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FROM THE MOTHERLAND

By **SEAN FARRELL**



Diego Maradona 1960-2020

Diego Maradona, arguably the finest soccer player of the Twentieth Century, perhaps of all time, is dead. Maradona's years of greatness - in the 1980s - preceded today's saturation TV and Cable coverage of soccer, and while we have certainly the films of his greatest goals and exploits, these are all too few. Memories fade quickly and there is also the sad flawed spectacle of the man in his declining years to blur his memory. Like most admirers, I never saw him play in person, only on film.

How good was he? He inspired passion for and against. He was subversive; underdogs rooted for him. He was transformative. Other great players played in great teams; Maradona foraged alone, elevating those around him. His exploits were unique. Off the field he had major flaws. He should have been better protected; too late now. Yet read what his footballing peers wrote about him. And watch, please, those films of him in action.

2021 will mark thirty five years since Maradona in 1986 almost singlehandedly delivered a World Cup to Argentina, scoring in the process the "Goal of the Century," and linking his name forever with that World Cup. He very nearly won another World Cup four years later with a far inferior team when by then his greatness was fading. Yet by 1986 his star had been in the ascendant for nearly a decade after he burst on the Argentine scene as a teenager, a mop-headed undersized kid from the Buenos Aires slums. He was omitted inexplicably from the 1978 Argentine World Cup squad, a squad that was strong enough, with the assistance of good luck and home advantage, to capture the trophy. In a fascinating documentary last year Maradona revealed his hurt at being left out and denied the chance to raise the Cup before his countrymen. (Pele, after all, at the same age in 1958, HAD been given his chance.)

By 1982 the world soccer scene had re-configured. Maradona was now acknowledged as the world's best player and was already signed up for Barcelona for

a record fee. He was also, as befitted his status in the cruder and crueler environment of 1980's soccer, a marked man, with opponents committed

to stopping him by fair means or foul, usually by kicking him around and off the field. Such tactics would not be tolerated today, when some protection at least is provided for creative players, but then it was open season, a time moreover of heavier pitches and balls and more license for the tackler. And given that Maradona did not hide but was proactive, and once in possession of the ball had only one aim, to get forward and score or assist his teammates to score, there were ample opportunities to "get" him in every match.

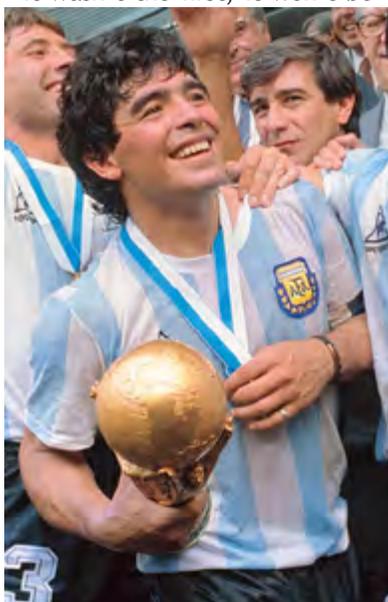
So it was in World Cup 82, where additionally the opposing teams were gunning for Argentina as the holders. Maradona was harried, hacked and pursued in every match, most memorably in the match against the eventual winners, Italy, where he was shadowed closely and neutralised by the inappropriately named Italian defender Gentile. In the next match, against traditional Latin American rivals Brazil, Maradona, who usually took the fouling and punishment stoically, finally snapped, retaliated after a succession of fouls, and was sent off, Argentina's chances disappearing with him. With eerie prescience, given the shelf life of football superstars, Sean Connery, narrating the official FIFA world Cup film shortly after, commented that Maradona would have to await another occasion to fulfill his potential.

By 1986 Maradona was playing in Italy where he was in process of transforming perpetual losers Napoli into a championship winning side and instilling pride and self-belief to Naples and the Neapolitans, long looked down upon by much of the rest of Italy. His time in La Liga had not been happy. Frequently fouled, the target for every defender, in 1983 he suffered a savage and potentially career-ending ankle injury at the feet of Goikoetxea, the "Butcher of Bilbao," which side-lined him for several months. In Naples he was welcomed as a Hero, his impact immediate. What he was to do with an ordinary squad at Napoli over the next six years mirrored what he did for his national team on the world stage.

World Cup 1986 will be remembered, certainly in the English-speaking world, for Maradona's performance in the

quarter final against England, featuring his “Goal of the Century” and the “Hand of God” goal. The latter continues to rankle with sections of the British tabloid media; indeed not too long ago one pundit declared that Maradona had not scored twice, since the first was not a goal! There was history of course, both off and on the field. In 1982 the UK and Argentina had been at war, over the Falklands, a war won resoundingly by Britain, a humiliation which left the Argentines smarting. Those with memories of 1966 could recall another World Cup quarter final, a nasty foul ridden contest (typical of the tournament itself) where England, on home soil, triumphed 1-0 in a match that saw the Argentine captain sent off and the England manager Alf Ramsey, categorise the Argentines as “Animals.” It was hardly surprising that, after the “Hand of God” goal stood, and was followed by what is general-

ly regarded as the greatest goal of all time, and England were out, the Argentines celebrated. It wasn’t the first; it won’t be



the last, controversial moment in a World Cup match.

The difference between the teams, as throughout the competition, was Maradona. There were six roughly equal teams competing, but only one had Ma-

radona. He led a good, but certainly not great, Argentina team to overall victory, scoring, in addition to those against England, a superb often overlooked goal against Italy, and two against Belgium in a virtuoso semi-final performance where he created, and teammates squandered, several gilt-edged chances. In the final against Germany, man marked, but fairly, he was subdued but still produced flashes of brilliance including the sublime through pass for the winning goal. Unsurprisingly the official World Cup film was entitled “Hero.”

By 1990 he was clearly past his peak. He had led Napoli to dominate the cauldron of Italian soccer, was lionised in Naples, had logged breath-taking goals and performances but off the field had succumbed to the temptations of drugs, high living and the claustrophobic embrace of local gangsters. His last effective bow was the foul-ridden World Cup 90. Argentina’s team

was mediocre, even compared to that in 1986, with only one other fine player - the striker Caniggia. Argentina’s opponents’ tactics were simple - kick or foul Maradona - something demonstrated initially by surprise packet Cameroon in the opening match. Yet incredibly Maradona dragged his side to the final, eliminating both Brazil and hosts Italy along the way. This time Germany were ready

and won 1-0; perhaps the result might have been different had Caniggia not missed the match over a silly technical foul. His appearance at World Cup 94 was brief - he failed a recreational drug test early. From then on it was downhill all the way.

On the field he was sublime. We shall not see his like again.

Sean Farrell is a retired Irish diplomat and former Irish Consul General in Chicago in 2006-2007.

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Ireland Network Chicago

A social, professional and cultural network for Irish, Irish-Americans and friends of Ireland in Chicago



Happy new year to our IN Chicago members and friends. As Ireland Network President I am delighted to ring in what will be a much better twelve months than the one we just had. For those of you who are not aware of us, Ireland Network is a social, business networking group with the goal of introducing people of Irish and non Irish heritage to each other for social, business, networking and fundraising opportunities. We offer a wide range of cultural, business and social events throughout the year. I would ask you to stop by our website (chicago.irishnetwork-usa.org) and think about becoming a fully paid member. Membership offers a number of benefits, including discounts on all of our in-person and online events. Hopefully we will be getting back to in-person networking in 2021! The next initiative is an online speed business networking event taking place on Wednesday, January 27th. I'd like to extend best wishes to all IAN readers for a happy and healthy 2021.

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 Garret Diamond
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Trade Agreement Between EU and UK

Ireland's 2021 economy should be in better shape than their modest forecasts as the European Union and the United Kingdom penned an agreement between them.

The Irish economic outlook for 2021 was prepared for higher costs and tariffs before this deal was reached.

No tariffs or quotas will apply

on trade between the EU and the UK.

The Irish fishing industry will be restricted when it comes to access to some UK waters.

Trade between Britain and Ireland will probably involve some new customs roadblocks, as with any new deal, but the outlook for a smoother transition now is good.

After the Fear Come the Gifts

This book recommended by Brigid Gerace-Duffy

While receiving treatment for breast cancer, clinical psychologist and spiritual director Kay Metres found nine surprising discoveries that she came to think of as gifts.

The Nine Gifts

-Transformation:

Embracing change

-Learning to Ask for Help:

On not being alone anymore

-Interdependence:

Cooperating in your healing

-Surrender:

The power of giving up

-Sisterhood:

The wonderful women in your life

-No Longer Need to be Right:

The delicious freedom of letting go

-Savoring Each Day:

Mindfulness in every moment

-Discovering Your Own

Strength and Beauty:

Loving yourself again

-Deeper Spirituality:

The unending pool of strength

"I hope through reading this book, you will find empowerment and even joy, yea, joy, becoming more aware of your own strengths and inestimable value you bring to the world."

Hi There. This will be an informal introduction to me, Kay Metres, aka Katherine Metres.

I'm a writer and therapist, raised in coastal Rhode Island and now living in suburban Chicago.

I wrote this book because I needed to record for myself the big changes in me that resulted from breast cancer. As I wrote,

I wondered if my words would comfort other women, and, let's face it, there are thousands of us who have or had this disease. But what has surprised and delighted me as I give talks on this topic is the universality of the growth that adversity brings. For example, a man told me it helped him deal with his prostate cancer, and a young woman said it is helping her deal with



her divorce. My neighbor said it is helping her with her financial fears. Wow. I feel so much a part of the human community after publishing this book. We never know what burdens others are carrying.

I hope to update this author page regularly and I also hope it has some value for you, the reader.

The best way to reach me is by email at kmetres@comcast.net. I will see your message promptly and I can respond to you easily.



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Contributing Writers, Katie

Fitzpatrick, Katherine Iannitelli,

Ryanne Gallagher Johnson

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Scythian to Release New Album, Roots & Stones

Celtic-Americana-Gypsy band Scythian is set to release their long anticipated record “Roots & Stones” on Saturday, November 28th. It’s been over five years since the band released a full-length studio album and this one promises to be its best.



beginnings that I see it as a seed that’ll inspire new growth during an age when storytelling and the preservation of roots is so important.”

What promised to be an epic CD-Release Tour was stopped in its tracks due to the Covid-19 shutdown, but Scythian found an alternate ways to build buzz and connect with fans: They launched a bi-weekly live-stream dubbed - “The Quar-anstream” - which has averaged between 30,000-40,000 views per stream. The band has decided to use this momentum to release Roots & Stones during a year where live touring has been decimated.

The album features 13 tracks with “Galway City” as the first single. The song is a perfect incarnation of Scythian’s blend of Americana and Celtic and is a foretaste of what listeners can expect with Roots & Stones.

iHeart Radio’s Arroe Collins said Roots & Stones “is the type of album that makes well crafted musicians return to class. There’s so many unique new

Roots & Stones is available at the Scythian Store, scythianmusic.com @ScythianMusic | #AppaloosaFestival | #ScythianIrishTour

Mary Pat Flanagan Sr. VP North American Sales

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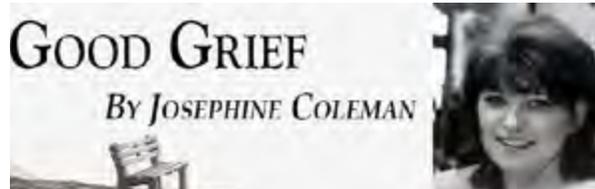
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THE LARKIN & MORAN BROTHERS

Hello everyone. Hope you are all well and hanging in there. During our quiet Thanksgiving dinner our kids asked us about growing up in the "olden days" My husband and I both laughed. We told them we had it good compared to our parents. My husband started to tell them about their grandfather. Andrew Coleman Senior.

At the age of 17 my father and two friends cycled 18 miles to meet a British employment agent as England had a big Manpower shortage at that time. He signed up under his deceased brothers name in order to meet the age requirements and in the event of being drafted into the British army he could easily disappear without trace. To his mother's displeasure he departed by ferry bound for the UK. He spoke about the ferry stopping midway to set off flares as the Germans were bombing London that night. Upon arrival he was bussed to a steel mill in Scunthorpe Knowing that he didn't want to work there and having been mistakenly given his full work permit he noticed a side door open after orientation. He slipped out the door and jumped on the first bus he saw which was headed for Birmingham. Arriving there he found temporary work at a chocolate factory and found cheap accommodation. In those days part of your suitcase kit was a delouse as accommodations were not clean back then. Packed lunch was bread and jam today and bread and tomatoes tomorrow. While playing darts one night he befriended a British soldier and worked out a deal to buy American "rations" from him. He was warned to dispose of the packaging as the soldier would suffer the consequences. Each night he would dig a hole and bury the evidence. He then got a job at Dunlop tire factory for three years and sent five Pounds to Ireland each week. Conditions were unhealthy at the Factory so he got a job in Gloucestershire as a pipefitter running gas and water lines. This required that he travel with the job thus living in a caravan for six years!

Hearing great stories of Canada he once again headed into the unknown but under his real name this time! Ar-

iving early morning in bitter cold Montreal he went to a café to warm up. Hearing a familiar accent he approached a railroad worker to find work. The reply was "every man for himself in this country"! Undeterred he found work at the Uranium mines as a pipefitter. He was out in the "sticks" with the nearest highway 35 miles away and an abundance of snow. On occasion he would visit his brother who was a Canadian Airforce pilot. After 3 years it was time for another adventure.

In 1958 he contacted very kind neighbors from Ireland who were living in Chicago. They were able to sponsor him in and he got his citizenship. His first job was waxing floors for Sears at 99 cents per hour. The main navigation spot was the pub so he frequented it regularly to further his career! There he met a couple of Donegal men who took him under their wing. He would visit them at their houses at weekends to serve an unofficial apprenticeship as an Ironworker. After a number of months he went to the Union hall and paid a "kicker" fee to join. Sided with his Donegal friends he learned the trade fast and became a foreman for Gateway Construction. He worked on Marina towers and Lake Point towers to name a few. The last load of steel landed on the deck before lunch always held a pleasant surprise of several cases of ice cold beer for noon. Those buildings still stand today so Guinness does give you strength!

Attending a wedding one time he was introduced to my Mom. She asked for a lift home that night under the presence that she wanted to get away from an annoying suitor. The rest was history and he met the fate of all good men... marriage! She worked as a supervisor for Webcor Electronics. They soon bought a two-flat at Long and North Ave. Two babies later and Irish accents at every corner in the neighborhood they were now living the American dream with a hint of Ireland.

Then the bittersweet letter came from My Grandfather stating that my Dad was the chosen son of twelve in family to inherit the marshlands in Roscommon. The decision was made to leave the promise land and return to the Emerald Isle. They had a house built beforehand and he bought the first tractor in the village. He worked long hours on hire cutting meadows, hauling turf, bringing cattle to the market etc.

Life was very much different living in rural Ireland compared to a bustling city. High points in the year were Fair Days and visitors from abroad at Christmas, Easter and summer along with those dreaded packages of used clothes from America. The look of shock when a pair of outdated check pants were taken out and mother's words "those will fit you perfect"! I grew up listening to the romantic Chicago stories and truth be known my mother's heart was left behind in the Windy City. When leaving Ireland after a vacation she would hug me with a tear in her eye and whisper "Don't ever move home"...He Didn't he met me!

I think our children have a better understanding of the sacrifices that were made long before they were born. I hope you enjoyed my husband's story maybe there might be a part two .We just want to wish you lots health and happiness in the coming New Year.

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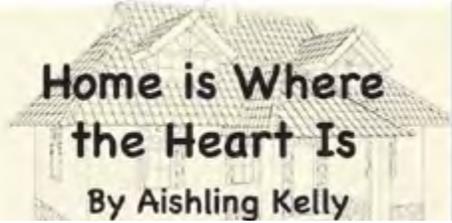


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many family members can struggle with anxieties more than others, this pandemic we have seen how other family members just take things in their

Well, here we go a brand-new year! New beginnings, a chance to turn over a new leaf so to speak and start fresh ... so what is your new year’s resolution? Did you know that on average new year’s resolutions are made and broken within the first week? Many fall off the wagon and do not get back on it! They just slip back into the old habits without giving it a try again. No one is perfect, not one single person in the entire world is perfect which means mistakes are made, and we can hopefully learn from them - forgive ourselves, restart and reset.

I can honestly say that many of us, myself included, have gained a few extra pounds during 2020 mainly because of the stay-at-home order, boredom, and much negativity in the media and around us. Many of us turned to food to feed our souls and make ourselves feel better. I will not even mention the increase in alcohol sales during this pandemic.... We all have had much time at home that we were not accustomed to, right? Much more time to think about things that normally we didn’t give time to pre COVID-19. But have any of us really focused on what has happened here? How many of us have really given focus on how COVID-19 has brought us all closer together, the family unit so to speak which is somewhere perhaps we never should have strayed from.

Here are my observations and take away from 2020. Nothing is guaranteed and life can change literally in a heartbeat! A solid home is the foundation for family and that’s where the basic building blocks for life are built. A place we should have pride in, a place where all are welcome. Anyone can have a house but how many of us have a real home? Since COVID-19 we have all been forced to revert to the home, even those who had previously flown the nest, now working, and living from the house without an outlet to the normal of-office setting. We have learned new ways to separate our business life from our personal life. We have learned to be more principled and set boundaries for work to take place within set hours from the home just as if we traveled to the office. We have seen how the family meals are so important and having all around the dinner table to talk about their day - our wins, our loses and our frustrations! We have witnessed how

strides. We have learned to listen to others concerns for the future around the dinner table and mealtimes. We have learned to home school our children without having a degree in education because now we must be involved for the next generations to be educated from home. The responsibility has now shifted from the teachers to the parents having to work together for the success of the child. We have been forced to learn technology, and new ways of keeping in touch with our loved ones when before we did not have to. We have learned to get into routines and now we know without them everything is chaos! We have learned to designate chores to the entire family so that everyone in the home space can be successful. We have learned that everyone needs to be responsible for their own space and work, right? We have learned to be more neighborly and to watch out for those that perhaps previous we just walked by in our state of busyness.

I personally have noticed that everything still gets done just in a different way. I find that I have found new ways of doing things that I would never have dreamed of before. I recognize that never has community been more important than it is now. I recognize that things I thought were important are not! Anything can happen if you take the time to plan it and that even virtual dinners can brings families together to bond. For me personally I have found that Family, faith, and community are what is important, and these are the things that will bring us all out of this pandemic. For 2021 let us focus on being more patient with ourselves, forgive ourselves for not being perfect. Let us look at all the great things we have learned in 2020 because of COVID-19 and lets all reset ourselves for 2021, focusing on the true meaning of life and being more appreciative of the things that truly matter, FAMILY, HOME, FRIENDS & COMMUNITY. Pat yourselves on the back you made it this far and be proud of yourself for all the ways you morphed into something you never thought possible in 2020. Now imagine what you can be in 2021! Anything is possibly believe in yourself! New beginnings, a chance to turn over a new leaf, start fresh ... so what is your new year’s resolution?

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On the Upbeat

By Maryann McTeague Keifer

There is an extremely talented new band who has just recently debuted its intro to the world album, and it is a beauty! Known as Maça, named after the Irish goddesses known as the three Morrigna who have images of strong, fierce and independent, self governing women, these ladies are

going to be a force to be noticed and admired.

From New Ross, County Wexford, Saoirse, Naoise, and Ciara Carty are three incredibly gifted musicians who are also blessed with what I call, the gift of "the craic." Great times surround and follow them wherever they are.

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Winners of TG4's Réalta agus Gaolta—Ireland's Most Talented Family, they decided to formally create a band and share their love of music with all of us. While they had previously recorded an EP, they decided to set a new album as a priority and began working on it this last pandemic year. With encouragement from good friend Rónán O'Snodaigh of Kila, they began composing songs and tunes for SPIRAL named for their logo which showcases the fluidity and changes of their lives, music, and rising career. A successful :fund:it campaign has allowed them to produce and now distribute their dream.

Full of spirit and energy, they put on a series of mini concerts from their bedroom allowing us to get to know and enjoy their laughing, teasing, bantering (as only sisters can do...), as well as be amazed at their playing and singing. Saoirse, who is the band's lead vocalist and guitarist, Naoise, the fiddler, concertina master, and vocalist, and Ciara who handles the bodhran, percussion, whistles, flute, and vocals have a way of pulling you into the joy, mischievousness, and soul of their music.

When asked about their musical background, they all agreed that sports were their first love until preteen years when they became interested in music. Their folks were not musicians, but encouraged and hauled them around to lessons and sessions. They were fortunate to live near and get to play at pubs with the great Sean Keane, Sharon Shannon and Eddi Reader. Disney's Raglan Road noticed them and offered them a long residency in Disney World and off they went. Getting to play there with The Byrne Brothers, Colin Farrell and other well known musicians whet their appetite to form their own band.

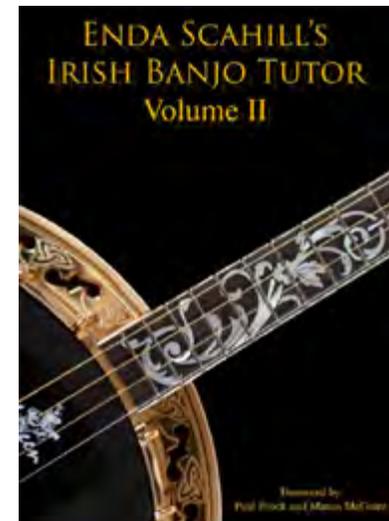
SPIRAL is a brilliant collection of Irish Trad tunes arranged with a modern, yet respectful twist that is refreshing, and songs that pull on your experiences and immediately involve you in the music. All were composed by the ladies and they have every reason to be quite proud of their work.

They feel it is very important that their audiences feel that they know who Maça is after seeing them. From specially designed outfits to their music and stories, they want to give to their listeners



a piece of themselves that they will take and remember them by; that what they see on stage is who they truly are and will be known and appreciated for. Music, and telling their story through it, is who they are and we are now being gifted with them and their music. Head to their website and get a copy!

With the world crippled by the Covid pandemic, musicians and students have heavily begun to rely on online teaching and learning. One very special opportunity now available is a set of two Banjo technique books by the talented and popular We Banjo 3 leader, Enda Scahill. Four time All Ireland Banjo winner, member



and guest musician of bands such as The Brock McGuire Band and Chieftans, Enda had published Learn Irish Banjo - Enda Scahill's Essential Foundation Techniques Volume 1 in 2008. This past fall, he

added a volume and working with Sound Slice has put out ebook versions which add valuable videos of him modelling the techniques and exercises and playing the tunes. The speed can be slowed down for learners to learn the fingering, and then put back to regular speed to play along with Enda as the learner progresses.

The program also includes interactive displays of the banjo fretboard, waveform displays, changing the tunes to different keys, and many other options. It is well set up for all levels of players from the beginner establishing good habits and basic techniques to the advanced student looking

to work with a banjo master musician. Hourly music lessons can be quite costly. At \$19.99 for Volume I and \$21.99 for Volume II, these are absolute steals, and true gifts of music which you can order at www.soundslice.com

A quick mention for all Irish music lovers, IRISH MUSIC MAGAZINE has just come out with their Annual 2021 issue which features an incredible number of interviews with Irish musicians both new and those around for many years including Maça, Joanie Madden, Nathan Carter, Coscán, Maurice Lennon, Andy Cooney, Marie Nesbitt, and Runa to name just a few. The much looked forward to "yearbook" of this magazine is well worth your time and purchase.

Keep an eye out as many bands and musicians are ready to debut new albums. I'll be reviewing as many as possible and also looking forward to those upcoming from Goitse, Shane Hennessy, and others. Hopefully, we can start looking forward to some live performances by the mid or end of this new year!

Kitchen Party Ceili Radio

at 9pm Central on WICR FM 88.7 or www.wicronline.org. Also Monday at 4pm Central on WXTF 97.9 FM in Harrisville, Michigan, and on Friday 6:30 am Central on Blues & Roots Radio, bluesandrootsradio.com

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Irish Books and Plays in Review

Frank West



A presenter I met at IBAM, recently passed away. I was saddened by the news, but then recalled a lovely memory of him. John Gleeson was his name. He was professor emeritus of the University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee. He had developed the Celtic Studies Program there. I was presenting from 4-5p.m. one year. He came early for his 5 o'clock presentation about Irish films. When we had time to talk, I quickly noticed how enthusiastic he was. He must have been a very good teacher. As we talked, I praised his brother, Frank. With good nature, he said, "I taught him everything he knows."

I laughed at his joke. He knew I enjoyed the joke and he told it to me when we saw each other at other IBAM events. Rest gently, John.

Andrew Jackson and the Miracle of New Orleans

By Brian Kilmeade
Random House

On January 8, 1815, one of the most important events in American History happened. That event was the Battle of New Orleans. The American Republic was only 29 years old. Britain, the premier power in the world, had never accepted that it had been forced to surrender at Yorktown. "The British had failed to respect American sovereignty." They had impressed 5,000 American sailors into their navy. They encouraged Indian tribes to attack settlers.

After Napoleon's defeat, a huge British fleet of 60 ships carried an invasion army that attacked the United States. It defeated the American army and burned Washington D.C. The President's mansion was so badly burnt that it later had to be painted white—hence White

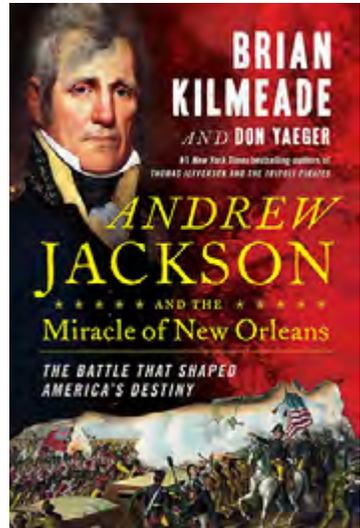
House. The invasion fleet then sailed to Baltimore's furiously shelled Fort McHenry. But the Fort did not surrender! During the bombardment, the "Star Spangled Banner" was written. Then the British sailed south to the Caribbean to invade New Orleans. It looked like the British, with over 14,000 soldiers, could easily do this. Except they didn't know that General Andrew Jackson was determined to outsmart them and defeat them. They laughed at Jackson and called in a "backwards Napoleon."

Irish Americans can be very proud of Irish American Andrew Jackson. His family came from Larrick Fergus in Co. Antrim. And as Presbyterians they never forgot their cruel treatment by the Church of England. They joined the War for American Independence and were strong supporters of the future United States. The exciting story is told by Brain Kilmeade. He writes with such energy that we constantly feel the excitement of the events.

Kilmeade is co-host on "Fox and Friends." Born in 1964, he lives on Long Island with his wife and three children. During the War for Independence, the British invaded South Carolina. A British cavalry officer slashed young Andrew and scarred his

forehead and hand. His mother and two brothers died during the war and teenage Andrew was raised by neighbors. "Great Britain had left him an orphan, and one day he would settle that score."

As a young man, he moved to Tennessee, became a lawyer, a judge, and ran for Congress. He was then appointed to command the Tennessee militia. At the time of the Battle, Jackson was 48 and was "red-haired, blue-



eyed, and a rangy, six-foot one." He was intensely strong-minded and resolute. He had "unrivaled courage, natural leadership, and uncanny battlefield instincts." He didn't even consider defeat.

Jackson understood the strategic importance of New Orleans. "New Orleans was the great gateway to and from the heart of the county. America's inland waterway—the Ohio, the Missouri, and the numerous rivers amounted to an economic lifeline for farmers, trappers,

and lumbermen. Flatboats and keelboats were a common sight, carrying manufactured goods from Pennsylvania, as well as crops, pelts, and logs."

The army Jackson put together to defend New Orleans was typically American. There were no class or racial divisions. It included militiamen from Tennessee and Kentucky, Indians, freed slaves, woodsmen, French colonials, and pirates. The pirates were superb artillery men. A British general said, "In campaigns in Spain and France...he had never seen anything like the murderous accuracy of Jackson's riflemen."

In late December, 1814, Jackson learned that the British Army was setting up camp. He roared his promise, "By the Eternal, they shall not sleep on our soil." He led his small army in a surprise attack. The British were routed and realized that taking New Orleans wouldn't be so easy. There were several approaches to New Orleans. Jackson blocked several, forcing the huge 8,000 man British Army to attack on a narrow front. This

made his 4,732 army roughly equal to the British.

Jackson positioned his men behind a canal and he had them build an earthen wall to fire from. He outsmarted and outfought the British. "Thanks to Jackson's military instincts, his impeccable planning, and his ferocious leadership, America prevailed in the most important fight for its young life."

A man of single religious faith, Jackson wished to give thanks to the "Ruler of All Events." He has the Bishop of New Orleans to organize "a service of thanksgiving for the signal interposition of Heave in giving success to our arms."

"Jackson took a seat under the alter for the chanting of The Dream." After the service, he visited the Ursuline convent to thank the sisters for their all-night prayer vigil on the eve of the battle. The Mother Superior promised the Almighty an annual mass of thanks. And "to this day on January 8, the Ursuline nuns conduct a Mass of Thanksgiving" for the victory at the Battle of New Orleans.

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New Online Festival, Wild Atlantic Fleadh Just Announced For St Patrick's Week 2021

The Wild Atlantic Fleadh Features Over 60 Events from March 13-17 2021

The Wild Atlantic Fleadh is a virtual festival that debuts on St Patrick's Week 2021. Running from March 13th to 17th the Fleadh is a 5-day celebration of all things Celtic. Billed as an Online Celtic Festival Experience, Wild Atlantic Fleadh (WAF) ticket holders can access over 60 different events with one single ticket. Tickets cost \$75 and are available from December 4th, 2020 on the Wild Atlantic Fleadh website <http://www.wildatlanticfleadh.com/ticketing>

March is Irish American heritage month in the U.S. and the Fleadh's goal is to celebrate a shared heritage by producing a world-class festival celebrating Ireland's rich history of music, arts and culture, presenting shows and events by Irish, Scottish and American artists providing a unique opportunity to virtually present

some of the very best performances in a safe online community.

With a stellar lineup for its inaugural event, WAF has assembled an eclectic range of performances to include internationally renowned shows, traditional Irish and folk musicians and up-and-coming artists. World champion Irish dancers, poets, comedians, painters, chefs, mixologists and storytellers round out the mix. Musical performances at the festival run the gamut from top PBS shows such as Celtic Thunder to world acclaimed traditional musicians Cherish the Ladies, Celtic country heartthrob Nathan Carter, Riverdance tenor Michael Londra, folk duo Byrne and Kelly, Celtic Woman star Chloë Agnew to newcomer Emma Langford. All of these artists had their entire itinerary of shows for 2020 cancelled or

Celtic Thunder, Cherish The Ladies, Nathan Carter, Byrne and Kelly, Chloë Agnew, Emmet Cahill, Damian McGinty, Michael Londra and band, Emma Langford, UCD Choral Scholars, Colin Keegan & Laura Durrant and Barry Kerr and Friends. More artists will be announced shortly.

Dance

Both Michael Londra and Cherish the Ladies shows feature world champion dancers, many of whom are Riverdance and Lord of the Dance alum. Festival attendees can further delight in performances of Irish dance from The Pub, as well as dance workshops at the Wild Atlantic Club throughout the fleadh.

Culture

From the works of internationally acclaimed Irish poet Louis de Paor, to the fine art exhibit hall, the storytelling expertise of actor Phelim Drew and sketches from some of Ireland's favorite comedians, the guest artists at WAF are sure to enthrall.

Demonstrations

Daily demonstrations offering up some great Irish culinary recipes and tips from an award winning top Irish chef, just in time for St Patrick's Day. The chef is joined International award-winning mixologist Liam Cotter with daily cocktail demonstrations and ideas for all guests over 21 years of age.

Travel

Visit Ireland virtually and pick up tips and ideas for your next trip in real life. The Virtual Irish Travel Village offers a wealth of information, insider tips, trends and deals. Festival goers can check out the Wild Atlantic Way, learn about Ireland's Ancient East, virtually explore Northern Ireland Coastal Causeway, research their Genealogy and plan a future trip to Ireland for when the time is right.

www.wildatlanticfleadh.com
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and cooking demonstrations as well as special guests popping in for a chat. The third stage is The Wild Atlantic Club, a smaller, more intimate venue that offers acoustic shows, bespoke workshops and performances from comedians, poets and up-and-coming artists.

Music is the heartbeat of the Wild Atlantic Fleadh. Featured artists include

postponed.

The MainStage will feature the daily headline shows with supporting acts before the main event. The Pub is exactly what an Irish pub should be - warm and welcoming with traditional music, dance and storytellers. The Pub features a resident award-winning mixologist and world class chef offering cocktail

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Roaming in the Gloaming

By Estelle Shanley

To the survivors of Christmas past, welcome to the New Year. We made it through Thanksgiving although one of my Chicago colleagues reported her elderly parents drove to her home and remained in the safety of their automobile. The things we do out of fear, the weight of anxieties piling up by a deadly exploding virus that abuses and kills. This Christmas represented the second time in my life I skipped traditional festivities. I gave thanks on December 25th 2020 as the skies darkened and we were finished with this most sacred, super commercialized holiday. Fast on its heels the New Year rang in quietly, bereft of traditional fanfare with the exception of invincibles shunning masks, demonstrating in protest of government ordered shuttered restaurants. These hooligans played a significant role spreading the deadly virus. As the Irish drawled: Covid’s too bloody good for them!

The first event in my life skipping Christmas was giving birth to Janet, my first daughter, late in the day on Christmas Eve 1960 at a Boston Catholic Hospital. Staffed by nuns, my spouse invited to join me for Christmas Dinner, billed for two dollars and ninety-nine cents. There was little festivity on the plate, or perhaps I wasn’t in the mood! I began breast feeding the next day when an elderly nun approached, her speech riddled with spittle for a drenching effect, declaring that only the Irish breastfed their children. Ironically this was confirmed weeks later by the Catholic Pediatrician who warned again malnutrition. On that Saint Stephen’s Day, late in the afternoon an army of cleaners directed by nuns commenced to vacuum, wash, polish the hospital floors in a rigorous and rushed manner. I learned that Archbishop Cushing was arriving to welcome and bless the first baby born on Christmas Day presenting the par-

ents with a hefty check. As soon as I earned that baby was born two hours after mine, I felt the onset of postpartum depression!

Life has been upside down, BAM on computers and iPhones, socialization, dinner parties, lunch and business breakfasts fading to memory. Will we grab our lifestyle back at the conclusion of this bitter dangerous time? Workers may continue working in their home while children are off to school. If sufficient employees remain at home, working while caring for young children, it could herald an end to expensive daycare services for babies and young ones, curtail automobile travel, end the one martini lunch, or has that been extinct since women entered business life full force? Will men and women ever be equal in the work place, or does the question remain a pipe dream as the wage gap manifests in every paycheck?

I sat alone on Christmas, family spread across Boston, Kentucky and Florida. Yes, we opened presents on Zoom, absent was the traditional Christmas breakfast/brunch, being together, our animated conversation, deciding a time to serve a festive Christmas dinner. For me it was the most wretched holiday season of my life.

However in fairness I admit this Christmas Season had a few things to offer. Highly effective coronavirus vaccine was launched on trucks, and we watched TV in awe, experiencing a spirit of hope and the expectation of the pandemic wind-down in this New Year.

Trips to the United States Post Office spurred anxiety, masks mandatory, folks in long lines reading the well placed notifications: No Christmas Stamps, No Freedom Stamps, No International Stamps, No Money Orders. Postal clerks suffered verbal abuse, took it in stride, although when only one clerk was in service he/she appeared strung out and fragile.

It was hell for them and double hell for customers who feared Christmas gifts would not arrive on time.

I dutifully placed a wreath on my front gate, the total extent of Christmas decorations. I asked myself what was the point? Christmas lighting in high end shop windows blinked on and off without an audience confirming the absence of seasonal joy. The virus surged, deaths mounted, covid tests in full demand, news reports cluttered with dire predictions of death and tragedy. One headline sounded the alert that more Americans died from the virus than perished in the Pearl Harbor attacks. Multiply that by hundreds. Every single day, newspapers published the ugliness and cruelty in the national political rhetoric flowing with fevered pitch.

We were rarely spared. Five million Americans expected to perish from the coronavirus and I felt the privilege that none in my family was stricken. We reminded each other daily, texting, phoning, e-mailing, to wear masks, stay indoor, avoid crowds etc. I personally suffered receiving photographs of my six month old first granddaughter Emma, drinking in her lovely little face, her eyes, her growth, unable to see her in person and above all to hold her. I anticipate she will be walking and talking before it is safe to board a plane eastward bound to her home in Boston.

Like the death of President John F. Kennedy all of us will remember this Christmas, where we were, what we did, the loneliness we experienced. The New Year dawned, a lone resolution emphasized the approaching end of a pandemic, financial help for the poor and indigent, shops and restaurants back in business, the emergence of a new president, some type of normalcy being delivered. Time to think about climate change, a long awaited thaw between Democrats and Republicans and a return to hope and peace in our American society. Until that happens, Bah Hamburg!

estelleshanley@aol.com

The Voice of Catholic Charities

By Elmda Kulovic,
Director, Catholic Charities
Refugee Resettlement Program

As director of Catholic Charities’ Refugee Resettlement Program, one of the “perks” of my job is welcoming refugee families at the airport. Recently, we welcomed an 11 year-old girl from Uganda so we could reunite her with her mother after five

ible enemy has brought about fear, anxiety, isolation from family and friends, isolation from religious worship, loss of loved ones, loss of livelihoods, and turned our lives completely upside down. I remind myself that every day refugees face these burdens and more, for



years of being apart. It was too dangerous for the girl to flee with her mother, so she stayed with relatives until her mother was eligible to bring her to the U.S. Seeing the reunion of this mother and daughter after they had both endured violence, hardship, and years of being apart, is what makes my job so rewarding.

Although I have always admired the courage, endurance, and humble patience of refugee families, the COVID-19 pandemic has made me appreciate these qualities even more. This invis-

their enemies are far from invisible.

Yet, somehow refugees—unique children of God—endure. They live in the hope that better things are yet to come, and they persevere through obstacles and setbacks with resilience and fortitude. In these past months, I have learned that I can do this, too. That we all can. I am inspired by refugee families who truly are models of endurance and courage—and like them, I will choose to live with humble patience, in the hope that better days are yet to come.

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Chicago Gaelic Park

Serving the social & cultural needs of the Irish community throughout Chicagoland



A Cháirde

Happy New Year!

Welcome to 2021. We at Gaelic Park are looking forward to the year and the positive changes that we are expecting. Putting last year behind us, we are anxious to make plans for the time we can all be together.

I hope that you enjoyed the online Christmas Concert that was produced by the Association of Irish and Celtic Festivals as much as I did. We were very pleased to be one of the hosts of the event and we hope it added to your joy during the recent holidays.

As I write this we are told that we can't host live events of any size and we can't have people inside enjoying our pub. With the change in the weather, our patio curtains had to be taken down. We are not expecting to be serving food or drink during this month, but we look forward to resuming that when we can. Meanwhile, our planning continues and we are busy booking future events. We look forward to hearing from you.

Is mise le meas,
Bill O'Sullivan

Meet Our Volunteers



Don Tannheimer, from Chicago's south side and St. Kilian Parish has been a regular volunteer at Gaelic Park for 11 years. "When I decided to offer my services to Gaelic Park, I knew no one. Through the years, by 'giving back' both my wife Patricia and I now know countless people and have made many lasting friendships". Don has found working on new projects at Gaelic Park very rewarding and particularly enjoyed his tenure on The Board of Directors. Don encourages others to consider volunteering at Gaelic Park "just walk in, donate some time and be prepared to make many new friendships."



John Murphy is a native of Began Co. Mayo and he arrived in Chicago in mid-1977. John is a retired carpenter who volunteered at Gaelic Park until he was hired as Maintenance Manager. "Gaelic Park has long been a rock in the Chicago Irish community" and John demonstrates a deep commitment to see Gaelic Park succeed and continue to be a home for the Irish Community. "All of this would not be possible without the hard work, love and support of the great volunteers at Gaelic Park."

Selected Dates are Available for Your 2021 Weddings and Events in Our Newly Remodeled Emerald Room, Our Tara Room, Our Celtic Room, Our Patio and in Our Pub



Matt Ruane emigrated from Miltown Co. Galway in the 1960s. Matt retired in 2016 after 50 years working as a heavy equipment operator for local 150. Matt started to volunteer at Gaelic Park after retiring and enjoys doing whatever needs to be done be it cutting grass or trimming trees. "It's a place to call our own" and I enjoy going there in the evening to have a few beers with friends.



Tom Mc Gowan was born in Chicago and attended school in Galway. Tom is a retired mechanic and he likes to help out with repairs at Gaelic Park. Tom believes Gaelic Park is a credit to the Irish in Chicago and he says "they have a fine group of volunteers who are always willing to jump in when something needs to be done."

Gaelic Park Book Club (Club Leabhar)

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September 2020 - May 2021

The first Sunday of the month we gather to discuss great Irish writers. Please join us!
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If you have questions, contact:
Tina Butler at Molanive@yahoo.com

Jan 3	Of Weddings and Wakes	Alice McDermott
Feb 7	Stalking Irish Madness	Patrick Tracey
Mar 8	The Magdalen	Marita Conlon McKenna
April 4	A Celtic Childhood	Bill Watkins
May 2	The Billionaire Who Wasn't	Conor O'Clery

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On behalf of the Gaelic Park Board of Directors, we wish to thank all our supporters for making our 2020 Annual Fundraiser a success. We wish you and your families a Happy, Healthy 2020!

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President's Message - January 2021



Greetings and Happy New Year!

I hope you all had a wonderful Christmas and holiday season! To say that 2020 was an interesting year might be an understatement; however, 2021 can (hopefully) only go up from here! While the pandemic forced us to close our building, it also forced us to provide Irish culture in new ways that we haven't done before. We kicked off our virtual music sessions "Fridays in the Fifth" on our Facebook page, and we've hosted historical portrayals, play readings, and a lecture series online. Some of you joined us for our fun movie night *Under the Stars*, and others joined us for an active day outside while we *Golfed Fore Green*. *Paints and Pints* shifted from the Fifth Provenance pub to Zoom, we started hosting Yoga on Wednesday afternoons, and we partnered with many friends of the Center to offer online music lessons, online dance lessons, and even online Anam Cara and Creative Writing workshops! In a year where many of our days were spent at home, we sure had a lot going on "at the Center!"

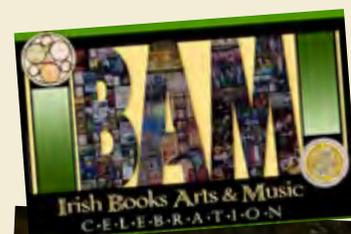
We had a successful year, all things considered, and it could not have been possible without the dedication, hard work, and heart of our volunteers, staff, and members. We are so lucky to have amazing volunteers who give their time, talent, and efforts to the IAHC. Whether helping in the Gift Shop, contributing to a committee or event, upkeeping our building, and even spreading the word of what we have going on, I am thankful for our crew of volunteers who continue to drive our organization! In addition to our volunteers, our programming this year could not have been made possible without the continued commitment from our employees to the mission of the Irish American Heritage Center. Last, but certainly not least, I'm grateful for the wonderful members and supporters of the IAHC, who allow us to continue to provide Irish and Irish-American culture. Without your continued support, our transition from in-person events to virtual events would not have gone as smoothly; it's been so great to "see" our favorite people along with new people from around the world enjoying Irish culture with us!

To shift gears a bit, I'd like to make an ask for our Annual Appeal. Even though we have shared some of our programs online, our building is our home, and we need your help to continue providing the best in Irish and Irish-American history, culture, arts, music, dance, drama, and heritage. If you have enjoyed one of our events or programs in the past, or have just started joining us for virtual programming, please consider supporting the Irish American Heritage Center. Our Annual Appeal fundraising will be put towards maintaining our home—our building, and towards providing cultural programming, and connecting with our members and supporters in new ways in 2021. You may contribute by going to irish-american.org.

Lastly, congratulations to Pat Flaherty—the winner of our Nimble Thimbles Quilt Raffle! Thank you, Nimble Thimbles, for another beautiful quilt, and for hosting your annual raffle to benefit the Center!

Until we meet again, stay warm, safe, and healthy!

Nicole McDonagh-Tueffel
President, Irish American Heritage Center



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Mulroy's Irish Acres, 4th Generation Irish Farm in Wisconsin Welcomes Overnight Guests

Changing With the Times Allows the Mulroy's to Survive and Thrive

By *Ryanne Gallagher Johnson*

Mulroy's Irish Acres, a nineteenth century organic/biodynamic farm located in New London, Wisconsin, is run by fourth-generation Irish American Dave Mulroy, and his wife Jane. One of thirteen original local farms that were owned and operated by Irish immigrants fleeing the Potato Famine in the 1840's, Mulroy's farm was the first of the group, and now only one of two that are still standing and working today. Over the last nearly two centuries since it's beginning, it's taken a little ingenuity, a bit of creativity, and a lot of perseverance in order to stay relevant in a rapidly progressing economy and society, and Dave and Jane have done so, beautifully.

Hailing from County Mayo in Ireland, when Dave's ancestors came to America, it was his great-grand uncle who initially settled at Irish Acres.

"My great-grandfather settled a farm about a mile from here, and his brother settled Irish Acres. (My great-grand uncle never married, so when he died, he left this place to my grandfather, who took over," Dave explains.

"One Arm Mike", Dave's great-grand uncle, passed the farm to his nephew, Mike, who passed it to his son, Dave's father, James. But It wasn't until his father's health began to decline that Dave took over full time.

"I never wanted to farm when I was a kid," Dave admits. "I'd work here on the weekends... I got a Master's Degree in Labor Economics... the education helped me make investments, but that's about it."

Much of the equipment used on the farm is original to the place, including the first tractor bought by Dave's father, when the invention became big. Over the years, anything that surpassed its usage has gotten repurposed into other necessities for the farm, like planters for the gardens, or even a coop

for their chickens. Dave has also adapted some of the equipment to suit his needs as he's gotten older.

Today, the farm's predominant crop is hay, of which they make and sell 10,000-12,000 small bales each year. They do this on the sixty-five-five acres of their own farm, as well as rented parts of four other farms, for a total of about 110 acres of hay.

The biodynamic aspect was introduced when Dave met his wife at the St. Patrick's Day Parade in Milwaukee one year. Jane, who was trained by Christopher and Martina Mann, students of the father of biodynamics, Rudolf Steiner, had a few requests she made before agreeing to move in with Dave.

"I told him, if I come up here, we're going to be biodynamic, and we're going to eventually follow the path of a community farm."

Biodynamics, in short, is a holistic, ecological, and ethical approach to farming, gardening, food, and nutrition.

As Jane describes the process, "It's a blessing in that it's so clean and pure here. There's no chemicals. We use heirloom seed. Biodynamics (means) that you let every plant come into its own fruition in its own time. It's really the way God intended farming, and for plants to grow, and nature to flourish. We follow all the natural rhythms, and we collect rainwater... we only use rain water when we irrigate. We're very much in tradition with the old ways, when they settled the farm. We try and keep that going."

Dave and Jane find that biodynamics not only suits them and how they want to run their farm, but also has a few very big upsides.

"Number one, it's really wonderful for us. Anywhere anyone wants to walk, you can walk. If you see something you want to eat, you can eat it. It's not been sprayed, it's not been contami-

nated. And number two, it's so much less money. On average, a conventional chemical farm will spend \$800-\$1000 per acre, between chemicals and spraying, and all that. We make our own soil supplements, and we do our own biodynamic preparations, and I've got it down to about \$10 an acre. And, everything is in balance and healthy."



Dave and Jane Mulroy

Keeping biodynamic has helped them adjust their practices along with climate change.

"That's biodynamics. You honor the seasons, and you honor the weather... We've had some late winters, so we've shifted things around to accommodate that."

Being adaptable as farmers also allows them to revise and adjust as surprises pop up. When Dutch elm disease killed 600 trees at the bottom of their farm, they hand-planted 8500

more to make up for the loss. The farm is able to hold a couple microclimates, which makes it ideal for planting different crops in different areas. They grow alfalfa, timothy, and clover in their gardens. They have an heirloom apple orchard sourced from Maple Valley Farms, the seeds for which Jane had to undergo traditional heirloom apple

'If I move up here, I need a place to swim, and I need a cottage.'

"We had one spot in the field that was always wet, and (Dave said), 'I know there's springs there'. So we had the guy come out, and they dug the pond. And as they were doing that, it was filling faster than they could dig, so within four days, the pond was full. It's an acre pond, and it's been full ever since. It's beautiful and spring fed, It's icy cold and clean and wonderful."

Then, a few years ago, that cottage Jane asked for became another source of revenue for the farm.

"Back in 2014, the hay market went to hell," She recalls. "They were giving it away. The barns were full. It was such a good year, but when it's a good year, it's a bad year, because there's just too much. We couldn't sell a bale. At auction, it was going for \$.25.

"I used to work as a camp director and a travel agent, so I like to do fun activities, and I like camping... So, I told Dave, 'Let's do glamping. We've got the little cabin, we've got rivers and lakes, and we've got hiking trails.' And I got this look of horror (from him). First of all, nobody outside the family had ever been on the farm, and inviting guests in was just beyond his scope of imagination. The first thing out of his mouth was, 'Who would pay to come to a farm?'

"I did some research and I showed him that glamping and farms and open space was becoming the heart and soul of people yearning for a connection with nature. Then we went to Ireland... and I planned the trip at all bed & breakfasts, and all country venues, and we stayed on farms in Ireland, and I said, 'This is us. This is what we can bring back home.'

"In America, we had bed and breakfast inns, but we weren't really grasping farm stays or glamping at that time, and I think that nobody does it better

tree classes over the course of several weeks. They also offer their own classes on organic and biodynamic farming and gardening.

Another part of Jane's requirements for moving onto the farm was the addition of certain accommodations to the property.

"When I moved up here in 2000, I had owned a cottage on six acres on a lake outside of Milwaukee, and it was "the dream" cottage on a lake. I said to Dave,

than the Irish. Nobody gets it better on connecting people to the land like the Irish.

"I had the cabin, and it was very rough here. I didn't have the kitchen, I didn't have anything... I advertised on Craigslist, and we had four nights in five months booked. And then, that winter, I got a note from Delta Airlines that (told me about) this AirBnB program. I looked into it, and AirBnB is just fabulous. When you're a host, you set your own parameters, your own rules, and your own pricing. It's just wonderful.

"In 2015, we went to 89 nights in five months, with AirBnB. The following year, we had 119 nights. And then we started hosting day retreats and parties... So now, I run the glamping, and Dave takes care of the farm."

Glamping, by definition, is a style of camping with some amenities and, in some cases, resort-style services not usually associated with "traditional" camping. The word is a portmanteau of "glamorous" and "camping", and the practice is offered in many forms. In the case of Irish Acres, guests can either stay in the "tiny house" style Fairy Cabin, or the nature-centered Secret Garden room nestled between two greenhouses.

From May through October, guests can take the provided paddle boat out onto the pond, participate in catch & release fishing, take nature walks, attend special classes, experience the meditation labyrinth, play croquet or bocce ball, sit by a fire at night, and just enjoy being out and one with nature for the duration of their stay. Jane also makes and offers ten different "purposeful" crafts, such as dream pillows and wreaths made from herbs on the farm, herb pots, and fairy crowns, for a small upcharge.

Much of the revenue from their guest stays has gone right back into the experience.

"We've taken the money and stuck it back in. We put in the secret garden room, we put in

the kitchen, we put in the bathroom. I debated doing bigger improvements, but I think we're going to stay where we are. And we can still do what we love, which is farm."

Although the COVID-19 pandemic has altered the way they offer their glamping experience, guests are still able to reserve the space for some social distanced vacation time outdoors. Irish Acres is allowing up to ten people between the two rooms, as long as they're all with the same party, and when they come, they have the run of the entire place.

Deeply appreciative of all the wonderful people who have passed through their farm in the last six years, Dave and Jane credit the Irish American community for the success of their glamping site.

"We want to tell the Irish Community in Chicago, who are our biggest supporters, how much we love and appreciate them," Jane says. "And, without them, we would not have survived, or been able to fund the programs that we fund, and do the things that we do. Because the glamping is one of the sources of income that we truly rely on."

Up to this point, and moving forward, they continue to work towards maintaining as much of the old ways of doing things as they can, and striving to give the farm a sustainably functioning process.

"We try and preserve the best of the past, and make the present in harmony with what has been, with what has always been. We hope to preserve it in the future. Our goal is to keep the farm as its own living, breathing entity, and to stay a community farm. Out of the 13 original Irish farms, there are only two left."

Looking into the future, Dave's daughter plans to take ownership of the farm, although she has no desire to run it. Instead, Dave and Jane are working on turning the place into a Camphill Community.

Founded in 1939, Camphill



There is no rest for Dave as he puts in a full day!



Look for this beautiful Celtic Cross is on the grounds.

Communities are residential communities and schools that provide support for the education, employment, and daily lives of adults and children with developmental disabilities and other special needs.

"It started in Scotland. They currently own 107 small farms around the world. Each farm is run by adults with special needs, who are residents on the farm. Each farm has a bakery, a woodworking shop, a candle shop, a weaving shop, and gardens," explains Jane.

"We have the gardens in, the house is a licensed bakery on the main floor, the garage is the woodworking/metal/art shop, we have a space that will be the weaving shop... Then they would either live in the existing farm house, our house, or they would build residences on the farm."

The program determines each adult's skill level, then gives them a job in which they can contribute to the farm, make their own money, and pay rent. House parents oversee the groups, and they create small families within the farm.

Just as their biodynamic farm heeds the call of the seasons, Dave and Jane spend their summer months at Irish Acres, and their winter months down in Florida. Dave also recreationally sings with the Irish band Flip of the Coin, and Jane writes children's books in her free time.

The dream of keeping Irish Acres running into its bicentennial anniversary and beyond is well underway, thanks to all the hard work that Team Mulroy has put into it.

As Dave and Jane say, "We were the first of the thirteen farms, and we'll be the last of the thirteen."

If you're interested in booking a stay with Mulroy's Irish Acres, you can find them on the AirBnB site by searching for accommodations in New London, Wisconsin. Jane is a "Super host" through the site, so the farm should be listed on the first page. You can also Google "Mulroy's Irish Acres" for listings to pop up.



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Irish Community Services is proud to showcase People of Color in our community

Introducing... **Katie Cahill (16yr)** Chicago, IL



How do you identify?

I am a first-generation American: my mother is from Killarney, Co. Kerry and my father is from Jamaica. I am a **female biracial teenager**.

Tell us something about yourself?

I have an enthusiastic love for sports! I'm a competitive figure skater, on the varsity swim and water polo teams at the Latin School of Chicago. I am not a picky eater, I love to cook and just like my grandma, I make an excellent sherry trifle.

What do you like about Ireland?

I like the open air, cycling my bike over to my grand uncles farm, turning turf at the bog for our winters, getting to eat Irish bread again, going to the butcher shop and selecting fresh cuts of meat for dinner: the friendly butcher always offering me a lollipop from the jar, seeing the friends I have made over the years once again, horseback riding, seeing my family and feeling their unconditional love.

What's your favorite thing about being Irish?

I love not having to wait in the international line at the airport as I cut that long line with my Irish passport. Every time I am there I feel an immense sense of freedom, I feel at home. It's my favorite place to be.

What has it been like growing up?

Since I was five weeks old, I have been spending my Christmas, Easter, and long summer breaks with grandparents Jackie Healy Rae (deceased 2014) and Kathleen Cahill.

Being biracial isn't always easy. There are times where I feel I don't exactly fit in on either side. I have grown up raised by my mom and grandparents to be strong, happy, and to always know I'm loved, so that's the strength that keeps me going every day even when times are hard. I have always felt no different from anyone else in Ireland.

Rose of Tralee festival was an experience of a lifetime.

My mom, Antoinette Cahill, has worked at the Drake Hotel for 22 years and I fondly remember having my 5th birthday in the palm court. I love going out to restaurants with my mom. I've had the opportunity to try all different kinds of restaurants, from sushi to Indian to Thai and even Irish cuisine. I am so grateful to have her in my life. I have a variety of friends that are so supportive of me both here in Chicago and Ireland. My grandfather, Jackie, was a huge part of my life. He taught me how to appreciate the little things in life, and how value is not determined by materialistic worth.

Being a rosebud in the

What hopes/wishes do you have for the Irish American community?

I hope the Irish American community will be ever-expanding and welcoming to all, just as I was welcomed with warm and loving arms. I wish the Irish American community to always remember where they came from and to make a trip back home to remind yourself of the beauty and love of Ireland.



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Visit ICS's YouTube Channel for informational videos on how to become an Irish citizen & apply for an Irish passport.

- www.youtube.com > Irish Community Services - Midwest

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Irish Co



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Consulate General of Ireland



CELTIC

AN IRISH JOURNAL FOR SENIORS



WELCOME

Happy new year and welcome to the first issue of **Celtic Magazine** for 2021! I hope you had a great holiday and have found the courage and energy to look optimistically toward the year ahead. Here, at Irish Community Services, we're trying to put our best foot for-

ward! This month, Ambassador Mulhall shares a touching poem written by a son for his mother. In the Celtic Kitchen, our friend Melia shares an old recipe gifted to her from her Mother-in-law and in **Front Porch Profiles** we visit Frank and Sherry Avila, who were raffle winners at our online Senior Christmas party. Over-

leaf, you'll find the schedule of remote senior events for January and February which can be accessed by phone or by computer. We've put together a great series of programs for you, so we hope you'll join us. Thanks for making **Celtic Magazine** part of your new year!

Paul Dowling

THE AMBASSADOR'S POEM PICK

My Mother

by Francis Ledwidge

"My Mother" is a beautiful poem, a tender and touching homage to his mother. It was written by Francis Ledwidge, an up and coming poet from County Meath. He was killed on the Western Front in 1917 during the First World War and was just 29 years old at the time of his death. We will never know what he might have achieved as a writer had he survived the war. Ledwidge, whose best-known poem is his "Lament for Thomas McDonagh", one of the leaders of the Easter Rising of 1916, was one of some 200,000 Irishmen who fought in the First World War. 'He shall not hear the bittern cry/ In the wild sky where he has lain/ Nor voices of the sweeter birds/ Above the wailing of the rain.' Ledwidge was a strong Irish nationalist, but he took

what must have been a hard decision to enlist for service in the First World War. Nobel laureate, Seamus Heaney, wrote a fine poem "In Memoriam Francis Ledwidge" in which he referred to Ledwidge as 'our dead enigma', reflecting his puzzlement at the idea of an Irish nationalist 'in your Tommy's uniform/A haunted Catholic face, pallid and brave'.

Ledwidge wrote this poem while he was recovering from war wounds at a hospital in Egypt. It is one of his most poignant poems. It finished with a sentiment that all of us could probably share. 'I bless the God who such a mother gave/ This poor bird-hearted singer of a day.'

Dan Mulhall
Ambassador



My Mother

God made my mother on an April day,
From sorrow and the mist along the sea,
Lost birds' and wanderers' songs and ocean spray,
And the moon loved her wandering jealously.

Beside the ocean's din she combed her hair,
Singing the nocturne of the passing ships,
Before her earthly lover found her there
And kissed away the music from her lips.

She came unto the hills and saw the change
That brings the swallow and the geese in turns.
But there was not a grief she deem'd strange,
For there is that in her which always mourns.

Kind heart she has for all on hill or wave
Whose hopes grew wings like ants to fly away.
I bless the God Who such a mother gave
This poor bird-hearted singer of a day.

The Celtic Kitchen

Melia's Old Fashioned Seed Cake

Years ago, when Melia's Irish Mother-in-Law sent her a recipe book, she was surprised by this recipe for its use of Caraway seeds.

Ingredients

- 10oz self-raising flour
- 5oz unsalted butter
- 5oz Caster, Superfine or Baker's Sugar
- 1oz Caraway Seeds
- Grated rind of 1 lemon
- 2 eggs
- Approx. 5 tbs milk
- Sugar for dusting

Directions

- Preheat the oven to 350F.
- Grease and line a 7" or 8" baking tin with parchment paper.
- Sift the flour into a large bowl.
- Rub the butter into the flour.
- Mix in the sugar, caraway seeds and lemon rind.
- Mix in the eggs and enough of the milk to achieve a smooth, dropping consistency.



- Turn mixture into the prepared tin, smooth the top and sprinkle with some sugar.
- Bake for 1 1/2 - 1 3/4 hours or until the cake is springy to the touch.
- Turn onto a wire rack, remove parchment paper from bottom and allow to cool before serving.

More recipes and instructional videos are available online. Visit [youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com) and search for Irish Community Services.

Just before Christmas, we dropped in on long-time friends (and recent raffle winners) of Irish Community Services, Frank and Sherry Avila, as they reflected on 2020 and thought about the year ahead.



Frank & Sherry Avila

What neighborhood do you live in? North Edison Park

Last year was a challenging one but were there any positive highlights for you from 2020?

The birth of our granddaughter Francesca, the creative celebration of our 55th Wedding Anniversary, the naming of a water plant in honor of Frank and his work with the Water Reclamation District following his retirement, keeping connected online with the ICS Senior Club, the Francis O'Neill Club, Celtic Women International, Irish Heritage Singer's, and others!

Do you have any resolutions of aspiration for the new year?

We're looking forward to visiting family & friends without worrying about Coronavirus. We're also looking forward to meeting again with our Irish Senior Club, dancing with the Francis O'Neill Club, Sherry singing again with the Irish Heritage Singers, enjoying Celtic Women International, and attending events at the Irish American Heritage Center. Our Resolution for the new year is to spend more time with our family, travel, continue organizing our home, to dance, laugh & sing more, and be thankful for our health and all our blessings.





FREE PROGRAMS FOR SENIORS WHERE YOU CAN DIAL-IN BY PHONE OR JOIN A VIDEO CALL USING YOUR COMPUTER FROM ANYWHERE IN THE WORLD!

JANUARY

A Story of Ireland

WEDNESDAY 13TH - 10 AM

Ruairi McKernan shares tales of adventure, community and hope from his book, **Hitching for Hope - A Journey into the Heart & Soul of Ireland.**

Mental Wellness During Covid

WEDNESDAY 27TH - 10 AM

Counselor and psychotherapist, Mary Foley shares insights into managing adversity and finding purpose as we cope with Covid and kickstart 2021!

FEBRUARY

Emigration & the Humble Potato

WEDNESDAY 10TH - 10 AM

Helena Byrne discusses Irish life in days gone by & the impact of the potato on Ireland's history.

Irish Tales & Fiddle Tunes

WEDNESDAY 24TH - 10 AM

Aindrias de Staic's rich and rare style of fiddle playing and his stories are sure to captivate you during this session.

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After you've done this, you will be asked to enter your participant ID **OR** press the **# key**. Just press the **# key** and you will be joined into the call!

USE A COMPUTER OR TABLET

For online meetings, we use a platform called **Zoom**. When you join our programs using a computer, laptop, tablet or smart phone you can hear and see other participants. Remember, even if you don't want others to see you, you can still join using your device and choose to switch off your camera.

A few minutes before the program is scheduled to begin, use your internet browser to go to the website listed below.

www.zoom.us

Click on '**join meeting**' at the top right side of your screen.

Enter the Meeting ID listed below in the box titled '**Meeting ID or Personal Link Name**'

Meeting ID : 884 0991 8529

Click on the '**Join**' button and you'll be joined into the meeting!

What do you call a cat that gets anything it wants?
Purrr-suasive!

Why was the math book sad?
Because it had so many problems!

'I regret becoming a vegetarian - it was a huge missed steak'

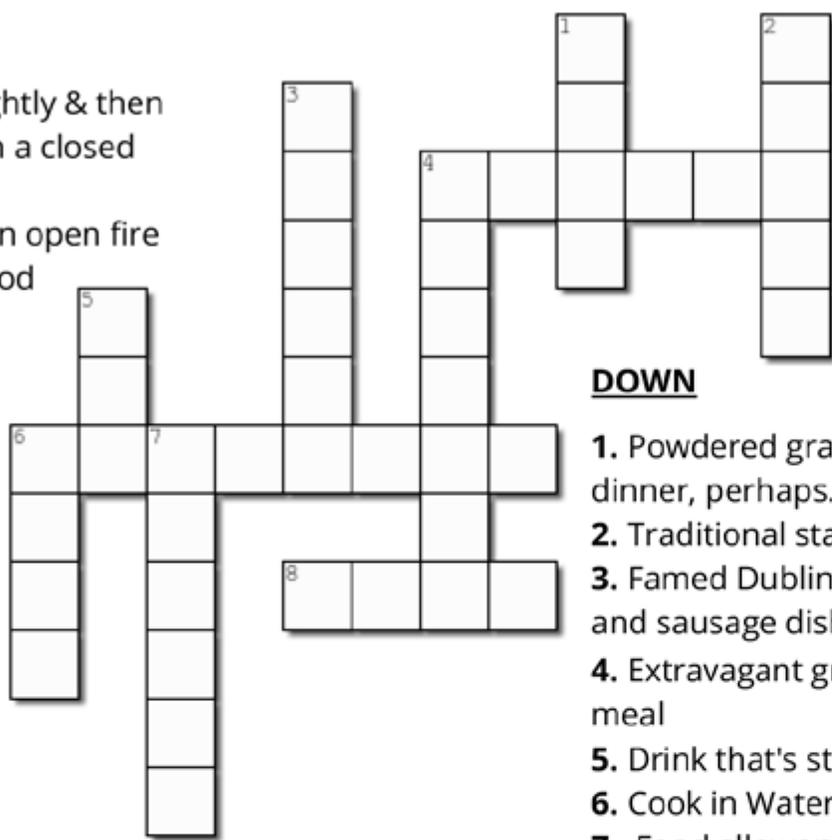
Watch our Comedy Club videos online : go to www.youtube.com and search for 'Irish Community Services'

Think it Over



ACROSS

- 4. Fry food lightly & then stew slowly in a closed container.
- 6. Grill over an open fire
- 8. Takes in food



DOWN

- 1. Powdered grain or dinner, perhaps.
- 2. Traditional staple food
- 3. Famed Dublin potato and sausage dish
- 4. Extravagant group meal
- 5. Drink that's steeped
- 6. Cook in Water
- 7. Food allowance

In the Kitchen

R	E	H	S	A	W	H	S	I	D
M	P	L	A	T	E	S	N	W	M
G	D	R	E	T	T	A	L	P	Q
I	R	Q	J	H	L	Y	S	O	L
K	F	R	I	D	G	E	N	A	X
S	O	T	L	M	N	K	D	D	E
I	R	N	G	P	I	L	I	A	U
H	K	E	X	A	E	L	W	O	B
W	S	Y	B	K	N	I	V	E	S
G	A	S	T	O	V	E	A	V	G
LADLE	STOVE			FORK					
FRIDGE	BOWL			WHISK					
KNIVES	PLATTER			DISHWASHER					



Josephine Cullinane, star of 'Maid In America'

Maid in the USA

Maid In America is a short documentary by Kathy Raftery about Josephine Cullinane who emigrated from Co. Galway in the early 1950's. Josephine shares stories from her time working as a maid in Philadelphia, including the time she encountered a member of the Rockefeller family! The documentary received rave reviews at this year's Chicago Irish Film Festival. The work of Irish maids in America is of special interest to Kathy as her

own grandmother came to work as a domestic in Pittsburg in the 1930's before eventually returning to the West of Ireland. Growing up, Kathy loved hearing her stories about her time in America. Kathy is currently developing *Irish Maids in America* and their experiences into a feature documentary and wants to connect with any Irish women who travelled to the States to work as maids from the 1930s to the 1960s and who would be willing to share their stories. If you'd like more information:

Kathyrafteryfilms@gmail.com or Kathy Raftery Films, Cloonlee, Ballinlough, Couty Roscommon, Ireland.



Keep in touch with Irish Community Services in 2021

773-282-8445
info@irishchicago.org
4626 N Knox Ave. 301
Chicago, IL 60630

We'd LOVE to hear from you!

Crossword Solutions:

DOWN: 1. Meal, 2. Bread, 3. Coddle, 4. Banquet, 5. Tea, 6. Boil, 7. Ration.
ACROSS: 4. Braise, 6. Barbecue, 8. Eats

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AIRLINES

AerLingus.com

ARTISTS

Bryan Boylan at newirishart.com

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Law Office Thomas Lynch 708-598-5999

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Murphy & Smith Ltd - 312-427-3650

BAGPIPERS

Chicalba Bagpiping - 630-534-4964

BAKERY

Doughs Guys Bakery - 708-931-5199

BANKS

First Ntnl Bank Brookfield - 708-485-2770

Marquette National Bank - 888-254-9500

BANQUETS

Gaelic Park - 708-697-9323

Irish Am Heritage Ctr - 773-282-7035 x 10

Palos Country Club - 708-448-6550

BEAUTY SALONS

Appearances Pk Ridge - 847-825-7615

Hair by O'Hara - Palos Hts - 708-239-1111

BOOKS - IRISH or IRISH THEMED

Athenry by Cahal Dunne cahaldunne.com

How Long A Shadow (barnes & noble)

TheIrishBookClub.com

BRICK REPAIR/REPLACEMENT

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Sheilas Carpet Shampooigans 847-636-2529

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IrishCommunityServices - 773-282-8445

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CHIMNEY REPAIR

Shamrock Tuckpointing - 708-388-2871

CHOIR

Irish Heritage Singers - 773-282-7035

COTTAGE RENTAL

Dingle Cottage: 312-399-8793

Gurtinard House - Listowel, Co Kerry on

Facebook

CRUISES

Phil Coulter Cruise

January 6-17 2021 508-879-8600

CULTURAL ORGANIZATIONS

Chicago Gaelic Park - 708-687-9323

iBAM! 847-872-0700

Irish Am Heritage Ctr - 773-282-7035 x10

Irish Am Unity Conference - 888-295-5077

Irish Am Society Co Will - Facebook

Irish Comm. Serv. Info@irishchicago.org

Irish Fellowship Clb irishfellowshipclub.com

Irish Heritage Singers - 773-282-7035

West Suburban Irish - wsirish.org

Will County Irish - 815-791-6424

DANCE SCHOOLS

McNulty School of Dance - 224-639-8644

Trinity Irish Dance - 877-326-2328

ENTERTAINERS

Chicalba Bagpiping - 630-534-4964

Dooley Brothers - 708-366-9458

Paddy Homan - paddyhoman.com

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Hello everyone,

A very Happy New Year to you. Let's hope this is a good one. I think we deserve it. I was just listening to the song 'Isle Of Hope, Isle Of Tears', written by Brendan Graham. It's about the first person that entered the United States, through Ellis Island.

I'm sure most folk know now, her name was Annie Moore, from County Cork. In a lot of ways, it's thanks to Brendan, for writing such a wonderful heartfelt song, so we can remember her story. I thought it very fitting to mention the song because it happened on 1st of January, 1892. I hope my calculations are correct. It was 129 years ago on the 1st of this month.

Maybe some people won't know of Brendan Graham, a Tipperary man, he is one of Ireland's finest songwriters along with being a best selling novelist. Other songs written by Brendan I'm sure you will have heard are 'Rock 'n' Roll Kids', and 'The Voice' (both of which won the Eurovision Song Contest) and I'm sure you have all heard of the great song 'You Raise Me Up'.

One of his books 'The Whitest Flower' (best seller) was written about the Irish Famine or Holocaust, as I would refer to it. The white flower being the flower of the potato plant. Brendan's brother Colm, is a member of Andy Cooney's Band. I got to hang out with him on the cruise my son Declan and I performed on. We had some great conversations on-board, having a lot in common- being friends of Margo O'Donnell, was one of them. In fact Colm Graham was lead guitarist in Margo's band.

Remembering another date, on the 9th Jan 2012, Donegal Singer Bridie Gallagher passed away at age 87. She was known as the 'Girl from Donegal', over a 50-year career she played everywhere from the Royal Albert Hall (which was the biggest crowd on record before or since for this venue) in London to Carnegie Hall in New York and Sydney Opera House. At her show at the Albert Hall mounted police had to be used to hold back fans who blocked the surrounding streets.

Born in Creeslough, Donegal, Bridie Gallagher later made her home in Belfast, and it was there she was discovered by a Decca tal-

ent scout in 1956. Her first single for them - 'A Mother's Love's a Blessing' - was a big hit, (The first song I learned) and within a few short years she was performing on Sunday Night at the London Palladium.

The late 50s and 60s saw tens of thousands of Irish people emigrating. In Britain, America and Australia, Bridie packed out the theatres everywhere she sang. In later years, she told Margo O'Donnell, "You are now the 'Girl From Donegal'"

December 2020 was a sad month, we lost another lovely lady from Donegal, **Sarah Birt**, from Arranmore, and wife of **Tom Birt**, owners of the **Sixpenny Bit** Bar. She was one of the most pleasant people I have ever met. R.I.P. Sarah, I'll never forget that wonderful smile of yours.

The music scene lost another legend, when Charley Pride passed away from complications brought on by Covid-19.

I was so privileged to have met him, on the night Daniel O'Donnell recorded the song we wrote, called 'Erin Tennessee'. Charley was one of the guests on the show and it was plain to see that he was the real deal, he was a warm hearted gentleman. After meeting him I felt that I should write a song for him. Margo knew him a lot better than me, so we wrote the song together, along with our good friend James Thacker from Nashville.

Margo was on the Gertrude Byrne cruise along with Charley Pride soon after we'd written the song. So, I sang it on tape with just me and my guitar, and printed the words out for him. Margo said he was so happy that we'd written the song that he called his wife over to listen to it. He said to his wife "they wrote a song for your Charley". I got an email from his management in Texas, to send the tape onto them and the lyrics, which I did. Unfortunately time beat us and he never got to record the song. I'm going to make it my song for this month. It's a song for Charley Pride to his many fans and it's titled 'Thanks'

As always, be good to one another. **Joe**

It Starts With A Song

By Joe McShane



'Thanks'

Written by Joe McShane,
Margo O'Donnell and James Thacker

Verse 1

I grew up pickin' cotton
In a little Delta town
Working from daybreak
Till that mean old sun went down
Out there from an early age
I was singing from my soul
With no idea what the future had to hold

Verse 2

A sharecropper's son
From Sledge Mississippi
I pitched a lot of baseball
Then I left for music City
Pickin' my guitar
For two years you didn't see
All I have to offer you is me
Chorus

Thanks for these many years
Of happiness and joy
Thanks for a dream come true
For this old country boy
From singing on the Opry
That circle as home base
For standing here with you my friends
All I can say is thanks

Verse 3

I've loved to sing those country songs
From when I was a boy
And as the years go rollin' by
They still bring me joy
From the heart of Mississippi
To Nashville, Tennessee
I've always loved you all my friends
Just between you and me

Bridge

You're the reason I've been singing
With love in every breath
I want you all to know
You're too much to forget

Chorus

Thanks for these many years
Of happiness and joy
Thanks for a dream come true
For this old country boy
From singing on the Opry
That circle as home base
For standing here with you my friends
All I can say is thanks!

Check out Joes Website www.joemcshane.net
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Playwright Vicki Quade, Shares Funny, Quirky Stories in New Book: Close Encounters of a Chicago Kind

For years, Chicagoan Vicki Quade has been telling stories as a journalist, playwright, theater producer, and performer. So it's not surprising she has a way of connecting with quirky characters during mundane, everyday occurrences.

Playwright and producer best known for her comedy, *Late Nite*

dangerous - and all are unique to the spirit of the Windy City.

Her next step, she says, will be taking the stories she loves the most and turning them into a performance piece. "I think these will work really well on stage, especially given the quirky people in them," she said.

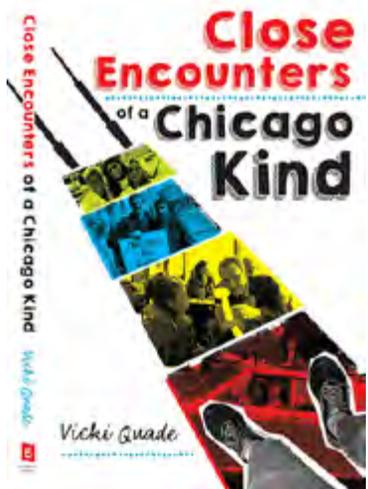
Her book, out in time for holidays sales, is already getting wonderful reviews.

"Call Vicki Quade the anti-quotidian," says Don Rose, noted Chicago political consultant and journalist. "There is nothing 'everyday' about her experiences, her interactions and especially her keen, well reported observations. She is an oddity magnet. More odd things unfurl before her on almost every outing than hap-



pen to most of us in a season--funny things, sad things, sometimes even dangerous things, or just plain odd things. That's in part because she is a hyper-curious buttinsky, often launching conversations with strangers our mothers warned us against, emerging with priceless stories and anecdotes. You will find yourself amazed, amused, or just drop your jaw, but it's all true. I swear it is."

In this pandemic time, Quade said she hopes her book reminds



people of "the public interactions we will eventually get back to."

Close Encounters of a Chicago Kind is a compilation of stories, examining the lives that brush past her on city streets, in banks, at the grocery store or in restaurants. With a sharp wit and empathetic skill, Quade colorfully recreates brief scenarios that range from the comic to the bizarre to the

Tracy Baim, publisher of the Chicago Reader, noted, "I love observational journalism. When a writer simply listens and watches, and interprets a story through their senses. Chicagoan Vicki Quade is that kind of writer. She beautifully captures the small nuances of movement and conversation that make Chicago what it is—a city of people, a city of neighborhoods, and a city of a million stories, big and small."

Will Clinger, producer and host of *Wild Travels* on PBS, added, "Vicki Quade is a Chicago treasure with an abiding curiosity about the world around her, and sprinkled among these fly-on-the-wall stories are some valuable tips on things to see and experiences to have in our great city."

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Our November virtual concert, hosted by the Irish American Heritage Center’s Facebook page, was a great success and we are grateful to all who attended and donated. Though certainly not the same as past annual concerts, the program provided an opportunity to highlight our dedication to Irish music and to our home, the IAHC. Thank you for joining us. We look forward to singing for you again soon!

On Thursday, December 3, the Irish Heritage Singers remembered our late Board President Judy Loevy in a Zoom memorial with family and choir in attendance. Judy died nine months ago while the Singers were amidst our rigorous St. Patrick’s concert schedule, all before the world locked down. In various virtual meetings throughout the year, a fond memory of Judy would always come up. Her huge loss still feels like yesterday, but our memories of Judy live on. With the continued need to social distance ourselves, we finally settled on a date to formally remember her with songs and stories.

Family member and choir member Loretta Hooks shared:

“I am incredibly grateful that [music director Paul Matijevic] and the choir wanted to host the memorial for Judy, and I know that her family is incredibly grateful. I cannot tell you how



many times I heard her sisters voice this on phone calls, emails, and texts before the event took place. After the memorial Zoom, I received numerous emails from family and friends telling me how much they appreciated the evening and for being given a chance to feel and voice their memories. I was deeply moved during the session as I listened to testimonials and as I signed off, gratitude overwhelmed me! Words cannot express the depth to which I was moved! I am so glad we did this!”

Longtime friend and confidant

Kathy Werning noted that we all learned something new about Judy during the gathering and that Judy was a blessing to all she met. “For me, it was a time to let out all the emotions. Judy and I had served together on the choir committee for many years. We had gone through so much as a choir, and she was my friend. My good friend. She was my partner in crime as we planned fun things together. She was my partner in pain as we each lost loved ones. She was my partner in joy as we celebrated successes. And she was my partner in song, through our love of music. And as much as I loved her, so did the rest of the choir. She gave us strength and direction. Judy, the few moments of tribute fell far short of what you deserved, but they were moments full of love. I hope you saw. And someday soon, we will be partners in song again. Rest well, my friend.”

The family and Irish Heritage Singers still plan to celebrate the life of our dear Judy in person once it is safe to do so. Until then, we will continue to remember her wisdom, grace, smile, laughter, and song as we proclaim, “Hey Jude!” with love for our gone-too-soon, Judy.

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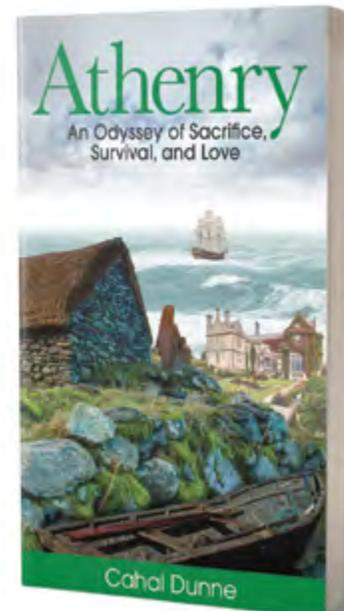
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Old Jokes, New Resolutions; and Same Political Pigs

"I have the most profound contempt for the system - a total alienation from it."

Author **John Le Carré**, who died in December, explaining why he never accepted honours or a knighthood.

It's funny, the things that come back to me during these months of self-isolation, in this strange year now ending as I write - this year of 2020.

I've been remembering an old joke. Stop me if you've heard this, but it's the one about the sloth that is moving its lazy way through the jungle...very...very...slowly...

Next thing you know, an entire gang of

to clamber back onto the beach. Not slowly, though; ten-year-old kids don't ever move slowly, don't ever move like sloths.

And there we'll find waiting for us our mam, with those great cheese and tomato sandwiches she used to make and that always seemed to get sand into them, no matter how careful you were.

And no matter how much sand there was, nothing ever tasted quite as good again.

That was the day before yesterday. Somewhere in this strange year it occurred to me that the ten-year-old kid had been away for quite a while. To be honest, I hadn't really seen him at all for a fair bit. And that's OK. Because ten-year old kids have no business in hanging around with grouchy old guys like me.

He's still there, though; and every time I open a Ray Bradbury novel - 'Dandelion Wine', say -- I can hear him going:

"There you are, Charley; you thought that you had gotten rid of me. You thought that you had outgrew me. But I'm still here; and I'm still loving looking into those rock pools, just the same as you are."

Another thing that occurred to me during these past months is that my dad and my dad's dad and my mum's dad...well, they all died at the same age, give or take a few months; they all died at 74. And it hit me that - on the likely chance that I'll be exiting this dimension at a roughly similar age -- I've got twelve years left in me.

And do you know something? That's OK too - because it's been a hell of a life, between one thing and another.

So: the conclusion I came to - I was even thinking of making it a New Year's resolution - was that I would not be wasting another single moment on politics.



Swimming Upstream

By Charles Brady

But in the second week of the last month at the end of the year 2020, it is damned hard to avoid making at least some comment on the total chancers and wastes of space who make up the bulk of most Irish political parties. The snout-in-the-trough leeches who are so bad that they make you mix your metaphors. The career conmen who will lie to your face on the doorstep and laugh at your idiocy in voting for them as soon as they have their ludicrous expenses and their pensions sorted out.

You just know in your heart that these characters never looked into a rock pool in their lives.

In December there was a simple motion put forward - couldn't really HAVE been much simpler - that suggested we pay intern nurses for the extraordinary work that they have been doing during this pandemic. Extraordinary work under more than extraordinary conditions - in fact conditions of very possible contagion -- that they could never have foreseen when they signed on for their thankless task.

We had previously been encouraged to light candles and clap for them in order to show our solidarity: that we were, in that nauseating and very untrue phrase, 'all in this together'.

A friend of mine was genuinely shocked when I told her that I would not be doing anything so utterly moronic; if we wanted to show solidarity, I argued, we should be offering tax concessions to all those who have remained at the front line, whether it be ambulance drivers or supermarket workers. After all, our swinish politicians

found no problem at all in giving themselves no less than three pay rises whilst all of this was going on. And last week of course giving a pay rise of 2% to judges, who let's face it, really need the money. Oh, and while we're at it, here's a raise

of €5,000 for Bertie Ahern's pension. I wouldn't mind but according to himself he doesn't even have a bank account. Under the mattress with it, I suppose.

Well, our student nurses found that the candle and the applause was expected to be enough. That in fact for the second wave of Covid, they were actually reduced to a €50 allowance for a twelve-hour shift and in many cases not paid at all.

Well, it's a learning experience, innit? In fact, I'm actually surprised that some of our well-fed honking political swine didn't take their snouts out of the trough long enough to suggest that the nurses actually PAY THEM for this marvelous on-the-job training.

So, when a motion was put in front of the swine that said maybe we should pay these heroic nurses the princely sum of a whole €14 an hour, those very same pigs -- you've read George Orwell's 'Animal Farm', right? -- stood up on their hind trotters, squealed 'Some animals more equal than others' and voted the notion down. DOWN.

Fianna Fail voted it down; and Fine Gael voted it down; and the virtue signaling Green Party, who I hold a special loathing for...well, they voted it down. Mind you, Sinn Fein didn't; but we better not say that since the other three are putting the boot into them at the moment.

If you recall the end of 'Animal Farm', poor old Boxer the workhorse was worked to death, whilst surviving on shag all and still believing in the system that would kill him. And at the end the animals stare into the farmhouse window and they look from pig to man and from man to pig and back again. And they can't see any difference any more.

That's the way I feel these days. But do you know, as I wind this up, I find myself thinking of another old joke:

Sirens start going off in a hospital for the insane. And the doctors and nurses are running around, screaming and roaring as the flames begin to engulf the building. It all turns out well, though. The paranoid schizophrenics lead them to safety. After all, the paranoids are the ones who checked out the exits first.

Thanks to writers Neil Gaiman and the late, great Iain Banks for the jokes.

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sloths jump...slowly...out of the trees and mug him, taking all of his food with them.

When the Jungle Police arrive (eventually) and ask him if he can describe his assailants, the sloth just looks bewildered and replies:

"No. It all happened so fast..."

That's the way I feel about Life sometimes. Back when I was a kid every day seemed slow, filled with that sweet honey-nectar that you never really taste again after a certain age; but looking back, well...they all happened so fast, those days. Like being mugged by a sloth.

Do you know something? Just the day before yesterday I was ten years old. I was ten years old and clambering around those great little rock pools that you find on the way down to the beach. Looking into those whole tiny, self-contained universes of crabs and wee stranded fish that will only exist until the next tide comes in...and out. And tomorrow there will be another pocket universe for another ten-year-old to peer into, in awe and wonder.

Lives will have been lived, miniature little communities will have passed, all in the time that it takes my brothers and I



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Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from the Irish Fellowship Club 2020!

On behalf of the entire Irish Fellowship Club, Happy New Year! I am grateful for the honor to have served as only the 6th woman president in the 119 year history of the Club.

This leadership position was especially meaningful to me as I personally have seen the strength of the Chicago Irish community in my own family. My parents, Kathleen and Charles Gillespie, both immigrated from Ireland to Chicago in search of greater education, job, and economic opportunities, especially for their children. They came from humble beginnings. My father, one of thirteen children, was raised on a rural farm, and after his oldest brother inherited the land, he sought to come to Chicago, where one of his sisters had immigrated and wrote to him about job opportunities. My mother lost both of her parents as a child and spent most of her childhood in an orphanage. As a young woman, she followed her sisters and an aunt to Chicago. Here in Chicago, my parents met at an Irish dance and fell in love. They built a beautiful life together and worked incredibly hard, my father for the gas company, and my mother as a secretary and waitress, to give my siblings and I every opportunity possible. They instilled the value of education in us, sending us to Catholic schools, from grade school through college. I would not be where I am today if it was not for my parents' strength and resilience, and I am so proud of their legacy, and the legacy of the entire hardworking Irish community here in Chicago.

While this year was not what we anticipated it would be in December of 2019, I am proud of the Irish Fellowship Club's work to provide scholarships so that more students can benefit from Catholic education and to celebrate and foster Irish culture and heritage in Chicago. Even without several of our traditional events, we were able to provide grants to each high school in the Archdiocese of Chicago. Our Golf Outing was certainly a highlight of the year and I am grateful to the entire Golf Committee for their support.

The Irish Fellowship Club and Education and Cultural Foundation were proud to sponsor **I AM IRELAND**, premiering on WTTW in December. The collaboration of Paddy Homan, Rich Daniels and the City Lights Orchestra creating an outstanding musical performance of the history of Ireland in story and song. I am personally grateful to the donors who made this impressive performance possible.

I would like to thank Kathy Taylor, Executive Director of the Irish Fellowship Club, for her guidance and many years of service to our Club and the Executive Committee and Board for their support during my year as President. Lastly, I would like to thank my family for all of their support this year.

Sláinte and Happy New Year! Thank you for your support of the Irish Fellowship Club of Chicago.

Rose Doherty
President, Irish Fellowship Club of Chicago

I AM IRELAND

The Irish Fellowship Club Education and Cultural Foundation is proud to be the sponsor of I AM IRELAND, a history of Ireland through song and story. The show was aired on December 15 2020. It will air several times next year. We will send out dates once the show is programed. While not the same show that was envisioned at the outset, City Lights Orchestra's Rich Daniels and Tenor Paddy Homan have created an outstanding tribute to the history of Ireland in an innovative new way. DVD's will be available next month on the Irish Fellowship website. www.irishfellowshipclub.com

The collaboration of **Paddy Homan** and **Rich**



Daniels (pictured l to r) with the City Lights Orchestra has created an outstanding musical experience including live performances filmed at Old St. Patrick's Church and synchronized recorded music. Says Rich Daniels, "The tale of Ireland is one of struggle, perseverance and victory. There's no better way to honor that legacy than with this program in this setting as we share our own struggle to overcome challenges that none of could have imagined." Says IFC Foundation President Jack Hartman, "We were delighted that Rich and Paddy were able to adjust and create this unique video presentation. The Irish Fellowship Foundation is fortunate to be associated with this outstanding show illustrating the history of the Irish people."

Future shows will be aired next year and we will inform you of the dates. **Happy Christmas!**



THE IRISH FELLOWSHIP CLUB ANNOUNCES NEW OFFICERS & BOARD MEMBERS

Irish Fellowship Club Officers and New Directors for 2021

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(serving until December 2022)

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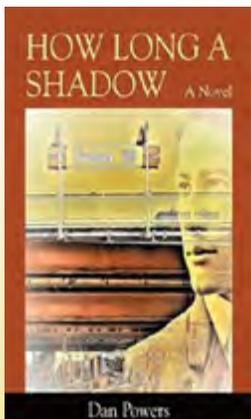
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Hibernia (The Land of Winter)

A comment was made some years back that the only apparent outward semblance of Ireland achieving freedom from Britain was the fact that the post-boxes were painted green instead of red. This should be taken in the humorous context in which it was meant to be delivered. In 1921 we did not have an awful lot to start with but we were fortunate to inherit the British Civil Service. Some time ago I noticed two wall mounted post-boxes in Cork bearing the royal insignia underneath the green paint. The original British Post Office boxes were bright red. When Ireland gained Independence in 1921 the post-boxes were retained, even the postage stamps were retained with overprints for some time. Now the post-boxes are painted green, but the royal insignia can be clearly seen. The ones I have come across are those of Edward V11, this was Queen Victoria's son who reigned from 1901 until his death in 1910. When I saw these it struck me as to how short a time we have been out on our own as a Country.

Sometimes I get the feeling that we can lack confidence and belief in ourselves as we are a small nation on the outer edges



of Europe. In the early 1920's when our first independent Government looked around at what they had to start with, they realised that they had very little. In the previous centuries of colonisation we had become an agricultural market garden to feed Britain and its Colonies. The Industrial Revolution was never allowed to reach us and apart from some areas in the Northern part of the Country there was no industrial base in the South of the Country at this time. However, with a strong innovative spirit that launched and developed projects like Ardnacrusha, Shannon Airport, Bord na Mona and the attraction of a Multinational Industrial base we have achieved a great deal in the past 80 years, and we should be very proud of this.

Yes, we were certainly restrained during the colonial period but if we journey upstream a bit in time we will find an Irish people with a great economic and cultural tradition that has helped the advance of civilisation in a global context. In the Monastic period we travelled extensively throughout Europe, providing the people in these areas with learning and religion. Newgrange was constructed over 5000 years

ago, at the same time as the Egyptian pyramids, by an Irish race that had a knowledge of trigonometry. We also produced intricate and priceless works such as the Book of Kells, the Ardagh Chalice and knowledge of navigation may have seen St. Brendan reach Newfoundland as early as the 6th century. We have also produced literary giants such as Swift, Yeats, Shaw, Wilde, Joyce and Heaney that are now globally respected.

Not bad for a small island country at the edge of Europe. There will be little downsides from time to time, but if we formulate an economic policy that develops value add and innovation over volume manufacturing and that also embraces the agricultural, fishing and leisure industry, our future is guaranteed to be very bright and long lasting. As a nation of less than 5 million people we have hosted the European Presidency representing a landmass of over 450 million people. This should not surprise us, we will never be a huge player but we can certainly be a very effective smaller one.

'The possibility of the Future far exceeds the accomplishments of the Past' - Thoreau

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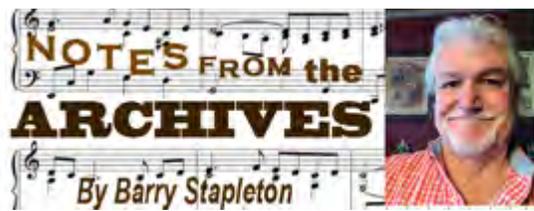
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Patrick Gilmore

Patrick Stephen Gilmore was born on Christmas Day in 1829 in Ballygar, Co. Galway. Catholic Emancipation in Ireland was only six months old when he was born. He was musical from the outset as he learned to play the fiddle, fife and drum. Marching bands were everywhere in those days and Patrick joined the Ballygar band. On a trip to Athlone in 1843 he saw the professionalism of the big British Army regimental bands and was hooked. Upon asking his father to join the band the answer was an emphatic no. But soon the famines raged the land and his father consented to young Patrick so that he could escape. He joined a regimental band as a trumpeter and was transferred to Canada.

His sojourn in Canada only lasted a year before he made his way to Boston, which was the musical capital of the United States. He held positions in various posts in bands that worked with the great entertainers of the day including P. T. Barnum and the Swedish Nightingale Jenny Lind. In 1855 Patrick moved to Salem, Massachusetts where he met his wife Ellen O’Neill. It is also in Salem where Patrick dropped his middle name of Stephen and adopted the name of Sarsfield, one of the more famous names in Irish history.

He had missed Boston and returned there in 1859. By 1861 he was known as America’s greatest bandleader and he organized many regimental bands for the Union. His own band, Gilmore’s Band, served as the regimental band for the 24th Massachusetts Infantry during the Civil War.



He subsequently wrote many notable tunes of the day, especially for the war. Two of his compositions are still recognized today. He wrote the melody to the words of John Brown’s Body by Captain Halgren and this was destined to become one of the great marches of all time, and an unofficial national anthem, when it became known as The Battle Hymn of the Republic. Before the war ended he wrote the music to another poem by Louis Lambert which became the famous song When Johnny Comes Marching Home.

While music historians today recognize the above two compositions as a huge gift to our patriotic repertoire, Gilmore was known during his lifetime as more of an organizer of extravagant events than a composer. His first major event was held in New Orleans at the inauguration of Governor Hahn in 1864. He assembled a choir of 5,000 school children and an orchestra of 500 pieces. This made national news and for his efforts he was awarded a silver goblet filled with gold coins. In 1869 he put on his “National Peace Jubilee” in Boston. In this undertaking he built a new auditorium to

hold the spectacle which was presented with 10,000 voices, 1,000 instruments, 100 bells and cannons. He also had 100 real fireman hammering out the Anvil Chorus. Because of its success Gilmore decided to do it one more time with twice as many performers. The “World Peace Jubilee” in 1871 included 20,000 voices, 2,000 instruments and several hundred bells and cannons. He built an auditorium capable of holding 50,000 people. He called on royalty from around the world to send bands of which England, France, Germany, Austria, Belgium and Ireland all complied. World famous composer Johann Strauss composed The Jubilee Waltz for the occasion. Even by today’s standards these numbers are huge. It is estimated that over 18 days a million people attended this event.

Other facts about Gilmore is that he took over the old Hippodrome in New York and named it Gilmore’s Concert Garden. It is now known as Madison Square Garden. He later became the bandmaster of the 22nd regiment band in New York. It is with this band that a tradition started that the world still recognizes today. Every December 31, beginning in 1888, the band would play in Times Square and at midnight Patrick Gilmore would fire his pistol to bring in the New Year. He was also the first bandmaster to take his bands around the country and overseas for grand concerts.

Patrick Sarsfield Gilmore died on September 24, 1892. That very night a young man by the name of John Philip Sousa gave his first concert and dedicated the concert to the life of Gilmore. Gilmore was noted for his flamboyant showmanship and innovations and was America’s first musical “Superstar.”



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Update Your Beneficiary Designations?

By **Brendan Houlihan**
Happy New Year 2021!

Start this year by taking a financial inventory of all your retirement and personal accounts. Update your beneficiary forms! This is one of the most common and potentially costly retirement and estate planning errors that savers and investors make. The



critical beneficiary statements are the go-to document used to distribute your retirement assets. Reassure yourself and your loved ones that beneficiary information is the way you want it. These beneficiary forms supersede your estate plan, will and trust. Be careful! Beneficiaries need to be checked on:

- Traditional and Roth IRAs as well as SIMPLE and SEP accounts
- 401(k), 403(b) and Deferred Compensation plans
- Life insurance - annuity policies
- Pension plans
- 529 Educational Accounts
- Bank Accounts TOD (transfer on death)

Verify your beneficiary forms on a yearly basis so that they carry out your intended wishes and remain in agreement with other estate planning documents. It is not an important priority for the biggest financial institutions to keep track of your beneficiary forms, as well as to make sure that the forms are filled out correctly. This is your responsibility and priority!

It is amazing to think that the one document that controls the distribution for the money that you worked for and saved for your entire life is not filled out properly or cannot be found. Do you want a judge and the courts to determine who is entitled to your

money? The beneficiary form can cause an expensive problem that cannot be fixed after the fact.

Check and review all your retirement forms TODAY. Always update after marriage, divorce, life changing events and death of beneficiary.

Inspecting your beneficiary documents is proactive planning!

God forbid if an emergency occurs! Could you go home right now and put your hands on your own beneficiary forms for every retirement account you own? Could you do it? For most, the answer is NO!

Brendan Houlihan, a fiduciary, is Financial Advisor at BFH Wealth Management and creator of the Learn to Earn Investment program for children.

For more information on Brendan, you can visit his website at bfhwealthmanagement.com, call him at (708)280-8753, or contact him by email at brendan@BFH-WealthManagement.com

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Counties of Ireland

by Tom Butler

I have been thinking about Maureen O'Hara as I just finished watching the "Quiet man". Some would say, one of Irelands national treasures. (Born Maureen Fitzsimons) She was a strong woman that lived until she was 95! She lived through some incredible times as well. She was born in Dublin, one of six children. O'Hara was a singer & actress. She was one of the greats, a legend, one of the longest-lived stars from the "Golden Age" of Hollywood.

In her day, O'Hara's mother, Marguerite, was considered one of the most beautiful women in Ireland. O'Hara trained with the Rathmines theater company and at the famous Abby theater in



Dublin. She moved to America as a teenager to act. She married three times and had one daughter named Bronwyn. O'Hara's third husband Charles Blair was a pilot and head of the United States Virgin Island airlines. Sadly, O'Hara's husband Charles died while flying for his airline. O'Hara was elected president of the airline. She also ran a clothing store; she was quit a businesswoman.

She was diagnosed unfortunately with uterine cancer (4th most common cancer in women in the U.S). She had an operation and fully recovered thankfully. However, years later she died at her home in Idaho from natural causes. She is honored in a variety of ways which include: winning the John F. Kennedy Memorial award for outstanding American, she has a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame, in 1999 she was honored to be the Grand Marshall of New York City's St. Patrick's Day parade and O'Hara was named Irish America's "Irish American of the Year" in 2005.

In 2011 she was inducted into the Irish American Hall of Fame, and our publisher, Cliff Carlson had the honor of presenting it to Maureen near her home in Glengariff, Co Cork, Ireland. In 2012 she received the Freedom of the Town of Kells, Co. Meath, her father's hometown. Her autobiography, 'Tis Herself', became a New York Times Bestseller. There is a statue of O'Hara in Cong, Co. Mayo. O'Hare famously said, "My heritage has been my grounding and it has brought me peace". I will leave you with this story about

Appearances

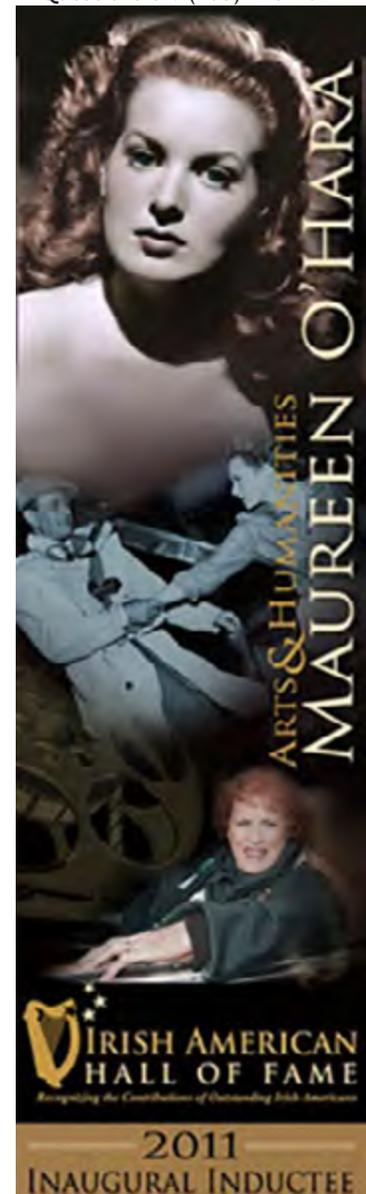
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During the 1940s, custodians who worked for the New York Public Library often lived inside the buildings they tended. In exchange for cleaning and keeping the building secure at night, the library provided an apartment for the custodians and their families. Ronald Clark's father, Raymond, was one of those custodians. For three decades he lived with his family on the top floor of the Washington Heights branch on St. Nicholas Avenue in upper Manhattan. Three generations of the Clark family resided in that library until Ronald's father retired in the late 1970s. After college, Ronald got a position as a professor teaching history at Cape Cod Community College. At StoryCorps, Ronald told his daughter, Jamilah Clark, how living inside the library shaped the man he would become.

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View From Ireland

By Maurice Fitzpatrick



Sinn Féin and the Irish Constitution

Sinn Féin abandoned its abstentionist policy in the Dáil in 1986. Despite taking its seats, Sinn Féin’s language continues to reveal a refusal to recognise the Dáil, its government and the State itself. A symptom of this refusal occurred 11-28 when Sinn Féin member of the Dáil, Brian Stanley, conflated in a tweet an attack during the Irish War of Independence in 1920 and an attack perpetuated by the IRA during the Troubles. The first campaign had the authority of the Dáil based on the 1918 general election; the second had no such authority. Sinn Féin’s leadership has characterised Brian Stanley’s tweet, implicitly glorifying the IRA campaign, as an unfortunate gaffe. Other members see it as an instantiation that there cannot be an agreed narrative about the past. This points not to dissonance about the past within a party whose eyes are trained on the prize of entering government in Dublin, but to disagreement about how to impose its narrative of the Troubles.

While Sinn Féin does not form part of the government of the 33rd Dáil, it remains quite possible that it will be less dislodgeable in negotiations for a future government. So, what can the current government do to prevent Sinn Féin’s unwillingness to confront its demons from precipitating a crisis in the future? The government has an opportunity—and even a duty—to respond to the new political circumstances and to institute an additional requirement of taoisigh and their cabinets.

On assuming their roles, the president of Ireland and Irish judges ‘sincerely promise and declare’ (Article 12 and Article 34 of constitution, respectively) to maintain and to uphold the constitution. The taoiseach and cabinet do not. This is partly because the very concept of an

oath remained bitterly charged when the constitution was ratified in 1937, only five years after the abolition of the Oath of Allegiance to a foreign monarch and when Ireland was still embroiled in a futile trade war with Britain. No such recoil prevails today. A declaration to uphold the constitution must be acceptable to the leader and cabinet of a putative government as an obvious precondition of assuming their roles.

The philosopher Thomas Hobbes once argued that the State’s primary purpose is to maintain its own integrity. It would be good politics for this government to propose a constitutional amendment requiring the most senior politicians in the government to protect the State’s integrity. What objection could opponents to the amendment raise other than a specious party political one? With the support of Fianna Fáil, Fine Gael and the Greens, the amendment would likely carry in the Oireachtas. If a majority of the electorate endorsed the motion in the consequent plebiscite, the party political criticism of the amendment would become redundant and any further objection would be tantamount to denying the sovereignty of the people.

To date, Sinn Féin’s commitment to the Dáil has been tentative and this is reflected in the skeptical language it uses to describe the State and its governing institutions. Its position on the Constitution leads to inter-party sparring that masks the real face-off, which is a challenge from Sinn Féin to the sovereignty of the government. Yet with what legitimacy can Sinn Féin propose to govern if it does not recognise that the government’s authority is bound to the Constitution? Sinn Féin cannot continue to avoid affirming the authority of the government of which it wishes to be part and

this government can future-proof against such avoidance.

It is self-evident that the authority of the Irish Constitution supersedes the authority of a political party’s constitution. Clarifying that fact and entering it in law could avert a future constitutional crisis in Ireland: if Sinn Féin, in government, refused to recognise the State as it is currently constituted, how could it conduct international negotiations on behalf of the State, particularly with the UK? It is almost inevitable that Sinn Féin’s de facto repudiation of fundamental aspects of the State would stymie its capacity to fully represent the State.

As jurist Carl Schmitt wrote, ‘all significant concepts of the modern theory of the State are secularised theological concepts’ and this is strikingly so in Sinn Féin’s conception of the Irish Republic. A belief prevails among Sinn Féin members that the increasingly probable united polity on the island of Ireland will be a manifestation of Sinn Féin’s politico-theological destiny: the fiat of Easter 1916 that somehow finds its deliverance in a border poll in favour of Irish unity. Yet unity will almost certainly take the form of the northern State conjoining with the south. If constitutional change were to take this shape, what identification can Sinn Féin have with it unless it unequivocally recognises the State in the first instance?

Forcing Sinn Féin’s hand on the political language espoused by the party would clarify its position on related bugbears that tongue-tie its representatives elected to the Dáil—the full purview of the judiciary and the authority of the Garda Síochána. That, in turn, would also help to allay unionist suspicions about Sinn Féin’s commitment to exclusively democratic methods. If it is to become a party of change, Sinn Féin must swap the ritualised responses that have entrapped its elected representatives for a new idiom commensurate to the transformation that the party seeks to embody. It may be optimistic to suppose that such a shift in the language Sinn Féin uses to describe the State and its

institutions can bring a still more urgent reform in the language it has adopted vis-à-vis the Troubles. Nevertheless, it would be a necessary step towards overcoming its

ambivalence about the sovereign Irish government. The present government has the chance to shape an important agenda for our island’s future.

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A Great Irishman is on His Way to Heaven

I have been steering this vessel since late in 1991, and have had a great time doing it. I have made some wonderful friends and Tom Boyle was one of them.

Tom passed shortly after receiving last rites in his home on December 18, 2020 at age 82. He was a life-long resident of Des Plaines, IL.

Tom was not well for over 8 months, and in my mind, COVID played a role in his death. A warning to anyone out there that has been ill or feels they need to see a doctor, just do it!

Although Tom tested negative for COVID, his doctors seemed busy, and when his specialist found nothing wrong with him recently, I strongly suggested he check himself into the hospital - which he did - but by then it was too late.



Stoic to the end, Tom reeled off a list to me over the phone from the hospital of things he wanted to give his relatives and others.

I'm sure there is a lot more to know about Tom, but this is what I know.

Tom served as a Corpsman in the Air Force after high school.

A self-made man, he had a distinguished and rewarding career in sales in the printing industry, filling the needs of large printers around the country.

He was very proud of his Irishness, and collected Irish memorabilia most of his life. He hated the Irish stereotypes and fought with greeting card companies about it.

The man could sing, and he was especially fond of Irish songs. He was asked to sing at many Irish functions.

Tom was a long time member of the Irish Fellowship Club, Chicago Gaelic Park and the Irish American Heritage Center.

He was a Vice President of the IFC for several years. He was proud of his relationships with many of the volunteers at the Heritage Center, and held them in high regard, even if he had his differing opinions on how things should get done.

He served as a board member, Vice-President and President of the Heritage Center in the years from 1989 to 2013. He had the honor of hosting Mary Robinson, the President of Ireland, proudly showing her all the things the volunteers at the Center had accomplished.

He was instrumental in raising big support for the library at the Center and hosted a large fundraiser, bringing award winning singer/songwriter Phil Coulter from Ireland to entertain the crowd. Long time friend of the Irish, Martin Healy Jr., made a big donation and with those two as catalysts the library became a reality.

Over the years he worked in the museum and headed up the archives at the Center. He told me that in his youth he once strapped a refrigerator to his back and carried it upstairs alone! No surprise then that he would pitch in with a shovel and a strong back when it was needed for digging tunnels in the basement of the Center or whatever other dirty work needed doing.



Tom also had the honor of being named the iBAM! (Irish Books, Arts and Music Celebration) Volunteer of the year. He worked on the iBAM! committee, and supported the event since it began in 2009, buying his last ticket days before his demise.

Tom was on the St. Patrick's Day Parade Committee and dedicated close to 25 years to the parade theme history and more enjoyable- the Queen Contest. He was one of about 20 judges who interviewed and reviewed the contestants about their Irish background, their knowledge and involvement in traditions - and what made them Irish.

He wrote "Boyle the Kettle" in *Irish American News* for many years, and while our views were many times opposite, he always wrote what he thought.

Tom was instrumental in garnering help from the local pipefitters union in Chicago to help build the Jeanne Johnston Famine Memorial ship that sailed to America and is now docked in Dublin. I traveled to Ireland with Tom to see the building of the Jeanie Johnston long before it was seaworthy in the 1990's. We walked the 'ribs' of the ship in Tralee, Co. Kerry near the small and wonderful Irish city of Listowel.

His friend, John Griffin, who headed the building of the ship in Tralee visited Chicago, and Tom, John and I met at the Gage Restaurant on March 13, 2020, the last day of freedom before COVID took hold.

When the scavengers of the law came after the farm of a relative of his, Tom came to his rescue and somehow beat them at their own game, and that relative still has his farm all these years later!

One of his friends whom I will keep anonymous said, "if you look in the dictionary under the definition of Curmudgeon, Tom fit the description to a tee!" Tom did not suffer fools well, and was known to speak his mind no matter who might get upset.

But underneath the gruff exterior was a softy with a heart of gold. When he passed, he was still making do-



Tom working in the archives at the IAHC.



Tom proudly welcomes the President of Ireland, Mary Robinson, to the Irish American Heritage Center for her first visit there.



Tom (with shovel) and some of the hard working volunteers that brought the Irish American Heritage Center to where it is today.



Past presidents celebrating Founders Day, 2005. (l to r): John O’Malley, Tom Mc Namara, Tom Boyle, John Mc Grath, Chuck Kenny, Gabe (Joseph) Keleghan, Patrick Mc Kenna.

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Tom Boyle, Chuck Kenny, Patrick Bloom, Fr. Kevin Shanley and Noel Rice.



Tom Boyle, Shay Clarke, Cliff Carlson.

nations to causes he cared about. He had a score of letters at his house from causes to which he had donated to over the years, and I was amazed at how many.

Born September 12, 1938, He was a great and devoted friend to many.

The son of the late Michael Boyle and Johanna (Cooney) Boyle. Beloved brother of Catherine (Boyle) Shaffer, Patrick Kent, Eileen Kent and the late Margaret (Boyle) Taylor, Elizabeth (Boyle) Dockter, Jeanne Boyle and his treasured dog Boru. He was a dear uncle to his many nieces and nephews and grandnieces and grandnephews.

A celebration of Tom’s life will be held in the future at the Irish American Heritage Center. Funeral care provided by G. L. Hills Funeral Home. For information please call the funeral home at (847) 699-9003 or glhillsfuneral.com

home.com Tom has made his last trip to Ireland, which I believe can only have prepared him for what is to come!

God bless you Tom!

A big thank you to Brian Donovan, Peggy Murphy, Mike Neary, and Monica Dougherty for their input on Tom.

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Suggestions for the New Year

As I write this column, we are nearly through the month of December, thank goodness. I decided to review the January columns that I have written for the last seven or eight years. I've selected the most pertinent items for inclusion in this year's January column. Perhaps you will find some use for one or more of these ideas during the new year. Let me suggest that you take a couple of hours of quiet time in the new year either alone or with your closest confidante and decide on the kind of year that would most satisfy you. Your success or failure in 2021 will be decided by your willingness to put in the effort.

Suggestions That You Might Find Valuable in 2021

Decide that you are going to speak to people whenever an opportunity presents itself. Many people live in a lonely environment; i.e. widowed individuals, isolated men and women, senior citizens, and certainly a lot of young people, especially those who are unemployed. A friendly or cheerful word from you could be welcome, especially if accompanied by a warm and genuine smile. We have all heard the old bromide "that it is easier and less demanding to smile than to frown."

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Careers

By James F. Fitzgerald, CPA



It's said the sweetest sound to anyone's ear is the sound of their own name. So use a person's name when you are greeting them.

Strive to be friendly; it's a quality that virtually everyone likes in others. Most of us respond better to friendly, kind people. Accept compliments with a simple "thank you". Believe in yourself.

Be willing to change your mind, when you realize that you are mistaken. Typically there are three sides to any disagreements: yours, the other person's and the right one. Be willing to laugh at your own mistakes. It helps others to see your playful side. Give credit when it's due.

Always strive to do your very best regardless of the task. There is a great YouTube wherein the retired four star Seal Admiral William H. McRaven speaks of the importance of making your bed the first thing every morning. He says fixing your bed will serve you well throughout the day. And besides however well or poorly your day went, you can climb into a well-made bed every night. Display pride in your work.

Everyone deserves to be treated with respect. Learn to listen to the other person. S/he may be a lot smarter or more experienced than you.

Always do your best to hear another person's point of view. Periodically review your goals.

Charles Dickens wrote "My advice is to never do tomorrow what you can do today. Procrastination is the thief of time". Does that speak to you?

To achieve competence you need to believe that you can achieve your goals. You need to determine your set

of goals even if they are still a "work in progress". And you should ask your friends for their help and encouragement.

Keep your promises. Strive to be a better person every day. Life's a gift; share more. Be generous with your praise and cautious with criticism.

Read a lot. Visit your local book stores; see how much they have to offer, regardless of your interests.

I have found a number of John Maxwell's books quite interesting. A friend of mine recommended a book called "What the most successful people do before breakfast"; which I also recommend highly.

Watch programs like "ted talks"; they can expand your knowledge of all kinds of information in a conveniently short format. I believe that their presenters are limited to 15 minutes, so they really get to the point of their presentation quickly.

Learn to trust others; you may regret it occasionally, but remember, trust helps to build lasting relationships. I once heard an excellent consultant say there are three ways to gain someone's trust—be positive, be positive and again be positive.

A good sense of humor is invaluable in life. A good level of patience is also essential to achieve some success. Don't forget to be humble.

Stop comparing yourself with others. Stop putting yourself down. Associate with positive, supportive people. Be true to yourself. I am convinced that a lack of urgency is a formidable obstacle to your success. If you hate your job, start looking for a new job. Realize that you have greatness within you. As the Army says, "Be all you can be". Don't let the world control you.

For Your Consideration: "None of us, including me, ever do great things. But we can do small things with great love, and together we can do something wonderful." Mother Teresa

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has". Margaret Mead, famed Cultural anthropologist
BEST WISHES TO YOU AND YOUR LOVED ONES FOR A MERRY, BLESSED CHRISTMAS, FOLLOWED BY A HAPPY, HEALTHY AND PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR.

I would again like to thank my two wonderful editors: my wife, SANDEE WASK FITZGERALD and my daughter, ERYNN FITZGERALD. They have been of great help to me over this past year.

James F. Fitzgerald is president of James F. Fitzgerald & Associates, Inc., a Naperville based senior executive and career transition firm. Jamesffitzgeraldassociates.com jamesffitz37@hotmail.com

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Getting to Know the Irish

By Tina Butler



The Coast Guard- Almost all coastal countries have coast guards. Their boats are impressive and said to be unsinkable! The core values of the coast guard include respect, honor and devotion to duty. The American coast guard was founded in 1790. The coast guard’s motto is Semper Paratus meaning, “always ready”.

The Irish Coast Guard (Garda Costa) is part of the department of Transport of Ireland. The main roles of the Coast Guard include maritime safety and search and rescue. In case there is any confusion about the Coast Guard and the Navy. They are two different entities; the major differences include: The Navy’s budget is 150 billion dollars, and the Coast guard has a budget of 10 billion dollars. Both huge sums but vastly different also. The Navy is a war fighting force and is a part of the Department of Defense and the Coast guard is a law enforcement and search and rescue branch of the armed forces.

Some of you may remember the five O’Sullivan brothers that died at sea in 1942. They were in the Navy; they were sailors during WW II they were in a battle with the Japanese. They served together for four years. There is a movie about the tragedy called, The Fighting Sullivan’s.

The English water guard formed around 1800 extended to Ireland as part of the United Kingdom & Ireland. When the Irish free state was formed in 1922, Tom Casement (brother of Roger Casement) tried to establish a new

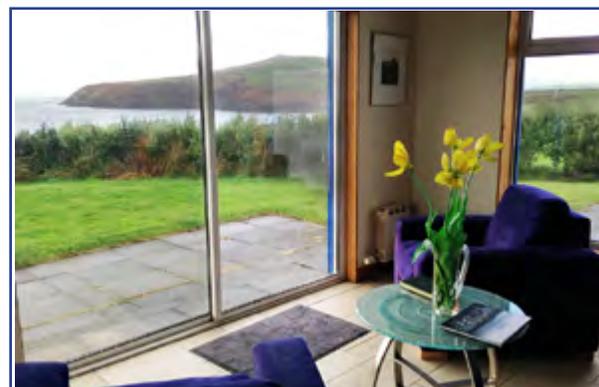
Irish Coast Guard. Casement instead became the first inspector of a new Coast Life Saving Service. It was renamed the Coast and Cliff Rescue Service. In the 80’s there were 54 stations and only three with ladders for cliff rescue. There was an investigation by Eamonn Doherty (retired Police commissioner) he recommended transferring responsibility from the Irish Air Corps to a new emergency service. In 2000 the name was changed to the Irish Coast Guard in agreement to the requests of its employees. Unlike Coastguard models in other countries in Ireland it is not part of the Irish Defense Force. The Irish Coastguard is a civilian agency and therefore forbidden from carrying any type of weapon. The personnel include paid employees and volunteers. A volunteer named Caitriona Lucas unfortunately died while on a rescue mission. In 2019 the Irish Coastguard saved 380 lives & assisted in rescuing approximately 3,500 lives. We are lucky to have these men and women. Thank you to the Coastguard for all your effort & work!

Gaelic for the Month:

Rescue-tarrthail Boat-bad
Water-uiscu Ocean-aigean

“We do this job because sometimes someone is out there without hope, desperately praying for their life, and we get to be the answer.” Coastguard

Our dear friend Virginia Gibbons recently moved from Chicago to Washington D.C. and wanted to send a message: “Even though I have relocated to DC I’m still active with the Great Irish book club and the memoir writing sessions and I know the IAHC will make it through the pandemic” xxx Questions or comments to Molanive@yahoo.com



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James Bartlett’s Movie News

With Winter settling in, a little movie news can help you get through it!

By James Bartlett

Can it be that we’re finally at the end of 2020? I’m sure everyone will be glad to see this year consigned to history, though with Covid-19 cases rocketing again in California - and around the country - it seems like 2021 isn’t going to be much different, at least to start with.

With restrictions and lock downs back, the movie and television industry is again facing more delays and challenges, but there are some bits of news, including the fact that County Kildare-born **Paul Mescal** has just signed to play the male lead in the movie *Carmen*.

As the name suggests, the movie is a contemporary re-imagining of one of the world’s most celebrated operas, and will see Mescal starring alongside **Melissa Barrera**, who will play the iconic role of *Carmen*. It will be directed by **Benjamin Millepied**, a former principal ballet dancer and choreographer who is married to **Natalie Portman**.

Ironically, Mescal is replacing another Irishman, **Jamie Dornan**, (best known for the *Fifty Shades of Grey* trilogy), though there’s no word about why. Perhaps Jamie couldn’t quite hit those high notes, or perhaps he’s smarting from the avalanche of laughter that has poured onto social media when people heard his - and co-star **Emily Blunt’s** - “Irish” accents in *Wild Mountain Thyme*.

Criticized for being the most cliched of “Oirish” romanticized paddywhackery in terms of story, the accents came under the greatest fire, and it seems so strange that Dornan, who is from Belfast, would use another type. What was successful playwright and director **John Patrick Shanley**, who won an Oscar for writing *Moonstruck*, thinking?

He’s Irish-American, and the movie is based on his Broadway play *Outside Mullingar*, but it seems to have garnished only howls of derision (though locals in Mayo, where the movie was shot, are hoping it will bring tourists to town and they can laugh all the way to the bank).

Anyway, filming on *Carmen* will take seven weeks and start in mid-January in Australia, which is where many Hollywood productions are decamping too, now that *Down Under* seems to have Covid-19 under better control.

I can’t even imagine what the Oscars will look like this year (lots of movies no one has seen, most likely), but awards are still being given out, and the latest will be going to a person known alternatively as Mary Ryan, Mrs. Columbo, Captain Janeway, or “Red” Reznikov: actress **Kate Mulgrew**.

Raised in Iowa in a large Irish Catholic

family, the “Ryan’s Hope”, “Star Trek: Voyager”, “Orange Is the New Black” (and many others) stage and screen veteran virtually received the **Eugene O’Neill Lifetime Achievement Award** on December 7.

“Having come late to writing,” she said, “I find a certain inexplicable gratification in the process itself, not to mention the entirely unexpected recognition I have received for my memoirs. It strikes me as a brave new world, a path not indicated for the faint of heart, but if well-chosen, a path surpassing any other.”

Her memoir, *How to Forget*, chronicles her journey home to Iowa after her father is diagnosed with cancer and her mother with Alzheimer’s.

Moving onto **Netflix** (and how much more has that become a part of our lives this year?), there’s news for Ballymoney-born actor **James Nesbitt** (*Waking Ned Devine*), who has been cast in the latest adaptation of Harlen Coben’s mysteries and thrillers.

“*Stay Close*” will see Nesbitt alongside **Cush Jumbo** (“The Good Fight”) and **Richard Armitage** (“The Stranger”), and the eight-part drama will follow three key characters whose dark secrets emerge and set off a chain of events that threaten to ruin their lives. As perhaps another nod to the difficulties of filming in America right now, the story (and filming) has been relocated to the U.K. Jumbo said she “couldn’t wait to get her teeth into such a brilliant British thriller,” and Coben

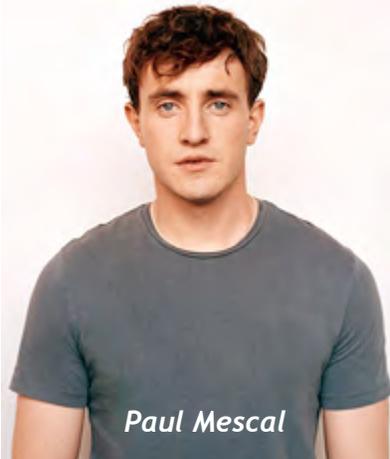
said that “Jimmy Nesbitt is a legendary actor I always wanted to collaborate with.” Coben has a five-year deal with Netflix to develop 14 of his titles into movie and television dramas.

I’m going to leave you with some good news for 2021 - or at least something we can plan for, when either the vaccine seems to be doing its job and we can maybe travel again.

As the many millions of “*Game of Thrones*” fans will already now, the major studio tour that will take them to the heart of the Seven Kingdoms is due to open next year in the North of Ireland.

Fully interactive, the *Game of Thrones* Studio Tour will be located in Linen Mill Studios, Banbridge, and will bring fans face-to-face with original sets, props, weapons, make-up and prosthetics used to create the worlds of the fantasy blockbuster. You’ll even be able to virtually try on some of your favorite costumes!

The only fully licensed tour in the world (or at least the world that we’re living in), it will feature a compelling mix of behind-the-scenes insights, interactive elements and familiar sights. Visitors will wander through the



Paul Mescal



Kate Mulgrew

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show’s most iconic scenes, and walk in the footsteps of Westeros’s most famous - and infamous - residents.

Promising a feast for all the senses (though I’m sure you’ll have to wear a face mask, which will actually fit in well with many of the characters), the exhibit promises to showcase King’s Landing, Winterfell, Dragonstone, The Wall and the lands beyond, to kingdoms across the Narrow Sea like Mereen and Braavos. At the center of it all will, of course, be the Great Hall of Winterfell.

Located halfway between Belfast and Dublin, Linen Mill Studios was one of the key production sites for the global television phenomenon, which was shot largely in the North of Ireland, mainly in Titanic Studios Belfast and on location in counties Antrim and Down.

As well as this new tour, there are already plenty of GOT attractions to visit in that part of the island. Among the most popular experiences is the Causeway Coast and Glens three-day *Game of Thrones* Itinerary, a 250-mile round trip across some of Northern Ireland’s most stunning landscapes that passes through some stunning and memorable locations from the show.

A Winterfell tour at Castle Ward, which doubled as the ancestral home of the Stark family, is a must-see, plus you can also take a journey around the Doors of *Thrones* that hang in pubs, restaurants and hotels. Carved from trees brought down at the Dark Hedges (Kingsroad) during a storm, the 10 intricately designed doors celebrate key moments from Season 6.

And fans should not miss the *Glass of Thrones* trail in Belfast, which features five, giant, freestanding glass windows depicting key scenes relating to the Houses of Lannister, Baratheon and Targaryen as well as the White Walkers and the Iron Throne.

I was not a GOT addict, but when I went on this excellent tour in 2019 I absolutely loved it, and can highly recommend it. And of course, you can explore the whole of Ireland, and have a few Guinnesses! Perhaps 2021 might not be so bad after all.

Happy Holidays, and a very, very safe New Year to you all!

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