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Story Page 26



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Now, just a few months before the Irish electorate casts their votes for the next President of Ireland, is as good a time as any to consider the significance of the office, the perils of running for it, the president's role and the perception that has accrued to the role over time.

Every successful presidential candidate in Irish history has had the nomination of a strong party, as well as that party's financial support, behind them. While the office is allegedly 'above politics', John Healy, an Irish journalist of yore, used to write that 'Above Politics'. Party politics often does more to determine the outcome of a presidential election than another other factor. Moreover, the loyalties of a candidate are carefully considered to ensure that a nomination poses no threat to a party's interest.

Due to its electoral strength for most of the 20th century, Fianna Fáil monopolised the office for the first five decades of the presidency. The party anointed figures such as Seán T. O'Kelly, Eamon de Valera and Paddy Hillery for double terms of 14 years to quietly maintain the role and stay out of government's way. Even so, at key moments the Irish president did exercise decisive control on an overreaching government or a rogue senior politician.

1990 heralded a sea-change at Aras an Uachtaráin. That year, the Labour Party candidate Mary Robinson's

View From Ireland

By Maurice Fitzpatrick



win saw not only Ireland's first female Head of State, but it also inaugurated arguably the best decade in Irish history. It was a decade of transformation for young Irish people who had, up to then, been forced to emigrate en masse. An advanced economy formed by a newly educated population revealed a new confidence in the people. From the mid-1990s, a long, hard peace was wrought in the North. That Mary Robinson was succeeded by another woman, Mary McAleese, in 1997 was not so much symbolic of change, but of a New Ireland, one that encouraged personal fulfilment and attempted to confront its troubled past; the presidency managed to emblemise that. A flinty Belfast woman with sound political antennae, McAleese's timing was impeccable: she was elected the year before the signing of the Good Friday Agreement and played a key role as a liaison throughout the peace negotiations, and after it to bed in the agreement's provisions.

Michael D. Higgins succeeded Mary McAleese in 2011, becoming the second Labour Party candidate to break the tradition of Fianna Fáil nominations holding the office. That occurred against the backdrop of an implosion of the Fianna Fáil party machine after the banking crisis and the property crash - for which the electorate roundly punished Fianna Fáil (the party declined to even field a candidate).

Higgins' victory in 2011, and his landslide re-election in 2018 (after an election was forced by Sinn Féin, whose candidate polled 6%) was the strongest mandate an Irish president has ever had. Higgins managed, over 14 years, to excite the population and speak for large swathes of it, and to rise to the underestimated challenges of the office. That he consistently waded into controversial areas pleased the body politic a good deal more than successive governments; he has been the people's president.

So, since 1990, we have had presidents who have considerably matched the mood of the country. Maybe there is a lesson there for those eyeing a run for 'the

park' (as the office is known, for its location in Phoenix Park)?

The front-runner in this year's election until August 14th was Mairead McGuinness. Did she answer how and why she could speak for today's Ireland? She and her team were surely aware that, although the duties of the president are largely symbolic, if a candidate seems too wedded to one aspect of Irish identity that can paint them as too niche. In McGuinness' case, that was her significant success in European politics. It was not clear that that experience, with its perception of elitism, could inspire a generation who have been deprived of a fair access to housing. It may be unfair to expect a president, who is without governing powers, to succour such an extensive national crisis, but perceptions fundamentally matter for Ireland's symbolic presidential role. During his presidency Michael D. Higgins publicly referred to the housing disaster as our 'great, great failure', and that 'housing and the basic needs of society should never have been left to the marketplace. It is the mad speculative money that is destroying our country, which we are welcoming, which we shouldn't be'. That speech may have achieved nothing tangible, including for a generation locked out of home ownership. Still, many of them would have applauded Michael D. for making it, and many would have difficulty imagining European Commissioner Mairead McGuinness saying anything like it.

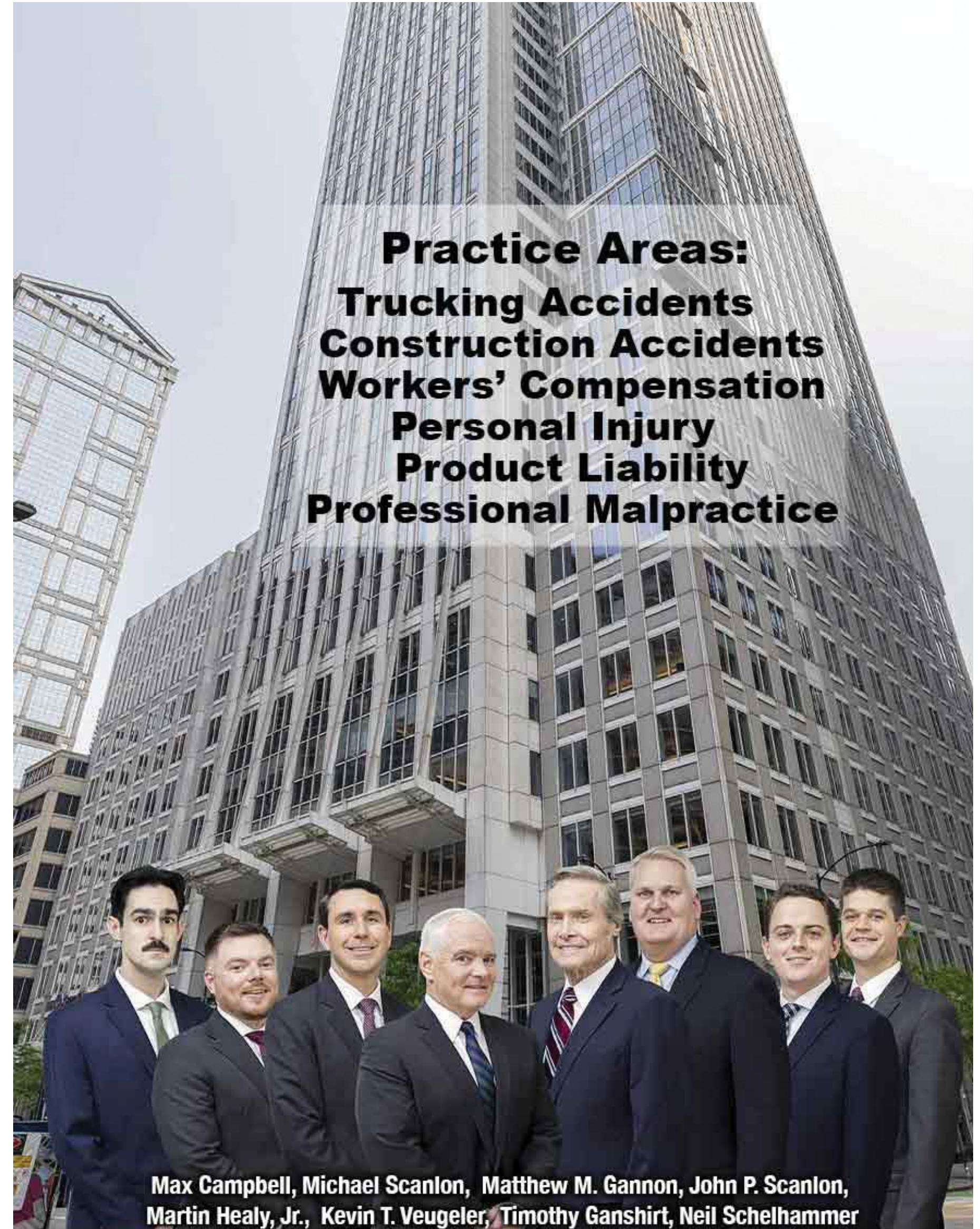
As it happens, on August 14th, McGuinness withdrew her candidacy, citing health issues. Fine Gael, mostly the second biggest party in the country since the foundation of the state, has never won the presidency. With McGuinness' departure, many in the party consider that their best hope to buck that trend is dashed. Fine Gael may well now nominate Monaghan woman Heather Humphreys - and may find her a strong candidate.

For now, though, the field is now wide open, and polling day, 11 November 2025, is approaching. Many people have been mooted but, at time of writing, none of the major parties except Labour has nominated a candidate. What is the hesitation?

The story of Adi Roche's candidacy can shed some light on this. Roche was an unsuccessful candidate in the 1997 presidential election where she saw her support plummet after spurious allegations about her brother, a soldier in the Irish army. He later received a government apology, but the damage was done to his sister. The controversy knocked her out of the running for the presidency, and she has spoken about the traumatic effect the attacks on her integrity had on her.

The Irish presidential election is among the nastiest political contests in the country, in which the political is personalised. Seamus Heaney, a hugely popular figure in Ireland throughout his lifetime, when asked if he would run for president, replied that he would consider it as a cross-party nomination - in other words if there was all but no contest. Apparently fewer and fewer want to enter the bear-pit of a presidential campaign. The forensic examination of one's personal and professional life, the spinning to manufacture scandals, are too off-putting. Have we made candidacy for the office too perilous to entice the best person to be Head of State?

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Second to None?

Our next topic is a bit of a doozy. The Second Amendment to the United States Constitution reads as follows: "A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed."

Over time, the protections afforded by the Second Amendment have been

extended, retracted, modified, interpreted, and reinterpreted. Today, the Supreme Court of the United States holds that the Second Amendment guarantees an individual's right to own a gun for self-defense (District of Columbia v. Heller, 2008). Further, the Court has also stipulated that those protections extend to carrying a gun in public with objective limits (such



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Constitution Corner
by Conor O'Connor




as background checks) being permissible as determined by elected officials (New York State Rifle & Pistol Association, Inc. v. Bruen, 2022). In the 21st century, there are more firearms than people in the United States. Estimates put the number of guns between 390 million and over 500 million (compared to 340 million people living in the United States). While mass shootings are often a focal point of the gun rights/gun control debate in our country, 6 out of 10 deaths attributed to gun violence are suicides. According to Pew, while gun murder rates have largely declined since peaking in 2021, gun suicides recorded an all time high in 2023.

Self-defense continues to be an important reason for folks to want to own firearms—whether that is defense against a home intruder or a tyrannical government. When it was written, however, the Second Amendment was

mainly meant to be another layer of defense for state governments to have against an all-powerful federal government. James Madison wrote in Federalist No. 46 that “the existence of subordinate governments ... forms a barrier against the enterprises of ambition.” The existence of state militias, Madison argued, would help prevent an authoritarian federal government from coming to be for fear of civil war.

However, as previously stated, the Second Amendment has been reanalyzed and reinterpreted many times since its ratification. Even today, some legal scholars believe that the amendment was never meant to apply to individuals, but rather to states and their militias.

For better or worse, however, the United States is one of the most armed countries in the world. We find ourselves in the midst of a heated (and oftentimes

deadly) debate about the safety of our communities, our students, our loved ones, and society's most vulnerable. While there are many good reasons to want to own and/or carry a firearm, there are also many good reasons not to want to.

I anticipate that the Second Amendment will be one of those bits of the Constitution that continues to be revisited well into the future—for many good reasons. In the meantime, I encourage all my gun owner readers to take reasonable steps to keep themselves and their families safe around firearms: lock your guns, keep them out of reach of children, and keep the keys and ammunition away from the gun itself. Enjoy exercising your rights, but please do so responsibly.

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Seán Griffin of the Ruffian's Releases 'People are Mad' From New Solo Album

Seán Griffin's first single from his solo album 'People Are Mad' to be released in the fall.

The title track 'People Are Mad' is out now on all streaming services

Mad," is borderline genius, transforming a familiar phrase often muttered under the breath into a shoutable mantra tailor-made for today's, let's say, chaotic social climate. It's an instant earworm, a



Nights out at the pub with a pint of Guinness in hand are hard to beat—but they are even better with one talented musical force: Seán Griffin.

Starting in the late 90s, a group of musician pals called *The Ruffians* entwined the heart and soul of their Irish heritage with the exuberance of punk rock winning over the hearts of Irish music lovers across the Northeast.

At the helm of *The Ruffians* stands Griffin, the lead vocalist whose honeyed voice lies like a warm blanket, enveloping listeners into a vibrant world of crank-up-the-volume Celtic rock-n-roll bliss.

Naturally, Griffin is no stranger to the stage: at their peak, *The Ruffians* played around 100 shows a year, with Griffin performing even more as a standalone artist. Though he's been in the game for several decades, he shows no signs of slowing down. He's picking up steam as he prepares to release his debut solo album—a carefully-crafted, mature batch of brand new tracks brimming with Celtic spirit and storytelling—and hit the road across North America, the UK, and Europe later this year.

Griffin's opening track and first single, "People Are

shimmering gem that properly introduces listeners to Griffin's clever lyricism and effortlessly blended sound. Rooted in a bouncy, shuffling beat and infectious banjo melody, this timeless anthem evokes a sense of collective frustration, articulating what so many are thinking in today's bewildering world. Yet, the amusing sound effects and soaring harmonies lift the track from nihilistic to oddly uplifting, reminding listeners it's okay to laugh a little, especially when everything feels like it's going off the rails. Truly, "there's nothing we can do," And somehow, it's strangely comforting to hear that people are, and have always been, crazy "from the moment they're born till they're pushing up daisies."

Though this new album is Griffin's first official solo project, it came to life with the help of numerous virtuosic special guests and industry standouts—a truly collaborative effort. Armed with a set of surf-punk jams, Irish laments, and general garage-rock mayhem, Griffin headed to Old Soul Studios in Catskill, New York, teaming up with Grammy award-winning producer Kenny Siegel and audio engineer Mathew Cullen.

Unveiling & Commemoration Fenian



12 noon, Saturday, September 13, 2025 at the Holyhood Cemetery, 584 Heath St, Brookline, MA 02467
Reception to follow at the Hibernian Hall 151 Watertown St, Watertown, MA. 02472
Near the grave of the famous Fenian, John Boyle O'Reilly, lies the unmarked grave of his friend and comrade, Fenian Denis Cashman (1843-1897).



Ten years ago, a group of Veterans who served in the Viet Nam War were invited to present to the crowd their memories of that war. They were celebrating an anniversary of the end of the war. A brick was laid outside the Irish American Heritage Center in their honor.

The fighting in Viet Nam lasted 20 horrific years from 1955-1975. It seemed to be a war of competing ideologies between the communist North Viet Nam and the U.S. backed South Viet Nam. In what started out to be a struggle for Viet Nam's independence turned into a confusing conflict involving several nations looking to rule that country. The United States was fearing the spread of communism throughout Asia and elsewhere. This local conflict turned into an international complicated mess. The United States first started sending money and weapons but then made the terrible decision to send troops. The military draft sent soldiers, with the average age of 22 to sign up.

The first wave of infantry started in 1965 with 3500 troops. which would balloon to over 580,000 young men fighting in what was destined to be an unwinnable war.

Viet Nam's jungle produced horrific battlefields featuring unconscionable obstacles.



Soldiers had to hack through the unconventional terrain with machetes at a very slow pace only to be greeted by creeks and rivers loaded with snakes and leeches. They often met the enemy by way of ambushes and booby traps. Miles and miles of tunnels were dug by the Viet Nameese soldiers.

This war was not popular among the American people producing uncountable anti-war protests and riots back home. It was a constant

Denis Cashman

Cashman's new gravestone will be unveiled.

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battle between social and political issues. All told, too many of our soldiers died or had life changing injuries. They still suffer the effects of the likes of Agent Orange. Close of four million people died as a result including 58,000 U.S. troops.

But on this day when these Viet Nam Veterans came to the Irish Center, they spoke of the good times they had while serving. Nobody spoke with regret for their service. They each said what an honor it was to serve. Each veteran has a memory or a story of their experience but on this day, it was only the good stories. We honor these veterans with a brick on our walk. As we should honor all of our veterans who have served and those currently serving in our military.

We thank them for their bravery and courage and sacrifice for the citizens of America. They fought for this country so that future generations can enjoy the peace and freedom that this country provides. War is hell, but on this day it was service with honor. I can only think of two people in this world who would die for me. The first was Jesus Christ who died to forgive our sins and the other is the soldier in the U.S. Military who offered to die for our freedom.

AUDITION NOTICE:

Gaelic Park Players

Gaelic Park Players are holding auditions for its Fall 2025 play:

BIG MAGGIE, by John B. Keane

Directed by Maureen Weber
Audition Schedule: Tues. and Weds, Sept., 9-10 (7:00 pm - 9:00 pm)
Where: Gaelic Park, 6119 W. 147 th Street, Oak Forest, IL (Celtic Room)

Phone: Gaelic Park: 708-687-9323 Director's Email: mweber0487@gmail.com

Script: Available at Gaelic Park office Cold readings from script required;

No appointments necessary.
Call Back Date
Sunday, September 14, 2025 (2:00 - 4:00 pm)

Written in 1969, John B. Keane's play "Big Maggie" is set in rural Ireland and explores the themes of power and control within a family. The play tells the story of Maggie, a woman who has just lost her husband, who is determined to take

control of her life and her family. Maggie's quest for power leads her to clash with her adult children and other people in her community, ultimately leading to tragic consequences.

Characters:
Maggie Polpin: (Middle-aged women)
Gert Polpin: (Late teens or early twenties)

Katie Polpin: (Early twenties)
Maurice Polpin: (Mid-twenties)
Mick Polpin: (Early twenties)
Teddy Heeling: (Mid-thirties)
Mary Madden: (Early twenties)
Mrs. Madden: (Middle-aged)
Mr. Byrne: . (Middle-aged)
Old Man
Old Woman:
Priest:

Performance Dates:
8:00 pm Fridays, November 14 th and 21 st and Saturdays, November 15th and 22 nd

and
3:00 pm Sundays, November 16 th and 23rd

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"a genuine love for the music they're playing, an uplifting spirit in their performances, and not-a-little fond sentimentality toward their work" - Classical Candor

Iconic musician collective Ensemble Galilei announces its new album *There I Long to Be*, which will be released September 26, 2025 on Sono Luminus. This special 2-CD release coincides with Ensemble Galilei's 35th anniversary and marks the group's fourth recording with the GRAMMY®-winning label, following 2015's *From Whence We Came*.

Ensemble Galilei is a small ensemble specializing in a wide range of music for their particular instrumentation, and includes Isaac Alderson (uilleann pipes, Irish flute, whistles, tenor saxophone), Jesse Langen (guitar), Kathryn Montoya (recorders, whistle, shawm), **Jackie Moran** (banjo, bodhrán, egg shaker; and founder Carolyn Surrick (viola da gamba). The group performs Renaissance and Baroque, Ancient and recent Celtic (including Scots, Welsh, Cornish, Breton, and Galician music), and Irish music, including some works especially written for them. The ensemble is named after Vincenzo Galilei (ca. 1520-1592), a pioneer in the Greek-inspired movement that created "opera in musica." He is credited as both simplifying and bringing passion back into music, and was also a leading theoretician of his time. (His son, Galileo Galilei, was the great astronomer.)

Featuring 47 tunes across 34 tracks on two discs, *There I Long to Be* contains an abundance of jigs, reels, traditional tunes, and early music, as well as works by members of the Ensemble. In addition to the five regular Ensemble members, this recording also features Hanneke Cassel (fiddle, and Ensemble Galilei emeritus member), Tim Langen (fiddle), Ronn McFarlane (lute), and James Oxley (tenor).

The project began as two albums, on parallel paths. One was new for Ensemble Galilei - an early music, classical album. The other was in line with the approach the Ensemble had embraced in its previous recordings. As Surrick put it, "For the first time, we were going to record an early music album in a conventional classical music style. Ensemble Galilei had always been known as a crossover group, meaning that while it was true that we performed early music, traditional music was always right around the corner. We never sought to achieve a level of historical performance practice that might engage early music audiences, until now."

Recorded over the course of two

years, the music on *There I Long to Be* encompasses a wide range of musical styles, cultures, and time periods - a combination of the musicians' individual interests and the group's focus. What unites it is an artistic vision that is inspired and undeterred, and unique to Ensemble Galilei. Sono Luminus CEO Collin Rae recognized this, and suggested embracing a 2-CD format to showcase the Ensemble's full scope.

The new album adds to Ensemble Galilei's extensive discography, which has attracted millions of streams on Spotify. Surrick writes, "I looked at our Spotify page for the first time and saw that we had millions of streams. Our big cities were Paris, Seattle, and London, and our demographic was predominantly people in their late teens, twenties, and early thirties, not our usual concert audience - they were

listening and sharing with friends. This was happening all over the world."



This discovery illustrated Ensemble Galilei's mission of deeply connecting with humanity through music. As Surrick summarizes in this album's liner notes, "In the end, if the musicians have brought their hearts, souls, and years of mastery, if the recording team has entered into the space with wisdom, tools, patience and good will, if Lindsey Nelson, our executive producer, is saying, 'Sure, let's book one more session to make this the very best it can possibly be' then the opportunity exists for the listener to hear it all - the breath, the intention, the ensemble, the soloist, the fingers on the strings, the air as it comes out of the recorder, the hands on the regulators of the uilleann pipes, the tipper as it touches the head of the bodhran, the rosin on the fiddle's bow, and feathered end of the note on a viola da gamba. It is all there."

Recorded over the course of two

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At some point in late teens as a wide-eyed "greenhorn" immigrant to America coming from a small town in northeast Ireland. I was barely out of a convent girls' school and

thank god a sexless green wool uniform i realized i had much to learn about american attire.

I decided to take a bus to the beach located in South Boston. I am wearing white short shorts (the nuns would die!!), A sleeveless top, ponytail, a beach towel rolled under my arm plus a bag with one, two or three books just in case I grew tired of watching Americans, how they walked, talked, and most especially how they dressed.

I was married, delivered three daughters one after the other under the rythmn method, the only type of contraception accepted by the church. Allow me to pause for a moment and praise to the rafters Dr. John Rock who developed the birth control pill. You may not be aware that the

Roman Catholic Church cast him loose immediately, claiming the pill was a mortal sin.

We women swallowed it anyhow! On his deathbed a priest visited and offered to bring him back into the church. The doctor refused and died a pagan. I believe he's in Heaven! I know he is! My daughters grew and so did I and I adhered to a dress code which was popular at the time. Thankfully, with Betty Friedan's encouragement, I embarked gingerly on a journalism career. I also divorced. I hosted a television talk show when Time Warner introduced cable tv to our suburban communities.

Did I have capabilities? Being Irish - that's a given. I could write! Being educated by Saint Louis nuns in Dundalk ensured

I could speak, and was given the gift of verbal enunciation via the elocution route.

I had another significant advantage. It was the sixties. I was on the cusp of the feminist movement and dressed for success as so many of us did. Yes, I struggled and juggled with the responsibilities of rearing my three daughters, and being a spouse keeping both roles going while I let my ambition loose and advanced as a journalist.

My girls thrived and so did my marriage until it did'nt. In its 25th year it ended, and in time i married again. My second spouse was an academic, a historian, a university president and his mother came from Ireland. He claimed he had ability and I had talent. I still do!

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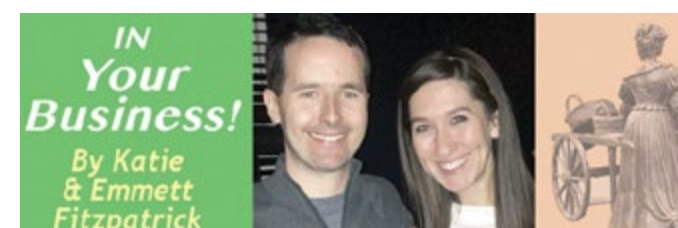
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Paul McCarthy Continues Family Legacy as Marquette Bank Celebrates 80 Years

Eighty years ago - on May 12, 1945, four days after Victory in Europe Day marked the end of World War II in Europe - Chicago native John McCarthy founded Marquette Bank on the city's South Side, serving as Founding Director and Chairman of the Board. After a career in real estate, He had raised



\$250,000 from family, friends, and local business owners to capitalize the new bank, believing that his neighborhood would need and support a new bank following the Great Depression and World War II. Under his guidance, the bank focused on financing essential assets—cars, homes, and apartment buildings—for local residents. He believed this was the best way to serve the interests of depositors, neighbors, and shareholders. Mr. McCarthy's vision proved prophetic, as the bank became profitable in 1946 and every year since.

Eighty years since its founding, the bank remains staple of the Chicagoland community and has been celebrating its eight decades in business throughout this year. Earlier in May, the bank hosted customers, employees, and nonprofit partners at all 20 of its banking centers across Chicagoland as well as at its Corporate Center in Orland Park. The 80th Anniversary celebration will conclude with a fall special event honoring the people and organizations featured in the "80 Faces of

Marquette Bank" campaign. For customers, there will be a final branch wide celebration on September 27 to coincide with National Good Neighbor Day.

For Paul McCarthy (pictured), Mr. McCarthy's son who serves as Bank Chairman, these celebrations reflect the bank's commitment to the communities they

serve and serve as a fitting honor to his family's legacy and Irish heritage.

While the size of the bank has grown dramatically over the past 80 years, its measured growth still encompasses real estate lending, giving back to the neighborhoods, and retaining shareholders who are descendants of the original founders—values that Mr. McCarthy would have appreciated.

Quantifying the impact that Marquette Bank

local high school students—a tradition that began in 1968. Employee teams also made 50 sandwiches for 22 days, resulting in 1,100 sandwiches donated to a local shelter. In June, the Marquette Neighborhood Commitment hosted its third Mobile Food Pantry event of the year, during which families can drive through and pick up food to last an entire week. Each event helps over 200 families in need.

Moreover, the award-winning Marquette Neighborhood Commitment program conducts monthly service projects, provides volunteers, offers support, and partners with nonprofits in the areas of Shelter/Housing, Hunger, Education, and Health/Wellness.

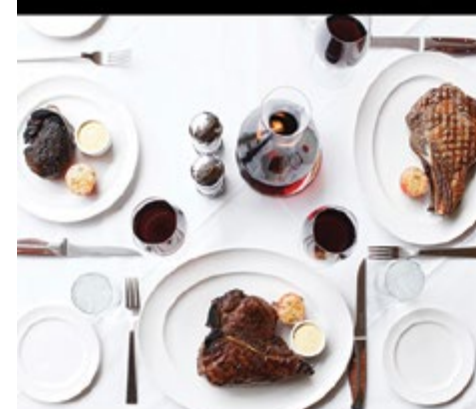
While the 80th anniversary is cause for celebrations - and those continue throughout the year - it also reflects the fulfillment of founder John McCarthy's dream and serves as a testament to son Paul's leadership in keeping Marquette Bank a thriving Chicagoland institution.



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“Changed Colonists into Patriots, and Yankee Yeomanry into Americans”

I recently discovered some photos from frozen moments in the Eisenhower era. They always get me juiced up. At this stage they are almost like laboratory slides. An intense swatch of DNA. Happy portraits of familial genetic instructions.

Where do I begin?

Among these Brownie snaps is one shot in front of my O’Gorman grandparent’s home, just three houses away from my family home at 56th and Peoria on the South Side. Our neighbor, Alderman Paul Sheridan, lived next door to my grandparents. He was lord of the manor. We saw lots of political celebrities and carrying-on thanks to him. It was, after all, the glorious 16th Ward.

Just one block away from our dwellings (visible in the upper part of the photo) was the huge campus of Visitation Parish spread out on the six-lane Garfield Blvd. Three school buildings: kindergarten, elementary and girls high school. There is also a huge convent for the Sinsinawa Dominican Nuns, over 100 of whom staffed this complex. A well proportioned Neo-gothic church sits there. Cathedral-size.



Grandparents John and Rebecca O’Gorman, parents Moss and Eileen O’Gorman, sister, Mary Regina & Tom O’Gorman as a young lad.

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A very comfortable priests’ house as well. Visitation is Irish Catholicism at its finest back then. One of America’s largest and in the 1950s, the stuff that Catholics were proud to brag about.

In the photograph are my grandparents, James and Rebecca O’Gorman, who were life-long active members of the Irish Republican Arm. My grandfather was an important and popular military leader in his youth. A crack marksman. Commandant

and Jefferson expected they would. The schools here were jammed thanks to the young G.I.’s like my father who fought for their country and returned home to raise families. Their lives were forever changed by military life and living half way around the world for five years. This is before Tom Brokaw gave us the sobriquet, “The Greatest Generation.”

We always knew they were great. Especially my Pop. He had a box of medals. My grandfather left Ireland with his wife and three tiny sons during the Irish Civil War in the 1920s to protect his family from the insanity of Irishmen killing Irishmen. They ended their journey in Chicago when my grandmother refused to go on farther to Australia. Thank God. I can’t abide the accent.

The O’Gormans had three sons in military service in World War II. David landed at Normandy, while my father, Mossy, was storming beaches in the South Pacific. And then in the waning days of war, just before the allies made their way into Germany, my 18-year-old uncle, Seamus, was killed at Bastogne, in Belgium, in the Battle of the

Bulge. So much for keeping your family safe.

The war sucked everyone into the violence. Immigration and assimilation had a huge price tag on it for my grandparents. They never moved far from the sadness of their son’s sacrifice. They had been used to shedding blood for freedom in Ireland. But this one, for America, caught them off guard. It is very Shakespearean. All grief and tragedy just beneath the surface of the wave. Redefining meaning by teenage humanity and nobility a la Graham Greene. This is what I see when I look at this photo. Parents celebrating the ongoing assimilation of their family into the promise of America. But holding a heart, shattered and slashed by the cruelty of the day. Perhaps they felt they made an error in crossing to America. Maybe they felt they were mistaken at the sacrifice. I never heard any regrets. They went to Mass everyday. They embraced what was before them on that Mother’s Day in 1954. With me, a precocious grandson festooned in blue satin adding to the religious theater of victorious America. With our Irish monsignor praying for soldiers that never got back alive. And me thinking how close Hitler had gotten to us all. My grandfather clinging to his IRA stoicism and the lost Michael Collins.

But my grandmother allowed the poetry of being Irish the chance to speak for her and her broken heart. Knowing that her son was safe none the less and that the mysteries of our faith could revive us again. Rosary by rosary.

And so we marched in solemn procession along the spring greenery of Garfield Boulevard. One head behind the other. Like it was the Catholic West Point. We moved with an ocean rock of faith and splendor, like the ebb and flow of water, spilling out where there was room, a public display of religious procession evolved from a sense of belonging. People were proud to celebrate their identities with tolerance, friendship and pride. They also flowed out of a feeling of safety and belonging. A sense of oneness with the secular landscape and political environment.

Maybe that Mother’s Day was more of an American Fourth of July than we realized? Apple pies, Irish soda bread and big, rare roasts of beef. We were not lost in its vast proportions as a nation at all. We knew right where we should be, warming by that stove of hope and hospitality. History brought us close to the center core of values that first changed colonists into patriots. And Yankee yeomanry into Americans.

From Turf to Tech: Ireland’s Green Transition and What Chicago Can Learn

Whenever I visit Ireland, the scent of smoldering turf—hand-cut and home-dried—was synonymous with Irish hearth and home. That smoky perfume drifted from stone chimneys across boglands and small towns alike, as dependable as the tea kettle and just as central to rural life. But times are changing.

Ireland, long reliant on peat and fossil fuels, is in the midst of a remarkable green transition—one driven not just by necessity but by cultural and climate reckoning. The move from turf to tech is real, rapid, and surprisingly reflective of what’s unfolding here in Chicago and across the American Midwest.

From Fossil to Future

For generations, Irish homes were heated with peat cut from local bogs. Peatlands are rich ecosystems that provide habitat for various plant and animal species, including many rare and endangered species. But peat, while traditional, is neither renewable nor environmentally friendly. It emits more carbon than coal and destroys these fragile wetland ecosystems that serve as vital carbon sinks. Recognizing this, the Irish government officially banned the sale of turf for commercial burning and introduced Just Transition programs to help workers and communities adapt.

To mitigate the environmental impact of turf cutting, sustainable practices like selective harvesting, replanting

native species, and habitat restoration to reduce ecological damage are gaining momentum. These efforts aim to preserve traditional methods while promoting long-term environmental conservation.

At the same time, Ireland has become a global leader in renewable energy,



with onshore wind now providing over 35% of its electricity grid. Offshore wind farms, floating solar platforms, and green hydrogen projects are rapidly scaling. Even agrivoltaics—placing solar panels over pastureland—is taking root. From the wild Atlantic coast to the reclaimed bogs of the Midlands, clean energy is no longer a futuristic fantasy. It’s a daily reality.

Parallel Paths:

Chicago’s Energy Evolution

Here in Chicago, we’re facing similar transitions. Thanks to the Climate and Equitable Jobs Act (CEJA), Illinois is committed to 100% clean energy by 2045, phasing out fossil fuels and investing in solar, wind, and energy efficiency. We’re seeing a rise in community solar projects, workforce training hubs for green jobs, and electric vehicle infrastructure from Bronzeville to Bloomington.

But like Ireland, our transformation

isn’t just about the tech—it’s about people. It’s about making sure the historically marginalized communities, who’ve long borne the brunt of industrial pollution, benefit from the clean energy future. It’s about retraining fossil fuel workers for solar panel installation or electric vehicle battery manufacturing. It’s about honoring the past while building something new—just as the Irish are doing.

Lessons We Can Share

What can Chicago learn from Ireland’s turf-to-tech journey?

1. Embrace cultural change alongside policy. Ireland’s green transition has involved deep storytelling—redefining national identity from “hearth and turf” to “heritage and innovation.” Chicago must do the same, linking climate justice with civic pride and resilience.

2. Invest in place-based solutions. Ireland’s success lies in tailoring renewable projects to local geographies—wind in Kerry, hydro in Leitrim, solar in Offaly. We can mirror that in Chicago, maximizing urban rooftops, lakefront wind, and neighborhood-scale energy cooperatives.

3. Support a Just Transition. Ireland is actively funding programs to re-skill peat workers and preserve cultural landscapes. We must prioritize similar investments in union labor, youth training, and equitable job access here in Illinois.

4. Protect nature while powering progress. Ireland’s rewilding of bogs, rivers, and wetlands alongside renewable expansion reminds us that climate action is ecological action. Clean energy and biodiversity can go hand in hand.

Diaspora as Bridge Builders

As Irish Americans, we’re uniquely positioned to be connectors in this transatlantic climate conversation. We carry the stories of our ancestors—of turf fires and rural resilience—but we also live in urban innovation hubs where sustainability isn’t optional, it’s essential.

Imagine a green future shaped by both our roots and our reach: where solar panels shine above the old stone walls of a Mayo cottage, and wind turbines turn over the former brownfields of Chicago’s South Side. Where boglands heal and neighborhoods breathe easier. Where we no longer burn the earth beneath our feet—but learn to live more lightly on it.

This September, as we mark World Environmental Health Day and Zero Emissions Day, may we remember that the transition from turf to tech isn’t just

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The Importance of Culture and Heritage For Everyone - Except the Irish

On several occasions over the past year or so I've mentioned my distaste for the Belfast rap trio Kneecap. It's nothing to do with their music, which I really don't get, not that I'm meant to 'get it' anyway.

God knows I wouldn't have been overly impressed back when I was a young fella if my dad had found himself as enthralled as I was by the Velvet Underground or Rick Wakeman. At a certain age we're attracted to a kind of music because it defines the manner in which we wish to be perceived and reflects the world in the way we imagine it to be run. We sure as hell don't want old fogies like our parents 'understanding' what we're listening to - where would be the fun in that?

So, it's not their music. What gets me about Kneecap and their like is that these people are forever banging on about how great they are for putting themselves at the centre of the debate over 'free speech.' You would swear that they invented it. And they're always the ones hard done by, according to themselves.

But when they use the term 'free speech' what they really mean is that THEY want to be free to say whatever they like. God forbid that you have an opposite view.

Yet if you put down a petition in front of me demanding that Kneecap be banned from being heard, thinking that it is a foregone conclusion that I will sign it, you'd be in for a rude awakening. You see, I may not like the bigotry that they espouse but as far as I'm concerned, they have the right to their opinion. Personally, I'd rather talk to them about it.

It's a pity that they don't share that same sentiment. And they don't. After this week, let's be in absolutely no doubt about that: Kneecap are fully behind censorship of thought and are in fact firm supporters of the Orwellian 'cancel culture' that they hypocritically rail against.

Along with 500 other brave Irish defenders of free speech they have managed to get cancelled the Mise Éire Festival that was due to take place in Drumshanbo, County Leitrim later this month, August 23.

Now, I don't have a horse in this race (apart from -- you know -- having a GENUINE fondness for free speech); but I could have predicted that the festival was going to have problems as soon as I read that it was to be an event 'for those who cherish Irish culture, heritage and are united in celebrating our shared values.'

Whhooooaaaa... Irish culture... Heritage... shared values. Any ONE of those would be enough to start the Usual Suspects screaming 'FAR RIGHT!' All three and you've no chance. And yes, in amongst the music and workshops there would indeed be speakers asking legitimate questions and wishing to debate our very real problem with both over-immigration and illegal immigration.

In today's Official Ireland that is a no-no. Any attempt at all to have a reasoned conversation is enough to have you labeled as Far Right and A Racist even if you clearly are not. Believe me, I know. (And of course having opinions not Officially Sanctioned can lead to some amusing moments, when one tongue-tied beauty recently described

me as a Jew-loving Nazi. Now there's one weird label I actually got a kick out of.)

With weary inevitability in today's timid, fearful climate, those who signed the petition to have this festival cancelled got their way; and one must assume that they are proud of themselves. The likes of Kneecap didn't surprise me, but some names disappointed me, one being Christy Moore. More of him in a moment.

Trying to strike a balance was journalist and playwright Mary Kenny. Speaking on Newstalk Breakfast she said: "If you think something is really bad or disgusting or repellant, then you say so. Objecting to something is not the same as cancelling things and censoring things."

"The liberal view is that you listen to what someone has to say, you look at the evidence and you argue the point. You don't just go around cancelling everything; that seems to me to be very illiberal."

"I think part of the Left's tradition has been that you do go in for debate and that you are robust in debate. [But] there has been a movement towards censoring things and cancelling things; in some ways, that's more dangerous."

"If ideas are not expressed, often they become more extreme if they are not openly discussed."

Ms. Kenny has been in this game a long time and has seen a lot of changes; and I couldn't have put it better. She also added: "People are allowed to be opposed to immigration if they want to. Surely, it's a free country? Surely that's something that's allowed to be debated?"

Confirming that a new venue has been found close to Castlebar in County Mayo, the organiser Stephen Kerr reiterated that it would be a day out to celebrate Irish culture.

Irish culture. Bloody hell, is he asking for ANOTHER petition against him?

"It's a family-friendly event, with music and talks. We have musicians coming from all over the country and we have workshops and discussions."

"I find it inexplicable that people signed a petition seeking to close down a festival about Irish culture. I'm not sure what they were told would be happening at the Mise Éire event but if they came

Swimming Upstream

By Charles Brady



to the festival they would have seen it for themselves, they might have changed their minds. What's divisive about workshops on the Irish language or a talk on Brehon law, or a discussion about Irish heritage?"

Speaking of the Kneecap hypocrites, he said that they had championed

their own right to free speech while using their 'fame, influence and establishment funds to punch down on a very small Irish cultural and musical event.

"Too many people are full of talk about diversity, but they won't tolerate any diversity of opinion at all."

As to Christy Moore, Lawyers for Justice Ireland commented: "The irony of Christy Moore signing a letter to cancel the Mise Éire festival... Christy Moore was at the forefront of protesting against censorship restrictions under Section 31 of the Broadcasting Act, eventually lifted in 1994."

They went on to quote the lyrics from his song on that same subject. Who are they to decide what we should hear? Who are they to decide what we should see? What do they think we can't comprehend here? What do they fear that our reaction might be?

And of course that's it in a nutshell, really. The political establishment and certain segments of the media do not want us asking questions. Not ever. We are living in a Time of Distractions, something I want to come back to. If we do persist in asking questions, then we take the risk of being labeled and slandered, something that at least one festival speaker has already been subjected to.

I'm saddened - very saddened indeed - to see Irish artists siding with those who would deny us our right to a different opinion. There was a time when they would have been on the side that values an alternative take on things.

That is emphatically no longer the case. charleybrady@gmail.com

Socks in the Frying Pan at Old Town 9-7

Socks in the Frying Pan, a multi-award-winning trio from Ennis, County Clare, Ireland - the mecca of Irish traditional music - was formed in 2014. Forged together by a fire of pure joy and passion for their art, the band



comprises Aodan Coyne on guitar and lead vocals, Shane Hayes on accordion, and younger brother Fiachra Hayes on fiddle.

Their 'Socks Sound' combines virtuosic musicianship with a burning

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Limerick on a Plate: A Taste of Ireland's Slow Food Soul

By Tom Flavin

In Limerick, nothing is wasted, and everything is savoured. I learned this growing up on a small dairy farm in West Limerick, where life was measured not by the clock, but by the rhythm of nature and the seasons.

We milked our own Friesian cattle and brought the milk to the local creamery every morning. We kept a few pigs, chickens, and ducks. Our garden yielded rows of vegetables and earthy potatoes pulled from rich, rain-fed soil. Food wasn't just sustenance—it was a way of life. There was a deep and quiet respect for where it came from and how it was shared. Fond are my memories of cycling to the neighbours' houses, gifting pork steak or freshly made black and white pudding from our home.

We also hunted rabbits, hares, and pheasants in the fields, and foraged for mushrooms, blackberries, hazelnuts, and wild herbs in the hedgerows. The seasons guided us, not just in what we ate, but in how we lived. I remember curing bacon and hams in a wooden barrel, and hanging them to smoke above the crane over the open turf fire. That fire was the heart of the home, where soda bread, scones, and apple tarts were baked in cast iron pots. The scent of turf smoke and baking bread is a memory that has never left me—it's the scent of comfort, of home, of Limerick.

That respect for real food still lives on here, woven into the fields, kitchens, and markets of the Treaty County. And if you listen closely—from the clink of teacups in the towns and cities' cafés and restaurants to the sizzle of rashers on a grill or a farmhouse pan—you'll hear a story that resonates across oceans, especially for those who carry Ireland in their hearts.

Limerick has always been a city of food. Long before the world talked about "farm to fork," we were living it. Our unique Atlantic climate, with its rolling rain and lush grasslands, produces some of the finest dairy and meat in the world. And in the 19th and 20th centuries, Limerick became world-famous for one thing in particular: bacon.

Known as The City of Pigs, Limerick was once home to four major bacon factories—Denny's, Matterson's, Shaw's, and O'Mara's. By the early 1900s, thousands of pigs were being processed every week. The pig industry provided jobs that helped many neighbourhoods thrive. Families, including many who would later emigrate to America, were fed by it. The smells of curing meat and the sound of factory whistles were as much a part of the city as the River Shannon.

At the other end of the culinary scale was the famous Limerick ham. Its flavour was so prized it graced Queen Victoria's table, was served aboard the Titanic, and presented to U.S. Presidents and Irish dignitaries alike. It was, and still is, a symbol of pride for Limerick.

Limerick's food culture is alive and thriving, with markets and artisan stalls

filling the city and surrounding towns throughout the week. One not to miss is the famous Milk Market, right in the heart of Limerick City, which has been feeding locals for over 150 years. On a Saturday morning, the place hums with life—you can sip freshly pressed apple juice, bite into a toasted baguette piled with rich black pudding and tangy goat cheese, topped with caramelized onion and basil dressing. But the real magic is in the people: the farmers, bakers, cheesemakers, and brewers behind the stalls, each with a story to share and a welcome as warm as the bread they bake.

Today, after more than three decades in the hospitality industry, my journey has come full circle. I began my professional career in bustling Manila, learning from a multicultural brigade of chefs. But it was only when I returned to Ireland in 1999, after working and travelling throughout the UK, Europe, Asia, Australia, and the USA, I realised that the quiet strength of our food culture—our land, our people, our pace—was something the world could learn from.

In our fast-moving, hyper-connected world, we've lost something vital in the rush. Our phones ping. Our calendars overflow. But in farms and kitchens across Limerick, and indeed across Ireland, there is a gentle resistance growing: a return to the values of slow living and slow food. This movement isn't about nostalgia for its own sake—it's about reconnecting with what truly matters: nourishment, intention, and community.

Across the county, Limerick's food has a mix of trends from traditional, authentic, classical, casual or street food we offer something for every taste and budget—from Michelin-starred dining at the luxurious Adare Manor, to a sausage roll and fresh-squeezed juice from a market vendor, or a pint of Sarsfield Stout and a brewery tour in the medieval quarter. Wherever you go, you'll find not just great food and drink, but a personality behind every product. And if you stop for a chat, you'll quickly

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Limerick is a unique destination for tourists, offering a perfect blend of friendly locals, captivating folklore, and hidden gems.

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Thrill-seekers can enjoy the buzz of the Ballyhoura Mountains, while Lough Gur Lakeshore Park and its ancient Stone Circle offer a deeper connection to Ireland's past.

Treaty City Brewery Tours provide a taste of locally crafted beer, rounding out a memorable experience.

Limerick is a must-visit destination for tourists in 2025, where vibrant culture, rich history, stunning landscapes, and a warm, welcoming atmosphere await around every corner.

Limerick.ie #LimerickEdgeEmbrace

learn that here in Limerick, we don't just serve food—we share stories, traditions, and a little bit of ourselves with every plate.

To those in the Irish diaspora who remember their grandmother's brown bread, their father's stories of working in the fields, or the smell of stew on a cold winter's day—I say this: the Limerick you carry in your blood is still here. It's in the butter that melts on

fresh soda bread, in the sizzle of pork on a Sunday morning, in the shared story and laugh at the market stall. It's in the dignity of the everyday, and the food that binds us across time and distance.

So come back—if not in person, then in spirit. Set the table. Pour a cup of tea. Slice a bit of ham. And remember, here in Limerick, nothing is wasted, and everything is savoured.



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Chief O'Neill's Session Features the Brilliance of Pauline Conneely

This 2nd installment in my series on the wonderful Irish traditional music sessions in Chicago (and the people who lead them) took me to the traditional session on Sundays 5-700 pm at Chief O'Neill's Pub and Restaurant, 3471 N Elston Ave in the Avondale neighborhood. Led for many years by banjo player Pauline Conneely, this session features an iconic setting, and an equally iconic leader.

The pub is named for Chief Francis O'Neill (1848 -1936), an Irish-born American police officer and collector of Irish traditional music. Born in Tralibane near Bantry, County Cork, to parents John and Catherine O'Neill, Francis was the youngest of a family of seven children. Both his parents were keen musicians with strong musical backgrounds and the O'Neill home was a center for Irish music in the area where singers, flute players, fiddlers and pipers would meet and exchange tunes.

At the age of 16, O'Neill ran away from home to a life at sea. His travels took him to the South Pacific, San Francisco, Missouri and eventually Chicago, where in 1873 O'Neill became a Chicago policeman. After being on the job only a month, O'Neill was shot and seriously wounded in the course of duty. He recovered, and steadily rose through the police ranks. In 1901 Francis O'Neill was appointed Chief of the Chicago Police, where he had 3,300 men

under his command.

O'Neill was a fine flautist, fiddler and piper. Francis' wife Ann shared Francis' passion for music and their home at Poplar Avenue became a meeting place for all known Irish musicians - fiddlers, dancers, flute players, pipers, accordion and concertina players.

O'Neill had the extraordinary gift of being able to memorize any tune which he had heard, despite not having the ability to read or write music. With the help of collaborators who did write music, O'Neill managed to record and commit to music-sheets all the tunes he had memorized. In 1903, he privately published "O'Neill's Music of Ireland" which contained a

total of 1,850 Irish Melodies and has come to be regarded as the "Bible" for traditional musicians.

Francis O'Neill is remembered for being Chief of Police for Chicago and for his remarkable and invaluable contribution to traditional Irish music. It is said by Richard Jones, music librarian at the University of Notre Dame that "without him, the music would have died or it would have gotten changed so

much the original would never have been remembered".

It is no surprise that All-Ireland musicians Brendan and Siobhan McKinney, proprietors of Chief O'Neill's Pub and Restaurant, chose to name their Chicago establishment after this famous chronicler of Irish music. Since 1999, they have thoughtfully led their pub to become one of the best in the USA. It recently celebrated its 25-year anniversary, and Francis O'Neill's 176th Birthday. The online "Travel + Leisure" guide has named Chief O'Neill's



among the top 50 Irish bars in the United States – the only Chicago spot to make the list. Others in the Midwest making this distinguished list are Milwaukee's County Clare Irish Pub, Fiddler's Hearth in South Bend, Ind. and John D. McGurk's Irish Pub in St. Louis.

Amidst this cozy pub setting (and the Francis O'Neill memorabilia), the weekly traditional Irish music session is held, led by the extraordinary Pauline Conneely on Irish tenor banjo. She has been leading this session on and off for 25 years, often joined by Laurence Nugent on flute and whistle, and Jesse Langen on guitar. Pauline says her session attracts a variety of levels of musicians, and wants people to know, "I welcome everyone.... If they are playing at a beginner level, I will encourage them to 'keep going!' It's not about being bad or good, or what level you are, it's about loving the music." Session etiquette can be a delicate balance between welcoming the newcomers, and keeping the audience engaged with the music of the seasoned musicians. Pauline feels its wise for less experienced musicians to listen and learn from those more experienced.

Conneely was born in Bedford, England of Irish parents from Connemara County Galway and County Longford. Her father Mick played fiddle, flute, and accordion and Pauline has fond memories of him playing every

night in the kitchen with the children watching and listening to him. Mick is still alive and now lives in Connemara. Her late mom Lizzie was a champion step dancer who knew and loved Irish traditional music.

Pauline is one of four siblings. All are accomplished musicians, having learned from their father, and the great Brendan Mulkere, a Clare-born musician who taught and performed Irish traditional music in Britain for decades. Brother Mick plays fiddle and bouzouki and has performed with De Dannan, while sister Kathleen plays whistle, and Conneely. Her album was named best solo CD of the year by the Irish American news in 2016.

When asked what has been the highlight of her musical career, Conneely offered, "Well, I was the first Irish tenor banjo player to ever perform on the stage at the Grand Ole Opry and became an in Nashville, opening there for the great Crystal Gayle, Vince Gill, and Mike Snider. Since then, I have made several more appearances." Now that's cool!

Probably the biggest compliment one can receive is from one's peers. Frequent collaborator Jimmy Keane said this of Conneely, "In addition to being a brilliant musician she is equally so as a person. Her knowledge of traditional Irish music and the nature of its tunes is unparalleled – never mind her innate and exceptional playing of them on the often-maligned banjo! During our joint sessions, there is not an evening that goes by without Pauline recalling a tune she learned from her dad or heard a variant of a particular tune once in passing for which I am ever grateful. It goes to show the width and breadth of her knowledge of traditional Irish music."

Although she may not agree with me, I believe there are striking similarities between Pauline and the namesake of the pub where she leads her session. Both Conneely and O'Neil were born of Irish parents who instilled in them an enduring love for Irish music and East Coast. Both left their homes and countries at a young age to pursue their futures. Both settled in Chicago, and both have had their share of life's challenges. O'Neill did not read music; and neither does Conneely, as is often the case for traditional Irish musicians. Both have made MAJOR contributions to Irish music in Chicago. I can't think of anyone more suited to lead the Chief O'Neill's session on Sunday evenings 5-7pm. Aside from the session at Chief's, and soul of every session. Her Conneely also runs a session on quick fingers are matched only at the Harp and Fiddle from 8-10pm.

At her extensive repertoire of

not only tunes but jokes too! "In 2016, Pauline recorded her debut album called "All Because." Noted Irish Echo music reviewer and fellow banjo player Dan Neely wrote: "I am always delighted when a great new banjo album lands, and I feel especially so when the stylistic approach is direct and says something frank about the serious nature of the instrument. It's something one hears in the playing of John Carty, Angelina Carberry, and Mick Moloney, but it's also something one happens to hear in the playing of Pauline Conneely." Her album was named best solo CD of the year by the Irish American news in 2016.

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At her extensive repertoire of



Putumayo Releases Dream World Featuring Lá Lugh



Ease into tranquility with Putumayo Discovery's new album, Dream World - Soothing Songs from Around the Globe, a gentle soundtrack for bedtime, reflection and quiet moments. Out on Friday, August 8th, this collection offers gentle acoustic arrangements, serene vocals and ambient textures ideal for yoga, reading, bedtime or any time you need to slow down. Featuring exceptional artists from a wide array of countries, including Ireland, Senegal, Colombia, Philippines, Iceland, Croatia, India and more, Dream World invites listeners on a relaxing, border-crossing musical journey.

The album will be available for download on iTunes and Bandcamp with streaming on all major



platforms upon release.

Gerry O'Connor & Eithne Ní Uallacháin Formed in County Louth in the early 1990s, Lá Lugh brought new vitality to the musical traditions of Northern Ireland through their virtuosic playing and rich vocal storytelling. The group was led by fiddler Gerry O'Connor and singer/flutist Eithne Ní Uallacháin, both natives of Dundalk from deeply musical families. O'Connor, a fourth-generation fiddler and former member of Skylark, developed a dynamic style rooted in his mother Rose's teaching. Ní Uallacháin, raised in an Irish-speaking home, became one of Ireland's most respected traditional singers, drawing from family songs and local folklore. With additional members Gilles Bigot, Siobhán Kennedy, and Donal O'Connor, Lá Lugh earned acclaim for their passionate performances and creative interpretations of Irish tradition. Their album Brighid's Kiss was named Best Album of the Year by Irish Music Magazine in 1996.

Featured Song:

"Bealtaine Song" is a dreamy rendition of a traditional Gaelic song in praise of summer. Traditionally sung on May Eve while carrying a ribboned "May Baby" doll, it captures the beauty of seasonal renewal. "Golden Summer of the white daisies / We bring the Summer with us / Up hill and down glens / Girls adorned in pure white / And we bring the Summer with us." The



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FATHER ANDREW GREELEY
2016 INDUCTEE



JOANNE HAYES-WHITE
2023 INDUCTEE



Columnist Estelle Shanley (3rd from right) asks if anyone knows some of the names in this picture? we think it's Father Finucane, Mary Pat O'Connor middle left, and Marian Brady far right. If you think you know folks here, email cliff@irisamericannews.com

Ireland Pens Letter with EU Nations Condemning Israel's Gaza Plan

Ireland today jointly signed a letter with other European countries in strongly condemning Israel's plan to expand the war in Gaza.

The letter states that the countries "strongly condemn the recent announcement of the intensification of the occupation and the military offensive, including in Gaza city." "This decision will only deepen the humanitarian crisis and further endanger the remaining hostages' lives. This operation will lead to an unacceptable high toll of deaths and the forced displacement of nearly one million Palestinian civilians," it adds.

The letter continues: "We firmly reject any demographic or territorial changes in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. Actions in this regard constitute a flagrant violation of international law and international humanitarian law."

"The intensification of the military offensive and the occupation of Gaza City represents a serious obstacle to the implementation of the two-State solution, which is the only path towards a comprehensive, just and lasting peace. The Gaza strip must be an integral part of the State of Palestine, along with the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. The recognition of both Palestine and Israel is the best security guarantee for both and will ensure stability for the whole region."

"We continue to call for an immediate ceasefire agreement and a permanent end to hostilities, for the immediate release of all hostages at the hands of Hamas and for the rapid, unimpeded and large-scale entry of humanitarian aid. Hamas cannot have a role in the future governance or security arrangements in Gaza, and must be disarmed."

Speaking today, the Tánaiste said:

"I strongly urge the Israeli Government to reconsider the decision to escalate its offensive in Gaza. Israel's actions are confounding the international community. Any expansion of military operations can only deepen the already catastrophic humanitarian situation in Gaza, leading to further displacement of the civilian population. The exhausted people of Gaza continue to face the prospect of famine. The time for a ceasefire and hostage release deal is long overdue. I call again for Hamas to release all hostages immediately."

"I reiterate Ireland's unwavering commitment to the vision of the two-State solution where two democratic States, Israel and Palestine, live side by side in peace within secure and

recognised borders, consistent with international law and relevant UN resolutions, and in this regard stress the

importance of unifying the Gaza Strip with the West Bank under the Palestinian Authority."

Full text of letter: The Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Iceland, Ireland, Luxembourg, Malta, Norway, Portugal, Slovenia and Spain strongly condemn the recent announcement by the Government of Israel of the intensification of the occupation and the military offensive, including in Gaza city. This decision will only deepen the humanitarian crisis and further endanger the remaining hostages' lives. This operation will lead to an unacceptable high toll of deaths and the forced displacement of nearly one million Palestinian civilians.

We firmly reject any demographic or territorial changes in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. Actions in this regard constitute a flagrant violation of international law and international humanitarian law. The intensification of the military offensive and the occupation of Gaza City represents a serious obstacle

to the implementation of the two-state solution, which is the only path towards a comprehensive, just and lasting peace. The Gaza strip must be an integral part of the State of Palestine, along with the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. The recognition of Palestine and Israel is the best security guarantee for both, and will ensure stability for the whole region. We continue to call for an immediate ceasefire agreement and a permanent end to hostilities, for the immediate release of all hostages at the hands of Hamas and for the rapid, unimpeded and large-scale entry of humanitarian aid. Hamas cannot have a role in the future governance or security arrangements in Gaza, and must be disarmed.

Thorgerdur Katrin Gunnarsdottir, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Iceland Simon Harris, Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade of Ireland. Xavier Bettel, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade and Minister for Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Affairs of Luxembourg.

Ian Borg, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Tourism of Malta.



Minister and Minister of Foreign and European Affairs of Norway. Espen Barth Eide, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Norway. Paulo Rangel, Minister of State and Foreign Affairs of Portugal. Tanja Fajon, Deputy Prime Minister of Slovenia. José Manuel Albares Bueno, Minister for Foreign Affairs, EU and Cooperation of Spain.



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SEPTEMBER CROSSWORD

ANSWERS page 53

Crossword by Myles Mellor

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Across

1. Nile reptile

4. Caribbean and others

8. Lubricate machinery again

13. Extinct flightless bird of New Zealand

14. "Full Metal Jacket" group. abbr.

15. Irish Peninsula where the film "Ryan's Daughter" was filmed

16. 1997 U.S. Open champ, Ernie

17. Creamy sandwich spread

18. Abundant amounts

19. Guinea's capital city

21. Disney's first name

23. Double bend in the road

24. Rework

25. Tiny parasitic insects

26. One who gazes intently

29. Mythical aquatic creature

34. Proportional relationship

36. Founded, in brief

37. View from the Murlough Nature Reserve in County Down

43. French department in Normandy

44. Desert water source

45. Details about one's life and job

49. Large birds of prey

52. Sampras of tennis fame

54. Mysteriously unsettling

56. Scooby-___ (cartoon dog)

59. "Jurassic Park" menace, briefly

60. "The Little Mermaid" villain

61. National Park in County Clare which has 70% of Ireland's native flowers, The ___

63. Shakespeare's famous question starter, 2 words

65. Parcel abbreviation, abbr.

66. Gain entry to

67. Follow orders

68. Golf ball supporter

69. Elevator passageway

70. Traditional knowledge

71. Older family member, briefly

Down

1. Single-celled organism

2. Not liquids or fluids

3. Volkswagen sedan model

4. Relating to Indonesia's largest island

5. Biblical brother

6. Actress Adams

7. Frown deeply

8. Violent protestor

9. Conclusion

10. Stare at inappropriately

11. French for islands

12. Not as much

15. Sweet, in music

20. Practiced boxing

22. Point

27. Summer in Paris

28. Edge of a golf hole

30. Childhood illness

31. "Just ___ thought!"

32. British news network initials

33. Dentist's degree, briefly

35. Tic-tac-toe winner

37. Unruly crowd

38. "...___ quit!"

39. Card game

40. Emirates, for short

41. Decryption org.

42. Golden-brown or yellow quartz, 2 words

46. Most suitable

47. Seabirds with forked tails

48. Dined

50. Bursts forth suddenly

51. Smooth as fine fabric

53. Praise highly

55. Enthusiastically willing

56. Alternate business names, briefly

57. Painful exclamation

58. Black and white whale

60. Global city transport middleman

62. Sports official, for short

64. Or best offer, for short

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Fall Irish class registration is open for current and former students. Register now!

Registration for Fall 2025 Na Gaeil Chicago Irish language classes is now open! Use the links below to learn about and choose the class that's right for you. We have in-person and online classes at several levels. Come connect with Irish culture, heritage, and new friends through the first language of Ireland in an informal and fun setting. We can't wait to see you in class!

This fall, we're offering eleven classes on four levels, with more Beginner class space than ever before. Special welcome to new teacher Pat Duffy who will be teaching one of our two Wednesday evening in-person Beginner classes. Fáilte is fiche romhat, a Phádraig! The teachers are really looking forward to welcoming everyone.

In-person classes are at the Irish American Heritage Center, and online classes are on Zoom. Wednesday classes begin September 17th, Thursday classes the 18th, and Saturday classes the 20th. On Wednesday evenings there are two Beginner classes, section A and section B. The only difference between them is the instructor, so you can choose either one.

Beginner (section A), in-person Wednesdays at 7:00PM [view and

Intermediate, ONLINE Thursdays at 7:00PM [view and register]

Intermediate, in-person Saturdays at 11:00AM [view and register]

Advanced, in-person Wednesdays at 7:00PM [view and register]

Advanced, in-person Saturdays at 11:00AM [view and register]

or, see all classes at once

Check out detailed class descriptions on their registration pages to determine which class is for you, based on your current level of Irish. Email us at info@nagaeil.org if you are uncertain about which class to choose. (Also, please also let us know if we're not offering a class or day of the week that works for you.)

Classes fill up quickly, so it's best to register right away.. If the class you want is full, please join its waiting list. Class spaces that become available will be filled first-come, first-served from the waiting lists.

Online class sessions will be conducted through the Zoom videoconferencing system, requiring a desktop or laptop computer, a camera, and microphone. (Devices like phones and tablets have functionality limitations in Zoom, and audio and video will be necessary to participate fully in class.)

Tuition is \$105 for returning Na Gaeil Chicago students and \$130 for new students. Most classes will use the

na Gaeil CHICAGO

AN GHAEILGE BHEO ANSEO

register]

Beginner (section B), in-person Wednesdays at 7:00PM [view and register]

Beginner, ONLINE Thursdays at 7:00PM [view and register]

Beginner, in-person Saturdays at 11:00AM [view and register]

Beginner 2, in-person Wednesdays at 7:00PM [view and register]

Beginner 2, ONLINE Saturdays at 11:00AM [view and register]

Intermediate, in-person Wednesdays at 7:00PM [view and register]

Gaeilge Gan Stró series of textbooks, and we'll provide one as part of your tuition if you haven't already received the one your class is using. Textbooks for the online classes, where needed, will be mailed to the address you give at registration, timed to arrive before your first class.

Questions about classes, our activities, or Irish in general, anyone can email us at info@nagaeil.org, and anyone can join our mailing list at <https://www.nagaeil.org/maillinglist.html>.

We hope to see you in September.

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Irish American Movie Hooley Returns For 2025

When a party gets rowdy, the Irish call it a "hooley".

Hibernian Media proudly announce film selections for their 11th Annual "Irish American Movie Hooley", at The Wilmette Theatre Sept. 26-27-28, 2025. It's the only Irish American film festival in the world and we are excited to present these 3 extraordinary films.

Opening on Friday September 26th at 8PM will be **KING FRANKIE** starring Peter Coonan. Following the death of his father, Frankie Burke, a kindly taxi driver living a quiet life in a Dublin suburb, is forced to confront the ghosts of his past when an unexpected stranger arrives at his door. It's a mad roller coaster ride through his past as he tries to reconcile the demons of his earlier life to make peace with the man he has become. International film star Peter Coonan joins us for our opening night screening and discussion.

Saturday night, September 27th, will feature the 8PM special Chicago screening of **DEAD MAN'S MONEY** When

Young Henry's wealthy uncle starts courting "the Widow" Maureen Tweed, he starts to fear that he'll be written

out of Old Henry's will. Conspiring with his wife, Pauline - and a chauffeur with a chequered past, Young Henry hatches a plan to make sure that the Widow Tweed never sees a penny of the inheritance. This funny, yet scary romp knits together a Shakespearian tale of greed framed inside a friendly Irish pub with a rising body count that just won't quit. Actress Judith Roddy, who stars as the "Lady MacBeth"-inspired Young Henry's seductive wife "Pauline", joins the Hooley for this screening.



On Sunday at 5PM, Sept. 28th, the Hooley will present writer-director Colin Hughes' real life documentary film, **FIRE DEPARTMENT. INC** as a

suburban Chicago firefighter's labor union finds itself fighting a different kind of fire when the Village Mayor schemes to destroy the union. What results is a five year long legal battle with the potential to change labor law for the entire country. It's local and lethal. Director Hughes will join us for the screening and hooley.

Now in its' 11 year, the Movie Hooley has introduced audiences to the best in Irish & Irish American filmmaking, with opportunities to meet each writer, director, actor, or producer who have brought their films to Chicago, this year once again unveiling their

creations personally to our audiences at the intimate Wilmette Theatre.

Chicago Tribune columnist Rick Kogan sez "If your image of the Irish is trapped in some sort of playful Shamrock-"Danny Boy" realm, prepare yourselves for the dark but altogether satisfying world represented by the latest offerings of this year's Irish Movie Hooley."

The films have grown in stature each year and the 11th Annual Movie Hooley promises to be our best yet. The Irish American Movie Hooley is presented by Hibernian Media NFP, our local public charity dedicated to the preservation and promotion of Irish culture.

Sponsors of the 11th Annual Irish American Movie Hooley include The Hilton Chicago, Your local Irish Whiskey and Madden Funds.

Tickets for each film are \$15 and snacks and drinks are offered in the lobby. Wilmette theatre 847-251-7424, 1122 Central Ave, Wilmette, IL. wilmettettheatre.com. <https://hibernianmedia.org/movie-hooley>

My husband and I took a summer trip to Boston, we visited our cousins John & Marie Murphy. We had a great time with them touring Boston. John & Marie celebrated their golden jubilee, Happy 50th Anniversary! Thank you both for your gracious hospitality. I like how they call sprinkles for ice cream, "Jimmies" in Boston. I noticed Bostonian's put an R in my name, my name changed to Tina'r.

(it's called an intrusive R, cute!) I discovered that the area known as "Southie", the "tough" Irish Catholic area has undergone extensive gentrification and development. However, the area still has crime like any other urban area. Some of us remember the infamous crime boss, James Whitey Bulger. He was in the Winter Hill Gang, an Irish mob group. Bulger was finally arrested in 2011...

We went to a concert with John & Marie at the Irish Cultural Center in Canton, Mass. The center was founded in 1989 to celebrate



GETTING TO KNOW THE IRISH!

By Tina Butler - Leonard



Irish culture and heritage in the Greater Boston Area. It is on a 46-acre site, it reminded me of Gaelic Park.

The band we saw was called, Onoir, which means honor in

Gaelic.

They are a group of four men from Co. Donegal. Donegal is in the province of Ulster while part of the Republic of Ireland.

In between each song, frontman Diarmaid (Dermot) would tell a story & background information, my favorite part of the concert.

Onoir is a traditional folk group, they sing famous Irish songs, share stories and entertain to massive crowds. The band includes Tom McHugh, Declan Gaughan, Deane Connaghan and Diarmaid McGee. Declan's last name reminds me of the famous volunteer "Michael Gaughan" who died on hunger strike. Christy Moore sings the famous song, "Take me

home to Mayo", also known as the Ballad of Michael Gaughan.

My husband and I rarely go to concerts, but this band is worth seeing! We really had a great time; we loved the energy and of course traditional music. I saw people singing and crying, traditional songs tug at our hearts. Furthermore, a lot of Irish songs tell stories and often true stories about people and events in our history.

I thought of my parents and how they would know every word of these songs. While we were growing up our parents would sing Irish songs and also explain the story behind it.

Onoir is a genuine group, they connect with the audience and are keeping our classical songs alive.

Mike & I were lucky to have a front row seat at the concert. Onoir sang some traditional

favorites, Sonny, Sweet 16, Boolavogue, The Parting Glass, Isle of hope, & The town I loved so well.

We certainly wish Onoir much success and know they are on their way to playing in Croke Park!

Smidin Gaeilge-Onoir-honor, Donegal-Dun na nGall, music-ceol, song-amhran

"Irish music is the heart and soul of Ireland."

"The older the fiddle the sweeter the tune." Irish proverb

"Music produces a kind of pleasure which human nature cannot do without." Confucius

"Where words fail, music speaks." Hans Christian Anderson

Any questions, please email me: Molanive@yahoo.com



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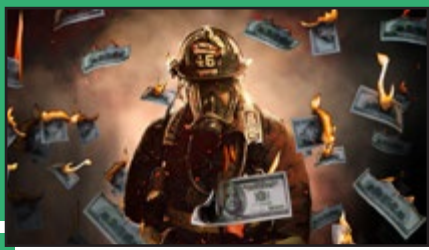
DEAD MAN'S MONEY

Saturday, September 27, 8:00 pm
Actress-Star Judith Roddy in Person!



FIRE DEPARTMENT INC.

Sunday, September 28, 5:00 pm
Writer/Director Colin Hughes in Person!



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Mike and Tina Leonard on their wedding day, above, and Pat Gibbons, Mike Leonard and Gerry Carey relaxing after the ceremony, below.



(L-R) Dan Starzyk, Bernie McNally (Brophy Excavation), Alan Coyle (Platinum Homes), Phil Richard, Mary McNally, Ray Burzic all of First National Bank of Brookfield, enjoying a GAA gathering at Sheehan Group office. More pics pg 44

Christmas Tour

by Kevin

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This month we travel to Co. Sligo (Sligeach translates to-place of sea shells”) Co. Sligo's nickname is Yeats country. Co. Sligo is in the province of Connacht and has miles of natural beauty, enchanting landscape, and clean beaches. There is a Sligo, Pennsylvania, a village of maybe 800 people.

Sligo Abbey was a Dominican convent in Sligo, Ireland, founded in 1253 for the Dominican order by Maurice Fitzgerald. It was built in the Romanesque style (round arches) It is in ruins but most of the walls are still standing. There are several functioning abbeys in Ireland today where monks and nuns continue to live and pray. Most of the active abbeys belong to a branch of the Cistercian order similar to the Trappists. Here are some of the active Cistercian abbeys in Ireland:

Mount St. Joseph Abbey, Roscrea, County Tipperary. Mount Melleray Abbey, Knockmealdown mountains, County Waterford. Portglenone Abbey Church, County Antrim, Northern Ireland. Bolton Abbey, Moore, County Kildare. St. Mary's Abbey, Glencairn, County Waterford, is the only Cistercian abbey for women in Ireland.

A famous ghost story associated with Sligo is in Markree castle, the castle is now a luxury hotel. It is said to be haunted by “Pippa,” a friendly ghost who enjoys playful pranks, particularly

Counties of Ireland

by Tom Butler



on wedding guests. The cellar is also rumored to be a source of ghostly activity.

Benbulbin, the majestic mountain in Sligo, is referred to as Yeat's country. All layers of the mountain have fossilized seashells in them. In Irish mythology Finn McCool is said to have found his long-lost son, Oisín here at Benbulbin.

It's nicknamed Yeats country because for the past 60 years they have Yeats summer school, an annual nine-day program in Sligo. It's focused on the works of Nobel laureate W.B. Yeats, combining academic lectures & seminars delivered by world class scholars with cultural experiences rooted in the landscape that inspired him.

County Sligo has a long history of traditional music. There were great fiddles players, a few include Paddy Killoran & Michael Coleman. A more current group from Sligo is called, Westlife.

Common surnames found in Sligo include Mullaney, Brennan, Walsh, Flynn and Keavney.

I wanted to share something that happened to me 50 years ago this month. It is something I will never

forget. When I first came to Chicago I was working on some demolition work. (114th & Torrence Ave) I was operating a jackhammer; it hit a power line and

to the jackhammer; I fell backwards in the water with the jackhammer. Next thing I remembered I was in South Chicago hospital, the doctor attending to me described this event as puzzling and that something intervened to save me. Construction is a dangerous business be vigilant about equipment and training. (708) 425-7021.

Yeats is buried here facing Benbulbin Mountain & it is a magical place to visit.



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Truce and Treaty

When the Truce was ratified in July 1921 it allowed the Hegarty's and 1000's of other families to take a step back from the brink, hoping it would lead to a permanent peace.

The Truce led to Peace Talks; the Talks led to a contentious Treaty agreed on the 21st of December 1921. Michael Collins (against his wishes) was chosen by President DeValera to lead the Irish plenipotentiaries to London. He was a key figure in the negotiations and signed the Treaty as he believed it offered “the freedom to achieve freedom.” He also believed he was signing his own death warrant.

Rallies were organised nationwide to garner support for the Treaty. Many disrupted with speakers heckled, shots fired, by anti-treaty supporters. John Joe, Nan and Mamie with their friend Maud and Sean

became officers in Cork's ‘G’ company and close friends of the Hegarty family.

Treaty Signed

After the Treaty was signed it was approved after much rancour in the Dail in early January 1922. During the debate many spoke in favour of acceptance others such as



Cathal Brugha against stating, “the war was fought for a 32 county Republic as declared in 1916 and not a 26 county Free State with allegiance to a British King.”

The vote was carried by a narrow margin of 64 in favour with 57 against. This resulted in a split in Sinn Fein with DeValera, and Collins on opposite sides. It was also the month that the Free State Army was established, with the British Army vacating all Barracks with the majority returning to Britain. Some swapped uniforms and joined the new FS Army, linking up with former enemies' pro treaty volunteers.

Naval Battle - The Capture of The Upnor

Those on the Anti-treaty side continued their campaign of opposition and remained armed. They executed one daring raid off the coast of Cork when capturing The Upnor a British Naval Ship laden with arms.

In March 1922 just months prior to the commencement of the civil war, the IRA under the command of Sean Hegarty, whose planning and intelligence work launched an audacious plot to secure arms. Hegarty became aware that a British vessel,



the Upnor was to transport arms and ammunition from Queenstown back to the UK.

Mamie and John helped in obtaining intelligence as they were still free to roam Queenstown with privileged access to British positions as the official undertaker.



When Hegarty had sufficient intelligence, Michael Burke CO.in Queenstown, was

summoned and informed of the plan to capture the Upnor at sea and sail her to Ballycotton.

Ballycotton gets its name from Gaelic meaning (Town of the small boats) is situated about

25 miles east of Cork City. During the War of Independence, it had a very active section with men such as David Manning and the O'Riordan brothers involved. Mamie and Nan had helped to establish the Cumann na mBan in the village and brought arms and dispatches there on a regular basis. As a fishing village it has a proud history of sea rescues over the centuries.

When word that the ship was ready to sail, Tom Crofts, Michael Murphy and Sadow Donovan with other volunteers left Cork and travelled to Queenstown. They brought with them Captain Collins a civilian with naval experience who had been helpful to the Brigade on previous occasions.

In his book ‘For the Life of Me’ Robert Briscoe describes how Collins had previously helped with his gun running from Germany. In Queenstown a tugboat, The Warrior, was secured and its captain held prisoner so he could not raise the alarm. With everything in order, they set out to pursue the Upnor despite it being escorted by two naval battleships (HMS Heather and HMS Strenuous). The escorts were sailing about 3 miles in front as was normal naval practise at the time.

Everything went to plan under the command of Murphy. The ship was boarded about 35 miles off the coast after the ship's captain accepted the story that a private message was sent from The Admiralty.

Once in control of the ship, the captain and crew were ordered below deck and told no harm would come to them if they obeyed orders. The captain protested at gun point and called it an act of piracy but offered no resistance.

When they were off the coast of Ballycotton local IRA officers (who were on standby) the O'Riordan brothers Mick and John experienced fishermen

sailed out, climbed on board and piloted it safely to the Pier in the Harbour.

Waiting on the Pier were men such as Conn Neenan and Martin Corry and up to 100 vehicles (stolen and borrowed) parked waiting to be loaded with the Upnor's cargo. Once the loading was complete the convoy made its way back to the city with some arms going to The Laurels, the Mitchells home in Kerry Pike with the majority going to the West Cork Brigade.

When word reached Michael Collins, he was fuming as he knew it would further arm the anti-treaty side. He also suspected the British were involved in order to undermine the Provisional Government. Collins was aware of the political uncertainty that was prevalent in Cork regarding the truce. Either way, this daring operation supplied the anti-treaty men of the ‘Munster Republic’ with plenty of arms, ammunition and mines for the imminent Civil War.

In London Winston Churchill, as Secretary of State for the Colonies, had to account for

his stewardship in the House of Commons. In Queenstown Michael Burke was summoned to the Admiralty and asked if he knew anything about the event. He told them he had no knowledge of it and returned home aware of their inferior intelligence.

The event was

reported worldwide, The New York Times calling it a “sensational affair “and emphasizing its “audacity “with which it was carried out.

The success of the capture highlighted again the important role of Intelligence gathering during the war.

When I spoke to Don O'Riordan (Micks son) he told me as a child they had boxes of ammunition still stored in their home and it was only when their father saw them playing with the bullets that they were removed. He also said that when the Free State troops arrived in Ballycotton his father was put up against the wall of the Pier and threatened to be shot for his role in the event.

If Mick had been executed, it may have started the Civil War! That was for another day.

Tom Crofts grandson Tom Mahon now residing in Honolulu has written a book about the capture “The Ballycotton Job.” Crofts would later be appointed CO of the Cork Brigade during the Civil War.

To be continued
The Civil War and Aftermath
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Seafield Hotel and Spa Resort: A Gateway to the Island of Ireland

By Grainne McCool;
Irish Correspondent

Situated less than an hour from Dublin city, the Seafield Hotel & Spa Resort is a luxury retreat to escape the reality of everyday life and the bustle and hustle of working life. Located in the very Southeast of Ireland the hotel is tucked away in the midst of 160 acres of woodland, with a private riverside walk to the stunning white sands of Ballymoney beach. You will also find yourself focusing on the dramatic backdrop of Tara Hill. This really is the perfect base to relax, unwind and completely escape the real world. The resort embodies luxury and comfort with their impeccable range of rooms and suites. It offers comfort at every turn.

Micheal Cunningham, hotel manager, took time out of his busy schedule in August to tell me a bit more about the hotel, his work there, and the area in general.

It's so clear from talking to Mr Cunningham just how much he loves his job here, and his real passion for the hotel and spa exudes overload. He told me that he moved from the West of Ireland to the hotel near 18 years ago. The hotel was less than a year old at the time. He loved the location and the product that he remains firm now in 2025. And from my meeting with him, he has no plans to leave any time soon, and that can only be good for this wonderful resort.

Mr Cunningham told me that the 4-star Spa is the footprint of the hotel. The Spa will both relax and rejuvenate all who visit. You can indulge in a wide range of massages and treatments there. The hub of skilled therapists will see to your individual needs, and you will enjoy a truly rewarding experience.

The Spa is for 'over 16's' only and allows the guests using it to have a complete relaxed environment. In the award-winning Oceo Spa here you really will discover something that exceeds all expectation. Boasting 14 treatment rooms, thermal suites, a 16-metre hydrotherapy pool, outdoor vitality pool and sunken private spa gardens, it is designed for your complete relaxation, and it is for grown-ups only! You can follow all or some of that with lunch or just coffee in the Spa Café. What's not to love about this part of the resort!

Although the Oceo Spa caters for 'over 16's' the hotel itself is very welcoming to families and is loved

by its many families that return to it. With its extensive parkland and access to beaches, there's never a dull moment here for the little ones. The new outdoor playground has a zip-line, swings, slides, merry-go-rounds and more. It's a playground to beat all others and will keep the little ones entertained for hours. And if preferred, there is always the Courtown Adventure Centre just a

10-minute drive away. Another added benefit for families is that the hotel can offer babysitting services and a kids menu. This resort really does cater for all.

Micheal mentioned that the hotel underwent a refurbishing during the lockdown. 'The final two suites were completed just last year' he added. In his, the managers words, 'it's looking good.' Micheal also added, 'we're a

restaurant within this undoubtedly finest luxury which this resort on the East Coast of Ireland has to offer. They have talented chefs cooking fresh local produce, innovative cooking in this glorious dining room, with superb views and the best possible service. Every dining experience will be a special and a memorable one.

The hotel is located just outside Gorey town, Co. Wexford. Gorey town, being a commuter town to Dublin city, allows visitors here to travel to the capital city in just over an hour by car, and less than 2 and a half hours by train. It is also situated in the heart of the East County and that leaves visitors within short distance to Ireland's 'Ancient East'. This is an area where vibrant history meets modern life. It provides the opportunity to have memorable food experiences, wander down the cobbled streets of medieval towns and explore the gorgeous gardens of this scenic region. This Ancient East is known as the land of Myths and legends,

and of course the birthplace of Irish culture. Explore Powerscourt Estate, Newgrange, Glendalough, Cobh, Waterford Viking Triangle, Hook Head Lighthouse, Dunbrody Famine Ship, Kilkenny and so much more. Make sure you venture into the ancient times and explore this period of Irish history. It's all within a short distance from Seafield.

And of course, when you visit take the time to enjoy the town of Gorey. A town rich in history, culture, and sheer natural beauty. Visit Gorey Castle which dates back to the 13th century. Discover the towns quaint shops, boutiques and art galleries. Enjoy the natural world in the outstanding landscapes surrounding Gorey. Walk in the nearby Courtown Woods which boasts a forest with walking trials leading to stunning views of the Irish Sea. You are spoiled for choices with the huge array of beautiful beaches nearby. And just a short drive away you will find Wells House and Gardens. This attraction will enchant visitors with its fabulous Victorian architecture and perfectly manicured gardens.

You will also find Gorey train station nearby to which you can travel North to Belfast or Derry or go further South to Waterford or as far as Cork. The Seafield Hotel & Spa Resort is a gateway to the island of Ireland, or just a place to relax in the luxury that is the resort.

Ireland is fortunate to be a hospitality hub from North to South, East to West, and here in the Southeast at The Seafield Hotel & Spa Resort you really won't be disappointed, or short of something to do. They have something for everyone, and when you leave you will probably be planning your return!



First off, I want to say how much I enjoyed seeing Ballymena's own action hero, Liam Neeson, starring in the comedy The Naked Gun, which opened at theaters August 1 and has grossed close to \$60m so far worldwide



Liam Neeson with his iBAM! 2015 (Irish Books, Arts & Music Award)

- let us hope there will be a sequel!

A few days after The Naked Gun hit the screens, season two of Wednesday premiered on Netflix, with 50 million views in five days, and further episodes due in a few weeks. Many people might not realize that it was shot in Ireland, specifically in locations around Counties Wicklow, Dublin and Offaly. Co-showrunners and executive producers Alfred Gough and Miles Millar called the filming locations "truly magical," and said they were the perfect backdrop for the series.

"It adds a sense of timeless beauty, wonder, and epic spectacle to the world of Wednesday, and it's no coincidence that Dracula author Bram Stoker hailed from Dublin, and his stories were inspired by the stories of Irish folklore."

Dramatic Irish landscapes can be seen throughout in the series, including Powerscourt Demesne in Enniskerry, with its stunning waterfall and gardens, which you might recognize already from Vikings and Disenchanted.

The gothic Charleville Castle in County Offaly makes an appearance too, and it has been seen before in Becoming Jane and The Tudors. The atmospheric Deansgrange Cemetery in Dublin also appears; it's the final resting place of former Irish Taoiseach Seán Lemass and singer Sinéad O'Connor.

Jenna Ortega leads the cast as supernatural detective Wednesday Addams, alongside regular cast members Isaac Ordonez (Pugsley), Catherine Zeta Jones (Morticia), Luis Guzmán (Gomez), Victor Dorobantu (Thing) and more. New series regulars include Steve Buscemi and Billie Piper, and there will be appearances from Christopher Lloyd, Joanna Lumley and Thandie Newton.

"This season Wednesday's journey is darker and more complex as she navigates family, friends, new mysteries, and old



adversaries, propelling her headlong into another year at Nevermore," said Gough and Millar.

Hopefully coming our way soon - it's already out in the UK and Ireland - is Saipan, the movie version of the infamous confrontation between iconic Republic of Ireland soccer captain Roy Keane (played by Eanna Hardwicke) and his national team manager Mick McCarthy (Steve Coogan) during the team's preparations for the 2002 FIFA World Cup.

Soccer fans may still recall this sensation, but for others the story is about the intense rivalry between two strong personalities that transcended the game and gripped an entire nation. On the surface the feud was all about

It's directed by award-winning filmmakers Lisa Barros D'Sa and Glenn Leyburn and is based on an original



Amybeth McNulty

standards, but deep down it was a hugely emotive story of two men whose rivalry and contempt came to surpass the sport they loved.

Finally, definitely coming in the future - November and December to be precise, and also on Netflix - is the fifth and last season of *Stranger Things*, which will include actor Amybeth McNulty, who was born in in the small town of Milford, County Donegal - a place historically and wonderfully called Ballynagaloglag.

She plays Vickie, a student at Hawkins High School, though you may know her already from her starring role as Anne Shirley in the CBC/Netflix drama series Anne with an E.

In *Stranger Things 5* her character is involved in the school band, where she plays the clarinet. She's quirky, friendly, fast-talking, and clearly has a unique personality that stands out from the crowd.

Not familiar with the show? You might want to catch up on the first few seasons before you go diving in!

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On the Law
Matthew Gannon, John Scanlon,
Martin Healy, Jr. and Kevin Veugeler
**HEALY SCANLON
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TRIAL ATTORNEYS

This is the next of a series of columns on how the law can impact your life. The articles will focus on various aspects of the law relating to personal injuries, those that happen both on-the-job and otherwise, including mishaps which occur in driving vehicles, using products, and receiving medical care. The column will also respond to legal questions relating to personal injury that are sent to us.

Healy Scanlon Veugeler Gannon is a law firm comprised of eight trial attorneys and four "Of Counsel" attorneys, two of whom are from Ireland. We are located downtown at 161 N. Clark Street, Suite 2200, Chicago, Illinois 60601 (312-977-0100) (overlooking Daley Center). www.HSVGLaw.com. The firm concentrates in the representation of injured victims of all types of accidents.

Readers are encouraged to call or write with questions concerning personal injury law.

Eat, Drink, and Be Weary: Social Host Liability in Illinois

One party. One bad decision. That's all it takes to turn a social event into a legal nightmare. Here are some things to keep in mind when hosting guests to ensure you stay out of the courtroom.

Minor Consumption, Major Problem
Most states have some form of law dealing with "social host liability." Event hosts can be civilly or criminally liable for underaged drinking occurring in their homes, even if the host was not aware this drinking was taking place. Since 2004, the social host law in Illinois holds adults accountable for serving or providing alcohol to a minor or permitting the use of alcohol by a minor. The statute specifically imposes civil liability for "any person at least 18 years of age who willfully supplies alcoholic liquor or illegal drugs to a person under 18 years of age." Under the statute, the victim can recover economic damages, non-economic damages, attorney's fees, and in some circumstances punitive damages.

Under the current law, an adult host is held liable for the injuries to persons or damages to property caused by an alcohol-impaired minor who consumed alcohol in the host's home. It is important to note that this liability remains whether the host provided the alcohol or merely facilitated an environment for its consumption, and it applies even if the host was not present while the alcohol was being consumed.

The statute covers not only injuries to the teen, but also to any third-party victims of the intoxication. If the intoxicated teenager leaves the home and gets into an accident, the homeowner providing the alcohol may be responsible not only for the injuries suffered by the teen, but also the injuries suffered by any other person involved in the accident.

Looking to place the duty of reasonable care on mature adults, legislators specifically eliminated any theory of contributory negligence of the minor from the statute. The Act states,

"Neither contributory negligence nor contributory willful and wanton conduct shall apply to any injured party claiming damages under this Act." It does not matter that the minor may be acting carelessly; the homeowner may still be found liable for their actions.

Don't Let Your Premises Be Your Nemesis: How to Satisfy the Duty of Reasonable Care

Premises liability laws vary from state to state but generally all share the same basic principles. As the host of social events, an owner or occupier of land owes their guests a duty of reasonable care under the circumstances. This duty of protection extends to dangerous conditions on the premises which the host was or should have been aware of. Failure to provide warning of, or protection from, such dangerous conditions which guests could not reasonably discover on their own establishes a host's breach of duty if an injury was to occur. A host is exposed to liability for injuries suffered as a result of this breach, regardless of the severity of the injury. If the owner or occupier of the premises fails to satisfy

their duty of reasonable

care, that breach of duty could make them responsible for payment of the injured person's medical bills and other injury-related expenses including, but not limited

Pool Safety: Avoiding the Deep End of Liability

Private swimming pools pose a significant risk of harm to all persons, specifically young children. Illinois law generally imposes a duty upon private pool owners to maintain their pools in reasonable safe condition and to warn of any dangerous conditions that are not open and obvious. This rule is similar to the rule governing premises liability.

The Illinois House of Representatives has recently proposed the Private Swimming Pool Enclosure Act. If passed, this Act would require that in-ground pools on residential property must be "enclosed by a fence, wall, or other effective permanent barrier of 42 inches or greater height." The

enclosure requirement would also apply to jacuzzies and above-ground pools with a height of less than forty-two inches. Under this act, pool owners would be held liable for expenses and costs related to injuries caused by a failure to provide these protective enclosures.

Conclusion

Whether it be hosting a pool party, barbecue, or other summer event, a little extra care in the short run can mean that your saying "I'll have another one" remains a reference to drinks and not incoming lawsuits. As a guest, if you or someone you know is injured, feel free to contact Healy Scanlon Veugeler Gannon, and we would be happy to assist.

By Maxwell X. Campbell

Maxwell X. Campbell, a former law clerk and now incoming associate at Healy Scanlon Veugeler Gannon, is a recent graduate from DePaul University College of Law. He was a writer for the DePaul Law Review and was on the Dean's List.



Phil Coulter Releases For Another King And Country

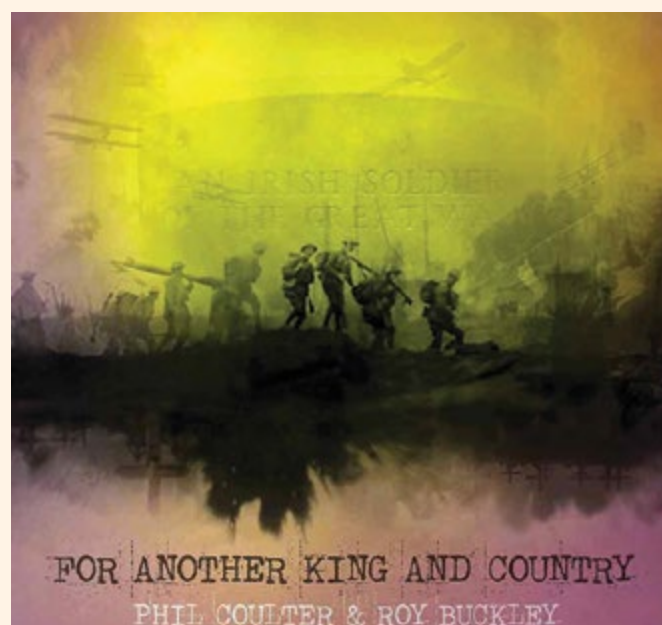
Phil Coulter & Roy Buckley.

This is more than just a song. It is a tragic story from the First World War. It is an Irish "Saving Private Ryan", without the happy ending.

In the early days of WW I, before the full horrors unfolded, Irishmen were encouraged to join the British Army. Times were hard, jobs were scarce and the future was bleak. The added incentive, as promoted by John Redmond M.P., leader of the Irish Parliamentary Party, was that in return for this support, Ireland would be granted Home Rule.

Six Collins brothers from a poor family in Waterford city answered the call and joined up. Four of them fell in the battles of Flanders and the Somme. One died later of his terrible wounds and the remaining brother William, was sent home on compassionate leave.

The political landscape had changed dramatically while he was gone. The 1916 Rebellion had captured the minds and hearts of the Irish people. Having been waved off to war as a hero, William returned as an



unwelcome supporter of the English Crown, as a pariah in his own town.

My great friend RALPH McTELL has long had a fascination with WW 1 and has written very movingly on the era. When I shared with him that I'd just uncovered the story of the Collins brothers he told me that I needed to write a song about it. I thought I'd introduce some fresh energy into the creative process so I invited Ryan Hennessy & Jimmy Rainsford of PICTURE THIS to join me.

When it came to matching a singer to the song, one name came to mind straight away. Cork folksinger ROY BUCKLEY was the perfect voice. Known as 'the last of the balladeers' Roy is steeped in that storytelling tradition and, as if to underline the connection, his Great Grandfather fought in WW 1.

I've been blessed to have worked with some the giants in this tradition, LUKE KELLY, FINBAR FUREY, PADDY REILLY, LIAM CLANCY and it's been quite a while since those days. I've really enjoyed returning to this world and have found this project to be a joy from beginning to end.

Given the state of the world right now, I believe that a story that reminds us of the horrors and futility of war is timely.

Phil Coulter
Available at
Spotify, Amazon,
and Apple Music

Young Irish Fellowship Club of Chicago Hold Another Successful 'Golf & Give' Outing

Write-Up and Photos By: Fiona Gaffney and Eileen O'Gorman

The Young Irish Fellowship Club of Chicago (YIFC) hosted its annual golf outing, the Celtic Cup, Saturday, August 16th, at the Old Orchard Country Club.

The event drew over 120 golfers and volunteers to Mount Prospect to support YIFC's 2025 charity partners: Pat's Mac Pack and Mercy Home for Boys & Girls. Pat's Mac Pack raises money for pediatric brain tumor research in memory of Patrick McNamara. Mercy Home for Boys & Girls saves young lives by providing a safe home environment, development tools, and critical support so they can reach their full potential. Both charities hold a special place in the Chicago Irish community, and YIFC is grateful to contribute to their incredible work this year.

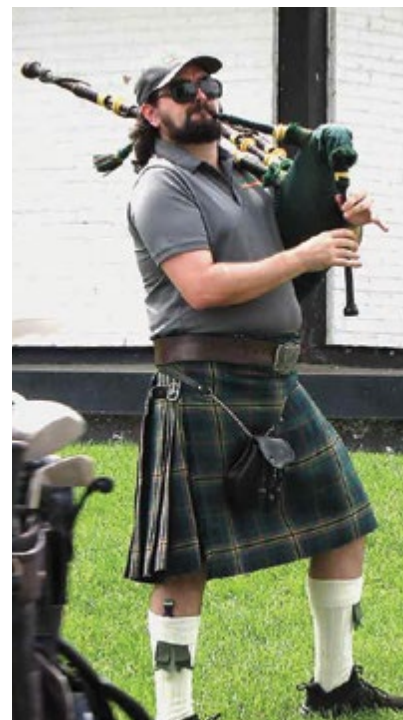
The day started bright and early at The Emerald Loop for check-in and a welcome party. After arrival at Old Orchard, participants were welcomed to practice on the driving range before a lively bagpipe send-off. Across 18 holes, golfers were able to compete in sponsored competitions such as Closest to the Hole, Longest Drive, and Beat the Pro. Winners took home bottles of Keeper's Heart Whiskey, who are a valued sponsorship partner. Although the golfing ended early due to rainy weather, the festivities continued through an extended reception with

raffle prizes ranging from golf gear to Chicago sporting tickets to Kerrygold goodies. The night ended in celebration at The Kerryman.

We are grateful to all our sponsors, especially The Irish Fellowship Club, Schulze & Burch Biscuit, Vaughan Hospitality Group, Flood Brothers, Keeper's Heart, Rose Insurance Group, Buckley Builders, O'Briens Riverwalk Cafe, The Local 150, The Patrick J. Harney Family, Tone Products, and CBRE. All in all, The Celtic Cup was a great success and we cannot wait to see everyone back on the course next year!

The YIFC is always welcoming to new members. It is a great club to make friends and network while raising money for Chicagoland charities. Join us for our monthly First Thursday Happy Hour events. You can also come out to support our next event partnering with the Irish American Heritage Center to celebrate Halfway to St. Patrick's Day in September.

For more information on The Young Irish Fellowship Club of Chicago, upcoming events, and membership, please visit our website at www.youngirish.com or follow us on Instagram @youngirishfc.



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Retreat Country House in Co Cork Let’s You Get Away in Style, and With Privacy, all While Staying in the Heart of Ireland

By Grainne McCool,
Irish Correspondent

West Cork in Southern Ireland is well renowned for it’s scenery and scenic areas. Much accommodation can be found throughout the county, but nestled just outside Bandon town is a much sought after abode, The Retreat Country House. Miriam O’Driscoll established The Retreat Country House business in 2022 with her daughter Valerie and son, Edward. A business grown from family and evolving continually from familial love and passion.

The Retreat is more than just a

pay its way. The strong woman that Valerie’s Mum clearly is, she took the latter option and showed resilience and determination in a way that is evident in the families survival after loss and their togetherness in business. ‘The gardens wouldn’t be what they are if it wasn’t for Edward’ Valerie says. Her admiration for him shining through in her words. ‘Mum put a trojan amount of work into the house to get it ready, and continues to do so to this day’. That ‘family love-affair’ is continually to the fore and at this Retreat’s core.

The Retreat Country House only has been owned ever by two families. As you

weeks prior to our talking that a wedding took place right there. ‘A couple eloped here just recently’ she said, ‘and it showed what a great base it really is for such an occasion.’ Valerie continued, ‘this really is the perfect location to host a small wedding with up to 30 guests.’

The house sits secluded amidst near 30 acres of land and provides the ideal location for complete privacy and relaxation. The warmth of the homely welcome you receive only serves to further the love of this family for the house/business. At all times, it really is more than just a business. As you

Golf Club’ just a short drive also.

And very nearby is the Michael Collins Centre Museum. This is a very popular attraction and welcomes people worldwide annually. The museum is famous for its live dramatized illustrated presentations, during which photographs and maps are used to tell the story of Michael Collins in a traditional Irish style. The museum is home to one of the most extensive collections of artefacts in Ireland associated with the 1916 Rebellion, Irish War of Independence and the Irish Civil War - including six personal items connected to Michael Collins. A guided tour of this collection and the outdoor exhibits are all included in the presentation. More information on the



business, it’s clearly a ‘family love affair with the family home’. I spoke with Valerie about the business and how it all came to be. Passion oozes out of Valerie, the owner’s daughter, as she talks of her beloved home and how it has evolved into the family business. It is often said that it is the people who make a home, and here it really is the family who make this house a real home, a welcoming one, for everyone who comes to stay.

Dad PJ died just 8 years ago and it was then that the business idea took seed. Valerie says he would not only be shocked at her Mum’s initiative, but also very proud. After a sudden death the upkeep of the house meant either selling it or making the house itself help

O’Sullivans and The O’Driscolls. Both families have legal professions, and both have an interest in horses. It’s no coincidence that there are such similarities. Both also had/have a passion for the house and its gardens. The sense of familial love has been passed down over the generations.

When speaking of the extensive gardens that surround this beautiful 18th Century Georgian House, Valerie is incredibly proud of the work her brother does there. ‘Edward is also very much part of the running of this wonderful property and the gardens are what they are because of him.’ It’s clear that this is an exclusive guest house but with a genuine families love at its core.

And in relation to those very special, very lovingly tended gardens, Valerie told me how just a few

unwind in this lap of country luxury, you really will feel like Lord/Lady of the Manor. And you won’t want to leave!!

As you approach the house along the tree-lined driveway, you catch a glimpse of it in the gaps. With sufficient space for a number of cars, once parked up you have the choice to remain in this exclusive setting or plan adventures in the local area; of which there are numerous.

Valerie tells me that The Retreat Country House is just 20 minutes from the Wild Atlantic Way - a journey that will take you along the beautiful scenic western coast of Ireland to the very top of the country right here in Donegal! It’s also a short drive to the West Cork Distillery and the world famous, Blarney Stone. One of Ireland’s

culinary hubs, Kinsale, is less than half an hour away. Golf lovers will find the ‘Old Head

centre/museum can be found online at www.michaelcollinscentre.com

This Retreat really is in a prime location with a doorway to so much of our beautiful country. And an opportunity to step into so much of our rich Irish history.

With its six bedrooms the Retreat can house 12 guests. A luxurious sweeping staircase will take you up to these. All bedrooms have bathroom access, be it ensuite, Jack ‘n Jill or bathroom just nearby, each room is fully accommodated and inclusive of much storage space.

Downstairs you have the availability of the spacious kitchen with a large dining table to enjoy your relaxed, holiday breakfast. Enjoy the comfort



What to make for dinner? It’s 94 degrees outside and I really don’t feel like cooking. I also don’t want to go out to eat and spend \$50 to \$75 dollars on two burgers and a couple of beers. So what ingredients do I have in my fridge that I bought on sale at the grocery store this week?

Let’s see. What’s on sale. 13-15 count Argentinean Red Shrimp, \$7.95 per pound ½lb \$3.98

Peaches, .99 a pound 5oz .31
Butter lettuce & mixed greens, both \$1.99 each 4oz \$1.99
Avocados, .69 each ½ .36
Green onions, .69 a bunch 2 .05
Large eggs, \$1.99 2 .35
Grape tomatoes .99 12oz 4oz .25
Lemons .39 each 1 .39
Lemon zest 1 lemon
Total \$7.68

From my pantry:
Mayonnaise .20 per oz 2oz .40
Heavy whipping cream .18 per oz 2oz .36

of home with the aga and feel the warmth of the real Irish homestead. Take time to enjoy dinner in the formal dining room, relax beforehand in the drawing room, have a quite read in the library space or sit by the stove in the second sitting room. This house is just awaiting your visit and ready to welcome you on every door you walk through. With a real sense of magnificence you also find a real sense of home. The family home element of the Retreat is ever present.

As the owner of the Retreat is a pet lover, you are welcome to bring a maximum of two pets on your stay there and asked to keep them in the downstairs area. The homely feeling related to here really is endless.

When you book The Retreat Country House, you are not only booking a holiday; you are booking an experience and you are booking a little piece of family history. A history steeped in love for the property and the grounds that accompany it. On meeting Miriam, Valerie and Edward, you discover that the family love that is ingrained in the walls of this home now exudes to all who visit. Whether you walk the gardens, read in the library area, dine in the fine dining room or relax in your chosen bedroom, you will at all times experience the ghosts of families past spreading a family love and passion for the walls you are within. And they encourage you to relax and enjoy their territory, their family home. The Retreat Country House is indeed a Retreat, but it is one created from familial love.

Chili or cocktail sauce .20 per ounce 1oz .20
Capers .56 per ounce 1oz .56
Dijon mustard .17 per ounce .5oz .09
Gorgonzola cheese \$1.10 per ounce 2oz \$2.20
Lemon juice 1 lemon Salt .01
Pepper .02
Garlic powder ¼ tspoon .05
Dried tarragon ½ tspoon .25
Olive oil 2 tablespoons .60
Total \$4.74

Grand total \$12.22 or \$6.11 per person

This is how I used to price out the menu items at my



restaurants.

If you divide the cost by the suggested sale price you get your food cost

\$6.11 divided by \$29= 21% which any restaurant would love to have.

What can you get to eat that is comparable for \$6.11? This is less than the average cost of a Big Mac in the U.S. and ½ the cost of a pickup pepperoni pizza from Dominos..

I guess what I’m trying to say is eat smart, eat fresh, and eat healthy. I took my grandson out for his birthday last week and ordered a similar salad in a fairly nice restaurant and paid \$29. The only ingredient you may not have is capers. Substitute a sweet or dill relish instead. I made this for dinner the other night and it only took about 20 minutes. This is the perfect dish to serve on a hot summer afternoon or evening. Now I don’t expect you to be pricing out your meals every night, but I wanted to give you an example of what six bucks can buy you.

This is the type of recipe that allows you to add a variety of additional ingredients like cucumbers or even beets. If you want more shrimp, or avocado, or perhaps you prefer crab meat, be my guest. The

addition of whipped cream to the dressing adds a silky lightness that the French refer to as a mouseline. It’s great for two or twenty. Serve this with some bubbly, or dry white wine like a Sauvignon Blanc from New Zealand, a French Chardonnay, or even a dry Pinot Grigio from Italy.

Shrimp Louie for 2
8 colossal size shrimp shell on 13-15 or larger
2 tablespoons olive oil
½ teaspoon salt
½ teaspoon black pepper
¼ teaspoon garlic powder
½ teaspoon tarragon
½ of the lemon juice

Add all the dry ingredients, olive oil, and frozen shrimp in a bowl . mix and place in a covered sauté pan add a splash of water or white wine, and lemon juice., Cover

boil, cover and remove from the heat. Let rest covered for 20 minutes. Drain, and rinse eggs under cold water, or place in an ice bath until cooled Peel the eggs under cold water and slice in half or quarters. The shells should peel away easily and the yolks will not turn green.

Arrange lettuce leaves on a plate. Garnish with tomatoes, peach and avocado slices. Add sliced eggs, and crumbled gorgonzola cheese. Place shrimp on a row on top of the salad. Spoon and drizzle the dressing over the shrimp and greens, and garnish with lemon zest, green onions, and capers. Add a sprig of basil leaves, and you have the perfect summer meal.

Louie Dressing
2 oz mayonnaise

2 oz heavy whipping cream
1 oz chili, or cocktail sauce
1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
1 tablespoon chopped capers
½ of the lemon juice

Whip heavy cream in a bowl until thickened, add remaining ingredients and blend. Refrigerate until needed.

This recipe can look intimidating with a lot of ingredients and steps, but it really isn’t that difficult.

Make sure you have all your ingredients prepped and ready. Then it’s a matter of cooking the shrimp and eggs, making the dressing, and arranging your plate with the rest of the ingredients. The extra effort is well worth the end result.

Good Eating!

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CHICAGO GAELIC PARK

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

A Cháirde:

August was a brilliant month here and we thank everyone who enjoyed it with us. In the first part of the month, we had exciting Chicago GAA finals action, a wonderful Kids' Irish Cultural Camp, and a concert with Bernadette Morris. There were wonderful nights of conversation and music in the beer garden and delicious rib nights. Later in the month we commemorated Our Lady of Knock, we welcomed Galway City Mayor Michael Cubbard and his delegation, and we welcomed thousands of you to Irish Fest 2025.

Thanks to all of you who were part of our August, and a special thanks to our volunteers and staff for all their contributions.

Le gach dea-ghuí,
Bill O'Sullivan - President of the Board of Directors



Go raibh
maith
agat!



Thanks for
joining us
at Irish Fest
2025!



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CGP Event Calendar

Visit chicagogaelicpark.com for more information.

- September 4 - CGP GOLF OUTING
- September 7 - GAELIC PARK BOOK CLUB
- September 26 - FOUR C NOTES DINNER & SHOW
- October 17 - FLIGHTS & FLANNELS
- October 26 - FAMILY HALLOWEEN PARTY

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- September 2 - JAM SESSION & CAR SHOW
- September 4 - TRAD THURSDAY
- September 5 - GERRY HAUGHEY
- September 6 - LIAM DURKIN
- September 7 - CELTIC ROOTS
- September 9 - JAM SESSION & CAR SHOW
- September 11 - THE FABTONES
- September 12 - KIERAN BYRNE
- September 13 - ELROY ACOUSTIC
- September 14 - DAVE ROBEY
- September 16 - JAM SESSION & CAR SHOW
- September 18 - TRAD THURSDAY
- September 19 - BERNIE GLIM
- September 20 - O'LEARY'S LANTERN
- September 21 - SUSIE J
- September 23 - JAM SESSION & CAR SHOW
- September 25 - SMILEY TILMON BAND
- September 26 - ST. JAMES GATE
- September 27 - RAY GAVIN
- September 28 - COLIN CURTIN & SAMI DUPREE
- September 30 - JAM SESSION & CAR SHOW

Friday, October 17

FLIGHTS & FLANNELS

Stay tuned to @YoungGaelicAssociation on Instagram for updates! Tickets will be on sale at our Box Office soon.



Gaelic Park Players Presents Fall 2025

Big Maggie

by John B. Keane

Fridays, November 14th
and 21st - 8:00 PM

Saturdays, November 15th
and 22nd - 8:00 PM

Sundays, November 16th
and 23rd - 3:00 PM

Director: Maureen Weber
Assistant Director: Liz Tinley

Follow us on Facebook: Gaelic Park Players • Website: www.GaelicParkPlayers.org
Big Maggie is presented by special arrangements with the Drama League of Ireland



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Gairdín Beorach before
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Friday: Bar Opens 3pm - 1am (Kitchen 5pm - 9pm)

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Sunday: Bar Opens 12pm - 11pm (Kitchen 2pm-7pm)

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- Gaelic Park Players
- Heritage and Harvest Day
- Children's Irish Cultural Camp
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Four C Notes Concert
Dinner & A Show
Friday, September 26

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Chicago's Own, Jim Dooley of the Dooley Brothers Has Passed Away

Dear Friends,
It is with very heavy hearts that we inform you of the passing of our beloved Jim - father, brother, uncle and long-time bandmate. He died peacefully at his home on August 8 surrounded by his family after a heroic battle with stage 4 colon cancer.

Jim was a supremely talented musician, superb vocalist, brilliant guitarist, arranger, and a prolific songwriter, poet, artist, nature photographer, husband and father. Jim formed the original Dooley musical group with his brothers in 1966 and the band has given many thousands of performances from then until this year. The popular group has been a Chicago institution for six decades. NPR radio has called them the longest continuously running band in the Chicago area after the Chicago Symphony Orchestra.

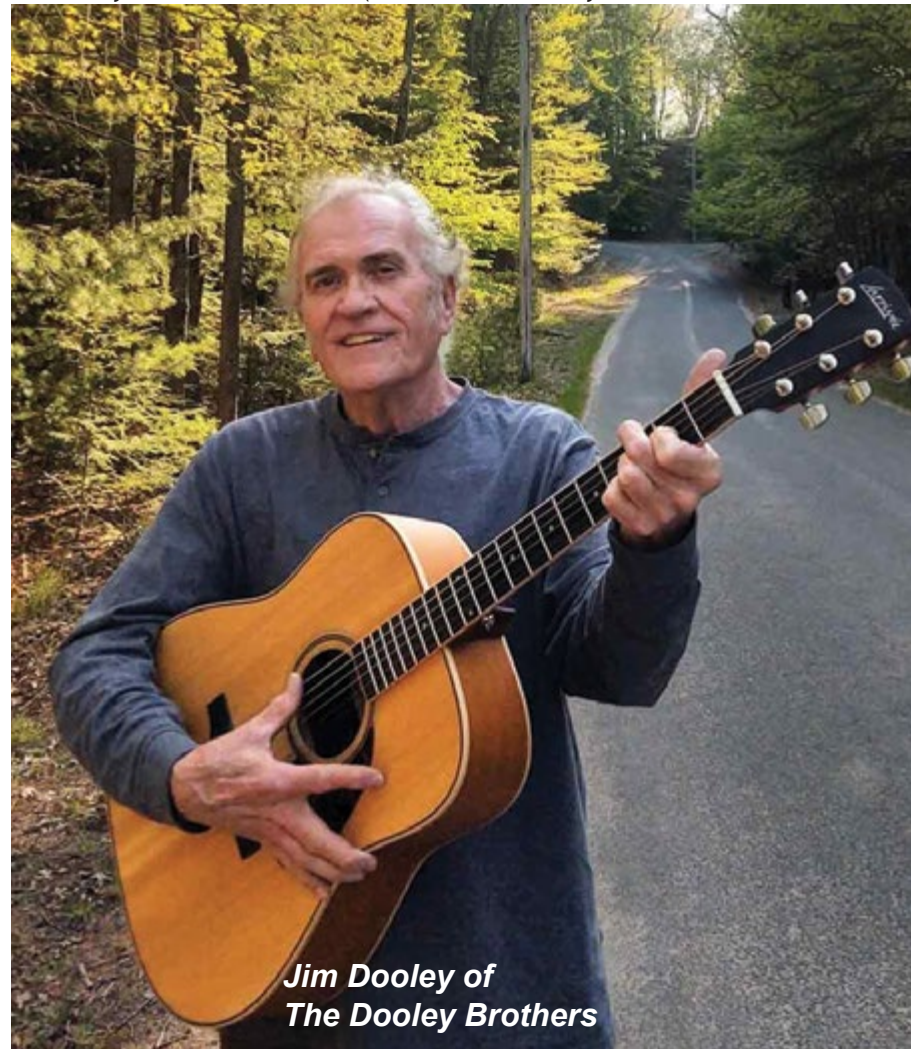
He was born into a musical and artistic family. His grandfather, T.W. McMullin, performed Irish music hall ballads in the 1890s on Lake Michigan cruise ships and at Strening's Saloon at 11th and Blue Island Avenue on the near southwest side of Chicago. Jim's other grandfather, Tommy Dooley, was a popular fiddler from County Clare Ireland who settled in the Chicago area and was the first captain of Cicero's fire department. Jim's father, Thomas Dooley, was a photo engraver at the Chicago Tribune where he composed and set the colors for the Sunday comics. Avis McMullin Dooley, Jim's mother, was a pastel portrait artist who had an art studio on Michigan Avenue in Chicago with her sister Marion in the 1930s. Avis also exhibited her artwork at the Chicago World's Fair of 1933-34 and later became an accomplished landscape artist.

Jim started out singing at home with his brothers, harmonizing and recording the popular doo-wop songs of the 1950s on a Webcor reel-to-reel tape recorder that our father had given us on Christmas Day, 1956. Sometimes Jim and his brothers would hurry home from grammar school during the lunch hour to make these recordings. Appreciating all kinds of music, Jim and his brothers moved on to harmonizing barbershop quartet music and singing the songs of the Kingston Trio and many other folk music artists of the day. During his high school days, Jim fronted a rock band with some friends called "The Group Incorporated" playing the current '60s popular songs at local high school dances in the Oak Park area.

As he began his college years, in 1966 Jim, along with brothers Joe and Bill, founded the original Dooley musical group known at the time as "The Dooley Boys" and started playing at colleges and various coffeehouses and nightclubs in and around Chicago especially in the Old Town and Rush Street areas. A few years later, their youngest brother Mike joined the group and the four of them became known as "The Dooley Brothers." This group would go on to play many thousands of performances in the ensuing decades. NPR radio has called them the longest continuously running band in the Chicago area after the

Chicago Symphony Orchestra. Dooley Band with Jim Dooley (2nd from right)

In the 1970s and 1980s the band performed regularly at music clubs on Chicago's north side including The Roxy, The Barbarossa, The Bulls, Wise Fools Pub, Orphans, Ratso's, Holsteins, The Earl of Old Town, Somebody Else's Troubles and (one of



Jim Dooley of The Dooley Brothers

their favorites) The Kilkenny Castle Inn. One of the band's mainstay nightclubs was FitzGerald's in Berwyn, where the band played regularly from the club's opening month in 1980 up to this past March, when the band played at the FitzGerald's St. Patrick's Day Celebration for the 40th time. Another regular spot for the band was the Irish American Heritage Center where the band has done over five hundred appearances since the Center opened in 1985 all the way to the present year.

In between these club appearances there were myriad other shows: the brothers were featured on the Emmy Award winning television show "Nightclubbing" on PBS Channel 11;



numerous radio appearances; King Richard's Renaissance Faire in the 1970s; the house band for Marshall Field's State Street Store at Christmas and for their other events in the 1980s; summers performing in the pubs of County Clare, Ireland while living at their cousin's farm there, auditorium concerts, festivals, and community outdoor concerts.

Jim and the band just completed recording, which will be released in the coming months.

Jim had many musical and varied influences. Some of them were The Kingston Trio, Bix Beiderbecke, Bing Crosby, Donovan, Django Reinhardt, Antonio Carlos Jobim, Claude Debussy and Maurice Ravel. Jim was one of those rare persons who was a naturally-talented musician. He was self-taught and never learned to read music. He would just play guitar and sing at home for hours and hours for the sheer pleasure of it. He could hear a song once and just sing it or play it right back on his guitar. He developed a unique guitar finger-picking technique that was all his own.

Jim simply loved to entertain people and bring a smile to their faces. He always said one of his favorite things about performing was connecting with and talking with all the folks who would come out to a show. When he performed at a show, he never gave less than 100 percent of everything he had, from start to finish, never paced himself or coasted through a show.

Jim was passionate about music and life and love. Over and above everything he loved his family the most: his wife Anna, his daughter Claire, his late son Jimmy, his parents Avis and Thomas, and his brothers Mike, Bill, Joe, Dennis and Tom. There are many others in the Dooley clan that he loved, nieces and nephews, sisters-in-law, uncles and aunts. And his many, many friends were important to him.

"The honor of my life has been performing with my Dad on stage, playing guitar with him at our house, and our voices harmonizing together. As our voices harmonized together, so did we." - Claire

There will be a Celebration of Life service for Jim sometime this fall. Notification will be sent out.

Love, The Dooleys
Claire, Mike and Mick

In February of this past year, Jim, Mike, Claire and Mick got together and recorded a video interview delving into the folklore of the band, their philosophy of music, as well as other anecdotes.

It is now available to view and listen to on YouTube on the Dooley Band Channel.

tunes & tartans light up naperville irish fest!



September 19 & 20, 2025
Central Park, 104 E. Benton Ave.
Downtown Naperville

Join us for two days of live music, Irish dance, Irish food & vendors, bagpipes, and family fun in downtown Naperville!

CHECK OUT THIS YEAR'S LINEUP!

Music (Friday, September 19)

- 3:30p - Firefighters Highland Guard of Naperville
- 4:00p - McNulty Irish Dancers
- 5:15p - Celtic Roots
- 6:45p - Larkin & Moran Brothers
- 8:15p - Brigid's Cross

Music (Saturday, September 20)

- 12:00p - Bailey Murray Academy of Irish Dance
- 12:55p - Firefighters Highland Guard of Naperville
- 1:25p - McNulty Irish Dancers
- 2:40p - Small Batch
- 3:55p - Bentley Academy of Irish Dance
- 5:10p - On The Lash
- 6:40p - Whiskey Mick
- 8:10p - Classical Blast

Irish Culture

- Irish Culture Tent
- Q&A with the Consulate of Ireland in Chicago
- Irish genealogy with the Ancestry Sisters
- History of the Mother Jones Project
- Two (2) Irish book authors
- Learn about the Irish language
- Irish hurling & Gaelic football demos
- Guinness glass etching
- Guinness & whiskey tastings
- Many Irish vendors

Family Fun!

- St. Patrick & leprechaun photo opportunities
- Playground (enclosed within Fest grounds)
- Face painting
- Home Depot wood crafts
- Kids' parade
- Storytelling

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\$10 each or 2 for \$15 🍀 **Kids 12 & under are free.**

After 9/12: \$15 each or 2 for \$25



Get the full schedule of events >> WSIrish.org/IrishFest



Leigh Fowler, Whiskey Mick fiddler

I always love the game of choosing one word to describe something or to describe an experience. I did just that after a recent weekend with three of my girlfriends. A few friends and I hopped in the car, and after a full tour of Arlington Heights on the way (thank you, Jamie and Kelly; I really want to see all your high school jobs next time), we made it to Milwaukee Irish Fest. It had everything one could want, and this fest truly knows how to

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CONNECTIONS
BY ELYSE LYONS PFANDLER

have a great time. It is the world's largest, with over 130,000 people attending the Fest each year to watch nearly 250 acts on 17 stages. You walk into the huge gates under a sign that says "Cead Mile Fáilte," and you know you are going to have a good day when, to the left, you hear an Irish session just starting and to your right you see a sea of Irish dancers heading to the Aer Lingus stage for a performance. Magical was the word I chose to describe the Fest.

This past weekend was a celebration. That is the word my friend Jamie chose to describe the Fest. If you are looking to listen to some fabulous Irish musicians, you can find all kinds here. There were a few on our list that we really wanted to see, but mainly wandered in and out of tents and stages and heard fabulous musicians. A few highlights were Cherish the Ladies, The Michael McGoldrick Family Band, Rory Makem, and when Skerryvore played "Fisherman's Blues." There were so many talented musicians and dancers that I wished I could see them all. It is so impressive and truly mesmerizing. Listening to some of these musicians is so emotional, and I would also describe it as very peaceful. People had their green festive attire on and are ready for a party.

This past weekend was filling. That is the word my friend Kelly used to describe the Fest. Freckle contests and redhead contests were throughout the day, and although we didn't enter, there is always next year. They have a whole area for little ones with games and musicians. There are lots of delicious food stands with tons of choices. We tried the Irish eggrolls, shepherd's pie, curry fries, mac and cheese, and even threw a Lou Malnati's pizza

in for good measure. Drinks are around every corner, and one can always make a stop in the Jameson tent. I would describe the Jameson "creamy tini" drink as delicious, but also could be dangerous. One is enough! We took a tour of the Grafton Street market and found some adorable Irish gear. Little wallets with lambs on them, purses, shirts, jewelry, and so much more. Honestly, we could have spent an entire day shopping, but the music kept drawing us in, so we didn't spend too much time. This Fest offers a genealogical tent where you can research your Irish ancestry. There are so many other little tents with Irish things going and it is all so spread out that it doesn't feel crowded. There are many huge backdrops throughout the fest that you can take pictures in front of. This creates a cozy little journey as if you were in Ireland as you walk throughout the Fest. This Fest truly gives you a great fill of all things Irish.

This past weekend was all about the connection. That is the word my friend Lauren used to describe the Fest. All the previous aspects discussed make the Irish Fest memorable and worth the journey to Milwaukee, but the connections made are what make this Fest so special. We connected to our shared heritage, our Irish community, and our Irish sisterhood. Our small group of four chatted and talked to so many people throughout the day. We met families, couples, women, bachelor parties, people wearing shirts of the same last name, those from Chicago, and those from New Zealand. People were so warm and friendly, and we just enjoyed all of our conversations. The Irish Fest in Milwaukee was a celebration filled with magical connections. When it comes around next year, be sure to hop in your car, plane, or train, take a brief tour of childhood homes in Arlington Heights with friends, and then spend a full day or days at the largest Irish Fest in the world, you never know the journey you will go on.

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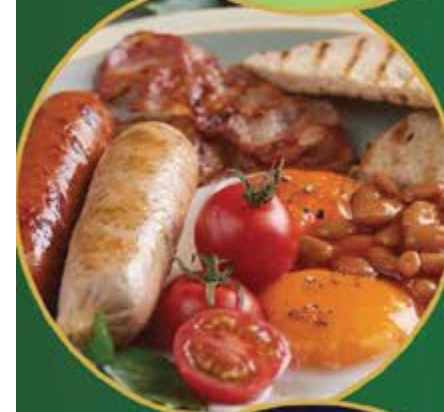
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THE SOUNDS OF IRELAND TAKE CENTER STAGE AT THE IAHC

This summer, the Irish American Heritage Center invites you to experience the magic of Irish music, community, and culture with an exciting lineup of events. Whether you're a longtime member or a first-time visitor, the Center has something for everyone—from internationally acclaimed musicians to lively pub sessions and community traditions.



HALFWAY TO ST. PATRICK'S DAY FESTIVAL

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 12 – SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 14

Mark your calendars for a weekend of Irish music, dance, food, drinks, and fun for the whole family as we count down six months to St. Patrick's Day. From lively performances to delicious food vendors and cultural activities, it's a celebration that captures the true spirit of Ireland right here in Chicago.

TEE OFF FOR A CAUSE – GOLFING FORE GREEN

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 13 | 8:00AM

Join us for our annual Golfing Fore Green outing at the Billy Caldwell Golf Course! Enjoy a morning on the course with fellow IAHC supporters while raising funds for cultural programming. Tickets include 9 holes of golf, a cart, and a complimentary lunch at the Irish American Heritage Center. Plus—on-course contests, raffle prizes, and sponsorship opportunities available!

TICKETS \$85 Individual | \$300 Foursome

MONTHLY MASS & FULL IRISH BREAKFAST WITH EXTENDED BUFFET

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 21 | MASS 10:00 AM

Our beloved monthly tradition returns, beginning with Irish Mass in the Mayfair Theatre (free to attend) followed by a hearty full Irish breakfast buffet in the Fifth Province Pub. This month's gathering will be extra special as it coincides with the final day of our Halfway to St. Patrick's Day Festival—so after breakfast, stay to enjoy live music, dancing, and plenty of festive fun.

TICKETS \$30 Adults | \$25 Seniors (65+) | \$15 Children (12 & under)

BINGO NIGHT

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 3 | DOORS 6:00 PM | BINGO 7:00 PM

Join us in the Fifth Province Pub for a fun-filled night of Bingo with plenty of laughs, camaraderie, and the chance to win exciting prizes. Hosted by the ever-entertaining Geno, this monthly favorite is the perfect midweek pick-me-up. Bingo cards are just \$10 each, and you can play as many as you like. Come early to grab a drink or bite from the pub before the games begin.

FREE | Every Thursday

WEEKLY MUSIC SESSION – EVERY THURSDAY

PUB OPENS 6:00 PM | MUSIC STARTS 7:00PM

Don't miss Chicago's most popular traditional Irish music sessions every Thursday in the Fifth Province Pub! Enjoy live music from some of the city's most talented Irish musicians, hearty pub fare, cold drinks, and great company. Admission is free, and the atmosphere is unbeatable.

FREE | The pub opens at 6:00pm, Sessions begin at 7:00pm



PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Dear Members and Friends of the Irish American Heritage Center,

The Center is ready for **FALL!** From **September 11-14** we will be hosting our **HALFWAY TO SAINT PATRICK'S DAY** weekend. Expect plenty of music, dance, food, and beverages for all to enjoy.

On **Saturday, September 13th**, we are proud to partner with the **Young Irish Fellowship Club (YIFC)** for a full day of festivities. Throughout the weekend—weather permitting—there will be outdoor music in the south parking lot, along with performances in the Fifth Province and Mayfair Theatre. This is a fundraiser for the IAHC, with admission set at **\$15 per person per day or \$30 for the entire weekend**. Performers and additional events will be announced soon, including split-the-pot, a bags tournament, raffles, and drink specials. That same Saturday morning is also our **annual Golf Tournament** at Billy Caldwell Golf Course—always a highlight of the season!

Our **IAHC Mass and Irish Breakfast** continues monthly with wonderful reviews. Plans are already underway for September's celebration, and we invite all members to join us.

The Center will also be hosting **Bingo twice a month on Wednesdays**, and we are excited to soon add **Trivia Nights** on alternate Wednesdays in the Fifth Province. Bring your knowledge, enjoy food and drinks, and compete for prizes!

As always, **Thursday evenings feature Chicago's best Irish Music Session** with Michael Austin and James Conway, and the Fifth Province continues to host live Irish music every Friday and Saturday.

Stay connected by following us on **Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok**, and watch for updates in the **Irish American News**.

Finally, please know that the IAHC Board, management, and staff are committed to continually enhancing your IAHC experience. Through our partnerships with the Chicago Irish Consulate, the Irish Government, our sister Irish cultural centers across the U.S., and most importantly, **you—our dedicated members—we look forward to even more exciting times ahead.**

There is so much more to come!

GOD BLESS and GO IRISH!!!!!!

Thomas "Tom" Herion
Board President IAHC
2025-2026
therion@irishahc.org



IAHC GIFT SHOP

HOURS | TUESDAY-FRIDAY: 3:00-8:00PM
SAURDAY: 10:00AM-8:00PM

STOP BY THE IRISH AMERICAN HERITAGE CENTER GIFT SHOP FOR A WIDE SELECTION OF IRISH FAVORITES—WHETHER YOU'RE CRAVING SWEET TREATS FROM THE GALWAY BAKERS OR SAVORY DELIGHTS FROM WINSTON.

Browse handcrafted items made by our own Nimble Thimbles, including hand-sewn quilts, aprons, and face masks. You'll also find cozy woolens from Aran Mills, classic Irish caps, candles and diffusers from Inis, and even authentic turf from Ireland to bring the scent of home to your fireplace.

Our inventory is always changing, so there's something new to discover every time you visit.

Looking for something special? Email us at giftshop@irishahc.org—we're happy to help!

QUILT RAFFLE *It's the perfect Christmas gift for someone special!*



Looking for the perfect Christmas gift? Enter to win a one-of-a-kind, hand-stitched quilt from IAHC's Nimble Thimble quilters! This year's piece, titled "Phases", is an 86-inch square, all-cotton quilt valued at over \$500.

Raffle ticket packages start at just \$10—less than the cost of a pint of Guinness—

and are available now through December 8, when the drawing will take place. Own a piece of functional Irish art or gift it to someone special this winter season.

THE DRAWING IS ON DECEMBER 8TH.

☐ 2 tickets \$10 ☐ 3 tickets \$15 ☐ 5 tickets \$20

Total number of tickets purchased: _____

Checks payable to the IAHC and mail to:
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Or visit irish-american.org, to purchase tickets or donate online

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Your Center to gather
with Family and Friends.

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“Though thousands of miles separate me from the green fields of Ireland, I've discovered that my homeland has a way of following me wherever I go. For me, that journey led straight to the North Side of Chicago.

As a young Irishwoman living here, I am often asked if I ever get homesick. The answer is, of course, yes. But each time I step through the doors of the Irish American Heritage Center, it feels as though the Atlantic Ocean disappears. Suddenly, I am not just in Chicago—I am back among friends, laughter, and a community that carries our heritage proudly, like a badge of honor.

I will never forget my first St. Patrick's Day in Chicago, spent working at the Center. Back home, Paddy's Day has always been special. Here, it is something else entirely—an ocean of green, music spilling into the streets, and smiles from people who may never have set foot in Ireland but celebrate it with open hearts. Standing in the middle of it all, helping out at the Center, I felt an overwhelming pride.

Pride that our little island, with its songs and stories, could unite so many people so far from its shores.

The Center has since become my home away from home. It is where I've made friends who feel more like family, and where I've seen Irish culture not just remembered, but lived every day. The dancing, the concerts, the language classes—none of it is simply entertainment. It is a living, breathing celebration of tradition that embraces everyone, whether they are Irish-born, Irish-American, or simply Irish for the day.

For young Irish people settling in Chicago and searching for that sense of belonging, the Irish American Heritage Center is more than just a gathering place—it is a bridge across the Atlantic. It keeps us connected to our roots while opening its doors wide enough for everyone to share in the joy of being Irish. ”

— Hollie Clarke



ENHANCED MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS INCLUDE:

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- ♣️ **1 Year \$30 Individual/\$50 Family**
- ♣️ **2 Years \$50 Individual/\$75 Family**
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- Member only discounted tickets for concerts and shows
- The right to vote for IAHC Board of Directors
- Members in good standing for three out of five consecutive years can run for IAHC Board of Directors
- Irish American News* subscription

HARPER ♣️ 3 Years \$250

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- Irish American News* subscription
- 1 Exclusive IAHC Member T-Shirt

BARD ♣️ 5 Years \$500

- 10% off in the IAHC Gift Shop on non-sale and non-food items, and food in the Fifth Province
- Member only discounted tickets for concerts and shows
- The right to vote for IAHC Board of Directors
- Members in good standing for three out of five consecutive years can run for IAHC Board of Directors
- Private Tour of the IAHC
- 2 Tickets to the IAHC Christmas Bazaar Breakfast
- Irish American News* subscription
- 1 Exclusive IAHC Member T-Shirt

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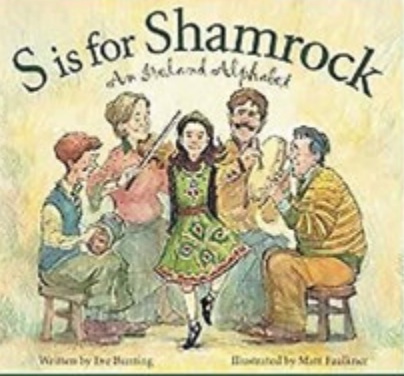
Much More Than Leprechauns



By Sheryl O'Sullivan

Welcome back to the enchanting land of Tir na N'Og for books. As the kids all head back to a new school year, it seemed like a good month to look at school stories. This month we have an alphabet concept book for the young scholar and a boarding school chapter book for older readers.

S is for Shamrock: An Ireland Alphabet
You have probably heard of the author, Eve Bunting, because she is so prolific. She grew up in Northern Ireland and immigrated to the United States as a young adult. Her



career includes more than 250 books, if you can believe that, and most of these books are picture books, many of them about Ireland. You could read all Eve Bunting for a good long time and not get through her entire list, but today, in honor of school starting, let's look at her Irish-themed alphabet book.

S is for Shamrock follows the normal format of any alphabet book. We start with A is for Ancient Ireland, and end with

Z is for Zed. In between we have enlightening pages as G is for Giant's Causeway, Q is for Queen Maeve.. Sadly, a major oversight happens on the O is for O' page when the important surname of O'Sullivan is not included along with O'Neill, O'Connor and O'Shea, but we will try not to hold that against the book!

Each alphabet letter is represented by a four-line poem that is a quick and witty reference to the major idea for that letter. You could read only these poems aloud to children making the book excellent for children just starting school. However, the book then has a sidebar for every letter that discusses the ideas in greater depth. These sidebars make the book useful far beyond the alphabet-learning group of students. I have used the book, for example, with much older children as an introduction to

all things Irish during school presentations.

The words and ideas in this book are tremendous, but the pictures really make the book a stand-out. Illustrations by Matt Faulkner are mostly two-page spreads for each letter, and the book is oversized which means there is lots of room for great pictures. Humor is evident from the very first spread which shows a tourist wearing a Cashel Rocks t-shirt while discussing ancient Ireland. There is also

great sensitivity in the drawings for difficult ideas such as the J is for Journey page about the many Irish people who left Ireland never to return.

As an alphabet concept book the intended audience is the 3-6-year-old group, but the book really goes way beyond that group and will hold the interest even of adults.

First Term at Fernside
Maybe you were a fan of boarding school stories when you were young. I know I was, and it would be even better if the students were orphans! First Term at Fernside by Sheena Wilkinson follows the school-

story formula that fans of Enid Blyton will recognize. The story is set in 1925 Belfast at Fernside House Boarding School. There are the main characters of Robin and Linnet, who are cousins, and a wide group of their friends. The girls are split between boarders and day girls, and each group has its own issues and problems. Robin has been

Rambles in Eirinn by William Bulfin

In 1902, William Bulfin embarked on a cycling tour of Ireland, his musings along the way offering a fascinating glimpse into early 20th-century Ireland during a time of significant social change.

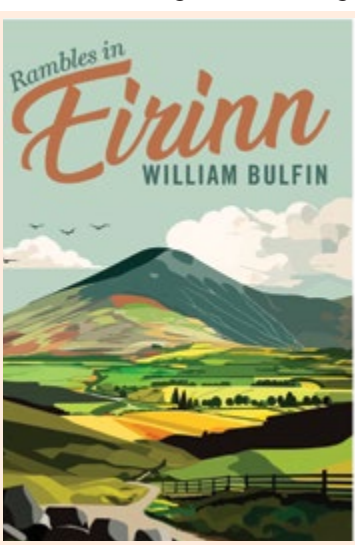
Based on a series of articles originally published in nationalist newspapers, Bulfin's narrative is rich with encounters that reveal the character of the Irish people and their connection to the land. He reflects on sacred historical sites such as Tara and Vinegar Hill, agricultural

practices, and the folklore that defines Ireland's cultural heritage.

at this school for a while, but for difficult ideas such as the J is for Journey page about the many Irish people who left Ireland never to return. While the plot follows the school year beginning with arrival day and ending with the awards at the end of the year, as we expect from a school story, the themes of the book are quite important. One recurring theme is how the girls deal with the special needs of some of their classmates. For example, Sadie is recovering from polio and uses crutches. And Linnet is a difficult-to-place student because she is too academically advanced for a lower grade, but too young

for Lower Fourth, the grade in which she is placed. Her young age often shows up in her behavior as she is given to tears and impetuosity that the other girls find babyish. The events and crises are very age appropriate and so not too terrible. This means kids can read the book without flinching, but can still learn something about making

friends, working together, dealing with loss and deciding when to take risks.



practices, and the folklore that defines Ireland's cultural heritage.

www.WhiskeyMick.com



Booking contact: whiskeymickbooking@gmail.com

friends, working together, dealing with loss and deciding when to take risks.

Since the setting is 1925 Belfast, you get a real glimpse of Northern Ireland at that time. There are few motor cars, the greengrocer still delivers with a horse and cart, the buildings are still lit by gas, and stone-flagged floors are common. So beyond being an enjoyable read, the book brings that historical period in Northern Ireland to life. In addition, there is lots of Irish/ British language (lower fourth form, half-term, calling bags on the front seat, etc.) to give the book authenticity.

This is a chapter book designed for ages 8-12. The book will almost certainly become a series much like the Enid Blyton school stories. So, if a kid likes this first book, there should be lots of other opportunities to join Robin and Linnet in their adventures at Fernside. Also, author, Wilkinson, won a Children's Books Ireland Award in 2013 from her coming-of-age novel, Grounded, so readers who like Fernside, might want to check out Wilkinson's other books.

As he traverses the countryside, Bulfin's poignant commentary on the socio-political climate following the Land War emphasises his disdain for colonial rule and his hope for Irish freedom. A staunch nationalist and friend of Arthur Griffith, sadly he would not live to see the goals of Irish nationalism realised.

With its vivid descriptions and evocative storytelling, Rambles in Eirinn serves as both a nostalgic tribute to a changing Ireland and an insightful exploration of its enduring spirit, making it a timeless read for lovers of travel literature and Irish history alike.

Praise for Rambles in Eirinn 'Makes a lovely gift to yourself or anyone with an interest in travel and history' - The Irish Independent

About the Author
William Bulfin was born in Co. Offaly and emigrated to Argentina in 1884 where he worked on a ranch in the pampas region. An author, journalist, newspaper editor and publisher, his pieces appeared in The Southern Cross, United Irishman and Sinn Féin. In 1902 he wrote Rambles in Eirinn, an account of his travels around Ireland by bicycle on his return to his homeland. Following his death in 1910, his son Eamon was involved in the 1916 Easter Rising and his daughter Catalina married Seán MacBride, a leading Irish republican who was the son of Maud Gonne and Major John MacBride.

THE IRISH BOOK CLUB.COM

The Killing of The Reavey Brothers: British Murder and Cover-Up in Northern Ireland
By Eugene Reavey & Ken Murray

In this gripping memoir, Eugene Reavey takes readers on a harrowing journey through the darkest chapter of his life during the Northern Ireland Troubles.

Reavey relives the tragic night in 1976 when his three brothers—John Martin, Anthony, and Brian—were brutally murdered in their family home in Whitecross, South Armagh.

As Reavey grapples with profound loss and an unrelenting quest for justice, he uncovers a web of treachery and collusion that shakes the very foundations of Northern Ireland's past.

Available at Mercier Press and Amazon

Through meticulous research and firsthand testimony, Reavey exposes the alarming truths behind the covert protection afforded to the notorious Glenanne Gang, a loyalist paramilitary group, by key institutions. He navigates a sinister

labyrinth of threats and schemes orchestrated by the feared Ulster Defence Association (UDA) enforcer, Jimmy Craig, and confronts the shocking false allegations made by Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) Leader Ian Paisley in the House of Commons, which were challenged but never retracted.

Perhaps the most chilling revelation is the Reavey family's accidental discovery of a staggering 84-year embargo on the release of crucial British files related to the murders. This startling find raises the question: why the silence?

Reavey's compelling narrative captures the intrigue, drama, and profound human cost of the Troubles. It serves as a powerful testament to the lengths people will go to uncover the truth and the devastating impact of sectarian violence on families and communities. It is a searing chronicle of a society fractured by conflict and a family's unwavering determination to find answers in the face of unimaginable tragedy.

This book is a must-read for readers of true crime, Northern Ireland history and stories of injustice and resilience. It is also perfect for fans of Patrick Radden Keefe's 'Say Nothing', Henry Hemmings' 'Four Shots in the Night', and similar works that explore the human impact of The Troubles.

Eugene Reavey, born in South Armagh in 1948, is the brother of John Martin,

Fianna by Susanne Carpenter

- the epic saga continues -
Fianna, the second instalment in the Tuath trilogy by Susanne Carpenter is to be launched at the end of August. It is a book that has all of the ingredients to thrill and enthrall both new and returning readers. <https://tmppublications.com>

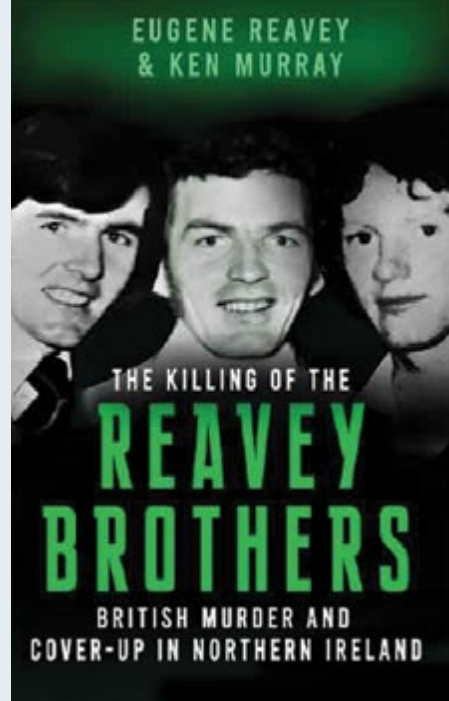
In the year 2027, with the world facing the rapid onset of volcanic winter, the Tuath Dé Danann must travel through time to halt the effects of the ash cloud strangling the planet. Their hopes rest on

Brian and Anthony Reavey, who were killed by The Glenanne Gang in 1976.

A founding member of TARP (the Truth and Reconciliation Platform), Eugene also leads Peaceful Futures South Armagh, an organization promoting understanding and reconciliation to create a peaceful environment for future generations on all sides of the political divide in the North of Ireland. Eugene has campaigned for truth and justice surrounding the murder of his brothers since January 1976.

Ken Murray, a multi-award-winning journalist, covers the island of Ireland for Euronews TV and serves as Ireland correspondent for ITN Productions. He previously worked as a political and parliamentary correspondent for INN Radio News and as Dublin Correspondent with BBC Northern Ireland. In 1990 he made history by winning a Jacobs Radio Award, the first national accolade for a commercial broadcaster in Ireland.

Ken holds a Masters Degree in journalism from Dublin City University



and authored All Kinds of Everything, the official biography of Dana Rosemary Scallan.

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Imprint: Mercier Press
Distribution: Gill
Category: Memoir
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deploying the Claiomh Solais (sword of light), a powerful laser designed centuries into the future.

They are aided and abetted in their efforts by the McNamara family, with whom they have banded together under the newly re-constituted Na Fianna. The challenges that they face are significant however, especially when faced with opposition from the most powerful people on Earth (past, present and future) and the prospect of having to defend Ireland in the face of invasion.

This is the scene and the setting for the newly published Fianna by Susanne Carpenter, a fast-paced, action-based adventure novel that


blends sci-fi, fantasy, intrigue, themes from Irish mythology, and so much more. It follows up exactly where her debut novel, Tuath, leaves off.

The book will be formally launched on Thursday, 28 August at Chapters Bookstore in Dublin. The evening gets underway from 7pm. Admission is free but advance registration is essential. Please visit Eventbrite for further information.

Fianna by Susanne Carpenter is published under the imprint of Aos Sí and available to buy online, in print and e-book editions, along with other books in the Tuath trilogy series.

Books Under Review

By Sabina Clarke



A Daring Portrait of Mary, the Mother of God

by Sabina Clarke
The Testament of Mary
by Colm Toibin
Scribner Publisher
New York, NY 2012

Shortlisted for the 2013 Man Booker Prize, this bold, provocative and wildly imaginative novella, paints a portrait of Mary that is so far from our centuries old concept of the Blessed Mother-- it is both shocking and fascinating. Toibin's Mary is real and within our grasp-- for the first time.

It is years after the crucifixion and Mary is an older woman living in the ancient city of Ephesus--alone. She is not interested in collaborating with the authors of the Gospel who are her keepers. They take care of her daily needs and check in on her. She does not believe that her son Jesus is the Son of God. She feels his sacrifice was not worth it. She wishes she could change the ending--this thought permeates all her waking hours.

Toibin inhabits Mary like a second skin. He speaks for her and his language is exquisite-- a triumph of the imagination. As her son's fame grows, Mary realizes that he is doomed.

Toibin has an uncanny ability to plumb the psyche of his female characters. His language soars and borders on the poetic. He has taken the stock image of Mary and smashed it with a sledgehammer-- and brought her to life.

Mary realized that the more famous her son became, he incurred the wrath of the Roman authorities-- and put himself in danger. She did not understand his mission. She was still a Jew who frequented the Temple on the Sabbath-- and we are led to wonder that perhaps even her Virgin birth was a myth.

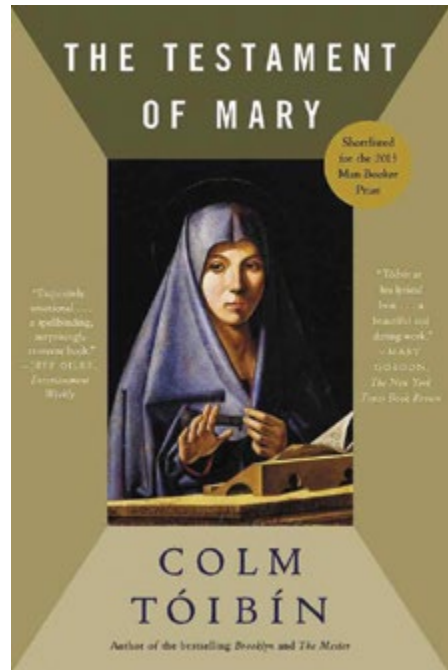
She seems not sure of anything beyond her doubts that Jesus was the Son of God and that his crucifixion was not worth it-- "I can tell you now, when you say that he redeemed the world, I will say that it was not worth it."

Two of Jesus' followers - his



apostles, visit Mary and try to intimidate her and urge her to confirm the story of Jesus' divinity. She refuses knowing that the scribe has "written of things that neither he saw or I saw."

Not only does Toibin brilliantly evoke a very believable Mary but he recreates the feeling of daily life in an ancient city about 20 years after the crucifixion. His description of the atmosphere during the marriage feast of Cana is filled with drama when Mary whispers in her son's ear: "You are in great danger. You are being watched" to warn him that he was being followed--and that he should leave.



A bold leap into the greatest story ever told!

Reporter's Note: When I first met Colm Toibin at the Union League in Philadelphia I had just read his short story collection Mothers and Sons which I absolutely adored. As he approached me I thought with his sturdy physique and rough-hewn features he looked more like a longshoreman than a writer -- but his deep, dark, wide set eyes were the giveaway -- such sensitivity.


A few years later I was asked to arrange a private tour for him at the old Barnes Museum in Merion. PA. He loved it. He was lost in each painting -- oblivious to anyone around him. Years later, I read his book House of Names, a retelling of the myth of Agamemnon and Clytemnestra. I did not want this book to end. Some books you can read over and over again.

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NO MORE WAR

by James Carroll

I first met Father Daniel Berrigan at a poetry reading in 1965. I was 22. Writing, I sensed from him, could be an act of worship. That idea defines me still. But that was only the beginning. And that is all you will hear about me. Like so many, the arc of my life took its shape more, perhaps, from his example, his words, and ultimately his friendship than from any other figure. A personal hero. A literary hero. A Catholic hero. An American hero. So why should I not be awed and honored to be here at this celebration as Orbis Books pays its splendid tribute to Father Berrigan? That my partner in this precious act is James Forest seasons the awe I feel with pure joy at what, for me, is a long overdue reunion. If Dan Berrigan gave shape to my life, Jim Forest gave it a gentle if much needed push at just the right time. Jim, too, was a hero to me in the anti-

war hey-day – his writing, his example. And to have his stirring biography of Dan is a gift beyond measure. Jim’s book will keep the epic Berrigan saga going - on into the future. Orbis Books has long been a treasure of Catholic and Justice publishing, and At Play in the Lion’s Den is a crowning jewel of the great Orbis list. It moves me deeply to be with Jim here. I feel doubly humbled as I try to offer a worthy word in honor of Father Daniel Berrigan, S.J.

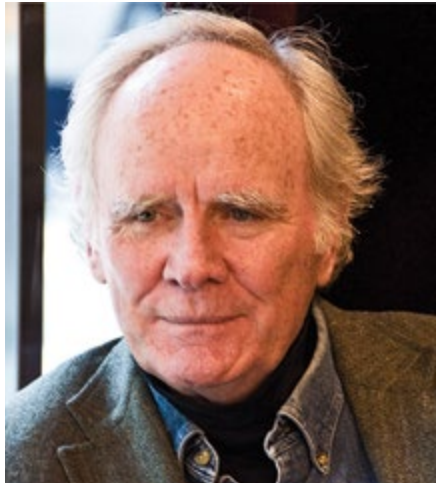
You know the story. But it is worth rehearsing. Our Church’s story. Our nation’s story. And Dan’s. Bear with me if I presume to suggest that the story began a thousand years ago with the cry of a Pope. “God wills it!” declared Pope Urban II in the fall of 1095, the spark that ignited the first crusade – the beginning of a two hundred year-long holy war that sacralized violence, demonized Islam, launched Europe’s first anti-Jewish pogroms, and put the Roman Catholic Church on the side

of those who hold that the answer to killing is more killing. In the wake of that primal “God wills it!” came heresy hunts, warrior monks, the Inquisition, and, ultimately, the religious wars that sundered Christendom.

Flash forward a full millennium. “God wills it!” finally had its rebuttal in the cry of another Pope – Paul VI, who, at the United Nations in 1965, cried “No more war! War never again!” That world-historic proclamation was brought to life in the Catholic imagination and in the American imagination by no one more than by Daniel Berrigan. Alas, that story begins in tragedy. In November of 1965, only weeks after Pope Paul VI’s resounding speech, a young Catholic named Roger LaPorte set himself aflame across from the United Nations building where His Holiness had spoken. LaPorte was driven to this act by the savage American violence in Vietnam, the soon to be infamous Operation Rolling Thunder that Lyndon Johnson had set loose in the far-away country, like ravaging war dogs. Johnson, recall, had been elected as the peace candidate the year before. Johnson had been stunned when the Pope, of all people, instead of denouncing Communism, as Johnson and New York’s Cardinal Francis Spellman had been certain he would, had denounced war, stirring the Catholic conscience. Apparently stirring Roger LaPorte’s. “I am a Catholic Worker,” he said before dying. “I am anti-war - all wars. I did this as a religious action.”

Daniel Berrigan, too, was associated with the Catholic Worker,

and, like Jim Forest, he might well have called the great Dorothy Day his mentor. Dan had in no way encouraged Roger LaPorte’s action, had never approved his self-killing. But Dan, also, refused to denounce LaPorte. Dan prayed at



James Carroll:
photo by Katharine Gilbert

the young man’s funeral, which was enough, as Dan understood, to bring down the wrath of Cardinal Spellman, who was, in fact, the godfather of America’s war in Vietnam. The Jesuits, agreeing with Spellman, banished Dan. That controversy transformed Dan’s reputation. From then on, he would be known more for his dissidence than for his poetry, but, in truth, it was the combination of bold resistance and eloquence that made him the tribune of “War No More!” Dan’s writing and work were central to the transformation of the “Just War Church” into the “Peace Church,” whose popes have, across the



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Not While I Have Ammo

By Jim Corbett

About the Book

During the Irish Civil War, between the 15 and 20 July 1922, the Republican-held Strand Barracks in Limerick, on what is now Clancy’s Strand, came under constant ferocious attacks from Free State troops.

They attacked the barracks repeatedly with armoured cars, and a non-stop bombardment of sniper, machine gun and mortar fire. All attempts to capture the barracks were resisted fiercely by the brave men inside. Finally, when everything else failed to dislodge these gallant men, the Free State turned an 18-pounder Artillery Gun on the barracks.

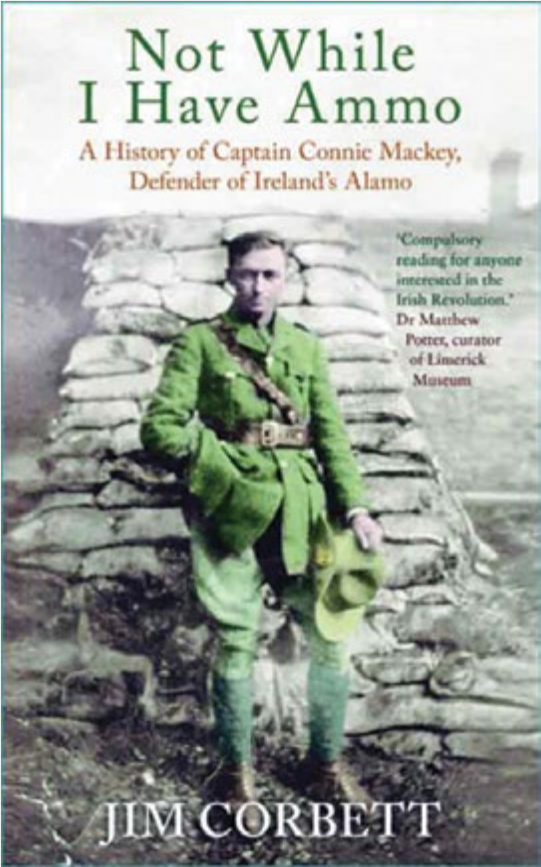
This was the only time a siege gun was used in Limerick since the siege of 1691.

The officer in charge was told to surrender the barracks or be held responsible for the loss of life. His response was “he would not surrender while he still had ammunition”.

This man was Captain Cornelius McNamara of ‘A’ Company, 2nd Battalion, Mid-Limerick Brigade, but was known to his men as Connie Mackey. An intimate friend of the former Irish president Sean T. O’Kelly, Connie was part of a golden generation of unselfish Irishmen with high ideals who were prepared to risk and endure everything for the sake of

their country and countrymen. This is his story.

The men inside were surrounded, cut off from the rest of their comrades, outgunned and outnumbered. They had withstood everything the Free State had thrown at them; realistically, there was no real point



in continuing as further resistance would have led to needless loss of life.

In order to spare the lives of his men, the officer in charge surrendered. After he surrendered, he was

complimented by the Free State Officer in charge Commandant General Michael Brennan on the magnificent defence he put up, and was offered third in command on his staff should he come over to the Free State side.

Reviews

‘A concise, well-written tale of struggle, hardship, love devotion to a cause by a man of high standards and respected by both his peers and enemies alike.’

Sgt David Nagle, An Cosantóir, The Defence Forces Magazine

“The amazing story of an idealist who heroically fought against overwhelming odds. Well told and generously illustrated throughout.

Dr. Pádraig Óg Ó Ruairc PhD, Author of ‘The Battle for Limerick City’

This volume will be especially appealing to anyone interested in the history of the period 1916-1923.

Terrance J. Kenneally, Irish American News

‘Compulsory reading for anyone interested in the Irish Revolution.’

Dr Matthew Potter, curator of Limerick Museum

‘A fine biography ... well written and densely researched.’

Dr Ruan O’Donnell, University of Limerick

‘Compulsory reading for anyone interested in the Irish Revolution.’

- **Dr Matthew Potter, curator of Limerick Museum**

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publication/not-while-i-have-ammo/

About the Author

Author Jim Corbett was born and educated in Limerick City. He left Limerick after secondary school and moved to Croydon, England in 1988, where he still lives. He briefly studied Business in London and has spent the past twelve years working in the telecommunications industry in London. He is the author of the 2008 Hardback edition of Not While I Have Ammo, since it was written it has become a reference work itself and it has been used as source material in other historical books and TV documentaries of the period. He is very much interested in history and is a lover of sport, especially rugby and football.

While working for Vodafone, he wrote the Vodafone Music Club Weekly Magazine. He began writing in 2005 and is very much interested in twentieth-century Irish history.

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last forty years, opposed every one of American’s many wars.

We have just been through the D-Day commemorations, and once again the honoring of ordinary soldiers, sailors, and airmen for valor - and Omaha Beach was rife with valor - has reinforced American myopia about the larger evil of war, especially war in the nuclear age. In 1953, the Bulletin of Atomic Scientists put the doomsday clock at two minutes before midnight - the midnight of nuclear apocalypse. It was around then that Dorothy Day - another sort of “D-Day” entirely – began her campaign of, as she called it, “noncompliance” with laws requiring citizens to participate in civil defense drills.

Dan Berrigan’s own “noncompliance” began with his arrest, with hundreds of others, at the Pentagon in October, 1967. I was there, although not with Dan, and certainly not arrested. He later told me, “I had no intention of getting arrested, but I saw the brutality with which the protesters were rounded-up.” He was in jail for a week. When he got out, he called his mother. She said, “You’re out of jail, but Phil is in.” On October 27, Phil and several others (in the press, it was always “the Berrigans and several others”) – poured blood on draft files in Baltimore. That was, by the way, the very day on which a young Lt. John McCain was shot down and captured in Hanoi.

Three months after Dan’s Pentagon arrest – as the famous Tet Offensive was unfolding - he went with Howard Zinn to Hanoi to receive released American POWs. While Dan and Howard were there, a merciless American bomber force rained fire down on the North Vietnamese capital. Dan huddled in a bomb shelter with, especially, children. They obliterated from then on any capacity he might have had to cloak the realities of war in abstraction. His poem “Children in the Shelter” marks his transformation:

I picked up the littlest, a boy...

...In my arms, fathered in a moment’s grace, the messiah of all my tears. I bore, reborn a Hiroshima child from hell.

It was children who Dan had uppermost in mind when, four months later, on May 17, 1968, he, Phil - “and seven others” – burned draft files in Catonsville, Maryland. “Our apologies, good friends – “You know these words, and we’ve just heard them so movingly rendered by Jim. “–for the burning of paper, instead of children.”

All at once, with the Berrigans and the noble company they mustered, including Jim Forest, the Catholic Church had a new image of what faith requires. “No more war! War never again!” The end, at last, of “God wills it!”

If Dan was a Catholic witness, he was an American witness, too. “The essential American soul” – this is D.H. Lawrence – “is hard, isolate, stoic, and a killer.” The nation that came into being through genocide and slavery has a constitutional inclination toward war. That is tragic enough in ordinary time, but ordinary time ran out in August of 1945. Since then, the rush toward war has been a rush toward the precipice of nuclear Armageddon. And no, that rush was not

halted by the end of the war in Vietnam. The peace movement to which Dan and his brother were key did not, in fact, stop the Vietnam War, but it stopped cold the open-ended escalation toward nuclear use that was advancing inside the Pentagon. But nuclear accumulation continued, like a Niagara current, in an image Henry James applied to the inexorable coming of World War I. An irresistible force, a momentum toward world-destroying catastrophe.

Henry David Thoreau wrote, “Let your life be a counter-friction to stop the machine.”

And so, yes, Dan and Phil – “and six others” – illegally entered the G.E. plant in King of Prussia, Pennsylvania to “beat” the noses cones of Trident nuclear missiles into ploughshares. The beginning of the Ploughshares Movement. That was 1980.

A year later, more than a million anti-nuclear protesters gathered in New York, the Freeze Movement, which was, over subsequent years, instrumental in the non-violent resolution of the Cold War. But with stoic American hubris insisting that the United States had “won” the Cold War, the US nuclear arsenal has been protected, glorified, and, lately, renewed. A terrible complacency is the Niagara current along which the nation still moves toward Armageddon.

Way back in 1970, the federal government sent a psychiatrist into Lewiston Prison to interview Phil Berrigan, hoping, in fact, to learn the whereabouts of his still-fugitive brother. Frustrated, the psychiatrist said to Phil, “You people are like salmon, trying to jump Niagara Falls.”

Yes. Precisely. There have been across these decades more than a hundred Ploughshares actions – heroes, some of whom are here, who made of their very lives “counter-friction to stop the machine.” If Dan were here today, he would insist that we lift up the Kings Bay Ploughshares Action that occurred on April 4, 2018, when seven people intruded on the Kings Bay Submarine Base in St. Mary’s, Georgia, to take hammer and blood to, yes, the demonic Trident nuclear missile. The seven await trial now - three of them from jail. They face many years in prison. This time, let their names be heard: Elizabeth McAlister, Phil’s widow and partner at Jonah House; Fr. Steve Kelly, a Jesuit; Carmen Trotta of the New York Catholic Worker; Clare Grady of the Ithaca Catholic Worker; Martha Hennessy of the New York Catholic Worker and the granddaughter of Dorothy Day; Mark Colville of the New Haven Catholic Worker; and Patrick O’Neil of the North Carolina Catholic Worker.

I referred to the Bulletin of Atomic Scientists setting its doomsday clock in 1953 at two minutes before midnight - the most dangerous alarm ever sounded. Over the years, especially after the Cold War, the hands of that clock fell back – reassuringly. But only this year, the clock has been put back at two minutes before midnight again – an unprecedented return to mortal danger. And no wonder.

The Ploughshares heroes refuse to pretend that this jeopardy is not urgent and immediate. The madness of the current administration makes the point. Only last month, B-52s were sent to the Middle East. The United States not long ago abandoned the INF Treaty, having already abrogated the ABM Treaty. With its current policy of reinventing the arsenal with “usable” nukes, it is burying the sacred NPT Treaty,

school of salmon that refuses to quit jumping at Niagara Falls – never mind the height, never mind the opposing current. At the center of their memory, their imagination, and their hope is the figure of Daniel Berrigan.

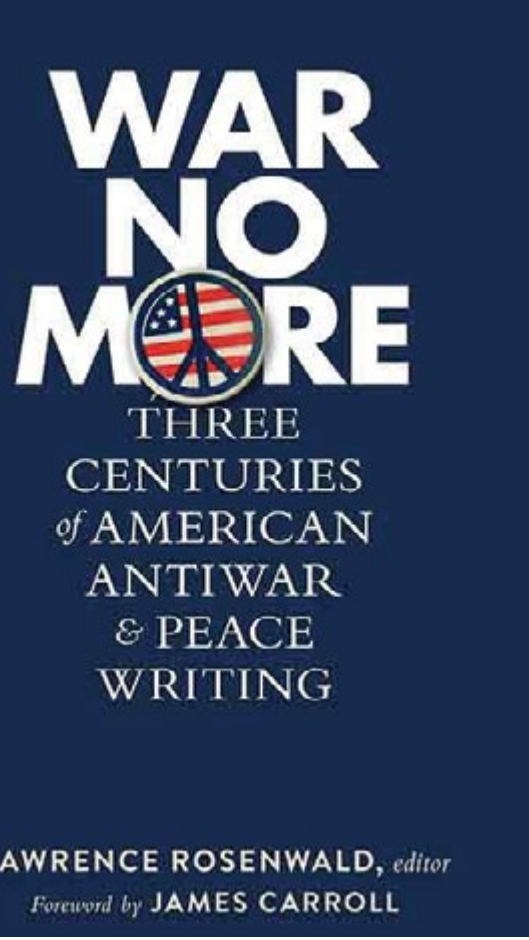
Because the human future, for the first time in history, is itself imperiled by the ancient impulse to respond to violence with more and greater violence, even claiming that “God Wills it!”, there is that other cry that can be heard coming back at us – not now from a Pope or from an anti-war priest – from time ahead, the very future: War No More! War Never Again! The cry comes from the men and women who simply will not come into existence if the essential American soul does not change.

Daniel Berrigan believed in God, which was his way of believing in the human future to which, in courage, faith, and hope, he gave his entire life. His life to Life. He died three years ago, but, to paraphrase his beloved Edna St. Vincent Millay, that is all that Dan Berrigan ever did for death.,

Postscript: This dissertation was delivered by James Carroll, the featured speaker at Villanova University in 2019 at an event celebrating the life of Jesuit priest and anti-war activist Daniel Berrigan.

James Carroll is an award-winning author, historian, journalist, and former Catholic priest. Among his books are House of War and An American Requiem...God, My Father and the War That Came Between Us.

His late father, a native of Chicago, Illinois was U. S. Airforce General Joseph F. Carroll.



WAR NO MORE

THREE CENTURIES of AMERICAN ANTIWAR & PEACE WRITING

LAWRENCE ROSENWALD, editor


Foreword by JAMES CARROLL

guaranteeing a near-term cascade of nuclear proliferation.

The long-nurtured dream of nuclear abolition - even if only given lip-service – has been abandoned by the American government, and the American public takes no notice. But still there is this

journalist, and former Catholic priest. Among his books are House of War and An American Requiem...God, My Father and the War That Came Between Us.

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GOOD GRIEF

By JOSEPHINE COLEMAN



While looking for books for my godson to help him with his summer reading, I came across one about U.S. presidents who had unusual animals in the White House.

In 1909, President William Taft was given the gift of a cow, which he named Pauline. She was the last cow to live at the White House. She was most likely given to provide milk—and possibly butter—for the Taft family, but she soon became a beloved pet. Pauline was a black-and-white Holstein, and during her time at the White House, she even gave birth to a calf named Big Bill. Pauline roamed the White House lawns like a pet dog and slept in the stables alongside the president's prize horses and cars.

Around 1911, Pauline was invited to be a star attraction at the International Dairywomen's Exposition in Milwaukee. Unfortunately, the train car she was in was mistakenly attached to another train headed for the Chicago stockyards. She ended up in the Chicago marketplace, and White House security was furious. They frantically initiated a nationwide search, hoping she wouldn't end up in a slaughterhouse or local butcher shop—most importantly, they wanted to keep it from the president.

Thankfully, Pauline was found in Chicago, though I'm not sure how they identified her among hundreds of nearly identical cows. When President Taft learned of the incident, he forbade her from ever leaving the

White House grounds for the remainder of his presidency. I'm not certain what became of her afterward, but given how fond he was of her, I like to think she lived out her days happily with the Taft family.

Several other U.S. presidents also kept unusual pets at the White House. President Rutherford B. Hayes was gifted

Siamese cats, which were considered exotic at the time, and he became the first American to bring the breed to the United States. President John Quincy



Adams had an alligator, which was reportedly kept in the White House bathtub. Martin Van Buren received two tiger cubs, which—after growing to the size of small donkeys and sprouting adult teeth—were sent to a local zoo.

President Calvin Coolidge had quite a menagerie, including a raccoon named Rebecca who walked on

a leash. Herbert Hoover kept a possum, a pygmy hippo named Billy, a bobcat, a donkey, and a wallaby. President Benjamin Harrison had a flock of sheep and a goat named Old Whiskers, who was fond of chewing tobacco leaves. One day, Old Whiskers escaped while towing the Harrison grandchildren around the White House lawn in a makeshift carriage—never to be seen again. Perhaps the nicotine got to him!

Then there was President Theodore Roosevelt, an avid animal lover, who owned a bear named Jonathan Edwards, a lizard named Bill, a zebra, a coyote, a hyena, a one-legged rooster, and many more. Roosevelt was also the inspiration for the teddy bear.

The story goes that in 1902, while on a bear hunting trip in Mississippi, Roosevelt failed to shoot a bear. His aides, wanting to ensure he didn't go home empty-handed, tied up a black bear for him to shoot. Roosevelt refused. A political cartoon depicting the incident appeared in newspapers, catching the eye of Brooklyn candy shop owner Morris Michtom.

Michtom made a stuffed bear dedicated to the president's act of mercy, calling it "Teddy's Bear." After receiving Roosevelt's permission to use his name, Michtom began mass-producing the toy, which became so popular that he founded the Ideal Toy Company. The teddy bear's popularity has lasted for more than a century, all thanks to that hunting trip.

I hope you enjoyed these little snippets of history about past presidents and their pets. For those of us who didn't grow up here, it's always fun to learn more about our adopted country and the people who once ran it.

Enjoy the rest of this fine weather as autumn approaches—before you know it, the children will be knocking on your door for trick-or-treating. Bye for now



Players, management and supporters of John McBrides Chicago GAA gathered at Sheehan Group offices in Chicago recently. More pictures page 23

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Chicago Scots' 24th Annual Kilted Classic Golf Tournament Returns This September

Dust off those clubs, throw on some tartan, and get ready to swing for a great cause! Chicago Scots, Illinois' first and oldest non-profit organization, invites golfers of all levels to the 24th Annual Kilted

with airfare for two, and bragging rights from contests like Longest Drive, Closest to the Pin, and the playful Nessie Challenge or Beat the Scot - a chance to outplay Chicago Scots President Gus Noble OBE himself.



Classic Golf Tournament on Tuesday, September 23, at Cantigny Golf Club (27W270 Mack Road).

Proceeds benefit Caledonia Senior Living & Memory Care, the principal charity of the Chicago Scots. Guests can expect bagpipes, Highland dancers, Scottish trivia, and a festive atmosphere that celebrates both heritage and giving back.

Presented by Roscoe Company, the tournament kicks off with an 11:00am shotgun start and features a full day of friendly competition, Scottish flair, and community spirit. Whether a seasoned golfer or a first-time participant, the Kilted Classic offers something for everyone - including skill contests, whisky prizes on every hole, and the always-entertaining Roscoe Massed Putt. Registration is available online for foursome, pairs or single players. Kilts can be rented at check in on tournament day.

Golfers will compete for incredible prizes including a golf trip to Scotland

Special thank you to our 2025 Kilted Classic Committee: Curtis Linder - Chair, Brendan Caulfield, Don Cook, Bill Del Principe, Archie Edgar, Ashley Gill, Joey Guzzardo, Rick King, Rusty Magner, Scott McAdam Jr. & Tim Wojcik.

Sponsorship opportunities are also available and range from \$100 to \$5,000.

For more information regarding sponsorship opportunities, please email Dawn Miller at dawnmiller@chicagoscots.org.

The Kilted Classic is just one of many events that support the Chicago Scots' mission. Funds raised directly benefit Caledonia Senior Living & Memory Care, a trusted and compassionate community for older adults.

Register for golf here, <https://chicagoscots.org/classic> or learn more about the Chicago Scots, upcoming events like the St. Andrew's Day Gala in December, or their ongoing mission, please visit www.chicagoscots.org.

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Cróga Tours: Dare to Discover Ireland

For many American travelers, Ireland isn't just another stop on a European bucket list — it's an emotional journey. Whether it's ancestral roots, a lifelong fascination with Celtic history, or simply the pull of misty cliffs and warm-hearted locals, Ireland offers something deeper than your typical destination.

That's where Cróga Tours comes in.

Founded in 2022 and based in Money more, Northern Ireland, Cróga Tours (Cróga meaning brave in Irish) takes a bold approach to travel. This isn't the kind of trip where you snap photos from a bus window or get dropped off at a gift shop.

Cróga Tours invites Americans to discover Ireland through meaningful moments, authentic connections, and stories that stir the soul.

What Makes Cróga Different?

Cróga Tours specializes in immersive, small-group travel rooted in local experiences and Irish storytelling. Their offerings include customized chauffeur-driven tours, group holidays across Ireland, and tailor-made itineraries for couples, families, and private groups. Whether you're traveling solo or planning a multi-generational trip, Cróga provides a travel experience that feels personal, heartfelt, and deeply connected to the land.

Rather than racing from castle to pub to ruin, Cróga focuses on 5 central themes: History, Nature, Music,



Faith, & Food. Tours are designed to engage the senses; tasting fresh-baked soda bread, listening to traditional Irish ballads in intimate settings, walking through medieval ruins with local guides, & enjoying quiet moments in sacred places that few tourists ever see.

It's a style of travel that resonates especially with Americans who want to go beyond sightseeing — people

who want to feel Ireland, not just see it.

Hospitality That Feels Like Family

Cróga Tours is a small but experienced operation. While the company itself is young, its team has decades of experience in Irish tourism. It's also closely affiliated with J&K Coaches (a respected transport provider entering its 20th year in business) ensuring tours are delivered with top-tier professionalism and comfort.



But it's not just about logistics.

What sets Cróga apart is its hospitality. Travelers consistently describe the team as warm, knowledgeable, and passionate. Many say it feels less like taking a tour and more like being welcomed into a family.

Whether it's a luxury chauffeur tour through Connemara or a guided group holiday exploring scenic parts of The Wild Atlantic Way, the Cróga team's deep local knowledge and personalized approach shine through.

A Favorite for American

Travelers

American guests will find that Cróga speaks their language — not just in service, but in spirit. Tours are designed to match what U.S. travelers often value most:

- Comfortable pacing: No exhausting, rushed itineraries. Each day allows time to explore, reflect, and enjoy.

- Story-rich experiences: Travelers learn the why behind each stop — from the folklore to the food.

- Local flavor: Meals in traditional restaurants, encounters with artisans, and stays in charming accommodations.

- Flexible travel styles: Whether you want a romantic trip for two, a group experience, or a faith-based pilgrimage, Cróga tailors to your goals.

For those with Irish ancestry, Cróga can even help shape tours around your family's regional heritage, offering a powerful emotional connection that few other operators can match.

Tours With a Twist

While Cróga's private tours offer ultimate



- Coastal drives through the Causeway Coast and the Wild Atlantic Way

- Historic towns and countryside such as Kilkenny and Derry

These tours balance sightseeing with storytelling, and comfort with cultural richness. They're ideal for American travelers who want to see more of Ireland without sacrificing authenticity.

Why Americans Will Love It

- Connection over convenience: Cróga prioritizes moments that move you over bucket-list checkmarks.

- Faith-based options: Ideal for spiritual travelers interested in Ireland's religious heritage or Christian pilgrimage routes.

- Perfect for all ages: The mix of comfort, culture, and gentle adventure appeals to couples, families, and retirees alike.

- Sense of belonging: Whether it's your first time in Ireland or a homecoming of sorts, Cróga's personal touch makes you feel like part of the story.

The Heart of Something Bigger

In an era of fast, faceless travel, Cróga Tours represents a quiet revolution: a return to travel that is brave enough to be personal. Instead of polished package deals, they offer depth, dialogue, and discovery.

They don't just show off Ireland — they introduce you to it. To the people, the places, and the traditions that have shaped its enduring charm. For Americans craving an escape that's as emotional as it is scenic, Cróga delivers something rare: connection with place, with people, and perhaps even with heritage.

Whether you're chasing your family's Irish roots, planning a meaningful anniversary trip, or simply longing to explore a country that feels like a second home — Cróga Tours offers a path less traveled.



personalization, their already packaged tours across Ireland are equally impressive. These aren't your typical mass-market tours. Cróga keeps group sizes manageable, the itineraries thoughtful, and the experiences diverse.

Popular tours include journeys to:

- The Cities of Belfast and Dublin

It's not about traveling in someone else's footsteps. It's about crafting a journey brave enough to become your own.

So go ahead — let Ireland change you. Cróga will make sure it's a journey you'll never forget.

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GAA Gathering in Support of John McBrides Players

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Bob Touhy
Sean Morahan
Cian McHale

On Wednesday, July 29, John McBrides players stopped in to thank James Sheehan, a sponsor and longtime supporter of the club. The McBrides panel beamed with talent, as at least 10 players had experience at inter-county level, the highest standard of football played in Ireland.

To bring the caliber of inter-county footballers to clubs in Chicago, such as John McBrides, would not be possible without the generous and tireless supports of club sponsors and supporters. Often times, many play such roles as performed from a distance, not always having access to get to know the players on a personal level. In this case, an informal lunch was a great opportunity for friends of Sheehan Real Estate to chat with players gain perspective on their summers spent in Chicago. It is such exchanges that are often remembered by players and supporters alike, laying a foundation of mutual support for years to come.

John McBrides would like to thank James and all at Sheehan Real Estate, as well as all players, friends, and supporters of the club as players for their effort all summer.

Northern Ireland Politicians Launch International Appeal to Victims & Survivors of Mother & Baby Homes

Northern Ireland politicians have launched an international appeal, asking victims and survivors of mother and baby institutions for their views on legislation to establish a public inquiry and financial redress scheme aimed at addressing historical injustices.

Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs) in Belfast are appealing for feedback on the Inquiry (Mother and Baby Institutions, Magdalene Laundries and Workhouses) and Redress Scheme Bill which was introduced to the Northern Ireland Assembly in June 2025.

The Bill will see the establishment of a formal inquiry into Mother and Baby Institutions, Magdalene Laundries and Workhouses in Northern Ireland between 1922 and 1995. It will also set up a redress scheme for the victims and survivors of these institutions.

The Northern Ireland Assembly's Committee for the Executive Office has begun work scrutinising the Bill and is asking anyone who will be

directly affected by the legislation to respond to an online consultation which closes on 29 September 2025.

The Chairperson of the Committee for the Executive Office, Paula Bradshaw MLA said: "This is a Bill to make provision relating to one

"We want to hear from those who will be directly affected by the Bill and the schemes it creates. As well as publicising details of the consultation across the UK and Ireland, we are also reaching out to those in Canada, Australia and the United States - as we are aware people right across the world may have connections to the institutions or know someone who is a victim or survivor. We want as many as possible to have their say on the Bill.

"Our aim is to get the message out as widely as possible that we want your feedback on this Bill and your views are very important to us. The consultation is available online here: <https://lk.cmt.e.fyi/InquiryRedressBill> but we can also email or post hard copies to anyone who is interested, anywhere in the world. Email cteotrconsultation@niassembly.gov.uk or contact the Committee for the Executive Office, Room 247, Parliament Buildings, Belfast, Northern Ireland BT4 3XX.

"Getting the foundations of the Inquiry and the Redress Scheme right

is essential, and the Committee takes this responsibility extremely seriously. That is why it is important to be clear our work at this stage is focused on the legislation required to establish the Inquiry - and this is not the beginning of the Inquiry itself.

"We deeply value the lived experiences and personal testimonies of those affected by Mother and Baby Institutions, Magdalene Laundries and Workhouses and as a Committee we're committed to listening to the people affected in as respectful and open a way as possible. Whilst personal narratives and testimony are not the focus at this stage, they remain a vital part of the broader context, having significantly informed the Bill's creation and will help us in our role of scrutinising this important piece of legislation."

To support those giving evidence and help stakeholders understand the legislative process of the Bill, the Committee is holding a series of familiarisation sessions with stakeholders including an online event on Thursday 11 September. If you are interested in attending this virtually, please email: cteotrconsultation@niassembly.gov.uk



of the most distressing and hurtful episodes in Northern Ireland's history. At this stage, the Committee's role is to ensure that the Bill leads to the creation of a truth and redress scheme that is strong, robust, fit for purpose, and capable of delivering the greatest possible impact.

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Meeting Pope Leo XIV

By Mary Pat Kelly Exclusive to Irish American News

“Go, Go Sox,” I called out. The Pope, my fellow Chicago White Sox fan, Leo XIV, looked toward me and smiled. Astonishing! Surprising enough to be here in Piazza della Libertà, Freedom Square, at the Papal Summer Residence, Castel Gandolfo among the approximately 4,000 pilgrims waiting to hear the new Pope lead the Angelus, deliver a sermon and bless them. The event usually happened every Sunday in St. Peter’s Square, but this was the Ferragosto weekend, marking August 15th, the Feast of the Assumption and Italy’s premier summer holiday. Even the Pope was on vacation.

Lots of nuns in the crowd. Many in full habit. Pilgrims from Africa, India, the Philippines and Vietnam. I was reminded of August 15, 1963 the day I took the habit of the Sisters of Providence at St. Mary-of-the-Woods, Indiana. After six years in the convent, including a year teaching at Providence High School on Chicago’s West Side, the order and I decided it was time for me to move on. I remain friends with many of the Sisters, still love The Woods and rely on Providence.

I even chose August 15th for my wedding day in 1987. My County Tyrone husband and I had spent the summer in Ireland and now I was heading back to New York. I had included Italy in my Dublin to New York flight so I could join my dear, longtime friend, Roberta Aria Sorvino, and her family in celebrating her husband Bill’s 90th birthday in Taormina, Sicily. Days of joyous celebration included a visit to Raccuja, the mountain village where Roberta’s father, Michael Aria and the family of her mother, Rose Raccuia, had originated.

Twelve of their direct descendants met Mayor Ivan Martella and other town officials who welcomed them warmly. I had been eager to visit two other Sicilian towns--Polizzio Generosa and Cimmina, the homeplaces of Martin Scorsese’s parents. I had met the Master Director through correspondence in 1965 when he was a film student at New York University and I was a nun-in-training at St. Mary-of-the-Woods. After I left the convent, I also attended NYU Film School and worked with Martin Scorsese during the summer of 1970 programming films for New York’s Movies in the Park and the Sorrento Film Festival. I came to know Charles and Catherine Cappa Scorsese well and was enthralled by their stories of their Sicilian roots. Thrilling to actually see the villages and to think of the epic odyssey their families had made from these beautiful but remote places to New York’s Lower East Side. Both had worked in the garment district. Mr. Scorsese told me that when he and his friends gathered to play their guitars and ukuleles in Washington Square Park, he would look at the surrounding NYU buildings and hope that somehow his sons might go there one day.

“Sure enough God granted me that wish,” he said. When the Martin Scorsese Institute of Global Cinema funded by the Hobson/ Lucas Family Foundation with the largest gift in the school’s history was announced, Martin Scorsese said, “This is a singular and remarkable honor for

which I thank my old dear friend George Lucas and his wife Mellody Hobson.” He concluded, “I only wish my parents were around to see this. “They would be so proud.”

The book I wrote tracing his journey from young filmmaker to legend had just been updated and reissued. On August 15th I presented a copy to Signor DiStefa at St. Mary’s Church in Polizzio Generosa which contains the tomb of St. Gandalf and attended mass. I also went to the



Municipal Museum. In one room large photos commemorated the film Martin Scorsese and Pope Francis had recently shot in the town.

Thinking of the courage of both Roberta and Marty’s ancestors reminded me of my own Great Great Grandmother Honora Keeley Kelly, who against all the odds, escaped The Great Starvation of 1840’s Ireland and brought her children to Chicago. They landed in Bridgeport then called Hardscrabble because it was. Her grandson would become Mayor of Chicago. And my Kelly family history became the basis for my trilogy of Irish American novels, Galway Bay, Of Irish Blood and Irish Above All. Pope Leo’s roots were in the same area. He was born in Mercy Hospital in nearby Bronzeville where I attend church at St. James. David Samber has made ththe Polo Inn, 3322 S Morgan my home away from home. The Pope’s brother, John, was principal of St. Gabriel’s in Canaryville—right next door. My dad played football (offense & defense) at St. Rita’s, the Augustinian School where Pope Leo taught as Father Bob Prevost. Plus Dad bequeathed me the loyalty to the White Sox that Pope Leo shares. With all these vibrating connections, I felt that I had to try to see the new Pope.

My ticket from Catania, Sicily to New York allowed a one-day stopover in Rome. I arrived at Fiumicino at 10 am on Sunday, August 17th. Aurel from RomabyCar was waiting. I explained that I wanted to go to Castel Gandolfo for the Pope’s noon ceremony.

Did I have a ticket, a reservation, a plan he asked me? I didn’t. Did I know we were at least an hour away? Well . . . hope was fading. But Aurel is a very kind young man. He’s originally from Romania and had lived in Rome for 20 years but had never been to Castel Gandolfo. But he was willing to take on the challenge.

We arrived at Castel Gandolfo around11:30 and began to look for The Square. But then the thunderstorm hit. Sheets of rain, bits of ice battered the windshield. We saw lines of people

struggling to hold their umbrellas as they trekked toward the Papal event. Nuns wore ponchos over their habits. Aurel looked at me. I could almost hear him think, “You’re getting out in that? The woman who had been wheeled out of baggage claim.” I had taken advantage of the Italian airline ITA offer to assist passengers with reduced mobility Mobiliata Riddotta. And I was definitely Riddotta . . .

I tried to explain to him that I had pictured Piazza della Libertà, Freedom Square as similar to Times Square and



saw myself getting out of the car on a handy corner.

Plus I expected a small crowd this far from the Vatican. But I had underestimated the appeal of faith and spectacle. We drove along following the crowd walking on each side of the highway and came to the entrance of the huge park that contained the Apostolic Palace and the Square. Clusters of police cars closed off all access. It was getting closer to noon.

Aurel sighed and decided to confide in me. “Driving is my part-time job, he said. “I work in the Vatican. I have an ID card. Let me try and see if they will let me drive up and drop you off.”

“Tell them I’m from Chicago and 80 years old and unsteady on my feet.”

Aurel went out into the rain and huddled with the policemen.

I watched the body language, lots of leaning forward, hand gestures. It looked promising. But when he came back to the car, he was shaking his head no.

“You would have to walk,” he said. “About 700 meters.” “What’s that in miles?” I asked. “A half,” he said shrugging, remembering the wheelchair.

We looked up at the long and winding road that led to The Square. Discouraging. But then the rain stopped. The wind whipped the dark clouds away. Sun. But still wet cobblestones, the steep pitch of that hill. Yikes!

Another sigh from Aurel. “I will come with you,” he said.

We step up and into the park on the path, which is very steep, very slippery. Without Aurel’s arm to lean on, I never could have made it. Then step-by-step there we were. The Square was as big as two football fields, absolutely packed with pilgrims who stood shoulder to shoulder. Some, I discovered, had arrived at dawn. They faced The Papal Residence, which I would find out later was designed by Bernini. Two Swiss Guards stood at the entrance.

We had stumbled into an area right

next to the VIP section where about 50 people sat in chairs behind a barrier. Two female soldiers hurried up to us. Very stern. We were in a secure area. We had to move right now.

Aurel showed his Vatican ID card. They still moved us on. But didn’t see us as a threat. One looked at the other and shrugged. Strangely, amid all the security a souvenir shop and a café were open and doing business. We ducked in for an espresso and a cornetto then slipped into a side patio just as Pope Leo appears.

“Papa Leone, Papa Leone,” the crowd chanted.

If ever a crowd went wild, this crowd did. He stepped back in and began his sermon. I really can’t see him because I’m off to the side and of course he is speaking in Italian. Later I read a transcript of his comments on Luke 12:49 where Jesus said that He came to bring fire to the earth. Pope Leo reminds us that our mission is not “a bed of roses”. Opposition can come. Hold on to the faith.

I may not understand his words, but he delivers them in a calm reassuring way that does communicate. I do pray the Angelus with him. Pope Leo projects the same self-possessed warmth when he comes out to greet the group in the VIP section. Some are in wheelchairs. Others must have special tickets. And, of course, there is a group of nuns. I’m directly behind them. The crowd around me surges forward. And suddenly I’m only a few feet from Pope Leo as he speaks to the nuns.

“Go, Go Sox,” I shout. That’s when he hears me and looks over.

“Leo, Leo,” I yell. Later I am embarrassed. I should have called him Papa Leone or Holy Father. But maybe he hears my Chicago accent because he waves to me.

“I’m from Chicago,” I say. “We love you in Chicago.”

HE EXTENDS HIS HAND ACROSS THE BARRIER.

I take it. For a moment he’s Father Bob offering me the handshake of peace at St. Jude’s in New Lenox. A parish whose motto is There Are No Strangers Here. Only Friends Who We Haven’t Met.

The Pope and I smile at each other.



He moves on. I turn around. Aurel is laughing and shaking his head.

We were both a little delirious on the drive back to Rome and through the city. We passed St. Peter’s on the way to San Giuseppe della Montagna, the convent where I was staying.

Aurel told me that he worked taking care of pilgrims in the snack bar at St. Paul Outside The Walls and how impressed he was with the history of

the Vatican and of Rome.

I blurt out “It’s possible that none of this would exist except for the Irish monks rekindling Christianity during the darkest of the Dark Ages.” I knew that was a bridge too far for our combination of basic English and my strange Italian. But I really wished that I could explain how in many ways the Irish did save civilization.

Rome had been sacked, left in ruins with Christianity on its heels in the seventh century.

Then, from out of Ireland, they came. I thought of what former President of Ireland, Mary McAleese, had said during her speech at the John and Pat Hume Foundation’s Inaugural European Conference in July 2021, “St. Columbanus was the first European.”

She was referring to how the Irish monk had established monasteries in France and Italy creating communities of faith and scholarship that transcended tribes and national identity. The persecution of Catholicism in Ireland made these European centers of learning crucial for Irish people well into the 19th century. There were 38 Irish colleges across the continent. Right now the Irish Cultural Center in Paris and the Irish College in Rome continue to host Irish scholars and artists.

A lot of history and too much to cover with Aurel as we entered the Eternal City.

I started “I’m writing a book . . . “but we’ve arrived at the convent.



I said that Perhaps I’d see him tomorrow.

In the spare but very comfortable room, I sat down at the desk and tried to write some notes. The relationship between Ireland and the Catholic Church was central to my book. And here I was in the center of it all.

I recalled how in the same speech Mary McAleese had spoken of Ireland’s transition going from “Poverty, conservative Catholic religiosity and isolation . . . on a tortuous enough journey which would see it mature into one of the most stable, peaceful, successful, globalized, economy, and secular liberal democracy in the world.”

In an earlier speech she left no doubt as to what propelled that success “It is absolutely no accident that the peace and reconciliation, and indeed the economic progress that eluded us generation after generation for hundreds of years, has at last come to pass in an Ireland where the talents of women are now flooding every aspect of life as never before.

In 2016 I quoted her in the narration I wrote for Chicago’s Old St. Pat’s Parish. That year Siamsa na n Gael commemorated the Rebel Women of Easter 1916. When Mary McAleese’s words were read, applause from the women in the audience stopped the show!

Now, Mary McAleese is a feminist. She was the only woman in history to succeed another woman as Head of State when she followed Mary Robinson as President of Ireland. In a recent talk given at Spirits Unbound to a group which advocates the ordination of women, she called for equal discipleship for women. She’s been unflinching in her criticism of the sexual abuse of children by clergy. Her own brother was a victim. But in her autobiography, she writes with great affection of her time studying for a PhD in Canon Law in the Vatican and named one of her sons after a favorite priest.

Contradictory? Not really. I think of my own experience with friends in Ireland and how they relate to the Catholic Church right now. Some don’t attend mass regularly, but all still participate in Christenings, First Communions, weddings and funerals. This evolution will be an important theme in my book. And I wasn’t going to solve it sitting at the desk at San Giuseppe della Montagna. But I do think about Derry where I spend a lot of time. Many couples

don’t get married until after they buy a house and are financially secure. This delay means they have children. These children are in their weddings, which are often in church with tiny groomsmen in suits and boutonnieres and little girls in frilly dresses. Great parties follow. My friend’s eight-year-old son came home from school one Monday afternoon after hearing still another story of the weekend celebrations crying. “Why didn’t you wait for me to get married?”

I’m still mulling over all of this later that afternoon when I walk through the Holy Door at St. Peter’s with Claudio Argento, who I met at the Sorrento Film Festival all those years ago and whose wife, Beatrice, became one of my best friends. Their daughter, Claudia, is with us. I am wearing my Create Bravely T-Shirt from Peter H. Reynolds, a wonderful artist with whom I’m currently collaborating. Somehow it’s a tribute to the monumental works of art all around me.

I light a number of votive candles, say a prayer. Sometimes there are no words.

Still the Irish connection kept reoccurring. The next morning at 8 am I was at St. Paul Outside The Walls, a place of worship since the 4th Century, one of the four churches on the pilgrimage way for the Jubilee Year and the burial place of St. Paul.

Rome was crowded and St. Peter’s had been jammed the day before, but I walked through the Holy Door of St. Paul’s into a completely empty Basilica. I was the only one in this extraordinarily beautiful church. I wandered around in a trance, ended up in The Blessed Sacrament Chapel.

Again, all alone, I sat in the front row and looked at the medieval crucifix that is one of the treasures of the Basilica. Jesus’ head is turned. Strange. I read the explanation. According to the legend our Lord turned to look down at Are you ready? St. Brigid. Yes, our St. Brigid who was praying before the crucifix. Now, maybe a little time traveling was involved, but this is the legend. And it’s not really surprising. Those Irish monks carried the story of Brigid throughout Europe. In fact there are 100 manuscripts in libraries all over the continent of The Life of St. Brigid of Kildare by Cogitosus.

I was a little over excited and had to immediately dictate a text to Melanie Lynch and her mother Maria Bourke. Melanie is one of the founders of HerStory and led the campaign to have Brigid’s Day, February 1st, made into a

national holiday in Ireland in 2023. It may be the only national holiday in the whole world dedicated to a woman.

Melanie’s mother, Maria, comes from a long line of healers and wise women. I have never forgotten my first encounter with her when we were celebrating Brigid’s Day in Maynooth, County Kildare this year. I told her about my book and what I was attempting to do. She put her hand on my back and said AMAZE. At that moment I got my title “Deep Amaze: Parables of Hope from the Emerald Isle” The words came from the Foggy Dew song repurposed. The world will gaze again in deep amaze at Mna na hEireann.

And then I heard a noise. I was no longer alone. The sound of a vacuum cleaner. I walked into the main church and there on the high altar was a nun with a Hoover. I went up to her and tried to explain our solidarity and how I had studied to be a nun. My Italian wasn’t up to it. I got the idea of googling my book, Special Intentions, and showed her the book cover, me in full habit, pushing a mop under a picture of the Sacred Heart. She understood. We shared a laugh.

I went to the snack bar with Aurel. We had a cappuccino and discussed the events of the day before. I explained what Go, Go Sox meant. We then talked about the Pope’s heritage. His mother’s family had New Orleans connections and some members were of African descent. I mentioned that I had just seen an interview Pope Leo’s brother, John Prevost, gave to NBC on August 15th where he said that the family had not known about their ancestral diversity. But they embraced it.

“His brother said that Leo really is the People’s Pope.”

“Yes,” Aurel agreed. We talked about how Pope Francis had declared the A Pilgrimage of Hope as the theme of the Jubilee Year 2025 and he had called on us to look to the future with open spirits. Aurel and I agreed that Pope Leo is that future. Aurel told me that Pope Leo’s motto is “In Illo uno unam,” which translates to “In the One, We are one.”

Then I said that there was an echo here of the words John Hume so often quoted, “E Puribus Unum”, From Many We Are One. He would say the words on America’s smallest coin were the basis of the philosophy that helped him bring peace to Northern Ireland. Surely a powerful sign of hope and peace.

“Go, Go Leo!” we said.



Roberta Aria Sorvino and her family with Mayor Ivan Martella in Raccuja



Chicago Garda Pipes and Drums Performed recently at the Irish American Heritage Center for The Galway Sister Cities Committee and delegates from County Galway. Tom Herion and Bruce Quintos in front center and on the right.



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RSVP/QUESTIONS

Sergio Yanez
773-282-8445
syanez@irishchicago.org

Irish American Heritage Center
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September 17, 2025 | 12:00 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.








CDPH SUICIDE PREVENTION


Thursday, September 18, 2025 | 6:30 P.M. - 8:00 P.M.
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Register here using the QR code



Learn more at chicago.gov/SuicidePrevention

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September is Suicide Awareness & Prevention Month

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Gatherings for Seniors

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Music by Declan McShane

Questions: Contact Kathleen Howlett
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Voice of Charity

By Aida Segura

When I embarked on my vocational quest, I asked a spiritual adviser, "What do I do in order to find and devote my life to encounter God?" The answer was, "Stay close to suffering." In my job as site director of the House of Peace, I have learned to accompany women's stories, women's survival, and women's journeys of suffering. And yet, it's also been a place of grace and a blessing.

The House of Peace has been accompanying domestic violence survivors for more than 14 years. The women and children at the House of Peace have suffered physical, verbal, emotional, financial abuse and so much more, and yet they

have persevered. We provide a safe and supportive home for these survivors to stay for six months to heal, process, learn, and transform on their journeys to survival.

It's the will of the Holy Spirit for these families to dwell here, and our role is to open our arms to them, offer unconditional acceptance of who they are, and provide



a restful place for them to breathe, rebuild their sense of self and safety, support

their children, and build community with one another, so they can become ready to restart their independent lives.

Their time with us is to connect with the Holy Spirit — the flame of fire — the vital enlightenment inside of all of us. That connection happens in two ways: a connection to self which quickly evolves into a synergy with community. These women feel empowered to support their new friends, sisters, and neighbors, and quickly become actors of goodness and healers that extends years beyond their stay with us. They return to us to give back, their generosity powering a dynamic flow of energy into a community of love and care that embraces

Special Film Premiere on WTTW 11: Embracing Ireland's County Clare

Every September, in the small village of Lisdoonvarna on Ireland's Wild Atlantic Way, an international "hope" festival happens in the form of matchmaking. So our Islands Without Cars team took a detour to investigate. And like every great detour, what we found was so much more moving than what we planned.

The Lisdoonvarna Matchmaking Festival, which dates back to the 18th century and is known as one of Europe's largest singles events is a month-long fun-fest. Before Covid, the festival attracted as many as 40,000 people from all over the world looking for love and laughter. But in 2024, while the hotels were all full, we quickly discovered



Kira Cook in whiskey barrel on the Atlantic

that the occupants were not looking for someone as much as running from something as the people of Lisdoonvarna welcomed love-seekers as well as refugees from the war in Ukraine.

With the Wild Atlantic Way as a backdrop, what we discovered in County Clare in September of 2024 was way more than we expected. We came for a laugh and left with hearts full of love at human kindness.

For 15 years the team of Islands Without Cars at Terry Lissy Productions have been traveling to islands that ban or restrict car use, including the Island of Inisneain in Ireland.

On September 14 at 5pm, and September 18 at 9:30PM on WTTW Channel 11 you'll be able to tune in to this movie "premiere" highlighting the Lisdoonvarna area including the towns around it.

Go to islandswithoutcars.org for more information about the team.



SEPTEMBER CROSSWORD ANSWERS

these women with guidance, support, encouragement, and accompaniment. Our community is a sisterhood that makes a commitment to a condition of presence and a loving, caring culture giving these families a chance to rest from the weariness of their wounds.

We assure these women they are not alone. Our sisterhood — other mothers residing at the House of Peace and those who came before them — accompanies them. Although women and their children only stay with us for six months, we have created a community of sustainability through our Phoenix Program which allows women to continue the sisterhood they formed here. They can stay connected to continue processing, healing, and learning from one another, while sharing the good news of Jesus Christ. It's beautiful to witness the experience of

walking together faithfully. That process of humanizing ourselves again is when we really find God.

It's profound to witness the suffering of these women and their children, and how their rehabilitation transforms them into people who have resilience and hope. As one of the women shared with me: "This House of Peace has been given to us by God and we're proud of our prayers. This house is a miracle. It's our responsibility to God to care for it and to make it a loving place."

My responsibility at the House of Peace is to be a gatherer of the flickers of hope for these women and in return, I have found a well of hope.

Aida Segura is the site director for the House of Peace, a Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Chicago shelter for survivors of domestic violence.

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Ireland In The Fall: A Season Of Color, Calm And Culture

The island of Ireland undergoes a striking transformation with the arrival of Fall, when the pace of life slows after the long days of summer and the place takes on an air of tranquility. Towns and cities buzz with a gentler energy, while the countryside glows in rich tones of orange, red and brown.

September and October often deliver some of the island's finest weather, making it an ideal time for outdoor exploration. Crisp air, bright skies and vibrant foliage create a kaleidoscope of color across forests, glens and coastlines—a season tailor-made for hikers, photographers and those simply looking to take in the views.

Though often described as the “off-season,” Fall in Ireland hardly fits the term. Unlike many destinations that shut down after the Summer, the Emerald Isle remains lively. Indeed, with smaller crowds, attractions become more accessible. Visitors can more easily book tee times at top golf courses, secure coveted restaurant reservations or snag those hard-to-come-by theatre tickets. Hotels and other accommodations are less busy, often more affordable, and the overall experience feels more relaxed.

Seasonal activities add to the appeal. Farmers' markets brim with fresh local produce—don't forget it's harvest time—while cafés offer cozy retreats with pots of tea, coffee and indulgent slices of cake.

For nature lovers, Fall is one of the best times to visit. The island of Ireland lies beneath major bird migration routes, and the season brings a dazzling array of species. Canadian geese, Icelandic whooper swans and golden orioles can all be spotted, making it a haven for birdwatchers and photographers alike. If wildlife is your thing, there is nothing more dramatic than the breathtaking aquatic displays performed by humpback and minke whales, and even the occasional orca, all along the Atlantic seaboard from Donegal to Cork.

Of course, no trip to Ireland is complete without soaking up the atmosphere of a traditional pub. A Fall evening offers the perfect opportunity to while away an hour or two with locals and visitors alike, gathering around the hearth with a pint in hand, and enjoying a live music session that carries on late into the night—an experience that captures the very essence of Irish hospitality.

With its blend of natural spectacle, cultural vibrancy and seasonal charm, fall in Ireland offers travelers a quieter, richer and more colorful way to experience the island.

Ryder Cup 2027

Adding to the appeal of an autumn visit the prestigious Ryder Cup will take place at Adare Manor in County Limerick from September 13th to 19th, 2027. This world-class golf event will draw international attention to Ireland's stunning parkland courses and renowned hospitality, making it an ideal opportunity to explore the surrounding region.

Between vibrant fall

scenery, festive food and drink celebrations, rich cultural traditions, and world-class sporting events, Ireland in autumn offers visitors an unforgettable experience that captures the true spirit of the season.

Fall Festivals

The island of Ireland is known for its many festivals, which take place year round in big cities and small towns alike, featuring every aspect of Irish culture from food and drink to music, from theatre to literature, and everything in between. The Fall is an especially good time to visit if you want to indulge yourself in one or more of these fantastic celebrations of Irishness. Participating in a festival is also a great way to meet the local people and to see the host town or city at it's finest.

Below are some of the highlights of the Fall festival calendar. It is only a partial list, but hopefully enough to whet your appetite if you are planning a trip in the coming months. *The Armagh Food and Cider Week-end* (Armagh, September 4-7).

Four thoroughly mouth-watering days and nights will showcase the very best of local produce, and both traditional and innovative purveyors of culinary excellence, that together have given Armagh the well-deserved reputation of being Northern Ireland's Food Heartland. The city will come alive with events, artisan experiences, and crisp orchard pours you won't want to miss. From artisan bites and pop-up dining experiences, to farm-to-fork feasts, immersive culinary trails, and behind-the-scenes orchard tours, there's something to tempt every palate.

The Dingle Food Festival (Dingle, County Kerry, October 3-5).

The Dingle Food Festival is set in the picturesque fishing town of Dingle on the Dingle Peninsula along the Wild Atlantic Way. This three day celebration of food, community, and sustainability has an important focus on zero waste. Organized annually by volunteers on a non-profit basis, the festival features the popular Taste Trail, Market Stalls, Masterclasses, Workshops, Children's Events, Street Entertainment, Ceiliúradh Bídh Chorca Dhuibhne (an informal long table dining event), and much more besides.

The Guinness Cork Jazz Festival (Cork City, October 23-27).

Swinging jazz, top international performers and legendary Irish hospitality: the Guinness Cork Jazz Festival has it all. Every year on the last weekend of October, Cork City transforms into a hub of rhythm and soul, drawing musicians and music fans from across the globe.

Since its launch in 1978, the festival has grown into Ireland's largest jazz celebration. It has welcomed some of the world's biggest names, from Courtney Pine and Damon Albarn to the Harlem Gospel Choir and Nile Rodgers & Chic, while also championing local talent. Sharing stages with jazz greats has given countless Irish musicians the chance to shine on an international platform.

The variety is part of the magic. With events spread across



An apple orchard in Armagh at harvest time.



A cheesemaker at the Dingle Food Festival.



Adare Manor in County Limerick, host of the 2027 Ryder Cup.

more than 90 venues—from theatres and concert halls to pubs and pop-up street performances—the festival spills into every corner of the city. Many gigs are free, while headline concerts sell out quickly, so booking in advance is essential. Beyond the main stage shows, Cork's many bars keep the music flowing late into the night. With its infectious energy, diverse line-up and trademark Irish welcome, the Guinness Cork Jazz Festival is more than a series of concerts—it's a citywide celebration of sound, culture and community. *The Lisdoonvarna Matchmaking Festival* (County Clare, September 1—30). At over 150 years old Lisdoonvarna is one of the island of Ireland's best known festivals, famous for providing space for singles (especially from rural areas) to meet new people, but with a healthy measure of

The Wexford Festival Opera (Wexford, October 17–November 1). For over 70 years this wonderful celebration of high culture has specialized in bringing some fabulous, but hitherto neglected, musical masterpieces to appreciative audiences.

Of course, one of the highlights of the Fall is Halloween. Ireland is the birthplace of the Halloween tradition, which evolved from the Celtic festival of Samhain, first recorded over two millennia ago. It is now one of the world's great holidays. Samhain marked the end of the harvest and the start of winter, a time when it was believed that the boundary between the living world and the spirit world grew thin. The ancient Celts believed they could commune with their deceased ancestors at this time. Nowadays, every major city in Ireland puts on a show for Halloween, marking the holiday with storytelling events, spooky costume parades, ghost tours featuring haunted houses and much more. Halloween has also become a time when arts and culture come to the fore.

A number of festivals bring tradition and modernity together perfectly. *Derry Halloween* (Derry/Londonderry, October 28–31). Northern Ireland's second city hosts the largest Halloween Festival in Europe every year. For four unforgettable nights in October, this ancient Walled City is transformed into Halloween HQ. The festivities will feature stunning light shows, acrobats and circus performers. And, of course, fireworks, a spectacular display. *The Bram Stoker Festival* (Dublin, October 25–28).

Now in its 11th year, the Bram Stoker Festival celebrates the legacy of one of Ireland's most beloved and iconic writers—the man who created Dracula. Expect deliciously dark treats on the streets and in venues across Dublin. *Púca Festival* (Athboy/Trim, County Meath, October 30—November 2).

A fabulous festival that “salutes the Halloween spirits through folklore, food, myth and music, and lights up the night sky with awe-inspiring fire performances.”

Kilkenny's Toil and Trouble Festival (November 1-9). Go back in time to 1324 to uncover the chilling tale of Ireland's first Witchcraft Trial. Learn about the powerful and wealthy Alice Kyteler, accused of witchcraft and heresy by the Bishop of Ossory, Richard Ledrede. Alongside Alice's story, explore the tragic fate of Petronella de Meath, the first person in Ireland to be executed for witchcraft. A thoroughly authentic Samhain experience.

From glowing autumn landscapes to festive tables, from deep-rooted traditions to unforgettable sporting moments, Ireland in the fall embodies the true spirit of the season. Please check out www.ireland.com which has all the information you need about Fall festivals and golf in Ireland.

www.ireland.com



Fill your heart with Ireland

The magic of travel isn't in the distance, but in the moments along the way — like stepping inside an inviting pub after an afternoon spent wandering, admiring the autumn colors that dress the streets and walkways.

In Ireland, fall wraps you in warmth: golden light on rolling hills, the crackle of the cozy fires, hand-knit wool sweaters, the scent of freshly made soup and brown bread, and friendly faces welcoming you wherever you go. From Donegal's open skies to West Cork's winding roads, this is the season to savor every detail.

So come on, fill your heart with Ireland...

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