

17 March 1956: Chicago Irish Fellowship Club Welcomed John F. Kennedy, Eunice Kennedy Shriver, Adlai E. Stevenson and Mayor Richard J. Daley for St. Patrick's Day Celebrations

IFC story pages 38-41



(l to r): Adlai Stevenson; Democratic Party nominee for President of the United States, Senator John F. Kennedy, Eunice Kennedy Shriver; soon to be director of the Joseph P. Kennedy Jr., Foundation, and Chicago Mayor Richard J. Daley

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## View From Ireland

By Maurice Fitzpatrick



## Fuel shortage worries compel Aer Lingus to cut over 500 Flights for maintenance



Benjamin, the donkey in Orwell's Animal Farm, had a refrain that 'life would go on as it had always gone on - that is, badly'. Whatever about that as a view of life, it is certainly could apply to the marching season in Northern Ireland. The season culminates in the Twelfth (July 12), the annual Orange Order commemoration of the Battle of the Boyne, at which William of Orange defeated the Catholic King James II in 1690. In the decades following that battle, the Penal Laws were enacted, entrenching the Protestant Ascendancy in Ireland and immiserating the native Catholic population.

The marching season still prompts many Catholics to clear out of the North. Few are intimidated by the marches, which are substantially regulated now by the Parades Commission. Still, it is a reminder, from their perspective, of the entrails of Northern Irish 'culture', that they would happily leave behind. While for many summer is a time for vacation, for some in Northern Ireland it is a time for evacuation.

Traditionally, speakers at Orange marches intoned religious-political dogma to rouse their adherents and vindicate the enterprise. They were, and are, apt to infuse their rhetoric with expressions of support for the British Army, including its more recent campaigns such as Iraq and Afghanistan. Yet this affirmation of loyalism to king and country makes about as much impact on the 'Mainland' as an obscure academic research paper. The unrequited attachment that Northern Ireland loyalists have to Britain is starting to grate. Britain cannot be made to listen, and the most extreme branches of loyalism take their frustration out on minority groups.

There are no lows to which some people who 'celebrate' the Twelfth will not sink. In July 2017, only months after Martin McGuinness' death, a black coffin bearing his photograph was placed atop an Eleventh Night bonfire in East Belfast and burned. In July 2023, the bonfire in Moygashel in Co. Tyrone burned a photograph of then Taoiseach Leo Varadkar alongside an Irish tricolour and a mock copy of the Good Friday Agreement emblazoned 'Null and Void'. Despite these outrages, there is an element in loyalism, supported by some of their political leaders, that finds these outrages justifiable.

This year in Moygashel a replica of a mosque was burned on a pyre. (The replica they burned last year was of a boat with immigrants). The Police Service of Northern Ireland moved to take the replica mosque down in advance of the bonfire, but the community burned it in advance. The PSNI then issued a statement condemning the burning 'as a hate-motivated criminal offence'. The Moygashel Bonfire

Association placed signs including 'Secure our borders' and 'End the threat of radical Islam' beside the pyre. Under pressure from many strands of unionism (except the DUP) the Moygashel Bonfire Association went further in claiming a human right to burn religious effigies: 'it is an exercise in our rights under Article 10 of the ECHR' (the European Convention on Human Rights). What they did not add is that Article 10 (2) of the Convention maintains that the exercise of these freedoms 'carries with it duties and responsibilities, may be subject to such formalities, conditions, restrictions or penalties as are prescribed by law and are necessary in a democratic society, in the interests of national security, territorial integrity or public safety'.

And where is the evidence that burning an effigy of a mosque is a threat to public safety? Just one month before, there were widespread anti-immigrant riots and arson attacks targeting migrant families in East Belfast. That evoked memories of the Bombay Street pogrom of August 15, 1969, when a loyalist mob burned an entire Catholic street and drove its residents from their homes. Yet neither June's outrages nor Bombay Street were isolated incidents - such episodes have recurred throughout Belfast's history, as Andrew Boyd's book, Holy War in Belfast (1969) details. Boyd's documentation of cyclical sectarian violence in Belfast since the 19th century remains a key text for understanding contemporary violent attacks on minority communities and their objective of population displacement.

The paradox is that these displays of supremacy are less expressions of confidence than symptoms of political insecurity. They are attempts to preserve psychologically what can no longer be guaranteed politically.

The DUP's 'leadership' has been disgraceful: 'The DUP supports the right of people to express lawful political opinions, even where those opinions are controversial or unpopular'. They have also attempted to suggest that many of Northern Ireland's problems are attributable to the Irish Sea border, a line blithely replicated in The Spectator in London. Whatever their view of the Northern Ireland Protocol or the Windsor Framework, a key fact of the Brexit negotiations is that the Withdrawal Agreement is an international treaty. London has no intention of re-opening that casket.

On June 22, Jeffrey Donaldson, DUP leader from 2021-2024, was convicted of multiple historical sexual offences against two young people (who cannot be identified) throughout their childhood. The fall of Donaldson has been a profound shock not only his party, but for unionism as he had been a key figure for four decades. A central aspect of the damage is that it is clear that several people knew more than they disclosed and enabled him to perpetuate his crimes. For a party and an ideology rooted in religious righteousness, the sense of moral downfall accentuates the political losses that unionism has incurred in recent years.

Unionism may well seek refuge in tawdry demonstrations of its superiority but there is an inescapable reality that by doing so they are digging the hole deeper for themselves. A political tradition that continues to define itself primarily against its neighbours rather than alongside them is rejecting its own future. Unionism can continue to fight the demographic, constitutional and cultural changes reshaping Northern Ireland, or it can begin the far more difficult task of adapting to them. In February this year, veteran unionist politician, John Taylor, now 88 years old after a lifetime in politics including several incumbencies in the UK and Europe, had a simple message: 'unionism will not survive'. He urged unionists to make common cause with the people they share the island with and to prepare for a united Ireland.



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### The 13th Amendment: Free at Last

Despite having plenty of work left to do in order to make a more perfect union, politicians in early 19th century America left the Constitution alone for many years after the ratification of the 12th Amendment. By the time that Congress picked up their pens again to draft the 13th Amendment, millions of American lives had been lost in the Civil War. Meanwhile, many millions more had endured the horror chattel slavery for centuries. With this amendment, finally, Congress took real action to free Black Americans from the same chains their ancestors wore

when they were kidnapped, sold, and brought to North America in 1619.

The 13th Amendment reads as follows:

Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime

whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction. Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

By passing this Amendment, Congress effectively nullified the prior provisions of the Constitution that counted slaves as a person for the purposes of census-taking (and proportional representation in the House), as well as the Fugitive Slave Clause in Article IV that required states without slavery to return runaway slaves to their owners in slave states.

Despite having the immediate effect of technically freeing all remaining enslaved people in the United States from bondage, newly-freed slaves faced impossible

hardship immediately after liberation. This included lynching, sharecropping, de facto slavery, poll taxes, literacy tests and reprisal violence.

Congress granted itself the power to legislate further in order to force compliance with this amendment, but these efforts varied in their efficacy. Further, until the late 20th century, the Supreme Court held that Congress could not legislate against instances of private racial discrimination that bordered on the definition of slavery to better protect Black people.

Additionally, in Plessy v. Ferguson (1896), the Supreme Court ruled that racial segregation as a practice was perfectly legal, so long as facilities being segregated were "separate but equal." In practice, the concept of equality for Black Americans was nothing more than a pipe dream under Jim Crow.

Thankfully, the Supreme Court loosened its prohibition on Congress legislating against individual instances of private racial discrimination with famous cases like Brown v. Board of Education (1954), Jones v. Alfred H. Mayer Co. (1968), and more.

An important note about the 13th Amendment is that it preserves the right for slavery and involuntary servitude to be imposed as punishment for a crime that a person is duly convicted of having committed. According to a 2022 Guardian article, US prison labor is valued at \$11 billion annually, including \$2 billion produced in goods. Despite this, prisoners are often paid mere dimes per hour for the work they perform. Under the 13th

Amendment, this practice is perfectly legal.

All of this is to say that, while the 13th Amendment was a leap forward in advancing human rights in the United States, it is an imperfect part of the Constitution. The 14th Amendment, ratified shortly after the 13th Amendment, was inspired by these imperfections. Congress sought to establish equal protection under the law for all Americans, regardless of race. In so doing, they teed up an enormous amount of Constitutional case law. Tune in next month to learn more!

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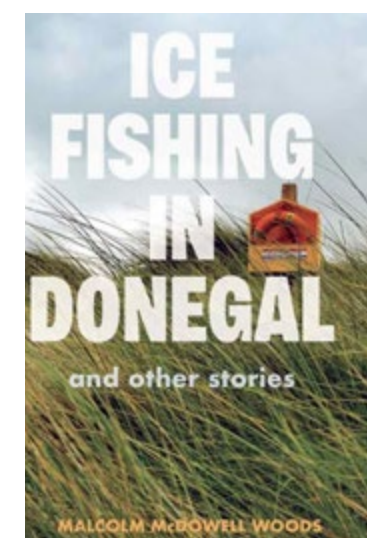
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**Gaelic Park Players' Spotlight on Director Phyllis Bierdz**

**By: Liz Tinley**

In honor of our nation's 250th birthday, The Gaelic Park Players will be presenting a short one-act play at this year's Chicago Gaelic Park Fest (August 21 - August 23). Entitled United and written by long-time Gaelic Park Players' actor, director and former board member Phyllis Bierdz, the play runs about 30 minutes. It will be performed each day of the Fest on the Players' Performing Arts Stage in the Tara Room. Performances will be Friday at 7:30 pm, Saturday at 4:00 pm, and Sunday at 2:00 pm.

I sat down recently to chat with the playwright and octogenarian. We met at her home in Oak Forest. Phyllis is slight and fine-boned, stylish—a lovely Lithuanian lady. While she still has a fine pate of natural hair, she has a slew of great wigs which she wears now and again with a certain aplomb. This can take one by surprise! Even if you didn't know her well, you might think to yourself "I bet that woman was in theater....!"

Liz: And of course, Phyllis, you are. How did you first become involved with theater?

Phyllis: My association with the theater goes back a long time. I am Lithuanian on both sides of my family, and I grew up in a heavily Lithuanian area of Brighton Park. Two of my aunts were opera singers, and they performed regularly in operettas, at the Milda Theater in Bridgeport. I remember being hoisted up on a bar to sing at a very young age - I might have been three years old. So, I have been around theater and performers for most of my life. Eventually, I began performing in many operettas in the Lithuanian community theater myself. As a teenager and young adult, I took voice, piano, and drama lessons.

Liz: When did you start to write your own plays?

Phyllis: Well, I wrote skits for performances in high school. But I began writing more consistently after I moved to Oak Forest, where I became involved with the theater group at St. Damian's Church and School. Along with my husband, Jerry, I wrote and directed cabarets and original musical productions mostly as part of the fund-raising efforts for the school and church. In 1981, we debut a musical production, Applesauce, which included a large cast of local parishioners. I also directed plays for the youth and high school theater groups at the parish.

After my children were raised. I began work as the Director of Activities at an independent living facility in Oak Brook. It served a population 55 and older. I started a theater group at the facility, and I wrote a yearly play that the residents enjoyed performing in. It helped to engage people, helped them form new friendships. It resurrected their creativity, and made them feel vital and capable. It also helped with memory issues and challenged them on many different levels. I found over the years, even for myself, that theater groups are cohesive and provide a great sense of belonging. Likewise, they can be intense and dare I say it filled with their own drama.

It wasn't unusual for children and relatives of these new stars to be shocked - flabbergasted even - on

seeing their parents, grandparents and loved-ones in these very different roles - new aspects to their personalities that they had not seen before and could not have imagined!

I remember one emerging male star (he was well into his 70's) telling me the only reason he was going through with his knee replacement surgery was to enable him to be considered for a role in the next season's show.

Liz: Well it sounds as though theater is wonderful for seniors, what impact do you think involvement with theater has for children and young adults?

Phyllis: Theater is a great way to involve people of any age in group activities, but it is especially valuable for children, teens and young adults. As we all know, fitting into the "group" can be enormously challenging for many children and developing teens. Theater is a very accepting environment. It attracts a lot of independent, creative, often quirky souls. But usually all are accepted

*Continued to pg 14 Phyllis Bierdz with flag (R)*



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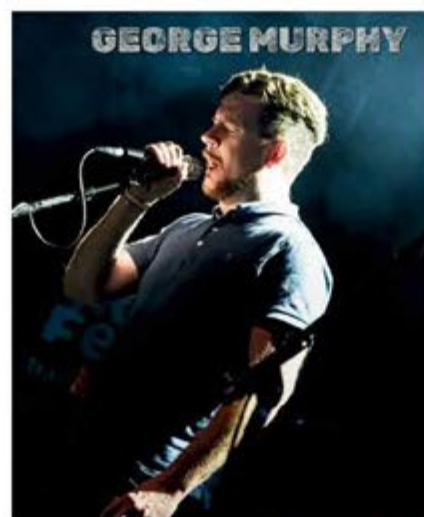
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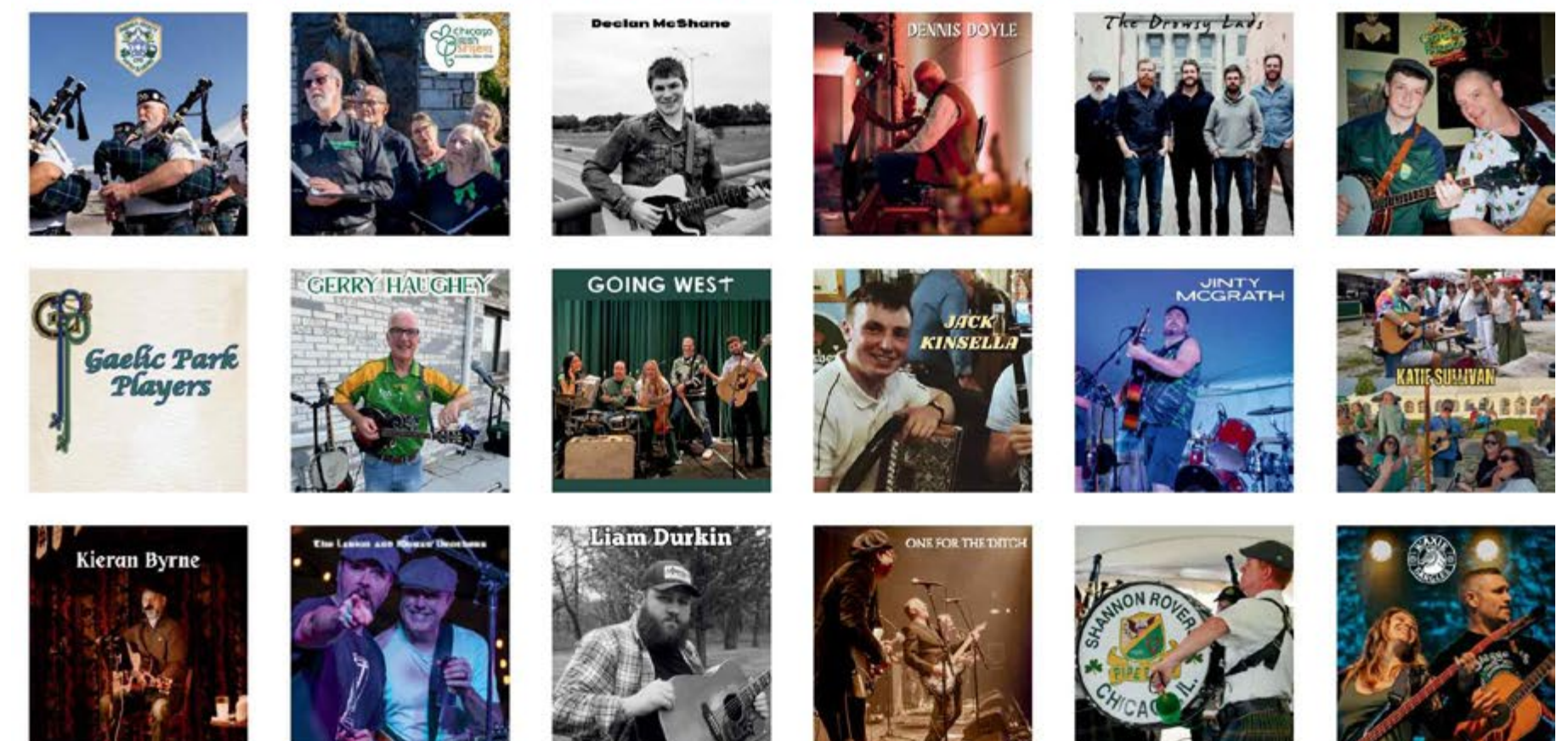
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I recently had lunch with a bunch of mothers who had a European background and were raising teenage and college students. Here are a few snippets of our conversation. The front door of my childhood home in Europe was more than just a piece of wood; it was a boundary. Growing up, the rules were as unyielding as the stone walls of the house. If a friend wanted to see if I was available, they didn't text, and they certainly didn't just walk

in. They stood outside, knocked firmly, and asked my parents if I was "coming out to play." Very seldom did anyone who wasn't a blood relative cross that threshold. (especially in our home with twelve of us, cousins only.) And if they did, the "upstairs" remained a forbidden kingdom. That was where the bedrooms were—the sacred territory of the parents. Unless you were desperate for the bathroom, your feet never touched those stairs. We

lived by a code of privacy and hierarchy that seems almost alien in today's world of open-concept living and "open-door" parenting.

Now, as a mother in a very different era, I find myself standing at a new kind of threshold. My "babies" have grown up, gone off to college to taste the wild air of independence, and are now circling back to the nest. It's the "boomerang" phenomenon, and while our hearts are glad to have them back, our heads are often spinning.

The transition of a college student moving back home is a delicate dance. For four years, they have lived in a world where 2:00 AM is the prime of the evening, where "cleanliness" is a subjective term, and where their peers are their only authority. Then, they walk back through our front door, bags packed with laundry and a college degree,

and suddenly, two worlds collide.

I've had to explain that while they may be "adults" in the eyes of the law, this home still operates under a very specific set of rules—the "Irish mum and Dad Law."

The first clash usually happens over the 9-to-5 reality. Parents are working Monday through Friday. It's a hard pill for a recent grad to swallow when I tell them that the "college buddies" cannot be over on a Tuesday night. My home is my sanctuary, it isn't a 24/7 social hub or an extension of the campus student union.

In my youth, the upstairs was sacred because it belonged to the parents' peace. I find myself channeling that European upbringing now. I need them to understand that their presence here is a transition, not a permanent retreat.

Then comes the "Big World" wake-up call: the bills. It starts with the realization that car insurance doesn't pay itself and that "unlimited data" on a cell phone plan has a very real price tag attached to it. When we talk to them about contributing to the utility bills or even paying

a modest rent, I can see the flicker of shock in their eyes. They see it as "mean" and we see it as a survival course.

Laying down the law isn't about being a drill sergeant; it's about being a coach. If I make this home too comfortable—if the fridge is always magically stocked, the towels are always fluffy, and there are no financial expectations—why would they ever want to leave? By enforcing these boundaries, I am helping them build the muscles they need to find that first job and eventually secure a place of their own.

Transitioning into adulthood is supposed to be a little bit uncomfortable. It's that discomfort that pushes a bird to leave the nest. When I insist on knowing their plans for the day, or when I remind them that the kitchen needs to be clean, we are not just nagging. We are reinstating the hierarchy that allows a family to function. I'm protecting the "sacred upstairs" of my own life while preparing them to one day have a "sacred upstairs" of their own.

To the other mothers out there navigating this: don't be afraid to lay down the law. It is okay to say "no" to the late-night visitors. It is okay to hand them the bill for their car insurance. It is okay to expect them to live by your terms while they are under your roof. You aren't just their mother anymore; you are their first landlord and their most important mentor in the reality of the "big world."

Our homes are our fortresses. We worked hard to build them, to pay the mortgages, and to create a life of stability.

I want my children to know that they are always loved and always welcome, but I also want them to know that the threshold of this house is a place of mutual respect. Just like the friends of my youth who waited patiently outside our front door, my adult children must learn that entry into the "big world" starts with respecting the rules of the house they were raised in.

A home is a privilege, the "upstairs" is earned, and the best way to help your children grow up is to stop treating them like they're still small enough to play in the yard.

Whether I follow through remains to be seen but this was some of our mum's perspective. Personally I'd choose to have my son and daughter at home but in reality while it breaks my heart I'm not doing them any favours. I thought I was going to have a heart attack when my son moved to Kalamazoo but I visited him and saw how happy and independent he is and want the same for my daughter. She just graduated in May from ISU with Honours. Our little Teacher. Congratulations Maryjo.

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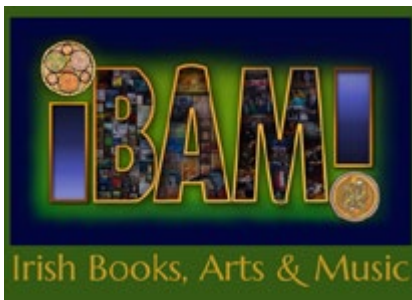
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## Jerry O'Grady Keeps Hugh O'Flaherty's Legacy Alive With Killarney International Humanitarian Award

Ask Killarney's Jerry O'Grady if he is proud of his efforts to honor the legacy of Monsignor Hugh O'Flaherty - the Irish priest who is credited with saving the lives of an estimated 6,500 Allied prisoners of war during World War II - and he demurs.

"I take satisfaction in our efforts," O'Grady clarifies. "But

and lingerie brand that had a major presence in Killarney and was ultimately bought by Sara Lee. As a local business leader, he went on to serve as CEO of the Killarney Chamber of Tourism & Commerce, and he recalls the day when the idea for honoring Monsignor O'Flaherty came across his desk.

"Our Chamber of Commerce



I take pride in Hugh O'Flaherty." This distinction exemplifies the selfless work of O'Grady and his fellow volunteers who established the Hugh O'Flaherty Memorial Society in 2008 and will be awarding the O'Flaherty Humanitarian Medal an individual or organization considered to be an outstanding humanitarian role model later this year.

For O'Grady, who serves as chair of the memorial society, his interest in studying the past dates to his school years; as he says, "I've always been a lover of history. I would smile going into that class."

O'Grady's passion for history was put on the back burner while he pursued a successful professional career at Pretty Polly, the well-known hosiery

office was based in the Discover Ireland office in Killarney, and below us was the mayor's office. Two of our Chamber members visited me after they had read a story about a new book about Hugh O'Flaherty, and they pointedly asked me, 'why aren't we doing something to publicize this man?' After all, O'Flaherty was a proud Killarney native. So, the three of us went downstairs to meet with the mayor, got him on board, and soon enough we had a committee formed."

The book would reignite interest in Monsignor O'Flaherty, and in 2008, O'Grady and his fellow volunteers created the Killarney International Humanitarian Award, presenting it to the descendants of Monsignor O'Flaherty on behalf

of the people of Killarney. They would subsequently award the O'Flaherty Humanitarian Medal annually from 2009 to 2019 before the COVID-19 pandemic halted operations.

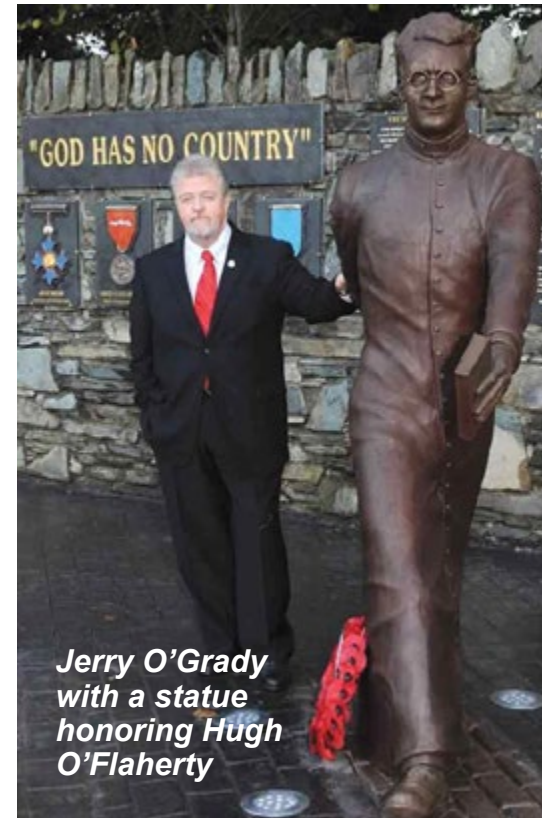
Recipients of the award include Ireland's UN Peacekeepers, Darfur-based aid workers Sharon Commins and Hilda Kawuki, and Sister Agnes Hunt of the Irish Council for Prisoners Overseas, among the many deserving honorees.

This year will mark the first year since 2019 that the award will be bestowed on another recipient. As part of the honor, winning recipients will receive €3000 and be recognized at a special awards ceremony in Killarney in October.

For all the efforts of O'Grady and his compatriots who have organized this award and its heroic recipients, the heart of this story remains Hugh O'Flaherty and his remarkable actions in Italy over eighty years ago that earned him the nickname of the "Irish Oskar Schindler."

In the autumn of 1942, the Germans and Italians began to crack down on prominent Italian Jews and aristocratic

anti-fascists. Having socialized with these people before the war, Monsignor O'Flaherty now hid them in monasteries and convents, in his old college and in his own residence. In the



Jerry O'Grady with a statue honoring Hugh O'Flaherty

spring of 1943, his operation broadened to include escaped British prisoners of war and shot-down allied airmen. He developed a network of safe apartments in Rome in which they could hide.

By the end of the war he had helped over 6,500 Jews, American and British soldiers escape from the Germans, and his activities earned him the

nickname "Scarlet Pimpernel of the Vatican" as he became the master of disguises, evading capture from the Germans when he had to leave the security of the Vatican to go on his rescue missions.

After the war, the Monsignor received many decorations, including Commander of the British Empire and the US Medal of Freedom. His death in 1963 made front page news in the New York Times.

If readers believe that a movie could be made about Monsignor O'Flaherty's life, they would be reassured that such a film - The Scarlet and the Black - was released in 1983. Starring Gregory Peck as Monsignor O'Flaherty and Christopher Plummer as a German SS officer, the film is available for streaming on Amazon

Prime.

Not lost on O'Grady is the importance of Monsignor O'Flaherty's heritage. After all, the memorial to the Monsignor stands in a high-profile location in the middle of Killarney and has become a center of attraction for many of the millions of visitors to the town each year. More than any physical landmark,



U.S. Brigadier General George Smith presenting the U.S. Medal of Freedom to Fr. Hugh O'Flaherty, in December, 1945

however, Monsignor O'Flaherty's actions exemplify the spirit of humanitarianism that has come to mark Ireland and the

Irish people.

"We have a small military, but we are proud that every year we have sent military personnel to UN peacekeeping roles, at large expense," O'Grady shares. "Per capita, Ireland continues to give more in terms of people and money. It's ingrained in our psyche, perhaps from the days of our colonial past, or even back to the Famine. We seem to be more receptive to giving and helping, above and beyond what our size would otherwise suggest. That just seems to be our nature, as it was Hugh O'Flaherty's."

While over half a century has passed since Monsignor O'Flaherty's death, O'Grady believes his story is as relevant as ever, and he carries on the sacred duty of passing on this story to younger generations.

"Hugh O'Flaherty's story is about a

gentleman who was an incredible role model, who didn't stick to his neutrality. When he saw people needed to be protected, he stepped up and ran the organization that saved people. Certain stories, like Monsignor O'Flaherty's, are life changing, life enriching, and educational on how we should evolve as people and societies. If we don't study, research, and appreciate history, then we are going to make the same mistakes again. Even though we seem to keep making those mistakes in the present times, that shouldn't stop us from trying."

It certainly has not stopped Jerry O'Grady from trying.

For more information about the Hugh O'Flaherty International Humanitarian Award, please visit

[www.hughoflaherty.com](http://www.hughoflaherty.com)

Society Committee in 2012 with then Taoiseach Enda Kenny, and the UK ambassador and the Papal Nuncio



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Gaelic Park Players’ Spotlight

*Continued from page 7*  
and many thrive in this environment. It also develops social skills, builds confidence, rewards patience, and fosters discipline. It gives some children an opportunity to experience being in the spotlight, very often for the first time in their lives. And, of course and more importantly, almost all of the time, it is fun, fun and more fun!  
Liz: I first encountered your work in 2019 when I attended a marvelous rendition of John B. Keane’s, Moll, at Gaelic Park which you directed. You and the Gaelic Park Players’ troupe took that play all the way to Listowel, Co Kerry, where it was performed at the John B. Keane fest. That was a marvelous feat. Tell us about your experience in Listowel?  
Phyllis: Yes, that was a wonderful experience. To travel to a foreign country, and due to a shared love of theater, feel at once at home and understood was very satisfying. Our play was not singled out for any special awards at the fest, but we received numerous compliments and tons of



Phyllis Bierdz, Gaelic Park Players

well-wishes. I did feel very proud. Some of the actors and crew members were from Ireland and it was fun to visit Ireland with these people as our guides. They definitely knew all the good pubs!  
Liz: The Gaelic Park Players performed another of your short plays-Irish American Heroes—at the fest two years ago. This was a innovate tale that was set in heaven where members of our armed forces who had died in combat were getting together. United, the play that will be performed at this year’s Chicago Gaelic Park Fest and that you will direct yourself, also focuses on the formation of our county. It is a novel telling of the making of our Flag and features Betsy Ross and George Washington. I feel you have a special affinity for works about our country. Am I right about that?  
Phyllis: Hmm, not necessarily. I have written a wide variety plays. However, I suppose I did develop a strong sense of patriotism and love of country growing up due to my public school education. The public schools in the 40’s and 50’s instilled in us a strong sense of patriotism, a love for country and a very deep respect for the

men and women of our armed forces. Probably underscored by being around during World War II. Some aspects of such patriotism might be missing in our schools today.  
Liz: And when did you become involved with the Gaelic Park Players?  
Phyllis: I answered an audition ad in a local Oak Forest newspaper and was given the role. And I suppose you could say that the rest is history. I’ve been involved in all aspects of the plays and have been a member of the group for close to 25 years. It’s been nothing but fun and a good share of drama of course.  
Liz: Tell us a little about the play United, that will be performed at this year’s fest?  
Phyllis: I used that age-old theatrical devise of a play within a play. While, the play somewhat challenges the Betsy Ross myth about the making of our flag, it enforces the notion that Mistress Ross was more than likely to have been involved with some aspects of its creation. I want my work to underscore how important the flag was back

when our country was being formed and its importance as an enduring symbol of freedom to this day.  
Liz: Many years ago, I picked up a small book called Late Bloomers which was written by a staff writer for the New Yorker, Brenda Gill. I was well into my forties at the time; I must have felt I hadn’t quite bloomed yet myself. You on the other hand have been blooming since you were a very little girl, and sitting here with you tonight, I sense that you’re going to continue to bloom for some time. Are there any new works in the pipeline?  
Phyllis: “Aw ain’t you sweet!” Well, maybe a little something. I am currently working on a book of parodies of well-known fairy tales and rhymes which will be published shortly.

Liz: Well, I look forward to this new work. Thank you, Phyllis, for your contribution to community theater in the Chicagoland area and for taking the time to speak with me tonight.



Maggie O’Shea, Gaelic Park Queen for 2026,



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Irish American Writers and Artists Find New Momentum as Chicago Forms A New Chapter

In the last week of June, Chicagoans interested in forming a Midwest Chapter of Irish American Writers & Artists (IAW&A), met at Chief O’Neill’s. The process was begun during the Conference of the American Literary Association at the Palmer House in May and took another step forward as writers and musicians shared their work.  
“We entered a zone of creativity. Very uplifting and fun,” said Mary Pat Kelly, founding Board Member and former President of the IAW&A and the author of Galway Bay.  
“One of my favorite events during the iBAM! (Irish Books, Arts & Music) celebration was the IAW&A session when Chicago writers and artists stepped up to perform. I hope that by having the regular salon gatherings that energy can be unleashed again. Maeve Binchy, an iBAM! Literature awardee herself, gave me the secret to being a writer -- a deadline. Scheduling specific times to gather and share work can be a great incentive to moving a project along,” she said.  
Anthony Murphy, Salon Producer and Board Member, was at that first Palmer House meeting and is happy to encourage the group in Chicago to move forward.  
“As the salon producer for the IAW&A in New York, I am pleased to see the sprouting of a Chicago Chapter. It’s great that people want to get involved in real time and share their stories in a real life setting. I have helped curate and host numerous salons over three years that I’ve been involved here. I have met and listened to many talented presenters, poets, actors and musicians and made a lot of friends.  
With the salon format, we aren’t putting on shows but are giving space to voices that are working on their craft. It creates a nurturing environment, one that was IAW&A salon instigator Malachy McCourt’s wish. A place for co-creatives, open to all. He didn’t want to be a gatekeeper, more of a guide. I hope that I continue that here in New York and that our Oakland group and our burgeoning Chicago allies grow with the support of their communities and our association. Sláinte!”  
Attendees agree. Playwright Eileen Byrne said, “I arrived a little early and sat at the bar and started chatting with a new member and felt this instant camaraderie and bond. We were all there to push ourselves to new levels of writing. By the end of the afternoon, I felt like I had known everyone for ages.”  
Dan McLaughlin, contributing writer to Irish American News, concurs, “This first meeting was a great opportunity to meet some very talented people that were also very generous in offering ideas and advice for my own project. I was grateful to be included and can’t wait for the next event.”  
Erin McCarthy, Associate Professor of History, Columbia College Chicago said, “I am impressed with the range of writers and artists the relaunch of the Chicago IAW&A Chapter attracted. The performances of works-in-progress were particularly inspiring.”  
Writer, poet and journalist Kathy O’Neill, who participated in the iBAM!/IAW&A salons, said, “Partnering with IAWA in New York is an honor. This allows Irish American artists, writers, poets & scholars who live in the Chicago area to meet, collaborate and showcase their work to a larger audience.”  
As a long-time participant in iBAM!, Mary T. Kanak, is thrilled to join in. “Meeting other writers and sharing my memoir, Ripples of Connections, at iBAM! opened a new world to me. I’m delighted to continue that comradery and inspiration with the IAW&A salons. Count me in!”  
Josephine Craven, President of iBAM! (Irish Books, Arts & Music), shared exciting news about another opportunity for the newly forming Chicago chapter. iBAM! is launching a new initiative called iBAM! POP-UPS, designed to bring the spirit of iBAM! into new places and create new possibilities for Irish arts and culture throughout the year.  
Each POP-UP will feature a dynamic mix of writers, artists, musicians and cultural voices, creating intimate gatherings that celebrate creativity, conversation and community. Irish American Writers & Artists will play an important role in the initiative, giving members of the emerging Chicago chapter opportunities to share their work while introducing the IAW&A salon spirit to new audiences.  
“The iBAM! POP-UP initiative is about creating new spaces for connection, creativity and collaboration,”

Craven said. “As we continue to grow iBAM!, we’re excited to create opportunities that bring together writers, artists, musicians and audiences in meaningful ways, while expanding the reach of Irish arts and culture beyond our traditional annual programming.”  
Among the participants were Eileen Byrne, Cliff Carlson, Charles Connor, Josephine Craven, Mary Pat Kelly, Taia Koker, Erin McCarthy, Dan McLaughlin, Kathy

O’Neill and Mark Piekarz. Other interested members are Rosaleen Crowley, April D. Fallon and Jacqueline Fitzgerald.  
The group will also meet on Sunday, September 20th at 3:00 pm at Chief O’Neill’s. Anyone interested is welcome to come by.  
For more information, please contact Mary Pat Kelly at [mpk@marypatkelly.com](mailto:mpk@marypatkelly.com)



The Irish-American Writes Association founders are: (l to r) Cliff Carlson, Erin McCarthy, Josephine Craven, Mary Pat Kelly, Mark Piekarz, Kathy O’Neill, Eileen Byrne, and Dan McLoughlin. Interested in membership? email Mary Pat Kelley at [mpk@marypatkelly.com](mailto:mpk@marypatkelly.com)

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## Wooden Flute Maker Patrick Olwell Awarded Nation's Highest Prize for Folk Arts

In September of 2026, wooden flute maker Patrick Olwell will be awarded the prestigious National Endowment of the Arts (NEA) National Heritage Fellowship. Each year, the NEA presents two lifetime achievement awards: the NEA Jazz Masters Fellowships, and the NEA National Heritage Fellowships, the nation's highest honor in the folk and

responsive playability.

Born in 1952, Olwell grew up in Brooklyn and Boston, in a musical family of Irish American heritage. Although he was not immersed in Irish traditional music during childhood, his love of music led him to study piano and guitar before discovering the harmonica and then wooden flute in the early 1970s. After purchasing an

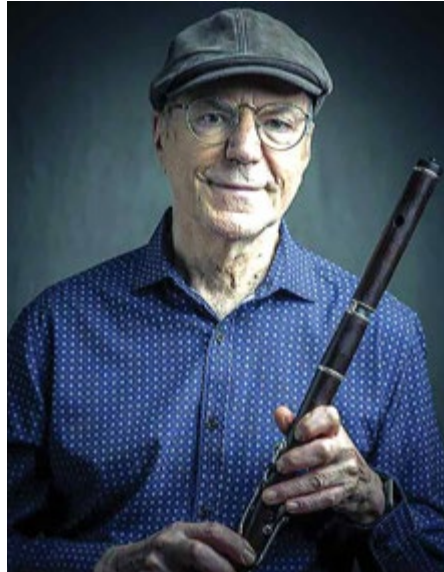
research. He examined hundreds of nineteenth-century simple-system flutes in museums, private collections, and libraries, carefully measuring their dimensions and studying their acoustic properties. One of the most important collections he studied was the Dayton C. Miller collection at the Library of Congress, which contains over 1700 flutes and woodwind instruments from the 16th to 20th centuries, crafted by more than 460 European and American makers. Rather than merely copying historic models, he refined their designs by improving the bore, embouchure, and tone-hole placement. These innovations produced flutes that retained the warmth and character of traditional instruments while offering greater reliability, intonation, and ease of playing.

Beginning in 1975, Olwell established what would become Olwell Flutes, a workshop dedicated to producing handcrafted instruments one at a time using traditional methods. His flutes, fashioned from carefully seasoned woods such as African blackwood, boxwood, and rosewood, quickly earned an international reputation for excellence. Many distinguished performers have chosen Olwell flutes, including Matt Molloy of The Chieftains, Mike Rafferty, Seamus Egan of Solas, June McCormack, Brian Finnegan, and even Ian Anderson of Jethro Tull. Their performances have introduced the sound of Olwell instruments to audiences around the world, further enhancing his reputation as one of the foremost makers of Irish wooden flutes.

58 y/o multi-instrumentalist Irish musician Pat Quinn leads sessions at Chicago's Galway Arms. He purchased an Olwell flute in the 90's, on the advice of Matt Malloy of The Chieftains. Quinn praises his Olwell, saying "Tuning is more accurate.... One is less apt to go flat or sharp. While not a beginner flute, it's a great way to fill the transition from flute intermediate to master level." Other Chicago-based Irish musicians own and play Olwells. Including

John Williams, and County Fermanagh native Laurence Nugent.

Nowadays, Olwell splits his time between Athens Georgia, where his wife teaches at University of Georgia, and his main workshop in Virginia.



As a dedicated mentor and instrument maker, he is often in Virginia working with his son and longtime business partner Aaron Olwell. Jointly, they are training Seth Swingle and Aaron's brother Matthew Olwell—both currently journeymen flute makers. Together, the four

the selection committee rejected her application, stating that Olwell was "too young, and it would be highly unusual for a flute-maker to be considered for such an award."

Unfazed, Eck persisted over the next 20 years, revising and resubmitting her application almost annually. In 2022, she grew weary, stating "I had interviewed every important flute player in support for Patrick, but that just wasn't enough." Although Eck had given up, thankfully that was not the end of the story. A couple of years later Dr. Timothy D. Taylor, UCLA Professor of Ethnomusicology, entered the picture. Building on Eck's groundwork, Taylor was able to get Olwell's nomination across the finish line, and on Wednesday, September 30, 2026, at 5:30 p.m. ET at the Library of Congress in Washington, DC, Patrick Olwell will finally receive the National Heritage Fellowship award. The ceremony can be watched live on arts.gov/heritage.

Olwell is in stellar company; other Irish artists preceding him for this award have been:

**Joe Heaney** (1982) - Sean-no's (traditional old-style) singer.

**Joe Shannon** (1983) - Uilleann piper.

**Martin Mulvihill** (1984) - Fiddler and instructor.

**Michael Flatley** (1988) - Choreographer and

dancer **Jack Coen** (1991) - Flutist. **Liz Carroll** (1994) - Fiddler and composer.

**Donny Golden** (1995) Dancer. **Mick Moloney** (1999) - multi-instrumentalist, folklorist, and advocate.

**Kevin Burke** (2002) - Fiddler. **Joe Derrane** (2004) - Button accordionist.

**Mike Rafferty** (2010) - Flute and uilleann pipes player.

**Séamus Connolly** (2013) - Traditional Irish fiddler.

**Kevin Doyle** (2014) - Stepdancer.

**Billy McComiskey** (2016) - Button accordionist

**Joanie Madden** (2021) - Flute, whistle player, and leader of Cherish the Ladies.

As you can see from the above list, most Irish artists who received this important award have been performing artists. Patrick will be the first craftsman to receive the award. Perhaps that is why it was such a long time coming?

A simple 1000-word article cannot do justice to Mr. Olwell. For more on his fascinating life and craftsmanship I urge readers to view the 2013 documentary "The Keymaster," available on YouTube.

Contact me at christine.lawless@yahoo.com



traditional arts. Since 1982, the NEA has awarded 502 National Heritage Fellowships (including 2026 fellows).

Patrick Olwell is one of the world's most respected makers of wooden flutes, celebrated for his craftsmanship, innovation, and dedication to preserving the traditions of Irish music. For five decades, he has devoted his life to studying, designing, and handcrafting simple-system wooden flutes that are renowned for their exceptional tone, accurate tuning, and

old wooden flute from a pawn shop, he became fascinated by both the instrument and its construction. Since then he is largely self-taught.

Olwell started by making bamboo flutes in college before progressing to hardwood instruments. Finding that many antique flutes suffered from poor tuning and inconsistent response, he began teaching himself the craft of flute making through experimentation, careful observation, and extensive

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## Turtle Bunbury



is an Irish historian with a penchant for digging deep into Irish history and presenting it to readers in a factual, thoughtful and very interesting way.

Check out his Irish in Chicago section at the link below, and if you like it I recommend you subscribe to receive it for \$12 a year!

And if you think you might have some Chicagoland history of interest to him, here is his email.  
turtlebunbury@gmail.com



Ed Fitzpatrick, Scott Brennan, Thomas Thibeault, Cliff Carlson, young Thomas Fitzpatrick, enjoying a day of golf at Deerpath CC benefiting the Fitzpatrick School of Irish Dance.

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By Mike Corrigan

## Pre-Retirees Face Retirement Uncertainty

Americans nearing retirement are facing more uncertainty than they have in years. A recent report from the Center for Retirement Research found that concerns about Social Security, Medicare, taxes, inflation, and the nation's growing debt are causing many pre-retirees to rethink their retirement plans.

The study found that fears of potential Social Security benefit reductions and persistent inflation topped the list of concerns among those approaching retirement. As a result, many are reconsidering when they will retire and how much investment risk they are willing to take.

Policy uncertainty has real financial consequences. It can slow economic growth, increase stock market volatility, and make long-term financial planning more difficult. For individuals preparing to retire, that uncertainty often leads to difficult decisions about when to leave the workforce and how to protect retirement savings.

The report found that a growing number of pre-retirees plan to delay retirement or shift a portion of their portfolios to more conservative investments. Many are willing to accept somewhat lower potential returns in exchange for greater financial stability and peace of mind.

For those seeking additional certainty, principal-protected

investment strategies, such as fixed indexed annuities, may deserve consideration as part of a diversified retirement plan. These products offer the opportunity to participate in a portion of market gains while protecting principal from market losses. For retirees who are concerned about outliving their savings, certain annuities can also provide guaranteed lifetime income.

No single financial strategy is right for everyone, but today's environment reinforces the importance of reviewing retirement plans regularly. Working with a qualified financial professional can help individuals evaluate their options, manage risk appropriately, and build a retirement strategy designed to provide confidence regardless of what lies ahead.

The Center for Retirement Research concluded that today's elevated policy uncertainty is influencing the financial decisions of older Americans. While protecting against uncertainty often comes at a cost, thoughtful planning can help retirees balance growth, income, and security as they prepare for the years ahead.

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“Other people have a nationality. The Irish and the Jews have a psychosis.”

Do you remember the Jack Parr “Tonight” Show? The precursor to Johnny Carson, David Letterman and the rest.

Jack Parr was background noise to my childhood. My Irish grandmother, Nora Ryan O’Conner, was devoted to the soft-spoken New Yorker who seemed so 5th Avenue-sophisticated and erudite. To me he always seemed more like a prep school literature professor than a showbiz mid-town Manhattan habitué. It was the late 1950s so TV wasn’t very sophisticated or high brow.

But every once in a while, between appearances by comedienne Phyllis Diller and stripper Gypsy Rose Lee, a Parr guest would come out and simply take over the show.

No one did that better than Irish writer Brendan Francis Behan. Somewhat an unknown among the lower uneducated showbiz fans. Behan was a Dublin man of words, x-ray memory and beverage. It permitted him the long look. The chance to look back on his life and create stories that would peel the shells off eggs.

Behan was a writer of breakthrough brilliance as only the self-destructive Irish can produce. He was a large man. A big rough bouncy boy who let his lower class Dublin persona shine through his television antics and tough poetic prose.

He had all the gifts, save common sense, I reckon. His literature appeared to have no bottom. He brought to life the broken wanderers of Dublin streets. Its penal system, especially for the young. The victims of broken families. The living corpses of modern 20th century poverty as only the Irish could fashion.

He portrayed a people of unflagging religious self consciousness. A haunted adult population of unfulfilled adolescent sexual understanding. Emotionally malnourished and seeming incapacity

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for adult fulfillment. All against a background of centuries old persecution and woundedness by a neighbor nation. Further firmly placing a layer of broken expectations after being granted political independence.

This was Behan’s real world. Hardly the landscape of happy leprechauns, green beer and pious clergy. Behan’s Ireland is gritty. Greasy. Bleeding. The streets of Dublin filled with broken dreams, drunkards and the wickedly sinful just trying to cope.

This is hardly the Irish world, all physically torn and emotionally threadbare, that Irish immigrants in the U.S. wished to be reminded of, or even introduced to. It made my grandmother Nora insane. Behan’s remarks about Ireland, his cynical political crime, sexual naughtiness and rough Irish living, were not welcome by her. When made in such television interviews, she found them a horrific nightmare. Not



Brendan Behan holding court in Dublin

only for my grandmother, but for most pious folk we knew. His literary works might be one thing on the “Tonight” show. But among the hard-working Irish he was often portrayed as the “devil himself.”

Armed by a reputation for hard dangerous drinking and skirmishes with the New York Police, Behan often became the star of his own melodramas. His membership in the Irish Republican Army, (IRA), the banned military and political rebels of Irish history, added a criminal layer of patriotic shame to his rebellious behavior, often more embarrassing than dangerous. But it spiced up his writing and gave his poetry an edge.

It is said that Behan was up by 7 AM each day and worked till noon. When the pubs would open. He carried off well his hard-earned reputation as “the carouser-in-chief.”

His career soared in the early 1960s, thanks to the power of American publicity creating a fan base. He mingled easily with American illuminati such as Arthur

Miller, Jackie Gleason and Bob Dylan.

In Dublin his unusual fame was reinforced by his closeness to famed contemporary Irish writers like Flann O’Brien, Patrick Kavanagh, Patrick Swift, Anthony Cronin, John Jordan, J. P. Donleavy and artist Desmond MacNamara. All were captivated by his self-destructive joviality, self-revealing literary drama and outrageous use of language.

Behan’s literary world exploded in 1954 with the production of his play, “The Quare Fellow.” The work is heavily influence by Behan’s own personal experience of the penal system. Satire fills the pages of the work and catalogues the true human experience wrought by capitol punishment. It ran for six months. And later opened at the Theatre Royal Stratford East.

His autobiographical work, “The Borstal Boy,” became an international best seller.

Behan would enjoy ten years of literary celebrity before his death on March 20, 1964. His addiction to alcohol and physical deterioration due to diabetes brought him quick death at the age of 41.

Thus passed Ireland’s heroic playwright, poet and begrudged literary giant whose eyes and ears were the product of another age of Irish renaissance. A mystical moment of literary genius when the heart out runs the details of the drama of life and reshapes it with the cold hard facts of reality on the plateau of human life.

Brendan Francis Behan embraced the centennial of his birth earlier on February 9, 2023.

In the thick literary soup of Ireland’s ferocious passion and dutiful

commitment to the literary traditions of its people, Behan’s accomplishment as a writer once more works before the world.

The texture and climate of Irish writers to record the deepest depths of being human remains mysterious.

Out of the most provocative carnage of human passage Irish literary achievement spills over the cauldron of everyday living.

The gnawing persecution of poverty, hunger, life-time exile, warfare, my grandmother’s criticisms and centuries of religious antagonism are unable to damage the imaginative literary soul of its people. Behan is the proof.

Behan surrenders the secret of his success and lays out the clues to his brilliant career when he says -

I have total Irreverence for anything connected to society except that which makes the roads safer, the beer stronger, the food cheaper and the old men and the old women warmer in the winter and happier in the summer.

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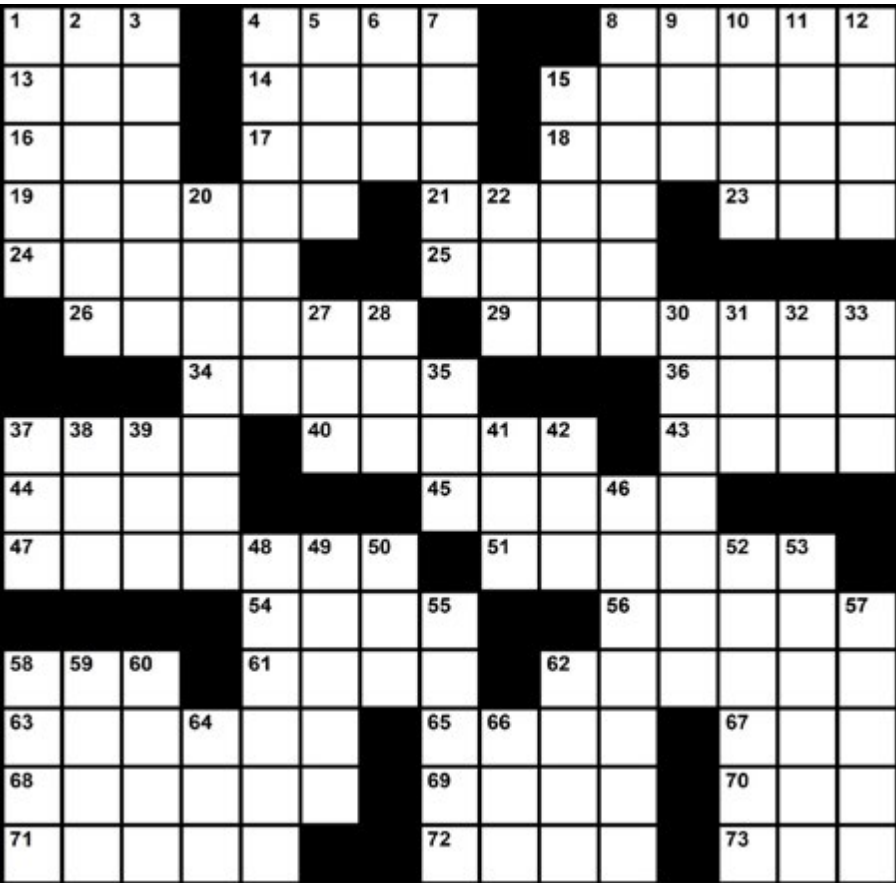
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- ACROSS

1. Command, abbr.  
4. Frees from  
8. Nobel prize-winning Irish poet  
13. LA footballer  
14. Very bad  
15. Exam taker  
16. Dwarf in “The Hobbit”  
17. Poet Angelou  
18. Strike caller  
19. Yellow  
21. Atmosphere, slang  
23. Trademarks, abbr.  
24. Dog-  
25. Flip through  
26. Jazz bandleader, Cab Callo-way’s signature line, 3 words  
29. Consuming, 2 words  
34. Brief announcement  
36. Sounds of amazement  
37. Conical tent  
40. Fuss  
43. Party giver  
44. “It’s cold” sound  
45. Prohibited thing  
47. It should grow if looked af-ter, 2 words  
51. Irish actor who played Op-penheimer  
54. San \_\_\_\_ Obispo, Calif.  
56. Exit  
58. Roosevelt or Kennedy  
61. Line on a spreadsheet  
62. Aces, e.g.  
63. Irish horror writer who wrote “Dracula”, Bram \_\_\_\_  
65. Spicy stew  
67. U.F.O. crew, abbr.  
68. Formal dress  
69. Middle-eastern kingdom  
70. Swallowed up  
71. Corrodes (of metal)  
72. Demolition compounds  
73. Okla. neighbor, abbr.

DOWN

1. “Time in a Bottle” singer, Jim \_\_\_\_  
2. “Emancipation of Mimi” sing-er, Carey  
3. Composer Shostakovich  
4. Modernize  
5. One Terrible, one Great  
6. Home Depot specialty, abbr.  
7. Poles, e.g.  
8. Sana native  
9. Special perception, abbr.  
10. Hard \_\_\_\_, 2 words  
11. Kind of paper  
12. Grasps  
15. Brass instruments  
20. Cardinal, e.g.  
22. Hosp. section  
27. Puzzled response  
28. Spanish for gold  
30. Down and out, 2 words  
31. Gunk  
32. Sounds of hesitation  
33. S.F. setting, abbr.  
35. Automated program  
37. Atlanta-based channel  
38. Rage  
39. Before: Prefix  
41. Son of Noah  
42. \_\_\_\_ Dhab  
46. New \_\_\_\_, LA.  
48. Tool box need  
49. Bizarre  
50. Material-forming tool  
52. Attack, 2 words  
53. Mimieux of ‘The Time Ma-chine’  
55. \_\_\_\_-Hawley Tariff Act of 1930- which raised duties on imports  
57. County in eastern England  
58. Romanov ruler  
59. “\_\_\_\_, Brute!”, 2 words  
60. A detective connects them  
62. Thin flat strip  
64. Do-it-yourself \_\_\_\_  
66. Letter run after K
- (ANSWERS PAGE 17)

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**Day 2 Saturday: Westport**  
Following breakfast we head West to Westport. A Stop at Seans Bar, Irelands Oldest pub for a tour and tasting. Once we arrive in Westport, you will have the remainder of the day to explore the town on your own. Overnight in Westport.

**Day 3 Sunday: Galway**  
After breakfast, we head south towards Galway. We begin with touring of the breathtaking Connemara region and a stop for a tour at Kylemore Abbey. Followed by a visit to Glen Keen Farm for a sheepdog demonstration with tea and scones. Continue on to Galway for dinner as a group at the hotel tonight. Overnight in Galway.

**Day 4 Monday: Galway**  
The day is yours to explore the city on your own. Overnight in Galway.

**Day 5 Tuesday: Dingle**  
Following breakfast, we head South, our first stop will be at the awe inspiring and majestic Cliffs of Moher, which rise 700 feet above the Atlantic Ocean. Continue on to Killybeggs for a Jaunting Cart Ride through the National Park and some free time to walk around the town. Continue on to Dingle to check into our hotel for dinner and overnight.

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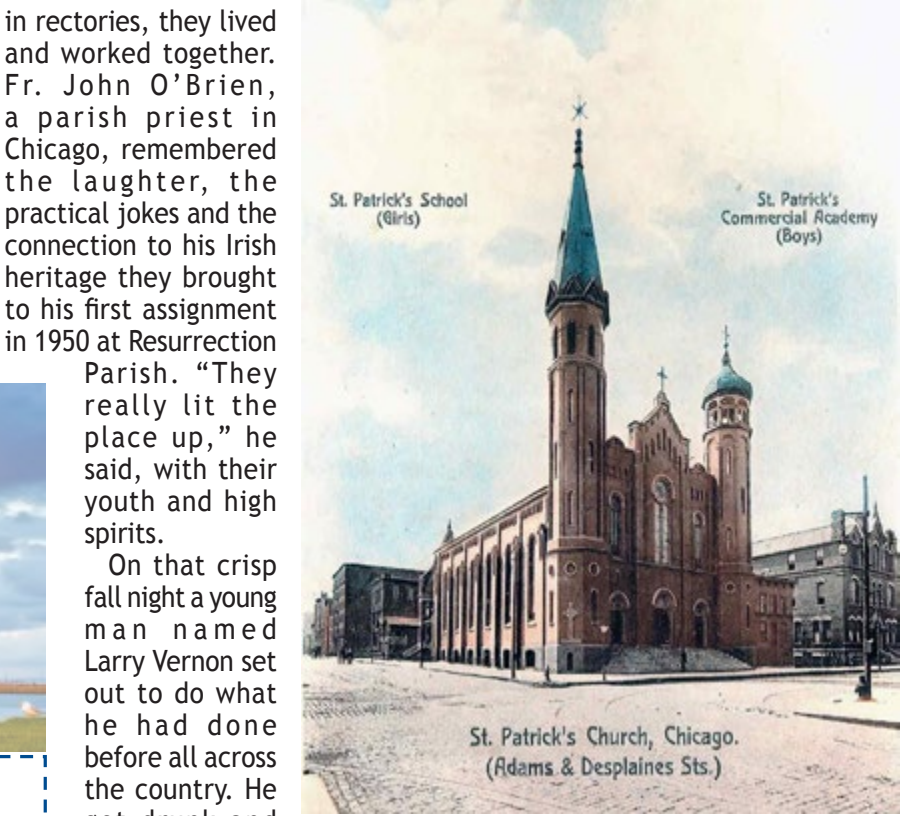
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in rectories, they lived and worked together. Fr. John O'Brien, a parish priest in Chicago, remembered the laughter, the practical jokes and the connection to his Irish heritage they brought to his first assignment in 1950 at Resurrection Parish. "They really lit the place up," he said, with their youth and high spirits.

On that crisp fall night a young man named Larry Vernon set out to do what he had done before all across the country. He got drunk and armed himself with not one but five knives looking to steal money from the nearest rectory. Creeping up to a first floor window, he shattered it and crawled through. The intruder found himself in the apartment of the Walsh sisters. Awakened by the commotion, the sisters ran screaming from their bedrooms into the living room where the intruder was ransacking drawers. Vernon stabbed Betty Walsh twice in the back. She collapsed at the foot of the stairway leading to the quarters of the pastor, Fr. Stephen O'Donnell; assistant rector, Fr. Mark Holihan, and three other priests. Peggy was ahead of her sister and pursued by Vernon who stabbed at her, inflicting wounds on her back and arms. She managed to reach the landing halfway up to the second floor when Fr. O'Donnell emerged from his room armed with a revolver. Fr. O'Donnell ran down the stairs and encountered Vernon brandishing a knife in each hand. The priest shoved him back and then fired when Vernon headed for him again. "I aimed at his legs; I didn't want to kill him," the priest said. While Fr. Holihan phoned the police, Fr. O'Donnell, a highly decorated World War II Army chaplain who had served under Gen. George Patton in Europe, held Vernon at gunpoint until the police arrived.

Betty died that night, but Peggy recovered and continued to work at

Old St. Pat's after recovering from her wounds. Fr. O'Donnell left her his Wisconsin home in his will and she eventually retired there. According to the newspapers of the day, Larry Vernon carried with him in addition to the five knives a couple of religious booklets. Written on a page in one of the books was a note dated just weeks before and signed by a minister in Reno, Nevada. It read, "Give Larry a chance—every man needs a friend." He had arrived in Chicago just the day before from Texas. Vernon eventually received a sentence of 99 years in prison for the murder of Betty Walsh.

**The Back Story- 50 Years Later**

My interest in this event all came about when my cousin, Fr. Michael O'Connor OMI, was visiting us in Chicago in May of 2011. This was the first time he had come back after the death of my mother the year before. My mother, Ann Dalton Skerrett, was from Ballyhahill, County Limerick and had immigrated to Chicago in 1929. For the final three years of her life she lived at Holy Family Villa, an assisted living center. There she made many friends, including Fr. John O'Brien, also a resident. Fr. O'Brien loved to reminisce and tell stories of his days as a young priest in Chicago. He told my mother the story of the Walsh sisters. Although she did not recall the crime, she did remember them as girls from her school days in Ballyhahill.

When Fr. O'Brien met Fr. Mike and learned he was from Ballyhahill he told the story of the Walsh sisters. It was a story Mike had never heard before and felt that it should be shared. So long ago Larry Vernon's path of violence took him to Old St. Pat's and the Walsh sisters. Sometimes cultures clash, but more often they meet and cross in harmony and beauty like the Celtic knot that adorns the walls of Old St. Pat's.

Old St. Pat's in 1916. It looks much the same today.

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**Game On!**  
*By Chris Wheaton*

There is a ton going on in the sporting world this coming weekend and as you sit down to read this column, it will all be over, but that is what happens in the monthly publishing business. As a sports fan I am trying to juggle my commitments to view all 3 of the championships I am interested in and still have time to watch the Tour de France.

The Open Championship golf tourney opens on Thursday at the beautiful Royal Birkdale in Southport, England. Come early Sunday afternoon, one proud golfer will be hoisting the Claret Jug and will forever be known as an "Open Champion". My hope is that Rory McIlroy's game is in good enough form for him to claim his second crown at the Open. He will face some stiff competition from the "usuals", Scottie Scheffler, Tommy Fleetwood and Matt Fitzpatrick who has been playing his best golf of late.

Right as the Open golfers will be heading up the 18th fairway, the World Cup final will be kicking off with the winners of the Argentina v. England match facing off against the winner of France v. Spain. A month ago, I was not feeling the excitement of the World Cup for various reasons, one of which was the expanded field which I thought watered down the competition to some extent. I could not have been more wrong! In my opinion, this has been one of the greatest World Cups ever contested. Every match in the knockout rounds as well as most in the group stage have been riveting. Love them or hate them, FIFA has done a great job of pitting probably the best four sides to square off in the semis. FIFA is not without faults and arguably one of the most corrupt organizations in all of sport, but they have put on a spectacle that has been nothing short of amazing.

The other huge contest is the All-Ireland Senior Hurling Championship also getting underway on July 19. Limerick will be shooting for their 13th title and 5th in the past seven years and will face a tough squad from Galway who haven't raised the Liam MacCarthy since 2017. Galway's five previous championships have been few and far between in recent memory as we must go all the way back to 1988 to find the Tribesmen 2nd most recent crown.

This year's game has some extra significance to me as my good friend, Peadar Hurley (a handy hurler himself) has a nephew who plays for Limerick. Ethan Hurley is a young, up and comer who has been used as a substitute in the midfield and is certainly part of the future for Limerick. Ethan is the first Newcastle West clubman to play championship hurling since 1950! The hurling bloodline runs deep in the Hurley family as Ethan's great grandfather's cousin was the captain on the 1918 Limerick All-Ireland championship panel. Peadar's great aunt would tell stories of how the family, back in the day, would travel the county on horse and tram with great pride to watch the cousin's hurling matches. It all comes full circle now as the next generation of "Hurley hurlers" shine for Limerick, forever making Newcastle West and Monagea Parish proud. Peadar and Ethan's father, Willie will be cheering loudly at Croke Park on Sunday and as a bonus, Peadar will be joined by his wife and 2 of his kids for their first ever All-Ireland Final. Let's hope the long trip from Chicago was worth it.



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Naperville Irish Fest Marks Halfway to St. Patrick’s Day with Music, Culture, Community

Festival kicks off one day after the halfway point to St. Patrick’s Day, bringing the spirit of Ireland to downtown Naperville

The luck of the Irish returns to downtown Naperville this fall as Naperville Irish Fest celebrates its sixth year on Friday and Saturday, September 18-19, 2026, at Central Park. Hosted by West Suburban Irish, the two-day festival brings together authentic Irish music, dance, food, culture, and family fun while supporting the organization’s mission to preserve and promote Irish heritage throughout the community.

The festival begins just one day after the halfway point to St. Patrick’s Day, making it the perfect opportunity to celebrate all things Irish before March arrives again.

This year’s Naperville Irish Fest is proudly presented by Woody Buick GMC of Naperville as the Emerald Isle Sponsor, with Spennare Americas serving as the Shamrock Sponsor. The festival is also made possible through the generous support of the Naperville Special Events & Community Arts (SECA) Commission.

Festival guests can enjoy live Irish music throughout the weekend, performances by award-winning Irish dance schools, cultural exhibits from the Irish American Heritage Center, the Irish Culture Tent, unique shopping in the Irish Village, and a variety of food and beverage offerings. Returning favorites include the Irish Food Truck, Home Run Inn Pizza, and The Creamery.

Families will find plenty to enjoy with crafts, face painting, games, the popular Kids’ Parade, interactive storytelling, playground activities, and photo opportunities with St. Patrick and leprechauns.

“There’s something special about bringing the community together to celebrate Irish culture in the heart of downtown Naperville,” said Chris O’Hara, Co-Chair of Naperville Irish Fest. “Whether you’re Irish by heritage or simply Irish for the weekend, Naperville Irish Fest offers incredible entertainment, authentic traditions, and fun for every generation. We’re also incredibly grateful to the Naperville SECA Commission for their generous support, which helps make this celebration possible.”

Beyond celebrating Irish culture, Naperville Irish Fest continues its tradition of giving back to the community. In keeping with the

philanthropic mission of West Suburban Irish, the festival will once again donate \$25 for every volunteer who works the event. Each volunteer selects one of the festival’s partner nonprofits to receive the donation in their name.

“Naperville Irish Fest is about more than music and entertainment,” said Linda Dimitropoulos, Co-Chair of Naperville Irish Fest. “It’s about strengthening our community, supporting outstanding local nonprofits, and creating an event where families and friends can come together to



experience Irish hospitality and culture. Every volunteer helps make a meaningful impact, and we’re proud to continue giving back through our volunteer donation program.”

Volunteers may designate one of the following nonprofit organizations to receive a \$25 donation in their name:

- ALIVE Center
- Irish Community Services
- Loaves & Fishes Community Services
- Naperville Area Humane Society
- St. Patrick’s Residence
- Institute of Traditional Irish Music TICKETS

Festival attendees are encouraged to purchase tickets in advance. Discounted advance tickets are available for \$10

each or two for \$15 through September 11, 2026. Beginning September 12, tickets are \$15 each or two for \$25. wsirish.org/IrishFest.

EVENT DETAILS

- Dates: Friday and Saturday, September 18-19, 2026
- Location: Central Park, downtown Naperville (104 East Benton St.,

Naperville)

- Activities: Live music, Irish dance performances, bagpipers, Irish cultural exhibits, children’s activities, sporting demos, whiskey tastings, food and beverage vendors, and more, including:
  - Irish Culture
  - Irish genealogy
  - History of the Mother Jones Project display
  - Irish book authors
  - Irish hurling & Gaelic football demos with a “batting” cage
  - Kids’ Activities

- St. Patrick & leprechaun photo opportunities
- Kids’ parade, interactive storytelling & playground
- Face painting
- Home Depot wood crafts
- Guinness & Whiskey Tastings
- Guinness Tasting: Enjoy a guided Guinness experience hosted by WSI at **Quigley’s Irish Pub**.
- Whiskey Tasting: Savor premium Irish whiskeys in a curated tasting session hosted by the West Suburban Irish at Quigley’s Irish Pub.
- Both tastings require a separate ticket, which includes one general admission ticket to

our Irish Fest.

- Entertainment Lineup
- Pre-Fest on Thursday, September 17 - Celebrate the halfway point to St. Patrick’s Day at Quigley’s Irish Pub

and hear the sounds of Character Fleadh the evening before Naperville Irish Fest.

- Friday, September 18 - Fest Kicks Off
- McNulty Irish Dancers
  - Mulligan Stew
  - On the Lash
  - Classical Blast
- Saturday, September 19 - Day Two of the Fest



- Firefighters Highland Guard of Naperville (bagpipers)
- Bailey Murray Academy of Irish Dancing

- McNulty School of Irish Dance
- Joyce Boys
- Bentley Academy of Irish Dance
- Celtic Roots
- The Chancers
- Reilly

For additional information, the complete entertainment schedule, ticket information, volunteer opportunities, and vendor details, visit [wsirish.org/IrishFest](http://wsirish.org/IrishFest).

About Naperville Irish Fest

Hosted by the West Suburban Irish, Naperville Irish Fest celebrates and promotes Irish culture and heritage through a vibrant community event that brings people together. The Fest aims to foster a sense of unity, cultural exchange, and tradition while supporting local non-profits and enriching the lives of those in our community. In the philanthropic spirit of the West Suburban Irish, Naperville Irish Fest has a commitment to both cultural celebration and community support. [wsirish.org/irishfest](http://wsirish.org/irishfest)

About West Suburban Irish

West Suburban Irish (WSI), Inc. is a registered 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization based in Naperville, IL whose mission is to cultivate a genuine appreciation and understanding of Irish heritage, culture, language, music, art, literature, and sports across the communities in the western suburbs of Chicago. Our motto, “Friendship, Fun, Service,” embodies both Irish culture and our approach to achieving our mission.

For 30+ years, WSI has cultivated a genuine appreciation and understanding of Irish heritage by fostering a robust social network of members, volunteers, artists, and enthusiasts across our

local communities. Guided by our WSI Board, we’ve brought joy to thousands of people in the western suburbs of Chicago through our charitable giving efforts, parades and festivals, cultural events, and more. [wsirish.org](http://wsirish.org).

Colleen Doyle, CoDo Marketing, Inc

Marketing Chair, West Suburban Irish & Naperville Irish Fest

[colleen@codo-marketing.com](mailto:colleen@codo-marketing.com) 630-222-8176

Half an Hour in Heaven an All-American Irish Hit

The acclaimed transatlantic comedy-drama Half an Hour in Heaven by award-winning playwright Cinzi Lavin adds new chapters to its successful U.S. production history this August. The piece will be featured at Chicago’s Gaelic Park Irish Festival on August 21-23, with a separate engagement the following week at the Peoria Irish Festival.

Irish-American dramatist *Cinzi Lavin*, (pictured) was honored when her play, Half an Hour in Heaven, premiered in Ireland in March of 2025 at the Charlestown Arts Centre in County Mayo. The play is set in the early 1960s and revolves around four Irish immigrants who have established themselves in New York while fiercely retaining the traditions of their beloved homeland.



PHOTO CREDIT: Anna Zuckerman-Vdovenko @AZV PHOTO/MEDIA

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Close out your Summer with community, culture, and connection at the IAHC. As we head into August, enjoy live music, cultural programs, classes, and gatherings that bring us together...while looking forward to upcoming Fall events.  
Details & tickets: [irish-american.org](http://irish-american.org) | 773-282-7035 (Ext. 10).



#### MONTHLY MASS & BREAKFAST AT THE IAHC

Celebrating Our Trinity Irish Dance Community

**SUNDAY, AUGUST 9 | MASS AT 10:00 AM - FOLLOWED BY A FULL IRISH BREAKFAST**

We hope you'll join us for our next Mass & Full Irish Breakfast, where we'll be honored to welcome special guests and performers from Trinity Irish Dance Academy. Together, we'll celebrate the Irish American Heritage Center's long-standing partnership with Trinity and recognize the incredible impact they've had in preserving and promoting Irish culture through dance.

**TICKETS** (Breakfast): \$30 Adults | \$25 Seniors (65 & over) | \$15 Children (12 & under)

#### SUMMER BLOOD DRIVE

**MONDAY, AUGUST 10 | 3:00 - 7:00 PM**

Join us for the IAHC Community Blood Drive, hosted in partnership with Vitalant and State Representative Mike Kelly. The Vitalant Bloodmobile will be located in the south parking lot of the IAHC. Just one blood donation can help save up to three lives, making a meaningful difference for patients in need this summer. As a thank-you, donors who give blood between August 1-31 will receive a \$15 Rewards Gift Card when scheduling with code AUGUST15-2026-V (donor rewards opt-in required; terms apply). We hope to see you there!

**FREE EVENT** | Visit our website for more information

#### SATURDAY MORNING TEA SERIES

**SATURDAY, AUGUST 15 | 10:00AM - 2:00 PM**

Join us for the return of one of the IAHC's most beloved traditions—the Saturday Morning Tea Series. Enjoy an elegant afternoon featuring a delicious assortment of tea sandwiches, freshly baked scones, cookies, desserts, seasonal fruit, tea, and wonderful company in the warm and welcoming atmosphere of the Center. This special gathering will celebrate acclaimed Chicago author, poet, educator, and longtime IAHC artist John S. O'Connor, who will join us in person to share stories and insights from his remarkable career. Space is limited, so reserve your seat today for an afternoon of literature, conversation, community, and Irish culture over a proper cup of tea.

**TICKETS** \$35 per person

#### FUNDRAISER GAME WITH THE CHICAGO FIRE

**SUNDAY, AUGUST 16 | 5:30PM**

The IAHC is proud to partner with Chicago Fire FC for a special fundraiser on Sunday, as the Fire take on the Portland Timbers at Soldier Field. We invite all IAHC families, friends, members, donors, and supporters to join us for an exciting evening of soccer while giving back to the Center. Through this special partnership, 20% of every ticket purchased through our exclusive link will be donated to the IAHC to help support our mission of preserving and celebrating Irish and Irish American culture. Come cheer on Chicago Fire FC and support the IAHC at the same time!

**TICKETS** Prices vary | Learn more on our website

#### GEORGE MURPHY CONCERT

**FRIDAY, AUGUST 21 | 8:00 PM**

The Irish American Heritage Center is excited to welcome acclaimed Irish singer-songwriter George Murphy to the Fifth Province Pub for a special live performance. Known for his powerful vocals, heartfelt songwriting, and deep roots in Irish folk tradition, George has become one of Ireland's most respected contemporary folk artists, blending traditional Irish influences with modern storytelling and rich acoustic sound. Set in the warm and intimate atmosphere of the Fifth Province, this promises to be an unforgettable evening of outstanding live music and community.

**TICKETS** \$25 IAHC Members | \$30 General Admission

#### PARTNERSHIP NIGHT WITH THE CHICAGO DOGS

**SATURDAY, AUGUST 22 | 5:30PM**

Join the IAHC and the Chicago Dogs for a special partnership night celebrating Irish heritage, community, baseball, and fireworks! The evening features the Chicago Dogs' Fireworks Night, including a St. Patrick's Day hat giveaway for the first 1,000 fans and a spectacular post-game fireworks show. This special game honors the Center and its mission to preserve and celebrate Irish culture, with IAHC representatives throwing out the ceremonial first pitch and a 50/50 raffle, with half of the proceeds benefiting the Center's nonprofit cultural and community programs. The day begins with a pregame gathering at the Fifth Province Pub before guests travel together by bus to the stadium, followed by the game, fireworks, and a post-game celebration back at the pub. Wear your favorite St. Patrick's Day gear and join us for an unforgettable day of Irish pride and family fun!

**TICKETS** \$15.50 (including all fees)

#### 2026 HALFWAY TO ST. PATRICK'S DAY MUSIC FESTIVAL

**SEPTEMBER 17 - 20 | TIMES VARY**

Join us for the return of the Halfway to St. Patrick's Music Festival at the IAHC! Celebrate four days of live music, Irish dance, delicious food and drinks, family activities, cultural programming, vendors and nonstop craic as Chicago's Irish community comes together halfway to our favorite holiday of the year. The festivities begin on Thursday, with a special opening-night concert by internationally acclaimed Celtic ensemble The Bow Tides (concert tickets sold separately). Additional special events throughout the weekend include a Friday Night Irish Comedy Showcase and our Sunday Mass & Full Irish Breakfast. Enjoy live entertainment, Irish dancing, shopping from Irish vendors, bounce houses, face painting, outdoor games, and fun for all ages while supporting the Center's nonprofit mission to preserve and celebrate Irish culture. Mark your calendars and join us for one of Chicago's favorite Irish celebrations!

**FESTIVAL TICKETS** \$30 Adults | \$25 IAHC Members | \$20 Seniors | FREE for Children (12 & under)



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## The Galway Arts Festival...in the Original Klingon

"Well, what can you expect from a world strangling in the pollution generated from its own material greed, a world governed by corrupt and venal politicians who act as handmaidens to a score of multinational corporations that enrich the already wealthy by colonizing the perpetually poor, a world where nations that institutionalize death squad killings of dissidents qualify as 'democracies', a world where nuclear, chemical,

biological, drug and, god help us, 'conventional' warfare are rehearsed by trigger-happy armies every day?"

That cheerful missive came from a lady by the name of Cat Yronwode; and God bless you, Cat, it could have been written yesterday. It could have been written today.

Instead, it was penned in 1990 and was part of the introduction to a comic book collection called 'Miracleman: The Red King Syndrome', published by

Eclipse Comics, of which the outspoken Ms. Yronwode was then editor-in-chief and co-founder.

I'm often asked why I so regularly quote from popular culture; and it's a genuine question, but one that I always find puzzling. I feel like saying: "Sure, why wouldn't I?" But the short answer is that as long as Pop Art throws out observations like that top paragraph, I'll see no problem with doing so.

People can be strange. Would they be more comfortable if I referenced Dante's 'Divine Comedy' or the lesser-known works of Philip Marlowe? Do you know, I suppose that they would. There has always been this ridiculous elitism attached to the Arts.

Would Shakespeare be amused that a couple of Star Trek fans from 'The Shakespeare Klingon Reclamation Project', actually went to the trouble of translating 'Hamlet' into that fictional language? I think that he would have LOVED that level of barmy obsession as much as I do! The translators satirically propose that Shakespeare was in fact a Klingon - and the truth is that I've heard nuttier theories. (Not many, mind.) In fact, the kind of person who dismisses that is probably the kind who believes that Elvis is dead. And I tend to avoid such weirdos.

I mean, when you push all the nonsense to the side, what was Shakespeare himself but a writer of popular culture, out to tell a damned good story, entertain the masses and make a few quid out of doing something that he loved? Look: unless you've seen Kenneth Brannagh's UN CUT four-hour version of 'Hamlet', then you've very likely no more seen a full Shakespeare play than I have. They had lots of superfluous bits added back then because Ye Olde Globe Theatre attendees would wander in and out, often just watching an hour here and there. You know, popular culture. So what we are seeing are the shortened versions.

And wouldn't you know that it would take a Belfast man like Brannagh to instigate such a contrary, bloody-minded project as a full version. I think that they put something in the water up there; but again, how can you NOT love that level of obsession?

As I write this it is the week of the Arts Festival here in Galway, and tonight I'm off to the opening of the Druid Theatre Company's production of Dion Boucicault's 'The Shaugraun'. You just need to hear that name 'Druid', with its echoes of a semi-mystical past, to know that you're in safe hands. They have been a West of Ireland

## Swimming Upstream

By Charles Brady



touring company since the mid-seventies and never disappoint. But what a country this is for the Arts of all kind! Here's actor Gabriel Byrne on the Late Late Show. You'll just have to take my word for it as to how his face lights up when he speaks of this: "We love stories and we love to tell stories and we love to listen to them. When we got the pen in our hand in the 19th century, we had imbibed Gaelic culture up until then and we kind of married it with the English language; and Oscar Wilde said: 'You gave us your language but we returned it with beauty.'"

"Look at the number of writers we have, it's just astonishing. Musicians, writers, actors, painters - we have a fantastic cultural imprint around the

genre, but with a distinctly Irish twist. More of interest to me due to my love of folk horror and mythology is a solo Barry Keegan's gorgeously rendered duo, 'The Bog Road' and 'The Dark Pool'. These are quite simply sublime.

We're in the middle of a very welcome heatwave here at the moment, but a couple of weeks back we had a regular tropical downpour of an afternoon. I had just bought the graphic work 'The Children of L.I.R.', a modern retelling of the classic Irish myth by Paul J. Bolger. (For added enjoyment I put on composer Patric Cassidy's lovely 'Children of Lir'.) A simple story, elegantly told and illustrated, with a backdrop of music and rain. It doesn't take much to make me happy.

And yes, just to give them a well-deserved plug, it's published by Atomic Diner. If you dismiss comic books as something for kids, take a look at that paragraph up top again. The best of them can be as stimulating and challenging as any other work of Art.

And with the resurfacing of Irish folk horror tales done for the cinema, I'm in my element these past few years. Can I point you in the direction of County Cork man Damian McCarthy? If his first two films - 'Caveat' and 'Oddity' -- showed great promise, it was fulfilled with his latest one, 'Hokum', a sojourn in a County Cork hostelry that makes the Overlook Hotel look like the definition of welcoming. And for extra homework points check out Leah Schnelbach's guide to Irish horror films in the Reactor online magazine.

It seems like it's a great time for Irish horror tales; but then, when hasn't it been? There is something in the remarkable history of this land that simply lends itself to a dark and brooding feel, with its sombre but often satisfyingly dramatic landscapes. Go all the way back to 1872 and Sheridan Le Fanu's Gothic masterpiece 'Carmilla'. Would it even have been possible without the then-recent background of the Famine?

What stories these are. What grim, dark and beautiful stories. And what a perfect country this is in which to tell them. And on that note, it is time to head out to the Galway Arts Festival, to Druid and 'The Shaugraun'. To the best of my knowledge, it is not being performed in the original Klingon; but listen - you can't have everything!

charleybrady@gmail.com



world. And that is really soft power. That is power that goes around the world."

It's so close to what I feel myself that I could listen to him all day. That passion. That knowledge. That enthusiasm. And the talent to communicate it in a quintessential Irish fashion.

We're now tentatively adding the world of the comic book to Ireland's achievements. I was in Galway's Sub-City Comics Store recently and was talking to owner Brian Curley (pictured). He has run the West of Ireland shop for twenty years, while his brother Robert Curley takes care of the Dublin one. Like myself, Brian has been a lifelong comic book fan; and like myself he believes that it has long since passed the point where it has to prove itself as a legitimate art form.

Some time ago Sub-City got itself involved in producing their own stuff through the imprint of Atomic Diner. Amongst other titles Robert writes and Barry Keegan illustrates 'The League of Volunteers', which along with its spin-off 'The Glimmer Man' delves into the superhero



This past month, my family and I finally had the opportunity to meet my cousin Sinéad and her family from Ireland. It was seven years in the making, and the connection we made on this trip was both memorable and special. I already look forward to visiting them in Ireland someday. We toured around Boston, shared dinner together, and exchanged gifts. My children immediately opened the candy they brought from Ireland and decided that it tasted different from the candy here and I completely

say fish and chips, but sometimes the most memorable foods aren't the ones you'd expect. On a recent family trip to Quebec City, we went

to watch their baseball team the Quebec Capitales play. The stadium had wonderful energy, and everything at the concession stand cost just three Canadian dollars. As we looked around, we noticed nearly everyone was eating poutine which are French fries topped with cheese curds and hot brown gravy. At first, my kids thought it seemed like a strange thing to eat at a baseball game, but we all loved it.

Travel gives us a new perspective on so many things, even the foods we think are "supposed" to be prepared



agreed.

Whenever I travel to another country, I love to check out the grocery stores for candy and snacks. Trying new foods doesn't just happen in restaurants and cafés. There is something so fun about discovering a snack you've never seen before. I

a certain way. That simple dish at a baseball game has become one of the strongest memories I have from our trip to Canada. Whenever we return from traveling, people inevitably ask, "How was the food?" I think a better question is, "What dish defined your trip?" My dad still talks about a pasta dish he ate in Rome more than twenty years ago. He remembers details of what was in it, and he is not a foodie at all! But I think what he really remembers is sitting in Piazza Campo de' Fiori, surrounded by the beauty of Rome.

Trying different foods while traveling creates more than a good meal—it creates lasting memories and conversations. Food somehow tastes better on vacation, whether it's a new snack from a grocery store or a gourmet meal made with local ingredients. There is no rush. We slow down and appreciate not only the food, but also our surroundings and the people we're sharing it with. I remember that meal in Rome, too. Not because of the pasta itself, but because I was there with my parents and my brother, listening to Italian conversations throughout the piazza, enjoying live music, and feeling the energy of a beautiful historic city. The meal became part of the memory.

So now I'm curious: What dish defined one of your travels? Or what food do you think defines Ireland? Was it something from a restaurant, a baseball stadium, or even a grocery store snack? I'd love to hear what food you still remember long after the vacation ended. Drop me a line at elysepfandler@gmail.com

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**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. We are located downtown at 161 North Clark Street, Suite 2200, Chicago, Illinois 60601 and our telephone number is (312) 977-0100.**

Most people don't think about workers' compensation until they need it. An work injury or illness can leave employees facing unexpected expenses and uncertainty of what's next. Recent changes to workers' compensation laws in Illinois are intended to better protect employees and their families during some of their hardest times. Illinois lawmakers have enacted a recent bill updating the system to better reflect actual problems faced by employees.

House Bill 5228 amends the Illinois Insurance code and the Workers' Compensation Act. HB5228 imposes a surcharge on insurance companies must pay, which is used to achieve an annual funding target for the Illinois Workers' Compensation Commission. Additionally, employers are now responsible for up to \$10,000 in burial and funeral expenses, an increase from the \$8,000 employers



treatment instead of the utilization review process, the reviewing physician must issue their report within 90 days. The 90-day period begins when the employer receives the treating doctor's medical records containing the request for treatment. The employer must exercise due diligence in obtaining the employee's medical records. Additionally, the reviewing physician must be board certified in the same specialty as the employee's treating doctor.

HB5228 also limits who may conduct utilization review and issue adverse determinations. Only licensed health care professionals may determine

whether a medical service is medically necessary during the review process. If the treatment was recommended by a physician, any denial or other adverse determination must also be made by a board-certified physician who has experience treating and managing patients with the same condition involved in the request.

The bill was submitted to the Governor on June 26, 2026, and he has until August 25, 2026 to veto or suggest changes to the bill. The bill will become law automatically without the Governor's signature on August 26, 2026.

These changes reflect an effort to bring Illinois' workers' compensation system up to date with real challenges employees face. The bill seeks to improve both the administration of the system as well as increasing relief for injured workers and their families. While many employees never need these benefits and most hope they never will, these changes ensure that, if they do, the system is fairer and better equipped for today's workplace. If you or someone you know has been injured in a workplace accident, call the attorneys at Healy Scanlon Veugeler Gannon for a consultation.

**By: Faith Cummins**  
*Faith Cummins is a law clerk at Healy Scanlon Veugeler Gannon and a second-year law student at DePaul University College of Law. Faith received a CALI award for achieving the highest grade in her legal writing course and is on the Dean's List.*

### Worth the Wait: The Day Limerick Ended a 45-Year Wait

by Ger O'Connell

For those unfamiliar with hurling, it is often described as the fastest field sport in the world. Played with a wooden stick called a hurley and a small ball known as a sliotar, it combines exceptional skill, speed, athleticism and courage. Deeply rooted in Irish culture and history, hurling is more than just a sport for many communities; it is a source of identity, pride and tradition. Each year, counties from across Ireland compete in the All-Ireland Senior Hurling Championship, with the ultimate goal of lifting the Liam MacCarthy Cup, the most prestigious trophy in the game. Against this backdrop, Limerick's 2018 All-Ireland victory became one of the most significant sporting moments in the county's history.

The summer of 2018 was already shaping up to be memorable for Limerick supporters. After a dramatic semi-final victory over Cork on 29 July, a match that required extra time to separate the teams, attention immediately turned to the All-Ireland Final against Galway. The achievement was historic in itself. Limerick had not appeared in an All-Ireland Final since 2001, and more significantly, the county had not won the championship since 1973. For an entire generation of supporters, an All-Ireland triumph existed only through stories told by parents and grandparents.

Behind the growing excitement, preparations continued with professionalism and focus. The management team and backroom staff approached the final as they had every other game throughout the championship. Training schedules, logistics, travel arrangements and match-day preparations were carefully planned and reviewed. While supporters eagerly debated the prospects of victory, those closest to the team concentrated on the details that might make the difference on the biggest day of the season.

Across Limerick, however, anticipation was impossible to ignore. Green and white county colours appeared in towns, villages, homes and businesses. Supporters searched tirelessly for tickets, organised buses and trains to Dublin and booked accommodation wherever they could find it. The prospect of seeing Limerick compete for an All-Ireland title created a sense of excitement that spread throughout the county. It was clear that this was no ordinary sporting occasion.

Within the camp, attention remained firmly fixed on Galway. Every aspect of the opposition was analysed. Tactical plans were discussed and refined. Training sessions were intense during the first week before gradually easing as the final approached, allowing players to remain physically fresh and mentally focused. Alongside the tactical preparation came countless practical tasks. Jerseys, hurleys, helmets, medical supplies, water, energy drinks and all the equipment needed for match day were organised and checked repeatedly. On a day of such significance, preparation became a source of reassurance.

As final weekend arrived, the atmosphere became even more noticeable. Limerick jerseys were visible wherever people gathered. Conversations in workplaces, cafés and shops centred on one topic: the match. The final training session took place on

the Friday evening, bringing together players and management one last time before the journey to Dublin. It was an opportunity to sharpen focus, confirm arrangements and reinforce belief in what the team could achieve.

The journey to Croke Park on Sunday morning was itself a reminder of the importance of the occasion. Service stations and rest stops along the route were packed with Limerick supporters making the same pilgrimage to Dublin. The closer one got to the capital, the more visible the sea of green and white became. Supporters of all ages were

was gathered safely by Tom Condon, a sense of relief swept through the Limerick support. Moments later, the referee's whistle sounded and history had been made. Limerick were All-Ireland champions, winning by a single point, 3-16 to 2-18.

The scenes that followed were unforgettable. Players embraced, supporters celebrated and years of hope, frustration and longing were released in an instant. After 45 years without an All-Ireland title, the wait was finally over. The emotional high point came when captain Declan Hannon



Photos-Kieran Ryan Benson

united by a common hope that this could be the day the long wait finally ended.

Upon arrival at Croke Park, preparations intensified. Dressing rooms were organised, equipment was laid out and final checks were completed. As kick-off approached, the iconic stadium gradually filled with supporters. The atmosphere built steadily, creating a sense of occasion unlike any other. For players, management and supporters alike, this represented the pinnacle of the hurling calendar.

When the match began, Limerick rose to the challenge magnificently. The team displayed a level of composure and confidence that belied the enormity of the occasion. Throughout much of the contest, they played with determination and purpose, gradually building a lead over their opponents. As the final minutes approached, Limerick appeared to be in a strong position, holding an eight-point advantage and edging ever closer to a historic victory.

However, sport rarely follows a simple script. Galway produced a dramatic late surge, scoring two goals and reducing the margin to a single point. What had seemed a comfortable lead suddenly became a nerve-racking finish. Every attack, tackle and possession felt crucial. Supporters inside the stadium and watching from home were left anxiously willing the clock to run down.

A vital point from Graeme Mulcahy helped steady Limerick's nerves, but the drama was not over. In the closing moments, Galway's Joe Canning stood over a free that could potentially alter the outcome of the match. Thousands held their breath as he struck the ball. When the effort dropped short and

climbed the steps of the Hogan Stand and lifted the Liam MacCarthy Cup to the delight of thousands of supporters both in the stadium and back home in Limerick.

Celebrations continued long into the night and throughout the days that followed. The team's return to Limerick was met with extraordinary scenes as huge crowds gathered to welcome home their champions. Streets were packed, communities came together and the county celebrated an achievement that many feared they might never witness. Special homecomings in Adare for Declan Hannon and in Galbally for manager John Kiely highlighted the pride felt throughout the county.

Looking back, the significance of the 2018 victory extends beyond the trophy itself. It marked the beginning of one of the most successful periods in Limerick hurling history, with further All-Ireland titles following in subsequent years. Yet for many supporters, nothing can quite compare to the first breakthrough. It was the day a 45-year wait ended, a county rediscovered its belief and a new chapter in Limerick sporting history began. After years of longing and generations of hope, the title that had seemed so elusive was finally home. It was, quite simply, worth the wait.

Today, hurling continues to thrive not only in Ireland but also in cities around the world with strong Irish connections, including Chicago, where clubs and competitions help keep the sport's traditions alive. For anyone planning a visit to Limerick, experiencing a live hurling match is one of the most authentic ways to connect with the county's culture, passion and community spirit.

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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



# The Heart And Soul, And The Heights, Of Irish Cuisine

IRELAND'S CUISINE IS A STORY OF place. From Atlantic coastlines carved by the sea to fertile pastureland, limestone hills and rolling green fields, every landscape has shaped the ingredients, traditions and techniques that define Irish food today. Across generations, farmers, fishers, bakers and artisan producers have worked in rhythm with the land and sea, creating a food culture where authenticity is not a trend but a way of life.

Recipes have been handed down through families, evolving alongside changing seasons and local resources. Bread reflects centuries of ingenuity, cheeses express the unique character of the pastures where animals graze, and seafood carries the unmistakable imprint of Ireland's bays and coastlines. Together, they tell the story of an island whose culinary heritage is inseparable from its history, culture and natural environment.

For today's visitor, Ireland offers far more than exceptional food. It offers the opportunity to meet the people behind it, learn age-old traditions and experience the landscapes that give every ingredient its distinctive character. From baking bread in a farmhouse kitchen to visiting oyster farms or tasting whiskey where it is distilled, Irish cuisine invites travellers to become part of the story.

### Bread: A Tradition Baked Into Irish Life

Few foods are as deeply woven into Irish culture as bread. Its history reflects centuries of resilience and adaptation. Early breads were simple oatcakes cooked over an open hearth, perfectly suited to Ireland's cool, damp climate where oats flourished long before wheat became commonplace.

By the nineteenth century, soda bread had become Ireland's defining loaf. Made using bicarbonate of soda rather than yeast, it could be baked daily in cast-iron pots over an open fire, with every household developing its own recipe using oats, seeds, dried fruit or whatever ingredients were available. Today, brown soda bread remains a cornerstone of Irish cooking, alongside festive barmbrack and a thriving craft baking scene that combines traditional techniques with contemporary creativity.

One of the finest examples is Ursa Minor Bakehouse in County Antrim, where locally milled flour has been at the heart of every loaf since the bakery opened in 2014. Its breads and pastries celebrate Northern Ireland's grain-growing heritage while serving as a gathering place for both local communities and curious travellers.

Visitors can experience this tradition firsthand at Tracey's Farmhouse Kitchen outside Belfast, where hands-on baking classes bring classic Irish griddle breads to life. More than a cooking lesson, it offers a warm introduction to Irish hospitality and a skill that participants can take home with them.

### Oysters: The Taste of Ireland's Coastline

Ireland's oysters are among



St Tola Goat Cheese Farm, Ennistymon, County Clare.



Johnnie Fox's Pub and Restaurant, Dublin Mountains, County Dublin.



Apple harvest in the County of Armagh, also known as the Orchard County.

the purest expressions of its coastal landscapes. Every bay tells a different story, with tides, geology, freshwater streams and Atlantic currents shaping oysters whose flavors cannot be replicated elsewhere.

Galway Bay produces Ireland's most celebrated oysters, nurtured by nutrient-rich Atlantic waters that create their distinctive briny, mineral character. They are honored each September at the Galway International Oyster Festival, a celebration that has welcomed visitors since 1954.

On the east coast, the sheltered waters of Carlingford Lough produce oysters known for their clean salinity, gentle sweetness and elegant mineral finish, while the Wild Atlantic Way's exposed western coastline creates intricate briny oysters shaped by powerful ocean currents.

Oyster farming also reflects a remarkable continuity with Ireland's past. Coastal communities have harvested oysters for more than 4,000 years, and today's producers continue that tradition using sustainable methods that protect marine ecosystems while supporting local livelihoods.

evolved over centuries, combining traditional methods with modern innovation to produce an extraordinary range of single malts, pot still whiskeys, grain whiskeys and contemporary craft gins.

Along County Leitrim's tranquil Blueway, visitors can tour The Shed Distillery in Drumshanbo, discovering how local botanicals, pure Irish water and time-honored craftsmanship come together to create award-winning whiskeys, gin and vodka. Tastings offer an opportunity to explore how these spirits naturally complement Ireland's seafood, cheeses, breads and desserts.

### Grass-Fed Beef: Shaped by Green Pastures

Ireland's grass-fed beef owes its exceptional quality to one defining feature: pasture. Thanks to the island's mild climate and abundant rainfall, cattle graze outdoors for much of the year, producing beef celebrated for its depth of flavor, tenderness and distinctive mineral character.

Visitors can experience this connection between landscape and food in a variety of ways. At Camus Farm's Field Kitchen in West Cork, grass-fed beef raised on the farm is cooked over wood fire and served alongside seasonal produce harvested just steps away. In County Clare, the Burren Farm Experience invites guests to explore the dramatic limestone landscape of the Burren UNESCO Global Geopark before enjoying organic beef tastings and charcuterie produced from the farm's own herd.

### Where Ireland's Landscapes Meet the Plate

Ireland's culinary story is enjoying a well-deserved moment on the world stage. More visitors than ever are discovering what generations of Irish people have always known: the island's greatest luxury lies in the extraordinary relationship between its landscapes, its people and its food.

From the Atlantic Ocean to fertile pastureland, mountain slopes and ancient farmlands, Ireland's natural environment shapes every ingredient. Farmers, fishers and artisan producers have worked in harmony with these landscapes for centuries, creating a food culture rooted in seasonality, sustainability and a profound respect for place. Today's chefs build on that foundation, transforming exceptional local ingredients into cuisine that is both deeply authentic and internationally acclaimed.

The story begins with Ireland's abundance of remarkable produce. It is this abundance that has helped establish Ireland as one of Europe's most exciting culinary destinations. Across the island, twenty-four Michelin-starred restaurants showcase not only remarkable technical skill but also a deep connection to the landscapes and producers that make their cooking possible. Fine dining in Ireland is not defined by extravagance alone; it is an expression of terroir, craftsmanship and cultural heritage.

Restaurants awarded two

Michelin Stars are recognised for cuisine that is refined, inspired and executed with exceptional precision. Ireland has five of them.

*Chapter One, Dublin*, where Chef Mickael Viljanen combines refined French technique with exceptional Irish produce, creating elegant seasonal tasting menus that have earned international acclaim.

*Restaurant Patrick Guilbaud, Dublin*. Ireland's longest-standing two Michelin Star restaurant pairs classical French cuisine with outstanding Irish ingredients, including Carlingford oysters, Donegal lobster and seasonal local produce.

*Liath, Blackrock, County Dublin*. An intimate tasting experience where precision, creativity and Ireland's seasonal ingredients come together in beautifully crafted, story-led menus.

*Dede, Baltimore, County Cork*. Blending Turkish heritage with the exceptional produce of West Cork, Dede celebrates coastal ingredients and Irish lamb in inventive, deeply personal dishes.

*Terre, Castlemartyr, County Cork*. Located on the historic Castlemartyr Estate, Terre showcases Ireland's terroir through contemporary French-inspired tasting menus built around seasonal local ingredients.

Together, these restaurants, and Ireland's many other Michelin-starred restaurants, illustrate the evolution of Irish cuisine. They honor centuries of farming, fishing and food traditions while embracing innovation, proving that Ireland's greatest culinary strength has always been the quality of its landscapes and the people who care for them. For visitors, dining at one of Ireland's fine restaurants is not simply a memorable meal—it is an opportunity to experience the island's culture, heritage and sense of place through every course.

### A Culinary Journey Rooted in Place

Across Ireland, exceptional dining begins with exceptional landscapes. Every loaf, oyster, cheese, spirit and cut of beef reflects generations of knowledge, close relationships with the land and sea, and a culture that values quality over excess.

Visitors can discover these flavors at vibrant food festivals, on immersive producer experiences and along regional food trails, or enjoy them at one of Ireland's two dozen Michelin-starred restaurants, where local ingredients meet world-class culinary artistry.

Whether sharing freshly baked soda bread around a farmhouse table, tasting oysters overlooking the Atlantic or meeting the farmers, bakers and distillers who preserve these traditions, visitors experience something far richer than a meal. They discover the landscapes, heritage and people that make Irish cuisine one of the world's most authentic food cultures.

### Visit the island that goes beyond

— Ireland.com —

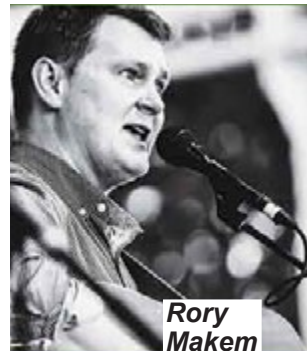




21st Irish Fest La Crosse August 7-9

[www.irishfestlacrosse.org](http://www.irishfestlacrosse.org)  
Join the celebration as Irishfest La Crosse marks its 21st year in 2026! From August 7-9, downtown La Crosse will come alive with the sights, sounds, and spirit of Ireland. This beloved non-profit, family-friendly festival is powered by a dedicated volunteer board and hundreds of enthusiastic community volunteers who bring Irish culture to life each year.

Festival-goers can look forward to a stellar lineup of Irish and Celtic music spanning traditional tunes, lively harp melodies, Celtic rock, and everything in between. Beyond the music, Irishfest offers a



full weekend of dance performances, cultural displays, hands-on workshops, storytelling, genealogy research, Highland games, two days of Tug of War, the lively Kilt Run, an Irish Market, and plenty more. A wide variety of food and beverages will be available to satisfy every appetite.

The popular Harp Stage returns with the crowd-favorite Harp Twins, known for their unique and eclectic sound. Families will love the Wee Folks Area, filled with games, activities, contests, puppets, music, sheep shearing, and even Irish dogs. Older kids (and kids at heart) can enjoy the arcade and additional activities throughout the grounds.



The Cultural Tent's theme this year is "Irish Rock" featuring displays, photo ops, Irish karaoke and more. In the adjacent, Arts Tent a presentation of

the "History of U2" will be offered.

All musical performances take place under tents, rain or shine. The 2026 entertainment lineup includes The High Kings, Gaelic Storm, Scythian, Screaming Orphans, Bliard, Mairtin de Cógáin, Rory Makem, who will record a live episode of their podcast "The Ballad Lounge," along with Murphy & Mancuso, Billow Wood, The Harp Twins, Ian Gould & Lukas Jaeger, and more. Dance performances throughout the weekend will feature Glencastle Irish Dancers and Amanda's Academy of Dance. Sunday highlights include Irish



Mass and a lively fiddle competition. There is something for everyone at Irishfest La Crosse—whether you come for the music, the culture, the food, or the fun.

Advance tickets are available online for \$30 for a 3-day pass or \$15 for a single day at [www.irishfestlacrosse.org](http://www.irishfestlacrosse.org). One-day tickets will also be available at the gate for \$20. Youth 17 and under are admitted free. Visit the website or Facebook page for the latest updates and full schedule details.

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C  ad m  le f  ilte! A hundred thousand welcomes are waiting for you at Milwaukee Irish Fest, returning to Henry Mair Festival Park, August 13-16.

From unforgettable performances and authentic Irish food and drink to family activities, cultural experiences, shopping, dancing, and more, four incredible days await along the beautiful shores of Lake Michigan.

17 STAGES OF ENTERTAINMENT

With 17 stages of music, dance, and cultural entertainment, festivalgoers can experience everything from Celtic rock and traditional Irish music to singer-songwriter, bluegrass, folk, and contemporary sounds from across the Celtic nations.

Some of this year's returning headliners include the following:

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  - GAEILIC STORM
  - GARDINER BROTHERS
  - JIGJAM
  - O'JIZO
  - SCYTHIAN
  - SHANE HENNESSY
  - TOMMY SANDS
  - AND MANY MORE
- And here are some of the artists and bands making their festival debut:
- ALLY THE PIPER
  - BIIRD
  - CAILIN   L  A
  - CAMPBELL AND JENSEN
  - THE FOREIGN LANDERS
  - GEORGE MURPHY AND FRIENDS
- Home of Halloween Returns



An international partnership brings attendees face-to-face with the birthplace of one of the world's most widely celebrated holidays. Home of Halloween, presented by F  ilte Ireland, invites attendees to discover the ancient Celtic festival of Samhain, where Halloween first began. Through engaging storytellers, folklore, myths, and conversations with representatives from Halloween festivals across Ireland, visitors can explore the authentic origins of the holiday while gathering inspiration for a future autumn trip across the Atlantic.

New Experiences at Irish Fest

Every year, Milwaukee Irish Fest works to mix favorite traditions at the festival with something new, giving longtime attendees and first-time visitors new reasons to explore the world's largest celebration of Irish culture. From exciting cultural exhibits and family-friendly experiences to can't-miss music debuts, this year's festival introduces several firsts that make a trip to the lakefront even more worthwhile.

One of the most unique additions to this year's festival is sheepherding



Experience the Magic of Ireland at Milwaukee Irish Fest



OLLSCOIL NA GAILLIMHE  
UNIVERSITY OF GALWAY



Coming up August 13-16 at the Henry Maier Festival Park



demonstrations. Held in Urban Park just outside the North Gate on Saturday and Sunday, these live demonstrations will showcase one of Ireland's most iconic rural traditions. Watch highly trained border collies work alongside their handler to expertly guide sheep through a series of commands, highlighting the intelligence, precision, and teamwork that have been central to Irish farming for generations.

The Irish diaspora in America will also be featured with the debut of the University of Galway's Imlric Project: The Kerby A. Miller Collection. This remarkable archive features thousands of letters and personal stories written by Irish emigrants to North America from the seventeenth through the mid-twentieth centuries. Throughout the weekend, visitors can hear live readings of these letters at the Theatre Pavilion, explore an exhibit in the Genealogy Area, and attend a Hedge School presentation about the fascinating work of researching, preserving, and digitizing the collection. It's a powerful reminder that the Irish story is also an American story and one that resonates strongly in a city like Milwaukee.

Vivienne Sayers, a digital content creator and internet sensation known for her beginner-friendly Irish language content, will make her debut in the Irish Language Workshop Tent. The viral Irish language educator will introduce visitors to the Irish



language in fun, interactive sessions throughout the weekend.

Sports fans won't want to miss the Aer Lingus College Football Classic Wisconsin Badgers Pep Rally on Saturday, August 15, at 2 p.m. at the Aer Lingus Stage. Celebrating Wisconsin's upcoming appearance in the 2027 Aer Lingus College Football Classic in Ireland, the pep rally features performances by the University of Wisconsin Alumni Marching Band, UW's spirit squad, Bucky Badger, Paddy and Molly McFest, Sl  inte Irish Dancers, and more. Throughout the weekend, attendees can also stop by the Aer Lingus College Football Classic activation area to test their football skills and learn more about attending the football game in Ireland to root on the Badgers.

Whether you're discovering ancient Irish traditions, diving into stories of immigration, cheering on the Badgers, or taking in all of the live music, this year's Milwaukee Irish Fest offers plenty of experiences for everyone to enjoy.

Explore the full lineup, view the schedule, and more at [irishfest.com](http://irishfest.com). Get your tickets in advance to avoid the queues at the box office windows at [irishfest.com/tickets](http://irishfest.com/tickets)

Children 12 and under geet in for free. Active military receive complimentary admission all weekend long, plus one guest. Veterans receive complimentary admission, plus one guest, on Sunday, August 16, all day long.



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**By Keara Ette**

My faith journey started early on when I was growing up in a home I now live in with my family on the South Side of Chicago. My parents guided us with their faith, and my grandmother, who was from Northern Ireland, shared her grit and commitment to serving the community. But it was when I performed as a disciple in a play at my Catholic grammar school that I discovered my true passion in life.

There's a phrase that the Jesus character said, written by our director, Father Burke, that stuck in my head and it's still there today:

How can I show you how beautiful you are?

How can I make you understand?

That phrase colored the rest of my journey. I realized what drives me most is just helping or walking with people and trying to show them how much they're loved. That led me to



Notre Dame to study theology then go on to earn a Master of Divinity degree to pursue parish ministry.

After 17 years in parish ministry at Old St. Pat's, I felt the Holy Spirit tugging at me saying, "You need to grow in ways you can't yet imagine."

It was November 2023 when I discovered a wonderful opportunity to join Catholic Charities. I remember my dad saying, "You know, there's a couple of things you can always be proud of as a Catholic, and one of them is Catholic Charities."

In my role at Catholic Charities, it is incredibly powerful to have day-in and day-out interactions with our clients. I discovered how we're being called to listen on so many different fronts and to be present, but also to train our volunteers, so they are not just doing a task but doing it with the right spirit and the right energy.

Across Catholic Charities, service begins by meeting immediate needs and grows into something more lasting: dignity, stability, and human connection. Diapers can ease the strain on a parent choosing between essentials. A stocked pantry helps a family prepare meals for the week, while a freshly made sandwich or a

warm meal offers nourishment and reminds someone; they are seen, welcomed, and supported.

Volunteering makes this work possible by turning compassion into practical action.

We offer opportunities serving meals, working in a food pantry, and distributing basic needs at our community centers in downtown Chicago, Summit, Waukegan, and Round Lake. Our basic needs rooms offer hygiene and household products for free that nutrition assistance programs don't cover.

The connection extends from meeting basic needs to sharing community around the table. Each Wednesday, warm meals are provided at our four locations, including two community centers, and St. Francis of Rome in Cicero, and Lord of Mercy Parish in Harvey. Those serving help set tables, pour beverages, deliver meals, clear dishes, and, most importantly, spend time with guests. A simple conversation, a warm welcome, or a few minutes of listening can turn a meal into a moment of belonging.

**LAKE COUNTY**

In Lake County, we offer senior congregate meals monthly, but we also deliver hot meals to homebound seniors on weekdays, and we're always in need of drivers. This is a really powerful service opportunity because it connects one-on-one with people. You're not only bringing a meal to that senior's home, but you're also checking in on their well-being and asking about their family. That is a beautiful testament to someone's desire to support a neighbor.

Our volunteers are, in so many ways, the face of kindness and compassion to those who come to our doors for help, and they widen and deepen the impact of our work.

Through our training and guidance, I watch our volunteers get comfortable, feel invited, then quickly fall in love with our clients, and that's the best feeling in the world.

Keara Ette is the Senior Director of Community Programs for Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Chicago. For volunteer opportunities & sign-up, visit [catholiccharities.net/volunteer](http://catholiccharities.net/volunteer)

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## Skinny & Houli Return to Ireland 2026

**By Izzy Cusack**

It could be the most anticipated journey since Magellan embarked for the East Indies, without any booze in his kit bag.

Long time friends and legendary radio hosts Skinny Sheahan and Mike "Houli" Houlihan have agreed to once again travel to Ireland, "one more time before we croak!"

The lads have traveled to the Old Sod many times over the last decade, with large groups of friends, many of whom have now gone on ahead to heaven, including old pal Dick Haggerty, CFD retired Chief Mike Miller, and total whack job Greg "Walking Eagle" Peckham, who almost got them thrown out of a hotel in Killiney after asking a waitress "would you like to pet my weasel?"

Skinny was interrogated by Garda in Donegal after being accused of stealing a pillow from the hotel. While visiting a castle in Ireland, a tour guide inquired of the group how long they were going to be in Ireland and Chief Miller famously quipped, "Until we run out of underwear!"

Houli sez, "Ireland is a preview of heaven, but we're not in a hurry to get there.... just yet."

This band of rogues have aged gracefully and promise to behave themselves in the Emerald Isle this October. It's a pilgrimage in every sense of the word and past trips have featured a miracle at Our Lady of Knock shrine in Mayo, musical epiphanies and plenty of laughs along the way.

Houli sez, "We've brought many gorgeous Irish musicians with us over the years including Kathleen Keane, Katie Grennan, and the "darlin' girl from Clare" Eimear Arkins, but this year we're luckiest to have the 'Celtic Nightingale' herself, joining us, the one and only Catherine O'Connell, Chicago's own 1976 Queen of the Paddy's Day parade, and a fixture on the windy city's Irish scene ever since."

Catherine recently celebrated

her 50th anniversary of being crowned Queen with a bevy of former queens out at Gaelic Park in March and they are all invited to join the trip as well!

Also joining Skinny & Houli, and the Celtic Nightingale is legendary publican Brendan O'Brien from Reilly's Daughter pub on the south side, where



they just celebrated their 50th Anniversary in June. Brendan has joined Skinny & Houli thrice in the old country himself. No doubt Brendan's dad, the late, legendary Boz O'Brien, will be joining in spirit as well.

In the past Boz had demurred on joining Skinny & Houli trips for fear of falling off the wagon. But now that's he's in heaven the tour will be doubly blessed. All Reilly's customers are encouraged to join this tour to celebrate fifty years of Irish joy.

This year's trip starts just outside Dublin at Fitzpatrick Castle for first and last night in Killiney, as we have celebrated

almost every journey. Houli sez, "My first trip to Ireland, Eithne and John Fitzpatrick hosted my family and it's now a tradition to return where the shenanigans first started."

Then it's on to Galway at the Ardilaun Hotel for the next four nights as we roost about Galway, Kylemore Abbey, Connemara day trips to the Spanish Arch, and Latin Quarter Galway, all culminating in the magnificent MACNAS festival in the streets of Galway on Sunday. The Irish invented Halloween and MACNAS will not disappoint with their legendary parade and internationally acclaimed spectacle of Halloween 2026!

One more night then at Fitzpatrick Castle before returning home with huge grins on all faces.

Join Skinny & Houli, Catherine O'Connell, Reilly's Daughter's Brendan O'Brien for the most unforgettable journey of your lives!

Info and itinerary available when you call 1-800-664-7474 or contact Eimear Tuffy at [tuffy@special-ireland.com](mailto:tuffy@special-ireland.com)

Bring someone you love with you to the Skinny & Houli Return to Ireland 2026. You will never forget it!

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Be A Part of History: Celebrate 125 Years of The Irish Fellowship Club of Chicago on September 17th - You Never Know Who Might Show Up!

Since 1901, the Irish Fellowship Club of Chicago has gathered the Irish community to create fellowship and connection. On September 17, the Club will celebrate that dedicated history with former Taoiseach Enda Kenny.

The Club began with a group of dedicated Irishmen committed to enhancing the reputation of the Irish community in Chicago and providing a sense of community across the city. Through the years, the Club has had the opportunity to host US Presidents, Irish Taoisigh and Presidents, senior business, labor, religious and civic leaders at the Annual St Patrick's Day Dinner, including Presidents Harry Truman and John F. Kennedy, Cardinal Stritch,

According to Consul General Brian Cahalane and Vice Consul Padraig Manning's recent Chicago Tribune article, "The Fellowship Club was an important partner after Ireland secured independence in 1922. An invitation from Chicago brought about the first official visit to the U.S. of the leader of an independent Ireland: William T. Cosgrave, the first president of the Executive Council of the Irish Free State, forerunner to the taoiseach, visited in 1928. It proved to be highly significant for Ireland's subsequent diplomacy in the U.S., setting the template for decades to come."



John F. Kennedy visiting Chicago and the Irish Fellowship Club in the 1960's

Education and Irish culture have been hallmarks of the activities of the Irish Fellowship Club's Foundation. Through annual events, the Club and Foundation raise funds to support students in need at Catholic High Schools across the Chicagoland area as well as Irish culture. In recent years, the Irish Fellowship Club has supported the transfer of former Irish President Mary Robinson's papers to a special collection at DePaul University.

All are invited to join the celebration of 125 years of the Irish Fellowship Club at a special event at Theater on the Lake on September 17. Says Anniversary co-chair John Wrenn. "This will be a special evening to recognize the accomplishments of the Club and Irish leaders across the Chicagoland area."

Former Taoiseach Enda Kenny will be the Club's special guest for the evening. Irish Fellowship Club

President, Devon Bruce of Power Rogers, commented, "Enda Kenny served Ireland as Taoiseach from 2011-2017 and has been a distinguished guest in Chicago over the years, including serving as the Guest of Honor of the St. Patrick's Day parade in 2012. We are delighted to have him celebrate this auspicious occasion with the Irish Fellowship Club."

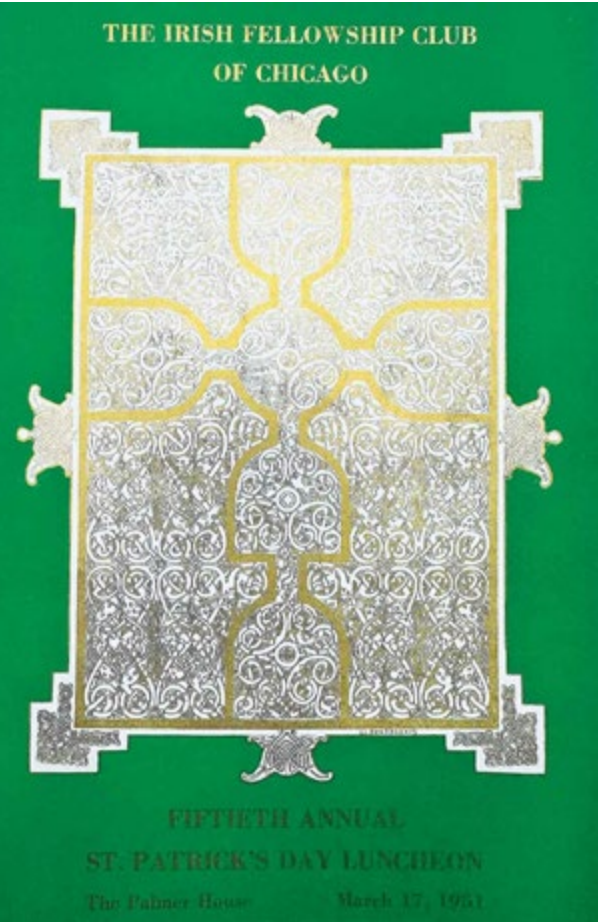
The event will be on September 17 at Theater on the Lake from 6-10pm and feature Irish entertainment from the Shannon Rovers (celebrating their 100th Anniversary), Tom Gleason, the Chancey Brothers and Jimmy Moore and conclude with a fireworks show over the lake.

MEMBERSHIP FORM AND IFC GOLF ON PAGES 40-41

Irish Fellowship Club JOIN, ENGAGE, ENJOY!



Mayor Richard Daley (Center) and others attending an Irish Fellowship Club Event.



Commemorative Book from the 50th annual Irish Fellowship Club Luncheon, March 17, 1953

IRISH FELLOWSHIP CLUB 125TH ANNIVERSARY

SAVE THE DATE

SEPTEMBER 17, 2026

THEATER ON THE LAKE

SPECIAL GUEST:



FORMER TAOISEACH ENDA KENNY

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Open Bar + "Taste of Chicago" featuring Chicago's Irish restaurants

Entertainment provided by Tom Gleason, The Chancey Brothers, Jimmy Moore

Special Appearance by the Shannon Rovers

Tickets available on the Irish Fellowship Club website: [www.irishfellowshipclub.com](http://www.irishfellowshipclub.com)



Former Mayor of Orland Park, Dan McLaughlin and his wife, Patricia; with Maggie Daley, and former Mayor of Chicago Richard J. Daley



Former President Harry Truman getting the official Shamrock decoration from former Mayor of Chicago, Ed Kelly circa 1947



(l to r): Ben Regan; President, IFC in 1954, Mackay, a horse born on St. Patrick's Day 1953, Senator Everett Dirksen, and then Vice-President Richard M. Nixon at the annual Irish Fellowship Club banquet.



Gerry Adams of Sinn Fein with former Mayor of Orland Park, Dan McLaughlin. (Thank you Dan for supplying many of these historic pictures)



Join the Irish Fellowship Club! New Member Application

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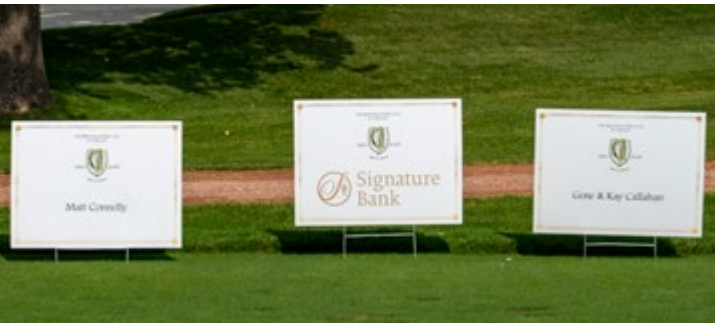
Mail to HOME

REMINDER: The Irish Fellowship Club Christmas Luncheon will be held a week later in 2026.

SAVE THE DATE for December 11, 2026 at the Hilton Chicago.



A rare Hole in One by Joe Gergley of Country Financial



A Great Day on the Golf Course for the Irish Fellowship Club

The sold-out Irish Open was tremendous success. On Monday, July 20, Irish Fellowship Club members and their guests enjoyed an outstanding day of golf at beautiful Ridgemoor Country Club.

Major event sponsors were Cavanagh Sorich Law Group, Celtic Crossing, Chicago Beverage System, Cogent Strategic Wealth, Peg Corboy, Drunken Driving Defense Lawyers of Illinois, Gallagher & Kosner Law, Lodge Management Group, O'Brien's Riverwalk, Reilly's Daughter, Shoreline Sightseeing, Tully & Associates. Over 50 hole sponsors supported the event and provided key support to the IFC Foundation.

Out on the course, Broda Vodka, Blue Ash Farms, Consentino Spirits and Brian Barkely and Access One provided fabulous samples and fun!

The Irish Fellowship Club Golf Raffle featured outstanding prizes including American Airlines miles, a 50" flat screen TV, a liquor basket, Gibsons, Vaughn's and Hilton gift certificates, a Beluga Vodka basket and many others. Vice President Liz Howard said, "Our Raffle Donors are always so generous and we appreciate everyone who supported the Raffle this year. And, we extend a special thank you to Katina Panagopolous, Gene Callahan, Rita McGovern and Peggy Lombardo who were integral to the success of the event."

Golf Chairman John Wrenn commented,



The Irish Fellowship Club is grateful to photographer Michael Kardas for his excellent photography skills for our events.  
<http://www.kardasphotography.com>  
or email: [kardas@kardasphotography.com](mailto:kardas@kardasphotography.com)







What comes to mind when you think about summer? For me it's cutting the grass and trimming the hedges. Tending to the garden including flowers, vegetables and herbs. Doing routine maintenance around the house. Spending time outdoors. Going to neighborhood street fairs, and shopping the local farmers markets. Just trying to enjoy the warm sunny days that summer brings knowing what lies ahead in a few short months. Alas this is the fate of a Midwesterner, but I wouldn't have it any other way. I love the change of the seasons and as far as cooking goes the endless possibilities of foods and ingredients available during the summer months

If you're like me sometimes you don't feel like, or have the time to cook a meal, and all that it entails. It's 90 degrees out and the thought of cooking on a hot stove my not be your idea of having a good time. What are your options? Firing up the grill and cooking burgers or steaks? Ordering out? Pizza or Chinese or perhaps, something fresh and healthy. How about a composed salad? Fresh ingredients, very little cooking if any, light and easy, and as complex flavor wise as you want to make it. Finish it with a homemade vinaigrette, and croutons and you have a meal perfectly suited for hot weather, top it off with a protein of your choice. Salmon, shrimp, chicken, steak, or grilled vegetables. You can incorporate any style cuisine, or create your own piece de resistance.

I can't think of any country or region that doesn't have a type of salad associated with it. I was first introduced to composed salads when I lived

in London back in the early 70's. Crisp lettuces like Cos or Webb's wonder, tomato, cucumber, sliced ham and turkey, or leftover roast chicken, hard boiled eggs, scallions, really good Cheddar cheese, some boiled potatoes,



pickled onions, and Heinz salad cream. The English sometimes call this a Ploughman's lunch. A far cry from the chopped iceberg lettuce, tomato wedge perhaps a slice of cucumber or red onion and choice of thousand island, French, Italian, or oil and vinegar that I was used to.

So, what is a composed salad? Back in the good old days when I was growing up Iceberg was the lettuce of choice. A dense globe in shape it was very crisp and relatively cheap. Today there are a multitude of lettuces and greens to choose from. Once you've chosen your lettuce or greens the palate of flavors is unlimited.

Let's look at lettuces and

green that are available in your market. The four main varieties are:

Romaine also called Cos. Oblong shape with crispy leaves. Great for chopped, and Caesar salads or lettuce wraps, Iceberg: a tight cabbage like all-purpose crispy lettuce. A must for wedge salads.

Butter or Boston Bibb: a loose round lettuce with soft leaves and texture, Pairs well with light vinaigrettes.

Loose leaf: There are numerous loose-leaf lettuces

thinly sliced radish, chopped green onion, tomatoes, cotija or crumbled queso fresco cheese, chopped cilantro, a chipotle lime vinaigrette, and thin strips of fried corn tortillas. Add marinated grilled chicken or shrimp, a one dish meal for the family.

Chipotle lime vinaigrette: ½ cup light oil. Avocado oil is fine

1tablespoon honey or agave. Juice from 2 limes. 1-2 chipotle peppers with adobe sauce. 1 clove garlic, ½ teaspoon cumin.

1 pint halved cherry or grape tomatoes

Creamy Italian dressing; In a blender, combine 1/3 cup olive oil, ¼ cup white wine vinegar, ½ cup mayo, 2 teaspoons Italian seasoning, 2 teaspoons minced garlic, ¼ cup grated parmesan cheese, and one table spoon honey. Blend until smooth. Combine all ingredients in a large bowl and toss.

The Irish salad also known in some areas as a Tea Dinner:

This, probably the simplest of all the salads. it consists of butter lettuce leaves, cold deli meats like ham, turkey, roast beef, corned beef, smoked salmon, or cold chicken breast, tomato and egg wedges. Definitely sliced pickled beet root. Sliced red or green onions, and maybe pickled onions. Perhaps, some coleslaw or potato salad, slices of good white Cheddar cheese, I personally like to add halved boiled baby potatoes. It's kind of what you have in the fridge salad but it's one of my favorites. No fancy vinaigrette just salt, pepper, a dollop of good old Heinz salad cream and a chunk of brown bread and butter.

Here is a recipe for homemade Heinz salad cream:

½ cup good mayonnaise 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard ½ cup powdered sugar ½ cup evaporated milk ½ teaspoon apple cider vinegar

1tsp salt Place all ingredients except milk in a blender and blend. Slowly add enough milk until the dressing looks creamy and is pourable. You can also put all the ingredients in a mason jar and shake to more or less get the same results.

Here's another tip. When making boiled eggs place the egg in a pot with cold water. This prevents cracking. Bring to a boil. Cover and remove from heat. Let sit for 20 minutes then place under cold running water or ice bath, crack shells and peel under cold running water. No more green egg yolks.

A few more salad ideas that you can put your own spin on.

Cobb Spinach BBQ Chicken Tuna Nicoise Greek Steakhouse Wedge Mediterranean

These are just a few of the many ways you can beat the heat this summer. Remember use the freshest ingredients, nothing exotic just what in the market. Don't forget micro greens or toasted nuts and seeds for toppings, along with flavored oils and vinegars. Always organize your prepped ingredients so all you need to do is assemble or toss and go. Enjoy the gifts of summer.

## August 2026 YIFC Spotlight

By: YIFC Culture Committee: Katie, Hannah, Robby, Dani, & Fiona G.

The Young Irish Fellowship Club is incredibly grateful and thrilled to partner with *Irish American News* to share what we do with you each month.

### Spotlight: Golf

This month, we highlight our incredible Golf Committee.who are responsible for planning the annual Young Irish Fellowship Club of Chicago Golf

Outing, The Celtic Cup. The Outing will be Saturday, August 15th at Old Orchard Country Club. YIFC is grateful to have over 50 sponsors for the event. Please let us know if you are interested in sponsorship! For the day off, check-in starts at Emerald Loop at 10am and buses depart at 11am. You can meet us at the course, too. We have tickets for groups of four or single golfers. Prizes will be awarded for best ball, foursome, female, and male. Reception tickets are available for \$75. Tickets also included transport back to the Pony Inn. Thank you

to our Golf Outing Chair Pat Neenan and Committee, Sloane, Abby, Seamus, and Kevin, for their hard work!

### July in Review

Our July Happy Hour was an amazing start to the holiday weekend. Thank you to Cody's Public House for a fantastic evening! It was a hot one, but we were so happy to see so many new faces. The YIFC board was honored to attend the 100 Years Celebration for The Shannon Rovers at Soldier Field. The Shannon

Rovers are instrumental to the Chicago Irish community, and the Young Irish Fellowship Club of Chicago extends our sincere congratulations. The evening was full of amazing performances, great food, and lots of connections. As always, the Shannon Rovers put on a show! Congratulations to our very own Rovers, Robby O'Connor and Emmett Browne. We also would love to extend our congratulations to all our past YIFC Rovers, family, and friends, with a special shout-

out to our board member Marty Ryan and our President Maura McTighe! We hosted our YIFC Annual Awards Night at Chief O'Neill's. We were proud to honor Mallory McSweeney with the Alumni Award, Jack Hartman with the Arthur Dunne Award, and the Shannon Rovers with the Businessman Award. Our July event was held at The Wolfhound for an Irish Breakfast on Saturday, July 18th. We were able to watch the women's camogie Semi and enjoy incredible food. It was also

great to partner with Ireland Network Chicago. Mile buiochas le Brendan and staff for being incredible hosts!

### Save the Dates!

YIFC summer is in full swing! Start August off with our First Thursday Happy Hour on August 6th. We are counting down to our annual golf outing on Saturday, August 15th at Old Orchard Country Club. Please come support and join the fun! You will also find us at the Irish American Heritage Center in September for their Halfway to St. Patrick's Day Celebration. We

don't mean to spook you, but with October next, don't forget about the YIFC Halloween Party!

### Cultural Corner - The Rose of Tralee!

As August comes around, the countdown is on. The Rose of Tralee Festival has been connecting the Irish diaspora since 1959. It celebrates modern Irish women, their stories, and the opportunity of ambassadorship for our Irish communities across the world. Chicago has very close ties to the Festival, and the first ever international Rose to win was from Chicago (Teresa Kenny, 1960). YIFC was proud to have seven representatives from the board partake in the 2026 Chicago Selection (Maeve LeFevour, Kathleen Sullivan, Mary Kate Barron, Katie Connelly, Fiona Connelly, Maggie Cronin, and Fiona Gaffney) in addition to many regular YIFC event attendees. We are so proud that Chicago had 24 entrants, the third largest selection of the year! Our VP of Culture, Fiona Gaffney, will be taking the Chicago sash over this August!

### Get Involved!

Join us at one of our great events! If you are interested in sponsoring YIFC or partnering with us, email [youngirishfellowship@gmail.com](mailto:youngirishfellowship@gmail.com)

To follow all YIFC activities, find us on our Instagram @ [youngirishfc](https://www.instagram.com/youngirishfc), Facebook, or [www.youngirish.com](http://www.youngirish.com)



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Amy Grant Midwest Touring, Life Reviewing“The Me That Remains” First Album in 13 Years



Thirteen years is a long time between albums, and a season of change between the 65 year old Amy Grant of 2026 and the 52 year old of 2013 who didn't know the significant illness and injury she would face in her sixth decade. In June 2022 Grant underwent successful open heart surgery to repair a rare, congenital heart defect doctors described as a ticking time bomb.

A month later she suffered a severe traumatic brain injury while bike riding. After being knocked unconscious for 10 minutes she faced lasting symptoms that included short-term memory loss and difficulty recalling song lyrics. Despite those afflictions she's returned to the concert tour scene with a tour that takes her through the Midwest with stops in Michigan and Ohio and finishing up North to Alaska as she prepares to transition to her Christmas concerts.

I saw Amy in concert as the tour kicked off at the beautiful,

and historic Coronado Theater in downtown Rockford, an appropriate setting for a royal figure in the world of religious pop and Top 40 music. The locale and regal venue were fit for a Queen. Her loyal subjects, fans who have listened, and followed (literally) Grant from iteration to iteration and decade to decade.

With an air of warmth tinged with excitement and a dab of nostalgia, Grant started singing her first song of the night, "Saved by Love" before appearing from offstage, the mere sound of her voice flooding anticipation with reality that the newest meetup was underway.

Amy noted both the beautiful setting indoors in the palatial Coronado Theater and the beauty of the Rock River flowing through the city of 110,000. "I could not believe the gorgeous view of the river from the hotel in your town" she told the audience.

Two women who had traveled



that giving longtime fans what they want sometimes means accepting the celebration of the old success before playing what lies ahead in her latest record, "The Me That Remains."

"Not everybody coming to a concert want to hear is the old stuff, but it's fun for the people performing to say 'Oh yeah, something new!'"

Sweet echoes of Amy in the past continued in the first set with "Power," "Ask me," "Somewhere down the Road," "That's What Love is for," and the autobiography of her Born Again experience, "1974."

Next came her first single from the new album, "January 6," which draws parallels to the protests of the 1960's to those of today via references to Woodstock, John Lennon and Marvin Gaye.

"We're experiencing history as it happens," says Grant. "Nobody has the big picture, and it's vital that we can sit in unrest without jumping to conclusions of how it can all be fixed. That starts within ourselves."

If the eyes are the windows to the soul Grant reveals that she can now see them in the smaller venues she plays in these days, not the major stadiums and giant concert venues in her heyday. "It's nice to be able to look out and see faces again in wonderful old places like this," she said of the Coronado between songs.

"Music should be a shared experience, and there'll be a part later on tonight where I'll ask you to get up and dance. There's just something about

standing among others as you sing that you really experience the song individually and with others."

Midway through the concert she performed the blockbuster chart-toppers that framed the 1990's with "Baby, Baby," "Every Heartbeat," and "Good for Me."

Before singing a number of songs from virtually every album of hers from the '70's, 80's and

90's, Grant played her new single from the album of the same name, The Me That Remains.

In introducing the song she pointedly suggested to the audience that "sometimes you have to let the past die to fully experience where you are now,"

The song was the summation and result of a time of healing and recovery that also included vocal cord surgery which left her needing to learn how to sing again.

"How much of our lives do we spend projecting ourselves into the future, obsessing over what's next?" Grant observed. "There's something about the recovery process - it's essential to be in the moment you're in, to say, 'Where's the next step?' and relish that."

[IrishRoverJim@gmail.com](mailto:IrishRoverJim@gmail.com)



**Happy Summertime!**  
I would like to take this Summer to share some Irish quotes. A lighter article this month since it is Summer. Some professions take a Summer hiatus such as teachers, ski instructors, snow operators and even the Senate and House of Representatives have their "August Recess".

I think studying quotes can act as a historical and linguistic fingerprint of a culture. They can offer a bit of insight to the culture's values and identity.

*"The Gaelic League was built on a positive love for Ireland, not hatred of England."* Dr. Douglas Hyde

*"Seanabhean is ea mise anois go bhfuil cos léi insan uaigh is an chos eile ar a bruach."* "I am an old woman now with one foot in the grave and the other on its edge." Peig Sayer's opening gambit, 1936

*"Pat Fox has it on his hurl and is motoring well now but here comes Joe Rabbitte hot on his tail. I've seen it all now a Rabbitte chasing a Fox around Croke Park! Micheal O Muircheartaigh, (RTE sports commentator)*

*"Well, I don't know if I can repeat what I've just done this week."* Swimmer Michelle Smith after winning three gold medals and a bronze medal at the Atlanta Olympics, 1996

*"All changed, changed utterly: A terrible beauty is born."* WB Yeats (referring to the Easter Uprising in 1916)

*"Okay, one last time. These are small, but the ones out there are far away. Small. Far away."* Father Ted, 1996

*"There is no disagreement that can't be solved with a good cup of tea, in the face."* The Nuala's, 1990s (female Irish musical comedy group)

*"They took away our land, our language, and our religion; but they could never harness our tongues"*

Brendan Behan

*"Planxties"* A word the harpist Turlough O'Carolan invented for his compositions, early 1700s. *"That's the Irish people all over - they treat a serious thing as a joke and a joke as a serious thing."* Dramatist Sean O'Casey, 1923

*"Our revenge will be the laughter of our children."*

Republican Hunger Striker Bobby Sands.

*"I have nothing to declare except my genius."* Oscar Wilde (told U.S. customs agents when he arrived in NYC in 1882)

*"To Arthur!"*

A toast to Arthur Guinness that went from a marketing campaign to a drinking game.

The Tradition: Participants around the world raise their glasses and toast "To Arthur!" at exactly 17:59 (5:59 p.m.)

The time 17:59 is a nod to 1759, the year Arthur Guinness signed the 9,000-year lease for the St. James's Gate Brewery in Dublin.

*"On Good Friday Brian Boru was killed, while kneeling in prayer Defending the Irish."* (13th century poem about Brian Boru's death)

*"Generosity is the source of all richness. We should work to banish greed and offer what we have and what we are to those hundreds of thousands of people who are displaced."*

Sister Stanislaus Kennedy on the refugee crisis in 2016.

*"Yes, it is a rich language, lieutenant, full of the mythologies of fantasy and hope and self-deception at a syntax opulent with tomorrows. It is our response to mud cabins and a diet of potatoes."* Brian Friel, Translations, 1980

*"Young people of Ireland, I love you."* Pope John Paul II, 1979

I would like to conclude with a short story about Daniel O'Connell, our Liberator. It's not a quote but it holds great cultural symbolism about solidarity and how the ordinary Irish felt about O'Connell (MP for Co. Clare)

Daniel O'Connell was at a dinner one day in London with several aristocratic men. These men were his enemies and after the dinner they were having a drink, one of the men put poison in Daniel O'Connell's soup. And the servant girl that was there was from Kerry. She knew about the poison in O'Connell's soup and she said to him. *"Tá salann ar do leitin"*

*There is salt on your porridge.*

Smidin Gaeilge

Words-focail, history-staire, Summer-Samhradh

Language-Teanga

*"The limits of my language mean the limits of my world."* Ludwig Wittgenstein

Any questions/comments Email: [Molanive@yahoo.com](mailto:Molanive@yahoo.com)

Baseball Ireland Appoints Ryan Flynn as First-Ever Chief Executive Officer, Marking New Era for the Sport

Baseball Ireland has appointed Ryan Flynn as its first-ever Chief Executive Officer, a landmark moment in the organization's transition from a volunteer-led structure to a professionally managed national governing body. As its new CEO, Flynn will bring to the organisation a highly respected international leader with extensive experience in building and growing baseball programs across multiple continents.



Ryan Flynn, CEO of Baseball Ireland

Ryan Flynn is widely recognised for his work in developing national and regional baseball organisations, most notably during his tenyear tenure as Chief Executive Officer of Baseball New Zealand, where he helped elevate the sport's profile and international competitiveness, while also founding and guiding New Zealand's first professional team, pre-Covid, that competed in the Australian Baseball League. Prior to this, Flynn led the Guam Baseball Federation, overseeing development initiatives and national team programs and leading the national team to within three wins of the 2000 Olympic Games in Sydney.

A native of the United States with deep Irish roots, Flynn's appointment represents both a professional milestone for the organization and a personal homecoming. His family emigrated from Ireland to America in the early-to-mid 19th century, making this role a return to his ancestral homeland.

"This is more than a job - it's a responsibility and an opportunity to build something lasting," said Flynn. "Baseball in Ireland has strong foundations, passionate people, and untapped potential. The task now is to professionalize the organization, expand participation across the country, and create a pathway for Irish athletes to compete on the world stage. The Irish have played a major role in the growth of the sport, especially in North America. Now is the time to build up the nation's infrastructure to contribute even more globally."

More recently, Ryan worked in various roles across Australia, where he notably served as

full-time to Dublin to begin implementation of Baseball Ireland's long-term strategic plan.

"This is a pivotal moment," Flynn added. "With the right support, Ireland can become a serious baseball nation - not just in participation, but in performance. The opportunity is real, and the timing is right."

In addition to his governance and sports development experience, Ryan brings a strong background in communications, marketing, and fundraising, having worked as a journalist and marketing professional earlier in his career and consistently applying those skills to grow organisations, secure partnerships, and build sustainable programs.

As Chief Executive Officer of Baseball Ireland, Ryan will be responsible for leading the organisation's strategic vision, strengthening participation and performance pathways, supporting clubs and volunteers nationwide, and advancing Ireland's presence on the international baseball stage.

Ryan's appointment marks an important step in Baseball Ireland's continued ambition to expand the reach of the sport, enhance player development opportunities, and build a strong, sustainable future for baseball across the island of Ireland.

About Baseball Ireland

Baseball Ireland is the national governing body for baseball on the island of Ireland. It is responsible for the development, promotion, and governance of the sport at all levels, from grassroots participation to international competition.

performance and international rankings

- Building strategic partnerships and sponsorships domestically and abroad
- Securing sustainable funding through government, commercial, and diaspora engagement
- Establishing Ireland as an emerging force in European and global baseball

Flynn will initially undertake a targeted fundraising and partnership campaign in the United States, engaging with the Irish diaspora and global baseball community, before relocating





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**CBS News in Crisis**  
*Or is CBS News under attack...and by whom?*  
By Michael Corrigan

It began with Norah O'Donnell stepping away from an anchor position to have more freedom working on other projects but still remaining with CBS. I have always admired her work but accepted her decision to leave her position as a personal one. She was cool under fire when President Trump attacked her during a contentious interview. Then John Dickerson and Maurice DuBois in a touching farewell broadcast announced they were not "stepping away" but leaving CBS. During their final joint broadcast, the anchors were compelling, choosing to focus on the viewers and their team rather than their history and accomplishments.

Dickerson even choked up as he thanked DuBois, referring to him "as a trusted friend and an outstanding journalist." DuBois saluted the audience for their trust and recalled the legendary journalist, the late Edward R. Murrow, with the classic Murrow sign-off, "Good night, and good luck."

What was really going on?

Though not foreboding, this was a shock, especially with John Dickerson who has been a solid and sensitive reporter for the CBS news broadcasts. Of course, even successful artists and reporters can call it a day and move on.

Then came Scout Pelley. He did not retire. He did not so go gently into the good night to paraphrase the great Welsh poet, Dylan Thomas, but Pelley was fired.

Why? The news reports indicate veteran Scott Pelley was "fired from CBS News in early June 2026 after 37 years with the network, including a long tenure on 60 Minutes." His departure followed an explosive, contentious staff meeting where he clashed with new management over the direction of the show, editorial independence, and qualifications. During a "fiery staff meeting," Pelley accused CBS News Editor-in-Chief Bari Weiss of "Murdering 60 Minutes," a legendary newsmagazine. There could be some truth to this since recent stories on 60 Minutes seem to suffer from severe editing and political bias, specifically regarding a story about ICE protests.

There is also the strong

possibility that President Trump exerts powerful influence on 60 Minutes, once a beacon of honest and courageous reporting, a show President Trump evidently intensely disliked. The program, 60 Minutes, has a remarkable history; remember Sam Donelson and his probing segments?

As you all must know, other journalists have left 60 Minutes: Sharyn Alfonsi (correspondent), Cecilia Vega (correspondent), Tanya Simon (executive producer) and Anderson Cooper, a veteran contributor, who declined to renew his contract.

Bari Weiss, an American political commentator and book review editor at The Wall Street Journal from 2013 to 2017 and an op-ed staff editor and writer on culture and politics at The New York Times from 2017 to

2020 now controls Sixty Minutes. I am not sure there is much left to control. The occasionally controversial 60 Minutes we once knew is gone.

Bari Weiss may answer the critics if and when the ratings for one of the most creative journalism shows on television sink. I can't imagine, however, CBS and some of its better shows ever returning to their former integrity.

Let us never forget the First Amendment to the United States Constitution: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances."



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**Party With Houli August 17**

Mike Houlihan, founder of Hibernian Media and Hibernian Radio, is returning to the village of Wilmette in September with his 12th Annual film festival. Celebrating a 5th anniversary locally at the Wilmette Theatre Sept. 25-26-27 with 3 great films, including DREAMING OF THE QUIET MAN, See Merry Doyle's magnificent celebration of the film and director John Ford starring Maureen O'Hara, Peter Bogdanovich, Martin Scorsese, and Gabriel Byrne. Two more films are yet to be announced for this year's movie hooley.

The party is to announce this season's hooley. He will be screening his personal hit documentary (3 stars from Roger Ebert) that introduced Houli to Ireland. OUR IRISH COUSINS. Recently described by the Tribune's Rick Kogan as "The bard of the South Side as writer, actor, newspaper columnist and filmmaker," Houlihan wants to re-introduce himself

to the Wilmette audience, and OUR IRISH COUSINS is the perfect vehicle, taking them with him on his first trip back home to the Emerald Isle.

RogerEbert.com said this about the film. "Although those of Irish descent are clearly the target audience, a good part of the secret to its success is that you don't have to be from the Emerald Isle to appreciate it. No matter where you come from or how much corned beef you've consumed in your life, you'll most likely find that Houlihan's observations about the importance of examining and coming to terms with one's heritage still ring true."

When a party gets rowdy, the Irish call it a "hooley". So join Mike for this preview! Donations are tax deductible and your \$100 ticket also covers the film screening, open bar & appetizers, as well as a raffle & silent auction. Or make checks payable to Hibernian Media NFP, PO Box 5650, River Forest, IL 60305.

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## PARTY With Houli !

Houli is Throwing a Party on

# MONDAY AUGUST 17, 2026

to announce this season's hooley. He will be screening his very personal hit documentary (3 stars from Roger Ebert) that introduced Houli to Ireland!

## OUR IRISH COUSINS

Wilmette Theatre  
1122 Central Ave, Wilmette, IL 60091  
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7pm - Start - Food and Drink 8pm - Screening  
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<https://www.zeffy.com/en-US/ticketing/movie-hooley-fundraiser>



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In the meantime Houli is throwing a party on Monday August 17th at the Wilmette Theatre to announce this season's hooley. He will be screening his very personal hit documentary (3 stars from Roger Ebert) that introduced Houli to Ireland. OUR IRISH COUSINS.

Recently described by Chicago Tribune's Rick Kogan as "The bard of the South Side as writer, actor, newspaper columnist and filmmaker...", Houlihan wants to re-introduce himself to the Wilmette audience with this screening and OUR IRISH COUSINS is the perfect vehicle, taking the audience with him on his first trip back home to the Emerald Isle.

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When a party gets rowdy, the Irish call it a "hooley". So join Mike Houlihan for this preview of his Hooley!

Donations are tax deductible and your \$100 ticket also covers the film screening, open bar and appetizers, as well as a raffle and silent auction.

Or make checks payable to Hibernian Media NFP, PO Box 5650, River Forest, IL 60305.

See you at the movies, Houli.





## Get Out and Have Some Fun !

## Skinny and Houli

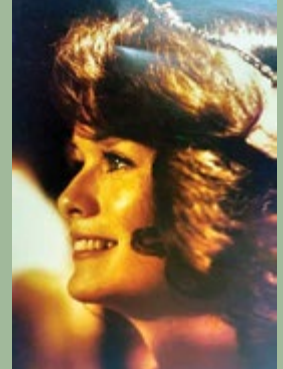
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BOOKS BOOKS BOOKS

**Much More Than Leprechauns**



By Sheryl O'Sullivan

Welcome back to the enchanting land of Tir na N'Og for books. Last month we discussed Children's Books Ireland's 2026 award for illustrations and for new authors. This month we will look at the grand-prize winner for this year, a picture book.

**DON'T TRUST FISH:**  
by Neil Sharpson,  
Illustrated by Dan Santat

The two zany brains of Irish playwright Neil Sharpson and Caldecott Award-winning Dan Santat have met in Don't Trust Fish, and the results are hilarious. The book starts by letting you think it is going to be a regular nonfiction treatment of the different types of animals--mammals, reptiles, birds, etc. Those first few pages are normal and boring with pictures to match. But then the zaniness begins!

When Sharpson gets to talking about fish, we have our first glimpse of why we shouldn't trust fish. Initially it is because they aren't as easy to describe as the other animal types. They might have gills; they might have



lungs; they might lay eggs; they might not. After this initial reason why fish are untrustworthy, though, the ideas only get crazier. Maybe they are plotting under the sea. Maybe they are building big war machines to take over earth. Maybe there are already fish spies in your house! The action gets more intense, and the refrain of DON'T TRUST FISH gets repeated more insistently.

The pictures, as you would expect from a Caldecott winner, enhance every page.

They are often quite subtle with, for example, drawings of early designs of warship legs being repeated on the actual warships later in the book. You can expect your non-reader to find many more of these than you will. Those non-readers never miss a thing in the illustrations of a picture book!

The book is a piece of wacky fun meant for the 3-6-year-old group. Hopefully, we will see more collaborations between Sharpson and Santat after this award-winning beginning.

**THE MUSEUM OF LOST UMBRELLAS:**  
by Marie-Louise Fitzpatrick

Our chapter book this month is by a highly decorated author, though she did not win any awards this year. You probably recognize the name of the author, Marie-Louise Fitzpatrick, as the Irish author who won Children's Books Ireland's award for Izzy and Skunk, There, and Hagwitch. I have reviewed all of those books in this column at one time or another. And now she is back with The Museum of Lost Umbrellas, and exciting fantasy romp aimed at middle-graders (ages 9-12, or so).

The action takes place on the island of Ollipest whose residents voted in 1996 to ban all magic. This is important because Ollipest is just filled with magic. It was the refuge and safe-haven for all the people who were accused of being witches but escaped being burned at the stake.



The NO MAGIC vote has lain somewhat dormant until Shelley shows up to re-open her ancestors' Museum of Lost Umbrellas, and Dilly shows up to live with her Aunt Florence, and Callum shows up to spend the summer with his Gran.

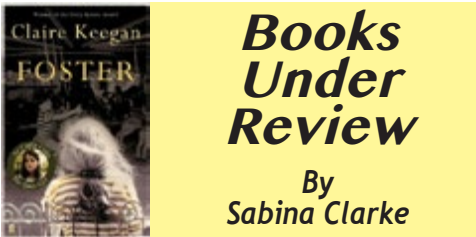
All three of these young people have magic aplenty, and when you add to this a shape-shifting parrot and an enchanted dog, and you can

see the townspeople now have a dilemma on their hands. Enter a sinister character named James Lambe, who is evil but charismatic, and what ensues is an exciting good-vs-evil battle, with magic being the side of Good.

The book may be a fantasy, but there are lots of real-life lessons to be learned. Book-burning, distrust of outsiders, and mob behavior are all featured and questioned. And it takes a united effort by all Pro Magic beings on the island (including enchanted animals and magical umbrellas) to disarm Lambe who has somehow united the townspeople behind him though he is an imposter and hypocrite.

Fitzpatrick says in her author's note that when she was writing The Museum of Lost Umbrellas, she was having such a good time that she accidentally wrote two books instead of one and had to tease them apart. This is good news for kids who love this book because there will surely soon be a sequel.

That's it for this month. The big news next month is that Ireland has a new Laureate na N'Og. I'll introduce him to you next month with a couple of his books.



**Books Under Review**

By Sabina Clarke

**Vandalizing Ireland**

by Dr. Eoin Lenihan  
Western Front Bookshops  
Austin, Texas 2025

Ireland On Fire... How The Media and Government Are Colluding in Creating a New Ireland

It was the title of this book that grabbed me-- it sums up in two words what is happening in Ireland.

Ireland is undergoing a profound identity crisis due to the mass migration into this tiny island. This book is now a bestseller in Ireland. It would fade quickly - with its moment in the sun if it were not backed up with ironclad facts and well researched statistics touching on topics that could be material for five or 6 separate books.

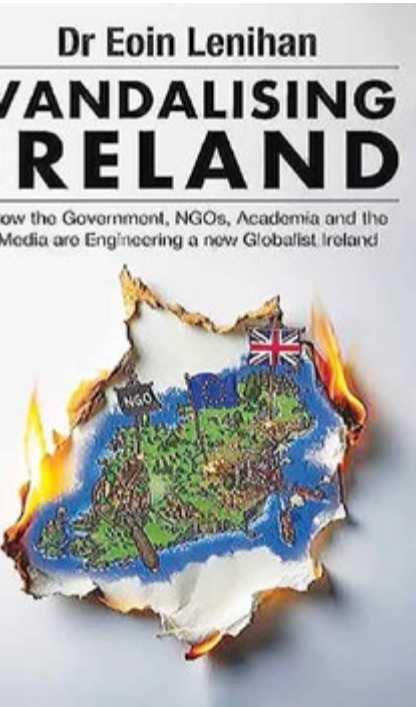
The author an independent journalist and researcher was born in the west of Ireland "on the edge of the Burren, a "barren, lonesome and uniquely beautiful karst landscape."

He reminisces about his youth in the Burren --one of the "last great living

oral cultures, a landscape interwoven with stories of fairies, death coaches, black dogs, banshees, giant serpents and other hidden entities who resided in the fields and graveyards, in ancient monuments, above ground and below."

These creatures, he tells us, when they showed themselves were "mostly indistinguishable from humans" and were treated with reverence. If respect was not given to them in the places they inhabited-- illness, death and ruin were certain to follow-- but when locals respected their ancient dwellings--all prospered.

Dr. Lenihan grew up in the Celtic Tiger and witnessed the passing of worlds taking "day trips to ancient Ireland in its feeble, humiliated and unwanted twilight." He mourns the loss of ancient Irish culture and the fairylore that has been passed down orally in pre-Christian times



believe recalling that "To step into the cabins of these old men was to transport back in time at least one hundred years."

He mentions an 86 year-old bard named Mikey Griffey whose stories he recorded in 2004 as a

university student. What Mikey taught him was that there was a "secret Ireland that survived every invading force." The bards and their oral customs, he tells us, are "living culture in its purest and most ancient form."

The Celtic Tiger brought "mass migration, massive foreign direct investment, wealth and unprecedented greed to Ireland." By 2020, a quarter of the occupants of Ireland were born overseas. The author calls present day Ireland a "crippled democracy and global experiment that teeters on the brink - a government that fosters state dependency and has no opposition." The Irish citizens have no voice. Academia and the national news media are in collusion with the agenda to wipe out the Irish identity.

The country has been flooded with migrants that have not been properly vetted-- and the lie has been publicly unmasked. Huge government contracts have been awarded to private hoteliers to house them costing 10,000 tourism jobs nationwide. They are placed in small communities with

no consultation with the inhabitants and this has led to violent confrontations with the communities.

In one altercation in Coolock, one of the most deprived areas in Dublin, on July 15th, the Public Order Unit arrived in heavy riot gear and engaged in shield and baton charges on the protesters and pepper sprayed them. Petrol bombs and debris were thrown at the gardai and Garda vehicles were damaged as violence spiraled out of control. This was not covered by international media-- the best source of information about what is happening now in Ireland is on social media, the author states, and I agree-- "There is a growing consensus that this is a government increasingly at war with its own people in a manner not seen since colonial times." Undeterred by the violence, the migrant center at Coolock would proceed as planned.

In Dundrum County Tipperary, a small village of 165 people which had willingly hosted 270 Ukrainians in '22 and '23, were told that the Ukrainians would be replaced by asylum seekers that would outnumber the locals. At a June town meeting, 400 people showed up to support the villagers. A local man gave an impassioned speech

supporting the villagers calling the planned arrivals a "plantation" stating, "We are currently in the midst of a plantation. Our whole culture, our whole way of life is going to be diluted and ultimately decimated."

The last time foreign men were forced into Irish communities with no veto and no consultation, the author notes, was during the "Cromwellian plantations of the 1650s."

What is happening in Ireland when there is a murder of a migrant it seems has a parallel to how the national media treats a murder by a migrant here in the United States. When Aisling Murphy, a talented young musician and teacher was brutally murdered by Jozef Puska a Slovakian immigrant to Ireland, it made international headlines.

Aisling was out for a jog in broad daylight running along the banks of the Grand Canal in Tullamore, County Offaly when she was overpowered, attacked and stabbed eleven times in the neck.

The media steered the conversation away from migrant crime and the government's migration policy and failure to do background checks - by diverting the blame for Aisling's murder onto all Irish men and a culture of misogyny-- "three days later the Irish Times printed a piece that blamed "an epidemic of femicide" and a "culture of misogyny" in Ireland for Aisling's murder.

Changing the narrative is key to advancing the globalist agenda-- this is also happening in the U.S. and in England and in France where migrant crime is decriminalized and any criticism of migrant crime is labeled as "hate speech."

Rather than supporting the people,

Irish born politicians are abandoning their own--their native people. One very shocking example cited by the author is that "Fianna Fail and Fine Gael have grown more openly anti-democratic and authoritarian in their actions by backing the 'no veto, no consultation" regarding the ramming of unvetted single men posing as asylum seekers into small communities across Ireland - this forced settlement says the author has "parallels only in Cromwellian times."

The Irish national media is in collusion with the government calling all political groups and individuals right of Fianna Fail and Fine Gael "far right"-- a derogatory label-- and dismissive in an attempt to dismiss a political movement. For a brief shining moment, the Irish Freedom party offered hope but was defeated.

The author sees Sinn Fein, the opposition party in silent agreement.

My hope is that Sinn Fein will rise to the occasion. The people need a leader who will preserve "authentic grassroots Irish culture and identity" which the author states is "facing an existential threat."

Ireland has been welcoming to those seeking refuge but Irish born are becoming second class citizens watching their culture disappear and be reinvented and unrecognizable before their eyes.

The Irish are becoming strangers in their own land.

Postscript: I would love to read a book by Dr. Lenihan on the Burren fairies, the ancient bards and their oral customs. His brief description in this book's

Preface of this ancient disappearing culture and his travels with his father is mesmerizing.

**Fore! Your Guide to local Irish Golf Outings**

**Maryville Academy Monday, August 10 - Location: Merit Club**

This signature event brings together golfers, sponsors and supporters for a meaningful day on the course while helping create brighter futures for the children and families we serve. Through the Maryville Golf Academy, young people across Chicago are introduced to golf while gaining life-changing opportunities that extend far beyond the course. This year, more than 100 students from Providence St. Mel School, St. Catherine of Siena School and St. Lucy School participated in our golf and caddy-in-school programs, gaining access to clubs, mentorship and the neighborhood Columbus Park golf course. Tina Hock at [restivo-hockt@maryvilleacademy.org](mailto:restivo-hockt@maryvilleacademy.org) or 847-294-1982.

**Ancient Order of Hibernians Div. 32** Friday, August 23 Edgebrook Golf Course Division 32, Chicago of the Ancient Order of Hibernians (AOH) is hosting its annual charity golf outing to fund the bulk of the donations of the Charity Committee throughout the year. The AOH supports groups, individuals and families throughout Chicagoland with donations and member participation. A few organizations that benefit from the AOH's philanthropy include Misericordia, St. Mary of the Lake Soup Kitchen and The Well of Mercy. The AOH is the oldest and largest Irish-American Catholic fraternal organization in the United States with members in 49 of the 50 States and Canada.

How to sign up: Visit <https://aooh.org>

**Young Irish Fellowship Club of Chicago** annual golf outing is August 15 10am at Old Orchard CC. 700 W Rand Rd Mt Prospect, IL 60056,

**Tickets** go live June 26. Early bird pricing is \$760 a foursome and then raising it to \$800 a foursome. Early bird for a single golfer is \$190, regular pricing is \$200. **Early bird pricing runs from 6/26 until 7/10.**

Golf tickets includes bus from Emerald Loop to Old Orchard CC. Then, from Old Orchard CC to the Pony Inn 638 W Belmont Ave, Chicago, 60657 following the outing. There will be a raffle also!

Reception only tix \$75 dollars. Sign up: Visit [www.youngirish.com](http://www.youngirish.com)

**Gaelic Park/Carraig Pub Golf Outing** at Odyssey CC Sept 3

19110 S Ridgeland Ave, Tinley Park IL \$140 per Golfer 18 holes Registration at 11am - Shotgun start at Noon! [www.chicagogaelpark.com](http://www.chicagogaelpark.com)

Irish American Heritage Center Date: September 19 at Billy Caldwell Golf Course, (see story this page) What we're hearing: This annual tradition includes nine holes of golf, carts, lunch, prizes, awards, raffles and more in the Hospitality Room at the Irish American Heritage Center following the outing, and admission to the Halfway to St. Patrick's Day celebration at the Center. There will be prizes for most green worn on the course!

How to sign up: Visit [www.irish-american.org](http://www.irish-american.org)

**Golfing Fore Green Sept-19 at Billy Caldwell**

The Irish American Heritage Center (IAHC), located in a beautifully renovated 86,000 square ft. school on the Northwest side of Chicago, nurtures and strengthens Irish culture and heritage through a wide variety of programming and resources.

Our membership represents large numbers of people from both the city and suburbs who recognize the need to preserve and share vibrant cultural experiences across all groups.

"Golfing Fore Green" is an annual event that helps us maintain our building and continue to develop and present more programming for our membership and community. Again this year, it coincides with the Halfway to St. Patrick's Day celebration at the IAHC, providing additional opportunities for golfers to enjoy the day beyond the 10th hole hospitality room!

Join us as a sponsor and golfer on Saturday September 19th for a wonderful fall day of golf at the Billy Caldwell Golf Course in Chicago to support the Irish American Heritage Center.

What's better than a round of golf in the lovely autumn weather! An information table will be available for sponsors' use on our return to the IAHC for the 10th hole hospitality.

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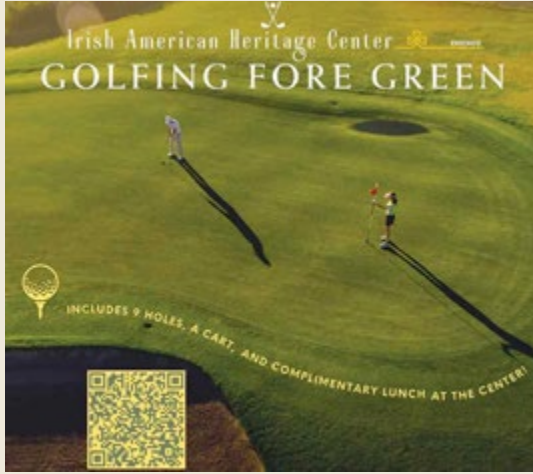
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BOOKS BOOKS BOOKS

**Land**  
By Maggie O'Farrell  
Published Jun 02, 2026 400 Pages  
In 1865, Tomás and his reluctant son, Liam, are working for the Ordnance Survey, and Tomás is determined for his maps to be a record of the disaster, The Great Hunger, that ravaged his homeland. But after an unsettling encounter in a copse just days before the



British soldiers in charge are scheduled to arrive, Tomás is set off course, taking his family to live on a peninsula in the west of Ireland. From there, Tomás, his wife, his two daughters, his two sons, are each taken on unexpected journeys that will extend far beyond Ireland to the shores of Canada and India—moving across time but always circling that one piece of land, remembering what was lost, what came before, what might still lay ahead.  
Maggie O'Farrell was born in Derry,

Northern Ireland, in 1972. Her novels include Hamnet (winner of the National Book Critics Circle Award and the Women's Prize for Fiction), The Marriage Portrait, After You'd Gone, The Vanishing Act of Esme Lennox, The Hand That First Held Mine (winner of the Costa Novel Award), and Instructions for a Heatwave. She has also written a memoir, I Am, I Am, I Am: Seventeen Brushes with Death. She lives in Edinburgh.

"A breathtaking hymn to the sanctity of natural spaces, operating on timescales both intimate and geological. I finished Land moved not only by the vivid lives of its human characters, but the thrumming, gorgeous presence of its mosses, waters, winds, and skies." —Daniel Mason, author of North Woods

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"Evocative and impassioned. . . . Steeped in Irish history and folklore, alive with a sense of wonder." —Kirkus (starred review) Available in Kindle, paperback, audio and hard cover from Amazon, Barnes and Noble or the publisher link below.

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I and I, Eye for Eye

Since moving to the desert, it's been an interesting journey. We escaped the harsh Chicago winters in favour of the intense desert heat of summers. I suppose wherever you move, there will always be challenges. And yet, despite those things that might irk us, there are enough positive things to keep us in our right minds, if that's even possible these days. The present

administration presents us with a clear demonstration of how human beings peddle their self-interest above everything else. We see this in action every day the White House issues yet another missive to please Bozo. Not satisfied with starting a war with Iran, he's worried that his ballroom won't be finished by the time he's gone. If he has a legacy to pass on, it will be one of petty revenge and incompetency.

His gospel of rank selfishness should rankle any believer in goodness. I'm sure Bozo would have the good lord himself in court or in prison. The Beatitudes sound like woke to me, and no doubt, would be considered seditious. Forget the whole forgiveness thing, especially if you have enough power and wealth to

get your own back. It amazes me that anyone who believes in goodness would ever find Bozo an example of faith. His despicable ruthlessness runs counter to anything close to goodness. When he chooses to pick a fight with the Pope, two of his disciples (both of whom are a pale shade of Catholic) rush to defend him. It seems that power is worth more than righteousness. To the Pope's credit, he refused to play

about those who are locked up in ICE facilities. The needs of others less fortunate are not sidelined for a stronger stock market. They rally in vast numbers to demonstrate their disgust at Bozo's rampant selfishness.

A couple of years ago, I witnessed something I'd never seen before. We live near a golf course where there is a pond. At a certain time of the year, the ducks make use of

creature that was not one of their own.

For weeks, we would see this goose side by side with the duck family. It wasn't until the ducklings were grown that the goose left the brood. What its motivation for doing such a good deed was will never be known. I can only say that I'd never seen anything like it before. If the natural world can provide us such a clear example of altruism, why can't humans? One thing is clear, we won't find it with this present administration. Bozo loves to mock the afflicted, ridicule those he considers inferior, and threaten anyone whom he

considers a challenge. The example he sets should be anathema to the believer, but it's not. They are those willing to overlook his selfish, petty politics to get what they want. It is sort of pragmatism that does not engender goodness. Instead, it smacks of self-interest. They are happy to placate Bozo providing he gives them what they want. If he diminishes Civil Rights, or imprisons people, it doesn't matter. It makes no difference if he commits crimes while he's in office. Morality is a flexible friend to those who support Bozo. You can turn and twist it until it does what you

want it to.

I hope that we find a goose among them who might be moved by the needs of those who do not occupy a position of strength. Whatever it was that triggered that response in the goose must surely lie in us too. Wouldn't it be something to find a goose in his administration to challenge the lies he spins? I'm not beyond hoping that those who claim some sort of faith will have the scales fall from their eyes, and see Bozo's criminality. Perhaps, they need to visit an ICE facility, or be with those who suffer at the hands of the bumbling oaf they are propping up.

Jesus was a goose in his time. His attitudes were different to those in the political and religious establishments. His concern for the poor and disenfranchised set him apart. What he did was in opposition to the attitudes of those in power, and it didn't go unnoticed. Can you imagine how this present administration would treat him? I wonder which ICE facility he would end up in. Would he even survive his imprisonment? And, if he did survive, I'm sure they would crucify him on Truth Social. Bozo, with the help of A.I., would conjure up a nice little reel of the Orange man defeating on the truth seller.

Chicago to Croke Park: Grandson Returns to Family's Mayo Roots to Honor His Late Grandfather, and to Witness the end of a 75-Year Sports Drought

Ireland - 27 July 2026 - Chicago native Mark Sulski made an extraordinary last-minute journey to Croke Park with one mission in mind: to stand with Mayo supporters, honour the memory of his late grandfather John O'Malley Sr, and help the county finally lift the legendary "Mayo Curse."

Sulski, whose late grandfather John O'Malley was born and raised in Lahardane, County Mayo, before emigrating to Chicago, travelled to Ireland to honour his grandfather's memory and celebrate the Mayo heritage that has been passed down through generations.

With nothing more than a bag on his back, no ticket to the match, and a belief that history was about to be made, Sulski made the journey to Dublin determined to be part of one of the most anticipated moments in Irish sporting history.

For 75 years, Mayo supporters have carried one of Gaelic football's most famous legends, the "Mayo Curse." According to folklore, after Mayo's 1951 All-Ireland victory celebrations, the team passed through Foxford where they were alleged to have shown insufficient respect when passing a funeral. The story claims that a priest placed a curse on the team, declaring that Mayo would not win

another All-Ireland title while any member of that victorious 1951 side remained alive.

While the story has never been proven and many associated with the team dismissed it as folklore, the legend became a defining part of Mayo GAA history and a symbol of the county's long wait for glory.

Earlier in 2026, the final surviving member of the 1951 All-Ireland-winning Mayo team sadly passed away, renewing belief among supporters across Ireland and around the world that the long wait could finally

be over.

Determined to play his own small part in helping Mayo lift the curse, Sulski travelled from Chicago without a ticket for the All-Ireland Final at Croke Park. Once in Dublin, he found himself surrounded by some of the most passionate and loyal supporters in sport, the Mayo faithful, whose belief and dedication have carried the county through decades of heartbreak.

Refusing to give up on his dream of being inside Croke Park, Sulski's persistence paid



**Mark Sulski at Croke Park**  
off when, at the last minute, a family member secured him a ticket to the game.

Standing among thousands of Mayo supporters, Sulski witnessed a moment that will never be forgotten: Mayo finally ending their 75-year wait for All-Ireland glory and bringing an emotional conclusion to one of Irish sport's greatest stories. "Being there was something I'll never forget," said Sulski. "I came to honour my late grandfather John O'Malley, my whole family, our roots in Lahardane, and to stand with the Mayo people who have waited so long for this day. I

just wanted to be there, to add my voice, and to help Mayo lift the curse."

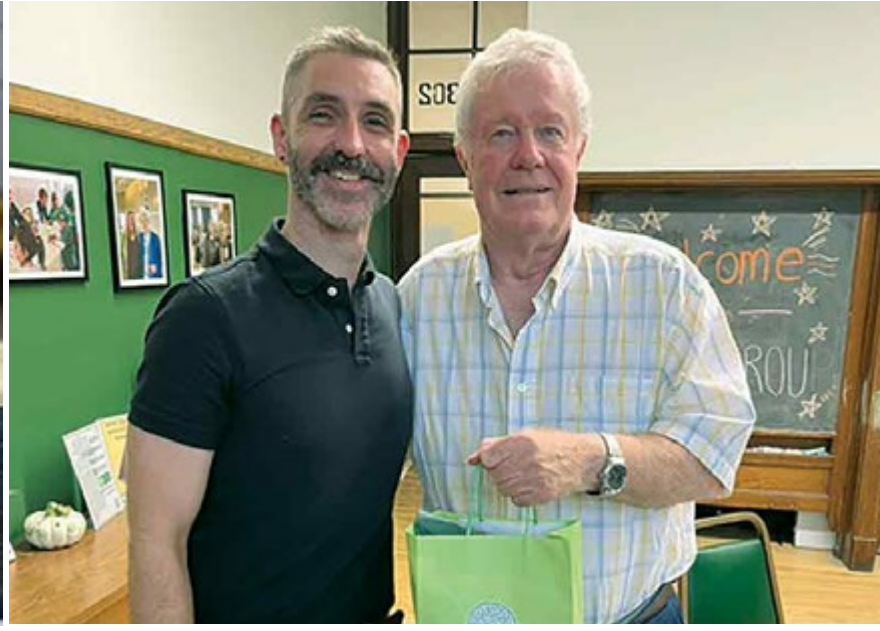
The victory became a celebration not only for County Mayo but for the Irish diaspora around the world, with supporters everywhere sharing in a historic moment that connected generations of Mayo people at home and abroad.

For Mark Sulski, what began as a spontaneous journey from Chicago became a once-in-a-lifetime last-minute flight that allowed him to stand among the Mayo faithful as history was finally made





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## Irish Immigrant Dennis Dobbyn, A Long-time Chicago Southwest Side Resident Celebrates Birthday 99!

By Hunter Minné

Almost 40 people have gathered together in the backyard of this small house on the Southwest Side, so full there is barely any space to see the grass between the party-goers. Every few minutes, a plane taking off from the neighboring Midway airport passes just overhead, momentarily pausing all conversation as they wait for the noise of the jets to diminish.

Despite this disruption, the cheery and social atmosphere is palpable with children running through the yard, bangers cooking on the grill and plenty of drinks being drunk. There are people wearing Cubs merch, Chicago Police Department

October, 1942, when I was fifteen years old. And I did alright. They kicked me out the first time and because I was underage, and I went back in again and they took me."

After a few years, he said he moved south to Manchester, England where he worked as a double-decker bus driver for three years.

Just one year before she was crowned Queen of England, while driving his bus out of Albert Square, Dobbyn said a police officer instructed him to pull over to let the then Duchess of Edinburgh's horse-drawn carriage pass. With 20 people on his bus just sitting and waiting, Dobbyn asked the officer if they could all get out

after the Dobbyn's moved to the South Side of Chicago.

"Now this part I don't know if it's true or not, but it sounds like there's some truth to it," John Dobbyn said. "He got drafted into the English army. He said, 'eff the English,' so he jumped on a ship and went to Canada."

After their ship was briefly waylaid off the northern coast of France, they sailed across the Atlantic and up the St. Lawrence River for eleven days before arriving in Canada.

"We landed in Quebec at seven in the morning and the French customs officers, it took us until seven o'clock at night before they cleared us," Dennis Dobbyn said. "They were all

From there he settled in Toronto and began working for the Canadian Pacific Railway. Eventually he left Canada for Chicago and once again began driving buses, this time for the CTA before retiring in 1991.

"So [Dennis and his wife Cis] came here in April '65," John Dobbyn said. "So, I believe this is a factual statement, that my father is the longest living person on this block."

Despite being long-time Southwest Side residents and living just over ten miles from Rate Field, the Dobbyns are staunch Cubs fans. John Dobbyn attributed this to the years his father worked on the North Side where he and his coworkers would watch Cubs games during

the fighting in Ireland," John Dobbyn said. "And I thought there was only Irish, Italian and Polish, because that was everything. Everybody in our neighborhood was Polish, pretty much. A couple Irish sprung out and a few Italians, so that's what I thought the world was."

Much of the Dobbyn family still maintains strong connections to their Irish roots.

A granddaughter in Minnesota owns an Irish dance studio, and another teaches it in Colorado. Three grandsons played for the Midwest Rugby Union 2025 men's D2 champions, the South Side Irish. His daughter Eileen Desmond owned an Irish pub in Chicago Ridge for 18 years



shirts and one in a Guinness sweater. Just as the sky starts to dim, not one but two birthday cakes are brought out from the house and everyone, of course, begins to sing.

The cakes land in front of the man of the hour as he takes a sip from his beer. His glass reads "Grandpa - The Man. The Myth. The Legend." Dennis Dobbyn leans forward and blows out the pair of nine-shaped candles on top of the taller cake to officially mark his 99th birthday.

The evening of June 16, the Dobbyn family gathered at the house of their father, their grandfather or their great-grandfather to celebrate the family patriarch and Irish immigrant to Chicago turning 99 years old.

Only a few of Dobbyn's eight children, 29 grandchildren and 21 (soon to be 22, his son clarifies) great-grandchildren are absent. While all of his children have moved out of the house, most still live in the Chicagoland area with a majority just south in Oak Lawn, some in Lincoln Park and one grandson living as far away as Indiana.

Dobbyn was born in County Clare in 1927 but grew up in County Cork before joining the Irish army as a young teen.

"I ran away when I was a young kid, ran away from home," Dobbyn said. "I joined the Irish army on the first of



and watch.

"So I stopped the bus and I said to him — there are 20 people on the bus — so I said to the copper, 'Do we have to sit here or can we get out and watch?'" Dobbyn said. "He looked at me and said, 'You're Irish?' I said, 'Yeah,' and [he] said, 'Long as you behave yourself.'"

Later, Dobbyn said he received a draft notice from the British Army and decided that was the right time to emigrate. He and a few other Irish and English boys, bound to avoid the draft, boarded a ship bound for the Great White North.

John Dobbyn is the fourth oldest of Dennis Dobbyn's eight children, and is the first born

French at that time, in Quebec, and they weren't too pleased with all these English-speaking people coming into Quebec."

their lunch breaks.

"Growing up, I thought everybody was either Catholic or a Protestant because of

and now owns the Cork & Bean cafe in Oak Lawn.

John Dobbyn said a neighborhood friend who had to leave the party early reminded his father to apply for the Centenarian Bounty, a gold coin signed by the Irish president and awarded to members of the Irish diaspora who turn 100 years old.

According to his family, one of Dennis Dobbyn's most common sayings is, 'You should never eat on an empty stomach.' At his birthday party, surrounded by three generations of family, he followed through on his own advice.

**Writer's note:** The writer thanks the Dobbyn family for their hospitality, their offers of food and drink, and to Aidan and Connor Desmond for the ride to the train station.



## Irish American Alliance Annual Picnic is August 9th

Join the fun in Burr Oak Woods at 135th and Harlem - just South of 135th on the East side of Harlem from Noon to sunset.

There will be live Irish music by the *Institute of traditional Irish Music* (formerly the Murphy-Roch Irish Music Club).

You can play some bean bags, do an egg toss, get your face painted along with other activities.

There will be two raffles on site with some nice prizes involved.

Free beer, wine, soda, hamburgers, hot dogs and snacks, along with the famous IAA pig roast, which will be cooked on site.

A donation of \$10 minimum per person if you can which allows you to partake. It's also a great time to become a member or update your membership.

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July saw the 38th Film Fleadh in Galway, and it hosted the world premiere of Frank Berry's *The Lost Children of Tuam*, a movie produced by Liam Neeson and written by Rebecca Lenkiewicz.

It tells the true story of how history enthusiast Catherine Corless uncovered the possibility that as many as 796 children had been buried in unmarked graves at the Bon Secours Mother and Baby Home in Tuam, County Galway.

The discovery made headlines around the world, and began a campaign for justice for both victims and survivors. It's still a big issue in Ireland, and so it's perhaps no surprise that it won the prize for Best Irish Film.

The Audience Award went to *Learning to Breathe Underwater*, which is directed by Rebekah Fortune and written by Richard Brabin, the Best Irish First Feature to *You'll Never Believe Who's Dead*, written/directed by Dallan Shovlin, and the Best Irish Feature Documentary (joint winners) were *Try* - writer/director Osín Mistéil and *The S.U.*, which is directed by Rob Dennis, Mark Byrne, Gerard Conway, and produced by Dennis, Alan Bradley and Sarah Jones.

Best Independent Irish Film was *Hollow Trees*, a near one-man effort from director, writer and producer Cathal Fitzpatrick, and the Best Irish Language Film was *Cill Stiúifín* (*The Church of St. Stephen*), which was written and directed by Kev L. Smith, and produced by him, Donncha Mac Con Iomaire and Deirdre Learmont. Hopefully we'll get to see them here in the USA, likely on streaming, sometime soon.

Moving into streaming, and Netflix has acquired worldwide rights to *Bad Bridgets*, the upcoming historical thriller from the award-winning director of

*Kneecap*, Rich Peppiatt. It will star Emilia Jones, best known for *CODA*, alongside Alison Oliver, whose recent credits include *Saltburn* and *Wuthering Heights*.

Shooting is scheduled to begin this year across the island of Ireland, and the story is set against the devastating backdrop of famine in the 19th century. It follows two sisters who attempt to escape poverty, hunger and an abusive father by travelling to America: on arrival in New York, they become part of the chaotic world of thousands of newly-arrived women like them - women who were nicknamed the "Bridgets."



Colin Farrell

Nicola Coughlan

The movie is inspired by the book *Bad Bridget: Crime, Mayhem, and the Lives of Irish Emigrant Women* by historians Elaine Farrell and Leanne McCormick, and will be produced by Peppiatt and his *Kneecap* producer Trevor Birney, as well as Margot Robbie's *LuckyChap* Entertainment.

Much news too about Colin Farrell, who stars in the second series of *Sugar*, which just began its eight-episode run on Apple TV. *Sugar* is a contemporary, unique take on the private detective story, and sees the return of LA's unique alien (yes, alien) private eye John Sugar (Farrell), who stayed on earth in hopes to find his sister - and also gets involved in a new missing person case.

Farrell is also set to star alongside Ralph Fiennes and Wagner Moura in *Art*, a new comedy feature directed by Fernando Meirelles. The English-language project adapts Yasmina Reza's acclaimed stage play of the same name, with a screenplay by Christopher Hampton.

The story centers on three friends whose relationship is thrown into chaos after one of them buys an expensive, all-white painting, and the film version has been in development for several years. The play was first staged in Paris, France, back in 1994, and has enjoyed major runs in London's West End, on Broadway and internationally, with recent stage iterations featuring actors including Bobby Cannavale, James Corden and Neil Patrick Harris.

Also, Dublin-born screenwriter Emma Donoghue (who was Oscar-nominated for her adaptation of *Room*) is set to adapt Ava Reid's bestselling gothic novel *Lady Macbeth* for the big screen, with acclaimed director Kari Skogland attached to helm the movie. The story is a gothic feminist retelling of Shakespeare's legendary play and of course centers on Lady Macbeth, reimagining one of literature's most enduring figures through a darker, more intimate lens.

Going back to Galway for a second, and their local actress Nicola Coughlan (*Derry Girls*, *Bridgerton*), has been added to the case of the *Hulu*'s hit comedy mystery *Only Murders in The Building*, which will be moving to London for their sixth season.

She's joining a list of high-profile actors set to recur in the show, including David Tennant, Jodie Whittaker, Jim Broadbent, Richard Ayoade, Jennifer Saunders, Martin Freeman and Coughlan's fellow Irish actress Sharon Horgan, among many others.

Production is currently underway on the show, which sees amateur sleuths Charles, Oliver and Mabel - played by Steve Martin, Martin Short and Selena Gomez respectively - on a new case in a new country. It's expected to premiere in 2027.

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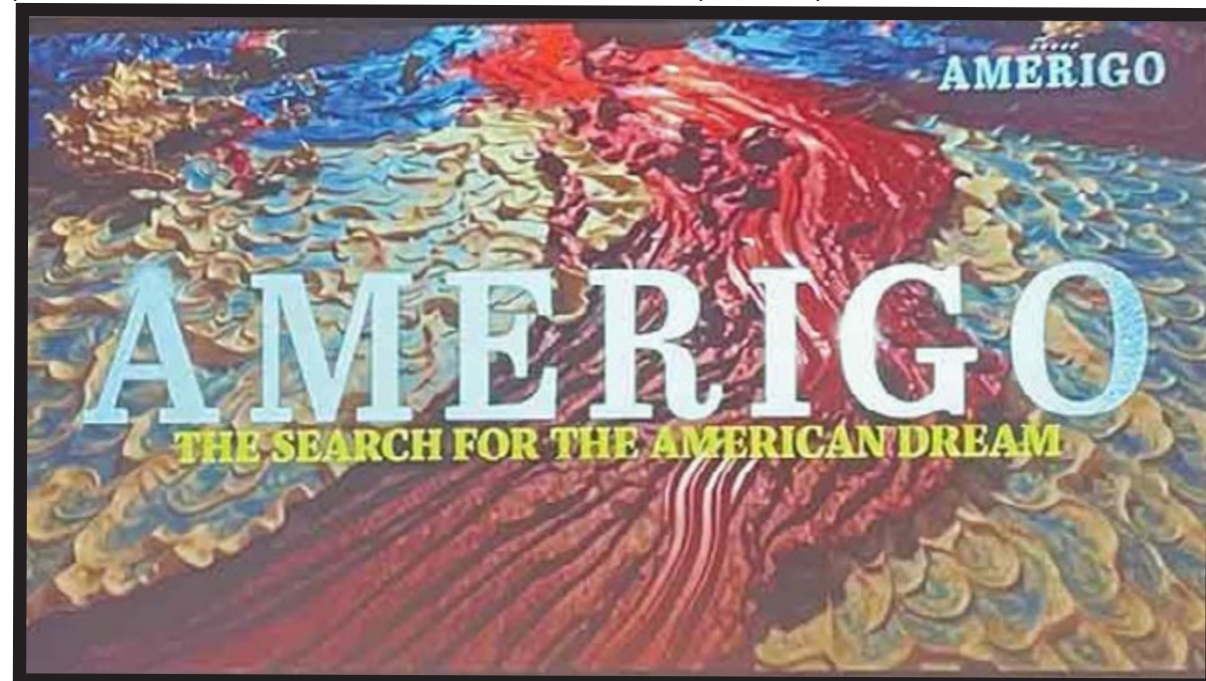
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| Saturday Sept 5                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Sunday Sept 6                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Monday September 7                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>10:45-11:45:<br/>Academy of Irish Music</p> <p>12-12:30:<br/>McNulty School of Irish Dance</p> <p>12:45-2:15:<br/>Whiskey Mill</p> <p>2:30-3pm:<br/>Shannon Rovers Pipe Band</p> <p>3-3:30pm<br/>Men's Best Legs in Kilt Contest</p> <p>3:30-4pm<br/>Dillon School of Irish Dance</p> <p>4:30-6pm<br/>The Larkin &amp; Moran Brothers</p> <p>6:30-8:30:<br/>Without U2</p> | <p>10am Mass<br/>Father Michael Madigan<br/>&amp; Music by-Gavin Coyle</p> <p>11-11:30am<br/>Trinity Schl of Irish Dance</p> <p>11:45-12:45 Gavin Coyle</p> <p>1-2:30 pm Joyce Boys</p> <p>2:45-3:15pm Men's<br/>Best Legs in Kilt<br/>Competition</p> <p>3:30-4pm<br/>Shannon Rovers<br/>Pipe band</p> <p>4-4:30pm McNulty School<br/>of Irish Dance</p> <p>5-6:30pm Dirty Wellies</p> <p>7-8:30pm The Toolies</p> | <p>10am: 10:45-11:15:<br/>Hogan School of Dance</p> <p>11:30-1pm<br/>Kathleen Keane-Jim Conway</p> <p>1:15-1:45: Dog Contest</p> <p>2-2:30 pm<br/>Shannon Rovers Pipe Band</p> <p>2:30- 4pm: The Boils</p> |

**Free Admission  
and Parking**

**Irish Music**

**Irish Dancers**

**Food, Drinks, Shenanigans**

**Best Legs in a Kilt Contest**

# Long Grove Irish Days!



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**Performing LIVE!  
LABOR DAY WEEKEND**

**September 5-7**

**Saturday 5th** 10:30am-8:30pm    **Sunday 6th** 10:30am-8:30pm    **Monday 7th** 10:30am-4pm

| Saturday Sept 5                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Sunday Sept 6                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Monday September 7                                                                                                                                                                                         |
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