



Bob Ryan Retires

Plumber With Perfect Pitch
Prepares to Live Pipe Dream

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Ireland Study Scholarship Awarded to Meghan McGuire

Meghan Elizabeth McGuire has won a partial scholarship from the Irish American Society of County Will to go study abroad in Ireland. Meghan is a junior at Lincoln Way Central High School in New Lenox. She entered a 300-word essay contest entitled "Why I Want To Study In Ireland" through the Irish American Society of County Will. On Sunday, February 24th, Meghan received the call that she was chosen by the committee to represent Will County in the Irish Way Program.

The Irish Way Program is a nationally recognized summer study abroad program that has educated over 4000 students since 1976. Each year 100 high school students from across the United States are chosen to spend the month of July experiencing the culture, people, landscape, history and heritage of Ireland. The Irish Way Program is an opportunity for young people to explore the rich heritage and tradition of Ireland, while also experiencing the country's distinct culture face-to-face. The Irish Way is truly a lesson on international citizenship. Meghan will be abroad from July 6th–August 1st.



POW & 1916 Easter Uprising Commemoration

The Irish Freedom Committee will hold its Spring POW Fundraising Event, and annual Commemoration of the 92nd Anniversary of the 1916 Easter Uprising, on Sunday, April 13th at Murphy's Pub in Forest Park.

The two hour event will feature a live performance by Chicago's "Jigmaster" Steve Fitzgerald, Easter statements from the Irish republican political prisoners, a reading of the 1916 Easter proclamation, and news and information from the POWs and their families. The IFC will also hold a raffle drawing for a unique hand-crafted Celtic harp, made in Long Kesh jail in 1987.

On Easter Monday April 24, 1916; Irish republican volunteers rose up against the might of the British Empire to declare a sovereign Ireland, free of British military and administrative rule. 92 years on, former republicans now sit in Stormont and Westminster, and join the ranks of colonial police forces in administering British "justice." Those who continue to oppose British rule in Ireland are branded as "dissidents" and are targeted for harassment, arrest, whole scale abuse of justice, and death. In a recent incident a 21-year old man Paul Quinn was savagely tortured to death with every single bone in his body broken, and his murderers ghosted into safety; after he had been ordered out of the country by former republican members of the provisional IRA.

Irish republican POWs continue to suffer under extreme and restrictive measures at the jails. Movement is controlled, and free association denied, at Maghaberry jail near Belfast. A single Irish republican prisoner still waits repatriation to Ireland in a British jail, hundreds of miles from his family, over four years after applying to serve his sentence at home. Serious incidences of medical neglect continue at Portlaoise jail near Dublin, and wanton abuse of justice continues as POWs fight for appeals in framed cases. Meanwhile, activists against British occupation are being targeted and arrested with little or no evidence, "guilty" under the word of a single police officer, including the recent arrest and physical abuse of a wheelchair-bound republican.

Please join us for an interesting and enjoyable afternoon with the always-entertaining Steve Fitzgerald. The event is Sunday, April 13th from 1-3 PM at MURPHY'S PUB, 7414 West Madison Avenue in Forest Park. All are welcome, and admission is free. In addition to the Celtic Harp raffle, we will have many door prizes for all who attend; and will have Irish republican mementos, t-shirts and books available for sale. All proceeds from the event go DIRECT to families of Irish POWs—not to any banned or proscribed organization. For more information please visit www.IrishFreedom-Committee.net, or call us at 312-560-9311.

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O'Shaughnessy's Public House in Ravenswood

O'Shaughnessy's Public House will open soon in the historic Pickard China Building at 4557 N. Ravenswood previously occupied by the famous Zephyr Ice Cream Restaurant. O'Shaughnessy's Public House will offer lunch, dinner, bar food and weekend breakfast along with a full bar and plenty of draught beers.

"O'Shaughnessy's will be a place where everyone is welcome to gather for great food and cold drinks in an atmosphere we've created so that people will feel there is a real sense of community here," says first time tavern owner and Michael's wife, Liz Finan. Michael's father is from Sligo, Ireland, but the O'Shaughnessy name is his mothers, who is from Tipperary, Ireland.

Growing up in England, Michael's family spent a lot of time in their local public house and after his lifelong travels, he is building O'Shaughnessy's with the finest of everything he has seen around the world. The new façade boasts a rich red exterior with gold lettering. The name "Pickard" remains on the building to honor the still famous Pickard China for which the building was built. Finan, a carpenter by trade, is not only general contracting the work at O'Shaughnessy's, but is personally doing the carpentry with his team which includes his father. The unique wood bar is covered in detailed designs and was custom made by Prairie Pacific Pubs, a Canadian company, and their first bar in Chicago.

A full wraparound bar with high tables and comfortable padded benches greets you. Seating for 160 in the dining area boasts a mix of

booths and low and high tables. Stained glass was created in Ireland. An additional custom bar brings up the rear of the dining area, perfect for private events. The addition of fireplaces and TV's showing the best of American, Irish and English sports will provide a relaxing atmosphere with a juke box to round up the daily entertainment. Live music may be scheduled for special events.

"We will serve traditional Irish fare, hearty entrees, and familiar bar food, but I am most enthusiastic about making healthy food options available," says Executive Chef Kristine Olson. Culinary Arts Le Cordon Bleu, Chicago trained Olson explains, "Irish cuisine is all about using fresh ingredients in a very simple and healthy fashion. I am committed to utilizing local and/or organic ingredients, and letting the natural flavors take center stage rather than covering it up with salt and butter."

Located in Alderman Gene Schutler's thriving 47th Ward at the intersection of Ravenswood and Wilson Avenue, O'Shaughnessy's ideal for those taking public transportation, walking or driving. The Metra stops at Lawrence just two blocks south and the Brown Line El stops at Montrose, only two blocks north. In addition to the east and westbound #145 bus stop on the corner, there is parking adjacent to the building.

Open seven days a week for lunch, dinner and weekend brunch: Sunday-Friday 11AM-2AM and Saturday 11AM-3AM. Reservations for large parties, special events and private parties accepted. Call 773.944.9896 Website is under construction at www.healthyorhardy.com.

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The Sales Pitch



Cliff Carlson, Publisher



What a Scoop!
Hats off to one of our American Irish Media Group writers, John Mooney. He helped Shaun Clancy of Foley's Pub and Restaurant in midtown Manhattan pull off the publicity event of the Irish year when he banned the singing of Danny Boy in his pub for the month of March! We should all stop in and hoist a pint in appreciation of the coverage he received for this stunt!

Networking
I broached the subject of networking in a previous issue, but, more can be said. I look at our Irish community as a giant network. A bit unruly, but if harnessed, a huge ethnic force that

can accomplish great things.
I've seen successful operators of Irish import shops help each other in many ways. If they are out of a product and a customer is asking for it, they call each other, and usually they get what they need. Sometimes they send their customers to their competition to get their item faster! If there has been a break-in or a robbery, I have seen them supply each other with lost jewelry and other products to tide them over until help arrives. Some would say, "Why help your competition?" But, these successful operators know why. It could happen to them just as easily, and

then, where do they turn? What goes around comes around.

Five years ago, a group of us Irish newspaper publishers got together and decided to work together. It's strengthened all ten of our papers. We now have more readily available editorial to share with each other. We run some of the same ads in all ten publications. Advertisers that wouldn't look at a single paper before, are reaping the benefits of reaching ten markets

at once. With group advertising buys companies save money, and only have to make one phone call. It's a win-win for everyone. Their editorial can also be placed in all ten papers at once.

If you are in any type of Irish related business I suggest you start expanding your circle to include other businesses or groups that do what you do. Don't worry about them taking business from you. There is enough out there for everyone!

About Our Covers

Both the March and April cover pictures were submitted by Dean Battaglia, who took them for the Plumber's Council. Our thanks to Dean for these fine photos.



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Free Help Applying for Citizenship

The Albany Park Neighborhood Council is a non-profit community organization and part of New Americans Initiative, a statewide program which assists Legal Permanent Residents in their process of applying for US citizenship. New Americans Initiative is being offered by the Illinois Department of Humane Services.

Each month in collaboration with 6 other groups, they organize citizenship workshops where they offer FREE, comprehensive assistance with naturalization applications, from legal consultations to application processing. Similar services with the help of private attorney or immigration lawyer may cost between \$200-\$1000. In light of the higher immigrations fees and in cooperation with local banks they also offer low rate "Citizenship Loans".

To meet the increasing need and rush for citizenship counseling and support, the Albany Park Neighbor-

hood Council and New Americans Initiative Northwest Chicago Collaborative will conduct a citizenship workshop every month to provide legal permanent residents with free of charge essential support in their process of applying for citizenship.

This workshop comes at the time when significant changes to the naturalization process are being implemented. In October 2007, US Citizenship and Immigration Service (USCIS) announced a new citizenship exam which contains a revised set of 100 questions. These questions will drastically change the level of knowledge necessary for legal permanent residents to obtain U.S. citizenship.

This FREE workshop will take place Saturday, April 26, 2008, from 9am-12pm at Foreman High School, 3238 N. Laclaire Ave., Chicago, IL 60641. For more dates, times and locations, contact 877.792.1500. Visit www.becomeacitizennow.org.

Healy Law

Martin J. Healy, Jr.



If a resident is injured as a result of a intentional or negligent act or omission of a Nursing Homes' employee, the home may be liable. (210 ILCS 45/3-601). At one time, a Nursing Home was liable for "trebled damages" or three times any actual damages sustained by the resident. In 1995 the Nursing Home Care Act was amended to remove this provision. However, the Nursing Home Care Act still allows a successful litigant to recover attorneys' fees and costs separate and apart from any damage award. (210 ILCS 45/3-602).

Allowing a successful resident to obtain attorneys' fees as part of a judgment is a significant and unique provision of the Act. Generally, each party bears the expense of their own attorney. In injury cases, an attorney typically agrees to work on a contingency fee basis; that is, he receives an agreed upon percentage of any recovery as his fee. This can dissuade some attorneys from taking smaller cases. By allowing for an award of attorneys' fees, the Act provides an incentive for an attorney to take a case against a nursing home even when damages are more difficult to quantify.

Illinois courts have expanded this incentive by holding that the amount of attorneys' fees awarded does not have to have a relationship to the amount of damages recovered by the resident. The purpose of the fee provision is to encourage attorneys to represent nursing home residents. In this way, the state can promote

responsible nursing home management without necessarily having to fund its own investigation into nursing home misconduct.

Waiver of the Right to Sue and of the Right to a Jury Trial

The Act also provides that any purported waiver of a right to sue by a resident prior to the filing of a lawsuit is null and void and will not have any legal effect. (210 ILCS 45/3-606). Similarly, any waiver of the right to a jury trial will be void. (210 ILCS 45/3-607). The provisions are in place to compensate for the vulnerability of nursing home residents. A nursing home could easily write a provision into its contract which waives the right to sue or the right to a jury trial and attempt to obtain the residents' consent with a promise to provide services. After a nursing home knows its employees committed negligence or abuse, it could also attempt to obtain a residents' consent to waive the right to sue or the right to a jury trial, even offering a nominal amount of money as consideration for the waiver. To prevent such abuse of authority, the Act provides that any such waiver is void until a lawsuit is filed.

Retaliation

Finally, the Act protects residents from any sort of retaliations, including transfers, discharge, or harassment because a resident files a complaint, brings a lawsuit or testifies in

support of another resident's lawsuit. Also, a nursing home employee is protected if he or she reports abuse or provides testimony in a lawsuit. (210 ILCS 45/3-608).

Conclusion

While, from our experience, the vast majority of nursing homes are well run, some nursing homes, like most businesses, could use some improvement. In that context, the Nursing Home Care Act attempts to balance the interests of the nursing home administration with the rights of the nursing home residents.

By: John P. Scanlon and Dennis M. Lynch

This is the next of a series of columns on how the law can impact your life. Each month we 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.

The Healy Law Firm is comprised of eight trial attorneys, two of whom are from Ireland. We are located downtown at 111 West Washington Street, Suite 1425, Chicago, Illinois 60602 (800-922-4500 or 312-977-0100). www.HealyLawFirm.com. The firm concentrates in the representation of injured victims of all types of accidents. Readers are encouraged to call or write with questions concerning personal injury law.

The Rights of Residents of Nursing Homes - Part II: Responsibilities of the Home

There was a lot of interest in last month's article, addressing the rights of nursing homes residents under the Nursing Home Care Act, 210 ILCS 45/2-101, et. seq. This month's article will discuss the responsibilities of nursing home administrators and employees.

Protecting a Residents' Funds

One of the responsibilities a nursing home owes to its residents is to protect his or her funds. To this end, a facility should provide each resident, or their guardian, a written statement explaining what services a resident will be charged for and should allow access to written records of any financial arrangement or transaction involving the resident. Specifically, at least every quarter the facility should provide the resident or his or her guardian a written itemized statement of all financial transactions involving the resident. (210 ILCS 45/2-201(4)).

Some residents choose to entrust their personal funds to the facility. If this is the case, the facility should obtain a surety bond insuring the funds against any loss, theft or insolvency. (210 ILCS 45/2-201(5)). The facility should keep the funds in an account separate from the facility's own funds, and may not withdrawn any funds for any reason not related to the resident. (210 ILCS 45/2-201(6)). If the amount of the funds exceeds \$100, they should be placed in an interest bearing account, with the interest accruing to the resident. (210 ILCS 45/2-201(7)).

Residents' Advisory Council

A facility should also establish a residents' advisory council. (210 ILCS 45/2-203). The residents' advisory council can only include

residents, and may not include any employees. However, an employee may serve as a staff coordinator. The council should meet at least once a month and records of the meeting should be maintained by the administrator of the facility. The purpose of the council is to 1) obtain and disseminate information, 2) solicit and adopt recommendations for facility programming and improvements; and 3) identify problems so that they can be resolved early.

The residents' advisory council will coordinate with the long-term care facility advisory board, which is appointed by the Director of Public Health. (210 ILCS 45/2-204). That board consists of the Director of Public Health, representatives from the Department of Public Aid, the Department of Human Services, the Department on Aging, the State Fire Marshal, a licensed physician, a registered nurse, a member of a residents' advisory council, and various members representing the general public and organizations whose memberships consist of nursing homes.

Civil Liability

If any of the residents' rights are violated or if the nursing home fails to meet its responsibilities, the nursing home may be civilly liable.

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Chicago Gaelic News



Pat Hennessy



Honors to St. Patrick with Two Big Parades

Once again the national Apostle of Ireland was honored with two big parades, one on the great Southside on the Sunday prior to the feast day, and the official one in the Loop adjacent to beautiful Lake Michigan, on Columbus Drive on the Saturday before March 17th. The weather for both tributes was chilly but fine, with approximately 300,000 people in attendance on both occasions.

Despite the chilly winter-like weather that prevailed on Saturday for the Southside parade, the crowds lined both sides of the Western Avenue parade route. More than 200 units comprised of marching bands, gaily decorated floats, trolley cars, and marching groups received rounds of applause from the onlookers making it another festive occasion; a fitting tribute to the great St. Patrick and our homeland, Ireland.

Our congratulations are again extended to the arranging committee who ensured the strict monitoring of participants all along the line of March aided by Chicago Police Department officers who did their usual fine job. It was another big success all around, and I'm sure St. Patrick was smiling down.

One suggestion that we would like to make for the safety of children and parents who march in front of a trolley or bus: a better system must be adopted to allow marchers, children, etc. to board their bus or trolley near Kennedy Park. It should not be necessary, and indeed is dangerous, to see children having to chase south on Western to catch up to their bus.

On a personal note we would like to thank the many members of the large Chicago Gaelic Park marchers who came over to greet and wish us a speedy recovery after our recent illness. Gur a mile a mait agat, Tom Dolan, Joe Begley, Harry Costello (the man for all seasons), Mary Riordan, Joe Morrissey, Gene Farley and others. The float was much commented upon along the route. Congrats Morrissey family.

The official parade in the Loop along Columbus Drive and beautiful Lake Michigan despite the chilly lake breeze, again was one of

the finest we have seen. And thank God we have seen them all since 1956. The way it was conducted and monitored made one delighted just to be a happy onlooker. More than 300,000 people lined both sides of the Drive and cheered the participants as they marched by.

As I recall the first one in 1956, the year after Mayor Richard J. Daley was elected was again headed by a Daley, the legendary one himself accompanied U.S. Navy Admiral (Ret.) Dan Gallery (the man who captured the first ever German submarine) and they were joined by Fr. Tom Byrne of Old St. Patrick's Church. The late Christian Brother Br. Al Houlihan, Bro. Edmund Rice school, also accompanied the GAA marchers that historic day. It makes one realize how far we have come since those days. Then we were getting started. Now "the dream has become a reality." Tanum cun De agus Naoinb Pdraig (Thank God and St. Patrick).



A Worthy Cause - "Kickin4Chris"

Before being diagnosed with non-Hodgkins Lymphoma disease Christopher (Chris) Doherty was a 12-year-old star member of the southwest side of Chicago's St. Symphorosa Grammar school and soccer teams and school band. He is an all around sports fan and loves hurling and gaelic. Hopefully, with God's help and the financial help of countless friends of the family, Chris will be back again on the field.

Before being stricken with cancer Chris underwent surgery to remove a severe infection in his hip. When he was released he was treated with intravenous medication and home care to ensure the infection was all removed and healed. Later he was treated for a lump under his armpit which resulted in numerous scans. He was finally diagnosed with Non-Hodgkins Lymphoma, after two separate surgeries. He immediately underwent chemotherapy and was treated with many medications, and underwent CT and PET scans. One more surgery was ordered after a mass had developed. It too was followed with chemo.

Needless to say all of this hospitalization, tests, surgeries, more tests and chemo may exceed the maximum lifetime insurance benefit and in order to help relieve the huge bills, friends and family are hosting a fund-raising evening at Hawthorne Racecourse, 3501 S. Laramie, Stickney, IL on Sunday, September 28th, from 4:00pm until 10:00pm.

There are a variety of ways you can help this worthy cause such as sending a check to Fifth Third Bank, 5235 West 63rd Street, Chicago, IL 60638; c/o "KICKIN4CHRIS." Another way is to donate gifts, etc. which can be auctioned at the event. Beer and wine will be available during the evening. For more information call Michele Doherty at 773-716-8836 or visit www.kickin4chris.org.

Chris is the son of John and Debby Doherty. His grandparents are Jack Doherty, well known retired Chicago Fireman and one of the legendary Doherty brothers, and Christine Hennigan-Doherty, one of our favourite nieces.

Your donation will be sincerely appreciated.

Hillary's Great Work for Irish Peace

In a recent issue of the Irish Echo, famed Editor Ray O'Hanlon paid a glowing tribute to Hillary Clinton and her up-front and behind-the-scenes efforts which helped bring about the Good Friday Peace Agreement. And although her opponent and the media continue to make light of that fact, not only in Ireland but throughout the globe, wherever conflict arose

during her husband President Bill Clinton's presidency, she was involved. That's real experience that cannot be learned any other way.

In a series of statements compiled by Labor and Fair Employment Advocate, Inez McCormack, Senator Hillary Clinton was lauded for her decade-long support of the peace process. "She supported us over many years and we will always be very grateful," Ms. McCormack said. One has to wonder where her opponent and her critics were when all this history making was going on helped by Pres. Bill and Mrs. Hillary Clinton.

GAA Promoter Wanted For Chicago Area

An ad in our last issue wanted a promoter for the GAA in the Chicago area. It required the person chosen to act as a Developing Officer



in order to promote Ireland's national pastimes, hurling, Gaelic (men and women), handball, camogie (ladies hurling). It would be under the auspices of the Gaelic Athletic Association,

North American GAA board and the Chicago GAA board. The promotional drive would include activity inside and outside of traditional Irish circles, schools and communities.

The person chosen, man or woman, would develop new clubs and teams in area schools and exhibit team activities at local festivals. It would be a part-time assignment but with success could develop into a permanent position. U.S. work visas are available for Irish nationals. The chosen candidate would no doubt have played one or both games, hurling or, or be a member of some GAA club in Ireland or abroad. He or she would have to possess oral and written communications skills in order to deal with the media, TV and print.

This is a wonderful opportunity for a person familiar with Ireland's games and their promotion and to be able to stage presentations at schools, community meetings, festivals etc. Retired well-known Chicago gaels like Liam O'Brien, Harry Costello (the man for all seasons), John Crean and others, if available, come to mind immediately as perfect candidates. Those mentioned have been there and done that, with a lot of success.

The mention of handball as a

national game may raise some eyebrows, but, it has long been established as one of the oldest. Many Irish clubs have their own handball court and not only use it to keep their players fit but also promote area championships for their members. It's a wonderful way to keep fit for men and women who also play racquetball on the court.

Handball has long been popular in Chicago, even Fire Commissioner Bob Quinn used to play handball at Chicago Rainbow Beach, at 6900 and S. Lake Shore Drive, with the late Flannery brothers, Mike, Marty and Jimmy. Ar dheis De go raibhn an ainm. Well known Tipperary man, Denny Carey, an All Ireland junior handball champion also played the game here in the 60's.

Chicago Gaelic Park would provide an ideal location for a covered handball court. It would provide a wonderful opportunity for the many handball fans not only on the Southside but all over the Chicago area. There are few locations to play handball and racquetball especially on the Southside, but they are great winter games for men and women. With some "Irish money" now available and perhaps more, if approached in a serious manner, the suggestion does indeed merit consideration.

For more information on the position please forward resumes to Jerry Kealy, 5355 N. Magnet Street, Chicago, IL 60630; or email jerrykealy@ameritech.com.

Chicago Gaelic Park's Finest Hour

At this year's recently held convention, officers and delegates of Gaelic Park's Board of Directors, members etc. heard some glowing comments from Pres. John Griffin, Secretary Mary Riordan and others concerning last year's activities. No doubt it was a dream year for officers and participants alike, without a doubt, Chicago Gaelic Park "finest hour ever."

It all began with the Gaelic Hurling and Youth Championship which brought teams from all over the States and even from London, Toronto and Ottawa in the play-off for both codes. It was the first time ever for Chicago Gaelic Park to host such an attraction with previous ones staged in Denver, San Francisco and Boston. And if that was not enough excitement for one weekend, Nicky Brennan, President of the Gaelic Athletic, traveled from Dublin accompanied by Seamus Howlin, chairman of Overseas Development, and other stowitness

the dream becoming a reality.

Never before in the history of the GAA at home or in exile the world over, were 180 games scheduled on 8 adjacent fields to be played over a weekend. But never before did gaels like Harry Costello (the man for all seasons), the field coordinator for such an event, aided by other great Chicago gaels like Tommy Dolan, Chairman of the North American GAA Board, Joe Begley, former chairman Chicago GAA and others, undertake such an event. They not only completed the herculean task but received rounds of applause from officers of other cities. Even Nicky Brennan was to say afterwards, "the completion of such a huge task is unbelievable."

On the long Labor Day weekend the playoffs of the North American Board's hurling, - ladies and gentlemen, Camogie-ladies hurling, were scheduled for Chicago Gaelic Park and here again, men like Harry Costello, Tommy Dolan, Joe Begley and others made the huge schedule look simple. And Chicago teams captured 4 national titles, including senior hurling and football. Other team officials talked highly of the playing field,

and dressing rooms and other facilities available at Gaelic Park and were loud in their praise of all concerned.

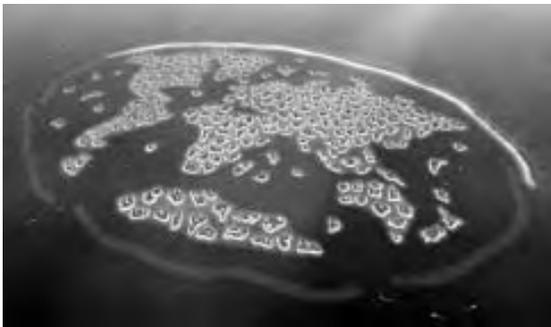
With such professional know-how apparent in Chicago it is time to consider a handball court with facilities for handball (one of Ireland's national pastimes) and Racquetball for the ladies. The possibilities of such a financial boon to Gaelic Park, especially in the winter lean time is limitless. Many great things could happen from the building of such a project such as All-American Handball Championships within the North American Board; City of Chicago Championship - men and women; Racquetball playoffs, etc.

The Central Council in Dublin granted the New York GAA \$1 million to put night lights around the field and new sod. If they can get such a grant, why not Chicago Gaelic Park? Nicky Brennan sees great possibilities for Gaelic Park.

A handball court for Chicago would complete what Mary McAleese, President of Ireland, on a tour of Gaelic Park a few years ago, called "...one of the finest GAA Centers that I have seen outside of Croke Park in Dublin."

Giant's Causeway in the Desert

Northern Ireland's most famous natural landmark—the Giant's Causeway—is to be rebuilt in Dubai. The hexagonal basalt columns are to be recreated in the Middle East as part of a project entitled The World.



The massive building project is replicating most of the countries in the world in about 300 islands in the Persian Gulf. It is the brainchild of Dubai's ruler, Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum.

A consortium of Irish businessmen has bought the island of Ireland for 19 million euro and apartments and homes are being sold by Irish-based property company, Larionovo.

Clearly Visible

Developers Andrew Brett and Raymond Norton said the life-size replica of the Giant's Causeway would be an "irresistible draw" for tourists.

Mr. Norton told the Belfast Telegraph newspaper: "The Giant's Causeway is a massive tourist attraction in Ireland anyway, so anyone who comes to this island is going to go and have a look at it.

"The important thing is that when they (tourists) get here they need to really see it—not something that looks like it.

"We need to recreate that."

The World project is already well under way and is clearly visible through satellite pictures.

Luxury suites on the Island of Ireland cost from 750,000 euros, rising to 2.8 million euros for a penthouse and stilted water homes.

The project can be seen from space.

There has been massive building programmes ongoing in Dubai over the past decade. The Gulf Emirate—where harsh summer temperatures reach well above 40°C—now boasts the largest indoor snow park in the world. It also has the world's tallest building, a seven-star hotel in the shape of a giant sail and the first underwater hotel.

Agreement on Joint Approach to Promoting Shannon Airport's Transatlantic Routes

The Mid West Regional Authority and Aer Lingus have agreed a joint approach to consolidating and expanding the flagship carrier's transatlantic services at Shannon Airport.

During a meeting held in New York this week, both parties put forward a set of proposals geared toward boosting regional support for existing services with a view to developing new business.

Representing Aer Lingus at the meeting in Ireland House, Park Avenue, were Jack Foley, Executive Vice President in North America; Kate Kiernan, Director of Revenues & Business Development; and Helen Maguire, Director Consumer Sales.

Councillor Lily Wallace (Chairperson) and Liam Conneally (Director) represented the Nenagh-based MWRA. Representatives of Clare County Council and Shannon Town Council, including both Mayors, were also present.

Councillor Wallace expressed delight that Aer Lingus had pledged its commitment to developing transatlantic services at Shannon Airport.

She acknowledged that this commitment was based on the Mid West's relevant agencies pulling together to market the region as a desirable tourist destination.

Task Force to Attack Mortgage Fraud

Eugene "Gene" Moore, Cook County Recorder of Deeds, has called for an in-house working Task Force to combat the growing crisis of mortgage fraud.

Referencing measures undertaken by his office to pre-identify documents that have red flags, Moore insists that his office has neither the authority nor the capacity to give this "looming problem" the type of specialized attention it requires.

Moore, a strong advocate for some type of government intervention, con-

vened a Mortgage Fraud Task Force in 2003. The Task Force recommended mailing post card notifications to owners of record whenever a Quit Claim Deed is filed. There is another proposal in the Senate for final review that would stiffen the penalty of Notary Publics involved with fraudulent notarizing real estate papers.

Moore plans to lobby lawmakers in Springfield and the Cook County Board of Commissioners to establish the in-house Task Force. He points to the hidden cost, neighborhood blight,



clogged court dockets, and devalued/declining housing sales existing now as associated with not being able to confront these problems.

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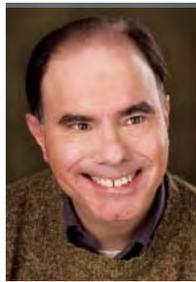
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By Frank J. Mahon



Part Seven: 4th and Inches on the 1 Yard Line

I waited until the last possible moment to write the final installment of these so-called chronicles, to impart the very latest news on our production of The Quiet Man Tales. My hope last October, when I began this series, was to devote this final column to the topic of preparing for opening night in April, but it has taken longer than expected to raise the money. This is a very common

occurrence in the theatre world. The good news is that as of March 22nd, we have raised over 80% of our \$260K budget. By the time you read this, we will probably have more, so we are very close. It's going to happen.

Back in 2004, when we had planned to do our chamber theatre-style version of the play at the Irish American Heritage Center, we had to cancel because

we couldn't find the right actors. It turned out to be a blessing in disguise. We regrouped and started writing a full play instead of just dividing up the dialogue from the book among the actors. If we had gone ahead with it, The Quiet Man Tales, as it is today, would probably never exist.

Likewise, if people showered us with checks when we did our big reading at the Mercury Theatre last year, I would never have had the opportunity to write these columns. I've had the chance to tell you about The Quiet Man Tales, how it came to be, where we are now, and where we hope it will go. And writing for the Irish American News has been a lot of fun—so much fun, in fact, that I'm going to keep doing it.

I've met some terrific people so far—actors, producers, investors, journalists. There was almost a Biblical progression in a major line of introductions. Our first reading begat Frank West; Frank begat Cliff Carlson; Cliff begat Jim Corboy; and Jim begat—well, lots of investors. The help and support that Cliff and Jim have given The Quiet Man Tales cannot be overstated. And I didn't

know either one of them a year ago.

During the 18 month-long process of tracking down and obtaining the rights to Green Rushes I had the pleasure of meeting four of Maurice Walsh's grandsons in Ireland. I visited Kerry and Dublin, where the stories of the book and play take place. My research into the Irish War of Independence not only gave me the opportunity to learn about Irish history, but led to the discovery that a relative, Captain Frank Mahon, was a rebel leader in Galway during the war. To learn about a certain period of Irish history, and to find your namesake in the pages of that history is startling and wonderful. Another Frank Mahon, my dad, was born during the Easter Rebellion—April 26, 1916—but I don't think he ever knew that. He was born in St. Louis, and had his own war to deal with in the 1940s.

Maureen O'Hara read our play, and endorsed it.

That was huge. Coincidentally, I met a gentleman at the Irish American Partnership breakfast last week whose aunt's sheep were also in the movie The Quiet Man—probably the ones Mary

Kate is herding when she first sees Sean Thornton. The sheep do a nice job, but I doubt that it helped their careers. Maureen was always a scene-stealer.

So now that the hardest part is almost over, everything else kicks into high gear: locking in actors, signing a contract with a theatre, lining up costume, set, sound and lighting designers, launching a website. That's just the top of a very long list. Since this all takes time, and summer is traditionally a slow season for theatre, The Quiet Man Tales will premiere sometime in the fall. Please come and bring everyone you know.

In the meantime, I will start a new column in May. It will come under the heading: "Enough about me, what about you?" It will give me a chance to meet more people and find new stories to tell. When I have more Quiet Man Tales news, I will throw that in as well.

So that's it for The Quiet Man Chronicles. My thanks to Cliff Carlson for allowing me to shamelessly hawk our play for the last seven months, and for his great endorsement in the March issue. If you didn't read it, I'll send it to you.

fjmahon@aol.com

Friday Concert 8 pm Tickets \$16 in advance/\$22 at door
Sean Cleland & Jimmy Keane;
Martin deCogain & Jimmy Crowley

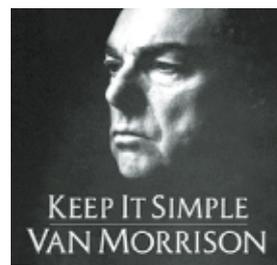
Saturday Concert 8 pm Tickets \$20 in advance; \$24 at door
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Keep It Simple
 By Van Morrison

Lost Highway has released Keep It Simple, the new album from Van Morrison. Keep It Simple is Morrison's first album of new material since 2005, and the first in several years in which he penned all 11 songs specifically for one album.

His music has always incorporated the widely varied influences he heard and absorbed since his childhood days on the streets of Belfast—long before the bands of his youth and his initial breakthrough with Them. On Keep It Simple, Morrison honors all those varied influences—jazz, folk, blues, Celtic, country, soul and gospel—at times melding them all together at once in



his own signature sound.

Throughout Keep It Simple Morrison exudes a wisdom gained through five

decades of making ground-breaking music. Few artists have successfully recorded in as many genres of music as Van Morrison, and even fewer have remained as relevant for as long. Morrison has done so by constantly moving forward and never sitting still. On the heels of a series of "Best Of" releases, this record starts fresh with what could well be a record full of all new classics. www.losthighwayrecords.com.

Ships in the Forest
 By Karan Casey

Karan Casey is one of the most influential and imitated vocalists in Irish and American folk music; a natural innovator, she proves that



the ancient and the modern make excellent bedfellows. On Ships in the Forest, her fifth solo album and debut (April 8th release date) with the Compass Records Group, Casey's warm, soulful voice ebbs and flows around ballads both timely and timeless.

As well as touring extensively with her own band, over the past two years Karan has performed with Peggy Seeger, Liam Clancy, Solas, Lunasa, Breton guitarist Gilles le Bigot, Michál Ó Súilleabháin, Iarla Ó Lionáird, Karen Matheson and Donald Shaw and was involved in Mick Moloney and Paul Wagner's Absolutely Irish film project which will be screened on PBS in 2008. www.compassrecords.com.

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Irish Books and Plays in Review

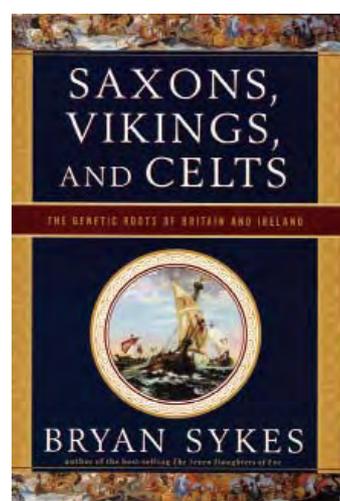
Frank West



DNA and Irish Americans

When a baby is born, the relatives admire the baby's tiny fingers, and its eyes, hair and features. It has blue eyes and brown hair, and they say the new human being looks just like Uncle Joe or Aunt Kate.

But how do we get those characteristics? Why does a child resemble other members of its family?



DNA determines those things. What is DNA? The American Heritage Dictionary says DNA is the critical part of our genes that "carries the genetic information determining individual hereditary characteristics."

We know that DNA is commonly used in our society to identify people. It is commonly mentioned even on TV.

Fine. But what does all this have to do with Ireland and Irish Americans?

This new book, Saxons, Vikings and Celts aims to answer that question. This quote is from the book's first page, "this is the very first book to be written about the generic history of Britain and Ireland using DNA as its main source of information."

This extraordinary new book was written by Brian Sykes, who is Professor of Human Genetics at Oxford University. And, he is the author of The Seven Daughters of Eve, a New York Times best-seller, and Adam's Curse.

The area studied is: Ireland, Britain, Scotland and its islands (the Hebrides, Orkney, Shetland), Iceland, Norway and Denmark.

The author is especially good at

showing the grand sweep of history to the reader. He used early historical descriptions (often Roman writers and military reports) of the people studied, along with their myths and legends. Then Sykes investigated those and compares the DNA of the people living in those places today.

The two maps provided are only adequate. The author presumes everyone has geographic knowledge of the places studied. More maps would be helpful.

Beginning about 1,000 years

ago, Scandinavia had an enormous impact on the peoples and places studied. The Vikings who came to Ireland, came from Norway and Denmark (Swedish Vikings went east to Russia). These robust and hearty Scandinavians didn't just raid and then sail away. Many settled in these lands to open businesses, to farm there and raise families.

Over the last thousand years they married our ancestors. The DNA of today's Irish people and Irish Americans show that they are us.

Saxons, Vikings and Celts: The Genetic Roots of Britain and Ireland by Brian Sykes. W.W. Norton & CO., New York, 2007. 352 pages, \$16.95. www.wwnorton.com.

The New Ireland

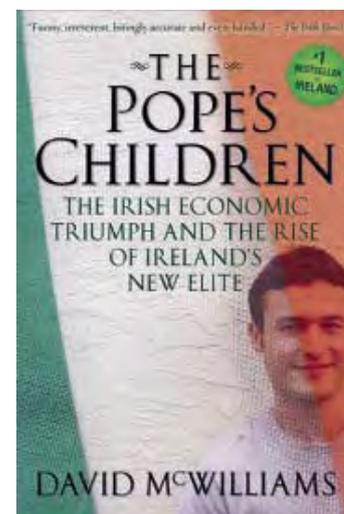
The Pope's Children is the #1 bestselling book in Ireland. The book is about the vast and profound,

and often painful, economic and social changes occurring in Ireland.

This quote is from the book's cover. "McWilliams paints a vivid picture of contemporary Ireland and how the Irish baby boomers of the 1970's (a generation that peaked nine months to the day after Pope John Paul II's visit to Ireland) are dealing with their newfound wealth."

The book is the definitive account of Ireland's economic boom. The Pope's Children has sold close to 100,000 copies in Ireland. And now the book is available here.

Powerful changes occurred in contemporary America's society and economy, but they took place over several generations. Americans were slowly able to get used to some of these changes. But in Ireland change was so rapid that it waste telescoped into fifteen or twenty



years!

Remember the book, Future Shock, of the 1970's? It was about the rapid changes that had happened and were about to happen

Continued to next page

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Books In Review

By Frank West

Continued from previous page

in America. How must the Irish feel after change happened so quickly there?

This is a personal example of the speed of this change. When I visited Ireland as a young man, my relatives used hand tools for farming. Now when I visit their rural town, there are construction cranes, computers and cell phones everywhere.

About these changes David McWilliams, the author, says Ireland today is "a country so dramatically changed as to make it barely recognizable for many Americans."

This quote is from the book's information sheet and biography of David McWilliams. He lives in Dublin and "is a bestselling author and has been a regular on Irish television and radio since his award winning Agenda current affairs program began in 2000. Before moving into writing and broadcasting, McWilliams spent ten years in banking, first as an economist with the Irish Central Bank, then in investment banking with UBS, where he became the youngest director at UBS at 27 and made regular appearances as an economist on CNN, CNBC and the BBC... He is a regular columnist in The Sunday Business Post and the Irish Independent..."

The author's rigorous training as a banker and economist shows in this book. The sources for facts or assertions are cited and often discreetly foot noted in the seven pages Notes section.

Thoughtfully included is a Glossary of popularly used terms, slang and Gaelic words. Some examples are:

- giro = and unemployment welfare check
- skangers = Dublin youths who

wear hoodies
- gombeen = a money lender who exploits people, "henceforth a term of contempt."

These are some quotes from this amazing fact-filled book:

• "We are Europe's bling nation. Per head, there are now more Mercs sold here than in Germany."

• "The two big banks—our principal moneylenders—are... the most profitable in Europe, making around 350 euros profit per customer."

• Women "are working extremely hard in their twenties to try and scurry up the corporate ladder and are postponing having children... The average Irish mother giving birth this year is thirty and seven months—the oldest in the EU."

These further quotes about the work ethic and the sociability of Irish people might also be of interest to Irish Americans too.

• "Any objective chronicler would deduce that if we are being so hedonistic we must also be indolent, lazy and work-shy. Nothing could be further from the truth. Miraculously, the Irish are the most productive workforce in the world."

• "Our sociability get the better of us always. We love going out. Four drinks out of five are sunk in the pub, and, remarkably, when we don't go out we don't tend to drink heavily at home... The Irish are desperately addicted to company as well as alcohol. We can't stand being on our own."

The Pope's Children: The Irish Economic Triumph and the Rise of Ireland's New Elite by David McWilliams. John Wiley & Sons, Hoboken, NJ, 2008. 320 pages, \$24.95.

Jesus: A Meditation on His Stories and His Relationships with Women

By Andrew M. Greeley

Jesus of Galilee taught through stories, which even today contain the power to startle us out of our prejudices and preconceptions. Now Father Andrew M. Greeley, one of America's most beloved storytellers, examines the parables told by Jesus in search of a fuller understanding of the man and his message.

This engaging and informal collection of homilies reveals a Jesus whose simple parables carry profound lessons about the Kingdom of Heaven. Along the way, Father Greeley touches on such provocative topics as the significance of Jesus's Jewish roots, his deep and revolutionary relationship with women, the Da Vinci code, and the Passion of the Christ.

As a storyteller, Jesus often surprised his listeners with unexpected



JESUS
A MEDITATION ON HIS STORIES AND HIS RELATIONSHIPS WITH WOMEN

ANDREW GREELEY
New York Times Bestselling Author

twists that challenged them to see the world in a whole new light. Father Greeley's insightful tour of the Gospels provides a fresh look at the parables that strips away centuries of false and mistaken interpretations to get at the essential truth of who Jesus really was and what he believed.

Jesus: A Meditation on His Stories and His Relationships with Women by Andrew M. Greeley. A Tor Trade Paperback, New York, 2008. 176 pages, \$10.95.

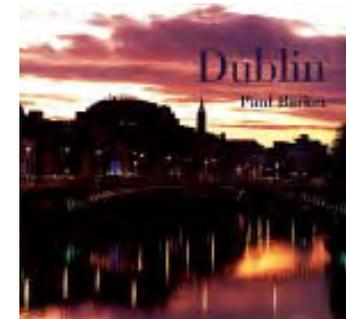
Dublin

By Paul Barker

This book is a visual celebration of old and new Dublin. Leading photographer Paul Barker presents the reader with the graceful streets, squares and monuments of Georgian Dublin, now restored to their former elegance.

Dublin combines a narrative history with images of each area's architectural highlights including the old, the new and the rejuvenated.

Dublin by Paul Barker. Frances Lincoln Limited, London, 2008. Hardcover, 120 illustrations, 112 pages, \$29.95. www.barnesandnoble.com.



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A Journey into Ireland's Literary Revival
By R. Todd Felton

From the 1890s until the 1920s, a great tide of literary invention swept Ireland. As the country struggled for political independence, the writers who formed the Irish Literary Revival created a new, authentically Irish literature. Some, such as W. B. Yeats, John Synge, and Lady Gregory, celebrated the mystical tradition of Ireland's west; others, such as Sean O'Casey, explored Dublin's crowded streets and tenements.

This fascinating, revealing, and beautiful book examines the relationship between these writers and the towns and countryside that fueled their imaginations. Partly history, part biography, and part travel guide, A Journey into Ireland's Literary Revival

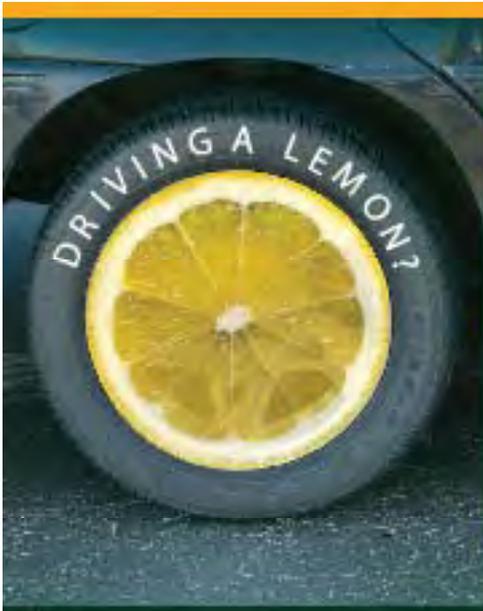
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(Pictured L to R) Greg Bella, 3rd Vice President of F.O.P., Chicago Police Officers Hanrahan and Brownfield and President of the F.O.P. Chicago Lodge #7, Mark Donahue. Officers Richard Hanrahan and Craig Brownfield were working in plain clothes when they heard gunfire erupt on 87th and Exchange and observed an offender running northbound. The offender shot his weapon again and ran into an alley. The Officers pursued the offender into the alley, where they announced themselves and ordered the offender to drop his weapon. The offender pointed his gun at the Officers. In fear for his life, and that of his partner, Officer Hanrahan discharged his weapon striking the offender once. The Officers were presented with Distinguished Service Awards.

into Ireland's Literary Revival takes the reader to Galway, the Aran Islands, Mayo, Sligo, Wicklow, and Dublin. Along the route, it visits the cottages and castles, crags and glens, theaters and pubs where some of the country's finest writers shaped an enduring vision of Ireland.

A Journey into Ireland's Literary Revival by R. Todd Felton. Roaring Forties Press, Berkeley, CA, 2008. 155 pages, 74 color images, 38 B&W images, 9 maps. \$21.95. www.roaringfortiespress.com.



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NACB GAA News

By Eamonn Kelly, PRO - NACB

April Hurling Development Tournament

An annual series of hurling matches that started on a weekend in April 2004 at Chicago's Gaelic park as a means to promote hurling in Midwest American cities has emerged into a most popular and successful hurling development program.

Started and continued each year by Milwaukee born Dave Olsen, the newly appointed NACB Hurling Development Officer, the 2008 event will be staged at Gaelic Park on the weekend of April 18th-20th. Teams are expected from the following cities: Atlanta, Akron, Chicago, Denver, Indianapolis, Madison, Milwaukee, Minneapolis and St. Louis.

It is estimated that 140 players will participate in the event.

The tournament, run on a round-robin concept, is geared to junior level B, C and minor level teams. The matches are scheduled for Saturday, April 19th starting at 8:30 am. Efforts are also underway to organize a camogie match as well as youth games.

In addition to the tournament, various coaching and seminar sessions will be conducted on Friday and Sunday of that weekend. As part of the GAA Twining Program,

the Munster Council is providing three coaches to conduct this training program which includes referee training. Traveling from Ireland are Munster GAA Games Manager, Joey Carton and coaches, Dinny Maher and Kevin Walsh.

According to Olsen "The core mission of this weekend is to bring all the clubs together to have fun, but most of all to work as an integrated team. Everyone should go home feeling that they have learned something new, made a new friend, and given something back. This weekend allows the heads of the clubs, in an informal setting, to get together and discuss the challenges clubs face and ideas for fundraising, recruiting, organization, equipment, training, etc."

Chicago St. Mary's Camogie Club 10th Anniversary

The Chicago St. Mary's Camogie Club is planning a special event in celebration of the clubs' 10th anniversary this year.

To mark the occasion, the club is hosting a night at Stony Creek Golf Course (5850 W. 103rd Street, Oak Lawn, IL). This night will take place on Saturday, April 26th, 2008 at 8:00pm. The purchase of a \$30 ticket includes food, open bar, door prizes and a DJ.

An Ad book is being published for the event and the club would encourage businesses, clubs and individuals that would like to advertise their

services, or to just send best wishes, to purchase a spot in the ad book. The price of a half page is \$50 and full page is \$100.

If anyone is interested in attending the event or would like to purchase an ad, please contact the club at annieb9@aol.com. All the information is also on the website: www.stmaryscamogie.chicago.gaa.ie. The deadline for submitting ads is April 10th.

St. Mary's Club was formed in 1998 and is now the only remaining camogie club in Chicago. Despite the relatively small number of players arriving from Ireland, the club kept going through great promotional efforts in attracting native born players.

Club secretary Annie Redmond is very proud of the clubs achievement as she stated,

"We enjoyed much success last year. We fielded a junior and senior team and won the North American Senior Camogie Final against Boston. This was the first North American title for the club. We also won Boston Eire Og's International Camogie Tournament in July, 2007. With continued support of the Chicago community, we can hopefully enjoy more success in 2008 and in the years to come."

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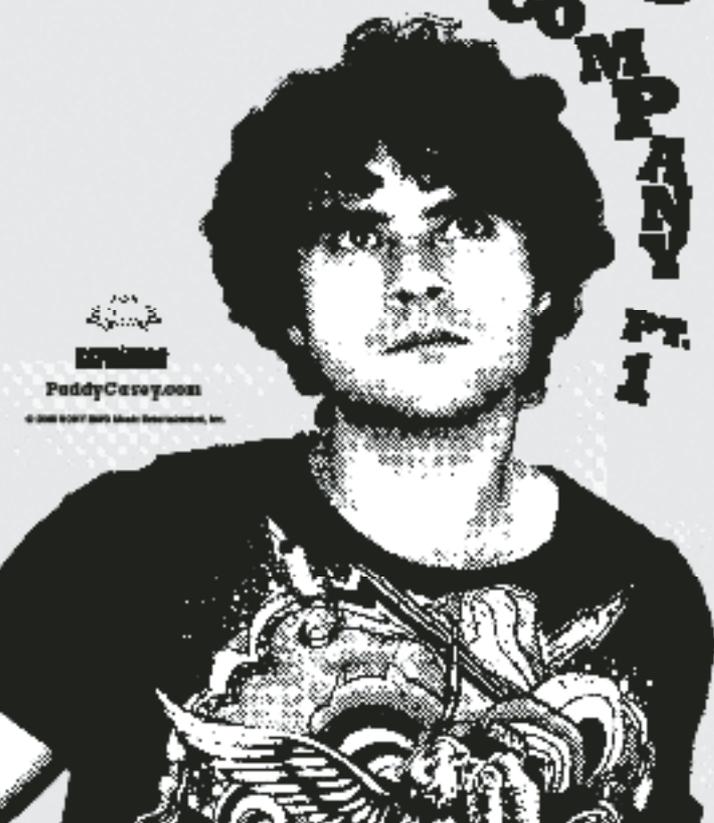
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IAHC and DePaul University Monthly Irish Lecture Series

The IAHC and the DePaul University's Irish Studies Program present an ongoing lecture series by scholars, artists, journalists and public figures.

Intersections: Present, Past and Future in Irish Culture addresses issues relating to the fast-changing culture, economy and historical sense of both the Republic and Northern Ireland.

The free April lecture, on April 6 at 2pm, is St. Patrick's Day, Celebrated in the USA and Ireland by Euan Hague, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Geography at DePaul University.

This presentation discusses how St. Patrick's Day has been practiced differently at various times in the United States since the 19th Century. The presentation proposes that Irish culture and St. Patrick's Day parades are continuously changing across time and space and that not all Irish people "be Irish" and celebrate St. Patrick's Day in the same way.

The second free lecture, on Sunday, May 4 is Should We Conserve Ireland's Cultural Landscapes? with Liam Heneghan, Professor of Environmental Science and Co-Director, Institute for Nature and Culture, DePaul University.

The support for nature conservation in Ireland is emphatic and its national parks are held in great esteem. The support derives from a perception that these wild landscapes are pure nature; landscapes held apart from people and easily distinguished from the cultural landscapes of city and farm. Heneghan questions the distinction between nature and people, suggests that most Irish landscapes are an ambiguous mix of nature and culture and discusses strategies for determining the value of landscapes along a gradient from city to wilderness.

For more information, call the IAHC at 773-282-7035, ext 10.

Late Breaking News . .

Our own James Fitzgerald informs us that Father Michael Boland has been selected as the recipient of the Heart of Loyola award at the Founders Dinner on June 7th. Fr. Michael has a masters from Loyola. It is the highest award given to an alum.



Malachy Towey (from Cloontia, Co. Mayo) and Bridget Mooney Towey (from Ardee, Co. Louth) celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary on St. Patrick's Day. Both known for their lifelong efforts in the cause of Irish freedom, the Toweys settled on the south side of Chicago in 1957 and have been St. Christina's parishioners since 1963. They have eight children, twelve grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

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Recently featured on QVC Home Shopping Network, the Aranware Collection embodies the essence of style, beauty and practicality and evokes the spirit of the Irish countryside, setting the stage for traditional Irish hospitality.

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Voice of Veterans

In January, I visited the Veteran's Medical Center in North Chicago, Illinois. My neighbor, Russ McCann, had invited me to visit there several months ago. He told me about the Voice of Veteran's Band and gave me a CD to listen to. The music is played by a bunch of veterans with one honorary vet. There are a couple of guitars, a fiddle, drums, and a keyboard. They write their own songs about their life experience as soldiers. Most of these men are Vietnam War veterans suffering from post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). I met the men in the band, Joe Klass, Carl Petersen, Greg Rodriguez, Jim Snow and Mike. The room was full, mostly men and a few women. The only photographs allowed were of the band.

It was like walking into a biker bar with many of the men wearing leather vests covered with military patches and other emblems like the peace sign. Some of the men had ponytails and others wore bandanas on their heads.

The music was good, the lyrics telling the story of war. One young soldier back from Iraq read a poem he had written. I asked for a copy but have not received it yet. I urge you to visit their website at www.voiceofveterans.us. One of their songs is titled "Welcome Home." This song honors all veterans of all nations who

have served and value freedom.

This song was performed at the 25th anniversary ceremony at the Vietnam War Memorial ("the Wall"). I have visited the traveling Vietnam Memorial Wall and I know three names inscribed on it, Jimmy Donahue, Mike Bryant, and Don Reilly. Looking at the Wall is a very emotional experience. If you would like to send them an email: VoiceofVeterans@voyager.net. The Voice of Veterans is funded by sales of their CD and private donations. Some proceeds were and are used to purchase telephone calling cards for Servicemen and Women in Iraq. Mailing address: Voice of Veterans, P.O. Box 1859, Kenosha, WI 53141-1859.

Saint Patrick's Day Parade

The morning was overcast and a chill was in the air when I headed for Old St. Patrick's Church. The scene was about to be played out once again. First they check your name on a list at the door and tell you what pew you will be seated in. I sit with the Parade Committee up front. The crowd was buzzing, greeting friends and shaking hands, some hugs or an air kiss on the cheek. Then everybody took their places and the dignitaries marched in: Mayor Daley and his wife Maggie; Ireland's Minister for Housing, Urban Renewal and Developing Areas, Batt O'Keefe;

Senator Richard Durbin; Martin Rouine, Counsel General of Ireland, et al. The processional was led by the Sheila Tulley Irish Step-dancers followed

by Bishop Timothy J. Lyne, D.D., who was the celebrant. Bishop Lyne is marking 25 years as a Bishop and 65 years in the priesthood. Reverend Thomas J. Hurley, the new pastor of Old St. Patrick's Church, and nine other concelebrants including the Rev. Jack Wall, John Cusick, and Deacon Bobby Ryan were on the

the reading of the Gospel and James T. Sullivan General Chairman of the Parade said the Prayers of the Faithful. When the mass ended, the Shannon Rovers Bagpipe Band marched in and led the processional out of the Church. A hearty breakfast of scrambled eggs, corned beef hash, sausages, and soda bread, orange juice, tea, and coffee followed immediately in the church basement. And then it's off to the Parade!

When I stopped at the hospitality tent at Balbo and Columbus Drive, a few dignitaries were waiting there for the parade to step off; Neil Hartigan, former Lt. Gov. and his wife, the Mayor of the Limerick County



altar, along with our Queen Eileen Kapolnek and her court, the choir, the cantors, and Irish traditional instrumentalists.

Let there be no doubt that Fr. Tom Hurley is a more than able replacement for Fr. Jack Wall who gave new life to Old St. Patrick's Church for the last 25 years. Fr. Hurley's homily was just brilliant laced with bits of family history. His father, an Irish American, moved to Galway in the early 50's to study medicine for five years, he then returned to the U.S.

In 1995, the Hurley clan returned to Ireland on vacation and rented a 20-passenger bus. Fr. Hurley has eight brothers and sisters. Arriving at Shannon Airport, their bus driver met them and suggested that they stay up throughout the day and see as many of the sites as they could. By evening, they were all exhausted and insisted the bus driver take them to the B&B where they landed at about 8pm. On that first night in Ireland, Fr. Tom heard the bus drive away from the B&B at about 9pm. The next morning he asked the driver where he had gone. He answered, "I had to wash the bus!" Obviously he had gone to the local pub to drown the shamrock. And the story lived on for the rest of the trip. The bus got washed very often!

Irish Minister Batt O'Keefe did

the finest lined the Parade route and they were all smiling.

This year's parade honored the Irish Union Labor Leaders who have played a major role molding Chicago into a great City for over 150 years. The day went by without a hitch and I moved on to the Irish American Heritage Center and spent time with friends, Sean Throne (author of Donegal Woman) and Shay Clarke, well-known to most of you.

Obama Damage Control

Pastor Emeritus Jeremiah Wright, theologian, Trinity United Church of Christ, Chicago... "God damn America" "US of A KKK" "We bombed Hiroshima and Nagasaki"... was he preaching or raving? I think he should steal some of the Republican philosophy and focus on "family values."

I think Reverend Wright has delivered a major blow to race relations and could possibly polarize the Democratic Party along racial lines as I warned in my last column. Surely, he scared off some independent voters. Obama's perspective on the sermons... "It reminds me that we have a tragic history when it comes to race in this country... but what I continue to believe in, is this country wants to move beyond these kinds of divisions. What? He did not speak to the issue! What ever has happened to these separation of Church and State? I think Pastor Wright is way off base on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The USA was attacked, remember Pearl Harbor? The Japanese butchered over 20 million people in the Philippines, Burma, China, Singapore, Dutch Indonesia and French Indochina. Using the A-bomb shortened the war. More importantly, mankind was made aware of the horror of nuclear war and now these weapons exist as a deterrent to war. Many atomic weapons have been decommissioned, now we have to keep them out of the hands of the lunatic fringe. There are no boundaries to man's inhumanity to man. Pastor Wright needs to focus more on what's really wrong with this country of ours. Someone I know, who does not wish to be quoted, said Barack Obama did not address Pastor Wright's incendiary remarks one by one, but "drenched himself in racial gasoline and set himself ablaze." I'm not interested in a litany of racial injustices. The Irish suffered through those same injustices. I would like to think that society can rise above that level of ignorance. But the dirty politics we endure locally keeps dragging us down.

Council and the Mayor of the Clare County Council, and to my surprise, Todd Stroger, Cook County Board President. Much to my chagrin I noticed he had three bodyguards with him. Hmhmhmhm!

Now the front line was forming. Gov. Rod Blagojevich and his wife, Congressman Rahm Emanuel and his wife, Mayor Daley, Senator Durbin, James T. Sullivan, General Chairman of the Parade, Dennis Gannon, Grand Marshall, Minister Batt O'Keefe, Neil Hartigan, et al. The Parade Marshals were busy getting everyone where they belonged. Then suddenly the Shannon Rovers struck up a tune and the pipes and drums beckoned to the crowd. Excitement filled the air! It will take two and a half hours for the Parade to pass the Reviewing stand. The crowds were big and extremely well-behaved. Many family groups lined the route on Columbus Drive. All of my favorite marching units were there, the entire corps of cadets from St. John's Military Academy, amongst others. The Queen Eileen Kapolnek was in a horse-drawn coach, O'Brien's Restaurant had a beautiful pony trap pulled by two white horses. There was a team of eight Clydesdale horses that were just magnificent. The Marist High School Band and others too numerous to mention followed. Chicago's

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Harbingers

We've been talking about the abuse implicit in owning the freedom to control public information. As of 2006, only eight huge corporations control most of your communication and in-

formation — that's everything you watch, hear, read and download. They are GE, Microsoft, Google, Time-Warner, Disney, News Corp, Viacom, and Yahoo. Together they manage almost all the information available to you outside the confines of your home. Most other big media names you are familiar with have been gobbled up as subsidiaries of these eight. And the list may soon shorten to seven if Yahoo is eaten by Microsoft. (MS, trying to outflank rival Google, tendered a \$42 billion offer for Yahoo in February.)

Here are the observations of a well-known media insider:

"Today, media companies are more concentrated than at any time over the past 40 years, thanks to a continual loosening of ownership rules by Washington. The media giants now own not only broadcast networks and local sta-

tions; they also own the cable companies that pipe in the signals of their competitors and the studios that produce most of the programming. To get a flavor of how consolidated the industry has become, consider this: In 1990, the major broadcast networks—ABC, CBS, NBC, and Fox—fully or partially owned just 12.5 percent of the new series they aired. By 2002 it had surged to 77.5 percent."

"A few media conglomerates now exercise a near-monopoly over television news. There is always a risk that news organizations can emphasize or ignore stories to serve their corporate purpose. But the risk is far greater when there are no independent competitors to air the side of the story the corporation wants to ignore."

"These big companies are not antagonistic; they do billions of dollars in business with each other. They don't compete; they cooperate to inhibit competition."

— Ted Turner

While composing this piece, Bear Stearns, feeding too high on sub-prime hog meat, received a modern lesson in the "Morganization" that was once the trademark of J.Pierpont. Bear Stearns claimed to be solvent, but JP Morgan Chase knew it was just BS. Bear got an offer it

couldn't refuse: two bucks for shares worth over \$90 only a month before. That's like having to swap your upscale three bedroom home for a 10-year-old sedan. And Morgan-Chase mixed a couple poison pills into its wedding cake batter just to make sure rivals stayed well out of shotgun range before the honeymoon—like an option to buy Bear's New York head office—worth around \$1.2bn— even if the bride's a no-show. That means if Mama Bear had the notion to cook porridge for another papa, she'd have to set up house in the '98 Chevy.

When the tables turn, one man's loss is another's gain. Harbinger Capital Partners is a low-profile hedge fund specializing in "distressed situations". This fund placed its bets against sub-prime mortgages and won big. Its Special Situations Fund increased more than 100 percent last year. Harbinger is now targeting the New York Times and its Boston Globe and other properties. Also in the crosshairs is Media General, a Richmond, VA, newspaper and TV group.

Last month Harbinger settled for two seats on the board of the family-owned Times.

Meanwhile, a bipartisan group of lawmakers has filed a measure aimed at rescinding the FCC's December ruling which ended the 32-year-old ban on radio and TV broadcasters owning newspapers in the 20 largest US media markets. The new rules would also make it easier for the FCC to waive ownership rules in any US market.

Rep. Jay Inslee, D-Wash., the resolution's prime sponsor and a member of the House Commerce Committee which oversees the FCC said: "Consolidation already has brought us to the point where two companies control 70 percent of market revenue in an average radio market... We need to use every tool available to prevent further weakening of media ownership rules." There are companion bills in the House and Senate.

In March Congress' General Accountability Office released a report showing that only about 9 percent of investigations completed by the FCC resulted in enforcement action. Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich said: "it appears that the FCC has abdicated its duty to protect consumers."

You're reading this after filing your taxes, so you have been thinking about the government. But hopefully you're not yet on the pavement ala the oracular Bobby Zimmerman: "Look out kid. The man in the trench coat wants eleven dollar bills. You only got ten. The pump don't work; 'cause the vandals stole the handles."

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Shapeshifters Presents Knocknashee

Shapeshifters Theatre of the Irish American Heritage Center presents Knocknashee, by Irish playwright, Deirdre Kinahan of Navan, County Meath in Ireland. Robert Ayres directs.

The play runs Friday, April 11 through Sunday, May 4. Friday and Saturday at 8pm and Sunday at 3pm. Tickets are \$12 for IAHC members and \$15 for non-members.

Knocknashee is set in a small cottage in County Meath on May Eve, 2001. May Eve is a traditional Irish pagan festival, and Knocknashee is alive with magic, mayhem, merriment and menace. Patrick, a physically disabled artist, Brigid, a single mother and Hughie, a lonely rural misfit are drawn together to celebrate by the forces of this forgotten culture. While these three extraordinary people seek friendship, the magic of May Eve's lore and even love, the unforgiving landscape threatens to reveal a secret of its own.

The production includes returning Shapeshifters veteran, Michael Schifferdecker as Hughie, Eric Leonard as Patrick and Rachael Jenison as Brigid. The cast and crew takes the production to Rochester New York, May 15-18 as its entry in the Acting Irish International Theatre Fest.

Shapeshifters, the Irish American Heritage Center's resident theatre company since 1987, continues to build on the tradition of Irish Theatre and expanding the presentation of established and new works. 773-282-7035.



John Mahoney and Mike Nussbaum. Pic: Michael Brosilow

Better Late at Northlight Theatre

Northlight Theatre continues its record-setting 33rd season with the world premiere commission of Better Late, by Larry Gelbart and Craig Wright. The production, featuring Chicago favorites John Mahoney and Mike Nussbaum, and directed by BJ Jones, runs through May 11, 2008, at Northlight Theatre, 9501 Skokie Blvd. in Skokie.

This world premiere production, commissioned by Northlight, reunites playwright Craig Wright (Grace, Lady) with actors Mike Nussbaum and Steve Key, both of whom appeared in Northlight's production of Grace, and welcomes actors John Mahoney and Linda Kimbrough and playwright Larry Gelbart (Emmy and Tony Award-winning author of M.A.S.H. and City of Angels).

As Better Late opens, Julian (Nussbaum) is forced to move in with his ex-wife and her new husband in order to recuperate from a sudden illness. With each passing day, the awkward situation spirals further and further out of control. As the laughter builds, the question becomes: how long will Julian have to stay? This biting funny December-December-December romance is a not-to-be-missed new comedy. (847) 673-6300 or visit www.northlight.org.

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Beyond the Abbey

Sean Callan

E-mail: Irishquill@aol.com.



This spring, Irish Theater goes from Chicago could do worse than consider making a trip to the finger lake region of upstate New York. If they do, not only can they enjoy the area's breathtaking scenic beauty, but they could also take in one or more plays at the 15th Acting Irish International Theater Festival. The festival, an annual adjudicated contest for top-notch Irish amateur acting groups, will be hosted by Rochester Community Irish Players in Rochester, New York. It will run from May 13 through 17, 2008 and the plays will take place at the 180 seat proscenium Nextstage at the Geva Theatre Center in downtown Rochester. Geva, the area's regional professional equity theater, is celebrating its 35th Anniversary this year.

"It is a wonderful venue and we're looking forward to great performances from ten different Irish theater groups from the US, Canada and Ireland," stated Peter Scribner, President of the Flower City's Irish Theater Players. The contest will include groups from Toronto Ontario, Calgary Alberta, Winnipeg Manitoba, Florida, Cincinnati, San Francisco, Milwaukee, Chicago and Rochester. Also, Holding Court Theatre from Ballymun, Dublin will be returning from Ireland.

Chicago Representation

Shapeshifters Theatre of the Irish American Heritage Center will represent Chicago with its production of Knocknashee, by Irish born playwright, Deirdre Kinahan. "The play will be directed by Robert Ayres of the Lakeview neighborhood and will include returning Shapeshifters veteran, Michael Schifferdecker as Hughie, Eric Leonard as Patrick and Rachael Jenison as Brigid," said Peg Murphy, the group's managing director.

Knocknashee is set in a small cottage in County Meath on May Eve, 2001. May Eve is a traditional Irish pagan festival, and Knocknashee is alive with magic, mayhem, merriment and menace. While the townsfolk prepare to celebrate as a fun festival, there are believers who await the promise of the fairies which are expected on May Eve. On the outskirts of town, Patrick, a physically disabled artist, Brigid, a single mother and Hughie, a lonely rural misfit are drawn together to celebrate by the forces of this forgotten culture. While these three extraordinary people seek friendship, the magic of May Eve's lore and ven love, the unforgiving landscape threatens to reveal a secret of its own. Those who cannot attend the festival but who would like to see the shapeshifter play can do so without leaving Chicago. "It will start on Friday, April 11, 2008 and run for 4 weekends thru Sunday May 4th. Shows are Friday and Saturday at 8pm and Sunday at

3pm. Tickets are \$12 for IAHC members and \$15 for the general public," said Murphy.

Playbill

The festival in Rochester will open on Tuesday evening of the festival week, and performances will be staged every afternoon and evening through Saturday evening. A celebration brunch and awards ceremony will be held Sunday morning. The performance schedule for AIITF 2008 will be: Tuesday evening, May 13: Rochester: The Hostage by Brendan Behan; Wednesday afternoon, May 14: San Francisco: The Perfect Romance by Nicky O'Brien; Wednesday evening, May 14: Florida: On Raglan Road by Tom O'Brien; Thursday afternoon May 15: Cincinnati: A Little Like Paradise by Niall Williams; Thursday evening, May 15: Dublin: Happy Birthday Dear Alice by Bernard Farrell; Friday afternoon, May 16: McPherson double header Winnipeg: Dublin Carol by Conor McPherson; Calgary: Shining City by Conor McPherson; Friday evening, May 16: Milwaukee The Blowin of Baile Gall by Ronan Noone; Saturday afternoon, May 17: Shapeshifters Chicago: Knocknashee by Deirdre Kinahan; Saturday evening, May 17: Toronto The Muesli Belt by Jimmy Murphy.

"We're pleased to have secured the services of three particularly well-qualified experts as our adjudicators. They are Annette Proconier from Ontario Canada, Patrick Sutton, Director of the Gaiety School of Acting in Dublin and Sanford Sternlicht, a professor at Syracuse University and author of textbooks on theatre," stated Scribner.

Festival tickets will be sold through the Geva box office and are available on-line. Additional information may be obtained from the Rochester Players at rochestercommunityplayers.org.

Gaelic Park Production of Love Thy Neighbor

The Gaelic Park Players, the in-house acting troupe of Chicago Gaelic Park will present their spring production Love Thy Neighbor, over three weekends beginning Friday, March 28 through the 30th, and continuing Friday, April 4th through the 6th and Friday, April 11th through the 13th.

Love Thy Neighbor, a comedy presented in three acts, was written by Jimmy Keary and is directed by Mick Kenna. Tickets for the show are \$10 and dinner and show tickets for any Sunday performance can be combined for \$23.

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Steppenwolf Announces 08-09 Subscription Season

Steppenwolf Theatre Company recently announced its 2008-2009 Subscription Season, exploring the theme of the imagination. The season opens with *Kafka on the Shore*, based on the work by Haruki Murakami (September 18 – November 16, 2008). The season continues with *The Seafarer* by Conor McPherson (December 4, 2008 – February 8, 2009), followed by *Art* by Yasmina Reza (February 5 – June 7, 2009). The fourth play is *The Tempest* by William Shakespeare (March 26 – May 24, 2009). Closing the season is *Up* by Bridget Carpenter (June 18–Aug 23, 2009).

Steppenwolf will present a special engagement of *Dublin Carol* by critically-acclaimed playwright Conor McPherson. *Dublin Carol* makes its Chicago premiere alongside McPherson's *The Seafarer*. Tickets to *Dublin Carol* (November 13 – December 21, 2008) are currently available exclusively to Steppenwolf subscribers for \$50-\$70. Single tickets will go on sale at a later date. (312) 335-1650 or visit www.steppenwolf.org.

Ain't Misbehavin' at Goodman Theatre

The Cotton Club comes to the Albert Theatre in a joyous tribute to the music of the inimitable Fats Waller. Travel back to Harlem in the sassy, swinging '30s, exuberantly performed by a quintet of irresistible talents. Sultry, infectiously playful, and downright fun, *Ain't Misbehavin'* will make the joint jump

Ain't Misbehavin'—which was originally slated for April/May production in the Owen Theatre—moves into the Albert Theatre and assumes the dates of *The Boys are Coming Home*, with a June 30 opening night, and running through late July. (*The Boys are Coming Home* will be removed from the 2007/2008 season due to irreconcilable artistic points of view among the key collaborators.)

The Tony and Emmy Award-winning musical revue *Ain't Misbehavin'* is a tribute to the musicians of the Harlem Renaissance and a celebration of the sounds of the 1920s and '30s Cotton Club.

The show will run from June 30-July 27, 2008. Tickets go on sale April 11, 2008. For more information call Goodman Theatre's Publicity Office: 312.443.5151.

Shaw Play 'You Never Can Tell' in Oak Park

Presented in the Mainstage Theatre of the newly renovated Village Players located at 1010 W. Madison in Oak Park, George Bernard Shaw's *You Never Can Tell* opens April 6 and runs through April 27.

Shaw mixes an unintentionally reunited family with irresistible romance, a dash of melodrama, a dollop of farce, several Wilde-like and absolutely silly coincidences. This Comedy of Errors, set in a seaside town, tells the story of Mrs. Clandon and her three children, Dolly, Phillip and Gloria, who have just returned to England after an eighteen year stay in Madeira. Not knowing their father, they end up inviting him to a family lunch, and hilarity ensues.

Fridays and Saturdays at 8 PM and Sundays at 3 PM. Tickets for regular performances are \$25 for adults and \$20 for Students & Seniors. All tickets for previews are \$15, and opening night tickets including reception are \$30 for adults and \$25 for Students & Seniors.

Parking, and handicap accessible; please call ahead for special seating. www.villageplayers.org, 866-764-1010.

Riverdance Farewell Tour to Play Five Performances at Paramount



Riverdance, the thunderous celebration of Irish music, song and dance that has tapped its way onto the world stage thrilling millions of people around the globe; will play five Farewell Performances at the Paramount Theatre April 11-13. Performances are Friday, April 11 at 8pm; Saturday, April 12 at 3pm and 8pm; and Sunday, April 13 at 2pm and 6pm.

Of all the performances to emerge from Ireland in the past decade, nothing can compare to the energy, the sensuality and the spectacle of Riverdance. An innovative and exciting blend of dance, music and song, Riverdance draws on Irish traditions and the combined talents of the performers propel Irish dancing and music to the present day capturing the imagination

of audiences across all ages and cultures. This extraordinarily unique show features an international company all performing to the magic of Bill Whelan's music.

The theatre is located at 23 E. Galena Blvd. in Aurora, IL. Tickets are \$45.50, \$55.50 and \$65.50 at the Paramount Theatre Box Office, 630-896-6666 or at TicketMaster ticket outlets. www.theparamounttheatre.com.



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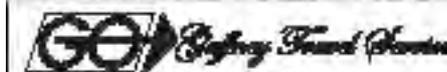
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Celtic Kitchen —Pure and Simple



By Julianna Leber

The Original Irish Kitchen

When people talk about their alma maters, the drink glasses clink and shouts of Michigan State, Ohio State, Purdue, USC, Northwestern, etc ring out. They show their pride in the school that taught them their life's trade. Even though I graduated from The University of Akron with a degree in English literature, I always raise a glass to my alma mater, Ballymaloe Cookery School. Ballymaloe taught me so much that my time at Ireland's great cooking school, a mere thirteen weeks for the professional course, was an all-encompassing life education. Instead of the stories of my days at school, let me tell you about the school itself.

In the early days of Irish tourism, Mr. and Mrs. Ivan and Myrtle Allen bought and created the Ballymaloe House along the very southern shores of County Cork, Ireland. The Ballymaloe House became a large country guest house, offering guest rooms, lovely dining settings and wonderful food created by some of Ireland's best. All of this took time, though. In the early days, Mrs. Allen taught herself to cook starting with barley water, a beverage of soaked starch from barley and water. From there, she blossomed into an accomplished chef. She utilized the wonderful bounty off the local boats in Ballycotton, discussed business and product quality with local livestock farmers, and worked the gardens near the house in order to provide the best ingredients for the food. Mr. and Mrs. Allen raised their



family in the house and everyone helped the business along.

In the late sixties, Darina O'Connell finished with school in Dublin and made her way to the south coast. She heard about the Ballymaloe house, a place where quality was an absolute (and women were allowed in the kitchen). Darina went to Ballymaloe house and got on famously with Myrtle in the kitchen. Darina was introduced to the concept of obsession with quality, from meat and dairy, to the produce from the garden, to local sourcing of the grain. Darina absorbed everything she learned from Myrtle. Then something else caught her eye, Myrtle's son Tim.

Tim Allen was a quiet person, studying horticulture and farmed mushrooms, when not helping at the House. While at the House, Tim noticed Darina too and eventually they were married. As their family started, they began to brainstorm about a business. So Tim and Darina went to Mr. and Mrs. Allen, asked them for a business loan, and soon began the Ballymaloe Cookery School. Darina already knew the school's philosophy, know the source! Whether the product is from the docks of Dublin or Ballycotton, it's important. One must know and care about the quality of the livestock farms, which may also produce dairy and cheeses. Know the quality of the soil where you plant your vegetables, fruits, and herbs. Darina is also Ireland's leader in Slow Food, a movement centered around product sourcing and taking

time with food. This food obsession opened her doors back in 1983, and has kept them open.

The Ballymaloe Cookery School is located on a large spread of Irish rolling green. Driving up to the gated entrance, stone walls laced with wild berries guide the route. Turning in, to the left are two happy cows in a vast field, basking in an easy sunny day, munching on clover. To the right, more fields and then farm buildings. Driving into the parking lot, the Café (open restricted times, due to the classes) is straight ahead. And then finally the



main building. This main schoolhouse was renovated from an apple barn when the original schoolhouse became too small to accommodate the interest in classes. The schoolhouse is a large, white building with the front wall entirely made of glass, warming the entrance. I can still remember the smells when I very first walked into the schoolhouse, full of yeasty breads, LOTS of spices, and the ever-present chicken stock pots, gently simmering in the prep room. I was so excited to be there, my stomach flipped. Back in 2001, the walls looked like they were painted for Cinco de Mayo, with loud pink doors, splashed with

yellow and green paints, and string of plastic chili lights, glowing in 3-D. It was surreal, but more so to spend 13 weeks there.

For the professional course, we had three parts to the day: We'd cook from 9:00 am until 12 noon. At that point, our food was graded on technique, presentation, and taste. With taste, the instructors loved salt. It only made sense, because in Europe salt and pepper are usually at the table, but rarely used. That's a sign of food made well. From 12 until 1:30pm, we had lunch and cleaned up. From 2pm until 5pm

we had classroom, where we learned about the food for the next morning. In between and on 'days off' we had field trips to local farms, restaurants, wine tasting, business lessons, and maintained a wood burning oven for the pizza and bread lessons.

Though it was an intense process of 9am to 5pm cooking, listening and learning, we still managed to have a 'little' fun. Since we were basically isolated in the middle of a field in cottages, we did the one thing we thought we could do: cook. The first weekend the girls in my cabin, Roisin and Rachel and I decided to have a pizza party. Porsha, an instructor from America, had previously worked in a New York City pizza shop and was eagerly invited. She was nominated to make the pizzas in our little oven, while the rest of us drank, ate and got to know each other. It was great to have a girls' party that first weekend. Who knows where the boys went. The following weekends became more of the same, trying variations of the great items we made in class. Every Sunday, I walked to the small local church for early mass and then to the store for ingredients for a fry-up at Vanessa's. The first Sunday it was four of us, relishing the heavy breakfast we made. As we told others, it became a standing room only event, with each person bringing new rolls from the week's lessons or jam freshly made

from berries outside the windows.

Back in class, I loved being somewhat experienced, except when Darina or another instructor called on me for help. I was probably talking at that time, so it wasn't for real assistance. I had worked in kitchens before, but never any classes or training. So everything I learned, I tried to help the 'newbies'. One day, a classmate came over to my cottage to practice making a seafood stew. I told her to be careful about the live versus dead mussels, and to tap each one in order to check. Behind us were three buckets, one for paper garbage, one for the compost pile, and one for the chicken coop. Since Darina was a stickler about separating, the students had to pay attention. So when my classmate found a dead mussel, she asked me where it goes. So I told her smiling, 'to heaven!'

The farm and school grounds were immense. They have well manicured flower and herb gardens and a beautiful seashell house, created by a friend and former student. The vegetables are all grown organically and picked each morning by the students, giving them first hand knowledge of the process of growing, from seed to plate. They also raise their own saddleback pigs, used in the schoolhouse. But never to forget the chickens, these cackling, roaming animals made the setting complete. The rooster must have been blind, since he would sound off any time he wanted, usually during class. The chickens were free roaming, so they had access to all points, including my open window. I had a particularly long day, and wandered back to the cottage. I went into my room and found a chicken egg settled into my quilt. My window was open, but thought Roisin put it there. She laughed and told me it wasn't her trick, but save it for breakfast. Hey, it was fresh!

I entered the hallowed halls of Ballymaloe Cookery School on September 10, 2001. It was traumatic to be so far away from home during such a hard time in history, and even harder to leave. I lucked out. I met some wonderful people, learned a lot from the inspirational instructors, and developed a cooking philosophy. For me it will always be to know the source, enjoy your food, and season!

Ballymaloe Cookery School is 30 minutes south of Cork City and 10 minutes from Middleton. The Ballymaloe House is 2 miles from the school. The school can be found at www.cookingisfun.ie.

*Julianna Leber is an English Lit graduate from The University of Akron and holds certificates from Ballymaloe Cookery School, Cork, Ireland. She can be reached at julileber@hotmail.com.

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Mr. Sean Joyce, Bernie Heveran, Frank McNamara and Sean Ginnelly.



Cliff Carlson, Frank McNamara, fans with Deirdre Shannon, and Noreen Heron of Noreen Heron Public Relations



Stephen Narens with his son Devitt at Mickey Finn's in Libertyville. Stephen and his wife are exposing their children to Irish culture as much and as early as possible!

Shane Joyce, son of Timothy Joyce, enjoys the 2008 South Side St. Patrick's Day Parade. Photo courtesy of NBC5.



Gerry Gainer, Nancy Moreno, Bill Gainer and 7th District Cook County Commissioner, Mario Moreno. Bill joked with Mario, telling him that his mother, (Bill's) wasn't really from Ireland, but from Mexico. Mario got the last laugh!





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↓ Batt O'Keefe; Minister of Housing Urban Renewal and Development, and Tom Boyle



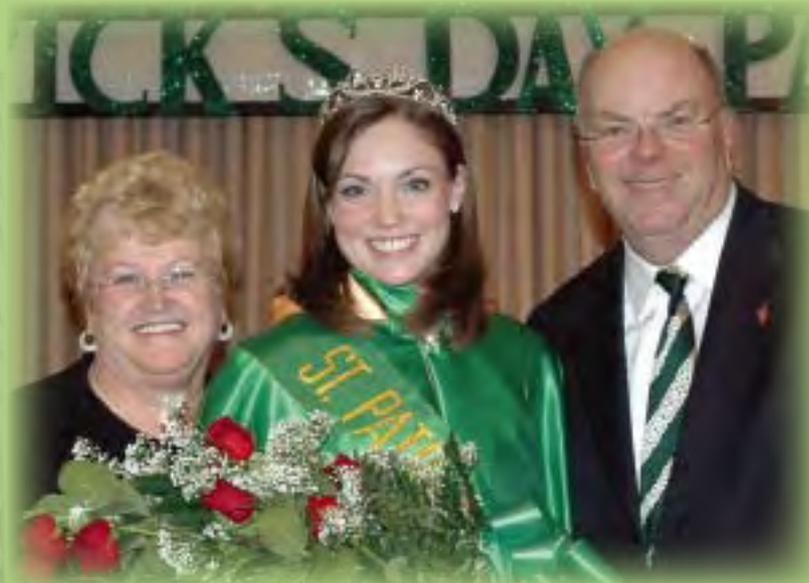
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Bob with his granddaughter and Cardinal George



As part of a recent O'Brien's Restaurant advertisement.



With his wife, Peggy and Kelly Green, 2005 St. Patrick's Day Parade Queen.



With his son Bob Ryan Jr. who is being groomed to take over announcing from the reviewing stand of the St. Patrick's Day Parade in Chicago.



With James Sullivan, and 2008 St. Patrick's Day Parade Queen, Eileen Kapolnek.

With Craig Thomas and Art Kavanaugh helping at the Christmas party for kids in need at Plumber's Hall.



With Batt O'Keefe; Ireland's Minister of Housing Renewal and Development, and his wife, Mary. The "Thumbs Up" says it all!



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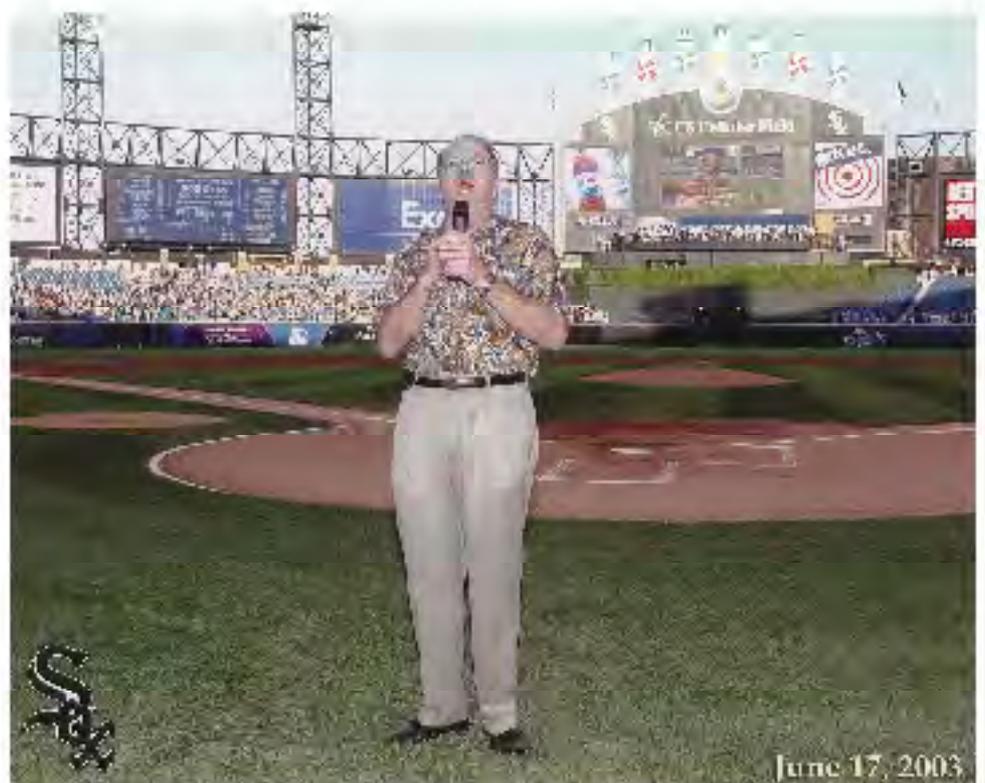
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Bob Ryan, singing the National Anthem at the White Sox game on June 17, 2003

Congratulations Bob On Your Retirement

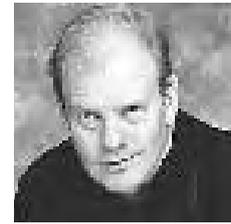


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Bob Ryan Hangs Up His Tool Belt

I carried Bob Ryan's home phone number in my wallet for years. I couldn't find a plumber one Christmas Eve and hired Roto Rooter to rod out my sewer line and he gave me hell for it. "Those guys are bums, I woulda found you a plumber, you shoulda called me!"

This was back in the nineties, and hiring a non-union plumber was tantamount to treason. My pal Pete Nolan and I worked for the Plumbing Council of Chicagoland in those days and we learned fast. Bob Ryan was executive director of the Plumbing Council and Jerry Sullivan was the visionary leader of Local 130 Plumbers Union. Jerry brought Nolan-Houlihan into the fold to help improve the image of union plumbers.

Pete and I devised a series of TV commercials promoting union plumbers, and also created a radio show starring Bob Ryan on WGN radio, "Ask Your Plumber", which is still running today on WBBM. In the TV spots I played "Crafty Al", a sleazy, non-union plumber who ripped off homeowners

by selling them "flameshooters" and each spot ended with Crafty Al laughing maniacally into the fisheye lens of the camera. Bob Ryan played the customer getting fleeced by Crafty Al and he was the perfect straight man. The spots were pretty funny and a huge hit all over town.

Nowadays you see and hear advertising for unions all the time, but Jerry Sullivan was the first union leader to take that giant leap in promoting the experience and reliability of union labor. Nolan and I pitched the Sun-Times on the story and Greg Burns wrote a piece in the business section that got picked up by the AP wire and the next thing we knew the entire country was talking about "Chicago plumbers spending \$200,000 to improve their image."

Jay Leno cracked wise in his opening monologue on the Tonight Show, "All they had to do was pull up their pants!" But most of the publicity was more in line with radio legend Charles Osgood's observation, "It's about time

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plumbers got the credit they deserve for indoor plumbing." Ten days after the initial Sun-Times story ran, the entire world had gotten the message, "Plumbers protect the health of the nation."

Nolan and I spent the next several years riding out this whirlwind advertising campaign with further adventures of "Crafty Al and Mr. Ryan." I learned a lot about plumbers and Bob Ryan was my teacher. He had an infectious giggle that he did his best to suppress while shooting the TV spots. Bob was

a proud member of the Shannon Rovers bagpipe band, which his father Tommy Ryan had founded. He was also a deacon at his parish St. Juliana's on the north side and spoke reverently of his trade as plumber as "the honorable toil".

Bob was also the announcer at the St. Patrick's Day parade each year and the emcee of the Queen Contest. I used to call him the Irish Bert Parks. If you've been to any Irish event in Chicago over the last thirty years you've enjoyed Bob Ryan singing

Continued to page 31

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Ryan Retires

Continued from page 29

the National Anthems of America and Ireland before the knives and forks descend on the platters of corned beef.

Bob Ryan and the Plumbing Council also supported my career

as an actor, not only paying me for starring in their commercials, but bringing groups of plumbers to all my shows. Bob was hosting a world conference of plumbers at Plumber's Hall one night and hired me to do a stand-up routine at their dinner. My act went over like a lead balloon as I broke out in a

sweat trying to get those plumbers to laugh. Afterwards Bob giggled, "Most of those guys were from Germany and don't speak a word of English!"

Our memorable advertising campaign finally came to an end as we entered the new millennium. New board members were elected to

the Plumbing Council and Pete Nolan and I were dumped. A Polish plumbing contractor with a bad wig brought his pal in to do their commercials. It's just like reform in Chicago politics, "My guys are in, your guys are out!"

But I still kept Bob Ryan's home phone number in my wallet, for

emergencies. Bob is retiring as Executive Director of the Plumbing Council and they're throwing a party for him on Saturday April 5th at the Rosewood. His service to the plumbing industry and the Irish community of Chicago will certainly be missed. God bless you Bob, I've never had a better straight man.



"May St. Patrick guard you wherever you go, and guide you in whatever you do – and may his loving protection be a blessing to you always"

Best wishes to Bob Ryan on his well deserved retirement

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◆ A Great Irishman ◆

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Tradition In Review



Bill Margeson



Greetings from the post-Paddy's Day musical front! Did you have fun? We did! Okay. First, please allow a bit of a flog. If you look at the ad below the column, you'll notice that the best Irish tour company in America, CFS Tours, has asked me to conduct a musical tour to Ireland

in November. I jumped at the offer! Check the ad out. Unbelievable. There is no tour like this anywhere at any price, never mind THIS bit of affordability! Four star hotels, great food and drink, wonderful sights all day, and the very best in the real music of Ireland every night. They

are calling it "The Great Sights and Sounds of Ireland." They are right. If you've never been, or you want to see and hear the real deal, get hold of CFS right away. They are limiting it all to 40. It will be a ball and a memory for a lifetime. It will be the REAL Ireland! Promise.

Now, on to the reason for the season—music! Last month, we awarded Martin Hayes and Dennis Cahill a joint honor of Male Musician of the Year in the Top TIR Awards. The Award is for their album, Welcome Here Again. It is out on Compass. We actually have never had the chance to review it; it came out so close to the deadline for the Awards and the column! It is a magic piece of business, and we are glad to have the second chance to tell you all about it in more detail. We did a lengthy article on them in Irish Music Magazine out of Dublin, last month. The essence of the whole thing is this. These two have been together so long (it has been nine years since their last album, for God's sakes!!) and they are both so perfectly tuned into each other, that this album is rather like hearing an Irish trad Everly Brothers, Mills Brothers or the Andrew Sisters. The

perfect blend. The lads emphasized that they wanted to really, really showcase the beautiful melodies themselves that grace traditional music, and they have succeeded brilliantly. This is not like their other wonderful outings. No nine-minute masterpieces here. No sturm and drang. This is the real essence of the music, interpreted and offered by two masters of the form. Martin Hayes fiddle has always drawn rave reviews, since he started playing in his native Ireland. We have always felt (with no small measure of civic pride, here) that Chicagoan Dennis Cahill's guitar always, always offers the perfect accompaniment. Again, in this album, there seems to be no fiddle and guitar. There, instead, seems to be a guifiddle. Okay. We know that made up word stinks, but it is the best we can do to describe what is going on here. There are 18 selections on Welcome Here Again. Correct. 18. The faithful Hayes-Cahill fan will be amazed. As we stated earlier, no 10-minute musical voyages here. Lots and lots and lots of melodies, and that is the idea. Sure, there are great reels, polkas, airs, the whole mix—but the entire project is to let you hear this music.

Really hear it. In a mass audience world that favors the kind of "musical" nonsense that my partner on the radio, Shay Clarke loves, there remain these artists of great musicianship and integrity—and thank God for them. Each year, we get to tell you about some albums that will last forever. Classic stuff. Welcome Here Again is one of them. It is, like, almost an honor to hear it. The tunes, presented this way, remind you of what drew you to this music in the first place—and what holds you. This is a great album, played by international masters of their art. Now, go get it. No prob to find it, as it is on Compass. Rating: Four Harps

We conclude with another flog. Blarney on the Air, every Monday night from 7-9 on WDCB, 90.9 fm, or www.wdcb.org. You want fun and great tunes? When was the last time you heard a show where Hayes and Cahill were being played and a caller phones in from Brazil to tell you how much he is enjoying the show? Or "St. Charles Sue" and husband, Bill call in from Hawaii on vacation, listening on their laptop, so as not to miss a single note of the show? We'll be there, and we'll leave the garden gate open for you!

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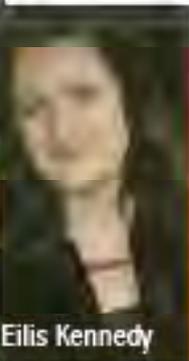
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Sharing a Pint



By Scott Powers



Brian Dunphy knew early on his life growing up in Dublin that he wanted to be a musician just like his famous father, Sean.

One would assume being around music and especially a gifted musician like his father, who was famous for his hit "If I Could Choose," that would be the reason the younger Dunphy sought the career. But actually, it was something altogether different at first.

"As a youngster, I did a lot of traveling with him," Dunphy said. "I witnessed how people were with him. I was like, 'This is kind of cool! I thought if I got a chance to do something like that, it would be pretty cool.'"

Yes, it the fame that hooked him first, but with time the music did catch up. Now much older himself, the music is what most important to Dunphy.

It's certainly was what on his mind when the opportunity came to join Finbar Clancy, Darren Holden and Martin Furey in the formation of The High Kings.

Having been a member of The Three Irish Tenors and sang in a number of musicals, Dunphy was targeted by the creators of Celtic Woman when they were putting together The High Kings. Dunphy didn't know personally the three other musicians, but he knew of their reputa-

tions. Dunphy, like everyone else, realized they had the making of an exciting Irish ballad group.

Group is the key word. While some may see bringing together four talented musicians with some famous family ties—Clancy is the son of Bobby Clancy who was in The Clancy Brothers and Furey is the son of famous piper and singer Finbarr Furey—as a gimmick to make money in America just as Celtic Woman did, Dunphy sees it's completely different.

"It's certainly not any kind of gimmick. We're not a show; we're actually a group," said Dunphy while on tour in early March. "That is the neat thing about the four of us. We play instruments and are singer-songwriters. We're not a boy band. We're

seasoned. We've been around a long time."

The proof is in their performance.

Go to YouTube.com and you can check out some of their music from a live show that was taped for PBS and a DVD, which along with a CD is now a sale. The High Kings also performed on The View for St. Patrick's Day.

You can personally catch The High Kings live when will be in Chicago on April 26 at the Auditorium Theatre.

So far, Dunphy is positive about the future of the group.

"People are reacting to it extremely well," Dunphy said. "We're looking forward to playing Chicago. Chicago's fantastic."

You can find more info about The High Kings at www.thehighkings.com.



Brian Dunphy

Munnelly Flaherty & Masure to Perform in April

Three of Europe's top Celtic musicians, the members of the trio of Munnelly Flaherty & Masure, will perform in two Chicago area concerts in April. The group features multi-award winning Irish button accordionist, piano player, and composer David Munnelly, who performed & recorded with The Chieftains for four years. He regularly tours the United States with his larger group, the David Munnelly Band, which has a large & enthusiastic following, especially in Chicago.

In Munnelly Flaherty & Masure, David is joined by his close friends & compatriots in musical conviviality, much loved Scottish singer Helen Flaherty and Belgian

guitar/ cittern virtuoso Philip Masure.

On Friday, April 18, the group performs in concert at LHC Concert Series, at 8:00 PM at the Wayne Church, Army Trail Road, in the historic village of Wayne, in the Fox Valley. Tickets are \$20 at the door & advance reservations are suggested & can be made by emailing islandheartartists@gmail.com or calling 646-262-9222.

On Saturday, April 19, Munnelly Flaherty & Masure perform at the World Music Company, 1808 W. 103rd Street in Chicago, at 8:00 PM. Tickets are \$25.00 and can be ordered by calling 773-779-7059.

The following evening, Sunday April 20, the group performs at 7:30 PM for Pipers Hut Concerts in Champaign, IL. www.pipers-hut.com.

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Jack Baker



The next politician who tells me that the economy is doing just fine has to come price bagpipe supplies that come in from Canada. Maybe their oil stocks or shares in Haliburton are doing well, but I'm seeing some serious problems here. I'm seeing those problems at the festivals too. Performers from Ireland, Scotland and Canada are hesitant to come here to perform. They now have problems going across borders that were once open and the exchange rate on the money leaves them looking at far less "real" money for the same work. Festivals are hurting too, fewer attendees who are willing to use their \$3+ gas to drive to a show or, if they do, are unwilling to part with any more cash to buy a beer, a cap or, woe is me, a CD. I understand their pain, our February gasoline bill, for only two shows, was over a thousand dollars.

I've also seen several vendors getting out of the business or not going to festivals. This limits the vendor fees paid to festivals, further undermining the bottom line. Where will it all end? I spoke with a Canadian friend just this morning who sees bright things on the horizon and not just polished dust bins. He thinks that a change of management in Washington will invigorate the economy and get people feeling good again. This, he believes, will get them coming out to the festivals to celebrate. Boy, I hope he's right.

Enough dreary thoughts for now, there's good news and plenty of it. For all of you that have been waiting for some good piping and didn't get enough on St Patrick's Day, the Midwest Pipe Band Association is sponsoring their Mini-Bands competition on Saturday, April 5 for grades 3, 4 and 5 pipe bands. The contest will take place at Bethany Union Church, 1750 W 103rd St in Chicago. For more information call 630/257-6570. It's a lovely church, a lovely area (Beverly) and there will be some great piping. What more, you ask? Well, follow up Mini Bands with a Pipe Band Concert. The City of Chicago Pipe Band will perform in concert at Grace Episcopal Church, 924 Lake St, Oak Park, IL on Saturday, April 5 at 7:30 pm. This band is committed to teaching Chicago area youth for free and will be showcasing many of its talented members at the concert. This concert also marks the debut performance of the new City of Chicago Grade IV band. Tickets are \$10 and may be guaranteed by emailing cocpipeband@gmail.com. Tickets will also be available at the door. This should be a great concert with some new faces and we really need to show our support for all the work these folks have done. But it gets better yet, because following the concert; the band will be hosting a ceilidh (that's party for all you non-Gaelic speakers) at Molly Malone's, 7652 Madison St in Forest Park. It's a perfect time to quench your thirst and party with the band, who are (trust me on this) fun to party

with. It will be the perfect end to a perfect day of piping. Midlothian Pipe Band will be hosting an evening of Celtic music on Saturday April 26th at St Odilo Church, 2244 East Ave in Berwyn, IL. I don't have a lineup at this time but any chance to hear Midlothian play should not be missed. Aside from superb piping and drumming, Midlothian also knows how to have fun. I've been to many of their functions over the years and they were all wonderful. For more information, contact Mike O'Donnell at 630/544-7839 or visit the band's website at www.midlothianpipeband.com.

From St Louis comes news that the Invera'an Pipe Band and the Saint Louis Caledonian Pipe Band have voted to merge and keep the name Saint Louis Caledonian Pipe Band. This is the third name change for Invera'an which began in 1972 as Meeting of the Waters Pipe Band. The band expected to compete at the Springfield Illinois Games and the St Louis Games but they won't be, as both events are cancelled for this year. Bloody shame but we'll see them soon, I hope. Saint Louis Caledonian Pipe Band's website is <http://slcaledonian.googlepages.com>.

The Milwaukee School of Pipes and Drums will host its 10th year this June 8th thru June 13th at Alverno College in Milwaukee. The instructor staff will be the same as last year with Ken Eller, Bruce Gandy, Ron Bowen, Doug MacRae and Lyric Todkill teaching pipes. Drumming instructors will be John Fisher and Tyler Fry. Further information is on the website at www.milwaukee-school-piping.com or call Tom Cobb at 414-422-9235. This is a great opportunity for all pipers and drummers to polish their skills and meet and learn from some of the most talented musicians alive today. It's just an hour and a half north of Chicago, in Milwaukee.

DRUMMERS WANTED... I have gotten more requests from bands looking for drummers. If you are a pipe band drummer looking for a band or you have ever wanted to be a drummer, here are a few places where you'll be warmly welcomed.

Chicago Celtic Pipe Band - 773/286-7833 or james-fenright@aol.com

Tunes of Glory Pipe Band - 630/225-7972 or www.tunesofglory.org

Clan Donald Pipes and Drums - 920/347-9507 or gb-piper1@new.rr.com

Finally, a wee word on a couple of new CDs. The new release by Field Marshall Montgomery Pipe Band is out, finally. Re:Charged is the title and it is, as we expected, a lovely CD, but expensive. I understand the band wanting its well deserved pound of flesh but I think they do themselves a disservice. Either way, it's a well performed and well recorded CD that all piping fans will enjoy. From far off France comes Erwan Keravec with his CD entitled Urban Pipes. It's a very strange recording indeed. All original compositions and I'm not sure appreciate his art. This one will take some listening to.

I saved the best for last. Wicked Tinkers is one of my favorite groups and they have released a new CD called Rant. This CD, their sixth, is full of their usual mix of pipes, drums and didgeridoo put together in original arrangements that will have you hopping. It is impossible to stand still while listening to Wicked Tinkers. I love watching these guys. They also manage to put their energy and fun on their recordings, something not everyone can do. The only problem with the Wicked Tinkers is that they're so popular on the west coast, where they live, that they seldom get to play in this area. Promoters take note; this is a group that brings excellent music and high energy wherever they go. Their new CD Rant is a winner, give it a try.

I appreciate your input, comments, criticisms, etc. You can reach me at Rampant Lion Celtic Traders, 47 S. Villa Ave., Villa Park, IL 60181 or call 630-834-8108 or stop by the store for a good old-fashioned chin wag. Happy Spring.

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An Immigrant's Musings

Fr. Michael Leonard



This month's contribution is courtesy of Geri Garvey, who works with Fr. Michael on Immigration reform issues in D.C. Citizenship Blues

Three bits of news from the first two months of 2008 highlight the galling inconsistency and inadequacy of the federal government's system for turning immigrants into citizens.

The first is that the wait for citizenship and green cards is up — way up. Citizenship and Immigration Services reported in January that the average time to process a citizenship application had risen to 18 months, from seven, and that green cards would now take a year, instead of six months or less.

The second was the recent news that the agency had finally taken a baby step toward clearing its green-card backlogs by easing a rule on background checks by the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

The third development is the surge in businesses using E-Verify, the federal system for checking employees' immigration status. As more states and localities have adopted harsh campaigns to purge undocumented immigrants, E-Verify has taken on a larger role, with 52,000 employers now using it, compared with 14,000 a year ago. President Bush's new budget includes \$100 million to expand E-Verify, which the citizenship agency calls "a cornerstone" of "long-term immigration reform."

You can tell a country's priorities from what works and where the money goes. With billions for border and workplace enforcement, the government has been rushing to impose ever more sophisticated and intrusive means to keep immigrants out. Yet it continues to tolerate a creaky, corrosively inept system for welcoming immigrants in — an underperforming bureaucracy that takes their money and makes them wait, with a chronic indolence that is just another form of hostility.

For the entire article, see: http://www.nytimes.com/2008/02/17/opinion/17sun2.html?_r=1&th&emc=th&oref=slogin

Source: New York Times Editorial

Immigration Becoming Part of the Solution

With Sen. John McCain now in a clear lead for the Republican nomination, it is safe to say that the days of "de-

port them all" rhetoric regarding immigration are likely over in the presidential contest.

Yet, the anti-illegal immigrant sentiment will continue to loom large in this year's political contests at the state and local level. What's more, immigration will remain so contentious around the country that Republican and Democratic insiders predict that comprehensive reform of the kind President Bush pursued but failed to pass could be a non-starter for the foreseeable future.

But even if comprehensive immigration reform is off the political table, the time for a sober — and realistic — assessment of immigrants and their impact on the United States has already arrived. According to some demographers and urban planners, a serious discussion about immigration is taking place and in a different context: the unprecedented economic and societal demands caused by retiring baby boomers, the first of whom began drawing their Social Security checks this year.

Dowell Myers, author of *Immigrants and Boomers: Forging a New Social Contract for the Future of America*, argues that policymakers will have to think of immigrants as part of a solution rather than a threat to America, as posited by many in recent years. A demographer at the University of Southern California who directs the Population Dynamics Research Group, Myers believes immigrants and their children will have to help the U.S. meet the huge costs of boomer retirement.

Myers is convinced that during the next president's watch "this will be a bigger, a more dominant concern... than the Iraq War is today." Policymakers already are reconsidering many attitudes about retirement age, Social Security benefits and taxes. But nowhere will the thinking need to be more different than when it comes to immigration.

For the entire article, see: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/02/07/AR2008020701942.html>

Source: Washington Post

League of Women Voters Immigration Study

The League of Women Voters has recently launched a two-year Immigration Study aimed at helping communities understand the implications of immigration at the local, state, and federal level. As part of this project, League members and leaders will explore the underlying values and principles regarding immigration, reasons for immigration, current federal immigration policy, and the impact of immigration in American society.

The study can be found at: <http://www.lwv.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=LWVUSImmigrationStudy>

Migrants Unlikely to End up in Prison Report Links Few Foreign-born to Crime

Countering widespread belief, a new report shows California's foreign-born population — including illegal immigrants — makes up only a sliver of the state's population of inmates.

The report by the Public Policy Institute of California, released Monday, also suggests the foreign-born population, which makes up more than a third of the state's adults, plays a disproportionately smaller role in serious crime.

"Crime, Corrections, and California: What Does Immigration Have to Do with It?" gives one of the clearest glimpses yet into the impact of immigrants and immigration on the state's justice system.

It also aims to dispel the perception that cities with large foreign-born populations are criminal hot beds, with several California cities showing a dip in police activity amid recent immigration waves.

But while the findings are surprising, they don't account for a complete relationship between immigration and crime. The report did not, for example, examine petty crimes such as shoplifting and vandalism, which wouldn't necessarily result in jail time. The findings also do not take into consideration the effect that the children of immigrants might have on crime.

The entire article can be found at: http://www.mercurynews.com/news/ci_8365551?source=email

Source: Mercury News

Fr. Karl (from the St. Patrick's Fathers, "The Kiltigans") shared this poem with us at the St. Patrick's Day Mass in The Irish American Heritage Center and now I'm sharing it with our readers.

The Unexpected

I dreamed Death came the other night
And Heaven's gate swung wide
With kindly grace an angel came
And beckoned me inside.
I found to my astonishment some folks
I'd known on earth. Some I'd judged and labeled
Misfits of little worth
Indignant words rose to my lips
But never were set free
For every face showed stunned surprise,
"not one expected me."

— Anonymous

Should you have any comments, questions or suggestions, please feel free to contact me @ siochan@catholic.org. or 312-337-8448.

Congratulations 2007 Celtic Youth Gaelic Football Players of Year!

The Chicago Celtic Youth GFC would like to thank Ken Sullivan and all members of AOH Div. 32 for their support. The Hibernians once again purchased the trophies, which were presented at their annual picnic in September 2007. The awards were presented to: U16—Sean Malone and Thomas Campbell; U14—Thomas Graziano and Declan Conway; U12—Johnny McCarthy and Jack O'Sullivan; U10—Martin Ronan and Conor Geraghty; and U8—Tommie Morrissey. Congratulations also to Agnes Loftus and Willie Barker who were named Club People of the Year for 2007!

The Chicago Celtic Youth GFC held their Annual General Meeting on Sunday, February 24, 2008, at Vaughan's Pub. Mattie Ronan served as Chair for the AGM, with Bernie Byrne as Secretary. The following people were elected to the 2008 Chicago Celtic Youth GFC Board of Officers: Honorary President—Jim Penny; Chairman—Matt Buckley; Assistant Chair—Willie Barker; Secretary & Webmaster—Jane Hynes; Recording Secretary—Mary McCarthy; Treasurer—Agnes Loftus; Assistant Treasurer—Eileen O'Malley;



Back Row: Gerry Geraghty, Gerry Campbell, Thomas Campbell, Micky Brady, Mattie Ronan and Pearse Ronan. Middle Row: Conor Geraghty, Tommie Morrissey and Martin Ronan. Front Row: Matthew Morrissey, Pat Morrissey and Micheál Morrissey.

Registrar—Bernie Markley Byrne; Public Relations Officers—Kathleen Renkosiak and Loretta Murphy; and Youth Officer—Tom Ennis.

All children ages six (as of January 1, 2008) and up are welcome to join the Chicago Celts! Registration for the 2008 Season will take place

on Saturday, April 5, 2008, from 1pm-3pm at the Norwood Park Field House, 5801 N. Natoma, Chicago. Registration is \$50 per child or \$100 per family (maximum). Further details are available on Chicago Celtic Youth GFC's site, www.chicagocelticyouth.com.

Horoscopes

By Theresa Castro

ARIES: This is your month to shine! The Sun and Moon meet and bring new life to your sphere. Use this time to further your aims, whatever they may be. The focus is directly on you so make the best of it!

TAURUS: Your Lot this month includes a lot of appraisal of your personal affairs. You are soul searching to make sure you are on track with your life. If you are not happy with your life so far, it is never too late to make revisions.

GEMINI: You have the support of the new Moon of April 2008 to further your aims. With the passing of winter you will have new horizons to look forward to. Get organize and get to work!

CANCER: The emphasis is being placed on your professional life this month. Most of the planets are congregating in your 10th sector of career and public standing. Make sure the public and the powers that be can see what you intend them to see.

LEO: Your month should run relatively smooth now. The planets are in your 9th sector of the higher mind and faith. Something could happen in your life to remind you that a higher power does indeed exist!

VIRGO: Your health will improve markedly this month. If you have been under the weather, you will most likely experience a resurgence of vitality. Or a grand surprise may come your way!

LIBRA: The issue this month will be with your significant other(s). You will either break off an unsatisfactory affair that is going nowhere, or begin a new and exciting involvement.

You could start a significant romance with someone who is quite different!

SCORPIO: April will bring a fresh perspective on your work and health! You may also meet some interesting people, or enter into a compelling new relationship. You, like everybody else, are tired of winter and in need of change.

SAGITTARIUS: The month of April will bring a breath of fresh air. The New Moon in Aries will smile on you! The area of life that will be especially meaningful is your activities with sports, children, and romantic interests. Enjoy!

CAPRICORN: There will be some changes in your home environment. You or someone living with you could move away or at least out of the house. There could be some reductions in family size due to changing circumstances.

AQUARIUS: There will be some additions to your circle of friends this month. You will be fortunate in having some of you cherished aspirations. What is it that you want most? You are sure to get it with a little effort.

PISCES: You will have an opportunity to add to your finances or somehow reduce a payment. Money could also arrive due to a refund or rebate of some sort. Maybe a forgotten loan will be repaid to you. Somehow circumstances will serve to ease a financial burden.

WANNA PLAY?

Young musicians come together to play Irish Music... and have a great time too!

The Academy of Irish Music students meet once a week at the Irish-American Heritage Center in Chicago. Students are divided into beginner, intermediate, and senior groups based on ability and experience. The children come from all over the Metropolitan area. Most of them participate in school bands and orchestras; many are Suzuki trained. These kids enjoy playing Irish music and making new friends.



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A Word With Father Boland

The Voice of Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Chicago



and Michael M. Boland

Administrator, President and CEO Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Chicago



100,000 pregnant and nursing mothers and their children up to five years of age. Our 17 childhood development centers provide excellent affordable edu-

cation opportunities for children in many of Chicago's poorest neighborhoods.

For almost nine decades, Catholic Charities Maternity Services have been dedicated to assisting pregnant teens and women, birth fathers and their families who are experiencing an unplanned pregnancy to receive medical care and counseling as they plan for the care of their baby. Catholic Charities Adoption Services continues to assist new parents who create their families through adoption.

In 1917, then-Archbishop George Mundelein responded to the call of all the Catholic pastors and parishes in the Archdiocese of Chicago for an archdiocesan agency to care for the needs of the desperately poor people who could not be cared for by the parishes themselves.

Since then, Catholic Charities has borne the primary responsibility for caring for the poor: the mothers and children, families and individuals suffering the effects of poverty, job loss, homelessness, addictions or domestic violence throughout the Archdiocese. We have fed, housed, clothed and offered life-changing programs to assist struggling fam-

ilies, supported by the generosity of the people of the Archdiocese of Chicago.

This year, Catholic Charities' Annual Mother's Day Appeal will be held on May 10-11, the Feast of Pentecost. As we celebrate the outpouring of the Holy Spirit of God's love into our hearts, I invite you to thank God for the gift of his grace by helping our neighbors in need.

Please help Catholic Charities continue to be a source of grace and support for women of all ages and faiths who need our assistance to raise their families and care for loved ones.

Thank you for your support. May God bless you and your families.

For more information about Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Chicago, please visit: www.catholiccharities.net

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"A mother's work is never done!" How many times have we said, heard or experienced the truth of that well-worn phrase. But who takes care of the mothers who themselves need help?

Mother's Day is just a month away, and as we take time out to honor and thank our mothers and grandmothers for the gifts of life, faith and example they have so generously given us, Catholic Charities also takes time to honor the courageous women and mothers whom we help.

You see, every day is "Mother's Day" at Catholic Charities! For 90 years, generation after generation, we have been privileged to help mothers year-round. The women we assist are mothers, grandmothers, aunts, sisters, daughters, spouses, caregivers; they are married, widowed or single; elderly, middle-aged, young adults and teenagers.

They are the parents or the guardians of children; they may be grandmothers and great-grandmothers caring for their children's children; or the mother caring for her elderly mother as well as her own children. Many of the mothers we serve are the breadwinners or the sole support of their families; or the primary caregivers for their elderly or disabled parents, spouses or relatives.

We care for generations of mothers of all ages; expectant or new mothers who need nutritious food for themselves and their children; young low-income, working mothers who need healthy food and quality child care programs for their little ones; elderly women who need daily home-delivered meals, adult day care programs, or in-home care; and teenage mothers who must learn how to parent their child and to make decisions for their own future.

Catholic Charities offers excellent services for women and mothers in all these stages of their lives, as they take responsibility for the care of others, and when they themselves need assistance.

Last year, through our 160 programs in 158 locations, Catholic Charities touched the lives of more than 1.1 million people in Cook and Lake Counties, rebuild-

ing lives and restoring dignity to families and individuals of all religions, races and economic backgrounds.

More than 178,000 families were restored to a future of hope and dignity with short-term food, rental and utility assistance; or long-term services such as counseling, case management, support groups, refugee resettlement or family services. Almost 2,000 seniors living on limited incomes reside in Catholic Charities' 20 beautiful residences in Chicago and suburbs.

Over the years, comprehensive programs such as our very successful long-term Family Self-Sufficiency program in Lake County and our 120 New Hope Apartments in Chicago and suburbs, have rebuilt and restored thousands of homeless families to stable lives of financial independence and employment. Families participate in an intensive program of job training and coaching; and learn parenting, budgeting, saving and life skills as they achieve the goal of obtaining and keeping permanent housing.

Families have been strengthened greatly each year by the support of Catholic Charities' nutrition program for more than

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the law and only if you know such laws exist and know of lawyers capable of helping you.

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What's "lemon" law? It sounds trifling and silly. But it's actually a colloquialism for the same law that governs our national economy: the Uniform Commercial Code—"uniform" because every state in the union has adopted it (Louisiana only in part). We call it "lemon" law because the average consumer understands what "lemon" means in the context of a defective car, or a defective product (whatever it may be). It's like when you get a bad (or rotten) apple. Why don't we call it "bad apple" law? I don't know. But it's the same law that a large manufacturer—e.g., Motorola—would turn to if a supplier of micro chips delivered a bad batch, or a defective lot. The only difference for individual consumers is that the law provides additional protections for individual consumers in light of the fact that individual consumers otherwise do not have a lot of bargaining power. Imagine if Motorola threatened to find a new supplier of micro chips if the bad batch was not remedied. The supplier would fall all over itself to remedy the problem. But an individual consumer who

buys a defective vehicle will usually get nowhere on their own in trying to get their money back, unless they have an attorney.

I am fortunate to be licensed in California (where I've lived), Illinois (where I am from), Pennsylvania (where I went to college and law school), and New Jersey. California has some of the best consumer protection laws in the nation. Illinois has some of the worst.

Once in California, I saw an older couple purchase a new flat screen television for \$700. Then, they asked the cashier if they could purchase a service plan. They paid another \$400 for five years of protection from the large retailer. The money was a total waste and I will tell you the reasons why.

First, the television comes with a manufacturer's warranty. Usually, if nothing goes wrong with the television in the first year, nothing will other than normal wear and tear (which could be ten or twenty years). Second, the rate at which technology is advancing and prices are falling, even if the television broke after the manufacturer's warranty expired, the television would probably cost no more than the \$400 just spent on a service plan. And that's a big "if." Third, the law provides them the same remedy they just purchased. (And if you, cynically, say to yourself "how much will an attorney cost?," you should know that most consumer protection laws have provisions whereby you can also sue for your attorney fees instead of the attorney taking a percentage of your compensation.)

The state consumer laws in Illinois are not as good as the state consumer laws in California but, nevertheless, they are still decent. They

could have more "teeth" so that the threat of litigation becomes that much more onerous so that manufacturers and retailers doing business in Illinois would be more willing to remedy any problems encountered by an individual consumer. But, nevertheless, where Illinois legislators fear to tread, our federal legislators (United States Congress) have enacted consumer protection laws that have effect nationwide. (Sometimes states, like California, enact their own, more stringent, laws and, thereby, their state citizens are protected even more than the rest of the nation. Hello! Lisa Madigan!!)

And consumer protection laws cover more than "lemons." They address consumer fraud, deceptive practices, common law fraud (think of a used car salesman), misrepresentation, predatory lending, mortgage fraud, credit reporting errors and abuses, abusive debt collection practices, and more. Even minor offences, if widespread, can merit a class action.

For more information about Illinois consumer protection laws, you can contact the Illinois Attorney General at (800)386-5438 (consumer fraud hotline) or (800)243-5377 (senior citizens consumer fraud hotline) or go online to www.illinoisattorneygeneral.gov/consumers.

For more information about Federal consumer protection laws, you can contact the federal trade commission at (877)FTC-HELP (877-382-4357) or find out more online at <http://www.ftc.gov/bcp/consumer.shtm>. Or if you are in need of an attorney, even if for nothing more than free legal advice, you can contact me at (888)LEMON-57 (888-536-6657) or go online to www.my-illinois-lemon-lawyer.com.

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(L to R) 2008 Northwest Side Irish St. Patrick's Day Queen, Tara Maye; Parade Organizer, Elizabeth Murray; Northwest Side Irish Queens Court 1st runner-up, Molly Fergas.

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For The Republic

Chris Fogarty



BRENDAN "DARKY" HUGHES, R.I.P. As C.O. of the IRA Belfast Brigade, his gun battles with the Brits became part of local lore. As IRA C.O. in Long Kesh prison he led the hunger strike that was ended after 53 days when concessions were agreed, the later Brit dishonoring of which triggered the hunger strike deaths of ten IRA volunteers, including Bobby Sands. Hughes became a tragic figure. In recent years, ailing, in inconsolable grief, Hughes would walk the streets near his tiny Divis Flats apartment like a ghost. A recent Sunday Tribune article, rare in that it wasn't a root-and-branch smear of the IRA, reported; "Hughes was haunted by the faces of IRA colleagues whom, he believed, had died for nothing. He'd spend days crying in his flat. A photo hung on his wall of Hughes in Long Kesh, with his best friend, Gerry Adams, arms around each other. 'I loved him. I'd have taken a bullet for Gerry. I probably should have put one into him,' Hughes said." He accused the leadership of abandoning republicanism for personal power; an undeniable accusation now that Adams and Co are rewarded for selling out and are officials of Occupied Ireland's Brit gov't that they had covertly helped to reestablish while posturing as patriots fighting for a 32-County Ireland. We didn't know much about Hughes when he met us at Frank O'Neill's tavern in Chicago. He still believed in Adams then. He said so. But we knew, and Hughes probably didn't, that our State Dept grants visas to Irish activists only if they are pro-Brit - for decades our gov't hasn't trusted its citizens enough to let them hear an Irish republican speak. So Hughes promoted Adams, believing he was promoting Irish freedom, and was obviously spooked that we attendees didn't agree. It may be a measure of Hughes' own honesty that he was so slow to grasp that his comrade was a traitor. Upon learning that sad truth, Hughes, for his remaining days, confirmed his reputation for great courage by frequently and publicly denouncing Adams, McGuinness et al when such denouncers were, and are, being murdered with impunity. Hughes was 59. To honor him and his life let us emulate his truth-telling. For example; on the subject of the IRA we must ask; "Do you mean the actual IRA or the Brit-and-media-fabricated IRA?" The actual IRA had the cleanest record of any army in existence; but we are more familiar with the fabricated entity; the "Marxist-Leninist murderers of women and children." Today in Occupied Ireland, Brit military helicopters swoop down upon the Irish; terrorizing people, especially children. They arrest people on fabricated charges and put them through kangaroo courts; and the news media refuse to report any of it. This new Brit terrorism is "peace."

IT WAS A CONTEST, but Irish-America didn't know it. While we worked spreading the standards of our US republic to Brit-Occupied Ireland, Brit spooks (MI5) were secretly insinuating their system here. We believed that US values would not alone relieve the occupied Irish, but would ultimately be welcomed by the English themselves. We still believe it; the US Bill of Rights is no small gift. The rest of this column recounts what we tried to correct, and the outcome of our efforts from 1983 to date.

BRIT JUSTICE was, still is, an oxymoron. In Occupied Ireland the Brits rounded up random youths and incarcerated them without charge for undetermined periods. Those charged with something were routinely given long sentences after a juryless show trial. Official fabrication of evidence was rampant. (It is astonishing that that same corrupt system has now, for once, acknowledged their own evidence fabrication, kyboshing their own frame-up of Seán Hoey for the Omagh atrocity.) Family and friends of Irish facing such political trials in London would seek foreigners to attend as observers. It proved true that the presence of foreigners in the courtroom elicited more temperate judicial behavior and verdicts. I visited Irish prisoners in Long Kesh, and Mary and/or I visited prisoners in Portlaoise and attended the London trials of the Birmingham Six, Gilbert McNamee, Dessie Ellis, and the more recent Patrick

Cullinane. Ditto, the Cullyhanna Public Enquiry into the murder, by Brit marines, of Fergal Carragher and the wounding of his brother. A few other foreign observers attended these trials, including European reporters and human rights advocates. The heroic Sr. Sarah Clarke, RIP, spent many years in courtrooms and prisons providing help and witness to Irish victims of Brit injustice. Meanwhile Brit spooks and police raided her and tried to incriminate her (read her NO FAITH IN THE SYSTEM). Attending those London trials Mary and I acted as unofficial advocates for US-type justice, the true justice that all humanity needs.

JOB DISCRIMINATION against Irish in Occupied Ireland offended humanity. In 1973, after winning a bloodily-suppressed campaign there for the right to vote, the Brits began to deny jobs to the newly-enfranchised Irish so as to starve them into exile and thus off the voter rolls. Irish-America responded by enacting laws in State legislatures across the nation (Illinois was 10th or 11% to enact) requiring that the 25 US corporations with branches operating in Occupied Ireland (and employing 11% of the working population) not participate in Britain's job denial policy there. Investment of pension funds constituted the incentive. Municipal gov'ts across the US, including those of Chicago and Cook Co., enacted similar legislation. Kudos to John McNamara and Tom Murphy!

BRIT ASSASSINATIONS offend all decent persons. The graffiti "Any Taig (Catholic) Will Do" was on walls throughout Occupied Ireland. Later, Britain's MI5 steered assassins toward suspected republicans, providing the hit-men with addresses and floor plans of their victims' houses. In some notorious cases the police (RUC) chauffeured the killers to and from their hits. The IRA's half of the approximately 3,700 total political killings were overwhelmingly of enemy combatants, while the Brit's half were overwhelmingly of noncombatants; the elderly, women, children, lawyers, reporters, and a few priests. For the comprehensive record of child-murders see my www.terrorismireland.org. For others see Malcolm Sutton's now-dated AN INDEX OF DEATHS FROM THE CONFLICT IN IRELAND; 1969-1993.

BRIT TORTURE was rampant; exclusively of IRA suspects. It shocked the world - to the extent that the news media reported it. At Europe's Court for Human Rights (ECHR) Britain became the most convicted torture State. The torture obligated us to oppose it.

MONARCHY is a squalid, benighted system of privilege for the corrupt few and oppression and injustice for the rest. The e-mail I receive daily from England, from victims of corrupt but legally-immune courts and police, is heartbreaking. They remind one that we revere our Founding Fathers for good reason, despite their permitting the genocide of the original Americans and their maintenance of slavery. Our pride in the US and certainty in the beneficence of our system impelled Irish-Americans including Mary and me to work toward justice and all-Ireland national self-determination on behalf of the Occupied Irish.

THESE MASSIVE CRIMES moved many of us to the above actions. We were certain that Occupied Ireland (and even England) would benefit hugely from the US republican standards that had inspired the world. In our minds, it was no contest. US republican values will readily defeat monarchical corruption; especially when part of the contest is played out here in the Land of the Free.

THE CONTEST became clear, as did the actions of Brit spooks operating against us. While we were trying to spread US standards to Occupied Ireland the Brits were implanting their corruption into US institutions. We are stunned by the sheer brazenness of their crimes on US soil, and especially by their success in subverting FBI agents and US courts here in Chicago and above all, by the impunity with which they were allowed to operate here. The 9-year incarceration, without charge, of Ex-IRA volunteer Joe Doherty in US prisons was a successful Brit blow against our Constitution, a blow abetted by many US judges and other officials. Eventually, when Irish-America had some 135 (and counting) US congress members signed onto an amicus curia brief and bill to release Joe, the Brits were allowed to extract him from his Pennsylvania cell and fly him to a Brit prison. The Brit-instigated framing of Irish-Americans who take our US Constitution seriously became an epidemic. They include the Boston 3, the Fort Worth 5, the New York 5, the Ft. Lauderdale 3 and identical frame-ups in San Francisco, Missouri, Alabama, Chicago, and elsewhere. These Brit

attacks upon our Constitution were abetted by our own news media. Obviously, American traitors were participating in these Brit frame-ups of US citizens. Judges, prosecutors, FBI agents were involved. Yet, we had to admit that the Brit hand was hidden; we could only suspect it; couldn't prove it. Whomever these Brits were, they were numerous, with frame-ups in so many US locations. Simultaneously, organized smear campaigns against Irish-American activists were raging across the US, while Irish-American news media extolled the smear artists as leaders of the cause.

MI5 OPERATING HERE! We finally became informed of crimes by Brit spooks in the US. FBI agent Joe Doyle met Mary and me to inform us that some of his FBI colleagues had been subverted by the Brits and were planning crimes against us. For a few hours Joe described the MI5 modus operandus. The initial bribe was 2-week freebie junkets to England. Many FBI agents took the junkets but didn't sell out. A few others did, and thenceforth worked as double agents; remaining on the US payroll, but taking direction from their MI5 handlers to "take us out." I responded to Doyle, my old Castlereagh Marist Bros. classmate; "Joe; you took an oath. You're in law enforcement; we're not. What are you doing to stop those crimes?" When he said he couldn't do anything I concluded that if he was that weak on his oath of office it was likely that his whole MI5/FBI story, including his warning, was either exaggerated or mere hearsay.

MI5/FBI CRIMES HERE! A few weeks after agent Doyle's warning the Langert family was murdered. The murder weapon was FBI agent Lewis'. The triggerman was David Biro; now serving life without parole in downstate Pontiac for two counts of murder and one of homicide. He was the only suspect named by the local police when they first met to investigate. But when MI5/FBI agent Patrick "Ed" Buckley arrived on site a few days later he directed the police away from the murderer and onto other "suspects." FBI agent Lewis never reported her gun, the murder weapon, missing. Her lawyer husband, already defending the murderer for previous shootings, also kept mum. MI5/FBI got Carole Marin to report on network TV an IRA involvement in bringing this atrocity to America. Thus, having implicated the IRA, MI5/FBI agent Buckley and gang took the next step, which was to name the actual terrorist. An MI5/FBI gang member took to lounging in my building's lobby while I was at work, announcing that mass murder suspect Chris Fogarty lived there. Early a few days later two MI5/FBI subordinates, police officers Keel and Fay arrived before I left for work. I told them to stop making politics of an atrocity; to pursue the actual murderer. Under Buckley's direction, they produced a signed murder report of their visit. It framed me; inescapably. "My" answer to "their question" included information that absolutely nobody but the murderer could know. I possess copies of it. Meanwhile, the smear machine was in full fling from within Irish-America. This, dear reader, was truly the Brit system brought to America; a classical form of it in all of its ripe, criminal elements. But to be truly British, the crimes must have impunity; and they do, so far. Thus, sad to say, the Brits have implanted their corruption here far more successfully than Irish-America's delivery of justice to Occupied Ireland.

MI5/FBI DIDN'T STOP when murderer Biro blabbed through their cover, thus demolishing their frame-up of me. They fabricated new charges and incarcerated my Mary, Frank O'Neill, Tony McCormick (RIP) and me in the Federal Correctional Center at Clark and Van Buren. After fifteen months and a fortune in legal expenses we escaped their crimes again by proving that their evidence, an FBI audiotape, was a criminal fabrication. Even the IRS participated in the crimes. All had total impunity. More Brit practices followed; the "unitary leader," an empire, ruinous military expenditures, alliances with similarly criminal regimes, violent colonization and genocide, looting of other nations' resources, abductions, assassinations, torture, secret incarcerations for indefinite periods, evidence fabrication, official secrecy and, above all, impunity. Agent Buckley began operating on Irish soil for MI5. With life-long criminal accomplice David Rupert whom he also got onto MI5's payroll, they continue their crimes for MI5. They framed Michael McKevitt using the same criminal tactics that failed against us in Chicago. All with impunity and news media complicity. Where are our fellow American patriots? When will we reestablish the US Constitution? fogartyc@att.net. Tel. 312-664-7651.



Sporting Log

Sean Og. O Ceallachain



the re-development cost of the GAA stadium will be paid off to the bank within the next 18 months—three years sooner than predicted at the time. The commercial aspect of the famous venue must be very pleasing to the Association although the extent by way of financial returns at the outset was not considered to be as high as it emerged. The use of Croke Park by the rugby and soccer bodies brought in a tidy 7.5m. The number of people who attended GAA championship matches last year was down 70,000 on 2006 to 1,750,000.

The number of people who went through the turnstiles in 2007 was 2,000,000, an increase of almost 650,000 on the previous year. That was an increase of 49% on the 2006 figure. There were 33 events staged

at Croke Park last year so the GAA could not have been happier with the returns from the action in the park with a figure 44.4m euro. That was an increase of 40% on 2006's figure of 7.5m on the rental of the ground to the IRFU and the FAI. These bodies paid 1.25m euro a game to play their international at the famous venue. Naturally GAA president Nicky Brennan pointed out to the counties that any money earned from the renting of the stadium would be 'ring fenced' and ploughed back to the clubs in the counties. It is no surprise that the debt of re-developing Croke Park will be paid off in 18-24 months.

Waterford hurling followers will be interested to learn that their very wholehearted John Mullane is recuperating quickly from surgery to cure nasal problems which left him with severe breathing and sleeping difficulties. Mullane wore a protective helmet during the early part of his career but dispensed with it in 2003. He revealed how fractures sustained over the past few seasons left him without an air passage in the left side of his nose. But the damage caused by repeated blows to the head

has convinced the Deise star to start wearing the helmet again. Mullane has had the operation to correct the nose problem but it will be some weeks before he will take a hurley in his hands again.

Mayo football star Kevin O'Neill has decided to call it a day on the inter-county front due to work commitments and so joins another great warrior David Brady who also opted out of John O'Mahony's plans for the coming championship season. Roscommon and Galway County Boards have come out strongly in favour of the resumption of International Rules games between Ireland and Australia. There was strong opposition to the "Rules" series after violence marred the 2006 games. But Galway Football Board Chairman Joe Colleran wants the GAA to make sure there is no repetition of the disgraceful scenes started by the Australians. GAA officials met with the Australian officials in Dubai in February and produced a four-page outline for a revamped series. The question of discipline has been most scrutinised and one of the disincentives for rough play is that anyone sent off will carry their punishment back into their domestic League (GAA and AFL) afterwards.

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Former GAA president Peter Quinn, who was the prime mover in opening up the rich potential value of the use of Croke Park to other sports can now bask in the wisdom of that appraisal. It was during his three-year-term as GAA supremo when the re-development of Croke Park was undertaken. The outstanding debt was revealed recently when the GAA unveiled its annual accounts and it now appears that

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Raised on Songs and Stories

Shay Clarke



Celtic Thunder ... the early days

Public Television seems to have the power to confer instant stardom on musical hopefuls lucky enough to be included in their specials. It's a bit like winning the lottery, but not in an America Idol way, as these productions are planned, rehearsed, packaged and promoted long before you can see them on your T.V. set.

The real issues here are talent, production values, and a lot of hard work...Ireland seems to have them by the bucketful---take Celtic Thunder for instance.

If you have been watching Public Television over the last few weeks, especially during their pledge drives, then you have probably had the distinct pleasure of meeting Celtic Thunder, the latest production of Sharon Browne, who also brought us Celtic Woman. I caught up with them in Chicago a week before St. Patrick's Day.

Friday March 7th.

I'm traveling with Jean Clancy, to hook up with the lads at their Chicago Hotel. George, Paul, Ryan, Keith and Damien have been in the U.S.A. since Wednesday and Jean is monitoring their ratings, feedback, and positive vibes from various Public T.V. stations around the country. Jean Clancy is the project manager and is constantly on her phone

and laptop computer as she pushes and promotes her boys, weaving together press reporters, radio presenters, T.V. hosts, news anchors, and concert promoters in this pre-emptive bid for the hearts of music lovers all over America. The boys have been busier than Barac Obama and Hilary Clinton on the stomp and Jean has been orchestrating the lot. Ryan, Keith and Damien went to Tampa FL. on Wednesday where they helped host a live pledge on WEDU on Thursday evening. The station aired their DVD/concert, which was recorded before a live audience at the Helix in Dublin in August of last year.

George and Paul went straight from the airport to WLIW in NY for a live pledge and performance on the day they arrived and then on to Philadelphia on Thursday to WHYY to man the pledge phones and perform, as their concert was being broadcast. It's now Friday morning and all get to meet at a downtown Hotel in Chicago. This afternoon is for interviews with representatives of the Irish Media including the Irish American News, the Midwest Irish Focus, and Irish Dance Magazine.

Even at 70 miles per hour, Jean is on the phone. "Have you not read your itinerary," says Jean to Sharon Browne. Sharon is at O'Hare with Ryan, Keith and Damien, they have flown in from Florida. George and Paul have flown in from Philadelphia. They all manage to hook up together and proceed to the hotel in Chicago where we all arrive together. Jean had stopped at CBS for a few minutes to drop off music for the next days live performance. All is good as I meet these amazing boys and men of Celtic Thunder for the first time.

They range in age from 14 to 40 and their talent and common love of their Celtic Heritage drew them, just a year ago, to open call auditions. They hail from Derry, Dublin, Glasgow and Tyrone. They are students, bankers, bus builders, and a professional tenor.

Keith Harkin, 21 years of age, singer songwriter and guitarist has the surfer dude good looks of the boy-band rock star with a talent to match. His own song "Lauren and I", which is included in the show, could and will be a major hit.....it's amazing and so is Keith.

Ryan Kelly the banker from Moy, Co. Tyrone is 28 years of age and single. Another great talent who can sing everything from trad to Rock. He was singing at a wedding the day before

the audition and heard about them in a phone call from his brother. Ryan, an accountant, is on a career break from the bank...I don't think he is every going back. He has put his heart and soul into this project and he loves the reaction from audiences to the show. Ryan plays the "bad boy role" in Celtic Thunder and his version of Desperado is the best I've ever heard.

George Donaldson is a coach-builder from Glasgow with a big heart and a bigger voice. He sings Christy, The Dubliners and the rebel songs. A committed and lifelong Celtic supporter, George got to sing at Celtic Park, Glasgow in front of 65,000 fans. In Scottish terms that's like doing the halftime show at the Super Bowl. At his first audition George thought he had blown it, but lucky for all of us, he was chosen to stay. George is 40, married with a beautiful daughter Sarah (you can see her smiling proudly as her Daddy sings "My Boy" on the DVD or the Public Television special). George is on leave of absence from his job, but again I think he has probably left that part of his past behind. George also sings "The Old Man" and "Voyage" on the show. Powerful stuff.

Paul Byrom is from Dublin, he is 28 years old and single. Paul, another handsome divil, should be used to all the hooplah as he enjoys a lively solo career---but this is different and Paul has embraced it. Paul is from the same part of Dublin as myself and even worked as a lounge boy at O'Dwyers in Kilmacud, as did my brothers and I. He attended Blackrock College and has been singing professionally every since. Check out his solo album Velvet. Paul is the real deal and his renditions of "She", "Nights in White Satin", and "Remember Me" are stand out gems on the DVD. Paul studied under renowned Irish vocal teacher Dr. Veronica Dunne who has trained some of Ireland's best voices.

And then you have wee Damian McGinty from Derry. Damian is a 14-year-old future mega star. He won his first music competition at 6 years of age and has been winning ever since. What a voice, it's truly amazing to hear such a mature vocal from someone so young. It was Phil Coulter who introduced Damian to Celtic Thunder and when you hear him sing "Come by the Hills" or "Puppy Love" you will understand why this kid is destined for stardom.

Legendary Irish composer Phil Coulter is Celtic Thunder's musical director. The April 2007 auditions have gathered the vocal talents of Damian, Keith, Ryan, Paul and George, and Sharon Browne's vision is fast becoming a reality as the talent gathers at Phil's studio to get to know each other and rehearse.

Phil Coulter is a God in Irish music circles and has no trouble putting together an amazing group of musicians to complete the picture. Phil has always been a magnet for talent.

In June and July they recorded 28 album tracks and in August they performed at the Helix in Dublin with a live audience where they recorded the DVD/concert.

Celtic Thunder were now a product ready for marketing. These were worrying times for the lads but Sharon Browne is such a professional, she had been there before and she went to work.

It was in January when the lads met with Decca/Universal executives in New York. They realized then the magnitude of the project. The train was on the tracks and it was not stopping.

Saturday March 8th

Celtic Thunder perform "Ireland's Call" live on Chicago's CBS Channel 2 morning show. The Celtic Thunder album is at number 3 at the amazon.com charts in the overall music category and it hasn't even been released yet. Saturday afternoon they are on Sean Ginely's Good Morning Ireland radio show and then on to WTTW Channel 11 for the live pledge and broadcast of the concert.

Sunday March 9th

Beverley, for the Southside Irish parade. Live CBS broadcast, interviews and on the CBS float for the parade itself. Jean Clancy, our intrepid project manager is run ragged as she is constantly fielding phone calls and trying to keep all the balls in the air. She manages to get them back to the hotel and then back again to the Southside in the evening for a live performance at Chicago's Gaelic Park.

Monday March 10th

Flying back to New York on American Airlines, Jean hears the voices again. The lads have been recognized on the flight and reward their fellow passengers with a few songs 5 miles over Ohio.

Tuesday March 11th

Easy day. Interviews with Irish and American media including the Irish Echo and The Voice.

Wednesday March 12th

A great honor for Celtic Thunder. They are performing for the "69th Regiment", "The Fighting Irish", at their annual St. Patrick's Day bash at the Armory in New York. They are entertaining dignitaries, troops and veterans some of whom are being redeployed to Afghanistan a few days later.

Thursday March 13th

Taping for another TV show to be broadcast later. In the evening they are back on Public TV, this time it's WNET, the largest Public TV station

in the country. At this stage the boys are like veterans as they handle the phones during the live pledge and do a live performance in the studio.

Friday March 14th

Today's lunch at the Metropolitan Club in New York for the Irish US Consul's lunch where they perform for guests and dignitaries at this stellar event. Then a photo shoot in Times Square and Central Park in their black kilts. On the subway back to the hotel, the boys serenade the passengers.

Saturday March 15th/ Sunday March 16th

Free at last to rest their voices for St. Patrick's Day. They meet with Richard Taylor from the Irish Independent newspaper. Richard is going to try and keep up with the boys tomorrow St. Patrick's Day.

Monday March 17th

Up at 5 for a 7:45 am sound check at The Waldorf Astoria. It's the Governor's breakfast and they have a 9am live performance. Never mind that New York has no Governor today, they have lots of other dignitaries to entertain. Dash to 64th and 5th to NBC for an on the street sound check for their broadcast at 11am live on 5th Avenue. Then the Today Show at 10 for live performance.

It's only noon and these boys are already more recognizable than Barac, McCain and Hillary to the St. Patrick's Day revelers in New York.

At 1pm they are live on the air on Adrian Flannelly's 38th St. Patrick's Day broadcast meeting more dignitaries, some of them perhaps for the third time today. At 2pm they are in the studio again. Out of Ireland's St. Patrick's Day party where they record a live interview with Patricia O'Reilly and perform. 3:30 pm fourth sound check of the day at the private residence of the Irish Consul General to New York for his St. Patrick's Day party. Here they meet former President Mary Robinson and Irish Minister for Education Mary Hanafin.

At 5pm it's large pints of Guinness for everyone except Damian who is underage. The boys are free on the 18th and fly home on the 19th.

They have achieved a lot in 2 weeks. Their album, released on March 18th went straight to number 1 at amazon.com, and went straight to number 1 on the download charts also. They have appeared and performed on 75% of Public television stations across the country. They have been on CBS and NBC both regional and national and have taken part in the New York St. Patrick's Day parade and the Southside Irish Parade in Chicago.

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Picture is Dr. James Hogg, D.D.S., right, welcoming Dr. Victor Avila to join his Oak Lawndental practice. Dr. Avila graduated from the University of Illinois College of Dentistry. Dr. Avila also has a degree in engineering and worked for a few years in engineering before getting into dentistry.



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The Irish Rover

By James McClure



Irish Leader Who Made British Cry "Uncle" Has American Nephew

Chicagoan John Collins Claims Heritage and General Michael Collins' Missing Cap

Imagine if you could hold George Washington's tri-cornered hat from the final Yorktown victory or John F. Kennedy's naval cap lost from his wartime PT-109 patrol boat's fateful ride into history in the Pacific.

Irish patriot Michael Collins has often been compared to both men, and for good reason. Martyred near the end of the Irish civil war in 1922 after having brought the British Empire to its knees with his leadership in the Anglo-Irish War, General Michael Collins is known as the George Washington of Ireland, and the father of guerilla warfare, less politically correct... terrorism.

Like JFK, his death is well-documented yet shrouded in mystery. Controversy and conjecture highlight debate about just who killed him as he traveled in an open car motorcade near his family home in County Cork. On August 22nd the commander in chief of the Irish Free State was silenced, but his legacy of freedom for Ireland and a mystery was just beginning.

Cap: Missing or Mystery Solved?

In *The Shooting of Michael Collins*, first printed in Ireland in 1981, author and retired army captain John Feehan covers familiar ground of whether or not Collins was murdered by the British, fellow Irishmen or a freak accident. Many feel the 1996 film *Michael Collins*, with Liam Neeson in the title role, accurately displays much of Collins' life and death.

On screen, as ambushers take potshots at Collins, he falls fatally wounded as his cap is blown off his head, never to be seen again in the film. And some say in real life.

Feehan writes "A cap, said to be Collins' is on public display in the Museum in Dublin. It has a large tear at the back consistent with a ricochet tearing it. This would seem to confirm Dalton's theory, except for the fact that the cap does not belong to Michael Collins."

It was General Emmet Dalton who gave the world the first news of Collins' death in his handwritten telegram he had transmitted from Dublin to Cork:

CHIEF OF GENERAL STAFF DUBLIN.

COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF SHOT DEAD IN AMBUSH AT BEALNAB-LATH NEAR BANDON 6:30 TUESDAY EVENING WITH ME, ALSO ONE MAN WOUNDED. REMAINS LEAVING BY CLASSIC FOR DUBLIN TODAY WEDNESDAY NOON. ARRANGE TO MEET. REPLY.

-- DALTON

Dalton would later tell an interviewer, Cormac MacCarthaigh, that the cap in the museum was his own, according to Feehan's transcript:

Cormac MacCarthaigh: A military

man named McDonnell claimed to see the newly displayed cap as a teenager, shortly after the Collins ambush. But writes Feehan of McDonnell: "He noticed a number of bullet holes in the cap. If this is correct then one must ask what happened to that cap? There are certainly no bullet holes in the cap on display now."

Then there is the local tradition that a young girl found the real cap the morning after at the site of the ambush. A priest advised her to give the cap to the Free State troops in Bandon. Their commander, General Sean Hales, made a troubling discovery according to Feehan's book: "Hales noticed that there was one bullet hole on the left-hand side of the band. It was this which aroused his suspicions and caused him to start probing into Collins' death. He is said to have sent the cap to Army Headquarters in Dublin as evidence of his suspicions. The cap, has, however, disappeared."

While many theories abound as to the real cap's finder and display location, the trail grows quickly cold in the years following 1922. Two years later John Collins, son of Michael's older brother Patrick is

you again."

But one small piece of that homeland would return... enough to hang his brother's hat on.

A Familiar Cap 86 Years Later — County Cork to Cook County

Sitting down to a leisurely dinner in the Crystal Lake, Illinois Hackney's Irish restaurant the week before St. Patrick's Day, John Collins relates the many accomplishments of his famous uncle Michael and the mysteries of his death. "I have a book titled *The Irish 100* that lists the most influential Irish of all time... St. Patrick is listed first and my uncle Michael Collins is listed second," he says with a proud smile. The World War II Navy veteran has seen a lot of the world between the Pacific campaign and his own visits to Ireland with his wife Ruth, son Dennis, daughter Renee and their children.

Ask him about his heritage, family or successful career in industrial sales in Indianapolis and Chicago and you get warm anecdotes and appreciative smiles. It seems maudlin to ask an accomplished man about the whereabouts of a military cap his uncle wore at the moment of his death.

"Oh, I have it," he states matter-of-factly with the calm assurance of what is apparently a lifelong fact. "Dear, did you ask the waitress for the Grey Poupon mustard?" John then asks Ruth Collins, who joined him and the whole extended family in Ireland trips in 1992 and 1997.

What seems commonplace to Collins is staggering in its import. Could he really have the missing headgear of the George Washington of Ireland? An artifact that might play a role in determining the answer to a question that has made the round of Emerald Isle pubs for generation after generation: "Who shot Michael Collins?"

Family History, Irish Heritage

That question may never be answered but soon Collins takes Irish American News to the location where he keeps a number of items from his uncle's final day on this earth. Some are especially poignant, like the railway ticket and stamp that Michael Collins had in his pocket the day he died. One had been torn in half and handed back to Collins on the trip to the armored car convoy that would claim his life. The stamp would never be mailed. No further correspondence would reach his brother, John's father, in America. But John Collins claimed his uncle's cap did.

The cap looks its age but is well preserved, and notably missing any bullet or tear marks, though either could prove or disprove authenticity given the range of opinions.

"I remember quite clearly the day my dad came home with the cap. Not because of the cap but because he had brought me a little toy to play with that he had gotten for me in New York." The Chicago cop had gotten the toddler's present during



Ruth and John Collins keep Michael's heritage alive in the States

cap on display in the National Museum as being the cap worn by Collins at the time of his death. It appears to me that the cap in question is too small to have been worn by Collins. In the 'blow-up' of the photographs taken of Collins shortly before his death the position of the cap badge does not agree.

General Dalton: It is probably my cap. I put my cap under his head to contain the wound.

Collins' eldest surviving male heir, 83-year-old John Collins of Lake County, Illinois agrees. "It can't be my uncle's cap. I've been there and seen it—it's two sizes too small."

"Missing" Cap Spurs Multiple Theories

Whom or what to believe? A Dublin

born on Chicago's South Side into an era of different armed intrigue. His immigrant father would become one of Chicago's youngest police captains in the era of Al Capone and the gang war between the South Side Irish and North Side Italian outfit run by Scarface.

In one of the ironies of history Michael rejected his older brother's offer to join him in America, and Patrick turned down an offer to return to Ireland and fight at his younger brother's side. They would never meet again.

"My Dad knew when he left in 1903, as all in his working-class generation did, that they would likely never see their homeland again. The expense and time of travel by ship was too great. Friends and family would actually hold a wake for you as you left since they knew they would never see

the trip to Gotham to meet with William T. Cosgrave, who was on a state visit to America. Cosgrave, who succeeded Michael Collins as Chairman of the Irish Provisional Government from August to December 1922, served also as the first President of the Executive Council of the Irish Free State from 1922 to 1932.

And so in 1926 Cosgrave personally delivered what John Collins' says is his uncle's cap to his father the police captain.

Hard to believe? Much of Collins' life and legacy was suppressed in Ireland and England yet flourished in the United States and elsewhere. An Israeli brigade that won a new country for insurgents in once British-occupied Palestine is named for Michael Collins.

"I can certainly see where some people would think that this is not his cap but I believe it is. You have to ask yourself, why would Cosgrave make a round trip of a month or more... he had to go by boat of course... just to give a replica and not the real thing?"

One year before Lindbergh crossed the Atlantic solo for the first time, Collins says his uncle's cap came to him in the opposite direction. "Of course Cosgrave was in the States for other reasons... but he made it a point to seek out my dad and give him this. I believe it's because he wanted someone to have it who would cherish it and retain it for safekeeping."

Three Generations Return Home—Lake County to County Cork

John Collins cherishes not only the cap but an experience his father never got—the opportunity to return to Ireland and see the home that Patrick Collins and his young brother Michael Collins were born in. "It's humbling to stand there and see a sight your

Dad knew he would never see again... and to do it with your entire family, all generations present."

At the time Collins' 13-year-old granddaughter Emily Anne looked at the tears

streaming down her grandfather's face and said "Don't cry Grandpa! I wish I could take away what makes you hurt so much."

For John Collins and devotees of an Ireland freed by Michael Collins, that would be taking away everything.

"I'm very, very humble that I was alive and able to do that and grateful for my whole family there to be standing in my father's courtyard. Anyone who's lived through World War II as my generation did... when we left we didn't know anything about if we would come back. I think more than anything I felt an understanding of how he felt when he left."

It appears what John Collins holds in his heart carries more weight than the simple militia cap of Michael Collins that he holds in his hands.

"I think it's amazing that a young man from the background that he came from is capable of doing the things that he did. It's



John Collins holds the cap of Michael Collins

certainly an example of what the common man can do with other common men's understanding and assistance... having the same goal."

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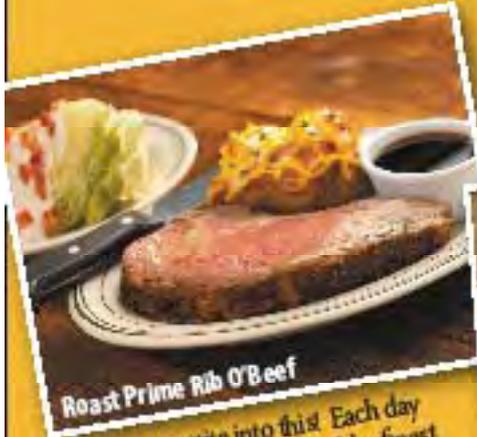
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