

"It's a Wonderful Life"
as the McGrath Family
Celebrates 40 Years
at Donegal Imports

Irish american news
ian
December 2019

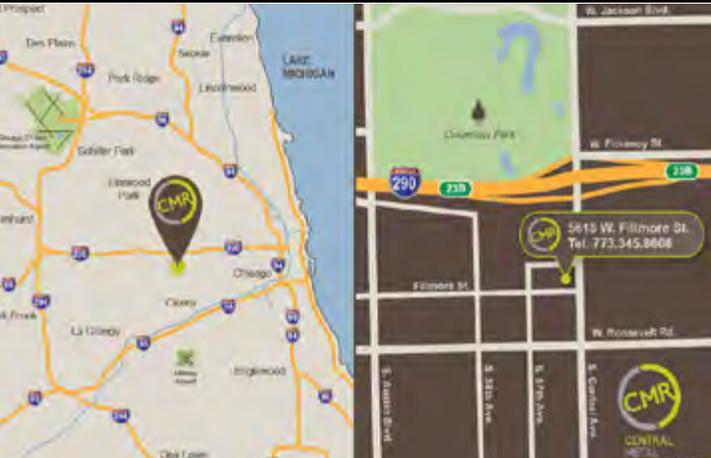
***The McGrath Clan left to right:
Noeleen, Sheila, Alex, Alastar, and Anne.***
Story Page 6




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Tom Boyle Moves to FNB Brookfield

After thirty-eight years in various positions at the local community bank, Countryside Bank, Tom Boyle (pictured) will be moving his expertise to the Board of Directors at First National Bank Brookfield where he will rejoin Dan Harrington and Mike Ryan.

Boyle was born in Visitation parish on the south side. He is a graduate of Leo High School, St. Joseph's College, Western Illinois University, and the Graduate School of Banking at the University of Wisconsin. After school, Boyle began his career as a bank

examiner for the State of Illinois in 1974, and then subsequently served as an auditor and loan officer at Ford City Bank from 1977 to 1982. He settled with his wife, Josephine, and four (now grown) children in Burr Ridge.

Boyle joined Countryside Bank in 1982, only a few years after its formation, as a loan officer. He eventually became President in 1997 and Vice Chairman in 2009. In addition to his work at Countryside Bank, he has served on numerous committees and been a member of countless organi-

zations, including the American Banker's Association, the Illinois Banker's Association, and the Chicago Bankers Club. He has been




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instrumental in the Irish American community in the city, not only in terms of serving as a banker, but also as a member of Chicago Gaelic Park, where he sat on the Board of Directors for over twenty-five years and as President for three. He is a member of St. John of the Cross Parish in Western Springs.

Please join us in congratulating him on a successful career at Countryside Bank and wishing him continued success at FNB Brookfield.



Russ Hartigan

For Judge

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 - Served as **President of Lyons Township Democratic Organization**
 - Served as elected President of the 45,000 member **Illinois State Bar Association**
- Served as **Lyons Township Supervisor, Trustee and Township Trustee of Schools, and Trustee of the Village of Western Springs.**

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Paid for by Committee To Elect Russ Hartigan Judge. A copy of our report filed with the State Board of Elections is (or will be) available on the board's official website or for purchase from the State Board of Elections, Springfield, Illinois.



From the Motherland

By Sean Farrell

Guests Of The Nation

Direct provision, central to Ireland's treatment of refugees seeking international protection and asylum here, has become a significant political issue. Opposition has emerged in several rural communities over plans to set up new asylum centres, with pickets on designated premises. Two mothballed hotels in Moville and Roosky earmarked for asylum centres were subjected to arson attacks. More serious was the burning, outside his house, of Sinn Fein TD Martin Kenny's car, after he publicly supported a proposed centre in Ballinamore, Co Leitrim. The attack was widely condemned and could serve as a wake-up call. A round-the-clock picket of the proposed centre was removed in mid-November after a High Court injunction. How enduring local opposition will be remains to be seen.

The demonstrations and pickets have been directed, not at the notion of asylum seekers per se, but at a perceived lack of consultation and information from Government agencies, seen as less than transparent. There are objections also, not without substance, that there are inadequate infrastructures locally to meet refugee needs; Ballinamore, for example, with a population of 914, and an infrastructure to match, is set to receive 130 asylum seekers. The protests and placards have also called for the scrapping of the Direct Provision system, condemning it as inhumane and demanding that asylum seekers receive better treatment. These last have been dismissed as disingenuous by counter demonstrators in support of refugees who have made accusations of racism - strenuously denied - and of manipulation by right wing outsiders.

Direct Provision was established as an "emergency measure" in 1999, and arguably in recent years there have been improvements to many (though certainly not all) of its more objectionable features. Many local communities have welcomed asylum seekers over the years. So do recent events show Ireland becoming more racist or anti-immigrant, after actually receiving proportionately more EU migrants after the 2004 Enlargement than any other country, including Britain, where the post-2004 influx is believed to have been a major factor in the 2016 "Leave" vote?



Was Casey's showing in last year's Presidential election, where 10% of the whole electorate voted for him after he

made anti-Traveller remarks, a portent for the future? Is Ireland, which takes much inspiration from the Nordic model, about to experience an anti-immigrant backlash similar to that which has fuelled the emergence of right wing political parties throughout Scandinavia? Will the issue of Immigration, as some assert, become an issue in the next General Election?

Answers to the questions posed need to be teased out in some detail, though in short the answers are negative. The Irish people have welcomed, settled and integrated relatively large numbers of immigrants in the last two decades without much friction or prejudice in a period which spanned the 2008 economic crash, despite being a society frankly unused to immigration. There is little interest in or support for any anti-immigration political party and the firm consensus among politicians against one is clear. A recent attempt by an independent rural TD to attack Nigerian immigrants in particular for sending money home was firmly dismissed by the Taoiseach and the President, both of whom referred to the vital assistance provided by remittances home from Irish emigrants in the quite recent past.

Direct Provision, which nobody likes and few defend, is "live" now for a particular reason. It was introduced to cope with what was for Ireland in 1999 an unprecedented influx of asylum seekers annually - 7224 in 1999, up from 4626 in 1998 and 424 in 1995. The number peaked in 2002 at 11,634, gradually declining to under 1000 in 2013 but since then has risen steadily to 3673 in 2018 and is expected to reach well over 4000 by year's end, pushing an already creaking system to breaking point.

There are currently roughly 6,000 people in Direct Provision, including 1,672 minors, plus 778 persons who have received refugee status but cannot afford outside accommodation. They are housed in several dozen Direct Provision Centres scattered around Ireland (significantly only two in Dublin), all of which are full, while a further 1531 persons, including 290 children, are housed in temporary emergency accommodation centres opened over the last year. Some 8,700 applicants are currently awaiting asylum decisions (the balance applicants not requiring Direct Provision).

Under the system, after processing, newly arrived asylum seekers are accom-

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modated in a regional centre, theoretically suited to their circumstances, while their cases are considered. There are currently thirty eight centres (the number fluctuates), with plans to set up more to cope with recent increases in applications. Most are contracted out and privately run, and provide full board to residents, about a third of whom have access to their own cooking facilities (a major issue). The centres range in size and type; the largest, the former holiday camp at Mosney in Meath, holds 900, while many are small hotels or purpose built hostels. A much liked centre in Dublin's Hatch Street was closed last year amid plans to become a five star hotel.

Asylum seekers are paid a weekly allowance of €38.80 (€29.80 for children), are entitled to free medical screening on arrival and qualify for a medical card, giving free access to medical care. School education is free. Since July 2018 asylum seekers can apply for work (a major improvement, long sought and lobbied for) after nine months in Ireland, though those appealing an initial rejection of their case are excluded. As of November, 3350 applications to work out of 5000 had been approved.

There are obviously problems lumping people of different cultures, language and beliefs together, with little privacy and few individual needs and requirements catered for. However, the system, which

on paper looks fine, and after all provides safety and security for refugees who have fled persecution, probably would have and could have worked well if only the asylum process from start to finish could have been compressed and streamlined into a few months. This has manifestly not proven to be the case. Most asylum seekers, once turned down, appealed the decision, with, over time, an elaborate appeals procedure evolving, which in many cases has dragged on for years, institutionalising and isolating individuals and whole families in asylum centres, with all the attendant pressures and strains this brings.

The current surge in demand for Direct Provision accommodation could not have come at a worse time, with Ireland still very much in its post-crash hangover where the building industry is concerned. Not enough houses and apartments are being built to meet the current housing shortage let alone cater for both a rising population and existing pent up demand. Local authorities have had to grapple with an unprecedented situation that has left 10,000, including many families, homeless and in emergency accommodation. With new asylum seekers arriving at close to 100 a week, and no available accommodation, there has been no option but to source new premises and locations. Hence the current problem and hence the stoking of local fears. (next pg)

(from previous pg) There is general agreement that Direct Provision, after twenty years, is a flawed system which needs a radical overhaul. But how to proceed? Is there a magic bullet, and if so what is it?

Shamrock American Club Events

The Annual Christmas Brunch will be held on Sunday December 15th in the Shamrock American Room. Mass will be at 10:00am with brunch to follow. Santa Claus will be making an appearance with gifts for all the good little and not so little boys and girls! Parents please bring a wrapped gift with your child's name on it to be passed out. Coffee, tea and goodies will also be available. Adults are \$13.00 per person and children 5-12 are \$6.00 and under 4 are free. Call Pauline Scollard by December 12th with your reservation.

January 4th the Shamrock American Club will hold its annual Card Party! Doors open at 7:30pm with playing to start at 8:00pm. Card game "25" \$20.00 per person, Card game "31" \$10.00 per person to include cash bar and tea, coffee, and goodies will be served. Grab a group of your friends and have a great night of card playing! The more that plays the bigger the pay!

There will be a table for Beginners "25" for ones that would like to learn how to play. Contact scollard@att.net

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Alex worked for Jewel Foods and then as a manager of Dominick Food Stores before he took the leap into business on his own! “Sheila had faith in my business sense and our being able to work together to build this, so I gave up the security and we went for it,” laughs Alex.

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Some of the McGrath Clan: Back row; Noeleen, Sheila, Alex, Michelle, Alastar, (with Maeve on his shoulders), and Anne. Front: Keira, Alex, and Caitlin.



Former Mayor Rahm Emanuel, 2019 Chicago St. Patrick's Day Parade Queen, Madeline Mitchell, and James Coyne, Business Manager, Plumbers Local 130, and Parade Chairman



2019 Chicago St. Patrick's Day Parade Queen, Madeline Mitchell



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(l to r): Matt Walsh and friends



Joseph McKittrick, Anne Cahill



(l to r): Eamonn Cummins, Bob McNamara, and David Ocasek



(l to r): Kevin Kelley, David Torres, Erika Conway, and Eamonn Cummins

Former Taoiseach Enda Kenny, invited to Notre Dame to honor Denis Mulcahy who founded Project children, spoke at the Union League Club about the future of Ireland. The former Governor of Virginia, James McDowell, Ireland's Ambassador to America, Dan Mulhall, Irish Consul General Brian O'Brien, Vice-Consul Sarah Keating and Irish tenor, Anthony Kearns also attended.



(l to r): Donncha O'Tuama, Brian O'Brien, Karen Healy, Damien O'Brien, and Robert J. Finley



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Former Taoiseach*



*Anthony Kearns,
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Two Weeks Left to See "Looking at the Stars," an Irish Art Exhibition at Notre Dame

By Katherine Iannitelli

I fancy myself a lover of all things Irish and, in another vein, a bit of an art aficionado. But when I visited the University of Notre Dame's Snite Museum of Art to see "Looking at the Stars," a special exhibition of Irish art, I had to

admit my knowledge of Irish visual artists was a mostly blank canvas (pun wholeheartedly intended).

Apparently, I'm not alone.

"When we think about Irish culture, we think about performing arts and literature," says the museum's Curator of European

Art Cheryl Snay. She explains that organizing this exhibition was a learning experience for her as well. "(Irish) fine art, painting, sculpture, printmaking, and photography are less familiar. The point we're trying to make is that Irish culture does have a visual component."

And make the point, they certainly have.

The exhibition features paintings from a 2018 gift of the Donald and Marilyn Keough Foundation, as well as loans from Chicago collectors Patricia and John O'Brien, and many works from the university's Rare Books and Special Collections housed at the Hesburgh Libraries.

Upon turning the corner to the O'Shaughnessy Galleries, one is immediately drawn in by the burnt orange halo over a prayerful "Young Claudius," the exhibition's signature piece by Mary Swanzy, who painted the 1942 oil-on-canvas upon returning to Ireland after fleeing the WWII air raids over her London home.

Flanking Swanzy's allegorical composition are stunning 19th- and 20th-century land- and seascape masterpieces, including the quaint "Cattle at Moldowney," by Nathaniel Hone II; the placid blues and grays of "Roadside Cottages" by Paul Henry and "Boulders Off the West" by E. Grace Mitchell Henry; a colorful "Torremolinos" by Roderic O'Connor; and two figures by Jack Butler Yeats: the mysterious "Driftwood in a Cave" and the dynamic "Scratch Mare."

Also featured are Yeats's whimsical illustrations, charmingly displayed on open pages of the rare books they embellish. One of the texts on display, as the thoughtfully crafted caption explains, was published by the "Cuala Press," an organization founded by Yeats's sisters Elizabeth and Lily, with editorship by brother William Butler Yeats.

The tone then shifts, dramatically, with a series of intense, mesmerizing, black-and-white portraits of Ireland's Travellers by photographer Alen MacWeeney, who befriended the storied people serendipitously on the outskirts

of Dublin in 1965. Over six years' time, he captured spectacular details of their austere lifestyle, contrasted by images of light-hearted playfulness. In some, his subjects are caught engaging with

each other in poignant and tender moments. In others, their eyes lock onto his lens with a serene sureness that is breathtaking.

"I wanted to show their
Continued to page 16



Nollaig shona

agus

Athbhliain faoi mhaise

(Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year)

to

All the readers of *Irish American News*



Standing, left to right: Terry Sullivan, Emilie McGuire, Patrick C. Anderson, Dennis M. Lynch, Matthew M. Gannon, Joan M. Mannix, Neil Schelhammer, Terry Geoghegan.

Seated left to right: David P. Huber, Martin Healy, Jr., John P. Scanlon, Kevin T. Veugeler Not Pictured: Matthew Healy.



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Irish Books and Plays in Review

Frank West



Constructing Alice

By: Cecil Allen, Self-Published

"Constructing Alice" is an extraordinary novel about what characteristics to encourage in a child. It is also an amazing social history of Ireland. Each chapter is like a scene in a play—bright, memorable, and powerful. Allen understands the immediacy and magic of the theatre. This is probably due to his theatre experience, as he was a professional actor.

Allen is the author of the grand, sweeping, epic novel, "The Actor—A Novel." He was a broadcaster with RTE for over twenty years! He now "is a retired college lecturer from the Dublin Institute of Technology and holds an MFA (in theatre arts) from the University of Minnesota." "He is the father of two sons and lives in Malahide, County Dublin, with his wife Julie"

Alice's father and mother are Thomas and Mariah Dalton. They both come from wretchedly poor backgrounds. As a boy, Thomas came to Dublin and swept the floor in a barber shop. He developed a chain of hairdressing salons in Dublin. He thanked himself for this because "he knew that through sheer hard work, personal drive, and a natural talent he had created his own work."

However, both he and his wife have almost no parenting skill or even empathy for children, as this quote shows. Thomas left the house to take his eight-year-old son to the horse-drawn cab that would take him to boarding school. The little boy asks: "Aren't you coming with me, Father? Gaspd the child."

Thomas turned his back, and says, "No. Your father has important work to do!"

About her mother, Alice asks herself: "Why does she never embrace me or hug me or kiss me? What did I ever do that was so wrong?"

As a parent of two fine daughters, I know the value of the Irish proverb: "Praise the children and they will thrive."

What does Alice look like? She "was a skinny, quick-witted girl with a great mop of tangled hair. She was adventurous, light-hearted, and always ready to laugh, smile and learn new things; she was also opinionated and stubborn."

In the garden, Thomas asked Alice: "Who is your new friend? That's Wendy Brincombe. Alice replied, "Oh, the Brincombes!

Thomas's face darkened. They're Protestants aren't they?"

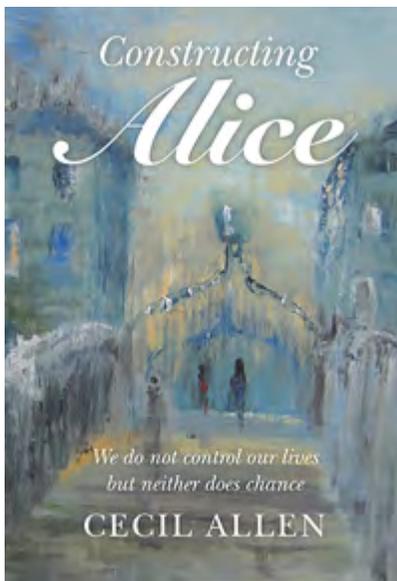
"I don't know. Is that

bad."

"Not exactly, but don't invite her into the house again. Actually, I'd prefer if you didn't associate with her at all."

Alice asked herself "why her father had asked her not to play with Wendy Brincombe?"

"Wendy's mother always walked Wendy



to dancing class and even though Wendy wasn't very good at dancing, she always acted like she was. Alice wondered what it would be like to have a mother like Wendy's: someone who would give you a hug when you felt you needed one or someone you could talk to and tell things to."

About her own mother, Alice's sister says: "No one can talk to mother about anything except herself and her imaginary illnesses."

When Thomas and Mariah had married, she was beautiful. In quick succession they had four daughters and two sons. But now, Mariah is depressed, reclusive, and drinks heavily.

The book is rich in possible quotes. In fact, I have ten pages of them to consider.

Alice is 21 years old and wants to marry George Gilbert: he is handsome, Protestant, and a hard worker. George invites Alice to his mother's 60th birthday party; "Alice had never been to a party like it. It was noisy, joyous, and filled with music. The house was heaving with relatives: Mrs. Gilbert's aging aunts and uncles, her many aunts and uncles, her many brothers and sisters, and what seemed like hundreds of cousins."

Alice's father objects to her marrying a

Protestant. Speaking to George he says: "I allowed you to come into my house to tell you to your face that I am resolved and determined that my daughter will never marry a bloody Protestant."

George responds: "I admire your determination and resolve, Mr. Dalton, but let me tell you, this bloody Protestant has just as much determination and resolve as you have, and Alice and I will marry."

"I love your daughter and after we marry, I intend to fill every moment of our time together with joy, happiness, and love."

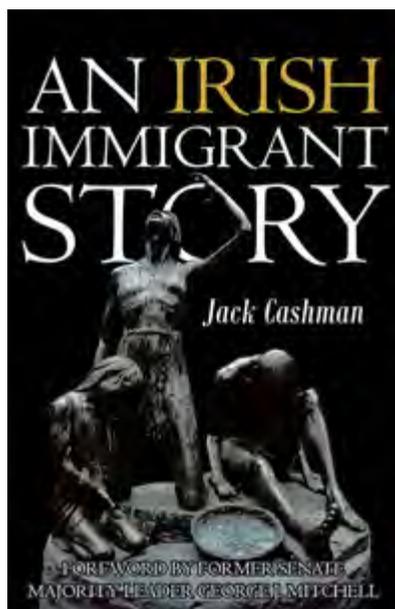
At a show-down at the Dalton's home: Mariah and Thomas are there, as well as the pastor, Canon Mulcahy. Mulcahy says: "Young man, you may not be aware that the Catholic Church has an aversion to marriage between Catholics and Protestants. Mixed marriages are greatly discouraged by Mother Church and the Vatican. The canon leaned back on the couch and gave an ecclesiastical smile that said he had explained the situation fully and that no further exploration of the topic was necessary."

True to his work, George and Alice married and lived a loving life together. And they had three delightful and considerate children.

A fitting close for this review is the author's comment about life on the book's cover. "We don't control our lives, but neither does chance."

An Irish Immigrant Story

Earlier this year, Irish-American novelist Jack Cashman published *An Irish Immigrant Story*, a unique look at Irish immigration to the United States. Chronicling the struggles of an Irish immigrant family and Ireland's drive for independence, Mr. Cashman's



novel is especially relevant in light of today's contentious immigration debate.

Johanna Cashman and John McCarthy, along with over a million others, immigrated to America to escape a devastating famine. They left behind family members who faced starvation to come to a land that would give them a new opportunity for a good life. They were soon made aware that they were not welcome in this new land and that every day would present a new struggle for survival. Johanna and John got married, determined to raise a family in their adopted country. In spite of all the obstacles they encountered, including John's untimely death, the family grew and found success. The second generation used their success to lend assistance to the country their parents were forced to leave in Ireland's drive for independence from its oppressor. This historical novel brings the reader through the story of a family that overcomes adversity to thrive in America. It details the movement in the country they left to find its own independent place in the world. **Available at Amazon.com**

Mr. Cashman is retired from a long career in business and public service in Maine. He is a long-time student of Irish history, and both his father's and mother's ancestors emigrated from Ireland to escape the famine, settling in Salem, Massachusetts.

Notes on Jackson and His Dead Released in the US

By Hugh Fulham-McQuillan

Notes on Jackson and His Dead, has just been released by Dalkey Archive in the US.

In this collection of eighteen stories, Hugh Fulham-McQuillan writes with the playfulness and intelligence of such masters of the short form as Borges, Poe, and Barthelme. He examines the aesthetics of murder, the reigning fascination with the macabre in popular culture, and the tenuous line that separates art from life. One narrator traces the Möbius strip that encloses the assassination of Julius Caesar, Shakespeare's play Julius Caesar, and the murder of Lincoln by a famous actor in a theatre. Another undergoes plastic surgery to accelerate the process of his being possessed by the ghost of the Italian composer Gesualdo. A detective ponders the interest he takes in investigating murders. Fulham-McQuillan wears his learning lightly and writes with the tact of a born storyteller.

Hugh Fulham-McQuillan is an Irish writer from Dublin. His fiction and essays

Hugh Fulham McQuillan
Notes on Jackson
and His Dead

have been published in *Ambit*, *gorse*, *The Stinging Fly*, the *Irish Times*, *Dalkey Archive Press's Best European Fiction 2018*, *The Lonely Crowd*, and *The Honest Ulsterman*. He is working on his PhD in psychology at Trinity College.

Paperback, pages: 192 ISBN-13: 978-1-62897-287-0 \$17.95
dalkeyarchive.com



Fiona's New Children's Book

Our American Dream is written by Fiona McEntee, an award-winning nationally recognized immigration lawyer. As an immigrant, mom of two young children, and lawyer who fights for justice every day, Fiona wrote *Our American Dream* to help explain the importance of a diverse and welcoming America.

Our American Dream highlights different immigrant stories and is inspired by Fiona's real-life



clients, family, and friends.

Our American Dream is the first in a series that celebrates immigrants and immigration.

A portion of the proceeds from *Our American Dream* will be donated to FWD.us I Stand With Immigrants Initiative, and to the American Immigration Council.

Fiona McEntee is an award-winning, nationally recognized immigration lawyer. She is the founding and managing attorney of McEntee Law Group, an immigration law firm based in Chicago.

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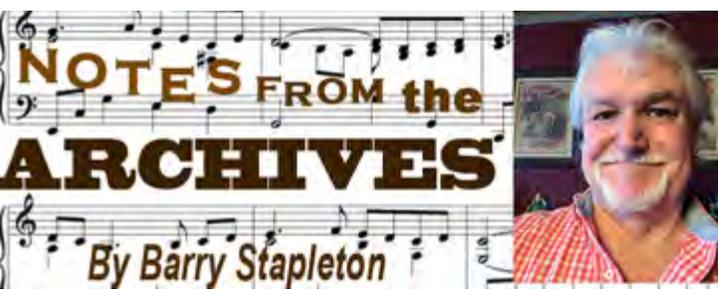
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Burl Ives

With a name like Burl Ives, it may seem surprising to many that his name would be celebrated in an Irish music archives. Like many genealogists know, names often only reflect the paternal side of a person. Burl Ives always gave credit to his grandmother for giving him his start as a singer. Both of his grandmothers were Irish with his maternal grandmother being an O'Flynn before marriage and his paternal grandmother a White. Burl states that "I am fortunate both carried with them, and gave me as a little boy, many of the beautiful songs which I know now are of Irish derivation."

Burl was born in Hunt, Illinois on June 14, 1909. He was the son of tenant farmers in the "Bible Belt" of Illinois and was singing publicly by the age of four. His grandmother Kate White was one of his greatest influences during these early days. Burl would stroll over to his grandmother's house

after his grandfather, Cyrus White would go into the fields to work. Cyrus was a God-fearing man that didn't drink or smoke and felt that

any singing should only be done in praise of the Lord. But when Cyrus left the house Kate would light up her pipe and occasionally chew tobacco while she taught Burl all the old folk songs she knew and loved.

Burl was a quick study when it came to music and soon he was singing at church functions and community functions. He went to school at Eastern Illinois State Teachers College from 1927-29 before leaving. He travelled throughout the United States for the next two years and learned many more folk songs. He then went to Juilliard in New York where he began singing professionally. He then spent many years in Broadway productions and was also a performer on the radio as a soloist and as part of the popular folk group "The Weavers." His folk singing persona during his radio and concert performances was known as "The Wayfaring Stranger."

During the 1950's and 1960's Burl ap-

peared regularly on TV and radio and toured America promoting American folk music. He was very successful in film and played the role of Big Daddy in Tennessee Williams "Cat On a Hot Tin Roof." He won an Oscar for his performance in the film, "The Big Country."

Burl is also remembered every Christmas as the narrator for the classic animation

in 1955.

In his Irish album "Songs of Ireland" he states: Many of the songs I learned in my boyhood were almost unchanged from the originals, but it was not until I visited Ireland that I felt them as part of the Irish countryside and Irish life of the past and present. Indeed, an Irish song in its homeland is a thing of even greater beauty. ... Whatever it is that makes the quality of a land and the temperament of a people was so akin to me that I recognized immediately a home for my spirit.

In 1948 Burl recorded "Blue Tail Fly" with the Andrews Sisters and it became one of his signature songs. In 1962 he had four more songs in the top forty, two of them "A Little Bitty Tear," and "Funny Way of Laughing" entered the top ten. He recorded into the 1970's and in 1979 he retired to his home in Washington State where he died in 1995.

Burl Ives was on the front line of folk music his entire life. He was a gentle giant. His performances were spirited and through his diverse talents he became one of America's best-loved entertainers. His presence on the musical scene not only served to sustain an awareness of neglected American folk songs, but would contribute to the resurgence of interest in folk music that occurred in the early 1960's.



film of "Rudolph, The Red-Nosed Reindeer."

He toured Ireland in 1952 and 1953. Upon returning from these tours he put together an album of Irish Songs. During production of this album Burl wanted to research more Irish songs and found that there was very few Irish folk songs published in the states so he published his own book of Irish songs

"From Ireland to Chicagoland"

Hailing originally from Arranmore Island, off the Donegal coast, Caroleann has been living and practicing law in Chicago for over ten years now. Her practice has been concentrated in representing labor and union workers and their families, in all types of personal injury and work related accidents; including, construction site accidents, automobile accidents and premises liability claims. Her father and three brothers all worked as tunnel miners so she has a deep rooted affinity for the working man and their families



Caroleann Gallagher
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Growing up, Caroleann has directly experienced the devastating impact on a family when the primary breadwinner suffers an injury. She recently joined a nationally renowned law firm concentrating in all types of personal injury, medical malpractice, nursing home abuse and neglect, workers compensation law, and wrongful death litigation. Caroleann is committed to protecting and vindicating the rights of people who are injured by the negligence of others

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December has arrived, and with it comes five Christmas albums to help you celebrate. Two, Christmas Time in Ireland from Paddy Homan and the Noble Call and Snowbound by Michael Londra are part of live performances you should make every effort to attend.

The rich tenor voice of Paddy Homan, great flute and whistle player Laurence Nugent, the captivating singer David Curley, bouzouki ace Mick Broderick, and the bow master Brendan Bulger comprise the band Noble Call titled after the well known custom in Ireland of giving everyone a chance to sing their song, play a tune or tell a story. Christmas would be a time when the 'Noble Call' would especially be given out as family, friends, and strangers all were welcome to participate. Their album includes a soon to be favorite carol of our generation written by David and Mick, "Christmas Time in Ireland." Uplifting, catchy, and from the heart, this song tells the story of the joy and customs of Christmas back home. What a gift they have given us!

Paddy also performs a stunningly beautiful melding of Patrick Kavanaugh's "A Christmas Childhood" and "The Wexford Carol." The combination of Paddy's gift-

The Noble Call



Christmas Time in Ireland

ed storytelling and singing will keep you hitting repeat when playing the album. David superbly sings "Holly Bears a Berry" and "The Night Visiting Song," and Larry's tunes add a rich traditional flavor. Mick's and Brendan's playing physically carries you through each song and tune. It is a fascinating and superior collection of Christmas songs and trad sets. The album closes with a beautiful arrangement of "The Kerry Christmas Carol." The official CD release is December 12th at Chief O'Neill's in Chicago. Go to the band website for their other Midwest and San Francisco appearances.

Michael Londra released his album at the IAHC to a huge and very appreciative audience Thanksgiving weekend. Michael is truly one of our generation's most well



On the Upbeat

By Maryann
McTeague Keifer

known crooners. His voice lifts and takes you on the journeys of his songs, with no better examples than those on Snowbound! A mixture of old favorites and newer compositions, this album is beautifully presented and orchestrated. He doesn't mess with our most loved songs, delivering them with a beauty that makes us fall in love with each all over again. "The Christmas Song" couldn't be done better. "I'll Be Home for Christmas" and "Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas" take you into the holidays with a perfect feeling of nostalgia. His Jazzy "Snowbound" and up-



lifting "Light of a Stable" give you newer songs to add to your holiday playlist. The gorgeous and energetic piano and guitar instrumental "What Are You Doing New Year's Eve" will be a favorite.

Michael's spellbinding voice is accompanied by some of the most beautiful piano, guitar and bass playing I have ever experienced. This is a sit by the fireplace wrapped in a blanket with your favorite drink and let the rest of the world pass you by holiday album. It is a Christmas present that you will well appreciate.

Another stunningly beautiful just released Christmas album that you must treat yourself to is Outside Track's CHRISTMAS STAR. I cannot keep from playing it-it is that exceptional! Singer and flute player Teresa Horgan, harpist Ailie Robertson, fiddler Mairi Rankin, and piano accordionist Fiona Black are well known for their superior performing, arranging and composing. We expect great from them, and they have raised the bar with this album. You will immediately enjoy the instrumental lead ins for each carol. Entrancing and alluring, they pull you into the song that

follows. Teresa's breathy beguiling voice is perfect for the solemnity of "Silent Night" and "The Christ Child's Lullaby." It is evident much work was put into the planning

of this album. Songs are well chosen, interesting, and perfect for their sound. Ailie's harp is as close to having another



voice as an instrument could be. You will be mesmerized by her fingers on the harp strings. Mairi fluidity on her fiddle takes you on a flight through the music. Fiona's accordion accompaniments and intro on "Winter Jigs" are magnificent!

Their arrangement of "Carol of the Bells" quietly teases you into the tune,

Seamus Egan Releases First Solo Album in 23 Years - Early Bright

Atmospheric new album of instrumentals taps into modern classical and Irish tradition

For over twenty years, Philadelphia's Seamus Egan blazed a new trail for Irish music in America. At the head of the

supergroup Solas, he toured the world and pushed the music in new directions, incorporating complex arrangements, stunning virtuosity, and elements of global and Americana music. His work defined Irish music for multiple generations and set a benchmark

that still hasn't been matched. As a composer, Egan put his stamp on film soundtracks, symphonic collaborations, and, most famously, co-wrote Sarah McLachlan's smash hit, "I Will Remember You." But what happens when a trailblazer needs to take a step back? Egan found himself asking that question when confronted with two major life changes: his band Solas went on hiatus,

and then picks up to a hand clapping, foot tapping close-how fun! The variety of songs and tunes will keep you replaying and enjoying this album throughout the holidays. The ladies have aced this and CHRISTMAS STAR is a must to have for your collection!

I am running out of room here, and want to mention two other albums. Andrew Finn Magill is just releasing his Christmas Carols for Violin and Guitar. He has put together a collection of well known and loved carols playing them with a solemn, yet light and lovely touch. His arrangements perfectly set the stage for a relaxing and quiet evening of music with a truly lovely "Silent Night," and very unusual and interesting renditions of "Coventry Carol" and "Carol of the Bells." Andrew is a master of both the fiddle and guitar, and you will well enjoy this album!

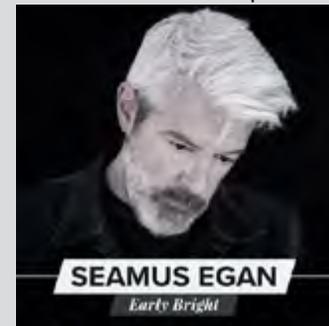
Celtic Women's The Magic of Christmas is everything fans could want-a collection of carols we love arranged and performed with good orchestral background. If you close your eyes, you'll be able to see them in their gowns on a sleigh in a snowy Christmas scene.

My wish is for you to have a Happy Christmas and the best of New Years-you are special!

opening up more time for his own music making, and he moved from his long-time home in Philadelphia to rural Vermont. "Both things coalesced not by design," Egan says, "but they came together at the same time. I liked the symmetry of it." Holed up in his Vermont cabin, Egan finally had time to go through tunes and melodies he'd composed over the years.

Inspired by this time alone with his music, he enlisted close friends and collaborators to make a new album of entirely instrumental music, *Early Bright*, to be released January 17, 2020. Throughout, the goal of Egan's new work was to reweave the threads of the Irish roots music he knows so

well with a more compositional perspective, drawing from classical influences like Bach, Segovia, Icelandic composer Jóhann Jóhannsson, and modern composers like Meredith Monk and Philip Glass. *Early Bright* marks Seamus Egan's first solo album in twenty-three years, following on the heels of his groundbreaking 1996 instrumental album *When Juniper Sleeps*.



Winter is upon us and so too is Christmas. Where has the time gone? Why does it feel like time flies? Is it because we are getting older that time seems to go so much faster? Or, is it that because we are older, we know exactly what we want and focus intensely on our goals

Art Exhibit at Notre Dame

Continued from page 10

strength, dignity, force of personality, fearlessness," says MacWeeney, who is now 80 years old.

MacWeeney also lent several of his Irish countryside photos, including an endearing image of chickens nestled inside an askew, broken-down, horse-drawn hearse, aptly named "Hens in a Hearse."

"I loved the fact that the beautiful hearse with the etched glass windows was being used as a chicken coop," he says with delight. "It's such a totally Irish kind of thing to do."

The exhibition closes with a host of contemporary prints and paintings. Hughie O'Donoghue's "Revolution Cottage" is a bold green, white, and orange oil-on-canvas that evokes a flag aglow over smoldering embers and depicts 1916 revolutionary Patrick Pearse's lakeside cabin in Galway. Across the room hangs John Doherty's "Loitering at McCarthy's Garage," a painting so realistic that it forces a double take to ensure it's not a photograph.

Snay explains that, when faced with the question of putting a name to this diverse collection, she and her colleagues asked themselves what it means to be Irish.

"When you think about the Irish, they seem to be happy, upbeat. They have a keen sense of humor and a sharp wit," she says. "On the other hand, there is a history of oppression, famine, hardship. How do they maintain this seemingly optimistic attitude in the face of so many challenges?"

Appropriately, they looked no farther than Ireland's own words to capture that dualism, with a perfectly picturesque line from playwright Oscar Wilde's "Lady Windermere's Fan."

"... we are all in the gutter, but some of us are looking at the stars."

"Looking at the Stars," which continues through December 14, will bring joy and new insight to anyone who wants to learn more about Irish visual arts.

The Snite Museum of Art is on the campus of the University of Notre Dame in South Bend, Indiana. sniteartmuseum.nd.edu



that we lose track of time? Once Thanksgiving passes, it feels like it's a race to the finish line to prepare for Christmas. For me, Christmas is a very special time of year. So many memories of my family and traditions come to mind this time of year. Excitement builds, we hustle and bustle to bake favorite recipes and follow traditions handed down from my parents and I in turn try to pass along these traditions to my children, all grown adults now, who one day will pass them down to their children.

This time of year is also a very melancholy time of year for our seniors. I can still see my own father sitting by the window in his favorite chair, watching life go by as the intensity for Christmas built. I would ask him "why so sad dad" and he would answer "I'm just melancholy, this time of year I reflect on my childhood memories, my own family all grown up, my friends that have passed away during the course of the last year and with the Christmas music in the background it just brings it all to the forefront and makes me a little sad".

This time of year is challenging for our elderly. The cold weather isolates them. Some may not have the ability to

get out or drive anymore and family members may be far away, if they even exist at all. I witnessed this very situation firsthand this week with a 97-year-old who has family, but they don't visit and grandchildren he has never met. I personally don't understand this at all, but I do know that there are different dynamics to every family. The thought of being home alone for Christmas is hard but

sadly the reality for so many of our seniors. Depression is also on the rise this time of year with the feeling of helplessness being so prevalent.

The real meaning of Christmas is giving - the giving of ourselves and our time. The gift of time is precious! Community is about those around us and those that came before us. This Christmas make time for those in your community that perhaps don't have any relatives, or relatives that simply don't visit. Be neighborly and reach out. Walk across the street and knock on their door. Drop a hot meal off, or do a wellbeing check! You may be surprised with the gift you receive in return, the gift of a simple "thank you". A gift that doesn't need wrapping but will make you feel warm and fuzzy on the inside knowing that you made a difference if even just for a few minutes.

Aishling Dalton Kelly aishlingcare.com

I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel. Maya Anjelou



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View From Ireland

By Maurice Fitzpatrick



The National Broadcaster?

RTÉ, Ireland's national broadcaster for almost sixty years, is facing bankruptcy unless the Irish government bails it out. That the word bankrupt has scarcely featured in the debate about the broadcaster's woes is indicative of the degree to which RTÉ believes it can rely on the government to save it. RTÉ's senior management, which oversees an organisation that ran a deficit of 13 million euro last year, seems to believe that, irrespective of how dysfunctional its operation is, the government will always shield it from itself. But what exactly can RTÉ now expect from the Irish government? And can it survive this crisis?

The waves of tributes over the past month in response to the death of Gay Byrne, RTÉ's titular presenter of yesteryear, demonstrated quite how central a role the national broadcaster used to play in Irish public life.

Byrne, in particular, helped to modernise discussion at the national broadcaster from the 1960s to 1990s.

The 21st century, however, heralded a new era in broadcasting. The end of the first decade of this century saw Ireland's banking collapse, the most searing economic crisis in decades and mass immigration from the country. RTÉ remained considerably immured from these seismic changes and that, in large part, is attributable to the false financial security that the broadcaster has enjoyed.

RTÉ's top 10 paid presenters account for 3 million euro of expenditure for an organisation with a revenue north of 300 million. The symbolism of a quasi-bankrupt organisation paying its talent such salaries is a constant source of ire among RTÉ's many critics.

Much of RTÉ's financial difficulties stem from the transference of advertising revenue from traditional platforms such as television to the internet. Unlike most other media, however, RTÉ's default response to plummeting advertisement revenue has been to make timid cuts when they are absolutely unavoidable—and to seek more money

from the public purse. In 2018, RTÉ received 189 million from the taxpayer via the television license fee, which constitutes 85% of the total license fee. By contrast, other channels, such as Virgin Media Television, start with no money whatsoever from the taxpayer.

RTÉ stated that it would announce major cuts and reforms in October to try to bring the broadcaster's finances into order. That announcement did not actually happen until November, and not before RTÉ's recommendations leaked to *The Irish Times*. The symbolic nature of the disclosure was matched by the juvenile response of RTÉ staff which heckled its management at a town hall style gathering to discuss the 'difficult decisions' required at RTÉ. The broadcaster recommends that 200 people accept optional redundancy which will, it seems certain, become compulsory redundancy next year if enough people do not avail of it. Meanwhile, RTÉ's senior management and presenters will heroically endure cuts to their bloated salaries of, respectively, 10% and 15%.

Yet these cuts, and even the loss of 200 employees, will not stabilize RTÉ's finances. Its production staff, as many as 800 people, constitute a financial outlay of nearly 200 million euro per year that the broadcaster can ill afford. RTÉ will have to accept streamlining its services and rely more heavily on independent producers in the private sector to make programs and films in the manner of many public service broadcasters around the world (full disclosure: RTÉ has been a partial funder of my films in the past).

Advocation that RTÉ peg its salaries to civil service standards has been notably absent from the debate. Instead, the straw man argument is wheeled out—also by the independent mainstream media—that public service broadcasting is a crucial aspect of our democracy and therefore RTÉ must be upheld. RTÉ has no more a monopoly on public service broadcasting in Ireland than it has a right to exist in financial never-never land. Has it occurred to the defenders of public service broadcasting that the cause they advocate may considerably benefit from RTÉ's demise, or

by reconstituting RTÉ in a way that better matches the realities of broadcasting in the 21st century?

Chairman of the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland (BAI), Pauric Travers, has notified the government that the latest research finds that 'RTÉ risks super-serving older audiences (55+) across services and under-serving younger audiences'. The tendency to super-serve less than a third of a small nation's population hardly justifies an annual governmental subvention of 189 million euro. Consequently, RTÉ has never been so friendless as it is today. While, in 2018, the BAI did recommend that the government inject an extra 30 million euro per annum into RTÉ's coffers, it also recommended major structural reforms. Yet RTÉ's current proposals have certainly not convinced the government: cabinet ministers have been publicly and privately unsympathetic. Minister for Communications, Richard Bruton, has done little to expedite the reformation of the collection of the television license fee; Minister for Trade, Heather Humphreys, in interview in November, pointed out that senior figures in RTÉ are paid more than the Taoiseach, the British Prime Minister and the US President; Minister for Finance, Paschal Donohoe, did not disburse a single extra euro to RTÉ in his October budget; Taoiseach Leo Varadkar has said that the television license fee reform will not happen for another

five years, and that the license fee may then be shared among other media outlets: 'we will have to consider that there is more to public service broadcasting than just RTÉ'.

The government is considerably focused on the next general election, which will probably be held next May, and it understands that its unwillingness to bail out RTÉ matches the mood of the Irish public. The public sees the broadcaster as out of touch, self-serving

and shrill defenders of a broadcasting model that is long since broken. Even so, Ireland remains a conservative and sentimental place. RTÉ will exploit whatever goodwill remains and find some way to hang on into the future. But it should count itself lucky that, unlike the government with which it has locked horns, it does not have to face an election.



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Tues	Dec. 31	Set & Ceili New Year's Eve

JANUARY

Sun	Jan. 5	Book Club (<i>No Ordinary Women</i>)
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A Few Happy Memories from Halloween!



It Starts With A Song

By Joe McShane



Frank Sinatra, calling him out for what she said was his bad manners. Or the quality of American beer, buttonholing the future President Gerard Ford to tell him: "I don't like your Guinness ... 'tis very, very weak."

Called "the Queen of the Gypsies" by a sharp entrepreneur promoting a St Patrick's Day concert at the Royal Albert Hall in the early 60s, she later rode up to the gates of Buckingham Palace in a pony and trap to announce: "The Queen of the Gypsies wishes to meet the Queen of England."

The death of her mother when Margaret was 12, and her father's marriage to a teenager little older than his daughter, led to her decision to leave home on her bicycle at 16 and throw herself at the mercy of fate. All she had was a 17-shilling wooden banjo tied to her back with a piece of string. Little wonder she grew up fast and swiftly developed the skills to fill her hat with coins, overcoming abuse and the prejudices of the times, which decreed that a woman's place was in the home. She was not averse to giving her tormentors a whack with her banjo if they annoyed her, and the force of her personality and the richness of her music won the people over. She became a familiar and popular figure at fairs and football matches all over Ireland. She had a child, Nora, fathered by a man called Charlie Power who soon disappeared from her life. She then spent time a mile or so across the Irish border to Crossmaglen, where she lived in a round-top caravan.

She died in 1989 aged 72, but she is not easily forgotten, and the significance of her role in the folk music revival - especially for women - has grown as the years have passed. Irish singer Mary McParlan said: "From 1900 to 1925, women were very active politically in Ireland, but the church and state came together in the 1930s to make women subservient again. Margaret wouldn't have seen herself politically as a feminist activist, but the fact that she pursued her personal journey with complete disregard for the restraints of church and state, and her love of her art, mean she created her own brand of feminism. I count myself blessed that I got to see and hear her perform. There is so much to Margaret Barry's story, I would need a lot more than one page to write about her life. I hope

someday there will be a movie about her. I'm sure her spirit still 'Moves Thru The Fair'.

This month's song is one I wrote with Nathan Carter and John Farry. Nathan and John had a one-day layover in Chicago about a year or so ago. So we sat in my house and wrote the song 'Old Street Singer'.

On behalf of my family and myself, we wish you a very happy Christmas and a Healthy New Year.

As always be good to one another.

Joe

'Old Street Singer'

Written by Nathan Carter,
John Farry, and Joe McShane

Chorus

Everybody loves an old street singer
You'll him, in every town
With a pocket full of change
And a suitcase full of dreams
I wonder where he goes
When the sun goes down

Verse 1

Shifting to the beat, of footsteps on the street
Bringing smiles to the faces passing by
With a heart full of music
And a soul full of love
Brings a little joy to our lives

Chorus

Everybody loves an old street singer
You'll him, in every town
With a pocket full of change
And a suitcase full of dreams
I wonder where he goes
When the sun goes down

Verse 2

Some people keep on talking
Some just keep on walking
Some join in and try to sing along
Some don't see him
Some don't even hear him
He's caught up in the music and the song

Chorus

Everybody loves an old street singer
You'll him, in every town
With a pocket full of change
And a suitcase full of dreams
I wonder where he goes
When the sun goes down

Verse 3

From the rocking Galway quays
To a buzzing Grafton Street
From Piccadilly Station to Times Square
You'll see these lads all over
Singing to the drunk and sober
So tip the man, show him that you care

Chorus

Everybody loves an old street singer
You'll him, in every town
With a pocket full of change
And a suitcase full of dreams
I wonder where he goes
When the sun goes down

Hello everyone,

I hope you're keeping warm. I was thinking about the buskers and street singers, especially at this time of the year, "it's cold out there". Then my thoughts wandered into an Irish folk legend, I'm sure many of you are familiar with her. Her name is Margaret (Maggie) Barry, who inspired people like Luke Kelly, Bob Dillon, and a host of other musical icons. Over a hundred years since she was born on New Years' day 1917 in Cork.

Bob Dylan called her his favorite folk singer. Christy Moore says she still inspires him. Sir David Attenborough put her on TV And even Van Morrison remarks: "a great soul singer" when her name is mentioned. The legend of Irish street singer Margaret Barry continues to grow. From her early days busking during some of Ireland's most troubled years, she went on to become a revered attraction in Ireland, United States, and London pubs where the Irish laborers would congregate after work for a few pints and chat with their countrymen. During a time when Irish traditional music might have been heading for extinction - a victim of state and church disapproval - exiled musicians kept the flame burning, resulting in a vibrant Irish scene in the English capital, Barry would play around pubs and sing with that uncompromising voice and raucous banjo playing of hers.

She gained fame within folk music circles but remained untouched by it. She smoked, drank, cussed, and span yarns. She would march on stage carrying pints of Guinness, she didn't care who she offended and spent money as fast as she earned it. She acquired not one ounce of polish or gentility along the way and sang the only way she knew how - as if her life depended on it (which, when she started out, it almost did).

Barry had a neat turn of phrase. She said she had "millions of miles of words" and, occasionally forgetting to put her false teeth in for performances, she said: "I have a mouth full of no teeth." She wasn't impressed by

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The Beauty and Curiosity of Words

I happened to be walking around one of the Shopping Centres in Galway recently. While I was there, I noticed an amount of communication mechanisms taking place. As I passed the Post Office, some people were mailing letters. Further down at the Library there were a number of people sitting in front of computers and connected to broadband. On the seats outside the Library, a group of schoolchildren were updating their friends on social media and texting furiously on their mobile phones. As all of this was going on it struck me that the written word had returned to us again through advances in modern technology!

There was a time when the old-fashioned letter was a very important and coveted source of

information. It was particularly so for young people who emigrated from the shores of Ireland and would not return for a very long time, and sometimes not at all. These letters were read and read again until the voices of their loved ones came alive in them and they became a tremendous source of comfort for many generations. Many of you may still have bundles of these in your attic from relatives that may have since passed away. If you get a chance, why not dust them off and read through them once again, as they can be a tremendous source of therapy after such a long time.

After a while, the letters began to be replaced by the telephone. This was an effective medium for passing on information but

never adequate for passing on emotions, and the majority of conversations were quickly forgotten after the receiver was replaced after the call had ended. Thanks to the advances in technology over the past decades, we now have E-Mail, and the explosion of texting and social media interaction. We are once again challenging people to construct sentences to carry information and convey emotion. The written word is back and any modern technology that promotes this is well worth having. If it helps the younger generation to construct well-meaning sentences and give their opinions, it will be of major benefit to us all, and also for the continuity of civilization as a whole.

No matter how far we expand on the technology front, mankind's innate desire for expression in words, painting and sculpture will always remain with us. We have seen examples of this in our prehistory and later history from the cave paintings at Lascaux in France, the Egyptian hieroglyphics, ogham stones, and the painstaking work on the Early Christian manuscripts. There was an opinion some years ago that newspapers, magazines and books would cease to exist in their current form and that we would be reading them online. This will happen to an extent but never fully. Books are much more than books, they are a testament, in words, to generations that have since passed out of living memory. How could we possibly live without the smell of books, to hold them in our hands, and make notes on them as we happily progress through the pages and chapters.

'I never feel lonely if I've got a book - they're like old friends. Even if you're not reading them over and over again, you know they are there. And they're part of your history. They sort of tell a story about your journey through life' - Emilia Fox

I hope everybody has a very happy and peaceful Christmas, and may you wear prosperity and happiness as a warm cloak during 2020. *Nollaig Shona Dhuit!*

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Out for an "Irish Walk"

By **Sonny Scanlon**

sonny.scanlon@gmail.com

When was the last time you went out for an "Irish walk"?

What is an "Irish walk" you say?

When I was a wee little lad me father used to leave the house once in a while, for what he told me mother was a walk.

Mom would simply say, "no problem, see you in a bit. Sure enough, 45 minutes to an hour later Dad would come walking through the door and life at our house would go back to normal.

Later on, sometimes in the same day, Mom would tell Dad she was going for a walk and he would simply say, "no problem see you in a bit".

The golden rule though, was that whether it was Mom or Dad, they went alone.

We had eight kids so it was time they wanted to themselves to just take a walk and have some alone time, we thought. For many years they actually had us fooled.

We often times thought that our Mom and Dad sure walked a lot. At the same time, because I was inseparable from me father as a young lad, many times I wanted to go with him. Not now Sonny he would say.

And sure enough, within 45 minutes to an hour he would come walking through the door.

When I was about seven, the curiosity of where they went each time was killing me.

One Saturday, I was with me Father on a side job. We were always on a side job on Saturdays.



"Six and one, not 5 and 2" he used to say, "and on the seventh day he rested".

Of course, it's keeping with tradition, every Irish tradesman has a regular job and a side job. On the side jobs, I was the cleanup crew. Leaving everything better than we found it. That was my job.

Anyhow, I asked my father where do you go on your walks when we are at home?

He said "Sonny, where do we often stop on our way home"? I said, "the pub dad and we sure

know a lot of them. And how long do we usually stay? About 45 minutes to an hour, I said. How many beers do I put away in that time? A couple of two, three, I guess. Yes and that puts us at around 45 minutes to an hour".

Then it's home to the wife, your mother and all you kids. We do not want to be out all night because Mom will be worried about us.

So I said, Wait Dad, when you tell Mom you're going for a walk, do you actually go to the pub? He said sometimes I do and sometimes I really do just walk or run some errands.

What about Mom, does she go to the pub? He said, no Sonny, she sometimes goes for a walk, and other times she may go to the store or run some errands herself. That's her time to do what she needs or wants to do.

He went on to say, "everybody needs a little time to themselves once in a while, some quiet time to simply clear their head or slow down the pace.

So keep in mind folks, that an Irish walk benefits both the men and the women.

It's about working together, and giving each other a break from time to time.

If that walk does find you at a pub then 2 to 3 drinks is the time frame.

It's customary nowadays that the bartender will buy you the fourth. It's up to you whether you take it or not and then out the door and keep moving to wherever it is you need to be. That my friends, is an "Irish walk".

So enjoy, and remember to drink responsibly, and tip your bartenders, waiters, and waitresses.

And by the way, one of the best places for an "Irish walk on the Southside is the James Joyce pub in Berwyn.

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Ireland 1969

(final installment)

In 1969 we leave Kilkenny City and head for the Mercy Convent in Naas, Co., Kildare.

We meet our aunt, Sister Joseph Boyle, Reverend Mother. She was an incredible woman. The first Mercy Nun to get a Bachelor's and Master's Degree at University College Dublin (UCD).

The convent was elegant, and their must of been 40 nuns living there. St Mary's School was just outside the garden wall and Sr. Joseph was responsible for building it, and putting a library in it.

My sister Jeanne and I stayed at the Ardenode Hotel at the Lakes near Blessington.

We had an unpleasant experience with an Englishman that was staying there. We met up with him in the sitting room. We made an attempt at polite conversation, Jeanne was asked what she did for a living. She said she was a secretary, he thought she was saying she was a corporate officer - secretary of a corporation, and he started getting derisive when I told him to tone it down. He told me that I should get a 'good thumping.' I told him I didn't see anybody who could do that.

The rest of the evening passed quietly.

We checked out after breakfast and headed for the convent, picked up Sister Joseph, and took the dual carraigeway to Dublin.

While visiting the General Post Office on O'Connell St.

we spotted a Chinese restaurant across the street on the second floor. We decided to have dinner there. Sister Joseph ordered the traditional Irish dinner, bacon and cabbage and boiled potatoes while Jeanne and I ate the Chinese food. About six month later I got a letter from Sr. Joseph with a newspaper clipping saying that the restaurant had been caught selling kit kat!

Dublin city was quite different in 1969. There was two way traffic

on both sides of the Quay, (the Liffey River).

Imagine bicycles, ass and cart, horse carts, double decker buses, pedestrians, taxi's, private cars, and trucks of every description with fruit and vegetable vendors on the sidewalks. It was truly Dublin in the rare old times.

I turned in the Fiat 850 in Dublin. I remember the young woman at the counter. Her name was Darlene Hards.

At Sr. Joseph's suggestion we were staying at the Barry's Hotel just off of O'Connell Street. It was third rate and bathrooms were at the end of the hall and the bathtubs were caked with grime. It was a farmers hotel and it was popular because they served a

HAPPY CHRISTMAS!



Father Christmas with my cousin, Tom Boyle in Tralee, Co. Kerry circa 1958.

good meal.

We went over to a pub on O'Connell Street and met up with three young women who just got off work. We had a good time with them and they said they were going to a dance and invited Jeanne and I to join them. Jeanne went back to Barry's hotel and I went to the dance. They wanted me to dance every dance. At the end of the evening the band played The Soldier's Song. We were somewhere out in the middle of the

city and I had absolutely no clue as to where I was. We decided to take a taxi back to the hotel, and believe it or not the girls wanted to pay for the taxi. I said no, and as I exited the taxi I dropped a 5 pound note in their laps.

The hotel was locked and I had to get the night porter to let me in.

the next day we flew to London on an Aer Lingus jet named after St. Brigid. Aer Lingus named all their planes after Irish Saints.

Cullerton

Edward F. Cullerton became a city of Chicago Alderman in 1871. He was the first of the Cullertons to hold the position of Alderman, and a member of the Cullerton family would serve on the city council for the next 144 consecutive years!

Family dynasties have held public office for years in Chicago.

Illinois Senate President, John Cullerton has now announced his retirement. He first won a seat in the Illinois House in 1988, and in 1991 he was appointed to the Senate. In 1994 he faced off with Dan Rostenkowski for the U.S. House of Representatives and lost.

John Cullerton is a partner in a law firm, and a registered lobbyist.

He disclosed potential conflicts of interests and did not resign either of those positions when it was brought up in a house debate on ethics.

He became State Senate President in 2009.

Family dynasties are disturbing. Would you like Chelsea Clinton for President, or Lisa Madigan for Governor?

Somehow term limits keep running through my thoughts.

Penn. States Attorney Blasts Archdiocese

Pennsylvania Attorney General Josh Shapiro had harsh words for Pennsylvania Republican



lawmakers and Roman Catholic Church leaders for what he views as their role in delaying reforms intended to prevent child sex abuse and help victims.

The reforms resulted from the Shapiro-led grand jury investigation which revealed sexual abuse by more than 300 Catholic priests in Pennsylvania.

They would eliminate the statute of limitations for prosecuting child sex abuse cases, create a window to enable older victims to sue for damages and prevent use of confidentially agreements to hide abuse, among other things.

The state House approved the reforms this Spring, but the Senate has failed to hold a vote.

Shapiro contends the lack of a vote is the result of lobbying on the part of the Catholic church and insurance companies, which would likely have to pay more victims.

"I am profoundly disappointed in the state Senate in Pennsylvania and particularly the Republican leadership of the State Senate in Pennsylvania, who seemingly continue to take their direction from the insurance lobbyists and the Catholic church lobbyists who have spent millions of dollars lobbying against the four grand jury recommendations," said Shapiro, a Democrat. "That is unconscionable to me."

Shapiro was speaking to the PennLive/Patriot-News Editorial Board and responding to questions about the grand jury investigation and the aftermath. The reforms were recommended by the grand jury involved with the 2 year investigation which also revealed more than 1,000 victims of abuse by priests. He said no Catholic bishops in Pennsylvania have pushed for passage of the reforms, which he said "proves they have not changed and proves they cannot

police themselves."

Chicago Archdiocese

The Archdiocese has announced the consolidation of three parishes, St. Thecla, and St. Cornelius will merge with St. Tarcissus, at 6020 W Ardmore in Chicago.

Lower attendance at Mass, declining enrollment in the schools, and aging infrastructure which doesn't seem to apply to these parishes, and a lack of priests are the reason the Archdiocese is calling this program, which will extend to other parishes in the future, "renew my church."

The weight of the pedophile scandal, the legal costs and payouts to victims have paved the way for the decline in Catholicism.

Have people lost their faith? They have not! Books like, "In the Closet of the Vatican," and countless editorials on pedophile priests have hurt attendance and collections at Mass.

When a basket comes down the row, many people just pass it on without a donation.

The church hasn't done anything to help itself. It's time to let women become Deacons, it's time to allow priests to marry, bring back general absolution, make Mass more uplifting, take away the guilt complex, and the threat of mortal sin.

When I see Baptist churches singing and rocking in the pews, they are having a good time. No more sack cloth and ashes.

When iconic churches like Holy Family are phased out, everybody pays attention. Chicagoans have always identified themselves by parish. When asked where they are from most would likely say, Visitation, or St. Patrick's. Family histories are tied to the parishes. Baptism, first communion, confirmation, marriage and last rites.

When that connection is lost, it leaves a terrible void.



Terry From Derry

by Terry Boyle



Seeing is Believing

Some people think of art as a mirror that reflects who we are warts and all. However, since the emergence of photoshop, we can now doctor our reality and we can no longer believe everything we see. Reality has become a matter of perspective. It is highly subjective and allows us to blind ourselves to what we choose to edit out. Contrary to this need for self-satisfaction, true art, in its many various forms, is inherently subversive and challenges us. The best art confronts our innate desire to blind ourselves to the truth by forcing us to come to terms with our denial of what is blatantly obvious.

A good example of the subversive nature of art is J.M. Synge's play, *The Well of Saints*. Mary and Martin, a blind married couple, are happily living with their belief that they are the most beautiful of people. In a strange turn of events, a holy man arrives in their village and is enticed by the villagers to perform a miracle. Of course, restoring sight to the blind couple is deemed by all to be a great sign and wonder. Having never seen each other, Martin, when he receives his sight, mistakenly rushes to a beautiful young woman that he believes to be Mary. The mistaken identity is witnessed by Mary who is undergoing her own reality check. Martin is not the handsome man she thought him to be.

With eyes wide open, they are forced to see the cruel pettiness of those around them. Village life will never be the same for Mary and Martin who are now keenly aware of their surroundings. As their despair begins to climax, blindness, once again, descends on them. So, that when the saint returns, the couple are brought out to be healed for a second time, only this time they are less than enthusiastic about receiving their sight back. They disrupt the service and refuse to be healed. Eventually, they are alienated from the village. In their exile they find that they are content with the gift of blindness.

The human tendency to blind itself against unpleasant realities is superbly captured in Synge's work. Rather than face the truth, we romanticize, create mythologies, and avoid what lies in front of us. My mother used to say 'love is blind and marriage is an eye-opener'. We never want to marry our ideals. To do so, those same ideals would lose their charm. Instead, we prefer to keep the illusion alive while blinding ourselves to our own deceptiveness.

Art, in our day, has an important role to play. We live in a country where a significant power broker is blinded by his own ego. In his unseeing world, everything that threatens his blind reality is quashed with empty rhetoric. To those of us who daily witness his ignorance and incredible small-mindedness, we wonder at those who have blinded themselves to his lies. It may be, as Synge suggests, that human nature is incapable of facing its true condition, but there are those, the artists among us, who see what we choose to avoid seeing. It is their job to find ways to restore our sight.

The artist must rouse and discomfort us. It is the artist who must perform the task of disillusioning us of our blind obedience to dominant ideologies that foster corruption and injustice. Indeed, there are many artists, modern day prophets, who force us to see the dystopia we are creating for ourselves when we deny the consequences of climate change, radicalized dissident groups through our political bullying, and refuse to accept responsibility for our actions. The nightmare they present to us is fast becoming a reality. It is no longer something in the future to be feared. No, when the blinkers are off we will have to reckon with the fact that we are already living in a dystopia of our own making.

The warnings of Orwell's 1984 are now realized. Big brother, disinformation, and domination by political elites are the Frankenstein's monster we have created. We made this scenario happen. It did not simply evolve on its own. We watched it develop as our democracy was undermined by politicians who cared more about their ego than their constituents. It was us who ignored the warnings of scientists and continued to pollute our planet. The future of our world is irrevocably changed because of us and those who come after us will see for themselves that we are the culprits. They will look back on our blind ignorance and wonder why we didn't see it coming.

Mary and Martin cannot live with seeing life as it is since it stops them believing in the fantasy they have created for themselves. The world is not as we blindly wish it to be. We are on the edge of a major catastrophe

pretending that if we shut our eyes it will go away but it won't. No matter how much we play down the actions of our greed, the results of our exploitation of natural resources, destruction of the planet's gift to us . . . the air we breathe, we continue to refuse to see the harm we are doing.



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Roaming in the Gloaming

By Estelle Shanley

Recently I was invited to speak at an upscale fundraiser in California. Introduced lavishly as an Irish immigrant, my task to shed light on growing up in Ireland of the fifties. I pondered whether to highlight the dominance of religion, the oppression of the Catholic Church and the neglect of spirituality. Surrounded by an abundance of nuns, priests and religious brothers who hammered grammar into our heads, referred to us as dunces, slapped, pushed and shoved. Capital punishment was metered out by wooden rulers, canes and knuckles. There

existed violence in classrooms, more severe for boys than girls, although the sting of a hand lashing with a cane looms large in my memory, especially the whirring swish and the wind of it raised on-high as it targeted my right or left palm. Shrink a hand back in fear resulted in a stinging smash on two hands. I wonder now if that was necessary?

Talking over my assignment with friends, they advised I opt out of highlighting the fear we school girls suffered from priests and nuns especially the constant braying about the fires of hell in

which bold, brazen and disobedient girls would languish and burn for all eternity. I sought answers about how long flesh, hair, bones, nails and teeth could burn for ever and ever. Such probings prompted parental threats that the parish priest would be sent for, or worse, an orphanage was in my future. The threats rarely stopped as more questions rose to the surface. On the many occasions Father Sweeney was sent for, his babble about faith, hope and charity rarely moved me, although I enjoyed being allowed into our parlor for these meaningless lectures, a lovely room in our home reserved for Christmas, Easter, First Holy Communion and priestly visits.

Walking to the podium I planned to talk about life in a girls' convent school and the experience of participating in the feast days of nuns who taught us daily. There were loads of feast days heralding when young women entered the convent, relinquished their names talking the name of saints. Sisters Colmcille, Borgia, Hildegard, Therese, Dymna, Maria Goretti, Jean D'Arc and Mother Frances, who broke my knuckles en route to transforming me into a first class violinist. Arthritis of the knuckles keeps her memory alive! Each class received an announcement of an approaching feast day, and the nun who taught art announced the presentation of a spiritual bouquet to the celebrant on her special day. She'd create an artistic holy card, we pupils would fill it with numbers of ejaculations, rosaries and visits to the blessed sacrament. We were allotted three or four weeks to accumulate our prayers.

Dear Reader, ejaculations creating an abrupt discharge of fluid may leap to one's mind. In our Irish childhood the word described a surge of brief utterances of prayer. Examples included, Lord Have Mercy on me, I give thanks to you Lord Jesus, Blessed be the Holy Mother of God. These were quick to accumulate and I could say a thousand on my way to and from school. Rosaries took longer and were also logged in the spiritual ledger. Visits to the sac-

rament took more time, because one needed to be in a church. Finally, the day came when the art nun visited our classroom to collect lists and numbers list of prayers. I'm not proud to admit, I'd hang back and wait until I was the last to report. I'd multiple everyone's numbers, make my report and emerge as the most prayerful, holy, spiritually monogamous girl in the class.

I did get attention, not the kind I wanted or needed. Due to my prominence as a prayer record holder, I was quickly targeted as one who clearly had a vocation, and destined for the nunnery. Impossible to avoid the programming, the talks with Sister Therese who claimed I did have a vocation and announced herself my spiritual advisor. Problematic, since I knew instinctively from the womb listening to my Mother screaming in labor promising God if the pain ceased she'd donate a boy to the priesthood or a daughter to a nunnery. Her roars continued and I felt obliged to remain for a while longer deliberating whether to emerge or not. Once delivered, in time I grew and decided a nunnery was an inappropriate goal. However, as a young adult I experienced guilt about the prayers I lied about and recorded on a spiritual bouquet card. During quiet times I utter millions of ejaculations to justify what I reported as a schoolgirl. I call it delayed reparation. Visits to the blessed sacrament were more difficult, since a church was required. I set the record straight one afternoon standing at the threshold of a chapel. I'd step one foot in, count it as one visit, then the other foot as two and so on until I reached about three thousands visits. Probably went overboard but the exercise calmed my conscious. Rosaries took longer since there are five decades, each requiring ten Hail Mary's and one Glory-Be, though I devised a short cut I'm not divulging, since it's my personal invention.

Since we live in a technological age, I often contemplate whether God in His Heaven had computers and logged all my prayers, and the

sins of my parents, my younger brother and sister who tormented me, especially my brother who consumed his Cadbury Easter Egg very quickly one Easter morning. I kept mine for the afternoon, placed it on a chair, and when parents were out of sight he pushed me into the chair smashing the confection to smithereens. I was inconsolable, he was never punished and because of my sniffing and carry-on was forced to share the broken shards of milk chocolate with the entire family. I have written extensively about this experience and to this day cannot find forgiveness in my heart.

The fundraiser was a success, I received positive feedback on my soliloquy, and a crowd of attendees lined up to share with me some of their own experiences at Catholic schools. One elderly gentleman, a dapper dresser with a hint of an Irish accent thanked me and said he was transfixed as I spoke because he saw the halo get brighter and brighter!

BREXIT-The Facts

Does anyone really know the facts inherent in Brexit? Government sways, UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson brays and brags reporting progress when none is visible nor feasible. Pundits in Northern Ireland wax and wane and Irish Prime Minister Leo Varadkar holds a tight but mannerly fist on a no-border deal separating the island north from south.

In actuality, Brexit has driven the relationship between Northern Ireland, The United Kingdom and the south of Ireland into the ground. Yet, Ireland holds the power and Varadkar's stalwart position maintaining an open Irish border between the two countries cripples Brexit to go forward.

While it has been reported that Brits considered Ireland an unknown place, an island and its inhabitants have been scorned by British people, scores of history books written, poems published, ballads sung illustrating how badly the Brits treated the Irish. The Irish Times reported in October that a business and

Continued to page 29

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IAHC Holiday Food Drive

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Through January 2, 2020



Parcel from America

A Christmas music that tells the tale of a family, a small Irish village and how the joy of Christmas brings love to all. **Saturday, December 7, 7:30pm, Sunday, December 8, 3pm**

\$25 for general admission and \$25 for IAHC Members and \$10 for students and children



Christmas Bazaar

Deck the IAHC halls at the annual Bazaar with Mass, breakfast, craft and bake sale, entertainment and visit from Santa. **Breakfast: \$15 for adults and \$5 for children 12 and under.**

Sunday, December 8 • 9am-9pm • Free



Eileen Ivers: A Joyful Christmas

Join world-renowned violinist Eileen Ivers for a concert of American and Irish songs, original tunes and holiday favorites, centered around the true meaning of Christmas.

Friday, December 13, 8pm • IAHC Members: \$25, General Admission \$30



Christmas Tea

Deck the Halls of the Erin Room with the annual Christmas Tea. Enjoy afternoon tea, sandwiches and Christmas cookies while musicians serenade you with music of the Christmas season.

Saturday, December 14, 11am • \$25 for adults, children 12 and under \$8



Irish Civil Registration and Church Records

Learn to use civil registration and church records in your genealogy research. **Thursday, December 19, 7pm • \$20**



It's a Wonderful Life Screening

Join host Gene Cooney for a matinee screening of the holiday classic in the Mayfair Theatre. Dress as your favorite character for a chance to win prizes! **Sunday, December 22, 3pm. Pub opens at 2pm**

Members: Free • Non-members: \$5 suggested donation



New Year's Eve Party

Ring in 2020 with annual New Year's Eve Party in the Fifth Province. The celebration features dancing, hors d'oeuvres, champagne toast at midnight, party favors and entertainment by Gerry Haughey and Joe Cullen.

Tuesday, December 31, 7pm • \$35



Piping: The Myths and Facts about the Great Highland Pipes

Bagpiper Kevin Chapman presents a lecture and demonstration on the pipes and its history as one of the oldest instruments still played in the world. **Thursday, January 9, 7pm • Suggested donation: \$5**



The High Kings in Concert

The true heirs of Ireland's folk heritage, The High Kings are internationally acclaimed singers of Irish folk songs who bring a rousing acoustic flavor to new songs and old favorites.

Saturday, February 22, 8pm, Sunday, February 23, 6pm

IAHC Members: \$30, General Admission: \$35



**Eileen Ivers:
 A Joyful Christmas**

Friday, December 13, 8pm • \$25-\$30



The High Kings in Concert

Saturday, February 22, 8pm

Sunday, February 23, 6pm

\$30-\$35

For all upcoming IAHC events, visit www.irish-american.org



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President's Message

Season's Greetings to you and yours from all of us at the Irish American Heritage Center!

Make sure you visit us this December and see the halls all decked and the Christmas spirit in its glory. With the help of our dedicated volunteers, our Center has transformed into a winter wonderland! While the Christmas season is all about counting our blessings, celebrating with family and hanging out with friends, it is also about the spirit of giving.

Our annual appeal campaign was recently mailed and I'd like to ask that you take a look to see if you can help. This big old building of ours does not take care of itself, so it is through donations like the annual appeal that we can continue to fund improvements throughout the building every year. Any donation, large or small, would be much appreciated and very helpful to our Center. If you didn't receive the mailing, please call the office and we'll get you the details.

The month of December brings a bounty of opportunities to celebrate the season at the IAHC!

We are thrilled to welcome back Irish Theatre of Chicago to the IAHC this holiday season. Make sure you mark your calendars for their performance of a brand-new holiday musical for the whole family. Set in the 1950's in rural Ireland, *Parcel from America* is filled with charming characters and beautiful songs and is sure to put you in the Christmas spirit. Performances are Saturday, December 7 at 7:30pm and Sunday, December 8 at 3pm.

One of my absolute favorite days of the year comes on Sunday, December 8 as the annual Christmas Bazaar returns to the IAHC. It is truly a day for us to showcase all that we have to offer in a very festive environment. And it's a great way to spend a Sunday afternoon catching up with friends



and family. Festivities include Mass, breakfast, a craft and bake sale, music, dance, children's activities and visit from Santa. Of course, make sure you've graduated to the "Good" list before making your way over to the man in the red suit!

Another of my favorites is famed fiddle virtuoso, Eileen Ivers.

Eileen and her band will be joining us for Eileen Ivers: A Joyful Christmas on Friday, December 13 in the Mayfair Theatre. The concert recalls the roaring hearths and roars of laughter that make up Christmas in Ireland. Ivers and her fantastic band will interweave age-old Wren Day songs and beloved American carols in the Ivers signature style. Get your tickets now as this is sure to be a special evening of holiday music.

And of course, don't forget Sean Cleland's free Thursday Shindig music session every Thursday night in December by the fireplace.

Nimble Thimbles, our crafting group has another charity project under its belt. For the past two years, they have been sewing Christmas stockings for the Santa's Workshop Stocking Program of Operation Support Our Troops. Stockings are filled



with useful items and delivered to military personnel. This is just one of the many projects the team is working on this season. Want to join the group? Email info@irishahc.org.

Wishing you and yours a very Merry Christmas and a wonderful New Year!
Mike Shevlin, President

The Heritage Line Staff

Kathleen O'Neill, Editor

Contributors: Meg Buchanan, Laura Coyle, Catherine Kelly, Sheila Murphy, Mike Shevlin, Becky Tatz

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the fifth province

IRISH AMERICAN HERITAGE CENTER

DECEMBER ENTERTAINMENT

Music Starts at 8pm unless otherwise noted

- 12/6 Francis O'Neill Ceili Mor
- 12/7 Joe McShane
- 12/13 The Boils
- 12/14 Dooley Brothers
- 12/20 Chancey Brothers
- 12/21 Rory Makem
- 12/27 Mulligan Stew
- 12/28 Seamus Fun Band



Thursday Night Irish Music Sessions: December 5, 12, 19 and 26

DECEMBER 2019

12/5	Genealogy Research Night for IAHC Members	Library	7pm
12/6	Francis O'Neill Ceili Mor	Fifth Province	8pm
12/7	<i>Parcel from America</i>	Mayfair Theatre	7:30pm
	Shamrock American Club Social	Sham Am Room	8pm
12/8	Christmas Bazaar	Full Building	9am
	IAHC Book Club - <i>When All is Said</i> , Anne Griffin	Library	1pm
	<i>Parcel from America</i>	Mayfair Theatre	3pm
12/13	Eileen Ivers: <i>A Joyful Christmas</i>	Mayfair Theatre	8pm
12/14	Christmas Tea - SOLD OUT	Erin Room	11am
	St. Patrick Fathers Social	Room 109	8pm
12/17	Celtic Women International Meeting	Room 304	7pm
12/18	Tara Club Monthly Musical Gathering	Room 306	10am
12/19	Irish Civil Registration and Church Records	Library	7pm
12/22	<i>It's a Wonderful Life</i> screening	Mayfair Theatre	3pm
12/24-25	Merry Christmas	Building Closed	
12/29	Genealogy Workshop	Library	1pm
12/31	New Year's Eve Party	Fifth Province	7pm

Regularly Scheduled Events

Mon-Fri	Gift Shop	First Floor Lobby	3pm-8pm
Tues	Nimble Thimbles	Room 208	9am-Noon
Wed	Genealogy Consultations	Library	10am
	Fall Watercolor Class	Room 309	6:45pm
	Traditional Irish Music Session	Room 111	7pm
	Na Gaeil Language Class	Room 304 and Library	7pm
Thurs	Irish Heritage Singers Rehearsal	Room 306	7pm
	The Thursday Shindig Music Session	Fifth Province	7pm
	Fall Watercolor Class	Room 309	10am
Sat	Na Gaeil Language Class	Library	11am
Sun	Celtic Art by Hand and Eye	Room 311	11am
	Celtic Art Portfolio	Room 311	1:30pm

Library Hours: Tues 10am-2pm; Wed 4pm-8pm; Sat 10am-2pm

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Continued from page 26
 executive coach from the south of England admitted she knew nothing about Irish history and never heard of the Irish Famine. As a sideline, what Brexit has exposed is the lack of knowledge many British people have about the shared history of the two islands.

Growing up in Ireland we learned little about the famine. A sense of malignant shame shadowed the history, records were destroyed diminishing the deaths of millions of women and children who died of hunger when the potato crop failed. Likewise in England children were not exposed to Irish history and Irish children were taught an extremely biased English history.

Meanwhile, the English and Irish have intermarried and more people from Britain are currently relocating to Ireland in numbers greater than the Irish migrate to England. A recent report documents that in April of this year, an estimated 19,700 immigrants from the UK arrived in Ireland to live, while 11,600 emigrants went the other way.

Apologies for historical wrongs may not be forthcoming, although explanations about Brexit are posted several times every single day. Brexit fatigue overcomes the masses on both islands.


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Christmas Bingo: It's a Ho-Ho-Holy Night Returns to the Royal George

Did Santa babysit the baby Jesus? Why were the Three Wise Men so lost? Do you know what the holiday classic Silent Night first sounded like? The answers to these and other humorous questions are answered in the hit holiday comedy CHRISTMAS BINGO: IT'S A HO-HO-HOLY NIGHT.

Written by Vicki Quade, one of the creators of the hit comedy Late Nite Catechism, CHRISTMAS BINGO brings together two of the

ing, "Vicki Quade has made a career out of Catholic comedy (Late Nite Catechism, Bible Bingo), and she's in top form here."

Quade will be sharing the role of Mrs. Mary Margaret O'Brien with the talented Chicago actresses Kathleen Puls Andrade, Lisa Braatz, Liz Cloud, and Cheryl Roy.

Today's Fan, an online review site, calls Christmas Bingo, "delightful." "You will be engaged by the show's uniquely interac-



best things about being Catholic: Christmas and Bingo. The show features the character of Mrs. Mary Margaret O'Brien, a former nun and current bingo caller.

The comedy has been a fixture in Chicago since 2012, and now returns again to the Royal George Theatre, Chicago. Christmas Bingo is the second installment in Quade's bingo series, which also includes the long-running hit Bible Bingo. The show was selected as one of 10 holiday shows highlighted by Chris Jones, the Chicago Tribune's theater critic.

In this interactive comedy, audience members play bingo while also answering questions about Christmas traditions, the origin of St. Nick, where do candy canes come from, miracles in the Bible . . . and a clever re-creation of the Annunciation, complete with audience members in angel wings and halos.

In its review, The Chicago Reader recommended the show, say-

ing, "telling stories to enlighten future generations while honoring our ancestors."

CHRISTMAS BINGO will run for seven weeks only throughout the holiday season, starting Friday, November 15, through Sunday, December 29. Show times are Fridays and Saturdays at 8 p.m., Sundays at 2 p.m. All performances are at the Royal George Theatre, 1641 N. Halsted, Chicago.

Ticket prices are \$30, group rates available. For tickets, call the box office at 312-988-9000.

You don't have to be Catholic to enjoy these shows. But it pays to love bingo!

Go ahead.... resurrect your social life in this guaranteed night of divine entertainment!

More fun than Sodom and Gomorrah!!

So much fun, you'll have to confess it!!!

Second Annual Hibernian Hooligans Ball December 15

McGaffer's Saloon in Forest Park hosts the second annual Hibernian Transmedia fundraiser on Sunday afternoon December 15, 2019 from 3-7PM.

The event is only the second in the history of Hibernian Transmedia, which was founded in October of 2013 by radio personality Mike Houlihan and his wife Mary and sons Bill and Paddy. In addition to celebrating the 11th year anniversary of Houli radio shows, the 6th year anniversary of their annual Irish American Movie Hooley, (which takes place each September at the Siskel Film Center), The 5th year anniversary of The Houli's Hooley Radio Show, (broadcast every Saturday night on WSBC), this shindig at McGaffer's will also celebrate Mike "Houli" Houlihan's 71st Birthday!

Hibernian Transmedia is a public charity founded by the Houlihan family, to promote and preserve Irish and Irish American culture across a wide swath of media;

Their careers have traversed regional theatre, Broadway, major motion pictures, network and public TV, newspaper columns, ethnic radio and recently stand-up comedy, community web blogs and indie filmmaking. Through it all they have especially delighted audiences with performances that trumpet their pride in their heritage and their faith.

As members of the Irish Diaspora and artists working in a variety of media they now work together professionally as Hibernian Transmedia NFP, providing a platform to present, produce, and create educational content that promotes and preserves Irish and Irish-American culture through film, TV, radio, theatre, literature, concerts, and the Internet.

Hibernian is currently active in a number of media endeavors, including a pair of weekly Irish radio broadcasts every Saturday night on WSBC 1240AM and pod-

cast each week on hibernianradio.org. They coordinate annual trips to Ireland with radio listeners. Their PBS Television program, OUR IRISH PUB, which debuted on WTTW last March; with Chapter Two scheduled to debut again in March of 2020. Our Irish Pub is also currently under consideration for national syndication across the globe. Hibernian recently received a grant from the Consulate General of Ireland to continue producing OUR IRISH PUB, and a development grant for their film, IN SEARCH OF WEEPING JIM, which chronicles the life of the

late Chicago City Treasurer and Alderman James Ambrose Kearns, "the father of The Chicago Flag." Kearns emigrated from Inishcuttle, Kilmeena, County Mayo in 1883, and then went on to law school and success in Chicago as Alderman and City Treasurer. They also are in post-production on a film starring local Southside Irish Balladeer Liam Durkin and his first trip to Ireland with his family last October.

All are invited to join in the celebration on Sunday December 15th from 3-7PM in McGaffer's Saloon, 7737 West Roosevelt Road in Forest Park. Guests will be treated to plenty of Traditional Irish music, with a variety of musical acts on the schedule and Irish media personalities from across the nation, as well as a "Who's Who" of former radio guests! They will also be screening several of their films, including OUR IRISH COUSINS, HER MAJESTY, 'DA QUEEN, TAP-



cast each week on hibernianradio.org. They coordinate annual trips to Ireland with radio listeners. Their PBS Television program, OUR IRISH PUB, which debuted on WTTW last March; with Chapter Two scheduled to debut again in March of 2020. Our Irish Pub is also currently under consideration for national syndication across the globe. Hibernian recently received a grant from the Consulate General of Ireland to continue producing OUR IRISH PUB, and a development grant for their film, IN SEARCH OF WEEPING JIM, which chronicles the life of the

IOCA, and OUR IRISH PUB. Cash bar and complimentary snacks thanks to McGaffer's proprietor Pat Malone. The craic will be mighty indeed. Suggested donation to the fundraiser is \$100, or you can donate online at hiberniantransmedia.org

Hibernian Transmedia NFP is a 501c3 public charity, and all contributions are tax deductible under Internal Revenue Code Section 170.

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Careers

By James F. Fitzgerald, CPA



Christmas? Christmas Season?

When I was a little boy I viewed Christmas as a magical day, mostly because there was the belief that I would receive some presents from my family members and that mysterious figure, Santa Claus. As I remember it I didn't spend a lot of time trying to figure out how Santa was going to get into our apartment, which did not have a chimney. But I was convinced Santa had brought me a gift or two the prior year, so I was optimistic that he would do it again this year, even though the writing on the tags in prior years always seemed to bare a clear resemblance to my mother's handwriting.

Christmas time played another important part in my life. I worked at a Christmas tree lot that was only two doors down from our home. So, from the first or second week of December, my brother, Joe, and my best boyhood friend, Bill Puschak, and I haunted the lot, trying to find ways to make some money. By the time that Joe and I got involved, the Puschak family had been selling Christmas trees on that lot for several years.

We would help people tie their newly purchased tree onto the roof of their car. Or if they lived real close by, we might carry the tree to their front door. As I re-

member, most people welcomed our assistance, and a fair number of them showed that by giving us a quarter or more once we had completed our task.

As we got older we took on more responsibilities; we would watch the lot when the older people went for dinner or left for the evening. It was a wonderful time of the year for us. Bill and I worked as the night watchmen for a couple of years. Exciting stuff for 13-14 year old kids, especially because Bill was a real trickster. For example, during the night we would take turns sleeping in our shanty, it provided Bill with the opportunity to alter our clock, so he frequently got an hour or two more sleep than I did.

One bitter cold night, about 3 A.M., we were alarmed by noise coming from the front of the lot. As we investigated a car was being parked. I immediately recognized the driver, my brother, Tom. He had driven from Fort Bragg in North Carolina in his beat up 1937 Ford. The car heater had failed while he was about 200 plus miles from Chicago. Tom as shaking from the cold. Bill and I brought him into our shanty and gave him some hot chocolate. After he warmed up and stopped shivering I got to

help my big brother, a paratrooper, get home the short distance to our house.

My wife established a Christmas-time atmosphere for my children by introducing them to the idea of Santa's helpers watching over them during the season. This greatly encouraged them to forget past mistakes and focus on being more thoughtful, considerate and generous going forward as we approached the birth of Christ. It taught them that everyone can be a bit of a Santa Claus if they choose to be.

To get to the point of this article, we lived in the Christmas season, not just Christmas day. We got a chance to be a part of families enjoying the selection of their family Christmas tree. Of course, we had the feast of Christmas to look forward to, but Christmas day would come and go in a fleeting 24 hours. I have always believed that working at that Christmas tree lot gave me a chance to enjoy the whole Christmas season, not just Christmas Eve or Christmas day. Somehow I wish we could return to some aspects of the buildup to Christmas, and just not celebrate Christmas Eve or Day.

We seem to have lost so much of the Christmas spirit in recent years. All the hustle and bustle is simply focused on the exchange of presents and how much "stuff" we have gotten. Let me propose that as you finish reading this article in the December issue of the IAN, that you start manifesting the Christmas spirit right away; don't wait for one more day to pass you by. Find ways to show your Christmas spirit even in the smallest ways. Speak pleasantly to others. Hold the door for an elderly person, it is

welcomed even if unnecessary. Address your waiter as a real person, not a servant. Contact an old friend whom you have not seen or spoken to in months or years; it will be welcomed. I recently got a call from a former client of mine; we probably haven't spoken in three or four years. He said he just wanted to check in with me; it was a real high for me.

I once told one of my granddaughters, Janna, who was work-

ing as a waitress to be pleasant and courteous to every customer that she waited on; she may be the only one who would speak to that individual that day. There are tons of people who live lonely lives; you will brighten their day by just showing a little courtesy. I have saved a news clipping for years about an unknown individual who really spoke to this matter. He said "So, if I had one month to live, I would write a note to each of my children, my sure that such a message could be a lovely Christmas gift.

And from a business point of view, your fellow co-workers would probably be appreciative of your enthusiasm. Your happy

holiday spirit could be a real plus to the whole office, department or shop. And you may be seen as the one who started it.

Wishing you a very Merry Christmas surrounded by your precious family, and many blessings for the coming year. Warmest thoughts and best wishes for a wonderful Christmas and a Happy New Year. May peace, love, and prosperity follow you always. CARPE DIEM.

James F. Fitzgerald is president of James F. Fitzgerald & Associates, Inc., a Naperville, IL-based executive coaching and executive career transition firm. #630-420-0362. Jamesffitz37@hotmail.com jamesffitzgerald.com

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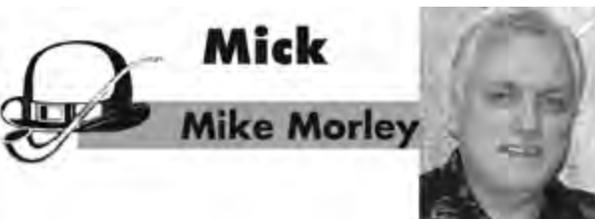
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That's the Way It Is

In the very first column I wrote for this publication in 2002 I mentioned: "the news" from Northern Ireland using quotation marks, because information from that part of the world appeared to "pass through a prism for the benefit of Irish in America... much of the green is filtered out, or tinted orange."

At this point it's obvious that kind of filter is being applied to major news and information sources everywhere, and media consumers should partake with "caveat emptor" in mind.

I also wrote that year of Johnathan Swift's "A modest Proposal"; his bitter satire offering a solution to the poverty of Irish peasantry, which I said "only a psychopath would offer sincerely: to raise their children to be sold as an expensive delicacy to grace the tables of their English masters". But only last September a Swedish Behavioral Scientist and Marketing Strategist proposed human flesh as a food source. Magnus Söderland admitted that "conservative attitudes" make it difficult to sell the idea of cannibalism to the public, but that it was important to consider this option. He apparently favors "choice" over taboo.

And looking forward in January '03 I predicted: "We can expect more strife in the summer over Protestants throwing bricks and human feces at Catholic schoolgirls and forcing victory parades into Irish Catholic neighborhoods... We can also expect NOT to hear about it from major American newspapers or TV... In other words, more of the same."

The attacks on schoolgirls did not, in fact, resume. Loyalists did place a pipe bomb at the entrance to the school. But the news blackout and disinformation here continued as expected. The Sun Times was then owned by Lord Conrad Black, newspaper magnate and member of the Queen's Privy Council. The paper granted First Minister of Northern Ireland David Trimble a private meeting with its editors. Next morning Trimble was quoted in the Sun Times: "If you took away Catholicism and anti-Britishness, the (Republic of Ireland) doesn't have a reason to exist". Curiously, he had paraphrased a favorite saying of Chicago's Irish Republican patriarch Frank O'Neill about Chicago's Irish community: "Take away St. Patrick's Day and Notre Dame, and what have they got... nothing."

New York's Irish Echo that week ran the story with a banner headline "Talking Trash". The Irish Times also printed Trimble's insult, and quoted a Chicago Sun-Times reporter saying Trimble was in Chicago "where Irish-Americans dominate local government" because he wanted the people "to hear the other side on Northern Ireland". They also mentioned Trimble's description of the Republic as an Ulster Unionist Council meeting in March as "pathetic, mono-ethnic and mono-cultural"

17 years on, both the Catholic Church and contempt for Britain have greatly diminished in Ireland, along with Irish

dominance in Chicago's government. And Frank is nearly nine years gone. But control of the press over public opinion appears to have grown mightily over that time. But I'd argue that's only the appearance. The media's chokehold on opinion seems so mighty because it has been exposed.

The internet has upset traditional dynamics. The media is no longer just the medium, it is the message; the subject under scrutiny. The "business as usual" result expected in November 2016 was shattered. Humpty was dumped from the wall, and wave after wave of aftershocks continue to batter the political and cultural landscape. Time appears compressed. Events that once commanded attention for months now fly by in a week's time. It's like a wartime pace developing as institutions begin to crack, and cultural icons shatter. Damage control rules when insurance and prevention fail.

Hillary, Mueller, Manafort, Flynn, Tillerson, "Rocket Man", Weinstein, Epstein, Senators shot, Mandalay Bay, opioids, Harvey, Irma, Maria, Michael, Florence- break for a rare total eclipse- Statue smashing, Charlottesville, Kaepernick capers, government shutdown(s), Parkland, Kavanaugh, blue wave, data breaches, unisex marriage, Russia scare flops.

At November press deadline we're now experiencing Ukraine on the brain as congressmen scream breathlessly that destroying the president is our most critical goal. Meanwhile Trump's economy smashes the DJIA past 28000 for its 21st record high of the year.

True believers sit glued to their TV screens for the opening of CNN's wall-to-wall coverage of "Russia Bombshell, Part II" and eagerly await star witnesses, William B Taylor, American diplomat in Ukraine, and George P. Kent, a deputy assistant secretary of state, to rescue impeachment. But they testify about what they "think" the President was saying in a phone call that neither of them actually heard.

Nonetheless, the New York Times reports their appearance gushingly. Taylor is described as "a wise fatherly figure with Kevlar credibility, expressing with restrained but unmistakable disapproval of what he found when he turned over the rock... a combat veteran and career diplomat who narrated with a deep baritone voice reminiscent of Walter Cronkite...what he saw as the corruption of American foreign policy to advance President Trump's personal political interest."

The Times actually compared Taylor to Walter, "the most trusted man in America"! Interesting that they failed to choose one of their own prize pundits for comparison. The Times bloviated on like the narrator in one of those yawn-inducing documentaries we were forced to watch to fill classroom time at the end of a semester. I imagined martial music in the background: "Mr. Taylor was the star witness Democrats had sought for a long time. Mr. Taylor is 72, a septuagenarian Vietnam veteran with a chiseled face and reassuring gray hair after a lifetime of service to his country... Mr. Taylor came across as calm, confident and in command of the facts as he knew them."

But Mr. Taylor (with his "reassuring gray

hair" approved by the "Gray Lady" of journalism) and Mr. Kent (with what the Daily Beast called his "stunning bow tie") offered only opinion and conjecture during their star witness (or star witless) TV time, seated before the Russia Redux impeachment inquiry.

Neither of those beacons of journalistic truth, nor any other major media outlet for that matter, reported what was arguably a far more interesting story: that of a world-renowned director, an exile from the former Socialist Republic of Romania, who immigrated to the U.S. in 1999 and resigned his tenured teaching position at Columbia University's Acting School rather than accept politically correct demands imposed by that university. Andrei Serban, "a major name in twentieth-century theater" who has directed theater and opera productions in London, Vienna, New York and Paris, led a Columbia "commission" to fill a vacant professorship. He was appalled when told by the dean of the Art School that the person he chose could neither be white, male or straight. But the final straw came when a transgender male auditioned for the part of Juliet in a production of Shakespeare's famous play. Director Serban failed to choose 'him' as her, and was roundly censured for his choice by the "commission". Serban then resigned his position at Columbia, adding that the Ivy League school is "on its way toward full blown communism". © 2019 Michael P Morley

Watch shows online: <http://IRISHTV.US>, facebook: [Irish Eye / IrishTV.US](http://IrishEye/IrishTV.US), Chicago cable TV: Channel 19 Monday 7PM, Tuesday 2PM, Comcast: NORTH suburbs: Channel 19 or 35: Tuesday, 6PM, WEST suburbs: Channel 19 Tues., 7:30 E-mail: IrishTV@att.net

WISDOM OF THE WINDS

There be winds that blow that blow not fair
Born of some womb of mournful despair
Whose labour of grief births forth the heir
Of anguish and woe from it's stygian lair.
It's vehement mouth blows havoc when it brings
Into our midnight beds, infernal things;
Hoarse shrieks of the night raven as it sings,
Bearing in nightmares on it's black foreboding wings.
Then there be winds that blow so fair
Arising from regions we cannot know where
Drifting into our lives without effort or prayer
On our parts and dispel every care.
We never can choose which winds will blow
There being rare chances of choice here below
Of fair winds or foul; only this can we know,
All winds good or bad they come and they go.
Neither winds blow on the throw of a dice
But appear out of nature in cycles precise.
Great sages of old left this prudent advice:
Each joy we attain always comes at a price.
What we must endure when our peace blows away
In the famine of heart-easing pleasure's decay
Remits on all counts the high tariff we pay
For largesse of fair winds on their bliss-bearing day.
Those foul fiendish winds my heart ever knew
With most lethal of maelstroms foul winds ever blew
Redeemed the high cost I paid as it's due
For that day of fair winds that came bearing me...you.

Swimming Upstream

By Charles Brady

chasbrady7@eircom.net



Roger Doyle: Music from the Mothership

I hope that this isn't too much of a shock, but I won't be dipping the old quill into my usual pot of vitriol for this column; let's finish the year with a happy one for a change.

For during the first week in November I took a wholly unexpected walk down a very pleasant Memory Lane.

I had gone along to see a documentary being shown in Galway's Eye Cinema, which afterwards had a Questions & Answers session with writer/ editor/ director Brian Lally and the fabulous young soprano Aimee Banks, who appears in the film.

I had imagined I would at the very least enjoy it, being both slightly familiar with Roger Doyle's music and also an admirer of Lally's 2008 feature film '8.5 Hours'. That Irish movie dealt with the beginning of the end of the Celtic Tiger period, just prior to the banks crashing, and was by turns gritty, intense, painfully honest and very, very, funny.

I thought at the time that it was probably a bit too honest and on-the-nose - Ireland in general and Dublin in particular weren't exactly ready to have the manner in which they went completely OTT pointed out—and that proved to be the case. The movie took a critical panning that was not only savage but sometimes seemed to veer into the personal. People who hadn't actually SEEN this film were showing up to tell you how bad it was.

Both in these pages and in two other magazines I spoke glowingly of it; and I fully expect at some point to see it re-evaluated with the perspective of time.

Hopefully before I fall off the twig, so that I can raise a vindictive middle finger to those who wondered why I liked it so much.

In the last decade Lally has kept busy making around 300 corporate films (which sounds like a kind of hell to me) but also finding time to work on this labour-of-love -- 'The Curious Works of Roger Doyle' -- and as I say, I had expected to enjoy a pleasant evening at the cinema. What I hadn't foreseen was how moved by it I would be, nor how personal a memory-trip I would find it, of my own twenty years in Dublin from the early 'eighties on.

Back then the people I knew (and myself) all seemed to have an away-from-work life that consisted of huge amounts of cinema, literature, theatre, drinking and passionate love affairs. And all of

that came flooding back.

Whatever Lally's original intention was, this film has somehow become much more than one that shines a light on an undervalued composer's work; and when I read up on it the next day I understood immediately what the 'Irish Times' meant when they called it "an alternative history of recent Irish culture". In its way, it is a fascinating time-capsule of a specific era. And it is wonderful to see some of the names who appear here.

Roger Doyle, who lives in County Wicklow, was born in 1949 and despite having brought out 29 albums (as well as a single from Mother Records that was produced by no less than Bono) he remains largely unknown, although somewhere along the road he has become known as 'the Godfather of Irish Electronica'.

Early footage and stills show a whippet-thin young man, with a faun-like goatee beard. Instead of in front of a piano, I picture that particular Doyle- incarnation sitting on a rock, with cloven

hoofs and playing Pan's Pipes, like something out of an Arthur Machen tale.

The Doyle of today is a more robust man, with a pleasant, soft-spoken voice that I'm going to guess hides a pretty steely inner core. Could I be far wrong in wondering if a lack of willingness to compromise is why he isn't more commercial? Whatever about that, it is compelling to see this big man approach the instruments of his art with an oddly diffident manner, before entralling us with sounds that evoke ephemeral, half-recalled memory-ghosts.

When Brian Lally decided to do a one-hour piece, and then by necessity a far longer one, he was faced with a mind-bogglingly daunting amount of material. The film is low-budget and to a large extent self-funded, but Lally has made a virtue out of his limitations, forced to become creative to a degree that I found totally satisfying.

This is never more evident than in the eleven minute sequence (which actually feels less than half that, so engrossing it is) in which Doyle plays the beautiful piece 'Coathanger Kisses'. It is done to the strange accompaniment of a phone recording that had been left for Doyle by the late journalist Jonathan Philbin Bowman. It is quite brilliant stream-of-consciousness and Lally spent a fortnight editing it and putting on the floating subtitles by himself. Movingly, Jonathan's brother Abie is

seen listening to the tape after commenting that his brother was the most spontaneously creative person he ever knew. And that's something I can attest to, having known him.

But he was more than that. He was intellectually generous with his ideas, spewing them out for the wind or whatever to take them, as we see with this remarkable piece of filming.

Jonathan died trag-

ically and ridiculously early at the age of thirty in 2000; and afterwards I mused on the odd fact that I was now exactly twice the age he was when he passed.

This sequence points up one reason why the film is so good. Most of the footage was shot from 2015-2017, as the composer prepared for his first opera, 'Heresy'. And Lally has polished each separate section until you end up with a group of mini-films that still manage to make a fully cohesive whole. And it should be noted that going back as far as ten years, Lally would just turn up at concerts and start shooting -- true guerilla-style filmmaking.

One wonderful contribution comes from Doyle's frequent collaborator Olwen Fouéré, from whom I've stolen the header to this piece. And seeing her took me back to 1988 when I haunted the Gate Theatre for its other-worldly production of Stephen Berkoff's 'Salome' in which Fouéré played the lead, finally seeing it seven times in all - and yet I had quite forgotten that Roger Doyle had done the music for it!

So many memories: Jeananne Crowley doing the narration... I think I fell in love with her just a bit when I saw her in Alan Stanford's production of Wilde's 'An Ideal Husband.' She was like a big, scary, sensuous cat when she prowled that stage.

Those were days when you could drop into the Library Bar in the Central Hotel or a few other pubs at nearly any time and you would find like-minded souls and some great, passionate conversation. It seems like a long time ago now.

And I could go on; but instead I'll simply recommend this entralling documentary if you want to take a glimpse into a particular area of Irish artistic life. It will have ended its cinema run by the time you read this, but will go out on DVD and online in 2020.

I wish all of you a most peaceful and loving Christmas and a great New Year.

You can find more info on Brian Lally's film at:

www.rogerdoylemovie.com
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Gallagher's Advice

By Caroleann
Gallagher



At the end of September, STERIGENICS announced it would be leaving its Willowbrook operation, which federal records show was one of the nations largest industrial sources of cancer causing ethylene oxide pollution.

The Illinois Environmental Protection Agency shut down Sterigenics in February of 2019, after air tests found higher than allowed levels of cancer causing ethylene oxide, a colorless and flammable gas were being emitted from its plant. It is reported that the levels could have been up to as many as three times higher than what was permitted. For more than a year, community activists in Chicago's Western Suburbs, comprised of patients and patients families who had been diagnosed with cancer over

the years, fought a campaign to force the factory out of its location.

By the end, it appears, at least according to the factory itself, a routine business decision was the push that the factory needed to finally agree to close its doors. I however believe that the strong community drive against this Company and the many recent lawsuits filed against it, had something to do with them finally moving on. It is also interesting to note, that their shock decision to close its plant, came less than two weeks after the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency granted Sterigenics a new permit, which could have dramatically reduced the amount of ethylene oxide it would be permitted to release into the communities surrounding its plant.

In March this year, Matt Heller, aged only 45 lost his long hard fought battle with cancer. Matt and his family strongly believe his illness was caused by his exposure to ethylene oxide due to the fact that he lived in close proximity to the Stringencies Plant.

Mr. Heller was one of the first people who had filed a lawsuit against Sterigenics to have passed away from his disease. CBS's Dave Savini covered some of Matt's last moments with his family and I would encourage my readers to check out that powerful and incredibly heartbreaking piece.

Even as he faced his final days, his message to this Company and to those that assisted its operation, was strong and powerful. He urged more people to come forward with information regarding what they knew about the way the plant had been operating. During preparations for the interviews and covering the story itself, CBS investigators obtained a letter from 1984, written by the

Illinois Environmental Protection Agency to the Company's predecessor, Griffith Laboratories, warning them of cancer dangers associated with ethylene oxide, listing cancers of the pancreas, bladder, brain, central nervous system and stomach. That warning appears to have been ignored time and time again by this Company.

Matt Heller shared his story hoping it would lead to more investigations into this Company and it has surely done that. Lawsuits are being filed in immense numbers against Steigenics and I fear, the surface is only being scratched, with regard to the way this factory has devastated and continues to devastate lives, over its 35 to 40 year reign in Willowbrook.

My colleagues and I at Dwyer & Coogan have taken numerous calls from people who feel they have been affected by this Company and are very familiar with the claims being levelled against Sterigenics. If you or a loved one, who lives or lived in the Willowbrook and surrounding areas have recently developed a chronic health condition or have been living in persistent bad health for years, you may be the victim of Sterigenics' negligence. We can help you so please do not hesitate to give us a call. At Dwyer & Coogan we fight for the rights of those who are suffering due to negligence and are prepared to help you build a case against this negligent corporation and fight for the compensation you may currently need, or will need, to cover the cost of medical expenses and other damages.

**Caroleann Gallagher is an Irish born Attorney now licensed in Illinois and practicing all types of personal injury law - including nursing home litigation, medical malpractice law, wrongful death claims, transportation injuries, premises liability claims, defective product claims, construction site injuries and Workers Compensation. She can be contacted at cgallagher@dwyercoogan.com or at 312-782-7482*

Sterigenics Leaves Willowbrook

Greetings this December to all my IAN Readers. I hope you are all enjoying the run up to the Christmas Season and staying warm!

You may recall earlier this year I wrote an Article regarding the medical device sterilization

plant, STERIGENICS, in Willowbrook, regarding the fact that more information was becoming known that the factory was for years, responsible for emitting cancer causing gases into the environment.

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Disaster in the Irish Sea Left Arranmore in Tears

Introduction and Submission by Michael Joseph Boyle

It was the worst sea tragedy Ireland had seen since 1825, and it happened on a 24-foot sailing yawl crossing from Burtonport to Arranmore Island in Donegal, on the 9th of November, 1935.

The small sailing boat had come from Arranmore Island to the mainland of Burtonport in order to collect many young islanders making their way home for the winter from the potato harvesting in Scotland.

The train coming from Derry was delayed in reaching Burtonport that day, and it was 6pm by the time the passengers and crew left the port on their three mile journey to Arranmore Island.

Winter crossings in darkness, with northeasterly winds, can be dangerous on the best of days, and less than one hour later, eighteen lives would be lost.

More than half way across, the boat encountered a particularly strong gust of wind, veered off course, hit a rock, and capsized. All on board were thrown into the icy North Atlantic waters, and most died shortly thereafter.

Patrick Gallagher and his brother John climbed onto the keel of the boat and began to drift. Ten long hours later, and just four hours before rescue by island search crews, John died in his brother Patrick's arms, leaving Patrick as the sole survivor. Patrick also lost two sisters, three brothers, and his father in the tragedy that fateful night.

This poem memorializes the disaster.

by Patric Stephenson

Somewhere below the grey Atlantic skies
Off Ireland, is an island, Arranmore.
Like an inverted plate its contour Hes
Far to the west, and on the seaward shore
Great rollers boom with never .. ceasing roar
And crying gulls, salt-sticky with spray,
Wing round all day and each year's every day.

One bay, one landing place, one tiny pier
Afford scant shelter from a running sea;
All who would visit Arranmore Island here
And boats tie up. beside the little quay,
While eager, barefoot children crane to see
What stranger comes, their coloured shirts and blouses
Flap in the breeze; behind them rise the houses,

Grey little houses, low built, weather .. stained,
Huddled like living creatures close together
In a poor land where it has always rained
and blows continuously through weeks of weather,
Some thatched with straw, some with the Island Heather
Tied down by ropes; their few, small windows peep
Beneath the eaves like eyes when half asleep

No doors or openings pierce the western walls,
Unbroken whitewash fronts the seaward side;
Here the Atlantic holds domain and calls
In aid ten-yard-high breakers, island-wide,
And wind to blow whatever's: out inside,

And cutting hail, and rain, and foam like yeast
To smite across the island west to east.

Yet in that season when the spring's young glory
Has not been smothered up in summer's prime
And spring and summer both became a story
To while away a winter's night in rhyme,

Rare peacefulness and calm rule for a time
And airs come gently from the balmy south
Kissing the little fields with fragrant mouth.
Then too, the ocean tamed to unusual calm

Rests its blue waters on the rocky ledges,
Healing storm-broken Spirits with a balm
Unknown by those who live behind thick hedges;



Moveless and dead it looks, but at the edges
A gentle swaying motion will be seen,
Echo of all the fury that has been.

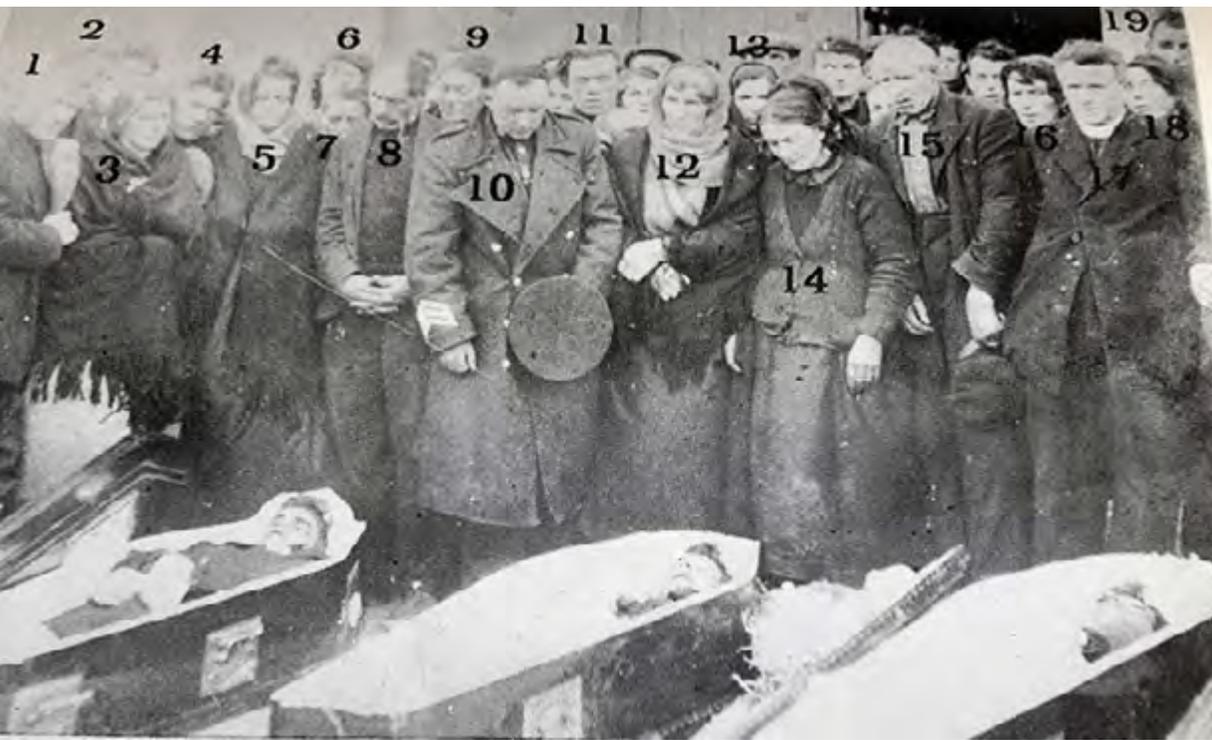
Never is that unruly ocean quiet,
Even upon the calmest summer days
Uneasy heaving speak of latent riot
Ready to burst out In a raging blaze,
Sea is the ruler here and man obeys,
Reading the signs of wind and wave, from womb
To death he labours shadowed by the tomb.

Each summer some of the young islanders
Go far afield for work upon the soil
And help at harvesting with Highlanders
In Scotland, earning money for their toll.
They later on return to share the spoil
With their own folk by labour long o'erwrought.
The island boat meets them at Burtonport.

"D'ye think the train will be in time?"
John said. "It's no' a market day," a voice replied,
"Why shouldn't she?" Behind the skipper's head
The island slid with steady, even slide.
The boat now nagged at by the running tide
Wobbled about. "Faith, I'll be glad to see
Our Michael back." The skipper braced his knee

And let her have an inch or two more rope.
"An' Madge an' Hannah," Charlie said, "I know
That theyn't bin thinkin' long, an' Ned I hope
Hasn't spent all his earnin's this year." So
They talked of friends to meet. A stiffer blow
Set in. The skipper eyed the sea and sky,
Filled a clay pipe and puffed complacently.

Now they were out where the Atlantic roll



Sweeps in unhindered from the distant west;
Thrilling to watch, a tonic for the soul
To ride upon an ocean's heaving breast
And view the coastline from each rounded crest
Only to lose all sight of land between
Those water-walls, grey, glinting into green.

Silent the crew remained, the easy motion
Rising and falling on this spacious swell
Sufficed for words, as though some magic potion
Had cast all men aboard beneath its spell
And tolled in every heart a slow buoy bell.
The ceaseless march of broad-backed rollers passed
Above, beneath, above the boat. At last

The skipper spoke, "My God, Look over there!"
He pointed to the western bay. His hand
Outlined a breaker. Greyer then his hair
Its swelling shoulder swallowed up the land.
John, crouching in the bow, jumped up to stand
And watch with staring eyes. Said he, "I bet
If we were there 'tis we'd be gettin' wet."

"Wet?" Charlie said, "Aye, wet until we'd drown!"
Even as he spoke the mighty roller reared
House high, poised at its height, then toppled down
In seething surf where in no vessel steered
By human hand could live. "I'd be afeared
To meet the like o' thon!" The salt air shook
With thuds of falling water. Charlie took
A pinch of snuff. His father spoke again,

"The highest wave I ever seen." Another
Almost as big swept onward in its train
And broke in creamier, broke in yellower smother.
"Aye!" answered John, "I'm thinkin' now that mother
Would fair be frettin' had she seen yon wave."
With sons afloat all mothers see a grave.

Gradually the rollers lessened, bit by bit
The boat sailed on into the sheltered bay,
Past the big rock where shags wing-dryinj sit
The old man steered the well-accustomed way.
'Twas cool and dull, a real November day,

But on the whole good for the time of year.
With practised skill they landed at the pier.

Landed, made fast the boat, and at the station
Met the homecomers' train with laughs and joy,
Warm hand in hand to greet a blood relation
Glad to be back and free from Scotch employ:
Money in pockets of each girl and boy,
Money to buy the summer back again
For fuel and clothing in the winter's rain.

"You're welcome Madge and Hannah," "Hello, Ned",
Familiar faces smiled with friendly nod,
"Troth but I'm glad to see yous back," some said,
And others, "Well now, glory be to God
Is it yourself!" The girls new-dressed, new-shod,
Ran into Bridget's for a drop of tea.
The boys went on with luggage to the quay

And called the girls to come. The tide was right,
Their skipper keen to start and be away
Before the coming dark had quenched the light..
Getting aboard, the sum, first time that day,
Shone through the mist, made their departure gay,
His glowing ball hung low above the sea
Out where America's the next country.

So in a sunset glow they said goodbye
To those upon the pier, and rowed outside
Clear of the boats. John said the tide was high.
Indeed he's never seen so high a tide.
The narrow, little harbour looked quite wide,
And rocks in places which had always been
Above high-water mark could not be seen.

Shipping the cars they hoisted sail and set
A course straight for the island's eastern shore,
The sun had gone, the mist came thick and wet,
The swell was not so heavy as before,
But hearts rose high to think of Arranmore
And home with loved ones near and hard-earned gold
To bum away the winter's dreaded cold.

Hannah had stories of some handsome fellow
Seen in the train. Madge not to be out-done

Told -speaking Gaelic -how amidst a yellow
Six-acre field of corn she found her one,
Fair-haired, well-built, with eyes like Bridget's son
Blue as the sea and deep as mountain pools.
Men laughed, teased, and called the girls young fools.

They were a happy boat load. Soon the weather
Grew worse and fog came down to left, to right,
Chilling and dark; but friends rejoined together
Cared naught for it, and singing songs made light
Of all their cold discomfort. Through the night
Rang many tales of human joy and troubles
Of true love broken like the wake-borne bubbles.

On went the boat and still the fog came thicker
Making the isle's dim outline vanish. Ned,
With flaring match, looked at the time. A flicker
Gleamed on the mist. "Say boys, why not," he said,
"Go through The Gap of Clutch? The flood is dead,
The water's quare an' high." They all agreed
To risk the short cut so to gain more speed.

The skipper changed her course to where the reef
Outside the Gap of Clutch had last been sighted
Some minutes past. A feeling of relief
To know they would be soon reunited
At home, warmed every heart.

Men stuffed and lighted Their pipes.
John Rodgers in the bow looked out.
"Hi, bring her round to windward!" came his shout,

"We're goin' on the rocks!" And quick as thought,
In half the space of time it takes to tell,
The sail was dropped, the tiller jammed to port,
But even so, too late; a passing swell
Subsiding, left the boat like some small shell
Perched on_ the reef. She tilted over, spilled
Her contents in the sea. The next wave filled

Her full. Then carried with the surging water,
She grazed the rocks and floated upside down.
Mad hands of someone's husband, son or daughter
Clutched at her slippery sides. To those who drown
Frail driftwood is more precious than a crown,
More precious than the wealth of many kings,
Most precious of the world's most precious things.

Only three men had strength enough to haul
Themselves upon the overturned boat's keel.
Michael, Patrick, their father • that was all
In twenty, and with hands too cold to feel
They clung and prayed to God. (O you who kneel
On cushions in warm churches saying prayers
You'll never pray with agony like theirs!)

What of the others? Helplessly they drifted,
Struggling and moaning in the icy seas;
Some drowned at once, and some by breakers lifted
Were dashed against the rocks and stunned, to be
Left high and drier than the clinging three,
But coming waves would suck them back again
Amidst the boiling surf, dead, numb to pain.

Then to three upon that up-turned yawl
Began a night of torture, fear and prayer;
Time and age, the hours were years, and all
The minutes, hours to those in anguish there.
Young Michael held his father by the hair,
And Patrick gripped both Michael and the boat,
A living mass of misery afloat.

Out of the night huge, bestial waves stampeded
Crushing defenceless victims. Pristine power
Raged till the most tenacious mind acceded
Through being lashed a hundred times an hour.
All things life stood still for withered like a flower
Within the consciousness of those three men.
Ashore the clock hands crept, past eight; nine; ten.

"Maybe they'll stop the night in Burtonport."
"Ouch aye, he's likely think the fog too bad."

In cottages on Arranmore the thought
And talk dwelt on expected lass and lad,
Folk went to bed not knowing dear ones had
Met death by drowning; all their wild distress
Pierced not the shroud of slumber's blessedness.

Out on the sea the upside-down boat, battered,
Buffeted, tossed and wave-swept as before,
Rolled with the men to whom now nothing mattered,
Not even home, not even Arranmore.

The mist cleared. They could see the island shore
And lit up windows darkened one by one,
Each little light the setting of a sun.

Hurried from the darkness came a monstrous wave
Black as the night. With bared and gleaming teeth,
It struck the boat and something broke and gave.
The hissing surf subsided underneath
And swept away, swept far beyond relief
The skipper; though he swam around for hours
His sons glued to the boat, possessed no powers

Or means to help. They could but let him drown;
Glimpsing the man whose skill at sea for there
Last forty years around the coast was known,
Knowing their father on whose sturdy knees
They'd often sat for stories, slowly freeze
There is the very waters he had ruled
Ever since they were born and weaned and schooled.

Now there were only two upon the boat,
And Patrick clutched his brother, firmer, tighter;
He tried by songs to keep their hearts afloat,
He sang and talked. Always a cheery fighter
He kept his spirits up; but Mick grew whiter,
White as the bursts of spray, and nothing saying
Died in the dark when Patrick thought him praying.

How long it took before that night's sky lighted
The one live man adrift could never say,
Ages passed till the dim east slowly whitened
To mark the lazy coming of a day.
At length the dawn broke, chilly, sombre, grey,
And mournful gull-cries heralded its light;
The sea's life wakened from a normal night;

Wakened with the old, slow routine of time,
The rhythm of the worlds, unchanged, unchanging.
Over the fields folk heard the chapel chime
As usual: little knew they that estranging
Death, had, while busy with his dire arranging,
Taken an evening's pleasure in the tide;
Grim death had struck and many kindred died.

Patrick, numbed blue, still gripped his cold, dead brother,
Half dead himself, he saw the island shore,
His father's house and smoke arise where mother
Kindled her fire. Then faintly two, three, four,
Soon all the cottages on Arranmore
That he could see - he counted six or seven
Sent up their little wisp of smoke to heaven.

This was a sight to cheer his fainting soul,
"Surely they'll see me now," he thought,
"I'll get in full view soon and wave." He felt the coal
Of life bum low, but not extinguished yet,
His sun would shine awhile before it set.
The current took him where he might be seen,
He raised a numb, cramped arm above the green,

Green space of water, rising, falling, heaving,
Exactly as before, which always will
Go rolling on, unmoved by death's bereaving,
In its own way as changeless as the hill
And proof to woe as mountain tops that still
Present their lofty summits to the sun,
The same, immutable, since time begun.

"Jesus, I'm weak!" He couldn't wave for long,
His arm dropped bump upon the keel, unfelt.
Yet hope sang through the heart a triumph song,
And in the mind before his God he knelt.

The born imagination of a Celt
Deposed the conscious self, his body's daze
Releasing him to travel gentle 'flays.

Dreaming, he wandered to the faery places
Where little people rule. Beneath their spell
He dried, and warmed himself, and kindly faces
Brought food and drink, beseeching him eat well.

O! It was blessed there, out of hell
The ceaseless up and down of icy waters,
The grave of lovely sons and lovely daughters.

Thus did he dream; anon the sense returning
Into the vacant chamber of his brain,
Brought all a mind and body's ache and yearning

Back to the field of consciousness again;
The nineteen dead; his danger; cold and pain
Hurting a hundred times worse than before;
The restless sea; a boat; the island shore.

Slowly the objects realised by sight
Took concrete shape in his awakening sense,
Slow as the birth of day had banished night
His hazy thoughts assumed the present tense,
"They come for me." The joyous fact made dense
His new-found vision. Undefeated hope
Fulfilled itself. When near, they threw a rope;

Somehow he grabbed it with unfeeling fingers,
Three men hauled him close alongside, bent
To lift a body where in life still lingers
Although its one last coin is nearly spent.

His clothes were torn in tatters, cut and rent,
As if by mighty jaws half-chewed and worried.
When safe inside, the others turned and hurried

To pick up Michael - someone threw a coat
Round shivering Patrick. From feet to head
They dragged across the gunnel of the boat
A stiffened human form. No word he said,
And those who saved him, only one word, "Dead."

Thus in a tiny boat the dead and living
Were carried home with sorrow and thanksgiving.

While Patrick smoked a cigarette he told
The ghastly tale with short and gasping breath.
They reckoned sixteen hours he'd stuck the cold,
For sixteen hours he's fought his fight with death,
Alone, one dead beside, and underneath
Deep down below him, drowned the eighteen others,
The loves of some, the darlings of their mothers



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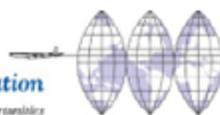
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GOOD GRIEF BY JOSEPHINE COLEMAN



Hello there again. Hope you all had a wonderful Thanksgiving speaking of thanks I forgot to thank Phil Coulter and his beautiful wife Geraldine for the photo opportunity and signing his John Hancock on my page. (Many thanks Cliff Carlson for taking the photo). What a wonderful concert presented at our Irish American cultural center if you're not aware who Phil Coulter is let me quickly fill you in. Phil is an acclaimed international Irish song writer, pianist, music producer/director he also has numerous Gold and silver discs, honestly the list goes on and on he is just amazing and was always one of my all-time favorite artists. His wife Geraldine Brangan is also an acclaimed artist in her own right performing in Eurovision song contests. They are so warm and down to earth it's like having a chin wag with old friends. I first fell in love

with his music when I took one of his tapes on my trip to Alaska 1989, to get there we flew into British Columbia rented a dodge caravan you have to zig zag your way through Canada we followed the pipeline from Anchorage to Fairbanks through the tundra driving over and through mountains which had been blasted to make way for the pipeline .Finally we reached Valdez it was a very sad sight as Captain Hazelwood's oil tanker had hit an iceberg with devastating percussions for the wildlife. People were pouring in from all over the world to help clean the oil off the beaches Folks were sleeping out in the open in make shift tents some with just a plastic liner over them. There was nothing we could do so sadly we left with a heavy heart .We headed out for a drink of water at the foot of the magnificent Horse tail and wedding veil waterfalls the water

tasted just like the well water we grew up with in Ireland. So sitting in the audience at Phil Coulter's concert brought back all these wonderful memories especially as I had played his music nonstop turned up full blast during my

trip. I could listen to his fingers on the keyboard all day. It was so uplifting as we drove over and through those beautiful majestic mountains. He sang a lot of the old songs that my parents sang to us out of the green pages of The Irelands Own, delivered every week by our Saturday bread man. Mother would purchase two million loaves of bread for us twelve kids. She was a fantastic baker she could throw up scone bread treacle bread in a New York second. We would also get a sticky bun and a packet of crisps. Thinking back she was a great one for treating us on Saturday nights. Father too was good he used to line us up youngest to oldest and give us our Pay. (Pocket money) depending on your age it could range from a penny to half a crown. I don't remember reaching that half a crown. Which brings me to a story my father told us? We loved listening to his stories but if he had that darn pipe in his mouth oh boy, it took forever you would get a story line every 6 puffs. Anyway this story actually pertains to something that happened to me the other day and my kids and husband reminded me or rather yelled at me.

My father worked as a farm hand, he loved the horses and would braid their Maine for competition but most of them were working plough horses. One day he and the other farmhands sat down at the end of their long laborious day, one of the men kicked off his boot in front of the farmer and fished out a stone size of a halfpenny. The farmer looked at him and asked how long had the stone been in his boot, he told him all day. The farmers paid him and told him not to come back. The man asked why? The farmer said if that had been one of my horses you wouldn't have stopped to take it out either until the end of the day. I love sharing these stories with my kids but sometimes they throw them back at you like the other day when my son dropped a glass it shattered all over the floor and as I was helping him sweep it up I warned everyone to please do not walk in the kitchen barefoot in case we didn't get all the glass. Next day I come back from the gym walk across the kitchen floor barefoot. You guessed it. I got glass in my foot! I tried to get it out. I could feel it but I couldn't see it. I steeped my foot in Epsom salts, nothing happened. I had promised to walk with my friend so I wrapped it up and went walking well more like hobbling. Later that evening I asked my husband to take a look at it and of course he asked what time did this happen. When I told him it was in the morning both him and my kids started yelling at me 'Mum remember Grandads story about the horse and the stone you should know better if that was us you would be so mad.'Ye, Ye Whatever. After much tugging and prodding by my husband with sterilized tweezers it turns out there was no glass just a deep cut the glass probably fell out earlier. Stay warm til next time.

In 2020 I'm excited to be returning to Spain, Ireland and Italy - familiar destinations but a very different vacation experience. We seek to make your next adventure fun and unique, with 4 & 5-star hotels, fabulous food, more free time to explore some of Europe's greatest attractions, the best drivers and guides in the world and some great friends you have yet to meet!

~ Shay Clarke

Christmas with Cherish the Ladies at Irish Cultural & Heritage Center 12-8

Joanie Madden, an All-Ireland champion flute and whistle player, has assembled a top-notch ensemble guaranteed to get you in the Christmas spirit that includes; Mary Coogan (guitar), Mirella Murray (accordion), Nollaig Casey (fiddle), Kathleen Boyle (piano, harmony vocals), Kate Purcell (vocals, guitar), Don Stiffe (vocals, guitar), David Geaney (5 times world champion stepdancer) and Seamus O'Flatharta (vocals, harp, stepdance).

This Grammy Award nominated Irish-American supergroup are one of the finest ensembles on the planet and this year's show marks 35 years since their debut on a New York stage where they boldly challenged the male domination of their musical genre. They have shared timeless Irish traditions and good cheer with audiences worldwide where they've brought



their signature blend of virtuosic instrumental talents, beautiful vocals, and stunning step dancing around the globe from the White House to the Olympics. Along the way, they have recorded a staggering 17 critically acclaimed albums including three Christmas albums; "A Star in the East", "Christmas in Ireland" and their debut Christmas album. "On Christmas Night", named one of the top 10 Christmas albums of

the year by the New York Times.

The Washington Post praises their 'astounding array of virtuosity', and the Boston Globe proclaimed, "It is simply impossible to imagine an audience that wouldn't enjoy what they do!" These ladies embrace the timeless gift of music that was passed down to them through the generations from their fathers. 'It was the greatest gift they could give us,' says bandleader Joanie Madden.

As their reputation and admiration from both fans and critics alike continues to grow, Cherish The Ladies blazes forward into another decade of music making and embarks on another season of bringing Christmas joy for the whole family to enjoy.

Tickets for Cherish the Ladies are \$25. A Christmas Pass (tickets to both Cherish the Ladies and A Christmas Tradition with Rory Makem at 7:30 on Friday, Dec. 13 are \$40. go to www.ichc.net.



Save the Date!

A Celebration of Ireland May 16, 2020, in collaboration with Honorary Chairs, Senator Billy Lawless and Anne Lawless, Consul General of Ireland; Brian O'Brien, featuring Anthony Kearns of The Irish Tenors and DePaul Symphony Orchestra with Maestro Cliff Colnot.

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Getting to Know the Irish

By Tina Butler

Epic Museum

I love going to museums because I always feel I learn something. I feel inspired to share what I have learned and discovered. Museums are filled with treasures, different museums, different treasures. I do love the quiet in a museum too. A museum is defined as: "A building in which historical, scientific, artistic or cultural interest are stored and exhibited."

Museums are a great magnet for a city and can bring development to communities. Frankly, I thought of the museum topic because I just watched "Night at the museum". It brought me to the Epic museum in Dublin. It is The Emigration themed museum in Dublin. It covers the history of the Irish diaspora and emigration to other countries. It was voted as "Europe's leading tourist attraction at the "World travel awards" in 2019. It opened in 2016 it is privately owned by Neville Isdell, (co. Down) a former chairman and chief executive of the Coca-Cola company.

Ireland has several museums including: National museum of Ireland, (Dublin), National museum of Ireland-country life, (Mayo), Michael Davitt museum, (Mayo), Irish whiskey museum, (Dublin), Kilmainham Gaol, a former prison now a museum, (Dublin). But, in this article I will just cover the Epic museum.

Some famous museums around the world include: Le Louvre in Paris, Smithsonian in D.C., and Yad Vashan Holocaust in Jerusalem.

The epic museum is made up of twenty galleries which are each individually themed, and fall under the headings of Migration, Motivation, Influence and Diaspora Today. The migration galleries deal with migration patterns from Ireland since 500AD. The motivation galleries cover religious missionary work, The Irish famine, religious and social persecution, criminal transportation, and the effects of Irish involvement in foreign conflicts. Displays include a series of video testimonies from six Irish emigrants. The influence section covers notable Irish immigrants in the world of business, sports, science and inventors, political leaders and thinkers, music, dance, writing and storytelling. Other cultural influences featured include 'rogues gallery' of troublemakers with Irish heritage, and worldwide festi-



vals of Irish culture. The Epic museum sounds amazing and worth the visit.

Some random museum facts I found interesting.

Paintings were originally housed in monasteries, the museum building developed as its own distinct type of building in the 18 century. The largest art theft was at the Isabella Gardner museum in Boston, thirteen paintings worth \$500 million. The empty frames are still hanging, acting as placeholders until the pieces are returned.

The Vice President and Chief Justice of the Supreme Court serve as two of the fourteen trustees that govern the Smithsonian. The mask of Warka, the oldest discovered depiction of a human face disappeared from the national museum of Iraq after the 2003 U.S. invasion. A U.S. military mission to recover lost artifacts found the mask, undamaged buried in a farmer's backyard. If you want to see a movie in a museum a few include: The maiden heist, Thomas crown affair & The relic.

"A visit to a museum is a search for beauty, truth, and meaning in our lives. Go to museums as often as you can." Maira Kalman

Gaelic this month: Museum-musaem Art-ealain Long ago-fado

National treasure-taisce naisiunta (tash-kay nawshunta)

I wish everyone a Happy Christmas & a new year to do things better!

Our next book is, No Ordinary Women, by Sinead McCoole. It will be on Jan.5 at Gaelic Park. I have a nice group of ladies coming to the book club. They discuss heavy topics with such ease & are open minded to different opinions. They are very insightful, curious & fun, we always have a good time! Thank you Club Leabhar!

If you have any comments, please email me: Molanive@yahoo.com



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Counties of Ireland

by Tom Butler



The Bogs of Ireland

This time of year brings me back to the bog & my childhood. A bog is a wetland, accumulated peat, deposits of dead material and moss. Bog in Irish is bogarch which means soft. It's one of four types of wetlands. Bogs are distinctive collections of animals, fungal and plant species of high importance and biodiversity in landscapes that are otherwise settled and farmed. We have some bog land in North America as well in the Hudson Bay and Mackenzie river basin in Canada. One of Ireland's classic features is the bog covering 1/6th of Ireland. (a little less than 20% of the country) Canada and Finland have more bog land than Ireland, Ireland comes in third in the world. Bog lands have been exploited as a source of fuel. In Ireland it's called a blanket bog because of their appearance from a distance they appear homogenous and they hug the landscape like a blanket. There are also raised bogs, which only make of about 20%. It takes many years to grow one-meter depth of bog. The peat bog itself is 95% water and the remainder are rotting vegetation cut, dried and burned in the fireplaces as turf.

Some bog land has been converted into grassland for grazing. Bog land has also been lost due to planting conifer plantations for timber used in construction. Ireland has the lowest forest land in Europe. In recent years (2017) Bord na Mona (turf company) Closed 17 bogs and the remaining 45 bogs are set to close in the next seven years for conservation purposes. Bogs are a very nostalgic thing and can evoke a lot of memories. However, as



we are learning harvesting peat emits greenhouses gasses that are hazardous to the climate. Ireland is shifting

to renewable energy, such as: wind, solar and water.

"You can take the man out of the bog, but you can't take the bog out of the man." A few movies set in the bog include: Into the west, Calvary, Poitin & Ryan's Daughter. There is a famous song about the bog, the rattlin bog.

I will leave you with an inspiring Christmas story:

Where will I Find the Perfect Christmas Gift?

As a young child I can always remember running down the steps on Christmas morning and looking around the tree for the biggest box. I always believed that within the biggest box lay the most expensive gift.

But as time works its magic on the mind and soul of a young man, I soon realized that each gift was special, unique, and meaningful.

In fact, those presents that I remember most are the gifts that came directly from the heart, such as one of my mother's handmade sweaters or scarves. Christmas truly is not about the gift itself, but rather the thought behind the gift.

But I know the true meaning of Christmas is found in the word "giving." So, this Christmas I promised myself to search and find the most incredible gift. But as I quietly passed from one store to the next, nothing attracted my eye. Somewhat defeated, I slowly made my way to the mall exit. But before I could reach the doors, I suddenly found that "perfect" gift.

No, this gift was not found in a fancy and expensive department store. It will not be wrapped in pretty Christmas paper and adorned with ribbons and bows. This gift doesn't have a receipt and can't be taken back. So, where did I find this "perfect" gift and more importantly what is it?

I found it in the eyes of an elderly couple holding hands, I heard it in the playful words between a grandfather and grandson, and I saw it in the actions of a proud new mother. The gift is love.

My wife Mary & I would like to wish everyone a Happy Christmas & Blessed New Year, may prosperity touch your feet!

If you have any questions, please call as I don't do email. (708) 425-7021



The Comedy Life Story of Michael Lynskey, King of The Claddagh

By Sean Garvey

Mike Lynskey, the present King of The Claddagh is fortunate to be among us. The following incidents happened in the first quarter of the twentieth century: Firstly, his mother, Bridget, failed to board the Titanic on the stop off in Cobh in 1912. Secondly, his father, Patrick, sustained a head wound in 1915 while in battle against the Germans on the Western Front. The presiding surgeon, who examined Mike's father, later remarked that if Patrick had been half an inch taller, he could have been a dead man!

Provisionally, both Bridget and Patrick were enthusiastic in sending love letters across thousands of miles of oceans, between Boston, where Bridget worked and over the other side of the world, to India, where Patrick was stationed at that time.

Blues Christmas for Blues Music Lovers

Christmas is considered a season of delight, good tidings and cheer. Paradoxically, Christmas is also a time for nostalgia and deep thoughts. It also



explains why blues music, with its ability to capture feelings of unbridled joy and heart-wrenching sorrow, often in the same song, turns out to be the perfect soundtrack for the holidays. Putumayo is pleased to bring some soul to your season with Blues Christmas.

Right from the get-go, Charles Brown reminds us to take full advantage of this special time, for "Christmas Comes But Once A Year." The Texasborn blues singer and pianist had a long romance with Christmas songs.

Brown's smooth voice gives way to the harmonica tones of Kenny Neal on "I'll Be Home for Christmas," a steady driving blues that features Neal's soulful harmonica playing. The cozy get-together turns full-blown party with "I Don't Want You

Just for Christmas" by zydeco legend, Nathan Williams and his band, Nathan &



Despite the distance, their love deepened and they jointly agreed to return to 'The Holy Ground' once more. They eventually walked up the aisle in 1920. The newly-married couple settled in Upper Fairhill

The Zydeco Cha-Chas.

We are then joined by two greats, blues-rock guitarist Anson Funderburgh and his guest, awardwinning vocalist Sam Myers. Together they perform the 1950s classic "Lonesome Christmas."

Next, "Please Come Home for Christmas." During his career, keyboardist Chuck Leavell has played with rock legends such as The Allman Brothers and George Harrison, and here he teams up with singer Lisa Fischer. Next, Paul Oscher re-orientes us in what he calls the "real, unadulterated, down-in-the-alley, gut bucket blues" with "Christmas Blues."

We slow things down with, "Merry Christmas Baby," as Mel Brown and the Homewreckers give it their spin. Then, Kenny Neal reassures us of the malleability of the blues, presenting his rendition of "Lonesome Christmas." Jesse Thomas leaves plenty of lyrical space for his harmonica to speak for him, claiming "...my love for you means more than words can express..." on "Merry Christmas." Whether you were naughty or nice this year, we're sure that Earl King and his potent electric guitar riffs on "Santa, Don't Let Me Down" will spice up your holidays.

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in The Claddagh and as the numbers in the Lynskey household increased, our future 'King' enjoyed some magnificent, magical and merry playtime in the company of his siblings.

Historically and in times past, the role and purpose of The King Of The Claddagh involved a small select set of duties. These included leading out the fleet of fishing boats and when the day's fishing had concluded, he gave the signal for a return to shore. He was careful to show that he was the last to berth his boat which might otherwise lead to rumours of unfair advantage to him in promptly selling his catch. The King was also chosen for his experience, insight and wisdom to mediate and seek reconciliation in marriage problems or where there were divisions among individuals, families and neighbours. His main goal was to use his particular gift in

these areas and to do everything possible to ensure there was peace and harmony in the village. Our present King is relieved to confirm that today, this role is purely a symbolic one!

Please take time out to enjoy these stories and entertaining musical pieces coupled with action, enjoyment and wonder. These recollections are lovingly told as Mike, invites all his listeners to 'come aboard' and join with him on this voyage of discovery. As the Gleóatóg christened 'Annie' gathers increasing speed, stay with us right to the end as our King 'trims the sails' and warmly celebrate, once again, another bright star taking his rightful place among the growing family of 'Galway Greats'.

Lastly, I feel honoured and proud to be able to engage with 'King Michael' as he weaves a wonderful tapestry of his many adventures that include the following: growing up in The Claddagh; his early job experiences in some of Galway's well-known establishments; his period of service in the army; working in Galway as an adult; meeting his beloved Annie in The Commercial Ballroom and finally his love for the sea and special pride of place, The Claddagh. I would like to add that 'His Majesty' has been generous and enthusiastic with his time and effort in the course of this project and through his support he has ensured that the unique and musical tones of his voice will now resonate down the centuries of time. Let us shout aloud with glowing fervour: "Long live Michael Lynskey, The King of The Claddagh!"

Merry Christmas!

Joe, Declan & Margaret McShane

Thank-you for your Support!



ICS welcomes their new Youth & Family Engagement Coordinator, Grace Odumosu!



Grace Odumosu is our new Youth and Family Engagement Coordinator. Grace was born and raised in Dublin, Ireland she immigrated to Chicago in 2014. Grace has an extensive background in theatre both in Dublin and here in Chicago. She began acting at the young age of four. Grace has been working with children and young adults in the arts since she was 16. Grace has a BA in acting from DIT now TU Dublin, during this time she was chosen to participate in an exchange program with Columbia College Chicago. After graduation; Grace worked teaching Drama in different acting schools in Dublin. She was also involved in various plays across Ireland. In this time Grace volunteered in a school for underprivileged youth helping them with their Christmas play; this was the beginning of her journey to helping people through the arts.

In 2012 Grace began her Master's degree in Drama therapy at NUI Maynooth. During this two year period, she worked with people with intellectual disabilities, school children, and she specialized in adolescents with mental health problems. In 2014 she moved to Chicago and began acting and working as a nanny, promoting development skills through reading and play. She also worked as a Dementia Care Specialist in an assisted living facility. While in that role, she created drama therapy inspired classes utilizing creative methods to promote conversation.

In 2017 she became a mother to a sweet little boy and her need for an Irish community became more apparent. In search of likeminded caregivers she stumbled upon our community play group.

'The connection to home was a feeling like no other, every time I came to the playgroup it felt like heading to Ireland for a couple of hours. In my life I have found people who move places either adopt the new culture where they are living or expand their own culture it explodes out of their pores. Chicago is a wonderful place to be an Irish person. In fact I would almost go to say I feel more Irish here than I did in Ireland.'

She is excited to incorporate the skills from her degrees along with her Irish heart to reconnect our community here in Chicago.



All are welcome!



Beginning December 4
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For more information contact
Grace Odumosu
grace@irishchicago.org
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Support for people with memory loss and those who care for them.



HELP A FAMILY LIVING WITH ALZHEIMER'S

In every stage of life, we need the help of our family, friends, and community. This is particularly true in times of hardship. The Alzheimer's Association has developed these tips on how to help a family living with dementia.

- 1 EDUCATE YOURSELF ABOUT ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE.**
Learn about it's affects and how to respond.
- 2 STAY IN TOUCH.**
A card, call or visit can show you care.
- 3 BE PATIENT.**
Adjusting to an Alzheimer's diagnosis is an ongoing process and each person reacts differently.
- 4 OFFER A SHOULDER TO LEAN ON.**
The disease can impact the entire family. Simply offering your support and friendship can provide comfort.
- 5 INCLUDE THE PERSON WITH DEMENTIA IN THE CONVERSATION.**
It's Important to engage the person even as his or her communication skills decline.
- 6 HELP THE FAMILY TACKLE ITS TO DO LIST.**
Prepare a meal, run an errand, offer a ride.
- 7 INVITE FAMILY MEMBERS TO JOIN YOU IN ACTIVITIES.**
Invite them to take a walk or participate in other enjoyable activities.
- 8 OFFER A REPRIEVE.**
Spend time with the person living with dementia so family members can enjoy time alone or with friends.

- 9 BE FLEXIBLE.**
The family may need time to assess its needs, if they don't accept your offer for support or assistance right away, try asking again later.
- 10 GET INVOLVED WITH THE ALZHEIMER'S CAUSE.**
Show your support for the family by joining the fight against Alzheimer's disease - you can volunteer, become an advocate, donate, participate in a clinical study, or take part in the Walk to End Alzheimer's

PEOPLE LIVING WITH EARLY-STAGE ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE WOULD LIKE YOU TO KNOW:

- I'm still the same person I was before my diagnosis.
- My independence is important to me, ask me what I can do and what I need help with.
- It's need to stay engaged. Invite me to do activities we both enjoy.
- Don't make assumptions because of my diagnosis. Alzheimer's affects each person differently.
- Ask me how I'm doing. I'm living with a disease just like cancer or heart disease. I can still engage in meaningful conversation.
- Talk directly to me if you want to know how I am.
- Don't pull away. It's OK if you don't know what to do or say. I value your friendship and support.



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-RAFFLES AND PRIZES-

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Irish American Heritage Center & Chicago Gaelic Park

January 2020

IAHC	Gaelic Park
Monthly Musical Gathering <i>Wednesday 15th January</i> Doors: 10 AM - Program: 10.30 AM A celebration of Irish culture with live music by Ray Gavin.	New Year Brain Boost <i>Wednesday 8th January</i> Doors: 10 AM - Program: 10.30 AM As the old saying goes 'a good start is half the work'. Today, we kick off 2020 with an interactive program of mental exercises to boost the brain and memory.
<p>Irish Community Services wishes all our seniors a very happy Christmas & a healthy New Year. Thanks for being part of our community!</p>	
A Morning of Music <i>Wednesday 22nd January</i> Doors: 10 AM - Program: 10.30 AM Enjoy a morning of songs and great company- music by Ray Gavin.	

All are welcome! Our programs are **Free** (excluding trips and parties) and refreshments are served. For more information call our office on 773-282-8445

As I was trying to get a press pass to cover the commissioning ceremony for USS Indianapolis on October 26th, I learned of the killing of the ISIS thug who beheaded the rosary-saying journalist from Evanston, James Foley.

That poor young man's mother and father endured what no parent ever should, when he was taken and murdered before a camera, not in the name of Allah, but in the name of a perversion of Islam. ISIS is to people of faith as the Klan is to people of color. My pelt happens to be a pinkish hue, when not palorous onion skin white. My kids are safe.

Sadly, the politically jacked-up Chicago media ignored the Foley Family with this news of Al Baghdadi's suicide, when Justice closed in on him. The Chicago media has far different values from the Foley family. Objective universal truth does not factor into those values, rather satisfying outcomes is prime testing in all things.

CBS network news reported this reaction from Mrs. Diane Foley, "I am grateful to our president and brave troops for finding ISIS leader al-Baghdadi. I hope this will hinder the resurgence of terror groups and pray that captured ISIS fighters will be brought to trial and held accountable,". God bless, this lovely woman and the Foley family which established The James Foley Legacy Foundation, dedicated to promoting moral courage. That mission might affect Chicago politicians and journalists like Kyptonite.

If Elizabeth Warren broke wind in Evanston, Chicago's media cheerleaders would be working 24/7. Mary Schmich would be eschewing her oafish Trumpoems for equally toxic Elizabethan Odes, and Rex Hupke would, by compulsion, compile "11 Things You Need to Know About the Salubrious Nature of Native American Flatulence,"

A rosary saying journalist, beheaded by an ISIS thug moves Chicago ink-slingers and TV gasbags not a hyphen.

I had planned to write about the launching of this littoral warship and link its commissioning to this year's 78th Commemoration of Pearl Harbor. Our watchers are much more vigilant and the threat to our nation much more frightening. I wanted to talk about the people who watch over us 24/7 and go unheralded and unknown.

I decided to drive to Burns Harbor and launch a Pat Hickey Charm Offensive on the gate-keepers. They would have none of it, but told me to return on Sunday. Which I did.

However, one of my many brilliant Marquette Catholic High School Composition III Dual Credit students, Ms. Abigail Ryan of



pH Factor

By Pat Hickey



Portage, Indiana was present and offers the following 400 words on the commissioning of LCS-17 USS Indianapolis. IAN readers, I give you Ms. Abigail Ryan!

The USS Indianapolis (LCS-17) was commissioned into the United States Navy on Saturday, October 26, 2019. The ship was commissioned at the Port of Indiana in Burns Harbor, Indiana.

The USS Indianapolis is a littoral combat ship, meaning it was designed for use in littorals. A littoral is a shallow area of water near the shore, where combat ships would normally be unable to maneuver. The vessel is 378 ft long, has a 57 ft beam, and only 14 ft draft. The ship's draft of only 14 ft as well as its maximum speed of 45



knots is groundbreaking for a vessel of this size. She is also the 4th ship to be given the name USS Indianapolis.

The USS Indianapolis was built by Marinette Marine in Marinette, Wisconsin. She was launched on April 18, 2018. A Navy tradition is to christen new ships before they are launched by breaking a champagne bottle on the ship's bow. The USS Indianapolis was christened on April 14, 2018, by her sponsor, Jill Donnelly. It is a naval tradition to ask a woman to act as a kind of Godmother and Guardian Angel for the vessel. The ship then set sail from Marinette to Burns Harbor, Indiana for her commissioning. The commissioning logs the name of the vessel into the list of active duty United States Navy ships. This is unique to the military and only ships of Navy Department are

commissioned.

The commissioning of the USS Indianapolis was a very exciting event Hoosiers. People gathered at the port from all over Indiana, as well as other naval enthusiasts from around the nation. More than 8,000 people attended the commissioning ceremony. The ceremony featured many notable guests including the governor, the ship's sponsor, and four of the sailors from the third USS Indianapolis, which sunk in July 1945, after being torpedoed by a Japanese submarine.

My family was attracted to the commissioning by our interest in the navy, but mostly our interest in the actual ship. My family has had been boating since before I was born. My parents met as teenagers on the boat docks that their parents both docked their boats at. They then got married and bought their first boat, and haven't stopped since. Growing up I spent almost every Saturday and Sunday at the

beach. Not only was it fun to go to the beach, but I took a great interest in the boats themselves and learning more about them. I dream of becoming the youngest person to earn a 100 ton license and then become a ship captain.

As my interest in boats grows, I want to learn more and more about them. I love getting on ships as well as watching them from the beach, or from our boat as they come and go from the port. When I learned about the opportunity to go to the commissioning, I was very excited. We arrived at the port after an hour and a half of sitting in traffic throughout Portage. The first thing we saw on the pier was the USS Indianapolis standing tall above the dock. The event hosted thousands of excited people, with long lines to get in and the required securi-

ty checks. The attendees learned about the vessel and all of her amazing capabilities. As the ceremony ended, the work began to prepare the Indianapolis to sail to her new home at the Naval Station Mayport near Jacksonville, Florida.

Ladies and gentlemen, Ms. Abigail Ryan of Portage, Indiana and Marquette Catholic High School.

I went back to Burns Harbor and the Federal Port of Indiana the day after her commissioning. I was able to take photos of the vessel from dockside, as the crew was in the process of weaponizing USS Indianapolis for active duty as littoral warfare vessel.

Littoral warfare is new to the lexicon; born of the new global warfare. Ships need to assault camps and urban centers on coasts, as in the Horn of Africa and the Straits of Hormuz. Terrorists have reintroduced piracy on the high seas and recently we saw that rogue nations like Iran and North Korea seize civilian vessels far beyond the limits of International waters. Ships like USS Indianapolis foil such opportunities.

I spoke with a crew member of LCS-17. He was armed with an M-16 rifle and sported a watch cap, body armor, duty camouflage, a very serious visage, but delighted to talk about Hoosier hospitality and his love of duty. A recent high school graduate from Philadelphia, the young sailor who squired me around was a weapons rating - that is all he would say. He asked that I not use his name, but he agreed to photos.

He was on the job for my entire visit and his finger never left the trigger housing on the grip of his weapon. I can be a charming chin-wagger, but, so too can a terrorist affect friendly chat. I felt a sense of pride in my host's vigilance. The ship was set to leave Burns Harbor the next day and deploy to Jacksonville, Florida.

Pearl Harbor was attacked seventy-eight years ago, this December 7th. We were not looking to eastward and the young men who crewed the steel vessels at Battleship Row, worked on planes at Ford Island, or rose to breakfast at Schofield Army Barracks, never saw it coming.

The young 'weapons rating' who proudly calls himself a plank-owner of USS Indianapolis is as serious as a heart attack and his eyes look for a danger to his home. Maybe the Foley family can take small comfort that a young man has his eyes on the watch for evil people.

God bless the watchers.

God Bless All Who Serve!

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