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A snowman created by the Christmas week storm stood guard on the O'Connell Bridge over the River Liffey in Dublin during the holiday weekend. This is one of many photos of the storm's wintry effects that were published by the Irish Times in its newspaper and on its website, IrishTimes.com.

'Twas a Humbug Christmas for Too Many Irish Travelers

BY LIAM FERRIE
THE IRISH EMIGRANT

GALWAY – The days leading up to Christmas were fraught with discomfort and frustration for families across Ireland as they prayed that their own emigrants would defeat the elements and be home for Christmas. Some made it, often with considerable difficulty, but thousands more were disappointed as snow closed Dublin Airport on the 23d, leaving many flights canceled.

An unprecedented cold spell had already closed Dublin Airport for lengthy periods on a number of occasions but even when it was open flights were disrupted as airports in Britain and on the Continent were also closed for long periods. Travelers from London, Paris, Frankfurt, Amsterdam and Brussels had the longest delays.

On Thursday, as the snow fell and the airport closed at 9:30 a.m., a Ryanair spokesman argued that the amount of snow did not warrant the closure of the airport. It was re-opened at

1 p.m., then closed again at 6:30 for the remainder of the day. The backlog that the airlines had hoped to clear at the start of the day had actually increased, and emigrants who had planned to be at home with their families were stranded in airports across Europe and in the US.

On Christmas Eve, there was no talk of extra flights and travelers without a booking for that day could not be accommodated. Many who had bookings were also disappointed as flight after flight was canceled.

This wasn't just a problem for Irish people hoping to come home. There were heart-rending scenes at Dublin Airport as frustrated travelers came to terms with the fact that they would not be with their families in Britain, Poland, Spain and other countries across Europe or in the US.

Record lows recorded

Sunday night Dec. 19 was the coldest December night on record in the Republic with -17.2C (1F) recorded in Foxford, Co. Mayo. It was even colder in Castleterg, Co. Tyrone, where

the temperature fell to -18C, or almost zero Fahrenheit. This was cited as the lowest on record for the North.

The coldest daytime temperature ever recorded in Ireland, at -9.4C (15F), was claimed by Ballyhaise, Co. Cavan, on Tuesday the 21st. Gerald Fleming, head forecaster, reported that December had been the coldest month on record, with temperatures five to seven degrees below the mean average for the first 22 days.

Snow fell in most parts of the country at different times during the week leading to the holyday. Most, however, seemed to be deposited in the greater Dublin area and across the north. While airports were closed for many hours, rail and bus services were maintained for the most part although the Dublin-Derry bus was not operating.

Come the day after Christmas, the snow quickly melted on in the Galway region, but it was taking a bit longer in other parts.

'The Color of Rose' – Remembering the Life and Times of a Matriarch

BY R. J. DONOVAN
SPECIAL TO THE BIR

ArtsEmerson at The Paramount Theatre begins the new year with an Irish Festival of three plays. In addition to the Druid Theatre production of Martin McDonagh's "The Cripple of Inishmaan" and Abbey Theatre's "Terminus," the series kicks off Jan. 27 with the world premiere of "The Color of Rose," which details the life of Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy. The candid play touches on a dramatic cross section of Rose's life from her youth to her marriage, her children, her triumphs, and her tragedies.

Featuring Judith Roberts, Karen MacDonald, and Theresa Masse, "The Color of Rose" is from the pen of playwright, actress, and musician Kathrine Bates, who's no stranger to writing about iconic figures. She's also the author of "Roar of the Crowd," about silent film star Fatty Arbuckle; "Evil Legacy," about Lucrezia Borgia; and "The Manor," a fictionalized drama inspired by the tragic story of the Doherty family of Beverly Hills. She recently spoke about the new play by phone from her home in Los Angeles. Here's an edited look at our conversation:

BIR: As Boston is home to the Kennedys, "The Color of Rose" is the perfect place for its world premiere. How did it all come about?
KB: I was introduced to [California producer] Chuck Fries . . . and he told me he had an



KATHRINE BATES: No stranger to writing about iconic figures.

Photo courtesy
Kathrine Bates.

idea – to have three actresses play Rose Kennedy [at three different points in her life]. . . . The idea had been percolating in his mind for a long time and he actually spoke to Katharine Hepburn about it at one point. She was interested, but she did not want to play Rose Kennedy while Rose was still alive. She wanted to give her that respect, just waiting until time had passed. And she, of course, is no longer with us, either, so the project went nowhere for a very, very long time.

(Continued on page 12)

Here's Lookin' at Ya



One of many things to love about Ireland are the noble black-faced sheep that roam the commonage around the country. See *Traveling People* column, Page 15.

Judy Enright photo

**Cora Flood
of IPC into
reconnecting**



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**Paul Doyle,
DEA Man,
Tells His Story**



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**In ARTS:
Meet Dan Gurney,
Entrepreneur,
Musician, Writer**

Page 11

"Mrs. O'Brien"

Vincent Crotty



Mrs. O'Brien Oil 8" x 10" 2005

Mrs. O'Brien, Oil 8" x 10, 2005

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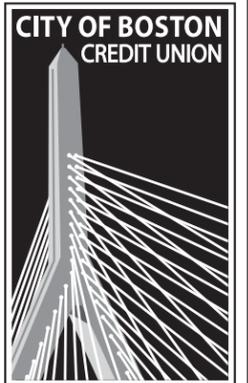
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ON THE TOWN WITH THE BIR

Riverdance maestro impressed with Academy students



Bill Whelan, the Grammy Award winning composer and producer of Riverdance, visited the Columbia Campus of Pope John Paul II Catholic Academy last Wednesday morning. Whelan was entertained with Christmas songs by members of the Academy's music program, which offers the largest violin program for an elementary school in the city. *Photo by Ed Forry*



Martin Nicholson at right with Irish Taoiseach Bertie Ahern at the Erie Pub in May 2008. *Associated Press photo*

Eire Pub's Nicholson Withdraws from the Bar

The new year brings a big change at Dorchester's Eire Pub.

For the first time in 33 years, you won't find **Martin Nicholson** working the bar. The Roscommon-born Nicholson has worked at the Adams Corner landmark since the his arrival in Boston in the late 1970s. First hired by pub owner **Tom Stenson** on Nicholson's second day in the country, he has become a well-know fixture there, working now in partnership with **John Stenson**, the late founder's son.

The Boston Globe's Kevin Cullen told about Nicholson in a Dec. 26 story (read it online at tinyurl.com/37nwrzy.) "There may be another bartender in Boston who has worked longer in the same place — the great **Jerry Foley** of the great **J.J. Foley's** in the South End comes to mind — but none has served two presidents and a prime minister," Cullen wrote. Nicholson served two presidents, **Ronald Reagan** and **Bill Clinton**, and the Eire Pub was the last stop for former Ireland Taoiseach **Bertie Ahern** during his farewell visit to Boston in 2008.

Nicholson's last day at work was scheduled for New Year's Eve, and at the age of 60, he will begin to take it easy in the weeks ahead. Old friends and pub regulars expect that he will keep himself active; already there's word he might wind up working part time at Fenway Park come the new baseball season.

Aer Lingus Curtails Winter Flights to Shannon

The longtime non-stop Aer Lingus **Trans-Atlantic** service between Boston's Logan Airport and Shannon Airport in Ireland has been discontinued for the remainder of the winter. Also suspended is the New York-Shannon route, effective Jan. 5. The suspension affects four weekly Boston flights, as well as four Shannon flights from New York/JFK. The 11-week suspension will remain in effect until March 27.

The Irish Times reported that the decision, first announced last June, comes as Aer Lingus estimated annual losses of \$14 million on the wintertime routes. The newspaper reported the airline said it remains committed to the Shannon flights, but the winter demand is low, and the three-month suspension will help maintain the viability of the Shannon transatlantic routes.

Although Aer Lingus continues to operate daily flights to Dublin, the suspended flights will cause

an inconvenience to travelers headed for the west of Ireland,

One local Milton resident lamented the change in an online Facebook posting: "Shannon is officially closed through end of March for US flights — completely shocking!" she wrote. "I have to fly to Dublin or London/Cork if I am to drop into Limerick for a visit. It's woeful, ... and a huge blow to Shannon. A lot of families here are thinking twice about going home, especially people from Galway and Munster. I never appreciated the luxury of Shannon — arrive at 6.15, Teresa's at 7 a.m. for breakfast! Dublin is not appealing! Same if Mam wanted to come out, Dublin would be her only option. Unreal altogether!"

Another wrote, "I didn't know about that. Dublin at 7 a.m. is not appealing after an all-night flight and another 3 hours to Limerick after that. That's a lot."

Meanwhile, Aer Lingus is accepting booking for Boston/Shannon flights from March 27 with daily non-stop service. Currently the service is available through September 6 of 2011.

— ED FORRY

Bar Association Honors Retired SJC Justice Greaney

The Mass Bar Association has presented retired Supreme Judicial Court Justice **John M. Greaney** with its Centennial Award, which is meant to celebrate the

service of those in the legal field to the profession and their communities.

MBA immediate Past President **Valerie A. Yarashus** presented Greaney with the award during the MBA's holiday party in Boston last month. "His jurisprudence has touched the lives of so many people," Yarashus said. "Since retiring he has only become involved in more legal works."

Greaney, who was a justice on the SJC from 1989 to 2008, is now director of Suffolk University Law School's Macaronis Institute for Trial and Appellate Advocacy. While on the SJC, he authored numerous significant opinions, including one of the most complex corporate litigation cases in Massachusetts history, same-sex marriage, termination of life support, and the constitutional right to an adequate public school education.

After serving in the military, Greaney practiced for 10 years with the firm of Ely and King in Springfield. In 1974, he was appointed as the presiding judge of the Hampden County Housing Court, the second such court in Massachusetts. In 1976, he was appointed to a Superior Court seat, in 1978, to the Appeals Court, and, in 1984, as that court's Chief Justice.



Justice Greaney



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Publisher's Notebook

Commentary

Democrats Have Right to Be Proud, Should Say Why

By ED FORRY

The gridlock that seems to have enveloped Washington D.C. in the two years since Barack Obama was elected has come to define the country in this first decade of the 21st century.

Such ephemeral nonsense as demands for the president's birth certificate, hidden holds by anonymous senators on presidential nominees, and John McCain's colossal flip/flop on undocumented immigrants are in themselves enough to cause a person to lose faith in the legislative process.

The pundits on the right are already writing the president's political epitaph, gleeful as they are over the power changes in Congress. Indeed they are all sure that things will go their way, with the GOP claiming that "the American people" have spoken.

But such simplistic analysis ignores the evidence of history: Presidential parties typically lose ground in mid-term elections. It was the case with Bill Clinton, also with Ronald Reagan.

The truth is, there really is no unilateral "voice of the American people"; rather there is a steadily shifting center of political gravity that swings, pendulum-like, across the vast middle ground between the political right and left.

And even as the chattering class predicted nothing would be accomplished in the "lame duck" nine weeks between the Nov 2 election and January's new Congress, the reality was quite different, as the Democrats rallied around the White House to pass one after another significant change into law.

The Republicans, content to foster a near-unanimous inertia ("The Party of No!") these past 24 months, must struggle with the reality that, now a majority in the House, they have to learn to govern. And these next 24 months will enable the Democrats to regroup, re-charge and, in a Palin-esque word, re-load.

Boston's John Cullinane feels confident that his party will have some success in the coming years. He explains: "Recently, I met with the Democratic House Leadership regarding their plans to win back the House in 2012. I came away quite optimistic that they can do it."

"One reason is that the leadership has put together an outstanding team which is open to new ideas. Second, as Congressman Ed Markey said, the spotlight will be on the House Republicans and Tea Party members over the next two years and that's going to help because people may say they don't like government but they sure like what government does for them."

"Third, the 111th Congress had an outstanding record of accomplishment despite the fact that the Republicans took a walk at a time of great national crisis in order to play political games with America's future."

Cullinane says that Democratic supporters must learn how to claim credit for their legislative accomplishments, and there have been many of them in the last two years.

"It's really very impressive in terms of the number of bills that were signed into law, despite all the Republican opposition," he says. "As such, it's a perfect 'get out the message' piece, and we can't start soon enough. The key is broadcasting it to all your friends and acquaintances with your personal take on things. This will be very effective if followed with other pieces over the next two years, on a regular basis. If we do, by 2012 America will recognize it made a big mistake when it gave control of the House to the Republicans."

Columbia University historian Alan Brinkley called the 111th "probably the most productive session of Congress since at least the '60s." Norman Ornstein of the American Enterprise Institute says, "The 111th Congress is going to go down as one of the most productive in terms of its legislative accomplishments, their sweep and scope and breadth, certainly in our lifetimes, and probably within the 20th century."

Simply put, writes Cullinane, the Democratic message is this:

"In the 111th Congress, Democrats worked to move America forward, create jobs, and end the Bush recession – the worst economy in 60 years. We have fought for Americans who work for a living—in the face of relentless opposition by Wall Street, Big Oil, and the health insurance industry, led in Congress by Republicans. Despite GOP opposition, we produced landmark achievements for the middle class in job creation, small business tax cuts, health care, Wall Street reform, veterans' health care, and child nutrition. We are proud of our record."



Ed Forry

News Continues to Disappoint; Irish Turn to 2011 with Hope

By JOE LEARY
SPECIAL TO THE BIR

Unemployment is high, existing salaries have been cut, taxes are being increased, furious bitter criticism is everywhere, politicians are screaming at each other, and amateur economic experts are demanding their economic solutions be adopted. Newspaper reporters are delighted to offer their own advice and commentary.



Joe Leary

This is an unhappy time in Ireland.

The 85-billion euro loan to Ireland from the European Central Bank (ECB) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) has been approved, permitting Ireland to conduct its business and maintain its banking system.

ECB President Jean-Claude Trichet is apparently having second thoughts as the Irish government tries to assert control over its wayward banks. He objects to a recently passed Dublin banking bill that gives Irish Finance Minister Brian Lenihan substantial power to regulate and supervise the current system. This kind of second guessing from Europe is not helpful and further feeds the discontent already present amongst the Irish people.

There is ample evidence that the Irish banking system requires discipline and government supervision. Perhaps Trichet fears such controls may spread to other countries in Europe.

Government tax receipts are currently substantially less than government expenditures, resulting in new deficits every month. In order to pay back the European loan and run the government without having to borrow more funds, the Irish Parliament passed a bill to cut expenses and provide more tax revenue. The Fianna Fail political party, now ruling Ireland, was successful, with some small party and independent vote support, in getting the bill approved, 72 to 68. The legislation, actually a series of bills, will broaden

the tax base, requiring more citizens to pay taxes but not raising tax rates.

The bill will reduce social expenditures by cutting payments to the unemployed and trimming the minimum wage from roughly \$11.67 to \$10.32 if you use 1.35 euro to the dollar as the exchange rate. The minimum wage is far lower in the United States, depending on individual state laws.

Two examples of the effect of some of the expense cuts: Two years ago, the prime minister of Ireland was paid \$415,000 yearly; under the new bill he will now be paid \$294,000. Salaries of ministers of government will be reduced from \$325,000 to \$244,000. These are just some of the many decisions. Ireland's citizens will be experiencing years of austerity before a return to full economic health.

Ireland is facing an election in the spring and there is little doubt that new political leaders will be chosen. Not a day goes by without the opposition parties offering severe criticism about all that is going on. Fine Gael, Labour, and Sinn Fein all hope to gain seats in the parliament. The new government will be a forced coalition since no one party is expected to gain a majority.

The Irish Times's most recent poll, in December, showed dramatic fluctuations in voter disposition. The polls questioned 20-25 voters in each of the 43 constituencies to predict probable results. The party in control at present, Fianna Fail, is doing very poorly with only 17-18 percent of the preference. Many Fianna Fail ministers and parliament members have announced they will not run again and are leaving politics.

The idea that new political leadership can solve all the problems is not considered likely, as the electorate surely will soon find out. But change is coming, and that is probably a good thing for everyone.

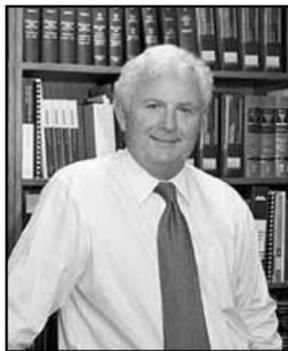
The Christmas and New Year's holiday season in Ireland is the country's most festive time of year. This year the fine hotels in Dublin were expecting exciting busy weeks and there are increasing signs that good news is just around the corner. Few don't anticipate a better 2011 than 2010.

Off the Bench

The Winter of 1860 ... Winter of 2010

By JAMES W. DOLAN
SPECIAL TO THE REPORTER

In the winter of 1860, the country was on the verge of the Civil War. Lincoln had been elected and would take office in March 1861. Amid calls for war, southern states had begun to secede.



James W. Dolan

That was 150 years ago, but only 79 years from 1939, the year of my birth. It was 54 years from the start of World War I in Europe, and only 40 years from the turn of the century.

Was the carnage of the Civil War necessary to rid the nation of slavery or would the "peculiar institution," as it was referred to in the South, have died of its own gruesome weight

in the four decades leading up to the 20th century?

In all probability, slavery would have succumbed to a combination of moral outrage and economic pressure from our European trading partners. There were voices in the North that called for accommodation while others argued that to tolerate the practice for even one more day was an abomination.

At the time, nobody foresaw the terrible carnage that would accompany emancipation. Most believed one side or the other would back down after a brief but gallant demonstration of the power of their arms. But once started, wars are impossible to control. An estimated 620,000 soldiers, North and South, were killed in that bloody conflict; more than the combined total of all our other wars.

In retrospect, it appears the evil of slavery had to be purged with the blood of those that embraced, tolerated, ignored, or otherwise accepted the view that one human being could own another. The sin of slavery was just too outrageous to be allowed to simply wither away. A brutal price in blood and treasure had to be exacted from a society where men, women, and children were bought and sold like cattle.

Justice demanded that the pain of slavery be visited upon the nation as a whole to atone for such a grievous crime. The idea of divine retribution is proclaimed in the popular Civil War battle hymn: "He is stamping out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are stored."

God was then seen as having a far more direct role in the lives of human beings. Unlike today, there were fewer obstacles between Maker and man. The distractions, so evident in this age of technology, obscure our vision. In this information age, we confront the paradox

of seeing more but knowing less.

Slaves were dehumanized. If their humanity was acknowledged, there would be no way to justify their subjugation. The same thing occurs in war. It is easier to kill a dehumanized enemy. We dehumanize a fetus to justify abortions.

I cannot say at what point in the development of a fetus that human life begins. In my view, the burden of establishing that a fetus is not a human being is on those that would seek to destroy it.

I know a fetus is at least a potential human being. Allowed to develop, it will certainly become a human being. That potential (a child-to-be) is worthy of some protection. Consider, for example, the rights we give persons accused of crimes.

To dismiss a fetus as an appendage, while not the same, is analogous to justifying slavery on the ground that a slave is sub-human. Some 150 years ago, and continuing even to this day, this nation has paid a terrible price for the obvious evil of slavery.

What, if any, will be the consequences of the not-so-obvious evil of terminating what is at least a life-in-waiting?

James W. Dolan is a retired Dorchester District Court judge who now practices law at Dolan Connly.



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Boston Irish Reporter's Here & There

BY BILL O'DONNELL

More Trouble for Irish Church – Boston's archbishop, **Cardinal Sean O'Malley**, has not completed his report to the Vatican on the Dublin abuse investigation, but the situation in Irish Catholic Ireland at the moment can only be described as toxic, tawdry, and seemingly endless. The latest chapter in the Murphy Report just released describes a "breath-taking cover-up" of a serial priest-abuser, Father **Tony Walsh**, by church officials for 17 long, painful years.



Bill O'Donnell

An Irish Times analysis clearly shows church leaders in Ireland knew and did nothing to corral Walsh's predatory actions. As the Times notes, "Archbishops, bishops, chancellors, vicars general, parish priests – the list of senior clerics who knew of Walsh's serial sexual abuse of children is virtually endless." The Walsh abuse charges first came to the church's attention in 1978, just two days after his ordination, but were not reported to the Irish police until 17 years later. During those years Walsh, while being shielded from prosecution by the church, abused hundreds of children.

The policies of the Vatican during the second half of the 20th century could be described at best, as muddled and contradictory. A decision, for instance, in 1993 by an Irish church tribunal to remove Walsh from the priesthood was overturned by the Vatican. More recently, Archbishop **Diarmuid Martin** was placed in Dublin by the Vatican to clean up the mess there, but two of the Irish bishops implicated as enablers by inquiries offered their resignations; both were rejected by the Vatican. Further complicating the lengthy inquiry into the clerical abuse scandal is the fact that the Irish police were, to say the least, not particularly vigorous in prosecuting Catholic priests accused of clerical abuse of children.

One thing continues to stand out in the most recent 60-year history of the Catholic Church in Ireland: The church's special position of authority and respect within the State, coupled with a reluctance by church hierarchy to publicly identify and charge offending priests, produced a climate that did little if anything to stop priest abuse while exposing hundreds of innocent young people to abuse that might never have occurred if firm, zero-tolerance action had been taken from the beginning.

Irish Echo Publisher Returns To Politics – Belfast media guru and Irish Echo publisher **Mairtin O Muilleoir**, who spent a long hitch as a Belfast city councillor, is looking to return to Belfast City Hall and the council there. He is being welcomed as the Sinn Fein successor to former mayor and councillor **Alex Maskey**, who recently stepped down after 27 years of service.

It is uncertain how O Muilleoir will work out the logistics as he has been a US resident since shortly after his purchase of the Irish Echo in 2007. Maybe he might look to emulate the late **Sonny McDonough** who, as a governor's councillor in Boston, regularly voted by phone from his Florida winter home.

No Surprises on Nixon Tapes – Recently released tape recordings of **Richard Nixon** in the White House Oval Office some 16 months before his resignation as president reflect a low-brow prejudice towards certain ethnic and religious groups, including the Irish. The recordings depict Nixon protesting any personal prejudice but then going on to talk about "certain traits" that people had.

With regard to the Irish, Nixon is heard saying in early 1973: "The Irish have certain – for example, the Irish can't drink. What you always have to remember with the Irish is they get mean. Virtually every Irish I've known gets mean when he drinks. Particularly the real Irish." More profound reasoning from America's premier political misfit.

I am sure that the Irish on Nixon's enemies list – folks like **Marty Nolan** and **Bob Healy** of the Globe, **Mary McGrory** and others outside the media like **Bing Crosby**, **Jim Bishop**, and **Gregory Peck**, were shattered by the late president's designated opponents list. In actuality, everyone on the Nixon enemies list was absolutely delighted and dined off

the designation for years.

Irish Bailout And the Granite State – The \$100 billion bailout of Ireland and its mortally wounded banking system is the result of plans put in place years ago that were utilized by the European Union late last year to buy time and hold off Ireland's debtors. The genesis of the recent EU rescue mission for Greece and Ireland had its beginnings at something called the Bretton Woods Conference that met for three weeks in July 1944 at the spacious and splendid Mount Washington Hotel in Bretton Woods, New Hampshire.

The elegant hotel, host in years past to wealthy vacationers and their servants, is just 160 miles from Boston, a easy two-and-a-half-hour ride.

The purpose of the conference in 1944 was to ensure the future stability of currency internationally, to encourage open markets, and to set an acceptable exchange rate. The main terms of the agreement created the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. These and other provisions went into effect officially in 1959. The smallish conference room where the agreement was signed is located on the hotel's first floor and can be viewed by the public.

Ireland's Quiet Role in WWII Resistance – Most of us who read Irish history are well aware that Ireland sent many adventurous sons off to war in South America. The names are etched in history: **Bernardo O'Higgins** in Chile, **Leopoldo O'Donnell** and **Alexander O'Reilly** in Spain, et al., but few of us know anything of the dangerous but vital role played by Irish men and women in the French Resistance during World War II.

I was in touch with **Dr. David Murphy**, of the history department at the National University in Maynooth, who has been researching the Irish in the Resistance, and he agrees that it is a fascinating wartime chapter and one most likely deserving of a book.

Among the agents or spies sent into France to work with the Resistance were a modest contingent of 30 Irishmen and women who risked torture and death if captured by the Gestapo but wanted to be part of the fight against Nazi Germany. The courageous group included Dublin-born **Patricia O'Sullivan**; future Nobel Laureate **Samuel Beckett**; **Katherine Ann McCarthy**, an Irish nursing sister from Cork; and **William O'Connor**, **William Cunningham**, and **Sam Murphy**. They traveled across enemy lines carrying essential codes, shortwave radios and other contraband; if they had been searched, they would have met with almost certain death.

Most of the Irish Resistance fighters returned quietly to civilian life but it is known that ten were arrested and sent to camps. Several simply disappeared. I recall that in 2000 we visited a large, white stucco memorial in Caen, France, devoted to the French Resistance. If memory serves there was not a single Irish name among the photographs on display. Maybe Professor Murphy can change that.

NOTABLE QUOTES

"For 14 years I have placed my confidence in the citizens of Massachusetts – and they have generously responded by placing their confidence in me. Now, on the Friday after next, I am to assume new and broader responsibilities. But I am not here to bid farewell to Massachusetts. For 43 years – whether I was in London, Washington, the South Pacific, or elsewhere – this has been my home; and God willing, wherever I serve, this shall remain my home."

– President Elect **John F. Kennedy** in a speech to the Massachusetts Legislature, Jan. 9, 1961.

"I wish to inform you that the provision of further state funding to AIB will be conditional, inter alia, on the non-payment of any bonuses, no matter when they have been earned."

– Irish Finance Minister **Brian Lenihan**, saying "no" to the Allied Irish Bank bonus plan.

"The sooner a general election is called the better. Public approval of the way the State is being run has shrunk to 8 per cent while the level of dissatisfaction with the government has ballooned to a staggering 90 per cent. Taoiseach Brian Cowen's approval rating has shrunk to an all-time low of 14 per cent... Such a comprehensive rejection of policies, personalities, and parties should not be ignored."

– Irish Times Editorial, Dec. 16, 2010.

"We should all support Sinn Fein. If Gerry Adams can afford three houses on

one industrial wage – without worrying about negative equity or mortgages, etc. – then surely the whole financial crisis is just a government con trick. Forget the IMF and the EU; just ask the Sinn Fein president how it is done. Good advice costs nothing and Gerry always gives an honest answer."

– **John Brennan**, Slugger O'Toole Blog.

"The budget is going to increase my taxes, reduce my income, and cut my standards of living, and these guys are the culprits."

– **Stephen Henry**, a Dublin working man, pausing to glower at the Anglo Irish Bank building.

"We are not going to apologize for any small role we may have played in helping to remove a dictator who made his people suffer for 20 years, carried out horrific acts, and didn't care about democracy. He is gone now and thank God for that."

– The first of dueling quotes from former Taoiseach **Bertie Ahern** about the Iraq war, May 2003

"We were always dead against the war."

– **Bertie Ahern** on the same subject 7 months later in December 2003 discussing the Iraq war

"Contrast [today's] lavish ministerial lifestyle with the Nobel peace laureate's continued use of trains and taxis. Hume gave his Nobel Prize money to the St. Vincent de Paul Society. His confidante was not the media but his wife, Pat."

– **John Cooney**, Irish Independent, on why **John Hume** of Derry is Ireland's greatest man

The Honeypot, Alas, Still Open For Business – A quick spin around the rarified ambience of the corridors of power in the old sod would suggest that while the currently grim isle has hardships previously unknown to the home-bred Irish punter, the High & Mighty (ranking government employees to you and me), have overdosed on the fruits of the Tiger!

An example at hand: Ireland's esteemed Minister of Transport, **Noel Dempsey**, who turns a youthful 58 on the sixth of this New Year, has read the tea leaves and deserted Fianna Fail for luxurious retirement. Gold watches are out this season, but as a sign of good faith for services rendered Noel will be leaving with a one-time, tax-free \$413,000 parachute. And he can begin soon after collecting his annual pension of close to \$15,000 each and every month.

A colleague of Noel's, Justice Minister **Dermot Ahern**, is leaving, also sans the gold watch, but with slightly in excess of \$400,000 tax-free and an annual pension of \$170,000. As the late **Jerry Williams** of Boston radio might have said: "Neither will need a dinner." A deputy in the Irish Dail (or parliament) who can keep a low profile, stay out of jail, and give lip service to the Whip can retire in ten years at age 50 with full retirement of \$150,000 a year. The Taoiseach defended recent payouts to civil servants as "not a bonus." We know, Brian, it's never the money.

Later Cowen defended ministerial Mercs (that's Mercedes Benz to we folk) for his cabinet while protestors picketed Leinster House. And despite a cut in social welfare and other barebones essentials, new luxury cars have been ordered for the cabinet: Cost: \$1.3 million, and don't forget the Director of Public Prosecutions, **James Hamilton**, who complained recently that his office is "overstretched." He has managed to look like a well-heeled advance man for Lonely Planet by jetting across the globe on taxpayer-paid junkets: Cost: 35 foreign trips. Total \$50,000. Ain't it grand.

The end of the pile is near – Staff of the Irish Health Service have racked up over a third of a billion dollars (that's correct) in expenses in a brief but glorious four years. I forgot to mention that the Health Service is indisputably the most inefficient and unresponsive Irish government agency in Ireland. Before Brian Lenihan stepped in and said a loud "no," senior Allied Irish Bank executives were all set to each receive a bonus of \$235,000. Shades of Goldman Sachs!

There's more to come, sad to say, but that's enough to help you frame an answer when next asked about Ireland's financial crisis.

Welcome to the New Year – A look at some January history over the years:

On the first of January 1973, Ireland joined the European Economic Community together with the United Kingdom and Denmark ... The actor **Barry**

Fitzgerald died 50 years ago this month (1/4) ... Forty-two years ago Nationalist marchers were attacked at Burntloft Bridge and the N.I. civil rights campaign began (1/4) ... In 1839, the General Post Office on O'Connell Street, Dublin, opened (1/6) ... Ratification by Dail Eireann of the disputed Anglo-Irish Treaty by a vote of 64 to 57 (1/7) ... **Brian Friel**, Ireland most honored playwright, was born in 1929 in Omagh, Co. Tyrone (1/9) ... **Edmund Burke**, orator and politician, was born in Dublin in 1729 (1/12) ... On Jan. 13, 1941, **James Joyce** died in exile in Zurich ... **Sean MacBride**, son of **Maud Gonne** and winner of the Nobel Peace Prize, died in 1988 (1/15) ... Nobel Peace Laureate and political leader **John Hume** was born in Derry in 1937 (1/18) ... Patriot **Kevin Barry** was the first IRA volunteer to be executed during the Anglo-Irish war, Jan. 20, 1902 ... Finally, on Jan. 30, 1972, thirteen unarmed men, seven under age 19, were shot and killed by British Paras on Bloody Sunday in Derry.

RANDOM CLIPPINGS

Isn't it more than ironic that former Anglo-Irish Bank CEO, **David Drumm**, who presided over the multi-billion dollar meltdown of his bank, is now living in Massachusetts, has filed for bankruptcy here, and is running a consulting firm in Boston that "advises businesses on financial matters, including debt issues." ... The Vatican doesn't have enough troubles in Ireland and elsewhere with investigators now looking at money laundering at the Vatican bank. ... I don't know what to think when the Vatican felt "offended" that Ireland had the nerve to disrespect the Holy See to answer some questions about decades of clerical abuse. ... **Gerry Adams** was initially turned down when he went to Louth to register and vote. Seems he and Chicago's **Rahm Emmanuel** have some residency problems. ... **Bertie Ahern** may be out as Taoiseach but he's not out of the fundraising business. Yet his recent whip-around/hold-up had a lot of empty, unpaid tables. ... Killing earmarks in the federal budget also killed the \$8 million tabbed for **Ted Kennedy's** Senate center, but they'll find the money.

For the first time since **Ian Paisley, Sr.** founded the Democratic Unionist Party there are no Paisleys in the DUP party executive. ... and if I were in a trench in some Afghan backwater, I'd want Mr. Lucky, **Peter Robinson**, at my side, Wow! ... Nice to see a major Irish paper choosing the Cooley Peninsula as one of Ireland's most scenic drives, and the same goes for the briny beauty of the Causeway Coast up north. ... **Paddy Moloney**, leader and spiritual counselor of the Chieftains, is set to receive a lifetime achievement award from NY's National Arts Club; the Boston Eire Society honored Paddy and the entire Chieftains' contingent eons ago. ... Galway's famed Druid Theatre Company and the National University in Galway have teamed up in a three-year partnership. ... The Anna Livia sculpture (Floozie in the Jacuzzi) is long gone from O'Connell Street, but it has been resurrected and is due to decorate the front of Dublin's Ashling Hotel.

Dublin theater buffs have a keen treat in store when **John B. Keane's** play, "The Field," opens on Jan. 13 for a month's run in Temple Bar starring **Brian Dennehy** as Bull McCabe. ... Nice to see old friend **Maureen Toal**, the brilliant Irish-speaking stage actress (and of TV's Glenroe), being honored with an honorary doctorate at University College Dublin. ... One of Ireland's classiest hotels and golf courses is the historic Ballymascanlon House Hotel run by the Quinn Family near Dundalk on the border. **Brian and Oliver Quinn**, and their late mother, **Irene Quinn**, operate my all-time favorite hotel in all Ireland. It's a grand gateway going north or coming back. ... After a long wait, the Irish law reform commission is strongly recommending abolishing the outmoded practice of jailing debtors. ... In case you missed it, it seems that the Soldiers of Fortune, (cum/Fianna Fail) are bottoming out in public poll dis regard at a minuscule 17 percent. That's about the same as the US Congress. That's scary.

A Final Thought: Be nice to Ireland and visit it in the New Year. The Green Isle can use all the friends it can get. And never forget it wasn't the people of Ireland who helped lead their country into insolvency. It was the banks, a distracted and careless government, and those who stayed too long at the fair.

BIR Profile

Irish Pastoral Centre's Cora Flood's Mission: Reconnecting with 'the Pride of Being Irish'

By GREG O'BRIEN
SPECIAL TO THE BIR

Cora Bridget Flood is one of the Pope's Children.

Born in Graignamanagh in County Kilkenny—not far from the River Barrow, navigable south to St. Mullins where it joins the tidal waters linking with the Nore River and Inistioge with access to New Ross and the open sea—Flood, now 40, is the oldest of six siblings born in this community of farmers and stone masons along the southeast coast. She never met an American until she was a young adult. And yet she was on the leading edge of what the Irish author and economist David McWilliams calls a celebrated movement in his acclaimed book, "The Pope's Children: The Irish Economic Triumph and the Rise of Ireland's New Elite."

Published in 2005, the book details the impact of the Celtic Tiger and ensuing property boom on the Republic of Ireland, "resulting in the rise of a new bourgeoisie," the first generation in Ireland since the mid-19th century Great Famine to increase in population.

"Named for the ironic coincidence of the Irish baby boom of the 1970s, which peaked nine months to the day after Pope John Paul II's historic visit to Dublin, "The Pope's Children" is a celebration of the first generation of the Celtic Tiger, the beneficiaries of the economic miracle that propelled Ireland from centuries of deprivation into a nation that now enjoys one of the highest living standards in the world," Amazon.com crowed in an online review.

But that was then. The recent European Union and International Monetary Fund bailout of Irish banks and the worsening state of Irish debt have tamed the tiger, more suitable now for a petting zoo, and have raised questions anew about the economic independence of the island nation whose cultural, political, and artistic influences are embraced, and in some places emulated, around the world.

Sound the clarion call with faithful defenders like Flood of the Irish Pastoral Centre in Quincy and recipient two months ago of the Boston Charitable Irish Society's Silver Key Award for her "extraordinary service to the most vulnerable members of the Irish community." About 3,000 miles from Kilkenny or about 4,980 kilometers as the black crow flies, Flood, like other of the "Pope's Children," is sanguine about the future of her homeland and focused on lifting the Irish spirit. "I wouldn't be depressed about it," she says, "I'd be more practical. I firmly believe that Ireland is strong enough to sustain itself."

All boats indeed rise with the tide from the North Sea to Boston Harbor, and Flood, who came to Boston 16 years ago and today coordinates the Pastoral Centre's senior citizen outreach programs, is intent on plying the distinguished currents of Irish history, humor, and culture. "We're in the business of reconnecting, of



Cora Flood: wants to "reinforce" the Irish identity abroad.

sustaining the pride of being Irish," she says of her job, overseeing more than 400 senior outreaches a month, in a "parish without boundaries," as the Pastoral Centre notes on its website.

"We are all about creating possibilities for older people from Ireland, as well as people with an interest in Ireland, to get together either in person or on the phone so they can beat the loneliness and sometimes depression that comes with losing spouses and loved ones to illness and old age," she said in accepting the Silver Key Award, stating that her Kilkenny primary school teachers, "the terrifying Sr. Teresita and Sr. Scholastica, would be smiling if they could see me now."

It always helps, she observed, "to have a sense of humor, an upbeat attitude, a store of sarcasm, and an ability to be a good listener to make a difference in individuals lives."

Flood is fully blessed with such attributes.

"We're very good at self-promotion," she says of the Irish spirit in an interview from the Pastoral Centre. "At an early age, we were taught to be proud of our heritage. At least once a day, we were told that we have a remarkable ecclesiastical and literary history, that we're explorers, saints, and scholars shaped by the sea. My job now is to reinforce this notable identity abroad."

Flood began her journey in 1994, emigrating to Boston to complete a summer work-study program at the Irish Immigration Center, as part of post-graduate studies in community

and youth organizing at the National University of Ireland. She returned to the Immigration Center the following year as a permanent resident beneficiary of the Morrison Visa Program. Her work under esteemed executive director Sister Lena Deevy involved community and volunteer organizing, including building relations with the Montserrat community in Dorchester.

Founded in 1989 to meet the needs of the Irish immigrant population in Massachusetts, the IIC serves Irish newcomers and has expanded to assist immigrants from more than 100 nations—providing legal advice, information, advocacy, referrals, and support for immigrants on issues relating to immigration, employment, citizenship, housing, and social services.

After taking a leave of absence to explore the world on an extended trip to Africa, India, and Australia, Flood returned to center for another four years, to assist with a new initiative, the Walsh Visa Program, as director of Development and Training for the young participants from Northern Ireland.

Word of Flood's organizational skills spread throughout the Boston area like pink magnolias on Commonwealth Avenue in the springtime.

In 2006 she was named coordinator of the Senior Outreach Program at the Irish Pastoral Centre, a program that seeks to reconnect elderly Irish residents with the social network of the community. Weekly "coffee mornings" in Brighton and Quincy offer senior citizens the opportunity to renew acquaintances, make new friends, and participate in educational and social activities. A monthly Mass and breakfast is held at the Irish Cultural Centre in Canton, and Pastoral Centre house visits are made throughout the Route 128 circuit, as far away as Worcester. "If we can get to a person, we'll go there," Flood vows.

Founded in 1987 and funded in part by the Irish government and contributions from Irish and Irish-American communities, the Pastoral Centre serves a range of individuals with programs for toddlers, young mothers, and young adults, as well as seniors, that help to meet immigration, housing, counseling, socialization, and employment needs "in as culturally sensitive manner as possible."

One might get the impression that Flood was raised in a convent. Hardly. "At an early age, my mother and relatives told me that I should be a nurse and that my younger sister should be a model," Flood recalls. "I thought there was no way in hell that I'm going to be a nurse, if she's going to be a model! I didn't want to fit into that stereotype."

Years later, at secondary school in New Ross, about 11 miles from Kilkenny,

Flood confided with a counselor that she thought social work sounded "sexy." She reasoned at the time: "It had an inviting title, and involved people doing good and making an impact on the world, although I didn't know why."

Flood eventually would discern the connotation, a learning curve set in motion through the fine example of her parents, Paddy and Maura (Doyle), who raised their children in a small village, a service town for the surrounding farming community. "The only people who came to the village where I grew up were folks who worked there or were raised there," she says. "We didn't have tourists or foreigners. It was insular, very comfortable, and very old Irish."

A gifted stonemason, Flood's father, who left school at age 12 to practice the trade, stressed the importance of education to his children—two of whom now live in Australia, one in England, one in the U.S. and two in Ireland. Her mother, who left school at 15 and stowed away to England, stressed the importance of independence. "Mother also was always encouraging the girls to get an education and not be dependent on the guys to keep us in the manner in which we were accustomed," Flood says.

Neither parents, now retired in Kilkenny, smoked or drank; they spent all their discretionary resources on their children. Neither were they particularly religious in traditional Catholic ways, "although Dad was a bit more spiritual; perhaps it was his way of torturing us," Flood says.

Each Sunday, Paddy Flood took his wife and children to his parents' home in County Carlow at the base of a mountain. "We got to Granny's house just in time for the rosary at 6 p.m. The minute we got to the door, all six kids and my parents were made to grab sofa cushions, kneel on the floor, and say the rosary. That was the extent of our formal religion. With Dad, I suppose, it was not so much about religious customs or prayers; it was about participating in something he felt was good, worthwhile, and that connected us to one another and to our grandparents."

Today, Cora Flood's life at the Pastoral Centre is all about religion in the missionary spirit, and yet she views her spiritual beliefs as a "faith without boundaries. I'm not particularly a Mass-goer, the outward notion of a devout Catholic," she says. "Faith or belief in something outside myself is important, but actions to me speak louder than all the decades of the rosary and all the Masses one attends. I'm more inclined to say of myself that I'm an Irish person interested in providing opportunities for the people I work with, the people of Ireland to which I have dedicated my life."

There is little in Flood's life that is stereotypical. A mother of two children, Orla, 3, and Killian, 1, she lives in Dorchester with her partner of 15 years, Brian Crosse, a Limerick City man who is now an accountant with a downtown Boston financial services firm. "We live between Adams Village and Fields Corner," she adds, but is quick to note, "I might be considered snobby if I said we lived in Adams Village, so I say the edge of Adams Village and Fields Corner, between the Irish and the Vietnamese."

So be it. For now, Flood is staying put, but her vita suggests new challenges lie in the future. A self-proclaimed short-term planner, she's toying with the prospect of a master's degree one day in intercultural relations, as in "how the Irish interact with people of other cultures."

Would she circumnavigate the world to assess this interaction? "Brilliant!" she replies with characteristic understatement, in a tone that suggests Cora Bridget Flood has a clear vision for her life and the grace and endurance to pursue it.

Greg O'Brien, a regular Boston Irish Reporter contributor, is president of Stony Brook Group, a Brewster-based publishing and political/communications strategy firm. He is the author/editor of several books, and writes for various regional and national publications.

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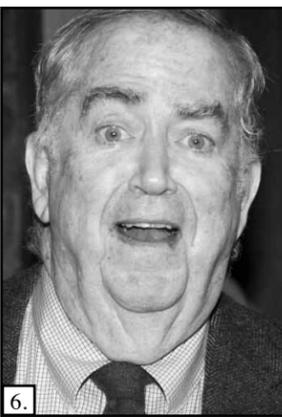
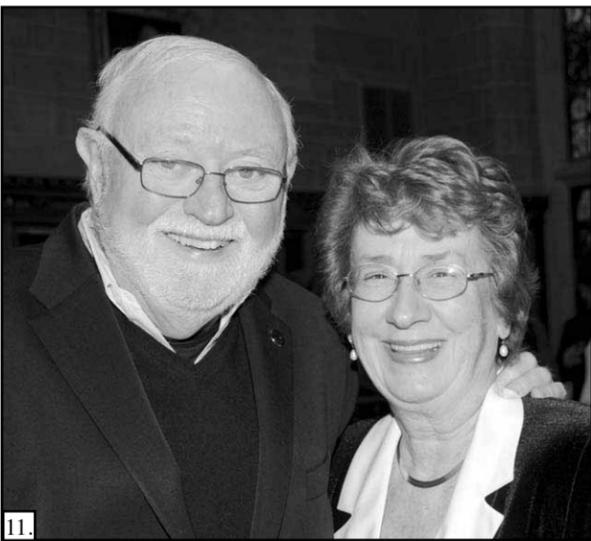
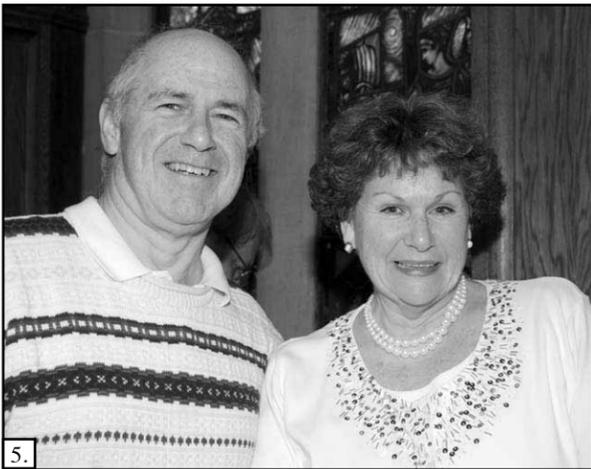
BRETT'S BOSTON

By Harry Brett

Exclusive photos of Boston Irish people & events

The Eire Society joined with members of the Charitable Irish Society and the Irish Ancestral Research Assn. (TIARA) in a Celebration of a "Celtic Noël" on Sun., Dec. 12 in the John J. Burns Library at Boston College. Hors d'œuvres and wine "worthy of a such a celebration" were served, along with music both Irish and seasonal. A silent auction of Irish gifts benefited the Eire Society.

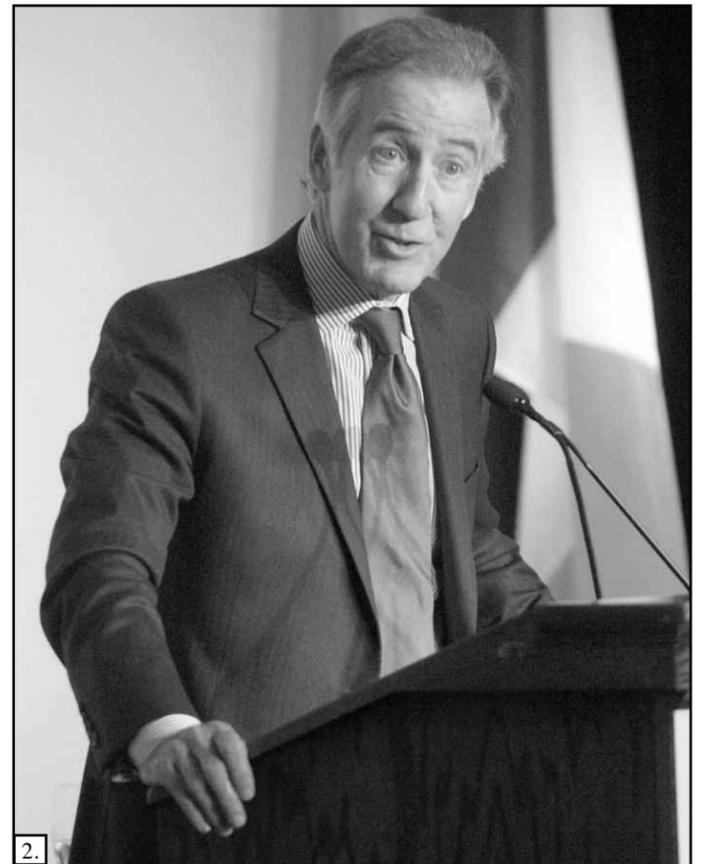
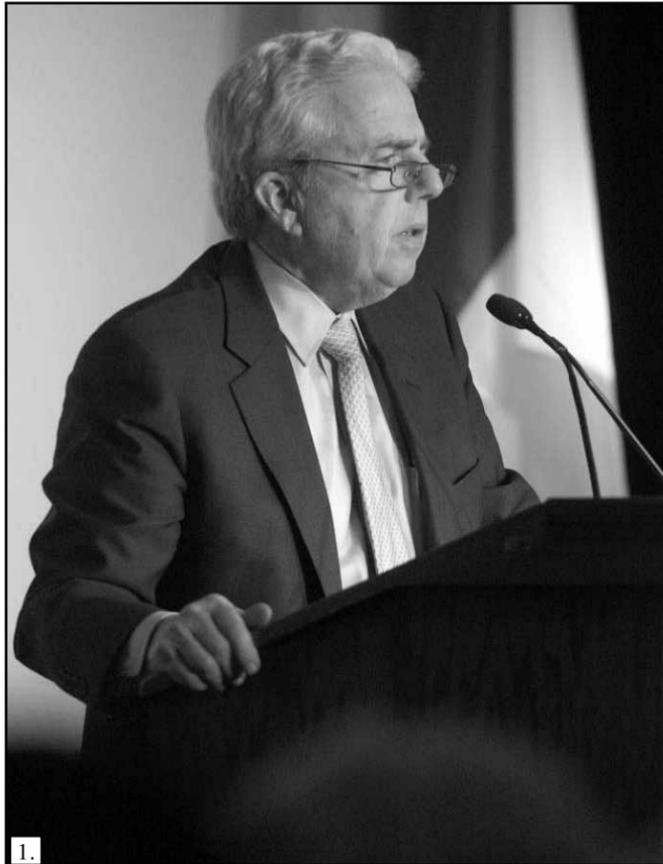
1.) Connie Koutoujian, Waltham; Pat Joyce, Littleton; 2.) Ann and Kevin Phillips; 3.) Tom Walsh and Mary Ellen Collins, Milton; 4.) John McGuire, Roslindale; Ann Walsh, Milton; 5.) Tom Carty, Dedham; Betsy Butler, Milton; 6.) Mike Donlan, W. Roxbury; 7.) Ann Doherty, Newton with Glenn and Janae Bronson, Chelmsford; 8.) Bev and Richard Armour, Norwood; 9.) Kay Moran, Newton; 10.) Musicians Sean Smith, Newton; Colleen White and Shane Cornyn, BC students; 11.) Ed Forry, BIR publisher with Della Costello of Dorchester; 12.) Jim Riley, Weymouth; Mary Barrett, Stow; 13.) Barbara and Kathleen Quill, Andover; 14.) Philip O'Brien, Kirsten Wenge, W. Roxbury; and Trisha Griffin-Carty, Dedham; 15.) Ron O'Keefe, Jeff and Margaret Flagg, W. Roxbury.



IIC Salutes Its Solas Award Winners

The Irish Immigration Center (IIC) hosted its annual Solas Award dinner on Fri., December 10, at the Seaport Hotel/World Trade Center. The 2010 Solas Awards were presented to Robert Glassman (1) and Congressman Richard Neal (2). Also honored with special Humanitarian Leadership awards were Marie St. Fleur and Sabine St. Lot, pictured with Karen Ansara, left, and IIC director and founder Sr Lena Deevy at right. (3). Among the guests at the event were former State Rep. Charlotte Golar Richie and Brian Concannon, director of the Institute for Justice & Democracy in Haiti (IJDH) with Ms. Lot.(4).

Photos courtesy Bill McCormick.



BCMFEST

Schedule for BCMFest 2011

NOTE: Times and performers subject to change
Last updated 12/17

Friday, January 7

Kick-off Concert at Club Passim 7 p.m. (doors open 5:30) featuring:

- Plaiditude
- Susie Petrov & Reinmar Seidler
- Long Time Courting

Boston Urban Ceilidh at the Canadian-American Club, Watertown 7:30 p.m. (doors open 7:00 p.m.) with:

- Pelham Norville, Adam Cole-Mullen, Bethany Waickman & Dan Gurney
- Kimberley Fraser & Hanneke Cassel
- Laura Cortese and the Boston Urban Ceilidh Band

Saturday, January 8

DayFest

CLUB PASSIM STAGE

- 10:45-11:30 am – Bob Bradshaw; Lindsay Straw & Cara Frankowicz
- noon-12:45 pm - Tri
- 1-2 pm – Irish Session with Lindsay Straw and Jim Gleason, others TBA
- 2:30-3:25 pm – The Stoneybatter Band
- 3:45 pm – “The Blue Dress” with Shannon Heaton & Maeve Gilchrist

FIRST PARISH OF CAMBRIDGE

PARLOR STAGE

- 11am-noon – Kyte MacKillop & Friends; Feargal Ó Béarra
- 12:15-1:00 pm – Lissa Schneckenburger & Bethany Waickman
- 2:30-3:30 pm – “Celtic Journey: Power Ballads, Celtic Style,” performers TBA
- 4-4:45 pm – Mariel Vandersteel

5-6 pm – “So You Think You Can Sing”

6:00 pm (approx.) – Singing session for all with Salty Barnacles, Sean Smith, others

ATTIC STAGE

- 10:30-11:15 am – Andy Reiner, Mariel Vandersteel & Stash Wyslouch
- 11:30 am-12:15 pm – “Dueling Duos” with Michael O’Leary & Steve Levy; George Keith & Adam Cole-Mullen
- 12:30-1:15 pm – Flynn Cohen & Matt Heaton
- 1:30-2:15 pm – Royal Scottish Country Dance Society of Boston
- 2:30-3:15 pm – Ari & Mia Friedman with Owen Marshall
- 3:45 pm – The Artie Flynn Memorial Open Stage, performers TBA
- 6:00 pm (approx.) – Scottish session with the Boston Scottish Fiddle Club

SANCTUARY STAGE

- 12:45-1:25 pm – “Dueling Lizzies,” with Liz Hanley & Michael Rose; Liz Simmons & Hannah Sanders
- 1:25-1:55 pm – Highland Soles
- 2:00-2:30 pm – “Lift Every Voice,” with Lissa Schneckenburger & Bethany Waickman, Hannah Sanders, Michael O’Leary, others TBA

BCMFest Finale Concert

January 8, First Parish of Cambridge, 8 p.m.

Featuring: The members of Halali – Laura Cortese, Hanneke Cassel, Lissa Schneckenburger & Flynn Cohen – playing together, and solo with special guests including Matt Heaton, Danny Noveck, Chris Lewis, Ari Friedman, Jefferson Hamer, Bethany Waickman, Kieran Jordan and Highland Dance Boston

BCMFest Ticket Prices

- Friday kick-off concert at Club Passim: \$28/\$25 for Passim members
 - Boston Urban Ceilidh: \$15, \$10 for children and teens
 - DayFest: \$15/\$13 for Passim members
 - Finale Concert: \$15/\$13 for Passim members
 - Combo Pass (DayFest and Finale Concert): \$25/\$23 for Passim members
- You can purchase tickets through Club Passim at www.clubpassim.org

NOTES FROM THE IRISH IMMIGRATION CENTER

An agency accredited by US Department of Justice



100 Franklin Street, Boston, MA 02110

Telephone (617) 542-7654 Fax (617) 542-7655

Website: iicenter.org Email: immigration@iicenter.org

As we begin 2011 Irish Immigration Center pays tribute to the Department of Foreign Affairs of the **Irish Government**

With their support, the IIC continued to offer critical services to the Irish communities of Boston in 2010.

Community Counseling and Education Services – 200 students graduated from our Home Health Aide Course and most are employed in their field

Dozens of people struggling with depression, anxiety, and substance abuse received weekly individual counseling and support

Nearly 100 people participated in our health screening

Legal Services – Approximately 500 Irish individuals received legal consultations

Dozens of Irish immigrants became US citizens

We would like to thank the Consul General, Michael Lonergan; Vice Consul, Deirdre Ni Fhalluin, and Consulate staff for the support, advice, and assistance which is so crucial to our work with Irish immigrants. We are very grateful that the DFA of the Irish Government

has been providing annual funding for 20 years. Without this funding, the IIC would not have been able to adapt and respond to the needs of the newer Irish immigrant community over the years.

Community Counseling and Education Services Update – The Irish Immigration Center's Community Counseling and Education Services offers counseling, free health clinics, job skill workshops, and other resources to Irish immigrants. Director Danielle Owen, a licensed substance abuse counselor, can assist you if you are experiencing issues such as substance abuse, domestic violence, anxiety, depression, lack of access to healthcare, or homelessness. For assistance, contact Danielle, in confidence and without judgment, at the IIC at 617-542-7654, Ext. 14, or at dowen@iicenter.org.

The Irish Immigration Center wishes to thank the Department of Foreign Affairs of the Irish Government for its generous support of programming for Irish immigrants.

Classes and Workshops on Offer in 2011 – Please keep an eye out in

the *Emigrant*, the *Boston Irish Reporter*, on Facebook, and via e-mail for updates and announcements related to the following classes in 2011 (Venues will be in Boston, Canton and Dorchester):

Home Health Aide Classes in March and September.

Free Health Screening events in February, April, and September.

CPR Classes from February.

Computer Classes (of all skills and levels) from January.

Active Parenting: Raising resilient children – Preparing for the Teen Years (February).

Accessing Higher Education Workshops.

Smoking Cessation Workshops.

Managing Stress and Anxiety Workshops.

QPR: Suicide Prevention Workshops.

Substance Abuse/Addiction Information Workshops.

Citizenship Workshops (to help prepare for US Citizenship Application & Exam).

Call Danielle at 617-542-7654, Ext. 14, or Ann Marie Cugno at Ext. 32 for more information or to register. E-mail: dowen@iicenter.org.

iicenter.org.

Immigration and Citizenship Update – The Irish Immigration Center provides comprehensive, professional, and confidential legal assistance on visa options, immigration and citizenship issues. IIC operations include a mix of outreach and education to the immigrant community, as well as specialized, individual consultation and immigration case assistance.

Legal Clinic Schedule – The IIC is pleased to offer free weekly legal clinics. Our friendly, dedicated, and experienced immigration attorneys will answer your questions about immigration and citizenship issues.

Upcoming dates for our community clinics include:

Mon., Jan. 10, 6:30 p.m.: The Green Briar Pub, 304 Washington St., Brighton

Tues., Jan. 18, 4 p.m.-6 p.m.: IIC Offices, 100 Franklin St. in downtown Boston (Enter from the side entrance at 60 Arch Street or 201 Devonshire Street)

Wed., Jan. 26, 6 p.m.: St Mark's Parish Hall, 1725 Dorchester Ave, Dorchester.

IMMIGRATION Q & A

Legal US Residents Can Lose Their Immigration Status If Not Careful

Q. *I'm a US legal permanent resident, but I've been staying in Ireland for the past nine months and I'm concerned that I may have a problem getting back into the US. I didn't intend to stay here so long, but after I arrived home my mother was diagnosed with cancer. Could I have difficulty returning to the US as a permanent resident?*

A. There are a number of ways in which a legal permanent resident (LPR) can lose immigration status, and leaving the US for extended periods is one of them. Once lost, LPR status can be regained only by beginning the LPR application process over again. After you become a permanent resident, you must demonstrate if questioned at the time of re-entry that your trip outside the US was temporary and that you have not abandoned your primary residence in the US. If you remain outside the US for more than six months or engage in activities that indicate that your permanent residence is no longer in the US, the US immigration inspectors may consider you to have voluntarily abandoned your US residency and deny your re-entry. Many people believe that they can retain their LPR status by brief trips into the US each year. That is not correct. If your actual permanent residence is not in the US, you have abandoned your US immigration status. The factors that may determine the temporary nature of trips outside the US include the following:

Are your actual home and place of employment still in the US?

Did you have a definite temporary reason to travel abroad, such as study or a short-term employment assignment?

Did you expect and was it your intention to return to the US within a relatively short period of time?

Are you returning to the US when expected? If not, what circumstances caused you to spend additional time abroad? Were these circumstances within your control?

Where are your family ties, property, business affiliations, etc?

Have you filed US resident tax returns?

In your particular case, it seems you did not intend to abandon your US LPR status. You should obtain evidence of your mother's diagnosis to illustrate to US immigration inspectors why you remained away for nine months. Evidence could include letters from her doctors and records from the hospital. You also should assemble evidence to address the points outlined above.

You should return to the US as an LPR sooner rather than later and certainly within a year of your departure. An absence from the US of more than one year very likely would result in the loss of your LPR status.

There is a re-entry permit that can be applied for if one anticipates being outside of the US for more than one year, but the application must be submitted prior to departure, while the LPR is still in the US. (See re-entry permit application Form I-131 at uscis.gov).

For a free, confidential consultation about this or any other aspect of immigration law, visit one of our legal clinics as advertised in the Boston Irish Reporter each month.

Disclaimer: *These articles are published to inform generally, not to advise in individual cases. The US Citizenship and Immigration Services and US Department of State frequently amend regulations and alter processing and filing procedures. For legal advice seek the assistance of an IIC immigration specialist or an immigration lawyer.*

Matters Of Substance My New Year Resolution About Smoking... Again?

BY DANIELLE OWEN
SPECIAL TO THE BIR

Why is it so hard to quit smoking? Are smokers weak-willed or is something else going on? It seems logical that people would drink or use heroin or cocaine for the euphoria or "buzz". But smokers don't get high, so why can't they just quit?

Nicotine is one of the most addictive drugs in existence and smoking is one of the most difficult habits to quit. The National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) discovered that "all the elements of addiction found with "serious" drugs like heroin and cocaine are also found with nicotine." When nicotine is absorbed into the blood stream, it affects the brain in the same way heroin or cocaine would. When we smoke cigarettes, the "feel-good" chemical we produce – "dopamine" – floods our brain, giving us intense feelings of plea-

sure. Nicotine raises our heart and breathing rates as well as our blood sugar levels, usually leaving smokers feeling more alert after a cigarette. Up to 40 minutes after though, half the effects of nicotine are gone. So smokers get the urge to light up again. After repeated doses, our brain stops producing its own dopamine and relies on cigarettes to do it instead. So now the smoker needs nicotine just to feel "normal" because without it, s/he feels irritable and depressed.

When do you find yourself smoking the most? When you are bored, stressed, or tired? People smoke because it is useful to them. The brain is now "trained" to crave tobacco, which makes it hard to quit despite fears of health problems or premature death (see the websites below). A study found that when chronic smokers were deprived

of cigarettes for 24 hours, they had increased anger, hostility, aggression, and loss of social cooperation (NIDA). Smokers tell me that because they have failed before, there's no point in trying again. Change takes a lot of practice and a lot of support, but you can quit!

After the New Year's celebrations are over, make a list of what you like and what you hate about smoking. If the "hate" list is longer, it's time to get help. Remember, smokers' bodies and minds are trained to smoke because of the nicotine. Nicotine patches and other products can help with cravings and talking with others in a supportive group can help us learn new ways to cope without cigarettes. So the question is, are you ready to let go in 2011?

The IIC is planning to hold Smoking Cessation



Danielle Owen

Support groups in 2011 open to all who want to stop smoking. Whether it's your first time or your twentieth time, you don't have to do it alone. Call Danielle at 617-542-7654, Ext. 14, for more information or register with Kielan at Ext. 42. Meanwhile, visit acsh.org/healthissues/newsID.798/healthissue_detail.asp or nida.nih.gov.

Danielle Owen is the IIC's Director of Community Counseling and Education Services

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From the Grand to the Desolate: Ireland's Diminished Mansions

From the mid-eighteenth century Irish country houses flourished. Landowners generated easy income leasing land to tenants. As their wealth increased, so did the size of their country mansions. But factors such as the Great Famine, land reforms, the increasing expense of maintenance and the IRA targeting the houses during the War of Independence took their toll.

Gradually, abandoned and forgotten, the houses sank into decay. In 2008 Tarquin Blake,

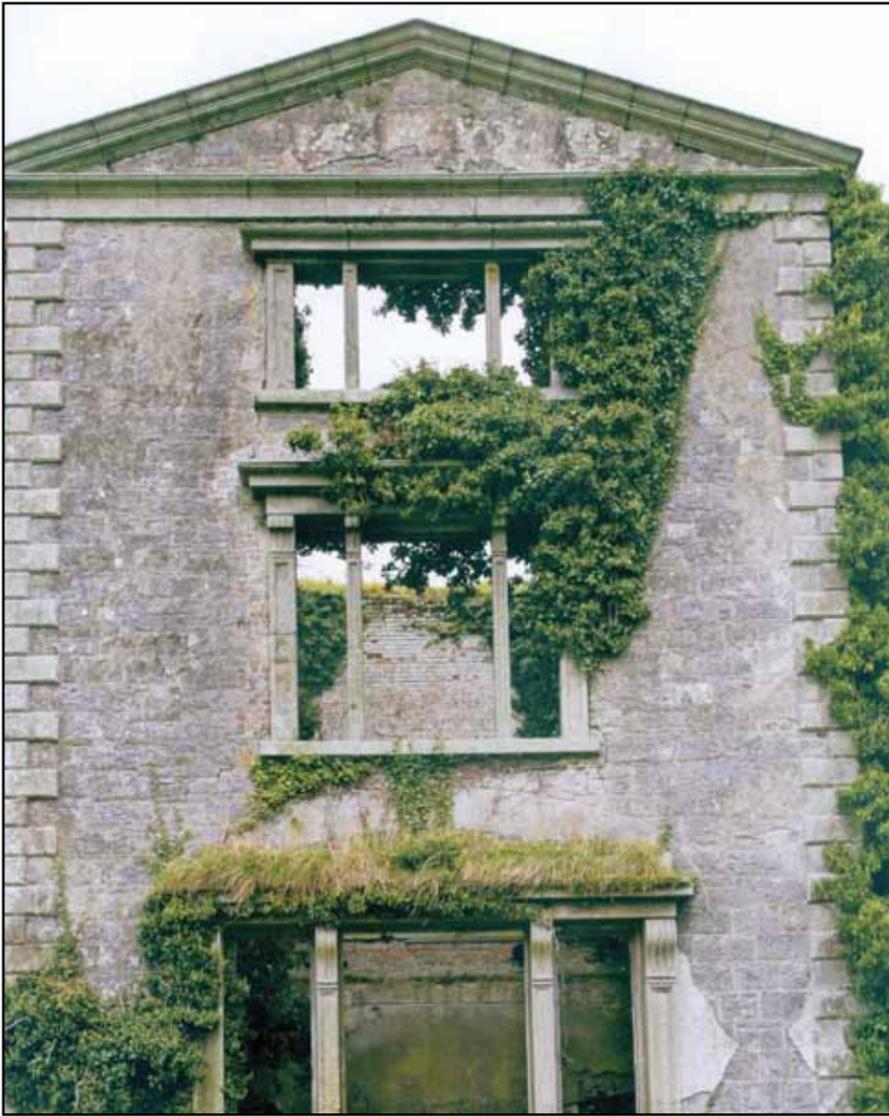
the author of "Abandoned Mansions of Ireland," found his first abandoned 'Big House' and so began exploring the lost architecture of Ireland. In his tome, he documents what is left of fifty mansion houses with brief histories and beautiful photographs of the haunting ruins. Included are Mountpelier Lodge (Dublin Hellfire Club), the birthplaces of Daniel O'Connell and the Duke of Wellington, and the one-time homes of Grace O'Malley and of brewing family the

Smithwicks of Kilkenny.

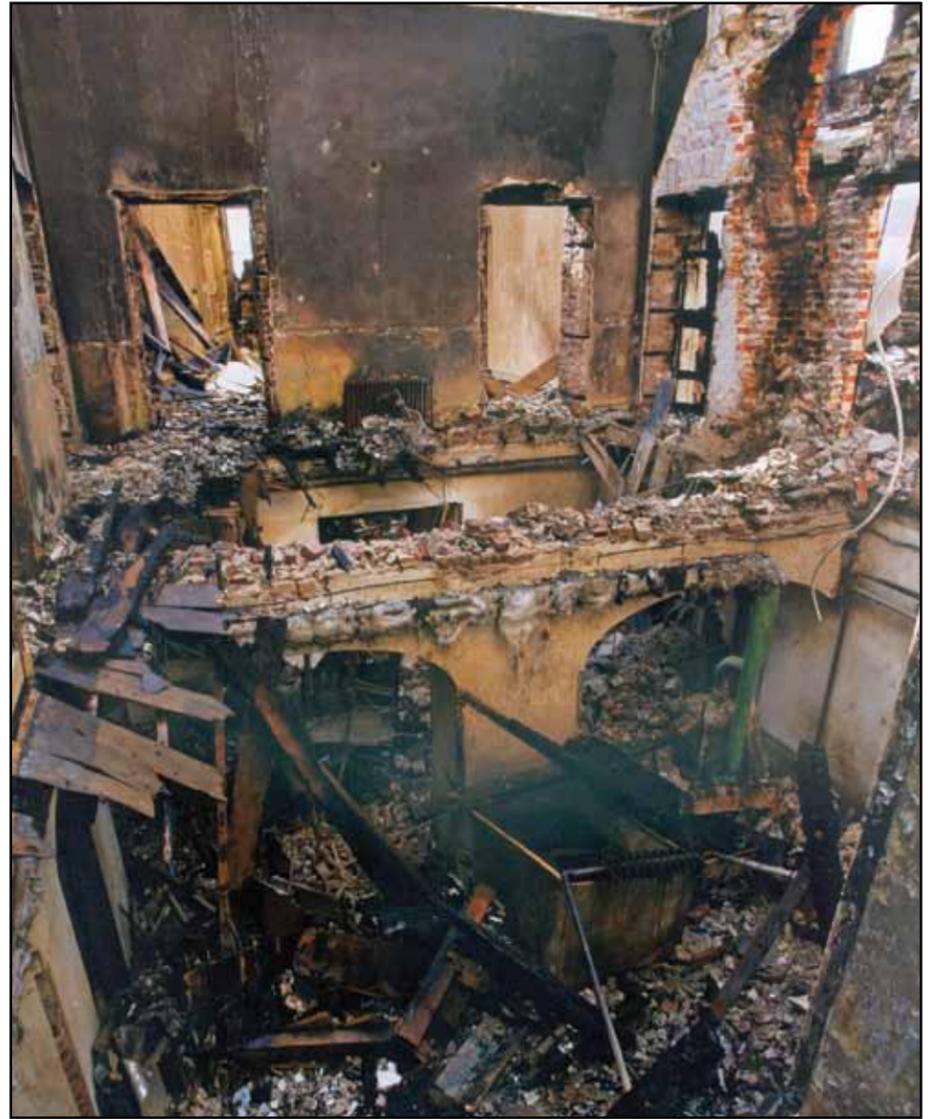
The inclusion of details from the 1911 Census offers a glimpse of the closing days of the aristocracy and their mansions.

From a review in ReadIreland.com.

Photos courtesy "Abandoned Mansions in Ireland," ©2010 Tarquin Blake. Hardback; 30 Euro/\$36 US/25 UK; 300 pages. Imprints: The Collins Press/ Dufour Editions.



View of front entrance to Clogrenan House, Co. Carlow.



The Doonass House, Co. Clare.



The Mountpelier Lodge in Co. Dublin was built as a hunting lodge in 1725.

BOSTON IRISH REPORTER

BOSTON IRISH ARTS,
ENTERTAINMENT,
TRAVEL & MORE



'From the Green to the Blues'

If you got the Boston Irish Reporter September 2010 edition, you might have read Susan Lindsay's candid, enjoyable account of how she and husband Stephen put together this CD: the doubts and fears, the highlights and lowlights, and the constant balancing of hope versus expectation versus reality.

Well, to these ears, it was all worth it.

"From the Green to the Blue" reflects the "very Dublin" approach the Plymouth couple take to their music: a genre-bending mix of traditional tunes, Irish ballads, and contemporary, world-music influenced songs by the likes of Johnny Mulhern and especially Dublin native Wally Page, who wrote three of the pieces appearing on the CD. The Lindsays (Susan on flute, whistle and sax, Stephen on guitar) are supported by a splendid variety of instrumentalists, notably Salil Sachdev, who utilizes exotic percussion such as African water drums, dumbek, and cajon.

The highlight of the album — in fact, a perfect exemplar for the Lindsays' body of work — is "Sixteen Jolly Ravens," Page's rollicking, ribald yet lyrical tale of Spanish fishermen trying to navigate the Dublin night scene. Susan's saxophone and Chris Barrett's trumpet add a mariachi-band texture as Stephen sings with obvious relish, and a backing chorus supplies an additional rakish touch, right through to the whirl-a-gig instrumental play-out at the end.

Susan's haunting flute casts an appropriate chill over "One Last Cold Kiss," a little-known Felix Pappalardi/Gail Collins song popularized by Christy Moore, while by contrast Mulhern's true-love-redeemed "Blue-Green Bangle" coasts along breezily on the strength of Sachdev's inventive rhythms and Evan Harlan's amiably bouncy accordion.

The instrumental tracks include a spirited set of jigs in which Susan links up with fiddler Nikki Engstrom, and "Sax Reels," a medley led by Susan's sax and Harlan's accordion that draws on the Dudley Street 1950s dance hall era sound while recalling vintage Moving Hearts.

"From the Green to the Blue" serves as a reminder that folk and traditional musicians don't, and shouldn't, shut themselves off from a wider array of styles and influences, especially if they use them with equal amounts of panache and discernment.

— SEAN SMITH



Susan and Stephen Lindsay

Musician, Entrepreneur, Writer Gurney Lives Life by 'Just Seeing What Comes Along'

By SEAN SMITH
SPECIAL TO THE BIR

How's this for a resume? Graduated from a prestigious Boston-area university. Trekked around the world as a travel writer and video maker (experiences included finagling a prime location at the annual solstice celebration at Stonehenge). Spent a year in Ireland soaking up as much traditional music as is humanly possible. Returned to Boston to start an Internet broadcast enterprise that might possibly be the next big thing in live music.

Oh, and he is already long-established as one of the more talented young Irish accordion players on the East Coast. And he's starting his own record label to help preserve traditional music.

Such is the life of Dan Gurney, and that's just from the past couple of years.

Hardly in his mid-20s, Gurney would seem to be a natural candidate for the "Renaissance Man" tag, given his assorted activities and interests, which include playing tunes that go back decades, if not centuries, and honing his expertise in the latest Internet audiovisual technology. But in conversation, at least, Gurney is laconic about how he integrates the various facets of his life. There's no dynamic, unifying vision at work here, just a guy who feels comfortable slipping into whatever role -- musician, entrepreneur, writer -- is required of him.

"I've always been independent, and enjoyed working on my own projects," says Gurney, a native of Rhinebeck, NY, about two hours north of New York City. The son of artist and illustrator James Gurney (creator of the science/fantasy series *Dinotopia*), he says he has had an up-close and personal example of successful self-employment. "I like to be able to act on an idea without having to clear it with other people."

Which is not to say that Gurney doesn't work and play well with others. Since arriving in the Boston area as a freshman at Harvard more than five years ago, he has appeared with such eminent local musicians as Jimmy Noonan, Joe Derrane, and Matt and Shannon Heaton (he appeared on their CD "Lover's Well"), and frequented popular sessions at The Burren and The Druid. He also co-founded The Hay Brigade, an acoustic quartet that offers a heady blend of folk and jazz styles, and has performed on WGBH-FM's "A Celtic Sojourn."

Then there's Concert Window, the brainchild of Gurney and his Hay Brigade comrade Forrest O'Connor. Last fall, the two -- along with third co-founder John Garrett -- struck up an agreement with Club Passim, the legendary folk and acoustic music venue in Harvard Square, to stream concerts for free via a website they created, concertwindow.com. As of late December, Concert Window had carried a dozen shows from Passim, each attracting hundreds and hundreds of viewers. "We've gotten an amazing response -- people are very enthusiastic about it," says Gurney. "Passim was absolutely ideal as the starting point, and we're really grateful to them."

The theory behind Concert Window, Gurney explains, is that both performer and venue ultimately benefit by the increased exposure (and by splitting sponsorship proceeds with Concert Window). A place like Club Passim has a strong, loyal following to begin with, but Concert Window offers the opportunity to get the Passim name out to a wider audience, even beyond Massachusetts or New England, and generate additional interest that can translate into more bodies in the seats. Similarly, he says, the performer can expand his or her fan base: "People watch him or her do a show through Concert Window, and they like what they hear -- and there's a link to the performer's website they can follow to find out more. So maybe these



Dan Gurney: "From the beginning, I just always felt attracted to Irish music. I never thought about whether it was something I wanted to do. It was just there for me."
Sean Smith photo

people will want to buy the performer's CD, or go out to see him or her next time, or they'll tell somebody else, "Hey, you should listen to this great singer I saw on the Web the other day."

For Gurney and O'Connor, Concert Window was no modest undertaking. "We had to do a lot of research, to find out what cameras and cables would do the best job. Then we had to go out and get sponsors and advertisers. But we're very excited about the possibilities, and hope to take it nationally. We feel we've come up with a model that's more expandable than what's out there: The system can broadcast shows every night and,

potentially, we could have 110 concerts available at a time."

If Gurney can view Concert Window from the performer's perspective, it's probably because he began developing that outlook very early on. He started playing the accordion seriously at age 7, with the great fortune of having legendary Irish concertina player Father Charlie Coen living nearby -- "He would have concerts or sessions, and I started to go regularly. I just loved it." Although largely self-taught, Father Coen's East Galway style proved to be the most influential on Gurney in his formative
(Continued on page 13)

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'THE COLOR OF ROSE'

From Inspiration to Despair: A Remembrance of Rose Kennedy



Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy, belle of the ball in Boston during her father's mayoral regime.



A proud JFK and his mother in happy times.

(Continued from page 1)

BIR: As a playwright, how did you approach such a broad story?

KB: The Kennedy Family was so much a part of my lifetime, and every one of my generation and before . . . it really sparked my interest and the light bulb sort of went off. Chuck had mentioned three actresses, but I decided I would like to have them all onstage at the same time. And the way I did that was to create a sort of umbrella.

BIR: How so?

KB: The older Rose is preparing for an interview for a Mother's Day special on television. And while she's preparing in her hotel suite, she's thinking about the episodes of her life and how she will handle the questions. By having all three characters on stage at the same time, I could have the older Rose not want to really get into her deep feelings about the things that had happened in her life. And I could have the middle-aged Rose, who is quite bitter about the way her situation turned out, challenge her and say, "Don't white-wash it, remember it this way, let them what happened." And of course, the younger Rose is wide-eyed and optimistic.

BIR: Having conducted so much research for the play, did you find that the stoic woman we saw in public was a creation for the cameras or a real reflection of the woman inside?

KB: I don't think it was purely a creation. I think she was a very genuine person. But I think for the sake of history and

the legacy of the Kennedy family, there were some things that she wanted to keep private. And that is absolutely understandable . . . I found that she tended to cover the events in her life -- cover the pain, cover her feelings about them. As a woman of her generation protecting her family, you can understand that.

BIR: Did you learn anything that especially touched you about her life?

KB: Kathleen's story, that was really surprising. I knew this young woman had died in a plane crash, but the story surrounding her -- she was at odds with her mother. She had fallen in love with a British Protestant, and her mother, being Irish Catholic to the very bones, was very much against the romance. Kathleen married the young man and he died five weeks after the marriage. That was very tragic. He was shot, killed in the war. And she did it again. She fell in love with another titled British Protestant who was married. And that really, really caused a rift between Rose and Kathleen. And then Kathleen's subsequent fate of being killed in that horrible plane crash. . . . From what I could ascertain, they probably never really came to terms with each other before that crash, and that was something that Rose had to live with for the rest of her life. That had to be, for a mother's heart, just heartbreaking.

BIR: And yet she went on, despite tragedy upon tragedy.

KB: I think her strength came from her faith. She was so Catholic. I think she believed that God dealt her what she could handle.

BIR: Did you find a significant change in the woman through the years?

KB: I think while she may have been very firm in her views of propriety and impropriety, those loosened up a little bit later. For example, her relationship with Jackie. One wonders, in her early life, how she might have dealt with something like Jackie wanting to marry Aristotle Onassis. But by the time it came around, I think her feelings had loosened up about life and behavior and where you find happiness. She was able to accept it and understand that you take happiness where you can find it.

BIR: While this is a dramatic piece, it sounds like you offer a rare and very personal look inside history.

KB: The climax of the piece has to do with Jack's assassination. We used some of the real auditory material from the funeral cortege, the procession, and it just brings back those memories of sitting around that television in 1963 for those four horrendous days. We wanted to evoke all those memories and bring it all back. Oh, what a different time.



Kathrine Bates

BIR: It must have been challenging to sort out which parts of her life to intertwine onstage.

KB: There's a fine line between delving into the private areas of a family -- the episodes in one's life -- and just presenting a drama that doesn't do that, which would be infinitely less interesting. Many of the things that we do deal with are on the record. These things happened in the Kennedy story. So I just did my best to be truthful to the episodes in her life . . . and to how she may have reacted to them, and present them dramatically in a way that is loving and respectful. As a dramatist, that's all I can do.

R. J. Donovan is publisher of OnStageBoston.com.

"The Color of Rose," by Kathrine Bates based on a concept by Chuck Fries. Jan. 27-Feb. 6 at the Paramount Theatre, 559 Washington Street, in Boston. Tickets: 617-824-8000 or at artsemerson.org.

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BIR Music CD REVIEWS

BY SEAN SMITH
SPECIAL TO THE BIR

The Outside Track: "Curious Things Given Wings"— Fairly bursting with creative energy, yet possessing enough restraint to channel it effectively, this five-member band combines musical traditions from Canada, Scotland,



Ireland, and Cape Breton in fun, adventurous, and tasteful fashion.

The Outside Track is particularly distinguished by its vocalists, Canadian Traditional Singer of the Year nominee Norah Rendell — who is lead singer — and Mairi Rankin, from the legendary Canadian music family. Their potent rendition of "The Turkish Revery" (this version, believe it or not, traces back to a Burl Ives LP) opens the album — their second release — with a resounding bit of drama, and Rendell closes it with Julie Henigan's "Farewell Song," full of familiar sentiments but no less poignantly beautiful, especially with her respectful treatment. "Silvy, Silvy" — a New Brunswick ballad about an unusual means to determine whether your man really loves you — is thoroughly charming, and their handling of the tragic "Caroline of Edinburgh Town" is sensitive, rather than over-wrought.

Rankin (fiddle, step-dancing) and Rendell (flute, whistle) are outstanding instrumentalists as well, as are Fiona Black (accordion), Cillian O'Dalaigh (guitar, backing vocals) and Ailie Robertson (harp). They careen through "The Jubilant Goat," a set of polkas primarily from Cork and Kerry, with gusto — Black's accordion at the beginning evokes the organ intro to J. Geils's "Freeze Frame." O'Dalaigh and Robertson gently usher

Rendell's whistle into "Doberman's Wallow," the start of a brilliant jig trio titled "Swerving for Bunnies." Rankin and Black kick off "Belladrum Outhouse" (the set and tune names are priceless) with a brisk strathspey that is followed by a surging blast of reels. O'Dalaigh gives a heady oomph to another set of reels "Crusty the Clown" and "The Panic."

If anyone might have wondered whether the well of hot young Celtic bands was running dry, "Curious Things Given Wings" should allay all such concerns.

Dave Rooney: "This Is My Home" — Dublin singer-songwriter Dave Rooney has about as pleasant and disarming a voice as you'll hear nowadays, and it's very well suited for his brand of acoustic-based pop. The nine songs on this album, his debut, are easy on the ears and tend not to tax one's powers of comprehension. His subjects revolve around the sense of disorientation and displacement from life on the road (or, perhaps, life anywhere), as well as relationship stuff — but all delivered with enough sincerity and earnestness that make you willing to overlook some of the more pedestrian material.

Rooney is aided considerably by backing vocalist Ciare Peelo, whose harmonies galvanize such tracks as "Let It Happen to You," "Ordinary World" and

especially "Dublin," one of the album's most heartfelt, and outstanding, songs. Sharon Hussy's fiddle and whistle add a winsome, folkie touch on, among others, "Getting Over Me" and "This Is My Home," which could well serve as Rooney's signature piece ("Coming back now the bad feeling's gone in my home/where the love is/in my home again").

Perhaps the most intriguing track is "Tara St.," which seems to personalize the gut-wrenching reversal in Ireland's fortunes over the past few years ("This year's silver linings are fading to grey and not turning to gold/last year's good tidings are shattered and stained memories of old").



Dan Gurney, Musician, Entrepreneur, Writer, Lives Life by 'Just Seeing What Comes Along'

(Continued from page 11)

years on the box. By the time he had finished high school, Gurney had made his mark in the competitive arena, winning the Eastern US Fleadh Cheoil Irish music competition six times and earning three bronze medals at the All-Ireland Fleadh Cheoil. But while the fleadhhs were "a good learning experience," Gurney had become far more interested in the virtues of the music itself.

"From the beginning, I just always felt attracted to Irish music," he says. "I never thought about whether it was something I wanted to do. It was just there for me."

Gurney knew that his choice of college would be partly determined by the proximity to, and quality of, an Irish music scene. So being accepted by Harvard, where he majored in music, fulfilled more than his educational goals. "My classmates would wonder why I was spending nights going out to play in Dorchester, or other places around town. But those first years in Boston were really important: I was surrounded by interesting people, and exposed to a lot of insights and ideas," recalls Gurney, who in 2007 was awarded a fellowship from Harvard to study with Joe Derrane, one of Boston's most celebrated traditional Irish musicians.

Not all of that exposure involved Irish music. For example, Gurney wound up touring as an accompanist for New England roots musician Lissa Schneckenburger. And then there was his collaboration with O'Connor, fiddler Duncan Wickel and, eventually, double bassist Nicky Schwartz, which culminated in the debut of The Hay Brigade in early 2008.

"It was a chance to try something new," says Gurney. "I saw The Hay Brigade as totally separate from Irish music, but also part of who I am. This was a chance to play music without any labels and to see what came out."

Gurney also pursued

other kinds of opportunities, notably a job writing and making videos for the Let's Go series of travel guides, which had him bouncing around from Barcelona to Istanbul "in a 'Where's Waldo?' suit." During one of his Let's Go stints, Gurney happened to be in London on the night of the solstice, and on the spur of the moment decided to go out to Stonehenge at 3 a.m., where he witnessed hundreds of people in druidic costumes marking the changing of seasons. Gurney actually managed to work his way into the celebration's inner circle, and wound up playing accordion as the sun came up.

But Irish music was still very much at the forefront of his interests, and he landed a post-graduate fellowship that enabled him to live in Galway for a year and immerse himself in the tradition. He worked part-time in a music shop, played sessions four to five times a week, spent time with a veritable Who's Who of musicians like Colm Gannon, Ronan Flaherty, and Johnny "Ringo" McDonough, got the occasional gig -- including one with much-revered singer Dolores Keane — listened to old tapes and record-

ings, and generally reveled in his circumstances.

"The whole experience was filled with epiphanies, and it would probably take days to go through them all," says Gurney. "But the best thing about that year was seeing how much traditional music fits into the culture there, how it has enriched the lives of so many people."

One important realization Gurney had during that year was how many of Ireland's traditional musicians had never been recorded -- and that the opportunity to preserve the sounds and styles of an earlier era in Irish music was therefore slipping away. Along with Cormac Begley, brother of accordionist Brendan Begley, Gurney hatched the idea for a record label, Anam Records, that would focus on bringing these musicians to the attention of the Irish music audience.

Anam's inaugural project was Monahan fiddler Seamus Quinn, who agreed to do a recording in a friend's living room. "The best place for most all of these older musicians to play for a recording is in a casual environment, like a living room or a kitchen," says Gurney, who says the CD should be released in

a few months. "So we got Seamus all set up, and he did 14, 15 tracks worth, some solo and others with pianist Brian McGrath. It was such a privilege to be there; that was some of the best music I've ever heard."

Gurney's not exactly imagining himself as a record mogul, though. "Obviously, I want Anam to succeed, but I think it's just important to have this music out there, so that we will always be able to listen to, and remember, the musicians who have been so closely tied to the Irish tradition."

Even as he forges ahead with Concert Window, as well as Anam Records, Gurney isn't neglecting his own musical involvement. He's putting together a solo album of his own, continuing to play out at sessions — he recently helped inaugurate one at The Haven in Jamaica Plain, with Scottish harpist Maeve Gilchrist — and is more than willing to give accordion lessons (he invites interested parties to e-mail him at gurney.dan@gmail.com).

"There's a lot of interesting things happening, and I like what's going on in my life," says Gurney. "No master plan here — I'm just seeing what comes along."

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A column of news and updates of the Boston Celtic Music Fest (BCMFest), which celebrates the Boston area's rich heritage of Irish, Scottish, Cape Breton music and dance with a grassroots, musician-run winter music festival and other events during the year. The eighth annual BCMFest is January 7 and 8.

- SEAN SMITH

Four for the show - Laura Cortese, Hanneke Cassel, Lissa Schneckenburger, and Flynn Cohen are among this decade's most notable alumni of the proving ground that is Boston's Celtic music scene. And at the Boston Celtic Music Fest 2011 finale concert on Jan. 8, the four will share the many fruits of their collective and individual coming-of-age in Boston.

The finale concert, which takes place at 8 p.m. in First Parish Cambridge (at the intersection of Massachusetts Avenue and Church Street), will cap off BCMFest's eighth annual showcase of local Irish, Scottish, Cape Breton, and other Celtic and Celtic-inspired music. All festival details are available at bcmfest.com.

While Cortese, Cassel, Schneckenburger, and Cohen

have cultivated impressive solo careers and other musical ventures, they are particularly well-known for their work as the band Halali, boasting a triple fiddle line-up, a repertoire of well-chosen tunes and songs from all over the Celtic map, and an energy and verve appealing to both traditional and contemporary ears.

BCMFest 2011 will see a Halali reunion, as well as a sampling of the collaborations each of the four have undertaken in the past several years.

But Cassel feels the event can be viewed as a tribute to Boston and the musical creativity and partnerships it inspires.

"The people we've met, the sessions we've played, the opportunities we've had for musical and personal growth during our time in Boston - it's all been tremendous," says the native of Oregon. "Boston is a unique place for folk and traditional music, and we've benefited immensely from being here."

Cassel's association with San Francisco-born Cortese and Schneckenburger, from Maine, actually predates Boston: The three became friends at the annual Valley of the Moon Scottish Fiddle School run by Alasdair Fraser. They cemented their friendship by attending college in Boston, Cortese and Cassel at Berklee College of Music, Schneckenburger at the New England Conservatory. After they crossed paths with guitarist and Ohio expatriate Cohen, Halali was born at the turn of the century (the 21st, that is).

For all the band's popularity, their gigs together have been increasingly fewer and far between, as the four have branched out on their own, quite successful paths. Cassel has pioneered a striking blend of Scottish and American styles; Cortese has firmly established



The members of the fiddle super-group Halali (L-R, Laura Cortese, Lissa Schneckenburger, Hanneke Cassel and Flynn Cohen) will play together and as soloists at the BCMFest 2011 finale concert.

Sean Smith photo

herself as a singer-songwriter; Schneckenburger (who has returned to Maine) has drawn acclaim for her explorations of New England traditional music; and Cohen is founder of the "alt-trad" band Annalivia, which draws on Irish, American, Cape Breton, Scottish and English traditions.

These aspects of Cassel, Cohen, Cortese, and Schneckenburger all will be featured at the BCMFest finale concert, with a bevy of special guests joining each of the four during her or his solo spot. Cohen will be part of a fretted-string instrumental trio with Matt Heaton and Danny Noveck, while Cortese will perform with Jefferson Hamer, a talented New York-based guitarist with whom she has toured for the past few years.

Schneckenburger will be joined by her frequent accompanist of recent years, guitarist Bethany Waickman, and Cassel will feature her trio, which includes guitarist Chris Lewis and cellist Ari Friedman.

The finale concert also will include appearances by Irish dancer Kieran Jordan and Highland Dance Boston.

"It's amazing to look back and think about what we've learned and experienced since we came to Boston," says Cassel. "This concert, in a way, will be a 'thank you' to the Boston area and everyone who has influenced and inspired us while we've been here."

Tickets for the BCMFest finale concert will be \$15, \$13 for members of Club Passim; a combo pass for the festival "DayFest" and the finale concert is \$25, \$23 for Passim members. More ticket information is available via bcmfest.com.

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Traveling People

The Island of Ireland Never Disappoints Those Travelers Who Are Curious and Active

BY JUDY ENRIGHT
SPECIAL TO THE BIR

What's the first thing that comes to mind when someone says "Ireland?" Well, probably green fields, sheep, and magnificent vistas. Sure, there are all three in Ireland but there's so, so, so much more. It's truly a place that has something for every taste. And, as they say, what's not to like?

SHEEP

If you're mad about sheep, there's nothing better than seeing their charming faces everywhere although we are more than delighted when they are not in the middle of the road. For the most part, the sheep we see in our travels are black-faced and supposedly descended from Scottish imports. But last spring, I found a field full of the most spectacular white-faced sheep, and on the drive around Achill Island, there were odd-looking brown-and-white sheep that looked as though a white sheep had been crossed with a Jacobean sheep.

The spring lambs are especially endearing, although I also like the older sheep and I find that they have so much character in their faces. My favorite photography spot is Minaun Heights on Achill Island, Co. Mayo, where, after I have visited about half a dozen times, the sheep actually recognize my car and come running -- probably thanks to my secret weapon, the bag of sheep food I carry in the trunk. I dole it out as needed to draw the sheep and lambs closer and it works every time! Last spring, there were even sheep and lambs nibbling from my outstretched hand.

If just viewing, or feeding, sheep isn't enough to satisfy your craving, how about visiting a place like Kissane Sheep Farm on the Ring of Kerry, between Kenmare and the Killarney National Park. You can even adopt a sheep at their website (Adopt-a-Sheep.ie) and gain free admission to the farm when you visit.

The goal of Adopt a Sheep is to preserve the Irish heritage of the mountain sheep. In doing so, the heritage of a traditional family farm in this Special Area of Conservation is also saved for future generations.

Kissane Sheep Farm also offers sheepdog demonstrations, sheep shearing demonstrations, a chance to cuddle and bottle-feed the orphan (pet) lambs, take one of three marked



If hill walking or mountain climbing is your passion, there are plenty of opportunities for both in Ireland as evidenced by this mountain scene from the Inagh Valley in Connemara. *Judy Enright photo*

(mountain) walks or a puzzle walk and treasure trail.

Kissane sounds like a lot of fun to me!

And, if you're heading up the coast into Westport, there's a Sheep and Wool Museum in Leenane that's interesting, has a good gift shop and good homemade lunches, soups, and desserts.

SCENERY

Do you like soft, rolling hills, like Vermont, or rugged, dramatic scenery more like New Hampshire? The midlands of Ireland remind me of the rolling hills of Vermont replete as they both are with lovely lakes and incredible greenery. The edges of Ireland are where you find the cliffs and more dramatic vistas.

Is scenery enough for the average traveler? Maybe not but if scenery is for you, why not take a hike along any of the many hill walks offered in various parts of the country.

Some are guided, like many walks offered by various people in the Burren in Co. Clare; you can find their information on the internet and a guided walk is worth doing if you have an interest in the amazing flora and fauna throughout that limestone, moon-scape region.

There are also numerous guided walks through various parts of Connemara and other sections of the country. Just Google your request and you're sure to find something interesting.

Last spring, two of Ireland's most famous West Cork walking routes, Sheep's Head Way and the Beara Way, were connected when the 20-km Mealagh Valley Walk

officially opened outside Bantry. The Mealagh walk includes ancient settlements, a wedge tomb, standing stones, stone circles, and more.

You can, of course, see scenery from your car but there's nothing like getting out and walking around or bicycling or riding horseback to see Ireland in its full beauty.

Fascinated by Titanic lore and the ill-fated liner's connection to Ireland? If so, swing down to Cobh in Co. Cork, and take Michael Martin's guided walking tour of Cobh that departs at 11 a.m. from the Commodore Hotel. Be sure to pre-book, especially in the winter, to make sure there's a tour going.

There are lots of other walking tours in places like Dublin, Cork City, Galway, Belfast, and Londonderry, so check with the local Failte Ireland office or Northern Ireland tourist offices for details. Also check hillwalkireland.com.

SPORTS

There's nary a sport you can name that doesn't have a foothold in Ireland. Every sort of boating and other water sport imaginable is here from sailing to sea kayaking as is every land sport from golf to horseracing to skydiving, rock climbing, show jumping, boxing, baseball, basketball, cricket, Gaelic football, cycling, handball, tennis, and hurling. Just ask and you're sure to find your favorite pastime.

Fishing is extremely popular in Ireland and you can learn more from the websites fishinginireland.info and irishfisheries.com. There are many other websites with information, and

there are hotels and lodges that cater specifically to fishermen, especially up in Mayo and the Shannon region.

Georgina Campbell's guide to Ireland lists the 10 top fishing accommodations as Ashford Castle in Cong, Newport House in Newport, Enniscooe House in Ballina, Healy's Hotel in Pontoon, all in Co. Mayo, Ballynahinch Castle and Lough Inagh Lodge Hotel, both in Reccess, and Delphi Lodge in Leenane, all in Co. Galway; Mount Juliet Conrad Hotel in Thomastown, Co. Kilkenny, and Ballyvolane House in Fermoy, Co. Cork.

Even if you're not a sports enthusiast, those hotels are fabulous and any one of them would be a great take.

We were interested to see that Dromoland Castle, near Shannon Airport, has started a School of Falconry run by Dave Atkinson who has worked at Dromoland for years and knows the Castle's history and all about the estate wildlife. You can experience live birds of prey as the instructor talks about the

natural history of raptors and the role they play in the environment.

There are also Schools of Falconry at Ashford Castle, at Ailwee Cave in the Burren, and several in Northern Ireland.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

There are lots of other different and interesting things to do in Ireland. How about taking an escorted digital photography tour of wildlife, landscape, and seascape from a variety of locations in West Cork, including Kinsale, Courtmacsherry, Timoleague, Rosscarbery, Baltimore, and Bantry? The tours run from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. with a stop for lunch, critique of the images and small groups. For more details, visit thewildlife-filmschool.com

If you're not into photography, how about going on a whale watch in West Cork with zoologist and writer Nic Slocum? For details, visit whale-watchwest

There's a writers' week in Listowel, Co. Kerry, in the late spring, that celebrates 40 years in 2011. Visit the website writersweek.ie for details.

There are many wonderful museums all over Ireland and one of our favorites is the Museum of Country Life in Turrough Park, Castlebar, Co. Mayo. The museum plans many interesting exhibits during the year and you can learn more about this museum as well as three Dublin museums at museum.ie.

There's also a wonderful museum (the Burren Centre) dedicated to the Burren in Kilfenora with a fascinating cathedral next door that's well worth a visit. The Kilfenora cathedral was dedicated to St. Fachtnan and built about 1189 on the site of an early monastery. See theburren-centre.ie for details.

If you're near New Ross in Co. Wexford, be sure to stop by the Ros Expo (roseexpo.ie), a permanent exhibition of the 15 Ros Tapestries. The exhibit is currently closed for the winter but will reopen in the spring so be sure to check the website for times and dates.

HAPPY NEW YEAR

We wish all our readers the happiest New Year ever. If you plan a trip to Ireland, be sure to visit Tourism Ireland's website, discoverireland.com, for information about happenings there

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The Irish Language

by Philip Mac AnGhabhann

Nollaig Shona Daoibh! "Merry Christmas to You-All!" /NOHL-ikHOH-nuhDO-eev/. Shopping is in the air – and so it's time to review numbers. Let's start our review with examples of the numbers, "one" through "twenty".

When you count alone, without any reference to "things" such as when playing games, starting races, or counting football and hurling scores, the numbers must be preceded by **a**. In such cases the numbers "one" and "eight" then prefix **h-**, **a haon**, **a hocht**/ This keeps the beginning sounds separate just as English speakers refer to "a car" but "**an** apple."

"one"	a haon	/uh heen/
"two"	a dhá	/uh gah/
"three"	a trí	/uh tree/
"four"	a cheithre	/uh KEH-ruh/
"ten"	a deich	/uh jey/
"eleven"	a haon déag	
"twelve"	a dhá dhéag	
"thirteen"	a trí déag	
"fourteen"	a cheithre déag	
"twenty"	fiche	

déag is pronounced /jey/, **dhéag** /yey/ and **fiche** is /fee/.

The numbers "two" and "twelve" reflect an obsolete dual system and require that the next word be **lenited** ("aspirated") and an object following **dhá** is **singular**– **Dhá bhád** /ghah baht/ "two boats" but **trí baid**, /tree bahj/, "three boats". In some dialects, the number "two" by itself will change to **a dó** when alone but to **dhá** when counting things.

Above "two" you can use either a **singular** or **plural** form of the **noun** – **trí cailín** or **trí cailíní**. We will stay with the singular for now.

When counting "things", the numbers from "one" to "six" cause **lenition** ("aspiration") of the following **noun**. "Seven" through "ten" cause **eclipsis**.

When counting objects, the number "one" is most often replaced by **amháin** /uh-wahn/, "only one" – not **aon bád** but **bád amháin**

When you begin to count things above "ten" than the system becomes more complicated. Remember that Irish inserts the **noun between** the first and second words – in effect saying "three girl teen" for "thirteen girls" and "seven boat teen" for "seventeen boats".

The rule that "one" to "six" cause the following **noun** to be **lenited** and "seven" through "ten" to be **eclipsed** is still in effect. Recall that **l**, **n**, and **r** can never be **lenited** and **eclipsed** of the first consonant takes the following forms: **b-/mb-**, **c-/gc-**, **d-/nd-**, **f-/bhf-**, **g-/ng-**, **p-/mp-**, and **t-/dt-**.

trí bhád déag "thirteen boats"
seacht mbád déag "seventeen boats"

Counting "things" above twenty used to be a real challenge. Traditionally, Irish counted by "scores", "twenties" **Fiche** /fee/ is "twenty" but "forty" was "two score" **dhá fhichead** /gah EEK-uhd/, and so on. Under the influence of modern needs, counting by scores has been replaced by a decimal system.

"thirty"	tríocha	"sixty"	seasca
"forty"	daichead	"seventy"	seachtó
"fifty"	caoga	"eighty"	ochtó
"ninety"	nocha	"hundred"	céad

In addition to the words/phrases we have learned before, here is both an old and new "shopping" vocabulary:

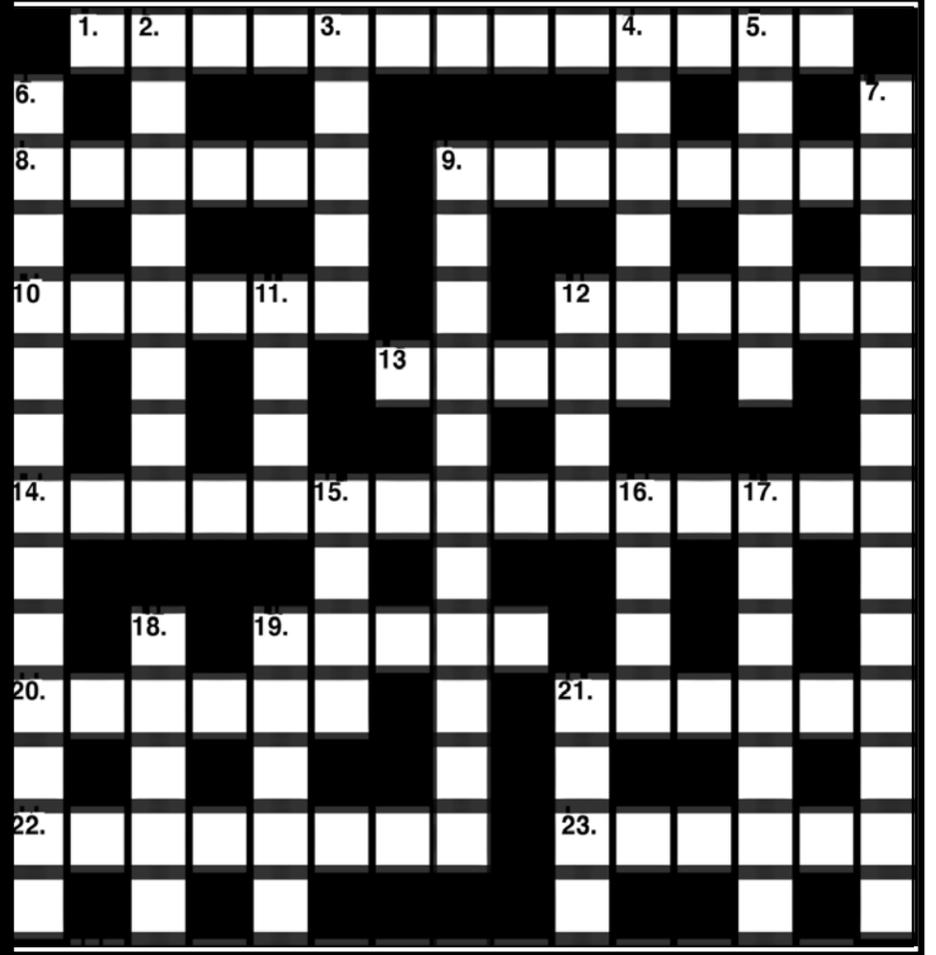
- Tá ..X.. **uaim**. /tah ..X.. weem/ "I want ..X."
- Tabhair dom ...?** /TOHR dohm/ "Give me ...?"
- Más é do thoil é.** "Please."
- Buíochas** "Thanks."
- Go raibh maith agat.** "You're welcome."
- Saor** /seer/ "Inexpensive."
- Daor** /deer/ "Expensive"
- An-daor** /ahn deer/ "Very expensive"
- Ro-dhaor** /ROH-gheer/ "Too expensive."

See if you can read these sentences in Irish: 1.) **Cé mhéad atá ar an cóta seo?** 2.) **Tá sé tríocha euro cuig.** 3.) **Cá bhfuil siopa?** 4.) **Cuir ort an geansaí agat!** 5.) **Tá seacht gcaipín agam.** 6.) **Tá an hata sin saor.** 7.) **Tabhair dom caife le bainne agus siúcra, más é do thoil é.** 8.) **An bhfuil an carr ro-dhaor?** 9.) **Níl. Níl é daor.** 10.) **Tá sé an-shaor.** 11.) **An raibh an gúna daor?** 12.) **Bhí. Bhí caoga euro seacht.** 13.) **Blain Mhaith Úr agus siopadóireacht mhaith!**

Answers: 1.) "How much is that coat?" 2.) "It's thirty-five euros." 3.) "Where is a shop?" 4.) "Put on your sweater!" or "Put your sweater on!" 5.) "I have seven caps." 6.) "This hat is cheap." 7.) "Give me coffee with milk and sugar, please." 8.) "Is the car too expensive?" 9.) "No. It's not expensive.. It's very cheap." 10.) "Was the dress expensive?" 11.) "Yes. It was fifty-seven euros." 12.) "Happy New Year and good shopping"

CELTIC CROSS WORDS

The Irish crosswords are a service of an Ireland-based website which provides Irish Family Coats of Arms by email. You are invited to visit www.bigwood.com/heraldry



IRELAND IN CROSSWORDS ©-bigwood.com

ACROSS

1. Or find chiller. (anag.) Stepchildren of Aoife whom she turned into Swans on Lough Derravaragh. (8,2,3)
8. Protection found in popular Mourne location. (6)
9. Pout face up until refreshment appears. (3,2,3)
10. Fry air? No, but reduce its pressure. (6)
12. Get up on hind legs about per can order. (6)
13. Impulses scrambled the last of the Carrickfergus letters. (5)
14. Then avoid by cute diversion around engineering work carrying the Dublin - Belfast rail line over Drogheda. (3,5,7)
19. Tree falls over after a century on Mediterranean island. (5)
20. Threw in at the Gaelic game? (6)
21. Make a quick grab for ants all over the small church. (6)
22. Stretch little Leonard starts, then finishes after note. (8)
23. Salty pool covered up back in Portnoo gallery. (6)
24. Sweet stew clan. (anag.) Limerick market town with a Knights Templars castle built in 1184. (9,4)

DOWN

2. Oh, lure me in disorder for Bill first proposed and lost by Gladstone in 1885 and passed in 1912. (4,4)
3. "Hail fellow, well met. All -- and wet: Find out, if you can, Who's master, who's man." Swift. (5) 4. Storeys one knocks to the ground. (6)
5. Recite with a singing voice to nine others in Rosses Point one time. (6)
6. Hour train call. (anag.) Kerry mountain popularly ascended through the Hag's Glen and up the Devil's Ladder to the peak at 3,314 feet. (13)
7. Jests shame pen. (anag.) Irish writer and poet (1880-1950) who wrote 'The Crock of Gold' . (5,8)
9. Owners latch up in neat Mayo village on the Sligo border. (11)
11. You must see the faithful dog in Glengarriff, I do insist. (4)
12. Ripe conversion of fairy on Greek roundabout. (4)
15. Squirrel's home back in the American garden in

pretty Ardmore. (4)

16. Last word in mean fashion. (4)
17. Greasy sun out over U.C. (8)
18. E.g. rang up Sligo village underneath Ben Bulbin on the Bundoran road opposite Inishmurray Island. (6)
19. "This goat-footed bard, this half-human visitor to our age from the hag-ridden magic and enchanted woods of -- -- antiquity." Baron Keynes - (describing Lloyd George) (6)
21. Soothe in the meandering vales. (5)

CROSSWORD SOLUTION ON PAGE 23

Irish Sayings

- "Youth does not mind where it sets its foot."
- "Both your friend and your enemy think you will never die."
- "The well fed does not understand the lean."
- "He who comes with a story to you brings two away from you"
- "Quiet people are well able to look after themselves."
- "A friends eye is a good mirror."
- "It is the good horse that draws its own cart."
- "A lock is better than suspicion."
- "Two thirds of the work is the semblance."
- "He who gets a name for early rising can stay in bed until midday."
- "If you do not sow in the spring you will not reap in the autumn."
- "Put silk on a goat, and it's still a goat."
- "Listen to the sound of the river and you will get a trout."
- "A persons heart is in his feet."
- "It is a long road that has no turning."
- "Necessity knows no law."
- "The wearer best knows where the shoe pinches."
- "There is no luck except where there is discipline."
- "The man with the boots does not mind where he places his foot."
- "The light heart lives long."
- True greatness knows gentleness.

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Thirty-Two Counties

Antrim: David McNeill and his wife Sheila have unraveled a mystery contained in a book written about the North. "A Year in the Province" included a number of clues to where a Spanish medieval coin was hidden, and author Christopher Marsh never expected the puzzle to be solved. However David, who has represented the UK at the World Sudoku Championships, managed to follow the clues and he and Sheila went to Rathlin Island where they found the 15th century coin in the corner of a ruined building. The couple will now take the coin to Conor Cafe in Belfast where they will enjoy a meal for two and a bottle of Bushmills.

Armagh: Winnifred Pennington from Bleary has gone from child-minding to providing dogs for therapy since she first took one of her dogs to visit her father in Lurgan Hospital. Now she takes her Great Dane Tiny and three chihuahuas, Titch, Lelo and Indi, to visit patients in hospitals, nursing homes and day care centres, as well as to schools. The general public had the chance recently to meet Winnifred's dogs at the Millennium Court Arts Centre where the official switching on of the Christmas lights for Portadown was carried out.

Carlow: Slaney Power, aged thirteen and from Ballyconnell, and fifteen-year-old Tallulagh Shulah Costelloe from Kilinure in Tullow, both students at Tullow Community School, were in Kilkenny last month for the premiere of a short film in which they had major roles. In "Holidays", which was shot over three weekends in Kilkenny in May, the two girls play sisters. Slaney was accompanied to the premiere by her parents, Michelle and Niall and her brother Illann, while Tallulagh Shulah's mother Yvonne and her sister EmmaJane were also there. The play raised a total of 700 euro for the Chernobyl Children's Project.

Cavan: A lecture by local historian Dr Jonathan Cherry on the history of the town from 1610 to the present day was one of the first events to be organized to mark Belturbet's celebration of the 400th anniversary of its foundation. Although King James did not grant the town its charter until three years later, Belturbet was incepted in 1610. The occasion of the lecture also saw the unveiling of a plaque by the chairman of the Town Council, Seamus Fitzpatrick, and County Manager Jack Keyes.

Clare: The county is to have the first commercial seaplane base in Europe after An Bord Pleanála granted permission for the development at Dooras, Mountshannon. It will be one of a network of bases for seaplanes run by Harbour Flights and will include a floating pontoon, mooring anchors, a reinforced concrete slipway, and a work-store. Harbour Flights has to seek written permission from Waterways Ireland for the pontoon, and they must also restrict construction works to between August and April.

Cork: Six-year-old Oran Manning from Maseytown in Macroom was in Dublin last month for the presentation of an award for courage during an unexpected illness. In June of last year, after complaining of a stomach ache, he had to be rushed to hospital after suffering a stroke. According to his mother Catherine, her son was unable to walk or talk for a while after the stroke and showed tremendous courage during his gradual recovery. She and Oran, accompanied by his father Martin and sister Ella, were at

the Mansion House to receive his National Stroke Award.

Derry: The clock on the Guildhall in Derry city, which was first erected in 1891, is to be wound down in preparation for restoration work to be carried out. Once the largest and most powerful in Ireland, the clock has dominated the city centre for almost 120 years. It will be covered from view for the next three months while the restoration work is carried out and, according to City Engineer John Kelpie, the quarterly chimes that have become a familiar sound in the city will also be silenced. The clock is due to be reinstated in March.

Donegal: Sir Gerry Robinson, who opens up Oakfield Park Estate in Raphoe to the public each year for charity, has been granted a license at Bunrana Circuit Court to sell alcohol at the train station on the estate. Using a law dating back more than a century, which stipulates that licenses can only be granted in existing premises or in a railway refreshment room, Sir Gerry cited the narrow gauge railway which runs for almost three miles around the estate, and the court accepted that its refreshment area came within the meaning of the act.

Down: A planning application has been lodged by supermarket chain Asda for an outlet on a four-and-a-half-acre site on Newry Road in Banbridge, which is expected to give full- and part-time employment to up to 250 people. The store will have a sales area of some 25,000 square feet and will carry the full range of Asda products. In addition, a petrol station will offer low-priced fuel and there will be a recycling centre and up to three hundred car parking spaces.

Dublin: Brother and sister Kate and Cathal Mooney from Griffith Avenue have made medical history by taking part in Ireland's first donation of a kidney through keyhole surgery. The operations took place last month at Beaumont Hospital while Kate and Cathal's parents, Breda and Charlie, kept vigil. Cathal had experienced kidney failure after contracting a rare disease during his teens, and had been on dialysis when Kate, a teacher at the Margaret Aylward School in Beaumont Road, was found to be a good match. Keyhole surgery means that both of the patients will make a much quicker recovery.

Fermanagh: The council came under fire from traders in East Bridge Street, Church Street, High Street and Darling Street in Enniskillen, who accused the body of closing the streets without warning. Traffic was barred during the day to facilitate the installation of Christmas lights, a job carried out at night in previous years, and Maureen Wilkin of Leslie's Bakery and butcher Gaby Stuart were among those who complained of loss of business. They claimed they had not been informed of the closures, though this was denied by Director of Technical Services Gerry Knox.

Galway: During last month, Kenny's Bookshop on the Liosban Estate in Galway was celebrating seventy years since Des and Maureen Kenny opened their first bookshop in the city's High Street. To mark the occasion the Kennys had invited seventy authors to take part in a mass signing. While the weather deterred some from attending, there were plenty who made it including Michael D Higgins, storyteller Eddie Lenihan and local historian Peadar O'Dowd. Also attending was Mary Lane Heneghan from Loughrea,



representing the local Creative Writing Group.

Kerry: The youngest male in Ireland and Britain to receive a black belt in tae-kwon-do is Benjamin Lyne of Killarney. The nine-year-old is a member of the Killarney tae-kwon-do club, as is his brother Jonas, another black belt who won a gold medal in games in Britain recently. Benjamin attends the club for practice sessions four times a week when competitions are approaching. He is the youngest child of Denis and Lotte Lyne of Ross Road in the town, and Lotte believes the sport gives a child great focus.

Kildare: Conor McGearailt from Athy has won himself one of five places on the Irish equestrian team for the Special Olympics Equestrian Games in Athens next year. Twenty-three-year-old Conor is a former pupil of Athy Community College where he got his Applied Leaving Certificate. He was introduced to horses at the age of fourteen when he visited his aunt's stables near Kildare town, and he has completed a stud management course. In addition to representing his country at the Special Olympics, Conor has also begun to take part in mainstream competitions.

Kilkenny: Hundreds of people are gathering at the Quay in Gragnamanagh every day to see the latest attraction, an adult otter that does not yet have a name. But mindful of the number of visitors drawn to Dingle by Fungi the dolphin, Brian Roberts of the Waterside restaurant is offering a free Sunday lunch to anyone who can come up with an appropriate name. It has not yet been ascertained whether the five-foot long otter is male or female, making the choice more challenging.

Laois: Seamus Malone, originally from Barrowhouse but living in England for the past fourteen years, was in New York last month to receive an international Emmy Award on behalf of the company for whom he works, Aardman Animation. The award recognized the hit children's show "Shaun the Sheep," for which Seamus was one of the directors. He is the son of Jim and Mary Malone, and his mother is librarian at Ballitore. After attending Athy Community College he studied

animation in Dublin before going on to further education in Bristol.

Leitrim: At the inaugural Leitrim Sports Partnership Sports Awards which took place last month in the Grand Ballroom of The Landmark Hotel in Carrick-on-Shannon, the guest of honor was Kerry manager and three times All-Ireland winner Jack O'Connor. A number of presentations were made in different categories, with the Hall of Fame award going to Frances Cryan of Carrick-on-Shannon. Frances was being recognized for her career in rowing, during which she qualified for the Olympic Games in 1980.

Limerick: When Breda Heelan from Ballinlough, Kiltteely was widowed suddenly last year she thought she would lose the home where she lived with her two daughters. Her partner Ged's mortgage protection did not cover his death, nor had he any life assurance and Breda could not afford to pay the mortgage. However she asked retired councillor Eddie Creighton for help and, with local auctioneer Gerard Mitchell, he organized a fundraising campaign among neighboring communities that raised more than 20,000 euro.

Longford: At the recent county final of Scor Clonbroney had success in three different categories. The figure dancing group, trained by Jacinta Reynolds, took first place, as did the instrumental music group; they were trained by Deirdre Duggan and Mary Brady. A win was also gained in the recitation category. During the final a presentation was made to Margaret Farrell for her contribution to Scor in Longford, as she steps down from her post as Irish and cultural officer for the county.

Louth: A special guest arrived in Ardee last month to perform the official switching on of the Christmas lights. A fire engine with full garda escort arrived at Ardee Castle carrying Santa who was accompanied by his elves. Prior to his arrival the Ardee Concert Band provided the music for Christmas carols. In tandem with the ceremony, organized by Ardee Traders and Business Association, the annual crib has once again been placed in McCabe's shop window. The following day a Christmas Bonanza, Christmas Spraoi, was also held in

the town.

Mayo: A new hotel, part of the Castle Hotel Group owned by Fionn MacCumhail, is due to open in Ballina shortly. The former Ridgepool Hotel on Barrett Street will be opened under the new name of Ballina Manor Hotel, while the official opening will take place in February. However the opening depends on the granting of a license. The refurbishment of the building cost a total of 4.5 million euro and some staff have already been hired, with a further twenty-five to be taken on once the license has been confirmed.

Meath: Commuters who up to now have had to seek refuge from inclement weather in Tommy Reilly's news agents' shop at Market Square in Navan can avail of a brand new bus shelter. Traffic was diverted recently when a specialized crane lowered the shelter into position at the bottom of Metges Lane, where it forms part of the Market Square remedial work that is almost complete. While the shelter has been welcomed by Mr Reilly, a local councillor, he is also calling for a proper bus station for the town.

Monaghan: Last month proved a special time for Inniskeen when it held the Patrick Kavanagh Weekend. The keynote address was delivered by Eileen Battersby, Irish Times Literary Correspondent, while John F. Deane read from his third collection of essays. A walking tour of the Patrick Kavanagh Literary Trail in Carrickmacross was led by Larry McDermott, starting from the Valley Lodge opposite St Joseph's Church, and a bus tour of local sites of interest was conducted by Art Agnew. The annual Graveside Commemoration took place on Sunday afternoon.

Offaly: Liam Kirwan from Tullamore has been chosen as one of the winners in The 3 Silver Surfer Awards with Age Action. The seventy-year-old was nominated by his granddaughter Gráinne, a psychology lecturer whose research was inspired by his interest in the Nintendo DS. Liam spends much time on Skype communicating with his grandchildren, and is also heavily involved in the website of his local parish. Taking digital photographs and editing them using Photoshop is also a favorite pastime of his.

Roscommon: First it was an end of summer opening, then the people of Roscommon were promised that they would have a cinema by Christmas, but now it appears that it will be this month before they can enjoy a big screen on their doorstep. The six-million euro entertainment complex at the Centre Point Retail Park is said to have the potential to provide employment for between forty and sixty people, but the project is running six months behind schedule. However Darren Corcoran of Flix Leisure insists that the complex will go ahead.

Sligo: The doors of the Geevagh post office closed last month after the facility amalgamated with the post office in Ballyfarnon. Ballyfarnon postmaster Alan Benson is retiring and it was decided that the most practical move was to join the two post offices, which are only two and half miles apart. Geevagh postmistress for the past fourteen years Irene Kearns will take over the running of the Ballyfarnon office, which has moved to a new location on the main street of the town, in Killoran's Gala supermarket.

Tipperary: James Berkery from Lahorna, Puckane, who

(Continued on page 22)

NEWS DIRECT FROM IRELAND

Minister opposes extension of Murphy remit – Minister of State for Children Barry Andrews has said that extending the remit of the Murphy commission to investigate child abuse in dioceses other than Dublin would be time-consuming and of little benefit. Andrews was speaking prior to the presentation to the Government of the commission's report on the Diocese of Cloyne. Judge Yvonne Murphy, who chaired the inquiry into the Dublin Archdiocese, was asked to conduct a similar inquiry after a Church review found that allegations of child sex abuse in the Diocese of Cloyne had not been properly dealt with. It is expected that this latest report will be referred to the High Court before it can be published. The court will consider whether sections of it, if published, would inhibit the successful prosecution of the named priests.

Christmas release for 134 prisoners – Among the 134 prisoners granted temporary release over Christmas was Malcolm Macarthur, who is serving a sentence in Shelton Abbey for the 1982 murder of Bridie Gargan in Phoenix Park. He returned to the Co. Wicklow open prison on Christmas night, while other prisoners were allowed to remain outside prison for a few days. This category includes Seán Courtney, who received a life sentence for the 1991 murder of Patricia O'Toole in the Dublin Mountains.

Belfastman readmitted to priesthood after gap of 37 years – Father Michael McConville made news last month when he was readmitted to the priesthood after an absence of 37 years. He was ordained in 1961 but decided to leave after 12 years and married Imelda Byrne two years later in 1975. The couple had three children before Imelda died in 1981. Michael remained active in parish and diocesan work through the years. He spent many years in Ballycastle but now he is back in his native Belfast as a priest of the Diocese of Down and Connor. On Sun., Dec. 17, with the approval of Pope Benedict XVI, he was "incardinated" back into the Diocese for which he was originally ordained.

Former bank employee seeks reinstatement – Brian Purcell, 38, formerly employed by Allied Irish Bank, was at the Employment Appeals Tribunal last month seeking to be rein-

Ireland Today: Early December Snow Snarls Life on the Roads

GALWAY – We are not used to snow in November and early December, cold snaps that last longer than a week, daytime temperatures that fail to go above freezing or nighttime temperatures that fall to -10C, but that is how it was in Ireland last month.

The cold conditions we had been experiencing worsened at the start of the first week of December with little letup. On Monday, Nov. 29, motorists everywhere were asked not to make any journeys unless absolutely necessary and those who had to travel were urged to use public transport. That message was repeated on a daily basis throughout the week.

Overnight snowfall from East Leinster to Galway made life even more difficult for commuters on Tuesday. There were reports of roads blocked or only passable with difficulty right across the Midlands. Difficulties were also experienced on roads through the Dublin and Wicklow mountains as well as in Sligo and Donegal and across the North. Many schools on both sides of the border had closed by that stage, many remain closed and were joined by others.

More snow fell in Leinster in the early hours of Wednesday, increasing problems for Dublin commuters. It also forced the closure of Dublin Airport for a number of hours. Snowfall in the Wexford/Waterford area was said to be the heaviest in two decades.

In the early hours of Friday snow started to fall in the west and moved across the country during the day. Driving conditions were said to be particularly difficult in Donegal, Sligo, Leitrim, north Mayo and parts of Roscommon and Longford.

It was on Friday that the first significant snow fell in Clare, Limerick and Kerry but volumes were light and disruption minimal.

It is believed that the severe weather was responsible for the deaths of three elderly men, two of them farmers. All three had been living on their own, had fallen and appear to have died from hypothermia.

– LIAM FERRIE

stated in his job. Purcell was dismissed after he was found to have accessed the accounts of nine colleagues to ascertain whether they had received a bonus which had been denied to him. Counsel for Purcell suggested that there had been a bid to oust him as he was a "whistleblower" who had reported a number of unusual accounting transactions at the bank. A decision is expected in the New Year.

HSE to cut pay to trainee nurses – As part of the Department of Health's cost-saving measures, student nurses will no longer be paid for the part of their training that takes place on hospital wards. To date student nurses have received 80 percent of their salary for the placement of nine months which is part of their four-year degree program. The pay will be phased out gradually over a five-year period and will be abolished totally in

2015. The decision has drawn criticism from the Irish Nurses and Midwives Organisation, which has resolved to fight the cuts.

Sligo to get Eastern Bridge after all – The proposed Eastern Bridge over the Garavogue River has been reinstated in the Sligo and Environs Development Plan following a special meeting of Sligo Borough Council last month. Minister of State for Housing Michael Finneran had told members of the Council that he was ready to pull the plug on a promised 100-million euro project if members do not agree to reinstate the construction of the Eastern Bridge in the local development plan. The Minister believes that the regeneration of the Cranmore area of the town would be meaningless without the provision of the bridge. He had given the council until the end of the month to change the plan of face

Framework for casinos published – On Wed., Dec. 22, Minister for Justice Dermot Ahern published "Options for Regulating Gambling", outlining a scheme for licensing small casinos which at present operate as members' clubs. The proposals also look at options to license online betting operators, and will allow one major casino resort. The reference to the major casino is pay back to Independent TD Michael Lowry, who has been supporting the Government in recent tight voting situations and who is anxious to see a major gambling resort being licensed in his constituency. That might be as far as the proposal goes as there is nothing binding on a new Government in the document published by Ahern.

Poll puts Fianna Fáil in fourth place – A Red C opinion poll early last month put the Fianna Fáil party in its worst position ever and Taoiseach Brian Cowen appeared to be even more unpopular, with an 8 percent satisfaction rating.

Support for Fianna Fáil was down three percentage points to 13 percent, Fine Gael was at 32 percent, down one, while Labour was down three to 24 percent. Sinn Féin was up five points to 16 percent and the Greens remained unchanged on 3 percent while support for Independents and others was up from 8 percent to 11 percent.

Both Eamon Gilmore and Enda Kenny enjoyed an increase in their satisfaction ratings. The Labour leader was up two points to 41 percent while the Fine Gael leader was also up two, to 25 percent.

Dermot Ahern and Rory O'Hanlon retiring from politics – Minister for Justice Dermot Ahern announced last month that he will not be contesting the general election. The 55-year-old politician, who represents the Louth constituency, noted that he had been active in politics for some 37 years, 24 as a TD. He revealed that he is suffering from rheumatoid arthritis and had been advised to take life easy.

It had earlier been widely reported that Ahern had sharp exchanges with the Taoiseach and Minister for Finance Brian Lenihan over the failure to keep him informed in relation to the initial negotiations with the European Central Bank. After the BBC started reporting that talks

were taking place between the ECB and the Irish Government Ahern was asked to deny this to reporters. He did so emphatically in the belief that it was all rumor but in fact the ECB had already started putting pressure on the Government to seek support from the bank and IMF.

Dr Rory O'Hanlon, Fianna Fáil TD for Cavan-Monaghan and a former Ceann Comhairle, announced later in the day that he is also retiring from politics. As he will be aged 77 by the time the election takes place there was little comment on his decision, compared with the interest in the earlier announcement from Minister Ahern.

Exchequer data – Returns for the first 11 months of the year gave some cause for hope on all fronts except in the employment area. Income tax for the year to November was 356-million euro below the Budget forecast but it is not clear if this is the result of fewer people in employment or a greater than anticipated fall in pay rates. Total tax receipts for the 11 months were 1.6 percent ahead of forecast at 29.5-billion euro. The biggest surplus came in corporation tax which was 19.1 percent, or 589-million euro, above the budgeted figure. Current spending came in just short of that predicted while capital spending fell short by about a billion euro.

Tiger kidnapping foiled – Gardaí in Dublin foiled a tiger kidnapping in the Crumlin area of the city last month after a passerby noticed suspicious activity at the home of a senior executive with Chubb security. About seven intruders were in the house when gardaí arrived but they managed to escape out the back door and over a wall. An SUV believed to have been used by the gang was found burned out a short distance away. A firearm was found in the vehicle.

O'Callaghan lodges application for Cork conference centre – The developer Owen O'Callaghan has lodged a planning application with Cork City Council for a 50-million euro event and conference centre for the city and is confident that he can complete the 5,000-seat centre within two years. The centre will be located on a 1.75 acre site at Albert Quay, fronting onto the south channel of the River Lee. In addition to the event and conference centre, the complex will include restaurants, bars, and merchandising and reception facilities.

THIRTY-TWO COUNTIES

(Continued from page 21) has been training with the Cork City Ballet Company for the best part of two years, was given a major role in the company's production of Swan Lake last month. Unusually for the popular ballet, six of the swans were males, with James being one of them. He took up ballet at the age of fourteen in Nenagh, attending Aisling Doherty's School of Ballet, before moving to Coláiste Stíofán Naofa in Cork where he has completed a number of exams including reaching the grades to enable him to teach dance.

Tyrone: The former Lisanelly army base in Omagh is the site for a planned campus comprising six schools in a 100-million pound development. The plans for the shared campus have just been published, with each school having its own site, ethos, and identity but having the opportunity to share state-of-the-art facilities, both academic and sporting. Provided the plans are approved and the funding is put

in place, the first schools could be open on the 140-acre site in five years' time, though to date no schools have been selected for the move.

Waterford: An unusual auction took place at Lismore Castle when more than twenty framed recipes from celebrity chefs and food writers were sold. Among those who contributed their hand-written recipes were chefs Darina Allen, Loyd Grossman and Richard Corrigan, as well as food writers Tom Doorley and Paolo Tullio. There was a reserve price of 150 euro for each Food Framed item, and all proceeds were donated to the local St Vincent de Paul Society. The event was organized by local councillor Ken Madden.

Westmeath: Following the fire that extensively damaged St Mel's Cathedral in Longford, an Athlone church has taken on an important role in the diocese. Last month, Bishop Colm O'Reilly inaugurated St Mary's Church in Athlone as the interim Cathedral for the

Diocese of Ardagh and Clonmacnois, an appointment marked by the delivery of a Bishop's chair that had been used in the Cathedral for some eighty years. St Mary's will now host a number of liturgical events until work is completed on St Mel's, expected to take up to four years.

Wexford: Speculation and excitement were rife in Clonroche last month after it emerged that one weekend's lotto winning ticket was bought at Kavanagh's Service Station on the Enniscorthy to New Ross road. After Mass that Sunday a number of local people gathered in the shop to see if anyone knew who the lucky winner was, although proprietors Jack and Rita Kavanagh say they have no idea of the owner of the ticket. Those gathering to speculate on the identity of the purchaser were hoping he or she is a local and not someone passing through.

Wicklow: It might have been a long time coming, but Des Redmond from Manorkilbride

has finally fulfilled his dream of driving at Mondello Park in Co. Kildare. Des is eighty-three years of age but that did not deter him from taking a race-prepared hatchback around one of Mondello's Mazda 3 courses. In doing so the octogenarian

also set a record in becoming the oldest person to complete a Motor Racing School course at the track. The event was organized by a group of Des's friends who had heard him say it was one thing he would like to have done.



IRELAND'S WEATHER

REPORTED MONDAY, DECEMBER 27, 2010

Record cold snap ends

The severe weather conditions have ended but now parts of the country are being warned to prepare for flooding. Melting snow and up to 50mm of rain over the next two days could cause problem in areas prone to flooding.

Most parts will escape rain on Wednesday, and Thursday is expected to be dry everywhere. It will also turn cooler that day, without being anywhere near as cold as recent days.

Latest Temperatures:
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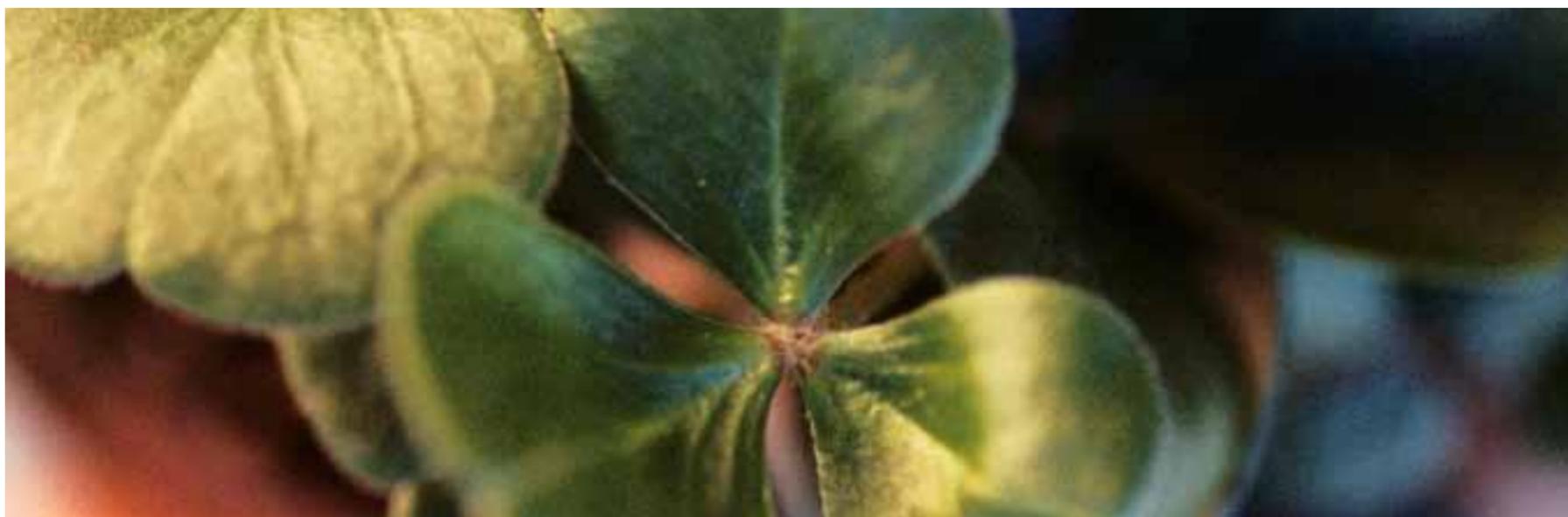
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