

2015 BOSTON IRISH HONOREES



The Evans family (from left): Paul, William, James, Thomas and John with Mayor Walsh and Ed Forry.

Margaret Brett photos



Boston Globe CEO Michael Sheehan, Boston Irish Reporter publisher Ed Forry and Bill Kennedy, who introduced Sheehan.



Ed Forry of the Reporter with honoree Margaret Stapleton.

Evans family, Mike Sheehan, Margaret Stapleton feted

The city's top policeman, a leading media executive, and a pioneering philanthropist were the honorees at this year's Boston Irish Honors luncheon, the season's premier celebration of Irish-American achievement in Massachusetts. The luncheon at the Seaport Boston Hotel, hosted

by the Boston Irish Reporter, drew over 300 attendees. It included remarks from Mayor Martin Walsh, who introduced Boston Police Commissioner William Evans and his brothers Paul, John, Thomas, and James — who were honored as an exemplary Boston Irish family. The Evans clan of



Rev. Tom Kennedy delivered the invocation.

South Boston has excelled in law enforcement, the fire service, and business while inspiring new generations of Bostonians to be engaged citizens. Also honored at the event were Michael Sheehan, the chief executive officer of the Boston Globe, and Margaret Stapleton, who rose through

the ranks of John Hancock Insurance and Financial Services to become a vice-president before her retirement and has been a leading donor and advisor to the Pine Street Inn. The program was moderated by Boston Red Sox "poet laureate" Dick Flavin. Coverage, Pages 18-24



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WITNESS HISTORY IN THE MAKING

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Bring on tomorrow®

They're lining up for the AIG Fenway Hurling Classic

Ticket sales are said to be brisk for the the AIG Fenway Hurling Classic that is set for Fenway Park on Sun., Nov. 22. Gates will open at 11a.m. and the game begins at 1 p.m.

Hurling, the world's fastest field sport, returns to Fenway Park for the first time since 1954 as two of the sport's biggest teams – Dublin and 2015 All-Ireland Finalist Galway – compete on the pitch. The festivities will include a lively Irish festival complete with Irish food, music, and dancing, featuring Boston's favorite the Dropkick Murphys.

The game will form part of an Irish Festival at Fenway Park on that weekend where all aspects of Irish culture and music will be celebrated. It will be played the day after Boston College takes on the Fighting Irish of Notre Dame at Fenway Park in a much anticipated college football game.

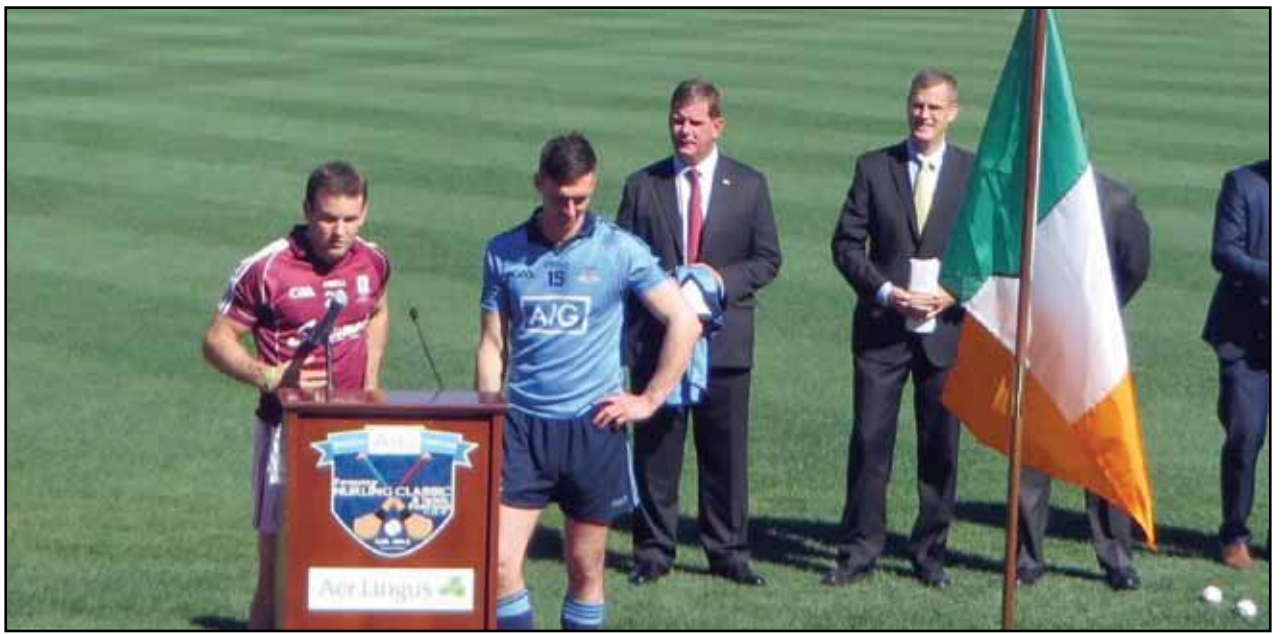
Dublin's hurlers, of whom AIG Insurance of Ireland are the official sponsors, will take on Galway, which recently lined out against Kilkenny in the All-Ireland Hurling Final.

The AIG Fenway Hurling Classic was in the planning stages for months and has the full support of the GAA, the GPA, both the Dublin and Galway county boards, the North American GAA board and FSM.

Aer Lingus, the official airline partner of Dublin GAA and the official travel partner of the GPA, are also backing the match and will provide flights for the entire travelling party.

Super 11s, the brainchild of the GPA, is an eleven aside format of traditional hurling. It was developed specifically to allow hurling to be played in stadiums and venues all over the world where the pitch size is smaller than the traditional hurling pitch. Only goals can be scored in the adapted game. Training sessions to ensure the players become fully accustomed to the rules will be organized by the GAA and GPA in advance of the trip.

It will be the first time since November of 1954 that hurling will be played at the world famous home of



Mayor Marty Walsh and incoming Red Sox president Sam Kennedy unveiled plans for the AIG Fenway Hurling Classic and Irish Festival at Fenway Park. Hurlers Dave Collins (Galway) and Mark Shutte (Dublin) were on hand for the announcement in August.
Ed Forry photo

the Red Sox. Back then All-Ireland Champion Cork defeated an American Hurling selection.

Says General Manager at AIG Ireland, Declan O'Rourke, of the upcoming event: "We are absolutely delighted and hugely proud to be able to bring hurling to the iconic Fenway Park in Boston. I don't need to explain the close ties the city of Boston has to Ireland and that is why it is a fitting venue to play host to one of our national games."

"We have enjoyed a hugely successful relationship with Dublin GAA since late 2013 and this is another sign of our support for them. It also marks our first official partnership with the GAA at national level and also with the GPA and I'd like to thank them

for their professionalism and co-operation in getting this event off the ground.

Red Sox and Fenway Sports Group President Sam Kennedy added; "Hurling is one of the most electrifying sports in the world and we think fans are going to enjoy watching all the fast-paced action as two of the most accomplished and talented counties compete on the pitch at Fenway Park. We are always looking for opportunities to bring new and exciting events into Fenway and whether you're a fan of hurling or new to the sport the AIG Fenway Hurling Classic and Irish Festival promises to be a great event."

Irish Network/Boston hosting national parley

Delegates from across the United States will descend upon Boston this month for Irish Network USA's annual national conference, featuring plenary sessions, a special celebration at the State House, and a festival celebrating Irish culture and film.

The four-day program runs from Thurs., Nov. 5, through Sun., Nov. 8. Registration details are available at irishnetworkboston.net.

Irish Network Boston (IN Boston), in partnership with the Consulate General of Ireland Boston, is hosting the weekend. "With 2016 marking the centennial anniversary of the Easter Rising, the conference will celebrate and analyze the importance of the past 100 years of the relationship between Ireland and the United States, but more importantly, it will outline a strategic vision to best continue and build upon

those enduring links for the benefit of all," said Sean P. Moynihan, President of IN/Boston.

The conference will focus on the economic, educational, cultural, and sporting partnerships that have always been such a critical component of the relationship between the two countries. Transatlantic trade will be a major focus with key participants to include: Gary Hanley of Invest Northern Ireland, Mark Gallagher of Silicon Valley Bank, Dave Greaney of Synergy Investments, Larry Naughton of Choate Hall and Stewart, and Ryan McDermott of the Boston Irish Business Association (BIBA).

The conference will bring together participants for a high-impact agenda featuring keynotes by Ireland's ambassador to the United States, Anne Anderson, and Mark Redmond, chief executive of the

American Chamber of Commerce Ireland.

Other notable participants include Johanna Murphy, CEO of Connect Ireland; Joe O'Brien of Crosscare Migrant Project in Dublin; Professor Liam Kennedy of the UCD Clinton Institute of American Studies; John Cunningham, chairperson of the GAA North America; and Stewart Matthews of the Northern Ireland Bureau.

"Since our first conference in 2013 INUSA has continued to go from strength to strength," stated Steve Lenox, president, INUSA. "We are grateful for all the work that IN Boston is putting into making INUSA15 a success, and are looking forward to having lively discussion about where the future takes an organization that remains committed to engaging the 'Global Irish' in every corner of the USA".



Irish Network/Boston president Sean Moynihan meets with Mayor Marty Walsh as the five-year-old Irish group makes plans to host a national Irish Network conference in the city this month. Photo courtesy IN/Boston.

Friday evening will mark an important historical event for IN Boston as the organization celebrates its 5th anniversary at the Massachusetts State

House on Beacon Hill. In partnership with the consul general of Ireland in Boston, guests will be entertained with traditional Irish music, Irish fare including

traditional beef stew, Irish salmon, a unique selection of Irish cheeses from throughout Ireland, and a selection of unique craft brews.

A Charitable welcome for new consul general



Consul Quinlan

The Charitable Irish Society will host a welcome reception for the newly arrived Consul General of Ireland, Fionnuala Quinlan, and Vice Consul Meg Laffan on Nov. 24 at 6 p.m. at the Union Club, 8 Park Street, Boston. Subscription for the event is \$35 per person, and registration may be made online at charitableirishsociety.org.

Eire Society installs new slate of officers

The Eire Society of Boston has announced its slate of officers for the 2015-2016 season. They are: Thomas Carty, president; Robin Tagliaferri, first vice president, John Connolly, second vice president; Ann Doherty, Treasurer and Recording Secretary; Mary Ellen Mulligan, Membership Secretary; and Barbara Smith Fitzgerald, Corresponding Secretary.

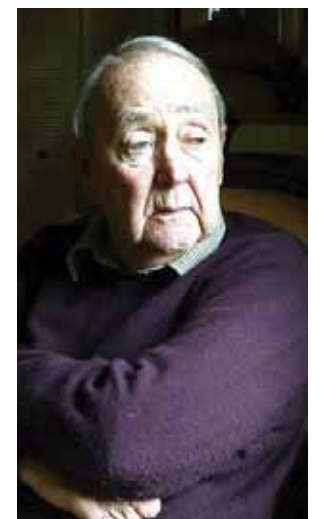
The board is currently accepting recommendations for honorees for the 2016 Gold Medal dinner to be held in the spring.

The next board meeting is scheduled for Mon., Nov. 16, at 7 p.m. at Insight Realty Group, 1427 Centre Street, West Roxbury.

Jim Murphy, 1932-2015

Jim Murphy, a veteran and professor of English and literature at Massachusetts Maritime Academy and Boston College, and a lover of Ireland, died last month. He is remembered fondly in this month's Reporter by his longtime friend Bill O'Donnell on page 10.

Photo by Sarah E. Murphy



David Finnegan: He made his mark with élan

David Ignatius Finnegan, a member of a prominent political family with deep roots in Dorchester, died on Oct. 12 in Bluffton, S.C. at age 74. The cause of death was given as lung cancer.

Some 70 years ago, Mr. Finnegan was a lively presence in Neponset, his boyhood neighborhood where the streets were the best playgrounds. As a teenager he joined his brother John in treks up to Wollaston Golf Club across the Neponset River where he caddied with a certain panache while learning how to play the game skillfully.



David Finnegan

His education was all local: St. Ann's School, Boston English High, Stonehill College, and Boston University's law school – with a stint at Harvard for a master's degree later in life. While in college, he held a steady job working nights on the display desk at the *Boston Globe*.

Once out of the groves of academe, Mr. Finnegan took zestfully to public life. He served two terms on the Boston School Committee, made several unsuccessful runs for the mayor's office, most notably in a showdown with Ray Flynn. He was a broadcaster, hosting a radio show on WBZ in the early 1980s and a television show on Ch. 7 later on. In his later years, Mr. Finnegan was a lawyer and lobbyist specializing in insurance cases before retiring to South Carolina in the early years of the new century.

On the private sector side of his ledger, Mr. Finnegan was a raconteur and master of ceremonies who took no prisoners when roasts were in order at the many dinners, luncheons, and functions that he attended in the course of his business.

Of David Finnegan the man and politician, former Mayor Flynn said on hearing of his death: "The best thing about running against David Finnegan was after a hard fought campaign, you knew you made a good friend. Seventy six spirited and well attended neighborhood forums, debates and candidates nights throughout the neighborhoods Boston in 1983, but never a personal attack or a harsh word from David or among any of the candidates. David was a man and a public official whom I had deep admiration and respect for. Whether on the School Committee, on radio or in a tough campaign, Dave was an articulate and well-informed competitor, but always a complete gentleman. All the citizens of Boston can be grateful for David Finnegan's outstanding record of public service.

The second-youngest of nine children born to Julia and Joseph Finnegan, the latter a state senator in the Depression years, Mr. Finnegan leaves his wife, the former Ellen Olsen of Bluffton, S.C.; three sons, David of Boston, Joe of Los Angeles, and Michael of Nashville; a daughter, Trish Giampaoli of Naples, Fla.; four brothers, Joseph and John, a former Massachusetts state representative and state auditor, both of Naples, Fla., Thomas, of Dorchester, and Stephen, of Milton; two sisters, Eleanora Golden of Delray Beach, Fla., and Julie Matzel of Mashpee; and four grandchildren. In 1967, the year he graduated from law school, Mr. Finnegan married Patricia Harden. They had four children and their marriage ended in divorce.

A memorial Funeral Mass was said for Mr. Finnegan on Wed., Oct. 28, in the Chapel of Mary at Stonehill College in North Easton, MA.

– Tom Mulvoy

BOSTON IRISH REPORTER

The Irish American Partnership: Taking stock – 1986 to 2016

By Joe Leary
Special to the BIR

The year 2016 will mark the anniversary of several important Irish events. First and most important are the 100th anniversary celebrations in Ireland and the United States American of the famous "Easter Rebellion."

Another event will also be remembered by many: the beginning of the Irish American Partnership in early 1986.

It was then, 30 years ago, that the first meetings of the men and women who dreamed of creating of such a partnership took place in Dublin. It was, from the beginning, about a partnership representing both the North and South of Ireland. Official Ireland, in both Dublin and Belfast, thought this was a valid concept and proceeded to take steps to create the organization.

The following year, the Irish Parliament under Taoiseach Garrett Fitzgerald voted to encourage the idea with an IRL 50,000-pound grant to fund the early expenses. And an elite group of Irish business executives, educators, and political leaders from both the North and South created the partnership in Ireland and began to enlist prominent Irish Americans to manage the organization in the United States.

General P.X. Kelley, United States Marine Corps (ret.), became chairman of the American board of directors and the former speaker of the US House, Thomas P. "Tip" O'Neill, became the spokesman for the partnership in the United States.

The Irish American Partnership's mission was to organize Irish-American support for Ireland, its people, and its future, specifically, by assisting Irish education, starting with the underprivileged primary and secondary schools in the west of Ireland.

Today, 29 years later, there are 5,000 Irish American Partnership supporters, coast to coast and the organization has raised more than \$1.2 million, with 86.8 percent going to its mission in Ireland. In answer to concerns about charitable spending, the Partnership notes that fund-raising and administrative expenses, including salaries, are less than 14 percent.

Ireland's Prime Minister Taoiseach Enda Kenny has said: "The Irish American Partnership has a great track record in supporting worthy causes in Ireland, particularly in the area of education. I thank the members of the Partnership for everything they do to promote and support the great connection between Ireland and the United States."

As of November 2015, the Partnership has provided funds to insure 500 primary schools in the North and South of Ireland to help build and modernize their school libraries and provide science teaching materials to assist teachers discussing multiple science programs

with their young students. Ireland's universities have received special grants to assist deserving underprivileged students achieve a college education. In addition the Partnership has funded extensive science teacher training programs in coordination with teaching colleges in Dublin and Limerick.

A special program focused on school leavers and non-college graduates has received funding for many years. The program is called "A Fast Track to Technology" (FIT), taking advantage of undiscovered hi-tech talent in lower paying jobs.

The Partnership works within the established system and Departments of Education in both Dublin and Belfast. Almost 90 community groups in both the North and South have received grants for specific programs. Many of these are focused upon Northern Ireland and promote cross-community understanding.

The thrust of Partnership funding is based on the concept that an educated population is essential to a nation's prosperity. Partnership programs work to empower the next generation of Irish leaders to lead their nation through the challenges a changing world will present.

There are 3,305 primary schools in Ireland, 509,652 students and 32,489 teachers. This is where learning begins. The fact that over 50 percent of the schools have four teachers or less shows how small and distant many of these schools are. It is these schools that benefit from Partnership help the most. The 15-member Partnership board of directors is made up of men and women from throughout the United States, Ireland, and Northern Ireland. Several American members have second homes in Ireland, indicating their affection and involvement in their heritage.

The Partnership relies upon a directors' standing committee in Dublin and Belfast to provide advice and guidance on all funding decisions. The board recently established a planned giving program and funded a modest but growing endowment program to insure that American support will be forthcoming for years into the future.

The dreams of those who began the idea of an Irish American Partnership 29 years ago have been at least partly realized. Much, much more can be accomplished.

It is fitting that we end with a statement from a leader of the American Partnership, Executive Director Mary Sugrue, originally from South Kerry, Ireland: "The Irish American Partnership is pleased to provide a tangible link for Irish Americans to honor their Irish heritage by connecting them with schools and universities across the island of Ireland. The grants are appreciated by the students and teachers who are encouraged by the gifts received from the United States. We are honored and humbled by the generosity of our donors."

Why black lives matter more

By James W. Dolan
Special to the Reporter

The "Black Lives Matter" movement in one form or another has gone on for decades. Today it is focused on the actions of police officers who lack the maturity, judgment, and self-discipline to use a weapon only as a last resort. While the vast majority of police officers know when to exercise restraint, there are some only too willing to make a benign situation bad, or a bad situation worse.

A better selection process and improved training should reduce instances of police overreaction. But police officers are human beings, like the rest of us, and even the good ones from time to time may exhibit poor judgment and lack of self-control. In my experience, the Boston Police Department is an outstanding example of setting and enforcing standards of police behavior.

But the police are only responsible for a fraction of violent deaths of black people. The number of murders of blacks committed by black perpetrators is overwhelming. That tragedy, so evident to me while I was on the bench, continues at an alarming rate. Drugs and guns are a toxic mix, and the victims are often innocent bystanders, some of them children.

Residents of high crime areas want police protection while knowing the risk of black on black violent crime far exceeds the likelihood of an unjustified police shooting. Police officers also feel more at risk when patrolling such areas. They are apprehensive and, therefore, more likely to overreact when confronted. Given that, supervisors must carefully screen officers before assigning them to high crime areas.

The causes of black crime are many, and often related to circumstance beyond the control of the offenders. They include family dysfunction, drugs, health issues, poor education, and the lack of job opportunities. Protesters claim that society undervalues black lives and cite instances of police shootings. But the murder rate of blacks by blacks is a much more serious manifestation of the problem.

How do we as a society underscore what should be self-evident: All Lives Matter. Since black people are more at risk within their own communities, greater emphasis should be placed on black lives. Unfortunately, so much of what contributes to this problem appears to be beyond our reach.

I am reminded of a favorite quote by Samuel Johnson: "How small of all that human hearts endure, that part which laws or kings can cause or cure." So often we must rely on our own resources to deal with intractable problems. That does not mean we are alone. There is faith, family, clergy, community, all the elements that

teach us what is right and wrong. Laws are a poor substitute for a sense of values learned at home, reinforced at church, and practiced in the community.

Despite progress in other areas, the influence once exercised by those informal values-shaping mechanisms has declined. Our youth today are bombarded with distractions suggesting that what's right is anything you want to do and what's wrong is anything that interferes with that.

We go from one extreme to the other. While I was on the bench, criminal justice reform consisted of stiffer penalties – longer, often mandatory, sentences imposed to deter crime and at least temporarily disable criminals. That approach provided some relief, but obviously inflated the prison population. Now criminal justice reform includes reducing sentences, putting fewer people in jail, and relying on community-based correction programs.

The harsher "reforms" were due to increased drug-related offenses and the violence associated with them. The sale of drugs provided the money for guns that were used to establish and protect markets. With few job opportunities, black youth often chose the high-reward, high-risk path of drug dealing. Many of the murders were drug-related.

Will violence be better controlled with a more lenient policy, one that focuses on treatment and rehabilitation. Perhaps, but only if the money we now use to incarcerate too many offenders is used instead to rehabilitate them. Even that may not be enough unless we do something about our disgraceful gun culture, which seems unlikely in this political climate.

We've lost the "war on drugs" that has been going on for over 30 years. In order to eliminate the financial incentive that generates the murders in the drug trade, we may have to consider legalizing drugs. The money spent on the "war" might then be used to discourage drug use (look what we've done with cigarettes) and provide rehabilitation services. It is an unfortunate choice, but the adverse consequences of legalization may be less onerous than the murders generated by their illicit sale. At the same time, more opportunities must also be provided for disadvantaged black youth to achieve financial independence.

Police behavior is only a small part of the problem. The community wants to be protected by officers who are both respectful and aggressive, a difficult balance that requires dedication, maturity, and good judgment. But unless the deeper underlying problems are addressed, I fear the death toll will continue to mount. All lives matter but black lives now matter more because they are more vulnerable.



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Full circle on the Irish Sea

By GREG O'BRIEN
SPECIAL TO THE BIR

Duncannon, County Wexford – The tapering headland of Hook Head on the Irish Sea, at the mouth of rivers Barrow, Nore and Suir, is wholly inspiring in its rugged landscape, primeval history, and the majesty this jagged peninsula evokes. At its rocky tip stands the majestic 800-year-old Hook Head Lighthouse, one of the oldest working lighthouses in the world. It rises like an ancient barbican—four stories high with trademark black and white stripes and limestone walls up to 12 feet thick that will likely stand until end times. Legend has it that long before construction of the lighthouse, monks in the fifth century from the nearby Dubhan monastery lit fires to warn ships from the treacherous red sandstone sarsens.

By hook or by crook, I was destined to connect here, southeast of Dublin, with John Joe Vaughan—two brash Irishmen separated by a sea of blue, roiling waters rushing to a horizon where water flushes up against the sky. It was God-ordained.

I had met John Joe almost nine months earlier at Logan Airport upon my return to Boston from Dublin, an annual pilgrimage to Eire. He had just arrived himself with family to visit his daughter Rena, who now lives in New Hampshire. While I was on the cellphone responding to a queue of backlogged voicemails, Rena began waving at me. She recognized me from a photo in my book, “On Pluto: Inside the Mind of Alzheimer’s.”

“I want you to meet my father,” she said, noting that her dad had been diagnosed with Alzheimer’s, and was reticent to talk about it until reading “Pluto.” She had given him a copy. I was humbled, but that was just the beginning.

The Lord works in mysterious ways.

John Joe, 79, of New Ross in County Wexford, ancestral home of the Kennedys, has a smile that would light the River Liffey and the handshake of a heavyweight champion. He embraced me, eyeball to eyeball, and I saw the tears streaming down the side of his creased, righteous face—the two of us in a fight against a demon of a disease, one that we won’t win.

I cried, too. “I know how it feels,” he said to me. “We fight together now as brothers, right?”

“Right!”

And so we are now brothers, joined in a worldwide fight against Alzheimer’s, from Cape Cod to the Irish Sea. The battle is fully engaged, and if the tag-team, rope-a-dope of John Joe and me are any indication, Alzheimer’s in time could be down for a hand count, if lawmakers worldwide, committed parties, devoted caregivers, and those with the disease join forces around the planet.

This was no brief encounter with John Joe—a father of 8 with his devoted wife Peggy (a champion Irish stepdancer), grandfather of 17, a retired teacher and school principal, raised in rural Marshalstown without electricity and paved roads. He invited me to spend a week in this past summer writing and just hanging with him over a few pints at his family’s summer cottage on the Irish Sea in the fishing village of Duncannon, overlooking Hook Head Light at the mouth of Waterford Harbor.

On this day, the Fresnel lens of Hook Head Light flashes every three seconds; I counted the blinks in my bedroom each night as I tried to sleep. I was captivated by the night sky flecked with infinite specs of white, reflecting on the lighthouse and the craggy peninsula called Crooke, just across from the narrow strait. It is a spot where in the mid-



Greg O'Brien during a 2015 visit to Ireland.

1600s, Oliver Cromwell, charged with defeating the rebellious Confederate Coalition, declared that he would take Ireland “by Hook or by Crooke,” a declaration that would last in the vernacular hundreds of years.

And so John Joe and I met by Hook or by Crooke, in county Wexford whence my mother’s family hailed—she, as well, a victim of Alzheimer’s. John Joe’s mother also died of Alzheimer’s and his older brother is stricken with the disease, and now he doesn’t recognize John Joe, a situation that awaits him, he fears.

The Lord works in mysterious ways.

Over a pint in Wexford Town, John Joe, named for his uncle John and his father Joseph, talked for one of the first times about the horrors of Alzheimer’s, which is consuming a generation worldwide, one diagnosis of dementia about every minute, according to the Alzheimer’s Association. Globally, the number of individuals living with dementia—a death in slow motion, akin to having a sliver of your brain shaved every day—is expected to rise from the present 46 million to more than 131 million in the next 35 years at a staggering cost of care. In the US alone, the cost of care for those with dementia is expected to rise to \$2

trillion by 2030.

“I’m emotional about this,” says John Joe. “I can’t control that; it’s the card I was dealt. What can you do about it? I refuse to give in. So I fight on. I retreat into myself and fight on. It makes me nervous, the progression I have to face.”

Once quick-witted and gifted with the Irish natter, John Joe is now slower to the draw, yet he uses humor to make fun of the fact that he can’t remember. As they say in Alzheimer’s, he makes new friends every day. A remarkable man, an incredible teacher—to his children, his students, and to me—John Joe always had a fascination with the world beyond him. As a teacher and principal, he encouraged others to broaden their minds. He was principal at the National School in Courtnacuddy and Carlanstown where he also taught fourth, fifth and sixth grades. Now John Joe’s world is shrinking in disturbing ways, but he presses on in muscle memory, indelible images, analogous to a palate of oil colors ready to paint a canvas.

One of John Joe’s most indelible images is the memory of John F. Kennedy’s visit to New Ross in 1963, a defining moment in both Irish history and a family tree. JFK’s grand-

father, Patrick Kennedy, left New Ross in 1849, escaping the Famine, to become a cooper in East Boston, making and repairing wooden casks and barrels. John Joe recalls President Kennedy, in a New Ross speech, pointing to a nearby warehouse and declaring that he’d be working there if his grandfather didn’t have the Irish passion to fight on when he was down.

John Joe has always been a fighter, yet he has an artistic soft side, a thriving right brain that is guiding him back to his love of art, a self-healing therapy from the ravages of a disease that robs a sense of self. He spends hours now painting in oils; it’s a passion and yet a challenge to remember what colors to use. So he has devised a scheme of selecting the proper oil colors, somewhat similar to a carpet swatch display where he has laminated and labeled the colors to choose the right ones. And he does.

Art, whether painting, music, or writing, stimulates the brain, stirs memories and reduces agitation caused by Alzheimer’s. By his own admission, John Joe is no Michelangelo, yet his work is inspiring in so many ways. Upon my visit to Duncannon, he presented me with an impressive painting of Hook Head Light. It hangs now in my family room.

“What scares me about this disease,” he says over another sip of his pint, “is the loss of memory and the inability to carry a conversation. The brain just isn’t processing; it’s stalled. It’s embarrassing. So I often avoid conversation. I retreat into myself, and at times deal with rage. People who know me say, ‘He’s changed a lot.’”

I understand. I tell him about my daughter’s wedding two summers ago when I had to detach myself several times from family and friends to retreat in solitude and restart the brain. “I used to

hold court at such gatherings,” I tell him. “I thrived on it. My nickname among friends was the ‘Senator from Cape Cod.’ No longer. I’ve left office; things have changed.”

What hasn’t changed about John Joe is his heart and his gut Irish humor. Alzheimer’s drives one from the mind to the place of the heart, the soul. “I may have tears in my eyes,” he says, “but I’m not crying out of sorrow. It’s part of what I’ve been handed. I was blessed with a good family that gives me strength. I have no cause for complaint. “I laugh, like you, at how long it takes me to remember.”

I draw the analogy with John Joe, one he relates with, of comparing Alzheimer’s with the basement of a house. “Ever been in a basement doing laundry at night when someone in the kitchen turns the cellar light out?” I ask him. “You scream, right, and you throw a few ‘F’ bombs until someone upstairs turn the light back on. That’s Alzheimer’s. A light goes off, and one goes into rage because it’s dark. At some point, the light goes off forever.”

John Joe laughs, the kind of gurgle one would expect from a leprechaun. I’m looking for the rainbow now. He’s on a roll. “If a cure comes,” he says. “It will likely come from America. I hope you call me up some day and say, ‘John Joe, I have a little pill for you.’”

“You’ll get the first call,” I tell him.

Two Irish guys in a pub, full circle near the Irish Sea, separated by 2,992 miles, connected for a lifetime by a disease that will take their lives. In some ways, it doesn’t get any better...

Greg O’Brien’s latest book, On Pluto: Inside the Mind of Alzheimer’s, has won the 2015 Beverly Hills International Book Award for Medicine, the 2015 International Book Award for Health, and is an Eric Hoffer International Book Award finalist.

Point of View

By PETER F. STEVENS
BIR STAFF

It’s about time. For the first time since 1951, the British Open – “The Open” to the golf world of the UK and Ireland – will literally hit the links on the Emerald Isle. The announcement that Royal Portrush Golf Club had a chance for the 2019 Open was announced in 2014, but not until late October 2015 did the official nod arrive. Royal Portrush was the first and only previous site of the Open outside of Scotland and England.

Throughout Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland alike, legions of links lovers reveled in print and online headlines at the news that the Open was indeed coming back to Irish shores. Still, a turf war of sorts colored some of the coverage in the North. In a front-page article, the *Belfast Telegraph* proudly and justifiably noted that in 1947, countryman “Whistling Fred” Daly became the first Irishman from any corner of the isle to hoist the claret jug, the legendary winner’s trophy of the Open. The *Telegraph*’s Jim Gracey wrote, “The numbers, organisation, technology and, indeed, the money involved - the event will be worth millions to the whole Northern Ireland economy - are a world removed from when The Open last visited here in 1951, in the heyday of our own late, great Fred Daly, the first Northern Ireland winner of the Championship, at Hoylake in 1947. Clarke and Rory McIlroy ended our long wait for another in 2011 and 2014, respectively.”

Not to carp, but it seems that even though he hails from the Republic, Pádraig Harrington’s *two* Open triumphs – in 2007 and 2008 – deserve at least a passing nod from golfers in any corner of the island. Just saying...

The 2019 Open will unfold across Royal Portrush from July 18-21, and many of the game’s sagest observers believe that the club’s topnotch hosting of the 2012 Irish

Open set the stage for the competition’s second-ever act outside Scotland and England, impressing the R & A (the Open’s ruling body. It derives its initialized name from the Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St. Andrews) so much that they selected the venerable Northern Irish links. First, however, Portrush needed upgrades and “contingencies.” If they were not met quickly, the 2019 Open was out of the equation, as the 2014 R & A announcement stated.

Royal Portrush has obviously met the challenge. High on the “to-do list” was for course designers to carve out two new holes to bring the par-71 layout to 7,337 yards in the era of the longest drivers the game has ever seen. Of equal importance to the R & A, the two new holes can accommodate the requisite huge grandstands for the tournament.

Graley continued: “It will be the biggest sporting event ever to be staged here in terms of prestige and global media exposure. It will also provide a massive boost to the tourism economy, well beyond the north coast, with tens of thousands expected to descend.”

To golf-mad Northern Ireland, his words peel not with hyperbole, but with pride.

Royal Portrush is a fitting venue for The Open’s return to Irish soil for a wide array of historical reasons. The club merits the appellation “Royal” both in terms of that rich history and the course’s spectacular vistas. Looming above the tract is Dunluce Castle, a 13th-century Norman fortress hugging the very edge of a seaside cliff. In 1693, a chunk of the castle toppled into the ocean during a savage storm.

The site, once the haunt of warlords, provided the backdrop for the Royal Portrush Club in 1888. One of the link course’s earliest patrons was King Edward VII. Not surprisingly, many Irish golf historians have anointed Royal Portrush as the cradle of Irish

professional tournament golf, for in 1895, Ireland’s first official match-play competition was held on the course. A starry field of the game’s best descended upon Portrush, their ranks including golf immortal Harry Vardon. Until 1900, when the Golfing Union of Ireland was formed, Royal Portrush’s members organized professional competitions.

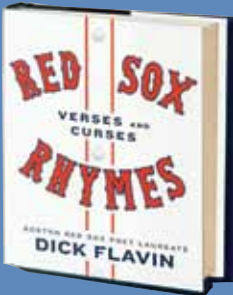

In 1951, Portrush was chosen to hold the first Open off Scottish and English turf. Hopes were high throughout the North and the South that Fred Daly, winner of the 1947 Open would duplicate the feat on his home links, Portrush. A genial man but a fierce competitor, he had honed his game as a youth beneath glowering Dunluce Castle. Daly overcame a lackluster opening round and battled tricky winds for the claret jug, but at the end of the fourth and final round, Englishman Max Faulkner stood atop the Portrush leaderboard with a three-under-par 285, good for the top prize of 300 pounds (about \$850 in US dollars). Daly tied for fourth place with a 292, pocketing 62 pounds (about \$175 in US dollars).

In a statement following the R & A’s decision for 2019, Tourism NI Chairman Terence Brannigan said: “The north coast will provide a dramatic and stunning backdrop to the event when it will be hosting an expected 200,000 visitors from all parts of Great Britain, the Republic of Ireland and overseas.... Tourism NI and our industry partners will be pulling out all the stops to stage the best ever welcome for an Open Championship.”

If Rory McIlroy or Graeme McDowell can pull off what eluded Fred Daly at the 1951 Open at Royal Portrush, there is virtually no way to measure how welcome that would be to the throngs of their Northern Irish fans.

Two books

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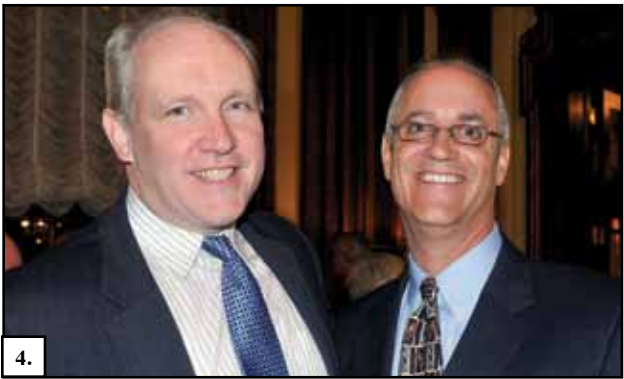
BRETT'S BOSTON

By Harry Brett

Exclusive photos of Boston Irish people & events

The Charitable Irish Society presented its 2015 Silver Key awards to Margaret Stapleton and the husband-and-wife artist team of Vincent Crotty and Kieran Jordan in ceremonies on Oct. 14 at the Fairmont Copley Plaza. The Society's central mission is to assist newly arrived Irish immigrants to Boston, most recently by providing support in the areas of employment, housing, education, finance, health, and law. The proceeds from the Silver Key Award Reception are used to underwrite the Society's efforts in helping individual Irish immigrants on an as-needed basis. In recognition of the Society's mission, the Silver Key Award is conferred annually upon individuals who have demonstrated outstanding dedication in helping new immigrants.

1.) Vincent Crotty, Dorchester; Donna Doyle, Barrington, RI; Kieran Jordan, Dorchester; Kevin Doyle, Barrington, RI; 2.) Ronnie Millar, IIC; Anne Auerbach, Chelsea; Neil Hurley, Somerville; John Rattigan, Newton; 3.) IIC volunteers Deston Hudson and Honor Moody; 4.) Patrick McShane and Tim Kelly, Holliston; 5.) Ellen Woods, IPS, Melrose; Megan Carroll, IPS exec. dir., Wellesley; 6.) Fionnuala Quinlan, Irish Consul General 7.) Margaret Flagg, W. Roxbury; Sheila Gagnon, Marshfield; 8.) Vincent Crotty and Kieran Jordan, Dorchester; Dolores Jordan, Philadelphia, PA; Elizabeth Dooley, Short Hills, NJ; Ed Forry, Dorchester; 9.) Meg Laffan, Vice Consul; 10.) Christopher Duggan, Pres., Charitable Irish; 11.) Tim Carty, Dedham; Lyn Ferrara, Scituate; Edris Kelley, Marshfield; 12.) Keiran Jordan, Vincent Crotty and Margaret Stapleton, Scituate.



Boston Irish Reporter's Here & There

By BILL O'DONNELL

To A Good Friend – Jim Murphy and I were pals for 40 years, and both of us being mouthy, it was a miracle when one of us took time between exhortations to grab a breath. Jim was one of a kind. He was generous with his time, and he had a comedic ease that allowed him to blow kisses one minute and damn the pharisees when it came to that. He was the funniest man I knew who never charged a performance fee.

Jim had a distinguished career, or maybe several, and he was a crackerjack in each of them. Together he spent over half a century doing what he was born to do: teach. He was a professor of English and public speaking for 25 years at the Massachusetts Maritime Academy, and he spent another 28 years as a professor of literature at Boston College, stirring the juices of hundreds of young creative writing students with his bywords, “Yes, You Can.” In between he wrote an armful of novels on the Irish and New England. He had another ready when he left us.

In his teens, he served his country as a grunt in the Army and if you called him a patriot, he would redden but never flinch. He was in country in combat in Korea when the truce was announced. Jim had instincts that were old-fashioned, but never out of date. He adored his wife, Margaret Ann, and their six children. He loved Cape Cod and Falmouth and liked nothing better than to come upon a good conversation, expected or otherwise. Jim had legions of true blue friends, and if they were anything like me, receiving a phone call or a letter from Jim Murphy was a refreshing tonic, full of fun and facts and thunderbolts attacking pomposity, selfishness, and hypocrisy. People with those traits were deserving of a special corner of Hades in his personal Murphy's Law ledger. And he loved Ireland, the gorse, the seashore, the nod of a farmer at his gate to a passing stranger, the stories on ghosts and myths that new-found Irish friends would excitedly relate to a grateful Murphy ear. He returned often on business, and on pleasure, of course.

Yet Jim, crowded life and all, held other commitments that were personal, private – a missionary bent that allowed him to face challenges and maybe do some good for others along the way. In his earlier years Jim met head-on with unruly demons that he confronted with courage and constancy and out of that came a decision to help the addicted and the alcoholic. So often in his earlier and middle years, before diabetes and the gathering years took their toll, Jim would volunteer to counsel and mentor the addicted. That meant trips to strange settings, hours of long, painful periods at one end of a phone line with anguished sufferers. Jim used his humor, his understanding, and his empathy with strength to help people in need turn a desperate corner. He did it again and again, getting the call, saving lives, and helping give people back their reason to live.

I cannot think of a calling – clerical-collared or white-frocked – that deserves to be honored more. And that was what Jim did, with no credit lines, no vainglory, no self-congratulations. He simply answered the call from the new friend in need that needed Jim.

I lost my youngest brother to an addiction centered on booze and pills. He was in his mid-thirties and harmless as a hippy hoe-down. He died with an entire unrealized life in front of him. Young Steve O'Donnell never met or knew Jim Murphy or a facsimile, but I wish it might have happened.

And, finally, a belated “well done” to one of life's gentlemen, **James F. Murphy, Jr.**, for finding the time and the compassion to reach out in life, to be there in those dark, lonely hours. We honor his memory, his years with us, his smile, and, always, his generous spirit.

Costello In Boston On ‘Shared Famine’ – **Frank Costello** a loyalist Great Famine scholar, **Jonathan Hodge**, who is working with Dr. Costello in raising the awareness of the tragedy of the mid-19th century famine will be in Boston this month. There will be a breakfast and book-signing fundraiser on Thurs., Nov. 12, on “Sharing the Past,” which is working with the youth from both traditions to update Famine history and broad scope. All proceeds from the fundraiser will go to Building Communities Ltd. for youth programs in the North.

The breakfast/book signing and a talk by Dr. Costello will take place at Slowey/McManus Communications, Suite 340, 11 Beacon St. in Boston from 8 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. If unable to attend, donations can be made to Building Communities, Ltd. c/o Bill O'Donnell. 47 Cold Spring Place, Woonsocket, RI 02895. Suggested donation: sponsors \$100, patrons \$50. All are welcome.

The thrust of the tour event in Boston will focus on the hidden effects of the Great Hunger and its impact on youth in both traditions in wide swaths across Ulster. For information about the youth programs or the Famine tour in Boston call 401-651-0800 or send an email to bjod1969@verizon.net.

Hurling Comes To Rhode Island – It all began with a high school student, **Michael Walsh**, who first

saw hurling on a trip to Ireland with his parents when he attended a Cork-Clare Final. He was hooked. At the time Rhode Island was the only New England state without a hurling team. While Walsh was preparing his HS graduation project on hurling, he learned that a neighbor, **Michael Kenneally**, who had been on a team in Hoboken, NJ, knew a lot about the game. Walsh distributed brochures and found some young people in the east side of Providence, and the rest, as they say, is history in progress. A Rhode Island team is organizing and will hold a fundraiser for uniforms on Sat., Nov. 14, at Patrick's Pub on Smith Street in Providence.

Former AIB Chief, Drumm on Hold In Boston – Former Irish banker **David Drumm**, who recently lost his bid for bankruptcy in a Boston court room, is being held by US marshals as he tries to avoid extradition to Ireland. Drumm is wanted by Irish authorities on 33 charges, ranging from fraud to false accounting. Nothing for the arrogant tape recordings?

In his defense, Drumm says he cannot get a fair trial there due to adverse media courage and that his extradition to Ireland is for “a political purpose.” Legal experts in the US strongly suggest that Drumm will be unlikely to avoid extradition for several legal reasons, chief among them being that Dublin wants him back to answer charges and the US would be reluctant to keep him from being returned to Ireland and an insult an ally that has legal procedures similar to our own. If Drumm's lawyers succeed in their fight to keep him in Boston through an “unlawful detention” petition, Drumm could be kept in custody for a “couple of years,” hardly an outcome that he would likely desire.

Drumm's attorney, **Tracy Miner**, who is seeking his release, said outside the courthouse that “it was outrageous that he was picked up on a Saturday of a three-day weekend...” Yes, as Ms. Minor says, it might be outrageous, but banker Drumm walked away with tens of millions of euros when he departed Anglo-Irish Bank, the same bank that the Republic of Ireland was forced to take over with tax revenue paid by Irish citizens. Get banker Drumm a hankie.

Irish “Biggest Losers” in World Recession – In a report recently published by the *Irish Times*, an ECB analysis shows that the Irish lost more of their personal wealth than any other euro zone country in the crash. Germany and the Netherlands gained the most. The per capita Irish loss, the ECB study says, is 18,000 euros or nearly \$20,000 per person with the economic collapse in 2007. The Irish loss is greater than Greece, Spain, Italy, Portugal, Cyprus, and Latvia.

Radio's Howie Carr Shamed By Media Matters – The national service MediaMatters monitors, researches, and reports on radio, television and print abuses that appear in or on the media and publish their findings for free to everyone on mediamatters.org/research. They are the mortal enemy of Fox News and other far right-wing outlets that omit, alter, lie, or make egregious and oftentimes intentional mistakes or errors without correction.

Media Matters focuses mostly on those conservative outlets that reach a national audience or who have a national listener base. Generally, **Howie Carr's** weekday radio program, which is aired on WRKO in Boston, wouldn't normally qualify, but his high level of conservative misinformation, history of mocking rape victims, Muslims, Catholics, and the LGBT community, among others, is so objectionable that Media Matters has started looking and listening to the Carr output in the Boston Herald, and at WRKO Radio, for as long as he lasts there.

Carr is a bottom-feeding predator with little or no concern for truth or civility. He delights in characterizing the homeless as “bums.” He blames the rape victim for her own rape and attacks people based on their races and religions. An anti-Catholic, he is an outspoken nativist who insults immigrants. Carr is a destructive and divisive force in local media. People should know what drivels their advertising dollars go towards paying for. The more we know about these media slugs and what they are peddling, the better we will be at refuting their lies and racist rants.

Importing Priests Brings Warning – The Irish Catholic Church, like the churches in America, are suffering a priest crisis. They are, as the churches are currently structured, unable to find enough priests to officiate and provide services at a level similar to what has been offered until recently. Many churches in the United States are moving with increasing speed to church clusters, where priests who had been curates or pastors serving in a single church are now sharing religious duties in two or more churches. This development has not met with universal acceptance in the US or Ireland, and in Ireland, particularly, there is criticism from within such high visibility groups as the Association of Irish Priests.

Due to priest shortages, **Bishop John Kirby** recently invited two African priests to serve in Galway, Roscommon, and Offaly. And the dioceses of Ballinasloe and Creagh and Loughrea have welcomed two new priests from Nigeria.

The Association has warned that bringing in priests from abroad to minister in Ireland will not solve the vocation crisis in the Church. One priest offered that bringing in foreign priests is not the same as transferring footballers, while another says “Priesting is different; language matters, culture matters, tradition matters...”

I wonder how many of the bishops complaining

about the shortage and the outspoken priests in the national association would be willing to ease the Irish priest shortage by opting for married priests, or by beginning to ordain women?

Paramilitary Report: Some Concern, Some Shrugs – With former US Sen. **Gary Hart** newly back as an advisor in the North to see if there is a way to bring the parties together and save Stormont, it is a moment to look closely at the new government report on the status of the paramilitaries (not dissidents) that still exist 17 years after the Belfast Agreement. The findings:

- None of the groups is planning or conducting terrorist attacks.

- IRA members remain involved in criminality, including large-scale smuggling and have been involved in murder

- Despite decommissioning, the IRA continues to have access to some weapons, but had not procured new ones since 2011

- Provisional IRA members believe that the Army Council oversees both PIRA and Sinn Fein with an overarching strategy

- Most of the IRA members have nothing to do with dissident republican paramilitaries

- Some UDA members continue to have access to “some weapons”, but their leadership tries to steer members towards “peaceful initiatives.”

These represent the main assessment of both republican and loyalists paramilitaries.

To Little Surprise, North Drops Adams Case – The decision to drop the McConville murder charges against **Gerry Adams** was hardly a surprise to Northern legal experts but it was a sad reminder of the power of the public prosecutor's office to take whatever time they need to gather “evidence” and other flimsy underpinnings and then wait for cooperative witnesses to surface.

The North's chances of trying and winning a guilty verdict on Gerry Adams was, as the years passed, an unlikely outcome. As the *Boston Globe's* Kevin Cullen so brilliantly illuminated in his Sept. 30 column, it was “payback” for a politician that loyalists despise. Adams was the Big Kahuna and key loyalists, who have equal scorn for the Republic and its citizens, would say anything and wiggle their way through whatever the legal niceties if they could just have Adams in their clutches.

Who is running the distant northern province these days? Anyone? Hello, anyone!

RANDOM CLIPPINGS

Remembrances of two great men, one a poet for the ages, the other a writer who born with an awful hand but who was determined to be heard and fought his way out of Kimmage and profound physical disability to write one of the classic Dublin tales, “Down All the Days,” will soon be open to the public. Dublin's **Christy Brown's** exhibition at the American Irish Historical Society, 991 Fifth Ave, New York will be presented from Nov. 11 to Nov. 24. Some time next year, **Seamus Heaney's** artifacts will be on permanent exhibit at a new site at the Bank of Ireland on College Green. ... The Irish-born scientist **William Campbell** of Donegal is a co-winner of the 2015 Nobel Prize for Medicine. ... Does anyone care that US Sec of State **John Kerry** uses private email? ... A Belfast-Boston link between young people in these two cities has been set up by the Boston City Council and **Mayor Marty Walsh**. More news on this initiative to come. ... I haven't tried it yet, but something called nomorobo helps block out hated robocalls. ... The Vatican Synod is closed and it's jump ball on divorce and homosexuality between **Pope Francis** and his Curia. Status quo? ... A new film out of the North. “The Journey,” with Colm Meaney charts the friendship of the late **Ian Paisley** and **Martin McGuinness**. ... You can't make this up: in Texas college dorms Nerf guns are banned, and real ones are okay. Wow! ... There is a strong to middling chance that Pope Francis will be heading to Ireland for the 2018 World Meeting of Families.

Shannon Airport is far from dead. It just won “Airport of the Year” for the second year in a row. ... Dublin's Trinity College has produced more entrepreneurs than any other university in Europe since 2010. ... Four Irish hotels in Top Ten Euro resorts: County Clare Golf Links, Ashford Castle, Powerscourt Hotel, and Kerry's Sheen Falls Lodge. ... The PSNI may have to re-introduce 50-50 police recruitment to attract new Catholic officers. ... **Nancy Soderberg**, of **Bill Clinton's** National Security Office, urged northerners to get past flags, parades, etc. and focus on investment, technology, and good schools. Sounds about right. ... Former Irish Minister **Michael McDowell** says that the Dublin government had a mole in Sinn Fein ten years ago. ... The 2019 British Open golf tournament is set for Royal Portrush in Antrim; it's an event that is expected to boost the local economy. ... **Peter Robinson**, just back from a few weeks of R & R as Stormont heads to oblivion, says there are only weeks left “to save Stormont.” Well, he would know. ... **Mitt Romney** almost had steady work. He was piped as next US House speaker, I read somewhere. ... Airbus says the next Concorde could be crossing the Atlantic (London-New York) in a hour flat. ... Nobel Laureate **John Hume** and **Ivan Cooper** were both in Derry for the unveiling of an updated civil rights mural at Glenfada Park. ... Headline of the Week: “Benghazi bubble bursts, GOP befuddled!”

IRISH INTERNATIONAL IMMIGRANT CENTER

IIC 2015 Solas Celebration

Thurs., Dec. 3, at the Seaport Hotel

Our Solas Awards Celebration will be held at the Seaport Hotel in Boston on Thurs., Dec. 3. This annual event, hosted by the Irish International Immigrant Center, gives recognition to men and women whose leadership and service make a difference in the community.

This year, the recipients of the Solas Award will be The Hon. Martin Walsh, Mayor of Boston; The Hon. Linda Dorcea Fory, a Massachusetts state senator; James Rooney, President of the Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce; and Robert Coughlin, President and Chief Executive Officer of the Massachusetts Biotechnology Council.

IIC Updates
Legal Clinics

- Tues., Nov. 2, and Tues., Nov. 17 – IIC offices, 100 Franklin St., downtown Boston. Lower Level. Entrance is at 201 Devonshire Street
- Mon., Nov. 9 – Green Briar Pub, 304 Washington Street, Brighton.

Open House and



Jimmy Tingle: On the job

Annually attended by hundreds of IIC friends and supporters, the Solas Awards Celebration will also feature live music and

entertainment, a networking reception, and a silent auction. For seat reservations, sponsorships, or auction item donations,

please visit iicenter.org or contact Mary Kerr, Development Associate, at 617-695-1554 or mkerr@iicenter.org

Art Reception: Please join IIC staff, volunteers, and board members as we share our current work, plans for 2016, and a toast to our center's newly donated art pieces. Thurs., Nov. 5, 5:30 p.m., 100 Franklin Street, Boston (enter at 201 Devonshire Street). Light refreshments will

be served. Special thanks to our benefactor, Art Collection. Please RSVP by Nov. 3 to Mary Kerr at mkerr@iicenter.org or 617-695.1554.

IIC Receives 2015 Golden Bridges Award: The staff of the IIC were on hand at the Seaport Hotel to receive an award citing its work in welcoming

new immigrants to Boston and Massachusetts from the 2015 Golden Bridges Alliance of Boston and Northwest Ireland. The reception was held on the closing day of the Seventh Annual Golden Bridges Conference.

Happy Thanksgiving to All!

Matters of Substance

‘Happy Ever After’ in Recovery?

Everything in Good Time

“I have been sober from alcohol and drugs for over four months now. I feel physically much better and go to AA meetings every day. I never believed that I would have friends without going to the pub. I am delighted to discover that at these meetings I am able to talk and enjoy other people’s company without alcohol or drugs. However, I feel very disheartened by my relationships with my wife and my family. When I was in treatment, they were very honest about how I had hurt them and I have since apologized to them all. I am beginning to feel that they want me to apologize forever! My three children still don’t talk to me about their days in school or camp. When I come home from a meeting I feel that no one is happy to see me. I thought things would get better once I was sober but I feel that my family is still trying to punish me. What can I do?”

It is a huge achievement to be able to stay away from alcohol and drugs day after day and your physical recovery is a testament to your efforts. Congratulations! It sounds as if you have really embraced the support

available to you.

Addiction problems have a huge impact on us individually and on those we are closest to. Being in recovery does not mean saying sorry to your family forever. However, the hurt, pain, and upset that addiction can cause do not disappear once the person becomes sober. Think about how long you had a problem with alcohol/drugs – five or ten years? Longer?

That length of time is also how long your family has been living with the addiction. They did not go into a treatment center and have not had a chance yet to let go of the hurt and anger even though the alcohol/drugs are out of your life. For your children, it can feel like having a stranger in the house and they need time to get to know you again. Everyone has to re-learn how to live together. It may sound dramatic, but just as you have learned to get through a day without drugs, to find friends and acceptance without alcohol - your family needs time to learn how to live without the constant worrying about their husband and father.

Your family members have their own recovery path. There is plenty of support in Al-Anon, Nar-Anon and Al-Ateen groups as well as individual, couple, group, and family counseling. Ask your friends in the meetings how they have coped with re-building new relationships at home. Recovery for your entire family is possible. It takes time and patience, but trust will grow again for all of you.

If you or a loved one is struggling with addiction to alcohol or other drugs, please reach out in confidence to Gina at 617 542 7654, Ext. 14, or tgkelleher@iicenter.org

For more information about this issue, visit the *Learn to Cope* website,



Gina Kelleher

Learn2cope.org. This non-profit network offers families, support, education, resources, and hope when dealing with recovery.

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Immigration Q&A

The Waiting Game:

Immigration processing

Q. I’m planning to file an application with US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) to adjust my status to that of legal permanent resident based on my marriage to a US citizen. I understand that this can take a long time, and I heard that there is a way to pay a special fee to get an application on the fast track. Is this true?

A. Currently USCIS offers what it calls “premium processing” for a \$1,225 fee (in addition to the normal application fees) only with regard to certain employment-based visa petitions. Other applications, such as those to adjust immigration status based on family relationships, are processed on a first-come, first-served basis. Processing times vary with the type of application and the particulars of individual cases. Adjustment of status cases based on marriage to a US citizen, for example, has been taking on average around three to four months from the date of filing to the adjustment interview in the USCIS Boston regional office. Applications for naturalization have generally been taking a little longer.

USCIS does provide what it calls “expedited processing” for no extra fee in cases where its “expedite criteria” have been met. USCIS stresses very strongly that it will expedite processing only when there is, for example, an “extreme emergent situation,” or the likelihood of “severe financial loss,” or a humanitarian situation. Our experience is that USCIS means what it says about its strict criteria for accelerated processing, and such requests are granted rarely. Still, cases do arise when the agency will accept an accelerated processing request. If you think you may have such a case, let us know, and we can help you to evaluate your chances.

Here are some other points about case processing:

- Applicants can track the processing of pending cases with USCIS online at uscis.gov or by calling the agency’s customer service center at 1-800-375-5283. When checking case status, have the application receipt number and other documentation from USCIS ready.

- Make sure that USCIS has current address information for mailing notices of action and other important communications to applicants. Address changes can be submitted online; this should be taken care of as soon as an applicant moves to a new residence. We have seen numerous instances where applicants wonder why they have not heard from USCIS for many months, and it turns out that mail from the agency was returned as undeliverable.

- Keep in mind that processing times refer to the amount of time it takes the government agency to get to a particular application that is actionable when filed. This is different from the waiting time, for example, for visa numbers to become available in categories other than immediate relatives of US citizens. The waiting time in such cases can last many years under current law, based on the limited number of visas that Congress provides each year.

IIC can assist applicants with case status and processing time inquiries. If you have questions about this or any other aspect of immigration law, visit one of our weekly legal clinics for a free, confidential consultation.

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

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EATING AND EMOTION

Dr. Bernadette Rock

Some easy rules

for healthy eating

By Dr. Bernadette Rock
Special to the BIR

The days of calorie counting and low fat diet foods have been replaced with clean eating, the new buzz phrase in nutrition. It can mean purchasing organic food, choosing ‘whole’ and ‘natural’ foods. Yet a part of it still seems a bit ‘diet-y’ to me, a euphemism for diet when the word ‘diet’ has become unfashionable.

Our obsessive diet culture and clean eating is about extremes. I notice a strong habit among clients whereby restrictive eating is always followed by out-of-control eating or a binge. It’s an “all or nothing” mentality, of either being “good” or “bad,” on the wagon or off. Some will “eat clean” and exercise four times a week for a month, and then do nothing for another two months but eat curry and go out. Yo-yo dieting wreaks havoc on the body, and the ups and downs can be exhausting.



Bernadette Rock and her daughter Keela.

Clean eating and the ‘all-or-nothing’ mentality is appealing to people who have high expectations for themselves and are perfectionists. If their eating isn’t perfect, it’s not good enough, hence “I’ve eaten a few biscuits, I might as well finish the packet.” A problem with black-and-white thinking is that it skews your perspective. Imagine if you spilt a few drops of orange juice on your white shirt, and thought, “It’s a complete mess, it’s destroyed.” The reality is that it can be salvaged. It’s only a few drops.

Part of a balanced approach lies in understanding that different days require different ways of eating. It’s normal to overeat some days and under-eat other days. “But I need rules” you might say. Here are some loose guidelines from Heyday’s award-winning online program, which re-trains your mindset around:

• **Try not to treat any foods as bad** – This rarely works and often intensifies food craving you may have. Food is just food; it’s neither good nor bad. It’s how we think about it that is often the problem. You are not what you eat – “I’m vegan,” “I’m paleo.” Once you merge your identity with a diet, you’re locked in.

• **Reward yourself, but not with food** – Finding other ways to reward and treat yourself besides eating is absolutely essential. Will these other ways be as effective at soothing you as food? Definitely not! The things you come up with will help somewhat, but to manage your weight, it is crucial to distinguish and separate mind hunger from stomach hunger.

• **Get as much of your nutritional intake as possible from a variety of unprocessed foods** – Include fruits and vegetables but also poultry, fish, meat and eggs that haven’t been altered or processed. Choose brown rice over white rice, and whole grains over refined grains. Eating at home allows you to avoid processed ingredients more easily. It allows you full control over what you eat, and allows you to choose the flavours you prefer.

• **Eat with other people, as often as possible** – It will most likely make you eat more slowly. Many of my clients notice they eat differently when by themselves - faster, bigger forkfuls, less chewing. Eating bowls of cereal when you know no one is looking can leave you feeling ashamed and guilty.

These rules are flexible and balanced, and try to help you be more aware and deliberate about what you eat. It’s so easy to eat more than you need and to believe that change should come in the form of drastic dietary changes. Re-thinking and re-formatting our relationship with food is crucial to long-term sustainable change.

Send your comments or questions to hello@heydayworld.com and check out heydayworld.com for further details.

Wishing you good health,
Dr. Bernadette Rock (PhD)



Buddy The Elf spreads his holiday cheer in “Elf The Musical,” playing The Citi Wang Theater from November 17 - December 6.
Joan Marcus photo

He makes “Elf” dance

By R. J. Donovan
Special to the BIR

“Elf” first jingled to life as a holiday film in 2003. It immediately became an audience favorite, taking in more than \$30 million in ticket sales in its first week.

“Elf” tells the story of Buddy, a young orphan who mistakenly crawls into Santa’s bag of gifts only to be transported back to the North Pole. He’s unaware that he’s human, but his enormous size and poor toy-making skills cause him to face the fact that he has never been an elf at all.

With Santa’s blessing, Buddy embarks on a holiday journey to New York City to find his birth father and learn who he really is. Along the way, he spreads a high-spirited dose of holiday cheer and helps Manhattan discover the true meaning of Christmas.

In 2010, “Elf The Musical” opened on Broadway, with a score by Tony nominees Matthew Sklar and Chad Beguelin, and a book by Thomas Meehan (“The Producers”) and Bob Martin (“The Drowsy Chaperone”). A new holiday touring production, featuring Eric Peterson as Buddy and Christiane Noll as Emily, comes to The Citi Wang Theatre from Nov. 17 to Dec. 6.

Choreography for “Elf” is by the affable Connor Gallagher, who created the choreography for the show’s first national tour. His many credits include “Into The Woods” for the Public Theater in Central Park, “The Robber Bridegroom” at Roundabout Theater, and Disney’s current “Beauty & The Beast” tour.

We spoke as Gallagher was putting the finishing touches on a new musical stage version of Disney’s “Tangled,” set to open on Disney’s Cruise Lines on Nov. 11.

Q. A name like Connor Gallagher certainly rings true as Irish.

A. And my middle name is Kennedy. It doesn’t get more Irish. I’m named after one of the characters in “Trinity.” My Mom was reading it when she was pregnant.

Q. So how did you begin performing?

A. I started as a competitive gymnast when I was a kid. My parents tried me in all the sports and gymnastics was the one that stuck. We had to take ballet classes on Tuesdays and I gradually let go of gymnastics and started doing a little bit more ballet. And then I sort of fell into theater. I started studying dance formally probably around 10 or 11.

Q. Do you remember your first time on stage?

A. My Mom says I was always a bit of a ham. It’s always hard to tell when you’re a kid what your objective is, but I was always cracking jokes. I remember my first time on stage – I played Petey in “Petey and the Purple Caterpillar.” And my Mom thought, well, he’s a star. And my Mom is not a stage Mom . . . I do remember just being very comfortable. I never had any problems up there.

Q. You eventually shifted from performer to choreographer. How did that happen?

A. I went to college at the University of Cincinnati, the Conservatory there. And I spent my summers working at the St. Louis Muny. I got my equity card and right out of school I booked a Broadway show (the final Broadway company of “Beauty & The Beast”). Immediately I knew I wanted to choreograph. I was like 18. And that’s how I got to where I am.

Q. Anyone special inspire you as you were coming along?

A. My dance teacher was a woman named Debbie Pigliavento who was dance captain on “A Chorus Line” and “42nd Street” on Broadway. Her style of teaching and her work ethic were really strongly rooted in old school Broadway. It’s just practice makes perfect. Truly, that’s all it is. It’s not about beating people down, nor is it about giving them false hope. It’s a very, very, tough industry and she always taught me, ‘Work as hard as you possibly can, recognize your strengths, strengthen your weaknesses,’ and that’s still, to this day, even as a choreographer, what rings true in my daily process.



Connor Gallagher, choreographer for “Elf The Musical,” playing The Citi Wang Theater from November 17 - December 6.
Matt Murphy photo

Q. Speaking of beating people down, what are your thoughts about shows like “Dance Moms” and “So You Think You Can Dance?” Do they build genuine interest in dancing or is it more about the drama of competition than the art?

A. I think it gets people excited and gets people talking about dance, and taking an interest in dance more than ever before. The danger, I think, is when you’re watching a dance bite, which is 90 seconds, perhaps. You’re watching incredible dancers do things they wouldn’t necessarily sustain for a two-hour performance. For 90 seconds, to wow an audience and to win a game show is one thing. The only problem I have with it, really, is when people come to the theater expecting that 90-second dance bite to be sustained.

Q. So let’s talk a bit about “Elf.” How did you approach creating choreography for the show?

A. I was sort of given the dance arrangements, where in some shows – like in “Tangled,” the one I’m doing right now – I create from the ground up. For “Elf” . . . it’s like scaffolding. I get to color it in with my own [thoughts] . . . The script says Buddy and the Macy’s workers decorate the store. Through the course of the dance we’re supposed to learn how Buddy, through his magical infectious energy and spirit, transforms Macy’s and its workers.” [There’s] “the New York City Christmas we all seem to think we know in our minds, where it’s perpetually snowing and beautiful and everyone’s happy and cheery. Through the course of the dance, it’s my job to create that moment.”

Q. Do you find it’s a benefit that audiences come into the theater already loving the story, or is it a challenge to live up to their expectations?

A. It’s funny, I didn’t really start to take that into consideration until after we had done the first production . . . I love the film, but I guess I didn’t take into account how iconic the characters were and how iconic some of the lines were. Of course we try to play true to those . . . We’re honoring the original script, but also we’re telling it in a completely different medium . . . Audiences have been surprised and delighted about what we’re able to do with it.

R. J. Donovan is editor and publisher of onstageboston.com.

...

“Elf The Musical,” Nov. 17 - Dec. 6, Citi Wang Theatre, 270 Tremont Street, Boston. Tickets: 800-982-2787 or citicenter.org.

For BCMFest, 13 is the number: Celebration set for Jan. 8 and 9

The Boston area’s annual homegrown celebration of Celtic music and dance, BCMFest (Boston’s Celtic Music Fest), will mark 13 years when it takes place this coming January 8 and 9.

This family-friendly festival draws performers of all ages from around Greater Boston, presenting music, song, and dance from Irish, Scottish, Cape Breton and other Celtic-related traditions. Events are held in Harvard Square’s Club Passim (47 Palmer Street) and also nearby at First Church, Cambridge (3 Church Street) and The Atrium (50 Church Street).

Performances begin with the Friday night Roots & Branches Concert in Club Passim, then continue on Saturday – starting with children’s and family entertainment in the morning – at Club Passim and on three different stages in First Church, Cambridge. BCMFest also features a number of participatory events, including the Boston Urban Ceilidh – BCMFest’s popular Celtic dance party – which takes place on opening night in The Atrium.

The festival’s crowning event will be the Saturday evening BCMFest Night-



cap finale concert in First Church, Cambridge.

BCMFest is a program of Passim, a Cambridge-based non-profit seeking to build a vibrant music community through its legendary listening venue, music school, artist grants and outreach initiatives.

At press time, performers confirmed to appear at the festival included: Lindsay Straw; Nathan Gourley, Laura Fedderson and John Coyne; Kieran Jordan; Caroline O’Shea and Tim Buckley; The Kelly Girls; Joe Deleaut; Scottish Fish; Realta Geala; Elizabeth and Ben Anderson; Audrey Budington and Clayton Clemetson; the Friends of Kyte MacKillop; Mari Black; Gus LaCasse; Buttons and Keys; Molly Pinto Madigan; Fellswater; Royal Scottish Country Dance Society of Boston; Oran Mor; Jigs and Saws; Colleen White and Sean Smith; After the Morning; Liz and Dan Faiella; The

Rushy Mountaineers; and Highland Dance Boston.

The BCMFest Nightcap concert will feature a number of festival performers as well as special guests.

As a bonus, BCMFest will once again offer a series of classes taught by festival performers on Saturday afternoon at the Passim School of Music (26 Church Street). Information and registration will be available via the festival website at passim.org/bcmfest.

A look at some highlights of BCMFest 2016:

• Friday night’s “Roots and Branches” concert at Club Passim offers a sample of the innovative, dynamic sounds to be heard in Boston’s Celtic music community today. This year’s performers include singer/guitarist Lindsay Straw, whose repertoire spans Scottish, Northern Irish and Irish traditions, and the Irish traditional music trio of Nathan Gourley (fiddle, guitar), Laura Fedderson

(fiddle) and John Coyne (bouzouki).

• The Boston Urban Ceilidh features participatory and social dances from the Irish, Scottish, and Cape Breton traditions, all with live music. No experience is necessary – all dances will be taught.

• BCMFest’s Saturday “Dayfest” begins in the morning at Club Passim with songs, storytelling and other entertainment geared toward children and families.

• “Dayfest” also includes participatory events in The Attic of First Church, such as Irish and Scottish music sessions and instruction in Scottish country dance.

• BCMFest is noted for its special collaborations and workshops, in which performers often unite around a particular theme or focus. Among the showcases planned for BCMFest 2016 are “Sliabh Luachra,” a sampling of the unique music tradition from the west of Ireland, with The Rushy Mountaineers and the duo of Caroline O’Shea and Tim Buckley, and “Singing Along in The Attic,” with Oran Mor and The Kelly Girls.

Individual prices for BCMFest 2016 are: “Roots



Multi-genre fiddler Mari Black makes her BCMFest debut in 2016.

and Branches” concert – \$28, \$25 for Passim members; Boston Urban Ceilidh – \$15 in advance, \$20 at the door; Saturday “Dayfest” – \$15, \$13 for Passim members; BCMFest Nightcap – \$25, \$20 for Passim members.

Early-bird full festival passes will be on sale during November: a combo pass (“Roots and Branch-

es”/Boston Urban Ceilidh/Dayfest/Nightcap) is \$55, \$45 for Passim members. Beginning Dec. 1, the combo pass will be \$65, \$55 for Passim members.

All ticket information, performer updates and other details about the festival will be available at passim.org/bcmfest.

For Low Lily, nee Annalivia, there’s a rebirth in the making

By SEAN SMITH
SPECIAL TO THE BIR

Adieu, Annalivia. Hello, Low Lily. For the better part of a decade, the Eastern Massachusetts-based band Annalivia presented an intriguing brew of folk/acoustic music that encompassed material from Irish, Scottish, Cape Breton, English, and American traditions, marked by a skillful level of arrangement and performance, at venues and events such as Club Passim, Irish Connections (ICONS), BCMFest, and the New Bedford Folk Festival. In their early years, an Annalivia set list or CD would include a brisk Cape Breton march-strathspey-reel medley, a centuries-old ballad from the British Isles that found its way to the Appalachians, a couple of Irish jigs, even a Richard Thompson cover or two.

A series of departures and arrivals altered the band’s line-up – from quartet to quintet, back to quartet and then to trio – and over time its musical focus shifted, concentrating more on the American/Appalachian branches than the Irish-Scottish-British roots. Annalivia also began to integrate more original songs and tunes, further diversifying its sound.

And then last year saw several drastic changes for the band: yet another new line-up, a new base of operations and, last but not least, a new name – Low Lily. Now headquartered in Brattleboro, Vt., Low Lily will mark the recent release of



The trio Low Lily, formerly known as Annalivia, is (L-R) Lissa Schneckenburger, Liz Simmons and Flynn Cohen. Andy Cambria photo

its CD/EP with a concert on Nov. 11 at Club Passim in Harvard Square.

Some things haven’t changed, notably the presence of Annalivia/Low Lily’s co-founders, Flynn Cohen (guitar, mandolin, vocals) and Liz Simmons (guitar, percussion vocals), whose musical partnership pre-dates their marriage.

They are joined by fiddler-vocalist Lissa Schneckenburger, a Maine native who has been part of the New England folk scene for some years.

Also unchanged are the band’s impressive credentials from the Irish/Celtic domain: Cohen has played with John Whelan, Cathie Ryan and Aoife Clancy;

Simmons, who also has sung with Clancy, worked with former Solas vocalist Karan Casey and was a member of the (sadly) now-defunct all-female quartet Long Time Courting; Schneckenburger, along with Cohen, is part of the occasional Celtic band Halali, and also appears with the Boston-based fiddle ensemble Childsplay.

But make no mistake, the line-up and name change reflects a further, definitive step away from what Annalivia was. For all its artistic and critical success, Annalivia also exemplified the challenge of keeping a band together while balancing professional interests and personal considerations, in a day and age when many folk musicians typically juggle several different collaborations.

“Bands tend to be short-lived; you burn hot for a while, then fizzle out,” says Simmons. “I thought that as wonderful a thing as Annalivia was, because of all the roster changes, the potential ultimately faded. We wanted to build something new, have a rebirth in terms of our musical identity and how we manage it.”

“We’re less self-conscious now about categorizing our sound,” explains Cohen. “For us, it’s a multifaceted, inclusive music that is a product of everything we do. So while we certainly are influenced by, and play traditional music, we’re not tied to it. We feel we can draw on other interests and influences – even

Continued on page 25)

A busy November schedule for Irish/Celtic music events

A look at some upcoming Irish/Celtic-related music events in the Greater Boston area:

The **Burren Backroom series** will have a double bill on Nov. 4 with the harp-guitar duo **Máire Ní Chathasaigh and Chris Newman** at 7:30 p.m. and Cork singer-songwriter **Mick Flannery** at 10 p.m. Ní Chathasaigh and Newman, who have released six recordings, perform a distinctive and innova-

tive take on Celtic music that includes swing jazz, bluegrass, baroque, and other influences. Flannery won two top awards at the 2004 US Songwriting Competition in Nashville, and then went on to capture the music world’s attention with his 2007 debut, “Evening Train”; he’s just released his fifth album, “By the Rule.”

The Backroom series also will host what’s become a very special event:

the annual **benefit concert for the Somerville Homeless Coalition**, on Dec. 2. The concert, which begins at 7:30 p.m., features local and visiting acts representing not only Irish and Celtic but also other musical styles. At press time, performers confirmed to appear included Burren owners Tommy McCarthy and Louise Costello, with guests: klezmer musician, composer and scholar

Continued on page 25)



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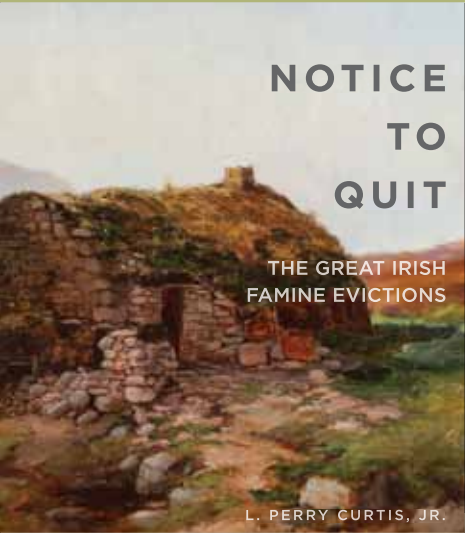
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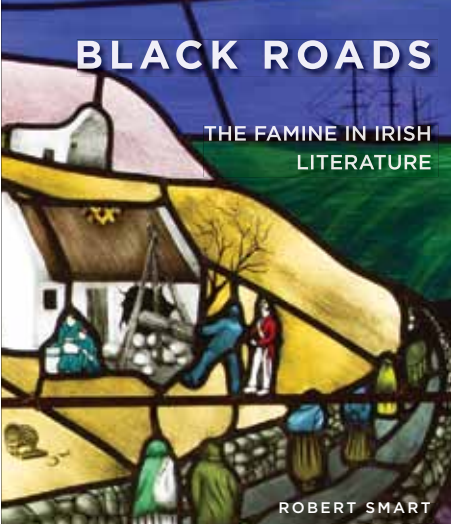
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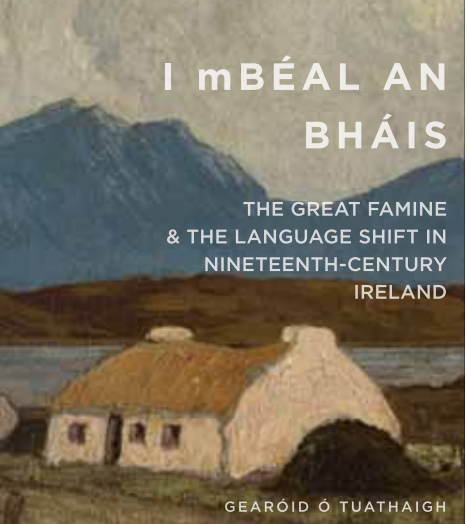
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LITERATURE

ROBERT SMART



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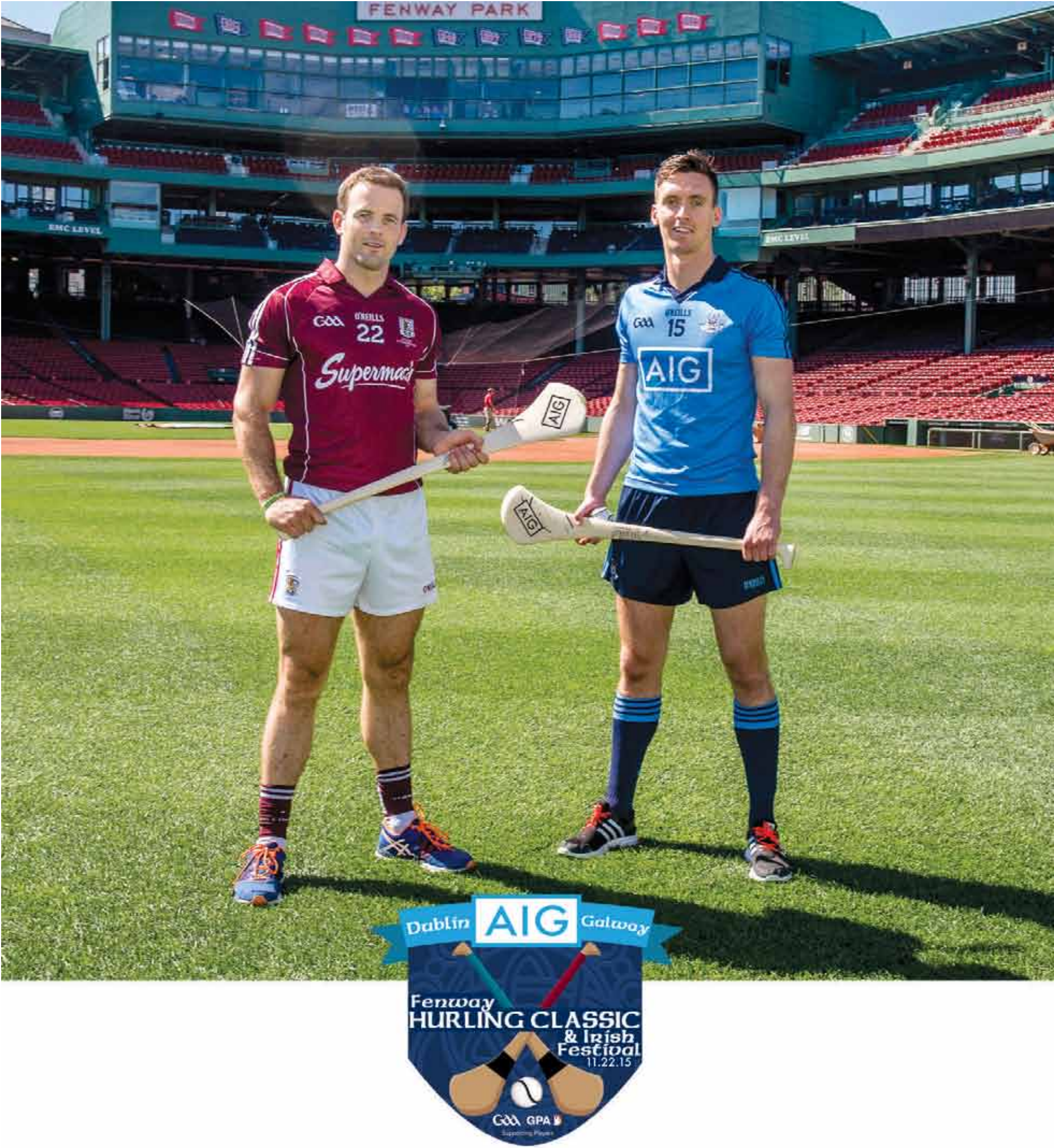
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CD Reviews

By SEAN SMITH
The Boys of the Lough, “The New Line” •
Over the past few years, several prominent Irish/Celtic bands have hit significant milestones of durability, notably The Chieftains (50 years), Cherish the Ladies (30 years), Altan and Dervish (25 years), and Lúnasa (15 years), to name a few. So, let’s tip our collective hats to the Boys of the Lough, which is well past the four-decade mark.



There’s no question about their lofty place in the Irish folk music annals. For one thing, the list of musicians who have been in the group is more than a little impressive, including the likes of Dick Gaughan, Aly Bain, Mike Whellans, Robin Morton, Christy O’Leary, and John Coakley. The band’s focus on the connections between the Irish (both north and south), Scottish and Shetland folk traditions was, at the time, a new and exciting perspective – in many ways it still is. And then there was their sheer technical brilliance and well-crafted ensemble playing, eschewing electric instruments and other rock/contemporary influences found elsewhere in the Irish folk revival, yet producing a fresh, vibrant sound.

Charter member Cathal McConnell (flute, whistle, vocals) of Fermanagh remains the link to the band’s beginnings, and more importantly, to its Northern Irish character; fiddler Kevin Henderson replaced Aly Bain more than a decade ago, ensuring the Shetland and Scottish traditions are represented in the group. West Kerry’s Brendan Begley brought accordion and Gaelic singing into the mix when he joined in the late 1990s, and more recent arrival Garry O’Brian’s piano and guitar, along with his mandocello, diversify the Boys’ rhythmic texture.

While Begley and O’Brian’s presence has served to broaden the band’s sound – especially through the addition of a strong third melody instrument in Begley’s accordion – what hasn’t changed is its attention to detail or the precision in getting just the right balance and tone among the instruments. From the get-go, a powerful set of four reels that begins with their signature tune – introduced flawlessly by McConnell and Henderson – the Boys establish (or re-establish) the fidelity and charm for which they’re known. Other highlights of “The New Line” include a rare version of the jig “The Gold Ring” that is led by Begley with O’Brian’s piano; a set of reels from the repertoire of legendary Donegal fiddler (and one-time Boston resident) Tommy Peoples; a quartet of slides that, rather than played at break-neck speed, are explored for fuller melodic and harmonic possibilities, courtesy of McConnell’s whistle and Begley’s accordion; and a delightful, whimsical take on the reel “Chase Her Through the Garden” that goes through seemingly every key in the book.

One of the band’s most treasured constants has been the pure, sweetly-hued singing of McConnell, and his voice is in full flower on “Liffey Side” and “The Boston Burgler,” two tug-at-the-heartstrings songs penned by Mayo singer and collector Delia Murphy, and “The Cavan Road,” a Monaghan song with a particularly beguiling melody. Begley’s ornate Gaelic singing is equally compelling, and to great effect, on “Fill Fill A Rún O,” in which a mother pleads with her lapsed-Catholic priest of a son to renounce Protestantism and return to the fold. And here let’s pause to praise the masterful accompaniment on both songs and instrumentals by O’Brian – his sensitive touch on piano, along with his classical/jazz-influenced guitar style, suit the band perfectly.

Somewhat disappointing is that there’s less of the Shetland/Scottish dimension here: Henderson gets a turn in the spotlight on the air, “Da Smugglers,” and Begley closes the album with “Nuair a Ráinig Mi ‘m Baile,” a tragic Scottish Gaelic love song he learned through Flora MacNeil from the Isle of Barra.

But “The New Line” is a more-than-worthy entry in the band’s distinguished portfolio. The Boys are back.

Breaking Trad, “Breaking Trad” • No, this trio doesn’t wear sunglasses and pork pie hats – and, thankfully, they do not run crystal meth operations, either – nor pay any homage to Bryan Cranston. What they do is churn out jigs, reels, polkas, and slides with alacrity and gusto.

It certainly helps matters when the trio includes a pair of former All-Ireland winners in accordionist Dónal Murphy of West Limerick and fiddler Niall Murphy from South Armagh, who have an obvi-

The Boys have sometimes been overlooked in latter years, due in part to periods of relative inactivity and few new recordings – by contrast, they put out 11 albums over their first decade or so – but

ous rapport with one another that is simply joyous to behold; they play fast, but under control. Then there’s Mike Galvin, who supplies rhythm primarily through guitar but also plays bass, keyboards, percussion and a bit of dobro; he’s experienced in different musical styles, but he certainly understands how to drive traditional Irish tunes along energetically and tastefully.

There’s not a lot of subtlety or variation to Breaking Trad’s approach, and truth to tell, none is particularly necessary. Basically, the Murphys set a groove with their tight playing, and Galvin drives things along in a splendidly bristling manner, whether it’s a set of reels (“The Long Drop/Naughton’s/Wing Commander Donald McKenzie”; “Jenny Picking Cockles/Heron on the Water/The Mortgage Burn”; “Farewell to Connacht/Sweeney’s Buttermilk/The Boyne Hunt”) and jigs (“Katy is Waiting/Anton McKinney’s/The Rock”; “Humours of Ballyloughlin/Rógaire Dubh/Seanduine Dóite”), a trio of polkas or a medley of slides. At some points, a fiddle and/or accordion is double-tracked – such as on “Donald MacKenzie,” with Niall playing a bassy, rhythmic counterpoint – or Galvin reaches into his grab-bag of instruments to supplement guitar with, say, piano (“The Rock”) or dobro (“Shetland Reel”). But the propulsion never lags.

You listen carefully enough, you hear those little nuggets – a brief harmony there, a flourish from Niall’s fiddle, a cracker of a triplet from Donal’s accordion – that attest to virtuosity. And then there’s the visceral joy of hearing the trio segue into a med-

ley-ending reel in A that gives the set one last forward thrust (the late Johnny Cunningham always called A “the fastest key”)

Somewhat less successful is a rendition of Jay Ungar’s “Ashoken Farewell” (you know, that tune from the PBS “Civil War” series) if only because it’s become such a staple throughout the session world that you really could do without hearing it for a while. On a similar note are two frequently covered songs, “Silver Dagger” and “The Blacksmith,” with guest vocalist Pauline Hartigan: She’s got a fine set of pipes, honed through jazz and pop, and while there’s nothing wrong, per se, with her delivery or the band’s arrangements, ultimately neither track really advances the cause; you just find yourself waiting for the next set of tunes.

Fortunately, though, nothing about “Breaking Trad” is sufficiently broken to require fixing.



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The Boston Irish Honors 2015 for Excellence in Business and Philanthropy

Margaret Stapleton's credo: Work hard, be honest and faithful, and help others

By Ed Forry
BIR Publisher

Margaret Stapleton arrived in Boston from County Tipperary in July 1955, then settled with cousins in Scituate. She accepted an entry-level job with the John Hancock Mutual Life Insurance Co. and earned BS and MBA degrees by taking evening college classes over more than a decade's time. She has been a longtime volunteer at Pine Street Inn and plays an active role with Irish organizations including the Eire Society, Charitable Irish, and the Irish Pastoral Centre.

The early years in Ireland

Margaret Stapleton's parents emigrated to the states in the 1920s. Although they both hailed from County Tipperary, William Stapleton and Mary Anne Lyons first met in New York, married, and settled down there to begin their family. Mary Anne gave birth to a girl and then a boy just as the Great Depression began.

Her parents became naturalized American citizens, and, says Margaret, her mother loved her life in this country. But her father struggled to find work, so in 1933, the parents boarded a ship and headed back to the Emerald Isle with their children. Three years later, Margaret came into the world.

"My father wanted to come back to Ireland and my mother had inherited a small farm from her uncle," Margaret said in an interview as she recalled some of her family's history. "My father wanted to return but my mother did not – she was very happy in the states and she wanted to stay here. My brother Bill was two and Mary four when they returned. It was my mother's family farm near the village of Burn Court in the butt of the Galtee mountains in south Tip. Two years later I was born and then later it was my brother James."

Margaret lived her early years on that family farm in Tipperary, but her father wanted to move back to his old home area, and in 1945 he bought a farm in north Tip, just outside of Thurles, and the family moved again.

As a girl, did Margaret work on the farm? "Yes, I did! No doubt about that. In those days there were a lot of mixed farms of all kinds – with livestock, it was chickens, geese, milk cows, calves, horses, pigs; for crops it was wheat, oats, turnips, potatoes, and sugar beets.

"There was a sugar beet factory in Thurles – one of four in all of Ireland – and sometimes I would go to town to bring the crops, and just to get off the farm. It was a great expedition, a great adventure.

"Through World War II, we lived with lots of rations, but living on the farm we did have enough for ourselves. I do remember them at school telling us there may be planes flying over, don't you dare point a stick towards them or anything that would look like a gun. At home, my father would get the newspapers and read them aloud to us, so we kept up with how things were going in the war.

"I remember, too, in the mountains we had what we called whorts – small bushes with berries. We would go up in the hills and pick those berries and bring them down to the little store and they shipped them over to England for the soldiers. We used to snare



Margaret Stapleton: A long way from Tipperary.

the rabbits because they wanted the meat for the soldiers, and the fur for their boots. That's what I remember about the war."

Did she ever catch any rabbits to bring home? "Yes, in those years in the country in Ireland you know, there was no refrigeration. You had salt bacon every once in awhile, and we would tire of that. We were in the country and not close to the ocean so we couldn't get fish; maybe a few in the stream, but that was it. So we would bring the rabbit into my dear mother and she would stop whatever she was doing so she could skin the rabbit and we would have fresh meat – that's right. What a treat!

A mother's yen for education

"My mother wanted her girls to be educated. She said to me, 'You are going to get an education because you are not going to inherit the farm.' My sister went to a boarding school. But when I came along, I guess money was a little tighter, so they bought me a bicycle and I would bicycle five miles each way to Thurles for secondary school. In the winter it was dark all day; you would leave for school that began at nine and be home after four. In Burn Court it was a two-room classroom and later in Thurles it was a one-room classroom.

"We were left to study on our own in secondary school, and we had one nun for all four grades who was amazing. Her name was Sister Rosaria, and she was from the Mercy order. There were ten girls in this class: A couple (of them) dropped out for whatever reason, six of us passed the civil service exam, one became a teacher, and one became a nurse."

Sister Rosaria's tutoring paid off: Margaret was one of six girls in her class to pass the civil service test, and at age 17, she was offered a job working at a post office in Mayo; later she was transferred to an office in Carlow

"There were jobs for one female and for five boys. We were post office clerks. We trained on the telephone; in those days the post office had the telephone. It had the old crank phone and you had to be careful because if you

weren't careful it could blow your ears out.

"I sorted mail, dispatched the mailmen, recorded them in when they returned, sold stamps, and gave the old age pensioners their checks. I learned Morse Code and transmitted weather information up to Dublin. But I wasn't very good at it, I must admit, and I think it was the Morse Code that drove me from the post office."

When she was age 18, Margaret recalls, she reflected on her life at that point: "I was in the post office and behind the counter, and I thought to myself; 'Am I going to spend the rest of my life behind this counter? Doing this or what my mother spoke so fondly of: life in the states?' So I went home for Christmas and mentioned it to mom."

Her mother quickly wrote to her Boston cousins and asked them to look after her daughter when she arrived in Boston.

"So I quit the post office," said Margaret. "I sent in a resignation notice, and I got a letter back accepting my resignation, and in the letter the last words were, 'Don't come back.' I guess the letter had been written by someone in Dublin, a civil servant, I suppose, who was irritated with having to write this letter. The idea was, 'We invested all this money and training in you, and you're quitting on us.' It was the best decision I ever made!"

"Mother's last words to me were, 'No, you're not going to take a ship; you're going to fly over because you can get there faster and you can get to work faster.'"

New country, new life

In that summer of 1955, Margaret boarded a Pan Am plane in Ireland that stopped to refuel in Gander before touching down in Boston after a 14-hour flight. The city was in the middle of a July heat wave as her mother's relatives greeted her at the airport. She had never experienced such hot weather. Her cousins drove through the Sumner Tunnel (on the wrong side of the road!), and emerged into the city, where she had her first view of the tall buildings "all clustered together."

"I'm not in my country anymore," she recalls thinking to herself.

Then it was on to Scituate, where her cousins, Mary Pearl Ritterhaus and Josephine Murphy, made room for her in their home.

Two weeks later, the teenage Margaret Stapleton went to work in her first job in America as an entry-level clerk at the John Hancock Mutual Life Insurance company. The position paid \$8 a day.

"It was a whole different culture," she recalled. "It was exciting. I was just 19, and I was working within two weeks. I went in and I did well on the exam and I got a job in the securities department as a clerk, working in the Berkeley building. I had never been in an elevator before and I was never that high up before, either. But I had a job to do – at \$40 a week.

"It seemed like a lot to me coming from Ireland, but basically it wasn't. Because I was living with my cousins, I didn't have to worry about how much money I had because they were good to me. Basically they drove in [to Boston] and took me with them. The job was

A STAPLETON FAMILY ALBUM

easy to learn because it was numbers and I had worked with numbers in the post office. We had to do numbers in school and we trained at the post office with numbers so I knew numbers. Numbers were no problem to me."

Margaret took to her new work with gusto, and, she says today, the work helped her to quickly learn about her new country: "I learned the geography of this country by the municipal bonds, the tax-exempt bonds that they had. In those early days you could get a promotion if it was a woman's job - the lesser jobs, as a clerk (not as a supervisor.)"

"I remember a young man came in and I trained him and the manager came down to me and said there's a supervisor's job open and he's going to get the job. Because, the manager said, 'he's a young man and he's going to get married. I know that you can do it but he's going to get your job.'"

What did she think of that? Did her Irish come out when she heard those words? "Yes, yes it did - but what can you do about it?" She later applied for other positions, and eventually won a job in the research department, where she would hone her skills with numbers by doing statistical analysis of public utilities.

"Then, in July 1964 do you know what happened? Lyndon Johnson signed the Equal Employment Opportunity Act."

The new law opened doors for her and other women in the company. "There were a couple of women ahead of me, also sidelined for promotions. Women then had the opportunity to be equal and from there I did work hard and I had some wonderful people - male and female - who were really willing to help me. I tried to focus on the job and we became a team and that's what it was."

Enter Rev. James Woods, SJ

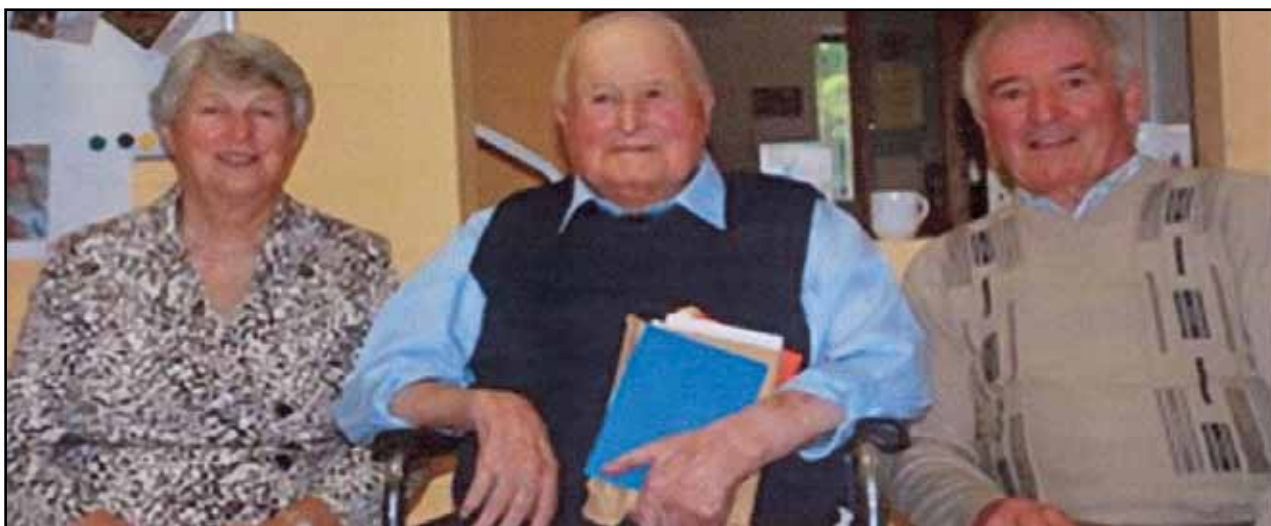
After work hours, Margaret enrolled in the evening program at Boston College, headed by a Jesuit priest who would become a guiding force in her life, Rev. James Woods SJ, her longtime friend and mentor. After earning a degree at BC in economics, she enrolled in the night school at Babson College, where she earned her MBA.

In the mid-1970s, Margaret advanced to a role as team leader, and later she became the first Irish-born woman at John Hancock to join the ranks of senior management when she was appointed a vice president and senior investment officer, a role she held until her retirement after 46 years at Hancock.

"At St. Mary's church in Scituate, there were three groups that used to go up to the Pine Street Inn for volunteer work. One of them would actually bring meals and the other two would serve meals there. I joined one of those groups. We donated money and they would buy the food for them."

"In Ireland, we had had what they called - with that politically incorrect term 'the Tinkers.' Now they're called the Travelers, and they would come and my mother always felt that we have to share (with them). She would give them potatoes, eggs, bacon and whatever other vegetables. The group would be the same each time and they would always come back and they would know us and ask how the family was. It was almost like a community. Being Catholic, (we were taught to be) willing to share with people who don't have anything. It was part of giving. Pine Street was a wonderful place to share, so I got involved in that."

Margaret joined Pine Street's board, and after her retirement in 2001, she became a regular volunteer, and a champion for build-



Clockwise from top, Margaret with her half-brother John and her younger brother James; her grandmother, Mary Lyons, and her grand-uncle, William Duggan; her grandmother, Margaret Stapleton; Margaret at work at John Hancock; Margaret and James; James and her older brother William.

ing a shelter for women adjacent to the main facility in the South End.

"Lyndia Downie [Pine Street Inn president] is a marvelous person, and she wanted to see if they could house people and give them a new start, then work with them on programs to help them improve themselves. There was a three-story building next to the Inn on Harrison Avenue, and they were building a lot of condominiums across the street. I said to myself, 'One day you know they're going to take this building as a condominium.' I went to Lyndia and I handed her a check as seed money for that house."

Pine Street converted the building into an 11-room home for homeless who have been on the street for 10 years or more. When the facility opened in 2007, it was dedicated as the Stapleton House, in Margaret's honor.

At the opening, Downie told the Boston Globe that Margaret's generous contribution helped the Pine Street generate many more donations, and, she added, the facility would not have been possible without her. "These are people who slept on the street, and now they have their own beds. Margaret helped create a home, in the best sense of the word,"

said Downie.

Margaret has remained a constant supporter, volunteering weekly for the women: "I'm not doing heavy lifting. They have a lottery system for the beds and I hand out the lottery numbers and I tell him that this is your lucky number and they laugh." And she adds, she has made many friends with the residents.

Margaret Stapleton then reflected on her upbringing in Ireland, and the example that her family set for her. "We are standing on the shoulders of people who were deprived, on the shoulders of people who had nothing," she said. "My grandmother worked the farm all her life. Going up the hill with the sheep and all, that's hard work. No matter what your circumstances are, to prove yourself all you have to do is make up your mind that you're going to do the work and be honest and faithful. And also think about all the people around you that may not be as successful as you are and help them."

"To me, that is what our history is, and that's what we should be all about."



The Boston Irish Honors 2015 for Excellence in Business and Philanthropy

The Globe's Mike Sheehan has proven a stand-up guy and a standout success

By Peter F. Stevens

Wherever he has worked, Mike Sheehan has made a mark. Optimism and ad and business savvy are his trademarks, and to his new post, the CEO of the Boston Globe, he brings something else: a deep knowledge of the journalistic side of the business. Before he brought his skills to advertising at such prestigious outfits as Clarke Goward (Boston), Leo Burnett (Chicago), and Hill Holliday (Boston) and helped promote such high-stakes clients as Lotus Notes, Fidelity Investments, McDonald's, and Dunkin' Donuts, he thought his career path would wind its way to journalism – specifically newspapers.

Sheehan was raised in Weymouth and proudly calls himself “a regular Weymouth guy.” He grew up with and played CYO basketball with Brian McGrory, now the Globe's editor-in-chief, and the two remain close friends and colleagues.

At the age of 15, Sheehan became a local sports reporter for the Weymouth News. After his graduation from Thayer Academy, he was accepted at the US Naval Academy, but decided after a semester to attend Northeastern. Then, he went up to St. Anselm College, in Manchester, New Hampshire, with a friend who was visiting the school, and decided “on a whim” to fill out an application himself. He was admitted and ended up graduating from the Catholic institution. During his years at St. Anselm's, Sheehan worked on the weekends at the Boston Globe's library, where he learned firsthand how a large newspaper works.

Following his graduation, he took a night job as a reporter with Quincy's Patriot Ledger and worked days at a South Shore ad agency. It was at the latter that he found his calling. He liked the optimistic energy of the business, which, to him, was in contrast to the innate cynicism of so many men and women in journalism. He also loved the sheer creativity that drove the ad industry with its inherent demand for effective writing.

In Boston, Sheehan accomplished something that many business insiders viewed as somewhere between improbable and impossible. He succeeded legendary Hill Holliday co-founder and CEO Jack Connors and made his own mark in a big way, ushering the company through dizzying technological advances – he crafted winning uses of Facebook, Twitter, and smartphones for ad campaigns – and guiding it through the grim ad landscape of the worst economic downturn since the Great Depression. He points out that when the nation's other top ad agencies were laying people off during the financial downturn, Hill Holliday kept its staff intact.

Sheehan has long evinced a personal credo that any CEO should be limited to no more than a ten-year tenure. With him at the helm, Hill Holliday attained record profits, but he practiced what he preached, and stepped down to pursue new opportunities. All of that would lead to a breakfast with John Henry, owner of the Red Sox and the Boston Globe. He had never met Henry, who contacted him “out of the blue” to persuade him to take on the role of CEO at the newspaper.

Sheehan has similarly parlayed his con-



Michael Sheehan and his father, Frederick Joseph Sheehan, of whom the son said in a funeral service eulogy: “Dad wasn't a great father, he was a perfect father. Without flinching, he would have sacrificed anything for any of his children. He gave Fred, Kathleen, Mary Claire, and me everything we ever needed to be successful in life. We didn't go to Disneyworld – we went to private school. He sacrificed to give us the best education, the best guidance, all the help we could ever need, and then he set us free to do whatever we wanted with it. He didn't care if any of us – or all of us – followed in his footsteps. He just wanted us to work hard, take care of our families, and be happy doing whatever we chose to do.” *Sheehan family photo*

nections, his time, and his creative business talents to help a wide array of charitable causes and fundraising efforts.

In the aftermath of the 2013 Boston Marathon bombings, he stepped into the vanguard of the community and business leaders who were determined to help the victims and their families. He was instrumental in the founding of The One Fund Boston to do just that, enlisting and joining with his team at Hill Holliday to create the fund's website, logo, and message. The result? The effort raised millions and played an integral part in the still-evolving process of healing while never forgetting.

Among the many corporate and nonprofit boards of which he is a member are Catholic Charities, American Repertory Theatre (A.R.T.) Thayer Academy, and the Raptor Accelerator, a Boston company set up to aid promising new companies.

Sheehan and his wife, Maureen, are kept busy raising their young children, Catherine and Michael. Recently, he spoke with the BIR about his career, his years growing up in Weymouth, his new work at the Globe, and the meaning for him of the Boston Irish Honors Award:

A sturdy Irish heritage

“My family comes from Counties Leitrim and Kerry. The Sheehans are from Kerry, but it was ancestors from my mom's side – her maiden name was Keaveny – who were the first to come over to America – they came well back. My grandmother came from Glenfarne, County Leitrim, in 1899. My grandfather came from Castleisland, County Kerry around 1921.

“They met at a July 4th party at Hough's Neck. So many of the young immigrants met

that way, at parties, dance halls, and parish socials. My dad was born in 1924.”

Sheehan looks back on his young years as something out of a dream. “It was kind of idyllic in its way. It was a good time to be a kid. We were always playing whatever sport was in season, and while there were leagues, kids then organized our own games. It seems like every waking moment outside home and school was spent playing sports. It was great. Like so many families then, we traveled just about anywhere you could go by car. We had a camper, and our family vacations revolved around it.”

As to his schooling? “The Academy Ave School in Weymouth, and then it was on to Thayer. My parents were committed to our getting the best private school education possible, and much of the family finances went to that end. They wanted all of us – my brother Fred and my sisters Kathleen and Mary Claire – to receive the kind of education that could give us an edge later in life.”

It was in Weymouth that Sheehan came to know the young Brian McGrory, now his partner as the editorial chieftain at the Globe. “We go back a long way. He's a great guy and a great friend. I truly believe that it was somehow Brian's destiny to become the Boston Globe's editor-in-chief. I've said this before about Brian, but in my brief time at the Naval Academy, they used to describe two sorts of leaders: the ones whose command willingly follows them into fire and the ones whose command wants to push them into fire. Brian's the one you'd follow into fire. He's the perfect newsroom and editorial leader for the paper at this important point in its history.”

Where does Sheehan see the Globe at the moment and what does he see as the way for-

ward in a media landscape that has shifted so much and so fast, technologically speaking?

"I believe strongly in the concept of the self-fulfilling prophecy," he says. "If one believes that everything is doom and gloom, that's what things will inevitably be. You have to believe that you can effect change that will transform things. Granted, changing a culture such as the Globe's or any other major newspaper's takes a long time.

"With the Globe, we have a great opportunity that's grounded in the past, present, and future," he added. "The paper is a pillar of the city's proud past – what I like to call 'Olde Boston' – with an 'e.' What we're working hard to do is to seize the opportunity to take that tradition and make it the catalyst of the new Boston. We want to maintain the great journalism that informs readers both in print and online, but we also want the Globe to become an active part of the new Boston taking shape around us every day. Taking on that role offers us almost limitless possibilities both journalistically and business-wise."

Back to roots at the Globe

The 142-year-old Globe has taken many forms in its longtime role as provider of news to citizens of Boston and the region. For most of its history, it reported national and international news via wire services and kept its staff closely tied to the city where it was established, save for a stretch of almost 50 years, from the mid-1960s to the first decade of the new century, when it turned its focus more widely, setting up a well-staffed bureau in Washington and single-staffed coverage of international cities like London, Jerusalem, and Mexico City. And now, the focus is narrow one again, and rightly so, days Sheehan.

"The paper has to be Boston-centric. The national and international news has got to be more through the lens of Boston. Our current newsroom is a leaner but tightly focused team. It's inevitable that we have to cover less ground outside the city, but I really believe that today's readers buy the Globe to get information about Boston. No matter what, the solid and outstanding journalism that the paper provides – has always provided – remains the core. Brian deserves so much credit for the progress we're making. We're more than holding our own, and it's going to grow.

"For me, optimism is the key," Sheehan says. "People still ask me what the difference is between a newsroom and an ad agency. The basic difference is that journalists are trained to be cynical. Think of the best reporters going, and they're probably cynical. They have to be. I learned early on that for me, advertising was a better fit. To succeed there, you have to be optimistic. If you don't believe in the pitch and campaign you're making, no one else will either.

"What I'm working with everyone in both the news and business ends of the Globe is to infuse the optimism into the cynicism. I'm confident that we're on our way to achieving that and ensuring that the Globe remains the must-read for anyone in or around Boston.

"I do believe," he added, "that the pessimism that was at the Globe for the past five years or so has evaporated, and that's exactly what I want to keep going. The paper is so important to the city and the whole region. Maybe it's because I remember the days when the Globe and other newspapers were such a fixture on everyone's doorstep, everyone on the subway, and everywhere around here you went that [I see] the paper as part of the



Top, Mike Sheehan and his sister, Mary Claire, in Glenfarne, Co. Leitrim. At right, Mike's parents, Fred and Claire Sheehan.

community's very core. We're adapting and optimistic about the future. I've also said it before, but there is nothing more important to a city than its newspaper except the city's government."

Sheehan's takes that optimism and his advertising background to advance another big goal for him and the paper: How to make the Globe more relevant to advertisers and how to convince them that the newspaper is still the best outlet for them to get their message out to the public.

"One of the things I learned in advertising," he says, "is that the more creative, the better the product – the Globe now – the larger the audience you'll draw. That has huge appeal to advertisers willing to pay to reach that audience. The more revenue that comes from advertisers means more revenue to put into the newsroom."

While keeping very busy in Boston, Sheehan often casts his gaze across the sea. "I've been over to Ireland at least a dozen times. It is so moving to walk where one's ancestors walked. When they left, they were hoping for a better life in America and, I think, they were optimistic they would find that, even though leaving everything behind was so hard.

"My parents and grandparents were so proud of their Irish roots, but the roots they put down here in America were just as important. My father won a Bronze Star and a Purple Heart as a staff sergeant in France during World War II. And he was in the FBI for a while. His family was so proud of him, so proud that he and they were so completely vested in America and the opportunities that their hard work and sacrifice earned them. My grandmother was so Irish that she watched and followed the Celtics religiously – the team's name did it for her."

The model of an immigrant story

In many ways, says Sheehan, his family's is "the classic immigrant story."

Presenting the Boston Irish Honors honoree will be William F. Kennedy, a prominent Boston attorney and a partner at Nutter McClennen & Fish LLP. Kennedy knows Mike Sheehan as a friend, a family man, and as someone who translates his business success and acumen into community service. Kennedy also notes how deeply that sense of family and community were imbued in Mike



and his siblings, Fred, Kathleen, and Mary Claire, by his parents, Frederick J. ("Fred") and Claire Sheehan.

In 2013, Kennedy notes, Fred Sheehan passed away at the age of 88, and Mike eulogized his father in a poignant, often humorous remembrance that emphasized how that sense of place, so important to father and son, included both the family's ancestral home and the new country that became, and remains, their home.

"Everyone at Fred's service still remembers Mike's eulogy," Kennedy said. "When he was describing the family's Irish roots, he had everyone laughing with the Irish accents he used. His words just showed how much love he had for his father, who always placed his country and his family first.

"As I've worked on my introduction for Mike at the Irish Honors event, I've been trying to come up with some witty comparison of Mike to 'Mad Men's' Don Draper. It's hard, though, because Mike is really such a great guy, he's someone who gives so much back, who does so much good stuff for people and causes. His immediate leadership in the One Fund came as no surprise to anyone who knows him. That's Mike."



The Boston Irish Honors 2015 Distinguished Public Service



Boston Police Commissioner William B. Evans (far left) is shown with his brothers (from left) John, Paul, Thomas and James at the baseball field in South Boston that is named for their brother Joseph who was struck and killed by a car in 1968 when he was age 11. *Bill Brett photo*

The Evans boys: All for one, one for all

By Jack Thomas

November 1967 was a somber month in American history.

Five hundred thousand American troops were in Vietnam, and Gen. William Westmoreland was insisting that the United States was winning the war in Asia, which Americans would fight for another seven years, then abandon. On Nov. 19, a Sunday, while the Jets and Joe Namath were at Fenway Park, beating the Patriots, 29-24, in Vietnam, in the Central Highlands, the battle for Hill 875 began, a four-day siege with American casualty rates of 60 percent. On the same day, 9,000 miles away, in South Boston, six teenagers agreed to enlist together in the Marine Corps, and soon they were off to South Carolina, to boot camp at Parris Island, and then to Vietnam.

One of the six was Paul Evans, eldest son and nominal head of the Evans clan of South Boston, recipients this year of Boston Irish Honors 2015. A family of five sons ranging from 66 to 56, they are acquainted with grief. In 1962, when they were aged 13 to 3, their mother died of ovarian cancer. In 1968, when they were aged 19 to 9, a hit-and-run driver killed 11-year-old Joey, a Little League All Star. In 1974, when they were aged 25 to 15, their father died unexpectedly of a heart attack at age 53.

The Evans family survived those heartaches by drawing on familiar resources, their faith in Gate of Heaven Parish, their neighbors in South Boston, their

confidence in America, their loyalty to one another, and their adherence to the best of Irish values. Today, the five surviving Evans brothers count among their achievements the service of three of them who served in combat during the Vietnam War (Paul, James, and John, who won two bronze stars), two who joined the Boston Fire Department (Deputy Chief James and District Chief John), and two who became police commissioners of Boston (Paul, 1994-2003, and, currently, William). All five brothers scoff at the notion of living anywhere but South Boston.

Six boys, six Marines

The loyalty that runs deep in their neighborhood is reflected in what happened to the six boys who collaborated that day to enlist together in the Marine Corps. One of them, Johnny Cole, came home in a coffin. Another, Paul Evans, was slogging through the jungles near Khe Sanh when he learned that a hit-and-run driver had killed his little brother. A third, Tommy Gill, was shot in the back by a sniper a few days after his arrival in Vietnam, and was airlifted to Japan with collapsed lungs.

"Doctors told his mother and father by telephone, 'Don't bother coming to Japan. He'll be dead before you get here,' Paul recalls. "Well, they underestimated Tommy Gill. Later, when my little brother was killed, I came home to Southie on emergency leave. Tommy was recuperating,

and when I visited him, I was shocked because his legs were as thin as pencils. But he regained his strength, and, like his father, Tommy became a Boston cop and won decorations, only to be killed by a train in 1988 while searching for some stolen weapons in Brighton.

"We used to kid him and say, 'Tell us some war stories, Tommy,' because the poor bastard was in Vietnam only a few days."

Next month, once again, as they have done every November for 27 years, the four surviving members of that clique who joined the Marine Corps together will gather at the Morton's on Boston's waterfront, and they will request a table for six, the two empty chairs memorializing their lost buddies.

"We've done this every year since Tommy was killed," said Paul. "We drink a toast to all of us, but especially to Tommy and Johnny. We tell the same stories every year, and the waiter will come over and say, 'Are there two others?' And we'll say, 'They're here, don't worry about 'em'."

Growing up on East Sixth Street

On a brisk autumn afternoon, the sun is shining off Dorchester Bay and into the venerable Puritan Canoe Club, founded in 1888, and around a long table, three of the Evans brothers are reminiscing about their boyhood at the family home on 529 East Sixth, a three-decker that has been converted to a two-family house where two of the brothers, John and James, now live with their

own families.

What the brothers want to talk about is not themselves, but their father.

"People say we had a tough life, but no, never," says Tom. "Sure, we had crises, but we had great times just growing up as a family. We had no girls, and our father did a tremendous job bringing us up. Every night we sat down to a full dinner, more food than you could eat, and every morning he was up to make us breakfast, pancakes, eggs, sausage."

The family flat on the middle floor was small – kitchen, parlor, two back bedrooms, and a small room in front not much bigger than a closet. "I don't remember having a certain bedroom," recalls Tom. "It was first come, first serve."

Single fathers have a significant challenge, especially when there are six sons, and by the testimony of his boys, Paul Evans Sr. rose to the challenge with devotion and discipline. Whatever the tale, and no matter who is telling it, recollections about life in the cramped three-decker revert to their father, who was hard-working, autocratic, given to pranks, protective of his sons, and determined to give them a normative boyhood.

"All of us went to Gate of Heaven School, and in those days, we'd come home for lunch," says Tom. "So, my father would leave his job at the Boston Herald, and he'd probably get fired for this today, but he'd come home and prepare our lunch and have it on the table every day at 11:30 – soup,

sandwiches, tuna fish, and then we'd have to be back to school by 12:15. For supper, he'd cook so much food that it was 'take off your shirt and unbuckle your belt,' because you couldn't get any more food on your plate."

From his job as forklift operator at the Boston Herald Traveler, their father slipped away frequently for the meaningful moments in the lives of his sons. With six of them playing baseball, basketball, and football, there was always a ball game to attend.

"If one of the older brothers was playing on one field, then my father would go and stay at that game for a while," recalls James. "And then, he'd leave to go to another field where another one of his sons was playing, and then to a third field, from Columbus Park, to M Street Park, to the Babe Ruth League Park, and then back again to Columbus Park."

When John became captain of the South Boston High School baseball team, his father would write letters to the nuns at Gate of Heaven School, asking that John's brothers be granted early dismissal in order to watch him play.

The father knew how to puncture their pomposity, too, and when Paul introduces a story about the day John hit three home runs in one game, his brothers burst into laughter. "They weren't just home runs," says James. "John hit every one of them out of the ballpark, except that on his fourth time at bat, he struck out. When he arrived home late that afternoon, my father greeted him by calling him the K-O kid," -- a reference to the symbol in baseball that scorekeepers use to indicate a strikeout.

Life, and love, with their father

As the anecdotes and laughter ripple from the memories of the Evans boys, life at the their three-decker sounds like a blend of "Boys Town" and "National Lampoon's Animal House."

"We grew up next to a home with three girls, and what they must have seen," says Tom, "because we never pulled a curtain, never closed the bathroom door."

The father kept the boys on edge. When report cards from Gate of Heaven were ready for distribution, nuns required a parent to come to the school after the eight o'clock children's Mass, and it was a day the Evans boys dreaded.

"On the morning report cards were to be handed out, my father would be getting our breakfast," says Tom, "and to remind us of what we faced, he'd walk around and say, 'Hello, Sister,' and 'Yes, Sister,' 'Thank you very much, Sister.'"

"If their father, by today's standards, seems to have been tyrannical, his sons remember him with affection, respect, gratitude, and



The boyhood years at the Evans house: Left to right, youngest to oldest: William, Joseph, Thomas, James, John, and Paul. Right, Joseph, the Little League all star who was killed by a hit-and-run driver in 1968 at age 11. Evans family photos

a deep love.

"Here's an example," says Tom: "In those days, the style for guys was hair to the shoulder, and one day, my brother John sat down to breakfast, and he was half asleep when my father grabbed him by the hair at the side of his head and lifted him off the chair and he said what he said so often: 'This is what I don't like. I'll give you until this afternoon to get it cut.'"

"Now, my brother had a short fuse, but he wouldn't say a word back to my father. Nobody had the courage, ever, to speak up to my father, nobody that I knew of. So, even though all my brother's friends had hair to their shoulders, John went to the barber shop and got it all cut off, and when he came home with his 'boy's regular haircut,' pouting like hell, my father looked at him and said, 'Boy, you look foolish.' And we all laughed."

The home with seven males sounds like a frat house, and in a manner of speaking, it was.

"Dad loved hitting people with a wet dish towel," recalls Paul, "and he knew how to push buttons, although with some of us, he couldn't push our button because we knew him and we expected the ribbing."

His favorite target was "Mouse," the nickname he gave his youngest son, William, and even though William has been Boston's police commissioner since 2013, and even though he was acclaimed nationally for his role in the investigation of the Boston Marathon bombing, in South Boston, he is still known by many as Mouse.

"My father loved red peppers," he says, "you know, the ones with the hot seeds in them," recalls Paul, "and when Mouse wasn't looking, my father would mix those into Mouse's mashed potatoes, so the next bite would make him gag."

"Here's another example," says

Tom, plucking from his endless file of anecdotes. "Now, my father made us lunch for school every day, and one day, at breakfast, he gave me my lunch and he also gave me five bucks. 'What's this for?' I asked, and he said it was in case I wanted something at school. So, okay, all morning, I'm feeling pretty good. I got my lunch. I got five bucks in my pocket, and then, when it's time for lunch, I sit down in the cafeteria with my buddies, and as we open our lunches, everybody says, 'what do you have, and what do you have?' When I open mine, what do I have but a raw [expletive] potato, not even cooked, right out of the bag, and although I could buy a lunch with the five bucks, my friends were laughing like hell at me."

The boys had their way of getting even, though, just by being boys. "He'd go to work on Saturday morning," recalls Tom, "and we'd head for his bedroom and, using rolled up socks as a ball, we'd run the bases, on and around his bed, turning the bedroom into mayhem."

Always, a fraternal competition

In addition to their acidic tongues, senses of humor, and loyalties to one another, the Evans boys also inherited from their father a competitive streak so strong they contest everything, even down to who makes the best meatballs.

"Our father told us that all we have is each other," says Tom, "and we've stuck by that."

Paul, who was a cop and a Marine, shakes his head. "Except in one aspect," he says, wryly. "We have a lot of give and take about the police department versus the fire department, and the Army versus the Marine Corps. My brother John, who was in the Army, tells me the Marines think they're the only ones who fought



in the war."

They also inherited a fervid patriotism, which explains why three of them served in the armed forces during the Vietnam War, and it's dramatized when they overlap one another in telling what they agree is the classic story about their father.

"He was a Navy veteran of World War II," says Paul, "and after school one day, when we were about to sit down to dinner, he insisted we eat in front of the TV. So there we were, watching the six o'clock news, and all of a sudden, on comes a story about draft dodgers burning draft cards at South Boston District Court, and as the camera pans the scene, my father yells, 'There I am.' And sure enough, there he was. As one guy lights a match to burn his draft card, from out of the crowd my father sucker-punches him. 'What a shot,' my father said proudly. 'It caused a riot.' The Boston papers were on strike, but it was played up in a New Hampshire paper," says Paul, "and I still have the clipping."

It was not until the early Sixties that their father invested in a Chevy station wagon, and for the family's entertainment, he'd pack a lunch and then pack the car with kids and head to Nantasket Beach and Paragon Park, or perhaps to Salisbury Beach.

"Not so much my older brothers, but with me and my two younger brothers," says Tom, "on a Sunday my father would go up the street

The Evans boys: All for one, one for all

and buy two large sub sandwiches, five bags of chips, and all the tonic you could drink, and he'd take us to Fenway Park to watch the Red Sox. In those days, you could watch a double-header, starting at one o'clock, and you'd be good till seven. When he dropped us off, there'd be a lamppost on the corner, and he'd say, 'See this lamppost. When the games are over, you come back to this lamppost, and do not move from there until I come back to get you.'

The brothers don't talk about one another for very long before the competitive streak appears. As a result of his role in the aftermath of the Boston Marathon bombing, William appeared in Runners Magazine and then, after he appeared in GQ, he said to Paul's wife, Karen, "Was Paul ever in GQ?"

Commissioner's just one of the boys

In the eyes of his family, being police commissioner does not give William immunity from family barbs, and his absence from the interview at the Canoe Club leaves him additionally vulnerable.

"Have you seen his picture in full uniform?" asks Paul. "How does he look in that hat? It's oversized, right? He looks like somebody who stole his father's uniform."

The comical caricature is then followed, as always, by praise. "When Paul was commissioner, he always took care of Mouse" says Tom. "I mean, he had a lot of influence on him, but Mouse earned his own way."

Here's an example of Mouse's dedication, says Paul.

"When Mouse was a teenager, he was playing softball at M Street Park and someone slid into first base and tore up Mouse's knee so bad they had to operate on it. When he decided to go on the police department, I told him he'd better do something to strengthen his knee, because there'd be physical exams. Well, Mouse is like Forrest Gump, because he's been strengthening his knees ever since. He's up every morning at 4:30, and he runs eight miles or so. He's run in more than 50 marathons, and he's run Boston more than 20 times, sometimes under three hours. He looks small, but there isn't an ounce of fat on him, and if he were here, he could drop down and give you 100 pushups and 200 sit-ups.

"I was his brother, and I was obviously up in the ranks in the department, but he made sergeant because he topped the list. As part of my job, I'm promoting my brother, so there's an ethical question, and I remember praying, please, let him do well in the exam," said Paul, putting his hands together prayerfully, and lifting his eyes to heaven. "Well, he made life easy for me, because every exam he took, he topped the list."

Topping the list runs in the family. Paul, too, topped exams in the police department,



Paul and Catherine Evans on their wedding day. The mother of six boys aged 3 to 13, Catherine succumbed to cancer at age 37. Paul died at aged 53 in 1974, leaving behind five boys aged 15 to 25.

Evans family photo



Commissioner pairing: William and Paul in uniform in earlier times.

Evans family photo

and James topped the exam for deputy chief of the fire department.

The family anomaly is Tom, who declined to follow his brothers into the military or into the fire or police departments, and instead enjoyed a successful career at Boston Edison Co.

"My brothers did well," says Tom. "James went as far as he could in the fire department as deputy chief, and John was district chief, and I was kind of like the screw-up. When people realize what my brothers had done, people would say to me, 'Jesus, what happened to you?' And this question would come from some bum whose job was cleaning streets, and here I was working for the Edison and getting pretty good dough."

After castigating their brother John in language that does not lend itself to recitation in a newspaper, the brothers then heap praise upon him.

If there's a Martha Stewart in the family, it's John.

"He's a hell of a cook," says James. "He's been cooking for us since he was 12 years old. He inherited it from my father." Continues Tom: "He's the type of guy that for 25 years now, I can call him and say, 'John, I'm putting a 20-pound turkey in the oven. What temperature, and how long? His best dish? My father's meatballs. I'll be honest with you, they're phenomenal, but don't tell him I said that. Don't encourage him. Tell him my meatballs are better.'"

At every family outing, says James, John's got to bring his meatballs. "We tell him, 'don't bother. We've got plenty of food,' but he always shows up with meatballs."

Be careful, warns Paul. "He's liable to show up at the Irish lunch at the Boston Seaport Hotel with a bowl of his meatballs. He's more proud of the meatballs than he is of his combat medals from Vietnam."

Keeping in touch is a priority

The brothers get together regularly, often on Friday nights, at the Shamrock Pub, at H and Eighth Streets, where their father drank.

Later, after the interview in the Puritan Canoe club, Paul calls to say they should have spoken more about their mother, Catherine, who died when he was 13.

"Her family came from Ireland, from Sligo and Cork," he says, "and she adored her sons. Someone saw her one day with her six boys and said, 'don't you wish you had a daughter, and my mother said, 'No, I love my sons.'"

"She was a spitfire, too. My father got his marching orders from her, and I'm sure she admonished him to take care of us. It was my father who went to the games, but it was my mother who taught every one of us how to throw a football and how to catch a baseball and how to hit a baseball, too, except for my brother James, who still can't hit a beach ball."

"After my mother died, it was my father who kept us together," says Paul. "He'd probably kill us for talking to you the way we are, because it was a rule of thumb - whatever went on in our house stayed in our house."

What would Paul Sr. say today about his family?

"I don't think he'd say anything publicly," said Tom, "and he wouldn't be too happy that we're talking to you. He always told us that we should look out for one another, and I think if he could see us today, it's not the titles and the successes that would make him proud, but it's the fact that we're still together. That meant more to him than any honor or achievement. If my father could see us all together now, what would make him proud is that we're still doing what he taught us to do. We're still taking care of one another."

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For Low Lily, nee Annalivia, there’s a rebirth in the making

(Continued from page 13) popular music—that have been part of our musical development.”

The band’s name, chosen via a contest on social media, was a way of acknowledging its past while moving forward. “Annalivia” was a reference to Anna Livia Plurabelle, from *Finnegan’s Wake*, which besides being the name of a female character was supposed to be an embodiment of the River Liffey,” says Simmons. “A low lily is a type of flower that grows in New England, so we’re keeping that feminine personification in a context that’s closer to home.”

In Schneckenburger,

Cohen and Simmons welcomed not only a friend and kindred spirit, but also someone who, like them, has a family life as well as a musical one. The couple wound up moving from Gloucester to Brattleboro, where Schneckenburger lives with her husband, string bass player Corey DiMario (a former member of Crooked Still), and their son. This made working together easier and had the additional benefit of putting them in a more central geographical location, notes Cohen, who still makes frequent forays into Greater Boston and elsewhere in Massachusetts.

“We knew we wanted someone who not only was an excellent musician but could share the lead in singing,” says Simmons. “Lissa fit that description, and she also is in the same domestic situation we are, where you want to stay close to home as much as you can.”

Schneckenburger didn’t need a lot of coaxing to join the band. “Since I have known Liz and Flynn for so many years, part of the attraction was that they were a known quantity of personalities. I knew that I liked them, and we’d get along on the road, which is a big part of being in a band together. But I was also already a fan of their

music, and based on what I’d already heard, I knew it would be fun to experiment with arranging the next generation of songs.”

Another attraction for Schneckenburger – also a songwriter and tune composer – was the prospect of incorporating more original material into the band repertoire. “My last solo record was all pop/rock covers, and I found that all the up-close work with other people’s gorgeous material really made me think more deeply about writing songs myself. I used that recording as a bit of a study in how my favorite songs were crafted, and what I like about them. That set me up perfectly to focus more intently on my own songwriting in the following years.”

The Low Lily CD/EP, say the band members, represents a continuation along the route established by Annalivia’s 2012 album, “The Same Way Down,” which included the traditional ballads “False Sir John” (which at one point was the most-played track on folk music radio, Cohen notes) as well as tune sets and songs from, or at least partly inspired by, tradition.

Schneckenburger’s “The Girl’s Not Mine” is one of three original songs on the new CD. She describes it as a reimagining of Rick Springfield’s hit “Jessie’s Girl,” written in her own voice; but here, the theme of yearning for what you can’t have plays out in gentler tones, suffused

by gorgeous harmonies from Cohen and Simmons – a Low Lily hallmark – with a mellow chorus of trombones (played by Simmons’ father Fred) adding a poignantly warm undertone.

Simmons’ “Adventurer” and Cohen’s “All Roads Lead to You” (which he co-wrote with Aram Sinnreich) are something of a set-piece – they follow one another on the track list – in that both have to do with traveling, but where distance is measured in something other than miles. Simmons credits her son’s interest in adventure/fantasy stories for inspiring her composition, in which a journey leads back to the starting point, with enlightenment and wisdom as homecoming gifts. Cohen’s “All Roads” is more about traveling as metaphor for growing older: As he puts it, the song came about during a visit with Sinnreich and their families – “Our kids and wives were hanging out, and we sat off in the corner and wrote something grown-up.”

As with “The Girl’s Not Mine,” “Adventurer” and “All Roads” have unmistakable pop music hooks and riffs peeking out from amidst the acoustic guitars, mandolin, fiddle and string bass (the latter played by DiMario). Yet these fit comfortably alongside the CD’s lone traditional song, “House Carpenter,” an American variant of the British Isles ballad “The Demon Lover” that here has its

supernatural qualities heightened by Cohen’s mandolin picking and Schneckenburger’s eerie fiddle backing. The other tracks are a Cohen instrumental, “Northern Spy,” that has the character of a Tim O’Brienesque progressive bluegrass piece; and a medley of the old-timey reel “Cherokee Shuffle” with another Cohen tune, “Lucky.”

If one sets one’s mind to it, he or she can still probably detect a hint of the genealogical line extending from Ireland and the British Isles through Low Lily’s music – if not a traditional song like “House Carpenter,” maybe a word, a phrase, a theme, an instrumental passage that hints of links from across the ocean. All well and good, but from the band’s perspective, it’s probably not something in which to get too caught up.

“A fresh start allows you to say, ‘OK, what do we want to sound like?’” Simmons says. “For us now, there’s not as much of a connection to the Irish or other Celtic traditions as before. They certainly influence the way we play, but the material we choose is more the style of home-grown and American, with some traditional but also a very contemporary vibe. It’s folk/acoustic for the modern age.”

For tickets and other information on Low Lily’s Nov. 11 concert at Club Passim, see [passim.org](#).

A busy November schedule for Irish/Celtic music events

(Continued from page 13)

Hankus Netsky and his ensemble; folk and Celtic vocalist/guitarist Mary Casey, who has performed extensively in Boston and across New England; and the Contemporary Improv Ensemble from New England Conservatory.

“Last year was phenomenal: We had people like Matt and Shannon Heaton, Robbie O’Connell, Aoife Clancy, Tommy McCarthy and Louise Costello, Ry Cavanaugh, Cat and the Moon, and Danielle Miraglia and Tom Bianchi – quite the mix of sounds,” says Backroom series co-coordinator and host Brian O’Donovan. “We actually had to turn down other musicians who really wanted to play. And the tickets sold out very quickly. This is something people want to be part of.”

An additional attraction for the event is a raffle, with the top prize a night at the Boston Harbor Hotel, with breakfast; other prizes are being confirmed. O’Donovan’s wife Lindsay, a co-organizer for the benefit, says the event offers more than entertainment. “At that time of the year, early December, with the holiday season approaching, a lot of us are thinking about home—whether it’s where we live now or where we grew up. So being together at this concert is an opportunity for us to really consider just what ‘home’ means, especially if someone doesn’t have one.”

Losing one’s home is not as far-fetched a scenario as it may seem, she adds, referring to a talk at last year’s benefit given by Somerville Homeless Coalition Executive Director Mark Alston-Follansbee. “Mark pointed out how so many people live from paycheck to check these days. Just imagine if something were to happen like your car breaking down, which means that it’s harder for you to get to work; because of that, maybe you wind up getting fired from your job, and you can’t pay the rent, so you and your family get evicted – and next thing you know, you’re in a shelter because there’s nowhere else to go. It’s very fortunate that an organization like the Somerville Homeless Coalition is around to

help families find housing and stability, and all the while treating people with respect and dignity.

“This concert will be a great way to come together as a community, and all the proceeds will go to SHC. If people are unable to make it, we’re hoping they can do something in the spirit of the occasion: Maybe instead of having an office holiday party this year, or to honor somebody’s memory, they’ll consider making a donation.”

For information on the Burren Backroom series, see [burren.com/Backroom-Series.html](#).

Dublin-born Declan O’Rourke, who has entered the growing circle of Irish singer-songwriters that includes Paddy Casey, Gemma Hayes and Damian Rice, will play on Nov. 3 in **The Red Room at Café 939, Berklee College of Music**. O’Rourke appeared on the “Transatlantic Sessions” series with such luminaries as Alison Krauss, Jerry Douglas, and Amos Lee, and his debut single, “Galileo (Someone Like You),” has been covered by numerous artists, among them Eddi Reader and Josh Groban. Also performing that evening will Boston-area native **Molly Pinto Madigan**, whose songwriting draws on many folk and traditional themes and styles. See [berklee.edu/red-room-cafe-939](#).

One of the most legendary Irish folk revival bands, the **Irish Rovers**, will play at the **Chevalier Theater in Medford** on Nov. 29. Since forming in Canada more than 50 years ago, the group has produced more than 40 albums and a multitude of songs that became classics, such as “Black Velvet Band,” “The Unicorn” and “Whiskey on a Sunday.” The North American tour that includes the Chevalier Theater performance is one of the band’s rare international trips. See [chevaliertheatre.com/event/the-irish-rovers](#) for more information.

Singer-songwriter **Tim O’Brien**, whose American roots style of music is full of Irish and Scottish influences, will perform at **Club Passim** in Har-

vard Square on Nov. 4. O’Brien has frequently collaborated with Irish/Celtic bands such as The Chieftains, Cherish the Ladies, and Grada, among others. Opening for O’Brien will be Old Man Luedecke, a Nova Scotian singer-songwriter whose songs mix folk, bluegrass and pop. For tickets and other details, see [passim.org](#).

The **Gaelic Roots series at Boston College** will host a concert of traditional Irish music on Nov. 12 with **Paddy O’Brien and Nathan Gourley**. O’Brien, a highly regarded master of the Irish button accordion, is known for his vast repertoire of tunes, many of which he has shared through a series of recordings. Gourley (fiddle, guitar), a former Minnesota resident who has been living in Boston for almost three years, has played with O’Brien as part of the trio Chulrúa. The concert will take place at 6:30 p.m. in the Theology and Ministry Library. See [bc.edu/gaelicroots](#).

The fiddle ensemble **Childsplay** returns to the stage after a hiatus, with a tour from Nov. 17 to Nov. 20 that will include a stop in the Boston area. The group comprises two dozen or so musicians, singers and dancers – many from Boston or elsewhere in New England – performing fiddle music mainly from Irish, Scottish, Cape Breton, Scandinavian, French Canadian, and American folk traditions, and using violins created by Cambridge resident Bob Childs, who also plays in the ensemble and serves as its artistic director. This year, Irish singer **Karan Casey** will be performing with Childsplay, whose regulars have included Laurel Martin, Hanneke Cassel, Steve Hickman, Sheila Falls, Mary Lea, Mark Simos, Lissa Schneckenburger, Naomi Morse, Dave Langford, Amanda Cavanaugh, Katie McNally, Kathleen Guilday, Mark Roberts, Shannon Heaton, Keith Murphy, Kieran Jordan and Nic Gareiss.

For information on the Childsplay tour, see [childsplay.org](#).

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The Irish Language

by Philip Mac AnGhabhann

This month we will start a review of the “irregular” Irish **verbs** – and the most commonly used **verb** is **bi**, “to be” in a “not permanent” sense. By “not permanent” state we mean something that has a finite end such as “going”. “sitting”, “learning a topic” or a body position. **Bí** is used for descriptions such as “fat” and “thin” since they are viewed subject to change. **Is**, “to be”, on the other hand is a more permanent state such as a location, a family relationship, or a profession. This is not an unusual arrangement, even shared with other Indo-European languages such as Spanish and French.

Here are the forms of **bi** in the three tenses that we have learned so far – there are more but we will not bother with them for now (if ever).

	<u>Present</u>	<u>Past</u>	<u>Future</u>
Affirmative:	Tá	Bhí	Beidh
	“is, am”	“was, were”	“will be”
Negative:	Níl	Ní raibh	Ní bheidh
	“isn’t, aren’t	“wasn’t, weren’t”	“will not”
Interogative:	An bhfuil?	An raibh?	An mbeidh?
	“Is?, Are?”	“was?, were?”	“will?”
Neg. Interog:	Nach bhfuil?	Nach raibh?	Nach mbeidh?
	“Isn’t?,aren’t?”	“wasn’t?, weren’t?”	“won’t?”

Subordinating Conjunctions: **go** and **nach**.

A reminder that **bhfuil** is pronounced /weel/ as the **f** is silent and **raibh** is /roh/ as the ending **-bh** is also silent. **Bhí** is /vee/ while **beidh** is /behy/, **bheidh** is /vehy/ and **mbeidh** is /mehy/,

Some examples of **bí** include:

Tá Nóra ag a lón.	“Nora is at (her) lunch.”
An raibh an garda ag an siopa?	“Was the policeman at the shop?”
Nach bhfuil muid ag caint Gaeilge?	“Aren’t we speaking Irish?”
Nach mbeidh tú ag caint Gaeilge?	“Won’t you be speaking Irish?”
Beidh siad sa stáisiún.	“They will be in the station.”
Cá bhfuil tú?	“Where are you?”
Níl a fhios agam.	“I don’t know.”
Bhí mo mháthair bho hÉirinn.	“My mother was from Ireland.”

In contrast, there are far fewer forms of **Is** since there is no **future tense**. The **present tense** can be used with a future meaning but there is no “future tense” *per se*. However, there is a difference between colloquial or “spoken” Irish and the “Official Standard” Irish. Make up you mind which you will learn – both are presented here. In the exercises below we will mostly use the “Official” forms but be prepared to hear and/or use the “spoken” forms.

	<u>Present & Future</u>	<u>“Official”</u>	<u>Spoken Past</u>
Affirmative:	Is, ’S	Ba	Ba
Negative:	Ní	Níor + lenition	Ní ba
Interogative:	An	Ar	An mba
Neg. Interogative:	Nach	Nár	Nach mba


Subordinating Conjunctions, “Official” **gur** and **nar**, “Spoken”, **go** and **nach**.

Here are a few examples of the uses of **Is** with some of the **Past** in spoken Irish and some in “Official” Irish.

Is mise	“I’m ... (My name is ...)”
’S mise le meas.	“I am sincerely ...” (sign a letter)
Ba dochtúr e.	“He was (a) doctor.”
Nach mba Yeats scribhneoir?	“Wasn’t Yeats a writer?”
Ba sé.	“Yes” or “He was”
Ar Liam múinteoir?	“Is Liam (a) teacher?”
Níor mhúinteoir, sagairt e.	“Not (a) teacher, (a) priest.”
Dúirt sé gur ba Yeats dochtúr e.	“He said that Yeats was a doctor”.

Translate into Irish. You will have to choose between **bi** and **is** and among the tenses. 1.) “Collins was not a priest.” 2.) “Sincerely” 3.) “It’s a beautiful day.” 4.) “Will you be here on Sunday?” 5.) “I’m Mary.” 6.) “Thank you.” 7.) “It’s very cold.” 8.) “Would you like a cup of tea?” 9.) “No. I like black coffee.” 10.) Spoken “Wasn’t she a teacher?” 11) “No. Nora is a nurse.” 12.) “They were eating the bread and the butter,” 13.) “She was sick on Tuesday.” 14.) “He says that Yeats was a teacher. 15. ”Weren’t the children in the street?” 16.) “He says that Sean was a doctor, probably.”

Answers: 1.) **Níor Collins sagart.** 2.) **Is mise le meas.** 3.) **Tá an lá breá.** 4.) **An mbeidh tú anseo Dé Domhnaigh?** 5.) **’S mise Máiri.** 6.) **Go raibh maith agat.** 7.) **Tá sé an-fhuar.** 8.) **An maith leat cupan tae?** 9.) **Níl. Is maith leam caife dubh.** 10.) (Spoken) **Nach mba sí múinteoir?** 11.) **Ní mba.** **Is Nóra banaltra.** 12.) **Bhí siad ag ithe an t-arán agus an t-im.** 13.) **Bhí sí tinn Dé Máirt.** 14.) **Déir sé go ba Yeats múinteoir.** 15.) **Nach raibh na leanaí ar an tsráid?** 16.) **Déir sé gur ba Seán dochtúr, is dócha.**



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SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

NOVEMBER 2015

1 Sunday 23rd Annual West Roxbury Friends of Rosie’s Place Harvest Brunch and Raffle catered by Roche Bros. 10am until noon. Admission only \$15. For more information, please call the Club at 617-327-7306.

1 Sunday Traditions

5 Thursday 5th Annual West Roxbury Roslindale Kiwanis Dinner and Auction. Call Bob McNeill for more information at 617-327-3100. 6 pm. Donation \$15.

6 Friday Holy Ghost Fathers Annual Fundraiser. Doors open at 7 pm. Admission only \$10. Music by the Andy Healy Band. Great raffle prizes and more. For information, please call Fr. Peter Nolan at 617-947-1057 or Cathy Coppinger at 617-323-2800

8 Sunday Andy Healy Band

13 Friday The Sean Folan and Tom Clifford’s Ireland On the Move TV Shows Annual Fundraiser. Music by Margaret Dalton. \$15 admission. For more information, please call Sean Folan at 857-719-6979.

14 Saturday Pub Night with Ireland the Band. Free Admission

15 Sunday Wild Rovers

21 Saturday Mass for Deceased Members and Installation of Officers. Music by Mossie Coughlin. 7 pm.

22 Sunday Erin’s Melody

29 Sunday Fintan Stanley

DECEMBER 2015

3 Thursda Members Meeting at 7:30 pm. Please bring your membership card.

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Traveling People

Where to stay in Ireland? You can count on hospitality experts

By JUDY ENRIGHT
SPECIAL TO THE BIR

Nothing enhances an Irish experience like having a wonderful place to stay – and no one knows that better than the owners of assorted types of accommodation whether hotels or bed and breakfast homes.

Visitors and Irish travelers, too, are looking for comfort but also value, location, a warm welcome, and charm. Thankfully, there are still many places where you will find all of the above – and more.

EXPERTS

There are many travel and accommodation specialists in Ireland who have been writing about the hospitality industry for many years. Supported by research from assistant editors, some experts write books and newspaper articles and others present awards to their chosen favorites. It's generally viewed as a great honor to be chosen by the likes of John and Sally McKenna or Georgina Campbell.

The McKennas, who own Estragon Press in Durrus, Co. Cork, are among the best known authorities. Each year for many years, the McKennas published a book of their annual "100 Best" Irish places to stay, shop, and eat. The books were always on my "must buy" list when I was in Ireland because they were such fun to read. John is not short on opinions nor is he timid about sharing them, so it was always interesting to read his take on the various aspects of Irish tourism and accommodation. For those familiar with the McKennas, they were formerly published as Bridgestone Guides but are now McKenna's Guides. They have an app for Apple and Android and are also on Facebook. I have not seen printed versions of their "100 Best" for the past few years, but that could mean my chosen bookstore just doesn't have them.

The McKennas recently hopped on the Wild Atlantic Way bandwagon and published a book highlighting restaurants and accommodation along the route, promoted by the Tourist Board, that stretches along the West Coast from Donegal to Co. Cork. And Sally researched and wrote a highly acclaimed book, "Extreme Greens, Understanding Seaweeds"



Maire O'Connor, who owns Lough Inagh Lodge Hotel in Recess, Co. Galway, with her dog, Sophie. Lough Inagh was named by Georgina Campbell as "Pet friendly hotel of the year for 2016." It isn't every hotel that has a ram (real or otherwise) in the living room, but you can find this proud creature at Gregan's Castle Hotel in Co. Clare.

Judy Enright photos



Above: Lovely Lough Inagh Lodge Hotel in Recess, Connemara, was cited in Georgina Campbell's annual awards as Pet-Friendly Hotel of the year. Below, left: Every year, Irish food writer Georgina Campbell and her staff of hospitality professionals name award winners in numerous categories. Temple House in Ballymote, Co. Sligo, was awarded best Country House Breakfast for 2016. Below, right: Irish food writer and guidebook author Georgina Campbell named Gregan's Castle Hotel in Ballyvaughan, Co. Clare, as 2016 Hotel of the Year and also for having the best Hotel Breakfast of the Year for 2016.



about the many uses of the ocean algae that are so common along Ireland's many miles of shoreline. See guides.ie for more.

AWARDS

Another well-known authority on all things Irish is Georgina Campbell, author and presenter of Ireland's longest-running and extremely prestigious hospitality awards. Award winners were chosen after anonymous inspectors visited and paid their own way.

Several of this year's top places – Gregan's Castle Hotel in Ballyvaughan, Co. Clare, and Lough Inagh Lodge Hotel in Recess, Co. Galway – are among my favorites, too. Both are privately owned and operated by the owners, who often greet you at the door and make you feel so welcome.

Campbell's Ireland Guide named Lough Inagh as the "Pet Friendly

Hotel of the Year" for 2016. And aren't dogs such great conversation starters as well as a little reminder of home? Whether you own a dog or are just a dog lover, it's hard to resist striking up a conversation with someone who's sharing the holiday with a best friend or two.

Over more than a decade of staying at Lough Inagh, I have made friends and still stay in touch with a lovely lady named Orla from Dublin and her sweet, small dog named Polly, and with a couple, also from Dublin, and their handsome large dog, Zeus. And, of course, Lough Inagh's owner Maire O'Connor's pup, Sophie, is one of my favorites, too.

Campbell writes in her Lough Inagh award: "In Ireland we lag way behind our UK neighbors when it comes to pet friendliness; if you Google an area in Britain looking for somewhere to stay, chances are that pet friendly options will pop straight up. Water bowls are put out at doors and in bars wherever you go and dogs are genuinely welcome almost everywhere.

"Although it is far from the norm, many establishments here have quietly welcomed dogs for years, and our Pet Friendly Hotel of the Year [Lough Inagh] is one of them."

PET PAMPERING

Campbell adds, "It's a pity that Ireland is not very well supplied with pet-friendly places to stay, as it's a great place to

travel with your dog - yet many pet owners decide to go somewhere else that's more welcoming when deciding where to take a break. But there are some really lovely places that do welcome dogs and, while that includes a few pretty high-fallutin' hotels offering doggy welcome packs and even pet pampering while you're at the spa, plenty of dog owners really prefer the fuss-free places that [with a few necessary restrictions] treat your pet prettily much like one of the family."

Further, says Campbell about Lough Inagh, "A small owner-managed Irish hotel is a wonderful thing - add a wild West of Ireland setting and pet-friendliness to the mix and it becomes irresistible to a surprising number of people. And Maire O'Connor's lovely, understated country house hotel, Lough Inagh Lodge, is that kind of place. It's beautifully located in deepest Connemara and many guests bring their dogs because it's in a brilliant area for walking and other country pursuits.

"But even if you do none of that, it's just so relaxing that pets are welcome in some areas of the hotel [in the cozy bar, for example] and to come in at night," Campbell writes. "Well-behaved owners are equally welcome, it should be said."

GREGAN'S CASTLE

Gregan's Castle Hotel is beautifully located at the bottom of Corkscrew Hill in Co. Clare's Burren region, but it's a

manor house rather than a castle like Ashford or Dromoland. Campbell has chosen Gregan's as the top 2016 Hotel of the Year and has also given Gregan's kudos for best hotel breakfast of the year.

Campbell's award says: "As we have great independent hoteliers [such as Gregan's owners Simon Haden and his wife, Frederieke McMurray], an important aspect of this country's unique appeal will be in safe hands." Campbell said the editors "don't look for perfection and we certainly don't expect to find it, but occasionally something comes pretty darn close ... and, if the Guide's recent experience is anything to go by, this second-generation family-run hotel is certainly one of them."

"Thoughtfully looking out onto its unique surrounding landscape [the Burren], the hotel offers a quiet haven of discreet opulence, warm hospitality, and caring service. The exceptional food has drawn many new guests in recent years, and their long-established policy of showcasing local produce has given well-earned support to producers as well as highlighting the area's unique foods.

"Yet Gregan's Castle deserves to be seen more in the round, as the beautiful rooms - all refurbished with understated elegance in recent years, with constant reference to the surrounding landscape - the cozy bar with its welcoming open fire,

the original artwork, and the well-tended environmentally friendly grounds are just a few of the many other equally appealing aspects of this lovely hotel. It is a relaxing and inspiring place to stay, and merits the highest praise."

We could not agree more with every compliment. Even though Gregan's is expensive, it's well worth a splurge because it's a fun, relaxing, and elegant place to stay with exceptional food. Simon credits Frederieke for the interior design of the hallways and rooms, which are beautifully done with original art, classic fabrics, and antiques.

And Frederieke's sense of humor shines through in the full size papier-mâché ram proudly standing near the windows in one living room and the wild, bright green wallpaper with silly running cows that decks the walls of the ladies' room off the front hall. Both make you laugh.

CAFÉ RUA

We were happy to see Café Rua in Castlebar – an outstanding eatery where we've dined many times – win as "Just Ask" Restaurant of the Year for 2016. ("Just Ask!" is a public awareness campaign to encourage diners to look for information on where food - especially meat - comes from, and encourages chefs to provide the information on their menus.)

Rua stands out from the crowd for many reasons, Campbell wrote, "not least the leadership that two generations of the McMahon family have shown in seeking out and supporting the very best of foods from the region."

Other Campbell award winners for 2016 include: James Street South in Belfast, Restaurant of the Year; Dylan McGrath, of Taste at Rustic in Dublin, Chef of the Year; MacCarthy's Bar, Castletownbere, Co. Cork, Pub of the Year; Teach Nan Phaidai on Inis Mór, Aran Islands, Cafe of the Year.

Some of the other awards include: Taste of the Waterways Award to Larkin's, Garry Kennedy, Co. Tipperary; Seafood Restaurant of the Year, La Cote in Wexford; Wine Award of the Year, Stanley's in Dublin; Family Friendly Restaurant, Stonecutters Kitchen in Doolin, Co. Clare; Country House of the Year, Greenmount House, Dingle, Co. Kerry; B&B of the Year, Straneden, Portstewart, Co. Derry, and named Hideaway of the Year, Bervie on Achill Island in Co. Mayo. See ireland-guide.com for more information.

IRELAND

It's nearly the end of 2015 but there are still many great reasons to visit Ireland and there is still much to see and do there. For information on activities and more, visit Ireland.com, the tourist Ireland's website. And, watch for great deals on airfare and ground travel in this shoulder season.



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