

November 2017

VOL. 28 #11

\$2.00

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Boston Neighborhood News, Inc.

BOSTON IRISH REPORTER

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Galway hurlers Colm and Jason Flynn gave their team captain Andy Smith a lift as they celebrated their victory over Dublin at the AIG Fenway Hurling Classic in Nov. 2015. The classic will be reprised this month as a one-day tournament on Nov. 19.
Image: Ray McManus/Sportsfile

Sun., Nov. 19 is the day: AIG Hurling Classic returns to Fenway Park

By DANIEL SHEEHAN
BIR CORRESPONDENT

The AIG Hurling Classic is coming back to Fenway Park, this time in the form of a three-match tournament on Sun., Nov. 19. The event will feature four of Ireland's top teams, with Galway taking on Dublin in a rematch of the 2015 contest, and Tipperary facing Clare in the second preliminary match. The winners will then play for the championship.

America's oldest major league ballpark has had ties to Ireland for nearly a century. It was there in 1919 that the eminent Irish leader Eamon de Valera made his case for the recognition of a newly independent Ireland to a standing-room only gathering. A century later, the Irish of Boston's ties to the motherland remain as strong as ever, as evidenced by the immense popularity of the 2015 hurling exhibition, which was played in front of a crowd of 30,000. That contest saw Galway come from behind in a thrilling matchup against Dublin to win, 50-47.

Event organizers were encouraged and inspired by the success of the first of what they hoped would become a recurring series. "The strong demand and positive response to the inaugural AIG Fenway Hurling Classic in 2015 prompted us to make this year's event even bigger and better," said Fenway Sports Management managing director Mark Lev. "The game's exciting combination of speed, skill, constant action, and scoring has really resonated with fans."

So this month, "the fastest game on grass" returns to Fenway in the wake of last month's All-Ireland Championship,



Darren Gleeson of Co. Tipperary joined Red Sox President Sam Kennedy to announce the AIG Fenway Classic last June.

which saw Galway emerge victorious over Waterford. The reigning world champions will seek to defend their title and earn a second straight victory over Dublin in the Fenway Classic.

"Along with the championship trophy, there will be an intense Irish pride for counties competing in the final match," said Gaelic Players Association chief executive officer Dermot Earley. "The new tournament format is going to bring the best out of four brilliant teams. It will be an unforgettable day for fans, players, and the sport of hurling as a whole."

The classic will be preceded by a lively Irish festival featuring Irish food, music, and dancing. The festival will begin at 11 a.m. The preliminary games will be played at 12:30 and 1:30 p.m., and the championship match at 3 p.m. Tickets are available for purchase at mlb.com/redsox/tickets/special-events/hurling.

Immigrant experience draws attention at Irish Honors luncheon

By DANIEL SHEEHAN
REPORTER CORRESPONDENT

The *Boston Irish Reporter* hosted its eighth annual Boston Irish Honors luncheon on Oct. 26 at the Seaport Hotel. The event drew some 400 guests who helped to honor *Boston Globe* columnist Kevin Cullen, former state highway commissioner and Boston mayoral advisor Tom Tinlin, and a Dorchester and South Boston family dedicated to serving their community: Annmarie, Nora, and Bill Kennedy.

The event was bookended by passionate speeches from Mayor Marty Walsh and Cullen, both of whom preached humility and tolerance to the largely Boston Irish audience in the context of the divisive national debate surrounding the anti-immigrant climate in Washington.

Walsh's parents immigrated from Connemara, Co. Galway in the 1960s, while Cullen's grandparents came to America a generation earlier.

The mayor, who has been outspoken against the current administration's harsh stance on immigration, implored his fellow Irish Americans to remember that just a few generations ago, their forebears were in the same position as today's Latin American immigrants.

"Those of us that are Irish-Americans must be on the front lines to continue to fight and welcome im-



Boston Mayor Martin J. Walsh offered opening remarks at the Boston Irish Honors luncheon, saying in part: "Those of us that are Irish-Americans must be on the front lines to continue to fight and welcome immigrants — to protect them from persecution, and protect them from hate. 'Many of our ancestors and relatives who came to this country were undocumented. We should never forget that.'"

Isabel Leon/City of Boston photo

migrants — to protect them from persecution, and protect them from hate," he said. "Many of our [Irish] ancestors and relatives who came to this country were undocumented. We should never forget that."

The mayor said that it was only fitting that the BIR honors continue to be conscious of the plight of immigrants Boston, for they are the people who built and continue to build our city.

He added: "It's important for us today ... to remember that those immigrants coming today will be the leaders of the future. Some day they'll be somebody standing, maybe at this microphone, maybe at this luncheon, whose mother might have come from Honduras and whose father might have come from El Salvador and they met at a hall or restaurant in East Boston. Twenty-five years later... their son or daughter could become mayor of Boston. And we hope that the immigrants 25 years from now are treated better than the immigrants of today are being treated."

Cullen echoed Walsh's sentiments in his remarks concluding the luncheon, chiding those who would willfully ignore their own immigrant past and turn a blind eye to the current plight of those seeking a better life in America.

As a group that "faced institutional discrimination for

(Continued on page 17)



I work in Hollywood but I keep my money
in my hometown-Kevin Chapman

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Doherty memoir sheds light on Kennedy friendships

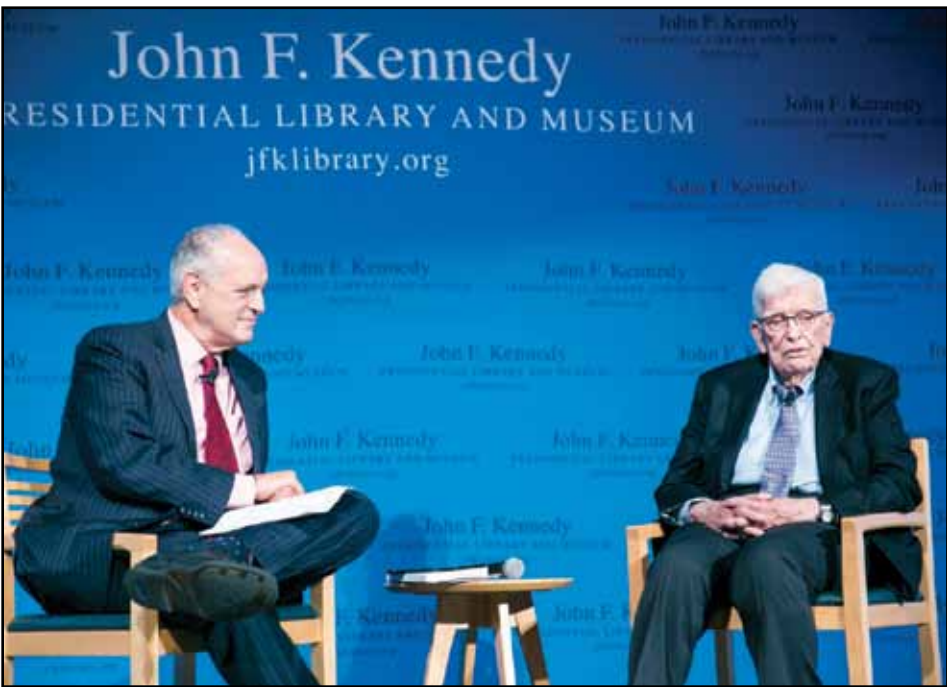
BY DANIEL SHEEHAN
REPORTER CORRESPONDENT

About a minute had passed since Gerard Doherty welcomed me into his office on Franklin Street in Boston, and he had already launched into one of his favorite stories about the Kennedy brothers, one involving Ted Kennedy and a bathtub in central Massachusetts.

“Ted was accustomed to soaking in a tub every afternoon for half an hour to relax,” Doherty said. “It was toward the end of a long day of campaigning and we were in a small, remote town in central Mass when he urged me to find a tub for him. We came upon a home and I walked up and knocked on the front door and explained the situation. The man who answered didn’t believe me!”

In the end, the confused homeowner obliged after seeing Kennedy in the flesh, providing Doherty with a particularly entertaining anecdote, one of many in his new book, “They Were My Friends—Jack, Bob and Ted.”

Doherty, 89, has long been an eminent figure in Boston’s political realm. A Charlestown native, he has been many things: state representative, Democratic Party chairman in Massachu-



Gerard Doherty speaks as WGBH’s Jim Braude listens at the JFK Library on Oct. 15.

setts, lawyer, real estate broker. But most notably, he was a political advisor, strategist, and campaign manager who worked on the front lines for President John F. Kennedy, US attorney general and US Senator Robert Kennedy, and US Sen. Edward Kennedy.

Doherty has seen a lot and done even more, in the process amassing a wealth of political and life wisdom over the years, as well as quite a few good

stories to tell.

His storytelling takes center stage in the autobiographical memoir, which spans the nearly ten decades of his life, recounting whimsical moments like the bathtub saga with bemused candor while recalling moments of tragedy with grace.

Doherty touches on each of the many phases of his life, including his education at Harvard and beyond, his bout with tuberculosis as a young

man, and his first foray into politics.

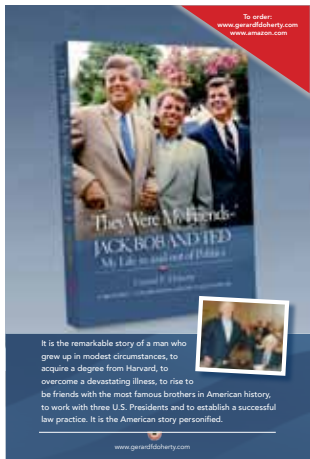
Employing a matter-of-fact narrative voice, he works his way through the throngs of people who have made an impact on his life in one way or another, revealing a complex web of personal connections at the center of which he often found himself.

From his childhood days playing sandlot football to his experience campaigning door to door as a state

representative, Doherty presents an intimate portrait of his hometown, its Irish Catholic history, and its complicated political past.

From his stories of success on the campaign trail, it’s clear that the political savvy he learned in Charlestown proved useful on both the state and national level. Doherty’s boldness and creativity were instrumental in a number of political victories, including one in Indiana during RFK’s presidential campaign when Doherty, in what he calls “a Machiavellian idea,” solicited the help of a local marching band to help rally support and gather signatures at community churches.

In addition to its treasure trove of stories and anecdotes, “They Were My Friends” also includes a number of previously unreleased photographs from Doherty’s personal collection, many of which hang on the wall in his office. One memorable photo depicts Ted Kennedy reaching up to shake the hand of a lineman perched halfway up a telephone pole. The book is full of presentations like these – rare, candid glimpses into the lives of the Kennedys from someone who maintained a close rela-

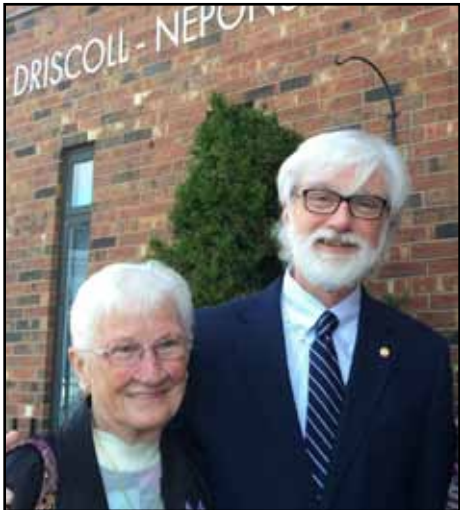


tionship with the family for decades on end.

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The JFK Library hosted a conversation with Doherty and WGBH’s Jim Braude on Oct. 15. At the conclusion, Braude read the one line from the book that he thought to be “wildly untrue.” Doherty was recalling a meeting with two politicians during which he was forced to stall. He writes, “I then did something I do quite well. I talked for a very long time without saying anything of consequence.”

Whether this was Doherty being transparent or simply modest, readers of his book will find at the end that they have learned a great deal about a figure who has permanently cemented his legacy as a significant figure in Boston and American politics.



Dan Driscoll and long time health center employee Freda Nolan.
Bill Forry photo

It’s now the Daniel Driscoll Health Center

Dan Driscoll, who retired last year from his post as president and CEO of Harbor Health Services, Inc., was honored by his colleagues in a special way last month. The health center on Neponset Avenue that he led for 40 years was renamed the Daniel Driscoll Neponset Health Center.

He began his career in community health at the Neponset facility in 1977. By the end of his tenure, Harbor Health had grown to a staff of 550 people with a budget of \$72 million.



Dave Burke “Mr. Hibernian” in Lawrence.

Lawrence presents ‘Dave Burke Way’

On Sat., Nov. 4, at 1 p.m., the city of Lawrence will rename East Kingston Street in St. Patrick parish “Dave Burke Way” in honor of a beloved leading figure in the Hibernian community who passed away in 2009.

Mr. Burke, a national board member for the Ancient Order of Hibernians, was involved in countless events and fundraisers over a span of many decades. Often working behind the scenes, he maintained close connections with the motherland and pushed for peace and reconciliation in Northern Ireland.

John Foley, a Boston immigration attorney and close friend, remembers Mr. Burke as a selfless, dedicated community servant. “He was always doing stuff for everybody else,” said Foley. “Anything Irish that happened in Massachusetts would have had his fingerprints on it.”

– DANIEL SHEEHAN

Mayor Marty Walsh has earned our vote again

Four years ago, in this space, we endorsed Martin J. Walsh for mayor of Boston. The *Reporter Newspapers* was one of only two city newspapers (The *Weekly Dig* was the other) to back Walsh in the final election.

Commentary

This time, as Walsh seeks a second term, we have company. The *Boston Globe* and the *Boston Herald* both endorsed Walsh this week, a reversal for both dailies who, in 2013, favored John Connolly, Walsh’s opponent. Last week, Connolly himself endorsed the mayor.

The mayor has disappointed some Bostonians, but he has clearly won over many converts in the last four years. In growing his base, the former state representative from Dorchester has punched in a solid first term in office and earned our endorsement again in next month’s final election.

Marty Walsh is a steady hand and a thoughtful, compassionate leader who is clearly the best-equipped and fully committed candidate to lead the city through the next four years.

In 2013, we wrote that Walsh has “the potential to be a transformative leader for Boston on multiple fronts, but especially when it comes to job equity and neighborhood development.” The Walsh administration is a work in progress on both fronts, and on other key indicators, but he has set in motion – or continued – important work that has made Boston a better city, with the promise for even

better outcomes in the future.

The mayor has been faulted by some, including his opponent in this race, for putting too much emphasis on big-ticket wins for the city – such as landing General Electric or seeking to lure Amazon. This critique, which suggests that such efforts undermine other city priorities, like school funding or efforts to curb homelessness, doesn’t ring true to Bostonians who are paying attention.

We actually like Walsh’s big ideas. Bringing in companies that will expand the city’s tax and job base is a good thing. Boston’s long-ago days as a stultified backwater that hemorrhaged people and talent are in the rear view. The mayor has seized upon this concept. While not every initiative he has attempted has, or will, pan out, we want our city government to think big, embrace innovation, and trumpet our virtues to the world. And we expect that they will be skilled enough to be able to multi-task. Marty Walsh and his team have shown they are able to manage an increasingly complex city.

If there’s a downside chasing big ideas, it’s the increased pressure on housing and transportation, and valid concerns about potential displacement. But these are regional problems that Boston cannot be expected to mitigate on its own. The Walsh team has put its best foot forward – and followed through – by encouraging new housing starts and seeking to build middle-income units.

The Department of Neighborhood Development’s accelerated initiative to

build affordable units on formerly vacant land is a standout. The data have shown that Walsh’s overall strategy of encouraging more density and higher-end housing across the city is easing the pressure on rents a bit in older housing stock. That needs to continue and extend deeper into Dorchester and Mattapan. But clearly, the city is moving in that direction.

We’d like to see a lot more emphasis on planning out Columbia Point – where developments have been stalled or left in a chaotic state at best – and where the Walsh team can really have a constructive influence. On the development side, the Point neighborhood should become a focus of Walsh’s next term.

The administration’s record so far in improving the city’s school system is incomplete, but moving in the right direction. His team made a good call locally in converting the Mattahunt elementary school to an early education center, with an emphasis on Haitian language learners. Schools like the Kenny in Adams Corner are attracting more families. And Walsh has reached an accord with teachers to expand instruction time and fairly compensate our hard-working educators.

For the mayor, there’s ample room for improvement on multiple fronts. Police body cameras should be put into full use across the city without further delay. The city, and the state, need to change the hiring priorities for police and fire positions to allow for a much larger proportion of people of color to earn spots.

Walsh’s promise to add diversity to the city workforce has been stymied in part by those civil service hiring hurdles. He has been far more successful in diversifying other parts of city government, including his own cabinet.

Much of what we saw as the promise of a Marty Walsh mayoralty has come to fruition. The city’s bond rating is top notch under his watch. He is a collaborative leader who works well with the city council and is eager to reach consensus. He has shown a willingness to re-think his own plans – as in the case of the Boston 2024 Olympic bid – when he recognizes that a course correction is necessary.

The mayor has spoken out forcefully, and with genuine feeling, about the outrages of the current regime in Washington, delivering a strong and urgently needed voice at a time of great upheaval for our nation. Cynics might say it’s a matter of expediency for someone seeking re-election, but we know from our years covering Walsh as a back-bench state rep who spoke out on matters of civil rights, such as LGBTQ equality, that Marty Walsh is simply being Marty Walsh.

Four years ago, we concluded: “City government needs a leader at its helm who has an authentic feel for our neighborhoods and who understands at a gut level the pressures of the daily grind that most city residents face. Boston will have that mayor in Marty Walsh.”

We were right about that, and Marty Walsh has earned our vote on Nov. 7.

– Bill Forry

How we told listeners that ‘Eddie’ beat ‘Teddy’

The estimable Gerard Doherty, a Charlestown guy who went to Malden Catholic and Harvard College in the late 1940 and early 1950s, was elected a state representative in 1956 at the age of 28.

While he was still at Harvard, Doherty was part of the Townie crew that helped Jack Kennedy win his US Senate seat in 1952. He was part of the reelection campaign in 1958, and on the team for the winning run for the presidency in 1960. Two years later, now a lawyer out of Suffolk Law School, he ran the campaign to elect 30-year-old Teddy Kennedy, JFK’s youngest brother, to the seat once held by the president.

A legendary figure in Boston politics for seven decades, Doherty recently published a memoir entitled, “They Were My Friends – Jack, Bob and Ted.”



For me, highlights from the stories he tells are his recollections about EMK’s first campaign in 1962, when he was challenged by then-Attorney General Edward J. McCormack. The contest was known as “Teddy vs. Eddie,” and as a fresh-faced BC High grad, I campaigned that summer with other young people as one of the “Students for McCormack.”

The campaigns rented space side-by-side in downtown buildings where the Tremont on the Common apartments now stand. We McCormack supporters got to see young Teddy frequently, and every time we saw his car coming down Tremont Street, two or three of us would run outside to greet – make that taunt – him with McCormack for Senate signs.

The Kennedy campaign slogan was “He Can Do More for Massachusetts.” We countered that with a pair of bumperstickers: “I Back Jack” ... “But Teddy isn’t Ready.”

The campaign featured a now-famous debate at South Boston High School in McCormack’s boyhood neighborhood, where my candidate joined the chorus, saying, “Teddy, if your name were Edward Moore, your candidacy would be a joke.” Kennedy was shaken by the attack, and I can still hear the tremble in his voice as he gave his prepared closing remarks.

“It was an interesting debate,” Doherty recalls in his book. “Ted and McCormack went back-and-forth. Considering McCormack’s extensive experience with debate and Teddy’s lack of experience, Teddy did OK.”

“By the end of the debate, Teddy was furious at McCormack. I was the first one up to Teddy and I congratulated him and I said let’s go. He said, ‘I’d like to go and punch him in the nose.’ I told him you’re not going to do that, let’s go.”

I moved him quickly out of the auditorium. We waited for the verdict.

“The general perception of the public expression on radio talk shows was that Teddy held his own and if anything he came off more positive than McCormack. There was no doubt he was a more visibly pleasant person. Those that heard the debate on the radio thought that McCormack won, while those who watched it on television thought Ted won. The TV camera showed McCormack snarling and grimacing when he talked.”

I was there in Southie High that night. Near the end, four of us McCormack students jumped in the car and raced back to headquarters to create our own “spin room.” In short order we captured the phones to a WMEX 1510 radio talk show hosted by a guy named Jerry Williams, and managed to hold all four lines. We took turns swapping phones, proclaiming that McCormack was the clear winner.

For those few moments, we McCormack operatives alternated the phones back-and-forth, each time changing our neighborhood and trying to disguise our voices.

When it was my third time to identify myself with some fictitious name and address, I couldn’t come up with a good story – I was from Dot, the Rozzie, but where from now? I started to laugh.

Suspecting something fishy, the talk master went to commercial break, his producer hung up all the lines, and the connections we had controlled were gone – forever. It was the beginning of the end for us, and as we would learn, for the McCormack campaign.

Still, for a few minutes after the debate, Eddie was beating Teddy 8 to 2.

It was, I think, the only lead McCormack ever had in the whole campaign!

BOSTON IRISH REPORTER

Brexit presents a threat to Ireland and the world

BY JOE LEARY
SPECIAL TO THE BIR

At first, no one took the Brexit vote seriously. Few believed that the British would actually leave the European Union (EU). But the decision has become a reality and Ireland and the rest of the world could be among its casualties.



The EU was originally set up so that the 29 countries of Europe could trade among themselves without custom duties. The union also encouraged free travel with no passport control between countries that had so often gone to war with one another.

The British people with their superior attitudes were skeptical of the EU at first, but they joined up several years after its establishment when they saw that it was far more profitable to be in than out.

In answer to demands that British participation in the union be reviewed, former Prime Minister David Cameron called for a special election in June 2016, and to the surprise of most everyone, 51.9 percent of the people voted to leave the EU. It appears few voters understood the real impact of what they had voted for.

Northern Ireland, Scotland, and the people of London voted to stay with Europe, but majority ruled, and Brexit became a reality.

As former president George W. Bush said recently, this return to nationalism can be very harmful to world peace and cooperation.

Leaving the European Union requires negotiations to set up border controls to collect custom duties and institute passport controls. Thus far, talks have produced little agreement. Two of the main sticking points are the land border between Ireland and Northern Ireland and the large payments the British will owe the remaining 28 European countries for breaking away.

Northern Ireland and Ireland trade extensively with each other, and with Britain. To set up full controls and custom stations between them will be very expensive and, further, a violation of the hard-won Good Friday agreement.

Americans in Dublin looking to visit Belfast can now drive to Northern Ireland in less than two hours. A return to a closed border with passport controls will both delay and discourage frequent travel over this now invisible border. The government of Ireland estimates it will have to install eight new customs and passport facilities to keep track of all the activity.

As Ireland’s prime minister, Leo Varadkar, said in late October in the *Belfast Telegraph* “It is still not clear what the UK wants in terms of a new relationship, because on the one hand it seems that the UK wants to have a close trading relationship with Europe like it has now, but also seems to want something different, and it is very hard for us as European prime ministers to understand exactly what the UK wants.” Expanding on that confusion in an interview with the BBC, Varadkar said, “It certainly can’t be, and I think anyone will understand it can’t be, having all the benefits of EU membership but none of the responsibilities and none of the costs.”

Complicating the situation is the fact that the political situation in Northern Ireland is a mess. The leaders can’t seem to agree on anything. With the rise of the Catholic vote in the elections last March, and the resulting dramatic increase in Sinn Fein representation in the membership of the Northern Ireland assembly, the new 108 members of the assembly have been unable to agree on procedures. There have been no Assembly meetings since early in the year, and, therefore, no representation in the Brexit talks to protect Northern Ireland.

Former President Bill Clinton visited all the parties last month in an effort to help reconcile differences. He also went to London and met with British Prime Minister Theresa May as part of the same mission.

In the British parliamentary elections in June, the Conservatives, led by Theresa May, fell ten votes short of the number needed to create a new British government in London. So, the former Paisley Party in Northern Ireland known as the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) pledged its ten votes to the Conservatives, allowing them to form a government. One result of that pledge is that the DUP now has enormous influence within the Brexit negotiations.

The DUP wants a “hard border” to solidify their position as separate from Ireland. We can only guess at what private agreements have been made between the DUP and British Conservatives. And since the Northern Ireland Assembly is inoperative at the moment, there is no one to represent the Nationalist side.

Complicating things further are indications that Sinn Fein leadership is conflicted within itself and is not taking a firm stand on issues. With the death of its powerful leader, Martin McGuinness, there may be leadership difficulties ahead.

Northern Ireland Secretary of State James Brokenshire, who reports directly to May in London, had issued an ultimatum setting the end of October as the time for a newly organized Northern Ireland Assembly to be in place. That is a situation worth watching.

Off the Bench

Trump puts us in reverse gear, makes America less great

BY JAMES W. DOLAN
SPECIAL TO THE REPORTER

It’s all about winning. President Trump sees the world divided between winners and losers. He’s the winner-in-chief and opponents are losers incapable of recognizing his unique skills or displaying the deference to which he is entitled. He views himself more as a king than as a public servant. He sees former President Obama as an adversary. Having failed to disqualify his predecessor by challenging his citizenship, he has chosen to undo his accomplishments.

One of the original “birthers,” Trump was unable to defeat Obama by using the false charge that he was a Muslim from Africa. He now misses no opportunity to denigrate the 44th president. From climate change, civil rights, trade policy, health care, consumer



protection to nuclear arms proliferation and use of public lands, Trump is systematically undoing the Obama legacy. It’s as if he’s trying to retroactively nullify the election of our first black president. Trump is the anti-Obama, resenting everything a man so unlike himself has achieved. How much of this is policy differences and how much is personal?

The two are so different. One is dignified, prudent, engaged, intelligent, articulate, humble, and disciplined. The other is impulsive, immature, erratic, egocentric, ill-informed, and insecure. Is it any wonder that Trump is jealous of a reputation so far beyond his understanding or capacity? Knowing he will never achieve that level of respect motivates his destructive impulses.

Uncomfortable in the formulation of policy, Trump instead relies on his instinctive reaction to people. Whether or not he likes or trusts them usually depends not on their ability but on the deference they display. Craving adulation and lacking the capacity for self-deprecation, he resents criticism and attempts to mask his obvious weaknesses by demeaning oth-

ers. He’s always the victim; nothing is ever his fault.


To what degree does Obama being black affect Trump’s judgment? Racism is obviously a factor motivating a portion of his base. Trump’s narcissism is a compulsion he cannot control, manifesting itself as a superiority complex. It’s natural for him to conclude that others are inferior, lacking his intelligence and intuitive skills. Does that explain why he is so intent upon dismantling virtually everything Obama did? Is he motivated by a belief that a black man could not have been a successful president? Does he think that by attacking Obama he elevates himself?

It must be disheartening for the former president to watch the undoing of so much of what he accomplished, particularly by someone who appears to have no idea what he is doing. That history is likely to view Trump as a failed president offers small consolation. Silently, Obama watches as his policies are undermined, wisely choosing not to debate his successor. To engage with Trump is to sink to his level. Incapable of coherent dialogue, he revels in the bullying, name-calling, pettiness, and lies that for him have been so preposterously successful.

Whether or not one agreed with his policies, Obama was presidential. He possessed the character, dignity, integrity, compassion, and decency one should expect in that office. He looked, spoke, and acted like a president and he earned the respect of world leaders. Trump cannot abide comparisons that make him look bad. His so far futile attempt to replace and repeal Obamacare with almost anything, regardless of how destructive, is an example of his compulsive need to “win” at any cost. Since branding is his business, the very name “Obamacare” must irritate him. Not one to acknowledge or build on the record of a predecessor, the only way to defeat him is to invalidate it.

By carpet bombing the Obama legacy, Trump somehow believes he will be triumphant. Most believed Obama’s election was a sign that the country was moving forward. To erase that achievement places us in reverse and makes America less great.

James W. Dolan is a retired Dorchester District Court judge who now practices law. His column appears regularly in the Reporter. Read his past columns online at DotNews.com.



BOSTON IRISH REPORTER

The Boston Irish Reporter is published monthly by:
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On The Web at www.bostonirish.com
Date of Next Issue: December, 2017
Deadline for Next Issue: Monday, November 20 at 12 noon

Published monthly in the first week of each month.

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Point of View

• Trump’s ‘fake news’ on an Irish tax rate;
• When an Irishman spoke for the Pilgrims

By PETER F. STEVENS
BIR STAFF
A Grand, Green Lie – When it comes to the Emerald Isle, President Donald Trump was the one – surprise, surprise – peddling “fake news,” which are the words Ireland’s *Taoiseach*, Leo Varadkar, used to characterize recent comments from the White House. In a recent comment to reporters, Trump said, “I hear that Ireland is going to be reducing their corporate rates down to 8 percent from 12.” He was talking about his determination to lower US corporate tax rates.

For starters, Ireland’s rate is 12.5 percent. According to Henry McDonald, of *The Guardian*, “Trump angered Irish officials with his comments at a White House briefing, in which he alleged that Ireland was going to cut the tax on corporations such as Apple, Google and Facebook to 8 percent.”

While taking questions in the Dail (the Irish Parliament), Varadkar minced no words about the president’s mis-statement: “I can confirm that President Trump’s claim that we are proposing to reduce our corporation profit tax to 8 percent is indeed fake news. There is no such plan to do so.”

Ireland’s low corporate tax rate has engendered criticism from fellow EU members and from US politicians for Ireland’s luring of giant American companies to set up shop in Ireland. Trump is on solid

ground in pointing out that companies are getting around US taxes by operating in large part overseas. Of course, he neglects to mention that these companies were never paying anywhere close to the American tax rate as it was.

That said, Trump and any relationship with the truth and simple facts parted ways long, long before he won the 2016 election. Perhaps the president has faced a tougher or two on his Doonbeg links, but the *Taoiseach* wasted little time in calling him out for his – well, let’s call it “fake news.”

Talking Turkey – As Thanksgiving nears, it’s fitting to remember the Boston Irishman who put his own stamp on the holiday. One might think that Thanksgiving traditions do not reflect anything Irish. One would be wrong in that assumption.

In 1889, at ceremonies in Plymouth dedicating the National Monument to the Forefathers, the famous broad-shouldered, mustachioed poet who rose to deliver the main speech was not someone bearing the name Bradford, Alden, Winslow, or Carver. Nor was he a celebrated Yankee author such as Oliver Wendell Holmes. The man who delivered the ode to the original Pilgrims was an Irishman, a Boston Irishman. John Boyle O’Reilly had been a Fenian rebel and a British Army cavalryman condemned to death by a British military court for treason.

Only his daring escape from a prison in Western Australia had brought him to the same shore where he now prepared to honor a vivid national memory: the arrival of the Pilgrims in Plymouth in 1620.

O’Reilly, the nationally acclaimed editor of the *Boston Pilot*, was an essayist and novelist who had carved out a notable literary career in Boston. Not everyone was pleased with the selection of O’Reilly to write a poem honoring the “Pilgrim Fathers.” Locally, letters to editors and people of “polite society” objected that a “foreign-born poet would write and deliver the words “for such an important occasion.”

Former Massachusetts Gov. John Davis Long, the president of the Pilgrim Society, admonished the dismayed dissenters nationwide with his rejoinder that John Boyle O’Reilly was in many ways “a genuine New England Pilgrim, born not on the mainland, but on a small island out at sea.” The fact that the small island was Ireland distressed Americans who contended that only a “real American” – someone born on American soil – should deliver the tribute to the Pilgrim settlers.

The dedication of the Monument garnered nationwide coverage by the press, and O’Reilly was under some pressure to deliver a poem worthy of both his talent and of the occasion to a throng of dignitaries and citizens from all over the nation.

After several testimonials

to the Pilgrims and to the monument were delivered, Mr. O’Reilly stepped forward. In a reception that proved yet again how far the Irish-born writer had climbed in the collective opinion of his fellow immigrants and native-born Americans alike, a newspaperman recorded that “the introduction of John Boyle O’Reilly elicited much enthusiasm.”

“Mr. O’Reilly was the poet of the day,” *The New York Times* reported. The Irishman cleared his throat and began to read aloud his 260-line ode, “The Pilgrim Fathers.” The crowd was riveted.

“Here, on this rock, and on this sterile soil, began the kingdom not of kings, but men...,” he intoned. Emerging from his stanzas were verbal shots at “privilege and Crown,” redolent of a former Fenian who had been denied freedom in his own land, only to find it in that of the Pilgrim fathers.

John Boyle O’Reilly recognized that in Boston and New England, the Irish were still clawing for their own foothold in America. His words in Plymouth brimmed with the hope that, for the Irish, “all the idols” of the crown and Anglo-American privilege would fall.

This Thanksgiving, as families with Irish bloodlines gather to celebrate the holiday, they would do well to recall that Fenian and poet John Boyle O’Reilly claimed a place for the Irish in the Pilgrims’ home town.



It’s -30- for our colleague.

BIR columnist
Bill O’Donnell
bids us all adieu

Bill O’Donnell, the longtime columnist for the *Boston Irish Reporter* whose bona fides as a chronicler of all things Irish in the greater Boston area brook few comparisons, has put down his Reporter’s Notebook and called it a day, citing a need to take it easier. His final column appeared in last month’s BIR.

In a poignant note to BIR editors announcing his retirement, Bill thanked them for providing the space each month to a “scraggety, aging, half-assed wannabe to use the freedom (not absolutely, thank God) to say the truth aloud in ink-driven form, truth without shame or reticence.”

He added: “I am moving along in time, having served in a wonderful enterprise with imaginative colleagues beside me as we stood in service to that one great imperative – truth.”

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BRETT'S BOSTON

By Harry Brett

Exclusive photos of Boston Irish people & events

On Tues., Oct. 10, the JFK Library hosted “In the Name of Peace: John Hume in America,” a new documentary on the work of John Hume, who shared a Nobel Peace Prize for his role in the peace-making in Northern Ireland. A discussion followed with filmmaker Maurice Fitzpatrick and former US Sen. George Mitchell, who served as the chairman of the peace talks. The Boston Globe’s Kevin Cullen moderated; Former US Sen. Paul Kirk introduced the program.

1.) Sen. Paul Kirk, Steven Rothstein, Former US Senate Majority Leader And Special Envoy To Ireland George Mitchell; 2.) Audrey and Steve Johnston; 3.) Prudence Barker and David Lewis, Andover; 4.) Anne Sweeney, No. End and Kathy Murphy, Savin Hill; 5.) Fionnula Quinlan, NE Irish Consul General, Ravi Ganti, So. Boston; 6.) Natalie Mets, Brookline; Mary Sugrue, IAP; 7.) Brian and Linda Moriarty, Duxbury; 8.) Seamus Healy and Breeda Ryan, Braintree; 9.) Lucille Brett, Braintree; Paul Doyle, Weymouth; Fr. Jack Ahern, St. Patrick’s, Roxbury; Peg Brett McCobb, Weymouth; 10.) Beverly McHugh, Charlestown; Marion Galvin, Plymouth; 11.) Kevin Cullen; 12.) Jim Brett, Dorchester; Sen. Paul Kirk, Steven Rothstein.



IRISH INTERNATIONAL IMMIGRANT CENTER



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Website: iiicenter.org Email: immigration@iiicenter.org



From left, Thomas Dalton, IIIC; Shannon Quinn, Norbella Media; Stacey Washkowitz, Norbella Media; Paul Pelan, IIIC.

Living the best of both worlds in Boston

For Co. Tyrone native Shannon Quinn, living in a neighborhood in Dorchester with strong Irish roots and working for a media agency in Boston's historic South End is "the best of both worlds."

A third-year student at Ulster University, Shannon decided to forgo a year of formal study and gain work experience abroad, stating, "I didn't want to stay in Northern Ireland for my placement year [...] never did I think I would be working in the US!"

Shannon currently works as a marketing intern for Norbella Media,

an award-winning media team. The unique partnership between Ulster University and the IIIC allows her 12-month internship to meet the required 'co-op' placement required by her communication, marketing, and advertising degree.

Reflecting on her internship, Shannon says, "I am finding it the best experience I could have ever asked for. I delved into the world of media planning, something I was learning in a classroom a few months ago. Being able to see how business is done in the real world,

especially in America, is a truly unique experience."

Although she only started her position in August, Shannon says co-workers joke that she's "practically a fully-trained media planner, rather than an intern!" She enjoys the variety of her work, and appreciates gaining a "well-rounded sense of the business." She emphasized the advantage her internship on her university studies, and the impact on her career aspirations.

In her free time, Shannon explores Boston's historical roots through the

Freedom Trail, checks out the diverse music scene, and enjoys her newfound softball talent with her co-workers.

She says that she was at first a bit wary of journeying across the pond to "Beantown", but soon found friends and co-workers who are "are hard-working, hilarious, and passionate." The team at Norbella are ensuring her time in Boston is "truly special."

Our thanks to Norbella Media for providing Shannon with this remarkable opportunity!

Immigration Q&A

The ways to avoid abandoning a legal permanent residence

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

A. There are a number of ways in which a lawful permanent resident (LPR) can lose US immigration status, and leaving the United States for extended periods is one of them. Once lost, LPR status can be regained only by beginning the LPR application process all over again.

The rule of thumb for permanent residents is that you should be spending more time in the United States than outside of it, and you should not make any trips that last 180 days (approximately 6 months) or longer. When returning from a trip abroad, you must demonstrate that your trip outside the US was temporary and that you have not abandoned your primary residence in the US.

If you remain outside the United States for more than six months or engage in activities that indicate that your permanent residence is no longer in the United States, US border patrol may decide that you have voluntarily abandoned your permanent residence. If this happens, you will either be asked to sign a document that formally acknowledges that you abandoned your residence, or you will be placed in removal proceedings and asked to demonstrate to an immigration judge that you have not abandoned your residence.

Many people believe that they can retain their LPR status simply by making brief trips into the US each year. That is not correct. If your actual permanent residence is not in the US, you have abandoned your US immigration status. Border patrol looks not only at lengthy absences but also frequent absences in deciding if you have abandoned your status.

Factors that may determine the temporary nature of trips outside the US include the following:

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

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

Did you expect to return to the US within a relatively short time?

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

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

Have you filed US tax returns as a resident of the US?

In your particular case, it seems you did not intend to abandon your US LPR status. You should obtain evidence of your mother's diagnosis to illustrate to US immigration inspectors why you remained away for nine months. Evidence could include letters from her doctors and records from the hospital. You also should assemble evidence to address the points outlined above. You should return to the US as an LPR sooner rather than later and certainly within a year of your departure. *An absence from the US of a year or longer very likely would result in the loss of your permanent residence status.*

As a final note, if you anticipate a prolonged absence from the US, you should apply for a reentry permit, which preserves your residence for up to 2 years. This application must be filed prior to your departure. See reentry permit application Form I-131 at uscis.gov.

For a free, confidential consultation about this or any other aspect of immigration law, visit one of our legal clinics.

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

Matters of Substance

Let us honor, and support, 'caregivers'

By RACHEL REISMAN
IIIC STAFF

As we move through the fall, we have a few important topics that we should bear in mind, particularly as September was Suicide Awareness and Recovery Month and October was Depression Awareness Month. We have previously discussed services available to those struggling with anxiety, mood disorders, and substance abuse, and we keep them in the front of our minds now more than ever. However, it is important to also remember people who love and support those who live with mental health issues and addiction. Setting aside these months enables us to think about "caregivers," to honor them, and to provide resources for them.

Whether you grieve a loved one lost to suicide, help a dear friend with depression, or live with addiction in your family - you need compassion, a place to feel heard, and a space to recover.

Our own Mayor of Boston, Marty Walsh, has written: "I wouldn't be where I am today without the recovery community." The mayor has been a leader across the nation with his Office of Recovery Services. While a formal



Rachel Reisman

recovery community includes the vital treatment and professional services (crisis teams, hospitals, detoxes, AA, therapists and sober living houses), we also know that it is our natural supports (family, friends, and neighbors) that play a huge role in support and recovery. Caregivers champion goals, and provide the courage and love to carry on; these are the vital resources that anyone managing depression or substance abuse needs to create change and remain resilient.

The friends and family of those battling addiction or suicidal thoughts also have to grapple with their own limits - emotional and spiritual exhaustion - while effecting change. Caregivers may spend days and hours worried, sad, angry, frustrated, or

grieving. They are just as much at risk of stress, depression and physical issues, and need community support, recovery services, the goodwill of others, and healthy self-care.

Support groups for caregivers such as Al-Anon and NAMI have meetings throughout the state. They provide education, practical advice, and peer support, and are an anonymous and confidential place for therapy services, reflection, problem solving, and healing. The impact of being with others who truly understand your experience is enormous and healing.

To those of you who love someone who lives with depression or addiction, or who may have lost someone to suicide: these autumn months are special for you too.

The city of Boston leads the way in providing access to mental health and recovery services and we here at the IIIC are honored to play our role in that continuum of care. We are here for those directly affected by these challenges, as well as for loving "caregivers." Please feel free to be in touch at any time - we are free and confidential.

Rachel Reisman, LIC-SW, is Director of Well-

ness Services at the IIIC. Contact her at rreisman@iiicenter.org, at 617.542.7654, Ext. 14., or on FB: Irish Outreach & Wellness Services IIIC-Boston

Additional resources: Mayor's Office of Recovery Services (311 or 617.635.4500), Ma-al-anon-alateen.org, Nami-mass.org, Samaritans.hope.org.



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Insurance and Investments

A good financial strategy is not just about “making money;” it is also about protection.

Provided by Brian W. O’Sullivan, CFP, ChFC, CLU



Some people mistake investing for financial planning. Their “financial strategy” is an investing strategy, in which they chase the return and focus on the yield of their portfolio. As they do so, they miss the big picture. Investing represents but one facet of long-term financial planning. Trying to build wealth is one thing; trying to protect it is another. An effort must be made to manage risk.

Insurance can play a central role in wealth protection. That role is underappreciated - partly because some of the greatest risks to wealth go unnoticed in daily life. Five days a week, investors notice what happens on Wall Street; the market is constantly “top of mind.” What about those “back of mind” things investors may not readily acknowledge?

What if an individual suddenly cannot work? Without disability insurance, a seriously injured or ill person out of the workforce may have to dip into savings to replace income. As the Council for Disability Awareness notes, the average length of a long-term disability claim is nearly three years. Workers’ compensation insurance will only pay out if a disability directly relates to an incident that occurs at work, and most long-term disabilities are not workplace related.

What if an individual suddenly dies? If a household relies on that person’s income, how does it cope financially with that income abruptly disappearing? Does it spend down its savings or its invested assets? In such a crisis, life insurance can offer relief. The payout from a policy with a six-figure benefit can provide the equivalent of years of income.

Why do people underinsure themselves as they strive to build wealth? Partly, it is because death and disability are uncomfortable conversation topics. Many people neglect estate planning due to this same discomfort and because they lack knowledge of just how insurance can be used to promote wealth preservation.

The bottom line? Insurance is a vital, necessary aspect of a long-term financial plan. Insurance may not be as exciting to the average person as investments, but it can certainly help a household maintain some financial equilibrium in a crisis, and it also can become a crucial part of estate planning.

Brian W. O’Sullivan is a registered representative of and offers securities, investment advisory and financial planning services through MML Investors Services, LLC, Member SIPC (www.sipc.org). Supervisory Address: 101 Federal Street, Suite 800, Boston, MA 02110. He may be reached at 617-479-0075 x331 or bosullivan@financialguide.com.

Solas Awards to Kerry, Arbella’s Donohue, and UMass Boston student Noon Elhassan



John F. Kerry



John F. Donohue



Noon Elhassan

The Irish International Immigrant Center held its 28th annual Solas Awards Gala on Oct. 12 at the InterContinental Boston. As the IIIC’s signature annual fundraising event, the gala honors the many ways immigrants contribute to our society and supports the immediate needs of those coming to our shores from across the globe. Proceeds from Solas enable the IIIC to expand its legal, education, and wellness services for immigrant and refugee families at this time of critical need.

This year, the IIIC honored three individuals who have significantly contributed to the Center’s mission, who are strong community leaders and advocates for immigration, and who are working towards a society where all are welcomed and valued, and enjoy equal opportunities and protections: Former US senator and US Secretary of State John F. Kerry; John F. Donohue, president, chairman, and CEO of Arbella Insurance Group; and Noon Elhassan, a UMass Boston student and Sudanese immigrant. As a strong proponent

of comprehensive immigration reform and a pathway to citizenship for immigrants, Secretary Kerry received the Solas Service Award. John Donohue received the Solas Leadership Award for his outstanding service to immigrant and refugee families across Massachusetts, and for his leadership within the business community for championing this cause. Noon Elhassan received the inaugural Solas Courage Award. Noon, now a student at UMass Boston and immigrant from Sudan, has overcome great odds to build a life here in Boston. The IIIC assisted Noon and her family in becoming permanent United States residents, and today she is pursuing her dreams of becoming a medical professional and a US citizen. The IIIC wishes to extend its sincere appreciation to those who attended and supported the celebration this year, particularly thanking the Arbella Insurance Group for their close partnership. The IIIC also extends a warm thank you to the master of ceremonies, state Sen. Linda Dorce



Sen. Dorcea Forry Emcee of the event

Forry, to Robert Consalvo for leading our Live Ask and Auction, and to all of our superb musical artists.

Ronnie Millar, executive director of the IIIC, expressed his gratitude in stating, “Everyone at the Irish International Immigrant Center is deeply grateful for the support of all our Solas sponsors and donors. The theme of this year’s Solas was courage, and for sure we all need courage in these days when there is so much uncertainty. We need each other and as the Irish say, ‘we all live in each other’s shelter.’”



Above, Solas Award attendees salute Arbella’s John F. Donohue (seated). Below, Sound Off, an award winning semi-pro a cappella group from Boston entertains the gathering. Photos courtesy IIIC



“Fiddle Hell” – it’s about friendship, exposure, and learning from the best

BY SEAN SMITH
BIR CORRESPONDENT

For a dozen years now, fiddlers from Greater Boston and elsewhere have gone to their own special hell – and they couldn’t be happier about it.

Massachusetts Fiddle Hell, which takes place Nov. 3-5 in Westford, is an annual gathering that brings together fiddlers and players of other instruments to share knowledge, friendship, and lots (and lots) of music. During the 50-plus hours of Fiddle Hell, participants can attend workshops given by expert musicians; take in a mini-concert here and there, as well as a Saturday evening performance that is followed by a contra dance; congregate for both planned and spontaneous jam sessions; and be part of a “flash mob” experience or two – all of it in the friendly confines of the Westford Regency Inn.

Music styles at Fiddle Hell include Irish, Scottish, Cape Breton, Appalachian, old-timey, Scandinavian, Eastern European, blues, Cajun, classical, klezmer, jazz, and just about anything else under the sun – or moon, since activities go on well into the night. Fiddles are in the majority, of course, but there is plenty of room for cellos, mandolins, guitars and banjos, and accordions, flutes, whistles and string basses are in evidence, too.

“Fiddle Hell is for the ‘closet fiddlers,’ or other closet musicians, who don’t get out much,” says Lexington resident Dave Reiner, who created Massachusetts Fiddle Hell. “Above all, it’s a chance to make some friends, get exposure to different styles and to learn from some of the best traditional musicians – some of them are local to Greater Boston or Massachusetts, but some are farther away. Maybe you’ll be able to work out something in your playing that’s bugged you for a while, maybe you’ll be inspired to explore some aspect of a music tradition you hadn’t heard before, maybe you’ll even get turned onto something entirely new. Anything might happen.”

Reiner-based Massachusetts Fiddle Hell picked up on an idea by Missouri fiddler Dale Hopkins, one that also has taken root in other parts of the world. But the scope of Massachusetts Fiddle

Hell sets it apart from other incarnations: Last year, according to Reiner, more than 430 musicians from as near as Westford to as far away as California, Alabama, Florida, Canada, Scotland, and even the Netherlands, came to Fiddle Hell, and some 60 others served as faculty.

“Dale’s concept was to give fiddlers from all over a chance to get together for a bit of fun – ‘Hey, let’s meet up at a bar,’” explains Reiner, a former member of the eminent New England bluegrass band Southern Rail. “My thought was, ‘Let’s make it into a camp.’ And now, I think it’s really become a community.”

Reiner, along with his wife Cindy Eid, and their sons Andy and Eric – all musicians who have played as a family band and in numerous other collaborations – form the core of the Fiddle Hell organizational team, aided by a host of staff and volunteers. Faculty members represent a diversity of generations, styles, interests, accomplishments and experiences: Their ranks have included the likes of Laurel Martin, Bruce Molsky, Katie McNally, Frank Ferrel, Lissa Schneckenburger, Mark Simos, Skip Gorman, Barbara McOwen, Andrea Beaton, Pete Sutherland, and Ed Pearlman.

“Fiddle Hell strikes a perfect balance between focused learning and community-spirited joy,” says Martin. “Dave Reiner and his family do a beautiful job organizing the event, so the logistics work seamlessly. I love the fact that teachers are given the freedom to design their workshops according to their own particular interests, and that the students arrive with a sincere desire to learn.”

“I think that the greatest lesson that musicians who are new to traditional music can take away from Fiddle Hell is that a spirit of intense learning and hard work can be combined with the joy of becoming part of a creative, artistic community.”

Like most any regularly occurring event, Fiddle Hell has had its learning curve and growing pains: The opening night for the very first Fiddle Hell, for example, took place in a snowstorm, and the turnout was a grand total



Lissa Schneckenburger leading a workshop at last year’s Fiddle Hell. Irish, Scottish, Cape Breton, American and many other styles of music are explored at the event, which takes place this coming weekend.

Sean Smith photos

of five people. It’s twice outgrown its venue, first at the Old Groton Inn, and then the Colonial Inn in Concord; the Westford Regency became the host in 2014. Over the years, there have been changes to the format and programming, notably to include workshops for more instruments and also for vocals. And there are now two CDs of commonly played Fiddle Hell tunes (52 on each disc) available for purchase.

“I can’t take the credit for what Fiddle Hell has become,” says Reiner. “Andy and Eric have been to plenty of music camps, and they’ve passed along their insights and thoughts – as have many of our friends and acquaintances. Like I said, Fiddle Hell has become a community, and a lot of people have become invested in it.”

Spend even a few hours at Fiddle Hell, and Reiner’s description of “a community” seems very apt. Elementary school-age kids lugging shiny fiddle cases walk the halls of the Westport Regency along with septuagenarians whose worn, battered instrument cases evince an odyssey of folk festivals, concerts, and music parties, while friends and acquaintances greet one another warmly by the snack table and go over their itineraries.

Depending on your tastes and the schedule for a given year, you might go to the Julia Clifford Room – the hotel’s meet-



“Fiddle Hell strikes a perfect balance between focused learning and community-spirited joy,” says Laurel Martin, shown at an Irish fiddle workshop at Fiddle Hell 2016.

ing rooms are temporarily named for legendary fiddlers from various traditions – to learn an Appalachian waltz, then head to Jean Carignan for a seminar on picking up tunes by ear; or perhaps you might like to spend an hour with Bob Wills exploring melodic variations in Irish tunes, followed by a talk with Buddy MacMaster on how to get over performance jitters.

There’s no shortage of jam session aficionados at Fiddle Hell. Pass by one group immersed in Quebecois tunes, and around the corner you might find

another playing Irish polkas, or a Scottish strathspey-reel medley, or some Texas swing, or perhaps even some hearty sing-alongs. Sit down to join in, and something as simple as a sticker on your instrument case may spark a conversation – and before you know it that total stranger next to you has, in a matter of minutes, become a newfound friend.

“I love seeing such a large group of people getting together to learn, socialize, and make music,” says fiddler Ellery Klein, a Fiddle Hell faculty member who has been a

member of Gaelic Storm and Long Time Courting, and now plays in the trio Fodhla. “In our world right now, a gathering of people for music and friendship is something to treasure. I think we are realizing that social connection is something we are losing, and the Reiners have done an amazing job building a weekend for hundreds of people to gather and make music.”

For those new to playing traditional music, or music of any kind, whether on fiddle or other instruments, a full-immersion weekend like Fiddle Hell might sound a little out of the ordinary, perhaps even intimidating. But Reiner says such an experience can be beneficial to one’s musical development.

“It’s true that we emphasize learning mostly by ear, and that may be out of your comfort zone if you’re only used to working with sheet music,” he says. “The thing about traditional music – whether Irish, Scottish, American or whatever – is that it’s not simply a mechanical reproduction of what’s written: You play variations and ornamentations, and these may be different than what someone else plays, and that’s OK.”

“At Fiddle Hell, you can get to know about these kinds of details, you can watch and listen to excellent musicians demonstrate them, and then you can explore them yourself through jam sessions – and hopefully, it will all be something that you can help you get to wherever it is you want to go.”

Klein agrees. “There are beginner-level classes, so even those fairly new can bring their fiddles or other instruments, and a spirit of ‘Try it!’ There are also plenty of classes geared towards kids as well as adults. So take along a recording device and try to challenge yourself with something new.”

“There is inspiration everywhere,” says Klein. “As a teacher, I believe conscious listening is 50 percent of learning. Between daytime mini-concerts, classes and the evening concert on Saturday, there is listening to be had everywhere. Just tap into your inner musical sponge and soak it up.”

For information on Fiddle Hell, go fiddlehell.org.

BC celebrates its Connolly collection



On October 12, Boston College hosted a celebration for the Seamus Connolly Collection of Irish Music, an online resource featuring more than 330 traditional songs and tunes gathered by Connolly, at left, former director of Irish music programs and Sullivan Family Artist-in-Residence at BC. The collection is accessible at connollymusiccollection.bc.edu.



Seamus Connolly was joined at the end of the evening by, from left, Matt and Shannon Heaton, Cynthia Polo and Elizabeth Sweeney for a set of tunes from the Connolly Collection.

Sean Smith photos

Moynihan's fiddle, Chaimbeul's harp insinuate themselves into a listener's ear

By SEAN SMITH
BIR CORRESPONDENT

There's nothing in the Musician's Universal Handbook that says you *have* to be friends with your bandmates: creative differences, artistic temperament, hours of rehearsal, schlepping to and from gigs – all that can be pretty demanding on a relationship. But the fiddle-and-harp duo of Brighton residents Jenna Moynihan and Mairi Chaimbeul doesn't have many problems on that score, the two sharing not only an address but also a fondness for long train rides and, according to Moynihan, "1990s dance parties," among quite a few other things.

More to the point, Moynihan and Chaimbeul share a love for Celtic music, specifically that of Scotland, flavored with Appalachian and other influences, traditional and otherwise. Having emerged as one of the Boston folk scene's most visionary collaborations of recent years, they have now released their first full-length album, "One Two."

The Moynihan-Chaimbeul story is in some ways a by-now familiar one in the Boston-area Celtic music annals: Two people from distant locales – Moynihan from



Jenna Moynihan, left and Mairi Chaimbeul, who met at Berklee College of Music, released their second album, "One Two," earlier this year.

Louise Bichan photo

New York's Southern Tier, Chaimbeul from Scotland's Isle of Skye – pursuing different musical interests connect through the Berklee College of Music, with glorious results.

"The more time we've spent together, the greater a musical intimacy we've developed," says Moynihan. "A great part

of that is our friendship – it's rare you can share so many levels of connection. We hardly ever butt heads about what should happen, because we have a similar vision – the whole being greater than the sum of its parts."

Chaimbeul agrees. "There's an instinctive quality to our music. We seem to know what the

other is going to do. It's kind of like lying on a giant marshmallow – you just feel very supported and comfortable."

Moynihan and Chaimbeul's sound is not of the pin-your-ears-back, knock-you-into-the-next-room variety of Celtic music. It insinuates itself into you, gathering strength until you're suddenly conscious of how full-bodied and intense it is. "Dialogue" is an oft-employed metaphor to describe the interplay in a musical duo; with Moynihan and Chaimbeul, it's more like a conversation with multiple dialects.

Moynihan will take the melody and explore it, tacking on variations in fingering and bowing that might be Scottish, or Appalachian, or of some other source. Chaimbeul will establish a steady pulse underneath the fiddle, and then venture out on a more elaborate course, perhaps doubling up on the melody or transitioning into some ambitious improvisations. Or it might be Moynihan softly plucking or bowing a riff, and Chaimbeul taking the lead, the resonance of the harp strings meshing with the dulcet tones of the fiddle – as is the case at the outset of "Kyle Tune," their joint composition that opens "One Two."

Other delights on "One Two" include the traditional "Nighean Donn Nan Gobhar," which puts into sharp relief the respective qualities of harp and fiddle, each expressing its own nuances within the tune; the lament "Mo Run Geal Og (My Fair Young Love)," heartbreaking without being maudlin – Chaimbeul adds a subtle, elegiac harmonium drone at the outset; the up-tempo briskness of the pipe tune "Malcolm Johnston" and "Steaph's Red Shoes," a Chaimbeul original (listen to her use of bass strings to ratchet up the tension with Moynihan's melody line); and, taking their repertoire farther afield, tunes from Brit-

tany and Sweden, the latter ("Norsken") with an extensive range Moynihan absolutely nails.

"One Two" builds on the duo's 2014 CD/EP, "Back and Forth," recorded early on in their partnership (it's now living "in a small corner of the Internet," Moynihan quips), as well as Moynihan's 2015 solo album, "Woven," on which Chaimbeul appears. As Moynihan explains, "We did 'Back and Forth' in several hours – our feeling was 'Let's just record.' So it was a total snapshot."

Says Chaimbeul, "One Two" is also a snapshot, but it has a different feel to it, because we've had more time together to get settled. We're more connected musically and so we were able to dig more deeply into what our sound as a duo is."

Moynihan and Chaimbeul followed different musical paths to Berklee. Moynihan started out with Suzuki lessons as a schoolchild, but her teacher had a fondness for Celtic music and nudged Moynihan into exploring it. Moynihan was drawn to the cross-genre playing of American fiddler Jeremy Kittel, which led her to other innovative fiddlers like Alasdair Fraser, Hanneke Cassel, and Berklee faculty member Matt Glaser. Deciding against the classical-conservatory route, she came to Berklee, where she studied performance with a minor in American roots music.

Chaimbeul had plenty of exposure to and instruction in traditional music as a child, yet she never saw herself tied to it. She took up harp at age 8 – she doesn't remember exactly how she arrived at the choice – and at age 12 went to school in Edinburgh. While most of her music education there was classical, she had the opportunity to work with harpist Catriona McKay, whose multiple-influence style she found intriguing – much as Moynihan had been struck by Kittel's music. Chaimbeul also was drawn to the jazz music community in Edinburgh, and decided she wanted to study harp in a jazz context. Berklee, she felt, would be the place to do that.

Paradoxically, coming to Boston awakened Chaimbeul's interest in traditional music, especially the largely unfamiliar bluegrass and old-timey she heard at Berklee and around town. And at Berklee, it's not especially difficult to find people who share similar interests and ambitions.

"We were certainly aware of each other – I would hear about that Scottish girl who plays harp," recalls Moynihan, who was in her senior year when Chaimbeul arrived. Larry Bethune, then Berklee's vice president of student affairs, suggested the two of them should get together and play. "Our first meeting was a rehearsal, our second was a gig," says Moynihan.

"And our second gig was at the British Consulate."

Since then, they've performed locally at The Burren, Club Passim, BCMFest and "A St. Patrick's Day Celtic Sojourn," as well as the Acadia Traditional School in Maine, the Edinburgh International Harp Festival, and Folkclub in Glasgow.

Yet Moynihan and Chaimbeul also have had to spend time apart pursuing other collaborations: Moynihan with folk-roots-pop string band Laura Cortese & The Dance Cards, for one, Chaimbeul with the "prog-trad" outfit The Aerialists. In fact, they spent a great deal of last year doing their own things, and it wasn't until the late fall when they were able to completely focus on recording "One Two," at a studio tucked away in New Hampshire's White Mountains.

"At one point earlier in the year, we'd met up in Scotland to work a lot on creating and arranging sets, and it was a great experience," says Chaimbeul. "I think that energy carried over to when we got together again to make the album, so it made it easier for us to regroup and focus on recording. That was very satisfying – I think it showed how strong our connection is."

"The studio is part of someone's home, so it had a very welcoming atmosphere," says Moynihan. "We spent four days recording, and it was nice to make full use of that time, and not rush to get it done – we had a lot of dance parties and plenty of good food. Definitely another good bonding experience."

This year has seen somewhat less separation for Moynihan and Chaimbeul (although this fall Moynihan has been on the road with the Dance Cards and Chaimbeul had an extensive tour with The Aerialists). Later this month, they'll be at the Scots Fiddle Fest in Edinburgh, and also will be taking part in "A Christmas Celtic Sojourn" next month.

Musing on their busy joint and individual itineraries, Moynihan says, "There was a time early on when we didn't think too much about getting gigs, especially because Mairi was still a student. We were just making music because we wanted to, and there was no pressure with having to book a tour – or about whether anyone actually liked what we were doing. So we got used to the music just being an organic part of our lives, and I think that helped a lot in building our partnership."

"Now, we may sometimes be off making music with other people, but then we come back to the house we share with a bunch of musician friends, reconnect, and it feels as natural as it ever did."

[Learn more about Jenna Moynihan and Mairi Chaimbeul at jenniandmairi.com]

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A comical intervention by some critical friends

**BY R. J. DONOVAN
SPECIAL TO THE BIR**

If you foresee disaster looming in a friend's romantic relationship, is it fair game to speak up? And if you do speak up, will your criticism ruin your own relationship with that friend?

Those are the challenges faced in "Robyn is Happy," kicking off the fifth season at Hub Theatre Company of Boston. Performances run through Nov. 11 at the First Church of Boston. All performances are "pay-what-you-can."

In the East Coast premiere of Michael Elyanow's dark and unpredictable comedy, Robyn is smitten with a new suitor. However, her lifelong pals think she's making a mistake. A huge mistake. A mistake that could alter her life forever.

The piece has been termed a biting blend of "Sex and the City" and "Titus Andronicus."

Amie Lytle plays Robyn in the ensemble production (with Christine and Lauren Elias). The Albany native studied theater and English at Muhlenberg College, including a brief visit to Ireland. She later attended the prestigious Actors Studio Drama School in New York before eventually settling in Boston in 2013.

Locally, she has appeared with Shakespeare Now!, Harbor Stage, Boston Theater Company and Bridge Rep, among others. She also appeared in "Finish Line," the emotional Boston Marathon documentary play. In addition to her stage career, she teaches yoga in Boston and on Cape Cod.

We spoke while "Robyn" was in rehearsals. Here's a condensed look at our conversation.

Q. "Robyn is Happy" touches on a timeless irritation – unsolicited advice from friends. Everyone's suffered through it

at one time or another.

A. People will relate to this play. It gets ridiculous . . . It's so fun and funny and heart breaking and cringe-worthy sometimes . . . I've had some friends my whole life. They *love* my husband, but I have had that experience of having a boyfriend they think is not good enough for you . . . I value honesty and loyalty, so I think I'd want people to tell me the truth. But it can be hard.

Q. Some friends have a long memory when you criticize a potential partner who later turns out to be "the one."

A. To be honest, I have been in that position where a friend broke up with somebody, I told them what I thought, and now they're married. And it's sort of awkward. I'm not super close to them any more and maybe that's why. Who knows? It's a tricky thing.

Q. You mentioned your husband. How did you meet?

A. We actually met online. On his profile it said that he liked theater . . . I found out later the only play he'd seen was "Book of Mormon." I was like, okay. But now he sees so many shows. Obviously he comes to my shows, sometimes as many as four times. He's very supportive. And then he'll want to see my friends' shows. He gets into it.

Q. For the sake of love you overlooked the little white lie?

A. (My profile) said I liked sports, which was kind of an exaggeration, as well. (Laughing) In our vows, he said, "I'm so glad I lied and my profile said I loved theater."

Q. I'm curious how your yoga practice informs your acting.

A. I do think it's like the perfect balance for acting. They go together really well. I always do yoga before a show.

It helps me connect with my breath, be more present, be really in tune with how I'm feeling, how I'm doing. With some of the pressures that can easily get in your head . . . yoga helps me to just let it all go.

Q. Tell me about your time in Ireland when you were an undergrad.

A. It was an acting and writing program. We spent a semester reading a lot of Irish plays, a lot of Irish literature. (Then), when we were actually in Ireland, we created a performance piece about (an) experience on a farm in Kilkenny . . . I remember sitting with these cows in Kilkenny and thinking about Irish plays that I loved and thinking, this is so cool.

Q. In "Finish Line," you portrayed Erika Brannock, the teacher from Baltimore who lost her leg in the Marathon bombing. It must be daunting to portray a person who's sitting in the audience on opening night.

A. There is a little bit more pressure . . . because this is a real person and she went through this and I want to capture her spirit and tell her story . . . She's such a funny, generous person, even after everything she went through. I will treasure that experience forever . . . You don't always hear the stories of all these heroes like Erica, who's a preschool teacher, a wonderful sister and daughter, who lost her leg and had to learn how to keep going . . . It's a beautiful project and I'm very proud I got to be a part of it.

Q. In terms of making that sort of emotional connection, tell me about studying at The Actors Studio. They favor method acting?

A. It's method acting . . . but it's not the way Hollywood portrays method acting, [which is] "you become the character. You never leave the character" . . . This is more extreme preparation. You're re-



Amie Lytle appears in the new comedy, "Robyn is Happy," from Hub Theatre Company of Boston, through November 11.

ally researching what it's like to be your character . . . What is daily life like? . . . When have you felt like your character felt? What can you relate to that? . . . Very focused on the preparation, and then connecting to your stories.

Q. Was your time there worth the intense emotional investment?

A. I've never worked so hard, but I know it's served me so well.

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

...

"Robyn is Happy," Hub Theater Company of Boston, through Nov. 11. First Church Boston, 66 Marlborough St. hubtheatreboston.org.

Dorchester Irish Heritage Festival 2017

The Dorchester Irish Heritage Festival took place on Oct. 8 at Florian Hall, with dozens of Greater Boston music and dance performers. The event is supported by many local businesses and the work of volunteers.



Two young attendees got a floor-level view of the Greene-O'Leary School of Dance performance in Florian Hall.



Brian Nicholson and Jessica McNeil and 10-month-old Autumn Rae enjoyed the entertainment.



Ten-year-old Ellie Mullen clutched her friend Sham-rock while she sang the traditional Irish song "The Dawning of the Day."

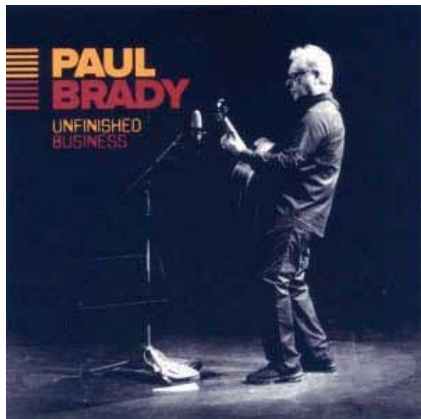


From left , Joey Abarta, Paudi Walsh, and Liam Hart filled the hall with their music. Sean Smith photos

CD Reviews

By SEAN SMITH
BIR CORRESPONDENT

Paul Brady, “Unfinished Business” • What kind of lens should you use in scrutinizing Paul Brady? Do you take the long-distance view, back to his early Irish folk revival days with The Johnstons and, of course, his seminal work in the 1970s with Planxty and Andy Irvine, and recordings with traditional musicians like Matt Molloy, Tommy Peoples, Andy McGann, and Paddy Reynolds (not to mention his role in the underappreciated “The Green Crow Caws” album of settings of Sean O’Casey poems)? Or do you focus on the latter part of his career – dating from roughly 1981 – as a pop-based singer-songwriter whose songs have been covered by Santana, Dave Ed-



munds, Tina Turner, and Bonnie Raitt? With “Unfinished Business,” Brady seems to suggest that we can integrate both perspectives. Nine of the album’s eleven tracks are co-written by Brady; the remaining two are traditional songs that include guest appearances by – hold onto your hat – none other than Andy Irvine. More on that to come.

Those who are wedded now and forever to the “Arthur McBride/Lakes of Pontchartrain” incarnation of Brady may find it difficult to acknowledge, but the fact is he operates very comfortably in the contemporary/pop vein – which includes touches of funk, soul, R&B as well as rock. He knows how to come up with hooks, like the repeating chorus in “Say You Don’t Mean,” the mandolin-whistle-keyboard riff on “Maybe Tomorrow,” the piano interlude on “Once in a Lifetime.” Everyone knows he can play acoustic guitar, but he is equally proficient on electric guitar, keyboards, bass and drums, and he uses that distinctive soaring voice of his to belt out lyrics like any arena-stage denizen.

Brady also shows a talent for teamwork with his co-writers. Pulitzer-winning Irish poet Paul Muldoon worked with Brady on three of the songs (“I Love You But You Love Him,” “Say You Don’t Mean,” “I Like How You Think”), and they are gems of sardonic, but not anti-social, tonality: stuffed with unlikely, random literary and pop culture references (including our hometown Bruins), and outrageous wordplay (“James Joyce and Sam Beckett/They scanned the Sandymount sky/All they saw was small potatoes, they’d bigger fish to fry”). Sharon Vaughn – who’s teamed with Dolly Parton, Waylon Jennings, and George Jones – collaborated with Brady on five tracks, and these are of the romantic/realistic, emotionally accessible kind, like the winsome “Oceans of Time” and the title track, a narrative of hopeful love haunted by history. Canadian Ralph Murphy – he’s written for Kathy Mattea and Randy Travis – gets co-credit for “Once in a Lifetime,” a tender give-love-a-chance plea with pedal steel guitar to boot.

The two traditional songs are “The Cocks Are Crowing,” Irvine’s harmonica and Francesco Turrisi’s accordion weaving through the soft-jazz vibe of Brady’s arrangement; and – the album’s closing

track – an American version (by way of the recently departed Mike Seeger) of the classic ballad “Lord Thomas and Fair Ellender” – just Brady’s voice and guitar, ably backed by Irvine’s mandolin and harmonica. Mention should be made, by the way, of the excellent backing vocals throughout the album by, variously, Suzanne Savage, Bairbre Anne, Sinead Farrelly

It’s understandable if the latter makes you nostalgic for “Plains of Kildare,” “The Jolly Soldier” and all those other tracks of that classic album of yore.

Just don’t lose sight of the bigger picture – that Brady moves around a much larger musical landscape. [paul-brady.com]

The Nesbitt Family, “Devil’s Bit Sessions”

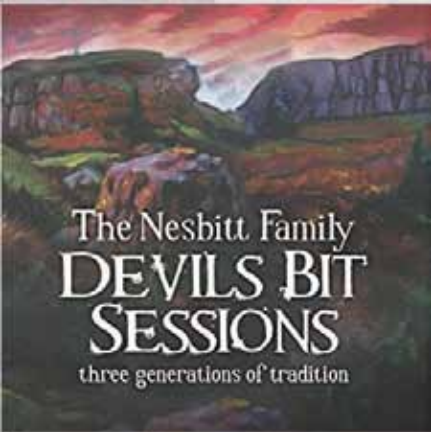
• Speaking of being typecast (see Brady, Paul, above), Mairead Nesbitt is known to millions as the Celtic Woman with the violin. But she comes from an impressive musical heritage celebrated on this album in a fashion (thankfully) far removed from the glitz and glamor with which she’s been associated.

Nesbitt goes back to her native Tipperary at the foot of Devil’s Bit Mountain to play traditional tunes with 13 members of her family, their ages ranging from 10 to 81, including parents John and Kathleen, and brothers Seán, Michael, Noel and Karl (some of whom have appeared on Nesbitt’s previous recordings). The album was recorded in the Nesbitt home to provide an informal “session” atmosphere, with some familiar, beloved standards like “Bunch of Green Rushes,” “Beare Island,” “Smash the Windows” and “The Gatehouse Maid” among the selections.

There are five full-ensemble tracks, among them “Captain O’Kane,” (a Turlough O’Carolan piece which is given a dramatic, orchestral-like treatment) and the rest spotlight duos, trios and other combinations of Nesbitts, including a hornpipe/reel medley (“Fisher’s Rant/Glen Road”) on fiddle, accordion and bouzouki; a leisurely jig set (“Old Lark on the Strand/Charlie’s Aunt”) that includes fine harp-playing by Lilly May; a rousing flute duet by Noel and Karl, accompanied by Michael on bodhran; and a banjo-bouzouki duet by Michael and Karl.

Mairead displays her artistry on a pair of intricate hornpipes, “The Japanese Hornpipe/The Contradiction,” and as part of a spellbinding fiddle trio with Kathleen and Frances on the air “The Wild Geese.”

Sprinkled throughout are conversations among family members about where and from whom a particular tune was learned, and you rather want to hear more – or perhaps read some summarized version – of these. Such details help to reinforce the idea that this music has roots wide and deep, and whatever the scope of its presentation on big stage and TV screen, it is firmly ensconced in home and hearth. [maireadnesbittviolin.com]



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Traveling People

Let’s take a quick tour of Clare, starting with the Cliffs

By JUDY ENRIGHT
SPECIAL TO THE BIR
Nothing says success like the Cliffs of Moher in Co. Clare, Ireland’s top tourist attraction.

Ten years ago, a new visitor and interpretive center opened there, and from then on the Cliffs have enjoyed ever increasing attendance, a fact highlighted by the more than a million visitors who have come by every year for the past four years. The million figure was reached on Aug. 11 this year, 11 days ahead of the millionth visitor in 2016, and 10 weeks earlier than in 2014, the first time a million visitors were recorded at the Cliffs.

LEADERSHIP
While the incredible popularity of this tourist attraction cannot be entirely credited to management, Director Katherine Webster certainly deserves to take a long, deep bow for her leadership of the site since 2005. She was at the helm during construction of the new center, which is carved into the hillside, and she supervised the improvement of exterior assets, too, such as pathways along the Cliffs and up to the popular O’Brien’s Tower. The tower, which, by the way, nearly every visitor climbs up to see, was built at the highest point of the Cliffs at Knockardakin in 1835 by Cornelius O’Brien - local landlord and descendant of Brian Boru, the first high king of Ireland.

The tower was restored in 1970 and again in 2008 and is a perfect viewing point for the Cliffs and Aran Islands. On a clear day, visitors can look across Galway Bay to Connemara to the north and south to the Kerry Mountains. Webster has also guided the facility on work to alleviate ongoing issues such as parking - a challenge to any busy tourist attraction. This summer, visitors were advised to come before 10 a.m. or after 6 p.m., Webster said, so they could enjoy the majesty of the Cliffs in the shoulder of the day and be free from the crush of massive crowds. And, really, what could be nicer than seeing sunrise or the moon over the Cliffs?

While you’re there, be sure to note that the Cliffs are home to the largest colony of nesting seabirds on mainland Ireland, including a number of endangered and rare species. There are more than 20 species of nesting birds there, including nine species of nesting seabirds and up to 30,000 breeding pairs of seabirds. There are petrel, herons, gannets, skylarks, gulls of course, rock doves, ravens, goldfinch, stonechats, and wagtails to name just a few. They make for great bird watching when you sign on for one of many boat tours available in the area.

THE BURREN
The Cliffs are not the only reason to visit Co. Clare. There is much, much more to see and experience in this fasci-



Cliffs of Moher in Co. Clare are Ireland’s #1 attraction.



Road hazard encountered on the way to the Cliffs of Moher in Co. Clare.

inating area. Be sure to spend time in the limestone karst landscape of the Burren, a Unesco Global Geopark that covers nearly 100 square miles. Its magical, stark hills, wildlife, and rare flowers have inspired artists and writers over the centuries. Would you believe this bleak, grey landscape is host to 25 of 27 orchid species native to Ireland, as well as Mediterranean and Arctic-Alpine plants rarely found in Ireland. Some of the Arctic-Alpine plants include mountain aven, spring gentian, and spring sandwort. Mediterranean plants are maidenhead fern, dense-flowered orchid, and burnet rose.

While you’re exploring the area, don’t miss the popular Poul nabrone dolmen and some of the 70 other megalithic tombs of all shapes and sizes in the Burren. The informative Burren Centre in Kilfenora is a great place to start, especially if you watch the video by acclaimed photographer Eamonn de Buitlear (details at theburrencentre.ie). The center has a gift shop and café and is next door to the Kilfenora Cathedral ruins and one of the greatest concentrations of high crosses in Ireland, including the famed “Doorty Cross.”

WILD HONEY INN
When you’re ready to relax after a day of adventure, there are many interesting and comfortable accommodations in the area.

In nearby Lisdoonvarna

is The Wild Honey Inn that recently became the first pub in Ireland to win a Michelin Star. Owned and run by chef Aidan McGrath and his partner, Kate Sweeney, the Inn offers accommodation in addition to a unique menu. Aidan is credited with developing his own culinary style, based on the French classical genre and many years of cooking. He uses locally sourced products and other Irish foods and describes his cooking as “Bistronomy – a lighter style of cooking or refined bistro cooking.” The Inn, which dates back to 1860, was renovated in 2009 and has a range of rooms available. For more information, go to wildhoneyinn.com. Another interesting place to stay would be Mount Vernon in New Quay, a Georgian villa once owned by Lady Gregory of Abbey Theatre fame. The house has views over Galway Bay and is part of the Hidden Ireland list of historic private homes where visitors stay as guests. There are four rooms available for B&B. See details at hiddenireland.com or mountvernon.ie.

CLARE FOODS
We always make a point to visit the Burren Perfumery in Carran for delicious, fresh lunches as well as a walk through the lovely gardens and a stop in the shop for soaps and lotions made there. Lisdoonvarna is home to the Burren Smokehouse, Birgitta, and Peter Curtin’s immensely successful business that produces



Poul nabrone Dolmen in the Burren, Co. Clare.

Judy Enright photos
The most delicious smoked salmon, rainbow trout and mackerel and other delicacies (burrensmokehouse.com.) We never pass through Shannon Airport without buying Burren Smokehouse salmon (in assorted flavors) – and also McCambridge’s soda bread – to make the Irish experience linger just a little bit longer. (You can buy McCambridge’s here: Foodireland.com) The visitor center at the Smokehouse is well worth a visit if you’re in Lisdoonvarna. We also bring home interesting jams/jellies and mustards from David and Vera Muir’s Clare Jam Company in Doolin, chocolates from The Doolin Chocolate Shop, Hazel Mountain “bean to bar” chocolate in Bellharbour (and in the shop at 6 Middle St. in Galway City) and Wilde Irish Chocolates from Tuamgraney, along with delicious Bur-

ren Gold cheese from the Ailwee Cave Farmshop and more. We always look for St. Tola Goat Cheese while in Ireland. We stopped there once to visit the goats and watch cheese making - it’s a fascinating process. **RESTAURANTS** As for restaurants in Co. Clare, there are many and, honestly, we’ve never had a bad meal there. Most pubs sell more than just soup, sandwiches, and brews. We’ve had excellent dinners in McDermott’s Pub (mcdermottspub.com), O’Connor’s Pub (gusconnorspubdoolin.net) and Fitzpatrick’s (hoteldoolin.ie/fitzs-pub-doolin), all in Doolin. While in Doolin - where I stay at Riverfield House – finer fare is offered at the Roadford House (roadfordrestaurant.com) and Cullinan’s Seafood Restaurant (cullinansdoolin.com.) And, don’t forget that Doolin is famed for

trad music and it’s available in many places. Heading north, I have stopped at The Soda Parlour in Ballyvaughan for yummy crepes and for lunch one sunny afternoon at Gregan’s Castle Hotel at the foot of Corkscrew Hill. If you’re in the area, you might also try the Anchor Inn in Liscannor, Linnane’s lobster bar and seafood restaurant in New Quay (linnanesbar.com) and L’Arco Italian Café in Ballyvaughan. You’ll find your own favorite places to stop for a bite as you travel around.

CRAFT FAIR
One fun activity in Ballyvaughan if you’re there during the season is the craft fair held every Sunday in the Village Hall from May to October. Crafts for sale include photography, jewelry, stained glass and much, much more. Be sure to look for Celtic Caprine goat milk soap by Janis James, once from Massachusetts who swapped New England’s vistas for a fairytale outlook over the Burren in Co. Clare. Janis’s soaps are sold throughout Ireland and we’ve bought them on several occasions at The Beehive on Achill Island and at O’Reilly & Turpin in Westport, both in Co. Mayo.

Not a shopper? How about heading a bit south along the coast to Lahinch for Lahinch Adventures where you can enjoy rock climbing, surfing, archery or cycling (bike hire is available.) See lahinchadventures.com for more. Lahinch is also known as a surfing mecca. See lahinchsurfexperience.com for information on lessons for adults, students and kids and rentals of wetsuits and other equipment.

TRAVELING
No matter when you visit Ireland, you’ll be sure to find your favorite fun and interesting things to do, places to go, stay and eat. Be on the lookout for Christmas markets this month and next in Galway (galwaychristmasmarket.ie), Waterford (winterval.ie), Limerick (milkmarketlimerick.ie), Dublin (dublinatchristmas.ie), Cork (corkchristmascelebration.ie), and Belfast (visit-belfast.com.)

Have great fun when you go, wherever you go, and whatever you do. See Ireland.com for regional timely activities.



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THE BIR'S ARTS CALENDAR FOR NOVEMBER

Alook at Irish / Celtic music events this month in Greater Boston and Eastern Massachusetts:

• Boston-based fiddle ensemble **Childsplay** has announced its 2017 fall tour schedule, which includes a stop in Somerville Theater on Nov. 19, where they will play shows at 3 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.

Childsplay comprises two dozen or so musicians – many from Boston or elsewhere in New England – performing fiddle music mainly from Irish, Scottish, Cape Breton, Scandinavian, French Canadian, and American folk traditions. All the fiddlers use violins created by Cambridge resident Bob Childs, who also plays in the ensemble and serves as artistic director as well as its namesake.

Last year, Childsplay introduced Ireland's Karan Casey as its newest lead singer, joining stalwarts such as Laurel Martin, Sheila Falls, Shannon Heaton, Mark Roberts, Hanneke Cassel and Keith Murphy. Casey will return for this year's tour, and dancers Kieran Jordan and Kevin Doyle will be in the cast as well.

Childs has announced that this tour will kick off a three-year period in which Childsplay will record a new album and then, in 2019, embark on its farewell tour.

For information and links, see childsplay.org.

• Singer and harpist **Moya Brennan**, a member of the groundbreaking internationally renowned Irish folk-rock band Clannad, will give a concert at the Irish Cultural Centre of New England in Canton on Nov. 9 at 7:30 p.m. Brennan, a native of Donegal, helped put Irish music on a global stage through Clannad's string of hit singles and albums during the 1980s and '90s, culminating in a 1999 Grammy Award. She also has collaborated with numerous figures in rock and folk – including Shane McGowan, The Chieftains, Michael Crawford, and Robert Plant – and more recently with fellow harpist/vocalist Cormac de Barra.

Go to irishculture.org for event details.

• Maine quartet **The Press Gang** will play at Boston College's Gaelic Roots series on Nov. 2 at 6:30 p.m. (they'll be at The Burren Backroom the night before).



Quebec's Le Vent du Nord comes to The Burren Backroom on November 15.

Christian “Junior” Stevens (accordion, concertina), Alden Robinson (fiddle), Owen Marshall (guitar, bouzouki) and newest member Hanz Araki (flute, vocals) form one of the most compelling Irish trad bands to have emerged in New England during the past several years. They recently completed work on their third album, “Fortune It May Smile.” The concert will take place at the Theology and Ministry Library on BC's Brighton Campus. See bc.edu/gaelicroots.

• At The Burren Backroom this month will be the duo of **Maeve Gilchrist and Keith Murphy**, on Nov. 8 at 7:30 p.m. Gilchrist (harp, vocals) and Murphy (guitar, mandolin, vocals) represent an intriguing blend of music from Scotland, New England, Ireland, Quebec, Acadia, Newfoundland, and Cape Breton, among other places, and their own creative minds. Both are also highly praised for their skills in composing and arranging – Murphy with Childsplay and as music director for “St. Patrick's Day Celtic Sojourn,” Gilchrist as assistant music director for “A Christmas Celtic Sojourn.”

A progressive force in traditional music for 15 years, Quebec's **Le Vent du**

Nord – Nicolas Boulrice (hurdy-gurdy), Olivier Demers (fiddle), Rejean Brunet (accordion, bass) and Simon Beaudry (guitar, bouzouki) – comes to the Backroom on Nov. 15 at 7:30 p.m. The band's resume includes tours across five continents, collaborations with performers such as The Chieftains and Dervish, and two Juno Awards (Canada's Grammys). Their most recent album, “Têtu,” shows the band incorporating contemporary material – some of it their own compositions – alongside the traditional.

Sharon Shannon, who has taken the Irish accordion to far-off lands and multiple music genres, will play two afternoon shows in the Backroom on Nov. 13, at 2 and 4:30 p.m. Shannon's work has included explorations of Appalachian, country, rock, hip-hop, reggae, classical, French-Canadian, African, and Portuguese music, and a supporting role on Steve Earle's Irish-American anthem “Galway Girl.” Her most recent album, “Sacred Earth,” continues her global journey.

Ushering in the Thanksgiving holiday break will be fiddler **Jamie Laval**, on Nov. 22 at 7:30 p.m. A Pacific Northwest native now living in North Carolina, Laval has been active in several genres of music, from Scottish trad to classical to ethnic jazz to pop (including a collaboration with Dave Matthews, and his composing the Emmy-nominated theme song for the TV show “Everwood”). This wealth of experience has enabled Laval to bring a wider dimension to his renditions of Celtic music, along with his highly

praised command and technique. His 2012 album “Murmurs and Drones” won “Best World Traditional Album” honors in the Independent Music Awards.

For tickets and other information on Backroom series events, go to burren.com/Backroom-Series.html.

• The Canadian American Club will hold its annual Club Gala Benefit on Nov. 12 from 1-7 p.m., featuring a performance by Cape Breton fiddler **Andrea Beaton**. A native of Mabou, Beaton comes from a distinguished musical family: Her fiddle-playing father Kinnon and pianist mother Betty are both acknowledged as among the most influential Cape Breton musicians of their generation; Beaton's lineage also includes grandfather Donald Angus Beaton and grandmother Elizabeth Beaton, and uncle Buddy MacMaster and cousin Natalie MacMaster, all of them revered in the Cape Breton music tradition. Her album “Branches” earned the East Coast Instrumental Recording of the Year in 2010; her newest release features Beaton accompanied by her mother and guitarist Dave MacIsaac. Accompanying Beaton at the benefit will be pianist Janine Randall, a mainstay of the local Celtic scene.

Go to canadianamericanclub.com for more details.

• Greater Boston native **Emerald Rae**, a fiddler and vocalist of wide-ranging, tradition-influenced styles, will perform at the Gore Place Carriage House in Waltham on Nov. 8 at 7:30 p.m. Rae started out playing Scottish and Cape Breton music, winning the US Scottish Fiddle Championship at age 18, then moved into Irish and American old-timey, as a member of the band Annalivia (now the trio known as Low Lily) and in her solo work; she also took up the medieval Welsh fiddle the crwth. Her more recent projects have included her album of original songs, “If Only I Could Fly,” and “Artifact,” a collaboration with accordionist Somer O'Brien that features Celtic, European and Quebecois music.

See goreplace.org for information.

• The third annual **Lexington Family Ceili** will be held on Nov. 5 at 4:30 p.m. in the First Baptist Church, 1580 Massachusetts Avenue in Lexington. Irish social dances like “The Walls of Limerick” and “Shoe the Donkey” will be taught and called; all ages are welcome and no experience is necessary. Live music will be provided by Nora Smith (fiddle), Natasha Sheehy (accordion) and John Coyne (bouzouki). Admission is \$10 per person, \$20 per family.

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BCMFest (Boston Celtic Music Festival), the annual showcase for Celtic music and dance in greater Boston, will mark its 15th year with an expanded schedule and the addition of a new venue as part of its programming.

The Harvard Square-based, all-ages festival will take place over four days, Jan. 18-21, celebrating the variety of music, song, and dance from Irish, Scottish, Cape Breton and other Celtic-related traditions found in the Greater Boston area.

BCMFest 2018 will be centered around Club Passim, the renowned Harvard Square listen-

ing room, with evening concerts on Jan. 18 and 19; a marathon "Dayfest" on Jan. 20; and, on Jan. 21, a final slate of performances at Club Passim as well as The Sinclair, one of Cambridge's most popular nightspots.

Performers and acts confirmed to appear at BCMFest 2018 thus far include: The Katie McNally Trio; Daymark; Lindsay Straw with Jordan Santiago; Molly Pinto Madigan; Celtic Roots; Eamon Sefton and Maura Shawn Scanlin; Parcel of Rogues with Susie Petrov and Calum Pasqua; Elizabeth and Ben Anderson; Highland Dance Boston;

Maggie MacPhail; Boston Harbor Bhoys; Gus LaCasse; Boston College Irish Dance; Rockport Celtic Duo; Ceol Corvus; Quebecois showcase with Adrienne Howard, Eric Bodman and Max Newman; Vienna Scheyer; The Medford All Star Ceili Band; Boston College Irish Dance; The Kelly Girls; Boston Scottish Fiddle Orchestra; Thar Toinn; Natasha Sheehy; Sailbow; Colleen White and Sean Smith; Royal Scottish Country Dance Society; and Pumpkin Bread. [Updates at passim.org/bcmfest]

Among the highlights of BCMFest 2018 will be the Emerging Artists Showcase (Jan. 18); the Roots and Branches Concert (Jan. 19); the Boston Urban Ceilidh (Jan. 19), featuring social dances from Celtic traditions; Saturday Dayfest (Jan. 20), 12-plus hours of all manner of Celtic music,

from classic traditional to more contemporary sounds, followed by the Festival Club, with late-night performances that provide festival artists the opportunity to engage in special collaborations and push the envelope; a BCMFest Brunch on Sunday (Jan. 21) at Club Passim; Sunday Dayfest, with more sounds and styles from Boston's Celtic music scene, and that evening, the festival's climax, the BCMFest Nightcap concert.

There also will be music sessions, sing-alongs and participatory dancing, and festival performers will lead workshops at The BCMFest Academy on Saturday and Sunday.

BCMFest is a program



The duo of Eamon Sefton and Maura Shawn Scanlin will make their BCMFest debut at the festival in January.

of Passim, a Cambridge-based non-profit seeking to build a vibrant music community through Club Passim, music school, artist grants and outreach initiatives.

Ticket and schedule

information, as well as updates on performers and other festival events and activities, are available through the BCMFest website at passim.org/bcmfest.



Fiddler Katie McNally will be among the performers at BCMFest 2018.
Natalie Champa Jennings photo



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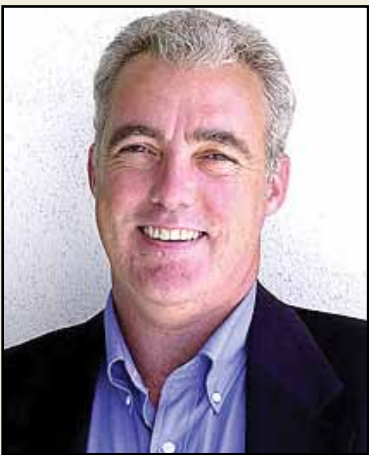


www.wgbh.org/celtic

Photo credit: Vic Dvorak



Our Honorees



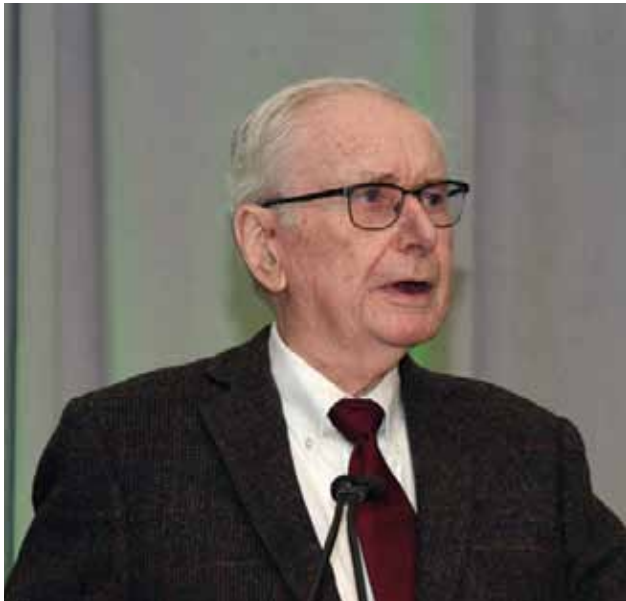
NORA, ANNMARIE, and BILL KENNEDY
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KEVIN CULLEN

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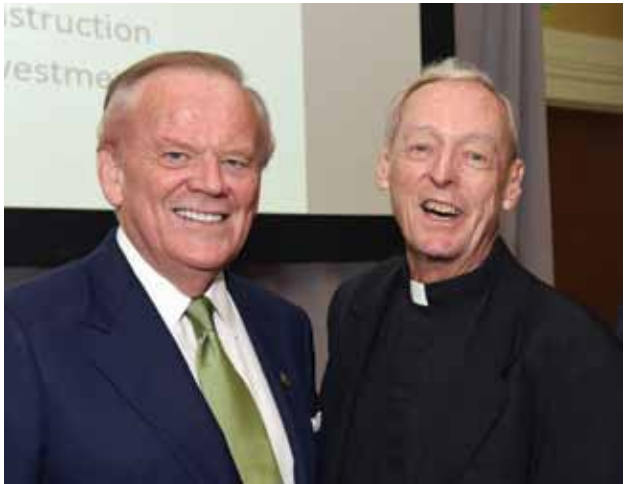
THE HONOREES



Irish Honors Awards chairman Aidan Browne



Master of Ceremonies Dick Flavin



New England Council President Jim Brett and Fr. Richard (Doc) Conway share a laugh.

Immigration draws attention at Irish Honors luncheon

(Continued from page 1)

generations,” Cullen noted, the Irish should not forget their past just because their social status in America has changed over the last century.

“If anyone should be tolerant and welcoming, it’s the Boston Irish,” he declared. “If anyone should show solidarity for people who might be shunned or derided for being nothing more than themselves, it’s the Boston Irish.”

After writing a story earlier this year about Francisco Rodriguez, an immigrant from El Salvador facing the threat of deportation, Cullen said he received several racist emails from people “with Irish surnames.” He went on to denounce the hypocrisy of Irish Americans who would denigrate the very group they were once part of.

“Being Irish in a city where it once brought scorn now brings responsibility,” Cullen continued. “Part of being Irish is knowing your history. And if you’re really Irish, if you’re Boston Irish, you should always stick up for the underdog — the people who get stereotyped and screwed — because that used to be us.”

Other speakers at the event included honoree Tom Tinlin, who spoke about dedicating his work to raising awareness about brain aneurysms after undergoing surgery for one earlier this year. Nora Kennedy, representing her family in receiving their award, emphasized the need for the next generation of Boston Irish to carry on the values taught to them by their elders.

This year’s luncheon committee was chaired by Aidan Browne, partner at Sullivan & Worcester and chairman of the Boston Friends of the Gaelic Players Association. In his speech, Browne shared his excitement for the upcoming Fenway Hurling Classic on Nov. 19, which he described as “the biggest Irish event in Boston in almost 100 years.” Tickets to the tournament were raffled off at the event.



Tom Tinlin, who was honored for distinguished public service, is flanked by (l-r) his aunt Mary Greene, wife Heather and his father, Tom Tinlin.



Eversource Energy President/CEO Jim Judge, a 2016 honoree at the Boston Irish Honors, introduced new inductees Nora, Annmarie and Bill Kennedy.



Reporter editor and publisher Bill Forry, honoree and Boston Globe columnist Kevin Cullen and Aidan Browne, partner at Sullivan & Worcester and chairman of the Boston Irish Honors 2017 committee.



The Boston Irish Honors 2017 Exemplary Boston Irish Family

ACROSS THE GENERATIONS

Bill, Annmarie, and Nora Kennedy open their hearts and their philanthropic spirit to help ‘the least among us’

By Peter F. Stevens
BIR Staff

For Bill, Annmarie, and Nora Kennedy, it’s all about community, about giving back and treating everyone – no matter an individual’s means and station – with compassion, dignity, and respect. While the term “family values” has morphed into cliché among cynics, the words have never been cliché to the Kennedys.

Born and raised in Dorchester’s Meetinghouse Hill neighborhood, Bill Kennedy attributes much of his success – he has been lauded as one of *Boston Magazine’s* “Super Lawyers” – and credits his concern for others to his family and to St. Peter’s parish. His roots have helped shape his career and his charitable work.

Today, Kennedy is a partner in the prestigious Seaport law firm Nutter McClennen & Fish, specializing in the corporate and transactions department and serving as chair of the firm’s Public Policy group and as a member of the Public Finance section. He is also immersed in the firm’s “very active pro bono program providing legal services to those who need access to our legal system.”

Kennedy earned his B.A. from the College of the Holy Cross and his law degree *cum laude* from Suffolk University, where he was an editor of the Law Review. His legal career started in 1980 in private practice, and he has taught as an adjunct professor at Suffolk Law, where he founded the university’s Legal Assistance Bureau. He served as Chairman for the Massachusetts Board of Bar Examiners.

In terms of the law and public service, Bill Kennedy has covered the gamut with the skill and breadth of knowledge that has cemented his status as a Boston Super Lawyer. He served as chief of staff and chief legal counsel to former Massachusetts Speaker of the House Thomas M. Finneran. Prior to that, he took on the duties of chief of staff and chief legal counsel to the House Ways and Means Committee and was an attorney for the Executive Council. He also served as an assistant clerk at the Mass Supreme Judicial Court.

A chance meeting, a teaming up

A *cum laude* J.D. was not the only life-changing achievement Kennedy found at Suffolk. While riding the Red Line in his final month of law school, he met another Suffolk student, Annmarie Looney, who was working in Boston and pursuing a degree in education. The rest, as the adage goes, is history. They married in 1984 and bought a house in St. Ann’s parish a mile or two down Adams Street from Meetinghouse Hill. Later, they moved to Quincy and spent summers at a cottage in Falmouth.

Like Bill, Annmarie Looney Kennedy was born and raised in Dorchester. The family lived on Edwin Street in St. Mark’s parish in the house that had been in the family since 1908. Again, like Bill, she says that her family and the parish were tightly entwined. “My cousins – the McCrevas and the Joyces – were our extended family in the parish,” she says. “My parents, Leo and Margaret Looney, were always involved in charitable work for the parish. My father was a member of the St. Vincent de Paul Society, and often he would take my brother and me with him on calls to deliver food, clothing, and other necessities to local families who were having a hard time. It was something that people just did in the parish.”

That “something” has stayed with Annmarie Kennedy in her family and professional life. She attained her master’s in education, and after fifteen years of teaching at Katherine Gibbs, she went on to Quincy High School, where she has been educating grades 9-12 for the last 20 years.

Her core belief that every child deserves a good education has shaped her community service on the board of St. John Paul II Catholic Academy- Lower Mills, the former St. Gregory’s School in Dorchester, with the Carmelite nuns, and with numerous other laudable causes. The virtue of being a person for oth-



“Family values” mark the ties that bind Nora, Bill and Annmarie Kennedy to home, career, and philanthropy.

A FAMILY ALBUM



Bill and Annmarie on the day of Bill’s graduation from Suffolk Law School.



Nora and her parents outside the US Supreme Court building.



Wedding Day: The bride, the groom, and Bill’s mother Mary.



Annmarie’s parents, Leo and Margaret Looney.



The Boston Irish Honors 2017

ers also took root in her brother, Dr. John Looney, an internist at Beth Israel Deaconess Hospital in Milton.

Bill Kennedy is quick to point out that giving back to the community is a package deal with the Kennedys and that Annmarie and Nora are every bit as involved as he is.

An enduring parental choice

Nora Kennedy is equally quick to credit her parents for instilling in her the importance of family, education, and community service. “Because I’m an only child, my parents had two choices in raising me. They could have let relatives and neighbors babysit me when they went out to charity events, political fundraisers, parish meetings, and all sorts of other community functions. They often took me with them. They chose to make me a part of all this from an early age, to expose me to the world they lived in. Through them, I met so many wonderful people.

“I learned fast how lucky I was and how so many other kids and families needed help. My parents’ belief that every kid deserves an education and a fair chance to succeed has stayed with me. I can’t stress enough how much my mom’s compassion, dedication, and selflessness to her students in and out of the classroom has taught me that everyone deserves the chance to reach their full potential.”

She added, “An important thing for people to understand about my dad is something he has said to me just about every day when I was growing up – ‘treat people like you want to be treated.’”

Nora has the same deep sense of place and community that her parents have. “In a lot of ways,” she says, “the Kennedys and so many other families can trace their lives up and down Dot Ave and all across Dorchester and Southie, where I live now.”

Bill Kennedy seconds that sentiment when he recalls how a drive with his late sister Linda, who was battling cancer, from Brigham & Women’s Hospital to Hanover punctuated the closeness he and his sisters had forged in and around Meetinghouse Hill. He speaks wistfully of how the route he chose took them past many of the Dorchester sites of their youth.

“A lot has changed in Dorchester and Southie,” says Nora, “but you can still walk around and see people you’ve known all your life. That sense of camaraderie and real community still exists. As a kid, my grandparents were within walking distance. Sunday family dinners were important. It was that same way for my parents when they were growing up—generations of close-knit families and close-knit communities. Families used their neighborhood and the city as a backdrop.”

A graduate of Boston College, Nora is the chief of staff for John Fish, the CEO of Suffolk, and she is involved in numerous charitable and community programs such as Scholar Athletes. She says that she and her parents try at all times to honor the Jesuit motto – “Men and Women for others.”

“Those words are a key to how people should live their lives,” she says. “Giving back is a part of who you are. It’s not a burden. My parents have always lived by that motto, and I try to do so, too.”

His footprints are everywhere

Along with his professional achievements, Bill Kennedy’s philanthropic work for Catholic Charities, Project Bread, and a vast array of other community and educational efforts has marked his presence in the community. He is currently a trustee at Emmanuel College at St. John Paul II Catholic Academy and a former trustee at the University of Massachusetts. His numerous civic awards include recognition by the Children’s Trust Fund for his years of service, and by Holy Cross as the “Crusader of the Year.” He was also named “Father of the Year” by the American Diabetes Association.

In May 2017, he was awarded Catholic Charities’ Justice and Compassion Award “for his inspirational leadership and solidarity with the most at-risk and underserved members of our community.” He was introduced by his daughter and honored at the banquet by his friends Cardinal Sean O’Malley and Governor Charlie Baker. “For over 40 years,” *Pilot* reporter Mark Labbe wrote, “Mr. Kennedy has worked tirelessly to better the lives of the less fortunate in and around the Greater Boston area.”

More important than the award to Bill Kennedy and his family was the fact that the event raised some \$1



At top: An amiable chat: Boston’s Cardinal Sean O’Malley, Massachusetts Gov. Charlie Baker, and Bill Kennedy.

At right: A meeting of peacemakers: Bill Kennedy and former US Sen. George Mitchell, a key figure in the 1998 accord in Northern Ireland.



million for Catholic Charities.

Generations of Community and Place

The impact of Bill Kennedy’s Boston Irish roots and his sense of community materialized in Dorchester, and they have been his moral compass throughout his life. The same holds true for Annmarie and Nora.

“My Mom, Mary, and my Dad, William, raised my six sisters and me to work hard, treat others right, and help others out,” says Kennedy. “Virtually the entire neighborhood was like that. Everything revolved around the parish – St. Peter’s, family, and neighbors. My Aunt Bertha, my mom’s sister, lived next door to us with her family, six kids. Everyone knew everybody else in the neighborhood. It gave you a sense of place and also a sense of purpose.”

Kennedy speaks with pride at how his mother was a “Rosie the Riveter” at the Fore River Shipyard during World War II. After serving in the war, his father became a welder at Fore River. Mary Kennedy later worked for many years for the city of Boston. Today, her son notes, “she is 93 and living at the Royal Braintree Nursing and Rehabilitation Center, in Weymouth Landing.”

Kennedy knows that the spirit of giving back is a legacy from his parents. “They were always watching out for everyone in the neighborhood, and just about everyone we knew did the same,” he reflects. “We had such great parish priests and this incredible sense of community – everyone pulling together.

Kennedy’s religious beliefs make up his very core. He believes that they were shaped and strengthened by the “many compassionate people I’ve met along the way from my Dorchester childhood to Holy Cross and my professional life.”

He considers his undergraduate years at Holy Cross as transformative. “The friends I made at Holy Cross have been my friends for life,” Kennedy said. “The school’s Jesuit tradition was perfect for me, and the necessity to give back to the community is so essential to the school and the graduates it sends out. Getting involved with those in need is a core lesson one gets at Holy Cross. One of my biggest regrets is that I didn’t serve in the Jesuit Volunteer Corps.



Above: A daughter and dad
Some of my college friends did that.”

Kennedy fondly reveals something of a “secret weapon” he brought to Holy Cross and, later, to Suffolk Law School. “My mom and dad were always involved in my education. My mom typed my Holy Cross papers and then my Law Review articles. I was always getting professors’ compliments for how good my spelling and my grammar were. I owe a lot of thanks to my mom for that.”

Asked what the Boston Irish Honors Award means to the family, Bill Kennedy says, “It’s a special one to us. I’ve been a part of the event for past honorees who are not just people I admire, but longtime friends in many cases. The tradition that Ed Forry and his family have created with the award recognizes that so many Boston Irish families have never let success turn them away from the more important work of reaching out to the entire community and helping others.”

You Can Go Back Home

Thomas Wolfe wrote, “You Can’t Go Home Again.” The Kennedys have proven things to be otherwise in their case. Recently, Bill and Annmarie decided that with Nora out on her own and with her career in full swing, the house in Quincy was too big for the two of them. “We decided it was time to downsize. We looked at places in downtown Boston, but ended up buying a condo in a great local building somewhere else – the old Baker Chocolate Factory, in Dorchester.

“It feels right. Lower Mills is a great place to live.”



The Boston Irish Honors 2017 for Distinguished Public Service

A proud son of Southie, Tom Tinlin personifies the virtue of public service

By Bill Forry
BIR Editor

There was a time — before his life was nearly cut short by an undiagnosed brain aneurysm — when Tom Tinlin was best known in government circles as the consummate Mr. Fix-It. First — and most notably — for Mayor Tom Menino, as he rose from a security officer working the front desk to the city's transportation chief in the span of a decade. After that, briefly for Deval Patrick, and finally for Charlie Baker, Tommy Tinlin was the versatile, witty, and unflappable lieutenant, the cabinet chief who could be counted on to give you a straight answer and a sensible solution.

When his mug would show up on your TV screen under a hard hat and over a fluorescent MEMA vest, it usually meant some natural calamity was under way.

"Tommy has always been in the news," says Heather (Canavan) Tinlin, his wife of a quarter-century. "If you saw him, you knew it was time to go get milk and bread."

Tommy Tinlin was — and is — the urban mechanic's urban mechanic. All of that changed suddenly last April when the thunderbolt struck. While the 51-year-old Massachusetts Highway commissioner was emceeding a charity event for South Boston's Fourth Presbyterian Church, the excruciating, week-long headache he'd been nursing with pain meds and sleeping pills suddenly turned violent. He nearly blacked out, then walked off the stage, turned to Heather, and uncharacteristically demanded: "Take me to the hospital. Now!"

After emergency surgery and 12 days in the hospital, Tom Tinlin had survived his brush with death, which was chronicled brilliantly in a *Boston Globe* feature by Nestor Ramos last August.

"Heather saved my life long before that ride to Beth Israel-Deaconess. She's the most special person I've ever met," he told the *Reporter* recently in an interview. "I'm blown away that she wants to spend the rest of my life with me."

What happened to Tom and Heather and their children, Thomas, 17, and Grace, 15 (as Tinlin was quick to note, this was a crisis for his whole family) was preventable. A CAT scan — had his physician ordered one — would have detected the ticking time bomb in his head. Now, working in tandem with the Brain Aneurysm Foundation, the Tinlins are devoted to spreading awareness about the warning signs to the public and the medical community.

"We can educate the public, but if doctors aren't asking the right questions and doing the tests, all the education on the public side is for naught," Tinlin says. "It has to be something that professionals are talking about. If my doctor listened to me — if my doctor did right thing — Heather would not have left the hospital that day wondering if I was going to survive or not."

An early riser from the very start

Thomas Jude Tinlin made his debut at a different hospital — St. Margaret's — on May 26, 1965. He was born earlier than expected, the baby brother of Kelly and Kerry and only son of Tom Tinlin and his bride, Anne (Madden) Tinlin, a couple minted in Southie's Old Colony projects. They were married at St. Augustine's in 1961 and nurtured their young crew in a flat on Second Street. Tom Tinlin, an Air Force veteran, hauled Schlitz kegs — and later Buds — across greater Boston as a proud union truck driver. Their kids learned their work ethic from both parents. Mom took a part-time job making beds at the Bay View Nursing Home on P Street. Dad missed the start of his own "retirement" party from the Teamsters because he'd decided to start a new gig: managing beer concessions at Fenway Park. He's still on the job — and loving it — at age 78.

"I remember one time — I was 10 years old — and my dad came home with a cast on his hand," says Tom the younger. "He'd broken it at work the day before. He went right into the bathroom and soaked



Gov. Charlie Baker with the Tinlin family — Grace, 15, Thomas, 17, and Heather and Tom Tinlin.



Tom Tinlin with his dad, Tom, at Fenway Park, where the elder Tinlin — now 78 — still directs the delivery of beer at the storied ballpark.



Mayor Thomas M. Menino with Tom Tinlin in his City Hall office in 1994. The mayor came to lean on the young man from South Boston as a trusted advisor for his entire tenure from 1993 to 2014.

the plaster in the tub so he could take it off himself. We couldn't afford to have him out of work."

There are a few clans that claim deep roots in Southie, but the Tinlins have the town in a strangle hold.

Thomas McMahon, Tommy's maternal great-great grandfather, emigrated from County Clare in 1874. He met his wife Eleanor — also from Clare — and moved into a flat on W. Fourth Street. They packed the joint with seven kids, including Tommy's great-grandfather, Patrick Joseph McMahon, who married a "girl from the ice" — Catherine. They staked their own claim, settling at 392 W. Fourth St.

Their daughter — Tommy's grandmother, Louise McMahon — met and married John Tinlin, who served in the Coast Guard during WWII and later split from his wife and family. Louise single-handedly raised her brood of seven kids — including Tommy's dad, Thomas J. Tinlin — on Darius Court in the Old Colony development. Louise found work at the old Carney Hospital on Telegraph Hill, now operating as Marian Manor. When the Carney decamped for greener pastures in leafy Dorchester, Louise followed and eventually found her own apartment in a three-decker near the hospital campus.

While still in "the bricks" — Tom Tinlin's dad met and courted his mom, Anne Madden, a sweetheart from Patterson Way. Their first-born was Kelly, who later married Coley Nee, another stalwart Southie clan of Connemara extraction. She became a powerhouse in city law enforcement and rose to the

rank of deputy superintendent in the Boston Police Department before "retiring" last year to become the first chief of the Boston University Police. Second daughter Kerry — the family's resident "adrenaline junkie" — is a nurse and consummate first-responder, making regular airborne runs as part of a MedFlight units out of Cape Cod Hospital and Milford Regional Medical Center.

From street corners to Gillette and City Hall

The baby of the bunch, our subject, chugged along predictably at first — grammar school at St. Brigid's and high school at Christopher Columbus in the North End, where the Italian lunch mothers spoiled students with pasta and "gravy." Tommy Tinlin's teen years were spent on Southie street corners and, later, at the L Street Tavern before it was a Robin Williams sound stage. College was an option, but not a pressing one, nor his first choice, by a long shot.

"My biggest ambition was to make 10 bucks an hour," recalls Tinlin, who made short work of that bucket list item by pulling the 11 p.m. to 7 a.m. shift in the "hot room" at the Gillette factory. The magic of molding plastic razors on the piers of the Fort Point Channel wore off after a few months. In 1987, a neighborhood sponsor, Eddie Wallace, tucked him into a security guard's seat at Ray Flynn's City Hall at age 22.

It was a life-changing moment.

First, and most importantly, it was there that Tom crossed paths with Heather Canavan of K and Fifth,



The Boston Irish Honors 2017

A proud son of Southie, Tom Tinlin personifies public service

and two years his junior. He was immediately smitten with the young mayoral intern, whom he somehow had never met in his Southie travels. “She was funny, pretty, and had no use for me at all,” says Tom with a laugh. “But I was going to wear her down one way or another.”

Says Heather: “We had all these things in common.” Friendship turned to flirtation and, after Heather graduated from college, romance. They were married in 1992 and celebrated their 25th anniversary this month.

The newlywed Tom Tinlin had been giving some thought to becoming a Boston cop, but he wasn’t all that sure of his long-term plans. But City Hall serendipity was not done with him yet: He had just met an Italian guy from the western reaches of the city who would change his life.

For some reason— and no one really fully grasps why— Tom Menino took a shine to the red-faced kid from Southie. The Hyde Park district councilor, who had recently earned his own long-deferred college degree at UMass Boston, leaned on Tinlin to do the same.

“We used to say that the mayor could see around corners, for people and situations,” says Michael Kineavy, another Southie kid from Second Street who became Tom Menino’s closest City Hall aide. “If you had walked by [Tinlin] at the security desk, you wouldn’t have known he had all this capacity. He saw something in Tom early on. I think he probably saw that he has a good heart.”

When Menino was elevated to interim mayor after Ray Flynn left for the Vatican, Tinlin was one of the few loyalists he could count on in South Boston, where Dorchester state Rep. Jim Brett was the local favorite in the 1993 race to pick a full-term successor.

Peter Welch, Menino’s chief of staff, enlisted Tinlin to organize a “time” at the South Boston Yacht Club. “We got a call that the mayor was ten minutes out and the place was pretty much empty. ‘All of a sudden— swoosh— there are people swarming in. We had a full house in Southie for him that night. He was pretty pleased.’”

Tinlin’s loyalty and hustle paid off within hours of Menino’s November election victory. The next morning, he was summoned to the mayor’s fifth floor perch overlooking Faneuil Hall. Menino wanted Tinlin to be his full-time Southie sentry in the Office of Neighborhood Services.

“He said, ‘I want you to come and work for me,’” Tinlin recalls. “But, he also said, ‘You have to promise me you’ll go back to school.’” It was not a request. “I would call it a mandate,” deadpanned Kineavy. “There were a couple of people the mayor really pushed in that way.”

Heather Tinlin was fully on board with the mayor. “Honestly, I was nagging Tommy to go to college, too. But the mayor saw him in all kinds of capacities, addressing some serious things that happened in security. He really saw something in him.”

Taking the mayor’s urgings to heart

After a false start or two, Tinlin found his niche at Eastern Nazarene College, where he enrolled in night classes. “Eastern Nazarene gave me the tools I needed. It taught me how to study again,” he says.

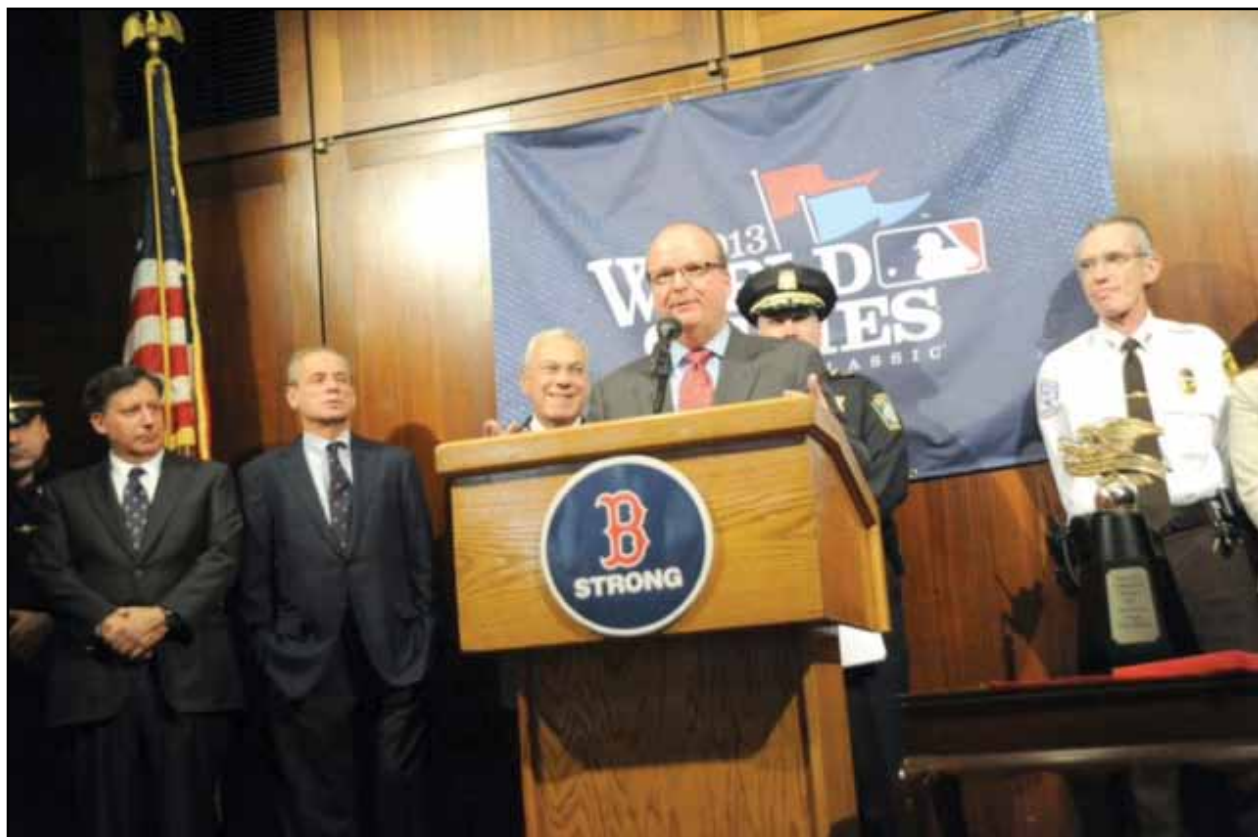
Within days of Tom’s getting his bachelor’s degree, Menino pulled him aside again. “Congratulations,” he said. “Now guess who getting his master’s?”

Menino then plugged Tinlin into a slot in a city-sponsored graduate degree program at Suffolk University, where he earned a master’s in public administration over the next two years.

“I thought I was getting punished at first, that’s the kind of dope I am,” laughs Tinlin. “Suffolk made me a better employee and changed me as a manager.”

Those were important skills to have as he joined the inner circle of the Menino administration with a promotion to acting commissioner of the city’s Transportation Department. It was a demanding position in which Tinlin earned a reputation as a hands-on, no-nonsense manager who would personally respond to accidents or water main breaks in the middle of the night.

Menino, who died in 2015 from cancer, earned a reputation as a tough boss, but Tinlin says that any re-



Tom Tinlin addressing the media at a 2013 press conference at Boston City Hall.



Our subject, circa 1969.



The Tinlin four at Disney World this year— Tom, Heather, Tom and Grace.

telling painting Menino as a bully is way off. “He was very direct. You got a full report card every day. But it was never personal,” he said.

Cabinet heads could expect the mayor to ask a simple question that was a hallmark of his leadership style: “Who are we helping by doing this?” Says Tinlin: “It had to begin and end with that. I don’t think he gets enough credit for how that sort of direct communication works. His intuitions were always so sound.”

Menino came to rely on Tinlin’s counsel, too, and not just on matters of transportation. He was the mayor’s guide for navigating the annual St. Patrick’s Day breakfast— the political roast that the mayor looked forward to about as much as he did a root canal.

“He wrote all the jokes - which the mayor always butchered but somehow made more hilarious,” recalls Dot Joyce, Menino’s longtime press secretary and confidante. “Tom Tinlin is the total package. We couldn’t have survived some difficult days without him.”

On the state stage, preaching



The Tinlin family in 1986 celebrating the 25th wedding anniversary of Tom and Anne: Kerry, Kelly, Tom and Anne. And that’s our esteemed honoree, Tom Tinlin, on the floor.

an ‘urban sense of urgency’

Tinlin brought all of the lessons learned at Menino’s side to state government in 2013 when he joined the Patrick administration as the chief of operations for the state’s highway department. Patrick was winding up his term and Gov. Charlie Baker was in the wings.

“I thought I was going to the state for a year while I figured out what I wanted to do next,” says Tinlin, who first met Baker during his transition. “Immediately, I said, ‘This guy gets it.’ I wasn’t necessarily on his team, but he was deferring to me, asking all the right questions. And he wasn’t hesitant to get his hands dirty.”

Baker bought into Tinlin’s guiding principle: Adopt a Menino-like approach to the day-to-day workings of state government.

“I wanted to bring an urban sense of urgency to state government. As a former municipal official, there were times we thought that the state was out

(Continued on page 11)



The Boston Irish Honors 2017 Exemplary Boston Irish Journalist

Kevin Cullen the journalist, in his own words

Editor's note: When Boston Irish Reporter publisher Ed Forry approached Kevin Cullen about accepting a Boston Irish Honors award for his exemplary career in journalism, Kevin told Ed that he would "jot down a few words" of background information on his life and times. Those "few words" follow:

By Kevin Cullen

I was born in the old Richardson House, which was then part of the Boston Lying-In Hospital that later merged with Brigham and Women's Hospital. My mother was from South Boston and my father was from Malden, where my family settled and where I grew up.

My paternal great-grandparents were from Cork – they were Flemings – and the Cullens were from Dublin. My great-grandfather was a labor activist who supposedly knew Jim Larkin, the renowned early 20th-century Irish trade union activist. The Cullens were never big on their Irish roots, as least as I can remember.

My maternal side was a different story. Irishness was very much at the fore of the family's identity.

My mom's parents were from Connemara. My grandmother, Brigid Connolly, grew up in Carraroe, and came to Boston as a domestic, working initially for a family on Beacon Hill when she was a teenager. My grandfather, Martin Flaherty, was a better-than-average hurler from Camus. When I hitchhiked there as a student in the late 1970s, I was told by locals that he was from Upper Camus. I looked around the barren countryside and couldn't believe there was an Upper and a Lower Camus. It just looked like one big-ass bog to me.

My grandmother took care of me for a while when my mom was sick and she spoke to me in Irish all the time. Years later, I would be startled when I heard words in Irish that stirred memories in me.

That said, my grandparents, who were married at what was then St. Peter's and Paul's in Southie, were determined that their kids would assimilate as much as possible. Even though they were native Irish speakers from the Gaeltacht, they did nothing to facilitate their children learning Irish. In fact, they used Irish as their private language so they could talk in front of their kids without the kids knowing what they were saying. I find that very sad. But it was very common in that day and age, and the Irish were determined to be less foreign and more American. One of the casualties was the Irish language in America.

Much later, when I was a student at Trinity College, I hitchhiked out to Connemara one day and went into a pub somewhere around Carraroe. It was the middle of the day, and the only people inside the pub were the bartender and a couple of old-timers at the far end of the bar. I sat down in the middle, not wanting to be seen as pushy. I got talking to the bartender over a pint and, of course, my family came up and I said my grandparents were from the area.

"What were their names, and where were they from?" the bartender asked. When I told him, he walked down to the old-timers and spoke to them in Irish. They were drinking Guinness bottles, as the old folks did in that era. No draft for them.

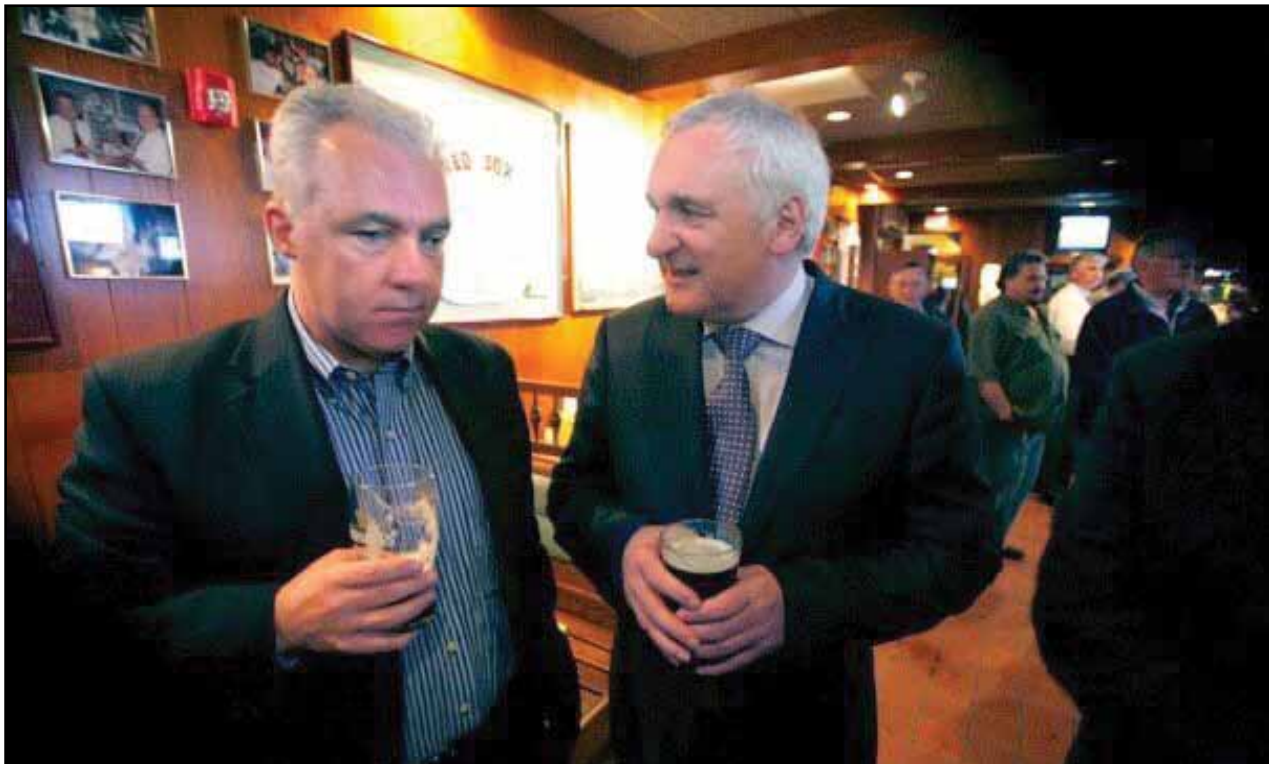
The bartender came back and said, "This fella knew your grandfather." So I walked over and shook their hands. I could say hello in Irish, and I understood when one of them, the one who supposedly knew my grandfather, asked my name. But the torrent of Irish that followed was indecipherable to me. I shrugged, and said, "I'm sorry, but I don't have Irish."

The man who had been talking to me, chuckled, turned to his friend, said something, and shook my hand again and it was pretty clear that was the end of the conversation.

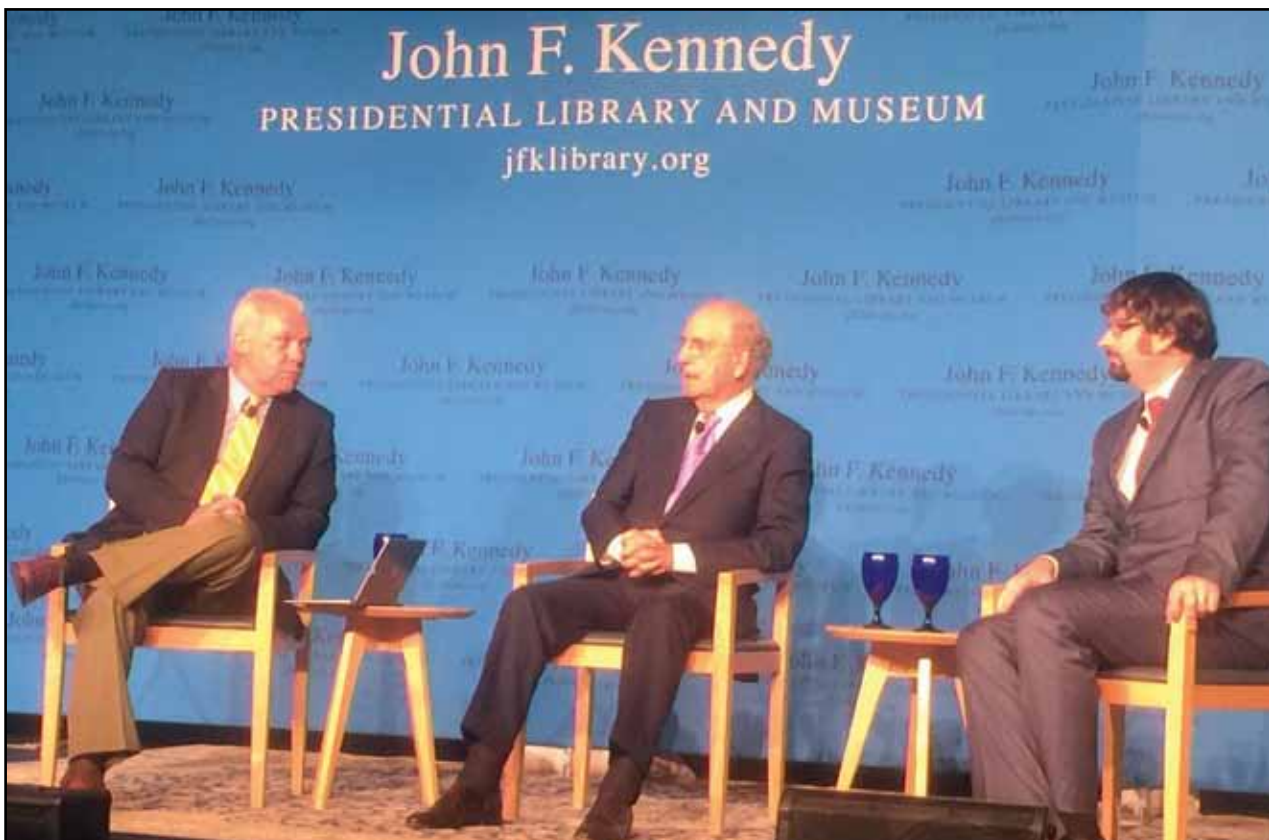
I went back to my pint down the bar and eventually got the bartender's attention. "What did your man say after I told him I didn't speak Irish?" I asked him. He scrunched up his face and said, "Ah, nothing." "No," I said. "I'd really like to know." The bartender shrugged as he began pulling my next pint, and said, "He said you're [expletive] useless."

About Mom and Dad

My mom, Margaret "Peggy" Flaherty, was in



When I got Bertie to go to The Eire...Somebody had to drink the Bass. The occasion was a visit to the Dorchester pub by outgoing Irish Prime Minister Bertie Ahern in 2008.



Kevin Cullen and former US Sen. George Mitchell talking about the 2017 movie "In the Name of Peace: John Hume in America" at the Kennedy Library as the film's director Maurice Fitzpatrick, listens in.

the first graduating class of Gate of Heaven High School in Southie, 1938. She became a telephone operator, working out of the exchange in what is now Chinatown. My dad, Joseph Cullen of Malden, was nicknamed "Duke." He had to have been one of the few white kids of his era who was named after Duke Ellington. My father was a jazz nut, from a very young age. He and my Uncle Chub were the only white guys in a club in the South End when they saw Duke and his big band perform before the war.

My parents met during the Second World War, at a USO dance in Park Square, when my dad was home on leave (he had enlisted in the Navy right after Pearl Harbor). My mother's boyfriend from Southie, whom everyone expected she'd marry, had been killed in the war the previous year.

My dad served in the Pacific throughout most of the war and came home after VJ Day. After he and my mother were married at Gate of Heaven, they lived in Southie for a while before settling in Malden after he became a firefighter for the Malden Fire Department.

I went to Catholic school, Cheverus, through the eighth grade. I was an altar boy at Sacred Hearts in Malden. My mother wanted me to go to Malden Catholic, but I was constantly getting in trouble with the nuns over Catholic dogma. I liked to question things; they didn't. I didn't feel like starting over with the brothers at MC, so I went to Malden High.

Some of my uncles were Boston cops and firefight-

ers. I thought about taking the Boston firefighters exam, but my uncle, Bozo Flaherty, who at the time was on Engine 39 on D Street, urged me to go to college and take the exam later. I got accepted at four or five other colleges, but went to UMass Amherst because it was the only one I thought I could afford.

I played soccer at UMass, was actually recruited to play. A kid from Dorchester, Julio Avila, and I had work-study jobs in one of the dining halls while we tried to play Division 1 college soccer. Julio was really good, but while very fast, I wasn't very skilled and early in sophomore year, when it was obvious I wasn't going to play much if at all on the varsity, and after my coach told me he didn't want me working for the student newspaper, I quit the team.

By this time, I had been pretty well bitten by the journalism bug. One of my professors, Howard Ziff, was a real mentor. One of the turning points in my life was when, in my sophomore year, I enrolled in an Irish history class taught by Professor Joe Hernon. Joe had his students read a lot of Irish literature, because he said you couldn't understand Irish history if you didn't understand Irish literature. I began reading Joyce, Yeats, Synge, O'Casey, Behan. At the same time, my roommate, Mike Power, who hailed from a big family in Mission Hill, turned me onto Irish folk music: first, Tommy Makem and the Clancy Brothers, then, Planxty and De Dannan and the Bothy Band, among others.



The Boston Irish Honors 2017

Revising my outlook on life

Around that time, I experienced what the social scientists call Third Generation Return, when you begin to strongly identify with the land of your foreign-born grandparents. I decided to spend my junior year abroad. The UMass exchange program had a relationship with University College Cork, but I wanted to live in Dublin. Between Joyce's "Dubliners" and the history of the Rising, I was obsessed with Dublin.

The folks at the UMass exchange office told me I'd have to do it on my own because they had no formal connection with schools in Dublin. UCD struck me as being too far out in the suburbs. Trinity was right in the heart of the city, and that's where I wanted to be. I wrote a letter to the registrar at Trinity and, shockingly, they wrote back. To this day, I have no idea why they accepted me.

The year I lived in Dublin changed my life completely. I fell in love with Ireland, its people and its culture. I hitchhiked a lot. It was common back then. Especially because the buses went on strike all the time. I brought my guitar to Clare and, in a nearly deserted O'Connor's Pub in Doolin, sang Neil Young songs with a farmer who wore shit-caked Wellies and played a mean tin whistle. Turns out, it was the legendary Miko Russell. Who knew?

I took the train up to Belfast, and was walking down the Falls Road when a British Army patrol came walking toward me. I was stopped, and when I tried to explain who I was, one of the officers told me to knock off the phony accent. I showed him my passport and he muttered something under his breath and tossed it back at me. I remember thinking: If this is how they treat me, how do they treat the locals?

Even then, in my head, I thought that someday I'd come back and write about all I saw in the North.

I had hoped to finish my degree at Trinity, but when the administrators there suggested they might not accept all or even most of my UMass credits, I came back to the States and finished up at UMass in 1981.

My first job out of school was working for a reporter at the *Transcript-Telegram* in Holyoke, an old mill city in western Massachusetts that had seen better days. Holyoke has a big St. Patrick's parade and I when I wasn't covering cops, politics, and the courts, I was the fulltime parade reporter. One year, Maureen O'Hara was the parade committee's choice for the JFK Award. I rode around in a limousine with her, and told her that "The Quiet Man" was my favorite movie of all time. She seemed unimpressed, and was more intrigued by the people hanging out the windows in the Puerto Rican neighborhoods we drove through. I'm not sure that Maureen O'Hara had a full measure of Holyoke when she agreed to attend the festivities.

I learned a lot in that city. It was like going to graduate school for journalism, except that I got paid \$200 a week to start.

Reporting in Boston about Boston

After Rupert Murdoch bought the *Boston Herald*, his editors began trying out young reporters whom they could pay much less than the old crew from Hearst. I did one of those three-day tryouts and they hired me. When I called my mother in Malden to say that I was coming home, she said, "That's nice. Did you know there's a fireman's exam on Saturday." My mother thought newspaper reporters were ne'er do wells, and the ones she knew were.

Charlie O'Brien, the managing editor at the *Herald*, handed me a letter on my first day, saying, "This is the reason you were hired." It was a letter, crudely written in broken English, from a Haitian woman from Dorchester I had interviewed during my tryout. Her son had been shot to death by a man the Boston Police had arrested. She told me her son's shooter was his cousin, and his best friend, and that it was an accident, but the police wouldn't listen to her. After my story appeared, without a byline because I was on tryout, the DA's office reduced the charge from murder to manslaughter. The woman wrote a letter addressed simply to The Boston Herald, to thank them for the polite young man who came to her house and who told the truth.

For whatever reason, I was the only reporter to knock on that woman's door. I have not forgotten the power of being polite and decent to people, especially when they are in the midst of a traumatic event. Nor have



The Cullens after settling in Dun Laoghaire in So. County Dublin in 1998: Patrick, Brendan, Kevin and Martha.



My folks: Peggy and Joseph "Duke" Cullen.

I forgotten that woman's kindness, either.

I led a Damian Runyonesque life at the *Herald*, where I was the chief crime reporter, though, truth be told, everyone at a tabloid is a crime reporter at some level. I cashed my check at JJ Foley's in the South End and built sources at the bar, which was peopled by homicide cops and EMTs and paramedics from the city's EMS.

For reasons I can't remember, I stood for and was elected president of the editorial union at the *Herald*. It would have made my trade unionist great-grandfather proud, but I wasn't a very good labor leader. My only, and lasting accomplishment was to get our union to affiliate with the Newspaper Guild, which succeeded in narrowing what was then a huge pay gap between *Globe* and *Herald* editorial workers.

Reporting in Ireland on Ireland

Shortly after that, in 1985, the *Globe* headhunted me and I became the first Murdoch-era *Heraldite* to join the *Globe*. The first should have been Brian Mooney, who, when asked by a *Globe* headhunter what was wrong with the *Globe*, gave him a laundry list of faults. Shortly after Mooney's honesty got him passed over, I was asked the same question, and I replied that the only thing wrong with the *Globe* is that they hadn't hired me yet. I really did say that.

Working at a tabloid was fun, but I wanted to have more than fun; I wanted to have a real impact, and I wanted to go abroad, especially to Northern Ireland, where there was an ongoing story that I thought was badly under covered. The *Globe* afforded me those opportunities by sending me to Northern Ireland regularly, usually two or three times a year for a couple of weeks at a time. I began spending



My maternal grandmother, Bridgid "Connolly" Flaherty, a native of Carraroe, who took care of me when my mother was sick.

more time on the ground in Ireland than any other American reporter, most of whom lived in London and spent little time in Northern Ireland, and even then, usually just Belfast.

I resisted writing about politics and focused on how the conflict affected ordinary people in Northern Ireland. Republicans assumed I was sympathetic, loyalists assumed I was hostile. I tried to be as fair as possible, but, as they say in Northern Ireland, if you stand in the middle of the road, you're gonna get knocked down.

By 1997, with the chance of a lasting peace in the offing, *Globe* editor Matt Storin decided to station me in Ireland fulltime. If it was just me, I would have moved to Belfast, but with my wife Martha and my two young sons Patrick and Brendan in tow, I took up residence in Dun Laoghaire, in South County Dublin, because I had a lot of friends in the area, and I wanted my wife to have a support system with me on the road so much. Besides, if the peace process blew up, so would Belfast.

I spent the next year chronicling the peace process, and cursing the lack of a bypass road in Drogheda, where I got stuck for ages every time I drove home from Belfast.

Being a witness to the Good Friday Agreement, and all of that leading up to it, felt like being in the middle of history, all of it good, although some of the violence right before and after was horrific. I talked to an old priest, not long after he prayed over two friends, one Catholic, the other Protestant, who were shot to death by loyalist gunmen trying to derail the

(Continued on next page)



The Boston Irish Honors 2017

'If John Cunningham is not safe, no one is safe'

By Kevin Cullen
The Boston Globe

Published on June 20, 2017. Reprinted with permission, Boston Globe Media

They came for John Cunningham on a sunny evening last week, showing up at his house in Brighton like early dinner guests.

They were federal immigration agents, and they were there to throw John Cunningham out of the country he has called home for 18 years.

Now this would come as a great surprise to the young people that Cunningham helped as chairman of the Gaelic Athletic Association in Boston. It would come as a shock to the many immigrants, not just the Irish but those from other countries, that Cunningham has helped over the years. It would come as an insult to a very kind priest named Dan Finn, who runs the Irish Pastoral Centre in Dorchester and who knows that John Cunningham is a good man.

Chris Lavery, Cunningham's lawyer, told me there is no underlying criminal charge. Cunningham was grabbed for overstaying the 90-day visa he received 18 years ago.

Lavery was trying to determine whether Cunningham missed a court hearing after a customer filed a complaint that Cunningham took and cashed a deposit check for more than \$1,000 for electrical work he didn't perform. That would have produced a warrant for his arrest, but not by immigration agents.

"You would think a guy like him, with no criminal convictions, would not be a priority," Lavery said.

But the days of immigrants who kept their noses clean not having to worry about being deported are gone.

Under the Trump administration, Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents have been very active. And ordinary, hard-working, tax-paying immigrants are being targeted the same as hardcore criminals.

In the midst of all this round-'em-up-and-throw-'em-out talk, a question has to be asked: What is gained by arresting, detaining, and deporting someone like John Cunningham?

"Nothing is gained but ruining a good man's life," said Sean Moynihan, head of a Boston consulting firm called The Moynihan Group. "John makes this city, this state, this country better. So how is throwing him out helping anyone?"

Cunningham is widely known in Boston's Irish ex-pat community. He was a fixture at the Gaelic Athletic Association fields at the Irish Cultural Centre in Canton. He was especially proud of getting more kids from all backgrounds play-



IRISH NETWORK BOSTON

John Cunningham, owner of an electrical contracting business, was chairman of the Gaelic Athletic Association of Boston.

ing the traditional Irish games of hurling and Gaelic football.

It is because of Cunningham's prominence in that community that his arrest has sent shivers through it.

"If they'll go after John Cunningham, they'll go after anybody," said Ronnie Millar, the executive director of the Irish International Immigrant Center in Boston. "John is so well-known and so well-liked. If John Cunningham is not safe, no one is safe."

That is a new reality that is hitting not just the Irish, but other immigrant communities from East Boston to Lawrence, from Worcester to Springfield, and everywhere in between. Being a good person means nothing. Round 'em up.

Kieran O'Sullivan, an immigration counselor at the Irish Pastoral Center, said Cunningham was among several Irish people detained this month. Like Millar's organization, his has been inundated with frantic, worried calls, especially as word of Cunningham's arrest spread. He spoke with a couple that is making contingency plans for what to do with their children if they're arrested.

"People are nervous about going to work," O'Sullivan said. "What to do if both parents are picked up. This is driving people further underground. It's a very difficult time. We need to move away from viewing immigrants as a threat to this country."

Fat chance that will happen with a new admin-

istration being cheered on by a sizable portion of Americans that does indeed view immigrants as a threat to this country.

O'Sullivan likes to remind people that 60,000 immigrants are serving in the American military. Members of his family from Kerry have been part of immigration waves going back to the 1950s, serving in every major US war since Korea.

"Our country would be more secure if people are allowed to come out of the shadows," O'Sullivan said.

John Cunningham was just out of his teens when he came to Boston from Donegal. Like a lot of young Irish, he quickly found work, a Gaelic football team, and a supportive ex-pat community in and around Boston. He never went back to Ireland, not just because Boston was his new home but because he knew if the immigration authorities realized he had overstayed his 90-day visa, he'd be barred from the United States for at least 10 years.

He would have done anything, paid anything to obtain legal status, but he couldn't. The same government that gladly gave him a tax ID number wouldn't give him a way to get legal. Cunningham worked for years lobbying for immigration reform, trying to create a system that would allow millions of immigrants to legalize their status.

Some worry that Cunningham's willingness to speak publicly about the need to reform the immigration system made him an easy target for that same flawed system.

Lavery, his lawyer, visited him in jail, hard by the Expressway. Cunningham is despondent. He has spent half his life here. He's in lockdown most of the time. It's unclear how long he will be held before he's deported. He has no right to a hearing because of the visa waiver program under which he entered the country.

"What does this accomplish?" Chris Lavery asked.

The short answer is it accomplishes nothing. For those who would ask, "What part of illegal don't you understand," I'd ask, "What part of pointless don't you understand?"

John Cunningham hails from a small, beautiful place in southwest Donegal called Glencolmcille. It is an Irish-speaking area, and it's named after St. Columba, the Irish missionary who brought Christianity to Scotland.

If St. Columba came to this country today and needed more than 90 days to spread the word of God, he wouldn't be called a saint. He'd be called a criminal.

Kevin Cullen is a Boston Globe columnist. He can be reached at cullen@globe.com.

Kevin Cullen the journalist, in his own words

(Continued from page 9)

peace talks. I cried while writing about the murder of the Quinn brothers, little boys burned to death by a loyalist firebomb during the Drumcree standoff after the agreement was approved by voters. A little girl, their neighbor, told me she heard one of the boys, trapped on the second floor, yelling that his feet were burning. I was numb, walking around Omagh after the rump of the IRA who refused to accept peace left a car bomb that killed 29 people. After filing my story, I went to give blood.

A new deal with an old colonizer

Watching prosperity boom in the South while the booms ended in the North was exhilarating. Ireland was confident enough to strike a new relationship with its old colonizer, as equals. I watched the inferiority complex and victimhood melt away, and it was a wonderful time to live in Ireland. I didn't want to leave Dublin, as we had a good family lifestyle, and being the Boston Globe guy in Ireland mattered. But my editors wanted me to be the European correspondent, and insisted I move to London, so we packed up and lived there for a few years. I covered the wars in the former Yugoslavia long enough to know that I didn't

want to be a war correspondent. Traveling through Europe on someone else's dime, however, made it worth 70 straight days, minus being expelled from Serbia in the Balkans for a few days.

I have done a lot of other things at the Globe. I was part of the Spotlight Team that outed Whitey Bulger as an FBI informant who was protected by the FBI while he murdered and maimed. I was part of the investigative team that won the 2003 Pulitzer Prize for Public Service for exposing the coverup of sexual abuse by priests, and the newsroom team that won the 2014 Pulitzer Prize for Breaking News for coverage of the Marathon bombings. And I was a Pulitzer finalist in commentary the same year. I became a Globed columnist in 2007, and the next year won the Batten Medal, awarded by the American Society of Newspaper Editors for writing about the poor and marginalized. I was awarded that Medal a second time in 2013. In 2014, I won the Mike Royko Award, named for the famous Chicago newspaperman, as best columnist chosen by the American Society of Newspaper Editors. And with my colleague Shelley Murphy, I wrote a book about Whitey Bulger, but then who didn't? Still, the book was a finalist for the

National Book Critics Circle Prize for non-fiction.

I thought Harvard had standards until they gave me a Nieman Fellowship. A year off in academia was a nice break, but I wanted to get back to the actual craft of journalism. The newspaper business is in decline. I can never retire because my pension will not cover my rent. But I still like what I do. I still think what people in my profession do is important. At our best, we bear witness to those with no power and hold those who have power accountable. I like to tell stories, mostly about ordinary people, often about decent people, and sometimes about those who are abused by those who have more power.

As the grandson of immigrants, I'm especially sympathetic toward immigrants. Our country is growing meaner, more petty, and nowhere is that more evident than in the demonization of immigrants. I write about them regularly, and what pains me most is that the worst invective, the most racist emails I get whenever I write about immigrants, the name on them is invariably Irish.

I wish my grandmother Brigid was alive because I know she'd give them a dressing down. And I'd recognize the swear words in Irish.



The Boston Irish Honors 2017

Proud son of Southie connects old town and the new

(Continued from page 7)

of touch with what the real needs of municipalities are. Governor Baker really gets that. He wanted to make sure we were doing everything we could do to help the cities and towns.”

Sometimes, that meant his Mass Highway chief showing up in person to far-flung parts of the state. Last winter, as Fall River’s rookie mayor struggled to deal with back-to-back blizzards that had emptied the city’s reserves, Tinlin showed up at his door — in person — to assist.

It wasn’t just these small acts of kindness that earned Tinlin plaudits for government service. On his watch, the state accelerated its bridge replacement program to make necessary fixes less disruptive and, in a bold move, dismantled the state’s longtime toll booths on the Mass Turnpike, replacing them with an all-electronic system.

Tinlin always encouraged his staff to come up with new ideas — a philosophy that doesn’t always bubble up in risk-averse bureaucracies. “In government, you have people who don’t want to see their name in the paper if something doesn’t work out. I told my people, ‘You don’t have to worry about it, because it’s my name, not yours, that’ll make the paper.’ I’m willing to embarrass myself for the sake of trying to do things more expeditiously.”

After his health scare last spring, Tinlin returned to work sooner than expected. But then he decided — to the surprise of many — to retire from state government. The pace and demands of the job — mixed with his own compulsive focus on showing up to everything — weren’t the best recipe for a continuing recovery.

In September, Tinlin joined the Boston engineering firm Howard Stein Hudson as the director of Institutional and Private Markets. Despite his departure from the scene, he speaks with affection for the people he met over the years of his work in government.

“I miss the tow truck drivers, the guys fixing the guardrail, working with people, traveling around the state and doing those things that have to get done,” he says. “I think to do what we do and do it well, you have to be wired a certain way. I miss the people.”

When it comes to Southie, passion drives the man

“The town has changed, but Tommy has kept the ingredients of the best of old South Boston and transported it to what it is today,” says Michael Kineavy. “He’s invested, he’s involved. He’s a family guy, a coach, he’s at all of the events. He’s a hybrid in the best possible way.”

Tinlin is more modest about this, naturally. But there’s no doubt that his devotion to Southie is heartfelt, even passionate. He’s instrumental, often behind the scenes, in everything from golf tournaments and charity events to the St. Patrick’s breakfast, now hosted by [my wife], state Sen. Linda Dorcea Forry, who counts Tinlin as one of her most trusted advisors.

“I do feel a devotion to the town, but I think that means different things to different people,” says Tinlin. “The media want to portray this town as something that we’re not. It’s that reputation that formed around busing, and it’s unfortunate, because that’s not who we are. The best way you show support is you just do what you think is right. To me loyalty to the town means making sure we are welcoming to everyone. You conduct yourself in such a way that you’d want your own family to be treated. We’re a neighborhood of immigrants. Everyone has had their first day in this neighborhood.”

For all that, Heather and Tom almost didn’t stay in Southie. As their family grew to four, they looked around for a house in the neighborhood, an increasingly frustrating search these days. They even peeked at an option or two in Dorchester, but they remained stymied until one day Tom got a call from a realtor who’d heard about a possible house for sale on E. 5th Street. It had a backyard.

The woman selling it — Barbara Logue — was an empty-nester and adamant that the next buyer be a neighborhood family. “I don’t want it in the Globe,” she said. “I want it to go to a Southie guy with kids who want to stay here.”

Tinlin went over to meet her. “Who are you to Louise Tinlin?” she asked, good-naturedly. “She’s



Tom Tinlin helped State Sen. Linda Dorcea Forry run through her St. Patrick’s Day Breakfast material before the event in March 2017. Tinlin has been a key advisor to Forry, who took charge of the storied South Boston political event in 2014.
Bill Forry photo



Showing off with a trophy from the sea.

my grandmother!” he replied.

It turned out that Louise and Barbara had worked together for years back in the day at the old Marian Manor and the Carney, and Mrs. Logue remembered her friend warmly.

“We talked for about 15 minutes, she named her price, I said, ‘Great, it’s a deal!’” says Tinlin, who still trades cards and calls with Barbara Logue. “She’s an amazing, special person.”

This summer, as he recovered from his illness, Tom received a note from her. She was praying for him. And, by the way, she said, she’d also survived an aneurysm.

“Brain aneurysm is the number one killer that nobody is talking about,” says Tinlin.

“One in fifty will have one. Many will live a long life and never know it, but the odds are that it’s going to kill them or leave them with a life-altering injury. So I decided that that’s going to be my cause.”

“I’ve had some important people give me opportunities I probably didn’t deserve.

I don’t know what they saw in me, but these folks gave me opportunities. You can be a good person, but if you’re not given an opportunity... a lot of good people just don’t get that break.”

Tom Tinlin has caught his share of breaks in life: amazing mentors who opened doors and ushered him in. A medical miracle. And a partner who is devoted to him in ways he’s still trying to comprehend.

“Every day I’m awed by Heather. She was cool under fire that day, but she cared for me every day after that, too. I’m a blessed guy in many ways.”



Before attending to the city’s snow removal needs, Tom got a start on his own Southie sidewalk.



Heather and Tom Tinlin: “Heather saved my life way before that ride to Beth Israel,” says Tom, who survived a brain aneurysm rupture in April 2017. The Tinlins have become devoted to creating awareness to the risks and proper treatment of the condition, which will afflict one in fifty people.

The Irish Language

by Philip Mac AnGhabhann

Ochan, ochan! “Alas, alas!” I must begin this column with an apology. When sent to **The Reporter** from my home electronically the answers to the little quiz on selecting the verb to be pronounced was both ***italicized*** and ***underlined***. When the “Answers” appeared in **The Reporter** they were the same as the “Questions”. My sincere apologies. Here are the correct “Answers”.

- Answers:
- | | | |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| 1. agamsa | 7. maith | 13. gasur |
| 2. gardaí | 8. inniu | 14. siopa |
| 3. bhfuil | 9. buachaill | 15. gealach |
| 4. pionta | 10. raibh | 16. geata |
| 5. múinteoir | 11. leapa | 17. Sasana |
| 6. mada | 12. ceart | 18. anachain |

In all of these words the “loudness” or “stress” falls on the first syllable. Recall that in Irish the stress, loudness, must fall on the first syllable of a word – and Irish, by definition can have only one or two-syllable words. Anything more than two syllables are viewed as “compound words”, combinations of one or two syllables with two syllables.

Here are some notes that I intended for this column. In #2 the second **-a-** is retained for “balance” but its pronunciation is superceded by the accented **-í-**. In #3 the combination **bhf-** is silent so the word really begins with **-ui-**. In numbers 4 and 14 the words are “loan words” from English “pint” and “shop”. In #4 the **-o-** is there to show you how to pronounce the **-t-** and is silent; in 14 the first vowel, **-i-** is there to show you how to pronounce the **-s-**. In #5 the accent mark tells you that it is the **-í-**. In most of the others the rest of the vowels are there for “balance” – think of a Celtic knot, endless. always revolving on itself,

Examples of compound words are those words with **co-**, “together” **prefixed** such as English “co-defendants”. Irish uses the same device although **co-lenites** the following **consonant** letter as in **margadh** /MAR-guh/ “market” but **Cómharadh** /koh-WAR-guh/ “Common market”. Note that **Có-** has an accent mark showing that it is to be fully pronounced.

Now let us look at one of the **consonants**. Recall that Irish has eleven consonants plus the sign **-h-**. Let’s talk about this “sign” which a native-speaking teacher once called “the troublesome **h**”. Actually, it is rather easy when called a “sign” rather than a “letter”; a “sign” rather than a “consonant”. This is what it used to be when the old uncial script was in use, just a “dot” above the consonant to show “heavy breathing” or “aspiration” similar to “Classical Greek Script” except that the **h** in Irish can come after a **consonant** but sometimes before a **vowel**.

Let’s look at these in reverse order – coming in front of a **vowel**. This is to separate the word beginning with a **vowel** from a preceding word which ends in a **vowel**.

Examples are the **plural** of a **nouns** beginning with a **vowel** which have the article **na** “the” in front of it – **an armhán** /uh OW-rahnn/ “the song”, **na hamháin** /nuh HOW-raynn/. “the songs”; **an oifige** /uhn EF-ig-uh/ “the office”, **na hoifigí** /nuh HEF-ig-ee/ “the offices”.

In some Irish songs the **h-** is used on “nonsense syllables” (**ha, ho, hu**) but these are meaningless except to provide “mouth music”.

The real meaning of the “**sign h-**” is when it changes the sound of a **consonant**. Then it can be truly meaningful. One important task of affixing an **-h** to a **consonant** is to make the **verb tenses** – **Bí!** /bee/ “Be!” and **Bhí!** /wee/ “was”; **Cuir!** /koor/ “Put” and **Chuir** /hoor/ “Did put”. Another is to form the **Vocative Case** – **Brid** /BREEJ/ “Bridget” but **A Bhríd** /uh WREEJ/ when you talk to her.

The range of **consonants** which can be **lenited** is limited to nine – **b, c, d, f, g, m, p, s, t**. The consonants **l, n, and r** are never lenited (or accompanied by **-h**). Now let’s take them one-by-one starting with **b-**. Besides being the first **consonant** in the Irish alphabet, **bh-** is also the most complex.

b- at the beginning of a word (initial), in the middle (medial) or on the end (final) always has the sound /b/: **brea** /braw/ “fine”, **bord** /bord/ “table”, **pobal** /POH-buhl/ “people, community”, **scuab** /skuawb/ “broom”. In other words, **b** is “bee”.

However, when we add **-h** it becomes a little more complicated. **Bh-** at the beginning and middle of a word has a /v/ sound in the far northern dialects (Donegal, Ulster) and a /w/ sound in Connacht and Kerry. We will stick with the majority and “official” Irish pronunciation as /w/.

- Here are a few general rules:
- Bh-** is /w/
 - bh-** before **-f** or **-t** is silent.
 - An bhfuil** /uh weel/ The question form of **bi**.
 - bh-** in the combination **-ubhi-**(preceded by **-u-** and followed by **-i-**) is /oo/. **tíubhaigh** /CHOO-ee/ “thicken”
 - bh-** preceded by stressed **a-** or **á-** combine with it and is /au/.
 - bh** is silent at the end of one syllable words with a short **vowel**.
- It is kept there for historic reasons and to differentiate homonyms:
- dubh** /doo/ “black”, **gabh** /gah/ “go”

You will often hear Irish speakers say, **Bhoil** /wehl/ a “Pause word” from English “Well, ...”



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West Cork councillors support plan to ‘twin’ with Scituate

WEST CORK – With its promoter calling the town of Scituate, MA, “the most Irish town in America,” councillors here are looking at plans to “twin” the town of West Cork with the South Shore town.

A West Cork newspaper, southernstar.ie, reported last month that “members of the West Cork Municipal District have been presented with a detailed report on the benefits of twinning with the town which has a population of 18,133, by officer Justin England. They were told that Scituate is synonymous with food and has a broad range of shops, restaurants, waterfront activities, entertainment venues, and artists.”

The newspaper told its readers that “the harbour town is located just 25 miles south east of Boston and the 2010 census shows that 47.5 percent of its residents listed their primary ancestry as Irish – which, allegedly, is the highest percentage of any town in America. And every April it holds its Restaurant Week, which, like the A Taste of West Cork food festival, showcases what the region has to offer in relation to food and food tourism.

“Located midway between Boston and Plymouth,” the newspaper wrote, “Scituate has a harbour walk along its waterfront and was voted the 2015 Best Town Centre South by Boston magazine.” Added England: “By bringing people together from different regions, it presents an opportunity to learn from each other and create friendships through common interests and issues. Twinning would also promote mutual business development, as well as commercial and professional exchanges. And it would offer an opportunity for youth exchange programs.”

Given the percentage of Scituate residents who expressed an Irish ancestry, helps make the town a perfect fit to twin with the West Cork Municipal District, according England, who also took note of the new air routes begun this summer between Providence and Cork Airport.

British man convicted in Germany for decades-old attack by the IRA

A 48-year-old from Northern Ireland has been convicted in Germany of attempted murder for participating in an Irish Republican Army attack on a British barracks in the northwestern city of Osnabrueck more than two decades ago.

The court says James Anthony Oliver Corry, a British citizen, was sentenced to four years in prison. The Belfast man was extradited from the Republic of Ireland in December to face charges.

Corry was convicted of being part of an IRA unit that fired three mortar shells onto the grounds of the Quebec Barracks in Osnabrueck on June 28, 1996. Only one of the shells detonated on the property, damaging buildings and vehicles but injuring no one.

The Provisional IRA killed nearly 1,800 people from 1970 to July 2005, when it formally renounced violence. (AP)



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