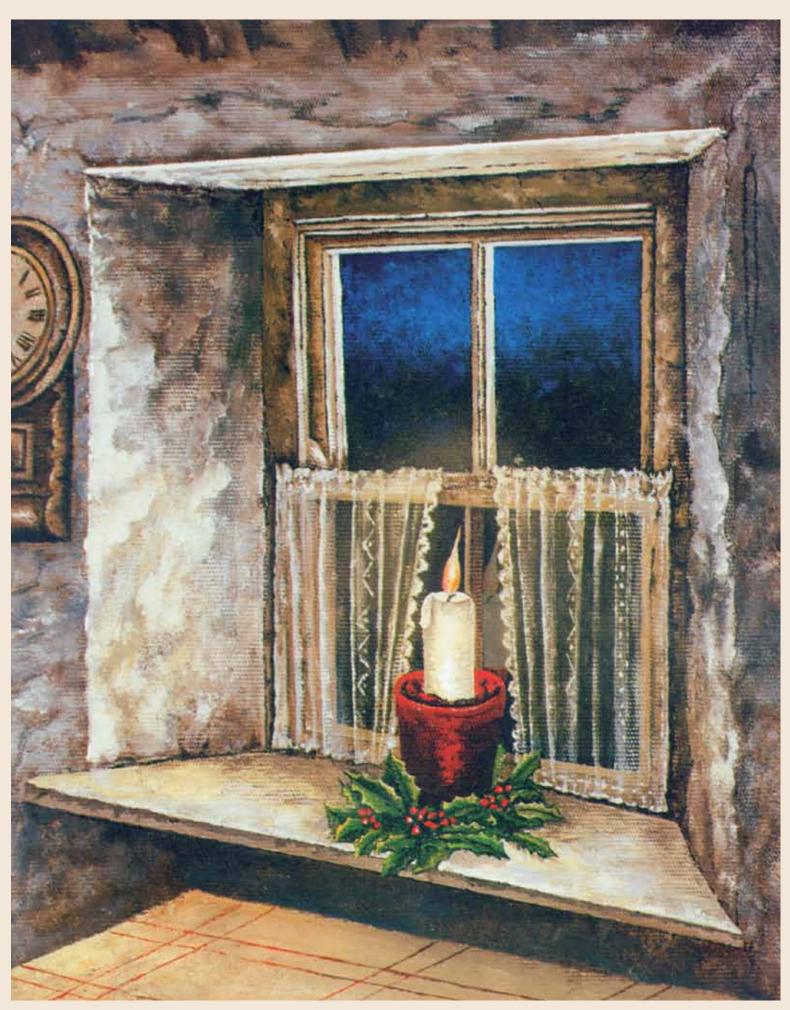
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# BOSTON IRISH REPORTER

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## Beannachtaí na Nollag Christmas Blessings by Mary McSweeney



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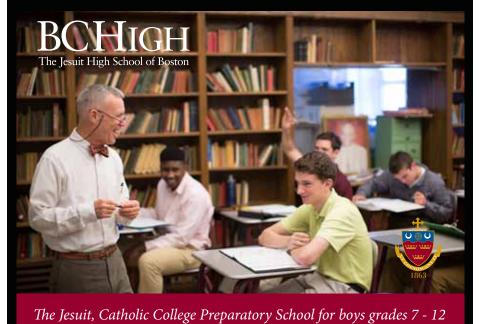








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## Catholic Memorial students talk politics with presidential candidate Martin O'Malley

By Peter F. Stevens BIR Staff

A few weeks ago, nine Catholic Memorial students in their junior year had the opportunity to meet a presidential candidate and talk with him face to face at the District Hall in Boston's Seaport district. The presidential hopeful, who sat down privately with the students at the third Civic Innovation Pitch Competition, was Democrat Martin O'Malley, the former governor of Maryland and mayor of Baltimore.

The students spoke with a politician for whom there has been a recent uptick in the polls. O'Malley, battling to deliver his message against frontrunners Hillary Rodham Clinton and US Sen. Bernie Sanders in the 2016 Democrat presidential campaign, has been lauded by many in the media and by various party leaders for a far more specific message than Clinton and Sanders on such vital issues as gun control and immigration.

O'Malley remains a longshot in the race. Still, as his supporters point out, eventual presidential candidates from

both parties often sit low on the polls at this juncture of the race. Mitt Romney is a case in point. O'Malley's backers assert that his success in dealing both with gun control and immigration as governor of Maryland provide him hands-on experience, and that since 1976, four of the nation's last six presidents – Jimmy Carter, Ronald Reagan, Bill Clinton, and George W. Bush – first served as governors. All four defeated so-called Washington insiders for the top job.

In one way, O'Malley already has a proverbial leg up on his fellow competitors. A musician himself, O'Malley has been "endorsed" in song by the Corrigan Bros, an Irish rock band. Their song is simply entitled "Martin O'Malley for President." Back when Barack "O'Bama" mounted his first campaign for the Oval Office, the Corrigan Bros recorded "Nobody's More Irish than Barack O'Bama." The song not only went viral — viewed by more than 1.3 million people—but it also introduced Obama in a sense to the Irish American community, some 40 million strong. O'Malley, a guitar-strumming

musician whose repertoire leans Trad, can point to unquestionable Gaelic roots.

The focus of O'Malley's appearance at the Seaport, according to Catholic Memorial's Susan Griffin in her article "A Lesson in Government and Innovation," was all about ways of "improving government performance through the use of innovative technologies. Local technology start-ups applied to make their 'pitch' before a panel of tech professionals. The winners will receive mentoring from each of the judges."

O'Malley's background fit seamlessly into the event's theme. Throughout his career as the governor of a large state and the mayor of a major city, he has been at the forefront of melding politics with technical innovation.

Griffin writes, "Science, technology, engineering, arts and math...and interdisciplinary learning...are integral parts of CM's curriculum. The chance to see the connection between government and innovation at the O'Malley event demonstrated that as new professions emerge, traditional boundaries between

academic disciplines will need to change as well."

Organizers for the nine students' trip to the Seaport were Catholic Memorial President Peter Folan and history teacher Thomas Jordan '92, with Jordan serving as the group's chaperone. He told Griffin that the event offered "a unique opportunity for our students to not only see the political process in action, but also to witness how technological innovation and entrepreneurship are just as important in government as they are in the private sector."

Boston City Councilor Matt O'Malley first met with the Catholic Memorial students and then introduced them to Gov. O'Malley. The students, all of the them from the Class of 2017, were Matt Moriarty, Cody Ciesielski, Matt Marcantano, Trevor Grinsell, Mike Caron, Matt Demmler, Aidan Gallegos, John McLaughlin, and Preston Zhang.

It's not every day that high-school students have the opportunity to meet in private with a presidential candidate. All seven juniors add the sit-down to their scholastic resumes, and someday – whether in 2016 or another election cycle – they might be able to say they met personally with "President Martin O'Malley."



## Hurling match draws 30,000 to Fenway Park

The event was billed as "the world's fastest field sport" in a return to Boston's Fenway Park as a team from Galway met the lads from Dublin in a "friendly" hurling match Nov. 22 on the field at Boston's own cathedral for sports. And the game more than lived up to expectations.

Our city's revered baseball field was transformed into a football gridiron for an American college football game between Boston College and a nationally ranked Notre Dame on Nov. 21. That Saturday night, a sold-out crowd of almost 40,000 filled Fenway for a game that ended in an unexceptedly close 19-16 win for the squad from South Bend.

The next day saw the Irish hurlers take the field for a highly competitive match in which 2015 All-Ireland finalist Galway squeezed out a 50-47 victory over the Dubliners.

The 30,000 in attendance were mostly quiet throughout the first 15 minutes of the match, as the sport was unfamiliar for many who were seeing their first hurling match. But early in the second

quarter, the Dublin goalie was felled by an injury, and a bit of a brawl broke out between the two squads. After that, the largely American crowd got into it, and loud cheers and dramatic "oohs and "aahs" could be heard as the action went up and down the field, as the lead changed hands several times.

Finally, the Galway team mounted a 19-point fourth quarter surge, and hung on for the win

The game was played in a chilly drizzle

"The Irish brought their weather with
them," one wag said – and after it was
over, a stage was rolled out onto the
right field grass and the local rockers
The Dropkick Murphys gave a boisterous
45-minute concert.

Later that week the Red Sox opened the field again for four traditional Thanksgiving high school football rivalries, featuring Xaverian - St Johns Prep and BC High - Catholic Memorial on the holiday eve, and Needham-Wellesley, followed by Latin-English on Thanksgiving day.



Smiling faces and rugged play dominated the scene at Fenway Park on Nov. 22 as Galway beat Dublin in an exhibition hurling match under drizzly skies.

Photos courtesy of Fenway Sports Group



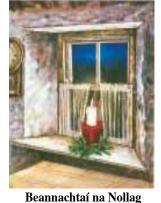


More than 400 business leaders gathered at St. Anselm College on Oct. 28 for a "Politics and Eggs" event featuring former US senator and Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton, a candidate for the Democratic nomination for president next year. Clinton took up discussed a variety of issues on the national campaign agenda, including healthcare, education, and the economy. At the event, from left, were Lucille Brett of Braintree; James T. Brett, president and CEO of The New England Council; Hillary Clinton; Pattie Brett; and Peg McCobb of Weymouth.

### **ABOUT PAGE 1**

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#### **Publisher's Notebook**



Cian Smith with his uilleann pipes at the Irish Pastoral Centre last month.

## Meet Cousin Cian, musical prodigy

By Ed Forry

When the American Ireland Fund hosted its annual November Boston Dinner last month, the AIF's Steve Greeley arranged to present a performance by a young uilleann piper they brought in as a featured guest. It was a champion piper from Co Waterford, a young fellow named Cian Smith, and he's just 10 years old.

Turns out, young Cian is a cousin of the Forry clan—we each trace our Irish roots back to the family of my grandmother, Hannah Crotty Forry, who came to Boston in 1890, where he met and married my father's father, Patrick Forry.

It was Cian's first-ever visit to our country, and he traveled here with his parents, Cillian and Nollaig Smith, who live near the land of my grandmother's home in Ballymacarbry, near the Tipperary border town of Clonmel.

Some of my family here in Boston have visited with our Waterford cousins over the years, but regrettably I failed to connect with them during my trip to Waterford last August. Greeley arranged for us to meet the Smiths in Dorchester on Veterans Day, when Cian made a two-hour visit to the Irish Pastoral Centre

That night, Cian performed before an audience of 1,100 in the ballroom of the Westin Waterfront, exchanging some light-hearted banter with Greeley. And when he performed, it's reported that he "brought the house down," receiving a standing ovation from the large gathering.

Last summer, Cian attended the Fleadh Cheoil in Sligo, where he won first prize in competitions on the tin whistle and uilleann pipes. The young musician is considered a musical prodigy, and has studied for just two years with the gifted uilleann pipe player David Power.

After the fleadh, teacher Power uploaded a video of Cian playing the pipes. "Ireland could have just found its latest music star, the Irish website ireland-calling.com said. "The video has now been viewed more than half a million times and shared by thousands of impressed traditional music lovers.

"Cian performs a fantastic rendition of "The Boy in the Gap" was the note his teacher posted online along with the video stating how proud he is of Cian, and crediting the boy's hard work and commitment. He also points out the amazing fact that Cian has only been playing for two years.

"There have been concerns that traditional Irish instruments like the uilleann pipes, tin whistle, and the bodhrán have fallen out of favor in recent decades," the teacher wrote. "Seeing talented young musicians like Cian excel is great for the preservation of these iconic Irish instruments."



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**BOSTON IRISH REPORTER** 

## We have much to be thankful for, so think 'Irish' with your gift lists

By Joe Leary Special to the BIR

December is the month of giving. Whether it is to our families under the tree, a few coins in the Salvation Army basket, or the local homeless shelter, most of us are already planning our Christmas gift list.

This column is an attempt to persuade all of its readers to consider placing Ireland on their lists this year.

Irish Americans sending gifts to Ireland has been a tradition for over 200 years. I am told that for a time giving back to Ireland was so financially significant that American gifts were counted as part of Ireland's gross national product.

It makes sense. The United States is a massive country, with enormous natural re-

sources and an amazingly diverse people, while Ireland is very small, with hardly any natural resources that has been occupied by Britain for most of the last 500 years. Ireland struggles mightily whenever the world suffers a recession.

Joe Leary

In fact, today, the population of Ireland both North and South is smaller than the 6.8 million who live in Massachusetts. There was a time in the 1800s when Ireland's population was close to nine million.

The census offers a most-telling comparison of a single surname in the two countries: There are approximately 30,000 Murphys living in Ireland and more than ten times that number of people – 350,000 – with the name Murphy living in the United States.

For some reason, our Irish ancestors did not travel west after they arrived in Boston. We are fortunate to find ourselves living in a center of Irish-American culture

There are so many local Irish activities that it is difficult to choose which to support. There are organizations that teach the Irish language, Irish dance, and Irish music. Irish sporting events led by the Gaelic Athletic Association are contested most every weekend. Local universities have dedicated Irish studies programs, Harvard, Boston College, Northeastern and Boston University among them.

The oldest Irish organization in the United States, The Charitable Irish, was organized here in 1737. The Erie Society was born in 1937. The Irish Pastoral Centre and the Irish International Immigration Center focus on helping young Irish immigrants.

The Ireland Fund and The Irish American Partnership fund programs in Ireland. The Irish Cultural Centre in Canton is an active center for Irish activities year round.

Down on Cape Cod in Yarmouth is the 1,600-member Sons of Erin organization. And a new arrival focused on both Boston and national networking is the Irish "In Boston" organization.

This is only a portion of the many local Irish organizations that celebrate our Irishness in our area. We even have two newspapers serving the Irish community here, The Boston Irish Reporter and the Irish Emigrant.

As Irish Americans living in the Boston area, we have much to be thankful for. We are no longer simply the latest class of immigrants. Americans of Irish ancestry have risen to the top of corporations, universities, and government, becoming leaders in every field of human activity.

I'm sure most of us are proud of our ancestry and want Ireland to do well in the years ahead. Supporting the Irish language, Irish dance, Irish music, Irish organizations – and Ireland itself – will greatly help that cause.

## 'Spotlight': In sync with reality

#### By Tom Mulvoy Managing Editor

The recently released movie Spotlight, which will open nationally tomorrow, dramatically and effectively relays the story of how in 2001 and 2002 a determined team of Boston Globe journalists, working under the banner of the newspaper's celebrated Spotlight Team, uncovered and published details from long-secret documents that laid out, among other things, the Catholic Church of Boston's betrayal of its little ones, children who had been taught to see God in the faces of their priests

The newspaper's long-running account brought into the sunlight evidence showing that over decades cardinals and bishops and their lawyers had privately acknowledged sexual abuse of minors by priests under their supervision with payoffs to the families – the details of which were placed under judicial seal. After buying the victims' silence, the church hierarchy essentially enabled the abusers by quietly moving them from parish to parish in the full knowledge that these were very troubled men.

The Spotlight Team effort brooks few comparisons as the most important story the Globe has told in its 142 years of publishing, an effort the film captures realistically in its telling. The series sent the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Boston into a state of shock. It had a horrific impact in discrete areas like neighborhood parishes and homes and schools in and around Boston. And it engendered widespread soul-searching among Catholics and their ministers nationally and internationally as the scandal took on a worldwide face.

The revelations also placed under a cloud of suspicion the respectability of all the clerics of the church. Decried by priests, their families, and their congregations as unwarranted and unfair, that cloud remains in place for many to this day.

There had been continuing news coverage throughout the 1990s about several celebrated priest abuse cases locally before the Spotlight revelations – in the Globe itself, in other local media, particularly in the now-defunct Boston Phoenix, and in other communities across the country. But the Spotlight Team's series of stories, gleaned via a persistent, don't-take-no-for-an-answer investigative style and driven by a rich trove of judicially released data that showed how the church dealt with the crisis in-house, served up a brutal narrative that conveyed to the public the stark evidence of reckless criminal behavior by a large number of priests that had been covered up by their prominent religious supervisors.

There is much in the movie that is familiar to me, a managing editor at the Globe through the 1980s and 1990s, as the script brings viewers along while reporters and editors work the story inside and outside the building—Who at the paper needs to know about what's going on? How will the team distribute the work when thousands of documents are dropped on their desks? How to deal with confidences demanded by reliable sources? How to determine reliability? How to deal with those in the know on the church side who won't hesitate to insert themselves into the investigative process? How to present the information in the most compelling manner?

Across the fetch of the story on screen there is the occasional over-dramatization of personalities and events, and in several instances, individuals whom I know well are presented unfavorably – and unfairly, in my view.

For all that, the movie as a whole speaks successfully to the high value of the journalism it portrays, so much more excellent than flawed. Everyone who worked on the story, including those who were left out of the script, committed themselves to affirming that value as the horror stories played out day after day in the pages of the Globe, eventually forcing the presiding archbishop of Boston, Cardinal Bernard F. Law, to resign and decamp to Rome.

On May 23, 1992, Cardinal Law, in an appearance at St. Patrick Church in Roxbury, took up ongoing media coverage of the criminal cases against James R. Porter, who had been accused of molesting between 50 and 100 children while serving as a priest in the Fall River diocese from 1960 to 1967.

Law seemed to view the Porter story as being about a single priest who had gone astray, an aberration that was putting the Roman Catholic priesthood itself in a bad light. "The papers like to focus on the faults of a few. . . . We deplore that," he said, according to the Boston Globe story the next day, and he quoted the apostle Paul in offering an admonition against that focus.

"St. Paul spoke of the immeasurable power at work in those who believe," the prelate said. "We call down God's power on our business leaders, and political leaders and community leaders. By all means we call down God's power on the media, particularly the Globe. ... to tell the good story about the Catholic parishes in the inner city."

The cardinals words echoed the prevailing sentiment in some precincts that the Globe was out to get the church and never had anything positive to say about what it was doing. From the 1960s on, the newspaper had begun to take strong affirmative stands on issues of the day, some of which hinged on religious values – for birth control, for abortion rights, and, later, for same-sex marriage – stands squarely against the church's teachings. Ergo, for many, the Globe was anti-Catholic.

The record will show that from the time of Cardinal William O'Connell, the bishop of Boston from 1911 to 1944 who knew what a bully pulpit was for, the Globe and other media in Boston rarely missed the opportunity to tell what Law called "good" stories about the church and its priests and nuns. Like the trains to South Station, they showed up day after day on a steady schedule.

But the Porter story, and later ones about Boston priest-abusers named John Hanlon and John Geoghan, in particular, directed media attention to a dark space where a desperate secrecy had long been part and parcel of the church's dealings with clerical abusers, their victims and their families, and a succession of lawyers representing all sides.

Journalists are trained to follow the trail, not to concern themselves with the consequences, the good or the bad, that might flow from what they discover, then tell the story.

In the face of a bitter reaction to the series by certain entrenched Catholic interests and by many in the laity, that is what the Spotlight Team did under Globe editor Marty Baron and the team's captain on the ground, Walter Robinson, across the days, weeks, and months of 2002

**Point of View** 

## 'TIS THE SEASON OF TAKING AND GIVING Of corporate and Christmas battles

#### By Peter F. Stevens BIR Staff

The issue of corporate inversion has erupted again, and again Ireland stands center stage in the controversy. The long-expected news that Pfizer Inc. will swallow Allergan Plc. in a \$160-billion "merger" has drawn sharp criticism from both the political right and left – for entirely different reasons. The one point that presidential candidates can all agree upon is that the deal is blatantly structured to slash the company's US tax bill by shifting its corporate headquarters to Ireland. The Wall Street Journal reports, "The proposed Pfizer combination, with Dublin-based Allergan PLC, would be the largest ever to move a US company to a lower-tax jurisdiction."

On paper, Allergan is buying Pfizer, but that is simply corporate sleight of hand. The deal is classic inversion: Pfizer, the larger entity, will actually keep control of the company, but by maintaining Allergan's legal Irish corporate office, the merger will allow Pfizer to flee the US corporate tax rate of 35 percent and revel in Ireland's 12.5 percent. As with all inversion deals, it blends smart business and bald-faced corporate greed. Pfizer — excuse me, Pfizer Plc, a "new" Dublin company and the world's largest drug-maker — now stands to make obscene profits by turning "Irish" instead

of racking up merely massive profits as an American-based company. That's got to be welcome news to Americans who will lose their jobs as the company prepares to go "green."

Predictably, presidential candidate Bernie Sanders immediately decried the impending birth of the "Irish" company in a statement to the media: "The Pfizer-Allergan merger would be a disaster for American consumers who already pay the highest prices in the world for prescription drugs."

Pfizer is bracing for a brass-knuckle brawl with the Obama administration and the US Treasury over the deal. Interestingly,, and perhaps ominously, for the merger, Pfizer's Irish gambit has already evoked similar criticism from two disparate contenders for the Oval Office. Both Hillary Clinton and The Donald oppose inversion and favor restructuring corporate tax rates in the US. Of course, the ways in which either would attempt to do that are a chasm apart.

In a press release, Trump stated, "These corporate inversions take capital and, more importantly, jobs offshore. We need leadership in Washington to get the tax code changed so companies will be coming to America, not looking for ways to leave."

Clinton, through spokesman Ian Sams, expressed that she "is committed to cracking down on so-called 'inversions,'

where a company chooses to leave the US on paper to game the tax system, and believes we should reform our tax code to encourage investment in the US, rather than shipping earnings and jobs overseas."

In and around Boston and throughout Irish America, the 40 million or so people who have blood ties to the "old sod" likely want both the US and Ireland to prosper. Still, there has to be a better way than one-sided corporate inversions, one that is grand for both American and Irish bottom lines. Stay tuned — the Pfizer-Allergan inversion promises to be a flashpoint on both sides of the Atlantic. The Puritans, the Irish, and Christmas

Turning from the season of greed to the season of giving, the latter season did not arrive easily for Boston's first Irish immigrants. From 1800 to 1850, the Irish could scarcely have picked a worse place than Boston to celebrate Christmas. The Puritans had loathed "Popish" Yuletide rituals so much that, in 1659, the Massachusetts General Court had enacted laws against honoring the day. Anyone caught toasting the occasion suffered a five-shilling fine. So entrenched did Bostonians' antipathy toward Catholicism become that that the city's public schools were open on Christmas Day until 1870.

In such a climate, Boston's Irish celebrated the holiday in muted fashion

until their political clout swelled in the late 1800s. In Ireland, Christmas had largely revolved around Mass and family. The early Irish of Boston marked December 25th simply, many families keeping children home from schools later in the century.

Christmas Masses were held in the opening decades of the 19th century at St. Augustine's, in South Boston, and, later, at the Cathedral of the Holy Cross, always under suspicion by anti-Irish, anti-Catholic locals. As German Catholic immigrants arrived and began attending the local "Irish churches," the newcomers introduced Christmas trees and greeting cards, introducing a thaw in the region's traditional, Puritan-steeped Christmas notions.

Boston's Irish could celebrate Christmas as openly as they wanted by the end of the 19th century, and they turned the Yuletide season into a genuine holiday. During the period of Advent in late November and early December, persons of all ages prepared for the coming of the Christmas season by attending daily Mass. They then enjoyed the celebration of midnight Mass on Christmas Eve, often followed by festive and early morning breakfasts with friends and relatives. Through religion, reflection, and, finally, revelry, Boston's Irish could finally celebrate Christmas in "grand fashion.'

## Survivors of Bloody Sunday victims push for justice

#### By CALEB NELSON SPECIAL TO THE BIR

Nearly 44 years after the Bloody Sunday Massacre in Derry John Kelley still hopes he might one day get to see his brother's killer locked behind bars.

"He showed absolutely no remorse," said Kelley. "I would love to see him walking through the gates of a jail."

Professors and students gathered in a small conference room off the cathedral-like lobby of UMass Boston's new Integrated Sciences Complex on Nov. 17 for a round table discussion hosted by the university's Conflict Resolution Department.

Kelley described how the 1972 protest march in his hometown turned bloody.

"I spoke to my young brother Michael prior to the march," Kelley said. "He was never on a march before, and he went to the march that day simply because his friends were going. But I advised him, 'If anything should happen, go home.' So I left him. He went with his friends and I went with my friends."

An estimated 15,000 people showed up that January day in an expression of grievance against

the crown and found the roads barricaded by British Paratroopers. Three days before the protest the Provisional IRA murdered two police officers in their patrol car in Derry, and many believe that the shootings at the Sunday morning protest were planned as retribution. One soldier involved in the incident said that a lieutenant asked for kills during a briefing the night before.

"They were sent in, not as policemen, because paratroopers cannot and do not act as policemen. It's impossible," said Kelley. "They came in with their rifles loaded, and knew exactly what they were going to do, and they intentionally murdered innocent people on the day of Bloody Sunday."

At 17, Michael Kelley was the youngest of the 14 protesters who died that day. Fourteen more were injured. The first inquiry after the incident became a whitewash attempt to shift blame on the victims, associating the people who were shot with other violent incidents committed by paramilitary groups and gangs.

"They were called the Derry Young Hooligans," Kelley said. "Most of them were teenagers, 17, 18, 19, and these are guys



John Kelley points out the location of victims shown in a photograph taken in Derry on Bloody Sunday, 1972. Kelley's brother Michael was killed in the massacre by British paratroopers.

Harry Brett photo

who were conducting riots on a daily basis."

Former British Prime Minister Tony Blair began a second inquiry in 1998, which identified the seven surviving soldiers who shot people that day. Known as an alphabet soldier because of court granted anonymity, Lance Corporal F killed Kelley's brother and three others.

"They came into Derry to teach us a lesson," Kelley said. "Mostly our people were shot in the back or shot in the side trying to get away from these soldiers, and even at times trying to help others."

Kelley traveled from Ireland with Robin Percival, chair of the Bloody Sunday Trust, to celebrate rekindled hopes for justice following last month's arrest of a 66 year-old former paratrooper—identified as Lance Corporal J— and the announcement of a judicial review in the case.

"Did the forces of the crown act in a lawful and legal manner?" Percival said. "These are critical human rights issues, and they're important if we think about what's happening in the world today. The problem of terrorism is going to be won by increasingly looking at how we deal with these issues."

In the same way the bloodshed in Syria started when a police force shot protesters in March of 2011, Bloody Sunday exacerbated violence in Ireland, he said.

"The question of whether or not a state acts in a lawful manner in its attempts to defend the state, institutions within the state, and the civilians, must be of interest to anybody who wants peace, who wants justice and who wants to live in a civilized society," said Percival.

Kelley and Percival are touring America to provoke discussion about how brutal civil rights abuses might end with grace and justice, and to offer a case study for keeping the government and law enforcement accountable.

"If we can't resolve this, it's going to create a legacy that will continue for many years to come," said Percival.

## **COPING WITH THE LOSS**

#### By James W. Dolan Special to the Reporter

And so it ends: On Halloween, the cancer train that carried my wife for over two years moved on as we sadly disembarked. Standing on the platform, there was a sense of relief that her tortuous journey had ended.

Now we prepared for the wake and funeral we had hoped would not happen. Family and friends gathered to offer support. The house was constantly full with people coming and going and making sure I was all right. Although operating in a daze and with much help, I was able to make sure all her last wishes were realized. Her "send-off" was exactly as she would have wished.

The activity soon ends and one is left alone to absorb the loss. Most painful is the knowledge that she will not be coming home. Her comforting presence I took for granted. That loss will slowly heal, but the pain will linger. It is embedded in my memory.

I begin the journey of the rest of my life alone. Despite the support and love of family, for which I am so grateful and upon which I depend, there remains that hole only Joan could fill. For over 53 years, she was always there, even when we were apart.

Death, the most common of all experiences, is not

shared. Each individual faces it in his or her own way. Those who prepare for it are probably better equipped to endure the inevitable. Knowing there is no escape, fear eventually gives way to resignation and acceptance. While the divide will be crossed by all, no one is certain as to what, if anything, lies beyond. Faith is a choice. It is hope affirmed, offering comfort in the belief of a joyous reunion. Oblivion is embraced as a satisfactory and more realistic alternative by non-believers.

I heard Joan's cell phone ring a few days after her death. It was a text from one of our granddaughters that read simply: "Nana please come back," Nothing in the entire experience moved me more than that plea from one who loved her dearly. I could only try to assure her that her nana still loved her and would remain a presence in her life.

Both of my grandmothers and one of my grandfathers died before I was born, so grandparents were not a part of my growing up. We were fortunate enough to be able to participate in the lives of our nine grandchildren. Joan, in particular, was close to them all, planning family events, never forgetting a birthday, and her specialty: "Nana never says no dinners and shopping sprees." Poppas are okay, but I think most would agree that when it comes to grandparents, nanas (by

whatever name) know best.

An odd thing happened the other evening. I had taken something up to the loft, a guest bedroom we rarely used over the garage. As I was leaving, a picture fell off the wall. I picked it up and saw that it was an aerial photograph of the campground in Marshfield where we had a trailer on the water for 43 years. My wife loved it there.

Both the wire on the picture and the hook were fine, and as I hung it back on the wall, I said aloud: "Are you trying to tell me you're okay and at the beach?" Fortunately, there was no reply or I would have had a heart attack then and there. Was this a "Joan wink," as one of my daughters suggested, or just a coincidence? Why would this particular picture fall off the wall for no apparent reason while I was in the room? I prefer to believe it was a comforting message of reassurance.

Whatever it was, it made me feel better. Life is a mystery, but now and then we may get a clue, a hint of what lies beyond. After six weeks of watching my wife struggle to live, I needed a sign. A picture falling off a wall will do.

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

## American Ireland Fund's gala raises \$2.6m for worldwide aid

December 2015

More than 1,100 guests gathered on Thurs., Nov. 12, for The American Ireland Fund's 34th Annual Boston Dinner Gala at the Westin Boston Waterfront.

A record-breaking \$2.6 million - the largest amount ever achieved at the Boston Gala -was raised for The Worldwide Ireland Funds "Promising Ireland" Campaign to support nonprofit organizations across the island of Ireland and around the

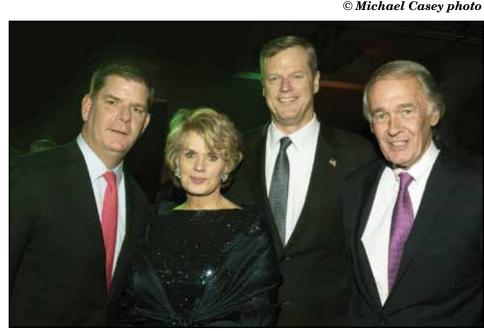
The 2015 event was chaired by Mike Mahoney, President and CEO of Boston Scientific. Vice Chairmen were Andrew Arnott, President and CEO of John Hancock Investments, and Jack Sebastian, Managing Director, Goldman Sachs.

In attendance were Gov. Charlie Baker, Boston Mayor Martin Walsh, and US Sen.Senator Edward Markey, among other leading Boston civic, philanthropic and business leaders.

The Gala honored Anne Finucane, Vice Chair of Bank of America and National Director of The American Ireland Fund.



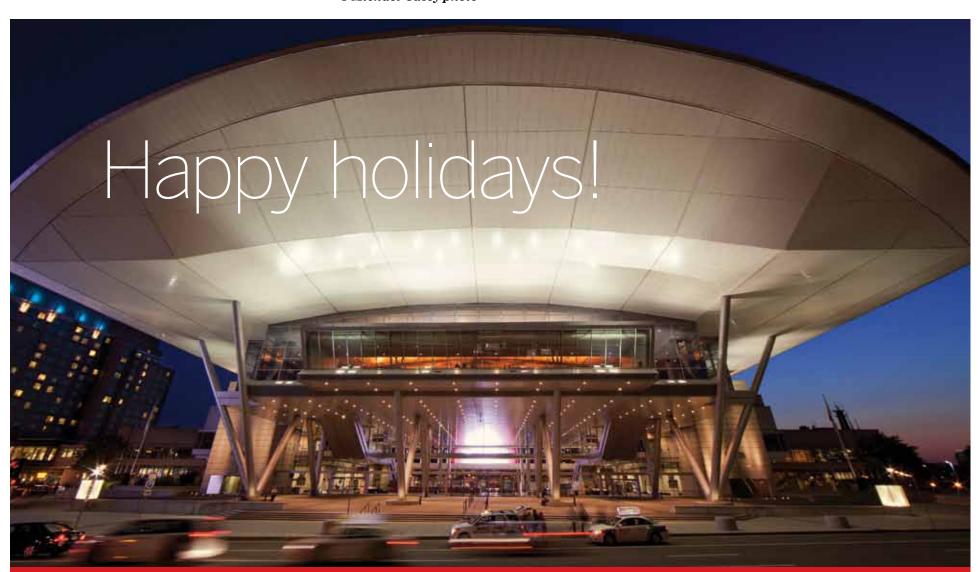
Bob Reynolds, President and CEO of Putnam Investments and chairman of The American Ireland Fund Regional Advisory Board; Mike Mahoney, dinner chairman and chief executive officer of Boston Scientific; Anne Finucane, Dinner honoree and vice chair of Bank of America; Steve Greeley, vice President of major gifts and New England Director of The American Ireland Fund.



Mayor Marty Walsh; Anne Finucane, Dinner Honoree and Vice Chair of Bank of America; Governor Charlie Baker; US Senator Ed Markey. Bill Brett photo



Cian Smith, a young musician from Ireland who performed at the dinner. © Michael Casey photo



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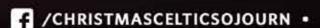
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## BRETT'S BOSTON

December 2015

By Harry Brett Exclusive photos of Boston Irish people & events

Dorchester artist Vincent Crotty celebrated 25 years living and working in Boston last month at a November 20 reception at the Aisling Gallery in Hingham. A native of Kanturk, County Cork, Crotty and his wife Kieran Jordan were recipients of the Eire Society's Silver Key honors earlier this fall. The exhibition of Crotty's recent work continues through the holiday season at the Aisling Gallery, where proprietors Maureen and John Connolly have been a regular supporters of the artist's work over his quarter century in the Boston area. Pictured are: 1.) Vincent Crotty, artist, Dorchester; 2.) Krystal Marble, Hull; Kimber Edwards, Quincy; Marquita Mosley, Quincy; 3.) Pat and Larry Velie, Hull; 4.) Michael Carroll and Marnie Edwards, Martha's Vineyard; 5.) Ginger Batts, Weymouth; Karyl Adams, Whitman; 6.) Shelly Kelly Sullivan, Scituate; Breda O'Connor, Squantum; 7.) Gregory and Mary Jane O'Meara, Hingham; 8.) Cathy Darche and Janice Grant, Whitman; 9.) Ellen Delaney, Hingham; Maureen Connolly, Aisling Gallery; Leila Walden, Hull; 10.) Dan Roy, So. End; 11.) Carol and Dr. Martin Dunn, Milton; Joan Linehan, Scituate; 12.) Janine Susan, Jason Smith and Virginia Cummings, all of Randolph.

























Legal Clinics – Dec. 1, 7, 15

Tues., Dec. 15 – IIIC offices, 100 Franklin

St. Lower Level, Down-

town Boston. Entrance

is at 201 Devonshire

Mon., Dec. 7 – Green Briar Pub, 304 Wash-

ington Street, Brighton. For further legal

clinic information, call

617-542-7654.

Street.

Tues., Dec. 1 and

### Irish International Immigrant Center

#### Keeping the Lamp Lit

By RONNIE MILLAR, IIIC EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The Irish International Immigrant Center is a not-for-profit organization founded in Boston by Irish immigrants in 1989. We are Boston's Port na Fáilte (a Port of Welcomes), deeply rooted in the Irish spirit of hospitality, human rights, and care for others. Among our staff are those whose great-grandparents left Ireland during the potato famine, and some whose grandparents fled the Holocaust. Several of our staff members are immigrants themselves who moved to the US seeking a better future.

Most Americans can recall their own family's immigration story and are thankful that they found the safety of a new life in the US after experiencing the horrors of war, poverty, or persecution. The refugees of today are no different from our grandparents and those who came before us. They are simply seeking a safe place to live with their families after fleeing impossible circumstances.

To question how the US refugee policy is implemented is perfectly reasonable. To shun or reject these innocent victims outright, as some state governors propose, is not. The truth of the matter is that security checks for refugees seeking entry into the US are far more rigorous than for any other immigrant class. A refugee applicant cannot be approved until all required security checks have been completed and cleared. The full vetting procedure has to be finished before any refugee would be allowed to cross the Atlantic.

Refugees need to be welcomed, protected, and healed, and in doing so, we reject their persecutors and their horrific violence.

"I lift my lamp beside the golden door" - the words

inscribed on the Statue of Liberty, a welcoming sight to generations of immigrants arriving from abroad. I urge us all to reflect on how we would want our families to have been treated when they first arrived here. This ought to be our moral compass as to how we treat the refugees of today and how we can

keep that lamp lit.
J1 Summer Work
& Travel Program changes for 2016

The US sponsoring agencies that maintain oversight of the J-1 Summer Work & Travel program have announced a programmatic change requiring pre-placed employment for all applicants (Visa Waiver countries included) beginning in the

2016 season. Ronnie Millar, IIIC Executive Director, stated "It is important to note that these new regulations are restricted to the J1 Summer Work & Travel program, and do not affect the 12 month J-1 Intern Work & Travel program.'

The IIIC is committed to continuing to support the Irish J-1 students who come to the US in summer 2016. We encourage prospective J-1 students and their parents to be diligent in reviewing and understanding the new program requirements as outlined by the US

#### of poet Emma Lazarus | Happy ending for the Deadys

Our legal services team was delighted to meet Amanda Deady, a young woman from Co. Kerry who enjoyed dual citizen-ship in the US and Ireland through her US citizen parents.

Amanda moved to the US two years ago to be closer to her parents in Quincy, arriving with her husband Alan and their children, Sarah, 2, and Jack, then only five months old. Alan came on a holiday visa and had to return to Ireland upon its expiration. For Amanda, the prospect of having to care for two young children by herself while Alan was away was overwhelming.

Amanda came to the IIIC for help. Having begun the process to obtain Permanent Resident status for Alan, Amanda had run into roadblocks and the process had stalled. Meanwhile, baby Jack also was lacking permanent immigration status.

Managing attorney Jeannie Kain took both

critical that the students

plan early next year, contact their sponsors

with questions about the

new regulations, and the

program process. Histori-



cases. Working with the Consulate, she restarted the process and pushed through the barriers Amanda had in Alan's case and worked to get little Jack a green card. Just months later, Alan was reunited with Amanda and the kids in Boston. Amanda was thrilled, "I thought this day would never come!"

Alan quickly got a job and plans to start his own business. The kids are in school and not only does Jack have a green card, he is now a US citizen. Having set down roots, the Deadys are glad to be together as a family.

a significant personal sponsoring agencies. It is development experience for Irish college students and an integral part of their college education, and we at the IIIC want to ensure that it remains cally, participation in the so for future generations.



## **Matters of Substance** Telephone counseling: Does it really help?

By GINA KELLEHER **DIRECTOR OF WELLNESS** 

Telephone counseling is not much different from face-to-face counseling and studies show that it can be as or even more effective for people experiencing challenges such as depression, anxiety, weight-loss management, or smoking cessation. It has been around for quite a while; it was initially used for crisis situations such as suicide hotlines. However, you do not have to be in crisis to benefit from telephone counseling. It's easy, convenient, and often fits in well with our busy lives. Some of the benefits are as follows:

Convenience: You do not have to worry about transportation, traffic, or expensive parking. You don't have to dress or worry about how you look. You can talk to your counselor in your pajamas and slippers and no one will be any the wiser!

Flexibility: Child-care, work schedule, or inclement weather need no longer hold you back from talking to a supportive person. It's a lot easier to schedule appointments which fit in with your

schedule and life-style Comfort: Opening up and sharing our innermost thoughts and feelings can be hard with someone sitting in front of us. Many people are a lot less self-conscious sharing personal information on the phone, in the safety and familiarity of their

Anonymity: Walking into an office to speak with a counselor can feel daunting. Using the phone, you're in control by revealing only as much identifying information about yourself as you are comfortable with

It is important in all counseling relationships that a rapport or bond develop between counselor and client. Without this, trust can be a challenge, which in turn can interfere with treatment goals. You

may wonder if it is possible to develop this bond and trust with someone over the phone. I've worked for many years doing telephone counseling and I can tell you from experience that the rapport with my telephone was just as engaging and powerful as my face-to-face clients, even though I had never met any of them in person!

So if you want guidance and support for relationship, drinking or addiction problems, anxiety, depression or help to quit smoking, why not try it? It is as easy as picking up



Gina Kelleher

the phone and calling Gina at 617-542-7654, Ext. 14. Hope to hear from you!



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Claim your Heritage. Apply for Irish Citizenship today! If your parent or grandparent was born in Ireland, you are eligible to become an Irish citizen. Our attorneys will help locate your documents and file your application. Contact Foley Law Offices to begin your citizenship application at (617) 973-6448.

**Immigration Q&A** 

## **Know your rights** about employment

Q. I recently became a naturalized US citizen. I've been looking for a new job, and it seems to me that some prospective employers have been hassling me unfairly about my immigration status. This may be because of my accent or the country I originally came from. Is there anything that I can do?

A. In the Civil Rights Division of the US Department of Justice, there is an Office of Special Counsel (OSC) for Immigration-Related Unfair Employment Practices. This office investigates situations like yours,

as well as those involving other people authorized under federal law to work in the US, such as legal permanent residents or employment visa holders. In appropriate cases, OSC will sue employers who discriminate against people based on their immigration status or national origin.

OSC has published the following guidance on this

Citizenship/immigration status-Generally, an employer may not treat you

differently because you are, or are not, a US citizen. [Note: one exception would be certain jobs with the government or a government contractor requiring US citizenship for a security clearance.]

National origin -- An employer may not treat you differently because of your place of birth, native language, accent, or appearance.

**Document abuse** — An employer may not, on the basis of your citizenship status or national origin, demand more or different documents than necessary for completing the I-9 Form, reject reasonably genuinelooking documents, or treat you differently when using E-Verify

Retaliation -- An employer may not retaliate against anyone who files a complaint with OSC or cooperates with an OSC investigation, or who asserts his or her rights under the anti-discrimination provision of the Immigration and Nationality Act.

A person who believes he or she has been subjected to discrimination for any of these reasons can call OSC at 1-800-255-7688 or visit the agency's web site at usdoj.gov/crt/osc.

Of course, there are other avenues to relief from various types of employment discrimination, including filing a complaint with the federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission or the relevant state agency. Choosing the right course in a particular case generally will require the advice of a lawyer specializing in employment discrimination issues, particularly as they relate to immigration status or national origin. IIIC can make a referral to such a lawyer in appropriate cases.

Visit one of IIIC's weekly legal clinics for a free, confidential consultation on any immigration law-

**Disclaimer:** These articles are published to inform generally, not to advise in individual cases. Immigration law is always subject to change. 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.



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## Parties in North reach deal to sustain the power-sharing

December 2015

By Shawn Pogatchnik ASSOCIATED PRESS

DUBLIN - Britain published a long-sought agreement with Northern Ireland's parties last month that all sides agreed would sustain the Catholic-Protestant government in the British

territory.
Issued on Tues., Nov. 17, the 67-page agreement, titled `A Fresh Start," took more than a year of negotiations to achieve. The Brit-ish Protestant and Irish Catholic leaders of the coalition, Peter Robinson and Martin McGuinness, stood side by side as they praised the agreement as a landmark compromise that would deliver tangible economic benefits subsidized by Britain.

We have pledged ourselves today to stand together," said McGuin-

ness, whose Irish nationalist Sinn Fein party represents the Catholic minority. "Today represents another milestone along the way as we normalize and build our society," said Robinson, whose Democratic Unionist Party represents the Protestant majority.

McGuinness said the agreement failed to deliver Sinn Fein's key demand for a new investigative panel empowered to unearth the truth about the most bitterly disputed killings from Northern Ireland's fourdecade conflict. He blamed Britain for refusing to lift the veil of state secrecy on files documenting the role of British soldiers and spies in killings.

But McGuinness said the deal secured enough common ground to keep the coalition running. This includes commitments from Britain to provide more than 500 million pounds (\$760 million) in funds to soften the blow of welfare cuts long opposed by Sinn Fein.

And, significantly, Mc-Guinness said Sinn Fein would accept a new oath of office committing all Northern Ireland lawmakers to reject illegal paramilitary groups and seek their disbandment. There can be no place whatsoever for armed groups in our society. There can be no hiding place for criminality," said McGuinness, a former commander of the outlawed Irish Republican Army, which killed nearly 1,800 people before calling a cease-fire in 1997.

Northern Ireland's eight-year-old coalition has threatened to unravel since 2014 when Sinn Fein

Northern Ireland First Minister Peter Robinson, right, and Deputy First Minister Martin McGuinness speak to the media at Stormont, Belfast, Northern Ireland, on Tues., Nov. 17. AP Photo/Peter Morrison

blocked efforts to impose budget cuts on welfare payments that already had been enacted throughout the rest of the United Kingdom.

Tensions rose further in August when the IRA, which officially renounced violence and disarmed in 2005 as a condition for Sinn Fein's involvement in government, was accused of killing a former member in a revenge attack. It was the first killing pinned to the IRA since the 2007 rise of power-sharing.

Protestant leaders started to withdraw from cooperation with Sinn Fein and threatened to collapse the coalition, unless Sinn Fein offered new peace commitments.

Robinson said the new pledge of office, plus plans to form a new all-Ireland organized crime task force, would put "those still involved in terror and criminality out of business once and for all.'

## At Stonehill, a Holocaust lesson from an Irish citizen who was there

By Liam Dacko

Visitors came in droves Stonehill College in late October for a teaching event that explored a concept that is simple in theory, but complex in practice: forgiveness.
Tomi Reichental, a

Holocaust survivor and Dublin resident, and the filmmaker Gerry Gregg talked about their experiences in making a

documentary called "Close To Evil," which details Reichental's attempt to find and meet with former SS officer Hilde Michnia, who served as a guard at the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp where Reichental was imprisoned as a boy.

Gregg told his audience that he jumped at the chance to make the film with Reichental, as it was

 $believed\,that\,no\,Holocaust$ survivor had ever met with an SS officer outside of a courtroom since the end of World War II.

"He was asking me to make history," Gregg said.
"It was an offer I couldn't refuse."

Reichental told of how the opportunity to try to meet Michnia arose. He said a friend of Michnia's had come across materials

related to the SS in the woman's house. Michnia apparently had told her friend to get rid of the materials, as she did not want her children to find

Later, Michnia's friend heard Reichental speaking on the Irish radio about his experiences at Bergen-Belsen. Realizing that Michnia was an officer at the same camp where Reichental had been imprisoned, the woman reached out to him, hoping to help set up a time that the survivor could come and speak to the former SS officer.

Michnia ultimately refused to meet with Reichental while denying that she ever played a role in the Holocaust.

"In my naiveté, I thought she was brainwashed and a victim of her upbringing," Reichental

Although Reichental never talked to Michnia, he did meet with Alexandra Sennft, granddaughter of Hans Ludin, the Nazi official responsible for the destruction of the Jewish community in his homeland of Slovakia, including the deaths of 35 members of the Reichental family.

A clip from the documentary of Reichental's meeting with Sennft, in which the pair pay an emotional visit to Ludin's grave, was shown at the

Tomi Reichental addresses the students. event. Each confronted different ghosts – for Sennft, it was the stark legacy of her grandfather's hand in mass murder; for Reichental, it was a test: Could he narrow the psychological and emotional

Gregg called the clip "inspirational. It makes Tomi's journey all the worthwhile," he said.

distance between him and

one of Ludin's relatives.

Reichental said that going into the production of "Close To Evil," he had no intention of forgiving Michnia. "The people who can forgive are gone," he

Reichental has no regrets about not meeting Michnia. He said he probably would have embraced her in the heat of the moment, even though she would not admit to the role she played in the Holocaust.

Gregg said although Reichental's journey did not turn out as he originally planned, he gained a lot from the experience.

"He sets out to build a bridge, and he builds a bridge, but it's not the

bridge he sets out to build," Gregg said. Reichental is keen on sharing his experiences and stories with people. He regularly visits secondary schools in Ireland to talk about his time at Bergen-Belsen.

However, it took him a long time to be able to share his story. Although Reichental's wife, who  $died\,13\,years\,ago, knew\,he$ was a Holocaust survivor, he never told her about his time at Bergen-Belsen. She never knew what I

went through," he said. Now, his story is well known. He said he has spoken to more than 80,000 students about his imprisonment and his schedule is booked solid with engagements until

"I thought I owe it to the victims so their memory is not forgotten," he said.





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## Christmas Celtic Sojourn is a family party; new faces, old faces revel in music-making

BY SEAN SMITH SPECIAL TO THE BIR

"A Christmas Celtic Sojourn," which opens for its 13th year on Dec. 11 at Boston's Cutler Majestic Theater, has become as much a family-style tradition for its performers as for the crowds that flock to see the show every year.

For example, those little kids from the Harney Academy of Irish Dance who, year in and year out, invariably win hearts and earn respect among audience members with their spirited, youthful display? Well, some of them will be returning to the stage this year as high school and even college students.

"The whole thing's really taken on a life of its own, something people seem to look forward to," says the show's creator and host, WGBH's Brian O'Donovan. "It's quite amazing to contemplate that some of those dancers from the Harney Academy who joined us during the early years of the show are now practically grown up. To have them, along with the younger Harney dancers, in the line-up indicates how well-rooted 'Christmas Celtic Sojourn' is."

True to form, this year's show — which also will be staged in Worcester and New Bedford, as well as Rockport (where it is already sold out) — will include other returnees, notably "Sojourn" music director Seamus Egan and his band Solas (fiddler Winifred Horan, multi-instrumentalists Mick McAuley and Eamon McElholm, and guest bassist Chico Huff), harpist Maeve Gilchrist, cellist Natalie Haas and Eamon Murray on bodhran and percussion ("Eamon has an excellent touch on the drum, of course, but he's also quite the character on stage — always glad to have him in the mix," says O'Donovan).

Cara Butler, who appeared in the 2012 and 2014 productions, will be back not only as a featured solo dancer but also as dance director for the show. Joining her, and the Harney Academy students and alumni, will be English step-dancer Declan McHale.

will be English step-dancer Declan McHale.

Making her debut with the show will be vocalist Cathy Jordan, known for her work with the band Dervish, and among a vanguard of pioneering female Irish singers – along with the likes of Mary Black, Maura O'Connell, Dolores Keane and Moya Brennan – that came to the fore during the 1970s and '80s.

"Cathy is a powerful presence, and someone we've wanted for the longest time to be in the show," says O'Donovan. "She has a broad resume and repertoire that is perfect for 'Christmas Celtic Sojourn.' More to the point, when you look at the female singers we've had in the show, they've all had the chops to perform in this kind of production, certainly, but they've also had the personality to match. Cathy does, too."

Also new to "Christmas Celtic Sojourn" this year is the Nordic Fiddlers Bloc: Shetlander Kevin Henderson, Olav Luksengård Mjelva from Norway and Anders Hall from Sweden are fine exponents of their respective fiddle traditions, with which they create a fascinating synthesis of styles and sounds while upholding the distinctive flavor of each element.

"We've often explored in the show a crossover/kinship dynamic between traditions – like Appalachian or oldtimey for instance," says O'Donovan. "This Northern music of Scandinavia and the Shetlands seems remote, even exotic, but there's an unmistakable connection to Celtic traditions that makes for compelling listening."

Celtic traditions that makes for compelling listening." The presence of these "Christmas Celtic Sojourn" newcomers will, in turn, make for striking collaborations with the show's returnees, he adds. "Solas is a powerhouse, of course, and part of what makes them great is how well they work – as a group or individually – with other performers.

"Maeve plays that ancient instrument, the harp—she's also a talented pianist and singer—but she has a very innovative, contemporary approach that utilizes a lot of improvisation. Natalie, meanwhile, has helped bring the cello into the domain of Celtic music, through her partnership with fiddler Alasdair Fraser but also through numerous stage and recording appearances with an array of different performers.

"You can only imagine how exciting it is, as we're drawing up the plans for the show, to think about



The band Solas, including "A Christmas Celtic Sojourn" music director Seamus Egan, will be on hand again this year.

Niko Alexandrou photo

the various combinations and how they might sound: harp with cello; cello with a Scandinavian hardanger fiddle and viola; accordion and harp; and all of them together with the rest of the ensemble – the list just goes on and on."

O'Donovan says the ascension of Butler — whose resume includes appearances with The Chieftains, Solas, and Cherish the Ladies, and lead dancer credit in the "Dancer's Morning" Folger's commercial — to dance director for "Christmas Celtic Sojourn" was practically destined to happen. "When she was in the show on earlier occasions, she practically took on the director's job ad hoc and showed some real leadership; then when I hired her for the 'Celtic Sojourn'/Boston Pops show back in the spring, she demonstrated a strong work ethic in delivering custom, high-quality choreography.

"Those were important considerations in having her assume the dance director's job. Obviously, as director you not only have to work with the other dancers, including the Harney kids, but also with the musicians, the production crew, and so on. Cara will do all that, and the result will be top-notch."

Butler, he adds, already made a significant contribution to this year's show by bringing in McHale, who has four World Championship and three All-Ireland titles to his credit, has toured with "Riverdance," and performed with Dervish and Cherish the Ladies.

"Declan is quite accomplished, and he has a tremendous sense of roguery, even comedy, to his style – he'll definitely make an impression," notes O'Donovan.

Paula Plum's 13th consecutive stint as the show's artistic director underscores the sense of continuity in "Christmas Celtic Sojourn," O'Donovan says, even as new personalities and wrinkles are added.

"If you go back to the idea of the show and its performers and crew as a 'family' in and of itself, well, families undergo changes over time: There come new faces, who bring a fresh perspective and energy with them, and there are still the 'old' faces, who represent the family history and memories; you get them together for a party every year, and with all the familiarity there'll always be something a little different, too. That's what it's all about."

"A Christmas Celtic Sojourn" will take place at the Cutler Majestic Theater Dec. 11-13 and 18-20; the



Cara Butler returns to "Christmas Celtic Sojourn" as the show's dance director as well as one of the featured dancers.

Niko Alexandrou photo

Hanover Theater in Worcester on December 14; and the Zeiterion Theater in New Bedford on December 17 (the December 15 show at the Shalin Liu Performance Center in Rockport is sold out). For show times, tickets and other information, see wgbh.org/celtic.

#### A look at Boston/Eastern Massachusetts Irish-Celtic music events for December:



Matt and Shannon Heaton will play at the Gaelic Roots Christmas Concert on Boston College's Brighton Campus. Kelly Lorenz photo

In addition to "A Christmas Celtic Sojourn," holiday-related happenings in the area include a performance by "The Celtic Kates" - Kate Chadbourne, Katie Mahoney, Katie O'Neill and Cait Sargent Lubelczyk-on December 4 at 7:30 p.m. in the Hibernian Cultural Centre in Worcester. This will be the debut for this quartet, all with local ties and diverse backgrounds, and an affinity for Celtic music. Chadbourne is a musician, poet, storyteller and part-time college professor whose background is in Irish language singing; Mahoney is an accomplished jazz singer; and both O'Neill and Sargent Lubelczyk learned to sing in the musical theater environment. The concert will feature holiday-related and other music – traditional, folk, and contemporary - from Ireland, Scotland and North America. Local musicians Liz

Alexander, George Arata, Greg Bacon, Maarten Goji Tom Lubelczyk, Myra MacLeod and Eli Matteo.

For ticket information and other details, see https://www.facebook.com/events/413870565476266, or call 508-344-4932.

The annual Gaelic Roots Christmas Concert at Boston College will take place on December 8, with guitar/bouzouki-and-flute duo Matt and Shannon Heaton as well as fiddler Hanneke Cassel and guitarist-vocalist Keith Murphy. The four, mainstays of the Boston/New England music scene, will play traditional and original music of the season. The concert, which is free, begins at 6:30 p.m. in the Cadigan Alumni Center on BC's Brighton Campus. See www. bc.edu/gaelicroots for more information.

(Continued on page 13)



Áine Minogue's show at Club Passim will celebrate Christmas and the winter solstice.

## A CONVERSATION WITH MAEVE GILCHRIST

Scottish-born Maeve Gilchrist, among the featured performers at this year's "Christmas Celtic Sojourn," has been awfully busy of late, but she paused in her recent travels to discuss the show, her past times in Boston, and her childhood memories of the holiday season.

Q. This is your second go-round with "Christmas Celtic Sojourn." What was it about your first experience with the show that made you want to return?

I had a fantastic time on every level during my time with the "Christmas Sojourn" two years ago. It was a chance to collaborate with some of my favorite musicians on some beautiful stages, but just as importantly, I made some really wonderful new friends. There was a memorably great vibe in the cast of that show – supportive and fun in equal measures. I think that Brian [O'Donovan] knows the importance of hiring musicians who get on both personally and musically and the show was so rewarding on both those levels. Additionally, who doesn't love a bit of Christmas indulgence?"

**Q.** Give us an insight into the preparations for the show: You probably trade ideas and thoughts via e-mail, Skype, etc., beforehand but what is it like when you finally all get together? Is it hours and hours of jamming and directed practices, and then exhausted sleep?

'Yes-all of that! We're lucky to have Seamus Egan as our patient and insightful music director. Ideas get swapped around before the show, but if I remember correctly, it's really the rehearsal week where the magic happens. The musical arc of the show seemed to shape around everyone's strengths, giving each artist the space to do their own thing while contributing to the supporting musical tapestry the rest of the time. During the rehearsal process, ideas are constantly being thrown out and shaped to the line-up available. Someone will hop on the piano, create a backing vocal or harmony line on their instrument. As someone who loves the challenge of creating both as a solo artist and as a side person, it's a perfect gig.'

Q. Do you have any special memories of Christmas/New Year's as a kid? Do you find these inspire you as you get ready for "Christmas Celtic"?

'Certainly! Christmas was a magical time in my household and I still get a kick out of the lights, the trees, and the child-like anticipation leading up to the day. We had our own Christmas traditions including pillowcases (instead of stockings), our verbose great aunt Betty, and whiskey for Santa (milk didn't cut it in Scotland).

And the biggest celebration of all came at New Year's, or "Hogmanay" as we call it in Scotland. The kitchen would be crammed with family and friends. We'd count down the bells as my father played the small pipes and when the clock struck midnight we'd all join hands and sing the original version of "Auld Lang Syne." It was a party that always went long into the night and our neighbors and



"As someone who loves the challenge of creating both as a solo artist and as a side person, it's a perfect gig," says Maeve Gilchrist of "A Christmas Celtic Sojourn.'

friends of all ages would stay up together to welcome in all the fresh hope of the new year. Good times!"

Q. You have a history with Boston, going back to when you were a student at Berklee College of Music, and another period when you lived in town for few years. How did your experiences here influence you as a musician, and as a person?

"I moved back to Boston in 2009 after a couple of years away. I was drawn back by the rich "new acoustic" music scene that seemed to be exploding around that time. So I remember lots and lots of tunes. It was a time that I think really informed my playing. Just the sheer amount of jamming and creating - it felt like I was part of a scene and everyone around me wanted to make music just for the love of it. It's hard to tell whether the music was good or bad - but it was certainly a lot of fun.

My roommate at the time was Matt Smith, the manager of Club Passim. That place really became like a second home while I was living in Boston. Either playing or taking in a concert, it was a great hang in a historic club that still seems very much at the heart of the music in scene in Boston."

Q. You've explored other genres in your music other than trad and folk, of course. What are some of your current/ongoing projects and activities?

"I'm currently sitting in Orlando airport having finished a residency at a college here with one of my collaborators, Nic Gareiss. He's a wonderful percussive dancer and we have a duo project I'm very proud of. It's raw and challenging and (hopefully) evocative. We aim to take elements of traditional music and use it to come up with a language between the footwork and the harp, trying to move away from what is commonly expected of our respective instruments and create a duet that intertwines the two.

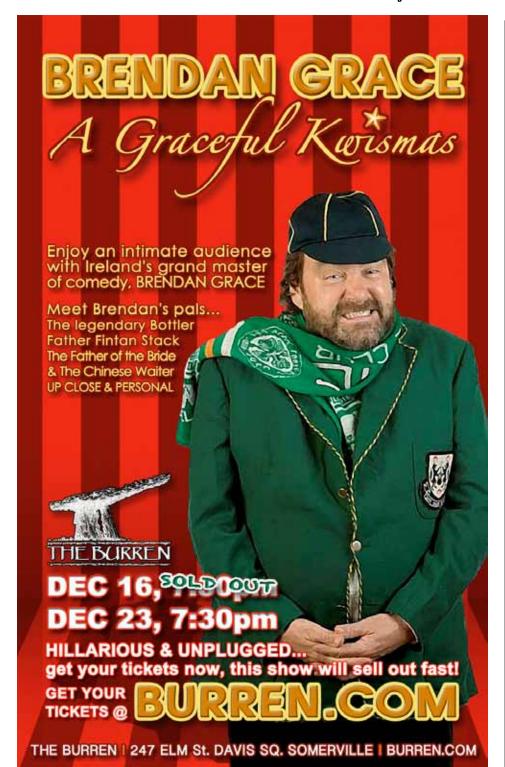
"I have two recording projects coming up in January and February. I'll be flying to Nashville to make a record with the great bassist Viktor Krauss. I met him at the Berklee American Roots festival last summer and we both enjoyed that collaboration so much we decided to make a record that will be released on Adventure Music.

"I'm also making a record with the fantastic local hardanger fiddle player Mariel Vandersteel, with whom I worked with in the "Christmas Celtic Sojourn" a couple of years back. We're working with the electronics artist Charlie Van Kirk and New York City-based electric guitarist Kenji Herbert to create a recording in January. I can't wait for both of these.

"And I've been commissioned to write a lever-harp concerto for the Western Piedmont Symphony Orchestra in North Carolina to be debuted in March 2017, and I've been spending a lot of the past few months coming up with the raw material for that.

"It's a busy, busy time. But I love every minute of it!"

- SEAN SMITH



#### **EATING AND EMOTION** Dr. Bernadette Rock

### Determined to lose weight this month? Do it for yourself, not for Christmas!

What do you hear when an advert tells you that you have "four weeks to fit into your LBD," or to "tone your tum for Christmas, drop a dress size before Christmas," or advising "how not to ruin your diet during Xmas?" Many of us hear fear, failure, and the reinforced message that you cannot be trusted around food, that you need the rules of a diet to tell you what and how to eat, or you'll eat everything that's not nailed down.

Several women have mentioned to me that they hide in photos, with their children as little props in front of them. Or hiding in black clothes with black trousers being a staple in their wardrobe and constantly tugging down their top so it covers their bum.

Alma is a typical client – intelligent, well-educated and fun-loving - but 'feels fat'. She is acutely conscious of the reactions of others towards her weight and her eating. She recalls wishing the ground would open up and swallow her when she overheard a family member say ,"She's eating AGAIN" or when a complete stranger looked in abject horror at the plate of food in front of her and then at her face. It seems that the acceptable reaction of people around overweight people is to be disgusted, and the dutiful place of an overweight person is to feel ashamed and small, very small (oh, the irony!).

Alma was obsessed with counting calories and points, of trying to be in control, but then losing control as she shoveled food into her mouth. She felt utterly helpless. Yes, it was indeed her choice to eat. But weight loss or the struggle to lose weight is not what it is all about. Alma revealed that part of the reason she has remained fat is because the extra weight means she can blend into the background, without being the focus of attention, and doesn't feel that she's "on show." If we allowed ourselves the

space to understand our weight, instead of constantly piling pressure on ourselves to lose it, it would bring us closer to a "normal" relationship with food. You cannot lose it until you first own it.

How we eat often reflects what's happening with and around us. So suggestions such as "Move away from the table" or questions like "How does



someone allow themselves get so fat?" (which my clients are often asked) implicitly lack understanding and convey a very narrow belief that fatness and being overweight are all about gluttony, and lack of will power. But that makes no sense given that you have discipline to do so much else in your life, such as raise a family or go out to work, and given that willpower is only a shortterm burst of energy, that usually ends quite abruptly.

That diet mentality implies "Be good until Christmas, then have a blow-out for two weeks," then "Lose weight as you're a New Year's resolution". The best you can do right now is to push out your goals and decide where you would like to be 6 months or 12 months from now. Start to give yourself the chance to understand what your extra eating and weight is all about. After 15 years of experience, I realize that you are far more than what the bathroom scales tell you, or what the looks or comments of others say about you.

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

Wishing you good health, Dr. Bernadette Rock, PhD



Evan Harrington and Erica Spyres take center stage in the Tony Award-winning musical "Once," playing The Shubert Theatre from December 8 - 27.

## **Bringing "Once"** home to Boston

By R. J. Donovan SPECIAL TO THE BIR

Erica Spyres – actress, singer and classical violinist - has spent her life surrounded by music. Her parents are both music teachers. Her brothers are both singers. And her family was honored as "The Most Musical Family in Missouri." The Ozarks native relocated to Boston when her composer-husband was accepted to study at Boston Conservatory.

Spyres has carved out a busy career here in Boston. She dazzled audiences as Clara in "A Light In The Piazza" at SpeakEasy Stage. And she has continued to win praise for her work in "Camelot" at New Rep, "Into The Woods" at Reagle and "Tribes," also at SpeakEasy, for which she received The Elliot Norton Award for Best Actress.

Most recently, she has been on tour playing the Ex-Girlfriend in the international company of the Tony Award-winning musical "Once."

After a lengthy journey that has taken the cast around the globe, "Once" finishes its tour this month here in Boston, playing The Shubert Theatre Dec. 8 through the 27th.

Based on John Carney's 2007 film of the same name, "Once" tells the captivating tale of a Dublin street musician – Guy – who's about to give up on his dreams. Things change when a beautiful young woman-Girl-takes a sudden interest in his haunting love songs. Over the course of one fateful week, their unlikely connection and collaboration evolves into a complicated romance.

The show features an impressive ensemble of actormusicians who play their own instruments on stage. Music and lyrics are by Glen Hansard and Markéta Irglová with a book by Enda Walsh. The film version won an Oscar for the song "Falling Slowly.

'Once" is also renowned for operating a pub on stage, both before the show and during intermission. Preshow, the actors gather to present a lively Irish session.

Erica Spyres is a summa cum laude graduate of Drury University where she studied vocal performance. Her first time on stage was in a church play. And she began studying the violin at the age of three, initiating her lessons on a mock instrument fashioned from a crackerjack box. "Once" marks her first national tour.

We spoke by phone about the show and her career when "Once" was playing in western Canada:

**Q.** As an actress with a 20-plus year history as a classical violinist, you appear to be a perfect casting

choice for "Once." How did they find you?

A. It was here in Boston, almost two years ago. A few of my friends went to see "Once" and they each came back and said why aren't you in this show? And I was like, 'I don't know the New York scene.' One of my friends on Facebook said, 'You need to be in this!' . Another friend (on Facebook) sent me the notice that they were holding auditions in Boston within then next couple of weeks. So I went in.

Q. And what was the process like?

A. You're supposed to play something on your chosen instrument and accompany yourself. So I went in and sang a Damien Rice song and I played the violin and I got a callback for the next day. . . . They said, "Hey we really like you, but we don't have a place for you right now. But these [auditions] are for all future productions, so we'll let you know." About six months later they contacted me and said we're holding auditions the next week, callbacks. I did those callbacks and a

week later I found out I got the job.

Q. And now you're bringing "Once" home to Boston to close the tour. I expect the audience will be packed with family and friends?

A. I'm so excited . . . I have a feeling I'm going to know people at every performance. My first time performing (at the Shubert) was for the Elliot Nortons this year. I think it's a perfect space for "Once." It's small and intimate but it's got that old feel.

Q. "Once" is a very moving, very intimate experience. What makes the show work so effectively?

**A.** I think it works for many reasons. I know the people who started it, who developed it. They said that they never imagined it would actually be on Broadway. It was just a labor of love . . . I think that the heart was in the right place because they weren't trying to make it a big success on Broadway. They spoke to people in a very real way.

Q. You're a part of the pre-show session every night. Normally audience members aren't allowed anywhere near the playing area, but with the pub actually on stage in "Once," it's encouraged. Any mishaps?

A. Well I got beer spilled on me last night, so it's funny that you ask today. They always make people put lids on their cups - people aren't used to drinking wine and beer out of cups with lids – so this lady took her lid off and then she spilled her entire beer right behind me. And some of it got on me . . . Sometimes they try to sit on the chairs and they have to be told not to. And they'll try to talk to us while we're playing, so it can be kind of interesting. It keeps you on your toes.

**Q.** Does the pre-show session vary by performance? A. We have about 30 pre-shows songs, I think. So we change every night . . . I have a couple of feature songs where I'll have a solo . . . We usually do two Irish songs and one Czech song each night. There are always three that change, and the final three are always the same.



Boston's Erica Spyres returns home to play the Ex-Girlfriend in the international touring company of the Tony Award-winning musical "Once," at The Shubert Theater December 8 - 27.

Joan Marcus photo

That's what leads into the show, and that's when the audience starts sitting down.

**Q.** Is there a favorite moment for you in "Once."

**A.** It's kind of changed for me over the course of the year, but one place that's always special is "Gold" (at the end of Act One.) They did (that number) at The Tonys for a reason. It's the first time you see everybody on stage together. Our associate director said it's kind of like choral music. It all flows . . . All of us are moving with our instruments at the same time. We're all dancing and playing at once. The first time that all comes together, it's really, really special. In the course of the show, that's when Guy realizes he has feelings for Girl and she has feelings for him. That is always a special moment.

R. J. Donovan is Editor and Publisher of onstageboston.com.

"Once," Dec. 8 - 27, Shubert Theatre, 265 Tremont Street, Boston. Tickets: 800-982-2787 or citicenter.org.

## **December events**

(Continued from page 11)

Club Passim will host a winter solstice/ Christmas show by harpist-vocalist Aine Minogue on December 23 at 7:30 p.m. Minogue's music expresses the poetry, mythology and rituals associated with Irish tradition and culture; her CD/DVD releases include "To Warm the Winter's Night" and "Winter: A Meditation." For ticket reservations and other details, see passim.org. **The Burren Pub** in Somerville holds

its unfailingly entertaining New Year's Eve Party, with Galway fiddler Helena **Delaney** and an impressive coterie of traditional musicians holding an Irish session in the pub's front room.

Not strictly holiday-related but no less festive events at the Burren this month include a December 12 show with two bands in the Celtic rock vein: The Narrowbacks from New York City and

Boston's own Gobshites. The Narrowbacks describe their sound thus: "If Joe Strummer, Shane MacGowan and Bruce Springsteen survived a drinking session through the five boroughs, the hangover would be called The Narrowbacks.' Gobshites pride themselves for not only turning traditional Irish standards into hard rock rave-ups, but by putting an Irish slant on punk-rock classics. The concert starts at 7 p.m.

Tickets may be all but gone by the time

you read this, but the Burren's Backroom Series will present an all-toorare pairing of widely acclaimed singer Karan Casey with one of Ireland's most celebrated bands of the past decade or so, Lunasa, with shows at 7:30 and 9 p.m.

Go to burren.com for details on all these events.

-SEAN SMITH



 $HOLIDAY\,TURMOIL-What would\,happen\,if\,Jesus\,had\,been\,born\,in\,Ballygoura$ instead of Bethlehem? That's the premise of "Return of the Winemaker," a dark Irish Christmas comedy written by Bernard McMullan and scheduled forTir Na Theatre at Davis Square Theatre in Somerville from December 2d though the 20th. Carmel O'Reilly directs the production featuring Colin Hamell and Derry Woodhouse (above, left and right) with Nancy E. Carroll and Stephen Russell. For tickets, visit tirnatheatre.org.

#### IRELAND'S GREAT HUNGER MUSEUM

December 2015

### In the Lion's Den: Daniel Macdonald, Ireland and Empire

January 20 to April 17, 2016



Daniel Macdonald, The Fighter, 1844, oil on canvas. Image courtesy of Sir Michael Smurfit.

Ireland's Great Hunger Museum 3011 Whitney Avenue • Hamden, CT www.ighm.org • 203-582-6500

by grants from Connecticut Humanities and The George Link Jr. Charitable Trust.

#### Daniel Macdonald (1821-53)

The 19th-century Cork artist was the only painter audacious enough to paint the Great Famine as it was happening.

#### **BIR News Update**

#### Many hail first gay marriages after May approval referendum

#### By Shawn Pogatchnik Associated Press

DUBLIN-Ireland celebrated its first gay marriages last month, six months after voters overwhelmingly chose to legalize the practice in the traditionally conservative Catholic nation.

Dozens of couples nationwide converted their existing civil partnerships into full marriages in brief ceremonies in often less-than-romantic settings, such as antiseptic hospital offices where births and deaths also are re-

 $Gay\,marriage\,became\,officially\,legal\\on\,Nov.\,16\,but\,the\,legislation\,required$ a minimum 24-hour notice to upgrade civil partnerships, while those seeking a legal union for the first time must wait a further three months to schedule their services.

Ireland's first couple to sign on the dotted line were the lawyer Cormac Gollogly and bank official Richard Dowling, both 35.

The senior registrar for South Tipperary, Mary Claire Heffernan, officiated at the ceremony before 9 a.m. in a spartan waiting room inside a registration center for births, deaths and marriages inside the hospital in Clonmel, southwest Ireland. She also oversaw their much grander civil partnership in September, when the couple donned top hats and tails and spent two weeks honeymooning in the Maldives.

This time, Gollogly and Dowling sat in office chairs as they took turns presenting rings and exchanging vows to love and comfort him in sickness and in health," followed by a kiss and embrace. They used a stainless steel hospital trolley as a desk to sign their wedding certificate.

"It was great to get it done so early ... to be the first in Ireland," said Gollogly, who has been with Dowling for

More than 62 percent of voters approved gay marriage in a May referendum, making Ireland the first nation worldwide to approve the measure

by popular vote. Twenty-two other countries have legalized gay marriage  $through \, legislation \, or \, court judgments.$ 

#### Broadway will dim lights to memorialize Brian Friel

ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW YORK – Broadway theaters plan to dim their marquee lights next month in memory of Brian Friel, the Tony Award-winning Irish playwright who created "Dancing at Lughnasa"

and more than 30 other plays.

The Broadway League says the lights will be dimmed Dec. 8 for one minute at 6:45 p.m. Friel died on Oct. 2 at age 86.

He received his greatest acclaim for his 1990 play, "Dancing at Lughnasa," which won three Tonys in 1992. It was turned into a 1998 film starring Meryl

In 1980, Friel collaborated with actor Stephen Rea to found Ireland's Field Day Theatre Company, which is committed to bringing productions to small towns across the island.

He leaves his wife, Anne Morrison, four daughters and a son.

#### **Ex-Anglo Irish Bank chief** seeks bail on fraud charge

#### ASSOCIATED PRESS

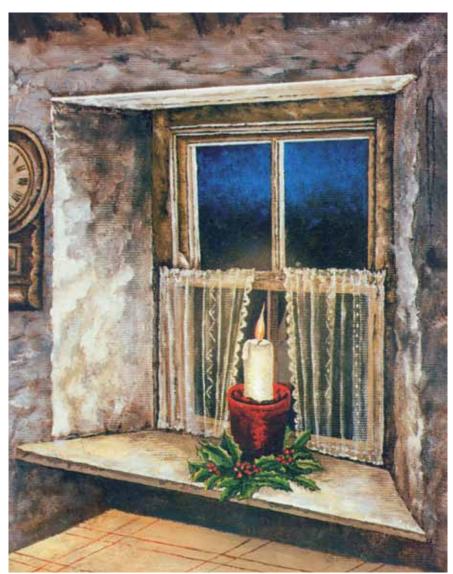
The former chief executive of Anglo Irish Bank who is facing fraud and other charges in Ireland has asked a US judge in Boston to release him on bail while he awaits an extradition hearing.

According to the Boston Globe's report, David Drumm told a federal judge in Boston on Fri., Nov. 13, that he is not a flight risk and would not abandon his family. He asked for home confinement with electronic monitoring so he can continue working.

Federal prosecutors argued that Drumm is a flight risk who can marshal "significant resources" and has not cooperated with Irish authorities.

The judge didn't immediately rule. Drumm left Ireland and moved to the Boston suburb of Wellesley in 2009. Irish criminal investigators accuse him of conspiring to conceal massive losses at Anglo Irish Bank from shareholders.

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#### **Traveling People**

## A holiday tip: Check out Harry Clarke's wondrous works

#### By Judy Enright SPECIAL TO THE BIR

Christmas seems like a perfect time to remind future visitors to Ireland about the wondrous works of the stained glass artist Harry Clarke. His magnificent windows can be found in numerous places around the country, and you won't be sorry if you spend time looking for them.

Born on March 17, 1889, he left school at 14 to join his father's stained glass and ecclesiastical decorating business. He won several scholarships and studied stained glass in London and France.

During his life, Clarke was commissioned to create more than 160 windows. There are 17 churches in Co. Mayo with Harry Clarke windows, so the Mayo County Council published a guide (available in the Castlebar office) as part of the Heritage Plan 2006-2011. St. Mary's Church in Ballinrobe also published a book about its collection, which is reputed to be one of the largest in the

#### **WINDOWS SOLD**

We were reminded about Harry Clarke's enduring stained glass skills after reading that an unnamed Jesuit priest was the top bidder in a fiercely contested auction last summer of church windows made by the Harry Clarke Studios. The Dublin-based priest paid 31,000 euros - 10times the estimate – for a single panel depicting "Saint Francis Xavier preaching in the Orient." He also paid 21,000 euros for a large, three-panel window of St. Francis Xavier. Both windows were made by commission in the 1930s for a church in Co. Kilkenny, but were never collected from the studios. Although the pieces were made after Clarke died, some of the artists worked directly under him.

The stained glass auction lots sold for a total of 88,500 euros, well ahead of the pre-auction estimate of 25,000.

The windows, owned by Harry's late son David, were made for churches in Ireland, Wales, and New Zealand in the mid-20th century but, for various reasons, were never collected or installed and have been in storage for years. Auctioneers said the trustees of David's estate approached the National Museum of Ireland to buy them, but terms could not be reached.

Although Harry died in 1931, The Harry Clarke Studios in Dublin continued to make stained glass windows until the business closed in 1973

Among other lots in the auc-



more in the Wolfsonian-Florida International University design museum in Miami, FL. You can also find his windows in Australia, England, Northern Ireland, Scotland, and Wales.

#### **PUB MEALS**

It's always interesting to read reviews of various sorts in various publications. Probably the most important thing to remember when you read a review is that the reviewer may have picked a bad or good day at a particular establishment and his or her analysis may not necessarily be a true picture.

I recently read a story by Sorcha Pollak in the Oct. 30 edition of The Irish Times detailing recommendations in the 2016 Michelin Eating Out in Pubs Guide. Michelin recommends the food at 32 pubs in 15 Irish counties as well as in a total of 590 pubs in the Republic, Northern Ireland, England, Scotland, and Wales.

It's interesting to read the reviews when you've visited an establishment yourself. I agree with some of the recommendations – some of the pubs were chosen, in my opinion, because they have name recognition rather than quality.

My favorite pub-the Grainne Uaile in Newport, Co. Mayo escaped notice. I have eaten there many times and have found the food consistently excellent. I'm not talking about soup and sandwich meals, but

potato and vegetable. Two other Mayo pubs are listed and I totally agree with one, The Tavern in Murrisk, and have enjoyed meals there a number of times. However, I was not impressed by the food at the other, Cronin's Sheebeen in Westport. Maybe I need to give the latter another try.

Detail from the three-light stained glass win-

dow in St. Patrick's Church, Kilmaine, by

Harry Clarke, brilliant Irish artist.

Co. Down led the Michelin listings with six recommended pubs, followed by Co. Cork with five, Co. Clare with four, and Co. Kildare with three. Counties Dublin, Galway and Mayo each had two, while Antrim, Kerry, Leitrim, Louth, Sligo, Tipperary, Wexford and Wicklow had one each.

Wild Honey Inn in Lisdoonvarna, Co. Clare, and Toddies at The Bulman in Kinsale, Co. Cork, both received an "Inspectors' Favourites" commenda-tion and were described in the guide, according to Pollak's story, as "establishments found to be particularly charming and which offer something extra special."

The Irish listings included: Co. Antrim, Billy Andy's at Mounthill, near Larne; Co. Clare, Morrissey's in Doonbeg, Vaughan's Anchor Inn in Liscannor, Wild Honey Inn in Lisdoonvarna and Linnane's Lobster Bar in New Quay; Co. Cork, Mary Ann's in Castletownshend, Poacher's Inn in Bandon, Deasy's in Clonakilty, Cronin's in Crosshaven and Toddies in Kinsale; Co. de Paul in Bayonne, N.J., and full meals - an entree with Down, Pheasant in Annahilt,

Poacher's Pocket in Comber, Parson's Nose and Plough Inn, both in Hillsborough, Pier 36 in Donaghadee, and Balloo House in Killinchy.
Also, Co. Dublin, Old Spot

and Chop House, both in Balls-

bridge; Co. Galway, Moran's Oyster Cottage in Kilcolgan and O'Dowd's in Roundstone (we heartily agree with this recommendation!);

Co. Kerry. O'Neill's Seafood Bar in Caherciveen; Co. Kildare, Harte's in Kildare, Ballymore Inn in Ballymore Eustace and Fallon's in Kilcullen; Co. Leitrim, Oarsman in Carrick-on-Shannon; Co.

Fitzpatricks in Jenkinstown; Co. Mayo, The Tavern in Murrisk and Sheebeen in Westport; Co. Sligo, Hargadons in Sligo Town; Co. Tipperary, Larkins in Garrykennedy; Co. Wexford, Lobster Pot in Carne and Co. Wicklow, Byrne & Woods in Roundwood.

It's great to see Ireland's many pubs recognized for their food, which is often of good

quality and of very good value. Pollak quoted Rebecca Burr, editor of the guide, as saying the demand for good quality food in the relaxed setting of a local pub is still increasing. "More and more pubs are serving flexible all-day menus – incorporating breakfast, brunch and afternoon tea. The pub industry should be congratulated for moving with the times.
TIDY TOWNS

Hooray for Letterkenny, Co. Donegal, winner of the 2015 Tidy Town title. Letterkenny topped 860 villages and towns to become the eighth Donegal town to win the designation since the competition began in 1958. Letterkenny was also named Ireland's tidiest large urban center.

Other winners in this year's Tidy Town competition include: Clonegal in Co. Carlow, tidiest village; Listowel in Co. Kerry, tidiest small town and Westport, Co. Mayo, tidiest large

The competition was originally designed to encourage residents to pick up litter but now awards marks in a range of categories including use/ development of natural amenities and landscaping. Every year, towns across Ireland vie for the title.

#### **TRAVEL**

There are lots of deals available online and from your favorite travel agent at this time of year and it's a great time of year to make plans.

Enjoy Ireland whenever and wherever you go and happy



Adam and Eve designed for a

New Zealand church but never

sent. It sold for 9,500 euros. A

single panel for a window, titled

"St. Bernadette and Our Lady

of Lourdes, which originally

had two panels sold for 6,500

euros. The pre-auction estimate

was 500 euros. The window had been commissioned for a

church in Wales but the priest

there declined to pay packaging and shipping costs of 33 pounds

NEWPORT WINDOWS

dows I ever saw sit over the high altar in St. Patrick's in

Newport, Co. Mayo. "The Last

Judgment" there took four years to complete and has been

described as Clarke's most

magnificent work. The window

includes his self-portrait, said

to portray his prolonged suf-

fering from poor health - he

was 41 when he died en route

home to Ireland and a month

before his studio installed the

final window at St. Patrick's in

I went to see the work in the

hilltop Newport church after

being told that former pastor

- Canon Michael MacDonald -

sold his life insurance policy to

pay for the windows he commis-

sioned in 1926. What a treasure

he left for Newport and the

many visitors to St. Patrick's.

you can see Clarke windows

n the Basilica of St. Vincent

If you can't make it to Ireland,

Newport.

The first Harry Clarke win-



Detail from "Adoration of the Magi," a Harry Clarke stained glass window in Kilmaine, Co. Mayo.



Detail of one of Harry Clarke's stained glass windows in St. Mary's Church, Judy Enright photos Ballinrobe, Co. Mayo.

## Listen to Haley Richardson play the fiddle, and you can almost hear the future resound

By SEAN SMITH

December 2015

Here's a little sampler of what New Jersey fiddler Haley Richardson has done over the past six years or so: Won Junior Fiddler of Dooney honors, plus seven Mid-Atlantic Fleadh and two All-Ireland Fleadh titles; performed on the worldwide FleadhTV webcast; was featured in *Fiddler Magazine*; and appeared on stage with, among others, The Chieftains, Mick Moloney, the John Whelan Band, and Paddy Keenan.

Not a bad six years, especially when you consider that the period constitutes about half of her lifespan

 she turned 13 this past summer.
 Haley, who has studied under the renowned Sligo fiddler Brian Conway, also has an album to her credit, "Heart on a String," on which she is accompanied mainly by her older brother Dylan on guitar and bouzouki. When a recording showcases a 12-year-old musician, it might be easy to regard the album more as a benchmark toward future development, instead of appreciating the work on its own terms. And that would be a mistake, because while Haley shows every intention of continuing to refine her craft, on "Heart on a String" she already displays a command of the fiddle, and a focus and lift to her playing, that belies her age.

The arrangements on the album are straightforward, mostly just her and Dylan – Conway joins her on one track, Whelan on another; Flynn Cohen guest-stars on guitar for the slow air "Dear Irish Boy" – and thus put her firmly in the spotlight. And Haley doesn't take the easy route when it comes to repertoire; sure, there are plenty of jigs and reels, but also slow airs, barndances and hornpipes – including J. Scott Skinner's outrageously intricate "The Mathematician," a highwire act in and of itself – all of which exert their own particular demands and idiosyncrasies on the fiddler.

Yet while it's important to assess "Heart on a String" on merits alone, rather than as a harbinger of things to come, it's difficult nonetheless not to speculate on the progress of Haley's music over the next few years. If a stray note or a phrase here and there might not sound quite so strong or smooth, well, these are the sorts of things that are typically resolved with time and practice. Perhaps she'll make her arrangements more varied and adventurous, and perhaps there are collaborations down the road that will expand her perspective and creativity. The possibilities do seem endless, and that's an undeniable part of her appeal.

Earlier this year, Haley and Dylan, along with uil-



Haley Richardson with her brother Dylan, right, and their friend and bandmate Keegan Loesel prior to their concert at The Burren Backroom series. Sean Smith photo

 $leann\ piper\ Keegan\ Loesel-with\ whom\ they've\ begun$ playing as the trio Méara Meara ("Lively Fingers") traveled to Somerville, where they were the opening act for the Mairtin O'Connor Trio in The Burren's Backroom series. With a combined age of only 44 -Dylan and Keegan at the time were, respectively, 17 and 15 - the three served notice that, as host Brian O'Donovan declared in his introduction, "There's no danger of this music going away anytime soon.'

Before the concert, Haley took some time to talk about her music and life, and made an impression as a poised, polite, and altogether affable young woman,

who's probably going to be doing a lot of interviews. **Q.** You began playing classical violin at age 3 and then started on Irish fiddle just a few years later. How

did that transition take place?

"When I was almost 5, I went to a Kevin Burke concert, and I really loved what I heard. So I started teaching myself tunes by watching his DVD and listening to his CD. After that I began to study with Kathy DeAngelo, and then when I was six I played at the Mid-Atlantic Fleadh, and that's where I met Brian Conway; a few months later, he became my teacher. Playing classical music was fine, but everything felt kind of cookie-cutter. With Irish, you can add your own variations and bowings, so it's really a kind of a personal style. I still do play classical, because it's a good way to learn technique."

Q. How did the CD project come about?

"I'd wanted to do a CD for a while, and John Whelan

approached us with the idea. But at the time I had a kind of a "small sound," because I was playing a three-quarter size fiddle. So I had to wait until I found something bigger and deeper, and then when I did, John brought up the idea of doing the CD again. We did some of the recording at John's studio but also in our basement.'

**Q.** What was it like to hear the final result? Did you feel good about it?

"Well, nothing is ever really perfect – you just have to accept that. But you may be the only one who notices anything wrong. Anyway, John was very helpful, and

gave us a lot of advice, so that was definitely a plus." Q. What are some other helpful learning-type experiences you've had?

"I went to a nine-day camp called "studio2stage" in 2014, in which dancers and musicians work on a show together and then perform it. The whole thing really opened up my eyes to what kind of different experiences you can have with Irish music, because I wasn't playing something that I had arranged; I had to be part of a bigger production, so it was a lot more deliberate and involved than I had been used to."

Q. How do you work fiddle-playing into the rest of

"I'm home-schooled, so I have a certain amount of freedom to my schedule, although of course I have to make time to do assignments and other things. Some days I might busk for an hour, then rehearse for a few hours, and then go play sessions. But I don't look on it as "work"; it's just tunes."



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## TIARA is going to Ireland; and you all can come along

Have you completed research on your ancestors in the US? Are you ready to visit Ireland to fill in the details of your family's past? Do you want to expand your understanding of the life of your immigrant ancestor and the family they left behind?

Join members of TI-ARA (The Irish Ancestral Research Association) to search for family records. Look through estate records, newspapers, valuation books, local histories and other documents that record the daily lives of your ancestors. Then share your finds with other TIARA researchers as you relax after a busy

day in the repositories.

TIARA is offering two

weeks of research in Ireland next spring. The April Dublin genealogy trip includes seven nights in the city centre, close to the National Library and a short walk from

Grafton Street. Research assistance will be provided before and during the trip. Trip members will also experience a full-day guided tour to Castletown House in Kildare and nearby Maynooth.

For those with roots in Northern Ireland, seven nights are offered in central Belfast and five days of research opportunities are planned for repositories. Participants will also spend a day at the Ulster American Folk Park in County Tyrone.

For complete details of the research trips, please visit the TIARA website, tiara.ie. Questions may be directed to trips@tiara.ie.

Back home, TIARA promotes the study and exchange of ideas among people interested in Irish genealogical and historical research. The group meets monthly at Brandeis University in Waltham. The Dec. 11 meeting will feature photodetective Maureen Taylor. See tiara.ie for details. In addition to research trips to Ireland, TIARA 2016 events include monthly speakers, occasional workshop the August 2016 Celtic Connections Conference in Minnesota.

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#### Father Kelly issues Christmas album

Almost a year to the day his debut album was released, Father Ray Kelly, right, will release a wonderful collection of Christmas songs – "An Irish Christmas Blessing" on Dec. 11.

Since the video of him singing 'Hallelujah' at a wedding went viral in April 2014, the past 20 months have been somewhat of a blur for Father Ray who has traveled the world promoting his debut album, "Where I Belong," and telling people his story.

Born in Tyrrellspass, Co Meath, in April 1953,



Ray moved to Dublin and worked in the Civil Service. He was ordained in 1989. He joined the St Patrick's Missionary Society(Kiltegan Fathers) and worked as a Missionary in pre-Apartheid South Africa from 1991-1992 and did Mission Appeal work in the US. He returned to Ireland and was appointed as parish priest in Oldcastle in 2006.

#### **CD Reviews**

By SEAN SMITH

We Banjo 3, "Live in Galway" • What, in general, do we want from a live album? People have their tastes, obviously, but it seems reasonable to hope the recording at least affirms the distinctive qualities one admires in artists, yet also shows them willing to go beyond their milieu. Well, We Banjo 3 more than fulfills both criteria on this, their third overall release



The quartet (two pairs of brothers, Enda and Fergal Sca-hill and David and Martin Howley) has quite rightly attracted loads of attention in its exploration of the links between Irish/ Celtic and American traditional/roots  $music, with\, the$ 

Irish tenor banjo – played mainly by Enda Scahill but in occasional duets with Martin Howley - serving as the fulcrum. Their insanely high levels of precision and energy sound even better in a live setting (as those who caught their performance at Johnny D's in Somerville back in March can attest), and the audience's enthusiasm here is palpable as WB3 runs through some of its signature sets from their earlier albums, such as "Bill Cheatum/Kitchen Girl/The Donegal Lass," "Shove the Pig's Foot a Little Further in the Fire/Fine Times at Our House" and Liz Carroll's "Air Tune." (They also play "Because It's There," a reel composed by Bostonarea musician Mark Simos.)

A previously unrecorded medley shows why this band is drawing such raves, as fiddler Fergal Scahill leads a less familiar version of the slide "Padraig O'Keefe" and then the Enda-Martin banjo combo drives into "The Foxhunter's Slip Jig"; somewhere along the way, guitarist David Howley starts playing a competing rhythm against the fiddle and banjos, the four gradually break down the slip jig into a series of riffs that accelerates like a locomotive – and suddenly they're playing a reel, "Roddy MacDonald's," that achieves a

whole other velocity.

Yes, WB3 certainly fulfills the affirm-distinctivequalities criteria, so what else can they do? How about bring in a brass section for five tracks, including "The Bunch of Green Rushes/Salt Creek" medley and two songs that feature David Howley's stirring vocals, Eric Bibb's bluesy-gospel "Get Onboard" and Guy Davis' inspirational "We All Need More Kindness in This World," on which the audience gets a cameo. If that's not enough, the band pulls in Offaly trio JigJam to cover a song by South African singer Johnny Flynn, "Tickle Me Pink," and a few other guests elsewhere, notably vocalists Norianna Kennedy and Nicola Joyce, who make for a gorgeous collaboration with David Howley on "The Long Black Veil" - which somehow surpasses the sublime version on their last album ("Gather the Good").

Perhaps the only complaint one can have about "Live in Galway" is that there's no companion DVD of the performance, so you can actually see, and believe, what your ears are hearing. That's probably the ultimate benchmark for a live album.

Various artists, "Joy of Living: A Tribute to Ewan MacColl" • Maybe the folk music revival of the mid-20th century would have happened without Ewan MacColl, but it sure would've sounded a lot different. Try to imagine pub singing sessions or Celtic festivals without "Dirty Old Town," "Shoals of Herring," "Schooldays Over," "Thirty-Foot Trailer," "Sweet Thames Flow Softly" or "Freeborn Man," all of them MacColl compositions.

This being the centennial of MacColl's birth (he died in 1989), Cooking Vinyl Records has released this double CD of some of MacColl's best-known songs including those cited in the above paragraph - covered by a very impressive cast of performers representing some five decades of the UK/Irish/American folk revival, among them Paul Brady, Christy Moore, Martin Carthy, Damien Dempsey, Steve Earle, Billy Bragg, Dick Gaughan, Norma Waterson and Eliza Carthy. MacColl's sons Calum and Neill served as co-producers and contribute backing on several tracks.

Of course, MacColl was far more than a singersongwriter. He was a collector and singer of traditional folk songs, an actor, a playwright and poet, a folk club organizer, a radio show creator and producer, and a decidedly left-of-center sociopolitical activist. MacColl also was a controversial figure, in both his personal and political life, and was doctrinaire when it came to music - he made it a rule in his folk club that you could only perform material from your own culture.

But MacColl perceived that, during the first part of the 20th century, folk music was increasingly viewed as some quaint, nostalgic ideal of bygone days rather than an expression of the common people, so he sought to locate it in the modern, urban world. MacColl's songs were not about ploughboys, milkmaids, verdant braes and rolling hills, but about coal miners, factory laborers, road workers and others looking for hope and fulfillment in gritty industrial settings – dirty old towns, if you will. He wasn't the first or the only one to champion this neo-realistic strain of folk music - guys like Guthrie and Seeger did a pretty good job, too – but, through various performance and broadcast media he

was able to bring it to a wider audience.

A hallmark of MacColl's writing was playing against sentimental themes and turning them on the head, and "Joy of Living" illustrates this: the arrival of adulthood is hardly a cause for celebration in "Schooldays Over," even with Damien Dempsey emphasizing more sweet than the bitter; the tenderness of Chaim Tannenbaum's voice on the parental tribute "My Old Man" doesn't mask hard feelings about industry's betrayal of its working men; and Martin Simpson sounds appropriately world-weary on the lullaby-cum-cautionary-tale "The Father's Song."

But MacColl was not all about unrelenting grimness. In "Sweet Thames Flow Softly," sung here with absolute exquisiteness by Rufus and Martha Wainwright, love transcends, and transforms, the geography of London (at least for a while). "Champion at Keeping Them Rolling," as voiced by Martin Carthy, is full of defiance and pride; along similar lines is Steve Earle's take on "Dirty Old Town." And then there's "The First Time  $\begin{tabular}{ll} Ever I Saw Your Face"-its success, thanks to Roberta \\ Flack, was said to mortify MacColl-his very personal \\ \end{tabular}$ love note to Peggy Seeger (who went on to become his third wife), sung with simplicity and straightforwardness by Paul Buchanan. The title track, written by MacColl three years before his death and presented here by David Gray, is as triumphant a coda for life and love as they come.

One of the more compelling aspects of this album are the selections from MacColl's radio ballad program about the Travellers, itinerant people who for generations have resisted efforts by authorities to "settle" them. These songs have a fresh relevance in an age

where marginalized populations like immigrants, refugees, and the homeless are more than ever regarded with suspicion, anxiety and downright hostility. Norma Waterson who along with her siblings had some Travellers an-

JOY OF LIVING

cestry – gives "Moving On Song" (with its chilling "Go, move, shift" chorus) a special gravitas; Waterson's daughter, Eliza Carthy, on "Thirty-foot Trailers," and Paul Brady, on "Freeborn Man," convey the Travellers' underappreciated sense of pride and identity, while Karine Polwart's rendition of "The Terror Time" offers a counter-balance to the romanticism with which

others might view such a lifestyle.

It's common practice to imagine how a legendary artist of the past might regard the world of today. Mac-Coll, witness to the impact of global war, class conflict, and economic and social dislocation, would have no shortage of material from which to draw inspiration, and based on his body of work – including that on this recording – he would have surely given us yet more memorable songs to sing.



## Oprah



## Phillips's Turtles

Oprah Winfrey has discovered one of Dorchester's



the Phillips Candy House's signature turtles made the media magnate's list of "Favorite Things" list—published last week on the website, Oprah.

December 2015

Winfrey wrote: "Sitting down? You'll need to be to handle 15 pounds of chocolate turtles (hand-roasted nuts and caramel coated with milk, dark, or white chocolate) presented in a 5-pound edible basket. That's 20 pounds of chocolate, people! I've ordered

the giant version for certain friends, but smaller appetites can get the signature size."

Mary Ann Nagle, who manages the Morrissey Boulevard store, said that the family-owned business is stockpiling gift baskets to handle the increase in demand for their now even-more famous specialties.

"We make everything, so we have control over the supply," said Nagle.





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Each basket is carefully handmade in batches of eight. Orders for the baskets have already poured in from online.

"This is early," said Nagle.
"As you get into December, more people will be ordering for the holidays."

Phillip's has donated one of

their top-of-the-line chocolate baskets to be auctioned off at the Dorchester Boys and Girls Club Annual Grand Drawing Silent Auction, set for Nov. 21 at the Fairmount Copley Plaza.

– MADDIE KILGANNON





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### The Irish Language

by Philip Mac AnGhabhann

Nollaig Shona Dhaoibh! "Merry Christmas (to) you-all!". "And (a) Happy New Year", **Agus Bliain Mhaith Úr**.

Spoken Irish tends to have short, declarative, sentences joined, if necessary, by agus,"and", instead of the "run-on" sentences typical of English such as the one that you are now reading. As the daughter of a native speaker once told me, "Every time my Dad got together with his friends, all I heard was 'agus, agus, agus'.'

"She went into the shop."
"She bought a new dress." Chuaigh sí na siopa. Cheannaigh sí gúna úr. "She went into the shop *and* she bought a new dress." Chuaigh sí na siopa agus cheannaigh sí gúna úr.

However, there are other coordinating conjunctions that have the same weight as **agus.** These are **ach** "but", **nó** "or" and **ó** "since". **Ach** "but" implies a **negative** or contradictory response and **nó** and **ó** "or" and "since"

"Do you like coffee or tea?" Ar mhaith leat caife nó tae?

"I called him but he didn't answer." Ghlaoidh mé air ach níor fhreagair

An aside, did you notice that guna "dress" is related to "gunny" as in "gunny sack". If you pronounce **fhreagair** /RICK-uhr/ (remember that **fh**is "silent") it is related to "ricochet" as in "bounce back".

Irish has very few irregular verbs as well as a couple that we can call 'defective" because they lack one or more tenses. Is, for example, has no future tense, depending on the present as above in Ar (or An) mhaith **leat ...?**, "Do you like ...?

Here is a list of the **irregular verbs**. Notice that these are the most common verbs in many languages, such as English where we have "speak" and "spoke" and depend on many auxiliaries such as "will", "may", "have" and "be" among others.

alla oc alli	ong ources.		
$\underline{\operatorname{Irish}}$	English	<b>Pronounced</b>	<u>Verbal Noun</u>
Abair	"speak" or "talk"	/AH-pehr/	rá
Beir	"born"	/bayr/	breith
Bi	"be"	/bee/	none
${f Cluinn}^*$	"hear"	/kloon/	cluistin
Déan	"do" or "make"	/jen/	déanamh
Faigh	"get"	/fay/**	fáil
Feic	"see"	/fek/	feiceáil
Ith	"eat"	/ee/	ithe
Tabhair	"give"	/toar/	tabhairt
Tar	"come"	/tahr/	teacht
Téigh	"go"	tey/	dul

\*There is an alternative verb "hear", clois /klosh/, in some dialects.

\*\*A reminder that /ay/ is as in "Aye, aye" or "eye" so /fay/ rhymes with "pie". Actually, most of these eleven verbs are only irregular in one or two tenses, the most commonly the **present** and **past tenses**. You cannot say, "I will be born" unless it is understood as figurative language. Also, a few have separate "independent" and "dependent" or "after particle forms" and **verbal nouns** ("-ing" in English) as seen above.

Let's look at the irregular verb abair, "speak". The tenses we have learned so far are the **present**, **future**, and **definite past**. Note the term "definite past" because there is also a tense called the "habitual past" where English uses the auxiliary "used to" as in, "I used to smoke". This suggests that whatever was done was over a longer period of time whereas a "definite past" refers to a one-time event, "I smoked a cigarette." We will learn the "habitual past" tense later.

Abair is irregular in all of the tenses you learned so far and the 'irregularities" all begin with a **d**-. All are irregular in the first person plural ("we") and the present is irregular in the first person ("I").

Present: Deirim, Deir tú, sé, sí, Deirimid, Déir sibh, siad. /JER-uhm/, /jer/, /JER-uh-mij/

Past: Dúirt mé, tú, sé, sí, Dúramar, Dúirt sibh, siad. /DUR-uh-mahr/ /durt/,

Future: Déarfaidh mé, tú, sé,sí, Déarfaimid, Déarfaidh sibh, siad /JER-fee/,

These are the "official standard" forms. In the younger generation of native speakers there is a tendency to simplify the "I" and "we" form to comply with the others; i. e. Deirim and Deirimid become Deir mé and Deir muid.

The verbal noun, "saying", is rá, implying something was in progress at the time. Recall that it follows the format: **Bi** + **Subject** ag + **verbal noun**. We will practice these next month and in the months to follow.



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