



Aer Lingus planes are shown at Dublin airport, Ireland, on Tuesday, Jan. 27, 2015. Aer Lingus said it supports a takeover bid by British Airways parent IAG, putting the Irish national airline with its trademark shamrock tailfins on course for foreign acquisition nine years after its privatization.

AP Photo/Peter Morrison

Aer Lingus backs takeover bid by IAG, parent of British Airways

By SHAWN POGATCHNIK
ASSOCIATED PRESS
DUBLIN — Aer Lingus said late last month that it supports a takeover bid by British

Airways parent IAG, putting the Irish national airline with its trademark shamrock tailfins on

course for foreign acquisition nine years after its privatization.

The 11-member Aer Lingus board said it could recommend IAG's latest bid of 2.55 euros (\$2.85) per share, valuing the airline at 1.36 billion euros (\$1.52 billion). It emphasized that the proposal

required backing from the two biggest shareholders: rival Irish carrier Ryanair and the Irish government.

Ryanair, which acquired a 29.8 percent shareholding as part of three failed hostile takeover bids, declined to comment on the news from Aer Lingus.

The government, which retained a 25.1 percent share when it privatized Aer Lingus in 2006, opposed Ryanair's ambitions and has emphasized its concern that a private owner could weaken travel connections for Ireland.

Aer Lingus is the fourth-
(Continued on page 10)

Great travel deals for Americans

By SCOTT MAYEROWITZ
AND ANNE D'INNOCENZIO
ASSOCIATED PRESS
Americans hoping to save on European goods thanks to a falling euro shouldn't rush to uncork that bottle of French Bordeaux. There's very little to celebrate. Unless you like travel deals. Not since September 2003 has the euro traded this low against the dollar. Still, German sports cars, Belgian beers and the latest

fashions out of Italy aren't going on sale anytime soon. The reason? There's simply too much demand in the US for any markdowns. "The US economy is the one that's doing well in the world right now," notes IHS senior principal economist George Magliano. "We've got a lot of growth in upper-income families and households." Since Americans are willing — and able — to spend heavily on imported goods, there's no need for companies to cut prices. Any savings

thanks to the euro's decline will instead be pocketed by manufacturers and distributors. It's been a dramatic fall for the euro. Back in April, the European currency was trading at 1.38 dollars to the euro. That means that one dollar bought you about 72 euro cents. Now the exchange rate is hovering around 1.13 dollars to the euro, so one dollar buys you 88 euro cents. The euro extended its slide against the dollar late last month, dropping
(Continued on page 10)

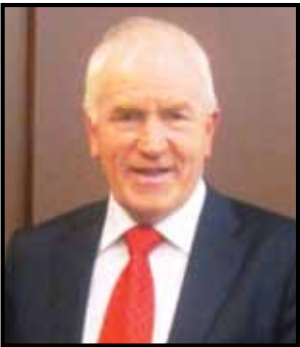
Hopeful local immigrants weigh impact of Obama move

By ELIZA DEWEY
SPECIAL TO THE REPORTER

Almost a month into the new year, a cautious optimism seems to be growing among those in the local undocumented immigrant population as they consider what President Barack Obama's recent changes to federal deportation practices might mean for them.

In November, Obama signed an executive action that will halt deportations for an estimated four million undocumented immigrants. The change, which the president made in the absence of any comprehensive immigration reform effort by Congress, is not guaranteed to remain in place beyond Obama's time in office and will not change anyone's actual immigration status. It will, however, have a significant effect on the lives of those who qualify and set the pace for what is sure to be a heated debate on immigration during the 2016 presidential campaign.

Reaction to the president's move among local immigrants who might qualify and those who work with the undocumented population has been hopeful. In an interview, Jeannie Kain, an attorney with the Irish International Immigrant Center (IIIC), noted that the executive action will allow people to "finally come out
(Continued on page 9)



Jimmy Deenihan, Irish Minister for the Diaspora, discussed immigration on a visit to Washington and Boston last month. Page 3.

Irish first to get beef to US market

By PETER F. STEVENS
BIR STAFF

The news has been a long time coming — nearly sixteen years. Since the Mad Cow outbreak in the late 1990s, the US had banned the import of European beef. Now, Ireland has become the first country in Europe to meet the strictures ensuring that the meat is safe for American consumers.

The US government lifted the ban last March, but Ireland has beaten its neighbors in preparing to sell
(Continued on page 18)



Simon Coveney
"A huge prize"

BANK H 'APP' Y

MT. WASHINGTON BANK FREE MOBILE BANKING APP

- Now Available: Mobile Deposits
- View Account Information
- Transfer Funds
- Bill Pay

Download Our App Today:



Member FDIC Member DIF

The County Donegal Association, Boston

St. Patrick's Day Dinner Dance Saturday, March 7, 2015 7:00 p.m.

Florian Hall
55 Hallet St., Dorchester
Hot & Cold Buffet
Entertainment by Erin's Melody



Tickets \$40.00 per person
Hope to see you all there!

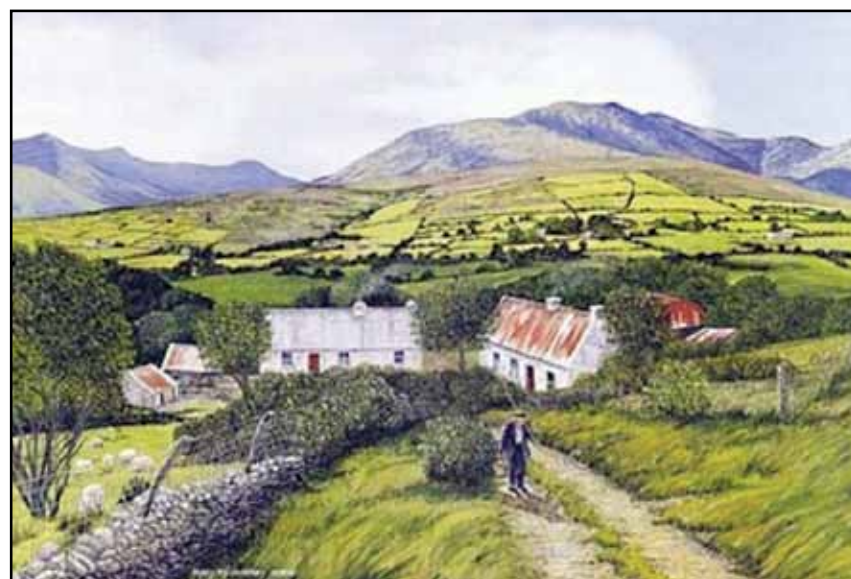


For tickets and info:
President Colm McDaid
617-698-7112
Michael McCarron
617-696-1702



PAINTINGS OF IRELAND BY MARY MC SWEENEY

A selection of Limited Edition Prints also available



Hillside Farm, McGillicuddy Reeks, Killarney, Co. Kerry

STUDIO & GALLERY
RT. 6A, CUMMAQUID (BARNSTABLE)
CAPE COD

508-362-6187

www.marymcsweeney.com

FREE SHIPPING on Christmas Orders

Expires: 12/19/2014 Please order early to ensure Xmas delivery.

Irish sessions

Join us at **Gerard's Restaurant**
for food, drink, and fun.
Wednesday nights from 6—9



Serving breakfast, lunch
& dinner every day of the week
Kitchen open nightly
until 10:45 p.m.

GERARD'S ADAMS CORNER

772 - 776 Adams Street
Dorchester, MA 02124
617-282-6370



Geraghty ASSOCIATES PROPERTY MANAGERS

Studio and 1-Bedroom Apartments
Available in the desirable
Cedar Grove section of Dorchester.

Studios reasonably
priced;

1-bedroom units;
heat and hot water included.

Short walk to the Red Line.

Free off-street Parking.

Washing Machines
and Dryers in building.

Call Michael at 617-364-4000

GERAGHTY ASSOCIATES, INC.
Property Managers

P.O. Box 52, Readville, MA 02137-0052
Tel: 617-364-4000 Fax: 617-364-3157



Minister for Diaspora talks immigration in visit to D.C. Boston

By Ed Forry
PUBLISHER

Irish Fine Gael politician James “Jimmy” Deenihan T.D., the Minister of State for the Diaspora, visited Boston last month during a four-day, two-city American visit that featured immigration talks in Washington with members of Congress, Irish American business leaders, and organizations that support Irish citizens.

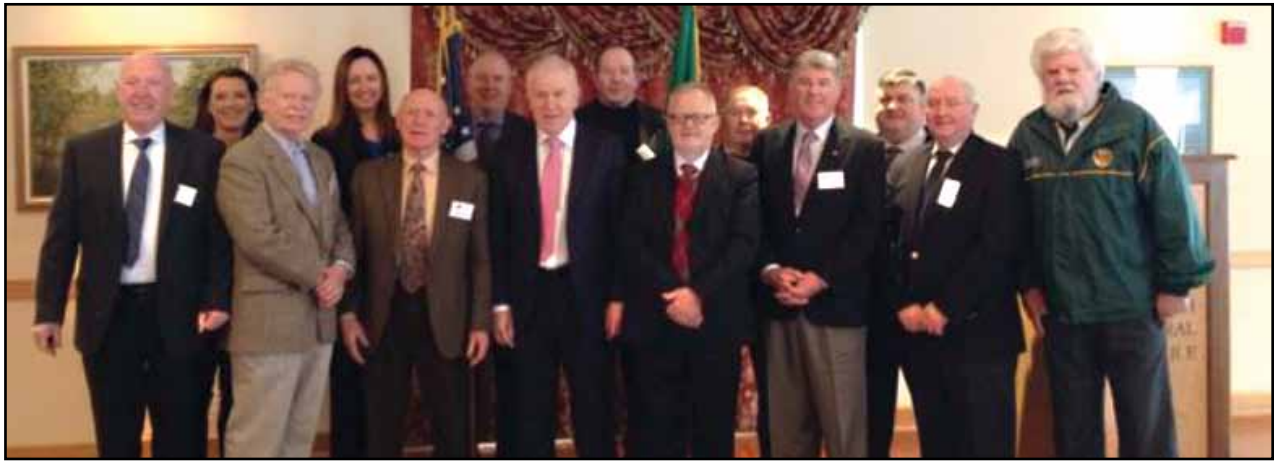
When he was in Boston, the five-time All Ireland GAA football champion, who is 63 and a member of the Irish parliament, visited the Irish Pastoral Centre in Dorchester, the Irish International Immigrant Center downtown, and the Irish Cultural Centre in Canton. He also visited the soon-to-open EM Kennedy Institute at Columbia Point and the Boston College Irish Institute in Chestnut Hill.

In Washington, he met with Paul Ryan, the 2012 Republican vice presiden-

tial candidate who now chairs the House Ways and Means committee, and with Bay State members of Congress Richard Neal and Joe Kennedy to discuss immigration reform, Ireland’s economic recovery and the continued progress in Northern Ireland.

Speaking ahead of the visit Deenihan said, “This visit is a great opportunity to discuss progress on President Obama’s announcement on immigration reform in November. While we warmly welcomed the measures announced, we will continue to press for substantive action by Congress to ensure a long-term sustainable solution for the undocumented Irish in the United States.

“The Irish community in the US have waited a long time for progress on this issue. The government is committed to working hard to secure improved channels for legal migration between Ireland and



Ireland’s Minister of State for the Diaspora Jimmy Deenihan T.D., had a busy two days in Boston last month meeting with Irish organizations, academic and business leaders. He is pictured (above) with members at the Irish Cultural Center, at the Irish International Immigrant Center (below left) and with the Irish Pastoral Center in Dorchester (below right).

America to reflect the concerns and needs of the Irish community. We will ensure that immigration reform remains firmly at the top of the agenda.”

The *Irish Times* has noted that ‘it’s estimated that thousands among the government’s estimate of 50,000 illegal Irish in the US will benefit. Mr. Deenihan said so-called undocumented Irish should start preparing the paperwork required to avail of the temporary relief from deportation afforded by Mr Obama.

“ ‘People should embrace the opportunity that the Obama initiative will give them, and that they will not miss the opportunity,’ he said. He said it would be premature to say that qualifying illegal Irish would be able to return freely to Ireland before the Irish Ambassador to the US, Anne Anderson, receives clarification from



the State Department on the circumstances under which eligible immigrants could travel.

The Times added, “That is what we want of course to result from the actions, but I don’t want to be building up people’s hopes

yet,” he said.

In a Jan. 23 meeting in Boston, Deenihan said he looked forward to welcoming Congressman Ryan to a visit to Ireland in the spring. He added he has plans to host a gathering of elected officials with

Irish links from all over the world to a special session later this year. He said currently the plans are to host the global elected officials in the Dáil in late August.

Peter Koutoujian is dead at 77; active in Irish, Armenian affairs

Former Waltham City Clerk Peter Koutoujian, a prominent personality in the local Armenian-American community where his ancestral history helped to shape his view of community and of government and how to make both better for those around him, died suddenly at his Waltham home on Jan. 16. He was 77.

With his wife of fifty-four years, Newton native Cornelia “Connie” (Cassidy), Mr. Koutoujian also involved himself heartily

in local Irish activities with memberships in the Knights and Ladies of Saint Finbarr and the Eire Society of Boston.

Born in Boston in January 1937, the son of Armenian immigrants Abraham and Sarah (Der-Bedrosian) Koutoujian, he moved with his family to Waltham as a child. He was a graduate of Waltham High School and Newton Junior College and served with the US Air Force.

After early work in sales and real estate, Mr.



Peter Koutoujian

Koutoujian served for two terms on the Waltham City Council before he became Waltham’s assistant city clerk, then clerk, a position he held for 30 years.

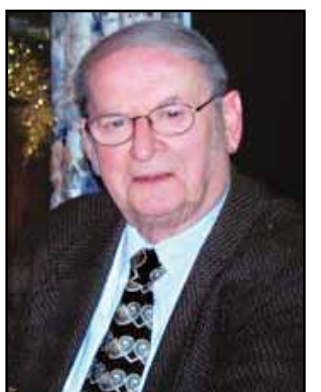
A funeral Mass for Mr. Koutoujian was said on Fri., Jan., 23, in Our Lady Help of Christians Church, 573 Washington Street, Newton.

Matthew Donovan dies; proprietor of Village Tavern for many years

Matthew J. Donovan, of Milton, formerly of County Cork, died on Jan. 22. Mr. Donovan was the longtime proprietor of Donovan’s Village Tavern and Restaurant in Dorchester Lower Mills. His funeral Mass was celebrated at St. Gregory’s Church on Jan. 26 and he was buried in Milton Cemetery.

A US Army veteran of the Korean War, Mr. Donovan leaves behind his wife Veronica (Burke) Donovan. Loving father of the late John P. Donovan and Kathleen Donovan.

Father-in-law of Marie P. Donovan of Dorchester. Papa of Kayla Donovan. Brother of Hughie O’Donovan of Ireland, Ellen Kelleher of Dorchester, John O’Donovan and Neil O’Donovan, both of Ireland and the late Nora O’Donovan, Humphrey O’Donovan, Maurice Donovan and Jeremiah O’Donovan. Brother-in-law of Maureen Donovan, Joan O’Donovan, Mary O’Donovan, Anne O’Donovan, Eileen O’Donovan, Theresa O’Donovan and the late



Matthew J. Donovan

William Kelleher.

Matt is also survived by many nieces, nephews and friends. In lieu of flowers, donations in Matt’s memory may be made to Saint Gregory Church.

ST. PATRICK’S DAY PARADES SCHEDULE

Boston’s 2015 St Patrick’s Day/ Evacuation Day parade has been scheduled for Sun., March 15. The annual event, organized by the Allied Veterans in South Boston, steps off at 1 pm at Broadway station, marching across the South Boston neighborhood.

In all there are nine parades, large and small planned this year across Massachusetts, one in New Hampshire, and one in Rhode Island. Here’s the schedule, as reported on the Boston Irish Tourism Association website irishmassachusetts.com:

Cape Cod: Sat., March 7, 11 a.m. Lawrence: Sun., March 8, 1 p.m. Worcester: Sun., March 8, noon. Newport, RI: Sat., March 14, 11 a.m. Boston: Sun., March 15, 1 p.m. Scituate: Sun., March 15, 1 p.m. Abington: Sun., March 22, 1 p.m. Holyoke: Sun., March 22, noon. Manchester, NH: Sun., March 29, noon.

Irish officer shot during visit to New Orleans

By CAIN BURDEAU
ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW ORLEANS — An Irish police officer on vacation in New Orleans was shot by an armed robber, one of the latest victims in a string of shootings that have put the city on edge as it gets ready to kick off Carnival festivities.

Brian Hanrahan was in serious but stable condition on Jan. 28, a day after he was shot in a residential area about 15 blocks from the French Quarter. Hanrahan told

officers he was robbed after withdrawing money from an ATM, accompanied by a man who told him where he could get a drink at that hour. Police say the shooting happened at 5:40 a.m.

Officers said they haven’t found a suspect or Hanrahan’s wallet.

The officer’s shooting came a day after a 17-year-old high school student was killed on his way to school. Detectives believe the teenager was shot over an argument about a video game

controller. In addition, a 29-year-old man was killed Monday and a 25-year-old woman was killed Tuesday in other parts of the city.

The shootings come as police struggle with a shrunken force and an increase in violent crime.

“The city is not safe,” said Tamara Jackson, the executive director of Silence Is Violence, a community group that works with the families of shooting victims.

She said many actions need to be taken — from

stanching the flow of weapons onto the streets to beefing up the size of the police department.

Judge James F. McKay III, an Irish honorary consul in the city, said Hanrahan worked as a police officer — known as garda in Ireland — in the Limerick area and is a father. He said Hanrahan had arrived in New Orleans with his father, who lives in Missouri. His wife and mother were expected to arrive in New Orleans on Thursday, he said.

‘Riverdance’ just keeps on coming

By Ed Forry

Last fall, when Rachel Kelly brought the inaugural iFest to Boston, she featured a group of about thirty dancers, and another eight musicians from the Riverdance troupe. That “Riverdance” performance here last September was a huge audience favorite, and a real showstopper.

On the elaborate outdoor stage at the Seaport World Trade Center, their 25-minute condensed version of the show featured live dancing and music, synchronized with video moments from the various performances from around the world.

The original “Riverdance” was actually a short “interval act” designed for the television broadcast of the 1994 Eurovision song competition, which was staged in Dublin. To everyone’s surprise, the Bill Whelan music, when blended with the dancing of Americans Michael Flatley and Jean Butler, electrified the huge television audience and won the hearts of many.

The following year, Whelan teamed with producer Moya Doherty to mount a full length, critically acclaimed theatrical production that premiered in Dublin and London and eventually crossed the Atlantic for shows in New York, Boston, and other American cities. That year, the show began a 16-year, non-stop tour by Riverdance companies, later expanded to South America, Oceania, South Africa, Europe and Asia, playing before 25 million people at some 465 venues in 46 countries across 6 continents.

Most recently, the show played Cuina, where a review in the Guangzhou Daily heaped praise: “Excellence beyond compare ... majestic unshackled emotion ... the audience was teeming with passion, so much that some audience members were even dancing in the aisles.”

It has been several years since the full stage show has been seen in North America. Now this year, Doherty and her company have announced plans to mount a 20th anniversary World Tour, making stops in some 60 cities in United States and Canada during the 2015/2016 season, beginning in October in Calgary.

The press announcement said the show has some new features: “The 20th Anniversary World Tour, composed by Bill Whelan, produced by Moya Doherty and directed by John McColgan, is currently celebrating a sold out, critically acclaimed run across Europe and Asia and will arrive in North America in fall 2015. To mark the eagerly awaited return of the show to North America, ending a four-year absence, “Riverdance – The 20th Anniversary World Tour” – will feature new costumes, new lighting, new projections and the addition of a brand new number, ‘Anna Livia,’ featuring the female members of the Irish dance troupe in an a capella hard-shoe number. The tour has set design by Robert Ballagh, lighting design by John Comiskey, costume design by Joan Bergin, and sound design by Michael O’Gorman.”

“The success of “Riverdance” across the whole world has gone beyond our wildest dreams,” said Doherty. “The fact that the show continues to draw and excite audiences is a tribute to every dancer, singer, musician, staff and crew member who have dedicated themselves to the show. This 20th Anniversary Tour is a thank you to our audiences and a celebration of what has been an incredible journey across two decades.”

At press time, news about negotiations for a Boston venue and performance dates was not available.



BOSTON IRISH REPORTER

The Boston Irish Reporter is published monthly by:

Boston Neighborhood News, Inc.,
150 Mt. Vernon St., Suite 120, Dorchester, MA 02125
news@bostonirish.com www.bostonirish.com

Mary C. Forry, President (1983-2004)
Edward W. Forry, Publisher
Thomas F. Mulvoy Jr., Managing Editor
William P. Forry, Editor
Peter F. Stevens, Contributing Editor
News Room: (617) 436-1222
Ads : (617) 436-1222
Fax: (617) 825-5516 news@bostonirish.com

On The Web at www.bostonirish.com
Date of Next Issue: March, 2015

Deadline for Next Issue: Friday, February 20 at 2 p.m.

Published monthly in the first week of each month.

The Boston Irish Reporter is not liable for errors appearing in advertisements beyond the cost of the space occupied by the error. The right is reserved by The Boston Irish Reporter to edit, reject, or cut any copy without notice.

Begorrah, you better believe it: Bostonians care about Ireland

By Joe Leary
SPECIAL TO THE BIR

Most Irish Americans, and certainly all those Americans who were born in Ireland and are now living in the Boston area, deeply care about their Irish Heritage. There are dozens upon dozens of serious Irish organizations in the Boston metropolitan area whose members are devoted to Ireland and our heritage. Most of them not only celebrate their heritage, but they also try to instill Irish values in their children through dance, sport, and cultural events.

The local American Ireland Fund is probably the largest in terms of dollars raised for Ireland, with \$10,000 to \$25,000 tables at its annual black tie dinner in Boston. Basic admission is \$1,000 per ticket. They have been doing this for over 35 years. It is the grandest Irish event in Boston but unfortunately far beyond most people’s means.

The Irish American Partnership, now 28 years old, has its national headquarters in downtown Boston with nearly 3,000 members located in 35 states throughout the country. The Partnership has just finished a most successful year, having sent support to nearly one hundred schools and universities in Ireland, North and South.

Says Mary McAleer, the executive director of the Partnership: “The more they know about us, the more they want to assist our work in Ireland.”

The Partnership has its focus on education under the belief that a strong, highly educated Irish population will serve Ireland well in the years ahead. The American Ireland Fund makes grants to many different organizations in Ireland and has made a significant difference where its has been active.

Two smaller elite Boston organizations, the Erie Society and The Charitable Irish, have celebrated their Irish heritage for hundreds of years. The revered Boston Clover Club has been in existence since 1883 and meets three times a year.

The Irish government in Dublin plays a hand in all of this by each year making generous grants to at least three area Irish groups – The Irish Cultural Centre in Canton, the Dorchester-based Irish Pastoral Centre, and The Irish International Immigration Center in Boston.

Off the Bench

A reflection on Biblical matters: Free will: God’s gift, our challenge

By James W. Dolan
SPECIAL TO THE REPORTER

How does one reconcile two obvious facts that seem to conflict with the Bible and Christian tradition?

As described in Genesis, creation and the fundamental flaw in mankind, often termed “original sin,” are inaccurate. The creative process occurred over millions of years and Adam and Eve are more representative than real.

Their sin was not transmitted at birth to all mankind. Baptism was not to wash away the stain of their sin. Babies are not born in sin but they are born with the capacity to commit sin.

Baptism is an acknowledgment of our sinful nature and an affirmation of God’s forgiveness.

Genesis is a parable, not a scientific explanation, written so that it could be understood more than 2,000 years ago by people who could comprehend the message rather than the science or theology. The message was clear: God created the universe and all things in it in time and by a process that only He could fully comprehend.

He created human beings with a flaw that prompted them to turn away from Him. If it was not disobedience by eating an apple from a forbidden tree, what was it? I suggest it was not a flaw but a gift – free will. Without free will human beings would have been automatons, robots unable to choose and incapable of merit or fault. With all its temptations, free will was the greater good. It was only through the exercise of free will that mankind could truly love.

Original sin may have been the first act of free will wherein man put self ahead of God. It was pervasive, not in the sense that a specific sin indelibly marked future generations, but rather that sin, time and again in many forms, would be repeated down through the ages.

The Partnership has its focus on education under the belief that a strong, highly educated Irish population will serve Ireland well in the years ahead. The American Ireland Fund makes grants to many different organizations in Ireland and has made a significant difference where its has been active.

There are also the Boston Ireland Business Association (BIBA) and the relatively new “In Boston” organization that has an active social calendar. “In Boston” is part of a national network.

I could go on and list the Irish American clubs like the ones in Duxbury, West Roxbury, and Billerica. Or attempt to name all the Irish pubs and restaurants in the area that benefit from their association with Ireland. While I’m at it I could pass on the unproven rumor that the Milton cemetery has the highest number of Irish names on its gravestones than any cemetery in the United States, which simply shows just how Irish our neighborhood is. We even have own newspaper, *The Boston Irish Reporter*.

Perhaps the best known of all Boston Irish heritage events is the famous South Boston Saint Patrick’s Day Breakfast and the following parade.

Down on Cape Cod is one of the most active and fun Irish organizations I know, The “Sons of Erin” in West Yarmouth, with over 1,500 dues-paying members. They have many social activities and are open every night on Route 28.

The point of all of this is to suggest that readers become involved in one or more of these Irish activities. They are all worthwhile organizations, run by wonderful people who will welcome your participation.

And now is the time to become more aware of your choices. Check their websites and decide what your participation might be. Saint Patrick’s Day is coming next month – for many of us this is our feast day. Join the celebration.

God knew that in the exercise of free will mankind would reject him by choosing evil. Nonetheless, he wished to give humanity the freedom to choose. Sin is the inevitable consequence of free will. It is choosing self-seeking, self-delusion and self-love over God’s will as expressed in the commandments and the beatitudes.

Knowing that evil would necessarily flow from the exercise of free will, a merciful God purged the permanent effects of evil with Christ’s death and resurrection. By saving us from the lasting consequences of a sinful nature, our bad choices could be forgiven and, despite our inherent weaknesses, we could be reconciled to God.

Free will is both a gift and a burden. Christ’s death freed us from the burden – the guilt associated with the evil choices we make. In his mercy, we are pardoned by the redemption – an act of limitless love and understanding. This explanation does not distort the Genesis message but instead refines it in terms that comport with what we know today.

Evolving mankind is obviously smarter, better informed, more comfortable, and more self-centered. Our brains have evolved but have our choices? Are we more inclined to be humble, tolerant, understanding, generous, and merciful than prior generations, or have too many choices made us more distracted and self-absorbed? As clever as we may think we are, have we simply developed new ways to ignore God’s presence?

I hope and pray that a merciful God will judge us in the context of our lives, the applicable standard being our individual capacity to do good or evil. This of necessity requires a sliding scale: primitive man is not judged the same as modern man, the mentally ill are not judged the same as the sane, and the disadvantaged are not judged the same as the gifted.

An all-knowing God will measure our lives against the advantages He gave us. Those with much will likely be judged more harshly than those with little. A merciful God knows there are mitigating and aggravating factors and, depending upon the circumstances, some wills are freer than others.

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

Point of View

OF A TIME CAPSULE AND THE MARCH OF HISTORY

A link to Boston’s religious past is but a short walk away from 1795 capsule site

BY PETER F. STEVENS
BIR STAFF

The discovery of a hidden time capsule is always intriguing. To great fanfare a few weeks ago, the opening of a 1795 trove discovered by workers repairing a leak at the Massachusetts State House did not disappoint. The capsule, a link to the present from Washington’s day, contained artifacts that evoked tangible artifacts of such legendary colonial figures as Sam Adams and Paul Revere—including a rectangular silver plate that, if made by Revere, is extremely valuable. Just down the street from the State House, a small marker on School Street testifies that when Adams, Revere, developer William Scollay, and other local dignitaries placed the time capsule, change was coming to “Old Boston.”

A small but growing community of Irish Catholics was testing the tenets of religious freedom at that School Street site, an old, ramshackle Huguenot church. The church is long gone, but few passersby realize just how important it once was in the annals of the Boston Irish.

In 1779, when Massachusetts’ leaders wrote the state’s constitution, they added a startling proviso: For the first time, they proved willing to give at least tacit acceptance to the handful of Irish and French Catholics in Boston. No longer would local Irish have to assume membership in other churches, masking or even shedding their traditional faith, because the Legislature could no longer enact overt statutes against Catholics. To the ire of many colonial Bostonians, the proverbial religious genie – “popery” – was slipping from its centuries-old constraints in the region.

Not many Catholics had actually practiced their faith other than in private. But in 1788, in a development that would have scandalized Cotton Mather and other Puritan luminaries a century earlier, a handful of local Irish and French heeded the call of a French priest named Abbe de la Poterie, who showed up in Boston and invited Catholics to hear the first legal Mass in Boston’s annals in the little church on School Street on a Sunday in November.

De la Poterie said the Mass in Latin, but with a thick French accent that proved difficult for the Irish to follow. The language barrier notwithstanding, Doyles, Callahans, O’Briens, Fitzpatricks, and other Irish emigres new and old crowded into the church.

As two years passed and another Frenchman, Father Rousselet, replaced De la Poterie, some of the Irish, frustrated by French-accepted sermons that they could barely follow – if at all, began to slip away from services, muttering they would return only when a priest fluent in English arrived.

That man strode onto the School Street church’s diminutive altar on Jan. 10, 1790. Father John Thayer had been born and raised a Congregationalist and had studied at Yale, a bastion of the era’s traditional American Protestantism. Then, he traveled to



The Puritan experiment met with royal reality in 1686 when the original charter was revoked. Moreover, the Toleration Act was passed in old England in 1689 spelling doom for Puritan exclusivity in New England. Anglicans led the way with King’s Chapel in 1686, followed by Quakers, Anabaptist, Scottish Presbyterians and French Huguenots in the next two decades, after significant numbers of merchants and the persecuted found Boston more than a nice place to visit. Library of Congress photo

France and Italy, where he developed an interest in Catholicism. In 1787, he was ordained a priest in the Catholic Church and set out to organize a bona-fide parish in Boston.

Thayer had an immediate impact upon the local Irish. As the late Professor Thomas H. O’Connor wrote in “The Boston Irish,” the “Irish, especially... began to attend church services in greater numbers, brought their children (some as old as 16) to be baptized, and had their Protestant marriages solemnized in the Catholic Church.”

Eagerly aiding Father Thayer in his personal crusade to establish an English-speaking parish were the Irishmen and Irishwomen who had long awaited a church of their own. With such names as O’Connell, Magner, Mulligan, Harrington, and Maloney, they came out of the religious shadows to practice their faith in the open despite the certainty that no mere words in the state constitution could quickly erase centuries of religious antipathy between them and their Protestant neighbors.

A number of the parish’s members belonged to an organization that had quietly but firmly turned from religious prejudice as early as 1764. Despite Boston’s vehement 18th-century prejudice toward Catholics, the Charitable Irish Society had been ignoring religious admonition since that time and, in 1804, the group officially removed the Presbyterian requirement for membership, which had not stopped Irish Catholics from joining.

There was no memento of that landmark little School Street parish amid the contents of the 1795 time capsule. Still, at the very juncture where Sam Adams and Paul Revere buried the container, the Irish were making their presence known just a short walk from the State House.

Whither the Age of Tiger?

In a matter of little historical significance but of interest to golf buffs, outspoken Northern Irish golf great David Feherty continues to buck the legions of Tiger Woods haters. To SB Nation and other sports media, Feherty pronounced, “It would surprise me if, by the end of this season, he’s not No. 1 in the world again.”

Sensibly, Feherty tempered his prediction with an “if-Tiger-stays-healthy” caveat: “I think, if he’s durable, if his body’s in good shape, that we’re going to see him in contention again. The only mistakes I’ve ever made with Tiger Woods are underestimating him. If you think he can’t do that, well, he kind of thinks he can.”

Feherty’s remarks likely have not gone down well in Northern Ireland, the proving ground not only for Feherty, but also for the world’s current No. 1, a guy named Rory McIlroy. If somehow Woods does regain his game of yore – or something akin to it – a Tiger versus Rory chase for the top spot would pump some much-needed excitement into the Tour. “People have forgotten what happens when he does play well,” said Feherty. “It’s been so long since he did, I think, just by the law of averages, it’s going to happen again. Does anyone doubt that even a few tight final rounds between the current and former kings would be memorable? Here’s a hope that it happens – despite the long odds at the onset of the 2015 Tour.



No more majors? We shall see.

A milestone shift in Dorchester parish network

Rev. Linh Nguyen, a Vietnamese American, will succeed Rev. Daniel Finn at St. Mark’s

BY BILL FORRY
AND TOM MULVOY
BIR STAFF

Rev. Daniel J. Finn, longtime pastor of St. Mark’s Parish in Dorchester who



Rev. Linh Nguyen

also supervised activities at two other Dorchester parishes during his 20-year tenure – St. Peter’s on Meetinghouse Hill and St. Ambrose in Fields Corner –will be taking his leave of the Roseland Street rectory in June as he welcomes as his successor a 44-year-old native of Vietnam who settled in Dorchester as a teenager.

The shift marks a milestone in the neighborhood’s Catholic community: Rev. Linh Nguyen will be the first Vietnamese-American man to lead a Dorchester parish, two of them, actually, as he will also be the pastor of St. Ambrose.

The news is not unexpected. The archdiocese of Boston has been planning to name new pastors this year as part of a system-wide consolidation effort aimed at streamlining the way parishes are administered. Dorchester serves as a model for the pastoral reorganization plan, dubbed Disciples in Mission, a nine-year-old effort that links neighboring parishes under the umbrella leadership of one pastor.

Fr. Finn’s reputation among with Catholics of all ethnicities along Dorchester Avenue and up into Meetinghouse Hill is legendary for the tirelessness and good will that he has shown through two decades of a dedicated ministry in church and on the streets involving three parishes in the latter stages of a transition from white, largely Irish congregations to multi-ethnic religious communities.

A native of Cork, he also served over the years as a de facto chaplain to the Irish immigrant community in the city’s neighborhoods.

Fr. Finn, who recently beat back a debilitating illness, told the *Reporter* that while it might be time to leave St. Mark’s, he hopes he will be given the opportunity for further service in the city going forward.

“As this process goes forward, I am sure there will be opportunities for me to continue my service to the city’s Catholics. Time will tell.”

In an interview week with the *Reporter*, Fr. Linh heaped praise on Fr. Finn, whom he met as a teenager going to church in Dorchester: “He’s a gentle soul and a great model for a pastor, really: to treat people like family and to be with them and not just as a pastor, but as friend and to journey with them at every moment of their life. He’s just a kind, gentle and a good priest.”

Fr. Finn grew up in Dorchester after moving to the United States from Vietnam with his parents and four siblings at age 15. He was ordained in 2000 and has served as the pastor of St. Bernadette parish in Randolph for the



Reverends Jack Ahern, Daniel J. Finn and Vincent Daily below.

last seven years.

Last year, in anticipation of the reorganization, all but one of the existing pastors at Dorchester’s Catholic parishes were all asked to resign their positions. (The exception was St. Brendan and St. Ann, which was recently joined under one administrator, Fr. Jason Makos, who began his ministry at the dual parish last year.) Each pastor could elect to re-apply for the position as pastor of one of the new collective parishes.

Fr. Jack Ahern, who has led the so-called “tri-parish” of Blessed Mother Teresa, St. Peter, and Holy Family, has been chosen to stay on as the pastor. Fr. Vincent Daily, currently the pastor at St. Gregory in Lower Mills will also remain in place, but will add two new parishes to his administrative duties: St. Matthew and St. Angela in Mattapan Square.

Fr. Daily, who has led St. Gregory’s parish since 2006, said he “couldn’t be happier” with his re-appointment. “I thought I might be assigned back to the suburbs, but I’m just thrilled with this decision and I’m very much looking very much forward to taking on St. Angela and St. Matthew.



Fr. Ahern, who said he is “happy” to be staying on as the leader of the tri-parish, called Fr. Linh a “great choice. He did a fabulous job in Randolph. The difficulty of the announcement is that two great guys have chosen to move on. Fr. Finn and Fr. Joy [Rev. William Joy, pastor off St. Angela Parish in Mattapan and St. Matthew in Dorchester] have both served in the city for a long, long time.”

Immigration Q&A

The Waiting Game: Processing Times

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

A: Currently USCIS offers what it calls "premium processing" for a \$1225 fee (in addition to the normal application fees) only with regard to certain employment-based visa petitions. Other applications, such as those to adjust immigration status based on family relationships, are processed on a first-come, first-served basis. Processing times vary with the type of application and the particulars of individual cases. Adjustment of status cases based on marriage to a US citizen, for example, have been taking on average around three to four months from the date of filing to the adjustment interview in the USCIS Boston regional office. Applications for naturalization have generally been taking a little longer.

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

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

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

IIC also provides on its web site current average processing times for different types of applications filed at various USCIS offices and processing centers, so applicants can determine whether their applications are taking longer than usual. We note, however, that the average times given have in some instances been out of date, with the actual processing times being somewhat faster or slower.

Processing and individual case status information for the types of applications filed with the State Department at the national Visa Center (NVC) can be obtained by e-mailing NVC at NVCINQUIRY@state.gov (preferred method) with the case number and other particulars, or by telephoning NVC at (603) 334-0700. For applications in process at a particular US Consulate abroad, visit the State Department's web site at www.state.gov and follow the relevant links to the web site for that Consulate. (Each Consular office has its own web site, and processing and contact procedures vary somewhat from office to office.)

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

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

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



ARE YOU AFFECTED BY THE PRESIDENT'S RECENT IMMIGRATION ANNOUNCEMENT?

Have your questions answered by local immigration lawyers.



FOLEY LAW OFFICES

Call Foley Law Offices (617) 973-6448 or visit www.FoleyLawOffices.com

Foley Law Offices – 8 Faneuil Hall Marketplace – Boston, MA 02109



IRISH INTERNATIONAL IMMIGRANT CENTER

An agency accredited by US Department of Justice

100 Franklin Street, Boston, MA 02110
Telephone (617) 542-7654 Fax (617) 542-7655
Website: iicenter.org Email: immigration@iicenter.org

IIC welcomes Jimmy Deenihan, Ireland's Minister of the Diaspora

On Jan. 23, the Irish International Immigrant Center (IIC) was pleased to host a reception for the visiting Minister of the Diaspora, Jimmy Deenihan TD. Deenihan was appointed Minister of State in July for the newly created post in the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. He previously served as Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht for three years prior to his recent appointment.

In speaking to the assembled group of friends, staff, board members and volunteers at the Center, Minister Deenihan explained that the work of the last six months has been a building process to coordinate the responsibilities, which had previously been assigned to multiple Irish government agencies. He indicated that his department would unveil a comprehensive strategic plan in the spring.

The IIC is grateful for the support from the Irish Government's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, and that Minister Deenihan took

the time to visit Boston to learn more about the particular needs of our immigrant Irish community. We wish him well in his new endeavor.

IMMIGRATION UPDATES

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts can be proud of its record this past year in passing legislation benefiting the immigrant community. To begin with, anti-immigrant language was eliminated from three major bills pending in the last legislative session on Beacon Hill.

On a more positive note, an estimated 300,000 Massachusetts workers, including many Irish immigrants, began the New Year with a welcome addition to their paychecks. That is when an increase took effect that raised the state minimum wage to \$9.00. Additional increases of \$1.00 will follow in 2016 and 2017.

Massachusetts also joined the growing list of states to guarantee paid sick leave for employees. According to the new law (a ballot question passed by voters), employees may use earned sick leave to care for a physical or mental ill-

ness, to care for sick family members, to attend medical appointments, or to address the physical or legal effects of domestic violence. This is an initiative endorsed by President Obama in his recent State of the Union address.

The city of Boston passed a Trust Act last summer that limits the involvement of local law enforcement in the Secure Communities program that has proven to be an ineffective and divisive tool and one which focused unfairly upon immigrant residents.

The Irish International Immigrant Center (IIC), along with many other immigration advocacy groups, was involved in shepherding all of these measures through the legislative and ballot processes. While the record looks good, much remains to be done. The agenda for 2015 includes a state-wide Trust Act bill, a Safe Driving bill to allow the issuance of licenses to Massachusetts drivers who are undocumented, and an Education Equity bill to allow immigrant students eligibility for the discounted college tuition rate reserved for residents.

In the meantime, the IIC is continuing to present a series of information sessions concerning the implementation of the Executive Action immigration plan announced by President Obama in November. The next session is scheduled for Thursday, Feb. 19, at 6 p.m. at the Green Briar Pub in Brighton Center.

The Irish International Immigrant Center (IIC) website now has a video presentation of a recently held information session to discuss the Executive Action plan for immigration relief. IIC managing attorney Jeannie Kain explains the Deferred Action Benefits of the plan, eligibility to apply, and the factors that need to be considered before applying. To access the information session video, go to the website: iicenter.org, Executive Action page.

As this legislative year gets underway, the IIC is pleased to announce that the featured speaker at its sixth Annual Business Leaders Breakfast on April 2 will be Congressman Joseph P. Kennedy III, representing the 4th District of Massachusetts in the US House of Representatives.

Matters Of Substance

Celebrating Recovery in our Families

BY DANIELLE OWEN IIC STAFF

Addiction services all over the state have seen an increase in calls from parents, grandparents, and caregivers of children who have loved ones living with alcohol/drug addiction. The governor, the mayor's office in Boston and other leaders are responding to this ever-increasing crisis.

We here at the center hear from families who all want to know how best to help the young person in their care who has been impacted by the substance abuse of a parent/caregiver. No one wants to believe that children are impacted, but the research, and our own work with families, clearly indicates that they are very much affected.

The great news, though, is that by giving our children some clear messages and allowing them to chat about their feelings about this "taboo" or forbidden topic in their families, recovery for the whole family is possible – even if the loved one, who remains ill with addiction, does not recover!

So what messages can we share with the child impacted by a loved one's addiction?

- Sharing your feelings is not being mean or disloyal to your family.
- When you talk to someone you trust you begin to feel better and feel less alone.
- When you live with alcoholic/drug addicted parents, feeling afraid and alone is normal. It is confusing to hate the

disease of alcoholism at the same time that you love your alcoholic parent.

- Remember to have fun! Sometimes children with alcoholic families worry so much that they forget how to be "just a kid." Find a way to let yourself have fun.
- *Don't ride* in a car when the driver has been drinking if you can avoid it. It is not safe. Please help protect your child from having to ride with someone who has been drinking.
- You have no control over the drinking. You didn't make the problem start, and you can't make it stop – and you can't "make" anyone use alcohol or drugs!!

The National Association of Children of Alcoholics (nacoa.org) shares "The Seven C's" – a tool to help young people understand that they are not responsible for their parents' problems. Children need to know that it is not their fault when their parents drink too much or abuse drugs, and that they cannot control their parents' behavior. They can be shown that there are ways they can learn to deal with their parents' alcoholism or drug use. I didn't cause it. I can't cure it. I can't control it. I can help take care of myself by communicating my feelings. Making healthy choices and celebrating me!

Please join us every



Danielle Bowles

Tuesday in February (3rd, 10th, 17th 24th) for our Family Healing Workshop Series with refreshments and resource sharing from 5:30 p.m. and the workshop beginning promptly at 6 p.m. at the Laboure Center (275 West Broadway, South Boston, MA 02127). Childcare is available but you must RSVP to confirm.

Please call Danielle at the IIC (617-542-7654, Ext.14, or dowen@iicenter.org) if you have any questions about this series or about recovery in families. Change is always possible – We can help! (Partnership with Catholic Charities Recovering Connections, RFK Corps and COASA). If you are affected by the drinking of someone close to you, Al-Anon may be able to help, even if you are in another 12 step program of recovery. Check out this link for more information: ma-alanon-alateen.org/ or call 508-366-0556.



IRISH INTERNATIONAL IMMIGRANT CENTER

IMMIGRATION LEGAL ASSISTANCE

The Irish International Immigrant Center provides free legal support and representation to the Irish immigrant community. Weekly legal clinics where you can receive a free and confidential consultation with staff and volunteer attorneys are held throughout the Greater Boston area.

For information, call us at (617) 542-7654.

Upcoming Clinic Schedule

Tuesday, February 3rd
IIC, 100 Franklin St. Lower Level, Downtown Boston Entrance is at 201 Devonshire Street

Monday, February 9th
The Green Briar Pub
304 Washington Street, Brighton Center

Tuesday, February 17th
IIC, 100 Franklin St. Lower Level, Downtown Boston Entrance is at 201 Devonshire Street

Tuesday, February 24th
The South Boston Laboure Center
275 West Broadway, South Boston

Our Downtown Boston location is fully accessible by public transportation.

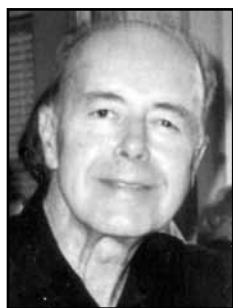
Phone: 617-542-7654 | Fax: 617-542-7655 | www.iicenter.org

Boston Irish Reporter's Here & There

By BILL O'DONNELL

A Great American Patriot Dies – Former US Ambassador to El Salvador **Robert White** died at age 88 on Jan. 13 after a lifetime of loyal, principled service to the truth and to his country. The Massachusetts-born White served in the Navy in the Pacific in World War II and joined the Foreign Service during the Eisenhower administration.

During his time in El Salvador, “Ambassador Bob,” as he was called, made America proud during the tragic civil war in his host country amidst the terror campaigns waged by right-wing dictatorships in Latin America during the Reagan presidential years.



Bill O'Donnell

If remembered at all, Bob White, an envoy who stood up for truth and decency, would be recalled for his public outrage that became immutably linked with the savage rapes and murders of four Catholic churchwomen by the Salvadoran National Guard.

The four American women – **Ursuline Sister Dorothy Kazel, lay missionary Jean Donovan, and Maryknoll Sisters Ita Ford and Maura**

Clarke – were working with the peasants in El Salvador in a humanitarian attempt to provide food, water, and medical supplies and ease the endemic poverty of that country's poor. Unfortunately, the Salvadoran government, corrupt and oppressive, viewed the women as enemies of the state, and fomenters of revolution. That judgment sealed their fate.

The murders by government forces were the subject of a cover-up, but Ambassador White knew the truth and he wouldn't stay quiet. The Reagan administration and **Secretary of State Alexander Haig** made excuses for their Salvadoran government allies and sided with its bogus explanations. Haig fired White. During the next ten years 75,000 Salvadorans died, most of them victims of the government's military and death squads.

Following his dismissal by Haig, the former envoy dedicated much of the rest of his life to his public testimony about what he had observed in El Salvador and to serving as an expert witness in a number of trials in which members of the Salvadoran military were convicted of deadly crimes.

I only wish that the American government had on the day of White's death ordered our flag lowered at the State Department and at every US diplomatic mission across the globe to honor “Ambassador Bob.”

Oil Prices Down, Airfares, Fees Riding High – While gas and aviation fuels prices have dropped wondrously in recent weeks, air fares mysteriously remain at top levels and fuel surcharges continue to be levied by bottom-line-fixated airlines. With the lowest oil prices in more than five years, many people are asking: When are the airline savings from the lower-cost fuel going to be reflected in airline passenger fares?

One answer, not all that satisfying, is that airlines went through a sustained period of economic stress several decades ago that resulted in bankruptcies and a slew of mergers. That's true, but that was then and this is now. It's bad enough that airlines have kept the fares unnecessarily high, but the bean counters cutely overlooked the added fuel surcharges that were instituted to pass the once-high fuel costs onto the airline traveler and they remain in force.

Not all airlines have done this. Several carriers have moved to lower or remove fuel surcharges. Among those are Qatar, Japan Air Lines, and Cebu Pacific. Another reason for the continued surcharges, airline officials contend, is that many airlines hedge their fuel needs over a longer guaranteed price cycle to control cost, especially for long-haul flights.

What wouldn't hurt, perhaps, is more transparency and maybe a keener government eye on airline price trends, especially when the higher prices for fees and surcharges prompt the airlines to come together as an industry to quietly agree and act as one to cover what once was considered illegal price agreements between competitors.

For the poor stiff in that middle seat, one low-octane way to let the airline know your unhappiness with high costs might be to mention the surcharges, fees, etc. every time he or she boards a commercial flight. And if the airlines offer a favorability survey, complain about those irritating and unnecessary costs. Can't hurt!

Drones: A New and Uncertain Presence in the North – According to a Jan. 18 news story in the *Irish Times*, the police (PSNI) have been using drones in Northern Ireland for at least a year and a half. The drones were first acquired as part of the security preparations in the spring of 2013 for the G8 summit in Enniskillen, Co. Fermanagh.

These unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) resemble large model aircraft with cameras that are used to relay information to security forces on the ground. In addition to relaying photos, the drones can intercept communications and access electronic data.

Responding to a Freedom of Information request, the PSNI supplied details of where the drones have been used, but declined to release information on whether they are used in covert surveillance operations, citing security concerns. The drones, PSNI said, have been used 114 times in the North and the project so far has cost some \$2.3 million. Since the drones were acquired they have been used to support policing operations

during a British royal family visit to the North, the Belfast Marathon, and last year's Italian cycling event.

Two points about the Northern Irish drones come to mind. While not as potentially destructive nor intended for military operations as with the US use of drones in the Middle East, could drones be used against so-called dissidents or others in police/military action in Northern Ireland? And given that the PSNI has drones and specialists operating them, what restraints, if any, exist and what type of operational use of drones might be out of bounds or barred in the North?

Charlie Revisited in New TV Mini-Series – The Irish people, or at least the powers that be in the television industry, have an enduring obsession with the former taoiseach and Fianna Fail Leader **Charlie Haughey**. The latest peek into the Haughey persona, extra-marital affair, and political chicanery included, has actors playing Haughey and his mistress and other still-living characters in this exotic, nationally televised three-part bio-pic that the former political leader's family has found little to be comfortable about.

Sean Haughey, son of the late taoiseach, was critical of the TV drama, charging that the program portrayed his father as being obsessed with power, and also that the drama failed to capture Haughey senior's personality. Not having viewed any of the TV rehash, I can well imagine that an actor, even a talented one, would have extreme difficulty in getting his hands around the charismatic Charlie Haughey. In his time, if Charlie walked into a room unheralded as a politician, and unknown as a man, he would, I believe, soon be dominating the room. He had what the late Boston newspaper columnist **George Frazier** called duende, a certain something beyond good looks and regal bearing.

THE NO-GO ZONE – The oligarchy-like group that is supporting the Boston 2024 Olympics and that has made a friendly capture of Mayor **Marty Walsh** (did he have any choice once John Fish & his band of boosters signed on?) deserves some rebuttal. Herewith a few words from the “No Boston Olympics” group, an all-volunteer, grass roots organization.

“Boston's Olympics boosters tell us that the games will be an economic boon, and that costs will be borne by the private sector. This is the exact same rhetoric that was pitched in Athens, Vancouver, and London. Economists have found that none of these host cities enjoyed lasting economic benefits. And in each, the public was left on the hook for billions of dollars in overruns (the London Olympics was 3X over budget), one-time security costs, and ongoing maintenance of unwanted venues.

“A Boston Olympics would divert resources from education, healthcare, transportation, and open space – all to throw an extravagant party for the unelected, unaccountable members of the International Olympic Committee. Whatever our priorities as a commonwealth, it is clear that \$19 billion, the average cost of a Summer Games (and more than the cost of the Big Dig), could be better spent on other things.”

King of Ireland? Gerry Says No – It may be that **Gerry Adams**, with his size elevens, has his feet in both corners of Ireland, but he has never been quoted about the appeal of straddling Ireland north and south as the king of all he surveys. What he has said is that he has given no consideration to the possibility of becoming taoiseach after the next general election due later this year. However, that would still seem to leave Gerry with some open field wiggle room in his march into history.

Humble Gerry may have an ace or two up his sleeve, but a possible impediment, even for someone of Gerry's impressive protean powers, could be that both Fianna Fail and Fine Gael have absolutely, positively ruled out going into coalition with Sinn Fein after the next election.

At the start of the new year, Gerry signaled that, unlike his casual bounce to a back burner of the taoiseach job possibility, he, as the spiritual leader of today's Sinn Fein, has no plans to “step down” as leader of his party in the North and will be a candidate for reelection at Sinn Fein's spring ard fheis.

One can only hope that the vaunted Adams leadership extends to his stepping up to the dais and answering why “Republican fuel smugglers are pumping massively toxic waste linked to cancers and abnormalities in unborn babies straight into water supplies in the Republic.”

The above quote is from the Jan. 18 issue of the *Irish Independent*, which goes on to charge former IRA members and other Irish republicans of disposing of waste from an illegal fuel plant in South Armagh into two lakes and the Fane River, which is the main reservoir for more than 40,000 residents in Dundalk. The *Independent* also alleges that 200 to 300 main operators in south Armagh “continue their trade even though they are possible poisoning their own families.” Many of the main operators of the illegal, poisonous fuel plants have become millionaires, the *Independent* states.

Come on Gerry, profit is one thing, but having the troops poisoning their neighbors is another. Speak up, Mr. Adams.

Ruling Parties in No Rush on Overseas Vote – From recent comments from well-placed Irish politicians regarding giving the vote to Irish citizens living abroad, it appears that the idea has been shunted to the back of the room. It was pretty much granted that there would be action on a referendum to allow Irish overseas citizens to vote in Irish presidential elections, but that near promise has gone by the boards.

Minister of State for the Diaspora **Jimmy Deenihan** was the fall guy in announcing in early January that a referendum this year on the presidential election voting was “highly unlikely.” In announcing the disappointing news to the Irish abroad after a round table discussion at Dublin Castle, the minister said that two other referendums – one on marriage equality and one on age qualification of presidential election candidates – would be put to the people, but a third one on the vote would be difficult to do. I'm sure.

It is obvious that Irish office holders are trembling in fear at the prospect of putting their political futures in the hands of overseas voters. It's not so much the presidential election that concern the incumbents and professional politicians but rather the impending slippery slope where opening the presidential voting to voters far from home could well turn into expanded voting rights to participate in parliamentary elections.

More than 120 countries have provisions for their citizens abroad to cast an election ballot. Ireland, however, does not currently allow emigrants to vote in presidential or Dail elections.

Former Boston Deputy Consul Named Ambassador – Brendan Rogers, a popular deputy Consul General in Boston during the 1980s, and more recently the top Department of Foreign Affairs official directing Ireland's widely honored international aid program, has been appointed Ambassador to Thailand and Myanmar. Myanmar was formerly named Burma. Rogers, a native of Dundalk, Co. Louth, has held a number of key positions in the Foreign Affairs Department since his service in Boston, with postings in Zambia and similar African stations, and as a sustaining member of Ireland's delegation to the United Nations. He assumed his new position in the Far East early in December.

Anglo Irish Chief Draws a Blank in Boston – Former Anglo Irish Bank CEO **David Drumm** ran into a perfect storm in Boston's US Bankruptcy Court last month when his bid for a court decision declaring him bankrupt with his debts discharged was vigorously denied by Judge **Frank Bailey**. Not content to deny Drumm's petition, the judge also decided that he should be held liable for debts totaling some \$13 million.

The judge listened to six days of testimony charging Drumm with activities that the judge termed “both knowing and fraudulent.” Drumm was also found guilty in the court's judgment of telling “outright lies,” a finding that leaves him open to perjury charges. In his 122-page ruling, the judge said, “I conclude the plaintiffs have established cause to deny [Drumm] a discharge many times over.”

Drumm, who left Ireland in 2009 to seek bankruptcy relief in a Boston court, was found by the judge to have fraudulently omitted details of five property transaction transfers to his wife. The judge also found that cars and other properties had been transferred to **Lorraine Drumm's** ownership in contravention of bankruptcy rules. It was revealed by the *Irish Independent* that the Irish police have been preparing to issue a warrant for Drumm's extradition after he refused to return home to Ireland.

RANDOM CLIPPINGS

Some 15 years after Mad Cow disease halted US beef imports from Ireland, the ban has been lifted and Irish beef is now available in America. ... It now appears that the Tory threat to ban the Irish in Britain from voting in the May general election has been withdrawn and all's well once again. ... In the North, SDLP Leader **Alasdair McDonnell** has charged First Minister **Peter Robinson** with “ambitions for unionist domination at any price, starting with the repression of Irishness.”... Former Noraid wannabe **Martin Galvin** has decided to pull away from Irish dissidents in their violent campaign against the peace plan. ... In a lead editorial, the *National Catholic Reporter* said that American nuns deserve an apology for Vatican-imposed apostolic visitations, calling the visits “a sham” and “an abuse.” ... The Irish and British have signed an agreement that will have Irish troops training British military in peace-keeping duties. ... **George Clooney's** announcement that he and his new wife, **Amal Alamuddin**, will visit Ireland has sparked a resurgence of interest in tourists visiting the Isle. ... **Kevin Vickers**, the Canadian who foiled an attack in Canada's House of Commons and became a national hero, has been named Canada's ambassador to Ireland.

More than 56,000 vehicles were clamped (booted, that is) in Dublin last year, earning the city over \$5 million in fines and fees. ... The Democratic Unionist Party voted, with four party members abstaining, to back **Mitchel McLaughlin** as the first Sinn Fein speaker, the first nationalist in that post. ... Irish Jobs Minister **Richard Bruton** is telling the public and his colleagues that Ireland will have full employment by the end of 2018. ... The NI corporate tax cut is moving slowly toward possibility with supporters saying that adoption of the cut will benefit some 34,000 small businesses. ... Thousands of Irish have signed a petition against Ireland TV's Channel 4 making a sitcom of the Famine. ... Irish coalition leader Fine Gael is skipping TV debates chaired by journalist **Vincent Browne**, who can be a sloppy reporter and arrogant to boot. ... Cardinal **Raymond Burke**, a senior American churchman and a Pope Francis critic, blames the priest shortage on a “feminized church and altar girls.” The Rome-based Burke was recently demoted by **Pope Francis**.



The pipes, the pipes are calling.

So are your cousins, the festivals, the sessions, the shops, the peat fires, the fry-ups and the pubs.

You've got plenty of reasons to come home to Ireland this year. And we'll be happy to give you a million more - that's the record number of visitors who came from the U.S. during the year of The Gathering. And the wonderful festivals, music and sporting events are still going strong in 2014. So make plans today to visit the friends and family you've missed. Because if you listen closely, you can hear them calling.

Find out more at Ireland.com

Jump into 
Ireland

Hopeful local immigrants weigh impact of Obama move

(Continued from page 1) of the shadows.” She also said that those who have contacted IIC for help in applying come from a wide range of places, including Ireland, various Central American and African countries and a few Asian countries.

Of major concern to a lot of clients is the ability to finally return home to see their families. “The big thing that they’re interested in is travel, particularly among our Irish clients,” Kain said. “Many of them have been here for years and years, and they’ve missed all sorts of family occasions.”

In last week’s State of the Union address, the president said that attempts to “[refight] past battles on immigration” would “earn my veto,” an apparent reference to legislation passed by the Republican-led House last week that would effectively roll back his executive action. Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell has said that his chamber will try to pass the House bill.

The executive action affects two main groups of people: Under a program called Deferred Action for Parental Accountability (DAPA), it protects immigrants who have children who are US citizens or legal permanent residents who have resided in the United States for at least

five years. Secondly, it expands the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program initiated by the president in June 2012. DACA covers children, popularly referred to as “dreamers,” who were brought to the United States illegally by their parents. The expanded eligibility requirements eliminate the previous cut-off age of 31 and allow applications from residents who have arrived as recently as 2010.

No one is automatically covered by the executive action. Rather, people are eligible to apply for deferred action and must reapply every three years.

For her part, Kain was quick to underscore the tenuous nature of the change, saying, “It’s mixed, because on one hand it sort of gives people some peace of mind, but on the other hand it’s not that much peace of mind because it’s only good for three years.”

John Foley, an attorney who focuses on immigration issues, noted in an interview that he is seeing significant interest as well in the wake of the president’s actions, although he currently can only do initial assessments of potential clients’ situations. “Basically we’re just kind of compiling basic information and telling them what [documents] they’re going to need,” he

said, “We’re waiting to get more from USCIS [United States Citizenship and Immigration Services] before we actually start meeting with them and start charging them fees.”

Foley added that the president’s changes are significant, but they cannot solve all the problems that clients might have. One such group, he said, is made up of those who arrived in the United States from a country that is not required to provide a visa for entry into the United States if the person stays here for less than 90 days. He said that those who have overstayed this kind of visa waiver are “stuck here,” because if they try to leave, they will be banned from returning to the United States for ten years.

Daniela, a native of Brazil who lives in the Boston area with her hus-

band and four children, described for the *Reporter* the family’s immigration history and the multiple ways that the change will affect their daily lives. She and her husband arrived in the United States legally on a tourist visa, but now reside here illegally because they overstayed that visa. Their first three children became covered under the original 2012 DACA program, and their fourth child was born in the United States as a “surprise” when Daniela was 39 years old. She and her husband are eligible to apply under DAPA due to their baby’s status as an American citizen.

“Thank God for giving me my baby,” she exclaimed.

DAPA will have several practical effects on Daniela and her husband’s quality of life. They will receive employment autho-

rization, which will make them eligible to apply for a Social Security card and, in turn, a driver’s license and a credit card. She says her husband, who is currently limited to construction and landscaping work that pays low rates in cash only, will be able to get a better job. She hopes that with a credit card, they might build enough credit to one day buy a house. They will be able to “drive without fear,” noting that they have driven without one because “we had to.”

She says that equally important to her is the emotional impact.

“Some people treat you as a person,” she says. “And other people... sometimes they treat you very bad because you don’t speak [English] well or because they figured out that person don’t have documents.”

DAPA will not grant

Daniela citizenship, but even having some form of official recognition will “help me to feel like a person,” she says.

The Asian Outreach Unit (AOU) of the Greater Boston Legal Services noted that regulations and applications for the DACA expansion will not be available until the end of next month and for DAPA not until May. “We strongly advise those who are interested in this immigration relief to not pay money to anyone who claims they can help file an application right away,” the AOU said in a press statement. “Instead, we suggest prospective applicants save money, start collecting documents [and] consult a lawyer regarding eligibility.”

Irish Health Minister says he’s gay; seen as a potential taoiseach

By SHAWN POGATCHNIK
ASSOCIATED PRESS

DUBLIN — A senior Cabinet minister in Ireland says he’s gay, becoming the first openly homosexual government figure in the history of the traditionally conservative Catholic country.



Leo Varadkar
Seeks to be
“equal”

Last month’s announcement on state radio by Health Minister Leo Varadkar received widespread praise for its straightforward honesty. Analysts said his decision was likely to be viewed with hindsight as a landmark of social change in a country that, until 1993, outlawed homosexual acts.

Varadkar said he decided to declare his sexuality in advance of government moves this year to advance gay rights. These include plans to legalize gay marriage, permit homosexual men to donate blood, and create greater parenthood rights for gays in surrogate-pregnancy cases. He said May’s constitutional referendum on gay marriage, in particular, got him thinking about going public.

“I was thinking about the arguments that I might make. That’s what politicians do. You rehearse your arguments, you write them down, you run them by a few people. All the arguments that I was going to make were kind of detached ... and that wouldn’t have been entirely honest,” he told RTE.

“Because what I really want to say is that I’d like the referendum to pass because I’d like to be an equal citizen in my own country — the country in which I happen to be a member of government — and at the moment I’m not,” he said.

Varadkar, who made his announcement on his 36th birthday, is highly regarded in Irish political circles as one of the government’s hardest working members and a potential future prime minister. Speculation about his sexuality had grown in recent months, reflecting Varadkar’s decision to tell an increasing circle of his family, friends, and political colleagues in private.

Varadkar said he told his parents in advance of his plans to come out publicly, in part because he didn’t want them to get the news from fellow parishioners at Catholic Mass.

He said he also telephoned Prime Minister Enda Kenny to tell him he was gay and planned to tell the nation the following day. He said his own initial feeling of awkwardness was quickly alleviated by Kenny, who reassured him that nothing in their working relationship would change.

Two other lawmakers in Ireland’s 166-seat legislature are openly gay. Ireland legalized civil partnerships in 2011.

CAREER BUILDING OPPORTUNITIES at FEENEY BROTHERS

Unearth your potential and learn about The Northeast’s Utility Contractor since 1988.

Join us for our OPEN HOUSE event
Wednesdays
Feb. 4, 11, 18, 25 and March 4
at 6:00 a.m.

to meet key personnel and discuss the different career paths we offer.

Seeking Qualified/Experienced:

• CDL A Drivers • Backhoe Operators • Diesel Mechanics

We look forward to seeing YOU at 103 Clayton St. in Dorchester
Visit our website – www.feeneybrothers.com



FEENEY BROTHERS
EXCAVATION LLC

PROVIDING UNDERGROUND
UTILITY SOLUTIONS SINCE



DotHouse Health

We keep you well

(Formerly Dorchester House Multi-Service Center)

We wish you, your family and friends a happy & healthy New Year!



1353 Dorchester Avenue, Dorchester, MA 02122 www.dothousehealth.org @dothousehealth

Tourism Ireland hails 9 percent '14 growth in visitors

Ireland's Central Statistics Office CSO reported in January that the number of overseas visitors to the Republic of Ireland last year grew by nine percent over 2013.

The year 2014 set a record for visitor numbers from North America, Germany, France, Spain, and Australia, the report stated, with a growth of 15 percent in visitors from the United States and Canada. "Given that overseas tourism business accounts for almost 60 percent of all tourism revenue, this is good news indeed, with the increase in visitor numbers from

overseas helping to boost employment and the economic recovery around the country," the CSO report said.

Niall Gibbons, CEO of Tourism Ireland, said: "2014 was a strong year for Irish tourism, with today's CSO figures confirming 620,000 additional visitors when compared with 2013.

"In fact, 2014 was the best year ever for visitor numbers not only from North America, but from Germany (+15 percent), France (+ 5 percent), and Spain (+11percent), as well as from our long-haul markets including Aus-

tralia and New Zealand (+ almost 9 percent).

"And the all-important British market, the largest market for Irish tourism, also saw growth of +8 percent last year (235,000 additional visitors), which is very encouraging. Throughout 2014, Tourism Ireland undertook a packed program of promotions to bring Ireland to the attention of people around the world. Our overseas publicity campaigns brought positive messages about Ireland to potential visitors in our key markets; Tourism Ireland estimates that this international media

exposure was worth an estimated 280 million euro in equivalent advertising value.

"Looking to the year ahead, ambitious targets have been set to ensure

that tourism growth continues," Gibbons said. "Following last year's success, we will be pulling out all the stops this year, to keep the momentum going and ensure that

2015 is the best year ever for Irish tourism when we aim to welcome 7.74 million visitors – surpassing the previous record year of 2007."

Aer Lingus backs takeover by parent of British Airways

(Continued from page 1)

largest owner of landing slots at London's Heathrow Airport,

Europe's most strategic and crowded airlines hub. Those slots alone are valued at 400 million euros (\$450 million) and could

be used by new owners for more lucrative long-haul routes.

Transport Minister Paschal Donohoe has briefed fellow government ministers about the takeover offer.

The Aer Lingus board

said IAG executives had offered assurances that Aer Lingus would remain "a separate business with its own brand, management and operations, continuing to provide connectivity to Ireland."

Later, Madrid-registered IAG said it intended to talk directly with Irish government leaders to explain that their takeover plan "would secure and strengthen Aer Lingus' brand and long-term future."

IAG said Ireland was geographically well positioned to handle more US-European long-haul traffic. It said Aer Lingus would benefit from increased cooperation with IAG's main US partner, American Airlines, which directly competes with Aer Lingus on Chicago and New York routes.

IAG was created in 2009 by the merger of British Airways and Spanish airline Iberia. Its Irish chief executive, Willie Walsh, led Aer Lingus from 2001 to 2005.

Great travel deals seen

(Continued from page 1)

more than two percent against the US dollar, after the European Central Bank pledged to spend 1.1 trillion euros on bond purchases to help revive the region's flagging economy.

The problem for Americans: we don't buy enough European goods, except for high-end products. Our clothes might come from Bangladesh or Costa Rica. Our furniture from China. And our cars — even foreign brands like Honda — are mostly made at home.

The one bright spot for Americans: vacations to Europe are now much cheaper. Thanks to the currency shift, travelers will pay less for hotel rooms, museum admissions, and meals out.

"It's basically a 20-percent-off sale on the whole eurozone for Americans," says Adam Goldstein, CEO and co-founder of airfare search site Hipmunk.

There are 19 countries that use the euro. So those considering deals should look at Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia and Spain.

"This is the best time to travel to Europe in years," says Anne Banas, executive editor of SmarterTravel. "Americans can now indulge in a fancy pastry and chocolat chaud without the budget-busting guilt."

We don't know everything about you.

Roberta
District Manager

But we know this:

Peoples Federal Savings Bank is a well-loved, supportive, and valuable part of this community, and that will continue as Peoples joins Rockland Trust. We have our own tradition of deep understanding and support of the communities we serve. And we do it by treating our neighbors just like our customers — we listen to them and make sure we're there when they need us. So stop in sometime. We can't wait to get to know you.

If you have any questions, just stop by. Helping you find answers is what we do best.

ROCKLAND
TRUST

Where Each Relationship Matters

Visit RocklandTrust.com/Peoples or call us at 800.222.2299.

Member FDIC

BIR ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT



Nora Conley is both Box Office and Front of House Manager at Lyric Stage Company of Boston.

Meet the 'Queen of the Audience Experience' at Lyric Stage Co.

By R. J. DONOVAN
SPECIAL TO THE BIR

If you're among the thousands of theatergoers who attend performances each season at Lyric Stage Company of Boston, chances are you've crossed paths with Nora Conley, who is both Box Office Manager and Front of House Manager at the theater. Due to the skillful execution of her duties, the staff has affectionately dubbed her "Queen of the Audience Experience."

Before joining the theater world, the Holbrook native earned her BA in communication studies at Bridgewater State College. After graduation she was exploring options for an advanced degree when University College Dublin caught her eye. The university's master's program focused on arts management and cultural policy. The added bonus would be moving to Ireland for a year to study.

"I have family there, our heritage [is there]," she said. "Grad school in Europe is cheaper than New York – that was a big thing. And it was a chance for an adventure. So I thought, why not?"

In anticipation of heading to Dublin, she secured her Irish citizenship. "I got it because my grandmother was born in Ireland (the Quinns of Connemara) . . . I knew it would just make things easier . . . I wouldn't have to worry about a visa. I had an Irish passport, too, so travel would be easier if I traveled around Europe. I also thought it would be kind of cool to have."

It was at University College that her future in the arts came into much sharper focus. An internship was a requirement of the program. "That's what really interested me," she said. "They required you to do a two-month internship – a real world experience."

She took a position at Smock Alley Theatre in Dublin. "And that's really when I fell in love with working in the theater," she said.

Smock Alley, which dates back to 1662, ranks as the first Theater Royal built in Dublin. The theater's website notes that it "was the first custom-built theatre in the city and still remains in substantially the same form, making it one of the most important sites in European theatre history."

The structure itself has endured a varied past. The building ceased to operate as a theater in 1787, becoming a whiskey distillery. It later evolved into a church and eventually a bar. The building closed completely in 2002 for a six-year renovation, and Smock Alley reopened as a professional theater in 2012, just as Nora arrived.

"There was minimal staff," she said, "so I had a lot of things to do." When the theater reopened, "they had a big opening night party – that was a lot of fun. I helped plan that, get that executed and see that come to fruition."

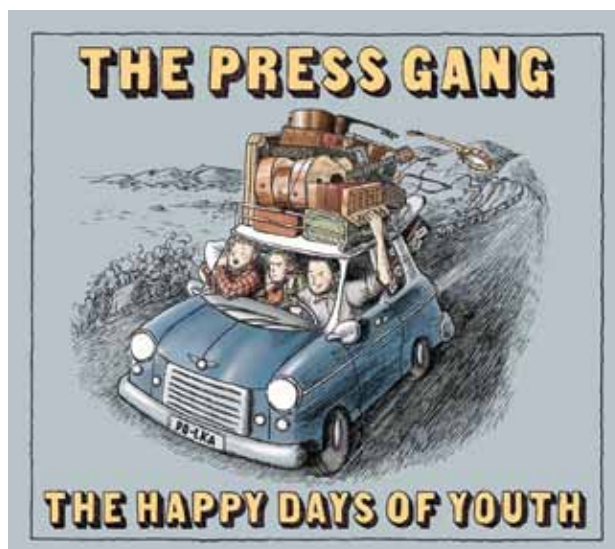
(Continued on page 16)

Ebullience and joviality mark what The Press Gang offers their listeners

By SEAN SMITH
SPECIAL TO THE BIR

If you were a fellow in the prime of life back about, oh, a couple of hundred years or so in the British Isles, a press gang was the last thing you wanted to meet. Listen to a few traditional songs from the period ("Arthur McBride," "William Taylor," "All Things Are Quite Silent") and you'll know that press gangs constituted an altogether nasty form of military recruitment, notorious for using bribery, deception, or brute force to compel young men into serving in the Royal Navy.

But today, if you meet a Portland, Me.-based trio calling itself The Press Gang, there's no need to fear, especially if you're a fan of Irish music. That's because the combo of Alden Robinson (fiddle), Chris "Junior" Stevens (accordion, concertina), and recent Boston-area arrival Owen Marshall (guitar, bouzouki, harmonium, banjo) has established itself as one of the more compelling New England trad bands to emerge in the past several years. Their love of and respect for tradition is apparent, as is the sheer ebullience with which they play, and the overall joviality they bring to the



whole enterprise, whether in their sometimes adventurous approach to material and arrangements, or their good-natured, even self-deprecating sense of humor.

All of which is there in spades on their recently released second CD, "The Happy Days of Youth," coming almost five years after their debut album. Recordings often serve as snapshots, so if the band's 2010 release was a metaphorical baby picture, "The Happy Days of Youth" offers a portrait of a trio that has grown in many ways.

"We really weren't a band then," says Marshall, a Vermont native who now lives in Medford,

of that first CD. "We hadn't played together much at all as a group, and we asked ourselves, 'How do you become a band?' Our answer was, 'Let's make a CD.'"

"We learned a lot about how to work with each other when we were in the studio that first time. Our ears got sharper, more refined, and we caught more things than we had before. Everything got better and better, and so it was a real formative experience for us."

(Incidentally, don't look for any kind of significance in the trio's choice of moniker: "We don't have a good story for our band name," admits Marshall. "It just sort of happened.")

They had wanted to do a follow-up album for a while, says Marshall, but found it difficult to put aside the time and energy. Then last August came a watershed moment: "We were playing at the New World Festival in Vermont, and were having a great time: The audience was very receptive, and we just felt 'on.' And then we sold out of all the CDs we had brought with us, so we said to each other, 'Well, maybe we should do another one now.' It was one of those moments where we wanted to reinvest in ourselves."

Let's just say the ROI on "Happy Days of Youth" is a highly favorable one, from the exhilarating medley of polkas that opens the album (Marshall moving from bouzouki to harmonium to guitar, with great effect) to the closing track, a rendition of the tender 17th-century Thomas O'Connellan composition "Planxty Davis," which gradually unfurls into full flower with Robinson and Stevens trading off, then joining together on the melody, all to the gentle accompaniment of Marshall's guitar and special guest Jeremiah McLane's piano.

The jig-reel set "Apples in Winter/Woods of Old

(Continued from page 13)



The Barra MacNeils, who will perform at Medford's Chevalier Theater on March 7, have forged a hugely successful career of nearly three decades playing Celtic music, including that of their native Cape Breton.

The Barra MacNeils are coming!

By SEAN SMITH
SPECIAL TO THE BIR

Legendary Celtic music performers The Barra MacNeils, who have traveled far and wide for nearly three decades to present music from their native Cape Breton, as well as Ireland and Scotland, will journey next month to Greater Boston, where they will present a concert on March 7 at 7 p.m. in the historic Chevalier Theatre in Medford.

The event commemorates the 75th anniversary of the theatre's dedication in memory of pioneering Medford aviator Godfrey Chevalier, the first American to land an airplane on

They'll play a concert on March 7 at Chevalier Theatre, Medford; Legendary unit highlights the music of home and hearth.

a moving ship. The Chevalier has a Greek Revival style exterior with Art Deco interior details, including a double elliptical ceiling that provides near perfect acoustics, and over the years it has hosted local and touring musical and theatrical shows, and civic, school, and performing arts events.

Now the Chevalier will add another chapter to its distinguished history by

serving as a venue for the Barra MacNeils, whose performances are noted for featuring multiple lead vocalists, songs in English and Gaelic, entrancing harmonies, numerous acoustic, stringed, percussion and wind instruments, and step dancing.

Ken Krause, a member of the board of directors for the Friends of the Chevalier Theatre—which is sponsoring the concert

with the City of Medford/Mayor Michael J. McGlynn, Medford Convention Center and Auditorium Commission, Chevalier Theatre Organ Society, and the Canadian American Club of Massachusetts – says the March 7 event is all about tradition and legacy.

"The Chevalier is a point of pride in Medford, an enduring symbol of our city's rich history, architecture, and commitment to arts and culture," he explains. "It's a characteristic WPA building honoring one of our foremost military veterans, Godfrey Chevalier, and it's here today because

(Continued on page 16)

Q&A with Scott Doherty about ‘Rockin’ Road to Dublin’

The era of Irish dance-themed stage productions, which has seen “Riverdance,” “Lord of the Dance,” “Dancing on Dangerous Ground,” and “Atlantic Steps,” among others, is not over yet. Now there’s “Rockin’ Road to Dublin,” which comes to the Greater Boston area this month with performances at the Collins Center in Andover on February 20 and 21. For the show’s co-creator, Irish dancer Scott Doherty, it’ll be a homecoming—he’s a Massachusetts native, born and raised in Lawrence. A former Irish World Dance champion, Doherty made his professional debut in 2005 in the North American tour of “Riverdance,” went on world tours with “Riverdance” and Michael Flatley’s “Lord of the Dance,” and then performed in the lead role of Lorcan in Gaelforce Dance for their 2012-13 tours of Europe and Asia. He has also appeared in the Irish dance shows at Busch Gardens, and in concert with acts such as The Irish Tenors, Cherish the Ladies, Michael Londra, and Andy Cooney.

The Boston Irish Reporter recently caught up with Doherty, who talked about his background and what’s different about “Rockin’ Road to Dublin.”

Q. “Rockin’ Road to Dublin” has been described as “Irish dance meets a rock concert.” Tell us about the show and how it came together.



“We wanted to make a modern show that would speak to people of every age,” says Massachusetts native Scott Doherty, co-creator of “Rockin’ Road to Dublin.” “We thought, ‘Hey, let’s make Irish dancing cool again.’”

A. The idea for “Rockin’ Road to Dublin” came through a series of conversations that myself and the show’s other creator, Chris Smith, had about shows we would love to see. I’m an Irish dancer and Chris is a musician who’s played all types of shows, including Irish genres, so we had a lot of similar ideas. We wanted to make a modern show that would speak to people

of every age. We thought, “Hey, let’s make Irish dancing cool again.” Why not do Irish dancing with music played by electric guitars, two full drum kits, stuff like that. No one’s really done anything like that before. And after about three years of work and dedication, we had a show.

Q. So what’s the show like? Is there a plot or narrative of some kind?

A. There’s not a full on storyline to the show, although some numbers tell a story within themselves. The way we saw it, we wanted to make a show that people can come to and just be entertained. There are definitely rock elements in the show, but that’s not all “Rockin’ Road to Dublin” is centered around. There are softer, slower numbers that everyone enjoys, as well as upbeat dance numbers. We wanted to make sure that we didn’t overlook the great traditional core that Irish music has, and I really think we’ve found the perfect balance that everyone will enjoy.

Q. What kind of response have you had so far?

A. We debuted “Rockin’ Road to Dublin” in Newport News, Va., last year and it was an amazing success. The feedback we got was incredible. Everyone, old and young, all loved the show. People definitely seem to get what we’re trying to do. We’re not trying to reinvent Irish dance shows, we’re just making it cool and relevant again, and in a

way that no one has really done before. And people loved it. It was instant confirmation that we need to bring this show to bigger and better levels.

Q. How did your upbringing in Lawrence help you get interested in Irish dancing?

A. My family has proud Irish roots. My great grandparents were from Ireland, so we have always had strong Irish traditions. In fact, my mom is president of the local Ladies Ancient Order of Hibernians. The way I got into Irish dancing was actually because my older cousin did it. We were young but we enjoyed it and my parents thought it would be best to start my siblings and me. I have a twin sister, actually, and I also have an older brother and sister that are twins as well. So when they were 6, my parents started them in Irish dancing classes, and then did the same for my twin sister and me.

All four of us danced for years, but my two sisters stopped when they went to college. On the other hand, my brother Brian

and I pursued dancing in professional shows. Brian danced with Michael Flatley’s “Lord of the Dance” for over a decade. I was lucky to have joined him on tour for a few years as well.

Q. How did you join “Riverdance,” and what did that experience do for you?

A. After my brother started touring with “Lord of the Dance,” I knew that was what I wanted to do as well. So I sent my name, resume, and a video to all of the big shows and one day I was lucky enough for “Riverdance” to call me to join them. That jumpstarted my professional career of dancing in shows—it was a dream come true. To do shows they usually look at two things: what other shows you’ve been in, and what your competition results are like. I had done all right in competition, so I was lucky to get into “Riverdance” back in 2005. It wasn’t until a few years of touring that I actually won the 2009 world championships of Irish dancing.

Q. What do you see as the biggest impact of “Riverdance” and “Lord of the Dance”?

A. “Riverdance” and “Lord of the Dance” definitely paved the way for Irish dancing and how it’s known today. If it weren’t for those shows, then people would barely know what Irish dancing even is. Now it’s a worldwide phenomenon that people can’t get enough of. It’s amazing.

Q. What it’s been like being one of the guys in charge, as opposed to just being a member of the cast?

A. This is the first time I’ve been hands-on with a production from the very beginning. Chris and I are literally doing everything: show design, performing, office work, setting up the business and handling contracts. It’s like a crash course in learning how to run a company, but we’re loving it. We also have an unbelievable cast and crew. So if it weren’t for them then none of this would be possible.

— SEAN SMITH

Professor O’Grady to discuss experiences of Irish soldiers in WWI at Eire Society event

The Eire Society of Boston will host a lecture entitled “The Things They Carried: Irish Soldiers in the Great War” by Dr. Thomas O’Grady, Director of Irish Studies at the University of Massachusetts Boston, on Sun., Feb. 8, at 2 p.m. in the Keys Room of the Milton Public Library, 476 Canton Avenue, Milton.

The talk will illuminate the experience of Irish soldiers in the British Expeditionary Force during The Great War of 1914-18 (World War I) by way of the poetry of Lance Corporal Francis Ledwidge of the Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers and the prose of Rifleman Patrick MacGill of the London Irish Rifles.



Dr. Thomas O’Grady

Professor O’Grady presented the topic in an essay published in last month’s *Boston Irish Reporter*.

“Ledwidge and MacGill are remembered not because they were men of action who performed acts of uncommon valor

but because they were men of words whose body of writing lifts the mask of anonymity from the 210,000 Irish men who enlisted to serve in the British Army during The Great War,” says O’Grady.

The event is free and open to the public. A reception immediately following will include light fare and refreshments along with live Irish music.

For more information, call Edward Duffy, ES President, at 617-698-9435 or send an email to Barbara Fitzgerald, ES Corresponding Secretary, at barbara.s.fitzgerald@gmail.com. You can also visit the Eire Society website at eiresociety.org.

HUNTINGTON
THEATRE
COMPANY

MOVING IRISH DRAMA

THE GIRL
THRU THE SECOND

BY RONAN NOONE
DIRECTED BY SCOTT CAMPBELL

“Ronan Noone is one of his adopted country’s best young playwrights.”
— THE BOSTON GLOBE

NOW THRU
SOUTH END
CALDERWOOD PAVILION AT THE BCA

USE CODE “IRISH” AND
SAVE UP TO 33% ON TICKETS!

Singer and songwriter Hanvey will present multimedia show on ‘The Troubles’ at BC

Northern Irish singer-songwriter Steafán Hanvey, the son of acclaimed photojournalist Bobbie Hanvey, will be at Boston College on Feb. 23 to present a performance-lecture that combines his musical compositions with his father's photographs, offering a uniquely personal perspective on “The Troubles” and its pervasive impact.

The show, “Look Behind You,” will take place at 7 p.m. in the Theology and Ministry Library Auditorium on BC's Brighton Campus. Admission is free and open to the public.

This will be Hanvey's second appearance at BC, which houses his father's collection of news and feature photographs in its John J. Burns Library, which is co-sponsoring the event with the Boston College Center for Irish Programs. The Bobbie Hanvey Photographic Archives comprise a comprehensive documentation of people and life in Northern Ireland (and elsewhere in Ireland) from the 1970s through the first decade of the 21st century. The photos feature major figures in politics, arts, literature and other fields – such as John Hume and Seamus Heaney – as well as families and individuals from all walks of life, whether at work, leisure or in the midst of social and public events. There are also images that capture the



Steafán Hanvey's “Look Behind You” blends his music and reminiscences of growing up in Northern Ireland with images by his father, acclaimed photojournalist Bobbie Hanvey, whose photo collection is housed at Boston College. Sean Smith photo

landscape of Northern Ireland, like an undisturbed scene in nature or a town coping with the aftermath of a paramilitary action.

These photos provide

a counterpart, and sometimes a counterpoint, for the songs Hanvey performs. Most are his own compositions, which deal with themes and ideas

percolating through the three decades of Northern Ireland's sectarian turmoil that encompasses most of Hanvey's life (he was born a few months

after the tragic Bloody Sunday event in 1972). In addition, he uses clips from his father's radio interviews with prominent political and cultural

figures, along with other broadcast material, as he discusses the role of language – especially by the media and authorities – in depicting The Troubles.

A native of Downpatrick, Co. Down, Hanvey grew up in a musical household – his parents both played traditional music and recorded two albums – and as a teenager began to explore his own path, forming a rock band at age 16. He released a mini-album while living in Finland during the mid-1990s, then moved to Dublin and released his debut full-length album, “Steafán Hanvey and The Honeymoon Junkies.” During 2004-05, he played in New York City, Montreal, Europe and at Boston's NEMO festival; he also recorded three in-studio sessions at the BBC. In 2012, he recorded “Nuclear Family,” which along with his first album provides much of the musical material for “Look Behind You.”

Although “Look Behind You” inevitably touches on political aspects of Northern Ireland, Hanvey says the show is meant to be a biographical/autobiographical work. “I think the best way I can put it is, I have never written about Northern Ireland,” he said in an interview with the *Boston Irish Reporter* during his 2013 appearance at BC. “Northern Ireland has written me.”

Ebullience marks what The Press Gang offers listeners

(Continued from page 11)

Limerick/Road to Garrison” (the latter tune by Maurice Lennon) – with Hanz Araki on bodhran – is a masterful blend of tone and transition, as is the set that begins with a Robinson-Stevens duet on the venerable hornpipe/set dance “The Blackbird,” then on the strength of Marshall's guitar launches into a pair of polkas, “An Spailpín Fánach” and “Sonny Sweeney's.” Another medley opens with Stevens and Marshall vamping together and establishing an infectious contra dance-type groove for three reels, “The Girl Who Broke My Heart/Paddy Ryan's Dream/The Plough and Stars,” McLane again lending support.

The band also displays its predilection for adapting somewhat unlikely material, taking the Scottish tunes “The Peat Fire Flame” and “Highland Laddie” and “bending” them into polkas (“They didn't want to be polkas,” says Marshall, “but we made them because, hey, we're The Press Gang.”). A recording by Boston-area sean-nos singer Bridget Fitzgerald provided the inspiration for “An Seandúine,” which starts out slowly (via a lovely concertina-bouzouki pairing) and with numerous rests before gathering momentum and easing into two up-tempo jigs, Junior Crehan's “The Lurgadan” and “Have a

Drink with Me.”

A reel set that is arguably the highlight track begins with the titular tune and just keeps building strength as it goes into Johnny Harling's “With Ourselves” (helped along by Araki) and ends with “The Miller of Droghda.” The latter tune, which includes a cameo by Marshall on banjo and subtle, distinctive chords from Stevens' accordion, is particularly mesmerizing; the whole medley is a tribute of sorts by the band to De Dannan, their source for “Miller of Droghda.”

An additional attraction of the CD are its liner notes, which among other things poke a bit of fun at the trio's somewhat outsized stature (they'd probably be the odds-on favorite in the Irish Traditional Three-on-Three Basketball Tournament, if there was such a thing): In case, you might wonder, their combined height is 18 1/2 feet, and altogether they tip the scales at 660 lbs. Elsewhere, we learn that the “Blackbird” set was arranged prior to a concert one day during a blizzard: “We hitched Owen to a toboggan and trudged off to play for Portland's most stalwart audience.” Their first and only camping trip to Maine's North Woods, meanwhile, is evoked in the “Father Dollard's” set, as they explain: “It begins happily, with plenty of provisions, and grows increasingly euphoric until the last dismal tune,



The Press Gang (L-R, Alden Robinson, Chris Stevens and Owen Marshall) performing at last fall's Dorchester Irish Heritage Festival.

with the supplies gone and their consequences setting in.”

Yet there's a certain hint of reflectiveness and contemplation, too, since a lot has happened in these four-going-on-five years, as they note: “We have more dogs, chickens, accordions, houses, girlfriends, banjos and

wives than we did when we started.” (Stevens, who got married in 2011, also recently became a father.) What's more, the trio's average age is now closer to that magic number of 30. So, is the album title a little ironic, even wistful, perhaps?

“Maybe,” muses Marshall. “I guess you could

say we're not really ‘youth’ anymore, and obviously we've had changes in our lives since that first CD. So when you reach another milestone – a second CD – it's natural to take a look back at where you were and where you are now.

“Our approach is, and has always been, that this is music everyone can en-

joy. You don't try to exploit it, or tart it up, but you look for moments – a transition here and there, a riff or harmony – that alerts the listeners: ‘Something is happening here.’ And for us this comes from a place of respect for the tradition, a desire to bring more people into it. We want to keep it alive.”

Sean Smith photo



The 12th annual BCMFest (Boston's Celtic Music Fest) brought lovers of Celtic music, song and dance to Harvard Square January 9-11. The festival included a Friday night "Roots & Branches" concert in Club Passim and Boston Urban Ceilidh in The Atrium on Church Street; Dayfest, a full day of family entertainment, music and dance performances, workshops and participatory events at Club Passim and First Parish Church; and the Saturday evening "BCMfest Nightcap" concert featuring the band Long Time Courting with numerous guests. New at this year's festival was The BCMFest Academy, a slate of special classes given by performers on Sunday afternoon in Passim.

Sean Smith photos



Rachel Reeds, center, led an informal session of Cape Breton music during Dayfest.



Adriana Ciccone, a native of Ontario who is attending the Berklee College of Music, showcased her fiddle and step dance talents at BCMFest.



The duo Oran Mor (Peter Hale, left, and Dave Hallowell) performed at the First Parish Church Parlor Stage during BCMFest's Dayfest.



The Mad for Trad ensemble, along with students from the O'Riley Irish Dance School, presented "Handing Down the Tradition" in The Attic during BCMFest.



(L-R) Danny Noveck, Flynn Cohen, Brian Hanlon and Matt Heaton teamed up for a lively set of reels during the BCMFest "Roots & Branches" concert in Club Passim.

CD Reviews

By SEAN SMITH
SPECIAL TO THE BIR

Mary MacNamara, “Note for Note”; Various musicians, “Unfolding: Young Music from East Clare” • These two recently released CDs have a connection, in that the fingerprints of Mary MacNamara are all over them. MacNamara is one of the most eminent concertina players of the past few decades, schooled in the music of her native East Clare from an early age. She has also cultivated an equally important role as a teacher and mentor, particularly in encouraging youths to learn about and play traditional music. More on that later.

“Note for Note,” her fourth album and first in a decade, is a completely solo effort: no guitar, bouzouki, fiddle – not even the ubiquitous “Ringo” McDonagh and his bodhran. As she explains in the liner notes, “solo playing has always been where I considered a musician’s soul is discovered.” The tunes she plays here span her musical life, some from childhood learned in the company of greats like Joe Bane, Martin Rochford and P. Joe Hayes, others from friends and acquaintances of more recent years.

As with her other albums, MacNamara puts the spotlight squarely on the East Clare style: blessedly mellow in tempo and temperament, with little in the way of ornamentation. As that translates to her instrument of choice, MacNamara and other East Clare concertina players often make use of the bellows to accentuate the rhythm of a tune, and also tend to eschew harmonies or chording; instead, they introduce variations in the melody through holding long notes or repetition of short notes.

If it all sounds like a lot of exposition about technique and method, well, yes, there is that. But don’t get the idea that “Note for Note” is a for-squeezeboxers-only affair. This is an opportunity to hear, clearly and without distraction, a regional tradition in full flower – an increasingly elusive thing, what with the trend toward blended styles among many Irish musicians – and in the hands (literally) of a master. It also serves as a sort of minimalist construction of Irish music itself – the guts of the tunes, if you will.

But you know, in the end it really is about the tunes, and these are really quite wonderful. There are some familiar session favorites, like “Rakish Paddy,” “The Rakes of Kildare” and “Tatter Jack Walsh,” but those looking for rarer fare will no doubt enjoy the E-minor jig “The Chapel Bell,” which MacNamara plays in C minor and then D minor – “good, dark East Clare keys,” as she notes; “The Caves of Kiltanon,” a composition by Tulla fiddler Paddy Canny in honor of a local geological feature; a pair of Scotch lilt; or a medley of barn dances, the first of which, “Dúlamán na Binne Buidhe,” has been recorded (albeit in different forms) by famed Galway fiddler Lucy Farr and super-group Altan. MacNamara’s musical soul is well worth the discovery.

MacNamara doesn’t appear *per se* on “Unfolding” (other than in a couple of photos in the inside cover), but she bears a big responsibility for its existence. The featured musicians on the album range between the ages of 11 and 20; some are concertina students of MacNamara, who along with those who play other instruments have been involved in various activities and programs she’s run through The Music Room in Tulla.

Here would be a good place to mention an important Boston dimension: MacNamara and Lisa Coyne, executive director of Boston’s Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann Music School, are creators of the Trad Youth Exchange, which promotes friendships between the young Tulla musicians and their peers



in Greater Boston; this past November, the Tulla group visited Boston to meet their US counterparts and play several events, notably an afternoon concert in The Burren [read the *Boston Irish Reporter* story about the Trad Youth Exchange at <http://bit.ly/1xlx040>]. (Note: The Boston contingent heads over to Clare this month.)

Some of those same Tulla musicians are on this album, which was recorded live at Gerry Shortt’s Pub in Feakle – the same pub (albeit under a different name now) where MacNamara herself cut

her musical teeth. Rosa Carroll (fiddle) and Lily O’Connor (concertina), for example, who opened eyes and ears at The Burren concert, do a fine turn together on a pair of reels, “Coen’s Memories/McDonagh’s”; the two also are part of the Tulóg Ceili Band – a number of whose members came to Boston – which appears on two of the tracks, to great effect.

Elsewhere, harpist Aisling Lyons plays a gorgeous solo medley of jigs and later teams with concertina player Eimear Donnellan – a pairing of instruments that should really be heard more often – on another pair of jigs. The combination of Eion Beirne (banjo), Cliona Donnellan (fiddle), Aisling McMahon (flute), Ulick O’Sullivan (concertina) and Padraig Costello (piano) do a cracking rendition of two venerable session tunes, “Kitty’s Rambles” and “Boys of Ballisodare.” And, for a change of pace, fiddler Isobel Elger plays a spine-tinglingly expressive slow air, “The Wild Geese.”

The quality and assuredness of these young musicians is evident throughout “Unfolding”; the phrase “They’re good – for their age” just simply doesn’t apply. And while ultimately it’s up to them far they can go, having someone in their corner like Mary MacNamara – who knows from first-hand experience the value of having a caring adult to nudge you along – is a big asset.

[Copies of the “Unfolding” CD are available through custymusic.com. For information on the Trad Youth Exchange, see tradouthexchange.weebly.com.]

World Famous
Mr. Dooley's
Now in Wrentham!

Real Irish Country Feel
Traditional Irish Fare
Live Music &
Entertainment Nightly
Irish Breakfast Daily
Sunday Brunch
Prime Rib Specials

OPEN 7 DAYS A WEEK
MON-FRI 12PM-1AM : SAT-SUN 11AM-1AM
SPACE FOR FUNCTIONS & PRIVATE PARTIES
DINE IN OR TAKE OUT

303 SHEARS ST., WRENTHAM MA - TEL: 508.384.3457
WWW.MRDOOLEYSWRENTHAM.COM

Prospect Hill Company

Spectacular Weekend Sale
on First Communion Dresses

3 DAYS ONLY

Saturday, January 17th
9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
Sunday, January 18th
12 Noon – 4:00 p.m.
Monday, January 19th
9:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Up to 60% OFF on
DISCONTINUED
COMMUNION
DRESSES

800 Dresses in Stock

Also showing our
2015 Designer Dress Collection

Great Selection of Large and Half Sizes

• Veils • Girls' Shoes • Nylons • Gloves • Purses • Capes

BOYS' WHITE SUIT SALE – February 16th-21st
ALL SUITS 20% OFF

12 Field Street, Brockton • near Brockton/Avon Line
Minutes off Route 24 • 1-800-586-1951

The Barra MacNeils are coming!

(Continued from page 11) citizens demanded it not be sold and converted to apartments in the 1980s. “One of our goals of the 75th anniversary concert is to introduce the Chevalier Theatre to people who are unfamiliar with it. Given the Boston area’s deep roots in Celtic music and culture, we expect the Barra MacNeils to attract a large audience from around the region, which we hope will lead to more performances like this in the future.”

Band member Stewart MacNeil says he and his family view the event, their first Greater Boston area appearance in 12 years, in much the same way. The Barra MacNeils have long had a big following in Boston, for years a major destination for Cape Breton natives, and the island’s music and dance traditions live on in local halls and clubs, such as the Canadian American Club in Watertown.

“It is always exciting to return to the Boston area for a Barra MacNeils concert,” says MacNeil, who plays accordion, whistle, flute, guitar and bouzouki and sings and step dances. “There’s so much connection, shared history and culture between the Maritime region of Canada and Boston – it’s like a special visit with old friends from home each time.”

Stewart’s siblings are: Kyle (vocals, guitar, violin, mandolin), Lucy (vocals, bodhran, Celtic harp, fiddle, step dancing), Sheumas (keyboards, piano, bodhran, fiddle, bouzouki, vocals) and Boyd (mandolin, fiddle, guitar, banjo, percussion, step dancing). The band also includes Jamie Gatti on bass.

The Barra MacNeils’ resume is impressive, to say the least. They’ve released 17 albums, including three of Christmas-themed music; toured throughout Canada, the US, Europe, the United Kingdom and the Caribbean; and made frequent appearances on TV – their Christmas special also was the basis for a DVD.

That the MacNeils (“Barra” refers to the island off Scotland where the MacNeil clan is said to have originated) would take up their native music as a nearly life-long vocation is hardly surprising. Cape Breton has a well-deserved reputation for preserving its music and dance traditions: There’s an oft-repeated claim that the island has more fiddlers per capita than any other place in the world; another bit of folklore has it that all Cape Breton children are given the choice of learning fiddle, piano or step dancing – or all three.

Yet while the Barra MacNeils are living exponents of Cape Breton music and dance, they have embraced other traditions, notably that of Ireland. As Stewart MacNeil points out, their part of Cape Breton (North Sydney) had a substantial Irish population, whose musical influence – through such people as fiddler Johnny Wilmot – rubbed off on local fiddlers and other musicians.

And the band has incorporated other musical genres, including rock, pop and country, while also doing covers of contemporary songs, some of them lesser-known compositions like “The Ballad of Lucy Jordan” – written by Shel Silverstein (often best remembered for his children’s books, such as “The Giving Tree”) and recorded by Dr. Hook and the Medicine Show and Marianne Faithfull, among others – and English folk-rockers The Oysterband’s “By Northern Light.”

“We have a strong traditional background, of course, through our family,” says Stewart MacNeil. “But we’ve also studied classical music, and over time we got interested in other styles. I think that all of us doing vocals and playing various instruments diversifies what we can do, and help makes us all well-rounded.”

When you get down to it, though, he says, the Barra MacNeils define themselves by the music of home and hearth. “I feel the band is stronger than it’s ever been, in terms of how we’ve grown musically and personally over the years. But we have never left behind our traditional roots, and that’s resonated a lot with our core audience.”

“Lucy’s voice, for example, has that really strong traditional quality to it that gets your attention. And there’s a lot of storytelling in our concerts, especially our Christmas shows, where we talk about things that are an important part of being a family – people really seem to identify with all that, whether they have connections to Cape Breton or not. So we’re looking forward to sharing our music, and our story, with everyone who comes to the Chevalier next month.”

Tickets for the Barra MacNeils concert are priced at \$31 and \$26 (\$23 and \$19 for seniors/students) and may be ordered at [chevaliertheatre.com](#). Tickets also can be purchased at Medford Electronics, 25 Salem St., on weekdays from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Meet the ‘Queen of the Audience Experience’

(Continued from page 11) Commenting on the theater’s initial programming, she said, “They had just started producing their own productions. When I was there, they did some Irish classics. ‘Playboy of the Western World.’ ‘She Stoops to Conquer’ . . . They also rented out the theater to other companies, so there was a wide variety of shows.”

“The staff was very warm and welcoming,” she said. “They made me feel like part of the family.”

Oddly enough, a favorite Dublin memory involves sharing the seemingly non-Irish occasion of Thanksgiving with an international blend of faces. “There were a couple of American students in my program so we decided to throw our own Thanksgiving,” she said. “We invited the rest of our class – there were 26 of us all together – and everyone showed up and brought food. It was nice to be able to hang out as a group outside of classes and share something so American with them.”

Having thoroughly enjoyed her time in Dublin, Conley considered staying in Ireland. “I thought about it toward the end, but I was exhausted,” she said. “I had just finished up my thesis (comparing arts education in the United States and Ireland). Grad school was tough and I was low on money. So it was kind of like, I need to go home and recharge and

figure things out. Time was up. Maybe I’ll go back some day and maybe even live there some day. But for now, time to go home.”

She returned to Boston and landed a job at Actors’ Shakespeare Project, which was looking for someone to begin work immediately. Although she enjoyed the experience, it wasn’t a full time position.

Last fall Conley joined the staff at Lyric where “basically I’m in charge of anything ‘Guest Communications – The Guest Experience.’ Box office-wise, I oversee and help sell tickets and subscriptions. I also do the financial stuff and make sure that’s in order.”

Managing front of the house operations “is the more fun part of the job,” she said. “But it’s also more chaotic. Half an hour before the start of the show I’m responsible for making sure everybody gets in their seat and that the show starts on time.”

This is often where a major part of her interaction with theatergoers occurs. Lost tickets, double seating, last minute problems and requests require her to be a multi-tasking problem solver. “You need to be able to think quickly on your feet. And keep everybody happy. *And* get the show started on time!”

Conley notes that Lyric’s season continues with the evocative Lynn Nottage drama “Intimate Apparel”; the Cy Coleman musical comedy homage to 1940s film noir Hollywood, “City of Angels”; and the classic Moss Hart backstage comedy, “Light Up The Sky,” coincidentally set during a seemingly disastrous Broadway tryout in Boston.


R. J. Donovan is Editor and Publisher of [onstageboston.com](#).

•••

Lyric Stage Company of Boston is at 140 Clarendon Street in Boston’s Back Bay. Tickets: 617-585-5678 or [lyricstage.com](#).

"Best Irish Dance Class in Boston" City Voter 2010

Kieran Jordan Dance Irish Dance Classes



Non-Competitive Irish Dance for Adults
with Instructors Kieran Jordan and Rebecca McGowan



Now enrolling for Winter 2015 classes at [www.KieranJordan.com](#)

- Traditional Irish step dance (in Cambridge, MA)
Beginner - Tuesdays 6-7 pm
Intermediate - Wednesdays 6-7 pm
Intermediate/Advanced - Mondays 7-8:30 pm
Advanced - Tuesdays 7-8 pm
- Sean-nós (old style) Irish dance
Intermediate - Mondays 6-7 pm (Cambridge)
Beginner - Tuesdays 6:30-8 pm (Quincy, MA)

Private lessons - Performance opportunities - Guest artist workshops - Live music events


Cambridge location: 185 Green Street, Central Square
Quincy location: 48 Winthrop Ave., Wollaston

Kieran Jordan has been teaching in the Boston area since 2001, with a uniquely designed non-competitive Irish dance program for adults. She holds a Master's in Contemporary Dance from University of Limerick, Ireland, and the TCRG qualification for teaching Irish dance.



"Jordan's teaching is renowned ..." (Irish Echo)
"a rare find ..." (Cambridge Chronicle)

[www.KieranJordan.com](#)



PHILLIPS CANDY HOUSE

Handmade since 1925

Order Online at [phillipschocolate.com](#)
or call 800.722.0905

- Delicious Handmade Chocolates
- Custom Corporate Gifts
- Handmade Phillips Cookies
- Favors for All Occasions
- Gift Baskets & Towers


818 Morrissey Boulevard • Boston | South Shore Plaza • Braintree



Co. Roscommon Assoc. of Boston

Annual St. Patrick's Dinner

Saturday, March 14, 2015
5-10 pm



at The Irish Social Club

Corned Beef & Cabbage Catered Meal

Tables can be reserved. NO TICKETS will be sold at the door. Tickets \$40

Call Lord Mayor Richie Gormley
617-327-7777

Subscribe Today!

to the Boston Irish Reporter

Call 617-436-1222 or use our handy subscription form on page 19.

Traveling People

There'll be commemorative stamps aplenty in 2015

By JUDY ENRIGHT
SPECIAL TO THE BIR

Do you ever look at the stamps on your mail? The US Postal Service offers many different and interesting stamps that feature a variety of seasonal designs, sports, flowers, history, holidays, and more.

Ireland's post office also offers many interesting designs and we were delighted to see that detail from church windows by famed stained glass artist Harry Clarke was featured on two of three 2014 Irish Christmas stamps. The third stamp was a Dublin schoolgirl dressed as an angel.

HARRY CLARKE

Clarke (1889-1931), his father Joshua, and his brother Walter all worked in stained glass. Harry also illustrated books. We've written about Harry Clarke's amazing artwork before but it bears repeating that if you are near any of his windows, it's well worth taking a look. Harry's work is often easy to spot because it is so detailed with such rich, deep colors.

I've always loved the story of how Harry's large three-light window depicting "The Last Judgment" came to be installed in St. Patrick's Church in Newport, Co. Mayo. In 1926, the pastor, Canon Michael MacDonald, sold his life insurance policy to pay for the windows. The canon specified that Harry himself was to do the work and not his studio. Harry started the work in the summer of 1930 but died the following January. Sadly for Canon MacDonald, the windows were finished and installed by his studio.

This year's Christmas stamps were from photographs taken in St. Patrick's Church in Newport by Michael McLaughlin, and in St. Patrick's Church, Millstreet, Co. Cork, by Bill Power from Mitchelstown, Co. Cork. Both images are details from "Adoration of the Magi" windows in those two churches. The Millstreet photo depicts an angel playing a lute; the Newport image is of the Christ child.

MORE STAMPS

The Irish post office (An Post) plans a series of stamps this year to mark key events of a century ago, including the landing of Irish troops at Gallipoli and the sinking of the Lusitania. Sixteen new stamps will be issued in 2015, we read in *The Irish Times*.

Two of the stamps will commemorate Irish soldiers in the British Army who fought at Gallipoli in 1915, with some 4,000 of them losing their lives.

Two new stamps will commemorate the 50th anniversary of the founding of Mountain Rescue Ireland. Four stamps will be issued to represent Ireland "the food island" and five more to represent the five senses. Another stamp will mark the 150th anniversary of the birth of William Butler Yeats.

Two stamps will be issued to mark the 100th anniversary of the sinking of RMS Lusitania, a passenger liner sailing from New York to Liverpool that sank on May 7, 1915, after being torpedoed. The largest ship ever built at the time, the Lusitania listed and sank off the Old Head of Kinsale within 18 minutes after being struck on the starboard side by a single torpedo from a German U-boat. Losses totaled 1,198 passengers and crew while 761 were rescued.

Cobh plans to mark the centennial with a five-month program of events that began last month.

During the commemorative events, the Cunard liner Queen Victoria will be in Cobh on May 7 as part of a "Lusitania Remembered" seven-night cruise to recall the ship known as "the floating palace." In the evening, a flotilla of large and small boats will start toward Cobh from Roches Point, each illuminated by white lights to symbolize the return to Cobh of boats full of victims and survivors. A museum dedicated to the Lusitania is expected to open then, too.

Be sure to stop into any Irish post office while you're there and pick up some of these wonderful stamps.

KNOCK FLIGHTS

How exciting to read recently in *The Mayo News* that on Aug. 8 Aer Lingus will fly the first transatlantic pilgrimage group from JFK into Ireland West Airport Knock (IWAK) in Co. Mayo.

According to the writer Anton McNulty, "The announcement represents a historical development for the airport and the region, as it will be the first-ever transatlantic service operated by Aer Lingus from the US to IWAK and the first official chartered pilgrimage to Ireland's National Marian Shrine. The pilgrims, led by Cardinal [Timothy] Dolan, will spend eight days in the region in a specially tailored Pilgrimage program that will showcase some of Ireland's most historical spiritual sites..."

McNulty reports that Joe Kennedy, chairman of IWAK, was "delighted to see the return of transatlantic flights to Knock after an absence of eight years" and he hopes it will be an important stepping stone in securing regular transatlantic services to the region in the future.

The previous transatlantic flights to Knock you may remember were by a low-cost British airline - Flyglobespan - that flew Boston-Knock for a short while but abandoned that service and eventually went into receivership. That direct flight was a great boon to those who love the West of Ireland and now would probably be even more popular with all the events and places being promoted along the 1,600-mile Wild Atlantic Way.

Speaking of the Wild Atlantic Way, if you de-



Two Irish Christmas stamps for 2014 featured work by stained glass artist Harry Clarke. This image was photographed by Bill Power from Mitchelstown, Co. Cork, and shows a detail from the Adoration of the Magi window in St. Patrick's Church in Millstreet, Co. Cork.



One of Ireland's three Christmas stamps featured a Michael McLaughlin photograph of the Infant Christ from "Adoration of the Magi," a Harry Clarke stained-glass window in St. Patrick's Church, Newport, Co. Mayo.

cide to drive it while you're in Ireland, be sure to stop in Brigend on the Inishowen Peninsula, Co. Donegal, to have a meal at Harry's Restaurant, named by the *Irish Times* restaurant columnist Catherine Cleary as her choice for the best Irish restaurant of 2014. She writes, "The Wild Atlantic Way has a wildly good restaurant in this partnership between chef Derek Creagh and owner Donal Doherty. They serve just-landed fish from local boats alongside just-picked vegetables from one of their three gardens. Irish restaurant dining doesn't get better than this and they're selling it at prices that are jaw-droppingly low."

The Wild Atlantic Way stretches down the coast from the Inishowen Peninsula in Co. Donegal to

Kinsale in Co. Cork.

TOURISM TOWNS

Westport (Co. Mayo) has been named 2014 National Large Tourism Town and Kinsale was chosen National Small Tourism Town for 2014. The Tourism Town Award was designed by Fáilte Ireland (the Irish arm of Tourism Ireland here) to promote Irish towns and villages that work to "enhance their appeal to tourists visiting their local area."

According to *The Irish Times*, Tourism Minister Michael Ring said the awards "are all about honoring the towns that put tourism at the center of what they do." Both towns are on the Wild Atlantic Way driving route.

Westport and Kinsale each received certificates and a 5,000-euro grant to further develop them-

selves as tourism destinations. Competition judges said there is "something for everyone" in Westport and that the coastal town "caters well for Ireland's climate."

Kinsale, the judges added, has a "cosmopolitan feel" added to beautiful scenery and narrow streets bursting with history that encourage visitors to get out and explore. "It would appear that Kinsale has something to offer all demographics and its visitors will leave with lasting impressions and memories," they said.

Other commended towns: Ardmore, Co. Waterford; Carrick on Shannon, Co. Leitrim; Cobh, Co. Cork; Glengarriff, Co. Cork; Kilkenny town, Co. Kilkenny; Killarney, Co. Kerry; Lismore, Co. Waterford; and Portmagee, Co. Kerry.

Always nice to see these towns get recognition. Both Westport and Kinsale are fun places to visit and offer many wonderful restaurants (Kinsale is known as the "Gourmet Capital of Ireland" and Westport's An Port Mor restaurant has won many culinary awards), good music, and interesting shops that feature Irish-made products. My favorite bookstore, Seamus Duffy's, is in Westport and it's a great place to stop. If they don't have what you want, Seamus and his staff will happily order it.

EVENTS

Looking for things to do in Ireland in February? How about taking in the Feile na Tana (Feb. 6-8) that brings the best of Irish traditional music to the heart of the Cooley Peninsula? The festival is held in Carlingford, Co. Louth, and more information is available from feilenatana.com

For more wonderful trad music, be sure to include The 21st Russell Memorial Weekend Festival on your schedule. The weekend is in Doolin, Co. Clare, from Feb. 26 to March 2 and features workshops in fiddle, tin whistle, concertina, and accordion as well as sessions in the town's pubs and hotels, a Russell Concert, cliff walk and set dancing. For more, visit michorussellweekend.ie

Do you fancy hearing poetry read by the River Lee? If so, the Cork Spring Poetry Festival is the place for you and it's scheduled from Feb. 11 to Feb. 14 to include readings, workshops, book launches, poetry prizes and more. For details visit corkpoetryfest.net

TRAVEL

No matter when you visit Ireland or where you go, there is always a lot to do. Before you leave, be sure to take a look at Tourism Ireland's informative website - Ireland.com - for details on events, accommodation, and more that will be offered while you're there.

Photography by Image Photo Service



- Weddings • Anniversaries • Banquets
- Portraits • Reunions • Groups
- Families • Special Occasions

(617) 291-6609

Harry Brett • Margaret Brett Hastings

The official photographers of the Boston Irish Reporter

Irish beef will be back on US tables next month; the first shipment since Mad Cow scare of 1998

(Continued from page 11) to the lucrative market across the Atlantic. The news has been greeted with elation by the Irish government and its food board, *Bord Bia*. In an announcement last month on Irish national radio, the Republic's agriculture minister, Simon Coveney, stated: "This US market is a huge prize, given its size, and the demand we know

exists there for premium grass-fed beef. We now have first-mover advantage as a result of being the first EU member state to gain entry. There is also the large Irish-American community, which will be a key target of our promotional efforts." While no one expects Irish beef to claim a huge share of the American market, food-industry insiders prognosticate

that the product can capture a hugely profitable niche here. According to Douglas Dalby in *The New York Times*, "Ireland might be likely to find a market among buyers seeking beef raised in pastures and free from artificial growth hormones." The US government's concerns about European beef surfaced in 1998 because of alarm that the unquestionably horrifying



"Mad Cow Disease," or BSE (bovine spongiform encephalopathy) could infect American consumers. Ireland is the first European beef producer since that time to pass the required American standards. A Reuters account referred to a USDA inspection that recognized Ireland as "the first European country deemed to have consistently and effectively implemented a beef slaughter inspection system that satisfies all criteria for equivalence with the United States system." Until other European nations pass the same standards as Ireland – Scotland is likely the next candidate – the Republic has the advantage among the EU members. The Irish entry into the American market has certainly garnered the attention of other EU members. In a recent statement by EU Health Commissioner Vytenis Andriukaitis,

Trade Commissioner Cecilia Malmström, and Rural Development Commissioner Phil Hogan, the trio asserted, "It is now desirable that the US acts expeditiously to extend the approval to the rest of the European Union and to fully bring their import conditions in line with international standards. We also welcome that this move, which forms part of a growing trend, recognizes the robust, comprehensive and successful measures put in place by the EU to eradicate [mad cow disease]." The commentary by EU representatives notwithstanding, only Irish beef has cleared the hurdle and Ireland is wasting no time in trumpeting that status. Said a *Bord Bia* representative: "We are finalizing arrangements at the present time. Initially our aim will be to target Irish beef at high end restaurants and other elite food service outlets.

Two launch events will be hosted by *Bord Bia* in New York and Washington." As part of the launch, officials from the Irish Agriculture Department will meet with their American counterparts at a series of discussions and events. In his national radio statements and to other media outlets, Agriculture Minister Coveney said that "the demand for premium grass-fed, hormone-free beef in the United States is growing an estimated 20 percent a year." The BIR has learned that Coveney is due to visit Boston in mid-February. In 2014, some \$4.8 billion of foreign beef reached the United States market, but none from Europe. Coveney contends that in the US, Irish beef could reap 100 million euros in 2015, while adding, "This is the culmination of two years of intensive work to prove our credentials as a supplier of highest quality premium beef."

Prepare to be
dazzled at our annual
Wedding Show
Jan 30th - Feb 1st
Fri. 5:30-7:30 Sat. 1-4 Sun. 12-2

**GORGEOUS
FLOWERS**

Come to this **FREE**
event for resources, ideas &
answers. Numerous wedding
approaches from altar to
reception in an open house
setting.

CEDAR GROVE GARDENS
UNIQUE FLORALS & GIFTS
WWW.CEDARGROVEGARDENS.COM
617-825-8582
911 ADAMS STREET DORCHESTER, MA 02124



photo credit: yan voygor

**Open House for all grades
Tuesday, February 3, 2015
8:30 – 10:30am and 4:00 – 6:00pm**

**Early Childhood (K0, K1 and K2) Open House
Tuesday, February 24, 2015
8:30 – 10:30am**

Living the Gospel on the Road to College!
Located in the heart of the Longwood Medical Area



Snow Date 02/10/15

**Our Lady of Perpetual Help
Mission Grammar School**
Unity in Diversity, Excellence in Education, Since 1889

94 Saint Alphonsus Street
Roxbury, MA 02120
www.missiongrammar.org
All application information online

by Philip Mac AnGhabhann

Answers: 1.) Tá an lá go brea. 2.) Tá an duine seo óg ach tá m'athair an-sean. 3.) Nach bhfuil sí álainn? 4.) Tá mé go mhaith, buíochas le Dia. 5.) Nach raibh d'iníon an-tinn? 6.) Nach mbeidh sibh ag ithe ceathrú chun a naoi? 7.) Cé atá ann? 8.) Bhí an tranóna go deas. 9.) Bhí. Bhí sé go hálainn. 10.) Tá an garda an-mhor.



7 days a week

Follow us on Twitter @irishsocialbos Follow us on Facebook: Irish Social Club of Boston

Mail to: Boston Irish Reporter, 150 Mt. Vernon Street, Dorchester, MA 02125
We accept phone orders with your Visa or Mastercard.
Call 617-436-1222 Or Fax this order form to 617-825-5516

"We Get Your Plates"

www.Gormleyfuneral.com

email: miltonmonument@gmail.com





CRASH arts

MUSIC AND DANCE
FROM THE FAR AND NEAR CORNERS OF THE GLOBE



Natalie MacMaster & Donnell Leahy

Visions from Cape Breton and Beyond: A Celtic Family Celebration
Saturday, February 21, 8pm • Berklee Performance Center
136 Massachusetts Ave., Boston



ALTAN


Saturday, February 28, 8pm • Somerville Theatre
55 Davis Square, Somerville

FOR TICKETS AND INFORMATION

617.876.4275 www.WorldMusic.org

TICKETS ARE ALSO AVAILABLE AT THE VENUE BOX OFFICES

QUINCY COLLEGE
PLYMOUTH, QUINCY & ONLINE
WWW.QUINCYCOLLEGE.EDU



HIGHER EDUCATION.
LOWER TUITION.

REGISTER NOW. OUR LOCAL, AFFORDABLE
CLASSES START THROUGHOUT THE FALL.

IRISH
FILM
FESTIVAL

Boston

March 19-22, 2015

Somerville Theatre, Davis Square



For tickets visit www.irishfilmfestival.com