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# BOSTON IRISH REPORTER

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Cherish the Ladies' performance in Boston this month comes as the band celebrates its 35th year. "We'll keep going until the phone stops ringing," says co-founder Joanie Madden.

## These 'Ladies' are all about cherishing the golden chalice passed down to them

BY SEAN SMITH  
SPECIAL TO THE BIR

Sometimes, destiny comes in the form of a message that tells you you're on your own.

So it was for Joanie Madden some years ago when she was part of a new groundbreaking all-women Irish music group. Formed in 1985 for what was envisioned as a one-time series of concerts, the ensemble received such an enthusiastic response that – with support from the

National Endowment for the Arts – it had gone on to record an album and, with a smaller, restructured line-up, went on a short tour under the name "Cherish the Ladies" (the title for the original concert series) that also proved successful.

But then the NEA funding ended, and the band was at a crossroads.

"It was a shock to the system," recalls Madden, the band's flute and whistle player. "Things had been going so well, though, and I went to the rest of the band and said, 'Hey, quit your jobs and

I'll keep us working.' I just took up the mantle: I sat home calling around, spending months – years – getting us gigs. And it clicked."

It certainly did: Madden and her Cherish the Ladies colleagues will come to town this month – they perform Feb. 16 at the City Winery Boston – having just begun the band's 35th year. The group's tour comes on the heels of its newest album, "Heart of the Home," their 17th overall, including the record-

(Continued on page 11)

## May wins a Brexit point; Irish prep for 'no deal'

BIR STAFF

Speaking late last month after British lawmakers had backed a move to reopen negotiations with the European Union over the so-called Northern Ireland "backstop," Prime Minister Theresa May said that it was now "clear that there is a route that can secure a substantial and sustainable majority in this house for leaving the EU with a deal."

May said she would now seek to deal with concerns – primarily from the right wing of her own Conservative party – over the backstop, an insurance policy in the withdrawal deal to avoid a hard border between the Republic of Ireland (which is in the EU) and Northern Ireland after Brexit.

In a statement issued after the votes, the Irish government said its position on the Brexit deal has not changed. Both it and the EU have repeatedly said since the draft deal was published in November, that it cannot be amended. The statement from Taoiseach Leo Varadkar's office said, "The withdrawal agreement is not open for re-negotiation. We have consistently said that we want the closest possible future relationship between the EU and the UK. A change in the UK red lines could lead to a change in the political declaration on the framework for the future relationship, and a better overall outcome."

The Irish government also said it will continue its preparations for a no-deal scenario. Earlier this month it said it was implementing its plans for a no-deal Brexit and would be prioritizing Brexit legislation through Dáil Éireann (Irish parliament) in the form of an "omnibus bill."

Said May, "There is limited appetite for such a change in the EU and negotiating it will not be easy," a statement that triggered a round of jeers from the House of Commons. "But in contrast to

(Continued on page 14)

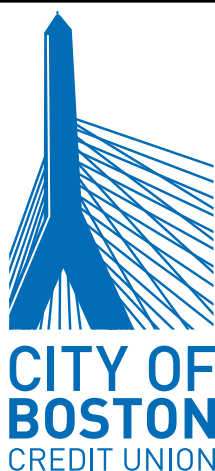
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### A new look for Aer Lingus craft

Aer Lingus unveiled its new "aircraft livery" last month, revealing, at left, the prototype in a hangar at Dublin Airport. Published online reports about the new strategy give some interesting details about the carrier's plans going forward. The main body of the aircraft is white after market research showed that people associated the green-dominant one of a predecessor with a primarily local network.

See Ed Forry's Publisher's Notes on Page 4.  
**250 inaugurate Nollaig na mBan event**

More than 250 attended the inaugural Nollaig na mBan (Women's Christmas) Boston Breakfast Celebration on Jan. 10 at Boston Harbor Hotel, hosted by the Irish American Partnership. The program featured inspiring remarks by former Irish Ambassador to the US Anne Anderson, left, and the eighth President of Ireland, Mary McAleese. See Page 7 for more photos.



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# BIR NOTEBOOK



Sean Cannon  
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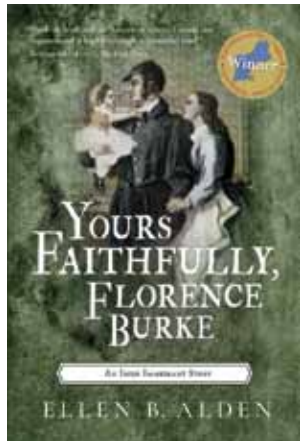
Sean Kyne  
Galway, Mayo

### Irish ministers plan to visit Boston in February, March

The city will host two Irish politicians who represent constituencies in County Galway in the coming weeks.

In February, Minister Ciarán Cannon TD will be in Boston on Feb. 12 to speak at a conference at the Boston College Club. He is also expected, in his role as minister for the Irish diaspora, to visit the Irish Cultural Centre in Canton and meet with other Irish

### Consulate's Book Club meets on Feb. 27



Boston's Irish Consulate has extended an open invitation for an upcoming meeting of its Irish Book Club on Wed., Feb. 27, from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. The discussion will center on local author Ellen B. Alden's book "Yours Faithfully, Florence Burke: An Irish Immigrant Story," winner of

the Independent Publishers of New England Book Award.

A published synopsis at Goodreads.com reads, "Irish immigrant Florence Burke has lived in Massachusetts for more than a decade but he's still a tenant farmer and his family lives in near poverty. He came to America for a better life, but finds his adoptive country less than hospitable. Florence recognizes that owning land is the path to prosperity, but the bank won't grant him a loan and he's running out of options. "An opportunity arises that could make his dreams come true, but it involves great personal risk to both himself and his family. He recalls the gamble he took when he fled the Potato Famine in Ireland, and wonders if he could make a gamble on his life one more time? Will his wife and children understand his decision to join the war?" Attendance is free and open to the public, but registration is required and space is limited. Register online at [eventbrite.com/e/february-book-club-at-the-consulate-tickets-55049086299](http://eventbrite.com/e/february-book-club-at-the-consulate-tickets-55049086299).

groups and organizations.

A native and resident of Kiltullagh, Athenry, Cannon is an award-winning musician and songwriter and an avid cyclist, regularly participating in a 900 km fundraising cycle for the Irish Pilgrimage Trust, a national charity caring for children and young people with disabilities.

In March, the Irish Government will send Chief Whip and Minister of State for Gaelige, Gaeltacht, and the Islands Seán Kyne TD to Boston to represent the country at St Patrick's Day events. Kyne is responsible for the day-to-day running of government business in the Dáil, and he has special responsibility for promotion of the Irish language.

A former member of the Galway County Council for Connemara, he was first elected to Dáil Éireann in 2011, and represents the constituency of Galway West and Mayo South, including the City, Connemara, and areas from Clarinbridge and Oranmore through Claregalway to Annaghdown and Corrandulla. Kyne lives in Clydagh, just outside of Moycullen. He holds degrees in Agricultural Science at NUI, Galway, and UCD.

### Women in Science program at BC Club

The Consulate General of Ireland and the Global Leadership Institute at Boston College will host a panel discussion featuring leading women in STEM, and remarks from visiting Ireland Minister for the Diaspora and International Development Ciarán Cannon.

The event, "Leading the Way: An Evening to Celebrate Women in Science" will be held on Tues., Feb. 12, from 6 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at the Boston College Club, 100 Federal Street in downtown Boston. Among the panelists will be Elizabeth O'Day, CEO and Founder of Olaris Therapeutics, Aoife Ryan, International Development Lead at Science Foundation Ireland, and Máire Quigley, principal scientist at Novartis Institutes for BioMedical Research (NIBR). Space is limited, and registration is required. For details, email [James.Cribbs@dfa.ie](mailto:James.Cribbs@dfa.ie).

### BC to host Irish Studies conference

The Irish Studies Doctoral Students of Boston College, in conjunction with the Center for Irish Programs, will launch "Comhfhios Boston College," an annual conference emphasizing new theories, new media, and innovative approaches to Irish Studies. The event will take place on Sat., Feb. 24, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. at BC's Connolly House, 300 Hammond Street, Chestnut Hill.

Comhfhios, meaning "knowledge together" or "open to all knowledge," invites emerging scholars in Irish Studies to gather in Boston, share research projects, and generate new discourses within the discipline.

This year will focus on the concept of "Living Irishness." Topics can include pop culture, cross-culture, new materialisms, the everyday, and representations of what it means to live or perform Irishness.



AFL-CIO leader Steve Tolman is pictured with Fr. Sean McManus and Barbara Flaherty, both officers of the Irish National Caucus based in Washington DC.

## Top state labor leader wins World Peace Prize

Steven Tolman, president of the Massachusetts AFL-CIO, was presented with the World Peace Prize as a "Roving Ambassador for Peace" at a ceremony on Jan. 15 at Dorchester's Florian Hall.

Rev. Dr. Han Min Su, who founded the World Peace Prize in Seoul, South Korea, in 1989, is a Presbyterian minister.

The presentation was made by Rev. Sean McManus, chief judge of the World Peace Prize and president of the Capitol Hill-based Irish National Caucus; the ceremony was chaired by Barbara Flaherty, a judge of the World Peace Prize Awarding Council, and executive vice president of the Irish National Caucus.

The World Peace Prize Awarding Council consists of a 14-member board of international and interfaith panel of judges comprised of representatives of the world's nine major religions: Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Catholicism, Protestantism, Russian Orthodox, and Zoroastrianism.

"Working for peace, locally or globally, means, in effect and of necessity, working for social justice," said Rev. McManus.

"Therefore, members of the labor movement are ideally qualified to be recipients of our World Peace Prize.

"Steven Tolman, president of the Massachusetts AFL-CIO — a charismatic, energetic, and passionate labor leader — eminently deserves this prize. As Pope John Paul II has said, 'Peace is the fruit of solidarity.' And the American labor movement knows a thing or two about solidarity."

Said Tolman in his acceptance speech: "I am humbled by this award because I truly believe that every union leader and activist is worthy of the same recognition. We're all working day in and day out for justice... On behalf of our members, on behalf of fairness in the workplace, on behalf of all working people who deserve a voice and their fair share.

As Martin Luther King said: 'As you press on for justice, be sure to move with dignity and discipline, using only the weapon of love. 'Thank you for the honor of receiving this award.'

Tolman's full speech will be available soon on the website [WorldPeacePrizeWashington.org](http://WorldPeacePrizeWashington.org).

## JFK Library re-opens after long government shut-down; offers free admission until Feb. 2

BY DANIEL SHEEHAN  
REPORTER STAFF

The John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum reopened Tuesday after being closed since December 22 due to the government shutdown.

With federal funding cut off, the the Columbia Point facility saw its programming and activities suspended for over a month, while the building remained vacant and its staff went furloughed without pay. Library Director Alan Price said he was excited to be back open, but acknowledged the hardships enacted upon his employees by the shutdown.

"Most of them held up for about two weeks or so, but after that the stress become much more palpable," said Price. "People lost sleep, they had a difficult time just not knowing when they would be able to get back to work. Some staff are the primary or sole breadwinners for their family, and so the impact was hardest on them."

Price added that the human toll of the shutdown extends beyond what is visible, and that his staff may still feel residual effects for some time.

"For example, you can't pull your kid out of child care to save money, because there may not be a spot for them when it's over...there's a lot of work to do working on morale, retention, and just getting everyone back in the flow of things."

Despite the challenges of the shutdown, Price says they did not lose any staff, likely, he suspects, "because of the dedication of our staff and the compelling mission of JFK library."

As a gesture of appreciation for everything the city did to support furloughed workers during the shutdown, the library and museum will be offering free admission through Saturday.

Price said that the more than a month-long closure was in all likelihood the longest stretch of time that the institution has been shuttered in its history. Some employees, he said, imagined how the building's namesake would have reacted to the ordeal.

"Thinking from a JFK perspective, you know, budget squabbles certainly precede his 35th presidency, but the idea to shut it down because of a budget issue—I think he would be quite puzzled by that decision."

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Editor's Notebook

# The ‘ungreening’ of Aer Lingus

By Ed Forry

It soon might not be quite as easy to spot the daily Aer Lingus flights from Ireland as they approach Logan Airport. That’s because the airline has commissioned a new design for its aircraft, and for Eire-philes like myself, used to looking skyward to spot the green-bellied planes flying over the neighborhood, the new look will take some getting used to.



The carrier unveiled its new “aircraft livery” last month, unveiling the prototype in a hangar at Dublin Airport. Published online reports about the new strategy reveals some interesting details about Aer Lingus’s plans going forward.

According to a report in *Forbes Magazine*, “There’s less green and a slight tilt to the shamrock. And a sense of confidence. Overseen by the brand agency Lippincott, ... the undercarriage is teal, with a few flashes of a lighter green. The main body of the aircraft is white after market research showed that people associated the green-dominant one of a predecessor with a primarily local network.”

The redesign is said to be all part of a new Aer Lingus strategy as it expands its market and adds new flights to more American cities. Chief Operating Officer Mike Rutter said the new branding was designed to reflect modern Irish society, which is “open, progressive, liberal, outward-looking, and dynamic,” according to a report by the non-profit trade group APEX. “Regarding its strategy, Aer Lingus’s new CEO, Sean Doyle, who replaced Stephen Kavanagh in January 2019, highlighted that under Aer Lingus’s new business model, the airline hopes to see 50 percent of its passengers connecting through Dublin to North America, ‘making Aer Lingus less susceptible to economic fluctuations.’

“Doyle noted that Aer Lingus has been on a journey of transformation over the last five years, expanding its route network to include Los Angeles, Newark, Hartford, Miami, Philadelphia, and Seattle, with flights to both Montreal and Minneapolis scheduled to enter service in 2019.”

The report continues, “These changes were made possible by the introduction of new aircraft, including the A330-300, two more of which are due to be delivered to Aer Lingus in 2020. The airline is also set to benefit from the introduction of the A321LR. Doyle confirmed that it plans to grow its long-haul fleet from 17 aircraft today to 30 in 2023, but that the A321LR will also be used on short-haul European flights.

“For, above all, Aer Lingus is repositioning itself as a budget carrier across the Atlantic. While travelers in the southeast of England have plenty of choice of carriers to the US and Canada, it makes a great deal of sense to use Aer Lingus if you are travelling from farther north or Scotland. And it’s worth noting that the price in economy includes one piece of checked-in luggage and meals. “The airline is expanding steadily. Above all, it is increasing its North Atlantic fleet with 16 A330s and 14 A321 long-range aircraft. This summer, there will be new flights from Dublin to Minneapolis and Montreal. There’s a rollout of wifi on the A330s, the aircraft’s business class have flatbeds, seat pitch of 58 inches and lounge access, but overall, a more affordable price tag. ‘We’re not trying to be a five-star Emirates-style airline; neither are we trying to be in the two- to three-star category, like Ryanair,’ says Rutter.”

Aer Lingus is owned by International Airline Group (IAG), a holding company that also owns British Airways and Iberia. IAG’s chief executive, Willie Walsh, is a Dublin-born pilot and a former Aer Lingus executive.

The *Irish Times* reported last month that Aer Lingus is the most profitable carrier in the IAG group. “Willie Walsh, chief executive of Aer Lingus’s parent, International Consolidated Airlines Group (IAG), said the company had done a ‘great job’ staving off competition from Ryanair.” Walsh...warned that some airlines could fail this year. ‘We’ll see some of these airlines disappear,’ he said, referring to turbulence that had hit the sector in recent months.”

By Joe Leary  
Special to the BIR

When the people of Britain voted to leave the European Union in June of 2016 they had no idea that it would cause so much harm to themselves and to their country. Their leaders had no idea, either. Two years later, the European Union and the British Parliament cannot agree on the terms of the separation.



Joe Leary

As it currently stands, in just about two months (March 29), Britain is scheduled to formally leave its European neighbors and break the agreement they have had since 1973, when the British people voted to join the Union by a vote of 67.2 percent to 32.8 percent.

In 2016, the vote was 51.8 percent to leave and 48.2 percent to stay. The “leavers” represent that portion of the British population who believe in British superiority, don’t like immigrants, and are annoyed at many needless EU regulations. EU ministers can be very officious.

It was a huge surprise when the vote was announced, and the road to leaving has been very difficult. Bitter words have been spoken, political parties have been damaged, and business has been hurt. The British completely underestimated Europe’s belief in the common market.

It is fair to say that Ireland could be hurt substantially if some of the options being discussed are put into law. The DUP conservatives in the North want a “hard border” separating them from the Republic. As members of the British Parliament, they have some

## Criminal justice reform has come full circle; the ‘fixing’ never ends

By James W. Dolan  
Special to the Reporter

Good public policy is all about establishing a sensible balance between often opposing views. In the attempt to achieve that balance, we too often go from one extreme to another. Criminal justice reform is an example. In the 1970s, rising crime rates prompted a reform emphasizing stiffer sentencing, including mandatory incarceration for drug dealers and repeat offenders. In so doing, policy makers were responding to complaints of community residents.

The reform produced the desired effect. Crime was reduced as more offenders were sentenced to long prison terms. However, there were unanticipated consequences. Draconian sentencing resulted in a huge increase in the number of those incarcerated; more often than not black males. Given the absence of other opportunities, many black youth became drug dealers as the only reasonable alternative to unemployment or under employment. It beat working at a fast food chain. They assumed the risk of being caught or worse, of being shot, because of the competitive violence common to the business.

Now, criminal justice reform has come full circle. Appalled by the numbers, cost, overcrowding, recidivism, and dismal prison conditions, the emphasis is on less incarceration and more on alternative sentencing that stresses treatment and rehabilitation. Its success or failure will depend on (a) the effectiveness of the new programs in providing training and jobs for offenders and (b) a reduction, or, at the very least, no significant increase in crime. Prison serves two obvious purposes – as a deterrent and as incapacitation, preventing those imprisoned from committing crimes.

High crime communities will support this new approach so long as they believe it enhances public safety. There is a risk that by emphasizing a more humane

influence. But the threat of renewed violence is very real if the Good Friday agreement is weakened. A recent bombing in Derry is a good example.

New leadership of both the Sinn Fein and the DUP seem unable to govern in Northern Ireland. The Assembly set up by the Good Friday agreement has not operated in well over a year, and since Sinn Fein leaders do not participate in the British Parliament, the people they represent have no voice in the Brexit discussions in London.

The situation is very serious.

Special British police units are being trained to protect the Northern Ireland border. The British army has been put on alert and reservists put on notice. If these troops move into Northern Ireland and become active, many say there will be trouble. It should be said that most in Britain do not care a whit about Northern Ireland and a “hard border.” That is especially true about British leaders.

Businesses have been moving out of Northern Ireland and Britain for more than a year. As March 29 looms closer more, more are making their goodbye announcements, as are wealthy families who are moving to France, Belgium, and Switzerland.

What will happen? The most likely first moves will involve the date of March 29. This can be adjusted and most likely will be to avoid a “no deal” exit. The “no deal” option has everyone scared to death. Already many businesses are stockpiling raw materials and other inventory to prevent shortages of hard-to-get goods. Medicine for diabetics is a particular worry.

A second possible outcome is the calling of a second referendum. This possibility seems remote since Prime Minister Theresa May is adamantly opposed to such a move.

No matter the final outcome, British voters will regret their vote to leave their compact with Europe.

approach to offenders, crime will increase. In my experience, community leaders in high crime areas are mainly concerned about safety. They invariably wanted more police and strict enforcement. Judges are often criticized for being too lenient, rarely for what might be viewed as harsh sentences.

Residents are also troubled by disorderly behavior (relatively minor offenses) that tend to diminish quality of life. Recent proposals to minimize such offenses may not sit well with the community. When I was a judge, the emphasis was on victims (actual and potential). Now it’s gradually shifting to the offender. How do we best serve him or her to assure they become productive citizens? Sometimes offenders are themselves victims, having had had few, if any, opportunities. Despite that, they still represent a threat to public safety. Judges are realists; they have to deal with things as they are, not as they should be.

The success or failure of this new wave of criminal justice “reform” will depend on achieving that elusive balance between justice and mercy, deterrence and rehabilitation, victim and offender. There is room for both, but, knowing human nature, I’m not confident we can achieve a satisfactory long-term resolution.

As you may have guessed, I’m skeptical of the word “reform.” It suggests a solution, and too often I have seen yesterday’s reform become today’s problem. Remember: Reformatories and reform schools were once considered innovations. I’m more confident in slow, incremental progress rather than sweeping changes. Preserve what’s good and make it better. So much depends on the capacity and good will of those seeking to improve any system. It takes persistence, humility, trial and error. Reform implies we are “fixing” something. For me, the fixing never ends; we can always do better.

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

## Let’s re-discover what our families mean to us

By Rev. Jack Ahern

The following are excerpts from the homily given at Mass in St. Gregory’s Church on Sun., Dec. 30:

A few weeks ago, we said goodbye to actress and comedienne Penny Marshall. Most of us remember her from her role in the television comedy “Laverne & Shirley,” but Marshall was also the director of several critically acclaimed movies, including 1992’s “A League of Their Own,” the story of the women’s professional baseball league that played during WWII that gave us the iconic line, “There’s no crying in baseball!”

But there’s another memorable and insightful moment in the film. The Rockford Peaches are on the verge of the championship when their star catcher, Dottie Hinson (played by Geena Davis), wants to return home to be with her husband, who has returned from the war badly injured. The Peaches’ manager, Jimmy Duggan (Tom Hanks) confronts Dottie:

“I thought you were a ballplayer,” he sneers. “It just got too hard,” Dottie replies.

And Duggan delivers the line that keeps Dottie in the game: “It’s supposed to be hard,” he says. “If it wasn’t hard everyone would do it. The ‘hard’ is what makes it great!”

Today, as we celebrate the Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, we also are invited to

ponder the importance of family in our lives. And if the truth be told, being family isn’t always easy. At times it is hard. But the “hard” is what makes it great.

To be sure, some of the happiest moments of our lives are celebrated within families; birthdays, holidays, graduations, weddings, births, and more. But there are also moments of pain, doubt, and despair. There are events in every family that challenge us to the core: battles with addiction, a child being bullied in school or a teen in an abusive relationship, a loss of a job, serious illness, separations, divorce, and many more.

Hard stuff – but you deal with them. Somehow you find a strength you never imagined possessing. And once you got beyond the hurt, the anger, the sense of betrayal, you realized how important each member of the family was to you, how much you needed one another and could depend on one another, how much you loved one another.

And you were ready to do anything - anything! - to keep your family together. You discovered the grace of God in your midst.

As we gather with our families this Christmas season, may we re-discover our families as harbors of forgiveness and understanding and safe places of unconditional love, welcome, and acceptance.



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# Work is continuing on Famine Memorial for Deer Island site

## May 25 dedication planned

An ad hoc Irish Great Hunger Deer Island Memorial committee last month continued to plan for the installation of a Celtic Cross to memorialize the Famine-era Irish buried in unmarked graves on the island. The memorial stone, currently being cut in a Pennsylvania quarry, is expected to be delivered to Deer Island in the early spring. The memorial was a longtime dream of a Duxbury couple, Dr. Bill O'Connell and his wife, Rita O'Connell, who set out some 20 years ago to establish a proper memorial for the more than 800 Irish souls whose remains are interred there. The O'Connells are each now deceased, but their vision appears about to become a reality. Site preparation work (in photograph at right) is nearing completion, and current plans call for a Memorial Day weekend unveiling and dedication ceremonies on Saturday, May 25. A website is under development at deerislandirish.com. (Photo courtesy Mike Carney.)



# WHAT'S IN A NAME? Irish America's 'Baghdad Bob' Is A Man Named Mick

BY PETER F. STEVENS  
BIR STAFF

It's over, at least for now. As of this writing, the partial shutdown/presidential temper tantrum ignited by Donald Trump's demand for a border wall or bust is over until Feb. 15. Still, as the president is already making noise that another shutdown or his declaration of a national emergency to strip defense spending to finance his wall is in the offing, his currently preferred mouthpiece is an Irish-American enabler who is serving as the quintessential "yes man" for his erratic boss. Mick Mulvaney, Acting Chief of Staff at the White House, has embraced his role as White House lackey, eager to please the president and never, ever to question any of his actions or comments, no matter how questionable.

### Point of View

Even the former White House chief of staff, the retired four-star general John Kelly, who has seen his hard-earned military reputation tarnished by his own obeisance and constant support of Donald Trump's antipathy toward immigrants and anyone who fits the Nativist description of the "other," joined fellow former secretaries of Homeland Security in signing a letter imploring the president to end the Federal shutdown for reasons of national security. On CBS's "Face the Nation" and "Fox News Sunday," Mulvaney chirped that Trump is ready, willing, and able to shut down the government again if Congress refuses the approximately \$5.75 billion he is demanding so he can start on his border wall. More to the point, the president is reportedly seething at how Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi forced him to back down and reopen the government without a cent for the wall, barrier, steel slats, or whatever other fluid description escapes the lips of Trump or the new "Baghdad Bob," aka Mick Mulvaney. With the president's other oh-so-pliable and cowardly boyo, erstwhile Speaker Paul Ryan, having slinked out of Washington, Mulvaney is left to contend with Pelosi, who has served notice that she understands Trump and will not hesitate to buck him when she needs to. He is accustomed to the likes of Mulvaney, Ryan, and Kellyanne Conway not only bending to Trumpian will and whims, but also twisting his tweets and other utterances into a political knots. The president's Irish-American acolytes do possess



Mick Mulvaney

varying dollops of the proverbial gift of gab, but their skillfully garbled "translations" of what Trump "really meant to say" grow increasingly tortured. One fact that they are unlikely to raise with Trump is that the GOP, the very party that has cringed in fear from his incendiary tweets and from his hard-right-base, went along with his recent shutdown but faced heavy and ominous opposition from a majority of Americans in virtually every reputable poll from the left and the right. Senate Leader Mitch McConnell hid from the shutdown for weeks, but he knows that he faces a rebellion from his caucus if the president is going to unleash a second shutdown round. Additionally, McConnell understands full well that if Trump invokes a national emergency over the border, he is setting the stage for a future Democratic president to declare the same over the climate-change crisis or other issues that are toxic to the hard right. What Speaker Pelosi grasps is that if her side ever allows the president to get his way by closing parts of the government, he will use the tactic again and again. In *Politico*, Nancy Cook wrote about the shutdown "that began before he [Mulvaney] took on the role, an overworked skeleton crew in the West Wing, and a newly empowered Democratic majority — people can try their best to blame these things on Mick, but he cares about one thing: executing the president's agenda," said Jonathan Slemrod, one of Mulvaney's former top aides at the Office of Management and Budget... Those words reveal that even in attempting to defend his former boss, Slemrod acknowledges that Mulvaney cares only about serving his president with blind and

compliant allegiance—no questions asked. At the moment, the likeliest bet for Feb. 15 is that Mulvaney will prepare the ground for a manufactured national emergency over a second shutdown. It's a lose-lose proposition for the nation as a whole. This fine broth of an Irish-American lad will carry the deceitful verbal weight of President Donald J. Trump with shameless and spineless loyalty. "Men and Women For, and With, Others"

As February ushers in Black History Month and the nation grapples still with the omnipresent issue of prejudice in all its forms, the above words that infuse the Jesuit principles that founded Holy Cross College resonate in the improbable saga of Bishop James Healy, a landmark figure in both African-American and Irish-American annals. Healy, who became both the first ordained African-American Catholic priest and first African-American Catholic bishop, was born on a plantation near Macon, Georgia, in 1839 to Co. Roscommon immigrant Morris Healy and "Mary Eliza, a mixed-race domestic slave." James was the couple's tenth child. Because Georgia law prohibited interracial marriage, the Irishman, who was deeply in love with Mary Eliza and flouted convention by treating her as his wife, sent his children north to be educated. In 1844, James was sent to Worcester, Mass., to begin his education. He went on to fledgling Holy Cross College and graduated as valedictorian in the school's first graduating class in 1849. He earned a master's degree there and decided to enter the priesthood. With the sponsorship of Boston Bishop Bernard Fitzpatrick, Healy was ordained on June 10, 1854, at Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris to serve in Boston. Twenty-one years later, Pope Pius IX appointed Healy as the bishop of Portland, Maine, in 1875.



Bishop Healy

Throughout his life, Healy, the son of the Irish plantation owner and the slave he loved, revered Holy Cross as the place where his entire career took shape. Instead of burial in the vault of the Portland, Maine, cathedral when he died in 1900, Healy had specified that he be buried in a simple graveyard at Holy Cross. At the school he so loved, a building fittingly bears his name today.

# Becoming a 'Bostonian' – Niamh McAteer's story

An internship placement year can open up so many possibilities for Irish students, none more so than for Ulster University student Niamh McAteer. Niamh, who hails from Kilrea in Derry, who is working toward a degree in Business Economics and Marketing, is enjoying an internship opportunity in Boston at the IIIC. As a development associate, she is engaged in a varied range of tasks that complement her university studies, from data management to graphic design and donor relations. For some, a year abroad can seem daunting, but Niamh has flourished in America and feels "a lot more independent." In fact, she says, she feels she has lived in the welcoming city of Boston for years! For many other Irish J-1 exchange visitors who are undertaking an internship in Boston, Niamh has become the vibrant and familiar face of the IIIC's Learning Exchange Program. She shares, "Not only do I live with fellow J-1s, I try to welcome everyone who has arrived when they visit the center and include them in local events and activities." Keen to make the most of her time in America, Niamh has already travelled across many states including Maine, Illinois, New Jersey, and New York, with a dream to visit Nashville before her year finishes. One highlight of her year so far was experiencing Thanksgiving with distant rela-



Niamh McAteer and Mary McAleese at the Irish American Partnership's recent Nollaig na mBan Boston

tives in New Jersey. She explains, "it was lovely to see a different and unique tradition like that first hand." Becoming a true Bostonian already, Niamh has invested herself in the city's fervent sports culture, attending the Red Sox World Series Championship

Parade, watching the Celtics play in a recent home game, and cheering passionately during the Patriot's AFC Championship Game. Never one to say no to new challenges or miss opportunities, Niamh has attended many cultural events and met a number of influential leaders from Massachusetts and from Ireland along the way. Describing it as her most surreal experience during her time in the United States thus far, Niamh joined and volunteered at an Irish Women in Leadership Breakfast to hear the former President of Ireland, Mary McAleese, and former Ambassador of Ireland to the US Anne Anderson speak. She says her favorite moment of the event was during the Q&A section when McAleese responded thoughtfully and enthusiastically to a question that Niamh posed on women in leadership. "It was so inspiring to hear Mary McAleese talk about the struggles one encounters and can overcome as a woman in politics." Here at the IIIC, Niamh has become an integral member of our team, and we are delighted that she is making the most of her time in the United States. We wish her all the best throughout the coming months as she rounds off her experience in Boston, and are so grateful that she decided to pursue an internship with us!



IRISH INTERNATIONAL IMMIGRANT CENTER

An agency accredited by US Department of Justice

One State Street, 8th Floor, Boston, MA 02109 (617) 542-7654 Fax (617) 542-7655

Website: [iiicenter.org](http://iiicenter.org) Email: [immigration@iiicenter.org](mailto:immigration@iiicenter.org)

# IIIC receives \$140,000 grant from Fish Family Foundation

The IIIC is the grateful recipient of a two-year grant of \$140,000 from the Fish Family Foundation in support of its Citizenship Engagement Program. The foundation is a private family foundation located in Boston that is committed to supporting community organizations dedicated to helping new American families improve the qualities of their lives.

“The Fish Family Foundation’s vision of promoting engaged citizenship is fully aligned with IIIC’s vision, values and work. Immigrants have much to offer America and becoming a US citizen is the beginning of a new journey. Immigrants are courageous, entrepreneurial, and care deeply about community. As they become fully engaged citizens these attributes will help create a much better future for us all,” says Executive Director

Ronnie Millar. “The IIIC has championed immigrant issues for many years and assisted people from across the world as they make Boston their new home. This work aligns with our commitment to immigrant inclusion and we are thrilled to offer support for the IIIC’s relentless work,” said family member Larry Fish in a statement.

Matters of Substance

## Of women navigating alcohol use

By Rachel Reisman

As 2019 begins, we at the IIIC are pausing to think about the many women who may be taking stock of their alcohol use. For women, this is most often done in silence, and alone. Due to the particular shame women face about substance use, the different cultural factors involved in alcohol use for women, and the particular challenges they navigate in seeking help, women end up seeking out help with substance use less than men do. For many, they worry about losing their children if they talk about alcohol use, they can’t find childcare to attend appointments, and they fear being shamed and judged.

Alcohol overuse accounts for 88,000 deaths a year in the United States. Cirrhosis and deaths related to alcohol have been on the rise since 2006. Binge drinking is now diagnosed more frequently in young women than in men, and our culture is heavily invested in pro-



The IIIC Wellness team is here for you! We provide confidential, culturally competent counseling and case management. Contact us for a chat, to problem solve, and to figure out the next best step for you!

moting excessive drinking as a fun, independent, glamorous thing to do. Marketing alcohol use to mothers has intensified over the past 10-15 years, with “wine-o’clock” and “Mommy’s Time-Out” blogs, and books tout alcohol as the way to manage the stresses of being female, a mother, and a caretaker.

It’s an onslaught and part of why more women of late are beginning to re-evaluate the emotional and physical costs of using alcohol to cope on a daily basis. While medical groups define excessive alcohol use for women as beyond 8 drinks a week, most who exceed this

don’t meet the diagnostic criteria for alcoholism or dependence. What’s most important is how your use affects your daily life. Alcohol use is a personal inventory just as recovery is different for everyone. One size does not fit all and all pathways to feeling better are valid.

While both men and women may turn to alcohol for relief from underlying depression and anxiety, women who rely on alcohol to manage very often carry a history of sexual abuse in their teens, domestic violence, the onslaught of cultural pressures about body image, and being the “perfect mother” while working and parenting, and the daily grind of self-doubt and feeling invisible. Many women are joining online support groups to speak of their isolation, the expectations of caretaking and working, and how they turned to alcohol to forget, to relax, to find a respite.

The good news for 2019 when it comes to women and alcohol use is that there are now so many more ways to make changes! Whether a woman wants to live sober or wants to change how and when she uses alcohol, whether she needs medicine to manage cravings or finds therapy a big help, whether she attends the women’s meetings in AA or likes Smart Recovery instead: it’s all valid. IIIC’s Wellness Services team work this way and is always here to listen to your goals and how we can help you get there.

We’re passing along a few great resources to jump start anyone who may be taking a look at her alcohol use this year, and please be in touch for any help navigating it all!

Caroline Knapp’s book: “Drinking: A Love Story” is a great memoir by Boston journalist (soberistas.com); Online worldwide support for women seeking change (sobermoomies.com); aaboston.org, a MA based online community for women & alcohol change with a full schedule of meetings including women’s meetings; the app Check-up & Choices, popular for making changes in alcohol use

Rachel Reisman, LIC-SW, is IIIC’s Director of Wellness Services. [rreisman@iiicente5r.org](mailto:rreisman@iiicente5r.org); 617-542-7654.

Immigration Q&A

## Legal permanent residence: key dates

Q. I have an interview scheduled with US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) on my application for permanent residence. Assuming the interview goes well, what happens next?

A. In cases where the interview is successful, the USCIS officer has the authority to grant you permanent residence immediately. Your new status will begin on the very same day as the interview, and for most people will be valid for ten years. People applying through a US citizen spouse who have been married for less than two years at the time of approval receive “conditional permanent residence” that is valid for two years.

After the interview, the officer will order production of your permanent resident card (I-551, or “green card”). In cases where no interview is required, a notice of a favorable decision is mailed to the applicant. In both types of cases, the actual card will be sent to the mailing address on record with USCIS -- so make sure to inform USCIS, not just the Post Office, right away if you change your address. The easiest way to report your change of address is online at [www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov).

New permanent residents should be aware of the following:

(1) “Conditional” permanent residents (those who were granted permanent residence based on marriage to a US citizen) need to petition to have the conditions removed before the two-year green card expires. The I-751 Petition to Remove Conditions on Residence must be filed within the 90 day period preceding the expiration date. Once the petition is approved, the applicant will receive a new green card valid for 10 years.

(2) Once conditional permanent residents have their conditions removed, they are eligible to become naturalized US citizens three years after the date that their first application for permanent residence was approved. Naturalization applications may be filed as early as 90 days before the end of this three-year period.

(3) With certain exceptions (involving military service, for example), all other green card holders are eligible to become naturalized US citizens five years after the grant of permanent residence. Again, naturalization applications may be filed as early as 90 days before the five years have expired.

Remember that eligibility for US citizenship involves other criteria in addition to the length of permanent residence – good moral character, English language proficiency, and physical presence in the US.

IIIC can advise you on your eligibility for permanent residence or naturalization at one of our weekly legal clinics. You can find out IIIC’s clinic schedule by calling 617-542-7654 or by visiting [iiicenter.org](http://iiicenter.org).

Disclaimer: These articles are published to inform generally, not to provide advice in specific cases. Immigration laws are subject to change, and 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 of IIIC immigration legal staff.

LEGAL ASSISTANCE

The Irish International Immigrant Center’s immigration attorneys and social workers are available for all immigrants during this time of uncertainty and concern in our community. We are closely following the changes in immigration policies, and are available for confidential, legal consultations, and case representation. At weekly legal clinics, you can receive a free and confidential consultation with staff and volunteer attorneys. For information, or if you or anyone you know would like to speak to an immigration attorney, please call us at (617) 542-7654.

Clinics are in the evening – please do not arrive more than 30 minutes before the clinic begins for registration.

Downtown Boston

IIIC, One State Street, 8th Floor, Boston - Tues., Feb. 5 and 19 at 4 p.m.

Brighton

The Green Briar Pub, 304 Washington St. – Mon., Feb. 11 at 6:30 p.m.

South Boston

Labouré Center, 275 West Broadway – Tues., Feb. 26 at 6 p.m.

Citizenship Clinics

IIIC, One State Street, 8th Floor - Wednesdays from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Walk-ins are welcome!

Our Downtown Boston location is fully accessible by public transportation. Phone: 617-542-7654 | Fax: 617-542-7655 | [iiicenter.org](http://iiicenter.org)

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CONTACT:

Siobhan Kelly  
617.542.7654, ext. 15  
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Classes run for 8 weeks from 6:30-8:30pm.

CUMANN NA GAELGE I MBOSTON

Irish Language Society of Boston





BRETT'S BOSTON

By Harry Brett

Exclusive photos of Boston Irish people & events

More than 250 attended the inaugural Nollaig na mBan (Women's Christmas) Boston Breakfast Celebration on January 10 at Boston Harbor Hotel, hosted by the Irish American Partnership. The program featured inspiring remarks by the eighth President of Ireland, Mary McAleese and former Irish Ambassador to the US Anne Anderson. The traditional event each year celebrates women leadership in the family and community. Sponsors included Geraghty Associates, the Boston College Global Leadership Institute, Invest Northern Ireland, John Hancock, Just Happy Tears, Mary Kelleher, and Sullivan & Worcester.

1.) Fontbonne Academy Select Chorus with Mary McAleese; 2.) Mary Conroy Henderson, Norwood; 3.) Sandra O'Sullivan, Nigel Keenan and Julian Keenan, all of Andover; 4.) Raphaele, Tim and Helen Kirk of Needham; 5.) Anne Anderson, former Irish Ambassador to the US; Mary McAleese, former Irish President; and Mary Sugrue, CEO Irish American Partnership; 6.) Therese Murphy, Washington, DC; Niamh McAteer, Dorchester; Coldagh Boyle, Quincy; 7.) Jill and Aidan Browne, So. Boston; 8.) Mary Swanton, Milton; Jim Brett, Dorchester; 9.) Don Adams, Whitman; Ann Sexton, Milton; 10.) Msgr. Liam Bergin, Boston College; Pauline Vaughan, Aer Lingus; Martina and Craig Carlson, Boston; 11.) Bernie O'Reilly, Newton; Maudy Doohar, Needham.



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# Assembling the class for ‘School of Rock’

By R. J. DONOVAN  
SPECIAL TO THE BIR

What would “The King & I” have been like without Yul Brynner? Or “Evita” without Patti LuPone? Or “Music Man” without Robert Preston?

It’s obvious that casting is essential to theatrical success. The casting director works closely with a show’s director, producer, writer, and creative team to help find the perfect actor for just the right role. That includes everyone from the ensemble to the star.

Claire Burke, pictured on next page, is a casting director at Tara Rubin Casting in New York. She has worked on a number of recent Broadway hits, including “Miss Saigon,” “A Bronx Tale” and “Bandstand” (which included Boston’s own Mary Callanan).

However “School of Rock: The Musical” is very special to Claire because it’s the first project she has been a part of from its initial audition to its national tour -- which plays the Boston Opera House from Feb. 12 to Feb. 24.

Based on the hit film of the same name, “School of Rock” follows Dewey Finn, a failed rock singer who masquerades as a substitute music teacher at a prestigious prep school. He winds up turning a class of straight-A 5th graders into a bona fide, guitar-shredding rock band. The multi-talented young cast members all play their own instruments on stage.

The original music is by Andrew Lloyd Webber with a book by “Downton Abbey” creator Julian Fellowes.

Before working in casting, Claire was a founding member of the Mad and Merry Theatre Company where she produced, assistant directed, and performed. She also worked as House Manager at the Irish Arts Center.

She holds a BFA from NYU where she studied Drama (with the Atlantic Acting School) and Irish Studies. She also studied at Dublin’s Trinity College during her junior year, which she describes as “absolutely one of the best experiences of my life.”

Claire spoke about her work and “School of Rock” from her offices in Manhattan. Here’s an edited look at our chat.

**Q.** You studied acting at NYU, but you ended up in casting. How did that happen?

**A.** I’d always been really curious about casting. In school I really loved watching people do their scenes and figuring out where they would fit best in the larger scheme of the show. I was always fascinated by it, and then (an initial) internship (at Rubin) kind of solidified that for me.

**Q.** When are you contracted to work on a new show?

**A.** We’re usually brought in at the very beginning. If it’s a new play, we’ll get an early draft of the script. And we often work with the director and writer as the script gets developed, as far as what they’re looking for and what actors they’re interested in seeing . . . Sometimes we cast readings . . . deciding on actors who will do the reading and read the show out loud so the writer can get a sense of how it sounds.

**Q.** Do you stage an Open Casting Call or scheduled auditions for specific actors?

**A.** It depends on the show . . . Every show has an Actors Equity required call . . . That allows basically any member of Actors Equity to come in and have an initial audition with us. Usually after that we hold an invited call for the creative team. For certain shows, mainly when we’re looking for specific things, and when there’s not generally a pool (of specific talent) . . . that’s generally when we hold an Open Call. For instance, for “School of Rock,” we definitely hold Open Calls because we’re looking for so many little kids who are amazing instrumentalists.

**Q.** Working with young performers must require a specific skill set.

**A.** We’re very mindful that we’re seeing kids who are really young -- they’re between 8 and 12 years old. We always want to handle that with care. There are some 12 year olds who are in the business for a while and know how it goes. But a lot of the kids we’re seeing really aren’t in theater at all. We find them through their music teachers or their band programs and this is all totally new for them.

**Q.** “School of Rock” was a very popular film. What drives the stage show?

**A.** I think part of what makes it special is what makes theater so special, the live component and getting to see all this talent right in front of you. These kids are so incredibly talented. They’re playing all this music, live on stage every night . . . Not to mention that Andrew Lloyd Webber’s music is something new to the show since the movie. It’s really fun.

**Q.** Is Lloyd Webber pro-active during casting and rehearsals?

**A.** He’s very involved . . . He will come in at the end of the process and have what we call our Finals, where it’s usually narrowed down to just a couple of people for each role. He always loves to be there for that, and he’s very hands on in the audition room, which was something interesting for me to see. Especially with the kids. He’s great about working with them and giving them notes.

**Q.** Before we end, tell me about your time at the Irish Arts Center?

**A.** My best memory is that every St. Patrick’s Day they’d pass out free books by Irish and Irish American authors at different spots around the city. So there were several years where I’d wake up at 4 in the morning and go up to a subway station in the Bronx and hand out books. It was a really gratifying thing to do and a great way spread Irish culture around the city on St. Patrick’s Day.

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

“School of Rock: The Musical,” Feb. 12 – 24, Boston Opera House. Info: 800-982-2787 or BroadwayInBoston.com.



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Claire Burke, Casting Director for “School of Rock: The Musical,” at The Boston Opera House.



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### Writers workshop for Women

Saturday March 9th, 2019  
from 9.30-1pm

No previous writing experience necessary. In the writing circle format, we will write to prompts, read and receive feedback that supports our writing and our story. For this workshop we will take a look at heritage, home and connection to place. This workshop will help you write and reflect on important connections, events and memories within a fun and encouraging environment. - Lara O'Brien

Admission \$30 / \$25 for members of ICC. Limited space, 15 people max.

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## BCM Fest 2019

The 16th annual BCMFest (Boston Celtic Music Fest) took place Jan. 17-20 in Harvard Square at Club Passim, The Atrium and The Sinclair, featuring numerous musicians, singers and dancers with ties to the Boston area Celtic community. Special guests to the festival this year were renowned Irish-American fiddler Liz Carroll and Kevin Henderson, a fiddler from the Shetland Islands -- the two were featured in the BCMFest Nightcap concert and gave workshops.

*Sean Smith photos*



Laura Feddersen of Wooden Nickels during the trio's performance at the BCMFest Roots and Branches Concert, held in Club Passim.



Liz Carroll joined the "Live at the Druid" band for BCMFest's Boston Urban Ceilidh in The Atrium.



Michael O'Leary presented songs of immigration at BCMFest's DayFest in Club Passim, with accompaniment from (L-R) Jen and Bob Strom and Steve Levy.



Boston-based quartet Ship in the Clouds was among the acts at BCMFest's DayFest in The Sinclair.

## These 'Ladies' cherish the golden chalice passed down to them

(Continued from page 1)

ing that helped serve as Cherish the Ladies' launch point. It's also the second with the band's revamped line-up following the departure of Boston-area fiddler Grainne Murphy, Nollaig Casey (fiddle, viola) having joined Madden and co-founder Mary Coogan (guitar, banjo, mandolin), Mirella Murray (accordion) and Kathleen Boyle (keyboards, vocals); vocalist Kate Purcell -- who sings on one track -- will be with the group for their Boston appearance.

Cherish the Ladies has been hailed for drawing attention to the contribution of women to Irish music, and -- given that some of its past and present members, like Madden, are Americans of Irish ancestry -- showcasing the vibrancy of Irish-American music. The list of musicians associated with Cherish the Ladies, whether in the original iteration or the band that followed, is impressive to say the least: Liz Carroll (who'll also be with the band for the Feb. 16 show), Eileen Ivers, Aoife Clancy, Winifred Horan, Mary Rafferty, Deirdre Connolly, Donna Long, Bridget Fitzgerald, Rose Conway Flanagan, Cathie Ryan, and Heidi Talbot, among others.

But for Madden, Cherish the Ladies' significance also has a personal, familial dimension. "Wherever we may be from, whether the US or Ireland or elsewhere, a lot of us who've been in the band are daughters of musicians," explains Madden, whose father Joe was an All-Ireland champion accordionist from Galway. "So for us, the music is like a golden chalice passed down. Cherish the Ladies is all about being true to the tradition and legacy, not just putting on a tune. We're strict about our material -- if it's not something passed down, it's something we went digging for, in old recordings or collections. But we also find new tunes and songs that fit the mold. We're conscious and respectful of the role we play as tradition-bearers -- and we're proud to do it."

That pride, and the vitality that goes with it, animates "Heart of the Home." The band's instrumental prowess is as potent as ever, as is their talent for arrangement: On the "Paddy Mills"

Fancy/Eel in the Sink/Johnny Henry's Reel" set, for instance, Boyle lays out a lovely opening for Madden (on flute) and Murray, who pairs up with Boyle for a sprightly duet at one point during the second tune, and then Coogan joins in on banjo to bring it home.

Boyle also plays solo, all graceful and limber, at the outset of an upbeat medley that begins with the jig "The Murphy Boys," leading into a typically festive O'Carolan piece, "Planxty Johnson." It's Coogan's turn in the spotlight, with some deft finger-picked guitar, at the start of her own "Gloria's Travels"; Casey joins with Boyle to jumpstart her reel, "Gallop the Glen," and Madden's "Montana Reel" finishes off the set in a rollicking spirit-of-the-West fashion.

A linked pair of Madden-composed tunes merits attention not just for the quality of the music but for the story behind them: "The Portumna Workhouse" refers to a notorious structure in her father's East Galway hometown built by the English to house the destitute during the Great Famine; Madden's whistle (with more fine backing by Coogan) leads the solemn, respectful tribute to those who made it out -- and those who didn't. "The Hurling Boys of Portumna," meanwhile, offers a far more revered memory of her father's birthplace, and its accomplished sportsmen.

Like their live shows, Cherish the Ladies' recordings have almost always featured guests, and the tradition continues here, with appearances by Trevor Hutchinson on double bass, Donnchadh Gough on bodhran, and Peter McKinney on percussion. But, as in the past, it's the invited singers who give the proceedings an Irish-American family ceilidh ambience, whether taking on gripping traditional ballads or more contemporary tug-at-the-heartstrings songs. On the trad side of things, All-Ireland champion vocalist Molly O'Riordan provides an enthralling "The Little Thatched Cabin," while the Ennis Sisters (Maureen, Karen, and Teresa) of Newfoundland bring a Canadian Maritimes lilt to the sea shanty "Ambletown."

"Glenties," written by Dublin's Maurice McGrath in fond memory of a

Donegal beauty spot, is a bridge of sorts between the traditional and contemporary song material, and Purcell lends an appropriate air of nostalgia to it. Fans of Silly Wizard and the late Andy M. Stewart in particular, meantime can give ear to the rendition of his "Heart of the Home" by country singer Nathan Carter, Liverpool-born to Irish parents and now residing in their home country. Galway singer-songwriter Don Stiffe -- who lived in Boston during the 1990s -- covers "Shadow of a Singer and His Song," a rumination by Sligo's Dermot Henry on the risk of viewing music as a career choice rather than a source of personal fulfillment.

"We're not fussy about where a song comes from, but how it speaks to us, what kind of connection we can find in it that relates to where we've come from," says Madden, who points out that the group once covered a Dan Fogelberg song, "Leader of the Band," which includes the phrase "I am a living legacy to the leader of the band."

"I felt like that song was written about me. It meant so much to all of us, as the daughters of musicians." (Madden notes that the late Fogelberg called her after the band's version came out, and after acknowledging his general distaste for covers of his songs, gave Cherish the Ladies a thumbs-up.)

Funny thing is, "Home of the Heart" came together somewhat before its time, says Madden. The band had a tour to China planned last year, but when it fell through, they were at loose ends.

"I felt it might be too soon to start work on album -- I didn't want to lose the quality control," she says. "However, there we were in West Clare, with its beautiful scenery, and sessions in the local pub -- and lo and behold, everything came together. When you surround yourself with people who know what they're doing, and with whom you have such a great connection, everyone gives a piece of themselves and the experience is wonderful. It just works."

It has been working since the mid-'80s, when eminent musician and folklorist Mick Moloney noted how many of the Americans winning All-Ireland Fleadh

titles were women, including Madden, and reached out to them with his idea of a concert. Madden was the one who proposed the name, which happens to be the title of a jig but neatly summed up the concept behind the project: to value and respect women for what they bring to Irish traditional music.

"We've had such a great time, not just because of the music but the friendship, the love, the camaraderie," she says. "You're like sisters on the road. Over time, there were marriages and children -- I'll have the baby and I'll be back! -- or people felt it was simply time to move on; that's how it is. But we've become a family in many ways." (That's not hyperbole: Witness the all-female band Girsá, for example, which includes children and students of Cherish the Ladies members.)

And while Madden had never expected to become a band promoter/marketer/manager, she has felt comfortable enough about doing the job that after outsourcing management for a time, she took it back on again (even though, she admits, there was that episode in which she botched travel arrangements, sending half the band to Kansas City, Missouri, and half to Kansas City, Kansas).

"I've learned that it's more important to be a good business person than a good musician," she says with a laugh. "But you know, you're only as good as the people you associate with, and on that count I've been extremely fortunate. Like I said, everyone gives something of themselves to help the band along."

By now, of course, it's not as if the band struggles to make itself known, or to put bodies in the seats.

"We've put our live game out there enough so people know they'll have a good time when they come see us," declares Madden with her characteristic joviality. "We have a ball doing this, and we feel fortunate to make a living at it. Hey, I was just a girl from the Bronx -- I never expected it would last 35 years. But you know, we'll keep going until the phone stops ringing."

*City Winery Boston is located at 80 Beverly Street; tickets and other information available at [citywinery.com/boston](http://citywinery.com/boston).*



# Celtic Woman – and ‘Ancient Land’ – New England-bound in March

Celtic Woman’s latest tour, featuring the ensemble’s latest recording, “Ancient Land,” is heading for New England, with stops planned in Concord (NH) at the Capitol Theatre on March 29, in Providence at the Performing Arts Center on April 2, in Hartford at the Bushnell Center on April 3, and in Worcester at the Hanover Theatre for the Performing Arts on April 7.

In the company’s own words, “Ancient Land” carries on “the centuries-old Irish tradition of using song to tell stories of the land, stories of love and stories of dancing, with songs that will bring a piece of Ireland to audiences everywhere.”

To read the commentary in the Celtic Woman Forum is to see that for many, reaction to “Ancient Land” is a mix of the good and the not so bad and the what I find missing. One contributor, signed on as Excalibur, writes about his “great



Ancient Land features the incredible vocal talents of Megan Walsh, Mairead Carlin, Eabha McMahon, Tara McNeil.

expectations for this one after two albums with little to zero new material. This has always been a

very important thing for me,” he adds. After some back and forth of historical Celtic Woman note,

the critic reports: “My overall impression with Ancient Land is quite positive: I’m always

happy when the girls and the band of Celtic Woman actually record and play Celtic music instead of

going too far from their roots. I don’t mind when they do some classical piece (I actually quite enjoy those) or contemporary songs, but sometimes it sounds a little too much, especially if the ‘Celtic twist’ of the arrangement is not very, very peculiar. In this case, most of the songs have a very strong Irish feel, most of them are actually traditional and there’s a lot of Gaelic lyrics which is another thing I’ve always wished for in previous albums.”

Readers can rely on Excalibur’s critique of the new CD or judge its value for themselves late next month and into April in Concord, Providence, Hartford, and Worcester.

Tickets are \$45, \$75 and \$156 depending on seat location. Discounts are available for members and groups of 10 or more. Please contact the box office at 877.571.SHOW (7469) for more information.

## CD Reviews

By SEAN SMITH

**Childsplay, “The Bloom of Youth”** • Hard not to feel bittersweet about the latest release by this all-star fiddle ensemble, because it heralds the end of a grand two-decades-plus partnership.



Childsplay comprises two dozen or so musicians – many from Boston or elsewhere in New England – performing fiddle music mainly from Irish, Scottish, Cape Breton, Scandinavian, French Canadian, and American folk traditions. All the fiddlers use violins

created by Cambridge resident Bob Childs, who also plays in the band and serves as its artistic director, as well as its namesake. Almost every fall, the group has gathered – albeit not always with the same exact roster – to put together new material and go on a brief tour, which typically includes a stop at the Somerville Theater.

In 2017, Childs announced that the ensemble would go on hiatus, record its seventh album, return to the stage in 2018, and then embark on one final tour this coming fall. So, “The Bloom of Youth” amounts to the last recorded testament of Childsplay (viral or official videos aside) – and it is a fine and fitting farewell.

As before, the brilliancy of fiddlers like Laurel Martin, Hanneke Cassel, Lissa Scheckenburger, Sheila Falls, Amanda Cavanaugh, and Childs himself, plus other exceptional musicians like Shannon Heaton (flute, whistle), Kathleen Guilday (harp), Keith Murphy (guitar, piano), and Mark Roberts (banjo, bouzouki, whistle, percussion), as well as vocalist Karan Casey, is enriched by their arrangements, whether the full ensemble or various components of it. The instrumental sets and songs are full of dramatic builds, gentle interludes, suddenly energetic passages, offsetting rhythms and counterpoints.

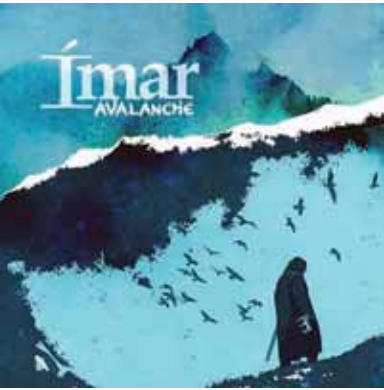
The titular track and reel begins with Murphy’s groove-steady piano and an equally stellar banjo accompaniment by Roberts as fiddles – and the superb cello-playing of Elsie Gawler and McKinley James – take up the melody; then the tempo ratchets up with the E-minor reel “Temple House” – just a handful of fiddles set against Roberts’ banjo – until the full assemblage cruises onto the Charlie Lennon composition “Sailing In.” Cassel and Murphy (on guitar) lead on a Cape Breton/Scottish set, starting out with a good-and-punchy “Buddy’s Strathspey” – her tribute to the legendary Cape Breton fiddler Buddy MacMaster; Heaton, on flute, takes over on the reel, “Wooden Whale,” by Alasdair Fraser, and the track climaxes with “The Farmer’s Daughter,” full of drop-dead gorgeous harmonies. Another track combines Falls’ winsome “Lara’s Jig” (named for her older daughter), with fiddles trading off on melody and chords; a Johnny McCarthy composition, “The Burning Snowball,” marked by Guilday’s deft harp-playing; and a blazing denouement with Armagh fiddler Brendan McGlinchey’s “Farewell to London.”

And to show that they’re a fun bunch, they have a go at “Turka,” a bit of Russian gypsy jazz led by Bonnie Bewick with all the appropriate melodrama and pyrotechnics – she even references “Orange Blossom Special”-style rhythmic chopping and bowing.

Then there’s the singing of Casey, who has served as Childsplay’s vocalist for the past couple of years;

while her predecessors, Scheckenburger and Aoife O’Donovan, each have much to credit them, Casey provides a whole other dynamic, with her background in Irish tradition and sheer passion. She’s recorded “Sailing Off to Yankeeeland” – a particularly moving famine/emigration song associated with the great Frank Harte – in her partnership with John Doyle, but the Childsplay setting is sumptuous in its expression of sorrow and bitterness: empathetic strings, Murphy’s discreet piano, Heaton’s solitary whistle, and Casey’s soaring, emotive delivery. She also does plenty of justice to the archetypal dandling song “Cucanandy,” and the late Andy M. Stewart’s “Where Are You Tonight, I Wonder?” and puts her own sweetly elegiac “Lovely Annie” – written on the death of her mother – into the Childsplay mix, all with splendid results.

Of further interest is the Casey/Childsplay take on “The Fiddle and the Drum,” the Vietnam-era anti-war song which might prove to be Joni Mitchell’s most enduring and profound creation: As Casey intones the song’s message of locating humanity within putative enemies (“But I can remember/All the good things you are/And so I ask you please/Can I help you find the peace and the star”) Bewick’s arrangement employs a series of long, bowed notes from a subset of the ensemble, ominous one moment and reassuring the next. It’s a reminder that Childsplay, inspired by music traditions and styles that go back centuries, is thoroughly modern and forward-looking in its collective vision. They’ll be missed. [childsplay.org]



**Ímar, “Avalanche”** • This quintet takes its name from the ninth-century Viking who founded a great dynasty in Ireland and Scotland, which would seem quite appropriate for a band that has ties, musical and otherwise, to both places. And listening to them, there might be a

temptation to say that Ímar’s music displays the ferocity attributed to those Norse warriors. But that’s going a little overboard: It takes prodigious control and skill to play with the intensity Ímar does and sound as high-quality as they do. And it’s clear that these guys have all that and more.

“Avalanche” is the second album by the band, whose members – Adam Brown (bodhran, guitar), Ryan Murphy (uilleann pipes, flute, whistle), Tomás Callister (fiddle), Adam Rhodes (bouzouki) and Mohsen Amini (concertina) – are from Ireland and various parts of the UK, including the Isle of Man, and now based in Glasgow. They originally met as teenagers through Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Eireann (a pretty darn good endorsement for CCE) and have played with highly praised bands like Talisk, Cara and RURA. Murphy’s pipes, by their very nature, are the most conspicuous melodic feature of Ímar, but Amini’s flat-out phenomenal concertina-playing is the sinew of the band – which is not to overlook Callister’s energetic fiddling. Brown’s bodhran, meanwhile, helps power things along but rides ably along in the sidecar on the more moderate-tempo numbers, and Rhodes’ bouzouki bolsters Ímar’s rhythmic heft.

Most of the material on “Avalanche” is self-composed or by other contemporary musicians, and while solidly in the traditional vein, a modern mindset is discernible here: harmony, syncopation, improvisatory passages or bridges, such as on “White Strand,” and rock-style grooves (albeit with acoustic instruments).

If you’re looking for the characteristic Ímar track, try “Rambling,” a robust trio of slides that climaxes with “Dilly Dilly” (hopefully not a reference to a certain beer commercial) and a pulse-quickenning variation in the B part executed by Amini and Murphy. Or “Blue,” a threesome of reels that scarcely lets up for a second (listen to the changing rhythm pattern on the middle tune, “Spiders”). Or the polka medley “Wise” – Brown and Rhodes are in particularly fine form here, and there is a lovely bit of harmony between Amini, Murphy and Callister during “John Creaney’s.”

Adding to the delights of “Avalanche” is the production of Donald Shaw, who in addition to some stints on electric piano put together arrangements for the string quartet that appears on various tracks. Greg Lawson and Fiona Stephens (violins), Rhoslyn Lawton (viola) and Sonia Cromarty (cello) provide strokes, counterpoints and fills that deepen and broaden without distracting from the core sound, such as on “White Strand,” the first of three successive tracks (along with “Afar” and “Setanta”) that showcase Ímar’s quieter, more lyrical persona.

There’s something satisfying about the album’s closing track, the traditional reels “Sally Reel/Dunrobin Castle/Dunmore Lassies.” It amounts to a we-know-from-whence-we-come statement by the band, reminding us (as if needed) that innovation and experimentation do not by definition sever the bond with tradition. [www.imarband.com]

**Salt House, “Undersong”** • The second release from this Scottish band, originally a quartet and now a trio of Ewan MacPherson (guitars, vocals) – who also plays with Shooglenifty – Lauren MacColl (fiddle, viola, vocals) and newest member Jenny Sturgeon (guitar, harmonium, vocals). They blend an assortment of contemporary acoustic styles, such as 1960/70s UK blues-folk a la Pentangle and introspective, pastoral songwriting informed by the likes of Frost – including a moody setting of his “The Road Not Taken” – and Burns, whose “Westlin Winds” provided inspiration for Sturgeon’s “Charmer”; similarly, “Old Shoes” is an ode to perambulation, while “Staring at Stars” is a quietly stirring acclamation for locating one’s sense of place and self.

Throughout is a deep appreciation for the folk song and literary tradition, such as “Turn Ye to Me” – a supernatural tale of bereavement from 19th-century



poet John Wilson – and an intriguing, minor-key rework of “I Sowed Some Seeds.” The album’s centerpiece is “The Sisters’ Revenge,” based on a Scandinavian murder ballad collected and translated by 19th-century writer Robert Buchanan: Exquisitely, perfectly arranged and paced,

the trio patiently unfolds the grim, gritty narrative with its chilling refrain (“The summer comes, the summer goes/On the grave of my father, the green grass grows”).

Much to applaud here, notably the instrumental interplay between MacColl and MacPherson, the quality of the writing, and above all the outstanding vocals, whether among all three, as on “The Sisters’ Revenge,” or individually – most especially Sturgeon’s clear, cogent delivery. Word is Salt House will be at work this year on a new release, and this is an event that merits anticipation. [“Undersong” is out of print, but the album is available via download at salthouse.bandcamp.com/album/undersong]



# THE BIR’S CALENDAR OF CELTIC MUSIC EVENTS

The Galway Irish-Americana quartet **We Banjo 3** returns to the Boston area this month with a show on Feb. 9 in the Somerville Theater at 8 p.m. “WB3” consists of two pairs of brothers, Enda (tenor banjo) and Fergal Scahill (fiddle, bodhran) and David (guitar, lead vocals) and Martin Howley (mandolin, tenor banjo), who are widely acknowledged as the originators of “Celtgrass,” a mix of Irish and American folk sounds that are inspired by tradition while embracing modern styles. Their honors include RTÉ Radio 1 Best Folk Album, *Irish Times* Trad Album of the Year, LiveIreland.com Best New Group of the Year and *Irish American News* Concert of the Year, as well as a no. 1 ranking in bluegrass by *USA Billboard*. WB3’s most recent album, “Haven,” saw the band continue a trend toward emphasizing its own compositions.

David Howley recently offered some thoughts on WB3’s return to Boston and other subjects.

**Q.** *David, it was four years ago that you guys made your debut in Boston, at sadly-departed Johnny D’s. What impressions have you formed of the area?*

**A.** We form our opinions of places by the shows we’ve had there, and in that respect Boston has been really good to us: There’s a great energy in the crowds and people are up for some fun. We expect this show will be no different. Boston folk know how to party and we’re ready to bring the banjo!

**Q.** *Over the last couple of albums, and especially on “Haven,” WB3 has focused more on original material, often with an acoustic-pop feel, as opposed to trad tunes / songs or covers of more contemporary stuff (e.g. “Long Black Veil,” “Happiness,” “Ain’t Nobody Else Like You”). What prompted the band to move in this direction?*

**A.** We’ve been working on original music for years now. “Haven” was special because it was the culmination of our collective creativity. Each song went through a painful pulling apart and putting back together with a WB3 feel. I don’t think we ever knowingly changed directions – it was just what naturally came out.

**Q.** *A couple of the newer songs also express a concern for contemporary social issues, like mental health awareness (“Don’t Let Me Down”) and the plight of immigrants and migrants (“Light in the Sky”). Was this a big step for you as songwriters?*

**A.** Mental health has been a big part of my life, personally. Another songwriter once told me to “write about what you know,” so that’s where “Don’t Let Me Down” sprung from. It would be hard to find someone who hasn’t been impacted by mental health issues in their life somewhere. For too long, we all fight alone in the shadows. We wanted to bring attention to it but from a positive perspective, and show that there is always light somewhere.

But “Haven” runs deeper than just mental health and immigration: It’s a space for people to lay down their armor for a couple hours and feel a part of something. We wanted to create a space for all people, an inclusive and welcoming place. We’re all only human, after all.

**Q.** Another recent development for WB3 has been using brass on some tracks. How and when did the inspiration for this come about?

**A.** We’ve loved the sounds of brass in folk music for years, from bands like La Bottine Souriante to even the early days of Mumford and Sons. Brass adds such deep power. We work with an amazing trio out of New York called The Huntertones Horns – they just get the music and fit so perfectly with the Celtgrass style. We try to continually come up with new ideas and sounds to bring to our fans. We’re eventually working up to Coldplay-style stage rigging, but I’d say we’re a few years off.

**Q.** *Your recently released video for “Don’t Let Me Down” features a bravura performance by “Soky the Sock Monster.” Do you foresee a larger role for Soky in the band – kind of like a “Fifth Beatle” thing?*

**A.** Soky is a humdinger on the banjo. If Enda needs a break from touring, he’ll rest easy knowing the sock monster is ready to shred!

Tickets for the We Banjo 3 show, sponsored through World Music/CRASH Arts, are available at [worldmusic.org/content/event\\_page/7281](http://worldmusic.org/content/event_page/7281).

• The Burren Backroom series in Davis Square will feature three Irish/Celtic events later in the month, beginning Feb. 20 at 7:30 p.m. with **MAC**, a trio of American musicians that is well-versed in Scottish, Irish, and other Celtic traditions while guided by other influences, from Americana to classical to rock, in their writing and playing. Driving the melody are Ryan McKasson, a former National Scottish Fiddle Champion, and Elias Alexander (bagpipes, percussion, harmonium, vocals), known locally for his work with The Bywater Band and Soulsha, supported by Colin Cotter (guitar, harmonium, vocals), who draws on numerous folk/world styles for his singing and songwriting.

The duo of **Robbie O’Connell** and **Rose Clancy** will perform a 4 p.m. matinee in the Backroom on Feb. 24. Waterford-born and Tipperary-raised, O’Connell is one of the best-known Celtic/folk singer-songwriters, and many of his songs – like “Kilkelly,” “There Were Roses,” “Keg of Brandy” and “You’re Not Irish” – have become staples of the Irish/Celtic music scene. Clancy is a Cape Cod-based fiddler and violin-maker, impresario of the Chatham Fiddle Company, where she often hosts performances by leading Celtic artists.

Two of the most active, high-profile performers in the Cape Breton tradition, **Andrea Beaton** and **Troy McGillivray**, come to the Backroom on Feb. 27 at 7:30 p.m. Equally proficient on fiddle and piano, both Beaton and McGillivray each also boast an impressive

family musical heritage and an impressive discography. Beaton’s first CD, “License to Drive ’Er,” earned her a nomination as Roots Traditional Solo Artist of the Year at the East Coast Music Awards (ECMA), and her follow-up release “Cuts” was nominated for the 2005 ECMA Instrumental Recording of the Year. She’s also released “Little Black Book,” an album of original instrumental compositions. McGillivray also received ECMA nominations for his first two recordings, “Boomerang” and “Musical Ties,” as well as Music Industry Association of Nova Scotia nominations. Another recording project, “When Here Meets There,” featured a unique collaboration with Canadian and US National Fiddle Champion Shane Cook, while his most recent album, “Tune Poets,” weaves some of his own compositions alongside unique arrangements of great composers from the traditional fiddle world.

Go to [burren.com](http://burren.com) for Burren Backroom tickets and information.

• In addition to Cherish the Ladies [see separate story], City Winery is hosting another Celtic act this month: Canada’s **Enter the Haggis**, on Feb. 2 at 8 p.m. For more than two decades, the band (Craig Downie, bagpipes, guitar, keyboards, whistle; Brian Buchanan, fiddle, guitar, mandolin, accordion; Trevor Lewington, guitar, mandolin, keyboards; Mark Abraham, bass, banjo; and Bruce McCarthy, drums) has brought together a prodigious – even quirky – blend of rock, fusion, bluegrass, traditional Celtic fare, agitpop, folk, and other strains. From head-banging, arena-friendly Celtic rock to more nuanced, lyrical, indie-type offerings, “ETH” combines a versatile repertoire with sociopolitical conviction.

More at [citywinery.com/boston](http://citywinery.com/boston).

• Boston College’s Gaelic Roots series will present singer-musician **Nóirín Ní Riain** and her sons **Owen** and **Moley Ó Súilleabháin** on Feb. 7 at 6:30 p.m. in the Theology and Ministry Library on BC’s Brighton Campus. Ní Riain, who as a visiting faculty member at BC in 1990 was part of an effort to establish Irish music as a presence at the university, is an authority on Celtic music as well as sacred and spiritual songs from across the ages. One of her most famous collaborations was a trio of recordings with the Benedictine monks of Glenstal Abbey, and she’s also performed with artists such as Sinead O’Connor, John Cage and Paul Winter.

Information on Gaelic Roots events, which are free, is available via the BC Center for Irish Programs website at [www.bc.edu/irish](http://www.bc.edu/irish).

• On Feb. 23, the Canadian American Club of New England, at 202 Arlington St. in Watertown, hosts a performance by the duo of **Fiachra O’Regan** and **Sophie Lavoie** from 8-11 p.m. Their partnership blends two seemingly disparate traditions, Gaelic and French, through O’Regan’s uilleann pipes and tenor banjo alongside Lavoie’s Quebecois fiddle and vocals. A Connemara native, O’Regan is a former All-Ireland champion on pipes and whistle who has collaborated with a number of prominent musicians, including The Chieftains and Paddy Keenan. Lavoie has been part of various Quebecois bands, and is researching the fiddle style and repertoire of her native region, Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean, as part of her master’s degree in ethnomusicology. Their third album, “Un Canadien Errant,” was nominated for Best Album of the Year at both ADISQ and Canadian Folk Music Award in 2016.

Go to [canadianamericanclub.com](http://canadianamericanclub.com) for ticket information and other details.

• **Boston College Irish Dance** will give its annual performance at the university’s Robsham Theater on Feb. 22 and 23 at 7 p.m. BCID, which is comprised of undergraduate students, presents both traditional and original Irish dance choreography. For links to tickets, see the Robsham web site at [www.bc.edu/robsham](http://www.bc.edu/robsham).

• The Boston area’s annual feast of Scottish fiddle music, the Pure Dead Brilliant Fiddle Concert, will take place on Feb. 14 at 8 p.m. in the Log Cabin Chapel at Grotonwood (167 Prescott St., Groton). Along with current or former local and New England musicians **Hanneke Cassel**, **Katie McNally**, **Neil Pearlman**, **Eamon Sefton**, **Laura Risk**, **Keith Murphy** and **Jenna Moynihan**, “PDBF” will feature special guests: the trio **MAC**, who are also playing in the Burren Backroom series [see above]; and Grammy-nominated fiddler **Jeremy Kittel**. His style marked by a fusion of Celtic, American, and jazz elements, Kittel has worked with a wide range of artists, including local American Scottish fiddler Hanneke Cassel, Boston native singer-songwriter Aoife O’Donovan, and celebrated cellist Yo Yo Ma; he also was a member of the Grammy-winning quartet Turtle Island.

Tickets and other details available at [pdbconcert.brownpapertickets.com](http://pdbconcert.brownpapertickets.com).

## Succession planning for your business

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

It may be hard to imagine right now, but odds are the business you’ve worked so hard to create will be owned by someone else in the future. Eventually, you will either give up the helm voluntarily when you retire, or involuntarily as the result of an unexpected event.

### Charting a path for your small business

Succession planning helps you specify, in writing, what will happen to the business when you retire, become disabled, die prematurely, or otherwise step down. It is not a one-time



event, but instead a continuous process that starts with your goals, and builds and improves over time. Your succession plan is also a roadmap for you, your family and your employees to help ensure that, in the event you are no longer able to run the company, any ill-

advised decisions are kept to a minimum. By creating a succession plan today, you can make the decisions now about what will happen to your company in the future.

### What goes into a succession plan?

Like any strategy your business may already have in place, a succession plan follows the same principles. It should address the who, what, when, where, why and how you would like to transition your business. Your professional tax advisors will be able to provide you with detailed guidance on setting up a succession plan customized for you and your company. Generally speaking, your succession plan should address the following:

- Your goals - what do you want from the business when you exit?
- Your successor(s) - who will take over and are they prepared?
- Ownership - what will future owner roles be, and what will the ownership percentages look like?
- Management - how will you keep key employees on board through the transition and beyond?
- Transfer plans - what are the steps involved in the transfer, and what is the timeline?
- Triggering events - what events (death, disability, retirement, divorce, bankruptcy) will start the transfer process?
- Purchase price/financing - Where will the funds come from for a buy-out and what are the tax implications?

### Other considerations

Your succession plan will also have an impact on both your retirement plan and estate plan. Some additional considerations you will need to keep in mind:

- Value of the business: You need to know the true know the value of the company so you are confident the succession plan is accurate. Keep tabs on company value regularly (every three years) and update your succession plan to account for any changes
- Estate Equalization: If a family member who works in the business is the chosen successor, you should indicate how you plan for equitable distribution of the remainder of your estate for other family members, such as other children, who have no knowledge of the business.
- Sale Proceeds: You’ll also want to include instructions relating to taxes from the proceeds of the sale of your business, and detail what should occur regarding your personal estate plan.

### Timing matters

Regardless of what form your succession plan takes, its ultimate success often hinges on timing. The sooner you start planning for the eventual transition, the more flexibility you’ll have in making future adjustments because – let’s face it – the only thing that’s guaranteed is change.

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# May wins on Brexit point; Irish prep for ‘no deal’

(Continued from page 1) a fortnight ago, this House has made clear what it needs to agree a deal.” RTE reported that day

that while decisions on Brexit and Ireland, north and south, were being made in Westminster that will impact Ireland

and the Irish people, North and South, personal relations between the British and Irish Governments remain strong, according to the Irish Tánaiste, Simon Coveney, speaking to questions in the Dáil.

Coveney said that new relationship structures post-Brexit between Britain and Ireland will be confirmed at the next meeting of the British Irish Inter-governmental conference.

Earlier, the Cabinet had discussed the economic impact of a no-deal

Brexit after Minister for Finance Minister Paschal Donohoe brought a document to Government this morning that gives his Department’s latest analysis, which suggest that the economy could be 4.25 percent smaller in hard Brexit scenario.

Speaking to RTE from London, Sinn Féin’s David Cullinane said: “If there is a hard border, that will come about because of chaos in Westminster, not because of anything Irish politicians have done. It is absolute nonsense. We’ve had two years of negotiations between the British government and the EU which resulted in basic protections for



Theresa May



Leo Varadkar

Ireland which are in the protocol known as the backstop. They cannot be changed, they cannot be nuanced, they cannot

be renegotiated. Theresa May cannot tear up an agreement, which has been painfully negotiated over two years, chasing some phantom agreement which doesn’t exist.”

Cullinane added, “Politicians in Westminster need to understand that the days of politicians in Britain pushing around Ireland, and threatening the Irish people that if they don’t accept any changes to the backstop then there will be a hard border, have to be gone. We have negotiated in good faith with the British government. We have achieved collectively between opposition and Government a backstop to prevent a hardening of the border and to protect the Good Friday Agreement.

“As far as we’re concerned that can’t be changed nuanced or reopened to satisfy hard Brexiteers in Britain or the hard right in the Tory party,” he told RTE.

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## Traveling People

## Irish pot pourri: A singing donkey, a disappearing beach

BY JUDY ENRIGHT  
SPECIAL TO THE BIR

No matter how often you visit Ireland, you can nearly always find something fun, new, and interesting.

Last autumn, we loved hearing on the radio and reading about “UFO sightings” in Irish skies. Local radio stations were abuzz with reports that unidentified flying objects had been spotted by several commercial airline pilots.

The British Broadcasting Company (BBC) reported in November that the Irish Aviation Authority was investigating reports of bright lights and UFOs off the southwest coast of Ireland. The stories began when a British Airways pilot, flying from Montreal to Heathrow, asked Shannon air traffic control if there were military exercises in the area because something was “moving so fast” in the sky.

Traffic control reported that there were no exercises. The pilot said there was “a very bright light” and the object came along the left side of the aircraft, then “rapidly veered to the north.”

About the same time, a Virgin Atlantic pilot flying from Orlando to Manchester, suggested it might be a meteor or some other object re-entering the earth’s atmosphere. He reported that there were “multiple (very bright) objects following the same sort of trajectory.” The pilot said he saw “two bright lights” over to the right that climbed away at great speed.

According to press reports, another pilot quipped, “Glad I’m not the only one” who saw the strange lights.

*The Irish Times* reported that the Irish Aviation Authority was investigating the incident and would file the conclusions from a report that “will be investigated under the normal confidential occurrence investigation process.” We haven’t heard of any updates since then.

#### HARRIET

As I drove across Co. Galway heading for Connemara last autumn, local radio stations hosts were chatting about Harriet the Singing Donkey, whose bray was said to sound like an aria by Madame Butterfly. Harriet was an international sensation. Assorted newspapers, radio, and television stations from everywhere had trekked into the somewhat remote region of Connemara to record and report about her singing.

Not to be outdone by other media, we hitched a ride with a friend to Carraroe and found Harriet, who as then eight years old, down a narrow one-lane road bordered by ancient stonewalls. We drove past the local school and stopped several people along the road to ask where we might find the soprano. They all knew.

A bit farther on, there she was, braving the rain and wind in her muddy pasture beside the road. A blue rope tied a metal gate across the stonewall



Always on the hunt for a great story, Boston Irish Reporter travel writer Judy Enright tries using a carrot to coax an aria from Harriet the Singing Donkey in Connemara. Maire O'Connor photo



One of the newest Irish gins - this one produced “in the wilds of Mayo” is Loch Measc. It says on the bottle that this London Dry Gin “is inspired by the wild juniper berries and botanicals that grow around Lough Mask.”

opening. I had anticipated a grander and more sheltered enclosure for such an international celebrity.

With our bag of fresh carrots, we knew she couldn’t resist us. A Connemara gale blew sheets of rain against us as we fed her the carrots. Did she sing to thank us? Actually, she didn’t utter a single sound.

We met her owner, Stephen McGrath, 15, walking along the road with his sheepdog, and asked him about his famous donkey. He said Harriet - originally named Harrison until they realized she was a female jenny - was never able to heehaw like other donkeys. Martin Stanton, a neighbor who lives about 20 minutes away, regularly brought her carrots, bread, and ginger nut biscuits and she “sang” every time he approached.

One day, Stanton took a video of her singing and posted it online where it went viral, making Harriet a star. “I never knew she sang until he took the video,” Stephen said. Even though the media reported that her song sounds like the aria from Madame Butterfly, we can’t verify that because she didn’t make a sound for us.

#### MAYO BEACH



Harriet the Singing Donkey in her less than grandiose digs in Connemara.

#### AND GIN

Mayo’s Dooagh beach on Achill Island has disappeared, reappeared, and recently disappeared again.

The beach was washed away in 1984 but reappeared in April, 2017, when many tons of sand were deposited by the sea back onto the shore, much to the delight of the tourist industry. That story made international headlines and visitor numbers reportedly increased by 70 percent after the beach reappeared.

This winter, the beach headed out to sea again after a series of strong storms. Seamus Molloy of Achill Tourism was quoted in the Irish press as saying, “In 2017 when it reappeared, it was over the Easter period and it was a very cold snap. It was a very strong wind but it was a constant northerly wind and it was just in the right direction to bring the sand back in. It was a very freak occurrence. I wouldn’t be holding my breath that it will come back again in April but you would never know.”

Also making headlines in Mayo recently is the gin produced in Tourmakeady. Gin has become popular in Ireland; for instance, at a recent wedding there, favors at dinner were small bottles of gin sporting the names

of the bride and groom.

The Tourmakeady product is called Loch Measc Gin and it says on the bottle that it is “handmade in the wilds of Mayo” and was “inspired by the wild juniper berries and botanicals that grow around Lough Mask. We distill small batches of gin in a traditional copper pot still.” The distillery also brews single malt whiskey and vodka.

To learn more, see [loughmaskdistillery.com](http://loughmaskdistillery.com).

#### WILDE IRISH CHOCOLATE

While passing through Shannon Duty Free, some cute cartoon sheep caught our eye. Eight woolly critters pleaded from the wrapper of a pure milk chocolate candy bar, “Are we going home with ewe?” Seven more cartoon sheep hovered on a ledge at the Cliffs of Moher saying, “Crowded at the Cliffs.” The bars are handmade by Wilde Irish Chocolates in Tuamgraney, Co. Clare, and are sold in Shannon’s outstanding duty free shop and at numerous other locations, including the Cliffs of Moher.

Not only is the chocolate delicious but there’s interesting information on the back of each wrapper. The Cliffs wrapper cites the height of the Cliffs at various locations and notes that more than a million tourists visit the



Stephen McGrath, 15, of Carraroe in Connemara, is the owner of Harriet the Singing Donkey, who gained worldwide media coverage last autumn.



Featured at Shannon Airport recently were these handmade chocolate bars from Wilde Irish Chocolates in Tuamgraney, Co. Clare. Judy Enright photos

site every year. The other wrapper says Ireland’s sheep flocks are small by international standards, with half the flocks having fewer than 50 ewes, even though there are more than 2.2 million breeding ewes in Ireland. The most common breed, according to Wilde, is the blackface, which is hardy and can cope with the wind, rain and cold.

Be sure to look for these cute gifts when you next pass through Shannon or visit the website, [wildeirishchocolates.com](http://wildeirishchocolates.com), to find other locations where the chocolates are sold.

#### GAME OF THRONES

If you’re a fan of Game of Thrones, you’re in luck if you’ll be anywhere near Belfast this year. A touring exhibition is coming to the Titanic Exhibition Center (TEC) in Belfast for a limited visit, starting April 11. The exhibit features costumes, authentic props, and settings from all seven seasons to create an interactive Game of Thrones experience.

The exhibit runs through Sept. 1. The exhibition will give fans an up-close look at the artistry and craftsmanship behind the Emmy award-winning series, as well as

opportunities to experience the landscapes of the North and the tree-lined pathway of the Kingsroad; view a garrison of Unsullied warriors and the iconic costumes of House Targaryen; step into the House of Black and White; and explore Castle Black, the home of the Night’s Watch and Battle for the Iron Throne.

Tickets can be booked at: [gameofthronesexhibition.co.uk](http://gameofthronesexhibition.co.uk)

#### MEDIEVAL BANQUETS

Have you ever been to one of Ireland’s fun and fascinating medieval banquets? There are a number to choose from in the Shannon area, including Bunratty Castle in Bunratty, Knappogue in Quin, and Dunguaire in Kinvara. See [shannonheritage.com](http://shannonheritage.com) for bookings and details.

Another interesting place to visit is Craggaunowen Castle and Cranog to see how Bronze Age peoples lived. Be sure to check the Shannon Heritage website for opening times as winter sometimes curtails availability.

Enjoy Ireland whenever and wherever you go. It’s a magical country with something for everyone.





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Director James Demo's multi-award winning film, "The Peacemaker," is an intimate portrait of Padraig O'Malley, UMass Boston's John Joseph Moakley Distinguished Professor of Peace and Reconciliation, who helps make peace for others but struggles to find it for himself.

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