

THE NEW KENNEDY COMPOUND

President Obama, colleagues dedicate EMK Institute in Dorchester

**BY LAUREN DEZENSKI
REPORTER STAFF**
The Lion of the Senate's tribute to the body that he loved finally became a reality on Mon., March 30, with the dedication and opening of the Edward M. Kennedy Institute for the United States Senate in Dorchester.
In a ceremony replete with pageantry, its attendees reflected the co-operation embodied by the late senator, as officials from all forms of government converged on Columbia Point, the former landfill where Kennedy's widow, Victoria Kennedy, said her husband hoped to create an "institute with full-scale recreation of the Senate chamber." The large white building standing behind her "stands exactly where Teddy dreamed it would."
Nearly 1,800 attendees were bused out to the tip of Columbia Point, where the EMK Institute stands next to the JFK Presidential Library, the Massachusetts Archives, and UMass Boston. The elected officials in attendance, including President Barack Obama and First Lady Michelle Obama, Vice President



President Obama spoke feelingly about the late Sen. Ted Kennedy at the dedication of the Edward M. Kennedy Institute for the United States Senate on Columbia Point, Dorchester, on Mon., March 30. Seated at left, Edward M. Kennedy Jr., First Lady Michelle Obama, and the senator's widow, Victoria Kennedy. *Chris Lovett photo*

Joe Biden, Sen. John McCain, Gov. Charlie Baker, Mayor Martin Walsh, and Sen. Elizabeth Warren, were nearly too many to

count, not to mention the former staffers for Kennedy in his 47 years in the Senate—and Kennedy's relatives.

Obama was the final speaker of the two-hour plus program and he delivered a 28-minute address that saluted the

late senator, his family and his accomplishments. "I did not know Ted as long as some of the speakers here today," said the

president. "But he was my friend. I owe him a lot. And as far as I could tell, it was never ideology that compelled him, except insofar as his ideology said, you should help people; that you should have a life of purpose; that you should be empathetic and be able to put yourself in somebody else's shoes, and see through their eyes."
Jean MacCormack, president of the institute, recalled her childhood growing up in Dorchester, when children would play in the landfill.
"When I was growing up, this area was a forbidden place," said MacCormack, a Downer Avenue native who went on to become the chancellor at UMass Dartmouth. "Who knew that the place where we played as children would become home to world class university, a presidential library, the state archives, and the newest jewel in that crown, the glittering institute behind me."
"That same sort of transformation is what the institute is about," she said. "We're going to light a fire in each and every (Continued on page 10)

New deal for parade, yuks for breakfast

St. Patrick's Day, South Boston

**BY LAUREN DEZENSKI
REPORTER STAFF**
Last month's St. Patrick's Day celebrations in South Boston unveiled a new deal along the parade route while tradition kept pace at the Convention Center where state Sen. Linda Dorcea Forry, in her second year as host, presided over the annual

holiday breakfast where politicians tried to one-up each other over scrambled eggs, sausages, and corned-beef hash and before some 500 guests.
Dorcea Forry opened with a video skit that hit many of the same targets that the pols took shots at

later on—snow, the wintry woes of the MBTA and the commuter rail, Boston 2024 and its hiring of former Gov. Deval Patrick's as a \$7,500 per day consultant. Baker, for his part, played along, holding a mock press conference and revealing a MEMA vest

underneath his jacket, a wardrobe mainstay for Patrick during the time he spent in the MEMA bunker.
Among the dignitaries at the event were United States Ambassador to Ireland Kevin O'Malley and Joan Burton, TD, Ireland's deputy prime minister or Tánaiste.
Video skits proved to be the highlight of the three-and-a-half-hour event, with Mayor Martin Walsh's surrealist video depicting City Hall falling into chaos as the winter storms—and their accompanying press conferences—never let up. House Speaker Robert DeLeo's video, which depicted the Winthrop Democrat taking Irish lessons from comedian Steve Sweeney, delivered, via Sweeney, some of the most pointed jabs at the speaker.
(Continued on page 18)



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The Eire Society of Boston will hold award its Gold Medal to Dr. Catherine B. Shannon, Professor Emerita of History at Westfield State University, at its 78th Gold Medal Dinner on Saturday evening, April 25, at the Fairmont Copley Plaza in Boston. For four decades, Prof. Shannon Ph.D. taught courses in Irish, British and European History at the Western Mass. campus. Story, Page 3.




St. Patrick's Day breakfast host state Sen. Linda Dorcea Forry, Mayor Martin Walsh, US Rep. Stephen Lynch, and Massachusetts House Speaker Robert De Leo react to a quip at the March 15 event. *Copyright © Don West / FOTOGRAFKS (Randy H. Goodman © Don West)*

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Tánaiste Joan Burton posed for a photo with members of OutVets, the LGBT veterans organization that marched in the South Boston St. Patrick’s Day Parade on Sunday, March 15. Burton, a member of the Labour party who serves as the deputy prime minister of Ireland, was in Boston for the holiday and attended the St. Patrick’s Day Breakfast in South Boston, the Irish American Partnership breakfast on March 17 and met with Governor Charlie Baker.

Photo courtesy Office of the Irish Consul General

John Joe Somers, at 63; the ‘Dean of Irish Pubs’

The Boston Irish community is mourning the death of John Joe Somers, the “dean of Irish Pubs” who passed away March 24 after a long illness. He was 63.

Mr. Somers was the founder and owner of the Somers Pubs, a popular group of Irish locals that included, among others, Mr. Dooley’s, the Green Dragon, Hennessey’s, and Durty Nelly’s in downtown Boston and in the suburbs.

He was the recipient of the 2003 “Always the Irish Heart” award presented by the Irish Chamber of Commerce USA, and was highly regarded for his philanthropy and job creations.

That year, Mr. Somers told the BIR that his success could be explained by his commitment to work. “It’s just attention to detail. Anybody can make money in a good economy,” he said. “It’s when the economy goes slower is when you separate the wheat from the chaff.”

He said he got ideas by talking with the staff and keeping his wide eyes open; and he was known to visit each of his pubs every day.

Mr. Somers was born and brought up in Co. Kerry into a family that was in the pub business in England and Ireland. He opened his first business in Listowel at age 19. He later came to the states as a musician, playing guitar in a band for some 25 years. He opened his first pub, Mr. Dooley’s, on September 30, 1991, his 40th birthday.

He leaves his wife Ann (McCarthy); four children, Noelle Somers, Sean Somers, Kristine Higgins, and Jillian Somers; three grandchildren, and three siblings, Rita Horan, Brenda Murphy, and Kevin Somers.

A funeral Mass was said for Mr. Somers on March 29 in St. Theresa Church, West Roxbury.



The BIR edition of November 2003 carried a feature on JJ Somers.

Eire Society Gold Medal to Catherine Shannon

The Eire Society of Boston will hold its 78th Gold Medal Dinner on Saturday evening, 25 April at 6pm at the Fairmont Copley Plaza in Boston. This year, the Gold Medal Honoree is Dr. Catherine B. Shannon, Professor Emerita of History at Westfield State University.

For four decades, Catherine B. Shannon Ph.D. taught courses in Irish, British and European History. She is the author of /Arthur J. Balfour and Ireland, 1874 -1922 /(1988), and /The Churchills in Ireland: Connections and Controversies/ (2012 Irish Academic Press), where she explored the role of Lord Randolph Churchill in Irish affairs from 1877- 1893.

She has published book chapters and articles on the role of women in the Northern Ireland conflict and peace process, and was actively involved in the 1980’s- 1990’s in the search for a peaceful solution to the conflict.

Dr. Shannon was the first woman president of the 278 year old Charitable Irish Society of Boston, served as president of the Eire Society of Boston and was a member of the Executive Committee of the American Conference of Irish Studies for over a decade. In 1999



Dr. Catherine B. Shannon, at center, taken on the grounds of Forbes House Museum, October 2014, with Curry College interns, Megan Birden and Julian Weiss.

she was among 15 Irish-Americans from Massachusetts to receive a “Dreamer of Dreams” award from the New York based Irish Voice newspaper. Dr. Shannon was the recipient of the Solas Award from the

Irish International Immigration Center and the Irish Heritage Award from the Irish American Partnership, both based in Boston. She is currently researching the role of Boston and New England in

providing food aid to Ireland in 1847 at the height of the Great Famine.

The Gold Medal Dinner was established in 1937 with the founding of the Eire Society of Boston. Each year, a person or persons who exemplifies the best in Irish culture and ideals is honored with a Gold Medal Citation, written by a prominent local writer and beautifully crafted in Irish calligraphy by a professional artist.

This year, the elegant full course dinner will be held in the St. James Room at the Fairmont Copley Plaza. Dick Flavin will serve as the master of ceremonies with an invocation by Reverend Gerald Osterman, a benediction by Reverend Brian Dixon and presentation of the national anthems by singer, Maureen Keady.

Tickets to the Gold Medal Dinner are \$150 per person and can be purchased by sending a check payable to the Eire Society of Boston, Ms. Cathleen A. McGrail, 105 Beech Street, #1, Belmont, MA 02478. For more information on the Gold Medal Dinner, contact Cornelia Cassidy Koutoujian at 781.929.1387.

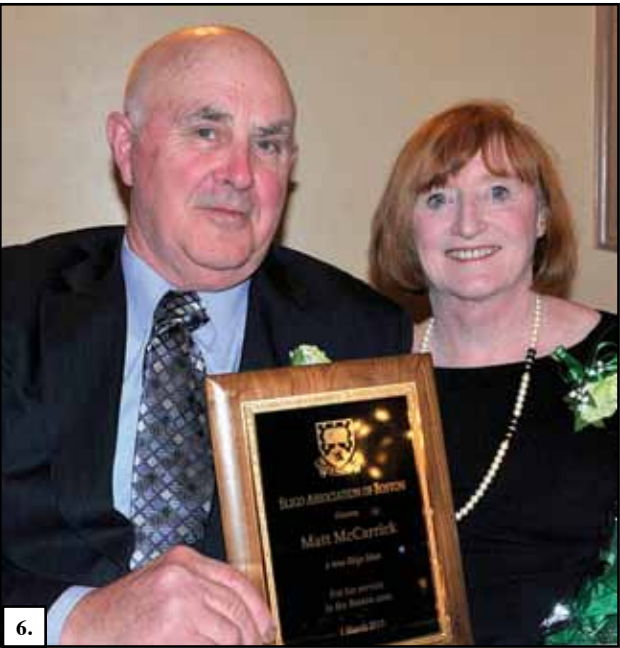
Visit the Eire Society of Boston’s website at eiresociety.org.

BRETT'S BOSTON

By Harry Brett
Exclusive photos of Boston Irish people & events

The Sligo Association of Boston hosted its 7th Annual St. Patrick's Banquet on March 1 at Florian Hall, Dorchester. Honorees this year were Bill McGowan and Matt McCarrick. Sligo's own Andy Healey Band provided the entertainment, and proceeds will benefits the Irish Pastoral Centre.

Pictured are: 1.) Fr. Dan Finn; awardee Bill McGowan; Bridged McGowan; Seamus Healy; 2.) Marian Quinn, Brighton; Ray McVeigh, Dover; 3.) Dianne Colleary, Wareham; Kevin Johnston W. Roxbury; 4.) Declan Healy, Newton; Jamie Lightfoot, Waltham; 5.) Seamus Healy, Braintree; pres. of Sligo Associan; Mary Feeney, Canton; 6.) Awardee Matt McCarrick, and Maureen O'Donovan, Needham; 7.) Brendan Healy and Shayna Arasimowicz, So. Boston; 8.) Gerry and Paula McGrath, Seamus Johnston, Norwood; 9.) Ann Sheehy, Milton, Kathy Sullivan, Dedham; Sheila Cummings, Milton; 10.) Jerry and Mary O'Sullivan, Milton; daughter Karen, Quincy.



Thank You!

Sponsors Made the 2015 South Boston St. Patrick's Day Breakfast a Huge Success



Senator Linda Dorcea Fory hosted the annual St Patrick's Day Breakfast on Sunday, March 15, 2015 at the Boston Convention and Exhibition Center in South Boston. The two-and-one half hour event, produced with the assistance of the non-profit First Suffolk Partnership Inc., was enjoyed by more than 700 invited guests, and reached a television audience on NECN- New England Cable News throughout New England. Senator Fory and the First Suffolk Partnership extend a warm thank you to the sponsors whose support helped make the breakfast a great success.

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Publisher’s Notebook

Recalling our ‘62 campaign against ‘Teddy’

By Ed Forry

It was the summer of ‘62. I had just finished BC High, and was hoping to hang out for the summer, prior to college. A good friend had keys to his mother’s car, and together we cruised down Route 3 to the Cape, driving along Route 132 into Hyannis, while keeping an eye out for “summer help wanted” signs. It was already the second week in June, and, of course, all the summer jobs were filled. So we returned home, our dreams of idyllic days on the beach summarily dashed.



My Aunt Kate, who spent much of her life looking out for her ten nieces and nephews, asked what I planned to do with those two and a half months until Labor Day: “Why don’t you go up to Beacon Street and offer to help Eddie McCormack get elected,” she asked me. So up I went, and by day’s end I had signed on to work for the summer in a statewide political campaign for the US Senate - in a Democratic primary campaign, against Ted Kennedy.

Those were heady days, working with a group of other like-minded young students. Somehow, the Young Democrats club at Harvard had signed on to support McCormack, and our team consisted of a brash young Harvard junior named Barney Frank, a graduating senior named Harry Green, who eventually became a federal judge, Kevin Moloney, the son of the then-chairman of the Boston Public Library, and several young women from Regis and Emmanuel.

We students had great fun that summer as the campaign became our lives, seven days a week. When I walked my first parade route on Bunker Hill Day, I learned to stay 50 paces ahead of our candidate, and every 20 feet or so one of us would exclaim, “Look! There’s Eddie McCormack!” while encouraging the parade watchers to join in our excitement and applause.

The McCormack campaign headquarters were in a closed-down department store on Tremont Street across from Boston Common, right next to another property that housed Kennedy’s campaign, chaired by the estimable former Charlestown legislator Gerard Doherty. We were always on the lookout for the young Ted Kennedy, and years later Gerard told me his chief task that summer was to shelter his candidate from the students next door. “He can do more for Massachusetts” was the Kennedy campaign slogan.

The campaign that year became known as “Teddy vs. Eddie,” and it drew national attention. I was assigned to McCormack’s press office, and would intersect with members of the Washington press corps when they visited Boston. I remember meeting with John Chancellor, then an NBC reporter, and for two days I was assigned to drive the legendary Stewart Alsop around the campaign trail. Pretty heady assignment for this 18 year old!

I was in the building at Southie High when McCormack told his opponent, “If your name were Edward Moore your candidacy would be a joke.” That night, five of us commandeered the phones to call the Jerry Williams radio talk show, and in the early going, Eddie was out-polling Teddy 5-0!

As with all campaign workers, the McCormack team held steadfast to the belief that our candidate was the better choice. Privately, we printed a pair of bumpers stickers: “I Back Jack,” said the one, “But Teddy isn’t Ready” said the other. That was 53 years ago, and I was a young man.

My aunt was always the giver of good advice, and I will always cherish her counsel that early summer day. But she also gave me some other words of advice, and one of the most telling was, “Eddie, keep your mouth shut until you know what you’re talking about.”

I can admit now, after all these years, that I was just a tad off, that summer of 1962. Ted Kennedy really did do more for Massachusetts. Even Aunt Kate of blessed memory would concur that at last I know what I’m talking about.

Commentary

Remembering the 1916 Rising: Irish parties have their differences

By Joe Leary
SPECIAL TO THE BIR

It was a short rebellion. Only six days. According to the “Book of the 1916 Rising,” a 2006 publication by the *Irish Times*, 450 people died – 62 Irish rebels, 132 British soldiers and 256 civilians. Beyond that, the British Army imprisoned approximately 3,400 men and women in England and Wales, but soon released 2,000 of them back to Ireland.



Joe Leary

Within 12 days, after summary court trials, 15 of the Irish leaders were shot dead by military firing squads at the famous Kilmainham Gaol in Dublin. All of them have become heroes in the years since, their deaths memorialized across Ireland by the streets, parks, and train stations named after them.

Short as it was, “The Rising,” as it is called in Ireland, was a seminal event in Irish history. In one sense, it was a continuation of Irish rebellions against British rule that had been going on for centuries. It actually began on Easter Monday, April 24, 1916, but its centennial will be celebrated next year on Easter Sunday, March 27.

You would have to be a real student of Irish history to fully appreciate the different approaches that today’s political parties and their politicians are taking to the upcoming commemoration/celebration. Many of the differences stem from old rivalries from that time and the tragic 1922-1923 civil war that still resonates with many parts of the population.

Some of those differences emerge from an abhorrence of the violence that occurred in the past 40 years in the North and a strong desire to put the various conflicts behind today’s Irish society. Some involve demographics, the relatively wealthy versus the underprivileged. There are those who want things to stay the same and those who want change. Some come from a lingering loyalty to the British Crown and some from political posturing about the sides that were taken during those seven years a century ago – The Rebellion, The War of Independence, and the Civil War.

The result of all that is that today’s Irish political parties have taken on different levels of enthusiasm for the celebration. Sinn Fein is the most enthusiastic, promising parades in Belfast, Northern Ireland, and month-long events around the country. Fianna Fail is equally enthusiastic with a full agenda of its own. Fine Gael not quite so.

Fine Gael, the party now controlling the government, proposes to link the commemoration to the World War I battle along the River Somme in France where many Irish, from both North and South, died. Some have proposed inviting British royalty to the events as part

Off the Bench

History: A demanding taskmaster

By James W. Dolan
SPECIAL TO THE REPORTER

Nations tend to collapse from within. Internal problems such as corruption, dysfunction, economic collapse, concentration of wealth and power, and military adventures all wrapped in the creed of exceptionalism suggest that the lessons of history no longer apply.



James W. Dolan

The ebb and flow of dominant powers in history demonstrate the futility of permanence and the inevitability of decline. It is only a question of when and how fast the seeds of destruction undermine once-great powers. Are the cracks now apparent in our own country likely to widen and render us just another “has-been” nation, incapable of sustaining the balance so necessary to maintain equilibrium? Will China succeed us as the dominant power in this

century?

Since Vietnam, the signs have been discouraging. We have engaged in ill-advised wars that have cost us dearly. Yet there are many who are prepared to venture again into conflicts that offer little hope of lasting success and are certain to have unforeseen consequences. The limits of power are so much harder to accept than the boundless exhilaration of hubris.

The process of ascendancy and decline seems to have accelerated. What once took centuries now takes decades, probably due in part to the flow of information now available. Transparency itself has its drawbacks as celebrity politicians compete to distort both the message and integrity of the opposition. How will this play back home becomes far more important than will it serve the common good.

Power and money have replaced checks and balances as the fulcrum upon which public policy is formulated. The well-financed interests of the few outweigh the interests of the many. Ideological partisanship replaces the pragmatism so necessary to achieve consensus. Politics becomes the end game rather than a means to achieve workable solutions.

of an inclusive, all is forgiven gesture.

These same divisions were present in 1916 when a mix of academics, poets, writers, and pseudo military men decided to challenge the British military in Dublin and around the country. They called themselves the Irish Volunteers. To call them naive would only be partly true; they had few weapons, little military training, but were imbued with a strong drive for Irish Independence.

This was nothing new.

Ireland today owes its existence as an independent nation to the thousands upon thousands of Irish men and women who consistently over hundreds of years agitated, took up arms, fought, and died to remove their land from British rule. The rebellion didn’t just happen in 1916 – it had been going on for centuries.

There is no doubt, however, that Easter Monday, April 24, 1916, was a historic event in the history of Ireland. On that day several thousand men and women, many armed with German rifles, marched to their assigned positions throughout Dublin. Their headquarters was the General Post Office, which is still there on what is now known as O’Connell Street.

The rebels were led by dedicated men, among them those who were executed by a British firing squad on the orders of General John Maxwell, who arrived on April 28 to take charge of British forces. Patrick Pearce was the commanding officer of the Irish Volunteers, and Tom Clark, James Connelly, Joseph Plunkett, Sean MacDermott, Thomas MacDonagh, and Eamon Ceannt were all active leaders and signers of the famous declaration of the new Provisional Irish government that was read from the General Post Office on the first day of the uprising. They and eight others were shot dead after surrendering to Maxwell’s forces.

Though neither took a major role, Eamon de Valera and Michael Collins were among the fighters during the rising and both are venerated as heroes by much of Ireland today. Collins was assassinated during the civil war while de Valera survived to serve a number of terms as president and head of state of the Irish Republic.

But that was all to come. In that spring of 1916, the “rising” was to no avail. British troops swarmed in from England and from the North, and the British Army moved the gunboat Helga up the Liffey River that splits Dublin and relentlessly shelled and bombed the buildings on O’Connell Street. Many were destroyed and much of the area where the rebels were entrenched was leveled. The damage would take years to repair.

The 1916 rebellion was part of a series of events that created the Ireland of today. It will be interesting to see how the Irish people will welcome the celebrations next year.

As Americans, we have no hesitation regarding our commemorations of Patriots Day, Bunker Hill Day, Evacuation Day and, especially, Independence Day, the Fourth of July. We celebrate them.

I believe the founding fathers would be distressed to see the extent to which money and power have undermined the republic and the degree to which public service has become synonymous with serving one’s own personal interest. Few today are willing to risk losing office for a greater good. For them, there is no greater good than their own political survival.

Despite enormous costs, our efforts to project power and control outcomes in the Middle East have failed. There exists little agreement as to what, if anything, we can do to address the problems. Having failed in Vietnam, in Iraq, and likely in Afghanistan, some of us ignore our mistakes and limitations while calling for more of the same.

We cannot fix the world. Of late, we have demonstrated we cannot even fix our own country. The resulting lack of confidence in our ability to prudently address external threats and sensibly deal with internal problems raises questions of competence. Have we become so partisan that as a nation we can no longer agree on coherent and effective policies?

History teaches us that decline is inevitable. Human and institutional flaws will diminish our status and influence, but the pace can be slowed and even reversed temporarily. However, that would require elements of leadership, respect, cooperation, humility, and restraint not now visible. Once the unraveling begins, it is difficult to stop.

Mankind has made great strides in areas of science and technology that offer great promise for the future. We inhabit one beautiful speck in the vastness of the universe. From space, the earth looks orderly and peaceful. The undercurrents that tear us apart are invisible. Unless we can master ourselves and control the arrogance, pride, greed, and sectarianism that impede our progress, the planet will suffer.

I saw a beautiful newborn in church recently and thought, “He will be my age in 2090.” What will the world be like then? Having mastered many of the natural forces that promise a vastly improved quality of life, will we also have made strides in loving one another? Absent that, real progress is an illusion.

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



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Reflections on the ‘Smack 47’ letter – Comparing it to the ‘Irish Cable’ of 1920 is flawed reasoning

By PETER F. STEVENS

What does the recent furor over the 47 Republican senators’ missive to Iran’s ayatollahs have to do with the United States and Ireland? Nothing – at least until defenders of the 47 started talking smack about the time 95 years ago when 88 members of the US House of Representatives sent a cable to British Prime Minister David Lloyd George and the British Parliament protesting the brutal treatment by the British of Irish prisoners who had been stripped of all rights and held without arraignment or trial.

Champions of the 47 senators have claimed that their letter to Iran was not unprecedented, citing the congressional move in 1920. They have contended that it was – and is – just fine that Congress undercut and derailed a president’s and his State Department’s constitutionally empowered responsibility to negotiate agreements with foreign entities. They have asserted that it was their “duty” to hijack foreign policy from a president before that policy had been crafted. We’ll see how their stance holds up if Democrat senators and reps behave the same way if Jeb Bush wins the White House. No president, regardless of party, should have foreign policy negotiations made the subject of interference by Congress before legislators even know if there is an agreement and what it entails.

On one count, the 47 and their cheerleaders are right. In following the controversial footsteps of the 88 who sent the “Irish Cable” to the British government, Arkansas Senator Tom Cotton – the “brains” behind the letter – and his 46 self-appointed fellow “diplomats” acted in bald-faced challenge to, and contradiction of, the policies of a duly elected president. In 1920, Congressmen assailed Woodrow Wilson, no supporter of Irish independence and an unquestioned Anglophile. In 2015, some of the senators seem to believe that President Obama wants Iran to have a nuclear arsenal; some genuinely believe that he does not grasp the danger Iran poses; and a handful are

out-and-out Obamaphobes.

But there is one stark difference. Even though the thorny question of Irish independence complicated the League of Nations talks after World War I, the Wilson administration was not involved in direct negotiations with Britain over issues that could lead to war. Some have hailed the 47 senators as patriots; others have blasted them as akin to traitors. Retired Gen. Paul Eaton, in the *New York Times*, opined that Cotton and crew were not treasonous, but “mutinous.” The senators waded – stormed, actually – into the middle of actual negotiations not only between the Obama administration and Iran, but also between Britain, France, and the other nations immersed in the process. The men who sent the “Irish Cable” in 1920 intended to embarrass President Wilson. It would be hard to deny that the Senate’s 47 intended to destroy any chance of an agreement with Iran – before they knew what that agreement might be. Do they have every right and duty to oppose any deal? Yes, but before anyone even knows what that agreement is?

The actions of “Smack 47” (with apologies to the great band “Black 47”) are transparently political. At least human rights played a role on the 1920 cable. It is hard to recall such a blatant attempt as Cotton’s prose to undermine a president, whether Democrat or Republican. If 47 Democrats had dashed off such a sloppy, ill-written missive to a Soviet premier during the Reagan years or to Iraq in 1990, or even 2003, there would have been ferocious pushback – and rightfully so. Barack Obama is not Neville Chamberlain – just ask Osama Bin Laden. Whether on his watch or that of the next president, it is a good bet that Iran will not possess nuclear weapons.

In an unattributed article (“Ireland and American Politics”) that appeared in the *Harvard Crimson* in May 1920, a professor or a student penned the following words about the 1920 cable from Congress to Parliament:

“And now 88 members of Congress have enabled Lloyd George, criticising [sic] the treatment of political prisoners in Ireland. ... Anyone with half an eye can see beneath the pretense of love for Irish liberty to the selfish political motives that prompted these actions. ... America must realize that meddlesome interference by a few vote-seeking politicians is not going to settle the Irish question; it will only make matters worse.” [Some of the legislators were staunch supporters of Irish independence and furious over the treatment of Irish prisoners; others were, as the writer noted, political opportunists. In the Senate, Henry Cabot Lodge, of Massachusetts, no fan of the Irish cause, would later acknowledge that he used the issue of Irish independence as a means to undercut Wilson.]

In the most polarized Washington in memory, “meddlesome interference” is an especially apt term. Republicans view the Affordable Care Act as just that. That, however, unlike the “Irish Cable of 1920” or the “Letter to the Ayatollahs of 2015,” is a domestic issue. Throughout our nation’s history, presidents and State Departments have set the initial parameters of foreign policy. In ignoring that history, the 47 senators have endeavored to neuter the nation’s commander-in-chief and the State Department. They have “enabled” the ayatollahs to “criticize” the administration and all of Congress. Their letter weakens the nation and weakens all future presidents no matter whether they have a D or an R next to their names. Such was not the case in 1920, and it is historically and intellectually specious to compare the two instances of Congressional “meddling.”

No matter that many Americans loathed Woodrow Wilson for his anti-Irish stance, no matter that many despise George W. Bush for his race to war against Iraq, no matter that many revile Barack Obama for reasons base or principled, the letter of Arkansas Senator Tom Cotton and his colleagues ventured far beyond the proverbial pale.

Enough already, Mr. O’Dowd

By TRINA VARGO

The week of March 16 was so seven years ago.

Irish America publisher Niall O’Dowd may be loud, but that doesn’t make him right, or representative of most Irish Americans. In his never-ending need to ingratiate himself with the Clintons, he inducted Hillary Clinton into his Irish America Hall of Fame during that week. All that did was to remind everyone that when Clinton ran against Obama in 2008, she and her camp falsely claimed she played an instrumental role in the Northern Ireland peace process leading up to the 1998 Belfast Agreement.

As Senator Ted Kennedy’s foreign policy adviser, I was directly involved in that process, as was O’Dowd, and he would know full well that the First Lady’s role was far from instrumental. He keeps trying to suggest more than was there with vague but grandiose-sounding comments like, “Hillary Clinton played a leading role in creating the links between the White House and leaders on the ground that would become so important during crunch time when negotiations came.” That’s as specific as he can get, and as non-specific as he has to be, because there’s no there there.

In 1997, *Irish Times* journalist Conor O’Clery wrote the first detailed book on the US role in Northern Ireland as it related to obtaining that first visa for Sinn Féin leader Gerry Adams to visit the US and that period leading up to the Belfast Agreement. As O’Dowd was one of O’Clery’s primary sources, one would think that if the First Lady had played any significant role, he would have credited her, as would anyone else O’Clery interviewed. But in O’Clery’s, “Daring Diplomacy: Clinton’s Secret Search for Peace in Ireland,” Hillary Clinton is mentioned five times but there are no references to her playing any role; she is referred to merely as accompanying her husband.

Most tellingly, if her contributions to the Northern Ireland peace process were so significant, why didn’t she mention that herself in her 2003 book “Living History”? In the 500-page autobiography she mentions Northern Ireland on several occasions but never suggests she played an instrumental role in ending the conflict. As Maureen Dowd wrote in the *New York Times* in 2008, “Having a first lady tea in Belfast is not equivalent to bringing peace to Northern Ireland.”

And O’Dowd was also at it again with his futile demands to separate the Irish from everyone else who is illegally in the US. The *Irish Times* reported that O’Dowd told the Taoiseach (Irish Prime Minister Enda Kenny) that he might want to take a page from the Israeli government, which “did well in the US because they were prepared to ‘kick down doors’.” The Taoiseach responded by correctly recognizing that he is “not in a position to dictate to the American administration on the issue of immigration reform.”

Underlying all this are O’Dowd’s delusions about an Irish American vote and political power that simply don’t exist. He would like the Clintons, and everyone else, to believe that there’s an Irish vote and he’s the man to get it for them. But as the former Maryland Governor Martin O’Malley told the late *Irish Times*

journalist Seán Flynn in 2010, “Irishness per se does not deliver a huge political dividend.” Aside from how one feels about the influence of money in politics, the American Israel Public Affairs Committee’s revenues in 2013 were nearly \$72 million. There is no equivalent Irish/Irish American organization and thus no serious clout in elections or policy. When the journalist Niall Stanage looked at the Federal Election Commission records from the 2007-2008 election cycle, he found that the Irish American Democrats’ PAC raised \$35,840 and most of that minuscule amount was from just a few people. One reason there is no such Irish war chest is because there are no galvanizing issues around which most Irish Americans feel a need to lobby.

I wrote in the *Irish Times* in 2007 that there would be no special deal for the Irish illegally in the US. It

was simply a statement of fact. Personally, I’m all for immigration reform but a special deal was never going to happen and saying otherwise to those living in the shadows is to mislead them. American politicians are not going to irritate millions of Latinos by bumping a couple of thousand Irish to the front of the line (incidentally, there is no evidence to support that the number of Irish illegally in the US is 50,000, O’Dowd created that figure).

O’Dowd is certainly entitled to lobby for Hillary Clinton and the Irish who are illegally in the US – but he’s helping neither.

This essay was posted by Trina Vargho on the US-Ireland Alliance website.



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Immigration Q&A

Be on lookout for immigration scams

Q. I hear that there are a number of frauds being practiced on immigrants in the US. How can they protect themselves?

A. There are indeed many immigration scams, with new ones appearing all the time. One that came to our attention involves a telephone call to an immigrant from someone claiming to be from US Citizenship and Immigration Services. The caller claims that there is some discrepancy in the agency’s information on the immigrant, and that there is a penalty that must be paid to clear it up. Next – you guessed it – the caller instructs the immigrant to wire money to an address provided. Real US immigration officers will never ask for money over the telephone, nor will they seek personal financial information such as bank account or Social Security numbers, which can be used in identity theft.

The general principle to remember with regard to telephone scams is that one never should give out sensitive information or send money to anyone. This applies, by the way, to all unsolicited telephone calls, emails, and other communications, whether they relate to immigration, sales offers, investment opportunities, claims that relatives need money in an emergency, and so on.

It also is important for those seeking immigration benefits to be very careful in dealing with anyone offering application support online. Aside from outright fraud, there also is a large risk that websites will contain outdated or incorrect advice. In addition, beware in particular those sites that are dressed up to look like official government sites, using symbols such as the seal of the United States, the US flag, photos of President Obama, etc. However, it is easy to recognize authentic official web sites: they always end in the suffix .gov, never .com, .net, etc.

Note also that all government application forms are free. USCIS forms can be downloaded from uscis.gov. Never pay anyone for copies of blank forms. Furthermore, never pay application fees to third parties; these fees are always paid directly to the government in accordance with instructions on the application forms.

The safest course for prospective applicants is to visit one of our weekly legal clinics for a free, confidential consultation with an immigration lawyer concerning any applications that you are planning to file.

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



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IRISH INTERNATIONAL IMMIGRANT CENTER



An agency accredited by US Department of Justice

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

Computer workshops empower participants

This spring, the Irish International Immigrant Center (IIIC) is offering free drop-in computer skills workshops every Thursday evening. Students attending these workshops can get individualized help on everything from basic computer and internet skills to questions about Word, Excel, and resume-writing.

Brian O’Keeffe, who leads the workshop, has this to say: “We’re hoping to help people improve their skills and their confidence in using technology. Some people come in with skills, but lack the exposure and confidence to use it effectively. Others come in with very specific needs, such as working on a resume or learning how to use a spreadsheet.”

Why does he like leading these workshops? “I like being able to empower people to improve their lives. Just a little empowerment goes a long way,” says Brian. “We welcome all skill levels; this is not limited to just beginners. Come to learn the basics or improve your computer skills.”

These weekly drop-in sessions meet on Thursday evenings from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. at the IIIC’s



Brian O’Keeffe helps out a visitor to the IIIC’s free drop-in computer skills workshops that are being held every Thursday evening from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. at the center’s downtown office.

downtown office. To learn more about our computer skills workshops, contact Sarah at 617-542-7654,

Ext. 36. Pre-registration is suggested, but not required.

Legal Clinics

Tues., April 7, Tues., April 21, 4 p.m. – IIIC, 100 Franklin St. Lower Level, Downtown Boston. Entrance is at 201 Devonshire St.

Mon., April 13, 6:30 p.m. – The Green Briar Pub, 304 Washington St., Brighton Center.

Tues., April 28, 6 p.m. – South Boston Labourer Center, 275 West Broadway, South Boston.

Boston Globe Readers Can Help the IIIC! The Boston Globe GRANT Program enables readers to show their support for non-profits by choosing which ones are given free advertising space in the Globe newspaper. The organizations with the highest donations will

be able to spread the word about their valuable work through this process. Seven-day newspaper subscribers’ vouchers are valued at \$100; all other subscribers (including website-only readers) receive vouchers valued at \$50. You may have already received the voucher in the mail. This will cost you nothing. Simply write our name and address on the voucher, and place it in the return envelope. Alternatively, you may go online and enter your selection at <http://tinyurl.com/mjdqf9c> The Irish International Immigrant Center, 100 Franklin Street, Boston, MA 02110

Upcoming Events

Thurs., April 2 – IIIC’s Sixth Annual Business Leaders Breakfast – It will be held at the Boston Harbor Hotel and feature as guest speaker US Rep. Joseph P. Kennedy III. The breakfast is held to support the IIIC’s immigrant services. Please join us for an engaging discussion on immigration, the economy and other issues facing Massachusetts and the United States. The event will begin at 7:30 a.m., and end at 9. Tickets are \$250, and there are opportunities to sponsor the breakfast. Please contact Mary Kerr for more information at mkerr@iiicenter.org | 617-695-1554.

Matters Of Substance

Family-Healing Workshops

Please join us Tuesday evening April 7 and Tuesday evening April 14 for another of our Family Healing Workshop Series. Refreshments and resource sharing will begin from 5:30 and the workshop starts promptly at 6 p.m. at the Labourer Center (275 West Broadway, South Boston, MA 02127). Childcare is available but you must RSBVP to confirm. Please call Danielle at the IIIC (617-542-7654, Ext.14, or at dowen@iiicenter.org) if you have any questions about this series or about recovery in families.

Tues., April 7, 5:30 p.m. – This workshop will focus on “How do I get a loved one into treatment?” It

will cover questions like where to start, what to do if the person refuses, and support for families. A panel of speakers will help answers these and other questions families may have about how to bring peace and healing to their home at last. Please join us that evening for the third of our four week Family Healing Workshop Series with refreshments and resource sharing from 5.30 p.m. and the workshop beginning promptly at 6 p.m. at the Labourer Center.

Tues., April 14, 5:30 p.m. – This workshop addresses how to deal with a loved ones’ behavior when drinking/using drugs and the problems it may cause

family and home. When you love the person but hate their behavior, how can you take care of yourself? There are many ways you can bring recovery into your life and home, allowing healing to start even if the person you love is not ready for recovery yet. Please join us at the Labourer Center for the final of our four week Family Healing Workshop Series.

Change is possible – We can help! (Partnership with Catholic Charities Recovering Connections, RFK Corps, and COASA.) If you are affected by the drinking of someone close to you, Al-Anon may be able to help, even



Danielle Bowles

if you are in another 12-step program of recovery. Check out this link for more information: ma-alanon-alateen.org or call 508-366-0556. Or call IIIC Wellness Director Danielle at 617-542-7654, Ext. 14.



IRISH INTERNATIONAL IMMIGRANT CENTER
WELLNESS SERVICES

FAMILY HEALING WORKSHOPS



WHAT:
4 week Workshop Series learning about Alcohol/Substance Abuse and its impact on you, your family, and our community.

WHERE:
The Labourer Center
275 West Broadway
South Boston, MA 02127

WHEN:
Tuesdays, March 24th, 31st & April 7th, 14th 2015
Refreshments at 5:30PM
Workshop 6PM - 7:30PM

CONTACT:
Danielle Owen
617-542-7654 ext. 14
dowen@iiicenter.org

Callie Armstrong
617-464-8569

RECOVERING CONNECTIONS
Have you or your family been affected by another person's substance abuse? Do you have questions?
Join us in February for a 4 week Workshop Series.
Highlights include:
• Learn how Substance Use problems occur.
• Practical resources and paths to recovery.
• Guest speakers from our community.

All are welcome, including family members, persons in recovery & service providers. Childcare is available for attendees each night, but you must RSVP to avail of this.


Catholic Charities
Recovering Connections
Robert F. Kennedy
Children's Action Corps

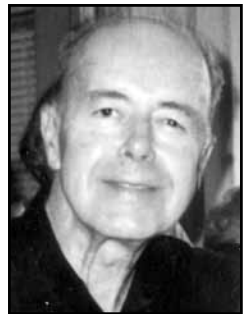
WELLNESS SERVICES

Boston Irish Reporter's Here & There

By BILL O'DONNELL

Good News On Irish Economy – A number of factors have come into play that lend a rosy scenario to Ireland and its rebounding economy. The most important indicators by any standard are the recent numbers from 2014. They show robust economic growth of 4.8 percent, exceeding government forecasts. Ireland's GDP last year far exceeded the previous year's number, and follows a solid increase in domestic demand as consumers resumed spending.

An additional factor creating buoyancy in the Irish economy is the drop in the value of the euro – it could reach parity with the dollar for the first time in 13 years – which serves to boost exports and the tourism sector. It means that tourists to Ireland and other euro zone countries will get a bigger bang for their dollar. Also, the euro's weakness provides a clear advantage to Irish food exporters as well as additional strength to big Irish Pharma companies to sell into the US.



Bill O'Donnell A final encouraging sign in a new report rates Ireland as the No. 1 destination for US foreign direct investment. The highly favorable report was published as Microsoft announced it is investing \$150 million on a new campus building in south Dublin.

'Where The Bodies Are Buried' – The newest entry in the ever-expanding investigatory archives of Irish republican leader **Gerry Adams** is a 15,000-word treatise in the New Yorker magazine (March 16 issue) by Dorchester native **Patrick Radden Keefe** that adds some highly credible details by former IRA colleagues to the life and legend of the Sinn Fein party leader and County Louth TD in the south's Irish Parliament.

Keefe is a staff writer with the magazine, a senior fellow at the Century Foundation, and the winner of the 2014 National Magazine Award for feature writing. He has several critical advantages that he displays to good effect in his treatment of Adams. The first is that he had the help of **Michael McConville**, who as a young boy 43 years ago witnessed his mother's abduction by IRA members. The second advantage is that Keefe is an experienced investigative reporter; he knows the McConville family, their Belfast turf, and is trusted by the Belfast nationalist community.

"Where The Bodies Are Buried" is a gory, hard-hitting look at Gerry Adams's alleged central role in the deaths of **Jean McConville**, a mother of ten, and others in the Provo war against the British in Northern Ireland. Much of Keefe's narrative has been rumored and/or leaked in earlier media reports, but this is a chilling, up-close account in a highly respectable magazine that puts Adams in an IRA leadership role directly ordering murder for a cause that he has consistently denied having any involvement with. Coming less than two months before the Irish elections, these and other recent accounts of Adams's alleged past paramilitary behavior will give his constituents much to chew on as they enter the polls.

Typhoid Mary, The Back Story – We first take historical note of Tyrone native **Mary Mallon**, who in the early years of the last century became a confinement target after health officials traced her to an Oyster Bay house on Long Island, New York. Mary, then in her early 20s, worked around in homes as a cook and too often outbreaks of Typhoid Fever followed in homes where she had worked. It was later discovered that she was a healthy carrier of the disease.

Thus began Mary's long and demeaning struggle with health agencies and her subsequent forced movement, or quarantine, to North Brother island in the East River just off the Bronx. Several years afterwards, she was released after agreeing not to cook professionally. Later, after years of pursuit, freedom, and quarantine she was again found to be cooking and the source of typhoid and consigned for the last 23 years of her life to quarantine in New York.

While it seems that Mary Mallon's tale concerns a single woman, a healthy carrier of typhus strain, and her much publicized jousts with the authorities, there are questions 100 years later about how she became the controversial face of contagion.

Some historians point to the fact that by the time of Mary's second forced quarantine, there were thousands across the country who were carriers of typhoid but Mary was the only one who was imprisoned for life. Some social scientists strongly suggest that she became a target because she was female, Irish, uncooperative, and without a family.

Mary's tragic life and trials would not pass the bio-ethical sniff test in this more enlightened era.

Not Quite the "Pulse Of The Faithful" – That description is a far cry from what was advertised by the Catholic Church in promoting a worldwide Vatican survey that has been sent on to the US Conference of Catholic Bishops and ultimately to the Vatican. When first announced many months ago, the survey was said to be a means of reaching out to ordinary Catholics in the pews to get a sense of what they are thinking and doing. Sorry. If you want to see something like that in the survey results, you will have a very long wait.

Instead of engaging with ordinary parishioners in the individual dioceses, the questions instead went

to a tiny sampling of Catholics, those who had demonstrated consistent support for church policies and agreement with orthodox viewpoints. What was being sought, then, was something akin to a political survey that doesn't want any dissidents spoiling a good story, nor moderate or liberal Catholics, but rather a reliable conservative element that finds little if any disagreement with current church rules. In other words, what were once known as "good Catholics."

Thus you had "deaneries" (look it up), well known, small, relatively conservative safe groupings of parishes that would not rock the boat as many Catholics in Europe and Latin America have done to the Catholic Church's consternation. Elite deaneries were just the first piece of the "faithful" mosaic that also sought out clerics or religious, Catholics with advanced religious education, Catholic university professors, and other well-scouted survey participants. Lay Catholic pew-sitters were not invited to participate. If there is any doubt that the church was looking for rubber-stamp approval of Catholics in their survey, why not let the bishops publish the methodology and scope of this latest suspect pulse of the faithful. Transparency!

"Easter Rising" Centenary a North-South Affair – The centennial marketing the 1916 Easter Rising is scheduled to be observed in Belfast and Dublin and other cities in the Republic on Easter Sunday 1916. That, for the moment, is all that is sure about the ceremonies that have been described by the North's Deputy First **Minister Martin McGuinness** as commemorating a time "recognized as a turning point in the quest for Irish independence."

Meanwhile, northern unionists have been critical, saying the multiple marches would glorify the deaths of soldiers and innocent civilians killed in the rising. The Democratic Unionist Party, the party with the highest vote and the most ministers at Stormont, is unhappy with plans that call for the Irish government to organize Rising events and Sinn Fein seeking to ensure an alternative agenda that recognizes the Rebels of 1916 in strong, specific terms.

At this point, two things are ensured: There will be a centenary of the 1916 Easter Rising, and the scramble for primacy will likely still be going on next year.

Saying Goodbye to a Legend – Father Ted Hesburgh, who led the University of Notre Dame for 35 years, died at 97 in late February. The good priest's passing was too late for my deadline in the last issue but he really never left my long-distance thoughts. I had the pleasure of Father Hesburgh's company on the Notre Dame campus, along with former Wisconsin Gov. Patrick Lucey, in the early springtime in 1980 at the Morris Inn where we had gone for breakfast and a meeting with the Notre Dame leader. Pat and Father Hesburgh were old pals who took to chatting about mutual friends but for me it was a special moment with someone I had always admired.

I don't recall anything profound that was said that morning but the grace and quiet confidence of this living icon was more than enough. The greetings that smiling students and parents accorded Father Hesburgh as they entered the restaurant and saw the face from Time magazine covers and hundreds of newspaper front pages said it all. A full life of service. A good man.

Bill O'Reilly Blows His Cover – Is the genie out of the bottle? Has Billo, as he is irreverently called, finally told his last lie, his last made-up little insecure me-ism that proves to him perhaps, if not to others, that he is an overpaid, overripe narcissist with an out-of-control ego and his mating with Fox is the luckiest moment in his entire fiction-filled, exaggerated life.

As one of the Brownings, in speaking of the love they shared, reportedly said, "Let me count the ways," I am trying to count the ways that O'Reilly's latest swath of falsehoods and made-up tales of derring-do have befouled the airwaves, relegating NBC's **Brian Williams** all the way back to amateur status, a distant also-ran to Bogus Billy.

Where to begin? Maybe his book claims where he has "seen soldiers gun down unarmed civilians" in Latin America, or as Billo remembers, I've seen Irish terrorists kill and maim fellow citizens in Belfast with bombs, or on another occasion Billo saying, "I've covered four wars. I've seen the best and the worst."

Of course, Billy needed long-range opera glasses to see the savagery in the Falklands from his distant secure patch off-island in Buenos Aires. And what faithful Fox News viewer can fail to remember Billo saying, "I saw nuns get shot in the back of the head" in El Salvador. Try to forget that Billy, the intrepid, spirited eyewitness du jour, didn't arrive in El Salvador until months after the brutal killings. Ah, what's a few months when you're a star!

If Billo is a truthful guy for a probationary period, and if his co-written books go out of print and his TV tapes are shredded, then maybe he can try to set the record straight and blame all the rest of us for calling him out on his fictional non-fiction. Billy, please look at something beyond a six-month leave.

A Sad, Hopeful Story Out of Ireland – *The Irish Examiner* had a story about **Eamonn Coghlan** and his son Michael that left me sad but hopeful for this retired world class champion runner, one of Ireland's best ever. Coghlan, who spent much time in Boston, has good friends here and to those whose lives, even for a moment, interacted with his, he was the gentleman athlete, a lot like one of Boston's best via Parry Sound, **Bobby Orr**. Two class acts.

Anyway, when Eamonn learned that his prized son Michael is gay he was initially devastated, but he loves his son unconditionally and he made sure Michael knew that. Eamonn talks about the bullying in school and the street assaults. And about Michael and the stress he lived with as he struggled with his gayness.

The elder Coghlan, a member of the Irish Senate in his post-athletic life, spoke about his son being gay and how he handles it. "It's not about politics or voting for a particular party. It is about equality, removing rejection, removing exclusion, removing the guilt, shame, and fear that gay people experience. We have to think of the person, their dignity, their validation...to love and live life to the full. I was lucky enough to marry the woman of my dreams. Who are we to deny our sons and daughters the basic right of marrying the person they love?"

Seamus Heaney, an Irish Treasure – To the surprise of few, and the satisfaction of many, the late Seamus Heaney's elegiac paean to his mother, "When All The Others Were Away at Mass," has been named Ireland's favorite poem of the last 100 years. The poem has the then young author recalling a morning shared with his mother in the kitchen where she was peeling potatoes, moving seamlessly to the final hours of her life, sharing, and sharing again.

Irish Miscellany – A new hardcover book handsomely bound, full of good stuff for young and old, for first timer to Ireland, for oldsters returning, for curious tourists or root-seeking grandkids is a book for all. It's "Irish Miscellany," subtitled "Everything You Always Wanted to Know about Ireland." The writing is excellent, with a cheeky style and full of vital information and on-target details about Ireland and its truths and fables told with mild irreverence and a keen eye for the realities of the Green Isle, without any grizzly leprechauns stalking you. A fine read at only \$14.95.

To get your copy check amazon.com or BN.com and wherever else books are sold. The author is **Dermot McEvoy** and it's a delightful read, a great buy from Skyhorse Publishing. And if it matters, a personal recommendation from this columnist.

PERSONAL CLIPPINGS

Martin McGuinness, junior partner in the North's ruling junta, says that a British Conservative election victory would have "disastrous consequences" for Stormont. ... Thousands of Dubliners and others from across Ireland continue their street protests against the new water charges. ... First-rate journalist **Anne Cadwallader**, now of the Finucane Centre, charges the RUC with working with the Ulster Defence Regiment in the deaths of 120 people in the North. ... Slugger O'Toole, a hip blog covering the North and the Republic suggests that a Stormont collapse could mean a United Ireland with the ball in the DUP court. ... Let's give **Marty Walsh** a round of applause on telling **Deval Patrick** and others to skip the big paydays and go volunteer for the Olympics. ... The European Union has drafted legislation to end sweetheart tax deals. Is there a bit of envy at Ireland's gritty turnaround after the brutal recession?

Well, take a good look at the 3/22 Boston Globe's multi-columned Valentine to first-term US Senator from Massachusetts **Elizabeth Warren**. A early, gutsy call at the Globe for a Warren presidential candidacy. ... The only thing holding up the Aer Lingus sale is a longer term guarantee for Heathrow take off and landing slots. ... **Bertie Ahern** (and I promised myself to start the 12-step withdrawal program) can't get arrested at home but the former taoiseach picked up an honorary at Washington College in the good old USA. ... Amazing: 7 out of 10 of Irish users say they go to Facebook on a daily basis. ... The broker whose \$1.4 billion gamble broke the venerable Barings Bank in 1995 is giving advice to AIBank former CEO **David Drumm**, who is hiding out somewhere near Boston. Memo to myself: Check if there is an active reward posted for Drumm. ... Don't cry for Bank of Ireland; it made a pre-tax profit of over a billion dollars last year. Now when is it the Irish ratepayers' turn to get theirs?

US business figures, including Sinn Fein donors, are raising concerns about Sinn Fein's skitzo approach to Ireland's divided economics and anti-business policies. Sinn Feiners, not being wooed by Fine Gael or Fianna Fail, announce they will not join them in government. Wow, Stop the presses. ... If you're in Dublin, don't try to get a coffee at the Grafton Street Bewleys. It is being redone and will reopen at the end of this year. ... Only 22 more years until the Charitable Irish Society can celebrate its 300th anniversary. ... But on May 29, the Charitable Irish and the Eire Society co-host Irish Night at the Pops (contact: charitableIrishSociety.org for tix/info). ... If the 2024 Boston Olympics were on the Suffolk tote board they would be about 6 to 1, it says here. ... **Linda Dorcea Forry** (back up on the board after Southie Breakfast) had the best line on that pre-parade function: "Look at all the elected officials here today, all of them. They must have thought this is a Boston 2024 job fair." As my father used to say, more truth than poetry. ... Give a four-tour Marine veteran of Iraq, new Congressman Sean Moulton, a hand for this: "Gay rights are the civil rights fight of our generation" – yes, but alongside the other one we have been working on. ... Bring your St. Patrick's Day empties to a redemption center and give the money to the homeless.

The New Kennedy Compound

(Continued from page 1) person who walks through these doors and I for one can't wait to get started." Speakers lauded Kennedy as the lion of the Senate and the person most committed to cooperation and encouraging greater participation in government.

"Senator Kennedy was one of the most effective leaders in American history. Not because he brought

federal resources home," said Mayor Walsh, referring to the Geiger-Gibson Health Center on Columbia Point for which Kennedy won federal funding in the 1960s. "But because he brought our homes, our neighborhoods, and our voices to Washington."

As the institute and luminaries glittered, attendees to the ceremonies shivered as they were seated under the large, heated but open tents erected in front of the institute's front entrance. Following the ceremonies, elected officials, including a litany of senators, joined students from every state to christen the replica Senate chamber with Vice President Joe Biden.

President Barack Obama also made a surprise appearance to the Senate chamber before Biden arrived, commending the young people for their involvement and the chamber itself.

"I have to say, this is remarkable," he told the young people and elected officials who both surged up to greet him at the front of the chamber.

"This is the colossus of the constitution and I hope you got the same feeling that I got when you walked in here," Biden told those gathered on the chamber floor and the gallery. "Its intimacy is real."

The EMK Institute opened to the public on Tuesday, March 31. Admission to the museum will cost \$14 for Massachusetts residents between 25 and 61, and \$12 for the state's seniors, students, and veterans. Admission will be free to Massachusetts children between 6 and 17. Regular admission for out-of-state residents will be \$16.

For more information, visit emkinstitute.org



A take from above as Vice President Joe Biden addresses the gathering. Below, UMass Boston Chancellor J. Keith Motley makes a point.

Photos by Lauren Dezenski and Chris Lovett





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‘The Cripple of Inishmaan’

A take on the mythology of what it is to be Irish

By R. J. DONOVAN
SPECIAL TO THE BIR

The plays and films of Martin McDonagh could hardly be called light entertainment. From “Lonesome West” and “The Lieutenant of Inishmore” to “The Beauty Queen of Leenane,” “The Pillowman,” “In Bruges” and “Seven Psychopaths,” the Irish writer often punctuates his dark comedies with brutality, gore, and the occasional murder.

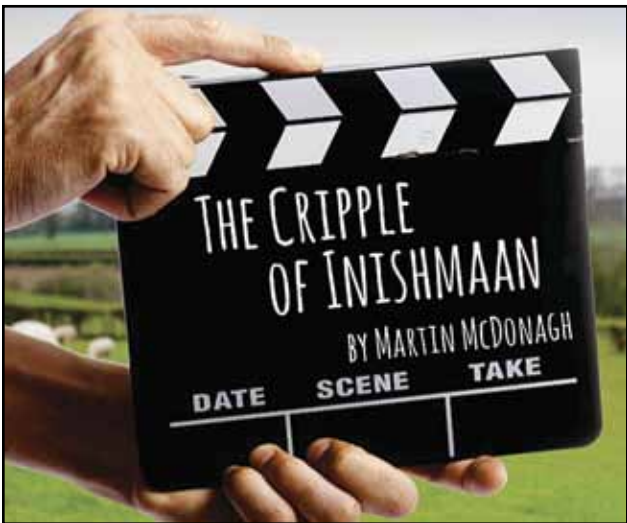
That said, “The Cripple of Inishmaan,” written by McDonagh in 1996, stands on its own. Although still brimming with cruelty, this tale of a cripple who longs for a chance to shine is often described as having a simple poignancy underscored by heart. It’s also laugh-out-loud funny.

An exercise in great storytelling, “The Cripple of Inishmaan” is being presented by the Boston University College of Fine Arts, School of Theatre, from April 29 to May 3 at the Boston University Theatre.

The title character is young Billy, an outcast both for his physical affliction and the fact that his remote village on the western coast of Ireland sees him as being not too bright. The truth is that Billy is far sharper than most people give him credit for, which turns out to be a trait that serves him well. An orphan, he has been raised by two daft old adoptive “aunties.”

Most of McDonagh’s work is set in the present day. Again in contrast, “The Cripple of Inishmaan” takes place in 1934. And the hook of the plot is grounded in fact. Word arrives on Inishmaan that a Hollywood director is coming to nearby Inishmore to shoot a film.

This is the part of the story that’s true. Robert



Boston University College of Fine Arts, School of Theatre, presents Martin McDonagh’s dark Irish comedy “The Cripple of Inishmaan” from April 29 - May 3.

J. Flaherty traveled to the Aran Islands in an effort to capture a true slice of Irish life in “Man Of Aran.” More fantasy than fact, his “documentary” proved to be a contrived effort filled with forced events and inaccurate relationships that had little to do with life off the coast of Ireland.

In the play, the prospect of having a Hollywood director in their midst sets the villagers into a frenzy. Everyone wants a shot at being involved in the film, including Billy, who sees the documentary as his once-in-a-lifetime chance to break the tedium, gossip, and mocking he experiences. If all goes well, America could be within his grasp.

Capturing both the inherent humor and sadness of the islanders, “Cripple of Inishmaan” was most recently produced in London and New York starring Daniel Radcliffe of “Harry Potter” fame.

Prior to the Broadway opening of the production (which was nominated for six Tony Awards), Radcliffe said: “What I think

is impressive about the play as a whole is that it manages to be so cruel but also has this heart. When you think about the play at first, you think about it as this dark comedy, but I actually don’t think people expected it to have this really heartbreaking, very beautiful, very tender side to it as well, and I think that’s what makes it work. I feel like the last scene from this play leaves the theater with people when they go.”

At BU, the production is being directed by grad student Thomas Martin as part of his MFA Directing thesis. A Montana native, Martin lived and worked in London before arriving in Boston. Although he first set his sights on an acting career, he shifted his focus to directing after being impressed by the highly creative staging of a production of Pirandello’s “Six Characters in Search of an Author” in London.

“It just blew my mind,” he said, “and at the end of the whole thing I stood up, pointed at the stage and said to my friend ‘I want

to do that!’ (although I didn’t realize exactly what that meant at the time.”

A further turning point came when he was auditioning for a place in an MFA Acting program. “They had me do additional monologues, and at the interview part of it they asked me what I wanted to do. I said ‘I want to be a part of the philosophical implications of a play.’ I realized later that they heard, ‘I don’t want to act any more,’” he said laughing. “I became more and more interested in the directing side of things and helping shape the narrative of the play and helping that interpretive process.”

Here in Boston Martin has worked with Theater Cooperative, Footlight Club, and Arts After Hours in Lynn where he has been Associate Artistic Director since 2013. Once he graduates in May, he’ll become the company’s Artistic Director. Most recently he served as director Campbell Scott’s assistant for the Huntington Theatre production of Ronan Noone’s “The Second Girl.”

When considering plays for his thesis production, he ultimately chose “The Cripple of Inishmaan” because “I am fascinated by stories of outsiders, people who are outsiders because of some perceived difference, whether physical or just the way they see the world.



Thomas Martin directs Martin McDonagh’s dark Irish comedy “The Cripple of Inishmaan,” playing at Boston University from April 29 - May 3.

“Billy’s ostracized because of a physical ailment rather than anything inherent like his personality or character,” he said. “But what I found very interesting is the way he uses his inherent outsider-ness and manipulates people to get what he wants.”

As his cast begins the rehearsal process, Martin said, “What I’m loving about the play is McDonagh’s take on mythology – the mythology of what it is to be Irish, both in terms of how the Irish view themselves and how the outside world views Irish-ness.

“I love the way McDonagh drops small signifiers as to time and place,” he said. When [the character] Johnny is sitting with his mother reading the newspaper, he’s talking about a man in Germany who has just come

to power with a funny little mustache. And the commentary is like, ‘Oh I hope he’s successful. I hope he has a good go of it’ . . . When you start to process what’s being said, you say, ‘Oh my God, they’re talking about Hitler. And they’re pleased!’

“In some ways, they’re at the end of the world,” said Martin. “You head west from the Aran Islands and there is nothing until you hit North America . . . It’s a very isolated place.”

R. J. Donovan is Editor and Publisher of onstage boston.com.

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The Cripple of Inishmaan,” Boston University Theatre, Lane-Comley Studio 210, 264 Huntington Avenue. Information: 617-933-8600 or boston-theatrescene.com.

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CD celebrates awesome sound of The Burren’s Backroom Series

**BY SEAN SMITH
SPECIAL TO THE BIR**

Bill Clinton was president, Thomas Menino was in only his second year as mayor of Boston, and Bill Belichick was soon to begin the last season of an unremarkable tenure as head coach of the Cleveland Browns on the day in 1995 when Boston-area musician and West Clare native Tommy McCarthy took his friend, accordionist Sharon Shannon, to see the unassuming commercial property in Davis Square he and his wife Louise Costello had recently bought, and planned to turn into a pub.

“We kind of stood there looking at it, and Sharon stepped up, put her two hands to the glass front and looked in,” recalls McCarthy. “Well, Tommy,’ she said, ‘it’s awful big, isn’t it?”

McCarthy described to Shannon the plans for how the pub would be laid out: the bar there, the kitchen over there, a cluster of tables there, there and there. And, he added, there would be an area for concerts and other special events – a back room.

Nineteen years later, McCarthy and Costello would join Shannon, along with guitarist Jim Murray, on the stage of that back room for a couple of reels, and the result has been captured on a recently released CD that celebrates the music series named for the Burren’s renowned performance space. The 14 tracks recorded between October of 2011 and August of 2014 offer a sampler of the now three-and-a-half-year-old Burren Backroom Series, featuring some of the biggest names in the Irish/Celtic music realm of the past few decades, including Dervish, Sliabh Notes, Andy Irvine, Liz Carroll, Jacqueline McCarthy & Tommy Keane, Robbie O’Connell, and Lúnasa.

Oh, and the Backroom Series organizers are quick to point out that the title of the CD includes the tag “Volume 1.”

“There was a phenomenal amount of material to go through, and we easily could’ve made it a three-CD set,” says Brian O’Donovan, who conceived the series with McCarthy and is its host. “It was very challenging to pare down

what we had to one disc, and that’s a testament to the quality of the performers – and the quality of the room.”

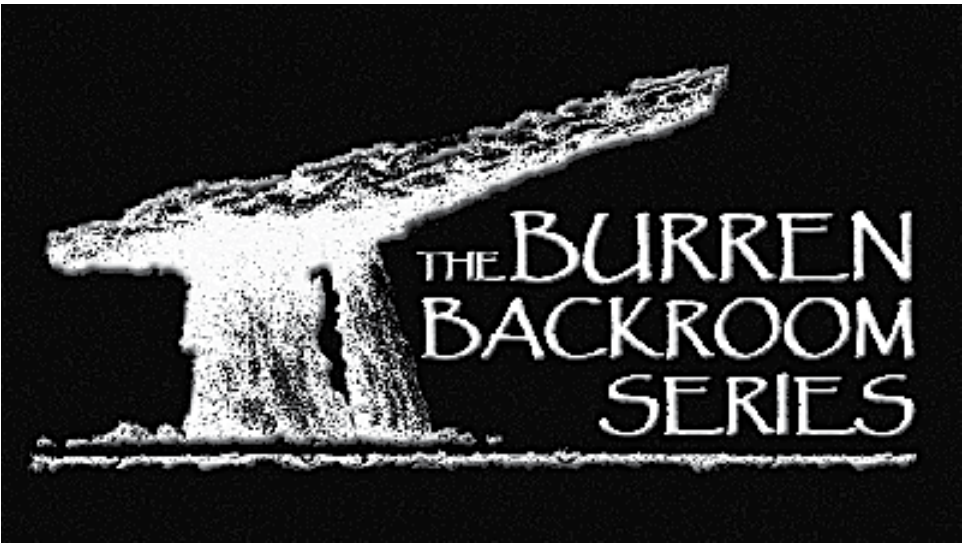
“I’m absolutely delighted with how the series has turned out,” says McCarthy. “But then, I envisioned it would be a success once Brian became a part of it.”

While The Burren has been a frequent setting for concerts of traditional music and other genres during its nearly two decades, the Backroom Series was conceived with a particular mission and format, says O’Donovan. “The idea was to offer a place where a touring band or individual could come to present traditional music in an ideal way, up close and intimate. Now, of course, The Burren has tradition built into it; it’s part of its DNA. But we also wanted to make the series a homey, relaxing experience for both performer and audience, and create a respectful atmosphere in which the music was front and center.”

To reinforce the casual, comfortable atmosphere, O’Donovan makes a point of engaging the featured performers in conversation at the beginning of each show, getting them to talk a little about some aspect of their involvement and interest in traditional music. Backroom audiences come away knowing that much more about the performers and the music they play.

Obviously, the phrase “traditional music” has always been open to interpretation, and as the CD makes clear, the Backroom Series is built on that foundation of open-mindedness. Its shows reflect a wide range of styles within, and approaches to, traditional music.

For instance, Sliabh Notes (Matt Cranitch, Donal Murphy, and Tommy O’Sullivan) showcases the distinctive Sliabh Luachra tradition with a medley of polkas, while the harp-accordion-fiddle trio of Dermot Byrne, Florianne Blancke, and Brid Harper brings forth the Donegal sound on a jig-reel set. Tommy McCarthy’s sister Jacqueline and her husband Tommy Keane present a taste of the music of County Clare that has been so dear to the McCarthy family.



The post-folk revival concert band model is well represented with Dervish (the song “The Creggan White Hare”), Lúnasa (“The Minor Bee Set”) and a tune set from Scotland’s Battlefield Band. The Backroom CD also celebrates collaborations like the aforementioned Sharon Shannon/Tommy McCarthy/Louise Costello/Jim Murray mash-up, otherworldly fiddler Liz Carroll with guitarist Jake Charon, and the powerful trio The Teetotalers – fiddler Martin Hayes, Lúnasa flutist Kevin Crawford and guitarist John Doyle. On the more exotic side is the Celtic-world music dynamic of Galician piper Carlos Nunez and his band, playing a gloriously regal “Aires de Pontevedra.”

The Backroom also has been fortunate witness to talented singers such as Téada’s Seamus Begley (a performance of the Gaelic song “Cill Mhuire”), Andy Irvine (“Farewell to Fellswater”), Robbie O’Connell (“Farewell Until Tomorrow,” with the chorus getting a generous and loving assist from the audience) and Sean Keane, covering O’Connell’s “Man from Connemara.”

Naturally, an audio archive only conveys so much of a performance. You can’t see, for example, the interplay between Hayes, Crawford, and Doyle as they roar through the set of reels, or Nunez’s unabashed exuberance as he wrings seemingly every possible iota of expressiveness from his bagpipes. You might, however, be able to visualize O’Connell’s smile as he gazes out upon the singing audience.

Likewise, there are sometimes Backroom back stories not even the audience is privy to, as O’Donovan explains: “When Andy Irvine came to do his

show, he had some travel difficulties: He ended up arriving in Newark the day of the concert, he had to fight traffic going through New York, and he got to The Burren with hardly any time to spare. But you’d have never known it, because he went up and just did an outstanding show, as that track on the CD indicates. And keep in mind that Andy’s no spring chicken, either – he’s 72; but then, he’s been doing this sort of thing for a while now, so perhaps it’s no surprise.”

O’Donovan and McCarthy look forward to more such memorable moments as the Backroom Series rolls along, and as it continues to explore the full spectrum of traditional music, from the “pure drop” to the more contemporary, multiple-influenced styles. In addition to next month’s line-up, with singer-songwriter Sean Tyrell (April 1), the Máirtín O’Connor Trio (April 15) and April Verch Band (April 23) – see the separate story in this edition on April events in Greater Boston – the Backroom schedule includes legendary uilleann piper Paddy Keenan and the Canadian roots-based band The Duhks.

If the music and ambiance isn’t attraction enough, McCarthy points to a perhaps underappreciated characteristic of Backroom events: Because all the seating is arranged around tables, chances are very good you may wind up sitting next to someone you don’t know. “So,” he explains, “not only do you get to hear some great music, you might make a new friend or two in the bargain.”

To purchase the Backroom Series CD, and to see the Backroom Series schedule, go to burren.com.

MUSIC CALENDAR

A look at some Boston-area events featuring Irish and other Celtic music this month:

- The Máirtín O’Connor Trio, featuring three highly distinguished figures in Irish music, will perform as part of The Burren Backroom Series on April 15 at 7:30 p.m.
- The trio is led by accordionist Máirtín O’Connor, whose career has included stints with distinguished bands such as De Dannan, The Boys of the Lough and Skylark, a featured role in the groundbreaking “Riverdance” production, and a string of acclaimed solo recordings.
- Joining O’Connor is fiddler and banjo player Cathal Hayden, a key member of the seminal bands Arcady and Four Men and a Dog. He also has played at various times with Arty McGlynn, Alan Kelly, Paddy Keenan and the O’Domhnaill family (Triona, Mairead and the late Micheal). Rounding out the trio is guitarist Seamie O’Dowd, a one-time member of Dervish who has performed with The Unwanted (along with Rick Epping and Dervish’s Cathy Jordan), Liam O’Flynn and Christy Moore.
- The Backroom Series will hold a CD release concert for the April Verch Band on April 22 at 7:30 p.m. Verch is a fiddler, singer and stepdancer from the Ottawa Valley and its rich Franco-Celtic music traditions who over the years has extended her interest to bluegrass, old-timey and other folk music. Accompanying Verch is Cody Walters on string bass and banjo, and New England Conservatory alumnus Hayes Griffin on guitar.

For ticket information and other details, see burren.com/Backroom-Series.html. [See separate story about the recently released CD featuring high-

(Continued next page)



Boston native Mari Black will perform with guitarist Joseph Carmichael on April 16 in Newton.

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The Trad Youth Exchange

A Promise fulfilled in Boston and Tulla, Co. Clare

BY SEAN SMITH
SPECIAL TO THE BIR

To hear the participants tell it, Part 2 of the Trad Youth Exchange was every bit as enjoyable, and successful, as Part 1.

The exchange is an effort to build fellowship and understanding between Irish and American children through traditional Irish music; a group of youngsters—mostly pre- and early teens—from County Clare were matched up with an equal number of their peers, most from Greater Boston and also the New York City and Philadelphia areas. Last fall, the Clare contingent came to Boston for a week of musical and social activities that culminated in a performance at The Burren in Somerville.

In February, it was the young American musicians' turn to travel. They spent a week in and around the town of Tulla in Clare to complete the second leg of the exchange, taking in the sights (including the real Burren), enjoying a "Trad Disco Night" of set dancing, and giving a few performances. But most importantly, the TYE members, about 30 in all, again had ample opportunity to hang out and simply play music—which, after all, is kind of the point.

"It was a whirlwind," says 13-year-old Maeve O'Brien of Brighton. "We did a lot of things, had a lot of fun, and the best part of all was seeing the kids again and being able to play tunes with them."

Medford sisters Elizabeth (13) and Mary (11) Kozachek—both fiddlers like Maeve—liked the exposure to different playing styles and techniques afforded them by the trip. "But," adds Mary, "I really can't point to just one thing. I loved all of it."

The exchange's social and educational dimensions are equally important, says Melrose resident Lisa Coyne, who co-founded the TYE with Clare musician Mary MacNamara. She and a core group of other adults—including Sean Clohessy, Kathleen Conneely, Patrick Hutchinson, Chris Stevens, and Jimmy Noonan—have encouraged young people to view their music of choice not as simply another task in their daily or weekly calendar, but also as a vehicle for building friendships and community. In a 21st-century world of social media and related technology, that community can cover a lot of ground—clear across the ocean, in fact.

"Even before the Tulla kids came over last fall, they were in touch with the Boston kids, through e-mail, Facebook, Skype and so on," says Coyne, who is executive director of the Boston Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann Music School, where many of the TYE musicians are enrolled. "After that visit, and leading up to the one in February, the contact only increased."

The big lesson gleaned by the young Bostonians through the exchange is the prominent role music plays in the lives of their Clare counterparts, and the benefits they reap as a result.

"Listening to them play together, you just hear how tight they are," observes Cormac Gaj, 14, a flute and whistle player, and budding uilleann piper, from Cambridgeport. "One of the things we found on the visit is that there is so much music there, even more so than in Boston. Kids are required to learn instruments in their schools, and they go out to play sessions and ceilis almost every week. So we really got an insight



The Trad Youth Exchange in concert at the Tulla Courthouse in County Clare.



Members of the Trad Youth Exchange rehearsed for one of their performances during the Boston musicians' trip to Clare in February.



"It was a whirlwind," says one Boston-area musician of the Trad Youth Exchange tour in Ireland during February.

into how music can be a part of your life."

Adds Maeve, "The kids in Tulla have been playing together for so long, they just sound amazing—not only as a group

but in solos, duos, and trios."

Deb Murphy of Burlington, who accompanied her 13-year-old son Liam on the TYE trip, agrees. "Music is an everyday

thing for the kids there. They just bring out the instruments and start playing. We were also impressed with how involved the kids' families are. Obviously, Tulla is a lot smaller than Boston, but it's bursting with the music."

In fact, adds Murphy, the Tulla-to-Boston leg of the exchange last fall supplied the Boston musicians with no small amount of motivation to bring their playing up a notch in time for the Boston-to-Tulla trip. "After hearing the kids from Clare, Liam and the others knew they had to practice more. They worked hard from November to February."

The TYE also affirmed how travel can be a means to experience the new and unfamiliar, and unleash hitherto hidden qualities, especially among youths. During their Boston visit, one Tulla parent had remarked on the ease and confidence her child exhibited in journeying around a big urban landscape like Boston. By the same token, in Clare the Boston musicians put their best feet forward in an activity not many of them had tried before: set and ceili dancing.

"When he saw this on the itinerary, Liam said, 'Dance workshop? No way, I'm not dancing,'" laughs Murphy. "But when it came time, there he was out on the floor. This is not something he'd normally do at home. I think being around all the other kids just helped open things up a lot."

With this first installment of the TYE complete, the question of "What happens now?" inevitably arises. The kids, parents, and other TYE adults all put in a great amount of work to raise funds and hammer out logistics for both legs of the exchange, and were helped immeasurably by support from both American and Irish music communities, note the exchange organizers.

"Basically, it took four years to put this all together, with 18 months of fundraising," says Coyne. "These families did so much, and people like Sean Clohessy, Kathleen Conneely, Pat Hutchinson, [Burren co-owners] Tommy McCarthy and Louise Costello, were simply invaluable."

Instead of trying to harness that degree of effort on an annual basis, TYE organizers are looking at holding another exchange in two or three years, and with some new faces among the participants.

"There are younger musicians now who, in another few years, will be old enough to really benefit from the experience," says Coyne. "But it's certainly possible that some of the kids who took part this time may return: They can serve as mentors and role models, which is a very important dynamic—both for them and for the younger kids."

No matter what shape it may take in the future, Coyne and others involved feel the exchange has definitely fulfilled its promise. "These guys have really bonded, within their own group as well as the one overseas, which is definitely a positive development," she explains. "Certainly, the relationships that have been formed are something the kids can enjoy outside of TYE: We heard so many 'See you at the [All-Ireland] Fleadh!' remarks at the end of the visit. At the very least, if a kid from our group goes over to Ireland, or one of the kids from Clare comes over here, he or she knows there's a friend waiting."

For more on the Trad Youth Exchange, see tradouthexchange.weebly.com.

lights from the Backroom Series.]

• On April 16, notloB Music will present Boston native multi-style violinist Mari Black and guitarist Joseph Carmichael for a concert that will span the musical globe. Black's repertoire includes not only Irish and Scottish traditions but also American folk music, Argentine tangos and even classic swing tunes, to name a few; among her honors are Glenfiddich Scottish Fiddle Champion, Canadian Maritime Fiddle Champion, US National Scottish Fiddle Champion, Canadian Novelty

Fiddle Champion and first prize at the American Protégé International String Competition. Carmichael is a member of contemporary Irish trio Flashpoint and regularly plays with singer-songwriter Ashley Davis.

The concert will take place at 8 p.m. at Carriage House Violins, 1039 Chestnut Street in Newton Upper Falls. For ticket information, and for details on other notloB events, see sites.google.com/site/notlobmusic.

• Young talent and enthusiasm will be on stage at Club Passim on April 26 when Scottish Fish

makes its official debut at the Harvard Square venue. The Boston-area quintet, whose members range from elementary to high school age, play traditional and contemporary Scottish and Cape Breton music, and have worked with Hanneke Cassel and Katie McNally. Scottish Fish performed at this year's BCMFest and has become a familiar presence at many local Celtic sessions and events, including the Boston Harbor Scottish Fiddle Camp. For tickets to the 2 p.m. concert, go to passim.org/club/scottish-fish.

— SEAN SMITH



The Teetotallers (L-R, Kevin Crawford, Martin Hayes and John Doyle), shown during their performance at The Burren Backroom Series, are among those appearing on a recently released CD of highlights from the series' first three years.

Screen capture from WGBH video on YouTube

CD Reviews

By SEAN SMITH
SPECIAL TO THE BIR

Danú, “Buan” • The album’s title translates to “lasting” or, more appropriately in this case, “enduring.” This year marks the 20th anniversary for Danú, which has weathered several line-up changes throughout its history but continued its forward progress as one of Ireland’s leading traditional-minded bands, with a particular inclination toward Waterford, Kerry, and Donegal.



One reason for its durability is that while Danú members may check out, they never entirely leave: It has become standard practice for them to make appearances on subsequent recordings. Thus, the current core of original members Donal Clancy (guitar, vocals) and Benny McCarthy (accordion), along with Oisín McAuley (fiddle), Eamon Doorley (bouzouki) and Muireann Nic Amlaoibh (vocals, flute, whistle) is joined on various tracks by former Danúians Donnchadh Gough (pipes, bodhran), another charter member, and Tom Doorley (flute, whistle). And “Buan” has a bonus attraction in the form of Irish folk revival pioneer Donal Lunny, who serves as producer and contributes bouzouki, bodhran and harmonium.

The result is an album that strikes the often elusive, highly desirable balance in which the arrangements, while sophisticated and sometimes intricate, do not overshadow or obstruct the full-on ability of the musicians, nor the character of the music itself. For instance, the first track is a brilliant meshing of Kerry and Donegal

traditions, with a pair of slides – the first led by bouzouki and whistle, with McCarthy and McAuley undergirding the rhythm and then taking on the melody in the second – followed by a pair of reels launched by McAuley and gradually drawing in the rest of the assemblage. A hornpipe, “Tuamgraney Castle,” features fiddle, pipes, and whistle set against a steady, pulsing guitar/bouzouki backbeat that gradually becomes more rounded, after which comes two reels, a less familiar “Broken Pledge” and “The Braes of Busby,” with all cylinders firing (Clancy’s guitar is tremendously supportive here). Arguably the album highlight is an unusual pairing of a waltz with a march – composed, respectfully, by McAuley and Clancy – where the former rests on an elegant fiddle-flute union, and the latter starts out with a Clancy-McCarthy duet that simultaneously rebuilds and transforms the track’s intensity.

On the vocal tracks, Nic Amlaoibh serves notice that she belongs in any discussion of outstanding female Irish singers, what with her goose-bumps-raising delivery of the chilling, tragic abandoned-but-determined-heroine ballad “Lord Gregory” (the accompaniment, which moves between several different instrument combinations, is inspired), and Pádrigín Ní Uallacháin’s starkly beautiful “Willow Tree”; she is equally proficient in Gaelic, giving a lovely rendition of “Beir Mo Dhúthracht,” a paean to West Kerry by Pádraig Ó Siochfradha and displaying a more light-hearted touch on “Muirisín Deas,” a medley of two West Kerry songs. Clancy, meanwhile, evokes the classic ballad-group sound (which is, of course, part of his lineage) in his treatment of “Willie Crotty,” a based-in-fact outlaw tale composed by his cousin Robbie O’Connell that sports a typically infectious O’Connell chorus and a relevant social message to boot.

It’s been reassuring these last few years to see releases

by longstanding outfits like Dervish and Altan that indicate just how full and deep the reservoir of talent and creativity remains in Irish music. Danú is another reason for continued optimism.

Anna Falkenau, “Féileacán na Saoirse” • A native of Germany, Falkenau has spent a good chunk of her adult life in Ireland, at University College Cork (during that time she was a member of Liz Doherty’s Fiddlesticks ensemble) and, for the past decade, in Galway; in between, she pursued a graduate degree right down the road at Wesleyan University. So perhaps it’s not a surprise that she’s equally at home with Irish and American fiddle styles, and “styles” is indeed the key word here, because Falkenau shows herself capable of playing in a variety of settings, whether Sliabh Luachra



and other Irish regional traditions, American old-time, and modern – including her own compositions as well as a couple by Liz Carroll.

Falkenau’s modus operandi on “Féileacán na Saoirse” – which is Gaelic for “Butterfly of Freedom” – is astute and appealing. Except for one track in which she’s joined by guitarist Kevin Hough and Mary Shannon on tenor banjo, a solo on a pair of hornpipes, and another in which she accompanies herself on viola – a gorgeous, intense rendition of the air “The Wounded Hussar,” as popularized by Sliabh Luachra legend Padriag O’Keeffe – the CD is a series of duets between Falkenau and different instrumentalists. Guitarist Ged Foley, late of the Battlefield Band and Patrick Street, plays on four of the tracks, and the rest are one-offs: Lena Ullman on five-string banjo, Holly Geraghty on harp, Steve Sweeney on accordion and the indubitable Johnny “Ringo” McDonagh on bodhran.

The effect of this is to focus attention on her fiddling while at the same time providing a variety of moods and contexts. Her collaboration with Sweeney on a trio of classic session reels (“The Sporting Pitchfork/High Part of the Road/Connachtman’s Rambles”) is fun, loose and easy-going; Geraghty underscores the gentleness of “Ivan’s Waltz,” a Falkenau original; the American tune “Richmond,” with its crooked phrasing and style of bowing that is markedly distinct from Irish fiddling, gets a fine lift from Ullman’s five-string; and McDonagh provides his characteristically spot-on rhythm for a medley that is arguably the album’s highlight – it begins with Falkenau playing the Irish reel “The Jolly Tinker” at a slow pace, then changes key and tempo and finally segueing into the Scottish pipe tune “The Little Cascade,” full of accents and tricky transitions. Her stints with Foley include “Sally Coming Through the Rye,” an otherworldly West Virginia tune Falkenau plays in open A tuning, and her own “Vodka & Chocolate,” a moody, moderately-paced reel, and a pairing of “Caoineadh Uí Néill (Lament for O’Neill)” – from the repertoire of another Sliabh Luachra swami, Denis Murphy – she plays solo before Foley escorts her into Carroll’s gloriously sublime “That’s Right, Too!”

The butterfly, as science teaches us, is not only lovely in its appearance, but also quite hardy, what with the long distances it migrates – rather like the music Falkenau champions.

Mélanide [électrotrad], “Les Métamorphoses”

• Sometimes, you can take an album at face – OK, ear – value; and sometimes, a little context and maybe a few subtitles are helpful. Quebec native and electric guitarist Mélanide started out as a pop/rock singer-songwriter, but through her relationship with her now-husband Alexandre de Grosbois-Garand, bassist and flutist with the popular Quebecois trio Genticorum, she developed a fascination with traditional songs – especially those that involve the life and times of women in French-Canadian and old French society. In addition to integrating traditional material into her repertoire, Mélanide also began to tinker with some of it, incorporating her own ideas and extrapolations from the narratives and themes in particular songs.

Nor did she stop there. For this album, she and Grosbois-Garand teamed up with Robin Boulianne (fiddle, mandolin, banjo) and Mark Busic (keyboards) to create a backdrop that pulls together folk/acoustic sounds and urban/electronica vibes: snatches of Quebecois reels set against techno beats, for example, or trad French-Canadian vocals – la turlurette (lilting) and les chansons á répondre (call-and-response) – alongside synthesizer sequencer rhythms. It’s an approach that recalls the Mouth Music/Martin Swan-Talitha McKenzie take on waulking songs, puiirt à beul and other Gaelic vocal music in the late 1980s/early 1990s, or the 1980 “Hidden Ground” album with fiddler Paddy Glackin and multi-instrumentalist Jolyon Jackson.

The most important element here, however, is Mélanide, whose voice clearly retains her earlier contemporary pop/rock influences, lending a certain dramatic and artistic panache to the proceedings – no small consideration for non-Francophone speakers like this writer. But a visit to her website [melisandemusic.com] is quite helpful to get an insight into her approach to songwriting and song-rewriting. For instance, on “Sort de vieille fille (The Role of an Old Maid)” – sounding like a what-if-The-Eurythmics-were-French venture – in which the titular character complains about not having a husband, Mélanide has added verses which reveal that it is largely the woman’s choice. In “Ja fais la difficile,” driven by a synth bass and Mélanide’s wah-wah guitar – and pausing for a fiddle-flute duet – a girl ticks off the pros and cons of potential suitors; in Mélanide’s version, a musician (“handy with his hands”) and a politician (“can’t trust him and his hands aren’t clean”) are added to the list. Plus ça change, n’est-ce pas?



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‘Family Reunion’ at the White House

Remarks by President Obama and Prime Minister Kenny of Ireland at St. Patrick’s Day Reception

President Barack Obama hosted Prime Minister Enda Kenny in White House on March 17. The two leaders offered the following remarks in the East Room that afternoon following their meeting.

PRESIDENT OBAMA: Hello, everybody! This is a good-looking crowd.... Happy St. Patrick’s Day, everybody.

There are too many distinguished Irish and Irish-Americans here tonight to mention, so I’ll just offer “a hundred thousand welcomes” to the White House. But I want to offer a warm welcome to our special guests: Taoiseach Kenny and his lovely wife, Fionnuala. Ireland’s Ambassador to the United States, Anne Anderson; and her counterpart, our man in Dublin, Kevin O’Malley. I also want to take a moment to recognize those who do the hard work of waging peace. Theresa Villiers, the UK’s Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, is here. Please give Theresa a big round of applause. As is America’s Consul General in Belfast, Greg Burton. And Richard Haass, two men who helped bring the Stormont House Agreement to fruition, and we are very grateful to them.

Two people who were going to be here — First Minister Peter Robinson and Deputy First Minister Martin McGuinness — are home hammering over the details to implement the agreement. So we wish them good luck and Godspeed, so the people of Northern Ireland can finally enjoy the full fruits of a lasting peace... There’s always a brood of Irish-American members of Congress running around here. (Laughter.) Or folks who wish they were Irish. (Laughter.) But let me just mention one. When Brendan Boyle ran for Congress last year, his campaign was followed closely by folks back in Ireland — not so much because of him, although he’s an impressive young man, but because of his dad. Frank Boyle grew up in Donegal. He moved to America as a young man, married an Irish lass, had two sons. He supported his family by working as a janitor for the Philadelphia public transit authority. Today, one son, Kevin, serves in the Pennsylvania House of Representatives. Brendan serves in the U.S. Congress. The Boyle boys are all here today, they’ve made people across two nations very proud. .

So when Irish and Americans get together, there’s more than a diplomatic exchange. It is a family reunion. Literally. My eighth cousin, Henry, who has become a regular at this party, I mean— where is “Henry the Eighth” -- there he is, he’s back there. Good to see you, Henry So is his good buddy, Ollie Hayes, who owns my favorite pub in Moneygall. And while many of you are far from home today, I’m

sure you’ve found plenty of green in the red, white and blue because we’ve got 30 or 40 million family members here in the United States and millions more who wish they were.

Now, Shaw said that an Irishman’s heart is nothing but his imagination. And if there’s any place that can set the imagination on fire, it is Ireland. I remember my own visit to Dublin, and Moneygall, and Belfast. The unrushed landscape. The unrushed pint of black. Waiting for that perfect pint is 90 seconds well-spent.

A people noted for bouts of great joy and the belt of a late-night song; a people known for the good things — slow days, hard lessons, high notes. But Irish-Americans are also rightly proud of what we’ve done here in America.

The cities our ancestors helped build, the canals they dug. The tracks they laid, the shipyards and factories they labored in, enduring all manner of intolerance and insult to carve out a place for themselves and their children in this new world. They put their full hearts into their work, even as their hearts were far from home.

In 1897, at an Irish Fair held in New York, dirt was shipped over from each of Ireland’s counties and laid out on a map. At least one immigrant knelt in prayer, grateful to be back in Fermanagh again, even if only for an instant. Meanwhile, thousands of young Irish women moved to America to find work as domestic servants. “Not a day goes by,” one said, “that I don’t look at the moon and say it’s the same in Ireland.”

So they persevered.

For the story of the Irish in America is a story of overcoming hardship through strength, and sacrifice, and faith, and family. It’s an idea central to Saint Patrick himself — faith in the unseen; a belief in something better around the bend. That’s why the Irish did more than help build America; they helped to sharpen the idea of America: The notion that no matter who you are, where you come from, what your last name is, in this country, you can make it. And today, we revel in that idea. We remember the great Irish-Americans of the past — those who struggled in obscurity, those who rose to the highest levels of politics, and business, and the arts. We celebrate the ideals at the heart of the Irish-American story, ones that people everywhere can embrace — friendship and family, and hard work and humility, fairness and dignity, and the persistent belief that tomorrow will be better than today. Yeats is one of my favorite poets and the Taoiseach honored me by giving me a slim volume of his favorite works. So in this 150th anniversary year of his birth, I’ll just close with words from one of his plays. “I have



Speaker of the House John Boehner, President Barack Obama, and Taoiseach Enda Kenny walked together down the steps of the U.S. Capitol Building in Washington, D.C. on March 17, 2015. Photo courtesy White House

believed the best of every man. And find that to believe it is enough to make a bad man show him at his best — or even a good man swing his lantern higher.” And with that, I will turn it over to our guest -- a man who always swings his lantern higher — the Taoiseach of Ireland. Prime Minister Kenny. (Applause.)

PRIME MINISTER KENNY: Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen, Fionnuala and I appreciate the honor that you bestow on the Irish people today and we’re very honored to be here in the White House on this St. Patrick’s Day. Let me extend and thank you for your hospitality to the Irish people and those of Irish descent here in the United States who are represented here this evening.

I want to thank you, President Obama and Vice President Biden, for your friendship and for your support for Ireland, North and South. When we met in the Oval Office this morning, we had the opportunity to discuss the progress that we are making in our economic recovery through the perseverance and the determination of the Irish

people. The United States remains our most important economic partner and the support of the U.S. has been critical to the progress that we are making. The improvement that the U.S. economy is making under your leadership, President, is essential not only to jobs and growth in the United States, but also to Ireland’s recovery and growth throughout the global economy.

Let me thank you, in particular, Mr. President, for the work that you are doing to achieve immigration reform and, in particular, for the executive actions, which you announced last November. The undocumented Irish represent a small proportion of the 11 million people affected by this issue across the United States, but I can also tell you that almost every family in our country is related to or knows somebody who is caught up in this deeply distressing situation. Any progress that would allow our undocumented to come out of the shadows and be free to travel home for family events would be very welcome and your very welcome ambassador, Kevin O’Malley, understands this deeply on his own personal family side.

We also want to see a legal pathway for the future for Irish people to make their full contribution here if they so choose. I can assure you this evening, Mr. President, that we will continue to add our voice to the many voices calling on this Congress to pass immigration reform legislation as soon as possible. Mr.

President, I also want to acknowledge and to thank you for your ongoing support and your commitment and your engagement in the peace process. Northern Ireland has been transformed through the implementation of the Good Friday Agreement. Huge steps have been taken with the work of building a shared future, bringing an end to sectarian division, and to ensure that future generations will grow in mutual respect and tolerance is still a work in progress. The Stormont House Agreement reached last December is a welcome step -- a welcome further step forward, and let me publicly acknowledge the role of Senator Gary Hart, appointed by you and Vice President Biden, as your representative in reaching some bipartisan agreement.

As you would have seen

in recent days, implementation can always be the hardest part of any agreement, and I urge the Northern Ireland parties — as you have done, Mr. President — to do all that they can to ensure that the current roadblock is overcome, as I’m sure it will be, and that the agreement can be implemented in full. We therefore appreciate your ongoing engagement and your support, and that of all our friends in the United States as we continue to build permanent peace and reconciliation in Ireland.

Mr. President, as you said on the conclusion of the Stormont House Agreement, where there is courage and a will, these changes can happen. In your brilliant Selma speech a few weeks ago, you said that the march is not yet over. I agree with that sentiment, nor can it be until democratically elected politicians decide to make decisions that are of benefit to all.

In Ireland, we’re now in a decade of commemorations marking the hundredth anniversary of the tumultuous events that resulted in our country achieving its independence. Next year, we commemorate the anniversary of the 1916 Rising in Ireland and around the globe, including a major festival here in Washington in the Kennedy Center.

This year, as you know, is also the 150th anniversary of the birth of the great poet W.B. Yeats, to whom you have referred, Mr. President. We will mark that event with many occasions in Ireland, here in the U.S., and around the world. And to mark that particular anniversary, Mr. President, this year the Shamrock Bowl is engraved with one of his most famous and beautiful poems: “He Wishes For the Cloths of Heaven.” The last line reads in that, Mr. President, if I recall it correctly, to paraphrase it, tread softly, for you tread upon our dreams. Happy St. Patrick’s Day to you all. Have a wonderful occasion here, Mr. President.

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April in Ireland: When colors reign over the landscape

By JUDY ENRIGHT
SPECIAL TO THE BIR

It's April at last, after a seemingly endless winter, and Ireland is exploding with spring color. Daffodils have popped up everywhere, fields are turning the delicious 40 shades of green, and gardens and hedgerows are springing back to life.

This is the loveliest time of year in Ireland for so many reasons. Weather is usually pleasant even if it rains and, of course, there are few things cheerier or more uplifting than the effervescence of newborn animals frolicking through the pastures. It's just a happy, bright, wonderful time of year.

Cities, too, experience the renewed vitality when visitor attractions reopen and activities start up again to welcome spring – and tourists.

GARDENS AND MORE

If you enjoy flowers and gardens, you will be in your glory in Ireland. There are numerous organized garden trails and tours in most counties in the North and in the Republic that offer entry to the most spectacular gardens, many of which are private and not open to the public except at this special time of year. Visitors should always check opening times for whatever gardens they wish to see. Local tourist information offices (online at discoverireland.ie in the Republic) and the Northern Ireland Tourist Board (online at discovernorthernireland.com) have all that information. Many of the participating gardens and homes also have websites that list hours and admission fees if any.

One group – “Houses, Castles and Gardens of Ireland” – includes more than 70 member properties in the North and Republic that are open to the public. It's fun to visit the gardens and also fascinating to get inside the historic homes.

One attraction gardeners should not miss when they're in Dublin is the National Botanic Gardens, in Glasnevin, with its amazing glasshouses and the Great Palm House with its exotic plants from around the world.

Entry is free and the Botanic Gardens are open Monday to Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., and on Saturday, Sunday and public holidays from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. There are free guided tours every Sunday at noon and 2:30 p.m. See botanicgardens.ie for more.

Another property listed in “Houses, Castles and Gardens of Ireland,” is Kylemore Abbey in Connemara, which was built as a residence by a wealthy Englishman in the 1860s. In 1920, Kylemore became home to a community of Benedictine nuns who ran a girls' school there from 1923 until 2010.

Kylemore is the most popular tourist attraction in the West of Ireland and

a perfect family destination that offers an outstanding craft and design shop, a Gothic church, a children's play trail, a coffee shop, a tea house, and an excellent restaurant on site. There's also a restored six-acre walled garden that is well worth the price of admission. The gardens were built at the end of the 1860s and are reputed to be Ireland's only gardens built on bogland.

The Glasnevin Botanical Gardens and Kylemore are just two of many properties open to the public. Others showcase world-famous flowers, landscaped parklands, formal, kitchen, walled, and cottage gardens, mazes, forestry and river walks, and arboreta.

Be sure to visit hcg.ie for details on others that include: Castlecoote House and Gardens, Co. Roscommon; Japanese Gardens and St. Fiachra's Garden, Co. Kildare; Birr Castle Demesne, Co. Offaly; Castle Durrow Hotel Gardens, Co. Laois; Hunter's Hotel gardens and Powerscourt House and Gardens, Co. Wicklow; gardens at Gregan's Castle Hotel and the Vandeleur Walled Garden, both in Co. Clare; Fota House Arboretum and Gardens, Co. Cork. Another great attraction in the Cork area, even though it's not a garden, is the Fota Wildlife Park.

There are magnificent gardens and stately homes open to the public in the North, too. Don't miss Rowallane Garden or the Mt. Stewart House and Gardens, Co. Down, and Springhill House and Costume Collection, Co. Londonderry. Many of the gardens are also opened for events such as concerts, craft and plant fairs, and more.

LISMORE CASTLE

Another lovely garden is at Lismore Castle in Co. Waterford, which is open daily mid-April to October from 10:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Visitors may wander through the seven-acre historic gardens surrounded by 17th-century walls. In addition to the variety of camellias, plants and trees, and a famed yew walk, visitors may view a permanent sculpture collection. Lismore itself is a private residence with no public access, but the castle can be rented as a luxury accommodation.

If you have the opportunity to visit Co. Donegal, Glenveagh National Park is a great place to spend the day. The gardens are beautiful and there's an excellent guided tour of the 19th-century castle, last owned by American Henry McIlhenny, an art connoisseur and plant collector. He designed and oversaw the gardens from 1937-1983, sold the acreage for the park to the Irish state in 1974-75, and gave Glenveagh Castle and gardens to Ireland in 1979.

There are many magnificent gardens around Ireland, so do get out and enjoy them.



What could be more Irish than the brilliant red, purple and pink fuchsia that grows wild in hedges all across the country?



Gorse, a mildly-scented yellow bush, grows wild all over Ireland and is especially prominent in the spring. Gorse is also known as Furze or Whin.

YOLA FARMSTEAD, FOLK PARK

Yola Farmstead and Folk Park in Tagoat, Rosslare, Co. Wexford, is a fun and interesting family activity. The five-acre park now includes the Wexford Genealogy Center, which offers a fulltime, professional genealogy service for those wishing to trace their Wexford ancestry. The center has collected a considerable amount of this material and provides a fulltime professional genealogy service.

At Yola, you can see a one-bedroom thatched cottage, a working windmill, a forge, four-pew St. Helen's Church, and stop to have a bite to eat in Granny's Kitchen. The farmstead is home to many breeds and species of animals, fowl, and plant life. Yola is open 10

a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday to Friday, in April and 10 to 6 daily from May to October. For more information see: familyfun.ie/yola-farmstead

And, while you're in that area, be sure to stop by the 622-acre John F. Kennedy Memorial Park and Arboretum in New Ross – included as part of the Wexford Garden Trail – where you'll see an amazing variety of trees and shrubs as well as magnolia, rhododendron, azalea, and heather. More than 4,500 individual species and varieties, some rare, have been planted and there will ultimately be more than 6,000. There's a shop and café, a visitor center, a miniature railway, a pony-and-trap, and more.

Nearby – in Dunganstown – is the Kennedy Homestead, the ances-



Blue Gentian flowers in the spring in the Burren's limestone landscape in Co. Clare.

Judy Enright photos

tral home of President John F. Kennedy's great-grandparents, Patrick and Bridget (Murphy) Kennedy, who emigrated to the United States during the famine years. The Dunbrody Famine ship, moored in New Ross, is also worth a visit.

ST. PATRICK'S CAMINO

Not to be outdone by the Camino de Santiago de Compostela – a pilgrimage route in northwestern Spain that attracts some 250,000 annually – two businessmen from either side of the border have launched an Irish version.

The St. Patrick's Camino will eventually stretch from Downpatrick, Co. Down, (where St. Patrick, St. Columba, and St. Brigid are buried) to Croagh Patrick, outside

Westport in Co. Mayo. The way has been designed as a self-guided walking trail and designers hope it will attract thousands, rival the Camino de Santiago, and increase tourism in an area of scenic beauty too often overlooked by tourists.

TRAVEL

Off-road walking/cycling routes have become immensely popular in Ireland and other countries across Europe along with varied sport and adventure pursuits for the active traveler.

Be sure to check the Irish Tourist Board's excellent website – ireland.com – for updated information on activities, accommodations, and more. And enjoy Ireland whenever you visit and wherever you go.

Olympics boosters make sharp turn towards a ballot question

BY LAUREN DEZENSKI
REPORTER STAFF

The backers behind Boston's bid for the 2024 Summer Olympics Games could be looking for April's showers to cleanse a winter and early spring of tumult. In March, Boston 2024 CEO John Fish made a major reversal and publicly supported a statewide referendum on the Games.

In a speech to the Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce, Fish announced that the private, nonprofit organization will seek a statewide ballot referendum in November 2016 – and, he added, if the question cannot capture the majority of the city and state's support, the bid will be dead.

"The people of Massachusetts can make the final decision on whether we have achieved those goals," Fish said in his statement.

The potential 2024-drafted ballot question is still by no means set in stone and could face a hurdle in the Legislature before appearing on the November 2016 ballot. Mayor Martin Walsh signaled support for the referendum. He previ-

ously said he wants to see at least 70 percent public support for the Games in Boston in order for the bid to move forward.

Mayor Walsh also went public, stating on the Herald Radio he did not believe Former Gov. Deval Patrick should make \$7,500 a day consulting for Boston 2024, the private nonprofit organization behind the bid for the summer games. Shortly thereafter, Patrick announced he would work for 2024 for free.

Gov. Charlie Baker also announced a \$250,000 independent study into the bid's effect on Massachusetts taxpayers, set to be complete in July.

Meanwhile, support for the Games has plummeted in the polls over the last two months. In a March 19 poll conducted within Route 128, 36 percent of those polled supported the Games, down 15 points since first the first round of polling in January. Opposition to the bid is now where support was in January: On March 19, 52 percent of those polled said they oppose the games.

The city of Boston continues to host monthly

hearings around the city for residents to vet the proposal while 2024 is hosting public meetings in Boston and around the commonwealth. On September 15, Boston 2024 and the US Olympic Committee will submit a bid to the International Olympic Committee. In 2016, the IOC will create a shortlist of candidate cities. The final decision on the 2024 Summer Games' host city will be made in August 2017.

In a clear sign that Mayor Walsh's camp intends to ramp up its machinery to build support for the bid, his key political lieutenants assembled in Dorchester on March 24 to plan a campaign strategy.

Some 75 members of Team Walsh, joined by re-

porters and camera crews, assembled at Florian Hall on a Tuesday evening to learn more about the proposal.

"Tonight here, we're running a political campaign," said City Councillor Frank Baker told the assembled crowd. "Normally at an organizational campaign you meet the candidate, ask them questions. That's what we're doing tonight," Baker reiterated that while he does in fact support the bid, he will keep asking questions. "I do think they will happen," Baker said of the Games. "I think it will be a heavy lift, but I think it will happen."

In order to sponsor a statewide ballot referendum, Boston 2024 would need to gather 64,750 sig-

natures, according to the Boston Globe, and then gain the approval of the Legislature and Secretary of State William Galvin to place it on the ballot.

On March 23, legislative leaders partnered with Gov. Charlie Baker to announce pursuit of an independent study into the possible impact of the Games on the state's taxpayers. Baker, House Speaker Robert DeLeo, and Senate President Stan Rosenberg teamed up to commission a \$250,000 report that will be due in July. The commonwealth will accept bids to conduct the report from firms outside of Massachusetts, according to a Baker aide.

Against all this activity came evidence of sinking

support for the Games in public opinion polls and pushback from elected officials, but at Tuesday night's meeting, Rull said that no matter the public optics, Boston 2024 is listening. "Just because we haven't acted on your concerns yet doesn't mean we're not listening. We're going to change our plan and make sure we're listening to the folks that live here."

But during that process, Rull said, patience will be important. "We're in the early stages of this. We still have another, geeze, two years until we find out whether or not we're chosen," he said.

"We ask for patience and to allow for our story to be told."

Honoring the pioneering women of the City Council

BY LAUREN DEZENSKI
REPORTER STAFF

When school children come through City Hall on a tour of the fifth floor, many of them stop in the lobby of the entrance to the City Council offices to gaze at the photos of Council presidents along the wall. Often, says Councillor Ayanna Pressley, they ask: "Where are the women?"

In its 106-year history, only ten women have served on the City Council, and just two of them have their pictures on the lobby's wall of presidents.

On March 25, as Women's History Month wound to a close, Pressley and fellow At-Large Councillor Michelle Wu honored the eight women who preceded them in office.

"Myself and Councillor Wu wanted to take the opportunity to celebrate local heroes and heroines and to do that for those that have served on this body," said Pressley said.

City Clerk Maureen Feeney, the first woman to represent Dorchester as its district city councilor and the body's second woman president, was also recognized at the meeting as was the first woman to head the council, Louise Day Hicks of South Boston. "I was first person of color to top the ticket and the only woman before me to top the ticket was Louise Day Hicks," said Pressley.

When Feeney was sworn in in 1994, she was in a class with three other women: Diane Modica, Peggy Davis-Mullen, and Maura Hennigan. "It was history-making," Feeney said in an interview with the *Reporter* last month.

Hicks, who served on the council from 1969 to 1971 and again from 1974 to 1977, was a leading opponent of the court-ordered desegregation of the Boston Public Schools and its busing component. "I think it shows the evolution of the city in the last 30 years," said Pressley. "She was a woman of firsts as well. Her own life was an example of progress even if I personally feel many of her ideologies were not progressive."

For Feeney, the presence of females on the council proved to be progressive: "I think we brought a different dimension and different perspective. The fact that there were four of us made us a force to be reckoned with. I'd like to think we had an impact on the council."

One of those impacts was a push for televised meetings for those who couldn't make it to City Hall for council sessions.

"It was just a fabulous adventure," Feeney said. She left the council in 2011 to become city clerk, a position that is filled by the council. "I do think even socially, we spent a lot of time together. It was a great bond."

The event also paid honor to Mildred Harris, the first woman elected to the council (1939) to replace her late brother. She served only one term. Some 30 years later, Katherine Craven became the second woman to join the council and the first-ever female at-large councillor. Rosemarie Sansone served from 1979 to 1981 and later joined Mayor Ray Flynn's administration. She is now president of the Downtown Boston Business Improvement District.

Feeney said that two of this year's group of female candidates for the council, Anissa Essaibi-George, an at-large candidate, and Andrea Campbell, who is running for the District Four seat, have reached out to her for advice.



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Dinner host State Senator Linda Dorcea Forry takes a call from Vice President Joe Biden.
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New deal for parade, yuks for breakfast

(Continued from page 1)
In addition to the videos, there was a surprise appearance by Patriots owner Robert Kraft, whose jokes were overwhelmed by some of the loudest cheers of the morning as he raised his own space-saver: The Super Bowl trophy.
Vice President Joe Biden phoned in, but his talk proved rambling and awkward, which moved Congressman

Stephen Lynch, whose bit was interrupted by the call, to say, “I hope that call wasn’t collect,” as he stepped back up to the microphone.
City Council President Bill Linehan, who skipped last year’s breakfast, was a surprise guest on Sunday, walking onstage as Dorcea Forry, Lynch, and state Rep. Nick Collins of South Boston began to sing “Southie Is My Hometown.”

As the breakfast concluded, parade marchers were moving to the starting line. In his time at the head table, Walsh had thanked the South Boston Allied War Veterans Council, which voted to allow OUTVETS and Boston Pride, two openly LGBT groups, to march in the parade for the first time ever. “The key agreement was this: anyone can march but the route has to be straight,” Walsh

joked. He marched later, the first mayor to join the parade in 22 years.
While the effect of winter’s snow limited the route of the parade – it started at Broadway Station and moved straight up Broadway to Farragut Park – organizers expected more than a half million to attend along the way.



A hand of welcome to Gov. Charlie Baker.



City Council President Bill Linehan, State Rep. Nick Collins of South Boston and Sen. Forry belt out a tune during a break.



Patriots owner Bob Kraft thanks the team’s fans for their support.

The Irish Language

by Philip Mac AnGhabhann

Tá sé an-fhuar anns i Bhostain sa ghemhreadh – “It’s very cold in Boston in the winter.” Let’s review some of the very earliest things that we had in this course concerning the weather and “intensifiers”.

First, we will have to review the forms of **bí** in its three **tenses**, the **present**, the **definite past**, and the **future**. There are other tenses but they are less frequently used than these three.

These three are complimented by the **Continuous Tenses – Past, Present and Future**. These are formed by using the verb **bí/tá**, the **subject**, followed by **ag** and the **Verbal Noun** such as **ith** “eat” and **ithe** “eating” – **Tá mé ag ithe**, **Bhí mé ag ithe** or **Táim ag ithe**, and **Beidh mé ag ithe** - English equivalents of “I was eating”, “I am eating” and “I will be eating”.

Although the **verbal noun** from **ith** is **ithe**, don’t think that all **verbal nouns** are made by simply adding **-e**. Not so, many are the same as their verb (**meas**, **meas** – “think” and **ól**, **ól** “drink”) while others are formed very differently (**oibriú**, **oibrigh**), You must learn each as you go and I will tell you each as we go.

Recall that the verb **bí/tá** has four forms in each of the three tenses: a **positive**, a **negative**, a **question** and a **negative question**.

Tense	Positive	Negative	Question	Negative Question
Present:	Tá	Níl	An bhfuil?	Nach bhfuil?
Past:	Bhí	Ní raibh	An raibh?	Nach raibh?
Future:	Beidh	Ní bheidh	An mbeidh?	Nach mbeidh?

Here are words that some of you learned early on but we have a few new readers now. These are in reference to the weather, an aimsir.

fuair	“cold”	te	“warm”
fluich	“wet”	tirim	“dry”
geal	“bright”	dorcha	“dark”

These can be made “stronger” or “more intense” by prefixing the particle **an-** as in **fuair** “cold” but **an-fhuair** “very cold”. Note that the hyphen is required and that words beginning with *f-* are **lenited** (“aspirated”).

The **n** in **an** is typically not pronounced in spoken Irish but it is required to write it.

This rule, prefixing **an-** also is used to make the following words “stronger”:

mor	“big”/mohr/	an-mhor /uh vohr/	“very big”
beag	“small”/beyk/	an-bheag /uh veyk/	“very small”
sean	“old”	an-sean /uh shan/	“very old”
óg	“young” /ohk/	an-óg /uh ohk/	“very young”
maith	“well,good” /mah/	an-mhaith /uh vah/	“very well”
tinn	“sick”	an-tinn /uh cheen/	“very sick”

Notice that prefixing **an-** to these words **lenites** those that begin with the lips – **m**, **b** and **f**.

Now, here are some more words that you should know by now – but beginners may not.

maith	“well”	tinn	“sick”
breá	“fine”	dona	“bad”
deas	“nice”	bocht	“poor” (quality)
álainn	“beautiful”	iontach	“wonderful”

These words are made “stronger” or more “intense” by prefixing the particle **go** (no hyphen required). Again, the best translation in English is “very”. **Tá mé go maith**, **buíochas le Dia**. /TAH mey goh MAH, BEE-uhk-uhs ley JEE-uh/ “I am very well, thanks (to God)”.

go maith	“very well/good”	go breá	“very fine”
go deas	“very nice”	go dona	“very bad”
go tinn	“very sick”	go bocht	“very poor” (quality)
go hálainn	“very beautiful”	go hiontach	“very wonderful”

Notice that words beginning with a vowel insert an **h** to keep go from running on to the word just as we say “a pen” but “an apple”.

See if you can put these sentences and phrases into Irish. 1.) “The day is very fine.” 2.) “That man is young but my father is very old.” 3.) “Isn’t she beautiful?” 4.) I am well, thank you.” 5.) “Wasn’t your daughter very sick?” 6.) “Won’t you-all be eating at a quarter to nine?” 7.) “Who is there?” 8.) “The afternoon was very fine.” 9.) “Yes. It was very beautiful.” 10.) “The policeman is very big.”

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



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5 Sunday	Fintan Stanley	19 Sunday 1916 Easter Rising Annual Memorial from 12-2 pm, Old Dorchester Post, 500 Gallivan Boulevard, Dorchester. Admission: \$12, which includes continental breakfast by Greenhills Bakery. More info? Call Sean Folan at 857-719-6979.
10 Friday	Lucy’s Love Bus Fundraiser: Making life a little better for children with cancer. Music provided by Colm O’Brien, Erin’s Melody with Margaret Dalton, and Devri. Call Johnny Costello at 617-678-7949 for more information.	19 Sunday 6th Annual Irish Hearts for Orphans Benefit Dance: Marriott Boston Quincy, 1000 Marriott Drive, Quincy. 4 -8 p.m. For more info, call Winnie Henry at 617-842-5506.
12 Sunday	Noel Henry Irish Showband	19 Sunday Mossie Coughlin and the Boston Irish
17 Friday	Fisher House Boston Fundraiser to help raise money for those who are running the Boston Marathon on behalf of this fantastic organization giving a place to stay for families with family members treating at the VA	26 Sunday John Connors and the Irish Express

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