

April 2017

VOL. 28 #4

\$2.00

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Boston Neighborhood News, Inc.

BOSTON IRISH REPORTER

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RIP, Martin McGuinness

Martin McGuinness, the Irish Republican Army chieftain who turned away from violence to forge peaceful political bonds with Northern Ireland's Protestants, died last month at age 66. Tens of thousands looked on from the streets of Bogside in Londonderry on March 23 as political colleagues, IRA veterans, family, and friends bore his casket into church where, remarkably, police commanders, Protestant leaders, and the British secretary of state for Northern Ireland joined Irish presidents and prime ministers past and present in the pews. No IRA trappings were present as two Protestant church ministers and former US President Bill Clinton took turns eulogizing a man who had long topped Britain's list of terrorists. (AP)

Remembering the Man

BY ROBERT P. CONNOLLY
SPECIAL TO THE BIR

In some respects, it was as if he were just another government official showing up for work on a chilly Belfast morning. But as the man who had inspired cheers and chills for three decades emerged from his car, it was surprising that television crews and throngs of reporters weren't there to capture the moment.

The date was Dec. 2, 1999, and there wasn't a camera in sight when Martin McGuinness began to climb the stairs at Stormont Castle in Belfast.

The date has taken its place in the annals of Irish history, as it marked the first gathering of the ministers who would run

Connolly, Page 6

BY JOE LEARY
SPECIAL TO THE BIR

The first time I saw Martin McGuinness was at the old Ritz Carlton Hotel in Boston in 1996 as he was striding down the second-floor corridor to join a luncheon the Irish American Partnership was holding in his honor.

We had run a breakfast for Northern Ireland Secretary of State Mo Mowlam that morning and had invited McGuinness and Sinn Fein to address the Partnership at lunch. As I remember, the ballroom was full of hotel security watching nervously from the balcony as he began to speak after we finished our lunch.

The British Consul (we invited all sides) and sev-

Leary, Page 6

St. Patrick's Day breakfast fare: A bit of blarney, jabs at Trump

By BIR STAFF

State Sen. Linda Dorce-na Forry's annual St. Patrick's Day breakfast drew some 750 friends of Ireland to the Boston Convention Center on March 19. Among the guests were US Senators Ed Markey and Elizabeth Warren, Boston Mayor Marty Walsh, Massachusetts Governor Charlie Baker, and Congressman Stephen Lynch.

A special guest was Ireland's Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, Dr. Katherine Zappone, who was visiting the city to mark the St Patrick's holiday on behalf of her country.

With roots extending back to the 1940s, this annual political gathering is legendary in Boston's history, and serves to focus the celebration of Boston's Irish heritage by the region's political and cultural constituencies.

As was to be expected, given the re-made political landscape, President Trump's name was heard



Dr. Katherine Zappone, Ireland's Minister for Children and Youth Affairs carried St. Patrick's Day greetings from the Irish people to state Sen. Linda Dorce-na Forry's breakfast and to the city of Boston. Said the minister: "Imagine if the people of Ireland had turned their backs on St Patrick as a migrant – our history would be very different."

Don West photo

throughout the proceedings, beginning with Sen. Dorce-na Forry's presentation of a tweet from the White House – "Good Luck on Your STUPID Breakfast – SAD!" The event also

featured plenty of good-natured joshing of GOP Governor Baker by the largely Democratic crowd of politicians spread across the dais and some light byplay between Mayor Walsh and his

challenger in this year's election, City Councillor Tito Jackson.

An album of photos from the breakfast on Page 2.

Father Dan Finn busily tends to his flock of anxious immigrants

By RYAN DALY

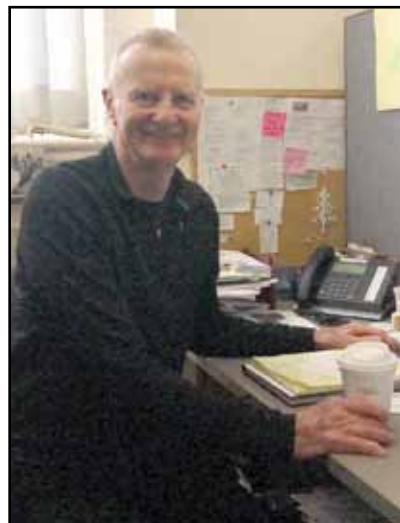
SPECIAL TO THE REPORTER

Father Dan Finn, a faith and community leader, especially among the Irish, in Dorchester since 1980, left his longtime post as pastor of St. Mark's parish two years ago, but he didn't go very far.

After a bit of rest and travel, the native of Kanturk, Co. Cork, moved into the rectory at nearby St. Brendan's parish and took up a new role as chaplain and coordinator of the Irish Pastoral Centre, which he had co-founded some 30 years before at a time when hearty waves of young Irish men and women were leaving their home island and settling in the city, often without proper immigration documents.

Many of them soon came to know Dan Finn as a priest who was energetically engaged with their ranks even as he was busily attending to parish affairs at St. Peter's in Dorchester throughout the '80s.

He brought to his pastoral duties a resume that reflected an immigrant's pluck and a drive to succeed as a churchman. A teen-aged carpenter on his arrival from



Fr. Dan Finn runs the Irish Pastoral Centre from an office on Rita Road. Ryan Daly photo

Cork at an aunt's home in Billerica, MA, in 1962, the young Finn worked and studied his way to archdiocesan seminary studies in Brighton and his ordination in 1972, the year before he was sworn in as a US citizen.

After seven years as a curate

in Norwood and Roslindale, he settled in as assistant pastor at St. Peter's, the beginning of close to four decades of priestly service in Dorchester where he quickly established himself as a relentless champion of the immigrant Irish in Boston.

Today, his responsibilities consist of helping out archdiocesan parishes with day-to-day needs while continuing his deep involvement in immigration issues on a large scale in Dorchester, across the city, and beyond. But increasingly, he said in an interview at his Rita Road office this week, his duties take him into cellblocks where anxious Irish-born prisoners – sometimes undocumented – seek out, and count on, his counsel.

"In the last year I've visited seven or eight people," said Fr. Finn. "They really appreciate my visit, and I have had to work to understand each of the different prison's rules, and what is acceptable." He added that he has learned the hard way that some prisons won't let you mail cash to inmates.

(Continued on page 3)



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

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Gathering time at Sen. Dorcena Forry's breakfast



The 2017 St Patrick's Day breakfast received an "Upgrade to Business Class" this year, thanks to presenting sponsor Delta Airlines, one of a number of contributors who helped defray the cost of the event. Delta will begin daily flights from Boston to Dublin on May 25, and to kick things off, Delta donated two pairs of round trip business class tickets to two lucky breakfast guests, Gerri Munroe and Michael Duffy. Pictured, from left: Kim Elkins and first officer Bob Clifford, Delta; Gerri Munroe; Delta regional manager Charlie Schewe; Michael Duffy; and state Sen. Linda Dorcena Forry.

They came from near and far to join in the festivities at the annual South Boston St. Patrick's Day breakfast hosted by state Sen. Linda Dorcena Forry. Among the guests pictured below, clockwise from top left: Sen. Forry; a musical rendition of "Southie is My Hometown"; Irish band Curragh's Fancy; comedian Jimmy Tingle; Irish dancer Kieran Jordan; artist Vincent Crotty; US Senator Ed Markey, 15-year-old singer Anthony Dooley, Cambridge Police Lt. Pauline Wells; and Sister Brenda Forry, CSJ, who gave the benediction.

All photos by Don West





Cardinal fete Fr. Dan Finn at the Irish Social Club in West Roxbury after his retirement from St. Marks.

Fr. Dan Finn tends to his local flock of anxious immigrants

(Continued from page 1)

He sees his role as acting as both a support system – quelling the incarcerated individual's anxieties – and as a messenger – sending updates to and from the individuals and their families in Ireland. Having strongly supported the rights of the undocumented Irish through almost four decades of priestly service in Dorchester, he takes this new facet to be a natural extension of previous work.

In the aftermath of President Donald J. Trump's controversial executive orders, immigrant anxiety is spiking to levels not seen since the 1980s, Fr. Finn said. Many of the Irish he works with are no longer seeking out the police and healthcare resources because they are afraid of being arrested. "It's a real fear for people. The centre tries to be a bridge between their situation and other resources that we know will be safe for them to go to."

Fr. Dan Finn's long career as a parish priest has earned him the trust of thousands – and not just from the Irish community. His 22-year-long ministry at multicultural St. Mark's parish on Dorchester Avenue made him a virtual family member to families with origins in places like Vietnam, Haiti, and Rwanda.

"I'm more or less a name," he conceded. "I know a lot of people in this community, and have a wide network of relationships. My job is a process of reconnecting with people I've met over my lifetime." At the Pastoral Centre, he added, "We basically assist people from the cradle to the grave."

Memorial Masses at St. Brendan's church, at which the death of an immigrant's relative from his or her native country is commemorated, are highlights of Fr. Finn's work.

"You should see the huge crowd that comes on that occasion," he said.

The centre aims to create a "parish without boundaries," as he puts it, meaning that it has to be there for immigrants "in the shadows."

Every month, the center brings immigrant attorneys to Dorchester and to its Quincy quarters to educate people on the appropriate engagement procedures with Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents. It is important, Fr. Finn said, for people to know that even though they may not be legal citizens, they still have rights.

"We're trying to get the word out that we're here for anybody and everybody – that the door is always open. We'll respond in any way we can, given our resources," he said.

Even though the Pastoral Centre is now entering its 30th year of operation, Fr. Finn believes that more familiarity with the immediate area is needed.

With a mission statement that purports to provide services without geographical boundaries, he said, the biggest difference in his work now, after St. Mark's, is simply that he is not focused on a square mile of parish space. Everything else goes on, more or less, as before.

"I say Masses in Milton, Quincy, Lowell, and different parts of the city. What before would have been an exception – travelling around all over the state – now is more of a rule."

The organization hopes to move into a more prominent office sometime this year, but there is no intention to ever leave Dorchester. "We feel this is area is where we belong," Fr. Finn said. "It is the crossroads for new Irish immigrants. I've always said, 'You don't need to join the Navy to see the world. You just need to come to Dorchester.'"

Dot runners fuel passion of Team MR8

By ELANA AURISE
REPORTER STAFF

A team of 100 runners affiliated with the Martin Richard Foundation are training hard for this month's BAA Boston Marathon, set for April 17. The foundation's team – affectionately known as Team MR8 – includes 18 Dorchester residents who are all raising funds to aid the Fields Corner-based organization, which is devoted to keeping Martin's peace-filled message alive through good deeds and philanthropy.

Martin, 8, was killed and his family members were injured when two terrorists detonated a pair of homemade bombs near the finish line of the city's marathon in 2013.

The Dorchester contingent that has been fundraising and training to cross the finish line this year is Eoin Cannon, Monica Davis, John Delano, Pat Doherty, Dianne Lescinskas, Michael McCarthy, Rachel Moo,

Kathleen Mullen, Cailin Pagel, Patrick Ryan, Talia Siravo, Jack Wu, Laura and Peter Oggeri, Sheryl Patel, Pat Brophy, Derek Mourad and Steve Wilkins.

As in years past, a larger group of runners will gather at the Eire Pub in Adams Village to run a mile loop on Saturday, April 15 at 5 p.m. All are welcome to join in the run in a solidarity with the Richard family and Team MR8. Many of the team members are also planning individual events aimed at building awareness and raising funds. Each runner on the team is committed to raising at least \$2,000 for the foundation.

Collectively, Team MR8 has already raised \$549,752 out of their \$750,000 goal for 2017 – making them one of the top fundraising teams participating in the BAA Boston Marathon.

"All Team MR8 runners have access to professional training and

fundraising support from team manager Susan Hurley, founder of Charity Teams, Inc., a North Andover, Massachusetts based company that helps small non-profits grow through athletic fundraising," according to the Team MR8 website.

Talia Siravo, a first grade teacher at Saint John Paul II Catholic Academy in Lower Mills, was a spectator on Bolyton Street waiting for her fiancé to cross the finish line when the bombs went off on Patriots Day, 2013.

"I remember feeling heartbroken and filled with impossible questions," she wrote. "Nothing seemed fair. However, in the weeks and months that followed, I remember seeing something incredible. In the midst of heartache and pain, a community banded together to help one another. I made a silent promise to myself to run the Boston Marathon and so my running journey

began. "For the past 3 years I have run many races," Siravo wrote. "I feel blessed to run my most important race for Team MR8."

Siravo has already surpassed her goal of \$7,500 for Team MR8 – raising \$11,271 to date.

Cailin Pagel's is running her first-ever marathon and she's already beat her goal of raising \$7,500 for Team MR8. She's hauled in \$9,326 in pledges, according to her fundraising page.

"Team MR8 honors values that have been instilled in myself from as far as I can remember," she wrote. "They are a huge support to local sports organizations and for myself sports have always been a huge part of my life. I believe that the coaches and teammates that I was so lucky to spend so much time with growing up really helped mold me into the person I am today. It feels so good to be part of a team again."



Team MR 8 shown at the 2016 BAA Marathon

Irish American Partnership hears of Kerry woes; sets awards for 5 schools

The Irish American Partnership used the occasion of a visit to Boston by Kerry Co. Mayor Michael O'Shea last month for a roundtable discussion about economic growth in the west of Ireland to announce Partnership grants to five Kerry schools.

O'Shea and Kerry Tourism Officer John Griffin

were in Boston to promote tourism, trade, education, and direct foreign investment in the county, which has not yet recovered from the devastating effects of the recession.

In recognition of their visit, Partnership Chief Executive Mary Sugrue presented O'Shea with awards totaling \$10,000.

O'Shea and Griffin

spoke at length about the challenges posed by Ireland's two-tiered economic recovery, which has left coastal villages along the Western seaboard struggling to survive.

O'Shea commented that the small family farm that was once the mainstay of Kerry life can no longer survive due to rising expenses and the current

regulatory climate, and Griffin, noting that the lack of employment in rural Kerry is annihilating small towns, asked the roundtable guests to consider Kerry should they wish to expand their business or begin an enterprise in Ireland.



Father William Joy, Kerry County Mayor Michael O'Shea, Partnership Chief Executive Mary Sugrue, Sean Moynihan of the Moynihan Group, Kerry Tourism Officer John Griffin



The view from the planned site of the Famine Memorial on Deer Island looking west across the harbor to Boston.
Ed Forry photo

Revival of a dream for Deer Island

By Ed Forry

The long-awaited memorial to the Irish who died before they could reach Boston during the great Irish famine and were buried at Deer Island may soon become a reality.

The late podiatrist Dr. Bill O’Connell and his wife Rita O’Connell, longtime stalwarts of Boston’s Irish community, spent many years learning about “The Great Hunger,” the famine that ravaged Ireland in the middle of the 19th century, leading to the death of many from starvation while countless others sought to extend their lives by cramming into sailing ships and set out for America.

In Boston, as some 25,000 Irish souls arrived in our harbor on “coffin ships” between 1847 and 1849, the city’s health officials steered the vessels to Deer Island, where the passengers were quarantined to prevent any communicable diseases from coming ashore.



There, within sight of our city, hundreds perished – from typhoid fever, pneumonia, dysentery, and consumption. One four-month-old baby died from whooping cough, a five-month-old from cholera. More than one baby perished from “marasmus,” a severe form of malnutrition that leaves a child emaciated and with almost no energy. Although many Irish did survive, those who didn’t were buried in unmarked

paupers’ graves on the island.

When the O’Connells discovered the graves on Deer Island, they reached out to the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA), which was building the massive sewage treatment complex there, and asked for help in memorializing the dead immigrants.

It was a decades-long dream of Bill and Rita to establish a memorial to those long-lost Irish, and in the early 1990s they gathered some friends to find a way to create a fitting memorial. They researched the history of those who died on the island and discovered that a primitive cemetery there contained the graves of hundreds of Irish, with no proper marking or memorials.

With a small group of friends, they formed the Deer Island Irish Memorial-Boston Harbor; their mission, they wrote at the time, “is to acknowledge, honor, and remember the 850 Irish men, women, and children who died and were buried on Deer Island between 1847 and 1850 during the time of *An Gorta Mor* – Ireland’s Great Hunger.”

But when two other Famine memorial efforts formed in Cambridge and Boston, the O’Connells’ effort was overlooked, and those early plans fizzled. Sadly, the Marshfield couple have since passed way, Rita on the last day of 2012, and Bill in 2014, and their vision for a Deer island memorial seemed to die with them.

That same year, Ireland’s Consul General in Boston, Michael Lonergan, reached out to see if the O’Connell’s efforts could be resumed. With his encouragement, a new working committee was formed. and the effort has been sustained by Lonergan’s successors, Breandan O Caollai and current Consul General Fionnuala Quinlan.

This year, the committee, now called the Irish Great Hunger Memorial Committee, is working with the MWRA and public- spirited business people from Winthrop to develop a new vision for the memorial: a 16-foot classic Irish/Celtic cross has been designed and carved in granite, and it will sit on a four-foot concrete foundation on a majestic Deer Island promontory overlooking Boston Harbor from which visitors will be able to see the shores of Boston, from the downtown skyscrapers to the city’s southern waterfront, including South Boston, Dorchester, and Quincy.

There will be informative plaques installed, and a series of granite blocks surrounding the cross, with an interpretive sign explaining the significance of the memorial.

The details of the agreement are being finalized, but there has been great progress, and the committee hopes the memorial will become a reality as early as this summer.

It will indeed be a fitting memorial to those hundreds of Irish who sought refuge here in Boston, but died before they could start new lives in America. It also will be a wonderful tribute to Bill and Rita O’Connell, who had the vision and commitment to remember those many lost souls.

A momentous election for Sinn Fein; getting down to business a must now

By Joe Leary
SPECIAL TO THE BIR

No one expected the leading Unionist party to lose 10 seats in the recent Assembly election in Northern Ireland. No one expected that as a result of the voting, the Democratic Unionists would have only a one-seat advantage over the Sinn Fein. No one expected the overall Nationalist vote to almost tie the Unionist vote. No one expected that 100,000 more votes would be cast than in the last Assembly election – a ten percent increase with nearly 60 percent of the increase going to Sinn Fein.

It was a momentous election, a clear victory for Sinn Fein, and Nationalists and Republicans were delighted. The Democratic Unionists and most everyone else were shocked.

Was Northern Ireland showing signs of agreeing to a United Ireland by voting in such a way for Sinn Fein? How will new, inexperienced political leadership be able to deal with the Brexit problems that seem to be getting worse by the day? Will Brexit motivate people to be more inclined to stay with the European Union by uniting with the Republic of Ireland? Several Northern Ireland businesses have already moved to the South.

The situation is confusing. Was the vote a reaction to DUP leader Arlene Foster’s mean spirited attitude, the resignation of Martin McGuinness, or, simply, a result of the fact that the Catholic population is growing?

The newly elected Assembly now must organize itself and appoint new leadership to manage its internal business. The rules in the Good Friday agreement require the newly organized government to be in place within three weeks of the election. If that does not happen, there must be another new election, or control goes back to London. As always, personalities and power struggles will have an impact on all decisions. Foster, the former DUP leader in the Assembly, is being challenged by Sinn Fein members, who are insisting they will not accept her. During her recent time in office as First Minister, she regularly insulted Sinn Fein, causing the late Martin McGuinness to resign in protest.

Given that, she may be the best vote getter Sinn Fein has. She plays to her highly prejudiced base by calling Sinn Fein a bunch of crocodiles who, if you feed them, will only want more. She cut the budget for Irish language schools while authorizing funds for musical instruments for Protestant bands. That kind of rheto-

ric and her governing decisions annoyed many on both sides. During the election Sinn Fein had men and women dressed up as crocodiles roaming all over the election sites.

The full impact of Martin McGuinness’s death will not become clear for some time. But he was a steady hand who was highly respected by most all the players. His reputation as a tough guy and an excellent negotiator combined with his friendship with ultra-unionist Ian Paisley evoked admiration from everyone who met him. His friendly manner and quick smile softened Sinn Fein’s image and made people forget the tough guy stories. It all came to him naturally.

That softening of Sinn Fein’s image has been a goal since the ceasefire and the giving up of its arms depots. It is not by accident that 40 percent of its representatives in the Assembly are women, a number far more than any other party. There is no doubt that this has had an impact on Sinn Fein’s success at the ballot box both in the North and the South.

McGuinness’s replacement as head of Sinn Fein in the North is Michelle O’Neill, a brilliant young woman from the Mid Ulster constituency who has been in politics since 2005. Married with two children, she was mayor of Dungannon for a time, and minister of Agriculture and Rural Development in the last government.

This latest Assembly election is hopefully another step toward peace and equality for everyone in Northern Ireland. If Catholics become the majority, all of us might remember that it will then be their responsibility to insure that the minority is treated as Catholics wished to be treated themselves.

For the moment, though, the biggest problem is the coming separation between the EU and Britain. This will greatly stress Northern Ireland in ways that are hard to predict. Prime Minister Theresa May’s first obligation is to protect her country and the issues in Northern Ireland are in second place. The same is true of Ireland itself.

Northern Ireland’s leaders must work hard and work smart to protect their own people as things comes to a head in London.



Joe Leary

Off the Bench

The value of an occasional ‘Hallelujah’

By James W. Dolan
SPECIAL TO THE REPORTER

Of late I have been attending the music Mass at St. Anthony’s Chapel. The Arch Street Band and singers join with the congregation in a festive and exuberant celebration of a ritual that has sustained Catholics for centuries. It underscores the celebratory nature of the sacrament at the heart of the faith.

There is usually precious little participation in a rite that over time has become almost routine. The gospel, homily, consecration, and communion are themselves



James W. Dolan

supposed to draw the congregation into an intellectual and emotional response. Too often that fails. The gospel is rote, the homilies are uninspiring, and the participation tends to be more the filling of an obligation than a spiritual experience.

While that may be due in part to people like myself, who fail to fully invest in what has become a duty more than a celebration. But some responsibility rests with priests who

fail to even try to inspire with turgid, disorganized, prolonged, and sometimes incoherent sermons. Instead of a short, relevant, meaningful message, many ramble on, unprepared, long after they have lost their audience.

The Mass calls for an intellectual, emotional and spiritual response. A poor sermon does nothing to generate such a reaction. In fact, it does the opposite. The Franciscans at Arch Street normally use that valuable time to convey something meaningful. It is usually brief, direct, and relevant, in that it can be applied to how we live. Done well, it produces the desired reaction.

The music and singing provide a jubilant response to what is supposed to be an uplifting experience. Those present are no longer just witnesses, but active participants in a ritual that is at the center of Catholic devotion, the source of which is a loving God. Love is not a solitary act; it demands action. Singing can be a vivid expression of that intensity, drawing the participants into a deeper appreciation of the joy that can be found in their exercise of shared responsibility.

Organized religion tends now to be out of favor. Many prefer to find their own way to whatever version of spirituality or humanism attracts them. They define their own faiths without the burdens and restraints of institutional limitations. Traditional religions, after all, are hierarchical; they are directed by human beings with the flaws and weaknesses so evident in all institutions. Offended, the disappointed look elsewhere for fulfillment.

That rejection is understandable. Organized religions make mistakes, and, sometimes, grievous errors. Why not seek solace in a purer more personal belief without the distractions of traditional faiths? My answer to that is simple: Human beings organize institutionally as families, tribes, trades, businesses, schools, and governments, etc. That is how we function. The fact that some or all of these institutions fail from time to time is as obvious as the reason for their decline: flawed human beings. Our human nature is easily corrupted; that’s a condition we cannot escape. However, with love, we can learn to identify, understand, correct, and forgive faults in ourselves and others. We can strive to do better.

Within the Catholic Church, the mission of the Franciscans is to help the poor, forgotten, sick, and dispossessed. Love, the paramount virtue, is the one from which all the others flow. Few organizations can match the zeal of the Franciscans in promoting active love. That is nowhere more evident than in the music Mass that draws those present into the joy and fulfillment of service to others.

It is in the joining of our aspirations that we are most productive. It can be as simple as a congregation united for a few moments in melodious prayer or as complicated as organizing programs to help those less fortunate. Either way, it helps to punctuate the task with an occasional “Hallelujah!”

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

BOSTON IRISH REPORTER

The Boston Irish Reporter is published monthly by:

Boston Neighborhood News, Inc.,
150 Mt. Vernon St., Suite 120, Dorchester, MA 02125
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On The Web at www.bostonirish.com
Date of Next Issue: May, 2017

Deadline for Next Issue: **Thursday, April 20 at 12 noon**

Published monthly in the first week of each month.

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Point of View

TWO PASSINGS, AND A PASTIME RENEWED

Two Men Who Made a Mark

By PETER F. STEVENS
BIR STAFF

They were vastly different men in many ways, but in their inimitable ways, they shared a bottomless love of their native Ireland. Martin McGuinness was an IRA commander turned peacemaker. Frank Delaney was a journalist, broadcaster, and, above all, a masterful writer and storyteller. They passed away in recent days, McGuinness to heart trouble, Delaney after a stroke. In these pages, I had the opportunity to speak at length with both men.

McGuinness trod a path that wound from his IRA days – when he rose to second-in-command of the Provisional IRA in Derry and was often described as “Britain’s number one terrorist” – to his pivotal role in the Northern Ireland peace process. Even as he became a prominent political figure, he neither denied nor sugarcoated his IRA past.

As Bill Clinton, another key figure in that Good Friday agreement process, eulogized, McGuinness was a key figure in ending the violence in Northern Ireland, securing IRA arms decommissioning in 2005, and sharing the new government with past, once-intractable Protestant foes. His momentous handshake in 2012 with Queen Elizabeth II signified just how far both he and Northern Ireland had come since the worst of the Troubles.

As the *Irish News* noted, “Mr. McGuinness said he ‘genuinely regretted’ every life lost during the Troubles... ‘Every single violent act was evidence of a failure of politics and a failure of British policy in Ireland.... I genuinely regret every single life that was lost during that conflict and today I want every family who lost a loved one to know that your pain is not being ignored and I am willing to work with others to finding a way to deal with our past so that we can complete our journey to true reconciliation.’”

In an interview with McGuinness, what I most recall was how thoughtful and quietly optimistic he was for his country’s future. Still, there was no mistaking the sheer toughness of the man.

...

Over the past decade, I had the great and good fortune of interviewing Tipperaryman Frank Delaney

on several occasions. A genuine Renaissance man, he started his career with Irish state radio and RTE in 1970. Then, he went on to the BBC in Dublin and covered The Troubles for five years, garnering a reputation for forthright, balanced, and courageous reporting.

Moving to London, he embraced his passion for books and writing with the popular *Bookshelf* program for BBC Radio 4, delving into the world of publishing and interviewing more than 1,400 authors who ranged from John Updike and Margaret Atwood to Stephen King. For the BBC, Delaney hosted *Omnibus*, the *Frank Delaney Show*, *Word of Mouth*, and later, on Sky News, the long-running *The Book Show*.

As a bestselling author, Delaney wrote five nonfiction books, ten novels, and short stories. His nautical nonfiction work “Simple Courage” is a book that stays with the reader long after one finishes it. It was to discuss this true tale of a shipwreck off the Irish coast that I first met Delaney. He was a man of towering wit, wordliness, and talent.

A Happy 105th anniversary to “the House That Logue Built”

Spring is a time of renewal, and for legions of people in these parts, that means opening day at Fenway Park. The year 2017 marks a milestone for the venerable “House that Logue Built” 105 years ago.

On April 20, 1912, some 27,000 spectators jammed the stands for the Red Sox home opener. This opening day, however, heralded a new era for the club. As starting pitcher Buck O’Brien rocked into his windup and uncoiled the season’s first pitch at the New York Highlander’s leadoff hitter, he did so in a brand new ballpark. Fenway Park was in business—in large part thanks to an Irish immigrant named Charles Logue. The Derry-born contractor’s company had built the ballpark destined to become a shrine to “the Grand Old Game.”

Born in Derry in 1858, a bearded man and the father of a large family, Logue possessed a genuine talent for shaping land to architects’ plans. He owned a construction company that earned a stellar reputation for finishing jobs on time and without questionable cost overruns, something that could not always be said of the city’s more than 230 Irish contractors in the early 1900s.

Logue built structures for the Catholic Archdiocese and for Boston College, and when John I. Taylor, son of the *Boston Globe*’s publisher, General Charles H.

Taylor, was given the Red Sox as a perk from his father, the new owner wanted a new ballpark for the local nine. On June 24, 1912, the *Globe* trumpeted the news with a half-page drawing and a detailed accompanying story stoking fans’ fervor. The article stated, “With the new park covering 365,306 square feet of land and the stands of the most approved type, and the home club brought up to its best pitch, the fans hereabouts can confidently look forward through the winter months to some great baseball games next season.”

The man hired as the chief contractor for the park was Charles Logue and beginning on Sept. 25, 1911, a state-of-the-art steel and concrete ballpark—one of the first of its kind—began to materialize on a tract whose most distinctive previous buildings had been the Park Riding School and a church.

Logue and his crews had to follow both the architects’ plans and the realities of “day baseball.” A Fenway Park historian writes, “There was no thought of night baseball in 1911, so the architects had to make sure batters would not be facing into the sun late in the afternoon. Thus home plate was set in the southwest corner of the yard...to ensure that the sun would set behind third base, bothering only the right fielder.” To the eternal agony of countless right fielders who would lose balls in the Fenway sun, Logue followed the plan to the letter.

By opening day of 1912, Logue had delivered the goods. Fenway Park was ready, completed at a cost of \$650,000 and with private funds only. Washed out by rain for two days, Fenway’s christening day was April 20, the stands packed with fans gaping at the technological “marvel.” The New York Highlanders, who would be renamed the Yankees in 1913, were a fitting opening-day foe, as the raucous rivalry between the clubs for decades to come would prove. The teams went into extra innings tied at 6 runs each. In the eleventh, Red Sox second baseman Steve Yerkes, already 5 for 6 in the No. 2 slot, got on base again. Tris Speaker stepped to the plate and drove in Yerkes for a dramatic 7–6 victory. Fenway’s first game had lasted three hours and twenty minutes. The Red Sox went on from there to rack up their best record ever, 105–47, and the beat the New York Giants in the World Series.

What should have been the newspapers’ big story was eclipsed on the front pages by the most recent developments in “the story of the century” – the *Titanic* had gone down just a few days earlier.

Kevin Barry talks about his way of dealing with writing

Kevin Barry, the Burns Visiting Scholar in Irish Studies for this semester at Boston College, is one of Ireland’s more highly regarded fiction writers to emerge this century. The author of two novels, “Beatlebone” and “City of Bohane,” and two story collections – “There Are Little Kingdoms” and “Dark Lies the Island” – Barry has won the Rooney Prize for Irish Literature, the Goldsmiths Prize, the IMPAC Dublin City Literary Award, the Sunday Times EFG Short Story Prize, and the European Union Prize for Literature, as well as a Lannan Foundation Literary Award. His stories and essays have appeared in the *New Yorker*, *Granta*, *Tin House*, and many other journals.

On Wed., April 12, Barry, a Limerick native (1969), will present the Burns Scholar Lecture, “A Writer’s Apprenticeship,” at 4:30 p.m. in the Burns Library Thompson Room.

In a recent interview, the Boston College Office of University Communications posed a few questions to the author:

Q. What prompted you to accept the invitation to be the Burns Scholar?

A. Well, it’s always a great and necessary thing for a writer to get out of the house – to hear some new voices, new ways of speaking. I’m not a stranger to Boston College by any means, having visited a few times here over the years, and I’m delighted to have the opportunity to stay for a few months. For one thing, you get a proper winter in Boston. In Ireland, all the seasons have sort of morphed into one; it never gets very hot or very cold, it’s just kind of gray and wet and a bit dreary all the time. Not very interesting.

Of course, I was impressed by BC on my previous visits, especially the depth and extent of its Irish literature scholarship. I remember going to the weekly reading of “Finnegans Wake”

held by [Associate Professor of the Practice of English] Joe Nugent, and I was struck by the diversity of the crowd showing up to puzzle through this great and famously impenetrable work by an old Irish dude.

I’ve really enjoyed being able to go to the Burns Library and browsing, for example, the Flann O’Brien collection – to see his original manuscripts, which are sacred texts to me, and even his typewriter.

Q. Your new novel – can you give a hint as to how it’s coming along?

A. I can’t, because I have no idea what it’s about yet! [Laughs] I’m in the very early stages where I’m just doggedly making myself go to the desk every morning and write. Actually, I am not in the habit of talking out a new project. I usually sneak up on it, as if it were a new and delicate life form, and I don’t want to startle it and send it running into the woods.

A campus with such great libraries as those here BC is an enormously useful environment for a writer. I love the O’Neill Library: It’s like a living Google machine where you can just follow a trail of reading, a trail of books. There’s a lot of reading that goes on before I write; it sets the stage.

Q. Do you follow a certain routine in your writing?

A. I make it a first-thing-in-the-morning practice. The great Don DeLillo talked about writing as something you should do when you first wake up, when you’re still “puddled in dream melt,” and you’re in touch with the part of the unconscious that fiction and drama come from. That’s why I’m always telling students in my Fiction Writing Workshop not to go online when they first get up. Get to the page instead.

But you have to find what works for yourself. An hour-and-a-half can be a perfectly



Kevin Barry
“Reading sets the stage.”
Gary Wayne Gilbert,
Boston College photo

good writing day. When I was emerging as a writer, in my 20s, I would have these random bursts of genius at 4 a.m. I’m on a different schedule nowadays.

Q. When did it hit you that writing was something you liked and wanted to do?

A. I can actually date it: I wrote my first short story, at age eight, the morning after Elvis Presley died [Aug. 16, 1977] – it was based somehow on Elvis’s life. I was always a scrawler, I suppose – certainly I wrote quite a bit of teenage poetry, none of which survived, thankfully.

When I worked in journalism, I wrote about books, films, art, and so forth, so I was always sneaking up on fiction. And then I began writing short stories, and that form kind of remains my first love.

Patience is the ultimate thing you need to become a writer. It takes a long while before emotions and impressions from your life filter into your work. I think what’s rare is to have both a talent for writing and a pragmatic, stubborn sense that makes you go to the desk every day and keep doing it.

Q. You must have been pleased by the reception to your first collection of short stories, “There Are Little Kingdoms” (2007), which suggested the changes taking place in Ireland’s towns and cities – new technology, new sounds, new kinds of relationships, and soon.

A. It went down well, and I was very fortunate to win the Rooney Prize for Irish Literature. The award is named after Pittsburgh Steelers owner Dan Rooney, so along with the prize you get a Pittsburgh Steelers T-shirt – which, of course, I know I’m not supposed to wear around Boston.

Q. But you didn’t necessarily set out with a collection in mind, right?

A. A short story collection is a curious beast. As you write the stories, you start to become aware that themes naturally emerge, so you think that perhaps you can build on these and put a coherent collection together. But I’ve found with stories that the rate of production gradually slows down, and the process doesn’t necessarily get easier.

Q. And then you went in a different direction with “City of Bohane” (2011), a dystopian novel [it takes place in 2053, in a world of minimal laws and technology, chronicling a power struggle among gangs for a western Ireland city]. How did that unfold?

A. When I was writing that book, I was very influenced by American television drama, shows like “The Wire,” “The Sopranos” and especially “Deadwood” – this seemed to be some of the best storytelling around at that time. They all had to do with who holds and exercises power in a place of uncertain law and order. Basically, they were westerns, which always make for some of the best stories. “Bohane” is kind of a west-of-Ireland western.

I was writing it at a time when Ireland was undergoing dramatic changes – you’re part of the country you live in, you feel what’s happening. There had been incredible prosperity, a lot of immigration into the country, new energies, new tensions, and then came the unprecedented collapse. It was by sheer luck, not design, that I’d chosen an almost dangerously interesting time to be writing in, and I think some of the mad vitality got into the pages.

Some reviewers had said that I was the guy who would write “the Celtic Tiger novel.” Well, I’d have rather pulled my head off than do that. But you know, when I look now, “Bohane” is, sort of, my Celtic Tiger novel.

Q. Speaking of stories, you and your wife have a unique home back in Ireland: an old police barracks. How did you wind up there?

A. Well, we had been moving around so much, and finally we decided it was time to find someplace where we really wanted to stay. But it was the height of the Celtic Tiger, and houses in cities were just not affordable. And then we found this old barracks, built in the 1840s by the Royal Irish Constabulary, and it hadn’t been used in 30 years. We needed a place for all the books we’d accumulated, so we thought, “This is it.”

And we moved in, and bit by bit we cleaned it and fixed it up. Win a literary prize, put in some central heating, that kind of thing. But the overhead’s slow, and there’s beautiful country out the windows.

My only complaint is there are no ghosts in it. I thought for sure there would be some old police sergeant, or maybe an old Fenian, haunting the place. Maybe I just haven’t heard them yet.

The event is free but registration is requested; a link is available at bc.edu/centers/irish/studies/calendar.html.

Remembering the Man

His was a journey of reconciliation

Connolly, from Page 1
Northern Ireland’s newly elected government – a power-sharing coalition flowing out of the Good Friday peace agreement. For McGuinness, this was the beginning of a nearly two-decade tenure as a top official in the government of a state that for many years he had been determined to destroy.

And on this first morning, the oddity, the sheer surreality of the former Irish Republican Army chief of staff morphing into something resembling a conventional politician was not lost on anyone – the Derry republican included.

A handful of civil servants – for the first time seeing Martin McGuinness not as the feared leader of the IRA nor as deputy leader of its allied Sinn Fein political party, but now as education minister in their brand-new government – impishly called out, “Good morning, minister,” sensing that the title would be worn like an ill-fitting suit.

McGuinness, surveying the staffers along with a Boston reporter who happened to be there filming interviews for a documentary film, grinned broadly and said: “The next one of ye who calls me ‘minister’ gets sacked” – punctuating his quip with a broad wink.

In many ways, the moment – which led to handshakes and more laughs with the staffers, who very likely had lost friends and relatives to the IRA during Northern Ireland’s brutal Troubles – was classic McGuinness.

He was a man who never backed away from his involvement with the IRA.

In *The Road to Reconciliation*, the Northern Ireland documentary film that I was able to make with director Paul Canney, McGuinness, who died last month at age 66, was unflinching when asked about his connection with the IRA and the violent campaign it waged to oust the British and unify Ireland.

“I’ve never denied down the years being involved in resistance ... in fact, I’m proud to say I was,” McGuinness noted in the

film. “We were effectively in a state of war with ... the forces of the state and indeed the British government, and it seemed to me that what was happening within our society ... was just the same as what happens in South Africa or the Middle East, where people are oppressed, where violence is used by the state, and where there is massive inequality and injustice. And it just seems the most natural thing in the world is to fight back.”

Despite his role as one of the key architects of that fight, the McGuinness who climbed the stairs of the Stormont Castle that morning and joked easily with the sophisticated, university-educated government staffers – who were to become aides to the working-class republicans taking their places in government – was able to use his easy touch to build bonds with the Protestant unionists who once feared and reviled him.

Bonds strong enough that the Rev. Kyle Paisley, the son of the late unionist stalwart Ian Paisley, noted his sadness at the passing of McGuinness. In the most unlikely of developments, McGuinness served easily and effectively with the elder Paisley when election results brought them together as deputy first minister and first minister of Northern Ireland, respectively.

“Look back with pleasure on the remarkable year he and my father spent in office together and the great good they did together. Will never forget his ongoing care for my father in his ill health,” Kyle Paisley tweeted when McGuinness died.

A less harmonious governmental partnership is the one that McGuinness shared with current First Minister Arlene Foster, who now leads the Democratic Unionist Party that Ian Paisley founded during the darkest days of the Troubles.

But if that relationship was strained, consider that Foster was eight years old when the IRA shot her father, a police officer, at the family’s home, and as a teenager, she was a passenger on a school



Martin McGuinness
Photo courtesy Robert P. Connolly

bus bombed by the group.

It was unclear if Foster, who had clashed with McGuinness in his final days in government, would attend the former IRA leader’s funeral, but when she walked into St. Columba’s church in Derry, mourners burst into loud and sustained applause – another bridge

built, perhaps the final step taken in Martin McGuinness’s long journey of reconciliation.

Robert P. Connolly, a former Boston Irish Reporter columnist and Boston Herald reporter, works for the University of Massachusetts

A unique, courageous man

Leary, from Page 1

eral of his people were there attempting to ask discrediting questions, but McGuinness, completely at ease before the 300 or so people in front of him, handled everything quite well. Afterwards, he and I sat down for a quick chat and began a 21-year friendship that endured until he died last month. I would meet him in Belfast and Derry and whenever he came back to Boston.

The Irish American Partnership had been asked to provide encouragement whenever we could to Sinn Fein on their journey toward peace in Northern Ireland. Among those urging encouragement were Belfast’s Cardinal Cahal Daly, the Belfast Unionist Sir George Quigley, and the Irish-American philanthropist Chuck Feeney.

McGuinness was an indisputable hero to many in Northern Ireland, especially in his hometown of Derry where he was born in 1950 to a very strict Catholic family living in one of the poorer areas known as the Bogside. In many ways he never left. He was a devoted Catholic, a faithful husband and father of four children, a Pioneer (nondrinker), and anything but a model terrorist.

After witnessing many horrendous attacks upon his Catholic neighbors both in Derry and Belfast, McGuinness became a local protector of sorts and joined the Provisional Irish Republican Army. As a young man in his late teens he personally and painfully felt the result of Catholic prejudice and the divisiveness of a separated Ireland.

These were the times of indiscriminate attacks on Catholic homes and businesses, including such incidents as the Bombay Street Fires in 1969, the first Bogside riots in 1969, the Ballymurphy Massacre in 1971, the Internment in 1971 when police and British soldiers arrested and imprisoned 2,000 people without charges – 95 percent of them Catholic. And, in 1972, there was Bloody Sunday.

Although he and I never talked about such things, they must have made a serious impression on young McGuinness. Hundreds of Catholics were being shot and killed every year, so for him to join the resistance was hardly unusual.

Nor was the rise of a very bright man with unusual people skills to the top of a dedicated organization unusual. One of the first to recognize McGuinness as

a leader was the British government. In 1972, when he was 22, he was invited to London to discuss peace terms. At least that was the cover for the meeting. Nothing came of it, but it was only a day trip to London and the recognition did no harm.

By the early 1990s, peace talks had broken out and McGuinness devoted himself to the difficult task of bringing the more radical elements of the IRA to the peace table. Some say that control in the IRA was absolute, but anyone who knows about people management knows that is a lot of work and that not everyone was willing to give up their guns.

The Good Friday agreement was signed in 1998, and McGuinness was appointed minister of education in the North in 1999. I invited him to speak at a Clover Club dinner in Boston and over he came. It was a wonderful evening apart from a couple of loudmouths who were opposed to what McGuinness stood for. While he was here, I asked him to recommend ten schools in Northern Ireland to receive grants from the Irish American Partnership.

I then travelled to Belfast to see his assistant and ask for the list of schools. The names came a few weeks later (5 Catholic and 5 Protestant) and I delivered the grants personally, one of them to a large (900 students) school in the Penneyburn section of Derry called St. Patrick’s where the principal, Martin Coyle, also a good friend of Martin McGuinness, introduced me to a few students who were reading in their class. I was given a book to follow along. Then I heard this booming voice say, “Take that book from him; he can’t read!” It was Minister McGuinness!

Laughing and joking, we adjourned for the mandatory tea and biscuits. It was one of my best trips to Ireland.

The last time I saw Martin was in Boston at a luncheon managed by the Northern Ireland Business organization two years ago. He had come over with First Minister Peter Robinson to speak to the advantages of investing in Northern Ireland. True to his spirit, Martin came into the room, walked over, laughingly gave me a big hug and introduced me to Robinson.

I will miss this unique courageous, man.
Joe Leary retired last year after 28 years as CEO and president of the Irish American Partnership.



From left, Frank Burke, Martin McGuinness, and Joe Leary at the Clover Club years ago.



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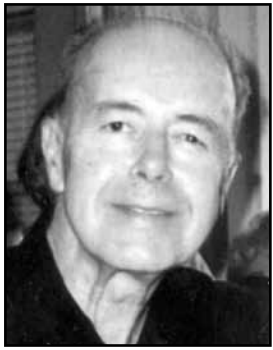
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Boston Irish Reporter's Here & There

BY BILL O'DONNELL

ACLU a Major Anti-Trump Force—It is unusual, to say the least, that the American Civil Liberties Union has become the face of defiance to the new administration in Washington and its policies. Not always on the side of what is likely to be the popular trends of the day, the ACLU has used its considerable non-profit clout on numerous controversial issues, ranging from the 1940s internment of Japanese residents in America during World War II, to political spending and gun rights.



Bill O'Donnell

In the ten weeks since **Donald Trump** was sworn in as America's 45th president, the ACLU has enjoyed an extraordinary surge in support, both ideological and financial. The same Americans who may have disagreed with the ACLU's famously detested positions on neo-Nazis and suspected terrorists, have risen, almost as one, to protest the first days of Trump's takeover of the executive and also his open warfare on American journalism.

Traditionally, the ACLU has given a wide berth to politically oriented organizations and causes due to an unwillingness to risk the allegiance of its contributors or to be cited for favoring one candidate over another. But membership returns during these opening weeks seemingly suggest that the ACLU considers the unorthodox Trump White House to be a bastion of dangerous issues such as its opposition to free speech and its continued denigration of the press as an "enemy of the people."

The enthusiastic support for the ACLU is registering broad increases in membership; since the election the membership has nearly tripled to 1.2 million and the group has collected more than \$80 million in online donations alone. Additionally, the national nonprofit has added scores of attorneys and investigators. The dramatic increase in volunteers has prompted a grass-roots effort with the ACLU to mobilize these new faces as a lobby focusing on local and state matters.

Officials of the ACLU acknowledge that they "have never taken such an oppositional stance against an American president." However, they do point to the fact that the Union "has built capital in their near-century by challenging every president on occasion," including many with whom they largely agree.

The executive director of the ACLU, **Anthony Romero**, notes several areas where his organization can be of assistance: "We can be helpful with lawsuits that can crystallize policy debates for the public," and "legislation can also ... gum up the machinery of the Trump administration. If we can rob them of momentum, we can stop them from doing greater harm or damage."

Donations are welcome at ACLU, Gift Processing Dept., 125 Broad St. New York, NY 10004, and on the internet at ACLU.com.

Martin McGuinness Dead at 66—He was a man of many talents: revolutionary, politician, leader. May he rest in peace. See BIR news columns for more coverage.

Maureen Haughey Dead at 91—She was the daughter of a taoiseach, **Sean Lemass**, and wife of Taoiseach **Charles Haughey**. Fianna Fail leader **Micheal Martin's** words capture the essence of Charles Haughey's long-suffering wife and life partner: "Maureen was a wonderfully warm, dignified, and intelligent woman, and a patriot who loved her country."

She had a materially comfortable and interesting life but living with Charlie Haughey was no stroll in the park. In her later years, she was torn by the public knowledge of Charlie's unfaithfulness, and the findings of the Moriarty Tribunal of his acceptance of large amounts of illegal money during his political career ("devalued democracy," it was called, in screaming headlines). The Irish newspapers and television had another name for the Haughey payoffs — "disgrace" — and so it was.

Throughout it all, Mrs. Haughey soldiered on, steadfast in her courage, refusing to play the tabloid image of a betrayed spouse, her dignity intact, her loyalty undiminished. She deserved better.

Congressman Neal Calls For New N.I. Envoy—The position of special envoy to the North has seen a troubling cavalcade of US-sponsored representatives going all the way back to former US Senate Majority Leader **George Mitchell**. The last envoy was former US Sen. **Gary Hart**, who gave it up and returned home in December. Over the years, six individuals appointed by three presidents have served with few if any successes to brag about following Mitchell's triumph.

Over the Saint Patrick's week, Bay State Democrat Congressman **Richie Neal** called on the president to formally appoint a new special envoy to the North. The basic role of the next appointee (if there is one) will be to lend some much-needed advice and gravitas to the current twin problems of keeping the peace and stabilizing the shredded political process.

Neal, co-chair of the Friends of Ireland in Congress and ranking Democrat on the House Ways & Means Committee, said, "We are now entering a critically important period of US-Ireland relations with a wide range of important issues to be addressed. So I strongly urge President Trump to appoint a new special envoy at the earliest possible opportunity."

With a new president and a new secretary of state

in place, it has been evident in recent weeks that the State Department's top tier is lacking in heft as some officials have been replaced and others forced out, causing a thinning out of the department's institutional memory, some of which relates to Northern Ireland and the US role there going back to the Clinton years. Ireland is an unlikely priority issue at this point, with issues like Cabinet choices, immigration, and the Russian enquiries in the spotlight. We will see what the Twitter finger says.

Religious Rebuff on Magdalene Abuse Reparations—It has been four years and a public state apology since the McAleese Report on the Magdalene laundry abuses, but to date the government's request for financial support for the indentured victims has been met by silence and stonewall refusals by the religious orders involved. Since 2013 four orders who were operating the laundries have been contacted about funding due the victims, and the response has been that they are "absolutely unwilling" to make any form of financial contribution.

In meetings between the leaders of the orders and the Irish state, the government was polite and pointed while the sisters were pleasant and willing to listen and provide records. Still, nothing has changed: The uniform response from the eleven sisters representing the four orders was they would not be contributing to the victim's redress fund.

It is clear after years of not contributing that the four orders of sisters fully expect that the Irish State will have to stand alone without any religious contributions. This refusal comes despite a Holy See statement that it "is heartened by the openness of religious sisters to engage in discussions about issues of compensation and their willingness to pay part of a compensation package developed by state authorities." Maybe the Vatican finance people can find a healthy chunk of "Peter's Pence" or a modest percentage of a particular Sunday offering worldwide to donate to the victims.

In the pursuit of reparations from the religious, there is not only the question of cash redress but also the ongoing problem involving a land transfer from the Christian Brothers as redress for abuse. There was an agreement in 2009 that the Christian Brothers, as part of the payment for the abuse in their institutions, would transfer land worth \$140 million to the Irish State as compensation for the abused boys. The offer was withdrawn in 2015. Nothing further on an agreement.

Given the findings of a long history of abuse followed by stalled reparation agreements by diverse religious orders, laundries, and residential boys' schools, one is left at least to consider that the stonewalling by the religious sisters and the Christian Brothers may be the result of a Vatican order, an internal, central decision not to contribute to the Irish abuse victims through the state.

It has been years, decades in many cases, since the abusive practices occurred, but they remain an indelible and painful part of church history and its unfinished business. Time to make it right, it says here.

The Trump Tumble: It Was Bound To Happen—Memory fails, but going over the list of American presidents, it is hard to recall the last US leader who didn't claim, or attempt to claim, Irish ancestry. We didn't hear much about the **Bush** presidents, but, we had **Clinton and Obama and Reagan**, and, with the cooperation of the Irish Tourist Board, there has been since before **JFK** and **Nixon** a consuming urgency to pin a shamrock on the pedigree of each of our national leaders.

That was then, and this is now. Whatever the reasons (let me count the ways), our rookie president has not been courted by the usual suspects. I can recall in past years the ancestry folks on the morning after the election looking up any Irish links to the new commander in chief. And that bit of reconstructive heritage was almost always requested by tourism officials who hoped to discover some arcane descendant, or tiny hamlet, by which the new president could claim a bit of the Green. Remember Ballyporeen, or Tricky Dick's Irish Fox Hound?

Trump doesn't seem to be passionate about finding his Irish ties. What appears to please his non-existent Irish side are the golf courses the Trump Company now owns in Ireland (no free ads here) and Scotland. The Irish course is the site of his attempt to rebuild a sea wall to better change the landscape and improve the view. A quick check with the neighbors suggests that the Trump plan is not going well, but a nearby business printing protest signs is enjoying a banner year, they say.

Trump Calls His Russia Links "a ruse"—Definition of "ruse": An action meant to confuse or mislead; wily deception. In Trump's first weeks in Florida, New York, and Washington, he has been trying to outrun the press corps, the House and Senate Intelligence Committee chairs and ranking members, the FBI, the director of the Central Intelligence Agency and a city full of crusty non-believers who are following the rising smoke in search of the fire. At least on one occasion (maybe more) Trump has called the ever-expanding links between Russia and the Trump campaign and his administration a "ruse."

Take a glance above at the dictionary definition of the word and consider if it has a familiar ring to it. I believe it does. It perfectly captures what I call the "see it now, (maybe) see it later" use of the word. Donald Trump is famous for his wily deceptions and distractions. Sort of a follow the ball but not too closely

approach. So, yes, let's slow things down and take a look at some of the operatives who helped his finely tuned machine stay in touch with Mother Russia and Mr. Putin during the journey to the White House:

Jeff Sessions, US Attorney General: His relationship with Russia's man in Washington, Ambassador Sergey Kislyak, is well-established;

Jared Kushner, White House advisor, Ivanka's husband: He met with Kislyak between election day and the inauguration. He has business connections with Russians;

Michael Flynn, retired general, fired former national security advisor: Had a number of meetings with Kislyak. Was paid for a public speech in Moscow with Putin at his table. Earned \$600,000 as an agent of a foreign country, Turkey;

Donald Trump, Jr., son of the president: Spoke in France to a group of Russians. Has been quoted as saying that "we see a lot of money pouring in from Russia," and "Russia makes up a pretty disproportionate cross-section of our assets";

Paul Manafort, onetime Trump campaign manager: Has well established links to Russia. Had reported contacts with Russian interests during the campaign. Was fired by Trump.

Rex Tillerson, US secretary of state: Close relations with Putin, awarded Order of Friendship by Putin personally. Before appointment by Trump, he negotiated massive agreement between Russian government and Exxon Mobil;

Wilbur Ross, US secretary of commerce: He has served on the board of the US – Russia Investment Fund. Has various connections with Russian business interests; owns Cyprus bank that caters to wealthy Russians;

Roger Stone, longtime Trump advisor: *New York Times* reports that he is possibly under investigation by the US government for dealings with Russia. Had inside knowledge of WikiLeaks document releases;

Carter Page, former Trump advisor: Met with Kislyak last year. Former investment banker in Russia. Speaks to Russian business groups;

J.D. Gordon: Briefly on Trump's national security team. Also in touch with Kislyak;

Donald Trump: He has been in communication with Putin; is thought to have direct and indirect business interests or relationships in Russia. His continued secrecy about his Russian business ties and investments, critics suggest, has given him reason to withhold his tax returns, which are available today, audit or not.

Taoiseach Lectures Trump on Immigration—Taoiseach **Enda Kenny** surprised a lot of people at the East Room of the White House during his recent US visit when he gave a rousing speech underlining the importance of immigrants and how much Ireland appreciates the role of the United States in providing a refuge and second home to the Irish. Kenny could have soft-peddled the usual safe words and avoided the matter of new threats to the Irish and other countries who rely on American open arms and good will. He laid out a particularly gutsy lineup of remarks, given the Trump administration's recent moves restricting the usual flow of newcomers to the states.

Kenny appealed to Trump to take a more favorable view of immigrants, saying, "We believed in the shelter of America, in the compassion of America, in the opportunity of America. We came and became Americans." Looking over the crowded, historic East Room, he added, "We want to give, not take." A low hum accompanied Kenny's recalling of those words of **President John F. Kennedy**.

RANDOM CLIPPINGS

You had to love the sight of Trump press secretary **Sean Spicer's** flipped-over lapel pin showing the American flag upside down. That's the universal distress signal, and not so inappropriate coming from the staggering Trump White House No happy St. Pat's Day for the lawyer **Pat Finucane's** family when a Belfast court refused to accede to a public inquiry into his murder in 1989 **George Mitchell** again speaks to truth when he assails the idea of a hard border as a possible outcome to the Brexit vote. "Very harmful" is his verdict **Gerry Adams** has taken on a failed mission in trying to persuade N.I., a UK province, to remain in the EU when Britain exits The Trump regime has its eyes on rolling back federal fuel-economy rules that have been saving motorists big money The Irish government is considering online voting as an option in granting voting rights to the Irish abroad A \$230 million road cutting through the landscape near poet Seamus Heaney's homestead is being litigated. Stay tuned The "Make America Great Again" hats have added a bogus fourth shamrock to the back of the hat; where's the harp? History Alert: **Sarah Palin** closed down her PAC after spending \$830,000 on consultants and only a wee 10 percent for her stated purpose of aiding other candidates The respected *Guardian* newspaper in the UK on Trump's resident white supremacist, **Steve Bannon**: "Unvetted, unconfirmed but immensely powerful, Bannon may just be the most dangerous man in America" The father of the Navy Seal killed in Yemen refused to meet with Trump; a good man **Maureen & John Connolly's** Aisling Gallery hosted a homespun gathering at their Hingham gallery on St. Patrick's Day. They do a lot to keep the links open & active within the greater Boston Irish community A win for the CITGO sign.

To **Mayor Martin Walsh**: kudos for the thumbs up for the Boston police.

Immigration Q&A

Passports for US citizen children

Q. I'm an Irish citizen who recently gave birth to a child here in the US. I want to get a US passport for my child before we take a trip to Ireland this summer. Does the child's father need to come with me or sign something to get the passport?

A. A child born in the US automatically has US citizenship, irrespective of the parents' citizenship (Exception: children of foreign diplomats). But because of child custody and support issues, the US Passport Office in the State Department has set out strict requirements for the issuance of US passports to enable children under the age of 16 to travel abroad:

- Both parents must appear together and sign the application for the child; or one parent appears, signs the application, and submits the second parent's notarized "Statement of Consent: Issue of a Passport to a Minor Under age 16," Form DS-3053, authorizing passport issuance for the child; or one parent appears, signs, and submits required evidence of sole authority to apply (such as one of the following):

- The child's certified birth record listing *only* the applying parent; or

- Consular Report of Birth Abroad* (Form FS-240) or *Certification of Birth Abroad* (Form DS-1350) listing *only* the applying parent; or

- A court order granting sole custody to the applying parent (unless the child's travel is restricted by that order); or

- An adoption decree (if the applying parent is the *sole* adopting parent); or

- A court order specifically permitting an applying parent's or legal guardian's travel with the child; or

- A judicial declaration of legal incompetence of the non-applying parent; or

- A death certificate for the non-applying parent.

Note that these requirements apply to all US citizen children under 16, irrespective of their place of birth or the citizenship of their parents. More detailed information about applying for passports, as well as any necessary forms, can be found at the U.S. State department's website, travel.state.gov/passport.

For a free, confidential consultation about any issue of immigration law, visit one of our regular legal clinics as advertised in the Boston Irish Reporter.

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

Legal Clinics Update

The Irish International Immigrant Center has a team of immigration attorneys and social workers who are available for all Irish immigrants especially during this time of uncertainty. We are closely following changes in immigration policy and if you or anyone you know wants to speak to an immigration attorney or a social worker please call us at 617-542-7654.

The schedule: Downtown Boston – One State Street on April 4 and April 18; Brighton – Green Briar on April 10; South Boston Health Center on April 25

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An agency accredited by US Department of Justice

One State Street, 8th Floor, Boston, MA 02109

Telephone (617) 542-7654 Fax (617) 542-7655

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Pursuing opportunity at Liberty Mutual Ins.

The Irish International Immigrant Center has helped many students and graduates find positions they are proud and pleased to fill. Right here in Boston, many Irish students have secured roles at Liberty Mutual Insurance.

Ryan Lundy, from South Armagh, is working as a software developer, where he gets experience in the E-Sales department helping to make the online application as easy and effortless as possible for users. Jack Emerson, from East Belfast, is on the documents solutions team, where he works transferring documents onto the Amazon Web Services Cloud.

Ryan chose the United States as a place to work because he has always wanted to travel somewhere he has never been before. He got to Boston by searching for major companies across the country that would further his career and Liberty Mutual not only offered such a position but it is also situated in a city with a large Irish community. When Jack learned he was awarded

the position he applied for at Liberty Mutual, he, too, had not been to the US before, and he saw it as a great opportunity to dive into.

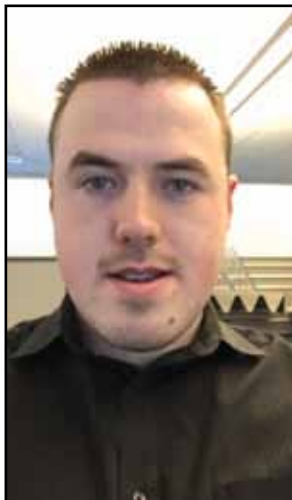
The IIIC is proud to help students fill high-quality positions at companies as prestigious as Liberty Mutual. Lundy has appreciated how much the IIIC has done for him. "The IIIC has gone above and beyond the protocol to ensure my internship and time here in the US runs as smoothly as possible," he says.

"From the day I received the job offer from Liberty Mutual, the IIIC has been there to help me with anything from sorting my accommodation to setting up bank accounts, not forgetting sorting my entire US Visa. Without the help and continuous support of the IIIC my internship here would not have been possible."

The IIIC has done a lot to make sure he and Ryan secured their positions at Liberty Mutual, says Jack. "From the start, I wouldn't have the position if the IIIC didn't co-ordinate with the



Jack Emerson and Ryan Lundy.



Queen's careers department and Liberty Mutual to make it happen," says Emerson. Since getting the position, Emerson says the IIIC helped with everything from signing contracts with Liberty to walking him through the process and explaining how to go about getting prepared for coming to the US.

And the IIIC takes daily details into account. "They also helped me and my flat mates find a place, and, when we landed, helped us figure out where we were going, and how to go about

getting Social Security," says Jack.

Lundy and Emerson have had a great experience in the US. "Not only am I learning and furthering my career but I have had so many opportunities to see places and do things that are not possible in Ireland," says Ryan, adding, "it's hard for anywhere to beat home but the US is close. "For his part, Jack says he "always thinks of it as there isn't anything that is hugely different, but almost every small thing is different in a small way."

Matters of Substance
Suicide Awareness and the Coming of Spring

By RACHEL REISMAN
DIRECTOR OF WELLNESS

I am writing this on March 20, the technical "first day of Spring," and we have snow banks on our pathways and the beginning of a crocus outbreak in our gardens. The days have a stretch of sun in the evening and we can begin to feel hopeful about the warmth of Summer just around the corner.



Rachel Reisman

A sad irony of this seasonal chapter is that it's a time when suicide rates worldwide begin to rise, as they have mysteriously done since the 1800s. Traditional wisdom would seem to suggest that the brighter days, and a release from the hardships of Winter, will bring relief to those experiencing a depression, sadness, or despair that feels too hard to bear; that the passing of the cold, dark days will lead to a sense of hope and rebirth, and not to self-harm or death by one's own hand.

However, research has told us for many decades that it is not actually the "holiday time" in December and January that leads to greater risk for suicide, but instead the brighter days of late April to June. Suicide rates rise from 20 percent to 60 percent in the Spring.

There are many current hypotheses for this, ranging from the ef-

fects of sunlight on our hormones and brain chemistry, to new questions about the role that even inflammation from autoimmune disorders may play in suicide risk. People diagnosed with bipolar disorder, depression, and seasonal affective disorder often encounter heightened symptoms as the Spring unfolds.

For those of us who have worked in hospital and crisis care, we see increased manic episodes and agitated depression during these weeks. While a depression may flatten someone through the Winter months, the longer hours of sunshine in the Spring may provide the neurological energy required to act on thoughts of suicide. Self-harm requires a boost of energy and motivation, thus possibly explaining why we sadly see such a jump in it come the warmer days. Others have speculated that the Spring doesn't bring the relief that someone may have hoped for and that this disappointment becomes the last straw.

Massachusetts has the lowest suicide rate in the nation due to our lower level of gun ownership and our greater level of access to mental health and crisis services. However, we still lose more people to suicide than to homicides and car accidents combined. I think of Ireland, too,

with the second highest rate for suicide amongst males in the EU and the highest rate of suicide for young females in Europe. Northern Ireland has the highest rate of suicide in the UK.

We can see that self-harm and the loss of loved ones remains both a public health issue and a human crisis both here in New England and across the way in Ireland. It's estimated that for every death by suicide, 100 people are affected. The grief for those left behind by a suicide is a particular despair in itself.

As Spring approaches, the IIIC works both to raise awareness about suicide prevention and to offer comfort to those affected by suicide. We welcome you to join with the IIIC in the weeks ahead as we collaborate with others, such as Ireland's Pieta House on May 6 to bring the first Darkness Into Light walk here to Boston (pietahouse.eventgrid.com), and an upcoming workshop at the IIIC, in late May, on recognizing depression and how to talk to loved ones about thoughts of self-harm.

For further info please see our website, iiicenter.org, and Facebook Page:

Irish Outreach & Wellness Services Boston-IIIC, or contact Rachel Reisman, LICSW, at rreisman@iiicenter.org - 617-542-7654, Ext. 14.

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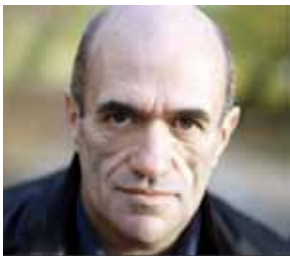
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Andover's Katie LaMark rocks 20th anniversary tour of 'Rent'

By R. J. DONOVAN
SPECIAL TO THE BIR

When "Rent" opened in 1996, it scored major headlines, for a variety of reasons. First and foremost, the show was a raw, rock musical that stood out in a theater season featuring "The King & I," "Victor/Victoria" and "Inherit The Wind." Its characters, a group of struggling young artists in New York's East Village, were a motley crew living amidst the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

Beyond that, on the night before the show's Off-Broadway premiere, its creator and composer, Jonathan Larson, suddenly died of an undiagnosed aortic condition. He would never see the enormous impact his landmark vision would achieve.

With a message of joy and hope, Larson's contemporary re-imagining of Puccini's "La Boheme" went on to win both Tony Awards and the Pulitzer Prize. Two decades later, the "Rent 20th Anniversary Tour" comes to Boston's Boch Center Shubert Theatre from April 11 to April 23.

Andover native Katie LaMark is playing Maureen Johnson, a flirtatious performance artist who has a history with the character of Mark, a struggling Jewish-American documentary filmmaker who serves as the show's narrator. Maureen is currently the girlfriend



The company of the "Rent 20th Anniversary Tour," playing Boston's Boch Center Shubert Theatre, April 11 – 23. Carol Rosegg photo

of Joanne, a public interest lawyer. (The role of Maureen was originated by Idina Menzel.)

Now living in Harlem, LaMark received her BFA at Syracuse University and has appeared in the Off-Broadway and National Touring produc-

tions of "50 Shades! The Musical Parody" as well as the Flatrock Playhouse production of "Chasing Rainbows."

We spoke by phone when "Rent" was playing in Kentucky. Here's an edited look at our conversation.

Q. When "Rent" opened in 1996, the world was a very different place. Why does the show continue to connect with audiences the way it does?

A. I think one of the main reasons is that everyone identifies with someone in it. It's very rare in musical theater that you have eight people who carry the show equally . . . (Plus) I think it's amazing — and it took me a little while to realize this — when people talk about (the characters) Collins and Angel, for example. Angel chooses to dress as a woman and identify as female. And Collins is a black man who works in technology. They're in an interracial gay relationship and it's like, "Oh, that's what we know about them." But never do any characters talk about it . . . It's never important . . . All these people come from such different walks of life. But it doesn't matter to the story, because the story is about connections.

Q. The influence of AIDS in 1996 almost categorizes "Rent" as a period piece. Yet it still fits in a contemporary sense.

A. Absolutely. Totally. Because of the lessons that it teaches. What do you do when you suddenly have this crisis, which then was the AIDS epidemic. In 2017, unfortunately, we have terrorist attacks or mass shootings . . . How do you manage? How do you cope? What becomes important? What are the things you struggle with? . . . The feelings are all the same . . . The unfortunate reality is that, here in 2017, we know what it's like to suddenly lose a lot of people.

Q. You're following in the footsteps of Idina Menzel. No pressure, right?

A. My God, so much pressure (laughing). I used to feel it very strongly, especially when I first booked the part. I

thought, "Man, people are gonna say that I'm not as good, how could I ever be blah, blah, blah." But then I realized, I'm not that. They cast me because they're excited about who I am and what I can do. So as soon as I sort of gave myself permission to explore it . . . with my own voice . . . then the pressures wore off, because I think what I do is really different.

Q. Is there a particular moment in the show that touches you personally?

A. The moment I felt most connected to the piece came when we were in rehearsal. And it's a part of the show that I'm not even in! But when Collins and Angel sing the first "I'll Cover You" — which is just so joyful — it's so happy when the two of them are just skipping down the street, falling in love. It totally brought me to tears . . . It's the moment you realize this is all these characters want, just to be loved and to love unconditionally. The beacon for the whole show is that song. And that's why we sing it again in the second act, which unfortunately, is after Angel passes away. It's sad because not only are we losing Angel, but we're losing the most healthy, pure relationship in the whole show. The rest of the show is these people struggling to try and achieve what *they* found easily. To me, that song speaks to my heart.

Q. I understand you're part of a very musical family.

A. My whole family are artists . . . My father is a Boston-area musician, Todd LaMark . . . (My parents met because) my Mom is a singer. The singer in my Dad's band couldn't do a gig one night and she was the sub on the gig. So I grew up in recording studios and around my parents playing the piano and singing with us all day.

Q. Do you have special



Andover native Katie LaMark plays Maureen in the "Rent 20th Anniversary Tour," playing Boston's Boch Center Shubert Theatre, April 11 – 23.

memories of attending theater locally?

A. Every year my family went to see "A Christmas Carol" at North Shore Music Theater. You know it's great because my Dad played in a lot of the orchestra pits in town. So I remember seeing "Grease" when I was really little. And when I was in high school we saw "Chorus Line," and my Dad was in the pit for that. It's really just been like that from the beginning.

Q. Was there a specific moment when you knew you wanted to perform professionally?

A. Honestly, I don't think there was ever a time when I wasn't interested . . . I grew up watching musical movies. And ever since I was little, I was in plays and musicals. My sister and I are only a year apart and the two of us did it together . . . It didn't occur to me that people did other stuff . . . Everybody does this, right? (Laughs)

R. J. Donovan is editor and publisher of on-stageboston.com.

"Rent," April 11 - 23, Boch Shubert Theatre, 265 Tremont Street, Boston. Info:bochcenter.org, or 866-348-9738.

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‘Sanctuary Sessions’ key on common values in face of anxiety, hail ACLU’s steadfastness

BY SEAN SMITH
SPECIAL TO THE BIR
Somerville’s On the Hill Tavern was the venue for arguably one of the most high-profile Irish music-related events in the US on March 5, as it played host to “Sanctuary Session: Trad Music for Civil Rights,” a benefit for the American Civil Liberties Union.

A special appearance by Lúnasa and singer Karan Casey highlighted the show, which included performances by a number of local musicians, followed by an informal session.

But the event was not confined to Boston: 25 other Sanctuary Sessions were held across the US, including Martha’s Vineyard and New Bedford in Massachusetts, Providence, New York City, Philadelphia, Milwaukee, St. Louis, Denver and Los Angeles; another took place in Dublin. Altogether, the sessions attracted hundreds of musicians and thousands of onlookers; they also raised nearly \$37,000 – \$5,160 at the Somerville event alone – all of it going to the ACLU.

Boston, however, was truly the hub for the Sanctuary Sessions. The idea originated with musician Noel Scott, a Galway native who has been living in the area for 25 years. He enlisted several of his fellow local musicians to brainstorm, organize, and spread the idea elsewhere.

“It was wonderful to see the community respond like that,” said Scott, interviewed a few days after the Sanctuary Sessions day. “Not just here, obviously, but all over the US, as well as in Ireland. Something like this makes you think anything is possible when you get enough people together.”

While many participants and attendees shared concerns about the Trump administration’s actions and statements on immigration and other issues, Scott said the impetus for the Sanctuary Session went beyond sociopolitical views and political party affiliations. As he explained, it was more about a need to appeal to solidarity and common values in a time of increasing anxiety – about women’s rights and economic inequality, for example – that had been building for a few years. Trump’s executive order on immigration was “the final straw,” said Scott.

“From what I have been seeing, there are many rights being challenged – not just those of immigrants. It just felt like this was the time for us to come together as a community and celebrate who we are” – with music as the focus. Adding substance to the symbolism, he said, was the idea of fundraising for the ACLU, given its support for civil rights for all Americans.

And he had an addi-



(L-R) Ted Davis, Tina Lech, Laura Feddersen, Nathan Gourley and Martin Langer during their set at the Sanctuary Session, held at the On the Hill Tavern in Somerville.
Sean Smith photo

tional thought: Why not make it a national event?

Fortunately, Scott had a circle of friends and acquaintances who could help make it happen, in Boston and elsewhere, such as fellow Irish ex-pat and Boston-area resident Sean Clohessy, Owen Marshall in Portland, Me., and Marian Makins in Philadelphia – who came up with the name “Sanctuary Sessions.” The word went out, a Facebook page went up, and plans were in motion in Boston and elsewhere.

The On the Hill Tavern event line-up also included the Coyne Family; Tommy McCarthy and Louise Costello; the Michael Boyle Dancers; the quintet of Tina Lech, Ted Davis, Nathan Gourley, Laura Feddersen and Martin Langer; Paddy Saul and Jimmy Ryan; Kevin De Rosa; and young musicians from Boston’s Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann music school. Several guest speakers, among them former Lowell Mayor Patrick Murphy, also were in the program.

Over the course of the afternoon, the audience inside the On the Hill Tavern grew steadily. The space in front of the stage filled up with parents and children, many of them early elementary school-age or younger: Some drew pictures, shared (or didn’t share) toys, or snuggled with their mothers and fathers; one small toddler went up to the edge of the stage to watch in fascination as Irish dancer Jackie O’Riley performed.

The coup, of course, was getting big-time performers Lúnasa and Casey involved in the event, which took a bit of luck, as Scott explained: They had played in New York City the night before and were on their way north, but a mid-day stop-off in Somerville happened to fit into their itinerary.

So it was that at a little past noon, Casey took the microphone and, along with the band, launched into Ewan MacColl’s

“Ballad of Accounting,” an anthem of activism (“Did you demand any answers?/The who and the what and the reason why?/Did you ever question the set-up?”).

During the concert, Casey spoke about the experience of having lived in the US as an immigrant – something she and the Lúnasa members

all shared – and called for greater understanding and appreciation of the contributions immigrants make to their communities.

“We want to raise consciousness,” she said, “not just dollars.”

At the end of the set, Casey read a poem she had written about immigrants – “people who

make America, day in and day out” – as an introduction to what she called “the real national anthem of America”: Woody Guthrie’s “This Land Is Your Land.”

“Make Guthrie proud. Sing out loud,” she said, and led the audience in the chorus.

Scott said the Sanctuary Session seemed to

make an impression on all who were there, even those of a young age. “My seven-year-old was humming ‘This Land Is Your Land’ the next morning as she got ready to go to school.”

For more about the Sanctuary Sessions, see facebook.com/pg/SanctuarySessionsForACLU.



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Writer, musician, organizer, academic, Dan Neely is on the lookout for insights

BY SEAN SMITH

SPECIAL TO THE REPORTER

So what do you do if you're a Boston-born, banjo-playing, soon-to-be ethnomusicologist with a special interest in Jamaican music living in New York City?

Well, you might decide to take up Irish music, become a session regular and organizer and, eventually, work for a premier Irish-American journal—at a job formerly held by Earle Hitchner, one of the more prominent Irish-American journalists of the past few decades.

That's the path Newton native Dan Neely chose almost 20 years ago, and he couldn't be happier about it.

Neely is marking his fifth anniversary this year as the traditional music columnist for the *Irish Echo*, the oldest Irish-American newspaper in existence. He's also the public relations officer for the Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann Mid-Atlantic Region branch and leader of a popular weekly New York session, the former artistic director for the now-ended annual Augusta Irish/Celtic Week in West Virginia, and he was director of New York's Washington Square Harp and Shamrock Orchestra during its last years. In addition, he is a lecturer on Irish music in America at New York University, from which he obtained his PhD in ethnomusicology.

Writer, musician, organizer, academic: These activities have given Neely a pretty sizeable window on the Irish music scene, not only in New York but also worldwide, and a deep appreciation for its history—some of which is almost literally in his old back yard.

Neely was in town recently to share some of that history at a combination lecture and performance, sponsored by Boston College's Gaelic Roots series, that focused on Irish music in Boston from the late 19th century to the Great Depression. He talked about some of the major figures of the period, like entertainer, piper, and songwriter Shaun O'Nolan, and particularly Daniel A. Sullivan (called "the most famous professional fiddler" by celebrated Irish tune collector Francis O'Neill, noted Neely) and his son Daniel J., who would go on to form the Dan Sullivan Shamrock Band, which played a mix of traditional Irish music and popular songs.

In an aside, Neely said that when he had first started researching the Sullivan family, he had been intrigued to discover that Daniel J. had owned two houses in Newton, and is buried in nearby Holyhood Cemetery—not to mention that one of Sullivan's compositions was titled "Neely's March."

For the second part of the event, Neely traded the lectern for his tenor banjo and played tunes associated with the era, along with local musicians Joey Abarta and Sean Clohessy.

All in all, a good night's work.

Earlier during his visit home, Neely relaxed over a pint in a Newton Center pub and talked about a job he may not have envisioned for himself originally but has fully and enthusiastically embraced.

"I write about music that I think is interesting," he said of his work at the *Echo*. "If I wrote about something I don't like, I'd probably have terrible things to say. Every Saturday, I go to my session, and I want to have a good time. I want to hear something stimulating. When I get an album from, say, [tenor banjo player] Angela Carberry,



"I see my job as talking about why something is good, and in a way that will be of interest even to those readers who might not be as familiar with the music," says Boston area native Dan Neely, music columnist for the Irish Echo. "It's the public-sector aspect of ethnomusicology, and part of that means being an advocate for people you work with." Iain Toft photo

I can assume it is of a certain quality that will make me want to listen to it. That means more to me than the number of sold-out performances or how many times someone's been on TV.

"I see my job as talking about why something is good, and in a way that will be of interest even to those readers who might not be as familiar with the music. It's the public-sector aspect of ethnomusicology, and part of that means being an advocate for people you work with."

But Neely also constantly seeks to build on his own understanding of the music. For him, listening to an album isn't just about how well the musicians play, the singer sings, how varied or interesting the material might be, but what kind of deeper insights he might glean. One such album was "As It Happened," by accordionist Danny O'Mahony and concertina player Mícheál Ó Raghallaigh.

"When I listened to it, I found it told me about the scene in which they grew out of—I was able to connect the dots and get a sense as to what they might've heard, what might've made an impression on them," he explained. "What resonates for me about an album like that is, it makes me understand some experiences I might not have had in Irish music."

Contrary to expectations, Neely—although he has Irish ancestry on both sides of his family—did not start playing jigs and reels before he could walk, nor recite all the verses of "Morrissey and the Russian Sailor" by kindergarten. Yes, there were Clancy Brothers records in the Neely household, but Neely himself didn't listen to them much. The music that

first captured his fascination was ska, a precursor to reggae, to the extent that he even became a guitarist for a local ska band. This led him to the NYU ethnomusicology program, through which he ventured deeper into Jamaican music, including mento, a form of social dance music that incorporated banjo—an instrument he thus added to his luggage.

It was at NYU that Neely made the acquaintance of Mick Moloney, a highly regarded scholar of Irish and Irish-American music, and a top-notch tenor banjo player. Through Moloney, Neely began learning Irish banjo, joined the Washington Square Harp and Shamrock Orchestra—eventually succeeding Moloney as its leader—and in the process discovered New York's rich Irish music scene, including its sessions.

Neely did plenty of academic writing—about Jamaican music, as well as the music of ice cream trucks—but then a new vista opened up when he began organizing weekly sessions. To help promote them, he sent out e-mails, adding some touches of humor to keep regulars and supporters engaged. It seemed to work, so he made the e-mails more elaborate and entertaining, using illustrations (most all of them his own), photos, satirical magazine covers ("Tunemapolitan," "Pogue"), poetry and song parodies, among other things. The session mailing list grew, and so did the number of Neely's admirers, which included some pretty distinguished members of the Irish music community.

One such person was Liz Noonan, who had briefly succeeded Earle Hitchner after

he had retired from his *Irish Echo* column in late 2011. When Noonan left a few months later, she recommended Neely as someone who knew the music and the people who played it, and who could write with expertise but also in a way that was accessible to readers.

"I didn't try to 'replace' Earle—he had his perspective, and his own style, and I have mine," said Neely, who added that Hitchner has been helpful and supportive.

Neely hasn't simply devoted his column to album or concert reviews. He has addressed issues that concern many in the Irish music community, whether in New York or elsewhere. One longstanding topic of controversy, the burdensome visa system for musicians from Ireland looking to perform in the US, rekindled last fall when legendary singer Andy Irvine announced he would no longer tour the US because of the red tape necessary to secure a visa, as well as the 30 percent withholding tax he and other foreign-born performers have to pay.

Then in February, Neely touched on a statement released by the Milwaukee Irish Fest—one of the premier Irish/Celtic events in the country—that underscored the complaints voiced by Irvine and others by breaking down the costs, in time and money, for visiting artists to get their papers in order to play in the US. Such a system is onerous, although manageable, for an international pop music act playing in big arenas, Neely said; for folk and traditional music performers, and their representatives, it has become a matter of diminishing returns

that argue against even trying to go through the process.

"It is an issue that challenges everyone in the Irish community," said Neely, "and the thing is, it's also personal: This affects many musicians whom people here in the US have come to know as friends. What's so ridiculous is not only the unfairness of the system, but that there are better ways we could be doing it. If you're a small-scale musician wanting to perform in Canada, for example, you fill out a work permit; there's no 30 percent withholding, and you don't have to travel beforehand to Dublin to meet with Canadian officials."

"But instead we have Andy Irvine, who's been a traveling musician for 50-some years, saying that it's just not worth it for him to come play here anymore. How does that help America?"

One less-discussed consequence of the visa restriction, Neely added, is that large-scale entertainment enterprises in Ireland, and elsewhere, are likely to step into the breach because they have the resources to deal with the system.

"But what that means is, they send to the US only those acts they think people will want to hear—and ones that will turn a substantial profit. So this ultimately limits the range of performers who will get any kind of exposure in the US."

Neely also gets passionate when he talks about changes in the recording industry—in fact, the whole nature of recording—and its impact on Irish music.

"Blame it on the 1960s," he quipped. "With Internet technology, everyone's talking now about the 'disappearance' of the album. Well, the album concept was largely a 1960s rock-n-roll idea, and it filtered everywhere, including into Irish music; the album—whether an LP, or a cassette, or a CD—became the gold standard for performers to get their music out there."

That model may have worked for a while, said Neely, but with the growing costs of international travel, a performer from Ireland who pays to bring an extra suitcase of CDs to sell on tour is only cutting into his or her profit margin. Folk/trad performers should fully embrace the digital age, he said, building and maintaining a fan base by parceling out their music through downloads.

"Think about it: Before the advent of the album, there were 78s, 45s, sheet music. Instead of releasing one big chunk of their music, performers would do it a little at a time," said Neely, citing Michael Coleman, a renowned Sligo fiddler who emigrated to the US and released a series of 78s during the 1920s and '30s. "So by abandoning the album format, you're actually going back to something which worked just fine for Irish music."

Still, for all the challenges it faces, Irish music is in no imminent danger of extinction, Neely said. "It's obviously become quite popular, and has attracted a certain amount of casual interest among a lot of the public. But what really gives me confidence is the young musicians I see, whether in their 20s or younger, who take the music seriously and really own it."

"I think over time, as the Irish music revival has taken hold, and more opportunities to learn the music became available, the talent level just rose across the board. So now you have these emerging generations of musicians who have the tools and the creativity to keep the tradition going."

CELTIC MUSIC, DANCE CALENDAR FOR APRIL

The next several weeks' worth of Irish/Celtic events in Greater Boston (and slightly beyond) sees the revival of a concert series in a new location, a visit by a "supergroup" of recent vintage, and appearances by several local performers.

• After a 10-month hiatus, notloB Music is returning to the folk/acoustic scene with an April 27 concert that features one of the Scottish music revival's foremost bands, **The Tannahill Weavers**, and Massachusetts fiddle/cello duo **Elizabeth and Ben Anderson**. This event, which takes place at the Harvard Unitarian Universalist Church at 7:30 p.m. – doors open at 7 – will inaugurate notloB's new base of operations in Harvard (the town, not the university); since its creation in 2007, notloB has presented nearly 200 concerts of Celtic, old-timey, bluegrass, folk and world music at venues in Arlington, Somerville, Jamaica Plain, Newton, and elsewhere in Greater Boston.

The "Tannies," whose origins go back to the late 1960s, was the first professional Scottish band to incorporate full-sized Highland bagpipes in performance, and over the course of the 1970s built a following not only in the UK but Europe and the US as well. Co-founders Roy Gullane (vocals, guitar) and Phil Smillie (flute, whistles, bodhran, vocals) continue to hold forth, with John Martin (fiddle, viola, cello, vocals) and Lorne MacDougall (Highland bagpipes, small pipes, whistle).

The Andersons bring forth both the intensity and grace in Scottish and Cape Breton music, mixing traditional styles and modern ideas. Having built a solid foundation of admirers locally, through performances at The Burren (where they opened for another legendary Scottish group, the Battlefield Band), BCMFest, and the Club Passim Campfire Festival, last year the duo made their international debut with shows in Scotland and France.

Further details are available at notloBMusic.com.

• One of the more intriguing blends of personalities and styles in Irish music, **The Gloaming**, makes a rare area appearance on April 22 at 8 p.m. in the Berklee Performance Center. The quintet features Martin Hayes, a master of the lyrical East Clare fiddle style; guitarist/mandolinist Dennis Cahill, who frequently collaborates with Hayes; Caoimhin Ó Raghallaigh, whose fiddling reflects the Sliabh Luachra tradition but also his own experiments in Scandinavian and American music; sean-nos singer Iarla Ó Lionáird, formerly with groundbreaking Irish/world-fusion group Afro Celt Sound System; and Thomas Bartlett AKA Doveman, a Vermont-born pianist who has played in numerous folk, contemporary and other musical genres.

This concert is presented through World Music/CRASHarts. For tickets and other information, go to worldmusic.org/content/event_page/5176/the-gloaming.

• The special dynamic between musician and dancer will be the focus of **"The Next Step,"** a showcase of solo, duet, and group choreography presented by advanced students of Irish dance teacher Jaclyn O'Riley on April 7 at 7 p.m. in the Canadian American Club in Watertown. Working with live rather than pre-recorded music in class greatly enhanced the students' experience, according to O'Riley; accompanying the dancers here will be Joey Abarta, Nathan Gourley, and Dan Accardi. For tickets and more information, send e-mail to orileyirishdance@gmail.com.

The following night, April 8, at 8 p.m., the Canadian American Club will host a concert with **Benedict Koe-hler** (uilleann pipes) and **Hilari Farrington** (harp), presented by the Boston Uilleann Pipers Club. The duo is widely known across North America as teachers as well as performers of Irish traditional music, and founded the Vermont School of Irish Traditional Music. Their presence has helped create a vibrant Irish music scene in Vermont, one that accentuates older traditional styles. Go to bostonupc.wordpress.com for more details on the concert.

• The Irish Cultural Centre of New England in Canton will host a dinner and dance event on April 6 at 7:30 p.m. with the "Kings of Irish Country," **Mick Flavin**



The Tannahill Weavers, along with Massachusetts duo Elizabeth and Ben Anderson, will mark the return of the notloB Music series this month in its new location in Harvard.

and **John Hogan**. A Co. Longford native, Flavin recorded his first album 30 years ago, and within a few years was sharing a concert bill with Tammy Wynette, Waylon Jennings, and Boxcar Willie. He was the first Irish country music performer to be nominated for a Global Artist Award in Nashville, and to receive a Living Legend Hall of Fame Award. Hogan, from Co. Westmeath, was working as a supervisor in a peat briquette factory in 1988 when he used his mortgage money to record the song "Brown Eyes" – which wound up at no. 1 hit in the Irish country music charts. He left his job to become a full-time performer, branching out as a songwriter as well; his album "My Feelings for You" became the best-selling country album ever released in Ireland.

For ticket and other event information, go to irish-culture.org.

• Local fiddler **Hanneke Cassel** will mark the release of her new album at Harvard Square's Club Passim on April 29 at 5 p.m. Cassel is a highly acclaimed practitioner of the "American-Scottish" style, combining techniques and influences from Scottish and Cape Breton traditions with innovations from the contemporary bluegrass and Americana domains. In addition to her solo act – in which she's accompanied by distinguished musicians such as her cello-playing husband Mike Block and guitarist Keith Murphy – Cassel has also appeared with Boston-based fiddle ensemble Childsplay, Irish singer Cathie Ryan, and Scottish fiddler Alasdair Fraser.

Also at Club Passim – on April 25, at 8 p.m. – is harpist **Maeve Gilchrist**, who interpolates Scottish and Irish traditions with jazz, folk and world music, her technique encompassing distinctive harmonies and improvisations. She has played locally at The Burren, BCMFest and "A Christmas Celtic Sojourn," and at major international venues and events like Tanglewood and Celtic Connections. Accompanying Gilchrist is

Viktor Krauss, who plays electric and double bass and has made forays into rock, soul, jazz, R&B, and progressive bluegrass, with more than 400 album credits as producer, musician or composer/songwriter.

Sixteen-year-old Cape Breton/Acadian-style fiddler **Gus La Casse** will be the opening act for an April 22 concert with multi-faceted guitarist/songwriter **Lloyd Thayer**. A Maine native, La Casse traveled to Ireland last year as part of the Young Tradition Vermont touring group and in January performed for the second time at BCMFest.

For tickets and information about all Club Passim shows, go to passim.org.

• Celtic folk-rockers **Burning Bridget Cleary** come to OCC Music in Wrentham on April 8 at 7:30 p.m. A 2013 nominee for the Irish Music Association's top live traditional music act, the band's high-energy personality derives from the twin fiddles of Rose Baldino and Amy Beshara, and is further enlivened by Baldino's charismatic lead vocals; adding guitar and vocal harmonies is Lou Baldino, while Peter Trezzi supplies the percussive force.

See musicatocc.org for more details.

• There will be two opportunities this month to catch Prince Edward Island's **Ten Strings and a Goat Skin**: on April 5 at 6:30 p.m. as part of Boston College's Gaelic Roots series, at the Cadigan Alumni Center on BC's Brighton Campus [go to bc.edu/gaelicroots to register for the concert, which is free]; and on April 12, in the band's return appearance at The Burren's Backroom series. The young trio of Jesse Périard and brothers Rowen Gallant and Caleb Gallant – on fiddle and guitar (the 10 strings) and bodhran (the goat skin) – has garnered critical and public acclaim for its mix of traditional Irish, Acadian, and French music with original creations, which they flavor with modern and world rhythms. Last year saw the release of their new album, "Auprès du Poêle," which further expanded the band's artistic vision.

• The Burren Backroom series hosts a double bill of trios on April 19: Boston/Portland-based **Fódhla** (Ellery Klein, fiddle; Nicole Rabata, flute; Bethany Waickman, guitar) infuses its brand of Irish music with a wealth of tastes and experiences, from American to contra dance to classical and more. **Cantrip** (Dan Houghton, pipes, flute, whistles, guitar, bouzouki, vocals; Jon Bews, fiddle, vocals; Eric McDonald, guitar, mandolin, bouzouki, vocals) originated from a session in Edinburgh some years ago, and over time settled into a transatlantic roster, with a bold sound rooted in Scottish tradition that has branched into other European cultures and contemporary influences.

Next month, the Backroom series begins on May 3 with another double bill, this one comprising a pair of Boston-area married couples. **Matt and Shannon Heaton** are highly admired for their deft flute/whistle-guitar/bouzouki instrumentals and richly harmonized songs, grounded in Irish tradition but also drawing on other sources, including Thai music. **Natalie Haas and Yann Falquet** is a union of some impressive resumes – Haas as a highly sought-after cellist not only in the domain of Scottish music (notably in her duet with fiddler Alasdair Fraser) but also in American, Scandinavian and other traditions; Falquet as an exponent of Quebecois vocal and instrumental music, solo and in collaborations such as the trio Genticorum.

All Backroom shows begin at 7:30 p.m. For tickets and other information, go to burren.com/Backroom-Series.html.

– SEAN SMITH



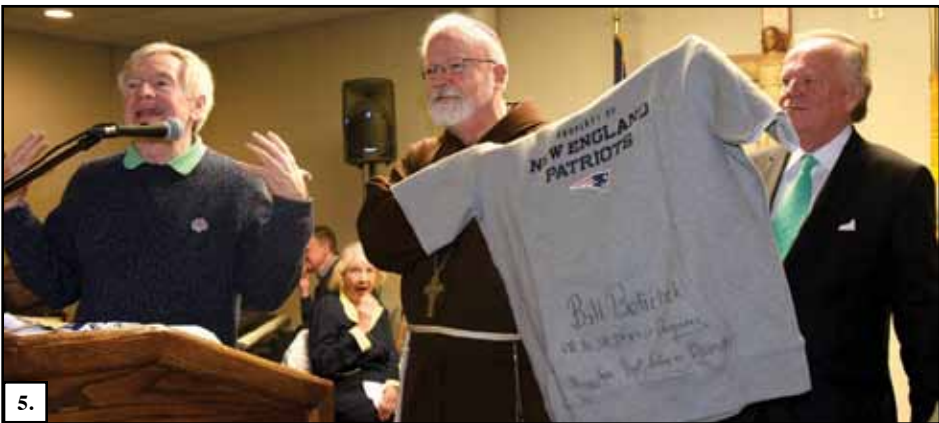
The Gloaming comes to the Berklee Performance Center on April 22.

BRETT'S BOSTON

By Harry Brett
Exclusive photos of Boston Irish people & events

Dorchester's Brett family honored the memory of their late mother Mary Ann Brett by supporting a parish food pantry named for her at St. Theresa of Calcutta/St. Margaret's parish church. The family hosted an annual St Patrick's brunch on Saturday, March 18. The occasion inducted four into the "Dorchester Hall of Fame," including Bill Brett, Kevin Chapman, Sister Margaret Leonard LSA and Edward F. Smith Sr.

1.) Inductees: Sr. Margaret Leonard, Eddie Smith, Bill Brett, Kevin Chapman, Flanked by Jim Brett (l) and Fr. John Currie, Parish Administrator; 2.) Lauren Sherer, Dorchester; Michelle Malloy, Milton; Jen Shea and Nicki Davis, Dorchester 3.) Steve Greely, Ireland Fund; Bob Scannell, Dorchester Boys And Girls Club; 4.) Rich Gormley, Lord Mayor of W. Roxbury; Pat O'Neill Dorchester; 5.) Dan Rea, Cardinal Sean O'Malley, Jim Brett, Dorchester 6.) Fr. Doc Conway, Connie Brennan, Portland, Maine, Craig Carlson, Boston 7.) Kathy Mullin and Maureen Mazrimas, Squantum, Christine Kuhn, Weymouth; 8.) Bob Donovan, Braintree, R.J. Valentine, Hingham, Mark Kerwin, Milton; 9.) Paul Quirk, Roger Croke, Dorchester, Tom O'Donnell, West End; Joe Donovan 10.) Gina McLaughlin, Dorchester, Rich Gribaudo, West Roxbury 11.) Joe Leary, Newton, Josephine Shields, Brookline, Bill Reilly, Cambridge; 12.) Janice and John Schneiderman, Phil and Pamela Carver, all Dorchester.



Traveling People

Weather picks, chooses on sites for St. Patrick’s Day parades

By JUDY ENRIGHT
SPECIAL TO THE BIR
Depending on whether you’re a “glass half empty” or “glass half full” type of person, this was either a bad or good year for St. Patrick in Ireland.

While communities on the east and south coasts celebrated the patron saint’s day with colorful parades, festivities, and bright weather, some communities on the west and north coasts were forced to cancel or postpone their annual parades due to cold ocean winds and pouring rain.

In Co. Mayo, for instance, Newport’s parade was pushed off for a week to March 26, which is also Ireland’s Mothers’ Day. Westport’s parade was postponed until April and will be held in conjunction with that town’s 250th anniversary celebration.

So, you might say, the saint’s special day was particularly special this year and went on long past March 17 - which probably made this a very good year for St. Patrick.

ACHILL PIPE BANDS

Despite the weather, there was no day off on March 17 for the brave and dedicated souls on Achill Island, Co. Mayo, who belong to the traditional pipe bands. These hardy folk, dressed in regulation uniforms covered with water-repellent ponchos, sloshed through puddles and braved rain and gale force winds to carry out their annual parades. They marched from local villages to various performance sites and then on to the Dookinella church for the finale. Appreciative onlookers lined the streets and followed behind the parade in cars and vans to applaud the marchers along the route and after the Mass in Dookinella. The bands then trudged through the wind and rain back to their villages.

A second Achill Island parade – with 65 bands, floats and assorted groups promised - was to step off on March 19 in Achill Sound, but it was called off because of the weather.

In north Mayo, several communities had earlier cancelled their parades out of respect for four crewmembers aboard an Irish Coast Guard helicopter lost near Blacksod during a nighttime rescue mission on March 14. The search for the missing crewmembers went on for several weeks because weather and heavy swells



On Achill Island in Co. Mayo, members of a traditional pipe band braved rain and wind to carry out the annual parade on St. Patrick’s Day.



Whether shamrocks were on their hats or faces, members of an Achill Island pipe band showed their Irish pride in the annual St. Patrick’s Day parade this year.



The Burren Center in Kilfenora, Co. Clare, is a great place to begin your Burren exploration.



One of 27 types of orchids found in the Burren in Co. Clare growing wild amidst the stone walls. Judy Enright photos

around Blackrock Light-house prevented ships and equipment from getting close enough to search.

SPRING

Spring has sprung and it’s the most luscious time of year in Ireland with trees budding and flowers bursting into bloom.

The Burren, on the coast of Co. Clare, is stunning at any time of year but especially beautiful in the spring. We have always found this area to be one of the most interesting places in Ireland to celebrate spring and its colors.

As you drive the coast road south out of Ballyvaughan and see nothing but slate grey and craggy limestone hills rising above you and on the horizon, you might think anyone who suggested a visit there was completely mad.

But the Burren landscape is deceptive and if you look carefully between the rocks and on the plateaus, you can

find so many beautiful flowers there, including 25 orchid species native to Ireland as well as some immigrants - Mediterranean and arctic-alpine plants that all grow here together. It’s really the most fascinating area.

If you have a chance to visit, be sure to stop in Kilfenora at the Burren Centre to see their exhibition and learn about the Burren’s megalithic tombs and dolmens. And it’s well worth taking the time to watch the beautiful film by Eamon de Buitlear that brilliantly captures the beauty of the area. A craft shop and tea-rooms are available, too.

There are many groups and individuals who offer guided walks, tours, and hikes across the Burren and surrounding areas. You will find detailed information online. Some of those include: heartofburrenwalks.com, burrenguידedwalks.com and burrenwalks.com –

and there are many more.

Water sports and other adventures are also offered along this western coast. We especially like the dolphin cruises at includediscoverdolphins.ie from Kilrush and dolphinwatch.ie. More are online.

BURREN IN BLOOM FEST

Next month, the Burren in Bloom festival kicks off (May 19-June 4) with garden visits, demonstrations, cultural and family events, talks, guided walks, and more. The Festival is designed to promote an understanding of and appreciation of the Burren, its formation and why it is a botanical, archaeological, and cultural treasure with its unique wild flowers and ancient sites.

The Festival is coordinated by Burrenbeo Trust, Ireland’s first landscape charity and a multidimensional resource for the Burren region. The Trust promotes and supports the sustainable management and use of this unique landscape and heritage.

While you’re in Co. Clare be sure to stop in Lisdoonvarna at the Burren Smokehouse for delicious smoked salmon in assorted flavors, a gift shop, and more. You can also buy the salmon at Shannon airport on the way home (be sure to get a loaf of McCambridge’s Wholewheat Bread to take home, too) or order Smokehouse salmon online at: burrensmokehouse.com. They ship worldwide.

There’s a lot to see in this area and there are

wonderful hotels (tops on the list is Gregan’s Castle Hotel - gregans.ie - in Ballyvaughan –), many good pubs where food is an absolute priority and excellent (we have always liked McDermott’s Pub, Fitzpatrick’s in the Doolin Hotel and Gus O’Connor’s in Doolin), a good coffee house and creperie (The Soda Parlour in Ballyvaughan) and great restaurants (Roadford House in Doolin is a favorite.) Another great place to stop for a summer lunch or afternoon tea is Burren Fine Wine & Food at the bottom of Corkscrew Hill in Ballyvaughan.

And, for some interesting locally made items, be sure to visit the free Burren Art & Craft Fair every Sunday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., through October in St. John’s Village Hall in Ballyvaughan.

And don’t forget to set aside some time in the evenings to hear wonderful traditional music offered regularly in various Doolin pubs.

MUSIC LOVERS

If you wondered whether the young Irish are music lovers, how about this? The Electric Picnic, an annual music festival at Stradbally Hall in Co. Laois, sold out in less than five minutes after tickets went on sale at 9 o’clock one recent Thursday morning. The event will be Sept. 1-3 and can handle 55,000 attendees.

Headline acts for the three-day event include Duran Duran, The XX, Interpol, London Grammar and Chaka Khan. Other acts confirmed are Run

the Jewels, Pete Tong, A Tribe Called Quest, and Father John Misty.

TRIPADVISOR CHOICES

Harvey’s Point Hotel on Lough Eske in Donegal Town has been named the best hotel in Ireland and the 10th best hotel in Europe in TripAdvisor’s Travellers’ Choice awards for 2017. The hotel was rated #1 on the list of 70 hotels in Co. Donegal. The hotel also finished in first place in the best service category and second place in the romantic category.

(And, in case you didn’t know, Donegal was termed the coolest place on the planet, according to National Geographic Traveller.)

Another Irish winner was Castlewood House in Dingle, Co. Kerry, which was 12th in the world, 10th in Europe, and No. 1 in Ireland in the bargain category.

For luxury hotels, the Killarney Park Hotel in Killarney, Co. Kerry, was named Ireland’s top hotel. Pax Guest House in Dingle, Co. Kerry, topped Ireland’s B&B list, and Pillo Hotel in Ashbourne, Co. Meath, won named best family hotel.

“Unlike other hospitality awards, these are based on feedback from actual guests over the past year,” said a TripAdvisor spokeswoman.

TRAVELING

Enjoy your visit to Ireland whenever you go and wherever you visit. There are many activities available for all interests now that winter has finally flown.



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Mayor Martin Walsh hosted Irish Prime Minister Enda Kenny during an official visit to Boston on March 13. Mayor's Office Photo by Jeremiah Robinson

Irish PM Kenny drops in on the mayor and the governor

By ANDY METZGER AND COLIN A. YOUNG
STATE HOUSE NEWS SERVICE

Before his meeting with President Donald Trump in Washington later in the week of March 13, the head of Ireland's government visited Boston City Hall, which Mayor Marty Walsh has said could become a citadel for Boston's undocumented immigrants depending on federal policies.

"We need some clarity for all immigrants, all undocumented immigrants," Walsh said at a press conference with Taoiseach Enda Kenny. He said, "I wish him all the luck when he goes down to Washington."

In broad terms, Walsh and Kenny are of one mind, advocating for Congress to come up with a solution for the country's 11 million undocumented immigrants.

"For those who are in this country, who have made their decision to live in America, to work for America, to raise their families in America, we need an opportunity for a path to legitimization here," said Kenny. "It's not just about the Irish. It's also about our position as a member of the European Union."

Kenny said he and the mayor are in agreement on the issue, praised the mayor's "fluent" grasp of the Irish language, and said Walsh, whose parents emigrated from Ireland, is a "living example" of the island nation's contribution to the United States.

Walsh said he disagrees with Trump's revised executive order on international travel, which dropped Iraq from the list of six Muslim-majority nations that would face new travel restrictions. Trump's intention to crack down on illegal immigration earlier this year prompted Walsh to announce he would throw open the doors of City Hall for people to live through.

"The fears in the city still exist. The painting of immigrants as criminals, the painting of Muslims as terrorists is still out there, and it has not softened at all," Walsh said Monday, when asked about the new executive order.

Irish Americans may in future years have more of an opportunity to contribute to the government in

Ireland. During his East Coast US tour, at a stop in Philadelphia on Sunday, Kenny announced an upcoming referendum on whether to allow Irish citizens living outside the country to vote in presidential elections. His plan was visit the White House and meet with House Speaker Paul Ryan on Thursday before heading to New York City for Friday's St. Patrick's Day Parade, according to a copy of his travel plans obtained by the SHNS.

At City Hall, a reporter asked Walsh whether he would push for a "special status" for undocumented Irish immigrants. "I'm a proud son of Irish immigrants, but I would not be supportive of rules and regulations that just benefit people that are undocumented Irish. We need a comprehensive piece of legislation," Walsh responded.

Kenny also said that with the United Kingdom's vote to depart the European Union, the border between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland would not revert to the borders of yesteryear. "We will not have a return to a hard border," he said.

After his visit at City Hall, Kenny took the short ride up Beacon Hill to the State House, where he was greeted by Gov. Charlie Baker and Lt. Gov. Karyn Polito. A drum and pipe corps of Massachusetts correctional officers played as Kenny and Irish Ambassador to the United States Anne Anderson climbed the State House front steps.

Baker, Polito, Kenny and Anderson then walked upstairs to the governor's office for a closed-door meeting and gift exchange. Though Kenny was greeted at the State House front steps, he did not use the building's front door, which is reserved for visiting heads of state. Kenny is Ireland's head of government, but not its head of state.

Kenny's meeting in Baker's office lasted about 45 minutes and he posed for photos in the executive office lobby before departing the State House just after 11:30 a.m.

In October, Baker and his wife Lauren visited Ireland for a weeklong personal vacation. Upon returning, the governor called Ireland "a beautiful

country filled with wonderful people." Last week, he proclaimed March 2017 "Irish Heritage Month" in Massachusetts, noting the state's "unique distinction" of being the most Irish-American state in the nation.

In the Bay State, more than 21 percent of residents claim to be of Irish heritage, according to a 2015 Pew Research report. Four other New England states – New Hampshire, Maine, Vermont and Rhode Island – round out the top five most Irish-American states, according to Pew.

Although 33.3 million Americans, or about 10 percent, identified themselves as being of Irish ancestry in 2013 – making it the second-largest ancestry group in the U.S. behind German – the green in America has been fading for decades. In 1990, 38.6 million Americans or 15.5 percent of the population claimed Irish ancestry, and another 5.6 million or 2.3 percent identified as Scotch-Irish, according to Pew.

And that trend, Pew said, is unlikely to reverse. Not only is the American population that claims Irish heritage aging, but the flow of Irish immigrants to this country is now just a trickle compared to a century or more ago. During fiscal year 2015, just 1,607 Irish-born people obtained legal permanent residency in the US, according to Department of Homeland Security statistics.

EATING AND EMOTION

Dr. Bernadette Rock

Gain control of your eating

Imagine you've had a long and tiring week, and it's now Friday. When you walk in the door in the evening and someone asks how your day was, you respond with the word "fine," and then head straight for the fridge for a few spoonfuls of ice cream or else seek refuge in a soft, crusty loaf of bread with lashings of butter.

I recently spoke to mother-of-two Emily, who explained that when she's feeling annoyed or overwhelmed, her eating goes out of control. It's not a good place to be. Stuffing down your emotions – anger, anxiety – with food may work temporarily, but they will always come back. Have you noticed?

It may seem daunting, but facing up to your disease will bring you more contentment in the long term. In order to change our current behaviors, we must first understand why we are following them in the first place. A journal can be a great place to start figuring it out. In Heyday's online program we use a tracker to identify not only why/when you're eating but also to find out what you're holding onto so you can let go.

What is it that you believe about any given situations or stressor? - "I feel like an idiot here- I should have said more." It's those "iceberg" beliefs that can trigger a feeling of being overwhelmed, anxious, stressed, followed by a drive for food. What small steps can you take to support yourself?

- It can be what you tell yourself about the stressor: "I have a choice here. I'm not powerless, I'm doing my best."
- Pause and take a few moments to center yourself. Bring your attention to your breath.

So this week ahead step back, be aware, and observe how this pattern plays out in your life. Once you're aware of your "icebergs," they will loosen their power and grip.

Be aware of the feedback you give yourself. If you don't get a constructive response from other, then give it to yourself. Ask yourself, "What can I do to help myself?" Support is far more effective than criticism.

Be intentional and alert as opposed to being in a trance-like state around food. Often, we live our lives in the same way we eat - consciously or unconsciously. When you eat calmly and consciously, you will feel calm and conscious afterwards. The more attention you pay to food, the more you enjoy it, and be satisfied with less, for example: Pause while eating to notice whether you are really enjoying your food and whether it is satisfying what you want.

In each series of the online programme, there are mindful eating tips, how to stop eating once you've had enough and how to feel satisfied afterwards. Satisfaction doesn't just come from physical fullness but from also fully enjoying the food you choose.

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

Dr. Bernadette Rock

Conway lecture set at Whaling Museum

The New Bedford Whaling Museum continues its popular "Famine, Friends & Fenians Lecture Series" on April 20, welcoming Philip Conway, an Olympian and father of the Irish Throwing Revival, who will present his lecture, "Irish Whales – A Favorable Term for Those Big Lads from Ireland."

Conway will share stories of a time when Irish and Irish-Americans dominated field events in the Olympics, and about how America provided the much-needed opportunity for Conway's athletic career, which culminated in his representing his country at the 1972 Munich Olympics.

Since that time, he has successfully coached and counseled student athletes looking to compete in the US collegiate system, ten of whom became Olympians.

The lecture, which is open to the public, will be given at 7 p.m. after an hour's reception. Tickets at \$10 for members, \$15 for non-members, can be purchased by calling 508-997-0046 or by going online at whaling-museum.org.

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The Irish Language

by Philip Mac AnGhabhann

Recall that there are only twelve “irregular” verbs in Irish – and the most common ones. Bi and Is “Be”, Abair “Speak/Talk”, Déan “do/make”, Cluin “Hear”, Faigh “get”, Feic “See”, Ith “Eat”, Tabhair “Give”, Tar “Come”, and Téigh “Go”. Most are “irregular” only in one or two tenses. Cluin, for example, is “irregular” only in one tense, the Definite Past, Chuala /HOO-luh/, “Heard”.

We are going to review these **verbs** and add our new tense, the **Conditional**. We will start by defining two new terms. When a **verb** stands alone, with nothing preceding it, the **verb form** is traditionally called an “Independent” form. An exception is a **verb** joined by an equalizing conjunction such as “and” **agus**, “or” **no**, and **ach** “but”.

“That dog is black **or** white.” “My dog is black **and** white.”
“They launched their boat **but** it sank immediately.”

If a **negative or interrogative** “particle” or a “non-equalizing” conjunction such as “that” precedes a **verb** then the **verb form** is called the “Dependent” form.

“**Is** the boat sinking?” “It **did not sink** that **was** a rumor.”

This is very different from English where we make no such distinction. However, Irish does and it is crucial. Sometimes “Independent” and “Dependent” forms of “regular” verbs will be the same. However, most “irregular” **verbs** have quite different forms. You will find verb charts where you will find labels such as “Past Independent” and “Past Dependent.” The verb **bi**, for example will show “Past Independent” as **bhí** but “Past Dependent” as **raibh**.

Bhí mé anns mo sheomair ní raibh mé thuas an staighre.
“I **was** in my room I **was** not up stairs.”

The first **verb** we will look at is the verb **Is**. This, you will recall, is a word called the **Copula** or “linking” **verb** which describes a permanent condition such as a person’s status, their long-term appearance, or permanent location – i.e. “Ireland is lovely”, “Ireland is an island”, “He has a big nose.”

Is can be frequently abbreviate to ‘**S**, especially before a **vowel** sound or words that begins with **m**-. It then acts as a part of the next word. It is also the only **verb** in Irish that defies the rule that an **–s** in contact with a vowel is sounded /sh/. Instead **Is** or ‘**S** keeps the /s/ sound.

Is sé garda /iss shey GARD-uh/ “He is a policeman.”
Is sí banaltra. /iss shee bahn-AHL-truh/ “She is a nurse.”
‘S mo mhála /smoh WAHL-uh/ “It’s my bag.”

Is has only two tense forms, **Present** or **Future** and Past or **Conditional**. This makes it easy to learn.

Present or Future	“Independent”	Positive: Is;	Negative: Ní
	“Dependent”	Positive: gur;	Negative: nach
Past or Conditional	“Interogative”	Positive: An?;	Negative: Nach?
	“Independent”	Positive: Ba; B’	Negative: Níor
	“Dependent”	Positive: gur;	Negative: nár
	“Interogative”	Positive: Ar?	Negative: Nár?

Notice that the **Positive Dependent** for all four tenses is the same, **gur**, although the **Negatives** are not, **nach** and **nár**, nor are the **Interogatives**, **Ar?** and **Nár?**. The **Interogative** form is, of course, when one asks a question such as “Is he a policeman?” **An sé garda?** or “Wasn’t your uncle a policeman?”, **Nár t’uncail garda?**

In some dialects **gur** and **ar** have a /b/ sound and spelling, **gurb** and **arb** while in the **Past** and **Conditional** **gur**, **ar**, **níor** and **nár** have a /v/ sound on the endings and are spelled **gurbh**, **níorbh**, and **nárbh**. Remember to insert the little vowel sound between **–r**- and **–b** . **Nárbh** will sound like /NAHR-uhv/. This is just to let you know in case you run across them. We will stick with the short versions in this course.

Now see if you can translate these sentences into Irish. 1.) “My wife was a nurse.” 2.) “She will be a policewoman.” 3.) “Is that person a man or a woman?” 4.) “Liam was not a teacher or a policeman.” 5.) “Wasn’t he a priest?” 6.) “No. The priest was my uncle Patrick.”

Answers: 1.) **Ba mo bhean banaltra.** 2.) **Is sí bangarda.** 3.) **An an duine seo fear no bean?** 4.) **Níor Liam muinteoir no garda.** 5.) **Nár sé sagairt?** 6.) **Nár. Ba an tsagart m’uncail Padruig.**

Next lesson we will learn the **Dependent** forms of **Bi** and then mix them up with the **Copula**.



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April 2	1916 Irish Uprising Event from 3-6 pm. Ceili & Set Dancing from 3-4:15 pm. Live music throughout the event. Kevin Barry Pipes and Drums and Band and the O’Shea Chaplin School of Irish Dance. \$15 admission. Call Sean Folan at 857-719-6979.	MAY 2017	
April 2	Andy Healy	May 7	Andy Healy
April 9	Fintan Stanley	May 14	Erin’s Melody with Margaret Dalton
April 16	Erin’s Melody with Margaret Dalton	May 21	Silver Spears
April 23	Erin’s Melody with Margaret Dalton	May 25	Members Meeting 7:30 pm
		May 28	Denis Curtin
		JUNE 2017	
		June 2	SMA Father Annual Fundraising Dance
		June 4	Noel Henry’s Irish Show Band
		June 11	Erin’s Melody with Margaret Dalton
		June 18	Andy Healy

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