

A remembrance of hunger, sickness, and burial



Facing Boston's shore, The Great Hunger Memorial site on Deer Island will display a Celtic Cross in the space between the rock walls. *Photo courtesy Mike Carney*

After 170 years, a memorial on Deer Island to the 'An Gorta Mor' refugees who perished in quarantine at the edge of Boston to be dedicated May 25

BY PETER F. STEVENS
BIR STAFF
This month will offer a fitting commemoration of a tragic chapter in the annals of the Boston Irish. A blessing and dedication for the Great Hunger Memorial will be held on Deer Island on the 25th "in memory of the Irish souls who, in hope of avoiding starvation, left their native land for new lives in America, only to perish and be interred in unmarked graves."
Delivering the invocation and blessing of those too-long-forgot-

ten burial sites will be Cardinal Seán Patrick O'Malley, OFM Cap Archbishop of Boston. Mayor Martin J. Walsh will also speak at the convocation.
The event will mark the success of the effort to erect a memorial to those immigrants that will be visible from virtually every point of the harbor's edge. The brainchild of the late Dr. William O'Connell and his wife, the late Rita O'Connell, the memorial is slated to stand as a poignant and dignified marker of what happened on



The logo for the Great Hunger Memorial is derived from a sketch drawn by the late Dr. William and Rita O'Connell.

the island some 170 years ago. Rita O'Connell put it this way: "It's important we don't forget the stories of people such as Patrick J. McCarthy, who lost his mother, father, and six siblings on Deer Island but went on to graduate from Harvard and become mayor of Providence."
According to City of Boston Archivist John McColgan, whose prodigious research of old records has laid bare so much of the sad saga of the quarantine station on Deer Island, some 800 Irish died there from 1847-1850

and perhaps up to 1,200 by 1852. In 1847, a crisis unfolded nearly daily along Boston's docks. Leaking, lurching vessels, aptly dubbed "coffin ships," unloaded hordes of ragged Irish passengers who had fled "An Gorta Mor," the Great Famine. Some 25,000 arrived in "Black '47," and with thousands wracked by "ship fever," likely a form of typhus, Boston officials so feared a citywide epidemic that they ordered a medical receiving room erected on Long
(Continued on page 10)



Bill O'Donnell, whose writings graced the BIR's pages for some 20 years, died on April 18 at age 84. An obituary and tributes are on Pages 6 and 7.

Pelosi group visit to Ireland highly significant

BY FRANCIS COSTELLO
SPECIAL TO THE BIR
BELFAST – The arrival of a high-powered US congressional delegation led by House Speaker Nancy Pelosi to Ireland North and South last month marked the most significant American official visit here in years.
That the speaker was joined by Massachusetts Congressman Richard Neal, the chairman of the powerful House Ways and Means Committee and a man with deep roots in County Down, made it all the more important in the midst of the ongoing current uncertainties over Brexit.
Neal's committee will oversee any future, post-Brexit, trade deal between the US and UK. Last month, in a letter to Prime Minister Theresa May, he made it
(Continued on page 11)



Nancy Pelosi and US Congressman Richard Neal met up with Irish Prime Minister Leo Varadkar, third from left, during their visit to Ireland North and South last month.
AP photo



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ICC Spring Author Series

Featuring

Jack Cashman

Friday, May 17th at 8pm

Jack's new book "An Irish Immigrant Story" is a riveting take on the struggles faced by the Irish that were forced to immigrate due to starvation, wars and oppression.

His inspiration for the book is born from personal circumstances and as a result, a better understanding of the lives of those that left their homelands to a better life in faraway lands.

Don't miss this reading and discussion touching on the Great Hunger, the events of 1916 and how Immigration has shaped his own life and times.

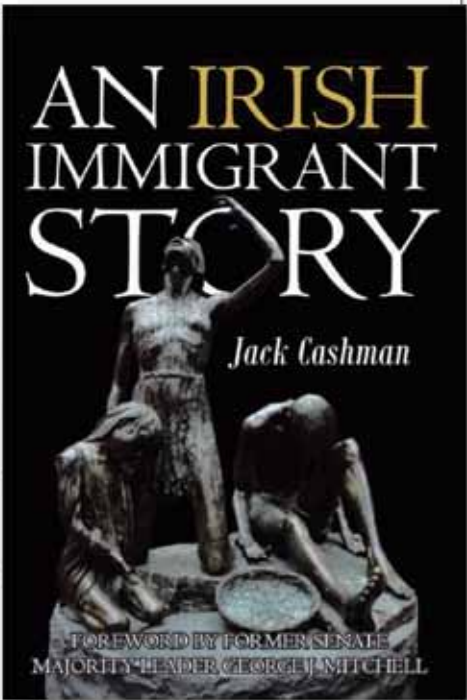
Jack Cashman will be joining us here at the ICC on May 17, 2019 at 8:00pm.

His book, "An Irish Immigrant Story" will be available for sale and signing by the author.

SUGGESTED DONATION \$10

RSVP TO : dbarrett@irishculture.org

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ICC Spring Author Series


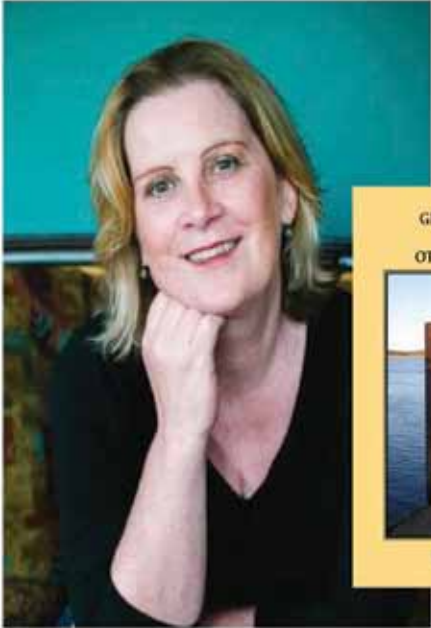
Featuring

Aine Greaney

Friday, May 10th at 8pm.

Join us for an evening with Aine Greaney as she discusses the central theme of her book— Immigration. An Irish Immigrant, Aine will share her "personal perspective on the challenges— fear, displacement, assimilation and dueling identities—faced by many immigrants from all countries."

Suggested donation \$10



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The Rose of Tralee International Festival presents the

Boston and New England Rose Selection Night 2019

Saturday, May 25 from 7 - 11 pm
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Tickets \$20

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For More Information:
Contact the Boston & New England Rose Centre
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BIR NOTEBOOK

Getting to the Point with Daniel Mulhall

Join the Kennedy Institute for breakfast and conversation with Ireland's ambassador to the United States on Tues., May 7, at 8:15 a.m. Mr. Mulhall will participate in a wide-ranging moderated conversation; and will discuss the Brexit deal, opportunities for ongoing cultural exchanges through global trade, innovation, and education; and the strength of the Irish-American community in Boston.



Amb. Mulhall

The ambassador began as Ireland's 18th Ambassador to the United States in August 2017. He maintains an active Twitter presence at @DanMulhall, engaging with followers around the globe, and is known for his keen interest in Irish history, literature, and advocating for public diplomacy.

A light breakfast will be available at 7:30 a.m.; the conversation will begin at 8:15 a.m.

Another key post for Katherine Craven

Katherine Craven Kryzanski, chief administrative and Financial Officer at Babson College, has been appointed as chair of the Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education by Gov. Charlie Baker. Craven Kryzanski, who was recognized in 2014 at the BIR's Boston Irish Honors luncheon, "is an experienced educational leader who cares deeply about expanding opportunity for every community and every child in the Commonwealth. Her deep knowledge of state government and her commonsense approach to policymaking and problem solving will be a tremendous asset to the Board and the Department in her new role," said Secretary Education Secretary James Peyser in a press release.



Katherine Craven Kryzanski

"I am honored and grateful for the support of the Baker-Polito administration. I look forward to continuing the great work of Chairman Sagan and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to promote forward-thinking policies providing educational opportunity for nearly 1 million children of all different learning styles and socio-economic backgrounds across the Commonwealth to succeed in an ever-changing world," Craven said.

Benefit set to help Irish children with disabilities

A benefit for Irish children with disabilities will take place at the Irish Social Club in West Roxbury on May 11 from 7 p.m. to 11 p.m. All proceeds from the event, which is being sponsored by the Knights and Ladies of St. Finbarr (Cork Club), will go toward funding for a new 26,000-square foot Children's Center currently being built outside Cork City by Enable Ireland, a non-profit organization that provides free vital therapy and rehabilitation services to children with physical disabilities and their families.

The Cork club will also honor West Roxbury's Richard Gormley with the Fr. Dan Finn Award for his contributions to the Boston-Irish community. He is currently the president of the Irish Social Club in West Roxbury.

Tickets to the benefit, which will feature several prize raffles and music from the Noel Henry Irish Show Band, are \$15 tickets can be purchased by mail from The Knights and Ladies of St. Finbarr, Post Office Box 4132, Dedham, MA 02027 or at the door. Donations can be made directly to Enable Ireland online at enableireland.ie/donate.

'Special Recognition' for Tommy Concannon

On Easter Sunday evening, Norwood's Tommy Concannon received Special Recognition at the Irish Social Club for all his many years of significant contributions to Boston's Irish communities. The salute took place at the ISC's weekly dance in West Roxbury.



Tommy Concannon at right with his wife MaryAnn and their sons.

Séan Folan photo



Attendees at Tourism Ireland's reception in Boston last month.

Tourism Ireland puts its message this way: 'Fill your heart with Ireland'

Join us and "Fill your heart with Ireland." That was the message of a new campaign to promote travel to Ireland by Tourism Ireland at an event in Boston on April 18. The presentations were made to a gathering of some 70 travel agents and media persons at the Mandarin Oriental Hotel. The Boston program was the last of three US cities visited by the group, which included 14 tourist partners from the island of Ireland, and five US-based industry partners.

In launching the new campaign, Brendan Griffin, Ireland's Minister for Tourism and Sport said: "2018 was the sixth consecutive record year for visitor numbers to the island of Ireland from North America. In 2018 we welcomed over 2 million American and Canadian visitors, delivering revenue of 1.85 billion euro for the economy. I have no doubt that this new marketing campaign will help to build on the very strong performance we have enjoyed from the

United States in recent years. ... Tourism Ireland looks forward to continuing to work with our travel partners to ensure that US travelers enjoy a unique and memorable vacation and receive the very best of Irish welcomes."

Among the Ireland industry partners represented were: Adams and Butler-Hallmark of Luxury Travel, Ashford Castle and the Lodge at Ashford, Castle Leslie Estate, Hastings Hotels Collection, House of Water-

ford Crystal, Knockranny House Hotel and Spa, Monart Hotel and Spa (Griffin Group), National Trust- Giant's Causeway, Parnassia Resort and Spa, Railtours Ireland First Class, Shaped by Sea and Stone-Mid and East Antrim, Teeling Whiskey Distillery, The Johnstown Estate, and Visit Armagh.

The American partners were Authentic Vacations, CIE tours international, Globus Family of Brands, Specialized Travel Services, and Scepter.

The Green Briar is shutting its doors

An iconic Irish venue in Brighton Center that has been the longtime scene of traditional Irish music for four decades will close its doors this month, according to its owners, the O'Connor family.

The Green Briar, located on Washington Street in Brighton Center, will draw its last pint on Mon., May 6. The restaurant/pub has been the flagship of the sprawling Briar Group since 1989.



In an online posting, the company said: "This was a difficult and sad decision

to make. We want to recognize and express sincere appreciation for our staff

- some have been with us since the very beginning. Their hard work and dedication to providing warm hospitality was what made the Green Briar so special.

We have met with the team regarding the closing date and our priority is to help each employee transfer jobs. To our guests, thank you. We hope to see you and say good-bye before our last day of service."

BOSTON IRISH REPORTER

Boston Irish Honors 2019 -- Call for Nominations

The Boston Irish Reporter- The region's leading chronicler of all things Irish-American, is a family-owned and operated media publication, a unique and independent source for news and information. Each month we report on the Irish people and events here in Boston as well as stories focused on the Irish diaspora. At the end of this year the BIR will complete three full decades-30 years-of telling "The stories of Boston's Irish."

Save the Date- The Boston Irish Reporter will host the 10th "Boston Irish Honors 2019" celebratory luncheon on Friday, October 18, 2019 at the Boston World Trade Center / Seaport Hotel. At this inspiring event, we recognize and celebrate exemplary individuals and families who share our culture and traditions- by telling the stories of their special achievements in public service, business, philanthropy and community leadership. Our annual BIH luncheon is the season's premier celebration of Irish-American achievement in Massachusetts.

Telling the stories- Our honorees represent the best qualities of the Irish- devotion to our fellow Bostonians; a sense of compassion for all people no matter their place of birth or station in life; and a deep connection to our common ancestral Irish homeland. In their personal and professional lives, BIH honorees inspire us and our fellow citizens with their dedication to our country to our Commonwealth and to the neediest among us.

Call for nominations- Our annual Boston Irish Honors luncheon celebrates the contributions of families and individuals who brought honor and distinction to our city and region over many decades. We earnestly seek your suggestions of potential honorees for the 2019 honoree luncheon. Nominations will be accepted until **Thursday, May 30, 2019**. Please send your nominations to us at honors@bostonirish.com

Past Boston Irish Honorees:

2018- Trevor McGill M.D., Rev. Richard "Doc" Conway, Bob Scannell and Mary (Kinsella) Scannell –
2017- Tom Tinlin, Kevin Cullen, Anne Marie, Nora & Bill Kennedy family
2016 - Jim & Mary (Cahill) Judge, Senator Paul G Kirk Jr, Kevin & Joe Leary & family
2015 - Margaret Stapleton, Mike Sheehan, BPD Commissioner William Evans family
2014 - Katherine Craven, Boston Mayor Marty Walsh, the Burke family of South Boston
2013 - Senate President Therese Murray, Gerry & Bob Mulligan family, John P. Driscoll Jr.(posthumous)
2012 - Congressman Richard Neal, Brendan & Greg Feeney, family of Mary & Bob Muse
2011 - Kathleen O'Toole, Senator Tom Kennedy, & families of Joseph Corcoran, James Hunt, & Mark & Tom Mulvoy
2010 - US Rep. Ed Markey, John Donohue, and families of Jim Brett, Tom & Peg Geraghty, & Mayor John B. Hynes

You are invited to send nominations and suggestions to us by
email to: honors@bostonirish.com
or by US Postal mail to:

Boston Irish Honors, 150 Mt Vernon St, Ste 560, Dorchester MA 02125

Editor's Notebook

New hands take helm at Pastoral Centre

By Ed Forry

The Irish Pastoral Centre was founded in 1987 to help the transition to American life for a then-burgeoning wave of young Irish immigrants. A 501(C)(3) non-profit funded in part by grants from the Irish government, the IPC is housed in part of the former convent in St. Brendan parish in Dorchester. The agency is searching for a new permanent home, and last month hired as its executive director Peggy Davis-Mullen. She is a former member of both the Boston School Committee and the Boston City Council. A South Boston native and an attorney, she's the mother of three sons and one grandchild and now lives in Plymouth. The BIR interviewed her at the pastoral centre offices last month.



Q. You are known for a background in elective politics, but what are some other facets of your life?

A. I am a product of the Boston public schools, and my first year of high school was the first year of desegregation, a very difficult time. I was fortunate enough to go

to Newman and finish my high school education. Then I went to BC and took a degree in psychology, and a master's in counseling psychology from the School of Education there. Then I ran for school committee.

Q. What was your occupation before being elected?

A. I was the director of counseling case work in the West Broadway Multi Service Center (ABCD). Most of the kids that were referred to me were public school kids, children from single parent families like myself, children whose families were struggling with drugs and alcohol. I've worked with lots of young kids and have seen the inequities, I saw that there was a lot lacking for them. That's why I love the opportunity to come here because my roots are in social service, in counseling psych, working with young families.

Q. What are your priorities in your new role?

A. To work to preserve and continue the great work that's done here, and to grow it. One of the things that drew me to the job is the work of Father Dan Finn. He is just a wonderful, amazing, kind, compassionate, spiritual man. And God has given me a great gift to be able to work with him, to strengthen what he's really carried on with this mission for many years. My mission is to support him and the work that he does.

He talks about a parish without borders and that's really important, that we're here to support the undocumented, those that are sort of in the shadows. That really speaks to what I am committed to. Those are the types of people that need our assistance.

Q. Does the IPC provide services for non-immigrants?

A. It's a very quiet work that goes on here, whether it's program director Veronica Keys going out and dealing with the victims of violence, working with Father Dan going into prisons and talking to young men and women who have been picked up because of immigration issues or just bad decisions.

I know that he spent Good Friday visiting two young men that have roots in this area. And I know that that was a really important thing for him. These two were not immigrants, they just were young men who needed guidance on Easter weekend. But a lot of the work is very quiet and I'm just getting my feet wet. But I'm very fortunate to come to work with people like Veronica and program administrator Audrey Larkin who have been part of this organization for so long.

Q. I'm sure one of the big components of your new job is fund raising?

A. Well, it's sort of the chicken and the egg. You need to have a home first and then once you have some place to call home, you can expand programs. There are so many good things that are going on here now. Like our project prison outreach, like the work that Veronica does on the ground, like the work that Audrey does, making sure that when people come here, they're connected to other services that would be available them. But whether it's focusing more on some of the issues of substance abuse, and AA meetings or Gaelic, it's a place where people can feel safe.

The seniors that come here, the sky's the limit as far as what we would like to do and what we can do. We need a home and we need to raise the funds to fix the home.

Q. What support comes from the Irish government?

A. Oh, there absolutely is a relationship. The fact that the Irish government cares enough and is committed

enough to follow its citizens abroad across the US, across the world really says something.

Q. Is the IPC looking for new office space?

A. That is a number one issue. I've been looking. This is a former convent, and we're in the chapel right now. I mean, you can see this is a pretty humble office. We just need space, so that Veronica can give the people she works with some dignity and privacy, and we want to expand some of the things we do, whether it's programs for children, mothers, and toddlers. Dan Finn and the Irish Pastoral Centre deserve to have a home. There's a lot happening between St. Ann's and St. Brendan's. Everybody knows that we're sort of here – but we don't feel like we really have any roots here. And it's really important for us.



Peggy Davis-Mullen at her new offices.

Here's a hope that massive egos find a way to come together on Brexit deal

By Joe Leary
SPECIAL TO THE BIR

Britain's long, boring, argumentative journey toward separation from Europe will be remembered for centuries. It will not be a proud moment in its history.



Joe Leary

So far the process has been a mess. Massive egos, with their own agendas, have interrupted discussions and negotiations. British leaders have tried to set the terms of their leaving and the European leaders are not responding to the British demands.

The British public, of which 51 percent voted on June 23, 2016, to leave Europe, had little understanding of what they were doing.

The conservative party felt the whole idea was preposterous and did almost nothing to educate the voters. Practically everyone throughout the world was shocked with the outcome.

David Cameron, the prime minister at the time, resigned and Theresa May was voted in as his replacement. She immediately announced that she would lead Britain out of Europe as soon as possible. This was a surprise because she was a "remainer" during the election. But what is frequently left unmentioned is that, in another surprise, her home district voted by some 60 percent to leave Europe. This must have had an impact on her thinking.

She has received much criticism for not managing the situation more expertly, but her constant, forceful efforts should receive much admiration. Her Parliament has rarely supported her in the three years she has been prime minister, mostly because Europe has refused to agree to all that the various British factions have demanded.

Off the Bench

How has it come to be that we live in the Disunited States of America?

By James W. Dolan
SPECIAL TO THE REPORTER

What has happened to our once glorious republic? After surviving a civil war, we managed to heal the wounds and move on to what would become the American century. It now seems to be eroding under the leadership of a demagogue whose moral compass is a mirror. Whatever serves his interest is good and any challenge to his enormous ego is evil.



James W. Dolan

"Lock 'em up," a chant frequently heard at his rallies is vaguely reminiscent of "Sieg heil" (Hail victory), a popular slogan from another era that did not end well. Once upon a time another cultured, well-educated democracy became enthralled by a leader who saw himself as a demi-god. Could it ever happen here? Many of us never believed Donald Trump would ever be elected president.

He has hijacked the once proud Republican Party, whose leaders now pay homage to a seriously flawed con man. Fearing rejection by his "base," they see their re-election prospects as paramount, and so they submit. Political survival supplants profiles in courage. Courage implies risk and sacrifice for a higher calling or duty. There is precious little of that in Washington these days.

That about 42 percent of prospective voters, mainly from the South, West, and Midwest support this president is disconcerting. What is it about him that appeals to them? His weaknesses seem so obvious. Is it his disregard of the norms we have grown to expect in our leaders? Unbound by conscience or humility, he gives vent and a veneer of legitimacy to our worst impulses. Lies abound, passion replaces reason, manners are for the weak, loyalty is demanded, not earned, and the bonds that unite us are weakened.

To him, winning is the validation he so desperately needs. It feeds an ego he is unable to control, craving recognition and the fealty of lesser beings. More pathetic

than evil, he cannot help himself. One can only speculate as to the forces that shaped this unfortunate man. Yes, despite his wealth and power, he is an object of pity. For they are not enough to satisfy him. However, that does not make him any less dangerous.

Truth and justice are inextricably bound. Without truth, what purports to be justice is an illusion. The corruption of truth is President Trump's principal threat, for without it, judgment, too, is baseless because it is no longer anchored to reality. Decisions are thus made within a fantasy, a concoction of fictions blended into myth with just enough intoxicant to have mass appeal. Once we stray into this illusion, it is difficult to find a way out. It is the lies that bind.

How did we get to this point? Is it just the beginning of the inevitable decline that all great powers throughout history have eventually experienced? Or, can we overcome our differences and return to a more positive trajectory, one that emphasizes unity, respect, cooperation, civility, and honesty? Is disunity an unanticipated consequence of social media, talk radio, and cable news? Do more and varied means of communication actually interfere with our ability to know and understand?

What role, if any, does the decline of religious belief play in affecting our ability to transcend the bitterness that now characterizes national politics? The absence of good faith has so undermined governance as to render it virtually powerless to even conceive of the common good, let alone enact it. We are now at a tipping point. Let us hope that we will come to our senses before anger and distrust fracture the social compact so essential to our national stability. What is now going on in Washington does not bode well.

When ties that bind are stretched and torn;
Replaced with bigotry and scorn,
It need not mean the end is doom,
But the "slouching beast" is in the room.

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



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Point of View

DONALD TRUMP'S ACHILLES HEEL

A warning: It's not the 'I' word

By PETER F. STEVENS
BIR STAFF

This writer is not in the business of predictions. In November 2020, however, President Donald J. Trump *can* be defeated. He can be trounced, actually, on one, and perhaps only one issue: It isn't impeachment; it's healthcare.

If the Dems collectively come to their senses and turn to the president's Ahab-like obsession with eradicating the ACA (Affordable Care Act), the so-called Blue Wave of 2018 will look like a ripple in comparison. Mitch McConnell knows it, which explains his warnings to the party and the genuine GOP terror that the US Supreme Court will overturn the ACA as unconstitutional in June 2020.

Here is a second prediction: If Trump's packed Supreme bench does his bidding, buttressed by the nearly unprecedented fact that his lackey, Attorney General William Barr, has done a legal 180 to support his boss's determination to wipe out any and all things Obama—especially “Obamacare”—the GOP is finished. The president, at the urging of Mick Mulvaney, his acting chief of staff and a man who has earned the mantle of the nation's most myopic and cruel Irish American, has given the Dems a pre-election gift. Of course, the Dems, aka the Party of Sancho Panza, and the media appear too busy chasing down every blind alley of the Mueller report. Trump's biggest wound, self-inflicted, could prove mortal if Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi and company open that gift from the White House and the Department of Justice.

While the President's daily assaults against the rights the Constitution assigns to Congress, to the First Amendment, to the “enemies of the people,” and to simple truths rage on, Mulvaney has somehow managed to tell a whopper bigger than just about any lie that has spouted from Donald Trump's mouth.

That's some feat, but here's the proof:



Mick Mulvaney: Plying his trade

Recently, the ABC journalist and “This Week” moderator Jonathan Karl asked this of Mulvaney: “What would happen to the more-than 60 million Americans with pre-existing conditions who are guaranteed coverage under Obamacare and the millions of adults under 26 who are able to stay on their parents' plans if the health care law is declared unconstitutional.”

As *USA Today's* William Cummings noted, Karl asked another question of the interim chief of staff: “Can you guarantee that if you succeed in court all of those tens of millions of people who have health coverage guaranteed because of Obamacare will not lose their coverage?”

“Yes,” Mulvaney answered. With that one word, he uttered the baldest-faced lie of the Trump administration to date.

The truthful answer would have been this: “No, Jonathan. My party has no viable replacement plan for the ACA. Never has and never will. I can guarantee that all Obamacare's protections for preexisting conditions, no lifetime caps, etc., will disappear. The most important thing

will be that the president has kept his campaign pledge to destroy Obamacare.”

The blarney from Mulvaney gets even worse. With the oh-so-adroit manner in which this self-professed practicing Catholic justifies his assault on the sick and poor whom his religion instructs him to help, this grand Irish American followed up his one-word prevarication with a stream of other lies about healthcare: “Both parties support them [coverage of preexisting conditions, etc.], and anyone telling you anything different is lying to you for political gain. Pre-existing conditions are going to be covered. The debate becomes: How do you best do it?”

Mulvaney inadvertently slipped in a phrase that rings true about him and his White House master — “lying for political gain.” Every time the president, Mulvaney, Kellyanne Conway, and company open their gobs and profess allegiance to Trump's bluster that the Republicans are “the party of healthcare,” GOP members in the House and the Senate cringe and seek cover. After their crusade to stamp

out the ACA legislatively came up short and cost them the 2018 Congressional midterms, they thought they could run away from the issue. Now, thanks to the president and Mulvaney, the GOP will have nowhere to hide in June 2020 if Obamacare goes down.

Here's the thing: As egregious as Trump's conduct and autocratic yearnings may be, and no matter how many Americans believe he has done something nefarious regarding Russia and our elections and obstruction of justice, many, if not most, voters don't feel personally affected by those issues, which consume politicians, pundits, and the media. Affordable healthcare is entirely different. It affects everyone, and if 20 million or more Americans lose their policies and protections in 2020, Donald Trump, Mick Mulvaney, and the entire GOP will face the fury of the nation.

And they won't be able to blame the Dems. The GOP will own the issue and have no one to blame but themselves. They have no healthcare plan to replace Obamacare. If the Supreme Court declares that the ACA violates the Constitution, it is game over for the president and the party that has so slavishly followed him. No words from the Brander-in-Chief will serve to save the GOP at the ballot box.

No one can reasonably expect that the Donald Trump-owned Republican Party — and the duplicitous Irish American sitting at the right hand of the president in the White House — will heed the words of Ireland's “Liberator,” the 19th-century statesman Daniel O'Connell, who said, “Nothing is politically right which is morally wrong.” What's stunning about the GOP's determination to tear healthcare away from millions of Americans is that the mission is morally and *politically* wrong.

Again, healthcare, not impeachment, is the true Achilles Heel of Donald J. Trump and the GOP.

Border Crossing: James Joyce in Mexico

By THOMAS O'GRADY
SPECIAL TO THE BIR

Several years ago, I used as the epigraph on the syllabus of my Recent Irish Writing course this wonderful observation by Mexican novelist Carlos Fuentes: “The English language has always been alive and kicking, and if it ever becomes drowsy, there will always be an Irishman.” I thought of that quotation recently as I read “Pedro Páramo,” a short novel by another Mexican writer, Juan Rulfo (1918-1986). My interest in the novel, first published in Spanish in 1955, was piqued in part by my understanding that it may have been influenced by Rulfo's reading of James Joyce. Reading Rulfo, I was definitely on the lookout for affinities between “Pedro Páramo” and Joyce's “damned monster novel” (as he described it) — “Ulysses.”

I read the text of Rulfo's novel before I read Susan Sontag's Foreword to the translation by Margaret Sayers Peden. When I did read the Sontag, I was struck by how closely her description of the novel's central concern resonated with the Joycean affinities I had scribbled down in my readerly notetaking: “The novel's premise — a dead mother sending her son out into the world, a son's quest for his father — mutates into a multivoiced sojourn in hell.” As readers of Joyce know, “Telemachus,” the opening episode of “Ulysses,” reintroduces Stephen Dedalus, the protagonist of Joyce's earlier novel, “A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man.” Having returned to Dublin from a brief sojourn in Paris to keep vigil at his dying mother's bedside, Stephen remains conflicted almost a year later by the memory of his mother: “Silently, in a dream she had come to him after her death, her wasted body within its loose brown graveclothes giving off an odour of wax and rosewood, her breath, that had bent upon him, mute, reproachful, a faint odour of wetted ashes.” Just pages later, the character Haines attempts to engage Stephen in an interpretation of Shakespeare's “Hamlet” — “The Son striving to be atoned with the Father.”

Of course, each of these references could be read simply as a common literary motif or trope. But the further I read in “Pedro Páramo,” the more I was reminded of an admission made by Stephen in “Nestor,” the second episode of “Ulysses.” Remembering Haines's casual remark that “it seems history is to blame” for political friction between Ireland and Britain, Stephen explains himself to the officious headmaster of the school where he teaches: “History . . . is a nightmare from which I am trying to awake.” As the novel unfolds, the reader discovers that for Stephen — and likewise for his co-protagonist, Leopold Bloom — “history” is not just general (political, economic, social, cultural, and so on) but personal. Ditto for Juan Preciado, the protagonist of “Pedro Páramo.” Late in Rulfo's novel,

the reader recognizes that some of the action channels La Cristiada, the Cristero Rebellion of 1926-29, as well as the earlier Mexican Revolution of 1910-20. But much of the novel focuses not on those events but on Juan's “personal” history relative to his mother, his father, and the lost world — the ghost town — of Comala. And it is really in Rulfo's inscription of Juan Preciado's search for his father that “Pedro Páramo” resonates most meaningfully with Joyce's “Ulysses.”

The theme of “the nightmare of history” permeates “Ulysses,” but two episodes in particular speak tellingly to Rulfo's narrative. The first of these is the sixth episode, “Hades,” in which Leopold Bloom, attending the burial of his friend Paddy Dignam in Glasnevin Cemetery, effectively makes the same descent into the underworld that Odysseus makes in Homer's “The Odyssey,” the text that provides Joyce with the elaborate scaffolding for his narrative. Tracing the route of Dignam's funeral cortège across Dublin, Joyce invites the alert reader to recognize that the various statues and monuments commemorating Irish political figures that line the city's thoroughfares — Sir Philip Crampton, William Smith O'Brien, Daniel O'Connell, Sir John Gray, Lord Nelson, Charles Stewart Parnell — represent not just a sampling from “the catalogue of Dublin's street furniture” (a fine phrase Joyce coined in “Stephen Hero,” a rough draft of “A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man”) but a manifestation of how history — the past, memory of the past — constantly infiltrates the mind and the imagination of the individual. (In the Homeric parallel, these figures also have their counterparts in “The Odyssey.”) Obviously, Joyce continues this conceit within the grounds of the cemetery itself, referring overtly to O'Connell's grave and Parnell's grave. Relative to Rulfo, however, the more significant passages in “Hades” are those describing first the stonecutter's yard and then Prospect Cemetery that the cortège passes en route to Glasnevin:

The stonecutter's yard on the right. . . . Crowded on the spit of land silent shapes appeared, white, sorrowful, holding out calm hands, knelt in grief, pointing. Fragments of shapes, hewn. In white silence: appealing.

The high railings of Prospect rippled past their gaze. Dark poplars, rare white forms. Forms more frequent, white shapes thronged amid the trees, white forms and fragments streaming by mutely, sustaining vain gestures on the air.

In her Foreword to “Pedro Páramo,” Susan Sontag quotes Rulfo as saying that the structure of his novel is “made of silences, of hanging threads, of cut

scenes, where everything occurs in a simultaneous time which is a no-time.” In Leopold Bloom's case, the public memory associated with the statues and the monuments eventually gives way to his private memory of his father who committed suicide and his son Rudy who died in infancy. In Juan Preciado's case, countless figures from the past, their names mere whispers, populate the ghost town that his dead father still presides over.

And that brings me to the other episode of “Ulysses” that I believe informs “Pedro Páramo” both thematically and structurally: that is the fifteenth episode, “Circe.” Fortunately for his boundless legion of readers, Joyce shared with three friends — Carlos Linati, Herbert Gorman, and Stuart Gilbert — complementary versions of a schema in which he labels the episode's “Technic” as “Vision animated to bursting point” or, more simply, “Hallucination.” Many Joyce scholars agree that the term “phantasmagoria” is also apt to describe the effect of “Circe.” While Rulfo's novel does not resemble “Circe” stylistically (Joyce's text is written on the page in the form of an expressionistic drama, as if intended to be performed on stage), it nonetheless shares with this climactic episode of “Ulysses” the idea that the individual carries within himself or herself an elaborate personal “nightmare of history” that needs to be awakened from. No less than the vast cast of characters encountered by Stephen Dedalus and Leopold Bloom in “Circe,” the elusive and spectral figures encountered by Juan Preciado in “Pedro Páramo” represent forces — some in his consciousness, some in his subconscious — that he must engage with, confront, and subdue.

For Stephen Dedalus the awakening from the nightmare is dramatic and emphatic, taking place when, rejecting the phantasmagoric specter of his mother, he declares: “The intellectual imagination! With me all or not at all. Non serviam!” He then punctuates his declaration by smashing a chandelier with his ashplant. For Bloom, the awakening is poignant, coming in his vision of his son as a changeling — a fairy child — fulfilling his father's dream in an alternative world. For Juan Preciado, whose return to Comala has led him into the collective unconscious of a community ravaged and then decimated by the sins of his father, the awakening occurs in the last sentence of “Pedro Páramo,” in his vision of his father brought low by his inability to escape “the nights that filled the darkness with phantoms” of his deplorable past: “He fell to the ground with a thud, and lay there, collapsed like a pile of rocks.”

Thomas O'Grady is Director of Irish Studies at the University of Massachusetts Boston

‘Bill’ O’Donnell, Irish activist, 20-year columnist with the Boston Irish Reporter, dies at 84

William T. “Bill” O’Donnell, whose words of wit and wisdom and praise and admonishment were featured monthly in the Boston Irish Reporter for 20 years, died in hospice care in Woonsocket, RI, on April 18.

The loving husband for 50 years of the former Jean McKenna, Mr. O’Donnell was born in Boston, and over the full measure of his long life he was an active member of the Irish community, traveling often for both business and pleasure to Ireland and joining numerous Irish-American charitable and cultural organizations. He was a past president and life member of the Eire Society of Boston, a member of the Irish Cultural Centre and the Charitable Irish Society. He also served as the treasurer and a board member of the Belfast (NI) –based nonprofit corporation, Intercomm, USA.

Occasionally, Mr.

O’Donnell stepped into the political arena. During the 1980 presidential campaign he was a senior press aide to the Independent presidential candidate, Congressman John B. Anderson.

He was a proud citizen of the United States and Ireland. As the editor of the Irish Echo weekly newspaper in Boston, he reported on the historic, tumultuous decade of the 1980s, covered local protests, hunger strikes in Ireland, and, later, the making of the Anglo-Irish Agreement. In the late ‘80s, he joined the Boston Redevelopment Authority as Community Relations Manager. In 1995 he retired from the BRA and later spent three years as an ADR case manager and arbitration analyst for John Hancock Financial Services.

For many years Mr. O’Donnell was involved in organizing Boston-based job training programs

benefiting young people from both traditions in Ireland, north and south. He served from 1995 to 1998 as president and CEO of Boston Ireland Ventures, a nonprofit corporation working to stimulate inward investment, development, and job creation in Ireland. Over the past two-and-a-half decades, he wrote a regular newspaper column for the Boston Irish community, and for the 20 years he contributed a monthly column “Here & There” to New England’s largest circulating newspaper serving an Irish American readership, the Boston Irish Reporter of Dorchester.

The son of the late William Sr. and Anne (Flaherty) O’Donnell, Mr. O’Donnell attended St. Clement schools in Medford and graduated from Somerville High School. He also attended Suffolk University and Boston State College. He was a



Jean (McKenna) O’Donnell and her beloved Bill share a moment.

US Marine Corps veteran of the Korean War.

In addition to his wife, he leaves a daughter, Erin Catherine, a son-in-law, Aaron Hoban, and a grandson, Aidan Araujo. He also leaves two brothers, Philip, of Mashpee, MA, and James, of Boston, (he was predeceased by his brother Steven), sisters-in-law Marilyn Gove O’Donnell and Carol Webster Blair, and nieces and nephews representing two generations.

Mr. O’Donnell’s funeral Mass was held on Tues., April 23, in St. Charles Borromeo Church in Woonsocket. In his homily during the service, the

Rev. Gerald Finnegan, SJ, alluded to the Irishness that permeated Mr. O’Donnell’s life:

“When I visited Bill about a week or two before his death. I was struck by the Catholic tone of the conversation. Of course, Catholicism was never far from our conversations when I dined with Jean and Bill at their home here in Woonsocket. After all, I was their pastor, and, after all, Bill and I shared an upbringing in Boston when things were very influenced by the Catholics of the city. But even then, it seemed to be more prevalent at this, my final, time with Bill. Maybe we

all turn to our roots when we feel that our time here is limited, and, I suspect, Bill felt that that was his situation. ...

“On Holy Thursday, when Bill entered into a new existence, we can imagine him turning around and seeing someone standing there. Like Mary Magdalen, he may at first have imagined that it was a stranger. But then the stranger spoke his name and Bill recognized him. It was, and is, Jesus. I just hope that Jesus’s voice and accent sounded just a bit Irish, or, at least, Boston Irish. If not, Bill may not have had a positive reaction.”

An adieu to his BIR readers (2017)

Bill O’Donnell, the longtime columnist for the *Boston Irish Reporter* whose bonafides as a chronicler of all things Irish in the greater Boston area brook few comparisons, has put down his Reporter’s Notebook and called it a day, citing a need to take it easier. His final column appeared in the November 2017 edition of the BIR.

In a poignant note to BIR editors announcing his retirement, Bill thanked

them for providing the space each month to a “scraggety, aging, half-assed wannabe to use the freedom (not absolutely, thank God) to say the truth aloud in ink-driven form, truth without shame or reticence.”

He added: “I am moving along in time, having served in a wonderful enterprise with imaginative colleagues beside me as we stood in service to that one great imperative – truth.”

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Remembering Bill O'Donnell

By FRANCIS COSTELLO
SPECIAL TO THE BIR



A man of many talents.

To describe Bill O'Donnell as one of a kind is to short-change this estimable man's life and times. Honorable and decent to the end, he was deeply proud of the America he loved - and whose uniform he wore - and of the Irish heritage he embraced in all its aspects. A man of many talents, Bill was also modest. An Marine who served during the Korean War, he declined military honors for his funeral, telling his family: "Look, I never got shot at!"

But most of all, Bill O'Donnell loved his wife of 50 years, the former Jean McKenna. He never stopped gushing about "Jeanie" and her talent as a jazz singer. He was a devotee of her performances with the Veritones - the group she made music with - while she was managing to raise their daughter Erin with him and pursuing her career as a teacher. In many ways, it was clear that Jeanie helped to make Bill complete as his partner and soul mate right during their life together.

Bill was also loyal to his friends of many decades,

always to the hilt. He also had time for everybody and would simply make them feel good. In this writer's days many moons ago as a teacher at Boston College High School, my dad would relish the task on Monday mornings of filing my copy in person for the sports column I wrote for the *Boston Irish Echo* where Bill was the editor. My father knew a hot cup of coffee and a cigarette awaited him, along with a wide ranging chat with Bill, who, whether busy or not, would embark on a freewheeling exchange about the Red Sox and on matters more global.

While Bill cared and wrote about many issues, at his core, he cared even more about people as individuals, never letting politics get in the way of lifelong friendships. All the while, he did not suffer fools gladly. There was the side we saw in the Bill who could be quiet and unassuming but who could also unleash a boisterous laugh often accompanied by a wave of his hand in the air upon hearing good news. He relished other people's happiness and was never a begrudger. He also enjoyed a glass or two of chardonnay, especially with a meal of lamb that he would expertly barbecue at home.

I was privileged to have known Bill's loyalty and kindness in many ways. But I also benefited from his commitment to doing a job well. That was the case with his skillful management of several Boston Ireland Ventures World Trade Festivals at the World Trade Center in the 1980s and 1990s during a still very difficult time in the Northern Ireland conflict that he helped coordinate for Mayor Ray Flynn and John Hume. While he worked behind the scenes to

help showcase the products made in the West and Northeast of Ireland in the much neglected region between Galway Donegal and Derry to local Bostonians, he also knew the importance of showing the richness of the culture of the people of those areas, and, indeed, of all Irish traditions.

Bill also made a highly positive impact on young Irish immigrants like Ann Mullan from Derry, who came to Boston in 1985. She saw him as bridge between Irish America and the Ireland she came from: "I was truly amazed by his knowledge of Ireland and the complexities of our politics. Bill's example taught me as an Irish-born person to admire and respect Americans of Irish descent."

Likewise for Sister Lena Deevy "I will always be grateful to Bill for his steadfast support of the Irish Immigration Center during our early challenging years. He understood the importance of immigration being inclusive of diverse immigrants, including the Irish"

Bill O'Donnell was indeed a catalyst for making good things happen. From his days as youth in Somerville to his onward journey in life, he carried on with an understanding of the Irish proverb "Ar seath a cheile a mhaireann na daoine," which means that "under the shelter of each other, people survive." May we keep his spirit with us.

Dr. Francis Costello served as press secretary for Boston Mayor Raymond Flynn and chief of staff to US Rep Joseph P. Kennedy II. He now lives in Belfast where he has long been a university lecturer in history as well as a consultant and author.

Notes and comment from Bill O'Donnell in the BIR over the years

September 2011

"We Remember 9/11 - It has been a fast-moving, fraught decade since the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on America. The recent Seals raid that removed Bin Laden from our midst did not solve America's political, financial, or social problems but it told a world too often doubtful of America's spine and resilience that we can still take care of business.

"I clearly remember that September day when the planes crashed into the two towers and the Pentagon and into that Pennsylvania field because we were in Ireland, outside Dundalk to be precise, following an overnight flight into Dublin. It was great fun to be back and along with favorite in-laws. The four of us, Jean and myself and my sister-in-law Pat and husband Will had left Logan the evening of Sept. 10 and arrived at the airport after a fast flight from Boston very early in the Irish morning of the 11th. "The five-hour time difference meant we were with our hosts at the Trainor family home well before the planes crashed in Manhattan. We saw the second plane, United Airline Flight 175, on live television crash into the South Tower of the World Trade Center at 9:03 a.m. Eastern Daylight Time; American Airlines Flight 11 had struck the North Tower of the Center 17 minutes earlier, which we did not see.

"We spent the next two weeks traveling through northeastern Ireland, to places like Waterford, Cork, Mayo, Galway, Clare, and Kerry. It was, after our scores of Irish visits over the years, the most unsettling and surreal but memorable of our trips there. The Kindness of the Irish, the reaching out, the understanding and, yes, the tears from strangers once they knew we were Yanks, was profound in its communion, the benchmark Irish oneness with America. The warmth of the Irish people in those wary, uncertain days is a fresh and recurring memory.

"After several frantic days trying to reach our daughter by phone we finally talked, uncertain if our return flight date or time could or would be honored. We learned that our daughter Erin, 28, had lost a friend from years earlier, a Girl Scout pal she hadn't seen in years. The news that Amy Jarret, the former scouting friend, had been a crew member among the 65 people on United Flight 175 brought the substance and sadness of the 9/11 loss into even more painful focus for her, for us ... and so it has remained."

July 2015

"NY Times Student Deaths Article 'A Disgrace' - What should have been a straight-ahead story of the accidental deaths of six young Irish students here on J-1 student work visas was badly botched by the New York Times last month. In the Times story of the collapse of an apartment balcony in California that killed the six students and badly hurt seven others, the Times focused on student partying and the "raucous life in a college town at night" before it moved onto the lead: the tragic loss of life of students who were celebrating a

twenty-first birthday party on a balcony possibly flawed in its construction. The possibility that there were faulty materials in the balcony that had been further weakened by weather and overcrowding is also being investigated.

"Not only did the story essentially and cruelly overpower the fact of the deaths of the young students by citing two incidents elsewhere with other students that zeroed in on wrecked apartments and visiting student misbehavior, but it also went on to call the J-1 visa program "a source of embarrassment for Ireland." This surely comes as news to the Irish government and program officials who have been fully supportive of the program links with Boston and other US cities.

"Back in the 1990s, I worked with scores of students on work-study programs that came to Boston from Irish venues, north and south, nationalist and unionist. They came from Belfast, Dublin, Derry, Letterkenny, and other places. The students were welcomed into the homes of Boston-area host families and split their duty schedules between relevant college courses and work that reflected their future work specialties. In all the time I ran these programs we had just one young man who was sent home early. He had come to the states from Ireland with a drug addiction problem and returned home for medical attention. In the main, these were great young people, eager, curious, hardworking, and a credit to Ireland and their respective programs. I loved working with those young people.

"The Times apologized for its misguided coverage of the balcony tragedy following a barrage of critical stories about the report. The article, however, remained for a time on the newspaper's website.

"I recall writing in a previous column about a San Francisco apartment that was wrecked by several J-1 visa student renters. What I recall well was a media follow-up to that San Francisco incident that detailed a number of students and other program participants showing up to work, volunteering and actively cleaning, repairing, and repainting the wrecked apartment, in essence apologizing for the bad behavior of program colleagues who did the damage and had returned to Ireland.

"That important "good news" aftermath of the San Francisco apartment assault was not mentioned in the Times article. A negligent omission! Ireland and the young people who come here representing Ireland north and south deserve far better at the hand of one of America's most prestigious journals.

March 2012

"Returning to Kerry - the Flahertys and the O'Donnells - My cousin Dan Flaherty died twenty years ago at age 53. As he left us, he was doing what he loved: tending his sheep atop the mountain overlooking the farm below that he shared with his wife Eileen and daughter Margaret. I love all the Flahertys, but I reserve a special place for Dan. He was a community leader,

a regular in the Castlemaine players group, and a much-loved performer in his neighborhood musicales. And from our first meeting almost 30 years ago, he was my friend. The following account of that first meeting with our Irish family members was published 29 years ago and I dedicate it now to Dan Flaherty and the cousins in County Kerry and beyond.

"Reaching back back into the past and confronting your beginnings has grown compulsively popular and very much the buffed personal journey to take in recent years. Much of the allure of the genealogical mania has rightly been attributed to Alex Haley and his book and TV series "Roots." But for Irish Americans who have found the excellent Irish Catholic Church records compelling, and the proximity of their native land a boon to ancestor-hunting, the roots of the old country have long held a potent fascination

"John F. Kennedy, as president, visited his forebears' homestead in June of 1963 and the photographs showing him with his Wexford cousins quickly became the focal point of his Irish pilgrimage - and front page, happy-time news around the world. Who can forget the beaming young world leader standing near the humble Dunganstown home of his grandfather surrounded by his equally delighted Irish relatives. That image contributed greatly, at least among the American Irish, to the upsurge of interest in Ireland and those who came before us.

"Yet despite all that and a personal, quiet longing to someday visit the birthplace of my mother's parents, Tadhg Flaherty and Annie Griffin Flaherty, I had resisted the temptation on many earlier Irish trips to "intrude" on ordered lives and separate worlds. The attempt to connect with ancestors in Ireland was simply something I would get to later. I had no idea, of course, if any Irish relatives were still alive and living in Ireland, and if so, what their reaction might be if a "Yank cousin" and his trailing family actually presented themselves at their front door.

"Just a kernel of family lore: I knew from early on that my maternal grandparents had come to this country from Ireland around the turn of the century. I could vividly recall the difficulty I had as a youngster trying to decipher my grandparents' brogues on our Sunday excursions to Dorchester from Somerville. But beyond that meager kernel of family history, I knew nothing further. But this year, 1983, I told myself on our annual visit to Ireland with my wife Jean and daughter Erin, it would be different.

"The trail began close to home in Dorchester, when my mother's brother Timmy handed me two long-forgotten Irish registry certificates. The papers confirmed that both grandparents were born and baptized in the district of Castlemaine, a small farming community over the Slieve Mish Mountains from Tralee in County Kerry.

"The next portion of the link was St. Gobnait Parish in Castlemaine. The church pastor, Father Casey, who, when we knocked on his door, didn't seem at

all surprised either at our visit or our request for information. After introductions and cold drinks for his three visitors, the priest produced from a nearby cabinet what looked to be a Dickensian ledger book, the official record of baptisms in the parish. Almost before the good Father could complete his apology about the parish's "poor record-keeping," he was tracing his finger along the neatly scripted entries of a century ago. It was all there: both my mother's parents' baptismal dates and godparents' names. All the godparents would show up later as sponsors of a succeeding generation of new births.

"All told the entire process, exclusive of the hospitality, at the parish office had consumed less than ten minutes. Our next stop, as directed, was at the "Keel Church" some two miles away on the main road where Tadhg and Annie were christened; Tadhg in 1875, Annie in 1878. I couldn't keep my eyes off a large, ornate crystal baptismal font where a century earlier both, as infants, had been christened. I had difficulty reconciling the two elderly Irish I knew from Lafield Street in Dorchester and the two babies that began their lives on St. Gobnait's altar here in Kerry in the late-19th century.

"But now, leaving the church, it was time (ready or not) to meet the cousins, who Father Casey told us were only minutes away. Our first stop was a small farm at the curve-end of a slim dirt road in the Shanachill section of Castlemaine. There a man pitching hay listened patiently to our story, nodded knowingly, and directed us to a farm building up the road where, he assured us we would find "your cousins, the Flahertys." And so we did.

"We wouldn't meet Dan, who was in Tralee, until later that evening, but his brother George, a bachelor who owned and worked a nearby farm - another second cousin (our grandfathers were brothers) welcomed us with conversation, tea, and open arms. George introduced his mother, Margaret Flaherty, widow of George's father Dan Sr. George explained that he had long expected cousins from the states would someday come calling, and there we were. During the following talk-filled hours as we sat in the farmhouse kitchen we discussed decades-old leavings and homecomings, births and deaths, and the sudden-new family history of both the stateside and Kerry Flahertys.

"Extended family" time - Photographs of Irish relatives I had never met nor would ever meet, were taken down from the mantle and the term "extended family" took on a new dimension. I would learn from George and Dan the adventurous lives of the peripatetic Flahertys of Ireland. I discovered that four brothers, Matt, Tom, Dan, and Tadhg (Tim) had emigrated to America in search of that better life. One brother, Dan, father of the Dan I was sitting across from, home-sick for the gentle, rolling farm country surrounding the River Maine, would return home after nine years in America. The other three brothers, including my grandfather Tadhg, would never return.

Immigration Q&A

Getting a passport when time is short

Q. *I recently became a US citizen but have not yet obtained a US passport. I have a family situation that will require me to travel abroad as soon as possible. What do I do?*

A. Normal processing time for a US passport application is 4-6 weeks, according to the State Department. There is an expedited processing option available, which is currently estimated to take 2-3 weeks. For first time applicants, it is required that you submit your application in person at a passport acceptance facility, which includes many local post offices.

However, for individuals who need a passport for foreign travel taking place within 2 weeks or for an application for a foreign visa within 4 weeks, it is possible to make an appointment to handle the process in person at a local Passport Agency. The mechanics for scheduling an appointment for expedited processing under these circumstances are covered on the State Department website travel.state.gov., go to the Passports link and select "Where to Apply."

The forms, required evidence, and all other details concerning passport applications are found on the US State Department website as well. In addition to the usual fees totaling \$145 for a new adult passport, expedited processing requires a fee of \$60 plus the costs of an overnight delivery service.

Foreign citizens without valid passports who urgently need to travel to the US or to leave the US and return should consult the website of their country's department of foreign affairs or its embassy or consulate in the US. There, they will find the information they need on emergency passport issuance. For Irish citizens, the local Irish Consulate can be contacted at 617-267-9330 or consulategeneralofirelandboston.org.

For a free, confidential consultation on any aspect of immigration law, visit one of our legal clinics advertised monthly in the Boston Irish Reporter.

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

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IIIC's Black and Green Celebration speaker panel this year included Suffolk County District Attorney Rachael Rollins, second from left, Bridget Keown, and Megan Parker-Johnson. The moderator was Ryan McCollum.

Black and Green 2019: Thank you to all who joined this year's celebration!

On April 7, the IIIC and the Montserrat Aspirers hosted their annual Black and Green gathering, which celebrated 100 years of women's suffrage. The event included a lively discussion of the role of women in society, with panelists Suffolk County District Attorney Rachael Rollins, historian Bridget Keown, and IIIC immigration attorney Megan Parker-Johnson. Discussion focused on the importance of women, including im-

migrant women, to be active in our government and society, and to make their voices heard.

The IIIC is deeply grateful to all who attended, to our wonderful and inspiring panelists, to facilitator Ryan Mc-

Collum, to the Montserrat Aspirers for their many years of tremendous partnership and to Hibernian Hall for hosting us. We look forward to seeing you all next year at Black and Green 2020!

Ulster University student settles right into Boston life

"Although it is a culture shock, it isn't long before you settle in" shares Connie Fitzsimons, who moved to Boston from Co. Down, Ireland, in July 2018. While it can be daunting to move to an entirely new country, the city of Boston and the people who make it up, have welcomed Connie and made the transition more enjoyable. "I've found Boston to be extremely welcoming," says Connie, who has been blown away by the opportunity to "make connections and network with people I never would have met otherwise and to experience a whole new culture."

Connie has taken to the culture of Boston and attended many sporting events, such as a Boston University basketball and ice hockey games. "We, of course, attended the St Patrick's Day parade," she

said. "The effort the people put in is crazy!"

Connie is a graduate in Business and Management at Ulster University and works within Business Controls at State Street. Her J-1 year has equipped her with great work experience: "The skills from my role are invaluable and will serve me well throughout my career."

Living in the US for a year provides her with the freedom to travel to many hotspots on cheap domestic flights: "The most memorable part has to be all the trips we have taken."

Congratulations to Connie on a fantastic year in the US. We hope you make the most of the months you have left! We also extend our thanks to State Street, a tremendous host for many talented J-1 interns this year through



Connie Fitzsimons has been taking in the most of all her placement year in Boston has to offer!

a program that supports the female leaders of tomorrow. If your business would be interested in hosting a J-lintern this year, please contact Paul Pelan (ppelan@iiicenter.org).

JOIN US
AT THE BOSTON PRIDE PARADE

IRISH FOR PRIDE

Saturday, June 8 | 12pm
Check in at Copley Square

We encourage and invite all of our clients and students to join us as we march under one banner with fellow Irish organizations and friends.

Free spaces can be reserved at our "Irish for Pride" Eventbrite page.

@iiicenter @IIICenter

IRISH INTERNATIONAL IMMIGRANT CENTER IMMIGRATION LEGAL ASSISTANCE

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

Upcoming Clinic Schedule

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

Downtown Boston

IIIC, One State Street, 8th Floor, Boston MA 02109
Tuesday, May 7th and 21st at 4:00pm

Brighton

The Green Briar Pub, 304 Washington Street, Brighton, MA 02135
Monday, May 13th at 6:30pm

Dorchester

St. Mark's Parish, 1725 Dorchester Avenue, Dorchester 02124
Wednesday, May 29th at 6:30pm

Citizenship Clinics

IIIC, One State Street, 8th Floor, Boston MA 02109
Wednesdays from 10am-1pm
Walk-ins are welcome!

Our Downtown Boston location is fully accessible by public transportation.
Phone: 617.542.7654 | Fax: 617.542.7655 | www.iiicenter.org

A message from Rachel Reisman, Director of Wellness Services

"Social work is the art of listening and the science of hope." Happy spring to everyone! At Wellness Services, we have wrapped up a busy winter season and are looking forward to the warmer months ahead. Siobhan Kelly and I are proud to have spent another year bringing our counseling, case management, and advocacy skills to our IIIC clients and community. We are committed to the

mental health and well-being of everyone who seeks us out.

Whether it is for support with a life decision, substance use, depression, or to solve a family or medical crisis, we listen, problem-solve, and offer hope when it can be hard to find. We hold dear the core social work principles of empathy, respect and empowering others, and acknowledge the privilege it is to work with all of our

clients as they navigate change and healing. As a fellow clinician puts it, "When you do it right, social work is a feeling larger than your own life" (Ogden Rogers). We wholeheartedly agree!

Never hesitate to be in touch with us (rreisman@iiicenter.org) or 617-542-7656 for a chat or to figure out the next best step. We are here for you and welcome all!

Save the Date: Irish for Pride

The IIIC will participate in Boston Pride Parade again this year, under the banner "Irish for Pride." Pending City of Boston approval, the parade and festival will be held on Sat., June 8, at noon. We welcome everyone to

march alongside us and stay tuned for more details! Please email Francesca Paranzino at fparanzino@iiicenter.org with any questions and to get involved! You can learn more about the parade at bostonpride.org/parade.

Boston Irish Reporter expands online with bostonirish.com, Facebook

The BIR's social media coverage has expanded, both on its website, bostonirish.com and the popular Boston Irish Reporter page on Facebook. "There is a wealth of great information about Ireland and the Boston Irish online," said BIR publisher Ed Forry. "We continue to publish a print edition each month, add frequent updates on bostonirish.com, and put out daily and weekly highlights and links on our Facebook page. Our readers now have more ways to remain up to date about Irish news both at home and in Ireland" The Reporter's growth continues in the wake of the demise of the New York-based Irish Emigrant last month. The Boston-based, family-owned BIR will soon observe its 30th anniversary while remaining Boston/New England's only independent source for news and information about our Irish communities.



Mary Smith was a Knocker-up who earned six pence a week shooting dried peas at sleeping workers' windows to rouse them so they could get to work on time. The profession started in England and Ireland during the Industrial Revolution, before alarm clocks were affordable or reliable. *Photo from Stair nahÉireann/History of Ireland Group.*



The Old Head peninsula of Kinsale reaches out over two miles into the Atlantic. It's home to Old Head Golf Course, one of the world's most spectacular layouts. *Photo from Ireland & Peg's Cottage.*



Black & White in Color- The graceful swans of Lough Cork. *Corkcity and countyphotos.*

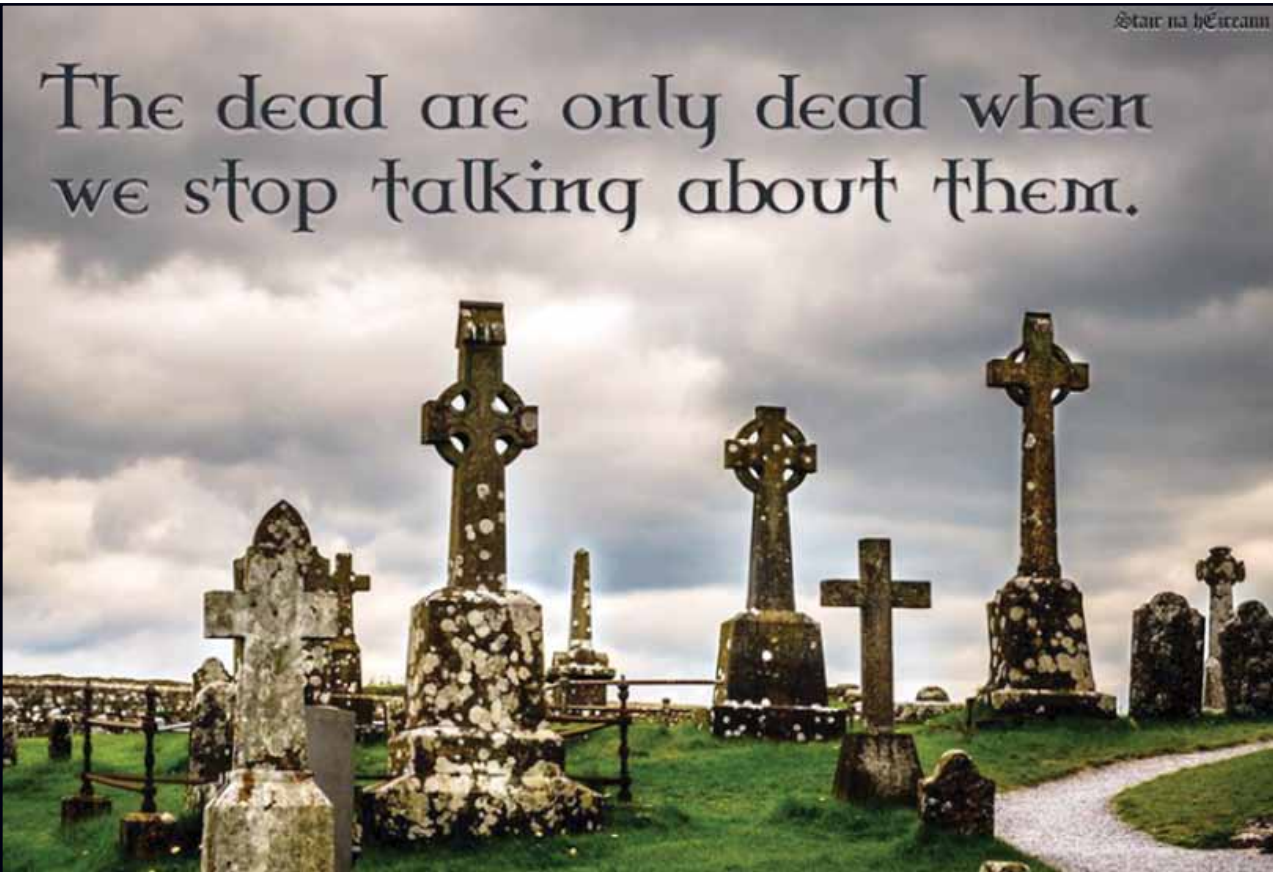


On this page this month, we offer an array of Irish images that have appeared recently online. We invite you to join us at facebook.com/bostonirishreporter.

Above, Boston Irish Catholics of a certain age (the 1950s and early 1960s) will share memories of Cardinal/ Archbishop Richard J. Cushing's 6:45 p.m. Rosary radio broadcast on seeing this rosary-time scene in an Irish home of the long ago. *Irishpost.com*

At right, huge waves serve as an impressive background to a photo of an old cottage on the Doolin to Moher clifftop trail. *Patrickgalvinphotography*

Celtic Crosses (below) in the stillness of an Irish cemetery. *Photo from Stair nahÉireann/History of Ireland Group.*



A memorial to hunger, sickness, and burial



All are cordially invited to join with members of the Boston Irish Community

For the blessing & dedication of

**The Great Hunger Memorial
(An Gorta Mór)
on Deer Island, Boston Harbor**

In memory of the Irish souls who, in hope of avoiding starvation, left their native land for new lives in America, only to perish and be interred in unmarked graves.

Invocation & Blessing
Cardinal Seán Patrick O'Malley, OFM Cap
Archbishop of Boston

Remarks
Honorable Martin J Walsh,
Mayor of Boston

**Saturday, May 25, 2019
10:00 am on Deer Island**

Event parking and assistance provided by the MWRA.
There will be traditional music followed by light refreshments
at the MWRA's Deer Island Historic Pump Station adjacent to the site

(Continued from page 1)

Wharf. As overwhelmed physicians dispatched the gravely ill to hospitals, the city determined that the swelling influx of Irish aboard Boston-bound famine ships posed such a health risk that it was deemed “a settled matter that the City must support a Physician at Deer Island, and that that is the suitable and proper place to attend to all the nuisance and sickness accompanying navigation...”

The Deer Island Quarantine Hospital and Almshouse was established in that year. All famine ships plodding into Boston Harbor and judged by port officials to be “foul and infected with any malignant or contagious disease” moored at Deer Island where the port physician quarantined Irish men, woman, and children suffering from typhus, cholera, and an array of fevers and oversaw the “cleaning and purification” of ships.

Only then could the healthier immi-

grants set foot in Boston. From 1847 to 1849, approximately 4,186 people were quarantined “as a precautionary measure to ward off a pestilence that would have been ruinous to the public health and business of the city.” Not all were to make it off the island.

Even before Bostonians grasped the health hazard posed by Famine ships clotted with direly ill passengers, the Irish newcomers had not been welcomed. By 1847, the city was changing – and its Yankee population didn’t like what was happening. Anglo-Protestant families who had ruled over the city since their Puritan ancestors set foot in the region in the 1620s embraced still the anti-Irish, anti-Catholic prejudice of Boston’s founders. Ephraim Peabody, whose family ranked high among Boston’s founding fathers, lamented that the Irish were infesting “proper Bostonians’” turf with a horrific “social revolution.”

As the city’s population swelled from some 115,000 to over 150,000 in 1847 alone, the newcomers quickly discovered that they had escaped the Famine only to find themselves in a new battle for survival among what historian George S. Potter dubbed “the chilly Yankee icicles.” The age-old prejudices that the Irish had encountered on the “old sod” now confronted them in the New World, and as some one million often-unwelcome Irish poured into America from 1845-1850, the roughest reception awaited them in Boston. For many, the first and last site they would inhabit in America was the Deer Island Quarantine Station across from the Boston shore.

It was scant surprise that so many Irish reaching Boston were sick after the six-to-eight-week Atlantic crossing. During the Great Hunger, over a million people perished in Ireland from starvation and associated diseases between 1845 and 1852. More than two million emigrated to the United States, Canada, Australia, and other sites, and roughly six percent of the Irish emigrants fleeing to Boston and other North American cities died at sea from disease or went down with vessels ill-suited to the crossing.

The logs and records of Famine ships sailing to Boston and elsewhere recorded unforgettable scenes of human fear and misery. In an 1848 letter penned by British official Stephen E. De Vere, the



Irish immigrants, c. 1840s, streaming from a “coffin ship” to the “Golden Door” of America.

description of the berths is chilling: “The passengers have not more [room] than their coffins.”

And a Parliamentary Report of the Select Committee to Investigate the Operation of the Passengers Acts related: “I have known cases of females who had to sit up all night upon their boxes in the steerage,” said one eyewitness, “because they could think not of going into bed with a strange man.” With men and women packed into steerage so tightly, there were scant or no means to preserve even a semblance of privacy or modesty. Fevers spread rapidly and lethally.

Irish men, women, and children, all thrashing with sickness, crying out in their fitful sleep, and dazed by the growing realization that no matter whether their ship went down in a storm or disgorged them in America, they would never see Ireland again. An elderly woman slumped against the rail of a coffin ship was heard to exclaim, “God save me. Old as I am, I should never have left Ireland. Who knows where I’ll be buried now.”

For many Irish, the burial place proved to be Deer Island’s old Rest Haven Cemetery from 1847 to 1850. A City Council panel ordered that the burial ground should be “near the northwest corner of the most northerly hill on the island.”

Figures as to how many were buried in an unmarked grave vary because a number of bodies were claimed by family members and buried elsewhere in or around Boston. Those who were unclaimed – they had died alone – were

laid to rest on the island at the city of Boston’s expense.

Many immigrants who were not sick enough for quarantine on Deer Island did not last long in Boston’s North End Irish tenements and rooming houses, where conditions were little better than on the crowded coffin ships. A Boston Committee of Internal Health study of the slums related that the Irish languished in “a perfect hive of human beings, without comforts and mostly without common necessities; in many cases huddled together like brutes, without regard to age or sex or sense of decency. Under such circumstances self-respect, forethought, all the high and noble virtues soon die out, and sullen indifference and despair or disorder, intemperance and utter degradation reign supreme.”

The lack of sanitation in the slums, or “rookeries,” unleashed a wide array of disease, cholera proving the most lethal. Of Irish children born in Boston during the Famine years, approximately 60 percent died before the age of six.

To bestow the respect and recognition the Deer Island dead were denied in life, the Boston Irish community and the community at large are cordially invited to attend the memorial ceremony on Sat., May 25, 2019, at 10 a.m. on Deer Island.

(Event parking and assistance will be provided by the MWRA. There will be traditional music followed by light refreshments at the MWRA’s Deer Island Historical Meeting Center adjacent to the site.)

Two plaques will tell visitors the history behind the memorial

By JOHN MCCOLGAN,
BOSTON CITY ARCHIVIST

The Deer Island Great Hunger Memorial will feature two plaques that will give visitors some history to appreciate what those who were buried there 170 years ago experienced as their lives ebbed away.

1. “An Gorta Mór,” Ireland’s “Great Hunger”, was a period of mass starvation, disease, and emigration between 1845 and 1852. In the dark year of 1847 an unprecedented exodus of emigrants fled Ireland for North America, many afflicted with dire illnesses spawned in famine. Tens of thousands arrived in Boston, hundreds suffering from disease easily spread amidst deplorable, crowded conditions aboard the “coffin ships” that brought them. “Ship Fever” – the highly contagious, often fatal, lice-born scourge of typhus – overwhelmed City institutions and threatened a wider epidemic in the city. The extraordinary emigrant influx alarmed Bostonians, and a burgeoning anti-immigrant nativism intensified. Faced with citizen disquiet and a financial and public health crisis, City government enforced laws requiring shipmasters to post indemnity bonds for support of foreign paupers, and established an emergency quarantine hospital on Deer Island.

The hospital opened on Sat. May 29, 1847, with some of its quickly built compound still under construction. Emigrants stricken in the city were transported by sloop from Long Wharf. Tents, erected at the island’s southern point, sheltered passengers landed from quarantined vessels. The ship “Clairborne” arrived from Liverpool with 259 passengers. Calvin Bailey, the city’s Inspector of Alien Passengers, deter-



A worker prepares the Deer Island Memorial site for the May 5 dedication.
Photo courtesy Mike Carney

mined eleven of them to be paupers, and required the shipmaster to secure bonds against public expense for their care.

The Port Physician, Jerome Von Crowninshield Smith, found six passengers suffering from “malignant diseases” and ordered their transfer to the hospital up-island. One of these, Mary Connell, age 1, would die on 3 June, the first Irish famine victim to be buried on

Deer Island. In the next year and a half, a team of doctors, nurses and support staff treated 2,815 patients. About 500 died and were buried on the island. Doctors and staff also contracted fever, some of whom also perished, including head physician Joseph M. Moriarty.

2. Disease aboard emigrant ships dramatically subsided in late 1848. With a

typhus epidemic no longer imminent, the City Council relinquished Deer Island Hospital to the House of Industry, the first of several institutions subsequently on the island sheltering the poor and the miscreant for nearly a century and a half. Boston Harbor’s quarantine hospital remained at Deer Island until the 1860s under the superintendence of Dr. John M. Moriarty, brother of the late Joseph.

In the final years of the Great Hunger and beyond, Irish emigrants continued to arrive in Boston in large numbers, ultimately rising in society to transform the city’s politics and character. Yet, many remained trapped in desperate circumstances requiring shelter and care in the city’s institutions. Hundreds more died on Deer Island, laid to rest in unmarked graves in ground disturbed by construction over many years.

In the 1990s, Bill and Rita O’Connell conceived the idea of a monument to Irish immigrants who survived famine and the coffin ships, only to perish in quarantine. The Deer Island Irish Memorial fulfills the O’Connells’ endeavor to create a fitting marker commemorating nearly 1,200 men, women, and children interred on the island during the Irish Famine years of 1845-1852. The Celtic Cross, an icon of Irish heritage, has signified since ancient times a place that is sacred. Victims of Ireland’s Great Hunger share this ground with peaceful Native Americans starved in confinement on the island during King Philip’s War in the 1670s. This Cross marks as sacred the earth of Deer Island holding remains that testify against colonialism, greed, economic exploitation, and political repression, inflicted upon Ireland, Native Americans, and many another people down to the present, the tragedies of famine, war, and forced exile.

Pelosi group visit to Ireland seen as highly significant

(Continued from page 1)

clear the negative consequences of a hard border in Ireland and, likewise if there is any threat to the Good Friday Agreement caused by Brexit.

Before arriving in Ireland, Neal and Pelosi, joined by several other House colleagues both Democrat and Republican, delivered that message in person in London to the British government.

To know Richie Neal as I have since his days as a popular mayor of Springfield, Massachusetts, is to know that he doesn't pull any punches. Mild and engaging by nature, he is also direct in his approach to issues he cares about. Jobs and educational funding for his district remain paramount. But true to his heritage as an Irish American with a proven interest in building peace for all in Northern Ireland, so is making sure the gains achieved under the Good Friday Agreement are not derailed by Brexit.

Before the Brexit vote in 2016, Neal, as co-leader of the Friends of Ireland in the US Congress, stressed that progress made in trying to promote more US investment by implementing the twelve percent corporation tax would mean little if Northern Ireland became separated from the European Union and from more meaningful cross border cooperation within the island.

Right now, Richard Neal may be one of the



Dr. Frank Costello was a guest speaker at the IICNE on March 22, discussing the topic “Brexit: a reckless endangerment to peace and stability or all of Ireland and its citizens.” A former Boston teacher, and an official in Mayor Ray Flynn’s administration, Costello has lived in Belfast working in business and academia.

reasons for ensuring that dislodging the North from Europe does not happen. As a university lecturer, he also is concerned that “the damage that would be done would not be economic alone.” At the heart of that concern is the need to ensure that the human rights protections under the Good Friday Agreement are also not scuttled by Brexit.

Boston software entrepreneur John Cullinane—

an architect of investment projects for Northern Ireland and the border counties funded largely with US government support under the International Fund for Ireland, and an advisor to Nancy Pelosi – noted his own faith in chairman Neal “as someone knowledgeable and well versed in the history of these islands.” Cullinane also singled out Neal’s commitment “to using his important role to use his influence to help thwart the madness that would drive job creating companies away whether they be on the Island of Ireland or in Britain itself by Brexit, something that too many do not seem to understand.”

“Business likes stability,” Cullinane noted, “whether in Springfield, Mass., Belfast, or Derry. And I am hoping that Richard Neal, given his leading role in Congress, will be able to help drive this point home to the British government if they come looking for special trade deals with the US.”

Sister Lena Deevy, a founder and former head of Boston’s Irish International Immigration Centre (IIC), said “It was a great tribute to him [Neal] that Speaker Pelosi joined him in coming to Ireland to emphasize the critical importance of protecting the Good Friday Agreement in any Brexit settlement between the UK and European Union.

“I first met Rep.

Neal when he joined me on the front lines over twenty years ago as an International Observer of the July 12th Orange March in Portadown,” she said. “He showed his concern for the besieged local Catholic population there while he was working for a peaceful settlement and reaching out to the Unionist community”

Attorney Brian O’Dwyer, always close to the scene on the ground in the North, and also among the most effective in leveraging influence on vital issues, stresses that Neal’s “stated position” on the inherent obligation of the US to protect against the undermining of the Good Friday Agreement “are not idle words” and that Neal “has made repeated visits to the border.” With Neal “now in charge” of the Ways and Means Committee, O’Dwyer emphasizes that this is where any post-Brexit proposed British trade deal with the U.S. “gets its first hearing.”

Another respected local voice has weighed in on the risks posed by Brexit. Tim Murray, chairman of the Greater Worcester Chamber of Commerce of some 2,500 members in Central Massachusetts stresses that “Many Massachusetts companies looking to expand business into the European market naturally look to the UK and Ireland.

Everything must be done to ensure that a UK exit from the EU will not put the North at a competitive disadvantage, especially as it continues to benefit from the relative peace of the last two decades thanks to the Good Friday Accords.

“Richie Neal is 100 percent right to emphasize the prospect of the reinstitution of the border crossing between the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland would be a major step backwards for any Brexit deal that threatens the Good Friday Agreement that the US backed fully in the effort to achieve peace and stability.”

The strong wind that has blown across the Atlantic to Downing Street, and also, hopefully, to enough members of the House of Commons with any sense, shows that US congressional leaders on a bi-partisan basis are intent upon protecting the economic, human rights, and political gains enshrined in the Good Friday Agreement. This means that Britain’s acceptance that it is in its own interest to honor its commitments to Ireland – all of Ireland.

Dr. Francis Costello, now based in Belfast as a consultant for US and Irish companies is author of several books on Irish history. He served in the Clinton Administration and was press secretary for Mayor Ray Flynn and chief of staff to Rep. Joseph P. Kennedy II.

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When Anne O’Sullivan becomes Dr. Ruth

BY R. J. DONOVAN
SPECIAL TO THE BIR
Karola Ruth Siegel was born in Wiesenfeld, Germany in 1928. Not too many years later, she watched as her father was dragged off by the Nazis. With hundreds of other children, she was shipped off, alone, to an orphanage in Switzerland. She never saw her parents again.
As a young woman, she trained as a sniper in the Jewish underground. She was seriously wounded and lost the ability to walk. Decades later, after time spent at the University

of Paris, The New School, and Columbia University, she emerged into the world spotlight as Dr. Ruth Westheimer, a four-foot-seven pioneer in the psychology of human sexuality who was fluent in four languages.
People know the twinkling eyes and infectious laugh. However, few may be aware of the challenging and complex journey that brought her to international prominence.
Dr. Ruth’s life is chronicled in the inspirational and very personal one-woman drama, “Becoming Dr. Ruth.” Written by Mark St. Germain, the play is being pre-

sented by New Repertory Theater in Watertown thorough May 19. It is set in Dr. Ruth’s New York apartment. It’s 1997 and her third husband, Fred Westheimer, has died. As she’s packing her belongings to move, she shares personal stories, life lessons, and advice.
Anne O’Sullivan stars in the title role at New Rep. Born in Limerick, Anne came to America at the age of five, settling in Brooklyn. With more than 140 plays to her credit, her career has taken her from the Williamstown Theatre Festival to the The Old Globe, Yale Rep, and

beyond. She has also appeared in film and on television.
When “Becoming Dr. Ruth” was first staged off-Broadway in 2013, Anne was hired to understudy the lead role. She never had the opportunity to go on. But in a remarkable twist of fate, she has since made the role her own, performing “Dr. Ruth” at The Herberger Theatre, Penguin Rep, B Street Theatre, Gable Stage and now at New Rep.
Broadway World has praised her performance, saying, “Anne O’Sullivan’s command of the material is remarkable . . . in the poignant



Anne O’Sullivan is Dr. Ruth Westheimer in “Becoming Dr. Ruth.”
Dorice A. Madronero photo

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MAY

7

Getting to the Point with Daniel Mulhall, Ireland’s Ambassador to the United States
Tuesday, May 7 • 8:15 a.m.
A conversation with Ireland’s Ambassador to the United States who will discuss the Brexit deal, opportunities for ongoing cultural exchanges, and the strength of Boston’s Irish-American community.

MAY

7

Getting to the Point: The Path to Affordable Housing in Massachusetts
Tuesday, May 7 • 6:30 p.m.
Adrian Walker, columnist at *The Boston Globe*, moderates a discussion on how government leaders and other stakeholders are working to address the need for affordable housing in the Commonwealth.

MAY

14

Getting to the Point with the authors of “The Hill to Die On”
Tuesday, May 14 • 6:30 p.m.
Jake Sherman and Anna Palmer will join C-SPAN’s Steve Scully to discuss their inside account of President Trump’s first two years in the White House as viewed from Capitol Hill.

Programs take place in a full-scale replica of the United States Senate Chamber
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emkinstitute.org/programs

moments, her sensitivity is extraordinary.”
Anne spoke about her work from her home in New York City. Here’s a condensed look at our chat:
Q. Dr. Ruth faced one obstacle after another. What made her such a success?
A. Knowing her background, it feels so much like destiny . . . Everything had to do with her incredible impulsiveness to take a risk . . . she always leapt at opportunities that came her way. She didn’t always know how to solve things, except in the moment. “I do this and then figure it out” . . . And the honor of playing this great woman who’s achieved so much – I never do take it for granted – I always come to this with a sense of it being very much a sacred work.
Q. Is it daunting to play both a real person and someone who’s so beloved?
A. I’d be a fool if I wasn’t daunted. Every day there’s something that happens to me that I find challenging. I remember reading a Georgia O’Keeffe quote – “I’m terrified every single day, but it never stops me” – and I wake up like that. I’m going to say thank you and embrace the day.
Q. Isn’t Dr. Ruth’s story particularly valid in today’s political climate?
A. Considering what is going on in this country, the suffering of so many people, refugees. Here I am telling the story of a refugee who triumphed against daunting odds. Her greatest sustenance was that she was so deeply loved; she was an adored child, by her mother and father and grandmother. Adored and nurtured, coddled – that love that she experienced really nurtured her through all of it. I feel a deep obligation to give myself deeply and fully to telling her story as best I can.
BIR. She has always dealt in facts, never anything sensational.
A. She wasn’t threat-

ening sexually. Because she was this tiny, little woman, it made people able to talk to her, like a Mamma . . . There’s a Hulu documentary coming out about her and it’s wonderful . . . She’s going to be 91 in June and still flies to Israel every year. She teaches at Columbia. She teaches at Princeton . . . She is just very alive.
BIR: I know you’ve developed a warm relationship with her.
“I said to her, I dream of bringing this to Ireland, this play – and this was a year ago, or maybe two years ago . . . And she just goes, (*speaking in Dr. Ruth’s voice*) “Do it! Do it now! Don’t think! Just do it!” . . . I think the Irish would go for her story . . . there are similarities to so many people
BIR: You’ve also developed a very personal connection to the content of this play.
A. I’ve been an honorary Jew for a long time – when I was in my 20s I read all of the Holocaust literature, I read all of Elie Wiesel and many other diaries by unknown Holocaust survivors – that was just because I fell in love with Judaism . . . I value the Jewish contribution to the world so much. I value the Irish contribution to the world, too, delving into Celtic culture, which is very rewarding to me. And I see similarities between the cultures, Irish and Jewish.
BIR: There’s a responsibility in conveying such a personal story to audiences.
A.: Story telling is sacred . . . I do feel we are at our noblest when we give our hearts to telling stories to people that, you know, we love and believe in. I’ve been a spiritual seeker all my life . . . acting has been part of my spiritual seeking, I guess.
R. J. Donovan is editor and publisher of on-stageboston.com.
•••
“*Becoming Dr. Ruth,*” through May 19, New Repertory Theatre, 321 Arsenal Street, Watertown. Info: 617-923-8487 or newrep.org.

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Subtlety, nuance, contemplation put Rakish duo in a nice, comfortable place

BY SEAN SMITH
SPECIAL TO THE BIR

There are, of course, many reasons why Celtic musicians decide to team up. What brought the Boston-based duo Rakish – fiddler Maura Shawn Scanlin and guitarist Conor Hearn – together was less an affinity for hot fiddle tunes than a shared affection for slow ones.

Not that Scanlin and Hearn aren't fond of blazing away on an Irish jig or Scottish reel, as is evident on the CD/EP they released late last year. However, much like the celebrated fiddle-guitar duo of Martin Hayes and Dennis Cahill, Scanlin and Hearn take pleasure in a more contemplative, colloquial approach: giving space to the subtleties and nuances of a tune or song, and building a groove that they can comfortably inhabit.

And when that happens, they reveal a set of influences and interests that extend from Irish and Scottish tradition to Americana and classical music, not to mention poetry and literature. Most of all, Scanlin and Hearn display an intuitive feel for how, and when, to bring it all together.

"Conor is always listening, reacting, adjusting – he's always very in tune with what we're trying to achieve in the moment. It's not unlike chamber music in the classical sense," explains Scanlin, a native of Boone, NC, and a two-time National Scottish Fiddle Champion. "We're constantly playing off of what the other one is doing. It's fun to take risks melodically with variations and stuff because I know he'll be right there with me."

"We bonded over classic, obvious things – the fast reels and jigs, Liz Carroll and John Doyle – but we found what we really like are the slow tunes," says Hearn. "It's a great way to get into the music and explore all the possibilities, and I think it's a big reason why we have this strong interactivity to our playing."

The Scanlin-Hearn partnership hasn't taken place in a vacuum: They also are members of the innovative quintet Pumpkin Bread, formed with fellow New England Conservatory students. Scanlin has been pursuing a master's degree at the Yale School of Music for the past two years, and Hearn has been involved in a number of informal, formal, and temporary collaborations since moving from Silver Springs, Md., to the Boston area to enroll in the Tufts/NEC program.

These experiences have been complementary while also serving as a point of departure for Scanlin and Hearn, delineating the qualities that make their connection a special one.

"Conor has a vast range of capabilities on guitar and always is able to find just the right sort of tone, whether that's a really open lyrical line or super driving rhythm," says Scanlin. "We've also had some fun trading melodic and accompaniment roles: I'll accompany him while he plays the melody."

"We try to explore a lot of different settings of a tune or song in order to create something that really feels right to us."

Hearn and Scanlin share some commonalities in their musical development: Both came from musical households, in which parents and siblings played



Maura Shawn Scanlin and Conor Hearn formed their duo, Rakish, while playing as part of the quintet Pumpkin Bread. *Steven Manwaring photo*

instruments, with a fondness for folk and traditional styles; both started out on violin very young – Hearn added guitar when he was 12 ("I was the only one among my friends who could play guitar, so people wanted me to play with them"); both also regularly attended festivals and music camps, where they soaked up tunes from different genres, whether Appalachian, old-timey, Irish, or Scottish.

Scanlin had a classical component to her music, and chose New England Conservatory for its strings department and chamber music offerings. Although she leaned more toward Scottish music early on, during her time in Boston she has dived deep into the area Irish scene. Hearn, who wound up majoring in English literature, knew he wanted to attend college in a place with a strong music community, and realized he was acquainted with a lot of fiddlers in the Boston area, and opted for Tufts/NEC; for all his Celtic music activity, he has spent a lot of time in Boston's bluegrass community.

Even as they and their three NEC classmates began putting their talents together to form Pumpkin Bread, Hearn and Scanlin found themselves playing together on the side, and liking what they heard. So during 2018 they began to break out on their own when time and energy permitted.

The five-track Rakish CD/EP is a window onto Scanlin and Hearn's brand of eclectic interactivity, particularly the track "Inion Ni Scannlain." The titular tune, a tender waltz written by Donogh Hennessy (former guitarist for the band Lúnasa), begins with Hearn first joining Scanlin on melody before shifting to a definitive chordal accompaniment. There's a brief transition, and then Scanlin's bowing and intonation take on a different character, as she plays a minuet movement from a Bach piece for solo violin; after about a minute-and-a-half, Scanlin returns to the waltz with

some improvisational passages while Hearn's chording and strumming serve to ratchet up tension; to close out, they hearken back to the tranquil tone from the outset of the track.

Another track features Hearn leading "Waterbound," by Kentucky-born singer-songwriter-musician Dirk Powell, Scanlin's bowing and Hearn's flat-picking providing the Appalachian ambiance – until, suddenly, Scanlin kicks in a break with a looser, Americanized version of "Lucy Farr's," a sprightly Irish barn dance named for a noted East Galway fiddler. It seems like an odd counterpart to the apocalyptic imagery in Powell's lyrics, but it works.

Hearn's singing, along with Scanlin's fine harmony vocals, are in the spotlight again on "The Stolen Child," his setting of the William Butler Yeats poem, based on Irish mythology. It's by no means the first musical adaptation: Loreena McKennitt, The Waterboys and Phil Callery (of The Voice Squad) are among those who have recorded versions. But the Rakish take stakes out some new ground, with a pulsing guitar accompaniment and fiddle riffs that draw on Celtic and American folk styles.

The other two tracks, "Sadbh" and "The Birds" are more reflective of the Irish and Scottish aspects of Scanlin and Hearn's resumé, as well as their modernist approach to arrangements of traditional tunes. On the latter, Scanlin and Hearn first deconstruct "The Bird's Hornpipe," slowing the pace and easing off the archetypal hornpipe swagger. Then they ramp up into "The Bird's Nest," a reel with ties to the Irish, Scottish, and Cape Breton traditions; during the third pass they reduce the tune to its essential rhythmic components while they slowly morph into a major key and proceed onwards; the master strokes come in the final go-round of the B part, as Hearn switches from rhythm to flat-picking a harmony. The set is a wonderful construction of build-up and

resolution, a little audacious and, above all, great fun to listen to.

"We had a great time putting the album together, though it was a kind of speedy process" says Scanlin. "People kept asking us if we had CDs, so we thought, 'Maybe we better make one.'"

"When you get into a recording mode," says Hearn, "you're really thinking 'What do we want to sound like?' After all, a CD is something that lasts – more or less, anyway – so ideally you want it to be as representative as possible of all your music. So we tried out some new ideas and worked on them to be ready for the recording."

Hearn credits Scanlin for coming up with the concept for "Inion Ni Scannlain," which they had planned to present at a special concert organized by WGBH "Celtic Sojourn" announcer Brian O'Donovan, who asked the duo to serve as opening act for a performance by classical musicians. Scanlin notes that baroque and Irish music aren't as disparate as they might seem, since both are related to dance traditions ("Music serving dance").

As it turned out, they wound up doing a different piece – a jig paired with another baroque tune – but "the experience of putting 'Inion Ni Scannlain' together gave us a mindset for how we approached making the album," says Hearn.

"The Stolen Child," meanwhile, was a case of Hearn following his literary bent and indulging his interest in adapting poems to music. "I liked the fact that it had a chorus, and I really didn't have to alter or tweak the text," says Hearn. "And, obviously, it's an amazing poem, and very much connected to Irish legend and folklore, so it fit in with what we were doing."

The release of Pumpkin Bread's second album last month means that, for the immediate future, Rakish will be on somewhat of a hiatus – although Hearn and Scanlin will play at the Club Passim Music Brunch on April 21, and have a couple of gigs in Washington, DC, next month – but there are plans for concerts in West Virginia and North Carolina in late summer and an appearance at the Bellingham Irish Festival in Washington state this October.

For those who might wonder, Scanlin and Hearn say the Pumpkin Bread-Rakish balance is an enjoyable one to strike – both collaborations fire their imaginations, in different ways.

"Pumpkin Bread is about playing mostly original music, although some of it is rooted in folk and traditional music, and the goal is to write songs," explains Hearn. "With Rakish, we don't really have to write anything – we have a traditional repertoire we can dip into, so we can put our energy and focus into figuring out what we want to play, and how we want it to sound."

"There's a little overlap sometimes, but I'm finding I can keep Pumpkin Bread and Rakish separate," says Scanlin. "It's just great to have both of them in our lives."

Rakish will play at the Club Passim Music Brunch on April 21 from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. See passim.org/live-music/brunch for details. For more about Rakish, go to rakishmusic.com.

Carter champions 'the country' in Irish music

BY SEAN SMITH
SPECIAL TO THE BIR

There won't just be a concert at Boston's Wilbur Theatre on May 28 – it'll be a birthday celebration (No. 29) for the guy who'll be on stage that night, the Irish country singer-songwriter Nathan Carter.

Born in Liverpool of parents from Co. Down, Carter was active in Irish music as a child, and by the age of 12 had won All-Ireland honors for singing and accordion-playing; he later joined the Liverpool Ceili Band as accordionist and pianist. He has gone on to become one of Ireland's most successful young country music per-

formers. In 2013, he was the first country act since Garth Brooks, six years before, to reach number one in the Irish charts. His 2012 album "Wagon Wheel" made it to the top three in the Irish Album Chart, and his single of the same name earned Carter the RTÉ Irish Country Music Award for Best Single in 2016. His self-titled five-episode TV show saw him perform with such luminaries as K.T. Tunstall, Finbar Furey, Paddy Casey, Mary Black, and Billy Ocean to an audience in excess of 2.5 million viewers.

Last month, Carter took a break from recording to talk about his career and

his upcoming American tour, which will be his third.

Q. *Nathan, you'll be turning 29 the day you perform at The Wilbur – did you ever imagine you'd be marking birthdays on stage before thousands of people?*

Carter: [Laughing] Well, it's getting to be a habit. Last year on my birthday, I was fortunate to play at the London Palladium, where people like The Beatles and Johnny Cash have performed. I'm very happy about appearing at The Wilbur, because although I've played at venues near Boston before, this will be the first time in the city

itself. But I've had the chance to explore Boston, and I love it; I couldn't get over how much of an Irish population there is.

I'll be playing with a six-piece band that includes fiddle and banjo, and as a special treat I'll be joined by Chloe Agnew, who people probably remember from Celtic Woman. She'll do a few on her own, and a few duets with me. I'm really looking forward to it.

Q. *Was there a turning point for you when you just knew music would be your life?*

Carter: I was about 17 when I left school, and I started playing concerts in and around Liverpool.

It got to the stage where I was doing several gigs a week, and found I was making more money than my mum made working for the city council. My parents had been hesitant about me having a career in music, but they said, "Well, if you're making good money, then you should really make a go of it."

I took playing music very seriously. I didn't go on spending sprees. I invested a lot of what I made into making sure I had good equipment that worked well. I still take it seriously: I work most days on the music even when I'm not gigging or making a recording.



Nathan Carter
Birthday Boy

Q. *You were heavily involved in Irish music as a kid, well into your teens. How did your interest in country music develop?*

Carter: My grandma was very fond of singers like Willie Nelson, Patsy Cline, and Buck Owens, and she always played their records, so I was used

(Continued next page)

‘Poets in the Trenches’ – recalling a war, and ‘ordinary men in extraordinary circumstances’

By SEAN SMITH
SPECIAL TO THE BIR

When it comes to World War I, Martin Butler will give you fair warning. “I can talk about it for hours,” says the Tipperary-born musician and singer who has been active in the Boston-area Irish music scene for years.

There are many facets to Butler’s interest in the “Great War”- the myriad, complex political, cultural and social forces that led to the conflict, and those that in turn were unleashed or affected by it – including, of course, Ireland’s bid for long-desired independence from England.

Yet Butler is most concerned with the war’s human dimension, not least because of a familial connection: his namesake great-uncle, who was killed in action in 1916. Private Martin Butler was one of more than 200,000 Irishmen who fought in Irish regiments of the Allied Powers – and one of anywhere from 30,000 to 49,000 Irish soldiers (depending on informational sources) who died during the war.

“There’s a difference between glorifying war and honoring those who fought,” says Butler, who credits friends John and Colin Owens for their invaluable assistance in pulling together the album. “World War I was a horrible, devastating event that caused so much death, destruction, and suffering. The fact that, less than a quarter-century later, we marched into war again shows that we learned nothing. But I’m not here to debate the causes or effects of the war, or how it was conducted, but to make the point that people like grand-uncle Martin bore the brunt of the everyday realities of the war.”

To commemorate the experiences and sacrifices of his great-uncle and other Irishmen, Butler has released a CD, “Poets in the Trenches: The Irish in the Great War,” that includes recitations of poetry, letters, and speeches from the period, along with instrumental music and songs, some original compositions and others from Irish tradition. The 70-minute album features more than 60 individuals – many from the Greater Boston community – providing voice or music; the use of occasional sound effects (troops marching, shells exploding, crowds cheering) lends additional atmosphere to the proceedings.

There is also a poem, “Orchards,” composed by Butler in memory of his great-uncle. It depicts the young private marching wearily with his fellow soldiers as dawn approaches, and being struck by the devastated countryside, a horrid parody of the familiar landscape he’d known in his youth: “I watched the rain falling on flowerless, crop-burned fields/On a corrupted well in a forlorn little town/Where even the apple orchards are cut down.”

While major historical figures like British Foreign Secretary Sir Edward Grey, the Irish nationalist Member of Parliament John Redmond, James Joyce, and Kaiser Wilhelm make cameo appearances, through readings of their speeches or pronouncements – or in the case of the Kaiser, an actual recording – it is the perspectives and words of three Irish soldier-poets that make up the bulk of the album: Tom Kettle, Francis Ledwidge, and Patrick MacGill.

The genesis of “Poets from the Trenches” came from Butler’s first CD project, “Thomas MacDonagh: Poet and Patriot,” in which – using a similar format of poetry, spoken word, songs, and music – he explored the life of MacDonagh, a poet, playwright, and educator who became one of the major figures of the 1916 Easter Rising. In his research on the literature and poetry of the period, Butler was intrigued by the works, and

life stories, of Kettle, Ledwidge, and MacGill. Together with MacDonagh, they – although from different circumstances and with different writing styles and outlooks – represented the unconventional qualities of many Irishmen who would go to battle, whether in Ireland or in Europe: neither soldiers nor statesmen, but men immersed in the arts and education.

“There is, of course, a lot of famous World War I poetry – Wilfred Owens, Hedd Wynn, Robert Graves, Rupert Brooke, to name a few – and there were many Irish who produced World War I poems,” says Butler. “But I decided on these three because they offer such interesting contrasts: Ledwidge, who wrote these pastoral odes to nature while in the trenches looking out on the devastated landscape; MacGill, self-educated, and a socialist much like James Connolly; Kettle, well-educated and from a middle-class background, whose writing style was like oratory.”

Ledwidge, who was killed in 1917, is the most well known of the three; among his poems featured on the album are “After Court Martial,” “The Call to Ireland,” “Autumn Evening in Serbia” and “Soliloquy” (“A keen-edged sword, a soldier’s heart/Is greater than a poet’s art”). Kettle, a friend of Thomas MacDonagh, left poems such as “To My Daughter Betty, the Gift of God” (“Know that we fools, now with the foolish dead/Died not for flag, nor King, nor Emperor/But for a dream, born in a herdsman’s shed/And for the secret Scripture of the poor”), penned four days before he met his death in battle.

MacGill, the “Navy Poet” and the only one of the trio to survive the war, vividly captured the Battle of Loos in his book “The Great Push,” and its sorrowful aftermath in “After Loos” (“Was it only yesterday/lusty comrades marched away?”).

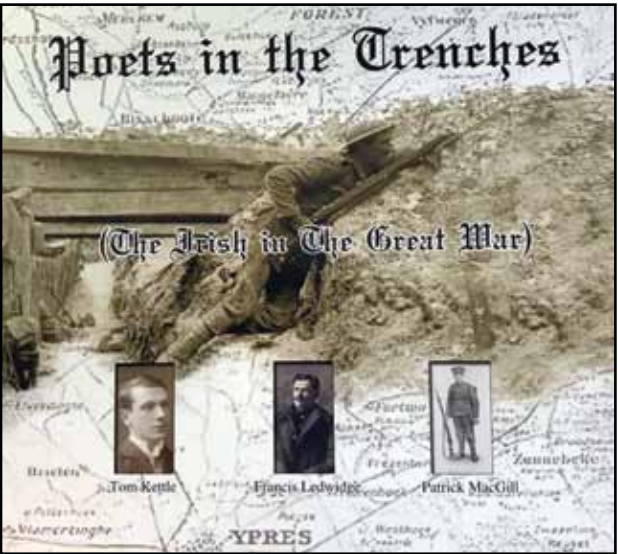
Highlighting the three poet/soldiers also serves to underscore the complexity of the war for Ireland, Butler points out: Many Irishmen confronted the dilemma of whether to take part in the struggle for independence from England, or join in the larger conflict taking place in Europe. And while much of the Irish populace looked askance at the 1916 Easter Rising, the British hardline response – especially the executions of the Rising’s leaders – changed attitudes, not just about the rebellion but also about Ireland’s participation in the Great War.

“Irishmen who went off to war being hailed as heroes,” Butler says, “were now coming back home to find indifference, even hostility.”

This ambivalence persisted for decades – far too long, as far as Butler is concerned. “No one has more respect for the men of 1916 than me, but it’s heartening to see a growing recognition of the Irish soldiers who fought for the Allies. I think there is finally a realization that the Irish in the Great War were fighting for the ideology of a free Ireland – they saw Germany as a menace to all of the UK, and that included Ireland. While in hindsight, through the lenses of today, the idea of a German invasion seems ludicrous, it was a very real, and scary, proposition.”

Such decisions were not made lightly, Butler says, and sometimes made for excruciating outcomes, particularly for families of combatants: Almost a year after Eamonn Ceannt was executed for his role in the Easter Rising, his brother William was killed in the Battle of Arras on the Western Front.

Although “Poets in the Trenches” touches on the controversy over Ireland and the Great War – among the references is the speech by Irish MP D. D. Sheehan criticizing British conscription in Ireland – Butler steered away from making it a major component in the



Martin Butler, creator of the “Poets in the Trenches” album project, says World War I-era poetry and other writing are fascinating to read: “People just don’t measure their words that way anymore. Back then, writing and speaking were both a true craft. So many of the soldiers kept diaries, full of incredible details that help us envision what they were seeing and feeling.”

project. “I had to really streamline the album, because being a World War I buff you can get to a point where you’re just throwing too much out there at once. I did my best to have a narrative of ordinary men in extraordinary circumstances.”

Butler also kept the album’s timeline focused: It begins with excerpts of Grey’s address to Parliament on August 3, 1914 – the day before Britain entered the war – in which he said “We are going to suffer, I am afraid, terribly in this war, whether we are in it or whether we stand aside,” and closes on November 12, 1918, the day after the war ended, as evoked by MacGill’s “The Cobbled Road” (“Now when we take the cobbled road/We often took before/Our thoughts are with the hearty lads/Who tread that way no more”).

Immersing himself in the writings of the era for this and the MacDonagh project was a treat for Butler: “People just don’t measure their words that way anymore. Back then, writing and speaking were both a true craft. So many of the soldiers kept diaries, full of incredible details that help us envision what they were seeing and feeling. And I think of D.D. Sheehan, for example, and the anger he expressed so eloquently, from a place of caring. There’s just so much power in words, and it’s all there for us to experience.”

“Poets in the Trenches” had “a lot of moving parts,” notes Butler, with recordings of its contributors coming from many, often far-flung locations. Among the many lending their skills were Grammy-winning flutist Frank Wharton, All-Ireland Fleadh champion musicians Stuart Peak and Torrin Ryan from Massachusetts, and actress Aedin Moloney, the daughter of Chieftains’ leader Paddy Moloney.

Butler – who is in the midst of writing a book to accompany the CD with co-author Captain Steven Dieter, a Canadian military historian – is no less grateful to all the other musicians, singers, readers, and technicians who were part of the album.

“It would’ve been a nightmare if I didn’t love it so much,” he quips. “But you know, it’s easy to lose your heart through something like this – just so many things that had to fall the right way. But in the end, a lot of good people made it work.”

“Poets in the Trenches” is available via iTunes, Apple and Amazon. For more details, go to the project Facebook page at facebook.com / PoetsInTheTrenches.

‘An Irish Immigrant Story’ zeros in on the challenges that immigrant families face

Jack Cashman, a retired business and public service professional, has completed his new book, “An Irish Immigrant Story. It’s an evocative telling of the challenges experienced by an immigrant family and the collective dream for independence.

The author draws his inspiration from personal circumstances in delivering a powerful message of understanding the lives of foreigners seeking refuge in a faraway land. He writes:

“Johanna Cashman and John McCarthy, along with over a million others, immigrated to America to escape a devastating famine. They left behind family members who faced starvation to come to a land that would give them a new opportunity for a good life. They were soon made aware that they were not welcome in this new land and that every day would present a new struggle for survival. Johanna and John got married, determined to raise a family in their adopted country. In spite of all the obstacles they encountered, including John’s untimely death, the family grew and found success.

The second generation used their success to lend assistance to the country their parents were forced to leave in Ireland’s drive for independence from its oppressor. This historical novel brings the reader through the heartwarming story of a family that overcomes adversity to thrive in America. At the same time, it details the movement in the country they left to find its own independent place in the world.”

“An Irish Immigrant Story,” issued by Page Publishing, is available at bookstores everywhere, or online at the Apple iTunes store, Amazon, Google Play, or Barnes and Noble.

Nathan Carter champions ‘the country’ in Irish music

(Continued from page 13) to hearing them, and I just picked up on the music – I’d sing some Charlie Pride or Johnny Cash, for example. Thing is, there’s always been a country scene in Ireland, and it’s really grown a lot in recent years, especially among the younger generations. So it’s easy to find other people who are interested in playing country, and I just found it kind of a natural transition.

Q. You mentioned a few country artists, and we could throw in so many more: Kris Kristofferson, Garth Brooks, Taylor Swift, and on and on. There are so many different eras, so many styles. What for you defines country music?

Carter: When I think of country, especially modern-day country, I think of Alan Jackson and those story-songs of his that he puts such feeling into. It’s all about the

lyrics, and the emotions. But I also try to take the incredible energy that Garth Brooks puts into his concerts, making that “big sound.”

Q. As you mentioned, country music has been popular in Ireland for a long time. Why is that?

Carter: Irish music and folk music have a lot of influence in country, as we know. There’s a lot of similar instrumentation between them, and I think the sentiment of the story-song is strong in both Irish and country – we know how much the Irish treasure story-telling.

And of course, like in America, country music is huge in the rural areas in Ireland, probably because there are a lot of similar topics and other common elements: working on the farm, love of the land, moonshine (or poteen), and so on.

Actually, nowadays, I’m trying to get back to my

Irish roots. This recording I’m doing now – which I hope to finish in July – will have a lot more of an Irish folk sound, and I’m hoping to collaborate with some Irish acts. So I guess that shows how much of a connection I see in country and Irish.

Q. Speaking of your Irish roots, one of the songs you wrote concerns your great-grandmother. What’s it about?

Carter: The song is “Winnie O’Neill,” and it’s about making the best of things when life takes an unexpected turn. It tells the story of my great-grandparents, Jimmy and Winnie O’Neill, and how when they were young newlyweds, they decided to leave Newry, in County Down, and go to America. But first they had to travel to Liverpool so they could get the boat to New York. Unfortunately, once they got to Liverpool, they were robbed – all the money

that was going to get them to America was stolen. So they had no choice but to stay in Liverpool.

But they wound up falling in love with the city, and it was there they raised their 10 children, including my grandmother, Anne O’Neill, whom we always called “Nan.” And she married John McCoy, and had a daughter, Noreen, who married Ian Carter, who was my father.

So, if my Winnie and Jimmy hadn’t stayed in Liverpool – if they had just gone back to Newry or someplace else – then my grandparents wouldn’t have met, and everything would have been different. For one thing, I wouldn’t be here, writing songs about them.

Tickets for the May 28 Nathan Carter concert at The Wilbur Theatre are available at thewilbur.com / artist / nathan-carter.

THE BIR’S CALENDAR OF IRISH CELTIC EVENTS

The Burren Backroom series has another full calendar of Irish/Celtic music, starting on May 5 with a 4 p.m. matinee performance featuring a pair of spousal duos. West Coast-based **Noctambule** is Marla Fibish and Bruce Victor, a quiet but steady presence in Irish traditional music also known for their acoustically eclectic settings of poetry by the likes of Service, Tennyson, Neruda, and St. Vincent Millay with mandolin, mandola, bouzouki, cittern, guitar, and tenor guitar; Fibish in particular has drawn accolades for her mandolin playing. Locals **Lindsay Straw and Jordan Santiago** mesh Irish instrumental music and British Isles song tradition with bluegrass, jazz and American fiddle tunes on guitar, mandolin and fiddle.

A pair of young musicians with intriguingly contrasting backgrounds, **Haley Richardson and Quinn Bachand**, come to the Backroom on May 8 at 7:30 p.m. New Jersey native Richardson, all of 16, is a seasoned fiddler in the traditional Sligo style who has performed all over Ireland, Scotland, England, Canada, Thailand, and the US (including locally at the Backroom and in “A Christmas Celtic Sojourn”), and has won multiple All-Ireland championships as well as Junior Fiddler of Dooney honors. Berklee College of Music alumnus Bachand, from British Columbia in Canada, is a guitarist of considerable and distinctive ability who, in addition to his equally talented fiddler/vocalist sister Kristina, has collaborated with performers like Jeremy Kittel, Ashley MacIsaac and Natalie MacMaster.

Opening will be **The Ruta Beggars**, a quintet of students in the Berklee College American Roots Music Program (Micah Nicol, guitar, vocals; Ariel Wyner, mandolin, vocals; Sofia Chiarandini, fiddle, vocals; Trevin Nelson, banjo; Noah Harrington, bass) that blends bluegrass with other folk/acoustic influences and original material.

Jarlath Henderson, a masterful singer as well as a brilliant uilleann piper, flutist, and whistle player, will make his debut at the Backroom on May 15 at 7:30 p.m. Henderson is a three-time All-Ireland champion who has played with Paddy Keenan, LAU, Michael McGoldrick, and Salsa Celtica, among others, and in recent years has drawn notice for his solo work, including his well-received album of traditional songs “Hearts Broken, Heads Turned,” which features electronica and jazz elements alongside pipes, fiddle, and other acoustic instruments.

Galway singer-songwriter and one-time Boston-area resident **Don Stiffe** returns to the Backroom on May 19 at 7:30 p.m. During the past decade or so, Stiffe has become a mainstay in Irish music on the strength of compositions like “Missing Galway” and “Grosse Isle” – and particularly “You’ll Always Be My Mother,” inspired by his search for his birth mother – and interpretations of other contemporary songs. He has also toured and recorded with Cherish the Ladies; his cover of Dermot Henry’s “Shadow of a Singer and His Song” appears on the band’s most recent album, “Heart of the Home.”

Karan Casey, one of Ireland’s most high-profile female singers of the past two decades, will be at the Backroom on May 22 for two shows, at 7:30 and 10 p.m. Casey’s career as a musical performer has included stints in jazz as well as folk and traditional music, and of late has seen her emerge as a songwriter: In 2014, she released her first album of all-original material, “Two More Hours”; last year, she came out with “Hieroglyphs That Tell the Tale,” which included two of her own songs and another she co-wrote with guitarist Sean Og Graham, as well as covers of Bob Dylan’s “The Ballad of Hollis Brown” and Eliza Gilkyson’s “Man of God.” Casey also is the lead vocalist for Boston’s fiddle ensemble Childsplay, and appears on its 2018 album, “The Bloom of Youth.”

Galway’s **BackWest** will be at the Backroom on May 29 at 7:30 p.m. Formed in 2016, the group features the Browne siblings, Maureen (fiddle) – formerly with Arcady and the Alan Kelly Gang – and Brendan (accordion), whose resume includes a stint with “Riverdance” and as a trio with Maureen and famed bodhran player Johnny “Ringo” McDonagh; Peter Vickers (bodhran, step dance), with vast experience in major stage productions including “Lord of the Dance”; and their newest member, Fabian Joyce (guitar, vocals), a former Boston-area resident who has played with the Kane Sisters, Pauline Scanlon and David Munnely. Their repertoire includes many instrumentals and songs – “The Flower of Sweet Strabane,” “Nancy Whiskey” – from the heart of Irish tradition. BackWest released its second album, “Heritage Hall,” earlier this year.

The evening will open with a set from The Burren’s owners, traditional musicians **Tommy McCarthy and Louise Costello**, plus a special guest. For links to ticket reservations and other information, go to burren.com/EventsCalendar.html.

• The recently launched Folk and World Music Concert Series at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Medford will feature **The Vox Hunters** on May 26 at 4 p.m. Armand Aromin and Benedict Gagliardi – who between them muster fiddle, concertina, banjo, whistle, and a few other instruments besides – have been active for some years in both the Rhode Island and Boston-area Irish music circles, but extend their repertoire to other traditions, with fine harmony singing and a good sense of humor to boot.

For more information, see uumedford.org/folk-and-world-music-concert-series.

• Club Passim in Harvard Square will present **McKasson, McDonald and McLane**, a trio of Americans with deep interest and involvement in Scottish music, on May 8 at 8 p.m. Ryan McKasson has become one of

the West Coast’s leading fiddlers in the modern Scottish style, which incorporates contemporary and improvisatory elements into the tradition; he has performed and recorded with such artists as Hanneke Cassel and Alasdair Frasier and Natalie Haas. Guitarist-mandolinist-vocalist Eric McDonald became involved at a young age in the Greater Boston folk music and dance scene, and has gone on to many fruitful collaborations, most recently as part of the trio Daymark. Accordionist-pianist Jeremiah McLane has been a key figure in the resurgence of New England folk/traditional dance music, as a founder of Nightingale (along with Keith Murphy and Becky Tracy, who’ll also be at Passim this month) and the Clayfoot Strutters.

Irish fiddle virtuoso **Martin Hayes**, at left, will give a solo concert on May 9 at 7:30 p.m. Hayes grew



up immersed in his native East Clare’s fiddle tradition, but in his 20s experimented with other kinds of music, notably with the jazz-rock band Midnight Court. Since then, he has paired with guitarist Dennis Cahill to produce mesmerizingly lyrical renditions of traditional Irish music; he and Cahill in turn are members of The Gloaming, which produces a unique sound in which the Irish music tradition is both framework and point of departure. The recipient of awards from the Irish Arts Center of New York, BBC, RTE and TG4, Hayes also has performed on stage with Sting and Paul Simon and recorded with Yo Yo Ma’s Silk Road Project. He is the artistic director of Masters of Tradition, an annual festival in Bantry, Co. Cork and a co-curator for the Marble Sessions at the Kilkenny Arts Festival.

On May 12 at 7 p.m., Club Passim hosts wife-husband duo **Becky Tracy and Keith Murphy**, solid, dynamic interpreters of the numerous music traditions found in New England and the Northeast, from Irish to Quebecois to the Canadian Maritimes and more. Tracy’s fiddling has the drive cultivated via years of playing for New England contra dances but also the sensitivity for accompanying slower tunes. Murphy’s percussive, infectious guitar rhythms – enhanced by his foot percussion – and tender, expressive singing in French as well as English have made him an outstanding soloist as well as a much-admired accompanist. Tracy and Murphy, along with Jeremiah McLane (see above), were part of the pioneering New England trio Nightingale.

Fiddler **Christine Delphine Hedden** will celebrate the release of her debut solo album, “When the Aster Blooms,” on May 19 at 4 p.m. Hedden, a Connecticut native, became interested in Irish traditional music at an early age and set out to adapt it for viola. Over time, she developed an affinity for English traditional and classical music, and later electronica and improvisation, and has sought to find and promote connections between different genres and styles. All the while, Hedden has continued to refine her love of composing and writing, rooted in a spiritual, and magical, view of the world. On “When the Aster Blooms,” she has created a diverse storybook of original tunes and songs, inspired by New England and Irish music.

DuoDuo Quartet, a diverse grouping of folk/trad-rooted talents and interests, will perform shows on May 21 and 22, both at 8 p.m. As the name implies, this ensemble is the pairing of two duos: inventive Celtic harpist Maeve Gilchrist and Nic Gareiss, a singer and versatile dancer drawing on multiple traditions; Natalie Haas, who’s helped bring the cello to the forefront of Celtic music, and Yann Falquet, vocalist and guitarist with the Quebecois trio Genticorum.

For tickets and information, go to passim.org.

• **The Mari Black Trio** comes to the Shalin Liu Performance Center in Rockport on May 5 at 7 p.m. A Boston native, Black – who has appeared locally at The Burren Backroom series and BCMFest – has distinguished credentials that include fiddling competition championships in Scottish and Canadian Maritime traditions. Her repertoire includes not only Irish and Scottish traditions but also American folk music, Argentine tangos, and even classic swing tunes, to name a few.

See rockportmusic.org/mari-black-trio for tickets and information.

• For a different kind of Irish-oriented entertainment, the Fiddlers’ Green Pub in Worcester will present “Jokes My Irish Father Told Me,” with **Dave Kane**, on May 17 at 7 p.m. The native Rhode Islander has worked successfully as a radio host, stand-up comedian, and author. His radio career has spanned more than four decades at several New England stations, including WARA in Attleboro, where he serves as host of “Kane and Company” on Saturdays from 9 a.m. to noon. For years, he has presented his one-man show, “Misgivings,” playing the character of an Irish Catholic priest, and contributed to many fundraising and charity events.

The Fiddlers’ Green website is fiddlersgreenworcester.com.

Succession planning for your business

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

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

Charting a path for your small business

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



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

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

What goes into a succession plan?

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

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

Other considerations

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

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

Timing matters

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

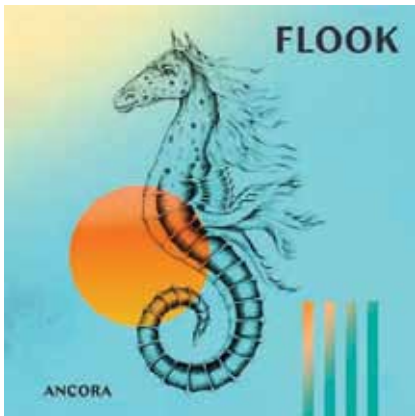
Brian W. O’Sullivan is a registered representative of and offers securities, investment advisory and financial planning services through MML Investors Services, LLC, Member SIPC (www.sipc.org). Supervisory Address: 101 Federal Street, Suite 800, Boston, MA 02110. He may be reached at 617-479-0075 x331 or bosullivan@financialguide.com.

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CD Reviews

By Sean Smith

Flook, “Ancora” • One of the truly inimitable Irish music acts to come out of the 1990s, Flook released three marvelous albums between 1995 and 2005, then broke the hearts of their multitude of fans by disbanding three years later to pursue other things, like domestic and family life. But when they resurfaced in 2013 – appearing at the Fleadh Cheoil in Derry, among other places – a new recording seemed only a matter of time. The anticipation was worth it.



The heart of Flook’s sound is the uncanny chemistry between their two wind players: Brian Finnegan, with superb tonal control and quicksilver touch on Irish flute and whistle; and Sarah Allen, who employs a concert flute and alto flute to lend har-

mony and counterpoint, and even percussive-type effects, to Finnegan’s leads. Guitarist Ed Boyd (who in the interim has also been playing with some band called Lúnasa) and bodhran player John Joe Kelly spin out diverse, complex rhythms, yet without overwhelming or dominating the breathy qualities of flute and whistle. Relying on their compositions or other contemporary tunes (like Adam Sutherland’s “Road to Errogie,” Brendan Ring’s “Cats of Camazen” or Gordon Duncan’s “Pressed for Time”) enables Flook to easily

move in and out of a traditional music framework, incorporating improvisations and hints of jazz, classical and world music.

More than a decade later, it all still works brilliantly. Arguably the highlight of “Ancora” is the medley that begins with Allen’s moody, mysterious, accented “Turquoise Girl,” then eases into a joyful “The Tree Climber” (by one-time Boston-area resident Simon Chrisman, who guests on hammered dulcimer); just when you’re ready for the finale, they pick up the pace by segueing into a Jarlath Henderson tune, “Twelve Weeks and a Day,” then again change the dynamic completely with Zoë Conway’s “Rounding Malin Head,” and the intricacies in the arrangement are a wonder to behold.

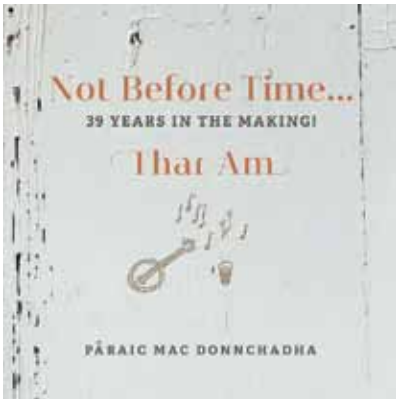
The compositional skills of Finnegan, as well as Allen, remain as strong as ever, such as on the waltz-like “The Crystal Year” (Finnegan’s), where the flute-and-flute combo is at its most sublime; then Allen ushers in “Foxes’ Rock,” a dramatic, moderate-speed tune she and Finnegan co-wrote that presents as a march, and Finnegan switches to whistle – Boyd and Kelly’s rhythmic presence is particularly acute here.

The album’s instrumentation is broadened not only by Flook themselves (Allen also plays piano accordion, while Boyd adds bouzouki and piano), but an assortment of friends on selected tracks that, in addition to Chrisman, includes Phil Cunningham on accordion, Trevor Hutchinson on upright bass, Niall Murphy on fiddle, Amadou Diagne on percussion, Philip Henry on lap steel and Patsy Reid as a string section unto herself (violin, viola and cello). On the more exotic end are cameos by Melvin Ifill on steel drums – whose duet with Chrisman on “The Coral Castle” is an enchanting interlude – Mathhias Loibner on hurdy-gurdy, Eva Tejador on an Asturian tambourine and Mark Tucker on theremin.

All of these guest musicians fit seamlessly into the Flook ethos, embellishing, but never distracting

from, that essential sonic core. This idea of moving through change and evolution while retaining one’s fundamental character is reflected in the album title: “ancora” is the Italian word for “anchor,” but also carries a secondary meaning of continuation. Surely something in which to take comfort, especially if you’re a Flook fan. [flook.co.uk]

Páraic Mac Donnchadha, “Not Before Time” • Obviously, not all Irish musicians, even the really, really good ones, make it into the recording studio. With a few exceptions – including guest appearances on a couple of recordings almost 30 years ago – such has been the case for Galway tenor banjo player Mac Donnchadha. While he’s been on the concert or festival stage occasionally, for the most part Mac Donnchadha has done perfectly well these past four decades playing sessions here and there, and developing friendships with eminent musicians like Kevin Crawford, Maeve Donnelly, Ben Lennon, Kevin Burke, Ciarán Curran, and Claire Egan, to name a few – this on top of having known legends like Willie Clancy, Seamus Ennis and Máirtín Byrne, among the visitors to Mac Donnchadha’s childhood home, itself a fount of music.



And now, 39 years in the making (hence the album’s subtitle), comes his first solo recording. With help from brother Mac Dara on uilleann pipes and sister Sinéad on keyboards, plus an assortment of musical friends, Mac Donnchadha has produced not just a relatively rare tenor banjo-focused album, but a heartfelt acknowledgement of the many personal as well as musical influences in his life, not least the East Galway/Clare style.

Mac Donnchadha and his guests collaborate mainly in trios and quartets, usually with at least one other melody instrument as well as a piano, guitar and/or bouzouki on each track, and an occasional bodhran; there are also tracks in which Mac Donnchadha is the sole melody player. With pretty basic arrangements, these alignments serve to fix attention on the banjo’s unique qualities and simultaneously contrast them against those of pipes, fiddle (played by Egan), accordion (Graham Guerin) and concertina (Cormac Begley). It’s an opportunity, if you’re so moved, to consider how the same tune can sound so different on two different instruments, and to listen for the nuances each one brings to the music.

Most of all, “Not Before Time” is marked by the infectious drive Mac Donnchadha and the other musicians (whose ranks also include Colm Murphy on bodhran, Terence O’Reilly on guitar, and bouzouki players Macdara Ó Faoláin, Libby McCroghan and Noel O’Grady) bring to these tunes; they play at a good, steady pace throughout, energetic yet with a leisurely feel, so the notes don’t go by in a rush. And if you like reels, there’s plenty of ’em, including an epic set comprising “Molly Maguire’s/Sporting Paddy/The Tempest/The Green Mountain,” with Guerin, Murphy and O’Grady, and a pairing of an East Galway version of “Pigeon on the Gate” with the late Tommy Peoples’ “First Day of Spring,” featuring Egan, Ó Faoláin and O’Reilly.

Two tracks deserve special notice: For a trio of reels that begins with “The Galtee,” Mac Donnchadha tunes his banjo down to blend with Begley’s low-key concertina, and the effect is quite striking, especially the instruments’ incidental sounds, like the push and draw of the squeezebox. Another track opens with an archival recording of Mac Donnchadha’s father Seán (the first traditional singer to record on the venerable Gael Linn label) singing “Carraig Na Siúire”; Mac Dara’s pipes provide a drone to the audio clip, and then a transition into a jig set, “Tatter Jack Walsh/Frieze Britches/Bean Páidin” – a profound tribute to the family’s musical legacy.

Mac Donnchadha details that heritage, and more, in the sleeve notes for “Not Before Time,” which add further value to the project and that underscore his family’s place, and his own, in Irish traditional music history. Included is a photo showing the back of Mac Donnchadha’s banjo, which sports a sticker with the Yiddish word “Mensch” on it; if anyone deserves to be regarded as a person of noble character, worthy of admiration and emulation, surely it’s Páraic Mac Donnchadha. [To download the album, or to order as a CD, go to paraic.bandcamp.com]

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Traveling People

Connemara oysters? You can read all about them here

By JUDY ENRIGHT
SPECIAL TO THE BIR

“Shucks,” David Keane might have said to his wife and family back in 2014. “Maybe we should buy an oyster farm.” Five years later, he’s happily shucking oysters for visitors touring DK Connemara Oysters Ltd. in Ballinakill Bay, Letterfrack. The farm had been owned by a French firm and was run down when the Keanes bought it. But after five years of hard work and dedication, it is now rejuvenated, employs eight local workers, offers tours, and ships oysters across the world.

We joined an afternoon tour this spring and found it fascinating to learn about one of our favorite foods. Keane led us down to the shore and explained that the farm, which dates to 1893, is one of the oldest licensed farms in Ireland and was originally a native oyster farm where laborers harvested them from the bay with forks and baskets during the spring tide. The oysters were packed in seaweed-filled barrels, moved to Clifden by horse and cart, then by train to Dublin where they were sent to the UK on mail boats.

Oysters take three years to grow from seeds, Keane said, and their final shape, determined during growth, is of utmost importance to consumers and chefs. The Connemara farm grows oysters in bags on top of trestles and shakes the bags every month to encourage the bivalve mollusks to grow deep and meaty rather than long.

In the late 1970s, a virus killed off native oysters in Ballinakill Bay, Keane said, so the French owner introduced the Gigas oyster and the bag-and-trestle method still used today. When the farm went on the market in 2014, the Keanes saw a great opportunity. “It was run down and, over the last five years, we have built it up again, hired a great team - all local to the farm - and have rekindled the unique flavor of Connemara oysters from Ballinakill Bay,” he said.

The farm is split into sections and each section is split into bays. Tides range from low to high with each section having different water depth. By moving the oysters as they mature, the farmer influences meat content. When nearing full growth, oysters are moved closer to the high shore. As the tide goes out, the oysters are uncovered and shut tight for the journey to market during which they must stay shut to avoid drying out.

UNIQUE TASTE

Streams flow down from Connemara National Park into Ballinakill Bay, fuse with Atlantic Ocean waters, and give the oysters their unique taste. If you go to another farm, Keane said, oysters look the same but have a different taste because oysters take their taste from the water in which they’re grown.

“We plan to produce 100 metric tons (220,462 pounds) per annum,” Ke-



Workers at DK Connemara Oysters Ltd. in Ballinakill Bay.

Michael O'Meara photo



David Keane, owner of DK Connemara Oysters Ltd., with some of the produce from his farm.



It takes an oyster three years to grow from a tiny seed (in the cup at the top) to an edible delicacy.



Aftermath of a most successful tour of of DK Connemara Oysters Farm in Co. Galway.

Judy Enright photos

ane added. “This is phased growth and we were well on our way before the Karenia bloom (algae) in 2018. We will be back on target by the end of 2019. “We sell to restaurants in Ireland, Holland, and the European mainland,” Keane said. Queries have also come from as far away as Singapore. “And, of course, the idea of selling a Connemara oyster in Boston is mouth watering,” he said.

The farm is included among 21 listings in the Tourist Board’s “Taste the Atlantic: A Seafood Journey” that skims along the Wild Atlantic Way coast from Donegal to Cork. This dedicated seafood trail offers visitors varied suggestions, ranging from restaurants and cafes to farms, fishing ports, and smokehouses.

Special group and family rates are available, and the outdoor tour, which lasts about an hour, is suitable for children over six. Be sure to wear appropriate clothing and footwear to suit the weather. At the end of the tour, there is a delicious oyster tasting. See dkconnemaraoysters.com for details and contact information.

MUSSEL FESTIVAL

When you’re in Connemara for oysters, you might plan a visit to the

14th Annual Connemara Mussel Festival on May 3, 4 and 5 in Tullycross, Renvyle.

The festival includes a Friday concert with local talent - musicians, poets, dancers, actors, and an original play. There will be a Saturday visit from Agriaware Pet Farm, a mobile farm and outdoor classroom, and ARC, a mobile classroom designed to raise young people’s awareness of aquaculture. Leading Irish chefs will demonstrate their skills in preparing the best of local produce and Belgian-based singer Sophia Ammann will present Leonard Cohen songs.

There will also be talks, walks, and a free Sunday gig by “The Good Hustle.” For more information, see connemaramusselfestival.com.

GOURMET GREENWAY

Once upon a time, Irish cooks primarily served meat and potato. Those days are a distant memory now and the food in Ireland competes handily with gourmet food served in other countries.

The Gourmet Greenway was created at the Mulranny Park Hotel, Co. Mayo, some years ago to showcase local food and food producers. There are events listed every month through October.

In May, Marlene’s Chocolate Haven in Westport serves a complimentary Gourmet Greenway-flavored chocolate with every hot drink, the Grainne Uaile Bar in Newport offers “Seafood and Beer by the Bridge” from May 3 to May 6, and every Friday in May at 11 a.m. you can take a tour (by appointment) with Achill Island Sea Salt to see modern and traditional techniques to make sea salt.

From May 1 to May 7, “This Must Be The Place in Westport” will create dishes using black pudding from Kelly’s Butchers of Newport. On May 6, explore the Clew Bay coastline with Cheryl Coburn Browne as she presents, “Seaweed from the shore to your table.” For details, see mulrannyparkhotel.ie

GARDENS OPEN TO VIEW

Many spectacular Irish gardens and garden trails are open to the public at this time of year. There are garden trails in Connemara, Laois, West Cork, Wexford, Waterford, Donegal, Carlow, the Boyne Valley, and more. And, there’s the tantalizingly named “Secret Gardens of Sligo.” One can only wonder why the gardens are “secret” and what fabulous species might lurk behind their walls.

There are also many

private gardens from county to county that are open. For more information, see these websites: gardensofireland.org, antrimgardens.com, and ulstergardensscheme.org.uk. More information is available at local tourist offices throughout Ireland.

PILGRIM PATH

We read recently that the Mayo County Council is discussing the creation of a 50-kilometer walking path from Westport to Cong. The path, reminiscent of the popular Camino de Santiago in Spain, would link Westport, Croagh Patrick, Ballintubber Abbey, Moore Hall, Ballinrobe, and Cong Abbey and hopes to draw visitors to these important sites.

There are “Lost Treasures” to be seen along the route, including Bronze Age boats on Lough Corrib, ruins of abbeys in Aughagower and Burris-carra, and Church Island in Lough Carra. The

County Council and National Parks and Wildlife Service took over Moore Hall in 2018 and plan to develop it - with adjoining Lough Carra - as a nature preserve and tourist attraction.

The Georgian house there is home to Ireland’s lesser horseshoe bat or *Rhinolophus hipposideros*. According to Bat Conservation Ireland, the lesser horseshoe is one of Ireland’s smaller bats, hangs freely by its feet, and wraps its wings around its body, the only Irish species to do so. For more information on the bats, see batconservationireland.org. For information on Moore Hall, see: historicalballinrobe.com

ENJOY IRELAND

Summer is lovely and it’s especially lovely in Ireland no matter where you go or what you do. For more information on events and more at this time of year, see Ireland.com.

Murdered journalist remembered at services in London and Belfast

ASSOCIATED PRESS
LONDON— The killing of journalist Lyra McKee must be a turning point for Northern Ireland, a priest said on April 24 at a funeral service attended by British and Irish leaders alongside mourners in superhero T-shirts and colorful Harry Potter scarves.

UK Prime Minister Theresa May, Irish Prime Minister Leo Varadkar, and Ireland's President, Michael D. Higgins, were among hundreds of people celebrating the life of Ms. McKee, who was shot dead by paramilitary gunfire last week.

British opposition leaders and the heads of Northern Ireland's Catholic and Protestant political parties also attended a service at St. Anne's Cathedral in Belfast led by Protestant and Roman Catholic clergy.

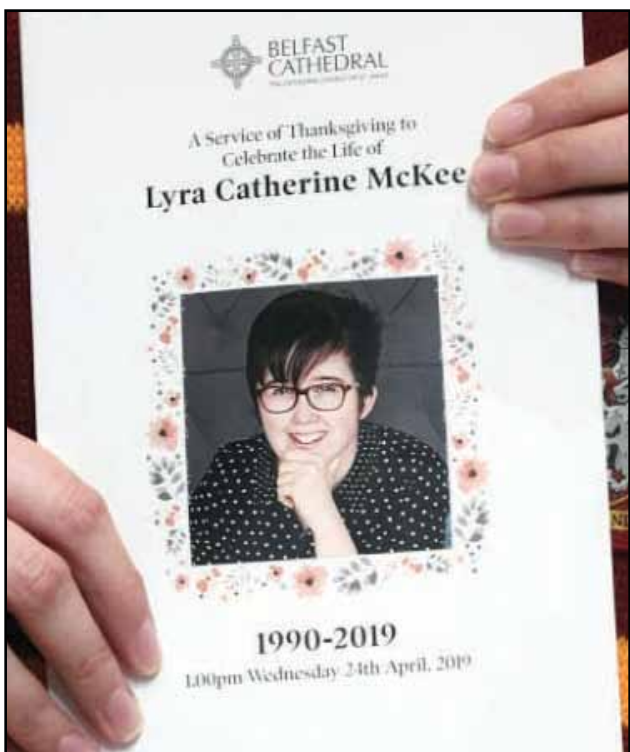
Ms. McKee, 29, was killed on April 18 as she covered anti-police rioting in the city of Londonderry, also known as Derry. A small Irish nationalist militant group, the New IRA, said it was responsible.

She was the first journalist killed on the job in the UK in almost 20 years, and her death caused wide shock in a region still shaken by tremors from decades of violence.

In his homily, Father Martin Magill said Ms. McKee's death should be "the doorway to a new beginning" for Northern Ireland. He praised the united response of politicians, but asked: "Why in God's name does it take the death of a

29-year-old woman with her whole life in front of her to get to this point?" — as mourners rose to their feet to applaud. "To those who had any part in her murder, I encourage you to reflect on Lyra McKee, journalist and writer, as a powerful example of 'The pen is mightier than the sword,'" Rev. Magill said. "I plead with you to take the road of non-violence to achieve your political ends."

A friend of Ms. McKee, Stephen Lusty, said she "embodied the future of finding commonality, enjoying difference in others."



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