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# BOSTON IRISH REPORTER

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Seamus Noonan and his father, Jimmy, playing at a session in The Druid. *Sean Smith photo*

## Four Greater Boston teen musicians – and 8,000 other competitors – are heading to Drogheda for Fleadh 2019

BY SEAN SMITH  
SPECIAL TO THE BIR

The four of them have each been to the All-Ireland Fleadh Cheoil at least once, and they're all set to go again. They know very well the amount of work it takes to get to the world's biggest Irish music competition and appreciate the opportunity. And none of them is old enough to drive yet.

Headed to this year's Fleadh, which takes place in Drogheda from Aug. 11 to Aug. 18 – sponsored by Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann, the global Irish cultural organization – are 12-year-old Niamh McGillicuddy of Milton, 15-year-old Seamus Noonan of Maynard, and brothers Yuriy (13) and Misha (15) Bane of Walpole; all of them qualified after winning or placing second



Yuriy Bane and brother Misha look forward to playing sessions and doing some busking at the All-Ireland Fleadh.

in their respective categories at the Mid-Atlantic Fleadh Cheoil held June 7-9 in Parsippany, NJ. They'll join some 8,000 musicians who will take part in competitions and other events, including impromptu sessions that spring up in parks and on street corners, or anyplace else where there's space.

Other Greater Boston/Eastern Massachusetts-area musicians who qualified include Jonathan Ford (tin whistle, slow airs on whistle, newly composed dance songs, slow airs on fiddle); Bailey Ford (piano); Noah Kelly (slow airs on fiddle) and Wynter Pingel (concertina).

Every Fleadh-going musician, of course, no matter what age, has his or her own special qualities that have contrib-

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## A message to PM Boris: US-UK trade deal hinges on 'backstop' decisions Pelosi issues caution on Brexit

BY FRANCIS COSTELLO  
SPECIAL TO THE BIR

"Don't even think about it" is the message US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi delivered with special emphasis during her recent visits to London and Dublin. The words were a strong caution to any UK government seeking a special US-UK trade deal without the inclusion of the Northern Ireland "backstop" to prevent the re-instatement of a hard border between the North and South of Ireland when Britain exits the European Union.

### Commentary

One colleague in particular who accompanied her was Congressman Richard Neal, of Springfield, Mass., who, as chairman of the US House Ways and Means Committee, holds a particular role that Boris Johnson, the new British prime minister might pay attention to, given his determination to exit the EU without a deal if the EU continues to hold the line on the "backstop," the guarantee that a "hard Irish border" – physical checkpoints for goods and people crossing between North and South – won't be put in place when the EU and UK break up.

While Winston Churchill once pondered why the "dreary steeples of Fermanagh and Tyrone" so perplexed British politics (as if Britain had nothing to do with the island's partition or distress), Johnson and the next British government will face the added formidable obstacle of US Congressional opposition in addition to the weight of its problems with a European Union standing firm against it where the island of Ireland is concerned.

It is Rep. Neal's own stated position that the inclusion of the "backstop" under any withdrawal agreement is fundamental to

(Continued on page 14)

## IPC sets up shop in Adams Corner

The Irish Pastoral Centre (IPC), based for many years in a building at St. Brendan church, will relocate to new rented space in Adams Village, IPC executive director Peggy Davis Mullen said last month. The move was expected to be completed by August 1. The new quarters are located on the second floor of a landmark commercial building at the

corner of Adams Street and Galivan Boulevard above the Irish Butcher Shop and overlooking the Greenhills Bakery.

The IPC was founded in 1987 by priests at St Mark's parish with a mission to help the transition to American life for a then-burgeoning wave of young Irish immigrants. The non-profit is funded in part by grants from the Irish government, and relies heavily on its fundraising efforts. When she began her job in April, Davis Mullen had said her first task was to find a long-term home for the program. "That is a number one issue. I've been looking," she told the BIR.

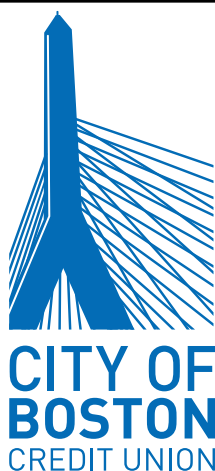
"This is a former convent," she noted in describing the old quarters, "and we're in the chapel right now. I mean, you can see this is a pretty humble office. We just need space to give the people some dignity and privacy, and we want to expand some of the things we do, whether it's programs for children, mothers, and toddlers.

"Dan Finn and the Irish Pastoral Centre deserve to have a home," she added.



Lauren Smyth and Andy O'Reilly (center) lead students in the "Riverdance" Finale at the Performance Showcase.

*R. J. Donovan photo*



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*Charitable Irish Society is a 501(c)(3) organization*



# Happenings August 2019

**Saturday, Aug. 3**

• The Irish Music Club of Greater Boston will hold its monthly dance at the Viking Club, 410 Quincy Avenue, in Braintree. Music by the Silver Spears. For additional information call Anna McAuliffe at 617-696-6007.

• ICCNE Summer Concert “Live at the ICC” - Forever FAB, recreating the sound of the Beatles. In Canton. 8 p.m. Admission \$15.

**Sunday, Aug 4**

• The Irish Social Club weekly dance with Mossie Coughlin 7-10 p.m.

**Friday, Aug. 9**

• ICCNE Irish Traditional and Folk Music weekend. 8:15 p.m. “REALTA” from Belfast. Admission \$20.

**Saturday, Aug. 10**

• The Knights and Ladies of St. Finbarr - Cork Club hosts Noel Henry Show Band, 7- 11 p.m. at the Malden Irish American Club, 177 West Street in Malden. Complimentary coffee, tea and assorted baked goods and Irish trifle. Admission \$10. For additional information call president Mary Tannian at 978-664-4652.

**Sunday, Aug. 11**

• ICCNE- A Ceili Mor by Comhaltas Ceoltoiri at 11:30 a.m. A traditional music session at 3 p.m; For Folk’s Sake at 5 p.m. O’Hara’s Tasting in the Tent. 2-6 p.m. Admission \$10.

• The Irish Social Club weekly dance with Erin’s Melody. 7-10 p.m.

**Saturday, Aug 17**

• No dance this month at the Norwood Irish Music Club. Next dance is Sept. 21.

**Sunday, Aug 18**

• The Irish Social club weekly dance with Fintan Stanley. 7- 10 p.m.

**Sunday, Aug. 19 – Monday Aug. 20**

• Friends of Irish Research seminar, at 899 No. Main Street Brockton MA 02301. Info: -friendsofirishresearch.org Thursday, Aug 22.

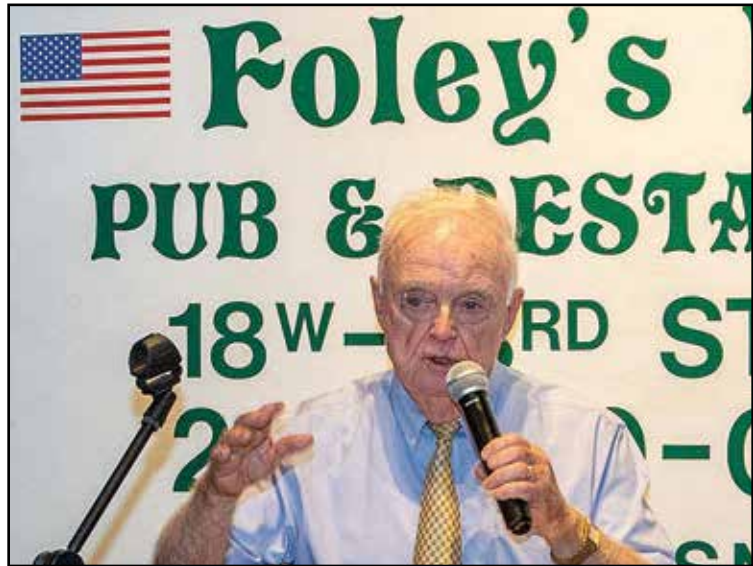
• ICCNE book launch and concert with Tara O’Grady.

**Sunday, Aug 25**

• The Irish Social Club’s weekly dance, with Denis Curtin 7-10 p.m.

*Happenings provided to the BIR courtesy of Richard Archer, Knights and Ladies of St. Finbarr - Cork Club, PO Box 4132, Dedham, MA 02027*

*Our sincere thanks to the Boston Irish Reporter, Stations WROL and WUNR for keeping the Irish Tradition alive with great music and news.*



**John Harrington addresses the gathering after his selection as a member of the Irish American Baseball Hall of Fame.**

## Ex-Sox CEO Harrington named to Irish American Baseball Hall of Fame

In a ceremony in late June, the Irish American Baseball Hall of Fame inducted its Class of 2019, which includes two-time NL MVP Dale Murphy, Phillies broadcaster Tom McCarthy, Atlanta Braves manager Brian Snitker, former Boston Red Sox CEO John Harrington, John Fitzgerald, a founder of The Baseball United Foundation, and Danny O’Connell, who scored the first-ever West Coast run in major league baseball history.

Hall honorees include players, managers, scouts, broadcasters, executives, and entertainers of Irish descent who have impacted the game of baseball in a positive way. The voting is conducted by past honorees and a panel of baseball historians.

John L. Harrington was for decades associated with the Red Sox, first as a member of owner Tom Yawkey’s ownership team and, later, as CEO of the operation in the 1990s and early 2000s when the team was a perennial challenger on the field. He also serves as the chairman of the Yawkey Foundation, which has awarded more than \$500 million in grants to nonprofit organizations serving the people of New England and Georgetown, South Carolina, Tom Yawkey’s home, since 1977.

“This year’s class includes one of the best all-around players of the 1980s, the reigning NL Manager of the Year, an award-winning baseball documentarian, an iconic baseball executive, and one of baseball’s best broadcasters,” said Shaun Clancy, owner of Foley’s Pub, which features one of the country’s most extensive public displays of baseball memorabilia.

The game of baseball has welcomed immigrants from its earliest days, when an estimated 30 percent of players claimed Irish heritage. Many of the game’s biggest stars at the turn of the 20th century were Irish immigrants or their descendants, including Michael “King” Kelly, Roger Connor (the home run king before Babe Ruth), Eddie Collins, Big Ed Walsh and managers Connie Mack and John McGraw.

# Stoughton’s Tanya Stanley is NE region’s candidate in Rose of Tralee Festival

## Winner will be named on August 27

A Stoughton woman will represent Boston and New England this month at the international Rose of Tralee Festival in Co Kerry, Ireland. Tanya Stanley was named to represent the six-state New England region at a May 27 competition at the Irish Cultural Centre of New England.

The festival is celebrated each year in the month of August in Tralee, Co. Kerry. It has become an annual International event and is held to choose and crown the Rose each year. The judges look for a representative with a great personality, a person who will be a role model as the winner will travel during her year as the Rose to many places and events.

In recent years the festival’s master of ceremonies has been Daithi O’ Se and prior to that Gay Byrne was the presenter for 17 years. The event will be televised by Irish Television and written up in all major Irish papers.

Theresa O’Rourke (Tanya) Stanley will travel to Tralee later this month for the week-long festival. In an online biography on the website roseoftralee.ie, she wrote, “I am a 22 year old living in the beautiful and historical Boston, Massachusetts. Although I was born in the United States, I spent the majority of my childhood living in Ireland. Both of my parents were born and raised in Ireland, my father being from Dublin, and my mother from Donegal.

“I am currently studying at Bridgewater State University where I am majoring in psychology in hopes to become a clinical psychologist or a therapist. This field requires a lot of empathy and patience to help



**Theresa O’Rourke (Tanya) Stanley**

those that are struggling with a mental disorder, something that I want to make sure they can overcome. I plan on furthering my education to obtain my master’s degree to broaden my knowledge as much as possible. “I am very bubbly, outgoing and kind hearted. I enjoy spending time with friends and family and making memories that will last a lifetime. I am truly honored to be representing as the 2019 Boston & New England Rose in Tralee and I am excited for the rest of the year and what it has in store.”

As legend has it, the Rose of Tralee is named after a ballad entitled “The Rose of Tralee” written by William Pembroke Mulchinock because of his love for a young Catholic girl named Mary O’Connor. The “Rose of Tralee” originated in 1959. At the start it was confined to ladies from Tralee. Later it was opened up to residents of County Kerry

and finally extended to any woman of Irish birth or ancestry. In 2018, Kirstin Mate Maher from County Waterford, a student and part time model who played with the Waterford hockey club, was crowned. She was the first African-Irish person to win this event. In 1985 Helena Rafferty who hails from Canton, Mass., won the event as the Boston Rose. The last American girl to win the trophy was Maggie McEldowney from Chicago in 2016. Tanya will spend approximately ten days in Ireland. The selection and ultimate winner will be made on Aug. 27.

Deirdre and Bob Leger along with Jim, Myrum, and Grainne Lanagan, members of the Rose of Tralee committee, are hopeful that this year Tanya Stanley will return to Boston as the international Rose of Tralee.

*The BIR thanks Richard Archer, who contributed to this report.*



**Contestants in the New England Regional Rose of Tralee competition.**

## DA Rollins to discuss her views on criminal justice in Ireland next month

Suffolk County District Attorney Rachael Rollins will visit Ireland in September to join a panel at a three-day program in Co Wexford, the BIR has been told.

Boston-born Larry Donnelly, a law lecturer at UC Galway, and Dr. Robert M. Mauro of Boston College, co-directors of the Kennedy Summer School 2019 in New Ross, Co Wexford, announced that Rollins will be among more than 50 speakers invited to the program, described as “A festival of Irish-American history, culture and politics,” set for September 5- 7 in New Ross, the ancestral town of the Kennedy clan. A statement on the program’s website (kennedysummer-



**Rachel Rollins**

school.ie) said, “In a public interview with Larry Donnelly, which will set the scene of our subsequent US politics panel, Rachael will talk about her career and her determination

as the DA of Suffolk County to change and improve the criminal justice system.”

Rollins is expected to discuss “A Bostonian perspective on law & politics in today’s USA.” Other announced panelists with Boston ties include Boston College theology professor Dr. Thomas Groome and former Boston Irish Consul General Michael Lonergan.

Other panelists include New York Times columnist Maureen Dowd, Archbishop Eamon Martin, DUP politician Jeffrey Donaldson, Fianna Fáil leader Micheál Martin, SDLP politician Seamus Mallon, and a number of Irish journalists, lawyers, politicians and performers.



Editor's Notebook



Kieran Jordan at the Catskills Irish Festival.

# Kieran Jordan keeps at it, ‘smiling through the tears’

By Ed Forry

I watched a wonderful video on Facebook that showed our friend Kieran Jordan dancing in full form at last month’s 25th annual Catskills Irish Festival. I was really pleased to see it and felt very encouraged to see how she had responded to her illness.

Kieran has been living with Lyme disease for two years now. She first fell ill in the summer of 2017, feeling lethargic and without much energy, but the cause went undiagnosed and untreated. After ten months, a holistic medical provider identified it as Lyme, but a lot of damage had been done. Since most health insurance plans do not cover Lyme disease, helpful friends formed a GoFundMe page, raising more than \$39,000

for Kieran.

“GoFundMe saved our life,” she says, as she has spent all but \$6,000 in treating the disease. “It’s going on almost two years now and it’s my full-time job, whether I like it or not. When people see me now they say, ‘Well, you look great,’ but people see what they want to see. I have to be careful to not just put a positive spin on things. It’s been a long and difficult trial but not everyone has the kind of community support that I have.”

At the first signs of the illness, she saw several medical professionals, she says. “The reality of this disease is that for ten months they missed the diagnosis. They didn’t even test me for Lyme.

“I’m making progress and I’m thrilled but there are still some symptoms. It is better than a year ago; I am getting some strength back. I wasn’t able to perform all the things I wanted to do [in the Catskills], but I was able to teach, and I’m pushing myself.”

Kieran is now seeing two physicians who specialize in Lyme and babesia, a parasite transmitted by ticks that infects red blood cells. But she’s angry that the health care system is so far behind in dealing with Lyme.

“It’s not a rare disease, it’s not just something you get on the Cape, or in the mountains or in the woods,” she said. “Lyme disease is not addressed by our healthcare system, our insurance system. People are lucky if they are aware of a tick bite or if they get a bull’s-eye rash – 50 percent of people don’t ever get a rash and therefore they don’t see what it is. By the time it’s diagnosed late, it has already borrowed down into the system.”

In a Facebook post about her performance in the Catskill, Kieran told her friends: “I can see that I AM healing. But I’m sometimes smiling through the tears!”



## BOSTON IRISH REPORTER

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# Trump told those who don’t like what’s happening in the US to get out. A fine idea

By TIMOTHY EGAN  
THE IRISH TIMES

He’s right, this angry old man in melting bronzer shouting in the July heat: Those of us who don’t like what’s going on in this country should get the hell out. “Go back,” as he said, to the “crime-infested places from which they came.” A fine idea. For me, as with more than 30 million other Americans with my hyphenate, that’s tiny Ireland, the country once so infested with crime, famine, disease, and assorted horrors of foreignness that its British overlords said a merciful God was doing a favor by killing off the starving masses.

So back I went to have a look. This, mind you, was just before Donald Trump’s suggestion to his fellow citizens to get out. And also generations after someone on my father’s side made the choice to flee for life itself, rather than fall into the cold Irish ground through the bottom of a reusable coffin.

What I found on that island where typhus once took entire families as they shivered on floors of mud, where once, by one medical estimate, 50 per cent of the children in Dublin died before their first birthday, is now a land of universal health care. Health care for all residents: It’s still a surprise to someone from a nation where the number of uninsured Americans has gone up by 7 million under Trump. I had left a place where nearly 1 in 7 people are left to fend for themselves when sick, to a fully covered country, the norm in most of the industrialized world.

What I found in that place where barefooted, Gaelic-speaking hordes once could not read an English sign are colleges nearly free to its citizens – good colleges, at that. Imagine, a family not having to bankrupt itself to help a child off to a better life.

What I found is a republic where nearly 1 in 8 people were born abroad, nearly as high a percentage as the foreign-born population of the United States. The prime minister, Leo Varadkar, is the son of an Indian immigrant. His father was born in Mumbai, while his mother hails from County Waterford, the home also of my mother’s distant family. That 19th-century hellhole has become a 21st-century heaven. The Irish have become us – what we wanted and aspired to. They are living our national narrative, a country open to those fleeing oppressors and lack of opportunity. Its prime minister would never gloat over a “send her back” chant at a hate fest directed at new members of the republic.

Back home in America, the unimaginable is the new norm: a fully blossoming fascism. We’re stuck

in a hideous loop of hate. But it’s also an idiocy loop. Why are we arguing about something any second grader has already settled after looking around the classroom and realizing that nearly every other child is a descendant of someone from a foreign land?

Read the resolution the House of Representatives recently passed, citing Ronald Reagan, John F. Kennedy and Benjamin Franklin, and quoting Franklin Roosevelt’s call to “remember always, that all of us, and you and I especially, are descended from immigrants and revolutionists.” It’s the kind of immigrants-make-a-nation-stronger boilerplate that would normally pass the House with unanimous consent, but it drew only four Republican votes.

Sludge.

This is how low Trump has taken us. We are a debased nation fighting over the scraps of our former principles. Should someone offer a resolution saluting the “purple mountain majesties” of the United States, every Republican would vote against it if Trump tweeted against a color that is not orange.

US Sen. Mitch McConnell, whose immigrant wife is indirectly a target of this sludge, would say, as he did about the “send-her-back chants,” that the president is “onto something.” I’m against the dismissal of others with the preemptive pejorative of “white privilege.” It closes minds and ends conversations. But this is one case where white privilege applies. For Trump’s tweet wasn’t aimed at me. Nor was it directed at his vice president, the cipher and coward Mike Pence, himself an Irish-American. Trump’s hate blast was directed solely at people of color. His tweet was the textbook definition of racism.

And I should add in the interest of full transparency, I disagree with much of the policy initiatives of the four left-wing congresswomen targeted by Trump. It was wrong and incorrect for them to make Nancy Pelosi’s disagreement with them about race. That episode was another textbook illustration of why the far left has trouble winning a majority.

But let’s leave that discussion for another day. Back in the country from which I came, the Irish appear genuinely perplexed at this American vomiting of principle. Writing in The Irish Times, Oliver Sears, a British-born resident of Ireland and son of a Polish Holocaust survivor, wondered how any immigrant could ever vote for Trump. I heard a similar thing when I went back: How could Irish-Americans vote for this awful man without becoming traitors to their heritage? For this Ireland has become what America used to be. If only America could be more like this Ireland.

Off the Bench

# If the Normandy invasion had failed, what might that have meant for the Allied push?

By JAMES W. DOLAN  
SPECIAL TO THE REPORTER

After Adolf Hitler invaded the Soviet Union in June 1941, Joseph Stalin immediately began pleading with Franklin Roosevelt and Winston Churchill to invade France, which, he said, he needed to reduce the pressure on Russian troops who were desperately resisting the Germans who were closing in on the Russian homeland. By then, Hitler had defeated France but had aborted plans to invade Great Britain due to the effectiveness of British air and naval forces in maintaining control of the English Channel.

The initial German assault against Stalin by 3 million men in 150 divisions was remarkably successful as Nazi troops overwhelmed poorly trained, shocked, and disorganized Russian defense forces. Fast-moving mechanized divisions advanced to the outskirts of Moscow before being stalled in December 1941 by a combination of the fearsome Russian winter and the difficult task of supplying troops. A Soviet winter counteroffensive pushed the invaders back and the tide slowly began to turn.

With the defeat of a German army at Stalingrad in February 1943 after a five-month battle, the initiative passed to the Soviet forces and thereafter Hitler’s troops were on the defensive. In battle after battle with enormous casualties on both sides, the Russians pushed the invaders back into Germany, eventually capturing Berlin in May 1945.

The Normandy invasion forced Hitler to fight on three fronts, Russia, Italy, and France. The size of the forces engaged on the Russian front dwarfed those fighting in Italy and France combined. The once powerful but over-extended German air force was virtually absent during D-Day. By any measure – troops involved, battles, casualties, prisoners and scope – the Russian campaign far exceeded the fighting elsewhere. An estimated 26 million Russians died in

the war including more than 8 million military deaths.

While opening a second front in France was helpful and likely shortened the war; would the Allies victory have been achieved without it? By June 1944, Soviet armies were attacking on several fronts and steadily gaining ground. Probably as important as a second front were the supplies, principally food and military equipment, provided to Russia by the United States, particularly during the early stages of the war.

The Soviets depended on the Lend-Lease Program to blunt the unexpected invasion. Upon the Russians recovering from the initial shock and with the marshalling of their military and industrial resources, Germany was on the way to losing. Hitler had counted on a swift victory and Germany was not prepared for a long war of attrition. It was only a matter of time. German forces were also retreating in fierce fighting in Italy where Rome fell to allied forces on June 4, 1944, two days before D-Day.

Allied forces invaded southern France on Aug. 15, 1944 and quickly overcame German resistance, capturing most of southern France within a month. Until D-Day, Hitler had been able to shift much needed troops from France to the Eastern Front where his best troops were desperately trying to stop the Russian offensive. With the invasion in Normandy, German ground troops were actively engaged in northern and southern France, Italy, and Russia. Hitler no longer had the luxury of consolidating his depleted forces. The Battle of the Bulge in December 1944 was a last desperate effort by Germany to halt the progress of the allies on the western front before they entered the homeland.

Defeat was inevitable. A rational leader would have acknowledged that and entered into peace negotiations. But Hitler was a madman, determined to continue fighting even if it meant the total destruction of Germany. Absent the Normandy invasion, in my opinion, Germany would have still lost the war but it would have taken longer and more territory would have fallen behind what later in the decade became the Iron Curtain. Roosevelt and Churchill were committed to the invasion, having promised to open a second front to relieve pressure on Russians forces who had been fighting for three years.

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



James W. Dolan



## Point of View

# MALARKEY FROM MULVANEY & CO.

## As ‘Moscow Mitch,’ Kellyanne Conway, others tout the party line, the question is: Whose party?

PETER F. STEVENS  
BIR STAFF

America’s chaotic political state of affairs no longer stands as a battle between “Red” and “Blue.” While the Democrats remain a party of circular firing squads seemingly bent on snatching defeat from the jaws of a potential victory in 2020, the Republican Party no longer exists—not in the way it did until Donald Trump descended onto the GOP’s stage in 2015. The Republicans belong to him alone. They grovel at his every whim and shudder in fear at the thought of his Twitter-fueled wrath.

The president’s full-throated assault on Congress, the media, immigrants of all stripes, minorities, and any court decision he dislikes would mean nothing without the obeisance of members of a party that once actually stood for something good and decent. In an ongoing rush toward the frequently cited but all-too-looming specter of a Constitutional crisis, a cadre of Irish Americans continues to evince a stunning collective case of historical myopia. All in servitude to the Trumpian Party.

At this year’s National Catholic Prayer Breakfast, in Washington D.C., White House chief of staff Mick Mulvaney—a proud promoter of his Irish roots and Catholic faith—asserted that the same religious beliefs that drive his own life are the very lifeblood of the Trump administration’s policies. Mulvaney asserted that “the principles of our faith [are] being manifest under the president.” He added, “That’s something I’m extraordinarily proud to be a part of.”

Maybe I missed something back in parochial school and Sunday school, but doesn’t the Catholic faith frown upon persecuting legitimate asylum seekers, immigrants, and the “least among us?” I’m trying to find the New Testament passage that advocates herding children—including infants—into cages (yes, they *are* cages no matter how much the president, Mulvaney, and the administration lie about them). The mantra “what would Jesus do” is one that has little or no role in the actions of Donald Trump or Mick Mulvaney.

Then there’s that Scots-Irish paragon who has earned from some the monicker “Moscow Mitch.” In the past weeks, US Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell and his minions have blocked every single bill designed to hamper Russia or other hostile actors from interfering in our 2020 elections. Here are two

of the major “objections” by McConnell on behalf of his lord and master, Donald Trump: (1) They don’t want a mandatory back-up system of paper ballots in case of cyber attacks on the election, and (2) McConnell believes there is no need for the president or anyone else to report offers of foreign “campaign aid” to the FBI.

In one of the baldest lies uttered in this era of countless falsehoods, McConnell actually praised Trump, citing what he has done to safeguard the 2020 elections from Russia or anyone else. Didn’t the president accept his BFF Vlad Putin’s denials that Russia had ever thought about interfering?

Next up—yet again—in the Murderers’ Row of pliant Irish Americans worshipping at the Trumpian altar is Kellyanne Conway. In response to some media questions about the president’s racist Twitter tirade against “the Squad” (US Reps. Ocasio Cortez, Omar, Tlaib, and Pressley), all women of color, Conway demanded to know the ethnicity of the reporter asking the question. Hours later, this ardent Trumpist, realizing she had crossed a line here, attempted to walk back her words. In contrast to the impact of the episode on a great many listeners and readers, she tweeted, “This was meant with no disrespect. We are all from somewhere else ‘originally.’ I asked the question to answer the question and volunteered my own ethnicity: Italian and Irish. Like many, I am proud of my ethnicity, love the USA & grateful to God to be an American.”

With those words, Ms. Conway’s historical amnesia resonates.

When it comes to the immigrants of yesteryear—especially Irish immigrants to America’s shores—the historical distortions and outright lies abound across the land. A huge number of Irish Americans refuse to accept any positive comparisons between their beloved ancestors from the old sod and the undocumented immigrants of today. Today’s Nativists hurl the argument that in the grim years of the potato famine, the waves of Irish streaming into America from “coffin ships” or across the Canadian border were not ever officially branded “illegal immigrants.”

On the surface, the point is accurate. The term “illegal immigrant” did not exist in the American lexicon of the 19th Century. Back in 2014, Boston Globe columnist Johanna Weiss posed a question about the phrase to Mae Ngai, a Columbia University historian and expert on immigration. Ngai answered, “People are shocked

when I say before World War I, there were no green cards, no visas, no quotas, no passports, even. Really, you just showed up. And if you could walk without a limp, and you had \$30 in your pocket, you walked right in.”

And that is what our Irish and European ancestors from that long-ago time did. They faced no quota system and no immigration courts or law enforcement. They came to “the Golden Door of America” *undocumented*. In Boston during the mass immigration of the Great Famine era, about the only thing preventing the Irish from staying in America without any legalities was if they were quarantined at Deer Island due to disease.

No one in his or her right mind believes that in the year 2019, the United States should not have border security and comprehensive immigration reform. If anyone, however, truly believes that the Great Wall of Trump will rise across thousands of miles of our southern border, he or she is either benighted by hate or willingly foolish.

“That was then, this is now!” President Trump and his fellow Nativists bleat about the situation in the 19th century as they profess that they want only the “right kind” of immigrants today. That’s where historical reality shreds the modern Nativists’ arguments and exposes either their bigotry or willing ignorance. The waves of Irish, Germans, Italians, and Eastern Europeans who came to America from the onset of the Great Famine to the early 20th century encountered the same prejudice and contempt that immigrants from Mexico, Central and Latin America, Haiti, Africa, and so many other places face today.

What many of our Irish-American forebears knew all too well was that the Nativists loathed anything Irish, anything Catholic, any immigrant except the right kind, anything they deemed “un-American.” They proclaimed that they needed to save the nation from going broke to pay for waves of “Paddys and Bridgets.” Anyone who was not a native-born Anglo-Protestant was not a real American, but a threat to them. In short, the Nativists “wanted their country back.” Today, the phrase has an all-too-familiar ring.

PS: The Twitter-in-Chief, responding to the furor his attacks on “the Squad” had elicited, typed, “Those Tweets were NOT Racist. I don’t have a Racist bone in my body!” The times we live in...

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Honors 2019  
Luncheon



# BOSTON IRISH REPORTER

**Date:** Friday, October 18, 2019, 11:30am

**Place:** Seaport Hotel, Main Ballroom

**Sponsored by:** Boston Irish Reporter

**Emcee:** Dick Flavin

**2019 Honorees**

**Grace Cotter Regan**

**James Carmody**

**John & Kathleen Drew**

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Immigration Q&A

Play it straight with answers on immigration applications

**Q.** *I'm applying for legal permanent residence in the US based on my marriage to a US citizen. I'm undocumented, and I've been working here for several years without authorization from the immigration authorities. I see that the forms involved in the process for getting a green card include questions about my employment history as far back as five years ago. I'm concerned that my application will be denied if I list my jobs in the US. What should I do?*

**A.** Quite simply, you need to tell the truth in response to all the questions on the forms filed with US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). This means not just making true statements; it also means not omitting facts when asked for them.

Some applicants are tempted to say that they have been unemployed for their entire time in the US or to simply leave blanks where job information is sought. Likewise, some applicants think that they can get away with denying past involvement with the criminal justice system in the US or abroad or with omitting reference to past entries into the US or past marriages, for example.

This belief is often based on rumors or hearsay about some acquaintance who allegedly got away with this in the past. Applicants need to realize that the Department of Homeland Security and the FBI run criminal background checks on applicants that reach records worldwide. Plus, US arrival and departure records are held in a computerized database and are easily retrievable by immigration officers. Finally, the interviews for adjustment of status applicants are conducted by experienced USCIS officers who are adept at detecting falsehoods in applications.

There are potentially two major consequences when certain false statements or omissions are detected: (1) The immigration benefit sought could be denied, and the applicant will risk deportation; and (2) making a false statement or omitting a material fact on an application form (as well as submitting any false documents to accompany an application) is equivalent to perjury, a federal felony that could result not just in deportation but prosecution and imprisonment in the US beforehand.

It is, therefore, crucial to understand the importance of submitting complete and accurate applications to USCIS. The good news for adjustment of status applicants who are immediate relatives of US citizens (spouses, parents, unmarried children under 21) is that unlawful presence in the US and unauthorized unemployment are not in themselves grounds for denying an application. Likewise, some minor criminal offenses, if openly disclosed, are not necessarily a bar to permanent residence. However, anyone who has a criminal record, no matter how minor and how long ago, and no matter what the outcome of the case was, needs advice from an experienced immigration lawyer before proceeding with any application to US immigration authorities.

You can visit one of IIIC's weekly legal clinics as advertised in the BIR for a free, confidential consultation on this or any other immigration law issue.

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

IIIC marks its 30th birthday at Solas Awards Celebration

This year, the IIIC is celebrating 30 years of serving families from Ireland and around the world. Join us on Oct. 10th as we mark the occasion at our annual Solas Awards, and celebrate with the friends and partners who have made our journey possible! Visit [iiicenter.org](http://iiicenter.org) or contact Megan Miller at [mmiller@iiicenter.org](mailto:mmiller@iiicenter.org) to learn more.

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. Attorneys will meet with as many people as possible during clinics, but we cannot guarantee that everyone will be seen.

Downtown Boston

IIIC, One State Street, 8<sup>th</sup> Floor, Boston MA 02109  
Tuesday, August 6<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>, registration at 3.30pm  
Monday, August 12<sup>th</sup>, registration at 5.00pm

Citizenship Clinics

IIIC, One State Street, 8<sup>th</sup> 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](http://www.iiicenter.org)

IRISH INTERNATIONAL IMMIGRANT CENTER

An agency accredited by US Department of Justice



One State Street, 8th Floor, Boston, MA 02109 (617) 542-7654 Fax (617) 542-7655  
Website: [iiicenter.org](http://iiicenter.org) Email: [immigration@iiicenter.org](mailto:immigration@iiicenter.org)

IIIC J-1 exchange visitor finishes exceptional year

Richard Stevenson is a third-year Ulster University student from County Down who recently completed a year-long J-1 internship at Norbella Media. As he looks back on his time in Boston, he has a few words of encouragement to share with any J-1s landing in the US: "You have a lot to look forward to!"

As a digital buying assistant at Norbella, Richard gained invaluable experience by applying his academic knowledge toward real-world professional practice. With an internship at Norbella, Richard was able to "adjust to a more independent, big-city lifestyle in a

foreign country," and, like other J-1 interns, willing to travel internationally to gain practical work experience.

He will return to Ireland with a distinct advantage. Finding your way in a new city can be daunting, and Richard advises J-1 interns to "put yourself out there, be unafraid, get involved, and meet new people." For those finding it difficult to secure an internship, Richard suggests "utilizing all your contacts, whether that be through your university, former J-1s, or the Irish International Immigrant Center."

While in the US, Richard took full advantage



Richard Stevenson, at left, with Paddy Clarke as they got into the spirit following the Patriots' Super Bowl victory!

of the opportunity to visit historical and cultural landmarks, from Washington DC, to the Rocky Steps in Philadelphia, to the fall foliage of Maine. And like all our J-1s, Richard hailed Boston for its welcoming environment

for Irish J-1s finding a temporary home away from home!

If you are a J-1 in Boston working to find an internship, please contact Paul Pelan [ppelan@iiicenter.org](mailto:ppelan@iiicenter.org) for support and assistance.

Wellness Team cares for clients and community

Matters of Substance

As social workers, my colleague Siobhan Kelly and I know the importance of *meeting people where they're at*. That includes working with clients toward their own goals, whether that means feeling better, getting sober, or making progress in a specific area of their lives. It also means meeting people in the office, on the phone, by text, or out in the community. Along with empathy, problem solving, and flexibility, this basic social work practice is core to our work with the Irish diaspora in Boston.

Despite the well-established community for Irish immigrants in Boston, many need another place to turn for care related to depression, anxiety, substance use, and everyday life challenges. During this chapter of heightened fear and new anti-immigrant actions, many Irish in New England are bearing the anxiety of possible detention and find themselves retreating further into the shadows.

As a licensed therapist with over 25 years of experience in the health-care field, I provide direct clinical care and crisis



Rachel Reisman, LICSW, and Siobhan Kelly, BSW, staff the IIIC's Wellness Services

intervention, while my colleague Siobhan Kelly, BSW, helps clients solve challenges related to housing, employment, Social Security, and finding other resources in Boston, across the US, and in some cases, back in Ireland. Every week is different, and we pride ourselves on adapting to the needs of our clients. Even if we can't solve their problems completely, we will always provide them with reassurance and direction for their next steps. Those who come through our doors always leave with something!

We are also proud to invest in community education on mental health, substance use, and Know Your Rights, as well as programming that sustains Irish cultural connections for many. In addition to hosting talks, film screenings, and other

events, we collaborate with Cumann na Gaeilge in Boston on an Irish language program that draws 60 students each year and provides a sense of Irish "home" to many in Boston.

With the generous support of the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade's Emigrant Support Programme, we are able to directly serve more than 300 Irish and Irish-American clients each year. Our Irish clients are often reticent to accept free care, and struggle to feel entitled to it. Being able to remind them that their home country wants to see them safe and well helps remove that sense of burden, and helps us remain in their lives to whatever degree they want or need.

The IIIC's Wellness Services provide a place of safety for our clients, as well as a confidential,

professional, practical response to their needs. The ability to provide immediate therapy and crisis intervention to our clients, regardless of their insurance or legal status, is an amazing gift.

Social work practice began with immigrant "settlement houses" in Boston, New York, and Chicago, and it has always sought to offer respect, kindness and hope to those acclimating to a new country and culture. Social work values difference and the contributions that immigrants make to our country. To be a social worker providing Wellness Services at the IIIC at this time in our history is to sit with Irish immigrants as they bravely navigate their way through the chapters of life that we all face, amidst new federal actions directed against them.

Doing so is to see the strength, courage and dignity inherent in all human beings. To be given the ability to serve and accompany our clients is a privilege every day.

*The IIIC Wellness team is here for you! Contact us to chat, problem solve, and figure out the next step for you. Contact Rachel Reisman, LICSW, at [rreisman@iiicenter.org](mailto:rreisman@iiicenter.org) or at 617-542-7654.*

A Summer Irish Chat Night at the Irish Consulate in Boston

On July 11th, the IIIC's Outreach and Wellness Services brought together old friends and new faces for an evening of Irish conversation and community. The IIIC thanks the Irish Consulate in Boston for hosting a wonderful evening, and Cumann na Gaeilge in Boston for facilitating and providing instruction for the event. The IIIC also partners with Cumann na Gaeilge year-round to provide Irish language classes for more than 60 people each year. Keep an eye out next month for more details on our fall term, beginning in September!



Students enjoying the conversation and community at last month's chat night!



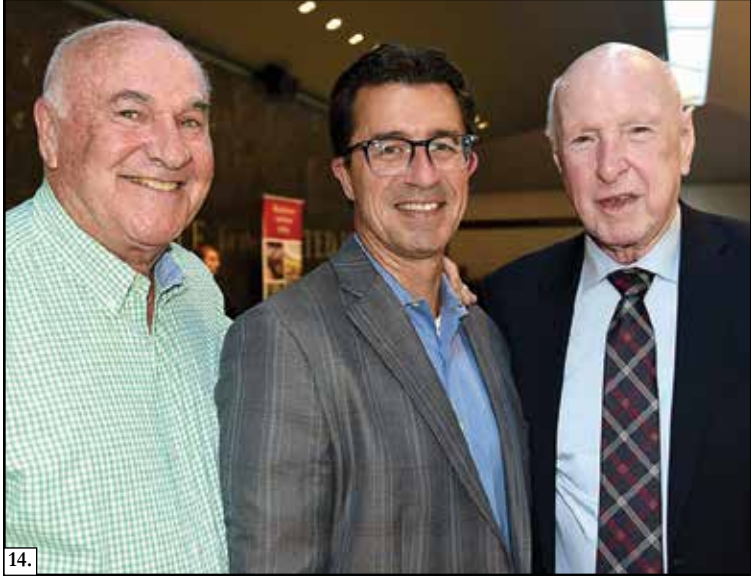
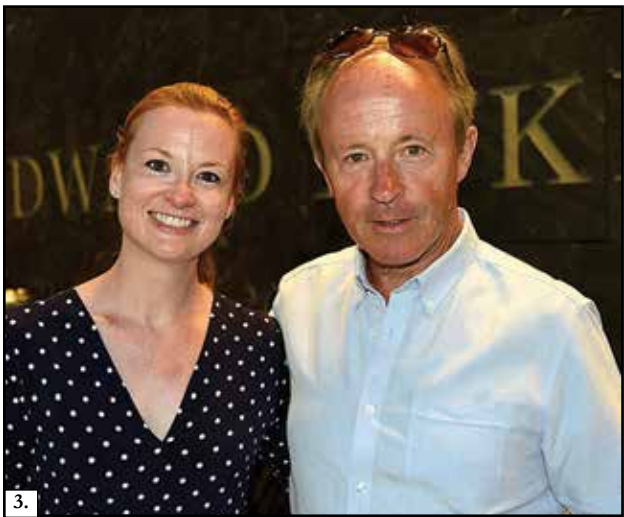
BRETT'S BOSTON

By Harry Brett

Exclusive photos of Boston Irish people & events

Last month (July 1), the Edward M. Kennedy Institute for the US Senate on Dorchester's Columbia Point featured a discussion on the topic entitled "1919-2019: DeValera in Boston and 100 Years of Ireland-US Relations." After welcoming remarks by EMKI president Mary Grant and greetings by Ireland Consul General Laoise Moore, the Irish journalist David McCullagh, author of two books on Eamon deValera, gave a keynote speech that was followed by a panel discussion featuring McCullagh, Irish Ambassador Daniel Mulhall, Elms College professor Damien Murray, and Westfield State University professor Catherine Shannon. Boston Globe columnist Kevin Cullen served as moderator.

1.) Kevin Cullen, Daniel Mulhall, Catherine Shannon, Daniel Murray, David McCullagh; 2.) Jim Brett, Dorchester; Casey McElneel, Cambridge; 3.) Siobhan Hunter, Scituate; John O'Donovan, Brighton, UK; 4.) Man photographing poster; 5.) Mary Convery, Wellesley; Dixie Kuehnel, No. Reading; 6.) Nuala Carlson, Andover; Linnea Walsh, Quincy; 7.) Doug and Anne Patriquin, Lynnfield; 8.) Monica Bushnell, EMK volunteer; Thomas Groome, Boston College; 9.) Rep. Kevin Honan, Brighton; Peggy Davis Mullen, IPC, Dorchester; 10.) Mary Joyce and Jim Morris, So. Boston; 11.) Della Costello, Dorchester, Mary Ellen Mulligan, Randolph; 12.) Aoife Budd, former Vice Consul, Irish Consulate; Kevin Thornton, Vermont; 13.) Ann O'Connor, Lois Sullivan, Dan Walsh, all of Cambridge; 14.) Paul Doyle, Hingham; Steve Burke, Exec. Dir. Irish Cultural Centre; Seamus Mulligan, Randolph (ICC).



1919-2019: de Valera in Boston & 100 Years of Ireland-U.S. Relations

July 1, 2019

Welcome

Mary K. Grant, Ph.D. President, Edward M. Kennedy Institute

Remarks

Laoise Moore Consul General of Ireland to Boston

Keynote

David McCullagh, Ph.D. Journalist, RTE and Author, "De Valera: Rose 1882-1932" and "De Valera: Rule, 1932-1975"

Panel Discussion

- Kevin Cullen Columnist at The Boston Globe, moderator
- David McCullagh Ph.D. Journalist and author
- Daniel Mulhall Ireland's Ambassador to the United States
- Damien Murray, Ph.D. Professor of History, Elms College
- Catherine Shannon, Ph.D. Professor Emerita at Westfield State University

Audience discussion

Closing remarks

Mary K. Grant, Ph.D.

Copies of Mr. McCullagh's two-volume biography of de Valera are available for sale in the Institute's gift shop.

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#deValeraInBoston

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# Riverdance Summer School: Inspiring the next generation

**By R. J. DONOVAN  
SPECIAL TO THE BIR**  
I recently had the unique opportunity to attend the Riverdance Academy Summer School Program on the campus of Boston University. Rest assured I was not there as a dancer, but as an observer. It proved to be an uplifting experience.

To apply, students must have at least five years dance training or three years of competitive experience. The program in Boston hosts up to 200 dancers, ages 12 and up, who attend one of two six-day sessions in July. Five days of classes are followed by a Showcase on Saturday for friends and family at the Tsai Performance Center.

This year marked the first time a three-day Juniors Program was added for those ages 5 to 11, who at the moment do not participate in the Showcase..

Students came from as close as Milton and as far away as Australia. One student traveled from Dublin just to have the experience of studying in Boston. The females far outnumber the males.

Over the course of the week, everyone learns the choreography for three or four of "Riverdance's" iconic numbers. Students then perform at least two numbers during the Showcase, if not more. The half dozen instructors are all elite dancers from the "Riverdance" cast.

Participants also attend talks from experts in the fields of dance and fitness

to learn about strength and conditioning, nutrition, and sports psychology. They also learn how to connect with an audience, about life on the road, and about the 25-year history of "Riverdance."

About a third of the students hope to someday perform in the show. For those over 18, the school serves as an audition. The rest are there purely for the love of dancing.

The school grew from a conversation begun here in Boston between "Riverdance" producer Moya Doherty and the renowned dancer Padraic Moyles. During a rehearsal of "Heartbeat of Home" at The Wang Theatre they spoke of establishing a summer program to train and enrich the next generation of dancers.

Moyles originally joined "Riverdance" in 1997, going on to become dance captain and then principal dancer. He subsequently appeared in more than 5,000 performances of the show globally, performing for heads of state and notable individuals, including Michelle Obama and Queen Elizabeth II.

Today, he is associate director of both "Riverdance" and "Heartbeat of Home" as well as course director of the Summer School. The program launched at Trinity College in 2015. When Moyles was looking for a second location in 2017, Boston was a natural choice.

The Irish diaspora in Boston was a factor in that decision, as was the acces-



Padraic Moyles rehearsing "Distant Thunder" with the male students. R. J. Donovan photo

sibility of an international airport. He researched Harvard and Boston College before settling on BU, where he found the support staff to be exceptional.

Chatting between classes, Moyles said, "We wanted to be established with universities that were well known, that had a high pedigree. Where we see ourselves at the top of our game, we wanted universities that were at the top of their game. Our goal is to inspire, to motivate, to encourage . . . We teach the students about mindset, rest, recovery – the key pillars around peak performance, which apply to every aspect of your life,

not just dance."

Connecting with new friends is also part of the program.

At BU, groups of students were hard at work in three different rehearsal rooms. It was staggering to see how quickly they learned the material and how much they encouraged one another. For many of them, they were learning choreography from dancers they had seen in the show and now idolized.

Caitlin Dooher, 15, from Needham, told me, "I expected it to be really difficult, lots of hard work, lots of sweating. It turned out to be all of that, but it was also a lot of fun. And the instructors are so nice and so understanding and so inspiring. They reach out to you as if they were your peers . . . I'm having an amazing time."

Moyles also wants to open students' eyes to the broad range of employment possibilities in the entertainment world. Last year he auditioned 946 people to fill just 2 open slots in the show. "But that doesn't mean a number of those 944 other people couldn't add value to this company in another way," he said. "They have a passion for dance. Maybe they could be a fantastic stage manager. Maybe they could be an amazing wardrobe designer. Maybe they could help us in production management."

"These people are unusually high achievers," he added. . . They are coming out of universities ready to

work with a huge level of education . . . We're trying to broaden their horizons as to what show business truly is and help them understand that just because one avenue doesn't work for you within this industry, it doesn't mean you can't work in this industry."

The students are a diverse group. Of that, Moyles said, "Some of these students come to us with disabilities. This is just what they love to do, and we always accept them. Whether it's autism or a severe food allergy, CF, whatever it might be. Just watching their work ethic, watching their approach to life and how they cope with things is truly what ends up being inspiring and motivating and encouraging to us."

I was introduced to a young man with autism, and made special note of him, both during class and at the Showcase. "Watching him, and watching him be accepted by all the other dancers," said Moyles, "has to be one of the most inspirational things I've ever witnessed. He walks in with this unbelievable amount of confidence . . . He goes out there and does it his own way and all the other dancers are cheering him on and clapping . . . The rest of the instructors were literally in tears."

Staging the program over six days gives students an avenue to show their talent, ethics, and personality, which would be impossible at a standard audition lasting a

matter of minutes. That staging also allows Moyles to see who can be coached and who works well in a team. "It gives us the opportunity to see what their true colors are."

Natasha Woytiuk, 26, from Montreal, agreed. Having attended the school in both Boston and Dublin, she said, "I really appreciate the fact that it's an audition that takes place over multiple days. Because in an audition, you're going to mess up . . . There are going to be little mistakes . . . This is the perfect scenario where you can come back an hour later and show them again. You can come back the next day and show them again . . . You get so many opportunities to show them that you can do it."

While Moyles is in charge of the school, he is quick to redirect credit. "I must point out that it isn't any one individual that makes this run, it's a team of people. If I wasn't in Boston, this would run seamlessly - because of the team . . . They know exactly what the expectations are and exactly what we have to try and do . . . And that, to me, is the success of it."

The ultimate goal? "Students don't just leave as better dancers, they leave as better people, more equipped to deal with challenges they could face in any walk in life."

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

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# Getting it right at Riverdance summer school



At top, Boston’s Riverdance Summer School class; at right, Lauren Smyth teaching the “Riverdance” finale choreography; at right below, students from The Juniors Program, with (back row) Padraic Moyles and instructors Maggie Darlington, Meghan Lucey, Lauren Smyth and Andy O’Reilly; Below, Montreal’s Natasha Woytiuk with Padraic Moyles; bottom, Padraic Moyles with Caitlin Dooher from Needham.

*Photos by R. J. Donovan*





# THE BIR'S CALENDAR OF CELTIC MUSIC EVENTS

**By SEAN SMITH**  
This month's offerings of Greater Boston/Eastern Massachusetts Irish and Celtic-related events will include a busy weekend at the Irish Cultural Centre of New England and, up on the North Shore, the inaugural Rockport Celtic Festival.

•The Canton-based ICCNE will host an Irish Music and Dance Weekend, beginning on Aug. 9 with Belfast quintet **Réalta** (Conor Lamb, uilleann pipes, whistle; Aaron O'Hagan, uilleann pipes, flute, whistle; Deirdre Galway, guitar, vocals, piano; Dermot Mulholland, bouzouki, double bass, banjo, vocals; Dermot Moynagh, bodhran, percussion). The band draws inspiration from legends of the Irish folk revival like Planxty and the Bothy Band while carving out its own place in the traditional scene, notably on the strength of its pipes and whistle-led sound – not to mention a song repertoire in English and Gaelic. **Réalta** has toured through Europe, India, South Korea and the US, and appeared at major events like the Celtic Connections Festival, where they won the coveted Danny Kyle Award. The concert begins at 8 p.m.

The next day, Aug. 10, at 7:30 p.m., the centre welcomes the **Byrne Brothers**, a family band from Dublin, and more recently Donegal, now residing in Florida. The group is brothers Dempsey (10 years old) on bodhran, whistle and vocals, Finn (13) on banjo, mandolin and guitar, and Luca (15) on accordion – all of whom are dancers – and father Tommy, who plays guitar, fiddle, whistles, uilleann pipes and Highland pipes, and sings. The Byrnes, who have two albums to their credit, are known for high-energy performances



Lily Honigberg of Fade Blue during the band's afternoon concert on Palmer Street outside Club Passim.

with plenty of showmanship and stage savvy. As befitting a 21st-century act, they also are very active on social media (guided by mother Julie), complete with a YouTube channel that includes “vlogs” as well as concert and session clips.

Boston's **Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann Hanafin-Cooley-Reynolds Branch** will provide the music at the Aug. 11 céilí mor, which runs from 11:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. and features plenty of and social dancing and other entertainment.

For tickets and other information about these events, go to [irishculture.org](http://irishculture.org).

•The **Rockport Celtic Festival**, the theme of which is “Exploring Celtic Roots & Branches,” will take place August 23-25 at the Shalin Liu Performance Center, with a diverse line-up of accomplished musicians, dancers and singers who explore connections between the Irish, Scot-

tish and American music traditions: **Mick McAuley; John Doyle; Oisín McAuley; Bruce Molsky and Allison de Groot**; the **Palaver Strings** chamber orchestra; **Dana Lyn and Kyle Sanna; The Seamus Egan Project with Moira Smiley; Jenna Moynihan and Mairi Chaimbeul; Rakish; The Murphy Beds; Kevin Doyle**, and others. The festival opens with “The Celtic/Appalachian Journey” on Aug. 23, and finishes up on Aug. 25 with a concert, “Songs and Stories of the Sea,” with special guests **David Coffin** and **Michael O'Leary**. The festival hosts and artistic directors are **Brian O'Donovan and Maeve Gilchrist**.

For more, go to [rockportmusic.org/celtic-appalachian-journey](http://rockportmusic.org/celtic-appalachian-journey).

•In addition to their appearance at the ICCNE [see above], **Réalta** will be at the Burren Backroom series on Aug. 7 at 7:30 p.m.

Also in the Backroom, on August 14 at 7:30 p.m., will be **Susan O'Neill** (known as **SON**), a Clare-born singer-songwriter-guitarist with a blues-rock influence and a throaty, powerful voice to match – honed in part by her participation in the Ennis Gospel Choir as a teen. After playing in the bands **Propeller Palms** and **King Kong Company**, O'Neill launched her solo career in 2017, releasing her debut album, “Found Myself Lost.” Her use of a “loop” pedal enables her to expand her one-woman sound, adding vocal and instrumental textures (including trumpet, which she learned to play in her town's brass band). Many of O'Neill's songs deal with her interest in mental and physical health – and music's role in aiding both – and passion for environmental issues.

Two founding members of Ireland's beloved rock band **The Saw Doctors**, **Padraig Stevens** and **Leo Moran** – co-writers of the group's most famous song, “I Useta Love Her,” which became Ireland's best-ever selling single – will be in the Backroom on Aug. 22 at 7 p.m. The pair's friendship dates back to a youth club in their native Tuam, and has continued beyond

The **Saw Doctors**, which Stevens left several years ago. Besides “I Useta Love Her,” Stevens' other writing credits with the band include “That's What She Said Last Night,” “Same Ol' Town,” “Good News,” “Maroon and White” and his very own “Still the Only One”; Christy Moore covered Stevens's “Tuam Beat” in 2016. Moran, a prodigious songwriter himself, and Stevens recorded a collection of songs about Gaelic football under the name “The Folk Footballers” to celebrate Galway's appearance in the 1998 All-Ireland senior football final.

Go to [burren.com/music.html](http://burren.com/music.html) for tickets and other details.

•Dublin quartet **Lankum**, which made its Boston-area debut earlier this year in Club Passim, returns to the Harvard Square venue on Aug. 2 for two shows, at 7 and 9:30 p.m. The self-described “Dublin folk miscreants” have gained considerable popularity with a populist, gritty, infectious blend of traditional, music hall, and original material. The band started out more than 15 years ago as **Lynched**, an experimental psychedelic folk-punk duo of brothers Ian (uilleann pipes, concertina, whistle, vocals) and Daragh (guitar, piano, vocals) Lynch, and – with the addition of Radie Peat (concertina, accordions, harmonium) and Cormac Mac Diarmada (fiddle, viola) – garnered three

nominations in the 2016 BBC Folk Music Awards for their first album, “Old Cold Fire.” Changing their name to **Lankum**, the band's 2018 release “Between the Earth and Sky” brought it further acclaim, and continued to showcase its interest in musical styles ranging from punk, black metal and techno, in close quarters with a deep affection for traditional music.

West Coast-based power trio **The Fire** are at Club Passim on Aug. 13 at 8 p.m., their music bridging the diverse and venerable Scottish fiddle and bagpipe traditions. The **Fire** is Rebecca Lomnisky, a past winner of both US and International Scottish fiddle championships; David Brewer (Highland pipes, whistle, guitar, bodhran), who has toured with Scotland's Old Blind Dogs and appeared with The Chieftains, and contributed to the soundtrack for a PBS documentary on Andrew Jackson; and Adam Hendy (guitar, bouzouki), who's studied and played with members of such bands as **Flook** and **Lúnasa** and performed across the US, Ireland and UK. The trio last year released its first full-length album, “Radiance.”

Fiddler-vocalist **Emerald Rae** returns to the Club Passim stage on Aug. 14 at 8 p.m. The Gloucester-born and bred Rae is an accomplished fiddler, singer, and step dancer who has been active in traditional music, particularly that of Scotland and Cape Breton, since her childhood, playing in many collaborations – including as part of the “alt-trad” band **Annalivia** – as well as a soloist. In recent years, she has turned her attention to American folk music and songwriting. Her most recent work, showcased on her 2018 album “**Emerald Rae**,” focuses on her vocal-fiddle synergy for traditional, contemporary, and original songs.

Opening for Rae is **Liv Greene**, whose songwriting aligns with her interest in Appalachian folk and roots music.

**The Young'uns**, known for infectious harmony singing and a repertoire of traditional and original songs that capture the life and times of their native Northeast England, will be at Club Passim on Aug. 21 at 8 p.m. Hailing

from Teeside, the trio of Sean Cooney, Michael Hughes and David Eagle has earned BBC Radio 2 Folk Awards for Best Group and Best Album (for their fourth release, “**Strangers**”) while winning audiences across the UK and elsewhere with a jovial, down-to-earth stage presence to go with their compelling musical portraits of working-class people, their challenges and triumphs. Their most recent project is “**The Ballad of Johnny Longstaff**,” the story of one man's adventure in times of upheaval – from begging on the streets in northern England to fighting against fascism in the Spanish Civil War.

Tickets and other information available at [passim.org](http://passim.org).

•Toronto-based **Enter the Haggis** comes to the City Winery on Aug. 1 at 8 p.m. For almost 25 years, the band (Craig Downie, bagpipes, guitar, keyboards, whistle; Brian Buchanan, fiddle, guitar, mandolin, accordion; Trevor Lewington, guitar, mandolin, keyboards; Mark Abraham, bass, banjo; and Bruce McCarthy, drums) has brought together a prodigious – even quirky – blend of rock, fusion, bluegrass, traditional Celtic fare, agitpop, folk, and other strains. From head-banging, arena-friendly Celtic rock to more nuanced, lyrical, indie-type offerings, “**ETH**” combines a versatile repertoire with sociopolitical conviction.

See [citywinery.com/boston/enterthehaggis08012019.html](http://citywinery.com/boston/enterthehaggis08012019.html).

•A recent addition to Boston's ranks of roots-oriented bands, **Corner House** will give a free concert on Aug. 8 at 5 p.m. in Kendall Center (2 Cambridge Center in Cambridge) as part of the Berklee College of Music “**Summer in the City**” series. Between them, Ethan Hawkins (guitar), Louise Bichan (fiddle), Ethan Setiawan (mandolin) and Casey Murray (cello) have amassed a solid background in Irish, Scottish, Appalachian string band, New England contra dance and bluegrass traditions, all of which they present in a winning, easygoing fashion. (They make fun, creative YouTube videos, too.)



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Hannah DeRusha (left) and Rebecca McGowan of the Irish dance troupe **Rising Step** collaborated with **Fade Blue** during the Summer BCM Fest afternoon concert.



# Four Greater Boston teen musicians are heading to Drogheda for the Fleadh 2019 competition – with 8,000 other competitors

(Continued from page 1)

uted to success. In the case of these four young musicians, they all have a familial connection to Ireland, as well as to the music, and – key ingredient here – supportive parents. Most of all, they have by now arrived at a place where Irish music is more than lessons and rehearsals, or another obligation to fulfill; it's something they own, a part of themselves that demands time and attention – both of which they are happy to give.

"It's like having a second life," says Seamus, who plays flute and concertina and will be competing in the former category at this year's All-Ireland Fleadh, his sixth. "When you go off to a session, you end up meeting and hanging out with people you probably wouldn't meet otherwise. Playing Irish music just expands your world like that."

"Playing the concertina is definitely a stress reliever when you're anxious," says Niamh, who in addition to the concertina competition also will play in a duet with Misha at her third straight All-Ireland. "When I play it, I don't have to think about that test I've got coming up on Monday. But I like playing the music for itself, like when you're in a duo or trio: You communicate and bounce off each other even while you're focusing on each other; they'll cover for you, and you'll cover for them. It's a great feeling."

"I just like having the ability to join other people, literally anywhere in the world, in sharing Irish culture and music," says Yuriy, a whistle player, who along with brother Misha is bound for his second Fleadh.

Obviously, you don't have to compete in the Fleadh to be able to experience all that. There are plenty of musicians who have excelled in Irish music, or have gotten good enough to find satisfaction in playing it, without going the competition route. Those who do compete tend to view the process as a milestone or a point of reference to help sort out their progress, and to affirm their feelings and attitudes about the Irish music tradition.

As Misha notes, competition can be a means for instilling self-discipline. "You stay focused on what you're doing, and don't worry about the other musicians," he says, repeating advice his and Yuriy's teacher, Dennis Galvin, has given them. "Find a spot to look at when you play, and you won't see your surroundings, so you won't be distracted."

For her part, Niamh says she hasn't gone through Fleadh-related jitters: "Everyone reacts their own way," she says, with a smile. "I don't know, I just don't get nervous – I get an adrenaline rush."

But the competition is only one aspect of the All-Ireland Fleadh: There are classes and workshops with master musicians and dancers, concerts featuring some of Irish music's best performers



**Niamh McGillicuddy and Misha Bane at the Irish Cultural Center of New England in Canton last month. The two will compete as a duo, as well as in individual categories, at the All-Ireland Fleadh.**

*Sean Smith photo*

(this year's line-up includes Téada with Seamus Begley, Eleanor McEvoy, Damien Dempsey, Zoë Conway, Sean Keane, the Martin Hayes Quartet, Cherish the Ladies and Kevin Burke), and many, many sessions. The streets are fairly bustling with tourists, so an enterprising young musician can do pretty well busking – which is what Misha and Yuriy plan on doing together.

In recent years, the Fleadh has reached an international audience via the Internet, broadcasting some of their special concerts as well as on-the-street interviews and performances with Fleadh competitors.

"My first Fleadh was a real eye-opener," recalls Niamh. "I'd never been to a festival that big in my life. And there were so many kids playing music. It was a great way to make friends and pick up some ideas and inspiration. I really like the classes, where you get to learn from different instructors – they each make you look at the music in a different way."

The All-Ireland Fleadh can be eye-opening in another way, as Seamus found his first time there. Witnessing the high quality of the Irish-born competitors in his category got to him, he acknowledges: "I just completely lost it on the first pass. I was too nervous."



**Being an Irish musician is "like having a second life," says Seamus Noonan. "When you go off to a session, you end up meeting and hanging out with people you probably wouldn't meet otherwise. Playing Irish music just expands your world like that."**

"It's a revelation to see the kids from Ireland," says Seamus's father, Jimmy Noonan, an accomplished flute and whistle player born in the US whose father was from Clare. "In Ireland, just about all they do is practice; they learn instruments in their schools, and they have sessions and ceilis to go to all the time. And to qualify for the All-Irelands, every kid has to compete not only in the county but also in the provincial fleadhs,

so they have to be really, really good."

But Seamus didn't let his initial breakdown defeat him. He sampled the other features of the Fleadh, made friends, and sat in with more experienced, and older, musicians. Back home, he took part in the Youth Trad Exchange co-organized by Boston's Comhaltas branch music school, through which young musicians mainly from Greater Boston were matched with peers from

County Clare; each group spent time in the other's country, playing and performing together. Fortified by these and other experiences, he subsequently played far better at the competitions.

"Before, music was work," summarizes Seamus, who cites the Trad Youth Exchange in particular as foundational to his development. "And then it wasn't a chore. I wasn't only playing, I was listening to a lot more music, like what Dad has

on his iPod. That really helps you a lot."

Although he once qualified for the All-Ireland, Jimmy Noonan never took to competing – "I would just get too nervous" – but he thought it might be beneficial for Seamus, who early on showed an interest in playing (Seamus, like Misha, also learned Irish dance at an early age, which helped familiarize them with the music). Still, Jimmy didn't push things.

"I always told Seamus just to learn the music, and to pass on the music," says Jimmy. "And then he got good. So the Fleadh seemed like something to try for. He saw what it was all about, how competitive it is, and how that drives up the standard for the music. He gets it. What he's doing now is beyond what I ever did."

"I'm just happiest when I hear him sit down with his friends and play great music."

Niamh – who started on fiddle and tin whistle at age five – says her father's side of the family was active in Irish music, including her grandfather, who played concertina and thus gave her the motivation to follow suit. She understands there is something beyond the immediacy of learning tunes or practicing one's technique, and credits her teacher, Florence Fahy, for helping her see that.

"Flo likes me to know where a tune came from, which musicians would play it, or who composed it," she explains. "She wants me to be able to answer the question, 'What's that you're playing?'"

Misha and Yuriy's father, Frank, had an accordion-playing brother whose musical partners included Boston Irish music legend Billy Caples. Although more familiar with American traditional music, Frank took up the box himself, and when the boys were young he would bring them around to Irish sessions until they began playing themselves. Now, Frank – whose wife Mary, a Kerry native, further solidifies the family's Irish heritage – is not too proud to admit that Misha and Yuriy have progressed beyond him ("If we're playing with Dad, we have to slow down," Misha quips).

Frank recalls advice he once received from a professional musician on the parental role in helping children get involved in music: When kids are very young, they have only a vague notion of what playing music entails, so parents make the decisions – instrument, genre of music, teacher, practice times, and so on. "It's your gift to them," says Frank. "You give them that regimen, those hours, rides to and from lessons. But eventually, it's the kids who have to decide what part, if any, music will play in their lives."

*For information about this year's Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann, see [fleadh-cheoil.ie](http://fleadh-cheoil.ie).*



CD Reviews

By SEAN SMITH

**Liz Carroll and Jake Charron, “Half Day Road”**  
• Yeah, I *thought* there’d been something missing these last several years: Last time Liz Carroll released a new album was 2013, back when the Patriots still only had three Super Bowl titles. That’s a pretty long stretch to go without hearing a blast of new music from the Chicago-born, Grammy-nominated, National Heritage Fellowship-winning, All-Universe fiddler, who is justifiably celebrated as a composer of tunes as well as a superb interpreter of the Irish tradition.



But “Half Day Road” is not a solo effort. Ontario guitarist/key-boardist Jake Charron – who has earned plaudits, plus awards and award nominations, for his work as part of contemporary Canadian-Celtic trio The East Pointers, and with brilliant Nova Scotian fiddler Troy MacGillivray – deserves the equal billing. The teaming of Carroll and Charron makes for a very North American take on music rooted in the Irish tradition. You can hear this in how Carroll’s fiddling distills the mix of Irish influences (touch of Galway here, perhaps some Sligo there, and on and on), or when her bowing exhibits an unmistakably American style, or when Charron’s piano accompaniment evokes the Canadian Maritimes – especially on “A Tune-Back for Andrea Beaton,” a tip of the hat to one of Cape Breton’s finest fiddlers.

Even the album title is a manifestly North American reference: It’s not only the name of a road in Illinois

near Carroll, but also the English translation of a Potawatomi chief’s name.

Of course, you can enjoy “Half Day Road” just for itself, without the context: The titular reel that comes midway in the album’s opening medley, for example, is a perfect showcase of the robust bowing and superb touch and tone that has defined Carroll’s playing; on the one after it, “Tune for Jim DeWan,” she makes ample, glorious use of the fiddle’s G and D strings. “As the Crow Flies” and “Jarl Squad” both have a distinctive, relentless Appalachian/old-timey groove.

Carroll shows her willingness to push beyond the traditional tune structure – and demonstrates her sense of playfulness – on “The Bird,” with an ascension on the B part that is ridiculously wonderful. (Is it just coincidence that the very next track starts with her polka “The Cat”?) The second tune in that medley, “The Greek Petunia,” has Joannie Madden chiming in on whistle – one of three welcome guests on the album, along with bassist Chico Huff and percussionist John Anthony.

“Half Day Road” has its quieter moments, too. Carroll’s “The Famine” is about as gorgeous a lament as it gets (especially with multi-tracked fiddles), and Charron’s composition, “Last of the Leaves,” is spare as it is beautiful. He also demonstrates a well-honed melodic touch on guitar on “Planxty Mary Fahey.”

On the final track’s closing tune, “Trail Magic,” Charron’s guitar pounds out the beat as Carroll churns through the melody, the B part spiraling to a crescendo and back again until, at the fade-out, she plays a variation as a repeating riff – it’s like some magnificent sunset at the end of an immensely satisfying day. [lizcarroll.com]

**Hanz Araki, “At Our Next Meeting”** • A member of Maine Irish quartet The Press Gang, Araki moved to Portland, Me., from the Pacific Northwest three years ago, bringing not only his prowess on flute and whistle – not to mention the Japanese shakuhachi – but his fine singing voice. Both are on display here,

as Araki mixes sets of mainly Irish tunes with songs that come from the Irish/British Isles tradition as well as contemporary writers. His supporting cast includes Donogh Hennessey, who in addition to providing guitar and bouzouki accompaniment served as producer, Trevor Hutchinson (double bass), Laura Kerr (fiddle), Méabh Ní Bheaglaoich (accordion), Niamh Varian-Barry (violin, viola) and his wife and collaborator Colleen Raney, whose harmony vocals are a treat.

Araki’s is a sweet-toned, sensitive yet deceptively powerful voice, which he utilizes judiciously: no overemoting, no pathos. He lends a worthy swagger to “The Bold Princess Royal,” your classic intrepid sea-battle ballad, and conveys the simple joy of the familiar in “The Road to Drumleman” (co-written by the late Tony Cuffe, a native Scot who settled in Boston). Another highlight is the enigmatic, tragic “Flanders Shore,” one of numerous traditional songs (also known as “Flandyke Shore”) fetched from obscurity by the great Nic Jones – a favored source of Araki – and delivered by Araki with a stately sorrow.

He also does a thoroughly tender take on one of Paul Simon’s gentlest creations, “Song for the Asking” – sounding not unlike Rhymin’ Simon himself – with Varian-Barry’s lovely strings behind him. But the song that may really lodge in your mind, and ear, is Scot-Canadian David Francey’s “Saints and Sinners,” a meditation on seeking middle ground between religion and secularism, with a beaut of a chorus: “Way off in the distance, there rang a bell/and it rang for the saints and the sinners as well.”

None of which, however, should overshadow the instrumental tracks, like the reel medley “Famous Ballymote/Ivy Leaf/Jack Rowe,” with some delectable backing from Hennessey, or a set of jigs (“Whistler at the Wake/Humours of Kilclougher/The Old Flail”) for which he uses a B-flat flute – the lower key and moderate pace bringing out a singular richness in the tunes. A set of polkas (“The Gullane/The Harvest Fair/Miss Mulvihill’s”) celebrates the album’s birthplace in the West Kerry town of Dingle, and features a delightful duet between Araki and Ní Bheaglaoich.

“At Our Next Meeting” is Araki’s first release since moving to the East Coast, so it’s not a stretch at all to discern some contemplation on his part about this new chapter in his life, and the people, places and events that have led up to it. “Ask me and I will play/All the love that I hold inside,” he sings on “Song for the Asking” – sounds like a guy who’s got plenty of good music ahead of him. [hanzaraki.com]

**Arise & Go, “Meeting Place”** • From the verdant vistas of Ithaca, NY, comes this trio, which connects the Irish and Scottish instrumental traditions with those of Atlantic/French Canada. This is the sort of musical enterprise that can misfire, where the pieces just don’t fit together well or the attempt to mix traditions inevitably waters down their salient characteristics. Fortunately, that’s not the case here, and it’s all to the credit of these three musicians – Ellie Goud, Michael Roddy, and Tim Ball – for their ability to emphasize the essentials of the different styles within a unifying band sound.

Roddy is in many ways the linchpin for Arise & Go, playing as he does three different sets of pipes (he must need an annex to store all his reeds): border pipes, with a similar timbre as the Great Highland pipes; the mellow, sweet-toned small pipes; and, more or less in the middle, the uilleann pipes. But Goud’s versatility on fiddle – and her rapport with Roddy – is not to be overlooked, nor are Ball’s contributions on guitar, bouzouki, and Quebecois foot percussion.

Arise & Go is at its best, and most ambitious, in integrating traditions within a set, such as when Goud, with Ball’s infectious *podorythmie*, roars through the jubilant French-Canadian reel “La Grondeuse,” and Roddy’s border pipes usher in “Mutt’s Favorite,” one of Cape Breton fiddler Jerry Holland’s all-time greats; the set closes with compositions by modern-day Scottish pipers – Gordon Duncan’s “Break Yer Bass Drone” and Ross Ainslie’s Galicianesque “Dirty Bee.” Another medley begins with “Major George Harrison, DSO,” one of those noble, mesmerizing Scottish marches, led by Roddy’s small pipes, until a rhythmic fiddle-foot combo ushers in “The Acadian Reel”; Goud (with Ball’s feet still tapping) shifts into “Le Voyage” before rounding into “Jack Daniels,” Goud switching to border pipes.

But the sets that stay within one tradition are equally pleasing: A set of venerable Irish session jigs, “Bill Harte’s” and “The Black Rogue,” sandwiched around Kevin Burke’s “The Eavesdropper” are a fine introduction to Roddy’s uilleann piping. “Slides & Polkas” starts with “Cuz Teehan’s #1 and #2” (Goud plays the latter an octave lower, in Sliabh Luachra fashion), and the three go a few measures into “Mairtin O’Connor’s” before transforming it into a polka, after which they blow through “The Ballydesmond” and “Jessica’s.”

While the album title might certainly refer to Arise & Go’s collective musical influences, “Meeting Place” also aptly describes the trio’s facility for combining precision with passion. [ariseandgo.org]



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## Traveling People

# The inside story of the veterinarians behind the Mescan Brewery

By JUDY ENRIGHT  
SPECIAL TO THE BIR

Ninety-nine bottles of beer on the wall, 99 bottles of beer; if one of those bottles should happen to fall, 98 bottles of beer on the wall.

We are probably all too familiar with that old song. How many of us gritted our teeth as our kids worked their way (usually in the car on a long trip) from the first to the final bottle?

Well, you may not find 99 bottles of beer on each and every wall in an Irish pub – with the number of breweries in Ireland now, you might find even more.

## MESCAN BREWERY

Here's an interesting beer story. Two veterinarians – Bart Adons from Belgium and Cillian O'Morain from Dublin – met in Westport, Co. Mayo, where both had successful practices. Each was getting a bit older and finding his job and the attendant emergency calls to cold, drafty barns becoming more difficult with every year.

The two met up one day, clinked glasses, gave up their practices and went to work developing a Belgian beer brewery in the shadow of the Holy Mountain, Croagh Patrick. They chose the name Mescan to honor St. Patrick's personal brewer – a monk named Mescan – and chose a stylized logo for the bottles that represents Croagh Patrick and St. Patrick's staff.

The two men share their wit and the progress of the company on the website, [mescanbrewery.com](http://mescanbrewery.com). They write that their first brewery “was a 50-litre set up. For three years, we brewed each week in Cillian's garage, creating recipes and learning from our mistakes. The real work started when we set about converting a farm shed on Bart's farm and building a 1,000-litre brewhouse from scratch. Many expansions later, we've now lost most of our hair, but, on a good day, we wouldn't swap it for anything.”

Mescan's offerings include Westport Stout (densely flavored with sweet and bitter notes), Westport Blond (golden ale with pear and floral notes), Westport White (subtly flavored with flora, citrus and yeast), Westport Red Tripel (malty and fruity) and Westport Saison (dry, light with citrus notes), Special Reserve (robust, dark beer), Seven Virtues Lambik, Seven Virtues Lager (crisp and slightly dry) and Seven Virtues Lambik (dry and cidery).

Hops, malts and yeast are imported from Belgium and water is sourced from a spring that rises from under nearby Croagh Patrick and runs beside the brewery. Food pairing suggestions are listed on the website also and tours (you can book on the website) with tastings are available.

There are enough beer breweries along the coastal route in the West of Ireland to inspire a guide that's available in tourist offices, many hotels, and



Bart Adons, left, and Cillian O'Morain, owners of Mescan Brewery in Co. Mayo.

B&Bs. Those interested can also find it online by googling Guide to Craft Breweries and Beer on the Wild Atlantic Way.

The guide includes breweries all the way down the coast from Kinnegar in Co. Donegal ([kinnegarbrewing.ie](http://kinnegarbrewing.ie)) to Black's of Kinsale ([blacks-brewery.com](http://blacks-brewery.com).)

## GREAT WESTERN GREENWAY

Without a doubt, the greatest boon to the Newport, Mulranny, and Achill Island area in recent years has been the Great Western Greenway, which attracts cyclists and walkers of every age from all over. Bike rental businesses, stores, restaurants, hotels, and pubs along the 42 km (26.09 mile) route have flourished.

The Irish press recently reported that Michael Ring, minister for Rural and Community Development, announced that a further 3.2-million euro have been allocated to the Mayo County Council to extend the Greenway from Achill Sound to Bunnacurry and from Westport to Murrisk.

The extension will add 56 kilometres (about 35 miles) to the Greenway route.

Ring is quoted as saying, “This is wonderful news for Mayo. This investment will see further extension of the Greenway onto Achill Island and significant further work on the trail between Westport and Murrisk. With each investment from the Government we are getting closer to completing the Greenway all the way around Clew Bay. The Great Western Greenway has been a phenomenal success for Mayo. It is probably the finest outdoor recreational facility in the country...”

A number of other Greenways have sprung up around the country since the first section of the

Great Western Greenway opened in 2010 following the route of the Westport to Achill railway that closed in 1937.

The Greenway is said to be the longest off-road walking and cycling route in Ireland.

## WATER STATIONS

Ireland is miles ahead of the US in conservation efforts as evidenced by a charge of 15 cents many years ago for single use plastic bags in grocery stores. That was long before this country decided to take a stand against plastic.

This March, the first water station in Ireland was installed at the Mulranny Tourist Office and has been getting plenty of use.

A voluntary environmental project called Refill.ie is working toward making Ireland a tap water refilling country again. There are currently more than 850 free public reusable bottle refill locations around the country.

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to refill, avoids single use plastic water bottle waste while helping the environment, health, and bottom line at the same time – the refill water is free.

See [refill.ie](http://refill.ie) for more information.

## THE LOST VALLEY

While you're cruising along the Wild Atlantic Way, a destination often recommended by local tourist boards is The Lost (Uggool) Valley which offers a three-hour tour that gives a window into the cultural heritage of the 19th century west coast way of life and the catastrophic effects of the Famine and its aftermath. The guided tour is conducted at a leisurely pace on well-developed trails and is said to be suitable for all ages.

A road was built into the Valley in 1989 but, prior to that time, at least seven generations of the Bourke family could only gain access to their home on foot.

The Valley has been designated a “Natural

Heritage Area” and a “Special Area of Conservation” under the European Habitats Directive.

Because the Lost Valley is now a working farm, pre-booking a visit is essential. For more information, see [thelostvalley.ie](http://thelostvalley.ie) or email [info@thelostvalley.ie](mailto:info@thelostvalley.ie)

## KILLARY SHEEP FARM

Looking for another fun family outing? If so, be sure to check in at the Killary Sheep Farm just outside the town of Leenane, Co. Galway. There you'll meet Tom Nee, a fourth-generation sheep farmer who greets visitors, talks about farming, and supplies all outdoor footwear and rain gear.

It's great fun to watch the sheepdogs at work rounding up the herd, see sheep shearing (in season) and turf cutting. Orphan lambs can be bottle-fed, too at certain times of the year.

Killary Sheep Farm is open from April 1 to Sept. 30, Tuesday through Sun-

day, with demonstrations beginning at 11 a.m. 1, and 3 p.m. Email: [info@killarysheepfarm.com](mailto:info@killarysheepfarm.com) for more information and before visiting.

## TASTE OF DONEGAL

THE 11th annual A Taste of Donegal Food Festival will be held in Donegal Town Aug. 23-25. Some 28,000 visitors attended last year's festival and this year is expected to draw even more attendees. The festival features all kinds of activities from theater and presentations to entertainment – and of course, great food and drink too.

The extensive schedule of events can be found online at: [atasteofdonegal.com](http://atasteofdonegal.com).

## ACTIVITIES

There's lots more to do in August than space here allows so visit local tourist offices for the latest news, accommodation recommendations, and suggestions to help you enjoy every minute in this beautiful country.



Demonstration of how a sheepdog rounds up members of the herd at the Killary Sheep Farm in Leenane, Co. Galway. You can also see bog cutting, sheep shearing and enjoy a walk through the countryside while there. Great family day out.

Judy Enright photos



# Message to Boris: US-UK trade deal hinges on ‘backstop’ call

(Continued from page 1) the protection of Strand Two of the Good Friday Agreement by guaranteeing there will be no hard border in Ireland under any circumstances. He knows the “backstop” is a protocol the Irish government worked hard to secure. Neal himself also worked long and hard to secure the Good Friday Agreement which, for Boris Johnson’s education, the US government, with the backing of both US political parties, also supports in a rare (for these days) example of bipartisanship.

Unlike Johnson, Neal is also aware from his own direct observation that since the 1998 Agreement, “the 310-mile border has been frictionless and indivisible. More than 30,000 people cross the border each day without incident. There is free movement of goods and services. After so much progress, and 21 years of peace, thoughts of returning to the bad old days of checkpoints, roadblocks, and customs patrols are simply unacceptable.”

This should matter to Boris Johnson because it matters to Rep. Neal and, with that, to Speaker Pelosi. In the simplest Queen’s English, the reality is that regardless of any empty promise from President Trump about “a great trade deal,” if Britain leaves the EU without a Northern Ireland “backstop,” no US-UK trade deal will get past the US House Ways and Means Committee.

Simon Hoare, chairman of the House of Commons Northern Ireland Select Committee, is indeed correct in stating that the position taken by Johnson represents “a very, very dangerous step.” It is dangerous far beyond trade matters alone for both Britain and Ireland. Both Irish Garda Commissioner Drew Harris, and George Hamilton, the former PSNI chief constable, have said that any physical infrastructure or fortifications on the Irish border post-Brexit would threaten peace and security.

“A hard border from a policing perspective would not be a good outcome because it creates a focus and target,” Hamilton said. His is a view echoed by a recent report by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

Neal and Pelosi are by no means alone, given the vast majority of Democratic and Republicans alike who continue to value the key role that US Sen. George Mitchell of Maine played in the successful peace process that was backed by President Clinton in working closely with both the Irish and British governments. That effort saved the lives of members of the police and security forces as well as ordinary citizens on all sides.

It is indeed a perverse and dangerous irony that Boris Johnson, who sees himself as student of history and is fond of quoting Winston Churchill, has, unlike Churchill, chosen to place party over country. By his reckless behavior toward stability in Northern Ireland and his threat to the British economy by “a No Deal Brexit,” he has cravenly catered to extremists offering the politics of darkness.

In the end, it may take the actions of friends of Great Britain and Ireland alike in the US Congress to steer the British off the rocks of moral, political, and economic disaster by focusing their next government’s attention on the reality that any attempt to undermine the peace that has been achieved in Ireland and the prospects for a prosperous, harmonious future for all in will not stand.

*Dr. Francis Costello is a historian who worked in the Northern Peace Process as a member of the Clinton Administration, as chief of staff to US Rep. Joseph P. Kennedy II, and as an advisor to Mayor Ray Flynn. He now resides in Belfast.*



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At Royal Portrush, Shane Lowery seized the British Open stage and the Claret Jug.

## The Republic’s Lowery wins The Open easily

By Peter F. Stevens  
BIR Staff

In the middle of July at Royal Portrush in Northern Ireland at the edge of the North Atlantic Ocean, it was a grand outcome for the golf-mad Emerald Isle. The Republic’s burly, bearded Shane Lowery made a magical run at the challenging Royal Portrush tract to seize the British Open’s and its vaunted trophy, the Claret Jug. That the victor was not named McIlroy or McDowell—lads of the North—ended up mattering little to the throngs that cheered Lowery on throughout the tournament.

Lowery’s talent has never been in question, especially on links courses. If anything, many of his fans and peers wondered why it was taking so long for a player with such a blend of power and touch to break through in a major. At Portrush, Lowery rode a stunning third-round performance and a steady one on the final day in horrific weather to enter the pantheon of Irish and Northern Irish Major tournament winners, elbowing for his spot with Padraig Harrington, Rory McIlroy, Graeme McDowell, and Darren Clarke.

As *Golfweek’s* Alistair Tate aptly wrote, “Shane Lowry carried the hopes of an entire island into the final round of the British Open and delivered.”

Even more importantly, the simple fact that the Open unfolded was testimony to an event unthinkable during The Troubles. That fact was not lost on McDowell, who said to *Golf Magazine* and other media: “The fans put on a show for these players. They treated Shane like one of their own. North or south of the border, they showed there is no border when it comes to golf in Ireland.”

As Lowery’s run to the top of the leaderboard unfolded, the Irish golf world received another welcome development. As CNN reported, “Ireland’s remarkable week of sporting success ratcheted up another level Thursday after the country was named as host nation of the 2026 Ryder Cup....Adare Manor was chosen as the venue for one of golf’s biggest showpiece events.”

The Ryder Cup was much on Lowery’s mind as he spoke with the assembled media after his feat at Portrush: “I’m a European Tour member....I’ll be back in September to start my quest of making the Ryder Cup team. My big goal still remains the same, and that is to be on the plane going to Whistling Straits next year. That’s my plan for the next 12 months. Hopefully that involves a couple of wins along the way.”

Few who witnessed any of Lowery’s performance in the 2019 British Open would now bet against his chances.

## IrishAmerican Whiskey opens its first Ireland-based distillery

The distillers of IrishAmerican Whiskey were on hand at the American embassy in Dublin last month to welcome the newly appointed US Ambassador Edward Crawford at Independence Day celebrations at the envoy’s residence in Phoenix Park.

The IrishAmerican brand is a family-run business operated by Sean, Michael, Paul, and Katie McKay, who launched their first island-based distillery in Ireland last month on Achill Island, Co Mayo. They said they were “honored to welcome Ambassador Crawford” whom they called “a proud Irish American with family connections in Achill Island, Co Mayo.” IrishAmerican Whiskey had a leading stand at this year’s Independence Day celebrations in Dublin providing cocktails samples and truly conveying the qualities of this family-run brand. Popularity of these summer cocktails – “the Uncle Sam” and “The Jackie O” – spread fast as the queue was constant with joyful Irish and Americans alike expressing their interest in the story behind the brand’s epic journey.

The product is currently on sale across 15 states in the US operating from US headquarters in Boston. The whiskey was awarded Double Gold and best in show in this year’s Wine & Spirits Wholesalers of America convention in April.

# A MOMENTOUS MONTH

## For Boston-Irish titan John Boyle O’Reilly, August served up both triumph and tragedy

By Peter F. Stevens  
BIR Staff

At least twice in the life of John Boyle O’Reilly, August had proven to be a time of triumph. August 1876 had brought the news that one of the most daring rescues in Irish and Irish-American annals had succeeded—with O’Reilly one of the chief plotters. In August 1889, the Irish-born and –bred O’Reilly had been chosen in a nationwide competition over America’s foremost poets to deliver the dedication of the Pilgrim Monument in Plymouth, Mass. A year later on Aug. 10, 1890, he made front-page news yet again. Admirers and foes alike were stunned to learn that he was dead at age 46.

In the summer of 1890 exhaustion had caught up to O’Reilly. While serving as a judge at the National Irish Athletic Association’s annual games on Aug. 6, he shrugged off the dizzy spell as the result of his heavy workload at the *Pilot*, likely figuring that a few nights of solid sleep would take care of the problem. Sleep, however, had rarely come easily to him. The former Fenian rebel and Royal Army cavalryman had been sentenced to be hanged for treason against the Crown, but his sentence was commuted to hard labor in Western Australia. He pulled off a daring escape to the United States aboard a New Bedford whaling ship and eventually ended up in Boston, where, wrote Oliver Wendell Holmes, O’Reilly would become “the most famous Irishman in America.”

Early in the pre-dawn hours of Aug. 10, O’Reilly walked into the office of his Hull, Massachusetts, summer home and settled into a chair. He lit a cigar and opened a book. His wife, Mary, entered the office a few hours later to coax him to bed. She found him slumped in the chair, his left hand resting on the book, his cigar smoldering. When she tried to waken him, he did not move. She sent a servant racing for the doctor.

It was scant wonder that John Boyle O’Reilly had been worn down. Since his harrowing escape from Australia in 1869, he had worked ceaselessly to carve out a brilliant career as a reporter, editor, poet, novelist, and essayist. A man who did not like to acknowledge any physical limits, he pushed himself hard, and in terms of life experience, he was 46 going on 86. His hellish experiences as an Irish rebel and prisoner haunted him, filling many of his poems and press writings.

By 1876, O’Reilly was a man on the rise in Boston’s and the nation’s literary and newspaper circles. Happily married and having bought the *Pilot* in partnership with Boston Archbishop John J. Williams after the paper’s owner, Patrick Donahoe, was financially ruined after the Great Boston Fire of 1872, O’Reilly was scaling the ladder of success in his adopted country.

On April 15, 1876, the archbishop and O’Reilly officially became the newspaper’s owners, but O’Reilly’s elation of rescuing the *Pilot* was tempered by his worry over a secret that only a handful of men knew: the New Bedford whaler *Catalpa* had anchored off Western Australia, and a plan to free six of O’Reilly’s fellow prisoners from the horrors of Fremantle Gaol and forced labor in Australia quarries and the bush country was nearing its climax. O’Reilly, along with future “father of the IRA” John Devoy, had played a key role in procuring the *Catalpa* and in introducing his

fellow plotters to the New Bedford men who helped to launch the mission—literally.

The whaler rescued the six Irish prisoners two days later, on April 17, and the *Pilot* was one of the first newspapers in the world to break the stunning news of the plot’s success, an event that was always to fill O’Reilly with pride for a blow struck against his former captors.

For the *Pilot*, O’Reilly wrote on a wide array of topics that included his advocacy of equal rights for blacks, his diatribes against anti-Semitism, and his espousal of better treatment of all immigrants. He also made the *Pilot* an outlet where some of the era’s finest female writers and poets could have their work regularly published. His enlightened views on many social and cultural issues notwithstanding, O’Reilly proved a conservative Catholic with traditional views of men’s and women’s roles in the church and in the household.

His status as the newspaper’s editor and part-owner not only afforded O’Reilly plenty of space for his editorials and articles, but also a healthy salary of \$5,200. The man who had desperately wondered if he would die in the boiling heat of the Australian bush, and who had been willing to die in his attempt to escape that fate, had truly “made it in America.”

In August, 1890, O’Reilly stood at the heights of career success. He was tired, to be sure, plagued by insomnia, but no one who knew him suspected that he might literally and unwittingly be working himself to death.

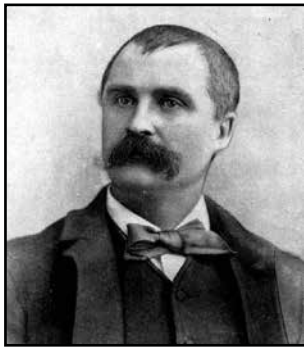
His public funeral was—and remains—one of the largest in Boston’s annals. Attesting to the status of the Irish rebel and immigrant who had bridged Boston’s social and ethnic prejudices, the city’s Irish and Yankees turned out to honor the man who had lived his all-too-short life with uncommon passion and courage. He stands as both a transitional and pivotal figure in Boston’s history.

Today, at his burial site, in Holyhood Cemetery, in Brookline, a boulder from his birth-place, West Meath, stands above O’Reilly’s plot. The stone is a fitting symbol of the one-time Fenian rebel who first fought tyranny, then escaped it, and went on to condemn it in his new nation. In the history of the Boston Irish, John Boyle O’Reilly was the indispensable man.

Words that O’Reilly once penned are still instructive but ignored by far too many Americans:

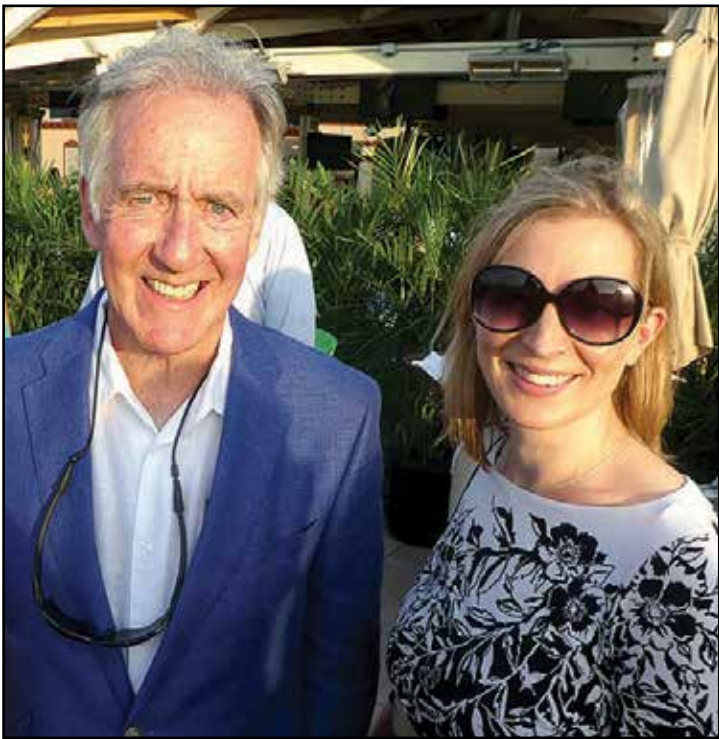
*There are no classes or races,  
But one human brotherhood.*

*There are no creeds to outlaw,  
No colors of skin debarred.  
Mankind is one in its rights and wrongs.  
One right, one hope, one guard.  
The right to be free, the hope to be just,  
and the guard against selfish greed.*



John Boyle O’Reilly

## A Cape Cod Irish Night at Ocean Edge



The Corcoran family hosted an annual Ireland Funds America reception July 19 at Ocean Edge Resort in Brewster. Pictured, clockwise, from top left, Steve Greeley, Ireland Funds VP of Development, Congressman Richard Neal with Ireland Consul General Laoise Moore, and Suzanne Corcoran Early, who welcomed the guests on behalf of her dad, Joseph Corcoran.



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SATURDAY, AUGUST 10

4pm: Katie McD & friends

7pm: THE BYRNE BROTHERS

Admission: \$20 / Kids u12 Free

SUNDAY, AUGUST 11

11:30am: A Ceili Mor by CCE

3pm: Traditional Irish Music Session

5pm: For Folk's Sake

O'Hara's tasting in the tent 2-6pm

Admission: \$10 / Kids u12 Free

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She and guitarist 'Vinny McElhinney with the Ravioli Eyes' will perform the songs from the soundtrack of her new memoir 'Migrating Toward Happiness; The Soundtrack to My Spiritual Awakening'.

It is a story about how she replicated her Irish immigrant grandmother's 1957 road trip from New York to Seattle in a '57 Chevy Bel Air. The inspiring story features the Irish experience in America, as well as flashbacks to her summers in Donegal. There will be a book signing after the concert.

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Copies of her book will also be for sale during the event.

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