

June 2012

VOL. 23 #6

\$1.50

All contents copyright © 2012
Boston Neighborhood News, Inc.

BOSTON IRISH REPORTER

Boston's hometown
journal of
Irish culture.

Worldwide at
bostonirish.com

A weekend for wearing of the Green



Gaelic Storm will kick off this year's Boston Irish Festival with an opening-night concert on June 8.

BY SEAN SMITH
SPECIAL TO THE BIR

Gaelic Storm, the irrepressible Celtic folk-rock quintet, headlines this year's Boston Irish Festival, which takes place June 8-10 at the Irish Cultural Centre of New England in Canton.

Other performers slated to appear at the festival include The Prodigals, The Glengarry Bhoys, and The Screaming Orphans, as well as popular local acts such as The Gobshites, Devri, The Great Whiskey Rebellion, The Silver Spears, Erin's Melody, and the Andy Healy Band.

As always, music is just one of the attractions at the festival, which will feature GAA Irish football and hurling, Irish step dance performances, Irish arts and crafts shops, genealogy consultations, and amusements and activities for children. There also will be special events, notably a road race and an attempt to set the world's record for a gathering of redheads.

Gaelic Storm will open the festival with an evening concert on Fri., June 8. While the band drew international attention through its cameo appearance in the 1996 film "Titanic," Gaelic Storm has built a solid, loyal following through nearly two decades of constant touring and the release of a concert DVD and four albums, with another, "Chicken Boxer," due out this summer. The band's members are Patrick Murphy – an audience favorite for his spirited singing and stage patter; guitarist Steve Twigger; percussionist Ryan Lacey; bagpiper and whistle player Pete Purvis; and fiddler Jessie Burns.

Tickets for the Gaelic Storm concert range from \$30 for preferred seating (sold only in advance) to \$25 at the gate and \$20 for advance purchase.

Similar to Gaelic Storm, many of the other acts performing at the festival bring rock and other more contemporary styles to their treatment of Irish music. But traditional sounds will be around, too, say festival organizers, such as the musicians from Boston's Hanafin-Cooley branch of Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann.

The Saturday portion of the festival will open at 9:30 a.m. with a 5K road race; entrants will get free admission to the festival (go to the festival website for details on registration).

Festival information, including ticket prices, is available online at bostonirishfestival.info.

ONE OF A KIND Thomas O'Connor wrote the book(s) on Boston's Irish, the city's history

An Appreciation

BY PETER F. STEVENS
BIR STAFF

The passing of Professor Thomas H. O'Connor last month marked the passing of a man and historian who was truly one of a kind. O'Connor's work stood – and stands – as the bar for anyone who writes about history. He was that good. He also was generous with his time, his experience, and sage insights to this writer, and I've rarely enjoyed interviewing and simply conversing with someone more than with Professor O'Connor.

Although he will always be best-known around here for his splendid *The Boston Irish: A Political History*, in many ways the title of his book *Boston A-Z* is an apt one title for

O'Connor's career itself. Few historians anywhere have bridged the gulf that exists between professional historians and the general reader better than O'Connor, and when it comes to the history of the Boston Irish or the general city proper, he had no peers in these parts. He was named Professor Emeritus at Boston College in 1993 and held the title of University Historian at Boston College. For anyone with even a passing interest in Boston's Irish heritage, O'Connor's works hold a special place in bookcases, coffee tables, or any other site within easy reach. Equally important, copies of his books are likely to be "dog-eared" – the ultimate compliment to any author,



Thomas H. O'Connor

as it means the pages are read and reread.

Three books that were published between 1995 and 1997 – *The Boston Irish: A Political History*, *Civil War Boston: Home Front and Battlefield*, and *Boston Catholics: A History of the Church and Its People* – stand as must reading for those seeking a sense of Boston's past and present. So much of O'Connor's writing did just that, connecting the threads of the past that color and shape the literal and figurative face of the city.

(Continued on page 4)

INSIDE

Piercing the Irish Ceiling:

Memoir by
Robert E. Riley
Page 4

Update on
'The Gathering'
Page 5

Irish president
on the Famine
Page 7

Bloomsday at
IHC Center
Page 9

Generosity rules
at Sergio benefit
Page 12

Remembering
De Valera
Page 15



If you think you have the reddest locks in the region, then you should get yourself to the Boston Irish Festival in Canton on Sat., June 9. The Festival will be attempting that day to break the world record for the most redheads ever in a single gathering.

Photo courtesy, Boston Irish Festival

At Mt. Washington Bank you've got choices.

Our Totally Free Checking and Totally Free Business Checking offer:

- Free Online Banking, BillPay and e-Statements
- Free ATM/VISA® Check Card (access to 40,000 Free Allpoint ATMS – Worldwide)
- 24-hour Driveup ATMs

You'll find a whole lot of access and convenience at Mt. Washington Bank!

Connecting All Offices – 617.268.0379 • www.MtWashingtonBank.com

Mt. Washington Bank
A Division of East Boston Savings Bank

Customer purchases checks. We reserve the right to substitute an item of similar value. In the event the value of the free gift exceeds \$10, the bank is required to report the gift on Form 1099-INT. The recipient is responsible for all applicable taxes.

Member FDIC
Member DIF

Allpoint

Offices in Dorchester, Jamaica Plain, South Boston, South End and West Roxbury



Get your choice of a
FREE Emerson® Lantern
OR Igloo® Cooler with any
new checking account!



Attention homebuyers!

MassHousing, the state's affordable housing bank, has just announced it's newest, affordable home mortgage, **Right Rate**.

For income-eligible homebuyers* the interest rate is a full .25% lower than our already low rate.

Ask your local lender if they offer MassHousing loans, and request the Right Rate loan to begin your journey toward home ownership.

* The Right Rate loan is for buyers with household incomes of 80% of area median income or lower.



For more details, including where to get homebuyer counseling, visit www.masshousing.com





Irish sessions

Join us at **Gerard's Restaurant** for food, drink, and fun.
Wednesday nights from 6—9



Serving breakfast, lunch & dinner every day of the week
Kitchen open nightly until 10:45 p.m.

GERARD'S ADAMS CORNER
772 - 776 Adams Street
Dorchester, MA 02124
617-282-6370





Geraghty ASSOCIATES

PROPERTY MANAGERS

Studio and 1-Bedroom Apartments
Available in the desirable
Cedar Grove section of Dorchester.

Studios reasonably priced;

1-bedroom units;
heat and hot water included.

Short walk to the Red Line.


Free off-street Parking.

Washing Machines
and Dryers in building.

Call Michael at 617-364-4000

GERAGHTY ASSOCIATES, INC.
Property Managers
P.O. Box 52, Readville, MA 02137-0052
Tel: 617-364-4000 Fax: 617-364-3157





*“Landfall,” Lithograph by John Skelton (1924-2009)
Matted and framed in custom moulding
measuring 29”x 22”
\$195*

Aisling Gallery & Framing

Art of Ireland

229 Lincoln Street (Rt. 3A)
Hingham, Massachusetts, 02043

781-749-0555
Hours: Tues. - Sat. 10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m., Sunday noon - 5:00 pm

email: aisling.gallery@yahoo.com
www.aisling-gallery.com



The G Hotel in Galway.

It's all about you having the Irish 'experience'

By ED FORRY
BIR PUBLISHER

Suzanne Meade, business development manager for the Edwards Hotels, was among a group of Irish travel and hospitality officials who visited Boston this spring under the sponsorship of Tourism Ireland's "Jump into Ireland" campaign. Meade's company operates four leading hotels, including the Meyrick Hotel and the G Hotel both in Galway, the Lisloughrey Lodge, a 60-bed country house adjacent Ashford Castle in Cong, Cty Mayo, and the D Hotel in Drogheda, Cty Louth.



Suzanne Meade

"It's all about experiencing Ireland, get involved with it," Meade said in an interview during her visit to the Boston's Seaport District in late April.

Her company owns the landmark Meyrick at Eyre Square, formerly known as the Great Southern Hotel/ Galway. She said the Edwards Hotel group purchased the hotel called the "Grande Dame of Galway" in 2007, and renamed it after General Meyrick, whose name had historically been linked with the land. The origin of the square comes from medieval open space in front of town gate, known as The Green.

In 1801, General Meyrick raised a stone wall around the square, which was later known as Meyrick Square. Meade said the new management "refurbished the hotel to the old elegance."

Just on the edge of town, a short car, cab or bus ride to Eyre Square is the luxurious G Hotel, the newest and quite likely the most glitzy hotel on the island. Galway's only five-star hotel, the G was designed by the world renowned milliner Philip Treacy, and offers glorious guestrooms, a luxury spa and first class dining options.

"Treacy did all those wonderful hats in the Harry Potter movies, and he designed the hats in the royal wedding of Prince William and His fashions are world-renowned, and Galway proudly claims him as a native.

The G was rated "one of the top three hotels in the world for ambience and design" by the Condé Nast Gold List, and "Top Hotel in Ireland" by Travel & Leisure magazine.

Meade says the summer of 2012 is going to be huge in Galway: "We have an awful lot going on; it's really the city of festivals for Ireland, non-stop from March." There's the upcoming Festival of Literature and the Traditional Music Festival July 16-29. And Galway Race Week begins on Mon., July 30, and runs through Sun., Aug. 5 in Ballybrit.

But the big event this summer, she says, takes place in early July: "The first week in July the Volvo Ocean race returns to Galway at the finish. It came here three years ago, on a Boston to Galway leg. But they purposely chose Galway for the finish this year because they were so blown away last time.

Meade says the Volvo activities include "Free entertainment – bands every night from the 30th of June until the 8th of July. And it's all free; just pay for your drinks and food!"

Don't just come and see the island of Ireland in 2012 but "Jump In." That was the message as Tourism Ireland launched its new brand to a gathering of Boston travel trade partners and industry media at Boston Exchange Conference Center recently. "Jump into Ireland" describes the joyful immersion of a trip to Ireland, a theme that will dominate Tourism Ireland's advertising, consumer and trade promotional activities, co-operative campaigns and media outreach this year and also be a focus for extensive social media campaigns to drive awareness of the unique nature of a vacation to the island of Ireland.

Sen. Kerry and immigrant he helped speak at IIC business leaders breakfast

Irish Consul General also offers remarks

Business leaders from greater Boston gathered at the Irish International Immigrant Center's (IIC) 3rd Annual Business Leaders Breakfast last month to hear a keynote address from US Sen. John F. Kerry (D-MA) and to support the life changing services offered by the IIC to immigrants from Ireland from over 100 other countries. This year, the breakfast included for the first time a speech by a recipient of the IIC's services who was also assisted by Senator Kerry. Thaer Abdallah is a Palestinian who was born in Iraq. He came to give testimony about the extensive support provided to him by the IIC. A human rights activist, Abdallah was held in a prisoner of war camp in Syria, among many other challenging experiences. He also rescued eight other refugee



Consul General Michael Lonergan addresses business leaders.

families.

Senator Kerry, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, provided those gathered with his knowledgeable perspective on immigration reform and offered some insight on the current session of Congress.

Kerry, who also holds senior positions on the Finance, Commerce, and

Small Business committees, also spoke about the economy and deficit reduction while taking questions from some of the more than 150 business men and women gathered to support the work of the IIC.

Irish Consul General Michael Lonergan, who is based in Boston, thanked the business leaders for

their support of the IIC J1-Irish Work and Travel intern placement project. Arbella Insurance Co. CEO John Donohue spoke to the significant contribution Irish graduates are making in his business, and how one of their Irish interns recently returned to Dublin to secure a great job in human resources.



Irish Language Society of Boston elects Newell as its next president

Cumann na Gaeilge i mBoston, The Irish Language Society of Boston has elected its first new president in nearly 30 years. Mike Newell of Dorchester, a native speaker from Ros Muc, was elected at the Cumann's annual meeting last month where more than 90 members cast votes.

He defeated long-time President Peggy Cloherty of Brookline.

"I think we all felt that it was time for a change of leadership," said Newell. "Personally, I was energized by the efforts of my colleagues on the Executive Committee, and by the prospect of our working as a team to revive the organization. We have in place now a group with the talent and expertise to ensure greater success in language learning both through classroom instruction and social activities."

The new Executive Committee will consist of: Bernadette Nic Con Iomaire (Ridge) of Braintree, a native of Casla, Co. Galway, who was elected vice president, replacing Martin Gavin of North Attleboro, who will take the post of recording secretary. Mike Cahill of Canton, a Galway City native, was elected treasurer, and Natasha Sumner of Cambridge, a doctoral student at Harvard, was elected corresponding secretary. The delegates to the Executive Committee will be Liz Mc-

Mahon of Quincy, David Chamberlain of Roslindale, Mary Coughlin of Dedham, Michael Dwyer of Norwood, Tommy Beatty, Michael Quinn and Michael Tolan. The new Board of Directors will comprise Mary O'Toole of Hull, Rev. John McLaughlin of Weston, Paul Moran of Dorchester, Mary Cloherty of Medford, and Michael Graham of Newton.

Cumann na Gaeilge i mBoston was founded in 1973 and is dedicated to the promotion of the Irish Language. The Cumann conducts classes in the language in the Greater Boston area and holds several social and educational events during the year where Irish speakers at all levels of proficiency can converse in the language.

The Irish language (sometimes called Irish Gaelic or just Gaelic) is still spoken in Ireland, primarily on the West Coast, but it has enjoyed a strong comeback elsewhere in recent years. Currently the president, prime minister and deputy prime minister of Ireland are all fluent speakers of Irish. The language, with its lyrical quality and different way of looking at the world, has become a popular subject among Irish-Americans and lovers of Celtic culture. For further information about Cumann na Gaeilge please visit the website at cumann-na-gaeilge.org.

Related story, Page 7.



Boston Health Care for the Homeless honored Troyen A. Brennan, MD, MPH, Executive Vice President, and Chief Medical Officer at CVS Caremark, with its Dr. Jim O'Connell Award in recognition of his "care for those most in need; his engaging passion for his work; and his belief in the resilience of the human spirit" at the organization's Medicine That Matters gala at Boston's Seaport Hotel on April. 30. The event raised \$485,000 and was attended by some 400 guests, including Meghan Geoghan of Dorchester, Bridget Horne of Scituate, Sarah Ciambone of Dorchester, the director of BHCHP's McInnis House, and Laurie Jo Wallace of Roslindale.
Roger Farrington photo

Riley’s way: Combine drive and a moral compass

In his compelling memoir, *Piercing the Irish Ceiling*, top exec Robert Riley tells of his groundbreaking career in the investment world and what he has learned about life along the way

By PETER F. STEVENS
BIR STAFF

When it comes to success, Robert E. Riley knows what he talking and writing about, and in his just-released memoir, *Piercing the Irish Ceiling*, he has rendered a blueprint of how hard work, tenacity, education, faith, and family were key to his success. He also presents a candid, often poignant, and often self-deprecatingly humorous chronicle of what it was to grow up Irish Catholic in a time when all doors were still not open to those with Irish bloodlines. For Riley, the doors he opened were, and are, as his book’s subtitle cites, “the story of a Boston Irish Catholic who reached the top of the American investment world.”

Born on Feb. 19, 1930, at St. Elizabeth’s Hospital in Brighton, Riley writes of a fascinating family that begins with “croppies” (peasants) in Counties Cavan and Galway. In a loving but un stinting manner, he pulls few punches in describing his own family’s virtues and flaws, doing so when it comes to his own life, too. The book’s opening lines signal that Robert Riley is going to tell you the *real* story of his life, not the wan autobiographical watercolor that so many notable men and women foist



Robert E. Riley

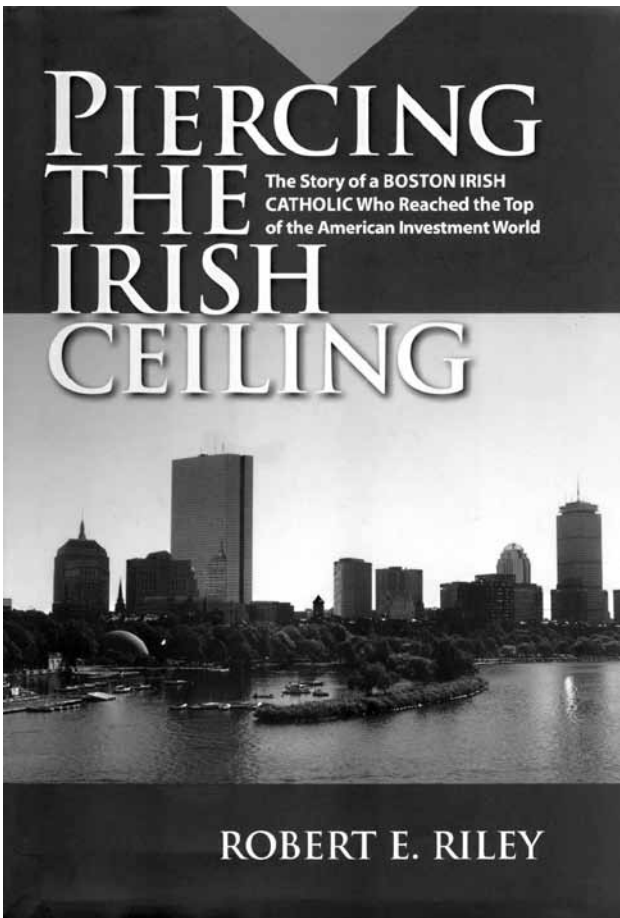
upon readers. He writes in strokes that are often bold, sometimes blunt, and always engaging, which flows from that opening paragraph:

“If it was not already obvious from the name – “Riley” – I did not descend from the aristocracy....my great grandparents were Irish peasants...who emigrated to Boston directly or via Canada in the mid-nineteenth century. The other two [great grandparents] were Jews from Germany and Switzerland who came to New York during the same period.

“Recently I mentioned to a Jewish acquaintance my Irish/Jewish heritage. ‘Great combination!’ he exclaimed. ‘You got your brains from the Jews and your b-lls from the Irish.’”

Throughout his life and career, those two attributes surfaced. Riley’s story is a tribute to the uniquely Boston, uniquely Irish experience. Educated at Boston College High, the College of the Holy Cross, and Harvard Business School, he is also a retired Lieutenant Commander (Supply Corps) in the US Naval Reserve who served during and after the Korean War. He entered the financial world in an era when Irish Catholics could advance only so far before they hit a glass ceiling. Riley does a fine job of describing concisely how the world of Boston finance long remained a haven of longstanding Yankee-Puritan prejudices that survived well after the local Irish had studied and pushed their way into politics and just about every other former Brahmin bastion. At Putnam Investments, Riley did what no Boston Irishman had done: He became the CEO of a major investment house in the region.

Today, he serves as a director and chairman of the Investment Committee of the John F. Kennedy Library Foundation, a former member of the Investment Committee of Holy Cross College, an overseer and member of the Finance Committee of Beth Israel Deaconess



Medical Center, a trustee associate and member of the Investment Committee of Boston College High School, and chairman of the Investment Advisory Committee of the Cohasset Library Trust.

Profiled in the book *New Breed on Wall Street*, Riley was twice named Investment Companies Industry CEO of the Year by *Financial World*. In Irish America Magazine’s Tenth Anniversary Issue, Riley was chosen for the “Business 100: A Celebration of Irish American Corporate Success.” He has five sons, and he and his wife Carol live in Cohasset, Massachusetts.

Piercing the Irish Ceiling is a unique memoir written in a strong, forthright, and compelling voice. The man who wrote it sat down recently with the BIR in his Hingham office to discuss his book and career.

BIR: What prompted you to write the book?

Riley: Family exposition might not have been enough – I felt that the Irish Ceiling, which I had encountered firsthand, was a real theme. Irish Catholics in Boston were not allowed above a certain level at financial institutions, That theme was a key issue.

BIR: When you began your career, what were your first direct experiences with that prejudice?

Riley: I knew about George Sullivan, who had been blocked. He didn’t have a chance at the top jobs. He had all the right academic and business pedigrees, but he was still blocked. When I did start in Boston financial companies, they were skeptical of my being able to climb above a certain rung. The big senior jobs were supposed to be out of my reach.

BIR: Why was that still the case?

Riley: Catholics had the majority in and around Boston in so many ways by 1960, but in the Boston finance scene, it was a different story. It was not a done deal for Irish Catholics even though an Irish Catholic was on his way to the White House. Some of the top

financial guys still came from Yankee families who made their fortunes in the 18th and 19th centuries through privateering and the opium trade and over time had ruled the business landscape in Boston and hung on to it even as the Irish made inroads in other walks of life and business.

In all historical accuracy, and in fairness, as time went by the investment business began to outgrow the Old Guard. I was probably the first to benefit from that. The investment business exploded in a way that became too big for the Old Guard alone. The real world opened it up. There were simply not enough members of the old clubs to handle it all.

After 150 years, the field expanded. I was a Boston Irish Catholic at the junction point. I was fortunate that way – proximity and my own ambition, driven by fear of failure – came together at that time. They *had* to let us all the way up, and that’s where I intended to go. Investment companies, even the oldest ones, finally became meritocracies. **BIR:** When you actually took the CEO post at Putnam, was there residual prejudice?

Riley: When I became CEO, the opportunities for younger talent in finance had begun to rise. The top guys were now in their 40s, not 50s like before. Still, even when I was at the top position at Putnam, prejudice lingered at other forms. I was the right guy at the right time – luckily so. The opportunity was there, and I truly believe that no one else there was up to it better than I was. I was ready for that chance.

BIR: How do you feel your working-class, Irish-Catholic roots prepared you for the resistance you encountered in the investment arena?

Riley: I had the proverbial “fire in the belly.” So did guys like Jack Welch. When I went to Holy Cross, it was a fine school, as it is now; but in that day, it did not have the Ivy cachet, the old club path to the top in Boston’s boardrooms. I compensated by pushing forward always, trying and largely succeeding in outworking and outstudying others.

I also have to give so much credit to BC High. They prepared me there for almost anything, but also taught me and the other boys that success did not – does not – mean operating immorally or unethically.

BIR: Some would contend that God does not have a seat, so to speak, in corporate America; yet as you relate in your book, your religious faith has been a cornerstone of your career.

Riley: I not only believe that morality and ethics are the right way to approach all of one’s life, but also that doing the bad thing in business, the unethical or illegal thing, is the *dumb* thing to do. In many ways, there is fear in my religion. My Catholic faith is what I know well, fear as well as love. Fear of doing the wrong thing and what it brings, fear of hurting those one loves. I am a great admirer of Pope John Paul and Sir and Saint Thomas More. More was both a man of both the religious and the secular, but it was his faith that guided his secular actions.

I believe that one can have both drive and a moral compass. In terms of my faith, I didn’t ask for it, but that’s who I am, where I end up. I was raised in a very conservative Catholic background, but it made sense to me. It still shapes me today. I believe that it fits me.

BIR: If there’s one thing – or a few things – that you’d like readers to take away from *Piercing the Irish Ceiling*, what would you like it or them to be?

Riley: I believe that the book extols the basics of family, hard work, and having a moral compass that guides you in all parts of your life. I do believe that if one works hard, perseveres, and tries to live ethically, he or she *is likely* to succeed personally and professionally.

He wrote the book(s) on Boston’s Irish, the city’s history

(Continued from page 1)

All his life, O’Connor was part of that city. He was born on Dec. 9, 1922, in South Boston. His father, John Francis O’Connor, was a mail carrier, and his mother, Marie A. (Meany) O’Connor, as with most of the mothers in the neighborhood, a home-maker. Then, in 1940, John O’Connor died. His wife was compelled to go back to work and eventually landed a post with the Social Security Administration.

As with so many local Irish kids, young Tom spent summers either swimming with his friends at the M Street beach or, on rainy days, entrenched in the South Boston branch of the Boston Public Library in the Municipal Building, where he was drawn to historical adventure books, especially those featuring the vivid illustrations of Andrew Wyeth. After attending

the Gate of Heaven Grammar School, he went to the Boston Latin School. When the school day ended, he would head down Huntington Avenue to the Boston Public Library at Copley Square, where he earned thirty cents an hour shelving books. The money provided enough to cover the cost of his carfare and lunches.

His next stop was Boston College, but World War II erupted, and after his freshmen year, he spent three years with the US Army in the Chinese-Burma-India Theater, rising to the rank of staff sergeant. When his tour of duty ended, he came back to Boston College and received his AB degree in 1949 and MA degree in 1950; from there, he moved down the Comm. Ave. tracks to Boston University and in 1958 earned his PhD in American History.

Back in 1950, Dr.

O’Connor had started teaching US history at BC; the post was supposed to be open for “only a year.” Some five decades later, he was still teaching there.

He moved onto the tenure track as one of BC’s most popular and gifted instructors, becoming a full professor in 1970 and serving a stint as chairman of the History Department. His introductory courses in American History and such elective offerings as the Age of Jackson and the Civil War not only cemented his reputation as one of the region’s top history professors, but also led to his publication of the books *Lords of the Loom* and *The Disunited States*.

Gradually, he found himself delving even deeper into the history of the Irish in Boston where he learned that there was a surprising paucity of serious scholarly work on the subject. O’Connor

addressed that need with his groundbreaking books *South Boston: My Home Town*; *Fitzpatrick’s Boston, 1846-1866*; *The Boston Irish*; *Building a New Boston*; *Civil War Boston*; and *Boston Catholics*. One need only glance at Dr. O’Connor’s resume to glean his status in local historical circles. For thirty-five years, he taught a class in Boston History at the Extension School of Harvard University, where he was named the Lowell Lecturer for 2000-2001. A member of the Board of Directors of the Boston Society, a Resident Fellow at the Massachusetts Historical Society, and a member of the Massachusetts Archives Commission on the Bicentennial of the United States Constitution – these well-deserved laurels were just a few of the many that came his way. The Daughters of the American Revolution

awarded him the Gold Medal in History; the Erie Society of Boston named him the winner of the organization’s Gold Medal.

In a visit I once made to Thomas O’Connor’s office across College Road from BC’s Bapst Library, he chatted about his unabashed love of history in general and Boston’s history in particular. “As a kid,” he said, “I loved books, especially historical adventures. My friends and I invaded the BPL book stacks; I especially went for books about Colonial history. By the time I got to the Latin School, I gravitated toward history; I loved the color and sweep of the wonderful stories.”

We talked in depth about balancing academic history with history that excites the non-scholar, a balance that no one handled better than O’Connor. He related: “I work hard to make the material as

interesting for everyone as it is to me. In that sense, one writes with audience in mind. It’s an approach that good teachers use in the lecture hall, too. What good is it if your listeners or readers drift off? You’ve got to make it interesting for all, as best you can. I don’t believe there is ever *one* history. I also don’t believe there can ever be one approach to history. In my field, many view history as science, and it is a valid approach. However, I also view history as a *human* story, often driven by emotion and random events such as movements or larger themes.”

Thomas O’Connor’s listeners and readers never drifted off. That is not hyperbole; it is simple truth. When it came to history in general and the story of the Boston Irish especially, there was no one better than Thomas O’Connor. One wonders if there ever will be.

Boston Irish Reporter’s Here & There

By **BILL O'DONNELL**

Irish “Gathering” To Be Highlight of 2013 -- The Irish government and its tourist agency are planning a mammoth party next year and are inviting some 70 million people of Irish heritage around the world to join in. It is hoped that the Gathering, modeled on the widely acclaimed Scottish event in 2009 called the “Homecoming, will bring over a quarter of a million visitors to Ireland.



Bill O'Donnell

At the launch last month in Dublin, Taoiseach **Enda Kenny** and **Taniste Eamon Gilmore** took turns describing the events and reaching out to the diaspora in an effort to promote the 2013 Gathering as the biggest tourist event in Irish history. Said Kenny: “This initiative needs the widespread participation of communities and local organizations across Ireland. The Gathering gives each of us an opportunity to do something positive for our country in our own unique way.” Added Gilmore: “Ireland aims to engage with our global diaspora, to invite them to come home in 2013 ... it is not just for anyone with Irish heritage; it is also addressed to those who love or have an interest in Ireland”

A number of high profile Irish celebrities, including **Liam Neeson**, **Maeve Binchey**, and **Pierce Brosnan** are among the active supporters of the Gathering. For more details or to track information as it becomes available visit thegatheringireland.com

Sinn Fein Seeks To Upend Fiscal Treaty— Sinn Fein has moved from its original proposal that Ireland simply refuse to put the May 31 treaty referendum to a national vote to a new approach calling for the treaty to be voted down or ignored entirely and replaced by an alternative of a \$16.5 billion investment boost to jobs and infrastructure. The party of **Gerry Adams** and **Martin McGuinness** claims that the proposal would create 130,000 jobs over the next three years and cut public welfare costs over a trillion dollars. This proposal was countered by the government campaign appealing to the public to vote ‘yes’ in the referendum. In a related matter the Referendum Commission ruled that the fiscal treaty vote can only be deferred in the case of a general election. This effectively prevents a postponement of the May 31 vote, which Sinn Fein and some others have consistently proposed.

A political sidelight of the debate over the referendum has been the opposition of **Eamon O Cuiv**, Fianna Fail deputy, to the treaty and his criticism of his party for “gagging him.” While O Cuiv, grandson of **Eamonn deValera**, has remained in Fianna Fail, he is seriously looking at challenging his party in June and seeking the leader’s post now held by **Michael Martin**.

Irish Grads Fall Behind IT Job Needs—For years Ireland’s graduates from universities and some technical schools have enjoyed a reputation as the cream of Europe’s workforce, the best trained, most talented and eagerly sought after by multinationals. Sadly that was the profile some six or eight years ago but things are changing in Ireland and not for the better.

A shocking story recently in the Irish Independent reported that recent graduates are “failing the country’s thriving tech sector by turning out unemployable graduates.” The charge is that almost none of Ireland’s dozen plus colleges that offer marketing degrees carries a relevant digital marketing content.

Critics suggest that the Irish students are being taught by people who have not worked in the digital industry. **Ian Dodson**, who operates the Digital Marketing Institute, says that after four years in college, new hires in the digital sector are having to take courses like Microsoft Power Point and Office. “We are being sent babies who need to be taught how to walk,” says Dodson. He also looked at Paypal, which has been trying to fill 1,000 job openings. “They will be lucky if they get 500 Irish people who are qualified enough in language skills.”

That’s a deeply troubling assessment if it is true. In the late 1990s, I ran job training programs for young people from Ireland and they were first rate and eagerly scooped up by solid companies and agencies here. It would be a shame if Irish skills in some of the more prolific tech and digital fields were to drag down Ireland’s reputation for having an excellent work force.

Did You Know That ... despite widespread belief that Aran knit sweaters or jumpers had distinctive cable stitching chiefly to identify fisherman lost in curraghs off the Aran Isles, there is a much more prosaic explanation for their origin? Aran sweaters were originally knitted in the 1920s to be worn by boys for their First Holy Communion. They were hand-knitted almost always by family members who as a matter of family pride adorned the garments with intricate, decorative stitches.

The earlier misconception, romantic as it is, that the stitching served as a method of identification for fisherman recovered from the water off the Aran Isles was fueled by **J.M. Synge’s** play “Riders to the Sea,”

which associated the decorative stitching with dead fisherman. What Synge was actually writing about was a plain stocking worn by most fisherman, not the hand knits that appeared later.

Memories of ‘My Left Foot’s’ Christy Brown—I first met **Christy Brown**, the author of the searing novel *Down All The Days* and several others and three volumes of poetry, in 1970 in Cork at the since shuttered Oyster Bar. His first novel, taken largely from his own life story, was an international bestseller, translated into 14 languages and wildly praised with encomiums ranging from “unforgettable” to the Irish Times reviewer’s “Will surely stand beside Joyce and in front of all the others as Dublin writ large and writ for all time.” His first writing effort in his twenties was an autobiography, “My Left Foot,” wrenched from his young life as a creative genius in a body wrecked at birth by cerebral palsy that left him with just his soon-to-be famous workable left foot, an IQ in the 150s, and a hunger to create. His autobiography, Christy gleefully boasted to one and all, was written by the world’s youngest author [himself], “next to **Helen Keller**, of course.” From that initial week together in the spring of 1970 we became fast friends, pals, with letters back and forth, signed books, visits, and even the occasional phone call from first Dublin, then Ballyheigue, Co. Kerry and later Parbrook, in Sussex, England. My wife **Jean** and I were in Christy’s specially-fitted home in County Dublin when he and his lady, the Kerry girl **Mary Carr**, announced their engagement. Later we visited Chris and Mary in Kerry along with our daughter, **Erin**. Happy Days indeed and for the two of us, Chris and Willie (which he always called me), far too much free-flowing Hennessy.

He asked about straws, the flexible hospital type that he loved. I sent some and then sent more and more. Finally an urgent SOS from Christy: no more straws! Chris, hostage to a body that made him dependent on those around him and with daily demons that helped make him, awry in his wheelchair, a heavy drinker (which would help kill him before his 50th birthday) was often notorious for his whimsy, bad puns and ribald, raucous exchanges with the males amongst his dozen siblings. Christy loved semantic duels, horse racing on the telly, singing badly with friends in the pub, writing when it was going good and the IBM Selectric was humming, his wife Mary, American Jazz, lolling in his chair with a pint glass and floating straw of anything alcoholic except beer.

The phone call from Britain came on a Sunday night in September 1981. I had just received in the Saturday mail a long letter from Christy, three foolscap pages filled with tales of writer’s block, a horrific internment to dry out at a local clinic, and tales “to hell and back.” as Chris described his recent weeks. On the phone, Mary, sobbing uncontrollably, hysterically, was telling me that Christy was dead and asking had I received his letter. It was the last letter he had written to anyone, she said. Please don’t lose it, Mary pleaded. I flew to Ireland, to a cheerless, Christy-less Sussex country home, and later escorted Mary to Glasnevin where Christy resides today among Ireland’s dubs and dukes.

Eight years later, at Dublin’s Savoy movie house I was sitting between Mary Brown and the actress **Anna Manahan**, holding hands. The three of us later chatted with U2’s **Bono** and **the Edge**, and watched the premiere for family and close friends of the 104 memorable minutes of Christy’s life in *My Left Foot*. Later that night, after a party for family and cast at the Gresham, we all landed at Powerscourt in the city centre where I somehow ended up taking Mary Brown by the elbow, walking her across the noisy jam-packed floor to introduce her to **Daniel Day-Lewis** while I swiftly disappeared. Mary was a friend and late night phone caller until she died in Brighton, England in 2006. Christy would have celebrated his 80th birthday this month on June 5.

NOTABLE QUOTE

“Shooting is a popular sport in the countryside... unlike many other countries, the outstanding characteristic of the sport has been that it is not confined to any one class.”

Quoted by the New Statesman from a Northern Ireland Tourist Board brochure, 1969

Aer Lingus In Play—It is almost six years since Aer Lingus ceased to be a state-owned airline and the Irish carrier is likely to change hands, or, at the least, sell off a sizeable portion of the shares it still retains. That much is evident since Etihad, the national airline of Abu Dhabi, took a nearly 3 percent stake in Aer Lingus and Ryanair’s **Michael O’Leary** has not lost his interest in Aer Lingus despite a ruling in 2007 by the European Commission that Ryanair could not wholly own its rival airline. This ruling was later upheld by the EU Court of Justice.

There is a continuing deadlock over who will ultimately be able to purchase enough stock to own a controlling interest. Today the ownership of Aer Lingus is largely split by three entities. One is Ryanair, which has been allowed to keep the 29.8 percent it owned prior to the EU ruling. The Irish government has retained 25.2 percent, and Aer Lingus employees have a scattered 14.9 percent stake. These shares together represent almost a 70 percent ownership of Aer Lingus.

Earlier this year as part of a planned state asset sale, the government announced that it was looking to sell its 25.2 percent share. Ryanair was

specifically excluded from buying the state shares, but Abu Dhabi (Etihad) took an initial small stake in the Irish airline and could be looking for more.

Two possible scenarios regarding Aer Lingus in the coming months:

(A) The state would like to get out of the airline business and Aer Lingus, cleanly in the black, is an attractive target for other regional air carriers. (B) Abu Dhabi’s Etihad Airlines is considered a serious bidder in the short term and could buy a fairly substantial share of the state-owned stock, and Aer Lingus appears amenable to a cash infusion from Abu Dhabi.

Irish Social Club Makes A Comeback—In April 2011, the Irish Social Club closed its doors in West Roxbury. Founded in 1945 by **Mary Concannon**, it had at one time an astonishing 13,000 members. A year ago membership had dwindled to 239 with no plan in place for survival. Now in the spring of 2012, less than a year later, the Irish Social Club is completing the repairs and upgrades necessary to keep the club site solid and functioning; a membership drive has been a huge success with over 500 renewals already in and more coming every week, and the club has reopened and welcomes all to join in the revival.

From **Kathleen Adams**, who led the effort to reverse the decision to close and helped to form the steering committee to save the club:

“Thanks to the new officers: **President Mary Maloney** and fellow officers **K. Adams, T. Maloney, Irene Daly, Ken Daly, Kay Hayes, Richie Gormley, Mary Tannian, Mike Walsh, S. Mannion, M. O’Donnell, Doc Walsh, K. Murphy, John Davenport, and Joan Kelliher**. The club would have been lost without the kindness of **Marty Walsh** and the Boston Building Trades, **Mike Monahan** and Local 103 IBEW and our union friends. Thanks all!

Also due thanks for their protean help are **Richard Archer, Jim Calvey, Patrick Casey, Mary Mulvey Jacobson, Rep. Ed Copping, City Councillors Matt O’Malley and John Connolly, Sen. Mike Rush** and our West Roxbury neighbors who deserve a hug or a handshake for rising to the occasion. To all the new and old members may your tribe increase and may the ISC thrive for years to come.

RANDOM CLIPPINGS

Peacemaker **George Mitchell** recently made a quiet trip back to Northern Ireland with son **Andrew** to keep a promise he made to himself during the GFA talks. ... What is the Irish Embassy in Brussels doing promoting tax avoidance plans so Irish expats can escape taxes at home? ... Don’t miss the June 10 Tony Awards on TV where the Irish love story “Once” is likely to do very well. ... Want an island all your own? Inisliroo Island on Lough Erne is for sale at just under a million. ... Irish lawyers and judges are seeking help for depression and stress, higher than in the UK. ... Congratulations to **St. Clement Parish** on the Somerville-Medford line, my old school, on its Centennial. ... The forecast for Irish growth for 2012 is a low 0.5 percent, hoping for almost 2 percent in 2013. ... NI’s **Darren Clarke**, who won last year’s British Open, reportedly takes the winner’s Claret Jug with him everywhere. ... June 15 and 16 are days to mark Bloomsday 2012 at 100 Franklin St., Boston, at Arch and Devonshire. ... Hard to believe, but Galway University Hospitals report that they had 35,000 no-shows for appointments last year. ... Ireland still doing its part; its just sent six unarmed observers to monitor the situation in Syria. ... True story: A member of Families Acting for Innocent Relatives (FAIR) saw an Italian flag atop a Tyrone school and reported it as a Tricolor and the school as an IRA training facility. ... The actress **Fionnula Flanagan** joined the protest against building a mall in Dublin at the Moore Street site where the Rising leaders sought refuge after leaving the GPO. ... **Newt Gingrich** owes his vendors and PR people \$4.8 million and **Pastor Santorum** owes \$2.3 million. An expensive ego trip for Nasty Newt. ... Even long gone from this earthly scene, **Charlie Haughey** makes news. His Abbeville estate in Co. Dublin, is going for \$9.5 million. ... Friends were worried about 91-year-old **Maureen O’Hara**, who some said was a victim of elderly abuse. That proved groundless and she’s fine and working away on her foundation.

Old friend **Bertie Ahern** may have found a way to spend his retirement riches, He is facing a possible \$1.3 million penalty about his finances and could have to pay his legal bills, which are substantial following the Mahon Tribunal negative findings. ... What a couple of stand-up guys? **Rupert Murdoch** blames his employees for his papers’ phone tapping woes. And **Mitt Romney** looked the other way and had a virtual “no comment” when his top foreign affairs advisor, who is gay, left under pressure. ... Some news outlets are asking if the US Conference of Catholic Bishops is becoming the new religious right? Were they around during **George W’s** love affair with the Catholic Church and its voters? This is old, old news. ... And is it true that Cardinal Law, who was at the helm during the worst of the clerical abuse in Boston, is actually leading the hunt to “expose” the good nuns who have labored with dignity and something akin to sacred servitude.

BC’s **Tom O’Connor** was the real thing, a Southie guy who loved his city and its history. How fortunate we were to have him with us all these years sharing his wisdom. A good man at rest. RIP.

Publisher's Notebook

Fifty years later, I was back home, safely home. Again

By ED FORRY

"How far we all come. How far we all come away from ourselves," James Agee wrote in "A Death in the Family."

"You can never go home again."

Well home again I did go last month, to a special gathering to observe the 50th anniversary of my graduation from high school. And my, what a time we had! Mine was the class of 1962 from BC High (see photo at right), and last year the alumni staff reached to encourage us to make plans for our event. The high school has done a good job of keeping current addresses for many of us – we were a class of 289 graduates that June day in 1962 – and a few had stayed in touch with classmates.



One of our number, Ray Capobianco, is the proprietor of Cappy's Tavern, a delightful little outpost in Wolcott Square, where Hyde Park, Readville, and Dedham meet, and it was there one day last October that a few of us gathered to begin making plans for a reunion.

After a brief meeting at the old high school, we began to follow a loose schedule of sessions at Cappy's. We let the alumni staffers believe they were "working meetings," but truthfully they were old-fashioned bull sessions. Someone brought along a yearbook, and we quickly realized that we all were unrecognizable from that 50-year-old senior class.

The planning group numbered less than 12: Mike Manning, Carl Johnson, Joe Galeota, Jim Rourke, Ray "Cappy" Capobianco, Gil Sullivan, John Jones, Bill McCarthy, Tom Gilarde, with all of us in our 67th or 68th year, and some of us still working or in the early years of retirement. Among us were teachers, accountants, a youth athletic referee, lawyers, a retired business owner, even a couple who had spent time preparing to be priests, before their life's path led elsewhere.

The sessions, always intended to have the serious goal of reaching out and finding other classmates, inevitably turned into nostalgia-fests. Old friends meeting again after 50 years shared handshakes, hugs, and all sorts of long-remembered stories. That very first night at Cappy's, the barmaid handled a long-distance call from Houston. It was Hubie Walsh saying he wished he could join us.

We Boston guys quickly learned to love these get-togethers. There were just two rules: no discussion of personal political views, and a limit of three minutes, – tops! – to grandchildren stories.

Over time, we were able to reach about half of our classmates; sadly, we learned that about 10 percent of our old mates were deceased.

Joe Galeota spoke by phone with Tim Sullivan, and reported, "He was close to death a number of years ago; his family was summoned before he was to be removed from the extraordinary means. After the plug was pulled, his heart kept on beating and even though it took him almost 15 months to return to normalcy, he did and even went on to teach high school calculus at a Georgia high school! Truly, the class of '62 has experienced at least one miracle!"

Our alma mater saved the best for last. The class of 1962 was invited to the stage last month as the class of 2012 received their diplomas. One by one, the '62 grads mounted the stage and received a golden diploma. One of our class, Father Jim Savage, is a pastoral assistant at St. Paul Church in Harvard Square, and he delivered the benediction to the new graduates.

As my fellow grads lifted our arms in silent prayer for the class of 2012, Father Jim spoke:

"We the graduates of 1962 of the era of Moriarty, Mahoney, and Gilday, salute you the graduates of 2012, of the era of Hughes, Kemeza and Perry, and we ask God's blessing upon you!"

"May your focus be small, Zeroing in on those things that you can actually control – like your manners, your temper, your values and your spiritual growth. But may your acts be large, living lives: lavish in hope, extravagant in generosity, and ambitious in self-giving."

"May you learn to cope with failure, and delight in success. May you learn to get over it, get used to it, and get on with it: Get over your mistakes and your failures – learn from them and don't get stuck in them. Get used to it – life is filled with loose ends, unfinished business, and persons and things that disappoint."

"And get on with it – not only living but also living well and doing what is doable and doing it now."

"May in the future you find not only a job but your vocation. May your greatest joy and satisfaction meet the world's greatest needs."

"And in the spirit of this Jesuit high school, may you always excel for the greater glory of God and under the blessing of God, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit today and hereafter. Amen."

Fifty years after graduation, I was home, safely home. Again.



MEMBERS OF THE BOSTON COLLEGE HIGH SCHOOL CLASS OF 1962

Commentary

About the troubles facing the Catholic Church in Ireland

By JOE LEARY
SPECIAL TO THE BIR

Are the continuing controversies surrounding the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland as serious as they sometimes seem? After a 1,500-year history of strength and fidelity, has the Church been weakened so much that political leaders now find it advantageous to call for the resignation of its leader, Cardinal Sean Brady, for his role as a young priest-clerk in a tribunal investigating an abusive priest 37 years ago?



Joe Leary

The answer to both questions is "yes."

Sexual abuse of young children by a few Catholic priests, and almost as importantly, the subsequent attempts by the church in Ireland and in Rome to keep such behavior secret and out of public knowledge, have caused, and are continuing to cause, the nearly complete skepticism and distrust of the church by many in Ireland. Irish politicians, who depend upon voter approbation to maintain their power, sense

these sentiments and criticize the church at every turn.

Ireland and the Irish are experiencing very difficult years of change. As one result of the economic collapse, the people elected a new government, which was formed on March 9, 2011. The party in power for many years -- Fianna Fail -- was reduced to a weak shadow of its former glory with less than 20 delegates in the Irish Parliament. A new coalition of the Fine Gael party and the Labor party came into power.

Four months later, on July 11, 2011, a special government-appointed commission issued an extremely critical report of the local Catholic Church's handling of sexual abuse incidents by priests in the Cloyne Diocese of Cork. Known as the Cloyne Report, it claimed, among other things, that Bishop James Magee and Monsignor Denis O'Callaghan deliberately lied in their attempts to cover up the priests' abuse.

The reaction was explosive. In deploring the report, Taoiseach Enda Kenny, the newly elected prime minister, criticized "the dysfunction, and elitism that dominates the culture of the Vatican to this day." He continued: "The historic relationship between the church and state in Ireland can never be the same again."

According to a July 25, 2011, article in the *Irish Times*, Kenny accused the Vatican of downplaying the rape and torture of children in order to uphold its own power and reputation. It is hard to imagine an Irish leader saying such a thing if he did not think that many of the Irish people believed it, too.

In fact, Irish leadership was so upset with the refusal of the Vatican and local Irish clergy to acknowledge sexual abuse and the cover-up described in the Cloyne Report that on Nov. 3, 2011, the government announced the closure of the Irish Embassy at the Vatican. The reason given was economic -- "We will save money." Diplomatic relations would now be managed out of Dublin. Now this was a shock! Whether done in anger or not, the closing was a major insult. That decision has been reviewed several times in these last months, and the government has announced the embassy will not reopen.

Since the Cloyne Report was issued, the papal nuncio at the time has been withdrawn and a new one appointed. Equivalent to an ambassador, the

new papal nuncio is Archbishop Charles Brown, a 53-year-old American who was born in New York. His low-key style and former relationship with Pope Benedict could help the Irish Church and most view his appointment as a very positive sign from the Vatican. He has a lot of work to do.

And yet more trouble has occurred. Early last month, the BBC ran a documentary entitled "The Shame of the Catholic Church" that detailed the repeated abuse by a priest named Brendan Smyth and implied that Sean Brady, a young priest in attendance at the investigation in 1975, should have, on his own, gone around his superiors and proclaimed Smyth's guilt to all.

Whatever the merits of that charge, to some Irish politicians it was just another instance of a cover-up, and they immediately began to suggest that the-now Cardinal Sean Brady resign his position. Brady is the primate of the Catholic Church in Ireland – North and South. He is actually located in the North, in the City of Armagh.

Taniste Eamon Gilmore called for his resignation. The Taniste is equivalent to an American Vice President except that he has formal duties and is also the Foreign Affairs Minister. Gilmore said that while he always believed in the separation of church and state, in this case he personally felt that Brady should resign. Most other politicians – North and South – were a bit more temperate, suggesting that Brady should consider his position. But almost all of them felt the necessity to speak out. It is highly unlikely that the cardinal will resign as a result of this type of pressure. He has said he would like to leave his position in two years.

In the meantime the Irish people are led politically by men and women who are very angry and critical of the way the Roman Catholic Church has dealt with the clergy abuse tragedy. They are outspoken and willing to bitterly condemn the leadership of a church that has been seriously weakened and may never again be an important factor in Irish life.



BOSTON IRISH REPORTER

The Boston Irish Reporter is published monthly by:

Boston Neighborhood News, Inc.,
150 Mt. Vernon St., Suite 120, Dorchester, MA 02125
news@bostonirish.com www.bostonirish.com

Mary C. Forry, President (1983-2004)

Edward W. Forry, Publisher

Thomas F. Mulvoy Jr., Managing Editor

William P. Forry, Contributing Editor

Peter F. Stevens, Contributing Editor

News Room: (617) 436-1222 Ads : (617) 436-1222

Fax: (617) 825-5516 news@bostonirish.com

On The Web at www.bostonirish.com

Date of Next Issue: June, 2012

Deadline for Next Issue: Friday, May 25 at 2 p.m.

Published monthly in the first week of each month.

The Boston Irish Reporter is not liable for errors appearing in advertisements beyond the cost of the space occupied by the error. The right is reserved by The Boston Irish Reporter to edit, reject, or cut any copy without notice.

Recalling *an Gorta Mor* ... thinking about today’s hungry

Following are excerpts from remarks on an Gorta Mor – The Great Hunger of Ireland of 1845-1847 – by Irish President Michael D. Higgins at the Famine Commemoration in Faneuil Hall on May 5:

I am delighted to be here in Boston, the capital of Irish America. This is not my first time in Boston but it is my first time here as president.

... There is not a single narrative of the Great Irish Famine. We are compelled to acknowledge the many different elements that make up the story of Ireland’s greatest disaster – its causes, contents, and consequences.

Be it the trauma of the Famine itself in the 19th century, the clearances of families that preceded or succeeded it, the emigrations for seasonal work across the Irish Sea that has seasonally bled life from our ancestors as they sought to pay the rent and they and their families sought to survive, the tyranny of landlordism and the emergence, after the Famine, of those elements in a grazier class, native predators, as acquisitive and cruel as any absentee landlord – from all this we have a legacy – many narratives – that have to be revisited, kept open, revised and made more inclusive of much that has been forgotten or perhaps deliberately avoided in a great silence amongst the survivors at home and abroad.

... It is when we acknowledge the facts of what has been omitted, and speculate on why, that we are best prepared to use our own Famine experience in such a way as would generate an appropriately ethical response to the obscenity of recurring famines in our own time in different parts of our shared vulnerable planet.

The Irish Famine of 1845-50 was the greatest social calamity – in terms of mortality and suffering – that Ireland has ever experienced. It was also the worst social calamity based on crop failure experienced in Europe, indeed, in the ‘developed’ world, in modern times.

... The salient facts of the calamity are not in dispute. From late summer 1845 a hitherto unknown fungus, to which there was then no known antidote, attacked and partially destroyed the potato crop in Ireland. In 1846 the blight was more severe and destroyed virtually the entire potato crop. The ravages of starvation and various diseases in 1847 earned for that year the grim description ‘Black 47’. ... During the crisis years it is estimated that over one million Irish perished, from hunger or, more commonly, from hunger-related diseases. In the decade following 1846 – when the floodgates of emigration opened to



President Michael D. Higgins

a population fleeing a stricken land – more than 1.8 million Irish emigrated, more than half of these fleeing (more as refugees than as emigrants, as the historian Peter Gray has remarked) during the famine years of 1846-50. The population of Ireland, which was close to 8.5 million in 1845, had fallen to 6.6m by 1851. It would continue to fall – due to the relentless drain of emigration – for many decades to come.

... the post-Famine exodus of men women and children created an ongoing memory of culpable neglect at best, and more usually, an abiding communal recall of the consequences of imperial degradation, a response that would now live on beyond the seas.

... We are here today, of course, I remind myself, not only to commemorate the victims of the Great Irish Famine but also to celebrate the lives that those who emigrated, forged in this city from adversity, and their achievements in creating and the enduring links between our countries which live on today.

... The Boston evidence demonstrates the determination of the Famine Irish to overcome poverty and prejudice to empower their children, and, they, in their turn, were dedicated to further, inter-generational, advancement and upward social mobility. They made an early and sustained commitment to serving the public good and contributing to the prosperity of their ‘new world’. This is evident everywhere in this country, in the great state of Massachusetts and in the proud city of Boston: in the services (police, fire services); in education (schools, colleges); in business, industry and finance; in health, welfare and philanthropy; in all aspects of religious life of the community; in politics and public administration; in science, technology and innovation; in all branches of the arts, creativity and cultural expression.

... Building on, and learning from, our shared experience of famine, Ireland and the US are working in partnership to lead efforts to combat under-nutrition around the world. Since September 2010, Ireland and the United States have been leading the 1,000 Days of Action to Scale Up Nutrition. This innovative movement aims to prevent the irreversible effects of under nutrition on children during the critical 1,000 days between pregnancy and age two.

... I would like to congratulate that Committee for their work over the last number of years in commemorating and paying tribute to those who suffered loss, death and displacement during the Great Famine years and also for the way they have linked respecting the memory of the Irish Famine with raising awareness of food security issues in the world today.

Off the Bench

The ultimate power tool

BY JAMES W. DOLAN
SPECIAL TO THE REPORTER



James W. Dolan

With all of the hoopla surrounding the Trayvon Martin case in Florida, it is difficult to determine what likely happened. This is my take based on a lot of years of observing human nature and trying to find the truth.

A misguided law set the stage for a tragedy in which a 17-year-old, innocent African-American youth was killed by a police officer wannabe. George Zimmerman fits the pattern of a well-intentioned neighborhood watchman, who enjoyed the inflated status of a quasi law enforcement role.

The gun he legally carried underscored that status and gave him the power and authority to amplify his importance. Unfortunately, he lacked the judgment and the training necessary to exercise the discipline and restraint expected of law enforcement officers.

The Florida “stand your ground” law permits someone to use deadly force – a gun – whenever they reasonably fear death or serious bodily harm at the hands of an assailant. Just who provoked the incident and what is reasonable fear are two threshold questions.

The law obviously creates an advantage for the person with a gun. Dead men don’t talk. The alleged assailant is unable to provide his version of events. Moreover, having a gun in your hand may influence one’s notion of what is reasonable.

Trayvon Martin was visiting his father in the gated community where George Zimmerman also lived. When Zimmerman observed a young black male wearing a hoodie, he assumed he was at least suspicious. The young man was simply returning to his father’s home after visiting a local store. Other than his race, age and the hoodie, there was nothing to suggest he was doing anything wrong. But, for Zimmerman, that was enough. Armed with a gun, his badge of authority, he decided to investigate.

After being told by the police dispatcher not to do so, he got in his vehicle and slowly followed the young man, who was talking to his girlfriend on a cell phone. Martin reportedly told his girlfriend he was being followed by a strange man. In an attempt to get away, he ran. This confirmed Zimmerman’s suspicions – the youth was up to no good.

Zimmerman exited his vehicle and followed, intent upon confronting Martin to determine what he was up

to. He later reported that he lost sight of Martin, had given up the chase, and was returning to his vehicle when Martin confronted him. An argument ensued during which Martin attacked him, knocked him to the ground, and began pounding his head on the cement, according to Zimmerman. Fearing for his life, Zimmerman said, he drew his weapon and shot the youth, who took his version of the events to the grave.

What likely happened? Zimmerman was on a mission. Relying entirely on racial profiling, he believed Martin was suspicious and was determined to detain and question him. That makes him the aggressor.

From Martin’s perspective, he was being followed by an older man for no reason. His fear was justified; Zimmerman’s suspicion was not. When the two finally confronted each other, is it likely that Zimmerman would at least have displayed his weapon? In his mind, it was his badge – his power and authority. At that point, Martin was likely terrified. He was faced with an angry armed man and in reasonable fear for his life.

Who was acting in self defense? Was it Zimmerman, who precipitated the entire incident without justification after being instructed not to pursue the “suspect,” or Martin, who only knew that an angry man with a gun was after him?

Under these circumstances, would Martin have the right to physically assault Zimmerman (as Zimmerman claims)? In my opinion, he would have been justified in using physical force to protect himself. But Zimmerman had power; he possessed the gun.

Too often under the “stand your ground” law, might makes right. A person who recklessly provokes an incident and kills someone prevails, simply because the victim is dead and therefore unable to assert a claim of self defense.

One must consider the victim’s state of mind and the context in which this incident occurred in determining if Zimmerman committed a crime. His misguided zeal does not make him a bad man, only someone who lacks the discipline, maturity, and judgment to be patrolling the neighborhood with a gun.

I expect he is now truly sorry for what occurred. His life will never be the same. But the facts and the consequences call for prosecution and, if convicted, punishment for his reckless behavior – more likely negligent homicide or manslaughter.

More importantly, the law which is a throwback to the Wild West, should be changed. For all our professed concerns about human rights, our passion for guns makes us the most violent of industrialized nations.

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

Irishfest hosts advocates for Irish language June 8-10 in Canton

The ICCNE’s Irish Festival in Canton (June 8-10) will welcome several individuals involved in a project that advocates for the Irish language in Northern Ireland.

The project, Ciste Infheistíochta Gaeilge (CISTE), is headed by Caoimhin Mac Giolla Mhin (Kevin McElwee in English), who will be joined by Frank Costello, the longtime Boston Irish activist who has resided and worked in Belfast for almost 20 years.

“We are not fund raising but outlining the changes happening in the North for the good on the Irish language and cultural front and why Ciste is important at home and abroad to those efforts,” says Costello. “The long and unbroken history of the Irish in America has included all parts of Ireland, all communities, and has included several generations as old as the great American Republic itself. It is a tie that is indeed seamless beginning with the Irish contribution to the creation of the American nation and runs deep to the present day.

“Among those who came to America, some by choice and many by necessity, were those

who spoke the Irish Language as well as those who spoke English. In coming to the United States, CISTE seeks to renew those bonds of culture, hope and friendship by offering a unique and genuinely historic opportunity for partnership in reconnecting the historic province of Ulster and all its communities with the Irish language and to enable the Irish in America to be part of that vital work.

“Our work at the rural and urban levels alike involves making the Irish language a central part in building the peace as well as the future while honoring the sacrifices and hard work of by so many men and women at home and abroad in working to build a better life.”

Costello added that he is “helping in a strategic effort to raise the profile of the Irish language among philanthropic influencers and others in the US. The emphasis is on the development needs of the Irish language in the North and making Irish America aware of the work they are doing.”

To learn more about Ciste, visit ciste.ie.

The Eire Society of Boston held its 75th anniversary dinner on May 10, at the Hampshire House, Back Bay, Boston. Gold Medal citations were presented to Seamus Mulligan, radio personality, and Ronan Tynan, Irish tenor, motivational speaker and physician. Presiding officer was President Cathleen A. McGrail; the emcee was Dick Flavin.

Karen Thornton photos



Ronan Tynan, Cate McGrail, and Seamus Mulligan



Ronan Tynan and Seamus Mulligan



Consul General Michael Lonergan, Connie Kotoujuian, and Neil Hurley



Ronan Tynan & Pauline Wells



Barbara Mahoney and Edris Kelly



Mike O'Connor



Dick Flavin



Mary Ellen and Seamus Mulligan



Barbara Fitzgerald



Patrick and Phyllis McDevitt

IRISH INTERNATIONAL IMMIGRANT CENTER



An agency accredited by US Department of Justice

100 Franklin Street, Boston, MA 02110

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

Website: iiicenter.org Email: immigration@iiicenter.org

The Here Comes Everybody Players, in collaboration with the IIC presents *Bloomsday 2012 An Evening of Music and Drama* to celebrate the literary work of James Joyce and benefit the IIC's programs.

Bloomsday is celebrated annually throughout the world on June 16. The day is named for Leopold Bloom, the main character of Joyce's great novel *Ulysses*, set in Dublin on June 16, 1904. Within the rich context of the life of the city, Joyce delineated every detail of Bloom's thoughts, words, and actions throughout the course of that day. It is one of the most extraordinary books of the twentieth century.

This year *Bloomsday* will be celebrated at the IIC Center in Boston by *The Here Comes Everybody Players*, a Boston-based theater group that focuses on dramatic interpretations of Joyce's literary work, and will feature dramatizations of excerpts from *Ulysses* and *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. The production will also include a scene from Mary Manning's theatrical adaptation, *Passages from Finnegans Wake*, based closely on Joyce's

novel of the same name, *Nuvoletta*, a passage from *Finnegans Wake* set to music by the American composer Samuel Barber, and other music associated with Joyce and his writings. "Joyce's work can be difficult and impenetrable for the reader," says director Jean Sheikh. "The process of dramatization brings it to life and helps the audience to both hear and see the humor and the humanity in Joyce's writing and characters."

Bloomsday promises to be thought-provoking, funny, moving, and true to Joyce's work. The performance will be a fundraiser for the Irish International Immigrant Center, a not-for-profit organization that assists immigrants from all over the world with the challenges of settling in a new country and culture and becoming part of American society.

The event is on Fri., June 15 and Sat., June 16 at 8 p.m. with reception following each performance at 100 Franklin Street, Boston 02110.

Reservations (recommended) Phone: 617-542-7654 or reservations@iiicenter.org Web: iiicenter.org. Suggested Donation: \$25. All proceeds support the services

of the Irish International Immigrant Center.

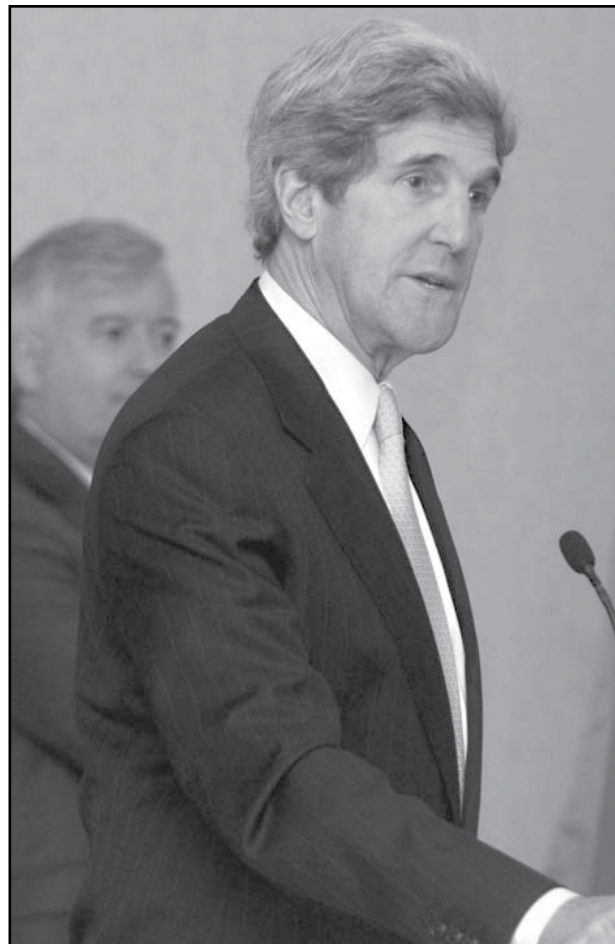
Calling All Employers and Landlords – Irish Summer "J1's" need your help – The IIC continues to help the J-1 summer students in their search for jobs and housing. We have new arrivals from Ireland visit us every day. A lot of the students are finding it hard to secure a job and we need your help! If you are an employer or landlord, please give us a call or e-mail us and we will include your jobs and/or housing free of charge in our resource list. Please contact Erika Bareiss at 617-542-7654, Ext. 18 or email at J1summer@iiicenter.org. On behalf of the young Irish men and women seeking employment and accommodation, we really appreciate your help! Thank you.

Host Families Needed for Wider Horizons Program The Wider Horizons program brings young Irish men and women to Boston for six week internships in community-based organizations. The experience provides a great opportunity for personal and professional growth for these young adults. They provide a tremendous contribution to the local

Boston community with over 1,000 hours of service to local organizations in 2011 and return to Ireland with new skills and confidence which allows many to become future community leaders, youth workers, care providers, and more. Please consider supporting this program by opening your home to one or two of these young adults for their six week stay!

Congratulations Sister Lena Deevy! – Our executive director has been nominated as a finalist for the Massachusetts Nonprofit Network has Excellence in Leadership Award. This award recognizes a nonprofit leader whose strategic vision, passion, perseverance, and collaborative style have led to extraordinary organizational or programmatic results. The award will be announced on June 11 at an event in the State House.

Save the Date: Oct 4th Evening Party – The Irish American Club Malden and the Irish International Immigrant Center will be hosting a great night of music, dance and partying as a fundraiser for the IIC. Please see iiicenter.org for more details.



Senator John Kerry speaks about immigration and the US economy. See story, other photo, Page 3.

IMMIGRATION Q & A

Trusted traveler program has merit

Q. Is there a program operated by the US government that allows people to avoid some of the hassles when they fly to the US from abroad?

A. US Customs and Border Protection (CBP) operates a trusted traveler program called Global Entry at 20 major US airports, including Boston Logan, with expansion to four additional airports planned to take effect by September 2012. Global Entry allows approved US citizens and permanent residents, as well as Canadian and Mexican citizens and certain citizens of The Netherlands, to avoid passport and customs declaration processing lines and check in at a self-service kiosk in the airport's international arrivals area.

The traveler inserts his/her passport or green card into a document reader, provides digital fingerprints, answers a few customs declarations questions on a touch screen, and then receives a receipt for presentation to CBP officers upon leaving the inspection area. CBP estimates that use of the Global Entry program reduces exit processing time by an average 70 per cent.

There is no minimum frequency of international air travel to qualify for the program. Those wishing to take part must apply on-line at globalentry.gov. A non-refundable \$100 fee is charged. CBP conducts a background check for criminal records, immigration or customs violations, etc., and then summons the applicant to a personal interview and digital biometrics (fingerprints and photograph). Membership in the program, if granted, is valid for five years and may be renewed. Disclaimer: *These articles are published to inform, not to advise. The US Citizenship and Immigration Services and US Department of State regularly amend regulations and alter processing and filing procedures. For legal advice seek the assistance of an IIC immigration specialist or an immigration lawyer.*

Matters Of Substance

Is there 'recovery' for families, too?

Q. "My sister has been sober for nearly six months and seems to be doing okay. We used to live together but finally I couldn't deal with her constant mood swings, bringing home strange people, and drinking on the couch all day. I was constantly worrying about her lit cigarettes burning my apartment down! Eventually I gave her an ultimatum: unless she got treatment, she would have to move out or go into a shelter. Thankfully, she did stop, got help, and now has a part-time job."

She has been sharing an apartment with a friend who's also in recovery. I'm still very worried about her, though. In her treatment center, they said that Alcoholics should go to AA meetings to stop them going back drinking. Yet she insists that she isn't need the meetings. I also recently saw her roommate outside the off-license near

their apartment.

I'm terrified that she has gone back drinking especially if her roommate has! Every time I call her and try to reason with her, we end up fighting. I am awake most nights terrified that I will get a phone call telling me that she has been injured or even killed when driving with one of her drunk friends! What can I do?

A. It sounds like you have been worrying about your sister for a long time and that you did her a huge favor by telling her to leave! It also seems like she used the opportunity she was offered, with your ultimatum, to get sober. It can feel impossible to just stop being concerned once someone we love stops drinking! Her recovery is now her own responsibility. So how come you're still losing sleep? Whether or not your sister sees herself as an alcoholic or goes to AA meetings, staying

sober is her responsibility alone. People do stay sober without meetings and without calling themselves alcoholic. Sometimes they don't. They need to learn what will work to keep them sober.

Do you think that staying awake worrying and stressing at night will stop her from drinking if she has started again? Did it stop her before? Remember how you put yourself first when you finally asked her to leave your apartment? You didn't wait till she got sober to protect yourself and your own peace of mind then, so why now? Putting yourself first is not rejecting the person we love. It may seem impossible to let go of your sister and her decisions but you have your life, too! Do you really want to spend the rest of your life wondering what she is or isn't doing? It can help to talk about it with someone you trust, get



Danielle Owen

some counseling or maybe go to Al-Anon meetings. Everyone there knows exactly what you are afraid of and may share some ideas that helped them. Those who love an alcoholic can and should find peace of mind, too.

Call Danielle at the Irish International Immigrant Center, in confidence, to go over all your options. Phone: 617-542-7654, Ext: 14 or e-mail: dowen@iiicenter.org. Check out: al-anon.alateen.org.

CARROLL

Advertising Company, Inc.

Large Format Printing

Billboards • Banners

1022 Morrissey Boulevard, Dorchester

617-282-2100

carrolladvertising.com

IMMIGRATION LAW

FOLEY LAW OFFICES, P.C.

Attorney John Philip Foley

Permanent Residency & Citizenship • Family & Business Immigration • Labor Certification & Temporary Visas
ALL Nationalities & AILA Members

(617) 973-6448

Events, Classes, & Workshops

IMMIGRATION LEGAL SERVICES

Upcoming Free Immigration Legal Clinics

Tuesday, June 5 at IIC, 100 Franklin St. LL-1, Boston
Monday, June 11 at 6:30 PM at The Green Briar Pub, 304 Washington St., Brighton
Tuesday, June 19 at IIC, 100 Franklin St. LL-1, Boston
Tuesday, June 26 at 6:00 PM at The South Boston Labour Center, 275 West Broadway, South Boston

All clinics are first-come, first-served. For complete details, please call (617) 542-7654.

WELLNESS & EDUCATION SERVICES

Classes & Workshops

CPR Class	Smoking Cessation
Computer Class	Stress Management
Parenting Education Class	QPR Suicide Prevention
GED Preparation Course	Healthy Eating on a Budget
Reiki I Workshop	Financial Planning
Home Health Aide Course	Employer & Education Fair

For more information, call Kielan O'Boyle at extension 42.



IRISH INTERNATIONAL IMMIGRANT CENTER
TOGETHER FOR ALL

(617) 542-7654 • www.iiicenter.org • Facebook • Twitter

Mortgage Loans

that feel right at home

Whether you're an experienced homeowner or a first-time buyer, we can help you purchase, rehab, or refinance your home mortgage.

Learn more about **Bank of Canton's** vast array of mortgage products and services, including:

- Low Fixed and Adjustable Rate Mortgages
- First-Time Home Buyer Programs
- Competitive Home Equity Loans and Lines
- MassHousing Programs
- Full Service Construction Loans


Bank of Canton has closed over \$2 Billion in Residential Mortgages over the past 3 years!

Experience the difference and find out first hand how our Mortgage Lending team has maintained a **customer satisfaction score of 98%!**

Call 888.828.1690 and speak with one of our Lending Managers today!



888.828.1690 • www.ibankcanton.com • Member FDIC. Member DIF.




Save the Date

Bloomsday 2012

An Irish cultural event of music and drama to celebrate the work of James Joyce

Performed by the **Here Comes Everybody Players**
with Stephen Mark Brown, Tenor and Linda Papatopoli, Piano



8 PM, Friday & Saturday, June 15 & 16
100 Franklin Street, Boston

Steps from Downtown Crossing T stop - On street Parking in the area
Reception to follow each performance

Suggested Donation: \$25 per person

Proceeds benefit the Irish International Immigrant Center programs and services to the immigrant community.

Reservations: (617) 542-7654 ext. 43 or reservations@iicenter.org

Each June 16, the work of great Irish author James Joyce is recognized around the world. "Bloomsday," named after *Ulysses'* lead character Leopold Bloom, celebrates that novel – set in Dublin on June 16 1904 – and Joyce's other great works.

SBLI has earned an A+ (Superior)* rating year after year from A.M. Best

We're Covered for Life

Life Insurance for Your Team at Home



Heidi and Tedy Bruschi

When I had a stroke at age 31—just days after winning my third championship—it was a reminder that no matter how perfect things may seem today, you never know what's coming tomorrow. That's why my wife Heidi and I called SBLI. Now our most important team—our team at home—is prepared for the unexpected.

SBLI®

THE NO NONSENSE LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY®

1-888-GET-SBLI www.SBLI.com

* Visit www.ambest.com to learn more.
SBLI and The No Nonsense Life Insurance Company are registered trademarks of The Savings Bank Life Insurance Company of Massachusetts.
© 2010 The Savings Bank Life Insurance Company of Massachusetts, Woburn, MA. All rights reserved.

Ballyvolane House, Co. Cork

COME ON HOME TO IRELAND (...you'll be glad if you do)

You'll have the craic, make new memories, rekindle old friendships, rediscover yourself - and your roots! And all at superb value.

So go on, spoil yourself, your family and friends. After all, we do reserve the warmest welcome for those we welcome home!

For more information and great travel deals, visit discoverireland.com.

Jump into 
Ireland

BOSTON IRISH REPORTER

**BOSTON IRISH ARTS,
ENTERTAINMENT,
TRAVEL & MORE**



Cork native Bob Bradshaw: "I guess I'm famous for taking a detour. There are things I want to do, but it seems like I have to go through something else to get there. But at least I'm still going."
Aditi Mehta photo

Detours mark Bradshaw's life — in the end, there's the music

By SEAN SMITH
SPECIAL TO THE BIR

It sounds like the kind of moment only the imagination of a singer-songwriter — like, say, Bob Bradshaw — might cook up, only it really happened.

The quick lead-in: Irish native moves to the US at the tail end of the 1980s, pursues a musical career that eventually lands him in Boston, where he decides to apply to, and is accepted by, the Berklee College of Music. Then he has misgivings, so he calls the school to cancel his enrollment.

"The lady at Berklee who answered the phone listened and asked me, 'Are you sure?'" recalls Bradshaw. "I thought for a few seconds and said, 'No.' And then I hung up.

"If she hadn't asked me that question, if she hadn't made me think about it, I wouldn't have ended up going to Berklee."

But Bradshaw did, ushering in another chapter of a career that has often proved to be more interesting than he might've thought possible — full of, as he puts it somewhat self-deprecatingly, "sideways or even backward steps." The more recent years, coinciding with his time in Boston, have seen Bradshaw focus on his craft in new ways, whether obtaining his degree in professional music from Berklee or gaining a fresh appreciation for the music traditions of his homeland.

"Maybe," he quips, "I'm the ultimate late bloomer — just figuring it all out now."

These and other experiences are distilled in Bradshaw's newly produced CD,

which features 12 songs solely or collaboratively composed by him. Simply and appropriately titled "Bob Bradshaw," the CD represents a meshing of Bradshaw's past and present through contributions from long-time collaborators like Scoop McGuire (who in addition to playing various instruments also produced and arranged the album) and more recent Boston/Berklee-era acquaintances such as Dan Gurney, Annie Lynch, Duke Levine, and Maeve Gilchrist.

Bradshaw's songs are situated comfortably in a country-rock/acoustic folk-pop landscape that has been shaped by influences like Guy Clark and The Waterboys; fiddles, mandolins and accordions — even a harp — provide cross-hatching across guitars, lap steel, bass, keyboards and drums.

His songs can be sparse yet abundant with just-below-the-surface emotion ("Carlos"), keenly observed cautionary tales ("Iowa Girl"), simultaneously fanciful and thoughtful ("Wings of Desire") and sometimes suddenly, startlingly nimble ("Remember Me").

"Long Way to Go" — about the emotional as well as geographical distance a pair of wary lovers must travel — is marked by Gurney's accordion, acting almost as a soothing counterweight to the angsty elements in the song.

"The song is in F-sharp, and I couldn't find another accordion player in Boston who could play it the way Dan does," says Bradshaw. "As far as I'm concerned, the accordion made that song."

"Wings of Desire," he says, takes its
(Continued on page 13)

Generous crowd gathers to help Sergio

Musicians, singers, dancers from the Greater Boston area came out to The Burren in Somerville's Davis Square on May 20 in support of Sergio O'Connor, a 1-year-old boy from Ireland who is undergoing treatment at Boston Children's Hospital for tracheo-oesophageal fistula, a rare

condition that prevents him from eating, drinking and swallowing due to a hole in his esophagus. An estimated \$20,000 was raised at the six-hour-plus event to help the O'Connor family pay for the treatment. Sergio's father, Donal — who along with his wife Rosa are staying in Boston while

their son is in the hospital — was on hand for the festivities and joined in the music himself. The helpsergio.com website reports that Sergio has been responding well thus far to the treatment, and at press time he was scheduled to undergo esophageal repair surgery.



Nigel Heaton, 1 ½, kept a watchful eye on his parents, Matt and Shannon, as they performed during the Burren event.
Sean Smith photos



Tina Lech and Ted Davis were among the many musicians who performed at the "session for Sergio" at The Burren.

Having the time of her life in ‘Mamma Mia!’

By R. J. DONOVAN
SPECIAL TO THE BIR
Boston theater audiences love Mary Callanan. Period. From her performances at Speak-Easy Stage, New Rep and Lyric to the hot night spots in Provincetown, she’s known for her razor-sharp way with a funny line as well as her ability to knock a musical number out of the park.

Loyal followers haven’t seen a lot of the South Shore resident lately because she’s been on the road playing the role of Rosie in the national tour of “Mamma Mia!” All that changes this month when the tour works its way to the Opera House for a June 19-24 run.

Seen by more than 50 million people around the world, the phenomenally successful musical is about a single mother, a spirited daughter, and a wedding on a Greek island. The score includes

such ABBA mega-hits as “The Winner Takes It All,” “Dancing Queen,” “Take A Chance On Me” and “Thank You For The Music.”

As Mary traveled between engagements in Kentucky, we spoke by phone about the tour and her upcoming Boston run. Here’s an edited look at our conversation:

BIR: “Mamma Mia!” is like the Eveready Bunny. From your perspective, what is it that makes the show such a phenomenon.

MC: That’s easy. It’s this music. It’s the music that you and I grew up with. It’s known all over the world . . . It’s also a family show. It’s about the strength of mothers and daughters and friendships . . . It’s sticking together and friends and girl power, whether it’s old girl power or young girls.

BIR: It crosses all borders.

MC: You look in the

audience and see four generations. There’s the grandmother, who would be my mother’s age. Then there’s me, and there’s my daughter, and then her daughter. And the husbands. They’re all there.

BIR: Rosie is the nonsense, comic relief in the show. That role is perfect for you.

MC: It is perfect for me. I always say, I think I’m the luckiest person in the world because I have the best lines, the best song, in the best position in the show. If you’re a comic, there’s really nothing more that you could really ask for. Except that I am blessed with [stage] partners who are equally dedicated to comedy.

BIR: Having played coast to coast, have you found that audiences embrace the show differently in different parts of the country?

MC: We’ve had surprising responses in different

markets. Like in Los Angeles, [they were] tearing the seats out of the theater . . . You think, Los Angeles, they’re sophisticated. But when people get there, they’re ready to have a good time. It’s crazy. They put on the costumes . . . In LA there was a drag queen in Donna’s opening outfit in the front row. Full on!

BIR: Diehard fans of “Mamma Mia!” tend to be very committed.

MC: [At one performance], three teenage girls had their mothers help them sew the dynamo costumes that we wear at the end. They had on these full sequin versions of us. It’s very flattering. It’s amazing that someone loves this story so much that they’re going to go through that.

BIR: They way the story is told, the audience clearly bonds with the three female characters.

MC: Every woman who comes to the show says “They’re just like me. She’s just like my friend Suzy or my mother or my Aunt Helen” or whatever it is. Our characters are so easily identifiable. Which is a beautiful thing. Our characters are not far from the truth.

BIR: You and I have spoken in the past about how many times you’ve auditioned over the years to get into this show.

MC: I auditioned throughout six years. They kept calling me back in. (Laughing) I’m assuming they waited until my hair and my wrinkles and my age were the right combination.

BIR: The process had to be somewhat challenging.

MC: It was a little on the rigorous side, but it’s

okay because it all worked out in the end . . . It was never that they didn’t want me. At one point I took one of those audition classes where you meet with an actual casting director and they give you choices of songs to sing, blah, blah, blah.

BIR: And one of those classes was with the casting director from “Mamma Mia!”

MC: He laughed when I was in the class because I know him. He’s seen me do my club act and we’ve known each other for a long time. And he said, in a mock whisper, “What are you doing here?” And I said, “Do you really want me to tell the whole class?” And he turned really red and said, “Actually, yes, you should tell the whole class.” And I said, “I’m here to ask you, what do I have to do to get this job?” And everybody started laughing. And he said, “It’s just a matter of time.” And I said, “So I’m going to stick with it if it kills me!”

BIR: You’ve used Facebook very effectively to stay in touch with people while you’ve been on the road. Social media has given the arts world a whole new promotional tool.

MC: It certainly helps me get in touch with my ever-expanding family all across the country . . . How it helps, quote, The Fan Base, is that people who have seen me in Provincetown are saying, “You’re in Kentucky! Oh my God, I’m in Kentucky.” That kind of thing. Which is why every morning—except I forgot this morning,

thank you for reminding me—I change my city when we move so people can either keep up or tell



Boston’s Mary Callanan plays the role of Rosie in the national tour of “Mamma Mia!” coming to Boston’s Opera House June 19 - 24.

their family. “Mamma Mia!” is a juggernaut all by itself. But for me personally, Facebook certainly is widening my purview, so that for the next thing, I have all these new friends.

BIR: The inevitable question is, what’s it going to be like performing for the hometown crowd at the Opera House? When you walk out for your first entrance in this huge hit, the response is going to be incredible.

MC: I just hope I don’t completely sob, that’s all I’m counting on . . . When I was a little girl or a teenager, I was sitting in the [Colonial] Theatre, saying, “This is what I want to do. This is what I want to do.” You check off one big Bucket List childhood dream.

BIR: And the headline reads, Local Girl Makes Good.

MC: (Laughing) Yes, I’m an overnight success! R. J. Donovan is publisher of *OnStageBoston.com*.

“Mamma Mia!”—June 19-24, Boston’s Opera House, 539 Washington Street. Tickets: 1-800-982-2787; BroadwayInBoston.com.



The national tour of “Mamma Mia!” stars Alison Ewing, Kaye Tuckerman and Mary Callanan (far right, front). Photo credit: Joan Marcus

Detours mark Bradshaw’s life—in the end, there’s the music

inspiration from the 1987 Wim Wenders movie of the same name, “about an angel willing to give up his wings”—even if it doesn’t follow the plot. “I’ve always loved that movie, and for years I tried to work it into a song. I thought it would be kind of amusing to have a harp in a song about an angel, so I asked Maeve Gilchrist to sit in, and she did a fantastic job.”

The album’s final track, “Mourning Dove,” stemmed from Bradshaw’s participation in a Holocaust-themed play, “Budzin,” that was staged in Harvard’s Sanders Theater. Recruited at first as a guitar player, Bradshaw wound up one of the production’s main actors: a concentration camp inmate who must, literally, perform for his life. The song touches on a succession of powerful emotions, summed up by a masterful couplet of a chorus: “It’s a rising up and laying down/Of a boundless love and a thorny crown.”

Therein, Bradshaw says, lies the paradox in many of his compositions.

“My songs are not autobiographical, but they do incorporate autobiographical elements in them,” he says. “The songs may focus on a particular character, but they’re not me. I may be in the songs, somewhere, but at the same time I want to seem as if I’m not.”

“Mostly, they’re simply stories.”

Born and raised in Mitchelstown, Co. Cork, Bradshaw found a model of music appreciation in his father, who “sang at the drop of a hat.” But as a young man, once he decided he wanted to play music, too, and got himself a guitar, Bradshaw looked elsewhere than his own country’s music for inspiration—from American country rock performers like Guy Clark and The Eagles, who in the 1970s were capturing the fancy of many Irish singer-songwriters; fellow countrymen like Mick Hanly and

Freddie White also caught Bradshaw’s ear.

Bradshaw did have the paradigmatic day job for a while, writing for a local newspaper and, after moving to Dublin, contributing stories to the Irish Press and In Dublin magazine. He even earned a bursary from the Irish Arts Council, and set about trying to write the elusive novel that all writers supposedly have within them. But Bradshaw couldn’t make his novel emerge, and found that, as far as writing went, he had “hit the wall.” So he turned to music, and hit the road, first going east to Portugal, Spain, Germany, and Sweden, and then west, all the way to New York City and San Francisco.

In San Francisco, he found pretty regular pub gigs, but more importantly, for the first time began playing more often with other musicians. This led to the formation of Resident Aliens (whose members included Scoop

McGuire), which built on the American roots sound Bradshaw had been playing to include the 1990s Celtic folk-rock that had come into vogue; that development owed a great deal to a collaboration with legendary singer-songwriter Ron Kavana, who had the Resident Aliens as his back-up band and recorded a live album with them.

Most of all, San Francisco was where Bradshaw first dipped his toe into the songwriting pool—somewhat out of necessity, as he explains: “It all started because someone offered to make a CD of us. I felt there was no point in making an album of cover material. So I started putting together some songs. It was all part of an interesting transition in many ways. I had been used to playing in pubs, where you’re mainly concerned with hitting people over the head to get their attention. But when it comes to ‘listening rooms,’ you have to be that much better.”

In any case, Bradshaw found he had a knack for songwriting, slow a process as it was, and continues to be: “If I write six songs a year, that’s great for me. And then I seem to spend years tweaking or fiddling with them; I also throw away a lot of them.”

The next, critical part of Bradshaw’s development came after he moved to Boston, when practically on a whim he enrolled in Berklee—a whim he later second-guessed. “I thought, ‘This is ridiculous, I’m in my 40s, I don’t belong there.’ But after the fateful phone call that brought him so close to pulling out of Berklee, Bradshaw went all in. He took part in the college’s Celtic ensemble, led by the late John McGann, and Dave Hollander’s bluegrass ensemble, entered the school’s singer-songwriter competitions and, in general, soaked up as much as he could.

“It was a struggle,” he says. “I had to learn to read music. I had to learn to

stop singing so far behind the beat. But at Berklee I found both the confidence and the vocabulary for my music.”

Bradshaw has found other avenues of exploration at Boston, including a new appreciation for Irish music: For a performance in Harvard Square’s Club Passim, Bradshaw played songs that were associated, in one way or another, with his native Cork; he also has taken lessons from Shannon Heaton and Liz Simmons, whose style and repertoire tends to traditional singing. What’s more, after having sung in Spanish while gigging in Barcelona, and in Polish for “Budzin,” Bradshaw says he began thinking, “Well, why not sing in Irish, too?”

“I guess I’m famous for taking a detour,” he laughs. “There are things I want to do, but it seems like I have to go through something else to get there. But at least I’m still going.”

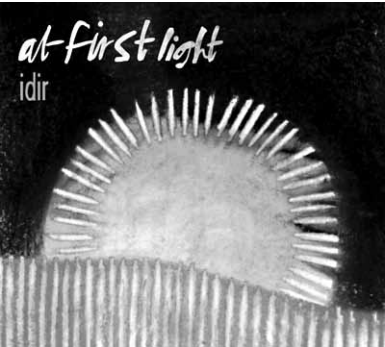
WHERE IN THE WORLD CAN YOU FIND
NEWS ABOUT OURSELVES & OUR TOWN
WWW.BOSTONIRISH.COM



CD ROUNDUP

BY SEAN SMITH
 SPECIAL TO THE BIR

At First Light, “Idir” – The trio of John McSherry (Uilleann pipes, whistles), Donal O’Connor (fiddle, keyboards) and Francis McIlduff (bodhran, Uilleann pipes, whistles, percussion) at long last bring forth the follow-up to their 2006 album “Tripswitch,” regarded



as one of the more outstanding examples in what’s often called the “neo-traditional” style of Irish music. At First Light’s sound is centered on Lunasa co-founder McSherry’s innovative piping, O’Connor’s lyrical fiddling, and McIlduff’s talent

on rhythm and melody; they are bolstered here by a quintet of guest musicians, including vocalist and fiddler Ciara McCrickard. Their intelligently crafted and arranged instrumental sets include original compositions and tunes from Breton and the Asturian region of Spain, even a French Renaissance dance, as

well as traditional Irish material, and are dynamic and thoroughly absorbing.

O’Connor’s fiddling, for instance, powers a trio of reels that includes his “Ar Thóir An Donn” and provides a powerful emotional current for a melodic interpretation of the sean-nos song “Máire An Chúil Or Bhui.” He also shows a deft touch on piano for McCrickard’s soulful renditions of the traditional false-true love lament “Courting Is a Pleasure” and a John McCambridge song, “The Quiet Land of Erin.”

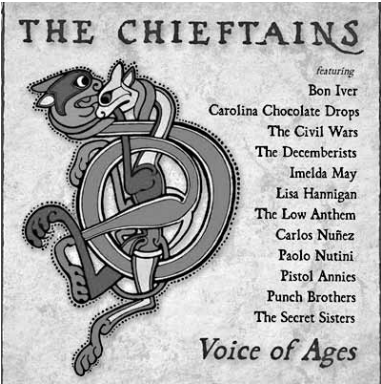
The McSherry-McIlduff duets on whistle and especially pipes are nothing short of brilliant, especially their treatment of piping master Finbar Furey’s epic “Roy’s Hands” — the pipes seem to perform a sad ballet of sound, bending and shifting notes at, or with, one another.

Another highlight is “Rolling in Rosemont,” which begins with “Brelydian” — a cheerful, gently rollicking jig invention of McSherry, O’Connor and American slide guitarist Bob Brozman (which they recorded on their CD “Six Days in Down”) — that segues smartly into the traditional hop jig “Comb Your Hair and Curl It” on the strength of McSherry’s whistle before the gang opens the throttle on a pair of slides.

At First Light elevates tune selection and arrangement to practically a high art form, blending moods and shades as well as key signatures — but in the end, it’s all about playing with the requisite amount of guts and grit, and they manage that just fine, too.

The Chieftains, “Voice of Ages” – If The Chieftains keep this up, practically every pop/rock performer in creation will be on tenterhooks waiting for Paddy

Worldwide at www.bostonirish.com



Moloney to invite them to participate in the band’s next recording project. In fact, maybe we should start a betting pool on whom they’ll call on next: Lady Gaga? Skrillex? Kraftwerk?

OK, that’s gratuitously snarky. “Voice of Ages” is by turns charming, fascinating,

and generally quite well-conceived and well-executed. Following their modus operandi of the last couple of decades, The Chieftains put together another collaborative recording, this time with bands and performers who primarily fall (or are pushed) into the “indie-rock” category — The Low Anthem, Bon Iver, The Decemberists, Imelda May -- and others with ties to roots-Americana and country, like The Carolina Chocolate Drops, the Punch Brothers, and Pistol Annies. The common thread among them is that for the most part they’re young(ish), open to experimentation and genre-hopping, and somewhat out of whatever entity passes for the mainstream nowadays.

Most of the songs, whether traditional or contemporary, have some sort of Irish association, and the guest artists seek to put their own particular stamps on them, with the influence and assistance of Paddy and the guys. (It bears mentioning that The Chieftains also work here with a fine supporting cast of fiddlers Deanie Richardson and Jon Pilatzke, guitarist Jeff White, and the delightful harpist Triona Marshall.) When you’re The Carolina Chocolate Drops, and you have an other-worldly vocalist like Rhiannon Giddens, the result is stunning: “Pretty Little Girl” is easily one of the album’s best, a high-energy, seamless mix of Irish and American South traditions. Meanwhile, Imelda May, the rockabilly/R&B torch singer, gives the traditional “Carolina Rua” a bounce and swagger, and you can tell she is absolutely savoring the whole thing, right down to the bit of scat-singing she employs.

The Punch Brothers are the only guests to get more than one track, and they deserve it, with Noam Pilkeny’s banjo and Chris Thile’s mandolin in particular enlivening “The Lark in the Clear Air” and “The Frost Is All Over.” The Civil Wars offer up their own, tender “Lily Love,” which they wrote specifically for the album, and with Marshall’s harp taking a prominent role, the song almost sounds like some lost O’Carolan piece with words. The Decemberists are at their typically dramatic/nautical best with Bob Dylan’s “When the Ship Comes In” and The Low Anthem — preceded by a children’s choir singing in Gaelic — brings a certain exoticness to Ewan MacColl’s “School Days Over,” with cello, pump organ, and hammered dulcimer underneath Ben Knox Miller’s melancholic, but not maudlin, vocals.

The Chieftains even bring back Michael Tubridy and Sean Potts to join them for a “Reunion” track, one of their characteristic long instrumental sets that includes solos and occasional bits of singing. It’s wonderful, of course, but seems oddly out of place here — unless it’s a sneak peek at a future recording project?

Davis Square events will heat things up

Early this month will see Somerville’s Davis Square once again be a hotbed for Irish music, with a pair of events spotlighting some highly popular Celtic performers.

This Sat., June 2, Johnny D’s Uptown Restaurant and Music Club will feature two Massachusetts-based acts, singer-songwriter Robbie O’Connell and all-female quartet Long Time Courting. One of the most beloved performers of Irish music around today, O’Connell has authored songs like “Keg of Brandy,” “The Man from Connemara,” “Islander’s Lament” and other compositions that have become staples of many a folksinger’s repertoire. In addition, O’Connell has appeared as part of The Clancy Legacy and The Green Fields of America.

Long Time Courting is comprised of four accomplished traditional musicians: Shannon Heaton (flute, accordion, vocals), Liz Simmons (vocals, guitar), Sarah Blair (fiddle, vocals) and their newest member, cellist Val Thompson. Their vocal harmonies and excellent musicianship, combined with material from Irish, English, Scottish and contemporary sources, have won the ears, as well as hearts, of audiences.

The concert begins at 7 p.m. For more information, see johnnyds.com.

More from ‘Backroom’ series

On Wed., June 6, Caoimhin O’Raghallaigh and Mick O’Brien, along with Boston-based duo Matt and Shannon Heaton, will perform in the latest offering of The Burren’s “Backroom” series. O’Raghallaigh has emerged as one of Ireland’s more intriguing traditional fiddlers of recent years — especially with his use of the Norwegian Hardanger fiddle — and his duos with Uilleann piper O’Brien have proved captivating and invigorating. The two recently released their second CD, “Aoibhinn Crónán (The Deadly Buzz).”

The Heaton’s are among the more high-profile performers in the Boston area, both as a duo and in their various other musical pursuits. Their instrumentals and songs, which include both traditional and original material, are featured on their four albums as a duo; Shannon also has a solo CD, “The Blue Dress.”

For more details on the show, which begins at 7:30 p.m., see burren.com.

—SEAN SMITH

World Famous
Mr. Dooley's
Now in Wrentham!

Real Irish Country Feel
Traditional Irish Fare
Live Music &
Entertainment Nightly
Irish Breakfast Daily
Sunday Brunch
Prime Rib Specials

Mr. Dooley's
Olde Irish Country Pub

Mr. Dooley's
Private Parties
Irish Breakfast
Live Music

OPEN 7 DAYS A WEEK
MON-FRI 12PM-1AM : SAT-SUN 11AM-1AM
SPACE FOR FUNCTIONS & PRIVATE PARTIES
DINE IN OR TAKE OUT

303 SHEARS ST., WRENTHAM MA - TEL: 508.384.3457
WWW.MRDOOLEYSWRENTHAM.COM



A column of news and updates of the Boston Celtic Music Fest (BCM Fest), which celebrates the Boston area's rich heritage of Irish, Scottish, Cape Breton music and dance with a grassroots, musician-run winter music festival and other events during the year.

—SEAN SMITH

School spirit: Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann Boston Music School faculty members and friends — who happen to be among the finest Irish music performers in the Greater Boston area — will give a concert on June 11 as part of the monthly BCM Fest Celtic Music Monday series at Club Passim.

Among those appearing will be Flynn Cohen (guitar), Patrick Hutchinson (Uilleann pipes), Danny Noveck (fiddle, guitar), Tommy Sheridan (accordion), and Bridget Fitzgerald (vocals), as well as the duos of Matt Heaton (guitar) and Shannon Heaton (flute, whistle), Tina Lech (fiddle) and Ted Davis (guitar), and John Coyne (bouzouki) and Josie Coyne (fiddle).

Organizers say the event is a celebration of the school and the music tradition it represents, and a means to help support both: Part of the concert proceeds will benefit the CCE Boston Music School, which holds classes at the St. Columbkille Partnership School in Brighton. But just as importantly, organizers add, the concert is a show of appreciation for one of the most important figures in the school's history, CCE Boston Chairman Larry Reynolds.

Since immigrating from Galway to Boston in 1953 at the height of the city's renowned Dudley Street dance hall era, Reynolds has been a mainstay in the local Irish music scene, leading such famous sessions as The Green Briar and Canadian-American Club and serving as a teacher and mentor to countless musicians. In 1975, he co-founded the Hanafin-Cooley Boston CCE branch, one of the largest and most active chapters in the world. A member of the Comhaltas Hall of Fame, Reynolds also has been honored by Harvard University's Celtic Languages and Literatures Department, the Irish Cultural Centre of New England, and, in 2006, by Irish America Magazine, which included him in its Top 100 Irish-Americans list.

"The Boston Comhaltas School is committed to helping preserve and pass along the great Irish music tradition, and we're grateful for the school's very talented and dedicated faculty members who enable us to fulfill that mission," says the school's executive director, John Kearney. "It wouldn't have been possible without Larry Reynolds and the Comhaltas officers who started the school 15 years ago.

"Now, with the help of the area music community, we look to continue teaching these great tunes and songs to the next generation of young players."

The Boston Comhaltas School offers instruction in fiddle, flute, whistle, anglo concertina, button accordion, Uilleann pipes, harp, guitar, tenor banjo, mandolin, singing and bodhran. In addition, the school has started a ceili band class and holds open sessions for students.

Comhaltas School faculty members are some of the city's most distinguished Irish musicians, including full-time performers as well as highly active, in-demand session players.

"BCM Fest's central mission is to promote and honor excellent players who advance traditional music," says BCM Fest co-founder and committee member Shannon Heaton, herself a Boston Comhaltas School faculty member. "Boston is one of the best places in the world for Irish music, thanks in large part to the incredible work and support that Larry Reynolds, John Kearney and the rest of the Comhaltas gang offer to our trad music community."

Adds Kearney, "We are very pleased to have this opportunity to showcase the talents of our faculty, and hope people will come out to enjoy an evening of fine music—and to show support for the Boston Comhaltas School."

Admission to the concert, which begins at 7:30 p.m., is \$12, \$6 for members of Passim, WGBH and WUMB. More details at passim.org.

Clock's ticking: There is still time left for musicians, singers, dancers and others interested in performing at the 10th BCM Fest (January 11-12, 2013) to apply. Go to cmfest.com/performers.html to download an application. Deadline for submissions is July 10.

Upbeat news on Fleadh front

There was plenty of good news for Greater Boston/Eastern Massachusetts Irish musicians at the recent Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann Mid-Atlantic Fleadh.

Among those tasting success at the event, held May 18-20 in Parsippany, NJ, were Armand Aromin, who won first place in Miscellaneous Instrument and in Duos with Patrick Hutchinson, and second in the Newly Composed Tune category; Hutchinson, who in addition to winning first in Duos with Aromin placed first in Trios with Willie and Siobhan Kelly; Lindsay Straw, second in Singing; Natalya Kay, second in Over-18 Solo Fiddle; Lisa Coyne, second in Duos and in Trios, and third in Newly Composed Tune; Coyne's daughter Josie, third in Under-15 Solo Fiddle, and second in Under-15 Duos.

Next month's issue of the BIR will include a look at some of the local fleadh winners.

De Valera: Colossus of Irish civic life

Following is the fourth in a series of retrospective articles on individuals who made notable contributions to civic life in Ireland in the 20th century.

**Eamon de Valera
1882-1975**

We have been examining the roots of the Irish push for independence and the lives of those who sacrificed along the way, controversial and important figures in 20th century Irish history. Eamon de Valera was a singular player among those figures, a man of many maneuvers who dominated Irish political life across a swath of decades, essentially until his death at age 92.

He and Michael Collins stand out in Irish memory as counterpoints on the political axis. They fought together, they conspired together, and, in the end, they fought each other. As the memory of Collins as a fallen martyr was taking hold on the island in the mid-1920s, de Valera was grabbing the reins of government and consolidating his party's hold on the national agenda.

Over the course of the next 30 years, he would serve thrice as Taoiseach (prime minister), as president, and as head of the Dail (Parliament) and the Executive Council.

Taking into account what de Valera had done in the years leading up to the Rising and over the course of the war for independence and the civil war over treaty obligations, you end up with a picture of a citizen-politician who knew his mind and tended to get what he wanted.

De Valera, like other standout figures in 20th century Irish civic life, was not to country born. He is among those who are hailed by the Irish national anthem,

Amhran na bhFiann (A Soldier's Song), which tells of Ireland's leaders and fighters for independence coming "...from a land beyond the wave."

He was born in New York City in October 1882 to an Irish mother, Catherine Coll, and a Cuban immigrant named Juan Vivion de Valera, and the boy's family life was anything but normal. Although Catherine and Juan allegedly were married in the summer of 1881, there have no records extant verifying the bond.

Soon after Eamonn was born, his father, reportedly in ill health, decamped to Colorado where he died in 1885. Three years later, after she had sent her son to live with relatives in Bruree, Co. Limerick, Catherine married an Englishman named Wheelwright and rarely saw her son after that and never again did he live with her.

Eamonn was raised by his grandmother and uncle and grew up an Irish lad with a Carribean name and heritage.

For all that, over time in the eyes of the Irish he was 100 percent theirs.

Growing up in Ireland, de Valera attended several colleges, mostly in the Dublin area, and for a time considered a life in the priesthood, a vocation his half-brother, Thomas Wheelwright, took up.

After college, he remained in academia, teaching mathematics on both a primary school and university level, and although he wanted to continue his education further, family life and work requirements came first.

In 1910, he married Sinead Flanagan, a teacher and writer who would herself rise to some literary fame, writing over thirty books in both English and Irish. They raised five sons — Vivion, Eamon, Brian, Ruairi, and Terrence — and two daughters, Mairin and Emer.

As a young activist and supporter of the Irish language, de Valera was soon swept into the world of Irish Republicanism, and in 1913 was sworn into the Irish Republican Brotherhood (IRB), a precursor of the IRA and an organization that would take on the fight for Irish independence.

He played a key role in the Easter Rising of 1916, leading a group of troops that occupied Boland's Mill in Dublin. Like so many others, he was arrested for his involvement in the rising and sentenced immediately to death, a fate that was not to be. His sentence was changed to life in prison, to be served at Kilmainham Gaol, for reasons of citizenship.

De Valera was not an Irish/UK citizen; he was an



American citizen by birth, so at his trial, he was represented by counsel from the United States embassy in Dublin, who argued for his release. Although that appeal was unsuccessful, World War I was ongoing, and with the United States not yet involved, the UK was careful not to inflame the situation by executing a US citizen.

De Valera's position was also helped by the fact that the file on him was negligible; he was not nearly as well known as other leaders in the Rising like James Connolly.

In 1917, having been released from prison under an amnesty agreement, de Valera was elected to the House of Commons representing County Clare. A year later, he was heading up the Sinn Féin party, which won governing rights by a large majority soon thereafter. From 1919 to 1921 he was the president of the Dail, a post more or less equivalent to prime minister, but not head of state position. The Dail presidency was abolished in 1922, and de Valera became president of the Republic of Ireland, not to be confused with the later position of President of Ireland.

Angry at the division of Ireland that Collins agreed to with the British, de Valera removed himself from Sinn Féin and formed his own party, Fianna Fail, while anti-treaty and pro-treaty forces descended into civil war, although de Valera's involvement as an anti-treaty leader was reportedly quite limited.

Thereafter, de Valera returned to politics and played a crucial role in the crafting of the Irish Free State constitution. In the 1932 elections, Fianna Fail secured 72 seats in the Dail, an important achievement and one showing a bright future for the party and de Valera, who ruled as head of the executive council.

In 1937, an entirely new constitution was drafted and directed fully to total Irish independence. Among the new realities: a formal name change to Eire; territorial claims to the entire island of Ireland, and the establishment of Irish as the republic's official language.

That same year, de Valera assumed the position of taoiseach, a seat he would hold until 1948. From this chair, he formally renounced all ties with the UK just before the start of World War II, and later declared a "National Emergency" during the war that suspended constitutional review. In fact, the "emergency" remained in effect formally until 1976. To the consternation of the Allies, De Valera maintained full neutrality during the war: no involvement, simply a commitment to peace.

In 1948, de Valera took some time off from politics to travel, but soon enough issues called him back to Ireland. Elected taoiseach once more in 1951, he served through 1954, and yet again from 1957-1959.

At age 75, he was elected to the post of President of Ireland, a largely ceremonial post with certain diplomatic responsibilities. He lived out his days of retirement in County Dublin, losing his beloved wife Sinead in January 1975, before he died in August of the same year, at 92. He is buried in Dublin's Glasnevin Cemetery.

Eamonn de Valera stood astride Irish civic life for more than half a century; he contributed to the rising, and he saw the coming of The Troubles. He ached for independence for all of the island of Ireland, and worked to his last breath to make that happen. He did things his way, the Irish way.

Burials in
Massachusetts
or Ireland



Gormley
Funeral Home

617-323-8600



2055 Centre Street
West Roxbury, MA

www.Gormleyfuneral.com

**MILTON
MONUMENT
COMPANY INC.**

BRONZE MARKERS • CEMETERY LETTERING

"Serving Greater Boston since 1971"

1060 N. MAIN ST., RANDOLPH, MA 02368

phone: **781-963-3660**

fax: **781-986-8004**

www.miltonmonuments.com

email: memmilton@aol.com



Traveling People

Hello, sheep lovers: Ireland is the place for ewe

By JUDY ENRIGHT
SPECIAL TO THE BIR

The clerk in the upscale Connemara shop said, “Sheep sell. Items here with sheep on them fly out the door!”

She had seen me admiring a large display of ceramic mugs, coasters, magnets, cards, prints, and more – by Thomas Joseph, an artist in Co. Down, Northern Ireland. He has a lot of fun with the word “ewe” – using it in place of “you” (wish ewe were here, for instance) – and depicts sheep on surf boards, driving tractors, playing and doing other whimsical things that, of course, sheep don’t do.

It is no wonder to me that sheep items sell -- especially to Americans -- because we simply do not see them strolling – with their lambs – down the middle of our busy roads. They are a real treat and a novelty to most Irish tourists although they are an everyday sight to the residents of rural areas and are often not such a treat when they rampage through gardens or snack on the prized shrubbery.

Obsessed with sheep

I enjoy seeing sheep wandering around and I find one more photogenic than the next. Catherine, a longtime member of the staff at the Beehive in Keel, Co. Mayo, laughingly told me one day that I am obsessed with sheep. Her family raises sheep -- as do many in Mayo-- so she’s quite used to them and can’t really fathom why I jump up from lunch to photograph them as they amble down the middle of the main road that winds through Achill Island.

My sheep “obsession” is also well known to those in Mulranny, Mayo, where I rent a house. I endure, but also enjoy, no end of kidding there. In fact, wandering the hills somewhere above my rented house is a big, old ewe that Francis O’Donnell, local fisherman and sheep farmer, named “Judy” in my honor.

Sheep are spray-painted in Ireland with each farmer’s distinctive colors, some of which are completely mad – like fluorescent purple and orange together on the same sheep. Marking locations are also unique to each farmer and sheep wear numbered tags in their ears.

Long ago, I heard that Ireland passed a law re-



Above: Mayo/Connemara Blackface Mountain ram. Below, left: Blackface Mountain lamb. Center: Not all Irish sheep have black faces. This pretty black and white ewe is an example of a breed that’s different from the Mayo/Connemara Blackface Mountain Sheep. Bottom, right: This lamb stopped long enough to pose for us. And, while he is no beauty, there is something so endearing about his funny face and ears that look like they are too long.

Judy Enright photos



quiring farmers to fence their land so that livestock are contained and don’t cause accidents. And, while I have seen some evidence of very good fencing in the more rural counties, apparently there are many sheep that didn’t get the message. They manage to slip out of even the tightest fences and are everywhere and, more often than not, that means in the middle of the road or grazing the “long acre” along the edge.

Last spring, for the first time, I saw an “Animal Safety and Welfare – Polite Notice” sign posted near the bridge on Achill Island in Mayo, warning motorists that it was lambing season and sheep were grazing. The sign

adds: “No dogs ...that’s common sense. Dogs worrying sheep is a legal offence...that’s the law.” This year, there’s a sign saying, “Slow down, don’t mow down.”

Sheep lovers

At an extremely informative website called ballybegvillage.com, I found the following: “Everyone loves sheep. It probably stems from the fact that as lambs, they are among the most cuddly and softest creatures you can imagine, and as adults they seem to be the most docile and harmless creatures you will ever meet up with.”

The writer added, “I once drove over 100 miles as a favor to an American friend of mine to visit with

an American lady who was taking a bus tour of Ireland. ... I thought I made a great impression! When the lady returned to the US, she was asked what the highlight of her trip to Ireland was. She replied, “those lovely Irish Sheep.”

When you’re in Ireland, be on the lookout for some of the farms that welcome visitors including: the Kissane Sheep Farm (kissanesheepfarm.com) near Kenmare in Co. Kerry, where you can visit and also “adopt” a sheep, and Killary Sheep Farm, just outside Leenane, Co. Galway, where sheep walks and dog demonstrations are held at 11 a.m., 1p.m., and 3 p.m. or by appointment Tuesday to Sunday (April 1-Oct. 31.) See more at killarysheepfarm.com.

You can find more information about other Irish farms open to the public at the local tourist offices.

If you’re traveling in Northern Ireland, there’s an interesting farm – the Ark Open Farm – in Newtownards, Co. Down that preserves rare and endangered species of domestic animals that are no longer seen in Northern Ireland’s fields. Set in 40 acres, the Ark is home to about 200 cattle, sheep, pigs, poultry, goats, donkeys, llamas, alpacas, and ponies, all of which are tame and friendly. The Ark is open all year. For more information, visit

thearkopenfarm.co.uk

Ireland Comes Alive:

There’s so much to do in Ireland now that summer and the warmer weather have arrived. You can go boating or to one of many gorgeous beaches, play golf, wind surf, hill walk, enjoy music, and art and so much more.

We’ve written before about the Great Western Greenway, the longest (26 miles) off-road cycling and walking trail in Ireland that follows the defunct Westport to Achill railway line. The Greenway has inspired many local residents to open assorted businesses in towns along the way – like cafes and bicycle hire – and now the pathway has inspired the Greenway Artists Initiative, which started in Newport last July and offers an array of workshops and courses and already has 77 member artists.

Maureen O’Neill and Tony Pilbro manage the Initiative, which Maureen says has taken off. There are plans for a 15-piece sculpture trail along the Greenway that will open in June. A bogwood sculpture exhibit opens in the Mulranny Park Hotel on June 10 and there are ideas for other exhibits in the future. Initiative locations are in Westport and Newport, and eventually there will be a site on Achill Island. For more information on the office


hours in Newport, visit greenwayartists.com or go to greenwayartists.blogspot.com.

Events: If you’re in the Westport, Co. Mayo, area, the annual Horse & Pony Show is Sunday and Monday, June 3 and 4) in Knockranny, Westport. The Westport Folk & Blue Grass Festival is scheduled from June 29 to July 1 and the Westport Sea Angling Festival is June 22, 23, and 24. They all sound like fun.

The annual Eigse Carlow Arts Festival is set for June 8-17. The Festival is extensive and the best bet is to take a look at the website to see what event you might be interested in attending. There is a Borris House hay festival, Carlow Town Park Family Day, musical events, exhibitions, workshops, to name just a few. See eigsecarlow.ie for more and visit culturefox.ie for an online guide to Irish cultural events.

The Taste of Dublin is on for June 14-17 at Meagh Gardens. See tasteofdublin.ie for details and to buy tickets.

Be sure to visit the Tourism Ireland website (discoverireland.com) for all the happenings and information about any part of Ireland that you’ll be visiting. It’s a great resource and constantly updated.



PHILLIPS CANDY HOUSE
— Celebrating 85 Years —

Order Online at
phillipschocolate.com
or call 800.722.0905

- Delicious Handmade Chocolates
 - Custom Corporate Gifts
- Handmade Phillips Cookies
- Favors for All Occasions
- Gift Baskets & Towers

818 Morrissey Boulevard • Boston | South Shore Plaza • Braintree

The Irish Language

by Philip Mac AnGhabhann

Is sí an Bhealtaine i arís. /iss shee uh The most common verb in almost every Indo-European language is “to be”. Some languages have two or even more verbs which can be translated as “to be” in English. Irish is one of these. The technical term for these are “descriptive” and “stative” or “copula”. One of these, **Tá**, is used to describe something of a more temporary nature. **Is** is used to describe conditions or things that are more or less permanent – where one equal the other.

There are a number of dialects in Irish – one can almost tell what village a person is from by the way they speak. Some are mutually comprehensible; others are not.

No where is this more apparent than in the verb forms.

A native speaker from Donegal once told me he could understand Scottish Gaelic but had to resort to English to talk to his wife, a native speaker of Irish from Kerry.

A native speaker from Galway could understand Donegal Irish. She went back Ireland each summer to refresh her skills but returned one year shaking her head. She had gone to Kerry. The Kerry dialect is the most conservative, retaining the “older” forms of the language. Modern scholars and teachers now chose the Galway dialects. However, “Official Irish” sometimes differs from the spoken language.

Both **Tá** and **Is** (often ‘**S**’) are English “be”. However, each has different uses. **Tá** is straightforward and is used to describe temporary conditions and physical features.

Here are some examples of each – the first shows **Tá** as a temporary condition; the second use is as a physical description.

Tá sé fluich inniu. “It’s wet today.”
Tá. Ach beidh tirim amáireach. “Yes. But it will be dry tomorrow.”
An bhfuil tú tinn? “Are you sick?”
Tá sí an cailín ramhar. “She is the fat girl.”

Is is used to show a more permanent condition.

Is mé Liam. (*I equal Liam.*) “I’m Bill.”

Nach mba do hathair dochtur é?

“Wasn’t your father (a) doctor?”

There are a number of idioms made with **Is**. Some you have already had – we will study these again in a future column. Why are **Tá** and **Is** always capitalized? Because they are always the first word in a sentence.

Long ago we studied the various forms of **Tá**. Recall that each tense has a variety of forms depending on the intent of the speaker:

Tá:	Affirmative	Negative
Present	Tá	Níl
Past	Bhí	Ní raibh
Future	Beidh	Ní Bheidh
	Interrogative	Negative Interrogative
	An?	Nach?
	An raibh?	Nach raibh?
	An mbeibh?	Nach mbeidh?

Initial **Bh-** is pronounced as a /v/ in some dialects and as /w/ in others. Therefore,

Bhí is pronounced /vee/ or /wee/ depending on the dialect; **raibh** is pronounced /roh/. **Beidh** is /bee/, therefore **bheidh** is /vee/ or /wee/ and **mbeidh** is /mee/. How to tell the difference between **bhí** and **bheidh**? **Bheidh** never stands alone, it is always preceded by **Ní**.

Is: Present and Future Habitual– there is no “Future” of this verb as the “Present” can be used in a “Future” sense. The **Interrogative** “Spoken Question Mark” **As** is more common in spoken speech in some areas.

Present	Negative
Is	Ní
Interrogative	Neg. Interrogative
An?/As?	Nach?

There are differences in the Past of **Is** depending on various dialects. The “official Irish” is as follows. You may hear variants in dialects as the language tends to be simplified in every day speech. These are listed below “Official Irish” in italics:

Past: **Ba** **Níor** **Ar?** **Nair?**
 Ní ba *An mba?* *Nach mba?*

All form of **Is** in the **Past Habitual** do lenite (“aspirate”) the following noun:

Ba Shorcha banaltra í.

“Sarah was (a) nurse”

Ba becomes **B’** when followed by a vowel sound:

B’ Arannach é.

“He was (a) man from Arann.”

All other forms add **-bh** when followed by a **vowel**:

NíorbhArannach é

“He was not an Arann man”

Arbh Arannach é?

“Was he an Arann man?”

Nárbh Arannach é?

“Wasn’t he an Arann man?”

Note that **Nair** is shortened to **Nár** when adding the **-bh** – and don’t forget to add the “unwritten” sound. **Níorbh** is pronounced /NEER-uhv/; **Arbh** is /AR-uhv, and **Nárbh** /NAR-uhv/.

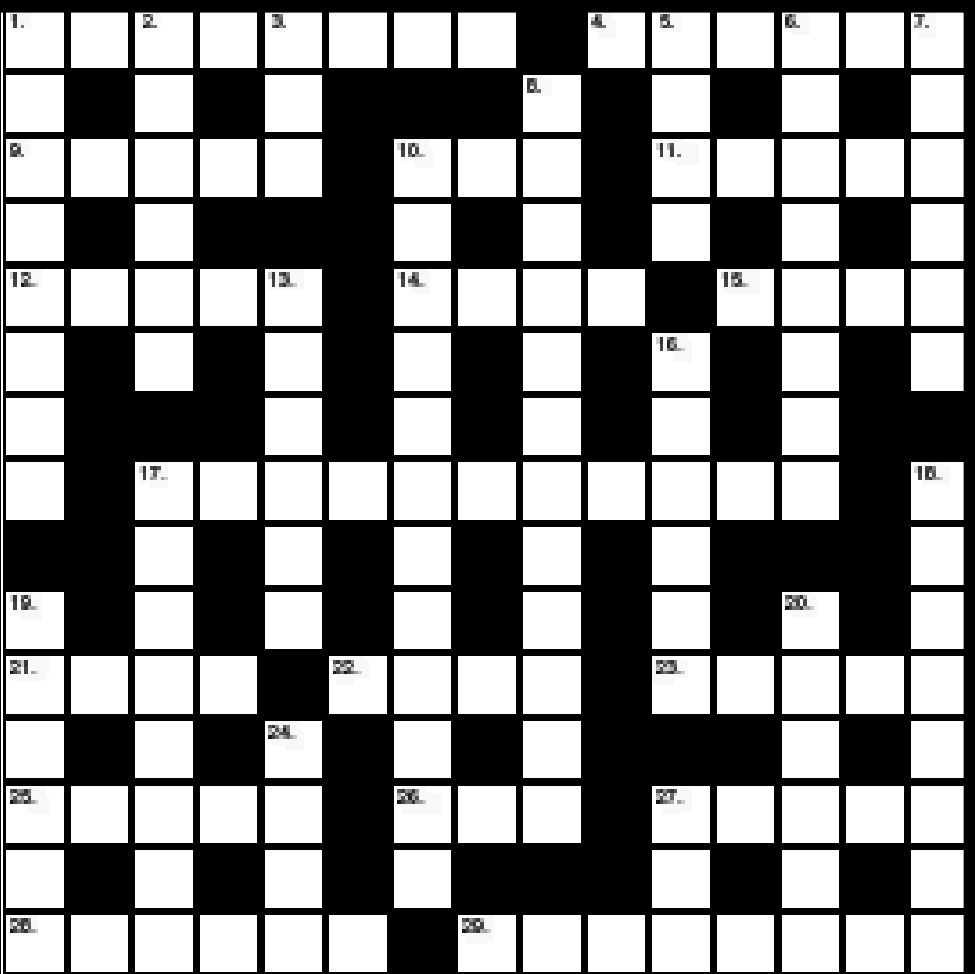
We will continue to work with **Tá** and **Is** in the next column so save this one!

CELTIC

CROSS

WORDS

The Irish
crosswords are
a service of an
Ireland-based
website which
provides Irish
Family Coats of
Arms by email.
You are invited
to visit
[www.
bigwood.com/
heraldry](http://www.bigwood.com/heraldry)



IRELAND IN CROSSWORDS

©-bigwood.com

ACROSS

- Cake to start with, but no ham following on the way back in Waterford fishing village where whales have been known to beach. (8)
- Elk Ike disposed of in attractive Clare resort sheltered from the Atlantic by the Duggerna Rocks. (6)
- Cut ham in pieces for she who wanted Oisín to stay in Tir na nOg. (5)
- Mr. Baba seen in Donegal incident. (3)
- Pins that sound like a scot back in Lusk categorically. (5)
- Get a rub of this old thing for luck in Tramore licensed premises. (5)
- The two of them are in Drumshanbo, then. (4)
- “The — — things a man is ashamed of, the — — respectable he is.” Shaw. (4)
- A jig can’t run around, but this will take you on a trip around the lakes of Killarney. (8,3)
- Garden tool, one of those from Mallow? (4)
- Young creature hidden in Ballinakill ambulance. (4)
- Fool will moor up facing north. (5)
- Dish of powdery boiled potatoes is insincere when mouthed. (5)
- Sunshine lad! (3)
- Arts graduate so Roman as to be fundamental. (5)
- Old men get confused as to the megalithic monument, with a fine example in Kiltarnan, Co. Dublin. (6)
- The do far out in small East Galway town near Ross Abbey beside the Black River. (8)

DOWN

- A burn can meander in sheltered Donegal resort on the shores of Lough Swilly under Slieve Nacht. (8)
- Len comes over with 26 across, almost. (6)
- Hurl off this tree? (3)
- I, to a confused Greek character, of little consequence. (4)
- Lose control and do this to the traces, that’s one point! (4,4)
- Shifty eye, ask inside for small Sligo seaside resort near a number of dolmens and ring forts. (6)
- Brain bent, yet wanders to Co. Wexford Cistercian church near Clonmines, having a ruined twin on the

Wye in South Wales. (7,5)

10. Bear they beat rears up in Dublin entertainment place burnt down in 1951 and reopened 1966. (5,7)

13. In an informal way chartered accountant leads Saul astray. (6)

16. Disorderly M.C. able to issue instruction not to panic. (2,4)

17. This is made up of unsolicited circulars about milk, Juan. (4,4)

18. Play a sneaky trick on a German night in one of the Ireland’s four green fields. (8)

19. Religious doctor outside the untidy room in Leitrim site of old ironworks on shores of Lough Bofin. (6)

20. Fast musical makes rope tangle around the saint. (6)

24. Piece of computer information inclusively concealed by Templemore establishment. (4)

27. “There’s no such thing as — publicity, except your own obituary.” Brendan Behan (3)

CROSSWORD SOLUTION ON PAGE 19

Irish Sayings

Even a tin knocker will shine on a dirty door.

Every patient is a doctor - after his cure.

“The Windy day is not a day for scallops (thatching).”

“People live in each other’s shelter.”

“The world would not make a racehorse of a donkey.”

“You are not a fully fledged sailor unless you have sailed under full sail,” “and you have not built a wall unless you have rounded a corner.”

“There is no strength without unity.”

“You must live with a person to know a person. If you want to know me come and live with me.”

“Praise the young and they will blossom”

“The raggy colt often made a powerful horse.”

“Age is honorable and youth is noble.”

“Youth does not mind where it sets its foot.”

“Both your friend and your enemy think you will never die.”

ADVERTISEMENT

Photography by

Image Photo Service



- Weddings • Anniversaries
- Banquets • Portraits
- Reunions
- Groups • Families
- Special Occasions

(617) 291-6609

The official photographers of the Boston Irish Reporter

Thank you, Sr. Gail Donahue, CSJ!



Pope John Paul II Catholic Academy thanks Sr. Gail for her 52 years of service to Catholic education and to the families of Mattapan and Dorchester. We wish her well in her new position with the Sisters of St. Joseph.

In her honor, Pope John Paul II Catholic Academy has created a scholarship in her name, a name that will live on for many years.

Donations may be made to:

Sr. Gail Donahue, CSJ Scholarship Fund
Pope John Paul II Catholic Academy
2200 Dorchester Ave
Dorchester, MA 02124

 **POPE JOHN PAUL II**
CATHOLIC ACADEMY

The Burren Rocks Festival continues through this month

The Burren & Cliffs of Moher Geopark has announced details of “The Burren Rocks’ festival,

which continues through the month of June. The celebration of the geology and landscape of the Burren will feature a unique musical performance by some of Clare’s best known traditional music artists in the grounds of the Iron Age Caherconnell Stone Fort, a landscape art exhibition and workshop, and a guided walk through the Burren’s world famous karst landscape. The festival, which forms part of European Geoparks Network Week 2012, will commence this Sunday with ‘The Antique Rockshow’ at Burren National Park Information Centre in Corofin. Experts in attendance will include Professor

Mike Williams, a Sedimentologist who was the first person to study the impact of large storms on the west of Ireland’s coastline geology, and palaeontologist Dr. John Murray, who is currently participating in a site study of one of the world’s earliest known human settlements in Azerbaijan.

Dr. Eamon Doyle, Geologist at the The Burren & Cliffs of Moher Geopark, said “The underlying geology of the Burren holds many fascinating clues to conditions on Earth more than 300 million years ago. More recently, the last Ice Age, which ended only around 12,000 years ago, has sculpted those rocks and largely given the Burren its current shape. Research is active and scientists and students come from all over the world to see what we have here. Our activities are designed to give people a taste of the geology and how it affects the landscape and also the culture of the Burren.”

Other events scheduled to take place this month include ‘A Climb Through Time’, a guided walk/climb from Fanore Beach to and from Slieve Elva on June10; The Burren & Cliffs of Moher Geopark and the Burren College of Art will host ‘The Cliffs of Moher Art Experience’ on June 15, with the public is invited to meet and engage with working and student artists.

AUTO BODY REPAIRS

(617) 825-1760
(617) 825-2594
FAX (617) 825-7937

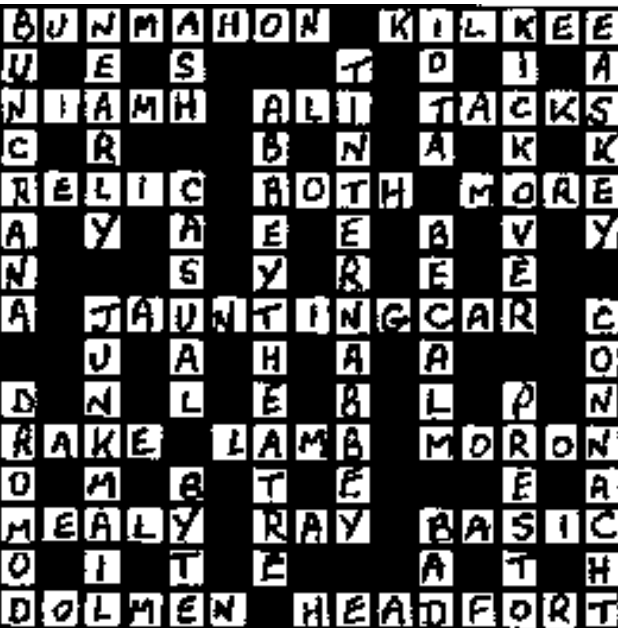
Fitzpatrick Brothers
CORPORATION


Free Pick-Up & Delivery Service

150 Centre Street
Dorchester, MA 02124



PUZZLE SOLUTION FROM PAGE 17





795 Adams St. • Dorchester

“President’s Choice”

Serving Lunch & Dinner

Every day,

7 days a week

Subscribe Today to Boston’s Own Hometown Newspaper

BOSTON IRISH
REPORTER

We accept phone orders
with your Visa or Mastercard.
Call 617-436-1222
Or Fax this order form to
617-825-5516

Order today, and we will send
a gift card in your name.
Enclose \$35.00
for each gift subscription.

Mail to
Boston Irish Reporter
150 Mt. Vernon Street
Dorchester, MA 02125

A Subscription to the
Boston Irish Reporter
Makes an Ideal Gift for
Any Special Occasion.

Why Not Order One Today for Yourself,
or for That Special Irish Someone in Your Life?

Order today, and we will send a gift card in your name.
Enclose \$35.00 for each gift subscription.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Gift from _____

Charge to Visa _____

Mastercard _____

Card # _____

Exp _____

JUNE 8-10, 2012 BOSTON IRISH FESTIVAL

Children under 12 are FREE June 9 & 10

Tickets: June 9 & 10 \$15 per day | Member price \$10 | Advanced purchase \$10

KICK OFF THE BOSTON IRISH FESTIVAL WITH
Gaelic Storm

FRIDAY, JUNE 8TH 2012

Tickets: Advance \$20 | Preferred Seating \$30 | \$25 At Door
(advanced tickets only)

Doors open at 6pm, concert begins at 8pm. Food and drinks available.



**Three days of non-stop, outstanding
and rock your socks off Celtic Music**

5K Road Race | FREE Face Painting | Amusements | Irish Baking Competition
Irish Arts & Crafts Shops | Genealogy Consultations | Field Games for Kids
Irish Football & Hurling | Step Dancing | Redhead World Record Photo
Great Food & Drinks | Irish Tea House | Irish Setters & Wolfhounds

TICKETS and information at
www.bostonirishfestival.info

BOSTON IRISH FESTIVAL
200 NEW BOSTON DR.
CANTON, MA 02021