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Pat Walsh, union chieftain, ‘fighter to the end’

Always on the lookout for one more worker job

On Election Day, while most of Dorchester was beating a path to the polls, one of the neighborhood’s political heavies lay dying in a bed on Neponset Avenue. Pat Walsh had been gravely ill for many months and had told all who would listen that he was ready to go. But, even on his deathbed at age 90, he kept close track of “the game” he loved— especially the brewing showdown for US Senate between Elizabeth Warren and Scott Brown.

The union that he built into one of the city’s strongest — Laborers 223, which is now led by his son Marty— endorsed the Democrat way back in October 2011. The Laborers — along with other workers mobilized by his nephew, state Rep. Martin Walsh — formed the sturdy backbone of Warren’s ground forces in Boston long before the candidate caught fire in the polls.

So when the candidate herself made a final swing through the city on Election Day, it was no surprise that she stopped at the GOTV beehive at the IBEW hall on Freeport Street. And when Elizabeth Warren finished her round of handshakes and photos at the union hall, she made it a point to swing by Pat Walsh’s house to thank him in person.

“I’m not sure that he really knew who she was at first,” recalled Rep. Walsh, who was there for the brief meeting. “Pat was pretty far along. But she came up to his bed and grabbed his hand and said, ‘Pat, I’m Elizabeth Warren. And I just wanted to say thank you.’”

Pat thanked her back and then, as she left the room, offered the candidate the first taste of a word she’d hear many more times that night: “Congratulations,” Pat said to her. “Pat knew at 2:30 that day that she’d be the next senator,” said Rep. Walsh.

Pat Walsh died last Thursday and was buried in Cedar Grove Cemetery after a funeral Mass at St. Margaret’s Church on Monday morning. The wake at Murphy’s on Dot Ave. was a two-day blockbuster, with long lines snaking around the block. Florists from across New England had a banner weekend. Massive arrangements adorned every nook and cranny of the stately funeral home. Most were from brother unions—the Carpenters, the Ironworkers, the Plumbers— they were all represented.

The most poignant carried cards from individuals who had no doubt benefited from Pat’s good deeds in some distant moment when a nod from Pat brought a union card, a day’s pay, and maybe a lift to a job site and home again.

“Thanks for all that you’ve done for the working



The Walsh clan at Greenhills in 2000: from left Mary Walsh, John Walsh, Marty Walsh, Pat Walsh - who passed away last week - Rep. Martin J. Walsh and his father, the late John Walsh. *File photo*

man,” read one such note.

Pat came to Boston in 1949 and was followed not long after by his brother (Rep. Walsh’s dad, John, who passed away last year). The Walshes hailed from Callowfeenish, a rocky and isolated village in County Galway’s Connemara region— a place where people spoke their native tongue and cut turf from nearby bogs to fuel their hearths.

In a 2000 interview with former *Reporter* editor Eoin Cannon, Pat Walsh recalled that “things were very hard in Ireland back then. They weren’t as good in this country as they are now, either. You had to find your own work.”

Once settled in Boston, Pat found work where he could: on the docks and railroads and in the factories of post-war Boston. He never forgot the struggles of those lean years. And when he clawed and cajoled his way up the ranks to business manager, the most powerful spot in the union, he made sure that he helped his fellow Irish by the thousands get an even shot at work.

He helped men of all backgrounds, of course, but there was no secret – and no apology – for the sham-rock that adorned the Local 223 bumper stickers. It was clearly “the Irish union.” Said Rep. Walsh: “He defended his men without hesitation. He was always fighting to get one more job.”

Pat had a tough edge and the salty tongue that you’d expect from a guy who had to slug it out with foremen, developers and, sometimes, other union chiefs. To the end, Pat was a fighter for the workingman and a staunch Democrat— even when he didn’t love the candidate. When he “retired” and passed his union baton to his son Marty, he did daily battle over cups of coffee with anyone who’d dare take the bait at his favorite haunt, Greenhills in Adams Corner.

His nephew, who was on the receiving end of Pat’s way with words more than once, laughed as he said, “He didn’t like you if he wasn’t yelling at you. He was a fighter to the end.”

– Bill Forry



Sinn Féin politician Martin Ferris, TD, spoke at a November 14 Boston luncheon hosted by the Irish American Partnership (IAP). Pictured with him (second left) are Joe Leary, IAP president, Mary McAleer, IAP vice president, and Ireland Consul General to Boston Michael Loneragan. For a report on his comments, see the Publisher’s Notes on Page 4. *Ed Forry photo*

Gov. Patrick talks ‘with pride’ about his Irish blood

In the days before the election last month, Massachusetts Gov. Deval Patrick used the occasion of his defending US Senate candidate Elizabeth Warren and her family stories about her Native-American ancestry against attacks by the incumbent US Senator, the Republican Scott Brown, to talk about his own belief in his Irish bloodline.

Noting that his grandmother told him she was the product of “an Irish Kentucky landowner and his black maid,” Patrick said, “I don’t have any documentation for that. So when I tell people that I have Irish blood I say that with pride because I trusted my grandmother was telling me the truth.”

Patrick called the issue raised repeatedly by Brown “absurd” and said most people are more concerned with other issues.

– STATE HOUSE NEWS SERVICE



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Regrets, hopes from an IRA man

By Ed Forry

When Martin Ferris was a young man in Tralee, Co. Kerry, he was a member of the Kerry GAA Under 21 football team that won the 1973 All Ireland championship for his age group.



He had joined the provisional IRA in 1970, and in 1975, he was arrested and jailed for nine months in Portlaoise prison on robbery charges; a year later, he was imprisoned briefly on charges as an IRA member. In 1984, he was sentenced to ten years for his role in the infamous Valhalla incident, where a Boston-based trawler was caught transferring an arms cache to the ship Maita Ann off the coast of Kerry.

Gaining his freedom around the time of the Northern Ireland peace talks, Ferris became politically active in Sinn Féin, eventually winning elections in Kerry and Tralee in 1999. In 2002, he unseated former Tanaiste Dick Spring and took his North Kerry seat in Dáil Éireann, the Irish parliament.

Ferris was in Boston last month, and spoke before a luncheon gathering of the Irish American Partnership where he said his party is committed to “the prospects of a united Ireland, a new republic that we in Sinn Féin are trying to develop, a better place for those who live on the island, irrespective of past affiliations or associations. We can do this together and have a better country. Ireland has been a divided country.”

Ferris said that since the Good Friday Agreement 15 years ago, there has been much progress. “The agreement [calls for] a border poll where the people of the six counties can vote as to their future. I don’t think it should be about majority rule because majority rule has failed miserably in the past and created the divisions that are there.

“Working together across the sectarian divide, we believe firmly that in the emergence of a cordial unit, it may come down to actually small groups of people working together on both sides of the divide, reassuring people that were once your enemy that we are now in a different place and we want to work together, to bring about a better place for all children.

“That is happening right across the spectrum of the six counties,” Ferris said, adding, “From an economic point of view, you have a situation where there are two different corporation tax systems, two different economies, two police forces, two armies, two sectors of local government. You have a double up of everything that goes to make up the governance of society.

“We believe that it would be far more beneficial for the common good if you had just the one jurisdiction. We have to prove that politics works, that our strategy for Irish republicans is moving forward. We have to bring the broad republican family together with us in that direction, as we have managed to do, and we have to show there is a way to achieve our goals through the direction we are currently traveling.

“What you need to do is convince as many people within the unionist community that from an economic point of view it is beneficial for them to be in an all- Ireland economy and challenge them in a way that is respectful, that the arrangement between unionism and past British governments has always been contractual – in that economically it has been more beneficial to them, so we have to move that part around, the economy around, and I believe we can do that.”

Ferris said that as a young father he spent 13 years in jail, and was not there to support his wife Maire in raising their five young children. “The children suffered from the conflict. My family suffered because of my actions, my involvement in the armed struggle, and my imprisonment for 13 years. But the one thing I see about this new generation of Irish republicans is that they are very educated unlike myself.”

His said his daughter Toiréasa is a Sinn Fein councillor and former mayor of Tralee. “She has a law degree and a master’s in human rights. They see the world a lot different than I did when I was her age. In so far as there are an awful lot of gray areas out there, they seem to be looking for solutions, understanding that you’re not going to get everything that you want, but you’re going to get a solution that everyone can live with. That what I see in Toiréasa.

“You have all these great young people coming through and it’s very, very encouraging that we are offering an alternative to the people from the status quo, an alternative far more equitable and fair. I think the general public is responding to that, especially the younger people.

“We have come from the last election 20 months ago [February 2011] from 9.9 percent in the polls to ... running anywhere between 18 and 22 percent. That’s a huge increase. But the United Ireland campaign that we are trying to build support for is not just Sinn Féin, it’s way bigger than Sinn Féin. It’s about people, it’s about children, it’s about families, it’s about having a structure in place that everybody can feel comfortable with and be part of it.

“And it’s also about having an economy to meet the need and requirements to serve the community and people, rather than the other way around, which we’ve been used to. If I ever do one thing in my life that in some way will help people going forward from here – if I can deliver is another matter – we will give it every breath in our body to try and make our country a better place for all people.”

Caring about Ireland at Christmas

By Joe Leary
SPECIAL TO THE BIR

The people of Ireland are struggling. Incomes are lower, taxes and fees are higher, unemployment is 14.8 percent, and tens of thousands of young people are once again leaving. After enjoying a booming economy for a brief time a few years ago, Ireland is now severely burdened with enormous debt caused by risk-taking speculators and greedy bankers.

To prevent a total collapse of the Irish economy, in November 2010, the government acted with the advice and backing of the world’s financial leadership and guaranteed all Irish bank debt. It is this debt that hangs over Ireland today.

Should we care? Do Irish Americans have a reason to help? Do we care about our heritage enough?

I respectfully suggest that yes we should care and help where we can.

With great courage and hope, our forebears left Ireland years ago to come to America to build new lives for themselves and their families. Many left large pieces of their hearts and souls back in their villages. Even today you rarely meet a recent immigrant – citizen or not – who doesn’t hold dear the memories of his or her childhood with all the wonderful Irish traditions, especially at Christmas time.

That spirit remains with us today. With determination and resolve, Ireland is doing its best on its own to cope with an extremely difficult economic situation, in the process earning much praise and admiration from European political and financial leaders for facing its problems and executing an unfortunate but necessary austerity program. The speculators are losing their fortunes, including their homes, and some have gone to jail.

It should be remembered that the government under Taoiseach Enda Kenny has had just over 18 months to



Joe Leary

Off the Bench

About the importance of circumstances

By James W. Dolan
SPECIAL TO THE REPORTER

As I see it, homicide is always evil; the degree, however, depends upon the context – circumstances and intent. Thus, we determine if the killing of another in self defense or the execution of one convicted of murder is justifiable.

In war, the killing of an enemy is an extension of the self-defense doctrine even when both sides believe they are acting in self defense or to preserve freedom and protect the homeland. One combatant killing another when neither played any role in the causes of the conflict, and when both are innocent victims, is considered justifiable.

The wholesale slaughter of innocent non-combatants – women and children innocent but for where they were born – is also justified. Cities are bombed to punish the innocent populace and to create such pain and suffering that those engaged in making war will relent. On a smaller scale, “collateral damage” (the killing of innocents) is justified as an unintended consequence in targeting an enemy.

While condemning killing as a grievous sin, the Catholic Church teaches it is tolerable in a “just war” – one in which an aggressor threatens the populace, freedom, or territory of its enemy. However, the perception of which side is the aggressor differs from conflict to conflict. Usually both sides believe they are in the right.

Not all wars are just but when was the last time the church officially declared a war to be unjust and directed Catholics not to participate? Slavery was an evil act, but certainly not all slave-owners were condemned to hell. Catholic chaplains served in both armies.

In Vietnam, the United States intervened in a civil war on flimsy grounds based on perceived threats that never materialized even after we lost. Over a million Vietnamese and 58,000 Americans died for what? History will likely view us as the aggressor nation. Those who fought and died were innocent victims of bad decisions.

The law takes into consideration the context in which an evil act such as homicide occurs. There are exceptions and degrees of guilt. One can commit an evil act and yet be found innocent or less culpable depending on the circumstances.

Many believe abortion is the taking of an innocent life, or at the very least, that the fetus is entitled to the benefit of any doubt as to when human life occurs. Others argue the fetus (particularly early on) is not a person. Some say they don’t know.

However, all must agree that a fetus is at least a person-in-waiting; in the course of its development, it will become a human being. Is “potential life” worth protecting? I say yes.

I am anti-abortion and anti-homicide. Although they

remedy the situation. The previous taoiseach, Brian Cowen, and his Fianna Fail government resigned in March of 2011 three years after assuming the government reins.

To be fair to Cowen, there were early signs pointing to a recession during 2006 that worsened through 2007 until the government formally declared a recession in September 2008 at which time Cowen had been taoiseach for only five months.

Putting aside for a moment the tragic accounting of Ireland’s recent troubles, what can we do to help?

There are so many places to start, and a good one would be: Plan a trip to Ireland next year. Tourism brings cash and productive wages not only to Dublin and Belfast but also to the more remote areas that need it most. The Irish tourist board in New York is sponsoring a year-long promotion they call “The Gathering.” Many have signed up already. This would be an excellent way to assist Ireland and enjoy yourself at the same time.

Another means of support would be to help the local Irish institutions here in Boston area that honor our heritage all year long. The Irish Cultural Centre in Canton is a perfect example. Most of us attend their Irish Festival, but there are events there each month and the dues to belong are nominal.

Other organizations – The Eire Society, the Charitable Irish, The American Ireland Fund, The Irish American Partnership, The Irish International Immigrant Center, The Irish Pastoral Centre – all deserve support. This newspaper, the *Boston Irish Reporter*, which honors Ireland with each issue, should be considered.

Then there is the new Irish Network Boston started a few years ago that has events nearly every month. If you would like to meet young Irish Americans and a few old codgers who try to go to everything, join Irish Network Boston.

As Christmas draws closer and you make out your list for gifts and charitable donations, think about adding Ireland to the roster.

may not be the same, I believe that life deserves the benefit of the doubt. But I also understand how many view abortion, particularly after rape, incest, or to protect the health of the mother, as justifiable.

Just as in homicide, the context is important. There are degrees of guilt. Persons who undergo an abortion for the above reasons may be innocent, or at least less culpable than those who choose to abort because a child is inconvenient or not the right sex.

I also understand the dilemma of a couple faced with caring for a profoundly disabled child. Hopefully, a merciful God will understand that few are capable of the self-sacrifice and heroism required in such circumstances. The greater good is to shoulder the burden but perhaps those who fail to do so are less culpable. Not every sin is mortal; much depends on the motivation.

The church recognizes extenuating circumstances in homicide and in divorce (by granting annulments) but fails to acknowledge the moral gray areas evident in abortion, contraception, and homosexuality.

It condemns child abuse but sadly tolerated this widespread evil, showing more concern for perpetrators than victims. To protect itself against scandal, it apparently found extenuating circumstances where none existed

Its opposition to abortion is undermined by equating the prevention of conception with the termination of a fetus. Most Catholic couples see the difference and use artificial birth control to limit the number of children to those they can afford and responsibly raise.

I believe an understanding, compassionate and all-knowing God will measure our behavior against the context of our lives – our capacity to do good or evil. That “capacity” includes all those things that influence judgment such as belief, intelligence, education, health, development, family circumstances. and conscience.

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Point of View

Old Abe and Old Boston: A troubled relationship

In Boston's Irish North End during the Civil War, President Lincoln was not a popular figure for all

BY PETER F. STEVENS
BIR STAFF

In the new film *Lincoln*, Daniel Day Lewis brings that towering figure into stunning life on every level. Throughout the maelstrom of the Civil War, the Boston Irish had a tenuous relationship when it came to President Abraham Lincoln.

At the outset of the conflict, in 1861, the *Boston Pilot* had pontificated. "We [Irish] Catholics have only one course to adopt, only one line to follow. Stand by the Union, fight for the Union, die by the Union." The Boston Irish would do all that – and more throughout the conflict. In July 1863, however, Boston's Irish neighborhoods would erupt into massive riots against Lincoln's Conscription Act – America's first draft.

By July 1863, the 28th and the 9th Massachusetts Irish Regiments – volunteers – had proven their mettle and patriotism on some of the war's bloodiest battlefields. Below the Confederate cannons and sharpshooters entrenched on St. Mary's Heights, above Fredericksburg, Virginia, on December 13, 1862, a green banner with its gilded harp and the Gaelic words for "Clear the Road!" dipped in the morning gusts. Beneath the flag, the 28th Massachusetts formed columns, wheeled into position alongside the three New York regiments of General Thomas Meagher's Irish Brigade, and charged into battle "as if it were the finest fun in the world."

Wearing sprigs of evergreen in their caps so "that they might still carry the colors of the Emerald Isle," shouting "Erin Go Bragh," they rushed impetuously forward against a storm of grape and canister that...tore great gaps in their ranks."

Six times the 28th and the other men of the Brigade charged, each assault filling the Rebels with equal parts of awe and dead. The Irish could not form for a seventh charge, staggering away



Daniel Day Lewis portrays President Abraham Lincoln in the critically acclaimed film "Lincoln." The future president visited Dorchester in 1848.

from the fence and back toward the town. In the first charge alone, 545 of 1,315 Irishmen fell dead or wounded. The 28th Massachusetts lost 158 of 418 in the suicidal charges up the heights.

Thomas Cass, a notable figure in the Boston Irish community, had recruited fellow Irish volunteers in the spring of 1861 into the 9th Massachusetts Regiment, soon to win renown as the "Fighting 9th." When the regiment's Irish ranks marched through Boston's Brahmin streets to the State House, Governor John Andrew lauded the troops and asserted that the nation must view alike "its native-born citizens and those born in other countries."

Proper Bostonian maven Mrs. Harrison Gray Otis presented the 9th with a flag adorned with the following words: "As aliens and strangers thou didst befriend us. As sons and true patriots

we do thee defend."

Massachusetts's Irish regiments served with distinction throughout the war,

displaying the same courage and resilience that had made Ireland's fabled "Wild Geese" the finest mercenaries in European armies. More importantly, the soldiers of the two regiments, through their sacrifices on the battlefields of the Civil War, had claimed a stake for citizenship in Boston and beyond despite the bigotry of various Brahmins and other Yankees.

The foothold proved one that Irish-Americans would never relinquish. A proud Boston Irish veteran proclaimed, "If they'd [the Confederates] known it was us [the Irish], they would have brought coffins with them."

Even as the 9th and the 28th battled for "Father Abraham's cause," others in the Irish North End rose up in July 1863 against the president's latest call to arms – the Conscription Act. The Boston Draft Riot was fueled by Irish immigrants' fury at the class and ethnic unfairness of the nation's first draft, which allowed "sons of wealth" to buy their way out of the fray for \$300. The sum was far beyond the reach of impoverished Irish families.

Early on the steamy afternoon of July 14, 1863, riots broke out when provost marshals tried to serve Union army draft notes in the Irish North End, where husbands, sons and brothers ad march away in Federal blue with the 9th and the 28th. Many of the North End Irish had had enough of "Mr. Lincoln's War." Many loathed Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation, afraid that hordes of ex-slaves would take even menial jobs from the Irish at lower wages. In New York City's teeming slums Irishmen shouting "rich man's war, poor man's fight" had already unleashed bloody draft riots for two days.

By mid-afternoon, mobs stormed

through the North End and soon surrounded the First Division Police Station. Scores of Irishmen joined the siege. Historian Edward Harrington writes, "They proposed to test the question whether the Government had the right to drag them from their home to fight in a cause in which they did not believe."

Mayor Frederic W. Lincoln answered that question by dispatching troops to the North End, with a light battery of artillery. The North Enders launched hit-and-run forays against the troops and the police for more than twenty-four hours. Throughout the tumult, Father Brady and other priests from nearby St. Mary's Church persuaded many parishioners to return to their homes, the clerics' courage winning the plaudits of the mayor and other Boston officials.

No one knows how many Irish were killed or wounded in the Boston Draft Riot, but the local newspapers ran the names of scores of wounded men, women, and children of the "ould sod" treated in Boston hospitals. The true tally was undeniably much higher, but will forever remain a mystery because the rioters dragged away the bodies of slain neighbors and buried them in secret "without any official permit."

On July 14, 1863, the fury of the Boston Irish at the draft had threatened to erupt with similar violence as the New York Draft Riots, but Mayor Lincoln's speedy and bloody reaction convinced many Irishmen "that it would be less hazardous to fight the Southern rebels than to fight Mayor Lincoln."

One local Irishman's words about the Boston Draft Riot summed up his neighbors' view: "I'd rather fight here, where I can go home to dinner, than in the Southern swamps."

What is undeniable is that in the Irish North End, neither President Lincoln nor Mayor Lincoln was a revered figure in July 1863.

The story of the Irish Brigade and the Lost Drum

BY JOHN RATTIGAN
SPECIAL TO THE BIR

In the fall of 1862, the second year of the Civil War, the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia under Gen. Robert E. Lee undertook to invade Maryland. This decision culminated in the bloody Battle of Antietam where Lee's forces were pushed back. It was now December of that year and the Army of the Potomac was on the offensive heading south. General Ambrose Burnside had been appointed its commander barely five weeks earlier and was under pressure from President Lincoln to make an assault upon the Confederate capital of Richmond, Virginia.

And so, on Dec. 13, 120,000 Union troops and 80,000 Confederate soldiers faced off against each other near the small town of Fredericksburg some 50 miles north of Richmond. This was to be the largest concentration of combatants in any Civil War battle.

Burnside's advance through Virginia lacked the element of surprise, giving Lee sufficient time to concentrate his forces on a series of hills known as Marye's Heights located just outside of the town. The Confederate forces were dug in behind a stone wall on the hillside – a highly defensible position. Behind them, artillery commanded the whole field below, ready to shell the approaching Union army, which included the Irish Brigade comprised of five regiments from New York, Pennsylvania, and Massachusetts.

As part of the Brigade, the Massachusetts 28th Volunteer

Infantry had been formed in May 1861 and was composed almost entirely of men who were Irish by birth or heritage. It was commanded by Gen. Thomas Francis Meagher, a native of Waterford, an ardent Fenian, and one of the best known Irish immigrant nationalists in America.

On the cold and foggy December morning of the battle, Meagher ordered his men to place sprigs of green boxwood in their forage caps to distinguish them from other units. He then positioned the Massachusetts men in the center of the brigade line, both because they were by far the most numerous and because they possessed the sole green Irish flag in the brigade. This distinctive bright green flag was emblazoned with a golden harp and the brigade's war cry "Faugh ah Ballagh," Irish for "clear the way." The Massachusetts 28th was the only regiment to carry the Irish Brigade colors that day because, after the battle of Antietam, the flags of the other regiments were sent to Tiffany's in New York for repair or replacement. In the hours that followed, they watched the first wave of Union soldiers go up the hill ahead of them, suffering heavy casualties. By coincidence, the stone wall entrenchment on Marye's Heights was defended by the Irishmen of Antrim-born Col. Robert McMillan's 24th Georgia Infantry.

Knowing that both McMillan's and Meagher's units contained members of the Irish Republican Brotherhood, Gen. Lee was concerned that such a



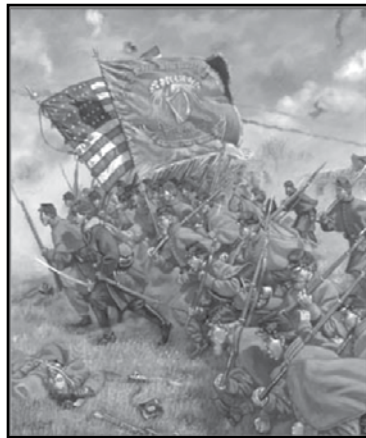
The Drum of the Massachusetts 28th Infantry Regiment

Irish Brigade Massachusetts 28th Regiment

kinship might interfere with his troops' sense of duty and so he ordered reserves sent to that position. He need not have worried. These were men at war and the human survival instinct of "kill or be killed" trumped any brotherly bonds that day on both sides.

As the Irish Brigade stepped off, advancing up the slope, the Southerners knew full well who was coming against them. One Confederate who spotted the green regimental flag approaching cried out, "Oh God, what a pity! Here come Meagher's fellows." The Brigade moved toward the Confederate position under a murderous fire of grape shot, canister, and bullets, suffering horrendous casualties all along the way. The rifle volleys were withering and the federal troops slowed and then fell back, never getting closer than 50 yards from the stone wall.

Throughout the day, Burnside ordered seven Union divisions



sent in, generally one brigade at a time, for a total of fourteen individual charges, all of which failed, costing the Union force between 6,000 and to 8,000 casualties. Confederate losses at Marye's Heights totaled only around 1,200. During these futile frontal assaults, the Massachusetts 28th suffered the greatest losses of the five regiments that made up the Irish Brigade.

After the war, Burnside went on to distinguish himself as Governor of Rhode Island and later as a US Senator but to many Union veterans, he was simply known as "The Butcher of Fredericksburg."

We now fast forward 129 years to the summer of 1991 when the Charitable Irish Society was contacted by the property manager of the Court Street office building in Boston where the Society's office was situated until the late 1970's. During a recent cleaning of the sub-basement, several boxes were found that bore the Society's name. Two board members were

dispatched to investigate. They found a collection of old records as well as a cylindrically shaped package wrapped in heavy brown paper. All of the items were covered with a thick layer of black coal dust, giving some clue to the length of time they had been in storage.

After unwrapping, it was discovered that the oddly shaped parcel contained a military drum. Painted on one side was a red shamrock as well as the regimental title and motto of the Massachusetts 28th Regiment.

The drum was in fairly good condition and subsequent research determined that it was crafted by the A.W. White Company, a musical instrument manufacturer established in the mid 19th century and located at 86 Tremont Street in Boston.

Thanks to the help and assistance of Robert Hall, Jr., President of the Olde Colony Civil War Round Table, the drum was professionally restored and in 1995 was presented by the Society to the National Park Service on a permanent loan basis. The drum is now the centerpiece of the battlefield artifacts collection at the Fredericksburg Visitor Center's museum in Virginia.

The Massachusetts 28th drum and the young men it once called to arms and eventual death are reunited on this 150 anniversary of the battle, a small but fitting tribute to those fallen Irishmen whose life journeys ended on a cold Virginia hillside, far from their homes and so very far from their native land.

Boston Irish Reporter’s Here & There

By BILL O’DONNELL

Opening Up Ireland’s West—There are plans afoot to develop an exciting new driving route in the west of Ireland dubbed the Wild Atlantic Way. The proposed route, which would use existing coastal routes from Donegal to west Cork, would cover 850 miles (1,400 km) and be Ireland’s first long-distance driving route for tourists.

Over the past several months the Irish tourist board, the Western Development Commission, the Gaeltacht agency Udaras, and regional tourist agencies have been meeting to study a range of options for the Wild Atlantic Way, which would roughly follow as close to the actual coast as possible and involve parts of seven counties, Donegal, Sligo, Mayo, Galway’s Connemara, Clare, Kerry, West Cork, and possibly the Bantry Bay area.

The Irish Government and Failte Ireland will be working with local tourism authorities to promote capitalizing on a long-distance driving route that would exploit the world class viewing points along the west coast, erecting signage, developing itineraries, and designing a marketing strategy.

Residents, businesses ,and anyone else interested in the routing of the new tourist highway are invited to register their views and comments by December 14.

The website is failteireland.ie/wildatlanticway. Possible launch of The Wild Atlantic Way has been put at sometime during 2014.

How To Pick A Winner—In the recent presidential election we were engulfed by numbers and polls on what most everyone assumed (from the conventional wisdom) would be a genuinely close election. The New York Times’s **Nate Silver** and the on-point Obama GOTV team called it right, but few were willing to back their choice with hard currency and trust in their opinion like Ireland’s premier bookmaker (turf accountant) **Paddy Power**. Some 36 hours before Americans went to their polling places Paddy Power, which had handled the major portion of wagering on **President Obama** to win, decided that Obama would beat **Mitt Romney** and began paying off the punters who had picked Obama long before the election results would be known. Paddy Power just decided it was a “done deal.” If Romney had won, Paddy Power would have been out of pocket to the tune of \$850,000. Some gamble, some win.

Another Try For Irish TV Nexus In US—A former Derry native who owns radio stations in Canada and operates out of the US is dedicating himself to launching a television outlet in the states with an estimated audience of 35 million, he says. **Tony Culley-Foster** is looking to produce several hours of TV programming each week featuring Ireland and Derry, in particular. The new effort is to be up and running, Culley-Foster hopes, by March 17 in the new year.

The plan is to have programming from Derry, Belfast, and Dublin with sponsors and advertising. One aspect of the planned TV launch is that Derry will be the UK 2013 City of Culture with an array of events and activities highlighting Derry’s historic past and colorful present.

As many in and around Boston remember there was an earlier, ambitious effort to create an all-Irish TV channel in the US with offices in Boston. It looked promising for a time but eventually had trouble attracting sufficient viewers and turned the key and departed, leaving many here owed money.

We wish Mr. Culley-Foster good luck with his endeavor and hope his vision for Irish-US TV ties is more successful than its predecessor.

A Backward Glance at the Election—Three million popular votes and an electoral vote edge of 126 was the margin of President Obama’s decisive win over former Bay State governor Mitt Romney. As usual, it was a messy affair, beginning with almost a year devoted to the long-winded, empty-calorie Republican primary that elevated Romney over what charitably can only be called a lackluster lineup.

In a series of debates that Romney called “nuts” after the election (yes, indeed), Mitt spent his star time before the debate TV cameras trying to convince the far right wingnuts and Tea Party folks that he was “severly conservative.” Following that bizarre marathon, Romney abandoned his heavy breathing romance of the right wing base in an effort to convince (wink, wink) independents and others that he was really a moderate. The American people didn’t buy it.

After Romney made the traditional phone call to the election victor, he went on stage alone to concede and he was graceful and generous. Where was this guy during the general election campaign? We soon found that the Romney magnanimity was illusory when in remarks in a phone hookup with donors he accused the president of using “gifts” to blacks, Hispanics and young voters; in essence he bought their votes. This notion was viscerally offensive to millions of Democrats, independents and, as we discovered, deeply out of touch with scores of Republican office holders and GOP campaign officials who knew they had put forth a flawed, gaffe-ridden, whining candidate even if he was one of their own. But, all said and

done now, Romney was never really one of them. He didn’t exhibit the character, spine, or the consistency to convince them – or us.

The reality is that Obama and his committed team of battle-tested volunteers and campaign pros rocked the Romney effort, and routed the GOP troops decisively in the trenches by identifying the Obama vote and getting those people to the polls. Romney’s team, absent a dry run of the much-vaunted ORCA Project to get out their vote, floundered badly with the system crashing around 4 p.m. on election day.

Karl Rove, Peggy Noonan, Dick Morris, Donald Trump, Wall Street Journal columnists and Fox TV cheerleaders were more than a skosh off, many predicting a Romney landslide. Obama took eight of nine battleground states. If you discount the still developing deep South, the president virtually split the white vote with Romney (a stretch but not unreasonable) who predicted more of the same (I will take care of you when I’m elected!) in pandering to his rich, largely white, male constituency.

To wrap up, I was not surprised by the pay-to-play pundits who drank the laced Snapple and could not believe that the rich, handsome, well-turned-out white guy couldn’t beat Obama and the dreaded unemployment rate so as to fulfill the hopes of that hack de jure, Sen. **Mitch McConnell**, in holding the president to one term.

But in a turn, I found briefly entertaining the fact of the candidate’s and his inner circle’s stunned, disbelieving reaction to his losing. This gang not only couldn’t shoot straight but they were also a failure at reading their own tea leaves. The Bubble giveth and the Bubble taketh.

Finally, a lush line from the inimitable Jackie Gleason that sums it all up for this year — “How sweet it is!”

NOTABLE QUOTE

“In this environment, too many news organizations are holding back, out of fear — fear that we will be saddled with an uncomfortable political label, fear that we will be accused of bias, fear

that we will be portrayed as negative, fear that we will lose customers, fear that advertisers will run from us, fear that we will be assailed as anti-this or anti-that, fear that we will offend someone, anyone. Fear, in short, that our weakened financial condition will be made weaker because we did something strong and right, because we simply told the truth and told it straight.”

Martin Baron, *Boston Globe* editor, who will become the executive editor of the *Washington Post*

Lance Armstrong Affair Threatens Irish Cycling Chief—**Lance Armstrong** has been stripped of his seven Tour de France titles and **Greg LeMond**, the only remaining American winner of the Tour following Armstrong’s disgrace, is seeking the immediate resignation of **Pat McQuade**, the president of cycling’s governing body, the UCI.

Dubliner McQuade has been seen as a supporter of Armstrong, a cycling sport leader who failed to aggressively go after Armstrong and someone who called into question the penalties Armstrong received. LeMond, a longtime critic of McQuade and Armstrong, has intensified his call for McQuade’s resignation, saying, “I have never seen such an abuse of power in cycling history.”

At press time, McQuade remains the president of cycling’s governing organization.

Shifting Popularity of Irish Political Scene—Fine Gael, senior partner in the government coalition, remains the most popular party in the country at 30 percent. Fianna Fail has crept up from political oblivion to second place at 22 percent. Sinn Fein has stumbled, losing ground to Fianna Fail and is now third in popular support at 14 percent while Labour is trailing at 12 percent.

Micheal Martin, Fianna Fail chief, tops the party leaders at 42 percent favorable with Taoiseach Enda Kenny (41 percent) and Sinn Fein’s Gerry Adams (40 percent) on his heels. A statistical dead heat as they might describe it in stateside polling.

While many had written off Fianna Fail due to the failed leadership of former Taoiseach **Brian Cowen**, Martin’s slow and steady demeanor has impressed the country’s voters, leaving him the most popular politician in Ireland in the most recent polling.

A Voice From The Garden shack—Every great once in a while chance and propinquity come together and do grand things. One of those occasions happened recently in the air over the Atlantic not all that far from Boston’s Logan Airport. An Irish ham radio operator, **Benny Young**, 29, was spending another evening at his radio scanning the airwaves thousands of miles away from his Co. Tyrone garden shack. He heard two Yank voices discussing the mega-storm Sandy and the debris flying around outsidewhen suddenly came the call came: “Mayday, Mayday.” It was on an emergency frequency from the pilot of a United Airlines flight from Dublin to Boston.

Radio communications in the air can be unpredictable. What sometimes cannot be heard from one nearby radio to another receiver a short distance away can be heard many thousands of miles away. Benny Young knew that and he also knew that the pilot was in trouble radioing out and being heard. The plane had lost its transponder in the storm, which meant the pilot was unable to contact Logan Airport.

As Benny Young later explained it: “So, because I was able to speak with the pilot and the operator of the emergency frequency individually when they couldn’t speak to each other, I was able to relay the

information between the two and the flight was safely diverted and landed.”

“The whole thing, said Young, “lasted about ten minutes ...but I felt good when the plane was on the ground and all the passengers arrived safely. As far as I know not one of them was in any way aware of the drama, or that a van driver from Castlederg was talking to their plane from his garden shack.”

(Author’s note: I wrote the above account from an article published in the Belfast Telegraph on Nov. 17. My thanks to the Telegraph.)

A Boost For the North—The rumor had been making the rounds for several weeks when confirmation came from British Prime Minister **David Cameron** that yes, indeed, next year’s G8 Summit of world leaders will be held in Enniskillen, Co. Fermanagh. The venue is a plush five-star spa, the Lough Erne resort, which comes with natural security surroundings for the leaders conference.

I am familiar with the area, having stayed nearby years ago when meeting with government job training officials. This is one of the island of Ireland’s most scenic areas with boating, swimming, and a full complement of tourist attractions, although I doubt that the G8 participants would stray too far from what is always a highly guarded and secure venue.

Expected to attend the 2013 sessions are the US, Britain, France, Canada, Germany, Italy, Russia, Japan, and leaders of the European Union. This year’s G8 summit was hosted by President Obama at Camp David, Maryland. This is a solid accomplishment in attracting to Northern Ireland one of the important, highly publicized international meetings. Congratulations!

RANDOM CLIPPINGS

Given the level of support President Obama received from the Hispanic community it would be shocking if the administration does not make a strong push in Congress for immigration reform. ... **Whitey Bulger** has been given a delay in his trial until next June. Speaking of James, the traveling man, one wonders if his recent trip to the hospital for “chest pains” was a rehearsal for the “defendant’s disease” seen often in federal court trials. ... The Republicans whined about the number of food stamp recipients. It’s the recession, stupid, and Obama didn’t create it. ... Looking to own the airline **Michael O’Leary** and his Ryanair are determined to increase their 30 percent stake in Aer Lingus. ... The long-awaited Finucane Report is due out on Dec. 10 and it said to contain highly secret material. ... The report last month of an oil find off the Irish southwest coast has quadrupled Petrel Resources company value. ... Gerry and Sinn Fein are campaigning in earnest for a border poll that many are doubtful will help the Unity cause.

The airlines are going mad as they attempt to tag a fee on everything from seat locations to anything that looks like its leather. Disgraceful and greed-driven. ... A few of the lads working at a Belfast site took a quiet break to sneak a Tricolor onto a main police station. ... Say a good word about the Unionist newspaper the *Belfast News Letter*, which is celebrating its 275th birthday. Founded in 1737, it is the oldest English language newspaper in the world. ... It has been 40 years since the carnage on Bloody Sunday in Derry and not a single British Para has ever been questioned or arrested in connection with the 14 deaths. Imagine 40 years and by your leave for the lads in khaki who were shooting that day. A lawyer representing the families says he is “staggered” by the PSNI inaction. ... Poppy Day in the North has more of the Green these days as Taoiseach Kenny laid a wreath in Enniskillen remembering those who died in the bombing there 25 years ago. The Taniste, **Eamon Gilmore**, was at a similar Poppy Day ceremony in Belfast.

The Irish poet, editor and publisher **Peter Fallon** is the 2012-2013 visiting scholar at BC’s Burns Library. ... **Gabriel Byrne** doled out some criticism of the forthcoming “Gathering” set for next year in noting that Ireland is one of the few Euro countries that denies emigrants the vote in national and local elections. The entire Gathering idea seems harmless to me and if it can increase tourism and revenue to ease the load on native Irish during the austerity years, why not? ... **Phil Coulter**, known worldwide for his Derry anthem “The Town I Loved So Well,” is writing a new song to mark Derry’s honor as the UK City of Culture. ... The west of Ireland is still burdened with hungry children and Galway county reports that people there are struggling. ... A related story out of Galway concerns the recession- era cuts in support programs and the growing number of abandoned homes there that **Eamon O Cuiv**, TD, has been hectoring the government about. He says conditions could trigger a mass emigration in the next 20 years. ... A group of Dublin footballers were in New York recently to play a match at Gaelic Park but they took a detour to Breezy Point in Queens where they pitched in to help with some of the Sandy cleanup. ... The five-star Ritz Carlton Hotel that opened a few years near the stunning Powerscourt grounds in Co. Wicklow is \$60 million in the hole and an examiner has been appointed to look into the matter. This was planned to be, and has been operated as, one of Ireland’s most luxurious destination resorts. The recession plays no favorites. ... Signing off with this line about **Donald Trump** from former Clinton advisor and Newsweek columnist **Paul Begala**: “Clearly Donald Trump is living proof that hair spray causes brain damage.”

To one and all: Beannachtaí Nollag

IMMIGRATION Q & A

Steer clear of incompetent, fraudulent advice

Q. *I plan to file an application for legal permanent residence in the US. A friend of mine said I should go to somebody she knows who supposedly will help me with all the paperwork for much less than an immigration lawyer would charge. Does this make sense?*

A. No, it does not. Incompetence and fraud in the provision of assistance in immigration cases are a big problem, and you need to be on your guard against them.

Often we at the Irish International Immigrant Center see people at our legal clinics who have paid non-lawyer so-called “experts” or “consultants” (including “Notarios,” who are not allowed to provide legal advice) to help them with immigration applications, only to receive incorrect advice. It also is common for people to search the Internet for assistance with their cases, only to receive outdated or false information. Often it is too late for us to help them, as they have missed crucial deadlines to file paperwork with the immigration authorities or to appeal adverse decisions.

And sometimes they never were eligible to receive a particular immigration benefit in the first place, and by relying on incompetent advice to the contrary they have rendered themselves vulnerable to removal from the US. Outright fraudulent immigration assistance is a major problem. US Immigration and Customs Enforcement and the US Justice Department frequently initiate prosecutions against “consultants,” “Notarios,” and even lawyers for filing immigration applications based on false information. The government regularly announces felony indictments in cases involving schemes to obtain immigration benefits fraudulently. Defendants convicted in such cases could be sentenced to up to five years in federal prison and large fines on each count.

Needless to say, the immigrants involved are not going to receive the benefits they applied for; instead, they most likely will be subject to deportation if not criminal prosecution. The solution is to make sure that you consult with someone who is professionally qualified to help you. If you come to one of our legal clinics, you will be able to have a free, confidential consultation about your situation with a fully qualified immigration lawyer or a representative accredited by the Board of Immigration Appeals in the US Department of Justice.

IIIC legal staff members are able to assist with the filing and processing of many types of applications. If your case is more complex (involving court proceedings or appeals, for example) and you need to be represented by a lawyer in the New England area, we can refer you to a reputable person whose work is well known to us. We also can make referrals to lawyers specializing in other fields such as criminal, employment, and domestic relations law. If you need an immigration lawyer in another part of the country, you should make sure that he or she is a member of the professional association in this field, the American Immigration Lawyers Association (AILA). You can find an AILA member anywhere in the US by checking with ailalawyer.com and entering your location. You also can contact the state bar to determine whether a particular lawyer is in good standing. It is extremely important to stop incompetent or dishonest people from preying on immigrants. In Massachusetts, you can file a complaint about such people with the Attorney General: Office of the Attorney General, Consumer Complaint and Information Section, One Ashburton Place, Boston, MA 02108-1698. There is a form for such complaints; it may be obtained at mass.gov/Cago/docs/Consumer/consumercomplaintform.pdf, or by calling 617-727-8400. Other states will have similar procedures; you can learn about them by searching the Internet for the sites of the various state Attorneys General. **Disclaimer:** These articles are published to inform generally, not to advise in individual cases. Areas of law are rapidly changing. US Citizenship and Immigration Services and the US Department of State regularly amend regulations and alter processing and filing procedures. For legal advice seek the assistance of an IIIC immigration specialist or an immigration attorney.

Telephone: 617-542-7654; Fax: 617-542-7655; E-mail: immigration@iicenter.org; Website: iicenter.org



The Irish International Immigrant Center wishes you Nollaig shona dhuit ~ a very happy Christmas. – Happy Christmas everyone! At this time of the year, we invite you to make an end-of-year charitable donation, and holiday gift to the IIIC and supporting our legal, wellness and education services, by visiting our website (iicenter.org/donate), or by calling Mary Kerr at 617-542-7654, or by sending a check to the IIIC, FAO: Mary Kerr, 100 Franklin Street, LL-1, Boston, MA 02110.

We recently launched an emergency appeal to help Haitian immigrants, and families who were impacted by the earthquake in Haiti in 2010. The funds raised through this appeal help Haitians stay and work in the United States through Temporary Protected Status (TPS). The IIIC is also providing legal services, and a lifeline to young immigrants who were brought to the United States as children, offering temporary protection from deportation, allowing them to work, and enabling them to go to college – a dream come true for many.

We humbly, but urgently, ask you to make a special gift to our “Dream Fund.” Your donation today of \$50, \$100 or any gift you can afford will truly change lives and give hope to individuals and families who are in desperate need of the expertise of

our excellent legal team. Thank you for considering making a holiday gift to the IIIC.

Please also note that there is still time to come along to our annual Solas Awards on Dec. 6 at the JFK Library. Come and hear the talented Christmas Revels, the Boston City Singers World Rhythm Ensemble, along with Ciarán Nagle, one of the original Three Irish Tenors, who will be accompanied by his wife, the renowned singer and violinist Tara Novak. Call Mary Kerr at the above number for ticket information.

Legal, Wellness and Education Services throughout December – The Holiday season is upon us and as the Irish International Immigrant Center’s Board members, staff and volunteers wish you a very happy and safe Christmas holiday, we also invite you to come along to our events throughout December:

Free Immigration Legal Clinics – 11/28 at 6:30 p.m. at St. Mark’s Parish, 1725 Dorchester Ave., Dorchester. ... 12/4 and 12/18 at the IIIC, 100 Franklin St., Boston. ... 12/10 at 6:30 p.m. at the Green Briar Pub, 304 Washington St., Brighton.

IIIC encourages you to take the first step to becoming a US Citizen – Would you like to become a US Citizen? Attending a Citizenship workshop with IIIC staff and vol-

unteers who can help you with the process is a great first step toward that goal! On Sat., Dec. 1, beginning at 1 p.m., the IIIC will hold a Citizenship Workshop at St. Mark’s Church in Dorchester.

If you are a Legal Permanent Resident and have been so for at least five years, or if you are married to an American citizen and have been a Legal Permanent Resident for three years, you meet the most basic eligibility requirement for citizenship.

A workshop is a fantastic way to apply for US citizenship, particularly if you have questions, are unsure about the process or your eligibility, or have simply been putting it off for years.

The IIIC offers free in-office consultations about naturalization prior to clinics, at which the application and supporting documentation (if needed) are explained. Individuals who take advantage of the expert advice available at the IIIC will arrive at the clinic fully prepared for application processing.

Benefits of US citizenship include no restrictions on travel outside the United States, the right to vote, the chance to sponsor family members to come to the US, and the opportunity to run for political office. The naturalization process gives immigrants full rights to enact change in their communities, benefiting fellow immigrants and our country as a whole.

Pre-registration for the clinic is mandatory. For information about the citizenship process and to register for the clinic call 617-542-7654, Ext. 26, or email tearls@iicenter.org.

St. Mark’s Church is accessible by the nearby Shawmut Station Red Line T Stop.

Congratulations to the IIIC’s Home Health Aide Class – Congratulations to our Fall 2012 HHA Graduates, Teachers and Musicians! We had a wonderful graduation party on Tuesday at our new venue, Hancock Park, in Quincy Center. We are so grateful to Ciarán Delargy, from the Irish Consulate, for joining us to meet our students, present certificates and stay to enjoy the music and great food! We are so grateful for all the continued support from the office of the Consulate General of Ireland in Boston as well as the Department of Foreign Affairs in Ireland! Many thanks to all of our students for your hard work, humor, great food (mostly homemade!!) and generous donations! Our wonderful teachers Maureen, Bridget and Norah (helped by Joanne!), thank you all so much for your hard work and dedication each and every week! A special thanks to Richard and his team at Hancock Park for being our wonderful hosts for the last two months! We love our new space and you made us feel very much at home!

Matters Of Substance Silent Witness during the Holidays

By DANIELLE OWEN
IIIC STAFF

The *Irish Times* noted last year how “one in ten Irish teenagers say their parents’ drinking affects their own lives in a ‘hugely negative way’ while a quarter of teenagers admit to binge drinking themselves,” according to The National Children’s Consultation survey published in Dec 2010 by the Irish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children.”

When I review the stories of the hundreds of people I have been privileged to offer counseling to since 2004, I discovered something equally as startling: in a key sample of clients who attended six or more sessions in the last 3 years, 74 percent of this group noted they had been negatively impacted by the alcohol use of at least

one of their parents or caregivers. That’s almost four of every five clients.

Children living in homes where there is parental substance abuse can find life difficult, unpredictable, and confusing. The holidays can make life even more challenging and fearful. Sometimes children even believe the alcohol or drug abuse is their fault. Teenagers who already are dealing with the ups and downs of adolescence who live with alcohol-dependent parents might feel anger, sadness, embarrassment, loneliness, helplessness, and a lack of self-esteem.

“For example, many alcohol dependents behave unpredictably, and kids who grow up around them may spend a lot of energy trying to feel out a parent’s mood or guess what he or she wants.”



Danielle Owen

Living with a parent or caregiver who has an alcohol problem may mean children and teens feel like they are walking on eggshells to avoid an outburst because the dishes aren’t done or the lawn isn’t mowed. Some parents with alcohol problems might abuse their children emotionally or physically, while others unwittingly may neglect their children by not providing sufficient care and guidance, usually because the stress in their home distracts them from meeting their children’s vital needs.

Although each family is different, children and teens with alcohol-dependent parents almost always report feeling alone, unloved, depressed, or burdened by the secret life they lead at home.

However, there is good news: alcohol-dependent parents who quit before

their children are teenagers not only improve their own health, but they also lower their child’s risk for drug and alcohol abuse. Change is always possible. But before change can happen, you need to see this “silent” problem.

One leading therapist, Dr. Claudia Black, says that children from alcoholic homes tend to exhibit some distinct behaviors within the family. Does your child exhibit any of the following behaviors?

- Assume the role of a parent, by feeding and caring for younger brothers and sisters?
- Hide and become quiet and withdrawn?
- Deflect attention from family problems by creating problems of their own at home and school?
- Ignore their own unhappiness to comfort others maybe becoming family clowns and trying to cover problems with jokes?

If you have answered yes to any one of these questions, and you believe there may be an alcohol problem at home, call Danielle at 617-542-765, Ext. 14, to learn more and find support

Danielle Owen is the IIIC’s Director of Wellness and Education Services

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Boston Irish sensibilities guide MSNBC's O'Donnell

BY BILL FORRY
REPORTER STAFF

When the hour came to name Barack Obama as the winner of Tuesday's presidential election, Rachel Maddow had the honor of making the announcement for the cable network MSNBC. But it was Lawrence O'Donnell—the accidental news anchor and pundit sitting two chairs away—who was called on to put the finest flourish of a writer's touch on the moment.

Instead, as cameras panned the crowd of jubilant Obama supporters in Chicago, O'Donnell had a suggestion: Let's watch this crowd enjoy the moment of victory.

As the hour grew late, with a Romney concession inevitable, O'Donnell found words to put the president's historic achievement in perspective. Despite a sluggish economy and anemic jobs growth, he had managed to fend off a vigorous challenge from Mitt Romney: "It's about an extraordinary candidate. A candidate the likes of which I have not seen in my adulthood."

O'Donnell, who anchors the weeknight 10 o'clock hour for MSNBC, cable's unabashedly left-wing news and punditry channel, has reached a new height of celebrity in this election cycle. His program, "The Last Word," has become must-see programming for the Obama generation. More than any one TV personality, O'Donnell synthesized the argument for a second term into a nightly bundle that gave aid, comfort, and informed talking points to a restless base.

"He calmed me down. He became my weathervane through all of that," says Michael Patrick MacDonald, the author and activist who now lives in Dorchester. "He's willing to be critical of the left when there needs to be — speaking truth to power. But Lawrence got a lot of people like me back on board with the president."

One of the reasons that O'Donnell speaks so powerfully to the ears of people like MacDonald is that O'Donnell is — to steal from a certain campaign slogan — "one of us." He's a Dorchester kid who got kicked out of Catholic Memorial for being an all-around punk, who was pummeled in the Combat Zone by rogue Boston cops, and who didn't give a rat's ass about politics until he found himself working for an iconic US senator on Capitol Hill.

Even now — as one of the country's marquee news analysts and partisan warriors — O'Donnell isn't quite sure how it all happened. He's also not sure if this nightly routine of bringing a garden hose to the mouths of the thirsty left is worth all the effort on his part.

"Every single thing I've done occupationally has been by accident," he said over the phone from a storm-ravaged and gridlocked New York City last month. O'Donnell lives in Los Angeles, where he works as a screenwriter and actor; but since launching *The Last Word* in 2011, he is in New York four days a week to produce the show. "I never asked to do a show. I've been cancelled more than anyone else on cable television. It's just that no one's really noticed."

...

Lawrence O'Donnell, Jr., and his four siblings came of age in the 1950s and 60s in St. Brendan's Parish. The O'Donnell clan bounced around from a three-decker on Gallivan to a two-family on Hilltop before finally landing in a single-family house on Grayson Street, two blocks from St. Brendan's church and the grammar school that the kids all attended. It was then, as now, an enclave of Irish-Americans whose world revolved around the parish school, church and — more often than not — a public sector job.

O'Donnell's own dad, Lawrence Sr., was a patrolman before turning to another dimension of legal life: Using the GI Bill, he put himself through Suffolk University and the then unaccredited Suffolk Law School at night to become an attorney. Even after his father left the BPD ranks to build his own thriving law practice, Lawrence was surrounded by role models with badges — men named Walsh and Moran — who "were real authority figures around us all the time."

"My neighborhood then had a bunch of cops in it who were the fathers of my friends. They were the toughest and scariest fathers in the neighborhood. I look back on them very fondly," he says. "We were the kind of kids who needed to be afraid of something. The simple honor of not breaking the rules was not good enough for us."



Lawrence O'Donnell on his MSNBC set.

Photo courtesy MSNBC

O'Donnell and his brothers, it turned out, needed more policing than the local constabulary could muster. The Christian Brothers of Catholic Memorial, fed up with their juvenile antics, dispatched Lawrence and his brother Bill (along, he says, with about 40 of his classmates) one year in an epic bloodletting of "wise guys." Furious, their parents exiled them to a private boarding school for a three-month stretch before Lawrence's "pleas for a pardon" were answered.

The boys landed at St. Sebastian's, a Catholic day-hop academy then situated near Brighton's Oak Square. At the dawn of the 1960s, St. Sebastian's was a school for hard-cases like Lawrence and Bill O'Donnell, and it served them well.

"It was a quirky, idiosyncratic place, and that was the magic of it," says Lawrence. "It was inadequate in every way, but when they wanted to move it to Newton years later, all of us were opposed to it. I actually think a certain amount of imperfection is where you find the charm and magic of institutions."

When O'Donnell was accepted to Harvard — where he flourished as a writer and humorist — it was, well, "awkward," he says.

"At that time, people in Dorchester did not say, 'Where are you going to college?' People would say, 'What are you going to do next year? I found it very awkward to say 'I'm going to Harvard.' None of us knew anyone who went to the college. I'd never seen the campus. I had seen Harvard stadium and my grandmother lived in Cambridge, so we'd take the Red Line and then the trolley to North Cambridge."

"The awkwardness of it is, 'Hey, don't think you're so great. If you hit a home run in our neighborhood in those days, when you crossed the plate, you'd hear, 'Why didn't you pull it to left field?'"

Still, O'Donnell acknowledges, "The burden was on me, not anyone else, for my awkwardness."

Like most Boston Irish clans of the era, O'Donnell's Hibernian heritage was not at focal point of daily life. He attended one St. Pat's parade in Southie as a kid and never had an urge to return. It was not until the TV miniseries *Roots* aired in 1977, O'Donnell argues, that the American public became more focused on their lineage.

"There wasn't a single Sean or Liam in my class at St. Brendan's," O'Donnell recalls.

But, the civil rights movement in the North of Ireland captured his attention to the extent that he personally traveled there in the early 70s as a Harvard student, where he also studied the Irish language.

"Things were getting really bad in Northern Ireland and I wanted to understand it. I began reading Irish history in high school. No one else in my family was interested beyond what we read about Bernadette Devlin from the newspaper," O'Donnell said.

...

After college, O'Donnell tried his hand at teaching and became a substitute in the Boston public schools in the run-up to the busing crisis of 1974-75. He taught at a wide array of schools, including Girls Latin Academy in Codman Square. The experience not only inspired his first magazine article, published in *Boston Magazine* in 1980, but it forged his thinking on public education for life.

"It made me think in terms of the individual faces I'm seeing in front of me and which of these kids can be saved," says O'Donnell, who today serves as a board member for a Dorchester school,

Codman Academy.

Meg Campbell, the school's founder and executive director, was a Harvard classmate and friend — and O'Donnell has made the innovative charter public school (which will dedicate its new building later this month) his top local cause.

"It means a lot to have him have our back," says Campbell. "He's a Dorchester guy through and through and it shaped his sensibility. He's very real. He has this sense of regular people and what's right and wrong."

That moral compass was forged in the neighborhood, of course, but more specifically in the tight O'Donnell family unit that still bore the wounds of tragedies endured by earlier generations. O'Donnell's grandfather killed himself after a family dispute at their home near Franklin Park in the 1920s, leaving a young family to fend for itself. The experience clearly left an indelible mark on the O'Donnells, who found solidarity with families, even those from different races, that knew the trauma and hardship that followed such a loss.

...

The trajectory of O'Donnell's life — and that of his family — was changed forever in 1975 when his father decided to take on a racially charged wrongful death lawsuit involving the Boston Police Department. James Bowden, a husband and father of two, had been gunned down on a Mission Hill side street that January by a pair of Boston cops who presumed he was a robbery suspect. He wasn't. And the cops' account of how and why they opened fire on Bowden didn't pass the smell test — even though the BPD's perfunctory review of the incident had cleared them of any wrong-doing. When Bowden's widow came to seek Lawrence O'Donnell, Sr.'s, counsel, she got it, in part, because of his memory of losing his dad in violent fashion.

Shortly after his dad filed the civil lawsuit, members of the now-infamous "TPF" — or Tactical Patrol Force — paid young Lawrence a visit at the Combat Zone parking lot where he was working nights. One of the cops clocked him over the head and two others stuffed him — handcuffed — into the back of a cruiser. The aim was pretty clear: The insular TPF crew needed a chip to horse trade with the elder O'Donnell at the courthouse the next day. Instead, a judge tossed out their trumped-up charge a week later. The message — if it was meant to intimidate the O'Donnells — had the opposite effect. Three years later, their firm scored a huge win and a \$250,000 judgment for the Roxbury widow of Mr. Bowden. The TPF, which continued to wrack up brutality complaints in the years after Bowden's murder, was itself put down by the police commissioner in 1979.

Despite his own assault at the hands of the desperate TPF crew — which included a cop who'd once coached him on a baseball team — O'Donnell insists that many inside the BPD were happy to see the "cowboy" cops who shot Bowden get their come-uppance.

"A lot of the guys that my dad had gone into the department with saw it as a case of young renegade cops watching too much TV," he says today.

And many of his Dorchester neighbors — despite the prevailing racial animosities that were at an all-time high in mid-to-late 70s in Boston — were largely rooting for the hometown team.

"No one in Dorchester ever said, 'What are you doing with that civil rights case?' Even if someone else were doing it, I suspect people were cheering for us, in

a much more tribal way, in the good sense of that word," says O'Donnell. "Everybody in my neighborhood had had run-ins with the police and saw dishonesty of some kind." Plus, O'Donnell adds, "In Dorchester, personal loyalty is everything. It's a bigger thing than any individual action."

Still, in choosing to represent Patricia Bowden against the BPD, Mr. O'Donnell and his family had taken a step that was irreversible. "We all knew it right away. It was very clear at the time. It's not one of those things that you look back on. All the clarity was there at the time, right in front of us."

...

For his part, Lawrence O'Donnell, himself a victim of police brutality, saw that there was historically important story to be told based on the Bowden case. He began documenting cases in which cops had killed mainly black men with impunity in cities around the country. He first wrote about the subject in a 1979 *New York Times* op-ed piece.

In 1983, the case became his first book: "Deadly Force" — still available locally in the stacks at the Codman Square Library, incidentally — which was subsequently adapted into a movie. It was a pivotal moment in O'Donnell's life: he found his calling in screenwriting, even though he would defer launching that career for several more years.

Despite his utter lack of interest in politics — "I never did anything more than vote for the lesser of two evils," he says — O'Donnell caught on as an aide and a speechwriter for New York's US Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan in the mid-1980s. He spent eight years working for the liberal workhorse, eventually topping off the experience as the staff director for the Senate's Finance Committee.

"I thought I was ruining my writing career," O'Donnell recalls. Of course, he was also assembling a deep institutional knowledge of the inner workings of Capitol Hill, which led to invitations to serve as a pundit on the emerging cable TV ecosystem. It also powered his writing for Aaron Sorkin's landmark TV series, "The West Wing" — for which O'Donnell served as a writer and producer. Writing for television, O'Donnell told the Reporter, is "the only occupation I pursued seriously."

But writing for "The Last Word" was clearly not what he had in mind. His regular gig as an MSNBC pundit — weighing in as a guest on other people's programs — gave his biting wit and deep understanding of Washington maneuverings a national platform. But it wasn't something he sought to make his life's work.

O'Donnell says he "didn't seek out" his current 10 o'clock post on MSNBC. But when the pilots for a pair of new television programs he was producing ran aground, his menu of options changed and "I started paying attention" to the network's pursuit.

Today, O'Donnell writes more words per day for the 10 p.m. show than he has in his life. And yet he says: "I've never felt less productive."

Like any live news show, he says, "The Last Word" "is never even going to be a re-run — it just blows away like leaves."

"I would like to have a crawl that runs throughout the show that says, 'You are watching an unrehearsed first draft.' It offends me in so many ways that I'm doing it — and I have to force it out of my head. In the world of dramatists that I come from; it's just so wrong."

And yet, more often than not in this presidential election season, it has been just right — especially for MSNBC's bedrock audience of Dems desperate for an authoritative counter to the more dominant (ratings-wise) FoxNews propagandists. O'Donnell's solo segment on the show — which he has dubbed "The Re-Write" — is a nightly tour-de-force that takes aim at the right's whopper du jour. It's often punctuated with brief video clips offered as evidence, but the sweep and craft of it is all O'Donnell.

"It's a very peculiar writing exercise," he explains. "I come from a filmmaking world where you don't just write it. You physically block out and think through why they will be there. Then you shoot it. To just go out there and do it raw and unrehearsed, and I don't even know what it looks like... I'm used to being in control."

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Editor's Note: an extended version of this article can be read at bostonirish.com

BOSTON IRISH REPORTER

BOSTON IRISH ARTS,
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‘Sojourn’ notes a decade of delights



“Christmas Celtic Sojourn” may have become a more elaborate production over the course of its first decade, says the show’s creator Brian O’Donovan, “but no matter how ambitious we might get, the show still has that very homey, folksy quality to it.”

By SEAN SMITH
SPECIAL TO THE BIR

It’s a bona-fide Boston holiday tradition that, 10 years along, has now captured wintertime fancies in other parts of New England.

This month, “A Christmas Celtic Sojourn” celebrates its first decade of bringing to the stage an inimitable blend of Celtic music, song, dance, and storytelling, with a series of performances from December 15-22 at venues in Worcester, Providence, Rockport, and Derry, NH, as well as the Cutler Majestic Theater in Boston.

True to form, this year’s show includes a combination of frequent “Sojourn” participants (pioneering Irish band Solas, a cappella harmony quartet Navan, the Harney Academy of Irish Dance), more recently appearing acts (the fiddle-harp duo Chris Stout and Catriona McKay and cellist Natalie Haas) and highly anticipated debuts, with Scottish singer Alyth McCormack and innovative dancers Cara Butler and brothers Jon and Nathan Pilatzke. Also present will be bassist Chico Huff and percussionist Ben Wittman, long-time contributors to the show.

And, as always, “Christmas Celtic Sojourn” will be lovingly hosted and guided by its creator, Brian O’Donovan, who, while hoping the show might catch on back when it premiered at Somerville Theater in 2003, honestly didn’t expect it to do so on this kind of scale.

“I certainly felt, at the beginning, that we could put together a production that people would enjoy as an evocation of what we all love about the Christmas holiday season: shared family memories, the warmth of friends, music to lift the spirit,” says O’Donovan, the host of WGBH-FM’s “A Celtic Sojourn,” which provided a basis for the show. “But I really thought it would be more of a church-sized affair, one performance with maybe a

(Continued on page 13)

‘Christmas Revels’ sets sail with Irish bent on a better life

By R. J. DONOVAN
SPECIAL TO THE BIR

Symbolizing the holiday season as indelibly as the welcoming fragrance of evergreen, “The Christmas Revels” returns to historic Sanders Theatre in Harvard Square from December 14 - 27. This year, the participatory theatrical solstice celebration that is filled with joyful music, dance, comedy and carols will focus on Irish immigration.

For its 42nd edition, “Revels” is set on board the RMS Carpathia. It’s December 1907 and a group of Irish émigrés have left their homeland in search of a better life in America. The voyagers carry in their hearts bittersweet pieces of the land they’ve left behind. A long trip is anticipated, and Christmas will be celebrated en route with jigs and reels, ballads, stories, rounds

to sing, a brass ensemble, a Mummers play, plus a champion Irish band.

Leading the way are musician and singer David Coffin, along with soloists Mary Casey and Steven Barkhimer, The Rattling Brogues with world champion piper Paddy Keenan and fiddler Sheila Falls Keohane, a 40-member chorus, The Cambridge Symphonic Brass

Ensemble, The Pine-woods Morris Men, and the O’Shea Chaplin Academy of Irish Dance.

In honor of this year’s Irish-themed production, “Revels” has released a companion holiday CD entitled “Strike The Harp.”

Paddy Swanson, the long-time artistic director of “Revels” who maintains Irish and American citizenships, is directing the production. We spoke about the show recently

during a break in rehearsals.

BIR: “Revels” celebrates a different culture each year. This time around, you’ve not only chosen Ireland, but also given it an extraordinary twist by not setting the story in a village.

A: Although we’ve never done an out-and-out Irish show, we’ve done several Celtic shows where we’ve combined several of the Celtic cultures. What maybe is a little unusual [this year] is that we’ve been very specific with our time period, which we’re usually not. I thought it might be interesting to . . . place it on board the ship, which really is, I think, the emblem for this tremendous change that happens when people emigrate. The story is a very poignant one for the Irish because there were so many iterations of it,

starting in the mid 1800s.

BIR: And the authenticity of the year?

A: We’ve chosen 1907, which was one of the actual voyages of the Carpathia from Liverpool to New York. And there were voyages which actually did span the Christmas period. So it happens in this case that history coincides with our story – and that’s all for the good.

BIR: Setting “Revels” on a ship has to provide some interesting challenges.

A: We’re constricted in some ways by staying in one place on the deck of the ship, so my thought was that we would break out of that convention imaginatively by having a shanachie on board to tell a story to the kids. And as we get into the story we kind of dissolve the context and take it

(Continued on page 15)



Fiddler Sheila Falls Keohane joins the cast of “The Christmas Revels,” December 14 - 27, at Sanders Theatre in Cambridge.

A Q & A with Clannad’s Moya Brennan

Forty years ago, a quintet from Gweedore, Donegal – siblings Moya, Pol, and Ciaran Brennan, and their twin uncles, Noel and Pádraig Duggan – first made its way into the Irish music scene, joining a generation of influential performers like Christy Moore, Andy Irvine, Paddy Keenan, Tríona Ní Dhomhnaill, Michael O Domhnaill, Donal Lunny, Paul Brady, Kevin Burke, Frankie Gavin, Dolores Keane, and many others who helped reshape Irish traditional music.

Even on this crowded stage, Clannad made an impression with its repertoire of mainly traditional Gaelic songs joined to influences from rock, jazz, and other genres, and imbued with exquisite vocal harmonies – and in particular the stunning lead vocals and Irish harp-playing of Moya Brennan.

The 1980s saw a shift in Clannad’s music: more original material; the use of synthesizers and other electric instruments, as well as percussion; and a lush, reverb-accentuated qual-



Moya Brennan at her post.

ity to their recordings – what became known as the “New Age sound.” But the band (who at one point were joined by another Brennan sibling, Enya) kept a connection to their old sound, using Gaelic lyrics in many of their compositions, retaining the acoustic guitars, mandolins, string bass, and Brennan’s harp that had characterized their earlier incarnation – and most of all, their hauntingly beautiful vocals. Clannad made inroads into popular music, with songs like “Theme from Harry’s Game”

and “In a Lifetime,” which featured a guest appearance by Bono and an accompanying video that gave the band major exposure in the US and elsewhere.

By the end of the 1990s, Clannad had become an international success, with record sales of more than 15 million, film and TV soundtracks, and several awards, including a Grammy. The first decade of the 21st century was a quieter one for the group: There were

(Continued on page 12)



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A Q & A with Clannad's Moya Brennan

(Continued from page 9) no new recordings (other than compilations), some solo or duo projects by members, and relatively few concert appearances. But this fall, Clannad embarked on its first North American tour in almost 20 years, which included a performance at the Berklee College of Music in Boston, and announced that a new album was in the works.

Recently, Moya Brennan spoke with Sean Smith of the "Boston Irish Reporter" about Clannad's 40-year history – including their association with Bono – and some of her own projects.

Q. How has it been, back on the road in the US?

A. Absolutely tremendous. We've been playing to full houses, with a fair amount of people who saw us 20 years ago, but also a lot who never saw us before but know our music. Many of the audiences want to hear the older material, from the first years of the group – like "Dulaman" or "Níl Se Ina La" – so we try to fit in as much as possible, along with the stuff from the 1980s on.

Q. Was it difficult to get back into a "touring mode" after all this time?

A. We had felt we needed a break, we just didn't expect it to last this long. But we're a family, so it's not like we don't get together; we stayed in touch, talked about what we wanted to do, and when. We made a few appearances, like at Celtic Connections [in 2007], and we did a short tour [in 2008]. Then we gave a concert at Christ Church Cathedral last year, and that was definitely a boost; people hadn't forgotten us. And we decided that it was time to think of doing a new album, and getting back to the US.

We're really enjoying this. The excitement we always used to feel about performing is still there, although there is a sense of maturity along with it. The reaction we've been getting is quite amazing.

Q. Does Boston carry any special associations or memories for you?



Moya Brennan and Clannad performing during their US tour this fall. "We always had that adventure in us," she says of the band's propensity to explore new directions.

A. Well, it's definitely a special community, what with its Irish history and legacy. One special memory we have is of Fr. Bartley MacPhaidin, who was president of Stonehill College – he's from Donegal, too, originally – because we would always end up having dinner with him when we came through town. In fact, the Boston stop on our first tour of the US – in 1979, I think – coincided with Thanksgiving. He invited us to dinner, along with loads of people, and we were just this young Donegal crowd who didn't know much of anything about Thanksgiving. It was the first time we'd ever had sweet potatoes!

Q. Talking of Donegal: There's an impression of Donegal as this remote place, kind of away from everything else, and yet Clannad shows up on the Irish music scene in the early 1970s with all these different influences as well as a strong traditional background. How did it all come together?

A. Gaelic was our first language, so we grew up with it. Our teachers would always include Gaelic songs, dramas, and the like at our school. My mother would always put us in the feis, and so we had exposure to the traditional music. And

my father ran a pub, of course – Leo's Tavern – so there was always music and singing there. My father had a show band, as well, and they would also play a bit of Elvis, or Nat King Cole, so there was that influence.

Now, my kids have had a great time with music because of Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann, but that wasn't available to us as kids. Whatever connection you had to traditional music was through your family – my dad sent me to school to learn the harp, for example.

But the other thing that went on during that time, in the 1960s and '70s, was because we were on the coast we were able to get all these broadcasts from pirate radio stations. And we'd hear songs by The Beach Boys and The Mamas and The Papas, with all these harmonies, and it made a big impression on us. Kind of funny, when you think about it: Here we were, on the west coast of Ireland, listening to the "West Coast sound" of America.

So, because of things like that, we'd branch out in our musical interests. Ciaran picked up the bass, and he became interested in modern jazz, like the Mahavishnu Orchestra and Chick Corea. My record player had a selection that was pretty unusual, too – I even had records from "Sesame Street," because I loved the songs!

However, when we first began playing, we were shunned. At that time, Gaelic songs were just never done with instruments, except the harp, or with harmony voices; it was sacrilegious. That's why we headed off to Europe a lot at the beginning, because they didn't care what language we sang

in. We were determined to stick to our guns. When you're true to something, you do it for years because you believe in it, if you're honest.

Of course, after a while, there was more acceptance about our approach to singing in Gaelic, and it wasn't so much of a problem to play in Ireland.

Q. Do you see a real divide between that early stage of Clannad and, let's say, the "Harry's Game"-and-afterwards era? It seems to me that, if you go back and listen to those first few albums, you can hear some hints as to the future direction of the band – even on the first album, like the jazzy stuff Ciaran and Pol play on "Níl Se Ina La," for example; or the vocals and the electric piano on "Eirigh Suas a Stoirín" from the "Dulaman" album.

A. We always had that adventure in us. I mean, on the first album, we used a jazz drummer for one of the tracks, we had "Liza," a pop song in Gaelic we wrote, and we even did a cover of Bonnie Robson's "Morning Dew," and of course the work with harmonies was already there. Clannad never went with the established flow; we always felt like branching out. When "Theme from Harry's Game" became an international hit, the fact it was in Gaelic made it all the sweeter.

But whatever we did, whether it was with traditional music or our own material, it all felt natural to us, it wasn't a stretch. We wanted to enhance the music, and we did it with respect. We felt our audience would understand, and appreciate that.

Q. Okay, since "In a Lifetime" was probably the first introduction for most Americans to Clan-

nad, you have to tell the story about how you guys wound up getting together with Bono.

A. It was one of those very lucky occurrences. We were working on the "Macalla" album, in Dublin, and we went around to the pub nearby. And Bono happened to be a regular there. Now, this was after "Theme from Harry's Game" had come out, which we had written for a TV show about The Troubles, and it had become a big hit in both Ireland and the UK, and had gotten nominated for a British Academy Television Award. As it turned out, Bono really loved Clannad, especially because we sang in Gaelic, and you know, because we had done a song in Gaelic for a TV show about The Troubles. So he was quite interested in what we were doing, and we invited him to the studio.

There was a song we had started on, and at the time it was just really a backing track, and he listened to it. It's not like either of us said, "Let's do a song together." But as we were listening, the idea of some kind of duet started to form – I just remember, after we all went home that night, there was this incredible thunderstorm, all this energy in the air. And over the next two days, he came up with this amazing vocal, and everything came together.

Q. And then you went on to do a video of the song.

A. That was a fantastic time. I mean, Bono and U2, they were big fry and we were small fry. Bono called all the shots. He said, "We've got to film it in Donegal." And the record company wasn't about to say, "No, Bono, you can't do that." So we shot the video in our hometown, Gweedore. It was very funny, because shooting the video involved bringing wind and rain machines – to Donegal, of all places! The production got local people involved, too. And we were back in Leo's afterwards, pulling pints, and I'd be teaching Bono Gaelic songs. He and the boys were just fantastic.

But the best part was, if you remember, there's a scene in the video with a hearse. Well, Bono

had actually bought that hearse before we had left to go do the shooting. So we all packed up the cars and drove off to Donegal in a convoy along with the hearse, which Bono was riding in. Now, at that time, you had to pass by an English army barracks to get to Donegal. Before we got in sight of the barracks, Bono had his friend who was driving stop the hearse. And Bono climbs in the back and lies down, and the convoy goes on, right past the soldiers, and they see him in the back and start yelling, "It's Bono! It's Bono!"

Q. You've had a number of your own projects going on these last few years. You've toured with your own band, and you and Cormac de Barra teamed up to do the "Voices and Harps" album.

A. The album was an outgrowth of performances and workshops we've been doing for a number of years. My daughter Aisling has been involved with that, which has made it even more enjoyable.

Q. And you also recorded with Triona Ni Dhomhnaill [Bothy Band], Maighread Ni Dhomhnaill [Skara Brae] and Mairead Ni Mhaonaigh [Altan] as "T with the Maggies."

A. Oh, that was an absolute pleasure, we practically did nothing but talk and laugh, and we don't do it nearly often enough. All of us come from Donegal, so it's a very special collaboration, and I have a lot of respect for them. Being with Triona and Maighread in particular is a treat, because they were in Skara Brae, who came about around the same time as Clannad. We were all very close and spent a lot of time together.

There's a whole different feel to the Maggies for me, because with them I'm an equal part of a quartet, so there's not as much pressure. You just have fun and make music. We're talking about doing another album sometime, which will definitely be something I'll look forward to.

Q. I understand you also are involved in some activities and initiatives that don't relate to music. Give us an example.

A. Well, there are a number of Franciscan monasteries that are closing, and they have stored up an incredible amount of literature, some of it going back to the 10th century. I mean, this is the history of Ireland, but many people are unaware of it. There are boxes and boxes of materials. So, I am on a commission that will work on creating a library so people can access them. It's very important to me, because I'm passionate about my history.

I'm also taking part in causes that have to do with nature preservation, especially in Donegal – trying to protect the land against pollution or destruction from development. If you love Clannad, you have to go to Donegal: It's so earthy, such a beautiful place, and you can see what it's meant to my family and how it's helped inspire us.



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

SEAN SMITH

One for Larry – The BCMfest 2013 finale concert, the climax of the festival's 10th anniversary celebration on January 11 and 12, will include a special tribute

to one of the major figures in Boston's distinguished Irish music history, Larry Reynolds.

To honor the memory of Reynolds, who died October 3, faculty musicians from the local Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann School of Music – which he helped establish – will perform during the final segment of the concert, which takes place Jan. 12 at 7:30 p.m. in First Parish Church, Cambridge, at 3 Church Street in Harvard Square.

The concert also will feature a program of Scottish music and dance with Highland Dance Boston, and Boston-area Cape Breton musicians, singers, and dancers.

The Comhaltas Music School contingent will include fiddlers Cara Frankowicz, George Keith, and Josie Coyne, uilleann piper Patrick Hutchinson, flute and whistle player Lisa Coyne, bouzouki player John Coyne and harpist Regina Delaney. They will perform in various combinations, as well as an ensemble, and with student musicians and special guests.

Reynolds was a mainstay of the area Irish music scene

‘Sojourn’ celebrates a decade of delights

(Continued from page 9) few hundred people in the audience. Instead, we kept adding shows, and then we started taking the show on tour to different cities in the region, and it hits you, ‘Something is really going on here.’

“Now, we’re working a good deal of the year on ‘Christmas Celtic Sojourn,’ and it’s gotten pretty elaborate in terms of costumes, staging and other aspects, and you wonder, ‘Is it too much work?’” says O’Donovan, whose wife Lindsay will also be part of the show. “But the experience is still an uplifting one, and no matter how ambitious we might get, the show still has that very homey, folksy quality to it. That’s a big reason why people keep coming out to see it – along with the fact that we have some remarkably talented individuals and groups involved in it.”

McCormack will join a long line of renowned Celtic female vocalists – including Cara Dillon, Karan Casey and Karine Polwart – who have entered the “Christmas Celtic Sojourn” spotlight. A native of the Isle of Lewis (off the northwest coast of Scotland) who is now living in Dublin, McCormack has appeared on some two-dozen albums and has two solo recordings to her credit, a body of work that covers a variety of music, from Celtic and folk to jazz, classical and indie. Her resume also includes appearances with The Chieftains, including a particularly memorable one in Boston that clinched her invitation to perform in “Christmas Celtic Sojourn.”

“I’ve loved Alyth’s voice for years; she was someone we had in mind for the show a long time,” explains O’Donovan. “Earlier this year, Alyth and The Chieftains, along with the band The Low Anthem, did a studio presentation at WGBH and it was riveting. So we made sure to put her on the roster for the show this time around.”

Another asset for McCormack is her extensive acting experience, on both stage and screen, notes O’Donovan. “There is an element of theatricality in ‘Christmas Celtic Sojourn,’ so Alyth fits in very well in that regard.”

This year’s other newcomers, the Pilatzke brothers and Butler, also have worked with The Chieftains, and thus will likely be familiar to some in the audience. The Pilatzkes are steeped in

the “high-off-the-floor” Ottawa Valley style of stepdance, while Butler is an award-winning Irish stepdancer who appeared in “Dancing on Dangerous Ground” during its 1999 run in London’s West End (she also starred in the Folger’s Coffee “Dancer’s Morning” TV commercial). The three are members of The Step Crew, a new production that blends the Ottawa Valley and Irish dance traditions with modern tap.

“We’re very excited to have Jon, Nathan, and Cara here,” says O’Donovan. “The fact they’ve worked together, and with Alyth, as part of The Chieftains’ tours, is a big plus.”

Navan, known for spell-binding close-harmony singing of material from Scotland, Ireland, Wales, Brittany, Cornwall, and the Isle of Man, among other places, makes its return to “Christmas Celtic Sojourn” as a quartet instead of a trio.

“They were in the very first show, and back then they were a quartet,” says O’Donovan. “It’s definitely very special to have them here with us again as a foursome.”

O’Donovan is also abundantly pleased to have Stout and McKay back. The pair electrified the audience two years ago with their intricate pas-de-deux of Scottish harp and Shetland fiddle, drawn from tradition but incorporating modern influences to create exciting, elegant sounds that seem drawn from the very geography of Scotland and the Shetland Islands.

“Chris and Catriona stole the show in 2010,” O’Donovan declares. “In many ways, they’re one of our most iconic acts, in the way they combine the old and the new.”

Equally iconic is Solas, of course, which has carved out its own unique position in the Irish music spectrum, squarely at the intersection of tradition and modern, and with virtuosic musicianship to boot. Their most recent album project, “Shamrock City,” further affirms their reputation as one of the most eminent Irish groups of the past couple of decades. The project is the creation of band leader Seamus Egan, who also is the “Christmas Celtic Sojourn” musical director, and was inspired by the experiences of his great-great uncle, who immigrated from Ireland at the turn of the century to Butte, Montana, an unlikely but robust Irish



“Sojourn” maestro Brian O’Donovan

outpost.

“We are in fact going to be incorporating an outgrowth of the ‘Shamrock City’ project into this year’s show,” O’Donovan says. “In his research, Seamus came across the story of ‘The Joshers,’ a Butte tradition in which, following the Christmas Eve festivities, people would go around leaving gifts, food or money on the doorsteps of those in need. This was a tradition that

continued right up until the 1970s.

“Seamus is a big part of the reason why ‘Christmas Celtic Sojourn’ has been so successful,” adds O’Donovan. “Year in and year out, he does a phenomenal job arranging the music. Besides the full ensemble numbers, there are opportunities for some special collaborations: You might see, for example, Winifred Horan from Solas pairing up with

Natalie Haas, who has almost single-handedly made the cello a ‘Celtic instrument,’ as well as with Chico and Ben.

“And when it comes to great work, the same holds true for Paula Plum, our artistic director. There’s no question as to how valuable they’ve been to this show.”

This year, O’Donovan notes, will see more emphasis on vocal performances. “We’re always trying to utilize that characteristic of the show to a greater degree. We not only have Navan and Alyth, but some great vocal talents in Mick McAuley and Eamon McElholm of Solas, as well as Lindsay, so that will definitely be a highlight.”

Running an annual production for a decade, O’Donovan says, means striking a balance between retaining aspects that audiences like and implementing changes to prevent staleness.

“It’s become a tradition for the lead female singer in the show to lead ‘O Holy Night’ – given the quality of singers we’ve had, that’s a no-brainer,” he says. “Another tradition is the young Harney Academy kids closing out the first act with their high-energy set dance. For a while,

we would say, ‘Well, we’ll change that next year,’ but it is the cutest, most wonderful thing to see, and the audience absolutely loves it. So there’s really no inclination for us to take it out.”

Over the course of its first decade, “Christmas Celtic Sojourn” has benefited from the infusion of talents and skills from many people, O’Donovan says, whether they have been out on the stage or behind the scenes. He cites, for example, Kieran Jordan and Kevin Doyle, who “have done so much for the dance choreography and performances.” Even though the roster may change somewhat from year to year, the imprint of various individuals on the show remains.

“Ultimately, ‘Christmas Celtic Sojourn’ integrates a lot of people’s visions, yet at the same time there’s a unity to the show. It’s kind of like a family’s Christmas ornaments: They may be made of different materials, and some may be older than others, but when you put them all on a tree it looks like Christmas.”

For ticket and performance information on “Christmas Celtic Sojourn,” see wgbh.org/celtic



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But she had never gotten around to recording an album, and now thankfully that little oversight has been remedied. "The Quiet House" shows O'Sullivan

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Various artists, "Together for Christmas: A Contemporary Celtic Christmas Collection"

Some more familiar names, voices and selections are here, too, like Cherish the Ladies and their trad-band treatment of Christmas-oriented tunes (a better fit might have been their cajunesque “Rise Up Shepherd”), The High Kings (“Driving Home for Christmas”), Damien Dempsey (“O Holy Night”) and the ever-ubiquitous Irish Tenors (“Silent Night”). Some delightful covers as well: Dave Browne and the Temple Bar doing Chrissie Hynde’s “2000 Miles,” Black 47’s Larry Kirwan dueting with Ashley Davis on the John Lennon classic “Happy Xmas (War Is Over),” and a give-em-points-for-trying take on Shane McGowan’s magnificently, sentimentally desolate “Fairytale of New York” by George Murphy and Emma Kate Tobia – Murphy and Tobia don’t have the dissolute grandeur of McGowan and Kirsty MacColl in the original (who does?), but they do evoke some of their tragicomic point-counterpoint (He: “I could’ve been someone”/She: “Well, so could anyone”). Put a bow on this one.

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"The Christmas Revels," set in December of 1907, follows a group of Irish emigres to America, December 14 - 27, at Sanders Theatre in Cambridge.

'Christmas Revels' sets sail with Irish bent on a better life

(Continued from page 9) underwater... One of the Yeats stories, quite well known, involves a mermaid taking Jack down to the bottom of the seas to see his curiosities. That allows us a lot of license. And of course, we're never stuck for music once we get into the Irish culture.

BIR: No matter where "Revels" takes us each Christmas, there are special touchstones that are always very important to the audience.

A: You measure the success of it by the reaction of the audience. A key part of why [founder] Jack Langstaff's formula is successful is that there are living traditions within this ephemeral piece of theater. Things that are done in a ritual way — going out into the lobby, for instance, dancing "Lord of the Dance," or singing together at the end of the show with the Sussex Mimmers Carol, or singing a round for peace, and the moment where we do

the poem, The Shortest Day.

BIR: Holding traditions close to the heart is especially true during the holidays.

A: Yes. I think it's interesting as you hear people talk about bringing up kids... that there's a very palpable advantage to having important things repeated, so there are parts of your life that are expected, not dramatic (perhaps), but they are there and you touch them. Like movies and pizza on a Sunday night (Laughing).

BIR: The participatory element of "Revels" is integral to the experience.

A: My theory is that as people get more isolated in more parts of their lives, where everything is customized to oneself — you have your own music and your own music delivery system and your own computer and gadgets and so on. I think that creates a little bit of a longing for sociability.

BIR: You scored a bit



David Coffin and The Children's Chorus, in "The Christmas Revels," December 14 - 27, at Sanders Theatre in Cambridge.

of a coup this year in that prominent Dublin artist P. J. Lynch did the beautiful graphic for the show. I'm told there's a local connection.

A: We had a kid in our chorus who just was very photogenic... We took some photographs (of him for Lynch's reference). We thought it would be nice to pitch this from the point of view of the child. By telling the story in these terms we can experience vividly some of the emotions that must have been central to the emigrant's experience. The anxiety — how are we gonna have any kind of a Christmas on a boat at sea? The voyage, in a sense, is finding out just how little you need to have a truly memorable Christmas. The boy's holding a model of the boat, but we're not sure whether it's his Christmas present, or if he's giving it to us. It's a neat image.

BIR: Is there a moment in this year's show that means a lot to you personally?

A: [Music Director] George Erlen's "Hymn For A New Land, which is in the tradition of the big orchestral choral works. [In creating it], he took a text, "The stone which the builders refused is become the headstone of the corner," emphasizing the place of the immigrant.

I made the voyage [to New York] on the Queen Elizabeth many years ago as a 12-year-old kid and I remember actually seeing the Statue of Liberty as we came in, and I remember the reaction. It was very somber as people stood and looked. We weren't immigrants, but I could imagine the enormous symbolic power of that moment — people had gambled their entire lives

and every resource that they had... and here it was. I'm hoping we can reconstruct a moment on stage that captures some of that.

R. J. Donovan is publisher of OnStageBoston.com.

"The Christmas Revels," December 14-27, Sanders Theater, 45 Quincy Street, Cambridge. Tickets: 617-496-2222 or revels.org.



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Traveling People

Irish treasure: Harry Clarke’s stained-glass windows

By JUDY ENRIGHT
SPECIAL TO THE BIR

It seems appropriate in this holiest of seasons to draw special attention to the incredibly detailed and brilliant stained glass windows designed and created by Irish artist Harry Clarke at the beginning of the 20th Century.

Clarke was born on St. Patrick’s Day 1889 on North Frederick Street, Dublin, where his father, Joshua, had a stained glass and ecclesiastical decorating business. The younger of two sons (brother Walter was exactly one year older), Harry left school at 14 to join the family business after his mother, Bridget, died. He took night classes in stained glass and won several scholarships, which ultimately led him to study the art in London and France.

If you have visited Ireland numerous times but have never heard of Harry Clarke or seen his windows, don’t worry. Many are in remote churches and, honestly, I only happened upon his work a few years ago after someone told me about a pastor who sold his life insurance to pay for stained glass windows in his church. Canon Michael MacDonald, a seemingly colorful character and pastor of St. Patrick’s Church in Newport, Co. Mayo, sold his policy for the magnificent windows that he commissioned in 1926. Clark apparently visited the church and found the canon out in his rose garden, carrying a basket and wearing a large straw hat, and was completely charmed by him.

As a side note, MacDonald is also credited, along with Dr. John Healy, archbishop of Tuam, with building the oratory at the top of nearby 2,510-foot high Croagh Patrick in Murrisk where St. Patrick is said to have fasted for 40 days and nights in the 5th Century. The oratory was dedicated on July 20, 1905, and re-established the ancient pilgrimage on Reek Sunday, the last Sunday in July. Depending on the weather, some 25,000 climb the mountain that day, many barefooted, to honor the memory of St. Patrick’s fast and do penance for their sins. Mass is celebrated on the summit every half hour from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. that day.

‘Last Judgment’ in Newport

The finely detailed Last Judgment window over the high altar in the east wall of St. Patrick’s in Newport

took four years to complete and has been described as Clarke’s most magnificent accomplishment and “a complete revelation in stained glass work.” The window includes a self-portrait of an anguished Clarke, said to portray his prolonged suffering from poor health.

A dedicated artist, Clarke continued working on the Newport design even while confined to a Swiss sanatorium where doctors worked to curb the tuberculosis in both lungs. He died in 1931 at the age of 41 en route home to Ireland and a month before his studio installed the final window in St. Patrick’s.

Clarke was commissioned during his short lifetime to create more than 160 windows for religious and commercial entities and was also well known as an illustrator. Among his more famous illustrations were the drawings in two editions of the works of Edgar Allan Poe.

It’s interesting that Clarke and his brother, Walter, were born on March 17 a year apart, worked in the family stained glass business, married sisters – Margaret and Minnie Crilley from Louth – and died within six months of one another.

Clarke works in the US
Also interesting is that Harry was commissioned to do nine windows for the Basilica of St. Vincent de Paul in Bayonne, N.J., which he insisted on designing and personally supervising even though that work was done during the last year of his life.

And, if you happen to visit the Wolfsonian–Florida International University design museum in Miami, FL, be sure to look in the permanent collection for his Geneva Window –13 panels each recording an incident or scene from Irish literature. The window was originally commissioned for the League of Nations in 1931 but was rejected by the prudish Irish government. You can also find Harry Clarke windows in buildings in Australia, England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

Several books have been written about Clarke and his work. Nicola Gordon Bowe wrote the comprehensive “The Life and Work of Harry Clarke,” first published in 1989 with a paperback edition in 1994, and “Strangest Genius: Stained Glass of



Above: Detail of a stained glass window by the late artist Harry Clarke in St. Mary’s Church, Ballinrobe, Co. Mayo.

Top right: It’s hard to fully appreciate the amazing colors and complex details in the late artist Harry Clarke’s magnificent stained glass windows when they’re printed in black and white in a newspaper. But if you have a chance to stop by any of the Irish churches with his windows - this one from The Immaculate Conception window (1925) in St. Mary’s in Ballinrobe, Co. Mayo - be sure to do so. (Judy Enright photo)

Right: Detail of The Adoration of the Magi (1925) stained glass window in St. Patrick’s Church, Kilmaine, Co. Mayo, shows the brilliance of the late stained glass artist Harry Clarke, who did more than 160 stained glass windows for religious and commercial commissions in the course of his short life.
Judy Enright photos

Harry Clarke,” by Lucy Costigan and Michael Cullen, published in 2010. Mayo Co. Council offers guide ...

The Mayo County Council published an excellent guide to Harry Clarke windows in 17 Mayo churches as part of the County Mayo Heritage Plan 2006-2011. I was surprised, after visiting St. Mary’s Church in Ballinrobe and St. Patrick churches in Newport, Kilmaine, and Lahardaun, that there’s no literature in any of them about the windows or Clarke. Visitors, when we were there, clearly knew about Clarke and his work and had made a point to visit and photograph the windows.

Wrote Bowe in her foreword to the Co. Mayo booklet: “The initiative of the Mayo County Council, under the able direction of its Heritage Officer, Dr. Deirdre Cunningham, is to be congratulated in realizing

this beautifully illustrated account in their county of windows by an outstandingly brilliant Irish artist and his studio. Two similarly extraordinary Mayo parish priests, Canon MacDonald of Newport and Monsignor Thomas Shannon of Ballinrobe, passionate supporters of Harry Clarke’s unique achievement in stained glass, are among those who would be proud of this laudable venture, having done so much to encourage and foster interest in it.” Lovely photos as well as the design and layout for the Mayo brochure were by Michael McLaughlin Studios of Westport.

We were able to purchase a copy of the Clarke booklet at the Mayo County Council offices on the Mall, near the Garda station in Castlebar, where the front lobby staff could not have been more helpful or accommodating. They are a credit to their organization.

We heard that the booklets are also available at Seamus Duffy’s Bookshop in Westport and no doubt in bookshops in Castlebar and elsewhere throughout Mayo. It’s well worth purchasing and visiting the varied churches if you have the chance. You will quickly see which windows are Harry Clarke’s and which are not. His designs, colors, and details are remarkable and easily identifiable.

... and a desk calendar
The County Council also produced a beautiful 2012 desk calendar with photos of churches and abbeys on



the Ecclesiastical Heritage Trail of County Mayo. Photos again by Michael McLaughlin Studios, as well as by Eamonn McCarthy. It is wonderful to see how much the Irish, especially in Mayo, appreciate their amazing treasures and we can hardly wait to see what the Mayo county council produces next!

Michelin stars: South Dublin and Galway city restaurants recently became 2013 Michelin Star recipients. Cited were: Locks Brasserie in Portobello, Dublin, a French restaurant and sister restaurant of Pearl Brasserie, and Aniar, at Lower Dominick Street, Galway. Aniar is owned and operated by Jp McMahon and Drigin Gaffey, who started Cava Spanish Restaurant and Tapas Bar, and is the only Michelin Star restaurant in the West of Ireland. The Patrick Guilbaud restaurant in Dublin is the only Irish restaurant with two stars. Sebastian Masi owns both Dublin Brasseries.

Those who say Irish food hasn’t changed in 30 years need only stop by for a meal at any of those great restaurants or at many other excellent pubs and restaurants all over the country. Irish food has definitely changed – for the better!

Guidebook writer Georgina Campbell also issues annual awards. Restaurant of the Year (tastiest and friendliest) for 2012 went to The Greenhouse in Dublin. Chef of the year was Ian Orr from Brown’s Restaurant in Derry, Northern Ireland, and Hotel of the Year was The Granville Hotel in Waterford.

Campbell’s Pub of the Year was Nancy’s Bar in Ardara, Co. Donegal, and having eaten lunch there – the freshest and tastiest fish, well prepared and served – I can vouch for that one and also for breakfasts at the Quay House in Clifden, Co. Galway, where I stayed several years ago. Quay House won the Guesthouse Breakfast Award from Campbell.

Holidays: We wish all our readers the very happiest of holidays. We also wish them a brightly wrapped package containing tickets to Ireland. What better gift could anyone want?

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The Irish Language

by Philip Mac AnGhabhann

You remember last month’s column where Maire chanced to meet her friend Caít at the beach. Both women had their daughters with them. When she retruned home Maire finds her husband, Seán.

A Sheáin. Bhuail mé Caít ar an dtrá innu. Cád é sin? Dáirire?
Bhí.
Cé bhí léi?
A hinín, Nóra.
Tá sí chomh tarraingteach le a mathair.
Ar a duine léi?
Nach raibh. Thánnaig sé I Sasana.
‘S ollamh le Gaeilge.
Seán. I ran into Caít on the beach today.
What’s that? Really?
Yes (It was).
Who was with her?
Her daughter, Nora.
She is as attractive as her mother.
Was her husband with her?
No. He went to England.
He is a professor of Irish.

This little conversation uses the **Comparative** which we studied long ago and several other uses of the Irish **le**, “with”.

Tá innu chomh breá le inné.
“Today is as fine as yesterday.”

On the other hand, if you want to go one step farther and say that something is “whiter”, “taller”, or “darker” than another—which may or not be in the sentence -- the formula is simply to precede an **adjective** with the word **níos** /neese/. **Níos** is a contraction of **ní** “thing” and **is** “is”.

Tá an seomra sin dorch.
“That room is dark.”

Tá an seomra seo níos dorch.
“This room is darker.”

Don’t forget that little sound /uh/ that goes between the **-r** and **c-**. Pronounce **dorch** as /DOR-uh-kuh/.

Note how she says. “Ran into” or “Met up with” – **Bhuail mé.** **Buail** has the general meaning to “hit” or “strike” and is used as a “Model Verb” in many Irish texts as it is perfectly “regular” in all tenses. Here the Past Tense is used, **Bhuail**.

There are a number of Irish uses of **le**, “with”. We call many of these “idioms” since they are really not meaningful is a word-to-word translation. One of these you have learned already where **le** “with” is translated “by” – “*Hamlet* is **by** Shakespeare”. **Is Hamlet le Shakespeare.**

Another use of **le** that you have already had is to say, “I like” as in “I like coffee” – **Is maith liom caifé.**

For review, here are the **Prepositional Pronoun** combinations of **le**. Notice the pronunciation of **leo**. It is not spelled with a **-b** on the end but is usually pronounced as if it had one.

liom	/lum/	“with me”
linn	/lin/	“with us”
leat	/lath/	“with you”
libh	/liv/	“with you-all”
leis	/leysh/	“with him”
leo	/lohb/	“with them”
léi	/leh/	“with her”

Now here are some of the uses of **le** in addition to **chomh ... le** in the little conversation.

Cé bhí léi?	/keh vee leh/	“Who was with her?”
Ar an duine léi?	/ahr uhnn DOON-yuh leh/	“Was her husband with her?”
‘S ollamh le Gaeilge.	/SOH-lahv leh GAEL-guh/	“He is (a) Professor of Irish.”

In addition you came across several new vocabulary items:

Cád é sin? /KAHT eh sheen/ “What’s that?”
Dáirire /DAR-uh-ruh/ “Really?”
Tarraingteach /TAHR-enk-chach/ “attractive”
Sasana /SAHs-uh-nuh/ “England”

Notice that the word for “England”, **Sasana**, is from the name “Saxon” whilst the word for the English language is **Béarla** from “Briton”.

Now see if you can put these sentences into Irish: 1.) “He likes coffee.” 2.) “She is very attractive.” 3.) “He is a Professor of English (language).” 4.) “Who is with them?” 5.) “She met Kate on the beach.” 6.) “The daughter is as tall as her mother.” 7.) “Nora was with me today.” 8.) Really? Was his wife with him?” 9.) We like coffee with milk and sugar.” 10.) “Do you like coffee or tea?”

Answers: 1.) **Is maith leis caifé.** 2.) **Is sí go tharraingteach.** 3.) **‘S ollamh le Béarla.** 4.) **Cé atá leo?** 5.) **Bhuail sí Caít ar an dtrá.** 6.) **Tá an inín chomh airde le a mathair.** 7.) **Bhí Nóra liom innu.** 8.) **Dáirire! Bhí a bhean leis?** 9.) **Is maith linn caifé le bainne agus siúcra.** 10.) **An maith leat caifé no tae?**

Nollag Shona Daoibh! “Merry Christmas to All”

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- ACROSS**
1. I ran non-art shop over in Clare’s gateway to Ireland, which has its ups and downs. (7,7)
7. Are set in order at this rising time of the year in Ireland. (6)
9. Hit hard when good person goes to the United Nations. (4)
10. “The whole worl’s in a — o’ chassis.” Seán O’Casey. (5)
12. “Too — for a statesman, too proud for a wit.” Goldsmith (of Edmund Burke) (4)
13. His run up leads to a sudden incursion (in Co. Dublin, near to Lusk?). (6)
15. Huge land log chopped up in Wicklow holy site where Saint Kevin built a hermitage. (11)
17. Desert rat gets rib and leg broken. (6)
19. Nore in turmoil over Nevada city of speedy unsplicing. (4)
20. Tiler in retreat having fired again. (5)
22. Dublin ullage has invalid content. (4)
23. We’re disturbed about six, to pass comment on the book. (6)
24. Selling, ask Bill about Kerry Irish speaking seaside village near Waterville. (14)

- DOWN**
1. Lined stack risk. (anag.) In Strangford Lough, County Down, where there is a Norman castle ruin. (8,6)
2. “Gladstone tried to guess the ——— to the Irish Question, but whenever he got warm, the Irish secretly changed the Question.” W.C. Sellar (6)
3. Rowing boat propellers seen in Sligo arsenal. (4)
4. It was not long ago that the centre was rebuilt. (6)
5. Cut back spending, but dig a hole again. (8)
6. We lack monk’s nod up in the Tipperary mountains above the Abbey of Mount Melleray. (14)
8. Rails a plank. (anag.) Kerry estate and hotel on the shore of the Kenmare River near Sneem. (11)
11. Panes get smashed by quivering tree. (4)
14. Naturists seen in the shifting dunes? (5)
15. Irregular soldier could lure Gail over. (8)
16. First notes taken in Gweedore mishap. (2,2,2)

18. Little to wear on the Pacific atoll of big bangs. (6)
21. “I shall be like that — —, I shall die at the top.” Swift. (4)

CROSSWORD SOLUTION ON PAGE 14

Irish Sayings ...

“A friend’s eye is a good mirror.”
“It is the good horse that draws its own cart.”
“A lock is better than suspicion.”
“Two thirds of the work is the semblance.”
“He who gets a name for early rising can stay in bed until midday.”
“A friend’s eye is a good mirror.”
“It is the good horse that draws its own cart.”
“A lock is better than suspicion.”
“Two thirds of the work is the semblance.”
“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.”
“The well fed does not understand the lean.”
Necessity is the mother of invention.
Lack of resource has hanged many a person.
Time is a great story teller.
Theres no need to fear the wind if your haystacks are tied down.
A trout in the pot is better than a salmon in the sea.
It’s better to bend than to break.
A ship often sank beside the harbour
Food is the “horse” of work.
Character is better than wealth.

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BRETT'S BOSTON

By Margaret Brett Hastings

Exclusive photos of Boston Irish people & events

The Aisling Gallery in Hingham held a reception on Fri., Nov. 23, the opening event of the show “Irish Light”, continuing thru Christmas Eve. The gallery is displaying three artists’ interpretations of “Irish Light”, including several private collection works by the family & patrons of Eugene Conlon, watercolorist (1925-2001); new oil paintings by Irish landscape painter Vincent Crotty; and a welcome to the gallery’s newest addition, Roisin Fitzpatrick, “Artist of The Light.”

1.) Vincent Crotty, artist, Dorchester; Kieran Jordan, Dorchester; Maureen Connolly, gallery co-owner; Brenda Spinnazola, Marshfield; 2.) Carla Pizzi, and Marcia Ganter, Weymouth; 3.) John Connolly, gallery co-owner; Roisin Fitzpatrick, artist of light@, Dublin; 4.) Jacquie McManus, Woburn; Janice Filteau, Medford; 5.) Niel Cannon, Concord, NH; Dolores Jordan Cannon, Philadelphia, PA; 6.) Sharon and Chuck Sullivan, Milton; 7.) John Brady and John Cafferty, Hingham; 8.) Brenda O’Connor, Squantum; 9.) Margaret Stapleton, Scituate; 10.) Norma McKenzie, Weymouth; Angela Bruzzese, Hull; 11.) Julie Davenport and Neil Hurley, Somerville; 12.) Annette Kavanagh and Mary Kavanagh, Milton; 13.) Harold Lincoln, Hingham; Vincent Crotty; 14.) Jane and George Doyle; Paul and Kate Doyle, Hingham.



Book Review

A penetrating portrait of an American mogul

BY PETER F. STEVENS
BIR STAFF

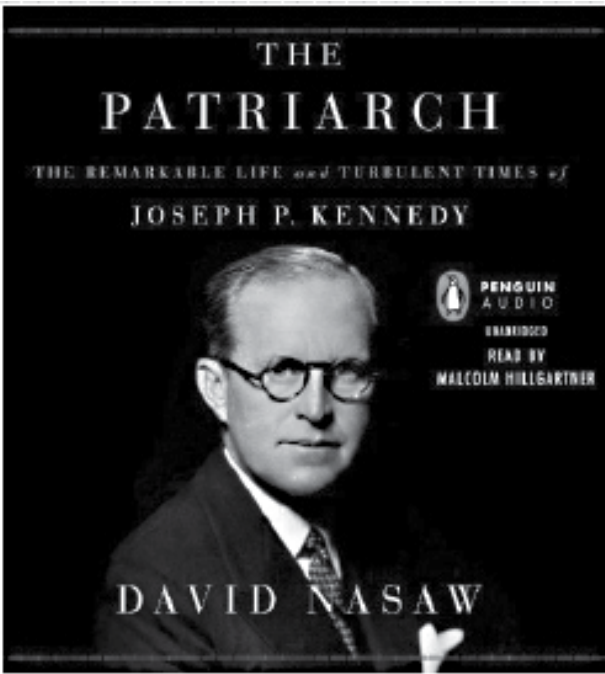
For readers who view Joseph P. Kennedy as a bootlegging, womanizing, election-stealing, Nazi-loving villain, “The Patriarch” is not their book. For readers who see Kennedy as a man whose good outweighed the considerable bad, the book is a mixed bag. However, in understanding what made Kennedy tick in public and private, “The Patriarch,” in this reviewer’s opinion, is the finest biography thus far of the ambassador and one of the best books about the entire family.

One of America’s foremost historians, David Nasaw is the Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., Professor of History at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York. His biographies of Andrew Carnegie and William Randolph Hearst deservedly earned critical praise and a host of prestigious awards. “The Patriarch” is no less splendid in scholarship, scope, and style. Nasaw’s narrative flows smoothly and skillfully for scholars and general readers alike.

Setting “The Patriarch” light years apart from previous works on Joseph Kennedy is the unprecedented access to source material that Nasaw was granted by the Kennedy family – on his terms. Nasaw notes: “When Ambassador Jean Kennedy Smith and Senator Edward Kennedy...asked me to write a biography of their father, I agreed to do so, but only if I was granted full cooperation, unfettered access to Joseph P. Kennedy’s papers...including those closed to researchers, and unrestricted permission to cite any document I came across. The family accepted my conditions. No attempts were made to withhold information or to censor this book in any way.”

The proof of that is in the book. Nasaw does not shrink from either the myths that many Kennedy-haters accept as gospel or an unsparing examination of his vices and virtues. Yes, while many won’t want to acknowledge it, there were virtues in this ambitious, powerful, charismatic, and often ruthless man whose life and that of his family constitute a Boston Irish, Irish American, and American saga that is Shakespearean in triumph, tragedy, and pathos. When it comes to the bromide that Kennedy was a man who made his fortune in bootlegging, Nasaw convincingly contends that there is no hard shred of evidence to support the charge – other than Kennedy’s providing alcohol for his tenth Harvard reunion.

Nasaw does not sugarcoat his subject’s womanizing: “He enjoyed the company of other women, hundreds



The most compelling and balanced look yet at “The Ambassador” – Joseph P. Kennedy

of them over his lifetime...” Despite that, Kennedy viewed himself as a staunch Catholic, who, according to his onetime paramour, the actress Gloria Swanson, thought he could “wipe the slate clean just by going to confession.”

Kennedy’s seething ambition in business and politics comes to vivid, engrossing life in “The Patriarch,” but so, too, does his utter devotion to his children. Of course, his legion of detractors will point immediately to his decision to have his daughter Rosemary lobotomized and then seemingly cut her out of his life and thoughts. Nasaw does not whitewash this, but simply presents the unvarnished facts.

He similarly takes on Kennedy’s legendary Wall Street dealings – many of which would have been grossly illegal today but were not in the 1920s – his anti-Semitism (even though a number of influential Jewish jurists and businessmen were his friends), his isolationist views, and all the other controversial aspects of his life and career.

Nasaw examines whether Kennedy was an appeaser “and Nazi sympathizer, a stock swindler, a bootlegger, and a colleague of mobsters.” He scrutinizes whether Kennedy forced his second son – JFK -- into the political fray and then rigged election victories – including the presidential campaign. Nasaw bores deeply into Ambassador Kennedy’s tortuous relationship with FDR, and his condemnation of the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan. He was against America getting involved in Vietnam, one case in which many might view his isolationism as valid.

While this reviewer is tempted to present Nasaw’s balanced, nuanced, and candid takes on all of these and more, it would be a disservice to both the author and the reader. For anyone with even a passing interest in the Kennedys and in American history, “The Patriarch” is a book not to be missed. What emerges from its pages is a word picture of a complex and towering man who was not the total rogue or villain that so many people have simplistically branded him. What emerges is a picture of a man who in many ways was all too human.

(“The Patriarch: The Remarkable Life and Turbulent Times of Joseph P. Kennedy,” by David Nasaw. Hardcover, The Penguin Press, NY, 868 pages, b&w photos, \$40)

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