

Boston Irish

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Ireland's new Ambassador to the US, Geraldine Byrne Nason, greeted several hundred guests to a reception aboard Irish Naval Service ship LÉ James Joyce on Sept. 12. The ship was docked at Boston Harbor's Fan Pier. More photos, Page 6. *Ed Forry photo*

The Irish Navy's LÉ James Joyce makes port of call in Boston Harbor

LÉ James Joyce, a 295-foot Irish Naval Service offshore patrol vessel, docked in Boston Harbor's Seaport District for seven days in early September. The ship was open to the public at Fan Pier for the week, a stint that included an evening reception for several hundred guests from the region's Irish community.

The newly appointed Irish Ambassador to the US, Geraldine Byrne Nason, delivered greetings aboard ship and spoke to an appreciative audience. Other remarks were made by the ship's

commanding officer, Lt. Cmdr. Donnchadh Cahalane, and by Dr. Laoise Moore, Consul General of Ireland to New England, seen in photo at right. The early evening event also featured the presentation of a citation from Boston City Council president Ed Flynn; a reading of Mayor Michelle Wu's proclamation naming Monday, Sept. 12, as "LÉ James Joyce Day" in the city of Boston; and a performance of excerpts from Finnegans Wake and Ulysses by The Here Comes Everybody Players.



Photo courtesy Irish Consulate

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Bill Russell (1934-2022) | He was our 'hero of heroes'

By ED FORRY
REPORTER CO-FOUNDER
AUGUST 3, 2022

Where can I begin to tell about what Bill Russell meant to me and my generation of Boston basketball fans?

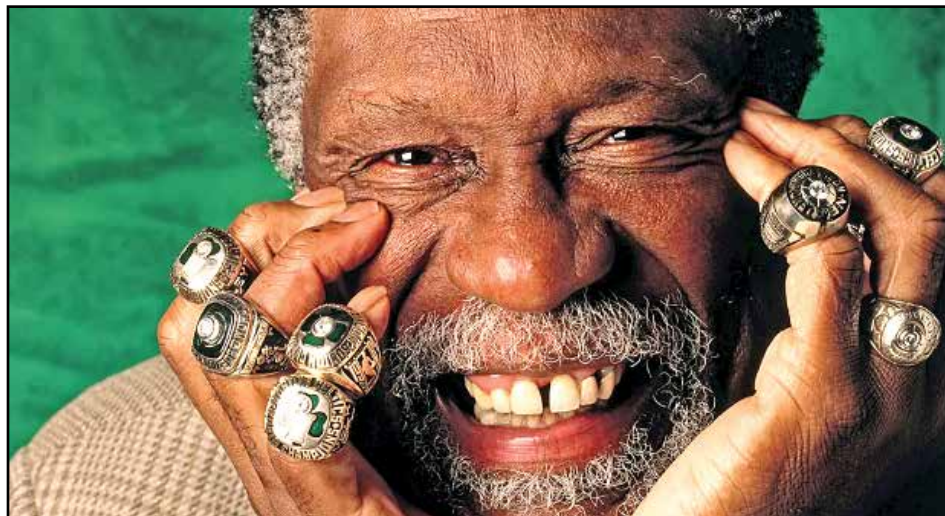
When Russell arrived in Boston just before Christmas day in 1956, he had won gold with the USA team in the Olympics and had led his college team at the University of San Francisco to two national NCAA championships. Still, he was mostly an unknown quantity for us Boston fans. There was no SportsCenter showing video highlights and the Boston press did not have much opportunity to see his college career play out 3,000 miles away on the Left Coast.

Our Celtics mostly had local roots. Holy Cross was a basketball powerhouse then, the source of familiar names like Bob Cousy, Togo Palazzi, and that year's eventual rookie of the year, Tom Heinsohn.

Russell was one of the first Black athletes Boston would come to know well, but he wasn't the first Black player on the Celtics team. That was Chuck Cooper, who was a Boston pick in the 1950 draft and played with the team for four seasons before moving on to Milwaukee.

Our Boston Braves had been home to speedy 1950 National League Rookie of the Year Sam Jethroe, who thrilled us with base-running for three seasons before he was sent to the minors as the team decamped to Milwaukee in 1953. And it would be several years before Pumpsie Green and Willie O'Rea would put on Red Sox and Bruins uniforms.

The Boston Celtics in the early years were a close-but-no-cigar outfit, lacking a dominating presence in the middle of the lineup. Walter Brown, the man who owned the old Boston Garden, was looking for something new to sell seats at the big sports arena on Causeway Street. Until the mid-1940s, Brown's venue was singularly a hockey arena, with the occasional ice show (the Ice Follies and the Ice Capades), track meet (the annual BAA tourney), circus, professional boxing and wrestling matches, and even touring rodeos headlined by movie



As NBA title rings go, Bill Russell was a champion in that category, too, winning 9 of them in 11 seasons as a player and coach.

cowboy Gene Autry and radio/TV talker Arthur Godfrey.

But Brown and his fellow ice arena owners were looking for more regular events. After World War II, several pro basketball leagues were assembled, evolving over a decade into today's NBA.

In those early years when Harry Truman, then Dwight Eisenhower were in the White House, pro basketball struggled to establish a fan base.

Assembling his team in 1946, Brown named them the "Celtics," presumably to appeal to our city's vibrant Irish population.

But in those early years, the team sold few tickets, and relied on doubleheaders with other pro teams and the occasional exhibition games featuring the Harlem Globetrotters to put Boston people in the seats. The early '50s team featured Cooper and Kevin Joseph Aloysius Connors, a/k/a Chuck Connors, who would later become an actor and star in a hit TV show, The Rifleman.

The 1956 team featured a former Holy Cross star named Bob Cousy, a coach named Red Auerbach, and a big fan favorite with a smooth outside shot named Ed Macauley. But St Louis native "Easy Ed" asked to be traded to his hometown team, which led to Auerbach sending him home in return for the rights to draft 6-foot-9 center Bill Russell,

whose team at the Jesuit college in San Francisco was winning two national college championships.

For me, still a pre-teen fan who considered Easy Ed a hero, the trade was perplexing. Why would our Celtics give up on a star, our leading scorer, and add a tall Black man reputed to be a weak scorer, but maybe with an upside as a good rebounder.

We were told Russell was tall, and lean, a rebounder but not a scorer. The successful basketball centers in those days were bulky, elbow-throwing, physically strong high scorers like George Mikan and Clyde Lovellette of the Lakers (they were in Minneapolis then). Mikan had to retire at age 30, his career shortened by game injuries (fractured legs, broken bones in his feet, fingers and nose.) Our own Bob Brannum, a tough and mean Celtics forward, averaged 250 fouls a year, and usually fouled out before games' end.

The Celtics in mid-decade were fun to watch, mainly because the Cooz was a basketball magician- his game was filled with amazing dribbling displays and behind-the-back passes. Teamed with the high scoring shooter Bill Sharman, the Cousy/Sharman tandem were called the greatest backcourt duo of all time. But those Celtics could never quite win a championship.

His Garden debut: 6 points, 16 rebounds, 1 assist

By TOM MULVOY

Bill Russell, the all-conquering college basketball star with consecutive NCAA titles at the University of San Francisco and an Olympic gold medal in hand, walked onto the parquet floor of the Boston Garden early in the afternoon of Sat., Dec. 22, 1956, to begin a 13-season professional career with the Boston Celtics that to date - 66 years later - allows for no one-to-one comparison in the history of organized sports.

I was there, age 13, with 11,051 other fans, including my older brother Mark, to watch the show, which ended with a Boston win over the St. Louis team via a buzzer-beating pop shot by Celtics Hall of Famer Bill Sharman, moving a Boston Globe sports department editor that night to emote an eight-column "CELTICS COP SIZZLER" headline in

a type size ordinarily reserved for the beginning or end of a world war.

In a sidebar to his game story the next day, veteran staff writer Jack Barry saw promise for the team's new center, who had made 3 of 11 shots for 6 points, taken down 16 rebounds, and accounted for a single assist:

"The big fellow gave a good account of himself defensively, and indicated that, with experience, he will pick up on offense. ... Late in the game, the 6-10 Celtic rookie blocked three consecutive shots from the league's leading scorer, Bob Pettit, which was no mean feat."

After the game, Barry quoted Russell as saying he was nervous before the game started, that "I was a lemon at the foul line. I guess I really choked on 'em out there."

Then, like a Christmas present, Russell arrived in Boston in December 1956 and changed everything.

Boston sports fans have been fortunate to have some highlight heroes in the major sports: the Red Sox had Ted Williams, the Bruins had Bobby Orr, and the Patriots had Tom Brady, and the 21st century generation of baseball fans had the thrill of cheering for David "Big Papi" Ortiz.

But for me, the hero of heroes was Bill Russell. When he wore the green uniform, we expected that every new season would bring an NBA championship. And it usually did.

In those early years, my dad would take me to Sunday afternoon games, when walk-up tickets were always available. As a teenager, my good fortune was to work as a vendor at the old Boston Garden, so I was there for dozens of Celtics games, including six or seven match-ups between Russell and Wilt Chamberlain.

There was nothing like the thrill in the Garden when the C's would take over a ballgame: Russ would block a shot, control the rebound, send an outlet pass to Cousy, KC, or Sam Jones, downcourt to Frank Ramsey or Tom Heinsohn for two quick points - then repeat, repeat, and repeat on a three-minute fast break run, of 14, 18, 20 unanswered points. It was a freight train, fast and unstoppable. The Garden crowd - often 13,909 of us - would go delirious in excitement!

With two or three minutes left in the game, the Celtics would call a timeout, and Bill Russell and our other stars would walk off the court to an ovation, while Auerbach lit up a victory cigar as he sat there, smugly on the bench. Talk about taunting!

There was nothing like it in sports, then or now, and it all began when Bill Russell came to our city and changed basketball forever.

How lucky was I to have seen him play basketball for my team. Bill Russell firmly and ferociously embodied social norms of justice and equality, values that I have shared over my lifetime. May he rest in peace.

How Russell Did

Rookie Nervous but Promising; Troubles Pettit on Defense

Bill Russell played 21 minutes in his Celtics debut yesterday, entering the game at the five-and-one-half-minute mark of the first period to tremendous cheering.

The big fellow gave a good account of himself defensively, and indicated that, with experience he will pick up on offense.

Russell took 11 shots, the majority of the left-hand-soft hook and push shot variety and scored on three. He had a bad day at the foul line, missing all four.

He picked up early fouls, covering 7-foot Chuck Share and was tagged with three personals by half-time.

Late in the game, however, the 6-10 Celtic rookie blocked three successive shots from the league's leading scorer, Bob Pettit, which is no mean feat.

This gave indication he can do likewise against the league's lanky jump shooters, who have been raising havoc against the Celtics over the years.

After the game Russell admitted he was nervous even before the game started. ... "And I was a lemon at the foul line. ... I guess I really choked on 'em out there," said the rookie.

Arnie Risen in particular had good things to say about Russell. ... "He'll get better as he goes along," Risen said. "Right now, he'll block any shooter in the league who shoots straight over head and turns and shoots straight from the pivot, because he's so tall and can get up so ... and he'll murder them on our defensive board."

Russell took quite a few rebounds off the defensive board late in the game and wound up with 16 in all.

—BARRY.

Blocks Pettit Shots

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—BARRY.

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Boston Irish is the region's leading chronicler of all things Irish-American. This family-owned and operated media publication is a unique and independent source for news and information reporting on the Irish people and events here in Boston as well as stories focused on the Irish diaspora.

Celebrating and preserving the heritage of Boston's Irish people and their families.

2022 Boston Irish Honorees



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Looking good – but don't put the mockers on it!

On an autumn day in Boston, when the blue sky is clear, the sun is warm, and the radiant color of the foliage reflects off the Charles River in a beauty that can take your breath away, superstitious Bostonians know the truth: "We'll pay for this later." Deep in the psyche is the knowledge that a gorgeous fall day will have an equal and opposite counterpoint. As sure as the sun rises but also sets, a bone-chilling, polar-vortexed February day will compensate for this pleasure. And on that cold, dark, score-settling morning, many a Bostonian will say "Ah, well, it's part of our penance."

There is a similar reaction to good weather, or good news generally in Ireland. If you comment on the fine sunshine, someone is sure to respond "Ach, sure now you've ruined it. Don't say it out loud! Och, it will be lashing rain now. Don't put the mockers on it!" Putting the mockers on something means jinxing it.

In 2022, the remarkable sunshine of success and resilience of the Irish economy has some people worried. Every day seems to bring news that dozens, hundreds, or even thousands of jobs will be added by Amazon, Medtronic, Abbott Labs, Siemens, Riot Games (apparently a video game company), or that large new capital investments in manufacturing facilities by Intel or Lilly are coming on line. So far this year, the Exchequer has collected an unanticipated 4-billion-euro surplus in income tax payments and a 4.2-billion-euro surplus in corporate tax income from multinationals. This good news is quietly acknowledged, but there is no big ballyhoo – Don't say anything, lads! You'll give the game away!

Census data published over the summer reveal that for the first time since the great famine, Ireland's population is larger than it was prior to the Great Hunger. In addition to "natural increase" (births minus deaths), immigration to Ireland has outpaced emigration. This does not even include the 40,000 or so Ukrainians Ireland has generously welcomed to its shores so far.

Dublin's city center is crowded with groups of students or tourists from Spain, France, Portugal, and Germany. Summer abroad programs and tours that previously would have gone to London have been rerouted to Dublin because it is easier than traveling to Britain post Brexit.

A particular bright spot over the last 30 years in Ireland has been the steady growth of manufacturing. Ireland's population is 13 times smaller than the UK's, but as of 2022 the manufacturing base of Ireland is now 50 percent of the UK's, much of it driven by the pharma, MedTech, and technology sectors. There is a "buzz about the place," but in spite of all of this good news, there is a feeling of foreboding.

WORRIES ABOUND

Not everyone is prospering. Homelessness, rising income inequality, and the cost of living, especially in housing, haunt Ireland. Irish people wonder 'If we can accommodate 40,000 Ukrainian refugees, why can't we look after rough sleepers and build homes that our children can afford to buy?' This question is posed without rancor; there is negligible nativist 'foreigners go home' sentiment in Ireland, but rather with sincere frustration and fear that talented young Irishmen and Irishwomen will turn again to emigration and take their energy and ambition elsewhere. There are disagreements among the political parties about how much housing should be built by the state or by private enterprise, and at what pace. Inflation is driving the costs up of everything, including building materials, but at least the political parties agree that housing is a major issue.

Another worry is that 10 multinational companies (Apple, Pfizer, Google, Intel, and others) account for 50 percent of the corporate tax haul to the Irish



A summer sunrise over Henry and O'Connell streets.

Tim Kirk photo

state. The fear is that decisions taken in Silicon Valley board rooms will determine Ireland's future. The mass migration of the '80s, the boom of the Celtic Tiger years, the bust of the real estate-driven financial crisis, and the austerity imposed by the IMF, cause many to look at Ireland's strong economy and tax surplus with skepticism.

'People in Ireland never forget that they have to die.' – Paddy Kavanagh

The cultural memory of the fragility of prosperity and the suffering caused by economic collapse is still fresh, and today's world has no shortage of legitimate concerns. The multinationals might decide to pull up stakes and move to another country. If Ireland has become over-dependent on their tax payments to fund the health service, education, and infrastructure, the nation would face trouble. Tory-led Britain (by Liz Truss or Rishi Sunak) will likely escalate its Brexit dispute with the EU into a trade war, with Ireland at ground zero. The invasion of Ukraine has disrupted energy and food supplies and brought inflation to a 40-year high. A looming global recession and the effects of climate breakdown will impact everyone, including Ireland.

Ireland's large tax surpluses and booming economy have produced political pressure on the coalition government to immediately either share the tax windfalls with those most vulnerable or to squirrel it away for a rainy day (there are plenty of those!).

The economist David McWilliams suggests that a portion of the surplus should be used to create a Citizens Wealth Fund that would invest in Irish companies and industries of the future. This approach would address the underlying worry of overreliance on taxes from foreign companies. It would also help move Ireland up the value chain from factories, call centers, and data centers to the invention and creation of new technology. The traditional source of wealth and destination for investment in Ireland has been land. McWilliams argues that introducing alternative local investment options would also stabilize soaring home prices.

Manufacturing and technology jobs in Ireland provide decent wages and stable employment. They provide a foundation for thriving members of the middle class who can raise their families in security. Still, they do not mitigate the long-term risk

of foreign-headquartered companies determining Ireland's future. To avoid that, Ireland must become the place where the next Stripe or Google is founded and flourishes.

Stripe is a multi-billion-dollar San Francisco payments processing startup founded by Patrick and John Collison of Co. Tipperary known here as 'The Stripe Lads'. Stripe's EU headquarters is in Ireland, and the billionaire brothers are universally admired, but there is hope that Ireland could be the breeding ground for the next global successes like Stripe. A Citizens Wealth Fund could provide seed funding for new, innovative companies.

Ireland may not be able to rival the biotech juggernaut that Boston and Cambridge have created or the software powerhouse of Silicon Valley, but there is much more that can be done to encourage domestic investment to position Ireland for the next big waves in life sciences, including cancer care and research, clean energy, software, and MedTech. By investing in these sectors, Ireland will create more local research and development clusters that will result ultimately in more wealth accumulating in Ireland.

How to build a society that reflects affluence and good will

Creating more wealth in Ireland would not by itself ensure Ireland's vision of building a society that is both prosperous and fair. Galloping income inequality in the United States is proof that a rich country can produce starkly uneven opportunities and outcomes.

In his wonderful book, "The Story of The Irish People," published in 1983, Sean O'Faolain presents the history of Ireland not with a traditional narrative of important dates, events, and remarkable individuals, but rather by describing four Irish archetypes: peasants, priests, rebels and writers. The group that O'Faolain intentionally omitted was a domestic wealthy class. Why? Because it has never really existed. O'Faolain asks whether a native-born Irish bourgeoisie would be as selfish, cruel, and occasionally charitable as the absentee landlords were.

Wealth is still uncommon here by American standards, so O'Faolain's central question is still relevant. Will an affluent Ireland build a fair and just society envisioned by peasants, priests, rebels, and writers, or will wealth inexorably collect at the top with a native-born moneyed class becoming insensitive to, and insulated from, the struggles and prospects of the unlucky? As important, can Ireland structure a future society that shares wealth to cure or prevent social ills as a matter of design rather than relying on philanthropy to address problems that have become crises?

The jury is still out. Like every country, Ireland is a work in progress but there are reasons for hope. Culturally, greed is not looked upon favorably. After the Celtic Tiger boom went bust, comic Tommy Tiernan commented simply, "Money doesn't suit us," but the boom is back now, bigger than ever, and Ireland should take intentional steps to share their wealth more evenly to ensure the flourishing of current and future generations.

The example of other small countries might provide guidance. Norway used the riches generated by its natural resources of oil and gas to create a Sovereign Wealth Fund in 1996. It has grown to \$1.3 trillion, which corresponds to \$230,000 for every Norwegian. Ireland's only natural resource, apart from rain and wind, which are found in abundance, is its people. The good news is that Irish culture and talent, unlike oil, are renewable resources.

American startups that become successful make a very small group of founders and investors

(Continued on page 5)

Cost of living proving to be a killer in Ireland

It is quite depressing, not to mention repetitious, to discuss the staggering rate of inflation in Ireland in this space. But as I sat down to write, Newstalk radio host Kieran Cuddihy posited that the big question for many people these days, as colder weather approaches, is “How am I going to survive this winter?” The fear of those already struggling to get by is palpable. It is the dominant topic of conversation.

For on top of hikes in the price of electricity and gas (roughly 24 percent and 32 percent, respectively) in May, one leading provider has announced further that increases of 35 and 39 percent will take effect on the first of October. These have been attributed to “continued volatility” and “ongoing market uncertainty” in “unprecedented times.” There is an energy shortage and speculation abounds that there could be blackouts in the months ahead. Soaring costs are having a tangible negative impact on businesses and households alike.

The government, together with its counterparts across Europe, is considering a range of measures to ameliorate what could become a truly dreadful situation throughout the continent. Additionally, consumers are being urged to pinch pennies. Here in Wicklow, for instance, warm clothing will supplant turning the heat on and the Christmas lights won’t be blazing for hours on end – at least if I have a say in the matter.

While some commentators caution against panic, asserting that the media are engaging in scaremongering and claiming that the present crisis could helpfully hasten an overdue transition away from fossil fuels, their theorizing will be small comfort for many Irish people. Those most adversely affected will expect elected officials to solve the problem, pronto. Regrettably, that’s not possible.

This seems destined to be the winter of our discontent. And as for a probable political consequence: the rise and rise of Sinn Féin.

WHEN TIME MOVES TOO FAST

Early September is invariably a busy period of adjustment for my family. After a summer spent trying to keep their daughters and sons occupied and out of mischief, parents of young children typically rejoice unreservedly when their little ones head back to school. But for me, it also means the start of the autumn semester at the newly rebranded University of Galway. As ever, there was some upheaval, but Larry Óg and I have quickly settled into our routines.

Partly because the two Larrys’ existences tend to revolve around the academic calendar, time is going by far too fast. My namesake is nearing his 10th birthday, is now in fourth class (the equivalent of fourth grade) in Gaelscoil Chill Mhantáin (the local school where he is being taught through the medium of the Irish language) and is pushing 5 feet 2 inches tall. He had a fantastic summer of vacations to Spain and New York, outings to watch Galway’s hurlers and footballers at Croke Park, and as much golf as we could squeeze in.

I keep saying to my wife Some interesting primary election results back in Massachusetts that we – and he, to the extent he may remember – will recall these days fondly as some of the best of our lives. I only wish that there was a pause button available to press before the apple of our eyes reaches his teens and beyond, and no longer shots out “Love you!” or kisses us without hesitation, no matter where we are or who we’re with.

Undoubtedly, the years ahead will be wonderful in their own way. I can’t help but feel, however, that there is something special and, dare I say it, irreplaceable about this moment of our journey. To lighten the mood and divert my angst elsewhere when I start down this gloomy path, my wife rubs my rapidly graying head of hair and correctly observes that, unfortunately, our boy isn’t the only one who is getting older!

REFLECTIONS ON MASS.

PRIMARIES

From a distance, I followed the Massachusetts primaries avidly. Contrary to reports and polls suggesting that the race was neck and neck, former Boston City Councillor Andrea Campbell won the Democratic nomination for attorney general handily. Her chief foe, labor lawyer Shannon Liss-Riordan, was thought to have closed the gap after pouring more than \$9 million of her own money into the campaign and garnering the endorsements of Boston Mayor Michelle Wu, the city’s former mayor Kim Janey, and US Sen. Elizabeth Warren. It was heartening to see Campbell, a Black woman with an inspiring personal story, overcome her opponent’s wealth and establishment support.

On the other hand, the state’s GOP’s odd lurch to the right continues. Chris Doughty earned the imprimatur of Howie Carr, a hero to MAGA Republicans in the Bay State, on the grounds that the more centrist businessman could actually prevail in November. Nonetheless, Doughty was defeated by Geoff Diehl, an ex-state representative and Trump disciple with two chances of beating Maura Healey: slim and none.

Why would Republicans eschew the successful politics of popular figures like Bill Weld and Charlie Baker – the blend of fiscal conservatism and social liberalism they favor must surely be the lesser of two evils from their perspective – for a candidate whose outlook has next to no buy-in among voters in one of the country’s bluest territories? It beats me.

At the local level, I was glad that my state senator, Walter Timilty, vanquished his primary challenger, Kathleen Crogan-Camara. Timilty is a hard worker who is committed to constituent service and relentlessly champions organised labour. But Crogan-Camara, a relative unknown, took 40 percent of the vote with a message predicated virtually

exclusively on her leftist stances on social issues. That she did is proof positive that moderate to conservative Boston-area Democrats are a vanishing breed. Due disclosure: Although separated from Boston by an ocean, I still think of myself as one of that breed. Insurgent progressives view us as “dinosaurs” in 2022. Oh, well.

A WELCOME TO AMB. CRONIN

It was a tremendous honour to introduce the Brockton native and US Ambassador to Ireland Claire Cronin, who opened the Kennedy Summer School in New Ross, Co. Wexford, where the famous clan originates from. I have been a co-director of the annual summer school for several years. Ambassador Cronin spoke movingly about her career in law and politics, her Irish heritage, her admiration for the Kennedy legacy and the manifest love she has for her diplomatic posting in the Phoenix Park.

We basked in a great weekend of Irish and American politics, history and culture with high profile guests from Ireland, the US, and more – both in the official summer school venues and in our unofficial headquarters, the incomparable Theatre Tavern. I encourage anyone who is interested to visit kennedysummeschool.ie to learn more. Better yet: If you’re planning a vacation at “home” next September, join us for what has become a “can’t miss” event on the Irish political calendar.

• • •

Sin é from Wicklow. Along with 400,000+ fellow Garth Brooks’ devotees, I have to get ready for one of the country music legend’s five sold-out Dublin concerts!

Larry Donnelly is a Boston born and educated attorney, a Law Lecturer at the University of Galway (formerly referred to as the National University of Ireland, Galway) and regular media contributor on politics, current affairs and law in Ireland and the US. His critically acclaimed book – “The Bostonian: Life in an Irish American Political Family” – is published by Gill Books and is available online.

Looking good – but don’t put the mockers on it!

extremely wealthy. Some of the winners embrace philanthropy as a way of giving back to the society that enabled their success. Could Ireland alter this model by making every Irish citizen a benefit in the future success of companies born and bred in Ireland? Seed funding of indigenous startups could become a vehicle not just for good decent-wage jobs but also for broadly shared prosperity.

Skeptics of the possibility of building a wealthy and fair society and of involving the government in any way, point to examples of brazen political and financial corruption during Ireland’s 100 years of independence. Cash-stuffed brown envelopes, kickbacks, sketchy real estate transactions, and sweetheart deals to

the well-connected are all part of the public record. The financial meltdown in 2008-2009 revealed a level of greed and chicanery by a small number of rich people in Ireland that rivaled New York, if on a smaller scale.

Even so, there is reason to hope and time to plan. Ireland is not a perfect country nor a perfectly fair country, but it is trying to be one. And that is something, an enormous something.

Nostalgia? In Ireland, it’s ‘for the future’

A 2021 Ipsos Global Trend Survey asked participants to respond to statements like “I would like my country to be the way it used to be.” Ireland ranked as one of the least nostalgic of any country. This surprised me, because nostalgia and

Ireland are so deeply associated in my imagination, but Irish people are clear-eyed about their history. The picturesque poverty of leaky thatched roofs, donkey carts, scant opportunity, and emigration are recalled not as contentment but as a warning of how economic stress can dismember a society. Their strong pride in being Irish is not misconstrued as a desire to go back to those days of poverty, tragedy, and separation.

Countries that rank highest in “national nostalgia,” those that yearn for the “good ole days” of an imagined past that never really was, have seen nostalgia morph into resentment and far-right anti-immigrant movements like Brexit or MAGA. Middle-class manufacturing jobs and prospects

have dwindled in nostalgic countries and their “pain has turned to wrath.” In contrast, far-right populist groups have no support in Ireland, in part because Ireland’s middle class is strong and growing, supported by stable manufacturing jobs.

Irish people have achieved global success in business, politics, diplomacy, literature, music, the visual arts, cinema, and sports. With more of her people pursuing their careers at home, Ireland can choose to craft a future with its own unique model of shared prosperity. President Joe Biden perhaps captured the mindset best during his Paddy’s Day meeting with Taoiseach Micheal Martin when he said, “We Irish are nostalgic for the future.”

All aboard the LÉ James Joyce



Irish Pastoral Center board member John McColgan grabs a shot at the reception, and Executive Director Mary Swanton and Fr. Dan Finn delight in their visit aboard.



Enjoying the time were, from left, Aoife Griffin of ICC, Geraldine Byrne Nason, Irish Ambassador to the US, Martina Curtin ICC president and Maudy Dooher ICC deputy director.



Consul General Laoise Moore with Brian Boyles, Executive Director of Mass Humanities.



During a farewell visit to Boston in July, former Irish Ambassador Dan Mulhall was greeted in the State House by a group of Irish American legislators. Pictured are (l-r): Reps Gerard Cassidy, Dan Hunt, Kevin Honan, and Meghan Kilcoyne; Amb Mulhall; Reps Kate Hogan, John Lawn; Ireland Consul General Laoise Moore; Reps Ed Coppinger and James Murphy.

Photo courtesy Irish Consulate

Mulhall tells of the United States he came to know as Irish ambassador

Irish Ambassador to the US Daniel Mulhall completed his five year mission on Aug 10 and retired from Ireland's Department of Foreign Affairs after a 44-year diplomatic career. The following are excerpts from his farewell statement:

"I arrived in Washington from London in August 2017 and have now visited all 50 US States (I had been to Alaska and Hawaii as a tourist before 2017), witnessing the incredible diversity of America and the scale of Irish connections here. I have experienced Washington during the Trump and Biden Administrations, and with Republicans (2017-19) and Democrats (2021-) in control of Congress. I have met a range of fascinating people and learned a lot about America and what makes it tick.

Like my predecessors, I have been buoyed by the warmth that Americans display toward Ireland. All across the USA, I have met people who are deeply proud of their Irish heritage, which is often an important part of their American identity. Many Irish Americans possess a genuine admiration for, and affiliation with, Ireland. This unique liaison with the world's premier power is hugely valuable for us.

It was a privilege for me to attend the inauguration of President Biden, the President with the

strongest Irish heritage since John F. Kennedy. The president epitomizes the best of Irish America with his genuine and enduring affection for his Irish American upbringing, not to mention his enthusiasm for Irish poetry.

Our ties with the USA have considerable political value. Support for the Northern Ireland peace process in successive administrations and in Congress is bipartisan like few other issues.

I am sometimes asked to point to a highlight of my five years in the USA. I normally reply by referring to the opportunity I had to speak at a ceremony at Promontory Point in Utah in May 2019 to mark the 150th anniversary of the completion of the Transcontinental Railroad. My task that day was to pay tribute to the 12,000 Irish workers who labored for years in trying conditions to connect America from coast to coast. They and millions like them who made that perilous journey across the Atlantic, and on to America's expanding frontier, created the bedrock on which our contemporary relationship with the United States is firmly and permanently rooted.

I now move to New York to teach at Glucksman Ireland House at NYU where I will strive to deepen knowledge of Ireland among students at that distinguished seat of learning.

Leona Maguire tees off ambassadorship with the Irish American Partnership



Irish LPGA star links up with leading transatlantic educational charity to equip schools across the island of Ireland with the resources needed to educate and inspire.

The Irish American Partnership last month announced the appointment of decorated Irish golfer Leona Maguire as ambassador.

The charitable partnership was born out of a mutual commitment to empowering the next generation of Irish leaders through education. In her capacity as ambassador, Maguire will champion

the Irish American Partnership's mission, specifically its efforts to ensure schools across the island have adequate resources to educate and inspire through its hallmark O'Neill Direct Grants to Schools program.

CEO Mary Sugrue welcomed Maguire to the team, "We are absolutely delighted to have such an incredible

Irish sportsperson and role model join the Irish American Partnership. At 27, Leona has achieved so much, as the first Irishwoman to compete in the Solheim Cup and to win an LPGA event, backed by her entire nation. We are immensely proud and honored to have Leona involved in our mission to invest in and support young people across the island."

Maguire said, "Coming from a family of teachers, I appreciate the importance and value of education, and I'm delighted to play a part in giving back to schools. By investing in Ireland's future—its youth—the

Partnership is ensuring that every child can have the resources they need to learn, and to grow. I'm so proud to join them as an ambassador, as they support children and communities across the length and breadth of the island."

Maguire's steadfast belief in the power of education runs in the family. To tee off the ambassadorship, the Irish American Partnership awarded €10,000 grants St. Patrick's National School-Corlough, and St. Patrick's National School-Castletara, in honor of her parents and principals of the two primary schools, Declan and Breda Maguire. Maguire proudly presented the two grants at a launch event in her native Cavan today.



A never-before-publicly-seen statue of St. Patrick was gifted by The Poor Clare Nuns to Richie Gormley of the Gormley Funeral Home in West Roxbury. The cloistered nuns plan to shut down and sell the Jamaica Plain monastery, which sits on 2.88 acres of land at the Centre Street rotary, adjacent to the Arnold Arboretum. Pictured with Gormley are the Abbess, Sister Clare Frances, OSC, and Sr. Margaret Mary, OSC. The gift was in gratitude to Gormley for his help finding 50 graves for the nuns in nearby West Roxbury.

Amb. Cronin draws a crowd from Brockton to Dublin



Some 100 friends of US Ambassador to Ireland Claire Cronin's from the Brockton/Easton area gathered as a group in August and flew to Dublin to say hello and take in the sights. At top, Deerfield Residence, the ambassador's home in Phoenix Park. At right, scenes from a reception at Bostonian Jay Cashman's Kilkea Castle in nearby Kildare. Below right, the tenor Ronan Tynan is flanked at the castle by, from left, Sue Spiller, Diane Nadeau, the ambassador, and Howard Spiller.

Nadeau family photos



Vincent Crotty



These 4 paintings will be part of my upcoming show called "Liminal Light" on September 24th and 25th at the Barn at Pretty Moon in West Roxbury.

Can't make it? Interested in buying? Send me a message! More details about the show at vincentcrotty.com/shows

Shannon Airport touts its value to west of Ireland tourists



Ireland has unveiled a new \$1 million campaign to promote direct flights from the United States to Shannon Airport. As part of the campaign, Tourism Ireland and the Shannon Airport Group hosted a Sept 15 event for key travel trade and media contacts in Boston. Pictured are: Paul McDonough, Tourism Ireland; Dan Irvine, Shannon Airport Group; Gilliam Griffin, Adare Manor Hotel & Gold Resort; Edel Vaughan, Doolin Ferry Company; Maura Larson, Caherconnell Fort & Sheepdog Demonstration; Mary Considine, The Shannon Group; Alison Metcalfe, VP, Tourism Ireland; Siobhan McManamy, Tourism Ireland; Ruth Vaughan, The Savoy Hotel; Adrienne O'Flynn, Shannon Heritage; Jarlath O'Dwyer, Burren Ecotourism Network; and Dana Welch, Tourism Ireland. *Tourism Ireland photo*

BY MAUREEN FORRY-SORRELL
BOSTON IRISH STAFF

Shannon Airport Group and Tourism Ireland have recently launched a \$1 million marketing campaign to draw American tourists to the Wild Atlantic Way, with daily, non-stop flights to Shannon Airport. At a recent luncheon at Porto Restaurant in Boston's Prudential Center, media and travel-industry guests were given a broad insight into the wide array of attractions in the Shannon region, known as the Gateway to the Wild Atlantic Way.

After a greeting by Tourism Ireland's EVP Alison Metcalfe, guests were introduced to Mary Considine, CEO of the Shannon Airport Group, who pointed out the many reasons that travelers should consider flying into Shannon Airport rather than Cork Airport, or the larger Dublin International Airport, citing among the most compelling reasons the speed with which passengers could expect to get through the airport.

She told the group one passenger had clocked his travel "from ticket counter, through security, to his gate at 11 minutes."

Once they are outside the airport, of course, is where the fun begins for travelers. To show why that's the case,

several speakers gave presentations of the special lure of various destinations in the Shannon region and the Wild Atlantic Way.

Gilliam Griffin of Adare Manor emceed a stunning slideshow of a lovingly restored castle hotel that boasts among its attractions an award-winning golf course designed by the celebrated golf architect Tom Fazio (adaremanor.com).

Adrienne O'Flynn of Shannon Heritage spoke of the fun, family-friendly attractions of Bunratty Castle, best known for the large folk park and interactive Medieval Banquet inside the castle; Craggaunowen, where visitors can learn about Ireland in the Bronze Age; and the Knappogue Castle Medieval Banquet (shannonheritage.com).

For travelers who might spend a bit too much time on YouTube watching border collies intently and intimidatingly herding sheep (Trust us, it's fun to watch!), Maura Fay of Caherconnell Fort offered a better idea: Sheepdog

demonstrations set against the backdrop of an 11th century stone fort. Located in Carron, Co Clare, the Fort boasts canines, sheep, archaeology, and a cafe (caherconnell.com).

The Doolin Ferry Co. was represented by Edel Vaughan, who spoke of the majesty and mystery of the ferry d of the Burren Ecotourism Network estinations: the Aran Islands and the Cliffs of Moher. Boasting a new fleet of boats with stabilizing technology (We asked about that, because those waters can be choppy), the tour boats leave on multiple trips per day, dropping visitors at all three of the Aran Islands, as well as at a jaw-dropping vantage point of the Cliff of Moher from sea-level (doolinferry.com).

For those looking to stay in style in Limerick, Ruth Vaughan of the Savoy Collections proudly showed off two new properties: the 5-star Savoy Hotel, and the 4-star George Hotel, both located in Limerick City Center. Brimming with elegance and personality, both hotels

seems a sure bet for visitors looking to explore the city that gave us King John's Castle, author Frank McCourt, and rock band The Cranberries (thesavoycollection.com).

Representing Unesco Global Geopark, Jarlath O'Dwyer, of the Burren Ecotourism Network, spoke to those visitors who are yearning for an organic, airy, and natural visit to the West of Ireland. said it strives to promote responsible ecotourism, and protect the land's natural resources. Whether it's exploring caves beneath the ground, to biking through the unique flora of the area, to glamping or camping under the stars and waking to yoga at sunrise, the main goal of the Geopark is to connect visitors to the ancient land they walk upon, to leave rejuvenated and at one with the earth (burren.com).

Airfares for this fall have dropped and now is a great time to start planning to enjoy everything the West of Ireland has on offer, starting with an easy entry through Shannon Airport.

Maureen Forry-Sorrell has initiated a Boston Irish travelability group. Follow along with them as they explore #ireland as a disability family. You can learn about it and follow her family visit to Ireland on Facebook at [tinyurl.com/8rz56c75](https://www.facebook.com/tinyurl.com/8rz56c75)

An easy-going first step to the Wild Atlantic Way

Fundraiser for Ciarán Moore family set for Sun., Oct. 2

Dorchester's Florian Hall will hold a special event on Sun., Oct. 2, beginning at 3 p.m.: A fundraiser to benefit the family of Ciarán Moore, who suffered a traumatic brain injury when he was assaulted in Dec. 2021. The event will include a silent auction, raffles, t-shirts and more. To donate, please make checks payable to Moore Family Benefit, c/o Rockland Trust, 2250 Dorchester Ave., 02124. What follows is from the event's Facebook page:

On Dec. 27, 2021, Ciarán

Moore was a victim of an assault, the result of which has left a catastrophic impact on both him and his family. TBI (Traumatic Brain Injury) is not something that he, his wife Shauna, or their three beautiful children, Eve (12), Emme (9), and Micheál (6) were at all familiar with, until now.

After two surgeries and two months in and out of the ICU at Boston Medical and MGH, Ciarán finally was moved to Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospital, where for four



Ciarán Moore, his wife Shauna, and their children, Eve, 12, Emme, 9, and Micheál, 6.

months, he received the best of therapy and medical interventions.

They helped him to put in the work and put in the effort

to afford him the ability to come home in June. Ciarán requires round the clock care, physical therapy, occupational therapy, and speech therapy. He is learning to walk again but has trouble with speech, sight, and short-term memory.

His family and his friends are determined to do everything they can to assist Ciarán with his recovery, but he has a long tough battle in front of him. They all do.

Ní neart go cur le chéile - No strength without Unity.

Ciarán, who was born in

Co. Laois, Ireland, has been living in the US for almost 20 years. Many know him from working in construction with his family and playing a big part in the Fr. Tom's Hurling Club. He has a love for hurling, golf, playing cards, and talking to people, but most of all he has a love for his family.

There will be raffle tickets (\$10 each, or 3 for \$20). Will there be a million-dollar ticket in the batch? Here's hoping! Appreciate any and all support.

The Irish ‘castaways’ of Plimoth Plantation

For a while, they were the Pilgrims’ guests, sharing meals and work chores at the colony

By PETER F. STEVENS
BOSTON IRISH STAFF

When one thinks of the Pilgrims and Plimoth Plantation, the Irish do not come to mind. There was little but enmity and strife between Irish Catholics and Protestants on both sides of the Atlantic in the early 17th century, yet a handful of Irish immigrants set foot in the Pilgrims’ settlement by the sea some five years after the first Thanksgiving. They were literally cast ashore, and for a brief time, had seats at the Pilgrims’ tables and room at their work spaces.

In December 1626, the Sparrow Hawk, a ship from England bound for the Jamestown Colony in Virginia, was buffeted by a gale and monstrous hissing waves and foundered off the shore of present-day Orleans, on Cape Cod. The vessel contained 25 passengers and their baggage. In his history of Plimoth Plantation, its stalwart governor, William Bradford, wrote:

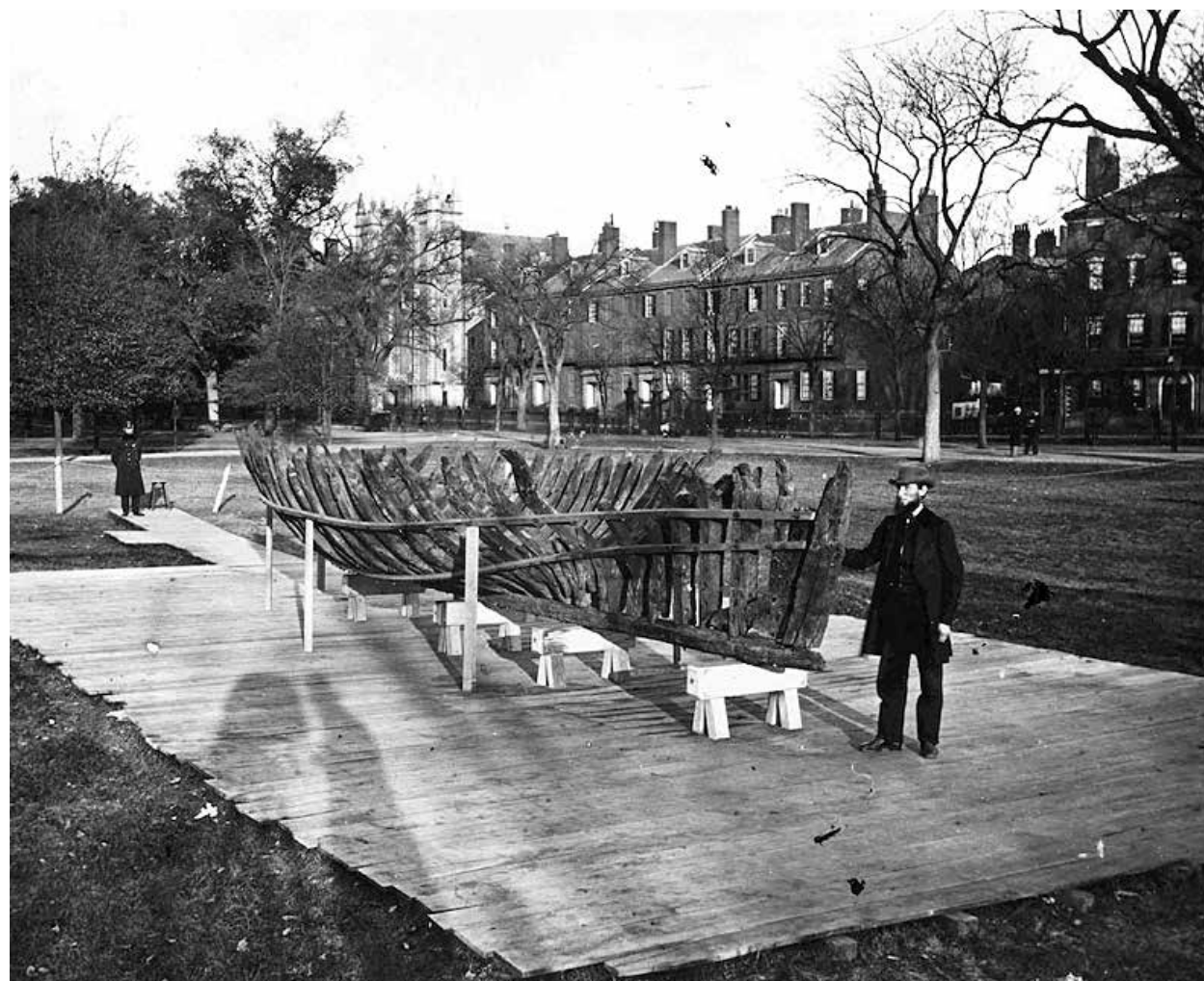
“Ther was a ship, with many passengers in her and sundrie goods, bound for Virginia. They had lost them selves at sea....For they had been 6. weeks at sea, and had no water, nor beere, nor any woode left, but had burnt up all their emptie caske....so as they feared they should be starved at sea, or consumed with diseases, which made them rune this desperate course. But it plased God that though they came so neare ye shoulds of Cap-Codd or else ran stumbling over them in ye night, they knew not how, they came right before a small blind harbore, that lyes about ye midle of Manamoyake Bay, to ye southward of Cap-Codd, with a small gale of wind; and about highwater toucht upon a barr of sand that lyes before it.”

The Sparrow Hawk’s ordeal was far from over. Bradford recorded that “...they laid out an anchore. But towrds the eveing the wind sprunge up at sea, and was so rough, as broake their cable, & beat them over the barr into ye harbor, wher they saved their lives & goods.”

Stranded, the crew and passengers were startled and apprehensive at the sight of local Indians arriving in canoes. The castaways were even more startled when several of the Native Americans began to address them in English. They offered to carry letters from them to Governor Bradford. The Native Americans then guided two of the survivors to Plimoth, and Bradford led a rescue mission with supplies and materials to repair the wreck. The Sparrow Hawk was beyond repair. The Pilgrims ferried the rest of the passengers and crew of the doomed vessel to Plimoth, where they would remain until passage to Jamestown would appear on the horizon.

So where do the Irish figure in the wreck of the Sparrow Hawk? Bradford reveals their presence:

“Considering their distres, their requests were granted, and all helpfullnes done unto them; their goods transported, and them selves & goods sheltered in their houses as well as they could. The cheefe amongst these people was one Mr. Fells and Mr. Sibsie, which had many servants belonging unto them, many of them being irish. Some other ther were yt had a servante or 2. a peece; but ye most were servants, and such as were ingaged to the former persons, who allso had ye most goods. Affter they were hither come, and some thing settled, the maisters desired some ground to imploye ther servants upon; seeing it was like to



This 1865 photo provided by the Pilgrim Hall Museum shows Leander Cosby, of Orleans, Mass., right, standing with the remains of the 1626 shipwreck Sparrow-Hawk, on the Boston Common, in Boston. Cosby was an early visitor to the wreck site when it was uncovered in the 1860s, and helped excavate and preserve the vessel.

Josiah Johnson Hawes/Pilgrim Hall Musuem via AP

be ye latter end of ye year before they could have passage for Virginia.”

Two of the shipwrecked passengers, John Fells and John Sibsey, were English planters whose goal was to attain wealth by cultivating and selling tobacco in Jamestown. The entrepreneurs had brought with them a handful of farmers and indentured Irish servants. Fells alienated Bradford and other Pilgrims through the planter’s relationship with one of his maidservants. Since most of the indentured passengers were Irish, it is quite possible that she was Irish.

Bradford huffed:

“Ths Fells, amongst his other servants, had a maid servante which kept his house & did his household affairs, and by the intimation of some that belonged unto him, he was suspected to keep her, as his concubine; and both of them were examined ther upon, but nothing could be proved, and they stood upon their justification; so with admonition they were dismist. But afterward it appeard she was with child, so he gott a small boat, & ran away with her, for fear of punishmente. First he went to Cap-Anne, and after into ye bay of ye Massachussets, but could get no passage, and had like to have been cast away; and was forst to come againe and submite him selfe; but they pact him away & those that belonged unto him by the first opportunitie, and dismist all the rest as

soone as could, being many untoward people amongst them; although ther were also some that caried them selves very orderly all ye time they stayed.”

Although Bradford acknowledged that for the most part, the seamen and servants of the Sparrow Hawk pulled their weight in the chores and tasks of the colony, he was not unhappy when a ship finally carried them off to Virginia.

During a storm in 1863, the wooden planks and ribs of a Colonial shipwreck were exposed by the shifting sands and currents off Orleans. Cloaked for more than two centuries in mud and sand in a spot dubbed “Old Ship Harbor,” the vessel’s remains were removed from the shore, reconfigured on Boston Common, and put on display at numerous sites. In 1889, the restored 109 planks and ribs of the vessel were donated to the Pilgrim Society. Speculation was rife at the time that the wood was that of the ill-fated Sparrow Hawk.

A trio of scientists put the timbers through a series of tests, and in April 2022, the team revealed that the ruined vessel was of 17th-century English origin. In all likelihood, it was the very one that had brought indentured Irish to Plimoth Plantation, where, for a short time, the men and women lived and worked with the shapers of the Plymouth Colony that was founded in 1620.

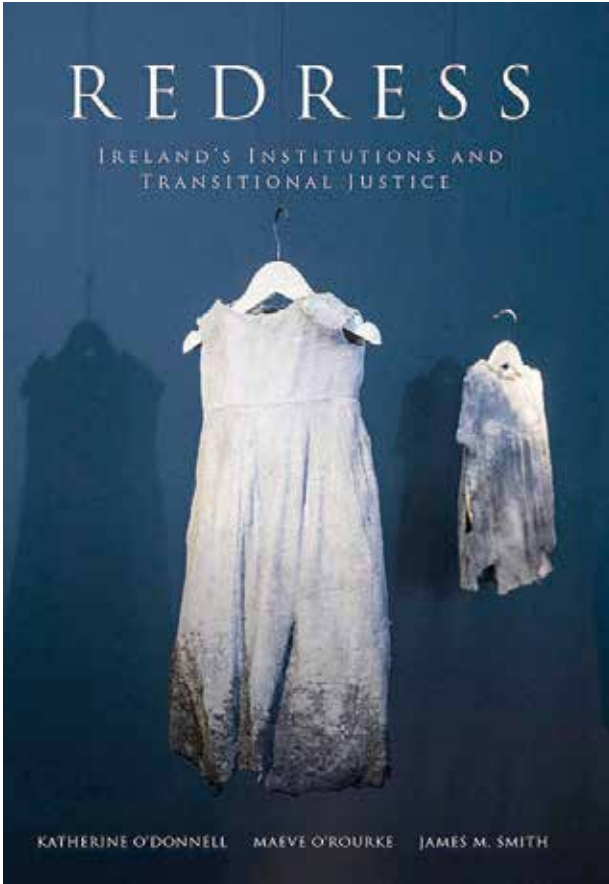
‘REDRESS’ explores justice for institutional abuses

Editors of book of essays meet at BC to plumb the issues

The Boston College Center for Irish Programs was co-host, along with the BC Center for Human Rights and International Justice, in early September to the American launch of “REDRESS: Ireland’s Institutions and Transitional Justice,” a book of essays based on a 2018 Boston College conference examining the controversy over the Magdalene Laundries and other institutional abuses in Ireland (both North and South).

The event featured talks by the book’s editors, Boston College Associate Professor of English and Irish Studies James Smith; Katherine O’Donnell, a professor of philosophy at University College Dublin; and Maeve O’Rourke, a faculty member at the Irish Center for Human Rights. The three have researched and written extensively on the notorious Magdalene Laundries – in which women were confined under dubious circumstances and suffered physical and emotional abuse – and in 2021 were among the co-authors of “Ireland and the Magdalene Laundries: A Campaign for Justice” (Bloomsbury/I.B. Tauris).

Revelations about the Magdalene Laundries led to wider disclosures of institutional abuses by the government: mother and baby homes, county homes and workhouses, industrial and reformatory schools, and a closed, secretive adoption system. While government officials and representatives have issued apologies, initiated investigations, and discussed or agreed to compensation for survivors or their families, Smith and his co-editors – who wrote the introduction and each contributed an essay to “REDRESS,” which was published earlier this year in Ireland – say the matter is far from settled: How will Ireland redress this legacy



of abuse? What constitutes justice?

“REDRESS” invites us to imagine what true justice might look like if the experiences and expertise of survivors and family members were allowed to lead us to more democratic outcomes,” said Smith. “Drawing upon the principles of transitional justice – the full range of processes and mechanisms associated with a society’s attempts to come to terms with a legacy of large-scale past abuses – the book asks how we might assist survivors and the public to evaluate the state’s responses to our histories of institutional abuse and forced family separation.”

These and related issues were the subject of a November 2018 conference with multiple sponsors, including the Institute for the Liberal Arts, Irish Studies Program, MCAS, and the Center for Human Rights and International Justice. Among the highlights was a keynote address by then-Irish Minister for Children and Youth Affairs Katherine Zappone, who oversaw an investigation of institutional care of unmarried mothers and their babies from 1922-1998, prompted by the discovery of a mass grave of child and infant remains on the site of a former mother and baby home.

Building on the themes of the conference, Smith, O’Donnell, O’Rourke, and other contributors to “REDRESS” examine the structures which perpetuated widespread and systematic abuses in the past and consider how political arrangements continue to exert power over survivors, adopted people, and generations of relatives, as well as controlling the remains and memorialization of the dead.

2022 Solas Honorees



Jules Latouche
Haitian Immigrant



Ron O'Hanley
State Street



Lenita Reason
Driving Families Forward Coalition



Chrystel Murrieta Ruiz
Driving Families Forward Coalition



Creating pathways to new beginnings.

2022 Solas Awards Luncheon

October 6, 2022
12:00-2:00 pm

The State Room
60 State Street



To purchase tickets & to learn more about Solas, scan the QR code or email Priya Murali at pmurali@riancenter.org

What's going on with DACA? A Rian Q&A

Q. I saw in the news that the Biden administration proposed a new regulation about the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program. What happened, and what does it mean for DACA holders as well as people interested in obtaining DACA?

A. On Aug. 24, 2022, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) filed a new regulation in the Federal Register to codify the DACA policy in an attempt to defend it. This rule will take effect on Oct. 31 of this year, or 60 days after its official publication on Aug. 30, 2022.

As a quick overview, DACA emerged out of a memorandum signed by then DHS Secretary Janet Napolitano. To qualify for DACA, a person must have continuously resided in the US since

June 15, 2007; be physically present in the US on June 15, 2012; be under the age of 31 on June 15, 2012; came to the country prior to turning 16 years old; meet the education requirement; and have not committed certain criminal acts. If USCIS grants a person DACA, that individual can apply for a work permit.

DACA's legality remains a contentious subject. The policy is currently the subject of a lawsuit in the 5th Circuit Court. This lawsuit appeals a 2021 decision by a judge in the US District Court for the Southern District of Texas to vacate DACA and prevent DHS from processing initial DACA applications.

This newly published final rule replaces the prior memorandum, but

little (unfortunately) changed in terms of eligibility. The requirements remain the same, and the regulation does not create any new eligibility categories. Approvals will continue to last for two years. All current DACA approvals remain in effect under the original memorandum, but any DACA renewals or new applications after October 31, 2022, will be governed by the regulation. One notable aspect of the regulation is that the document affirmatively states that USCIS will not refer any applicant to removal proceedings after a DACA denial unless the agency determines that the case involves fraud, a threat to national security, or public safety concerns.

If you believe that you qualify for



DACA or if you currently have DACA and need to renew it, please contact Rian at 617-984-6542 to be scheduled for a consultation.

Disclaimer: These articles are published to inform the general public, not to advise in individual cases. All law, including immigration law, is always subject to change. If you seek legal advice you can contact Rian's immigration legal staff at 617-984-6542.

Travel, job experience highlighted this J-1's time in Boston

When Luke Doyle was presented with the opportunity to complete his third-year placement abroad, he knew he had to take it. Currently a third-year student at the University of Limerick studying International Business, he just finished up his time in Boston on the J-1 Intern visa.

The opportunity to travel as well as further his career drew him to the J-1 visa. It was a once in a lifetime chance, so he had to take it.

The first step was obtaining his visa. Luke reached out to the team at Rian Immigrant Center to get it sorted. He said that even though the process had a number of steps in it, the Rian J-1 team ensured they were all clear and easy to follow. The templates that Rian provided, like one for the required Training Plan, made things a lot easier for Luke.

He also said that Rian set up numerous meetings to guide him through the process. They were always easy to contact if he had a problem.

When Luke finally arrived in Boston, he was excited. To him, it was surreal to land in such a big city like Boston. One struggle that he had at the beginning was finding accommodations. However, when he ultimately found somewhere to stay for the months he was in the States, things fell into place quite quickly. From there, he began to build his community and make friends in Boston, which he found easy to do. "Big cities always have a lot going on in them," he said, "so it's easy to meet like-minded people and find things to do."

Of course, Luke came to Boston not only to experience the cultural exchange aspect of this visa, but also to gain work experience. He spent more than six



Luke Doyle, center, with his friends on one of their trips to US sites.

months working at the Boston Consulting Group (BCG) as an operations assistant primarily providing local operations and project level support to the business

services director. He really enjoyed his time at BCG.

About his internship, Luke reflected: "I was very lucky to get to work with some really great people, which made things a lot easier." He also got to take advantage of some company perks, like free lunch and gym time, which allowed him to save some money.

Due to Covid, Luke worked on a hybrid schedule, splitting his time between the office and home. Being in the office, he said, was great for socializing and brainstorming ideas. But he enjoyed having a balance: "I also enjoyed being at home when I had a more complex or technical issue to work through."

Luke found enjoyment in Boston, his temporary home, and when he was away, traveling throughout the US. One of his favorite memories in Boston was attending the Boston Calling Music Festival over the summer. He also stayed connected to Ireland by watching GAA matches at the Irish Cultural Centre in Canton.

Luke's top recommendation for future J-1s is to travel. "You really can't do enough of it," he said enthusiastically. "Rent cars, go on road trips, book cheap flights. America is an incredibly vast country both geographically and culturally so just getting to see as much of it as possible is a must."

Now that he is back in Ireland, Luke will finish up his last year of university and travel after he graduates. "I plan to take what I've learned this last year with me," he says.

The team at Rian J-1 wishes Luke the best of luck! For pictures of Luke's time in Boston and to follow along with what Rian J-1s get up to while they are in the States, check out @rianj_1 on Instagram!

Taking a look at new driver's license law in Massachusetts

Q. What is the status of the Work and Family Mobility Act? What should I know about it?

A. On June 9, 2022, the Massachusetts Senate voted, 32-8, to override Gov. Baker's veto of the Work and Family Mobility Act to create a law that allows state residents, regardless of immigration status, to apply for a driver's license. This law will take effect next year, on July 1, 2023. This means that if you do not have legal status, you cannot apply for a Massachusetts driver's license until that date.

To resolve some myths and misinformation about the law, we ought to examine what does and does not change:

Starting on July 1, 2023, the Massachusetts Registry of Motor Vehicles will

allow individuals to present a foreign passport or consular identification document along with another document (either a birth certificate, foreign county ID, marriage certificate or divorce decree issued by US state or territory, or a driver's license from a different US state or territory) to prove their identities and dates of birth. If any of these documents are not in English, then they must be accompanied by a certified translation.

These potential drivers will still need to demonstrate knowledge of the rules of the road through a learner's permit exam and a road test, akin to any other individual intending to acquire a driver's license. If granted, the driver will receive a Standard ID, not a REAL ID. Although a Standard ID is not federal-

ly compliant - so it will not serve for domestic air travel after May 3, 2023 - the Standard ID allows Massachusetts residents to operate vehicles and demonstrate proof of identity.

The text of law specifically states that personal information, such as failure to provide proof of lawful status, cannot be shared by the RMV unless "required by federal law or as authorized by regulations promulgated by the attorney general." As a result of this language, if you apply for a driver's license or learner's permit under the new law, you should not put yourself at risk of enforcement action by immigration officials.

This new law does not impact foreign visitors who intend to drive in Massachusetts. In those circumstances, the

same set of regulations apply. Massachusetts allows foreign nationals to operate a motor vehicle in the state provided they possess a valid driver's license, are over the age of 16, drive the same type of vehicle that they are licensed to operate in their home country, carry an English translation of the license if the license is not in English, and not have a suspended or revoked license.

Disclaimer: These articles are published to inform the general public, not to advise in individual cases. All law, including immigration law, is always subject to change. If you seek legal advice you can contact Rian's immigration legal staff at 617-984-6542.

Fall Events & Classes

9/23/2022 - Irish Comedian Ardal O' Hanlon - Fr. Dougal - Live in the tent

9/24/22 - Irish Music Concert 'Bohola' - Jimmy Keane & Pat Broaders

10/9/22 - Derek Warfield & The Young Wolfe Tones Live in Concert

10/13/22 - An Evening of Irish Song with Briege Murphy

10/22/22 - The 3rd Annual Boston Irish Beer Festival

11/05/2022 - 'Jokes My Irish Father Told Me' with comedian Dave Kane

THE PUB

Open Traditional Music Sessions

Thursday's 6:30pm

Joey Abarta, Colm Gannon & Friends

Friday's 6:30pm

The ICC Friday night session group

Saturday's 6 - 8pm

Aoife Griffin & Friends!

Boston Irish Beerfest

A Taste of Ireland!

October 22nd 2022

www.irishculture.org

The Irish Cultural Centre | 200 New Boston Drive | Canton, MA 02021 | (781) 821 8291



Irish Cultural Center Fall Class Schedule 2022

Monday's

Children's Irish Step Dancing & Sean Nos with Jackie O'Riley
Beginners 4pm to 4:45pm
Advancing 4:45 to 5:45pm

Irish Set Dancing with Cait Bracken
All Ages & Abilities 7pm

Thursday's

Irish History Classes with Sean Murphy
All Ages & Abilities
32 Counties History Class 6pm to 7:30pm
Topical History Class 7:30pm to 9pm
This class takes place online - see our website for current topics

Saturday's

Traditional Irish Music Classes with Denis Galvin
All Ages & Abilities
Tin - Whistle 9:30am to 10:30am
Fiddle 10:30am to 11:30am
Button Accordion 11:30am to 12:30pm

Visit www.irishculture.org to register for any of our ongoing classes!



News from the Irish Pastoral Centre

Anseo Le Cheile-Here Together

IPC Staff aboard the L.E James Joyce



The Irish Pastoral Centre staff had a great time welcoming Ireland's Navy Ship, the L.E James Joyce to Boston on Monday, September 12th. Also present was Ireland's Ambassador to the United States, Geraldine Byrne Nason who enjoyed her first official visit to Boston.

Upcoming Special Events

SHINE Medicare Support Program:



The IPC is delighted to announce that we will be offering a series of in-house SHINE counselling sessions. SHINE assists those who are new to Medicare understand the many options, on a one to one basis, Such as: when to enroll, and which options might best meet their needs. This service is available by appointment only: Call Peggy 617-265-5300 ext 6 to schedule:
Wednesday, Oct. 19th 10AM-1PM.
Wednesday, Nov. 9, 1-4PM, and
Monday, Dec. 5th from 10AM-1PM.

Sunday Sing-A-Long with Mossy:



The IPC is delighted to announce a new social outing for Adams Village: The Sunday Afternoon Sing-Along! Dance away with us through the autumn and winter to the mighty music of Mossy Coughlan and others! The dates for the new Sunday Sing-A-Longs are:
Sunday, October 9th, 3-5 PM,
Sunday, November 20th, 3-5 PM
Sunday, December 11th 3-5PM

Save the Date! Florian Hall Thanksgiving Feast:



Join us for a Thanksgiving Celebration and Lunch on Thursday, November 17th at Florian Hall. It will be a great afternoon to gather once more with family and Friends as we head into the winter season. There will be food, music, and of course- Dancing! More details to follow in the October Edition of our IPC Newsletter.

Save the Date:
Thursday November 17th,
Florian Hall.
11AM-3PM.

IPC Newsletter Mailing List:

If you would like a complimentary copy of our full color, monthly newsletter delivered to your home, please call 617-265-5300 to be added to the list!

We are located at 540 Gallivan Blvd, Dorchester, MA 02124.
 617-265-5300 www.ipcboston.org @ipcboston



IRISH PASTORAL CENTRE PRESENTS NEW SENIOR COFFEE GROUP



Beginning Tuesday, October 11th at 1PM all are welcome to our weekly "Young at Heart" Coffee Group
 Located at St. Jerome's New Parish Centre
 1203 Commercial St, North Weymouth, MA 02189.



The IPC has been serving the needs of our community since 1987. We hold three senior coffee mornings per week. Mondays in Brighton, Wednesdays in Dorchester, Thursdays in West Roxbury... and we are delighted to announce our fourth coffee club... Young at Heart Coffee Club in Weymouth!



For More Information call 617-265-5300

IRISH PASTORAL COMMUNITY SUPPORT CENTRE



Community Outreach,	Immigration Services,
Pastoral Care,	Employment Resources,
Senior Programs,	Housing Resources,
Emotional Support,	Family Events,
Social Activities,	Mother & Toddler Group,
Returning to Ireland,	Community Newsletter,

Serving the Greater Boston Irish Community since 1987
www.ipcboston.org | 617-265-5300

 "ANSEO LE CHEILE" - "HERE TOGETHER" 

All are welcome to visit the Irish Pastoral Centre's new offices in Dorchester

The IPC has moved to our new location at 540 Gallivan Blvd., (Unit Rear). We are conveniently located next to College Hype and below Boston Sports Club. We have ground floor access at last with complimentary parking! The phone remains the same, 617-265-5300, www.ipcboston.org @ipcboston. We look forward to welcoming you!

On July 24, 2022, at Croke Park in Dublin,

‘I found my place again and I belonged’

By JOHN CONNOLLY
SPECIAL TO BOSTON IRISH

The Background

Departing from my home in Milltown, Co. Galway, I travelled to Shannon in March 2001 and made my way to Boston for what I thought would be a short enough adventure for around six months. After a series of extensions, I found myself in Boston City Hall working for Mayor Menino’s Arts, Tourism and Special Events department where I was renamed Johnny Cannoli.

It was John Connolly, however, who got married and had twins and panicked about not making enough of a connection to the homeland for the kids. Covid did not help with all trips put on hold. During lockdown, I found myself getting stuck in a series of sentimentality loops where I’d wait up late watching old Gaelic matches on YouTube...remembering the hot summer of 1995 when Clare hurlers emerged as true giant killers, capturing the imagination of the nation, even finding clips of Gay McManus punching the ball in against Mayo in 1989.

I was behind the goal that day cheering my head off. But now I was stuck at my kitchen counter feeling a sense of panic in my chest about not visiting home more when the skies were clear and the world less complicated. My wife and I booked our tickets and, of course, two for our six-year-old twins. We were even polite enough to come down with Covid two weeks before we went. Galway footballers, too, were polite enough to beat Derry in the All-Ireland semi-final. And best of all, the plane took off when it was supposed to, pointed toward home.

The Story

What a difference 22 years make. I was on my own as we had just parted. With a quickening heart and cradling two match programs and two bags of Tayto crisps, I joined the crescendoing electric streams of maroon and white, and green and gold, and began my uncertain ascent of the gray snaking stairs. “You’re ready for a fine feast,” said a Kerry man smiling kindly, and he was right: A quota would have to be met before my return trip back to Boston, the land of tedious Lays. As I reached the end of the steps, I was met with that vibrant sliver of green grass, that first moment where I feel that this is real.

The wide expanse of Croke Park opens before me, in what is almost like a personal parting of the Red Sea moment (minus the chasing Egyptians) To think of the journey this very stadium itself had taken, a cultural cauldron in a time of war, a defiant fort of national identity, a symbol of a modern inclusive Ireland, and now it shone as one of the world’s best sporting arenas, hosting one of



John Connolly, left, is shown with Paul Murphy of Athenry, Co. Galway, at Croke Park last summer.
Photo courtesy John Connolly



the great national gathering occasions.

The last time I took a seat in Croke Park, it was partial building site, and within a year I was gone for what would be a lifetime. Today, holding up my camera phone to this vast hulking experience seemed like such a small, ridiculous, absurd act, like trying to scoop from the fountain of youth with a fork. Seeing a living legend and former great Galway hurler, John Connolly, take his seat in front of me, I deftly filed my phone away to strike a non-tourist pose: here for the game, not for the Instagram moment. I did make a mental note to ask for a selfie after the match - if Galway won.

Even as I got myself physically acclimated, atmosphere poured into me and I trembled through the parade of the players, the waving of the maroon and white flags, the anthem, the roar, and then the game itself. Players seemed to move with greater athletic purpose than what I remembered, and they didn’t hold their positions as they flitted this way and that, making it difficult for me to make out their numbers, like trying to keep track of sugared kindergarteners at an aquarium. I did find the pony-tailed No. 7, Kieran Molloy, and that relaxed me as I found my bearings.

A tight, yet expressive, match swung back and forth deep into the second

half just like it did that day in 2000 in the building site bowl, the day my heart sank in defeated despair. But in 2022, as I marveled at the wizardry of both of Shane Walsh’s kicking feet, I simultaneously slipped into a serene detachment from the pursuit of the win and closed my eyes to hear and sponge up the roars, the curving mass of sound rising and falling around me, lifting me. In those poignant moments, it dawned on me that I had shut the door on any possibility of ever being in Croke Park watching Galway footballers in an All-Ireland Final again. I had almost entered a vivid dream-state. I was present but I was not in this world.

Having been away for 22 years and having Galway not getting to a final in 21 years, there was no way, in my mind, that the stars could align to the degree that we would all be in the same place again. And even if they did make a final and I was at home, I’d surely have lost my standing as a ‘real’ fan, the hardy soul who would go to Galway matches in the winter and watch four matches in a given day on the hidden circuit of the village competition. I was that happy soldier, too. Then. But the present version of myself was not even watching Galway matches in Irish pubs in Boston, a really sad loss to the social calendar, thanks to the convenience of streaming and the emergence of smoothie culture.

I was boxed in watching games on my laptop at the kitchen counter stress-eating crackers, rice-cakes, deli turkey, and while delighted for the technology, I lamented the loss of those shared emotional outbursts of joy, excitement, sorrow, and emptiness, all in one sitting. The nerves were still the same, of course, but there was no questioning the overall disconnect. I was so starved for conversation that I would finish watching the game on my laptop and, if Galway were victorious, I would play back the game Galway Bay FM radio, listening to an old school friend haughtily call the shots on commentary. I’d smile as he’d access an elevated breathlessness, a voice on the edge of the abyss being lost at a perceived and biased injustice over a bad refereeing decision, knowing that everything would be all right in the end.

I was more hotwired into the Gaelic football scene than ever before because my brother had been anointed Video Analyst for the football team. What pride! And they couldn’t have chosen a better lad because when it came to commitment, he was always there, and he is definitely The Smart One. My parents and sister would remark that he’d come home from work and crack the laptop open right away and be gone for hours. In some galaxy somewhere, the stars were inching toward an alignment.

I won’t tell a lie and say that the All-Ireland final date wasn’t buried

somewhere deep in my mind when I booked the dates to finally go to Ireland after over four years of waiting and wondering. On my laptop, I watched perennial underdogs Galway storm through powerhouses Mayo, Armagh, and Derry and then everything shot to the brink of reality. No matter what, I'd be home in Galway for the All-Ireland Football Final and soak up the pre-match excitement. My brother was part of the backroom team and this meant that I would bypass the highly strung scramble for tickets. Hope was alive! Still, I saw myself as the blow-in who had not put in his time and therefore was undeserving. Sitting in my sister's kitchen in Ireland, I voiced this to a crowded room and was met with irritated befuddlement, bordering on anger. This was insult territory and I was bluntly informed that I was going and there would be more discussion, so let's get back to being nervous about the match and let's have no more of this martyr carry-on.

One of the great joys on match-day was to be folded into the embrace of a pre-match tradition by my childhood friend, where I joined a jovial scrum of multi-generational fans in a small, bright and happy apartment in Glasnevin, hosted by an aunt who was a refugee from the west of Ireland, giving everyone that crucial base in the Big-Smoke, with some sandwiches thrown in. Here there were no light entries into fully formed sentences. We communicated in nervous, half-baked non-sequiturs, all tethered to the nervous anticipation of the match, but we all finished them in each other's heads, everyone nodding.

Memories from 25 years ago and more were jolted into action and were paraded out where they were greeted as old friends. Fond recollections of sparsely attended Under-16 games and who marked whom took their place alongside memories of larger, more widely reported historic occasions, fluid and running into one another, a stream of community consciousness. It also helped that I not only remembered these days, too, but had a tighter hold of those days from the past.

Despite my deeply personal 'Road to Damascus' moment, the game con-



The Sam Maguire cup with the Kerry and Galway jerseys at Croke Park in advance of the GAA All-Ireland Senior Football Championship Final match between Kerry and Galway in Dublin. Brendan Moran/Sportsfile photo

tinued, the players were not distracted, and, ultimately, we didn't make it over the line. My placid coma-state was interrupted briefly, and I did suffer a brief emptiness. It was different, though. I had tears of pride in my eyes, proud to have been present in this moment and for allowing myself to enjoy it.

The mood was a little on the heavy side when I met back up with my friends,

but the Kerry fans helped us out by being gracious and classy winners. Galway had done us proud and, while crestfallen, we felt pride thinking about how one of our own had given an inspired performance for the ages. It was an honor and a privilege to be in the area where greatness unfolded from the two feet of Shane Walsh, the mercurial Galway marksman who came of age on the biggest stage of all. Crowds were gathered outside pubs on that warm July evening, grabbing a pint or two before hitting the road.

'Hey, John Connolly,' said a lad

holding a pint on the sidewalk as I approached him. He was from Milltown, two years ahead of me in school, and I never had a full conversation with him. Shelving theatrical tones, a warm, genuine handshake was exchanged, and we briefly spoke of the happy journey we had taken together through this team. A few steps later, I hear my name called from stalled traffic and it's one of the village's former underage footballers. Truly a great player and a lovely person, in the same class as the other lad. I don't look left. I don't look right. I float over and the brief handshake and conversation don't mention the distance, the years, but just picks up on a strand and it's where we were and where we are, all in one instance.

This was the scene I never thought I'd be part of. The matches are incredible social occasions, where you see people and effortlessly reconnect in a 'we never went away' type of way. The warm handshake is a world away from the

box checking friend requests that we experience so frequently. No talk of Boston. No talk of where are you now? Lads from the village exchanging a warm hello and that deeply rooted familiarity where I am truly welcomed back to the Tribe, simultaneously feeling like a ghost but not being treated like one.

Was it a reawakening or an uncorking, I don't know. A personal cultural revival? I know that the combination of Time and living far away will chip away at the feeling of that day and ultimately sink it somewhere deep, but it won't ever take it away. As part of a large jigsaw, I found my place again and I belonged. It was a tribal thing and was always in there, but I hadn't let it come out in a long, long time and I think I did that because I never thought I would have the occasion to. Winning brings all the elation and tears, but there's a bit of growth and eye-opening that happens in those stunned silences. Home just never leaves you.



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Boston's Fall Theatre Season

Remarkable storytelling can be found on Greater Boston stages

By R. J. DONOVAN
SPECIAL TO THE BIR

"Dracula (A feminist revenge fantasy, really)" Through Oct. 23, Umbrella Arts Center

"Dracula" has been thrilling audiences on the page, stage, and screen for decades. Playwright Kate Hamill takes a new look at Bram Stoker's classic, spinning a quirky tale of humor and horror with a full-throated battle cry against toxic masculinity. In short, The Count meets the #MeToo Movement. You can expect "... no damsels in distress, no romanticized villains, just a gleeful stake through the heart of the patriarchy." (theumbrellaarts.org)

"A Bronx Tale"

Oct. 9, Emerson Colonial Theatre



Bronx-born Chazz Palminteri, left, wrote and performs this autobiographical, one-man play depicting his compelling coming-of-age story. After witnessing a gangland killing when he was just nine years old, he faced a fateful choice between joining organized crime vs. following the honest example of his hardworking bus driver father. Palminteri plays 18 characters over the course of the evening. (emersoncolonialtheatre.com)

"Mr. Swindle's Traveling Peculiarium and Drink-Ory Garden" - Oct. 12 - Nov. 6, Harpoon Brewery

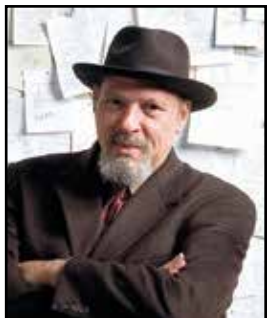
This irreverent entertainment experience transports grown-up audiences back in time to a turn-of-the-century traveling medicine show. Led by the infamous Mr. B.S. Swindler - that splendid scoundrel of eclectic entertainment - the evening features whimsical characters, magical potions and world-class artistry. Ninety minutes prior to each performance, audience members may enjoy tasty eats and potent potables in the Drink-Ory Garden. Patrons then make their way into the climate-controlled Peculiarium big top for a mind-bending spectacle of variety and vaudeville-style performances. (harpoonbrewery.com/)



"Joe Turner's Come And Gone"

Oct. 14 - Nov. 13, The Huntington Theatre

The Huntington has had a long and artistically gratifying association with the works of renowned playwright August Wilson. "Joe Turner" tells of Herald Loomis, who arrives at a Pittsburgh boardinghouse in search of his lost wife - but first he must regain a sense of his own heritage and identity. This tale of spiritual and emotional resurrection will officially open the Huntington's newly refurbished Main Stage venue in the Back Bay. (huntingtontheatre.org)



"Hairspray"

Oct. 18 - 30, Citizens Bank Opera House

It's Baltimore in the '60s and uncool 16-year-old Tracy Turnblad is determined to cha-cha her way onto TV's most popular teen dance show. "You Can't Stop The Beat" in this sweet Tony Award-winning concoction of big hair, teen heartthrobs, and bouncy musical numbers by Marc Shaiman and Scott Wittman. The cast is led by Andrew Levitt aka Nina West (from "RuPaul's Drag Race") as Edna Turnblad. (broadwayinboston.com)

"The Legend of Sleepy Hollow"

Oct. 21 - Nov. 6, Greater Boston Stage Company

Washington Irving's spell-bound characters get a ghoulish makeover in a funny, one-man show. In this world premiere, Paul Melendy summons a full cast of characters to life, including schoolmaster Ichabod Crane, love interest Katrina Von Tassel, ruffian Brom Bones, and, of course, the townsfolk of Sleepy Hollow. Try not to lose your head over this Halloween treat. (greaterbostonstage.org)

"Roald Dahl's Matilda, the Musical"

Oct. 21 - Nov. 20, Wheelock Family Theatre

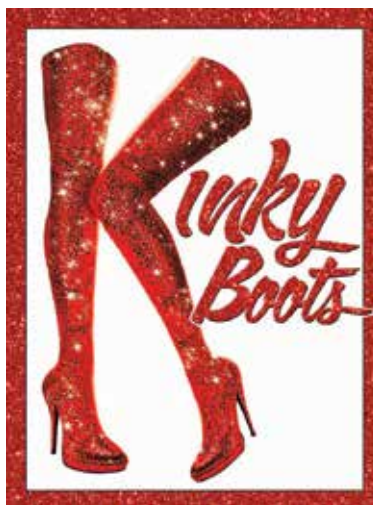
Founded in 1981, WFT has staged more than 100 family-friendly, thought-provoking productions. Next up is "Matilda," the story of a feisty little girl who loves getting lost in books. She also happens to possess the gift of super powers. Although she has a less than happy homelife and faces countless obstacles at school - including the cantankerous, child-hating, headmistress Miss Trunchbull - she ultimately rises above it all. Smart and funny, "Matilda" shows us (with a wink) that "sometimes you have to be a little bit naughty." (wheelockfamilytheatre.org)

"Kinky Boots"

Oct. 25 - Nov. 6, North Shore Music Theatre

Inspired by true events, sassy and uplifting "Kinky Boots" shares the story of a young man who inherits a floundering British shoe factory. With bankruptcy looming, he forms an unlikely partnership with a drag queen to produce and promote a fabulous line of high heeled boots. And yes, the business is saved.

The infectious score from this Tony Award winner is by pop queen Cyndi Lauper. (nsmt.org)



"On Beckett"

Oct. 26 - 30, Paramount Theatre, ArtsEmerson

In "On Beckett," the unparalleled actor, clown, and comedian Bill Irwin explores his relationship to the work of legendary Irish playwright Samuel Beckett, widely regarded as one of the greatest dramatists of the 20th century. Irwin's physical approach to the comic and tragic sides of Beckett's writing invites audiences to experience the writer's language like never before. Referencing passages from "Waiting for Godot," "Endgame" and more, "On Beckett" has been critically hailed as "a delicious piece of theater." This riveting one-man show premiered at Irish Repertory Theatre in New York. (artsemerson.org/)



"Dirty Dancing In Concert"

Oct. 28, Boch Center, Shubert Theatre

For one night only, the beloved Patrick Swayze-Jennifer Grey classic gets its first live concert treatment. Experience the digitally remastered hit from the '80s on a sweeping cinema screen, along with a live band and singers performing the film's iconic songs. Immediately following the film, the band and singers will throw an encore party to send you singing and dancing back to "the time of your life." (bochcenter.org)

THE PLAY THAT GOES WRONG

"The Play That Goes Wrong"

Nov 11 - Dec. 18, Lyric Stage Company of Boston

It's opening night for the Cornley University production of "The Murder at Haversham Manor." However, things are spiraling from bad to worse in this 1920s mash-up of Monty Python and Sherlock Holmes. The leading lady is unconscious, the corpse won't stay dead, the actors are mangling their lines and the scenery is collapsing (literally) all around them. Will they make it to the final curtain? Break a leg. (lyricstage.com)

Blue Man Group

Ongoing, Charles Playhouse

They're still bald, they're still blue, and they still serve up a rocking night of music, comedy, and audience interaction. (blueman.com)

...

(Covid safety precautions may vary by venue.)

A study in unison, tempo, and rhythm

BY SEAN SMITH,
BOSTON IRISH CONTRIBUTOR

"Live in Concert," The Kilfenora Céilí Band • The Kilfenora Céilí Band has been around since before ceili bands were even a thing: As far back as 1888, it was a fife and drum band that, by about 20 years later, had morphed into the ceili band model as we know it today. Whatever your feelings about ceili bands – and no, not everyone likes them – there's no denying that Kilfenora is immensely popular as well as it is storied, and well. Beyond Ireland. So, with the pandemic causing difficulties in scheduling live appearances, in 2020 the band arranged to stage a concert for the purpose of making a DVD that would tide its many fans over until some degree of normalcy came along.

Kilfenora – much like traditional Irish music itself – has changed over the decades, having long since gone beyond playing for dances and competitions to also making concert and TV appearances while fashioning a more entertainment-oriented act: Occasionally employing arrangements more nuanced than the all-together-now ceili band format, incorporating tunes outside the ceili band canon, and collaborating with guest singers and set or step dancers.

Ultimately, however, they are what they are, a champion ceili band built around strict unison, tempo, and rhythm. And that's largely what you get on "Live in Concert," as Kilfenora's 13 members, who between them play 20 instruments (from fiddles and accordion to banjo, mandolin and drums, and even cello) perform 18 tune sets or songs with élan and gusto. About a third of

the content is taken from their most recent CD, "Both Sides Now," which was produced by the estimable Donal Lunny (Planxty/Bothy Band).

Lunny's association with the band is an example of Kilfenora's willingness to broaden, even stretch, its artistic reach. Their opening to the "Dinky Doofer" set – two polkas composed by the band's concertina player, Tim Collins – is a fascinating, slow build of repeated phrases, first on piano and gradually strings until flute and concertina take up the tune, with the other melody instruments coming in over the next two rounds; "The Coolaholliga," the second tune in the medley, includes some sweet harmonies. Along similar lines is Kilfenora's setting of "Little Bird," a soulful, moderate-speed piece by Anglo-Irish guitarist/accordionist Tim Edey, opening with a banjo/cello pairing. It's all very reminiscent of an ensemble like Lúnasa (whose Kevin Crawford also has worked with Kilfenora) or Boston's own now-departed Childsplay.

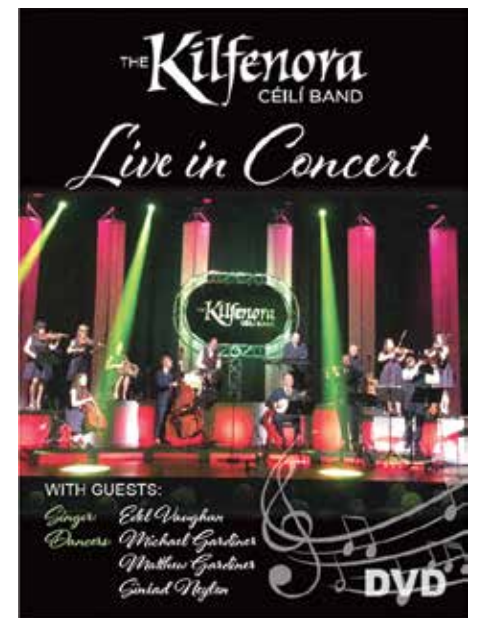
More typical fare are the straight-ahead sets like "Molly Bán" and "Lillies in the Field," both collections of reels, the "Our Last Night Together" hornpipe medley, and "The '95 Jigs" – the latter being a medley the band debuted more than 25 years ago (not even one-fourth of Kilfenora's lifespan). But it bears mentioning that where there is room for beauty and virtuosity in the classic ceili band sound, Kilfenora continually achieves this state of grace amidst the propulsion.

Kilfenora's acknowledgement of new directions also is reflected in their sets with three step dancers, brothers Michael and Matthew Gardiner, and Sinead

Neylon. The Gardiners, Colorado-born of Irish parents, are "Riverdance" veterans and a social media phenomenon through their videos on Tik Tok and Instagram. Neylon is hardly one to overlook, though. All three are athletic and vigorous as they are highly skilled, and definitely lend a certain theatricality to their dancing.

"Live in Concert" acknowledges a sad transition: the death in 2020 of vocalist Jerry Lynch, whose family has extensive ties to the band – his father P.J. was its long-time leader and his brother John (mandolin, banjo) took up the mantle almost three decades ago. Fortunately, six-time All-Ireland champion and frequent Kilfenora guest Edel Vaughan is back to lend her sean-nos-influenced singing on Joni Mitchell's "Both Sides Now" (although she botches the words, repeating some of verse two in verse three), Collins's "Clare My Heart, My Home" and two in Gaelic, "Na Chomaraigh Aoibhinn Ó" (by Maurus Ó Faoláin) and "Ardaigh Cuain" (Seán Mac Ambróis). These songs not only showcase Vaughan's exquisite singing, but also Kilfenora's ability to serve as a back-up band.

There's certainly no issue with the music, or the overall performance on the DVD, but one might quibble about a few things. The editing for the sequences involving the dancers is not always quite as precise as one might like it to be – we get an occasional glimpse of the Gardiners and/or Neylon just a second or two after what might well have been a show-stopping sequence. Vaughn performs her segments on an adjacent stage (as do the step dancers), with large video screens behind her that



show close-ups of band members as they accompany her; perhaps this set-up was supposed to emphasize the singer-band collaboration, physically separate though they might be, but it winds up being somewhat of a distraction.

Garry Shannon, Kilfenora's animated flute and whistle player, provides introductions to some segments with a few quirky, folksy bon mots. But these take place in a studio setting rather than on the stage, which kind of raises the question as to why, if this DVD is supposed to replicate a Kilfenora concert experience, didn't he just do the intros during that part of the filming? And why not have a few other band members have a turn?

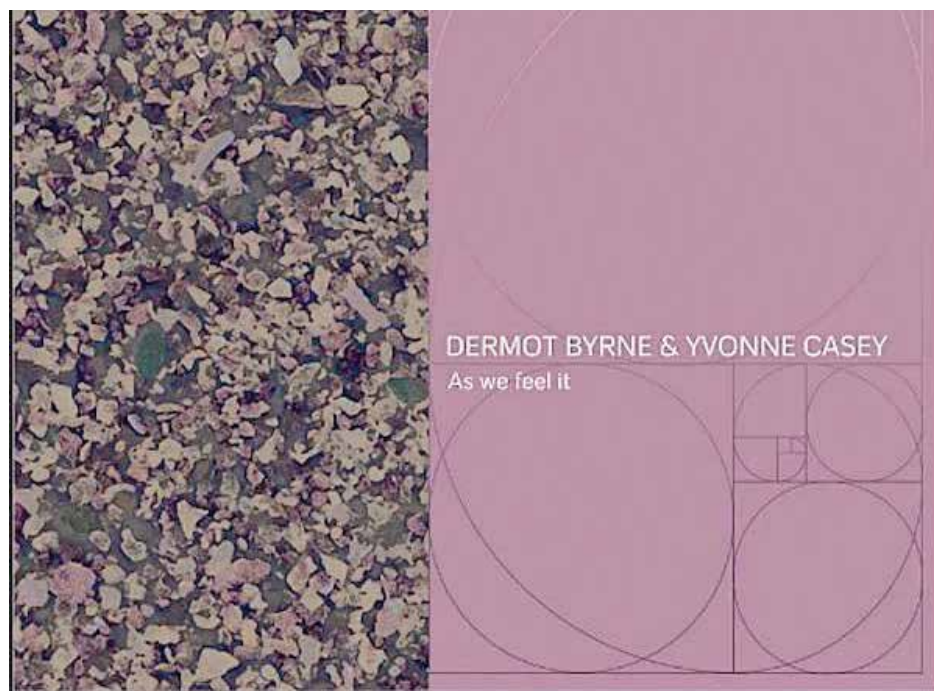
Such details are unlikely to bother most Kilfenora fans, though. This will do fine until the real thing comes along again. (Nota bene: It actually has. Since the DVD was released, Kilfenora has appeared at the Fleadh Nua in Ennis and Fleadh Cheoil in Mullingar; they're due to perform this month in Limerick and in Killarney the next.)

[kilfenoraceiliband.com]

Matching each other note for note with aplomb and vibrance.

Dermot Byrne and Yvonne Casey, "As We Feel It" • Byrne's Donegal-influenced accordion playing has been a hallmark of Altan for nigh on three decades now, while Casey is a fine exponent of the Clare fiddle style who has played with the Ceili Bandits as well as traditional denizens like Micho Russell and Kevin Griffin. Both also have developed a propensity for composing tunes that are squarely "in the tradition" – generally eschewing rhythmic and melodic divergences or novel time signatures that have become familiar features (not necessarily unwelcome ones) in contemporary Irish/Celtic tunesmithery. And that's the focus of this album, entirely comprised of Bryne and Casey originals.

But it's not even so much what they play – and what they play is wonderful stuff – as how they play it that makes "As We Feel It" a pleasure. Unaccompanied, Casey and Byrne do straight-up unison, matching each other note for note with aplomb and vibrance. Take the pair of Casey reels, starting with "Native Codes," which has a couple of nifty recurring phrases that almost



sound plucked from Appalachia; the set continues into the exuberant major-key "Yellow Gem," with an effusive little flourish in the B part. A set of energetic Bryne reels, "Tribute to Finbarr and

Joe/The Milbrae Rose," makes for a brilliant contrast in tone and mood, as does Casey's jig medley, "Herbs in the Burren/Rainbow Light."

Byrne and Casey go beyond jigs

and reels: "Citi's Dance" by Byrne is an elegant, deft barndance, while Casey's "Waltz for Cáilín" is similarly sweet-toned. "PK's March" (Byrne) is a particularly stirring number, with some punchy accents and phrasing.

The two also each have a pair of solo tracks: Byrne's jigs "Lag Na Carriage/Trá Bán" and the aptly-named "Freewheelin'," which he plays first as a highland – that Donegal twist on the Scottish strathspey – and then as a rip-roaring reel. Casey combines her moody "Tracin' Jig" with an intricate reel, "The Sparking Light," both set mainly in the fiddle's lower register and giving a different, darker feel; her air "Cnoc Na Rí," which closes the album, is expressive to the hilt, with a little vibrato here and there to accentuate the emotional quality.

There is no shortage, fortunately, of tunes that are from the tradition. But those that are "in the tradition" can add depth and dynamism to what's already there, and Byrne and Casey have accomplished this to a delightful degree. [dermotandyvonnemusic.com]

20th annual Brian J. Honan 5K set for Sun., Sept. 25

Boston Irish Magazine and BostonIrish.com have joined with other local companies to help sponsor the 20th annual Brian J. Honan 5K Road Race on Sun., Sept 25. The family-friendly run/walk welcomes everyone from competitive runners to friends of the late beloved councillor, who died after a surgical procedure in July 2002, onto a flat and fast USA Track and Field-certified course for a sanctioned race that covers just over 3 miles of Allston-Brighton.

Age Groups for the race are: 19 & under, 20-29, 30-39, 40-49, 50-59, 60-69, 70 & over.

Participants will start from the CVS at 181 Brighton Avenue in Allston Village, pass through historic Union Square and onto Cambridge Street toward picturesque Brighton Center on Washington Street. The race continues past Brighton Center on Washington Street, U-turning at Fairbanks Street for the run back. After passing by Boston's District 14 police station, runners will begin the last leg and complete the 3.1-mile course at the CVS. According to the organizers of the race, "The mission of the Brian J. Honan Charitable Fund is the continued development of those causes



Brian Honan at his seat in the City Council chamber.

which Brian championed throughout the course of his life. As a teacher, a prosecutor, and a city councillor, Brian endeavored to give ordinary people the chance to live extraordinary lives – through education, recreation, housing and healthcare.

"The Fund will support and foster programs to help local communities realize the true potential of its citizens in creating those extraordinary lives. Much in the same way that Brian's vocation in serving the people of his district – seniors, young people, community-based workers and educators, to name only a few – left

an unparalleled legacy, it is our intent to strengthen the fabric of our local communities by continuing his great work on their behalf and honoring his lifelong commitment to people. "While we will never forget Brian's boundless energy, charming wit, extraordinary intellect and unbridled passion for Allston and Brighton, the Foundation in his name will build on that legacy by developing a bridge of critical resources between donors and the organizations in our midst which work every day to help ordinary people to live extraordinary lives."

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For Nuala Kennedy, innovation, creativity within the tradition is what she cherishes

BY SEAN SMITH

BOSTON IRISH CONTRIBUTOR

For Irish musician, singer and composer Nuala Kennedy, life is often analogous to one's personal library, replete with inspirations, memories, lessons, cautionary tales, and every emotion on the human spectrum – the scale of it sometimes beyond our ability to keep up. So she writes in a winsome, heartstrings-tugging song she recorded for her 2010 album “Tune In”: “Amongst the books in my library/ There are some/I’ll never open again.”

Kennedy’s book on Boston has plenty of material, including the time she performed at The Burren Backroom in Somerville, along with her friend and frequent collaborator, the guitarist/bouzouki player/vocalist Eamon O’Leary: “There was a power outage, we were all in the pitch black – no air conditioning, either – and they lit some candles so we could get a bit of light. We just went ahead and had a totally acoustic performance, with candles and no sound system or AC. A situation like that, things can go either way, but it turned out to be a very special night. I remember at one point [host/organizer] Brian O’Donovan led us all in singing ‘The Leaving of Liverpool.’ It was a great spirit of community and love of the music. Boston audiences are very warm, very vocal, and very supportive and lively.”

The unfailingly buoyant Kennedy will add some new pages to her Boston tome when she and O’Leary, along with guitarist-vocalist John Doyle, perform as The Alt at the Burren Backroom on Sept. 7 at 7:30 p.m. [See burren.com/music.html for information and ticket links.]

When the trio formed nearly a decade ago, it was one of those you-gotta-be-kidding-me landmark events, given the stature and portfolio of the three individuals: Doyle, a much-admired and prominent figure in Irish traditional music over the past three decades, who also has emerged as a fine songwriter; Dublin native O’Leary, a mainstay of New York City’s Irish scene for many years and a member of The Murphy Beds (who’ll be at Boston College later this month; see the September events round-up); and Kennedy, a flute and whistle player and vocalist whose innovative interpretations of Irish and Scottish music have been spotlighted on her three acclaimed solo albums.

The Alt has more than lived up to its promise – even though its members are often busy with numerous other projects and commitments – as demonstrated on their two albums, including “Day Is Come,” released earlier this year. Their three voices are an ideal complement to one another – Kennedy’s ingratiating, sweet high tones; O’Leary’s mellow, affable bass; Doyle’s cogent, compelling tenor – while their musicianship and feel



The Alt -- (L-R) Eamon O’Leary, Nuala Kennedy and John Doyle – appear at The Burren Backroom series on September 7.
Douglas Robertson photo

for arrangements are at an equally high quality.

Their material comes from many sources, including ballad collections, traditional music archives, poetry and their own pens, and extends to Gaelic as well as English-language songs. The emotional-tonal range on “Day Is Come” is similarly expansive, such as the joyous “Ta ’na Lá,” the darkly humorous bothyballad “Falkirk Fair,” the solemn “Willow Tree” – a lament written by eminent singer, songwriter, and academic Pádraigín Ní Uallacháin – and the infectious, sweet-toned long ballad “The Flower of Northumberland.”

“Day Is Come” – and The Alt’s general body of work – is a championing of traditional song. Even with the representation of contemporary songwriters, including the three Alt members themselves, their repertoire asserts that the old songs can resonate with, move, and delight us at least as much as new songs. As the band notes on its website, “The old ballads, winding tunes, and freshly discovered songs that each artist brought to the table reflect the pure love of the song that has made Irish music so beautiful and compelling over thousands of years.”

Kennedy’s love of song, and Irish music, came early during her childhood in Dundalk (Co. Louth). Her parents both sang, as did her father’s six sisters – not as professionals but simply for the enjoyment of it: “Mom and Dad met at a folk club in London in the late 1960s. They always had a real feel for the music.” Kennedy evinced an interest in the singing, but her parents steered her toward playing whistle and piano, then flute and joining a local ceili band

(“The conversation went like this,” she recalls. “Dad said, ‘The ceili band needs a flute player’ and I said, ‘But I don’t play the flute,’ and Dad said, ‘Here’s a flute. You’re going to go and play it,’ and I said, ‘What?’ Now, my Mom and Dad were friends with Sam Murray, a great flute maker from Belfast, and he made my first flute, and Dad went up to get it – unbeknownst to me.”)

Kennedy points to Lá Lugh, the duo of Gerry O’Connor and Eithne Ní Uallacháin – and their first album in particular – as an important influence in her understanding of how traditional music could sound. “That album really inspired me as a young singer, because it has a mix of tunes and songs, and though I liked playing instrumental music I was always interested in song, and in singing different kinds of songs, like the contemporary, singer-songwriter stuff. Eithne’s voice inspired me, because it’s so beautiful and so plain; she was able to communicate big feelings in a simple way. That’s one of the things I love about this old music – the feelings in these songs, the topics they cover are ancient and universal: love, loss, joy, emigration, fun.”

Her sojourn in Edinburgh during the 1990s further broadened her view of traditional music, what with musicians of different backgrounds and interests, and across generations, playing and performing together. As a masterful flute and whistle player who also had studied classical piano, and who appreciated both the commonalities and differences in Irish and Scottish music, Kennedy felt stirred to explore her eclectic tastes and ideas. This led her to start the trio Fine

Friday with the Scottish guitarist/singer-songwriter Kris Drever and the fiddler Anna-Wendy Stevenson. They released two albums before going their separate ways, setting the stage for Kennedy to release her first solo album, “New Shoes,” in 2007.

Since then, Kennedy – now based in Ennis – has followed her muse in quite a number of directions, including The Alt. She’s put out three more solo albums; formed The Snowflake Trio with Norwegian musicians Vegar Vårdal and Frode Haltli – they released “Sun Dogs” in 2019; took on the role as producer for American singer-songwriter Nels Andrew’s 2020 album; collaborated with composer Brian Reitzell for an episode of the “American Gods” TV series; wrote and performed in “Shorelines,” a work commissioned by the glór, Ennis’ local theater; and joined with Lúnasa bassist Trevor Hutchinson and Kern guitarist-mandolinist S.J. McArdle as Long Woman’s Grave, which resulted in a video (“High Germany”). Oh, there’s yet another project, “Hush the Cat,” exploring the music of Oriel, the old region encompassing southeast Ulster and north Leinster; you can watch the video, for which she provided the animation, and buy the tote bag, which she designed.

“I’ve thought a lot about innovation and creativity within the tradition: How to play traditional music and make it your own and interpret it in your own way – to have some more personal ownership over that music. That’s something I work on a lot with my students, and I really enjoy thinking and talking about that aspect of the music.”

However busy they might be, Kennedy and her fellow Alt members relish whatever time they can spend together, and the enjoyment goes beyond the musical aspect of their partnership: Among other things, the trio also likes to hold ad hoc literary discussions and, while driving to their next tour stop, have been known to stop the car when they spy a pond or lake and take the plunge: “We were in Maine one September, and the weather was very hot, so we jumped in the water, and it was freezing cold. We all kind of screamed and got out, but then it was lovely and warm. It was just so refreshing.”

She continues, “We’re all from similar backgrounds, and we just understand where we’re coming from. We’re none of us native speakers, but when we’re having a conversation in the car, for example, we’ll throw the odd Irish word in there. We know what we’re talking about. We can be silly together, and just sing our questions to each other when we’re chatting. It’s just a lot of fun.

“It’ll be great to be back together, in the same room. Far too much time’s gone by.”

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Three Irish sites nominated for World Heritage status

The Neolithic Passage Tomb Landscape of Co. Sligo, the Transatlantic Cable in Valentia, Co. Kerry, and the Royal Sites of Ireland are included in the new World Heritage Tentative List for Ireland, one step removed from UNESCO World Heritage status.

The Tentative List is an inventory of natural and cultural heritage sites that can demonstrate outstanding universal value and therefore be considered suitable for nomination to the World Heritage List.

The Neolithic Passage Tomb Landscape on Ireland's Wild Atlantic Way represents the most westerly and one of the most dramatic expressions of the construction of ritual monuments across Europe between five and six millennia ago. The monuments include the famous Queen Maeve's Cairn, which dominates the mountain of Knocknarea. The huge Neolithic tomb is made up of more than 30,000 tons of stone and overlooks Sligo Bay.

The County Kerry project commemorates the 3,000km transatlantic copper cable that transformed global communications in 1858. It was laid between Valentia Island in Ireland and Newfoundland, Canada, connecting Europe to America and reducing communication times from weeks to minutes.

The first message transmitted on Aug. 16, 1858 was a note of congratulations from Queen Victoria to US president James Buchanan. As other technologies replaced the copper cables used to carry information across the Atlantic, the Valentia Cable Station closed its doors in the 1960s. It has since been refurbished and now houses an interactive visitor experience called the Eighth Wonder.

The Royal Sites of Ireland were all places where major royal inauguration, ceremony and assembly, representing



Valentia Island, Co. Kerry, the site of the TransAtlantic cable.

each of the four Irish provinces as well as the region of Meath, took place. The sites are strongly linked to myth and legend and are associated with the transformation of Ireland from paganism to Christianity and St Patrick.

Navan Fort in County Armagh was the royal site for the kings of Ulster, Dún Ailinne in County Kildare for the kings of Leinster, the Rock of Cashel in County Tipperary for the kings of Munster, and Rathcroghan in County Roscommon for the kings of Connaught.

The Hill of Tara in County Meath was the seat of the Irish high kings. In addition, the Hill of Uisneach in County Westmeath is traditionally the epicentre or navel of Ireland, where the five kingdoms met.

All of the sites were selected because of their potential to show outstanding universal value to humanity. Ireland will now work on its new Tentative List to develop nomination bids for submission to the World Heritage Centre in Paris.

The island of Ireland already has a

number of locations on the list of UNESCO World Heritage Sites. These include the Giant's Causeway in County Antrim, Skellig Michael off the coast of County Kerry, and Brú na Bóinne in County Meath. UNESCO Global Geopark status has been awarded to The Burren & Cliffs of Moher Geopark in County Clare, Cuilcagh Lakelands Geopark, which stretches across counties Fermanagh and Cavan, and The Copper Coast Geopark in County Waterford.



The Royal Sites of Ireland were all places where major royal inauguration, ceremony and assembly, representing each of the four Irish provinces as well as the region of Meath, took place. The sites are strongly linked to myth and legend and are associated with the transformation of Ireland from paganism to Christianity and St Patrick. Above, the Rock of Cashel in County Tipperary for the kings of Munster, and at right Queen Maeve's Cairn, Knocknarea (Eddie Lee photo).



The Emerald Isle as seen from outer space

Ireland seems beyond the reach of winter's icy grip in this true-color Moderate Resolution Imaging Spectroradiometer (MODIS) image from Jan. 4, 2003. The rugged cliffs that mark the island's west coast are showing their red-brown, rocky surface, but the low-lying interior region is still wearing the island's signature green.

Ireland is essentially a depression ringed by relatively low mountains. The highest elevation in Ireland is Carruntuohill, located in the rugged terrain of the southwest tip. The bowl-like shape creates the network of lakes scattered across the island, and over time has produced peat bogs, which provide a source of fuel on the island, which is covered mostly by pasture and meadows.

Ireland's largest city, Dublin, makes a purplish-gray patch peeking out from the clouds about halfway down the east coast. Belfast is more clearly visible on the coast in the northeast, due east of large Lake Neagh. One of Ireland's few other large cities, Cork, is located at the mouth of the Lee River, at the mid-point of the southern shoreline.

Surrounded by water, Ireland has the Atlantic Ocean to its west, the Celtic Sea to the south, and the Irish Sea separating it from England to the east. In the middle of the Irish Sea lies the Isle of Man. Ireland benefits from the moderating influence that large bodies of water have on regional climates. Its winters are cool—but not freezing—and damp, and summertime temperatures rarely exceed 70 degrees Fahrenheit. These moderate temperatures are



the result of warmer ocean water being brought up into the North Atlantic by the Gulf Stream, and its extension, the North Atlantic Drift.

The island has a rugged, almost scraped appearance caused by glaciers advancing and retreating over the island

during the last ice age. Ireland is part of the same land mass as continental Europe, and the Stone Age settlers who first came to the island between six and eight thousand years ago probably walked over on dry land—a land bridge similar to the one that allowed settlers

to cross the Bering Strait from Siberia into Alaska. The land bridge formed as the moisture from the Earth's oceans evaporated, fell as snow, and became locked up in massive ice sheets. Sea levels dropped, exposing land bridges.

NASA image courtesy Jeff

Schmaltz, MODIS Rapid Response Team, Goddard Space Flight Center. Caption by Holli Riebeck.

...

It is easy to see from this true-color image why Ireland is called the Emerald Isle. Intense green vegetation, primarily grassland, covers most of the country except for the exposed rock on mountaintops. Ireland owes its greenness to moderate temperatures and moist air. The Atlantic Ocean, particularly the warm currents in the North Atlantic Drift, gives the country a more temperate climate than most others at the same latitude.

Moist ocean air also contributes to abundant rainfall. Ireland receives between 750 and 2000 millimeters (29 and 78 inches) of rain per year, with more rain falling in the west and in the mountains. Most of the rain falls in light showers.

This moist climate means plenty of clouds and fog. According to the Irish Meteorological Service, the sky is entirely cloudy more than 50 percent of the time. There are more clouds during the day than at night, and fog is common.

The cloud-free view shown here is extremely rare. The Moderate Resolution Imaging Spectroradiometer (MODIS) on NASA's Aqua satellite captured the image on October 11, 2010, a time of year when Irish weather alternates between rainstorms from the west and cool, dry weather brought by high-pressure systems known as anticyclones.

Text by Jacques Descloitres, MODIS Rapid Response Team, NASA/GSFC

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Stunning in its scope, extent, County Mayo's Céide Fields Centre re-opens

The visitor centre at one of the world's most extensive Stone Age monuments on Ireland's Wild Atlantic Way has re-opened after a major facelift. The unique and extensive Céide Fields in northern County Mayo is a Neolithic archaeological site of international significance, celebrated for its complex and extensive remains of ancient field systems and habitations.

At a glance, the site seems like a normal Irish blanket bog, but this wild and incredible place is home to one of the oldest stone-walled field systems in the world. Hidden beneath the blanket of bog, the Céide Fields is the most extensive Stone Age monument in the world. It is a "landscape fossilized", as poet Seamus Heaney described it in Belderg, of stone-walled fields, dwelling houses, and megalithic monuments. There is nowhere else in the world with such evidence of how the first farmers farmed the land; only at the Céide Fields can visitors get a unique insight into the sophistication of the land management of Ireland's Neolithic farming ancestors almost 6,000 years ago. The transformative upgrade to the Céide Fields Visitor Center is designed to transport visitors back in time to see one of Ireland's oldest monuments in a fresh new light. The upgrade includes



Céide Fields, Co. Mayo. Courtesy The Office of Public Works, Dublin.

state-of-the-art technology that provides a new and immersive virtual journey spanning thousands of years, from the hunter-gatherers who first appeared in the area to the present day.

The revamped exhibition and interpretation centre now also features artist reconstructions, video, replica artefacts and other different techniques to significantly enhance the experience of the site, while the dramatic 4,000-year-old pine tree that

was unearthed from nearby bogland is retained.

The centre also unpacks the amazing geology, archaeology, botany, and wildlife of the unique Neolithic landscape and lets you investigate why bogs are formed and the huge influence a subtle change in climate can bring about. Guided walking tours of the site are available, and there is a tea-room for refreshments.

The award-winning centre is set against the stunning scenery of north County

Mayo. Rugged cliffs, rust-colored boglands, some of the most dramatic rock formations in Ireland and the majestic ocean views make a visit here something special.

A viewing platform has been erected among the 110m-high cliffs, offering epic panoramas. Standing on the cliffside, with the expanse of the Atlantic Ocean stretching into the horizon, feels like standing at the edge of the world. When at the Stone Age site, a tour along the Céide Coast, regarded

as one of the wildest parts of the Wild Atlantic Way, is well recommended, while another great way to delve into the Céide Fields story is to head to the nearby Belderrig Valley Experience.

This fascinating walk unpacks the science, history, and folklore that underpin the archaeological marvel. The tour is run by Professor Séamus Caulfield, who has close ties to the Céide Fields site, as it was his father who discovered the remains of the stone walls back in 1934. The remarkable neolithic site at Céide Fields contains the oldest known stone-walled fields in the world – dating back nearly 6,000 years. Céide Fields overlooks the mighty Atlantic Ocean which gently laps (or vigorously pounds depending on the weather!) up against the cliffs below. The landscape itself has been forged from the dramatic upheaval and movement of the earth's crust over millions of years.

The soil at Céide Fields has been constantly subjected to the conflicts of the weather. The warm Gulf Stream comes up past the American continent between Ireland and Iceland. In the opposite direction, cold deep waters flow south from the icy Arctic Ocean. The combination of all these factors has resulted in the wild beauty and uniqueness of this region in Co. Mayo, Ireland.

One of Ireland's top music festivals will usher in 2023

TradFest Temple Bar announces 2023 lineup

Ireland's largest gathering of trad and folk music will take center stage this January, as one of Ireland's most exciting cultural events returns to Dublin, in its full glory. On the back of a hugely successful return against all odds in 2022, TradFest Temple Bar is going bigger and better than ever, with a rich and ambitious showcase of the very best of trad and folk music.

With the music playing from Jan. 25 to Jan. 29, audiences will enjoy cosy pub sessions across Temple Bar, and concerts from headlining acts, including trad giants, cultural icon Judy Collins, English Folk legend Martin and Eliza Carthy, Kate Rusby, trad/world music group Kíla, Muireann Nic Amhlaoibh, Matt Molloy & Sean Keane, and Eimear Quinn. Women of

Note returns with a night of songs and stories with Aoife Scott.

Mairéad Ní Mhaonaigh will host a night of female Trad and Folk where she will be joined on stage by Sí Fiddlers, Tríona Ní Dhomhnaill, Brídín with more to be added. The festival also gives audiences an opportunity to witness the next generation of trad and folk artists in action including Brid Larkin, Moxie, Náva, Jig Jam, and The Ocelots, with more to be announced over the coming months.

TradFest Temple Bar continues to enthrall audiences with its day and night-time concerts in spectacular venues, with the 2023 program seeing the festival explore new spaces such as the GPO. Concerts will



also return to staple venues such as the majestic St Patrick's Cathedral, historical landmarks Collins Barracks, The National Stadium and Dublin Castle, as well as the vibrant live music clubs Button Factory and the Grand Social.

Tickets for TradFest Temple Bar 2023 are available from tradfesttemplebar.com.

Heritage of the Blasket Islands shines in stunning new center

Lying off the coast of Co. Kerry, the rugged Great Blasket island was home to a small Irish-speaking community for over 300 years but was officially abandoned in 1953. The islanders had a rich musical

and storytelling tradition that was captured in books written or dictated by them.

This extraordinary legacy is celebrated in the Blasket Centre, located at Dún Chaoin on the tip of the Dingle Peninsula on the Wild Atlantic Way. Following a significant investment, the centre has re-opened with a superb new visitor experience that provides

an imaginative re-telling of the islanders' story and celebrates their unique literary achievements.

With interactive displays, artefacts, audio-visual presentations and artworks, the exhibition takes you into the heart of the island community and offers the opportunity to engage with the history, language, and culture of Great Blasket.

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