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Keir Starmer, leader of the UK Labour Party and of the Opposition, is not notorious for his repartee or his oratory. Although he does his best, he is usually less than riveting. Even so, he had a fine moment in the House of Commons during the dying days of Liz Truss' Prime Ministership. Citing a book that is being written about her, he mentioned that it would be 'out before Christmas'. He then asked if that was the schedule of the book's release or its title.

Truss had introduced a mini-budget to funnel tens of millions into the pockets of the rich. After announcing the mini-budget, Truss' Chancellor of the Exchequer, Kwasi Kwarteng, made a beeline to clink glasses with City of London traders who have made a fortune out of the tsunamis that have washed over the British economy since Brexit. However, this time the fallout of the Conservative Party's financial mismanagement was devastating and immediate. None of these tax cuts were funded, so the international bond markets became nervous, and the sterling plummeted. Truss has no gift for explanation and every time she opened her mouth sterling lost value. She instantly became a leader in nothing but name.

The former governor of the Bank of England, Mark Carney, encapsulated the economic wreckage of the past six years in Britain when he told the

## View From Ireland

By Maurice Fitzpatrick



Financial Times in October: 'In 2016, the British economy was 90% the size of Germany's. Now it is less than 70%'. Carney also recalled reporting on the day of the Brexit referendum result, in June 2016, as the pound's value fell from \$1.50 to \$1.33 in a few hours. At the time of writing the pound is worth \$1.17 and former US Secretary of the Treasury, Larry Summers, thinks it will reach parity.

The analogy between the former DUP Leader Edwin Poots and Liz Truss is irresistible. Both espouse politics that are not of this earth. Neither of them can give an interview. Both have had terms of leadership that are counted not in years but in days: Poots resigned as leader of DUP after 21 days; Truss' term of office extended 44 days. Both won the leadership position over candidates who (for all their many faults) were undoubtedly better able for the job. Rishi Sunak would never have authored the mini-budget with which Truss destroyed herself and much else besides; Jefferey Donaldson lost to Poots but, when Donaldson subsequently replaced Poots, he succeeded in stanching the hemorrhage of support from the DUP.

The spiral of events that followed the

'mini-budget' was worthy of a five-ring circus. There was the bizarre spectacle of Truss sending one of her junior colleagues to take 'Leaders Questions' in the House of Commons on the pretext that Truss was busy with other matters. Instead, Leader of the House of Commons, Penny Mordant, fielded questions, one of which queried if Truss was hiding under a table. There is an iron law in politics not to answer such a question head-on. Either denying or affirming elicits jeers. Yet Penny Mordant was not found wanting and added to the Conservative Party meltdown: she confirmed that the PM was not hiding under a desk, and the House of Commons rocked with laughter. When Truss, who had been abundantly mocked for her absence, emerged and sat on the front bench, she looked on as Penny Mordant continued to take the Leader's Questions.

On October 19th Truss maintained that she was 'not a quitter.' The following day she quit. In a statement she read outside Number 10 Downing Street, Truss said: 'This morning I met the chairman of the 1922 Committee, Sir Graham Brady.' Enough said. Boris Johnson had to walk the same plank in July. Brady was right to make such bold interventions of course. Any more of Truss' or Johnson's behaviour could have given the 'Mother of Parliaments' a bad name.

In July this column suggested that Rishi Sunak was the most likely next prime minister of the UK Prime Minister. Instead, the Conservative Party opted for the near-suicidal option of staking its reputation for governance in Liz Truss. Sunak had to take the scenic

route, but by October 24th Sunak had fended off the opposition, such as it was, to become the UK's third prime minister within two months. Sunak's role is to calm the markets that have threatened to overwhelm the UK economy. He made millions in the City of London and surely understands what his predecessor failed to grasp: when faced with a vacuum and instability the markets retaliate.

Much has been made of the installation of a slightly more realistic UK prime minister as inaugurating better relations between London and Dublin over the Northern Ireland Protocol. There is a lot of wishful thinking bound up in that as this UK government seems likely to continue to use the protocol as a bargaining chip to wrangle more concessions from the EU. As an example of the enduring cynicism, witness the new Secretary of State for Northern Ireland calling a snap assembly election. Now that Christopher Heaton-Harris has realised too late that neither the threat of an election, nor the imminent reality of one, has caused the DUP to reverse its position on refusing to return to the assembly in protest against Northern Ireland Protocol, he cannot decide what to do about the election he called - and his authority is gone. Stable and reliable cooperation will probably only resume when the Labour Party replaces the Conservatives.

Meanwhile, the Conservative Party juggernaut splutters on. Since December 2019, its support has more than halved (from 43% down to around 20%). Their central ambition now seems to be to last for as long as they can before electoral annihilation in a general election. If they keep their heads, they might even make it to April Fool's Day.

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# Roaming in the Gloaming

By Estelle Shanley

It's early morning and I gaze at the calendar tapping my fingers on a glass top table, a pot of Irish tea by my side. Should the telephone ring I will answer and depending on the voice on other end I will probably launch into a loud and disgruntled lament that Christmas is arriving way too early this year.

I am not prepared. Nor was I prepared to enter a local cinema recently to view the newly released Martin McDonagh film *The Banshees of Inisherin* featuring Brendan Gleeson and Colin Farrell. I admit it was a good post covid sensation to be back in a cinema holding a bag of warm buttered popcorn, settling in to watch an Irish film. Alas, there is no joy in Inisherin. I sat through it muffling sobs and as I write wonder why

I didn't walk out and demand of whoever was in charge why this savage film was advertised as a Comedy/Drama. Trust me, there exists no comedy in Inisherin, a remote island off the west coast of Ireland.

Yes it was searing with drama, the kind that burrows deep into the souls of men and women who'd rather search for a rope than go on living in this barren island. Actually, it could have served better as the Alcatraz of Ireland!

The film, a brutal unrelenting betrayal of what's good about the Emerald Isle, the charm of the people, the hospitality laced with the vitality of poetry, music, storytelling and the endless repetition of the country's history. Mental illness on this remote god-forsaken place seemed to thrive and even the hopelessly intimidated priest is devoid of piety. It occurs I should have walked out of this film, featuring two of the best Irish actors, Gleeson and young Colin Farrell. A bit dark in the

beginning, a downer, not unfamiliar in Irish plays or films, but when it turned savage demonstrating mental illness bubbling from the mouths of its inhabitants who seemed to know no better other than carry on with rot in their guts, darkness in their souls and a prime sense of unavoidable delirious torture.

Here are two men, an elderly Colm played by Gleeson and the younger Padraic who is devastated when his longtime buddy suddenly brings an end to their lifelong friendship. There actually is no falling out, merely a harsh declaration that the elder Colm is fed up and wants out of the relationship. With help from his sister and a troubled young young fella, Padraic sets out to repair the damaged relationship by any means necessary.

However, as Colm's resolve only strengthens, he delivers an ultimatum that leads to shocking consequences. When Padraic pleads for an explanation, there is none although in a show of utter brutality, the elder Colm announces that if Padraic comes around to him, the elder will cut off one of his finger, and another one each time Padraic does not leave him alone. That actually happens in the film. All fingers and thumbs are sawed off leaving Colm, a decent violinist, unable to play the fiddle.

Harshness exists in other ways in this hell hole of an island. However, there appears a glimmer of light when Colm goes to confession and the dim-witted priest inquires if he's in despair, or rather prompts the question "is the despair back?" As I literally drowned in tears I wondered why mental illness was referred to as "despair?" Seems daft would have suf-

ficed! Is either one a sin to be confessed?

Meanwhile, Padraic lives with his adult sister Siobhan in a squalid house close to the sea where the horse is often brought indoors along with Padraic's pet miniature donkey treated as a pet dog, taking up a good deal more space.

On the outside Padraic appears okay, frequents the pub, drinks a good deal, grieves for his friendship with Colm but in his attempts to express it Colm pulls out the knife and another finger hits the floor. Trust me it's real, pretty harrowing up there on the screen.

The barmen are cordial reaping in heaps of money and when the lads come around seeking violin lessons from Colm they are aghast at the absence of his fingers the blood seeping from each hand. Meanwhile Padraic sulks while his sister pushes him to lighten up, urging that he accompany her when she decides to leave Inisherin for another go at life.

Siobhan coaxes, yells, begs and eventually storms off to the mainland alone. Padraic broods and decides to take revenge on Colm planning to burn him in his home along with his coli dog. Cans are filled with petrol and with the scratch of one match the thatched room burns nicely and brightly although Colm is safe standing on the strand, hands dripping blood. When Padraic joins him, bringing his dog who escaped the fire. The elder man thanks him and thanks be to God, the film ends.

In fairness, the movie directed by Martin McDonagh has received the Best Screenplay and best Actor Award from Volpi. It has also been nominated for other awards. See it at your own peril!

Meanwhile breaking news uncovering allegations of sexual abuse in schools run by the Jesuits Congregation in Ireland is enough as one Irish friend said: "to put you off your dinner." The harrowing stories of sexual

abuse occurred at prestigious schools for boys including Clongowes Wood College in Kildare, Crescent College in Limerick and Blackrock College where tales emerging from that institution are said to be as disturbing as abuse stories uncovered from the Magdalene laundries. James Joyce was educated at Clongowes, a prestigious Jesuit boys school.

Was he tampered with? An estimated forty-three priests have been accused of sexual abuse although just one case has led to criminal proceedings. According to a Jesuits' spokeswoman, further allegations are anticipated as the congregation encourages abused people to come forward.

The estimation of paid settlements thus far total approximately eight or nine million dollars. Thus far only one priest is named, the deceased Father Joseph Marmion who is alleged to have abused boys at three Jesuit Colleges in Ireland.

Marmion died in 2000. Jesuits meanwhile have admitted that reports in the seventies of sexual abuse of school boys were not properly investigation or brought to the attention of the Garda. As an explanation, or an apology a statement from the Jesuit congregation noted: "decisions were made that should never have been made and decisions that should have been made were not. There are no excuses. We are profoundly sorry for the terrible wrongs that were done to survivors".

Ironically a former pupil David O'Gorman attended Belvedere College from 1974 to 1982 and has expressed his concern at the lack of "investigation, transparency, disclosure, and the lack of any prospect of accountability or consequences for abusers and the institution."

At press time Taoiseach Micheal Martin said the latest revelations of historical child abuse in schools were "sickening." On one of his last visits to Ireland Pope Francis was astonished to learn that Ireland



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**COLUMNS AND REVIEWS**  
Careers **James Fitzgerald**  
Catholic Charities

Connemara Daly **Bill Daly**  
Counties of Ireland **Tom Butler**  
Gallagher's Advice **Caroleann Gallagher**  
Game On! **Chris Wheaton**  
Generation Next **Conor O'Connor**  
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**Katie & Emmett Fitzpatrick**  
Irish Rover **Jim McClure**  
Notes from Archives **Barry Stapleton**  
Roaming the Gloaming **Estelle Shanley**  
Starts With A Song **Joe McShane**  
Swimming Upstream **Charles Brady**  
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## Careers



By James F. Fitzgerald, CPA



### It’s Been A Grand Adventure!

I found myself thinking about the many people who have helped me over the years; I am sure that I have failed to fully and properly thank more than a few. So, I decided to use this, my final column, to thank as many of those people that I can, in the space I am given, as a reminder to all of us, to express our genuine thanks to those who have helped us on our path in life.

First, my thanks to my wife, Sandee Wask Fitzgerald, who has mentored me throughout our long and happy marriage. Among many other things, she has helped me to become more sensitive and aware of other peoples’ feelings and for that, and all her other counsel, I am deeply grateful.

Of course, my first teachers growing up were my parents and siblings. My thanks to my dad who demonstrated what the responsibilities of a bread winner were. To my beloved mother, who showed me the importance of unconditional love. To my sister, Mary, who helped me understand how a gentleman should conduct himself. To each of my four brothers, who all taught me what they knew best: Edward (courage and independence), Tom (toughness and leadership), John (charm and generosity), and finally Joe (scholarship and friendship). It has been my great fortune to have had such amazing, loving mentors for my family.

My children have also been an enduring gift. Mychelline, demonstrated a great intellect

even from a very early age. Damon has been a joy, his whole life, with his thoughtfulness, integrity and love of his family. Erynn has manifested a wonderful passion for life, coupled with great acceptance and inclusion of others. Neal, born a traveler and adventurer, is also a kind, gentle, and thoughtful soul. Our daughter Julie, Damon’s wife, has strengthened our bonds as a family in countless ways. As for our two granddaughters, Janna and Alecia; they are simply “perfect.” Finally, my two brothers in law, John Wall and Mark Wask, who have provided me with a variety of great help. John has been my advisor on so many things, especially technical and computer issues, while Mark is a mechanical wizard who has aided me in a myriad of ways. Both of them have always made themselves available to me for wisdom and counsel.

The good sisters at St. Theodore grammar school couldn’t accept me into first grade at age four, so our landlady, Eleanor Macak, became my first “formal” teacher, teaching me how to read and do basic arithmetic.

Once admitted to St. Theodore, I have to thank Sister Paula and Sister Maria Gemma, my 2nd and 7th grade teachers, respectively. Sister Paula taught me that a little extra effort can make a major difference in the outcome of a project; Sister Maria Gemma drilled us tirelessly on the importance of knowing the English language,

which has served me well ever since.

To my oldest boyhood friend, Bill Puschak, thanks for being another brother. Jim Kelly, my high school classmate who stood with me against some angry fellow classmates, making it clear he had my back, no matter what that took. God bless you, Red Dog

#### Publishers Note

We would like to thank Jim for his outstanding contributions to our paper, and the spot on advice he has given to a generation or two over the past 24 years.

We know from the letters and emails we get, that his input has been invaluable to many in finding a job, keeping a job, overcoming the pitfalls in a business environment, and moving up the ladder in that environment. Jim wrote these articles for the love of helping others.

Cliff Carlson, Publisher

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**Game On!**  
By Chris Wheaton



December is a great time to reflect on where you have been and where you are hopefully headed. I love this time of year because the world slows down a bit due to the holiday's, hurling season is taking a winter break and even my job seems more relaxed.

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(c)(3) not-for profit organization dedicated to the promotion of the Irish culture through sport and other means the general meeting is also a requirement in our by-laws.

As the Chairman of our organization for the past two years I made the difficult decision to step down and turn the reins over to someone else. It was a difficult decision but one I knew was necessary. I am a firm believer that change in any organization is usually a good thing to allow others to see the inner workings of the club and have a louder voice. My decision was made a tad easier when a few club members made some disparaging remarks about the board that I headed, basically saying that the club was in decline and that it was mismanaged. Not only were those comments offensive and insulting to the entire Board of Directors but they were totally unfounded in fact and false. Sadly, the comments of the one or two disgruntled members had a detrimental effect and most of the board agreed with me that it was time for others to grab the reigns. I can wholeheartedly state that the board of directors that served with me were fantastic to work with and always had the best interests of the club at the forefront of any decision we made. We all hope that the club will continue to thrive under new leadership and that the "complainers" can take real action. Having ideas with no implementation does not move the ball. Having a "problem for every solution as my good friend John Haran likes to say is no way to run a club.

With all the drama out of the way we were able to focus on the many highlights of the year and the accomplishments of the club. I believe that the club is better today than it was two years ago when most of us were sworn in as officers. A few of our high points were that our membership

is at an all-time high, we lost in the National semi-final to the eventual champion at the North American Championships this past summer and we were able to secure a new sponsor for our club.

Sponsorships are the life blood of any sporting organization and hurling is no different. It is a difficult "ask" because most businesses do not understand the game of hurling or have even heard of it, not to mention that it is often beyond comprehension that Naperville has such an active club. I always believed that the perfect sponsor/partnership for any hurling club is an Irish pub, for obvious reasons. From day one my goal was to partner with Quigley's Irish Pub which sits right in downtown Naperville and is the perfect fit for us. Quigley's has everything we were looking for; a great location, fantastic food, a family atmosphere, plenty of space for us to gather after training and games, solid musical entertainment and perhaps most importantly, one of the best poured Guinness's you will find anywhere in the Chicago area.

A few weeks before the club's annual meeting we were able to make it official and introduced Quigley's as our new partner at the meeting. The announcement was met with thunderous applause and excitement for the coming season when the Naperville Hurling Club will have the Quigley's Irish Pub crest across the front of our jerseys.

Our entire club owes a huge debt of gratitude to Quigley's owners Michele Michael and Nancy Quigley as well as Managing Partner Andy Nosek. The three of them took a leap of faith at a time when many pubs and restaurants are still feeling the effects of covid. Our partnership really is a "no-brainer", and we could not be more grateful that Quigley's saw the strength of the club and its membership.

I hope that every one of you sporting fans that reads this column every month has a tremendous holiday season, and that the new year brings you good health, peace and joy.



American Conference of Irish Festivals was held in Dallas recently, exchanging many ideas for future festivals

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# N. Ireland Tourist Board Screens Mary Pat Kelly’s Movie, Home Away From Home, in Washington DC

The screening of “Home Away from Home: The Yanks in Ireland sponsored by the Northern Ireland Bureau on 11/6/22 in Washington DC confirms the continuing interest in the story of the 300,000 American servicemen and servicewomen stationed in Northern Ireland during WWII.

The film begins with Walter Cronkite reminiscing about the time he spent in Derry as a young war correspondent in 1943 and concludes with Phil Coulter debuting the song that would become an international hit Home Away From Home.

The last two lines are “It’s a long way from Chicago but I’ll remember my home away from home.”

The film is very much a Chicago production made by Mary Pat Kelly for WTTW with the support of the Northern Ireland Tourist Board, represented by Maebeth Fenton Martin, to commemorate the 50th anniversary of WWII.

In the film the veterans of the First Battalion US Rangers recall how the unit was founded in Carrickfergus, Northern Ireland in 1942—the only military unit founded outside the United States.

They returned to Northern Ireland to share their memories. So did Leonard

“Tuck” Smith, the Navy aviator who as a young ensign taught the RAF how to fly PBV’s and became the one who found the notorious battleship Bismarck—an achievement he kept secret for 50 years since the US had not yet entered WWII.

Finally, we meet the men of the USS Mason, the only African American sailors to take a US Navy warship into combat. Their first foreign port was in Northern Ireland and in the documentary they say, “The Irish were the first to treat us as Americans. They called us Yanks and it was good.”

Producer Director Mary Pat Kelly says, “I’m grateful to Andrew Elliott, Head of the NI Bureau, for keeping this story alive. It is especially gratifying to have Sergeant Major Carlton Kent USMC (RET) and Captain Morgan Murphy USN in attendance. Derry had the largest US Navy Base in Europe during WWII.

The Marines guarded the base and the Sergeant Major led many groups of 30 Marines back to Derry to connect with his heritage. He became very friendly with John Hume.

Captain Murphy, an extremely accomplished writer, is interested in highlighting

the story. He was fascinated with the fact that the Base played such an important role in the Battle of the Atlantic that it was chosen as the surrender place for 43 Nazi U-Boats.”

The movie also has a scene on the U-505 at the Museum of Science and Industry where the German sailor who tried to scuttle the U-Boat meets the American who saved it.

“We can’t believe we were supposed

to kill each other,” the German said.

A museum was created in Carrickfergus [www.midandeantrim.gov.uk](http://www.midandeantrim.gov.uk) to honor the Rangers. Shirin Murphy, Director of the Museum, says that in June a three-day commemoration celebration will be held.

“We want to reach out to our friends in the US for whom this heritage is so precious, she said. We are delighted that Veteran Army Rangers of all ages visit the museum. They are very welcome.”



(L to R) Andrew Elliot, Director of Northern Ireland Bureau; Dr. Robert Clemm, Assoc. Professor at Air University; Dr. Augustine Meaher, Assoc. Professor at Air University; Mary Pat Kelly; Capt. Morgan Murphy, National Security Advisor for U.S. Senator Tuberville; Sgt. Major Carlton Kent The event was hosted at the Association for the United States Army (AUSA) Conference & Events Center.

## Mary Pat Flanagan Sr. VP North American Sales

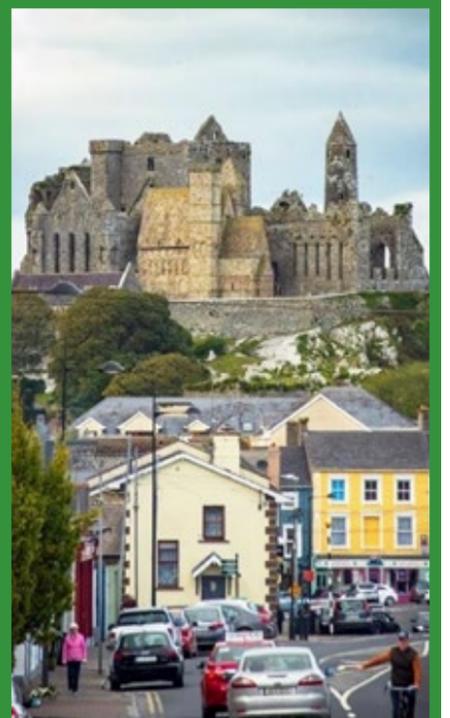
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**Breaking Down the Midterm Elections**

Phew! For the political types, this past month has been a doozy. As of this writing, we still don't know who will control the United States House of Representatives—but it looks like Republicans will have a slim majority in that chamber after the dust settles. As for the U.S. Senate, Democrats are poised to retain control. Pending a December 6th runoff election in Georgia, their majority may even expand to hold 51 of the 100 Senate seats. Even if they lose that election, however, Democrats will control the chamber because Vice President Kamala Harris breaks ties.

If you paid any kind of attention to the pundits prior to the election, you'd know that these kinds of results were not widely expected. In fact, some political opinionators anticipated a massive "red wave" that would have swept Republicans back into control of both the Senate and the House. That did not happen.

Instead, we're left with what will likely be a House governed by a slim Republican majority and a Democrat-controlled Senate. Consequently, we will all be living under a divided government for the next two years. So how will this impact the lives of average Americans?

For starters, don't expect any new, consequential legislation to be passed. Republicans will have ultimate agenda-setting power if they control the House, so any sort of cross-party vote whipping won't take place unless the new Speaker lets a Democratic bill out of committee to be considered on the House floor (which is extremely unlikely).

Additionally, a Republican-controlled House will have expansive investigatory power. While the Democrat-controlled House has

used this power to investigate the January 6th insurrection and conduct two separate impeachment inquiries into former President Trump, a Republican-controlled House will probably use this power to sow public doubt about US support of Ukraine and to investigate the business dealings of Hunter Biden, the President's son.

On the other hand, keeping control of the Senate should be cause for a huge sigh of relief among Democrats. When Mitch McConnell was in control of the Senate for the last two years of President Obama's second term, he prevented the confirmation of dozens of Democratic-federal judges, including a Supreme Court nominee. He did this by refusing to allow the President's appointments to come to a full vote on the Senate floor in the hope that a Republican would win the presidency in 2016. As soon as Trump took office and began making appointments, McConnell's Senate confirmed dozens of life-tenured Republican judges to the federal bench, including Supreme Court Justice Neil Gorsuch. Needless to say, Democrats do not want that to

happen again. And it seems that they will be safe from such antics until the next national election in 2024, at least.

The razor-thin margin by which Republicans will control the House will also make the power-sharing dynamic interesting. Should Kevin McCarthy (R-CA) want to be Speaker of the House, he will have to cozy up to some of the more reactionary elements of his party. Several Freedom Caucus members (Marjorie Taylor-Greene, Paul Gosar, Mary Miller, etc.) have already hinted that they will require some assurances from McCarthy that their priorities will be addressed in order to garner their support.

What those priorities will include is anyone's guess, but there have been rumors that Republicans in both chambers might support holding the debt ceiling captive to bring President Biden to the bargaining table in order to cut funding for entitlement programs like Social Security and Medicare. That being said, only a few Republican defectors in the House will sink that unpopular idea. As I indicated before, this was not the election Republicans were expecting, nor was it the one they had hoped for.

Greater questions about the direction of the Republican party persist. How these disappointing election results might affect a 2024 presidential run by Donald Trump, whose extremism some have taken to blaming for the party's woes, remains to be seen. One thing is for certain, however: Republicans have some serious soul-searching to do if they want the kind of landslide election victories they saw in the early 2000s and in 2010.

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**CelticWoman: A Christmas Symphony**

The Auditorium Theatre (Chicago's landmark stage at 50 E. Ida B. Wells Drive) proudly presents international singing sensation Celtic Woman performing a powerful holiday concert, A Christmas Symphony, in a one-night-only engagement Sunday, December 11 at 7:00 p.m. Tickets are \$47-\$158 and are available at auditoriumtheatre.org.

Christmas in Ireland is all about hospitality. The visitor is greeted with the traditional "hundred thousand welcomes" and is offered the best seat in the house. Audience members are invited to join in this sacred Irish tradition with Celtic Woman.

Celtic Woman is the most successful all-female group in Irish history, with a legacy of 12 consecutive Billboard number ones, 10 million album sales and an incredible 2 billion online streams to date. For more information about the musical collective, visit [www.celticwoman.com](http://www.celticwoman.com).

For more information on the Auditorium Theatre and a complete listing of events at the Auditorium Theatre, please visit [AuditoriumTheatre.org](http://AuditoriumTheatre.org).

### Shane Ó Fearghail and The Host - You To Hold

“You To Hold” is the first single release from Shane Ó Fearghail’s eagerly awaited fifth studio album. A three minute up-tempo track, You To Hold draws on old world influences and wraps new roots and rhythms to create a song you want to sing along to. For this album Shane drew on the expertise of his live



band “The Host”.

The single will be released on Friday the 31st October 2022 to radio and all streaming sites. Accompanied with a new video, the song will be launched in Vienna’s Theater Akzent.

#### The New Album

Recorded between Passau and Vienna, the new album contains fourteen songs, and takes Shane and The Host, on a trip down the Appalachian trail. “The Host”, bring a that live album feel to this new record, and partnered with Arge Music Austria for this project as well as Sad Opera Entertainment Ireland, Shane delves deeper into the Irish Appalachian tradition. With the band, they set out to explore the unique musical relationship between Ireland, Europe and North America. A relationship forged through culture, chaos and community; and fostered across continents and the Atlantic ocean.

#### The Sum of All Parts

“An uber professional Shane captivates every audience. Indeed great songwriting meets high musical sense. A fantastic artist!” Bernd Rossmann - Reinhardt Best Acoustics - Germany.

Shane Ó Fearghail (pronounced O Fa-reel), is an Irish Singer-Songwriter/Artist living in Vienna. From Dublin, his musical style has been called many things.

Irish Indie & Dark Folk is the new calling. In the past Shane has been likened to REM, Crowded House, Rufus Wainright III, Glen Hansard and Ron Sexsmith. He takes that as a big compliment.

“Shane Ó Fearghail & The Host are one of those bands that grabs you from the first minute and won’t let go. A wonderful live band!” Harald Neger - Donauinsselfest / We Serve You Better.

The Host are an eclectic group of musicians who come from Ireland & Austria. Namely, Kenneth Whelan (Accordion, Piano, Sax), Claudia Heidegger (Fiddle, Mandolin), Emily Velasquez (Bass), Johnny Falter (Banjo, Guitar), and David Butschek (Percussion). All live players and singers, Shane Ó Fearghail & The Host are an exciting contemporary Irish / Appalachian combo, with that alternative “Dark Folk” roots feel. Their live performances are up tempo, crowd engaging and full of Celtic Soul.

#### Doing it Differently

In today’s world, digital streaming dictates the musical landscape. A tight band in the truest sense, Shane & The Host wish navigate those digital soundscapes on their terms. A belief in the old school way of doing things. Build through performance. Touch base through tours and traveling.; to take that different road.

Doing it differently also means the albums single release schedule will follow an alternative route. The plan is simple – to release one single each month. To build momentum towards the album release in March 2023, where each single will be sent to radio and press. Each release will coincide with shows and will be followed by online releases on all digital platforms. Each song will then be available for downloads and streaming.

It is going to be hard work... but it should be. The plan is to build momentum and create a buzz. Not to mention keep some control for songs and streams that may well get lost in the new vast oceans of today’s music business.

The album will be released on Vinyl and CD St Patrick’s Day 17th March 2023. You To Hold will be the first part of the story. The album will be released to streaming sites on the 1st April.

<https://shaneofearghail.com>

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## Will Harris of Darvin Furniture Leads the Family Business Into its Second Century

Will Harris grew up in his family’s furniture business, learning from an early age the value of hard work, serving customers, and the importance of a strong culture among employees. Three years ago, when the opportunity to lead Orland Park-based Darvin Furniture became available, Harris jumped at the chance to take the helm of another multi-generation, family-run business. It was a natural fit for him and the 102-year-old company, and business is stronger than ever, but this success story was years in the making.

A native of New Hampton, New Hampshire, Harris spent seventeen years working for Harris Family Furniture, himself a fourth-generation member of this long-established company that boasts four stores in New Hampshire. During his time there, he took on every job imaginable, gaining first-hand experience in operations, customer service, and management. He earned his MBA from Bentley University in 2018

marketing” and began serving as its spokesperson on television and social media. Soon enough, he took on the expanded role of President, succeeding Marty and Steve Darvin, who remain active in the business.

“I’m in touch with Marty and Steve almost every day,” Harris said, “and I don’t take for granted the position that I’m in. The culture of Darvin is identical to what I grew up in. It’s uncanny what Marty and Steve had instilled.”

Now entering his third year at the helm, Harris appreciates that he knows many of the company’s 300 employees by name and uses an open-door policy to build relationships with them, just as Marty and Steve had done.

He has also gotten to know Darvin’s customers, many of whom are in the second, third, fourth, or even fifth generation of their family to frequent the store, and manufacturers, whose partnership with Darvin might

as much as possible.

Harris does not lack Irish ancestry on his family tree. His paternal grandmother was born in Ireland and immigrated to Lowell, Massachusetts, where his daughter Ella now matriculates at the University of



Massachusetts - Lowell. His maternal grandmother was also an Irish émigré, and his wife’s father is first generation Irish, having grown up in County Cork.

Looking to the future, Harris’s plan for continued success involves cherishing and living up to the ideals of the Darvin family, which he admits is no easy task because of the high bar that they set in running the company and interacting with customers.

It is those relationships with customers that form the fundamental part of the company’s growth strategy, which includes investing in what he calls the “right” areas, continuing the rapid acceleration of their online offerings, and ongoing execution of the teamwork-based approach to employee collaboration across the organization.

Harris also stresses the importance of providing a wide selection and creating value for Darvin’s customers. “Value means different things for different customers,” he said, “It might be finding the ‘highest deluxe’ furniture for one person, and for others, it could mean selecting a sofa or mattress that they can afford at a reasonable price.”

Harris indicated that the final piece of Darvin’s forward-looking strategy includes continuing to participate as an engaged member of the local community, remarking that “all of us feel that’s a part of what we do as Chicagoland’s local furniture store.”

With his Irish roots, passion for his company that is more than a business, and dedication to the local community, Harris now looks forward to getting involved in all things Irish here in Chicago.

Darvin Furniture is located at 15400 South La Grange Road in Orland Park. For more information, visit [www.darvin.com](http://www.darvin.com) or call (708) 460-4100.



**Will Harris standing in an area that represents just a small portion of the huge variety of furniture and things that go with it in their 200,000 sq. ft. showroom in Orland Park, IL.**

and moved to the Chicago area to begin working at Darvin in January 2020.

To understand the operation that Harris joined, one must appreciate the history of Darvin Furniture. Louis Darvin started the business in 1920, going door-to-door in Chicago to sell furniture through a catalog before he and his son opened their first store in the 1940s. Today, the company has grown to become the largest furniture store in the Chicago area, sitting on 11 acres in Orland Park. Darvin remained family-owned for the first hundred years of existence, before becoming employee-owned in the last two years.

As if moving across the country to take on a leadership role at a tight-knit, family-run business was not challenging enough, Harris quickly confronted a new curveball in early 2020: COVID-19. As the pandemic overhauled the furniture industry, he often found himself as the only person in the building. Drawing on his professional, academic, and personal experiences, Harris pioneered the company’s focus on “guerilla

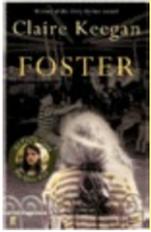
also span decades.

Darvin employees are said to “bleed Darvin blue,” and this sense of pride is not lost on Harris, even if it means opening the store at 4:15 am or shutting the lights at 10:00 pm. “I get an indescribable feeling going to work every day,” he said, “It’s a buzz I get from seeing the company be successful. We have a connection with the local community, and I take that very seriously. It’s a big deal.”

Taking on the new role at Darvin was not simply a career move for Harris; he also moved his family across the country from New England to the Midwest, settling in Homer Glen. The transition was not easy at first, particularly given that he made the move a year ahead of the rest of his family, but he has grown to find a home here. He has already been to Guaranteed Rate Field dozens of times to watch the White Sox, who became a favorite team when they drafted his nephew in 2019, and he and his family try to take advantage of the dining and theatre scene in Chicago



BOOKS by Irish Authors or About Irish Subjects!



**Books Under Review**

By Sabina Clarke



**17 Irish Martyrs**

Book by Mary McAleese  
Columba Books, Dublin, Ireland  
Review By Sabina Clarke

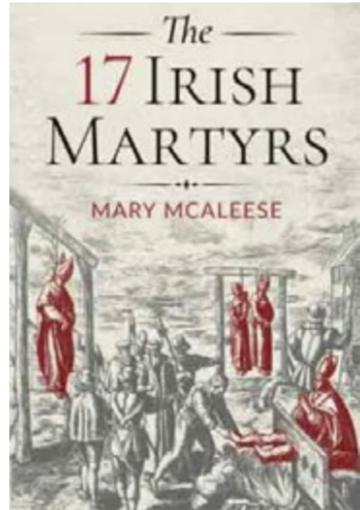
Dying for the Faith . . . Ireland and religious strife --- endless wars and internal conflicts between Catholics and Protestants is nothing new - yet it was never so dangerous to be a practicing Catholic as it was centuries ago in Ireland.

In writing this book, Mary McAleese, the former President of Ireland lifts the curtain on Ireland's brutal past when practicing your Catholic faith was a death sentence and priests had to say Mass in safe houses.

It was the 16th century on the cusp of the Protestant Reformation that Catholics were persecuted during the murderous reigns of three English monarchs- Elizabeth I, James I and Charles I and the time when the 17 Irish martyrs lived. It was also the time when the Penal Laws were in full force making life oppressive on all fronts for Irish Catholics.

minded that the martyrs prayed for forgiveness for their torturers even as they mounted the scaffold to their death—a powerful message that is so well conveyed by the author.

Her hope is that in our forgiving the Irish martyrs' oppressors, betrayers and killers and the history we inherited we can build a



new history where Christians do love one another.

One of the more interesting and provocative observations made by the author is the observation that despite all the challenges the Roman Catholic Church faces today—this is the same Church these martyrs died for -and if the Church survives—their sacrifices are worth remembering.

**About the Author:**

Mary McAleese was born in Belfast, Northern Ireland in 1951. In 1975, she became Reid Professor of Criminal Law, Criminology and Penology at Trinity College Dublin and in 1987 she was appointed Director of the Institute of Professional Legal Studies at Queen's University Belfast. She became the first female Pro-Vice Chancellor of Queens in 1995. She was elected President of Ireland in 1997. She earned a Licentiate and PhD in Canon Law from the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome.



The task of uncovering their individual histories and verifying their records was a laborious herculean undertaking that began in 1904 with a tribunal set up in Dublin appointed for the express purpose of examining the cases of approximately 460 martyrs.

It was not until 1975 that this great endeavor came to fruition under a dedicated group of historical scholars.

Despite the gross injustices during this period, McAleese exhorts us to forgive. We are re-

**Cry of a People Gone: Irish Musicians in Chicago 1920-2020**

Richie Piggott, originally from Cobh, Co. Cork, has been living in Chicago, USA for more than twenty years. Born into a family steeped in music, his own direction has led to a life-long interest in the collecting of Irish music books and manuscripts, and in the social history of Irish traditional musicians.



His new publication Cry of a People Gone: Irish Musicians in Chicago, 1920-2020, documents the lives of Irish musicians, and significant milestones in the development of Irish music in his adopted city of Chicago.

This book begins with a history of the development of Chicago and the reasons why emigrants from Ireland came to the city. It gives two personal accounts of the emigration experience from Ireland; firstly, during the Great Famine of 1845-1850 and one hundred years later during the late 1940s/early 1950s.

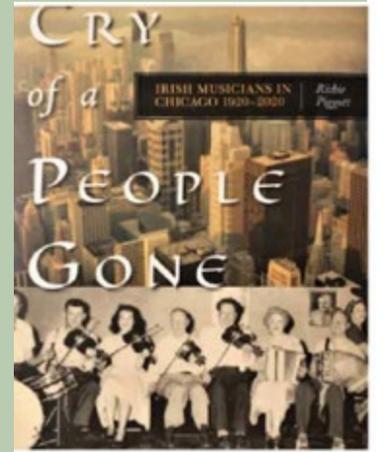
The next two sections of the book give detailed biographical information on Irish musicians who came to Chicago from Ireland and also includes first generation Irish American musicians born in Chicago. Section

one covers the period from 1920-1945 (musicians include Selena O'Neill, Frank Thornton, Tommy Cawley, Jimmy Neary & Cuz Teahan) and the second from 1945 - 2020 (musicians include Malachy Towie, Kevin Henry, Tom O'Malley, Joe & Seamus Cooley and Kevin Keegan).

The remaining chapters cover significant milestones in the development of Irish music in Chicago which include the formation of the Irish Musicians Association of America (IMA); tours of Irish musicians and dancers in both Ireland and America and the history of the first Fleadh Cheoil in Chicago (1964-1969).

There are two appendices to

the book specifically covering accordion players in Chicago and a personal (previously unpublished) memoir by Frank Thornton on Irish music. The book includes hundreds of photographs, primarily donated to Richie by the families he interviewed, which greatly add to the telling of the history of



Irish music in Chicago.

Cry of a People Gone: Irish Musicians in Chicago, 1920-2020 / Richie Piggott. Cnocanglas Productions, 2022. 410 pp. ISBN: 9780578287874 (pbk.).

The book can be pre-ordered at [richiepiggott.com](http://richiepiggott.com)

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country to Britain.

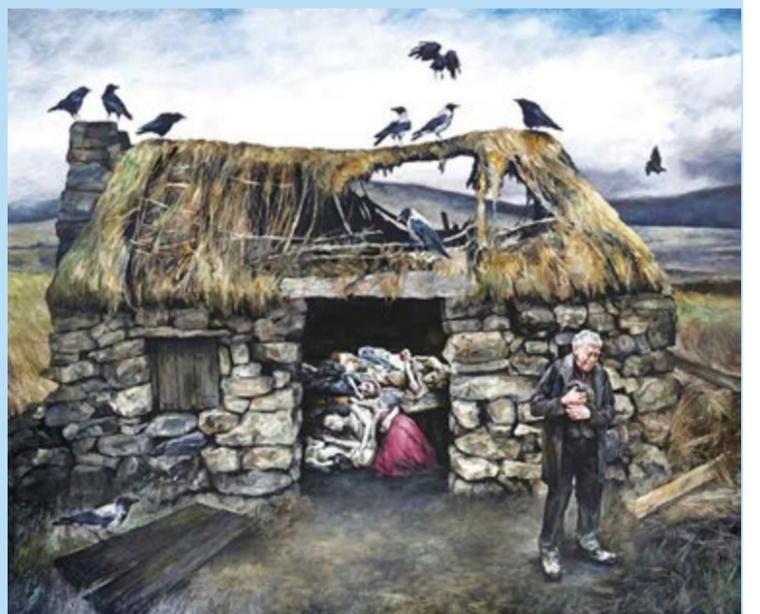
A half million people were evicted from their homes, often illegally and violently, during the potato blight. Another 1.5 million had no choice but to emigrate to foreign lands aboard rotting, overcrowded 'coffin ships'.

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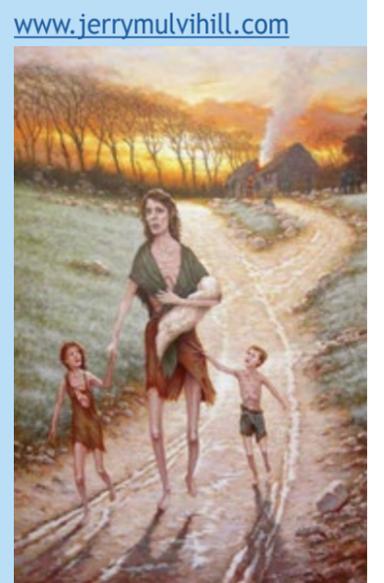
set in motion a war that would finally gain Ireland its independence from Britain in 1922.

How could there be a famine in a land with surplus food? How did Britain respond? What were the Penal laws and how did they impact this disaster? Why were 3 million people reliant on potatoes to survive? How could a country with a population of nearly 9 million people be divided into only 10,000 estates?

This is the story of how that immense tragedy came to pass.

This is the truth behind the Irish famine.

64 paintings were specially commissioned for this book by



Invited to Dublin to receive her UCD Alumni Award from 2021 post pandemic, Fiona McEntee (2nd from right) celebrates with her family.

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**Rebels Abroad**

By **Eddie Price**

This is a tale of two men—Thomas McDonnell, master carpenter and stonemason; and Harold Marston Fitch, heir to the title Viscount of Dermont in the County of Meath—“rebels abroad” who take radically different paths on two different continents. Both are strong-willed men separated by class, politics and religion—inextricably linked by Brigid McDonnell, Thomas’s fifteen-year-old daughter, Harold’s secret lover.

In 1739-1740, Ireland is stricken by a severe cold wave known to history as the “The Great Frost.” Evicted from their cottage, Thomas and Brigid must seek lodgings in Dublin in a time when the Protestant nobility marginalized and persecuted Catholics with a set of restrictions known as the Penal Laws. As famine and riots rage across the island, the McDonnells embark on a voyage to the American colony of Maryland. But the Atlantic crossing is a dangerous one, complicated by Great Britain’s war with Spain and the onset of hurricane season. Tragedy and hardship beset the family, ultimately forcing Thomas to become an indentured servant. He must adjust to his new life on a Maryland tobacco plantation, living among slaves and observing the institution of slavery close up.

Harold’s drinking and debauchery lead to expulsion from Dermont Manor and his enlistment in the prestigious

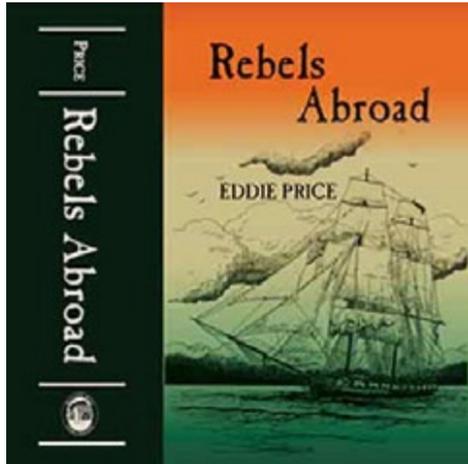
Inniskilling Dragoons, an adventure that weaponizes his already-frightening tendencies and hones his considerable skills. From daring anti-smuggling raids on the Lincolnshire coast to the wild underworld of Georgian London, and finally to the battlefields of the Holy Roman Empire, Harold ascends in rank and becomes a top-rate

nipulator, Harold grows more sinister as the story progresses. Driven by impulsivity, feelings of entitlement and superiority, promiscuity and other forms of self-gratification, he seizes upon opportunities which bring him even more success. But he is compelled to expose a dark family secret and to find those who betrayed him.

**Author Bio**

Eddie Price, author of the award-winning historical fiction novels *Widder’s Landing* and *One Drop—A Slave!*, and the illustrated children’s books, *Little Miss Grubby Toes Steps on a Bee!*, *Little Miss Grubby Toes Plays with Fire!*, *Little Miss Grubby Toes Falls in the Pool!*, *Little Miss Grubby Toes Eats Too Much Candy!* and *Little Miss Grubby Toes Gets Stuck in a Tree!* (All “Gold Medal” winners at the Mom’s Choice Awards.)

He has also written a sports history entitled *The Unlikely Trio—The Winners of the 1913 Kentucky Derby*. <https://www.eddiepricekentuckyauthor.com>



soldier, earning the respect and loyalty of those in his command. At the same time he descends gradually into the world of the psychopath—although this term did not exist in the 1740’s. A true narcissist and con-artist, liar and ma-

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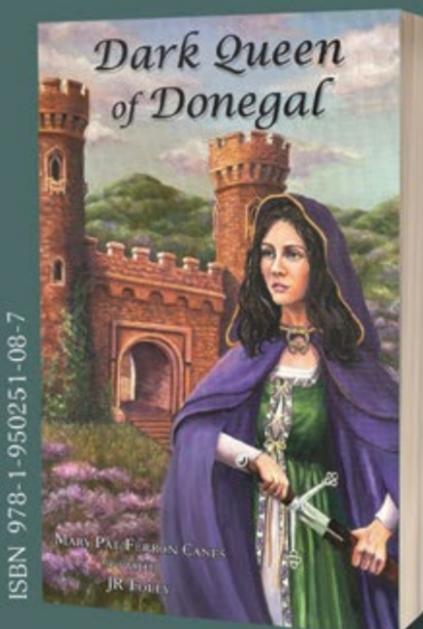
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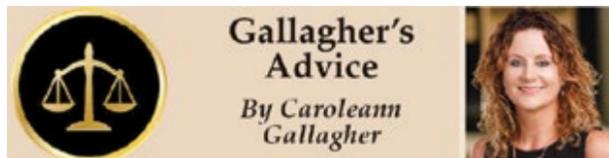


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### Understanding the Beginning of Personal Injury Lawsuits

Every personal injury case is different and unique. However, there are common litigation steps that you can expect your attorney to make when filing a personal injury lawsuit. At the end of this article, you will have a better understanding of the first steps we take when a client hires us to win their personal injury case.

#### Step 1 - Prelitigation

The very first step occurs prior to filing a lawsuit and it's called prelitigation. Some people call it the investigation stage. The purpose is to investigate and gather as much evidence as possible so that we are aware of all of the relevant facts and can properly evaluate your claim prior to filing a lawsuit.

Once a client contacts us, we conduct an interview with the client so that we understand exactly what happened, where it happened, how they're feeling, and how the injury has affected them in their day-to-day lives. We will also need to know whether or not the client has missed time from work due to their injury and how much wages they've lost as a result. Another task is to determine the amount of medical

bills they have incurred and whether or not they've been paid. Other investigatory work that we do includes actually going to the scene and taking a look at what may have caused the incident that resulted in our client's injury. For example, if our client was injured as a result of a slip and fall, we would go to the location of the fall and take measurements and pictures of the scene.

We also send a Letter of Representation to the at-fault party and their insurance company so that they are notified of the pending claim and injury. In most cases, we also send a Letter of Preservation to go along with the representation letter. A Preservation Letter not only puts the at-fault party and their insurance company on notice of the injury and that our client has hired us, but it also tells them not to delete or destroy any investigative material such as photos or videos of the incident or of the scene of the incident. This is important because, if they were to delete evidence after receiving that letter, we can use that to our advantage in court. There are legal ramifications for deleting evidence while there is a claim pending, especially after receiving a preservation letter. In addition to this task we also begin the process of trying to determine how much insurance an at fault party might have had that will cover the claim.

If the client does not require any further medical treatment at this stage, it could be possible to negotiate a settlement prior to filing a lawsuit. This

is done by gathering a complete set of the client's medical records and bills and putting them together in a package with other evidence and sending them to the insurance company in a demand letter. A demand letter lays out what happened, the medical treatment that the client has done as a result, the wages lost from missing work, the pain and suffering that the client had to endure and the effect the injury has had overall on the person's life. At the end of the letter is a dollar-figure amount that we demand be paid in order to settle the claim.

#### Step 2 - Filing a Lawsuit

If a settlement isn't reached, the next step is filing a lawsuit. The first thing we do is draft a Complaint. A complaint is a document that sets forth who the plaintiff is, who the defendants are, and it further sets out the allegations against those defendants, the specific laws they violated, and the facts that led to the injury. The complaint is filed with the court, who would then provide us with an official case number. We then use a process server to serve, or otherwise deliver, the complaint to the named Defendants. Once served, the Defendants have 30 days to respond to the complaint by admitting or denying the allegations.

#### Step 3 - Discovery

Filing a lawsuit triggers a stage called Discovery. The best way to describe Discovery is that it's a fact gathering stage. Both parties demand certain documents from one another and demand that certain questions be answered. An example of what the Defendant's attorney would demand is the client's medical records. An example of what we would demand in a case involving a car collision is the driving history of the driver and any photographs taken by that driver.

Another form of Discovery are oral depositions. A deposition is a question-and-answer session conducted outside of the courtroom but is still taken under oath. The purpose of depositions is to gather information and facts from the parties or witnesses. It can also lead to the location or revelation of relevant documents or other evidence. Since the statements are taken under oath, a transcript of the deposition can be used in court if a person gives an answer at trial that is different from the one taken during the deposition. This action is called impeaching the witness.

It is important that you speak with an experienced attorney like my colleagues and I who will evaluate your claim, determine whether you have a right to recovery, and represent you in that path to recovery. My colleagues and I devote time to developing personal relationships with all of our clients. Our team has decades of collective experience in representing people who have been injured and we have the knowledge, experience, and resources to walk you through the process and obtain the most desired outcome possible.

\*Caroleann Gallagher is an Irish born Attorney now licensed in Illinois and practicing all types of Personal Injury Law and Workers Compensation. She can be contacted at cgallagher@cgtrial.com or at (312) 782-7482.

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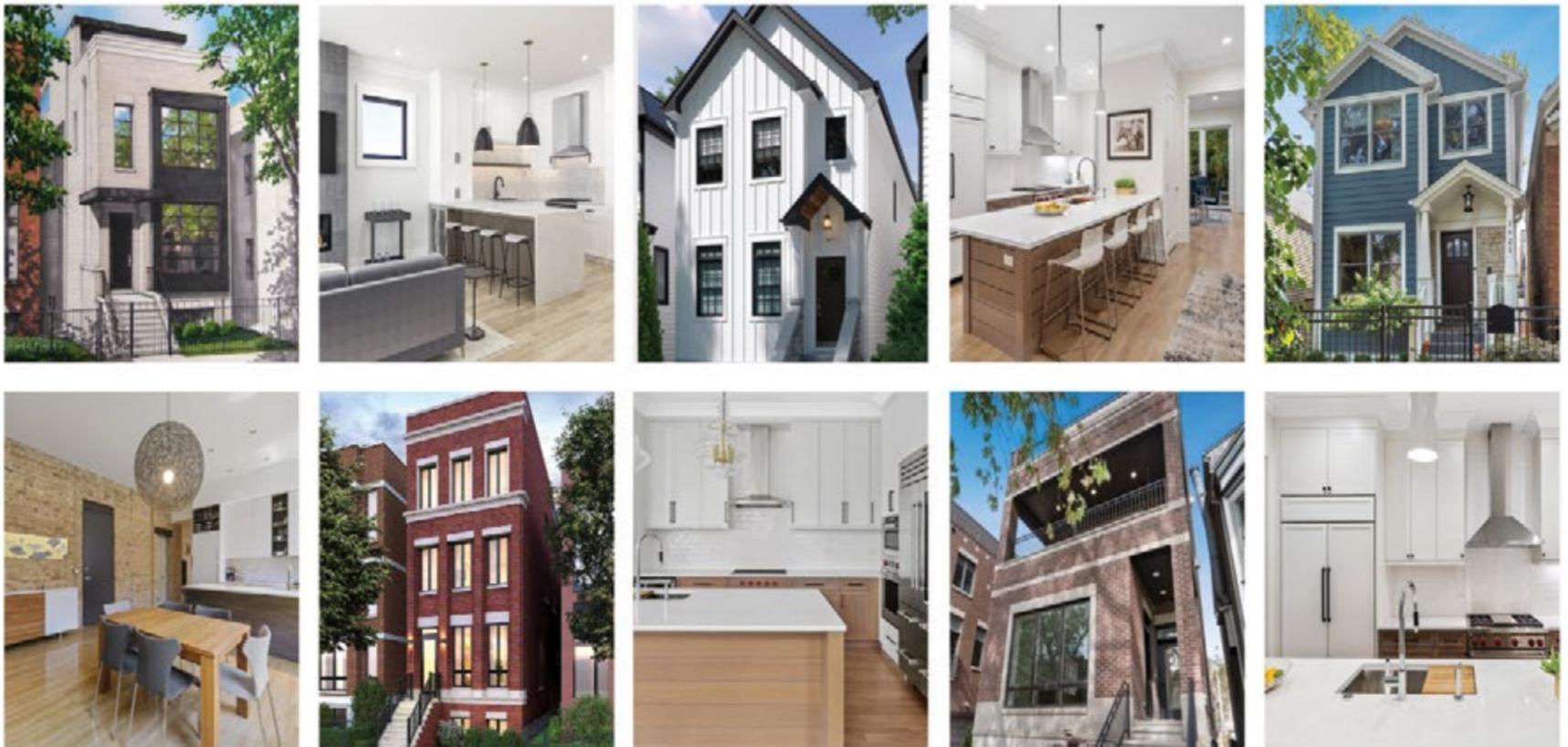
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## New Hunger Strike Quilt Unveiled

By **Ralph Fortune and Jo Mortland** (member of *Nimble Thimbles at IAHC*)

**Ralph:** This is the story of how a quilt became a major fund raising tool to finance a monument to the ten men who died while on hunger strike in Ireland in 1981.

Sometime in late 2013 or early 2014, a committee was formed to commemorate the hundredth anniversary of the 1916 Easter Uprising in Ireland. After organizing and fundraising, a monument was built and unveiled at the site of the Famine Memorial in Providence, Rhode Island.

The 1916-2016 Memorial Committee is made up of individuals from Irish American organizations including Irish Northern Aid, RI Unit (INA), Ancient Order of Hibernians (Women’s Auxiliary), the Irish Famine Memorial Committee, the Irish Ceilidhe Club of RI, et al., and exists as an educational organization presenting lectures on Irish/Irish American history and other subjects.

INA has commemorated the 1981 Hunger Strike every year since the death of the first hunger striker, Bobby Sands.

The idea of a permanent monument to the Hunger Strike was agreed upon. We hired an architect and raised funds to build it.

Fundraising events were held, but we needed something new to bring in more funds.

Jo Mortland comes in here. Jo is a personal friend of Committee member, Corrine Fortune. She

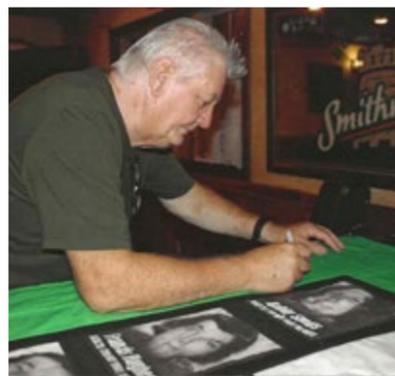
had recently visited us and happened to bring a catalog of her quilting works.

The artistry was impressive, so we asked Jo if she could make a quilt for us that would represent the 10 hunger strikers to create interest in our campaign.

**Jo:** My friends, Corrine and Ralph Fortune belong to INA in Providence, Rhode Island.

I had sent them photos of some of the raffle quilts we’ve made in Chicago to raise funds for the Irish American Heritage Center. They liked that idea, and asked me to make something they could raffle or auction to benefit their group.

They wanted a banner honoring the Irish Hunger Strikers from 1981. Because it is possible to print photos on fabric, I was able to scan photos of the 10 men involved. The background is a representation of the front and back of the Irish flag, and the finished product is 40 x 50”. One of the Hunger Strikers, Bobby Sands, was also known for a poem entitled *The Lark*, so there is a lark appliquéd on the banner. The Palestinian flag is represented, as the Irish Republican Freedom Fighters feel solidarity with the Pal-



estinian Freedom Fighters.

Making the banner turned into a much more challenging project than many of the quilts I have made in the past. The stripes for the flag had to match up on the front and back, and to find a table large enough to pin it all together, I used the workspace in the Nimble Thimbles Room at the



Heritage Center! While working on the banner, the only place in my home large enough to hang it was my living room wall. Friends who came by asked me how it felt to have ten dead people looking at me every day!

Quilting the piece was also challenging because of the size. It had to be done on a table top sewing machine, scrunching it up as I went, trying not to crease the photos. I used many vertical quilting lines, running from top to bottom, in thread that matches the colors of the flag.

Once finished, I wondered how I would get it to Corrine and Ralph? Corrine instantly fixed the problem by saying, “Oh, I will come get it!” And she did!! Drove all the way from Rhode Island!

**Ralph:** Fundraising has been successful. We’ve raised a lot of the money needed to install the monument. We have displayed the quilt at every fundraising event, committee meeting, and even a music event at the Ceilidhe Club where they did a 50-50 raffle. The support has been phenomenal. Adding to the excitement, Sean Sands, Bobby’s brother, a musician, came from Ireland with two of his mates and played a couple of shows for us to help us

raise funds.

Sean was very taken by the quilt, saying he’s never seen anything like it, ever, anywhere. He agreed to sign the quilt in Gaelic, next to his brother’s picture which translates to “Victory or Death.” The statement refers to the fact that Ireland is occupied in six counties in the North by England, and that Ireland cannot be one nation united and free until English rule is ended. Sean’s signature and statement has garnered more interest in the quilt with other organizations interested in having the quilt shown in their clubs.

Bidding for the quilt is done via silent action. The winner will be announced before or at the unveiling in May of 2023.

It’s possible that Sean Sands will return to Providence, RI for the unveiling of the monument (and maybe Jo will, too!).

Sculptor Bob Shure is creating the monument with installation in May, 2023.

The quilt that Jo created is beautiful and politically significant symbol of the just fight for a united and free Ireland. These 10 men and their sacrifices cannot be forgotten. The monument will be a permanent reminder of an historic event in Irish history. The quilt, wherever it may hang, will truly represent the 10 men who died on Hunger Strike in 1981.

For info, google Ireland’s Easter Rising of 1916 Centennial Remembrance Committee of R.I.

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# Minister for State for Overseas Development Aid and Diaspora, Colm Brophy T.D., Visits Chicago

Minister for State for Overseas Development Aid and Diaspora, Colm Brophy T.D., enjoyed a visit to Gaelic Park last weekend, with an opportunity to meet with the great team and volunteers. Our best wishes go to Marian Ryan, General Manager, on her retirement! While in Chicago the Minister also met with Concern Worldwide, The Irish American Partnership and visited the Irish American Heritage Center. Thank you to all who facilitated this visit.

Publisher, Cliff Carlson, interviewed Colm Brophy T.D., at the Irish American Heritage Center, October 30th.

**IAN:** How did you get started in politics?

**Brophy:** I know it's unusual, but as a young teenage person at 15 or 16, with a sense of politics about my own country in the 1980's, I was very influenced by Garrett Fitzgerald who was

then the leader of Fine Gael. I decided I wanted to get involved in politics, so at about 16 years of age I applied to join the party. I wasn't involved in the elected side of politics for many many years, and I was only elected to the Dail in 2016 for the first time. I think that there are a lot of benefit in having a career outside of politics as well as a career inside of politics. It enables you to bring a lot to the role. But, politics and what politics can achieve has been a life-long interest of mine, and it's wonderful now as a minister - particularly in the area in which I work which is the diaspora and the development aid area - to have the ability to implement and do things and see the positive reaction on the ground.

**IAN:** Are you responsible for the Emigrant Support Program here in the USA or around the

world?

**Brophy:** The Emigrant Support Program is right within the area of my responsibility. It is one of the best programs which we run, and one of the reasons I think it is so positive is that we saw aspects of this in terms of what we have just been doing - looking at the facilities, and looking at the projects that can be run. In terms of the emigrant support program, that ability to help and support Irish communities whether they be here in Chicago or in North America or indeed whether they be anywhere in the world,



Colm Brophy T.D.,

because the Emigrant Support Program also has major activities in any country where there is an Irish diaspora. That would include the United Kingdom, Australia, Canada, New Zealand etc. In all of those areas what we want to do is recognize from the Irish governments prospective that we need to be there, engaged, helping and supporting through our embassies and the consular networks, but also critically thru the community groups that are on the ground, and the greater Irish community that exists. In some instances that would be Irish born people but it is also for the whole Irish diaspora. Globally there are some 70 to 80 million that claim some sort of heritage back to Ireland. There are Irish diaspora and community groups right around the world, particularly in the United States and we want to be there to support them in celebrating the culture that is Ireland and the sporting life that is Ireland, in times of need or hardship that we are there to help them and give that support there as well, and obviously in days of celebration like St. Patrick's Day. It is really a broader remit than a lot of people think.

**IAN:** The Irish are a giving people. It shows in the places

you are visiting here. Irish Community Services, the American Ireland Fund, Concern Worldwide. What is your take on Gaelic Park and the Irish American Heritage Center which you have visited recently?

**Brophy:** I think they are two amazing facilities. I think Gaelic Park is one of the most impressive facilities I have seen in terms of the ability to have the GAA, to have our national games, and to be able to host (as they did last Summer) some incredible sporting tournaments, both for the youngsters and the adults from around the USA, and to also be able to have a facility that can host any kind of gathering. And the same here at the Heritage Center in terms of a very different building, but what comes across is the commitment by the people involved to be there to provide the library service, to provide the rooms for the Irish dancing, to provide rooms for the wonderful, wonderful theater which can be used in so many different ways. I think it is incredibly lucky for Chicago just to have that type of facility, and to know that as an Irish community that it is there for them, but also that it is very giving in the way that it works because it has a broader reach in that it is there for everyone to benefit from it including groups like the Farmer's Market that is here today that might not have any real connection to Ireland, but they get to see that key thing about the way we as a nation of people think about what it is to be Irish. Really at the heart of it, and you mentioned it in your question, is I think we are incredibly giving in numerous ways. On so many occasions over decades if there has been a worldwide disaster or fundraising effort, per head of population, you will invariably find that Ireland is right up there at the very top willing to give. That extends into our diaspora. It is part of the DNA. I think it is part of Ireland, and I think it comes out of an understanding that is very strong here in the United States and very strong back home in Ireland that we were a poor country for a long time. We know what it is to be on the receiving end of it. An awful lot of the Irish diaspora that exists today, particularly here in North America exists because of the Famine, because at the end of the day it is only 170 years ago. So we have

been lucky enough as a people to be supported at times when we needed support, and therefore it is embedded in our DNA effectively to have that generosity of giving and giving back.

**IAN:** We have the biggest Heritage Center in the world right here in Chicago. We are right here in the center of America, and the Center takes up an entire city block, less than five miles from the center of downtown Chicago with two parking lots, and two freeway off-ramps going in either direction. What can we do here to convince the Irish government that we are more than capable of hosting many of the events if not all that are held in New York City? In other words, what can we do better here to keep support coming from the Irish government?

**Brophy:** Keeping the Irish government perspective on this, we don't have any predisposed system of looking at whether it is the United States, or one part of North America, or whether it's one part of anywhere we are providing ESP support, or funding support or capitol projects. Every project gets evaluations on their merit and on the benefit it can be. On my perspective as a Minister one of the things I have wanted and have pushed to see is a diversity in the type of project we support and a diversity in the location and areas we support. The key thing is all about putting proposals together that reach out and coincide with the new Diaspora strategy in terms of it's objectives and aims, and also with the key idea of partnering, because we cannot be the sole provider of a funding source for a project. What we would like and try and do, and I think it is important, is we like to be the anchor finance to help enable a project to be able to reach out to get more support maybe at a local, a state, or a federal level, or through the process of private support through the process of fundraising, but to have that knowledge that there is a core amount of funding coming in from the Irish government side.

The key thing is to be innovative and come up with projects whether it is in New York, San Francisco or Los Angeles or Dallas-Ft Worth, or whether it is right here in Chicago, everything is open to be looked at. There are no bars and no restrictions. Good ideas are what we want.

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### Irish Shop Oak Park Closing as Jim & Anne August Retire

(Story below courtesy of the Wednesday Journal, Oak Park, IL)

By Stacey Sheridan of the Wednesday Journal

For 30-plus years, the Irish Shop has been a destination for those looking to connect with the Emerald Isle from the landlocked western suburbs of Chicago. Known for its vast array of everything Irish, from surname key chains emblazoned with family crests to wool sweaters, the Irish Shop is an entirely unique and special part of Oak Park’s shopping landscape. That landscape is about to change, however, as the Irish Shop will be bidding the community slán, as its owners plan to retire.

“Hopefully this space will take on a whole new thing for someone else,” Anne August said of her storefront at 100 N. Oak Park Ave.

The Irish Shop is a family business, owned and operated by August and her husband Jim. The two often returned to Ireland - Anne August grew up in Belfast, the capital of Northern Ireland - for buying trips and to visit family. That familial charm permeates the Irish Shop itself: loyal customers are greeted by name, effortless conversations are had and directions are given to pass on well wishes to each other’s family.

“We’ve had many families come through here with their grandmother, their mother, their kids - the kids are all grown, now their kids,” August said. “Oak Park has been very good to us.”

With their lease up at the end of January and lacking the desire to renew it, closing the shop and retiring felt like the natural next step for August, who started working at 17. Her husband needed a bit of persuading to stop working.

“I kind of convinced Jim, I think, that it was time for us to retire,” she said.

The Irish Shop will be open through Christmas. As weeks go by, the Augusts will reduce and continue to reduce merchandise prices. Eventually everything will be on sale, including the fixtures.

“If anybody wants to buy the business, that’s great!”



Owners, Anne and Jim August

August said.

In the three decades of running the business, the married couple has been a dependable and leading presence in the Hemingway Business District, formerly known as the Avenue Business Association. Both even served terms as district president.

Beyond being the place to pick up celtic silver jewelry and Waterford Crystal wares, the Irish Shop carries beautiful knitwear, all made in Ireland of soft Merino wool. The sweaters and wraps are a particular favorite of August’s.

“The people that make them, they’re so creative,” she said. “Their product lines are so exquisite.”

The Irish Shop is also something of a local food gem for those in the know. The shop’s fresh bread sells out each Friday. The bread is made by Jim August, a professional cook. It also sold a variety of imported foods - sweets, savory pies, sausages, bacon, black pudding and more Irish fare that is hard to come by in the United States.

While speaking with Wednesday Journal about the closure, August stopped to help Cathy Malone, an in-home careworker who came in to pick up some white pudding for one of her clients, who lives in Park Ridge.

“He loves the stuff,” she said.

Wednesday Journal spilled the beans to Malone about the shop’s closure.

“What do you mean you’re retiring?” Malone asked August.

“I’m going to spend time with my grandkids,” August told her.

The Augusts will have plenty to do once the shop closes. The parents of four children, the couple has 13 grandchildren varying in age from 26 to 4. They babysit one of their grandsons at 7 a.m. every morning.

They also plan to take some time for themselves. The Augusts bought a vacation home in Antioch near the Chain o’Lakes that they’ll be refurbishing. The couple will continue to live in their River Forest home as well.

Irishman, Mossie Forde invites you to enjoy a stay at his Villas in Delray Beach



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Once Malone’s shock subsided, she congratulated August on the upcoming adventure. The closing of the Irish Shop will certainly be an acute loss to the Oak Park retail community, but also to the many individuals that have come to rely on the Augusts and their shop.

“Of course I’m sad,” Malone said. “And I don’t know where I’m going to get my sausages now.”

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# It Starts With A Song

By Joe McShane



This has been a traveling season for me, hard to know where home is right now. I guess where I hang my hat as the old saying goes. I'm not complaining though, it's the life I chose, at least for the main part. I have really enjoyed traveling around with Nathan Carter and the band. To be with so many people and sleeping on a bus, I know can be a hardship for a lot of bands but this band really cares for each other and it shows. We poke fun at one another and tell stories of the many experiences on our musical road, with never a wrong word to one another. No ego's here!

We are on a bus from Minnesota to Chicago Gaelic Park for a 2nd sold-out show as I write. I asked Nathan Carter if he would chat with me as we journey onward and of course, he said yes. So, before I start I want to say "Nathan, thank you so much for inviting me on stage to perform 'The Boat To Liverpool' song with you. Even more so, to thank you sincerely for inviting my son Declan up to perform with us, and asking him to sing a song with the band. I know, it's not every musician that would do that. What a wonderful experience for Declan, which I'm sure he will never forget. Nathan - "It's a thrill to see Declan flourishing into the young talented musician that he has become... It is always great to see young talent getting the chance to perform on stages and it's an honor to help someone as keen as Declan... Myself, you, and Declan had a blast performing the boat to Liverpool and I'm delighted to say it brought the house down in Chicago...

"Not meaning to embarrass you, Nathan. I know you don't do what you do for publicity. I know you have always found time to raise money for the less fortunate and pay visits to children in the hospital. In fact, my brother Nick R.I.P. (who I know you were very close to) told me about one such visit to a young cancer patient when you said to someone please, don't video me for Facebook while you sang 'Wagon Wheel' to the young patient. This says a lot about you". Nathan - "Yes I've visited a good few fans in the hospital over the years and it really isn't

a chore to me and though it's only something small on my part it seems to bring a lot of joy to the patients... "Thank you for the chat Nathan, I've been on the road with you many times now and I enjoy every minute spent with you and all the crew" Nathan - "Joe, it's always a pleasure and you've become a great friend through the years and I hope we share many more tours together up ahead. Plus the band loves having you onboard, as well". "Wow! Right, let's have a beer, good idea, Joe...".

The song I picked for this month is one my friend Stephen Smyth and I wrote and, we are delighted to announce that one of Ireland's most popular singers, Robert Mizzell has recorded it. The song came to be one day while in Chicago, I got a call from Stephen and he

## Where's A Man Supposed To Go?

Written by Joe McShane and Stephen Smyth  
Verse 1

There's a cold spell coming in from Colorado  
While California burns in the summer sun  
There's a friend of mine real sick just down the block  
His life on hold with each ticking of the clock  
Verse 2

The Mississippi's banks are overflowing  
In Chicago, there's a cold wind a blowing  
A hurricane is coming through the Gulf of Mexico  
Tell me where in the hell's a man supposed to go?  
Chorus

Tell me where's a man supposed to go?  
It looks to me nobody seems to know  
20-20 vision came a little too late, way too slow  
Tell me where's a man supposed to go?  
Verse 3

They laid me off my job, last Monday  
I canceled my vacation yesterday  
So I'm sittin' on my front porch just a rockin' in my chair  
I'm out of beer, does anybody care?  
Verse 4

This new normal ain't normal to me  
Can't believe what I'm seeing on tv  
Will I ever get to see another live country show?  
Tell me where's a man supposed to go?  
Chorus

Tell me where's a man supposed to go?  
It looks to me nobody seems to know

said "how're things going Joe?". (This was in the middle of the pandemic). I said "things are pretty good but I just heard on the news, there's a cold spell coming in from Colorado" (it was an unseasonably time of year for cold weather) Then Stephen said, "I believe California was burning in the summer sun". The next thing he said, "I think we have the first 2 lines of a song there Joe". We started laughing, then 20 minutes later a song was born entitled 'Where's A Man Supposed To Go'.

I wish everyone a very Happy and safe Christmas. And a Happy and Healthy New Year! I'll be bringing and singing in the Irish New Year! From 4 - 7 pm at the Curragh, Edison Park. On New Year's Eve!

As always, be good to one another, Joe

20-20 vision came a little too late, and way too slow  
Tell me where's a man supposed to go?  
Bridge  
I can't go to my local dancehall  
Tennessee might run out of alcohol  
In church we'd stand together we'd sing and we'd pray  
Hoping to see a brighter day  
Chorus

So tell me, where's a man supposed to go?  
It looks to me nobody seems to know  
20-20 vision came a little too late, way too slow  
Tell me where's a man supposed to go?  
Tell me where's a man supposed to go?

[Joe's FaceBook Songwriter Page Website](#)  
[Joe's ian Monthly Columns](#)



A big "Thank You" to the Mulvey family, Tom, Margaret, Eilish, Siobhan, and Aislinn, who put together a fundraiser for Danny Golden at Gaelic Park, raising a good sum to help Danny as he rehabilitates after being shot, and paralyzed breaking up a fight. Danny and his family were also in attendance.

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**2ND GRAND PRIZE**  
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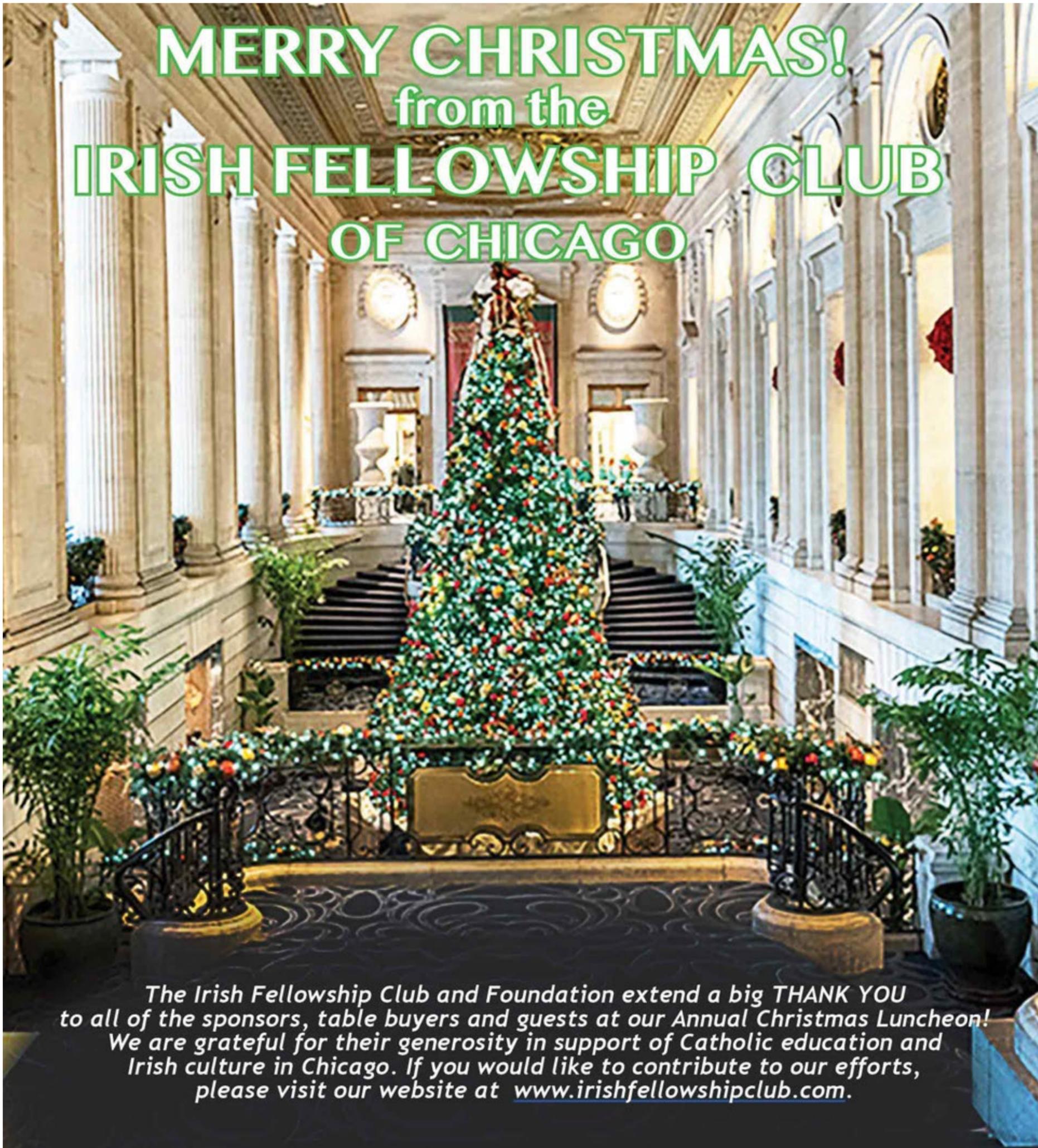
*Winners to be announced at the Corned Beef & Cabbage Dinner*

# MERRY CHRISTMAS!

from the

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*We wish the Chicago Irish Community a wonderful Christmas Season and start to 2023!*



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# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE DECEMBER 2022

Friends, Members of the Irish American Heritage Center (IAHC), founders, supporters, neighbors, and partners,

Merry Christmas! We hope that you have a wonderful holiday season with your family and friends around you. For those who live far away from your family, we hope that you are near to them in your heart. For those who have lost loved ones this year, we wish for you to have comfort and peace in the memories of Christmases with your family together.

I have been thinking about traditions and the way that we commemorate holidays and build memories – and what makes those traditions carry on. As my children get older, we vary our holiday plans as life changes, but the most important things are here: home and family. Heading into December, I am excited about our IAHC traditions of the Christmas Bazaar and the Christmas Tea. Over the years, both of these events have provided our members and friends with experiences to mark the holidays together. How many of you have met with Santa



(with or without your children – no judgment here) in the library during the Bazaar? Have you had Galway Baker tea and scones in the Erin Room? Or a holiday Guinness in the Pub?

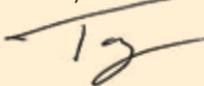
Come home to the IAHC this holiday. The Fifth Province is decorated for the season, and festive events are underway. Join us at the Center and bring your family, friends and neighbors. Enjoy the music, dancing and programming. Please take a look at the calendar on our website, <https://irish-american.org/events/list/> to see our coming attractions and details.

org/events/list/ to see our coming attractions and details.

- *Cherish the Ladies* is playing our Mayfair Theatre on December 18, 2022, at 7:00 pm.
- Win a trip to Ireland with the Aer Lingus raffle!
- The Irish book club continues.

Members get advanced notice of all of our events, and discounts on tickets and merchandise. Next time you visit, consider making sure your membership is current, and consider sharing your time and talents with the IAHC for any of our events, projects or improvements. Looking forward to seeing you at the IAHC!

Nollaig Shona daoibh go léir a chairde!  
Merry Christmas to all!



Tony McHale  
President of the IAHC. Board of Directors



## HAVE YOU

# Membered Up?

The Irish American Heritage Center is excited to present our 2022 membership renewal campaign, MEMBER UP!

Whether joining, renewing or purchasing a gift membership, take advantage of benefits at no price increase!

Visit [www.irish-american.org](http://www.irish-american.org) and **MEMBER UP** today!

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Planning to head home in 2023?**

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Airline tickets valid through September 30, 2023

The raffle closes January 6, 2023, so buy tickets now!

Winner picked on Oíche Nollaig na mBan on January 6, 2023

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For nearly 40 years, the Irish American Heritage Center has been a gathering place, a place for music and dance, events and cultural programs. A place that brings us all together to celebrate all things Irish. The Annual Appeal is one of our most important fundraisers, and enables us to continue providing entertainment and programming, as well as providing funds to keep our building in good repair now and into the future.

As you make your end-of-year charitable contributions, please consider including your Irish American Heritage Center. Now as in years past, Pat and Peggy Burke will match all donations up to \$25,000. The Burke's generosity enables your donation of any amount to have twice the giving power and will help us to reach our 2022-2023 goal of \$75,000!

Your gift will help take our Center into the future!

Contributions to the Annual Appeal can be made by mail using the form below, by responding to the mailing, or by going to [irish-american.org](http://irish-american.org) and contributing online.

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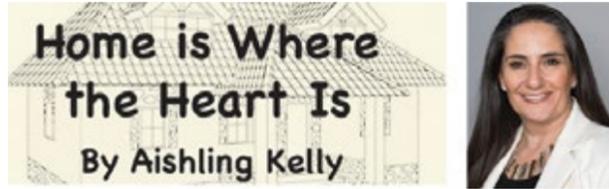
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**Is Dementia Hereditary?**

Alzheimer's is not a disease that can be inherited from one generation to another. But studies reveal that people who have a first-degree family member with Alzheimer's are more susceptible to getting the illness than those who do not.

The said disease is more common in people with a more significant number of first-degree relatives. Let's explore if genetic (hereditary variables) and environmental fac-

tors have a role when illnesses like Alzheimer's and other dementias run in a family.

**Vascular Dementia**

In most instances, vascular dementia is not passed down from generation to generation. However, a family history of predisposing factors like diabetes or hypertension can be handed down to the next generations.

Parental vascular dementia cannot be passed on except in scarce circumstances. However, some genes that enhance the likelihood of developing vascular dementia can be passed on via a parent's lineage.

The genes that enhance the risk of heart disease, diabetes, hypertension, and stroke are frequently the same factors that raise the chances of acquiring vascular dementia. For this reason, a good diet, regular exercise, and an overall healthy lifestyle may be more beneficial in the prevention of vascular dementia than Alzheimer's disease.

**Frontotemporal Dementia**

The brain's temporal and frontal lobes are affected by neuronal degeneration regarding frontotemporal dementia (FTD). Only 25% of individuals with frontotemporal dementia have a late beginning, making it among the most common types of early-onset dementia. However, is frontal lobe dementia inheritable?

Up to 50% of instances of frontotemporal dementia are inherited. All occurrences of familial frontotemporal dementia are caused by mutations in five genes, all of which are passed down from generation to generation - meaning there is a hereditary component to FTD. Trauma and thyroid illness are two of the most common risk factors for sporadic episodes of this type of dementia.

**Lewy Body Dementia**

It's been two decades since scientists have identified

Lewy body dementia as a different illness. Because of its relatively young status, there is a scarcity of meaningful data addressing spontaneous and hereditary Lewy body dementia frequency.

Lewy body dementia genetic variables have not been thoroughly defined, and only a small proportion (about 10%) of incidences are inherited. Similar to Alzheimer's disease, a genetic history of this type of dementia can raise the chance of acquiring the disease. For instance, the siblings of patients with Lewy body dementia have twice the possibility of developing the illness.

**Other Rare Dementia Types**

Familial Prion disease and Huntington's disease are two more distinct forms of dementia that can be handed down in families. Because these illnesses are produced by a single defective "dominant" gene, they have a 50/50 probability of getting passed down.

This means that even if you have a healthy gene from one of your parents, your body will still use the defective one simply because it's dominant.

**How to Lower Your Chances of Getting Dementia**

The risk of dementia is increased by genetics; however, this does not always lead to the disease itself. You can prevent dementia by reducing one's chance of developing diabetes, cardiac conditions, and hypertension, to name just a few. Moreover, you can reduce the risk of dementia by engaging in regular physical activity, eating a Mediterranean-style diet, drinking moderately, and abstaining from tobacco and alcohol.

Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia are more common in those with drug abuse issues. The stress and strain of caring for a loved one with dementia might lead some family members to turn to drugs or alcohol to cope. [Aishling Care Academy](https://www.aislingcareacademy.com/contact/) can help you or a loved one with dementia. We educate caregivers so that they could provide the utmost care tailored to a patient's specific needs.

Contact us if you would like to know more at <https://www.aislingcareacademy.com/contact/>

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# SAINT PATRICK’S DAY WEEK IN IRELAND 2023

Operated by JEM Tours

❖ March 10th Enjoy an overnight flight on Aer Lingus across the Atlantic to Dublin.

❖ March 11th Meet your driver/guide at the airport. Traveling out of Dublin you will stop at the *Man of War Restaurant* for your first Irish Breakfast. After breakfast we will continue to the north to *Downpatrick Visitors Center* believed to be the final resting place of St. Patrick. Continuing on to Belfast to enjoy our group dinner at our hotel.  
HOTEL- *The Europa Hotel-Belfast*  
Breakfast & Dinner



❖ March 12th After breakfast we will have a panoramic tour of Belfast...seeing the *Peace Wall*.. and the *Falls Road*, and *Shankill Road* famous for the murals. We will then visit the *Titanic Visitors Center* before returning to the hotel for some free time before our Belfast Taste & Tour which includes visiting several bars and restaurants.  
Breakfast & Dinner

❖ March 13th We leave Belfast to Derry...visiting the *Giant’s Causeway* and seeing the hexagonal towers created by an ancient volcano...then we will have a walking tour of Derry, with dinner tonight at the *Walled City Brewery*  
HOTEL-*The City Hall -Derry*  
Breakfast and Dinner



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❖ March 14th Today we head to the county of Donegal and through the Glenties to Ardara where you will visit *Triona Design* for an Irish Tweed demonstration. Continue to Sliabh League, the highest sea cliffs in Europe...we will stop in Donegal for free time then on to Kilronan Castle.  
HOTEL- *Kilronan Castle* - Breakfast and Dinner

❖ March 15th (Optional) Stop in Sligo to visit *Sligo Abbey* and have some time to explore this compact city. Traveling through Drumahair and visit the *Shed Distillery* where they produce Drumshambo Gunpowder Gin. Then back to the castle.  
Breakfast and Dinner

❖ March 16th Off to Galway with stops in Knock and the village of Cong- the home of Ashford Castle and the Quiet Man with a walking tour of the town.  
HOTEL-*The Galway Bay Hotel* Breakfast & Dinner

❖ March 17th Galway City Saint Patrick Day  
**Parade Celebration** - Breakfast

❖ March 18th Stops along *Poulnabroune Dolmen* and the *Cliffs of Moher*....head to Dublin for a night of fun!!!  
HOTEL- *Ashling Hotel-Dublin* - Breakfast

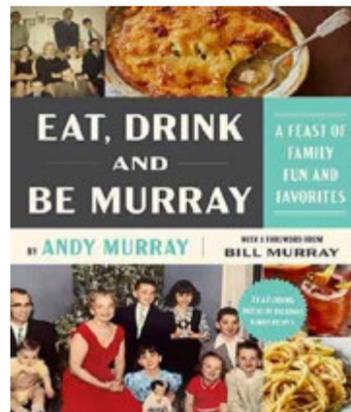
❖ March 19th Depart for Chicago - Breakfast



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## Andy Murray to be Featured in the January 2023 Issue

Andy Murray, Chef / Owner of the CaddyShack Restaurant in Rosemont, and Florida, has authored a new cookbook about family and food. “Eat Drink and Be Murray is out now and will be featured in the January Edition. Andy, brother of Bill Murray is a cancer survivor



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# CHICAGO GAELIC PARK



The Celtic Angels Christmas Show captivates audiences of all ages with the magic of the Christmas season!



The Celtic Angels along with the Celtic Knight Dancers will be coming to Gaelic Park on Saturday, December 10<sup>th</sup>, 2022 at 8pm. Tickets are \$30 and can be purchased by calling 708-687-9323

Chicago Gaelic Park - 6119 W. 147th Street - Oak Forest, IL

## A Chairde

Some years back, a young woman from Belmullet, County Mayo, came to work at Chicago Gaelic Park. Marian Ryan's talent, skills and dedication were quickly recognized, and it wasn't long before she was given keys to the place. Soon thereafter she was appointed General manager, and Gaelic Park has been reaping the benefits ever since.

Marian will be retiring at the end of 2022, and she can be very proud of her legacy. The Park grew and thrived under her watch. In addition to leading our banquet, pub and kitchen management team and staff, she has overseen countless physical improvements over the years and has been very involved with our festivals, feiseanna and other cultural activities.

Under her guidance, the Park has hosted major GAA sports tournaments and many Irish community and educational events. She has welcomed three Presidents of Ireland, numerous other Irish government officials, and many major Irish entertainers.

Many of you know Marian, and you know that her devotion to Gaelic Park is a large part of her life. There's a certain Offaly man that also stands tall in her world. Marian's husband, Hugh Ryan, is the man behind this successful woman, and I'm grateful to him for supporting the passion that Marian has had for her vocation as General Manager.

What I'll remember the most is the heart she put into Gaelic Park. I've been blessed to know her, collaborate with her, and learn from her, and to be inspired by her tireless work ethic and her love for Gaelic Park and its extended community. I'm very happy for Marian as she begins the next chapter in her life, and wish her a very rewarding retirement. Like others, I take comfort in knowing that she won't be a stranger, and will always be part of Chicago Gaelic Park.

*Go raibh maith agat, Bill O'Sullivan*

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### PUB ENTERTAINMENT DECEMBER 2022

#### Friday

- 02 - Gerry Haughey
- 09 - Nicky G.
- 16 - Kieran Byrne
- 23 - Bernie Glim
- 30 - Joe McShane

#### Saturday

- 03 - Damien Patrick
- 10 - Ray Gavin
- 17 - The Rockets
- 24 - The Jukebox
- 31 - Irish New Year's in the Pub

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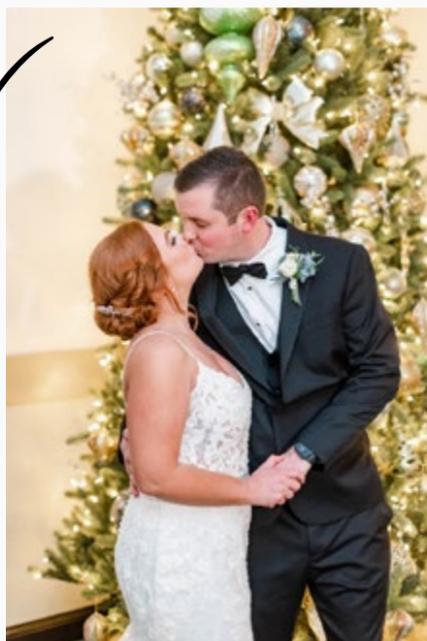


Photo by Elle Taylor Photography

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# CHICAGO GAELIC PARK

Serving the social and cultural needs of the Irish community throughout Chicagoland



## THANK YOU MARIAN!

☪ “Marian came from Mayo in the west, and steered Gaelic Park to its crest. Retiring soon to follow new quests, a thank you and sláinte to the best!” –

*Tom and Josephine Boyle*

☪ “Thank you for your years of service to Gaelic Park. It has been a pleasure working with you, and I appreciate your follow through whenever I needed something from you. If everyone took care of their customers the way you do, things would be a lot easier in this world! I know the powers that be at Gaelic Park would clone you if they could! Enjoy the heck out of retirement.”

- *Cliff Carlson*

☪ “Marian has been the face of Chicago Gaelic Park since she was hired. Gaelic Park had several General Managers before her, but she provided the consistency and stability the organization needed to grow and thrive. Marian was always dedicated to her job and treated everyone with respect, regardless of their background or status. It’ll be a tall order to fill her shoes. She is a credit to her heritage and will be sorely missed by all. I wish her the best of luck in retirement.” - *Harry Costelloe*

☪ “It has been a pleasure working with you, Marian, and thank you for a job well done. Good health and lots of enjoyment in retirement.” – *John Crean*

☐ “Gaelic Park Chicago has thrived and grown under the loving guardianship of Marian Ryan and we have been blessed to have had Marian as our lead person in representing our mission of promoting Irish Culture with a successful business model.” - *John Devitt*

☪ “Marian has put her heart into Gaelic Park, working tirelessly and unselfishly in promoting and preserving Irish culture and heritage while keeping Gaelic park financially sound. As a result, she became the heart of Gaelic Park. She has balanced and worked with all of the passionate personalities to keep GP moving in a positive and successful direction – no easy task. Marian will be missed!!” – *John Griffin*

☪ “Marian – wishing you and your family the very best in your next journey into retirement. You always led at beauti-

ful Chicago Gaelic Park by example to ensure there was always ‘welcome on the mat’ for visitors and musicians alike. And moreover, a welcome with a smile and a hug, and of course, the offer of a Cupán Tae or even a pint! Go n-eirí an t-ádh leat go deo- wishing you all the best for the future!” -

*Paddy Homan*

☪ “Thank you for your years of steadfast leadership in the service of Gaelic Park. It won’t be the same without you. “May your pockets be heavy and your heart be light; may good luck pursue you each morning and night.” -

*Sean, Katie, Eoin, & Declan Kenny*

☪ “When we think of Gaelic Park, we think of Marian and what she had done to make it the success it is today. Marian, you have made Gaelic Park the welcoming place with your smile, dedication and tireless work ethic. Gaelic Park won’t be the same without you! Wishing you all the best in your well-deserved retirement.” – *Mary and Joe McNally*

☪ “To GP you’ve always been true. You did everything you could do. You’ve given your best, and now you can rest. Enjoy special time with your Hugh.” – *Bill O’Sullivan*

☪ “What will we ever do without you? The best to you Marian, may the wind be always at your back.” – *Colleen Reidy*

☪ “Marian, while I am happy for you on your retirement, your smiling face and your dedication to Gaelic Park and all who know you will be missed. Your service for over 25 years has been outstanding. Hope you enjoy many happy years in the next chapter of your life.” – *Mary Riordan*

☪ “All the best to you on your well-deserved retirement!” – *Carol Sweeney*

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Gaelic Park's

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**Small Office Christmas Party**

Have more fun with more people as you join together with other offices in the area for one big holiday celebration! Everyone attending will enjoy a delicious buffet dinner, a 4-hour open bar and live DJ.

**Thursday, December 15, 2022**

**6:30-10:30pm**

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Call Gaelic Park and make reservations for yourself or the entire office!

Reservations must be made as soon as possible.

Payment in full by December 6th.

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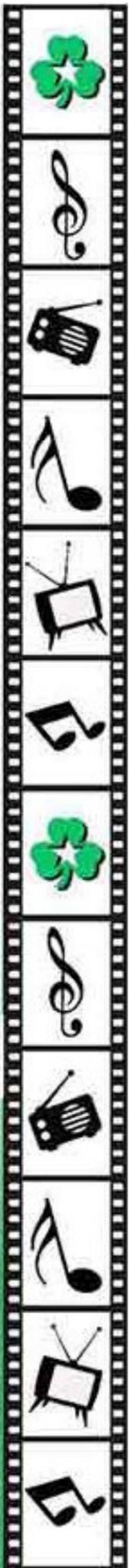
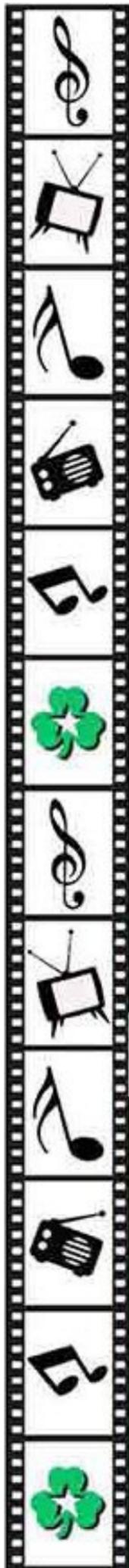
Dear Editor  
**Memories of an Irish Christmas** as a child growing up in Ireland was one of the most important holidays of the year. The day before was truly special. We anxiously awaited the days with glee. Parents did an entire day of shopping for toys, gifts and goods. The children were placed in the protection of the grand parents. A horse and carriage was means of transportation to local shops. Years before, my dad donated Shiny the horse to a needy couple. He purchased a used car for our family. One day he borrowed back the horse. It was customary to rise early to begin the journey. We promised to behave

honorably for our babysitters. A day absent from dad and mom was to be enjoyed abundantly. The mischief began as soon as grandpa and grandma took their naps. Our christmas goose was already slaughtered by my dad. This time my sisters decided to take the life of another goose. Halfway through the ordeal the goose escaped and ran into the neighbor's yard where Mr. Brady concluded the task with dignity and assured us the news would not reach our parents. Now we decided to take on another task. Time to bake a cake we thought! We accumulated the required

ingredients for perfect results. Instead, the liquid was too great for the solids. We tried with the remaining flour to save the mess but to no avail. Our Grandparents entered the kitchen and advised us to hide the disaster from our parents. We had heard that the closest bakery had just closed due to a snow storm. Grandpa commanded us to practice our instruments and sing our hymms and carols for church. One sister accidentally stood on a tin whistle and demolished it. By now we were shaking with fear, as punishment was in store. It couldn't get any worse we thought, as we welcomed the return of our parents.

With a skip and a hop we volunteered to assist with the unloading. I reached for a gallon of paint and off went the handle. Shiny got splashed on his tail. The floor of the carriage was soaked and suddenly my shoes were white. A match for the snow on the ground. The look on my dad's face was evidence that he could cook the goose and I together on Christmas Day! "Hallelujah!" he bellowed as he detached the carriage from the horse to return Shiny to his owners. We left in haste and halfway to our destination we both landed in a ditch. Luckily a pedestrian happened to walk by and alerted others to help.

At last the couples house was visible. It was getting dark and the snow continued to fall. The owners were delighted to get Shiny home and thought the paint on his back was snow. I had returned home to hear a knock on our door. Mom checked and discovered it was Shiny. He was exhausted and sad. He refused food and drink, but accepted warm accommodations. We checked him periodically, but poor old Shiny was declining. Mother said, "he came home to die." The next morning he did just that. We were sad he was gone, but glad he was with us until the end. Reluctantly, we proceeded to celebrate Christmas. *Joan McDonough.*



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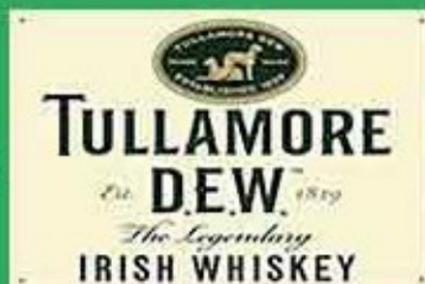
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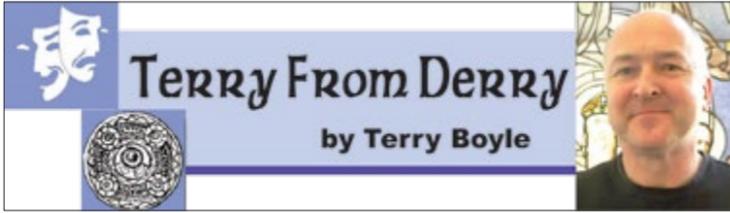
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### Uncivil Wars

Growing up in the 70s amid the Troubles I was constantly bombarded with the lyrics of every Republican song known in the Irish canon. My brothers would blast out Roddy McCorley, 4 Green Fields etc. with the sole purpose of indoctrinating the rest of us or, as they would see it, educating the uninformed of our blind servitude to the English Crown. There was one song, in particular, that seemed to grab my attention more than the rest and that was The Green Fields of France. Written by Eric Bogle, a Scottish/Australian songwriter, the song is often mistaken to be a rebel song, whereas in fact, it’s the complete opposite.

Bogle’s reflection on the first world war and the death of so many young men is quite daunting. Willy McBride is a 19-year-old willing volunteer who dies serving his country’s interest. Just what that interest remains unknown. We know that there were many Irish volunteers who served in that war believing that England would honour their enlistment by relinquishing control of Ireland, while Protestants in the north fought

in that same war believing England would protect them from a nationalist outcome. For Bogle, Willy McBride is simply one of the thousands of young men who naively believed that this war that would end all wars.

History has since shown how the war-mongering propaganda of McBride’s time was proven to be false. We have learned nothing about the futility of war, and as Bogle puts it, ‘....the killing and dying, it was all done in vain, Oh Willy McBride, it happened again, and again, and again and again.’ So, while the song celebrates the naïve enthusiasm of the young idealist who is willing to give his life for the cause, the sacrifice is deftly undercut by the larger sense of fatalism that such martyrdom is in vain. Humanity has learned nothing from war, except that violence has become a part of who we are as a species.

The more sophisticated our weaponry is the more likely we are to press the button and eradicate ourselves. We move from one cold war standoff to another, with one superpower nation facing off the other daring one another to do the deed and to hell with the consequences. Our preoccupation

with our own annihilation is frightening, especially since we as a species have managed to evolve from our primitive state to become technologically accomplished. Besides our need to develop weapons, biological and hardware, we have seen tremendous advancements in so many areas that benefit our humanity.

A large portion of the western world has enjoyed a system of democracy that has for years ensured that we as individuals choose who governs us. Politically, this system, like most political systems, is flawed but given the alternative, a dictatorship, we believe it’s worth preserving. However, in recent times, we’re allowing ourselves to be bullied out of believing in the merits of this system. The rise of belligerent political candidates who disregard the will of the people and who flaunt racist, homophobic and anti-Semitic intolerance is alarming. Yet, we are not as alarmed as we should be. The eradication of the cultural norms that should celebrate diversity has been transformed into bigotry and hatred. We have allowed those fearmongers to demonize our fellow human beings by presenting them to us as a legitimate threat. Instead of promoting tolerance, and dispelling fear, these candidates make their mark by pushing us further away from being civil to becoming un-

civil. They show no qualms for their blatant disregard for truth and seek instead to persuade us with unfounded lies.

If Bogle questions McBride’s sacrifice in the first world war, he does not question the young man’s loyalty or willingness to die. He questions whether the cause the young man died for was a truthful one. The war to end all wars was far from the truth. It was simply a tagline to pull on the heartstrings of those who lacked the critical skills to question such a mantra. Things have not changed since then. The mantra of the far right is equally unfounded. They exploit our freedom of speech to incite violence, enhance sectarianism and venerate the lack of civility. These same people use religion to justify their arrogance and ignorance.

If we continue to allow people to promote values that divide us, we are moving closer and closer towards the precipice of our own undoing. The United States no longer exists, apart from a legal standpoint, as a united entity.

Since 2016 the election of Donald Trump, the voter has elected a man with no principles, who is not prepared to put his country before himself, and who is happy to promote acts of violence to ensure he remains in power. The decision to put such a man into a powerful position was, in part, due to the disillusionment of

the many with those who are in power. While I can understand this disappointment with the usual politicians, it’s another thing to jump from the frying pan into the fire.

Electing such an irresponsible candidate into leadership has opened the floodgate to the present lack of civility. If your president reflects who you want to be as a nation, Trump doesn’t reflect well. Now, belligerence is seen as a virtue, political violence is viewed as fighting for a just cause, and freedom of speech has become an excuse to incite violence towards Jews, gays, and ethnicity that is not white.

With such a credo of incivility, there will never be peace. The divide will continue to widen until we see that the very system of democracy that we valued so little becomes nothing more than another dictatorship. This movement towards the uncivil war is not exclusive to the United States. Recent elections in France, Hungary and other European countries demonstrate how fragile our democracies are. The war against civility continues. If we allow it to win then all of those who have lost their lives to preserve democracy will have died in vain. So, let’s not turn on ourselves and by listening to those who promote violence and intolerance but aim to create an environment we can be proud of.

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## Kieran Conway's Triple Threat Becomes a Triple Play Triumph

By Katie Iannitelli

As a little boy, Kilkenny-born but growing up in Ghana, with one ear to a transistor radio, Kieran Conway first heard Elvis Presley and dreamt of playing the guitar. Initially, his father said no, encouraging him to focus on school and rugby. But a few years later in England, Kieran's high school added guitar to the curriculum. He signed up, despite not having an instrument.

"My father was one of those guys who, if you wanted something, you had to save up and buy one for yourself," Kieran says. "We had what amounted to a decorative ukulele on the wall, and my dad said, 'Take that.'"

When Kieran lined up next to "kids with guitars as big as them," the priest rebuffed him. "Come back when you're serious."

"I went to university and I saved up and bought a \$16



guitar and a John Denver book ... and I started teaching myself how to play."

Self-taught from then on, his first 'performances' as a twenty-something sprang from his other passion: playing rugby with his brother, Paddy Conway, for the Gloucester Rugby Football Club, one of the top teams in the world.

"After the rugby games, there was always a sing-song with our team and the other team. I would play and sing, and the rugby teams would too, because by then they were all drunk. And here all these tough rugby players were singing John Denver songs!"

At 27, Kieran gave up rugby. "I had had a broken jaw, broken ribs, my knee snapped in half. I took a look at players who were in their 40's, and they looked like they were in their 60's - beaten up and walking crooked - and I said, 'That's not going to be me.'"

By day, he taught high school geography and physical education and summered as a lifeguard. By night, he performed on patios and in pubs in the Channel Islands and went to auditions in London, scoring a gig with a European cruise ship's cabaret.

"I had to sing in five languages," he says. "I was learning songs phonetically in French, Greek, Italian, Spanish, and I didn't know what I was singing about."

He refined his comedic, interactive style at "the working man's clubs in the north of England," he says, places that prided themselves on heckling entertainers until they quit.

"I kind of turned it around, and I started heckling the crowd, and it seemed to work. Over time, ... it became part of my act."

In a Welsh pub in 1982, just before an Ireland-Wales rugby game, Kieran performed and goodnaturedly teased fans between songs. Chicago's Abbey Pub owner at the time, Peter Furlong, spotted him.

"He was in Wales to visit his sister who was a nun running an orphanage in a convent, and he stopped in to get directions and ended up staying until my stint was up. He asked me, in his heavy Irish accent, if I would consider playing at his place sometime."

Kieran made the trip to Chicago in the fall of 1984 and was flabbergasted by the audiences at the Abbey Pub.

"I thought people here were crazy. I didn't realize that every night was like St. Patrick's Day because the Bears were on their way to the Super Bowl!"

Word of his showmanship spread to other local venues. He booked more gigs and made a permanent move from England to the Midwest.

Kieran performed at Irish pubs all over Chicago. Despite his passion for rock and roll, he quickly became pigeonholed as a singer of Irish rebel songs, of which he knew only a few. "Most of the proprietors wanted me to play Irish music only. I said, 'I can't do this.' It wasn't fulfilling my dream of performing in America."

But one club, Shannon's Landing in Lansing, Illinois, gave Kieran a chance to perform rock and roll. "I was there for 18 years and developed a large following."

Kieran fell in love with Michigan and purchased a house in New Buffalo. But in 2008, he was diagnosed with esophageal cancer and underwent surgery and chemotherapy. "I lost my voice," he explains. "I made my living by being on stage." With no income, he sold his house and subsisted on the equity.

The doctors gave him a year to live, he explains, along with a wealth of printed reading material on cancer.

"I read one line: 'Your blood has more healing power than any drug you could ever take.' Wanting to move my blood, I thought, 'What if I get out of this bed and try to walk across the room?'" He walked ten steps, collapsed from exhaustion, and then tried again, increasing distance incrementally, until he was walking 15-20 miles a day.

"I brought my muscles back. I survived." Five years later, he purchased a building and opened Conway's of Three Oaks, an Irish coffee shop, in Three Oaks, Michigan. "We didn't allow WiFi. People had to sit around and talk. NBC TV came by and asked us how we thought we could survive without using WiFi. I told them, 'I don't know, but we will see if it works.' And it did."

Conway's went on to have a robust local following until 2017, when Kieran was faced with cancer for a second time and closed shop. Conway's establishment page stayed active with messages of support for Kieran and has, to date, 1.7K followers.

Kieran underwent 13 surgeries in five years and beat the second cancer. In 2020, it came back for a third time, into his lungs.

"Everyday I was sucking for air, but I kept up the daily walking, and they gave me a new immune drug, and I



beat that one too."

"I walk some days in blizzards and snow. I won't give up. I treat cancer like a little dog," he explains. "Come on, cancer, come on, we're going! Going where? We're going walking. Oh really? How far are we gonna walk? I don't know maybe five, ten, 15 miles. It's freezing! Yep."

It was by walking and singing, Kieran says, that he heard his voice come back again. In March of 2022, Kieran was asked to perform prior to a showing of the film Belfast at the Vickers Theater in Three Oaks.

He was reluctant, having not been on stage in 14 years. "In the end, I said okay."

The show sold out in three days.

In disbelief, he practiced for nine days and went on stage. He was supposed to play for 20 minutes, but the audience would not let him go. An hour and a half later, he closed to a standing ovation.

Then, two months ago, Kieran was invited by medical oncologist Dr. Christopher Lao, "the genius who saved my life twice," to speak at an international symposium on melanoma at the University of Michigan.

"After the doctor explained all my cancers and chemotherapy drugs, I think they thought I was going to come up in

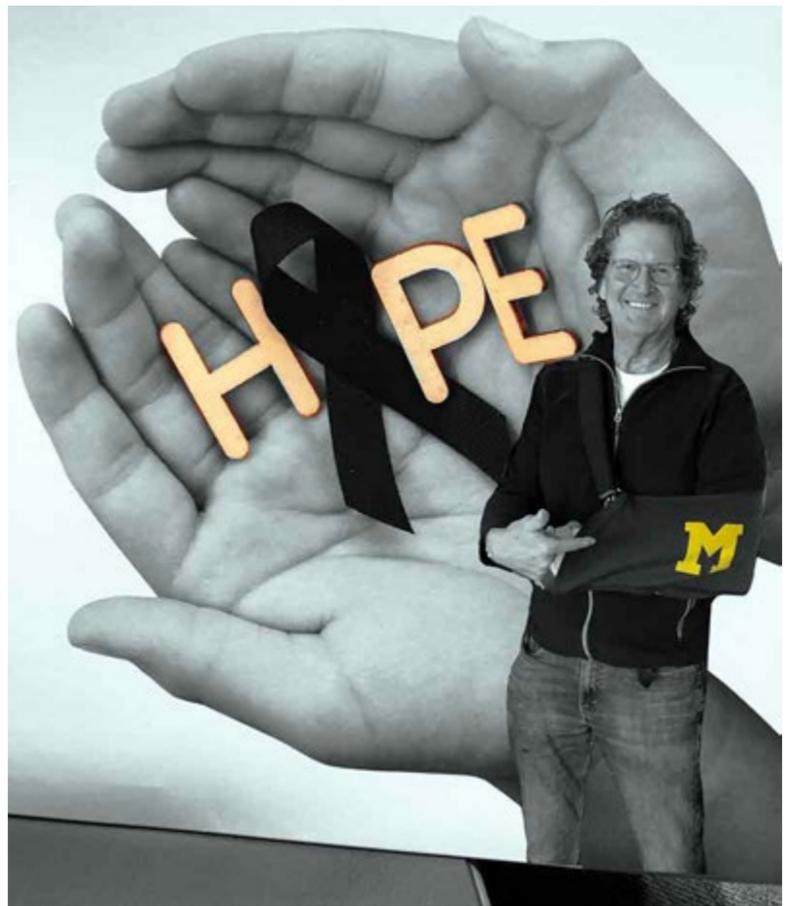
a wheelchair on oxygen. They were surprised to see someone so fit and healthy."

Kieran spoke to an auditorium full of expert-level oncologists, nurses, and over 500 people online.

"I was kind of intimidated, and then I realized that none of them have been through what I've been through: the surgeries and being told three times how long you've got left to live."

He quips that two years ago, the prognosis was six months.

"I ended my talk with one song, a challenging song with a lot of held notes," he says, "to let them know that two years ago I couldn't walk up the stairs and I couldn't breathe."



Since then, he built a studio at home. He practices every day and continues to walk.

"I say to cancer, 'Cancer, if I walk today, I win. If I don't walk because I just don't have the energy, you win.' And that has never happened. I won't let it beat me - a mentality I got from rugby. Even the doctors think I'm onto something with that."

As he plans future performances, he has one theme in mind: charity.

"If I'm going to perform again, I want to do it to help a cause. People were very good to me, and I'll never forget it. And I'm so lucky to say it's time for me to pay back."

To book Kieran Conway, leave a voicemail at 708-369-2831.



### A West - Waterford Christmas in the 1930's

As we say goodbye to another year, I would like to say a big Thank You to all who took the time to read my column during 2022, and it is really appreciated on my behalf. Wishing everybody a very happy and peaceful Christmas, and may you wear happiness and prosperity as a warm cloak during 2023.

The following account by the late Francie Murray of Knockanore in West-Waterford is one of my all time favourite Christmas stories. It is included in his book 'Them Golden Fields I Trod', published in 2002. I can almost sense the wondrous smell coming from the words!

'The celebration of Christmas in the rural Ireland of the 1930's was so different from what it is today. The only decoration which was considered very important was the holly. A prepared turnip was made in the shape of a candle-holder and when decorated was utilised to hold a large red lighted candle which adorned the main window in our house, as it did in all households throughout the countryside on Christmas Eve.

One Christmas morning, on returning home from Kilwatermoy and having



fulfilled my religious commitments, I found my Mother (Eileen Murray) busily engaged preparing the dinner. She had attended an early Mass in Knockanore

so as to give herself ample time to prepare what she considered the most important meal of the year. She invariably advised us to partake only of a

light breakfast so as to leave room - as she put it- for the Christmas meal that was to be served later in the afternoon.

On the crane over the open fire the stuffed turkey was simmering away. As we were having seven for dinner a large bird was required which would take roughly three and a half hours cooking time. The rich aroma, circulating in the precincts of the kitchen was so overpowering that it was causing rumbling pangs of hunger within us, even at this early stage with much cooking still to be done. Now when one realises the extent of the advancement in modern technology in the present day kitchen (equipped with electric and microwave ovens and all types of gadgets answerable to the pressing of a switch), it is difficult to comprehend how those cooking long ago managed to cook a substantial meal, on an open fire, with nothing but a crane, an iron stand, and a few pots and pans.

So it was with my mother - the pot containing the all but cooked turkey was placed by the left hand side of the fire to fully cook. It was replaced on the crane by the potatoes, which I had helped to peel. Two saucepans each containing vegetables were already cooking on the iron stand on the right side. The dessert having been set beforehand, there now remained the soup and the sauces, both of which only took minutes to prepare. By early afternoon all the family were seated around the table enjoying a sumptuous and well flavoured Christmas Dinner.

Each year my mother would invite a neighbouring gentleman who lived alone, to join us at the meal and spend the feast day in our company. As well as being a good cook, my mother was a great organiser, and it is only in later years, when she was no longer with us that I felt that I failed to give her due credit for being the wonderful person that she was'.

*Nollaig Shona Daoibh Go Leir (Happy Christmas Everyone!)*

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Counties of Ireland  
by Tom Butler



"Gentleman you may soon have the alternative to live as slaves or die as free men" words spoken by Daniel O'Connell at his speech in Mallow, Co. Cork. Back in 2013 in Ireland they were debating to have a day of the year to honor O'Connell, I'm not sure if they came to a conclusion or if they chose a day to honor O'Connell. I would suggest a day in August as that was his birthday month.

The Liberator as he was known, was born in Kerry to a wealthy Catholic family. This was during the penal laws. The penal laws meant, Catholics could not hold authority in the army, enter a profession,

or own a horse worth more than five pounds. Catholics could not possess weaponry and arms, could not study law or medicine, and could not speak or read Gaelic or play Irish music. (1695-1829)

His family had been able to keep land only through protestant trustees and protestant neighbors.

O'Connell became a lawyer and thought to be the most successful barrister in the country. He was one of the founders of creating the National bank of Ireland.

O'Connell married his cousin, Mary O'Connell. They had eleven children.

O'Connell won a seat in the English parliament. He would advocate for Catholic causes, Irish emancipation and pushed for a separate Irish parliament. O'Connell established Catholic rent, a

penny a month, paid to the priest. O'Connell's life's work was to get England to end discrimination against Ireland. O'Connell also saw himself as a supporter of Jewish emancipation and said that Ireland was the only Christian country that I know that hasn't persecuted any Jews. O'Connell was a landlord himself. There is a lot to know and learn about O'Connell. There is a book titled, Great Dan a biography of Daniel O'Connell.

In memory of him there are stamps, streets named after him, Statue of him in Dublin, A Daniel O'Connell bridge in New Zealand. When I was growing up my family often told the story of when O'Connell was invited to an English protestant nobleman's house as he sat down to start his dinner. The Irish maid said in Irish to him don't eat the soup, "there is salt in your porridge" tá salann i do leite. That angel of a maid saved his life. The somewhat ironic bit of the story is O'Connell's first language was Irish, yet he never wanted to speak it but knowing the language saved his life. Accepting who we are and what we were born with is something to be appreciated at every stage of life.

O'Connell died with softening of the brain; the most serious brain injury called

encephalomalacia. He died the year that the famine started, 1847. I will leave you with this poem by Katherine Pulsifer.

Remember to keep a hopeful and happy heart, be an example to those around you.

"H appiness depends upon your outlook on life. - Find the good in all situations

A ttitude is just as important as ability.- Keep your attitude positive

P assion find yours this year! - Do what you love and you will never work

P ositive thoughts make everything easier.- stay positive

Y ou are unique, with special gifts, use them. - Never forget you have talent

N ew beginnings with a new year. Enthusiasm a true secret of success. W ishes may they turn into goals.

Y ears go by too quickly, enjoy them.- Wisdom from your elders, listen

E nergy may you have lots of it. - Take care of yourself

A ppreciation of life, don't take it for granted. - Live each day

R elax take the time to relax in this coming year.- Keep a balance in your life."

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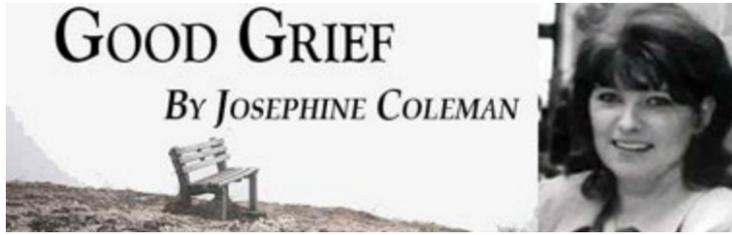
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Hello everyone, how are you enjoying this autumn weather? I love going through the four seasons. I was at a store the other day where the veterans were outside collecting donations.

I was scrambling in my handbag for some dollars, as I approached their table one of them smiled and asked “How are you, how’s your knee and hips?” I laughed and said how did you know was it my duck waddle. Laughingly he said it takes one to know one. I had both knees and hips replaced. His friends chimed in with tales of their surgeries. I said yes I had knee replacement nineteen months ago and I’m struggling with trapped nerves. I’ve been back in hospital a few times for manipulation, nerve blocker injections but nothing is working.

I had my hip replaced a few months ago and I bounced back after two weeks. Everything was going great until I thought I’d clean up the front garden planting chrysanthemums for Halloween, Thanksgiving and for my kids coming home.

One minute I was happily planting the next minute I was grabbing onto the fir tree above my head. I felt a big thud as if someone had kicked me in my hip. My leg collapsed. I was lying on the grass in shock. I tried to move but the pain shot down my hip to my big toe. I realized then that I had dislocated my hip.

I knew my husband was in the back garden cutting down some bushes. I started yelling his name praying that he didn’t have his favorite Irish station on while he worked. I was totally paralyzed. I couldn’t even roll over on my belly to drag myself to the mouth of the garage

where I knew my phone was. I actually tried shouting SIRI call Andrew but I was too far away.

Looking over at our neighbors there was no activity as it was a Sunday morning like all good Catholics they had gone to mass. I thought why didn’t I just go to mass too?

Due to health issues, I have had to avoid large indoor gatherings. Our lady of Quadaulpe has outdoor mass all during the summer. We light candles at their outdoor grotto. We started going when covid started. It’s just so calming and peaceful there. Looking around me I’m thinking I am under the fir tree even if someone hears me they can’t see me.

Eventually which seemed like hours but in reality it was less than twenty minutes my husband appeared.

He tried to get me up but the pain was so bad I thought I’m going to pass out, and I didn’t want to scare him. I told him to get my walking frame so I could at least stand and balance on one leg while he called paramedics. Suddenly I was aware of the dirt not only on my hands, but my feet were covered in mulch. Even through my pain I thought oh my Lord why did you garden with open toe shoes you idiot? Now you are going into hospital looking like a ragamuffin!

My Donegal mother would be mortified she dressed like a lady every day she’d never leave the house without her lipstick and powder on. I remember going home when she had her first hip replacement. I thought she had us twelve kids it’s the least I can do for her. I stayed for over a month to get her on her feet through physiotherapy.

Her biggest concern was that I cook for Daddy and make sure he got his pudding after dinner.

I remember one day I had just put the potatoes on to boil then went to lay down on the bed for a chat with her. After ten minutes she said, “go check the potatoes. I can hear them. They are ready. Don’t forget to teem them and put them back on low heat to dry out.” I laughed and thought her pain meds had gone to her head. You can hear them mother, yes it’s like a thickening sound so to please her I went to check and stuck a fork through them and guess what? They were ready. Years later I realized what she was talking about? It’s the sound of the starch thickening.

So back to my story. I was taken into hospital screaming like a banshee the gel fentanyl they put up my nose didn’t take away the pain as they tried to transfer me to the ER bed. I was quickly evaluated by Doctor Donaghue, the interim Ed Conroy and wonderful nurses, and X-ray technicians who examined me with little movement.

I was put to sleep right away to get me out of pain. They popped my hip back in its socket. later they said I woke up twice. I was hallucinating but very entertaining telling the doctor to get off my bar as he was spinning on his head break dancing. I remember zero. But huge Thank you to all the staff at NWC.

I’m on the mend but this was a cautionary tale if you’re going through hip replacement do not stoop more than ninety degrees. I’ve had a lot of surgeries trust me you don’t ever want to go through this. I purchased tall dustpan brushes and a few grabber sticks. I placed them in every other room. You’d be surprised how much you need them. I will as I need another hip done. Many thanks for listening. Remember knowledge is everything. Don’t be an egot like me. Til next time bye bye!

### Martin Scorsese: A Journey by Author/Journalist Mary Pat Kelly

In time for Scorsese’s 80th birthday and the release of *Killers of the Flower Moon*, a new edition of the seminal oral history tracing Scorsese’s journey from young filmmaker to legend, with a foreword by Steven Spielberg

Featuring exciting additional material, including a new foreword by Leonardo DiCaprio and a conversation with Scorsese himself, in which he discusses his latest film.

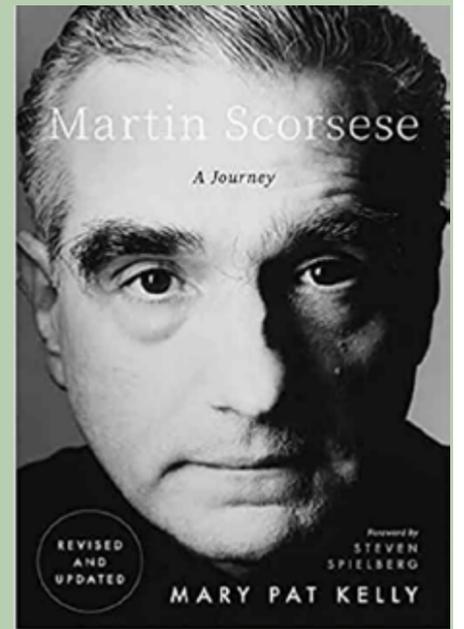
Few filmmakers, if any, make the kind of impact that Martin Scorsese has made on American cinema. The winner of every prestigious film award, including the Oscar, Scorsese is a living legend. Bestselling author and award-winning filmmaker Mary Pat Kelly’s groundbreaking biography reveals how this working-class boy from Manhattan’s Little Italy became one of our most acclaimed, celebrated, and influential filmmakers.

MARTIN SCORSESE: A Journey (Hachette Books; October 25, 2022 \$18.99, Paperback, 368 Pages ISBN: 9780306831010) maps Scorsese’s personal and artistic evolution through his films, from early works like student films and Mean Streets through cinematic masterpieces like Taxi Driver, Raging Bull, The King of Comedy, and Goodfellas.

Across interviews with Scorsese himself; stars like Robert De Niro, Paul Newman, Liza Minelli, and Nick Nolte; colleagues including screenwriters and cinematographers; as well as family and friends, it reveals the story of a man in a way that

only his community and fellow artists can, giving us unprecedented, intimate access to the making of these iconic films and the extraordinary mind behind them. Brimming with insight into Scorsese’s life, values, process, humor, and inspirations, it is a remarkable account of America’s premiere director, the shepherd of countless imaginations.

Mary Pat Kelly is the bestselling author of numerous non-fiction books and novels including Special Intentions, based on the six years she spent studying to be a nun, during which she met Martin Scorsese through correspondence. Kelly also wrote and directed the critically acclaimed feature film, Proud, starring Stephen Rea and Ossie Davis, as well as a series of award-winning documentaries for PBS. She worked on the television shows Good Morning, America and Saturday Night Live and was a screenwriter for both Paramount and Columbia Pictures.



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### Top Gun Maverick Stunt Pilot Kristen 'Dragon' Hansen

It's been the mother of all post-Covid movies and has garnered universal acclaim as a remarkable motion picture for all audiences.

But Top Gun Maverick is not your father's Top Gun. But it could be your mother's or daughter's.

The familiar music and iconic opening white words on black screen say it all... and then some:

On March 3, 1969 the United States Navy established an elite school for the top one percent of its pilots. Its purpose was to teach the lost art of aerial combat and to ensure that the handful of men and women who graduated were the best fighter pilots in the world.

"And women." A change from the first film, a hallmark of the second.

In the film's first act after Navy Captain Pete "Maverick" Mitchell learns his career is all but over, one Lt. Natasha Trace, a recalled Top Gun graduate,

strides confidently into a San Diego beachside bar figuratively and literally leading a group of khaki clad naval aviators past the brooding Maverick who will soon lead them into an impossible mission only he could teach.

"Everyone here is the best there is, who the hell are they gonna get to teach us?" asks Trace, call sign "Phoenix." powerfully played by actress Monica Barbaro.

We know who taught Barbaro in real life.

Back in 2019 two women wearing the identical red and black PHOENIX flight helmet leapt off the Naval Air Station Fallon runway, afterburners kicking the F/A-18 Super Hornet up into the Nevada sky as then Lt. Cmdr. Kristen "Dragon" Hansen, Naval Academy graduate, banked toward a rendezvous with other Hornets and a motion picture camera jet.

This would happen several times a day for the next week



Commander Kristen "Dragon" Hansen

standard rather than the mere appearance.

Hansen has experienced combat flying firsthand in Iraq, Afghanistan and Syria. "I've obviously never been in air-to-air combat, just close air support situations. While supporting ground troops, you are just constantly worried about ensuring everyone is talking about the correct target and the weapons go where they are supposed to," explains Hansen. "You essentially hold your breath until you hear 'good hits.'"

Split-second decisions have lifelong consequences. No middle ground says Hansen.

"If you get it wrong, you could be hurting civilians or friendlies, so you can't afford to get it wrong. However, that is why we train so much... you want to create habit patterns you can fall back on when things do get stressful."

It's a testament to the quality of the film that the ultimate insiders are deeply moved by it and suspension of belief comes naturally to these ever-precise warriors.

"I'm a weeper!" says Hansen. "It got to me." The reason?

"I absolutely have a different perspective watching this movie now then I did watching the first movie as a young kid wanting to fly. At this point I've seen the ups and downs that come with this career choice, so I can relate to the tough times as well as the camaraderie that is depicted in the movie."

Top Gun Maverick is a movie far beyond the original's emphasis on competition, conquest and boyish pursuits. It shows the main character coming to grips with his age, his faults, his fears, and an uncertain future.

Cmdr. Kristen "Dragon" Hansen now knows with Pete Mitchell that the days of flying ahead are shorter than the days behind. "At some point in all of our careers, you no longer have the opportunity to fly," says Hansen. "After doing this for almost 20 years, it has definitely become a part of who I am so it will be an adjustment when I no longer can get back into the jet. However, when the time comes, there will hopefully be new and fun opportunities waiting for me."

"In my experience, the community is gender blind...very performance based. I never felt any extra pressure. We've spent a lot of time working towards equality and although nothing is perfect, I personally believe we've achieved equality in the fighter community," Hansen says with conviction. "I'm actually a little sad that we are still talking about equality 20 years after I got commissioned and hope it becomes less and less of a topic since we are a mainstay."

Call signs Phoenix and Dragon... mythical creatures that both flew high and fast, turning and burning over Nevada and on the Silver Screen.

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as Barbaro and Hansen dove for the deck time and again after twisting through mountain canyons and attempting the film's "Miracle #1:" a gut-punching body-crushing 7.5 G's dive from a mountaintop to a precise ground target.

She watched the first Top Gun movie with her father, noting that her Irish Catholic mom wasn't too crazy about the idea when Dragon was a very young girl.

Now ranked commander, Hansen has most recently been the commanding officer of an F-18 Super Hornet squadron. The TOPGUN graduate found one Hollywood convention an especially new experience.

"It's the first time in my career that I reported for "Hair" and "Make-up" call before going to the flightline!"

As with Cruise, Barbaro sitting in the back seat Weapons Systems Officer (WSO or "Whizzo") position gave the illusion that she was flying the plane. For the Nevada filming, a shot of Hansen from behind as Phoenix trained for mountain combat, came complete with a sewn-on bun to resemble Barbaro.

If the makeup was superficial, the flying was anything but. Hansen used her considerable warfighter skills to the fullest since both executive producer Cruise and the Navy wanted absolute realism to be the

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Christmas has to be my most favorite holiday. For me it is all about tradition. Bringing out the decorations. Putting up the Christmas tree. I don't remember a real Christmas tree but I do remember a silver aluminum tree with red balls and a light with a rotating color wheel. The tree was put up in the front window for everyone to see along with the nativity set. Going to midnight mass and singing all the carols. Opening the presents on Christmas morning and a feast prepared by my mother for Christmas dinner. Depending on your nationality and family background there are always special items that are served on Christmas.

In Ireland Christmas is celebrated in a similar fashion. There are regional specialties but dinner usually consists of roast turkey with dressing, and gravy. Boiled bacon which is cured pork loin or shoulder that is first boiled with herbs and vegetables, then baked in the oven with a mustard and whiskey glaze. Accompanied by roasted potatoes, Brussel sprouts, root vegetables like parsnip, turnip, and swedes.

Let's not forget mince pies, Christmas cake with dried fruit and nuts, soaked in Irish whiskey, and topped with marzipan and royal icing, and steamed Christmas pudding with brandy sauce, and maybe a trifle. Christmas cake, and plum pudding need to be made at least a month before Christmas and preferably longer so that they age properly. Leftovers are kept out in the kitchen for snacking.

Other Irish Christmas Traditions include putting a lighted candle in the window to light the way for Jesus. It signifies that all are welcome in this house. Placing a Holly wreath on the door or mantle the more berries the better the luck you will have. Christmas crackers that pop and reveal a paper crown, toy or charm, and jokes. It wouldn't be Christmas at our house without crackers. Children and adults alike love their chocolate selection boxes and stockings. Roses and Quality Street sweets are also popular. Tins of fancy biscuits are set out for this special day. Every city, town and village is decorated with lights and a tree with baubles and tinsel. As for the home it is said that it is bad luck to decorate before December 8th.

The tradition at my house is a seven course meal individually plated consisting of an amuse, soup, starter, a palate

cleansing sorbet, a fish course, followed by a meat course, and dessert. Wines are served to compliment each course. I usually have a

charcuterie board with cheese. Maybe a pate and smoked salmon. Dinner usually lasts a couple of hours. This is just for the adults. I cook a separate meal for the kids. It's a lot of work but worth it. A gift that I create for my family and nothing is repeated from previous years. We also put up an 11ft real Christmas tree that we light and decorate.

In Ireland the day after Christmas is called Boxing Day. It is a national holiday



- 1 gallon warm water
- 1cup kosher salt
- 1cup brown sugar
- 2 tablespoons whole black peppercorns
- ½ teaspoon #1pink curing salt (omit this if you want nitrate free bacon)
- ½ cup maple syrup
- ½ teaspoon ground ginger
- ½ teaspoon nutmeg
- 2tablespoon coriander seed
- 1tablespoon dried thyme

Place all ingredients except for the pork loin or shoulder in a container large enough to hold the pork. If you have a large loin cut it in half. Dissolve the sugar and salt in the water. Place a weight on the pork loin to make sure it is completely submerged. Cover and refrigerated for four days. Remove the pork, rinse off any herbs, and place in a large pot with a lid. Cover with cold water. Add 1 onion, 2 large carrots, four celery stalks all rough cut, 4 cloves garlic, and 4bay leaves. Bring to a boil cover and reduce heat to a simmer. Cook for 1.5 hours. Remove pork from pot and cool. Place in a baking pan and cover loin with a mustard glaze.

**Mustard Glaze with Irish Whiskey**

- 4 oz Irish Whiskey
- ¼ cup whole grain mustard
- ¼ cup honey or maple syrup

2 tablespoon unsalted butter  
Place all ingredients except butter in a sauce pan and bring to a boil. Stir until smooth add butter 1 tablespoon at a time. Remove and let cool.

Place in a 325 degree oven and cook for about 30 minutes or until glaze starts to brown and pork loin is heated through out. Serve thick slices with vegetables and potatoes.

To make Irish bacon (Rashers), brine pork loin for four days. Remove loin from brine rinse and pat dry. Place in the freezer for an hour or two. This will firm up the loin and make it easier to slice. Slice pork loin length wise 1/8 of an inch thick. Fry in a pan or cook under the broiler. This bacon is very lean so it does not take a lot of time to cook.

*Nollaig Shona Duit*

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and a day of rest and relaxation, and perhaps visiting relatives and friends.

Whatever your family traditions may be, enjoy them with your families and loved ones and pass them down to the next generation, and may the spirit of Christmas live in your heart all year round.

Here is a recipe for brining Irish bacon. Bacon is the Irish term used for any cured pork. You can make your own Irish bacon at home with very little effort. Irish bacon is basically a pork loin with a little bit of the belly creating a large eye with a fatty tail. A regular pork loin will do just fine. You can also use a boneless pork butt. It is cured with salt, sugar, and spices. The brine is similar to a brine used for turkey.

**Brine Recipe**

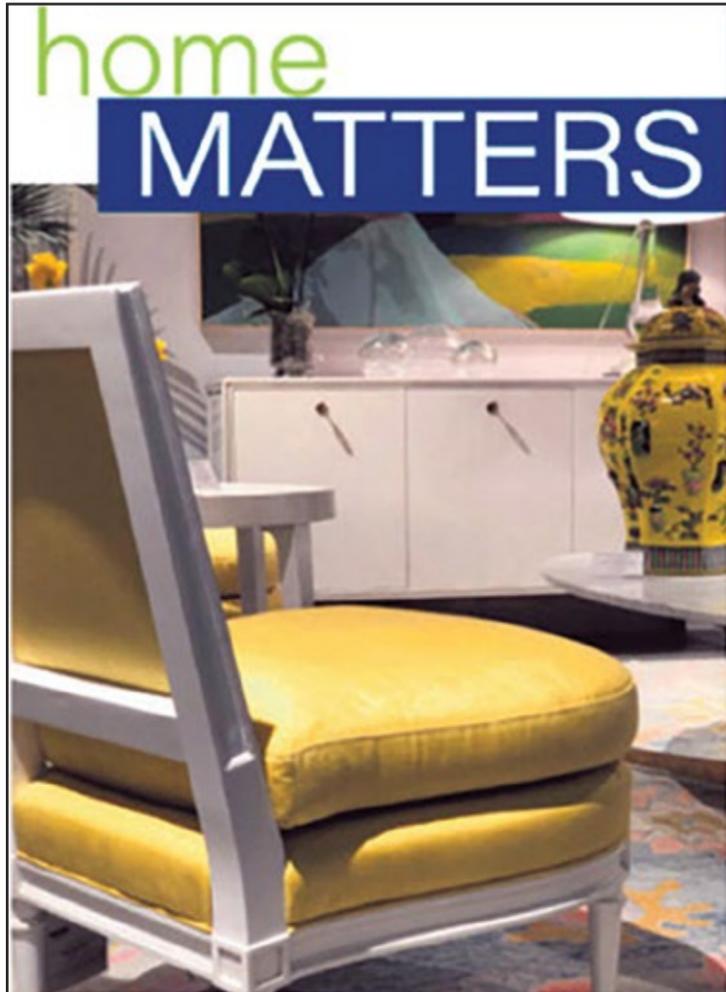
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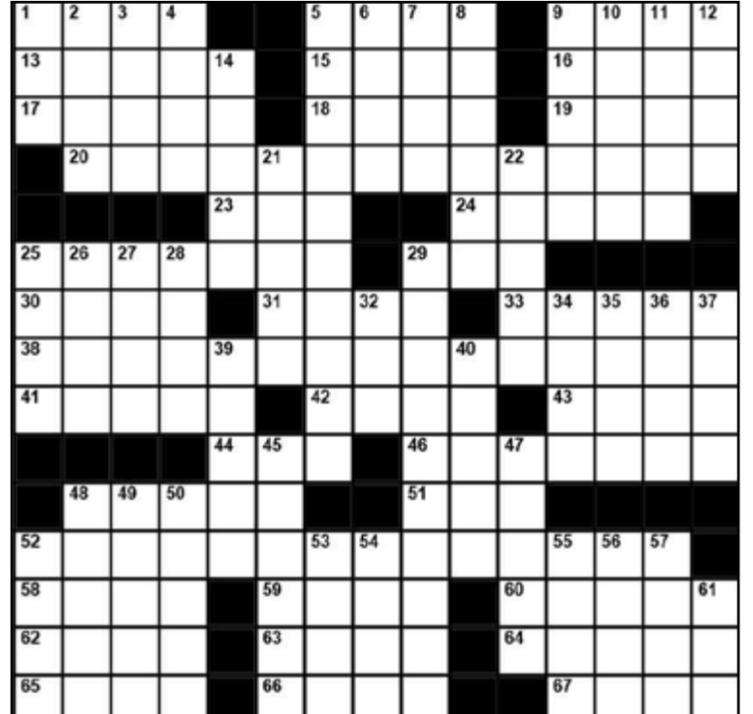
Nov 6 The Gathering, Anne Enright  
Dec 4 When All Is Said, Anne Griffin  
Jan 8 The Last September, Elizabeth Bowen  
Feb 5 Famine, Liam O'Flaherty  
Mar 5 Irish-Amer Autobiographies, James Rogers  
Apr 2 The Boy in the Striped Pajamas, John Boyne  
May 7 The Titanic Sisters, Patricia Falvey

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Answers in next months paper & online 1st week January

- ACROSS**
- Speedy steed
  - South African currency
  - Time \_\_\_ half, 2 words
  - Cap'n's mate
  - Had an effect on
  - Field or water sport
  - Oil barons, abbr.
  - Arizona tourist locale
  - New York borough
  - Embankment
  - Milky gems
  - Cotton seed pod
  - Disturbs
  - English county with an earldom
  - Low clouds
  - Dividing word
  - \_\_\_ and groan
  - Body position in gymnastics
  - Acres
  - Quality of being of interest in present-time
  - Brief party label
  - Agitate
  - Oppositionist
  - Jazz great, Getz
  - Pardner's mount
  - Heroic Spaniard
  - "Lord of the Rings" bad guy
  - Clear
  - Architect Frank \_\_\_ Wright
  - Aware
  - Kitchen utensil
  - Clandestine lovers' meeting
  - Pompous
  - Wireless medium
  - Basically alike
  - Trumpet sound
  - Corporate officer, abbr.
  - Bug
  - Strings, abbr.
- DOWN**
- Docs' org., abbr.

November Crossword Answers



**CHRISTMAS BINGO**

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**Who is Marty Walsh?**

Martin Walsh is an Irish American politician and former Union official. He is currently the United States Secretary of Labor in the Biden administration. Walsh is the former mayor of Boston. (2014-2021) Walsh is a Roman Catholic. He speaks Irish, since his parents were native speakers. It’s hard to pin down the actual percent of people who speak Irish, however a strong fact is in the Gaeltacht’s people are speaking and sustaining the Irish language.

My husband and I went to Boston recently to meet cousins, John and Marie Murphy for the first time. A memorable and happy trip to Massachusetts that brought-to-mind Walsh and his work. His position from former mayor of Boston, a city job, to his cabinet position in the Biden administration.

He was born in Dorchester to Irish parents John Walsh and Mary O’Malley. His parents were from an Irish speaking part of Ireland, a Gaeltacht in Co. Galway, an area called Rosmuc.

Walsh sadly was diagnosed at a young age with Burkitt’s Lymphoma. It is an aggressive non-Hodgkin lymphoma, cancer of the lymphatic system. He went through aggressive chemotherapy and beat the cancer.

He joined the laborer’s Union at 21 and served as the president until he became the mayor of Boston. Walsh served and co-chaired several committees including Public Construction Reform, House of Homeland Security and Federal Affairs, House Committee on



**GETTING TO KNOW THE IRISH!**

By Tina Butler

Ethics, Consumer protection and professional licensure, Joint Committee on Banking, Joint Committee on Judiciary, Joint Committee on Mental Health and Substance Abuse and Public Safety. That’s a lot of Committees. He is talented and a pro at multi-tasking. These Committees were probably over several years.



Walsh has a very personable, down to Earth, every man quality and most people lean toward that style of governance, I know that I definitely do. Walsh battled al-



coholism as several people in America and the world do or have done. I

saw a poster once that said, 30% of Americans are sober...

I’ve read a lot about alcohol/alcoholism; I’ll just note that moderation is key and maybe a little can protect against heart disease. And it’s a myth that alcohol warms you up!

Walsh was very friendly with real estate developers and as a result Boston underwent a substantial building boom during his years as Mayor. Walsh indorsed Boston’s status as a sanctuary city for people living in the country without documentation. He said, “If people want to live here, they’ll live here. They can use

my office; they can use any office in my building.” Walsh and I are definitely on the same wavelength! Walsh supports his New England Patriots; I would guess he’s been to a lot of the games!

Since Walsh is an Irish speaker a quote from John O’Donohue came to mind.

“The attempt to destroy Gaelic was one of the most destructive acts of violence of the colonization of Ireland by England. Gaelic is such a poetic and powerful language it carries the Irish memory. When you steal a people’s language you leave the soul bewildered.”

**Gaelic for the Month**  
City-chathair Government-rialtas  
Cancer-ailse Labor-saothair

“I’m personally asking each and every single Boston resident to look after their neighbor” Marty Walsh

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Because of our harsh winter climate, there will be no senior meetings in January 2023 at the IAHC or Gaelic Park.

**See you in February!**

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| <p><b>Senior Groups</b></p> <p>A welcoming place where seniors enjoy friendship, educational programs, and opportunities to connect with our Irish heritage and culture.</p> | <p><b>Toddler Playgroup</b></p> <p>A space where toddlers discover Irish culture through play and their parents and caregivers can connect to create community.</p> | <p><b>U.S. Citizenship</b></p> <p>Assistance navigating the process of attaining U.S. citizenship—from eligibility screening to application filling and civics test preparation.</p> | <p><b>Irish Services</b></p> <p>Guidance on applying for Irish passports and Irish citizenship.</p>              |
| <p><b>Direct Assistance</b></p> <p>Support for people experiencing challenging life circumstances &amp; modest direct financial support.</p>                                 | <p><b>Education &amp; Outreach</b></p> <p>Wellness information and resource sharing through online media and in-person programs</p>                                 | <p><b>Immigration Information</b></p> <p>Guidance on routine immigration procedures like renewing a green card and or travel requirements.</p>                                       | <p><b>Colorful</b></p> <p>Engaging diverse, historically overlooked community members.</p>                       |
| <p><b>Benefits Access</b></p> <p>Information on local, state, and federal assistance programs and support to file benefits applications.</p>                                 | <p><b>Fáilte</b></p> <p>Accessible Irish cultural programs for our community members with Intellectual disabilities.</p>  | <p><b>Immigration Legal Clinics</b></p> <p>Free consultations with licensed immigration attorneys that provide guidance to individuals on their unique immigration situation.</p>    | <p><b>J1 Assistance</b></p> <p>Information &amp; assistance to Irish J1 summer students.</p>                     |
|  |   |  | <p><b>Pastoral Services</b></p> <p>Services available through our chaplain Fr. Mick Madigan</p>                  |
|  |   |  | <p><b>Irish Student Program</b></p> <p>Formal internships for students studying at Irish social work schools</p> |

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# The Island Of Ireland Is A Winter Wonderland



*Clockwise from top left: Fireworks over the River Liffey, Dublin; a fireplace in County Limerick; Christmas in Derry/Londonderry; an Aran sweater makes the perfect gift, County Cork.*

**W**INTER IN IRELAND IS A special time, and a wonderful time to visit. The landscape is transformed, the fall colors giving way to stark, spectacular vistas. Areas of natural beauty, such as the Burren in County Clare or Cork's Beara Peninsula are only enhanced by the driving winds. The mountaintops turn white with snow for these few months, glistening magically. It is easy to see how author CS Lewis was inspired by the Mourne Mountains in County Down to create his enchanted Kingdom of Narnia. Elsewhere, Croagh Patrick, Ireland's holy mountain in County Mayo, stands magnificent against the elements.

Outdoor activities, such as hiking or cycling, take on a different feel. A more leisurely walk in the mid-winter air is both bracing and refreshing. Ireland is never too cold to enjoy. Dublin averages in the high 40 degree range in December, only a few degrees cooler than San Francisco. If you do get a light dusting of snow, wrap up well and enjoy it!

Whatever about the slight drop in temperature, you'll find it is more than made up for in a myriad of other ways.

You are never more than a few feet from a cozy fireplace, perfect for curling up in front of and escaping the winter chill. Every hotel, Bed and Breakfast, restaurant and bar has a roaring hearth to warm the cockles of your heart. Castles and stately homes too. The Crosskeys Inn in County Antrim dates back to 1654, making it one of the oldest thatched pubs on the island

of Ireland. Its low ceilings and whitewashed walls ensure that this beautifully aged space is a cozy den in which to hunker down from the cold. Not content with being one of the oldest pubs, the Inn is regarded as one of the best music pubs on the island, too. Toast your toes by the large open fireplace during a traditional Irish music session on the weekend. In County Galway the Ballynahinch Castle Hotel is nestled in the rugged landscape of Connemara on a 450-acre estate overlooking the Owenmore River. Its elegant countryside décor boasts antique furnishings and roaring wood-burning fireplaces. The huge stone fireplace in the Hunts Room is perfect for sinking into a plush seat, hands firmly wrapped around a hot mug of cocoa. Come dinnertime, the Fisherman's Pub's log fire casts a warm orange glow on quirky angling memorabilia.

The pub is where everyone gathers on cold nights all over the island of Ireland—and everyone is welcome! A hot toddy or an Irish coffee will get you in the right mood for a casual conversation—everyone talks to you in Ireland—or a night of traditional Irish music and singing. Irish pubs are also great places to dine out, and this time of year the focus is on hearty winter stews and seafood chowders which will warm you from the inside out. Each region has its own speciality dish. In County Cork, the local delicacy is spiced beef, cooked with sugar, spices and berries.

The winter months are a great time to visit the cities

around Ireland. The shopping districts are buzzing with activity in the run up to Christmas, but also beyond it in the traditional January sales events that extend into February! Museums, galleries and exhibitions such as Titanic Belfast or EPIC, the Emigration Museum in Dublin are generally more accessible than during the peak summer months. Tables at your favorite restaurants or tickets to a play or a show are also easier to come by. For a unique treat take a visit to Waterford, where Winterval transforms this Viking city into a twinkly winter wonderland.

One of the highlights of the winter season on the island of Ireland is the Christmas holiday. Unofficially starting around December 8, Christmas does not end until the feast of the Epiphany on January 6, known in Ireland as Nollaig na mBan or Women's Christmas to recognize the hard work and dedication of Irish mummies over the season.

Christmas in Ireland is most importantly a time for family and friends to get together. The greatest gift of all is to see a distant relative return from some far-flung corner of the world. The phrase Cead Míle Fáilte, a hundred thousand welcomes, was never more warmly uttered than when greeting a returning emigrant.

Traditions are big across the island too. The lights on Grafton Street, Dublin's main shopping district, as well as Belfast in the north, Galway in the West, and Cork in the south, all add to the festive atmosphere. Grafton Street is home to a bus-

ting conclave of buskers, some of whom have become internet sensations. In recent years these gifted amateurs have been joined by some of Ireland's biggest musical stars to celebrate the season. Legends such as Bono, Christy Moore, Glen Hansard and Hozier have been seen on this busy thoroughfare singing for tips (which all are then donated to charity).

Another tradition is the Christmas Morning Swim, when thousands of hardy souls creep down to the coast and throw themselves into the sea. Irish journalist Fergal Keane once said of his Christmas swim: "It was worth every second of Arctic misery for the sense of achievement that followed." In Dublin the favored place for this act of madness is the city's Forty Foot swimming spot. All are welcome. If you're there feel free to dive in!

Christmas markets, specializing in unique gifts and food, are a feature of most towns and cities throughout December. Good examples include the Christmas Market in Belfast, which is located on the grounds of Belfast City Hall and has a wonderfully international flavor, featuring unusual foods and gift ideas from all around the world. The 'Glow' market in the heart of Cork City offers Christmas with a Cork twist, replete with stalls of artisanal produce, vats of hot chocolate, a merry-go-round and a party atmosphere.

Holly and mistletoe are to be found everywhere, and many homes still honor the centuries-old custom of placing a welcoming candle in the window. But most of all what

makes Christmas a great time of the year to visit is that it is full of folk out to have fun. Scrooge was never seen on Ireland's shores, and 'Humbug' is not a word that has any direct translation into the Irish language!

And speaking of fun, the New Year's Festival in Dublin makes a welcome return this year, for the first time since 2019. As the clock strikes midnight, Dubliners and their guests will ring in the new year with a spectacular fireworks display, top tunes and a rousing rendition of "Auld Lang Syne." It is the largest New Year's Eve party on the island of Ireland, and is filled with family friendly public events, incredible live performances, and dazzling light shows. The festival welcomes visitors from all over the world and takes place over two days, December 31 and January 1, in venues across the city. This year, Irish legends Westlife will headline the show, alongside Gavin James, Lyra and other top Irish musicians and DJs. The tunes will rock out across six stages along the North Wall Quay, and a spectacular fireworks display will light up the midnight sky. What a perfect way to round off the year!

As the travel experts at Lonely Planet said: "Make no mistake—this is a town that knows how to party. What better place, then, to spend New Year's Eve ... ?"

If you want to get into the spirit of Christmas in Ireland or indulge in a winter break just press the Green Button and start planning your trip on:



**Tourism Ireland**



Belfast Christmas Market



**May you be blessed with the spirit of the season, which is peace,  
The gladness of the season, which is hope,  
And the heart of the season, which is love.**

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of Ireland. We look forward to welcoming you home in 2023.**

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*Merry Christmas*