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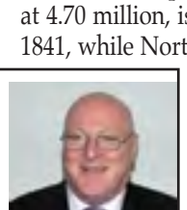
The Ladybird Book: "Learn About Irish History; The Backstop"

From the Motherland

By Sean Farrell



BREXIT. For the Outsider there is fascination in observing how the elite in a major economic and political power seem hell-bent on wrecking it. For the Insider, and Ireland is an involuntary Insider, there is trepidation and fear at the extent of the potential real and collateral damage as Britain seemingly stumbles towards a crash out from the EU.

It's not inevitable. Teresa May appears to be running the clock down, with a vital vote in Parliament on the Withdrawal Agreement - the least bad option -scheduled for mid-January. But a defeat, which seems likely, will leave precious little time left to come up with an alternative to the chaos of a hard (i.e. no deal) Brexit. Moreover there appears no palatable option that might get through Parliament, such is the paralysis in the British body politic.

As this reality seeps in, the anti-Irish rhetoric of the Brexiteers has intensified. As they see it, Ireland, through the Backstop, is frustrating Britain's Manifest Destiny of departing the EU painlessly and on favourable terms. Recently one anonymous Tory MP (a Party "grandee") commented to a BBC reporter: "We simply cannot allow the Irish to treat us like this. The Irish really should know their place." This came hot on the heels of former British Cabinet Minister Priti Patel, who, several days earlier, pondered why Britain had not used the possibility of food shortages in Ireland after a hard Brexit, to exert pressure in the negotiations with the EU.

Not surprisingly, on both sides of the Irish Sea there has been considerable adverse reaction to these comments and neither person seems likely to feature on many Irish Christmas card lists now or in the future. Yet they are merely the latest expressions of impotent rage from Brexiteers of that ilk that an issue ignored during the Referendum campaign has reared up to bite them in the posterior. An issue moreover that is intrinsic to an international agreement to which Britain signed up and which is fundamental to the peace settlement in Northern Ireland.

For their benefit, there follows a very brief potted history of Ireland since 1840. This might also interest Teresa May, who apparently, when addressing EU leaders in September, asked them how they would feel if their countries were "carved" in two, reaffirming several days later that any deal which "divides our country in two" would be bad.

Ireland, conquered and misruled by Britain over several hundred years, and formally part of a "United Kingdom" after 1800,suffered a massive famine in the 1840s when the staple food of millions – the Potato – was destroyed by a blight , Phytophthora infestans. Upwards of a million people died of starvation or disease between 1845 and 1849, with another million plus fleeing the country. The trickle of emigrants to the USA became a flood; 1,289,307 arrived in the USA in the decade 1846-1855 alone. The Irish rural underclass was decimated; those who couldn't afford to leave starved.

Ireland's population, 8,175,124 in 1841, fell by over 20% to 6,552,385 in 1851 and sank to 5,798,000 in 1861. It continued to fall until well into the Twentieth Century and even now the population in the Republic, at 4.70 million, is 1.8 million below that in 1841, while Northern Ireland only "caught up" with pre-Famine figures at the turn of the Millennium. The British ("our"!)Government's efforts at relief were pathetic and woefully inadequate. The most that can be said is that the ("our") Government's woeful reaction to the catastrophe fell short of accepted definitions of genocide in that there was no official murderous intent, though, as the late Professor Emmet Larkin remarked to me, it would not have been allowed to happen in the Home Counties.

The Famine proved a political watershed, giving an impetus over time to the separatist strain in Irish nationalism, which led eventually to the 1916 Rising (the huge post-Famine Irish communities in the USA providing considerable moral political and financial support). Any residual pro-British sentiment among most Irish received a coup de grace when the British commanding general shot fifteen of the Rising Leaders, the executions (ninety were planned) stopped only by the hasty personal intervention of British Prime Minister, Asquith. A brief but savage struggle for independence from 1919 - 1921 ended with a treaty establishing, in 1922, the Irish Free State.

There was unfinished business, however. The north- east of Ireland contained a sizeable non – Nationalist majority – the Unionists, identified by being overwhelmingly non- Catholic – who, for obvious reasons, were the preferred "Irish" of the British authorities. To cater for them Britain partitioned the island, carving a statelet along county boundaries rather than community lines, thus producing a sizeable Unionist majority but with a Nationalist minority of one third. The delineation of the Border was fudged, with a Boundary Commission (on whom Nationalists throughout the island had pinned hopes) suggesting only minor changes. Thereafter the border issue was frozen but unaddressed for decades. Britain applied some constructive ambiguity to the status of the Irish in Britain and Ireland, many of whom settled in Britain as economic migrants. They were given freedom of movement, residence and access to the British Welfare state similar to UK citizens.

All might have been well, with the British Welfare State after 1945 lifting all boats, had the Unionists not pursued a consistent pattern of anti-nationalist discrimination for decades in areas of employment, housing and local government. By the Sixties something had to give- and it did. Eventually civil unrest and political violence broke out and took several thousand lives in the quarter of a century after 1969. The much poorer Republic developed separately and more slowly, without the crutches of the Welfare State and the annual subsidy of billions from Westminster. EC and later EU membership helped change that.

A complicated and tortuous Peace Process began in the late 1980s, encouraged and assisted by the Irish and British governments and the European Union. Paramilitaries on both sides declared ceasefires in 1994, and, with the guns silent, political dialogue between the two communities in the North began. It was slow, but eventually culminated in the 1998 Good Friday Agreement, which cemented and defined relations within Northern Ireland, between both parts of Ireland and between Ireland and Britain. The Agreement was endorsed by massive majorities in both parts of the island (far greater than 52-48!). Integral to it was an open Border in Ireland which has functioned well in the two decades since, underpinned by common membership of the Single Market and the Customs Union. Lasting peace and prosperity in Ireland seemed assured.

Cue Brexit, where the vote in the North was an emphatic 55.8% Remain. In the Leave negotiations Britain committed to maintaining this open Border, declaring "in the absence of agreed solutions the UK will maintain full alignment with those rules of the Internal Market and the Customs Union, which, now and in the future support North South Cooperation, the all-island economy and the protection of the 1998 Agreement." The Backstop. Wordy but clear. And not Ireland's fault! Agreed solutions" are likely but if not the Backstop is the guarantee that perfidious Albion will not again do Ireland down.

Sinn Féin's Mary Lou McDonald Receives Politico Award

Speaking in Brussels after receiving Politico's European Leaders Class of 2019 Award, Mary Lou McDonald said,

"Today I met with Guy Verhofstadt, the European Parliament's Brexit Coordinator.

"I impressed upon Guy the fact that, for Ireland, there is no such thing as a good Brexit, irrespective of whatever deal is struck.

"Brexit poses incalculable challenges for the island of Ireland and Sinn Féin have been dogged in their expression of these.

"To that end, we have embarked upon a diplomatic offensive in Europe, influencing officials in each European institution.

"We share the belief that this remains a crucial time for Ireland in Europe

"I informed Guy of the deficiencies of the Withdrawal Agreement, particularly in the field of citizens' rights.

"While not a panacea, the Withdrawal Agreement does represent the least worse option.

"The 'backstop' is an essential part of the Withdrawal Agreement. The agreed 'backstop' represents a net through which the much-needed certainty for communities and businesses in Ireland cannot fall.

"There is much more work to be done. Uncertainty remains around the status of citizens' rights and Sinn Féin will continue to work effectively to ensure the maximum level of protection for all."

Mary Lou McDonald concluded:

"It is an honour to be awarded this recognition at a time of great challenge and change in Europe and Ireland."

Sinn Féin President Mary Lou McDonald TD has been announced by Politico as the Irish Representative for their European Leaders Class of 2019.

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About the Cover

Trinity Irish Dance Company members Aaron Wolf and Erin Gradus captured by world-renowned photographer Lois Greenfield.

Farewell John Raftery

John Raftery, who owned the A Touch of Ireland Gift Shops in Chicagoland over the last 48 plus years has passed away.

At the time of this printing, there is no information on funeral arrangements.

John used to work for Aer Lingus. He was especially well known at feiseanna held in the Midwest, and could be found selling dancing shoes at these events around the Midwest.

a touch of Ireland

Our condolences to his daughter, Anne, his family and the entire crew who work at A Touch of Ireland on 95th Street in Oak Lawn.. May he rest in peace.

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It Starts With A Song

By Joe McShane

Hello Everyone,

The year was 1961 and John F. Kennedy became the 35th President of the United States. He was the youngest man elected to the office on November 22nd. Sadly after only three years in office, he was also the youngest President to be assassinated. That same year in '61, my wife's father, Peter Hughes R.I.P. was home in Ireland for a visit. In the '60s like many other times in Ireland, there was very little work and money was scarce. While he was back home he said to his 22-year-old niece: "You should come to America". She took her Uncle's advice and traveled to the US on the boat with him. Got herself a job cooking for the priests at St. Lucy's Catholic Church on the westside. It was then noticed that Agnes was an expert seamstress, which she had learned from her mother. So before long she was cooking, baking and making vestments for the priests. She gathered enough money to pay her Uncle Peter back, but, He Said: "No, send the money home to bring your brother over". So she sent the money home to bring her brother James out. Agnes did get homesick and talked about returning to Ireland but her Uncle said: "Give it a chance and stay here" And so she stayed. And Chicago was blessed.

Young Agnes from Hollymount, Claremorris, County Mayo, started to put down roots in her new

home. She met and married a County Kerry man from Castleisland, Jim Mahoney R.I.P. (affectionately known as 'Big Jim'). They married in 1967 and raised five children - Bridget, Jimmy, Patrick, Catherine, and Deirdre. Now there are twelve grandchildren. She was involved in just about every benefit that was held in Chicago. An avid Irish dancer, which she passed on to her children and grandchildren. When you watch some of the dancers perform here in Chicago, it's very possible that Agnes made the dresses that some of them are wearing.

Even though this extraordinary Lady was diagnosed this past year with cancer, she still kept that active way of hers alight. She even made it to the Oireachtas, held in Louisville, Kentucky, just a few weeks before God took her home. Agnes Mahoney would have turned 80 this month on January 29th. Agnes, you will be missed so much by everyone. For your devotion to the Irish community, your baking, sewing, Irish dancing, sweet smile, refusing to accept very much payment and never looking for anything in return for your good deeds. Yes, Chicago was really Blessed. R.I.P. Agnes Mahoney…

Next month will be the start of Margo O'Donnell's 55th year in the music business. So, I'll be writing about a new album that she is releasing, of which I'm very proud to be a co-writer of some of the songs. When Margo celebrated her 50th year in the business, it was the same year her Mother passed away, so, I think we should make her 55th a special occasion.

This months song was written out of an idea which was brought onboard by Myles McVeigh. So between Myles, Jordan, and myself, we wrote 'From The Cradle To The Cradle'.

I want to take this opportunity to wish you all a very Happy New Year! And I hope you had a good Christmas. I know it was a sad Christmas for a lot of people. While some of us are full of joy there are just as many folks broken-hearted with grief or going through the pain of loneliness. I think we should extend the season of goodwill another eleven months. Put a smile on your own face by feeling the joy of helping someone. It's a perfect way to get a Natural HIGH...

As always, be good to one another, Joe

"From The Cradle To The Cradle"

© Joe McShane, © Myles McVeigh, © Jordan Mogey

Verse 1
She told him he was precious as she rocked him in the cradle
And he felt his Mother's love just as soon as he was able
In the mornings Mom and Dad would make his whole world glow
He said I can't remember, I was young back then you know
Verse 2
He grew up full of happiness and found himself a wife
God blessed him with a family and he was their guiding light
Another precious Momma in every thoughtful way
Poured her loving heart into that cradle every day
Chorus
From the cradle to the cradle, love was always there
Where pain was washed away with some loving and a prayer
A Father and a Mother that were always by his side
From the cradle to the cradle,,, like the ocean,,, returning with the tide
Verse 3
The years flew by so quickly, some things were not the same
A puzzled look upon Dads face, he seemed a little strange
With family all around him, though he doesn't know their name
Their arms will gently cradle him, their love won't go away
Verse 4
The mind is like a river as it gently flows along
Compared to eternity, it's no longer than a song
From the cradle to the cradle and then you leave one day
And God's gentle hand will guide you on your way
Chorus
From the cradle to the cradle love is waiting there
Where pain was washed away with some loving and a prayer
A Father and a Mother that were always by his side
From the cradle to the cradle,,, like the ocean,,, returning with the tide
Tag
The savior and his angels will be standing by your side
From the cradle to the cradle,,, like the ocean,,, returning with the tide

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On Their Own Terms

It's everything you expect, but like nothing you'd imagine

World-renowned New York photographer Lois Greenfield captures the essence of today's TIDC- photo by Lois Greenfield, 2018

By: Cliff Carlson

Trinity Irish Dance Company (TIDC) brings both classic and groundbreaking world premiere works to the iconic Auditorium Theatre on February 2nd for its first full-length Chicago performance in over ten years. TIDC's determined, fresh approach to an often overly commercialized dance form is resonating with audiences and critics worldwide.

Not to be confused with the the local Trinity Irish dance school, the Chicago-born TIDC is a contemporary non-profit performing arts company comprised of elite dancers from throughout North America and Ireland.

Called "sophisticated and commanding" by the Los Angeles Times and "impossibly complex" by The New York Times, the company sends a clear message of female empowerment by consistently presenting males and females on equal footing. They are fighting and increasingly winning the battle between substance and spectacle by carving new traditions.

TIDC's one-night-only performance at the Auditorium features the world premiere of An Sorcas (Gaelic for "the circus"), a collaboration between Emmy award-winning Artistic Director Howard, associate artistic director and company member Chelsea Hoy, and company member Michael Gardiner. A tour-de-force of original lyrics, music, and layers of symbolism, An Sorcas is an electric examination of society's focus on commercialization. The piece progresses from idolatry to empathy and is TIDC's most ambitious work to date.

Mark Howard as guest on "Tonight Show" 1991 L to R: Ed McMahon, Mark Howard, Johnny Carson

The company also gives the world premiere to Howard's Drunken Sailor, which features world solo champions Paige Turilli (who has won more solo world titles than any other Irish dancer in US history) and Ali Doughty. Other Howard works on the program include Push, an explosion of virtuosic hard-driving percussive power; Soles, which was previewed at Tokyo's Orchard Hall and world premiered at New York's Joyce Theater to high acclaim; and Johnny, a TIDC classic created in 1991 as a retirement gift for late-night TV host Johnny Carson.

Being presented by the Auditorium is an important part of TIDC's plan to build local support and give proud ownership of the company to the community. The Irish Consul General is excited to connect TIDC's message of female empowerment with the celebration of St. Brigid's Day (February 1st), and will be sponsoring a post-show VIP reception.

The Creative Force

Born in Yorkshire, England of Irish Parents, Howard trained as a child in Chicago church basements and banquet halls under the legendary Marge and Dennis Dennehy. Teaching his own students by the age 17, while studying at St. Ignatius College Prep, led to the founding of the Trinity Academy of Irish dance, Howard's own dance school which won America's first world team championships. His school would continue to push boundaries and break records, and by 27, he was appearing annually as a special guest on Johnny Carson's Tonight Show. Choreography for film, television, and theater ultimately led to Howard's unique transition to the performing arts stage at age 28, and the nonprofit TIDC was born.

Today's nucleus of A-list dancers are passionate about carrying on his legacy, and are riding a well deserved wave as the high watermark of their art form. This pioneering company, which opened the artistic pathways leading directly to commercial productions such as Riverdance, is re-energized and taking Howard's vision to new heights.

Howard sees his dancers as the main reason for TIDC's current success. He values and trusts them as contributors and leaders, integral to the choreography and creation of new work.

Artistic Associate and dancer, Ali Doughty won a hard-fought 2014 world solo title for the U.S. before moving from Philadelphia to Chicago to join TIDC. Doughty, who balances her identity as a performing artist with a demanding Physical Therapy doctorate program at Northwestern, appreciates Howards generosity of spirit in the studio. "Mark's combination of intensity and inclusiveness inspires me. We're not just invited to contribute movement, we're invited into the creative process at every step along the way," Doughty says. "He has an uncommon way of shaping rhythms that come out of our feet and pushing them to levels we never thought possible," she adds.

Denver transplant and Associate Artistic Director, Chelsea Hoy counts herself lucky to have Howard as a mentor. "I've never experienced a brain that works as quickly as Mark's," says Hoy. "He'll hear a sound on the radio, recall a story from 20 years ago, and have the vision for an entire dance piece all before the song has even reached my ears."

Hoy recalls a moment when she realized the fortitude of Howard's creative mind: "While I was studying photography and psychology at Loyola, I interviewed Mark for a project on the psychology of creativity. During the interview, he insisted that he did not have an artistic process. Weeks later, after four intensive days of constructing countless rhythms, I found myself surrounded by walls covered in lists of movement, categorized by

Ali Doughty (foreground) mid-flight in Howard's classic piece Johnny - photo by C. Hoy Photography

section and divided by musical bars. The company and I were in creation with Mark for our piece Soles, and once we had a mountain of material, he guided us on this laborious journey to chisel away until we found what he called the 'nutmeat' of the piece. Later, when I got the chance to insist that he did indeed have a process…he said, 'I've never created this way before,'" Hoy recalls. "That's when it became clear to me that Mark has never allowed a piece to be choreographed the same way twice, a strength reflected in the incredible range of the company's work."

Innovation and clarity of purpose have allowed Howard to be at the forefront of Irish Dance for what is now nearly four decades. Howard's work has brought numerous grants and awards, including choreographer's fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts, an Emmy award, and recognition from New York to Tokyo. He has twice been named one of Irish America Magazine's Top 100 Americans.

Despite that success, and as accessible as Howard is in the Chicago Irish Community, most of us really know little about him. After the first decade of his career as an Irish Dance teacher, Howard could have traded endlessly on his enviable resume of international competitive success. Instead, in 1990 he made a seismic shift to devoting his life to elevating Irish Dance as a choreographer in the performing arts. "Through a happy mistake, the performing arts stage provided me with a passion and an outlet that I didn't see coming. It was like somebody flipped a lightswitch. The concern was no longer whether you were going to get paid for it or whether you were going to go on and be successful. It was, as they say, no longer about the destination but the journey. I was alive to what I was doing, and I still am," says Howard.

Today, things are heating up nicely for TIDC. They've signed with New York Agency Selby Artists Management, joining a roster of renowned dance companies. They were recently named the #1 dance act by the Boston Globe, and this past summer they sold out a three-week tour of Japan. Most importantly, they are creating groundbreaking repertoire with an energy as potent as ever, developing ten impressive works within the past four years.

TIDC's 2019 season, with the Auditorium performance at the forefront, will take them across North America and potentially lead to China. Their outreach programming in under-resourced communities continues to empower young people through movement.

For those who go to the February 2nd performance, you are sure to experience dances that will transport, inspire, and leave you feeling whole. TIDC is using Irish dance as a catalyst for social change. And at the heart of it all, they are here to uplift and take care of one another and all of us. We are glad to finally have them at home.

Tickets are selling quickly -- For ticket info, visit:

www.auditoriumtheatre.org

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Mark Howard in studio with Company and crew of NBC's "First Look"

TRINITY IRISH DANCE COMPANY
FOUNDING ARTISTIC DIRECTOR MARK HOWARD

Co. Mayo Foundation Partners With Safe Home Ireland

New York - Returning "home" for some older emigrants who left Ireland several decades ago is a lifelong dream. For younger Irish people living abroad, going back home is the chance to raise their children in the place where they grew up and to be closer to friends and family.

This Christmas season, a time when many Irish people return home to visit family, the County Mayo Foundation is happy to partner with Safe Home Ireland.

The not-for-profit organization, which is based in Mulranny, Co. Mayo, offers home visitation services together with ongoing transition, integration support and advice to Irish emigrants across the globe who are contemplating the life-changing decision to return to Ireland.

Since its founding in 2000, Safe Home Ireland has helped over 2,000 people return "home" to live.

"For the majority, their return was a positive lifelong dream and could not have been fulfilled without the intervention and support of Safe Home Ireland," says Karen McHugh, the agency's CEO.

The County Mayo Foundation is hoping to raise awareness among the Irish diaspora and provide support to Safe Home Ireland with funding that will go toward the publication of a Welcome Home information guide, as well as additional resources for outreach purposes.

"Much reference is made to the 'forgotten Irish,' often depicted as older, vulnerable emigrants who still live abroad," says McHugh.

"In our experience, those who return home having spent a lifetime in exile can also feel forgotten, isolated and an outsider in the communities that they return to, as they try to re-adjust to living back in Ireland once more."

This is why providing prospective returnees with up-to-date, accurate information in advance is key to them making an informed decision, she explains.

In counseling applicants, McHugh says it's important that they do their homework first, plan their move well in advance and be prepared for the emotional challenges involved in moving home.

"This is particularly important if they have lived abroad for a long time or if they were not born in Ireland," she cautions. "Ireland has changed, as have they, and their return should be treated as a new immigration experience."

Safe Home Ireland's services are not just limited to seniors, though. It helps emigrants of all ages and all circumstances, says McHugh.

The agency, which gets the majority of its funding from the Emigrant Support Programme of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, provides up-to-date information on housing, welfare issues, healthcare, rights, entitlements, banking, and more.

In recent years, some returning emigrants have been unprepared to navigate government agencies. That resulted in difficulty obtaining driving licenses, social welfare payments, accessing GPs and healthcare, housing, and car insurance, along with the unexpected cost of third-level education.

Returning Irish emigrants who are resuming a previous residence in the state may be considered habitually resident on arrival, explains McHugh. However, she also stresses the importance of bringing home a good "paper trail" of documentation to show that ties have been severed abroad.

"This, together with being able to show connections to/in Ireland, will be key to meeting habitual residency requirements," she adds.

In the U.K., Safe Home Ireland representatives visit applicants in their homes, providing them with much-needed information and reviewing the housing application process in detail.

She says the agency would be open to doing the same in the U.S. There has been an increase in enquiries from U.S.-based emigrants this year, as well as those who have returned home.

Returning emigrants who apply for housing assistance must be Irish-born, living abroad and aged 57 and above. They must also be capable of independent living, have resided in rented accommodation abroad, and prove that they are unable to provide housing for themselves in Ireland based on their current income and/or savings.

Once emigrants return to Ireland, assistance from Safe Home Ireland is ongoing and includes referrals to local support services, as well as assistance filling out paperwork and determining eligibility for benefits.

"We at Safe Home Ireland are delighted and honored to work with and be supported by the Mayo Foundation," says McHugh.

"This is an exciting new venture for us, which we hope will advance our profile in the U.S., as well as reach out to people living there with Irish and Mayo connections."

Donations can be made directly on the County Mayo Foundation website at https://countymayofoundation.org/safe-home-ireland/

Pictured (l to r),:Mary Ann Fadian, coordinator, Safe Home Ireland, Dr. Jerry Cowley, chairperson, Safe Home Ireland, Minister of State with Responsibility for the Diaspora and International Development Ciaran Cannon, Karen McHugh, CEO, Safe Home Ireland, and Christopher Campbell, deputy director, Irish Abroad Unit, Dept. of Foreign Affairs & Trade

Search is on for Chicago's 2019 St Patrick's Day Parade Queen

The Chicago St. Patrick's Day Parade Committee today officially launched the search for the next young lady who will be crowned the Queen of the 2019 St. Patrick's Day Parade.

Applications are now being accepted for the role of Queen or a member of the Queen's court to represent Chicago's Irish community at the annual parade and throughout the course of the year at civic events and other public appearances.

The contest is open to young women of Irish ancestry who are between the ages of 18 and 28. Applications will be accepted through Jan. 3, 2019, according to James Coyne, General Chairman of Chicago's annual St. Patrick's Day Parade.

Contest guidelines and applications can be obtained at chicagostpatricksdayparade.org. Entrants are asked to send a photo with their name, age, address and telephone number along with a brief biography and an explanation of why they would like to be Chicago's 2019 St. Patrick's Day Queen.

The Queen Contest and judging will be held on Jan. 20, 2019 at Plumbers Local 130, 1340 W. Washington Boulevard, Chicago. The contest is sponsored by the Chicago St. Patrick's Day Parade Committee and Plumbers Local Union 130 UA.

(l to r): Madeline Mitchell, Catherine Coghlan, Mary Kate Manion, Maura Carr & Nicole Coghlan, 2018 Queen and the Court.

Mary Kate Manion,
2018 Chicago St. Patrick's Day Parade Queen

2018 Chicago St. Patrick's Day Parade Queen's Court

2018 Queen Court with
Justice Anne M. Burke,
2018 Guest of Honor

2018 Parade Queen with
Ald. Patrick J. O'Connor,
2018 Grand Marshal

Are you Chicago's 2019 St. Patrick's Day Parade Queen?

CONTEST FINALS WILL BE HELD AT
CHICAGO PLUMBERS HALL, 1340 W. WASHINGTON BLVD.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 20, 2019

Any girl of Irish ancestry, never married,
18-28 years old
is eligible to enter the contest.

All finalists will be entered to win an Irish Themed Pandora® Bracelet.

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER, VISIT
CHICAGOSTPATRICKSDAYPARADE.ORG

ENTRY DEADLINE: JANUARY 3 AT 12PM
REGISTRATION FEE IS $25.00

Irish Fellowship Club Holds Record-Setting Christmas Luncheon

The Irish Fellowship Club's annual Christmas luncheon, held at the Hilton Chicago, was the largest in the history of the Club. Under the guidance of the luncheon chairman, EamonnVaughan, Liz Vaughan, and Executive Director, Kathy Taylor, over 1300 people filled the floor and balcony of the Grand Ballroom.

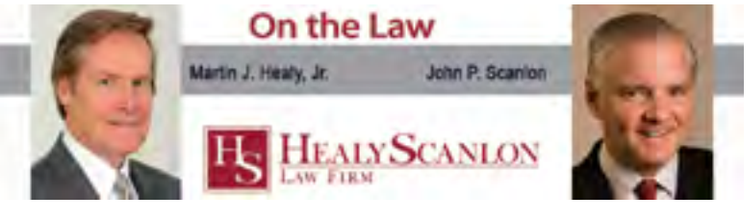
The foundation of the luncheon is holiday cheer and Irish fellowship, and there was an abundance of both. In addition, fantastic entertainment was provided by the Misericordia Heart Singers, Aislinn Gagliardi, the Shannon Rovers, Catherine O'Connell, Jimmy Moore and Jim Dooley. Bob Ryan performed the Irish National Anthem and Paddy Homan performed a rousing rendition of the American National Anthem. Other dignitaries who were present, included Mary Kate Manion, 2018 St. Patrick's Day queen, and Bill McTighe, doing his interpretation of Santa Claus, appropriately dressed in green.

James F. Coyne, Chairman of the St. Patrick's Day Parade and business manager of the Chicago Journeyman's Local 130 announced the 2019 Grand Marshall, Terrance J. Hancock of Teamsters Local 731. Mr. Coyne also announced the parade Guest of Honor, St. Ignatius High School, which is celebrating its 150th anniversary.

As is the tradition, the election of new IFC officers took place. Kevin Flood was elected president, and Rose Doherty was elected Vice President. John Griffin became Chairman of the Board and was presented with a Waterford crystal bowl, by outgoing Chairman, Chris Kozicki.

The luncheon is a major source of revenue to fund the 1600 scholarships the Irish Fellowship Club makes to 37 Catholic high schools.

The celebration continued all afternoon in the Normandy Room and Kitty O'Shea's. It truly was an amazing record-setting afternoon.



This is the next of a series of columns on how the law can impact your life. The articles will focus on various aspects of the law relating to personal injuries, those that happen both on-the-job and otherwise, including mishaps which occur in driving vehicles, using products, and receiving medical care. The column will also respond to legal questions relating to personal injury that are sent to us.

Healy Scanlon Law Firm is comprised of eight trial attorneys and four "Of Counsel" attorneys, two of whom are from Ireland. We are located downtown at 111 W. Washington Street, Suite 1425, Chicago, Illinois 60602 (800-922-4500 or 312-977-0100) (across from the Daley Center). www.HealyScanlon.com. The firm concentrates in the representation of injured victims of all types of accidents.

Readers are encouraged to call or write with questions concerning personal injury law.

Decades ago we wrote, and have since updated, a chapter in a book to educate Illinois attorneys on how to represent individuals involved in vehicle accidents. While our chapter "Intersectional Collisions" is written to educate attorneys through the Illinois Institute for Continuing Legal Education (IICLE), the overall subject matter should also be of interest to the general public.

This is the third in a series of articles in which we will be addressing some of the general topics in both our chapter and the book, Proving Fault in Auto Accident Cases.

Two months ago, we discussed some concerns that arise when vehicles approach an uncontrolled intersection; that is an intersection that does not have stop signs or stop lights for any direction of traffic.

Last month, we discussed controlled intersections; that is, an intersection that has a light or traffic signs to control the flow of traffic. Since writing the article, which discussed traffic lights and signs obscured by snow, Chicagoland had an unusual windy, wet snow storm, which created major problems for traffic lights, signs, and lighted information signs on the expressway. As discussed, whenever snow obscures traffic lights or signs, the intersection must be treated as a four-way stop intersection.

This month we will discuss emergency vehicles and non-motorist defendants in traffic accidents.

Emergency Vehicles

The Illinois motor vehicle code provides that when an authorized emergency vehicle using audible and visual signals or a police vehicle using audible or visual signals approaches: the driver of every other vehicle shall yield the right-of-way and shall immediately drive to a position parallel to, and as close as possible to, the right-hand edge or curb of the highway clear of an intersection and shall, if necessary to permit the safe passage of the emergency vehicle, stop and remain in such a position until the authorized emergency vehicle has passed, unless otherwise directed by a police officer.

Emergency vehicles other than police vehicles have the right-of-way when using both audible and visual signals. However, police vehicles have the right-of-way if they are using either visual or audible signals. If emergency vehicles are not utilizing such signals, other drivers are not obligated to pull over and give the vehicle the right-of-way.

Additionally, when emergency vehicles use audio and visual signals while responding to an emergency call (pursuing an actual or suspected violator of the law), or responding to (but not returning from) a fire alarm, Illinois law provides that the vehicle may disregard traffic regulations, including speed and direction of traffic laws. Therefore, even where an emergency vehicle is traveling above the speed limit or in the wrong lane, all other drivers have the duty to give the right-of-way to the vehicle by pulling over, and the normal traffic laws would not apply to the emergency vehicle.

Public employees and entities are also largely immune to suits for injuries caused when responding to an emergency call. The Local Governmental and Governmental Employees Tort Immunity Act provides that public entities and employees acting within the scope of their employment cannot be held liable for injuries caused by the negligent operation of a vehicle or firefighting equipment when responding to an emergency call.

While these protections are broad, they do not relieve emergency personnel and departments of all liability. The Illinois motor vehicle code still requires emergency vehicle drivers to drive with due regard for the safety of others. Additionally, public employees and vehicles are only immune to negligence suits. Where the employee or entity shows a conscious disregard for the safety of others, victims may recover for injuries resulting from that disregard.

Non-Motorist Defendants

Have you ever pulled up to an intersection and thought, there should be a stop sign or traffic light there? Sometimes intersections lack adequate traffic signals. The lack of such signals leads to situations where drivers are unsure of who has the right-of-way, increasing the chances of a collision.

Generally, Illinois law provides that cities are immune from suit based on the poor design of an intersection or the failure to improve or place traffic signals at an intersection. However, where a public entity installs a traffic control device, the law requires the entity to maintain the device in a reasonably safe condition. Therefore, if a person is injured due to the failure to correct a clear defect in a traffic signal, the person may be able to recover for their injuries.

This immunity only applies to public entities, like municipalities. Where private entities modify, remove, or relocate traffic safety devices or create a visual obstruction at an intersection, the private entity may be held liable for the injuries sustained from a collision if the injury is connected to the lack of a traffic signal.

Healy Scanlon recently made a large recovery for a man severely injured in a collision at the intersection of a commercial driveway and a busy state highway. The commercial driveway did not contain a stop sign or a "no left turn sign" at its intersection with the state highway. The defendant exited the commercial driveway and turned left into traffic, colliding with the plaintiff, who was driving on the state highway. The attorneys alleged that when the owners renovated the property, they should have added a traffic control device, and that such a device may have prevented the collision.

In sum, all drivers should give emergency vehicles the right-of-way when they have audible and visual signals on. Further, drivers should always proceed at intersections with caution, whether traffic signals are present or not. Many accidents could be avoided if drivers consistently kept their eyes and ears engaged and anticipated the actions of other drivers at intersections.

By: Martin Healy, Jr.
Emilie McGuire

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Irish Books and Plays in Review

Frank West

Being New York, Being Irish — Reflections on 25 Years of Irish America

By: Terry Golway
Irish Academic Press

What a fantastic book to begin the New Year with! It is all about our Irish heritage and its future. The book "gathers many of Ireland's and Irish America's finest writers…," 22 of them in fact, to consider "what has changed and what has not, in Irish and Irish American culture, art, identity, and politics since 1993."

The Glucksman Ireland House at New York University opened in 1993. And this book was published to celebrate its 25th anniversary.

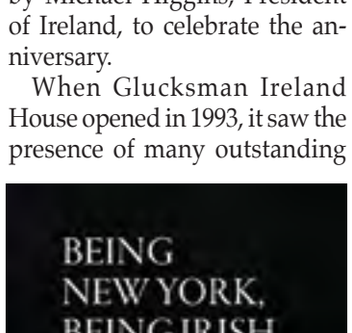
The purpose of the Glucksman Ireland House is "to foster the study of Ireland, Irish America and the Irish diaspora."

The book was edited by Terry Golway. I have read several of the books he has written. He has a wonderful writing style and an eye for the telling detail and anecdote.

"Terry Golway is a journalist and US political historian…He is a senior editor at Politico and past editorial board member of the 'New York Times.'"

He selected 22 essays for this book. They are written by five writers like Alice McDermot, Colm Toibin, Paul Muldoon, Peter Quinn, and many others. There is even a "poem by Seamus Heaney…" and a forward written by Michael Higgins, President of Ireland, to celebrate the anniversary.

When Glucksman Ireland House opened in 1993, it saw the presence of many outstanding



Irish and Irish Americans: Seamus Heaney, the Prime Minister of the Republic of Ireland, Albert Reynolds, Brian Friel, Maureen O'Hara, James Galway, and many others.

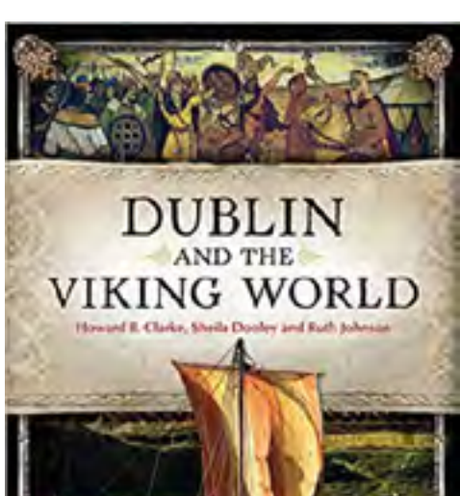
The people drawn by the opening of Glucksman Ireland House were "an astonishing display of Irish history, culture, art, politics…and memory." When Loretta Brennan married Lew Glucksman, she knew that Lew had another love too. She says, "Lew truly loved Ireland."

Since Lew's ethnic background was not Irish, makes us ask the question: How had he developed this love for Ireland? During World War II, Lew served in the United States Navy. When his ship visited Ireland, he fell in love with it and the Irish people. After the war, he returned to New York City and achieved great success in business. He was a public spirited man and water to become a philanthropist. He asked his wife for advice and the result is the Glucksman Ireland House.

When Lew and Loretta cut the ribbon to enter the new Glucksman Ireland House, they wanted "to inaugurate a space for which there were plans and ambitions and visions" but for which there was no precedent.

I am happy to say that Ireland House has been a great and delightful success. It regularly features readings and classes in language, literature, and theatre.

The generosity of Lew and Loretta Glucksman has greatly helped our heritage. This information is from Terry Golway's article "A Door, Opened." I will use others of the 22 articles in future issues.



Dublin and the Viking World

By: Clark, Johnston, and Dooley, O'Brien Press and Dufour Editions

This magnificent book is illustrated with colorful drawings, pictures, and maps. The accompanying text is a delight to read. The book is inspired by the Dublin Exhibit which is on permanent display at Christ Church Cathedral. However, it focuses during the Viking Age. This was about 790 AD to 1100 AD.

Why is this important to us? It is commonly thought that the Vikings were only violent raiders who sailed away after their brutal raids. It was a brutal age everywhere. And some of them certainly did leave. But many of them settled in Ireland and became part of the Irish population. They are us.

It is a misnomer that Dublin was founded by the Vikings. Dublin began long before the Vikings settled there. Yes, these people from Scandinavia made "Dublin Ireland's first fully functioning town." However, there was a settlement there, which would later become Dublin. Its name was Ath Cliath, Gaelic for "ford of the hurdles work."

Three of the five major roads in Ireland led to the Liffey River. There was a crucial ford there that could be crossed, or forded, at low tide. The hurdles marked the safest way to cross the river. This is illustrated with a beautiful drawing.

Later, the Vikings gave the areas the name Dubhlinn, or Black Pool, from the tidal inlet in the River Poddle. In the mid- 900's, the Hiberno-Norse king of Dublin had the first coins in Ireland struck.

The Vikings spoke Old Norse. Some of the words that originated from their language are: leg, shin, outlaw, ransack, berserk, law, and low-as in Arklow and Wicklow. "One of the few completely Norse names in the Dublin areas is heixlip…meaning 'salmon's leap.'"

Five town foundations are credited to the Vikings: Cork, Dublin, Limerick, Waterford, and Wexford.

The Vikings enjoyed a midwinter festival which they called Jol. This came into England as yule and yuletide. The Vikings left a heritage of vigor, creatively in art, and great imagination.

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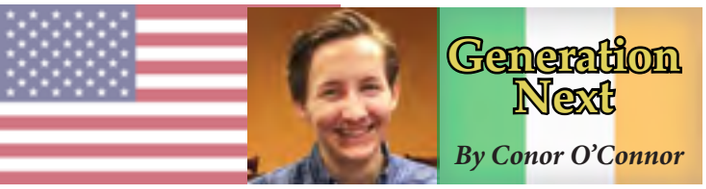

The Real Fightin' Irish

For first semester finals week, I knew I was gonna have to camp out in the library for quite some time. I lugged all my textbooks to one of the tables, grabbed my laptop, and set to work. If you know me, however, you know it can be a little difficult for me to concentrate on what's in front of me sometimes. One second I'll be productively slaving away making flashcards, the next I'll be caught up watching a funny video on Twitter or checking in on my friend's Snapchat stories. That being said, the distractions I create for myself aren't always unproductive.

I recently discovered that Irish folk music works pretty well as background music for a studious person like myself. So, there I was, crouched over my forensics notes in Pius Library, listening to the Wolfe Tone's Anthology of Irish Song, when I heard set of lyrics that caught my fancy: "Come all you gallant heroes, / And along with me combined / I'll sing a song, it won't take long, / Of the fighting sixty ninth". After a quick Google search, I stumbled across a detailed Wikipedia entry on "The Fighting 69th" and spent the duration of the song reading of the infantry regiment's exploits.

The song tells of a gallant group of Irish immigrants from New York that got called up to fight for the Union during the Civil War. Under the command of Michael Corcoran, the regiment saw action at Bull Run, Antietam, Gettysburg, Fredericksburg, and were even present for the Confederate surrender at the Appomattox Court House. All in all, the 69th lost more men than all but 6 of the 2,000+ Union regiments that fought during the Civil War.

The 69th went on to fight in World War I, retaining its status as an Irish heritage unit despite new, non-Irish joining its ranks. Father Duffy, chaplain of the 69th infantry, described the newbies as "Irish by adoption, Irish by association, or Irish by conviction." As time went on, the Irish of the 69th became increasingly outnumbered by new, non-Irish recruits. By the end of the war, only 50% of the regiment was Irish. Despite this demographic shift, the regiment maintained its Irish symbols and Gaelic battle cries through both World Wars.

During World War II, the regiment saw combat at Makin Island, Saipan, and Okinawa and suffered 472 KIA over the course of the war. Seven Medal of Honor recipients fought with the 69th, and, incredibly, all seven of them survived the actions for which they were awarded. Among the recipients is William Joseph Donovan, founding father of the CIA. Today, the 69th continues operating as a regiment of the New York National Guard, and were one of the first regiments to respond to the World Trade Center attacks on 9- 11, 2001.

Given the dedication of its members, it's pretty clear that the 69th never shied away from a fight. Robert E. Lee, the commander of the Confederate States Army, after witnessing members of the 69th bravely assault a heavily fortified Confederate position during the Battle of Fredericksburg, wrote: "Never were men so brave... Though totally routed, they reaped harvests of glory." General Douglas MacArthur said of the 69th: "No greater fighting regiment has ever existed." President John F. Kennedy even opened an address to the Irish Parliament with a tribute to the heroics of the 69th Regiment.

The legacy of Irish-American immigrants is epitomized by the bravery and fearlessness of the 69th Regiment. Thousands of Irishmen turned out to fight for a country that they barely knew in the hope that they could finally claim all that they had ever wanted: freedom. Despite their gallantry in battle, Irish immigrants would face many more trials before finally being accepted as an integral part of American society and culture.

After engrossing myself in all this information, I glanced at the clock and realized that almost an hour had passed since my initial Google search. Sighing, I closed the tabs on my internet browser and went back to making flashcards for my forensics class.

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May 10th – 24th
$3,575 per person

Dennis O'Brien Band Musical Pub Tour
3-Nights Galway, 3-Nights Cork, 3-Nights Dublin
September 20th – 30th
$3,485 per person

The Castles & The Kings
Dublin, Kinsale, Killarney, Bunratty & Galway
October 15th – 25th
$3,145 per person

Cruising The Greek Islands
Athens, Turkey, Rhodes, Crete, Santorini, Mykonos & Patmos
October 4th – 13th
$3,465/person (inside cabin)
$3,645/person (outside cabin)

Italian Shaynanigans
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$3,195 per person

*Price is based on double occupancy from Chicago and includes air, hotel, most meals and all taxes.

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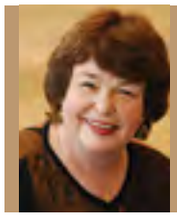

Clutter Buster

By Rita Emmett

Procrastinate No More!

Happy New Year!

Wishing You A Year That Brings:
True enjoyment in each moment,
True fulfillment in each goal,
True contentment in your heart,
And true delight within your soul.

~^~^~^

Chicago Gaelic Park

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

A Cháirde

Happy New Year:

The calendar pages keep turning, and we find ourselves busy planning a full schedule of 2019 events. For the first part of the year, consider saving the date for our Women's Little Christmas party(1/6), Merry Ploughboys Party(2/2), Super Bowl Party(2/3), Ireland on Parade(3/8 to 3/17), JigJam Concert(3/10), South Side Sunday Celebration(3/17), and Irish Fest (Memorial Weekend). We will also hold our Queen Contest and we'll march in several parades.

There will also be events hosted at Gaelic Park by the Gaelic Park Players, St. Patrick Fathers, Set Dancers, Ceili Dancers, the county associations, and more. You can keep up to date by following us on Facebook or signing up for our emails. Or drop in or give us a call! Join us, and let's have a great year together.

Cheers,

Bill O'Sullivan

2018 CGP Calendar of Events 2018

JANUARY

No Monthly Musical Luncheon in January

Feb 13	Ladies Auxiliary Meeting	7:30pm

Monday Evening Set Dancing	*7:30pm*
Tuesdays - Pub Trivia	
Tuesday Evening Ceili Dancing	*7:30pm*
Ceili Lessons	*7:00pm*
Sunday Evening CGP Radio Live WCEV 1450 AM	*7:05-8:00pm*

CLIP & POST

CGP Office 708.687.9323 www.chicagogaelicpark.org

Visit the CGP Library in the Shamrock Room

Women's Little Christmas at Gaelic Park

Sunday January 6, 2019 7:00pm

Join us for a fun-filled night Of music and laughter and who knows what else!

Little Christmas is a "ladies night out", rewarding women for their labors during the holiday season.

Drink specials and complimentary snacks.
No Cover Charge

Please RSVP to reserve your seats. Phone 708-687-9323 Over 21's only

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- Pub Trivia every Tuesday, October-May starting at 7:30pm
- Every Thursday Traditional Music with Pat Finnegan & The Irish Musicians

the CARRAIG IRISH PUB

Live Music in the Pub

Fri	Jan 4	Jerry & Kara	7:30pm
Sat	Jan 5	Kieran Byrne	8:30pm
Fri	Jan 11	Joe Cullen	7:30pm
Sat	Jan 12	The Rockets	8:30pm
Fri	Jan 18	bernie Glim	7:30pm
Sat	Jan 19	Gleeson Trio	8:00pm
Fri	Jan 25	Gerry Haughey	7:30pm
Sat	Jan 26	Ray Gavin	8:30pm

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NO COVER CHARGE

The County Connection Corner

SAVE THE DATE

CLARE ASSOCIATION ANNUAL DINNER DANCE
SATURDAY, APRIL 6TH
At GAELIC PARK

Antrim Armagh Carlow Cavan Clare Cork Derry Donegal Down Dublin Fermanagh Galway Kerry Kildare Kilkenny Laois Leitrim Limerick Longford Louth Mayo Meath Monaghan Offaly Roscommon Sligo Tipperary Tyrone Waterford Westmeath Wexford Wicklow

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

THE MERRY PLOUGHBOYS Party!

Chicago Gaelic Park

Saturday February 02, 2019

Tickets $25.00

Doors open 7:00pm - Show at 8:00pm

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Presents it's Annual

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Sunday, February 17, 2019

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and meet with 50 of our Top-Rated Vendors

Complimentary Hors d'oeuvres And Great Giveaways!

12:00-3:00pm

Admission $7 online / $10 at the door

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And a Fashion Show Featuring Gowns and Evening Wear from

DAVID'S BRIDAL

Be sure to join us February 22, 2019 for the Gaelic Park Players TRIVIA NIGHT! Doors open at 7pm. Quiz starts at 8pm. Team max 6 people, but as little as two is just as good. Cost is $60/team. $300 – THREE HUNDRED dollars $cash prize to winning team, with trophies to winners and runners up! There will also be Raffle Tickets available that will help off-set the cost of the Acting Irish International Theatre Festival, as well as a Silent Auction! Make your team reservations with johndevitt67@gmail.com and looking forward to seeing you there!

Gaelic Park Players have made the decision to "Take the Show on the Road.

Each year the Gaelic Park Players are invited to perform at the Acting Irish International Theatre Festival. The next event will be held in Ireland for 2019, and travel to the Festival in Listowel, Co. Kerry, Ireland. The Spring play has been announced! In honor of the author and the fact that the Theatre Festival will be held in his home town, the GPP is proud to present *Moll,* by John B. Keane. Performances will be held on March 29, 30, 31 and April 5, 6, 7, 12, 13, 14, 2019.

The group will be hosting a RAFFLE to help offset the costs of this trip and one lucky winner could "fly away" with the Grand Prize of 2-Round Trip Airline tickets valued at $1500! If you would like to join the group for the trip or purchase Raffle tickets, you are more than welcome! Please reach out to www.gaelicparkplayers.org for more information.

QUEEN OF HEARTS DRAWS ON SUNDAYS AT 7:30PM

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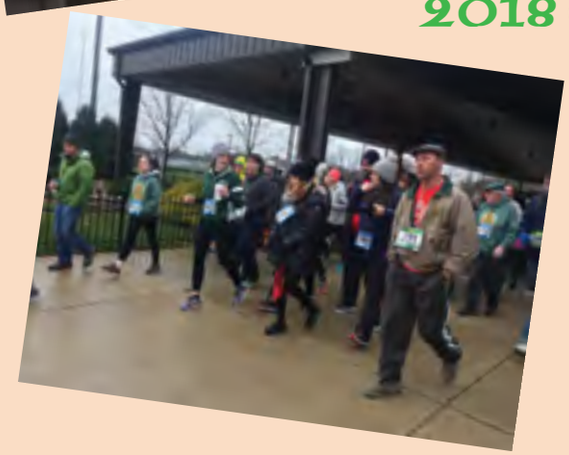
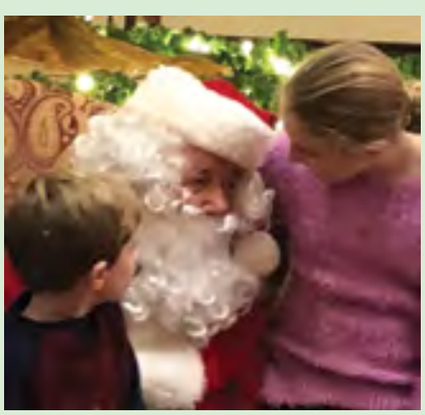


Paddy Homan's Noble Call



Getting to Know the Irish

By Tina Butler

The Irish Wake

I write about all things Irish and this topic might be dark and sad, but it is apart of life, to lose people…We all face this topic and may be encountering death next year or next week. However, it has been said that the Irish know how to give a great send off for the dearly departed. In some of the Irish wakes you'll see the, Mna caointe -wailing women and they are mourners and can recite poetry. It's been said that death in Western society is a closed door in a closed room in a closed world which makes the event even sadder. I think us Irish want a more open approach and would like more song and conversation to honor and remember the deceased. About 55 million people around the world die each year, over 100 people die each minute around the world. So, death and preparing for death and going to cemeteries is all around us, happening all the time.

The Irish wake tradition is widely known, however mostly today only happening in the countryside. When someone passes in the country areas the practice of watching over the recently departed from the time of death to burial is still practiced. It is an important part of the grieving process and tradition to wake people in their own homes. Wakes can last 2 or 3 days once the body was prepared it was never left alone.

The origin of the wake they say could date back to the ancient Jewish custom of leaving the burial chamber, of a recently departed relative unsealed for three days before finally closing it up. During this time family members would visit in the hope of seeing signs of a return to life. A wake is a place of comfort and consoling to the ones who have lost a loved one. It is a place of both sadness and joy as the end of that life is clear, but their life will be remembered and honored. The wake is usually held in the deceased home and they are laid out on a bed, table or coffin. Men usually visit the wake house late at night and some might sit with the body all night. Most people that visit will touch the deceased's hands or head. Mirrors in the house would be covered and sometimes they will stop the clocks at the time of the person passing. The body was covered in white linen adorned with black or white ribbons, flowers for the body of a child. Lit candles were placed around the body. In the old days, clay pipes, tobacco, and snuff were also placed in the room. Every male visitor was expected to take at least a puff. The smoke kept evil spirits from finding the deceased.

When the wake was over, they would carry the coffin to the church on foot, after the Mass the procession would continue to the graveside. The coffin would be lowered into the grave. Neighbors of the deceased would fill in the grave and the family and others present would recite the Rosary. The spade and shovel were laid on top of a new grave in the shape of a cross.

I found some interesting funeral traditions from around the world. For example, in South Korea after 60 years you must dig up your loved one's grave because there is declining graveyard space. I think one might choose cremation in that case. In Bali they cremate the dead and they believe the soul is free to choose a new body to return to. They believe in reincarnation. In Madagascar once every five years a family has a celebration at its ancestral tomb where the bodies are wrapped in cloth, exhumed and sprayed with perfume. As a band plays at the event family dances with the bodies and tells the corpse the family news.

They say do not fear death but rather an unfulfilled life. I think that is a beautiful statement to live by because as I am writing this article, I want to remember to treat my interactions with people with a little more patience. Since, we just don't know when our time or their time is up. Sadly, this year Ireland lost some notable people, whom include: Big Tom a country singer from Monaghan, Donall Farmer (actor), Delores O'Riordan, singer, and Liam O'Flynn (Uilleann Piper). There are a few movies with wake scenes in them that include: Road to Perdition & Waking Ned Devine.

Gaelic For the Month

Death-bas

Wake-duisigh

Funeral-sochraide

Grave-uaigh

Irish proverb for the month

'A toast to your coffin may it be made of 100 year oak and may we plant the tree together, tomorrow"

If you have any questions/comments please email me: Molanive@yahoo.com

The Full Monty

Review by Terence Boyle

Theo Uibque has launched its new season at their new digs on Howard with a cracker of a show. For those of us who loved the movie, the musical adaptation of The Full Monty follows the same plot only moving action from Sheffield, UK to Buffalo, New York. For fans of Theo Ubique, the new place represents a huge step up, and this production of a hugely successful story is a fitting debut to commemorate such a leap of faith. Now, this talented theatre group has found a bigger space in which to court a larger audience, and, if this show is anything to go by, they will continue to grow.

The Full Monty throws us into the desperation of a group of unemployed steel workers seeking to make ends meet. The hardship of being out of work has taken its toll on the men. Their friendships, relationships and family life are seriously challenged by this new reality. There is just enough tragic comedy to each man's story to endear us. We are moved by the hardships they endure, while sharing in the simple joys they muster up to offset the pervasive gloom of despair.

Despite the poverty of hope produced by unemployment, this work allows us to celebrate the ingenuity of human enterprise. The cast, all of them deserving of praise, breathe life into the lyrics of David Yazbek. Gerry, played by Matt Frye, grounds the show in the struggles of a man fighting against the humiliation that accompanies unemployment. He is joined by his friend Dave, Nick Druzbanski, who provides us with a robust performance. There is fire in the blood of these songs. They bring us closer to hearts and minds of a society struggling for survival. The overall feeling of optimism is loudly proclaimed in the final scene. While unemployment strips away a man's dignity, his nakedness is transformed from humiliation to celebration.

Theo Ubique have found a work fitting for a season of goodwill and cheer.

Thru January 27t
Showtimes:
Thurs-Sats at 7:30pm
Sundays at 7pm
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721 Howard Street,
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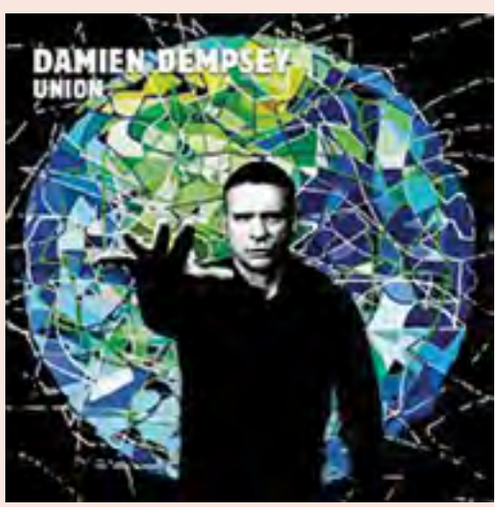

God's Green Land

A comment was made some years back that the only apparent outward semblance of Ireland achieving freedom from Britain was the fact that the post-boxes were painted green instead of red. This should be taken in the humorous context in which it was meant to be delivered. In 1921 we did not have an awful lot to start with but we were fortunate to inherit the British Civil Service. A while ago I noticed 2 wall mounted post-boxes on the Douglas Road and the Well Road in Cork bearing the royal insignia underneath the green paint. Original British Post Office boxes were bright red.

When Ireland gained Independence in 1921 the post-boxes were retained, even the postage stamps were retained with overprints for some time. Now the post-boxes are painted green, but the royal insignia can be clearly seen. The ones I have come across are those of Edward V11, this was Queen Victoria's son who reigned from 1901 until his death in 1910.

When I saw these it struck me as to how short a time we have been out on our own as a country.

Sometimes I get the feeling that we can lack confidence and belief in ourselves as we are a small nation on the outer edges of Europe. In the early 1920's when our first independent Government looked around at what they had to start with, they realised that they had very little. In the previous centuries of colonisation we had become an agricultural market garden to feed Britain and its Colonies.

The Industrial Revolution was never allowed to reach us and apart from some areas in the Northern part of the Country there was no industrial base in the South of the Country at this time. However, with a strong innovative spirit that launched and developed projects like Ardnacrusha, Shannon Airport, Bord na Mona and the attraction of a Multinational Industrial base we have achieved a great deal in the past 80 years, and we should be very proud of this.

Yes, we were certainly restrained during the colonial period but if we journey upstream a bit in time we will find an Irish people with a great economic and cultural tradition that has helped the advance of civilisation in a global context. In the Monastic period we travelled extensively throughout Europe, providing the people in these areas with learning and religion. Newgrange was constructed over 5000 years ago, at the same time as the Egyptian pyramids, by an Irish race that had a knowledge of trigonometry. We also produced intricate and priceless works such as the Book of Kells, the Ardagh Chalice and knowledge of navigation may have seen St. Brendan reach Newfoundland as early as the 6th century. We have also produced literary giants such as Swift, Yeats, Shaw, Wilde, Joyce and Heaney that are now globally respected.

Not bad for a small island country at the edge of Europe. There will be little downsides from time to time, but if we formulate an economic policy that develops value add and innovation over volume manufacturing and that also embraces the agricultural, fishing and leisure industry, our future is guaranteed to be very bright and long lasting. As a nation of less than 5 million people we have hosted the European Presidency representing a landmass of over 450 million people. This should not surprise us, we will never be a huge player but we can certainly be a very effective smaller one.

I hope everybody had a very happy and peaceful Christmas, and may your wear prosperity and happiness as a warm cloak during 2019.

'Injustice in the end, produces independence' – ***Voltaire.***

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The Champion of the Elderly – Louis S. Vivierto of Stickney

nemo enim est tam senex qui se annum non putet posse vivere – Cicero De Senectute

"No man is so old that he does not think himself able to live another year." Old Cicero had that one right. I am aging, but have avoided growing up, entirely. This brand new year is upon us! For a geezer like me, putting the past year as far behind me as possible is a joy. I was out of work, without Illinois Unemployment from January 26, 2018, until Mayor Jim Sexton offered me part time work the Evergreen Park Driving Range. It was slim pickens and remained so, even with full-time employment (6-7 days a week at minimum wage) in a local bone orchard.

Things are going to get better in 2019. They had better.

Only suckers beef. My life is pretty damn fine, because I come into contact with really wonderful people. One of the best people that I met in 2018, was former Illinois State Senator Louis Vivierto, a barber by trade and a Korean War veteran. Mr. Vivierto continues to serve as a Stickney Township Supervisor.

This happy man, unlike far too many elected officials, is of the same mold as Evergreen Park Mayor Jimmy Sexton. Mr. Louis Vivierto does not function to make a monument to himself – he busies himself in the interest of people who need an influential friend, advocate and champion. If you go to Vote Smart, you will learn just how great a man he happens to be with 57% vote of approval from Go-goos and a 0% rating from Planned Parenthood.

In November, I attended a Vendor Fair at the Louis S. Vivierto Senior Center. Louis Vivierto's name is on the Center, but he takes no credit for the wonderful care and attention that his staff lavish upon our Senior Citizens. Louis Vivierto is there for our most vulnerable people and he brings them the clout of many years in public service.

Public transportation, nutritious meals, exercise and fellowship are but a few of services our elderly can depend upon, thanks to Louis Vivierto, as well as a state-of-the-art Senior Medical Services Center. Services provided at the LSV Senior Center include:

- senior dining program
- meeting rooms for senior clubs
- Computer room
- bingo
- art classes
- cards
- line dancing
- craft classes
- exercise classes
- chess club
- AARP Driver Safety Classes
- trips
- volunteer opportunities
- special parties
- various speakers on educational topics important to older adults

Honoring the elderly in this odd culture that valorizes youth and easy living is pretty tough. I know our high school students are no longer required to Cicero, let alone De Senectute.

Ben Franklin had one of the first translations of this wonderful work, as well as the original Latin and Thomas Jefferson read De Senectute every year of his life. I doubt if President Trump knows of its existence and I will make book that none of 21 Chicago Mayoral candidates are familiar with the work.

Louis Vivierto knows. His work for the aged of Stickney reflects the sentiments expressed by Marcus Tullius Cicero in the waning days of the Roman Republic:

"Those… who allege that old age is devoid of useful activity… are like those who would say that the pilot does nothing in the sailing of his ship, because, while others are climbing the masts, or running about the gangways, or working at the pumps, he sits quietly in the stern and simply holds the tiller. He may not be doing what younger members of the crew are doing, but what he does is better and much more important. It is not by muscle, speed, or physical dexterity that great things are achieved, but by reflection, force of character, and judgment; in these qualities old age is usually not … poorer, but is even richer."

As we reflect on the year gone by let us all try to remember our most precious people

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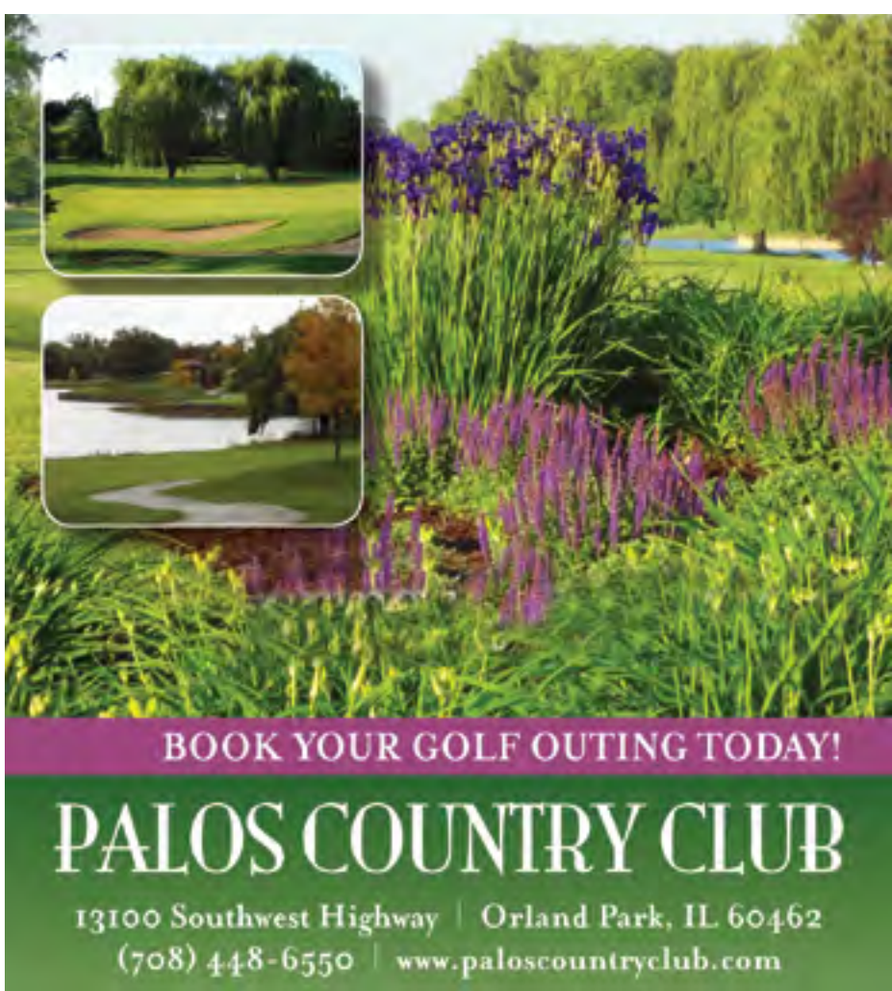

the heritage line

Irish American Heritage Center

Chicago, Illinois

WWW.IRISH-AMERICAN.ORG

UPCOMING CONCERTS AND PROGRAMS

Celtic Art Classes

Artist and instructor Michael Carroll's Celtic classes continue this winter.

Knotwork By Hand and Eye 1: Introduction to Knotwork

Learn the basics of Celtic knotwork using the easy grid method. No experience required; all ages welcome.
Sundays, 11am-1pm, January 6-February 24 • $125 for IAHC members and $140 for non-members

Celtic Art Portfolio: Open Studies

A project-oriented class for artists and craftspeople; some knowledge of Celtic art is helpful.
Sundays, 1:30-4pm, January 6-February 24 • $125 for IAHC Members and $140 for non-members

Connla

Labeled as the hottest new group out of Northern Ireland, Connla have been making an impact on the folk and traditional scene. **Saturday, January 19, 8pm • $20 for IAHC members and $22 for general admission**

Irish School Winter Semester

Kids ages 8-14 can experience Irish culture through art, music, dance, drama, language and more.
Monday and Wednesday session: January 21-February 20, 6-7:30pm
Saturday session: January 26-February 23, 10am-1pm • Five-week session is $55 per student with an IAHC family membership or $75 per student for non-members

The Fluid History of Irish Whiskey Class

Learn about the history, production of the various styles with whiskey educator Martin Duffy.
2/2, 3/2 or 3/9, 4pm • $35

Declan O'Rourke's Chronicles of the Great Irish Famine

Acclaimed Irish singer-songwriter Declan O'Rourke brings his epic song cycle about the famine to the Old Town School of Folk Music with musicians John Sheahan of The Dubliners, Dermot Byrne of Altan, Caitriona Frost of Celtic Woman and Cillian Vallely of Lúnasa.
Saturday, February 2, 8pm • Old Town School of Folk Music, 4545 North Lincoln Avenue, Chicago • $46

Dervish in Concert

For more than 25 years, Dervish have been bringing Irish traditional music to the world. Described by the BBC as "an icon of Irish music," the band is renowned for its live performances, featuring dazzling sets of tunes and stunning interpretations of traditional songs.
Friday, March 8, 7:30pm • $30 for IAHC members and $33 for general admission

Researching Your Irish and Scots-Irish Ancestors with the Ulster Historical Foundation

Join experts from the Ulster Historical Foundation as they describe the ins-and-outs of researching your family history. Workshops cover Irish education records and estate records, and using printed sources.
Registration is required. **Monday, March 11, 9am-5pm • Free**

Socks in the Frying Pan Concert

Hailing from County Clare, Socks in the Frying Pan are an award-winning trio known for dynamic vocal harmonies, virtuosic musical ability and onstage wit that has captured and captivated audiences throughout the world.
Sunday, March 17, 6pm • $25 for IAHC members and $28 for general admission

The Fitzgeralds in Concert

The Fitzgeralds is a trio of siblings from the Canada's Ottawa Valley who are 3-time Canadian Grandmaster Fiddle Champions and Ontario Open Step Dance Champions. The trio's unique act features high-energy fiddling and mind-blowing step dancing. **Friday, March 22, 8pm • $20 for IAHC members and $22 for general admission**

CONNLA in CONCERT

Saturday, January 19, 2019 • 8pm

$20 for IAHC Members
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the heritage line

Irish American Heritage Center

Chicago, Illinois

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President's Message

Happy New Year! Here's hoping that your holidays were blessed with joy and peace that precious time with family and friends brings.

December was an amazingly festive month for the IAHC, kicking off with another successful Christmas Bazaar. We continued December with weekly concerts, many of them free of charge, celebrating the season with members, friends and family. We were thrilled to host Paddy Homan, Jimmy Keane, Rory Makem, Kathleen Keane, Peter Brady, James Conway, The Dooley Brothers and many more over the course of just a few weeks. The pub was hopping, and the Christmas spirit was indeed alive and well at the Center! Thank you to our tireless staff and volunteers for helping us pull it together and to all of you who joined in the fun.

We're excited to announce new and improved membership benefits in time for the 2019 MEMBER UP! Membership Drive. Renew your membership now to take advantage of enhanced benefits at the same affordable prices! To MEMBER UP!, visit www.irish-american.org.

As we turn the calendars to 2019, we turn our attention to our Winter Concert Series. On Saturday, January 19, acclaimed traditional Irish band Connla make their return to the IAHC. Hailing from Keady, Armagh, Connla won the award for 2018 Concert of the Year Livvies Award/Live Ireland and Vocal/Instrumental album of the year from both Live Ireland, and our very own *Irish American News* in 2017. This is one not to be missed!

In March, we'll be paid visits from some of the best in the trad business with iconic trailblazers and Sligo legends Dervish gracing our stage on Friday, March 8. County Clare powerhouse Socks in the Frying Pan closes out our St. Patrick's Day festivities on Sunday, March 17, and Canadian family dance and fiddle sensation The Fitzgeralds wrap up our series on Friday, March 22. Tickets are available for these concerts and we sure do hope to see you there!

We also have teamed up with the Old Town School of Irish Music and Irish Arts Center of New York, supported by the Consulate of Ireland in Chicago to present Declan O'Rourke's Chronicles of the Great Irish Famine at the Old Town. Fifteen years in the making, this production presents true tales from the Famine with an all-star ensemble, featuring John Sheahan of The Dubliners, Dermot Byrne of Altan, Caitriona Frost of Celtic Woman and Cillian Vallely of Lúnasa. The concert is Saturday, February 2 at 7:30pm at the Old Town School of Folk Music at 4545 North Lincoln Avenue, Chicago and tickets are $46. The concert is sold out, but IAHC friends and members have the chance to purchase tickets for this show at our website.

Keep in mind that it is not too late to contribute to our Annual Appeal. This important fundraiser goes a long way to improving our bottom line throughout the year and fundraising capital projects to improve our building and facilities. If you haven't had a chance to donate, please consider doing so! Thank you!

Best wishes for a happy and prosperous New Year and see you around the Center!

Mike Shevlin, President

Member Up!

At the Irish American Heritage Center

Stay tuned for the 2019 MEMBER UP! membership campaign with enhanced benefits at the same affordable prices. Visit www.irish-american. org or call 773-282-7035, ext 10 and MEMBER UP! today.

Join Our Ranks!

Make a New Year's resolution to become an IAHC volunteer. Email info@irishahc.org to lend a hand!

The Heritage Line Staff

Kathleen O'Neill, Editor

Contributors: Meg Buchanan, Laura Coyle, Catherine Kelly, Nancy Moore, Sheila Murphy, Mike Shevlin, Becky Tatz

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Irish American Heritage Center

JANUARY ENTERTAINMENT

Music Starts at 8pm

1/4	Francis O'Neill Ceili Mor
1/5	Baal Tinne
1/11	In Spite of Ourselves
1/12	Mulligan Stew
1/18	Cirrus Falcon
1/19	Sons of Susan
1/25	Seamus O'Kane
1/26	Cash for Kids Johnny Cash Night 5pm $25

Thursday Night Irish Music Sessions: January 3, 10, 17, 24 and 31; 7pm

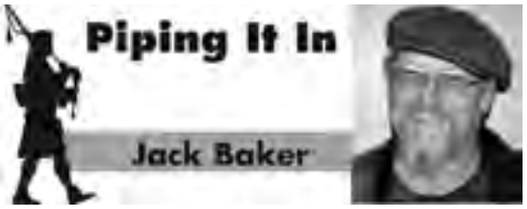
January 2019

1/1	New Year's Day	Bulding Closed	
1/4	Francis O'Neill Ceili Mor	Room 309	8pm
1/5	Shamrock American Club Card Party	Shamrock American Room	8pm
1/12	St. Patrick Fathers Social	Rom 109	8pm
1/13	Great Books Club: *Manhattan Beach*	Library	1pm
1/15	Celtic Women Interational Meeting	Room 304	7pm
1/16	Tara Club Monthly Musical Meeting	Room 306	10am
1/18	Shamrock American Club Meeting	Shamrock American Room	8pm
1/19	Connla in Concert	Auditorium	8pm
1/26	Cash for Kids Johnny Cash Night	Fifth Province and Auditorium	5pm
1/27	Genealogy Workshop	Library	1pm

Regularly Scheduled Events

Mon-Fri	Gift Shop	First Floor Lobby	4pm-8pm
	Children's Irish School (beginning 1/21)	Library	6pm
Tues	Nimble Thimbles	Room 208	9am-Noon
Wed	Children's Irish School	Library	6pm
	Traditional Irish Music Session	Room 111	7pm
	Na Gaeil Irish Language Class	Library and Room 304	7pm
	Nimble Thimbles	Room 208	7-10pm
Thurs	Memoir Class	Library	7pm
	Irish Heritage Singers Rehearsal	Room 306	7pm
	The Thursday Shindig Music Session	Fifth Province	7pm
Fri	Francis O'Neill Club Ceili	Room 111	8pm
Sat	Gift Shop	First Floor Lobby	10am-8pm
	Children's Irish School (beginning 1/26)	Library	10am
	Na Gaeil Irish Language Class	Library	10:45am
Sun	Knotwork Art Class (beginning 1/6)	Room Varies	11am
	Celtic Art Portfolio (beginning 1/6)	Room Varies	1:30pm

Library Hours: Tuesday 10am to 2pm | Wednesday 4pm to 8pm | Saturday 10am to 2pm



New Year – New Music – New Fun

Well, if you're reading this, it means that at least one of us survived Christmas, New Years (Hogmaney) and is settling for another wonderful year in this hotbed of musical delights that Chicagoland is and always has been. We're lucky that we have even more places to hear our musical heritage than ever before and more folks looking to share their musical talents with us.

That leads us into the first album review of the new year, a wee bit late since it is technically a Christmas recording, but frankly one that will be staying in my everyday play pile for quite some time to come. "The Noble Call – Christmas Time in Ireland" (www.thenoblecall.com) is one Homeric effort by some of this area's most outstanding musicians. Vocals are handled by Paddy Homan, a man who was born to sing, and Dave Curley, a man who's lovely voice has brightened many a song. Dave also excels on guitar and mandolin, while Brendan Bulger adds his considerable prowess on fiddle, Mick Broderick adds to the mix on guitar, mandolin and harmonica and Tom Boyer plays bass and Cello. Finally, a man we don't hear often enough, Laurence Nugent, on flute and whistle, adds his enormous talent to the party. This is a super group and folks who were lucky to see their live performances this last year will attest to the beauty these fellows created. The vocal pieces on the cd include "Christmas Time in Ireland", "Holly Bears a Berry", "A Christmas Childhood", "The Wexford Carol", "The Night Visiting Song" and a most wonderful version of "The Kerry Christmas Carol". Interspaced within these delightful vocals are some of the finest instrumentals you could ask for. This "Christmas" recording is one that you'll find yourself listening to at any time of the year, and loving it none the less.

In spite of the declining sales in hard copy cds, artists are still recording and still issuing cds. The big difference I'm seeing is that they are harder to get your hands on and the quality is infinitely better both in recording and performance. A case in point is our next cd "Follow the Music" by Ed Miller and Rich Brotherton (songsofscotland.com). One of the finest Scottish vocalists ever, Ed has produced a list of finely crafted recordings showcasing Scottish ballads at their finest, but in this recording, I think he has done his absolute best work. He has assembled an absolute stellar cast of musicians to assist him in his efforts. Rich Brotherton, who shares credit on the album, performs harmony vocals and performs on guitar, cittern, octave mandolin, banjo, keyboards and bass, damn near a one man band! The rest are no less prestigious, including Iain Fraser on fiddle, EJ Jones on flute, whistle, smallpipes and Highland pipes, Rob Forkner on bodhran, Rich Brock on harmonica and legendary fiddler Kevin Burke adds his genius to the mix. Last, but not least, Ed's daughter Maggie adds her lovely voice in harmony vocals. I still hope that Maggie does her own recording one of these days since she las a lovely voice that wants hearing. The mix of songs is a truly impressive blending of traditional Scottish and contemporary ballad, including two of my favorite pieces written by the legendary Hamish Henderson, "The D-Day Dodgers" and "Freedom Come All Ye". My Pop served in Italy in WWII and always had a soft spot in his head for the D-Day Dodgers song, it's worth looking up the history on this one. All-in-all, this recording is the type you'll want to listen to when you can relax with a couple fingers of the finest, put your feet up and really listen to this fine recording. It won't be the last time you listen to it I reckon.

My last recording this month is another that you'll find yourself listening to time and again, not too mention referring to it's extensive liner notes, because this is the latest from Derek Warfield and the Young Wolfe Tones and every recording they make is a lesson in our history and, for many of us, an emotional experience. "Last Man Standing" is the album's name and, appropriately enough it starts out with the best version of "Sean South from Garryowen' I've ever heard. The recording goes on with historic and patriotic tunes designed to make your pride awaken and your interest in your history reawaken. But there's more, in the middle of the recording is a delightful rendering of Steve Goodman's "City of New Orleans". Derek always gives full measure in his recordings and there's 18 tracks on this beauty and all tracks are covered in the liner notes and there are full lyrics for all songs. There are simply too many performers to mention them all here but I have to mention that the lovely and talented Damaris Woods plays banjo and mandolin on all tracks. She is a trooper and a very talented performer whose contributions to the band are invaluable. This is recording you'll want to share with your non-Irish friends so that they'll appreciate your pride in your heritage and with your Irish friends because they'll love it as much as you. Don't miss a chance to see Derek Warfield and the Young Wolf Tones when they're performing this year, there's few bands that will do as much for your pride as this one will. No one performs "Minstrel Boy" quite like they do and you'll totally change your attitude towards it.

All for now, see you at the festivals or at the Irish American Heritage Center. You can always contact me at store@rampantlion.com

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Milwaukee Irish Fest Founder, Ed Ward, Receives Presidential Distinguished Service Award

MILWAUKEE CelticMKE is proud to share that Ed Ward, founder of the world-renowned Milwaukee Irish Fest, has been awarded Ireland's Presidential Distinguished Service Award for the Irish Abroad.

Founded in 2012, the award is presented by the President of Ireland, Michael D. Higgins, and recognizes individuals living abroad for their extraordinary service to the country of Ireland and Irish communities. Former recipients include businessman and diplomat Dan Rooney as well as acclaimed actor and philanthropist Liam Neeson.

Each year, no more than ten individuals receive this honor for their efforts across six categories, including Arts, Culture and Sports; Business and Education; Charitable Works; Irish Community Support; Peace, Reconciliation and Development; and Science, Technology and Innovation.

The Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, Simon Coveney, T.D., announced and commended this year's recipients, "Through their work, they contribute to building an invaluably positive image of Ireland and Irish people around the world."

Milwaukee Irish Fest started out as a one-of-a-kind festival almost four decades ago and since then, has become the world's largest celebration of Irish music and culture. Every August, the festival welcomes over 100,000 fans of Irish and Celtic music and culture for four days of unprecedented music, cultural events, family activities and so much more.

"Ed's concept of staging an event to celebrate Irish and Celtic music and culture has evolved into the thriving organization known today as CelticMKE," said Linda Clark Klibowitz, president of the board of directors for CelticMKE. "We're incredibly happy for him and especially grateful for his tireless efforts over the years to build the festival."

With Ed's help, CelticMKE is now home to a number of informative programs such as the Ward Irish Music Archives and Milwaukee Irish Fest Summer School, which further educate the next generation on the music and history of Ireland.

Mick Moloney, global distinguished professor at New York University, also applauded Ed's inclusion in this year's honorees, "For close to forty years, I have watched, often with amazement, as Ed pioneered and developed a breathtaking vision for the presentation and preservation of Irish culture all over North America and beyond."

For more information on CelticMKE, in addition to Milwaukee Irish Fest, please visit www.CelticMKE.com.

Shaynanigan's

By Shay Clarke

The three I's, Ireland, Italy and Iceland are among the most popular tourist destinations in Europe these days and maybe it's just me, but anyplace with 'ice' in its name is going to be a hard sell. Truth is I have not yet been to Iceland and I intend to correct that as soon as possible as I'm reliably informed that it is incredibly beautiful and worth a visit. Especially now that Reykjavik has become a very popular hub for airlines flying the transatlantic including the cut price airline, WOW.

Italy of course has always been a favorite destination since tourism was invented there. They have certainly had the market cornered on culture and architecture as well as food and wine - and then you have the scenery which is incredible and varied as its topography runs from the Northern Alps and lakes, to the Adriatic beaches of Rimini and Cattolica.

Then you have the plains and vineyards of Tuscany, the beautiful Amalfi Coast and the Bay of Naples. Italy has it all in spades.

Ireland of course, in my humble opinion is the best of all, what else can I say. It was my home for 37 years and I still spend as much time there as I can nowadays.

There are several things that you need to know about Ireland if you haven't been there before, and if you have been to the 'Emerald Isle' then you know it's Grand!

First and foremost you don't go to Ireland for the weather, and secondly 'it never rains in a pub.' You go to Ireland for the 'craic' and even though you may ask what on earth 'craic' is, I can assure that by the time you return from your Irish vacation you will know all about it - it will have changed your life.

The craic can be hard to define, it is a sense of fun, an attitude that no matter how things may be, they are going to get better right away. Not only is the glass half full, but it's half full of the good stuff and we have loads more of it.

There is a saying at home, "The craic was 90 and we're working on the other 10." This basically means that no matter how much fun we are having, there is more to be had.

Ireland was known as the "island of Saints and Scholars," and indeed during the Dark Ages we sent our Saints abroad to bring a bit of Christianity to the heathen hordes. But, more recently we have been exporting the 'craic' in the form of Irish pubs which can be found all over the world. 30,000 of them have been spreading 'mighty craic' from Argentina to Albania, and from New York to New South Wales. Is there a connection between the 'craic' and the pubs? Maybe there is, but we will discuss that another time. In the meantime if we can't bring the 'craic' to you then we will bring you to the 'craic.'

Ireland is blessed with great touring weather. Never to hot and rarely too cold, as our coast is kissed by the warm Gulf Stream. We are a small country full of breathtaking scenery. We have the Wild Atlantic Way, at 1500 miles it is the longest scenic coastal route in the world, teeming with pretty fishing villages and wonderful scenery. Walk along majestic cliff paths, hike the hills, surf the waves or just sit outside a cozy pub with some seafood chowder and a creamy pint.

The neat and tidy towns and villages that dot the countryside are hidden gems full of history and friendly people, castles, abbeys, and monasteries, pubs with turf fires, live music and stories that can last well into the night.

Our cities are among the oldest in Europe, full of energy, excitement, culture, and history. There are street festivals, lively nightlife, and they are jam-packed with things to do. And, our cities are never more thant thirty minutes from the countryside.

Dublin itself is 'choc a bloc' with history, both glorious and tragic. Its rich in architecture and culture, museums, cathedrals, parks and pubs. Its home to Guinness, the Book of Kells, Kilmainham Jail, the General Post Office, all places of pilgrimage. In Dublin you can follow in the footsteps of writers, warriors, poets, and revolutionaries. This is where it all comes together, the perfect blend of craic and culture, pints and people.

Because no matter what else we have, its the people of Ireland that make it a special place. Irish people are gregarious, friendly and fascinating. They are irreverent, and fun loving and can be found everywhere across the country. They are in the shops, pubs, and parks, and they love to talk. So, if we can't bring the 'craic' to you, then we can bring you with us to the birthplace of the 'craic,' the place where Irish eyes are always smiling. Come with us to Ireland.

I'm escorting tours home to Ireland on May 10th for the Irish Spring Tour, September 20th for the Dennis O'Brien Band Musical Pub Tour, October 15th is the Fall Castles and Kings Tour, and if you feel like something different I'm leading a Greek Island Cruise on October 4th, finishing up the month with Italian Shaynaigans on October 25th.

John Kennedy of South Bend Indiana is hosting a traditional pub tour of Ireland on April 26th and Ian Gould, another great Irish musician and singer is leading a group to Galway, and Derry in the North on his Rocky Road to Belfast Tour on October 8th, and Houli's tour is in the works.

Diane Sheppard hikes Croatia on October 11. And there are many more tours to Ireland advertised in Irish American News.

For more details and information go to www.grouptripsandtravel.com or call me at 1-847-452-7764. Email shayclarke@gmail.com

Careers

By James F. Fitzgerald, CPA

Necessary Traits for Business Success in 2019?

Let's be honest, if you asked ten people what traits are most important for business success, you would get exacty ten lists with a wide variety of traits. I am relying on a list that an accomplished executive search professional developed after years in the field. I have done a similar column a couple of times, over the last 20 years.

#1. INTEGRITY. It would seem that this trait should be an obvious choice, given the troubled moral landscape present in our current society. This same trait, in the guise of HONESTY, is listed as the most important characteristic of leadership in the classic book, Leadership Challenge by Kouzes and Posner. We expect and admire it in our leaders. And we are so disappointed when those leaders betray the trust of their constituencies. We are faced with a lack of INTEGRITY throughout our society whether in business, academic, military and even in religious organizations.

If you expect to be a leader, you must continuously guard your integrity. You probably won't be asked directly to sell your corporate soul, for an improper, possibly illegal activity. It will be more subtle. It is so easy to fall victim to the slippery slope of ethical relativity. How often do you examine your own ethical standards? Have you slipped this past year? If you find yourself in a potentially troublesome ethical situation, consider seeking some outside counsel. Perhaps your priest, minister, rabbi or a tough minded mentor could help.

#2. HIGH ENERGY. Given the long hours that people are working, everyone needs their energy. Peter McLaughlin, a noted authority on the subject of energy said it is a function of good eating and sleeping habits, exercise and a sense of humor. Do you spend any time exercising? Just 20-30 minutes of exercises three or four times a week will have a significant effect on your energy level. So it is vital that you set aside some part of your day to enhance your energy.

#3. LEADERSHIP. One of the most overdone subjects in business literature is leadership. Many of us have difficulty defining leadership, but we know leaders when we see them. Tom Selleck in his role as Commissioner of the New York police department in the TV show, Blue Bloods, demonstrates impressive leadership in every episode. Almost anyone of reasonable intelligence can accede to a position of leader, if they are willing to accept the responsibility. Many people have ideas to solve problems, but they are not willing to make them their own. Traditionally, leaders are held to a higher standard of responsibility. They are expected to work harder; be fairer; and to challenge themselves and others. Have you accepted a role as the leader of any activity or organization during the past year? If not, how about in 2019?

#4. EXCELLENT PEOPLE SKILLS. One needs to understand the other person's point of view, and that means learning to listen. Listening is an absolutely critical people skill. Do you intentionally practice your people skills when you are dealing with colleagues? Challenge yourself to have the specific intention of listening. Express some genuine interest in the other person's issues.

#5. BALANCE. If you don't have balance in your life, you are on the road to failure. People allow themselves to be tethered to their electronic devices. They become slaves to technology. They lose the skills it takes to interact with other people.

Do you normally take your full allotment of vacation days? Many people don't; they are either afraid they will lose their jobs or want to display their total loyalty to the company, but time off is important.

#6. SENSE OF HUMOR. There are people who could find humor in any situation. Such people are a valuable asset to an organization. They bring levity to stressful situations. Strive to improve your sense of humor. A comedic view of the world can help you to see the lighter side of situations.

#7. CHEMISTRY. For a person to succeed, s/he must find an organization where his style works. Don't expect to succeed in an organization that is diametrically opposed to your natural self: it simply takes too much energy. Remember, many organizations want their personnel to fit a certain image. If you aren't a good fit, move on.

#8. INTELLIGENCE. When you think about the leaders in your company, are you awed by their intellectual firepower? If you see yourself as an average guy/gal, you may still be smarter than 50% of the other people. How smart do you have to be to run a company? Mature judgment must accompany intelligence. Virtually all studies indicate the importance of feeding one's intellectual engine. When did you last read a substantial study or book in or out of your field? What is the focus of your self-development program?

#9. PROVEN ACHIEVEMENT. People decide on what you can do for them in the future based on what you have done in the past. People commonly fail to give themselves credit for significant achievements. Lifetime achievers simply don't see their achievements as clearly as others do. Analyze your background thoroughly: look at yourself with the eye of a stranger. You might be surprised to realize how many important achievements you have in your background.

#10. GLOBAL ORIENTATION. Obviously companies are continuing to move manufacturing and other services off shore. We may tend to see our wonderful country as the center of the universe, but we need to remember that Americans represent only about 5% of the world population. Educate yourself on the cultures and languages where your company does business.

As we begin a new year, you might want to assess yourself against these criteria. Ask three of your friends to grade you on these traits. CARPE DIEM.

FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION: Work for a cause, not for applause. Live life to express, not to impress. Don't strive to make your presence noticed, just make your absence felt. Author unknown.

As we end another year, I would like to express my sincere thanks to my two editors: my wife, Sandee Wask Fitzgerald and my daughter, Erynn Patrice Fitzgerald.

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View From Ireland

By Maurice Fitzpatrick

Cliffhanger Brexit

In early December, observers of British politics readied to witness how badly the Withdrawal Agreement (WA) from the European Union, which British Prime Minister Theresa May had negotiated, would get hammered in a vote in British Parliament. Westminster boffins calculated a defeat north of 100 votes. That would have been followed by bitter denunciations of it and of May, both by her own Conservative Party and her wavering government partners, the DUP.

It is hard to imagine an agreement more germane to avoiding a hard border in Ireland, and to the future of Northern Ireland, than the WA. And what were Northern Ireland politicians elected to Westminster doing about it? The 10 DUP MPs were determined to vote it down, and the 7 Sinn Féin MPs were not voting at all. Leader of Sinn Féin, Mary Lou McDonald, said that the DUP was 'catastrophically wrong' in rejecting the WA. Yet Sinn Féin was equally vehement in not taking its seats in Westminster to facilitate its passage.

DUP MPs have now unblushingly aligned themselves with the rebels within the Conservative party who are set upon toppling Theresa May. May has not quite given up on regaining the DUP's support, but trust in them will now always be in question: expect to hear a lot less of rhetoric from May about 'our precious union'. Now that she cannot rely on the DUP on Brexit, they cannot rely on her either.

The WA represents one of the last chances for British elected representatives to avoid the train wreck that is a no-deal crash out of the EU in March 2019. May was set to stake her political career on its not being defeated too comprehensively (the prospect of her winning was nil). However, on December 10th, due to the swelling ranks of rebels in her own party, May cancelled the much-trumpeted vote on the fate of Britain. She then shuttled off to various parts of Europe to meet leaders of EU countries in her bid to either renegotiate the agreement or to obtain letters of assurance from European leaders that the WA's terms on the Irish backstop (guarantee of no hard border) would not apply in practice for long.

May's retreat emboldened a contingent within her party to successfully gather letters from the requisite 48 British MPs to mount a motion of no-confidence in their leader. So May was back in London fighting for her political life in a vote against her on December 12th. May prevailed by 200 votes to 117, and this was proclaimed a victory both by the rebels and by May. In truth, the vote settled very little. May cannot be challenged in a vote of no-confidence for another year, if she survives that long as PM. She probably will not: as part of her scramble to shore up support, she had to agree not lead the party into the next election.

Even so, she will be PM in the lead up to March 29th 2019, the date set for the UK to exit the EU, and she is now faced with a Sisyphean task. For example, to try to retain leadership, she guaranteed the DUP that she would secure a Brexit deal that they will be happy with—this is impossible because the EU is not budging on the WA they have agreed with May, and the DUP has rejected it out of hand already. Whereas getting her WA through Parliament as it stands remains highly improbable.

So what viable options does she have? She does not really have any. However, the option of remaining in EU, if May could steer parliament to accept that outcome, just became much easier thanks to the work of a group of cross-party Scottish politicians elected to various parliaments (Scotland, Westminster and Europe). They prompted the Scottish court to seek the legal opinion of the European Court of Justice's advocate-general as to whether Brexit is reversible. The advocate-general advised on December 4th that Brexit need not proceed unless the UK parliament gives its final approval. This option attenuated the Brexiteers' position still further. Not only have they failed to negotiate a Brexit for the entire UK worth having (a doomed objective from the outset), their 'solutions' to the Irish border conundrum have all transpired to be malarky. Now there is the option of abandoning the whole mission, and watching the value of the British pound recover accordingly.

The principal barrier to good sense prevailing on Brexit is the denialism that afflicts a significant faction of the Conservative Party in Britain. The nub of that denialism continues to centre on the canard that a meaningful Brexit for the entire UK without a hard Irish border is possible. It is not. Ireland as Ireland is small and less significant than Britain, so it profoundly irks elements of the Conservative Party that Ireland's border issue (as they see it) is impeding the majestic Brexit they initially envisaged. What they still cannot concede is that Ireland as EU member is infinitely stronger than Britain since it negotiates as part of a bloc of over 500 million people. Promoting a strategy of putting the Irish back in 'their place' (as one Conservative party MP opined recently), or of cutting food exports to Ireland to gain leverage in negotiations with the EU, as another Conservative MP suggested, are measures of the visionless idiocy that now grips the party.

So, is it a soft Brexit, as outlined in the WA with a few last minute assurances on the backstop from the EU, or the threat of exiting the EU in March 2019 without a deal, or even a reversion to the original question—to proceed with Brexit at all? The crisis remains opaque because the British government has been so incapable of forming a coherent strategy: on December 13th, at an EU summit, May maintained that she is 'crystal clear' about what assurances she requires about the Irish backstop. When pressed for details about the assurances, she could not provide any.

No matter what happens, the conflicts wrought by the Brexit referendum in June 2016, and by the flailing attempts to effect Brexit since then, have created enormous divisions in the UK. Disunity has now profoundly taken root. Who in British politics anticipates a bright brand New Year?

Dingle Whiskey Has Arrived in the U.S.A!

On October 18th at the Irish Whiskey Awards, Dingle Single Malt Batch 3 was awarded the 'Best New Irish Whiskey' for 2018 alongside our life giving Dingle Gin which was awarded 'Best Irish Gin' 2018. This is a wonderful achievement for our Dingle Distillery. Now as the Dingle Trilogy, Dingle Original Gin, Dingle Distillery Vodka and Dingle Whiskey have taken their visible presence, for you to order and enjoy, the love, dedication and craftsmanship of the Dingle Distillery Team.

Alcohol in all its form, when consumed is to be respected and enjoyed, its production, its contents and being a native of Dingle, knowing its humble and natural ingredients, are fit for inclusion in any gourmet chef's recipe.

Dingle Single Malt Triple-Distilled Irish Whiskey Batch No. 3 (now in the USA) 93 proof

Created by the marriage of meticulously selected casks, both bourbon and port, this single malt Irish whiskey is unique and rare. The burst of blue-black fruits on the notes forms a tart, almost jam-like, sweetness on the palate with subtle notes of citrus peels. The liquid coats the mouth like warm honey, mixed berries and marmalade linger on the tongue.

Dingle Whiskey is non chill-filtered.

AWARDS

Best New Irish Whiskey, Irish Whiskey Awards 2018.

Dingle Original Gin (now available in USA) 93 proof

Produced in Dingle Distillery's' own Copper Pot Still "Oisin," Dingle Original Gin is a London Dry-style gin that features a unique character through its selection of locally foraged botanicals, including; bog myrtle, hawthorne, chervil and heather to provide a taste of Kerry's landscape, using pure water from Dingle's own spring well located 240 feet below the distillery.

The Original Gin is chill-filtered.

AWARDS

Best Irish Gin, Irish Whiskey Awards 2018

Gold Medal, New York International Spirits Competition 2017

Best Irish Gin, Irish Whiskey Awards 2017

Best London Dry Gin, World Drink Awards 2016

Dingle Vodka (now available in the USA) 80 proof

Quadruple-distilled before a fifth distillation in Dingle's Copper Pot Still "Oisin," Dingle Vodka is produced in small batches of 500-liter. Dingle Vodka's creamy texture, clean taste and hint of sweetness, reflecting the environment where it is made.

AWARDS

Double Gold, Best Irish Vodka, WSWA Annual Convention & Exposition 2018

Best Irish Vodka, Irish Whiskey Awards 2017

Platinum Award, Irish Quality Food & Drink Awards 2016

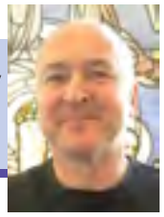
Best Vodka Bottle Design, World Drink Awards 2016

Dingle Single Malt Batch 3, Dingle Original Gin & Dingle Distillery Vodka, the perfect Thanksgiving & Christmas gift.

The Dingle Single Malt Batch 3 stocks are limited so it is most important to reserve your bottle at your nearest liquor store.

Terry From Derry

by Terry Boyle



All in Jest

They are very friendly, seems to be a catch phrase for most people when describing the Irish. No doubt there is some truth to the Irish charm, the smiling eyes etc. But as much as it seems cliched, and stereotypical, it's also complimentary. It's certainly preferable to the more negative side of the caricature, the Irish drunk. Wherever I go, I rarely hear anyone say anything derogatory about the Irish. We seemed to have conquered the world with our witty sense of humour; especially at times of real tragedy. Nothing seems to dampen our need for a laugh and this is a gift.

People know us for our musicians, dramatists, poets, writers and of course dancing. For a small country, we have made our impression. In the 80s, I would be frequently asked about the Troubles. How could such friendly people end up fighting each other; a question that required an extensive and overbearing lesson in Irish history that had no guarantee of satisfying the questioner. In the 90s, it was the Celtic Tiger. Ireland, was now a ferocious money-making animal, capable of leading the way towards a bright and prosperous future. For the first time, Ireland was a honeypot that attracted people in need of work. The new millennium saw the notorious financial crash with its subsequent austerity measures. Our ascension, and dramatic fall from prosperity was on a par with Icarus himself.

Now, when people think about Ireland, it's Brexit. Have you ever tried to explain the complexities of the UK's decision to leave Europe? If you thought explaining 800 years of history under British rule was too in-depth, too complicated for the beginner, then try explaining Brexit. For two years running, I've been part of an esteemed panel put together to break down in easy to understand language the latest news on Brexit. Such a challenge is, as you can imagine, fraught with great problems. If you simplify for ease, you lose the more complex nuances of the situation, or if you complicate the subject to the point of abstraction, the audience is lost.

My Jewish friends say 'two Jews, three opinions'. Everybody has their take on what Brexit means. Indeed, the many faceted sides of the British divorce from Europe is much akin to a Beckett play. You can say anything about it without being absolutely wrong or absolutely right. Everyone has an opinion, usually based on their own political bias. To quote Joyce's Stephen in Ulysses, Brexit is the 'nightmare from which we are trying to awake'.

Most people would agree, that the referendum to leave Europe was poorly orchestrated. Voters were ill-informed as to what they were voting for and reacted to fear mongering. However, the deed is done, and now we are faced with the inevitable reality that such decisions to 'uncouple' do not happen quickly. Separation affects more than one party. There are financial repercussions, and repositioning of future relations between those parties involved. It is somewhat funny that the sticking point to separation, ironically enough, is Northern Ireland.

Since the peace agreement of 1998, the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland have enjoyed a fruitful relationship. Cross-border security, trade, and movement of people has continued to unite the two separate parts of the country in ways that has been a beneficial to the island as a whole. So much so, that any discussion of resurrecting a hard border would jeopardize the good relations between the two countries. A hard border would be retrogressive, and would undo all the good work of the peace agreement. So, with the date of separation looming, March 2019, there has been a lot of shuffling back and forth between the UK and Europe regarding the future Ireland. No border would ensure the unchecked movement of people, something the UK wants to curb. A checkpoint between Northern Ireland and Britain would mean treating British province differently to other parts of the UK, something the Unionists refuse to endorse.

So now, where are we in all of the endless discussions? Again, I reiterate, it's anyone guess. The recent tentative agreement is proving to be yet another false claim of progress. For, when there is one step forward, two backward steps follow in succession. In such a climate of uncertainty, old loyalties are bared. Nationalists continue to question the legitimacy of the Northern Irish State, while Unionists hold fast to the 'no surrender' policy of earlier years. The stalemate between the two communities that had softened after the Good Friday agreement has become more pronounced as the finger-pointing continues to exacerbate fears on both sides.

Needless to say, even with such polarization there is always one consistent, the Irish sense of humour. Give us an enigma of colossal proportions and we'll find a way of poking fun at it. I think it's to our credit that no matter how much life takes us seriously, we find a way to lighten its grip. There is no way to describe the unflappable humour of the Irish. Its sacrilegious, rich in wit, and devastating to those who would ruin a good joke with sobriety. When Heaney, reacting to the English press and their jaundiced view of the Northern Irish violence, writes 'Yet I live here, I live here too, I sing', he demonstrates the Irish love of life. My Jewish friend also shared this sentiment about the Jews, 'they tried to kill us, we survived, let's eat'. I love the humour. Desperate times require comedy. We cannot sustain, or survive on a diet of parliamentary debates that end up in the same cul-de-sac. Humour keeps us sane. We need to reminded that life is for singing, laughing, and enjoying.

County Leitrim

This month I will cover Co. Leitrim it is in the province of Connacht. The population is about 32,000. The county encompasses the historic Gaelic territory of West Breffney. Leitrim has a hilly and mountainous landscape in the north west and is relatively flat in the south east. The coastline is about 2 ½ miles long. The Shannon is linked to the river Erne via Shannon waterway. Notable lakes include: Gill, Allen, Melvin, Macnean, Scur, Belhavel, Rynn & Garadice. Leitrim formed the western half of the kingdom of Breffney The region was long influenced by the O'Rourke family of Dromahair whose Heraldic lion occupies the official county shield till this day. Close ties initially existed with the O'Reilly clan in the Eastern part of the Kingdom, however a split occurred. Long ago Ireland was covered in woodland and five great forests are traditionally said to have stood in Leitrim. About 100 years ago almost the whole county was one undivided forest. Many of these great forests were removed for the making of charcoal for iron works around Slieve Anierin. The last coal mine was closed in 1990 and now they have a visitor center. The book of Fenagh is the most famous medieval manuscript and it originated in Leitrim. It was probably originally created by St. Caillin. Through different periods of time it was written by different people. All the writers were either monks in Fenagh Abbey. They were asked by the Abbot to do the work. The original book, which was altogether in verse was written during the 14th century. In 1516 it was discovered that the original vellum of the book had begun to decay. Tadhg O' Rodaigh Coarb of St Caillin/lay Abbot commissioned Muirghis Mac Paidin Ul mhaolchonaire, of the scholarly family O'Maolchonaire near Elphin to produce the Book of Fenagh. It was based on a collection of poems called the Old Book of Caillin. It is an excellent example of Gaelic literature. The book is mostly in verse attributed to St. Caillin. It was about the saints, and the famous relic the Bell of Fenagh. A few famous people from Leitrim include: Pat Quinn (Pat was a hotelier, storyteller, and founder of the Quinnsworth group, Ireland's first supermarket chain.) Margaret Haughery (philanthropist known as the mother of orphans) and John McGahern, (author). A few Leitrim songs: Wild Rose of Leitrim & The Ballad of Drumshanbo Ballinamore. I'll leave you with this short message: People have been coming to the wise man, complaining about the same problems every time. One day he told them a joke, and everyone roared in laughter. After a couple of minutes, he told them the same joke and only a few of them smiled. When he told the same joke for the third time no one laughed anymore. The wise man smiled and said, "You can't laugh at the same joke over and over. So why are you always crying about the same problem?"

If you have any questions or comments, please call me as I don't do email: (708) 425-7021

Sean O'Leary
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The November concert was a success. We filled the Erin Room. The choir is so blessed to have Paul as its director. He has taken this choir to heights it never could have reached without him.

After the concert there were people who stopped me and commented on the performance, commenting on the choir's sound and the music we're singing. It's all good.

Our final concert of the year was in December at the Glenview Library. We are taking a short break and then we'll resume rehearsals to prepare for the March concert marathon. We begin on March 1 at 7 p.m. at the Des Plaines Library; then March 3 at 3 p.m. at the Skokie Theater; March 5 at 7:30 p.m. at the Mount Prospect Library; March 8 at 7 p.m. at Friendship Village of Schaumburg; March 10 at 2 p.m. at the River Forest Library; March 12 at 7 p.m. at Luther Village in Arlington Heights; March 15 at 6:45 p.m. at Covenant Village in Northbrook; March 16 at 1:30 p.m. at IAHC St. Patrick's Fest; March 17 at 2 p.m. at Poplar Creek Library. How's that for a busy March? We bring $500 to $600 to the Center for each of the concerts. Our Marketing Director, John Mahal, is still accepting bookings.

Since it isn't easy pinning someone down at this time of year to do a bio I'm going to introduce you to myself. As the children would say, "Herself has arrived." I am the family matriarch after all. I grew up singing in my mother's Irish family. If you didn't sing it was treated as an affliction. I sang in school and at church from a very early age. I sang in choirs in high school and in college. I did musical theatre for years as an adult. I played Dolly in Hello Dolly. I played Yente in Fiddler. The list goes on. Keep in mind I wasn't the most gifted in each cast but I had chutzpah, sort of an Ethel Merman presentation. I could carry a tune, dance, cry on command, and build great sets. I joined the Irish Heritage Singers 11 years ago. I love this choir. I love the music we sing. I love our director. I'd adopt him in a heartbeat. At 76, it brings joy to my old Irish heart.

We could use a few tenors, basses, and baritones. We do sing music that rises above just the pub tunes. This is a committed choir. We work hard to achieve certain goals. We enjoy what we do and we enjoy each other. You do have to audition with our music director, Paul Matijevic. It's a painless exercise. Think about it. We'd love to have you join us. Slainte!

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by Vicki Quade

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Illinois Will Go Green

Folks legalized cannabis is coming to Illinois and will be legal this year. So with that in mind, Illinois needs to promulgate policies that maintain a safe and orderly marketplace for a dangerous substance and foster a sound business environment.

Issues the state should consider

Here are some issues the state should think through before legalizing cannabis.

Sean O'Leary

1. **Should we have minimum pricing?**

For cannabis, the issue is paramount because selling below a certain price becomes a potential public safety issue. If someone is allowed to offer cannabis at a low price, we could be flooding the market with cannabis and induce more people to buy a harmful drug.

This could happen in theory but it is harder to imagine in practice. The expenses are so high in this industry that it would not make sense to engage in this practice. Cannabis companies are not eligible for federal tax deductions or bank financing, which means they need to obtain non-traditional financing at higher rates. With the high cost of operating a business, it would be very hard to afford mass selling product at a loss.

2. **Local and community input**

Under the Illinois Liquor Control Act, the local government officials determine whether to allow the sale of alcoholic liquor. They control the issuance of retail liquor licenses and can deny a license or limit the number of licenses issued.

When cannabis becomes legal, the state should allow the local governments these same privileges. A locality should decide whether a cannabis dispensary can setup shop. In fact, the state should go further and allow a locality the power to determine whether they want a producer, distributor or cultivator of cannabis within their boundaries.

3. **Safety and compliance issues**

The state should consider safety and compliance measures carefully when it legalizes cannabis. Without these measures, the state is inducing an illegal and free wheeling drug market. Here are some suggestions:

a) The state should utilize a barcode tracking system for its marijuana plants.

b) The state should require 24-hour video surveillance and should have an adequately fenced facility. I know it seems like we are turning the cannabis farm into a prison, however the facility needs to be secured.

c) Sell it only in dispensaries. Please don't allow its sale in liquor or groceries stores. Further, make it illegal to enter if someone is under 21. We don't want children around the product!

4. **Black-Market concerns**

Even with legalized cannabis, there is a serious threat of a black market. I often hear people say legalize it and tax the hell out of it! Well great reasoning but taxing the hell out of it may induce more illegal sales. If the state imposes a heavy cannabis excise tax, we can expect a healthy black-market.

The best solution is to highly tax it but do not go overboard. The legislature will have a balancing act of taxing the product high enough to not make it readily used, and not taxing it too much, which would drive the price so high that it drives consumers to the black-market.

Also remember that cannabis is not a panacea for our budget woes! Remember your history, in Illinois the panacea was once the lottery and then legalized gambling. Cannabis will raise revenue but don't depend on it to solve budget issues, only responsible budget policies can achieve this goal.

Another possible policy idea is to limit how much cannabis is grown in Illinois. In Oregon cannabis suppliers grew so much product that the oversupply fed black-markets in other states. These consequences lead to violations of federal law and could lead the federal government to shut down or heavily sanction the Illinois cannabis market. I am personally against caps; however, this is an issue that policy makers could debate.

A further solution is the state should restrict how much cannabis a customer could purchase. Oregon has a limit of 1 ounce per day. By limiting these amounts, Illinois could cut down on a Sam's Club type purchase that may be smuggled into the black-market of bordering states.

5. **Miscellaneous issues**

There are issues that may seem peripheral but are actually very important for maintaining a safe and orderly marketplace.

1. Cannabis dispensaries should be limited in their hours of operation. Since there is not a long track record on legalization, the state should proceed cautiously. Oregon's law on 10:00 pm closing times is a sound guideline.

2. The state should consider a ban on consumption in public, and should penalize profoundly those that smoke in public parks or other places. Nothing is fouler than the smell of stale marijuana!

3. We should also proceed cautiously before licensing Amsterdam style coffee shops, which might not be very appealing for a locality's residents.

Green Theory

Cannabis will be legal but complicated. As indicated earlier, Illinois needs to strike the right balance between fostering a favorable business environment and maintaining a safe and orderly marketplace. There is not a long track record for cannabis legalization, so Illinois policymakers will make decisions with imperfect information.

Illinois has got it wrong often times, let us hope they get it right here!

If you have questions on cannabis legalization or want to enter into the cannabis business, contact the Irish Liquor Lawyer at 773 490-6738 or email me at sean.oleary@olearylpgroup.com and visit my blog irishliquorlawyer.com

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Your Home

By John Plunkett

By John Plunkett

The Holidays Are Almost Over – Whew!

The busy holidays are behind us. First, take a deep breath. Now, congratulate yourself for surviving (again!) this joyous yet sometimes stressful time of year. During this season of celebration and miracles you, too, have been a miracle worker ~ shopping, cooking, running, working, hosting, spending, and putting out fires… all at breakneck pace so that family and friends could gather and enjoy.

If you participated in the fine art of home entertaining, congratulate yourself again! There are few more noble or personable ways of enjoying one another. Yes, it is more work for you, but well worth the effort in terms of quality engagement. Guests are more relaxed. The laughter is heartier. The stories, better. They appreciate your efforts and are likely to tell you so. Yes, it's always nice to receive a compliment.

But there is another major benefit to home entertaining: It encourages you to complete decorating and home improvement projects that may have been lingering for too long. In planning your event, you look more critically around the house, seeing certain imperfections as they really are and as your guests likely will see them. How about that sofa that looked great twenty years ago, but now, not so much? How about the living room or family room walls you have wanted to paint a fresh new hue? How about that rug you've wanted to replace, or the lamps, or the old drapes…?

Post holidays is a great time to tackle your decorating to-do's that didn't get done previously. In doing so it is good to ask a few important questions.

1.) Home furnishings and interior design are fashion. Are your interiors current? Do they reflect your good taste and personal sense of style? If you haven't done much decorating or replacing of worn-out furniture in fifteen or twenty years, it may be time. This need not cost a lot to accomplish. And most importantly, decorating improvements that bring you and yours more comfort and pride make you feel better.

2.) Do each of the rooms in your home function well, especially when entertaining, especially with larger groups of guests? Is there enough seating? Are there enough small chairside tables on which to place drinks? Are there bottlenecks where people congregate and block traffic flow? Is there a better way to arrange furniture so the room(s) functions better? Has anyone shown you a scaled drawing of your room with the exact size and placement of each piece of furniture?

3.) Whether you are considering redecorating in the future, or are currently in the process, do you have a decorating plan? If you do, even if you have a good eye for design, it is always best to bounce your ideas off of an interior design professional. They will either confirm your are on the right track, or may offer other ideas you like even better.

4.) How do you avoid making mistakes? It isn't easy. There is a lot of Murphy's Law in the world of interior design and purchasing of home furnishings. And because these usually are large-ticket purchases, they can be expensive mistakes you'll live with for a long time. Again, it is always a good idea to talk with a trusted professional who can tell you in detail the quality differences between, say, a $1,500 sofa and a $3,000 one. How will each look and feel five years from now? Or, how do you select the right drapery fabric that will hang in neat folds rather billow out with a mind of its own. Or, why is the contractor calling for twelve recessed ceiling lights, even though you'd like more ambient lighting, not a room lit like a sports area?

5.) Why not try some new twists for your next home entertainment event – something to surprise your guests? Everyone loves new. Show your epicurean prowess with a new recipe from your favorite cook book. Try a wine-tasting. Set a new tablescape that showcases your creativity. Play some new music or a game guests will have fun with.

Hopefully the holidays brought you and yours much good cheer! May you enjoy all the blessings of family, friends, health, and home now and throughout the New Year.

Always feel free to share your decorating questions or challenges.

John and Valerie Plunkett
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847-906-1000

A Word With Monsignor Boland

The Voice of Catholic Charities, Archdiocese of Chicago

Rev. Monsignor Michael M. Boland
Administrator, President and CEO

St. Mother Teresa reminded us that "I can do things you cannot. You can do things I cannot. But together we can do great things." "Great things" are exactly what Most Blessed Trinity parish in Waukegan and Catholic Charities Lake County Services hope will be the result of a very special partnership we formed to jointly expand our services and better assist community residents.

Serving more than 60,000 people each year, Catholic Charities is the largest provider of comprehensive social services in Lake County. We offer a broad range of programs for all ages that help meet basic needs, provide counseling and support, and enable people to become self-sufficient. For years, Most Blessed Trinity parish has operated "four pillars" of community service for Waukegan-area residents including a food pantry, soup kitchen, House of Peace shelter, and a community center specializing in immigration-related services.

After many months of prayerful consideration and collaborative meetings, Catholic Charities and Most Blessed Trinity discovered that each of our organizations has unique areas of expertise that we could unite to offer a more comprehensive and wholistic continuum of care for people in need. In essence, we discovered that combining our unique skills would indeed bring "great things."

The new partnership is called Social Service Partners…Together We Serve. Sharing a common mission to serve the poor and vulnerable with the love and compassion that Jesus showed, this partnership is firmly rooted in the hope and light of Christ. Our mutual goal is not only to provide immediate assistance, but to walk with people on their journey toward a better life.

Catholic Charities is thrilled to be working with the parish's talented staff and incredibly dedicated group of loyal supporters who have brought the parish's social mission to life. Volunteers from parishes all over Lake County, including Church of St. Mary and St. Patrick's in Lake Forest, and St. Joseph's in Libertyville have become deeply connected and committed to those served by Most Blessed Trinity. It is wonderful to see the close relationship between clients and the volunteers who are truly invested in their well-being.

While Most Blessed Trinity is continuing to annually serve more than 25,000 people at its soup kitchen and food pantry, Catholic Charities is bringing its resources and professional expertise to The Community Center and the House of Peace shelter. As a result of our partnership, The Community Center is now able offer a broader range of services, not only to the immigrant and refugee population, but to all Waukegan and surrounding community residents, and has become a main hub in the community for helping those in need.

Started by Most Blessed Trinity seven years ago, The House of Peace is a six-month shelter program that each year serves 12-15 women and 30-40 children overcoming domestic and interpersonal violence. The program is focused on empowering, healing, and sustaining residents in a life free from abuse. Coupled with the House of Peace is the Phoenix Program, which provides after-care and support to more than 800 women and children overcoming the reality of domestic violence per year. Catholic Charities' involvement in these programs has broadened the range and depth of professional services offered, while dedicated staff and volunteers continue to provide the personalized mentoring and guidance that are essential to restoring hope and dignity.

Together we can do great things—and I can think of nothing greater than to help change lives for the better. Catholic Charities has been honored to work with Most Blessed Trinity parish in creating a partnership that maximizes our impact on the lives of thousands of people overcoming violence and poverty. Working together, we can indeed make life better for Lake County residents most in need.

Boyle the Kettle

We'll Have A Sup Of Tea

Tom Boyle

Abuse Nuns

The Roman Catholic Church's global organization of nuns has denounced the "culture of silence and secrecy" surrounding sexual abuse in the church and is urging sisters who have been abused to report the crimes to police and their superiors. The International Union of Superiors General, which represents more than 500,000 sisters worldwide., vowed to help nuns who have been abused to find the courage to report it, and pledged to help victims heal and seek justice. The statement was the first from the Rome-based UISG since the abuse scandal erupted anew this year and as the sexual abuse of adult nuns by clergymen has also come to light _ *Associated Press*

Joe Biden

Joe Biden is considering a run for president. He'll be 78 years old which is exactly the life expectancy for men. If he were to win, who would his running mate be? Joe Biden is likable, a hale fellow, well met, but too old for the Presidency. Nancy Pelosi is 78. If she becomes Speaker of the House she will only be a few heartbeats away from the Oval Office. Term limits are in order.

Southern Poverty Law Center

An unsolicited letter appeared in my mailbox looking for a donation. The Southern Poverty Law Center has President Trump in their crosshairs. They ramble on in a two page letter printed on both sides. One of the quotes is, "White Supremacists believe they have a friend in the White House." There are lots of quotes from Neo-Nazis on the lunatic fringe. And I thought that Superman was the defender of justice, truth and freedom, or was it Batman and Robin. What ever happened to Plastic Man?

Sadly, my name is on their mailing list. Some charity I donated to sold my name and address to everybody. Mercy Home gives you a chance to opt out of the mailing list.

6th January, Twelfth Day, Epiphany, Old Christmas

This day was also known as Little Christmas.

A recent custom is Nollaig na mBhan, or Women's Christmas, when husbands, sons and boyfriends treat their wives, mothers and girlfriends respectively in appreciation of what they have done for them.

St. Bride's (Bridget's, Brigid's) Eve

Celtic: It was an ancient belief that the Celtic Goddess Bride visited the poor and hungry tonight and blessed and provided for those who made her welcome. Preparations for her visit were accompanied by much ritual, both within the house and about the village. The Church transferred this belief to St. Brigid of Kildare, an Irish abbess.

Ireland: A typical supper would have been sowans, Colcannon or Champ, Dumplings, apple cake and fruit cakes. Boxty Bread and pancakes were also popular. Pancakes were eaten from plates on rush crosses.

It was believed that St. Brigid visited households to bless them, and in order to maker her welcome a rush mat was left outside for her to kneel on, and bread for her and a sheaf of corn for her white cow left on the step. A bed made from rushes or birch twigs was put in front of the fire. Further protection was obtained by making, out of straw or rushes, St. Brigid's Crosses. After sprinkling them with holy water they were hung up over the door in house and byre to keep fire and evil away. There were regional designs, but most featured lozenge or diamond shapes, originally symbols of the sun or eyes. The rushes were pulled, not cut, and were overlapped sunrise (left to right). Another shape made was the swastika, a three-legged one being put up in the byre.

Groups of young people went from door to door offering blessings in return for food or money. They displayed a straw effigy of St. Brigid or a decorated doll dressed in white. An image of the saint was called a Bídeóg or Biddy. Biddy Boys would go in fancy dress or in girls' clothes, wearing straw masks. Many counties held St. Brigid Processions, with a girl dressed in white carrying a St. Brigid's Cross.

Another custom was to place on an outside windowsill a silk ribbon, called St. Brigid's Ribbon (Ribin Brighid, Brat Bride, Bratog Bride, St. Brigid's Mantle or other item that goes round body such as scarf, sash or belt.

In Western parts of Co. Galway visitors to a house brought a St. Brigid's Girdle (Crios Bride), which was a late looped plaited straw rope, which plaited straw crosses attached. Householders would cross themselves, say an invocation to St. Brigid, and go through the girdle three times. Still larger ones were made for passing cattle through. This custom is still observed in Co Galway west of Loch Corrib and in he Aran Islands.

Lovie Smith

Even with his dismal won/lost record over the last 3 years as coach of the University of Illinois Football team, who won nine and lost 27 over the 3 year span, the University of Illinois Trustees decided to extend his contract for another two years.

This contract will pay him 4 million dollars for the 2019 season. It would have cost 8 million to fire him outright. The University of Illinois needs a law firm that would have seen that was a "sucker" deal. "Stupid is as stupid does."

Mike Breslan

My friend Bike Breslan passed away in November. Mike was a member of Local 150 Operating Engineers for over 50 years, and he was formerly President of the Chicago and Cook County Building Trades.

Last Summer, Mike took his whole family to Ireland where he rented Lisheen Castle near Thurles in Co. Tipperary. I met Mike at one of Jim Sloan's cultural luncheons many years ago.

St. Patrick's Day Parade Queen Contest

The contest takes place on Sunday, January 20th. I have been fortunate enough to serve on a panel of distinguished Chicagoans who judge the contest. We look for a multi-facet woman who will be judged on her accomplishments, education and career, not to mention an outgoing personality. I hope you will join us at Plumber's Hall at Noon on January 20.

Corned Beef and Cabbage Dinner

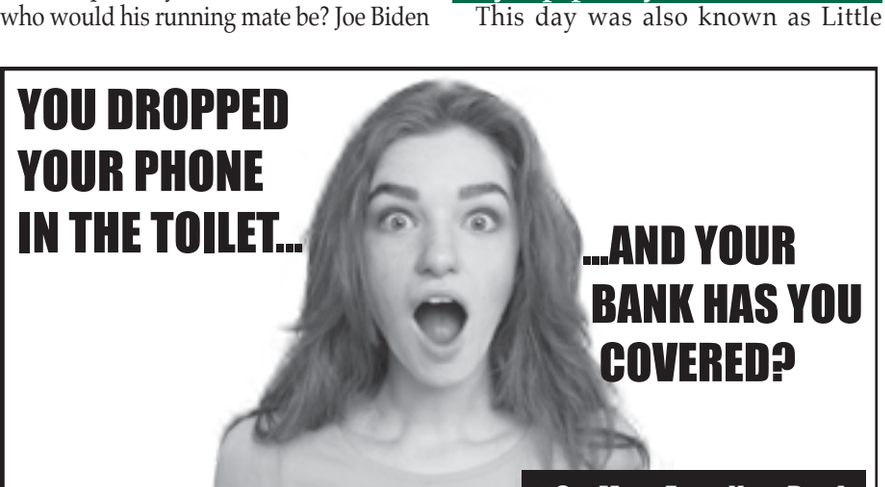
The annual Corned Beef and Cabbage Dinner will take place on Thursday, January 31, 2019 at Plumber's Hall. Harrington's Corned Beef, boiled potatoes and cabbage and horseradish to die for. Order your table early. This event sells out every year.

Russ Hartigan

Russ is just wrapping up his year as President of the Illinois State Bar Association, and is planning now to run for a seat on the Appellate Court. Healy Scanlon

The Healy Scanlon law firm threw their annual Christmas party at Gibson's Italia.

I ran into Martin Lynch from the ***Irish Times*** in Brookfield at the party. it was good to see him as Cliff Carson and myself celebrated our birthdays at the Irish Times in September. **Happy New Year!**



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Dwyer & Coogan, P. C.
takes great pleasure announcing
Caroleann S. Gallagher
as its newest Partner, effective November 1, 2018.

Caroleann originally joined the firm in August of 2017 bringing an abundance of real experience representing injured people. She has demonstrated tremendous talent in the practice of law, derived from her many years as an Attorney, both in Chicago and Ireland. Caroleann has worked tirelessly to protect the rights of injured workers and those injured by the negligence of others. Her wealth of experience, strong work ethic and commitment to her relationship with her clients has contributed to the growth and success of our firm. We are very excited about what she will accomplish as a Partner in the future.

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Trinity Irish Dance Company, photo by Lois Greenfield.

Reading the first line in the preface to Michelle Obama's biography "Becoming," prompted a desire for self analysis, a form of reflection. So the book lay on my night table and I spent more than an hour soul searching. I put the book down, took up a pen, a notebook, a reporter's power tools and sailed into reverie jotting copious notes.

That first line written by Mrs. Obama, the US distinguished First Lady Emeritus, divulged that as a child living in the South Shore neighborhood of Chicago, "My aspirations were simple." She longed for a dog and a house with stairs.

As a kid, what did I want? My Irish home already had an upstairs, but no dog. So what did I want when a child living in the Republic of Ireland? I had a mother, father, a brother, a sister and a myriad of uncles, aunts, cousins. When the adults were free from conflict, all speaking to each other, we'd gather together to sing songs, tell stories, and filled with anticipation, we children waited until Uncle Tom had consumed sufficient whiskey, and summon us to sit at his feet as he launched into his wondrous magical show. We were mesmerized. The first magical act was the unfurling from his mouth a black and red typewriter ribbon. It was long, he made appropriate gagging noises that scared and thrilled us. The unfurling took a while and every one of us wondered how his stomach could hold such a thing and if it hurt as he pulled the long stripped ribbon slowly from his mouth until it eventually lay raveling at his feet. It was a jaw dropping trick, never tried, never forgotten.

As I further reflected on my own childhood, I recalled sitting in a darkened bedroom in a house a few doors from ours, and gazed upon my friend Fiona who, according to Irish custom, was waked in her bed wearing her First Communion dress and veil, her small hands folded, interlaced with Mother of Pearl rosary beads. Fiona was my best friend, we walked to school together and played skip rope almost every day. We also marched in tandem to the altar to receive first communion when we were seven. I never knew why my friend died. No illness, nor disease was ever mentioned and I was too young to inquire, maybe even wise, recognizing it as an adult secret. Perhaps I was just compliant, being drilled with the mantra that children should be seen and not heard.

The shades were drawn, her room dark, blessed candles casting shadows over Fiona's pale face, the flickering light cascading shadows off blank walls. I sat for ages certain my play pal was a saint and God took her soul high in the sky into heaven. God performed the same feat for His Mother Mary when she died, as she fully ascended, as my holy picture illustrated, into billowing clouds wearing flounces of blue long beautiful robes, a halo shinning shimmers around her head.

That's what I wanted as a child. To be saintly, to die, to be air lifted to heaven. I told no one until now. I said my prayers every night kneeling at my bedside following the family's recitation of the rosary. Once in bed I smooth the top sheet over the down comforter, easing out the wrinkles, clasped my hands, rosary beads threaded through, and if I died during the night that's how I'd be found in the morning. My family would not be sad because they'd know I was up in heaven with Fiona.

Looking back, these thoughts had nothing to do with suicidal thinking. We were taught by nuns and priests, bishops and cardinals, that happiness could never be achieved on earth. In order to reach our eternal salvation, goodness, modesty, chastity and hoards of requirements must be applied throughout life. In actual fact, my thoughts of death as a child were spiritual and heaven my goal.

We change as we grow. Call it enlightenment, education or simply one's own perspective. When I picked up the Obama book again I made comparisons. How far Michelle Robinson Obama had come from a simple dwelling in Chicago to the ivory tower at Harvard, a legal career in a prominent Chicago law firm, and the Creme de La Creme, a private residence in the White House.

I marveled how far I had come as a child, an adult, a mother, a widow, a grandmother. America provided the opportunity to thrive as an immigrant, even if the US government referred to us as aliens. To live a life outside Ireland back in the fifties was paramount when economic darkness created a brain drain from the Emerald Isle to the United States, Australia, New Zealand, England and places unnamed. That too has changed, the land thrives, economy making a tremendous resurgence and the Irish flit back and forth between Dublin and Los Angeles like a trip from Chicago's Wrigley Bridge to the Art Institute. As a race our contributions to America have filled history books, and include politics, medicine, law, literature, theater, builders of roads, bridges, railroads. Songs have been sung, poems written.

As the New Year dawns, resolutions made, usually dissolved in the span of a week, I pause having long ago abandoned my personal quest for sainthood, and celebrate the treasures of mind and body in a life lived long and productive. My only regret, when I do make the transition from this life to the hereafter, my first communion dress is nowhere to be found. Alas, it wouldn't fit so regrets present as pure folly. Happy New Year!

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Multi-City Tour of Declan O'Rourke's Chronicles of the Great Irish Famine in Chicago Feb 2nd

Acclaimed Singer-Songwriter and RTE Radio One Award Winner Performs His Epic Song Cycle with an 8-piece Folk/Trad Ensemble at Irish Arts Center (February 7-10)

Additional Dates in Chicago, Kansas City, Lancaster, PA, and Elkin and Asheville, NC

"O'Rourke mines the darkest corners…of the Irish famine with a sensitivity that animates a raft of highly personal stories." — The Irish Times

Irish Arts Center (IAC), a multidisciplinary center dedicated to bringing people of all backgrounds together through the excellence and dynamism of 21stcentury Irish arts and culture, announces a multi-city series of performances of Declan O'Rourke's epic song cycle Chronicles of the Great Irish Famine. Released in 2017 and winner of a 2018 RTE Radio One Folk Award, Chronicles is an empathic portrait of the forgotten, and a vivid musical evocation of Ireland through the incomprehensible hardship of the Great Famine.

This poignant song cycle from O'Rourke — developed over more than a decade including frequent previous residencies and performances at Irish Arts Center — will be presented at Irish Arts Center in New York from February 7-10, as well as Old Town School of Folk Music in Chicago (February 2), Kansas City Irish Center (February 5), Tellus360 in Lancaster, PA (February 14), The Reeves Theater in Elkin, NC (February 15), and Isis Music Hall in Asheville, NC (February 17). Building on the success of IAC's 2017 multi-city presentation of An Evening with Cassandra Wilson and Liam Ó Maonlaí, through this engagement and tour Irish Arts Center again expands its scope to bring exemplary Irish work beyond New York to communities across the U.S.

O'Rourke—one of Ireland's most beloved contemporary pop/folk singer-songwriters, renowned for his gorgeously textured voice and virtuosic guitar playing—will be joined at IAC and in subsequent stops by a chamber ensemble of top Irish traditional, folk and classical musicians. O'Rourke provides lead vocals and guitar, while his band includes John Sheahan (fiddle), a member of The Dubliners for nearly five decades who brought to their work an "evergreen skill and grace" (The Irish Times); Floriane Blancke (harp, backing vocals), who O'Rourke has said has "the ancient gift of pure and natural musicality"; Dermot Byrne (accordion), a member of the traditional Irish band Altan who is "revered for his virtuosity on the accordion and melodeon" (The Irish Times); longtime O'Rourke collaborator Rob Calder (bass guitar), who has recorded and toured extensively with Angus & Julia Stone and Passenger; Caitriona Frost (drums/percussion), currently the percussionist for the world-renowned, Grammy nominated ensemble Celtic Women; Chris Herzberger (fiddle), an accomplished violinist/viola player who's contributed to more than 50 studio albums; Sharon Shannon collaborator Jack Maher (banjo, 2nd guitar); and Cillian Vallely (pipes and whistles) of the acclaimed trad band Lúnasa.

The initial inspiration for the song cycle came after O'Rourke learned from a birth certificate that his grandfather had been born in a workhouse in 1916, before they were shuttered for good in the early 1920s. Shortly after the discovery, the musician picked up a copy of a John O'Connor's The Workhouses of Ireland: The Fate of Ireland's Poor. A description on its very first page struck him: it told of a man who carried his wife's body home from the workhouse, and was himself found dead in their home the next morning, with her feet hugged to his chest. O'Rourke was compelled to pen the first song in what would, for the artist, be a 15-year songwriting process. "It's taken me years to sort through the emotions I felt reading that," he says.

The album is a meticulously researched combination of true and historical fictional stories, deviating from O'Rourke's contemporary, genre-crossing sound to capture an "emotional landscape" through more traditional sounds of the time. Presenting these stories on an intimate level was no easy task: few written accounts of personal struggle exist, because the bulk of Ireland's poor at the time were not literate, and there was a cultural tendency of trying to erase these years from memory.

O'Rourke explains, "A lot of it was not spoken about afterwards. It took me until recently to get a sense of why that was. In Ireland they talk about 'the shame.' That was the biggest sense I got of why they went quiet—I suppose they lived in fear of it happening again. But it's part of our history, and it has demonstrated to me what people are capable of in their own darkest moments; what kind of fundamental good is in the bottom of the soul. It's a story that's relevant time and time again around the world. We've had a standing ovation every night we've played it—people get it even more than I'd thought."

This engagement and tour builds on a long artistic relationship between O'Rourke and Irish Arts Center, which has provided New York audiences a variety of opportunities to experience his soaring talents. In 2013, O'Rourke performed in residence at IAC, during which he played music from his extensive catalogue, as well as select songs from what would become Chronicles of the Great Irish Famine. In a New York Times review of his performance, chief pop music critic Jon Pareles noted the "virtuosity" in O'Rourke's performance and the "compassion, romance, a sense of mortality" and "sense of history" running through the his songs. In December 2015, Irish Arts Center and the Abbey Theatre collaborated with O'Rourke on a weeklong workshop at the Peacock Theatre to develop a dramatic context for the live performance of Chronicles of the Great Irish Famine. In 2017, IAC presented the U.S. launch of O'Rourke's studio album In Full Color in a Valentine's weekend engagement with orchestra, and in 2018 O'Rourke featured in IAC's Groundbreaking Gala Concert at Symphony Space, alongside Martin Hayes, Dennis Cahill, and Camille O'Sullivan.

Chicago, February 2, 7:30pm
Old Town School of Folk Music
4544 N Lincoln Ave
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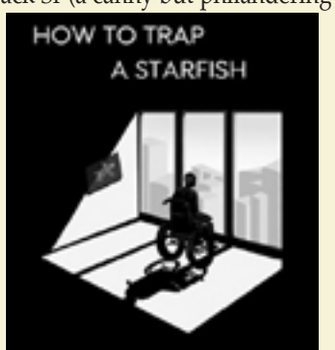
How to Trap a Starfish

by MarieAnn McLouglin

How to trap a Starfish is the story of Jack Mills, a boy born into the economic instability of Emergency Ireland in the 1930's. He comes of age in the 1950's and is one of the 500,000 people who leave Ireland's shores between 1945 and 1960, during a large-scale movement of Irish emigrants!

Jack, a Dublin native, handsome, charming and over confident, is the much-adored only son of Jack Sr (a canny but philandering Dublin chauffeur) and May Mills (a quiet spoken gentle country girl who was sent to work in Dublin after the premature death of both her parents). Jack set's out on his journey to New York City with Alva, his new bride. She hails from a prestigious home, she is artistic by nature, highly perceptive, and a cunning Sandymount debutant... Alva punches well above her weight in many respects, however, this being said, Alva leaves home with one ultimate life skill inherited from her experienced Mother's middle class, victorian & staunch household.



Alva Blake is well versed in the ways and methods of "How to catch a Starfish".

This book deals with one man's journey through life recalling and expanding on his challenges, journeys, victories, love triangles, and his ultimate defeat. It will, I hope, be of interest to all those who reflect on these human and philosophical subjects. It will have particular relevance to Irish people, and the Irish diaspora, with it's back drop of places and characters in Ireland and of course with Ireland's omnipresent relationship with emigration.

The book deals with a life spanning full circle until the last few days of an Irish Immigrants life while he nears death in a New York State Nursing home. It tells of one man's downward spiral into estrangement and dispossession.

Crucially It also takes a look at the remnants of the dinosaur, the politically incorrect, and indeed sexist generation. How they struggle to make sense of their vastly changed world. I would hope that it will prompt the reader to question our own possibly hasty approach sometimes...that of judgement of such characters... therefore perhaps helping us to understand the expectations and standards that the elderly male historically was socialised within from generations past. Just a thought!

Additionally I also undertook to examine the key female archetypes ever present and always influential within Jack's life from cradle to grave www.howtotrapastarfish.com.

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Martin: An Authentic Priest in a Time of Chaos

Kathleen FitzGerald has written a new book.

Kathleen was a Dominican nun in Chicago for 14 years and taught in Catholic elementary schools. Subsequently, she worked with the bishops and priests in Cleveland on issues of race, poverty and peace. Kathleen received her M.A. from DePaul University in Chicago and her Ph.D. from Northwestern University in Evanston. She has written ten books and her essays have appeared in Newsweek and Chicago Tribune.

She was the President of the Institute for Recovery in Lake Forest, IL. As a practicing psychotherapist for over 25 years, she has confronted the issues of clergy sexual abuse, from the positions of both the victim and the abuser. Kathleen has known many priests over the years and it is thru them that she has learned what the life of a priest is all about.

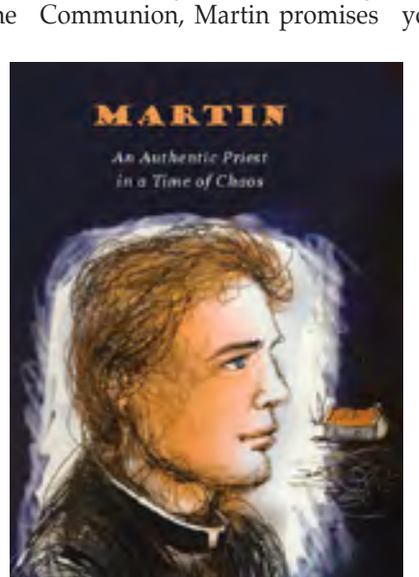
She is married to dear Tom, a native of Limerick, Ireland, and the mother of two beloved children and four grandchildren, the greatest blessings in her entire life. The major part of this book was written in Kilkee, Co. Clare, Ireland with the tempered assistance of her dear sister Molly. Kathleen lives with her family in the Chicago area.

About the Book: The celibacy requirement of priests within the Catholic Church has confounded many. The glorious book and film, The Thorn Birds (1977), set in a sheep-station in Australia, threw open the locked doors of the priesthood. We reveled in the story of a priest's humanity, as young Meggie Cleary's obsession with older Fr. Ralph de Bricassart resulted in the birth of their son, Dane.

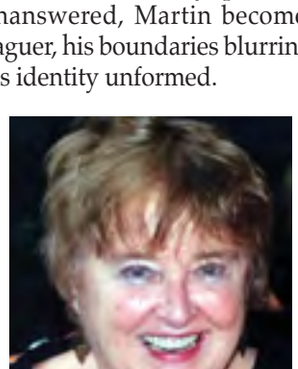
Martin: An Authentic Priest in Times of Chaos takes the reader on a deeply personal story of one man's journey to the priesthood and his confrontation of the horrible sexual crimes committed by priests and protected by bishops.

Martin Sweeney is conceived in the wilds of West Clare by his young mother Kate and Jeremiah Devitt, an arrogant young man studying for the priesthood. On the day he is born, Kate makes a vow that wild horses will never pull from her the identity of his father. Martin goes through his boyhood in a fog, never knowing who he really is.

On the day of his First Holy Communion, Martin promises



the Blessed Mother he will be a priest and Kate is struck in horror, fearing that her beloved son will become like his father. As Kate leaves his many questions unanswered, Martin becomes vaguer, his boundaries blurring, his identity unformed.



Kathleen Fitzgerald

When Martin is 10 years old, he leaves the West of Ireland with his frail mother and finds himself negotiating his life in a new country without a sense of himself. The world of Chicago is far from the little farm and family and friends he left behind. Who is the real Martin Sweeney?

Following his dreams of priesthood, he begins another new life at the junior seminary. On the very first day, he meets and begins an entanglement with Harry Hogan, a spoiled young man also on his way to the priesthood. Martin and Harry are mistaken as twins, as their towering height, dark, curly hair and deep, violet-blue deep-set eyes are a bedevilment to everyone.

Martin is chosen to study in Rome, but is called home to be ordained early, as Kate is dying. Still battered with the power of not knowing his father, he discovers Jeremiah Devitt, hidden among the hierarchy. Martin could kill him.

As their lives unfurl, Martin confronts his father for the church protecting the abusers and disregarding the wounded children and their families. Martin is never disloyal to the church, but unwittingly, he is falsely accused of abusing a young boy and begins a long process in the criminal justice system.

Martin and Jeremiah return to Ireland to reconcile the pain that Kate Sweeney set into motion by her secret. Martin grows physically and mentally strong in the same fields of West Clare where he was conceived. He becomes a man of prayer and returns home to America to begin the process to heal the Universal Church for the priests' crimes against its people.

Martin: An Authentic Priest in a Time of Chaos illuminates the serious reader with the historical and canonical roots of the sexual abuse scandal and extends the laurel branch of hope to the millions of Catholics who are left despondent by the actions of their once holy and beloved church.

Gallagher's Advice

By Caroleann Gallagher

Sterigenics Cancer Risks In Willowbrook, IL – Speak With A Personal Injury Lawyer Today!

At Dwyer & Coogan, my colleagues and I help victims of negligence recover compensation for their injuries and damages. I am sure you have heard on local news and in newspapers of one company that is under fire right now, for releasing chemicals that may have caused thousands of cases of cancer within the community of Willowbrook, IL.

Sterigenics, is a medical device sterilization plant located in Willowbrook and we have had numerous calls and know of numerous lawsuits filed against the company following evidence released by the Government that their practices and use of certain chemicals have been unsafe. If you or a loved one lives in the community of Willowbrook and want to learn more about Sterigenics cancer risks please give me at call and we can explore your concerns and your legal options.

Town Has Been Living With Cancerous Conditions For Possibly Decades

In August 2018, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services released a report that informed the residents of Willowbrook, IL that their local medical device sterilization plant is responsible for releasing a toxic chemical into the air called ethylene oxide. The emissions are three times higher than the EPA's acceptable limits. Long-term exposure to high levels of ethylene oxide, is known to cause several adverse health consequences, including but not limited to the following:

- Irritated eyes, skin, and respiratory tract
- Central nervous system depression
- Induced nausea and vomiting
- Certain cancer risks, including stomach, leukemia, non-Hodgkin lymphoma, and pancreatic cancer

Impacts Of Negligence

The report may explain why Willowbrook has some of the highest cancer rates in the nation and why so many residents are in an uproar over this newfound information. As reported by NBC5 Chicago, one woman who lives less than a mile from the plant claims that her eldest daughter has experienced strange and persistent health issues since she was in second grade. According to the woman, her daughter's coughing fits would be so violent and uncontrollable that they would cause her to vomit. These fits happened at all times of day and night, plaguing her sleep, school, and daily activities.

Another woman claims that her breast cancer was caused by the emissions, as she has no family history of the disease, demonstrates no risk factors, and no bracket genes. Yet another, whose home is closer to the plant than all of the others, claims that her family has always been plagued with health issues, a fact she attributed to bad genes—until now.

It is becoming clear to us that many of the Willowbrook residents diagnosed with various cancers over the years, were totally unaware that their cancer diagnosis could be related to Sterigenics emissions of ethylene oxide, until the August 2018 report was released by the Government.

Sterigenics Denies Cancer Risks

The company has produced report after report in an attempt to combat the government's findings. Sterigenics spokespeople give the same line, claiming that the ethylene oxide emission levels are far lower than those found in nature, or even than those found naturally in the human body. But the number of stories, and the elevated cancer rates in the population immediately surrounding the plant tell a very different tale.

Willowbrook Residents Want & Deserve Justice

If you or a loved one who lives in Willowbrook, IL have recently developed a chronic health condition or have been living in persistent bad health for years, you may be the victim of Sterigenics' negligence. Unfortunately, the adverse consequences caused by the company's actions may be irreversible. But that does not mean that you do not deserve justice, or that the company does not deserve to be apprehended.

One of the most important roles that injury lawyers play in the United States is to go beyond government investigations to help investigate individual instances of injury or disease to prosecute cases on behalf of individuals injured by negligence. This includes when individuals are injured by environmental emissions—whether in Willowbrook or anywhere else. One of the most difficult challenges people exposed to environmental toxins face is the helplessness that accompanies a diagnosis, feeling like they are powerless to do anything about what has happened to them.

At Dwyer & Coogan we fight for the rights of those who are suffering due to negligence and are prepared to help you build a case against this negligent corporation and fight for the compensation you may currently need, or will need, to cover the cost of medical expenses and other damages. If you believe that you or your loved one may be a victim of Sterigenics negligence, please call our office for a free consultation.

**Caroleann Gallagher is an Irish born Attorney now licensed in Illinois and practicing all types of personal injury law – including nursing home litigation, medical malpractice law, wrongful death claims, transportation injuries, premises liability claims, defective product claims, construction site injuries and Workers Compensation. She can be contacted at cgallagher@dwyercoogan.com or at 312-782-7482*

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