



# The Cairde Connection

“Keeping the Irish Arts Alive!”

Irish Cultural Center at  
Elms College

Volume 9 & Issue 3

January 2009

## Popular film series and Irish language classes begin in January

Plan on joining us for the viewing of four films in January and February on Wednesday evenings. Heather Lowe has prepared another outstanding list of films with great variety of the new and the old: drama, comedy and music. Something for everyone’s taste. We will host this popular series in the Alumnae Library Theater at 7:00 pm.

The first is the 2006 drama called *Kings*. It tells the story of a group of Irish emigrants who return for the wake of one of their friends after years of separation.

The next is *Absolutely Irish*, a documentary of great music with jigs, reels and airs, as well as contemporary takes on favorite old tunes.

The third offers the film by the legendary director, John Ford called *The Informer*. Made in 1935 it is based on Liam O’Flaherty’s novel of the same name. For the final show, we offer *The Matchmaker*, a romantic comedy. We will once again have green popcorn, admission is free, even though we’ll accept donations.

If you have always wanted to study the Irish language, now is the time to call the Elms College registrar at 265-2314 to enroll. The first class for Introductory Irish begins on Monday, January 26 at 6:30 pm. For those who have a good basis in the language group, the Irish Study group meets on Tuesday, January 27. The fee for each is \$150 with a \$50 discount for members of the Irish Cultural Center.

## Events celebrate our 10th anniversary

Once again we’ll host the Tea Party with music, song and dance to celebrate our patron saint. And once again Mary Franz will emcee the program. We’ll also award the essay contest prizes at this event.

+We hope many will join us to march in the Holyoke St. Patrick’s Parade. Dust off your marching shoes and step forward in pride as we celebrate our 10th Anniversary Year.

+In April over 40 folks will set forth on a Journey of the Soul—many of them for the second or third time.

+Last year, a bus full of people traveled to the National Archives in Pittsfield for an orientation session. On May 16, we offer an opportunity with another bus trip to pursue research.

The cost is \$40 for members and \$45 for non-members: price includes the bus, driver’s tip and a box lunch.

+We are looking into the possibility of attending the Pilgrim Souls Production in May in Worcester. Watch for further information.

+The Irish language committee has set June 6 for an immersion day.

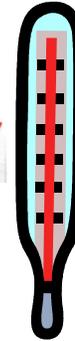
+We’ll welcome the children for Celtic Adventures for Kids on July 27 for a week of classes in music, dance, arts and crafts, storytelling, and language.

+From October 9-11 we are planning to celebrate the actual anniversary with a weekend full of great events. Come, celebrate with us.

## 10th Anniversary

Keeping the Irish arts alive!  
1999-2009  
October 9-11, 2009

Goal  
350



In honor of our 10th anniversary we have set a goal of 350 paying members for 2009. At this printing we’re over half way with nearly 200 having sent in a donation.

## Supporters pay dues

We are overwhelmed at the generosity of our supporters. Over one hundred first joined our organization in 1999 and continue to support us each year. These folks have sent a donation at least eleven times.

Such faithfulness attests to their belief in the Center and what it does to promote the Irish arts in the area. Each year we add new members—those encouraged by one of our present members or, perhaps inspired after attending one of our events or programs.

We continue to grow and add more programs. We have a goal to increase membership and we can do that if our faithful members continue to support us, and if they encourage others to join us in “keeping the Irish arts alive.”

If you have not as yet responded, please send in your tax deductible donation.

The Irish Cultural Center, founded in 1999, strives to “keep the Irish arts alive.”

The Irish Cultural Center...

- Serves as a public forum for events, including lectures, musical presentations, films and exhibits
- Promotes ties between the Center and educational organizations in Ireland, especially with the Basket Cultural Center
- Serves as an academic link with Irish American social organizations in Western New England.

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Judith Kappenman, SSJ, Chicopee

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265-2537 [irishcenter@elms.edu](mailto:irishcenter@elms.edu)

[www.irish-cairde.org](http://www.irish-cairde.org)

## Irish towns and counties listed on survey

When the Polish Center moved off campus last summer, establishing themselves in the former Holy Name Rectory on South Sreet, the room they had occupied became a seminar room. The college is pleased that we will fill the shelves and decorate the wall space. Since the room has display cases, we would like to show off archives or artifacts from the counties of Ireland.

We have items from several counties we can start with: Waterford (crystal), Donegal(Belleek vases), Fermanagh (Aramware), and Westmeath (Mullinag pewter). But we need to show items from some of the other counties. If you have something you could donate for this use, call the Center.

Many who sent in their renewal forms listed their ancestral homes. Kerry leads the way with Cork, Mayo, Clare, Galway and Sligo listed frequently. Other counties

include Waterford, Donegal, Roscommon, Tipperary and Armagh.

What strikes anyone in reading the responses is the obvious pride in claiming a spot in Ireland.

One member wrote when asked her county, “Kerry, and proud of this.” Another listed his county as Kerry, the Kingdom. One decorated her counties of Cork, Leitrim and Donegal with smiley faces. Some people listed parents and grandparents individually with town and county both. And some couples listed the hometowns and counties of both of their ancestors. A member, after listing the counties of Cork and Tipperary added, “or so the stories go.” Even including an exclamation point designates pride. A delight to read!

**The three speakers in the Ubiquity of Religion in Irish Studies series: Damien Murray, Peggy O’Brien and Tom Moriarty**



## Items of interest

**The John Boyle O’Reilly Club:**

Web site: [www.jbo-club.com](http://www.jbo-club.com)

**Ancient Order of Hibernians:**

Danny Curran Irish Night Party, Saturday, February 28

**Sons of Erin**

Web site [www.sonsoferin.com](http://www.sonsoferin.com)

**St. Patrick’s Parade:** January 16

Marshal’s Reception at Delaney House; February 21 Coronation

Ball/Awards Night at the Log Cabin  
[www.HolyokeStPatricksParade.com](http://www.HolyokeStPatricksParade.com)

**Pilgrim Souls Production,** May 1, 2, 8, 9, 8:00 pm, May 3, 2:00 pm:  
*Stones in his Pockets* by Marie Jones

**Berkshire Irish Club:** Feb 27 The Wolfe Townes; call Brendan Ronayne at 413 448-7230

## Continuing history of the Irish Center: many lectures offered

In addition to the importance of language classes, probably the core of the Irish Cultural Center is our offering of lectures and book readings. Amazingly, we have offered over fifty programs in just ten years, rivaled in numbers only by the films we have shown. (I'll write about those in the next issue.)

Topics have ranged from Celtic spirituality to sports; from goddesses and the little people to Patrick and Michael Davitt; from the peace process in Northern Ireland to the evacuation of the Blaskets. These last two topics have been addressed several times by different speakers.

We have listened to stories and poems; we have heard the history of Ireland and learned the impact of immigration on our own country. We heard Eva Paus praise Ireland as the Celtic Tiger as she demonstrated how Ireland's success story can act as a model for developing countries. Dave Hannigan looked at the other side of the coin with the negative changes brought to his home country because of the affluence of the 1990s.

We have learned how to research our ancestors and have been inspired and moved, entertained and cheered.

Speakers have come from Ireland: Dublin, Galway, Dingle and Ballyferrier. They have come from Springfield, Chicopee, Boston, New Hampshire and New York, as well as many places in between. We have heard from professors, journalists, priests, poets and politicians, as well as Consul general Isolde Moylan and her successor David Barry.

We have hosted some speakers multiple times: Father Pat Fenton of St. Mary's Church in Dingle visited us several times to share liturgy and his reflections on Celtic spirituality. Tom Moriarty spoke on Patrick and the spread of early Christianity. Damien Murray lectured on several aspects of Irish American Nationalism. Catherine Shannon from Westfield State College spoke once on the life of John Boyle O'Reilly and returned to speak of the Clinton peace efforts in Northern Ireland.

Peggy O'Brien from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst spoke

twice: first on the *Wake Forest Book of Irish Women's Poetry*, and on a return visit on her book called *Writing Lough Derg*. Kevin O'Hara, author of the *Last of the Donkey Pilgrims* read from his book, and returned to share some of his stories of growing up in an Irish Catholic home in Pittsfield. These are included in his next book with a publishing date in 2010.

We have benefited from a close relationship with Boston College in hosting both Robert Savage and Thomas Hachey. We have also taken advantage of the opportunity to hear some of the Burns Scholars, including Maria Luddy and Tom Garvin.

Cole Morton launched his book *Hungry for Home*, the story of the evacuation of the Blaskets at the Elms. Other authors who have shared their writings include Michael White, R. Todd Felton, Andy Mendlowitz and Kevin O'Rourke.

We are proud of this record of fine speakers we have hosted. Any one who attended one of any of these presentations is enriched.

## Christmas program delights one and all



**Pictured: Mary Franz as Miss Fogarty; additional photos on page 6**

On December 6 Our Lady's Chapel was filled with worshippers who attended the tenth annual Christmas with an Irish Touch liturgy. Kathleen Gilhooly and the Our Lady of Hope choir led the singing; George Bresnahan and Tom Moriarty did the readings both in Irish and English.

Monsignor Chris Connelly offered inspiring reflections on both the readings and the pride of the Irish immigrants, quoting from a new book by Jay Dolan.

After the liturgy we gathered in the Dooley Dining Hall for refreshments and a delightful entertainment. Kathy

Gallivan did a reading of Christmas customs, Sr. Judy read a poem by Patrick Kavanagh, Kathleen Gilhooly sang *Silent Night* in Irish.

Mary Franz delighted the audience as her portrayal as Miss Fogarty who is much put off by the remarks of her neighbors on her Christmas cake.

The children from the summer camp treated us to song and dance led by Mike Rancitelli and Mary Ellen O'Brien. And we all joined together to sing Christmas in Killarney, led by Mike Rancitelli and the children on their whistles.

## Our Ireland journey offers new experiences by Tim Allen

The next day our destination was the Aran Islands. This would be my second visit there, but we were headed to a different island (there are three) from last time. On that trip we had taken off from Doolin, and the boat brought us to Inisheer, the smallest of this Irish-speaking trio of islands. This time our destination was Inishmore, the largest and accessible from our departure point not too far from Galway City.

We all were somewhat back on an even keel; a good night's sleep was available after the overnight on the plane the night before and for some, an afternoon nap. Since I hadn't been to this island, I wouldn't be much of a tour guide.

On our way, we stopped at a popular shop called Standin, which has all different types of Irish souvenirs, from sweaters to trinkets. Kudos to our bus driver, Martin Hogan, who was in contact with the van driver from Shannon who had picked up Terry, Beth Ann, and Alison Aldrich. They had missed our departure date because of heavy rains in Burlington, Vermont.

We met them in the shop. It was great to see them. It is fun to make these connections happen. Here we are in Ireland and we're meeting American buddies on the side of the road. Hugs all around and enthusiasm were the order of the day.

A great ferry ride got us to the island where we hired taxis to take us to the famous fort named Dun Aengus. A highlight of the visit was our picnic lunch in the ruins of this fort built on a cliff by the ocean. It is similar to the Cliffs of Moher and the beautiful day gave us a great mid-day visit. The hike up to it paid off with the vistas overlooking the Atlantic. Next parish.....

The Restaurant Search Committee

from the night before had scheduled us for dinner at 10:30 p.m. at a fine restaurant. Our field trips around New England and the mid-Atlantic states to watch our daughters play lacrosse had provided us great opportunities for team dinners. Here we were again in familiar positions around a full and vibrant table – just in another country. About 20 of us enjoyed a couple of hours talking, eating, and laughing. It was a familiar and comforting scene.

Unlike the night before in the Galway pub, we had almost everyone on this trip; that is, except for our non-lacrosse friends: Sr. Judy Kappenman, Maryann Burritt, and Joyce Bosworth. They displayed maturity and sanity: they had retired for the night. That was unfamiliar behavior to the lacrosse team and their parents. Eating late at night. Why not? It's a team thing, especially when on vacation.

Sunday morning we left Galway because of a great deal we got to stay at Ashford Castle. There's never enough time in Galway, but the tour beckoned and we were off to more great places.

A short visit to the Connemara Marble Shop preceded a Martin Hogan special tour of a peat bog. I particularly liked this stop. He pulled the bus over and told us about peat bogs and their importance in Ireland as we stood with spongy ground underneath our feet. These are the tours I like most in Ireland with the informality and spontaneity of Ireland as it was, as it is, exploring the earth, the soul, the people.

Next we made it to our noontime goal: Kylemore Abbey. This is a beautiful castle-looking type place. On a lake, it is always pictured with the lake in front of it. It is beautiful, spiritual, mystical. Like a place you'd like to see.

A former school for girls, it offers beautiful gardens which we walked through, a nice lunch and, is, overall a great spot to visit. Walking around the gardens, Mary and I had a little time together, a chance for us to catch up. We had both been here before, but it is always a special place to visit.

But the real goal of the day was to get to Ashford Castle. We had traded our third night in Galway (plus a little cash) for the chance to stay in a castle. On the long drive in, we saw the castle, the lake, a bit of the setting. We were greeted at the bus by hotel personnel and led into the lobby. It was a bit of what I expected.

Soon we were exploring our rooms, the hotel, the grounds. The place was spectacular. No wonder Pierce Brosnan got married here. And to think that it sits in the village of Cong, the home of the screening of *The Quiet Man*.

Later, Mary and I took a boat tour of the lake. There was a traditional Irish musician/singer on the boat and before we knew it we were dancing with the other passengers. It was a great choice for an activity, but how could you go wrong here anyway? Golf, hiking, walking into town, the spa: there were many choices and all of them good.

Dinner was followed by entertainment in the Dungeon Pub. A songstress played the harp and sang beautifully, but not as beautifully as our singers. Soon Sister Judy was on stage, with support from Mary. The night concluded with our own version of Celtic Women: Jenni, Kathie, and Beth Ann belting out 'When Irish Eyes are Smiling'. Easy to sing this one on this trip. All eyes were constantly smiling.

## A Cork family is proud of one of its own

Gay Reilly grew up as one of fourteen children, seven boys and seven girls. She describes her childhood home as “active, engaged and energetic.” Recently she sent us information from North Carolina about one of her brothers, Eamonn who died at age 85 in August 2007. This large, sports-minded, and talented Young family came from Dunmanway, County Cork.

In fact, Eamonn was representative of the second generation of athletic greats bearing the name Young. Jack and Ned began the tradition in 1905; Ned’s playing career spanned 25 years.

Their father Jack served as headmaster of St. Patrick’s National School. He had won an All-Ireland senior football medal with Cork in 1911 and played for years. The children attended their father’s and their brothers’ games. The girls were active and athletic as were the boys, but not “exceptional in this male dominated environment,” according to Gay. They all played tennis on the family

court. They also all spent summer days swimming.

But it was the boys who went on to pursue organized sports of hurling and Gaelic football in earnest. Their brother, Dr. Jim won five All-Ireland senior hurling medals. Eamonn became the most famous Cork football player in history.

In 1941 he won a Railway Cup football medal when he helped Munster defeat Ulster. What is remarkable is that same year he also won a National Hurling League medal. He was a member of the 1945 All-Ireland winning side.

Bob Honohan of the *Cork Independent* praised Eamonn as the “greatest footballer ever to wear the famous red jersey.” Not only was he a great player, but he also served as a trainer/coach, and he promoted the sport by writing weekly articles for the *Kerryman* and the *Gaelic Weekly* for almost twenty years on every aspect of GAA.

In addition to sports, following the lead of their mother, the children were all piano players. For their fa-

ther’s school programs, she taught the students the songs, choreographed them, and made the costumes.

Gay praised her mother as “an exceptional woman.” Anyone who knows Gay Reilly would say the same of her daughter.

Eamonn served in the military where he rose to the rank of commandant; he served the cause of peace in the Congo and in Cyprus. After his military career, he studied for his degree and began a dynamic and innovative teaching career in a national school, as had his father.

Over the years, he also won many county and provincial squash titles. He loved mountain climbing and regularly took soldiers with him to climb and run in the Galtees; such missions became known as the Galtee patrol.

Gay reports that she is proud of all her siblings for their accomplishments, but that Eamonn is “special” perhaps because he ranked next to her in the family.

## Gaelic football club looking for support: an open letter

My name is Mike Carney and I am the coordinator of the emerging youth Gaelic football club in Western Massachusetts. The purpose of this letter is to enlist your support in the (re) introduction of the Gaelic games to the young people of the community through the cooperation and collaboration of our Irish cultural clubs, societies and centers.

For the past two summers the Boyle and the Sons of Erin have collaborated in developing a Gaelic football program for boys and girls (ages 5-16) in the area. The program has been successful in that we have offered clinics, training and competition to over 100 young people. We have competed, not only here, but also at

the Irish clubs in New Haven, and Canton.

Also, this past summer a number of our players participated in the North American Continental Youth Championships in Philadelphia.

While we have spread the game around the immediate Pioneer Valley, our goal is to develop the games (specifically, Gaelic football to start) throughout the larger western New England region, wherever there are Irish organizations whose goals include the cultural education of youth of Irish descent. A secondary goal is to develop our competitive programs so we can put forward teams to play in all of New England, especially New Haven, Canton/Boston and Stamford.

Relatively speaking, ours is not so big an area that we cannot coordinate training, clinics and competition locally. First and foremost, we need to gauge the interest of those included in this mailing. From there, we can plan to get together and look to bind ourselves into a sporting organization. Those of us who have been involved are more than willing to travel to introduce the youth of your club to the games, through developmental clinics, while it is incumbent on the clubs to provide field space and the kids.

Please contact me at your earliest convenience to express interest or, if you have questions on this program. 413 427-3534



**Pictured: Miss Fogarty with a friend; some of the children who entertained at Christmas with an Irish Touch**

**ONLY A FEW SPACES ARE LEFT!  
THE IRISH CULTURAL CENTER'S  
10<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY  
11-DAY IRELAND TOUR APRIL 19-29, 2009**

A few seats remain on our special 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, "Journey of the Soul" tour to Ireland!

Our adventure will take us to new and wonderful places where we haven't been before and also to a few of our favorite places. On this tour, you will experience Ireland in springtime—when the baby lambs frolic on the hillside and gardens burst with color. This is a wonderful time to visit the Southern Coast, as the days are longer and the coast is warmed by the Gulf Stream.

We will visit dramatic landscapes between mountain and sea—experience areas rich in culture, history and archeology and visit some of Ireland's most colorful villages. Let the Irish language, songs, dance and music captivate you as we follow the scenic coastline, participate in a medieval banquet in a 15th century castle and experience traditional Irish entertainment at Kate Kearney's Cottage in the Gap of Dunloe. Optional visit: Great Blasket Island with local historian Danny Sheehy.

**Highlights:** Kilkenny, Avoca, Wicklow Mountains, New Ross, Cobh, Middleton, Blarney, Kinsale, Bantry Bay, Killarney, Gap of Dunloe, Dingle Peninsula, Cliffs of Moher, Limerick. **Hotels:** Kilkenny River Court Hotel (2 nights), Trident Hotel (Kinsale-2 nights), Killarney Towers (1-night), Benner's Hotel (Dingle-3 nights), Absolute Hotel (Limerick-1-night). Call Kathy Gallivan at (413) 536-9709 or the Irish Cultural Center (413) 265-2537 for more details. Website: [www.irish-cairde.org](http://www.irish-cairde.org) to see April "Events". **Call soon as our prices won't be locked in for long!**

## Logainmneacha: Placenames

By Gerald Chip Costello



Our Irish language classes for the day in Ballyferriter were finished. We walked down the street to Smerwick Harbor, got some sun, watched and listened to the waves, and chatted in Irish with several new friends. Around 5:30 we walked back to Tigh i Murchú for a pint, some dinner, and more conversation; however, the day did not end at that point. In fact, the lecture that was delivered that night continues to make me think about the importance of language and how it reflects a variety of things about people and their history.

Bosco O'Connor spoke about several factors in people's experience that are reflected in the language, but the part of the talk that interested me the most had to do with place names - logainmneacha. By understanding the language, one can get a better appreciation of the town, topography, or some other unique characteristic associated with a particular place.

As Bosco pointed out, English surveyors did a fine job in locating and

documenting towns and placing them on maps in order for their government to retain control and order throughout the country. As you might imagine, however, they used their own language to identify what they thought they had heard. In reality, they probably changed some of the names to make them easier to pronounce.

An interesting example of a place name that did not reflect its reality can be seen in Cork. There was an area that was referred to as Bothar na Lobhar where the lepers walked and were restricted. Literally, it means Road of the Lepers. However, the Irish pronunciation sounded to the surveyors like Lovers' Lane, and they named it that. Without knowing the correct Irish name, the meaning of the area is totally lost.

Another town the surveyors named was Knocknagorraveela (whose spelling looks like a line on an eye chart in your optometrist's office). It is a great example of a place name. It is probably derived from

Cnoc na Garbhghaile which means hill of the rough wind. Obviously the surveyors opted for a briefer name for the river An Abha Bheag (meaning the little river) calling it Owveg.

The lessons of the evening quickly altered the tranquility of our afternoon walk to Smerwick Harbor. We learned that in 1580, Spanish and Italian troops landed at Smerwick to assist rebels. The siege took place at Dún an Óir (Fort of Gold). Six hundred troops were killed; they died at Gort a Ghearradh (Field of Cutting); and some were buried in Gort na gCeann (Field of Heads).



Remembering the peace of the afternoon sun and the rhythm of the water, it was hard to imagine what had happened roughly 430 years ago. Understanding place names through the medium of

language enables one to have a much better appreciation of the place.

You can find a great place names database of Ireland website at <http://logainm.ie> If you are interested in looking at a town and want to know its Irish language equivalent, it is as easy as a few clicks away. You may be similarly fascinated with what you find. Bain taitneamh as (Enjoy)!

**Irish Cultural Center  
at Elms College  
291 Springfield Street  
Chicopee, MA 01013-2839**

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## ICC Calendar of events

**Ongoing: Language groups meet weekly:** beginners, intermediate, conversation, advanced. Call the registrar at 265-2314 for fall classes.

**Genealogy volunteer**  
Ed Callahan (413) 527-5091  
email eastgram@aol.com

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**3rd Sunday of each month, except March: Irish Music Seisiún, 1:00-4:00 p.m.** Dooley Campus Center, dining hall annex:  
Jan 18, Feb 15

**Jan 26 and 27 Irish lan-**

**guage classes begin**

**Film series, Wednesdays**  
7pm Alum Library Theater

**Jan 28 Kings**

**Feb 4 Absolutely Irish**

**Feb 11 The Informer**

**Feb 18 The Matchmaker**

**March 8, 2:00 pm Irish Tea Party**

**March 22 Holyoke St. Patrick's Parade**

**April 19-29, 2009**  
Journey of the Soul: Spring-

time in Ireland

**May 3** Worcester Pilgrim Souls bus trip

**May 16** bus trip to Pittsfield National Archives

**June 6** La Gaeilge (day-long language workshop)

**July 27-31** Celtic Adventures for Kids

**October 9-11**  
a weekend of great events to celebrate our tenth anniversary

We offer our sympathy to Gerry Healy on the death of his brother, Michael.

Congratulations to Christine Danker who will study the Irish language, thanks to the John Johnson Award program.

Congratulations to Mike Rancitelli for the Appreciation Award received from the Springfield Parade Committee. No one deserves it more.

Congratulations to Sister Eleanor Dooley who was honored by Bishop Timothy McDonnell and the deacons for the work she has done for 20 years for the Diaconate program.