



The Cairde Connection

“Keeping the Irish Arts Alive!”

Irish Cultural Center at
Elms College

Volume 11 & Issue 3

January 2010

January/February events promise great variety by Sr. Judith Kappenman

On Sunday, January 17, 2009 at 2 p.m. in the Alumni Room, Doo-ley Campus Center, Kathy Gallivan will host an information session on the Journey of the Soul. Details on page 4.

Join us on Sunday, January 24 at 2 p.m. when we honor Michael Carney with a reception at the Irish Cultural Center, 3rd floor of Berchmans Hall. Read the article on page 6.

Host Heather Lowe announces the film series to be shown Wednesdays at 7 p.m. in the Alumnae Library Theater.

January 27, *Durango* with Brenda Fricker, Matt Keeslar and Patrick Ber- gin. In 1939 Ireland, a struggling farmer falls in love with the daughter of the town's cattle buyer, Fergus Mullaney. Fergus has threatened to destroy anyone who tries to court his daughter. To prove his worth, the farmer organizes a 40 mile cattle drive to break Fergus' monopoly and win his daughter's heart.

February 3 *The Mighty Celt* with Gillian Anderson, Robert Carlyle, Tyrone McKenna. Fourteen year-old Donal lives with his single mother in Belfast. To help make ends meet, he works long hours after school for the shifty, local dog trainer named Good Joe. One of Joe's dogs, a neglected greyhound Donal names "The Mighty Celt", has potential. To make a go of it, Donal strikes a deal with Joe even though he's not a man of his word.

February 10 *Ned Kelly* with Mick Jag- ger. The rock star plays the original

Wild Colonial Boy, armored bandit Ned Kelly. When their mother is un- fairly persecuted by police, Ned and his brother Dan earn money for her defense by selling homemade liqu- or. But what begins as a simple moonshine operation escalates into a series of confrontations with the law.

February 17 *How About You* with Vanessa Redgrave, Imelda Staunton and Brenda Fricker. Free spirit Ellie visits sensible sister Kate who runs a residential home in Ireland. When a family emergency sends Kate home, Ellie is left to cope with four difficult residents over the Christmas holi- day. Based on a Maeve Binchy novel.

We offer a complete change of pace in early Lent with a presentation by Sr. Ruth McGoldrick who will speak on Christian Celtic Spirituality on Sunday February 21 at 2 p.m. in the Alumnae Library Theater. The season of Lent offers an opportunity for growing closer to God.

Celtic Spirituality is a multi-faceted spirituality that is enjoying a renaiss- ance today. The early Christian Celts valued such paradoxical opposites as staying at home and wandering abroad, feminine leadership, hospitality, song, dance, prayer and pilgrimages.

Their nearness to God and nature made them sensitive to the sacredness of boundaries that connect the seen and unseen worlds. Out of the Celtic Church the practice of having an “anam cara” or “soul friend” arose.

The program is our gift to the commu- nity during our 10th anniversary cele- bration. However, we will accept free will offerings.

Continued on page 2

Member dues for 2010

Thanks to all who have re- sponded by renewing their membership dues. Each donation enables us to continue offering the programs you have come to expect.

We are pleased to announce several who have contributed at the lifetime member level: Timothy Allen, Springfield; Catherine Dower, Holy- oke; John Flynn, Hampden; Rosalie Pratt, Holyoke. They join the other twelve lifetime members.

Such generosity proves a belief in the organization and an implicit affir- mation of our programming.

The board of directors recently voted to name donors as lifetime members when they donate on the patron level of \$250 for four con- secutive years. We will include those who gave in the last several years and implement this policy ret- roactively.

Memorial gifts

We were saddened to hear of the death of Martin Kearney who died November 11 at the age of 83; we extend sympathy to his wife Eleanor and his family and friends who mourn his loss.

We are grateful to the family who requested that memorial gifts could be given in his name to the Center. To date almost \$1100 has been do- nated in the name of Martin Kear- ney. Working with the family, we will find a fitting way to use these funds in his memory.

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 Blasket Cultural Center
- Serves as an academic link with Irish American social organizations in Western New England.

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The best ballad singer I ever heard in my life

By Tim Allen

“The best ballad singer I ever heard in my life.” When Bob Dylan uttered those words about Liam Clancy, he was describing the man who sang the following:

“The Dutchman’s not the kind of man that keeps his thumb jammed in the dam,” “And the band played Waltzing Matilda,” and many others. Unfortunately Liam Clancy died a few weeks ago. His death was preceded by the death of Tommy Makem a couple of years ago. Now all the original Clancy Brothers and Tommy Makem are singing songs in Heaven somewhere. But as with all artists, they have left us their music, their hearts, and our memories.

Liam Clancy could sing a ballad. The best there was. But better than that, Liam Clancy could create

a mood, and let you into his life and also into your own.

Isn’t that what great artists do? Their music or art evokes a feeling of being let into your own life, all parts of it, the good and the bad, with a feeling that it’s okay, it’s really okay. Liam Clancy sang those soothing ballads beautifully – they were full of feeling, but with room for your feelings as well. And you knew you’d feel great driving home, although you absolutely were in no hurry.

Sitting in the Cathedral High auditorium some thirty-odd years ago, the anticipation was high. Sitting there ready to be serenaded, entertained, and ultimately mesmerized. The Clancy Brothers and Tommy Makem may have started the Irish folk music trend, but now the torch was largely in the hands of the youngest Clancy brother, Liam, and his singing partner, Tommy Makem.

When you were lucky enough to be in the same room as these two

Continued on page 7

Upcoming events highlighted continued p 1

On Tuesday, February 23 at 7 p.m. we will host Kevin O’Hara, who will read from his new book, *Lucky Irish Lad*. Details on page 5

On Sunday March 7 we are planning the Irish Tea Party with the drawing of the raffle: a trip for two to Ireland. We will also announce the winners of the middle school essay contest. Students examined two sacred sites in Ireland.

On Wednesday March 10 we will host a bus trip to UMass Fine Arts Center to attend a concert by the Chieftains.

We invite you to join us in the Holyoke St. Patrick’s Parade on March 21.

Save the date. We have set Friday, May 7 for our Second Wine Tasting event. Watch for further information.

Note of Sympathy

We extend our sympathy to the family and friends of member Martin Kearney, especially his wife Eleanor, his brother Michael Carney and his sister Maureen Oski: to Ann Lowe on the death of her mother Nora Burke: to Kelly O’Sullivan and Heather Lowe on the death of their grandmother: to Tim Donoghue on the death of his mother Marge Donoghue: to Mary Ann Cleland on the death of her mother Ann Kane: to Bridgid Kane on the death of her grandmother.

Christmas with an Irish Touch brings joy and spirit of the season to all



On December 12 we hosted our 11th Christmas with an Irish Touch and were blessed with a wonderful audience who came to celebrate the season with us. Even more blessings came in the performances of the children who sang and played their tin whistles, accompanied by Terry Ezold on the guitar. They also delighted us in a dance led by Mary Ellen O'Brien.

Kathy Gallivan read some of the Irish Christmas customs. Kathleen Gilhooly led a sing-along where all joined in with the familiar tunes and, as she has every year, sang "Silent Night" in Irish and English.

As a special treat for this our 10th anniversary year we served ice cream sundaes which proved to be a big hit with everyone, but especially with the children. We did not have a special guest with a white beard and wearing a red suit, but we were pleased that Bishop Joseph Maguire and Elms



President Sister Mary Reap attended. The chapel had an overflow congregation who prayed on the 3rd Sunday of Advent for the coming Savior. Monsignor Connelly in his homily reminded us that the readings speak of the joy that Christians are encouraged to have in anticipation of the coming of the Savior. The members of the Our Lady of Hope choir (Kathleen Gilhooly, Deb Paquette and Ann Gilhooly) provided the music; Tom Moriarty and Chip Costello did the readings of the Mass in Irish; Louise Collins led the recitation of the Our Father in Irish.

Pictured above from left clockwise: the children play Christmas in Killarney and dance; Kathy Tobin shows off her nephew; Sister Mary Reap and Kathy Riordan pause for a photo. Below from left: Our Lady of Hope Folk Group (Kathleen Gilhooly, Deb Paquette and Ann Gilhooly; Monsignor Christopher Connelly, Bishop Joseph Maguire Photos by Chris Pelletier, Elms College



Win an 11-Day Trip for Two to the Emerald Isle!

Win a trip of a lifetime – stay in Superior First Class Hotels while visiting Westport, Sligo, Donegal, Derry, Belfast and the Boyne Valley/Newgrange, Dublin and more! Includes 16 Meals, all attractions &, transportation to and from Logan/Boston airport from Elms College. THIS IS A GUARANTEED TOUR—We have already reached our minimum!

10th ANNIVERSARY RAFFLE

1st Place Prize: Wins a TRIP TO IRELAND FOR TWO* or \$4,000 Cash,

2nd Place Prize: \$500

3rd Place Prize: \$100

(Tickets are LIMITED TO ONLY 200 -- \$50 Donation per Chance)**

The Irish Cultural Center is a Non-profit Organization—your donation is **tax deductible!

PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE FOR MORE DETAILS AND

AN ORDER FORM AT

WWW.IRISH-CAIRDE.ORG

or Call the Irish Cultural Center at (413) 265-2537

or Kathy Gallivan at (413) 536-9709

(The **NEXT** one-hour **Information Session** about the tour will be held Sunday, January 17th at 2:00 p.m. in the Dooley Campus Center—Please Join Us! Hear more about the exciting places we will be visiting! If you sign up for the tour prior to the drawing and you are the lucky 1st Prize winner—you will receive a full *refund*.)

**Double-occupancy/Sharing room*

The 5TH “Journey of the Soul” TOUR TO IRELAND

INFORMATION SESSION

SUNDAY, JANUARY 17, 2010

AT 2:00 P.M.—Dooley Campus Center

A “ONE-OF-A-KIND” CUSTOM TOUR

Enjoy Ireland’s beautiful scenic coastline—visit historic & legendary attractions—join in traditional music and dance—sip tea and enjoy warm homemade scones—as you discover the charm of its people and experience ancient and modern Ireland!

The Irish Cultural Center’s NEW 11-Day Custom Tour to Ireland in 2010 (September 4-14, 2010) will take us to spectacular new places that we haven’t been to before—where they say “it’s different up here”! Touring the “West and East Coasts and Northern Ireland,” we will stay in Westport, with multiple-night stays in Donegal, Derry, Belfast and Dublin. Our tour departs on Saturday and includes the Labor Day holiday, giving our travelers an extra vacation day, and returns after the following weekend, on a Tuesday.

The Information Session (slide/PowerPoint presentation) will last approximately one hour and will provide you with all the important details--places you will visit, hotels, cost and answer any questions you may have. Space on the tour is limited and will be sold on a first-come, first-serve basis. Please come prepared to make a non-refundable deposit of \$300 to reserve your spot! Cost of the 11-Day Custom Tour is \$2,349 per person/sharing and includes Superior First-Class Hotels, round-trip transportation from Elms College to Logan Airport, attractions and 16 meals (*with a full Irish Breakfast each morning*). Light Refreshments. For more information, please call Kathy Gallivan at (413) 536-9709 or visit our website at www.Irish-Cairde.org

Book reader promises to delight by Kathy Gallivan

Join us on TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 2010, 7:00 p.m., Alumnae Room (2nd floor), Dooley Campus Center, Elms College for a book reading.

We are delighted to welcome Kevin O'Hara for a reading from his new book "A Lucky Irish Lad."

Kevin O'Hara's second book will be coming out in February 2010 and we are happy to invite him back for one of his first local appearances to read excerpts from "A Lucky Irish Lad" just before he launches a major book tour in March.

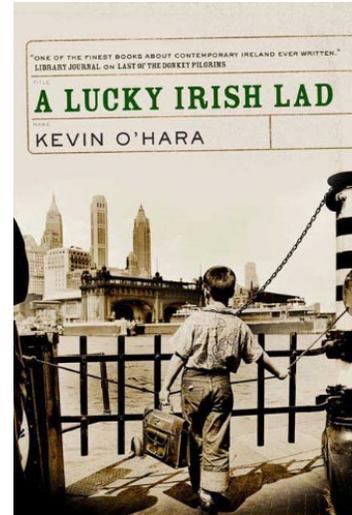
If you enjoyed his first book, "Last of the Donkey Pilgrims", you are sure to love this one! His second book is a heartwarming memoir that consists of a series of short stories about his boyhood experiences that are filled with humor and grace about the struggles and joys of growing up in a household with two Irish parents and a houseful of siblings: eight all to-

gether!

This is a true story of a "Lucky Irish Lad" that takes you from his birth in England to his homecoming from Vietnam. Kevin recounts the struggles the family faced and about their decision to emigrate to Western Massachusetts to find a better life for "the children's sake" in the 1950's; wonderful stories told by a master storyteller laced with a great sense of Irish spirit!

"This book will tug at your heart and make you cry tears of both sorrow and joy. It is a story about the Irish-American experience but it is much more—it's the story of a generation growing up in the shadow of the Second World War and the start of a new age of hope and promise, a time when people believed that anything was possible as long as you dared to dream and had faith in yourself." Amazon

Kevin will also be selling and signing copies of his first book "Last of the



Donkey Pilgrims." If you haven't read it, you will want a copy of this book too! Kevin's great knack of storytelling fills these two books with great Irish humor and perhaps may even bring back some of your own childhood memories or memories of past visits to Ireland. Both books are a must read!

Kevin O'Hara, a local author, resides in Pittsfield, MA, the place to which his parents emigrated.

Some reasons why and how I love all things Irish by Rosalie Pratt

I hear the questions all the time: "Why are you going to Ireland again?" "Why are you learning Irish?" and "Why are you listening to Irish music?" I love all things Irish! I never tire of the music or the dancing. I savor every bite of Irish stew and soda bread.

My first trip to Ireland inspired me to see and learn as much as I could about the country of my ancestors. I was struck by the beauty of the land and the hospitality of the people. I have read many books on Irish history. I treasure my signed edition of Kevin O'Hara's "Last of the Donkey Pilgrims" and Bill Cullen's "It's A Long Way from Penny Apples." Frank McCourt's books are also part

of my growing collection.

I'm a proud member of both the Ladies Ancient Order of the Hibernians and the Irish Cultural Center at Elms College. Both organizations provide countless opportunities to indulge in Irish interests; from the Holyoke St. Patrick's Day Parade to Danny Curran's Irish Night to Irish Tea to Christmas with an Irish Touch to movies and day trips – just to name a few!

In 2006, I traveled with the Journey of the Soul to Ireland and specifically to the Aran Islands. I encountered signs I couldn't read and locals I couldn't understand.

On my return I signed up for the Irish language class for beginners

with Tom Moriarty; he's fantastic and very patient. The language is difficult but I enjoy it. I say my prayers "as Gaeilge" every night and I am making progress with the reading, writing and listening skills.

(I can't help but think about the millions of Irish who were denied the right to speak their language in their own country).

In addition to all of the activities, you can't beat the people; both those who work tirelessly to put on events as well as those who attend them. All are welcome and all have great fun or "craic," as the Irish would say.

Join us as we honor Mike Carney with a reception on Sunday, January 24 at 2 p.m. 3rd floor, Berchmans Hall

Ireland honors ex-court officer by Stephanie Barry

Seven decades and an ocean away from the primitive shores of the Great Blasket Island, Michael Carney was called home for an unexpected honor.

The 89-year-old retired court officer traveled back to his homeland recently to receive an honorary doctoral degree in Celtic literature from the National University of Ireland, Maynooth.

His family says the honor caps a life-long devotion to preserving the language and promoting the culture - since growing up on the tiny island off the west coast of Ireland, tending bar in Dublin and emigrating to the U.S. in 1948.

For his part, Carney says he was surprised when the invitation came from the university in September. Carney follows other recipients including President John F. Kennedy and Nelson Mandela, among others. He chuckles at the comparison. "To think of it . . . a former president and a poor fisherman's son from the island honored at the same famous college," he said.

University officials called Carney a "true living link to our heritage and tradition" during a conferral ceremony at the Blasket Center in Kerry on Sept. 21. Carney was joined by his four children, two sons-in-law and two grandchildren.

"As you can imagine, we are all very proud," son-in-law Gerald W. Hayes said, adding that though Carney was never a writer by profession, he serves as a proxy for the island's rich literary legacy.

For a three-mile wide island with 150 inhabitants before it was evacuated by the government in 1953, Blasket produced a surprising number of writers.

They include Peig Sayers, Tomas O



**Michael Carney of Springfield
Photo taken by Dave Roback
of the Republican**

Criomhthain and Maurice O'Sullivan, who wrote in Gaelic about life on the island. Their books were translated into dozens of languages, Hayes said, and Sayers' memoir, "Peig," is mandatory reading for students in Ireland.

Carney said the simplicity of life there spawned a great tradition of story-telling. He knew little English when he traveled to the mainland at 16 to take a job as a "bar man," he said, and the little he did know he gleaned from tourists when he was a boy.

"I tried to talk to them to learn English while they came to learn Gaelic," he said. "It was a two-way street. He wrote a Gaelic language column for The Irish Times while he lived in Dublin, and taught adult language courses in Gaelic in this city.

For 20 years here, he worked as a store manager at local A&P markets

before applying for a job as a security officer at the Hampden County Hall of Justice. Carney retired from there in 1993.

He was president of the John Boyle O'Reilly Club - the city's Irish-American social epicenter - for 16 years and served on its board of directors for eight more.

Carney helped lead an effort to create the Blasket Island Center, which opened in the 1980s. The facility helps interpret life on the island as Carney remembers it.

Despite its remoteness, it was a lively place, he said, where residents made their own musical instruments and canoes. They grew much of their own food and shared whatever they had. They had no store, no priest and no doctor. All of those had to be found on the mainland, which was three miles off by boat but may as well have been on another planet during bad weather.

"In the wintertime, it was ferocious," Carney said. "The islanders were saintly, and they didn't know it."

That was the primary reason the government evacuated the island's 20 remaining residents when the time came.

"The youth had left, and the older people could not stand to walk against the hill anymore," Carney said.

He said he will continue to push for a historical park on the island, and thinks of his boyhood home often.

"When I left in 1937, my father said: 'Mike, I hate to see you go. But whatever you say, and whatever you do - do it right.'"

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Bígí Lúcháireach! By Gerald Costello

The liturgy celebrated prior to the annual Christmas with an Irish Touch party enabled many members to worship with friends, meet new people, reacquaint with others, and give thanks for the blessings we all had received throughout the year.

What made the liturgy even more interesting was that the two readings and Lord's Prayer were read in Irish. Although most people in attendance would not have known the words, there is always a surprise and an opportunity to appreciate someone else's joy in the understanding, comfort, and familiarity of the language. At the end of the Mass, two women approached and introduced them-

selves. One of the ladies looked familiar; in fact, it was Eileen, a classmate of mine from middle school in Northampton. That was forty five years ago! A Thiarna! The other woman was her mother. During our conversation, I could tell that there had been an old understanding of the words and the rhythm contained in the readings. Eileen's Mom indicated that it had been a long time since she had heard them. My interest was piqued and asked her about AN GAEILGE. As it turns out, she was from An Riasc outside of Ballyferrieter. Being in middle school, I never knew Eileen's family's history. Now, it is fascinating for me to see

the connections between so many of our parents and grandparents throughout the Valley who would have had a direct connection to the Irish language. Although they may no longer be with us, I am sure we connected that Saturday through the prayers and readings. Entering the new year, I think about the second reading from the liturgy. "Bígí lúcháireach i gcónaí sa Tiarna. Deirim arís é: biodh lúcháir oraibh." (Rejoice in the Lord always. I say it again - rejoice.) The language was the medium that enabled us all to reconnect that day. I hope you all get that chance this year.

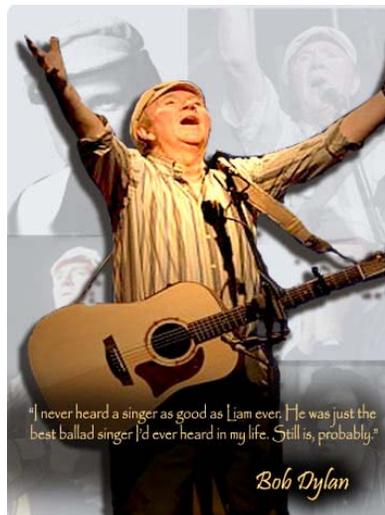
By the way, Mrs. Sullivan - "Go maire tú an céad." May you live to be one hundred.

The best ballad singer I ever heard in my life continued from page 2 By Tim Allen

fine Irish lads, you could check your cares and worries at the door. And be ready to enjoy a night not to be topped by many others.

When I think of Liam Clancy, I think of my wife's godfather and uncle, the late, great Dan Meder. He wouldn't miss their performances. That's one of my memories. I believe the sad story described in words like "I looked at the place where my legs used to be" somehow reminded him of the cruelty of war, and maybe his own experience with it. Dan thought that "The Dutchman" and "And the Band Played Waltzing Matilda" were two of the greatest songs ever. He was no music critic, but he was right on this one.

And he was right that when you could drive to see Makem and Clancy, you asked no further questions, you got your tickets and you went. In a life full of uncertainty, it was a sure thing.



*Red is the Rose that in yonder garden grows,
Fair is the lily of the valley,
Cool is the water that flows from the Boyne,
but my love is fairer than any.*

Your music was fairer than any, too.
Thanks, Liam.

Local performances of Makem and Clancy:

October 27, 1978 at Elms College
March 21, 1980 at Cathedral High
1982 at Cathedral High

The AOH presented at the Wherehouse? in Holyoke a plaque to Makem and Clancy following the Elms concert in 1978. It read: "In appreciation to Tommy Makem and Liam Clancy on whose magical loom is spun the threads of Irish heritage. Through your music you have woven for the world a magnificent cultural fabric, as strong as a Celtic tweed and as fine as any Irish linen." Written by AOH Vice President, Paul O. Mengel

Liam Clancy autobiography "The Mountain of the Women: Memoirs of an Irish Troubadour"
Film on his life "The Yellow Bittern"
Doubleday CD

Submitted by Fran Hennessey

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ICC Calendar of events

Ongoing: Language groups meet weekly: Intro Irish I & 2, intermediate, Irish Study Group. Call the Graduate Office at 265-2218 for spring classes that begin on Jan 25.

Genealogy volunteer

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

January 17, 2 pm Information session Journey of the Soul, Alumni Room, Dooley Center

January 24, 2 p.m. Berchmans Reception to honor Michael Carney on the reception of his doctorate

January 27-February 3, 10, 17 at 7 p.m.

Film series: Alumnae Library Theater
See details on page 1

Feb 21 at 2 p.m. Christian Celtic Spirituality with Sr. Ruth

McGoldrick, Alumnae Library Theater

Feb 23, 7 p.m. Kevin O'Hara book reading from his book, "Lucky Irish Lad" *Details on page 5*

March 7, 2 p.m. Tea Party (includes raffle drawing), Alumnae Room, Dooley Center

March 10 The Chieftains at UMass, Amherst bus trip

March 21 Holyoke St. Patrick's Parade

May 7 Wine Tasting with an Irish Accent fundraiser for the Irish Studies Minor program

July 26-30 Celtic Adventures for Kids summer camp

September 4-14 Journey of the Soul

September 17-October 2

Exhibit at the Big E, WS

EVENTS OF INTEREST

AOH

Feb 27, Wherehouse?, Dan Curran's Irish Night with Irish Parish and McDermott School of Irish Dance
March 14, Communion Breakfast following 8 am Mass at St Jerome's Church

John Boyle O'Reilly

monthly round table
Sat, Jan 9, Chip Costello on language
Feb 13, Pat Heslin on women of 1916
Jan 15, Feb 19 Bachelor's Supper and music

Sons of Erin

Annie's Brunch:
Sun Jan 17, Feb 14