



The Cairde Connection

"Keeping the Irish Arts Alive!"

Irish Cultural Center at
Elms College

Volume 11 & Issue 4

March 2011

Scheduling changes made in our programs

We have rescheduled our Irish Ceili to be held at the Sons of Erin in Westfield from March 6 to March 13, at 2 p.m. Leo Doherty and his musicians will play the jigs and reels. Dance instructors will demonstrate and direct participants in the steps. In addition, the McDermott Academy of Irish Dance will give a demonstration. We especially invite families with children to attend this free event. We will serve Irish tea and breads.

We have had to reschedule several events for several different reasons, mostly due to the stormy weather. The Famine exhibit trip to Quinnipiac is now rescheduled for June 11. Some of those who planned to attend will not be able to take part so a limited number of places are available for the new date. If interested, contact the office.

Two new programs are now on the calendar. On March 16, the eve of St. Patrick's feast, we will present an Irish concert in Veritas auditorium at 7:00

p.m. hosted by Maitiú de Hál. Local musicians, including Tim Donoghue, Bill Dempsey, Amanda Bernhard and Jonathan Kennedy will perform. They will offer both instrumental music, as well as songs in the sean-nós style. The Kiltie Band will also perform.

Added to the schedule is Justin Bell who will present his documentary "Seven Shades of Green" in the Alumnae Library Theatre on Sunday, April 3 at 2 p.m. The film tells of the journey from New England to Ireland through the lives of seven people who consider themselves Irish.

We received word that Brenda Ni Shuilleabhain will collaborate with Michael de Mordha to present both her program and the Dunquin documentary, but because of scheduling conflicts the date will move from May 4 to May 11.

La Gaeilge, the day-long Irish language workshop is now scheduled for May 21. Maitiú de Hál will lead conversation groups and give a lecture on the Irish language.

Congratulations to Parade Grand Marshal

Congratulations to Gerry Healy who was named the Holyoke St. Patrick's Parade Grand Marshal. The St. Patrick's Parade Committee praised him as "an outstanding member of the Community, a dedicated representative of West Springfield and the Parade Committee, and a fine family man."

Gerry served on the Board of the Irish Cultural Center from 2003-2009 and as its president from 2006-2008. Others who have been honored by

the Parade Committee are ICC members: Patrick Bresnahan 1991, Rev. Francis X. Sullivan 2000, Bishop Joseph Maguire 2001, James Curran 2002, Peter Brady 2003, Ann Gibbons 2008; they all served as Parade Grand Marshals.

Tom Moriarty was given the Ambassador Award in 2001, and served as Marshal of the Chicopee contingent in 2009; Sr. Kathleen Keating was named Marshal of the Chicopee contingent in 2001.

March with us in the Holyoke Parade

We're looking for marchers to join us on March 20 to walk proudly behind the Irish Cultural Center banner. Let us know if we can expect to see you in the morning at the K-Mart parking lot on Route 5, Northampton Street, Holyoke.

We will wear our Irish sweaters or green jackets with dark trousers. We have marched in the parade every year since 2001 and have had floats several years; in 2009 we featured an authentic jaunting cart. Last year in our 10th anniversary year our three founders rode in a Cadillac convertible.

Sympathy

We extend our sympathy to Steve, Marie, and Peg Jablonski, as well as family and friends of their mother Theresa who died recently; to Jim Sheehan on the death of his brother John; to family and friends of member Agnes Desmarais; to John and Stephen Davis on the death of their mother Mary; Bob Loughrey on the death of his nephew James Chapin.

Fiddler P. V O'Donnell died recently; a great musician, he played in the Center several years ago with Comhaltas Ceoltiri Eireiann.

We regret that Bid Barnett will not perform her Peig Sayers storytelling program at the Boyle on March 27 as previously announced. She contacted us to say that her son had drowned in the Great Barrier Reef, Australia. We extend our sympathy to her family and friends.

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.

Director:

Judith Kappenman, SSJ, Chicopee

Board of Directors

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Jerry Donovan, W Springfield

Kevin Taugher, So Hadley

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Mary Ellen Lowney, Chicopee

Kathleen Lynch, Chicopee

Mary Ellen O'Brien, Springfield

Kelly O'Sullivan, Westfield

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Chicopee, MA 01013

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www.irish-cairde.org

St. Brigid's celebration brings together

The Irish Cultural Center hosted a warm event on a cold January evening when Maitiú de Hál brought together 63 people to celebrate St. Brigid's Day on January 31. The actual feast day is February 1 but because of Maitiú's teaching schedule we celebrated on the eve. People who came wanted to hear Brigid's story and learn how to make her cross.



After a short introduction by Chip Costello, Maitiú gave an outline of Brigid's life story, including the legend of the creation of her special cross. Next he gave a demonstration of how to make the cross. To practice the design people used shredded strips of paper; others used pipe cleaners. The last step was to use straw in the making of the final product.

We thank Marie Raucher of Heritage Farm for providing the straw. Not only did Maitiú help the participants, others who learned quickly helped those who were struggling. As you can see in the pictures on this page people helped one another. Some attacked the project as serious business, while others thoroughly enjoyed themselves. It proved to be a fun event bringing together a diverse group.



Be a Part of the Excitement!
Two Great Tours to Ireland!

Sponsored by the Irish Cultural Center at Elms College

SEPTEMBER 3-13, 2011

WEST & SOUTHWEST COAST OF IRELAND TOUR

(We have only a few spaces left!)

This popular tour was last offered in 2006 and 2007— for 2011 we've extended our stay and enhanced it with some new attractions! 2 Extra Days and New Places to Discover! The 11-Day tour includes multiple night stays: 3 nights in Galway, 3 nights in Dingle, 2 nights in Killarney and 1 night in Adare with visits to the Aran Islands, Connemara, Cliffs of Moher, Dingle Peninsula, Iveragh Peninsula, Valentia Island/Skellig Experience Center and more. Cost of the tour is **\$2,599** pp/do (departure tax/fees, Optional Travel Protection are extra). A \$300 deposit + \$116 Optional Travel Protection is requested to reserve space. You'll enjoy this leisurely paced tour as you savor the culture and beauty of Ireland! Space is very limited.

Call Kathy Gallivan for Reservations at (413) 536-9709 or email her at KGallivan04@gmail.com.

Join us in 2012 for the 86th
Notre Dame vs. Navy Game in Dublin!
(10-Day Tour: August 25-September 3, 2012)
An Experience of a Lifetime!

We cordially invite our MEMBERS & "Journey of the Soul" FRIENDS & FAMILY to join us for our own exclusive "KICKOFF" with an ADVANCED opportunity to learn more about this exciting tour on **Sunday, April 17, 2011, 2:00 p.m., Dooley Center, Elms College!** We believe we have planned a "dream" itinerary for our sports enthusiasts as well as a very well-rounded tour that anyone would love! The tour is balanced with some of Ireland's most romantic & historic settings with visits to some of our very favorite places. Your tour includes 2-Nights in Dingle, 2-Nights in Kinsale (*Gourmet Capital of Ireland*), 1-Night in the medieval city of Kilkenny, 3-Nights in the heart of Dublin--AND GAME TICKETS! The last time the two teams faced off in Dublin was in 1996--16 years ago! Our Info Session will go over the details of our itinerary as you learn more about this "one-of-a-kind" spectacular tour!

The Notre-Dame-Navy game has been played annually since 1927, making it one of the longest uninterrupted intersectional series in college football. Famed rivalries do not come any better than this! The 2012 rematch is scheduled for September 1, 2012 in Dublin and will take place in the brand new, state-of-the-art Aviva Stadium (*built on the grounds of the old Lansdowne Road Stadium and home of the Irish Rugby Union Team and the Irish National Soccer Team*). Aviva Stadium is one of the finest venues in the world--few stadiums anywhere have attended to the detail, aesthetics and fan comfort as in Aviva Stadium (*seats 51,700 spectators!*).

Take advantage of this *Advance Notice* and get your **GUARANTEED SPACE** for the 2012 rematch! Early Reservations are advised--A \$500 deposit pp + optional travel protection will reserve your space for this unforgettable experience!
Be part of the Excitement! Space is limited to only 45!

Save the Date!

INFO SESSION: SUNDAY, APRIL 17, 2011; 2:00 P.M., DOOLEY CENTER

Elms College, 291 Springfield Street, Chicopee, MA 01013

Call Kathy Gallivan at (413) 536-9709 or e-mail her at KGallivan04@gmail.com
 Visit www.Irish-Cairde.org for more information

Photography exhibit of Irish immigrants

By Mary Ellen Lowney

They are the men and women who travelled the 3,000 miles from Ireland to the United States, making new lives. They worked hard, raised families, and forged ties in their new world.

Thirty-six of these Irish immigrants – including eight from Western Massachusetts – are featured in a traveling photography exhibit called ‘To Love Two Countries’.

On November 10, 2010 the group was honored at a reception at the Statehouse in Boston, where the exhibit remained for two weeks. The reception, in a packed Senate Reading Room, was co-hosted by Senate President Therese Murray and Irish Consul General Michael Lonergan. Both offered a warm welcome.

“In Ireland, we’re very proud of immigrants who scaled the heights, such as John F. Kennedy,” Lonergan said. “But this event attempts to recognize the people who came from Ireland, raised families, fought in wars, the quiet unsung heroes.” The black-and-white images were captured by respected Irish photographer John Minihan, who visited New England in the spring. The project was commissioned by the Irish Arts Center in New York City, and the Department of Foreign Affairs in Ireland.

In Western Massachusetts, Minihan found escorts in ICC President Chip Costello and Executive Director Judith Kappenman, who brought him to the homes of the eight area subjects.

Costello and Kappenman made the trip to Boston with Joseph and Mary Campbell of Springfield. Joseph left his home in County Armagh in 1956, settling eventually in Springfield and working as a chemist at the former

Monsanto Company until his retirement in 2002.

Campbell said he was touched by the event, as well as by being included in the exhibit. “It’s very exhilarating,” he said, studying the framed photograph of himself on his front porch in the Hungry Hill section of Springfield. “I’m very grateful to be a part of something that honors people who left Ireland for here.”

Other Western Massachusetts subjects included Michael and Maureen Carney of Springfield, Maureen Oski of Springfield, Sister Mary Magdalen Ward, SSJ, of West Springfield, Tim and Kathleen Sullivan of Northampton, and Frank MacAvin of Easthampton.

Since the photographs were taken, several of the subjects – including Maureen Carney and Kathleen Sullivan – have died.



Michael Carney was moved to tears when he saw the photograph of himself and his now deceased wife. He spoke of her in superlatives. “She was so beautiful – 60 years we were together, and all of this stuff that I do, she always supported me,” Carney said, referring to his fre-



quent travels to Dingle, County Kerry, and his work with the Blasket Island Centre in Dunquin, a museum commemorating the community that once lived on that island, as did Carney.

Now 90, Carney said he loves being involved in the community. Last year, he was given an honorary doctoral degree in Celtic literature from the National University of Ireland, Maynooth.

“I always feel I get younger when I get invited to attend events like this,” he said.

Sister Magdalen’s portrait shows her holding a piece of art from Kenya, Africa, where she taught for several years. She immigrated to the United States in 1931 from Gortnaderry, County Leitrim. At the Statehouse event, she discovered old friends from her hometown.

“It was thrilling to meet people from my town in Ireland,” she said. “It’s wonderful being a part of this.”

The exhibit will travel to locations around New England in the coming months. In October 2011, it will be on display in the Borgia Gallery of the Elms College in Chicopee, home of the Irish Cultural Center.

Pictured above: Michael Carney, Frank MacAvin, Sr. Mary Magdalen, Joe Campbell

Left: the photo of Tom and Kathleen Sullivan

Why I like to learn the Irish Language

By Amanda Bernhard

So many people have asked me, in my pursuit of learning Irish, why I would choose such an “impractical” language to learn. It is not a language widely spoken around the world, it will not help me to understand the languages most spoken in our immediate area, and there can be a limited future in using it as a career. In truth, it seems that all the logical explanations for learning a language do not apply to learning Irish, for the reasons listed above. The simplest answer I can give, therefore, in explanation of the foolish endeavor, is not one of logic but one of emotion: I love Irish!

I am a language lover in general. Not only do I thoroughly enjoy learning languages and being able to speak them, but my greatest joy is in learning about both the connections between languages around the world, and the connections between a language and its culture. When I first took Latin in high school I was enthralled to discover not only its cognates and grammatical connections to Spanish (which was the second language I was taking), but also what it taught me about the English language, my mother tongue, and its history.

I learned more about English grammar there than I did in any English class throughout my academic career, and I find the same kind of cross-language-connections happening whenever a new language is pursued. Although at first glance Irish appears to be separate from any other language, once the basic spelling, pronunciation and grammar of the language are understood, many connections can be made between Irish and several other languages around the world.

I delight in these connections whenever they occur, and feel as though I am not only learning how to speak the Irish language, but also tidbits and



treasures about other languages it is historically connected with as well. In addition, as with any language, by learning how to speak Irish I am also learning a great deal about the culture from which the language hails – a wonderful thing, as I am so enamored of the Irish culture is so many ways already. I have been playing traditional Irish music on the fiddle since I was nine years old and have lived with the music around me to this day.

I have been practicing Irish step dance since I was in high school, and I have spent several long sojourns in Ireland, including a 3-month period in Adare, County Limerick working on a horse farm and also a semester in college focusing on Munster Irish at University College Cork (UCC). The fascinating thing about Irish is, it doesn't stop with “general” Irish culture – it varies even between the different spoken dialects.

My initial Irish learning was in the Ulster dialect, and I was both delighted and overwhelmed when I realized just how different Munster Irish was while studying at UCC. Having an understanding of Irish not only helps with my musical endeavors (I am a singer and also studied a bit of Sean-nós singing while in Cork) but helps me understand the history and culture of this rich

county in far more depth than any textbook or historical novel could. What will I do with my Irish language knowledge, once I am a fluent speaker? I am, as of now, still uncertain of my goal, but I believe there are many options to pursue. I would love to teach it and spread the knowledge of this beautiful and endangered tongue. I would like to pursue a career in translation, and perhaps bring some un-translated Irish texts to the awareness of the greater world.

I feel certain that music will always be a part of my life, and I intend to incorporate as much of the Irish language into my music and singing as possible, so as to give a deeper glimpse of Irish culture to my audiences, as well. Most of all, I simply wish to speak the language and share it with others, as a language is meant to be used, and hope that in my speaking Irish it will not only spread the use of the language, but continue to help me grow as a person, as it has already done.

Searching Family

Sara Campbell is interested in the mass migration from the Mullet peninsula in Western Mayo to the Holyoke area in the late 1800s. Her ancestors had “cousins” in Holyoke. Her mother visited Holyoke in 1936 and it remained a vivid memory all her life. Names included: Broderick, Meeneghan, Lavalley, Gaughan, Keane, McGinty and Cauley or variations. She would like to share her research with others who are interested in this geographic group, and construct a data base that will show the many interconnections of these families.

Contact her at rememberingancestors@yahoo.com

Irish Fulbright teacher involved in many activities by Will Dziura

This school year has been a special one for the ICC and Elms community, particularly due to the presence of Fulbright Foreign Language (FLT) teacher Maitiú de Hál. Since arriving here, Maitiú has brought a youthful charisma and strong enthusiasm for Irish culture to our campus.

Currently, Maitiú teaches three different Irish language courses: two non-credit courses and one three credit novice course, all of which are continuations of the classes he began last semester. Maitiú spoke of the success of these classes so far, pointing out that during the fall semester there was strong participation, and so far this semester he has had a good experience. Maitiú also commented on the enthusiasm of the students in these classes, many

of whom come from distances as far away as Deerfield, Montague and Worcester to participate. In addition to teaching the Irish language classes, Maitiú said he has “enjoyed his travels throughout New England and beyond, including trips to Maine, Washington D.C., Boston and New York.” When not on the road, Maitiú can be found playing his bodhran with Springfield’s Kiltie band, coordinating or attending ICC events, or attending one of several classes he is taking at the Elms. When asked about American traditions that he has enjoyed, Maitiú said he liked sharing a Thanksgiving celebration - so much so that he and the other FLT’s from Ireland plan on celebrating the holiday next year at home. He also enjoyed the energetic atmosphere and culture that sur-

rounds the Super Bowl. For St. Patrick’s Day, in conjunction with the ICC, Maitiú will be playing along with the Kiltie band on the Elms campus, where refreshments will be served. Such an event speaks to the energetic spirit Maitiú has brought to both the campus and the cultural center, and he is optimistic that this spirit will continue into next year if another Irish FLT comes to campus.

Maitiú expressed his gratitude to both the ICC and the Elms for being “more than accommodating” during his stay. He also shared his belief that the family character that permeates the Elms campus, paired with the dedicated members that make up the ICC allow the center’s mission to thrive and keep alive a culture which we all know and love.

Faithful friend of great-grandfather By Will Dziura

Sitting on an oak shelf in a far corner of my house is a book, containing remnants of my family’s past. When opened, one can find newspaper clippings, photos and postcards all telling a variety of unique and interesting stories. There are, however, two artifacts in particular that have always been of value to me- a couple of newspaper clippings from the early 20th century telling the story of my great-grandfather, his death, and the surprising tale that followed.

Dr. John M. Maloney was born in Springfield in 1884, the son of immigrant parents. He was educated in the Springfield public school system, and then attended Georgetown University where he graduated in 1907 from the school of medicine.

Dr. Maloney moved back to Springfield, where he began work at Mercy medical center and opened his own practice on upper Liberty St. There,

Dr. Maloney made his living providing care for the Irish community of Springfield, right through the pneumonia pandemic of 1918. Sadly, in 1922 at the age of 38, Dr. Maloney himself succumbed to pneumonia, leaving behind a wife and two children, one of whom was my grandfather.

This story, taken from Dr. Maloney’s obituary, alone provides some very interesting family history; however, the story does not end here. Attached to the obituary is another article, written some time after Dr. Maloney’s death titled “Dog’s Love for Master Continues After Death.” The article tells of how when alive Dr. Maloney had a Scotch Collie named Rover who accompanied him wherever he went: “Rover invariably accompanied his master on all his journeys, whether to the Mercy hospital or on his round of sick calls, or to Our Lady of Hope Church to attend

low mass.”

As the title of the article insists, Dr. Maloney certainly did have a companion who truly loved him, for after his death Rover was seen weekly on the steps of Our Lady of Hope church “anxiously scanning the faces of the congregation in quest of the master whom he loved so well.” In addition to his weekly trip to mass, Rover was frequently found at the approaches of Mercy Hospital or at St. Michael’s cemetery, where his master was laid to rest.

The writer concludes: “The family places no credence in these stories,” a statement that leaves plenty of room to doubt the validity of such a tale. Yet, this story has become a special part of our family history - providing us a unique passage into our past. Rather than dig for the truth, such an account teaches us that sometimes it is best to just let go, and let the power of the tale sweep over.

Family remembers a “Christmas Miracle” and its heirloom gift

By Kathleen McCarthy

In 1891 my grandmother, Mary McGovern, left Killeshandra, County Cavan, for a new life in America. She would eventually marry Denis Kelleher, another immigrant, from Guinneveguilla, County Kerry. Mary and Denis had five children, one of whom was my mother.



However, before all that happened, Mary’s father, Bernard, passed away at home in Killeshandra in 1901, leaving her mother, Ann, alone in Ireland. So, my grandmother, Mary, took the treacherous sea voyage back to Ireland to bring her mother to America. The story goes that when my grandmother and great-grandmother were leaving the family cottage to travel to their port of embarkation, my grandmother said to her mother, “Aren’t you going to leave the door ajar? If you do, you’ll come home one day to this very house.”

My great-grandmother said, very matter of factly, “You can leave the door open if you wish, but I’ll never return to this house.” And so it was to be. Mary and Ann took their voyage to America on the ship *Oceanic* and



landed in America in 1901. Fast forward to 2005. My son Greg, our genealogist, and his family had moved from one neighborhood to another within the same town. On Christmas Day they stopped by a friend’s house after Mass because Greg’s wife wanted to give that friend a gift. The friend’s house was next to Greg’s old residence. As my son sat in his car with his two children waiting for his wife, he happened to look up to the front door of his old house and noticed a large package resting against the door. For some reason, Greg sensed the package might be addressed to him because he knew the new owners were not yet in residence. Greg also knew a torrential rain storm was predicted for that day, which would surely soak the package through and through. He took a chance and went up the front steps of his old house and checked the address on the package. Sure enough, it was addressed to him from one of our cousins. That cousin had just lost her mother, my mother’s eldest sister. Upon bringing the package back to his

car, Greg opened it. Overwhelmed was not even close to how he felt. He read a short note, written in my deceased aunt’s hand, that read, “My Mother bought this shawl for her mother for their trip from Ireland to New York.”

Greg said he just sat there in stunned silence holding a true family heirloom. Looking through the packaging he found a beautiful, black Irish shawl in near perfect condition. And to think that if he did not take the chance and walk up the steps of his old house to check on the package it would have surely been ruined by the horrible rains which began falling within the hour.

Greg called the day a ‘Christmas Miracle’ and our family is now blessed to have such a wonderful heirloom to connect us with our past.

Photos are of my great grandmother, Ann (Mc Goldrick) McGovern (seated in Mechanicsville, N.Y. where she lived until her death); my grandmother, Mary (McGovern) Kelleher, as a young woman; my granddaughter, Delia McCarthy, wearing her great, great, great grandmother’s shawl 110 years later!



**Irish Cultural Center
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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

ICC Calendar of events

Ongoing: Language Classes offered each semester; call the Graduate Office at 265-2218.

Genealogy volunteer

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

Note new dates for some events:

March 13, 2 p.m. at Sons of Erin
Irish Ceili

March 16, 7 p.m. Irish concert with Tim Donoghue and friends

March 20, 11 a.m.
Holyoke St. Patrick's Parade

April 3, 2 p.m. documentary by Justin Bell "Seven Shades of Green"

May 11, 7 p.m.
Brenda Ni Shuilleabhain, 'Bibeanna'; documentary "Dunquin" with Michael De Mordha

May 21 day-long La Gaeilge language immersion and workshop
May 21, 6-8 p.m.
Irish Wine Tasting fundraiser

June 11 Famine exhibit bus trip

July 26-30
Celtic Adventures for Kids

September 3-13
Journey of the Soul Trip to Ireland

September 15-October 2
Big E exhibit

October
Photography exhibit in Borgia Gallery "To Love Two Countries"

November 2 dramatic recital "J.M. Synge: The Aran Islands"

December 3
Christmas with an Irish Touch

For information on our partner Irish organizations, check out the programs on these web sites.

AOH

www.AOH-Holyoke.com

John Boyle O'Reilly Club

www.jbo-club.com

Sons of Erin

www.sonsoferin.com

St. Patrick's Parade Committee

www.holyokestpatricksparade.com

We are pleased to print on pages 6 and 7 the first two stories in connection with the History Project. We encourage our readers to submit a story for the next issue.