



The Cairde Connection

"Keeping the Irish Arts Alive!"

Irish Cultural Center at
Elms College

Volume 11 & Issue 2

November 2010

Documentary on The Boys of St. Columb's

Maurice Fitzpatrick will show the documentary "The Boys of St. Columb's" and talk about his book based on the interviews he conducted of former students on Sunday, November 7 at 2 p.m. in the Alumnae Library Theater..

The school in Derry is the only one in the world to boast two Nobel Prize winners- John Hume (Peace) and Seamus Heaney (Literature.) Seamus Deane, who has a long-standing association with Notre Dame University in both a publishing and a teaching capacity, is also one of the film's participants. Others interviewed include Irish ambassador James Sharkey, singer and songwriter Phil Coulter, civil rights campaigner and writer Eamonn McCann, singer and songwriter Paul Brady, and retired Bishop Edward Daly.

This film tells the story of how the



Pictured: James Sharkey, Seamus Deanne, Seamus Heaney, Maurice Fitzpatrick and unidentified man at the launching of his book in Dublin.

political and historical conditions of Northern Ireland altered as a result of the mass education of its population, culminating in the Civil Rights Movement of the late 1960s which drew its inspiration from the United States marches. The film uses St. Columb's, an excellent example of a school that

underwent the shift from the post-war years into the more liberal 1960s, as a lens to understand the effect of the 1947 legislation.

Fitzpatrick is professor at Keio University, National University in the Department of Science and Technology. He earned his bachelors in English and Philosophy and Masters in Literature from Trinity College, Dublin and an additional Masters in literature from Senshu University, Japan.

Copies of the book will be available for purchase at \$29.95.

Concert tickets

It's not too late to purchase tickets for Mary Black's concert at the Fine Arts Center. Don't miss the opportunity to hear this wonderful singer. Tickets include concert, bus and driver's gratuity: members \$47.50; non-members \$50.

Christmas celebrates music and children

Christmas is all about children and this year we are adjusting our Christmas with an Irish Touch celebration by hosting Dan Kane and his young singers in performance.

Dan Kane and Friends will perform December 4 at 2 p.m. in Veritas Auditorium, Berchmans Hall.

At 4 p.m. we will have Liturgy in Our Lady's Chapel with readings and the

sung parts of the Mass in Irish.

We are proud this year to be showcasing soloists from the famed Dan Kane Singers during this upcoming Christmas Season. This is a show not to be missed. Their annual Christmas Shows at the Mass Mutual Center and Symphony Hall have been popular for years, always selling out! Come join us for this very special program of Christmas music featuring several of their renowned children and adult soloists.

We will serve refreshments. The event is free and open to the public. We will conduct a raffle and take free will offerings. Berchmans Hall is handicapped accessible.



Sympathy

We extend our sympathy to the family and friends of Alice Joyce who died recently: to Margaret Cunningham and family on the death of her husband Martin.

Congratulations

Kelly O'Sullivan gave birth to her second child, a daughter on October 24. Catherine Ann is welcomed by her dad Jay and brother Andrew.

Congratulations to Richie Neal who will receive the Solas Award on December 10 from the Irish Immigration Center in Boston.

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

Officers:

Chip Costello, E Longmeadow

Jerry Donovan, W Springfield

Kevin Taugher, So Hadley

Kathleen Riordan, Springfield

Rose Baker, W Springfield

Joyce Bosworth, Longmeadow

James Cannon, Holyoke

Kate Daly, Westfield

Kate Doe, Northampton

William Dziura, Chicopee

Dennis Egan, Longmeadow

Sheila Foley, W Springfield

Kathryn Gallivan, So Hadley

Fran Hennessey, Springfield

James Hoar, Holyoke

Ann Lowe, Holyoke

Mary Ellen Lowney, Chicopee

Kathleen Lynch, Chicopee

Mary Ellen O'Brien, Springfield

Kelly O'Sullivan, Westfield

291 Springfield Street

Chicopee, MA 01013

265-2537 irishcenter@elms.edu

www.irish-cairde.org

Annual brunch brings together 70 people

By Mary Ellen Lowney

Quinnipiac University President Dr. John L. Lahey gave an informative talk on the Great Hunger at the annual brunch to the 70 attendees. His historical perspective on the five-year period in Irish history, spanning from 1845-1849, left a packed crowd silent at the Yankee Pedlar Inn in Holyoke.

Members and guests filled the room, mesmerized as Lahey spoke of the period of Irish history that was long left outside of history books, or even worldwide discourse.

But in fact the event, renamed ‘The Great Hunger’ from its long-known moniker ‘The Irish Famine,’ was courtesy of far more than a potato blight.

It was the result of more than 300 years of domination by the United Kingdom, Lahey said.

“It didn’t have to happen,” he said. “There was food available, but it was exported out for financial gain for the United Kingdom.”

While more than 1.5 million died of starvation and related diseases in five years, and another 2.5 million left the country over the course of a decade, the official stance of England was to look the other way. During the hunger, boatloads of livestock and grain were shipped out of Ireland every year.

“The Great Hunger was made far worse, and its impact lengthened by years and years, by prejudice, ineptitude and indifference,” Lahey said.

It was a five-year problem whose



impact continues even today. A country of ten million strong in the early 19th Century has never caught up, population wise. There are now 4.4 million people in the country. Lahey said the Irish also missed out on the Industrial Revolution because they were so set back by those lean years.

During the emergency the government adopted a laissez faire policy that only exacerbated the situation. After his presentation, Lahey answered several questions. Comments came from Maitiú de Hál, the Fulbright scholar teaching Irish language at the Elms College.

Lahey is a learned scholar in Irish history with a focus on the Great Hunger. He has established a museum to commemorate the tragic period of history: The Lender Family Special Collection, *An Gorta Mor — The Great Hunger*, is open to the public in the Bernhard Library at Quinnipiac University in Hamden, Connecticut.

Chip Costello gave an overview of the 2009 events and programs and showed a graph of income and expenses.



Pictured above: Dr. Lahey; left Carol Byrnes, Joyce Bosworth and Ann Lowe

How we keep the Irish arts alive by Chip Costello

Fall is a natural time of the year to be thankful and a bit contemplative. We are thankful for our families, friends, and the beauty of our natural surroundings. We are in that "in between" period that the Celts referred to as Samhain. The bounty of the crops has been harvested, followed by rest and an expectation that new growth will emerge in the Spring.

As we celebrate the holiday with our families, let's also take time to give thanks to our Irish Cultural Center as it focuses on its mission of preserving the Irish Arts. When we look at recently sponsored events, we can all be proud and thankful that the Center's mission is being fulfilled.

We should thank the fantastic partnership with Elms College that enabled us to have a Fulbright Irish Language scholar available for Irish language conversation classes. Maitiú de Hál, a Donegal native, is an exceptional teacher with a knack for getting students comfortable with the language. Classes are conducted in Irish. If you do not understand something, it is expressed differently so that you do understand. There is an expression in Irish that captures this idea: "Is éadrom an fhuip an t-eolas." It is light - the whip of knowledge.

In this environment, you can start to think in Irish, and that is the mark of a good teacher. In addition to



teaching at the college and for the Center, Maitiú will collaborate with us on some selected projects.

The Center collaborated with the Irish Arts Center of New York (IAC) to collect photos and stories of selected people born in Ireland but who settled in Western Massachusetts. Their photographs, in addition to others throughout the New England area, have been captured by John Minihan, the renowned Irish photographer. The stories were preserved by the IAC staff. The photographs will be seen at the State House in Boston with the opening scheduled for November 10. We are negotiating to have the display in the Borgia Gallery in October 2011. Eventually, both stories and pictures will be available online through the IAC website.

Recently, over forty travelers returned from a trip to Ireland that included stops in Derry and other locations in the North. Although there were many highlights, I was pleased to hear that the group was

able to stop and be welcomed by Reverend Good at the Corrymeela Community Center in Ballycastle. The Center focuses on peace and reconciliation through dialogue. Many of you will remember the visit to the Elms campus by Father Reid and Reverend Good discussing their involvement in the peace process. The travelers were able to witness a beautiful area but more importantly the good work of committed, enlightened people.

The events committee has been very busy seeking events that help us fulfill our mission. The film series continues to become increasingly popular; book readings with M.P. Barker, Kevin O'Hara, and Sr. Judy attract good attendance; lectures by Dr. John Lahey, President of Quinnipiac University, on the Great Famine and Dr. William Matthews on the life and influence of Michael Collins engendered good discussions. Finally, we should give special thanks for all of those who are responsible (especially Mary Ellen O'Brien) for designing and running the Celtic Adventures for Kids. Seeing the kids enjoy each other's company is fantastic. It is even more impressive when it is done through Irish dance, music, and language.

We need to continue to build on the legacy that was passed on by our founders. We thank them for their foresight and for the generosity and friendship of the Elms College. As we finish this year, we should take pride in our programming and look forward to increased membership in 2011.

The best way to do that is to invite friends to upcoming events. It will not take them long to realize what a great organization this is. Go raibh maith agaibh!



Pictured above Maitiú de Hál; left children learning at Celtic adventures for Kids

Development Committee wraps up educational video

The ICC Development Committee is heading into the final stages of an educational/promotional video that celebrates the first 10 years of the organization.

The video, in the production stages, will feature the voice of U.S. Rep. Richard E. Neal, long-time supporter and member.

Over a backdrop of music from Irish musicians Aine Ui Laoithe and Eilin Ni Chearna's 'Mna and Oilean,' the 12-minute production will include clips and photographs from the early days of the ICC, as well as more recent events such as last year's visit by Irish President Mary McAleese, the Celtic Adventures Camp for Kids, and the 10-year anniversary festivities held at

the Elms College.

The video will be used to educate people about the organization, as well as to help with fund-raising efforts.

Committee members are looking for old Irish photographs that depict immigrants before or after they came to Western Massachusetts. Anyone with photographs that would be appropriate are urged to call Sister Judith E. Kappenman at the Center at 413-265-2537.

The video will be available for viewing when completed.

Committee members are ICC President Chip Costello, board members Kate Daly, William Dziura, Dennis Egan, Mary Ellen Lowney and Mary Ellen O'Brien, along with past ICC President Tim Allen and Sister Judith E. Kappenman.



Life stories project

Mary Ellen O'Brien has begun the Life Stories project and we remind you again to look for documents, such as birth certificates, marriage licenses, baptismal records, passports, citizenship papers, etc. We will ask you to send copies or allow us to copy them for you. We would also like the names of people who have immigrated or their children who would be willing to be interviewed.

Please contact the Center.

Opportunities to become more involved in the Center

The ICC Membership Committee met recently to map out its work for the fiscal year. High on the priority list is drawing new members to the organization. Paying membership now stands at about 400.

Committee members also discussed the development of a brochure to draw in members, along with placard-type 'billboards' that could be used to inform people about the center and its activities.

Committee members are Francis Hennessey, who is chairman, and Rosemary Baker, James Cannon, Chip Costello, Kate Doe and Dennis Egan.

If you could help this group in any way, contact the center. Read on.

Did you know that any ICC member can serve on a committee? We are looking for volunteers who are willing to give time for monthly meetings to help steer the course for coming months and years. We wel-



come ICC members to step forward and join the work of the mission to promote Irish culture in the Pioneer Valley.

Committees with seats available include Development, Events, Genealogy, Language, and Membership.

Anyone with interest on serving, or on being considered to the full board, please contact the center.

We already have several who are working with the Events Committee and would welcome additional help.

In addition to the committees listed above, volunteers help with office work, most especially in preparing

mailings and hosting events.

Another way volunteers help is at the Big E where they promote the Irish Cultural Center, its programs and events, as well as giving out information on the Elms College. Ten Elms College students joined the ranks of volunteers this year. We are glad to have these young, enthusiastic helpers.

Questions often focus on the language classes, the trip to Ireland and upcoming events.

The volunteers help the Dingle merchants and promote Billy's Malawi Project. On two evenings this year, our local Irish musicians conducted a session, organized by Tim Donoghue and Bill Dempsey.

Several merchants expressed delight with the music that attracted Big E visitors to the area, and increased sales. Mairead de Staic said, "We had good sales last night while the music was playing."

Ireland trip forges memories by Kathy Gallivan

On Saturday, September 4th our 5th Journey of the Soul group departed on our “first ever” tour that included the Northwest and North of Ireland. We traveled with forty-four participants in all, representing nine states and twenty cities/towns within Massachusetts.

Highlights included many with spectacular scenery and special moments at places like the Slieve League Cliffs, Giant’s Causeway, Derry and Belfast and the lovely town of Ballycastle on the beautiful Antrim coast—where we met with the Reverend Harold Good for a very special afternoon at the Corrymeela Community.

We received a warm welcome throughout the Republic and especially Northern Ireland. Look for the full report of our journey in our next newsletter and postings of our photos on our website www.Irish-Cairde.org. We have already made arrangements for our next 11-day



tour that we will offer from September 3-13, 2011.

We will be returning to the popular West and Southwest Coast of Ireland for this trip, similar to our 2006 and 2007 tours—with a couple of extra days and new places to explore! We start off with 3 nights in Galway, 3 nights in Dingle, 2 nights in Killarney and the last night in the old world village of Adare. We will have more information about this trip in our next newsletter. Our first information session is planned for Sunday, January 16, 2011.



Pictured above a group of travelers gather at the Giant’s Causeway; above right, Mary Flynn, Rev Good, Jean Brigham, Barbara Boos, Terry Sawicki (the four women are Elms Alum.); one lone figure



Genealogy Conference offers research help

Of interest to our readers is the Eleventh New England Regional Genealogical Conference to be held in Springfield from April 6-10, 2011. Check out the web site at NERGC.org for a list of speakers, workshops, registration form and fees to attend.

On Thursday from 7:30 to 9 p.m. Michael Brophy will conduct a discussion on Irish American research including sources and strategies for finding Irish ancestors across the Atlantic.

On Saturday Eileen Ó Dúill will give a lecture to researchers who plan to travel to Ireland. She will give hints on preparation, documentary sources and pre-trip organization, on tips on Dublin record repositories. Pre-registration is required for all the events.

Michael Carney establishes scholarship

In the name of Michael and Maureen Carney, a scholarship to promote the heritage of the Blasket island has been established for the benefit of students in the Corca Dhuibhne Gaeltacht.

Michael Carney said, “We want this bursary to commemorate the island, its people and its language and to promote and preserve the Island’s heritage.”

The scholarship of €1000 per annum will be open to second level students from West Kerry Gaeltacht

who intend studying a heritage subject in a third level institution. Those subjects include Irish, history, geology, folklore, archaeology, music, literature and art

The scholarship, which will be available in 2011, will be operated on a partnership basis involving the Carney family, the Blasket Centre, Fundiureacht an Bhlaoscaoid and Pobalscoil Corca Dhuibhne. The funding will be donated by the Carney family, their friends and the wider community in Massachusetts.



Pictured from left, Pádraig Firtéar, Dr Micheál Carney, Noreen (Kearney) McNamara and Jerry Hayes.

Credit: Photo by Ted Creedon

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

NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
College of
Our Lady of the Elms

**Phone: 413-265-2537
Email: irishcenter@elms.edu
www.irish-cairde.org**

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

ICC Calendar of events

Ongoing: Language Irish Study Group meets weekly. Classes offered each semester; call the Graduate Office at 265-2218.

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

November 7, 2 p.m. lecture and film "The Boys of St. Columb's" by Maurice Fitzpatrick

November 12 bus at 6:30 p.m. to UMass Fine Arts to Mary Black concert

December 4, 2 p.m. Christmas with an Irish Touch Veritas Auditorium and Chapel

January 26, Feb 2, 9, 16, 7 p.m. winter film series Alum Library

Theater
March 6 Irish Ceili

March 27 Brid Barnett storytelling 'Peig Sayers' at the Boyle

May 4 Brenda Ni Shuilleabhain, author of 'Bibeanna'

June 4 day-long La Gaeilge language

Find us on Facebook!

The Irish Cultural Center now has an official page on Facebook. Stay up to date with the ICC's latest news and events schedule, and connect with others who love Irish arts and culture. Become a fan today - just visit our page and click "like". Then spread the word to your friends! Find our page at: www.facebook.com/IrishCulturalCenter

Contact the Center to make an appointment to use the Rosetta Stone program to learn the Irish language on the computer.

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