



# The Cairde Connection

“Keeping the Irish Arts Alive!”

Irish Cultural Center at  
Elms College

Volume 11 & Issue 1

September 2009

## You are invited to our 10th anniversary celebration; Come to one or all of the events

Please accept our invitation to attend some or all of the events in celebration of our 10th anniversary on the weekend of October 9-11, 2009. We know you'll be delighted with we have prepared. The centerpiece is a concert with the Makem and Spain Brothers performing at the Warehouse?, Holyoke on Saturday at 7:30 pm. Tickets for \$35 which includes admission and a corned beef sandwich can be purchased by calling the Center. To reserve a table of 10, call the Center because advanced tickets are required for a reserved table.

The Makem brothers, Shane, Conor and Rory were born in Drogheda, County Meath and continue the lineage of Irish music dynasties, begun by their grandmother, Sarah Makem. Their father, Tommy Makem helped to bring Irish music out of the corner and into the international spotlight. The Spain brothers, Mickey and Liam, learned Irish songs at their father's knee as well.

On Friday we ask you in join us in welcoming artist Vincent Crotty from 4-6 p.m. in the Borgia Gallery for his opening: Recent Paintings: Images of the Blasket Island, Ireland and Beyond. Immediately following the opening, a group of musicians will present a session in the Dooley Campus Center Dining Hall from 6-10 p.m. They love an audience and also invite anyone who wants to join in the music making (including the voice.) Dancers from the McDermott School will perform too. If you wish, you may purchase snacks and/or supper from Aramark Food Service.



Beginning at 9:30 a.m. on Saturday we will offer workshops in Berchmans Hall: Gaelic games, Irish language, bodhran and bones, Irish genealogy, Irish dancing; Heather Lowe will also host a series of films in the Alumnae Library Theater at the same time.

We invite you to join us on Sunday for Liturgy in Our Lady's chapel at 10:30 a.m. with Monsignor Christopher Connelly; the readings and sung parts of the Mass will be in Irish. Immediately following we invite you join us for brunch in the Dooley Campus Center Dining Hall where we will honor the three founders of the Center: Sr. Kathleen Keating, Tom Moriarty, and Sean Cahillane. Tickets are \$15 for members and \$20 for non-members.

Novelist and essayist Peter Quinn will address the topic *Unremembered and Unforgotten: Irish America and the Great Hunger* in the Kennedy lecture. Under a separate mailing you will receive a signup sheet for all of the weekend activities. Please complete and return to us with your check as soon as possible. We look forward to having you share in this momentous occasion of “keeping the Irish arts alive” for ten years. Thanks for your part in supporting us.

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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**291 Springfield Street**

**Chicopee, MA 01013**

**265-2537 irishcenter@elms.edu**

**www.irish-cairde.org**

## Fall and new year events highlighted

From Sept 18-October 4 we will have an exhibit in the Young Building at the Big E in West Springfield where we will showcase our programs and events, as well as have information on the Elms College and its programs. We'll also give assistance to some of the Dingle merchants. Please stop by to say “Hello” and then visit the Dingle merchants to admire their wares.

On October, 18 we will host an information session for Journey of the Soul September 4-14, 2010. See details on page 3.

We offer another opportunity for a dinner/theater experience in Worcester on Sunday, November 15 for a matinee performance. Pilgrim Souls Production is presenting “Big Maggie” by John B. Keane. See details on page 4.

Be sure to save the date: Saturday, December 12 for our annual Christmas with an Irish Touch. Monsignor Christopher Connelly will preside at the liturgy at 4 p.m. in Our Lady's Chapel with readings done in Irish, as well as the sung parts of the Mass. Immediately following we will offer refreshments and entertainment in the Dooley Campus Center Dining Hall. We will highlight some of the children

who participated in Celtic Adventures for Kids in July. They will sing, play the tin whistle and dance as part of the entertainment.

One of our most popular events, we host this unique program for the 11th time. The event is free but we will accept free will donations.

Save the dates of Wednesday, January 27, February 3, 10, and 17 for our annual film series at 7 p.m. in the Alumnae Library Theater. Host Heather Lowe promises another great list of movies with perhaps a classic, or a new release. She always gives us a great variety of Irish films to enjoy.

In February with a date to be determined we will host Kevin O'Hara who will read from his new book, Lucky Irish Lad. We're in for a treat, having hosted him for a reading of his first book the Last of the Donkey Pilgrims.

On Sunday March 7 we are planning the Irish Tea Party which will include the drawing of the raffle with the prize a trip for 2 to Ireland with the Journey of the Soul 2010.

Still in the planning stages is an evening with Sr. Ruth McGoldrick who will offer a program of Celtic spirituality.

## Sympathy and prayers requested

We extend our sympathy to the family and friends of member Lawrence Gormally who died recently.

We extend our sympathy to Mary Ellen O'Brien on the death of her brother, Kevin Russell; Helen O'Sullivan on the death of her

brother, Patrick Lynch; Dorothy Tuttle on the death of her brother John.

We ask for continued prayers of healing for Martin Kearney, Gerry Callahan, Mike Rancitelli, Sr. Eleanor Dooley Olivia Brooks, and Liz Daly of Dingle Crystal.

## Come visit Ireland with us on our fifth Journey of a Soul By Kathy Gallivan

The Irish Cultural Center is excited to sponsor its 5<sup>th</sup> Custom Tour to Ireland September 4-14, 2010. This 11-day scenic tour 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.

We will tour the majestic Slieve League Cliffs (believed to be the tallest sea cliffs in Europe), visit W. B. Yeat's grave in County Sligo in the shadows of Benbulbin, tour the Belleek Pottery factory, Donegal (home of Magee Tweeds), Omagh where we will visit the Ulster American Folk Park (*one of the finest living historic museums in Ireland*), embark on a guided walking tour (with a local guide) of the historic Derry City walls, tour the scenic Inishowen Peninsula, and visit Giants Causeway.

We'll then proceed along the An-

trim coast to tour the beautiful Nine Glens of Antrim before reaching Belfast City. In Belfast, a local guide will take us on a tour into the sectarian areas including Falls Road, Shankill, the Peace Wall and also a visit to the Titanic Quarter.

As we head toward Dublin we will stop in the Boyne Valley for a guided visit of the megalithic passage tomb of Newgrange (*built around 3200 BC—older than the Egyptian Pyramids and Stonehenge!*)

We will end our tour with two nights in Dublin's fair city with an opportunity to visit its famous historic sites like Kilmainham Jail and the Guinness Storehouse (*celebrating 250 years!*), with free time to explore Dublin or visit Trinity College and the Book of Kells.

Come and find out more about this “one-of-a-kind” tour at our next Information Session—scheduled for Sunday, October 18, 2009, 2:00 p.m., Alumni Room (2<sup>nd</sup> Floor), Dooley Campus Center, Elms College. Slide presentation and re-



freshments. A deposit of \$300 will be taken to reserve your spot—SURE TO BE A SELLOUT! For more information about the tour or the raffle call Kathy at (413) 536-9709.

*“There Are No Strangers Here, Only Friends We Have Yet to Meet” (Yeats)*

### INFORMATION SESSION!

Sunday, October 18,  
2009 – 2:00 p.m.

**Come and hear more about  
Our Next “Journey of the  
Soul” Tour to Ireland!  
East, West Coasts  
and Northern Ireland!**



**Pictured: above Peace Statue in Derry: Hands Across the Divide; below Giants Causeway, County Antrim**

*Irish Cultural Center's  
10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary*



**\$50 Donation**

*1<sup>st</sup> Place Prize*

**WINS THIS TRIP FOR 2**

*(OR \$4,000 Cash Prize)*

**11-Day Escorted Tour to Ireland**

*Featuring the East & West Coasts & Northern Ireland!  
Scenic tour including Westport, Sligo, Donegal, Derry, Belfast,  
The Boyne Valley, Dublin...and more!*

**ICC TOUR SEPTEMBER 4-14, 2010**

**LIMITED to ONLY 200 Tickets!**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Place Prize \$500**

**3<sup>rd</sup> Place Prize \$100**

*(Drawing: Irish Tea, March 7, 2010)*

**BUY YOUR TICKETS NOW!**

**CALL KATHY for Tickets & More Info at (413) 536-9709**

Visit our Website: [www.IRISH-CAIRDE.ORG](http://www.IRISH-CAIRDE.ORG)

Call (413) 265-2537



**P**ictured above is Peter Quinn who will deliver the George Kennedy lecture on Sunday, October 11 at the 11:30 a.m. brunch. He is author of both fiction and non fiction. He studied the Irish immigrant experience in New York in *Looking for Jimmy: A Search for Irish America*. He also wrote *How the Irish Invented Slang: The Secret Language of the Crossroads*. His novels are *Banished Children of Eve: A Novel of Civil War New York* and *Hour of the Cat*. He is a frequent contributor to Irish American newspapers.

## Bus trips offer entertainment and good experiences

**D**uring the last several months two bus trips traveled to opposite ends of the turnpike, one to attend a play and the other to pursue genealogy research. Twenty-eight participants had a dinner theater experience in Worcester on May 3 when they saw the Pilgrim Souls Production of "Stones in His Pockets." After the performance they enjoyed a buffet dinner served in the Hall. While dining, they were treated to a group of Irish musicians who conducted a session.

Another group traveled to the National Archives, Pittsfield on Saturday, May 16, to pursue research to discover their family heritage. The Archives include items from every branch of the Federal government: immigration records, national census records, naturalization records,

passenger arrival records, Civil War and military records and post office records. At lunch time they enjoyed a deli lunch while sharing with the others from the Irish Cultural Center the progress of their work.

Plan to join us for another dinner theater experience in Worcester Sunday, November 15 for "Big Maggie" by John B. Keane on November 15, 2009 at 2:00 p.m. After the play we will share another delicious buffet meal in the Hall Pub. Tickets, which are \$70 for members, \$75 for non-members, include the play, buffet, bus and driver's gratuity. Seats are limited; to reserve tickets, notify the Center by October 23 to guarantee a seat. Reservations are accepted with full payment; we have a no refund policy.

The bus will leave the Elms parking

lot on the corner of Springfield and Fairview streets at the Gaylord Building at 12:30 p.m. and return to Chicopee about 6:30 p.m. The buffet menu includes: chicken picatta, egg plant lasagna (vegetarian), salad, garlic bread, and a dessert table.

On March 10, 2010 the Irish Cultural Center will sponsor a bus trip to the UMass Fine Arts Concert Hall to hear the 6-time Grammy Award winning, *Chieftains and Patty Maloney* in concert. There will also be a special pre-performance Irish Celebration in the lobby. The cost includes transportation, driver's tip, and concert ticket. Members: \$45, Non-Members: \$49 and Kids: \$35 (17 and under). Full payment is required at time of reservation. No refunds. (Makes for Great Christmas Gifts!) Sure to be a Sold Out event!

## Camp mixes education and fun to produce happy children

By Sister Judith Kappenman

In a recent newsletter edition, I included several recipes for Irish breads, scones and other dishes. Now I share the ingredients for the best Celtic Camp anywhere. Begin with about 50 young people from the age of 6 to 14 eager to learn about the Irish culture and heritage, add talented and experienced teachers, stir in teenagers willing to assist as junior counselors, and a few adult volunteers, and you have the main ingredients.

The teachers for 2009 provided the meat: Irish language, Tom Moriarty; dance, Mary Ellen O'Brien and Kerri Sullivan; music, Terry Ezold; arts and crafts, Martha Franz; Irish literature and story telling, Anita Moore; and outdoor games, Erin Mulvagh.

The junior counselors added other ingredients: Nora Bond, Martin Boyle, Cassidy Cunningham, Caroline Heafey, Alexis Lussier, Ben Martin, Brianne O'Shea, and Mackenzie Russell-Masterson.

Adult volunteers Marian Callahan, Mary Ellen Lowney, and Kelly O'Sullivan came every day to add still more ingredients.

Place all of the above, adults, teens and campers in several Elms classrooms, on the stage of Veritas Auditorium and in the Keating Quad in order to offer a variety of activities: stir gently until all ingredients are completely blended.

Add a dash of fun, mostly good summer weather and a daily swim in the Maguire pool. Let it all simmer for 5 days. On the last day, family and



friends are welcomed to see and hear the product: clever arts and crafts projects, the use of the Irish language in song and words, the singing of Irish songs, the playing of the tin whistle, and the dancing of jigs and reels.

The children have learned about Irish culture and have made new friends; parents and grandparents are pleased and proud; the very tired teachers know they have accomplished a great deal in one short week. We offer an incredibly quick and easy recipe for happy children in a fun, learning experience.

All the credit for this recipe belongs to Mary Ellen O'Brien who created the formula in 2001 and has

coordinated the program over the years.

Kathy Martin whose two sons who have come for many of the years of the camp said, "It's the only camp they attend in the summer when they rise early." Christine Gray-Mullen whose three children attended for the first time said that the children were anxious on Monday because they didn't know anyone, but they quickly adapted because of the welcoming atmosphere. On the last day she enthused, "What a wonderful experience this has been! My children have a better understanding of their heritage and had a wonderful time making new friends."

We'll do it all over again for the 10th time in July 2010, we promise.



## Blasket islander to be awarded honorary Doctor of Celtic Studies

Blasket Islander Michael Carney is headed to Ireland where he will receive on September 21 an honorary Doctor of Celtic Studies from the University of Ireland, Maynooth at the Blasket Center, Dunquin.

Carney, when announcing this presentation said, "It (receiving notice of the honor) was a total surprise. I don't expect or look for recognition. I do everything I do because I like to do it and I enjoy it." But he is excited and pleased at this announcement.

He never lost his first language and uses and promotes it whenever and wherever he can, both in speaking and writing. He has been involved in

an amazing number of activities to promote Irish culture and the Irish language since leaving the island at the age of 16.

While living and working in Dublin as a young man, he became a Gaelic League member; he wrote articles in Irish for the Irish Press and for the Kerryman.

Once he moved to Springfield in 1948 he continued his involvement in promoting Irish culture and the language. He became an active member of the John Boyle O'Reilly Club. Ten years ago he became a member of the Irish Cultural Center when it was founded. He taught the Irish language at Commerce High School for ten years.

But what he is proudest of all he has done is his committee work in promoting the Blasket Island as a heritage site, and through years of diligent work, his plan has reached fruition. He has designed and will bring with him to the Blasket Center in Dunquin a plaque that reads: *In loving memory of all the people of this island.*

*May they rest in peace for the likes of them will not be again.*

Tom Moriarty said, "It is particularly a great honor for Michael because of the close association with Maynooth of the Irish scholar from the Kerry Gaeltacht, An tAthair Pádraig Ó Finnachta.

## Reunion brings together Blasket islanders By Ted Creedon

Five of the ten living people who were born on the Great Blasket gathered beneath a sculpture of writer Tomás Ó Criomhthain at the Blasket Centre in Dun Chaoin in July.

There are only ten people alive today who were born on the Great Blasket island and five of them paid a visit to the Blasket Centre in Dún Chaoin.

The catalyst for the get-together was the arrival of Máirín Ní Chearna Osky from Springfield, Massachusetts, who was spending a week with relatives in West Kerry.

She was born into a large family on the island in 1928 but when her mother died at a young age Máirín was sent to live with an aunt near Ballyferriter.

She spent her summers on the island with the rest of the family and loved gathering dillisk.

"We had a cow and a donkey and my father had a few sheep but he was mostly a fisherman. We didn't have a lot of meat in our diet. Sometimes we

had no bread and had to eat potatoes three times a day. I used to collect dillisk on the strand and the rocks and one day I fell in the ocean. I couldn't swim and went down twice and was nearly drowned but my brother Mike came along and saved me," she told The Kerryman.

Mike Kearney emigrated to Springfield in 1948 and Máirín followed shortly after and has been living there for most of her life since.

Other islanders who gathered in the Blasket Centre were Máirín Dunleavy Boland, Niamh Ní Chriomhthain Uí Laoithe, Nell Bean Uí Shé and Pádraig Ó Catháin.

While there, they were interviewed by Micheál Ó Sé for Radio na Gaeltachta and spent an hour recalling life on the island.

The reunion was organised by Blasket Centre Director Micheál de Mordha and Tralee man Edward Fitzgerald who has been a friend to the islanders for many years.



**Pictured from left: Niamh Ní Criomhthain Uí Laoithe, Mairin Dunleavy Boland, Mairin Ní Chearna Osky, Nell Bean Uí Shé and Pádraig Ó Catháin.**

**Photo by Ted Creedon**

## Why Bother to Learn Irish? By Gerald Costello

My friends and family often ask me why I spend time learning the Irish Language. In fact, some of my friends were not aware that there is an Irish Language. Even in Ireland, where there has been a recent, renewed interest in the language, there are many who still find the language inscrutable or remember it as an impediment to passing exams or getting a governmental job. For an interesting and funny view of the language in Ireland, go to YouTube and watch a video entitled "Yu Ming Is Ainm Dom."

There is a great essay – "A Dangerous Silence" – by Neasa Ni Chinneide that helps to answer the question why we should consider spending time learning this rich language. She quotes the poet Michael Hartnett, "It (English) may be a good language for the market ... But we can use Irish for a different set of purposes, to affirm important parts of who we were and might be." That's it! That's why I spend the time taking classes, going to Ballyferriter, attend-

ing language weekends, listening to Radio na Gaeltachta, watching RTE, observing a 1911 Kerry Census that shows my great grandparents as Irish speakers only.

The language serves as a tie to their history as well as a means to connect with others who share the same interest in Irish culture and history.

Aside from personal reasons that you may have for learning the language, there are several other reasons listed on [www.gaeltalk.net](http://www.gaeltalk.net). Let me cite a few that they have noted.

1. It's the national language of Ireland.
2. There is a dramatic increase in the number of speakers.
3. The language is in the mass media including Radio na Gaeltachta and Teilifis na Gaeilge (TG4).
4. There are numerous websites offering instruction.
5. It is a source of meaning for Irish surnames, personal names,

and place names as we have noted in other articles.

The most important reason to learn the language is that it's fun! It is a great opportunity to meet new people. I was returning from a business trip last month and saw a young lady boarding the plane with her red Irish passport. I should have at least let her stow her bags before asking the only question that mattered to me at that moment "An bhfuil Gaeilge agat?" (Do you have the Irish?)

As she headed to the back of the plane, she said that she did and was visiting some relatives before heading back to Dublin. This was "as Gaeilge" of course. The passenger next to me shifted in his seat a bit stiffly, but I had just met one of the cousins and used the language. What a great day!

If any of these reasons to learn the language is compelling to you, then join us in the beginning class which is starting up on September 14. You never know what cousin you will meet.

## John Johnson's gift application for January Irish classes

### IRISH LANGUAGE AWARD APPLICATION

**Read the article below before completing the form.**

Complete and mail to the Irish Cultural Center, 291 Springfield Street, Chicopee, MA 01013

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

**Answer the following questions; use additional paper, if necessary.**

Circle the organizations of which you are a member: ICC, Sons of Erin, John Boyle O'Reilly, AOH

Why would you like to study the Irish language?

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

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

## ICC Calendar of events

**Ongoing: Language** groups meet weekly: beginners, intermediate, conversation, advanced. Call the registrar at 265-2314 for fall classes that begin on Sept 14-15. **tenth anniversary** (See details on page 1)

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

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

**Sept 18-October 4**  
Big E exhibit and information

**October 9-11**  
a weekend of events for our

**October 18**, 2 p.m. Information session Journey of the Soul 2010

**November 15**  
Bus trip to Worcester for the play Big Maggie

**December 12** 4 p.m.  
Christmas with an Irish Touch

**Jan 27-Feb 3, 10, 17**  
Film series

**TBA Feb** Kevin O'Hara book reading his second book, Lucky Irish Lad

**Mar 7** Tea Party (includes raffle drawing)

**March 10** The Chieftains at UMass, Amherst

**March 21** Holyoke St. Patrick's Parade

**TBA March** an evening of Celtic Spirituality with Sr. Ruth McGoldrick

**April 24** Wine Tasting with an Irish Accent to raise funds for the Irish Studies Minor program

**July 26-30** Celtic Adventures for Kids

**September 4-14** Journey of the Soul

## Other events of interest

**John Boyle O'Reilly**  
Oct 4 Monthly breakfast returns  
Oct 10 Holiday craft Fair  
Contact Gloria 5195126 for more information  
Oct 10 Gaelic Garlic Night II. Dinner with Pat Tobin contact Jim or Tom Feeley  
Nov 7 Comedy night  
Round Table discussion on the 2nd Saturday of each month  
[www.jbo-club.com](http://www.jbo-club.com)

**Sons of Erin**  
[www.sonsoferin.com](http://www.sonsoferin.com)

**AOH**