



MARCH 2015
VOLUME 16 ISSUE 2

The Cairde Connection

KEEPING THE IRISH ARTS ALIVE • IRISH CULTURAL CENTER AT ELMS COLLEGE

Dr. Catherine Shannon to Present a Lecture on the 1847 Voyage of the USS Jamestown to Cork, Ireland



The Irish Cultural Center will present a lecture on the USS Jamestown's voyage to Cork, Ireland in 1847, *It is Not an Everyday Matter to See a Nation Starving: Captain Robert Bennet Forbes and the 1847 Voyage of the USS Jamestown to Cork, Ireland.* The lecture will be given by Catherine B. Shannon, Ph.D., professor emerita, of Westfield State University on **Sunday,**

April 12 from 3:00 – 5:00 pm in the Elms College Alumnae Library Theater. Free and open to the public.

Dr. Shannon will discuss the voyage of the USS Jamestown which left Boston on March 28, 1847, loaded with more than 800 tons of provisions and supplies for the starving people of Ireland in the darkest months of "Black 1847," the year the Irish Famine peaked. The New England Relief Committee, which was comprised of Boston Catholics and Protestants cooperating in an effort to collect money, and bring food to Ireland, organized the voyage. The committee collected approximately \$150,000 in food and cash, which accounted for half of the \$300,000 that was sent from Boston to Ireland in 1847.

Dr. Shannon describes that "she will discuss Captain Forbes's effort to ensure that the supplies reached the Irish people in the most efficient and fastest way possible, and his reactions to what he witnessed in Ireland upon arrival there in mid-April." Shannon relates: "This episode was a unique instance when the historic suspicions and hostility that divided the Boston's Irish and Yankee Communities were cast aside and were replaced by cooperation for a great humanitarian purpose."

Dr. Shannon will be honored for her works by the Eire Society of Boston on Saturday, April 25 at the Fairmont Copley Plaza Hotel at the 78th Gold Medal Dinner and Award Ceremony at 6:00 pm. Each year the Eire Society honors a person who exemplifies the best of Irish Culture and ideals.

Mark Your Calendars

The Irish Cultural Center will be continuing our popular film series, **showing three films on April 8, 15 and 22.** Films will be announced shortly.

Stay Up to Date

If your email, phone number or address has changed, please let us know so we can ensure that you don't miss any news from the ICC. Be sure to check your spam folders if you are not receiving our emails.

E-News

If you are not on our email list, you can easily subscribe through our website, www.ElmsIrishCenter.org. Let your friends and family know they can sign up to receive the latest news and updates on events from the ICC.



St. Patrick's Day Greetings

Beannachtaí na Féile Pádraig ort!
BAN-ACK-TEE NAH FAY-LA PAW-DREG ORT
St. Patrick's Day blessings on you!
(to one person)

Beannachtaí na Féile Pádraig oraibh!
BAN-ACK-TEE NAH FAY-LA PAW-DREG OR-IV
St. Patrick's Day blessings on you!
(to a group)



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CONTACT US

We are located in the lower level of the Alumnae Library at Elms College.

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Chicopee, MA 01013

413-265-2537

irishcenter@elms.edu

www.ElmsIrishCenter.org



From the Director's Desk

Hello everyone, it seems like the warmer weather is almost here! The Irish Cultural Center has been busy planning several new events for the spring season that you are sure to enjoy. We are very excited to be presenting Leo & Anto of the Saw Doctors on April 11, for the western MA date of their acoustic tour. Dr. Catherine Shannon will be giving a lecture on April 12, about the USS Jamestown's voyage to Cork in 1847, to provide support to the Irish people during the Great Hunger. We are also going to be running our annual Irish Film Series, hopefully with no snow dates this year! Films will be shown on April 8, 15 and 22; titles will be announced shortly.

The ICC is still accepting memberships for the 2015 calendar year. If you have not yet renewed your membership for this year, there is a handy form on the last page of this newsletter. We also have a new online payment option available on our website. As always, we appreciate your support.

For the latest updates, please visit our website at www.ElmsIrishCenter.org and Facebook page at www.facebook.com/IrishCulturalCenter. Please "like" our page and share with your Facebook friends!

The ICC's office hours are generally 10:00 am – 2:00 pm Monday through Thursday, but I would recommend calling ahead if you would like to visit.

We sincerely appreciate your involvement and membership support. We are always looking for volunteers to help with office activities and events. If you are interested, please contact me at 413-265-2537.

– Ellen Gallivan

Our Mission

The mission of the Irish Cultural Center is to cultivate a connection with Ireland, through the arts, culture, history, language, and heritage. The Center offers opportunities to engage in educational, travel, and social events that promote Irish culture.

The Irish Cultural Center is a leading Irish cultural organization in Western New England. We strive to:

- offer our members the highest quality programs, with well-known, respected guest speakers
- provide unique opportunities to actively participate in aspects of Irish culture
- promote ties between the Center and educational and cultural organizations in Ireland
- establish links with Irish organizations throughout New England
- develop programs for all ages to learn about Irish arts and culture
- maintain a collection of literature, films, music and archival materials available for use

Leo & Anto of The Saw Doctors Bring Acoustic Tour to Western MA

The Irish Cultural Center invites you to a special evening with Saw Doctors guitarist Leo Moran and sax player Anthony “Anto” Thistlethwaite. With The Saw Doctors taking a break from touring the world after twenty five years, Leo and Anto have put together an acoustic show that includes fresh takes on Saw Doctors’ fan favorites and lesser-known songs, and some brand new tunes. The evening promises to be full of great laughs and stories.

Leo and Anto take the stage at 7:00 pm on Saturday, April 11 at the Munich Haus, 13 Center Street in Chicopee, MA, in the second floor event hall. Doors open at 6:30 pm.

Tickets are general admission, table seating. **Advance tickets are \$25 for Irish Cultural Center members, and \$30 for non-members. All tickets are \$35 at the door.** Those who wish to eat at the Munich Haus before or after the show will receive **10% off their food order** by showing their ticket or purchase confirmation.

Please visit www.ElmsIrishCenter.org to buy tickets online, or download an order form. You can also call the Irish Cultural Center at **413-265-2537**.

About the Tour

Ireland’s ever popular band The Saw Doctors are renowned for creating party-like atmospheres with their raucous blend of Irish roots rock. Hailing from Tuam, County Galway, the quintet’s principle players notched a string of singles in their native land with “I Useta Lover,” “Bless Me Father” and “N-17” in the late 80’s, and have been bringing their energetic live shows stateside for the better part of twenty five years. In the summer of 2013 they decided to take some well-deserved time off.

Leo and Anto launched their first acoustic tour here in the U.S. in the fall of 2013. Now the two musicians and friends will be back this spring with their acoustic tour once again. This is the third time they visit the U.S. and, due to popular demand, they will be hitting more cities, many of which will be for the first time. They have released two new CDs for their acoustic tour, “Pushin’ It” and “Flyin’ It,” which have received great reviews from the music press.

Learn more about Leo & Anto, read reviews and see their latest videos at www.leoandanto.com

LEO & ANTO

**LEO MORAN & ANTHONY THISTLETHWAITE
OF THE SAW DOCTORS / THE WATERBOYS**

APRIL 11

7 PM (DOORS 6:30 PM)

THE MUNICH HAUS • CHICOPEE

**FOR TICKETS AND MORE INFO:
ELMSIRISHCENTER.ORG**



PHOTO BY FOTISSIMA

Going Home to the Puck Fair

by Chip Costello

There is something special about a fair that is over four hundred years old. More than 80,000 people attend the annual event located in Killorglin, on the banks of the River Laune in County Kerry. Although the origins of the fair are somewhat elusive, some see a link to the pre-Christian celebration of the he-goat. Others surmise that this is a celebration of the mighty goat warning residents that Cromwell's troops were on the way to subjugate the area. In order to honor these events, a townsman captures a puck goat in the surrounding mountainous area, crowns him, and guarantees the goat's ascension to his rightful throne. King Puck then oversees the festival. He is the only king that the community would pledge its allegiance to.

The structure of the fair consists of three parts: Gathering Day, Fair Day, and The Scattering. The Gathering Day features a horse fair with Irish Draughts, Cobs, Bog Ponies, and others. The Fairground is on the edge of town. You can see a real devotion to these horses from buyers and sellers. Selling, buying, and cajoling are all part of this time-tested festival. Meanwhile, back in town, the parade starts. King Puck ascends the throne, and opening speeches are made. The following day is Fair Day.

Cattle are brought into town. You notice the real affection the farmers and traders have for the cattle and one another while they are observing, assessing, and trying to identify where the best deals are. Finally, the last of the fair is referred to as The Scattering. King Puck is lowered from his throne and ultimately led back to the mountains. These three days are filled with various activities ranging from sean-nós dancing to concerts. The taverns are open for extended periods, and visitors will be thrilled with the overall friendliness they experience at this unique festival.

Gathering Day is also a traditional time for families to return to Killorglin. For me, this added an additional dimension to the trip. My grandparents were from Douglas and Lonart, two townlands that are part of the parish. I imagined them, their siblings and parents at this same fair. Although some of activities have changed over the years, the joy of this August festival has never changed. The most rewarding part of attending the festival was being with my cousins. Some of them lived in Killorglin while others lived not only in different counties but also in different countries. The Puck Festival enabled them to come back and connect as family. As my cousin Johnny said, "What took you so long?"





Doimnic Mac Giolla Bhríde enchants listeners with traditional Irish songs

On March 1, the ICC hosted an afternoon of traditional Irish music “as Gaeilge” with Doimnic Mac Giolla Bhríde, a celebrated sean-nós singer from Donegal. Doimnic sang, and played the accordion and uilleann pipes. About fifty people attended the event, many of whom are Irish language learners in ICC classes. Doimnic’s performance showcased a beautiful combination of music and the Irish language, and the Collegian Court provided wonderful hospitality.

Mayo Genealogy – The Blacksod Bay Emigration

by Mary Ellen O’Brien

For all of our members whose ancestors emigrated to the U.S. from County Mayo, there are now a number of new resources available that can help you if you are searching for information regarding their journey to this country.

Rosemarie Geraghty, a researcher in local history at Ionad Deirbhile, Heritage Center, Aughleam, Blacksod, County Mayo in Ireland, has been researching the Assisted Emigration and the people who left Mayo assisted by the “Tuke Fund” during 1883–1884.

The www.blacksodbayemigration.ie website is the result of research and transcriptions of the ships’ manifests regarding the people who left on the emigration ships from Blacksod Bay, and the history surrounding this time of 1883–1884. The emigrants embarked on the ships near where Ionad Deirbhile Heritage Center is located. The local history research was carried out to help descendants who may be looking for where their people left from, to connect with the land of their birth, and find present day relatives. The research focuses on those who left Blacksod Bay for Boston and Québec, and there is currently an exhibition in the Centre of the information which has been gathered. The Centre itself is located not far away from the Blacksod Lighthouse.

The Tuke-assisted emigrants from the Belmullet and Newport West Poor Law Unions embarked at Blacksod Bay. The next port of call was Galway, where emigrants assisted by the Tuke Fund from the Clifden and Oughterard Poor Law Unions embarked. The Committee of the Tuke Fund

had arranged for the ship to call at Blacksod, (it would not have been a usual stop on the route) where the ship sailed in to the heart of Blacksod Bay and those leaving Ireland were rowed out to the vessel. Link to “Mr. Tuke’s Fund” information and documents at Boston Public Library at archive.org/details/reportspapersrel00tuke.

Ms. Geraghty notes that many people from the Erris area went to Pennsylvania. Many of those who left from Achill Island and surrounding districts settled in Cleveland, Ohio. When you search the Blacksod Bay Emigration Site for Massachusetts, you will see that 135 people that they know of traveled to Massachusetts, including to Holyoke.

The website was launched on July 24, 2013 with the names of people who left on the ships. Descendants of those emigrants can submit photographs and share stories of their ancestors with each other. Some may have sailed on the same ship or traveled to the same destination.

The time in history of this “Assisted Emigration” is often referred to as “The Last Great Famine,” “The Hidden Famine,” or “The Forgotten Famine.” These people therefore were often regarded as the forgotten emigrants.

A memorial garden is in the process of being completed at the Centre and is scheduled to be officially opened in April of this year, and there is going to be a festival organized around it. The Centre welcomes all back for the festivities. The Centre can be reached at eolas@ionaddeirbhile.ie.



Tour Ireland with the Irish Cultural Center
**12-Day Southwest & East Coast of Ireland:
*Magic and Romance Tour***
September 9–20, 2015



Dingle • Killarney • Kinsale • Kilkenny • Dublin

ONLY ONE ROOM LEFT!

Indulge yourself for 12 magical days! A leisurely paced tour to experience the “real” Ireland you dreamed about. Experience the *Magic and Romance* of Ireland as we celebrate the Irish Cultural Center’s 10th year of the Journey of the Soul Ireland tours! This is an Exclusive **ONE-OF-A-KIND** Escorted Custom Tour!

Enjoy this special 12-day tour in beautiful September! You’ll experience the amazing Annual Dingle TradFest (attracting the best in traditional Irish music). This “dream” tour is well-rounded with spectacular coastal scenery, great music, song and dance in Ireland’s most romantic and historic settings, with multiple-night stays in the **center of each town** in Top-Rated Hotels with great Irish hospitality. Includes 17 meals, Welcome Drink/Reception, a “fun and engaging” Farewell Dinner and Show, and interesting attractions and surprises along the way as you discover the magic of Ireland! Plus **direct non-stop flights from Boston/Logan International Airport on Aer Lingus**. Cost of the tour is \$2,895 per person/twin or double room. (Single room option is available for additional cost.)
Optional travel protection is available.

**For more information please contact Kathy Gullivan at 413-536-9709
or kgallivan04@gmail.com. *Please call for availability!***

Visit www.ElmsIrishCenter.org for more details, tour itinerary and testimonials.



Join or Renew Today! — NEW! Easily pay your membership dues online at www.ElmsIrishCenter.org

YES! I would like to **support** the Irish Cultural Center at the following yearly membership level: (see listing below):

Single Family Junior Patron Lifetime

NAME(S)

STREET ADDRESS

CITY / STATE / ZIP

EMAIL

PHONE NUMBER

DOB

I would like to become a **corporate sponsor** of the Irish Cultural Center at the following level (see listing below):

Green Sponsor White Sponsor Gold Sponsor

BUSINESS NAME

I would like to make an **additional donation to support the ICC**: \$ _____

I am enclosing my employer's matching gift form.

I am interested in sponsoring an event at the ICC. Please contact me.

I would like more information on including the ICC in bequests. Please contact me.

Please cut along dotted line, and send with payment to:

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

Make checks payable to: Irish Cultural Center at Elms College

Show Your Support for the Irish Cultural Center

The Irish Cultural Center is devoted to keeping the Irish arts alive. We work to preserve, share, and promote Ireland's cultural heritage, so that all people will have the opportunity to appreciate its rich legacy.

As a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, your support is vital to the ICC's continued success. Your generosity allows us to maintain operational expenses, develop new programs for all ages, expand and exhibit our collection of cultural artifacts, and continue to provide high quality events for the community.

We invite you to join our *Cairde* (membership) and become a *Cara* (friend). Whether you are Irish or not, love the language or the music, or just want to support the preservation of art and culture, your contribution is greatly appreciated. If an opportunity exists for you to seek out a friend or family member to join the ICC, please encourage them to do so.

Now you can easily pay your membership dues online at www.ElmsIrishCenter.org

Membership in the Irish Cultural Center makes a great gift. Or honor your loved one by requesting a memorial donation in lieu of flowers or other gifts.

Support Levels

- Single \$35
- Family \$60
- Junior \$15 (high school – college)
- Patron \$250
- Lifetime \$1,000

Corporate Sponsorship Levels

- Green Sponsor \$1,000
- White Sponsor \$2,000
- Gold Sponsor \$3,000

Advantages of membership include free admission, or discounted pricing for certain events, Irish language classes, and Celtic Adventures for Kids, advance notice of events, and our bi-monthly newsletter. Membership lasts for one calendar year (January – December).

For detailed benefits, please visit our website at www.ElmsIrishCenter.org.

**Irish Cultural Center
at Elms College**

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Chicopee, MA 01013

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Keeping the IRISH ARTS alive



Irish Cultural Center Calendar of Events

Ongoing

Language classes offered each semester; please call the Registrar at 413-265-2314 or visit our website for more details.

April 8, 2015

Irish Film Series

April 11, 2015

Leo & Anto of the Saw Doctors:
Acoustic Show

April 12, 2015

Lecture: 1847 Voyage of the
USS Jamestown to Cork, Ireland

April 15, 2015

Irish Film Series

April 22, 2015

Irish Film Series

May 5 – 14, 2015

ICC Ireland Tour: Visiting Dingle
and Galway – Ireland’s Two Treasures

July 2015 TBD

Celtic Adventures for Kids

September 9 – 20, 2015

ICC Ireland Tour: 12-Day Southwest
& East Coast of Ireland: Magic and
Romance Tour

Visit our website and like our

Facebook page for news and the
most current information on our
programs and events.

Have you seen us on YouTube? We
are continually adding interviews and
event videos to our YouTube channel.

Links on www.ElmsIrishCenter.org

For information on our partner
Irish organizations, check out
their websites.

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

*“You should keep up the good work
because there are so many lessons to
be learned from Irish history, and Irish
culture is beloved to so many people.”*

Christine Kinealy, Professor of History
and Irish Studies at Quinnipiac University