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# iIrish

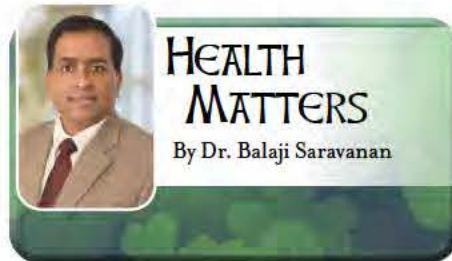
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**HEALTH MATTERS**

By Dr. Balaji Saravanan

# Managing Your Mental Health During the Holidays

It is often referred to as the most wonderful time of year, but for some, the holiday season can be anything but. The decorating, shopping, family gatherings, and other traditions that many credit for making this time of year so merry and bright can prove challenging for others. In fact, the National Alliance on Mental Illness says more than half of individuals living with a mental illness felt their condition worsened because of the holidays.

The unrealistic expectations of needing to find the best possible gift or host the perfect holiday party can lead to financial pressures and personal demands that increase anxiety. Depression can also descend on those who have lost a family member, gone through a breakup, or are unable to be



with their loved ones during this time of year. A jam-packed social calendar, deadlines at work, and even the winter weather can all contribute to the holiday blues that Elvis describes so well in his popular seasonal hit, "Blue Christmas."

Those suffering from the holiday blues can struggle with fatigue and irritability. They may have trouble concentrating, find they're eating or drinking too much, and struggle with feeling overwhelmed. However, all hope is not lost. There are various methods for managing your mental health to ease stress levels and enjoy the holidays more than you may expect.

First, it's important to acknowledge your feelings and realize you're not alone in feeling this way. That will help you recognize that you don't need to force the holiday cheer. Using alcohol or other substances to avoid your feelings can just make anxiety and depression worse. Instead, work to identify your triggers for holiday stress

and set boundaries.

To do this, make sure you keep in mind what really matters during the holiday season. You don't have to attend every social gathering you're invited to – friends and colleagues will understand you can't participate in every activity. It is also important to ask for help. Getting others to assist with cooking or cleaning can quickly ease the burden of hosting others or traveling away for the holiday.

Planning can also prevent added stress, especially when it comes to your budget. Decide how much money is realistic for you to spend before doing any shopping. When it comes to gifts, you can still deliver a smile without going broke. Consider giving one another homemade gifts or starting a family or friend gift exchange that has a set budget everyone must stick to.

Setting aside time for self-care is another important coping tool. Relaxation and breathing techniques can be beneficial whether sitting in holiday traffic, heading into a family

function or a busy store.

Even just a few minutes alone without distraction may be the key to clearing your mind so you're ready to take on the holiday season. Keeping up routines amid all the festivities – especially when it comes to your sleep, diet, and exercise – can also help you stay healthy and organized.

Reaching out to your loved ones during the holiday season is one of the most beneficial things to do when struggling with mental health. Speaking with a friend, family member or even a therapist can help you cope with any negative feelings you may be having. While it might be tempting to isolate yourself from others, surrounding yourself with people who love and support you can make all the difference.

Everyone feels some level of stress and anxiety as a result of all the holiday happenings, but don't let it become something you dread. If your mental health is interfering with your enjoyment of the season or if you continue to feel anxious and depressed long after the holidays have gone, it might be time to speak to your primary care provider. If you find yourself experiencing these issues on a more regular basis, it may also be a sign of seasonal depression and you should definitely talk to your provider.

For more information on sources of support locally, contact the Lorain Mental Health Crisis Hotline at 800-888-6161. Other assistance is available via the National Alliance on Mental Health at 800-950-6264 or the National Suicide Hotline at 988. If you are looking to connect with a trained Crisis Counselor, you can also text Go to 741741 – this is both free and confidential. ●

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**EDITOR'S CORNER**

By John O'Brien, Jr.

# Nollaig Shona Daoibh to You and Yours

**W**help, That's a wrap. Sixteen years of *Ohio Irish American News/iIrish* has been printed, disseminated and please God, is being enjoyed. I hope we have earned your trust in driving this caboose, as an authentic offering of our Irish colored world each month in print, and much more often in the eBulletin, website and all our social media platforms. Please engage with us.

We want your opinion, your experiences, your ideas, and your laughter to ring out, as only an Irish human being can. Expansion is important – for if you stagnate, you die, but we focus on continuous improvement of all that is *iIrish* too,



**About Our Cover:**  
Arch woodland path in Cong, Co. Mayo leads us into *iIrish*.  
Photo by Michel Garrick

with your help.

**Bloomsday**  
I am very excited to announce that the *iIrish Express Tour of Ireland* is finally back on, after three years of COVID cancellations. T'would make a mighty Christmas gift for your loved ones, and for you too.

We lift off from Cleveland on June 14<sup>th</sup>, on the new Aer Lingus Direct Flight to Dublin Airport, just in time to join *Bloomsday* in Dublin Town.

The itinerary is star-studded, and includes, just to date (we have six more months to add more of whatever magic my mind conjures): All hotels, plus Killarney, Mizen Head, Skellig Michael, the Dingle Peninsula and Town, Bunratty Castle, Grange Stone Circles, the Cliffs of Moher, Galway, the Aran Islands and Dun Aengus, Kiltonan, Bunratty Folk Park, Limerick, a medieval-style banquet, and of course, those magnificent hotels, castles, many, many meals and Best of All – music!

We return to Cleveland via Shannon Airport on June 24<sup>th</sup>. I hope you will join me and 40++ of my closest friends. The tour offers multiple days to choose A or B and options to go off on your own too.

Contact me directly for more info or to *Book 'em JohnO'*, at the phone or email below. Deposit is only \$350.

**Irish Film**  
It is a proud thing to see an Irish

film appear in mainstream American theatres. To see "Ireland," and then *The Banshee of Inisherin* within a month are prime examples of the successes, the quality and the demand for Irish films and Irish film stars. We are so grateful to see them getting their due; long may they live.

Within we have more *shenanigans*: *Hope for Lasting Peace in Ireland* and *Uncivil Wars*; *The Westminster Scorecard*; a Gaelic story on *Linguistics, Leprechauns and Legends*, and an Irish language lesson or two, too.

*Ireland's Flu Epidemic of 1918* and other *Heath Matters* wisdom; *Cork's Efforts to Build Business* and other efforts to build *Stone Walls*; *Famous Irish Boxers* and other sports; Red Velvet Chocolate Chip Cookies and other recipes; *The Smuggling Nun Poitín*; Stories, Books and giggles for the Kids; and Book Reviews and great gifts for Christmas for adults, that last all year long are also found inside. **HO! HO! HO! MERRY Christmas (Did you just say that in Santa's voice?)!**

But Dear friends, the things we hope the most to last all year long is this: no matter where you call home, we extend our wishes to have a memorable, Merry, Blessed Christmas, filled with love, laughter, and joyful experiences that you will be talking about, next Christmas.

*Nuair a stapann an ceol, an damhsa deánann an amhlaidh (When the music stops, so does the dance)*

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## The Smuggling Nun

Growing up in Fairfield, Connecticut, Maura Clare loved reading about her Irish heritage. In her late teens, she stumbled across mention of poitín and was immediately fascinated by the rich history around Ireland's original spirit. At the time, poitín was still illegal, and had been since 1661. Maura was amazed that Ireland's ancient, distilled spirit had persevered as an underground tradition and symbol of defiance, for over three centuries.

One of Maura's cousins - a Franciscan nun originally from County Clare - knew of Maura's growing obsession with poitín and eagerness

to try it. Sister Mary hunted down a sample of the hooch and smuggled it back into the U.S. in a holy water bottle for Maura. And so, the seeds of inspiration for the Smuggling Nun brand were planted, to come to fruition decades later.

Poitín is pronounced *POT-cheen*, with the emphasis on the first syllable. Poitín means little pot in Irish—a reference to the small copper pot stills used to make it. It is believed poitín dates as far back as 6<sup>th</sup> century Ireland, making it the precursor to virtually all distilled spirits we drink today.

Throughout history, poitín has been primarily produced from malted barley. Over hundreds of years, the Irish and Scots learned to age it into whiskey. Although barley is almost always the base ingredient, thrifty farmer-bootleggers might add other excess grains or fruit to their mashes.

### Potato

Sometimes potatoes were added, too, after they were introduced in Ireland in the late 1500s. In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, enterprising bootleggers determined to make the best-tasting poitín, learned to blend a little treacle and beet sugar into the barley mash before distillation.



When English colonizers outlawed poitín in 1661, it became the world's first illegal alcohol, and the basis for all bootlegging subculture to follow. In Ireland, poitín became virtually synonymous with the word illegal. That mindset was so entrenched, the Irish didn't get around to legalizing it until only twenty-five years ago.

"To this day, some will still insist that if it's legal, it's not poitín," Maura laughs. "Some also believe that poitín is always harsh. The moment they taste Smuggling Nun, they realize that well-made poitín is delicious and smooth, while retaining authentic flavor and strength."

For the bulk of her career, Maura lived in Boulder, Colorado, working as a producer of high-profile events that often showcased celebrities, performers, and dignitaries. She visits Ireland regularly, both for work and recreation.

Volunteer endeavors included helping with President Mary McAleese's visit to Colorado and becoming a founding, executive board member, of Irish Network Colorado and Irish Network USA.

In 2013, Maura put all the above experience to the test, when she decided she wanted to learn how to make poitín herself. She reached out to her Irish connections for help in finding someone willing to teach her.

Maura said it was surprising to discover how secretive the Irish still are when it comes to poitín. Finally, a friend made a quiet introduction through his family to a retired bootlegger-farmer in the Glens of Antrim, whose father had been

the distilling partner of Michael McIlhatton. "McIlhatton" is a song recorded by Christy Moore that immortalizes that bootlegger as the finest of poitín makers.

"TO THIS DAY, SOME WILL STILL INSIST THAT IF IT'S LEGAL, IT'S NOT POITÍN."

Over subsequent years, Maura worked with "Stephen Still," her ten-gallon copper pot, to practice and perfect the McIlhatton recipe. During the pandemic, Maura sold her house to finance the business and moved back to her native Connecticut. Smuggling Nun's County Down distillery went through an extensive process to procure the finest ingredients and scale up the formula for production.

In 2022, the Smuggling Nun became available to purchase online in most states, with free shipping on two bottles. The brand has debuted in select U.S. bars and liquor stores in New York and Connecticut and has been awarded international medals for the liquid and accolades for package design.

San Francisco World Spirits Competition tasting notes read, "Approachable in style, with bright cereal notes, a subtle smokiness and fine minerality. The vegetal, savoury elements appear within the smooth, delicate palate."

Poitín is becoming increasingly popular with cocktail enthusiasts and spirits aficionados in Ireland and other European countries. *Poitín Now*, the world's first poitín conference, was held in Dublin this fall, where Maura and the Smuggling Nun joined other brand producers in talks and tastings. Industry insiders predict awareness and demand for poitín will grow dramatically in the States in 2023 and beyond.

### How is it best to drink poitín?

Maura suggests, "If you like your spirits straight, Smuggling Nun is incredibly smooth and flavorful. You might sip that with alternating tastes of Guinness - or any Irish-inspired black stout. We call that "Black-and-White." And it's a standout in cocktails. Our signature drink is the 'Dublin Donkey,' a poitín mule."

Another favorite recipe on the [www](http://www).



[SmugNun.com](http://SmugNun.com) website is the Belfast Coffee, which is like an Irish coffee, but made with cold press, poitín, and demerara sugar. Heavy, fresh, unsweetened whipped cream is then floated on top and sprinkled with nutmeg. Maura adds, "You can also simply combine the Nun with some tonic or a little juice and seltzer. I like the sparkling limeade from Trader Joe's as an easy mixer."

"With the enormous success story of Irish distilled spirits, which grew 19% as an industry in just the last year, the time has come to honor and celebrate poitín as the original spirit of Ireland.

"I was fascinated by its underground status, and I was also fascinated by its links to the rebellion. It just was so interesting to me that something like that, something that's so much a part of Ireland's history, could thrive in such a quiet way over centuries. I

was curious to taste it; my cousin who is a Franciscan nun was going over to Ireland and knew of my interest. She's the one who hunted some down when she was back there.

"Of course, it was still illegal at the time. She smuggled it back in a holy water bottle for me. It was very nice of her to do that."

### What is the correct Poitín pronunciation?

There is sort of a range between, I'd say there are three variations. One is phonetically *POTEN*, but that's the most rare. Sometimes you hear something more along the lines of pot chain: a harder P UHT, and then a softer EN. But definitely the most common is pot cheen.

There are a whole host of things that it is called, other than poitín, and a lot of them are sort of affectionate expressions or words. Are you

familiar with the song, The Humors of Whiskey? The lyrics are absolutely brilliant.

One of my favorite terms for poitín is *The CRATUR*, so of course it's "little pots," in reference to the little pot still in which it was made.

*So stick to the cratur' the best thing in nature*

*For drowning your sorrows and raising your joys*

*Oh what moderation gives hope to a nation*

*Can give consolation like poitín me boys*

Did you know right away that you wanted to make this a business or were you experimenting as you went along?

I didn't start visiting Ireland regularly until many years later, so it got shoved to the back of my mind. It didn't really seem to have any relevance in my life back when I was younger. It wasn't until about ten years ago that it occurred to me that I could make it myself, I could learn to make it myself, and I started looking for someone to teach me.

I was looking specifically for a ...

**See the rest of our interview with Maura Clare in the January issue of *ilrish!***

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## ON THIS DAY IN IRISH HISTORY DECEMBER

**4 December 1971** - A bomb planted by the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF) exploded in a Tramore bar, commonly known as McGuirks, in Belfast. Fifteen people were killed, all Catholics.

**5 December 1640** - John Atherton, Anglican Bishop of Waterford and Lismore, was publicly hanged in Dublin for the crime of sodomy. He and his steward, John Childe, were accused of being lovers. Childe was hung in Cork the following year.

**6 December 1922** - The Irish Free State, independent of the United Kingdom, was formally established, a year to the day after the Anglo-Irish Treaty was signed by, among others, Michael Collins.

**10 December 1998** - John Hume and David Trimble - the respective leaders of the largest nationalist and unionist parties in Northern Ireland, the SDLP and the Ulster Unionist Party, received the Nobel Peace Prize.

**14 December 1918** - Voting took place in the United Kingdom general election. Of the 707 seats in the House of Commons, 105 went to MPs on the Island of Ireland. Sein

Fein won seventy-three of those seats, almost completely obliterating the Irish Parliament (IPP).

**18 December 1834** - Nine people were shot to death in Gortroe, near Rathcormac, Co. Cork, while protesting having to pay tithes to the local Church of Ireland parish.

**19 December 1973** - The Supreme Court of Ireland ruled that a ban on importing or selling contraceptives was unconstitutional.

**22 December 1691** - The mass exodus of Irish Jacobite soldiers, around 12,000, to France after their defeat at the Battle of Aughrim on 12 July that year. It became known as the Flight of the Wild Geese.

**27 December 1904** - The Abbey Theatre opened its doors in Dublin with a double bill of Yeat's On Baile's Strand and Lady Gregory's Spreading the News.

**31 December 1759** - The premises of a defunct brewery in the St. James Gate area of Dublin was formally leased to Arthur Guinness for an unprecedented 9,000 years, at an annual rent of forty-five pounds.





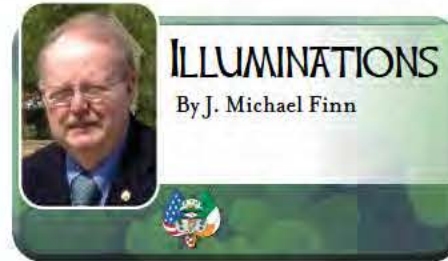


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## ILLUMINATIONS

By J. Michael Finn

# The 1918 Flu Epidemic in Ireland

The 1918-19 influenza pandemic killed an estimated fifty million people worldwide. Known as the "Spanish Flu," it infected at least one in five of the world's population. Few families in the world were left untouched by the pandemic (my Aunt Mary died of the flu in Cincinnati in 1918 at the age of 17). No other pandemic in history has claimed as many lives as the Spanish Flu, not even the Black Death in the 14<sup>th</sup> century.

It was called the "Spanish Flu" because its outbreak was first publicly reported in Spain, but that is not where it began. Some believe it began in China, but the most accepted theory is that it began in America, spreading from birds to pigs, then humans.

American soldiers appeared to be the first infected, and they carried the disease to Europe when they arrived for World War I. The flu soon spread, killing three times as many people as the Great War.

In Ireland, 800,000 people were infected with the flu and over 23,000 died. Dr. Ida Milne, Irish Research Council, has written, "We think that a lot more people died because people were dying so fast that doctors just didn't have time to certify the deaths. They were much more concerned with treating the living than filling out pieces of paper for death certificates."

### Black Flu

The 1918 epidemic in Ireland killed twice as many people as were killed in the 1916 Rising, the War of Independence and the Irish Civil War, combined. The Irish referred to the flu as the "Black Flu" because at times the patients turned purple, or even black.

The flu epidemic hit Ireland in several waves. Donegal was very badly affected throughout the entire influenza period.

The use of Lough Swilly as a naval base during the war, and the treatment of sick British soldiers and sailors in local hospitals, played a role in making Donegal an influenza hotspot. The infection gradually spread across the country.

The flu struck young adults between 20 and 30 years old the hardest. The disease progressed quickly through their systems. Those who were fine and healthy at breakfast could be dead by late afternoon. Within hours of feeling the first symptoms of fatigue, fever and headache, some victims would rapidly develop pneumonia and start turning blue, signaling a shortage of oxygen. They would then struggle for air until they suffocated to death.

For the individual Irish family the results of the flu were often devastating. Many families were decimated, incapable of doing anything except struggling to live. They often failed in that struggle in a dramatic way, presenting a pathetic scene to would-be rescuers who broke down doors to find entire families either dead or beyond help, sometimes all dying in the one bed.

Irish hospitals were overwhelmed by the ill and dying. Nurses and doctors worked to the breaking point, many of them succumbing to the highly contagious disease. There was little the doctors could do, as there were no treatments for the flu, and no antibiotics to treat the pneumonia.

Viruses were unknown, so doctors uselessly treated the flu as a bacterial infection, rather than a viral infection. Doctors threw everything at it: quinine to treat the fever, opium to promote sleep, large quantities of whiskey to relieve the symptoms. It was even suggested that eating onions would prevent the flu – it probably kept people away from you, but it did nothing to prevent the disease.

Dublin's Mater Hospital converted almost all its wards to handle influenza patients. So did the Adelaide, and the Dublin Union Hospital, where witnesses said coffins were stacked up 18-high in the mortuary.

St. Mary's Hospital in Castlebar, County Mayo, reported the following: "Since the date of the last report, the ravages of the disease extended in an alarming manner. At one period there were, out of a total staff of seventy-eight, only twelve persons on duty."

In the street, medical masks became the fashion of the day, as Irish citizens were encouraged to always wear them. Shops and public transportation would



often refuse service to customers not wearing masks.

### Dr. Kathleen Lynn

Doctor Kathleen Lynn of the Irish Citizen Army had been under arrest and was due to be deported to England for her republican activities. She was released in 1918 at the request of Dublin's Lord Mayor to help fight the flu epidemic with the understanding that she would not leave Dublin.

Dr. Lynn wrote in her diary about her efforts to convert a derelict Dublin building into a hospital: "The women

of the Citizen Army, of one accord on a Sunday, came to that derelict house and cleaned it up. They were mostly republicans that helped. Countess Markievicz helped and Countess Plunkett brought bedding. We got things from friends around. It was a very scratch affair."

On the evening of Armistice Day, November 11, 1918, Dr. Lynn's hospital was attacked by pro-British crowds. Dr. Lynn wrote: "We suddenly realized that a hostile mob was attacking the building. There were many Volunteers in the building at the time, including

Harry Boland and Simon Donnelly, who took over command. They immediately started to barricade the front door and windows with chairs and other furniture. Shots rang out, mingled with vile language and shouts of "God save the King!" A state of terror reigned over the whole neighborhood until a late hour when the crowds dispersed."

Community kitchens were set up in Naas, Dundalk and other areas, bringing soups and stews to those too ill to cook for themselves. Many of these kitchens were established by the Irish republican women's organization Cumann na mBan (*coo-men nah man*), whose members also volunteered as nurses and aides in the hospitals without compensation.

### Castlebar

In Castlebar, the flu struck the town severely in November 1918. All the schools and shops were shut and didn't reopen until March of the following year. All sporting events and public meetings were cancelled. The townsfolk were advised to stay indoors if possible to avoid spreading the flu.

Rumors abounded as to the epidemic's origin, with allegations that the banks were spreading germ laden currency, and that the illness had something to do with the wartime shortage of alcohol. People

were also wary of returning soldiers from the war, mistakenly believing that poison gas had something to do with the flu.

It is odd that today, even considering the latest pandemic, that the history of the 1918 flu pandemic is largely forgotten – an event that killed fifty million worldwide. One Irish survivor explained why little is remembered, "People did not want to talk about it because it was so awful, and they dreaded the thought it might come back again."

To read more about the Irish flu epidemic, read the book *Stacking the Coffins – Influenza, War and Revolution in Ireland 1918-1919* by Dr. Ida Milne (Manchester University Press, 2018). ●

*J. Michael Finn is the Ohio State Historian for the Ancient Order of Hibernians and Division Historian for the Patrick Pearse Division in Columbus, Ohio. He is also Chairman of the Catholic Record Society for the Diocese of Columbus, Ohio. He writes on Irish and Irish-American history; Ohio history and Ohio Catholic history. You may contact him at [FCoolavin@aol.com](mailto:FCoolavin@aol.com).*

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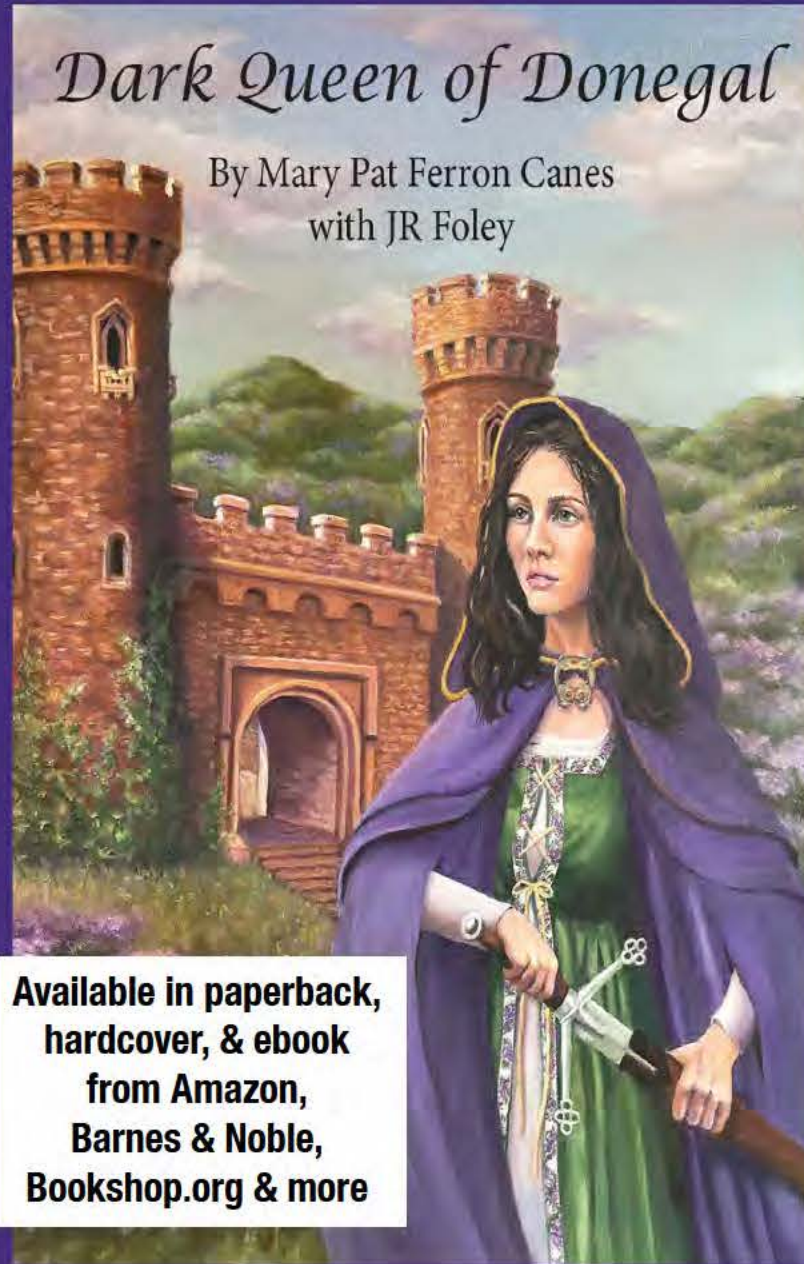
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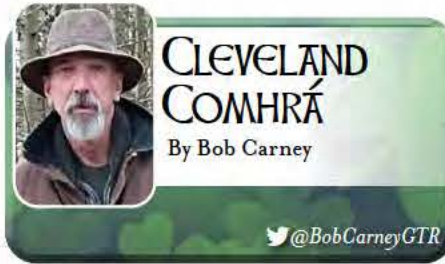
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## Christmas Reflections

*"May You Never Forget What is Worth Remembering or Remember What is Best Forgotten"*

A little over seven years ago, John O'Brien, Jr. and I were having dinner together. I was a new columnist for the Ohio Irish American News, which became iIrish, with my Speak Irish Column, and John mentioned he was losing a couple of writers.

He explained he wanted a column that would focus on the people in the Irish community in Cleveland. I said I thought it was a great idea, between bites of my cheeseburger, oblivious as to what was coming next. "Great! I need your first one by the 15th."

I had never considered myself a writer, but thought why not give it a try? I reached out to local musician Michael Crawley. His band, "Mary's Lane," was one of my favorites. Michael was my very first interview, he was kind and patient and made me think I might just be able to pull this off. As I sit here this evening with a glass of wine and Brahms Violin Concerto in D on the stereo, I'm reminded of how fortunate I have been in meeting, and in many cases becoming friends with many of the people I've been able to interview over the years for iIrish.

My young friends Andy McManus and Tiffany Schaefer were so quick to come to my aid when I was asked to do an Irish language presentation at a local high school. We came up with a plan in the school parking lot and it came across like we'd done it many times before.

### Inspirational Interviews

There have been many other great

musicians and performers willing to take the time to speak to me. I wish to thank Paulie and Peggy Baker of "Brigid's Cross," Brent Hopper, Riverdance star Brandon Asazawa, Limerick singer songwriter Siobhán O'Brien, Barry Conway, Andrew Fowler and the Bigley's; Brian and Kristen's KBB Production Co. brings us *Tomáseen Foley's Celtic Christmas*, which has become something we look forward to attending with my parents as a start to the Christmas Season.

There have been people whose stories have moved me greatly. Their examples of charity and passion for helping others or dedication in what they believe in is inspiring: the folks at St. Hermans, who struggle daily to help men in need on Cleveland's near west side; Patricia Krueger-Harding, a local artist whose non-profit "Faces of Angels" gives comfort to families that have lost a child; my friend Maureen Hennesey, a kinder, more giving person, I've yet to meet; Rebecca Jones and Lydia Murillo, park rangers in Cuyahoga National Park, who share their passion for our parks with it's visitors and always have time for my questions; Photographer Ian Adams, his love of the outdoors in his adopted home of Ohio shows in all of his work. He told me you have to get people to love something before you can get them to save it.

I keep in mind Laura Jordan, director of the Medina Raptor Center and all of the volunteers there, they do an incredible job saving these great birds; author Felicity Hayes-McCoy, who gave me good advice about what it means to be a writer; my friend Dacre Stoker, who is keeping the Irish Business Owners Who Give Back Irish tradition of storytelling very much "undead," and has been an inspiration to me; Al O'Leary and Richard Lardie, who always have words of advice and encouragement for what I try to do. I have never forgotten your "big brotherly" advice Dick.

Business owners too: the Casey sisters; Conor Boylan at "Five Points"; John Sullivan of "Sully's"; Sean Gormley of "Gormley's"; Sean Lackey of "Gandalf's" and Executive Producer of "Flanagan's Wake," which is returning this year at Kennedy's Cabaret in Playhouse Square Jan.6 - April 29.

I've lost count of how many



people I've gotten to know through the Speak Irish Cleveland Classes, but so many have become far more than acquaintances. I have to give a special thanks to Pat Campbell of P.J. McIntyre's; I can never thank you enough for all the years with Speak Irish Cleveland, a chara! Doug and all the Tuesday night staff are fantastic.

My affiliation with iIrish has allowed me to meet thousands of others over the years at festivals and events. Our old van still has the Ohio

Irish American News logos all over it and often has folks walking up and introducing themselves or sharing something of their own heritage.

The music has long since stopped and my glass is empty, so let me just say thank you to everyone; may you have a Blessed Christmas. I can't wait to see what the New Year brings.

Nollaig Shona Daoibh ●

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**AKRON IRISH**

By Lisa O'Rourke

## Very Merry

One of the constructs that is distinctive and unique to the human brain is the ability to imagine a story. We can imagine so vividly that we can conjure images of things that we have never seen, like flying elves, in our individual minds. We can see and describe those images. Going even further, we can create a story about that flying elf, building an entire alternative reality around this imaginary creature.

Every winter, we imagine that a jolly old man manages to pull off the entire holiday that we call Christmas, summoning it out of thin air. Evidence for this phenomenon is scarce. I have seen plenty of sample Santas, sitting comfortably on a throne-type seat, covered in warm furry clothes, and smoking a pipe. Looking chill, he passively listens to the requests of children while a flurry of females in little elf costumes run around taking pictures, money and handing those children some type of candy cane to appease them.

Such is our mythology that the overweight guy who sits in the chair gets all the credit for the holiday. Meanwhile, stage left from this panorama is a frazzled looking woman holding fifty bags waiting for the Polaroid of the kids and Santa to process.

I'm not trying to be a Negative Nelly about Christmas, but I am all about transparency regarding who it is who gets the proverbial sleigh off the ground. Big hint, they are not male for the most part.

You know who does all the heavy lifting for the holidays, the women. It is not elves led by a large old guy. He does not bake cookies and pies, roast turkeys, shop for months for hard-to-find gifts, wrap, manipulate elves on shelves, decorate to theme and/or a myriad of other endless tasks.

### Love-Hate Relationships

This workload has created a love-hate relationship for most women with the

holidays. This is the time of year that we train for, yet, as the calendar peels off to reveal November, there is a sense of anticipatory dread. That feeling of the holiday "scaries," and how will it all get done?

Will this be the year that it is blown amidst too many social gatherings, office outings, holiday concerts and the like? It is a marathon that we train for and run year in and year out. Just like anything else, women know that old restaurant mantra, "Proper planning and preparation prevent piss-poor performance," to be all too true.

"YOU KNOW WHO DOES ALL THE HEAVY LIFTING FOR THE HOLIDAYS, THE WOMEN. IT IS NOT ELVES LED BY A LARGE OLD GUY."

Add to all this the contrary fact that so many women list Christmas as their favorite holiday. Honestly, I love the laid-back 4<sup>th</sup> of July. Nothing to wrap, cooking is done outside, and it ends in fireworks, perfect.

But I kind of get why so many women love Christmas, despite the crazy logistics of the holiday season. Just like that marathon run, there is a sense of accomplishment when it all comes together.

Generations have passed on tips and tricks. We learn from television and social media too. Getting it all to conform to something close to your vision of perfection, you end up with an elated sense that you must be someone on par with a wizard or magician to have pulled it all off. That is part of what is called "holiday magic."

I am not here proposing a sexual revolution at the holidays. It would be great, but I know how slowly the wheels turn. What I do propose is at least a nod.

### The Twelve Days of Christmas

Ireland is getting that right. If we aren't going to share the work, at least give the ladies their props. First, you need to know that the Irish are sticklers for maximizing the holidays. Christmas is not one or two days, but twelve plus days long. This still carries on despite the creep of American work ethic

slithering across the Atlantic, causing more businesses to be open during the holy twelve days.

The celebrations begin on Christmas and end on January 6, the Epiphany. The day that the arrival of the Three Kings and their gifts arrived in Bethlehem is morphing into a gift day of another kind.

### Little Christmas

The Feast of the Epiphany is the official end to the holiday season in Ireland. It is the day to take down all the decorations and burn the holly if you are so inclined. If you are one of those people who take everything down on New Year's Day, it is bad luck, so don't say that you weren't warned.

The Feast of the Epiphany is also called Little Christmas. In Ireland, Little Christmas is also called Nollaig na Mban (*Nullag naw Mon*). It means women's Christmas. After all their work, it's the women's day to skip off to the pub.

I am sure that everything is taken down, dusted up and put away before they go, but at least it is an official ladies' day out. The wine must flow in the pubs that evening.

I think that it is an idea whose time has come! We need to bring that tradition here. We can start with leaving the decorations up until the Epiphany.

It is funny that people who are in such a hurry to get all the tinsel and lights up before Thanksgiving have them whipped down and put away as soon as New Year's strikes. Enjoy them. The lights are there as a panacea to all the dark. And while we are at it, let's bring Women's Christmas here.

It should be a day or at least a night off for all the hard-working women



who make the miracle that we call the holidays happen. Any of you fellows out there who were offended and were making mental lists of all that you do while reading this, go ahead, make my day, send your photo testimonials of your grueling holiday workload. I'm waiting ... •

*Lisa O'Rourke is an educator from Akron. She has a BA in English and a Master's in Reading/Elementary Education. Lisa is a student of everything Irish, primarily Gaelige and runs a Gaelige study group at the AOH/Mark Heffernan Division. She is married to Dónal and has two sons, Danny and Liam. She enjoys art, reading, music, and travel and likes spending time with her dog, cats and fish. She can be contacted at olisa07@icloud.com. Please send any Akron events to my email!*

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# KIDS CRAIC



By Megan Lardie



## 'Tis the Season for Giving

All across the world, the most popular tradition on Christmas is giving and receiving gifts. Families usually gather around the Christmas tree to open them together. How did all this start, when Christmas was set as a day to remember the birth of Jesus?

The idea of gift giving actually dates back to ancient Roman times. Before Christmas was celebrated, the Romans celebrated Saturnalia and the winter solstice, the shortest day of the year.

This was a way to honor the Roman god Saturn, who was the god of agriculture. It was believed that he was responsible for the vegetation and fruitfulness of the year. Ancient Romans would give gifts to friends and families on Saturnalia and during the New Year's celebrations.

Gift giving ceremonies were seen as a way of gaining fortune for the following year. These gifts were often handmade items or food, such as candles, fruits, or nuts.

When Christianity began to spread throughout Europe, Christmas replaced Saturnalia. Gift giving continued but was different from one place to another. In Germany and Norway, children received presents on

Christmas which they believed were brought by the Christ Child. Some of the adults in these countries would also exchange gifts.

In Sweden, neighbors would leave gifts at front doors, knock, and then run away. The neighbors would then try to guess who left the gifts.

In some European countries, the rich gave charitable gifts only to servants and employees. It was unfashionable for one rich person to give another rich person a gift.

In Ireland on the day after Christmas, many celebrate the Wren Boy Procession. This celebration has changed over the years, but the procession still takes place. The boys, and now girls, go door to door collecting money for charities. The festival features music, dancing, and food.

Does your family have a way to make a charitable gift during the holidays? Giving of your time, talent, or treasure is better than any gift from the store. It could be something that takes a small amount of time or an entire day. If your family does not have a tradition of giving, maybe this could be the year you could start one. •

## Kids in the Kitchen White Chocolate Party Mix

Make up a batch of this sweet treat, put it in festive bags, and give it as a gift to all the sweet people in your life!

Ingredients:

- 5 cups Cheerios
- 5 cups Corn Chex
- 2 cups salted peanuts
- 1 pound chocolate M&M's (use green and red for Christmas)
- 1 package (10 ounces) mini pretzels
- 2 packages (12 ounces each) white baking chips
- 3 tablespoons canola oil

Directions:

In a large bowl, combine the first five ingredients; set aside.

In a microwave-safe bowl, heat chips and oil at 70% power for one minute, stirring once. Microwave on high for five seconds; stir until smooth.

Pour over cereal mixture and mix well. Spread onto three waxed paper-lined baking sheets

Cool; break apart. Store in an airtight container.



## Literature Corner

### The Gift of the Magi by O. Henry

This is a true holiday classic tale of love, devotion, and sacrifice. A young woman cries while counting the small amount of money she has to buy a gift for her husband. She decides to make a great sacrifice to get him a wonderful gift for Christmas. Her husband has the same struggle wanting to get her a magnificent gift but must make a great sacrifice as well. Find out what the couple learns about the true gift of Christmas.

### Bounce by Megan Shull

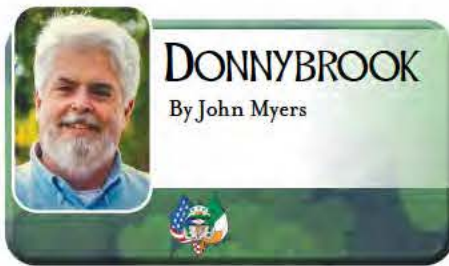
Ever spend too much time with your own family and wish you could trade them in for a different family? Find out what happens when Frannie makes one crazy wish and finds herself in a whole new life with a whole new family. She meets unforgettable friends and families and has amazing adventures, but Frannie begins to wonder, will she ever get back home?

*Megan is a Reading Intervention educator at Andrew J. Rickoff Elementary in the Cleveland Municipal School District. She holds a BA in Humanities from Hiram College and a BA+ in Early Childhood Education from Ashland University. She may be reached at meganlardie126@outlook.com*

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## Westminster Scorecard

A Westminster scorecard could be helpful to most Americans to keep track of all the happenings the last couple of months at Westminster, both Westminster Abbey (built by Benedictine monks) and Westminster Palace (built by St. Edward the Confessor, who was Canonized by Pope Alex III). In a three-month time, Westminster saw three Prime Ministers and two monarchs.

While predicted in these pages that PM Lizzie Truss would not last long, one was still surprised by the historic brevity of her governance. At least Lizzie likely did not have much to pack up and she did not even have time to fill any closets at No. 10.

Unfortunately for all, especially the residents of the Emerald Isle, Lizzie's successor, Rishi Sunak, also defines himself as an acolyte of PM Marg Thatcher. While running for the PM post, Sunak penned that: "I am a Thatcherite, I am running as a Thatcherite, and I will govern as a Thatcherite."

Not much gray area there. However, Sunak, the first person of Color to move into 10 Downing St. at PM is much more the corporate globalist that Lizzie. While a child of the Empire (his grandparents immigrated to England from India) he is reported to be the richest PM in history.

Sunak used his time and contacts developed at England's most elite educational establishments to make some serious cash in the finance world. His cash was greatly magnified when he married into the richest corporate family in India (Murty).

It will not help his success to lead the Tories into an inevitable general election with it being known that his wife used her status as a "non-dom" (not domiciled) to avoid paying any UK taxes on money earned outside of the



1st Minister delegate Michelle O'Neill in D.C. to observe the American Mid-Term Elections.

UK. Whatever the Tory tax policy will be under his watch, Labour will have much grist for the mill to attack; the commercials almost write themselves.

This will be coupled with decades old footage of Rishi being interviewed during his last year at Oxford indicating he had friends who were aristocrats and wealthy, but no working class friends. Even as the youngest Prime Minister since William Pitt over 200 years ago, he is a very starched shirt, difficult for the UK electorate to warm up too. And as the new PM is heading into a winter with Europe at war, with high inflation (much higher than the U.S.), coupled with rising interest rates, a likely energy crisis and continuing reckoning with a post-Brexit hangover, one would say Sunak has his hands full. This stew does not bode well for a Tory future.

### The N.I. Protocol

The Irish Sea Border will also be a heavy lift for Sunak. Boris and Lizzie both punted on the Protocol, Rishi is not going to be able to punt as easily. Hope is faint for Irish Republicans from one who is a self-described Thatcherite to lead the UK.

However, Sunak's insufferable elitism and his global corporate view

of the world, may, in the end, be an opening for those advocating for a United Ireland. Sunak will be much more susceptible, via his education and aristocratic nurturing, to the European Union's push to resolve any issues associated with the Northern Ireland Protocol. Combined with a push from the Biden Whitehouse and U.S. House Democratic Leadership, Rishi will be highly sensitized to the needs of the Canary Wharf (UK's Wall Street) to put the Protocol matter to bed.

Canary Wharf knows that it cannot maximize trade with the EU nor the USA while the Protocol is unresolved. And the longer the drift, the harder the cold realities of Brexit will hit. At his first meeting with The EU's leader, Ursula von der Leyen, Sunak admitted a need to reach a "final solution" to the Protocol imbroglio. Declan Kearney, of Ireland's pro-nationalist Sinn Fein party said there is "no credible alternative" to The Protocol.

### Toppin' the Poll

Toppin the Pole used to mean something in parliamentary elections, however the people in the north of Ireland have been waiting since last May 2022 to have a sitting, operating government. Michelle O'Neill, the

leader of Sinn Fein in the Six Counties earned the spot of First Minister Designate by virtue of Sinn Fein toppin' the poll, but loyalists refuse to return to Stormont.

The loyalists argue that they will not return to the Northern Ireland Parliament until the Protocol is removed. Not that one has to do with the other, but that is their stated reason. Their real reason is that they refuse to enter Stormont to see a Nationalist (O'Neil) assume the position of First Minister. Loyalists should look up the listing of pride as one of as one of the seven cardinal sins.

British Law calls on the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland to call for new assembly elections if a government is failed to form. October 28<sup>th</sup> was that date and Chris Henton-Harris, N.I. Secretary of State has failed to call for those elections. By law, those new elections are to be held within twelve weeks; that would mean elections by January 20, 2023.

The DUP, while leading the refusal to form a new Northern Ireland Assembly, is also afraid of a new election, afraid that their vote total will drop even lower. London and Dublin and Brussels seem to be pushing to put off an

election, feeling it will only inflame community passions rather than provide a path forward.

Of course, Westminster could also change the law to remove this new election requirement. But this will only force the new Sunak led government to face the failure of their positions that much sooner. The best outcome would be for Sunak to recognize, to give in to his inner corporate globalist self, and accept that the Protocol is here to stay.

U.K. Labour Leader, Sir Keir Starmer, stated: "We need to get the Northern Ireland government up and running and the sooner the better. That requires the government to get people around a negotiating table to resolve the issues on Protocol."

A seemingly simple, logical request, but the Tory Government allows its Loyalist partners to continue to have their cake and eat it too, with no consequences. Sinn Fein's Michelle O'Neill stated: "The British Government and the DUP are leaving us in a prolonged state of political limbo with NO assembly, No Executive and No caretaker ministers." Ironically, the longer the Tories and DUP drag this matter out, it becomes self-evident that the Protocol IS working, and trade is moving on just fine without any significant changes needed.

### Heiress, Rebel, Vigilante and Bomber

So titled Sean O'Driscoll's recent book on the life of Rose Dugdale. It does the job of an overview of the fascinating life of Rose Dugdale, who was born into a wealthy English family, presented to Queen Elizabeth at



Buckingham Palace as a debutante, studied at Oxford and yet, in 1972, at the height of the Troubles, joined the IRA.

This seemingly improbable story is a quick read and, while telling a remarkable personal story, gives another take of the history of 1970s and 1980s-armed defense in Ireland. For Irish Clevelanders, they will find mention in this book providing details of some of the strong links to the cause for equality and social justice in the Six Counties. ●

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## 2022 Christmas Irish Vacation Raffle

By Jim Lamb

In late 2022 and 2023, the Ireland Institute will be authorized to sponsor over 300 visa applicants to the US. We are proud of that recognition and excited for the opportunity to facilitate entry of Irish students to Pittsburgh and other US cities where students will live, work, and learn, temporarily, away from home. They return to Ireland with new and enhanced skills for jobs, careers, and better standards of life in Ireland.

We continue to assist companies, community groups, public agencies, entrepreneurs, professionals, civic leaders, and others, here and there seeking connection and partnership that has led to important transatlantic business, trade, and investment between Pittsburgh and Ireland. For tickets for this raffle, with a chance to win a trip for two to Ireland, or the Ireland Institute of Pittsburgh: iiofpitt.org. info@iiofpitt.org. ●

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## TERRY FROM DERRY

By Terry Boyle

### Uncivil Wars

Growing up in the 70s amid the Troubles, I was constantly bombarded with the lyrics of every Republican song known in the Irish canon. My brothers would blast out Roddy McCorley, 4 Green Fields etc. with the sole purpose of indoctrinating the rest of us or, as they would see it, educating the uninformed of our blind servitude to the English Crown.

There was one song that seemed to grab my attention more than the rest and that was *The Green Fields of France*. Written by Eric Bogle, a Scottish/Australian songwriter, the song is often mistaken to be a rebel song, whereas in fact, it's the complete opposite.

Bogle's reflection on the first world war and the death of so many young men is quite daunting. Willy McBride is a 19-year-old willing volunteer who dies serving his country's interest. Just what that interest is remains unknown.

We know that there were many Irish volunteers who served in that war believing that England would honour their enlistment by relinquishing control of Ireland, while Protestants in the north fought in that same war believing England would protect them from a nationalist outcome. For Bogle, Willy McBride is simply one of the

thousands of young men who naively believed that this war that would end all wars.

History has since shown how the war-mongering propaganda of McBride's time was proven to be false. We have learned nothing about the futility of war, and as Bogle puts it, '...the killing and dying, it was all done in vain, Oh Willy McBride, it happened again, and again, and again and again.'

So, while the song celebrates the naive enthusiasm of the young idealist who is willing to give his life for the cause, the sacrifice is deftly undercut by the larger sense of fatalism that such martyrdom is in vain. Humanity has learned nothing from war, except that violence has become a part of who we are as a species.

The more sophisticated our weaponry is, the more likely we are to press the button and eradicate ourselves. We move from one cold war standoff to another, with one superpower nation facing off the other, daring one another to do the deed and to hell with the consequences.

Our preoccupation with our own annihilation is frightening, especially since we as a species have managed to evolve from our primitive state to become technologically accomplished. Besides our need to develop weapons,



biological and hardware, we have seen tremendous advancements in so many areas that benefit our humanity.

#### Democracy or Dictatorship

A large portion of the western world has enjoyed a system of democracy that has for years ensured that we as individuals choose who governs us. Politically, this system, like most political systems, is flawed, but given the alternative, a dictatorship, we believe it's worth preserving.

However, in recent times, we are

allowing ourselves to be bullied out of believing in the merits of this system.

The rise of belligerent political candidates who disregard the will of the people and who flaunt racist, homophobic and anti-Semitic intolerance is alarming. Yet, we are not as alarmed as we should be. The eradication of the cultural norms that should celebrate diversity has been transformed into bigotry and hatred.

We have allowed those fearmongers to demonize our fellow human beings by presenting them to us as a legitimate threat. Instead of promoting tolerance, and dispelling fear, these candidates make their mark by pushing us further away from being civil to becoming uncivil. They show no qualms for their blatant disregard for truth and seek instead to persuade us with unfounded lies.

If Bogle questions McBride's sacrifice in the first world war, he does not question the young man's loyalty or willingness to die. He questions whether the cause the young man died for was a truthful one.

#### The War to End All Wars

The war to end all wars was far from the truth. It was simply a tagline to pull on the heartstrings of those who lacked the critical skills to question such a mantra. Things have not changed since then.

The mantra of the far right is equally unfounded. They exploit our freedom of speech to incite violence, enhance sectarianism and venerate the lack of civility. These same people use religion to justify their arrogance and ignorance.

If we continue to allow people to promote values that divide us, we are moving closer and closer towards the

precipice of our own undoing. The United States no longer exists, apart from a legal standpoint, as a united entity.

Since 2016, the election of Donald Trump, the voter has elected a man with no principles, who is not prepared to put his country before himself, and who is happy to promote acts of violence to ensure he remains in power. The decision to put such a man into a powerful position was, in part, due to the disillusionment of the many with those who are in power. While I can understand this disappointment with the usual politicians, it's another thing to jump from the frying pan into the fire.

Elected such an irresponsible candidate into leadership has opened the floodgate to the present lack of civility. If your president reflects who you want to be as a nation, Trump doesn't reflect well.

Now, belligerence is seen as a virtue, political violence is viewed as fighting for a just cause, and freedom of speech has become an excuse to incite violence towards Jews, gays, and ethnicity that is not white. With such a credo of incivility, there will never be peace. The divide will continue to widen until we see that the very system of democracy that we valued so little becomes nothing more than another dictatorship.

This movement towards the uncivil war is not exclusive to the

United States. Recent elections in France, Hungary and other European countries demonstrate how fragile our democracies are. The war against civility continues.

If we allow it to win, then all of those who have lost their lives to preserve democracy will have died in vain. So, let's not turn on ourselves by listening to those who promote violence and intolerance, but aim to create an environment we can be proud of. ●

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## Grianstad an Gheimhridh

Many cultures in the Northern Hemisphere prior to Christianity celebrated the solstice. It was the most sacred time of the year for the celts. The solstice happens twice a year, when the sun appears at its highest or lowest point on the horizon. North of the equator, the winter solstice, grianstad an gheimhridh, occurs between December 20th and December 23rd.

Alban Arthuan, also known as Yule, was celebrated at the time of the winter solstice by the celts. Druid priests would harvest mistletoe from the giant oak trees in the forest for its magical and healing properties on the day of the

solstice as they celebrated the rebirth of the sun.

The day after the solstice the sun moves higher in the sky, proof to the druids that it had been reborn. The celts believed that on the day of the solstice, the on-going struggle between the Oak King, the god of the waxing light or the Divine Child; and the Holly King, the god of the waning light or the Dark Lord; was decided.

Each year on the day of the winter solstice, the Oak King would be victorious in battle until his defeat by the Holly King at the summer solstice.

### Winter Solstice

The winter solstice has been celebrated in Ireland for over 5,000 years. Sid in Broga Cairn at Newgrange, in the Boyne Valley in Co. Meath, is the most well known of the ancient celtic sacred sites in Ireland. The alignment of light in the tomb that happens at sunrise during the winter solstice has been interpreted as a "ray of light by the Sun god into the womb of Mother Earth" to bring about the creation of new life in the coming spring.

In Co. Cork, at Drombeg Stone Circle in the afternoon of the winter



**Drombeg Stone Circle**

solstice, the stones line up with the sun. Nicknamed the Druid's Altar, there are many legends of human and animal sacrifices occurring here. Co. Louth has the Baltray Standing Stones that line up with the rising sun.

Another passage tomb in Armagh at the top of the Hill of Slieve Gullion is illuminated by the setting solstice sun. That tomb was constructed 6,000 years ago. It is also called Calliagh Beara's House.

### The Hag of Beara

Cailleach Beara or the Hag of Beara, was a witch or the pagan goddess of winter. She was born on November 1st, during the Festival of Samhain (the origin of Halloween). The Cailleach grows younger and in power and beauty throughout the winter months, until the spring feast of Bealtaine, when she is at her peak of beauty and strength.

During the summer months, her power and beauty fade and she grows

old. The celts believed she brought wintertime to regain her stronger self, making their own lives a struggle in the harsher weather.

### The Origin of the Christmas Tree

Many of our Christmas traditions have come from the celts winter solstice celebrations. The Christmas tree has its origin in pre-Christian celebrations during Yule. An evergreen tree was brought indoors to symbolize life. It was adorned with ornaments representing the sun, moon and stars. The exchanging of gifts evolved from the celtic tradition of hanging gifts on the tree as offerings to pagan gods and goddesses.

Holly leaves and branches were put around their homes and structures during the winter months to give shelter against the cold to the fairies that lived in the surrounding forest. They also believed that the holly would trap evil spirits before they could enter their dwellings.

The oak tree was very sacred in celtic life, and the parasitic plant that made its home in the branches of the oak was revered as well. Mistletoe was a healing plant, believed to hold the soul of the mighty oak tree. With the help of the oak, it possessed magical powers to heal, give fertility to humans and animals, and to protect them from evil from spirits and witchcraft, assuring the community of good fortune in the coming year.

Our vocabulary and phrases this month will include some of the influences from the celts as well as more traditional Christmas phrases and words associated with this time of year.

### FOCLÓIR

Coileann (kwill-un) holly  
Crann cuillinn (krahn- kwill-un) holly tree  
Druilas (dhroo-ah-lus) mistletoe Dair (dahr) oak

Crann darach (krahn dahr-ach) oak tree  
Crann ailme (krahn ahl-ih-mah) pine tree

Crann Nollaig (khran null-ug) Christmas tree  
Sa gheimhreadh (sa giv-rah) in winter

Réalta (rayl-tuh) star  
Grian (gree-un) sun

Éirí na grian (eye-ree nuh gree-un) sun rise  
Luí na grian (lee nuh gree-un) sun set

Grian na maighdean (gree-un nuh my-dunn) the fairest of maidens

An Mhaighdean Mhuire (ahn my-dunn woor-uh) The Virgin Mary  
An Mhaighdean Bheannaithe (ahn my-dunn bahn-ih-heh) The

### Blessed Virgin

Gealach (gahl-ach) moon  
Oíche ghealái (ee-huh yell-ee) moonlit night  
Sneachta (shnak-ta) snow  
Fear sneachta (fíhr shnak-ta) snowman  
Sioc (shuk) frost  
Fuar (foo-ar) cold  
Lá Nollaig (law null-ug) Christmas Day  
Oíche Nollaig (ee-ha null-ug) Christmas Eve

Lá na Bliana Úire (law na bleena oora) New years day

### FRÁSA (frah-sa) PHRASE

Nollaig Shona Duit (null-ug hoe-na gwit) Merry Christmas to you (singular)  
Nollaig Shona Daoibh (null-ug hoe-na yeev) Merry Christmas to y'all (plural)

Beannachtaí an tSéasúir (bahn -uhk-tee ahn tay-soor) Seasons Greetings  
Nollaig faoi shéan agus faoi mhaise duit/daoibh (null-ug fwee hayn ah-gus fwee vuh-sha gwit/yeev)

Christmas happiness and goodness to you/y'all

Anthbhliain faoi mhaise duit/daoibh (ah-vleen fwee vuh-sha gwit/yeev)

A happy prosperous New Year to you/y'all

Nollaig Shona Daoibh! ●

*Bob Carney is a student of Irish language and history and teaches the Speak Irish Cleveland class every Tuesday at PJ McIntyre's. He is also active in the Irish Wolfhound and Irish dogs organizations in and around Cleveland. Wife Mary, hounds Rian and Aisling and terrier Doolin keep the house jumping. He can be reached at carneyspeakirish@gmail.com.*

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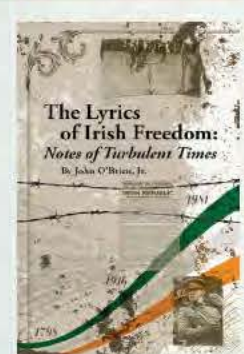
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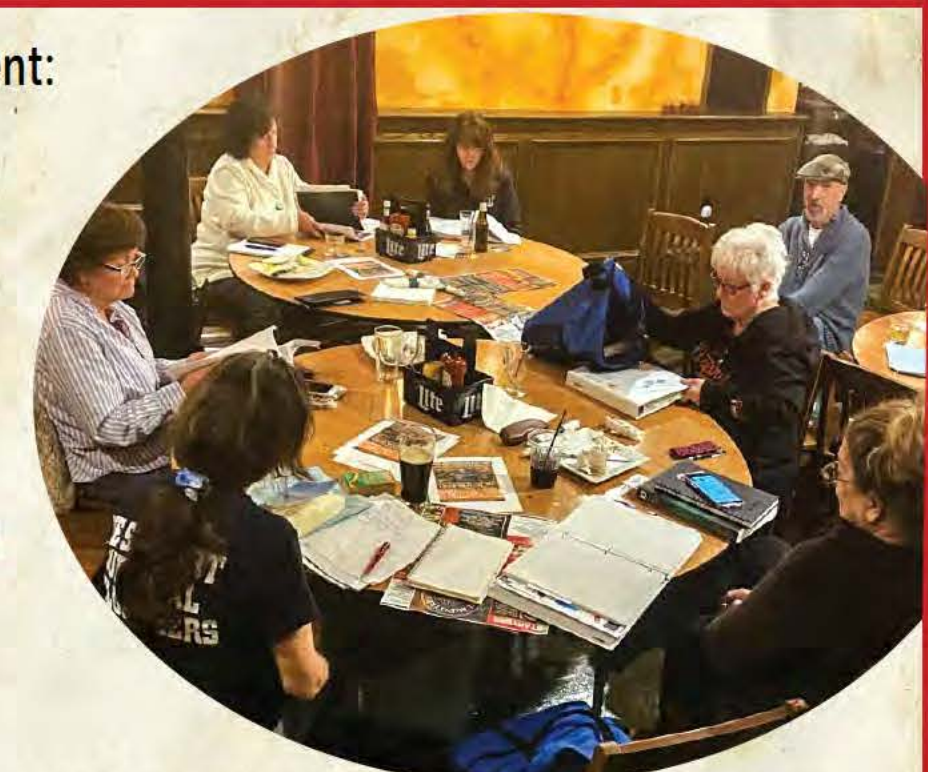
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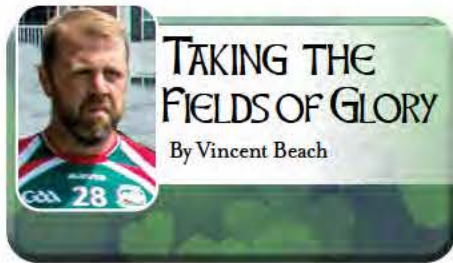
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## Midwest Gaelic Athletic Association

### Off the Pitch Fun

My first order of business on a beautiful, sunny October the 22<sup>nd</sup> Saturday at Bob-o-Links in Avon was to find Jim Coyne and thank him for his hours spent in the church pews praying for good weather... in late October... on America's Northcoast. It worked.

The golf course was packed with foursomes of GAA members and supports scrambling through the green fields. The annual event is more than a fundraiser, as it brings together family, friends, and many retired players who are happy to be out with the *Gah* for the *crac*. The dinner and post party were held at longtime GAA supporter PJ McIntyre's Irish Pub, with Cleveland GAA's official trad-band, *Full 90*, getting jiggy with it. Well done to the organizers: Ryan Bush, Annie Coyne, and Dan Kampman.

On November 4<sup>th</sup> at the home grounds, the West Side Irish American Club, Cleveland held their end-of-the-year awards banquet. At the youth level, the players are honored anytime they represent the club outside of Cleveland,

much like international soccer players representing their country earn caps. In attendance and earning their first cap, and the club scarf, were Lucy Dietz and our coach, Peter Dietz. Special shout-outs were given to all the players who attended the CYC (Continental Youth Championships) in Chicago and the recent Detroit Invitational (Chicago St. Jarlath's, Toronto Chieftains, Detroit Harps, and Cleveland Saints).

### Men's Gaelic Football

The men's football awards were passed out by veterans Dan Kampman, Tim McDonald, and Alec Stott to Rookie of the Year, Sam Nortz; Most Improved Player, Alec Stott; and Player's Player of the Year, Rhys Quinn. The footballers had a promising year and are poised for a bright future.

### USGAA Finals Al O'Leary Hurling Tournament

Coach Damon Margida then presented the Rookie of the Year to Tom Barrett, Most Improved Player to Cory Barry, and Player's Player of the Year to Evan Barry. With the men's awards complete, the night belonged to the ladies.

Coach Damon highlighted the inaugural camogie year from the 360 Camogie event to beating the newly minted divisional rival, Pittsburgh Na Laochra, to battling their way into the USGAA final, and closing the season out strong at the Al O'Leary tournament. Awards were presented to the club-wide leading goal scorer, Yi Wang, for Rookie of the Year; to Most Improved Player, Angie Dietz; and to Player's Player of the Year, Clodagh Murphy. Your Cleveland St. Pat's - St. Jarlath's GAA Ladies' Football

Champions were introduced by head coach Dan Murray and assistant coach, Colleen Mohney.

It must be noted that the players vote on player of the year and rookie of the year, while the coaches select most improved player. Side note complete.

Rookie of the Year was earned by Marie Murray; Most Improved Player was earned by Annie Coyne, who had a great scoring year; Player's Player of the Year went to their captain, Maureen Mohney.

The final award of the year was presented by the Club Chairperson and the winner was selected by the club board. The Club Person of the Year is awarded to an individual that embodies the ethos of the Association; volunteerism, the promotion of Irish games and culture, and the lifelong participation in activities for the enrichment of lives and the community. There were several worthy individuals, but the board vote was unanimous for John O'Brien Jnr.

*Comhghairdeas le gach duine.* Congratulations to everyone. It was a great year, a fun year, and a motivating year for more to come.

### Back to the Office GAA Meetings

The offseason is also a time for meetings ... annual general meetings, where the GAA decides who their new officers will be and what new rules they will vote on. Cleveland will hold their AGM on December 3<sup>rd</sup>, and the Midwest will hold their AGM on December 10<sup>th</sup>. The USGAA's meeting is referred to as Convention and will be held on November 11-13 in Chicago.

Notable to the Midwest GAA this year for Convention is John Young (Pittsburgh GAA) who is running for Vice-Chairperson, Rob Tierney

(Pittsburgh GAA) who is running for Secretary, and Paul Mulcaire (Buffalo Na Fianna) who is running for Central Council Delegate.

John has held several positions in the GAA from club level to the Midwest GAA Chair to the USGAA Treasurer and Vice-Chair. He has continued to serve the GAA this year as the Midwest Camogie Development Officer. Rob Tierney has done the same as Pittsburgh Youth Chairperson, time as Midwest Secretary, and for a number of recent years as USGAA Development Officer.

Besides playing, coaching, and serving on his club's board, Paul is current Midwest Chairperson and USGAA Youth Officer. The Midwest will be rolling into Convention as the 4<sup>th</sup> largest division by number of teams in the county, and holding thirty-five votes. Hopefully through the year of reading this column, you have come to realize that, not only is the Cleveland GAA growing, but so are many of the clubs in the Midwest Division. It has been an impressive year.

*Ath mór, a chairde.* Good luck, friends. We will report back soon on all the news from all the meetings and who will have the honor of leading this great GAA in America organization at the various levels.

### Recruitment Nights

The Cleveland footballers (ladies and men) welcome all perspective players and rookies to introductory nights at Rocky River Force (Center Ridge Road) on Thursday, December 1<sup>st</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>, from 8:00 to 9:00 PM. If you have any questions, email us at [info@clevelandgaa.com](mailto:info@clevelandgaa.com). The field sessions will be followed by pints at the nearby Gormley's Irish Pub.

**Go raibh mile maith agaibh** (thanks y'all) to our readers and

# The Irish American Law Society of Cleveland Travels to Ireland for Business and Law Symposium

By Patrick T. Murphy

Members of the Irish American Law Society of Cleveland attended the group's biennial Irish American Business and Law Symposium in Dublin and Cork, Ireland. The society, comprised of approximately 150 local judges, lawyers and law students, provides a forum for educational, cultural, and social activities concerning Irish heritage and tradition.

The group was founded under the leadership of attorney Thomas J. Scanlon in 2013. Mr. Scanlon was its first president and the impetus behind the collaborative symposium. Scanlon, a pillar of both Cleveland's legal and Irish communities, passed away on October 30<sup>th</sup>, just before this column was written. The current law society president, Ann Hawkins, recently announced that in honor of Tom the society has changed its name to the "Thomas J. Scanlon, Irish American Law Society of Cleveland."

The law society held similar symposiums in Cleveland in 2014 and 2018 and in Ireland in 2016. The 2020 symposium, which was planned to take place in Ireland, was canceled because of the pandemic.

This year, the society resumed its



Patrick Murphy presenting Lord Mayor of Cork, Deirdre Forde, with proclamations from Mayor Bibb and Council President Blaine Griffin. Location is Cork City Hall, Council chambers.

plans and completed nine hours of continuing legal education, along with multiple social networking events over four days in the two cities. The event was a great success, filled with fun, learning and valuable connections with legal practitioners and judiciary from

both sides of the pond.

In Dublin, more than sixty people gathered at The Honourable Society of King's Inns, Ireland's oldest school of law, which was founded in 1541. It is the Irish 'Inn of Court' for training and admitting legal professionals who wish to be awarded the degree of Barrister.

There, a distinguished panel presented a discussion on the Independence of the Judiciary. The panel consisted of Ohio Supreme Court Chief Justice Maureen O'Connor; Ireland Supreme Court Chief Justice Donal O'Donnell; Ireland High Court Judge Tony O'Connor; and United States Supreme Court Historical Society President James Duff. The topic was moderated by Ohio Supreme Court Justice, Melody Stewart.

The group toured the Four Courts of Ireland, where a history of the Irish Courts was discussed, including the centennial of the Irish Civil War and the English supported bombing of the Four Courts buildings. The Dublin portion of the event was rounded out with a discussion of Ireland as a Global Centre for Legal Services at Blackhall Place, the law school and historical home for Solicitors in Ireland.

The society members then traveled to Cork, where they were graciously

welcomed at Cork City Hall by the Honorable Lord Mayor of Cork, Dierdre Forde. Society Committee members were invited to sign the ceremonial visitor's book to the city and the Lord Mayor was presented with proclamations from the City of Cleveland.

In Cork, the group was hosted by the University College Cork School of Law. UCC Law School Dean Mark Poustie and his team helped the society symposium committee to put together a first-class educational program, which compared and contrasted legal issues in Ireland and Ohio. Topics included Civil Litigation, Cannabis Law, Digital Privacy and Environmental Law. The presenters included society members, law professors, solicitors and judiciary from Ireland, the director of the Sierra Club, as well as industry leaders from the environmental, technology and insurance fields.

The program left plenty of open time for members to tour historical sites in both towns and enjoy Irish culture and food as well as some real Irish hospitality. Members had the opportunity to golf, and to participate in a tour of the harbor town of Cobh and the Middleton Distillery.

Members of the law society celebrated with their Irish counterparts at a closing dinner at the historical Imperial Hotel in Cork City Centre. All said, the participants came away with a greater comparative knowledge and appreciation of the legal systems in Ireland and Ohio. Many friendships and professional acquaintances were made on the trip.

If you are interested in becoming a member of the Irish American Law Society of Cleveland or wish to attend any future forums, please visit [www.irishclevelandlawyers.com](http://www.irishclevelandlawyers.com).

Patrick T. Murphy is a partner with Dworken & Bernstein Co., L.P.A. He is a current Vice-President of the Thomas J. Scanlon Irish American Law Society of Cleveland and was the Chair for the 2022 Ireland Symposium

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## BLOWIN' IN

By Susan Mangan

@SueMangan

# Christmas Spice

"A mince pie carries with it everything I hold dear about this time of year.

In that tiny morsel lies the very spirit of the season."

(Nigel Slater "The Christmas Chronicles")

The close of November toasts the turn of seasons. Most of the leaves have fallen off the trees, save the Bradford pear on our front lawn. In holiday style, crimson leaves cling to branches awaiting the first fall of snow.

The brown oak leaves that remain underfoot crunch during my late

evening walks with my spaniel Lucy. This year the air is temperate, and Jack Frost has yet to appear. The leaves no longer smell like October woodsmoke; they emit a decidedly winter fragrance of cinnamon and pine resin. Our rosemary and bay plants are still contentedly green: happy companions to my pine roping and sprigs of incense cedar.

One evening in late fall during my weekly Writer's Salon, we were discussing the fragrant shift of autumn into winter. The sense of smell is the most powerful receptor of memory.

For me, early December ushers in a host of reminiscent aromas. Even after working late hours as a nurse, my mother would still treat us to delicious Crock Pot suppers of warming soups and home baked desserts. Our small Chicago kitchen was always aromatic with spiced pumpkin loaves and bubbling trays of homemade lasagna. Home is about comfort and warmth, especially during the holiday season.

My mother's spice drawer was a hidden treasure trove. Exotic scents of allspice, cloves, and nutmeg mingled creating the backdrop of any baker's dream. For weeks prior to the Christmas season my mother would bake batches of delicate cookies. Rolled in toasted coconut, rum balls served alongside sweet bourbon Old Fashioned cocktails were always the hit among my parents' friends. Too rich and boozy for me, I preferred marshmallow wreath cookies, chocolatey pinwheels, and ribbon

bars.

During the Christmas season, the American kitchen is redolent with chocolate and peppermint, butter and brown sugar. As I age, I long for the seasonal scents of aromatic spice and oranges, brandied raisins and mulled cider.

Perhaps I am remembering a time when I could barely reach my mother's spice drawer, or those dear moments when I could fit on her lap and place cinnamon hearts upon the center of her spritz cookies. My mother would always recite the age-old nursery rhyme that "little girls are made of sugar and spice and everything nice," winking at me because she knew I was made of more spice than sugar.

When I first started dating my husband, he brought me to his parents' house one evening in December. The house smelled of Christmas. Allspice and cloves, tea-soaked raisins and warmth radiated throughout the kitchen. Apron-clad, his mom was literally up to her elbows in flour and raisins.

She would mix the delicious ingredients by hand, not a measuring cup or spoon in sight, turning out cake after cake dense with brandied fruits and spices. These cakes conjured Christmas and stirred my baker's heart. Dark like a winter's eve, the cakes tasted of comfort and nostalgia. Since that night over twenty-five years ago, I have become a seeker of Christmas spice.

Traditional Irish Christmas cake is studded with candied citrus peel, sultanas, currants, and brandy-soaked raisins. It is slathered with a layer of marzipan paste and frosted with peaks of snowy Royal Frosting. For some, the frosting is the best part of the cake.

A purist at heart, I most enjoy the cake itself without the sweet icing and almond paste. Essentially, it is the combination of dried fruits and warming spices that remind me of cross-country skiing in the winter woods with my dad, the aroma of burning logs, the fragrance of bayberry candles, and the mystery of my mother's spice drawer.

Every culture seems to have its own take on spiced Christmas treats. Dusted with snowy powdered sugar, German Pfeffernusse tingle the palate with pepper, cardamon, and cloves. Fanciful cut-out Lebkuchen cookies

crumble with ginger and smack of enchanted forests. Great clouds of yeasty Italian Panettone entice with the licorice taste of anise and the sweetness of golden raisins. Each of these treats possesses the spirit of an old-world Christmas, a land unaffected by artificially colored sprinkles.

When my daughter studied abroad in London, I had the opportunity to visit her and experience the *pièce de resistance* of holiday confections: the mince pie. Glorious in their miniature forms, the handheld tarts were in every shop window and Christmas market. I was enchanted by their petite size.

Some were decorated with fairytale cutouts; others were plain with a sprinkle of dusted sugar. Glorious tiny pies rested atop vintage cake stands and were surrounded by wreaths of holly. Neighborhood shops offered endless jars of artisan mince. Some were made with quince or apples; others dates and figs. The jars were all festive and evoked yuletide spirit.

I became enamored with Waitrose & Partners Market. I would spend simple moments in rapt fascination exploring all the holiday goods from jars of jams to piquant chutneys. I decided to purchase a small jar of mincemeat made from plums, ginger, and honey. Again, I was that little girl delving into the magic of the spice drawer.

This season, I am going to attempt to make homemade mincemeat with dried figs, apricots, and apples. I want to conjure the aroma of spice that fills the wood at Christmastime. As my family are devotees of chocolate and sprinkles, I may only produce the smallest amount of mincemeat to successfully craft a handful of mince pies, but that alone will be enough to suffuse the kitchen with the fragrance of sugar and spice and everything nice. Such is the stuff of holiday dreams. ●

Susan holds a Master's Degree in English from John Carroll University and a Master's Degree in Education from Baldwin-Wallace University. She may be contacted at [suemangan@yahoo.com](mailto:suemangan@yahoo.com).

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## CLEVELAND IRISH

By Francis McGarry

# For Whom the Bells Toll

The bells in Ireland were formerly called crotals, a term that appears to be from the old Irish. The crotals were used by the clergy and the druids before them. Some scholars believe the early crotals were used to frighten ghosts.

John O'Phelan's collections of epitaphs in the cathedral of St. Canice at Kilkenny denote the first bell erected in a church in Ireland was given to St. Kieran by St. Patrick. It was mounted in St. Kieran's church, near Birr. Birr is 86 KM south of Newton Forbes and 101 KM to the east is Galway City.

### The Catholic Bell

Church bells, in some form, have been in use since 400 CE. Semantron, a flat plate of metal, similar to a gong, was used to announce the beginning of service in Greek monasteries. Those early flat metal instruments evolved in Ireland to the bells we see today, four sided and much bigger. Bells were also popular in areas traveled to by Irish missionaries.

St. Peter's in Rome, during the time of Ermharius (who died in 738 CE), had a bell made to hang in the little tower, or *turricula*. A monastic bell maker petitioned Charlemagne for funding for a church bell.

I once met a girl at a bar in the Atlanta airport who claimed to be related to Charlemagne. I retorted that I was related to John the Baptist; actually Jon-Jon is a Baptist and like a brother to me.

Early ninth century Frankish parishes were expected to have a least one bell. Notre-Dame de Paris has ten bells, which are rung every fifteen minutes, but in French. In 2012, four of the major bells at Notre-Dame were replaced with new bells.

Bells are cast from a bronze alloy, but they do not last forever, as any campanologue will tell you. The "Bourdon Emmanuel" bell, cast in 1686, remains in the south tower at Notre-Dame. The bell tower at the Basilica of

the Sacred Heart (Notre Dame, IN) is 230 feet tall, making it the tallest university chapel in America.

### For Whom the Bell Tolls

John Donne, not a Baptist, was born in London in 1572 to recusant Catholic parents. At the time it was illegal to practice Catholicism in England. His father was married to Elizabeth Heywood, whose brother was a Jesuit priest. She was great niece to Thomas More.

Donne is noted for his three moods of love in his poetry: cynical love, which was anti-woman, conjugal love, or married life, and Platonic love, which was spiritual. He married Anne More, daughter of Sir George More, in 1601 and had twelve children. Under the order of the King, Donne was ordained as an Anglican priest in 1615.

In 1624 he published *Devotions Upon Emergent Occasions*, which included *For Whom the Bell Tolls*.

No man is an island, entire of itself. Each is a piece of the continent, a part of the main.

If a clod be washed away to sea, Europe is the less. As well is a promontory were.

As well as if a manor of thine own or of thine friend's were. Each man's death diminishes me, for I am involved in mankind. Therefore, send not to know for whom the bell tolls, it tolls for thee.

### The Irish Bells of Cleveland

Immaculate Conception Church, the Mac, was chartered by Bishop Rappe in 1855. The first structure at 41<sup>st</sup> and Superior was the Church of the Nativity, which was relocated from the Cathedral. A temporary structure was built and housed the church and school for the next decade. The Fenians, on their way to invade Canada in the name of Irish independence, stashed their rifles at Immaculate Conception in 1866.

On August 17<sup>th</sup>, 1873 the cornerstone of the Mac was laid, witnessed by some 10,000 Cleveland residents. The bell towers were built 275 feet tall and still house twelve bells, ranging from 250 pounds to 3,500 pounds. The bells were baptized and are listed in the baptismal record.

Martin Luther claimed the rite of baptizing bells as superstition and a profanation of the sacrament. That did not matter to the Irish on 41<sup>st</sup> and Superior. Each bell is inscribed with the names of the benefactors.

Their donations were made knowing that no one would see their names on the



St. Anne's Church in Cork City, Ireland.

bells in the towers. Irish names are on those bells, all Irish names. Since 1899, Cleveland has heard their donations.

This was Father Godic's homily, a story of the Irish bells at his parish. He is Slovenian and praised the Irish monks who traveled to his land, before his time, and preached the gospel. Like Modestus, the "Apostle of Ceratonia," who in 720 CE converted the Cerantians in north-eastern Slovenia. He was Irish by birth and a disciple of St. Fergal.

Father Thomas Thorpe built those towers and that church. He was born near Dublin in 1838. After starting his studies in Ireland, he finished his priestly preparation in Cleveland and was ordained by Bishop Rappe in 1861.

Father Thorpe was named Monsignor in 1891 and a Prelate of the Papal Household in 1895. His obit honors the major building projects at Immaculate Conception and at the Cathedral. He

also launched the Catholic Universe, a Catholic newspaper, and served as its editor for three years.

Throughout the history of the church, bells have been rung in a variety of ways to signal to the faithful when and what to pray. The Angelus Bell was rung at 6am, noon and 6pm. It consists of three strikes of the lowest bell, three times. Church bells have announced Mass, Matins and Vespers. The bells at the Mac have been rung for all those occasions. Can you hear the names on the bells when they ring?

We did not know this narrative as we sat in the pews at our Hibernian Mass listening to Father Godic. Some of the Hibernians had never been to Mass at the Mac. That Mass and that homily changed the way we listen to those bells.

As Cleveland Irish, we are a part of our own history. We are the today to our brethren's yesterday. We are involved in the history of the Irish in Cleveland and not knowing that history, all of that history, diminishes all of us.

The bells at the Mac continue to ring and can be heard every day. Are you listening? Can you hear the names on those bells? Those bells tell our story and they toll for all of the Irish in Cleveland. ●

Francis McGarry holds undergraduate degrees from Indiana University in Anthropology, Education and History and a Masters in Social Science from the University of Chicago. He is the Executive Director of Bluestone Hibernian Charities and proprietor of McGarry Consulting. Francis is the founder and a past president of the Bluestone Division of the Ancient Order of Hibernians and a past president of the Irish American Club East Side.

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## Linguistics, Leprechauns, and Legends: Revisiting 'Artemis Fowl' with Gaeilge

By Leah Walper

In 2001, Eoin Colfer's first "Artemis Fowl" novel hit the shelves in bookstores around the world. The story centers around a twelve-year-old mastermind, the titular Artemis, who schemes to steal gold from the Fairy People to finance a search for his missing father, the head of the Fowl criminal empire. However, the People aren't at all like Artemis learned about in his native Ireland.

Their law enforcement, the Lower Elements Police, is not in the business of handing out gold, and a magical tit-for-tat begins. Throughout the course of the series, Artemis becomes increasingly intertwined with the People, the line between the worlds of

Men and Fairies inching closer and closer.

The world of "Artemis Fowl" is both fantastical and deeply intimate. On a grand scale, it is a story about someone with the power and intelligence to alter the world (and even the timeline) as we know it. However, at its core, it is about a child born into unusual circumstances, armed with his wits and the legends he believes in, on a mission to restore and protect his family.

I had the joy of meeting Eoin Colfer in 2019, on his book tour for "The Fowl Twins," a spin-off centered around Artemis's adventurous younger brothers. As a longtime fan and aspiring children's fantasy author, I knew I had to attend his talk, and he didn't disappoint.

He regaled the audience (of child and adult fans) with stories about growing up and living in Ireland, as well as how Irish mythologies influenced "Artemis Fowl." For instance, leprechauns were the driving force behind the whole concept of the Fairy People's Lower Elements Police. Lower Elements Police Reconnaissance, shortened to LEP Recon - leprechaun!

Sometimes I wonder how much of my decision to study Gaeilge in college was influenced by my deep love for this series. I have no intrinsic



Leah Walper

connection to it, my background being Jewish, and my knowledge of the culture didn't extend far beyond a rigorous deep dive into the Cranberries' discography.

### Irish Language Class in Pittsburgh

When I really think about it, it was the vivid picture of Ireland painted by Colfer that drew me to Marie Young's class at the University of Pittsburgh. I've always been fascinated by folklore, especially after everything I picked up from books as a kid, so it made perfect sense to learn the etymology. I had also developed an interest in indigenous languages in my teen years, which fueled my decision to major in anthropology and dive headfirst into Gaeilge.

This semester, I decided to reread the series and revisit what inspired so many of my current interests. Out of the many admirable techniques Colfer employed in writing "Artemis Fowl," the time I've spent with Gaeilge highlighted one in particular. I was, for the first time, hyper-aware of the decision to call the origins of the Fairy People the "Dé Dannans," no doubt pulled from the Tuatha Dé Dannan, a group of supernatural deities in Irish mythology.

The Sidhe, the modern name for the People, is derived from "aos sí," roughly meaning fairies. The People also maintain the hill Tara as their spiritual center, performing a ritual to renew the magic near the Lia Fáil, the real-life coronation stone of the ancient kings of Ireland.

As I continued reading, I was delighted to be able to make these connections between language and legend Colfer established in his universe. Every little reference or callback to Gaeilge jumped out at me in a way that would not have been possible if I hadn't pursued the topic and the class.

My time learning Gaeilge, combined with my return to "Artemis Fowl," has been comforting and daring. On one hand, I felt a bit like a kid again, wrapped up in the magic and schemes. On the other hand, however, I was able to read with fresh eyes.

### Perspectives

The Irish language has allowed me a new perspective on something I

thought I knew like the back of my hand. It goes to show why a good anthropologist will tell you to study the language of your desired area of interest.

Language is, after all, the most powerful tool we possess. It is often the most difficult obstacle to overcome in forming an understanding of anything. How do you extrapolate meaning from words that simply look like characters floating around on paper?

LANGUAGE IS, AFTER ALL, THE MOST POWERFUL TOOL WE POSSESS.

I think back to how much of the book I could not fully connect with, simply because I did not have the language to do so. In that sense, Gaeilge has become more than an elective or passive interest.

Rather, it's given me a foundation to build upon, whether I choose to continue into linguistics or keep it as a hobby. I will always be able to take what I learned, and use it to become a more well-rounded person, both in my personal life and academic life.

It's amazing what experiences become pivotal for our worldview as adults. I never considered the implications of language in "Artemis Fowl" as a ten-year-old, but now it's hard to ignore for very long. I feel fortunate that I was able to find a class here in Pittsburgh that not only taught me how to develop new skills, but also bridged the gap between my childhood daydreams and academic pursuits.

Maybe one day it'll even carry me all the way to Ireland! No matter where I end up, I'll always have Gaeilge and the enchanting series that started it all. ●

*Leah Walper is an Anthropology student at the University of Pittsburgh. Her main academic interests are language revivals, folklore, and music-based subcultures. In her free time, she is a musician, singer, and writer.*

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## Crafting Cleveland to Cork, with Cork Chamber's Cathal McSweeney

Cork Chamber of Commerce's International Relations Manager Cathal McSweeney spoke with us during the Irish Network USA's National Convention in Cleveland October 20-22. We wanted to discuss relationship building, the future of Irish business in Ireland, and in the U.S. too. Irish companies employ more than 100,000 people in the United States. Immigrants are 17% of the U.S. workforce.

"We have been involved in [Irish Network USA] IN for many years. Our goal here is to connect and to engage with the Diaspora and showcase Cork's story for business and economic development. Cork is definitely a city on the rise, in so many areas, including Life Sciences, Technology, Cybersecurity, Global Business Services; International Financial Services, Marine & Energy and Agri-food.

"Connecting Cork and Cork Chamber has a strong relationship with Irish Network USA and have sponsored the conference for many years. Irish Network USA offers us the opportunity to reach out to a strong Irish business community right across the USA and a diaspora with a close relationship to Ireland. This allows us to tell the great story Cork has to offer about our thriving business community and quality of life while building business connections throughout the U.S.

"Our vision is to be a world-leading



Bank of the river Lee in Cork, Ireland

Chamber of Commerce, delivering on a progressive, economic, social and sustainability agenda at the heart of a vibrant business community. Dynamic, Inspiring, Responsible, and Purposeful are the core values that define our operations and will enable us to best represent almost 1,200 members.

"Cork Chamber of Commerce has been a champion for the business community and a strong advocate for the economic development of the Cork region for over 200 years. With our members as our motivation, we champion Cork as a globally recognized place for business, innovation and quality of life. Working together we empower and support a successful and inclusive membership who drive a thriving Cork.

"Founded in 1819, Cork Chamber is one of Ireland's largest and longest established Chambers and is the nation's No.1 regional lobby group. Supporting sustainable development in the region, Cork Chamber is championing the UN Sustainable Development Goals, through which the Chamber priorities and activities are framed.

"Connecting Cork is a Cork Chamber-led initiative to expand and develop our international relationships and to promote Cork for business, investment, talent and collaboration. Connecting Cork engages with members of the Irish business community and diaspora overseas while promoting Cork to a targeted international audience.

"Cork is Ireland's 2nd largest centre of population, with nearly 600k people living in the region (581,231, 2022 Census). Cork is targeted as Ireland's fastest growing city region with population set to double by 2040. It also has a young population with 50% under 35. It has a strong pipeline of talent, with its two Universities, University College Cork and Munster Technological University, who have a combined 40,000 students and 10,000 graduates per-year.

"Foreign Direct Investment is very important to the economic success of the region. Over 180 foreign investors having decided to locate in Cork, building strong industry clusters and employing over 43,000 people in the region. While the IDA continues to do very well in attracting investment to Ireland, Connecting Cork looks to complement their work. Cork has a strong business ecosystem and Ranks 2nd overall in Small European Cities of the Future, and No.1 for Economic Potential (FDI Intelligence European Cities and Regions of the Future 2022/23).

"We are always encouraging, representing and supporting. We actively celebrate the vibrancy of our membership. Insight and experience define our strategic goals and daily workflow. We seek to be dynamic and forward thinking, to be purposeful change makers, to be responsible and inspiring. We want to complement efforts by bringing a focus on offshore, renewable energy, on world

engagement.

"We have the 2nd largest naval port in the world. By focusing on renewables, focusing on engagement, we showcase Cork, what the business environment is there, and why leaders should consider Cork as a location for their business, or for business expansion. [A light rail system is coming.] Infrastructure is the initial build in process, funds are set aside for train route development – a light rail system by 2040, which will really open the city.

"Our goal is to tell Cork's story, to make sure people know about our business community, know that it is thriving already. It is important just to connect Cork, to make relationships. We have a talent attraction movement, highlighting why Cork is a great place to live, and work, with great quality of life.

"Cork offers a quality of life that is second to none, as Ireland's culinary capital and maritime haven with spectacular coastlines and a vibrant nightlife, it has something for everyone."

The Chamber is based at Fitzgerald House, Summerhill North, Cork. See more at [www.corkchamber.ie](http://www.corkchamber.ie); on Twitter & Instagram: @CorkChamber; & on

Facebook: /FacesofCorkBusiness. ●

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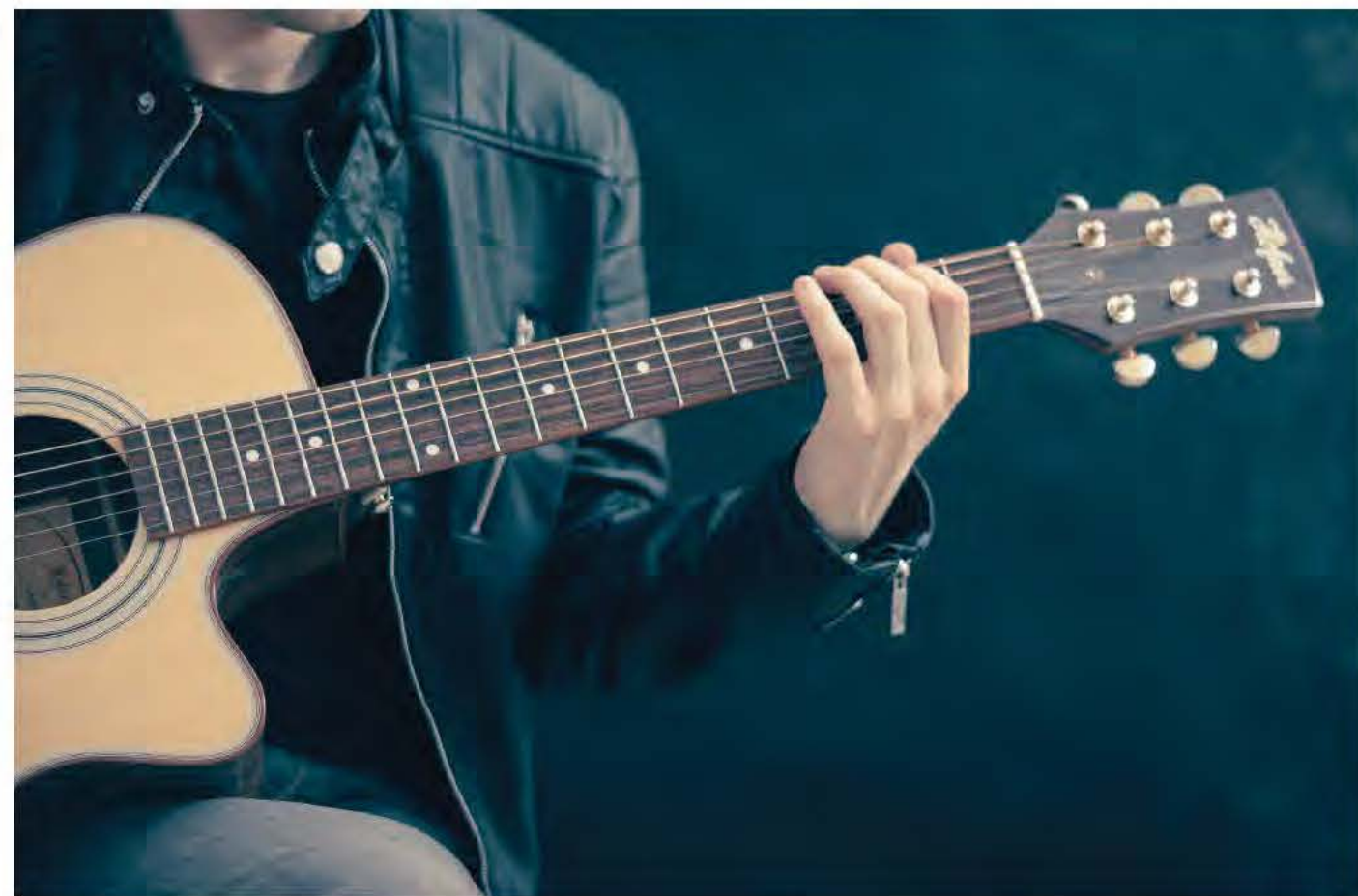






## IRISH AT HEART

By Natalie Keller



# Written from the Heart and Sung from the Soul, The Music of Hozier

Ireland has seen its fair share of superstars: U2, Van Morrison, Enya, The Dubliners, The Cranberries - the list goes on. But even among legends, Hozier stands out from the crowd.

There is no Irish musician *quite* like Andrew John Hozier-Byrne, the alternative singer-songwriter who has been referred to as "Ireland's new voice."

Born in Bray, County Wicklow to a painter and a local blues musician, it seems that Hozier was destined to be a musical artist. His distinct sound - which blends blues, gospel, folk, and soul - was shaped by his humble upbringing and as his father's vibrant,

diverse collection of vinyl and old cassettes.

He recalled to *Rolling Stone*, "We lived far out in the Irish countryside [and] had a very, very bad Internet connection. I developed a fascination with the roots of African American music. I love Muddy Waters and Nina Simone."

Limited internet access encouraged Hozier to delve into his father's records and discover the raw power of blues and jazz rather than pop on the radio. Hozier also names Leonard Cohen, community choral singing, and Irish novelist James Joyce's classic work *Portrait of an Artist as a Young Man* among his major influences. Those

influences are evident in the music, which often features choirs and literary references.

His most unusual inspiration, however, derives from the lectures he listens to daily. In fact, one lecture by astrophysicist Katie Mack on the eventual death of the universe inspired his apocalyptic song, "No Plan," in

which Hozier croons: "There's no plan, there's no kingdom to come / I'll be your man if you got love to get done / Sit in and watch the sunlight fade / Honey, enjoy, it's gettin' late / There's no plan, there's no hand on the rein / As Mack explained, there will be darkness again."

### Take Me to Church

You've no doubt heard Hozier's most popular track: his soulful, "Take Me to Church," a runaway 2013 hit. My favorite line in the song is "If the heavens ever did speak, she's the last true mouthpiece." The piece is abundant with rich imagery, biblical allusions, and political rage.

A struggling artist and college dropout at the time, the song was written and recorded in his parents' attic near Dublin. After going viral on Youtube, the song earned platinum certifications in eleven countries, won Hozier a major-label contract, and earned a Grammy nomination for Song of the Year in 2014.

In a short time, Hozier rose from small open-mic gigs in Dublin to interviews on international TV shows such as The Ellen Show, The Graham Norton Show, and The Tonight Show with Jimmy Fallon. Since then, Hozier has captivated international audiences with his melancholy ballads written from the heart and sung from the soul.

Beyond the uniqueness of his sound, Hozier's lyrics are also unmatched. Lines read like pure poetry. As a writer myself, I consider lyrics the bedrock of any song, and Hozier more than delivers.

### Lyrics That Linger

His songwriting is not simply beautiful, but overflows with meaning - whether a heartbreaking expression of love, a mournful illustration of loss, or a powerful political stance.

Indeed, the most stand-out elements of Hozier's work are its political undertones, though "overtones" is the better term, as the musician unabashedly addresses homophobia, racism, and domestic abuse both within his work and outside of it. Hozier's manager calls him a role model, a vocal feminist, and a die-hard defender of human rights issues.

He was an avid supporter for a Yes vote in Ireland's 2015 marriage equality referendum, and during the 2018 referendum to repeal the Eighth Amendment, he published a video urging voters to support "our

fellow citizens' access to healthcare and reproductive rights." He also often participates in fundraisers and concerts that raise funds to address homelessness. Hozier doesn't shy away from controversy or confrontation: when Pope Francis visited Ireland in 2018, he performed at the Stand for Truth protest rally, which invited anyone who had "been harmed or abused by the Roman Catholic Church or who wishes to stand in solidarity with those harmed by its actions" to join.

Hozier's songs reflect his deep-rooted convictions. "Take Me to Church" is a powerful indictment of the Catholic Church's treatment of the LGBTQ+ community, a shocking move from an Irishman raised in the Protestant faith.

"Nina Cried Power" is a celebration of the civil rights movement, and his newest single, "Swan Upon Leda," - which was inspired by the Supreme Court's overruling of Roe vs. Wade documents the age-old oppression of women in both ancient and modern society. Irishman William Butler Yeats's poem "Leda and the Swan" depicts the Queen of Sparta's rape by Zeus in the form of a swan.

### Women's Rights

The metaphor symbolizes England's "rape" of Ireland, and in Hozier's work, it represents the stripping-away of women's rights that leaves women vulnerable and powerless over their own bodies. Hozier defies this oppression by singing, "What never belonged to angels / Had never belonged to men." With the release of the song, Hozier announced that he would be donating to Mayday, AidAccess, and Plan C, organizations that provide safe access to reproductive healthcare.

It's invigorating to witness an artist live by their lyrics and wield their fame for righteous causes. Hozier tells *The Irish Times*, "We're all citizens of the Ireland we want to see come to fruition." As critically scathing as Hozier's music can be, hope and perseverance come out on top.

His music is a reminder to us all that we have the power to create the world we envision, which sets fire to my activist heart. And as Hozier writes in "Arsonist's Lullaby," "All you have is your fire."

Moreover, Hozier's success is testimony to the talent of Ireland. *Rolling Stone* quotes music producer

Aoife Woodlock, "When an Irish artist 'makes it' in America, the industry looks to Ireland. They look to the place that that artist came from. This is why it's imperative to support musicians. By supporting the up and coming you are investing in the next generation of [Hoziers]." •

Hozier's newest album *Unreal Unearth* is expected to be released by the end of this year. Before we enjoy the newest era of Hozier's work, these earlier songs are recommended: *Take Me to Church*, *Someone New*, *Cherry Wine*, *Jackie and Wilson*, *Work Song*, and *From Eden*.

References & Sources Consulted:

Article in *The Irish Times*: "Hozier: 'If

I wanted to make a f\*\*king pop song, I would."

Article in *Rolling Stone*: "Behind Hozier's Unlikely Rise."

Hozier Biography by Steve Leggett on allmusic.com

Natalie Keller is a former resident of Galway, Ireland and works in the world of libraries. Her poetry and fiction have appeared in various online platforms, including *Mirror Dance*, *Asymmetry Fiction*, and *The Peace Chronicle*. She loves to hear from readers at [nataliekeller.writer@gmail.com](mailto:nataliekeller.writer@gmail.com).

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# STONE MAD: The Making of a Wall

By John Digney

One might wonder why a person would travel 4,000 miles to a distant island just to labor over a pile of stones and spend all his retirement days wearing steel toed boots and work gloves? Well, it is certainly not for everyone, but when you have admitted being stone mad, it is part of the program.

I had gained the opportunity to connect with friends after three years of COVID and learn about an ancient craft that is alive and well on a remote island off the coast of Galway. I set my sites on the third week of September to travel to the smallest of the Aran islands, Inisheer. There, I immersed myself in the island life while preparing to build a Feiden Wall as part of the three-day stone festival Feil na gCloch.

To work side by side with people who are passionate about stone, will certainly bring me back and I hope sparks interest in others to get involved. They are the stewards of the ancient craft and true artists whose palette is found only from the earth.

## Innisheer

When arriving to the island from the ferry, it becomes immediately apparent that Inisheer is frozen in another place in time. From horse drawn carriages awaiting one's arrival, the limestone outcroppings sculpting the shoreline, and the welcoming smiles from the locals, it makes stepping off to this adventure what many would call a soft landing.

The first few days were an opportunity to experience local life, explore roads lined with stones as high as one could reach, and take note of the years that have passed since they were first set. It was truly an amazing experience to witness all the variety in

the way the stones were stacked. Even so, these walls have continued to stand strong for years against the wind and rain that is ever present in the north Atlantic.

I noticed many stone wallers beginning to arrive on the island, along with a very large collection of limestone rocks being delivered, adjacent to the proposed wall site. The build would include wallers from across the globe; Canada and the US and places as far as Austria, Australia and Korea, as well as many members of the DSWAI from Ireland.

I will explain just how a wall is built and the essence of the experience as it unfolded over three days of the festival. Fortunately, in anticipation of the wall being built, our hosts did all the necessary site work and preparation prior to our arrival. The foundation work and vertical stones that were set established the direction of the wall and the course level we were to follow once we were introduced to the basics.

With some very specific instruction and a better understanding of the Feiden Wall layout, we selected and placed stones as we worked. A Feiden Wall, a common wall on the Aran Islands, consists of uniquely specific components. The "mother stones" are placed vertically, as pillars, about 2-3 meters apart, that contain or tend to the "children stones" which are placed in between.

The wall we were building was a double-faced wall, meaning it has an even stone face on both sides of the wall with the mother stones keeping it in line. A critical part of dry-stone walling is the smaller stones that are not seen once the wall is complete. These are referred to as "pinning stones" and "hearting stones" which are placed



in the center of the wall with highly intentional placement and purpose.

## Pinning Stones Hearting Stones

These pinning stones are small slices of stone that are used to level the face stones and help to lock in all the stones with vertical pressure. The hearting stones, which are larger in size than the pinning stones, are used to fill any horizontal voids in the center of the wall.

One must pay close attention that the level is consistent for each additional stone course. With the vertical pressure and gravity to settle the wall, these two integral parts assist in strengthening the wall along the entire run. Once all the children stones are placed, the entire wall is topped off with "father stones" that span the entire length of the wall.

One prominent aspect of walling that I had not anticipated, was the finesse and rhythmic choreography that came about naturally throughout the day. The nonstop clicking of the sledgehammer on the large stones, combined with the delicate chiseling and tapping as we shaped and fit each individual stone provided a deep sense of relaxation.

This constant chatter and clacking

of the mallets were almost musical when fully taken in. Although it is most certainly hard work, the labor is lessened by the camaraderie, community engagement, and the friendships forged through the process. The connection that is made on the wall is not left there but rather is carried with you.

I would like to thank the members of the Dry Stone Wall Association of Ireland for spending time to teach and instruct us on Inisheer, and for providing us with the knowledge and insight that we can share with so many others. We will continue to work with DSWAI to bring you content, stories and information published here in *iIrish* as well as on the internet at [www.iIrish.us](http://www.iIrish.us) ●

*John Digney is an Artist /Designer who received his BFA in Industrial Design from the Cleveland Institute of Art. He was raised in the Cleveland neighborhood of Westpark near Kamm's Corner, and he and his wife Kathleen, now reside in Greenville, SC. John can be reached at [jdigney59@gmail.com](mailto:jdigney59@gmail.com)*

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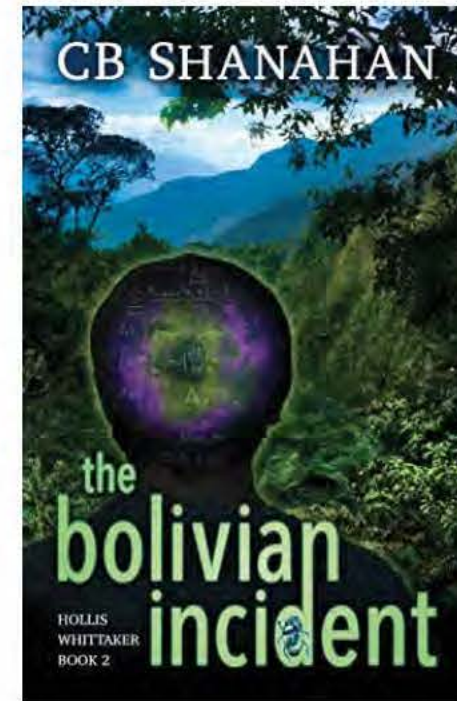
## The Bolivian Incident

Hollis Whitaker Trilogy Book 2

By C.B. Shanahan

@2022 Encircle Publications

274 pages ISBN-13: 978-1-64599-397-1



Continuing the story from Book 1, *Hollis Whitaker, The Bolivian Incident* finds young Hollis, having survived the many attempts at elimination by a mysterious, probably government, probably rogue, agency, finding others, past and present, that know and even share his secret. Both new and old, they shed light on many of the strange people and things happening to Hollis in his struggle to stay alive. Some fight with him; some try to destroy him.

It is not necessary to have read *Hollis Whitaker* to understand *The Bolivian Incident*, but Book 1 is a great read too, so I recommended it in my book review in the March 2020 issue of *iIrish* when it came out ([you can read that review by clicking here](#)). I still do.

I was immediately drawn into this second book of the *Hollis Whitaker* Trilogy too ... thirty pages, 100 pages, were gone in a seeming blink. My favorite characters from Book 1 were

back, and a few other memorable characters enter the story. Seemingly innocuous, they are instrumental in the fight to stay alive, and the understanding of the threats and wonders confronting the young boy on the run. Harrowing escapes and harrowing powers send the story in unexpected directions for both Hollis and those who wish to seize those powers for their own nefarious, and deadly, intentions.

*The Bolivian Incident* is a Top Shelf Selection, and highly recommended.

The *Hollis* Trilogy series concludes with Book 3, due in 2023. CB Shanahan has earned many awards as a journalist and spent twenty-two years on the road as a folksinger, where I first met him and swapped stories and music.

Crazy smart with a wicked, subtle sense of humor, he has a bachelor's degree in English Literature with a minor in Philosophy. He is a member of Mensa. Born in Ireland, CB now lives in New Hampshire with his partner Libby, plays music in his spare time, and loves to travel.

Visit [www.cbshananahan.com](http://www.cbshananahan.com), @cb\_shanahan on Twitter, and find CB Shanahan on Facebook and GoodReads.com.

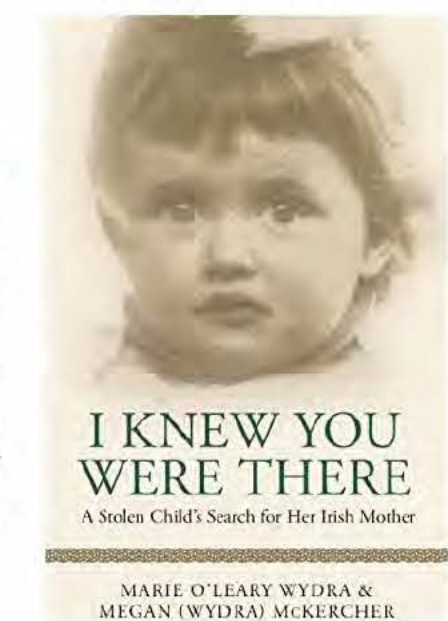
## I Knew You Were There

A Stolen Child's Search for Her Irish Mother

By Marie O'Leary Wydra and Megan Wydra Mc Kercher

@2022 175 pages.

ISBN 978-1-5445-3035-2



*I Knew You Were There* is the true story of Marie O'Leary Wydra, separated as

a baby from her mother, in the orphan and wayward mothers type home that is now finally getting a lot of attention and recrimination, with significant repercussions for those who exacted and enabled so much hate and damage on young pregnant mothers in Ireland, and their children, at the hands of those charged with their care, mostly nuns and staff, for generations, with the acceptance and cover up of the Catholic Church.

The story is very different from those I have previously read, of the *Magdalene*



**Megan Wydra Mc Kercher and Marie O'Leary Wydra**

*Laundries* and similar. The story centers not on the day-to-day abuse, unmarked infant graves, and other horrors, but around adult Marie's search for her real mother. The beginning, the time adopted by a brutal, damaged new "mother" and the carnage each inflicted is told, but the spirit of Marie, a lifelong nurse in career and in practice outside of her career, comes through throughout.

*In one glance, she took in my sadness: "How are you?"*

*"I don't think it's going to be long," I tearfully told her. "I wish I could be there. I feel so guilty."*

*With that, she grabbed my hands, looked me in the eyes, and said, "Marie, you weren't meant to be there now. You were there when she needed you. You brought her peace."*

*As she spoke those words, the feeling of lead in my chest disappeared. It felt as if my mother was talking through her, telling me, "It's okay. I'm okay." I felt, once again, as if I'd been touched by an angel. My*

*mother and I both went on to live fulfilling lives, but we never let go of the longing for each other. That all the angels in my life conspired to bring us together remains the single greatest blessing of my life.*

*You too have guardian angels that you might find in a cab or a coffee shop or anywhere else. So if you're living a tortured existence, as I was, please don't ever give up. I hope that the story of my life illustrates for you what I learned: no matter how improbable it may seem, you can overcome your past—by seeing good in the people around you, by deciding you are not a victim, and by choosing to be better and do better than the people tormenting you.*

*In the end, Marie found fulfillment, peace, and her mother. The stories of how she got there; the stories of the grand reunion with her mother and previously unknown relatives; many blessings and the pure love of family offer hope and inspiration for anyone struggling with isolation, loss, loneliness for family and a sense of belonging deeper than the span of one lifetime, complete I Knew You Were There.*

*I Knew You Were There* is a Top Shelf Selection, highly recommended for the truth in the story; the different perspective in which the story is told, and perhaps, never been told; and the inspiration it offers to those undergoing their own searches for peace, inspiration, and someday, closure.

In this search, and the book, Marie is accompanied, and gently nudged, by her daughter, Megan Wydra Mc Kercher, herself an active advocate and vocation committed owner of living with love. Megan founded *Heart & Home*, a residential care facility.

Marie and Megan donate a portion of the proceeds from *I Knew You Were There* to Providence House, Inc., a Cleveland, Ohio-based organization that fights child abuse and supports family preservation. If you also would like to support this worthy cause, please contact [www.provhouse.org](http://www.provhouse.org) or 1-216-651-5982. ●

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Quinlan 216-548-8063; 8<sup>th</sup> - Forever  
Young Christmas Luncheon, Mary  
Ellen Grealis 440-235-4164; 14<sup>th</sup> - Celtic  
Angels Concert, John O'Brien 216-375-  
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Thomas Wetmore, 30<sup>th</sup> - Bob Ford  
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Columbus, 43207 614.444.5949.

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#### IRISH AMERICAN CLUB

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### YOUNGSTOWN

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8:30 am / 2<sup>nd</sup> Flight 1:30pm. Duck  
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10. [mstrotmeyer@aol.com](mailto:mstrotmeyer@aol.com) or  
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[pittsburghgaa.com](http://pittsburghgaa.com)

#### THE ANCIENT ORDER OF HIBERNIANS/LADIES AN- CIENT ORDER OF HIBERNI- ANS

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\$30. South Hills Country Club 4305  
Brownsville Road Pittsburgh, Pa. 15236.  
Reservations: Rich O'Malley (412) 401-  
3945 [pghsaintpat@verizon.net](mailto:pghsaintpat@verizon.net)

Division 4 (North Hills)  
Christmas Basket Raffle - Tickets \$5  
ea. Contact Patrick O'Brien.

[aohdiv4.org](http://aohdiv4.org) or Bob Parry  
(724-933-0427).  
Division 21 William R. Murphy  
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Division 23 (Lawrenceville) **No  
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Division 32 Sean McBride (Carnegie)  
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Maud Gonne  
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44113

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Wednesdays 7-9 pm set dancing lessons: Irish American Club - East Side Euclid, OH;  
West Side Irish American Club, Olmsted Twp, OH. [CeiliClubCleveland@gmail.com](mailto:CeiliClubCleveland@gmail.com)

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**AN EEJIT  
ABROAD**  
By Conor Makem

## It's the Irish/Danish Smackdown

Sure, it consistently ranks as one of the happiest countries on the planet, but what does Denmark have that Ireland doesn't? Well, for one thing, they have a royal family, which obviously isn't anything to be envied, but the differences don't stop there. Oh no they don't, dear reader.

So, having just set foot back home in Amerikay from a quick trip over to the Land of Danes, I will now provide for you a full comparison of the two countries, which I'm sure upon completion of this column you'll agree is both accurate and all-encompassing.



**Good people, I ask you, do these not look like they should be chocolate? The Danes have some questions to answer for.**

This won't be pretty. You should be prepared to roll around in the mud with this article, but in the end, I think you'll walk away wiser.

**Chocolate bars:** Advantage Ireland  
Let's jump into the meat of the debate, shall we? One of my guilty pleasures when visiting a country for the first time is delving into their junk food. That's a huge part of the culture, isn't it, the potato crisps and choco bars?

I'm going to come clean and admit that I don't speak Danish and, if you've tried to learn it, you'll understand why I stopped trying. It's a tongue twister (much like Irish), with words that are pronounced very differently from how they're spelled (much like Irish). The best I could do was to visit the Irma shop and look for the good stuff.

On my first attempt, I settled on the Tyrkish Peber and the Pepe XXL. Both looked like respectable chocolate bars. The Tyrkish Peber with illustrations of flames coming out of the chocolate was intriguing. Upon returning to the hotel room, I ripped open the new delectables and chomped down on licorice...not chocolate.

Good people, I ask you, what nation of happy people disguise their licorice as chocolate and claim to still be happy? Their version of the Rolo was admirable, but the licorice was beyond the beyond.

**Potato chips:** Advantage Ireland  
On that first fateful trip, I also purchased a bag of Iberian ham potato crisps. Not so bad, I didn't think. Quite like kettle cooked chips, and certainly reminiscent of Iberian ham; I was content. Was I content enough to eschew my Tayto Cheese and Onion? Not on your life.

**Bicycles:** Advantage Denmark.  
Next, we move to environmental



**As far as castles associated with fictitious Danish kings, I'm not sure you could do better than Kronborg Castle (aka Hamlet's Castle), in Elsinore, Denmark. Hard luck, Ireland.**

issues. I was pleasantly surprised to see a complete void of plastic utensils. From the street vendors to the food markets, wooden spoons and forks wouldn't know it. It's like businesses have decided that bubblegum pop is the only option, that adults don't care about music, so let's just please the wee ones.

**Pastries:** Advantage Denmark  
This one is almost a no-brainer. Ireland has some lovely pastries. I mean, is there a person on the planet who doesn't love sinking their teeth into shortbread biscuits? But, good people, consider the Danish. The danged word is synonymous with the country. They don't call them Danish in Denmark, they call them pastries. And they're gooooood.

**Tea:** Advantage Ireland  
Denmark is not the black hole of easily accessible good tea like the United States, but a plain old cuppa does not grow on trees, like it does in Erin. Nose in the uppity direction.

**Background music:** Advantage Denmark

Let's face it, we've all been there. You stop into a quiet little pub in a quaint Irish village and as soon as you're settled, you realize that the music over the background speakers was selected by a twelve-year-old. It's a phenomenon that to this day I can't explain.

Ireland is home to some of the best

music the planet has ever known and yet, if you were to visit just about any public place in the country, you wouldn't know it. It's like businesses have decided that bubblegum pop is the only option, that adults don't care about music, so let's just please the wee ones.

Denmark had some of that, but on a whole, when you enter an establishment, you feel like there's an adult in charge of the music.

**Castles Run by Fictitious Danish Kings:** Advantage Denmark  
We visited Kronborg Castle (aka Hamlet's Castle) in Elsinore, Denmark. There's really no competition on this one. I don't think Ireland even has one of these.

**Border Crossings:** Advantage Denmark

While I'll admit that crossing between Monaghan, in the Republic, and Keady, Co. Armagh, in the North, via the now derelict British Army barracks is a tonic, the five-mile train bridge between Copenhagen and Malmö, Sweden, spanning the sea edges out the competition. Bravo Nordic countries. Bravo.

**Pedestrian Shopping Streets:** Draw  
It is darned difficult to top Grafton Street for pedestrian-friendly shops and restaurants, but the Stroget in Copenhagen's historic district will reel you in with its equally car-free and mobbed walkways. There's just no clear winner.



**I'm not sure there's a corner of this planet where you won't find an Irish pub and Copenhagen is no exception.**

**Happiness:** Advantage Denmark  
Alas, this one wasn't up to me. Ireland ranks pretty high on happiness rankings based on any number of criteria, but the Danish are consistently among the happiest people in the world. Maybe it's the Irish tendency to center life around alcohol, or their choice of pop music in public places... or perhaps it's the preponderance of bicycles keeping people active and fit in Denmark, but whatever it is, kudos to them.

**Flights:** Advantage Ireland  
Our direct flight from Boston to Copenhagen was cancelled an hour before we were set to take off. And since we didn't want to be saddled with a case of Coronavirus as we began our week in Denmark, we donned masks for the journey.

The airline, through much confusion and consternation (and much is not a strong enough word), booked us on another airline through Portugal and onto Copenhagen twelve hours later than we had planned, thus essentially cutting a day off of our holiday.

I'll add that we were wearing masks for twenty-four hours. With the caveat that Aer Lingus brings us into Dublin from Boston at an ungodly early hour, they've never cancelled a flight on me.

**Irish Pubs:** Advantage Ireland  
There were an unusually high number of Iris pubs in Copenhagen, but let's be honest. There are more in Ireland.

**Danny Kaye Songs:** Advantage Denmark

For weeks leading up to our Danish trip, nearly on a daily basis, the old Danny Kaye standard "Wonderful Copenhagen" was rattling around my brain. It continued through our stay and even for days after returning. I'll admit that no Danny Kaye song has done that to me any time I've been in Ireland. Who knew?

And there you have it, a complete and unvarnished comparison between Ireland and Denmark, the likes of which you're not likely to find in any periodical outside of *ilrish*. Put it another way, Denmark is well worth a visit. ●

*Conor Makem spent 22 years traveling and honing petty gripes as an Irish musician, and enjoyed a further 13 years of people not returning his calls as a journalist. He is fluent in English, American and old Kerry farmer. More of his photos are on Instagram under cb.makem.*

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1. After seven successful seasons, the Mary Tyler Moore Show ended its run on March 19, 1977. In the last scene at the tv studio, the cast huddled in a group and sang what song?
2. Who of the following was not a commander of the Irish Brigade during the U.S. Civil War? Thomas Francis Meagher, Michael Corcoran or D.P. Conyngham
3. Complete the following Irish proverb, "Live in my heart and pay no \_\_\_\_\_?"
4. Bernadette Devlin McAliskey is a native of what Ulster County?
5. Rock singer Bob Geldorf was born in what Irish city?
6. The Cliffs of Moher are located in what county in Ireland?
7. Writer John B. Keane (1928-2002) was born in what county Kerry town?
8. In two words, what does Banshee mean?
9. Under English rule, what county was known as Kings County?
10. Achill Island, Co. Mayo is the largest of the Irish islands - True or false?

1. "It's a Long Way to Tipperary"
2. D.P. Conyngham
3. Rent
4. Tyrone
5. Dun Laoghaire
6. Clare
7. Listolwell
8. Fairy woman
9. Co. Offaly
10. True



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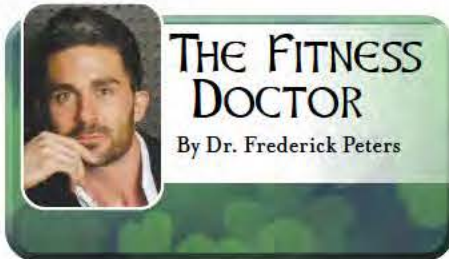


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**THE FITNESS DOCTOR**  
By Dr. Frederick Peters

## Are You Dieting Correctly?

As the holidays approach, many of us may be concerned about gaining a few extra pounds. Perhaps you are even considering starting a “before Thanksgiving” diet.

But are you sure your “diet” is actually going to work? According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, nearly half of U.S. adults try to lose weight each year. Many of these dieters attempt to shift weight by eating healthier and including more fruits, vegetables and salads in their meal plans. However, new research to be presented at the American Heart Association’s Scientific Sessions 2022, this November, finds there is a mismatch between the perceived and measured diet quality improvements for many dieters – they think they are eating healthier than they are.

Guidance about healthy eating from the American Heart Association,

issued in 2021, advises adults to eat a variety of fruits and vegetables, opt for whole grains rather than refined grains, choose healthy protein sources, substitute non-fat and low-fat dairy products for full-fat versions, choose lean cuts of meat (for those who eat meat), use liquid plant oils instead of tropical oils and animal fats, choose minimally processed rather than ultra-processed foods, avoid foods and beverages with added sugar, choose foods with little or no added salt, and limit or avoid alcohol.

In the recent study, researchers evaluated the diets of 116 adults aged 35–58 years old who were trying to lose weight. Study participants met one-on-one with a dietitian to discuss their nutrition and then tracked everything they ate and drank every day for one year on the Fitbit app. They also weighed themselves daily and wore a Fitbit device to track their physical activity.

### Healthy Eating Index

The researchers calculated a Healthy Eating Index (HEI) to assess how closely a person’s diet aligned with the U.S. government’s Dietary Guidelines for Americans. A score of “0” to “100” was possible when using the HEI, with a higher score indicating a healthier diet. The score was based on the frequency with which people ate various dietary components such as fruits, vegetables, whole and refined grains, meat and seafood, sodium, fats and sugars. A starting score and a finishing score

were determined subjectively, by the participants themselves, as well as by the researchers, the participants completed a 24-hour food recall of everything they had eaten during two days at the beginning and two days at the end of the study, respectively.

The self-assessment of their beginning diet was a “look back,” as they scored both their starting and ending diets at the end of the study. The difference in their starting and ending score was their perceived diet change. A difference of six points or less between the researchers’ HEI score and the participant’s perceived score was considered “good agreement.”

At the end of the study, about one in four participants’ scores had good agreement between their perceived diet score and the researcher-assessed score. The remaining three out of four participants’ scores had poor agreement, with most reporting a perceived score that was higher than the HEI score assigned by the researchers. The average perceived score was 67.6, and the average researchers’ HEI score was 56.4.

### Healthy Diet Disconnect

They found that while people generally know that fruits and vegetables are healthy, there may be a

disconnect between what researchers and health care professionals consider to be a healthy and balanced diet compared to what the public thinks is a healthy and balanced diet.

When considering the change in diet score over twelve months, only one in ten participants had good agreement between their self-assessed change, and the



change assigned by the researchers. At the end of the study, participants had only improved their diet quality by about one point, based on the researcher-assessed score, while participants estimated that they had made, on average, an eighteen-point improvement.

People attempting to lose weight, or health professionals who are helping people with weight loss or nutrition-related goals, should be aware that there is likely more room for improvement in the diet than may be expected. There needs to be concrete information on what areas of their diet can be improved and how to go about making healthy, sustainable nutrition changes.

Overestimating the perceived healthiness of food intake could lead to weight gain, frustrations over not meeting personal weight loss goals or lower likelihood of adopting healthier eating habits. While misperception of diet intake is common among dieters, these findings provide additional support for behavioral counselling interventions that include more frequent contacts with health care professionals to address the gaps in perception and support long-lasting, realistic healthy eating behaviors.

Are you sure you are “dieting” correctly? •

Dr. Peters is the founder of “The Fitness Doctor” ([www.thefitnessdoctors.com](http://www.thefitnessdoctors.com)) and a professor of Health & Human Performance. He has a Ph.D. in Physiology from Kent State University and is a certified member of the American College of Sports Medicine. [fred@thefitnessdoctors.com](mailto:fred@thefitnessdoctors.com).

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**MADIGAN MUSES**

By Marilyn Madigan

## Special Gifts

Every December, we start preparing for Christmas. The cards are sent out to friends and family. In today’s world, we also send greetings out using social media. At Christmas when we reflect on our greatest gift as Christians, the presence of Jesus in our lives, we also want to spend time with those who are important on our life journey. One Irish tradition that I love is the lighting of a candle to show the Holy Family that there is a place in our home for them on their journey.

Recently, I was able to present a candle with a saying about Strong Irish Women to the new Irish Ambassador to the United States Geraldine Byrne Nasson, from the Ladies Ancient Order of Hibernians. When presenting the candle to her, I referenced how the first



woman President of Ireland, Mary Robinson, had a candle to welcome the Irish Diaspora. This candle represented our welcome to her on her new journey as Irish Ambassador. As members of the Irish Diaspora, we look forward to our joint journey with her to promote our Irish Heritage.

This year my special gift is to be able to serve as the leader of the best Irish Catholic Women’s Organization: The Ladies Ancient Order of Hibernians. I am humbled and honored to serve the many women who have made an impact on my life.

More importantly these women have made many contributions to their local

communities. We all have people in our lives that are special gifts. How blessed we are for them to be on our journey. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. •

Marilyn Madigan is the National President of the Ladies Ancient Order of Hibernians and a Deputy Director of the United Irish Societies of Cleveland. She received a Bachelor of Science in Nursing from St. John College and retired from Nursing at University Hospitals of Cleveland.

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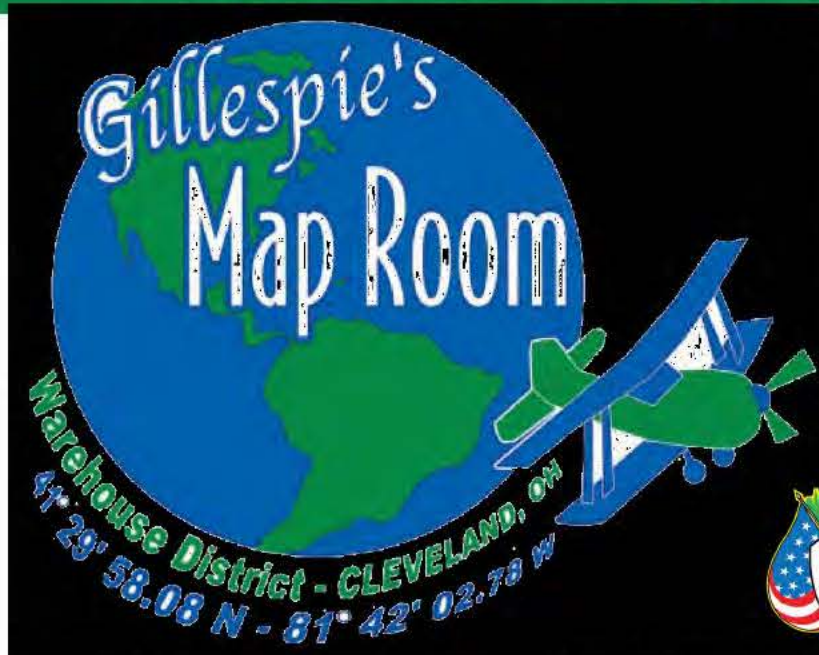






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**TOLEDO IRISH**  
By Molly McHugh

## December 8th

Does December 8<sup>th</sup> hold a special meaning to you? Perhaps the Immaculate Conception, or maybe my birthday? I assume the latter! This year, I'm turning 21, finally! And if you believe that, then I also have a bridge to sell you!

Historically in Ireland, December 8<sup>th</sup> was certainly representative of the Feast Day of the Immaculate Conception (at least for Irish Catholics), but it also signified the beginning of the Christmas season: think Christmas decorating, Santa and shopping! Because the Immaculate Conception was and is a holy day of obligation, children were off school

allowing parents to bring their children out to see the sights and sounds of the season.

The shopping part, however, meant the day was very important to the Irish retail calendar as well. This is primarily because when the 8<sup>th</sup> rolled around, people from the "country" journeyed into Dublin or to a more urban area (Cork, Galway) to get their

Christmas shopping underway.

What's ironic is that, at the same time the "country folk" were making their way into the city, the local "city folk" were making a mass exodus for the day. Ah, reminds me of NYC in summer. Who spends summer weekends in Manhattan?

Anyway, in my humble opinion, they really should have made it the

day for Christmas shopping plus a day shopping for my birthday! Alas, I may not be turning 21, but I'm also not that old; consequently, when this date became a day of shopping, surely, I wasn't in mind. Pass given.

While the 8<sup>th</sup> may no longer hold the same excitement as it did in bygone times (thanks to online shopping), there is still so much magic on Grafton Street in Dublin, or on Shop Steet in Galway, during the Christmas season. If you find yourself there this season, don't forget, it's my birthday as well and my address is..... just kidding!

Merry Christmas! May your days be merry and bright! ●

*Molly McHugh is a Toledo native and holds her MSC in Strategy, Innovation and People Management from National University of Ireland, Galway. Molly can be reached at molly.mchugh16@gmail.com*

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**COOKING UP A HOOLEY**  
By Katie Gagne

## Christmas Red

Chocolate Chip Cookies are always a favorite. Yet, at the holidays, many people shy away from these cookies and instead make traditional and more inspired pastries. Sometimes, though, a chocolate chip cookie is what you are craving. These cookies are unique and fit just perfectly with the Christmas season

### Red Velvet Chocolate Chip Cookies

#### Ingredients

Makes approximately 3 dozen  
3 cups + 2 tbsp of All Purpose Flour  
½ cup Unsweetened Cocoa Powder  
2 teasp Baking Soda  
½ teasp Salt  
1 cup (2 sticks) Unsalted Butter - room temperature  
1 ½ cups packed Light Brown Sugar  
½ cup white Granulated Sugar  
2 Large Eggs - room temperature  
2 tsp Buttermilk  
4 teasp Vanilla  
3 teasp Red Food Color  
2 cups Semi-Sweet Chocolate Chips  
2 cups Dark Chocolate Chips  
Whisk flour, cocoa powder, salt, baking soda in a large bowl and set aside  
With a hand-held or stand mixer, cream butter until light and fluffy

Add in sugars and mix until blended  
Add in eggs one at a time  
Add vanilla  
Add buttermilk and food coloring and mix until combined  
Use a good, strong red food color - the baking supplies in Walmart or craft stores are much more intense; you need that for the deep red color.

Add more food coloring until the dough is very bright red. Cookies will brown in the oven and the color becomes faded if you do not use enough.

Add in the dry ingredients and mix until combined.

Stir in the semi-sweet chips.

Dough will be sticky. Cover and chill at least 1 hour.

Roll into balls and place on cookie sheet covered with silicone mat or parchment paper.

Bake in a preheated 350° for 10 min.

They should be slightly puffy when done. Watch the time so the bottoms do not become too dark.

Remove from the oven and press 3-4 dark chocolate chips into each cookie while still on the warm cookie sheet

After 5-10 minutes, transfer to a rack to cool. ●

*Katie Gagne teaches English at Trinity High School in Garfield Heights. She is also the owner of her in-home bakery Sassy's Sweets and Oh So Much More. You can contact her at (440) 773-4459 or at [mkbluebows@aol.com](mailto:mkbluebows@aol.com), or find her on Facebook at [sassyssweetsandmore](https://www.facebook.com/sassyssweetsandmore).*

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11th - #ilrish eBulletin drops in your inbox at 3:10 p.m. Signup: <a href="https://www.ilrish.us">ilrish.us</a> #ilrish #LiveMoreLifeBeMoreIrish #IrishAmerican #Shenanigans	25th - February Issue of <i>ilrish</i> hits the street #ilrish #LiveMoreLifeBeMoreIrish #IrishAmerican
16th - Martin Luther King Day	
16th - Irish American Club East Side Monthly Meeting	
19th - West Side Irish American Club (WSIA) Monthly Meeting	

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**PITTSBURGH IRISH**  
By Elizabeth Myers

# May a Lasting Peace be Unto You

This is a true story, as luck would have it. Imagine yourself on a plane for six hours, flying 3,000 miles across the Atlantic Ocean, and then driving three hours from Dublin to the rural West of Ireland and the rugged Wild Atlantic Way ... only to meet a professor from Pittsburgh who lives a few streets from you? Over the summer I recently had the opportunity to spend time in the good company of Peter Gilmore, Ph.D., who has studied the impact of Irish emigration on American society and taught history at classic institutions

in the Oakland neighborhood of Pittsburgh.

Dr. Gilmore and I drove across the Connacht and Ulster provinces into Northern Ireland and Derry together, where he led me on a walking tour along the city walls and the iconic murals that mark the path from civil unrest to peace. We visited the new and greatly expanded facilities of The Museum of Free Derry (TMOFD), a private curation maintained by the survivors and relatives of those murdered on Bloody Sunday in Derry's Bogside neighborhood.

We talked with the staff who created the exhibits, including Mr. John Kelly, who narrates all TMOFD's digital content and documentary films. John's brother Michael was shot and killed while standing by a barricade on Rossville Street. He was seventeen years old. Of the thirteen people who murdered on January 30, 1972, many were young people: seven teenagers in all.

Derry today is a city enduring the post-pandemic economic challenges, just like Pittsburgh and every other city in the world. But Derry has a unique and deeply meaningful place in the history of Ireland, and in the world. Derry's story cuts into the marrow.



**Elizabeth Myers and Peter Gilmore, Ph.D.**

I was a young journalist and recent graduate of Point Park University when President Bill Clinton made history as the first American President to visit Northern Ireland, once the seat of deep struggle and violent strife that made national headlines for most of my life. Peace was achieved on April 10, 1997.

Dr. Gilmore also introduced me to instructors and the staff librarian at *Culturlann*, an urban Gaeltacht community center, where the Irish language and traditional Irish folk

artforms are shared with both children and adults. Having spent much of the summer in the Irish countryside and visiting the Irish speaking enclaves along the Wild Atlantic Way, I was surprised to learn of a Gaeltacht in such an urbanized area, outside of a university setting such as Belfast and Dublin.

"I find myself continually surprised," said Dr. Gilmore, who has spent fifty years pursuing research in the field of social history, specifically the impact of Ulster immigrants on the United States. An adjunct lecturer in history as Carlow University, he has taught courses on the history of the British Isles and Irish American History since 2010.

Dr. Gilmore came to Carlow after teaching Irish history and the history of Antebellum United States at Carnegie Mellon University, where he earned a doctorate in social and cultural history in 2009, and a master's in history in 2002. He began his pursuit of history at the University of Bridgeport in Connecticut, where he graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in 1972, the same year as Derry's Bloody Sunday. Dr. Gilmore also teaches history courses for adult learners at the University of Pittsburgh and has coordinated many Irish language learning activities in the area over the last two decades.

Many locations across Western Pennsylvania and specifically in Pittsburgh reflect placenames of townlands, parishes, counties and divisions on the island that is Ireland, including Irish and Scottish surnames and notable figures in history from both nations. Most Americans of Irish heritage may be familiar with The Great



Hunger of the mid-1840s, which resulted in waves of Irish people emigrating from Ireland to North America.

But it was not just those of Catholic faith who were escaping hardship and religious intolerance. The Penal Laws of the late 1700s and early 1880s created "an established elite" among The Church of England "by limiting the influence of Catholics, Presbyterians, and other Dissenters," according to an exhibit that caught Dr. Gilmore's eye during our recent visit to The Museum of Free Derry.

Much like how Mass was outlawed, so priests moved up into the mountains to give communion, the Irish language, stories and songs were only taught in whispers among the hedges – legal restrictions were applied to other denominations as well, according to Dr. Gilmore, "It was even illegal for Presbyterian ministers to conduct weddings and marry people in Ireland," he said in a recent interview near our homes in the South Hills.

With a broad smile he admitted, "I am obsessed with the connections between the British Isles, America and the geographic match-ups." His areas of

research and expertise lie in lexicology (the study of the origin and meaning of words), placenames, and music. "My argument is that in Pittsburgh, in the 1800s, the majority of immigrants have been Scots Presbyterians who were born in Ireland and emigrated from Ireland – and not Scotland," asserted Gilmore.

"Census records actually indicate many Scottish surnames that prevalent in Ireland at the time." According to his review of letters and documents dated between the late 1700s and 1800s, roughly thirty percent of the immigrant population in Pittsburgh could be identified as Scots Presbyterians. While not as well-known as the Irish Catholic majority here, the identity of Scots Presbyterians and others who emigrated under the same duress of religious persecution are more than a vital statistic. They are a vital part of the Irish American identity in the story of Pittsburgh.

Dr. Gilmore writes extensively about



the Ulster diaspora in the United States. His most recent publication is 'Irish Presbyterians and the Shaping of Western Pennsylvania, 1770-1830' published by the University of Pittsburgh Press in 2008, and a paperback edition in 2020. He is currently working on a chapter on Ulster Presbyterians for a new book on Irish American History, due to go to press late next year.

As 2022 ends, I realize that a lasting peace in Northern Ireland has endured nearly as long as *The Troubles* themselves. One may be tempted to



assume these counterbalances the three decades of conflict and violence. But the civil unrest of the 1960s, 70s and 80s is not lost as those decades fade from the headlines. Derry's story is well documented and preserved in the pavement, on the walls, and in the hearts of those still living in Bogside.

You will feel a deeper sense of gravity when you visit. All of Derry remembers. And around every corner is a reminder for the necessity for peace. Peace is not the opposite of war. It is the solution to war.

The end of the year and the changing of seasons ushers in a holiday season for many people, with many different traditions – whether they be Jewish, Muslim or follow other religious beliefs. Christians, whether Catholic, Presbyterian or other Dissenters, all rejoice in the birth of a Savior, recognized as the Prince of Peace. May the lights of this holy season guide you home, and may you have a sense of lasting peace, much like the story of Derry. ●



*focuses on the preservation of indigenous languages and promoting cultural tourism. She lives in Castle Shannon, a former Irish settlement in the South Hills of Pittsburgh, loves learning, and sharing the Irish language. She can be reached at [Elizabeth.Myers.PittsburghIrish@gmail.com](mailto:Elizabeth.Myers.PittsburghIrish@gmail.com).*

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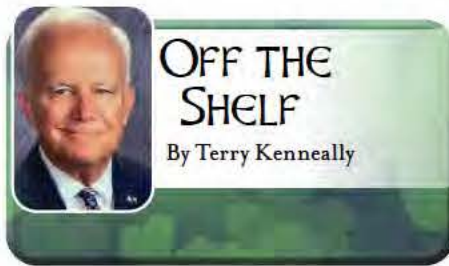
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## OFF THE SHELF

By Terry Kenneally

### Haven

By Emma Donoghue

@2022 Little Brown and Company  
ISBN 978-1-5290-9111-3 257 pp.

In this novel of religious discovery set in the seventh century, three Irish monks make a fraught with danger journey, from their monastery at Clonmacnoise on the River Shannon to Skellig Michael (Great Skellig), a craggy rock formation in the Atlantic off the coast of County Kerry. The novel opens at Clonmacnoise, a relatively new monastery with about three dozen monks.

Not 200 years have passed since St. Patrick converted the island to Christianity. Artt, a learned priest recently returned from afar, arrives at the monastery bringing with him new and uncompromising notions of how

a monk should live, which is contra to how he finds the community living.

It is to the relief of the abbot that Artt soon announces his departure because God has visited him in a dream, where he tells of a solitary island "far away, in the western ocean." God's instructions are that he must take only two companions. Artt's island proves to be a place for which nothing could have prepared them.

Skellig Michael may be familiar to some from its appearances in the Star War movies. It is also spectacularly photographed from the air in the recent Omnimax film, "Ireland," narrated by Liam Neeson.

The challenges - what to eat, where to sleep - are exacerbated by Artt's fanatical insistence that they immediately build a stone church and begin copying the Bibles. The result is a story trapped in a small space, completely cut off from the world.

In the drama that unfolds here,



though, Donoghue returns to the radical minimalism of 2010's *Room*. The two works share striking similarities: two characters struggle to preserve their humanity in utter isolation while appeasing an implacable captor (Artt).

The denouement of the book is surprising yet gratifying. *Haven* is the fourth Donoghue book this writer has read and reviewed for *i*Irish. My only criticism is that her prose tends to be too attentive to detail. None the less, *Haven* is a TOP SHELF read.

*Terrence J. Kenneally is an attorney and owner of The Kenneally Law Firm in Rocky River, Ohio. He received a Masters Degree in Irish Literature from John Carroll University and has taught Irish literature and history.*

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## CROSSWORD PUZZLE

By Linda Fulton Burke

@LindaBurke47

### ACROSS

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- 6 Carruth
- 9 McCourt
- 10 Harrington
- 11 O'Neill
- 13 O'Hagan
- 14 Kelly
- 16 Hilliard
- 18 Dwyer
- 21 Walker
- 22 Barrett
- 24 Doyle
- 27 Breton
- 28 Gilroy
- 30 Barnes
- 32 Elliott
- 34 Martin
- 35 Kenny
- 40 Flanagan
- 41 Smith
- 43 O'Grady
- 44 Larmour
- 45 Byrne
- 46 Russell
- 48 Douglas
- 50 Traynor
- 51 Meli
- 53 Brennan
- 55 McGuigan
- 56 Casey
- 60 Byrne
- 62 Reddy
- 63 Walsh
- 64 Lee
- 66 Dunne
- 70 Tiedt
- 72 Duggan
- 75 McLoughlin
- 76 Quinn
- 81 Irvine
- 82 Tracey
- 84 Conlan
- 86 Joyce
- 87 McNally
- 89 McLaughlin
- 90 Perry
- 91 Joe Nevin
- 92 McDonagh
- 94 Reid

- 96 Ward
- 97 Walsh
- 98 Roche
- 100 Corr
- 101 McKeon
- 102 Nash

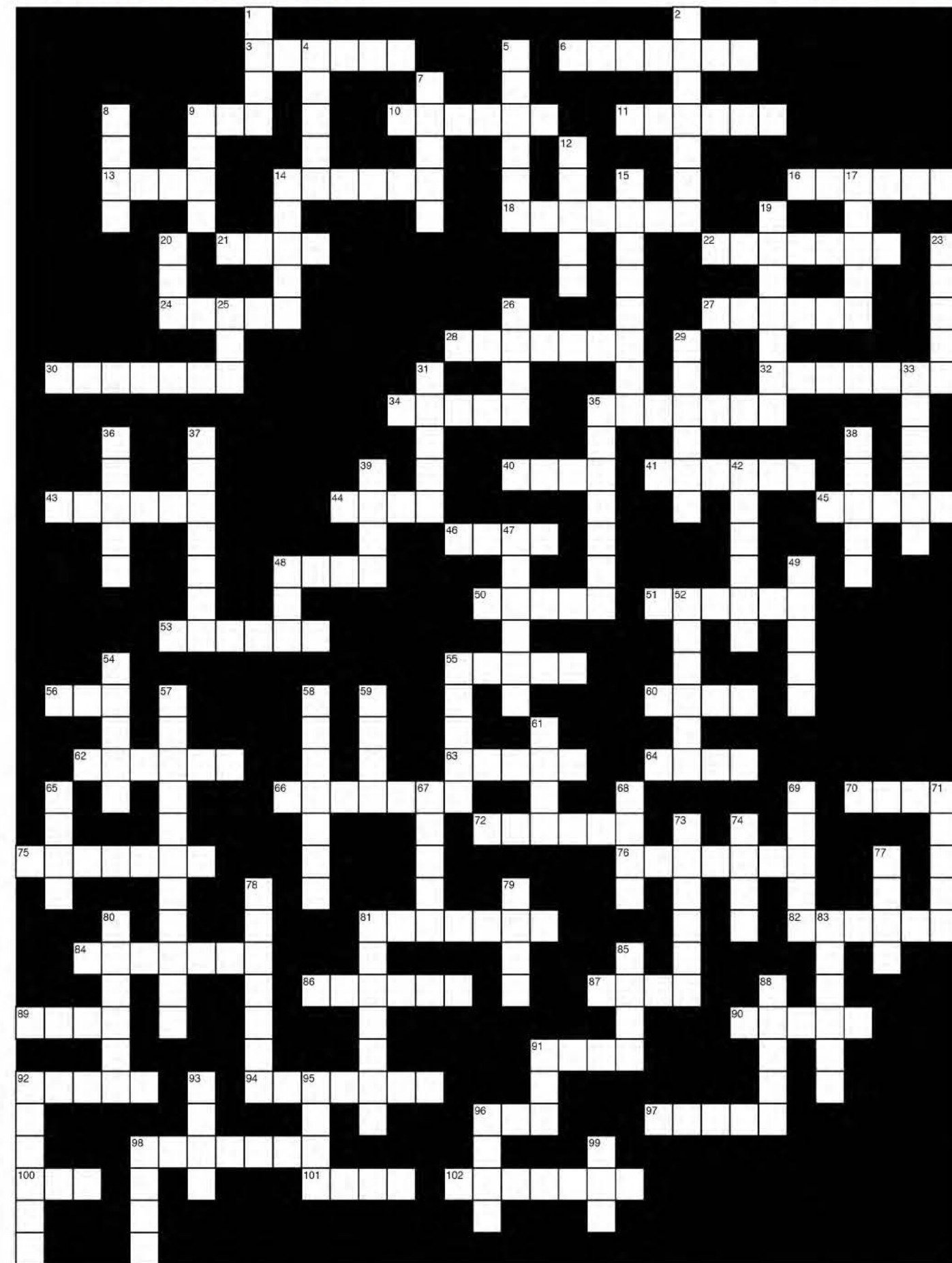
- 47 Hawkins
- 48 Fitzsimmons
- 49 McBride
- 52 McKeon
- 54 Egan
- 55 Magee
- 57 Rafter
- 58 Sharkey
- 59 Kelleher
- 61 Fitzgerald
- 65 Kidley
- 67 O'Rourke
- 68 McCafferty
- 69 McCullough
- 71 Oliver Joyce
- 73 Donnelly
- 74 Lowey
- 77 Nolan
- 78 O'Shea
- 79 Griffin
- 80 Lenihan
- 81 McCarthy
- 83 Sutherland
- 85 Lytle
- 88 Barnes
- 91 Lawlor
- 92 Smyth
- 93 Chase
- 95 McCoy
- 96 Rodgers
- 98 Dowling
- 99 Murphy

### DOWN

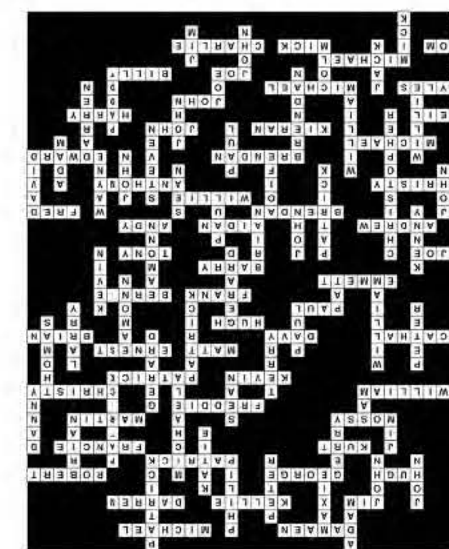
- 1 McLean
- 2 Davitt
- 4 McCullagh
- 5 Sutcliffe Sr.
- 7 Crotty
- 8 Caldwell
- 9 Joe Joyce
- 12 Taylor
- 14 Ó Colmáin
- 15 Walsh
- 17 Anderson
- 19 Hughes
- 20 Montague
- 23 O'Brien
- 25 Storey
- 26 Doyle
- 29 Hamill
- 31 Milligan
- 33 Reddy
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- 42 McCusker

## Famous Irish Boxers

By Linda Fulton Burke



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# SAFE HOME

## TOM SCANLON

We have lost another great one. A man of so many talents, who enjoyed sharing them, teaching, lifting those who needed a hand. By God, he loved Cleveland, loved Ireland, he loved a good story, and a good laugh.

I have had the great fortune of learning a lot from Tom Scanlon. He embraced my efforts, embraced my books, embraced *Irish* newsmagazine, and fed me stories and people I should learn stories from - I always left him feeling like I could never learn enough.

We both went to St. Ignatius, and he pointed out to me how the values taught there had become part of the fabric of his life, and of mine. For so many, he showed the way out of the darkness.

May he watch over us always.

Thomas J. Scanlon, who was a pillar of Cleveland's law community for almost 60 years, died October 30th in

Westlake, Ohio. He was 84. A lifelong resident of Cuyahoga County, Scanlon graduated from St. Ignatius High School in 1956, received his bachelor's degree from John Carroll University in 1959, and his law degree from Cleveland State University in 1963. He worked himself through law school by working as a financial analyst during the day and attending classes at night. He began his legal career with Shapiro, Persky, & Marken. In 1979, along with Charles Donahue, Scanlon founded the law firm Donahue & Scanlon, which specialized in commercial and real estate law. Among his most well-known clients were University Hospitals' St. John West Shore campus and handling contracts for the first commercial office condominium building in Ohio. He also served as a Special Assistant to the Ohio Attorney General for a case in 1991. In 1999, the firm was renamed Collins & Scanlon



TOM SCANLON

when Tim Collins became his partner. Scanlon was a practicing member of the American Bar Association, where he served as co-chair of the real estate section. He was a member of the Ohio State Bar Association, and the Cleveland Bar Association. He also served on the Ohio Supreme Court's Board of Bar Examiners. In 2014, Scanlon was inducted into the Cleveland International Hall of Fame for his involvement in the Cleveland Irish community date back to the 1870s when his family immigrated from Ireland. He also founded the Irish American Law Society of Cleveland, which sponsored speaking events in both Cleveland and Ireland. In 2009,

he was selected as one of "100 Leading Irish-American Lawyers". He was a board member of the Mayo Society of Greater Cleveland. He was also involved in The Ohio Rose of Tralee Center. In addition, Scanlon helped to raise funds for a book entitled "The Day we Celebrate," which chronicled a history of the St. Patrick's Day Parade in Cleveland. In fact, Ohio Supreme Justice Maureen O'Connor stated, "The name Tom Scanlon is synonymous with Cleveland Irish Legal Community". After having the event canceled in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Scanlon finally got his chance to serve as the grand marshal of the Cleveland St. Patrick's Day parade in 2022. He hosted Cleveland's largest St. Patrick's Day party with his law firm for over 40 years and the holiday remained an important date in Scanlon's life. Tom Scanlon has been affiliated with organizations such as the Centers for Families and Children, Cleveland Marshall Law Alumni Association, Cleveland Pops Orchestra, Greater Cleveland Sports Commission, Collaborative to End Human Trafficking, and Leukemia & Lymphoma Society of America. Scanlon remained working part-time with Hawkins & Company LLC until his death. For fun, Scanlon enjoyed running and remained active until just weeks before his death. He competed in marathons in Cleveland, Dublin, New York, and London and won a gold medal in Australia while on a business trip. He is survived

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## The Essence of EnnisCourt

Dedication and commitment to dignity, care, compassion, comfort and kindness

Through our holistic approach, we nourish the complete person - mind, body, and spirit - in a sensory stimulating community of faith. Residents are truly at home in a sanctuary of peace where dignity, choice and individuality are sacred, while rehabilitative and rejuvenating therapies help them to maximize independence and experience personal growth.

Families play an integral role in partnership with our caregiving team, forming a lifelong bond with EnnisCourt and creating cherished moments and lasting memories.

While people of all faiths are welcome, EnnisCourt is deeply committed to supporting the traditions of the Catholic faith. Dedicated priests provide pastoral services that guide residents on their spiritual journey, celebrating Mass and administering sacraments that bring healing, reconciliation and peace.

Patrice Campbell, LNHA  
Administrator/President

"Blessed is the servant who loves  
his brother as much when he is sick  
as when he is well and can be  
of service to him."

- St. Francis of Assisi



## EnnisCourt

A SANCTUARY OF PEACE, COMFORT AND FAITH

Skilled Nursing & Assisted Living

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by his wife of 59 years, Anita; sister, Elizabeth Marie Scanlon, SND, four daughters, Elizabeth (Brian) Donnelly of Birmingham, Michigan, Colleen (Timothy) Miller of Lexington, Kentucky, Cynthia of Cleveland and Kimberly (Jeffrey) Klein of Princeton, New Jersey; and seven grandchildren. He is predeceased by one grandchild, Christopher Miller; and his brother, John.

Obituary courtesy of [www.buschcares.com](http://www.buschcares.com)

Rest in peace Tom; may we meet again.

## TERRY GRIFFITH



Terry Griffith, beloved Irish entertainer, passed away peacefully at his home in Collier, PA on November 11, 2022. He began his sixty-year musical journey in Wheeling, WV, at the age of 15, playing classic rock. He, his wife Jan and their son, Damon, moved to Pittsburgh in 1973, where he continued his music.

When he was working his day job with Immigration and Naturalization for the government, he was given several Wolfe Tones albums. He began listening to them and discovered his true love, Irish music. Terry

remembered his grandfather, Tommy Minns, singing a few of them to him, especially *The Rising of the Moon*. He then started to delve into the stories behind these songs and immersed himself in the history.

It wasn't long before he began to play in the Irish Pubs in Pittsburgh, not only singing the songs but sharing the history of them and Irish history in general. He, along with Jan, put together a stage reading of the 1916 Rebellion, with songs, stories and poems, and performed it in several venues.

Terry joined the Pittsburgh St. Patrick's Day Parade, serving in several capacities, including Chairman of the Marching Band Committee. In 1999, he was named as Grand Marshal to acknowledge his commitment to the Irish Community.

If there was a fundraiser, Terry was one of the first in line to volunteer his music. He traveled the country performing at festivals and fundraisers. He loved what he did with a fierce passion. But, at the beginning of 2022, after several health problems, he made the decision to retire.

Terry was honored by friends, peers, and fans with a grand retirement party at The Harp & Fiddle in June of this year. He was touched to see so many come to wish him well. He will be missed.

GET MORE TO THE STORY  
More pics, and larger print too!  
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## MILESTONE & SWEET SNAPS



CONGRATULATIONS to Pittsburgh Irish Columnist Elizabeth Myers, awarded a Diploma in Irish Studies with Class Honours, from The University of Ireland - Galway



CONGRATULATIONS to Fiona Chambers, named Deloitte LLP Cleveland managing partner starting January 2, 2023



CONGRATULATIONS to Nolan Spicer and the St. Ignatius Wildcats on another State Championship win! Nolan was awarded the Gatorade Best High School Soccer Player of the Year in Ohio, and then won the Best High School Soccer Player in America. Nolan is the grandson of John & Rita Lally of Cleveland.





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