

2024

Festival

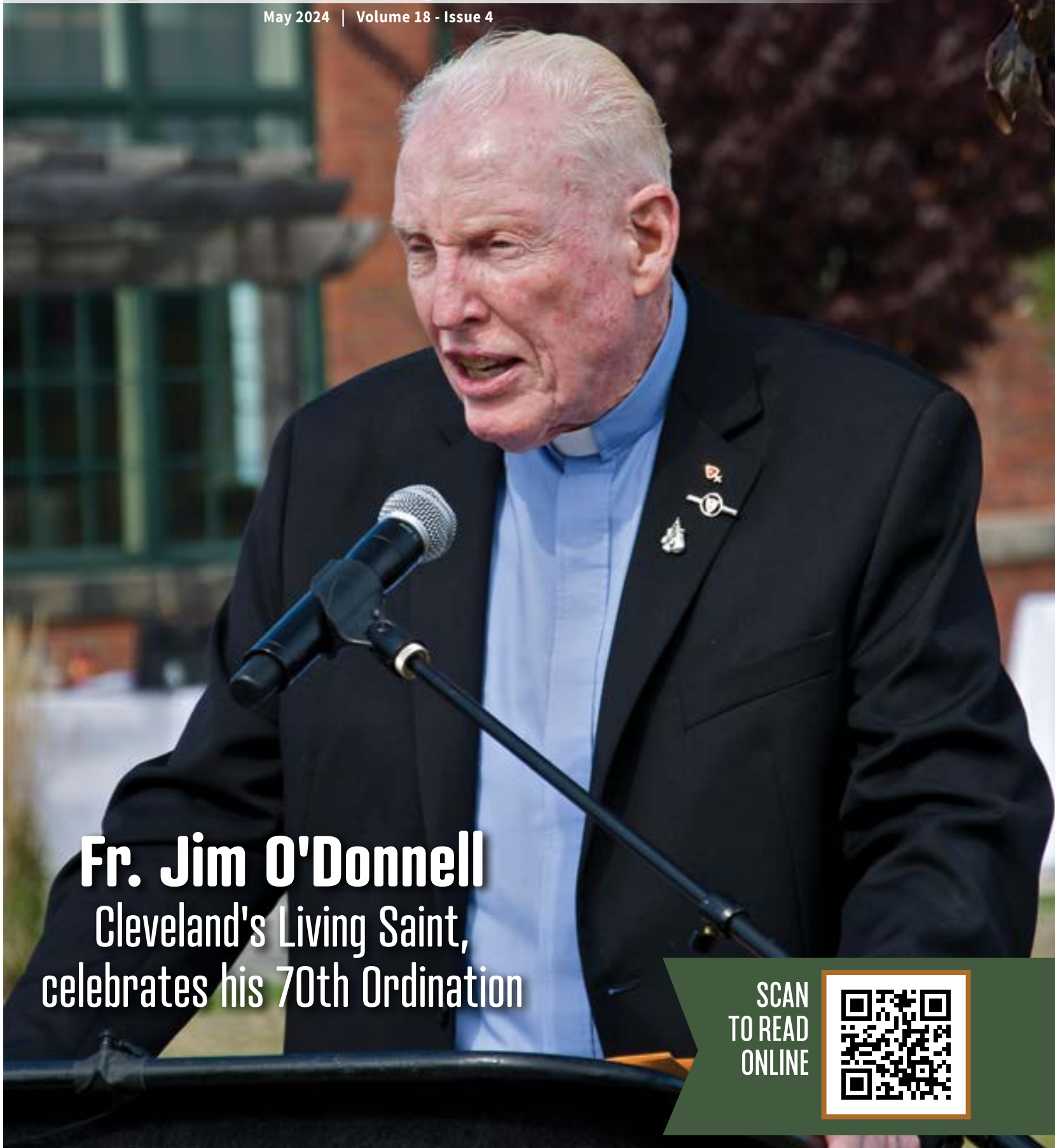


Focus



ilrish
newsmagazine

May 2024 | Volume 18 - Issue 4



Fr. Jim O'Donnell
Cleveland's Living Saint,
celebrates his 70th Ordination

SCAN
TO READ
ONLINE





Happy Mother's Day!

Hello, and Welcome to May. As *Madigan Muses*, May is for Mothers. Whether it be Mother Mary, May Crowning, International Worker's Day, Cinco de Mayo, Peace Officer's Week or Memorial Day, we celebrate with gratitude so many people and what they have done for our hearts and souls.

You can tell by our cover how much we think of the extraordinary priest and man that is Fr. Jim O'Donnell. Born and raised in Cleveland, Cleveland has been blessed by his presence for nine decades. Fr. Jim celebrated his 94th birthday April 10th, and his 70th Ordination to the Priesthood this month. We celebrate him too, here in print. We could not possibly capture

all the good he has done, the lives he has changed, but we do try to capture a bit, with this great feature written by Tommy O'Sionnach, with more to the story on ilrish.us. Thank you Tommy O'Sionnach, Sr. Maggie, Keith Kearney and Patti Behnke for sending us your pictures to share with our readers.

I may be biased, but I truly believe we have a saint living among us; the title may be the future, but the time is now.

Dance Dance

Welcome to new *Dance, Dance* columnist Catherine Duplisea, writing about the intricacies and milestones every month in Irish dance today. Catherine has a lifetime of experience and success, started through her mother, Eileen Mangan Stull, and shares that passion in her own life, and now, with us. We are grateful and excited to have her join our team.

Taking the Fields of Glory, written by Cleveland GAA Chairman Vincent Beach, is back for the summer. Cleveland GAA is composed of Men's Gaelic Football, Ladies Gaelic Football, Hurling (men's),

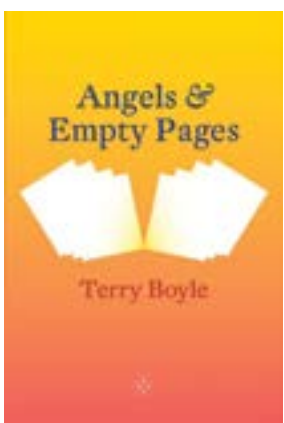
Camogie (ladies) and youth teams. Never has Cleveland GAA been so strong in featuring Irish sports for all levels, and they are all winning championships too. Check them out

within if you would like to win too. Terry Boyle has a new book of poetry out, *Angels and Empty Pages*; it is wonderful. Samples and stories are in this month's *Terry from Derry* column.

It is the magnificent month of May, a Mother's Love is a Blessing, bridging to a summer of even more celebrations; we have the talent, let us make the time.

ilrish is made in America. We have always been green and are proudly Irish, all year long.

...
Nuair a stapann an ceol, an damhsa déanann an amhlaidh
(When the music stops, so does the dance)
John



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About Our Cover:

Fr. Jim O'Donnell - Cleveland's Living Saint, celebrates his 70th Ordination as a priest.

What's it Like, Being Hibernian of the Year?

By Sarah O'Brien

Thank you to John O'Brien Jr for asking me to share some of my experiences in being the 2024 Hibernian of the Year (HOTY!). Cleveland is the best place to celebrate St. Patrick's season. Yes, I know I've never spent St. Patrick's Day away from Cleveland, but I still know it's true. And the 2024 season was no exception.

St. Patrick's season traditionally starts with St. Brigid's Day, though if you're a member of United Irish Societies, it feels like it starts in September, which is when the Parade cycle begins! The season is usually a busy time for me with obligations and duties in my role as mom, nurse practitioner, Deputy Director on the Parade Committee, and as Division President of ... dare I say I it ... the best LAOH Division in the country, Deirfiur of Charity. But I did take time this year to soak in the festivities and really appreciate what a blessing it has been to have grown up in the



Sarah O'Brien, 2024 Hibernian of the Year (HOTY!)

Cleveland Irish community.

My Hibernian brothers and sisters from Boland Berry and Our Lady of the Rosary Divisions throw a great party every year to celebrate the start of the season, the Celebration of St. Brigid and St. Patrick. The

event started with a lovely mass, followed by dinner and dancing as well as the introduction of the 2024 UIS Honorees and the HOTY.

Many of our east side Hibernians made the trip to the WSIA for this special night and had a wonderful time. We might have stopped at some of our favorite west side spots on the way back home, including the Pride of Erin, which serves some of the best Guinness in town.

I also celebrated this season by trekking to the Akron Hibernian Hall for their St. Patrick's Day celebration (typically a week prior to CLE). One of my favorite aspects of being a Hibernian is meeting fellow AOH and LAOH members from across the state and across the country. You feel an instant kinship and welcoming spirit and this vibe was alive and well at the Akron Hall.

I spent the rest of the season celebrating with friends and family at events at the IACES [Irish American Club East Side], including

the Corned Beef and Cabbage Dinner; Harp and Guinness Night; Family Day and the March General Meeting. The hall was filled for every event, and this was the first season since 2020 where the vibe and excitement felt "pre-pandemic."

The weekend of St. Patrick's Day started with volunteering along with 24 of my fellow east side Hibernians at the St. Malachi Run, which directly benefits the wonderful work being done at St. Malachi's Back Door Ministries. We have increased our volunteer presence at this special event over the last few years and we had a wonderful time!

Since St. Patrick's Day fell on a Sunday this year, and the Parade did not step off until 2, I had time to attend mass on St. Patrick's morning at Ss. Roberts and William Church with the IACES (just left a wee bit early to head downtown to tend to business of the Parade). Due

Continued on page 4



Irish American Women Need to Apply to the Ladies Ancient Order of Hibernians

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A United Ireland is Imminent

By **Judge Michael C. Mentel**

The Irish Unity Summit was held on March 1st this year in New York City, at the historic Cooper Union. I had the privilege to attend.

The Cooper Union venue is indeed historic. In 1860, Abraham Lincoln gave his celebrated anti-slavery speech at Cooper Union before his election as President.

It is also the venue where, in 1902, James Connelly spoke in support of a free and United Ireland. Fourteen years later, he would be executed at Kilmainham Gaol for his participation in the Easter Rising.

The Cooper Union once again served as a historic venue when Mary Lou McDonald, Sinn Féin President, and Leader of the Opposition in the Dáil, addressed the Irish Unity Summit, declaring that, “We’ve run the numbers, and it is adding up to a vote in 2030 that will create a United Ireland.”

Ms. McDonald’s declaration



Michael C. Mentel

was not one made-up of hope or wishful thinking. It is a declaration that recognizes the changes from the past and grounds itself in fact. Three major events within the past thirty years support Ms. McDonald’s

declaration.

First, no Irish Republican-Nationalist has served in any elected leadership capacity in the north following partition. This year, Michelle O’Neill, Sinn Féin Vice President and MLA, became the First Minister and leader of the Northern Ireland Assembly, with Sinn Féin holding the majority in the Assembly.

This is a clear tell on the political direction the north is taking. In the Republic, a poll conducted by Politico in early March of this year revealed that, among all political parties in the Republic, Sinn Féin has a 28% support level among Irish citizens, followed by Fine Gael at 20%, and Fianna Fáil at 18%, with all other parties and independents trailing.

The level of support for Sinn Féin in the north and the Republic provides an indicator of the direction that unification support is heading. Second, although a slim majority in the

north presently favors remaining a part of the UK, the number is dwindling.

As an example, an Irish News poll from February of this year revealed that 62% of the residents in the north would choose to rejoin the European Union following the UK’s adoption of Brexit. This is a revealing statistic. The Republic is a member of the European Union, enjoying the privileges of trade, travel, a common currency, along with having a thriving economy.

From this vantage point, one can see that unification is an attractive and sensible alternative to the present situation in the north. The third factor is the success of the Good Friday Agreement (GFA). Since its signing in 1998, the GFA ended the thirty years of the Troubles, established peace, and allowed for new investment in the north, albeit slow at this time. It also opened the border

with the Republic.

While all of this is good, much more must be addressed before a border poll on unification can take place. The demographic changes in the north have led to a growing Catholic, nationalist, majority. However, this growing majority does not equate to a clear win if a border poll was called today.

The risk of calling a border poll before it is ready is the backlash and rigidity it would create if it failed. The GFA mandates that the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland shall call for a border poll when it ‘... appears likely to [him or her] that a majority of those voting would express a wish that Northern Ireland should cease to be part of the United Kingdom and form a part of a united Ireland.’

Dr. Brendan O’Leary, Political Science Professor at the University of Pennsylvania, speaking at the Summit, opined that political support for unification is growing albeit such support would not exist today. The necessity of addressing multifaceted cultural, economic, and governing issues must be resolved if voters are to be made comfortable with unification.

Mr. Glenn Bradley, a former British soldier, a Loyalist political leader, and a declared Irish Republican, posed one example of an issue that must be solved before some residents of the north would support unification. Because Mr. Bradley is a former British soldier, he draws a pension from the British government. Many in the north are in Mr. Bradley’s same position, whether as a soldier or a government worker, unionist or nationalist.

Before he can support unification, Mr. Bradley wants to know which government will cover his pension? Other issues discussed included health care coverage, infrastructure, financing obligations, and how government representation will be structured; all of this must be resolved before a border poll on unification can take place.

Fortunately, the planning process is underway. A non-

governmental multi-party body has been formed with committees made up of individuals from various disciplines and backgrounds participating to address these issues.

A critical factor to the realization of unification is the involvement of the United States and Irish America. Summit presenters made clear that major support from the United States is vital to making any unification plan workable. This includes the pressure that the United States can impose upon the UK to support unification as well

as encouraging investment and providing financial backing for the north.

Some presenters questioned whether the UK would economically assist with unification should a border poll pass, making pressure from the United State on the UK a necessity. The Summit presenters also put out the call for active participation from Irish-America in the unification process.

Ms. McDonald and other presenters encouraged Irish Americans to contact their elected U.S. Representatives and Senators

to tell them that, as a voter, Irish unification is important and that we want our government involved. For us, the Irish American diaspora, now is the time to make our voices heard if we want to see an Ireland united and free.

Mike Mentel is Appellate Court judge on the Ohio Court of Appeals Tenth District and a member of Patrick Pearse Div. #1, Franklin Co.

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Ireland’s New Taoiseach

By **Judge Michael C. Mentel**

On March 20th of this year, Leo Varadkar announced that he was stepping down as Taoiseach of Ireland and as leader of his party, Fine Gael. His announcement caught the political establishment across Ireland by surprise. Even the Tánaiste, Micheál Martin, the leader of the Fianna Fáil party, was caught off guard.

The decision not to forewarn the Tánaiste is surprising given that Fine Gael and Finna Fáil operate in a coalition government, along with the Green Party, to maintain control of the Dáil Éireann, blocking Sinn Féin from forming its own government. Varadkar’s resignation became official on April 8, 2024, when he presented President Michael D. Higgins his resignation at Áras an Uachtaráin, the “House of the President.”

The following day, Simon Harris won the nomination for Taoiseach by a vote of 88 to 69 in the Dáil Éireann. The same day, Harris would receive his appointment as Taoiseach of Ireland from President Higgins at Áras an Uachtaráin. Simon Harris is 37 years old and is the youngest Taoiseach in the history of Ireland. He was elected in 2011 as one of three TDs for the Wicklow constituency and was the youngest TD in the Dáil during his first term.

Harris’s first major speech during that term came after the Fine Gael party selected him to nominate Edna Kenny for Taoiseach. He has served on several Committees in the Dáil Éireann and on Oireachtas joint committees. His rise in the Dáil Éireann began in 2014 when he was appointed as Minister of State to the Department of Finance with oversight of the Office of Public Works.

In 2016, Harris was elevated to the cabinet level when he was appointed Minister of Health. Harris’s tenure as Health Minister was a rocky

one to say the least. Harris was accused of being a hypocrite over his stance on the Sisters of Charity’s ownership of the National Maternity Hospital when he had condemned the Order for misuse of government funding several years before.

The inflection points for the Sisters stemmed from the Magdalene Laundries child abuse findings and its failure to pay the remaining €3 million (euros) it owes to the survivor’s fund. The Sisters would later give up ownership of three hospitals in Dublin.

Harris also found himself caught up in the cervical cancer screening scandal, where over two hundred women developed cervical cancer after receiving incorrect screening test results. Several women sued the Health Service Executive over the false-negative screening results they received.

Later, Harris would survive a no-confidence vote stemming from the excessive costs associated with the new National Children’s Hospital that exceeded €2 billion (euros). He was appointed later in his career to Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation, and Science which he served until his appointment as Taoiseach.

Taoiseach

Harris’s nomination and appointment as Taoiseach was criticized by Sinn Féin, the Labour Party, and the Social Democrats. Sinn Féin leader Mary Lou McDonald characterized Harris’s elevation to Taoiseach as “failing his way to the top of Government.” She noted Harris’s multiple mistakes during his tenure as Minister, describing them as the “Government’s narrative that dresses up failure as progress.”

Ms. McDonald voiced additional criticism

Continued on page 6

Hibernian of the Year

Continued from page 3

to my Parade duties, I have not been able to attend mass on St. Patrick’s Day for several years.

WOW! It was one of the highlights of the entire season. Worshipping, singing, celebrating, remembering

our deceased loved ones, watching our IACES units process into church – it was such a beautiful experience. Marching in the Parade always brings me great pride, not only as a UIS Deputy Director, but also as a member of the Cleveland Irish Community. As HOTY, walking alongside my Deirfiur of Charity sisters and my Bluestone brothers, I felt a sense of deep gratitude.

Gratitude towards my fellow

Deirfiur sisters with whom our Division was founded; gratitude towards our Bluestone brothers who have supported us every step of the way; gratitude towards my parents – who I miss during March more than any other time of the year – for bringing me up to celebrate my Irish Catholic heritage; and gratitude towards the east side Irish community who has lifted me up during some challenging times.

My son Eamon rode along the

Parade route in the HOTY car and was amazed how many people along the route were calling out his name. He too, is being raised to celebrate his Irish (and Haitian) heritage and to love St. Patrick’s Day as much as I do.

Hibernianism came into my life during a period of grief and loss. God knew that I would need a sisterhood and brotherhood to help me get through some of the challenges in my life, and for that, I am so grateful. It’s good to know that God knows what we need before we realize it for ourselves.

The 2024 St. Patrick’s season is one that I will remember for the rest of my life. It was filled with joy, happiness, peace, a few pints of Guinness, lots of laughs and being surrounded by the ones we love while remembering the ones we’ve lost. I hope everyone made some great memories this year. •

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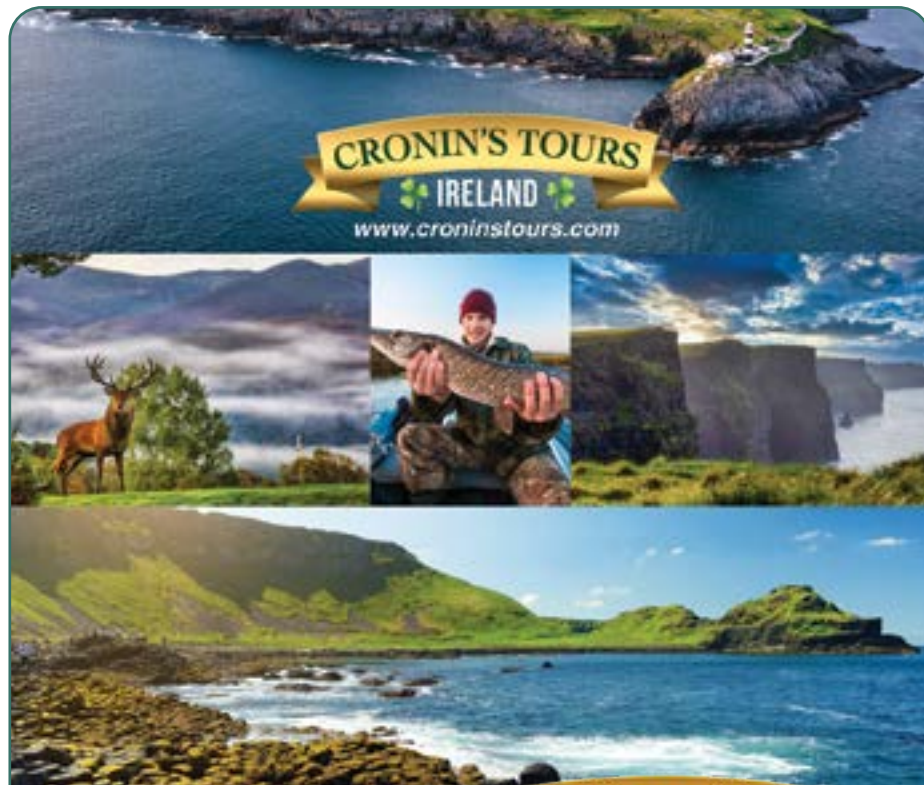



Ireland's New Taoiseach

Continued from page 5

of the coalition government for failing to call for a general election following Varadkar's resignation.

"For the third time you rearrange the Cabinet deck chairs... For the third time in four years, you pat each other on the back and tell the people what a great job you're doing."



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Addressing the call for a general election, McDonald said: "I believe that the people of Ireland deserve much better...If you really believe that your government has the support of the people, then you should go before the people and get the mandate."

Labour Party leader Ivana Bacik also called for a general election, saying Labour would not support a "cosmetic" change at the head of government. She added, "[that's] why we have called for a general election now, not just a change in Taoiseach."

Holly Cairns, leader of the Social Democrats, echoed the call for a general election. "We are facing serious challenges as a country, and in order to address them we need new ideas; for that we need a new Government."

In response to the calls for a general election, Taoiseach Harris responded that, "I am very clear in relation to mature, responsible leadership and that means that this Government intends to go full term. It is, I think, the shared aspiration of the three party leaders [of the coalition government], and I think it is what the people expect particularly after the events of recent weeks where we are now going to see a change of Taoiseach."

The next general election in Ireland must occur no later than March 22 of next year. However, the Government may call for an

election at any time before that date.

Irish Unity Summit

On March 1st of this year, Sinn Féin President Mary Lou McDonald addressed the Irish Unity Summit in New York City, where she outlined the increased support for unification of Ireland and the need for the Government to initiate planning and preparedness for a border poll within the decade. In contrast, Taoiseach Harris and the Fine Gael party have said that Irish unification is not a priority. In his first interview as Fine Gael leader, Harris was clear that unification of Ireland is "a legitimate aspiration," however, it is not a priority he will seek as Taoiseach.

"That's not where my focus and priority is right now and quite frankly, it's not where I believe our focus and priority should be...The Good Friday Agreement provides that framework. You can [recognize] different political aspirations and a clear pathway for those to be achieved," Harris said.

While it is true that Ireland faces concerns surrounding housing and health care availability, among other critical issues, it is incumbent for a government to address multiple priorities at the same time. The issue of Irish unification is not static. The possibility of a border poll within this decade is real.

As such, planning and coordination is an essential priority so that the respective governments are not caught flat footed when the border poll is called. The Irish American diaspora must convey to our elected U.S. officials that it is incumbent upon them, and the United States, to be ready to provide support when the time for unification arrives. •

Michael C. Mentel is an appellate court Judge serving on the Ohio Court of Appeals for the Tenth District.

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An Craobh Ceannais

(The Champion of Central)

By **Tommy O'Sionnach**

The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me; he has sent me to bring glad tidings to the lowly, to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to captives and release to the prisoners.

-Isaiah 61:1

We often think of the word "champion" as it pertains to the world of sports. There are many famous athletes who probably come to mind—too many to mention, quite honestly. Of course, that's interpreting the word as a noun.

These folks are often honored by our society for their accomplishments, but it's those who embody the word "champion" as a verb that deserve the most respect and credit for making this earthly existence so beautiful.

These special people are extremely rare and dedicate their lives to fighting for and protecting their fellow man. Such is the case with a son of Irish immigrants born and raised in East Cleveland.

Father James Patrick O'Donnell has made more of an impact on the lives of his fellow man than can ever be spoken of or written about. There are just not enough hours in a day, days in a month, or months in a year to truly capture what he has meant to all those blessed to have known him over the past 94 years. His life has been a testament to not only the Gospels, but the first four verses of the 61st Chapter of Isaiah.

Born at the start of the Great Depression to Irish immigrants from County Mayo — his father, Owen O'Donnell, hailed from Isle Eady, and his mother, Margaret Keaveny, from Balintubber, where St. Patrick baptized the first Christians - Father Jim was the oldest of four children. He and his siblings were raised in Saint Philomena Parish and were a part of the Eastside Irish community.

Owen was a "great 310er" (member of the building laborers' local union) and worked construction to provide for his family. It was from his dad that the young James Patrick learned the value of hard work and how to make it a prayer throughout his life.

To announce a year of favor from the Lord and a day of vindication by our God, to comfort all who mourn;

-Isaiah 61:2

After graduating from Cathedral Latin in 1948, James Patrick O'Donnell pursued his call to serve God and enrolled at St. Jerome's College in Kitchener, Ontario for two years before spending



Father O'Donnell at the 10th Annual Famine Mass in 2009.

six years at St. Mary's Seminary in Cleveland, Ohio. His first assignment was at St. Colman Church on West 65th Street, where he was warmly welcomed by the Westside Irish community for what he recalls as "six very happy years." It was during this time that my family came to know him as it was the parish of my grandparents, Tom and Catherine Fox.

Following his time at St. Colman's, Father Jim was transferred to St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception Church in Avon. It was a big change

going from the urban setting of the near Westside to the rural outskirts of Lorain County, but he also fondly recalls those years ministering to a much more ethnically diverse congregation.

In 1968, Father Jim's life took a different direction when he was made director of Cleveland's Catholic Youth Organization, or CYO. While most think of athletics when they hear mention of the

Continued on page 8



The Champion of Central
Continued from page 7

organization, the thirty-eight-year-old priest - who delegated the athletic side of things to others - used his new position to "help young people to live the message of the Gospel." Among the accomplishments during his tenure was a walk for hunger in 1970 that saw 3,000 of Cleveland's Catholic youth walk 25 miles to raise awareness for the plight faced by those living in impoverished conditions throughout the city.

During his years as Director, Father Jim also brought in numerous individuals to speak to the young people of the diocese who he believed were "living the Gospel." Some of those individuals included *Black Like Me* author John Howard Griffin; Dan Egan, the man known as "the junkie priest" for his work helping to rehabilitate drug addicts; and, most notably, the little nun from Calcutta, India, who the world knew as Mother Teresa.

In November and December of 1974, Fr. O'Donnell flew to India to

work side-by-side with the future Catholic saint. Last year at Christmas, I wrote a piece for my Substack column, *The Empathetic Fox*, about his experience. Here is an excerpt:

A few months ago, I spoke with Father Jim about his experience from almost fifty years ago. Throughout our conversation he referred to her simply as Mother, something she was to millions of the poorest and sickest people imaginable. He was his usual patient self with the questions I asked. While scribbling down some of the stories from his experience with her, it occurred to me that the privilege of just hearing his first-hand accounts was one of the greatest blessings and gifts I have ever received in my life. So, this Christmas, what better gift to give all of you?

What Was Mother Teresa Like?

One of my favorite stories Fr. Jim shared pertained to how she would put whoever came to meet her right to work caring for the sick - even those rich and famous that came to donate money to the mission of her Sisters of Loretto. The wealthy donors who usually arrived in expensive suits—hoping for a photo-op with the world-famous nun - were told to roll up their sleeves and get to work!

While always grateful for financial



Fr. O'Donnell

assistance in support of her mission, what was just as important to Mother Teresa was for people to spend time helping the poor beyond their monetary donations. She once said, "Today it is very fashionable to talk about the poor. Unfortunately, it is not fashionable to talk with them."

A Sneak Peek of Heaven

On one occasion, the Canonized Catholic Saint and Father Jim were invited to visit a colony of lepers. While there, those who had been outcast due to their sickness put together an impromptu Christmas concert.

Using primitive instruments, pots, and jugs, the lepers performed on a makeshift stage for their audience of two. As they played, the longtime priest shared with me how at one point Mother Teresa leaned over and whispered to him, "This is what it will be like when we are in Heaven."

Feeding the Poor on Christmas Eve

Calcutta, today known as Kolkata, has a population of almost 15 million. One of the city's largest travel hubs in 1974 was Sealdah Railway Station, where thousands of the city's



Fr. Jim O'Donnell in St. Patrick's Gaelic Football Club team photo, August, 1952.

homeless population lived.

On Christmas Eve, Saint Teresa of Calcutta asked Father Jim to feed the poor there, sending him out with three body bags full of bread. Yes, you read that correctly, and a bucket of tea.

In what could only be described as a sea of starving, emaciated people, the longtime Catholic priest distributed all that he brought with him in no time and, when it became apparent he couldn't feed everyone, passed through the hungry masses saying simply, "I love you, my brother. I love you, my sister."

Father Christmas

On Christmas Day, Father Jim was asked to play games with the

poor children of the streets by the tiny "Ma," who was born Agnes Gonxha Bojaxhiu, in what is today Skopje, Macedonia. After leading the children in some simple games and being handed a bag of tangerines, she instructed, "Now go play Father Christmas."

The joy a simple piece of fruit brought those impoverished children could be seen in their faces, as the man playing Father Christmas observed it was as though they had just been given the greatest gift they had ever received. Talk about perspective.

To place on those who mourn in Zion a diadem instead of ashes, to give them oil of gladness in the place

of mourning, a glorious mantle instead of a listless spirit. They will be called Oaks of righteousness, planted by the Lord to show his glory.

-Isaiah 61:3

In the years following his trip to Calcutta, Father O'Donnell, along with his dear friend Sister Maggie Walsh-Conrad, began ministering to one of the most impoverished areas of Cleveland, Ohio, known as Central. The pair would become "Oaks of Righteousness" for that community for the next 45 years, as they served the predominantly African-American neighborhood, which was the poorest neighborhood in Cleveland back then, and remains so today.

Little Brothers and Sisters of the Eucharist

In 1980, The Little Brothers and Sisters of the Eucharist were officially recognized by the Diocese of Cleveland. Sister Maggie and the man who worked side-by-side with a famous saint, began changing thousands of lives for the better—just as Mother Teresa had. They helped rebuild the poverty-stricken East 35th neighborhood both physically and spiritually, becoming a beacon of hope to thousands along the way.

Among the multitude of things the Little Brothers and Sisters of the Eucharist accomplished:

Continued on page 10

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The Champion of Central
Continued from page 9

Bringing *Habitat for Humanity* to the E. 35th neighborhood to build new homes. He mentioned it started with a blitz of putting up 10 houses in 15 Days! Since then, hundreds of homes have been built in Central by *Habitat*.

Creating a Community Gardens to feed the neighborhood and supply the Food Bank at E. 18th and Superior. The amount of produce grown behind the houses he and Maggie called home, 2186 and 2182 E. 35th Street, is nothing short of staggering. The pair worked jointly with members of Trinity Cathedral Episcopalian Church; the garden still flourishes today, thanks to those parishioners.

Fr. Jim often referred to the work as joyful and a prayer. Driving by the gardens, you would often see him hard at work, wearing a hat and plenty of sunscreen to protect his fair Irish

skin from the sun.

Caring for many of the abused and neglected children of the neighborhood, Father Jim and Sister

Maggie fostered fourteen children and adopted three: Josie, Martin, and Caroline. Martin was received into their home just three days after his birth. Below is a picture of Martin with my nephews, Tommy, Billy, and Jimmy, on their first communion day.

Sr. Ignatia

Father Jim has been ministering to Alcoholics for 73 years now. Father Jim's second cousin was the renowned Sister Ignatia, also known as the Angel of Alcoholics Anonymous. Father O'Donnell has helped hundreds of men and women who battle this terrible scourge, including yours truly.

Out of the blue four years ago, I received a call from Father Jim. He told me over the phone that he felt moved to reach out to me. Little did he know I had reached a low point with my drinking. Three days later, I met with him at his home in West Park, and have been free of the shackles of alcohol ever since.

Father Jim has also helped set up numerous LArche communities throughout Greater Cleveland to help those intellectually disabled. For thirty years he volunteered to minister at the women's prison at E. 30th and Orange. On top of all of this, for forty-five years he faithfully said Sunday Mass at St. Malachi's at the invitation of Father Paul Ritz, and said Mass at his home for so many every Thursday night.

Like Saint Teresa of Calcutta, Father James O'Donnell represents the best

a human being can be. He took her example and beautifully implemented an oasis of peace in his own hometown. Throughout his life, he has cared for and ministered to those who could not do anything for him in return and, according to the famous holy woman from Skopje, that is how one's true character is most accurately measured.

They shall rebuild the ancient ruins, the former wastes they shall raise up and restore the ruined cities, desolate now for generations.

-Isaiah 61:4

An Craobh Ceannais, or The Champion of Central, is a fitting way to refer to the man who spent so much of his life championing the poor of his community and dedicating himself to rebuilding and restoring not just an East Cleveland neighborhood, but the lives of those living there and well beyond. Much like the Prophet Isaiah, Father Jim O'Donnell brought glad tidings to the lowly and healing to the brokenhearted. His ministry has touched hundreds of thousands of lives because he chose to live out the message of the Gospels, doing so with the utmost grace and humility and showing us what it truly means to love our fellow man.

Tommy O'Sionnach is a father, teacher, author, and coach who originally hails from Lakewood, Ohio, where he and his six siblings were raised.

The grandson of Irish immigrants, he published his first book, A Penny's Thoughts, in 2021 and writes a weekly blog on his Substack account titled The Empathetic Fox. He makes his home in Altoona, Pennsylvania.



To Read More to the Story, with more text, more pics and LARGER print, visit ilrish.us or:

scan the code:



A mural painted to honor "Community Advocates Past and Present" by Cleveland artist Madeleine Keller.

MILESTONE & SWEET SNAPS



Congratulations to Marilyn Madigan, winner of the Heroes of Irish America Award! FANTastic!



Congratulations to Vincent Beach, winner of the Heroes of Irish America Award! FANTastic!



POLICE MEMORIAL WEEK
MAY 11 - 19, 2024

Hosted by The Greater Cleveland Peace Officers Memorial Society® the commemoration recognizes all law enforcement officers for their dedicated service, and honors those who died in the line of duty serving their communities. Please consider showing your support for our Safety Forces at any of the following events open to the public.

Saturday, May 11, 2024

Grave Marker Placement: After a brief ceremony at 8:00 a.m. at the Greater Cleveland Peace Officers Memorial® (GCPOM®) located in Huntington Park, Lakeside Ave. & West 3rd St., volunteers will travel throughout the region and place markers on the graves of the Officers commemorated on the GCPOM®.

Monday, May 13, 2024

Candlelight Vigil: 7:45 p.m. Greater Cleveland Peace Officers Memorial site.

Wednesday, May 15, 2024

Cigar & Bourbon Tasting Social: 6:00 p.m. CPPA, Hall, 1303 West 58th St., Cleveland, Ohio 44102

Thursday, May 16, 2024

Cleveland Police Badge Case Ceremony: 11:00 a.m. 1st Floor, Cleveland Police HQ, Justice Center 1300 Ontario Street, Cleveland, Ohio 44113.

Hero's Welcome: 8:00 p.m. - 12:00 a.m. CPPA, Hall, 1303 West 58th St., Cleveland, Ohio 44102. Live music "New Barleycorn" and complimentary appetizers.

Friday, May 17, 2024

Parade: 10:30 a.m. starting at Lakeside Avenue & E. 12th St., continuing along Lakeside Ave. to the GCPOM®. Parade participants include officers from local, county, state, and federal agencies throughout the U.S. and Canada, and surviving family members of officers who made the supreme sacrifice.

Memorial Service: 11:30 a.m. All are encouraged to gather at the GCPOM® immediately following the parade in "Keeping the Promise to Never Forget Our Fallen Heroes®."

Gathering: For parade participants immediately following the Memorial Service at the FOP Lodge No. 8, 2249 Payne Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio 44114.

Greater Cleveland Police Emerald Society: 4:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. Fellowship Event, CPPA, Upstairs Hall, 1303 West 58th Street, Cleveland, Ohio 44102.

Police Fellowship Steak Roast: 6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. CPPA, Hall, 1303 West 58th St., Cleveland, Ohio 44102. Sponsored by Chicago Police Emerald Society & CPPA.

Saturday, May 18, 2024

Police Collectors Show: 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Double Tree Hotel, 1111 Lakeside Ave.

Cleveland International Tattoo®: 7:00 p.m. Cleveland International Peace Officers Tattoo, Cleveland Public Hall. A spectacular demonstration of pageantry, music, song, and dance. Featured performers include the Pipes and Drums of the Cleveland Police and more! Tickets on sale online and at the door.

Sunday, May 19, 2024

Cleveland Guardians Baseball Game - 1:40 p.m. vs. Minnesota Twins. Gates open at 12:30 p.m. Visit <http://tinyurl.com/gcpoms24>. Use code GCPOMS24



www.gcpoms.org www.policememorialsociety.org

39th Annual Police Memorial Commemoration
The Greater Cleveland Peace Officers Memorial Society®
Celebrated in Cleveland, Ohio



COME JOIN US FOR ALL THE
FUN, FOOD, AND HIGHLAND GAMES!

June 21 & 22, 2024



Friday, June 21, 2024
7:00 PM – 11:00 PM

Irish/Scottish Cèilidh (party!)
in the Pub Tent with Live Music!
Music begins at 7:00 PM

\$22.50 Admission
Cash bar

Saturday, June 22, 2024
9:00 AM – 11:00 PM

Highland Games begin 9:30 AM
Festival grounds open until 8 PM
(Music continues until 11:00 PM)

\$12 (16 & older)
15 & under - FREE

HOLLAND, MICHIGAN

Traditional Irish and Scottish foods
Celtic Genealogy Assistance | Vendors of Celtic goods
Irish Pub tent | Scottish Clan Tents | Kids area



FOR TICKETS, VISIT: HollandCelticFestival.org

Are you interested in being a part of the festival?
We welcome inquiries from Celtic Merchandise Retailers,
Irish & Scottish Food Vendors, and Scottish Clans.

Visit our website!

www.HollandCelticFestival.org
info@HollandCelticFestival.org
Facebook.com/HollandCelticFestival



HOLLAND CELTIC FESTIVAL

Ottawa County Fairgrounds

DeZwaan Windmill photo by Norm Hoekstra. Other photos by Erika Tinney & Cassie Veen-Haveman



Festival Focus



13th Motor City Irish Fest June 9-11

Featuring 20 bands/performers playing Irish and Celtic music in two tents, including Derek Warfield and the Young Wolfe Tones, and The Gobshites.

The family-friendly event features a Cultural Tent exploring the history and culture of Ireland, and activities such as traditional Irish dancing featuring six local Irish Dance Schools. Also offered are dancing lessons, Irish football demonstrations, Pipe Bands, a .001-K Run, a Kid's Tent, vendors of Irish and Irish-themed goods and clothing, beer stations, and whiskey tastings. Festival hours are Friday – 5 – 11 pm, Saturday – Noon – 11 pm, Sunday – Noon Mass, Festival from 1 – 7 pm. Greenmead Historic Park in Livonia, MI.

To purchase tickets, and for directions and lodging information, visit motorcityirishfest.com.



29th Riverfront Irish Festival June 9-11

Cleveland's Marys Lane, Brigid's

Cross, The New Barleycorn and Westside Steve; Dulahan from Dayton; and Akron's Callahan & O'Connor, Case & Cairde, and Celtic Rush take the stage. New for 2024 includes Toronto's Michael Darcy and the Atlantic Tramps; Baltimore's Celtic rockers Poehemia; Kalamazoo's On The Lash; Pittsburgh's The Low Kings; and Akron's **Minstrels Grēn** and Emigrant's Wake.

Irish step-dancers from MacCormara Academy will perform on Saturday and Sunday afternoon. Those looking for bagpipers will be pleased to see both the Celtic Eagle Pipe Band and The Red Hackle Pipe and Drums.

In addition to the festival entertainment, vendors and food, the outdoor Mass in the amphitheater on Sunday morning is at 11:00 a.m. Reverend Thomas McCann, retired chaplain, will be the main celebrant. All are welcome.

Several area craft breweries will be on hand throughout the weekend, including Akronym, HiHo, Ignite, McArthur's, Missing Falls, and Missing Mountain, as well as Forever Craft Urban Winery. There will also be a whiskey tasting station, featuring Jameson and Tullamore D.E.W. from Ireland, and local Towpath Distillery bourbon.

This annual family-friendly event will feature FREE admission and FREE parking in city decks. Food and beverages will be available for purchase, as well as Irish items and crafts from independent vendors. You need not be Irish to enjoy!

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Riverfront-Irish-Festival-Cuyahoga-Falls-Ohio-89250107183/>



Penn-Mar Irish Festival June 15

The Penn-Mar Irish Festival returns to the grassy grounds of The Markets at Shrewsbury on Saturday, June 15. This volunteer-run

community celebration of Irish heritage features plenty of traditional and contemporary live Irish music, Irish dance groups, cultural talks and living history exhibits, non-profit organizations, Irish food, a children's area, and a variety of vendors offering quality Irish goods including gifts, clothing, jewelry, music, books, pottery, photography, stained glass, and more.

Eileen Ivers will once again headline with her amazing Universal Roots band. New for 2024,

Continued on page 14



Saturday, June 15

YORK COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

Music • Dance • Vendors • Food • Kids Area

EILEEN IVERS
SCREAMING ORPHANS
The Brigideens • Enda Reilly
Cas Ceol • Cormorant's Fancy
Ian Carroll & The Patrick Players
Hold Fast • The Emigsville Band
Plus: Bagpipers & Irish Dancers



HELD ON GRASSY GROUNDS OF:
The Markets at Shrewsbury
12025 Susquehanna Trail
Glen Rock, PA 17327
Off I-83 between Exits 4 & 8 • NO PETS

FOR TICKETS AND INFO:
PennMarIrishFestival.com



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Join us for all the 39th Annual

CLEVELAND IRISH CULTURAL FESTIVAL

FEATURING

GAEILIC STORM SCYTHIAN THE BYRNE BROTHERS THE NARROWBACKS BRIGID'S CROSS BALLINLOCH	EILEEN IVERS ALLY THE PIPER THE FITZGERALDS THE LOW KINGS THE NEW BARLEY CORN CRAWLEY & SOFRANNO	RORY MAKEM SEVEN NATIONS BROTHER CROWE IAN GOLD ANDREW MC MANUS
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Pipe Bands · Irish Dance Performances · Gaelic Sports
Children's Area & Activities · Local Food
Irish Heritage Exhibitions

July 19-21, 2024

Friday, 5-11 p.m.
Saturday, 1-11 p.m.
Sunday, 1-10 p.m.

Cuyahoga County Fairgrounds

Daily Passes: \$20
Weekend Passes: \$50
Kids 10 and under are FREE
FREE Parking

Buy Your Tickets Today!

Check out our website and social media for a full lineup and updates!

CLEVELANDIRISH.ORG

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@Cleveland_Irish

SCAN TO PURCHASE TICKETS

Festival Focus

Eileen will also perform with The Brigideens, a fiery, female band that she formed in 2023 for a concert in Pittsburgh to honor Saint Brigid.

The lineup also includes Screaming Orphans, Enda Reilly, Cas Ceol, Cormorant's Fancy, The Emigsville Band, Hold Fast, Susquehanna Pipes & Drums, McGinley School of Irish Dance, Ni Riain School of Irish Dance, and Oh! Gills Irish Dancers.

The children's area will again offer free crafts, games, face painting, and more.

Some festival seating is provided, but lawn chairs and blankets are welcome. Please, no pets or outside food and beverages.

The Markets at Shrewsbury is located at 12025 Susquehanna Trail, Glen Rock, PA 17327 (in southern York County off I-83 between exits 4 and 8). Free parking and shuttle bus service will be provided at nearby locations (look for signs).

The Shrewsbury Hampton Inn, located a short drive from the festival, has a discounted room block and will provide two comp tickets when checking in on Friday. Use this link to book a room: <https://group.hamptoninn.com/q8o9d4>

For discounted advance festival tickets and complete details, please visit PennMarIrishFestival.com.

You can also follow updates on Facebook and Instagram (#PennMarIrish).

Marketing and volunteer opportunities are available in support of the festival.

For all inquiries, please email PennMarIrish@gmail.com.

**17th Annual
Festival Focus
Issue!**



3rd Annual Holland Waterfront Celtic Festival & Highland Games June 21-22

West Michigan Irish and Scottish (and others) will gather at the Ottawa County Fairgrounds on Ottawa Beach Road in Holland, Michigan for the 3rd Annual Holland Fest & Games, featuring 16 Irish and Celtic bands on two stages over two days.

The all-day festival is Saturday, June 22, 2024, preceded by a Friday evening, 21 & older "Ceilidh" (concert/party) under a huge "Irish Pub" Tent.

Scheduled to appear are Acoustic Vagabondi, Toby Bresnahan, Selkie, Uneven Ground, Belfast Gin, Enda Reilly, The Barley Saints, The Chelsea House Orchestra, Kennedy's Kitchen, The Conklin Ceili Band, Whorled, The Leprecons, Ironwood, and CrossBow.

Friday night's "Ceilidh" features Canada's favorites, The Mudmen. Saturday evening's grand finale features The Devil's Brigade (formerly The American Rogues).

Scottish Pipe and Drum bands will perform throughout the event; area dance companies will perform Irish and Highland dance demonstrations; and the kids' area has games, coloring, temporary tattoos, and more.

Festival Focus

Highland Games begin at 9:30 am, featuring more than 70 men and women athletes competing in nine events, including caber-tossing, hammer-throwing and other feats of strength. A dozen ethnic food tents/trucks will assure no one goes hungry, while 20 vendors of Celtic clothing and other merchandise will please shoppers.

A cash bar is available both Friday and Saturday, featuring Guinness, Harp, Smithwick's, Magners and other beers, plus wines, seltzers and more.

Friday tickets are \$22.50 and include free return admission on Saturday; Saturday tickets are \$12 p/ person, 15 & younger admitted free on Saturday.

Friday, June 21, 7:00 PM to 11:00 PM – "21 and older" Ceilidh. Saturday, June 22, 9:00 AM to 11:00 PM
Ottawa County Fairgrounds 1286 Ottawa Beach Road Holland, MI 49424

Info@hollandCelticFestival.org
www.Facebook.com/HollandCelticFestival



47th Ohio Scottish Games & Celtic Festival June 21 - 23

From Friday's Calling of the Clans Event to Saturday's Grande Parade and Twilight Tattoo, this is one of Cleveland's most unique and fun

festivals. Competitive Jousting, featuring the Knights of Valour Jousting Troup features knights competing by scoring points with lance strikes.

(7:30 PM Friday evening; 3 PM & 7:30 PM Saturday Grandstands).

The renaissance period is represented by the Barony of the Cleftlands, Cleveland's Society for Creative Anachronism (SCA). The SCA is devoted to the research and re-creation of pre-seventeenth century skills, arts, combat, culture, and employing knowledge of history to enrich the lives of participants through events, demonstrations, and other educational presentations and activities.

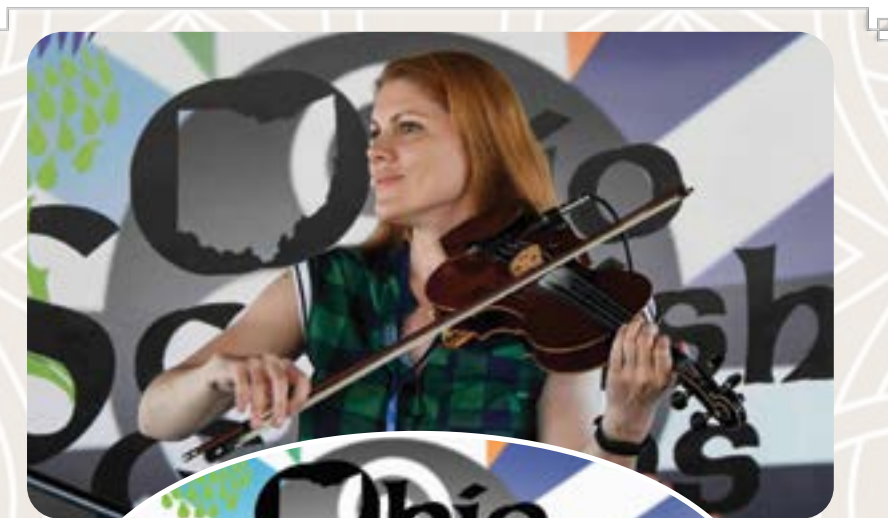
Music and dance: Father, Son & Friends; The Prodigals, Bastard Bearded Irishmen, The Low Kings, On the Lash, Andrew McManus Trio, McNamara & Custy, and the Brass Band of the Western Reserve, the Leneghan School of Irish Dance, the Brady Campbell School of Irish Dance and the Cleveland Heights chapter of the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society.

Reenactments by the 42nd Highland Regiment of Foot, a Revolutionary War period reenactment group based out of Marion, OH. New in 2024: Birds of Prey demonstration & exhibit; darts, held in the Tavern.

Plus: Highland athletics: Caber Toss (telephone pole), pipe band competitions, border collie demonstrations, highland dance competitions, harp & fiddle competition, British Cars, genealogy, clan exhibits, workshops, whiskey tasting, kilned mile and over fifty food and merchandise vendors.

Friday: Gates open 4:45 PM - including the "Calling of the Clans" torch lighting at 9:45; Saturday at 8 AM for early morning Highland Games competitions. The Grand

Continued on page 16



CUYAHOGA COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS

June 21-22, 2024

Gates Open Friday 4:45 PM - 10:30 PM

Saturday 8:00 AM - 10:30 PM

Calling of the Clans Event Friday at 9:45 PM

Grand Parade Noon Saturday

Tattoo 6:00 PM Saturday

Music entertainment includes Father, Son & Friends, The Prodigals, Bastard Bearded Irishmen, The Low Kings, On the Lash, Andrew McManus Trio and McNamara & Custy and the Brass Band of the Western Reserve. Dance group will include the Leneghan School of Irish Dance, The Brady Campbell School of Irish Dance, The Cleveland Hts chapter of the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society. Highland Athletics, Competitive Jousting, Birds of Prey, Border Collie Demonstration, Armored Combat, Renaissance Village, Living History with the 42nd Highland Regiment, Highland Dance, Harp & Fiddle Competition, Irish Music Competition, Children's Events, and Much More.



**New! Extreme Sport!
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www.OHIOSCOTTISHGAMES.com



Parade begins at noon. Twilight Tattoo is at 6:00 PM and includes the massed pipes and drums, as well as performances by harp, fiddle, highland dancers and the Brass Band of the Western Reserve.

Cuyahoga County Fairgrounds, Middleburgh Hts, Ohio. See ohioscottishgames.com for updates and info. •



39th Cleveland Irish Cultural Festival July 19-21, 2024

Featuring: Gaelic Storm, Scythian, Eileen Ivers, Rory Makem, The Byrne Brothers, Crawley & Sof-

ranko, Ian Gould, Ballinloch, New Barleycorn, The Low Kings, Seven Nations, The Narrowbacks, Ally the Piper, The Fitzgeralds, Andrew McManus Trio, Brother Crowe, Brigid's Cross & More.

John O'Brien Sr. started the festival in 1982 to celebrate Irish music, dancing, sports, and theater among Clevelanders. Currently, an estimated population of 1.6 million Irish people live in Ohio, with over 13% residing in the Greater Cleveland Metropolitan area alone.

"We didn't know it would become an annual thing," said O'Brien Sr. "We had nearly 4,000 people at the first one and they kept asking about the next one, so we kept it going."

The only remaining family-run festival in the area, which was originally two days, moved to the fairgrounds in 1993, making way for more space to introduce new exhibits and activities. The event is known for its musical entertainment and draws national and international Irish bands.

The festival is thrilled to welcome

Festival Focus

internationally renowned artists Gaelic Storm, Eileen Ivers, and Rory Makem to this year's lineup, as well as several other regional and national acts.

There are a variety of activities for the whole family including a children's area with activities and crafts, camogie games, and lots of Irish history and culture to round out the whole weekend.

The festival will continue to be cashless for on-site admission, food, beverages, and festival merchandise. Parente said the progressive move is to help improve the guest experience and offer secure transactions. Other vendors may choose to accept cash payments for their merchandise.

Plus: Cultural and Children's ar-

eas, Pipers, Dancers, Sports, Great food, beverage and treats. FREE Parking.

Berea Fairgrounds: Friday 5-11, Saturday 1 to 11, Sunday 1-10. Mass will be celebrated at 11:30 a.m. on the 20th. General admission is \$20.00 per day, weekend passes are \$50.00. Wristbands are \$10 for the Children's Area or \$35 for a family-pack. For more information: clevelandirish.org and on Facebook. •

37th Dublin Irish Fest August 2 - 4

Explore one of the top Irish festivals in the U.S., drawing over 100,000 guests to Dublin, Ohio each year with

Festival Focus



Iowa Irish Fest August 2 - 4

7 music stages, 60 acts, and more than 800 performers. The Dublin Irish Festival was voted in the top three for "Best Cultural Festival of 2023" by USA Today Readers.

This year's headliners include The High Kings, Socks in the Frying Pan, Teada, Gaelic Storm, Skerryvore, Talisk, Goitse, GADAN with Enda Sciahill of We Banjo 3, JigJam, Ispíní na hÉireann, O'Jizo, The Fitzgeralds, Ally the Piper, PoulaPhuca, Drowsy Lads, Bastard Bearded Irishmen and John Whelan with his All Star Ceili Band.

Kick off your weekend with the Dublin Irish Festival 5K and end it with the Festival Finale, in-between there is something for everyone. There are a variety of learning experiences available for every guest that attends. Learn about Irish history, genealogy, instruments or Irish language. Animal lovers can meet Irish breeds and their owners at the Celtic Canine area. Bring your own instrument and find the sessions tent to play a jig with other aspiring musicians. Children have their own area at the Festival featuring crafts, games and entertainment. The festival is complete with over 90 shopping vendors and 30 food vendors.

Save some green and buy your tickets before the price increase on July 20.

For more Info: DublinIrishFestival.org, and follow the Festival on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/IowaIrishFest), [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/IowaIrishFest), [Twitter](https://www.twitter.com/IowaIrishFest) and [YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/IowaIrishFest). •

Featuring: Scythian, Enter the Haggis, The High Kings, Elephant Sessions, The Screaming Orphans, The Bow Tides, Onóir, Dublin City Ramblers, Seo Linn, The Byrne Brothers, The Peelers, Colm & Laura Keegan, Ally the Piper, Blame Not the Bard, Enda Reilly, Ian Gould, Trinity Irish Dancers, Wylde Nept, Dan Vaughn, Cedar Glen Pipes & Drums, Kellen O'Cullom, Des Moines Irish Session, Stu Ryan O'Brien, Hannah Flowers on the Harp and More on seven stages.

The Battle of the Iowa Irish Bands which takes place on Thursday, August 1st, 6:30pm. Cheer on your favorite and see who will win \$500 and a spot on an Iowa Irish fest stage Saturday, August 3rd!

Visit www.IowaIrishFest.com, get the Iowa Irish Fest Ap at the Apple App and Google Play stores to view schedule of events, map, manage your classes/workshops and much more. Follow Iowa Irish Fest on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/IowaIrishFest> to stay up to date. Tickets are on sale NOW!

Iowa Irish Fest is held in the Lincoln Park area of downtown Waterloo. •



Lakewood Arts Festival August 3

Lakewood Arts Festival closes Detroit Avenue, between Belle to Arthur Avenues, to bring artists of all disciplines together, along with 15,000 collectors and art lovers. The juried festival hosts over 170 regional and national artists and makers displaying paintings, prints, photography, art glass, ceramics, jewelry, sculpture, fiber and more.

EAT ON THE STREET food court in front of the Lakewood Library on Detroit will offer a selection of the region's best food trucks.

Festival proceeds fund an annual scholarship for Lakewood seniors continuing to art school. The event also funds grants for arts education and programming in the city. Recent awardees include H2O (Help to

Others, middle-school students), The Barton Center (senior arts activities), The Beck Center for the Arts (Saturday programs) and Lakewood High School Art, Theater and Photography programs.

For more info: www.lakewoodartsfest.org. •



Chicago Gaelic Park Irish Fest August 23 - 25

Irish Fest 2024 features three stages of music and dance, a performing arts stage, a traditional Irish tea tent, wine tent, and the Leprechaun Tent with kidfriendly activities and entertainment, as well as shop and food vendors.

The music lineup includes first-

Continued on page 18

3 Days of Fun - August 23-25



Chicago Gaelic Park - Oak Forest, IL
(708)687-9323 - ChicagoGaelicPark.com



Festival Focus

time CGP Irish Fest performers: Uilleann piper/whistle player/composer, Conor Mallon from Keady, Co. Armagh; the Co. Donegal-based modern folk group, Onóir; and the German born, Irish-based multi-instrumentalist/singer/songwriter, Sina Theil. The Byrne Brothers, JigJam, Gaelic Brew, plus local musicians The Larkin & Moran Brothers, Liam Durkin, and The Dirty Wellies.

The inclusion of the rock cover band 4Cast and three tribute bands—One of These Nights

(A Tribute to the Eagles and their Solo Work), Dancing Queen: An ABBA Salute, and An Irish

Heartbeat: A Musical Tribute to Van Morrison plus The Bagpipes &

Drums of the Emerald Society and The Shannon Rovers.

Visit chicagogaelparkirishfest.org/irish-fest/ for information / to purchase admission tickets in advance at the best pricing. Parking is free and plentiful.

Chicago Gaelic Park, 6119 West 147th Street Oak Forest, Illinois. •

33rd Annual Pittsburgh Irish Festival September 6 - 8

The Pittsburgh Irish Festival welcomes Gaelic Storm, The Screaming Orphans, The Drowsy Lads, Morgan Bullock, Eileen Ivers and The Brigideens, Ally the Piper, Reverie Road, Bastard Bearded Irishman, Colm & Laura Keegan, The Low Kings, Donnie Irish, Shane Cook & The Woodchippers, Dennis Doyle, and Fiddle



Frenzy. Local performers: Abbots Cross, Alan Irvine, Bastard Bearded Irishmen, Bealtaine, Bell School of Irish Dance, County Mayo, Devilish Merry, Fitzpatrick School of Irish Dance PGH, Mark Guiser, Mike Flaherty, Mike Gallagher, Pittsburgh Ceili Band, Pittsburgh Irish Festival Ceili Band, Rust Town Rounders, Sean Patrick Regan, Showlin Academy of Irish Dance, Weekend at Blarney's.

Returning this year, a fifth stage presented by Five Farms Irish Cream where visitors can watch both professional and amateur bakers and chefs demonstrate the

process of cooking and baking some delightful treats, most of which will feature Five Farms!

Located at The Carrie Blast Furnaces National Historic Landmark. Tickets are available now.

About the Pittsburgh Irish Festival: The Irish Partnership of Pittsburgh d.b.a Pittsburgh Irish Festival, Inc. is a non-profit 501(c)(3) corporation created to contribute to the rich cultural awareness of Irish history and tradition that exists in Pittsburgh. In addition to our three-day Celtic Celebration, the Pittsburgh Irish Festival has expanded into a year-round resource for education and cultural programs through the creation of the Irish Education Outreach Program. For more information, visit pghirishfest.org. •

25th Michigan Irish Music Festival September 12 -15



Featuring Gaelic Storm, Kíla, Talisk, Aoife Scott, Seamus Kennedy, JigJam, Dave Curley & Colin Farrell, Síomha,

The Friel Sisters, The Irish Music All Stars, Shane Hennessy, Cathal Ó Curráin & Marty Barry, Blackthorn, The Wee Heavies, Ally the Piper, On the Lash, Kennedy's Kitchen, Conklin Céilí Band, Enda Reilly, Ian Gould, Ironwood, Ardan Academy of Irish Dance, and The Mona Shores Fiddlers.

Tickets and complete festival and performer information can be found at www.michiganirish.org. Children 12 & under are free but need a ticket, which can be ordered at the time of purchase.

Stay tuned to the website and Michigan Irish Music Festival social media pages for additional updates.

Held at Heritage Landing in downtown Muskegon, Michigan! •

To Read More to the Story, with more text, more pics and LARGER print, visit ilrish.us or

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Friday-Saturday 11:00-2:00

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ParagonEuclid.com

The IACES and LAOH Deirfiur of Charity Division
Announce: The Return of the

Communion Breakfast with May Crowning

Sunday May 19th

Class at 9:30 in the upper hall of the IACES followed by breakfast cooked by AOH Bluestone Division



\$10 per person (includes breakfast)

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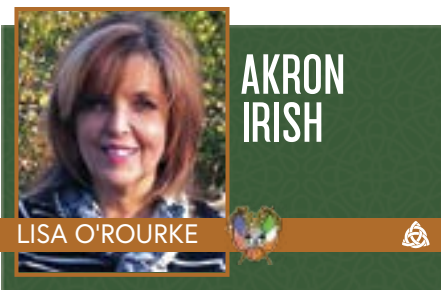


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IRISH

LISA O'ROURKE

Everyone Can Play

One lovely June evening, we found ourselves walking away from a riverfront music festival and into an inevitably dank, clichéd hotel bar. It felt counterintuitive to say the least, but we were heading toward a promise, the promise of a great Irish music session. It's a powerful lure.

As we entered, we saw a family, young and old, stuffed into a few corner booths, instruments in their laps at the ready. Then the music began, and the promise delivered.

The session was led by a character who was almost mythical in Irish traditional music circles, Frank Custy. Thinking back on that hotel bar session, I remember that it was wonderful, but I don't remember anyone standing out. What I remember is the enthusiasm that they had for playing together, how they enjoyed it.

At that time, Frank was in America with his brother Sean,

visiting his nephew Pat and wife Nikki. If you are into traditional Irish music, called Trad for short, and live in NE Ohio, you have at least heard of Pat and Nikki, or one of their bands.

Traditional music is the Custy family business. Once when we were in Ireland, we visited the Custy homestead in Clare. The visit is best summed up by my husband's comment, "Well, it's no surprise that they got good at music cause there's nothing here to distract them."

Ennis

The part of Clare that they come from is called Dysart. The house sits near the end of a long winding road that wraps around a big, wooded hill, nice and quiet. The nearest big town is Ennis.

Clare itself has a reputation for being a place to go for Trad music. The county hosts loads of annual music festivals, including the infamous Lisdoonvarna Festival. Plenty of homegrown musicians play at those festivals too.

Within that community, the Custys are known for both their music and the music shop that they have in Ennis. The shop houses one of Ireland's only didgeridoos.

You are probably thinking that since Frank was born and bred a Clare man and well-known for music, that he was born playing it. You would be wrong.

Born in Dysart in 1939, his early passion was hurling. He was good at it too, winning multiple championships beginning in his teens. He played goalkeeper, a position that requires stamina and



resilience.

Music did not enter Frank's life until after he was hired as a teacher in Offaly. A monk put out a call that he wanted a hurler who could teach for a National School position. Perfect.

Teaching Music

Frank was happy enough teaching. But soon the monk who hired him wanted more. He thought that it would be great if Frank could add music to his teaching. What the monk didn't know was that Frank failed the singing part of his exam to be a National School teacher.

He hadn't failed music though. Frank figured that he could learn to play quickly enough. He only had to stay a step ahead of the students to be able to teach them.

So began Frank's musical career. He started learning in 1963, at the age of 25. Being in a hurry to learn and a late starter as well undoubtedly influenced Frank's philosophy of learning music.

He saw that learning to read sheet music, staff notation, could be an obstacle to some students learning to play, especially since there was so much frontloading to be done with that approach. Learning to read music most often meant that it took students forever to get to interact meaningfully with an instrument.

So, instead he developed his own way of writing down a simpler notation, an ABC style approach. He published three books of music

using that style. He encouraged students to play by ear as well. His goal was to keep things as simple and accessible as possible.

Luck was with Frank. He ended up spending a few years in Offaly before he was able to return to Clare to work, at Toonagh National School. He applied what he learned about teaching and built upon it.

When he retired in 1999, Frank had been at the Toonagh National School for 40 years as both teacher and headmaster. His nephew Pat was in his classroom for a few of those years.

And what a classroom it must have been. Every day started with a session. Instruments were out and available for student use throughout the school day.

Sharon Shannon

Participation was key, everybody played and had something to contribute. Music should just be for the already gifted.

That egalitarian sensibility was something that struck one his notable students, Sharon Shannon. She talked about how music teachers that she knew wanted talented students.

Frank did not see things that way. He saw music as a way to let individual students do what they could. He valued all the contributions. Sharon said that Frank talked to students as people with dignity, at a time when that was not always the way in Irish schools.



Music was what Frank used to build community. Excellence was a side matter. However, some very prominent traditional musicians were taught by Frank, including Sharon Shannon, Siobhan Peoples, and members of the Kilfenora Ceili Band to name a few.

Enthusiasm for music grew from that school and expanded into the community. Frank started a Friday session to give the students a chance to play together and meet up. Former students talked about how much they enjoyed playing in those sessions and wouldn't miss them for anything.

The popularity of those sessions spread, and they became a venue for anyone who wanted to go. Play the banjo, violin or spoons, if need be, but play.

The sessions were still going on at the time that Frank passed away late in February. They are a delightful to watch. Frank's passing was commemorated by every paper in Clare. He was eulogized passionately by musicians and others who knew and loved him. My impression of him was that he was a warm and genuine person.

I have been intrigued and impressed by Frank for a long time. As a teacher, watching him leverage the arts in such a positive way, was amazing.

The arts in education tend to be the first disciplines to be cut when schools feel pressured. The reform trends in education try to fit

cookie-cutter solutions to issues in schools that require the personal and unique. Solutions need to be genuine to be effective.

Frank used his passion for music to engage his students. I think that playing and teaching sports had already shown him the value of participation for each student. Being part of a team gives students a sense of worth and belonging.

I bet there was no need for truancy officers in Toonagh. If we are willing and accepting, everyone can play. ●

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DR. JEANNE COLLERAN

The English Jesuit in Dublin

The next time I am in Dublin, I will go to Glasnevin Cemetery, to the Jesuit plot, and leave a small oval-shaped blue-hued stone at the foot of the cross where Gerard Manley Hopkins' name is engraved. The great nineteenth-century poet is buried there, far from his London birthplace, but in the city where he spent the final years of his brief life.

Hopkins spent the last five years of his life as a professor of Greek and Latin at University College Dublin, living in Newman House



Gerard Manley Hopkins

on Stephen's Green. The general consensus is that he was very unhappy. He died from typhoid fever.

We Irish may feel a flicker of accusation about his misery. Perhaps the truth is the Irish forbearance for melancholy reflection was *too* hospitable an environment for G.M.

The Oxford Movement got its hooks into Hopkins while he was a (brilliant) student at the University, and then Cardinal Newman and the Jesuits leveled the final *coup de foudre* (sort-of) by drawing him into the order. Leaving his family's Anglican faith and converting to Roman Catholicism caused a permanent rift.

He also thought his writing was at odds with his religious duties, so he burned some of his early poems and refused to have the rest published during his lifetime. At UCD, he was an Englishman living in Ireland during the stirrings of nationalism and revolution.

He composed his famous "terrible sonnets" (with terrible meaning terrifying) during this period, and they reveal not only his deep loneliness, but also his intense scrupulousness, exacerbated by a feeling of divine abandonment. Hopkins neared despair, but against expectation, his last words were, "I am so happy."

Yet, Hopkins' poems also tell us that with persistent attentiveness, we can gain a luminous awareness

of how natural beauty reveals divine immanence. We need to see everything as being, as he says in another poem, "charged with the grandeur of God."

To invoke how the divine animates creation, Hopkins developed a poetic style consisting of "sprung" rhythm (a pattern of placing stressed syllables close to each other) and the melding of noun and verb to obscure the difference between "being" and "acting." In the poem below, words like "thrush" and "shoots" are examples. Hopkins' poetic method was deeply Catholic and recognizably Jesuit: grasping the divine in creation was a form of divine consolation, the interior movement in the soul, according to Saint Ignatius, when it feels the love of the Creator.

Here is the first stanza of the sonnet "*Spring*," written when Hopkins lived in another Celtic country, Wales. It demonstrates a few of Hopkins' poetic/metaphysical practices, but first I suggest you read it aloud. It is so lovely; you might commit it to memory to welcome spring—however late it arrives in Ohio and Pennsylvania.

In a diary entry, Hopkins wrote, "I do not think I have ever seen anything more beautiful than the bluebell I have been looking at. I know the beauty of the Lord by it. Its strength and grace."

In "*Spring*," Hopkins does not want merely to say something *about* nature's beauty, as he does in his diary entry; he wishes to recreate the experience of seeing Spring quicken into abundance, revealing God. Hopkins looks at the unfurled leaves (the "wheels") which will shoot into beauty. He chooses virtually every **word** for its double description of nature and nature's movement. The speaker re-appears in the second stanza asking:

What is all this juice and all this joy?

A strain of the earth's sweet being in the beginning

In Eden garden. Have, get, before it cloy,

Before it cloud, Christ, lord, and sour with sinning,

Innocent mind and Mayday in girl and boy,

Most, O maid's child, thy choice and worthy the winning.

His answer to the question is to beg Christ to preserve the purity in nature and in humans – "the Mayday in girl and boy." The final phrase affirms the inherent value of creation, including humans, because we are "worthy the winning"

I wanted to share this poem because it captures the dynamism of spring and the uplift of faith. It is one of Hopkins' most beautiful and theologically rich, along with "*Pied Beauty*," "*God's Grandeur*," and "*The Windhover*."

I used the poem in a teaching demonstration when I was being considered for tenure at John Carroll. The Jesuit professor (now deceased) who observed seemed to approve my choice and my explanation, though he also recommended I work on my posture. Every Jesuit-educated person will understand why I've added this story.

We ought to know the works of this English Jesuit who spent extended periods among the Celts since Catholicism, melancholia, poetry, and spirituality are in our history and psyches. We might also consider that we in Cleveland (and Cincinnati) live in a Jesuit city, one of twenty-seven in the United States.

This is not to say that that the Jesuits have made more of a contribution than any other religious or civic organization (though they may think so!), but it is a mark of some distinction. Having numerous Jesuit secondary schools, parishes, and universities in Ohio means we are fortunate to have men and women formed in service to each other, and especially, in service to the vulnerable.

It also means that many have been schooled in a particular kind of critical thinking, one that joins contemplation to the imagination in colloquial familiarity with a God who guarantees both freedom and love. That's the best way to read Hopkins. •

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DANCE DANCE

CATHERINE DUPLISA

Leveling Up with Jigs and Wigs

Competitive Irish dancing has grown tremendously in the past 20 years and is now truly a global sport. There are dance schools spread clear across the globe, from Russia to Germany, Mexico, Australia, Canada, and everywhere in between. Dancers compete locally and travel, sometimes across the country or even the ocean, for competitions.

There are six competitive levels, called grades, that dancers progress through over the years. The first level is beginner, where dancers need to win a first, second, or third place in each dance to progress.

The next level is advanced beginner, a continuation of beginner for those who have already been competing for a year. Next, students compete in Novice, where the steps get a bit more intricate, the music slows down to allow for this, and dancers must win a first place in each dance to progress but can move up in each dance as they are ready.

Many schools require students to earn more than one first place to ensure success as they progress through the grades. Dancers may stay in this level, even after winning, for the calendar year.

The next level is prize-winner, and this is the last level before entering the championship levels. Dancers must win first place in each dance to progress and must get first place in soft and hard shoe dances before they can move up to the championship levels. Again, many teachers require their students to do more than the minimum requirements to move.



(Above) These tiny dancers from the Burke School had fun and success at the Bell School Feiseanna last month

(Right) Cara, from the Leneghan Academy, won her final first in Preliminary championships and is now qualified for the highest level, Open Championships.



Once dancers move up to the championship levels, they enter preliminary championship first. In this level, dancers compete dancing a soft shoe round and a hard shoe round in front of three adjudicators; the scores are tallied, and the top half of the competition receive awards. You must win first place in your prelim competition three times to enter the final level.

Open Championship

Open championship is the highest competitive level and mimics the three rounds dancers perform at major competitions, but usually has three adjudicators vs. the five at majors. Majors are the regional, national, and international competitions that dancers compete in.

Traditionally the competitions ran from May through October, but in the last decade, they have become available almost every weekend of the calendar year, with many back-to-back days. These competitions are called *feiseanna* or *feis* for short. Feiseanna is a Gaelic word that translates to "festival."

Many dance families pack up for the weekend, stay in a hotel, and

enjoy a mini vacation in surrounding cities and states as they attend these competitions. Traveling is one of the best and most expensive parts of competitive Irish dance that allows people to explore new places and experience other cultures! •

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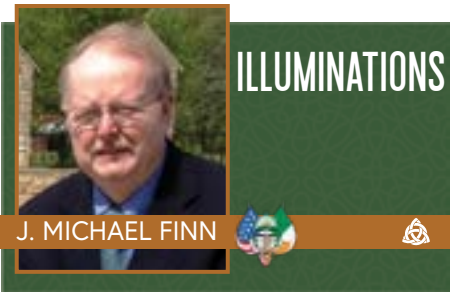
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The Treaty of Versailles and Ireland Part II

Last month's column concerned Irish diplomatic efforts to gain support from the members of the Paris Peace Conference and President Woodrow Wilson, in order to petition for recognition of the newly declared Irish Republic. These diplomatic efforts failed.

The Irish pleas for a hearing were ignored by the Conference and Wilson. It was clear that additional help was required. The Irish looked to the United States to provide political pressure on the Conference through its President Woodrow Wilson.

The *Friends of Irish Freedom* (FOIF) was an Irish American republican organization founded in New York, March 4, 1916, only a few weeks prior to the 1916 Easter Rising. The leaders of the organization were Daniel F. Cohalan, a New York Supreme Court judge and John Devoy, Editor of the Irish newspaper the *Gaelic American*. The FOIF was hoping to use President Wilson to attain their goals and was also encouraged by Wilson's goals as stated in his Fourteen Points.

Irish Race Convention

On February 22, 1919, the FOIF convened an Irish Race Convention in Philadelphia. This convention attracted 6,000 delegates, including Bishops and clergy, and representatives of most Irish American groups in the US. The



L-R: Edward F. Dunne, Michael J. Ryan, and Frank P. Walsh

newspaper the *Gaelic American*, described the Race Convention as "the greatest gathering of our people ever held in America" and stated that it would put the Irish question to the forefront of American opinion.

The Convention appointed twenty-five of its delegates to present President Wilson with their resolution demanding self-determination for Ireland. The Committee was named the *American Commission on Irish Independence* (ACII).

Following the convention, a mass meeting was arranged at New York's Metropolitan Opera House to present President Wilson with the Committee's demands relating to Irish self-determination. Wilson had temporarily returned to the United States from the Paris peace talks.

A reluctant Wilson met the delegation on March 4, 1919. Before Wilson addressed the group, someone shouted out, "What About Ireland?" Wilson believed it was Cohalan (it probably was).

Wilson was offended and stated he would not address the meeting until after Cohalan left the stage. Wilson had a long standing feud with Judge Cohalan. Cohalan left the meeting and Wilson agreed to meet privately with the Committee.

During the private meeting, Wilson was irate with the committee. He told his advisors

that he was prepared to tell the Irish delegation, "To go to hell." When he was confronted with the committee's request that he present Ireland cause to the Treaty Commission, he replied, "Surely, you do not think that I can answer that question now?" and left the meeting.

Éamon de Valera

After Wilson left the meeting, the delegation, acting under the authority of the Irish Race Convention, now appointed three of its members to form the *American Commission on Irish Independence*, to go to the Paris Peace Conference. The commission was elected primarily with the objective of obtaining the secure travel of Éamon de Valera (he had escaped from British custody), Arthur Griffith, and George Noble Plunkett to Paris to present the case of Irish independence in front of the world's leaders.

In addition, it was tasked with lobbying the American and British delegations for recognition of the Irish Republic. The American Commission was composed of prominent Irish Americans: Frank P. Walsh, Chairman (former co-chairman of the National Labor Board), Edward F. Dunne (former Governor of Illinois), and Michael J. Ryan (former Public Service Commissioner for Pennsylvania).

The three men sailed for Paris on March 31, 1919.

Following their arrival in Paris on April 11, the three-member committee was met by Seán T. Ó'Ceallaigh, the Dáil Éireann envoy to the Paris Peace Conference. They immediately set out to pursue a variety of different individuals associated with both the Wilson and Lloyd George delegations to gain a meeting with either leader.

Their efforts culminated in a meeting with President Wilson on April 17, in which he promised that while he could not approach Lloyd George in an official manner. He agreed to make an effort to highlight the issue of the Irish question, and its consequences for Anglo-American relations, with the Prime Minister at a later date.

Lloyd George was always too busy to meet with them. They accepted the invitation of Seán T. O'Kelly to visit Ireland and review first-hand conditions there. The commission willingly agreed to this suggestion and subsequently arrived in Dublin on May 3, 1919. Upon arrival, they were met by President de Valera and driven to the Mansion House to be officially received by Dublin's lord mayor.

After touring the countryside, Members of the commission were invited to address the Third Session of Dáil Éireann on Friday, May 9. By this time, their visit was creating a stir among British government officials, who began to question their actions. The

British and American press took up the story of their speeches and it became an international incident.

Back in Paris, Wilson was furious. He told his press officer, "I don't know how long I shall be able to resist telling them what I think of their miserable mischief making!" Historian Thomas Fleming writes, "The story is one more piece of evidence of how totally Wilson has become Lloyd George's captive."

With great reluctance, Wilson agreed to meeting with the three commissioners. It did not go well. Wilson told them that there was an agreement between the Big Four that any one of them had the right to block a small nation that wanted to appear before them, and that Britain was certain to exercise this veto on Ireland. Wilson blamed the commissioners for "kicking over the apple cart" with their speeches in Ireland.

Frank Walsh brought up Wilson's position on self-determination. Wilson replied, "You have touched upon the great metaphysical tragedy of today. My words have raised hopes in the hearts of millions of people. There are a lot of things I hoped for but did not get."

Consequently, Ireland did not receive its audience with the Treaty negotiators. Irish-America showed Wilson no mercy.

Judge Cohalan noted Wilson's refusal as proof that he did not care about Ireland. Others scoffed at Wilson's claim that he needed unanimous consent of the Big Four.

In any event, Irish participation at Paris was excluded, Woodrow Wilson refused any support, and in retaliation, Irish pressure groups refused to vote for the Democratic Party in the 1920 Presidential election, resulting in a victory for Warren G. Harding, the Republican candidate. In addition, Wilson's failure in Paris resulted in the failure of the US Senate to ever ratify the Treaty of Versailles, including the League of Nations.

Creating New Nations

The Treaty of Versailles was approved on June 28, 1919. It is also interesting to note that The Treaty of Versailles did create nine



President Wilson and Lloyd George.

new nations: Finland, Austria, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, and Hungary.

After Wilson's presidency, his successor, Republican President Warren G. Harding, continued American opposition to the formation of the League of Nations. Congress passed the Knox-Porter Resolution bringing a formal end to hostilities between the United States and Germany. It was signed into law by President Harding on July 2, 1921.

If you are interested in learning more about the Treaty of Versailles and Ireland you can read, *The Illusion of Victory: Americans in World War I*, by Thomas Fleming, Basic Books, New York, 2023.

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.

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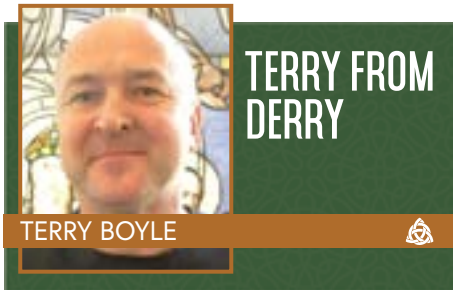


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TERRY FROM DERRY

TERRY BOYLE

Poetry

Trying to put together a collection of poems is no mean feat. Publishing anything is particularly difficult if you don't have a good editor. With the help of The Black Spring Publishing company, I managed to compile a good sample of my poems that, for me, captured the essence of my thoughts over the past year.

However, when it comes to poetry, it's not the most commercial of enterprises. You're not going to make a fortune from a book of poems, but that's not the point. Poets write to be heard.

We write in the hopes that what we have to say is shared by others. And, more than anything, a poet wants to create a work that demonstrates their creative imagination.

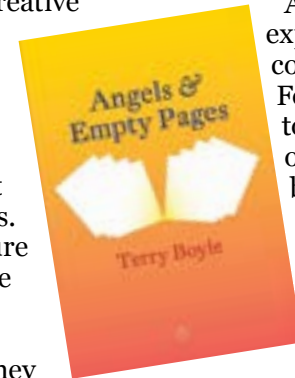
Having said all of that, most people would still prefer to read a good novel.

Poetry demands a lot more from its readers. It's a genre of literature that appeals to people who love words. It's only when someone such as Seamus Heaney hits the headlines with a Nobel Prize for literature or Amanda Gorman reads at Biden's inauguration that suddenly poetry is in vogue again.

Poetry's hot these days, he said, people, hooked on a lexicon of adjectives can be very addictive.

Notes of far-flung fancy and hype inspire, keep them buzzed.

Lights, action, thesaurus!
—A smithy for the Populace
Poetry, like music, has a way of



transporting us directly into an emotion. Poems can sometimes best express what we cannot find words for.

A whole gamut of experiences can be succinctly communicated in a short poem. For example, when it comes to grief and the loss of a loved one, we source a poem to bring us comfort.

Empty spaces stagnate my weeping hours, knowingly, they stare blankly back at me, indifferent to my pain, to my loss.

They surround my every thought with your absence.
—Red Bow Tied

The poet aims to universal their experience in ways that we can identify and relate in the poem. We all remember the early days of COVID-19 and the restrictions placed on our interactions.

We covered our faces in fear and our hearts opened, we kept ourselves a grave apart, six feet to remind us of what we fear.

Connected now by virtual intimacy.

—Six Feet Apart
Whatever your culture, you will find the work of poets ingrained into the soul of your tradition. Poets celebrate the best and the worst of us. They dig deep into the roots of who we are to uncover the rich darkness of our longings. One such longing is the need to feel connected



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to one's tribe. This longing is such a strong pull for most of us. In my own experience, I've always felt a deep relationship to Donegal. Whenever I go back there, I find myself at home.

Drenched in this fine mizzle, steeps a noble sadness, and a deep longing to return. My bog soul houses an ancient race within, mired in this place I call home, yearning, like me, to be gathered in.
—Spirits of the Past

Often when we think of poems, we tend to think of them as sentimental, and somewhat mawkish. Reduced to its worst, poetry becomes a celebration card, a rhyming gush of sweetness that is like eating a fast food meal that is never satisfying. You keep wanting more.

Poets want to celebrate love in all its facets. If you have been with someone for a long time, it's easy to allow familiarity to lead to contempt. In this poem, I paint the usual scene of a couple, one of whom is more engaged with their phone than the other.

Glancing demurely, I envy the strong, affectionate hold you have on your phone, your eagerness to tap, scroll, swipe, click your attention to somewhere else.
—Texting Eros

This scenario is a far cry from those heady days when infatuation and desire took priority over everything else. People in love abandon all else in pursuit of the object of their desire. Nothing is more important than the roaring passion of the early flowering of romance.

Under these sheets, love plays amorously, hidden from a prying sun. Under these sheets, the bright splendour of my tears illuminates in your generous heart...

Under these sheets, I venerate your soul's gentle light, with naked expectancy.
—The Wonder of Renewal

There's a thin line between love and hate. We are so full of contradictions. Our history has shown us to be capable of great good and destructive urges.

For every good deed we achieve, there are many more occasions when we mistreat others in the worst

possible ways. We must not forget the evil of the past so that we don't repeat it.

Lives short-lived, rich love forever lost; in Treblinka, the dark soul of the Holocaust. What's in a piece of earth? A bloody field of buried unquiet dreams...

—What's in a piece of Earth
So, as you can see, I set myself the impossible task of trying to encompass the personal and the collective experiences in such a way that it provides the reader with a chance to contemplate the tragic optimism that enshrines our journey towards evolution or extinction. I believe we choose how we will react in the face of adversity. It's easy to succumb to the apathy of the time and allow ourselves to be swayed by the more extreme forces that would doom us to our extermination.

I am among the last of the dinosaurs, among the few to believe that all is not well. This fragile life is near to becoming extinct. Our profound naivety will catch us off guard, And from the skies, our demise will fall upon us as we sleep.
—Fossilized Giants

I choose to believe that we will come to our senses once we begin to listen to those who encourage us towards peace and justice. Those who lead us towards such standards are often the ones who fall foul of

the bully whose fear tactics are designed to undermine democracy. In the face of such malevolence, we have those who continue to speak to us from the past.

Behold the Man to come again, rasping with indignity, boldly marching towards Sinai standing firmly on the mountaintop, waking the sleepers from their stupor to behold a world yet to be realized.
—Glass Darkly:
Martin Luther King, Jr.

My title for this collection, *Angels & Empty Pages*, expresses my hope and fear for us as human beings. I am hopeful that our muses, angels, will guide us to greater peace, otherwise, I fear that we will become the empty spaces on our planet, and thus, there will be empty pages.

Angels & Empty Spaces is available at Barnes & Noble and on Amazon. •

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WRUW-FM 91.1 Cleveland
4:00 - 6:00 Toss the Feathers
WCBE FM 90.5 Columbus

SUNDAY
10am-12pm: Gerry Quinn's
Irish Hours WHK-AM 1420
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MADIGAN MUSES

MARILYN MADIGAN

Memorial Day

May is a month that we honor and remember. On May 1, May Day, or International Workers' Day is celebrated around the world. Over the past 10 years, May 4 has been a celebration of Mayo-ness. This has become a Global celebration of

Mayo. Please visit mayo.ie for more information.

Cinco de Mayo Day is celebrated by many, but do you know what the day is about? Cinco de Mayo is the day to celebrate Mexico's victory over the French at the Battle of Puebla in 1862. In the United States, this day is a celebration of U.S. Latino history and culture.

Mother's Day

I personally feel that the most important day to celebrate in May is Mother's Day. This is the day we can thank our moms for all they have done for us.

Our moms are our first nurses, teachers and influences in our lives. Forty years ago, my best friend and mother was called home to God. Although, she is no longer physically present, I feel her

presence in my life.

For those who are blessed to have your moms, cherish them. The song "A Mother's Love's a Blessing" is so true ...*"you'll miss her when she is gone."*

I would like to share the following for all our mothers, which was written by Fr. W.J. Lockington.

"An Irish Mother
She is foremost among the hidden saints of earth. As a follower of Christ, whose cloister is within the four walls of the home, wherein she reigns as a queen. A lover of Christ, whose little kingdom comprises the treasured souls that God, has given her to guide. A ruler for Christ, who draws her subjects to her by sanctity and love. Her toil worn hands that clasp the old rosary are eloquent of strength to seize and lift to good all souls they meet. Her lips are molded to lines of peace by years of unending prayer and murmured benisons over sleeping babes, upon her bow eternal calm and resignation sit enthroned, her eyes are lit by the light of serene confidence that tells of a heart secure in the friendship of God."

Peace Officers Memorial Day and Memorial Day

On the days when we celebrate police officers and our military who have given the ultimate sacrifice for their community and country, the poem, "The Mother" comes to mind. We need to remember their mothers and pray for them and the entire family.

The Mother

By Patrick Pearse

*"I do not grudge them:
 Lord, I do not grudge*

*My two strong sons that I have
 seen go out*

*To break their strength and die,
 they and a few,*

*In bloody protest for a
 glorious thing,*

*They shall be spoken of among
 their people,*

*The generations shall
 remember them,*

And call them blessed;

*But I will speak their names to my
 own heart*

In the long nights;

*The little names that were
 familiar once*

Round my dead hearth.

*Lord, thou art hard on mothers:
 We suffer in their coming and their
 going;*

*And tho' I grudge them not,
 I weary, weary*

*Of the long sorrow -
 And yet I have my joy*

*My sons were faithful,
 and they fought." •*

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CLEVELAND COMHARA

@BobCarneyGTR

BOB CARNEY

Footprints on Valentia Island

On a wet morning in August of 1992, Iwan Stossel packed up his bicycle and left his bed and breakfast lodgings in Kerry to make his way to Valentia Island. The twenty-three year old Swiss geology student was wrapping up his work mapping the island's volcanic geology for his undergraduate diploma.

Hiking along a ridge near the shore, he spotted a trail of fossilized footprints in the rock. "This can't be true. This looks like the traces of a four-legged animal," he wrote in his field notebook, before the worsening weather drove him back to his lodgings.

The Devonian Period

The Devonian Period is known as the "Age of Fishes." The majority of all animal life was aquatic. Ohio's own Dunkleosteus Fossil is from this period, some 360- 420 million years ago.

"Dunk's" fossilized remains were found on the shores of Lake Erie in 1867. He or she is believed to be Earth's first vertebrate "superpredator," back when North America was near the latitude of what is now Rio de Janeiro.

A sculpture of "Dunk" stands outside Metroparks Rocky River Nature Center and fossils are on display at Cleveland's Natural History Museum, where you can learn much more about him and the Devonian Period.

On land, plant life was beginning to show great diversification, but animal life was limited to spider-like creatures and oversized scorpions.

The seas were also becoming rich with plant life, making movement

harder for some species, some would adapt, as fins evolved into limbs. Dinosaurs would come much later, around 230 million years ago.

Tetrapods

Tetrapod means four feet, and includes all species alive today that have four feet and many that don't. The group includes all of the organisms that descended from the last common ancestor of amphibians, reptiles and mammals, including extinct species. Birds, snakes and humans are all classified as tetrapods. The earliest tetrapods were aquatic, with gills instead of lungs. Eventually they would evolve into more of a salamander type of a creature, with an air bladder connected to the back of the throat that would enable it to breathe air.

The transition from fish to amphibian may have been necessary because of the abundance of aquatic plant life depleting oxygen levels in the water. An animal that could live in the water or on the riverbank would have the best of both worlds.

The tracks on Valentia Island were made 380 million years ago by one of these animals. It was a little over three feet in length, and in some places, imprints from it's dragging belly and tail can be seen.

Stossell had been in contact with an Irish adviser prior to his time in Ireland. Aware that Stossell was an avid fossil hunter, she warned him about Ireland's lack of fossils, but he was intrigued by the prospect of mapping the effects of volcanic activity on Valentia Island.

Dinosaurs in Ireland

Ireland was underwater for much of the time during the age of the dinosaurs. Mike Simms is the curator and palaeontologist of National Museum Northern Ireland and explains, "Most of Ireland's rocks are the wrong age for dinosaurs, either too old or too young, making it nearly impossible to confirm dinosaurs existed on these shores." Only two dinosaur fossils have been confirmed in Ireland, a femur fragment from a four-legged herbivore and a tibia fragment from a two legged carnivore.

Stossell's accidental discovery turned out to be the longest set of footprints made by one of the first four-legged creatures to walk the Earth. The discovery made headlines, but Dr. Stossell says that

the footprints were not recognized in scientific literature for a long time. They would occasionally be mentioned but their implications were not discussed.

"I assume this was because they contradicted the prevailing point of view at the time, that tetrapods were only able to advance to the mainland much later. I was not a vertebrate paleontologist and, as a practical geologist, no longer part of the academic community."

Unable to argue his own point of view on his discovery, he had no option other than to continue his work in geology. It wasn't until 2010 when a set of prints were discovered in Poland, thought to be older, that his discovery was accepted by academics as accurate.

Those prints were found in a former quarry in the Holy Cross Mountains in southeastern Poland. They have been dated around 395 million years old.

The significance of Iwan Stossell's discovery cannot be overstated. It provides some of the oldest evidence of the first water dwelling animals to crawl out of the water and breathe air on the shore, making one of the largest steps in evolution.

There are a total of four tetrapod trackways known to science. One is located in Scotland, and two others in Australia, but those are not as well preserved and are much shorter in length than those on Valentia Island.

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of the western most points of the country. It was chosen as the site for the first transatlantic telegraph cables in 1866 and operated for one-hundred years.

It is linked to the mainland by a bridge. A car ferry operates from April thru October, weather permitting. In the 2022 census, Valentia claimed 685 year-round residents.

The trackway itself is marked, and there is an information point at the entrance to the site. The path to the sight is steep and depending on sea and weather conditions you may or may not be able to get to the actual trackway.

A small word of warning, some visitors walk away slightly disappointed at the tracks, but if you understand what it is you're looking at, you will be impressed! (I had a friend who went to the Grand Canyon a few years back. When I asked him how his trip was, he replied, "Just rocks and dirt") Not everyone gets their science geek on.

The island is part of The Ring of Kerry, but off of the main tourist route. It is still well worth a visit for it's beauty, and of course, for it's tetrapod trackway.

You can listen to an interview with Iwan Stossell on-line at the BBC'S Witness History. The program name is titled, "Finding the Longest Set of Footprints left by the First Vertebrate". •

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- Kate Kearney's Cottage (traditional Irish night)
- Dingle Peninsula
- Ferry ride across the River Shannon Estuary
- Cliffs of Moher
- Galway City Bus Tour
- Kylemore Abbey
- National Famine Memorial & Croagh Patrick
- Knock Shrine Guided Walking Tour & Museum
- Sean's Bar in Athlone (Ireland's oldest pub)

Cost:

Land & Air: \$4280 per person (based on double occupancy)
Single Room Supplement: \$950

Deposit: \$250 (non-refundable and due at time of booking)
Travel Insurance: (recommended and due at time of booking)
 • \$332 based on double occupancy
 • \$403 based on single occupancy

Tour Inclusions:

- Deluxe motorcoach transportation with driver/guide
- Luxury and first class accommodations for 9 nights
- Admission to venues and attractions
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Pilgrimage to Medjugorje

September 9th - 17th, 2024

Trip includes:

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The Old Angle Honors

Johnny Kilbane

Featherweight Champion of the World 1912 - 1923

90 years ago, on February 22, 1912, Johnny Kilbane, a son of Cleveland's "Hugh" neighborhood, in a 25 round fight, became The Featherweight Champion of the World. A 600 lb fighter longer than any other featherweight in the history of boxing.

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TAKING THE FIELDS OF GLORY

VINCENT BEACH

Midwest Gaelic Athletic Association

USGAA News

The USGAA County Junior A football team is down to the final selections. The team will travel to Ireland for the tournament. Competing teams are Gloucestershire, Hertfordshire, Kilkenny, Lancashire, London, New York, Scotland, Warwickshire, Yorkshire, and USGAA.



Last year's competition saw New York beat Kilkenny by the score of 0-13 (13) to 1-09 (12). Our USGAA team includes players from Philadelphia, Boston, Detroit, Chicago, and San Francisco, with leadership coming from manager Aidan Corr (Delco Gaels) and trainer Louie Bradely (Delco Gaels), as well as selectors Martin Kerr (Boston), James Staunton (Chicago), and Ollie McIlhone (San Francisco).

Chairing the committee to make the County team a reality is John Young (Pittsburgh Celtics). Special congratulations to Patrick Newell of Detroit for making the team, and *go n-éiri*

libh to the lads.

Midwest News

The summer schedule of games is out, and on the next page, so be sure to mark your calendars for a match near you. Games have already started in some locations with pre-season tournaments, including for Cincinnati, who travelled down to Nashville with a men's football team and a combined Cincy-Indy ladies' team. Ladies' Gaelic football is the fastest growing sport in Ireland and is coming on strong in the Midwest, with development sides forming in Cincinnati and Detroit to join the established sides in Buffalo, Cleveland, Pittsburgh, and Rochester.

Cleveland St. Pat's - St. Jarlath's GAA

Cleveland will once again host the Memorial 7-a-Side Gaelic Football tournament for men's and ladies' teams.. Confirmations this year include Pittsburgh Celtics, Chicago McBride's, Buffalo Na Fianna, Toronto St. Michael's, Detroit Wolfe Tones, Cincinnati, and Cleveland for the men, and Pittsburgh Banshees, Chicago Erin Rovers, Toronto St. Michael's, Detroit St. Anne's, and Cincinnati for the ladies. The adult tournament is May 18th at the West Side Irish American Club (8559 Jenning Road, Olmsted Township, OH).

Games will begin at 9:30 AM and conclude by 6PM. A Barrio food truck will be onsite from noon to 7PM and the WSIA bar will be open from 2PM to 9PM. After the awards presentation in the pavilion, Cleveland GAA's official trad band, *Full 90*, will entertain the sweaty, dirty crowd until dispersment.

This year Cleveland has added a youth football and hurling tournament as part of the weekend. On

Sunday, May 19th, once again at the West Side Irish American Club, youth players ages U6 through U16 will compete. Confirmed clubs include Akron, Chicago Celtics, Chicago Limerick, Chicago St. Jarlath's, Detroit Harps, and the Toronto Chieftains to join the hosting Cleveland Saints. Games will begin at 10AM and conclude around 3PM.

Come on out to support the teams, Gaelic games, and Irish culture. Youth registration remains open to all new players - visit clevelandgaa.com/youth.

Cleveland Memorial 7's i gCuimhne

This year we remember George Dunne, Senior. In doing so with each dedication, we also remember and recognize that the GAA is more than a game, it is both a community and a family - often literally, including and touching the lives of whole families. The Dunne family shares a familiar story, and that sharing of the familiar story enriches and unites the community.

These stories tellof growing up around the GAA from a young age, because of the involvement of parents, aunts, or uncles; watching games, playing with other GAA'ers, and tagging along to socials until it was their turn to take the field. With that we thank the Dunne family for their continued support, and more importantly, their continued involvement with the Cleveland GAA.

It is families like this that perpetuate and grow the Association, Gaelic games, and Irish culture for the next generation of young players to someday do the same - for that we owe gratitude as well as comradery. *Go raibh maith agaibh, a chlann Ó Dúinn.*

George Dunne Sr. By his daughter, Annie

I would like to thank the Cleveland GAA Memorial 7's committee for selecting my father, George Dunne, to be honored this year. We lost my father November 21st, 2004, which will be 20 years this year. Hard to believe, I still hear his laugh and see his smile.

Dad was born May 4th, 1941 in Ballinabranna, County Carlow, Ireland. At seven years old, he moved to Arlis, County Laois, along with his mother, father, sister Nancy Pender and brother, Robin (Tom) Dunne, where he began playing Gaelic football.

At age 13, he left school to work on the family farm, as many did at that time. He continued to play football for Carlow, but eventually went back to Laois as a teenager and played for their Senior team in the late 1950s, where they won many championships.

My dad and mom, Sadie, were married in 1961 and lived on the farm until they moved to Cleveland in 1965, along with myself and brother John. Three more children were born shortly after, George (deceased), David and Tom.

Upon arriving in Cleveland, he stayed with his sister Nancy and her husband Bill Pender. My parents eventually rented a home on Bosworth Avenue, where we joined St. Ignatius Parish and became members of the West Side Irish American Club on Madison Avenue. They purchased their first home on West 136th St and became members of St Vincent de Paul Church.

Our family moved to a lovely home on West 137th Street in 1972, where we all grew up, with great memories. It was a nice Irish community with the Masterson, McBride, Mayer, and Sheehan families - what a street it was!! Their final home was in North



Olmsted in Asbury Park. When I think of my father, I think of his laugh, his smile, the way his eyes would light up when he walked into a room and saw his family and/or his friends. He loved people. His work ethic was legendary, his strong handshake, the way he hugged you and maybe even gave you a kiss!

My dad was so physically strong and at the same time had a soft heart, especially with his grandchildren. I have fond memories of dinners with the family at the kitchen table in our home. We all talked about our day, our week, school (not always the best topic), football or baseball.

Mom always made extra food because you never knew if dad was walking in the door with someone or even a band that had played locally at the Three Leaf Shamrock Tavern, which they owned at the time. If we were lucky, we would be treated to a sing song after dinner. The neighbors would even join in occasionally. They loved us on W. 137.

The way the story goes, he arrived in Cleveland on a Friday night and was playing that Sunday with St. Pat's football club. The team won the North American Championship that year (1965) and the following year as well. He continued to play with St Pat's until the late 1980s.

Dad was a strong player and always had his teammates back - with authority. Our family lived at Gunning Field every Sunday for games. He loved playing the game.

Dad not only excelled at Gaelic Football, but many other sports as well: including Hurling, Broom Hockey, Hand Ball, darts, and golf (known for playing golf with his left hand when

he was right-handed). He was known to be - one of the best in all sports he played - a true athlete.

Dad had several jobs before joining the Laborers Local 310 in April 1973 and retired after 25 years in May 1998. He worked hard as a laborer and was very proud of his union membership.

Not only did dad work as a laborer, but he also did landscaping, snow plowing, waterproofing and cement work. He was a master of several trades.

My parents owned the Three Leaf Shamrock on Lorain Road from 1973 to 1978. Irish bands played quite often, or you might hear Al O'Leary or Frank Barrett playing the fiddle or accordion. You never knew when someone, including my dad, would sing an Irish song or a waltz would be danced.

The bar is now called The Pride of Erin, owned by Jimmy Campbell. I work there now as well. Talk about coming full circle. Dad worked and played hard; he loved life. He loved his Irish heritage and never let us forget where we came from. We enjoyed many trips to Ireland to visit family.

We learned Irish songs and dances, marched in the St Patrick's Day Parade and spent a lot of Saturday nights at dances. The friends we met there are still the friends we have today. He left behind memories and a legacy we are all so proud of and have passed down our Irish roots to the family he left behind: Sadie, his wife of 40 years, his five children, twelve grandchildren and sixteen great grandchildren.

We all strive to make him as proud

of us as we are of him. Finally, *Sláinte* to the Cleveland GAA 7's Memorial committee for keeping the memories of the players of the past alive, they made Gaelic football in Cleveland what it is today. I am proud to be a part of this celebration and hope to continue - far into the future.

Is mise le meas, Annie Dunne.
Go raibh míle maith agaibh

Thanks y'all, to our readers and supporters. We need your help and involvement, but would most like to share the fun of Irish sport and Cleveland community with you. Consider getting involved at any level.

Fáilte (welcome) to all. The Gaelic Athletic Association is Ireland's largest sporting organization and a bit of home for the Irish abroad here in the US of A. Beyond sports, the Associa-

tion also promotes Irish music, song and dance, and the Irish language as an integral part of its objectives.

Cleveland GAA is open to all who want to play competitive sports, meet new people, and join an athletic, fitness-minded club for all ages. ●

Vincent Thomas Francis Xavier Beach is a proud Greater Clevelander and emigrant of Michigan. He joined the St. Pat's Gaelic Football Club in 1999 and, with much help, is the current caretaker of the Cleveland GAA. His spoken Irish is a cross of dialects from the University of Cincinnati and An Cheathrú Rua, Conamara.

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CLEVELAND GAA

2024 Great Lakes Tournament Series

AGES: U6, U8, U10, U12, U14, U16
TEAMS: CLEVELAND, CHICAGO, DETROIT, TORONTO, AND MIDWEST

EVENT DETAILS

19TH MAY 2024

10 AM - 3 PM

WEST SIDE IRISH AMERICAN (WSIA) GAA FIELDS
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JOIN US FOR A DAY OF YOUTH GAELIC FOOTBALL AND HURLING, AS TEAMS FROM AROUND THE GREAT LAKES AREA JOIN FOR THE MAY LEG OF THE BIENNIAL GREAT LAKES TOURNAMENT SERIES. FOOD & DRINK WILL BE PROVIDED FOR ALL PLAYERS. FOOD AND PUB FARE WILL BE ONSITE AND AVAILABLE FOR ALL SPECTATORS.

<p style="font-weight: bold; font-size: 0.9em;">THINGS TO DO IN CLEVELAND AREA:</p> <p style="font-size: 0.7em;">CLEVELAND MEMORIAL 7'S TOURNEY SATURDAY @ WSIA - A FULL DAY OF ADULT MEN'S AND WOMEN'S GAELIC FOOTBALL AND AN EVENING OF EDGE CLUB GAAE (TRAD MUSIC AND PUB) THE ROCK-N-ROLL HALL OF FAME, THE CLEVELAND ZOO, CEDAR POINT AMUSEMENT PARK, THE SOLSTICE STEPS AT LAKEWOOD PARK, GUARDIANS BASEBALL</p>	<p style="font-weight: bold; font-size: 0.9em;">HOTEL ACCOMODATIONS:</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="border: 1px solid white; border-radius: 15px; padding: 5px; font-size: 0.7em;"> <p>DOUBLETREE HILTON WESTLAKE OH</p> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid white; border-radius: 15px; padding: 5px; font-size: 0.7em;"> <p>BOOK BY APRIL 18TH FOR GROUP RATES</p> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid white; border-radius: 15px; padding: 5px; font-size: 0.7em;"> <p>HOLIDAY INN EXPRESS & SUITES WESTLAKE OH</p> </div> </div> <p style="font-size: 0.7em; text-align: center;">GROUP RESERVATION: "GAELIC ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION"</p>	<p style="font-size: 0.8em; text-align: center;">FOR MORE INFORMATION:</p> <p style="font-size: 0.7em; text-align: center;">VINCENT BEACH 216-202-9145 CLEVELANDYOUTHGAA@GMAIL.COM</p>
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SAVE THE DATE!!!
Thursday, MAY 16, 2024
Windows on the River

2000 Sycamore
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 6:00 Cash Bar 6:30 Dinner
 7:30 Awards Ceremony

Donation \$75 (\$35 tax deductible)
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*"Preserving Our Heritage,
 Sharing Our Stories"*



The Perfect Meatless Dish

I know I have mentioned before that my husband is a carnivore through and through. Almost no meatless meals happen in our house, except during Lent. I just could not pass up sharing this one in my column. It is so delish and versatile. My friend, Joyce and I exchange recipes we see online almost daily, and when she sent me this one, I could not resist trying it. Of course I had to add some of my own touches.

Vegetable Orzo with Creamy Paprika Sauce
Approximately 4 side servings or 2 meal servings

Ingredients:
 8 oz Sliced Mushrooms. I used half white and half Baby Bellas
 6 oz Sundried Tomato Halves – roughly chopped.
 3 stalks Green Onions (Scallions) – chopped – white and green parts.
 5 oz Fresh Baby Spinach
 1 cup Orzo Pasta
 2 cups of Vegetable Broth (you can substitute Chicken Broth – but it won't be meatless)



1/2 cup Heavy Cream
 2 tablespoons Olive Oil
 4 oz Garlic Herb Goat Cheese
 3 tablespoons Paprika. You can use smoked or sweet
 2 tablespoons Italian Seasoning
 1/2 teaspoon Red Pepper Flakes (you can add more if you like)
 Salt and Pepper

Directions:
 In a large skillet, over medium heat, sauté the mushrooms, tomatoes, and scallions in the olive oil until soft and tender. Make sure you season these heavily with salt and pepper.
 Remove half of the vegetable mixture from the skillet and set aside.
 To the skillet, add the orzo, vegetable broth, Italian seasoning, red pepper flakes, and paprika.
 Bring to a boil and then simmer 5-10 minutes, until the orzo is cooked through.

Add the spinach and cook until wilted and mixed in. This should take 1-2 minutes.
 Add the other vegetables back in and stir in the heavy cream.
 Let simmer for 3-4 minutes. Taste and add any additional seasonings needed.
 Once the mixture is warm and bubbling add in the goat cheese. I break of small pieces and just place right on top, they sink and start to melt in.
 Serve and enjoy.
 This does reheat very well. I add just a small amount of extra broth to it if the orzo is a little sticky.
 You can also double this recipe very easily for a bigger crowd. •

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Fir Na Tine



The month of May brings so much to appreciate. Mother Nature awakening from the cold of winter with bright colors blossoming, the promise of warmer weather, Nurse and Teacher Appreciation weeks, and, of course, Mother's Day.
 May also brings International Firefighter Day on the 4th. This is a day dedicated to recognizing the sacrifices that firefighters all over the world make to keep us all safe. Fir Na Tine is Gaelic for Men of Fire.

The Early Beginnings
 The very first fire department is

believed to have been in Rome over 2000 years ago. People were selected to roam the city to look for fires as well as enforce fire codes. These people were called "Corps of Vigiles." Augustus Ceasar selected the people from slaves and unfortunately, they were not paid for their work.
 The first fire department in the United States is credited to Ben Franklin. This was a volunteer department which started as a "club" to protect each other's homes in case of a fire.
 If a fire was discovered, these people would sound an alarm and

then help organize bucket brigades. In 1853, Cincinnati, Ohio was the first city to replace volunteers with horse-drawn steam fire engines and to form a paid career fire department.
The Fire Fighting Irish
 Why are so many firefighters Irish? When the potato famine broke out in Ireland, nearly 2 million Irish immigrants settled in the United States. They ended up in big cities like New York, Chicago, Boston, and Baltimore. They were met with widespread anti-Irish and anti-Catholic prejudice and

discrimination.
 Due to this, they were forced to take jobs that were dangerous and paid very little, such as law enforcement and firefighting. Since then, Irish Americans have sought out these jobs not only out of necessity, but because of family tradition as well. There are many firefighters working now that are 3rd or 4th generation firefighters.
More Than Fire and Water
 Firefighters are trained to extinguish fires, but they do so much more for the community. They are a part of search and rescue operations to locate and evacuate people who are trapped, not only in fires, but in other emergencies.
 They provide emergency medical care, such as CPR. They are trained to respond to hazardous material spills or leaks to minimize the risk to the public. Firefighters spend a great deal of time giving safety presentations and participating in community events to raise everyone's awareness about fire safety.
 They also are constantly improving their own skills, knowledge, and readiness to respond to emergencies for all of us! Take some time this month or any time during the year to let firefighters and all first responders know how much you appreciate them. Drop off a meal or some treats, write a thank you note, seek out opportunities to volunteer throughout the year, and most definitely, change the batteries in your smoke detectors!!!! •

LITERATURE CORNER

Children of the Fire
 by Harriette Gillem Robinet
 In this historical fiction book, eleven-year-old Hallelujah is intrigued by the fires burning all over her city of Chicago. She does not realize that these fires are going to change her life forever. It is 1871, the year of the Great Chicago Fire and Hallelujah finds a new friend who could not be more different, but their shared experiences will make them friends forever. For ages 8-12, 144 pages.



Look for the Helpers
 by Alexandra Cassel
 Mr. Rodgers used to always say, "Look for the helpers." In this book, Danile learns some important lessons about what to do when bad things happen. Whether it is a bad storm, a natural disaster, or anything else scary, you will always find good people helping out those who need it. For ages 3-7, 32 pages.



May 5th is Cinco De Mayo. With this easy recipe, you can make your own homemade salsa. You'll never go back to store bought!
Ingredients:
 4 Roma tomatoes (When in season, these are great. If not in season, you can use canned tomatoes for more consistent results. Be sure to drain the juice.)
 • 1/2 White onion
 • 1/3 cup Cilantro
 • 1 Jalapeno (the seeds are what make it spicy, so if you like a lot of spice add the seeds)
 • 2 Garlic Cloves
 • 1 Tablespoon Lime juice
 • 1 teaspoon salt
 • Pinch of pepper • Pinch of sugar

Directions:
 Roughly chop tomatoes and place half into a blender.
 Add lime juice to blender.
 Roughly chop the onion and jalapeno and add to blender along with garlic cloves.
 Add the remaining chopped tomatoes, cilantro, sugar, salt, and pepper.

kids in the kitchen



Pulse ingredients until the blender gets going (add a couple of tablespoons of water if needed).
 Blend at low speed until the salsa is smooth.
 Let it sit for 1-2 hours in the fridge for bolder flavors. The salsa will turn a darker red and the flavor will enhance. •

Megan is a Reading Intervention Educator for the Cleveland Metropolitan School District. She may be reached at meganlardie126@outlook.com.





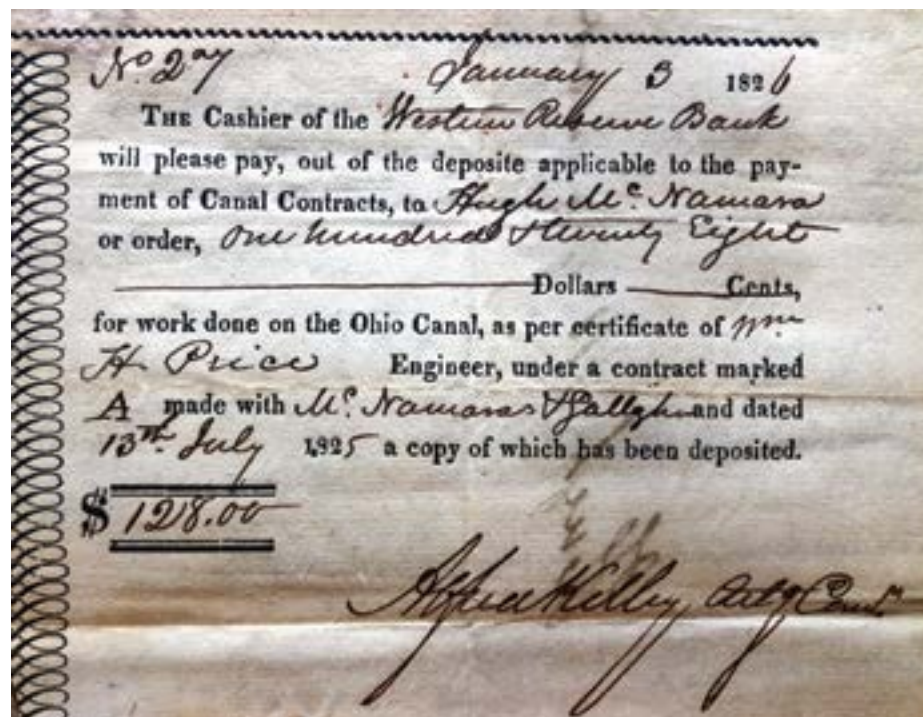
The Hardy Sons of Erin

There are moments in every generation and there are events. Cleveland was host to the NCAA women's basketball championship, Opening Day and the eclipse, all occurring in one long weekend. The eclipse is a once in a lifetime global event. The NCAA is a national event, with both local and international corollaries. Opening day is one of our signature local events, with national and international corollaries. Each

event illustrates Cleveland's intersections with international, national and local junctures. My neighbor, two houses up, is usually out in the morning working on the yard. When I talked with him Friday before the big weekend, I inquired as to his plans, "Doing the yard." After the festivities I re-inquired. He worked in the yard all weekend and during the eclipse. In fact, he went inside during the totality for a water break, gotta hydrate. The historical events still happened; my neighbor just chose that they were not correlated with his moments.

Ohio Underdeveloped

Ohio was granted its statehood and the War of 1812 fostered a security in Ohio that opened the door for migration and immigration. Yet, in the years that followed that war, Ohio, and especially Northeast Ohio, was still a comparatively unsettled wilderness. The local economy was a barter system, and agricultural surpluses were limited. Transportation



was undeveloped, there were few roads and those were "roads" if the weather allowed them to be passable. Portages still connected many waterways, just as they had long before any Irish, or Europeans for that matter, arrived in the Cuyahoga Valley. Many were focused on their yards, but the forces of history were at work, both nationally and internationally. The years immediately following the commencement of construction of the Ohio and Erie Canal altered or influenced nearly every aspect of local life.

The 1825 Canal Bill and the Canal Fund established eminent domain and funding for the canal. It was a structural adjustment in taxation and public works. The State of Ohio had even sanctioned a lottery for the first Monday of January 1808. That failed, with less than half the tickets being sold. As any good Catholic can tell you, can't have a 50/50 with just 50. Well, there were not enough papalists to support a raffle in 1808 Ohio. The canal in the Cleveland to Akron section immediately impacted local lives. Canal

contractors were paid in cash and in return paid their laborers in cash. That cash found its way to local merchants and the barter system was traded for cold hard cash.

Local industry related to the canal grew or was born. The area experienced the increased need for quarries, saw mills and white oak, stone masons, sawyers, carpenters, shipwrights and blacksmiths. Advertisements for workers were published in the east and on the soon to be finished Erie Canal.

The Irish were the bulk of that workforce. The Cleveland Herald, 7/22/1825, denotes the arrival of "the hardy sons of Erin." Those Irish were the start of a century of mass international immigration to America. They were also examples of national economic migration, following the canals.

The Cleveland to Akron section was opened on July 4, 1827. Urban population growth was already relatively substantial and the area was now commercially producing wheat and cattle. Property values increased almost three fold.

Canal Irish

There was a shortage of canal engineers, in Ohio and nationally. As a result, the initial sectional cost estimates were inaccurate. Incomplete elevational surveys, underestimating the cost of materials, and the need to adjust plans contributed to the general overages for the canal.

The completion cost of the canal was \$4,244,539.64. It was budgeted at \$3,081,880.93. The canal was subdivided into sections for contract purposes. There was not a shortage of Irish contractors.

Irish contractors included the names: McFarlan, O'Brien, McGuire, Whalen, Flinn, Doyle, Murphy, Keenan, McDonnell, McCarty, McKeever, McGinn, McGrotty, McMillian, and McNamara and Gallagher. It can be assumed, based in part on canal histories of neighboring states, that their crews were Irish as well. Please reference Jay Perry's article *The Irish Wars: Laborer Feuds on Indiana's Canals and Railroads in the*

1830s or Eileen M. McMahon's article *Canal Diggers, Church Builders: Dispelling Stereotypes of the Irish on the Illinois and Michigan Canal Corridor*.

It did not take long for the impact of Irish canal labor to affect the area. Urban population growth was already relatively substantial, and the area was now commercially producing wheat and cattle. Property values increased almost three-fold.

The last months of 1827 saw coal shipments to Cleveland. The Board of Canal Commissioners were boasting of positive economic growth and development in the state as early as 1831.

Cuyahoga County had roughly 1,500 residents in 1832, and by 1840, the population was closer to 6,000. In that same time period, assessed property values increased from 1.1 million to 3.2 million. The city of Cleveland shipping increased from 5.2 million pounds in 1832, to nearly 20 million in 1839.

Cleveland Commerce Developed

As commerce, industry and

housing experienced rapid growth, the banking industry had to keep pace. The Western Reserve Bank of Warren was an initial disbursing agent for canal work north of Akron.

Leonard Case left his position as president of the Western Reserve Bank to fill the same position at the newly re-opened (1832) Commercial Bank of Lake Erie. The Commercial Bank was opened in 1816 and Alfred Kelley was its president, also known as Mayor Kelley, and could have been known as "Canal Kelley." It closed after the Panic of 1819.

The bank was holding county tax collections by 1835 and was named a canal disbursing agent in 1836. Leonard Case, and his bank, extended loans to local real estate investors and to merchants. They were also cashing canal checks signed by Alfred Kelley.

The Panic of 1837 caused many of those loans to not be collected and the bank was overextended. The bank could not comply with new Ohio banking laws and its charter was not renewed after 1842.

Case Western Reserve

It was Leonard, Jr. and his brother who bankrolled what became Case Western Reserve. My uncle would call that "canal money." Canal money funded the industrialization of Northeast Ohio.

The Irish who built the canals, which in turn built Northeast Ohio in the 19th century, are often depicted as my neighbor is above, just labor working in the yard. Those Irish were not merely the labor that they sold.

The records of the early contractors on the canal are just one of many indicators that life was more complex than has been historically portrayed; we did own the banks, but our moments created events. It is the manifestations of the Irish presence that can still be seen today, and not just in University Circle. ●

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On this day in IRISH HISTORY

MAY

BY TERRENCE J. KENNEALLY

3 May 1933 - The Constitution (Removal of Oath) Act removes the oath of allegiance from the constitution of the Irish Free State.

6 May 2008 - On his last day in office, Taoiseach Bertie Ahern opens a new visitor centre on the site of the Battle of the Boyne in County Meath, along with First Minister of Northern Ireland, Revd. Ian Paisley.

7 May 1992 - Eamon Casey, bishop of Galway, resigns after it is revealed that he had fathered a son by an American woman, Annie Murphy.

10 May 1992 - In a referendum on Ireland membership in the European Community, almost five to one voted 'yes' - 1,041,890 in favor, 211,891 against.

18 May 1922 - During continued violence in Belfast, three Catholics are shot dead and three Protestants are shot the following day. Altogether, 44 Catholics and 22 Protestants meet with violent deaths in the city that month.

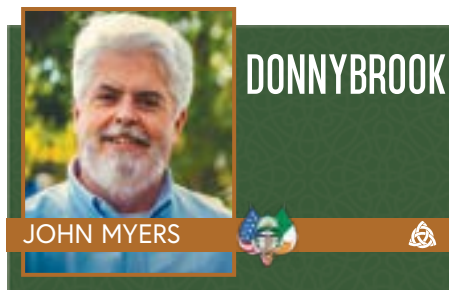
22 May 1998 - Referendum on the Good Friday/ Belfast Agreement: in Northern Ireland, over 70% voted in favour, whilst in the Republic of Ireland, the referendum on the agreement and on changes to Articles 2 and 3 of the Constitution resulted in 94% voting in favour.

24 May 1923 - The civil war ends when the new chief-of-staff, Frank Aiken, orders the IRA to dump arms.

27 May 1993 - President Mary Robinson makes a private visit to Queen Elizabeth II at Buckingham Palace, the first meeting of an Irish head of state with a British monarch.

28 May 2003 - James Plunkett (83), writer best remembered for *Strumpet City* (1969), set in the years leading up to and including the Lockout (1913), dies.

28 May 1970 - Former Ministers Charles J. Haughey and Neil Blaney and others are arrested and charged with conspiring to import arms and ammunition into the State.



DONNYBROOK

JOHN MYERS

Potato Western?

The term "Spaghetti Western" is familiar, but viewers of Liam Neeson's *Land of Saints and Sinners* may feel the need to coin the term Potato Western. While set and filmed in the stunning County Donegal countryside, Finbar Murphy (Neeson) echoes the themes of a classic Western. Of course, themes of lone ranger justice, protecting the homestead, a moral code beyond the law, searching soulfulness, bandits, true grit and riding off into the sunset are ultimately universal in nature.

The title is a play on the traditional description of Ireland as the Land of Saints and Scholars. Here the gimme line, by actor Jack Gleeson (Jeffrey Baratheon from *Game of Thrones*) is "ya gotta be a sinner before becoming a Saint."



Set in 1974, with *The Troubles* as the backdrop of the story, this fantastic ensemble of actors produces an entertaining thriller. In addition to Neeson and Gleeson, Kerry Condon (Angela's Ashes, *The Lieutenant of Inishmore*, Oscar nominated for *Banshees*); great character actor Ciaran Hinds (Oscar nominated for *Belfast*); and the always enjoyable Colm Meaney round out a bevy of talent. Popcorn worthy.

All was great fun, but little did I know that after my brief

Nice Party

Or so I thought. President Joseph Robinette Biden's White House St. Patrick's Day Reception was a grand affair, with great Irish music, plenty of refreshments, The Taoiseach, Sinn Fein and Unionist pols and a boatload of Kennedy's.



Taoiseach Leo Varadkar joins President Biden in the historic East Room on St. Patrick's Day 2024, just hours before his bombshell resignation.

Biden later took a pic in the Rose Garden with over 50 members of the Kennedy family, a not-so-subtle message to their brother and cousin, RFK Jr., that THE family is with the Scranton Irish candidate in the 2024 Presidential race. President Biden was most happy to celebrate the High Holy Day with an 'A' list of Irish Americans (I snuck in with the band), and seemingly most of Ireland's political establishment.

He shared many yarns that we have heard and fondly recalled his trip to the Emerald Isle last year, including his ancestral homeland in Mayo and Louth. I joined Ohioans such as AOH President Danny O'Connell from Y-Town, LAOH President Marilyn Madigan from Cleveland, St. Edwards Alum Carl Hughes and Washington Post columnist Mary Jordan and her husband Kevin Sullivan.

All was great fun, but little did I know that after my brief



Irish Northern Aids float in the Cleveland St. Patrick's Day Parade

conversations with the Taoiseach and with Sir Jeffrey Donaldson, DUP Party Leader, they both would be gone from their leadership posts within the week. Two political bombshells on the Island of Ireland in one week. The fallout will continue to evolve over time.

TIKTOK Taoiseach

Upon the unexpected resignation of Leo Varadkar, Simon Harris won over his fellow Fine Gael TD's (members of Irish Parliament) to assume the role of party leader and thus Taoiseach (Prime Minister). Assumingly, he also won over Fine Gael's parliamentary coalition partner, Fianna Fail.

Harris, proficient in the use of social media and as the youngest Taoiseach in the State's history (Varadkar was 38 when first became Taoiseach), earned the moniker of "Tiktok Taoiseach." He is a mere 37 years old, and hails from Greystones, a coastal community in County Wicklow, just south of Dublin. He grew up in a modest home and is married (Caoimhe Wade) with two children. Immediately prior to assuming Fine Gael leadership, he was the education minister, and before that, the Health Minister. He has a steep hill to climb with Euro and local elections scheduled in June and a national election likely this year, with his party at the bottom of the polls. He will have a equally hard road to climb to explain

his lackluster tenure as Health Minister, one of the policy areas of largest public complaint.

S.F. Responds

Not unexpectedly, opposition leader, Sinn Fein's Mary Lou McDonald, is calling for an immediate election, as Harris has no mandate from the public. McDonald was not shy in her comments regarding the new Fine Gael leader: "*Simon Harris wants to be the Taoiseach and if Micheal Martin and Eamon Ryan really believe their government commands the support of public, they should have no problem putting that to the people in a general election. I not only believe the people want a general election, I believe they would relish a general election and the chance to call time on a government that is tired, out of touch and out of ideas.*"

It's now friends, a time for a new government with energy and determination, a government of change that will roll up its sleeves and get the work done to sort out health, to ensure that young people can build a good life and a prosperous life here at home instead of being forced out by the repeated failures of Fine Gael and Fianna Fail. We need a government who will finish the business of 1916 and make the promise of the proclamation real in the lives of ordinary people. Our message is simple, call a general election and let the people decide."

Dodger Donaldson

'Sir' Jeffrey Donaldson played the character of the Artful Dodger in his high school drama production

of Oliver. It may have been foreshadowing as Donaldson, MP Lagan Valley, and his wife Eleanor face 11 criminal charges of non-recent historical sexual offenses, including rape. His wife was charged with aiding and abetting additional offenses.

Donaldson was removed as DUP Party Leader but remains as a member of the U.K. parliament (MP) in London. Donaldson 61, has served in the Parliament in London for over 25 years. He and his wife have been married for over thirty years and have two adult daughters.

Police say they acted upon a tip from March 7th, 2024. Interestingly, this was just after the Northern Ireland Assembly returned after a two-year hiatus called by Donaldson. The DUPsters were deeply divided over the return to Stormont. Odds are good that some very angry fellow Unionist was the one who dropped the dime.

Sir Jeffrey is a member of the Orange Order and was knighted by the Queen in 2016 for his service to the Empire. With local elections looming and a U.K. General election anticipated this Fall, timing was not good for the already divided Democratic Unionist Party.

Gavin Robinson, Deputy DUP leader, is expected to assume the Party Leader position and attempt to reach out to the Unionist voter. Sinn Fein, Dublin and Westminster all expressed (nervously) confidence that Stormont would motor on. •

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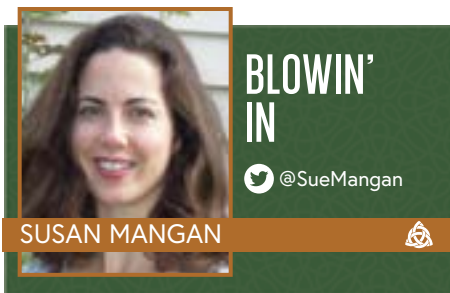


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The Garden in May

*"When I looked down from the bridge
Trout were flipping the sky
Into smithereens, the stones
Of the wall warmed me.*

*Wading green stems, lugs of leaf . . .
Over the soft fontanel
Of Ireland. . .*

*I'm out to find that village,
Its low sills fragrant
With ladysmock and celandine. . ."*

("May" by Seamus Heaney)

Soon asparagus will begin to push their violet heads through the detritus of late winter. Beneath spent blossoms dried and flaking like old parchment, a carpet of dwarf crocus rises mushroom-like heralding spring's arrival. Days continue to lengthen, spreading twilight shadows across the garden beds. Magic manifests upon fragrant magnolia



winds and apple blossom showers. Spring is our reward for patiently wading through the darkness of winter.

With great enthusiasm, the birds and beasts of nature usher in the change of seasons. Birdsong begins with May dawn and serenades the earth to sleep at dusk. Red-breasted robins begin to nest; apple blossom trees veil blue-speckled eggs from hungry hawks. A fragrant canopy indeed.

Rabbits burrow deeper into our spring pea patch to birth their kittens. Truth be told, it is a struggle every year to keep our English Springer Spaniel away from the den of the mother rabbit.

If the kittens survive and grow into young rabbits, they spring and hop more rapidly than our Lucy could ever run; each morning the race is on as dog chases the flash of cottontail over garden beds and dandelion covered lawn. A family of blue jays chirp a lively tattoo warning of Lucy's arrival.

Excited by the game, the squirrels tease my spaniel; lithely scampering atop the fence with the grace of tightrope walkers. Their antics are true diversionary tactics as Lucy changes course.

The smells of the earth are almost too much for our Lucy to bear. Nudging the ground with the desperation of an anteater, Lucy raises her snout to the scent of creatures that float like phantoms on the wind.

As May continues to warm, toads awaken from hibernation, hiding beneath clusters of English ivy. Lucy pounces about trying to catch the toads, but they are wise creatures, rolling belly-up, seemingly lifeless.

Lucy barks until we come running,

spade in hand, to scoop up the unassuming toad and place it safely through the hole in our old fence.

My love for nature began with summers spent on my Uncle's Missouri farm. With the curiosity of a springer spaniel, I would hunt for bullfrogs in the pond and stand statue still waiting for the evening chorus of crickets.

My mother would collect me from the farm and bring me back to my grandmother's farmhouse. Bathed for the night, I could not wait to throw my dirty clothes back on in the morning and set out for new adventures that awaited in the fields.

My mother and grandmother taught me how to identify the flora and fauna with simple games. Mim would hold my hand and we would swing around her mulberry bush singing the familiar nursery song, pausing to listen for birdsong in the old oak trees that shaded the farmhouse.

On quiet afternoons, my mother and I would walk to the Dairy Queen in town. She taught me to identify ditch lilies and daisies, fragrant roses and hollyhocks. We would collect clusters of dandelions to bring back to my grandmother.

When my own children were young, I would play the "guess the flower" game with them. Like my mother before me, I hoped that one day they would know the difference between a tulip and a daffodil.

On a recent holiday to Ireland, my grown son and daughter humored me by playing the "guess the flower" game as we walked along a quiet road near Clew Bay. Our footpath was thronged with towering pink foxglove and a host of otherworldly flora.

Although we could not identify all the flowers, we enjoyed the beauty of the moment. This mother's heart was truly full.

A child of May, I will raise my nose, spaniel-like, toward the blue skies. Delighting in the fragrance of blooming lilacs and apple trees, I will honor the country wisdom and simple delights that my mother, aunts, and grandmothers held dear.

I do not need to search for that village where lady's smock blooms, as it blooms in my heart each year. •

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1. What is the name of the revolutionary group responsible for the Phoenix Park assassination of Lord Kavandish and his understudy in 1882?
2. The seaside resort of Greystones is located in what county?
3. If you are riding the DART, what city in Ireland are you traveling in?
4. The father of actor Daniel Day-Lewis ?
5. True or False. Gabriel Byrne and Gay Byrne are one and the same person.
6. True or False. Achill Island in Co. Mayo is the largest of the Irish islands?
7. Under English rule, this county was known as King's County?
8. Clan Na Gael was founded in 1867 in what U. S. city?
9. 'Tiobraid Arann' is Irish (Gaelic) for what county?
10. What County Cavan town has the same name as a state in the United States?

1. The Invincibles
2. County Wicklow
3. Dublin
4. C.S. Lewis (Poet Laureat)
5. False
6. True
7. Offaly
8. New York
9. Tipperary
10. Virginia



High-intensity Exercise Can Reverse Neurodegeneration in Parkinson's Disease

High-intensity exercise induces brain-protective effects that have the potential to not just slow down but possibly reverse the neurodegeneration associated with Parkinson's disease, a new pilot study suggests.

But there has been no evidence that hitting the gym could create changes at the brain level. Now, a small proof-of-concept study involving 10 patients showed that high-intensity aerobic exercise preserved dopamine-producing neurons, the brain cells that are most vulnerable to destruction in patients with the disease.

In fact, after six months of exercise, the neurons had grown healthier and produced stronger dopamine signals. Dopamine is a chemical that helps brain cells communicate with one another.

"This is the first-time imaging has been used to confirm that the biology of the brain in those suffering with Parkinson's disease is changed by intense exercise," says Evan D. Morris, Ph.D., professor of radiology and biomedical imaging at Yale School of Medicine and co-principal investigator of the paper.

What Causes Parkinson's Disease?

Parkinson's disease is a neurodegenerative disorder caused by the misfolding of alpha synuclein

protein that is naturally present in our cells. The misfolded protein accumulates within neurons and damages them.

The dopamine-producing cells that are most affected reside in the part of the brain known as the substantia nigra, an area near the base of the brain. As these cells die off, the lack of dopamine creates the physical symptoms of the disease, particularly motor symptoms such as tremors and slowed movement. It's a gradual progression, and at the time of diagnosis, typically patients have already lost over half of their dopamine-producing neurons.

The most commonly available medication, levodopa, replaces the missing dopamine. While the drug is effective in alleviating motor symptoms, it does not prevent ongoing neurodegeneration and can cause undesirable side effects with long-term use, such as uncontrolled excessive movements [dyskinesia]. There is currently no cure for the disease.

Exercise Plays a Vital Role in Treating Parkinson's Disease

Previously, two well-designed

clinical trials have shown that engaging in high-intensity exercise, in which participants reach around 80% to 85% of their age-appropriate maximum heart rate three times a week for six months is correlated with less severe motor symptoms. These trials suggested that exercise really is disease-modifying in a clinical sense.

High-intensity Exercise Reverses Neurodegeneration

Following the six-month program, brain imaging showed a significant increase in both the neuromelanin and DAT signals in the substantia nigra. This suggests that high-intensity exercise not only slowed down the neurodegenerative process, but also helped the dopaminergic system grow healthier.

"Where we would have ordinarily expected to see a decline in the DAT and neuromelanin signals, we saw an increase," says Bart de Laet, Ph.D., associate professor adjunct in psychiatry and the study's first author. "We had hoped to see that neurodegeneration would

not progress as quickly or stop temporarily, but instead we saw an increase in 9 out of 10 people. That was remarkable."

The study highlights the importance of including an exercise regimen as part of one's Parkinson's treatment plan. The medications we have available are only for symptomatic treatment. They do not change the disease course.

But exercise seems to go one step beyond and protect the brain at the neuronal level. While this is an exciting finding, additional research will be needed to fully understand the neuroprotective effects of exercise. Parkinson's disease is the fastest-growing neurological disease.

By 2040, researchers estimate that over 12 million people worldwide will be living with this condition. The new study holds promise that exercise can help mitigate the enormous personal and economic costs the disease poses. •

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B.E.F.A.S.T: Stroke Prevention and Response

By **Dhruv Patel, M.D.**

Strokes are silent but deadly adversaries, claiming a life in the United States every four minutes, according to the CDC. They are a leading cause of death for Americans, sparing no age group, and striking with little warning. However, amid these alarming statistics lies a glimmer of hope: timely action can save lives. As a vascular neurologist, it is important to educate individuals on the signs of a stroke, how to respond if you or someone else is having a stroke, and what can be done to prevent it.

Recognize and Respond

Time is critical when recognizing and responding to a stroke. Acting fast can mean the difference



between life and death. During a stroke, a staggering 32,000 brain cells perish every second. To help you remember the warning signs of a stroke, think of the acronym B.E.F.A.S.T.

B – Balance: Sudden loss of balance or coordination.

E – Eyes: Vision trouble in one or both eyes.

F – Face: Facial drooping or numbness, particularly on one side.

A – Arms: Weakness or numbness in one arm.

S – Speech: Difficulty speaking or understanding speech.

T – Time: Time to call emergency services immediately.

If you or someone around you is experiencing the signs and symptoms of a stroke, call 911 immediately. The window for effective treatment is narrow. Patients who reach the emergency room within three hours of

experiencing their first symptoms often have better long-term outcomes, according to the CDC. Time, quite literally, equals brain.

Stroke Prevention

Contrary to widespread belief, strokes are not exclusive to the elderly. Over the past five years, there has been a trend of increased stroke occurrences among individuals aged 16 to 65. While age plays a significant role, other factors such as family history, high blood pressure or cholesterol, heart disease, diabetes, and lifestyle habits like smoking and excessive alcohol consumption contribute to the risk.

Prevention remains the goal. While some risk factors like genetics are beyond our control, there are other steps we can take to mitigate the threat. Take a proactive approach by managing cholesterol levels, controlling blood pressure

through medication if necessary, adopting a healthy diet, regularly exercising, and abstaining from smoking and excessive alcohol consumption. These lifestyle modifications not only reduce the risk of stroke but also promote overall well-being.

Those who have experienced a stroke face an increased risk of recurrence. Post-stroke care and prevention require a multifaceted approach and adherence to preventative measures. This might include rehabilitation, medication, and sustainable lifestyle changes to help limit the potential for another stroke.

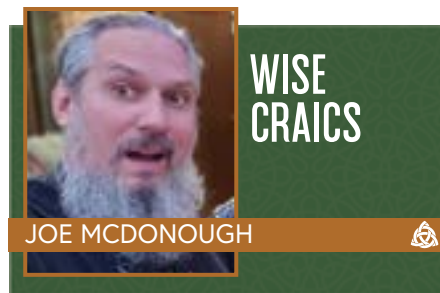
Strokes are formidable adversaries, striking indiscriminately and with deadly efficiency. Armed with knowledge and empowered to act swiftly, we can turn the tide in our favor. Prevention remains our strongest defense, and every individual has the power to minimize their risk through lifestyle modifications and vigilance.

By familiarizing ourselves with the warning signs and embracing a proactive approach to health, we can safeguard ourselves and our loved ones against the devastating impact of strokes. Remember, in the face of a stroke, time is of the essence – act fast, and save a life. ●

Dhruv Patel, M.D. is board Certified in neurology, vascular neurology, and neuromuscular medicine with certification in neurorehabilitation. He serves as the Medical Director of the Stroke Program for Mercy Health – Lorain and has more than two decades of experience in providing high quality and compassionate care in many subspecialties in neurology.

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WISE CRAICS

JOE MCDONOUGH

Job Hopper

As I kneeled in front of a cute blond in a short skirt with a pair of size 4 heels, I couldn't help but to have a quick glance at her knickers.

"Hey Cheeky!" she said as she gave me a playful kick. "I bet the only reason you work here is so you can have a peek up a skirt,

isn't it?"

"That's absolutely preposterous madam!" I said sternly. "I don't even work here."

Bad Kid

Teacher: "Kids, what does the chicken give you?" Student: "Meat!"

Teacher: "Very good! Now what does the pig give you?" Student: "Bacon!"

Teacher: "Great! And what does the fat cow give you?" Student: "Homework!"

Darwinian

A child asked his father, "How were people born?"

So his father said, "Adam and Eve made babies, then their babies became adults and made babies, and so on."

The child then went to his mother, asked her the same question and she told him, "We were monkeys then we evolved to become like we are now."

The child ran back to his father and

said, "You lied to me!"

His father replied, "No, your mum was talking about her side of the family."

A Way with Words

Paddy thinks he is so bloody smart; he told me an onion is the only food that makes you cry, so I threw a coconut at his face.

The Real World

Reaching the end of a job interview, the Human Resources Officer asked a young engineer fresh out of the University College Dublin, "And what starting salary are you looking for?"

The engineer replied, "In the region of \$125,000 a year, depending on the benefits package."

The interviewer inquired, "Well, what would you say to a package of five weeks vacation, 14 paid holidays, full medical and dental, company matching retirement fund to 50% of salary, and a company car leased every two years?"

The engineer sits up straight and says, "Wow! Are you kidding?"

The interviewer replies, "Yeah, but you started it."

A Wise Choice

In a Catholic school cafeteria, a nun placed a note in front of a pile of apples, "Only take one. God is watching."

Further down the line is a pile of cookies. A little boy makes his own note, "Take all you want. God is watching the apples."

Growing Old Together

There was an elderly couple who in their old age noticed that they were getting a lot more forgetful, so they decided to go to the doctor. The doctor told them that they should start writing things down, so they

don't forget. They went home and the old lady told her husband to get her a bowl of ice cream. "You might want to be writing it down," she said.

The husband said, "No, I can remember that you want a bowl of ice cream."

She then told her husband she wanted a bowl of ice cream with whipped cream. "Write it down," she told him, and again he said, "No, I can remember: you want a bowl of ice cream with whipped cream."

Then the old lady said she wants a bowl of ice cream with whipped cream and a cherry on top. "Write it down," she told her husband and again he said, "No, I got it. You want a bowl of ice cream with whipped cream and a cherry on top."

So, he goes to get the ice cream and spends an unusually long time in the kitchen, over 30 minutes. He comes out to his wife and hands her a plate of eggs and bacon.

The wife stares at the plate for a moment, then looks at her husband and asks, "Where's the flippin' toast?"

Traveling Abroad

An Irish husband and wife were driving through Louisiana. As they approached Natchitoches, they started arguing about the pronunciation of the town. They argued back and forth, then they stopped for lunch.

At the counter, the husband asked the waitress, "We're from overseas and before we order, could you please settle an argument for us? Would you please pronounce where we are very slowly?" She leaned over the counter and said, "Burr-r-gerrr Kiiing."

Do As Your Told

A bank robber pulled out a gun,

points it at the teller, and says, "Give me all the money or you're geography!"

The puzzled teller replies, "Did you mean to say, 'or you're history?'"

The robber says, "Don't change the subject!"

Shrewd Business

Two Irishmen are traveling to Australia. Before they leave home, one of their dads gives them both a bit of advice: "You watch them Aussie cab drivers. They'll rob you blind. Don't you go paying them what they ask. You haggle."

At the Sydney airport, the Irishmen catch a cab to their hotel. When they reach their destination, the cabbie says, "That'll be twenty dollars, lads."

"Oh no you don't! My dad warned me about you. You'll only be getting fifteen dollars from me," says one of the men. "And you'll only be getting fifteen from me too," adds the other.

Little Rascals

Two little boys were known troublemakers, stealing everything they could get their hands, even from the church. One day a priest stopped one of the boys and asked, "Where is God?"

The boy shrugged and the priest repeated, "Where is God?"

The boy ran out of the cathedral, crying to his home where he hid in a closet. Eventually his brother found him and asked, "What's wrong?"

The crying boy replied, "We're in trouble now! God is missing and they think we took him!" ●

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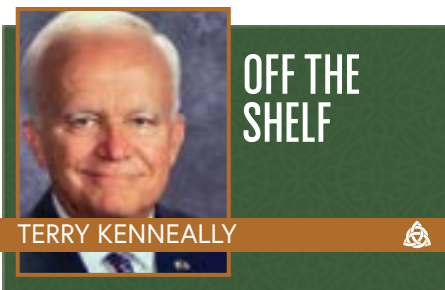
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Prophet Song

By Paul Lynch
A Oneworld Book ISBN-978-0-86154-686-2 309 Pages

Prophet Song, this years Booker Prize winner, is a harrowing and dystopian novel that visibly renders a mother's determination to protect her family as Ireland's liberal democracy slides inexorably and terrifyingly into totalitarianism.

The story is set in a version of contemporary Dublin. Eilish, the mother/protagonist, hears a knock at the door. There are two policemen outside who want to speak to her husband, Larry. "It is nothing to worry about," one of them says, though of course, Eilish starts to worry and questions her husband when he comes home.

Eilish is a biologist who works for a biotech company. Larry is the deputy general secretary of the teacher's union. They have four children and live comfortable middle-class lives with all of

the usual anxieties: battles with teenagers and fights with ageing parents. But the tone from the beginning has a suppressed intensity.

A "National Alliance Party" has recently taken control and passed an Emergency Powers Act. Larry, due to his position, is in the government's sights. A big demonstration is planned and Eilish doesn't want him to go, but he goes anyway and marches. What follows is a descent into chaos.

Lynch never explains the "emergency," which means it has no history. There are no opposing sides and the reader never learns what they're arguing about, apart from the rule of law.

The novel is difficult to follow. There are no paragraphs. Dialogue is not punctuated with quotation marks, which means that following a conversation takes some detective work.

Larry never returns from the protest march. Their oldest son, Mark, goes underground to escape being abducted into the "party." The second oldest son, Bailey, is injured in a bomb attack and is whisked away to a hospital.

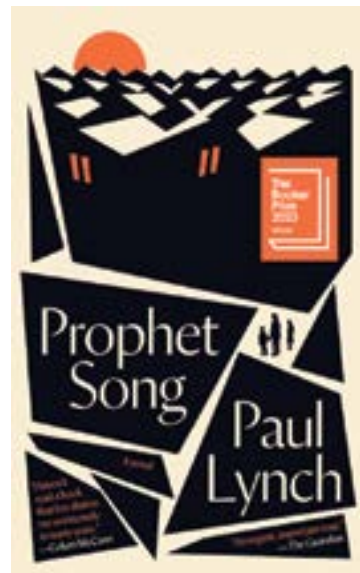
Eilish goes from hospital to hospital, trying to track down her wounded son while trying to contact her aging father to find a way out. A sister, Aine, who lives in

Canada, urges her to get out, but she and her two other children stubbornly refuse to leave until it is almost too late. Ireland is descending into total chaos and the border to the north becomes the only possible outlet for emigration.

Lynch does an excellent job of showing just how swiftly and possibly a society like Ireland's could collapse. This is a chilling study of

Ireland becoming a fascist state. This is a TOP SHELF and urgent, important read. •

Terrence J. Kenneally is an attorney and owner of The Kenneally Law Firm in Rocky River, Ohio. He received his Master's Degree in Irish Studies from John Carroll University and teaches Irish Literature and History at Elyria Catholic High School.



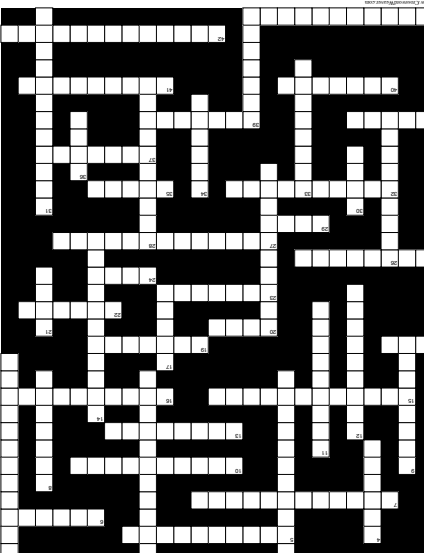
ACROSS

- 5 Bill Whelan best known for composing the music to _____ is born on 5/22/1946
- 6 _____ Plunkett is beatified by Pope Benedict XV on 5/23/1920
- 7 Amelia Earhart takes off from _____ for Ireland on 5/20/1932 becoming the first woman to fly solo across the Atlantic.
- 10 The Ancient Order of _____ in America is founded in New York on 5/4/1836
- 13 Eamon _____ is elected Taoiseach on 5/9/1932
- 15 The opening hours of Irish public houses are restricted by the _____ Liquor Act on 5/21/1927
- 16 _____ is sentenced to two years imprisonment for offences "against public decency" on 5/21/1895
- 18 On 5/31/1979 _____ 2 (now 2FM) makes its debut
- 19 Birth of Pierce Brosnan in Navan, Co. Meath on 5/16/1952
- 20 George _____, the world's first superstar footballer, is born in Belfast on 5/22/1946
- 22 On 5/31/1941 _____ bombs fall on North Strand, Dublin
- 23 The _____ Government recognizes the Republic of Ireland on 5/17/1949
- 24 Act of Parliament removes the right to _____ from Catholics on 5/6/1728
- 25 _____ Regional Airport at Knock, Co. Mayo (now Horan International) is officially opened on 5/30/1986
- 27 Arkle, the greatest Irish _____ of all time, dies on 5/31/1970
- 29 _____ [Eithne Ní Bhraonáin] is born in Gweedore, Co. Donegal on 5/17/1961
- 32 The _____ Agreement is overwhelmingly endorsed in referendums North (71%) and South (94%) on 5/22/1998
- 35 The first Irish _____ Festival is held in Dublin on 5/18/1897
- 37 The Dublin brigade of the IRA attacks and sets fire to the _____ House on 5/25/1921
- 38 Gay _____, becomes the 64th Freeman of the City of Dublin on 5/11/1999
- 39 The Irish Government restricts _____ adverts on 5/20/2003
- 40 The first aircraft lands at Rineanna Airfield now known as _____ International Airport on 5/18/1939



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- 41 _____ opens its first route commencing with a flight from Baldonnell to Bristol on 5/27/1936
- 42 _____, Thomas Clarke and Thomas MacDonagh executed by firing squad in Kilmainham jail on 5/3/1916
- 43 On 5/29/1798 in the first Battle of _____,

DOWN

- 1 The last barge on the _____ makes its final journey to Limerick with a cargo of Guinness on 5/27/1960
- 2 The Rev Ian Paisley and Martin _____ are formally appointed N. Ireland's first minister and deputy first minister on 5/8/2007.
- 3 Edward Daly, Michael O'Hanrahan, William Pearse and Joseph _____ are executed by firing squad in Kilmainham jail on 5/4/1916
- 4 Songwriter, entertainer and painter, Percy _____ is born on 5/1/1854
- 8 Actor Colin _____ is born in Dublin on 5/31/1976
- 9 Clocks and watches go forward one hour as the _____ Saving Act is introduced on 5/21/1916
- 11 The _____ is sunk by a German U-boat off the coast of Co. Cork on 5/7/1915
- 12 The City and Suburban Ground now known as _____, hosts a soccer match for the first time on 5/16/1896
- 14 Irish adventurer Colonel Thomas Blood steals the British _____ from the Tower of London on 5/9/1671.
- 17 On 5/28/1959 the _____ Tram, the world's highest and last operating open tram, makes its last journey
- 20 _____ dies at Long Kesh prison on the 66th day of his hunger strike on 5/5/1981
- 21 Birth in Roscommon of actress Maureen O'Sullivan Boyle who is remembered for her role as _____ on 5/17/1911
- 26 St. Brendan the _____, early transatlantic voyager, dies on 5/16/587
- 28 St. _____ establishes a community on Iona on 5/12/563
- 30 An Act by the British Parliament forbids the export of Irish _____ on 5/19/1660
- 31 An Act establishes the Irish _____ (police force) which will later become the Royal Irish _____ on 5/20/1836
- 33 Mary _____, President of Ireland from 1990 to 1997, is born in Ballina, Co. Mayo on 5/21/1944
- 34 Paul _____, better known as Bono, is born in Dublin on 5/10/1960
- 36 The Irish _____ Office is established by statute on 5/14/1784
- 39 The Irish _____, later to become the Royal Irish _____, meets for the first time on 5/3/1785

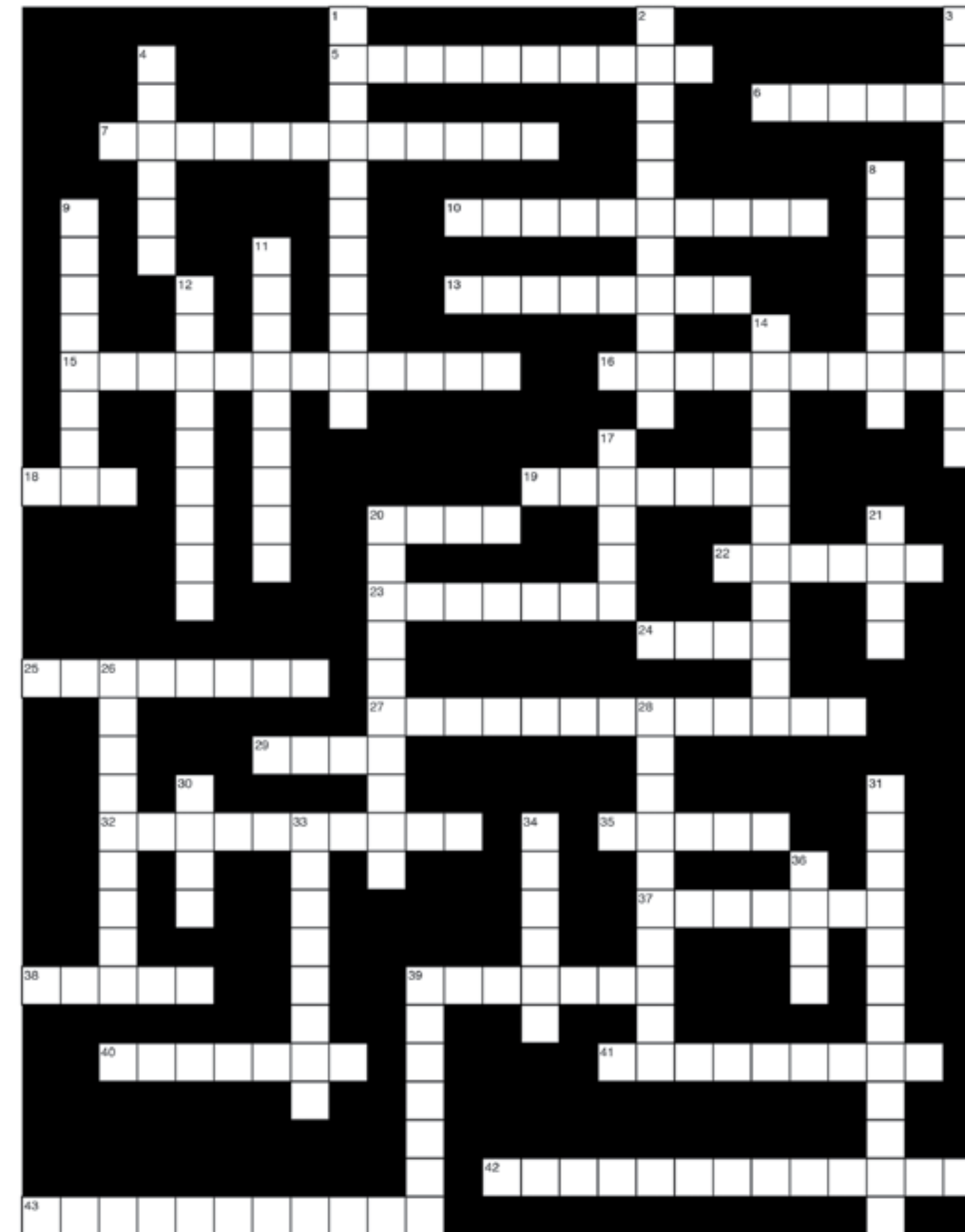
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