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Even the statues punch the air as crowds welcome home Olympic heroes



Miriam Lord

When the athletes looked out across the crowd, even the statues were punching the air.

From his plinth in front of them in the middle of O'Connell Street, big Jim Larkin's arms were raised aloft.

Everyone was celebrating when Ireland's Olympic heroes arrived home.

They got an enormous welcome.

The athletes deserved it. We deserved it too.

Hard to believe this was the first time Dublin laid on a civic reception for an Irish team returning from the Olympic Games. As yesterday's huge turnout in O'Connell Street proved yet again, we just love an excuse to don the green and have a national knees-up.

This exuberant lunchtime homecoming had all the colour and joyous fun of St Patrick's Day at the GPO, but without the street drinking and the drizzle.

For children, it was a brilliant way to round off the summer holidays - cheering their hearts out as their new (and not so new) sporting idols appeared onstage, holding up those gleaming Olympic medals and holding out a dream.

So many little girls and little boys in the crowd looking up to them and thinking: "That could be me, someday".



The Irish Times front page of the Olympics on August 13 leaves no doubt about the heroes of the day across the island of Ireland.

Skilled Olympians boost Ireland's sense of self

"What do you think of all of this Irish success at the Olympics? I asked a Dublin friend. 'Before we would have thought of ourselves as a third world country, not a part of the Olympics. We feel like we are really a part of it now' was Bill's revealing answer.

The Olympics were an amazing success for Paris, France, Ireland, and the community of nations, a moment of peaceful competition in a world preoccupied

Letter from Dublin
Timothy Kirk

with the ongoing war in Ukraine and the threat of an escalating war

in the middle east. Fears of disruption of the games themselves by terrorism were heightened on the day of the opening ceremony with an attack on the French railway system. Torrential rain came down on the city of light, but the show went on. And what a show it was. France staged an opening ceremony for the ages. Even preternaturally skeptical Parisians threw themselves into the wonder of it as the extravaganza crescendo-ed with Celine Dion singing Edith Piaf's "Hymne à l'amour" from the Eiffel Tower. Only the French would have the audacity to attempt such an over-the-top, city-wide spectacle, and to pull it off. France was rewarded by her Olympic athletes, especially Leon Marchand, a 24-year-old swimmer who won 4 gold medals.

The Irish 2024 Olympic team is the most successful in the 100-year history of independent Ireland by every



Rhasidat Adeleke, a sprinter dubbed "Ireland's fastest runner," blows a kiss back to her native Dublin after completing a competitive event in the Paris Olympics in August.

Photo taken from a televised video

measure. More Irish athletes competed in more events and won more total medals and more gold medals than ever before. Irish medalists hail from every province of the Island: Ulster, Munster, Leinster, and Connacht. In swimming, Daniel Wiffen from Armagh took gold and bronze, and Mona McSharry from Sligo took bronze. In rowing, Paul O'Donovan and Fintan

McCarthy from Skibbereen in Cork won their second consecutive gold in the two-man lightweight sculls. Rhys McClenaghan from County Down won gold in the pommel horse. Boxer Kellie Harrington from Portland Row on Dublin's northside brought home Olympic gold for the second time.

All this Irish Olympic success does not include the "Irish by proxy" medalists. The Irish lay claim to athletes from other countries whose names reveal their heritage. Swimming medalist Siobhan Haughey of Hong Kong is the grandniece of the former Taoiseach Charlie Haughey. American Ryan Murphy, Australian Kaylee McKeown, and Britain's Emma Finucane's names marked them as medalists from the Irish diaspora.

The most surprising element of the success is that the Irish are no longer shocked to compete and win against the world's best. Sport Ireland leaders are saying that the old concept of "Ireland punching above its weight" should be replaced by "Ireland punching on equal terms." Gold medalist Daniel Wiffen said prior to the games: "My goal is to win gold medals." Rhys McClenaghan said that every day since his loss in Japan during the covid-impaired games, he has thought about one thing: "Winning gold in Paris." In previous generations, these brash statements would have been considered evidence of "having notions" and better left unsaid, but the days of Ireland's more
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Kamala Harris for President

A Boston Irish endorsement

Rarely in the annals of the American republic have its citizens been presented with an electoral choice that could be termed existential, not only for our own shared destiny, but also for those of far-flung allies and untold millions for whom the global balance of power hangs in the balance.

Such is the case in 2024, when Americans must decide between a Republican ticket that has professed strong sympathies, if not explicit loyalties, to foreign strongmen and autocrats – proven and devoted adversaries of all democracies, including our own – and an incumbent administration sworn to sacred bonds of allegiance to like-minded Western republics, most of them crafted in the likeness of our own noble experiment in self-government.

For these reasons – and many more – we enthusiastically endorse Kamala Harris and her running mate, Tim Walz, for election on Nov. 5.

In the weeks since President Biden’s announcement that he would not seek re-election, and his swift and full-throated endorsement of his vice president to succeed him in the White House, there has been too-little public discussion about the foreign policy implications of this election. That is a testament to the grave domestic perils that we face and that, quite understandably, dominate our immediate impulses: The specter of civil unrest of the Jan. 6 variety, or worse, that could accompany a disputed result, whether or not such a dispute is even credible; the assault on civil liberties most egregiously waged and executed on women and their reproductive rights; the rupture of the Rule of Law personified by a former and would-be president who is a convicted, but unrepentant felon.

But what of the collapse of global order and the undermining of our own national security that a Republican victory portends?

Of all the mysteries inherent in this once Grand Old Party’s devolution over the last decade, none is more confounding than its abandonment of the post-World War II balance in which the United States is the main character and global leader. The Trumpist alternative is sometimes mistakenly characterized as mere isolationism, an echo of familiar “America First” refrains of earlier generations. But this MAGA iteration



Vice President Kamala Harris



Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz

is a more sinister brand that has its standard-bearers shamelessly embracing the likes of Russia’s Putin, Hungary’s Orban, and North Korea’s Kim Jong-Un.

The Trump doctrine would pacify Russia’s naked aggression in Ukraine, leaving a valiant, fledgling democracy to be wiped out by the war criminal next door. It would weaken or destroy 75-year-old alliances with European allies, who also happen to be among our most vital trade partners. It would have us walk away from the Pacific Rim at a time when China mobilizes and menaces its neighbors and North Korea’s dictator tests nuclear warheads. All await a second Trump term to get the green light to roll, unencumbered, into a new era of autocratic rule.

This matters, too, in the context of US-Ireland relations and the future of the Irish Republic, which this publication and its readers are particularly concerned with. “Irish America” is not a monolithic voting bloc by any means. But those of us tuned in closely to the homeland understand that the chaotic policies of the Trump years, his embrace of right-wing movements, including Brexit, and his undermining of NATO and the EU are all net losers for Ireland.

The Biden-Harris administration restored strong leadership in the form of Massachusetts’s own Ambassador Claire Cronin. Biden’s appointment of Joe Kennedy III as Special Envoy to North Ireland signaled a deft understanding of the importance of strengthening economic bonds in the interest of preserving peace and stability on the island. A Harris-Walz administration promises to continue these sound policies and ward off the destabilizing forces of Trumpism.

Finally, a note about President Biden, whose connection to Ireland and Mayo is well-documented and for whom we have a genuine fondness and appreciation. His decision to withdraw was the act of an American patriot. It was also the hard-nosed decision of a wise and wary world leader who can see the disastrous outcome of an American surrender to our own worst impulses. In stepping aside, he may have saved more than just our own democracy. He may have saved democracy writ large.

We respect President Biden’s choice of successor and have been delighted to see VP Harris not only rise to the occasion, but also inspire us with her skills, her acumen in law and justice, her personal story, and her choice of running mate. Biden and his camp picked Harris for good reason in 2020, and it paid off. We see her choice of Gov. Walz in much the same way.

Like many of our readers whom we have heard from in recent weeks, there is now authentic excitement for the Democratic ticket and an eagerness to defeat Trump and move forward beyond this unfortunate era in our nation’s journey.

On Nov. 5, we will be first in line to vote for Kamala Harris and Tim Walz.

About Boston Irish Magazine

The Boston Irish Reporter, an Irish American monthly newspaper published for 30 years, 1990-2019, circulated to subscribers and at newsstands throughout Boston and New England. BostonIrish.com

com is the online home of the Boston Irish Reporter. In 2020, the monthly publication was succeeded by Boston Irish, a quarterly magazine with a robust online presence at bostonirish.com

The newspaper and website are owned and operated by Boston Neighborhood News, Inc., a Dorchester-based company. Husband-and-wife team Ed and Mary Forry launched the publishing company in 1983, to provide their hometown with timely and insightful news, opinion and information about Boston’s largest neighborhood. The Reporter newspapers have won a number of awards for excellence in journalism, including from the New England Newspaper Association and UMass Boston Center for Media and Society; the Dorchester Reporter has twice been named Best Neighborhood Newspaper, and bostonirish.com was labeled “Boston’s Best Source” for Irish news and information..

Boston Irish is a companion with other titles owned by Boston Neighborhood News, Inc.: the Dorchester Reporter, Mattapan Reporter and the Boston Haitian Reporter.

More about the first 25 years of the Reporter newspapers may be found in a commemorative edition published in December 2008.



Boston College Magazine’s Summer 2024 edition contained a lengthy article on the state of local news coverage that featured a photo spread taken in the offices of The Dorchester Reporter. Written by Tom Mulvoy, BC Class of 1964, who has served as an associate editor and key advisor to The Reporter and Boston Irish since 2003, the story spotlighted the ownership Forry family’s role in managing community news publications in Boston’s neighborhoods, including Boston Irish and the weekly Dorchester Reporter. Shown above, from left: Reporter founder Ed Forry ‘69, co-publisher Linda Dorcena Forry ‘96, executive editor and co-publisher Bill Forry ‘95, and associate editor Tom Mulvoy ‘64. Photography by Lee Pellegrini for BC Magazine. You can read the full story online at bc.edu/content/bc-web/sites/bc-magazine/summer-2024-issue.

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 Boston Neighborhood News, Inc.,
 150 Mt. Vernon St., Suite 120, Dorchester, MA 02125
newsroom@bostonirish.com www.bostonirish.com

Edward W. Forry, Publisher
 Maureen Forry-Sorrell, Associate Publisher
 William P. Forry, Executive Editor
 Thomas F. Mulvoy Jr., Managing Editor
 Jack Conboy, Marketing Manager
 News Room: (617) 436-1222 Ads : (617) 436-5275
 Fax: (617) 825-5516 news@bostonirish.com

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Teaming up Boston Irish voters for Kamala and Tim

BY ED FORRY
PUBLISHER

It was 16 years ago, in September of 2008, that long-time Boston Irish leaders John and Diddy Cullinane pulled together a group to form a united effort to support the presidential candidacy of Barack Obama and his running mate, Joe Biden. I was invited to join an meet privately with Biden when he was in our city raising funds. We assured him of our support, and suggested ways to deliver positive messages about the Democratic nominees that would resonate with Irish Americans here and across the country.

The campaign was successful one for the Democrats, and in our view, it launched our fellow Irish American, Joe Biden on a wonderfully successful leadership role: eight years as VP and the past four years as POTUS. He truly has been a historic chief executive of our country.

In Irish politics, there's an adage about political slogans: Younger candidates can say, "Give a young person the chance," and their elders can say, simply, "Experience counts." But this year, many Democrats - officeholders and voters - were deeply concerned that the president's advanced age, hesitant public speaking, and stiff gait would jeopardize his bid for a second term. Then, in mid-summer Biden showed his patriotism by putting country ahead of personal goals by stepping aside to support a next-generation leader, Kamala Harris in her bid to become our 47th president.

In this edition, as *Boston Irish Magazine* announces our endorsement for this revised Democratic ticket, I am setting out to find ways to encourage others to join us in that spirit.

As a first step, I sent this note to a handful of friends in late August: "I plan to publish an endorsement of the Kamala Harris/Tim Walz ticket in the upcoming edition of *Boston Irish Magazine*. I want to add the names of others to proclaim our support as 'Boston Irish Voters for Harris/Walz'." Within hours of the email being sent, I received some enthusiastic replies:

"Count me in, Ed!" said former US Sen. Paul Kirk. "You can definitely add Sen. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.) to the list," Ed Markey told me.

"Please add John & Diddy Cullinane to the list. Every bit helps... Good that you are writing an essay as well. Kamala strikes me as a natural at this politics business... Also, great she chose Walz, and Joe did a Mount Rushmore exit for America. Of course, he didn't want to do it, but he just entered the history books. That's not a bad deal," wrote John & Diddy Cullinane.

"Yes, please add me to the list of Harris/Walz supporters," said Boston immigration lawyer John P Foley.

From New Hampshire came this reply: "YES - Parker House, Boston, Lowell, Kerry, Swiss, Irish," from Jerry Dunfey, co-founder of Dunfey Hotels International and founding president of Global Citizens Circle, confirming his Boston Irish bona fides. "Seeing segments of the Harris/Walz interview with Dana Bash on CNN more than convinces me that they are perfect for our time. Best wishes for all your good work."

From San Mateo, California, came words of support from a man whose daughter lives with her husband and children in Dorchester, whose son made football history in our town, and who spent a good part of his



US Senator Edward Markey with Vice President Kamala Harris.

life in Boston over the last 20 years: "You can certainly include me, Ed. Thank God Joe bowed out," wrote Tom Brady, Sr., chairman & principal, Thomas E Brady & Associates.

Others adding their names to our virtual "Boston Irish Voters for Harris/Walz" supporters: Frank Keefe, former state A&F Secretary, Hon. W. Paul White Former State Senator and State Representative, Maureen Eleanor Forry-Sorrell, Mary Flavia Tanner, Jim W. Hunt Jr., John J Madden of Mashpee, Sean P Moynihan, ("Very excited about this potential administration,") and Tim Kirk, a Bostonian now living in Dublin ("Yes, please add me to the list!")

I have been asking this "virtual task force" to come up with a good slogan for our effort. Others who agree can let me know: voter@bostonirish.com. I suggested this for a starting point for our discussion:

DOWN with the weird, UP with the joy!

Boston Irish Honors luncheon set for Friday, Oct. 25 at John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum

The 14th annual Boston Irish Honors Luncheon will take place on Fri., Oct 25, at the John F. Kennedy Library & Museum on Dorchester's Columbia Point peninsula. Inducted into the "Boston Irish Hall of Honors" that day will be:

- William M. Bulger, the longest serving president of the Massachusetts Senate and the former president of the University of Massachusetts.

- Bill Cleary Jr., a member of the US men's national hockey team that won the gold medal at the 1960 Winter Olympics, and for 30 years the head coach of the Harvard men's hockey team.

- Regina Quinlan Doherty, retired associate justice of the Massachusetts Superior Court, the widow of the Hon. Gerard Doherty, and a former nun in the Congregation of St. Joseph (CSJ) order.

"Boston Irish Honors is a unique annual program, acclaimed as Boston's premier ethnic Irish mid-autumn event," said Ed Forry, Boston Irish Magazine publisher. "Each October since 2010, some 400 Boston business, political, community, and social leaders have come together for a festive luncheon to honor meritorious families and persons who share our Boston Irish heritage, and to recognize their exemplary endeavors in public service, business, and overall community leadership.

"We plan each annual event to celebrate Boston's many estimable Irish men, women, and families in proud recognition of our own Irish heritage. For more than 35 years now, our publications have told the stories of Boston Irish individuals and families who share our common roots in Boston and Ireland, and we are proud to preserve and pass forward a magnificent ethnic heritage.

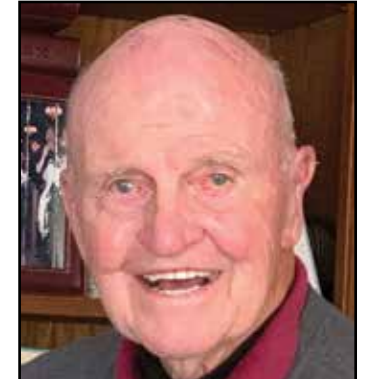
"This year, for the first time, the Honors Luncheon will be held at the John F Kennedy Library and Museum. Proceeds from the event help to support the



Bill Bulger



Regina Quinlan Doherty



Bill Cleary, Jr.

family-owned Boston Irish Magazine and BostonIrish.com, the region's leading chronicler of all things Irish American.

"In their personal and professional lives, Boston

Irish Honorees inspire us and our fellow citizens with their dedication to our community and our country."

Information about tickets and sponsorships is available at BostonIrishHonors.org

Boston Irish Hall of Honors 2010-2023

- 2023 - Vincent Crotty & Kieran Jordan, Gov. Maura Healey, Jim Rooney Family
- 2022 - Jon Cronin, Mary Swanton, Jerry York
- 2021 - Mary Sugrue, Joseph R Nolan Jr., Ed Forry
- 2020 - Cancelled due to Covid pandemic
- 2019 - James M. Carmody, Kathleen & John Drew, Grace Cotter Regan
- 2018 - Trevor McGill MD., Rev. Richard "Doc" Conway, Bob Scannell and Mary Kinsella Scannell
- 2017 - Tom Tinlin, Kevin Cullen, Anne Marie, Nora & Bill Kennedy Family
- 2016 - Jim & Mary (Cahill) Judge, US Sen. Paul G Kirk Jr, Kevin & Joe Leary Family
- 2015 - Margaret Stapleton, Mike Sheehan, BPD

- Commissioner William Evans Family
- 2014 - Katherine Craven, Boston Mayor Marty Walsh, the Burke Family of South Boston
- 2013 - Massachusetts Senate President Therese Murray, Gerry & Bob Mulligan Family, John P. Driscoll Jr. (posthumous)
- 2012 - US Rep Richard Neal, Brendan & Greg Feeney, Family of Mary & Bob Muse
- 2011 - Kathleen O'Toole, Massachusetts state Sen. Tom Kennedy, Families of Joe Corcoran, Jim Hunt, and Mark and Tom Mulvoy
- 2010 - US Rep. Ed Markey, John Donohue, Families of Jim Brett, Tom & Peg Geraghty, and the late Boston Mayor John B. Hynes



The Charitable Irish Society

Founded 1737

23rd Annual Fundraising and Silver Key Awards Reception



"With Good Will Doing Service"

Wednesday, October 23, 2024
6:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

UMASS Club, One Beacon Street, Boston, MA

The Society will honor two distinguished individuals
for their outstanding contributions to the immigrant community:



Maryann Casavant
Immigration
Coordinator Irish
Pastoral Centre



Mary Sugrue, C.E.O.
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Partnership

Tickets - \$175 per person. Reservations are required.

Payments accepted at the door.

RSVP: charitableirishsociety.org

**All proceeds raised at this event are used to aid immigrants in need.
The Charitable Irish Society is a 501(c)(3) organization**

Autumn medley: College football, a summer school, celebrity politics

Not for the first time, "Opening Day" in American college football was played in Dublin's Aviva Stadium. Georgia Tech and Florida State flew across the Atlantic to face off and some 27,000 of their followers accompanied them. The game itself was a thriller, with the Yellow Jackets, who have Co. Kerry-born David Shanahan on their roster, pulling off a 24-21 upset.

By any objective measure, the event was a tremendous success. My older son Seán, a huge football fan and Patriots diehard, thanks to his adoptive father, went along. He indicated that the atmosphere was electric and that there were no signs of trouble in the capital, which has unfortunately been the site of too much of it lately. In his own words, "there were Americans everywhere and they were loving it."

They surely did. An accounting firm estimates that this late summer Saturday was worth more than one hundred million euro to Dublin and the nation, given that scores of the travelling contingent went on tour. I encountered a group of them having a blast at Wicklow Golf Club.

Crucially, the visitors were not Bostonians or New Yorkers; lots of these southerners didn't have any Irish connections. Now, having seen this country's beauty and met its wonderful people, they will go home professing their grá for this place to family and friends who will add Ireland to their bucket lists. There will be further benefits from the Georgia Tech-Florida State clash that was watched by a massive TV audience in the US.

Most of the Irish enjoyed the event. But, sadly, some didn't and their pronouncements on the game and the disruption it undeniably caused were, to describe their criticisms euphemistically, ugly. The president of the Trinity College Dublin Students' Union posted on Twitter/X: "This is my idea of hell (yanks, the colour orange and sports)." Another opined that "Yank simps are just nauseating." And there were far worse remarks.

Of course, Twitter/X can be a cesspool. Yet the facts are that a not insignificant swath of the population in Ireland has little use for us and that this sentiment is more widespread due to vigorous opposition to US foreign policy in the Middle East and its essentially unwavering support for Israel as our close ally wages what is perceived near-universally here to be a grossly disproportionate, ghastly war on innocents in Gaza. It is equally a fact that this thinking is prevalent on the Irish left.

So yes, the relationship between our governments and our citizenries is, in many ways, stronger than ever. Be aware, though, that there is a vocal and growing minority wishing that wasn't the case.

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Conversely, it has been a privilege for me to be a director of the Kennedy



President Kennedy attends a reception and tea at his ancestral home, where his second cousin, Mrs. Mary Ryan, lives in Dungastown, Ireland. Pictured are Josie Ryan, Mrs. Mary Ryan, Mary Ann Ryan and guests.

Cecil Stoughton, White House/John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum in Dorchester photo

Summer School, an annual festival of Irish and American politics, history, and culture held in the Kennedy family's ancestral hometown of New Ross, Co. Wexford, for the past eight years. It has just concluded and we on the organising committee are basking in its glow.

The highlights of KSS 2024 included the hilarious impressionist Aidan Tierney, who assumed, in rapid-fire fashion, the voices and mannerisms of a number of well-known figures from the sporting, broadcasting, and political realms. He even impersonated yours truly, prompting my wife to say that it was better than the real thing! Attendees also heard from the current Taoiseach (prime minister), Simon Harris, who has to be one of the best communicators on the planet, and from former Taoiseach Enda Kenny, who regaled us with yarns from his five decades as a member of Dáil Éireann (Irish parliament).

It was a very special occasion that the speakers and the spectators alike relished, based on their unsolicited feedback. The planning for 2025 has already commenced. If you are aiming to be in Ireland at the end of August, please do get in touch and join us. I guarantee you won't regret it.

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It is natural, in that the 45th and possibly the 47th POTUS was the star of "The Apprentice," that discussions of celebrity politics typically begin by focusing on the land of my birth. That said, high profile and usually well-heeled individuals pursuing elected office isn't



a uniquely American phenomenon. Here in Ireland, a plethora of politicians became household names before they appeared on a ballot paper. For instance, Jack Lynch, Taoiseach from 1966 to 1973 and 1977 to 1979, was a brilliant hurler and Gaelic footballer for Co. Cork prior to entering politics.

Recently, famed ex-news anchor and Connemara native Gráinne Seoige announced her intention to seek the Dáil seat in the Galway West constituency being vacated by Éamon Ó Cuív, who has served in the parliament since 1992. Seoige's bid to garner a Fianna Fáil party nomination has taken most of us keen onlookers, who never had an inkling that the Irish language advocate with Boston links had any interest in politics, by complete surprise.

Seoige seems to be going about it the old school way: phoning and meeting the grass roots to persuade them of her capacity and credentials. It does throw up a question. Is it fair for an untested celebrity to parachute in and bypass the city and county councillors who

have been doing all the tough, often unrecognised work in their local areas?

I don't have a satisfactory answer. I believe it is a decision for Fianna Fáil initially and then, if Seoige is ratified, for the residents of Galway West. Frankly, in a context in which dozens of Irish parliamentarians are declining to run for re-election - owing in large part to their frustration with a 24/7 job that increasingly entails the incessant online abuse. I am only glad that talented women and men, regardless of their background, are still willing to put themselves forward.

Good luck to Gráinne Seoige and to her fellow prominent media personality, Alison Comyn, who is standing for Fianna Fáil in Co. Louth.

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Lastly, the eyes of the world will be on the US until November 5. All elections are vitally important, but this one matters perhaps more than any other in living memory. I urge readers to consider that when voting. And I don't write as someone who is a big liberal or who is particularly enamoured of the Harris/Walz ticket. I issue this plea because I love America and am terrified by the prospect of a second Trump presidency.

Larry Donnelly is a Boston born and educated attorney, a law lecturer at the University of Galway and a regular media commentator on politics, current affairs and law in Ireland and the US. Twitter/X: @LarryPDonnelly

Skilled Olympians boost Ireland's sense of itself

(Continued from page 1)
modest ambitions "Ah, sure, lookit, we'll try our best" are gone. During a seven-day stretch Team Ireland won a medal every day.

Ireland could have won even more medals but questionable judging in boxing, bad luck, and underperformance resulted in disappointments. Runner Ciara Mageean, who had won gold at the European championships in the 1,500 meters and was favored to medal in Paris, had to withdraw with an Achilles injury. Golf greats Rory McIlroy, Shane Lowry, and Leona Maguire underperformed. Equestrian hopefuls just missed the podium and there were two fourth place finishes on the track.

Team Ireland's confidence at the Olympics is representative of Ireland's growing assuredness in all areas of human endeavor, from politics, business, academics, medicine, cinema, music, literature, and more.

In geopolitics, Ireland stood boldly with Norway and Spain to recognize Palestine as a state over the objection of her largest benefactor, the USA. In film, Cillian Murphy won the Oscar for best actor for "Oppenheimer" and the "Quiet Girl" was nominated for best foreign language film. Colm Toibin published a new best seller and Hozier released a new hit album. Even the humble Irish admit that Ireland is indeed "having a moment" as acknowledgements of Irish excellence seem to be everywhere.

Victory has not extinguished the Irish instinct for humility. After winning their second consecutive gold medal, rowers O'Donovan and McCarthy flew to Dublin unannounced. They planned to buy bus tickets back home to Cork but met a fellow Corkman on the flight who offered to give them a lift home. The O'Donovan brothers gained worldwide fame in 2016 at the Rio games with "hilariously Irish" interviews explaining the strategy of their sport is to "pull like a dog." Paul and brother Gary O'Donovan won silver in Rio and Paul went on to win gold in Tokyo and now Paris with McCarthy. When asked about becoming the first Irish Olympian to win medals in three Olympics, Paul said, "It was a fluke. Maybe it's just that I'm getting old, been around too long."

Some sociologists attribute this surge in achievement to the processing of intergenerational trauma. Kathy Scott of Scoil Scairte said, "They say with



Irish fans young and old welcome their Olympic heroes at a first-ever homecoming event in front of the GPO. Photo courtesy Tim Kirk

trauma, that generation one is mute, generation two realizes their parents were mute and they've no emotional coping skills, and generation three does something about it." Maybe Ireland is now in the third stage.

There is probably some truth to that theory, but I think there is a simpler explanation: resources and investment. The talent of the Irish people in athletics was always there but it was either channeled to indigenous GAA sports or undeveloped; the barriers to entry into Olympic sports were financial. Simply stated, to compete in swimming, track or gymnastics, a country needs swimming pools, modern tracks, gyms, coaches, and programs. Until very recently, they did not exist in Ireland, another legacy of Ireland's history of colonial wealth extraction. In the days since the closing ceremony, Minister of Sport Thomas Byrne has announced expanded funding for sports.

BostonIrish readers will appreciate the effect of the lack of athletic resources in Ireland by considering a comparison. Think of the names of Boston's Olympic ice hockey greats. The legendary Cleary Brothers, or 'Miracle on Ice' heroes Jack O'Callaghan and Jim Craig probably come to

mind. Anyone who watched, played, or coached youth, high school and college hockey in Massachusetts will recall the ubiquitous shamrock stickers on helmets, or permanently emblazoned on shoulders or hips. The potential among "the Irish" to play hockey at the highest level was always there. After the Clearys' glory days and during the Bobby Orr era, hockey rinks were built everywhere in Massachusetts as human potential was matched with investment and hard work.

By contrast, when we first moved to Ireland, I googled 'rinks nearby.' I was disappointed to discover that the exact number of hockey rinks in the Republic of Ireland was (and still is): zero. The one rink on the island of Ireland is in Belfast. The processing of intergenerational trauma might have something to do with Ireland not having home-grown hockey stars, but the obvious reason is a lack of resources and investment.

Ireland's rising self-assurance needs to be bolstered by ambitious investment in the country's people: schools, hospitals, housing, transportation and green energy infrastructure, and sports facilities (maybe even a rink or two!). Ireland still needs everything, everywhere, all at once.

The largest barrier for the new wealthy Ireland is now not financial but psychological. The Celtic Tiger boom and bust left a legacy of governmental timidity on public investment. There is a sense that Ireland "lost the run of itself" and squandered public money with failed, white elephant projects. The fatalistic fear in Ireland is that if public investment is too aggressive, the money will dry up, housing estates will be left half-built, and another generation of young Irish people will emigrate.

The bogeyman of emigration is always close to the surface. Ironically, while the specter of emigration is still present, immigration to Ireland has emerged as a larger and more divisive issue. Emigration still happens: an average of 50,000-60,000 Irish people is predicted to leave per year through 2027, driven away by the high cost of living, especially housing. Immigration to Ireland has been led by refugees and asylum seekers. Over 140,000 Ukrainians have arrived since the Russian invasion of their country. Refugees from Iraq, Afghanistan, Somalia, Yemen, Palestine, Sudan, Syria, and beyond continue to arrive. In addition to refugees, hospitals actively recruit nurses and doctors from India, the Philippines, and Pakistan while immigrants

from Brazil or Nigeria choose Ireland.

Large numbers of black and brown people arriving from the "global south" is a new phenomenon for Ireland, and while racism is a new import, it does exist in Ireland. It is not structural, systemic, or widespread but it's here and when combined with pockets of economic deprivation and far-right misinformation spread by social media, the result has been some ugly incidents of arson, intimidation, and lawlessness. Anti-immigrant sentiment is far outweighed by the voices of inclusion, but bad actors have an outsized impact.

A special riot police force has been formed in Dublin to confront far-right agitation but the long-term solution to these problems is not complicated. Just as building world class athletic programs requires sustained investment and hard work, so, too, with nation building. Ireland needs to continue to invest in itself, and in all of her people with the confidence and pace to build an Ireland for 10 million by mid-century. Ireland is not "full," as the far-right claims. In fact, the island is one of the least densely populated countries in Europe, still far below pre-famine levels. Ireland's leaders need to not only love Ireland but also to believe in Ireland and invest in it.

One of the brightest stars of the Irish Olympic team is Rhasidat Adeleke. Born in Tallaght, Co. Dublin, to Yoruba parents from Western Nigeria, Adeleke has become a symbol of the new, diverse Ireland. Just 21 years old and at her first Olympics, the 6-foot-tall Adeleke came in 4th in both of her sprint events. She is the first Irish female sprinter to qualify for an Olympic final. Expressing both her disappointment and confidence, she said "I did not come here to participate. I did not come here to make the finals. I came here to win." She has vowed to return to the Olympics in Los Angeles. Reports of crowds glued to TVs in country pubs cheering for Adeleke were almost as inspiring as her impressive performance.

The Irish are not given to boasting that they are "number one" or "exceptional" or "indispensable" to the world. But they do have a deep pride in being Irish. In 2024, the signs are everywhere that Ireland has taken its place on the world stage and is, in every sense, "a part of it."

Generational churn keeps Irish sports alive in St. Brendan's

BY CASSIDY MCNEELEY
DORCHESTER REPORTER

The St. Brendan's Gaelic Athletic Club-Boston, founded in 2008, resembles a family – one big Irish family, that is.

The youth club offers both hurling and football, but most of the athletes prefer the latter. Gaelic football is an Irish team sport played between two teams of 15 players, including a goalkeeper, six backs, two midfielders, and six forwards.

During each 60-minute match, teammates work to score on the opposing goalkeeper by kicking or punching the ball into the other team's net for three points, or between two upright posts above the net for one point.

Though the game is physical and competitive, the St. Brendan's Club encourages children and teens in and around Boston to play and enjoy Gaelic games regardless of ability. More importantly, the club does this in an environment that prioritizes fun, friendship, personal growth, and lifelong participation.

That's why it has become a generational organization.

Chris McGillicuddy, one of the club's founders, moved to Boston in 1986 when he was 25 years old. Having left behind his own amateur sports career in Ireland, he introduced his children to Gaelic football in the Irish Sports Youth League (ISYL) in Canton.

"I got involved with my son. He originally played at ISYL and then we founded St. Brendan's because the travel from Dorchester was a lot with the afternoon traffic," said McGillicuddy. "We went to St. Brendan's church and got a blessing from the principal for the St. Brendan's team and then we got this field secured and it moved along from there."

It has been 16 years since McGillicuddy and his co-founders, Frank Hogan and Richie Hanberry, started the club, and participation rates are higher than ever.

"We have about 180 kids registered this year from U6 through U18," said club co-chair Brian McLaughlin. "The divisions are every two years. We have enough kids in some of the younger divisions to have two or three teams in each age group."

Practices take place every Tuesday and Thursday at Pope John Paul II Park in Dorchester, beginning at 6 p.m. In the winter the teams move their practices indoors at the Union Point Sports Complex in Weymouth.

Like McGillicuddy, McLaughlin's involvement in the organization stems from his children who now play in the U14, U12, and U10 divisions.

"Five or six years ago, all three of my kids played hockey and one of the other boys played Gaelic football and hurling at the club and they invited us down one Sunday afternoon," McLaughlin recounted. "The kids really took to it; the coaches were great, the parents were great, other families were involved. It was a lot of fun."

It only took the McLaughlins one practice to feel the sense of camaraderie that exists in the club. This same community has continued to be especially important for many Irish immigrants, including U12 co-ed football coach Jonathan Byrne.

"I always say when I moved to Boston it was home from home, you were immediately involved in a community, a lot of people with the same background," said Byrne, originally from Donegal. "When I had kids, it was great we had a program to throw them in. It was nice to get involved and have them know a little bit about their Irish culture."

Byrne, also the club treasurer, has three children who play for St. Brendan's. This season he is coaching his son Noah, who plays halfback.

"Boston is a very diverse community, lots of different people with different backgrounds," Byrne said. "I think it's key to people's identity that the Irish kids, whether they moved here, first generation, second generation, that they have something that kind of ties them back to what their Irish culture is."



Five out of the six Boyce children already play for the St. Brendan's Gaelic Athletic Club-Boston. The youngest, Margot, is expected to join them on the field in a few more years. Cassidy McNeeley photos



U10 and U8 athletes were full of smiles even after an hour-and-a-half of practice under the hot July sun.



Ava (left), Bevan (center), and Caitlin (right) started with St. Brendan's when they were just six years old. Over the last decade, they have paved the way for the club's next generations of female athletes.

One player who was born in the US but formerly lived in Ireland is Noah's teammate, Anna, who plays both Gaelic and hurling. "I moved here from Ireland six years ago," she said, "and we found this club 'cause it's near where we live."

Playing the Gaelic games connects Anna back to the community she formerly called home. Now, when her friends at school ask the 12-year-old what sports she plays, she jokes, "It's an Irish thing; you wouldn't get it."

Although some kids at school might not "get it," there are plenty of female players who came before Anna who could. This includes St. Brendan's Junior Ladies players Bevan, Caitlin, and Ava. All three have

grown within the club for the past ten years.

"We've been playing since we were six years old at the U6 level. The three of us were the original ones and then our team has expanded. So now we have a full girl's junior ladies' team which is amazing," said Bevan, 17.

Caitlin added: "All of us have grown up together so it's kind of like a sisterhood. We're all like a family here anyway 'cause everyone knows everyone. It's a good community."

After being with the program for more than a decade, the young women have not only become good athletes, but exceptional role models for younger girls like Anna.

"When we were younger, once you got to 18 there was nothing," said Ava. "Even a lot of girls would stop playing at U14, U16 because there was nothing to work toward. But now that we have this team at the junior level, and eventually senior, the little girls will keep playing and work up the ranks."

Bevan agreed. "Us continuing to play helps us build the program up. Now we have so much fun with the all-girls team. It helps boost the younger girls to see and try and reach us."

Though Bevan, Ava, and Caitlin are kind, helpful leaders, as soon as the match begins, they become fierce competitors.

Since establishing their St. Brendan's Junior Ladies team last year, the girls have dominated many major tournaments. They plan on continuing to do so for the rest of the summer, including when they travel to San Francisco at the end of this month to compete in the North American Finals.

Noted Junior Ladies' coach Hudi Mc Kenna: "Everybody in this club now looks up to them girls, they've set themselves on a pedestal. They've won a lot of stuff. It's not all about winning but it makes it easier for when kids see it to keep it going."

Like the other coaches in the club, Mc Kenna once had a career of his own. He now hopes that as a coach he is passing down some of that knowledge. "It's our national game and we want to keep it going as long as we can." Mc Kenna told The Reporter. "It's really good to give some of your knowledge down. I've learned from a lot of good coaches throughout the years and hope, please God, that the players will learn a little from me."

As each coach shares elements of the game with the players, those players in turn pass down what they've learned to their younger siblings. Many players, including Bevan, Ava, and Caitlin, have brothers and sisters within the club, but the Boyce family seem to have the lead on having the most athletes on the field at one time.

The five kids currently playing are Liam, 16; Fionn, 15; Brayden, 10; Adelaide, 9; and Cormac 6. In a few short years, the youngest of six Boyce, Margot, now 10 months old, will be repping the blue and gold, but then in a jersey of her own.

As siblings, cousins, friends, and neighbors train and compete together, older generations stand smiling along the sidelines. "It's fun seeing parents and grandparents come over and visit, watching their grandkids who were born in America learn the games that they grew up playing," said McLaughlin.

When these children age out and move on to senior football, another generation of Irish athletes will emerge. One of them will be yet one more McGillicuddy.

"Next year, another Christopher McGillicuddy is coming in. My grandson, he'll be four years old," said club founder McGillicuddy. "His father started with St. Brendan's and now he's coming next year. That's what the neighborhood's about."

For more on the St. Brendan's Gaelic Athletic Club-Boston, – and an exclusive video produced by Connor Nee of Connor Nee Media for the Dorchester Reporter – see DotNews.com.

Developer sees Dot's iconic stock as key to filling city's housing needs

By SETH DANIEL

DORCHESTER REPORTER

Sean George loves a good three-decker. In fact, he and his business partner, Darren Maguire, are so enamored of the signature Dorchester housing stock that they have built one on Meetinghouse Hill, with another under construction on Morton Street.

George, who emigrated to Boston from Ireland in 2015, has become a vocal proponent of using the three-decker as one means to address the city's shortage of affordable housing.

"Three-deckers are great from a builder and construction perspective," said the Jones Hill resident who spoke to The Reporter outside of the house that he and Maguire are wrapping up on Morton Street. "You can build a solid, attractive three-family for \$1 million."

Starting last year, George took to social media – mainly Twitter/X – to chronicle the journey of the Church Street project on Meetinghouse Hill, which filled a vacant lot that had housed a three-decker before it was "knocked down by the city in the 1990s," according to George.

"We just tried to recreate what once sat on Church Street," he said. "During design and presentations, we wanted to build a narrative that we could rebuild a part of Boston's history – the three-decker. New housing doesn't have to look like a spaceship from Interstellar."

George, who grew up in Dublin and earned a degree in business before moving to Boston, likes to use the word "spaceships," a term he has adopted after hearing Dorchester neighbors describe the boxy, steel-clad residential buildings that have proliferated in city neighborhoods in recent years.

He landed his first construction job while playing Gaelic Football in Moakley Park. It was there that he met Patrick Hayden, owner of Haycon, a contracting company based in the South End. After time spent "sweeping and picking up trash" on company sites, George wanted to get more experience. Soon, he discovered that by mastering Boston's complicated permitting labyrinth, he could add real value to other developers' plans.

He became – and still is – a fixture at 1010 Massachusetts Ave., the building that houses the city's Inspectional Services Department (ISD) and offices

where all permitting for building, zoning, and the like is approved. He started his own company, Dunmoe Consulting, to advise builders on their projects – and in so doing he saw that three-deckers could become his forte.

Now that he and Maguire have set out to build as many three-deckers as possible, they naturally started in Dorchester.

The city's Mayor's Office of Housing, it seems, agrees with them on the structure's housing value. The Wu administration launched the 'Future Decker' program last year as an effort to adapt three-deckers for future building projects in the city.

"From a construction standpoint, not much can go wrong," George says. "It's three stories and so that cuts down on things like sprinklers and there's no elevator. It's hard for the construction process to get away from you. It's all very predictable and you just have to be organized, and you can move fast."

George's pitch won over neighbors on Meetinghouse Hill. In addition to the three-decker there and the one in offing on Morton Street, he's now going through a community vetting process to build another one on Bird Street in Uphams Corner.

"Coming into the neighborhood meeting [on the Hill], we were surprised when we

got a good reception because we were doing a three-decker and many of the other projects they reviewed were bigger and described as being like a spaceship," George said. "They like the three-decker; they want something that fits in."

Jennifer Johnson, of Meetinghouse Hill Civic, was president of the organization at that time, and is now vice president. She said all the members liked his project.

"I would say most of us at Meeting House Civic were surprised at the hoops he had to go through to build a three-decker on an empty lot in a neighborhood that is full of three-deckers," she said. "I think this is one of the things where the zoning codes should be changed in these neighborhoods so three-deckers can be built as-of-right, with certain exceptions for green space related to flooding concerns... We were very happy for once to be able to say, 'yes' to a project that we felt really should be as-of-right."

Johnson noted that permitting difficulties only raise developers' costs, which they pass on to renters and prospective buyers and contribute to making housing unaffordable. "We have to find a way to get out of this doom loop," she said.

George, of course, believes he has found it with the three-decker – provided the city



Dorchester's Sean George has branched out from his consulting company to begin developing properties bolstered by the belief that the traditional three-decker style could be the newest thing in housing – if permitting were easier to get done. Seth Daniel photos

can make some common-sense changes. He's not shy about making his thoughts public on his social media feeds, and many of his followers chime in with similar positions.

"A lot of guys in the smaller

space say, 'I'm only doing 4 units, but I should instead find a site and go 30 units,'" George said. "It's the same amount of time because of permitting and you get a bigger reward at the end with 10 times the units... From my perspective, if the city really wanted to hurry things up, they could make it easier to get going on a three-family that fits on the street. Make it quick to make it fit."

Meanwhile, he and his partner are on the lookout for other sites where they can move fast, be honest with neighbors, and build three-deckers.

"I don't pull the wool over anyone's eyes," he said. "I build three-deckers and what I say I'm going to do is what I end up doing... I'm not going in to try to shove 10 pounds of into a two-pound bag. I understand the frustration from a neighbor's perspective. If the numbers don't work and you went out and paid too much for it, that's not your neighbor's fault."



The three-decker on Church Street in Meetinghouse Hill was the company's first attempt at "building what was there." It got a great reception from neighbors who were happy he wasn't building "another spaceship" in the neighborhood

Following Matthew Sheehan's journey with Chicago's Hounds on his J-1 Visa

On the J-1 Intern visa with Rian, Matthew Sheehan kicked off 2024 in Chicago, working with the Chicago Hounds, a professional rugby team competing in Major League Rugby (MLR), North America's professional rugby competition.

As an assistant performance analyst Intern, Matthew dived into the day-to-day activities of the Hounds and their team of analysts. Before the season started the Hounds trained every day, but once the season began the routine adjusted to accommodate game schedules.

This routine involved training, rest days, lighter days leading up to matches, and treatments. The first day of the

week after a game is usually particularly intense. Matthew collaborated with the analysts to review stats and reports, going through everything in detail to regroup and refocus for the upcoming week.

Throughout the week, the team would complete work outs and reviews of previous games. Matthew would record all their practices, training sessions, and video analyses, which he and the analysts upload by the end of the work day.

For home games, Matthew would use extra cameras to capture the action, providing footage that broadcast cameras often miss. Although he did not get to travel with the team for away games, working with a newer and smaller team like the Chicago Hounds gave him the opportunity to take on a wide variety of tasks and gain valuable experience.

Matthew aimed to "get a good understanding of what it's like to be in a professional environment" during his J-1 year. While his primary focus has shifted, he appreciated the Hounds' support in helping him develop his skills. As Matthew enters his final university year in September, he has a job lined up alongside his studies working with a team back home. He plans to bring back the skills and knowledge he acquired in the US, especially in communication and teamwork among coaches. His experience in Chicago will enhance his contributions both during the completion of his academic journey and as he advances in his professional career.

Matthew found the support from Rian especially helpful on his J-1 journey, with plenty of emails and access to groups in Chicago. Although he faced the normal struggles, the support network from other J-1s and the Irish community was invaluable.

Coming from a rural area of Ireland, Matthew found Chicago's diverse and bustling environment refreshing. Reflecting on his experience there, Matthew has a few pieces of advice for future J-1s. He advises future J-1s to do some research before arriving and not to leave plans to the last minute. He emphasizes the importance of making friends and cherishing those friendships. While working with the Chicago Hounds, he also played rugby for an amateur team, the Chicago Lions. "Do as many things as you can," he advises.

When asked about the highlight of his time in the States, Matthew immediately mentioned St. Patrick's Day in Chicago, with the river dyed green and the vibrant parade. He also enjoyed watching rugby and meeting fellow J-1 participants. The main takeaway from Matthew's J-1 experience is the importance of getting involved and meeting people. Whether through sports or other interests, he says this "makes life easier" and "more welcoming", especially for those going abroad alone.



Working for a professional team and playing for an amateur team, Matthew's time in the US was truly all about rugby!



For fun, Matthew joined a rugby team while in Chicago. Go Lions!

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SEPT. 6: Petrocelli School of Dance 4:45pm @ IPC.

Weekly classes begin

SEPT. 11: Polarity Therapy Workshops with Kieran Jordan @IPC, 7 - 8:15PM - *Polarity therapy is a holistic discipline that uses a combination of eastern and western techniques to balance energy flows in the body and achieve physical and emotional health.*

SEPT. 13: Irish American Country Dance Classes with Winnie Henry, 7-10PM @IPC

SEPT. 15: Traditional Irish Music Session, 3-5PM @IPC

SEPT. 16: Informational Evening from the IDEA and University of Galway on how American-born students can study in Ireland @IPC 7PM

SEPT. 19: Safehome Ireland workshop on Returning to Ireland, Social Welfare and Pensions with Karen McHugh, CEO of Safehome Ireland, 5-7PM @IPC

SEPT. 27: IPC Annual Golf Tournament @ Presidents Golf Course, 8AM

SEPT. 29: IPC Community Breakfast with legendary Kerry Gaelic Footballer, Pat Spillane, 11AM

SEPT. 29: Homebuyers Seminar, 4-6PM

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CALLING J1 GRADS & Boston Irish Young Professionals: Join our new Facebook Group!

The IPC is delighted to announce the launch of our new J1 Graduate and Boston Irish Young Professionals Group on Facebook. This page aims to be a resource for young professionals and J1 Graduate visa holders as they navigate housing, employment and settling into Boston Life.

Any other Queries, please reach out to our J1 Co-Ordinator Andrea at: J1@ipcboston.org

Charitable Irish Society Announces Silver Key Honorees

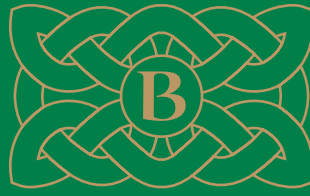
The Charitable Irish Society's Silver Key award is a prestigious recognition of exemplary work and support in helping immigrants and the award exemplifies the contributions of all generations. This year, the Society has named Maryann Casavant, Irish Pastoral Centre Immigrant Coordinator and Mary Sugrue, Chief Executive Officer of the Irish American Partnership as worthy recipients for their outstanding dedication in helping new immigrants.



The ceremony takes place on Wednesday October 23rd at the UMass Club on Beacon Street in Boston at 6pm. For tickets to the event, please call Sandra Moody at 617-304-1076.

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SEPT 20TH

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SEPT 28TH

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SEPT 28TH

OCT 4TH

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OCT 19TH

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Author of "Reflections of an Irish Grandson: A story of Grandmother Bridget Meade Quealy and the Meade family of Miltown Malbay, County Clare, Ireland"

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MORE INFO: IRISHCULTURE.ORG

Rockport Celtic Festival begins new era while retaining the vision of its founder

BY SEAN SMITH

BOSTON IRISH CONTRIBUTOR

Centered around the Shalin-Liu Performance Center, one of the more impressive venues in Greater Boston, the fifth Rockport Celtic Festival will take place from Sept. 12 to Sept. 15, with an assortment of big-stage and intimate events that spotlight Celtic traditions – Irish, Scottish, Cape Breton – as well as their ties and commonalities with other kinds of music.

A prominent figure this year will be multi-genre fiddler Jeremy Kittel, who as the festival’s artist-in-residence will perform as a soloist, with his trio Kittel & Co., and in collaboration with other artists.

In addition, Rockport 2024 will see performances of new works by esteemed traditional Irish fiddler Liz Carroll with the Rasa String Quartet, and Scottish-born fiddler-guitarist Hannah Read, who will present her collection of original compositions “The Fungi Sessions.”

Also on the roster: harpist/vocalist Maeve Gilchrist, the festival’s artistic director; Scandinavian duo Väsen; New England music quartet Pine Tree Flyers; Americana/old-timey music stalwarts Darol Anger and Bruce Molsky; uilleann piper Joey Abartha; popular maritime and sea shanty singer David Coffin; Irish singer Madelyn Monaghan; and widely traveled bass player Logan Coale.

Complete details, including times and event descriptions, are available at rockportmusic.org/rockport-celtic-festival.

It’s a transition year for the festival, whose founder, Brian O’Donovan, died last fall. His loss has been keenly felt throughout and beyond Boston, not least for his role in organizing and masterminding hugely popular events such as the Christmas and St. Patrick’s Day “Celtic Sojourn” productions.

But the Rockport Celtic Festival has always had a different ethos, says Gilchrist, who worked with O’Donovan from its very beginning.

“Brian’s idea was to create a platform to curate Celtic and Celtic-adjacent music in an adventurous yet informal way, similar to ‘boutique’ festivals such as Celtic Connections in which the music is a starting point to a larger conversation,” she explains. “He wanted Rockport to take on a life of its own and in the discussions we had after his cancer diagnosis, he gave his blessing to have the festival move forward. So there was never any doubt of it continuing.”

“While Rockport may have some different aspects than the ‘Celtic Sojourn’ shows and the many other events Brian created and nurtured, they all reflect his vision: that the best and truest way to bring people together, especially in a polarized world, is through music.”

The Grammy-winning Kittel, in his role as artist-in-residence, fits that mindset in many ways, says Gilchrist. “Jeremy is a wonderful example of a 21st-century Celtic-inspired musician.



Rockport Celtic Festival artistic director Maeve Gilchrist says that, despite the loss of festival founder Brian O’Donovan, below, “there was never any doubt of it continuing.”

He has such a strong background in Scottish music – he’s a former US Scottish Fiddle Champion – and he does the job of taking disparate influences, like jazz, classical, bluegrass, and making it work. He also has a phenomenal grasp of harmony that doesn’t feel like a cut-and-paste job but is organic and authentic. Jeremy’s sound, his whole vibe, is jaw-dropping and also emotionally satisfying.”

Carroll, meanwhile, has been one of America’s most prominent Irish fiddlers for nigh on four decades, not only for the precision and verve of her playing but also for her based-in-tradition compositions. The presentation of her new composition, in partnership with the Rasa String Quartet – a Boston-based ensemble that describes its music as exploring “the space where classical and folk traditions intersect and influence one another” – ushers in a new facet of Rockport, notes Gilchrist: Each year, the festival will feature a commissioned work that evokes the memory and legacy of O’Donovan.

The opening night concert, “West-bound from Sweden,” also illustrates the idea of music as a meeting place, according to Gilchrist: Väsen, the duo of Mikael Marin and Olov Johansson, will offer their intricate, sublime take on Scandinavian music – played on nyckelharpa, viola, and other bowed-string instruments; they’ll be joined at the concert by Anger and Molsky, who,, in addition to being superb musicians, have also been teachers and mentors to younger players discovering the joys of bluegrass and old-time music, and Abartha, – who has honed his skills through continuing relationships with master pipers, and is dedicated to passing along his knowledge to the next



generation – as well as Gilchrist.

“It will be a dialogue across three different styles of music that, at first glance, seem to be vastly different from one another – and in some respects, certainly are,” says Gilchrist. “But the focus at this festival is in finding those delightful intersections between Scandinavian nyckelharpas, old-timey fiddles, and Irish pipes. I’m as eager as anyone to find out.”

As glorious as the musical instruments are, Rockport is equally attuned to showcasing the human voice, whether the highly ornamented Gaelic sean-nós style of Monaghan or the rollicking sea shanty singing of Coffin. And true to the festival’s desire for audience participation, Coffin will lead a “pub-less pub sing” at the Old Sloop Coffeehouse in Rockport’s First Congregational Church (no admission charge).

“In putting the festival together, we’ve always been intentional about paying tribute to Rockport for its maritime history and culture,” says Gilchrist. “This also has been an opportunity to think more generally about the sea and its impact on people and places down through the ages, such as whaling and fishing industries, or emigration from

one place to another.

“That will be reflected in the ‘Transatlantic’ finale concert, with David and Jeremy as well as the Rasa String Quartet playing a sea-themed repertoire from the Western Classical canon. ‘Transatlantic’ also will be the setting for Liz’s collaboration with Rasa, which will be very exciting.”

Another Rockport hallmark has been its focus on the written word as a complement and companion to music. That’s the premise of the “Words and Music” segment, in which festival artists share a selection of poetry and prose, accompanied by both curated and improvised soundscapes.

“From the first, Brian and I nerded out on a passion project on words,” says Gilchrist. “There can be such a spiritual dimension to poetry or a piece of prose, distilling something ordinary into something profound. This has always been a very personalized experience for Rockport performers and audiences alike.”

The festive and social elements of Celtic music and dance also are important to artists and aficionados, and these will be front and center at the “Festival Club Ceilidh” with Pine Tree Flyers members Katie McNally (fiddle), Neil Pearlman (piano), and Emily Troll (fiddle, accordion), where there are likely to be any number of inspired, spur-of-the-moment occurrences.

“It’s going to be an emotional experience, of course, being the first Rockport Celtic Festival without Brian,” sums up Gilchrist. “But we’ve all drawn inspiration from how Brian loved and valued all different kinds of music and saw these as a means to connect people. We’ll keep that in our hearts as we carry on.”

Eric McDonald is relishing a life of music

By SEAN SMITH

BOSTON IRISH CONTRIBUTOR

This month saw another homecoming for Boston-area native Eric McDonald, a musician with a lengthy and diverse portfolio, when he appeared on Sept. 3 at Harvard Square's Club Passim as part of Celtic roots trio Kalos.

McDonald's homecomings aren't exactly few and far between: He was in town back in early July, playing with the quartet Cantrip at The Burren's Brian O'Donovan Legacy Series, for example, and in the spring of 2023 with Kalos at Club Passim. He has also regularly appeared at the annual BCMFest.

That's how it is when you're a top-grade guitarist, mandolinist and vocalist who plays with lots (and lots) of people, especially including those in the Irish/Scottish/Celtic vein: Chances are you're going to get your share of gigs in Greater Boston.

"Coming back to the Boston area is always special for me," says McDonald, who grew up in Newton and Medford and now lives just outside Montreal with his wife and their young daughter. "This was where I met so many people, and had so many experiences and opportunities, that were important in my becoming a musician. So much of my involvement in music was social: My friends played music, so I did, too, and it was all a load of fun. I have great memories of those times."

Besides Kalos - a Greek word that connotes the classical idea of "beauty" - and Cantrip, McDonald is part of the trio Bellwether, with English accordionist-pianist Alex Cumming and Orcadian fiddler Louise Bichan. His other collaborations have included Scottish/Cape Breton-style fiddler Katie McNally, Celtic trio Daymark, contra dance band Matching Orange, and stints with international artists like The Outside Track and famed Cape Breton fiddlers Andrea Beaton and Wendy MacIsaac. McDonald also has played with Americana-influenced sisters Ari and Mia Friedman (both of whom grew up in Newton), folk-pop band Pesky J. Nixon and Maine singer-songwriter Dave Rowe.

McDonald's Kalos colleagues are Tacoma, Wash.-based fiddler Ryan McKasson, a Scottish-style fiddler from California who has played with the likes of Alasdair Fraser and Hanneke Cassel and several bands, including a family ensemble with his sister, wife and brother-in-law; and Vermont accordionist/pianist Jeremiah McLane, who explored several genres of music before immersing himself in Celtic and French traditions - he also co-founded the much-loved trio Nightingale, a force in New England folk music for a decade.

Kalos describes itself as exploring the dark edges floating on the rims of tradition, including those of Scotland, Ireland, and New England. Their 2023 debut album, "Headland," evokes what they term as "the dreamlike place between the land and the sea" - and in fact some tracks exhibit a phantasmagorical quality, as McLane's piano accordion and McKasson's fiddle swirl,



Eric McDonald (right) with Kalos bandmates Jeremiah McLane (left) and Ryan McKasson.

churn, or glide through melodies that seem simultaneously native to several different origin points, supported by McDonald's solid guitar rhythms and occasional flatpicking, or chiming mandolin.

On a medley of original reels, McLane's "April and Joe," with a New England vibe, unfolds gradually on accordion and mandolin, then hits its stride once McKasson joins in. McKasson leads into his mesmerizingly cadenced "Brownington Cèilidh Club," McDonald matching him note for note on guitar until McLane re-enters, McDonald switches back to rhythm, and layered harmonies appear and shift as the tune continues.

A joyous set comprising "Nia's Jig/Luke's New House/Roy Michael's Reel," all composed in honor of the band members' children, offers a somewhat more conventional approach, and is highlighted by McDonald's flatpicking in duet with McKasson on the middle tune and McLane's piano accompaniment on "Nia's" and "Luke's" - he leads on accordion for "Roy Michael's."

Kalos dips into Scottish tradition with "Allen Water," a gloriously emotive 17th-century air found in the storied Henry Playford collection: Each of the three takes a turn leading, their respective instruments' characteristics (McKasson is on viola here) plumbing the tune's shapes and contours, then take it home together. In an interview with TradFolk, the trio spoke of "Allen Water" as a hymn to the pastoral beauty of the Scottish landscape that - given the increasingly dire outlook for the planet - serves as "an ode to the peace found only in nature."

Whatever dream state some of the instrumental sets may suggest, the songs - led by McDonald's gentle but expressive voice, with bracing harmonies from McLane and McKasson - are very much grounded in realities, whether grim, wistful, or joyful. The traditional "Fare Thee Well" - also known as "Ten Thousand Miles" or "My Dearest Dear"

- is a soulful lament of parting lovers, tinged by a steadfast, but likely vain hope of reunion. This particular version was first recorded by English singer/raconteur/song collector A.L. Lloyd, who in turn was the source for guitarist/vocalist Nic Jones' gold-standard 1977 rendition.

More upbeat in tempo if not outlook, "The Brakeman's Daughter," written by criminally underappreciated Canadian singer-songwriter David Francey, is a reminiscence of unattainable love in a gritty setting, the relentlessness of the refrain ("Where the trains roll by/where the trains roll by") underscoring the long odds against romance. By contrast, Alasdair Roberts's "The Whole House Is Singing" is a charming, heartfelt homage to familial love and devotion ("We are stronger when the glows in the sky/And causes the tide to rise and to rise").

For McDonald, Kalos is the perfect vehicle for three people with a long history of involvement in, and respect for, folk and traditional music - but who also go beyond preconceptions about such music.

"A lot of our repertoire is our own music," he says. "You can definitely hear the influences from Irish, Scottish, Scandinavian, and Quebec traditions, which is why we call it 'Celtic roots music.' If we had to sum it up, I think we'd say that we like to play music that feels right to us, which is why we listen to a lot of music together, and we talk about what we hear in it."

Growing up in a family where adults and kids alike played music, it might seem that McDonald was fated to follow suit - for a while he accompanied one of his sisters at local open mics - but he insists there was no pressure or expectation. He favored folk and acoustic music ("My mother liked Woody Guthrie, so that probably was an influence"), and found himself drawn to bluegrass, especially after hearing the band Crooked Still. Having picked up mandolin, McDonald branched out to

Irish and Scottish music and also began playing for New England contra dances.

What had been just good fun became, in McDonald's words, "more of an endeavor" when he began studying at the Berklee College of Music, and learning from respected musicians like John McGann and Eugene Friesen. "It was very intensive," he recalls. "You worked hard and sometimes you got your head handed to you. It definitely got me serious about playing music - and about picking up guitar - and I started touring out of Berklee."

McDonald always relished the folk scene's social aspect, such as the after-parties for concerts, festivals, and other events, where new friendships are often forged and ideas for collaborations take root. One such occasion, the 2013 New Hampshire Highland Games and Festival at Loon Mountain, was a major launch point for both his musical and personal life: Among the acquaintances McDonald made that year was his future wife, Sarah, and McKasson.

"There just happened to be a lot of people there that year who ended up being important to me," he says. "Ryan and I really hit it off, and we decided to record an album. I'd met Jeremiah - who was a big inspiration for me - at the Maine Fiddle Camp, and as it turned out, Ryan already knew him and invited him to play on our album. So, technically, our collaboration started even before we became a band."

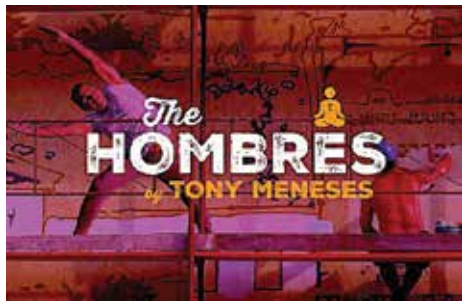
Plans are afoot for recording a new Kalos album next year, to be produced by the estimable Yann Falquet, a renowned Quebecois musician who is a member of the trio Genticorum and often plays with McLane's former fellow Nightingale friend Keith Murphy.

"We were very happy with the first experience, which was an important stage in our development as a band," says McDonald. "We're excited to be at this point in our life as a band, and look forward to moving ahead."

For more about Kalos, see <https://kalosband.com>

What's Happening Onstage This Fall

BY R.J. DONOVAN
SPECIAL TO BOSTON IRISH



"The Hombres"
Through Sept. 29, Gloucester Stage
A crew of macho construction workers clash with the clientele of the yoga studio next door. When the Latino yoga instructor confronts the head of the crew, the men find new flexibility and friendship. Secret yoga lessons and deep conversations provide a refreshing look at male friendships in this heartwarming play. "Hombres" plays Gloucester Stage for the first three weeks and then moves to Chelsea Theatre Works for its final week. So, polish up your chakra. gloucesterstage.com

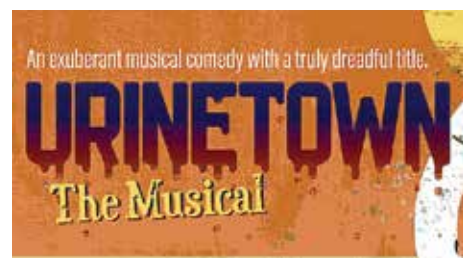


Tom Stoppard's "Leopoldstadt"
Through Oct. 13, Huntington Theatre
In Vienna, the heart of European culture at the rise of the 20th century, two brothers have conflicting visions of prosperity -- both for their family and the Jewish people -- releasing a tension that will echo through the generations that follow. With emotional intimacy, this Tony and Olivier Award-winning drama offers a stirring story of epic love and enduring bravery. huntingtontheatre.org



"Fight Night"
Sept. 20 - 21, ArtsEmerson
Five contenders. Five rounds. Your Vote. The invigorating evening begins with five candidates on stage. By the end, only one will remain. Guided prompts and questions take the audience on a journey to find the best candidate. Through revealing debates, spin doctors, humor and sharp political commentary, the twists and turns will have the audience rethinking how, and why, they vote. (Note: there are no actual political statements made, only

a sharp analysis of how democracy works.) artsemerson.org



"Urinetown"
Sept. 20 - Oct. 20, Lyric Stage
What if toilets were banned? What if you had to Pay 2 P? A greedy and unethical tycoon has unscrupulous plans to profit in the middle of a massive water shortage. But revolution is in the air. A hopeful hero rallies a cornucopia of quirky characters to take on the oily tycoon, and the road to relief is paved with silliness and mischievous musical parodies. Ignore the outlandish title, this is a wry and witty ride. lyricstage.com



"Network"
Sept. 20 - Nov. 3, Umbrella Arts Center
Veteran TV news anchor Howard Beale is struggling in the ratings. But when his on-air meltdown sparks a revolution, he suddenly becomes the hottest thing on the boob tube. The 1976 film by Paddy Chayefsky dominated the Academy Awards and was a prophetic masterpiece on what was to come. Nearly 50 years later, this provocative, new stage adaptation speaks to truth and authenticity as we search for meaning in a digital age. theumbrellaarts.org



"Mamma Mia!"
Sept. 24 - Oct. 6, Citizens Opera House
Set on a fictional Greek island paradise where the sun always shines, this "Dancing Queen" tale of love, friendship, and identity is told through the timeless hits of ABBA. On the eve of her "I Do, I Do, I Do, I Do, I Do" wedding, a daughter's quest to discover the father she's never known brings three men from her mother's past back to the island they last visited

decades ago. For nearly 25 years, people around the world have fallen in love with this "Super Trouper" hit. And that's "The Name of the Game." boston.broadway.com



"Baby Jane"
Oct. 11 - 27, Company Theatre
This world premiere is inspired by the classic Bette Davis - Joan Crawford thriller, "What Ever Happened to Baby Jane?" Twisted memories lurk in the decaying Hollywood mansion of Jane Hudson, once a spoiled child star and now a psychologically disillusioned recluse who lives with (and torments!) her invalid sister, Blanche. When Jane pitifully attempts to resurrect her career, her fragile mental state begins to unravel. And that's show biz, kids. companytheatre.com



"Pru Payne"
Oct. 18 - Nov. 16, SpeakEasy Stage
Prudence "Pru" Payne is a contemporary Dorothy Parker: a sharp-tongued intellectual and critic. She's recently agreed to share her extraordinary life in an eagerly-awaited autobiography. But then Pru's memory starts to fade. Her son sets her up in a state-of-the-art care facility where unexpected love takes hold just as her world is slipping away. With wit and heart, Pulitzer Prize-nominated playwright Steven Drukman explores the universal questions of memory, identity and connection. Karen MacDonald stars. speakeasystage.com

"Titanic, The Musical"
Oct. 29 - Nov. 10, North Shore Music Theatre
Board this epic musical featuring the real stories of people on the most legendary ship in the world - from third-class immigrants yearning for a better tomorrow to first-class passengers living a life of privilege.



This Tony Award-winning "Ship of Dreams" is stately. Sail on! nsmt.org



"Dinner For One"
Nov. 1 - 17, Greater Boston Stage Company
For this New England Premiere, it's a party like no other. Celebrating her 90th birthday, Miss Sophie has invited her four dearest loves to dinner. Only she doesn't remember she's outlived them all. So, her devoted butler, James, comedically impersonates all four of them while simultaneously serving dinner. As the night unfolds, unexpected mishaps and a bit too much wine lead to challenging situations. This charming journey is fraught with physical comedy, memorable music, and heartwarming nostalgia. Raise a glass! greaterbostonstage.org



"& Juliet"
Nov. 5 - 17, Citizens Opera House
From the Emmy Award-winning writer of "Schitt's Creek," this new musical flips the script on the greatest love story ever told. The question? What would happen if Juliet didn't end it all over Romeo? The answer? She ditches her woeful ending for a fresh start and a second chance at life and love - this time, her way. Juliet's story bursts to life through a playlist of high-energy pop anthems as iconic as her name. Forget the balcony scene - there's life after Romeo. And it would be a tragedy to miss it. boston.broadway.com

Boston's first couple of set dancing is taking a step back – but they will 'still be around'

BY SEAN SMITH

BOSTON IRISH CONTRIBUTOR

The first, and most important thing Sally and Joe Harney want people to know is this: They're not going anywhere and will not be disappearing from the face of the Earth.

The Walpole couple has been a mainstay of Boston's Irish set dance community for nigh on four decades now, Sally as teacher and Joe as much-valued assistant at gatherings of Boston's Reynolds-Hanafin-Cooley branch of the Irish cultural organization Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann. But recently, they announced they had decided to step back from this longstanding commitment.

Don't think you've seen the last of them, though.

"We'll still be around," says Sally. "We love it too much to stop altogether."

"It's just that now we won't feel obligated to go," adds Joe, with a laugh. "That's kind of important when it's cold and snowy out."

In recognition of the Harneys' dedication and service, Reynolds-Hanafin-Cooley CCE will hold an appreciation dinner on Sept. 22 from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. in Dorchester's Florian Hall. Tickets are \$25 per person, and are available from Barbara Boyd (BarbaraMBoyd@comcast.net), Cait Bracken (cait.bracken@gmail.com), and Michael Hickey (treasurer@cceboston.org).

In every sizeable group of people who enjoy gathering for an ongoing activity, there must be those few who ensure that all the fine details – not just the larger ones – are seen to, that the hall is booked, that word gets out, and that the basic elements are there for everyone to have a good time.

The Harneys have played that kind of vital role for the set dancing classes, which were first organized in 1986 by Sally and the late Terry McCarthy. Every Tuesday evening, except during the months of July and August, plus one or two Sunday afternoons a month, Sally and Joe have been at the Canadian American Club in Watertown to pass along one of the more popular, and most loved, features of Irish tradition.

Sally, as both an accomplished dancer and distinguished teacher, has had the primary task of instructing the participants. But while Joe quips that his job has been to "to push the button" – operate the audio equipment that provides recorded music for the dancing – others note that he also has helped guide new recruits through the basics, and his general good nature can aid in defusing potential frustrations or tensions.

"Sally and Joe are proud Irish people who have promoted Irish traditional heritage and culture by being the best ambassadors anyone could ever ask for," says Reynolds-Hanafin-Cooley Branch Chairperson Tara Lynch. "They have been both in the forefront as well as working in the background to make things happen and come true – not just



They keep on smiling: Sally and Joe Harney.

Sean Smith photo

for Comhaltas but the Irish Cultural Centre of Greater Boston and other local Irish organizations in the Boston area. They also are known far and wide for their personalities and set dancing across the US and Canada through the annual Comhaltas conventions."

The Harneys, who have been married for 62 years, are the parents of Liam, who founded the Harney Academy of Irish Dance (now affiliated with the Pender Keady Academy in Connecticut), Margaret McCarthy, and Michael. Their son **Joseph P. Harney Sr.** died in 2021.

A conversation with Sally and Joe is a window onto a time well before Irish music and dance became a global entertainment phenomenon featured in concert hall-sized venues and on TV and other electronic media. For them and their contemporaries, the music and dance were far more of a social event, enjoyed with family, friends and neighbors in whatever space – a parlor, a kitchen, a barn – was available.

"I was lucky to have musicians and dancers in my family," says Sally, who grew up in Donegal. "My grandmother on my mother's side used to do the 'old' solo dances, like 'The Turf Dance' or 'The Brush Dance,' and my mother was a great lilter as well as a dancer. Both of them taught us kids – there were 10 of us – the tunes and the barn dances, like 'Stack of Barley' or 'The Highland Fling,' and the solo dances, too. My grandfather and uncle played accordion, and sometimes my mother's cousin would come and bring his fiddle, and he'd teach dances – playing and dancing at the same time. You'd have house parties, people dancing in the kitchen, or maybe out in the barn: singing, storytelling, and dancing sets like 'Donegal Lancers' or 'Kerry Lancers.'

"We didn't have much, but there were no regrets. It was a simple life, but never sad."

Joe, a native of Roscommon, recalls the Mummies tradition at Christmas time, and going around the neighborhood in disguise performing songs and

recitations of the season.

"Part of the fun was trying to guess who was behind the masks and costumes," he says. It was a tradition he and Sally kept up when they had their own family, and daughter Margaret seemed to have a good knack for the disguise part. "One year, she was all in black, and at the celebration she sat off at a table by herself. It must've been a half-hour before we realized it was her. She still talks about it."

The Harneys' story also is part of a larger narrative of the Irish experience in America, and Boston in particular – notably the period of the 1940s to mid-1960s, a time often described as a "golden age" of Irish music and dance in the city. The two were among the many young Irish who immigrated to Boston following World War II, frequenting the great dance halls in Roxbury, especially Dudley Square, to enjoy the traditional music of home but also the popular styles that had taken root in America.

Sally was all of 17, she recalls, when her aunt "brought me out" to Boston to earn money doing housework. She adapted to her new home, and her new life, and Thursday became her favorite day of the week.

"Thursday was 'the maids' night out,'" she explains. "All of us girls would dress up, get the bus or the train to Dudley Square, and go to places like the Hibernian, the Colonial, and the Rose Croix."

Thursday night also was a fine time for a young guy like Joe, who worked at Stop & Shop and drove a blue convertible. "You'd usually go with a group of friends. There was great music in the halls, and you'd do ceili dancing, but also quicksteps, waltzes, jitterbugs, all kinds of dances. It was lots of fun."

Joe and Sally met through a mutual friend, and between the Thursday night outings, "would talk on the phone forever," she says. They were married about two years after being introduced.

"She finally put the hook into me," laughs Joe.

The dance hall era wound down as the 1960s wore on, but many of the relationships and acquaintances formed would endure, as the local Irish and Irish American community found new places and opportunities to socialize and enjoy their music and culture, such as through the establishment of the local Comhaltas branch, which held many events in the Canadian American Club.

"We were all lucky to be in the company of Larry Reynolds," says Sally of the late musician and one of the namesakes for the Reynolds-Hanafin-Cooley branch. "I'd heard him in Dudley Street, and I just loved the guy, as did many others. He had a way of making things happen. So, when I asked about whether we might be able to have set dancing classes, sure enough, he made it happen."

Reynolds had invited a Dublin step dancing master, Donncha O'Muin-eachain, to come once a year and teach sets. It became obvious that a more regular schedule of classes was needed, so Sally and Terry McCarthy took up the mantle and continued on for years until Sally, along with Joe, gradually assumed the full responsibility.

Sally is a member of the CCE Northeast Region Hall of Fame and winner of a Gradam award for service to Comhaltas. She's also been a teacher and assistant director of choreography for the Harney Academy, and in recent years has been giving parents of Harney students some instruction in dance.

"Liam asked if I would give them some basics, and they love it," she says. "It really helps them connect with and understand what their kids are doing."

If another example of Joe and Sally's love for and commitment to Irish dance is needed, look no further than the small barn they had built next to their house, complete with dance floor. Its presence ensures that no matter the time of the year, no matter the weather, people can dance at the Harneys.

"There's always something happening out in the barn," laughs Joe.

The Music Arts Calendar

Fall 2024

BY SEAN SMITH

BOSTON IRISH CONTRIBUTOR

A look at upcoming Irish/Celtic-related music events in Greater Boston

•The **Rockport Celtic Festival** – one of many gifts from the late Brian O’Donovan to Celtic music aficionados – takes place September 12-15, mostly at the Shalin Liu Performance Center in Rockport. Among the attractions: harpist/vocalist **Maeve Gilchrist** (also the festival’s artistic director); the **Jeremy Kittel Trio**; **Väsen**; **Pine Tree Flyers** (two of whom, **Katie McNally** and **Neil Pearlman**, also will have featured spots); **Darol Anger**; **Bruce Molsky**; **David Coffin**; **Madelyn Monaghan**; **Joey Abarta**; **Logan Coale**; plus special performances by **Hannah Read** and **Liz Carroll**, who will be collaborating with the **Rasa String Quartet**. You can read more about the festival on Page 13.

•The Brian O’Donovan Legacy Series at The Burren [burren.com/music.html] will feature singer, songwriter and composer **Éilís Kennedy** on Sept. 18. A former LiveIreland.com Female Vocal Album of the Year winner, Kennedy is a fluent native Gaelic singer and speaker from West Kerry whose collaborations have included a stint with Pauline Scanlon as the duo Lumiere, who were part of the cast in the 2014 “Christmas Celtic Sojourn” production, and guitarist William Coulter. One of Kennedy’s undertakings was the 2020 album, “So Ends This Day,” a collection of original and traditional songs about different aspects of the life of whaling, inspired by and based on letters, characters and journals. Kennedy will be accompanied by local guitarist **Adam Hendey**; they’ll also be appearing on Sept. 19 at the Boston College Gaelic Roots Series [bc.edu/irish].

Fiddler **Sorcha Costello** comes to the Legacy Series on Sept. 25. A native of the music hotbed of Tulla, Co. Clare, Costello grew up in a family notable for its love of the Irish tradition, including Costello’s mother, concertina player Mary MacNamara – the pair of them recorded the album “The Lady’s Cup of Tea.” Costello was schooled in the lyrical, relaxed East Clare fiddle style, but over time and travel has taken on influences from her many travels, as evidenced on her 2023 release, “The Primrose Lass,” which contains a mix of traditional and more recent tunes.

Turning to a different territory in the Celtic world, on Sept. 29 the Legacy Series will feature **Faltriqueira**, an all-female group that plays music from the region of Galicia in Spain. While the band mainly utilizes instruments familiar to the tradition – like fiddle, accordion, darboukas and txalapartas – their style reflects multiple and contemporary influences, especially their polyphonic singing arrangements; they’ve also experimented with electronics and string sections. It goes without saying that you don’t need to understand Spanish to enjoy them.

Also at The Burren (though not part of the Brian O’Donovan Legacy Series), will be an album release concert on Sept. 17 with Boston fiddler **Cecilia Vacanti**. A classically trained violinist who graduated from the Berklee College of Music, Vacanti has turned her attention to roots/folk styles, working with Celtic fiddler Jeremy Kittel and bluegrass/old-timey musicians Darol Anger and Bruce Molsky, and explored jazz/swing as well. Vacanti also has branched out into the New England contra dance circuit, as a member of the band Kingfisher. All these influences and interests abound in “Earth’s Dark Shore,” her new album of original material. Her special guests will be progressive folk duo **So Blue** (Devon Gardner, vocals, guitar; Adam Gurczak, double bass), which earlier this year released the EP “Water and Waves,” with original songs that tell stories about “love, loss, and bad roommates.”

•The duo **Väsen**, which comes to Harvard Square’s Club Passim [passim.org] on Sept. 12, is one of the most



Fiddler Jeremy Kittel will be the festival’s artist-in-residence.

influential purveyors of modern Scandinavian music, and their work has inspired many Celtic musicians and listeners. As teenagers, Olov Johansson and Mikael Marin would visit with older musicians in Sweden’s Uppland region, who passed along their knowledge and love of Swedish folk music. The pair later joined forces with Roger Tallroth, whose innovative 12-string guitar accompaniment brought a new dimension to the traditional repertoire: components of rock, jazz, and classical. Over time, the trio integrated its own tunes into the mix, while collaborating and performing with musicians from around the world. Tallroth left the band in 2020 to pursue other musical projects, but Johansson and Marin have continued on, their performances featuring the nyckelharpa and a variety of other stringed instruments including a silverbasharpa, oktavharpa, violoncello da spalla – and even a blue electric viola. They’ve recorded two albums, “Väsen Duo” and “Mellikan,” and later this month release another: their joint project with American trio Hawktail (Brittany Haas, fiddle; Paul Kowert, double bass; Jordan Tice, guitar).

Genre-busting American fiddler **Jeremy Kittel** with his trio Kittel & Co. will play two shows (7 and 9:30 p.m.) on Sept. 13. Kittel imbues his forays into Irish and Scottish music with jazzy, improvisational riffs as well as bluegrass, classical and other styles. A former US National Scottish Fiddle Champion, he has worked with a wide range of artists, including local American Scottish fiddler Hanneke Cassel and Boston native singer-songwriter Aoife O’Donovan; he also was a member of the Grammy-winning quartet Turtle Island. His “company” includes Berklee College of Music grad Quinn Bachand (guitar) and Josh Pinkham (mandolin). In 2018, the band released its debut album, “Whorls,” which included “Chrysalis,” nominated for a Grammy (Best Instrumental Composition).

(Väsen and Kittel also will both be appearing at the aforementioned Rockport Celtic Festival.)

Boston-area fiddler **Jenna Moynihan** will present a “Variety Hour” on Sept. 29, with assorted musical friends. Since arriving in Boston almost two decades ago, Moynihan has found numerous outlets for her versatile Scottish/Appalachian/Irish/Scandinavian-influenced fiddling, including an acclaimed collaboration with Scottish harpist Mairi Chaimbeul, as a member of unique folk-roots-pop quartet Laura Cortese & The Dance Cards, performing with the Hanneke Cassel Band and Seamus Egan Project, and as a faculty member at Berklee College of Music and teacher at various folk/acoustic music camps and programs. In recent years, she has also focused on developing an equally diverse song repertoire, which she shared on her EP “Five Songs.”

Closing out the month on Sept. 30 is **Skye Consort and Emma Björling**, which combines a “chamber-folk” vibe with a repertoire encompassing Scandinavian, Irish, British Isles and French-Canadian music as well as their own compositions. Co-lead vocalist and percussionist Björling may be familiar to some for her work with a cappella Scandinavian group Kongero, which appeared at Passim last December. Sharing lead vocals is Seán Dagher, who also contributes bouzouki and banjo. The consort has a striking bowed-string presence with cellist Amanda Keesmaat, and Alex Kehler and Simon Alexandre on nyckelharpa and violin. Their most recent album, “Ode & Ballade” – which reflects the various interpretations of those two words in English, French and Scandinavian cultures – includes a pairing of the French Canadian song “Un Ivrogne à Table” with the Irish jig “Foxhunter’s,” a set of Shetland tunes, a quite solemn take on the confessional ballad “Sam Hall,” and the maritime rouser “Blow the Windy Morning.”

•Galway native **Seán Keane**, one of Ireland’s most accomplished singers from the 1990s on, will be at the Irish Cultural Centre of Greater Boston in Canton [irishculture.org] on Sept. 20. Keane comes from a distinguished sean-nos singing family tradition that includes his sister Dolores and aunts Rita and Sarah, and by his teens had garnered 13 All-Ireland Fleadh Cheoil medals. After performing with bands such as Reel Union (with Dolores and accordionist Máirtín O’Connor) and Arcady (with Sharon Shannon, Frances Black and Johnny “Ringo” McDonough), Keane struck out on his own, with plenty of accolades (including three Best Male Folk Performer awards from *Irish Music Magazine*) and critically acclaimed and best-selling albums as a result. His repertoire ranges from traditional to pop, blues and country, including his moving rendition of Brendan Graham’s immigrant saga “Isle of Hope, Isle of Tears” – a theme of great importance to Keane, who in 2020 became an ambassador to Safe Home Ireland, an Irish emigrant support service.

•**The Langan Band**, a fascinatingly earthy trio from Scotland’s Outer Hebrides, comes to the Crystal Ballroom on Somerville Theater [crystalballroom-boston.com] on Sept. 22, as part of the Global Arts Live series. The band’s inimitable sound is built around the dynamic between guitarist/percussionist/ namesake John Langan, fiddler Alastair Caplin and double bassist Dave Tunstall, whose instrumental and vocal work unquestionably evoke folk tradition – yet simultaneously are of this era, as demonstrated on their 2023 album “Plight O’ Sheep,” featuring “Leg of Lamb,” a fond reminiscence of an improbable moment of bliss on the road, the powerful intimacy of “Sweetness,” and the crude playfulness (with a catchy 2/4 beat and an extensive narrative) of “Hills of Tottenham.”

•**The Young Dubliners** – who aren’t related to the “original” Dubliners of yore – play on Sept. 15 at the Brighton Music Hall [www.brightonmusicall.com]. The band was the brainchild of Dublin native and rocker Keith Roberts (guitar, vocals), who more than three decades ago came to the US, opened an Irish pub, and decided he wanted to focus more on Irish traditional music. Roberts recruited other musicians to join him as the bar’s Saturday night band, blending their various influences – including Thin Lizzy, The Pogues and The Waterboys – and interests with a healthy dollop of Irish folk. Since then, The Young Dubs (their line-up also includes Chas Waltz, violin, keyboards, vocals; Dave Ingraham, drums; Justin Pecot, guitar, vocals; and Ethan Jones, bass) have since gone far beyond their bar-band beginnings: touring internationally, appearing on “Jimmy Kimmel Live” and “CBS Early Show,” and releasing nine albums and a DVD, “Home Movies.”

Gloucester singer Michael O'Leary plunges into maritime history, culture of Cape Ann

BY SEAN SMITH

BOSTON IRISH CONTRIBUTOR

For some 25 years, Gloucester resident Michael O'Leary has been exploring, and celebrating, the connections between song and sea.

O'Leary has organized and led a series of regularly occurring "Celtic Music Sunset Sails" around Gloucester Harbor on the schooner *Ardelle*, inviting Celtic musicians and singers from the Greater Boston area to join him in providing on-board entertainment for passengers. On land, O'Leary has appeared at numerous festivals and concerts, among them the Rockport Celtic Festival, Dorchester Irish Festival, BCMFest, and NEFFA, mixing in traditional or contemporary maritime songs with his impressive repertoire of Irish ballads.

O'Leary is equally at home in an informal setting, like a pub or a living room. When someone says, "Give us a song, Michael!" he'll think for a few seconds, and depending on the mood and the moment, maybe he'll launch into something rousing:

All for me beer and tobacco

I've spent all me tin, on the lassies drinking gin

And across the western ocean I must wander

Or perhaps something quieter:

The currachs are sailing way out on the blue,

Laden with herring of silvery hue,

O silver the herring, silver the sea

Soon there'll be silver for baby and me

Now, O'Leary has embarked on a special project to spotlight an all but forgotten vestige of his adopted home's maritime legacy. With the help of a microgrant from Awesome Gloucester, a chapter of global nonprofit The Awesome Foundation, as well as grants from the Gloucester and Manchester cultural councils - which in turn are supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council - O'Leary is helping organize and participating in several events this month and next [see details at the end of the story] revolving around the 150th anniversary of the book "Fishermen's Ballads and Songs of the Sea."

Compiled and published in 1874 by brothers George H. and Francis Procter, who ran a stationery firm and published the weekly Cape Ann Advertiser in Gloucester, "Fishermen's Ballads and Songs of the Sea" features 120 pieces by various writers that relate to maritime life and events. A few selections and their authors are well known, like "The Wreck of the Hesperus" and "The Cumberland" by Henry Longfellow and "Little Billee" by William Makepeace Thackeray, but the vast majority are by Gloucester and other Cape Ann area fishermen and mariners as well as other local voices, including those of women. Some authors were given aliases ("Yankee Ned") or identified only by initials; others were not identified at all.

O'Leary, who calls the book "a literary,

musical, and folkloric time capsule," has added some enhancements to the original: He has created an author index and is working on a categories index and a digital table of contents. He has composed music for 24 pieces and plans to do so for more, although he feels some read better as poems to be recited. And he will continue to do research so as to identify the fishermen-authors and delve deeper into the stories behind the songs.

"With this project I am fulfilling the longing of the ghosts of these songs and poems, the vast majority of which have gone unspoken and unsung, even unseen, for decades," O'Leary says. "I feel that what I'm doing goes beyond some personal, artistic ideal. It's a way of preserving our maritime heritage and culture, and in ways that promote community togetherness and appreciation."

Showcasing and sustaining maritime song and culture, whether through the book project or his Celtic music sails, is not exactly the culmination of a lifelong dream for O'Leary, a self-described landlubber who grew up in South Dakota - hardly a locus of seafaring activity. Then again, though his family has a strong Irish heritage, O'Leary couldn't have imagined becoming a fount of Irish songs and ballads: Growing up, he recalls, about the only regular exposure he had to Irish music was a record the family would put on the stereo as part of their St. Patrick's Day observance; and no, he can't even remember what the album was.

But an almost yearlong sojourn in Ireland in 1978-79 on a Rotary International Fellowship changed his life. A defining event was when Clannad performed in the student union at University College Dublin, where O'Leary was studying.

"I was just blown away, and I wound up coming home with three of their albums," recalls O'Leary, who adds that he was "smitten" by the band's lead singer, Moya Brennan.

While O'Leary didn't start making the round of sessions ("I really didn't know about that world"), from thereon he did have his antenna up for Irish music, and in March of 1979 he attended a Bothy Band concert, an experience that left him "gobsmacked."

His newfound interest in Irish music stayed with him after he returned to the US, and during a period in which he lived in the Minneapolis/St. Paul area, he had another opportunity to see Clannad. But he didn't start singing until after he moved to Cape Ann in 1989, and gradually was drawn to the very active Greater Boston Irish music scene.

"There were just a lot of things going on that compelled me to want to sing, and opportunity upon opportunity seemed to come my way," says O'Leary, who remembers his first solo gig, at a Burns Night celebration in a Unitarian church.

Boston College's Gaelic Roots annual summer festival (now a concert series taking place during the BC academic year) was a key facet of O'Leary's

musical development. "It made such a difference, because there were so many great singers who were there as teachers as well as performers: Frank Harte, Niamh Parsons, Andy Irvine, Aoife Clancy, Jimmy Crowley. Going there really helped me in finding my voice - and finding songs."

O'Leary began showing up at local sessions and other events, such as Shay Walker's singers club at Paddy Burke's, or at the revered Green Briar session in Brighton. And his circle of musical friends and acquaintances became ever larger, which led to some formative experiences. One of these came when, thanks to a grant from the Massachusetts Cultural Council, he was able to study with Bridget Fitzgerald, a traditional singer and former member of the groundbreaking band Cherish the Ladies.

Much as he relished singing Irish songs, O'Leary was increasingly drawn to sea chanteys and other kinds of maritime songs. "Being where I was, living right near the harbor, it was almost impossible not to take an interest in songs and poems about the sea. And the more songs I learned, the more I wanted to know the stories behind them, and the people who lived that life."

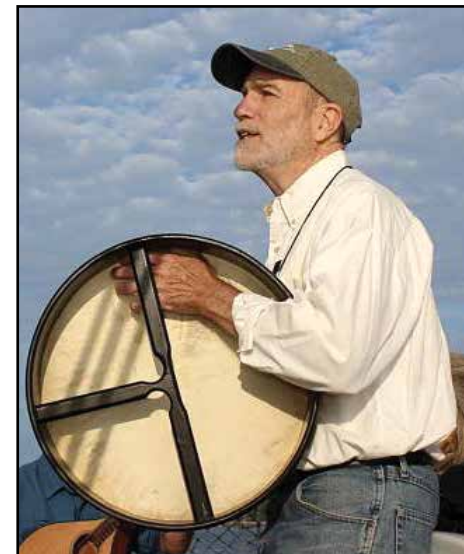
Having set poems to music - those of William Butler Yeats in particular - over the years, O'Leary had an idea: Why not do so for poetry on maritime and nautical life that related to Gloucester and Cape Ann? It wasn't a project so much as "something I had in the back of my mind for a while," he recalls.

But then he stumbled upon the Procters' book via the Cape Ann Museum in 2022, and the something-in-the-back-of-his-mind moved decidedly to the forefront.

"I looked through the pages, searching for anything I might be able to set to music. Some of the material didn't really appeal to me, but it's such a diverse collection and I was amazed by a lot of what I found. What struck me was that, while they used poems by published writers like Longfellow and Thackeray, the Procters recruited fishermen and other people who hadn't had that experience to contribute to the collection."

While the collection contains some idealized and romanticized depictions, O'Leary found that on the whole, "Fishermen's Ballads and Songs of the Sea" portrays seafaring life in a straightforward, plainspoken manner. Sarah G. Duley's "Saturday Afternoon," for example, describes in very simple terms a fisherman's family waiting for him to return, the mother working at her shuttle to repair a fishing net while the three children play on the shore. "Outward Bound," credited to D.W. Hillier, expresses with an economy of words the conflicting emotions at the start of another voyage.

"Somebody asked me to sum up the book in one word, and the one that came to mind is 'grief,'" he says. "The



Of his work with "Fishermen's Ballads and Songs of the Sea," O'Leary says: "I feel that what I'm doing goes beyond some personal, artistic ideal. It's a way of preserving our maritime heritage and culture, and in ways that promote community togetherness and appreciation."

Procters didn't pull any punches in putting this collection together. There are some very poignant pieces, dealing with loss of friends and concern about loved ones, either those going to sea or those left behind."

O'Leary points to a poem by the fisherman Daniel McDonald, "The Weather Gage," about the loss of his three friends on Georges Banks, and three by Captain Peter Sexton, including "The Loss of Life at Sea," which recounts the sinking of several ships on a stormy night, resulting in 36 deaths: "Our vessels of the best, our men are brave and smart/The hardships of these noble men would grieve the human heart/We must not think of gloom too much, while in this life we stay/But make ourselves contented until we pass away."

"I try to imagine what it must've been like to sit down and write a poem like that," says O'Leary. "It's great literature for what these poems are and what they deal with."

Harry L. Marcy's supernatural-themed "The Ghostly Crew" - which alludes to actual events in Gloucester in 1869 - has had a considerable reach and influence, serving as the basis for "The Spirit Song of Georges Banks" by Maine singer-songwriter Gordon Bok, whose music has been a source of inspiration for O'Leary.

"Pat's Farewell" by Mabel Lee, meanwhile, is a "holy grail of a song" for O'Leary, since it concerns both Irish emigration and Gloucester fishing, not to mention the ship the *Alfred Walen*, which was built less than a mile from where he lives. The poem is among the 24 he has set to music.

"I'm certainly not done with this project, but it's already been very fulfilling," says O'Leary. "I think these poems and songs really help bring history to life, in a way that's quite personal and relatable. The world they describe may be gone, but it won't be forgotten."

In honor of World Maritime Day on Sept. 28, O'Leary will offer a free talk, with performance, on "Fishermen's Ballads and Songs of the Sea" at the Cape Ann Museum. For time and other details, and to make reservations, see the museum website.

For more information on these and other events, see facebook.com/michael.oleary.222/

Scobie's pub opens in Dot's Adams Village

Scobie's Café & Bar, Boston's newest Irish pub and restaurant, opened its doors and pulled its first pints for the public on Sept. 6. Husband-and-wife owners John and Anne Lydon have created a space that seeks to bring a bit of Ireland's West Coast to Dorchester's most identifiably Irish business district, Adams Village. The cozy eatery has two fireplaces, a 17-seat bar, and room for 120 people along with a take-away café counter. "Since I was a child, my heart has been split between my mother's Dorchester roots and my father's Irish roots," said John Lydon, who lives in Savin Hill. "Scobie's is a place where Anne and I would like to try to bring the two together." The Lydons are already well-versed in the rigors involved in running licensed establishments. They are the owners and operators of Shamrock Pub in South Boston. John and Anne, who have children

ages 5 and 3, travelled to Ireland last summer and brought home a hearty list of ideas that will inform the look and feel of Scobie's.

The vision, John and Anne say, is "a place where you can get a pot of tea and have a long chat with an old friend; catch a broadcast game from Ireland over an Irish breakfast or get together for a community fundraiser." The space in question originally housed a bank called Minot Cooperative and was most recently occupied by the Butcher Shop and Deli, which just relocated to a smaller space two doors down. The restaurant conversion is the latest in several improvements made to 512 Gallivan Blvd. by the Lydons in recent months. Other tenants in the building include China Sky, PS Gourmet Coffee, Top Shelf Cookies, a dental office, and Attorney Michael P. Doolin.

-BILL FORRY



Scobie's co-owners Anne and John Lydon are shown inside the pub during its early construction phase in Nov. 2023 and, at right, in the newly opened space on Sept. 5, 2024.

Bill Forry photos

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BC's Burns Library features an Irish "Double-Header"

Burns Library at Boston College extends an invitation to attend an Irish double-header event on Wed., Sept. 18, with programs beginning at 4:30 p.m. and 7 p.m. Come for one or both programs and enjoy dinner and a drink in between.

Hilary Dully, editor of "On Dangerous Ground," the recently published memoir of the daring Irish Republican Máire Comerford (1893-1982), will speak on Comerford's 1924 sojourn in America to raise funds and public sympathy for Republican prisoner relief on behalf of Éamon de Valera.

Following a complimentary cold buffet supper with sandwich fixings and salads and complimentary beer, wine, and soft drinks, filmmaker Joe Comerford will screen and discuss "Reefer and the Model," his 1988 drama set across the background of the "Troubles" in Northern Ireland, which features a character based on his aunt Máire.



From Dangerous Ground

Irish Revolutionary Máire Comerford's Mission in America

Named as the most daring woman working for the Irish Republican cause by the Daily Mail in 1923, Máire Comerford (1893-1982) was an active participant in the War of Independence and the subsequent Civil War (1919-1923), when she fought against acceptance of a partitioned Ireland, the new Irish Free State, and the creation of the Northern Ireland statelet, which remained part of the United Kingdom. Following arrests, imprisonment, beatings, hunger strikes, and a daredevil escape, Comerford was sent to the United States in November 1923 by jailed Anti-Treatyite leader Éamon de Valera to propagate the Republican cause and to raise funds for Republican prisoner relief.

- 4:30 p.m.: Hilary Dully talk, book sale & signing
- 6 p.m.: Buffet supper & bar service
- 7 p.m.: Joe Comerford film screening

These special "double-header" events are presented by Boston College Libraries in collaboration with



Reefer and the Model

Film Screening & Discussion

Irish filmmaker Joe Comerford brings his brand of sharp realist cinema to this 1988 drama about Reefer, an ex-IRA man who picks up hitch-hiker Teresa, a pregnant woman trying to overcome a drug addiction. Nicknaming her "the model," Reefer takes Teresa back to the trailer where he lives with friends Spider and Badger. Shadowy connections to Irish Republican Army operations during "The Troubles" in Northern Ireland and a general lawlessness come to the fore as the makeshift family are forced to turn to crime to make a living. Conflicts and challenges—from IRA hunger strikes to homosexuality—are touched upon as Comerford's sharp-eyed awareness for political and social nuance remains keen throughout.

Boston College Irish Studies and support from the Eire Society of Boston and Tom and Trisha Carty. Please contact Burns Library administrative assistant Caroline Pace (pacecar@bc.edu) for more information, including accessibility and parking needs.

Carey named chair at Irish Pastoral Centre



Michael Carey is the new board chair of the Irish Pastoral Centre. Other new officers are Secretary Neil Hurley and Treasurer Mark Porter.

SMA Fathers plan benefit dance Sept. 28

The Society of African Missions (SMA Fathers- Dedham) will host a fundraiser on Sat., Sept. 28 from 7 p.m. to 11 p.m. at the Irish Social Club 119 Park St. West Roxbury.

Featured will be a raffle with first prize a round-trip for two to Galway or Nairobi, compliments of Crystal Travel, David Mundia family & friends, and Séan Staunton, ISC president. Music by Margaret Dalton's Erin's Melody. Admission \$20 (children free.) All proceeds to SMA Fathers missionary outreach. More details per Brendan Darcy 781-326-3288 or Christine McCarrick 617-364-6554

BC's Irish Institute appoints new director

Mary C. Murphy, an expert on the complex relationship between Ireland, Northern Ireland, and Europe, especially in the post-Brexit era, has been appointed as director of the Boston College Irish Institute. The former head of the University College Cork (UCC) Department of Government and Politics, Murphy began her duties as Irish Institute director, and as a professor in BC's Political Science Department, in August. She holds a bachelor's degree from the University of Limerick, master's and doctoral degrees from Queen's University Belfast, and a postgraduate diploma in teaching and learning from UCC.

"I feel very privileged to be joining the Boston College community and to be taking up the directorship of the Irish Institute," said Murphy. "Boston College has long played a pivotal and valued role in supporting the economic, social, political, and cultural



Professor Mary C. Murphy was greeted by Ireland Consul General Sighle FitzGerald at the Consulate's First Friday reception on Sept. 6.

landscape of the island of Ireland. I look forward to building on that immense legacy over the years ahead and to positioning BC as a premier location for the study of Ireland in the United States.

"I also welcome the opportunity for the Irish Institute to continue to encourage the consolidation of peace and reconciliation in Northern Ireland, to support North-South and British-Irish relations,

and to help the island of Ireland to adjust and respond to the challenges it faces in the post-Brexit era.

At a time of widespread political and economic upheaval, Boston College and the Irish Institute are committed to contributing positively to U.S.-Irish relations and to the future of both parts of the island of Ireland. I am hugely excited to be part of that endeavor."

Murphy's appointment represents a new beginning for the Irish Institute, launched in 1998 and widely praised for offering programs and initiatives to promote reconciliation between Ireland and Northern Ireland through increased mutual understanding and cross-border partnerships.

During the early 2010s, the institute broadened its geographical scope to include other regions—notably the Middle East and North Africa—and took a broader role within the University to aid international outreach. Under director Robert Mauro, it became the Global Leadership Institute, retaining elements of the Irish Institute model while undertaking ventures such as a leadership program for Kuwaiti youths and an initiative to assist in the professionalization of Mexico's police force. But Mauro, who died in

Rian Center appoints 'Interim Executive Director'

Rian Immigrant Center has announced the selection of an interim executive director to manage the programs while an executive search continues.

In an email statement addressed to the "Rian Community," Rian board chair Kim Borman said, "We are delighted to announce the appointment of Jennifer Bermant-O'Brien Chang as Rian's Interim Executive Director, starting Sept. 3. Jennifer will be responsible for the day-to-day operations of the

organization, ensuring our staff and board are effective and supported, and that our programs and operations are sound, sustainable, and fully responsive to the needs of our clients.

"Jennifer has over 25 years of work experience, primarily in the nonprofit sector. Most recently, she served as Interim Executive Director at Steps to Success, Inc., a Brookline nonprofit focused on ensuring that students from all backgrounds receive the education

they need. Before that, she stepped in as Interim Executive Director at Playworks New England, another youth-oriented nonprofit, transitioning from her position as a board member.

"Jennifer holds an MBA from Harvard University, an MEd from Endicott College, and a BA from the University of Virginia. She is well poised to help Rian create a path for growth while we search for a permanent executive director.

Free immigration clinics are set during September

• The city of Boston will offer a free one-time immigration clinic in the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Advancement. The free consultations by telephone are on the first and third Wednesday of every month from noon to 3 p.m.

Due to high demand, appointment

must be made. To register for an appointment with a volunteer lawyer call 617-625-2980, or email immigrantadvancement@boston.gov. Interpretation and disability accommodations are available.

• The Rian Immigrant Center and

the Boston Public library will host free immigration legal clinics at the Roslindale Library, 4246 Washington St on Sept. 12, from 3 to 7 p.m. and at the East Boston Library, 365 Bremen St on Sept. 26, from 3 to 7 p.m.

During the clinics, attorneys will

provide advice but cannot review or fill out immigration forms during the clinic. Individuals eligible to apply for immigration benefits will be referred to the Rian for case assistance.

Carney Hospital's namesake would be disgusted

The Carney Hospital, a fixture in Dorchester since 1953 and a healthcare facility in South Boston for 100 years before that, closed its doors on Aug. 31, spurring anguish and anger in and beyond its home neighborhood over the years-long actions of its private ownership which many viewed as tending not so much to the hospital's needs but to their financial expectations, both of which ended in a bankruptcy court in Texas this summer.

Answers as to long-term and emergency hospital care or former Carney patients and the use of the Carney property are in abeyance as various entities work at sorting out the future.

With these developments as background, Kevin O'Neill, the co-founder and former director of Irish studies at Boston College, considers what its founder, Andrew Carney would be thinking today.

BY KEVIN O'NEIL
SPECIAL TO THE REPORTER

When I first came to Boston 45 years ago to teach at Boston College, I was given an office in Carney Hall, the home of the History Department. I didn't know who Carney Hall was named after and wrongly assumed it was named, like most buildings at BC, for a Jesuit important to the college's history. I soon learned I was wrong. Carney Hall was named after Andrew Carney, a 19th Century Irish immigrant to Boston.

Carney, a penniless itinerant tailor, emigrated from County Cavan, one of the poorest counties in Ireland. When he arrived, Boston already had more tailors than it needed, so Carney followed a route familiar to so many of our immigrants - he started at the absolute bottom, working at the "Slop Shops" that supplied sailors with ready-made clothing. At the time, ready-made clothing was still unusual, but a necessity for sailors who were in constant motion and had few other options for acquiring clothing. Supplying clothing to poor sailors was not an obvious path to wealth.

But Carney became a pioneer in expanding the market for ready-made clothing, and eventually won a contract to supply the US Navy with trousers - the source of his first fortune. Wise investing in real estate, banking, and insurance [John Hancock] earned him much more.

The mid-nineteenth century Boston that Carney lived in was dramatically anti-immigrant, anti-Irish, and anti-Catholic. Carney responded to the needs of his isolated and struggling Irish Catholic community in Boston. He donated land and money to help build what would become the Carney Hospital and what would become Boston College - giving Catholics their own hospital and their own college.



Carney was a "good" capitalist who used his wealth to help build the infrastructure to aid the poorest and

most vulnerable in his community, people who were largely ignored by city and state government.

Carney Hall at Boston College and Carney Hospital carry his name in recognition of this commitment to his community. Sadly, though both share this history, they have had a very different recent history. Carney Hall of Boston College is still there, still functioning as part of a vibrant university now serving the nation.

Carney Hospital may soon be no more. One remained a private institution, the other became "for-profit." The closing of the Carney Hospital is a reminder of how little "for-profit" hospitals care for the communities they serve. The people of Dorchester have lost what Andrew Carney pioneered: health care for all.

We are all diminished by this.

We could seek to find blame, and there is plenty go around. The archdiocese certainly could have done more to support Catholic hospitals; and allowing the hospitals to become profit centers rather than health centers is a stain on our state regulators and politicians. But blame will do nothing to help those who have lost their local hospital.

One can only wonder what Andrew Carney would have thought of this.

The writer is the co-founder and former director of Irish Studies at Boston College. This article originally ran in The Dorchester Reporter.

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Museum of Literature Dublin display takes look at poetry's farthest frontiers

'Adventure on the edge of an artform'

SCENES AT THE MUSEUM

"Is This a Poem?" is a mixed media and event programme that explores works of poetry that exist beyond the page. The exhibition will continue through Sept 22 at the Museum of Literature Dublin, where the poems in the exhibition, which is scattered across five floors of the facility, include sound, sculpture, image, film, performances, software, and objects you can touch.

Curated by Christodoulos Makris, an award-winning contemporary experimental poet, the exhibition celebrates the power of poetry in all its forms to surprise, challenge, and inform our view of the world.

The poems collected in this exhibition were mostly made in Ireland over the last decade. They include Graham Allen's "Holes," an ongoing digital poem composed daily since December 2006 and presented as a rolling video projection, and Hayley Carr's "Glossolalia," a sound poem using backward phonetics with reversible playback.

A display of handmade miniature figurines, cards produced by artificial intelligence, a real-time rolling feed of every post on Twitter / X featuring the word "chance" and an outdoor sound installation are some of the other items in the eclectic mix. Visitors to the exhibition are also invited to contribute to "Is This Your Poem?" now a work in progress.

Having produced three of Ireland's four Nobel Prize winners for literature, and home to other literary giants including Jonathan Swift, Oscar Wilde, and James Joyce, Dublin has serious literary credentials and has been designated a UNESCO City of Literature. There are numerous literary festivals and events during the year as well as great bookshops to browse where you will always find something unusual.

In May, the International Literature Festival Dublin brings together the finest writers to take part in readings, conversations, debates, podcasts and broadcasts in a wide-ranging program of events.

And each June, the world-famous Bloomsday festival celebrates Joyce's remarkable novel "Ulysses" over six days of events that bring to life the characters and ideas in the literary masterpiece. With readings, performances, guided tours of the places featured in the novel, music, discussions and the chance to dress up in Edwardian garb and lunch like Leopold, it offers entertainment for all.

Additionally, the Dublin Book Festival takes place from Nov. 6 to Nov. 10 this year, shining a light on Ireland's writers and locations.

Events includes authors in conversation, panel discussions, book launches, anniversary events, literary walking tours, professional development events and creative workshops, and covers everything from literary fiction, history, poetry and science to non-fiction, nature, spoken word, art, children's literature, and a full free program of family and schools' events.

A festival hub is set up in our primary venue, which in 2024 will once again be The Printworks at Dublin Castle, where authors, publishers, and audiences mingle over the weekend. The Festival Hub is a space where audiences gather to lounge on beanbags and read, browse the bookshop, enjoy the café and meet authors at book signings. Visitors can immerse themselves in a world of readings, exciting and stimulating panel discussions, storytelling, and creative events for all the family to enjoy.

At the heart of Dublin Book Festival is the belief that literature is for all, and we aim to foster a sense of community among literature enthusiasts from all walks of life, providing a welcoming space and offering an inspiring and engaging literary experience, in the heart of Dublin, for all book lovers.

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Northern Ireland has evolved into a must-visit destination for tourists

A push toward green tourism and an unprecedented wave of international investment is reinvigorating Northern Ireland's tourism industry. Over the last few years, a number of major investments in Northern Ireland's hotel stock has added more luxury options for visitors to this small region.

In a story worthy of a Hollywood movie, Mick Boyle, a highly successful Australian businessman, made a family visit to the place of his birth in County Armagh and decided to purchase a derelict ruin, Killeavy Castle. He then transformed it into a 4-star hotel that sits in 365 acres in the stunning Ring of Gullion.

The Slieve Donard in Newcastle, located beside one of the island's, and indeed the world's, top golf courses, Royal County Down, recently got a multi-million-pound refurbishment. Now part of the Marine & Lawn Group, its interior has been transformed into opulent elegance that reflects its 125-year history.

New 5-star accommodation is set to open this summer alongside another top golf course, Royal Portrush, on the beautiful Causeway Coast. American investors are developing the luxury Dunluce Lodge in advance of The Open which will be played at Royal Portrush in 2025. And just up the road in Portrush, the Adelphi hotel is currently undergoing an extensive refurbishment and will re-open later this year and part of the Marine & Lawn portfolio.

Many other international investors are developing properties across Northern Ireland including new builds in Belfast city centre and at its famous Titanic Quarter. Matched by local investment, this is creating much more choice for visitors seeking top-notch accommodation and luxury extras.

As visitors increasingly seek out unique, sustainable experiences that allow them to discover the region's hidden gems, engage with local culture, and enjoy the natural beauty of the surroundings, new tourism businesses are stepping up to meet the demand.

These include a wealth of artisan food producers, lots of green accommodation providers, and a myriad of outdoor experiences.

In County Fermanagh, Erne Water Taxi offers an eco-friendly way to explore Lough Erne's gorgeous lake lands, combining nature immersion with cultural storytelling. Hiking, biking and kayaking opportunities abound in the region's many Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, while in County Tyrone, OM Dark Sky Park and Observatory in Davagh Forest is dedicated to reducing light pollution and providing a unique stargazing experience.

And with a vision to transition to an inclusive, zero-emissions, climate-resilient economy, Belfast was ranked eighth in the world in the 2022 Global Destinations Sustainability Index.

Northern Ireland is set to forge ahead, ensuring that the region becomes a leading destination for eco-conscious travelers. -IRELAND.COM



Nick Boyle purchased a derelict ruin and turned it into Killeavy Castle. A four star hotel in the Ring of Gullion.

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fills my
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Ireland's heart and soul are shaped by the sea. These crystal clear waters have sculpted the coast of the lunar-like Burren, the stepping stones of the Giant's Causeway and the quiet coves of Connemara. Its shores are framed by a clifftop temple, lighthouses and the balmy beauty of coastal villages.

Discover captivating tales at Titanic Belfast in the city that built the Ship of Dreams, or dive into the adventures of a pirate queen in County Mayo. But most of all, leave the world behind as the wind greets your face, your lips taste of salt from the sea and you realize you're home.

So come on, fill your heart with Ireland...

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