

Clannad Rocks the Rocksino



High Kings: Friends for Life ... Page 9
Lucky the Parting Glass Page ... 23
Let Them Play Page ... 27

Cover photo courtesy of Patrick Broome www.patrickbroome.com

Fare Thee Well My Friend: John Campbell

By Roger S. Weist

This past Thursday I heard the news of the passing of my friend, John Campbell. I can't tell you how many nights and early, early mornings, over so, so, many years, John and I would sit around The Pride of Erin talking about so many things. We talked about the troubles in Ireland, and what we could do about what was happening and how we could help unify our beloved divided island nation. We talked about the Irish in Cleveland and what we could do to increase awareness and activity in the heritage he so loved and worked to share. Yes, in those chats, over those many nights and mornings, we routinely solved most of the problems of the world, only to have new and more



vexing problems crop up the next day.

He arrived in Cleveland from Ballycroy, County Mayo, Ireland in the late 50s. Here he met and married the love of his life, Patricia Mannion. Together, through 50 years of marriage, they raised 10 children, 17 grandchildren and 2 great-grand children. He was an Army veteran, had a successful career at Lincoln Electric, and in 1982 became the proprietor of The Pride of Erin Pub at West 123rd & Lorain Avenue. A pub his family still operates today.

John Campbell was a truly a great family man, who instilled in his family his love of his adopted home and a deep and abiding love for the land he left behind. His love of his heritage drove him to find time to support all things Irish in Cleveland and beyond.

The Ancient Order of Hibernians,

the West Side Irish American Club, the Irish American Club-East Side and every Irish event that passed through Cleveland got John's support. His passion to see a united Ireland guided him to become one of the co-founders of Cleveland's Irish Northern Aid Committee, with a strong and unbending commitment to the cause of Irish freedom.

John put words into action. He was always there to man a picket lines, or information lines. He attended hearings, organized events to support the effort and in 2008 the United Irish Societies of Cleveland selected John as the St. Patrick's Day Parade Grand Marshall.

John had a razor sharp wit and a gleam in his eyes, proud, honest and true. And now he is at rest. He joins his lovely wife Patricia and so many of our friends and family. He will always be traveling the road in our hearts, our minds and our souls. And while we are sad that he is gone, and more than a few tears will be shed, today tomorrow and every day, we will raise a glass to him, and to the loving legacy he left behind.

Thank you John Campbell, father, brother, Grandfather, Uncle, Great Uncle, cousin, publican, friend, for all that you have done, but mostly, thank you for being a friend.

In John's own words, "you don't have to go home, but you can't stay here!"

Safe home my friend, safe home.

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Starting mid-February and while supplies last, "Balson Bangers" will be stocked and sold at all COSTCO Club locations in the Northeast and Midwest (see map below).

RJ Balson USA President Oliver Balson says, "We are absolutely thrilled with the COSTCO placements. We are encouraging customers to stock up on the bangers, as the price will be exceptional and the sausages can freeze for 6 months. This presents a huge opportunity for shoppers to show that there is a strong demand for authentic English and Irish items like bangers and back bacon. We are humbled and grateful for the support we have received from the Ex-Pat community here in the States and we continue to work with major retail buyers to make these items more accessible."

The Traditional Bangers will be available until St Patrick's Day or while supplies last. The item will be sold in a 2 lb. pack and can be frozen for up to 6 months. The following COSTCO Club Regions will be stocking Balson Bangers: **NORTHEAST:** VA, WV, PA, NJ, DE, MD, NY, RI, CT, MA, VT, NH and Wash D.C., **MIDWEST:** KS, NE, MO, IA, WI, MI, MN, IL, IN, OH, and KY).

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Editor's Corner

There truly is no rest for the wicked. Thanksgiving, Christmas, New Years, our 7th Anniversary, pulsed with joy and brilliant craic. Don't pause, don't even blink (and don't hate), I am on the Joanie Madden Cruise as you read this and St. Patrick's Day is officially launched with a bang in this month's issue.

Plenty of events this month, and Save the Dates for next fill the pages. Get out the calendar, pick what are don't misses to you, and Write them Down, so you won't forget the best of the best events this green season. I'll give you the cruise highlights when I return; for me, the Joanie Madden Folk n Irish Cruise is the first festival of the mighty festival season in the States.

Clannad rocks the Rocksino February 11th, the day I return from my Chicago book tour. If you are not familiar with the group, look them up on Youtube - all my words here could not do them justice. They have been, and are, a group of great talent, and immense influence. "Don't Miss" is over used, but could not apply more to Moya Brennan and Clannad.

If a song, a story and a laugh are right up your alley, be sure to see Flanagan's Wake at Playhouse Square's Kennedy's Down Under. Hilarious interactive comedy, every show is unique as the cast feeds off and takes the direction given by the audience. This is their 5th



John O'Brien, Jr.

year at Playhouse Square; I see it every year, and always have a fantastic time. Check it out; Flanagan's Wake puts the fun in funeral.

We are delighted once again to partner with the 38th Annual Cleveland International Film Festival, which opens March 19th, and the Cleveland Pops, who are presenting Ciarán Sheehan in Concert on March 15th. When you talk of nurturing great art and offering great opportunity for both known's and unknown's (as yet), these two organizations show us the way. Please give them your support as well, so they can continue to present and promote the arts in our community. Other outstanding organizations and benefits are highlighted in this issue, please be as generous as you are able.

I only write this column when the rest of the paper is complete, and sent off to layout. Highlights emerge. I am always stunned at the breadth and the wealth of what is offered to us across the state in music, events and opportunity to celebrate

~ each other and our heritage. The information is here; the ball is in your court; get up, show up, and lift up.

DON'T FORGET, The Green Season is nearly upon us. The March issue, our largest of the year, is now under construction. Don't let your event get lost in the fierce desperate shuffle of the green season. Advertise, it pays!

The Ohio Irish American News is a great targeted format to promote your St. Patrick's season event(s), offer congratulations to club or organization honorees in your community and to show your support for the Irish community on this very significant and meaningful day for the Irish around the world. We hope you will join us in this celebration.

Organizations, please send us a short bio and pic of your honorees, we'd love to feature and recognize them in our March issue. See you in the high season.

John

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Irish American Archives Society Announces Walks of Life Awardees

The Irish American Archives Society (of Cleveland) will hold its 18th Annual "Walks of Life" Award Dinner on Thursday, February 27, 2013, at the Holiday Inn, 6001 Rockside Road, in Independence. The "Walks of Life" Awards, launched in 1997, recognize living Clevelanders and northeast Ohioans of Irish heritage whose attainments in their chosen Walks of Life have been truly remarkable and stand as an inspiration to others.

2014 Walks of Life Award Recipients are Barbara O'Brien Brown, Margaret Pigott Flynn, Jeanne M. Colleran, Jack Kahl and Maartin J. Sweeney.

The schedule of events is: 5:30 VIP Reception, 6:00 Cash

Bar Reception, 6:30 Dinner, 7:30 Award Presentations. Individual tickets to the dinner are \$75; checks can be mailed, payable to Irish American Archives Society, P.O. Box 91756, Cleveland, OH 44101-3756.

The Irish American Archives Society is a not-for-profit organization founded in 1994 by the late Thomas F. Campbell to support the preservation of the legacy of Irish and Irish American achievement in northeast Ohio. Information about activities can be found at www.irisharchives.org or contact Margaret Lynch, Executive Director, Irish American Archives Society, iaasadmin@gmail.com or 216-941-5727.



Terry Kenneally and Colleen Corrigan Day model the Holy Name 100th Anniversary Commemorative T-Shirt.

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4001 Rockside Road

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6:00 Cash Bar, 6:30 Dinner

7:30 Awards Ceremony

Donation \$75 (\$44 tax deductible)

Send check (payable to IAAS)

& names of guests

by February 15th to

Irish American Archives Society

P.O. Box 91756

Cleveland OH 44191-3756

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baasdring@gmail.com

for more info



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Sober St. Patrick's Day® Celebration

It's a great day for the Irish (and their friends) every St. Patrick's Day as celebrations abound but in 2014 the Cleveland area will see a new and different kind of celebration as Cleveland joins the growing movement for a Sober St. Patrick's Day® alternative.

The Cleveland area Sober St. Patrick's Day® Celebration will take place from 5pm until 8p at Ahern's Banquet Center, 726 Avon Belden Road, Avon Lake, Ohio 44012.

The event offers outstanding Irish entertainment in-

Spencer Reilly, who almost lost a member of his family to addiction just eight years ago. He first proposed the idea to leaders in the recovery and Irish American communities, a pitch that led, a year later, to the 2012 inaugural party. Now an annual event, Sober St. Patrick's Day® was held again with a sold-out auditorium on March 16, 2013; parade day in New York City. As word spread, Sober St. Patrick's Day® celebrations were successfully staged in Casper, Wyoming, and Bel-



cluding Mary Agnes Kennedy (guitar and vocals) singing traditional Irish ballads; Patrick Kilroy on bagpipes; traditional Irish dancers; and the popular trio Fíor Gael with traditional Irish tunes and songs. Fíor Gael features Brian Bigley on the uilleann pipes, Rory Hurley, guitar & vocals, and Brendan Carr on the percussion and bodhran drum.

The purpose of Sober St. Patrick's Day® is captured in the organization's mission statement:

"To reclaim the true spirit of the day and to change the perception and experience of what St. Patrick's Day can be, by providing family-friendly, alcohol free events celebrating the best of Irish music, dance and comedy."

Sober St. Patrick's Day® was created in New York City by award-winning theater and television producer, William

fast, Ireland in 2013. Cleveland joins the movement as the fourth city to produce a Sober St. Patrick's Day event.

Admission will be \$10 per person with coffee, tea, and soft drinks provided along with light snacks. Alcoholic beverages will not be served or permitted. Ahern's Banquet Center has ample free parking and is convenient to I-90 just north of the Rte 83 - Avon exit.

"I really like the idea of having a special event on this holiday for Americans of Irish heritage [and those] who are in recovery from alcoholism, to celebrate our shared heritage in a safe and inclusive environment." - Noel Kilkenny, Consul General of Ireland, Sober St. Patrick's Day® 2012.

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The Thing About December

By Donal Ryan, ISBN 9781781620106; Doubleday Ireland; Lilliput Press, 2013; 205 pp

Several months ago, this column reviewed Donal Ryan's first book titled, The Spinning Heart? It garnered much praise and won the Irish Book of the Year award. This month we review his second novel, The Thing About

December, which is actually a prequel to The Spinning Heart.

Whereas The Spinning Heart was narrated by twenty-one victims of the property crash in Ireland, this novel is split into twelve chapters, each detailing a month in the life of the book's protagonist, Johnsey Cunliffe. Johnsey is a simple-minded young man

who lives with his mother and father and works in a local co-op. He is mildly handicapped and might be described as 'a bit soft in the head.' As a result, he had been protected by his parents, especially his father.



Both of his parents pass away, leaving Johnsey to fend for himself. Upon their deaths, Johnsey inherits the land on which they live and becomes the focus of the story. Like its predecessor, I rate The Thing About December a TOP SHELF read.

*Terrence J. Kenneally is an attorney and president of Terrence J. Kenneally & Associates Co. located in Rocky River, Ohio. He has a Master's in Irish Studies from John Carroll University and can be reached at terry@tjkenneally.com.



LAOH St Patrick's Day Parade Honorees

LAOH-Our Lady of the Rosary Division Cleveland, OH

The members of Our Lady of the Rosary Division of the Ladies Ancient Order of Hibernians honored St. Brigid with a Mass dedicated on Sunday, January 19, 2014 at St. Patrick's Church WP, 4427 Rocky River Dr., Cleveland, Ohio 44135.

Mass was followed by a breakfast and a short program recognizing the 2014 St. Patrick's Day Parade Honorees in Thorpe Hall.

Our 2014 St. Patrick's Day Parade Honorees are:
Thomas Lynch
Hibernian of the Year
Andy Dever
Grand Marshall
Bridie Joyce
Irish Mother of the Year
John O'Brien Jr.
Inside Co-Chair
Mark Owens
Outside Co-Chair

We were honored that AOH Ohio State President and LAOH Ohio State President Eloise Stalter attended the Day's Celebration. The Our Lady of the Rosary Division was honored to present their first Mary of the Gael Award.



This Award will be presented biennially at the St. Brigid's Day Celebration to a member of the Division to recognize her commitment in promoting a spirit of dedication to faith, family and heritage. By her actions this Hibernian Sister makes a difference in the community living our motto of Friendship, Unity and Catholic Charity. This year, Division President presented the Award to Mary Celine O'Leary.



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Piping It In

Jack Baker

by Gayle Baker

Jack is taking a long deserved vacation, and he's down in Florida soaking up the sun! He asked me to cover this month's column, since I'm still up north here, freezing my heinie off! I took him up on the offer and since there are no new CDs to really report on, I thought I'd take a trip into the archives, and drag out those recordings that are my standbys. These are discs that I fall back to when everything else



sounds old or tiresome, tunes that I always will listen to no matter what mood I'm in. These are CDs that make me laugh, get my blood flowing or just take me back to that relaxing time on the beach and I would like to share them with you. Maybe you will find someone new or someone old you have forgotten about!

In 1987, Alex Beaton released *Daft Ditties*, a collection of humorous and tastefully offensive songs. Alex has a great voice, and although health issues have sidelined him, his catalog of recordings remains available. Some of my favorite tracks are *Wee Castanettes*, a fun song about inappropriate advances; *Big Nellie May* which is about a lady golfer, and *Maids When You're Young* (Never Wed an Old Man). Alex is always good for a chuckle!

Seamus Kennedy released *Bar Rooms and Ballads* around the same time and his baritone voice and guitar bring lots of life to this live recording. He always does a



variety of trad and not, fun and sad on each CD. This CD has *Three Minute Hamlet* which is like *Cliffs notes* sung, plus one of my personal theme songs *Mom's Lullaby*, the beautiful and haunting *Kilkelly* and a taste of *Seamus' wild side* in *How the Yodel was Born* by Doug Green of *Riders in the Sky*.

Kila has always been my go to group when it comes to eclectic and up-tempo tunes. They are always my recommendation for something different. *Tóg É Go Bog É* came out in 1997 and this band of Irish speakers loves to take trad just a little further on. Mostly instrumental, there are a few songs but the rhythm is what keeps me coming back for more. *Gwerzy* is a very rhythmic, fast driving, melodic tune and if you look on *You Tube*, goes with a very surreal video! *Jasmine* is a lovely ballad, but the style is such that there are no words. You'll understand when you listen. This is a disc that is never out of reach.

Michael McGoldrick has always had vision when it comes to Irish music. He has been a part of so many bands in so many different ways over the years, it's not easy to tell where his influences come from. In 2000, he gave us *Fused* and it became THE soundtrack of many dance groups to choreograph to. Music flows and tempos change from beginning to end of several tracks. Trad pieces take on a contemporary feel without losing their tradition. *Lough Mountain* keeps it upbeat and makes you want to dance in your chair or on the floor.

Alasdair Fraser and his band *Skydance* released *Live In Spain* in 2001 and it include guests from the Spanish Celtic branch of the family, including *Hevia*, *Mikel Laboa* and others. The music is traditional but with an addition of Spanish flavor and

never stops until it's supposed to. The *Spark* and *Way Out To Hope Street* are tracks that feature so many musicians, it's difficult to keep track of who's who. *Harris Dance*, which includes *Ruil-eadh Cailleach*, has been one of my favorite pieces since it first appeared on *Alasdair's Skydance* CD. You just can't sit still when you listen.

The newest classic in my list is by John McSherry and Donal O'Connor. *Tripswitch* came out



Alasdair Fraser and Natalie Haas.

in 2006 and the combination of Uilleann Pipes and fiddle plus guest musicians on an assortment of guitars, bouzouki and percussion make the sound of each piece so full. I have always been a fan of great guitar playing

and this CD is full of it topped off by McSherry's and O'Connor's skillful performances.

As one snowy, cold day merges with another, it's nice to have some great music to pull out, dust off and slip into the player. The music brings me right back to festival season, listening and

talking and seeing new bands.

Jack will be back in the paper next month and hopefully there will be some new CDs to hear about. In the meantime, stop by the store or email him at jack@rampantlion.com.



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The High Kings: Friends for Life

2014, Sony Music Entertainment. 12 Tracks, 42 Minutes. Produced by Sharon Shannon and John Dunford

We often talk of the Ballad Boom, with a hint of nostalgia of that era, and coming along at the tail end of a most vibrant and influential period in Irish music. I have had the pleasure of seeing the High Kings live at least a half dozen times. The echoes of the Ballad Boom heyday are far more than the sons of legends moniker first attached to the group, before the talent wrote its own itinerary of greatness.

Darren Holden, Brian Dunphy, Finbarr Clancy and Martin Furey are the sons of legends, they are also gifted, vibrant, committed and one of the most exciting Irish music bands to grace the festival and concert hall in recent memory.

Friends for Life is their newest CD, fourth overall, and fantastic.

Four great voices, arrangements that touch with passion and persuasion and the obvious love and intimate knowledge of the songs they sing are trademarks of the CD and of the band. Have a listen, you won't be disappointed.

Oh Maggie starts ~ there is the sound of the High Kings, and the great ballad bands through and throughout modern Ireland. Made famous to some degree by Tommy Makem & the Clancy Brothers,



ers, the energy and embrace birthed the Ballad Boom in the U.S. and then back in Ireland too. The High

Kings vigorously stamp it with their own vibrant arrangement, a sound modern, distinct and full of joy.

Gucci ~ upbeat, moody; Jamaica goes to Ireland and Ireland's Diaspora sings to the world.

All Around the World ~ A song of love, today, without lament and with open arms.

Leave Her Johnny ~ Acapella, each voice can stand alone; together the High Kings are magic!



Health to the Company ~ Another touch of world music, it is hard to NOT sing along to this one.

Galway Girl ~ A popular recording right now, Con O'Brien's version with the Irish Descendants is the best I have ever heard. I didn't think it would be possible to beat that, but the High Kings run neck and neck, a wonderful rendition.

Peggy Gordon ~ This Paddy Reilly classic is a little edgier, a little slower, and beautiful.

High ~ I have not heard this song before

- the title matches the harmony. It has a country feel, but full of appreciation for life and how good it can make us feel.

Ireland's Shore ~ A seafaring ballad, with devil may care trademark of seamen of old. I can picture the Kings dancing on deck, accordion blazing and watchmen swaying.

Come with Me Now ~ Stroll with a maiden, a ship intrudes, as it so often did. Love laments: "I will look after you always".

MacAlpines Fusiliers ~ back to the verve and high energy, with a great beat; the old Irish classic, with a new twist that is perfect for a festival setting - dancing in the aisles and singing with the band.

Friends for Life ~ The CD title track, the whole album is a tribute to the journey,

reactions from the crowd, and those met along the way: influences, fans and ghost leave no one behind ~ friends for life.

On Friends for Life, the first track, Oh Maggie, is my favorite, but it was hard to choose. Every track on Friends for Life is good; every track forces a reaction and forces you to pay attention. For me, Oh Maggie and Galway Girl blaze the brightest. The whole CD is a favorite, stays in the stereo and stays at the top of my Highly Recommended CD's. Friends for Life is a Top Shelf Selection.

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By J. Michael Finn



"Doing My Bit for Ireland"

Throughout Easter Week 1916, women often faced the same dangers as did the men, risking their lives so that Ireland could be free. One such interesting person of the Rebellion was Margaret Skinnider.

Margaret was born on April 5, 1892 to Irish parents in the Lanarkshire town of Coatbridge, Scotland. The family later moved to Glasgow. Her father and mother had roots in County Monaghan and the family often returned there to visit relatives. She wrote, "Scotland is my home, but Ireland my country."

When she was twelve a friend loaned her a book on Irish history and she could not help but notice the difference between actual Irish history and the "English version" of Irish history that she was taught in Scotland. She noted that, "The resentment I had felt in County Monaghan grew hotter."

In college she was trained as a mathematics teacher. Believing that "An English war is always a signal for an Irish rising" she joined Cumann na mBan (pronounced coo-man nah van) and the Irish Volunteers in Glasgow in 1914. It was at this time that Margaret learned to shoot at a rifle club, which had been established so that women could help in defense of the British Empire. Margaret became a very good shot.

Her work in Glasgow for Cumann na mBan and the Volunteers came to the attention of Countess Constance de Markievicz and she asked Margaret to come to Dublin to visit her. Margaret made the overnight trip to Dublin during Christmas of 1915.

In crossing the Irish Sea, she chose to sleep on deck, using her hat for a pillow rather than sleeping in a stateroom. For in her hat, she was smuggling explosive detonators and had wires wrapped around her under

her coat. Margaret was fearful that in a stateroom she would run into a stray electric wire or a steam pipe that would detonate them. She wrote, "That I ever awakened was a miracle. Pressure, they told me when I reached Dublin, is just as dangerous, and my head had been resting on them all night!"

She arrived in Dublin and was welcomed by the Countess to her home in Rathmines, known as Surrey House. The house was always a hive of activity, full of an odd assortment of characters – out of work actors; struggling writers and artists; republican revolutionaries; trade unionists; Irish boy scouts; and others. Someone wrote that, "Until she (the Countess) came down to breakfast in the morning, she never knew what guests she had under her roof. In order not to disturb her, they often climbed in through the window late at night."

Margaret soon fell right in, assisting the Countess with the training of her Irish boy scouts (known as Fianna Boys). The Countess, a trained marksman herself, was teaching them to shoot. Margaret accompanied the Countess and her boys to the woods surrounding Dublin, where the boys learned shooting, camping and military skills. Margaret wrote that the boys were delighted that she could hit the bulls-eye more often than any of them.

"The Countess had trained them to expect good marksmanship from a woman," wrote Margaret.

At the encouragement of the Countess and after meeting James Connolly, Margaret signed on as a private in the Irish Citizen Army. She also made several trips back and forth to Glasgow, each time smuggling explosives

into Ireland hidden in her clothing. Her Scottish accent often kept her from being searched or detained.

During the Easter Rebellion, Margaret was assigned as a dispatch rider to St. Stephens Green, reporting to Commandant Michael Mallin. She made several trips during that week between the Green and the General Post Office delivering dispatches and successfully dodging bullets from British snipers.

As fighting around the Green began, Mallin ordered that they take possession of the College



of Surgeons building. Margaret was asked to utilize her skills with a rifle as she was sent to the roof, where she served quite effectively as a sniper under the direction of the Countess.

Then, Margaret and William Partridge were detailed to lead a patrol towards the Russell Hotel on the corner of the Green and Harcourt Street. Here they were ordered to gain entry to a nearby shop, work their way down the row of buildings, and set fire to a British outpost; this would remove the snipers, force the withdrawal of the military and deny this position to the enemy.

Upon arrival at the shop, Partridge smashed the front glass with the butt of his rifle. As the sound of breaking glass echoed throughout the street, a volley of rifle fire from

British snipers erupted from a nearby building. Margaret turned just as Fred Ryan caught the full blast of the first volley of fire, killing him instantly. Ryan was just seventeen years old.

The second volley hit Margaret, and she collapsed on the street. She had been shot in three places. The others took cover in the shop doorway. Partridge dragged Margaret's body into cover as the squad laid down covering fire. She was still breathing, but seriously wounded. She was the only woman wounded during the Rebellion.

Partridge carried Margaret back to the College of Surgeons, where they were able to remove the bullets, without anesthetic. That same day Partridge and the Countess returned to the scene of the shooting and the Countess personally dispatched the two British snipers who had killed Ryan and wounded Margaret.

When the surrender order was received on Sunday, it was decided to take Margaret directly to St. Vincent's Hospital, rather than risk her falling into the hands of the British. She was in the hospital for several weeks after the Rising, was briefly detained and then returned to the hospital when the doctor advised the authorities that she was too sick to be jailed. From the hospital, she arranged to escape while awaiting medical treatment and obtained a travel permit from Dublin Castle to enable her to return to Scotland.

Margaret returned to Dublin later that year before fleeing to

America in fear of internment. While in America, she collected funds for the republican cause and lectured with other women who had fought in the Easter Rising. In New York, Margaret also wrote and published her autobiography, titled, "Doing my Bit for Ireland". Her book provides an excellent firsthand account of the Rebellion. She later returned to Ireland and took up a teaching post in Dublin in 1917.

During the War of Independence she was arrested and imprisoned. In the civil war she became Paymaster General of the Irish Republican Army until she was arrested in 1923 and held at North Dublin Union. There she became Director of Training for the prisoners.

After her release from prison, Margaret worked as a teacher at Kings Inn Street Sisters of Charity Primary School in Dublin until her retirement in 1961. She was a member of the Irish National Teachers' Organization (INTO) throughout her teaching career and became its' President in 1956. She lived her last years in Glenageary, County Dublin. Margaret Skinnider died on October 10, 1971 and is buried in the Republican plot in Glasnevin Cemetery, Dublin.

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

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ACROSS

- 1 Place your bets and watch the dog races at the Galway _____ Stadium.
- 3 See a production at the Galway _____ Hall Theatre.
- 4 Get your picture taken standing on the _____ Man Bridge off N59 on the way to Cong.
- 7 Visit the Galway _____, the National Aquarium of Ireland.
- 8 See many different events at _____ Square, the city centre of Galway City
- 11 Hike the trails in Connemara _____ Park and climb Diamond Hill.
- 14 Hike up to _____, a stone fort, on Inish Mor
- 15 Visit _____ Park in Gort, once home to Lady Gregory and visited often by William Butler Yeats.
- 16 Stay a night in Cong's _____ Castle, once on Lough Corrib, once owned by the Guinness Brewing family.
- 17 Visit _____ Galway in Knocknacarra, Galway to test your skills at 10 different sports at this first of its kind in the world facility
- 18 View the bog landing site of Alcock and _____s first Atlantic flight in 1919 and see the Marconi Station near Clifden.
- 20 Hike the trails at Portumna _____ Park by the shore of Lough Derg.
- 22 Visit Athenry's Norman Castle and _____, listed as a National Monument.
- 23 Tour _____' Garden in Rosscahill to see the four gardens representing the Celtic Heritage of the Four Seasons.
- 27 Climb The Hill of _____ in Tuam
- 30 Take a ferry to the _____ Islands from Rossevale.
- 31 Stop at _____ Castle, a impressive 16th-century castle flanked by two branches of the Drimmeen River in Oughterard.
- 39 Local legend says that if you touch the hand of the Connemara _____ you will be blessed with the knowledge of his ancient tribe, located on the road from Clifden to Galway.
- 40 Take a spin on a go-kart at Pallas _____ in Loughrea, Europe's largest kart track or give paintballing a try.
- 44 Go to " _____ in the Church" at St. Nicholas Collegiate Church in Galway City for some great traditional music.
- 45 Stop in at the Galway City _____ in the Spanish Arch to learn about the history of this wonderful city.
- 47 Visit the lovely fishing village of _____ in Connemara, for great seafood, great pictures, and the best maker of bodhrans in Ireland.
- 48 See a demonstration of herding skills by the Joyce Country _____ in Shanafaraghaun.
- 50 Explore Connemara's _____ mine, closed in 1865, to look for copper pyrite or crystals of quartz and fluorite, or pan for gold.
- 51 Attend the Medieval Banquet at _____ Castle in Kinvara.
- 52 See the Lynch _____ and the window where Galway's Mayor Lynch hung his son, which is how the term "lynched" originated.
- 53 Tour the Woodville _____ Garden at Woodville House in Kilchree

DOWN

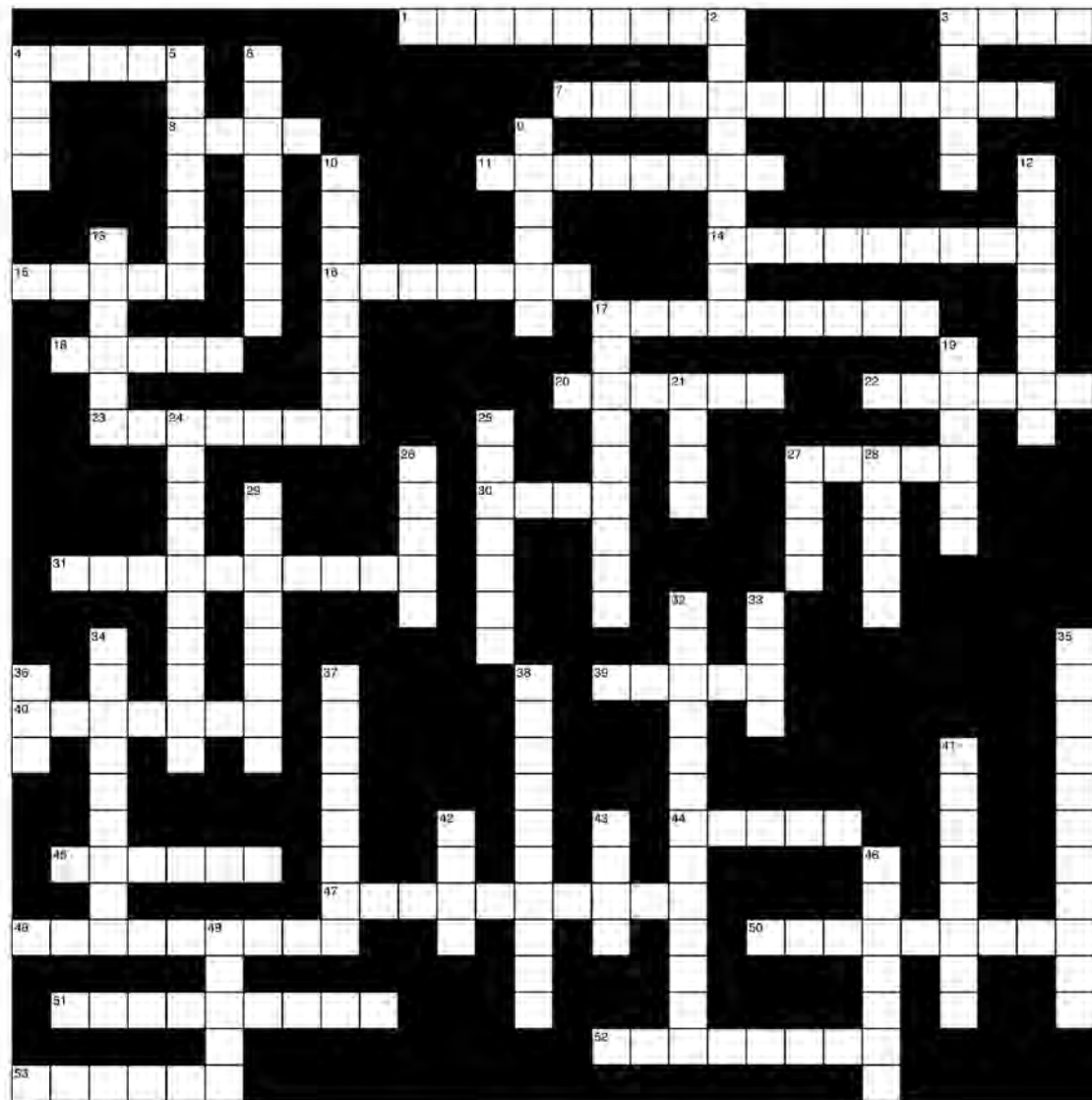
- 2 Visit Kiltullagh 's _____ Castle and Woods, a restored castle that often hosts Medieval Festivals and Visits with Santa.
- 3 Take the family to _____ Pet Farm in Loughrea to feed the animals and play on the bouncing castles and slides.
- 4 Take a stroll down _____ Street in Galway City, watch the buskers, have a pint, listen to music in a pub, and have fish and chips at MacDonagh's.
- 5 Attend a performance at newly renovated Taibhdhearc _____ in Galway City.
- 6 Look for the _____, a geological formation on Inish Mor that fills and empties with the tides.
- 9 Stop in at the Burren _____ Sanctuary in Kinvara to learn about the flora and fauna found in the Burren.
- 10 Shop at Roundstone _____, located in a former monastery, to purchase lovely earthenware.
- 12 Stop at the Athenry _____' Centre to experience Medieval History by participating in the many interactive exhibits.
- 13 Take a boat ride on Lough _____ by Ashford Castle to see many

of its 365 islands.

- 17 Take a stroll along the Salthill _____ and kick the wall at the end.
- 19 Spend a few hours horseback riding at Cooper's Hill _____ on the Tuam Road outside Galway City.
- 21 See many different events at _____ Square, the city centre of Galway City.
- 24 Take the ferry to Connemara's _____ Island to see what Ireland was like 60 years ago.
- 25 See the _____ Arches, a 1700's extension to the walls built in 1584 to protect Galway City's quays.
- 26 Attend the Galway _____ to place a bet on the horses and people watch..., similar to our Kentucky Derby.
- 27 Attend a murder mystery dinner, Murder on the _____, in Galway City.
- 28 Take the time to explore the ruins of Ross _____ Friary in Headford.
- 29 Visit the small _____ Ring Museum in Galway City for history of the ring and purchase a certified original ring
- 32 Attend a #1 rated show performance of _____ in Salthill
- 33 Visit the Galway _____ Centre, the cultural center for literary and visual arts and the home to an impressive Irish art gallery
- 34 Tour the Irish _____ Centre in Portumna to learn about hardships during the famine.
- 35 Stop at _____ Tower, one of the best preserved ancient Round Towers in Ireland, church ruins, and grave of St. Colman.
- 36 Drive the _____ Road to Clifden to see some spectacular scenery

- 37 Have a pint at _____'s Pub in Salthill amongst all the antiques and collectibles covering every inch of available space.
- 38 See Kilconnell _____ Friary's intricate tomb carvings and celtic cross.
- 41 Visit _____ Abbey and Victorian Walled Garden, home to the Benedictine Nuns in Connemara.
- 42 View the Twelve _____ of Connemara and take some great pics.
- 43 Visit Leenane's Sheep and _____ Centre to learn all you want to know fleece and methods of dyeing it over the years.
- 46 Stop at the beautiful, pristine white sand _____ Beach in Connemara for quiet walks.
- 49 Go to a play written by Irish playwrights at the _____ Theatre in Galway City.

Things to Do and See in County Galway



On This Day in Irish History

1 February - Feast day of St. Brigid, a patron Saint of Ireland.

1 February 1315 - Edward Bruce of Scotland and his Irish allies win the Battle of Skerries in Kildare.

2 February 1881 - Birth of James Joyce, novelist and playwright.

3 February 1862 - Thomas Francis Meagher, Irish Nationalist, is made Brigadier General in the Union Army during the American Civil War.

11 February 1926 - Rioting greets the Abbey Theatre performance of Sean O'Casey's *The Plough and the Stars*, due to what is viewed as its anti-heroic treatment of the 1916 Easter Rising.

13 February 1820 - Death of Leonard McNally, a defense barrister, composer, and one of the first members of the United Irishmen. On his death, it was discovered that he had been accepting government money to betray the U. I., while acting as their barrister.

18 February 1366 - English King Edward III introduces the Statutes of Kilkenny in an attempt to prevent Norman settlers from becoming "more Irish than the Irish themselves." Norman Irish were forbidden to speak Irish, inter-marry with natives, entertain Gaelic minstrels, poets or storytellers or follow Brehon laws.

18 February 1884 - Sean MacDiarmada, revolutionary, is born in Kiltycolgher, Co. Leitrim. He was one of the seven signatories of the Proclamation of the Republic and was court-martialed and executed on May 12, 1916.

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•Bardic Circle @The Shamrock Club of Columbus Beginner - friendly, intermediate level Irish session meeting every other Thursdays 8:00 pm - 11:00 pm

•Irish Eyes Heavenly Pub, 1st Wednesday of month. 3324 Secor Rd, Toledo

Stone Mad - 1st Sunday of the month Holleran Traditional Irish Session, 7pm

•Plank Road - Every Thursday

7 - 10. All ages and experience welcome. 16719 Detroit Road, Lakewood, 44107

•The Harp - 1st Friday of every month, 9pm

•Logan's Irish Pub - 3rd Wednesday of the month, 414 S. Main St. Findlay, 7:30 pm.

•Oberlin's Traditional Irish Session - 2nd Monday of the month 8-10pm Slow Train Café, 55 East College St., Oberlin. Informal all experience welcome: www.oberlin.net/~irishsession

•Claddagh Irish Pub - Sundays 6:00pm-9:00pm. All experience levels welcome 585 S. Front St. Columbus, Ohio 43215

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Ireland Past and Present

By Niamh O'Sullivan



The Principal Offender

I frequently drive the Famine Road here in Callan. A 'public works' road, it is a haunting relic of that catastrophic time when Ireland lost roughly one quarter of her population in six years. In 2011, I visited the new museum in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, enthralled. Of all the objects and statistics I absorbed, one set of figures lingers: 11,000 men died there. 40,000 were wounded, captured or missing, comprising 51,000 casualties. Together these made up twenty times the population of the little 1863 town. Accompanying words on a text panel cling to my mind, unshakable: "It leaves us a different people in everything".

Consider John Mitchel, someone who actually lived through those events, being deeply and personally affected by them both. Young Ireland member and later citizen of the Confederate States of America, Mitchel obliquely questioned his own sanity in the aftermath of the Irish Famine, or Great Hunger (1845-1852). At the beginning of his iconic work, "Jail Journal", chronicling conditions in Ireland, his arrest and transportation out of the country, he wrote: "At the end of six years I can set down these things calmly, but to see them might have driven a wise man mad." John Mitchel lost his youngest son, Willie, less than a decade later during General George E. Pickett's tragic charge on the third day at Gettysburg.

When I first studied Mitchel's life in Ireland during the Famine, I admired him greatly. On learning that he chose the Confederate side in the American Civil War, I dismissed him out of hand, my youthful idealism furiously disappointed. Starting work in the Jackie Clarke Collection in Ballina, Co. Mayo, I promised myself sev-

eral hours alone with their fantastic collection of The Nation newspapers.

Founded in 1842 by Thomas Davis among others, this was the paper that appeared throughout the Famine years. I wanted to see how exactly events were reported as they unfolded. I wish I had taken notes, I wish I had taken a more scientific approach, but I do recall from that long session my ever increasing puzzlement. Where is it? Where is that anger which should have been obvious on every page? I reached the 1847 editions before it became especially noticeable.

I did rediscover John Mitchel tho. The Nation was toning down his contributions; he left to establish The



United Irishman, his own explicitly revolutionary newspaper. And there I found it: John Mitchel's legendary sacred wrath. Initially appearing on 12 February 1848 (Abraham Lincoln's 39th birthday) until Mitchel's arrest three months later under the infamous Treason Felony Act, Mitchel named the wretched corpses.

His paper quoted incidents of deaths by starvation, restoring their names to the dead, leaving the horror vividly in our dooryards and along our streets. Mitchel dared dedicate editions to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, the Earl of Clarendon. He chastised the man, openly

challenging him with the startling: "...you should tell your policemen to let my agents alone. I, the principal offender, am here, at 12 Trinity Street, a few yards from your Castle gate. I remain, your enemy, John Mitchel."

In a separate essay, he related an 1847 visit to a family he has last seen two years previously. He arrived in their tiny village, keenly aware of the terrible, ominous silence, every door open. The family are dead, all of them. He explains, "... the father was on a 'public work', and earned the sixth part of what would have maintained his family, which was not always duly paid him; but still it kept them half alive for three months, and so instead of dying in December they died in March."

By 1865 these heart-rending events in Ireland and America had burned themselves out. In an 1866 letter to a former Young Ireland friend, after having been imprisoned in Fortress Monroe with Jefferson Davis, John Mitchel states, "Future of humanity be damned - why, I don't believe in the present, let alone the future."

Author Drew Gilpin Faust, in "This Republic of Suffering", argues that Americans during and after the Civil War had to exert enormous effort to comprehend and to cope with the colossal number of deaths it delivered; the figures and the reality were too overwhelming.

John Mitchel arrived in America right in time for the Civil War, just after witnessing the worst of the Irish Famine. Mitchel's colleagues and some historians believe the devastating events in Ireland alone transformed him. His youngest son killed in Gettysburg, Mitchel's oldest son, John Junior, also in the Confederate army, perished one year later during a Union attack on Fort Sumter. It leaves us a different people in everything.

Coming full circle, I need to re-examine one of Mitchel's most abhorrent notions; advocating the reopening of the slave trade.... How could this ostensibly fearless principled man articulate such a position? Was he used up and disillusioned? Was he conforming to his time and place? Do we judge from our time, or theirs? Did his quest for nationhood, Irish and Confederate, temper all rational thought? His love for Ireland dominated: did he hope for an American / British conflict which might benefit Ireland? Or did he believe it, plain and simple? Could he be a courageous agitator for social justice at home, suffer the humiliation of being removed from Dublin in chains, and defend slavery in America?

Charles Dana, journalist and contemporary of Mitchel wrote of him, "He not only spoke the truth at all times but he spoke the whole truth by a kind of moral necessity. He knew no reserve and no disguise ... no prudence in this regard ... his sincerity was perfect and his courage fearless."

Yet, words concerning Mitchel sent by Jefferson Davis erstwhile President of the Confederate States of America linger, "Together we struggled for states' rights, for the supremacy of the Constitution ...". That Constitution Davis revered recognised enslaved people as property. And this remarkable, flawed Irishman, who knew how it felt to walk in chains, although later disillusioned with Davis, had joined in that struggle with him.

Niamh O'Sullivan worked in Kilmainham Prison for 24 years with Kilmainham Jail Restoration Society & in the Archives. She is involved with the Jackie Clarke Collection, Ballina, and the Irish Life and Lore Series, Kerry" niamhva@gmail.com

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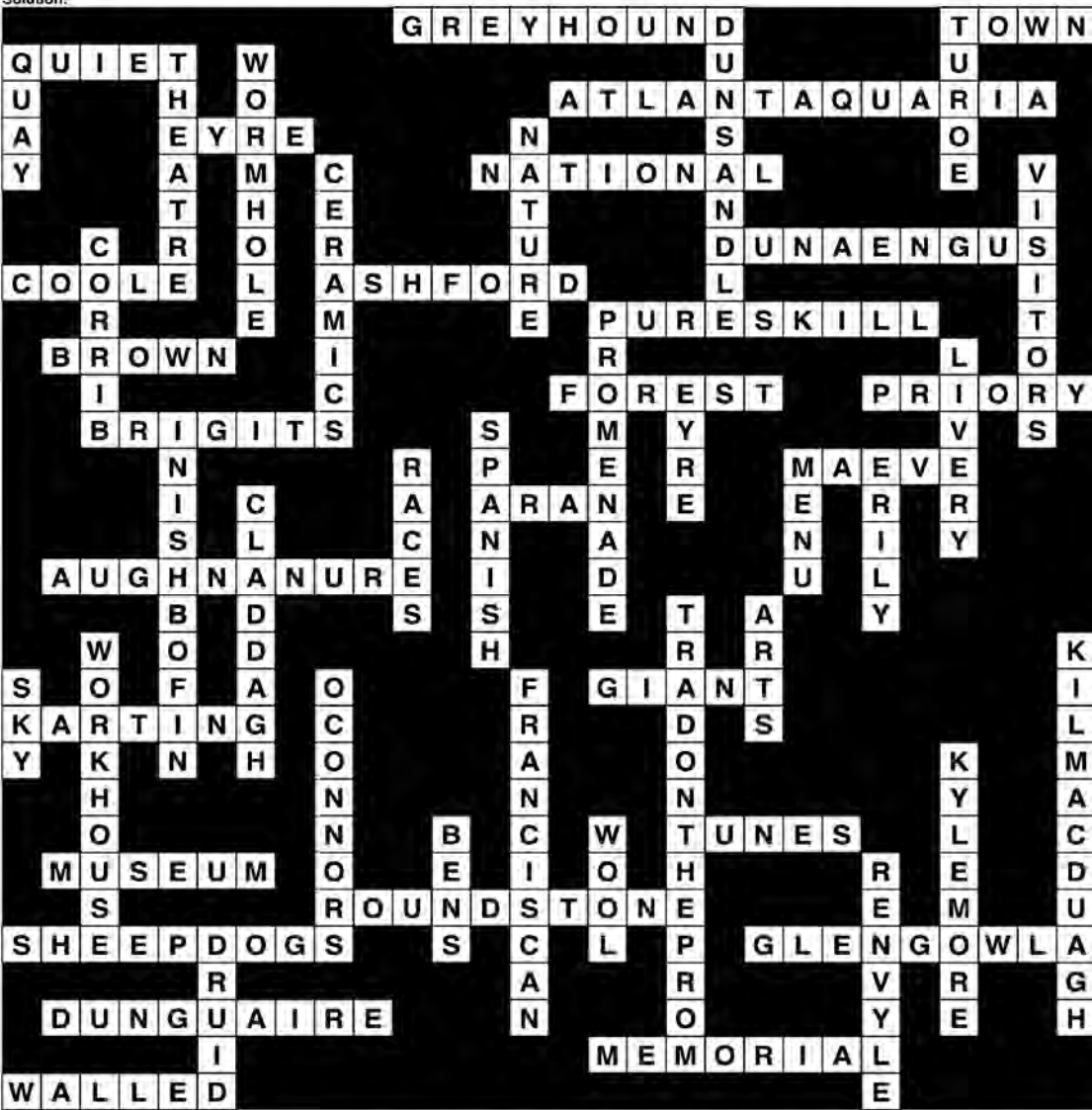
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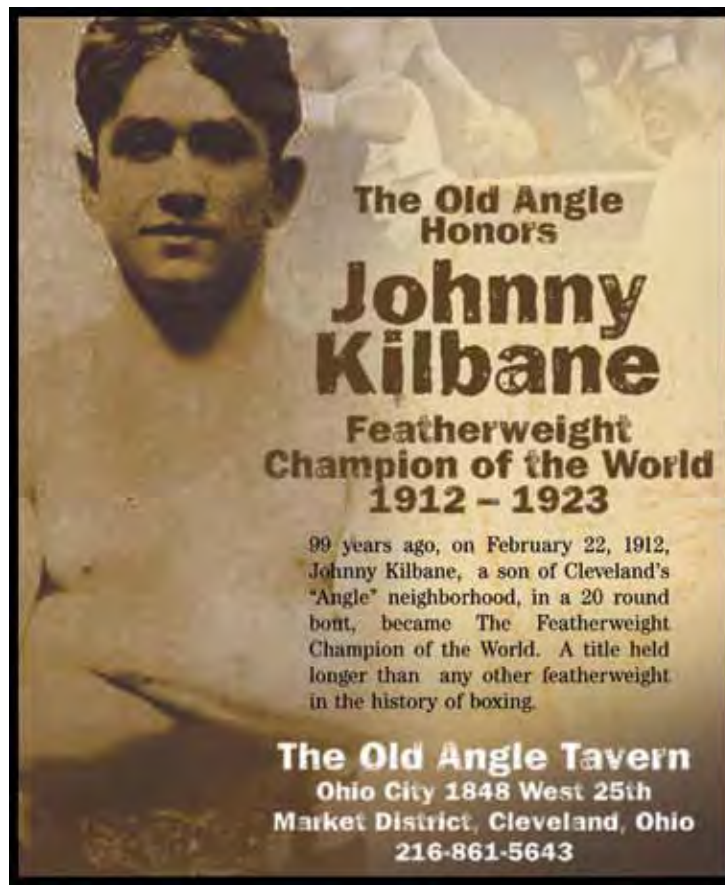
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*Terry, originally from Derry, now resides in Chicago and teaches Irish and British Literature at Loyola University, Chicago. terry.mchabada@gmail.com

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View From Ireland

By Maurice Fitzpatrick

Emigration in an Age of Austerity

The report's authors went for an epochal title. It sounds a little like Love in the Time of Cholera, Gabriel García Márquez's wondrous novel, although the realities of emigration during a recession are not nearly as uplifting as reading the great Colombian. I am referring to the work of a triumvirate of scholars (Irial Glynn, Tomás Kelly and Piaras MacÉinri) based in University College Cork who recently published a book length investigation entitled *Emigration in an Age of Austerity*. Timely and topical, its subject is one that has touched everybody in Ireland either directly or indirectly—and many people outside our country as well.

Emigration has been with us immemorially. Before the foundation of the state, Irish people had been leaving en masse for the New World. The mass departure of Irish people is often attributed to The Great Famine, but Irish people had left long before that trauma as well. The theme of Irish emigration is unrelenting in our past, resulting in an expectation that one disappeared generation would enable, and even fund, the departure of the next.

Yet there was one exceptional period when emigration was not a de facto part of Irish life. During a tiny window in our contemporary history, the 1990s and into the noughties, emigration did not dominate Irish thinking or demographics. The country was gripped then by a contrary fervour: how best to integrate the arrival of immigrants into Ireland. With the popping of the economic bubble, however, Ireland fondly embraced the mass emigration that had been with us for over two centuries. It is this swathe of Irish emigrants that MacÉinri and his colleagues profile. This research is a valuable first attempt at chronicling the latest chapter of the Irish emigration story against the backdrop of past experiences of Irish emigrants.

We are informed that The Irish Times in an editorial published in the 1950s savaged De Valera for his government's role in pushing people out: 'De Valera's reaction to emigration in 1951 was to blame the victim' for leaving behind frugal comforts in search of material gain. Undeterred by such rumblings, successive Irish



governments (whatever permutation the parties in power formed made no difference) contentedly sent Ireland's youth into exile. As our former Foreign Minister, Brian Lenihan Senior, gnomically observed in the 1980s: 'we cannot all live on a small island'. It is hard to trump that analysis unless one remembers that a relatively small island nation like Japan, the majority of whose land surface is uninhabitable, has historically always had minuscule emigration figures, and today 127 million people manage to live in Japan without falling through the floorboards. In voicing such views, Lenihan sang in unison with Irish governmental policy since the foundation of the state: they have all hoped that the road would rise to meet us.

This perspective epitomises current governmental policy too. Here is our Minister for Finance, Michael Noonan: 'What we have to make sure is our young people have the best possible education, so that when they go, they are employed as young professionals'. Why does Noonan not even entertain the idea that he might rather incentivise young professionals to stay and give back to the country that nurtured them?

One emigrant who participated in the surveys that form the backbone of this report accused the government of being 'bloody lazy-minded' in setting great store in emigration as a silver bullet for Ireland's woes. That criticism is not fully correct. While, certainly, the government's thinking is lazy in not seeking to staunch the haemorrhage of people from our shores, the real problem is more profoundly rooted than in the government simply falling back on a disastrous policy.

Irish governments since the foundation of the state have blithely maintained a policy on emigration first formed

by the British state. The Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Lord Clarendon, wrote in a letter (7th August, 1847) at the height of the famine, that the mass emigration of Irish people would be entirely beneficial; he described how a policy to create employment opportunities abroad to lure Irish people away was necessary. Cleared of Irish people, Ireland would thus become an outsize game shooting estate for the English gentry.

Irish governments absorbed this British policy and, even today, Irish politicians consistently duck out of challenging the perception that the state should seek to retain rather than dispatch its population. It is a perception that has ignoble roots, and the faintly infanticidal malady of spirit that sustains it needs to be addressed before trends of Irish emigration can be reversed permanently.

Recent Irish arrivals in North America and the Antipodes are sharply aware of the enthusiasm with which the Irish government bid them farewell. They want to have a say in the way Irish matters are handled in the future, and they have begun to agitate to achieve that. So, ap-

propriately, emigrants' voting and representation rights are given ample exposure in this report. We are reminded that Fine Gael once tabled a motion of allotting three senate seats to non-resident Irish people: this generation of Irish abroad, which is highly educated, will not be palmed off with such a sleight-of-hand the political equivalent of sending a monkey into space. Currently the strongest lobby group for adequate representation, Votes for Irish Citizens Abroad, is based in London. They focus on voting rights in Presidential elections as the entering wedge in the fight to have a voice in general elections.

These facts made for an interesting study of contemporary Ireland's attitudes to, and experience of, emigration. But emigration impacts much more in the heart than in trends of sociological data and in the shifting sands of politics. Human stories, too, feature prominently in *Emigration in an Age of Austerity*. In my next column, I will return to this most fundamental dimension in Ireland's narrative, and the emotional perspectives of emigration detailed in the report's findings



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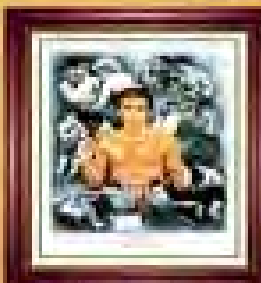
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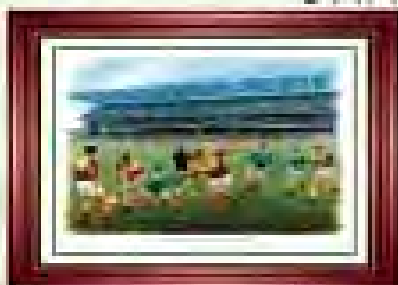
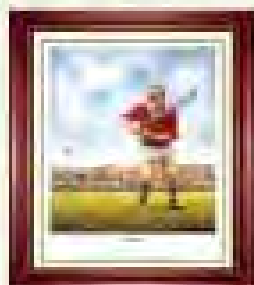
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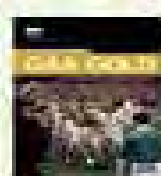
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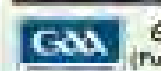
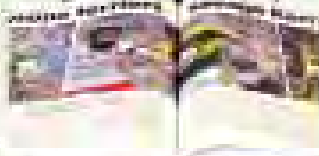
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The Parting Glass

Family gatherings at our house are loud, boisterous affairs. Counters buckle with the weight of food. Spirits flow freely. The jokes are never ending. Unorthodox humor may often abound, but love is present among all.

The children scatter to all corners of the house: the girls playing office or board games, while the boys play ball in the backyard. For everyone, there is someone.

When my youngest son turned nine, the annual family party was a bit of a calamity. One cousin, mild and sweet by nature, caught my attention and informed me that our basement was flooding. Apparently, the ball players became bored with their game and left the hose on during a water fight. Shortly after that catastrophe was cleared, another arrived.

From the kitchen I could hear a pitch perfect rendition of "Amazing Grace." I thought nothing of this somber choice of tune as perhaps the girls had moved on to a game of "America's Got Talent" featuring church hymns. The same cousin who astutely observed the flooding found me in the kitchen once again. This time he told me, "I think Michael's fish is dead."

Yes indeed, Swimmy, our carnival goldfish of five years, was dead. The cousins felt a prompt burial was in order. As it was May and the lilacs were in bloom, we buried Swimmy beneath a lilac bush. Our motley group of revelers became mourners. A leading representative from the finest funeral home this side of the Mississippi was on hand to lead prayer. One of the boys played Amazing Grace on the fife, while the girls sang along. Passing words were shared as

a shovelful of soil was tossed on the grave. Truly, Swimmy was sent off with the pride of a dignitary. After a toast to Swimmy's life, the revelers happily reconvened for the after party.

Our sadness did not last long as we still had another carnival goldfish, Swimmer, and our dog Lucky, a half-breed Border collie from Ireland, to provide the love only a pet can give.

pet, and the vast beauty of the sea.

Admittedly, I have a romantic adoration for the Border collie. Each time I see one in the States, I am transported to Ireland, its rolling green meadows and rugged strands. I see Cousin Thomas and The Uncle surrounded by an adoring group of dogs seeking affection after a long journey moving sheep to greener pastures.



Iconic to farming areas in England and Ireland, the Border collie is a graceful worker filled with loyalty to his master. On my recent trip to England, I watched as a collie ran along the beach with the speed of an antelope. Clearing fishing baskets and cement posts with ease, the collie always had an eye out for his owners who strolled together in the dog's wake. Relaxed in Wellington's and worn jeans, the couple laughed as I complimented them on their dog. "He's like a child, so he is, needin' to run and play, but we's likes our walks along the beach as well."

I smiled at their comfort with one another and their simple way of living in this coastal village. The couple went on to tell me that they rescued their Border collie and had not raised him as a pup. Nonetheless, they explained, their dog was quick to learn and affectionate. I waved as the couple went on their way, content with one another, their

Our dog, Lucky, was born in Newport, Co. Mayo Ireland. As she was a half-breed, part collie and part fox terrier, she was meant to be a pet, rather than a working dog. Smitten with the swing of her tail, my mother-in-law thought that she would make a great pet for her son and me, the newlyweds. And so Lucky arrived to us on a cold January day somewhere between New Year's Day and the Feast of the Epiphany, during our first Christmas together. Perhaps it was fitting that Lucky passed on just as the winter snows began on the shortest night of this year, nearly three weeks shy of her American homecoming, seventeen long years ago.

Lucky was a special dog because of her heritage. When she came to us, she unknowingly brought with her a piece of Ireland. Lucky does have a living half-sister, a purebred fox terrier, with the same adorable face. Lucky was her sister's senior by

one year. Both dogs are lovely albeit due to the proud lineage from whence they came.

Knowing our attachment to Lucky, all our family members were kind, offering heartfelt sympathies, and even a spiral sliced ham placed anonymously on our front door. After all Lucky was more than a pet, she symbolized a bit of Ireland and a lot of our Irish family.

Lucky was there to greet each of our three babies when my husband and I arrived home from the hospital.

Ever patient and attentive, she would stand at the door of our family room until our infant daughter fell asleep in her crib. When spring arrives, I will miss watering my plants and flowers with Lucky at my side. Much like her Border collie kin, Lucky would stay in step with my husband during all his gardening chores.

True to her Border collie ancestry, Lucky was loyal to her masters. She even earned a red flag of warning on her medical file stating, "protective of owner." I felt this was a bit slanderous, given her sweet nature.

When the time came for Lucky to be put down, I wrapped her in the children's baby blankets for comfort. My daughter came with me to the veterinary office to say her last goodbyes to the pet that stayed by her side during infancy and throughout the tumultuous storms of early adolescence. As Lucky passed, I stroked her silken ears and cried unabashedly over her peaceful face. Pets are more than just animals, they do indeed carry a piece of the human heart.

On Christmas Night, the same group of revelers that once laid Swimmy to rest gathered around the table. Stories were shared about Lucky and we ushered her memory into that other world. A final parting glass was raised toasting the richness of a life well lived, a very special dog, and the wonder of family.

**Susan holds a Master of Fine Arts in English from John Carroll University and a Master's Degree in Education from Baldwin-Wallace University. She may be contacted at suemangan@yahoo.com*

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Ciarán Sheehan with the Cleveland Pops, March 15th



Can you believe it? Winter is certainly making a bold statement. Sure, if you believe the old saw [cliché] "The sharper the blast, the sooner 'tis past," we'll be basking in the warmth of an early spring before long.

It seems just yesterday I wrote of Samhain's advent. Now, we're on the cusp of Earrach [spring] and St. Brigid's feast day [Imbolc, 1 February]. It's a time to honour hearth and home. As

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the days lengthen and signs of spring are in the air, children set about weaving new Brigid crosses for the house. Strips of cloth or articles of clothing are left outside for the saint to bless as she passes by. Candles or bonfires are lit and holy wells visited. Here in urban America, however, traditional Irish rural customs are difficult to replicate, but do what you can...something to honour our Gaelic past.

Here in Ohio, the recent invasion from a sub-zero polar vortex had me huddled in front of the fire, while across the sea, enormous Atlantic storms pounded the west coast of Ireland...the worst in living memory. Record high tides and massive flooding impacted parts of Limerick, Mayo, Cork City and Galway. A number of businesses beside the Spanish Arch in the City of Tribes sustained heavy damage. For a time, the roads, prom and carparks along Salthill's waterfront became part of Galway Bay while in Co. Clare, Lahinch's quayside witnessed 100 mph winds and sixty-foot waves. The pictures of the flooding on RTÉ were unbelievable.

Hoping to bring some good news to the people, Irish Tao-

iseach Enda Kenny addressed the nation just before Christmas. His announcement that Ireland was exiting the EU bailout programme was viewed with mixed emotions. He noted that the country was now one-step closer to financial solvency, but he quickly pointed out there was still more self-sacrifice and economic pain required of us all.

His sombre pronouncement did little to lift my spirits. Sure, regaining our economic sovereignty is important, but the current Government's austerity plan continues to choke the life-blood out of its people.

Kenny, warning that now is not the time to give up, said, "I know that many people are struggling to make ends meet. I also know that, for many of you, the recent improvements in the economic situation are not yet being felt in your daily lives. But it is now clear that your sacrifices are making a real difference. Ireland is moving in the right direction. Our economy is starting to recover."

An Taoiseach emphasised that stepping back from the bailout was an important move, but it's not the end all. Peoples' lives will not change overnight, but be prideful these past three years have been a signal to the world that Ireland is resilient...its people are fighters, not quitters.

In talking with folks, there still seems to be much more pessimism than optimism about the future, but I do give them credit. The Irish continue pulling up

their socks and getting on with it...be it good, bad or indifferent. Keeping the bright side out can't hurt.

With that in mind, the Irish Tourist Board is launching several new, bold initiatives, hoping to build on the positive energy "The Gathering" initiated last year. The Riverside City of Limerick, only a short distance from Shannon Airport, has been designated "A National City of Culture" for 2014. [Visit www.limerickcityofculture.ie/]

As you can see, a wide-ranging programme of varied activities and experiences is planned that should have great appeal. Check out the website's listing. Rightfully so, Irish culture receives a huge nod of attention in addition to sport, architecture, local festivals, city tours, history and much more...and oh, while you're visiting the 'Treaty-Stone' town, do visit the wonderful Hunt Museum and King John's immense castle. They're two of Ireland's finest historical and visual attractions.

The other tourist scheme being promoted this year is the 2,500 km-long tour of Western Ireland touted as "The Wild Atlantic Way." From Donegal in the north to Cork in the south, the visitor is directed through parts of Ireland likely only known to locals. The winding, narrow roads with their many majestic views lie just over the next hill or around that far bend.

The final details of this travel venture are still in the works.

[Check out www.failteireland.ie/wildatlanticway for updates.] Under the title "Discover Ireland", Ray O'Hanlon, editor of The Irish Echo, writes an appetising introduction to this unique travel adventure. See the 25 December 2013 issue at www.irishecho.com for Ray's description.

Finally, much like Michael Considine's song, "Spancil Hill," I recently stepped aboard a 'vision ship and followed with the wind' only to land in Galway during a driving rain. With great eagerness, I walked the one block from the station to #1 Eyre Square, Richardson's Pub. There, behind the bar, was my good friend Tom 'the Publican,' waiting for me with a smile and a cuppa tea.

After a good chat, we headed up the road to his family home. There was Mrs. Richardson and her two Yorkshire terriers anticipating our arrival. Warmed by her cheerful welcome, more tea and a grand dinner of roasted chicken, mash, veg and custard, we three sat and talked of old times and new.

Later, Mrs. R set the fire in the parlour and we relaxed with a glass and the telly. As with most such visits, it was all too short. But fear not, I'm already dreaming of hopping aboard that vision ship again. God bless and keep springtime in your hearts. Cathal

Cathal is a freelance writer and the author of four historical fiction novels. www.cathalliam.com

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Rugby – Six Nations Championships The annual European rugby international tournament, better known as the Six Nations Championship, kicks into gear this month with the first matches taking place February 1st, when current champions Wales will play host to Italy. The Welsh team is looking to make history by becoming the 1st team to win the Championship in



three consecutive years.

In the last thirteen seasons, only England and France have won the Champion-

ship in its current format of six teams back to back (each once), but neither was able to three-peat. Wales are coming into the Six Nations on the back of a mixed series of autumn games when they lost to Australia and South Africa. Despite this though, Warren Gatland's men will be the favorites for the championship, with talented players such as Leigh Halfpenny, Sam Warburton and George North all hopeful of continuing their fine individual play from last season.

If not Wales, then the next threat may actually come from England, looking to build momentum for 2015 when they host the World Cup. The English will host rivals Ireland and Wales, which could prove to be

crucial home field advantage.

Then there are the French, a team you can never write off, despite a horrible 2013 season,

Date	KO (EST)	Home		Away
Round 1				
Sat 1st Feb	9.30am	Wales	✓	Italy
Sat 1st Feb	noon	France	✓	England
Sun 2nd Feb	10am	Ireland	✓	Scotland

Round 2				
Sat 8th Feb	9.30am	Ireland	✓	Wales
Sat 8th Feb	noon	Scotland	✓	England
Sun 9th Feb	10am	France	✓	Italy

Round 3				
Fri 21st Feb	3pm	Wales	✓	France
Sat 22nd Feb	8.30am	Italy	✓	Scotland
Sat 22nd Feb	11am	England	✓	Ireland

Round 4				
Sat 8th Mar	9.30am	Ireland	✓	Italy
Sat 8th Mar	noon	Scotland	✓	France
Sun 9th Mar	10am	England	✓	Wales

Round 5				
Sat 15th Mar	7.30am	Italy	✓	England
Sat 15th Mar	9.45am	Wales	✓	Scotland
Sat 15th Mar	noon	France	✓	Ireland

when they finished last in the Six Nations and became a national embarrassment, finishing below minnows Italy.

Ireland, who most recently

came within a few minutes of beating the All Blacks, will have to build up extra motivation if they are to win the Championship this time

around. They begin their campaign on home soil on February 2nd, hosting Scotland. Their big rival game with the English will be held on Saturday February 22nd. It will be interesting to see what new manager Joe Schmidt can rustle up, he has the players there, but as they showed against the All Blacks when they led going into the final few minutes, they might just lack the bottle. Let's hope not.

Finally there's the Scots and the Italians, who finished 3rd and 4th respectively last season – the best finish in the competition for Italy, and further proof that they are no longer the whipping boys of Europe. Although it is highly unlikely that either of these teams will walk away with the trophy, do not be surprised to see them record a few victories again this year. I think it will be hard for Wales to win three in a row; there is a lot of pressure on them to do so – perhaps too much. As much as I hate to bet against the Irish, I think 2014 could see the Six Nations Championship return to England. Like most of my predictions over the years, let's hope this will not happen, and the Irish will prove me wrong!

Here is the full 2014 Six Nations schedule – for those looking to watch live in the Cleveland area, PJ McIntyre's Irish Pub in West Park shows the games live, as does Claddagh Irish Pub in Legacy Village (Lyndhurst).

Trivia: First last month's question: Next month sees the Six Nations Championships kick off once again, but who are the reigning champions? Wales. This year they are going for 2 in a row.

This month's question: When was the last time Ireland won the Six Nations Championship?

*Mark Owens is originally from Derry City, Ireland and has resided in the Cleveland area since 2001. Mark is the Director of Marketing for Skylight Financial Group in Cleveland. Send questions, comments or suggestions for future articles to Mark at: markfromderry@gmail.com



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Let Them Play

Cleveland St Jarlath's Gaelic Football Club recently held a celebratory "Evening with the Cup" at the Plank Road Tavern in Lakewood Ohio. While the occasion included a medal ceremony to recognize the 2013 North American Championship team and other past Jarlath greats, the highlight of the evening was the presentation of a lifetime achievement award to club Chairman and Head Coach, Jim Coyne, in recognition of his services to Gaelic football. Representatives from other Midwest clubs joined many in the Jarlath's family at the microphone to pay tribute to Jim.

It was also fitting that in attendance was John O'Brien Sr., Honorary President of the North American County Board and former St Jarlath's coach, as he had been one of the men who had helped mentor Jim when he became involved with the game in the early 1970s.

By then Gaelic football had been played in Cleveland for many decades, and the sport provided an avenue by which Irish immigrants could embrace their culture. Many worked tirelessly to promote the game within the Cleveland community and young locally born athletes like Jim were drawn to the physical and skillful nature of the sport. However the summer influx of Irish born players meant that many of these talented young American lads had limited opportunities to play competitively.

Rather than become disillusioned about their lack of playing time, some set out to do something about it. In early 1980, the decision was made to form a new club, whose primary focus would be to promote the game of Gaelic football among American born athletes. As a result, Cleveland St Jarlath's Gaelic Football Club was born.

An opportunity to compete against Irish born players at their own game meant that the club had little problem recruiting players in those early years. They hit the ground running and by 1982, Jim and his peers had won their first Midwest championship. A repeat the following year proved they were no flash in the pan.

The establishment of a new club in Cleveland also ensured that more people were afforded an opportunity to play the game and as Jim and others built the profile of Gaelic sport locally, the newly formed rivalries helped swell numbers at festivals and other cultural events. By the late 1980s, Jim had become a leading figure within the club. Not content to compete solely with clubs within the Midwest region, the forward thinking Jim

proceeded to take his team to such places as Chicago and New York in search of fresh challenges. While these road trips served to enhance club camaraderie and build a solid foundation on which the club would flourish, they also helped in establishing St Jarlath's as a major player on the North American GAA map.

Under Jim's guidance, the club went from strength to strength through the nineties and beyond, winning numerous Midwest titles and back-to-back National titles in 2005 and 2006. Such was the club's divisional dominance that between 1982 and 2011, St Jarlath's competed in all but one Midwest final.

Jim's contribution to Gaelic games has not just been limited to his role as player, coach and clubman. He served as the Midwest divisional chairman for a time and was known and admired for bringing a relaxed style to the role. While others on the board sought to adhere strictly to the GAA rulebook, Jim realized that in a division made up of small market teams located over a wide geographical area, the onus should be on preservation and strengthening through accommodation. He was instrumental in the Midwest division adopting an unlimited substitution rule that ensured that all players on the game day roster got the opportunity to play. Indeed his motto was 'let them play' and he takes great pride in the fact that at no time during his tenure on the board did any club incur suspension or financial penalty.

As St Jarlath's head coach, Jim surrounds himself with like minded individuals who strive for a quality Gaelic football product, and share his unquenchable thirst for success on the field of play. It is this winning mentality that has helped ensure that St Jarlath's, under his leadership, have firmly established themselves as a Gaelic football powerhouse within the Midwest. The accumulation of three National titles and fourteen Midwest titles cements their claim to the winningest Gaelic football club in the region.

St Jarlath's GFC is busy planning for the future. A fundraising drive is underway to help finance an Ireland trip in 2015 on the occasion of the club's 35th anniversary. Accommodation and training facilities are being researched in the centrally located Athlone area, and the intention is to play a game in each province over a two week period.

While the focus of some in 2013 was to present a quality Gaelic games product in the form of the NACB finals weekend, Jim's primary focus, as always, was to present a quality Gaelic football product on the field of play. His contribution to Irish sport and culture in the Cleveland

area and beyond has earned our recognition, respect and admiration. He is a true Gael.

Jim Coyne resides in Avon Lake Ohio with his wife Kay. He has three children;

Jimmy, Joe and Anne. Educated at St Ignatius High School and John Carroll University, he has worked for thirty years as a Market Business Manager with Bayer Healthcare.



Kevin, Mike and Chris Pap Stand with Uncle, Jim Coyne



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