



The Cairde Connection

“Keeping the Irish Arts Alive!”

Irish Cultural Center at
Elms College

Volume 9 & Issue 3

January 2009

Popular film series and Irish language classes begin in January

Plan on joining us for the viewing of four films in January and February on Wednesday evenings. Heather Lowe has prepared another outstanding list of films with great variety of the new and the old: drama, comedy and music. Something for everyone’s taste. We will host this popular series in the Alumnae Library Theater at 7:00 pm.

The first is the 2006 drama called *Kings*. It tells the story of a group of Irish emigrants who return for the wake of one of their friends after years of separation.

The next is *Absolutely Irish*, a documentary of great music with jigs, reels and airs, as well as contemporary takes on favorite old tunes.

The third offers the film by the legendary director, John Ford called *The Informer*. Made in 1935 it is based on Liam O’Flaherty’s novel of the same name. For the final show, we offer *The Matchmaker*, a romantic comedy. We will once again have green popcorn, admission is free, even though we’ll accept donations.

If you have always wanted to study the Irish language, now is the time to call the Elms College registrar at 265-2314 to enroll. The first class for Introductory Irish begins on Monday, January 26 at 6:30 pm. For those who have a good basis in the language group, the Irish Study group meets on Tuesday, January 27. The fee for each is \$150 with a \$50 discount for members of the Irish Cultural Center.

Events celebrate our 10th anniversary

Once again we’ll host the Tea Party with music, song and dance to celebrate our patron saint. And once again Mary Franz will emcee the program. We’ll also award the essay contest prizes at this event.

+We hope many will join us to march in the Holyoke St. Patrick’s Parade. Dust off your marching shoes and step forward in pride as we celebrate our 10th Anniversary Year.

+In April over 40 folks will set forth on a Journey of the Soul—many of them for the second or third time.

+Last year, a bus full of people traveled to the National Archives in Pittsfield for an orientation session. On May 16, we offer an opportunity with another bus trip to pursue research.

The cost is \$40 for members and \$45 for non-members: price includes the bus, driver’s tip and a box lunch.

+We are looking into the possibility of attending the Pilgrim Souls Production in May in Worcester. Watch for further information.

+The Irish language committee has set June 6 for an immersion day.

+We’ll welcome the children for Celtic Adventures for Kids on July 27 for a week of classes in music, dance, arts and crafts, storytelling, and language.

+From October 9-11 we are planning to celebrate the actual anniversary with a weekend full of great events. Come, celebrate with us.

10th Anniversary

Keeping the Irish arts alive!
1999-2009
October 9-11, 2009

Goal
350



In honor of our 10th anniversary we have set a goal of 350 paying members for 2009. At this printing we’re over half way with nearly 200 having sent in a donation.

Supporters pay dues

We are overwhelmed at the generosity of our supporters. Over one hundred first joined our organization in 1999 and continue to support us each year. These folks have sent a donation at least eleven times.

Such faithfulness attests to their belief in the Center and what it does to promote the Irish arts in the area. Each year we add new members—those encouraged by one of our present members or, perhaps inspired after attending one of our events or programs.

We continue to grow and add more programs. We have a goal to increase membership and we can do that if our faithful members continue to support us, and if they encourage others to join us in “keeping the Irish arts alive.”

If you have not as yet responded, please send in your tax deductible donation.

The Irish Cultural Center, founded in 1999, strives to “keep the Irish arts alive.”

The Irish Cultural Center...

- Serves as a public forum for events, including lectures, musical presentations, films and exhibits
- Promotes ties between the Center and educational organizations in Ireland, especially with the Basket Cultural Center
- Serves as an academic link with Irish American social organizations in Western New England.

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Irish towns and counties listed on survey

When the Polish Center moved off campus last summer, establishing themselves in the former Holy Name Rectory on South Sreet, the room they had occupied became a seminar room. The college is pleased that we will fill the shelves and decorate the wall space. Since the room has display cases, we would like to show off archives or artifacts from the counties of Ireland.

We have items from several counties we can start with: Waterford (crystal), Donegal(Belleek vases), Fermanagh (Aramware), and Westmeath (Mullinag pewter). But we need to show items from some of the other counties. If you have something you could donate for this use, call the Center.

Many who sent in their renewal forms listed their ancestral homes. Kerry leads the way with Cork, Mayo, Clare, Galway and Sligo listed frequently. Other counties

include Waterford, Donegal, Roscommon, Tipperary and Armagh.

What strikes anyone in reading the responses is the obvious pride in claiming a spot in Ireland.

One member wrote when asked her county, “Kerry, and proud of this.” Another listed his county as Kerry, the Kingdom. One decorated her counties of Cork, Leitrim and Donegal with smiley faces. Some people listed parents and grandparents individually with town and county both. And some couples listed the hometowns and counties of both of their ancestors. A member, after listing the counties of Cork and Tipperary added, “or so the stories go.” Even including an exclamation point designates pride. A delight to read!

The three speakers in the Ubiquity of Religion in Irish Studies series: Damien Murray, Peggy O’Brien and Tom Moriarty



Items of interest

The John Boyle O’Reilly Club:

Web site: www.jbo-club.com

Ancient Order of Hibernians:

Danny Curran Irish Night Party, Saturday, February 28

Sons of Erin

Web site www.sonsoferin.com

St. Patrick’s Parade: January 16

Marshal’s Reception at Delaney House; February 21 Coronation

Ball/Awards Night at the Log Cabin
www.HolyokeStPatricksParade.com

Pilgrim Souls Production, May 1, 2, 8, 9, 8:00 pm, May 3, 2:00 pm:
Stones in his Pockets by Marie Jones

Berkshire Irish Club: Feb 27 The Wolfe Townes; call Brendan Ronayne at 413 448-7230

Logainmneacha: Placenames

By Gerald Chip Costello



Our Irish language classes for the day in Ballyferriter were finished. We walked down the street to Smerwick Harbor, got some sun, watched and listened to the waves, and chatted in Irish with several new friends. Around 5:30 we walked back to Tigh i Murchú for a pint, some dinner, and more conversation; however, the day did not end at that point. In fact, the lecture that was delivered that night continues to make me think about the importance of language and how it reflects a variety of things about people and their history.

Bosco O'Connor spoke about several factors in people's experience that are reflected in the language, but the part of the talk that interested me the most had to do with place names - logainmneacha. By understanding the language, one can get a better appreciation of the town, topography, or some other unique characteristic associated with a particular place.

As Bosco pointed out, English surveyors did a fine job in locating and

documenting towns and placing them on maps in order for their government to retain control and order throughout the country. As you might imagine, however, they used their own language to identify what they thought they had heard. In reality, they probably changed some of the names to make them easier to pronounce.

An interesting example of a place name that did not reflect its reality can be seen in Cork. There was an area that was referred to as Bothar na Lobhar where the lepers walked and were restricted. Literally, it means Road of the Lepers. However, the Irish pronunciation sounded to the surveyors like Lovers' Lane, and they named it that. Without knowing the correct Irish name, the meaning of the area is totally lost.

Another town the surveyors named was Knocknagorraveela (whose spelling looks like a line on an eye chart in your optometrist's office). It is a great example of a place name. It is probably derived from

Cnoc na Garbhghaile which means hill of the rough wind. Obviously the surveyors opted for a briefer name for the river An Abha Bheag (meaning the little river) calling it Owveg.

The lessons of the evening quickly altered the tranquility of our afternoon walk to Smerwick Harbor. We learned that in 1580, Spanish and Italian troops landed at Smerwick to assist rebels. The siege took place at Dún an Óir (Fort of Gold). Six hundred troops were killed; they died at Gort a Ghearradh (Field of Cutting); and some were buried in Gort na gCeann (Field of Heads).



Remembering the peace of the afternoon sun and the rhythm of the water, it was hard to imagine what had happened roughly 430 years ago. Understanding place names through the medium of

language enables one to have a much better appreciation of the place.

You can find a great place names database of Ireland website at <http://logainm.ie> If you are interested in looking at a town and want to know its Irish language equivalent, it is as easy as a few clicks away. You may be similarly fascinated with what you find. Bain taitneamh as (Enjoy)!

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ICC Calendar of events

Ongoing: Language groups meet weekly: beginners, intermediate, conversation, advanced. Call the registrar at 265-2314 for fall classes.

Genealogy volunteer
Ed Callahan (413) 527-5091
email eastgram@aol.com

3rd Sunday of each month, except March: Irish Music Seisiún, 1:00-4:00 p.m. Dooley Campus Center, dining hall annex:
Jan 18, Feb 15

Jan 26 and 27 Irish lan-

guage classes begin

Film series, Wednesdays
7pm Alum Library Theater

Jan 28 Kings

Feb 4 Absolutely Irish

Feb 11 The Informer

Feb 18 The Matchmaker

March 8, 2:00 pm Irish Tea Party

March 22 Holyoke St. Patrick's Parade

April 19-29, 2009
Journey of the Soul: Spring-

time in Ireland

May 3 Worcester Pilgrim Souls bus trip

May 16 bus trip to Pittsfield National Archives

June 6 La Gaeilge (day-long language workshop)

July 27-31 Celtic Adventures for Kids

October 9-11
a weekend of great events to celebrate our tenth anniversary

We offer our sympathy to Gerry Healy on the death of his brother, Michael.

Congratulations to Christine Danker who will study the Irish language, thanks to the John Johnson Award program.

Congratulations to Mike Rancitelli for the Appreciation Award received from the Springfield Parade Committee. No one deserves it more.

Congratulations to Sister Eleanor Dooley who was honored by Bishop Timothy McDonnell and the deacons for the work she has done for 20 years for the Diaconate program.