



The Cairde Connection

"Keeping the Irish Arts Alive!"

Irish Cultural Center at
Elms College

Volume 8 & Issue 6

June 2008

Elms students study in Ireland by Laura McNeil

Although the academic year ended in May, seven Elms students continued hitting the books in a study-abroad opportunity of a lifetime. They packed their cameras, notebooks and raincoats and on Thursday, June 5, they met at the Irish Cultural Center, where members, family and friends wished them safe journey as they headed off for a two week immersion course in Ireland.

"The whole thing came together within three weeks," says the Irish Studies Program coordinator, Dr. Damien Murray. During finals week he received an email from a colleague at the Innisfree International College and Convention Centre, County Sligo, inviting the Program to send four students, all expenses

paid, to Ireland for the course on *Celtic Studies*. They offered all participating students free accommodations, food, on-ground transportation, admission to all sites and three college credits via their affiliate, the National University of Ireland, Galway. "We thought we'd have trouble finding people who could leave on such short notice. Instead, the problem was that we had so many students who wanted to go and we didn't have the heart to turn them away," says Dr. Murray. "So we asked if they could extend the offer to seven students instead, and they very generously agreed. You've never seen such happy students!"

The course included instruction in Irish history, archaeology, literature and culture. Students were taught in classrooms and through a series of

day-trips to museums and national heritage sites. When they aren't in class or on a tour, they participated in any number of different activities, including learning Gaelic sports, hiking Ben Bulbin or learning to surf off the Sligo coast. "It will be the experience of a lifetime," says Elms junior, Shannon Schickler. "Ireland is the one place I've always wanted to go."

The Irish Studies minor at Elms College is an interdisciplinary program that emphasizes Irish history, literature and culture. Study abroad is an important component of the program. "I'm excited to learn about Ireland's history through the eyes of the Irish people themselves," says Irish Studies minor, history major Melissa Fijal. "I'm really looking forward to this trip for that reason."

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Loyal member leaves bequest

George Kennedy was a loyal member of the Irish Cultural Center from its founding in 1999 until just before his death in January 2007. Once a week for all of those nine years, he volunteered at the Center, helping visitors with family searches or other requests. He was happiest when helping someone else in finding information.

George Kennedy generously remembered the Irish Cultural Center in his will with a total bequest of \$60,000. (He also left bequests to the Polish Center of Discovery and Learning at Elms College, and Mater Dolorosa Church in Holyoke.)

"The money we receive will help to 'keep the Irish arts alive' in the area," said board president, Gerry Healy. "We will treasure the gift itself, but more importantly, the gift will serve as a constant

reminder of George's friendship and faithfulness."

George, who was a decorated veteran of the United States Air Force during the Korean War, taught at Chicopee Comprehensive high School from 1963-1992. He was a committed volunteer to his church, and assisted at their yearly festivals, sang in the choir, and attended retreats at the Passionist Monastery in West Springfield.

George had considerable expertise and energy in helping people to pursue their family roots. In addition to the work he did for us in genealogy research, he also volunteered for years at the National Archives in Pittsfield and the at Latter-day Saints Library in Amherst, and after its move in Ludlow.



George Kennedy pictured in Ireland in July 2006.

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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10th Anniversary

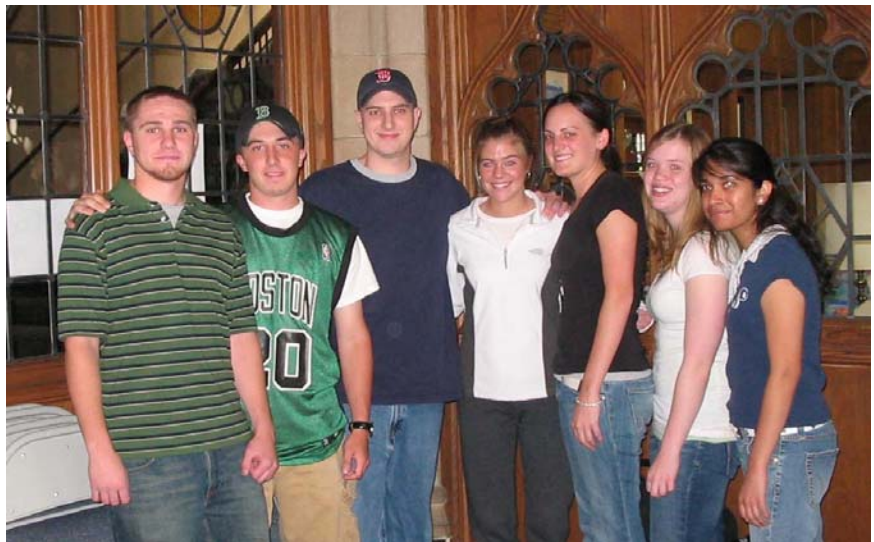
Keeping the Irish arts alive!
1999-2009

Wine tasting with an Irish accent

We will host a Wine Tasting with an Irish Accent as a fundraiser to support the Elms College Irish Studies Program on Saturday, September 27, 2008 from 6:00-8:00 p.m. in the Mary Dooley Campus Center. Tickets at \$30 each may be ordered from the Center at 413 265-2537 or purchased at Cabot Liquor, 220 Exchange Street, Chicopee. To help our fundraising effort we are printing a program ad book, which will be distributed at the event. We invite our friends to become sponsors by sending \$100 for a business card ad in the ad book. Sponsors will receive one ticket. Please complete the infor-

mation on the enclosed form and return by July 25 and return with your card (or other information) and check to the Center. The drinks provided by Cabot Liquor include Irish wines (yes, there are a few), beers, and ciders. Aramark Food Services will provide refreshments: Irish cheeses (Kerrygold Dubliner and Killarney), crackers and a fruit tray, Dubliner pasta, and salad. We’ll even have an Irish (aka Chinese) raffle.

The evening offers an opportunity to meet and mingle with friends, as well as to meet the seven Elms College students who traveled to study in Ireland in June.



Pictured above the students before they set off for Ireland:
Bill Dupré, Ben Massé, Will Jubinville, Shannon Schickler,
Jessica Leary, Melissa Fijal, Justina Thengumthyll

An Turas Fada-The Long Journey by Gearoid MacOisdealbhaigh

I am getting ready to visit Ballyfer-riter in the West Kerry Gaeltacht next month to study the Irish language for two weeks. It has been a long, strange journey. How did I get to the point where I would spend that amount of time to study the language? After all, there are the Red Sox, the Euro 2008 Soccer Tournament, and my job that require my attention.

When I think about it, there were some subtle things that happened at home that started this journey long ago. The first thing that was hardly subtle was my father's talking about giving me a kick in the bundún if I didn't get a certain task done. Inci-

dentally, that was probably the extent of his Irish. Another memory I have was receiving an Irish flag on Saint Patrick's Day; it was manufactured in Baile Atha Cliath. As a kid, I thought that wild collection of letters really was strange and could not believe that those letters were another way of saying "Dublin." In high school or college there never was an opportunity to learn more about the language.

Approximately eight years ago, I found out that the Irish Cultural Center was offering non-credit courses in the language through the College. I was immediately hooked and have been involved in taking the beginner and mid-level courses with

Tom Moriarty and George Bresnahan.

I now am part of a study group that meets weekly and feel that we are getting more proficient. The true test will take place on July 20th when I spend ten days in Ballyfer-riter in an Irish immersion class. I would not have reached this point without the resources provided by the Center and the Elms College. I'll report to you my experiences when I return. In the interim, call the ICC if you are interested in getting an introduction to the language in the fall. Call Sister Judy at 413 265-2537 or email at irishcenter@elms.edu

Items of interest

Irish Festivals: July 12, Blackstone Valley Celtic Festival at Indian Ranch Performance Center, Webster, Mass; August 9, Irish Music Festival with Enter the Haggis as the main band, The John Boyle O'Reilly Club, Springfield; August 30-September 1, Newport Irish Festival, Newport Yacht Club, RI; August 31 Sons of Erin Irish Festival, Westfield; ICONS Festival/Irish Connections, Irish Cultural Centre of New England, Canton.

The John Boyle O'Reilly Club: July 12 Irish Night at the Rock Cats baseball game; August 16 Saratoga Races bus trip, \$35 includes bus, grinders, beer, soda, and admission. Boyle web site: www.jbo-club.com

Glasgow Lands Scottish Festival, Look Park, 300 North Main Street, Florence, Sat July 19 from 9:00 am-9:30 pm (rain or shine); Adults \$15, children \$5, under age 6 free; parking \$2 with proceeds to Big Brothers/Big Sisters. Discount tickets and information available on-line at: www.glasgowlands.org

The Irish Cultural Center will have an exhibit and offer our goods for sale.

Come to Ireland!

Springtime Tour of Ireland

11-Day "Journey of the Soul" Tour

April 19-29, 2009

COME & EXPLORE IRELAND'S SCENIC SOUTHERN COAST-LINE

IN BEAUTIFUL SPRINGTIME!

INFORMATIONAL MEETING

Thursday Night, August 7, 2008

6:30 P.M.

Dooley Campus Center - Font-

bonne Room

Elms College

291 Springfield Street

Highlights: Kilkenny (2), Wicklow Mtns., Glendalough, Avoca, Kinsale (2), Midleton, Cobh, Bantry Bay, Killarney (1), Dingle Peninsula (3 nights), Cliffs of Moher, Limerick (1) and more!

See our website for more information at www.irish-cairde.org (Upcoming Events) or for more details call Kathy Gallivan at (413) 536-9709 or the Irish Cultural Center at (413) 265-2537 for an itinerary.

**Irish Cultural Center
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**Phone: 413-265-2537
Email: irishcenter@elms.edu
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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 or email at eastgram@aol.com

Sun. 3rd Sunday of each month, except March: Irish Music Seisiún, 1:00-4:00 p.m.
Dooley Campus Center, dining hall annex: June 22.
Will not play in July and August, but will resume in

September

July 28-August 1 Celtic Adventures for Kids

Fall film series

September, 10 *Once*,
17 *Patrick and Secrets of the Dead*,
24 *Gaelic Storm*

September 5-23, Borgia Gallery R. Todd Felton photography

Sept 7 Opening reception

September 12-28 Big E, West Springfield, exhibit

September 27 Wine Tasting fundraiser for Irish Studies program. See insert

Fall lecture series: The Ubiquity of Religion in Irish Studies:

Sept 28 Tom Moriarty

Oct 26 Peggy O'Brien

Nov 23 Damien Murray

December 6 Christmas with an Irish Touch

April 19-29, 2009

Journey of the Soul-Springtime in Ireland

Sale items available: short sleeved forest green polo shirts embossed with a shamrock and our name for \$20; short sleeved women's lime green tee shirts embossed with a shamrock and our name for \$15 and kelly green tote bags with our logo for \$5.

We offer prayers and condolences to: Jim Hoar on the loss of his brother John; Anne Fitzpatrick on the death of her husband James; Christine Coughlan on the death of her father John