



The Cairde Connection

“Keeping the Irish Arts Alive!”

Irish Cultural Center at
Elms College

Volume 9 & Issue 4

March 2009

10th Anniversary Celebration offers concert, workshops, films and more: keeping the Irish arts alive

A committee has been meeting monthly to plan our 10th anniversary celebration on the Columbus Day weekend from October 9-11, 2009. For the centerpiece we have scheduled a Makem and Spain Brothers concert on Saturday at the Warehouse?, Holyoke. We hope many will join us as we all rejoice in this organization that has been “keeping the Irish arts alive” since 1999 (and even for a few years leading up to the official opening.)

On Sunday we will celebrate liturgy in Our Lady’s Chapel with readings and parts of the Mass in Irish, followed by brunch in the dining room with guest speaker, author Peter Quinn.

During the day on Saturday we’ll offer several activities, including workshops and films. Workshops may include

dance, knitting, language, cooking, and learning the bodhran. Heather Lowe is also preparing a great film list for viewing.

Vincent Crotty will have an art exhibit in Borgia Gallery, Dooley Campus Center during October with the opening planned for Friday. *Ireland of the Welcomes* magazine highlighted his Blasket Island collection recently, but this artist from Kanturk, County Cork has also focused on other areas of Ireland, and he will display paintings from all of his work.

We will have a major raffle, with a prize being two tickets to our Fall 2010 Ireland tour or \$4000 in cash.

We’ll include further details on all events in the next edition of this newsletter. We need volunteers, so, if interested, call us to get involved.

Spring events offer variety

Join us on March 8, 2:00 p.m. at our Tea Party where we celebrate St. Patrick with music, song and dance. Mary Franz, our emcee, promises a good program with wonderful surprises. We’ll serve refreshments and have a raffle. We’ll also award the middle school essay contest prizes.

+We hope many will join us to march behind Elms freshman, Dave Peters, as he leads us by playing the bagpipes in the Holyoke St. Patrick’s Parade. Join us as we celebrate our 10th Anniversary Year.

+In April, over 40 folks will set forth for Ireland on a Journey of the Soul.

+On May 3 a bus will head down the Pike to Worcester to attend the

Pilgrim Souls Production of *Stones in his Pockets* by Marie Jones. Following the play and before returning to Chicopee, we’ll share a buffet of chicken picatta, eggplant lasagna, salad, garlic bread, desserts. The ticket price of \$65 for members and \$70 for non-members includes bus, driver’s tip, play and dinner. Contact us by March 30 to reserve a seat.

+On May 16, we offer a bus trip to the National Archives in Pittsfield to pursue research. The price of \$40 for members and \$45 for non-members includes the bus, driver’s tip and a boxed lunch. Don’t miss this opportunity; reserve your place soon.

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

Generous donors prove belief in Center

Thank you to all our faithful members who renewed for 2009. New lifetime members are Gerald Costello, East Longmeadow and Mary Quigley, Longmeadow. They join: John Davis and Stephen Davis, Longmeadow; Francis and Jeanne Feeney, Wilbraham; Joe and Deborah Loughrey, Columbus, Indiana; Joseph Lucia, West Springfield; Michael Quirk, Chicopee; Gay Reilly, Winston-Salem, North Carolina. We list two patrons for 2009: Tim and Mary Allen and Delores Costello, Springfield. If you have not responded with your dues as yet, we have included a member form on page 6.

Winning essays

At our tea party on March 8 we’ll interrupt the music to honor the three middle school essay contest winners: Mary Kate Sullivan 8th grader at Holy Cross School, Springfield; Kaitlyn Amuso 8th grader, St. Agnes School, Dalton; and Byron Bixler 8th grader, Holy Cross School, Springfield.

In their essays they discussed the idea that countries experiencing religious conflicts could follow Northern Ireland’s path to peace. The three will receive their money prizes, and the first place student will read her essay. In its eighth year of the writing contest, we received over fifty entries from several schools in the area.

The essays are printed on pages 3-5 of this newsletter.

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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It’s that time of year by Gearoid MacOisdealbhaigh

At this time of year, I thought you might enjoy a few Irish expressions that you can use with your friends. With a bit of practice, you can be an expert!

Expression Translation

Pronunciation

**Sláinte !
Cheers or health!**

Slann-cheh

**Sláinte is táinte !
Health and wealth!**

slaan- cheh iss tan- cheh

**Is Éireannach mé
I'm an Irish person.**

iss air-in-ack may

**Pionta Guinness, le do thoil. pin-tah Guinness leh do hull
A pint of Guinness please.**

Have fun trying to use some of these expressions. If you would like to know how to say something in Irish, please email me at gearoidc51@hotmail.com. Remember, you can also try the language at our annual Lá Gaeilge on June 6th at the Center; save the date. Bain triail as - Try it.

Items of interest

The John Boyle O’Reilly Club:
March 17: Dan Ringrose 3:00 pm to 7:00 pm; The Cabeyns 8:00 pm and The Boyle Boys upstairs at 7:00 pm; Corned Beef Sandwiches available
Web site: www.jbo-club.com

Sons of Erin
Music March 13, 17, 22;
Annie’s Brunch March 15
Web site www.sonsoferin.com

St. Patrick’s Parade
March 21, 1:00 p.m. Road Race; register by March 19; March 22 St. Patrick’s Parade: meet at the Kmart on Northampton Street at 11:00 a.m. Parade begins at noon.
www.HolyokeStPatricksParade.com

Springfield Parade Committee
March 17 Liturgy at Our Lady of Hope Church; program at Springfield City Hall

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

Ceilidh
Award-winning 23-year-old fiddler from Prince Edward Island, Cynthia MacLeod, will lead a Ceilidh with PEI guitarist Jon Matthews at the Chapel at Elms College, Thursday March 12, 2009 at 7 pm. Tickets for the Ceilidh are \$15/ adults; \$5/under 18. To purchase advance tickets, call 413-247-9426.

Dingle offers new experiences and surprises

By Tim Allen

We didn't really want to leave Ashford Castle. One night wasn't enough, but one night in a castle is definitely better than no nights in a castle. When will we stay in a castle again?

Our dinner left a little to be desired (too few choices), but breakfast was over the top with eggs, bacon, juice, oatmeal, cheeses, cold meats, breads, cheeses, fruits - unlimited, wonderful food. Did royalty eat like this?

We faced rain on this travel day.

Soon we were at the Cliffs of Moher, and Brendan O'Brien joined our trip there - just in time to see O'Brien's Tower. Now we were at full attendance. The restaurant and visitors' center at the Cliffs have been spiffed up, and there didn't seem to be as many outdoor vendors as I remember from days past. There also used to be a gift shop in O'Brien's Tower - now closed. The days of going to the Cliffs and looking at the people crawling on their stomachs to look down - those days are gone. Fences and barriers have been erected to keep more people from falling into the water 700 feet below. The Cliffs are getting 'Americanized'. But they are safer.

We had lunch at the Cliffs and then we continued on through the Burren to the Tarbert/ Killimer Ferry and to Dingle. This 7-hour drive continued for most of the day till we pulled into Dingle. The views hadn't been as spectacular as usual coming into Dingle, but maybe they'd improve in the next couple of days. At any rate, we moved into Benner's Hotel on Main Street. For me, staying here was new. I usually stayed out of town, and I had stayed at the Hotel Skellig previously, which is very near town but on the bay. Benner's is charming and a great place to stay.

We planned to stay three days in Dingle (everybody's favorite town, it seems) because most people have a connection or a memory here. This lacrosse crowd had no connections, no relatives, no history. I was hoping they would like it. We had scheduled some good activities.

After some memories were made at O'Flaherty's Pub on Monday night, on Tuesday we had the trip around Sleah Head and hopefully, out to the Blaskets. Unfortunately, it was pouring in the morning. (I think they might call it 'milling'). It wasn't looking good for a trip to the Blaskets.

But little did we know that 'the river that goes across the road' on the way to Sleah Head would be an absolute torrent. We were in a traffic jam. Cars were turning around. I got out to help the driver negotiate the bus. We were so close to the edge that some scared people requested to get off the bus, but that was impossible: the bus was up against the guardrail. Soon I re-boarded the bus and we approached the river.

A few minutes later we were through the flood. The bus was high enough to drive through two feet of rushing water, although I must admit I was very happy when we got past it. The thought of the bus sliding down into the sea had passed through my mind.

We visited the Basket Center and ate lunch. Then we were off to Mulcahy's Pottery and to the Museum in Ballyferriter, which is run by Danny's wife Maura. Danny was on the bus with us to share stories of the area. He was great company and we needed it this day.

That evening we had a planned dinner at Lord Baker's. Many of our

Irish friends attended and of course, most of our crew. About 30 of us met for dinner. After the day on Sleah Head, there were stories to tell and lives to appreciate.

At almost all of the tables, we had arranged for local Irish people to sit with our lacrosse people. So who was there? From Dingle: Fr. Pdraig O'Fiannachta (Fr. Fenton), Fran Ryan, Pdraig Lynch, Mags Riordan (also from Malawi, Africa), Danny and Maura Sheehy, Cait Looney from Tralee, Jim and Grainne O'Connell from Inch and Dublin, and Brenda Ní Shúilleabháin. Even Chip Costello, who was taking the language classes at Ballyferriter joined us.

Of course, the food was terrific and the hosting by John and Maureen Moriarty was first class. Fran Ryan had arranged for a local musician to play the bagpipes for us, and many of us modeled in the fashion show. It was great fun.

And then came the surprise. The lacrosse team and parents had a presentation to make. They had arranged to collect money in support of the work by Mags and her volunteers in Malawi.

This night of making new friendships with people from other countries, of laughing and conversing with new people, of eating and drinking in fine style, of feeling the warmth of humanity in a few square feet of Dingle - well there was more. The cherry on top was the presentation to Mags. She didn't know it was coming and was very taken with what had been done.

Over \$1500 had been raised for the people of Cape McClear, Malawi. The love in the room had extended around the world.

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www.irish-cairde.org**

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: Feb 15, Apr 19, May 17, Jun 21

March 8, 2:00 pm Irish Tea Party with entertainment and refreshments

March 22 Holyoke St. Patrick's Parade; our marching contingent will meet in the Kmart parking lot at 11:00 a.m.

April 19-29, 2009
Journey of the Soul: Springtime in Ireland

May 3 Worcester Pilgrim Souls bus trip (details on page 1—spaces limited). Register by the end of March

May 16 bus trip to Pittsfield National Archives

June 6 La Gaeilge (day-long language workshop)

July 27-31 Celtic Adventures for Kids week-long fun and learning experience

Sept 18-October 4
Big E exhibit and information; we'll need volunteers

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

Answers to the riddles on page 5
Glove
Sun
Pair of boots

Congratulations to lifetime member, Joe Loughrey, this year's Holyoke St. Patrick's Parade Kennedy Award winner

We offer our sympathy to Anita and Kelly Ann Moore on the death of their mother Dianne.

We mourn the loss of member, Nora Gormally and offer sympathy to her family.

Prayers requested: Jerry Callahan and Mike Ran-citelli, both battling illness.