

SPECIAL REPORT ON IRELAND'S TRAVELLERS

IRISH AMERICA

*"If my celebrity
can open
doors and help
raise money,
then that is
what it should
be used for."*

- Denis Leary

**RONAN
TYNAN
INTERVIEW**

**WHO'S IRISH
IN HELL?**

**THE QUIET MAN'S
50TH BIRTHDAY**

**HISTORY
BEHIND
BOSTON'S
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ON THE JOB FOR THE FIREFIGHTERS



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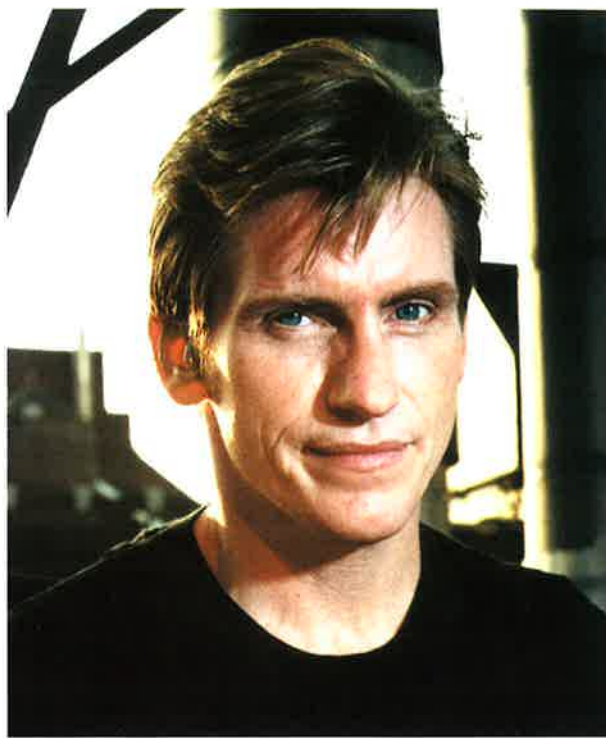
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Cover photo: Keefja Allard

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It's with that spirit that Mutual of America salutes, thanks and honors all Irish-Americans who have made a difference – big and small – to all of us.

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the spirit of America

Love Lights up The Darkness

"We want to tell the people of Afghanistan that we don't hold them responsible for the actions of a few terrorists As Americans, we're bigger than Sept. 11." - Emergency Service Unit Detective Thomas McDonald

The New Year is approaching fast as I write this in late December. Looking back on what started out as such a hopeful year, it is hard to see back past the darkness of September 11. It's as if all the good times and deeds of several lifetimes got swallowed up in the black smoke of the burning towers.

Yet, as I write this on December 21, the day of Winter Solstice, I know that in Newgrange, Ireland's ancient burial mound in County Meath, on this very morning, as it has for thousands of years, the rays of the rising sun pierced the gloom and bathed the inner chamber in a golden light that signaled the season of rebirth and nature's promise that the darkest days always beget light.

The ancient Celts believed that Solstice is the moment when the old solar year dies and the Goddess gives birth to the Divine child (the new solar year). According to ancient myth, Newgrange, which dates to 3000 BC, older than the Pyramids, is the abode of Aengus, the great god of love.

I have need for such myth now. A need to think on the eternal cycle of birth, death and rebirth. A need to look at the history of my people and all people and the tough road of their passage and know that they have endured. And I have a need to believe in the god of love – for love is the most powerful weapon of all.

Out of the darkness of September 11 has come not only an outpouring of love and compassion but a shift in our perception of what "greatness" means.

This was never more evident than at the fundraiser for Denis Leary's Firefighter Fund. The event was replete with Hollywood stars, but the firefighters in their dress blues were, as Jill Fergus tells us in her interview with Leary, the main attraction.

It was one of several events that I've attended in the last couple of months that lifted my spirits. Another was our Business 100 lunch on November 20, two days before Thanksgiving. Tom Coughlin, the president of Wal-Mart was our keynote speaker. Tom, one of 10 children, exudes warmth and humor. He talked about the best of Irish traits, instilled in him by his Irish grandfather. "Never be a quitter" is one.

Like so many Irish, Tom's father had been a fireman and then a policeman, and one of the things that made our lunch so special was the presence of members of the Police and Fire Departments.

I think that we Irish have need for such gatherings now.

We have need for community. A need to talk about the events.

We know the necessity of friends and family coming together in the best tradition of an Irish wake, not to mourn the dead but celebrate their life.

The American Ireland Fund, which promotes peace and culture in Ireland, held a holiday gathering and announced that it had donated a million dollars to the fund for the victims of Sept. 11. Several of our "Wall Street 50" who had lost colleagues and family were in attendance – a testament to how important Ireland is to Irish Americans.

Another event that lifted all our spirits was the "Healing" concert in Yankee Stadium. As our Irish representative, tenor Ronan Tynan did us proud. In an interview with Siobhan Tracey in this issue, Ronan talks about one of his own proudest moments – being named an honorary fireman.

The firemen and police continue to inspire. On this Winter Solstice day of light, a group of New York City firemen and cops will deliver 45 tons of humanitarian aid to the people of Afghanistan.

Emergency Service Unit Detective Thomas McDonald said, "We want to tell the people of Afghanistan that we don't hold them responsible for the actions of a few terrorists As Americans, we're bigger than Sept. 11."

Thomas is the brother of Steven McDonald, who has made three peacekeeping missions to Northern Ireland, though confined to a wheelchair after being shot in the line of duty.

If it takes reminding of what we have to be grateful for this holiday season, the two McDonald brothers do the job. Steven will again travel to Ireland for the January 31 anniversary of Bloody Sunday, which reminds us to be thankful to the Americans who provided the blueprint for the Good Friday Agreement and hopes for a more peaceful future in Northern Ireland.

Of the many messengers of love around this holiday season, one is the aptly named Father "Aengus" Finucane, whose Irish relief organization Concern is to be found in every troubled spot in the world and is presently in Afghanistan, bringing food, shelter, education, hope and love.

As John Lennon sang, "All We Need Is Love," and sure wasn't he Irish too. May the god of love shine his light on all of you in the coming year. □



Patricia Harty

Editor-in-Chief

Kit DeFeaver

The Broad-Brush

Although anyone with the semblance of a heart finds the events of Sept. 11 appalling, reprehensible, and without justification, two letters from readers in the Dec./Jan. issue reflect a broad-brush approach that has been part of the problem all along in Northern Ireland, a situation far different from anything connected to the events of September 11 and Islamic fundamentalism.

One reader, upset by the inclusion of the article on Martin McGuinness, said she was "in no mood" to read about him or the "IRA members" arrested in Colombia or the nuns protesting outside Ft. Benning, Why? McGuinness was a higher-up in an army that was fighting against a foreign occupying force and that in nearly every case took great pains to avoid any civilian casualties.

Do Islamic fundamentalist terrorists show anything like the same sort of concern, even some of the time? Or do they target civilians deliberately, killing as many as they can? How could a distinction like this not matter?

Or how can it not matter that the IRA has stuck to its own ceasefire for years, while Protestant loyalists continue to kill Catholic nationalists and scoff at the idea of matching the IRA's vow to decommission?

As for the Irishmen arrested in Colombia, it has yet to be established, as far as I know, what present connection they had with the IRA (if any). Perhaps the reader was in favor of summary judgment, without any sort of real fact-finding trial – like they do in societies like those controlled by factions such as the Taliban.

As for the nuns, one fails to see the connection there, unless the objection was that they dared to conduct a protest at a U.S. military installation.

But patriotism, even in times of emergency, does not require that one support everything done by the military of one's country. It seems to escape the reader that the ability to conduct this sort of protest is precisely why many people feel a very strong sense of loyalty to this country – not to mention the obvious fact that one can support the military foursquare in one mission but object to specific policy regarding a different matter. (Come to think of it, I know more people than not who have that same stance toward the



IRA; they might, for instance, support the IRA's no-casualty bombing of economic targets, but object strongly to sniping incidents such as the killing of Stephen Restorick.)

Another reader objected to "groups who use violence as a means to achieve their goal." The reader mentions as an example only the IRA, leaving out 1) the loyalists who have continued to kill Catholics over the past several years while IRA guns have been silent, and 2) the American colonists of the Revolution, who certainly used violence as a means to achieve a goal. Also missing was any acknowledgement that the present tense ("who use violence") hasn't applied to the IRA for some time now.

This sort of broad-brush thinking will lead only to more incarcerations without charge or trial and more of the same draconian "anti-terrorist" measures that tend to be advocated by those speaking from the safety of their home in a free country with free speech. One shudders at the possibilities of who might be named a "terrorist" next, and what might happen to anyone who protests that designation.

*Stephen Finley
Lubbock, Texas*

IRA Brings Good News

I just finished your Dec./Jan. First Word article and agree with you that the past several months have provided us extremely

stressful and emotional events to ponder. Your thoughts regarding the peace process in the North are my own.

As America (and the world) awakens each day hoping to hear good news, the announcement of IRA arms being placed out of commission, with international independent verification, brought a small but valuable beam of light into our lives.

*Tommy Mannix
Staten Island, New York
Recording Secretary AOH
Staten Island Division IV*

Exporting Terrorism

Your editorial (Oct./Nov.) dismissal of IRA/Sinn Féin presence in Colombia ("Conspiracy theorists would cite British intelligence at work...") should raise an eyebrow or two, especially after September 11. In the last six weeks, the *Wall Street Journal* has reported that the three in Colombia were, in fact, IRA/Sinn Féin, and one was a bomb expert.

Rather than visiting a tourist paradise, they chose to spend weeks in an area controlled by leftist revolutionaries. Today (October 24), Gerry Adams concedes that one of the three was Sinn Féin's representative in Cuba. The *WSJ* further reported on October 2 that "...representatives from Spain's murderous Basque-separatist ETA and Arafat's PLO showed up last week for the annual conference of Sinn Féin."

Assuming that all of this is true (or is the *WSJ* a tool of British Intelligence?), one might pose the following questions:

Why does Sinn Féin need a representative in Cuba? Were the "lads" in Colombia filling IRA/Sinn Féin coffers with cocaine proceeds in payment for information that could condemn innocent civilians in Bogota to violent deaths? What could the ETA and PLO contribute to a Sinn Féin get-together?

An unbiased observer might conclude that IRA/Sinn Féin are and have been in the business of not only advocating Irish nationalism within the confines of Ulster and the UK but of exporting terrorism to whomever will pay for their expertise. After the events of September 11 your editorial board might wish to reconsider the broader issue of IRA/Sinn Féin's contribution to international terrorism and not pass it off as some form of disinformation concocted by "...British/Colombian government connections."

*John F. Pyne
Boulder City, Nevada*

BBC Dependent

It has become painfully obvious that PBS TV 13, servicing the metropolitan New York area, is increasingly dependent on English and BBC programming to the point of not only co-producing programs with BBC, but for the past few years has been airing BBC news (pre-recorded by hours) weekday evenings on prime time as their only world news program. As might be expected, any news of the troubles in Ireland carry an obvious made-in-Britain political spin.

We don't need a British government controlled media pawned off on us as unbiased news. If PBS TV 13 were to be denied BBC related programming, at least half of their prime time airing would disappear, and to say BBC is not aware of this, one is beyond being naive.

I am convinced that the St. Patrick's programming on PBS 13 (extremely popular and upbeat), prior to carrying BBC newscasts, were dropped and replaced by "The Irish In America - Long Journey Home," a pro-English, anti-Irish Catholic historical farce, because of the "influence" BBC has gained through PBS TV 13's dependence. Perhaps the FCC might take a serious look into this.

The British Ambassador and Governor Pataki went at it hot and heavy over the ambassador's attempt to stop the Great Famine curriculum from being introduced into the New York State school systems. Pataki, to his credit, stayed the course. Such attempted political interference by England in our various forms of media in America is an ongoing fact of life we must be aware of and guard against.

On a positive note: keep up with the upbeat profiles of Irish Americans.

*John J. Nagle
Belfast, New York*

The Library at BC

I would like to thank you folks at the magazine for including mention of the exhibit being currently displayed at the John J. Burns Research Library, Boston College, at Chestnut Hill/Newton, Mass. It is the Thomas and Kathleen Daly Clarke Papers collection, which I personally found very interesting. I might add that anyone interested in the history of Revolutionary Ireland in the early 20th century would undoubtedly agree. I traveled over three hundred miles to see it and can highly recommend a long voyage for that purpose to any Irish historian; and isn't that the curse of the Irish? The staff is knowledgeable and extremely courteous.

Another equally important event, for me, was a great discussion with Professor Kevin Ó Neill, who heads the prestigious Irish Studies Program at the college.

I was also introduced to their splendid publication, *The Irish Literary Supplement: A Review of Irish Books*. I can highly recommend, especially for people who read, a subscription at \$12.00 annually. Checks should be made payable to the *Irish Literary Supplement* and sent to P.O. Box 265, Wadding River, New York, 11792-0265. Anyone with interest in additional information about this or other details about The Irish Military History Society of Ireland may contact me at my mailing address at P.O. Box 358, Pike, NH 03780 or this e-mail address:

*George B. Clark
Received by e-mail*

Murphy Is The Best

I was over the moon to see your mention of Murphy of Ireland. My purchase from them was a delightful experience and I am one of those mentioned who sent them a thank you note. Along with my purchase of a beautiful Celtic scarf they included a "luck penny." I even had a wonderful e-mail exchange with John Alexander, their employee in California. How many businesses take the time to personally (and politely) answer e-mails that don't contain an order? Murphy of Ireland is the best!

*Lisa Jillani
Charlotte, North Carolina*

ANCESTRAL RESEARCH

Fay

I am trying to locate the birthplace of (or any information pertaining to) my grandfather Michael Edward Fay. He was born on August 20, 1841 (we suspect in Cavan or Westmeath), entered the U.S. in 1852 (when 11 years of age), and was naturalized 4/21/1866 at Watertown, New York. He married Catherine Ryan from Fairfax, Virginia, and they lived in Flushing and Long Island City, New York. His parents were Edward Fay and Catherine Cleary. He was Catholic, a blacksmith, and we suspect he fought in the Civil War with one of the New York

Irish Brigades. He died 3/15/1926, and is buried at Mount St. Mary's In Flushing, New York.

If you have any information or suggestions, please contact me:

*Bill Fay,
339 West Main St., Newmanstown, PA
17073. Tel 610-589-4019*

Lydon and Brennan

My great-grandparents Thomas Lydon and Honora Brennan were married in Killedan, Co. Mayo, December 19, 1864. I know of two children - Briget born January 18, 1866 and John (my grandfather), April 12, 1868. I understand there was another brother. My grandfather married my grandmother Margaret Meade in Philadelphia in 1903. They had four children. He died in Chicago in 1912.

Any information would be appreciated.

*Jack Lydon
5909 N.W. Seventh Street
Miami, FL 33126-3199*

Ward/Lambert

According to family recollection, my grandfather, Michael Ward, was from County Roscommon. He was born of RC parents, John Ward and Mary Coyne (daughter of Thomas and Margaret) about 1859, came to the U.S. and was naturalized at the Court of Common Pleas, NYC, on October 12, 1876. Marriage to Mary Eleanor Flanagan (daughter of Peter and Ann McGrath) also of Ireland, took place on October 10, 1884 at St. Mary's Church in Jersey City, N.J. They raised 5 children in Jersey City: Anna, Mary, John, Margaret (m. Thomas O'Malley) and James (m. Mary Lambert, daughter of Peter and Anna Dolan).

Michael Ward was a clerk for the Pennsylvania RR when he was struck by a drill engine and died in 1918. To our knowledge he did have at least one sibling, named John, who served in the Irish Guard in the late 19th century. It is believed John settled in Glasgow.

Anxious to learn of family origins of both families and will gladly share additional search data.

*John Ward
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Please address to *Irish America*, 432 Park Ave. So., Suite 1503, New York, N.Y. 10016. Correspondence should include the writer's full name, address and home telephone, and may be edited for purposes of clarity. E-mail addresses and addresses of readers requesting research material will be printed in full. Our E-mail address is irishamag@aol.com. Our fax number is (212) 779-1198.

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Jill Fergus, a native New Yorker, writes about Denis Leary and his Firefighter's Fund, a charity for slain firefighters in this issue. His latest benefit, held this past October, raised money for the families of the 343 firefighters who lost their lives in the September 11 attacks. Formerly, an editor at *Travel & Leisure* magazine, Fergus currently writes for *In Style*, *Town & Country*, *Rosie*, the *New York Daily News* and other publications. Her past contributions to *Irish America* include cover stories on Roma Downey and Gabriel Byrne and personal essays about her frequent trips back to Ireland.



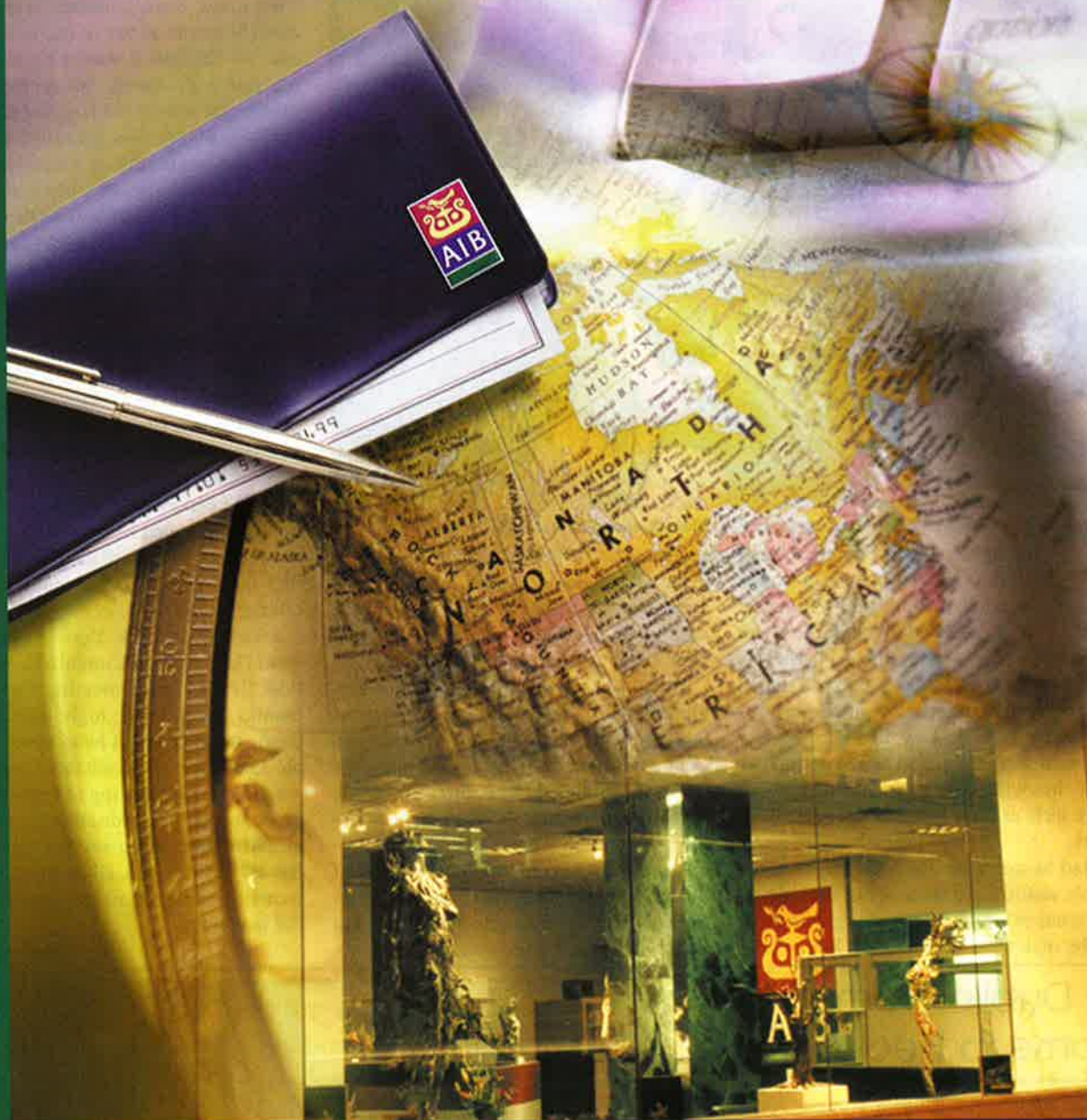
Irish America film columnist **Joseph McBride** writes in this issue on *The Quiet Man*, the John Ford classic loved by Irish Americans, less than revered by the native Irish. McBride's biography *Searching for John Ford*, was published by St. Martin's Press, last year. St. Martin's Press also published the revised version of his 1992 biography *Frank Capra: The Catastrophe of Success*. McBride lectures on film at the New Collage of California in San Francisco.

Michael P. Quinlin is president of the Boston Irish Tourism Association, marketing group promoting the Irish culture and businesses of Massachusetts to the convention and visitor industries. He has created such programs as the Irish Writers Series, Irish Food Festival and the Boston Irish Heritage Trail. Quinlin was Irish advisor to former Boston mayor Ray Flynn and has written articles for the *Boston Globe*, *Boston Herald*, *Fortnight Magazine* and *Christian Science Monitor*. He lives with his Tipperary-born wife Colette and their sons Leo and Devin in Milton, Massachusetts.



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FIREFIGHTERS HONORED BY DUBLIN COUNTERPARTS



Photo courtesy of New York Times

New York City firefighter Sean Cummins at his Park Slope firehouse in Brooklyn.

Fire fighter Sean Cummins from Dublin, who works out of Squad One in Brooklyn, New York, narrowly escaped death in the Twin Towers disaster on September 11. He was scheduled to work that day, and had traded time off with a colleague because he wanted to drop his mother, Marie, to the airport. She was returning to Ireland after visiting her son, his wife, Maureen, and their three little girls at their home in Queens, New York.

Had he not taken the time off, he most likely would have been one of the first on the scene at Ground Zero, along with most of the men from Squad One. On that hor-

rendous day, 12 of his 26 colleagues died in the inferno. Sean Cummins heard the news as he drove his mother to Kennedy Airport, and he immediately turned around and went straight to work.

The plight of New York's firemen resonated with their counterparts across the globe, and Ireland was no exception. Sean Cummins's mother, Marie, lives in Coolmine Close in Dublin, almost directly beside the firehouse in the suburb of Blanchardstown, on Dublin's north side. All the firefighters know her, and when they heard of Sean's experiences, they decided they wanted to do something to mark the event and to show their solidarity.

John Halstead, who has been a fireman for almost 20 years, explained what they did. "We knew Sean's mother was worried about him, with all that he had been through, and we thought it would be nice to get him home for a break. We decided to twin the two fire stations, and organized a memorial for those men from Squad One who died."

At the beginning of December, Sean Cummins was present when a plaque was unveiled at Blanchardstown Fire Station, bearing the names of both stations and the crest of the Dublin Fire Brigade. He was given an identical plaque to take back to Brooklyn.

"It's fate that he didn't end up like the others who died," said John Halstead. "He was supposed to be working that day. I think he enjoyed his trip home because he could talk to us about his experiences. He could relate to us because we have had some of the same experiences, although obviously nothing like what he saw in New York. It must be incredibly hard to lose half your unit like that. We stayed up until 1.45 a.m. talking to him."

Speaking in New York on his return from Dublin, Sean Cummins commented that "It was great meeting the guys in Dublin – I spent one night just talking to them. It meant such a lot to know that people 3,000 miles away felt the same way that we did. It was amazing to know that they supported us." He added that the plaque had already been hung on the wall of the Brooklyn firehouse, albeit in a temporary location, until a planned permanent memorial is erected.

– Emer Mullins.

Dublin Woman Returns Home to Heal After Sept, 11th

In December, Dublin woman Angela O'Reilly, 34, who lost her husband, in the World Trade Center attack moved back to Ireland from her previous home in Farmingdale, Long Island. Her husband of twelve years, Police Officer Vincent Danz, driving his Emergency Service Police Truck from the Bronx, reached the World Trade Center soon after the planes hit on September 11 and was last seen entering the Towers. Angela, together with her three young daughters, Winifred, 8, Emily, 5 and Abigail, 8 months, has moved back with her parents where Angela hopes "it will probably be more real." – *Georgina Brennan.*

Angela Danz and her children mourn the passing of Police Officer Vincent Danz at his Long Island memorial service in October, 2001.



Photo by 2001Newsday, Inc.

FURY OVER CLAIM THAT OMAGH BOMB WARNINGS WERE IGNORED



The devastation from the Omagh bombing

Photo by Crispin Rodwell

A report on the Omagh atrocity has heavily criticized the controversial Special Branch of the Northern Irish police force for allegedly failing to act on an informer's warning that dissident republicans intended to launch an attack in the County Tyrone town. A wave of disgust greeted the news that the warning had been received 11 days before the massive Real IRA bomb ripped the heart out of the town, killing 29 people, including one woman who was eight months pregnant with twins, on August 15, 1998.

Senior Ulster Unionists have attacked the report's author, Police Ombudsman (Police Complaints Commissioner) Nuala O'Loan, rather than criticize senior Special Branch members who appeared to have ignored the warning. Mrs. O'Loan refused a request by Chief Constable Ronnie Flanagan for a delay in publication to allow a point-by-point reply to be formulated.

Flanagan said the report "contained so many significant factual inaccuracies, unwarranted assumptions, misunderstanding and material omissions" that a request has been made to the Ombudsman's office for a reasonable period of time "to respond in detail with what we see as the serious deficiencies in this report."

Mrs. O'Loan and her investigators

began her probe into the police intelligence files on the attack, after newspapers printed an informer's claim that he had tipped off police about a planned dissident republican bomb attack. The informer did not specify Omagh, but while investigating the claim, the Ombudsman's team discovered evidence of another, more detailed warning. The second tip-off, made on August 4, 1998 to an Omagh detective constable, lasted more than 10 minutes and revealed that an attack would take place in the town on August 15. The detective constable, who is said in O'Loan's report to have acted responsibly at all times, passed the information to his superior who then briefed the Special Branch. The highly secretive group, which operates closely with British intelligence agencies, is said not only to have refused to act on the tip-off but also to have failed to link the information about an imminent bombing with the warning of an attack on Omagh. O'Loan's report stopped short of saying that the attack could have been prevented but did say that increased security patrols and roadblocks in the vicinity of the town on August 15 could have deterred the bombers.

Police Chief Sir Ronnie Flanagan, who is due to retire next May, leapt to the defense of his Special Branch, claiming the August 4 telephone call gave no indication of a forthcoming attack. Flanagan

also denied suggestions that the information had been suppressed to protect Special Branch officers. He said that the police enquiry into the bombing "remained current and alive." He would bring in an outside team "if that is what it would take to reassure victims that no stone will be left unturned in this investigation."

Ulster Unionist Party former security spokesman Ken Maginnis claimed in a typically blunt comment that "the Ombudsman had walked through police interests and community interests like a suicide bomber."

Sinn Féin MP Pat Doherty, however, insisted there had been a police cover-up. He said O'Loan's findings suggested that action could have been taken to try to prevent the attack on Omagh town center. Doherty added that he did not accept that the tip-off had nothing to do with the bomb and called for all information held by the police and intelligence services to be released.

Flanagan issued a statement saying that he may take legal action to have the report quashed. "So gross is this report that legal advice is being taken both on a personal and organisational basis. On an organizational basis we are considering whether it may be appropriate to take legal remedy to have this report quashed."

— *Brendan Anderson.*

EU SEARCH FOR DEATH SMUGGLERS

Police across Europe are trying to find the gang who transported eight asylum seekers to their death in Ireland. The dead, who included three children, were found in Wexford on December 14, when a truck driver opened the sealed steel container of his lorry. Five others, suffering pulmonary and kidney problems caused by low oxygen levels, hypothermia and dehydration, were brought to hospital to recover from the horrific journey.

Those who died included members of two families from eastern Turkey, believed to have been Kurds, a community which has suffered human rights abuses at the hands of the Turkish and Iraqi administrations. The families had paid between \$5,000 and \$8,000 per person to traffickers and believed they were being brought to Britain. Instead, they were loaded onto the wrong container in Zeebrugge in Belgium and brought to Ireland, a journey which took 54 hours in Gale Force 10 winds.

Belgian police were questioning two men about the smuggling operation. The driver of the lorry which brought the container from Cologne to Zeebrugge was also quizzed as well as a French national who is suspected of having driven some of the group from France to Belgium.

The deaths have shocked the nation. Though it is the first time that someone had died while trying to get into Ireland,



The container in which eight refugees died in Wexford was found on this truck.

in June, 2000, 58 Chinese died trying to get into Britain, via Kent. In that tragedy, there was one survivor and the Dutch driver of the lorry was convicted of conspiracy and manslaughter and received a 14-year sentence.

The recent deaths in Ireland have focused attention on both the Irish government's and the EU's attitude toward asylum seekers. A spokesperson for Taoiseach (Irish Prime Minister) Bertie Ahern said that while the EU is not "Fortress Europe," it had to have emigra-

tion controls. Green Party MEP Patricia McKenna criticized the government's position saying that "Smugglers thrive out of human misery thanks to these tough laws." She criticized a proposal to have an EU-wide quota system for asylum seekers and urged that a humanitarian approach to be taken.

Irish Minister for Justice John O'Donoghue has said that if the survivors wish to remain in Ireland, their applications would be dealt with sympathetically.

— Mairéad Carey.

IRISHMEN ARRESTED IN COLOMBIA CLAIM TO BE TOURISTS

In August, three Irish men claiming to be tourists, were arrested in Colombia after having apparently taking part in a five week summer training camp with a Colombian terrorist group known as the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia ("FARC").

The three men, Martin McCauley, James Monaghan and Niall Connolly, entered Colombia on false papers claiming to be journalists. They also claimed to be in the demilitarized zone, an area of land under rebel control, to determine the status of peace negotiations between the government and FARC.

Though Sinn Féin sought to distance themselves in the face of Unionist outrage, the three have well-documented links with the Provisional IRA. James Monaghan, convicted in 1971 of planting incendiary

bombs in a shop, was included on a Sinn Féin list of "on the run" names during negotiations with the government. He is believed by security forces to be the IRA's head of engineering. Martin McAuley was wounded by an undercover RUC unit, who shot dead his companion, Michael Tighe, in 1982 — one of the incidents which sparked the shoot-to-kill inquiry. Sinn Féin's president, Gerry Adams admitted in October that the third man, Niall Connolly, was Sinn Féin's representative in Cuba.

The men were initially incarcerated in the notorious La Modela prison, where a regime of torture and terror, allegedly, exists and where riots and killings are routine. After the killing of another prisoner, the men were moved to the Dijin interrogation centre, seen as being marginally safer than La Modela. Unlike most jurisdictions, in

Colombia, detainees can be held without formal charges being brought against them and the three currently face the prospect of a year's detention in difficult conditions before being formally charged.

If it is proven that they were indeed on an IRA mission to FARC, it is likely to harm Sinn Féin's already weakened US standing. Currently, Sinn Féin raises about \$700,000 annually in the US. If convicted, the men face sentences of up to 16 years in prison.

The arrest of a fourth Irishman in Colombia in August ended happily for him when he was released and deported after police found no link between him and the three detainees. Kevin Crennan was in Colombia legally and had a genuine passport. He had last been heard of by his overjoyed family in 1994 and returned to Ireland to a joyful family reunion.

Sellafield – Round One Goes to Britain

Ireland has lost round one in its fight to close the MOX plant at Sellafield, failing in its bid to get an injunction preventing the opening of the controversial mixed-oxide reprocessing plant.

The controversial nuclear facility recommenced operations in December, clearing the way for armed shipments of nuclear waste to be transported up and down the Irish coast.

A 21-judge UN Law of the Sea tribunal ruled that Britain could go ahead with the plant. The ruling means that in the New Year, shipments of fuel will be transported in heavily armored ships, armed with 30mm cannons and accompanied by armed officers from the UK Atomic Energy Authority through the Irish Sea.

The decision is a major blow to the Irish government and Taoiseach (Prime Minister) Bertie Ahern, who have made great efforts to close down the nuclear facility, just 60 miles off the Irish coast.

The MOX plant will produce nuclear fuel from nuclear waste, some of which will be imported through the Irish Sea from Germany and Japan.

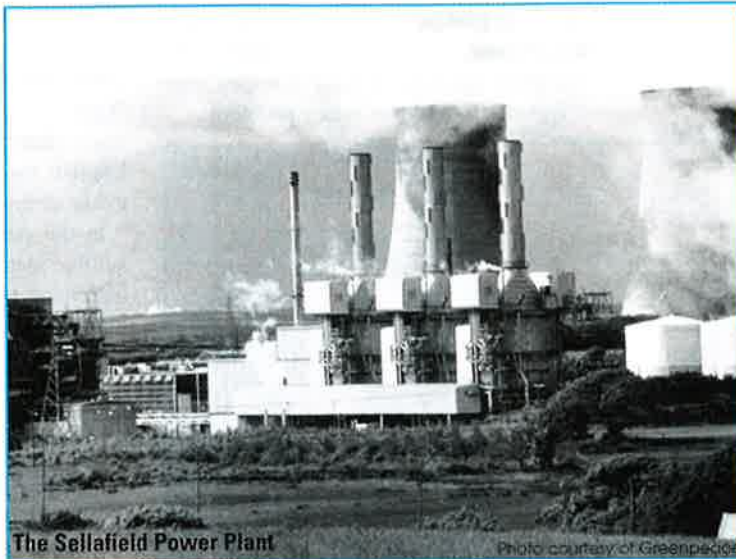
In the wake of the September 11 attacks, there were heightened fears that the plant could be targeted by terrorists and that Ireland would suffer catastrophic consequences. However, Sellafield has long been a source of worry for people living along the East Coast.

Irish people suffering from cancer.

The government has vowed to fight on. Preparations are underway to bring a case to the European Court of Justice to argue that the MOX plant is economically unviable and therefore illegal under the Euratom Treaty. They are also taking

a parallel case, through the North Atlantic maritime organization, OSPAR, claiming that the British have refused to give sufficient safety information about the plant and therefore it should be closed.

It was not all bad news from Hamburg either. The court acknowledged for the first time that Ireland has a right under International Law to be involved in developments at Sellafield. It ordered Britain to consult with Ireland and exchange information on the plant's effect on the Irish Sea as



The Sellafield Power Plant

Photo courtesy of Greenpeace

well as to devise measures to prevent marine pollution.

There have been reports of cancer clusters in Co. Louth which locals believed were caused by the plant.

There is also concern about the ongoing pollution of the Irish Sea. A recent report suggested that an attack on Sellafield would be 50 times worse than the nuclear disaster at Chernobyl and would leave hundreds of thousands of

well as to devise measures to prevent marine pollution.

The decision also left the door open for an eleventh-hour appeal. It said Ireland's plea for an injunction was premature because the British had given assurances that although the plant will be running from December, it will not transport material from the plant until October. It called on both countries to submit further information within a fortnight and if the President of the Court is not satisfied with the information given he could make further orders.

Attorney General Michael McDowell, who led Ireland's legal team, said the government was "undaunted" by the setback, "Britain can no longer hold back information in the way it has done in the past about the economic justification for Sellafield or the safety risks involved. We are just as entitled as the people of Cumbria, London or anywhere else to know the implications for the safety of the Irish people and the pollution avoidance in the Irish Seas as any of them." The failure of Britain to consult with Ireland is now "unlawful," he added.

– Mairead Carey.

DUBLIN MAYOR LAUNCHES NYC CAMPAIGN

Dublin's Lord Mayor Michael Mulcahy has launched a campaign called "Shoulder to Shoulder" in solidarity with the people of New York. The "civic solidarity campaign" will see plaques erected at Dublin fire and garda stations in memory of those who died in the September 11 attacks.

It is also hoped that at least 100 firefighters and police who were injured or traumatized by the events in New York will be given a holiday in Ireland over the summer.

"We are asking Irish sporting organizations to hold events in New York, and we are also organizing that Irish firemen march in the St Patrick's Day parade there on March 17," Michael Mulcahy told *The*

Irish Voice. The Mayor has already invited the outgoing Mayor of New York, Rudolph Giuliani, to march in the next St Patrick's Day parade in Dublin.

A committee was set up in the aftermath of the September 11 attacks to work on the new campaign. "We want to express our solidarity with New York. We would like to repay the people of that city for all that they have given us over the years," said the Lord Mayor.

"Obviously tourism has taken a big hit in New York, and Manhattan has been devastated economically, in terms of its shops and theaters and restaurants, so we would like to do our bit to help them bring back the buzz to Manhattan and New York." – Mairead Carey.

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The Travelling People

In a small village in County Galway, a group of parents decided to keep their children home from school. Their school has just 12 pupils between four and 12 years old, but parents closed it down for a week last September, because they wanted to keep other children out.

The children they wanted to keep out were also Irish. Their parents had grown up in the area, Ballinruane near Menlough, and wanted to return there after spending ten years abroad. But they were "Travellers" and that was a problem.

from one community to the next. Many present-day musicians will acknowledge their contribution. Ireland's famous balladeer, the late Luke Kelly of The Dubliners, sang a song in deference to the Travellers which included the words: "Move along, get along, move along, get along, go, move, shift."

Although the history of the Travellers is not very well documented, research shows references to them in Ireland as far back as the 12th century. This nomadic group has its own language, known as "cant" or "gammon," and referred to by academics as "shelta." But they speak English too, only using their own language among themselves.

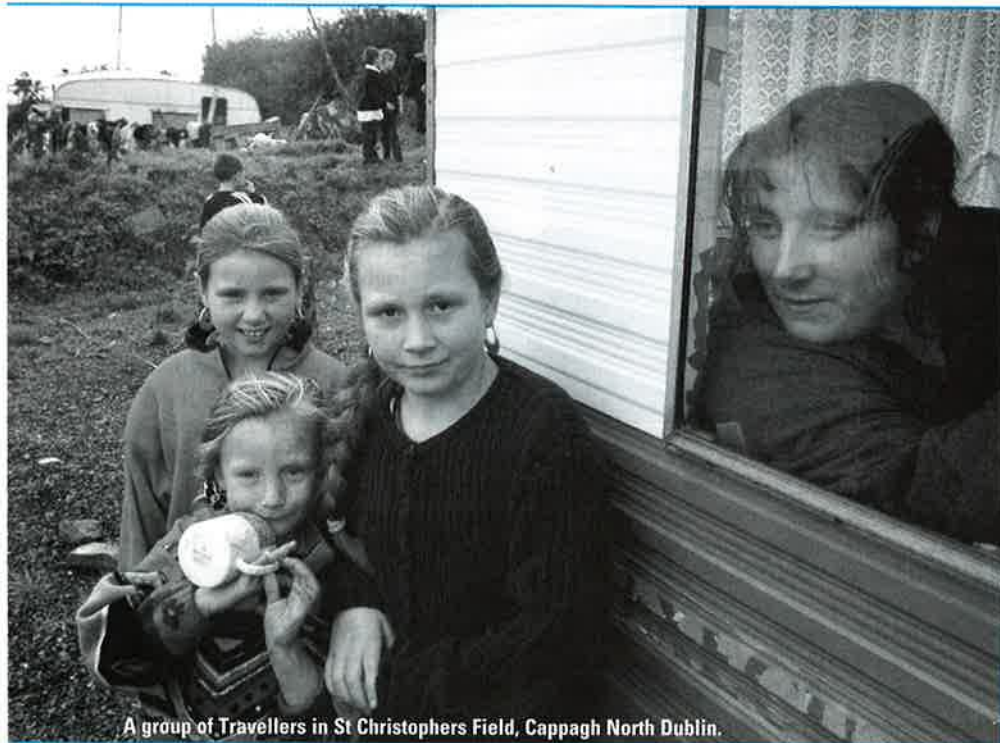
In the past, Travellers worked as tin-smiths, seasonal farm laborers, and scrap merchants and were welcomed in rural places where they mended buckets and other farm implements in exchange for food and a place to park. Today, however, many Traveller families depend on social welfare for their existence.

According to the Irish government, which recently set up a National Traveller Health Strategy, Travellers' life expectancy is 11 years less than that of a settled person in Ireland. Infant mortality rates are more than three times the national average, and Travellers have double the national rate of stillbirth and double the national rate of childbirth. Crib death was found to be 12 times more common among Travellers' babies.

The Director of Public Health at the Mid-Western Health Board, Dr Kevin Kelleher, said that the statistics are alarming. "If you look at Ireland itself, our life expectancy is below the European average, and then you have a section of the Irish community, whose life expectancy is even below that," he said at a recent public health conference.

"Traditionally the problem is that the services we provide are not attuned to the needs of the Travelling community," he said. The health services have much to learn about dealing with Traveller traditions, such as dealing with death. "In a situation of death, the entire family and more will want to be in hospital for the last moments of the patient's life and in general hospitals are not prepared for this. It creates an unhappiness between both Travellers and hospital staff that can be overcome."

The health services may be making somewhat of an effort to reach out to the



A group of Travellers in St Christophers Field, Cappagh North Dublin.

*Emer Mullins
reports on Ireland's
ethnic minority.*

Photos by Derek Speirs

Travellers are an ethnic minority with a long and colorful tradition in Ireland. And a lengthy history of discrimination: The stand-off in Co. Galway only ended when the Travellers – four families who had made arrangements for nine of their children to attend St Joseph's School – decided to move on. It was a bitter parody of the forced evictions of Ireland's past.

There are an estimated 25,000 Travellers in the Republic of Ireland, and around 1,500 in Northern Ireland.

Most of them live the life of their ancestors, roaming from place to place in caravans they park along the roadside, or in government-built "halting sites," moving on when farmers and others call the police to evict them.

Years ago, the Travellers were credited with bringing Irish music and storytelling

Travellers, but not enough is being done, say the people at Pavee Point, a group set up to promote Travellers' rights. "Pavee" is a name used by Travellers to describe themselves. The organization says that Travellers' life expectancy is equivalent to that of settled people in the 1940s, and cites a 1986 Economic and Social Research Institute report which found that only five percent of Travellers live to be 50 years old, while only one percent lives until 65, compared to 11 per cent of the settled population.

But the main problem being faced by Travellers, according to Caoimhe McCabe, a spokeswoman for the organization, is that of accommodation. There are not enough halting sites available, she said. "A lot of people presume that Travellers want to live on the side of the road with no facilities, but that's not the case. They want access to electricity and sanitation, but they also want to live as they always did [moving on when they



Traveller children playing in Carrá Park, Traveller site North Dublin.

Derek Speirs/Report

at the lack of available serviced halting sites continually move their camps on to private land. They stay a while before being moved on by the police. Then they go a few more miles and park on someone else's land. Along come the police and the cycle continues.

Travellers are sometimes feared and often despised, blamed for crime, and said to be living off the state, uneducated and unwilling to live in a "normal com-

the Council about not doing its job. There are complaints about a couch and a burned out car on the river's banks, allegedly belonging to the Travellers.

"That's not a common experience," counters McCabe, pointing out that the media are quick to report negative stories about Travellers and don't bother looking for positive things to report. "You never hear of cases when they leave an area and it's clean."

SO WHY ARE TRAVELLERS DISCRIMINATED AGAINST? IN SONG AND IN STORY, THE "TINKERS," AS THEY WERE THEN KNOWN IN THE DAYS BEFORE POLITICAL CORRECTNESS, WERE A CHERISHED PART OF IRISH SOCIETY. WHAT HAPPENED?

want]. They should not have to deny that part of their culture. They are used to living within their immediate family group and moving around a lot. It's alien to them to be put in a halting site with lots of other families and to be told to stay there." Pavee Point is campaigning for a system of "transient" halting sites, where a family could move from one to the next when a vacancy arises.

If the accommodation problems are not dealt with, the problem of Travellers moving onto private land will continue," adds Ms. McCabe. And therein lies the nub of the problem. Travellers protesting

community." They are refused service in pubs and shops no matter how much money they may have. When they marry, they must travel the country to find a venue, and when one of their clan dies, they gather in thousands to mourn.

This summer in Ireland a number of newspaper reports dealt with the outrage of local citizens at the piles of rubbish left after an encampment had been cleared. In one case outside Dublin, the damage was so great that the clean-up bill was estimated at 70,000 Irish pounds.

And, as I write this article, a debate is raging on a radio talk show about an illegal Traveller encampment

on the banks of the Dodder River in South Dublin. A spokesman for the local Council, which is responsible for providing accommodation for Travellers, said that six of his staff of eight are not in work because of stress-related problems caused by the public who were continuously haranguing

There have also been reports of Travelling families extorting money from businesses, by pulling their caravans on to private land, and refusing to leave unless they are paid to do so. Because it can take some time for the police to get an eviction notice, companies usually pay up rather than wait and risk damaging their business in the meantime.

Anecdotal evidence suggests that this has happened, McCabe admitted, but she thinks that such reports may be exaggerated. "I don't condone that, and people who do it should be prosecuted," she said, agreeing that Travellers sometimes contribute to their own bad press by their behavior. "Appearing in a newspaper for fighting brings notoriety, they think that's great," she said. "People take the high moral ground, but the 'fighting Irish' is not an uncommon stereotype generally."

So why are Travellers discriminated against? In song and in story, the "Tinkers," as they were then known in the days before political correctness, were a cherished part of Irish society. What happened?

"I think discrimination was always there," said McCabe. "But since other ethnic groups (Ireland is experiencing an influx of refugees) have come to Ireland



A member of Pavee Point's Travellers Primary Healthcare for Travellers Project visiting Traveller families in a North Dublin Site.

Derek Speirs/Report

it's worse. Attitudes have hardened and become more entrenched. The situation has gotten worse for many Travellers, and the settled community has a responsibility to see that they get their full human rights."

Since the mid-80s, however, Travellers have been participating, in growing numbers, in groups organized to give them a voice at local and national level and to campaign for better conditions. There are now 40 Travellers' organizations nationwide, and Travellers are becoming more empowered in terms of community development.

There are currently 17 health care pro-

Mrs. Nevin and her family, one of just 2,000 Traveller families to live in housing, found it difficult to settle into a house at first, and things were not helped by her neighbors, who didn't want them there. "It was hell on earth," Mrs. Nevin recalls. One of her daughters was hit on the forehead by a stone thrown by a neighbor. "When I asked why, I was told: 'Because she is a f...ing knacker.' Then our walls were covered in graffiti calling us names. It was terrible."

The Nevins stuck it out, however, and finally their neighbors settled into a state of grudging acceptance. The children made friends and eventually things

improved. "It was just fear of the unknown on both sides," Mrs. Nevin said. "Young people hear so much talk from their par-

"YOUNG PEOPLE HEAR SO MUCH TALK FROM THEIR PARENTS AND FROM OTHER KIDS AT SCHOOL THAT THEY THINK IT'S OKAY TO TREAT US BADLY. BUT THERE ARE SOME GOOD SETTLED PEOPLE AND SOME BAD TRAVELLERS. INNOCENT CHILDREN JUST GET CAUGHT UP IN THE DISCRIMINATION."

ents and from other kids at school that they think it's okay to treat us badly. But there are some good settled people and some bad

homework clubs after class, they should not remove the children during class because then they certainly won't learn. And the differences are again being played up." She moved her own daughters out of one school to avoid just such a situation.

She has happy memories of her childhood, and a strong appreciation for the values passed on by her parents. "They had a huge respect for each other, for the family, and for marriage. They had a love of nature and a deep community spirit. They supported each other and were deeply religious."

The way forward for the Travelling community, she believes, is through more integration and more understanding on both sides. "When we want to live in towns people must get used to that. Some people want halting sites, and that's okay,

but they must be serviced. Others want group housing, and that's okay too."

Since 1995 the government has introduced a series of Accommodation Consultancy Committees on a regional level designed to deal with the problem. These committees are working with local councils to arrange accommodation for Travellers. It was supposed to be a five-year plan to have all Travellers' living needs taken care of, but there's still a long way to go.

In Portlaoise town, where the Nevins live, the local halting site is in the middle of an industrial estate, surrounded by oil factories. The overhead barriers at the entrance are locked at night and there are no fire hoses. If a fire were to occur, Mrs. Nevin says, it only takes a caravan three minutes to burn. The fire department would never get there on time. The local council allegedly refused permission to build a house in the area, saying it is not residential land. But it's obviously good enough for Travellers, she noted ironically.

"If you haven't got accommodation with toilets and clean water you can't have good health," Mrs. Nevin insisted. "And if you can't stay somewhere as long as you like, your kids can't get an education." □



Police officers use force to remove a Travellers home.

jects where Traveller women are trained by local health boards to work in their own communities on public health issues. They liaise with health boards to set up medical appointments and to ensure that "culturally appropriate treatment" is delivered, McCabe said.

One Traveller who is studying community work is Julie Nevin, currently training as an outreach worker at Maynooth College in County Kildare. She has lived in the neighboring County Laois for 12 years: in a house with her husband, John, and their four daughters, Mary, Jean, Winnie and Catherine, for the last eight years, and in a caravan on a halting site for the four preceding years.

"I love traveling," Mrs. Nevin said, "but I took a house because it was too hard on the children in the winter. It was lovely [traveling], but we might get a week in a camp and then the guards would run us off and we'd have to drag the kids out of school and start somewhere else. Now we just go away for two or three weeks in the summer."

Travellers. Innocent children just get caught up in the discrimination." She believes that people should be taught about Travellers' culture to remove the fear of the unknown. "Kids need a better understanding of the fact that it's okay to be different," she opined.

Mrs. Nevin is a remarkably strong woman, a leader in her community who finds time to study for a diploma despite the fact that she dropped out of school at the age of 12, a situation common among Traveller children. "When you are shifted from camp to camp it's not easy to keep children in school," she said.

Referring to the situation in the Galway school, Mrs. Nevin said that Travellers' children are usually asked to sit at the back of the class and are treated differently than other kids when they are accepted in a school. Schools that agree to teach the children receive extra funding, but take the children out of class for remedial teaching, a situation she condemned. "How are they supposed to mix? If they need extra help they should have

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PRESIDENT BUSH HONORS ROBERT KENNEDY



President Bush and Ethel Kennedy at a ceremony naming the Justice Department's headquarters for Robert F. Kennedy, Nov. 2001.

On November 20th, President Bush, Ethel Kennedy, the widow of Robert Kennedy, and other members of the Kennedy clan attended a ceremony to rename the Justice Department headquarters after Robert Kennedy. Although somewhat surprising that the Republican Bush administration has chosen to honor a Democrat in this way, the impetus behind the honor came from the President himself, who had to overrule Congressional Republicans opposing the naming of the building.

The symbiotic nature of the relationship between the Kennedys and the Bushes – probably the two most important political dynasties in the United States – is becoming more pronounced even as their politics remain as far apart as ever. Ever

the political realist, Senator Edward Kennedy needs the President's support to get some of his agenda through Congress. At the same time, even if President Bush seems to be prioritizing anti-terrorist measures rather than domestic issues, he will need Senator Kennedy's support and clout in persuading others to support his education plan.

Politics aside, it remains appropriate that a building which is the headquarters of the Justice Department be named after Robert Kennedy, who served as Attorney General in his brother's administration. As Attorney General, Robert Kennedy threw his weight behind the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and prosecuted school desegregation cases. According to Senator Christopher Dodd (D-CT), a former Peace Corps volunteer, Kennedy had "that rarest of qualities – a clear-eyed conviction in what he knew to be right. He spoke with a passionate inten-

The symbiotic nature of the relationship between the Kennedys and the Bushes – probably the two most important political dynasties in the United States – is becoming more pronounced even as their politics remain as far apart as ever.

sity about the issues of the day, whether it was the tragedy of racial hatred or the wretched conditions of the American Indian, the despair of homelessness or the plight of the urban poor. He portrayed an America where justice and fairness always prevailed, and he challenged us to create that place for ourselves."

This idealism didn't prevent Kennedy from sometimes falling short of what he strove for, but in an era when reputations often suffer from posthumous revisionist exposés, his reputation remains as intact as it was when he was assassinated in 1968 after winning the California presidential primary.

One of Kennedy's most memorable speeches came after the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. in 1968. Visiting Indianapolis after learning of the death of King, Kennedy decided to proceed with a rally in the heart of the city's ghetto area. After climbing on to a flatbed truck that was serving as a platform, Kennedy told the crowd: "I have bad news for you, for all our fellow citizens, and people who love peace all over the world, and that is that Martin Luther King was shot and killed tonight." Kennedy, possibly the only white person in America who could have broken the news of King's death to the largely black crowd and not have caused a riot, continued: "For those of you who are black and tempted to be filled with hatred and distrust against all white people, I can only say that I felt in my own heart the same kind of feeling. I had a member of my family killed... he was killed by a white man. But we have to make an effort in the United States, we have to make an effort to understand, to look beyond these difficult times." -By Siobhan Tracey



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to give them beauty for ashes.”

—Isaiah 61:3

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Another Tragedy for Rockaway



Firefighters sift through the wreckage of the American Airlines flight that crashed in Rockaway.

When American Airlines Flight 587 crashed in Rockaway Beach, Queens, it hit a tight-knit community already reeling from numerous losses suffered in the World Trade Center tragedy.

After taking off only two minutes earlier from Kennedy Airport, located across Jamaica Bay, flight 587 broke apart and nose-dived directly into a heavily populated area of Rockaway known as Belle Harbor. Two hundred and sixty-three passengers onboard and five local residents (four of Irish descent) perished.

It's two months almost to the exact day that Rockaway lost more than 70 of its residents, many of them Irish Americans who worked on Wall Street and the FDNY, and this tight-knit community, already reeling with grief, is shaken to their core.

Great as the tragedy is, there were miracles that also occurred on this day. If you asked those who lost family members in the World Trade Center tragedy, you might hear them say they had an angel on their shoulders on that Monday, keeping them out of harms way.

Bernie Heerin, owner of the Harbor Light Restaurant and a retired fireman, lost his son Charlie in the World Trade Center tragedy. On this day, another tragedy was narrowly avoided when the engine of flight 587 landed directly across the street from his house on a gas station, just yards from his front door.

The plane passed directly over and clipped the house directly across the street.

His partner in the restaurant, John Whelan, lost his brother Eugene, a fireman. Eugene had lived above the restaurant, and his parents and brother Chris were in the apartment on that fateful Monday when the plane narrowly missed the building.

Chris described hearing a rumbling above their heads, followed by a burst of wind that came through the apartment, blowing the door open. When he looked he saw an orange fireball outside their window.

Countless Rockaway natives, including those New York City firefighters and police officers who'd lost family members and friends in the World Trade Center tragedy, rushed to the scene to offer assistance. Bernie Heerin was one of the first people to grab a hose.

Officer Sean Carlton witnessed the crash as he was leaving his apartment for work, all the while knowing his family lived in the area of the crash. He immediately got in his car and headed to the scene. Sean's family lives on Beach 126th Street, just blocks from the scene and within minutes they were all account-

ed for and Sean was grabbing a hose line to assist the firemen and getting all the neighbors out of their homes safely.

Sean's brother-in-law, Captain Timothy Stackpole of the FDNY, died in the World Trade Center tragedy as he was setting up a command post at the site. This heroic man had fought his way back onto the fire department after he was nearly killed in a Brooklyn blaze in 1998, which left him with serious burns over his entire body. No doubt he rests with the angels today, for he certainly earned his wings.

There were many other near-misses as well: Howard Beach native Brian Connolly, president of Avon, recalled how his brother, a pilot for American Airlines, pilots flight 587 regularly and would bid for this flight as it was his favorite. It was only the day before the crash he flew this flight for the last time.

One month later, there is an unusual quietness among this usually bustling neighborhood, albeit the sound of the bulldozers clearing the rubble of the remnants of homes and fuselage. As I venture over to the scene of the crash I am reminded of the families who have lost loved ones in this horrific tragedy and I stop for a moment on this hallowed ground to say a prayer – a prayer for the souls of those who perished.

Rockaway has its own "ground zero" now.

There is a makeshift memorial filled with photos, prayers, flowers – reminders of what used to be. The smell of jet fuel still permeates the air, and the charred remains of the homes that used to stand there can be a reminder of the resiliency and character of this sleepy town community, who find strength in their belief that their lost loved ones are looking out for them. As Chris Whelan said about his brother Eugene: "He saw that plane heading towards us and gave it a little kick."

– Patricia Daly

Daly, a Rockaway native, is Irish America's advertising director.



At the scene just hours after the crash.



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Death of "Quiet" Beatle

The world is mourning the death of former Beatles guitarist George Harrison, who died in Los Angeles, aged 58, after a long fight against cancer. In New York, fans gathered at Strawberry Fields in Central Park to pay homage to George at the garden created as a memorial to former Beatle John Lennon, who was murdered in 1980. Liverpool has long been the first port of call for the Irish emigrating to Britain and emotional links between Ireland and Liverpool remain strong. George Harrison was yet another Liverpoolian who could claim Irish ancestry. His maternal grandfather, John French (father of George's mother, Louise) was born in Co. Wexford in 1870 and moved to Liverpool in the early 1900s. During his childhood, George spent holidays in Ireland and one of his cousins, Tony French, still keeps in contact with the Harrison family in England. George visited Ireland on several occasions during the height of Beatlemania and stayed in his uncle's home in Drumcondra when they visited Dublin in 1963. In later years, George, who had reason to become very security-conscious after John Lennon's death at the hands of a crazed fan, felt safe in Ireland. In 1999, he was stabbed in his English mansion by an intruder. He made his first public appearance following the attack in Ireland, releasing a picture of himself and his wife, Olivia, taken in the Irish countryside, where he issued a statement to reassure his fans that the couple were fine after their ordeal.

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CELTIC APPALACHIA

If you live in Philadelphia or happen to be planning a weekend break to the city, you will be interested to note that the 15th Annual Celtic Appalachian Celebration will take place on Sunday, March 10th between 2.30 and 7.00pm at the International House of Philadelphia. The program's theme "Far from the American Shore: Irish American history through song" offers an entertaining departure from perhaps the more usual political approach to Irish American history. International House is located at 3701 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104. For more information, call (215) 895 6537 or visit www.ihousephilly.org.

Showcase Ireland

The press launch for Showcase Ireland, Ireland's largest trade fair, was held at The 21 Club in New York City on December 10th. The Crafts Council of Ireland felt it appropriate to hold the launch in New York to demonstrate their appreciation of the friendship and economic ties between Ireland and the United States, and to show solidarity with New York in the light of recent tragic events. The launch was attended by the Tanaiste (Deputy Prime Minister) Mary Harney and Dr Frances Ruane, Chairperson of the Crafts Council of Ireland who noted "we want to show our support to our friends and contacts in the United States and reassure U.S. retailers that Showcase Ireland is thriving and will host a record number of exhibitors and new products." She added that special airfare and lodging arrangements to encourage US retailers to make the trip have been organized. Showcase Ireland is one of Europe's premier trade fairs for gift, craft, tabletop and fashion attracting over 650 of the finest European and Irish craftspeople and manufacturers. Tom McGrath, President of the North American Celtic Buyers Association, states that "Without question, Showcase Ireland is the most important trade event for US specialty retailers of Irish merchandise. It keeps us up to date on Irish design."

Encouragingly it was noted at the launch that bookings are up 18% on last year. Showcase Ireland will be held in the RDS in Dublin and will run from January 20-23, 2002.

For further information, contact Ruairi Curtin, Enterprise Ireland. Tel 212: 546-0468; fax: (212) 371 6398; email: ruairi.curtin@enterprise-ireland.com or visit the Showcase Ireland website at www.showcaseireland.com.



Craft Council of Ireland's chief executive Les Reed and Tanaiste Mary Harney.

Gift Idea for Art Lovers

Irish sculptor John Behan's bronze memorial "Arrival" was recently unveiled at the UN Plaza in New York. Behan describes the work as having an emphasis "...on hope, the future. The people walk down the gangplanks into a new world having survived the wild, stormy voyage across the Atlantic. But the sculpture speaks to us of all peoples, not merely the Irish." Behan's work is included in the private collections of the President of Ireland, Mary McAleese, UN High Commissioner Mary Robinson, Queen

Beatrix of the Netherlands, Bill and Hilary Clinton, George Mitchell, Seamus Heaney, Edna O'Brien, Placido Domingo, the late Samuel Beckett and others. Collectors may acquire one of John Behan's limited edition of 100 individually-cast bronze sculptures based on "Arrival" at the UN Plaza. Each piece is signed and numbered by the sculptor and is accompanied by a certificate of provenance. Each number in the edition is valued at US\$5,800.

For further information, contact Tomas Hardiman at e-mail: thc@iol.ie or access the website at www.jbehan.com



MCCOURT RETURNS TO TEACHING

Frank McCourt has been giving accent coaching to veteran American actor Paul Newman. After a dinner one night, Paul told Frank that he was playing an Irish character and would like some 'accent' coaching. It was arranged that Paul would visit Frank at his apartment where Frank proceeded to read Paul's lines into a recorder. They then enjoyed coffee and a chat as Paul regaled Frank with stories of the making of *Butch Cassidy*. Next day, Frank received a jug of Tullamore Dew whisky as a gracious thank you gift from Paul.

Meanwhile.....

Brothers Frank and Malachy McCourt have signed on to act in a new film written by Irish American New Yorker Mike Carty.

Carty's film - co-directed with Irish writer Colum McCann - centers on three twenty-something characters Sean Lenihan (Dan Brennan), Bridget (Christy Meyers) and Rock (Javier Pice), growing up in the fictional town of Greenwood, an Irish American enclave in the Bronx.

Sean's brother Danny, played by John Carty (Mike's cousin) is the local tearaway while Sean's other brother Jimmy is a cop.

Frank plays the Lenihan brothers' father, while Malachy plays one of his closest friends, a straight-up guy against Frank's hard-drinking character.

McCann got Frank involved after both fell in love with the script.

"The script is great," said Frank, "it's very tough and unyielding. It's a very different view of Irish America, there's no sentimentalism, sham-rocks or shillelaghs.

"I'm playing my real-life father's role," he says wryly, "one of those hapless Irish men who should never get married."



Kelly Fincham

John Carty (Danny) and his film father Frank McCourt

Innisfree Fund

During a visit to New York last November, the Taoiseach (Irish Prime Minister), Bertie Ahern announced the launch of a drive to provide a holiday in Ireland for the families of firefighters and police officers who died on September 11th. Since then, support has poured in from a variety of sources, including those in the New York fire and police departments. In December, Trina Vargo, President of the US-Ireland Alliance, announced that the Irish Hotels Federation and the Northern Ireland Hotels Federation will generously support the initiative by providing accommodation for the families. Senator George Mitchell has also added his support for the project. The Alliance hopes to raise \$1.6 million (1.75 million euros) to

HOLIDAYS IN IRELAND FOR FAMILIES OF NEW YORK'S FIREFIGHTERS AND POLICE OFFICERS cover the cost of the vacations. Checks should be made payable to the US-Ireland Alliance and donations may be sent to any of the following addresses:

US-Ireland Alliance, "Innisfree Fund," Bank of Ireland, Lower Baggot Street Branch, Dublin 2, Ireland: Sort Code: 90-14-90; Account No.: 40384731;

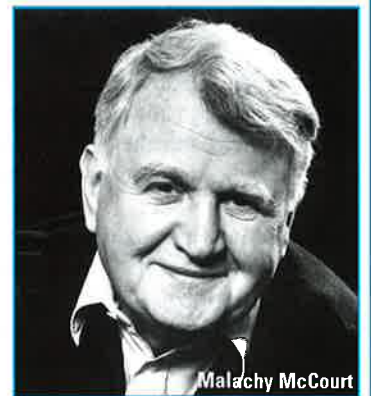
US-Ireland Alliance, "Innisfree Fund," Bank of Ireland, 54 Donegall Place Branch, Belfast BT1 5BX, Northern Ireland: Sort Code: 90-21-27; Account No.: 40384731;

US-Ireland Alliance, "Innisfree Fund," 1747 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, 12th Floor, Washington, D.C. 20006

Danny Boy Uncovered

In his book *Danny Boy - The Beloved Irish Ballad* to be published in March, well-known Irish-American writer Malachy McCourt offers an explication of the history, facts and myths surrounding the well-loved Irish air. McCourt explains that "Danny Boy" is unique in that people are willing to overlook a bad rendition if the singer is earnest and the moment is true. It is certainly true that the song, to the tune of the Londonderry Air, is probably the best known of all Irish songs or melodies. The book offers an analysis of the origins of the song's melody and lyrics, humorous accounts of bad renditions, the blind fiddler's tale, and a discography of recorded renditions. McCourt also calls on Seamus Heaney, Thomas Cahill and brother Frank to give their thoughts on the popular ballad.

Published by Running Press Book Publishers, March 2002.



Malachy McCourt



Quiet Man Celebrations

If you happen to have a neighbor, or even a friend, who has recently returned from a visit to the ould sod and, after a couple of drops of the crathur', they start babblin' on about strange sightings in counties Mayo and Galway, take a good pinch of salt and, please, be patient, all will be explained!

It is just over 50 years since one of the first Technicolor films ever to be shot on location outside the U.S. was made. Directed by John Ford and based on a novel by Maurice Walsh, *The Quiet Man*, starring John Wayne and Maureen O'Hara, was mainly shot in Galway and south Mayo during September 1951. (See Joe McBride's column page 56).

For a half century the nostalgic appeal of this film has attracted millions of American tourists to the beautifully scenic area in which the film was shot. *Quiet Man* countryside is an odyssey of panoramic scenery that sweeps from Oughterard, Co. Galway through the breathtaking mountains of the Maam Valley and north towards the shores of Lough Corrib and the pretty village of Cong with its historic edifice, Ashford Castle.

"Quiet Man Celebrations" is more than just a creative and fun venture by three local businessmen, Paddy Rock, Billy Gibbons and Gus Martin, to mark the anniversary of the shooting of the film in September 1951 and its general release

in September 1952. It is also a clever enterprise that enhances and markets the economic potential of this area as a haven for tourists. The first phase of The Quiet Man Celebrations was held at various venues in Galway and Mayo through the weekend of September 21, 2001. The highlight of the festival was the crowning or more accurately, the "bonneting" of a Maureen O'Hara look-alike by John Wayne, a.k.a. Graham Wilkinson, an actor from County Wicklow.

Throughout the summer thousands of red-headed Irish colleens vied for the honor of being chosen. National newspaper, *The Sunday World*, gave wide coverage to the competition whilst the independent television station TV3 followed 20 chosen beauties, who were flown courtesy of Aer Arainn to Galway, to be whisked in style through *Quiet Man* locations for the day.

Well begorrah! and bedad! you'd be forgiven for thinking that you were in a time-capsule on that balmy Monday during July. The staff of Ashford Castle were dizzied by a motley horde of Maureen O'Hara lookalikes who instead of suppin' tea and nibblin' porter cake were downin' Guinness and puffin' on enough Marlboro Lights to alert the local fire-brigade.

Shortly before 4p.m on July 9, a tour bus growled up the stately driveway and

ejected a host of giggling beauties from its bowels. Some minutes later an exhausted John Wayne (Graham Wilkinson) emerged from the bus.

"One redhead is enough for any man," he confided, visibly drained.

Fortunately, Paddy Rock and his cohorts had organized that two other male escorts, both fine specimens of country males and winners of the Culchie King Festival, were on hand to tend to the needs of the fiery colleens.

The backdrop that is Lough Corrib is in tumultuous turmoil as curly locks of red hair and demure skirts are breezily liberated in a most un-1950s fashion.

"Everyone called my father the Duke," confides Maureen Judge from Ballina, Co. Mayo. "You won't believe it, but he actually died on the same day as John Wayne. And to tell you the truth, I've always suspected that his mind was on Maureen O'Hara when I was conceived. I mean it does make sense, amn't I the spit of her?"

Later that afternoon the damsels descend on Danahers Pub in Cong. The bar's agog with oohs and ahhs as elderly locals check their pints with the bewilderment of a *deja-vu* experience. The TV3 crew are out in the square, it's raining, the local garda assures me that he has absolutely no concerns about the influx of "fine bits of shtuff" into his village. "And anyway, I'm married myself to a good lookin' redhead," he assures, with a wicked twinkle in his eye.

The 2001 Quiet Man Celebrations were first and foremost oodles of fun and craic. The program offered a broad selection of events, hosted throughout the *Quiet Man* countryside. From a golf championship to a soccer match, to a vintage car rally and an exhibition of traditional crafts while the evenings were peppered with a miscellany of music and song. The Inaugural Quiet Man Country Celebration Ball proved such a resounding success that it's set to become an annual affair.

So *Irish America* is giving you plenty of warning, folks, and we have it from the horse's mouth, next year's Quiet Man Celebrations promise even more craic, and sure won't the Maureen O'Haras be even more beautiful as they mature and mellow in the soft mists of the west of Ireland.

—Aine Ryan

For further information: www.quietmancelebrations.com

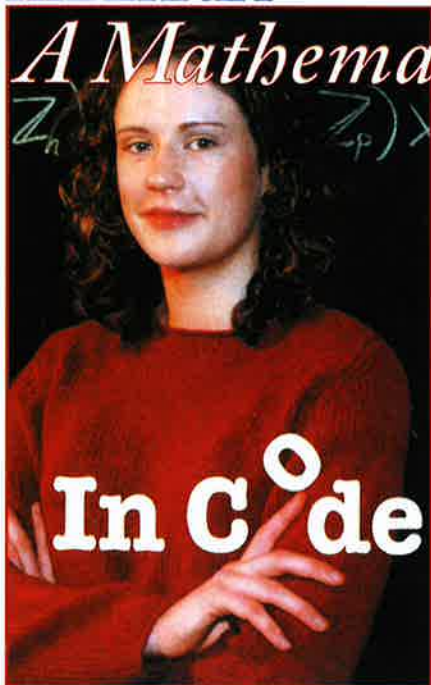


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When Sarah Flannery, a teenage girl from County Cork, won Ireland's Young Scientist of the Year award 1999, Ireland took notice. When she went on to win European Young Scientist of the Year with her discoveries in Internet cryptography, the entire world was buzzing. Now, a bit older, algorithm whiz Sarah Flannery talks to Elizabeth Raggi about her book *In Code*, fame, friends and her first year of college.

How did you decide on Cambridge?

I originally considered going to school in Ireland, but if I went to Cork or Dublin I would have lived with my parents or grandparents, and I wanted a change.

And do you feel you've made the right decision?

Cambridge is a fantastic university. I've loved every minute of it. I love my courses. I love college life.

Have you found more mathematically kindred friends at college?

My friends are studying everything. Physics, math, history. There's all sorts of people here and then of course, there are the people you can have the more in-depth conversations with about your interests, and that's great.

What kinds of classes have you taken?

Math, computer science and a little physics thrown in.

Have you declared a major?

I will be earning my B.A. in Computer Science.

A Mathematical Journey

You surely don't think math all the time. What do you do in your free time?

I play basketball. I'm the shooting guard on the University team.

After winning the Young Scientist 1999 award you overheard someone say "And to think people send their children to posh schools." You felt winning was a testament to your public school teachers.

We definitely received a broad education. I'm glad I had a public education. I loved all of the subjects. Besides math, I liked English. And I liked studying with both boys and girls, and playing sports.

You decided not to patent the algorithm. Lots of people had an opinion on this. How did it feel to be the subject of so many chat rooms? Did you ever doubt your decision to not patent it?

No I never did. Not at all. Nor did I when I turned down the Pepsi ad. The decision was just right. I had no interest in doing it. It would've to some extent taken away my integrity as a scientist, but mainly it was that I don't drink Pepsi or Coke or any of that. And I didn't want the implications it might carry with it, like drinking it would make you smarter.

What did your friends think about that?

For some of my friends it was difficult to understand in regards to the money. They were saying, "Why aren't you taking the money?" But they knew I wouldn't do something stupid. They just didn't understand the situation.

It was actually one of the reasons I didn't go to college in Ireland. I was afraid those who had read all the press would know "of me." I didn't want that, people having false impressions of me from newspapers and such. The students I am with in school had too much to do during all of it and didn't see very much of me. The older people and lecturers knew, but were asked not to talk to me about it and they respected that.

Do they know who you are now?

All my friends here knew nothing about it until my book was in the front display of the bookshops. They all said, "What's this?!" and then "Oh, I remember reading something about a girl who..." Then all the questions came. But it died off and things got back to normal.

You were shocked with all the media attention. Did you not realize people

would be interested in your work? Was it always just your school project?

I didn't think they'd get to see it. It was all good fun, but no one would get to see it. I thought maybe if I had more friends in the industry, then they'd be interested. I won on a Friday and that weekend all the papers in Ireland had covered it but I was sure it'd blow over. Then it was in the London *Times* and that brought 70 phone calls the next day!

You're very up-front about not being labeled a genius. Why?

I'm not. It's obvious if you ask my teachers. I do this with anything I'm interested in. I like to work for intensely short times, in bursts. I was enjoying what I was studying because it was so new and exciting, something I thought I'd never get to do – I mean this was real research! But I hate when people try to write about it. Once I was doing what I considered to be a good interview on live radio. The reporter was very interested in my childhood and the puzzles my Dad had given me. She gave me a puzzle and had me explain the solution. I wanted to show I'm a normal person who worked hard and was enthusiastic about something. So at the end of the interview she says, "Sarah Flannery. Irish Genius."

You don't see yourself as a genius, but do you see how you are an inspiration to people? Especially to girls who are typically discouraged from pursuing math?

I don't like being a symbol. But people don't see people being enthusiastic about something, most of all math. Or if they do they're old fogies. So in that sense, I guess I am.

Judging by your presentations, it seems that you would make a great teacher. Is this something you would like to pursue?

I haven't really thought about it. I have so much to learn. I want to go on to earn my PhD. The research is so much fun and interesting to me. I guess it's a little selfish to not teach but my parents are teachers. I've seen the downside and the perks. There's summer vacation but they put so much work in too. But I would consider continuing to give talks as a means to make money.

You say writing this book was torturous. Any plans for another?

No, not ever! I have enough to do. I could write a book on publicizing this one! □

-By Elizabeth Raggi

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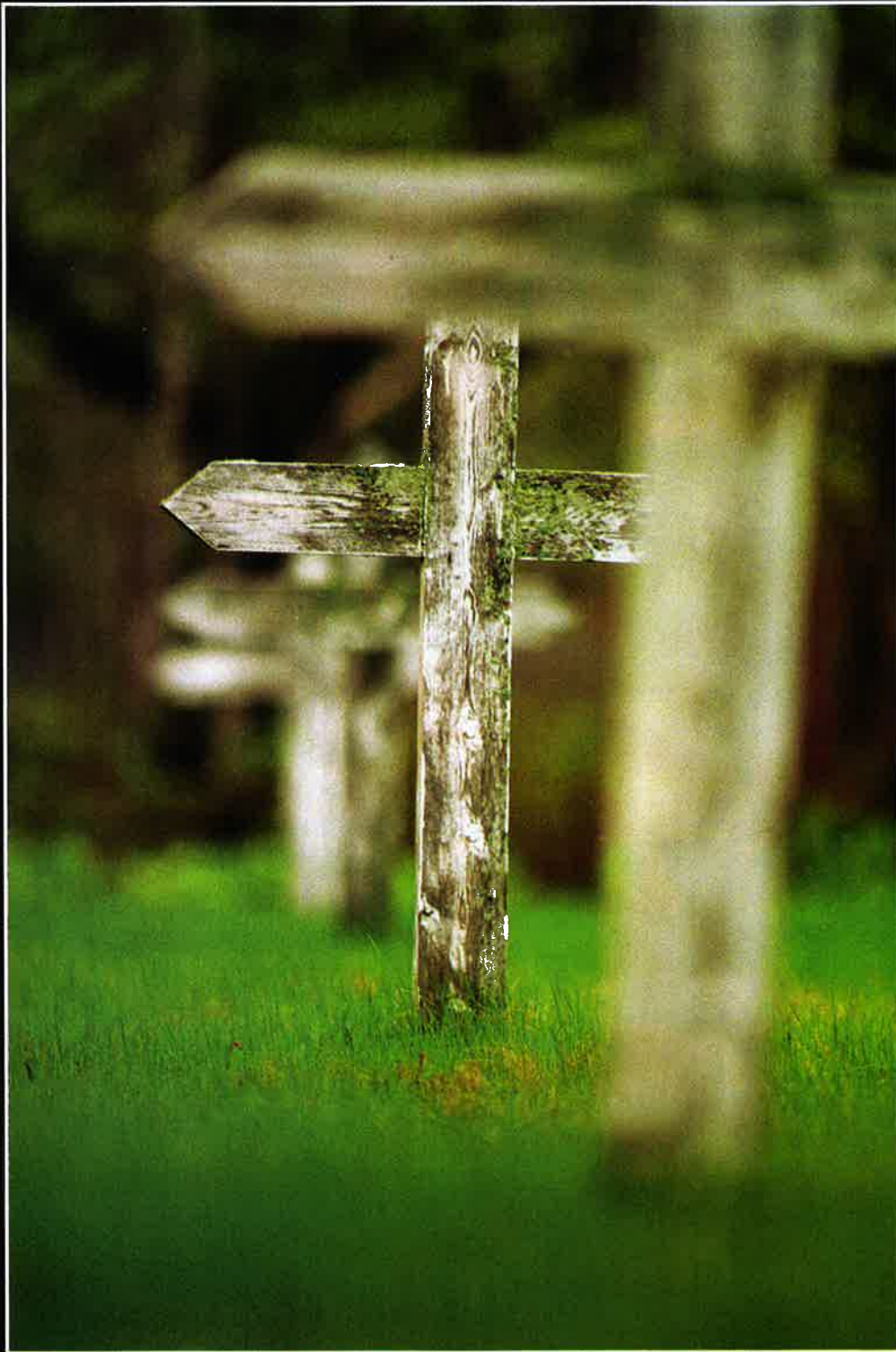
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—Tony Blair, British Prime Minister



1847

4,000 ships carrying peas, beans, rabbits salmon, honey and potatoes left Ireland for English ports.

9,992 Irish cattle sent to England.

4,000 Horses and Ponies sent to England.

Approximately 1,000,000 gallons of butter sent to England.

Approximately 1,700,000 gallons of grain derived alcohol sent to England.

1847

400,000 Irish people died due to starvation.

Grosse Isle, Quebec
Quarantine station.
10,000 Irish Dead.

Photo by Kit DeFever

THOSE WHOM WE LOST

“What I miss is having him come through the door saying, ‘Where’s my hug?’”

Sean Rooney’s wife Beverly. Sean was a vice president at Aon.

“Now he’s a hero, but he was a good man back then.”

Dennis O’Berg’s wife Christine. O’Berg followed his father into the FDNY.

“I’d call him every Monday morning to make sure he made it through the weekend. He loved that he was in a city where he could be out until four or five in the morning doing whatever.”

Mark Ryan McGinley’s best friend Brian Cramp. McGinley was a 26-year-old trader for Carr Futures.



“Jimmy said to me, ‘When I was a young kid, I lived in Washington Heights and a lot of people did a lot of things for me they didn’t have to do. They opened the gym at night, they coached baseball, they led the Boy Scouts and they made a big difference in my life. I have an opportunity now to help not just our own children but all the kids in our neighborhood.’”

Jeane McAlary on her husband James, 42, a trader at Carr Futures, who immersed himself in the life of his town of Spring Lake Heights, New Jersey.

“He rebuilt most of this house and he was always teaching the kids how to do things. They liked to sing that song” – the theme from a Nickelodeon TV show – “ ‘Bob the Builder, can he fix it? Bob the Builder, yes he can.’”

Elisabeth Lynch on her husband, Robert, 44, one of the World Trade Center’s many property managers, and the many valuable thing he passed on to his three children.

“He made sure that he had plenty of time for his nieces and nephews. Unfortunately, they won’t remember him, but they will certainly know about him.”

James B. Reilly’s wife on her husband who loved being an uncle. Reilly, 25, was a bond trader with Keefe, Bruyette & Woods.

“O.K., Rich, you have to give me a sign, give me some guidance. You have to get me through today.”

Richard Lynch’s wife Christina talking about how she listens for her husband’s voice telling her that she’s got to be strong for their daughter Olivia. Lynch, 30 was a bond trader at Eurobrokers.

“He was absurdly generous. He’d come at Christmas with the car loaded with gifts. He’d bring bags and bags of steaks and salmon to family parties. He’d do all the cooking and all the cleaning and if you tried to thank him, he’d insult you and make you laugh.”

Charlie Murphy’s sister Nancy. Charlie worked for Cantor Fitzgerald.

“He worked all day then rehearsed all night for his productions. Twenty-four hours just never seemed to be enough for him.”

Kevin Francis Cleary’s sister on Mr. Cleary, a stockbroker for Euro Brokers, who at 38 was starting a new career as an actor.

“He enjoyed his life. And he fit an awful lot in during his 37 years.”

Thomas Cahill’s mother Kathleen. He worked as a trader at Cantor Fitzgerald. A natural athlete, Thomas skied in Utah and Colorado, trolled for fish in the Bahamas and putted on all the golf courses in Ireland.

“You want something that you love, that you’re waking up in the morning and looking forward to.”

Christopher Wren on his father Bill, a firefighter who fought fires for 25 years and upon retiring from the firehouse in Coney Island, became the World Trade Center’s fire safety director.

“If anything, we were more in love today than when we first got married. The fact that he is gone is the greatest pain.”

Evelyn Berry on her husband Joseph John Berry. The couple, parents of three children, were about to celebrate their 32nd wedding anniversary.

The above quotes are from just some of the Irish whose obituaries appeared in *The New York Times* “Portraits of Grief” pages.

HIBERNIA

Irish America's Business 100 Awards Ceremony

A reception to honor the Irish in Corporate America took place over cocktails and lunch on Tuesday, November 20 at the Yale Club in Manhattan. The "Business 100" awards ceremony, hosted by *Irish America* magazine, was attended by many of the top 100 Irish-American business people. The Keynote speaker was Tom Coughlin, President of Wal-Mart Stores Inc., the largest retailer in the world, with a revenue of \$193 billion. Included on this year's list, among many notables were William Clay Ford, Chairman Ford Motor Co., Anne

Mulcahy, President and COO, Xerox Corporation, Jack Welch, CEO, GE (retired) and James Quinn, Vice Chairman, Tiffany and Company. The Business 100 nominees each of whom featured in the December/January issue of *Irish America*, received a Galway Crystal Harp.

Special tribute was paid to those who lost their lives on September 11.

The Business 100 awards were sponsored by the Jefferson Smurfit Group. □



Tom Coughlin, president and CEO of Wal-Mart, being presented with his award by Smurfit Group chief operating officer, Gary McGann and Irish America publisher, Niall O'Dowd.



Susan Kelliher Ungaro editor-in-chief *Family Circle*, Patricia Harty *Irish America* editor and Susan's parents Mary and Thomas Kelliher.



Dennis Swanson, president WNBC and Tom Moran of Mutual of America.



New York City Firefighters Billy Collins of Ladder 147, Mike Ruddick of Engine 22, and Kenny Collins of Engine 216. Kenny and Billy are brothers.



Patricia Harty and Bill Flynn, chairman Mutual of America



Brian Connolly, president Avon and his parents Breda and Patrick Connolly



Donald Keough former chairman Coca-Cola, Tom Moran Mutual of America president and CEO, Jack Foley vice president Aer Lingus North America and Jim Kilroy executive vice president Starwood Hotels.

The Molly Maguires Remembered

Controversy haunts memorial to the Molly Maguires

On 21 June 2002, to commemorate the 125th anniversary of the hanging of the Molly Maguires – ten Irish Catholic anthracite coal miners convicted of intimidation and murder by an impartial jury of non-peers – ten men who led the miners' fight against capitalist oppression through the Workingmen's Benevolent Association of Schuylkill County, Pennsylvania – the Borough of Mahanoy City (PA) will officially dedicate its publicly funded sculpture installation in the Molly Maguire Historical Park.

By building this park, officials and supporters are confronting the long muffled violent legacy of the Mollies and contesting the harsh criticism of opponents – some of whom are Molly descendants – who call the sculpture a depraved attempt to re-tell the tragic past in a sensationalist effort to promote tourism.

Molly historian Mark Major sees the park as a monument to all the victims of the Molly era – those who lost their lives – justly or unjustly – and to their families. "I believe we have ignored the Mollies and their story," Major explains. "Their

"This project will recognize the significance of this story . . . it will present the facts, it will not judge . . . it will publicly tell the story of capital versus labor, Protestant versus Catholic, everybody versus the Irish."

history has split the local Irish American community. This project will recognize the significance of this story . . . it will present the facts, it will not judge . . . it will publicly tell the story of capital versus labor, Protestant versus Catholic, everybody versus the Irish."

The commissioned sculpture by Philadelphia artist Zenos Frudakis is being promoted as an educational tool



Frudakis with the model and sculpture in progress.

that will invite a social re-thinking of Mollies. "I did not create my sculpture to be a tribute," the artist explains, "I created my sculpture to immediately represent the Molly Maguires . . . to detail the defining moment in Molly history, the moment before hanging, symbolized by the single faceless and hooded man on a scaffold [accompanied by a grieving woman below] . . . the emotional impact of my imagery provokes a reconsideration of history."

That history – created by Franklin B. Gowen, president of the politically influential Philadelphia and Reading Iron and Coal Company – included hiring a Pinkerton Detective to infiltrate the local miners' union, feeding the Molly story to capitalist-friendly publications like *The New York Herald* and *The New York Times*, using contacts to become the State's prosecuting attorney, and securing – from the sole testimony of Pinkerton undercover agent James McParland, an Irish native of dubious repute – the death sentence for all convicted men. Execution was more than a legal victory for Gowen; it represented an

economic and political victory of capital over labor.

Pottsville (PA) AOH President Joe Wayne – a descendant of reputed Molly leader Jack Kehoe – fiercely opposes the park for its deprived sculptural representation of the Mollies and its erroneous location. "Park advocates say the sculpture captures the defining moment of the Molly Maguires," Wayne states. "I disagree. . . The design is a sensationalist attempt to attract tourists to Mahanoy City, which was not a focal point for Molly activity. This project is about vying for the mighty tourist dollar, not about representing the families on both sides who suffered from Molly violence. . . they [park officials] did not ask for community input, they created what they wanted. I think it's presumptuous of them to think they are making a statement for



Zenos Frudakis with his Molly Maguire sculpture. the whole region . . . the story needs to be told, but not this way."

"This project is an educational tool for our youth who are unaware of what happened on their own soil," explains Patty Schnitzius, an Irish Catholic borough council member for Mahanoy City, "and will help our community begin to publicly talk about our Molly history." Spearheaded by State Representative Edward J. Lucyk, the park embodies, for Schnitzius, the emotional truth of Molly history: "The defining moment for Catholics is Christ's crucifixion, for Mollies it's the hanging. This sculpture asks us to question why this happened."

The guilt of the hanged men may never be fully understood, but Mahanoy City is asserting that its Molly Maguire Historical Park will help ease the anger and pain created from 125 years of silence. "This project has great potential to resolve problems caused by misunderstanding," explains Major, who is also executive director of the Mahanoy City Visitors Bureau. "This project is for heritage, not for tourism."

– By Joseph Dennis Kelly II

For more information on the Molly Maguire Historic Park, visit www.mahoneycity.org.



Denis Leary

Honors New York's Heroes

Actor/comedian
Denis Leary is
on the job
when it comes
to caring.

Jill Fergus
reports

It's an unseasonably balmy October night a little over a month since the tragedy of September 11 and a well-heeled crowd has gathered at the trendy Park restaurant in Manhattan for a benefit organized by Denis Leary's Firefighter's Foundation to raise money for the families of the 343 firefighters who lost their lives on that terrible day.

To the backdrop of Celtic tunes played by the Mount Kisco Scottish Pipe and Drum Band, handsome firemen in their dress blue uniforms mingle with celebrities, including James Gandolfini and the cast of *The Sopranos*, Liam Neeson, Robert de Niro, Harrison Ford, Penny Marshall, Richard Gere, Julianne Moore and Jon Stewart. Waiters float around with Cosmopolitans and platters of fried calamari and chicken satay, and giggly girlfriends take turns snapping photos of each other with hunky firemen. The World Trade Center disaster is never far from anyone's thoughts but this night is a chance for New York's Bravest to get their minds off the horrors they now face on a daily basis, particularly the daunting task of searching for their brothers, fathers, friends in that still-smoldering mass of rubble known as Ground Zero. In keeping with the festive spirit, actress Patti D'Arbanville, wife of New York City firefighter Terry Quinn and event co-coordinator, even ran a "Kiss a Fireman" booth. There were many takers.

"We're looking to bring a smile to their faces and raise a lot of money in one shot," says actor/comic Denis Leary, 43, who started The Leary Firefighters Foundation a year ago when six firefighters including his cousin were killed on the job in his hometown of Worcester, Massachusetts. Just a few weeks prior to this event he hosted a charity hockey game in that city

Left to right: Liam Neeson with wife Natasha Richardson, Denis Leary and Edie Falco of *The Sopranos* at the Firefighters Foundation benefit.



Robert De Niro and Denis Leary with two NY firefighters at the benefit organized by Leary to raise money for firefighters families.

(attended by Michael J. Fox, Conan O'Brien and former Boston Bruins) and as the enormity of the loss of life in Manhattan began to sink in he knew he had to take action. "A lot of the New York guys came up to our event in Worcester. It was the first time they had taken a break since September 11 and it really gave them a boost to have a few days where they were just laughing and enjoying themselves. So we're looking to do the same thing here." When he takes the stage, he tells the audience, "Please open your wallets, be nice to the firemen, say hello. Let's show them a good time. If I had a pair of tits, I'd be showing them tonight!" The crowd goes wild. The revelry continues when Nathan Lane and Matthew Broderick belt out a number from the musical *Oklahoma!*

The mood turns somber when an emotional Steve Buscemi, a former firefighter with Engine Company 25, begins a heart-breaking eulogy to his many slain friends but can't be heard above the din. James Gandolfini suddenly grabs the mike. "Will you please shut up?" he yells. "Can you please just be quiet for five minutes? Let's remember why we are here." With that the room falls silent. And not just because it's Tony Soprano. Reminders of exactly why we are here are scattered throughout the room – crayon drawings by children of the fallen firefighters depicting the burning buildings and their hero dads running into them (some 1,000 kids will grow up without their fathers). The main event, a live auction of items like tickets to *The Producers*, a Derek Jeter jersey, and a signed guitar from Sting, were scooped up in record time. Amid joy and sorrow, an estimated \$325,000 was raised for the foundation.

"No matter how much we make it's just a drop in the bucket compared with what we are going to need," says Leary, as he loosens his tie. It's a few days before the Park event and we are on the set of his ABC show *The Job*, a comedy about a street-smart New York City detective named Mike McNeil. In addition to playing the lead role, Leary co-created the series (filmed in locations around the city and in a Long Island City studio) and co-writes it with Peter Tollan. He is dressed in a charcoal gray suit with a light gray shirt and silvery tie with blue flecks which bring out the color of his intense blue eyes. Though his schedule is incredibly busy, he has agreed to sit down with *Irish America* because he is so passionate about his cause and eager to get the word out. "One of the things I wanted to make certain when I formed the foundation was that the money would go directly into the hands of the firefighters and their families. It's

one of the troubling aspects of watching this money float in that, due to the nature of the beast, not all of it is going to make it where it's meant to go. Our immediate goal is to get as much money in their hands as possible – each of these 343 families will receive an individual check. The long-range goal is to get them better pay and better equipment.”

He pauses to light a Marlboro Light.

“Firefighters don't get paid much to begin with. Their starting salary is \$32,000 a year before taxes. People don't realize that almost every single one of those guys has a second and third job. My cousin worked in construction and carpentry, a lot of them are electricians. I'd like to see them in a position where this job is all they have to worry about and not about feeding their kids and paying their mortgages,” he says “Everyone is talking about how great they were and how much they admire them, but not one politician – and I spoke to Senator Kerry about this when he was at the event in Worcester – not one politician has

“My father was a really funny guy. Sarcastically funny and just funny in general. We grew up laughing at adversity and laughing at people in the family. It was just always there.”

and Patti it was 60 guys gone, including the godfather of one of their kids. It's just astonishing.”

I ask if he's been to Ground Zero. “Yeah, I did go, early on. A couple of guys that I knew were down there digging. It's not a pretty place. It's a big celebrity thing now to go down there. I would tell people, be happy if you don't have to go down there. The smell alone is terrible. It's mind-boggling when you think about the magnitude of it all. This is the biggest and best fire department in the world. You ask any firefighter from anywhere

in the country, they talk about New York. They talk about the training these guys have and the experience these guys have. The last thing they want to worry about is their paycheck. If my celebrity can open doors and help raise money, then that is what it should be used for.”

As a child growing up in an Irish-Catholic family in working-class Worcester, Leary probably never imagined that he'd ever be in a position to give back in such a positive way, but community and family have always been a constant in his life. His mother, Nora, a homemaker, and father, John, who worked a series of blue-collar jobs to support Denis and his three siblings, always made sure that family came first. “My parents were always around, and if they weren't around because of work, you were stuck in your cousin's house. It was one of those neighborhoods where everybody knows everybody, so there was always someone watching you and you couldn't get away with anything. One of my uncles was on the police force. It was ridiculous. If you got caught you'd prefer to be held in jail than go home, it was the worst beating you could get,” he says with a smile.

As in so many Irish families, humor was a way of dealing with tough times in the Leary household. “My father was a really funny guy. Sarcastically funny and just funny in general. We grew up laughing at adversity and laughing at people in the family. It was just always there. If you did something stupid it was going to be brought back over and over again, the most embarrassing moments.” In addition to his knack for comedy, Denis was also a gifted writer and possessed a strong stage presence. “I was a really bad student. I wanted to be a professional hockey player. Luckily, I stumbled upon theater. Some nun stuck me in a play in grammar school. I met girls and I was like, wow! She saw something in me and thank God she did because I'd be screwed right now if she hadn't. She knew some people at Emerson College in Boston, so she set up an audition for me. Her name was Sr. Rosemary Sullivan; she died just this past summer. She was an extraordinary person. She saved my life.” He takes another drag of his cigarette.

“Denis, we're ready for you now.”

I turn to find an assistant director, who looks all of 25, summoning Denis to the fictional precinct room to do a few scenes. He disappears for a half hour, and when he returns he has ditched the suit for a more casual short-sleeved cream button-up shirt and slacks. You can't help noticing that he is taller and leaner than you expect, and that rugged Irish charm and no-bullshit attitude that comes across on screen is much more potent in person. It's that gruff disposition – well, he's lightened up a bit



Pictured at Denis Leary's Celebrity Hat Trick hockey game to benefit The Firefighters Foundation are (left to right) comedian Conan O'Brien, actress Elizabeth Hurley, Denis Leary's mother Nora and Denis Leary, Sep. 30, 2001.

stepped forward and said ‘Hey, don't you think that maybe we should pay these guys a little more?’ I mean, we're sending \$320 million in federal aid to Afghanistan. These guys have been at the bottom of the totem pole from day one...we're going to make the noise for them.”

His eyes are as focused as laser beams. If Denis Leary was determined before September 11, now he's truly a man on a mission. Like the rest of the city and, indeed, the world, he was shocked and stunned by what happened on that clear September morning. “I was on my way to play hockey at Chelsea Piers with a friend. We turned a corner and saw the smoke and thought, ‘What the fuck is that?’ We didn't know it was a plane that hit the second building, we thought it just looked like an explosion. We stood in the median in the middle of the West Side Highway, watching both buildings burn. The fire trucks and ambulances were racing past us. We got stuck down there for several hours because they turned the Chelsea Piers rink into a triage center. Once the buildings collapsed, all hell broke loose. The phones weren't working so I couldn't get through to anybody. It was only on Wednesday that we were able to find out who was missing and who was not. Two firefighters that I knew were gone, and Ace Bailey, a former Boston Bruin and now a scout for the L.A. Kings, was on the second plane. For Terry

from the days when he chewed out anyone who didn't smoke five packs a day, drink whisky and eat red meat – that helped propel Leary to stardom. In 1992, his hilarious one-man show *No Cure for Cancer* (which he says came from “family experiences and my observations and my take on things”) introduced his singular brand of comedy to New York audiences, and his career has been on the rise ever since. Film credits include *The Ref*, *Wag the Dog*, *Demolition Man*, and *The Thomas Crown Affair* with two more on the way – *Final* with Hope Davis in December and *Double Whammy* with Elizabeth Hurley in February. Though he would love to do another comedy special for HBO (*Lock 'n' Load* followed *No Cure*), his main focus right now is *The Job* which begins its second season in January.

“I developed this series for my production company, Apostle, based on the true life of a friend of mine who is a detective named Mike Charles, but when Peter and I got the script together I thought to myself, this is going to be a great character. I would be an idiot to let someone else play it. Plus, all the actors are so good it's easy to write for them. It's really been a dream job.” He also says that he prefers television to feature films because he has more control over the product. “On location, you may not like the people you're working with and you're stuck under

“But as I said in Massachusetts and as I will say in New York and say every time I run into a politician of note, I will tell him our message – that our aim is to get firefighters more money on every front. He can tell us it's not going to happen but we're not going to take no for an answer.”



Denis Leary backstage at a comic edition of *Who Wants To Be A Millionaire*. Left to right: Regis Philbin, host of *Millionaire* and former *Irish America* Top 100 honoree, Leary's children Jack and Devon, and Jack's friend Nick, September, 2001.

somebody else's vision. For any actor, eight out of ten films you make are going to suck and I don't want to be stuck in Toronto or Utah for three months. I don't like being away from New York.”

Though he is from Massachusetts he considers himself a New



Denis Leary and co-star Bill Nunn on the set of his hit TV series *The Job*.

Yorker at heart and keeps an apartment on the Upper West Side. He also has a farm in Connecticut where his wife, screenwriter Ann Lembeck, and his two children Jack, 12, and Devon, 10, reside. “I am pretty much an East Coast person. New York, Boston, London and Paris is pretty much all I need,” he says. And, of course, Ireland. “I am strongly connected to my Irish

roots. My mother and father grew up on adjoining farms outside Killarney which is now one big farm. Anywhere you go in that area of Kerry up to the Dingle Peninsula are Learys, O'Sullivan, Burkes – all part of the same clan. Even when we didn't have any money, we found a way to scabble something together to get everybody over there. Now, I try to get back there as often as possible with my kids. This past summer I took them and a bunch of my nieces and nephews over there and just let them run around like maniacs. They'd go into Killarney at night as a gang with the big ones in charge of the little ones, just like I used to do with my cousins. Twenty of us would just about raid the town, we'd eat, drink, meet girls, the whole nine yards. It's important to me that my kids know their family in Ireland.”

It's unlikely he'll be taking any extended trips in the near future. Leary's workload for the show is intense. A typical day of shooting can last up to 15 hours, which doesn't leave time for much else – except for the occasional hockey game at Chelsea Piers with buddies like Scott Wolf, Michael J. Fox and Tim Robbins. But you can be sure that he will continue to work with The Leary Firefighters Foundation. No doubt, the many men he is helping are thankful to have such a staunch supporter in Denis Leary. I ask if he has ever considered running for political office. “I am passionate about it but that's not my job. This is my job,” he says as he motions with his hands to the cameras and the lights. “But as I said in Massachusetts and as I will say in New York and say every time I run into a politician of note, I will tell him our message – that our aim is to get firefighters more money on every front. He can tell us it's not going to happen but we're not going to take no for an answer.”

Now, just who are you going to put your money on? □

If you'd like more information or would like to make a donation to The Leary Firefighters Fund call 617-536-0463 or log on to www.learyfirefighters.org.

LANDMARKS TELL THE BOSTON IRISH STORY

BY MICHAEL P. QUINLIN

You aren't in Boston long before realizing what an Irish city it is: Logan Airport, Callahan Tunnel, the McCormack, Kennedy, Moakley and O'Neill federal buildings, plus numerous parks, boulevards and squares honoring Irish Bostonians. The Irish have been in Boston for centuries with an illustrious history dating from colonial times through the present.

So it's not surprising that Boston has an Irish Heritage Trail spanning three centuries and including politicians and war heroes but also artists, writers, labor leaders and athletes. The **Boston Irish Heritage Trail** joins the city's other popular walking trails such as the Freedom Trail, Black Heritage Trail, Immigrant Trail and Women's Heritage Trail as a novel way to experience the history and ambiance of Boston.

The Irish Trail lists over two dozen Irish memorials, statues, cemeteries, parks and buildings in Boston's downtown and Back Bay, covering about 3.5 miles. Another 25 Irish landmarks throughout greater Boston and Massachusetts are reachable by car or public transportation.

Details of the Boston Irish Heritage Trail are available at www.irishheritagetrail.com. Here is an overview of some of the sites along the way, arranged by subject.

REVOLUTIONARY IRISH



John Hancock Memorial

John Hancock (1737-1793), the first signer of the Declaration of Independence and the first governor of Massachusetts, was an Irish-American whose family came from Downpatrick, Co. Down at the end of the 17th century. Born in Quincy, Hancock became a wealthy merchant and represented the Massachusetts General Assembly in 1766.

One of his vessels, the *Liberty*, was seized by British troops for suspected contraband, and in 1775 the Crown declared him an 'outlaw.' He is considered one of the founding fathers of the United States.

Hancock is buried at the **Old Granary Burying Grounds** on Tremont Street in downtown Boston, about two blocks from City Hall. Other notable Irish buried there are **Robert Treat Paine** (1731-1814), another signer of the Declaration of Independence, and **William Hall** (d.1771), a founder in 1737 of the Charitable Irish Society, the nation's oldest Irish organization.

Irish sailor **Patrick Carr** was one of the five men shot by British troops on March 5, 1770 in an episode that brewed the American Revolution. Carr was the last to die from the scrimmage and was buried on St. Patrick's Day in 1770 at the Old

Granary. The martyrs are memorialized at the **Boston Massacre Memorial**, on the Boston Common along Tremont Street, next to the Visitor Information Center and unveiled in 1888. A cobblestone circle next to the Old State House at 15 State Street marks the actual spot where the massacre occurred.

James Sullivan (1744-1808), lawyer, orator and statesman, was a delegate to the Continental Congress and governor of Massachusetts in 1807. He is buried at Granary Burying Ground. His brother **Brigadier General John Sullivan** (1740-1795) was George Washington's point man during the British evacuation of Boston in March 1776; the password used that day was St. Patrick. General Sullivan is honored at the **Dorchester Heights Memorial** in South Boston, erected in 1902. Their father, Owen Sullivan, was a schoolmaster from Limerick who settled in Maine.

On Boston Common along Tremont Street is a memorial to **Commodore John Barry** (1745-1803), a Revolutionary War naval hero many consider to be the Father of the American Navy. Born in County Wexford, Barry won the first and last naval battles of the Revolutionary War, and Washington appointed him the first Commodore of the US Navy. The original memorial to Barry, unveiled by Mayor James M. Curley in 1949, was stolen by vandals in the 1970s, recovered, and is now located at the Charlestown Navy Yard next to the USS *Constitution*.



Dorchester Heights Memorial

John Singleton Copley (1737-1815) was born in Boston, the son of Irish immigrants from County Clare. Copley is considered America's first great portrait artist, having painted John Hancock, Samuel

Adams, Paul Revere and other leading citizens. The Museum of Fine Arts has over 50 Copley paintings, including the famous Paul Revere portrait. Copley Square Park in Boston's Back Bay is named in his honor, and the city of Boston is planning to place a memorial to Copley in the park over the next few years.

THE FAMINE IRISH

Ireland endured many famines during the 19th century, causing Irish families to emigrate. The worst famine, known as the Great Hunger, occurred between 1845-49, ultimately killing one million people. Over 100,000 Irish refugees arrived in Boston Harbor during this time, transforming the city.

A century and a half later, Bostonians commemorated the Great Hunger by erecting the **Irish Famine Memorial** on June 28, 1998 at the corner of School and Washington Streets near Downtown Crossing. The twin sculptures by artist Robert Shure depict a starving family in Ireland and a hopeful family making their way in America. Eight narrative plaques encircling the statues tell the story of the famine and connect it to modern famines still occurring around the world today.

Across the Charles River in Cambridge Common outside of

The worst famine, known as the Great Hunger, occurred between 1845-49, ultimately killing one million people. Over 100,000 Irish refugees arrived in Boston Harbor during this time, transforming the city.

Harvard Square is the **Cambridge Irish Famine Memorial**, created by Derry artist Maurice Harron. Unveiled in July 1997 by Mary Robinson, then-president of Ireland, the memorial shows an Irish woman holding her dead infant while waving to her two other children to flee their home.

Images from the Famine period are scarce. The John J. Burns Library at Boston College has a rare painting depicting the Irish Famine, created by R.G. Kelly and entitled **A Tear and a Prayer for Erin**. The oil painting, on loan to the Burns Library for two years from a private collection, was completed in 1848 and reworked in 1851. It caused great controversy in the British House of Commons when it was unveiled, according to Dr. Robert O'Neill, curator at the Burns Library.

On Deer Island in Boston Harbor, a memorial to the Irish is being planned at the **New Rest Haven Cemetery**, where about 800 Irish Famine refugees who were quarantined on the island (1847-1849), died and were buried.

South of Boston, the **Brig St. John Memorial** in Cohasset commemorates the tragic shipwreck in October 1849, when over 80 Irish men, women and children fleeing the Famine drowned when their ship crashed off the Massachusetts coast during a storm. They are buried at Cohasset Cemetery beneath a 19-foot Celtic cross that overlooks Little Harbor in Cohasset.



IRISH SCULPTORS

The Great Hunger caused indescribable hardship and suffering, but also gave Irish immigrants a new freedom to express their talents in America. Two families from both ends of Ireland, the Saint Gaudens of Dublin and the Milmores of Sligo, fled to Boston to escape the Famine in 1848 and 1851 respectively. Their sons created a body of remarkable public sculptures that still stand today in many of the city's most public spaces.

Augustus (1848-1907) and **Louis Saint Gaudens** (1854-1914) together and individually produced some extraordinary public memorials throughout Boston and indeed the United States and Ireland. Their father was a French shoemaker and their mother, Mary McGuinness, was a native of County Longford. The family fled Dublin in the summer of 1848 and arrived in Boston in September.

Augustus is the more famous of the brothers, and became the most acclaimed sculptor of his generation, producing over 150 sculptures, the most notable being the **Robert Gould Shaw Memorial** in front of the Massachusetts State House, a pageant to Boston's Black Civil War 54th Regiment. The Shaw Memorial is also featured on the city's Black Heritage Trail.

Augustus also created the Phillips Brooks statue alongside Trinity Church in Copley Square and the medallions over the entrances to the McKim Building at the **Boston Public Library**. His last piece was the memorial to Irish patriot Charles Stuart Parnell, located on O'Connell Street in Dublin.

Louis Saint Gaudens, born in New York City, collaborated with Augustus on many major projects during their careers. Louis created the twin **Marble Lions** on either side of the grand stair-

way in the McKim Building commemorating the Second and Twentieth Massachusetts Infantry Associations.

Joseph (1842-1886) and **Martin Milmore** (1844-1883) immigrated to Boston in 1851 from County Sligo. Martin attended the Boston Latin School, and his artistic talent was immediately recognized. At 16 he began an apprenticeship with



IRISH LANDMARKS OF BOSTON

Boston sculptor George Ball, who was completing the George Washington Statue in the Public Garden. Martin created a series of famous Civil War memorials, including the **Sailors and Soldiers Memorial** on Boston Common, unveiled in 1877, as well as the Roxbury Soldiers Memorial in Forest Hills and the Charlestown Soldiers Memorial.

His brother Joseph assisted him on the major projects, and is best known for the **Sphinx** at Mt. Auburn Cemetery in



Cambridge, created as a Civil War memorial to Union soldiers in 1872 at a time when Egyptian art was fashionable in America. A third brother, James, helped out in the studio the brothers rented on Harrison Avenue in the South End.

Another sculptor featured on the Trail is **John Donoghue**, a Chicago Irish-American who was discovered by Oscar Wilde during his famous trip across America in 1882. Donoghue moved to Boston for a time, where he produced busts of John Boyle O'Reilly and Hugh O'Brien, the city's first Irish mayor. Donoghue's greatest work is considered to be **Young Sophocles Leading the Chorus of Victory**, which is located at the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum in the city's Fens area.

As President John F. Kennedy poignantly noted during his visit to Ireland in 1963, "Eight of my grandparents left these shores in the space almost of months and came to the U.S."

THE KENNEDYS

No history of the Boston Irish is complete without the Kennedy Family, the First Family of Irish America. When the Kennedy and Fitzgerald clans united in 1908 through the marriage of Joseph P. Kennedy of East Boston and Rose Fitzgerald of the North End, they created a political dynasty that continues today.

As **President John F. Kennedy** poignantly noted during his visit to Ireland in 1963, "Eight of my grandparents left these shores in the space almost of months and came to the U.S."

Patrick Kennedy (d. 1858), who immigrated from Wexford to Boston around 1847-48, was the grandfather of Joseph Kennedy and the great-grandfather of President Kennedy. He is featured as a lively hologram in a wonderful multimedia show at the **Dreams of Freedom Immigrant Museum**, where he recounts the tribulations of being an immigrant in 19th century Boston. The museum traces Boston's various immigrant communities, starting with the Irish, whom sociologist Thomas Sowell once described as the nation's first ethnic minority.

The **Rose Kennedy Garden**, located at Columbus Park on Atlantic Avenue in the North End, is a tribute to the matriarch

of the clan, **Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy** (1890-1995), whom many consider to be the consistent strength behind the Kennedy family during the Kennedy years. The garden, built in 1987, features a wonderful array of roses each spring planted by the Boston Parks Department, and an inscription honoring Rose "for her contributions to this country, and to the inspiration she has given to us all." She was born at 4 Garden Court in the North End.

A plaque to **John F. Fitzgerald** (1863-1950), Rose's father and mayor of Boston in 1906 and again in 1910, was placed across from Haymarket train station. It is temporarily in storage during Big Dig construction.

The **President John F. Kennedy Statue** on the front lawn of the Massachusetts State House along Beacon Street shows a youthful JFK strutting purposefully, hand in pocket. It was created by artist Isabel MacIlvain and unveiled in 1988 by his family and friends. Beyond downtown, must-visits include the **John F. Kennedy Library and Museum** in Dorchester, which is the president's official library. The library has a powerful news clip of President Kennedy's famous trip to his ancestral village in Wexford in 1962, and contains many Irish artifacts that Kennedy cherished during his life. The **John F. Kennedy Birthplace** at 83 Beale Street in Brookline, managed by the National Park Service, has Kennedy memorabilia and offers guided tours.

WAR HEROES

The American Civil War was the first great opportunity for the Famine generation to demonstrate their patriotism to their new country, and Massachusetts's Irish soldiers heeded the call to arms. In Boston's Public Garden stands a memorial to **Colonel Thomas Cass**, who led Boston's Ninth Irish Regiment, composed mainly of Irish immigrants who had survived the anti-Irish Know Nothing period of the 1850s. The regiment of

1,022 men mustered in 1861 and fought gallantly in a number of important battles. Cass, a native of County Laois and a member of the School Committee, was mortally wounded at Malvern Hill in Virginia, and died in Boston. His memorial was unveiled in 1899, attended by members of the Ninth Regiment.

The **Irish Flag Display** at the Massachusetts State House features various flags used by the 9th Irish Regiment and the 28th Irish Regiment of Massachusetts, part of a collection of nearly 500 military flags from the American Civil War. The Ninth Regiment flag was made of green silk with a scroll inscribed in gold that read: "Thy sons by adoption; thy firm supporters and defenders from duty, affection and choice." These can be viewed at Memorial Hall in the main rotunda.

Another famous member of the Ninth Regiment was **General Edward L. Logan** (1873-1939), for whom Boston's Logan International Airport is named. The son of Lawrence J. Logan of Ballygar, Galway, Edward fought alongside his father in the Spanish American War of 1898 with the Ninth Regiment, and later commanded the Yankee Division during World War I. He represented South Boston in the state house and was later a municipal judge in Boston.



Patrick Collins

POLITICIANS

The Irish came to dominate local and state politics for much of the 20th century, holding the Boston mayor's office for 86 years of the century, and from 1929 to 1994 without interruption. The 19th century produced one Irish mayor, **Hugh O'Brien** (1827-95), a Cork native whose family immigrated to Boston when he was five. O'Brien was a successful businessman before becoming mayor from 1884-

88, during which time he presided over the expansion of the city's Emerald Necklace park system and laid the cornerstone for the new Public Library at Copley Square. A bust of O'Brien by sculptor John Donoghue is located at the Boston Public Library.
Patrick Collins (1844-1905) was Boston's second Irish-born mayor (1902-05) and the first Catholic congressman from Massachusetts (1871). Born near Fermoy, County Cork, he immigrated to Boston in 1848 with his widowed mother and siblings. A leading spokesman for the Fenian movement, he was also president of the Land League in the USA. He got his law degree from Harvard while studying nights at the Boston Public Library and working by day as an upholsterer. He was the American Ambassador to Great Britain under President Grover Cleveland in 1892. Collins is memorialized on Commonwealth Avenue near Dartmouth Street.

James Michael Curley (1874-1958), Boston's most notorious Irish politician, is honored with a small park facing Boston City Hall on Congress Street. The son of Galway immigrants, Curley served four terms as mayor between 1914 and 1949, and was also the governor and a Massachusetts congressman during his controversial career. His life was made into a movie, *The Last Hurrah*, based on a novel by Boston writer Edwin O'Connor and starring Spencer Tracy as Curley. The Curley Mansion, now owned by the city of Boston, is located on the Jamaica way in Jamaica Plain and still features shamrocks carved into the green shutters on each window.



James Michael Curley

Maurice Tobin (1901-53), a protégé of Curley, grew up in Boston's Mission Hill, the son of immigrants from Tipperary. He served as mayor from 1937-43, was Governor of Massachusetts in 1944 and U.S. Secretary of Labor under Harry Truman. The Tobin Memorial was unveiled in 1957 at the Hatch Shell along the Charles River Esplanade. The Tobin Bridge coming into the city from the North Shore is also named in his honor.

Across the lawn on the Esplanade is a memorial to **David I. Walsh** (1872-1947), the first Irish-Catholic governor of

Massachusetts from 1914-16. He was also Lieutenant Governor and the first Catholic Senator from Massachusetts in the U.S. Congress, a post he held for 20 years. A strong supporter of women's right to vote, Walsh was also an ardent Irish nationalist, serving as the key speaker at a rally for Irish hero Eamon de Valera at Fenway Park in 1919. The Walsh memorial was unveiled in 1954.

MORE FAMOUS IRISH

Patrick Sarsfield Gilmore (1829-92), born in Ballygar, Galway, is best known as the composer of the Civil War anthem, "When Johnny Comes Marching Home." He emigrated to Boston in 1848, and at once established himself as a coronet player and band leader. In 1855 he began the tradition of an annual Fourth of July concert on the Boston Common, a forerunner to the Boston Pops on the Esplanade. Gilmore was also a successful promoter. He staged two giant peace jubilees near Copley Square in 1869, attended by President Ulysses S. Grant, and again in 1872, which featured waltz king Johann Strauss and 20,000 performers.

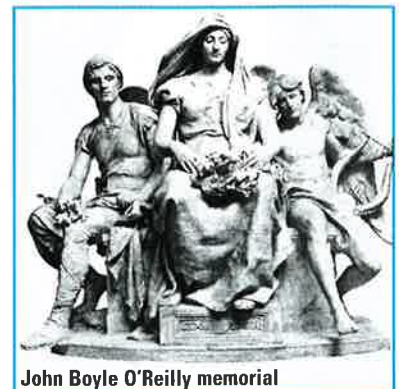


Patrick Sarsfield Gilmore

Louis Sullivan (1856-1924), whose father Patrick was an Irish dance master from Cork and whose mother was Swiss French, was born at 22 Bennett Street off of Washington Street in the South End. A plaque honors his birthplace, placed there by the Boston Society of Architects. Sullivan is recognized as the father of modern architecture, and was the mentor to Frank Lloyd Wright. His most famous dictum was 'form follows function.'

Mary Kenny O'Sullivan (1864-1943) was a nationally acclaimed union organizer, originally from Hannibal, Missouri, the only child of Irish immigrants. After organizing workers in Chicago, she moved to Boston in 1893 and organized the city's shoemakers and garment workers, and also helped found the National Women's Trade Union in New York City. O'Sullivan is one of six Massachusetts women commemorated at a State House portrait gallery entitled Hear Us, unveiled in 1999, and located next to Doric Hall.

John Boyle O'Reilly (1844-90) was perhaps the greatest Boston Irishman of the 19th century, a dashing, larger-than-life figure who reached Boston in 1870 after escaping from a British penal colony in Australia. O'Reilly became editor of *The Pilot* and published numerous editorials defending the rights of immigrants, blacks and children working in factories. He was poet laureate of Massachusetts, an avid sportsman, orator and a staunch advocate of Irish freedom from Britain. His memorial in the Fens was created by artist Daniel French in 1896, and is considered one of the best public sculptures in Boston.



John Boyle O'Reilly memorial

IRISH LANDMARKS OF BOSTON

The daughter of Irish immigrants and orphaned at eight, **Annie Sullivan** (1866-1936) taught Helen Keller to read, see and speak. Sullivan, who was partially blind herself, learned to read and write at the Perkins School for the Blind in Boston. In 1960 Keller herself placed a plaque in Braille and English, in Cambridge near the corner of Brattle and James Streets, next to a small fountain, that reads "In memory of Annie Sullivan, teacher extraordinary."

James Brendan Connolly (1868-1957) of South Boston was the first gold medal winner in the modern Olympic Games, winning the Triple Jump competition in Athens in 1896. "This one's for Galway," he reportedly shouted before making his winning jump. Connolly later became a noted writer and penned over 50 novels about the sea. His memorial is at Columbus Park in South Boston.

Born in South Boston to Irish immigrant parents, **Richard Cardinal Cushing** (1895-1970) was a leading churchman of the 20th century. He preached universal brotherhood among all religions, befriended Jewish leaders, and raised money for foreign missions. He officiated at the wedding of John and Jacqueline Kennedy and also presided at JFK's funeral mass in 1963. Cushing Park is at the Corner of Cambridge and New Chardon Streets near Boston City Hall.

BURIAL GROUNDS

While 18th century Irish are buried in downtown cemeteries then reserved for Protestants, a number of new cemeteries sprang up in the 19th century as Irish Catholics began coming here in greater numbers. St. Augustine's Cemetery in South Boston is the oldest Catholic cemetery in Boston, created in 1818. Other 19th century cemeteries for the Irish include Bunker Hill Cemetery in Charlestown, Cambridge Catholic Cemetery in North Cambridge, and Holy Cross Cemetery in Malden.

Fanny Parnell (1848-82), founder of the Women's Land League and sister to Charles Stewart Parnell, is buried at Mt. Auburn Cemetery in Cambridge, as is Colonel **Thomas Cass**. Heavyweight boxing champ **John L. Sullivan** (1858-1918) is buried at Old Calvary Cemetery in Roslindale. **Eugene O'Neill** (1888-1953), Nobel Prize winner in Literature, is buried at Forest Hills Cemetery in Jamaica Plain, as are the **Milmore brothers**. **Rose Kennedy** (1890-95) and **Joseph P. Kennedy** (1888-1969) are buried at Holyhead Cemetery in Brookline, along with **John Boyle O'Reilly**, **Patrick Collins**, **Maurice Tobin** and **Hugh O'Brien**. Buried at St. Joseph's Cemetery



Fanny Parnell's gravestone.

in West Roxbury are mayors **John F. Fitzgerald** (1863-1950), **John B. Hynes** (1897-1970), **John Collins** (1919-1995), U.S. House Speaker **John W. McCormack** (1891-1980) and **Mary Kenny O'Sullivan**.

PLACES TO STUDY THE IRISH

Boston College Irish Studies Program (617-552-3938) offers numerous degrees and courses in



Boston children study the exhibits at the Dreams of Freedom exhibition.

Irish history, literature, politics and music; the John J. Burns Library contains valuable manuscripts of W.B. Yeats, Samuel Beckett, Irish tenor John McCormack and others. **Harvard University** Celtic Languages and Literatures Department (617-495-1206) offers advanced study in the Irish language; the Widener Library contains an important collection of Irish materials. **University of Massachusetts** (617-287-6752) and **Stonehill College** (508-565-1000) also boast excellent Irish Studies programs.

The **Boston Public Library** (617-536-5400) at Copley Square has a renowned collection of over 13,000 Irish items, including original documents from the Irish Rebellion of 1798, the creation of the Irish Free State, and the formation of Dublin's Abbey Theater. The **New England Historic Genealogical Society** (617-536-5740) on Newbury Street has important records of Irish families dating back to colonial times. The **Massachusetts Historical Society** (617-536-1608) on Boylston Street holds the records of the Charitable Irish Society from 1737-1925, and also has early paintings by John Singleton Copley and a sculpture by Martin Milmore. The **Bostonian Society** (617-720-1713) at 15 State Street has a rich collection of archives and photographs that relate to the Boston Irish. The **Boston Athenaeum** (617-742-9600) at 10 1/2 Beacon Street has numerous collections relating to the Boston Irish. The **Dreams of Freedom Museum** at One Milk Street (617-338-6022) has a multimedia exhibit featuring Boston's Irish immigrants and other ethnic groups. In Milton, the **Captain Forbes House Museum** (617-696-1815) on Adams Street has an important collection of artifacts from the USS *Jamestown* voyage from Boston to Cork in 1847, which carried food and relief supplies to starving Irish.

If You Go...

The Boston Irish Heritage Trail can be downloaded at www.irishheritagetrail.com. The Boston Irish Tourism Association offers guided tours of the Trail.

To learn about Irish activities in the area, visit www.irish-massachusetts.com. For information on the Boston Irish Famine Memorial, visit www.boston.com/partners/famine_memorial. For an historical timeline of the Boston Irish, visit www.boston-familyhistory.com. □

Michael P. Quinlin is president of the Boston Irish Tourism Association and creator of the Boston Irish Heritage Trail.



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Never Mind the Weather!

IRELAND OFFERS A WARM WELCOME, EVEN IN WINTER.

By CHRISTOPHER CONNELL

Christopher Connell and daughter Ellen enjoy the Irish weather at the top of the Cliffs of Moher.

Dublin: The wind and rain lashed furiously on the tarmac at Dublin Airport, rocking our Aer Lingus Airbus like a gondola exposed to the elements on a mountaintop. We hadn't packed any sun block for this post-Christmas 2000 family trip to Ireland, but no one had told us we'd be landing in the monsoon season. It had proved impossible to land at Shannon Airport in the west, where the storm was said to be really raging. What had possessed us to think that taking our children at Christmastime to see Ireland for the first time made any sense at all? As a Muzak reel of Christmas carols piped us off the Airbus, I wondered: Can you get seasick on an airplane at the gate?

Not that folks hadn't tried to warn us. Everybody said the weather in Ireland at the outset of winter would be miserable – even the innkeepers we called to book rooms. Gusts had reached 100 mph in the west the previous day. The drenched ground crew in their yellow slickers looked like fishermen waiting to tie down the last ship in the fleet.

But what the heck? Most of the things we wanted to see, from the *Book of Kells* to Bunratty Castle, were indoors anyway. This was an adventure and a well-earned break for the Connells. I was a recovering journalist, about to embark on a new life as an independent writer after a quarter century in the daily news grind. Nancy and I had last been in Ireland together two decades earlier, the summer before our

first child, Matthew, was born. Now Matt, 19, home from college for the holidays, and Ellen, 13, were getting a glimpse of the land where their grandmother grew up and where unseen uncles, aunts, and cousins still lived. Our third child, James, 18, was back home rowing with his college crew team.

We encounter a few disappointments on our Yuletide tourist trek. The library that houses the *Book of Kells* at Trinity College in the middle of Dublin was locked tight for the week between Christmas and New Year's. There were no banquets or songs at Bunratty Castle just outside Limerick, either. But the off-season traveler quickly learns to appreciate the myriad of other sights that can be enjoyed without the bustling crowds of spring and summer. As for the weather, we paid it no never mind. The thermometer never sank close to freezing during our week in Ireland, and three days were brilliant – sunnier by far than many a July day I have passed in Ireland. There were vacancies galore and plenty to do, notwithstanding the occasional CLOSED sign. We weren't the only ones taken aback by Trinity College's and the keeper of the Kells' strict observance of the holiday. Two dozen foreign students were turned away at the same time, equally surprised and disappointed at missing a glimpse of the monks' colorful calligraphy. The stage was dark at the Abbey, but a few blocks up O'Connell Street the Gate Theater mounted a stir-

ring production of Rostand's *Cyrano de Bergerac*. We saw golden antiquities and relics at the National Museum, and had a delightful tour of Dublin Castle, led by a witty, feminist guide who remarked as she pointed out former President Mary Robinson's coat of arms that the incumbent Irish president "is also a woman – thank God!" We dispensed with the Guinness Brewery tour (but not with the Guinness – it's good for you), but made the ritual trek to Christchurch and St. Patrick's Cathedrals, where the 18th century dean and his wife are buried "where fierce indignation can no more lacerate his heart."

We also skipped St. Michan's Church, on whose regal organ Handel is said to have composed *The Messiah*. St. Michan's is also Dublin's answer to the Tomb of Tutankhamen: its basement houses a collection of mummified bodies, preserved by the limestone in these dry vaults. The largest and most famous tenant in St. Michan's basement is affectionately called the Crusader (the late 17th century church is built atop the ruins of an earlier place of worship that the Vikings built 900 years ago). I shook the Crusader's leathery hand back in December 1970 at the end of a five-month stay in Ireland as a college student. When I climbed out of the crypt and into the sunshine that day, a nasty cold that had been making my final days in Ireland a misery almost miraculously went away. We were told some vandals had made a mess of St. Michan's a few years back; I hope they left the Crusader his dignity.



Closed for Christmas - Nancy, Matt and Ellen at Trinity College, Dublin.

Most of my previous half-dozen trips to Ireland were in the 1970s, although I was back briefly in 1993 on my mother Mary's last trip home. She is 90 now and living in an assisted living facility in New Jersey, with few physical infirmities but bereft of memory. No longer can she recite the poems learned in the one-room schoolhouse near the County Cork farm where her widowed mother raised six youngsters. My kids had never met her two surviving brothers: Sean McSweeney, a retired schoolmaster and raconteur, and Jimmy McSweeney, the wry, gentle bachelor left to work the family farm outside Dunmanway when flu carried off the eldest brother, Con, in the 1920s.

We had rooms booked at the Golf Links Hotel in Glengariff for New Year's Eve, but a jammed lock on the rented Opel Astra foiled our plans for an early departure from Dublin. The lady at the desk at Talbot's Guest House abandoned her post to try her hand, but she had no

Fermoy, which straddles the main road south, was laying claim this morning to being the Irish Venice, so we charted a new course west through Limerick, Killarney, and over the Caha Mountains to Glengariff.

more luck than I. We called the AA, which promised to dispatch someone within the hour. He took 90 minutes, but had the door open in a trice. Ireland was still soaking this morning from the gales of the two previous days, and the main roads in the south and west were flooded. Fermoy, which straddles the main road south, was laying claim this morning to being the Irish Venice, so we charted a new course west through Limerick, Killarney, and over the Caha Mountains to Glengariff. How long would this take, Nancy and the kids asked. It was just a couple of hundred miles. Five or six hours, I guessed.

I wasn't counting on the dual carriage-way disappearing and traffic grinding to a halt in Kildare. It was dark before we reached Limerick. We pressed on relentlessly to Killarney, where I made a couple of wrong turns before Matthew (born with a compass in his head) set us right again. Nancy wondered what was wrong with all the choice lodgings we were passing up. But this was New Year's Eve, and we had an appointment in Glengariff. It was 8 p.m. before we reached Kenmare, and suddenly I recalled the

manager from the Golf Links telling me their restaurant was fully booked that evening, and she could only feed us if we got there early. That was not going to happen. Out of the car we clambered and down the street to a hotel with a crowded bar, where the first words out of the barmaid's mouth were, "It's a fixed-price menu only tonight – and we're fully booked." I felt panic set in as we headed back toward the street, wondering if we'd wind up ringing in the New Year with fish and chips from a greasy spoon.

Then the barmaid hurtled back to intercept us: "Wait! The cook says we have a cancellation." The meal that followed was a delight. It started with a prodigious Caesar salad, with chopped walnuts and cheese, and the best brown bread in Ireland. Nancy and Matt dined on chicken and I feasted on salmon in a wine sauce worth slurping with a spoon. There were plates of potatoes – fried and browned in the oven – as well as turnips

and small, tasty Brussels sprouts. The prix fixe of 12 pounds (about \$16) included pints of Murphy's Stout. Our vegetarian 13-year-old, who'd been subsisting largely on bread, butter and scones, was charged only for the plate of chips.

Fully restored, we made it over the mountain, past the grazing sheep with red and blue splotches of paint on their backs and into Glengariff without incident a little past 10 p.m. – 10 hours after we set out. The Golf Links Hotel beckoned us at the top of a lane, with a Christmas tree in the porch and peals of laughter in the bar. Helen, the manager, found us three rooms and we ushered in the New Year in style. In the morning we awoke to discover the beauty of Bantry Bay outside our windows. We made our getaway a good bit earlier than poor Helen, who had been up until 4:30 a.m. tending the holiday revelers, had a right to expect. She served us our tea and breakfast, then tallied the bill.

We were up early on this New Year's Day to rendezvous at the farm where my mother was born at a bend in the road called Inchicurka, five miles north of

Dunmanway. My cousin John, an American-born rebel who emigrated from the Bronx at the age of eight, would be there with Uncle Jimmy, the reluctant farmer who now spends his days in a nursing home in Clonakilty. It was a cold, wet holiday, and we found Jimmy warming by the peat fire in the pale, cream-colored farmhouse where he dwelled all but five of his 89 years.

The farmhouse is mostly empty these days, and another farmer tills the rocky West Cork fields. John now owns the house and 58 acres of land where he came of age after deciding back in the summer of 1948 that the Bronx was not his cup of tea. John was one of four children of my Uncle Patrick McSweeney, a postal supervisor, and his wife, Hannie. Uncle Patrick – Patsy — the oldest of my mother's five siblings, had come to America first and endured hard times in the



Nancy and Ellen in Glengariff, County Cork, with Bantry Bay in the background on New Year's Day.

Depression before finding work with the Post Office and raising his family in a three-room apartment opposite Our Lady of Refuge Church on Briggs Avenue. The quarters were too close for John. He saw his opportunity to escape when my mother took him and my two older siblings back to see her mother and brother on the farm outside Dunmanway in 1948. It was a difficult summer. Both of her own toddlers came down with whooping cough. And at the end of their stay, young John announced that he was staying put. When he refused to board the tender at Cobh for the homeward journey, my mother wired Patsy and Hannie and asked what to do. Leave him there for the winter, they wired back. We'll go over next summer and bring him home.

But John *was* home. He stayed on the farm with Jimmy and Grandma, who was happy to raise another child 40 years after her last was born in Inchicurka.

John became an Irishman and today manages a plant in Dublin, where he and wife Patricia have raised their own four sons. He visits Inchicurka on weekends and holidays and harbors ambitions of installing central plumbing and heating and turning the century-old stucco farmhouse into his own retirement home.

Inchicurka looks much as I remembered from my first visit as a 13-year-old in 1963: the spare, chilly kitchen with running water; the sitting room where Jimmy would build roaring fires with wads of the *Cork Examiner* and turf cut by his own hand from the land near the Caha River; a parlor reserved for ceremonial occasions (and now completely bare), and three bedrooms with mattresses en dishabille, to say the least. Jimmy, at 50, was delighted to have company once again back on the farm. He gave my sister Alice and me driving lessons, letting us tool around the countryside in his vintage, black Morris Minor. He also gave me the key to the tractor, which I managed to get stuck in the mud down by the river in the lower fields. Jimmy never raised his voice. He didn't let minor disasters bother him. Of course, his ears were so full of wax you had to raise your voice so he could hear you. A few years later, he put aside his natural aversion to doctors long enough to have his ears cleaned at a doctor's office in Cork. He left the doctor and nurses in stitches with his jocular complaints about all the fierce noise he now could hear on the streets below – just the normal sounds of traffic.

My grandmother had died in 1955, and the old farmhouse quickly degenerated into bachelor digs under Jimmy's relaxed

rule. The only serious cleaning was when my mother or Hannie came to visit, or when there was a station – a priest saying Mass in the living room, and a feast afterwards for the neighbors. The part of farming that Jimmy hated most was milking the cows – the dozen smelly animals that provided most of his income, but also were a yoke around his shoulders. Morning and evening they summoned him to the shed to be milked. It was a hardscrabble life that Jimmy led with his dogs, all of whom he called Shep. Jimmy was a non-card-carrying Pioneer who loved a good laugh and showed us kids no quarter in card games of 110. You can't blame him if he felt envious of the brother who became a schoolmaster or of Patsy and Mary who escaped to make their fortunes in the new world. And you can't blame them if they in turn envied Jimmy, living carefree in the beauty and serenity of the Irish countryside, while they faced a legion of children every morning or rode to work on the crowded subways in New York.

We found to our delight that Jimmy had lost neither his memory nor his smile. He recognized Nancy, whom he had not seen in 20 years. The kids he had never seen, but they laughed as I did 35 years ago at the lamentations in that rich Cork accent

You can't blame him if he felt envious of the brother who became a schoolmaster or of Patsy and Mary who escaped to make their fortunes in the new world. And you can't blame them if they in turn envied Jimmy, living carefree in the beauty and serenity of the Irish countryside, while they faced a legion of children every morning or rode to work on the crowded subways in New York.



Back at the farm - Jimmy McSweeney flanked by the Connells, Ellen Matt and Christopher, at Inchicurka near Dunmanway, Co. Cork.

about the fierce, hard life of the farmer.

Later, between downpours, we searched in the Kilmichael graveyard for the grave of my grandfather, James McSweeney, whom we know only by a photograph of a dashing figure in Philadelphia, where he ventured briefly before returning to Ireland and dying young.

We never did find the right one. Jimmy was waiting in the car; it was hours past his usual dinnertime at the nursing home in Clonakilty. We couldn't tarry, so we left the search for another year. We drove off to Macroom for dinner, and then bade good-bye in the rain to Jimmy and John.

Matthew had purchased two Ordnance Survey maps of West Cork. Inchicurka sits on the border of maps 85 and 86, with the farmhouse and every other dwelling in these rugged lands east of the Shehy Mountains marked with its own black sliver. All the villages and byways that figured in the stories Jimmy, Sean and my mother used to tell, from Kilnadur and Gortroe to Kealkill and Capeen – not one had been missed by the Ordnance Survey. Matt discovered that the fields and hillsides where Grandma played as a girl were thick with ancient stones, burial mounds and other monuments from several mil-

lennia before Christ.

Her brother Sean, the schoolmaster, could have led us to many of those sights without a map had we come a few years earlier. At 93, his memory, too, was gone, and we found him confined to bed in Ovens with a chest cold and low fever. We kept the visit brief. His handshake was still firm and his eye curious. He guessed that Matthew and Ellen were in their 20s. We left a bottle of whiskey, which he would have gladly passed around in earlier days – and not all that much earlier. Just the week before, the family had left him asleep in the house at midday while they attended to errands – and returned to find him walking down the road in his nightclothes, resuming his daily pilgrimage to the pub at Kilmuney.

Continued on p. 65

As my knowledge of opera is almost solely limited to the trivia fact that “Un bel di” from *Madame Butterfly* is playing as Glenn Close wreaks her havoc in *Fatal Attraction*, I did wonder fleetingly whether I needed to brush up on a few key operatic terms before meeting Ronan Tynan, the renowned Irish opera and popular singer. I needn’t have worried. A less pretentious and self-important character would be hard to find. No stranger to multi-tasking, he rushes in a few minutes late for our meeting, simultaneously introducing himself, apologizing profusely for his tardiness and talking on his cell-phone. The same rogue cell-



Right: Dublin born Irish tenor Ronan Tynan. Above: The Three Tenors (left to right) Finbar Wright, Anthony Kearns and Ronan Tynan.

phone’s malfunctioning that afternoon had necessitated an unscheduled stop at a Sprint outlet, throwing an already jam-packed schedule slightly out of kilter. He spends part of the next hour fielding calls and making consecutive arrangements to meet one caller at 7.00pm, another at 8.00pm and yet another for dinner. He appears to thrive on such a schedule.



America’s Favorite Irish Tenor

Siobhan Tracey talks to Ronan Tynan about life, love and what keeps him sane.

Where to start with Ronan’s long list of achievements? A quick synopsis is somewhat difficult. Though he came to professional singing at the comparatively late age of 33, he has enjoyed success in both a solo capacity as well as with the Irish Tenors. He is a qualified doctor, specializing in orthopaedics who says that if “this [musical success] were to be taken away, I would go back to medicine and be very happy.” A skilled show-jumper as well as a successful horse-breeder, in 1998, he represented Ireland in Arnheim, Germany, as a member of the Irish Amateur Equestrian Team and came fifth in the Grand Prix and third in the team event. In the 1980s, he competed in track and field events for bilateral amputees, amassing 18 world records, six world championship golds and eight Olympic medals, five of which are gold. Ronan was born with a bilateral congenital deformity below the knee and had his lower limbs amputated following an accident at the age of 20. Meeting Ronan, it is apparent that this disability appears to have become a footnote rather than the defining aspect of his life – through tenacity and determination, he has ensured that it hasn’t held him back from doing most of what he has wanted to do. He

recently took on another project by writing his autobiography *Halfway Home – My Life Till Now*, currently in bookstores.

As one-third of the Irish Tenors – a role, which has probably given him his greatest exposure in the U.S., Ronan, with his colleagues, Anthony Kearns and Finbar Wright, has produced five albums which have sold over 1.5m copies worldwide. The trio have also appeared in three well received PBS specials. When I meet him, he is four days into their Christmas tour, which will end in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania on December 21. The highlight of the tour will undoubtedly be their appearance in Carnegie Hall on December 17, which Ronan is greatly looking forward to. In his solo capacity, Ronan will spend January promoting his book before a singing engagement brings him to Florida towards the end of the month. He will be appearing in New York in February and in San Diego in March.

Now a Manhattan resident, Ronan speaks enthusiastically of both New York and the United States. He loves America unreservedly. “It is the greatest country in the world – a country where people will you to win, admire success and don’t fear failure” – sentiments by which Ronan appears to live his life.

He returns to Ireland regularly to see family, friends and his beloved horses but for the moment, to further his singing career, feels that New York is the place to be.

At this point in the conversation, Ronan receives another call and afterwards tells me that it is from Assistant Fire Commissioner Lynn Tierney, "a wonderful woman." He can't help himself from disclosing that he is to be made an honorary firefighter (in a ceremony which will take place on December 17 in New York). He is justifiably, very excited "absolutely thrilled to bits" by the honor, adding "they don't give them out

lightly." He remarks that somebody with a disability such as his could not otherwise have become a firefighter – it is one of the few areas perhaps in which determination and a strong will to win will not overcome every obstacle.

Ronan's connections with the New York Fire Department go back a long way. He describes how, at the 1984 Paralympics in New York, he became friendly with some firefighters "who were very good to me" and have remained friends to this day. This friendship led him to offer to sing at the funerals of two of the three firefighters who were killed in the Father's Day tragedy in June, 2001. It was at these funerals that he met Deputy Fire Chief Ray Downey, who was to lose his life on September 11 and at whose funeral Ronan would sing. It is obvious that the tragic events of last September which led to so many unbearably sad singing engagements at the funerals/memorial services of fallen firefighters are still very much on Ronan's mind. Ronan describes how he had sung for the President and Mrs. Bush in Washington, D.C. on September 10, and on September 11 was due to sing at a reception at the Pentagon but "I slept it out – can you believe that?" He made his way back to New York, via Amtrak, and like many others, tried to offer his services where they might be needed. As a qualified medical doctor, he offered assistance at St. Vincent's but as they were not overwhelmed by casualties, his help wasn't required. He was delighted then to get a call from Mayor Giuliani's office, asking him to sing at the service held at Yankee Stadium on September 23. He recounts mischievously that it wasn't the first time he had sung "God Bless America" at Yankee Stadium. The first time he sang it, the Yankees beat the Red Sox 8-2 (although it can't actually be proven that this was due to the inspirational effect of his singing!). Ronan also sang at the memorial for those who died in the American Airlines crash at Rockaway Beach in Queens. He describes this as one of the saddest events he has ever attended "People were so distraught, I have never seen people so despairing."

Ronan likes to feel that he can reach people through song. In his role with the Irish Tenors, he reflects that he is stuck with the tag of being "the emotional one." He claims that "if subtlety is required, then the other two won't let me near a song but if an emotion is required to be brought home to an audience – then I am the obvious choice." It is obvious that this idea appeals to him. An open and engaging character who talks unselfconsciously about himself, he describes how he wants "to make people cry and leave their sophisticated selves behind... music lovers are the same the world over. Whether in Manhattan or Ireland, they experience the same emotion when called upon to feel..." He reflects that through his earlier career in medicine, he sought a more cerebral way of trying to help people – by trying to give them a better quality of life physically, but that it is through singing that he can hopefully touch a person inside and perhaps tap emotions that they might not otherwise be able to access. Demonstrating a desire to spread a little happiness rather than to educate or promote "good" musical taste, he adds that he is eager to give an audience whatever they want "a bit of everything – opera, Broadway, French, Italian, popular songs – whatever makes them happy."

Ronan genuinely doesn't seem to consider that he is somebody who has achieved an unusual amount in life. "I'm a confident person and like myself a lot – you have to like yourself but I don't compare myself to other people or judge people on their

Excerpts from "Halfway Home: My Life Till Now"

...I could sense Mam's eyes bearing down on me and Dad's hands itching to reach out and help. "One foot in front of the other now," Tony repeated. I took a breath and shifted my weight to my left foot. Then I lifted my free right foot, heavier than lead in the braces, swung it out, and set it down on the shiny floor beneath me. Awkwardly, I shifted my weight to the right foot, feeling the cushion of the bootie and the chamois at my sole. Tony's hands lifted me a little at the waist and I moved my left foot forward the same way, wobbling in my hips and knees a bit, but still smiling broadly. In this awkward way, I took four glorious steps....

... At first, no one made a remark about my legs, but fairly soon after we settled into a routine, I began to be picked on. Friends were hard to come by. Though I dearly craved companionship, this new world had a coldness that did not encourage camaraderie. I've always had a great sporting nature and played football and hurling, a Gaelic sport similar to field hockey, with everything I could give. Still, I was not welcome on the teams. Once, in football, I was out on the pitch at a practice game. I was thrilled to get possession of the ball until a big cocky player from the other team ran up to me and dead-legged me, kneeling me so hard in the thigh I had to sit out. In hurling my reception on the pitch was not much better. The message was clear. In the eyes of those great sportsmen, I was worse than an eyesore; I was useless. Almost always the last picked for any team, I began to feel dreadfully insecure. The so-called best and brightest would not accept me because of my imperfect legs...

...I craved a close friend dearly but friends were few and far between in those years. Something about the visual effect of me, of my legs seemed to keep others away from me. Still, as always in my life, there were a few angels of mercy who came through for me in those cruel years. Funny enough, they were often the simplest people, big tough lads who weren't afraid to step in and save me from an attack, or choose me for their team in the face of ridicule. Once I remember being picked eighth instead of last in hurling by a solid chap from Offaly. I was delighted, but puzzled and asked him why he'd done it. "I know you'll kill yourself to get that ball," he said. I'd rather have someone with your heart than someone with perfect legs and no heart at all." I told him if I didn't kill myself for the ball, I'd at least kill anyone else who got near it....

successes and failures.” He is unashamedly proud of his faith and relies on it at all times. It is the one part of his life that he never questions and he considers himself lucky to have what proves to be a huge source of comfort to him. At times of adversity, he invokes the help of God and believes very much in “God’s will” in leading him to where he is today. At the same time, he is eager to point out that he “never wants to push religion down anyone’s throat – I don’t want to parade my religion. My mother said to me that what God took from me, he gave more back, and I suppose to a certain extent, I do believe that.”

He adds that he doesn’t feel he has made it yet. Somehow, I find it difficult to imagine Ronan Tynan sitting back at any stage to rest on his laurels and say to himself “I’ve made it” but find myself asking whether he could ever envisage thinking so. He replies that perhaps a U.S. No. 1 record would do it but quickly adds (lest one consider that he has been suddenly overcome by an excess of self-interest) that a No. 1 in the U.S. for an Irish artist would be great for Ireland. He loves U2 and thinks that their success did wonders for Ireland (in the days before the Irish economy went into overdrive and performed its own wonders for Ireland!) and considers that Bono is a great role model. When talking about other “contemporary” artists he likes, he mentions Phil Collins, Garth Brooks and Joni Mitchell. He won’t be drawn into saying anything less than complimentary about singers

against whom he is directly competing for record sales. I was to be disappointed if I expected to hear accounts of diva-like tantrums (or just plain adolescent sulks) from Charlotte Church. Ronan has met her on a number of occasions and describes her as “a lovely girl, really friendly and well-adjusted.”

As a renowned singer, track and field champion, medical doctor and now writer, I called upon Ronan to set his modesty aside and describe what he felt his greatest achievement was. His answer “being born into the family I was born into” was somewhat unsatisfying for somebody like me who likes to feel that one has some element of control in life and that it isn’t just an arbitrary accident. Viewing my skepticism, he offered that it was this one achievement which facilitated all the others. “Without my mother’s focus and my father’s tenacity and support, I wouldn’t be where I am today.” On being drawn to offer an achievement over which he had direct control or input, he added that “qualifying as a doctor is up there... singing in Madison Square Garden was amazing and being made an honorary firefighter is huge.” He adds that his parents considered his walking to be his finest achievement. His mother was determined that he would be “normal” but as for himself, as he had never known anything different, putting on his prostheses and walking seemed as natural as putting on shoes might be for another child.



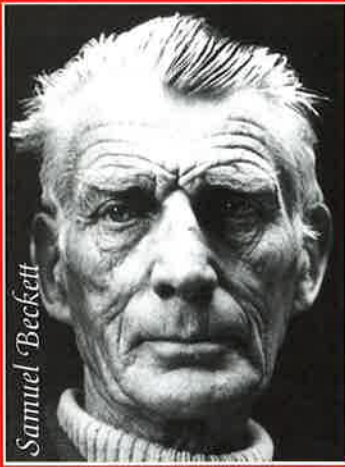
Competing in the long jump in Sweden at the World Amputee Games in 1986 in Gothenburg. Tynan jumped 5 meters 63 centimeters and broke the world record for double amputees.

Perhaps the only area in Ronan’s life in which he expresses any dissatisfaction is the difficulty in finding time for himself. Although he strikes me as a very energetic person – a doer rather than somebody given to over-analysis and somebody who thrives on being busy, he remarks that it can be difficult to find a balance in life. Though he gets home a couple of times a year to see his horses, these visits constitute his main leisure time and are the only holidays he is likely to get these days. He adds that even at “off-duty” times, he is sometimes approached by strangers who recognize him. Laughing self-deprecatingly,

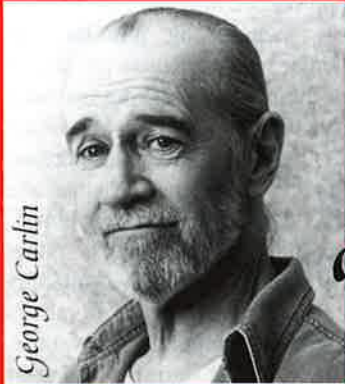
he adds “it sounds as though I think I’m a great man, doesn’t it.” He describes how, on a recent shopping expedition, a woman whose friend recognized him approached him and asked him to sing them a song. With this particular woman, Ronan put an end to the matter by asking her what she did for a living. When she replied that she was an accountant, he asked her whether she would do his accounts for him ... getting his point across rather definitively. While he generally enjoys the attentions of music-lovers and supporters, he sometimes finds it intrusive and feels that some members of the public don’t realize the effort involved in warming up a voice or the need to rest and cosset it and might interpret refusals to sing on demand as being difficult.

With regard to his personal life, Ronan is single. He relates that he was engaged in 1996 but that it didn’t work out. “She was a great girl – but I’m a romantic, everything has to be perfect.” He adds that in some ways, he would love to settle down – particularly to have children – “that would be an amazing thing” but feels that it would be difficult for anyone to put up with him as he never stays in one place for long. I get the impression that the same passion and inability to compromise that Ronan brings to his work and life in general means that a very dramatic *coup de foudre* would be required for him to surrender his single state. Regardless of this, he seems very happy and surrounds himself by family and friends. He was very close to his father, who sadly died in 1998. He is also particularly close to his sister, Fiona and enjoys the role of uncle immensely, having had his 15-year-old niece out for a visit on a recent occasion – something which he greatly enjoyed.

I leave Ronan, who refuses to let me pay for our coffee and his tea and honey (good for the voice!), settling up our bill. Even a brief meeting leaves one with an impression of a man of rich and varied talents who looks at himself and his achievements with a beguiling and genuine modesty. If the title of his autobiography *Halfway Home – My Life Till Now* is indicative of anything, Ronan is only halfway through his personal success story and we can expect to hear a lot more from him in the future. □



Samuel Beckett



George Carlin



Sinéad O'Connor

Who's Irish in Hell?

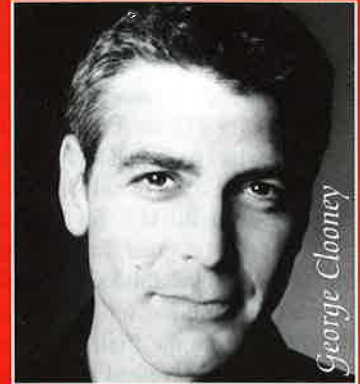
A LOOK AT WARREN ALLEN SMITH'S *WHO'S WHO IN HELL*.
BY MARILYN COLE LOWNES

Warren Allen Smith, whose great-grandfather was an Irish-American named Curran, has, with tongue firmly wedged in cheek, we suspect, compiled a 1200 page compendium with the fascinating title *Who's Who in Hell*. One might think he's rushing things a bit because the book lists atheists, humanists, naturalists, freethinkers, agnostics and others of that ilk who are still very much alive. If one labors under the delusion that all Irish are either militantly Catholic or Protestant, one is in for a bit of a shock, as the evidence presented in Smith's tome shows that quite a few could easily be labeled as practicing non-believers, shall we say "the unfaithful."

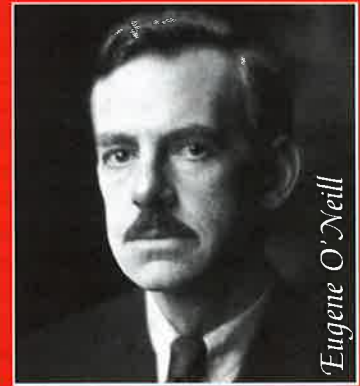
Before we examine their self-expressed doubts, let's consider some of the names that grace the members' board at Smith's club. There's Eugene O'Neill, Frank O'Hara, Bernardo O'Higgins. Conor Cruise O'Brien, Sean O'Casey, Sinéad O'Connor, Adam Duff O'Toole – and that's just a few of the Os.



F. Scott Fitzgerald



George Clooney



Eugene O'Neill

Who, you might ask, is Adam Duff O'Toole? It's quite in order that we look at O'Toole's credentials first as he had presumably been "down there" the longest, since 1327 when he was burned to death at Hogging (now College) Green in Dublin. Raphael Holinshed, from whom Shakespeare borrowed much historical material, wrote that O'Toole "denied obstinately the incarnation of our savior, the trinitie of persons in the unities of the Godhead and the resurrection of the flesh, as for the Holie Scripture, he said it was but a fable; the Virgin Mary he affirmed to be a woman of dissolute life..." So much for the late and unlamented Adam Duff O'Toole, burned at the stake.

Now, let's look at some of the more recent dissenters. Sinéad O'Connor, the shaven headed pop star, enraged Catholics when she tore up a picture of Pope John Paul on the *Saturday Night Live* television show. Ah, but then in 1994 the situation changed, a priest helped her kick her marijuana habit, and she told *The Irish Times* that he had restored her faith in the Church. Surely this latest development should earn her exclusion from the book, but, perhaps, she's only in there so we can see how

close she came to joining the ranks of the doomed.

Eugene O'Neill (1888-1953), one of the foremost playwrights of the 20th century, was born in a hotel in New York City and attended a Catholic boarding school and Princeton University. In his play *The Dynamo*, in which he portrays the defects of an age which has witnessed the death of an old God and the failure of science and materialism, O'Neill clearly showed that he has rejected his Catholic faith. In 1936, O'Neill won the Nobel Prize in literature. According to his biographer, Louis Schaeffer, O'Neill told his wife, Carlotta, about two months before he died, "When I'm dying, don't let a priest or a Protestant minister or Salvation Army captain near me. Let me die in dignity. Keep it simple and brief as possible. No fuss, no man of God here. If there is a God, I'll see him and we'll talk things over." Close to the end O'Neill cried out, "I knew it! I knew it! Born in a hotel room, and goddamn it, dying in a hotel room."

Séan O'Casey (1880-1964), the playwright best known for his plays *Juno and the Paycock* and *The Plough and the Stars*, was

a Dublin-born Protestant. One of his plays provoked nationalist riots when it was performed at the Abbey Theatre in 1926. That was the year O'Casey moved permanently to England, remaining alienated from Ireland. According to *Who's Who in Hell*, his various works have been grim, satirical and not always kind to the Irish people. According to British novelist George Orwell, O'Casey was "very stupid" and possibly a member of the Communist Party.

Two more of Ireland's best known playwrights warrant inclusion in *Who's Who in Hell*: Samuel Beckett and George Bernard Shaw.

Samuel Beckett (1906-1989), one of the greatest modern writers in English, was an unbeliever. He was born on Good Friday to affluent Protestant, Anglo-Irish Dubliners. His biographer, Lois Gordon, tells of Beckett's friendship in the 20s with James Joyce. They liked each other, took long walks, smoked cigars, drank and enjoyed such repartee as "What do you think of the next life?" "I don't think much of this one." A friend said Beckett, who had begun to drink heavily and refused to hold a job, told him, "All I want to do is sit on my arse and fart and think of Dante."

According to the Irish poet John Montague, Beckett included "God bless" in his greetings, an "uncanny salutation, a familiar Irish phrase made strange by his worldwide reputation for godlessness." Beckett was awarded the Nobel Prize for literature after the success of *Waiting for Godot*. At the play's end, the joke seems to be on the audience who assumes that Godot is God. But God is not there in any form, and this is one of Beckett's purposes. "If Godot were God I would have called him that," Beckett said in a little known statement.

Murphy, the eponymous character from Beckett's first novel, made a special request in his fictional will. He asked, "With regard to the disposal of these my body, mind, and soul, I desire that they be burnt and placed in a paper bag and brought to the Abbey Theatre, Abbey Street, Dublin, and without pause in what the great and good Lord Chesterfield calls the necessary house, where the happiest hours have been spent, on the rights as one goes down into the pit, and I desire that the chain be pulled upon them, if possible during the performance of a piece, the whole to be executed without ceremony or show of grief." Except that when his friend Cooper lugged the ashes but stopped off at a pub, a fight ensued and the bag of ashes scattered so that "...by closing time the body, mind, and soul of Murphy were freely distributed over the floor of the saloon; and before another dayspring greyned the earth had been swept away with the sand, the beer, the butts, the glass, the matches, the spits, the vomit."

Unlike Murphy, Beckett's own funeral and burial were traditional; bit of an anticlimax. Wonder what Beckett would have thought of that?

Beckett's pal James Joyce, the famed Dublin-born novelist (1882-1941), was an outright freethinker. Joyce was educated at Jesuit schools. Disliking what he perceived as the narrowness and bigotry of Ireland ("that scullery maid of Christendom") and Irish Catholicism, he spent most of the rest of his life on the Continent. The photographer Andres Serrano tells the story that Joyce, sitting for a painter who said he wanted to capture Joyce's soul, was told, "Forget the soul. Just get the tie right."

And George Bernard Shaw (1885-1950), let's see why he's right in the roasting with the others. Well, for a start, Shaw bold-

ly proclaimed himself "...like Shelley, a socialist, and atheist, and a vegetarian." Shaw had a 25-year exchange with a nun, Dame Laurentia McLachlan, during which both tried and failed to convert the other. She never forgave Shaw for his blasphemous picture of Jesus as "the conjurer" in his fable, *The Adventures of the Black Girl in Her Search for God*. Although he would never allow himself to be called a Christian, he can be classed as an unbeliever only in the sense that there was, as he said at the end of his life, no church in the world that would receive him, or any in which he would consent to be received. Shaw has written, "The fact that a believer is happier than a skeptic is no more to the point than the fact that a drunken man is happier than a sober one. The happiness of credulity is a cheap and dangerous quality of happiness, and by no means a necessity of life. Whether Socrates got as much out of life as John Wesley [the founder of Methodism] is an unanswerable question, but a nation of Socrateses would be much safer and happier than a nation of Wesleys."

On the last day of his life, an

"What do you think of the next life?"

"I don't think much of this one."

Samuel Beckett to James Joyce

hour before he died, and when visited by a friend, Ellen O'Casey, Shaw said wryly, "Well, it will be a new experience anyway."

Then there's James T. Farrell (1904-1979), author of the Studs Lonigan trilogy. Farrell wrote his own humanistic views in the *Partisan Review* of March 1951. "I was a Catholic until I was 21. I don't have any violent feelings about it, and if people want to believe, it is their business."

One hopes there's a theatrical venue in Hades as there certainly will be no shortage of actors to cavort there. Just the ones with an Irish link would, alone, make splendid company. There's George Clooney (b.1962) who was quoted in the *Washington Post* saying, "I don't believe in Heaven and Hell. I don't know if I believe in God. All I know is that as an individual, I won't allow this life - the only thing I know to exist - to be wasted."

For comedy we might turn to George Carlin (b.1937) who has appeared on numerous major television shows. The author of *Sometimes a Little Brain Damage Can Help*, he is often critical of the devoutly religious in his humor. "Religion is just a mind control," he has stated. In *Brain Droppings*, another of his books, Carlin says, "I've begun worshipping the sun for a number of reasons. First of all, unlike some other gods I could mention, I can see the sun. It's there for me every day. And the things it brings me are quite apparent all the time: heat, light, food, a lovely day. There's no mystery, no one asks for money, I don't have to dress up, and there's no boring pageantry. And interestingly enough, I have found that prayers I offer to the sun and the prayers I formerly offered 'God' are all answered at about the same 50-percent rate."

Carlin became the first recipient of the Freedom From



Who's Irish in Hell?

Religion Foundation's "The Emperor Has No Clothes Award."

Sean Penn (b.1960), who received an Academy Award for *Dead Man Walking* and was married to Madonna, seems to have been granted what most men would consider a pair of most ambitious prayers. Nevertheless, he has gone on record as being an agnostic (*George* magazine, December 1998).

Ronald Reagan Jr. (b.1958) is the son of the 40th United States President. When Ronald was interviewing the murderer Charles Manson for a media program, Manson asked him if he believed in God. "No, I do not," Reagan responded.



Kir De Fever

"My hereafter is here. I am where I am going, for I am mulch. It's a great comfort to know that in my mulch-hood I may nourish a row of parsnips." – Frank McCourt

Actress Amanda Donohoe played the part of a pagan priestess who belonged to a snake-worshipping cult in *Lair of the White Worm*. In one scene she was asked to spit venom on a crucifix. Asked by *Interview* about the scene, Donohoe responded, "I am an atheist, so it actually was a joy. Spitting on Christ was a great deal of fun. I can't embrace a male god who has persecuted female sexuality throughout the ages. And that persecution still goes on today all over the world."

Author Mary McCarthy (1912-1989) described the Dickensian, nightmare of her youth in *Memories of a Catholic Girlhood*. Although McCarthy was convent-educated she stopped considering herself a Catholic once she left her paternal grandparents' home.

Along with McCarthy in *Who's Who in Hell* we also have Ellen McBride, Eamon McCann, Mildred McCallister, Betty McCollister, Wendy McElroy, Mary McEvoy, Todd McFarlane, Lewis A. McGee, Phyllis McGinley, Christopher McGowan and William McIlroy amongst a host of Irish.

Here's a couple more "McDoubters": Emmett McLoughlin who was a priest but left the priesthood and became a free-thinker and wrote a book, *Crime and Immorality in the Catholic Church* (1962). And, how about S.J. McNeese who wrote *An Appeal to Reason, or Sanity versus Faith* (1924)?

Another author, F. Scott Fitzgerald, was born Catholic and is labelled an unbeliever. He once wrote to daughter, Scotty, "Be sweet to your mother at Xmas..." That his faith is questionable is further supported by the fact that his handwritten will speaks of "the uncertainty of life and the certainty of death." Fitzgerald got to check out that statement earlier than most – he died at the tender age of 44 in 1940.

Frank McCourt does not have his own separate listing in *Who's Who in Hell* but his iconoclastic observations about the afterlife rate his inclusion under that heading. The author of

Angela's Ashes says, "My hereafter is here. I am where I am going, for I am mulch. It's a great comfort to know that in my mulch-hood I may nourish a row of parsnips."

The important thing to remember is that these people are not all atheists. Some are nondenominational theists. They all have this in common: they do not associate themselves with a church or organized religion and they do consider themselves freethinkers.

By the way, if you are interested in this sort of thing, there's an Association of Irish Humanists, 5 Ailesbury Gardens, Ballsbridge, Dublin 4. There's also a quarterly published in Cork called *Church and State*. Editor is P. Maloney, Box 159, Cork.

Like *60 Minutes* we should close with a few words from Andy Rooney:

In a 1996 interview with Arthur Ungber in *TV Quarterly* Andy Rooney (b.1919) was asked if people really knew him. He replied, "The only thing I hide from people, that I have never said so far as being blunt and honest goes, is that I am not a religious person. I'm not sure the American public would accept from me that fact. I don't think that would please them or that it would attract a lot of people to me. And I take the position that it is a sort of personal matter, so I do not make an issue of it."

The commentator from CBS's *60 Minutes* told Sam Donaldson on ABC's *Prime Time Live* that he was "... critical of anyone who ever claims to know whether or not a god exists."

Trust Rooney to be quite funny on the subject. "My wife's from the Midwest. Very nice people there. Very wholesome. They use words like Cripes. 'For Cripes sake!' Who would that be – Jesus Cripes? Son of Gosh? Of the Church of the Holy



Moly? I am not making fun of it – you think I want to burn in Heck?" Alas, he has already made it into *Who's Who in Hell*.

These are just a few of the Irish in the pages of Warren Allen Smith's *Who's Who in Hell*, published by Barricade Books and available for a mere \$125 at your local bookshop. Open it anywhere, it's quite fascinating. How come George Washington and Abraham Lincoln are both included in its pages? Are you in it?

One thing is sure. With company like this, Hell won't be a boring place to be. □

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A SAMPLING OF THE LATEST IRISH BOOKS ON OFFER

RECOMMENDED

Brotherhood, a stunning, 240-page book of photos, captures the heavily-Irish New York Fire Department in all its rugged, poignant suffering and glory.

Pity Frank McCourt, who was drafted to write the introduction. His words are somehow supposed to stand alongside these extraordinary images. Somehow, he pulls it off.

“We don’t have to go to the movies anymore for our heroes. We don’t have to turn on the television. Our heroes are down the street, chatting at the firehouse door.”

The Pulitzer Prize-winner from Limerick writes of the only interactions many New Yorkers ever have with the FDNY, holding up their kids to wave as they speed to a blaze, or see-



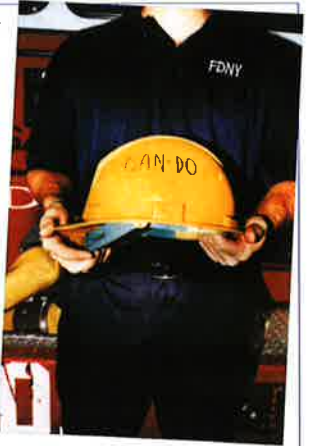
ing them shopping in a supermarket.

“There’s something remarkable about these men in helmets and turnout coats discussing the evening meal. You think there’s gonna be plain American food on the table that night or that an Italian is seducing Irish palates away from spuds and steaks. But no, [they] are discussing Thai chicken curry, and you’d like to be invited.”

Brotherhood – which also includes short essays by Mayor Rudy Giuliani and Fire Commissioner Thomas von Essen – is the brainchild of an ad executive whose midtown-Manhattan office is a block away from a firehouse that lost 15 men on September 11.

Believing this was something that needed to be captured, 60 photographers eventually donated their skills, and chronicled the post-9/11 FDNY. (The names of the 343 fallen members of the FDNY also run throughout the book, and the endless list of Irish names – including two victims named Tom Kelly – is heartbreaking.)

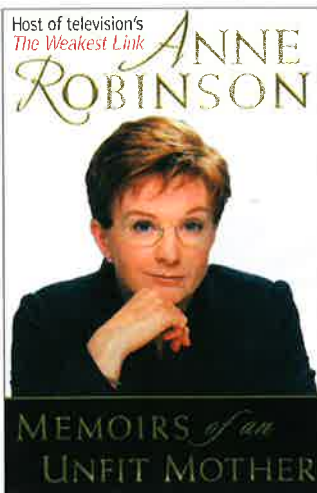
To add perspective to the FDNY’s death toll, consider what Commissioner Tom von Essen writes: “The total number of those who had given their lives in the line of duty in the entire 136-year history of our department was 752. On September 11, we lost almost half that number in a single terrible morning.” All proceeds go to victims’ families. (\$29.95 / 240 pages / American Express Publishing)



Memoir

Anne Robinson’s weak link is certainly not her Irish link.

In her new book, *Memoirs of an Unfit Mother*, the sharp-tongued, bespectacled TV game show host writes at length about her Irish roots.



Robinson’s family, the ex-journalist writes, “was part of the mass exodus from Ireland. Peasants who came to Liverpool (England) during the famine of the mid-eighteen hundreds.”

They were humble, yet driven to succeed. “Quite how a family of Irish peasants developed such grandness and appetite for all things luxurious plus, admirably, an appetite to make money that provided for high living, heaven knows.”

Robinson’s sarcastic Brit (or is it Irish?) sensibility dominates *Memoirs of an Unfit Mother*. Ultimately, the book is a provocative read, certainly by celebrity bio standards.

Prior to donning her trademark scowl for *The Weakest Link*, Robinson was a pioneering British journalist, who even covered the Northern Ireland Troubles as they broke out in the late 1960s.

Ultimately, *Memoirs* becomes an eye-opening journey through the elite U.K. journalism world of the not-so-distant past, which was rife with sexism. Things get more personal, and painful, when Robinson explores her battle with alcoholism, and her legal fight for custody of her daughter. (\$22 / 325 pages / Pocket Books)

In *Minuteman/Activist: To Promote the General Welfare*, 85 year-old Bill McCullough writes affectionately but honestly about growing up in the South Bronx as a member of New York’s small but vibrant Irish Protestant community.



The son of immigrants from County Down, McCullough faced adversity, from a youth of juvenile delinquency to a later resignation from the NYPD because he refused a bribe from a superior officer.

Yet the bulk of McCullough’s book explores how he has spent the better part of his life seeking to make positive contributions to his country.

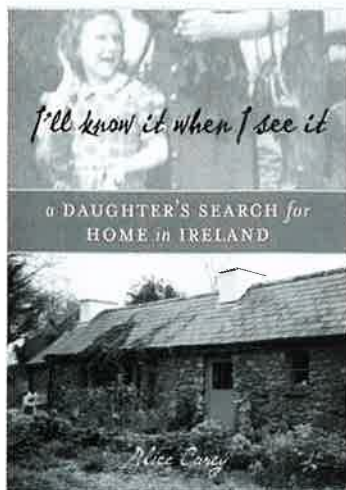
McCullough’s life has been nothing short of fascinating. He likes to point out that his background is similar to Secretary of

State Colin Powell's. Like the Bronx-born man at the forefront of America's new war, McCullough has an impressive military background, eventually rising to the rank of Colonel.

He would go on to work as a cop in downtown Manhattan for many years, and *Minuteman/Activist* offers a particularly vivid portrait of New York City in the 1950s and 1960s.

Overall, Bill McCullough's globetrotting book (though a bit too long) is a unique history of a remarkable 20th Century Irish-American. (507 pages / Rutledge Books / \$24.95)

Alice Carey rose from Irish immigrant poverty in Queens to Hollywood glamour (her mother worked as a maid for famed producer Jean Dalrymple).



Carey's book *I'll Know It When I See It: A Daughter's Search for Home in Ireland* is schmaltzy at times, but her life is certainly packed with interesting material. Aside from meeting up with the likes of Marilyn Monroe, Carey later became a teacher and performer, and she poignantly explores the impact of AIDS on her circle of New York friends. When Carey and her husband decide to buy and renovate a home in Ireland, the author is able to

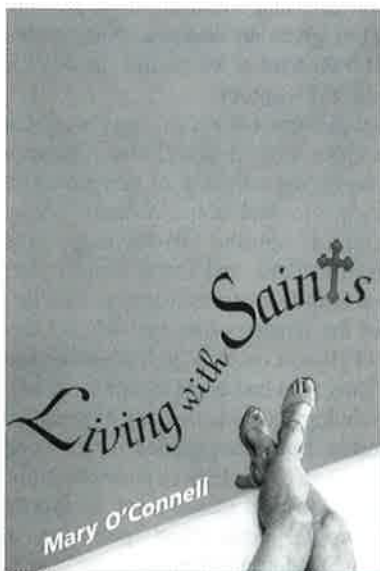
contemplate themes such as identity, roots and the power of place. (304 pages / Clarkson Potter / \$22)

Fiction In her first short story collection *Living with Saints*, Irish-American Mary O'Connell brings the likes of Saint Therese of Lisieux into the hectic lives and confused times of young American women.

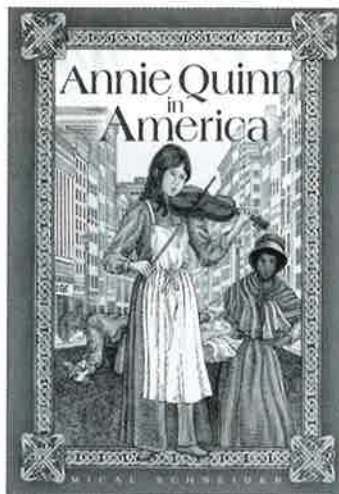
Suffice to say, this is not a faithful update of *The Lives of the Saints*. In "Saint Dymphna," a girl decides to have an abortion, while in "Saint Therese of Lisieux," a girl is forced to deal with an ill mother, her unkempt younger sister, and a sexually abusive father.

This all may sound intentionally blasphemous, but O'Connell's stories are suffused with faith and sensitivity. In presenting 21st century versions of saints' lives (which weren't exactly prim and proper centuries ago), O'Connell is able to explore the often-ignored topic of religion and faith in modern life.

Not all of these 10 stories are executed with success; some feel like mere sketches. In others, the girls seem too quick with "Bridget Jones"-ish cynicism. But in exploring how faith endures (or crumbles) under the stress of adversity, O'Connell (who teaches at the Lawrence Arts Center, Kansas) has written a challenging debut story collection.



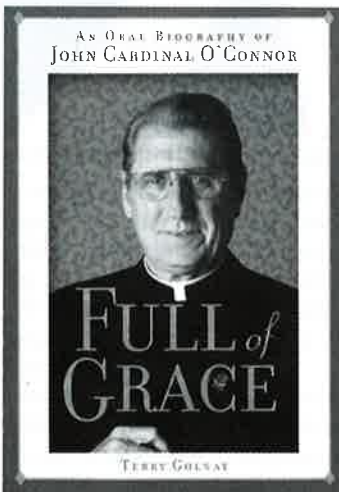
Young Adult Mical Schneider's *Annie Quinn in America* may make some readers shudder at first. This novel chronicles the misadventures of a lass sent from



famine-ridden Ireland to meet up with big sister Bridget (a maid, of course). When Annie's fiddle (!) is stolen by the smooth-talking Finnbar O'Halloran, a chain of events sends Annie from packed New York ports to the Midwest. It sounds dodgy, but since there are so few young adult stories about Irish immigrants, *Annie Quinn in America* may deserve the benefit of the doubt. Schneider certainly makes a genuine effort to convey historical realities, as well as write a ripping yarn, even if the details are a bit stage Irish. (\$15.95 / 246 pages / Carolhoda Books)

A fascinating read for young and old alike is *Journey of Hope: The Story of Irish Immigration in America* by the esteemed Kirby Miller and his wife Patricia. Dubbed "An Interactive History," this short book offers very broad history, as well as revealing replicas of actual letters, ads and other artifacts which document the Irish American experience over the last three centuries. (\$24.95 / 31 pages / Chronicle Books)

Biography Fond, funny and poignant remembrances of New York icon John Cardinal O'Connor can be found in a new oral biography, *Full of Grace*. Author Terry



Golway shows that O'Connor was not only proud of his Irish roots, but inspired many Irish and Irish Americans.

In one brilliant recollection, Congressman Pete King tells of mid-1990s "secret meeting[s]" between O'Connor, Gerry Adams and Martin McGuinness. "[McGuinness] was on cloud nine," King recalls.

At the St. Patrick's Day parade in 1996 – when the IRA had broken its ceasefire – King, Adams and O'Connor met on the steps of St. Patrick's Cathedral. After Adams walked off, O'Connor grabbed King. "He yanks me back, and he nods to Gerry and says 'He's a good man. We have to take care of him.'"

Irish Secretary-General Patrick McKernan, meanwhile, recalls an event at which O'Connor corrected a speaker, pointing out the peace-minded origins of the Irish tricolor flag.

This is all classic O'Connor: tough, tender and decisive. An editor at the *New York Observer*, and the author of several Irish histories, Golway includes, perhaps most touchingly, the words of eight-year-old Rachel Fader. Diagnosed with a brain aneurysm, she said this about O'Connor, with whom she shared an extraordinary correspondence of hand-written notes: "[You're] the nicest man in the whole world." (\$22/236 pages/Pocket Books) □

“Impetuous! Homeric!”

The Quiet Man Turns Fifty



A memorable romantic encounter from John Ford's 1952 Irish comedy-drama *The Quiet Man*, starring John Wayne and Maureen O'Hara.

This year marks the fiftieth anniversary of John Ford's *The Quiet Man*, the favorite movie of many Irish Americans. The native Irish tend to see it with more ambivalence, yet the readers of the *Irish Times* in 1996 voted it the greatest Irish movie ever made.

The beguiling comedy-drama won Ford his fourth Academy Award as best director, as well as bringing Oscars to cinematographers Winton C. Hoch and Archie Stout for their spectacular Technicolor photography of rural Ireland. Based on a short story by Maurice Walsh that Ford had been wanting to film since the 1930s, *The Quiet Man* stars the director's alter ego John Wayne as Sean Thornton, an Irish American boxer who returns to his birthplace in the fictional village of Inisfree (actually Cong in County Mayo) in an attempt to escape his violent life in America and find lasting peace. Maureen O'Hara, at her most ravishing, plays the fiery Mary Kate Danaher, who eventually becomes Sean's wife despite the tyranny of her loutish brother,

Red Will Danaher (Victor McLaglen).

Frank S. Nugent's delightfully witty screenplay brightens the surface of Walsh's rather grim story while adding greater intensity to the dramatic subtext of Sean's guilty flight from his adopted land. A deeply personal film for the director, *The Quiet Man* reflects Ford's own retreat from the modern world in the postwar years and represents a catharsis of sorts from his long obsession with combat both as a U.S. Navy officer and as a filmmaker.

After making the film in Mayo and in County Galway, where his people (the Feeneys) came from, Ford wrote his Irish relatives Michael and Sheila Killanin, "Galway is in my blood and the only place I have found peace. . . . [The filming] seemed like the finish of an epoch in my somewhat troubled life. Maybe it was a beginning.

"Hey, *The Quiet Man* looks pretty good. Everybody here is enthused and I even like it myself. It has a strange humorous quality and the mature romance comes off well. . . I

think the Irish might even like it."

Most Irish Americans find as many personal resonances as Ford did in this alluring and sometimes melancholy comedy of an exile's return. The film's romanticization of Ireland and its rustic western lands has given an immense boost to the tourist industries of Mayo and Galway for the past half-century.

From the time I first saw *The Quiet Man* in the 1960s, I was a typical Irish American male harboring a fantasy of going back to my own ancestral home, County Mayo, meeting a spirited Irishwoman like Maureen O'Hara, and living happily ever after in a little thatched cottage. In 1985, part of the fantasy came true when I met Ruth O'Hara, a recently arrived immigrant from Bray who had come to earn her Ph.D. in psychology at the University of Southern California. She accompanied me to Cong and the ruins of the Feeny ancestral home in Spiddal to help research my biography *Searching for John Ford* (published in 2001 by St. Martin's Press).

But there always remained one stubborn obstacle to the fulfillment of my Irish fantasies: Ruth thought *The Quiet Man* a deplorable film. I found this amusing, because it echoed in real life the theme of the film, Sean Thornton's naive expectation that Ireland will live up to his romantic dreams. The comedy and the drama come when he has to accommodate to the actual realities of life in rural Ireland.

I dedicated my Ford biography to Ruth, "who urged me to write this book and gave me invaluable help and advice at every stage — even though she *still* doesn't like *The Quiet Man*." An assistant professor in the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences at Stanford University, Ruth is a former professor of Irish studies at New College of California in San Francisco, where I now teach film and Irish studies. I recently sat down for tea with Ruth to compare our current views of *The Quiet Man* for *Irish America*.

ROH: My view of the film has certainly improved since 1985. There are aspects of it I do enjoy and scenes I think are magical and wonderfully acted. But I do think overall that *The Quiet Man* is a gross caricature of the Irish and indulges in some of the worst ethnic stereotypes of the Irish, particularly their supposed preoccupation with drinking and fighting. This is not conveyed in a subtle way in the movie so that it might capture the complexities of the Irish personality that perhaps have led to some of these stereotypes. I feel it's done in a way that plays into the foolishly patronizing notion of the Irish so trenchantly satirized by G. K. Chesterton: "The Irishman of the English farce, with his brogue, his buoyancy, and his tender-hearted irresponsibility, is a man who ought to have been thoroughly pampered with praise and sympathy, if he had only existed to receive them." *The Quiet Man* indulges in some of those stage-Irish stereotypes.

JM: When we went to Ireland to research the Ford biography, I made the comment, partly to tease you, that everyone I met seemed like a character out of *The Quiet Man*. I was taking a picture of somebody's thatched cottage, and horse manure started flying over the wall — the guy was flinging it at me with a pitchfork. I could see that it was a crude American thing for me to be taking a picture of somebody's home without asking. But you were embarrassed by the pitching of the horse manure because

you said that's the kind of behavior that reinforces these stereotypes. I was surprised about the extent to which a lot of people in Ireland behaved in ways that were similar to the film.

ROH: Well, I think the stereotypes in the film are appalling. There are aspects of the movie that ring very true. But the fact that Ford captured certain behaviors that people might encounter if they went to Ireland, or certain kinds of characters, is different from insisting that the movie is stereotypical, because we're talking about a measure of degree.

JM: When I met you, you said you were shocked by some of the American views toward the Irish.

ROH: Oh, absolutely. Before I left Ireland in the 1980s, I was living in an urban environment that was in many respects no different from the America to which I emigrated — the same TV shows, all modern conveniences, and so forth. I expected that people in America might have a nostalgic and romantic view of Ireland, but I did not expect the extent to which people would ask me, "Do they



John Ford in Ireland making his 1957 film *The Rising of the Moon*.

have proper clothes in Ireland, or do they still wear the old traditional clothes and shawls?" And, "Do they have roads and cars in Ireland?" Today, in the wake of the publicity for the Celtic Tiger and the new pride in the Irish economy, I wonder if I would hear that many questions speaking to the stereotype of Ireland as a backward, rural, peasant environment. John Ford is not the only individual guilty of perpetuating these stereotypes of the Irish. However, I think the success and

popularity of *The Quiet Man* is complicit in continuing and reinforcing them.

JM: *The Quiet Man* has become the cinematic vision of Ireland for many people.

ROH: Until recently that was very much the case. However, in the last ten years or so we've had a significant thriving of the Irish movie industry, which has presented more modern views of Ireland such as *My Left Foot*, *The Commitments*, and *A Man of No Importance*. Although a common thread in all these is the Irish preoccupation with alcohol. And the view of Ireland as a primarily rural and backward country certainly persists. This is reflected not only in movies but even in Thomas Cahill's introduction to his book *How the Irish Saved Civilization*, which states that Ireland is in many ways a third-world country. Yet Ireland has been for many years a first-world country with a far higher level of literacy and far lower infant mortality rates than places like the United States. To give Ford his due, when *The Quiet Man* was made, Ireland indeed was one of the poorer countries in Europe and was struggling with the conditions of poverty and the health issues just mentioned.

JM: That's a lot to lay on the shoulders of one film made fifty years ago. And it's about a man going back to Ireland hoping that he can recapture part of his childhood in a rural part of the country that is not as modern even as Dublin was in 1951, when the film was made. While Ford was filming in Cong, the ESB [Ireland's Electricity Supply Board] was in the process of putting electricity into the town, so that was a somewhat technologically old-fashioned place. When you and I visited there thirty-five years later, the town hadn't changed much — the buildings were all there and the landscape was much the same. Part of the appeal of *The Quiet Man* is the feeling that it's like *Brigadoon*, it's the Land That Time Forgot, it's Shangri-La, it's removed from things people don't like about the modern world. There's a quaintness to the film's world that is appealing to people, but from the Irish point of view, you take that as more of an insult than a compliment.

ROH: The confusion comes from the fact that because the outward appearance of some place hasn't changed, such as with Cong, people get the idea that it's not sophisticated or educated or part of modern society. That's just not correct. You're quite right that rural electrification only

came into Ireland in the fifties, but there were parts of the United States that were still being electrified only ten or fifteen years earlier. The bottom line is that everybody who lives in Cong would have their modern conveniences. However, there is an aspect of interpersonal relationships, camaraderie, attention to family, community life that still exists in rural areas, not just in Ireland but all over the world, that many feel we have lost in our modern urban society. And one of the things that people always comment on when they visit Ireland is how friendly people are, how warm they are, how engaged they are. *The Quiet Man* misses this tradition of Irish hospitality since the movie tends to cast it under the umbrella of drink.

What I am concerned about is if you're portraying a culture as it is not. *The Quiet Man* gives an image of a group of people in this town as ignorant and unsophisticated. That is not, I believe, an accurate image.

JM: I would defend the film by saying that it's partly about these mistaken attitudes toward Ireland that you're talking about. Sean Thornton suffers from the romantic delusion that he can go back in time to a simpler, happier time that he associates with his Irish childhood and that he contrasts to his hellish life in America. When he verbalizes his feelings about Ireland to the local people, they scoff at him. He tells the Widow Tillane (Mildred Natwick), "Ever since I was a boy and my mother told me about it, Inisfree has been another word for heaven to me." She replies tartly, "Inisfree is far from being heaven, Mr. Thornton." The humor of the film comes from the constant confounding of his romantic ideas about everybody in the story – they don't behave exactly the way he expects.

There is a level on which many of the characters are stereotypes, but most of them are also aware they're stereotypes and they have fun with it. They're ironic about their social roles, and so is Ford. The Barry Fitzgerald character, Michaelleen og Flynn, is one of my favorite characters in any film. Sure he's a stereotype of the drunken funny little guy, the town drunk or the town character, leprechaun-ish. But Fitzgerald is a great actor and he does wonderful things with the nuances of the lines. There's a sophistication in playing with the type that Ford does at his best. It's not just

indulging stereotypical behavior, but commenting on it at the same time. There's a melancholy to the character too, so he has many dimensions. I think Ford transcends the clichés and the stage-Irish stereotypes of the characters in most cases.

Not everybody in the film is falling down drunk. Michaelleen and Red Will are indeed portrayed as excessive drinkers. But Sean Thornton is not. And Mary Kate expresses disapproval of drunkenness more than once. The priest (Ward Bond) and the Protestant minister (Arthur Shields) are certainly not prodigious drinkers. It isn't a society in which everybody is a lush. Even in the pub not everybody is drunk, a lot of people seem



Joseph McBride and Ruth O'Hara discuss the finer points of *The Quiet Man*.

perfectly sober. Are you overstating your point because of a couple of characters in the film? Ford loves drunkenness as a comic motif.

ROH: Well, he loves drunkenness particularly among Irish people as a comic motif. In Ford movies such as *She Wore a Yellow Ribbon* [1949] or *Fort Apache* [1948], most of the characters who are preoccupied with alcohol are Irish. I find Victor McLaglen's fight scene in the bar in *She Wore a Yellow Ribbon* ludicrous. Even if the characters in his films aren't Irish, Ford indulges in that kind of brawling for its own sake. *The Quiet Man* could have tolerated some of that, but not as much as it has.

JM: Drink for Ford is a way of breaking down social barriers and making community harmony possible. Rather than seeing drink as a vice or a divisive thing, he usually sees it as a lubricant for getting people together. When Sean and Red Will are friendly because they're both drinking together, Ford sees that as a positive thing.

ROH: They're both drunk together. [Laughs]

JM: The wife doesn't mind.

ROH: No, exactly. I also find Red Will Danaher a two-dimensional part, and that is compounded by the fact that Victor McLaglen is not a great choice for the role. One of the problems for Irish people

dealing with the movie is that the lack of realism is further underscored by the fact that many of the characters have very erroneous accents. They have stage-Irish accents. Even Maureen O'Hara, who is a Dublin person and who is affecting a rural Irish accent and not successfully. Barry Fitzgerald and Arthur Shields are very good. But McLaglen is British and cannot really master the Irish brogue without it being extraordinarily stereotypical, a top-o'-the-mornin' type of Irish accent.

JM: Des MacHale, who wrote *The Complete Guide to "The Quiet Man,"* takes exception to my view that the characters played by Sean McClory, Charles FitzSimons, Ward Bond, and Barry Fitzgerald are portrayed as members of an IRA cell. The dialogue refers to that quite clearly. McLaglen says, "So, the IRA's in this too, eh?" And FitzSimons replies, "If it were, Red Will Danaher, not a scorched stone of your fine house would be standing." Barry Fitzgerald adds, "A beautiful sentiment."

The priest is involved in this cell, they call it "The Committee." But MacHale claims a priest would never be in the IRA.

ROH: Well, it's not a topic on which I'm particularly knowledgeable, but I do know that some of our great patriots were priests. Way back in the time of the United Irish and the Rebellion of 1798, "Father Murphy from Old Kilcormac spurred up the rock with a warning cry," so certainly there's no question that priests have been involved in activities for Irish independence, not least by providing the Irish with the opportunity to obtain education and access to their religion when these rights were prohibited under British rule.

JM: Ford removed some of the political elements in the Maurice Walsh story, which deals directly with the Troubles. Ford decided to remove *The Quiet Man* from that situation. I think that's fine, because the film is about something else and the political situation is a background to which it alludes. The grimness of Walsh's story tends to work against the love story.

ROH: I think a significant theme of the movie is power and who has power. It's about power in the ring, about power within the relationship of Sean and Mary Kate, power within the relationship of Mary Kate and her brother, the relationship of power

with land and power with money. Another subtext in the film is a certain amount of chastising or concern over the “mercenary” nature of the Irish. Sean comes back with his romantic view of Ireland and he must deal with the hard, cold realities. There is a truth in that. The relationship among power, money, and land is very intricate in Ireland. And so there is obviously a subtext of oppression in *The Quiet Man*, but the real focus is on portraying this through interpersonal relationships.

JM: People who criticize *The Quiet Man* often object to the film’s sexual politics. Lord Killanin, Ford’s relative who in effect produced the film for him, pointed out, “It was not very popular here [in Ireland] at first and there were strong objections to the line from May Craig” – she’s the older lady who tells Mary Kate: “Sir, here’s a good stick to beat the lovely lady.” Ford finds this very amusing. The Irish people were offended, and many Americans think this is simply outrageous. I think the sequence is a big play-acting show that Mary Kate stages because she wants her husband to publicly desire her and bring her back. She thinks of him as running away from her brother and she wants him to go through the motions of acting like a cave-man. It’s all tongue-in-cheek.

But apparently that aspect of the film doesn’t bother you very much.

ROH: Actually, it doesn’t. I take that to be more reflective of Ford’s problems with women rather than reflecting any particular stereotyping of Irish people. It’s confined to a limited point in the movie, and certainly the comment of the lady is outrageous, but one comment in a movie does not ethnically stereotype the Irish.

JM: Ford is also satirizing things about Irish culture that *he* thinks are outrageous.

ROH: What’s interesting about that scene to me is that Mary Kate is very feisty and actually hits Sean several times. I’m not in any way condoning either character’s behavior, but I see that less as a smear of Irish people than as a reflection of some of Ford’s own preoccupations. In his 1963 movie about the South Sea islands, *Donovan’s Reef*, there’s an outrageous scene of John Wayne shaking Elizabeth Allen. That has to do with Ford’s personal inability to express emotion except through aggression.

However, *The Quiet Man*, by portraying such episodes as Mary Kate serving the men and showing her being at the mercy of

her brother, is in many ways quite illustrative of how chauvinistic an environment it was in Ireland at that time.

JM: Red Will tyrannizes his sister, and she’s a frustrated, angry person, and while the film pokes fun at Mary Kate’s temper, her temper is justified because she’s treated as a lackey by her brother. It’s a very backward sexual politics that the town lives by.

ROH: Yes, and the film deals seriously with the issue of dowry and the belief that woman’s place is in the home. The Irish Constitution actually specified a strong preference for women to stay in the home.

There have always been conflicts within Irish culture about women – we were one

of things. And one of the constant themes in Ford is the nostalgia for the vanishing society or the vanished society, coupled with the recognition that it had to change. His attitude toward change is never simple, but in *The Quiet Man* that ambivalence perhaps is obscured by the visual beauty with which he idealizes this rustic paradise.

ROH: That ambivalence produces the most interesting aspects of the movie. It’s very interesting to get this complex mixture of, on the one hand, criticizing and recognizing and empathizing with the oppression that Mary Kate is encountering, much as Ireland itself was oppressed prior to independence. You can feel a great deal of sympathy in the movie for her. And at the same time there is a yearning for a situation in which the male is the dominant character dragging her across the field.

JM: You said you find some aspects of the film magical. What are you referring to?

ROH: I do think that through the cinematic aspects of the movie Ford beautifully captures the essence of the nostalgia that a returning emigrant feels for Ireland. The scene of Sean walking to the bridge the first night and returning to the cottage with Michaelleen is absolutely wonderful, the scenery is magnificent. It gives you a feeling of

homesickness and a feeling for the genuine aesthetic beauty of Ireland.

JM: In visiting Galway, I was struck by how the light constantly changes in a truly spectacular way. Ford and his cinematographers Winton C. Hoch and Archie Stout capture the subtleties of lighting and color. That’s part of the allure of the film.

ROH: That’s absolutely true. And I must say that I do like the romantic aspect of the movie – it’s actually a very sexy movie when you get beyond the Irishness, the American-ness, so to speak, of both Mary Kate and Sean – you actually have some wonderful romantic scenes, such as the love scene in the graveyard. The scene in the cottage the first night is very charged and enjoyable. These scenes represent the best of Ford, and it’s unfortunate that they are interspersed with the broad gross humor and stereotypes that take away from the movie. □

Joseph McBride’s biography *Searching for John Ford* was published last year by St. Martin’s Press. He also wrote the 1974 critical study *John Ford* with Michael Wilmington.



The original movie lobby card.

of the first countries to give women the vote, and women have always been involved in Irish politics. But at the same time, until recently there was this view, tied to both the religion and the politics of the era in which we got independence, that women should stay in the home to look after the family, to be the caregivers.

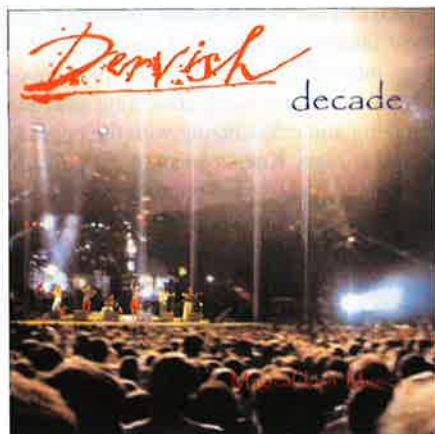
The film is an illustration of the confinements, economically and every other way, that are placed upon her by the society in which she lives – how she is under the control of her brother, how he wants her to stay in the house to look after him, which is not uncommon, and how she wants to keep something of her independence within her marriage, as represented by “her things.” However, at the same time I think Ford is also envious, at some level, of the situation between men and women in Ireland at the time. Part of the desire to go back to this romantic previous time represented by Ireland is also a desire to go back to traditional relationships “when men were men and women were women” and they knew their place.

JM: That’s a good point, because Ford’s films do have ambivalence about all kinds

Traditional Music Roundup

Decade

This “best of” collection is perfect introduction to Dervish, one of Ireland’s very best traditional music



groups. *Decade* samples tracks from ten years’ worth of recordings by a band that has gone from playing pub sessions in County Sligo to head-lining concerts before stadium-sized crowds in Europe and South America. Dervish is still relatively little known in the U.S., but their new label (Nashville-based Compass Records) may help change that.

Singer Cathy Jordan has a highly flexible voice and a unique style that pulls traditional songs like “The Hills of Greanmore” and “Molly and Johnny” in a decidedly modern direction. The instrumentals from what is now a seven-piece mini-orchestra are fast-paced arrangements that feature fiddle, flute and button accordion with backing on the guitar, mandola, bouzouki and bodhrán (Irish frame drum). (Compass Records)

Fierce Traditional

This is only the third solo recording in the long career of Frankie Gavin, the County Galway fiddle virtuoso who has



fronted the traditional music supergroup De Danann since the 1970s. Gavin’s lesser-known talent as a flute player is also well represented on this disc, which includes bouzouki accompaniment from Alec Finn, the only other founding member still with De Danann. County Fermanagh man Brian McGrath, a more recent recruit to the band, provides both piano backing and some sparkling tenor banjo playing on tracks that recreate the wild energy of music recorded on 78 rpm discs in New York by emigrant Irish musicians in the 1920s. Gavin’s brother Seán, an All-Ireland button accordion champion in his own right, is heard on some sprightly duet selections. (Tara Records)

It’s No Secret

Cork may be Ireland’s “second city,” but the local traditional musicians need take a back seat to no one on the Emerald Isle. This trio features three excellent Cork-based performers who are all equally talented as singers and instrumentalists. The instrumental tracks by flute player Hammy Hamilton, fiddler Séamus Creagh and button accordionist Con O’Drisceoil include solos, duets and trios, some of which get backing from Cork guitarist Pat “Herring” Ahern. The vocal selections include both old traditional ballads like the Ulster “Sea Apprentice” and several new-made songs. Two comic numbers, the tongue-in-cheek “In Praise of the City of Mullingar” from Creagh and “The Spoons Murder,” a hilarious revenge fantasy from O’Drisceoil, are worth the price of the disc by themselves. (Ossian)

At First Light

Mike McGoldrick, a flute player anduilleann piper from Manchester, England, and uilleann piper John McSherry of Belfast last recorded together when they were members of Lúnasa, a group that made a big splash with a debut recording featuring innovative modern arrangements of traditional and newly composed tunes from Ireland, Quebec, France and elsewhere. The duo were too busy with other commitments to play full-

time with Lúnasa (a group still going strong with new members), but Irish music lovers can only rejoice that they found time for this studio reunion. An eastern European “Doinna” and several stunning duets on low-pitched tin whistles recall Lúnasa’s eclectic repertoire. Co-producer Donald Shaw’s synthesizer keyboard wizardry, plus tasteful bass, guitar and percussion, helped McGoldrick and McSherry craft a disc that adds a glossy modern sheen to music still firmly rooted in the old tradition. (Compass Records)

Forgotten Days

Uilleann piper Davy Spillane has been known for musical innovation and exploration since his days with Moving Hearts, a fusion band of the 1980s with a lineup that featured electric guitar and saxophone. The featured piping soloist in



the original production of *Riverdance*. Spillane has also recorded several albums of original music that veered in the direction of “New Age” background tracks. For this recording, however, Spillane decided to revisit his traditional music roots in company with Kevin Glackin, one of three fiddling brothers from a prominent Dublin musical family. Accompanied only by the drones and “regulators” of Spillane’s uilleann pipes, the duo produced one of the finest and most soulful recordings of old-time traditional music of recent years, one voted the best of the 2001 in a readers poll conducted by Dublin’s *Irish Music* magazine. □

WHERE TO GET THEM

Compass Records are distributed throughout North America and are available online at www.compassrecords.com. *Fierce Traditional*, *It’s No Secret* and *Forgotten Days* are available as imports from Ossian USA, 118 Beck Road, London, NH 03301; (603) 783-4383; fax: (603) 783-9660; www.ossianusa.com.

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Oats: The Original Comfort Food

Call me crazy, but oatmeal cookies have never had a spot on my favorite foods list. They're too sweet. I prefer my oats prepared in such a way that I can really taste the full nutty flavor. I even enjoy eating them by the dusty flaky mouth-gumming uncooked handful. That taste quirk may be a result of genetic memory. My father's father, his father, and many of the other male branches on my Irish family tree were horsemen – jockeys, trainers, groomers, exercise lads, and Hansom cab drivers. It wouldn't surprise me at all if when they were hungry they simply dipped their hands into an oat-bag and munched a mouthful of rations belonging to one of their charges.

Every stable hand knows that horses love oats, but the grain is a favorite of humans as well. In fact, oats were one of the original domesticated grains in human history. Thousands of years ago, when the first Celts migrated from the European mainland to what is now Ireland they carried oat seeds with them, and the grain served as a staple of the Irish diet from prehistoric times until the 17th century when it was replaced by the potato. Even so, during the devastating Famine years when the potato crops failed, people reverted to oats, when available, as their primary source of nutrition.

Not only were oats nutritious, they were also extremely easy to grow. Unlike corn, which must be planted in neat rows and carefully nurtured until harvest, oats can simply be broadcast by the handful into the air to root and mature where they fall. Oats found Ireland's rich limestone soil, gentle rain, and cool climate especially to their liking. The plants flourished like weeds and with little to no overseeing could always be counted on to deliver a bumper crop at harvest time. Barley, wheat and rye had to be separated from their husks by threshing before being dried in a kiln, but the whole oat sheaf could be burned in its entirety and the ashes sifted to retrieve the toasted grain. This "burning in the sheaf" combined the labor-intensive processes of threshing, winnowing and drying into one simple operation, but so much straw needed to thatch roofs was

destroyed in the process that eventually many regions passed laws to abolish the practice.

It was not the first time that oats found their way into the Irish legal code. In the 16th and 17th centuries ground oatmeal was considered an acceptable element of the "food rents" that were paid to landlords. In the 9th century Rule of Tallaght which regulated food for the Culdee monks, the monastery's abbot Maolruain wrote that if a festival happened to fall on certain days the monks were to be given *meanadhach*, a watery oatmeal gruel. Two centuries earlier the *Senchus Mor*, a

apples or rhubarb with a topping of oats, butter, sugar and chopped nuts, and adding oats, candied fruit and raisins to plain flour dough transformed ordinary scones into wonderful little sweet cakes.

When the husks that remained after oatmeal was ground at the mill were soaked in water, the result was a milky-looking drink called *sowans*. If the husks were soaked for weeks, the liquid fermented and was known as Bull's Milk. Once the solids were strained out, Bull's Milk could be drunk in lieu of cow's milk, added to tea, or substituted for buttermilk in baking recipes. Since all the nutrients



Oat scones make a perfect accompaniment to afternoon tea.

section of the Brehon Laws addressing the care of children who had been fostered out, dictated the kinds of porridge they should be fed according to a rigid class structure. Wheat, which was in scarce supply and therefore valuable, was reserved for children of the aristocracy. Landowners' offspring were fed from the greater stores of barley. Poor youngsters received the most common and least socially valued grain – oatmeal, commonly known as "stirabout" because it must be stirred constantly while cooking.

Although it seems that the Brehon Laws only stipulated what fosterlings should eat at breakfast, that is not the case. Porridge, especially oatmeal porridge, came to the table in many guises throughout the day. Mixed with butter and salt, it was served as an accompaniment to meat. Combined with herbs and/or bits of bacon, it could stand alone as a meal in itself. Stirred into flour and baked, it made a healthy hearty loaf of bread. Adding honey and spices turned ordinary stirabout into a dessert. In grand manor houses delicious fruit crumbles were created by baking a dish of sliced

had been leached from the husks during the soaking process, Bull's Milk was extremely nutritious. It was the only food allowed on Lenten fast days, and it was a refreshing thirst quencher for turf cutters and field workers during planting and harvest seasons. Sowans could also be boiled over a hot fire and stirred until it thickened to the consistency of jelly. Adding sugar and honey transformed the humble gruel into a sweet dessert known as flummery.

Oats and sowans were so integral to survival that proverbs sprang up around them – many demeaning since oats were the grain with the lowest esteem. In County Mayo, calling someone "thick as flummery" meant the person was stupid. In County Antrim the saying "I'll pay you with meal and seeds" meant you'd not be paid at all. In the Glens of Antrim, however, it was believed that if a girl gave her beau sowans to drink after she had stirred it a certain way, the boy would fall madly in love with her.

In my not so humble opinion, a bowl of steaming oatmeal on a bleak winter's morning is the ultimate comfort food.

Especially if it is sprinkled with light brown sugar, drizzled with heavy cream, laced with a wee bit of Irish whiskey, and awash in melted butter with additional butter bits tucked here and there beneath the surface to erupt in golden puddles as my spoon finds their hiding places. I have discovered, however, another absolutely wonderful use for oatmeal to which I am practically addicted. Oatcakes.

Oatcakes are easily as ancient a way of cooking oats as any preparation method requiring liquid. Archaeologists theorize that porridges and a form of bread appeared at about the same time in the history of civilization. Grains were originally simply chewed straight from the sheaf, but many a tooth was lost in the process. Eventually some clever cook realized that soaking the grain made it easier to chew, heating the soaking mass made it easier

still, and drying dollops of cold porridge on a fireside rock transformed them into crunchy cracker-like morsels.

Aside from oatcakes' wonderful nutty taste, my favorite thing about them is that they are so easy to prepare. This must have been appreciated as well by women long ago whose daily chores filled the hours between sunup and sunset. Ground oats were simply mixed with a little bit of water, some melted fat, and a dash of salt. The dough was then patted into a flat thin round, baked briefly on an iron griddle, and placed on a drying rack known as a "harnen" set beside the turf fire. After several hours, the cakes could be broken into pieces and either eaten or stored for later use. Oatcakes kept so well that they made excellent traveling food. Soldiers carried oatcakes off to battle, workers carried them into the fields, and most emigrants

carried sacks of oatcakes to sustain them on the long voyages to America.

Like so many other vital foodstuffs, oatcakes also secured a niche in Irish religious traditions. On Saint Brigid's Day (February 1), it was customary to bake a large oatcake in the shape of a cross. In pre-dawn candlelight, the bread – called a strone – was placed on a bed of straw on the kitchen floor. After the gathered family intoned a prayer for health and blessings in the coming spring, each person broke off a piece of the strone and ate it, repeating the process until the oatcake had been completely consumed. Since Brigid was famous for the milk and dairy products produced by her herd of red-eared cows, I prefer celebrating the sainted lady's feast day by capping a candlelit mid-winter dinner with a platter of oatcakes and fine Irish cheeses. Sláinte! □

RECIPES

Oatcakes

- 1 3/4 cups oatmeal
- 1/4 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 tablespoon butter, melted
- 5 to 8 teaspoons hot water

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Use a blender or clean coffee grinder, to reduce 1 cup of the oatmeal into oat flour. Combine the oat flour, baking powder and salt in a bowl and stir in the melted butter until it is all absorbed. Stirring constantly, add only enough hot water, in small increments, to make a smooth firm dough. Gather the dough into a ball and place it on a cutting board sprinkled with 1/4 cup of the remain-

ing oatmeal flakes. Roll the ball around until it is covered with oats. Spread another 1/4 cups of oat flakes on the board, and use a rolling pin to flatten the dough into an 8-inch circle. Cut the circle into 8 wedges or use a small biscuit cutter to make circles the size of commercial crackers. Sprinkle a baking sheet with the remaining oat flakes and carefully place the oatcake pieces on it. Bake in the middle of the oven for approximately 15 minutes. Remove the oatcakes to a wire drying rack and let sit in a warm draft-free place until crisp. Makes 8 wedges or enough crackers for a 4-person cheese plate.

Note: You might consider doubling the ingredients to make twice as many oatcakes because they are so delicious they disappear almost immediately on serving.

McCann's Steel-Cut Oat Scones

- 1 cup McCann's steel-cut oats, toasted
- 1 1/4 cups buttermilk
- 1 cup whole wheat flour
- 1/2 cup all-purpose flour
- 2 tablespoons firmly packed light brown sugar
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/4 cup candied orange peel
- 1/4 cup golden raisins
- 4 tablespoons cold butter
- 2 tablespoons heavy whipping cream
- butter and jam

Spread steel-cut oats in a baking pan and toast for 20 minutes or until lightly browned in a preheated 300 degree oven. Set aside and cool completely before proceeding with recipe.

Preheat oven to 350 degrees and generously grease a 9-inch pie plate. While the oven is heating, stir toasted oats and buttermilk together in a small bowl and let stand for 25 minutes.

In a large bowl, combine the flours, 1 tablespoon of the brown sugar, the baking powder, baking soda, cinnamon, candied orange peel and raisins. Add the butter and cut in with your fingers until the mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Stir in the oats and buttermilk until just blended: Do not overmix or the dough will not rise properly.

Pat the dough into the prepared plate, molding it gently to fit. With a floured kitchen knife, score through the dough almost to the bottom, making 12 wedges. In a small bowl, combine the cream and remaining tablespoon of brown sugar then apply this to the top of the dough with a pastry brush. Bake approximately 15-20 minutes or until golden brown. Remove from oven, cut through the wedges, and serve warm with butter and jam.

The Irish Heritage Cookbook – Margaret M. Johnson

Note: John McCann founded his first grain mill in 1800 on the edge of the Nanny River, four miles from Drogheda on the east coast of Ireland. Since then the brand has won numerous international food awards and become a favorite source of oatmeal worldwide. In 1964, McCann's joined the Odlums group which had been milling since 1845; operations are now located in Sallins, County Kildare.

All They Need Is Love – The Lennon Clan

Lennon, a surname found throughout all of Ireland, is the anglicized form of *O Leannáin*, or *O Linnáin*, which has also been anglicized as Linnane and Leonard. The Irish surnames *O Lonáin* (Lenane) and *O Luinín* (Linneen) have sometimes also been translated as Lennon or Leonard.

Many of the *O Leannáin* clan can be found in County Galway as Lennon, while in County Mayo those belonging to the clan are usually called Leonard. The most important of these branches, however, are the O'Lennons of Fermanagh, which produced many distinguished ecclesiastics: no less than six of them are mentioned by the Four Masters as priors or canons of Lisgoole near Enniskillen, between 1380 and 1466.

In America, John Lennon (1768-1846) embodied all the romantic notions of a daring seafarer. His fearless feats on his ship *Hibernia* are part of American history.

John Brown Lennon (1850-1923), the grandson of the famous abolitionist John Brown, and the son of a tailor, became a prominent figure in the American labor movement. Lennon ran the Journeymen Tailors' Union of America and was part of the commission that helped to establish the Department of Labor under President Woodrow Wilson. For his efforts he was entered into the Illinois Labor Hall of Honor in 2000.



The Lennon Crest

The lives of these two Lennons would provide suitable material for writer and documentary filmmaker Thomas Lennon, who explores controversial aspects of American life. His production company has produced such documentaries as *Seven Days in Bensonhurst* and *Jefferson's Blood* which traced the nature of the relationship between Thomas Jefferson and his slave Sally Hemings. His work has won him the Writers' Guild Award, two Emmys, and the Peabody Award. Readers will recognize his work in the series *Long Journey Home – The Irish In America*.

The most famous Leonard in Ireland today, Hugh Leonard, a prolific writer with 32 stage plays to his credit, including *Da*, which won a Tony on Broadway, is not a Leonard at all, but a pseudonym for John Keyes Byrne.

Meanwhile the most famous Lennon of all time, John Lennon, was very proud of his Irish heritage. "My name is Lennon, and you can guess the rest," he told a cheering crowd of Irish Americans on a February morning in 1972. Lennon was one of 5,000 people in New York protesting the massacre of 13 unarmed civil rights marchers in Derry on Bloody Sunday the week before. Brian Dooley, who wrote on Lennon for *Irish America*, noted that it was bright and cold outside the British airline offices where the rally was gathered, and John and Yoko sang their new song, "The Luck of the Irish," to the demonstrators. Two days after the protest Lennon and his wife Yoko Ono invited Irish American political activists to their home to explore ways they could help the civil rights movement in Northern Ireland.

Lennon, born in Liverpool, was obviously very much in touch with his Irish roots, despite being named John Winston Lennon in a tribute to the British Prime Minister Churchill. His grandfather Jack Lennon had been born in Dublin but spent most of his life working as a professional singer in the U.S. (he was an original member of the Kentucky Minstrels).

"The Luck of the Irish" was included on the *Some Time in New York City* album, released in June 1972, along with "Sunday Bloody Sunday," proceeds from which went to the Northern Ireland civil rights movement. Lennon was disappointed by negative reaction from disc jockeys to "Luck of the Irish," which he'd hoped to release as a single. Much more successful was fellow Beatle Paul McCartney's "Give Ireland Back to the Irish," recorded two days after the Bloody Sunday shootings, which made it on to the U.S. Billboard charts.

While some suggest the name Lennon is derived from the Gaelic *leann*, meaning cloak or mantle, others have more amorous theories. They suggest it is a variant of *leannan*, the great muse and fuse – love. John Lennon, who penned "All You Need Is Love," and was loved by millions, certainly lived up to this interpretation of his name. □



The best known Lennon of them all, John Lennon, pictured with his wife Yoko Ono.

Never Mind the Weather!

Continued from p.46

In 1970, I had landed in on Sean, Joan and their three teenagers for what was supposed to be a two-week stay in August – and extended it until December. Joan, herself now retired from teaching, was quick to regale my two children with tales of how scandalized the neighbors were by this American “hippie.” I was a poor excuse for a hippie, but perhaps the Irish were more easily scandalized in those days.

(As it turned out, this was Uncle Sean’s final bout of illness. He passed away two weeks later, surrounded by family. The church at Ovens was filled with generations of his pupils.

We could not get back to Ireland for the service, but I was so glad to have had the chance to say good-bye, and for the kids to meet the schoolmaster in the family. It was yet another reason why the timing for this trip, which at first seemed so strange, turned out perfect.)

Nancy came to Ireland with bronchitis, and our travels had done nothing to improve her condition. She sat bundled in the car and napped while Matthew, Ellen and I clambered up the narrow, winding steps at Blarney Castle. At the top, a guide in yellow rain slicker waited on the narrow walkway at the top of the castle’s battlements where the Blarney Stone is ensconced. Ellen and I observed the tradition, which involves sitting down on the guide’s mat, arching your head back, clutching some rails and pulling yourself down a foot or two to kiss the stone while ignoring the remote possibility that you might soon be kissing the green grass six stories below if the attendant lets you slip through the cavity. Matthew decided that the gift of the gab was not worth this risk, so he left without planting his lips on the stone of legend.

On Sunday morning, as we were about to decamp from a guesthouse in Ballincollig, Nancy was running a fever. The landlady of Westfield House, Rose Cotter – just back from her own family’s skiing vacation in Italy – rang her doctor. In a short while – far less time than it took for the motorists’ helper to arrive in Dublin – Dr. M.F. Ryan was knocking at the door. Dr. Ryan was a cheery soul who gave the impression there was no finer way to spend a Sunday morning than running around Ballincollig with a medical kit, listening to phlegmy lungs. Nancy had come to Ireland with an antibiotic

spray that had been dispensed back in the States. He quickly diagnosed Nancy’s problem as failure to ingest enough of this spray. He dismissed as “nonsense” the advice she had gotten back home to hold the inhaler three inches from her mouth. To drive his message home, he darted downstairs to his car and returned in triumph with his personal inhaler, which he proceeded to suck in with enough force to deflate the Goodyear Blimp. After this tutelage, he penned a couple of prescriptions and departed.

And we took our leave of Cork, driving north to Limerick through Blarney over back roads with the help of a stranger’s directions illustrated on the back of a pharmacy slip. The Michelin Green Guide listed just one principal attraction between Blarney and Limerick: the 13th century Dominican Abbey in Kilmallock, just down the road from Bruree, where another reverse immigrant from America, Eamon de Valera, was schooled. The weather was dismal, but the ruins of the Abbey were breathtaking, setting me to wonder once again just how much of Ireland I had missed before while making multiple treks around the Ring of Kerry and the Dingle peninsula.

Dingle, in fact, was on the original itinerary for this winter solstice trip, since Matthew, an amateur linguist, wanted to immerse himself in the Gaeltacht. He was dismayed to find no one we encountered in Cork speaking Gaelic. The bilingual road signs were small consolation, and the evening news in Gaelic on Radio Telefis Eireann did not suffice. Matthew already had learned more Gaelic words from dictionaries back home than I had picked up in all my trips to Ireland.

However, Dingle and the beehive huts near Dunquin were not to be reached on this short visit. After enduring the 10-hour cross-country dash on New Year’s Eve, my family rebelled: no long car rides on our final day in Ireland, they insisted. Only Ellen came along when I set out for my final tourist destination: the Cliffs of Moher. And the highlight on that jaunt turned out not to be those beautiful green promontories jutting into the Atlantic, but an impromptu stop at a farmhouse in Doonbeg where 20 cattle were huddled around feeders. We stopped to take a picture, and Patricia McInerny emerged from the farmhouse to greet us. Three wiggling dogs on a haystack in the barn beside a stack of

rough-cut peat made up the rest of the greeting party. There was a skittish cat, too, but the pups chased it off. Mrs. McInerny said they had more cows than usual this winter: prices were so low they kept the bullocks to fatten away the winter on Doonbeg hay. “And they’ll probably be lower still this year,” she said with a rueful smile. Her husband makes his living driving a lorry, not off their 60 acres. “Soon there won’t be any farmers left,” said Mrs. McInerny, in the lament of farmers everywhere. But life in Doonbeg did not look too bleak on this blustery morning. Notwithstanding the towering stack of peat, the McInernys just installed oil heat in their house.

And so it seemed everywhere our travels took us. Ireland has changed from a country where vintage Morris Minors and Beetles roamed the roads to one where parking jams are commonplace and everyone seems to be driving late model Camrys, Fiestas, Astras and even Land Cruisers. From Grafton Street in Dublin to O’Connell Street in Limerick, the Irish, young and old, looked smartly dressed and in a hurry to get someplace. And when the receipt for your Guinness and Seven-Ups from Flanagan’s Bar in Kilmallock comes printed in euros as well as punts, it is just another vivid reminder that Ireland is knit now to a large and prospering continent.

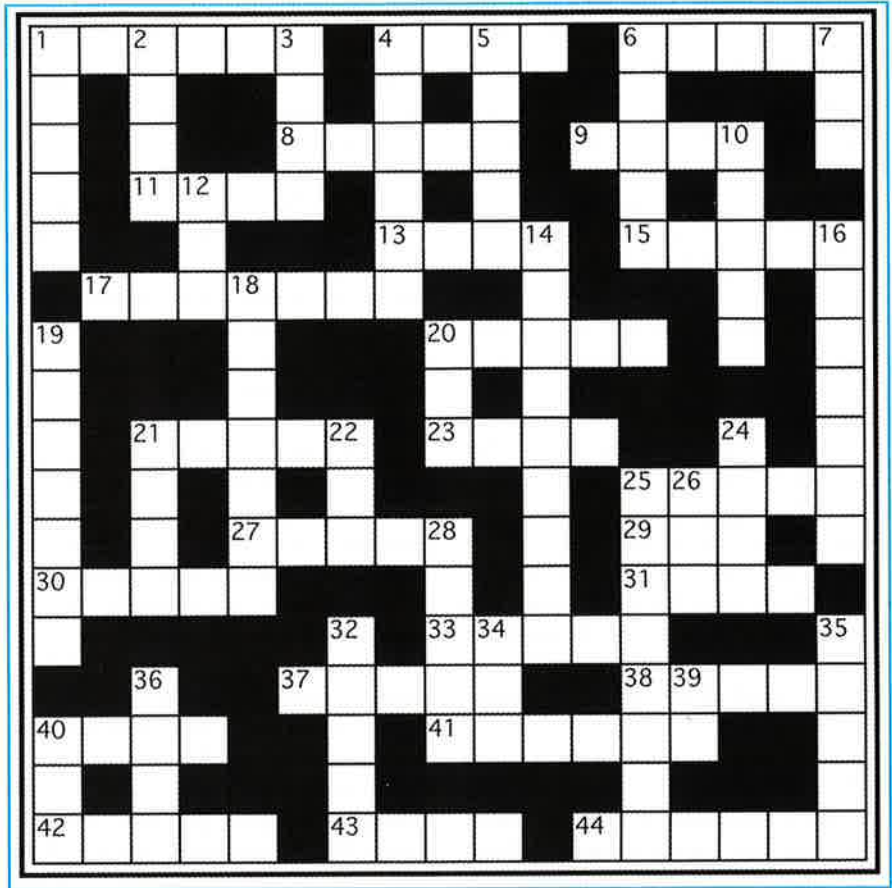
Back in Limerick, the restaurant in the King George Hotel resolutely played carols, 10 days past Christmas. We slipped away the next morning before dawn, steering our course down a deserted highway past Bunratty Castle to Shannon, where elaborate neon holiday decorations – the distinctive outlines of the Houses of Parliament, the Statue of Liberty and other distant landmarks – guided us in to the terminal.

It was the eve of Epiphany, and Frosty the Snowman was still hippety hopping on the same Muzak Christmas tape over the loudspeaker of our Aer Lingus jet. In America, stores would have torn down the Christmas decorations and stocked their shelves already for the next big commercial celebration, Valentine’s Day. But the holidays last longer in Ireland. It’s a new country, but still in touch with the old verities. We had come to Ireland at Christmastime to find family and heritage, and we had not been disappointed.

Christopher Connell can be reached at: cconnell@cceditorial.com

ACROSS

- 1 *Some Mother's Son* star (6)
- 4 Gaelic (4)
- 6 Actress Moira (5)
- 8 Actor Milo (5)
- 9 Woe! (4)
- 11 Bye! (Gaelic) (4)
- 13 Has breakfast (4)
- 15 Broken arm sight (5)
- 17 With 20 across, the
Queen of Suspense (7, 5)
- 20 See 17 across
- 21 See 18 down (5)
- 23 Sag (4)
- 25 Co. Meath town (5)
- 27 Immigrant island (5)
- 29 Something you shouldn't try to
get if you have Irish skin (3)
- 30 Artist need (5)
- 31 So be it (Latin) (4)
- 33 Popular traditional group (5)
- 37 With 32 down, subject of
1991 movie (5, 5)
- 38 Doctrine (5)
- 40 Knitter's need (4)
- 41 Magazine overseer (6)
- 42 Biblical bread (5)
- 43 Bia (Gaelic) (4)
- 44 Birr is in this county (6)



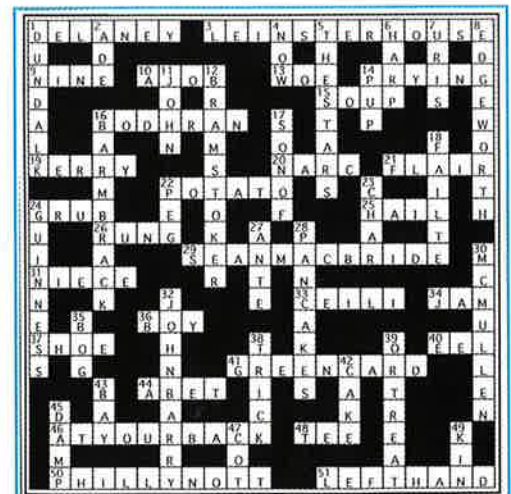
DOWN

- 1 Year division (5)
- 2 ___ lare or New ___
(towns in Ireland) (4)
- 3 Midday (4)
- 4 Binchy's reverberating
book (6)
- 5 Commandment word (5)

- 6 Book of ____ (5)
- 7 ___ or No (3)
- 10 *Gulliver's Travels*
author (5)
- 12 Part of a journey (3)
- 14 *Frankie* ___ (movie) (9)
- 16 Writing priest (7)
- 18 With 21 across, starred in 14
down (7, 5)
- 19 He's got Feet of
Flames (7)
- 20 Jersey or Hereford (3)
- 21 Ale (4)
- 22 Moray (3)
- 24 Bowler's guide (4)
- 25 Maintain a distance (8)
- 26 On the run or ___ (3)
- 28 Vibrate (5)

- 32 With 37 across, subject of
movie *Hear My Song* (5,5)
- 34 Guided (3)
- 35 Prefix for many Irish
towns (5)
- 36 Galway islands (4)
- 39 Either ___ (2)
- 40 Sweet potato (3)

Correction: Clue 29 in last issue's puzzle should have read 1974 instead of 1977. Thanks to readers who brought this to our attention.



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CCI-TV Tues, 9:00 AM, 7:00 PM, Waterbury (Statewide)	WBGU CH 27 Sun, 10:00 AM, Northern Ohio: Lima, Finley, Toledo, Bowling Green
Various Cable Systems Thur, 4:30 PM, 9:30 PM, 11:30 PM	SOUTH DAKOTA, WYOMING, COLORADO, KANSAS, MISSOURI, ILLINOIS, NEBRASKA
FLORIDA	KBDI CH 12 Sat, 5:30 AM, Denver
WSFP CH 30 Mon, 12:30 AM, Ft. Myers, Naples	KTNE CH 13 Thur, 10:30 PM, Alliant
INDIANA, ILLINOIS (including CHICAGO)	KMNE CH 7 Thur, 10:30 PM, Bassett
WYCC CH 20 Wed, 10:30 PM, Chicago	KHNE CH 29 Thur, 10:30 PM, Hastings
WYIN CH 56 Sun, 2:00 PM, Merrillville, IN	KLNE CH 3 Thur, 10:30 PM, Lexington
MAINE/ATLANTIC CANADA	KRNE CH 12 Thur, 10:30 PM, Merriman
WMEA CH 26 Thur, 3:30 PM, Sun 10:30 AM, Portland	KNXE CH 19 Thur, 10:30 PM, Norfolk
WMED CH 13 Tues, 6:00 PM, 7:00 PM Atlantic Time	KPNE CH 9 Thur, 10:30 PM, North Platte
WMEB CH 12 Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island	KYNE CH 26 Thur, 10:30 PM, Omaha
WMEM CH 10 Newfoundland, Presque Isle, Bangor, Orono	VIRGINIA, WASHINGTON DC
WCCB CH 10 Tues, 6:00 PM, Augusta, Lewiston	WNVC CH 56 Sun, 6:30 PM, Fairfax, VA

IRISH VOICE

"Things fall apart; the center cannot hold,
Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,
The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere,
The ceremony of innocence is drowned,
The best lack all conviction, while the worst,
Are full of passionate intensity."

— The Second Coming
William Butler Yeats

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Why it's Hard to be an American in Ireland

Dublin, September 11: Heading home from work, shocked by what I'd seen in the previous few hours, I wondered if people on the train felt the same as I did. Were they horrified? Were they feeling sick? Were they in shock?

A group of schoolboys, loud with nervous excitement, talked about what they'd seen. But, for the most part, there was little conversation.

That night and over the following few days, the words of Mary McAleese, Bertie Ahern, Mary Harney, the thousands of Irish people who stood in line for hours to sign books of condolences, and the near complete closure of Ireland and overflowing churches on September 15 for the National Day of Mourning convinced me that, yes, Irish people were feeling as I did.

Yet, even before the Day of Mourning was over, I heard mention of "fear of U.S. response" from people who were convinced that the U.S. was going to "overreact."

I had fears too. I was afraid there would be more attacks, perhaps of a nuclear, biological or chemical nature – and that family and friends were still in danger.

What I had seen on September 11 convinced me that the attackers had no moral limits. If they had access to nuclear weapons, I was sure they would use them.

Given that, I could see no way that the U.S. could be accused of overreaction. I was more afraid that President Bush and his administration might under-react.

The reaction of the bulk of the Irish media – a mixture of skeptical, anti-American and "turn the other cheek" views – provided a chorus of condemnation – even before the U.S. did anything.

Yet, the reaction of the bulk of the Irish media – a mixture of skeptical, anti-American and "turn the other cheek" views – provided a chorus of condemnation – even before the U.S. did anything.

Once the bombing started, most of the coverage was marked by a conviction of the futility and immorality of the campaign.

One Sunday newspaper argued that President Bush should give up his war mongering and get back to making the economy right – as if "It's the economy, stupid" still had any relevance.

Of course, I've become more sensitive as well. A sentence in an article in *The Far East*, a missionary magazine, equating George Bush with Islamic fundamentalists, convinced me never to give another penny to the religious order that produces the magazine.

I also have a suspicion that RTE has deliberately stopped showing the images of September 11 in the interest of "objectivity." I know that the images of Afghan refugees are more frequently seen than the World Trade Center – even though most of these refugees were living in camps long before September 11.

However, it is the reaction of my friends and colleagues which has surprised me most. So many of them have said, "What happened on September 11 was horrific, terrible, should never have happened, BUT . . ."

Generally what follows is something along the lines of "U.S. foreign policy blah, blah, blah, global poverty blah, blah, blah, the Palestinians blah, blah, blah, the Gulf War blah, blah, blah." Each supposed offense is offered as an explanation – "not a justification" of what happened on September 11.

Last week I was having dinner with a group of friends. At one point someone asked me how I was. This is a question that has confused me for the past three months. The easy answer is "fine." I'm healthy, my family is thriving and there is nothing going on in my personal life that requires any other answer.

But the easy answer seems wrong. Although I'm fine, I've changed in how I think and feel since September 11. I'm not just getting on with my life, as most Irish people seem to be.

Every day I spend a few minutes reading the "Portraits of Grief" on the *New York Times* web site. I spend some more time adding details to the individual pages on the IrishTribute.com web site.

Our family trip home for Christmas is a source of worry because my six-year-old daughter is scared about flying now and can't seem to stop talking about the World Trade Center. What she witnessed on TV that day is still fresh in her memory.

All of this was on my mind when the guy asked me how I was. I responded, "Fine, but of course, changed by what happened on September 11." I thought it was a safe enough answer.

His reaction was not to ask if everyone I knew was all right. Instead, he launched into a tirade that all but blamed America for September's terrorist attacks.

Others joined in, admittedly more sensitively, but equally certain that the U.S. had to address the "root causes." Others felt that the reaction should have been no different than when other atrocities happened around the world, as in Rwanda or Bosnia.

I was almost ready to respond with the old cliché that without the U.S. "You people would either be speaking German or be enjoying the same benevolent system that the Poles, Hungarians and others enjoyed for so long." Rather, I tried to counter with something about the responsibility of power. It was in vain.

It's so easy for Irish people to revel in self-righteousness. They live in a powerless state that no one could be offended by. They are so secure and comfortable – under the umbrella of American power and wealth – that they proclaim neutrality as a virtue.

I hope that the attitudes of my friends are not indicative of the majority of people in Ireland, but I fear they may be. I'm certain that my friends' views are a fair reflection of those of middle-class Dublin.

A friend of mine from the west of Ireland told me that people in the country are more supportive of the U.S.'s war on terror than Dubliners are.

I hope it's true, because if it's not true, Bórd Fáilte should issue health warnings with their advertising campaigns. "Americans with heart conditions should avoid visiting Ireland at this time as the attitudes of the Irish people are guaranteed to raise your blood pressure."

Growing up I was always proud of my Irish background. Before I saw the names I knew that many of those of the missing firemen would be Irish. I am in awe of their bravery. I also knew that many of those who worked in the World Trade Center would have Irish names, that they would be of a similar age, have gone to similar churches, schools and colleges to the ones I attended.

I always felt a special affinity for Ireland and the people here. I've often been "proud to be Irish," but now that pride is shaken. It's much easier for me to say that I'm "proud to be Irish-American." □

John Fay is the founder and producer of Nuzhound.com, a website devoted to news on Northern Ireland.

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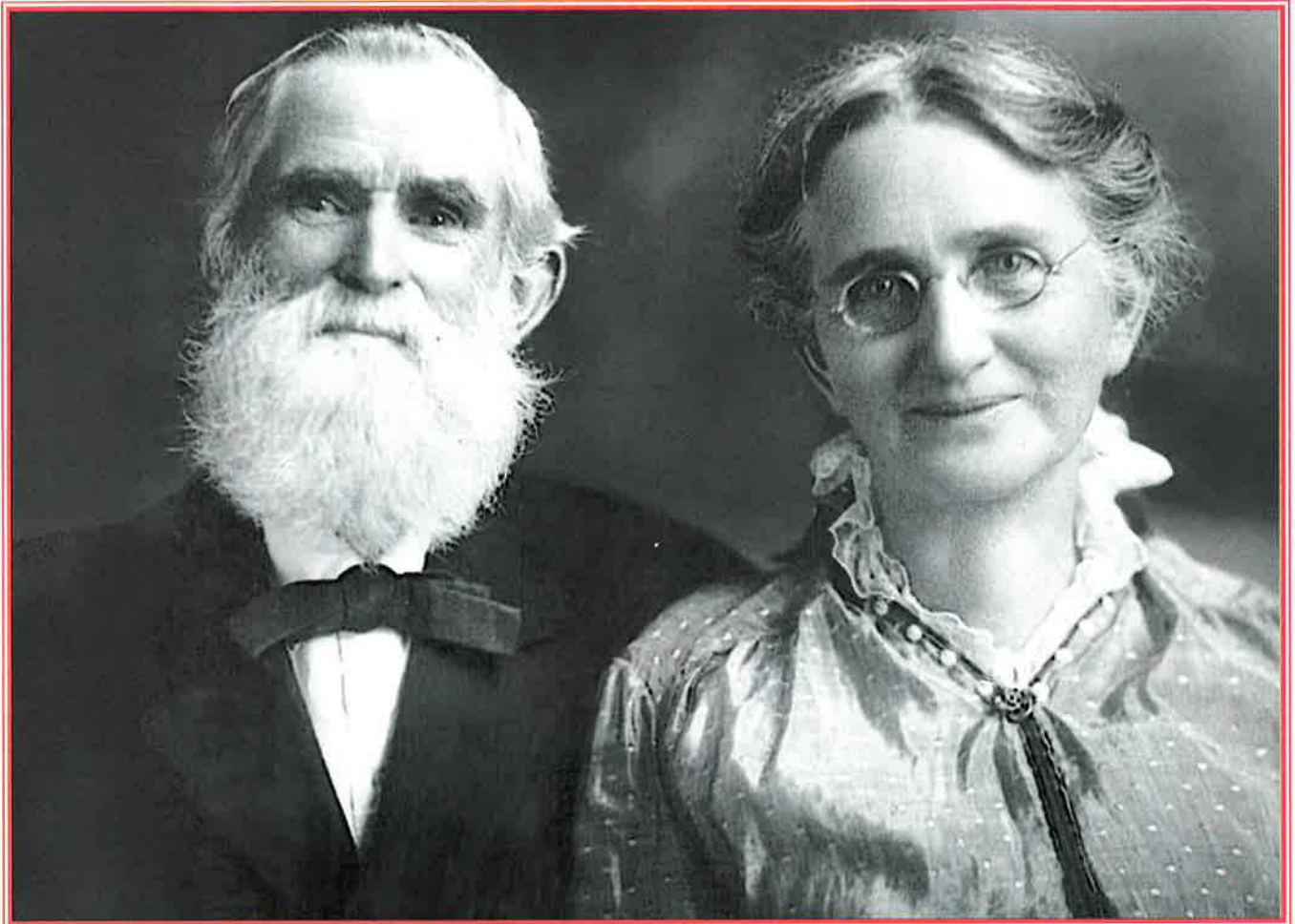
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Happy Valentine's



✿ 1916: Timothy & Mary Etta Caulfield, Ohio ✿

On April 3, 1916, Timothy and Mary Etta Caulfield marked their 50th wedding anniversary. The day began as befitting the occasion with High Mass at St. Joseph's Church in Dayton, celebrated by the pastor, Rev. Father William Hickey.

Timothy Caulfield, after the death of his father, emigrated to the United States, around 1860 from Ballymalone, Co. Clare. He settled in Dayton, Ohio and farmed, just as he and his father had done in Ireland. About 1866, he married Mary Etta Walsh who had been born in Holyoke, Massachusetts. While Timothy tended the farm, Mary Etta was responsible for the home and for rearing their 11 children: Thomas Francis, John Edward, Mary Ellen, Celia Gertrude, Agnes Bertha, Clara Estella, Catherine Etta, Alicia Leona, Ann Josephine, Margaret Emma and Leo Timothy. Not to neglect the accomplishments of their three sons, but Timothy and Mary Etta's daughters all were very accomplished which is notable for the

time. The girls' education and self-sufficiency must be credited to the encouragement of their parents. Both Gertrude and Agnes worked for Governor Cox of Ohio; Gertrude as a court reporter, Agnes as his housekeeper. Gertrude was a modern and independent woman and a bit of a maverick. Agnes owned the Dinner Bell Restaurant in Dayton and also worked as a cook at the Detroit Athletic Club. Mary Ellen entered the Sisters of Charity as Sister Agnes Josephine and spent her years as a nurse. Ann and Etta also were nurses, and Etta taught elementary school as well. Alicia was a librarian.

Timothy and Mary Etta are remembered as a loving couple who were cheerful and merry, thrifty but generous. They were not wealthy by any measure; however, they were blessed with an abundance of love, faith and morality which they passed along to their children. — *Mary Caulfield (great granddaughter), Farmington Hills, Michigan.*

Please send unpublished old photographs that you think are interesting, along with a brief caption or explanation to Patricia Harty at *Irish America* Magazine, 432 Park Avenue South, Suite 1503, New York, NY 10016. If the photo is irreplaceable, please send a copy, and please do not mail glass negatives.

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