



IRISH AMERICAN SOCIETY OF COUNTY WILL

Volume 26 Issue 2

January 2007

This may be the last newsletter you receive.

In looking through the mailing list, which the Society is using more and more for communicating with the membership, the board noticed a very large number of members who have not paid their dues in many, many years. A few date back into the last century!

Unfortunately, the huge cost of printing and mailing the newsletter prevents us from mailing 'complimentary' newsletters to anyone, even former members.

As a result, if we do not hear from you, in the form of a check, by March 1, we will have to remove your name from the mailing list, and consequently the membership roster. If you have any questions, you can contact us through the website : County Will Irish.net.

Irish Way Scholarship

In the next several weeks, high school underclassmen will be scurrying around, trying to get letters of recommendation and transcripts to compete in the Society's 24th annual scholarship competition to *The Irish Way*, a month-long course of study in Ireland promoted by the Irish American Cultural Institute of Morristown New Jersey.

Since 1983, the Society has sent 32 high school students as part of this program. "We are most proud of this accomplishment, according to Dan Malloy, Scholarship Chairman. "We are the longest continual supporter of this program."

The program is open to any High School Student, even current Seniors who will be graduates by July, when the program begins. The student must submit a 300 word essay entitled "Why I want to study in Ireland", a letter of recommendation from a school official, and a letter of recommendation from a non-family, non-school adult.

According to Malloy, "The choice of candidate gets tougher and tougher each year. We are starting to draw so many outstanding candidates from around the County."

Part of the selection process involves an interview with the scholarship committee. The criterion used by them are based on Maturity, the ability to pay the balance of the partial scholarship offered by the Society, other accomplishments achieved by the student, and Strength of character. The winning student or students represent the society to the Irish Way Program.

Last year's winners were Maureen McGreevy from Plainfield Central High School and Amber Oram from Joliet Central High School.

Manhattan Irish Fest XIII

The Irish American Society of County Will will once again host this year's festival, and hopefully your calendars have already been marked for March 2 & 3, 2007.

This year, Jimmy and Kathleen (*nee* Lee) Walsh have been chosen to be the grand marshals of the Festival. Jimmy has served as a trustee on the Manhattan Township Board for many years. He is currently the Manhattan Township Supervisor. Jim has been one of Manhattan's leprechauns since the start of Manhattan Irish Fest in 1995!

Admission buttons will be sold prior to the Fest for \$6, and for \$7 on the day of the event. Buttons will be on sale starting February 10th at various Manhattan businesses. Buttons will also be available at the local schools. Children under 10 are free when accompanied by their parents.

For a third year in a row the Fest will be selecting a King & Queen for the annual parade that will begin at 11am on Saturday, March 3rd. Applications will be available at local businesses and on the internet at www.manhattanirishfest.com. The applications must be received no later than February 12. Any high school senior or college underclassman, living in Manhattan Township or the Manhattan Grade School District is eligible. The winners receive \$1000 each towards college expenses.

Fest goers are encouraged to park at the Village of Manhattan's Metra Parking lot. This may seem out of the way but it is actually the closest parking to the fest. An entrance to the fest will be located directly west of the Central Park basketball court.

see Fest on p 5.

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Write it down !

- Feb 3-Rugby Social @ Galway Tribes, Frankfort
- Feb 15-Board Meeting @ Chicago St Bar & Grill @ 7:00
- March 2-3 Irish Fest !
- March 21-Board Meeting @ Joliet Elks
- April 18-Board Meeting @ Joliet Elks 7:00
- May 16- Board Meeting @ Joliet Elks 7:00
- Check the web-sites for last minute changes :
Countywillirish.net
Manhattanirishfest.com

Unity Conference

Mike Maloney and Ray Slattery, long standing members of the Society, helped host a world-wide conference in October. Members of the Irish American Unity Conference met for their annual convention near O'Hare Airport. As this year is the 25th anniversary of the H-Block Hunger Strike, some of the speakers focused on documenting this era. Other speakers concentrated on the progress after the Good Friday accords.

Several members of the Society attended as well, and an educational and eye-opening experience captivated the convention goers.

Speakers included Terry Kirby, escapee from the Maze Prison in 1983; Matt Morrison, a former POW who served ten years at Long Kesh ; and Jerry Boyle, a Chicago attorney active in the campaign against the US-UK Extradition.

The Irish American Unity Conference is a nationwide, nonpartisan, nonsectarian human rights organization which advocates the end of British colonial occupation and the peaceful reunification of Ireland. Maloney is pictured at right with some of the speakers and organizers.

Hats off to Mike and Ray for a job well done!



New Members			Answers to "So You Think You're Irish #1—From the October 2006 Newsletter
Please give a warm welcome to the following first time members of the IAS-CW			1. (A) There were 17 (a) Presidents of the United States of Irish Ancestry
Name	Town	Occupation	2. (A) St Lawrence O'Toole was Ireland's first Canonized Saint.
Karrie Baerlin	Joliet	Therapist	3. (C) Oliver Cromwell, in evicting the Irish from their own land wanted to send them either to Hell or Connaught.
Noah Bauter	Braidwood	Paramedic	4. (B) Daniel O'Connell, "The Great Liberator" was the first Irishman to sit in Parliament.
Matthew Blatti Family	Joliet	Fireman	5. (D) Jonathan Swift, in <u>A Modest Proposal</u> satirically suggested it as a way of reducing hunger and population in Ireland.
Mike Blatti Family	Joliet	Store Manager	6. (C) There were 9 men of Irish Ancestry to sign the Declaration of Independence.
Bill Boyle	Elwood	Sales	7. (c) Charles Boycott was the land agent for the Earl of Erne in County Mayo. The term was coined because of his acts.
Charlie Champene	Joliet	IT	8. (C) Michaleen Flynn thought that The Duke was 6'6", who was actually 6'4 1/2.
Beverly Chesterfield	Bourbonnais	Tour Director	9. (A) Cooks frequently add Guinness , a Porter, to stew. Try this delicious dish at the Galway Tribes in Frankfort.
Wade Cooper	Manhattan	Student	10. (B) Irish women won the right to vote in 1919. U.S. Women did not get it until 1920.
Sarah Grady	Frankfort	Jackhammers	
John R. "Jay" Keigher	Orland Pk	Attorney	
Melissa Lutz	New Lenox	Soc Worker	
Jim & Marianne Murray	New Lenox	Retired	
Mike O'Brien	Channahon	Trucker	

Ireland will be greener for St. Patrick's Day

By Rev Kevin O'Neill Shanley, O. Carm

This St. Patrick's Day will be special for thousands of Americans of Irish descent who will literally re-plant their "Roots" in Ireland and make the country greener through a unique program called "Trees for Ireland."

The program, sponsored by the Irish American Cultural Institute of St. Paul, MN, offers an alternative to the trashy St. Patrick's Day cards that Irish Americans often complain about as insulting to their ethnic group. Now greetings may be sent to relatives and friends in the form of a tree planted in one's favorite county in Ireland. A special Irish greeting will be mailed to the recipient, followed by a frame able certificate indicating where the tree has been planted. In addition, the name of the person being honored will be inscribed in a register at the appropriate forest center in Ireland.

The idea is the brainchild of Dr. Eoin McKiernan and board members of the Irish American Cultural Institute. The IACI wanted to give Irish Americans the opportunity to help in a very practical way the land of their ancestors. It is also hoped that the "Trees for Ireland" program will help bring about peace and reconciliation in Ireland.

Trees are important to Ireland. Visitors often sense something unusual about the Irish landscape without immediately recognizing that it is the almost treeless look that makes the difference. Today Ireland is the least afforested country in Europe. Irish forests cover one million acres , or 5 % of the land, while the average European Union country has 20%. Germany, for example, has nine times as much forest land as Ireland.

But it was not always so. A visitor to Ireland some 8,000 years ago would have been greatly impressed by the forests which stretched from coast to coast, broken only by lakes and rivers. The ice age had ended some 2000 years previously, and a number of tree species such as birch, oak, elm, alder, hazel, pine and yew had migrated from the continent of Europe across the land connections into Ireland.

When St. Patrick and his missionaries arrived in 432 A.D., the land of Erin was still literally "forty shades of green", with vast forests only slightly diminished to make way for farming and grazing.

Later, in 1185, when the Welsh monk Giraldus Cambrensis visited Ireland, he wrote that "there are many woods and marshes; here and there are some fine plains but in comparison with the woods, they are indeed small."

Ancient Irish chronicles also speak of the great forests. The old Irish alphabet was based on the names of trees, as though, for example our English alphabet were recited as ash, birch, cypress, instead of A, B,C

Place names in Ireland also reflect tree names such as "ure" (Knockanure) for yew tree; "beigh" (Glenbeigh) for birch; and "sally", (Sallynoggin) for willow tree. But during colonial times, the great Irish forests were almost totally decimated. The beginning of this destruction is mourned in the opening lines of a celebrated poem memorized by Irish children in school:

"What shall we ever do without trees / All our forests are destroyed."

During this period, the English exploited vast tracts of woodland for export. By the year 1625, France, and to a lesser extent, Spain, were casking most of their wine in Irish oak. The hulls of the British East India Company's ships were also made of Irish oak, and, it is claimed, the famous oak woods of Shillelagh supplied the roofing timbers of Westminster Hall and Henry the Eighth's Chapel in Westminster Abbey. The oak forests were also plundered for supplies of bark for the tanning industry, and as fuel for big glass and iron works. By early in the 18th Century, Irish forests were denuded to the extent that timber had to be imported. The area of natural forests had fallen to 1% of the land.

Not long after the first attempts were made to restore Ireland's forests, but it was not until the early 20th Century that efforts resulted in an increase of forests, especially under the governments of the Irish Free State and the Republic of Ireland.

Even today, the loss of great forest lands has had unfortunate economic consequences for the Irish. Imports of lumber and other tree products are a severe drain on the Irish economy. In addition, the lack of forests represents a loss of thousands of potential jobs.

"Planting a tree in Ireland, then, is more than a sentimental gesture," said Dr. McKiernan. "It is a practical contribution to the welfare of the people of Ireland and to the beauty of the countryside., as well as a vote of confidence that there'll always be an Ireland. What better sentiments for the celebration of St. Patrick's day!"

The program will be carried beyond St. Patrick's Day with planting a tree as a uniquely thoughtful gift for weddings, anniversaries, birthdays, memorials, thank yous, or to express any other special thought.

With the help of the "Trees for Ireland" program, the rate of growth per hectare is becoming the highest in Europe, and will probably be unequalled in the Northern Hemisphere.

"The current output of a million cubic meters will double within a decade and quadruple by the year 2010," said Dr. Pdraig M. Joyce, professor of Forestry at University College Dublin. "By the turn of the century, Ireland will be exporting timber to Europe, again, but this time, on a sound, sustained yield management basis."

We're helping to make Ireland green and peaceful again for St. Patrick's Day and always," said Dr. Eoin McKiernan.

December 10, 2006—IAS Christmas Party at the Galway Tribes



Sue Doyle, Sheila Corrigan, John Doyle and Tina Plunk Quigley enjoy the session at The Galway Tribes Christmas Party.

On December 10, 2006, the Society held their annual Christmas Party, hosted this year by Niall Freyne at the Galway Tribes Restaurant in Frankfort. As a treat for the membership, an unscheduled Session with Brendan Loughrey and John Condron was held. The excellent food and spirit of the season prevailed for the members.



Members John Condron (l) and Brendan Loughrey entertained the members at a Session during the Christmas Party.



No Christmas Party would be complete without a visit from Santa Claus. When Brendan O'Brien saw Santa, he ran with glee to the jolly old elf, known to many as Mike Malloy

The society provided a free glass of cheer, hors d'oeuvre and good Craic to the many members who attended. Watch further **newsletters** for the date for next year's celebration, In cased you missed this one.



New Member Sarah Grady from Frankfort, and Society President Coley O'Connell hold up the hand-stitched football jersey, awarded as a raffle prize for the new members. The shirt was courtesy of City Beverage.

Highlights of the 25th Anniversary Celebration



Fr Kevin Shanley, O.Carm, opened up the dinner by saying Grace, thanking God for 25 successful years as an organization.



Mike McHugh, Jim Lawler and Coley O'Connell pose for the camera after presenting Jim with his Citizen of the year plaque



Jim Lawler, Citizen of the Year ,relaxes after delivering his acceptance speech.



Coley O'Connell, left, and Mike Malloy , right, congratulate Katie O'Donnell on her selection as Citizen of the Year



After the awards ceremony Brendan Loughrey and his new band held a session for the listening and dancing enjoyment



The Sullivan School dancers perform a lively reel for the crowd.

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So you think you're Irish Quiz #2

1. What Boston born son of Irish Immigrants is said to be the Father of the Modern Skyscraper? A)Frank Lloyd Wright b)Louis H. Sullivan C)James Michael Curly D)James Hoban
2. The regions in Ireland where Irish is still spoken as the first language of the community are known as what? A)Gaeltachts B)The Pale C)Fainnes D)None of the above
3. What word meaning small fragments is a direct transliteration of the equivalent Irish word? A)Sherds B)Smithereens C)Flotsam D)Bits
4. What was the first country to recognize the Ireland's independence? A)England B)France C)The U.S. D)Australia
5. In an address to the Friendly Sons of St Patrick in New York City, who said: "there is no doubt in my mind that nothing could have been started until the Irish invented politics"? A)Thomas P. O'Neill B)Robert Kennedy C)Jacob Javits D)Lyndon B. Johnson
6. What famous work begins, "Soldiers are we, whose lives are pledged to Ireland"? A)The Irish Constitution B)The Proclamation of Independence C)The Irish National Anthem D)The Good Friday Accord
7. Who wrote the answer to #6 ? A)Padraig Pearse B)Peader Kearney C)Thomas Davis D)John Martin Feeney
8. Under Church law, until the early twentieth century, when was it forbidden to marry? A)During Lent b)Never C)After 12:00 noon D)On Sunday
9. What is Ireland's official color? A)Blue B)Orange C)White D)Green
10. Who is the only person ever to win both the Nobel Peace Prize and the Lenin Peace Prize ? A)Mairead Corrigan B)Sean McBride c)Connor O'Brien D)Lech Walesa

Answers in the next issue

(Perhaps one of our merchant members would consider offering a prize for the winner)

Irish Fest ...(from p 1.)

Saturday's festivities begin with Mass at St. Joseph's (9am), and the parade will follow at 11am. The Craft Show sponsored by the Manhattan Junior HS band Boosters will again be held at Anna McDonald Grade School from 9am until 3pm.

Manhattan's Central Park will be the focal point after the parade. The Manhattan Morigan's Ladies Rugby Football Club will play at 12:30 with a match featuring the Manhattan Shamrocks will be at 2:pm.

Starting at Noon on Saturday, the Kids Pavilion will host free games sponsored by the Lincoln-Way Area High School Rugby Clubs. If the weather is cooperative, inflatable rides will be available to kids in the park behind the main pavilion. In the Family Tent, Irish dancers and magicians will perform from noon to 4pm.

The Guinness Toast will be back, for the second year. The first round will be held Feb. 1 at Ebby George's Bar & Grill in Morris at 9:00pm; Feb. 8th at The Galway Tribes in Frankfort ; Feb. 15th (9pm) Chicago St. Pub in Joliet and Feb. 22nd (9pm) at Fritz's Saloon in Manhattan. The Final Four will offer their toasts on March 2nd at the Entertainment Tent at 8:00pm. The Championship toast will be March 3rd at the Bit-o-Blarney Pub at 9:30am.

So get your wits together, and compose a few lines. The finalists will give their toasts on Saturday evening in the entertainment tent. They will be introduced by last year's winner, Kevin Hegarty.

Although not finalized at press time, several musical groups have been booked for the event. The chairpersons have already booked both the Emerald Society and the Shannon Rovers pipe bands. Headlining on Friday this year will be a wildly popular group from Southern California, the **Young Dubliners**. You can be sure that they will join of Brendan Loughery, and The Larkin and Moran Brothers on Saturday as well.

The entertainment tent will be open from 6-10 on Friday night , and from noon till 10:00 on Saturday. Please plan on attending the 13th Annual Manhattan Irish Fest on March 2nd & 3rd in Downtown Manhattan Illinois. Check the website ManhattanIrish-Fest.com for up to the minute details.

Irish Activities

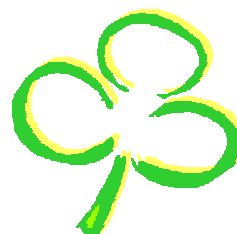
Don't we know that St Patrick's day is just around the corner. Here is just a partial listing of events going on in Northern Illinois.

IAS- CW — Festival of faith. Plans are underway for our Annual mass, to be held at St Patrick's church in Joliet. The membership will be contacted separately when details are finalized. It will be sometime during the week of March 13-16.

South Side Irish Parade — March 11, 2007 Runs from 103rd St south to 115th St along Western Avenue in Chicago.

Downtown Irish Parade — March 17, 2007 The Parade begins at noon, and proceeds north along Columbus Drive. Be sure to see Brendan Loughrey on a float, and catch him playing in the grand Ballroom at Navy Pier afterwards

Naperville Irish Parade. Saturday March 17 2007. Downtown Naperville. 10:00 step off.



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