

# the celtic connection

ISSUE 24 VOLUME 2

Proudly Serving Celts in North America Since 1991

FEBRUARY 2015



ARTWORK BY: Nataša Ilincic, artist and illustrator.

## 'With a heavier back....comes a lighter spirit'

This month's cover artwork is by artist Nataša Ilincic. She was inspired after a visit to Wales last year where she worked on an organic farm near Llanidloes, experiencing rural life, sleeping in a barn, tending to animals and wandering through the hills nearby. [For more about the artist, see page 2]

### WIN FREE TICKETS

Win free tickets to **Festival du Bois** Mackin Park, Coquitlam, starting February 26 (see page 4 for details). Entry by February 19. Mark your entry: Festival du Bois.

Win tickets to **CelticFest**, to **A Tribute to the Pogues** at the Imperial, 319 Main Street, Vancouver on March 7 (see page 6 for details). Entry by February 26. Mark your entry: Pogues.

Enter to win a pair (2 tickets) to see **Celtic Thunder** at Abbotsford Centre, Abbotsford on March 10; or in Edmonton at Enmax Hall, Winspear Centre on March 16; or at Calgary on March 18 at Jack Singer Concert Hall (see page 15 for details). Entry by: February 26. Only one entry per location. Mark your entry: Celtic Thunder & the city.

Win a pair (2 tickets) to see **The Irish Rovers** at the Massey Theatre, New Westminster on March 13 (see page 2 for details). Entry by February 26. Mark your entry: Rovers

Win tickets to **CelticFest Ceilidh** at the Imperial, 319 Main Street, Vancouver on March 14 (see page 6 for details). Entry by February 26. Mark your entry: Ceilidh

Entries by e-mail only. Mark the name of the event on your entry, including your name and daytime telephone number. (Only one entry per person.) Send to: cbutler@telus.net.

**NORTHERN IRELAND PARTIES AGREE ON A £2 BILLION DEAL TO SECURE POWER-SHARING**  
SEE PAGE 23

**CATHRYN AND DANNY QUINN ARE THIS YEAR'S HONORARY GRAND MARSHALS OF SEATTLE'S ST. PATRICK'S DAY PARADE ON MARCH 14. FOR FULL DETAILS, SEE PAGES 24 & 25**



WELSH schoolchildren wave the red dragon – the official national flag of Wales. On March 1 Welsh around the world celebrate the feast day of Saint David, the patron saint of Wales. [To learn more, see pages 2 & 8]



Are you ready for CelticFest Vancouver? Twelve fun-filled days of Celtic entertainment from March 6-17. Check out the full line-up on page 6.



SEVENTY-FIVE years since his "finest hour" in leading the fight against fascism in the Second World War, Winston Churchill is remembered as "a great leader and a great Briton" at events to mark 50 years since the former prime minister's State funeral. [See page 11]



CANADA'S new Ambassador to Ireland Kevin Vickers presented his credentials to President Higgins at Áras an Uachtaráin on January 21. His reputation at home was elevated to hero status for his role in stopping a gunman inside Canada's parliament on October 22. [See page 21]

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# Spring Arrives in Dark Times

**T**HE Celtic spring arrived at twilight on Imbolg, February 1. Yet the caul of winter holds fast.

As ever, this column is prepared prior to publication. As I write this, my heart grieves from the tragic news of the death of yet another victim in the strife-ridden Middle East.

Kenji Goto, a 47-year old journalist and family man lost his life in the unrelenting savagery that has gripped our world.

From news reports, we hear Mr. Goto travelled willingly to Syria to try and win the freedom of a countryman. Both men were mercilessly beheaded.

I will not pretend to be adequately informed on the politics of the day, or that region. Like many, I struggle to keep head and household above water and get through each day. But the deepening cruelty between humans, and its broadening reach, cannot be ignored.

Last night I attended a local school program. Talented students sang, played musical instruments and danced.

How many, I wondered, will close their eyes on this world as a result of the personal or impersonal violence that has bullied itself into local and national headlines?

Our society is woefully inured to violence. We accept it with grief, then statistics and move on. What else is to be done? I have no answers.

But the creeping bloodstain takes its toll. As minds and hearts toughen to the inevitability of terrorist and other acts of violence, the energy of evil plants itself where it never should grow.

By CYNTHIA WALLENTINE



**KENJI GOTO** was a man who dreamed of worldwide peace and fought for it without guns. Let's remember him as a hero of the free world and not as a victim of IS.

*"Engage our world, instead of killing it."*

The minds and lives of children are poisoned by acts and images they are too young to bear.

The paths and pursuits of adults are ruthlessly terminated when they happen into the wrong place at the wrong time – whether it is a war-torn country, a sports event, a café or a public building.

Violence is endemic to the human race. We are an often cruel and historically violent species.

Time cannot be turned back. On an increasingly heated planet, tempers flare and life gets cheaper every year.

Perhaps every generation decries the worsening brutality of its times. Violence begets violence.

Yet in that violence, in the lives snuffed out, come stories of men and women who were where they were because they were trying to help.

Ordinary people became aid workers, others tried to give voice to those without.

A journalist guessed what was ahead – and still chose to cross the line to save another. He lost his life but not in vain.

Mr. Goto was an ordinary man with extraordinary compassion and courage.

On a planet convulsed in pain, Mr. Goto tried to expose and improve the lot of those who suffer, particularly children.

In pursuing his personal mandate, he met an untimely and tragic death.

In the small and large moments of every day, and every life, we all make choices. Mr. Goto paid the ultimate price for his choice of compassion.

He will be missed by those who love him, and those who never knew him. The world is diminished.

But Mr. Goto tried. He acted for his own, undoubtedly complex, reasons.

Precious blood seeps into the ground where he fell, giving strength to those who would follow their heart, aspire to courage and walk the thin line between life and death to try and save a fellow man, woman or child.

Throughout history, humans have tried and failed in the darkest of times. They become our saints, our heroes, our legends.

The good earth is stained with their blood and their courage is metabolized into our own.

Take the small step – or the big one – to help someone or something today.

Hold a door open, make a contribution, volunteer some time.

Say a kind word, recognize the equal humanity of the downtrodden, have courage and try to nourish the seeds planted by those who sacrifice for higher aims.

Engage our world, instead of killing it.

In coming seasons, be someone who tries, even if you fail. It matters.

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## ABOUT OUR COVER ARTIST

Nataša Ilincic is an artist and illustrator based in Italy. Born in Sarajevo (BiH), she has been living in northeast Italy since she was two years old. After graduating in classical studies she has studied archaeology. She devotes her spare time to art, occasionally creating art on commission for private clients. For more information about her work, see her blog at: <http://natasailincic.blogspot.it>, or visit her Facebook page at: <https://www.facebook.com/natasa.ilincic.art>.



## St. David: Patron Saint of Wales

*"Be joyful and keep your faith and your creed. Do the little things that you have seen me do and heard about. I will walk the path that our fathers have trod before us."*

– St. David, Patron Saint of Wales (D. 569)

Saint David's Day (Welsh: Dydd Gwyl Dewi,) is the feast day of Saint David, the patron saint of Wales, and falls on 1 March each year. The first day of March was chosen in remembrance of the death of Saint David. Tradition holds that he died on that day in 569. The date was declared a national day of celebration within Wales in the 18th century.

David was the son of King Sant of South Wales and Saint Non. He was ordained a priest and studied under Saint Paulinus and was involved in missionary work and opened many monasteries.

In the Sixth Century, he founded a monastery and church at Glyn Rhosyn (Rose Vale) on the banks of the River Alun.

David's fame as a teacher and ascetic spread throughout the Celtic world. The monastic brotherhood he founded was very strict – besides praying and celebrating masses, they cultivated the land and carried out many crafts, including beekeeping, in order to feed themselves and the many pilgrims and travellers who needed lodgings. They also fed and clothed the poor and needy.

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# Play inspired by real-life dramas of new Irish in Vancouver

By CATHOLINE BUTLER  
VANCOUVER – My grandmother always maintained that after the long winter our bodies need a tonic.

Cork-born Michael Patric is just the man to provide that spring tonic with his comedic one-man show entitled *Tomorrow's Purple Fat Man...* an evening of utter madness and hilarious laughter.

The show is about 'Finbar Flatley', an Irish immigrant in Vancouver, and his eccentric world.

Finbar is intolerant of other humans and his challenges are more unusual than most. Stuck in a "shithole apartment," he is unemployed, has no luck with women, drinks too much, has a bizarre sleepwalking problem, and is obsessed with hurling.

He regrets not realizing his dreams, so he acts them out by turning his living room into a packed Croke Park, a confessional, a television studio, and a political podium.

All of Finbar's fantasies go awry on one particular disastrous Sunday afternoon when he plays out a range of dreams and scenarios with a host of crazy characters.



CORK-BORN Michael Patric created the character 'Finbar Flatley', a new Irish immigrant in Vancouver, and he describes Finbar's eccentric world in his one-man show.

Michael Patric is a Vancouver-based Irish actor. He has worked in theatre, film, TV, animation and radio.

He trained at Dublin's Gaiety School of Acting after which he worked on many Irish theatre productions such as *The Field* at the Gaiety Theatre, *Shadow of a Gunman* at the Lyric Theatre in Belfast, and *The Playboy of the Western World* at the Everyman Palace to name a few.

Patric has appeared on television shows and films such as *The Tudors*, *The Running Mate*, *Supernatural*, and

many more. He is also an accomplished voice artist, voicing several different characters on Lego/ Cartoon Network's *Legends of Chima*.

Having spent the past six years in Vancouver, Michael was inspired by the stories of some of the many new Irish people arriving in Vancouver.

Their search for work and a better life, the difficulties of adapting to new cultures, loneliness and isolation....and eventually feeling at home in a new city.

Based on this inspiration, Patric founded Green Maple Productions in December 2014 with his Canadian friends Ryan Robbins, Tom Stevens, and Jessie Fraser.

*Tomorrow's Purple Fat Man* will be Green Maple's first production and has been written and performed by Michael Patric.

Michael said, "This one-man comedy that I am doing in March will hopefully appeal to a wide audience but will be especially appealing and entertaining for the ever increasing Irish community in Vancouver."

*Tomorrow's Purple Fat Man* will be performed at Studio 16, Vancouver, from March 1 to 5. Tickets on sale at: brownpapertickets.com or call 1-800-838-3006.

## 2015 Western Canada Rose

Do you want to be the next Irish Rose?



The Rose of Tralee International Festival (August 14-18, 2015) is one of Ireland's largest and longest running festivals, celebrating 56 years in 2015. The heart of the festival is the selection of the Rose of Tralee which brings young women of Irish descent from around the world to County Kerry, Ireland for a global celebration of Irish culture.

The qualities of a Rose are defined by the words of William Mulholland's song "The Rose of Tralee".

A Rose reflects the intelligence, compassion and independence of modern Irish women. She represents the collective aspirations, social responsibilities and ambitions of young women from a variety of communities and backgrounds, united by their desire to celebrate their Irish heritage.

To apply to be a Western Canada Rose, you must complete a Rose application form that includes the following eligibility criteria:

- a) Female, 18 years of age and not older than 28;
- b) Unmarried;
- c) Of Irish birth or ancestry and must be able to verify Irish ancestry, if required;
- d) Has not represented any Centre at the National or International level of this event;
- e) Must have been living in the Western Region of Canada for a minimum of one year and agree that if selected as a Rose Ambassador that you remain a resident in the Western Region for the following 12 months.

Get your Rose application

Email: westerncanadarose@gmail.com  
Phone: 780-918-6331 (Moira Quirke)

Application deadline is March 22, 2015

The Western Canada Rose Selection

March 28, 2015

Irish Sports & Social Society  
12546-126 Street, Edmonton, AB T5L 0X3



# 'A Hooley for The Connection'

**A Day-Long Fun-Filled Pre-St. Pat's Warm-up**

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**1 PM - 11 PM**

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So what's a Hooley you ask? For generations, the highlight of Irish social life was the Hooley. Music, dance, song, good conversation and merriment flowed freely as described in the Percy French song, "There's a Hooley on in Hammigan's House Tonight."

We hope you'll join us to help support The Celtic Connection newspaper -- the heartbeat of the local Celtic community for nearly 25 years.

**DON'T MISS THIS GREAT WARM-UP EVENT TO ST. PATRICK'S DAY**

THE NORTH-SHORE IRISH ST. PATRICK'S DAY CELEBRATION

- LIVE MUSIC BY JIMMY COLE & THE ROGUES AND TINKERS
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## Rogue Folk Club

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www.roguefolk.com

**Saturday, February 7**  
Canada's leading folk songwriter  
**James KEELAGHAN**

**Friday, February 13**  
Hot trad. quartet from Quebec  
**Le VENT du NORD**

**Sunday, February 15**  
String quartet plays Celtic & more.  
The #1 Instrumental band of 2014  
**The FRETLESS**

**Wednesday, February 25**  
Hot double bill of fab songwriters  
**Shari ULRICH plus**  
**Karen SAVOCA &**  
**Pete HEITZMAN**

**Friday, February 27 &**  
**Saturday, February 28**  
Remarkable Canadian Folk /  
Country songwriter w/band  
**Fred EAGLESMITH**

**Friday, March 6**  
Ontario singer @ CBC Studio 700  
**Craig CARDIFF**

**Sunday, March 8**  
Brazilian Roots meets Bluegrass!  
**MATUTO**

**Friday, March 13**  
Canada's #1 Musical Comedy Trio  
with guest fiddler Anne Lindsay  
**Arrogant Worms**

St. James Hall (3214 West 10th Ave.)  
Tickets & Info (604) 736-3022

## If it's Celtic music you want..... it's all here this spring

**V**ANCOUVER – These are exciting times for lovers of Celtic music in the Lower Mainland – and beyond.

The end of February marks the beginning of acoustic music festival season with **Festival du Bois** in Maillardville, Coquitlam, and a couple of weeks later, **CelticFest Vancouver** hits Granville Street with a plethora of concerts and workshops and, of course, the **St. Patrick's Day Parade** on Sunday, March 15.

But you don't have to wait that long to get your Celtic music fix!

The Celts have certainly left an indelible mark on Canada, from coast to coast, and **The Rogue Folk Club** will be celebrating some of that legacy this month.

Quebec quartet **Le Vent Du Nord** combine trad. tunes from La Belle Province with "crooked" tunes incorporating Irish and Scottish influences.

They also compose songs in the traditional style but with a modern twist which makes their music appeal to audiences young and old, French, English, and pan-Canadian.

They are hugely popular in Europe as well. They play **St. James Hall** on Friday, February 13.

Two days later **The Fretless** – the band voted "Canada's Instrumental Act of 2014" in the Canadian Folk Music Awards last November – comes to The Rogue.

This scintillating string quartet combines trad. tunes from Scotland, Ireland, Cape Breton and Quebec with original compositions.

Led by Vancouver Island fiddlers **Ivonne Hernandez** and **Trent Freeman**, The Fretless have released two fine albums to date and put on a superb show the last time they played here.

If you love the music of **Alasdair Fraser** and **Natalie Haas** then you'll definitely love The Fretless too!

**Lunasa** have earned the epithet "Ireland's #1 Instrumental Band" with 15 years and nine albums of incredible traditional music.

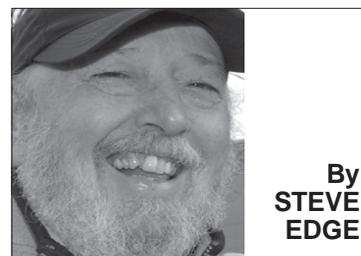
Kevin Crawford (flute,) Sean Smyth (fiddle,) Cillian Vallely (uilleann pipes,) Ed Boyd (guitar,) and Trevor Hutchinson (bass) make such richly-textured, exhilarating music that you barely notice that they don't sing.

They don't need to.

Their instruments are amongst the most eloquent to be found on the scene, and Crawford's irrepressible humour keeps the show flowing along very nicely.

They make a rare visit to these parts on Thursday, February 26 at the **BlueShore Financial Centre** at Capilano University.

Book your tickets at (604) 990-7810 or [www.capilanou.ca/blueshorefinancialcentre](http://www.capilanou.ca/blueshorefinancialcentre).



By  
**STEVE  
EDGE**

**Festival du Bois** (February 26 - March 1) features **La Bal a L'Huile** (Quebec's **Yves Lambert & co**), PEI's **Lennie Gallant**, and BC fiddler extraordinaire **Jocelyn Pettit** amongst others.

There is great Quebecois / French food, ranging from crepes to poutine and Sunday Gospel Brunch, plus workshops, kids' activities and much more. [www.festivaldubois.ca](http://www.festivaldubois.ca).

**CelticFest Vancouver** opens on Friday, March 6 with **Alan Doyle (Great Big Sea)** at **The Vogue**.

There are sessions and performances throughout the week, plus a whiskey tasting and many participatory music workshops.

The Celtic Village takes over Granville Street on March 14 and 15, and there's a Ceilidh on the 14<sup>th</sup> with **The Paperboys**, and **Mark Sullivan & Andy Hillhouse** and co.

Cape Breton's **Kimberley Fraser & Troy MacGillivray** and the amazing fiddling / dancing / singing sprite **April Verch** will also perform at the festival this year. Full details on [www.celticfestvancouver.com](http://www.celticfestvancouver.com).

If you're still looking for more traditional Irish music after that, fear not!

Donegal quintet **Altan** play North Vancouver's Centennial Theatre on Thursday, March 19 and sensational young Limerick quintet **Goitse** play **St. James Hall** on Sunday, March 22.

For over 30 years now, **Mairead Ni Mhaonaigh** has led Altan with her silky bowing skills and gorgeous vocals.

We are delighted to report that Altan will release *The Widening Gyre*, their thirteenth album, on February 24 on Compass Records.

It's an exploration of the musical connection between Ireland and Appalachia and was recorded in Nashville, with guest appearances by **Alison Brown**, **Bruce Molsky**, **Tim O'Brien**, **Darol Anger**, **Sam Bush**, **Jerry Douglas** and more!

Since their last concert in town (1999), which was the last Rogue show, they have made just the one line-up change: **Martin Tourish** replacing **Dermot Byrne** on accordion. Mairead sings most of the songs and doubles up on fiddle with **Ciaran Tourish**.

**Daithi Sproule** plays guitar and adds vocals, and **Ciaran Curran** plays bouzouki to add even more drive to the rhythm section.

This is a really great band; do your ears and feet a favour and get your tickets while you can!

They are on sale at the **Centennial Theatre** Box Office (2300 Lonsdale), or by phone at (604) 984-4484 or online on [www.centennialtheatre.com](http://www.centennialtheatre.com), Prussin Music, 3607 West Broadway, (604) 736-3036 also has tickets available, and

you can purchase them at Rogue Folk Club events, too.

Forged in the white-hot creative crucible of Limerick University's Irish World Academy of Music and Dance, **Goitse** have graduated with a musical maturity worthy of the greatest.

They have made a name for themselves as one of the most sought after bands amongst connoisseurs of Irish traditional music across the globe, with their performances gaining notoriety across four continents.

Having won feverish critical plaudits for their **Dónal Lunny**-produced second album *Transformed*, the band has skyrocketed to the forefront of the traditional Irish music scene.

They come to western Canada for the first time, hot on the heels of their new CD, *Tall Tales & Misadventures*.

Their distinctive sound lies in the quality of their own compositions interspersed with traditional tunes from Ireland and abroad.

Laying the foundations for the music are World and All-Ireland bodhrán champion **Colm Phelan** and **Conal O'Kane**, who is fast making a name for himself as one of the finest guitarists of this generation.

The gripping rhythm section sets a breathtaking pace for the music while the sweet, charismatic voice of **Aine McGeeney** draws audiences into the music.

When not singing, Aine's energetic style of fiddle playing is complimented by multi-award-winning banjo and mandolin virtuoso **James Harvey**.

His ability to transcend genres, combined with his unparalleled technical ability is a joy to behold. Bridging the gap between melody and accompaniment is the piano and piano accordionist, **Tadhg Ó Meachair**.

The Dublin native is renowned for his unique approach to bass work and accompaniment, while also having picked up national awards for his melody playing.

Lace up your dancing shoes and get ready for a night of wonderful music and fast paced fun with **Goitse** on Sunday, March 22 at **St. James Hall** in Kitsilano.

After I'd submitted my *Year's Best* for the last issue of *The Celtic Connection* I realised I'd missed mention of the concert by **The Gloaming** at The Chan Centre in November.

What an experience that was! **Martin Hayes & Dennis Cahill** wove their magic (and you can catch the duo at **The Rogue** on Sunday, May 3, by the way!) and **Iarla O'Lionaird** sang beautifully.

**Caoimhin O'Rhailligh** added hardanger fiddle harmonies to the mix and **Thomas Barrett** played piano with equal parts monastic solemnity and youthful exuberance.

I hope they come back again soon. Meanwhile, buy their eponymous album and wallow in this glorious approach to Irish music!

You can hear a lot of this music on my radio show, *The Edge On Folk*, every Saturday from 8 AM to noon on CiTR FM 101.9 and [www.citr.ca](http://www.citr.ca).

[Continued next page]

**Celtic in A Twist** 

Canada's Contemporary Celtic Radio

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LUNASA have earned the epithet "Ireland's #1 Instrumental Band" with 15 years and nine albums of incredible traditional music. They will play the BlueShore Financial Centre at Capilano University on Thursday, February 26.

[Continued from previous page] Nord on February 13, Fred Eaglesmith on February 27 & 28, Arrogant Worms on March 13, look like selling out soon, and Buffy Sainte-Marie at Capilano University on April 30 is very close to sold out already!

For Rogue Folk Club concert information visit [www.roguefolk.bc.ca](http://www.roguefolk.bc.ca).

[N.B. Upcoming shows by Le Vent du

## Upcoming Van Eire Feis

VANCOUVER – The Van Eire Traditional Irish Dance Association is a non-profit organization made up of representatives from local Irish dance schools in Vancouver and the Lower Mainland.

The goal is to offer the opportunities of competition to local traditional Irish dancers. Van Eire feis also promotes Irish art and music by offering competitive categories in these cultural activities.

This year's feis will take place at North Surrey Secondary School, 15945 96 Avenue, Surrey, BC, on February 28 and March 1, 2015. Registration is now open at [www.feisworx.com](http://www.feisworx.com).

### TOP 10 CELTIC HITS FOR FEBRUARY

*Celt In A Twist* is local contemporary Celtic radio heard weekly on AM 1470, CJVB in Vancouver.  
[www.worldbeatcanada.com](http://www.worldbeatcanada.com).

The following is the *Celt In A Twist* Contemporary Celtic Top Ten:

1. *The Hunger & The Fight* by The Mahones - *The Hunger & The Fight (Part 1)* on Whiskey Devil Records.
2. *Length of Space* by Kila - *Suas Sios* on Kila Records.
3. *The Ferryman* by Basco & DR Big Bad - *Live at DR Byen* on Go! Danish.
4. *Leaving of Liverpool* by Homeland - *That Show* on Independent.
5. *Chasse-Galerie* by MAZ - *Chasse Gallerie* on Independent.
6. *Nunca Jamas* by The Paperboys - *At Peace With One's Ghosts* on Independent.
7. *Lime Juice Tub* by Kamerunga - *Terra Australia* on ABC Music.
8. *Loch Lomond* by Firkin - *Finger in the Pie* on Pump Jump Records.
9. *Liliviau* by 9Bach - *Tincian* - on Real World.
10. *Chasin' A Rainbow* by Railroad Earth - *Last of the Outlaws* on Black Bear Records.

**Celt In A Twist Pick Of The Month:**  
Kila - *Suas Sios* - (Kila Records)

## 'The hottest group in the Celtic realm'

VANCOUVER – Altan – dubbed “the hottest group in the Celtic realm” by the *Boston Globe*– brings its brilliant musicianship and lively spirit to North Vancouver’s Centennial Theatre, just in time for St. Patrick’s Day week, Thursday, March 19 at 8 PM.

Hosted by the presenters of CeltFest Vancouver Island, Celtic Performing Arts, in partnership with the Rogue Folk Club, Altan famously masters every aspect of the genre, from stirring old Irish songs to rambunctious jigs and reels that won’t leave a still foot in the house.

This special event, marking CeltFest’s 15<sup>th</sup> year and its first co-production with Rogue Folk, adds guest artists and CeltFest dancers to the already heady mix.

Hailing from Ireland’s County Donegal, Altan – whose name means “stream” – has been together for almost 30 years, and has sold more than a million albums.

Since 1987, Mairéad Ní Mhaonaigh, who sings, plays the fiddle and founded the band with her late husband, Frankie Kennedy, has led Altan all over North



DIRECT from Donegal, Altan play N. Vancouver on March 19.

America, Europe and Japan.

In recent years, the group has experimented with integrating orchestral arrangements into its most popular pieces.

In 2010, Altan celebrated its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary with a symphonic best-of album release and a tour of Europe with the RTE Concert Orchestra.

It’s also worked with such artists as The Chieftains, Dolly Parton, Alison Krauss, Enya and Bonnie Raitt.

Between 1989 and 1999, Altan played Vancouver’s Rogue Folk Club seven times, so its return is eagerly anticipated.

### Rogue Folk Club

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[www.roguefolk.com](http://www.roguefolk.com)

**altan**

The return of Donegal's most celebrated trad. band. Their first gig here for years! And they have a hot new CD, recorded in Nashville. Don't miss this very special show!

**Sunday, March 22**  
Brilliant young trad. quintet from Limerick make their Rogue debut

**GOITSE**  
St. James Hall (3214 West 10th)

**Thursday, March 19, 8pm**

"The Hottest Group in the Celtic Realm"

**Centennial Theatre, 2300 Lonsdale Ave, N. Van**  
Tickets & Info (604) 984-4484

## CELTICFEST VANCOUVER

### MARCH 6-17

**ON SALE NOW!**

**ALAN DOYLE**  
Friday, March 6  
Vogue Theatre  
Presented by Live Nation & CelticFest Vancouver

**A TRIBUTE TO THE POGUES**  
With C.R. Avery, Dustin Bental, Pat Chessell, Babe Gurr, Rockland Moran, Shane's Teeth, Vagabonds, Natalye Vivian (Whiskey Jane), & The Whiskeydicks  
MC: Aaron Chapman (The Town Pants)  
Saturday, March 7 Imperial

**DELHI 2 DUBLIN**  
with guests Troy MacGillivray & Kimberly Fraser  
Sunday, March 15 Imperial

**VANCOUVER WELSH MEN'S CHOIR**  
with special guests De Danaan Irish Dancers  
Friday, March 13 Christ Church Cathedral

**THE WEIR**  
AN IRISH PLAY  
March 7, 8, 11, 12, 14

**THE BELMONT**  
WHISKY TASTINGS  
Wednesday March 11

**CELTICFEST CEILIDH**  
With The Paperboys, Fásta, Mark Sullivan & Andy Hillhouse  
Saturday, March 14 Imperial

**APRIL VERCH**  
with special guests Elsay  
Monday, March 16 Annex

**St. Patrick's Day Parade** Sunday, March 15, 11am

**Celtic Village** March 14 and 15

Program guides at selected Starbucks

[celticfestvancouver.com](http://celticfestvancouver.com)

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# CelticFest Vancouver

## 12 full days of Celtic fun

VANCOUVER – CelticFest Vancouver organizers have announced the dates and events lined up for the 11<sup>th</sup> Annual CelticFest Vancouver in 2015.

From March 6-17, concert venues, pubs, clubs and city streets will come alive with the sights, sounds, and vibrant spirit of Celtic culture.

An expanded festival promises 12 event-filled days of music, dance, family fun, spectacle and discovery for folks of all ages and backgrounds.

Western Canada's largest Celtic celebration offers the best of traditional and contemporary Celtic culture in all its diversity, and vitality – and everyone is invited!

"We're looking forward to welcoming people from all around the region to our eleventh festival," says festival director, Nicole Sirockman.

"Festival programmer, Tom Landa, a leading figure on the Celtic and music scene who has led The Paperboys to international fame, is hard at work in his new job at CelticFest with some great plans for 2015."

For full information and to purchase tickets for all events, visit: [www.celticfestvancouver.com](http://www.celticfestvancouver.com).

### TICKETED EVENTS

The festival's schedule of ticketed events is a 'must-see' list of music, tastings, and other great entertainment.

#### ALAN DOYLE – MARCH 6 AT 8 PM

**VOGUE THEATRE, 918 GRANVILLE STREET**  
The festival kicks off with a bang, as Live Nation and CelticFest Vancouver present Alan Doyle in concert.

Best-known as the lead singer for Newfoundland's beloved Great Big Sea, Doyle released his second solo album, *So Let's Go*, on January 20 and will rock the Vogue as part of his multi-date North American tour.

#### A TRIBUTE TO THE POGUES – MARCH 7 AT 9 PM

**THE IMPERIAL, 319 MAIN STREET**  
A Tribute to the Pogues is a celebration of this iconic band's music. Shane MacGowan and The Pogues have had a massive impact on the music scene for 30 years.

Their songs have been covered by hundreds of artists worldwide, and this evening the tradition continues, with some of Vancouver's finest musicians performing many of this revered band's best-known songs.

Featuring: C.R. Avery, Dustin Bentall, MC: Aaron Chapman (The Town Pants), Pat Chessell, Babe Gurr, Rockland Moran, Natalye Vivian (Whiskey Jane), Shane's Teeth, Vagabonds, and The Whiskeydicks.

#### THE WEIR – MARCH 7, 8, 11, 12, 14, 15

FOR TIMES AND LOCATIONS  
SEE WEBSITE

Standing Room Only Theatre presents the Canadian west coast premiere of Conor McPherson's award-winning Irish play *The Weir* in two fully functioning Celtic pubs (Billy Bishop Legion on Laburnam Street and at 670 Smithe Street – the former Ceili's Downtown) as well as one performance at the Elks Lodge, promising an immediate, unique

and immersive theatrical experience you don't want to miss.

#### THE BELMONT WHISKY TASTINGS – MARCH 11

**THE BELMONT, 1006 GRANVILLE ST. @ NELSON ST. (BELOW DOOLIN'S) WHISKY 101 – 6:30 PM**  
**WHISKY FOR CONNOISSEURS – 8:30 PM**

There's weeknight fun to be had as well, as CelticFest presents The Belmont Whisky Tastings on Wednesday, March 11 at The Belmont (the new name for the refurbished Cellar).

It's a night for both aspiring and veteran whisky aficionados to come out and taste. The Introduction to Whisky 101 at 6:30 PM opens the doors to the spirit world for those seeking basic knowledge and insights.

Then, at 8:30 PM, true whisky enthusiasts have an opportunity to learn even more at the "For Connoisseurs" session.

#### VANCOUVER WELSH MEN'S CHOIR – MARCH 13 AT 7:30 PM

WITH SPECIAL GUESTS  
**DE DANAAN IRISH DANCERS**  
**CHRIST CHURCH CATHEDRAL, 690 BURRARD STREET**  
The Festival presents the glorious 100-voice Vancouver Welsh Men's Choir in concert, with De Danaan Irish Dancers opening.

Steeped in the rich Welsh vocal tradition, the Vancouver Welsh Men's Choir present a repertoire of folk songs, spirituals, show tunes and Canadiana in the stellar acoustics of Christ Church Cathedral.

Founded in 1981, the choir is now in its tenth season under the dynamic leadership of music director and well-known soloist Jonathan Quick, assisted by accompanist David Buchan.

#### CELTICFEST CEILIDH – MARCH 14 AT 8 PM

**THE IMPERIAL, 319 MAIN STREET**  
The CelticFest Ceilidh returns by popular demand on Saturday night, March 14.

Welcome to the beating heart of the festival – a reeling, rollicking good time and a lineup of Celtic gold.

The evening includes performances by the fabulous The Paperboys, Mark Sullivan and Andy Hillhouse, and Fásta. This rollicking, kick-up-your-heels night of music and dance sells out every year.

#### DELHI 2 DUBLIN – MARCH 15 AT 8 PM

WITH SPECIAL GUESTS **TROY MACGILLIVRAY & KIMBERLY FRASER**  
**THE IMPERIAL, 319 MAIN STREET**  
Delhi 2 Dublin was formed on the stage at CelticFest in 2006, and returns to deliver their electrifying brand of Celtic and world rhythms at The Imperial on Sunday night. Cape Breton's Troy MacGillivray and Kimberly Fraser open.

#### APRIL VERCH – MARCH 16 AT 8 PM

WITH SPECIAL GUESTS **ELSAY**  
**ANNEX, 825 SEYMOUR STREET, 2<sup>ND</sup> FLOOR**  
On St. Patrick's Day eve, Monday, March 16, brilliant songstress April Verch takes the stage at the Annex (Orpheum).  
This internationally touring Canadian fiddler, step dancer and singer-songwriter's star continues to rise, as her reputation as a gifted interpreter of traditional music continues to grow.

Elsay, a fiery young folk quartet steeped in the Celtic traditions of Scotland, Ireland, and Canada open the night.

### PARTICIPATING PUBS & RESTAURANTS

Participating pubs and restaurants: Doolin's Irish Pub, The Belmont, and Mahony & Sons (three locations) will offer near non-stop performances by musicians, bands and dancers throughout CelticFest, and up to and including St. Patrick's Day itself, Tuesday, March 17.

### FREE SHOWS AND EVENTS

In addition to an amazing range of ticketed shows and events, CelticFest 2015 continues its tradition of offering a variety of *free* events for everyone to enjoy.

On the weekend of March 14-15, the Celtic Village fills Granville Street between Robson and Nelson with music, dance, fun and frolic, food – and shopping, too!

This free weekend-long street fair features music from some of the hottest Celtic music groups around on Doolin's Stage on Granville Street.

Folks can hear fiery folk quartet, Elsay, ballads from Victoria's Knacker's Yard, the traditional Irish sounds of Crikey Mor, Cape Breton's Troy MacGillivray and Kimberly Fraser, West Coast Fiddlers, Sarah Anne Chisholm, and the Jocelyn Pettit Band.

Look for the captivating antics of street performers: The Green Man can be found delighting passersby in the Village.

Academie Duello will be back to showcase their amazing brand of sword fighting and look out for the Society for Creative Anachronism in their medieval costumes playing musical instruments, singing, spinning, or playing ancient board games.

Village visitors can shop at the Celtic Market for a vast array of Celtic treasures and the works of gifted artisans, and sample from a wide selection of food and fare.

Friends and families can gather and wander, soaking in that special Celtic feeling all weekend long.

Throughout the March 14-15 weekend, Tom Lee Music Hall on Granville Street hosts a series of fascinating (and, again, free) CelticFest Performances and Workshops.

Performances include: Royal Scottish Country Dance Society's Demonstration Team, O'Connor-O'Brien School of Irish Dance, Dylan Thomas 100 (1914-2014).

Workshops Include: Kalissa Landa Fiddle Workshop and Fiachra O'Regan Uilleann Pipes and Whistle Workshop.

### ST. PATRICK'S DAY PARADE

CelticFest's jewel, and most popular event, the 11<sup>th</sup> annual St. Patrick's Day Parade animates downtown Vancouver on Sunday March 15, starting at 11 AM.

The parade route flows along Howe to Georgia Street, drawing thousands of spectators, many decked out in their own take on the tradition, to cheer on a couple thousand lively parade participants: marching pipe and drum bands, Celtic music groups, acrobats, drill teams, Irish and Scottish youth dance groups, and more.

## The 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Celtic Person / Organization of the Year Award announced by CelticFest Vancouver

VANCOUVER – CelticFest Vancouver has announced that the recipient of the third annual Celtic Person / Organization of the Year Award is Maura De Freitas, publisher of *The Celtic Connection* newspaper.



MAURA DE FREITAS, publisher of *The Celtic Connection*.

The award will be presented at the concert at the Christ Church Cathedral on Friday, March 13 at 7:30 PM. The evening's musical lineup features Vancouver Welsh Men's Choir with special guests, De Danaan Irish Dancers.

The Celtic Person / Organization of the Year award recognizes outstanding contributions made to the local Celtic community and the community at large by both groups and individuals of Celtic heritage.

It was almost 25 years ago when Maura De Freitas, founding publisher and editor of *The Celtic Connection*, launched the newspaper along with her mother Catholine Butler in 1991 (recipient of the inaugural Award in 2013).

The vision was a vehicle to connect people of Celtic origins across western Canada and the U.S. Pacific Northwest.

At the time there was no communication between so many various groups who shared common roots and history, but who operated in isolation with no cross-cultural connections.

Maura's dream was to bring these groups together through the pages of a monthly newspaper which they called *The Celtic Connection*.

Since then, *The Celtic Connection* has become the voice of the Celts with news and information covering the Irish, the Scots, the Welsh and the English communities with over 35,000 readers across Canada and the United States.

The newspaper has evolved along with a changing technology with the launch of a new website last year and a growing following on social media on *The Celtic Connection* Facebook page.

In addition to the newspaper, Maura also established the Irish Benevolent

Society of B.C. in 1996 to meet the needs of Irish immigrants far from the support of home and family.

It was through calls to *The Celtic Connection* that it became evident there was a need to establish a fund to help the local Irish community in emergency situations.

Over the years, the Irish Benevolent Society of B.C. has responded to help numerous local families and individuals. So often when disaster strikes it is without warning and in situations where help has been needed, the Irish Benevolent Society of B.C. has been there.

The benevolent fund has received support from numerous local organizations, including the Irish Women's Network of B.C., the Vancouver Irish Sporting and Social Club, the Irish Heritage Society of Canada, the Western Canada Division of the Gaelic Athletic Association, An Irish Christmas Celebration, Blake Williams and The Jericho Sailing Club, and the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, along with generous individuals and businesses.

For over six years the Irish Benevolent Society of B.C. has also hosted Irish seniors' luncheons through the support of the Irish Emigrant Support Program with the Department of Foreign Affairs of the Government of Ireland. The society continues to work with the community to provide support to those in need.

De Freitas said, "it is very gratifying to see *The Celtic Connection* reach its current level of maturity as we approach a quarter century.

"In the early days we struggled passionately to ensure its survival. Throughout the years, *The Celtic Connection* has served the needs of the community and we have shared both their tears and their joy. We envision many more years of service and look forward to more adventures in publishing."

Tickets for the Friday, March 13, 11<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Concert at the Christ Church Cathedral are \$27/\$24 (advance), \$31/\$28 (door), and available at [www.celticfestvancouver.com](http://www.celticfestvancouver.com).



**Volunteers needed for St. Patrick's Parade**  
VANCOUVER – *The Celtic Connection* needs volunteers to help distribute newspapers all along the St. Patrick's Day Parade route in downtown Vancouver on Sunday, March 15. Please be advised that there is a lot of walking involved and comfortable walking shoes are suggested. For more details call Catholine Butler at (604) 434-3747 or e-mail: [cbutler@telus.net](mailto:cbutler@telus.net).

## Festival du Bois: Celtic Flavours with a French-Canadian Flair

COQUITLAM – Festival du Bois returns for its 26<sup>th</sup> year, with music, family entertainment and activities, food and more February 26 to March 1.

Mark your calendars for the weekend that bridges February and March, and plan to head out to Coquitlam's Mackin Park for some great music, delicious poutine and tortiere, and a lot of fun.

Musicians from across Canada and from right here at home drive the excitement in the Grand Chapiteau (Big Tent) and other heated tents across the site. There's lots to see, hear, and do at this unique, friendly, and affordable festival with a Francophone flair.

This year's musical lineup offers an incredible range of styles and talent. From the East Coast, **Lennie Gallant** is one of Canada's finest singer/songwriters, with one of the most resonant and evocative voices around.

Three amazing groups from Québec visit: **Les Chercheurs d'Or** play an eclectic, foot-stomping folk-country; **Lanaudière's Bardefou** perform goodtime music inspired by France, Scotland, and Ireland; and, back by popular demand, **Le Bal à l'huile's** all-male voices deliver harmonic kitchen-



**LENNIE GALLANT** from PEI is a Canadian singer-songwriter whose music crosses into folk, Celtic, rock and country musicé

party music faithful to Québec vocal traditions.

Joining them on the festival's stages are the popular **Charlotte Diamond, Locarno, Tanga, Jocelyn Pettit** and her band, **Alouest, Will Stroet**, Aboriginal Peoples' Choice award-winner **Wesley Hardisty's** unique blend of folk, Celtic and Métis music – and so much more.

Be sure to check out Longueuil region wood carver, **Michel Campeau**, as he

completes an eight-foot wood sculpture over the weekend, destined to become a permanent feature in Mackin Park.

Adult admission is only \$12 / day on Saturday, February 28 and Sunday, March 1, with discounts for students and seniors – with family and weekend passes available, as well. Children under five get in free.

Leading up to the main festival weekend, there are other special events planned, too.

On February 17, **Dîner en Plaid** is an evening of traditional French Canadian food, craft beer (the specially-brewed French Lumberjack Ale from Port Moody's Yellow Dog Brewing), and music from Alouest. The dress code? Plaid!

Artist **Leanne Christie's** "Theatre of Public Life" exhibit opens at Place des Arts in Coquitlam on February 19.

Rising Manitoban singer-songwriter **Genevieve Toupin** opens the festival on Thursday, February 26, and the **Fusion Gospel Choir** performs in a benefit concert with **Les Échos du Pacifique** on-site Friday night, February 27.

For full festival information and tickets, go to [www.festivaldubois.ca](http://www.festivaldubois.ca).

## The Weir: Award-winning play set in an Irish pub

VANCOUVER-based company Standing Room Only Theatre are producing Conor McPherson's award winning play *The Weir*, set in a pub in rural Ireland, in three site-specific venues from March 7-15.

The locations include the charming Billy Bishop's Legion (March 7, 8, and 14) and the eclectic Roadhouse Pub (March 11 and 12). They will both host the show as part of the Vancouver CelticFest 2015.

Another one-off performance is planned at the intimate Elks Lodge #431 (March 15) as part of the White Rock Irish Festival 2015.

Standing Room Only Theatre, who have the distinct honor of presenting the inaugural theatre production, are serving up this Irish play with a difference... and a few rounds of drinks.

"It's expected of a play to watch it from a distance and observe," says director Tracy-Lynn Chernaske, "but this can often make an audience feel disconnected. We wanted to flip expectation on its head and have the action happen in and around the spectators."

Standing Room Only enthusiastically invite the audience to have their drinks at the ready as they watch.

Assistant director Joe Hinks says that the show is aimed at attracting a wide range of audience members, not just those who regularly attend the theatre.

"We're trying to create a real pub experience here...we even have live Celtic music after the show!"

"We want everyone to be able to relate to and enjoy the show, and what's more relatable than adults sharing life, love



**THE WEIR** by Irish writer and director Conor McPherson first opened in London in 1997. Next month Standing Room Only Theatre in Vancouver will present the play in three separate venues from March 7-15.

and scary stories over a few beverages?"

The three venues, all intimate in nature and each charmingly unique, presents a rare challenge to the performers but it will be an exciting and intimate experience.

The talented cast consists of Eric O'Connor (Jack), Spenser Dunlop (Brendan), Michael Stewart (Finbar),

Nathan Kelly (Jim) and Keara Barnes (Valerie).

Standing Room Only want this inaugural show to be one that audiences really remember and to do that they invite them all, as the poster itself says; Sit Back, Sip a drink, Be immersed.

Tickets are \$17. To learn more and to purchase tickets, visit [www.standingroomonlytheatre.org](http://www.standingroomonlytheatre.org).

### Anne Enright announced as Ireland's first fiction laureate

DUBLIN – Ireland has long been known, and envied, for its public subsidy of the arts, literature in particular.

Numerous countries have their poet laureate. But a fiction laureate? The Arts Council of Ireland set a brave precedent last year when it invited nominations for the first ever post of this kind.

The 119 nominations were made from bookshops, libraries, arts organisations, book clubs and individual writers, with a total of 34 potential candidates.

The decision to select Anne Enright was unanimous.

As chair, Paul Muldoon, put it, Anne Enright's fiction has helped the Irish make sense of their lives for the past quarter century – and helped the rest of the world understand Ireland.

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# St. Dwynwen celebrated at the Cambrian Hall

**V**ANCOUVER – In what has become a tradition in recent years, the Vancouver Welsh Society celebrated St. Dwynwen's Day on Saturday evening, January 24 at the Cambrian Hall. The annual St. Dwynwen's Day is actually celebrated on January 25.

Today, St. Dwynwen is regarded in Wales as the patron saint of friendship and love, rivalling the popularity of St. Valentine.

Welsh schoolchildren are encouraged to celebrate the saint's day and St. Dwynwen's Day cards are popular.

Welsh Society president David Llewelyn Williams organized and presided over the event, presenting a varied and enjoyable evening's entertainment with individual contributions and much audience participation.

Audience members also enjoyed desserts and fresh fruit platters prepared by the society's social committee.

St. Dwynwen was a beautiful Celtic princess who exiled herself to Llanddwyn Island off the Anglesey coast after being thwarted in a passionate love affair.

At Llanddwyn Island she established a church and nunnery where she was joined by other heartbroken young lovers.

Over the centuries, the ruins of a chapel built later on the site and a nearby well have become a mecca for young lovers seeking assurance of their everlasting love.

The stark beauty of Llanddwyn Island was shown in a short video presented by David Llewelyn Williams, who also gave a fascinating account of the events in Dwynwen's life.

David followed this by distributing a St. Dwynwen's Day card to each member of the audience.

The love theme continued throughout the evening as Beti Darvel-Jones gave a spirited and funny recitation of *Old Tyme Dancing*, originally popularized by English comedy actress Joyce Grenfell.

There was also a limerick competition on a love theme and a table quiz on famous movies with the same theme.

Popular entertainer Sharon McInty-Birrell contributed several well-known love songs during the evening, while the audience also sang a selection of Welsh folk songs.

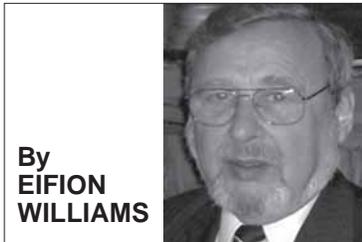
The Vancouver Welsh Society is now preparing for the St. David's Day Dinner on March 1.

Entertainment at this year's dinner will be provided by the Welsh folk trio *Tramor*, led by John Good, president of the Arizona Welsh society.

The trio wowed audiences at last summer's North American Festival of Wales in Minneapolis.

John Good is well known throughout the United States and in his native Wales as a talented Welsh piper, singer/songwriter, storyteller, composer and poet.

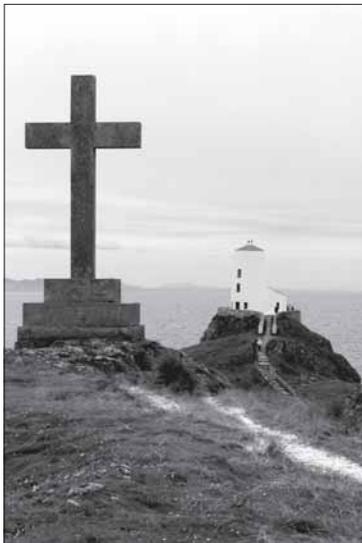
He has performed at several Celtic festivals and concerts, including the Chi-



By  
**EIFION  
WILLIAMS**



**DAVID LLEWELYN** Williams presented a short video on Llanddwyn Island and gave a fascinating account of the life of St. Dwynwen.



A VIEW over Llanddwyn Island off the Anglesey coast, popular with lovers.



**SHARON MCINTY-BIRRELL** entertained with several love songs at the St. Dwynwen's Day celebration.



**ARIZONA ENTERTAINER** John Good will be the guest performer at this year's St. David's dinner at the Cambrian Hall.

cago Celtic Fest, Sea Shanty Festival in San Diego and the Denver Highland Games.

Good was born into a Welsh-speaking family in Cwmafan, South Wales and immigrated to the United States in 1975, living and performing in Los Angeles and San Francisco before moving to Phoenix in 1989.

Good states that his goal is "to

strengthen a fledgling Welsh and Celtic cultural presence in North America by creating regional focal points, where American and Welsh/Celtic-born people with an interest in their heritage, culture and language would come to reconnect with their own living history."

Further information on the St. David's Day dinner will appear later on the Welsh Society's website at: [www.welshsociety.com](http://www.welshsociety.com).

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## 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of first Welsh settlement in Patagonia



A PROMINENT feature of the Chubut settlement was the number of chapels built throughout the valley to reflect the settlers' traditional commitment to their nonconformist religion.

By **EIFION WILLIAMS**

**T**his summer the Welsh community in the Chubut Valley of Patagonia will celebrate the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the arrival of the sailing ship *Mimosa* from Liverpool. The little ship carried 153 Welsh settlers.

The Welsh migrants sought to establish a Welsh colony in Patagonia where they could preserve the language and culture of their native land.

The migrants landed near what is today Puerto Madryn, where they found a harsh and inhospitable environment.

Shortly thereafter, they moved to the more hospitable Chubut river valley where they settled and proceeded to build agricultural communities that eventually prospered.

Over the years, more immigrants arrived from Wales as did some Welsh-Americans from the United States.

The settlers built a railway between the cities of Trelew and Puerto Madryn. They also built a major irrigation system which greatly improved the cultivation of crops such as wheat, thus greatly contributing to the success of the colony.

The Welsh settlers gradually expanded westwards to the foothills of the Andes and several new communities with Welsh names such as Gaiman, Trelew and Dolavon grew along the Chubut.

A prominent feature of the Chubut settlement was the number of chapels built throughout the valley to reflect the settlers' traditional commitment to their nonconformist religion.

The chapels became the focal centres of Welsh culture in the valley, continuing to foster traditional Welsh institutions such as the *eisteddfod* and *gymanfa ganu*.

It was also primarily in the chapels that

the history of the colony, including an annual Festival of the Landing (*Gwyl y Glaniad*) was generally celebrated.

The success of the Welsh colony and subsequent economic growth inevitably attracted more immigrants from Europe and other parts of Argentina.

However, the Welsh community managed to survive through the coordinated efforts of the Argentine Government and the Welsh Assembly to promote its distinctly Welsh heritage.

There are still strong links between Wales and the Welsh of Patagonia and a number of groups from Wales are planning to attend the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of The Landing throughout this year.

In recent years several Vancouver Welsh Society members have also visited *Y Wladfa*, as it is known in Welsh.

One Welsh Society member with a special interest in Patagonia is Victor Griffiths, who grew up in the Chubut Valley community of Gaiman.

He is descended from Welsh settlers who arrived in Patagonia from Wales in the 1870s.

Both his parents spoke Welsh. Victor now lives in Port Moody with his Buenos Aires-born wife Liliana and their two children.

Victor inherited some written records and artifacts from his ancestors, some of which give a vivid account of the difficulties encountered by the early Welsh settlers.

His great-uncle David Morgan Day, for example, wrote a detailed description of the Welsh colony's first 50 years.

"Every farm and every district could tell its own story, its own difficulties and its successes, especially during the first 50 years," wrote Day.

In his account he details the many problems faced by the Welsh settlers and their descendents, as well as their many achievements, which ultimately contributed to the Chubut Valley being transformed into one of the most fertile, productive areas in Argentina.

Since the voyage of the *Mimosa*, the story of the Welsh settlement in Patagonia has touched a chord among Welsh people everywhere.

Welsh migrants contributed much to the growth of Patagonia and became Argentine without losing their Welsh roots.

# Canada's first prime minister honoured with Sir John A's Great Canadian Kilt Skate

OTTAWA – Scottish pride and Canadian patriotism came together across Canada on Saturday, January 31.

To celebrate the bicentennial birthday of Sir John A. Macdonald, Canada's first prime minister, hearty Canadians in five cities across the country donned kilts – and headed outdoors.

Sir John A's Great Canadian Kilt Skate was originally the idea of the Scottish Society of Ottawa but this year kilt skates were also held in Montreal, Winnipeg, Saskatoon and Calgary, as well as Ottawa.

"Some of us have been marking Sir John A's birthday for years by getting out on the Rideau Canal Skateway in our kilts," says Don Cummer of the Scottish Society of Ottawa.

"For the bicentennial, we wanted to turn this into a bigger, public event. The next thing we knew, other cities wanted to join in."

In Ottawa, the kilt skate was held in partnership with Winterlude, and took place on the Rideau Canal Skateway with a concert of Scottish music at Confederation Park.



The St. Andrew's Society of Montreal hosted the kilt skate in that city at the Vieux Port de Montreal.

Winnipeggers held their kilt skate at The Forks, the frozen junction of the Red and Assiniboine rivers where the wind chill made it feel like -36 C.

John Perrin, president of the Scottish Heritage Council of Manitoba, said, "We're making a statement about how hearty we are as Canadians and we're saluting our Scottish heritage. And of course, it's one of the coldest days of the winter."

Saskatoon's kilt skate was held as a part of the city's annual PotashCorp WinterShines festival.

In Calgary, the kilt skate was organized by the Optimist Club at the Calgary Olympic Plaza where participants enjoyed free hot chocolate, Scottish entertainment and signed a John A. Macdonald birthday card.

The Great Canadian Kilt Skate launched a year-long celebration of the 200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the birth of Sir John A.

Macdonald was born on January 11, 1815, in Glasgow (Scotland), and died on June 6, 1891, in Ottawa, Ontario.

He came to Canada with his family as a boy and became Canada's first prime minister (Conservative Party of Canada).

Macdonald was the leading figure in the discussions and conferences, which resulted in the British North America Act and the birth of Canada as a nation on July 1, 1867.

Key achievements of his political career include the creation of the Canadian Pacific Railway from 1871 to 1885 and the creation of the Northwest Mounted Police in 1873.

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## A POSTCARD FROM LONDON

# 'Personally I'd like to vote for Angela Merkel

Blwyddyn Newydd Dda.  
Athbhliain faoi Mhaise  
Daoibh.

Bliadhna Mhath  
Ur. Happy New Year

LONDON – If you are sitting comfortably, then I shall begin with the weather. It is cold here.

Some friends from Niagra-on-the-Lake came to stay with us last week. When I enquired as to why they were wandering around in their underwear, they mentioned that perhaps the central heating was turned up a tad on the high side.

I commented that the outside temperature had fallen to three degrees. Apparently in the Toronto area the temperature had fallen to something that only penguins would enjoy and three degrees was warm enough to wear shorts and a tee shirt.

Whilst on the subject of clothing, Harris Tweed Hebrides, Johnnie Walker, and textile experts in Heriot – Watt University Edinburgh have collaborated to produce a range of Harris Tweed imbued with the aroma of Johnnie Walker Black Label whiskey.

The scent features “rich malt and dark chocolate tones with golden vanilla” designed by Angelos Bratis.

The fabric is grey with blue, pink and yellow highlights and has been launched in Berlin to be marketed in Germany, Greece and Belgium.

Donald Mackay, head of the finishing department at the Harris Tweed on the Isle of Lewis, said, “I have worked with aromas in the past, but they were only meant to withstand one dry clean.

“The process we have devised for Johnnie Walker means that this scent is layered into the fabric throughout the finishing process and is permanently imbued in the fabric.”

I don't see this catching on in the UK.

Picture a patriotic Scotsman buying a suit made from this tweed to support the industry.

He goes home to his wife to be accused of spending all day in the pub.

I can hear the words already: “You can't fool me, you positively reek of booze. What has the doctor told you about cutting back?”

“No honestly love, it's a special fabric designed to smell of whiskey.”

“Yeah pull the other one.”

If it does catch on then Savile Row tailors would have a whole new world to explore.

“What can we offer you today sir, a nice pinstripe blended with a gin and tonic, or what about a bold Irish tweed, carefully drenched with 15 pints of Guinness.

“Not your tippie sir? Then smell this one sir, a Prince of Wales check, oozing of a mature cask finished, fine Remy Martin champagne Cognac.”

Even more interesting could be cloth smelling of ladies perfume. That could cause some problems.

The political scene is hotting up with



By  
ELFAN  
JONES



ANGELA MERKEL has been Chancellor of Germany for 10 years.

less than a hundred lying days to go to the election.

Despite, or perhaps because of the media coverage, an enormous cloud of apathy covers the country.

As rival politicians do their utmost to protect their expense accounts, most of the opinion polls suggest that the result is impossible to predict.

The Conservative party is being hit by the popularity of UKIP and the Labour party could be badly affected in Scotland by the continuing rise of support for the Scottish Nationalist Party.

It would appear that the Liberal Democrats could lose most of their members

of parliament, the price for selling their soul to the devil by being part of the coalition government.

The battle lines between the Conservatives and Labour seem to be that the Conservatives are telling us that their economic policies are working, and Labour counter by arguing that only the wealthy are benefitting.

This sounds familiar. Back in the 1960s the then-Tory Prime Minister Harold Macmillan made a speech declaring that “you have never had it so good.” The retort from Labour, “I don't know, I've never had it.”

Personally, I would like to vote for Angela Merkel.

I have no idea what her policies are, but she seems to know what she's doing.

She has been Chancellor of Germany for 10 years, so must be doing something right and she is marginally more attractive than our lot.

On the home front, the good people who live in the county of Essex take a battering from comedians in the UK.

The “Essex” jokes normally concern the sexual antics of the young female population or the general standard of education there.

This week Super Pizza, a take away pizza company in Southend-on-Sea, Essex, has not helped their cause.

The company has sent out thousands of leaflets offering their customers a new, delicious topping featuring Baked Aborigine as a vegetarian option.

The flyer claimed that the 19-inch pizza at £10.99 was the best offer in town.

To the relief of the Aboriginal population of Essex this was a mistake as the menu should have read “Baked Aubergine” (eggplant).

New flyers have been issued and the company did not wish to comment.

All for now.  
Kindest regards,  
Elfan.

## 109-year-old Scottish woman reveals her secret to a long life

ABERDEEN – Celebrating her 109<sup>th</sup> birthday, Jessie Gallan, who is the oldest woman in Scotland, stunned care workers when they asked for tips on how to live to a ripe old age.

Jessie has never married and was born in a tiny two-room farm cottage in Aberdeenshire and left home at 13 to become a milkmaid.

She puts her old age down to avoiding men and also a daily helping of porridge each morning.

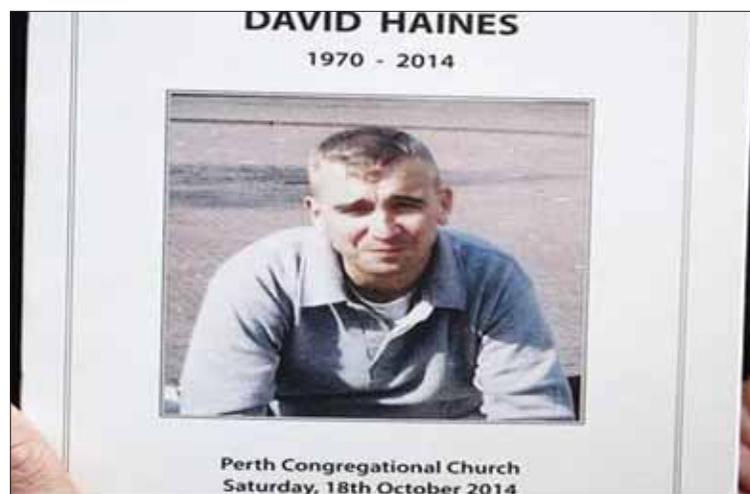
The spinster, who now lives in a care home in Aberdeen, said, “My secret to a long life has been staying away from men. They're just more trouble than they're worth.”

Jessie became Scotland's oldest woman following the death of Clare Dawson, of Glasgow, in June 2013 at the age of 109.



JESSIE GALLAN attributes her longevity to lots of porridge and staying away from men.

The oldest living person in the UK is Ethel Lang, 114, from Barnsley.



THE BROTHER of murdered aid worker David Haines said he is haunted by the look on his face in video released by Islamic State (IS) militants.

## Hostage's brother 'haunted' by face

PERTH, Scotland – The brother of murdered aid worker David Haines said he is haunted by the look on his face in a video released by Islamic State (IS) militants.

Haines was beheaded last September after being taken hostage in Syria in March 2013 while working for international relief agency Acted.

The 44-year-old father-of-two had been helping refugees in a camp near the Turkish border when he was snatched by militants.

Mike Haines said the family had to keep his brother's kidnap secret for 18 months, which they found very difficult.

His brother's name emerged in the public domain early in September after he was shown at the end of a video of journalist Steven Sotloff's murder.

In an interview broadcast on BBC Radio Scotland, Haines said he is haunted by the look on his brother's face.

He told the BBC, “That day when David appeared in the background, that day when we realised that David had been identified, my stomach hit the floor.

“The image on David's face when he was witnessing Steven's murder – it wasn't horror at what was approaching him, it was horror at what was happening to Steven.

“The look – no matter where you go, no matter how much you try and not see that image – is with me all the time.

In the deep, dark nights when I am not sleeping, I see that look on his face.”

The recording was released two weeks after a clip appeared online showing the beheading of another American journalist, James Foley.

A video showing David's death was broadcast on social media 10 days after the Sotloff video.

Haines said his brother and his family did not believe in paying ransoms.

“I have revisited every decision that was made and I would not change a single one because those decisions were made for the right reasons in the right way and that, no matter what we did, David's fate was sealed,” he said.

Born in Yorkshire, David Haines was brought up in the Perth area and attended the local academy before serving 12 years as an aircraft engineer with the RAF.

He later took up humanitarian work and assisted aid agencies in some of the world's worst trouble spots.

Mike Haines wants his brother to be remembered for how he lived rather than how he died.

He said, “His love for his daughters. His belief in community. His belief in humanity.

“There is no nobler role in life than helping your fellow man when he is down no matter what creed, religion, colour – David did that. So the work that he did, it stands for him.”

## Service marks end of Afghan combat mission

LONDON – A service of commemoration will be held at St. Paul's Cathedral in the presence of the Prince of Wales and Duchess of Cornwall on March 13 to mark the end of the combat mission in Afghanistan.

The service will be followed by a military parade of personnel who served in Afghanistan to pay tribute to those killed and injured during the 13 year campaign.

Alongside senior politicians and military top brass, invitations will go to veterans of the conflict, close relatives of troops who lost their lives, representatives of all regular and reserve armed forces units which served in Afghanistan and representatives of other nations which took part in the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force.

Announcing the plans to MPs in the House of Commons, Prime Minister David Cameron said, “I believe it's a fitting moment to pay tribute to the extraordinary contribution made by our Armed Forces in Afghanistan over 13 years.”

Following the announcement, Defence Secretary Michael Fallon said, “This is our opportunity to show the enormous gratitude we owe to all those who served in Afghanistan, and to salute the many acts of courage and sacrifice made by the thousands of men and women involved in the campaign.

“We owe a special debt to those who didn't return and I hope that their family members are able to join us at the service.”

# Homage paid to Churchill 50 years after he was laid to rest

LONDON – Winston Churchill was remembered as “a great leader and a great Briton” at events on January 29 to mark 50 years since the former prime minister’s State funeral.

Seventy-five years since his “finest hour” in leading the fight against fascism in the Second World War, his descendants travelled the Thames on the boat that carried the great statesman’s coffin in 1965.

The three main party leaders – none of whom were born when the nation turned out in vast numbers to mourn Churchill’s death – laid wreaths at his Commons statue.

Prime Minister David Cameron said Britain must draw on the same “courage and resolve” inspired by Churchill to battle the affronts to freedom faced today.

Churchill was still remembered with



THE HAVENGORE, the same boat that carried Winston Churchill’s coffin in 1965, passes London’s Tower Bridge as large crowds gather to remember Winston Churchill and watch a flotilla recreate his final journey.

affection by the country as a statesman, bon viveur and reformer, Cameron said, but most of all as a patriot – with lessons to teach the modern world.

Wreaths were also laid by Commons Speaker John Bercow, his Lords coun-

terpart Baroness d’Souza and Tory MP Sir Nicholas Soames – Churchill’s grandson – after a service in Parliament’s St. Mary’s Undercroft chapel.

Among family members taking part in the commemorations was Randolph Churchill, who said his great-grandfather would have been “surprised but thrilled” as he put flowers at another statue, in Parliament Square.

Crowds later gathered at London’s Tower Bridge to watch a flotilla – including Havengore, the vessel that carried the coffin following Churchill’s state funeral at St. Paul’s Cathedral – recreate his final journey.

Sir Nicholas, who walked behind the gun carriage bearing his grandfather’s coffin, said that the events of 50 years ago were “awe-inspiring.”

“The streets were 30 or 40 deep, full of people, wherever you looked. What was so extraordinary was to see the faces of people literally contorted with grief as the coffin went by, many people with tears pouring down their faces.”



THE 1965 funeral of Sir Winston Churchill was the largest state funeral in the world up to that point in time. It was attended by dignitaries from 112 countries. In Europe 350 million people, including 25 million in Britain, watched the funeral on television, and only Ireland did not broadcast it live.

## Bank of England Governor warns EU of ‘another lost decade’

DUBLIN – German austerity and the failure of wealthy states to help poorer countries risk trapping the eurozone in another decade of economic turmoil the Governor of the Bank of England has warned.

Mark Carney was delivering a lecture in Dublin on international economic trends at the Department of Foreign Affairs, attended by Governor of the Central Bank, Patrick Honohan.

Speaking at Iveagh House to honour the memory of Canadian Finance Minister Jim Flaherty, Carney said, “It will take the euro area eight years to achieve the recovery that Canada secured in two.”

Flaherty “would be more than a little frustrated with the euro area,” Carney said. The politician “remained unconvinced that Europe had fixed its problems” to his last days, he added.

The governor said that the eurozone’s poor performance mattered for the UK, as the currency bloc remains the country’s largest trading partner.

In order “to avoid another lost decade” he recommended that policymakers push for greater integration, and suggested that fiscal policy should be looser.

Carney’s remarks come days after Greece elected the radical Syriza party into power on a platform of ending the austerity policies imposed on it as part of the debt-laden country’s bail-out – a result that threatens to destabilise the currency union.

It also follows the announcement of a 1.1 trillion euro (£820 billion) asset purchase scheme to try to lift flatlining growth and pull the zone out of negative inflation – which threatens a damaging spiral of falling prices.

Some of his remarks, in a speech entitled ‘Fortune Favours the Bold,’ are likely to be seen as critical of the austerity policies in Europe being pushed by Germany.

He said they risked driving the single currency area deeper into a debt trap.

“Since the financial crisis all major advanced economies have been in a debt



MARK CARNEY [second from left], Governor of the Bank of England, is welcomed to Iveagh House in Dublin (L-R) by Canadian Ambassador to Ireland Kevin Vickers, Irish Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade Charlie Flanagan, and British Ambassador to Ireland Dominick Chilcott.

trap where low growth deepens the burden of debt, prompting the private sector to cut spending further.

“Persistent economic weakness damages the extent to which economies can recover. Skills and capital atrophy. Workers become discouraged and leave the labour force. Prospects decline and the noose tightens.

“As difficult as it has been, some countries, including the U.S. and the UK, are now escaping this trap. Others in the euro area are sinking deeper.”

Carney said the quantitative easing package announced by the European Central Bank had shown “monetary boldness.”

But he said, “The currency union has been relatively timid in putting in place the other policies and, crucially, the institutions necessary to deliver sustainable prosperity for its citizens.”

He said, “Europe needs a comprehensive, coherent plan to anchor expectations, build confidence and escape its debt trap.”

Carney gave the example of how Scotland’s North Sea dependent economy had been cushioned from the blow of plunging oil prices by its union with the rest of the UK.

He said, “There are few clearer illustrations of the benefits of sound fiscal arrangements in a currency union.”

Carney recently told MPs that the plunge in oil prices represented a “negative shock” to the Scottish economy.

But he said, “Because this risk is shared across the entire UK (which on the whole is a net beneficiary of lower oil prices), the net impact on the Scottish public finances is a mere one tenth of what it would be if there had been no risk-sharing.”

Carney said the plan to revive the European economy “begins but does not end with the monetary policy boldness of the ECB.”

He added, “That plan includes difficult structural reforms, but cannot be wholly reliant on them. That plan requires greater private risk-sharing via banking and capital markets unions.

“But that plan also needs to recognise that private risk-sharing will never fully replace public risk-sharing so that plan should include what every other successful currency union has at its heart: mechanisms to share fiscal sovereignty.

“Europe’s leaders do not currently foresee fiscal union as part of monetary union. Such timidity has costs.”

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## Delta Police Pipe Band hold largest Burns' event in the world



THE Delta Police Pipe Band has been selected to represent Canada at the Netherlands Military Tattoo to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the liberation of Holland during WWII.

By COLIN ABEL

The Delta Police Pipe Band held its 41<sup>st</sup> annual Robbie Burns' dinners last month before two sell-out crowds totalling 870 guests. This event is believed to be the largest of its kind in the world.

Under the direction of Pipe Major John Ralston and Drum Majors J.P. DaSilva and Jim Wishlove, crowds were entertained by the pipe band's three performances, the regimental dancers and pipers, and songs by the band's singing group The Deltones.

Also performing were the Shannon Highland dancers, master piper Alan Walters and various speakers extolling the virtues of Robert Burns.

Then, the exceptional dance band The Earthtones delighted the crowd into the wee hours of the morning.

These events are major fundraisers for the band which will attend the Okanogan Military Tattoo in Vernon this summer and in September will travel to Holland to participate in the Netherlands Military Tattoo.

Holland is celebrating the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the liberation of Holland by Canadian Forces during the Second World War and it is an honour for the band to be selected as the only pipe band to represent Canada at this prestigious event.

For more information, see: [www.deltapolicepipeband.com](http://www.deltapolicepipeband.com).

## Oil price crash threatens future of North Sea oilfields

ABERDEEN – In a blow to the Scottish economy as well as the thousands of workers employed in the oil sector, BP revealed it was cutting 200 onshore workers and 100 contractor roles from its 3,500 staff in the North Sea.

The price of a barrel of Brent crude – the global benchmark – has more than halved since June and stands at around \$48 (£31.50). It could tumble as low as \$31 (£20.44) by April, according to forecasters at Bank of America Merrill Lynch.

But the weak oil price also undermines nationalists' claims that an independent Scotland can rely on its natural resources.

Mark Carney, Governor of the Bank of England, appearing before the Treasury Select Committee, called the oil price fall a "negative shock for Scotland."

The collapse in oil prices has already seen a number of major firms scrap projects, cut jobs and slash wages – and the North Sea sector is now at "crisis" point, according to experts.

U.S.-based North Sea oil producer Conoco-Phillips is to cut 230 British jobs, while Royal Dutch Shell and Qatar are to shelve a £4.3 billion project in the Middle East.

Energy Secretary Ed Davey, who travelled to Aberdeen on January 14 to meet industry leaders, said the government was "determined to do everything we can" to save jobs.

He announced he has appointed Andy Samuel, head of the Oil and Gas Authority industry regulator, to lead an "urgent commission" into "practical measures to mitigate the immediate risks."

Sir Ian Wood, who recently completed a review of the UK's offshore oil businesses, said that as many as 15,000 jobs could be lost in the industry, which employs more than 450,000 staff across the country, with around 62,000 directly in exploration.

The falling oil price has been caused by a rapid growth of U.S. shale output, and the refusal of OPEC – the Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries – to cut production, which would push it back up.

Malcolm Webb, chief executive of the industry body Oil & Gas UK, called for urgent action to halt the decline and asked the treasury to radically reduce the tax burden on British oil firms.

Fergus Ewing, the Scottish government's energy minister, described it as "the most serious jobs situation Scotland has faced in living memory."

## RMM Pipe Band: Dedicated to developing talented young pipers



PHOTOS: Joanne Snow

ROBERT MALCOLM MEMORIAL 3 PS Luke Snow and RMM 2 Connor Watt at the Robert Malcolm Memorial Pipe Band Robbie Burns dinner on Saturday, January 24.

By JOANNE SNOW

COQUITLAM – The Robert Malcolm Memorial (RMM) Pipe Band Robbie Burns dinner was held at the Executive Plaza Inn in Coquitlam on January 24.

This annual celebratory tribute to the life, works and spirit of the great Scottish poet, Robert Burns (1759-1796) was a wonderful event with a special guest performance by the six time world champions the Simon Fraser University (SFU) Pipe Band lead by Pipe Major Alan Bevan.

Part of the world renowned Simon Fraser University Pipe Band, the Robert Malcolm Memorial Pipe Band is named after Robert Barbulak and Malcolm Bokenfohr, two dedicated members of the SFU Pipe Band who were killed in an automobile accident not of their cause in November 1993.

The RMM band was formed in January 1994 to continue the development of talented and dedicated young players much as Rob and Malcolm were.

Currently there are over 100 players in



JACK AND TERRY Lee RMM presentation at the annual Burns dinner held at the Executive Inn in Coquitlam.



MEMBERS of the Robert Malcolm Memorial bands at the annual Burns dinner. The band is named after Robert Barbulak and Malcolm Bokenfohr, two dedicated members of the SFU Pipe Band who were killed in an automobile accident in 1993.

the four RMM bands competing at grade 2, 3, 5 and novice 5 for the upcoming competition season.

The Robbie Burns dinner is an annual fundraiser for the RMM bands. A wonderful meal featuring the traditional haggis was enjoyed by over 270 guests.

Performances by all RMM bands delighted audiences. A special presentation was made to the RMM 4 band who won the Tayside Shield, for placing 5<sup>th</sup> in the Novice Juvenile competition, at the World Pipe Band Championships in

Glasgow this past August. This band has been promoted to grade 3.

The silent auction component of the evening was a huge success. Guests had an opportunity to bid on over 100 items including trips, wine cellars, draft beer collections, just to name a few.

A wonderful evening was enjoyed by all and the evening was a success for the RMM pipe band society. Planning is already underway for the 2016 dinner and we hope to see you there!



THE COLLAPSE in the price of oil has seen a number of companies change their plans and insiders claim the crash threatens the future of the North Sea oilfields.

# In Memory of Ron MacLeod: A great Scots-Canadian and a son of Raasay

EDINBURGH – Ron MacLeod, one of the community founders of Centre for Scottish Studies at Simon Fraser University, passed away last month. Ron is survived by Lorraine, his beloved wife of 57 years.

As a tribute to a great Scots-Canadian, *The Celtic Connection* has kindly agreed to republish a column I wrote in 2007 when I visited the island of Raasay where the MacLeods lived before they left for Canada.

The journey from Glasgow to the Hebridean island of Raasay feels epic.

My brother's aging car rattles and creaks north, threatening to overheat when the sun is out, but cooling off again in the apocalyptic downpours that hit every half hour or so.

Scotland's history rushes past the window – the skeletal remains of the shipyards along the Clyde, the bonnie banks of Loch Lomond immortalized in Jacobite song, Glencoe and its terrible massacre.

I note especially the Canadian connections – a distant view of Greenock from where so many sailed, the district of Lochaber which filled the ships and, north of Fort William, the great sweep of Glengarry, its name copied for the Scottish settlement in Ontario.

By the time I reach the wee ferry from Sconser to Raasay, however, I am thinking of journeys that really were epic.

Those made by the people who left Raasay for all corners of the world. "All the blood that flowed away" as Scottish band the Proclaimers put it.

In the early Twentieth Century, an extended family of MacLeods left their communities on the northern tip of Raasay and eventually found their way to Tofino on the west coast of Vancouver Island.

I know something of the family story because Ron MacLeod, a son of the original emigrants, told it to Ron Sutherland and me when we interviewed him in his White Rock kitchen in 2005.

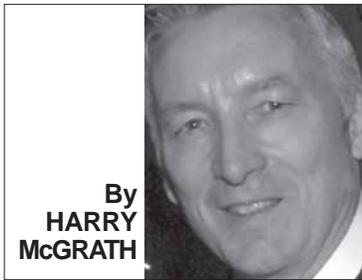
I have come to Raasay to try to understand more of their remarkable journey.

From the ferry terminal I drive to Raasay House on the south end of the Island. It is now an "adventure centre" but was once the home of the MacLeod lairds until the last of them migrated to Tasmania in 1843.

A previous building on this site was burned by government troops in revenge for the laird secreting Bonnie Prince Charlie in a Raasay bothy after the Battle of Culloden.

Johnson and Boswell were here too during their tour of the Hebrides in 1773, with Boswell observing that the family seat "was in a pleasing low spot with good grass fields and corn lands about it....and a good garden plentifully stocked with vegetables and strawberries, raspberries, currants etc."

Boswell's innocent observations on the



By  
HARRY  
McGRATH



RON MACLEOD

*"...a pleasing low spot with good grass fields and corn lands about it....and a good garden...."*

fertility of this corner of the island, however, held dire portents for the people of Raasay.

I remember Ron telling us about his family being moved from "the fertile south to the barren north," a process that ensured their eventual departure for Canada.

The grass in the south is still as green as it was when Boswell admired it, the corn lands are still there and, because it is late spring, the area around the house is alight with blooming rhododendron bushes.

Heading north, however, things change quickly just as Ron said they would. The grass and corn gives way to heather and rock.

Sheep are disappearing in other parts of Scotland but they are still on Raasay.

They part reluctantly to let the car past, the lambs making last minute dashes in front of the bumper to join their mothers on the other side of the single track road.

These are the descendents of the sheep introduced to Raasay in the 1840s.

To make way for these sheep, people were moved around or cleared completely from the island. For a time even marriage was banned to discourage settlement.

Raasay is an example of a Scottish island that suffered almost continuously from landlordism.

The island changed hands often and, with a few exceptions, the landlords were either neglectful or rapacious.

Ron's family somehow survived here

until the early Twentieth Century and to see where they lived, I walk beyond the end of the public road to the most northern tip of the island where even the sheep can't find much to graze on between the rocks.

Ron's father Murdo MacLeod came from Kyle Rona, his mother Julia MacLeod from Fladda a small island joined to Raasay at low tide.

Julia's cousin, Calum MacLeod, built the last two miles of the road himself after the District Council refused to help him, which is the only reason I don't have to walk even further than I did.

When Murdo MacLeod left Raasay, he went to Glasgow and then joined his brother Ewen in Victoria, British Columbia.

Finally, he settled with Julia in Tofino and there they raised a family.

The three families of Raasay MacLeods who settled in Tofino were Gaelic speakers and Ron remembers gatherings at the house where the ceiling echoed to the sound of an ancient language that he couldn't understand.

There was no road into Tofino when the MacLeods arrived, just as there was no road into Rona or Fladda, and to survive the family fished just as they had fished on Raasay.

But there were opportunities in Canada that the landlord system in Scotland did not allow. Ron eventually became Director General of Pacific and Freshwater Fisheries and was awarded the Order of Canada for his services.

Sadness clings to the north end of Raasay like mist.

It echoes the sadness that we heard in Ron MacLeod when he spoke in his White Rock kitchen of the place his people came from.

Walking around the broken communities of Fladda and Kyle Rona, I come across ruined cottages that at one time would have had families in them and the source of Ron's sadness is suddenly clear to me.

One of the cottages is home to a litter of Border collie puppies which venture out one after another to have their pictures taken.

Someone has left food for them but there is no other sign of human presence.

Another is the house of Ron's grandfather, still standing at Kyle Rona but used as a storage space by a shepherd. The MacLeods are all gone.

Sorley MacLean, the great Gaelic poet of Raasay, felt the spirit of the departed people at the cleared community of Hallaig and wrote:

*They are still in Hallaig,  
Macleans and Macleods,  
All who were there in the time  
of Mac Gille Chaluim:  
the dead have been seen alive.*

Ron MacLeod remembers his father saying to him "I came to Canada so that you could be a Canadian."

Canada has been good to the people of the Scottish Highlands, even if it was not always their choice to go there.

The important thing is not to forget and Ron's efforts to preserve his family history ensure that the MacLeods of Raasay will not be forgotten. Hold fast.



THE abandoned cottage on Raasay that was once home to the MacLeod family.

## Raasay Island

Raasay (Scottish Gaelic: Ratharsair) is an island between the Isle of Skye and the mainland of Scotland. It is separated from Skye by the Sound of Raasay and from Applecross by the Inner Sound.

It is most famous for being the birthplace of the poet Sorley MacLean, an important figure in the Scottish literary renaissance.

Traditionally the home of Clan MacSween, the island was ruled by the MacLeods from the 15th to the 19th century. Subsequently a series of private landlords held title to the island, which is now largely in public ownership.

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# Mahony & Sons Stamps Landing: The shining jewel in the family chain

**V**ANCOUVER: Last summer the third and much anticipated Mahony & Sons Public House restaurant/pub opened in Stamps Landing on False Creek. It is now the shining jewel in the Mahony & Sons chain.



By  
**CATHOLINE  
BUTLER**

Situated on the waterfront, and so close to the water you could put your toes in for a dip, it offers two floors with outdoor patios featuring panoramic views of spectacular scenery. The patio on the top floor would have to rank right up there among the best in Vancouver.



A PRIVATE meeting room overlooks the spectacular Vancouver waterfront.



The building was originally the site of Monk McQueen's and when the Mahony family purchased the location, it was completely renovated from top to bottom.

All the furniture and decor was designed and imported from Ireland. Irish artists were flown to Vancouver to create the familiar authentic Celtic motif design that identifies the high-end Mahony & Sons establishments.

The Mahony family, originally from Cork, Ireland, has deep roots in the hospitality industry. Great great great grandfather Barney ran *The Good Woman Pub* in Australia in the 1870's (after being exiled from Ireland in 1832 for pickpocketing).

Peter (Pete) Mahony is the general manager at the Stamps Landing location and he recently spoke to *The Celtic Connection* about some of the restaurant and particularly St. Patrick's activities as this will be the first year at this location.

He said, "we're super excited about what we've done here at our False Creek location and we're looking forward to our first St. Patrick's and summer coming up."

"Since our location in False Creek is in a residential area, we attract a lot of those residents, but our clientele base is quite similar to the Burrard Landing location, so it's really a nice mix."

The Stamps Landing location hosts a lot of corporate events where clients have booked the entire upstairs, sometimes the entire facility.

Pete said, "It's certainly a destination for Vancouverites, as well as a lot of visitors who can enjoy the beautiful view, a delicious dinner and then listen to the music."

"We also get a lot of people who hop on the Aquabus and arrive here by that means because the dock drop off is

right below our building. It's another mode of transport for people to arrive here from Yaletown, Granville Island and the Olympic Village."

It's a large facility with seating in total for about 575, but in the summertime, with both outdoor patios at capacity, add an additional 300 seats to that number.

A number of local entertainers are featured every Thursday, Friday and Saturday night. Many also perform at the other locations such as Evan Kennedy, Pat Chessell, and Johnny Leroux.

On special occasions, such as St. Patrick's Day which falls on a Tuesday this year, there will be entertainment featured all day from 1 PM. Another special celebration will be on Canada Day, July 1.

Between Super Bowl and St. Patrick's Day, Mahony & Sons offers an exciting chance to win a trip to Ireland.

The draw is held on March 17, St. Patrick's Day, and begins February 2 for the six weeks leading up to St. Patrick's Day.

Pete explains, "Anytime a customer comes into any of the Mahony & Sons locations and orders any of the Irish beers such as Kilkenny, Harp and Guinness, they will receive an entry form."

"The entries all go into a box and the prize is a return trip for two to Dublin and a \$500 spending voucher. The highlight of the trip is a tour for two of the Guinness brewery."

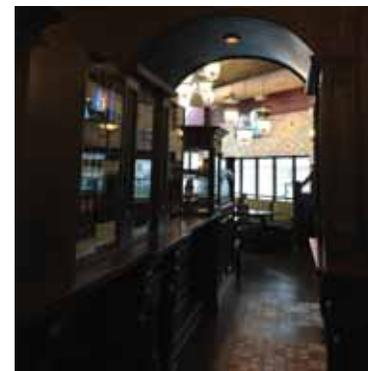
Mahony & Sons, False Creek location is located at 601 Stamps Landing in Vancouver. Call (604) 976-0234; Mahony & Sons Burrard Landing is located at 1055 Canada Place, #36, Vancouver. Call (604) 647-7513; Mahony & Sons Public House at UBC, 5990 University Boulevard, Vancouver. Call (604) 827-4444. More information at [www.mahonyandsons.com](http://www.mahonyandsons.com).



THE MAHONY clan now own and operate three locations in Vancouver.



THE dramatic entrance at Mahony & Sons Stamps Landing features vaulted ceilings, wide use of mahogany, hand-carved wood, Celtic designs, and Irish artwork.



## The Rebirth of Maui Celtic Spirals

By JENNIFER FAHRNI

After nearly a decade of producing and hosting his own radio show for a small non-profit station in Maui, Hawaii, Hamish Burgess' dreams were dashed one day when he was given his walking papers.

"I was devastated," he said. "I ran the whole spectrum of emotions from surprise, to anger, to sadness. I sat on those emotions for a month while the station went off air to restructure."

When the re-vamped station came back on air, Burgess's show would have been the first broadcast.

The last thing he wanted was to talk about being let go, but felt he owed listeners an explanation as to why he was no longer there.

"I had to face the music and post on Facebook about my losing the show... kind of humiliating."

Immediately, replies came flying in, including this: "I heard a worrying bit of chat today, I am a big fan of yours and hope the rumour is not true that you are going off air."

The message was from Scotsman Stevie Connor, co-founder of Blues and Roots Radio in Ontario (and Australia and the UK).

Connor continued, "If that be the case, please know I would love to carry it on Blues and Roots Radio."



HAMISH Burgess is pictured above in the studio with his vast collection of Celtic music.

Astounded, Burgess messaged back, "You want a Maui show?" Connor did indeed want the Maui Celtic show, and was excited at the possibility of adding it to his station lineup.

"I was a long time fan of Hamish's show and would tune in from Canada. When I realized he was no longer on air I thought it a travesty and immediately offered him a prime time slot on the schedule," says Stevie.

"Hamish brought his great music knowledge, not to mention listeners from around the world."

Soon after that, while visiting Scotland, Hamish was a studio guest at Celtic Music Radio in Glasgow. With Hamish in their studio, Ross Macfadyen, a director of the station also arranged to add the show to their network.

"Celtic Music Radio are delighted to be able to share the show with our audience in Glasgow and round the world in over 170 countries."

"Hamish's show is world class and adds a great Hawaiian perspective to Celtic music."

The Maui Celtic Radio Show spiraled from nearly gone, to a global broadcast on two of Celtic music's top forums.

The show is now heard online internationally four days a week, and on air across Glasgow in Scotland.

Long time show underwriters are B.C. residents, Anne and George Millar, and The Irish Rovers.

Millar says, "It's all about promoting Irish music around the world, and what better place than Maui Celtic."

"When you can hear this programme in Timbuktu, or Ahoghill just outside Ballymena, I think that's wonderful, and I'm very, very happy to help make that happen. It's the best thing on radio – by far."

Hamish says, "I'm stoked to have one of the biggest and longest-running Celtic music groups on the planet as my underwriters. It couldn't get any better for my genre of music."

"The old guard are helping the new artists get their music out there. Pretty inspirational."

Full details at [www.mauiceltic.com](http://www.mauiceltic.com). Sunday 1-3 PM PST (repeat Monday and Friday) at [www.bluesandrootsradio.com](http://www.bluesandrootsradio.com), and Tuesday 11 AM to 1 PM GMT at [www.celticmusicradio.net](http://www.celticmusicradio.net).

# 'The Very Best of Celtic Thunder' on tour of western Canada

ABBOTSFORD, B.C. – After a run of extremely successful shows, Celtic Thunder is set to return to western Canada with their brand new show “The Very Best of Celtic Thunder” tour.

The tour features an eclectic collection of the group’s best-loved and most popular songs from the past seven years.

Drawing material from Celtic Thunder’s nine Public Television specials, eleven CDs and DVDs and eight U.S. tours to date, “The Very Best of Celtic Thunder” tour aims to combine all Celtic Thunder classics, fan favorites and hit songs into a formidable stage show, married with that huge Celtic Thunder signature sound, dramatic lighting and imposing set that audiences and fans everywhere have come to expect from a Celtic Thunder show.

Celtic Thunder’s principal singers, backed as ever by the amazing eight piece Celtic Thunder band, will deliver their much loved ensemble numbers with selections including *Heartland* from the albums *Celtic Thunder: The Show*, *Galway Girl* and *Seven*

*Drunken Nights* from *Voyage*, *A Place in The Choir* from *Heritage* and *Turning Away* from *Mythology*.

Of course, no Celtic Thunder show would be complete without a performance of their rousing anthem *Ireland’s Call*, which generally acts as the show’s finale and never fails to bring the audience to its feet.

In addition to these incredibly popular ensemble performances, “The Very Best of Celtic Thunder” tour will also feature a wide variety of solo hits from the principal singers such as *Ride On*, *The Dutchman*, *Noreen*, *Danny Boy*, *Puppy Love* and many more.

Celtic Thunder is the brainchild of producer Sharon Browne and since its inception in 2007 has released 11 albums, toured the U.S. and Canada, coast-to-coast, eight times, and Australia three times performing at over 800 shows to date.

Celtic Thunder has also been hailed as Billboard’s “Top World Music Artist,” along with “Top World Music Imprint” and “Top World Album” of 2008, 2009 and again in 2011.

The Celtic Thunder official YouTube channel “Thunder Tube” has received over 28 million views since 2008.

Celtic Thunder is backed by the dynamic Celtic Thunder Band and their shows are known for the use of dramatic effects of lighting and choreography as well as a stage set resembling an ancient stone pathway suggestive of those referenced in Celtic lore.

Tickets for “The Very Best of Celtic Thunder” tour are on-sale and dates include: **Abbotsford, B.C.** – Tuesday, March 10 – Abbotsford Centre; **Edmonton, Alberta** – Monday, March 16 – Enmax Hall, Winspear Centre; **Calgary, Alberta** – Wednesday, March 18 – Jack Singer Concert Hall.



CELTIC THUNDER is an acclaimed Irish singing group and stage show frequently featured in concert specials on PBS. It is known for its eclectic, theatrical style show.

## A new global federation to connect Irish pubs

DUBLIN – The Irish Pubs Global Federation has a network of nearly 7,000 worldwide Irish establishments.

In practically any city in the world, on some corner or some street, you will find an Irish pub. But now, for the first time, Irish pubs around the world will be getting to know each other.

Irish Minister for the Diaspora Jimmy Deenihan has launched an official network of nearly 7,000 global Irish pubs, creating a platform from which Irish pub owners can collaborate for mutual benefit and the benefit of Ireland.

The Irish Pubs Global Federation is an extension of Irish Pubs Global, which aims to create and support a strong glo-

bal community of Irish pub owners, managers and suppliers.

With this new platform, Irish pub owners all over the world can easily communicate and coordinate.

Irish economic development agency Enterprise Ireland and Irish food board Bord Bia are backing the operation.

Enda O’Coineen, the Federation’s founder, said the new network wants to combine the presences of its members to create “something greater than their whole.”

An Irish Pubs Global Gathering Event will take place on February 26-28 in Dublin.

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<p><b>Irish Club Entertainment Listing</b></p> <p>February 21 – Country Night music by <i>Prairie Ride</i></p> <p>February 22 – Feis</p> <p>February 28 – Music by <i>Grace O’Mally</i></p> <p>March 7 – <i>Mattierin Trivia Night</i></p> <p>March 14 – <i>St. Patrick’s Dinner Dance</i> (ticket only event)</p> <p>March 17 – <i>St. Patrick’s Day</i> - Doors open 1:00 PM – Trad Irish Music &amp; Irish Dancing</p> <p>8:00 PM – <i>The Chancers &amp; Irish Dancers</i></p> <p>March 20 – AGM</p>	<p><b>Jam Sessions</b></p> <p>Almost every Thursday</p> <p>Call: 780-489-7402 to confirm being your musical instruments &amp; drop into the Irish Centre for a good old Irish Jam Session</p>
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## IRISH WOMEN'S NETWORK

# Nollaig na mBan: Irish women in B.C. and Ontario exchange greetings via Skype

By MAIREAD FOLEY



VANCOUVER – The Irish Women's Network of BC hosted a very successful event on January 4 – Nollaig na mBan (Women's Christmas).

Traditionally celebrated on January 6 (Little Christmas) Nollaig na mBan aims to recognize the important role of women during the Christmas period, and indeed throughout the year.

In Vancouver, an enthusiastic group of around 40 ladies met for an informal lunch at Mahony & Sons' newest location at Stamps Landing in False Creek.

The atmosphere was great and it proved an ideal setting with plenty of room to move about, chat and meet new people. There were even a spot prizes for a lucky few.

Many of those who attended are in Vancouver for many years but several are new to our city in the past year.

On a rainy Sunday afternoon in January the pub was mostly quiet except for the wonderful sounds of chatter and laughter as we celebrated our special Little Christmas.

The Ontario branch of IWN was hosting a similar gathering in Ottawa at the same time and through the determination of Eilis Courtney and the staff at Mahony's a Skype call was made.

What a wonderful occasion for us all, so far apart yet joined for a little while via technology to wish each other a wonderful day.

A great idea and a lovely memory of the day. A good day was had for sure, one which we hope to repeat next year.

So with a new year ahead there are many things to look forward to.

We are aiming to host another of our successful Newcomers Networking events, most likely in the springtime, details to follow.

This is an opportunity for any newcomers to come along and gain valuable tips on resumes and immigration.

In addition it offers a chance to meet some new faces. Many established members of the Irish in Vancouver community attend to offer advice where they can.

Don't forget CelticFest is fast ap-



MARIE BRUCE, Deirdre O'Ruairc and Geraldine Megannety with IWN president Eilis Courtney.



DESPITE the cold and wet January day in Vancouver, it was a warm atmosphere inside Mahony and Sons Stamps Landing as women with the Irish Women's Network gathered for Nollaig na mBan (Women's Christmas).



IRISH WOMEN in Vancouver sharing Nollaig na mBan greetings with members of the IWN branch in Ottawa, Ontario via Skype.

proaching, IWN will likely arrange a get-together to celebrate St. Patrick's Day and enjoy one or two of the planned events. Details will be posted closer to the time.

Please watch the website and Facebook page for updates, we encourage you to have a look and request to become a member.

We look forward to welcoming as many

members and friends as possible.

For more information on events also check out the 'What's on' section of the Irish in Vancouver website at: [www.irishinvancouver.com/whats-on.html](http://www.irishinvancouver.com/whats-on.html).

For more information on the Irish Women's Network of BC, visit [www.irishwomenbc.net](http://www.irishwomenbc.net), or e-mail [irishwomensnetwork@gmail.com](mailto:irishwomensnetwork@gmail.com).

## Irish workers heading for Canada and NZ

Canada is offering 10,000 working holiday visas for Irish residents this year, while New Zealand is offering jobs to those in the construction industry.

According to migration specialists VisaFirst.com, Canada's IEC (International Experience Class) Working Holiday Visa programme looks set to open over the next few weeks, with 10,000 places available for Irish workers in 2015.

Commenting on the much sought after visa programme, Edwina Shanahan manager with [www.visafirst.com](http://www.visafirst.com), the Canadian visas are likely to be snapped up as soon as they are launched.

"We believe this year's visas will be akin to Frozen dolls at Christmas — and I think most people will understand the buying frenzy that occurred around these. In addition, there is talk of late that Canadian Immigration will be reducing the number of visas for the working holiday programme in 2016."

Visafirst.com contend the quota for 2015 will generate the same, if not more, interest as the 2014 quota for Canadian working holiday visas. They are advis-

ing that 2015 applicants prepare all relevant documentation now.

"The 2014 Canadian working holiday quota for Irish applicants was issued in two stages, the first quota was filled within 15 minutes and the second quota was filled within a half hour," said Shanahan.

In 2014, applicants who were issued places in the first and second quota roll out, were given up to three months to get documentation ready for the work permit application.

However, this year it is estimated that once an applicant has a place on the Canadian working holiday programme, immigration will give applicants just one to two weeks to get the required documentation lodged.

Visafirst.com also revealed New Zealand is calling for Irish workers to fill posts in the construction sector. In the region of 20,000 Irish workers have relocated to New Zealand in the last five years.

"Since 2011 approximately 18,000 Irish workers have travelled to New Zealand for work and, with 4,000-5,000 expected to leave this year the total number of the last five years will surpass 20,000," said Shanahan.

## Both Ulster Protestants and Catholics suffered in Great Famine

BELFAST – A new cross-community project in Belfast is aiming to shatter myths and raise awareness about the famine across Ulster.

The initiative 'Sharing the Past' brings people from Belfast and Larne together to look at how the poverty and disease came in the wake of the potato blight.

Historian Dr. Francis Costello said that both the Irish Catholic poor and the Protestant poor in the north of the country suffered some sort of contagion linked to the famine.

The Great Famine took place between 1845 and 1852, resulting in the deaths of over one million people across Ireland and forced millions to emigrate.

Dr. Costello is currently writing a book on the global impact of the hunger.

He told the BBC, "What is rewarding about this project is that it is driven by the grassroots up. There are very harrowing stories about people's ancestors from Larne and the Shankill.

"This is education from the ground up that breaks down the myths and the

shibboleths surrounding the famine. Ulster – all of it – was hit very badly, not just Donegal."

As hungry people flooded in from the Ards peninsula – disease spread easily in the tenement houses and by 1846 one in five people in Belfast had been affected.

However amidst the suffering there were also gestures of help and charity.

"In Howard Street in Belfast, the local merchants fed 2,000 people a day at soup kitchens. The Society of Friends, the Quakers, did tremendous work and butchers and vegetable growers helped," said Costello.

"It was a calamity that struck across all classes and all faiths and no faiths."

He added, "In Belfast, then with an overwhelmingly Protestant population, the evidence shows there was a rekindled ardour of the early Christian Church characterized by charity and alms and the desire to alleviate starvation and illness.

"This saw people across traditions and classes coming together to support the poor."



OVER one million people across Ireland fled the Great Hunger.

# It's the same old story for a whole new generation of Irish

"There is no present or future, only the past happening over and over again now"

– Eugene O'Neill, American playwright and Nobel laureate in Literature

**I**MMIGRATION has been a way of life in Ireland from as far back as the Great Famine in 1841 when starvation caused a forced migration and the population plummeted from almost 8.2 million to 6.5 million by 1851.

Many sorrowful songs of immigration have been written by Ireland's sons and daughters following those years as they arrived in the United States, Canada and Australia to find work and survival.

Now, with the Irish economic crash, emigration has once again become a sad fact. Only this time, those leaving are some of Ireland's best educated professionals in both skilled technical and work trades.

These qualifications are highly prized and recognized in countries around the world and have helped open doors for a whole new generation of Irish migrants. However, despite the advantages, the sadness of leaving friends and family remains the same.

Blake Williams, manager of The Irish Wakers Celtic group here in Vancouver has written a very poignant and touching song about this newest wave of immigrants from the Emerald Isle entitled *Diaspora (Again)*.

The song was recently recorded in

Bryan Adams' warehouse studio in Vancouver and then performed live at 'An Irish Christmas' celebration to benefit the Irish Benevolent Society of B.C. It had a big emotional impact on those present.

The artists who contributed to the song are Jamie Snyder on guitar (originally from The Wonderful Grand Band in Newfoundland); Catherine Flynn of Vancouver (an emerging vocalist, whistle player and soon-to-be banjo player); Michael Burnyeat (a very young B.C., fiddle player and old time fiddle champion); and Blake Williams on vocals and bodhran.

Blake said, "We performed the song in public for the first time at the Irish Christmas event on December 13<sup>th</sup>, at St. James Hall, where it was very well received.

Williams penned the lyrics and music after a recent trip to Ireland and Australia, where he met and spoke with some of the recent Irish arrivals in Australia.

He recently spoke to *The Celtic Connection* about what prompted him to write the song.

"I had just finished a tour of the famine ship the *Jeanie Johnston* – the three-masted craft down near the Custom House Quay in Dublin – where I learned that more than 2,500 people were transported on that ship but, unlike the coffin ships, there was no loss of life. It was built in Quebec in 1847.

"I left there still thinking about what I had just seen and as I was walking along the Liffey, I noticed a huge red and white sign posted by the Federal Government of Canada saying, 'We want your tradespeople, your welders, your carpenters, your electricians'.

"I had some real mixed feelings about that. I thought it must be very hard on the parents of those kids to see them leave Ireland and travel so far away to Canada and Australia to find work.

"Then, I saw another sign saying there were 1,000 youths under the age of 25 years old leaving Ireland each week."

Continuing on his journey, Blake left Ireland for Australia where he met some of those young Irish migrants.

"I met some with two university degrees who were directing traffic on highway construction jobs. That really got me thinking about the rise and fall of the Celtic Tiger, and so I just started writing."

The song *Diaspora (Again)* can be heard on The Irish Wakers website at: [irishwakers.com](http://irishwakers.com).



THE EVENING finale with all the performers on stage for a final farewell at 'An Irish Christmas'. The event was held to benefit the Irish Benevolent Society of B.C. and raised \$1,650 to help provide emergency assistance to the local Irish community.



MEMBERS of the organizing committee for 'An Irish Christmas' presented a cheque to Maura De Freitas of the Irish Benevolent Society. The committee included (L-R) Ken Christie of the Discovery Sailing Club, Blake Williams of the Irish Wakers and Marian Buechert, of the duo Raven & Dove.

## Bones found on Canadian beach likely children fleeing Ireland's Great Famine

MONTREAL – Bones washed up on a Canadian beach are likely to be those of Irish children fleeing the horrors of the famine that ravaged Ireland in the 1840s.

In 2011 vertebrae and pieces of jawbone were discovered on Quebec's Gaspé Peninsula around 500 miles away from Montreal.

Since the discovery the remains have been forensically examined by scientists and historians – now a heritage protection group say they probably be-



WATERCOLOUR of Grosse Île from the officers' quarters, 1838-1840 [Collections Canada]. The island of Grosse Île, located in the Gulf of St. Lawrence in Quebec, was the site of an immigration depot which predominantly housed Irish immigrants coming to Canada to escape famine in Ireland [1845-1849]. It is believed that over 3,000 Irish died on the island and over 5,000 are currently buried in the cemetery there as many died en route. Grosse Île is the largest Irish potato famine burial ground outside Ireland.



SCENE from the 2008 film *Death or Canada*, an Irish Film and Television Award-nominated two-part Canadian-Irish documentary based on events of An Gorta Mor: Ireland's Great Hunger.

longed to children who died in a tragic ship sinking called *The Carricks* in 1847.

As the Great Famine tightened its grip on Ireland more than 150 years ago – one million died and two million people fled.

Today, the population of Ireland and Northern Ireland combined is still lower than it was before Abraham Lincoln became president.

And now, remains of some of those who tried to flee have been identified on a beach in Canada.

Parks Canada said while it can't prove the connection, there are a number of factors and indicators – including the fact that they belong to children, two of whom are between seven and nine and one 12-year-old.

Parks Canada archaeologist Pierre Cloutier said, "They are witnesses to a tragic event. You can't have a more tangible witness to tragedy than human remains," he told *The Globe and Mail*.

North America was just an ocean away for those desperate to escape from famine-stricken Ireland. But for those with-

out means, the only way to get there were "coffin ships."

And though they carried refugees of the Great Famine, coffin ships – illustrations of which resemble the sleeping quarters of Nazi concentration camps – were themselves deadly, claiming the lives of up to 100,000 would-be migrants, *The Washington Post* reports.

"These ships were packed with people," Kathryn Miles, author of *All Standing: The Remarkable Story of the Jeanie Johnston, the Legendary Irish Famine Ship*, told NPR last year.

"Most families of four would be given a platform that was about six feet square. So they were sleeping head-to-toe and there was no sense of quarantine or hygiene."

The research has also showed the bones had vitamin D deficiencies and malnourishment and are from those with a 'plant-based' diet.

Researcher Remi Toupin said the work had gone as far as possible in connecting the remains with Famine victims.

"We can't always reach absolute conclusions, but it's always our goal to go as far as possible in identifying people."

The doomed ship *The Carricks* set sail from Ireland to Quebec city in 1847 but never made its destination. It went down in a storm off the peninsula.

Up to 100 on board survived while 87 people perished. In 1900, a monument was erected in memory of the disaster.

OBITUARIES



DR. TOMA. BARRETT [August 2, 1944 - January 31, 2015] will be remembered by his many friends in the Vancouver Irish community.

He passed away peacefully in his sleep surrounded by loved ones at the age of 70 after a courageous battle with Multiple System Atrophy.

Beloved husband, adored father, brother, friend and respected doctor will be deeply missed by all who were fortunate enough to have known him.

Tom is survived by his wife Marion, daughter Gillian, son-in-law Rob and son Nial. He is also survived by his brothers Denis, John, brother-in-law Billy along with their wives and numerous nieces and nephews back home in Ireland.

Tom arrived in Canada with a bang in 1972 following great success both scholastically and athletically in Ireland.

He captained both his school and university rugby teams while also earning a spot on the vaunted Munster Rugby side.

Upon graduating with a degree in medicine from University College Cork, Tom interned in Pediatrics at both the Mercy Hospital in Cork and later at Vancouver General Hospital.

In 1973 Tom entered family practice, as a family physician he treated every patient as if they truly were family and received the same appreciation in return.

In 1974 Tom added to his duties when he became an instructor at the Department of Family Practice at UBC Medical School.

In 1976, Tom joined a team of physicians at the Olympic Games in Montreal. This proved to be a proud and exhilarating experience for him when his peers voted him to lead the team as Chief Medical Officer.

Through the years that followed Tom remained a respected figure in the medical community as a staff member of numerous hospitals in the Vancouver area while simultaneously running his very busy medical practice with his partner and wife Marion. Most patients can attest to what a hallowed team they were.

Tom will forever be remembered as a kind, gentle and courteous man whose presence and cheer filled every room he graced.



THE CROFTERS – Harry Baptie is pictured in the centre with Alan Walker on the left and Drew Thomson the right.

HARRY BAPTIE, born September 27, 1944 in Glasgow, Scotland, passed away peacefully on December 7, 2014, after a long illness in Lions Gate Hospital, North Vancouver. Survived by his loving wife, Anne and son, Derek.

Harry was a member of the well-known Celtic group, The Crofters. They performed at many North Vancouver venues and The British Ex Servicemen's Club in Vancouver. They also entertained at numerous Celtic Connection events.

For those who wish to pay their respects there will be a memorial service for Harry Baptie on Saturday, February 21, at 10 AM, Boel Chapel, 1505 Lillooet Road, North Vancouver. RIP.

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# Almost 1,650 people needed Irish consular help last year

DUBLIN – Almost 1,650 Irish people needed diplomatic assistance while abroad last year, it has been revealed.

Child abductions, accidents and arrests were among the emergencies which required intervention from embassy officials, according to the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

Consular help was also given to the families of 217 people who died in a foreign country last year.

Minister for Foreign Affairs, Charlie Flanagan, said, “our staff are deeply committed to assisting Irish citizens in difficulty and to helping Irish families at home dealing with distressing situations abroad.



“Ireland’s diplomats stand ready to respond quickly and effectively to urgent cases and emergency situations worldwide.”

Meanwhile, there was a 10 percent increase in the number of Irish citizens

born in a foreign country.

The department said more than 5,500 babies were registered through the Foreign Births Registration, with the majority being born in the United States, Britain, Australia, Canada and South Africa.

A further 3,000 Certificats de Coutume (civil letters of freedom) were issued to Irish citizens getting married or entering civil partnerships abroad, with Italy, Spain, Malta, France and Germany among the most popular countries for the ceremonies abroad.

An additional 50 applications were received from Irish citizens entering into a same-sex civil partnership abroad.

# New Irish passport card to allow European travel



DUBLIN – Irish citizens will be able to travel within the European Union and the European economic area using a new Irish passport card from mid-July.

The new credit card sized document will be issued as a supplement to existing passports. The card will be valid for a maximum of five years and will cost EU35.

Incorporated in it are a number of security features, including an embedded hologram. Details on the card will include name, date of birth and passport number.

Minister for Foreign Affairs Charlie Flanagan said the card will be particularly useful for young people who use their passport as identification, “especially on nights out.”

A new smartphone app was also launched to allow people to apply for the card and includes a feature that will take a photograph to meet international standards for passports.

The card will be available to all Irish citizens over 18 and who already hold a valid passport.

## NOVENAS

### NOVENA TO THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

Novena to the Blessed Virgin Mary (never known to fail). O most beautiful flower of Mount Carmel, fruitful vine, splendour of Heaven, Blessed Mother of the Son of God. Immaculate Virgin, assist me in this my necessity. There are none that can withstand your power. O show me herein you are my Mother, Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee (three times). Sweet Mother, I place this cause in your hands (three times). Holy Spirit, you who solve all problems, light all roads so that I can attain my goal. You gave me the Divine gift to forgive and forget all evil against me. This prayer must be said for three days, even after the request is granted and the favour received, it must be published. – PKM, MJ, CC, CTK

### Novena to St. Clare

For nine days, pray for one impossible request, two business requests, pray nine Hail Marys for nine days, each day. This novena must be published whether prayers are granted or not. – SVS

### Novena to St. Jude

Most holy apostle, St. Jude, faithful servant and friend of Jesus, the Church honors and invokes you universally, as the patron of hopeless cases, of things almost despaired of. Pray for me, I am so helpless and alone. Make use I implore you, of that particular privilege given to you, to bring visible and speedy help where help is almost despaired of. Come to my assistance in this great need that I may receive the consolation and help of heaven in all my necessities, tribulations, and sufferings, particularly - (Here make your

request) and that I may praise God with you and all the elect forever. I promise, O blessed St. Jude, to be ever mindful of this great favor, to always honor you as my special and powerful patron, and to gratefully encourage devotion to you. Amen – PMC, MJF, CB, CC

### Novena to St. Anthony

Remember, O Saint of Miracles, that you have never failed to help and comfort anyone who has ever sought you in a time of need. I too come to you, who are so rich in graces, and the favoured friend of the Infant Jesus, confident that I do not pray in vain. Eloquent preacher of the Infinite Mercy of God, do not refuse my prayer, but take my request before the throne of God, so that I may have help and strength in my present trial and necessity. Listen to my voice, together with that of your friars who ask you a grace for me. Amen. – SVS

### Novena to the Infant Jesus of Prague

O Infant Jesus, I run to you begging you through Your Holy Mother to save me in this need (name it), for I truly and firmly believe that Your Divinity can defend me. Full of trust, I hope in you to obtain Your holy grace. I love You with all my heart, I am painfully sorry for my sins and on my knees I beg You, O Little Jesus, to free me from them. My resolution is to improve and never more to offend You. Therefore, I offer myself to You and to serve You faithfully. I will love my neighbour as myself from my heart for the love of You. O Little Jesus, I adore You, O Mighty Child, I implore You. Save me in this need (you can mention it here), that I may enjoy You eternally, with Mary and Joseph see You and with all the angels adore You. – SVS

## Police probing Roy Keane 'incident'

MANCHESTER – Police are investigating an alleged road rage incident involving former Manchester United captain Roy Keane.

Keane, 43, is said to have got into an altercation with a taxi driver in Altrincham town centre, which led to police being called.

A spokesman for Greater Manchester Police said, “At 11:30 AM, police were called to Ashley Road, Altrincham, to a report that a man had behaved aggressively towards another man.

“An investigation is under way to establish the exact circumstances surrounding the incident.”

The current assistant manager for the Republic of Ireland football team lives in nearby Hale.



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**IRISH BENEVOLENT SOCIETY OF B.C.**

# A Bittersweet Irish Seniors Christmas Luncheon

By CATHOLINE BUTLER

VANCOUVER – On December 18 the Irish Benevolent Society of B.C. hosted the Irish Seniors Christmas luncheon at the Holiday Inn Express on Hastings Street in Vancouver.

This was the final luncheon in this series made possible through the Irish Emigrant Support Programme with the Department of Foreign Affairs of the Government of Ireland.

Every table in the banquet room at the Holiday Inn was filled to capacity. It was a bittersweet Christmas luncheon with so many Irish seniors expressing sadness that this series had come to an end but all saying how much they had enjoyed the luncheons and thanking the Benevolent Society for their time and effort in organizing the events.

Many of the Irish seniors said the luncheons provided a wonderful opportunity to meet up with old friends and catch up with what had happened over the years – it also provided an opportunity to make new friends.

The Christmas luncheon buffet was festive and delicious and the entertainment with Michael Viens, Rosie Carver and Mary Brunner was excellent. Michael handed out Christmas song sheets and guests were invited to join in the lively Christmas songs.

As with all of the luncheons after the buffet the microphone was turned over to the seniors and it was now their turn to entertain their fellow countrymen...and they did.

The Irish seniors luncheons are more like a house party with the amazing amount of talent in the room, there's never enough hours in the afternoon to hear all the songs and jokes and none are the same.

Hopefully there will be more again in the future.



PHOTOS: COURTESY OF CATHOLINE BUTLER AND BERNARD WARD



**IN MEMORY OF JACKIE MURPHY**  
 IN MEMORY of wee Jackie Murphy from Belfast who passed away suddenly on Christmas Day. Jackie was a fixture at every Irish senior luncheon hosted by the Irish Benevolent Society of B.C. along with his beloved wife Nora. He is remembered with great fondness and will be deeply missed by his many friends in Vancouver and beyond.

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# Cost of Irish bank bailout revealed at Oireachtas Inquiry

DUBLIN – The crippling bank bailout has cost Irish taxpayers an estimated EU40 billion to date, the Governor of the Central Bank has revealed.

In his first day of evidence to the Oireachtas banking inquiry, Patrick Honohan told the hearing that more consideration should have been given to liquidate rogue lenders Anglo Irish Bank and Irish Nationwide in September 2008 rather than including them in the mammoth EU440 billion guarantee of the banking system.

Honohan compiled a report in 2010 for the Irish Government attempting to explain why regulators did not spot the looming banking crisis in Dublin and attempt to prevent it and what the best containment measures would have been.

The governor told the inquiry that he stands by his 130-page report and that the regulation system at the time of the crash in 2008 in Ireland was one of “a triumph of hope over reality.”

In his opening address he said, “No regulatory system can or even should attempt to eliminate all possibility of failure, and regulation and supervision must be able to change with a constantly changing financial industry.

“But I think the more assertive and risk-based system of prudential supervision that we now have in place has struck the right balance and will help ensure that the banking system helps the economic performance of Ireland, rather than causing the economic destruction



PATRICK HONOHAN Governor of the Central Bank of Ireland.

which we have all been seeking to repair and rebuild.”

The bank guarantee from September 2008 covered customers’ deposits and bank borrowings in all the major institutions.

The inquiry is holding a series of hearings in an attempt to uncover the reasons the mammoth blanket security was given and the failings in the regulatory and political systems at the time.

The European Central Bank (ECB) has so far refused to take part in the inquiry.

Taoiseach Enda Kenny revealed that he has pressed banking chief Mario Draghi to attend and answer questions over its role in Ireland’s bank bailout.

The ECB president had said that he would not answer to national parliaments despite questions remaining over

the tone and content of a letter to the Irish Government threatening to withdraw emergency funding from the Irish banking system in late 2010.

Honohan revealed the possible extent of a bank rescue involving the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in 2010 in a phone call to RTE Radio three days before the government made a formal application for funding.

Committee members were warned not to raise the phone call at the hearing.

Honohan told the inquiry that Anglo should have been allowed to fail and that it was effectively dead by Monday, September 29, 2008 when the bank guarantee was unveiled.

He said regulators should have known it was bust but that the government would have been pilloried and would have been treated as a pariah internationally.

Honohan said that allowing Anglo to fail then would have been a “European Lehmans,” an assessment he has given in the past.

Honohan described Anglo in September 2008 as having a “business model that was not credible” and that it had “run out of cash” and that government or regulators should have stepped in to shut it down.

“The management should have been removed,” he said.

The governor, however, expressed sympathy for the “people in the room” on the night the bank guarantee was agreed.

# Irish hospitals in crisis with overcrowding

DUBLIN – Overcrowding in Irish hospitals has reached crisis levels according to the Irish Nurses and Midwives Organisation (INMO).

The number of patients on trolleys in hospital emergency units continues to grow with elderly patients having to wait for days, according to nurses who protested against hospital overcrowding on January 14.

The INMO warned that patient care was being compromised in overcrowded A&Es with some palliative care patients being left on trolleys for over four days and elderly and frail patients, with chest and other conditions, being left on trolleys with no dignity or privacy.

Dozens of nurses from all over the country attended the demonstration, which took place outside Leinster House.

Members of the INMO working in University Hospital Limerick, Ennis Hospital, Nenagh Hospital, Naas Gen-

eral Hospital and Croom Orthopaedic Hospital have voted overwhelmingly in favour of industrial action.

It came after nurses at Galway University Hospital voted for the action and a week after Beaumont Hospital also announced its intention of going on a work to rule.

Nurses in Drogheda, Beaumont, Naas, Mullingar, Galway and the Mid-West (Limerick) Hospital Group are to vote on possible industrial action in response to the crisis.

Meanwhile, Fianna Fail health spokesman Billy Kelleher said Health Minister Leo Varadkar should step in. “Overcrowding is crippling emergency departments at hospitals the length and breadth of the country and is putting patients’ safety at risk.

“This is a crisis which has been deteriorating steadily for the past year, but the minister has stood back and refused to take action and now the numbers on trolleys have reached record levels,” he said. “This is a frightening state of affairs.”

# Taoiseach to receive more security

DUBLIN – Security for Taoiseach Enda Kenny, as well as senior cabinet ministers, has been tightened.

The move is in response to alleged threats against them in recent months.

The taoiseach has been advised to vary his route to and from government buildings every day, while ministers will now have to give gardai details of their weekly diaries.

Extra measures could also be extended to some members of the gardai, after it emerged a female garda was followed to her home recently.

Security for President Michael D. Higgins is also under review. The move comes after video footage emerged of protesters heckling and swarming around a car carrying President Higgins as he left a school in Finglas.

Higgins (73) was called a “little midget parasite” and “traitor” as the group convened to protest his signing into law the Water Services Bill in December.

# Thousands join water charge rallies as deadline to register closes in

DUBLIN – Thousands of anti-water charge protesters brought town and city centres to a standstill in up to 20 nationwide demonstrations on January 31.

Events took place in Dublin, Cork, Limerick, Galway, Sligo and Waterford, with organisers claiming around 20,000 people had participated in Dublin alone.

An estimated crowd of about 3,500 took to the streets in Cork and in Limerick protesters unfurled a banner which read “We won’t pay” above the 13<sup>th</sup> Century King John’s Castle.

The main march through the capital caused traffic disruptions and there were scuffles when a group of demonstrators broke away and tried to gain entry to Leinster House.

There were reports of pushing and shoving and a flare being fired, but gardai told reporters they were satisfied with how the event had proceeded.

The main actions were promoted by the DublinSaysNo campaign, members of which have been involved in some of the more militant protests to have taken place.

One of the most outspoken members of the opposition group was recorded at a school in Finglas over a week ago shouting insults at President Michael D. Higgins over the water charges controversy.

Meanwhile, 40,000 households signed



THOUSANDS of anti-water charge protesters brought towns and cities to a standstill in up to 20 nationwide demonstrations on January 31.



up for water bills just hours before the February 1 deadline. It also emerged that no penalty will be imposed on householders who did not register in time.

However, some water bills might be too high as a standard fee of EU260 will apply to those who did not confirm their details by the deadline.

Penalties will kick in for those who have not paid by summer 2016, 15 months after the first bills arrive in April.

There will be a particular focus by Irish Water on rented accommodation in the coming weeks because of the low level of registrations by tenants.

Sinn Fein’s Mary Lou McDonald said the government had a deadline “that apparently wasn’t really a deadline. Irrespective of when the deadline is, hundreds of thousands of people won’t register and many, many more won’t pay because they are simply not in a position to pay,” she said.

Irish Water said 35,000 households had sent back their application packs either unopened or spoiled.

For those who do not register and who refuse to pay their bills, legislation will be brought in later on this year. However, the sanctions for non-compliance have not yet been revealed.

# Poverty is forcing some Irish families into cutting heating costs

DUBLIN – A cold snap is forcing some Irish families to decide between paying a bill or heating their home, says the Society of St. Vincent de Paul (SVP) charity.

The decision to either pay a bill or heat their home is an increasing challenge being faced by more and more people in Ireland as the weather worsens.

SVP has urged people to watch out for older neighbours in particular those who may be living without sufficient heating.

The SVP, which spent over EU10m in 2013 to help people with their energy bills, highlighted recent figures which show that 30.8 percent of those living below the income poverty line went without heating at some stage in the last year because they could not afford it.

This figure is up from 25 percent in 2012.

SVP spokesman Brendan Hennessy said that while recent energy price reductions for Irish consumers are welcome, most consumers do not see the drop in international oil and gas costs being passed on fully.

“The Energy Regulator (CER) and government need to explain to consumers how and why this is the case,” he said.

“Now that CER no longer regulates prices, SVP believes they should use their expertise to inform and protect customers.

“While consumers can seek to make savings by switching, this option is not available to many people assisted by SVP.

“This can be due to ongoing arrears issues, lack of access to computers or the use of direct debit not suiting people on low income.”

# Kevin Vickers Begins New Job as Canada's Ambassador to Ireland



**DUBLIN** – Kevin Vickers formally presented his credentials to the President of Ireland Michael D. Higgins on January 21, starting a new chapter in his career as Canada's ambassador to Ireland.

Vickers begins his four-year term as ambassador, assuming the role formerly held by Loyola Hearn.

The two men posed side-by-side at Áras an Uachtaráin, Ireland's presidential residence, with the 58-year-old Miramichi native towering over Higgins.

The photo-op prompted some on social media to offer witty commentary.

"Canada sends its Friendly Giant to Ireland to keep an eye on things," quipped one Twitter user.

Vickers got straight to work on his first day, meeting with Irish Foreign Affairs Minister Charlie Flanagan. The two discussed trade relations between the two countries, according to a news release.

Flanagan mentioned how thrilled he is to have Vickers in the position.

"He brings to this role both his close personal ties to Ireland and his long experience of service to the Canadian people," he said.

Referring to Vickers' Irish heritage, Flanagan added that "this ideal mix will serve Irish-Canadian relations very well."

During the meeting, the pair discussed a possible expansion of trade and tourism relations. Ireland's trade with Canada is currently valued at \$3.9 billion CAD.

Vickers' appointment to the position was announced by Prime Minister Stephen Harper who praised him for his "profound leadership" and "outstanding service" to his country.

The former sergeant-at-arms responded to Harper's remarks at the time by saying he was "humbled" by the opportunity, calling it an "honour."

His reputation at home was elevated to hero status for his role in stopping a gunman inside Canada's parliament on October 22. The 29-year RCMP veteran was delivered a standing ovation in the House of Commons on the following day for his courageous act.



HONOUR guard outside Áras an Uachtaráin as Canadian Ambassador to Ireland Kevin Vickers emerges with President Michael D. Higgins following the credential ceremony.



## Group planning three national events to mark the centenary of the 1916 Rising

**DUBLIN** – A citizen's initiative which has the backing of artists, union members and academics says modern Ireland can be revitalised by the tenets of the 1916 Easter Rising.

The initiative, 'Reclaim the Vision of 1916', is planning three national events to mark the centenary of the Rising next year, including a 'National Parade of Celebration' to mark the anniversary and a national seminar due to take place in spring 2016.

The group is chaired by artist Robert Ballagh and has the backing of playwright Brian Friel and the great grandson of James Connolly, Jim Connolly-Heron.

The move comes after the Irish Government was heavily criticised for its announcement about the 1916 commemoration events in Ireland.

Eugene McCartan, a member of the organising committee, said it was important to the group that Irish people took ownership of the celebration.

"It is important to us that people take ownership, become involved and celebrate 1916 in the most fitting way they see possible at a local level...and to look more deeply at the proclamation of 1916 and to find a way forward," he said.

"We are not going to fossilize the commemoration – we want the country to be re-inspired by the events of 1916 and see that as a way we can galvanise, revitalise and reinvigorate the three kernel demands of 1916 – democracy, independence and sovereignty," he said.

Dubliner Robert Ballagh said the national events are being planned, including a day of "mass mobilisation" on April 24, 2016 in response to what he described as the "neglect of heritage" by the government.

Connolly-Heron criticised the fact that Ireland does not have a public day to acknowledge its independence from the British monarchy.

"There's a clouding of the debate that it was just another event like the 1913 lockout and can be celebrated by people who are interested in that part of history, but it doesn't have to be our Bastille Day so there's no sense of a national celebration.

"As a result there is no sense of the sacrifice made to give us our nation," he added.

When questioned if it would be appropriate to have a member of the British monarchy in the review stand during the 2016 celebrations, both Ballagh and Connolly agreed that it wouldn't be "appropriate," especially for the relatives of those who died during the Rising.

"I think if you look to 1916 there is no relevance in relation to members of the British royal family being present for a commemoration.

"In 1916 the people fighting were anti-imperialist who went out to fight the British Army and to invite people from the British Royal Family who represent



PHOTO: Courtesy of Dublin City Public Libraries

**THE RISING** began on Easter Monday, April 24, 1916, and lasted for six days. Members of the Irish Volunteers – led by schoolmaster and Irish language activist Patrick Pearse, joined by the smaller Irish Citizen Army of James Connolly, along with 200 members of Cumann na mBan – seized key locations in Dublin and proclaimed the Irish Republic independent of the United Kingdom. The rebel headquarters was the General Post Office (GPO) in Dublin. It is pictured above in ruins following the 1916 Easter Rising.

the British Army would be singularly inappropriate.

"I would think if I were a relative of those killed during the Rising, I would be offended if a member of the family was on the reviewing stand," said Ballagh.

In Dublin, Sinn Fein has also launched a programme of events to commemorate the upcoming Centenary of the 1916 Rising.

In Canada, Friends of Sinn Fein in Canada will be organizing events commemorating the Rising in Toronto, Brampton, Montreal, Calgary, Edmonton, and Halifax and invite other communities to stage some form of commemorative event in their area in 2016.

Organizer Alan McConnell said, "FOSF is available to help you with speakers from Ireland, financing, literature and promotional materials.

"The events can be standard commemorations, public lectures, poetry readings, theatrical productions, or concerts.

"You can organize the event under your own name, or work with us to present an FOSF event.

"We hope you will do something. We want to see the Irish in Canada mark the Rising in a big way next year."

# A life in conflict: How Peter Taylor gained the trust of paramilitaries



VETERAN BBC television journalist Peter Taylor is widely perceived as a reliable interpreter of the North of Ireland after decades covering the Troubles. He has recently produced a new BBC Northern Ireland documentary *Who Won the War?* in which he gives his assessment on who if anyone are the winners in the conflict.

Last year, the veteran BBC television journalist, Peter Taylor, returned to Northern Ireland, where he has made dozens of documentaries about the Troubles.

His objective was to film a documentary about the North of Ireland in a more personal style this time, as seen through four decades of his film-making experience.

An Englishman by birth, Taylor became enthralled, in the late 1960s at the outset of his career, by the Northern Troubles in all its pity and terror, and stayed with events in the North from that point through to the Peace Process.

Others of his ilk tended to gain the limelight in the North and travel back to England for a more sedate life once they had made their names.

Instead, Taylor stayed the course and cut a compassionate figure, forming extraordinarily close relationships both with senior figures in Northern politics and in the armed struggle, and with civilian victims of violence.

He regularly met those people, listened to them and responsibly gave them their voices through his documentaries; the body of work he recorded constitutes an important source for an understanding of recent Northern Irish history.

As leading member of the BBC's Panorama team, Taylor had enormous influence in conveying a fresh message about the Northern crisis.

Panorama's impact reverberates across the UK, Ireland and beyond: Its viewership numbers more people than the readership of all of English broadsheet newspapers combined.

Thus Taylor came to be widely perceived, in England especially, as a reliable interpreter of the North of Ireland.

His particular strength is in illustrating the complexities of the situation and steeling his audience against easy one-sided formulations about the cause of and solution to the Troubles, keeping each of the protagonists – Republicans, Loyalists and the British – in focus.

The personal documentary he made last year, filming for four months in Belfast, is entitled *Who Won the War?*

It is clear from the beginning that the title itself poses an unsatisfactory ques-

## THE VIEW FROM IRELAND



By  
**MAURICE FITZPATRICK**



tion since, with over 3,000 people dead, countless more maimed and psychologically scarred on all sides, what could possibly constitute a victory?

From a loyalist perspective, with the structures now in place for a Northern majority to vote to secede from the United Kingdom, there is the loss of their union guarantee: the status quo upon which unionist politics traditionally fixed its focus to avoid any constitutional reform is gone.

The Republican side is more nuanced in its response to the question of victory.

Those who joined the IRA claimed a mandate to fight for a United Ireland and settled for an agreement that comes far short of that.

To use a phrase immortalised by Michael Collins, the current accommodation could be a "stepping stone" towards that goal.

Yet it should never be forgotten that such a deal was on the table, and signed by British and Irish Governments, in 1973.

The power-sharing Northern government established then was sabotaged by, among others, people who today hold high office in Ireland north and south.

The vigour with which those who *now* have absorbed the concepts of gradualism and accommodation, as they revise their original ambitions and deny self-evident facts about their own involvement in "the struggle" down the years, is remarkable.

Another Republican perspective is bitter: we lost the war, our side betrayed the cause by agreeing to a power-sharing arrangement in the state they vowed to dismantle.

Or, to adopt a slogan painted today on

the gable ends in Derry's working class Bogside area: "Sinn Féin Touts."

Because Taylor has filmed in the North over such a lengthy period, he can use, and did use adeptly in this documentary, his old footage as a story-telling device.

After showing testimonies to former terrorists turned politicians, or simply older heads looking back at their inglorious youth, Taylor seeks the views of his interviewees on how they conducted their lives.

It is compelling to listen to some participants express contrition on the one hand, and predictable yet disappointing to observe politicians avoid facing the full consequences of their past actions.

One of the sorrows of a depiction of Northern Ireland in recent decades is how little there is to admire in the political protagonists who now hold office.

If Progressive Unionist Party leader David Ervine had lived and had the chance to participate in a power-sharing arrangement, say for 10 years, it seems likely that his leadership would have given Northern Ireland's unionist community the stability it required.

Shortly before his death, Ervine stated that what he and his PUP colleagues strove to do, which was made difficult by the continuation of the Ulster Volunteer Force's massacres, was "an exploration of the future."

His thinking was a necessary and highly desirable manifestation of a new form of unionism capable of balancing the North politically.

Standing at the hustings during his 1983 electoral success in West Belfast, Gerry Adams proudly announced: "*Tiocfaidh ár Lá*" (Our day will come), a slogan as closely associated with the IRA and its United Ireland objectives as "In God We Trust" is with the U.S. dollar bill.

Yet Adams, again in this documentary, denies ever being a member of the IRA.

Martin McGuinness, who admits that he was an IRA volunteer until 1974, can be seen in archival footage chanting "the IRA" in Derry's Guildhall after votes were counted in an election in the 1980s.

Electorally, even in the warped environment of Northern Ireland, that position was difficult to sustain.

That is why John Hume outpolled McGuinness again and again in Derry and, after his historic electoral success in 1983, Adams failed to consistently hold his seat in West Belfast.

During one of Taylor's earliest visits to Derry, John Hume pointed out Martin McGuinness to him, saying that that was a man to watch.

All these years later, Peter Taylor surmises that, with McGuinness having embraced parliamentarianism, the shift towards a new politics is so profound that there may indeed be, in some distant future, a United Ireland.

If that means winning the war and if that was, in the estimation of some people, worth the lives lost, then it nevertheless must be conceded that constitutional politics ultimately succeeded where violence failed.

For a survey of the past two generations in the North of Ireland, Peter Taylor's book and film trilogy – *Republicans*, *Loyalists* and *Brits* – all three essential panels in the triptych, is an excellent place to start. Though it is a galling picture to behold.



THE MIAMI Showband were one of Ireland's most popular cabaret bands. Pictured above is the original line-up in 1972.

## Miami Showband killer John Somerville dies in Belfast aged 71

BELFAST – A loyalist killer involved in one of the most infamous attacks of the Troubles has died at the age of 71.

John Somerville was part of the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF) terrorist gang – four of whom were in the Ulster Defence Regiment (UDR) – that carried out a massacre of Miami Showband musicians on July 31, 1975.

On the night of the murders, the popular group had been driving back to the Republic following a concert in Banbridge, Co. Down.

They were travelling home to Dublin when a fake army patrol made up of Ulster Defence Regiment soldiers and Ulster Volunteer Force members stopped them at a bogus checkpoint outside Newry.

Band members were made to line up at the side of the road while attempts were made to plant a bomb on the bus. The device exploded prematurely, killing some of the would-be bombers.

It has been suggested that the plan had been for it to explode en route and kill the band, who would be branded IRA bomb smugglers.



A FORD ESCORT which was one of the cars used by loyalist gunmen, is left abandoned near the murder scene on July 31, 1975.

The other gunmen then opened fire on the band, murdering lead singer Fran O'Toole, guitarist Tony Geraghty, and trumpeter Brian McCoy. Two other band members, Des McAlea and Stephen Travers, were also injured but survived the atrocity.

Alongside Thomas Crozier, Somerville was handed a life sentence for his part in the attack, which also claimed the life of his brother Wesley and fellow UVF man Harris Boyle.

## Gerry Adams: Enda Kenny's handling of Northern Ireland 'incompetent'

BELFAST – Gerry Adams has slammed the Dublin Government as the "most incompetent ever" in dealing with Northern Ireland.

The Sinn Féin president also launched a blistering attack on Taoiseach Enda Kenny, who had criticised Adams' stance during the Stormont House Agreement talks as "outrageous."

Less than a month after the agreement, Adams blasted Kenny's administration as "the most deficient, inefficient and incompetent in dealing with the north."

And he repeated his assertion that Dublin's approach during the negotiations was "amateurish and hamfisted" and "little more than a charade."

Kenny told the Dail he wanted to take Adams "to task" for his attitude and said Deputy First Minister Martin McGuinness "was quite prepared to make much more progress."

Adams hit back, claiming, "As someone who has dealt with every Irish Government since Charlie Haughey's time, including another Fine Gael Government, this administration led by Mr. Kenny is the most deficient, inefficient and incompetent in dealing with the north."

# Northern Ireland parties agree £2 billion deal to secure power-sharing

BELFAST – An agreement was reached at the end of December on a range of disputes that had undermined power-sharing in Northern Ireland, following 11 weeks of discussions.

The deal announced in December has resolved destabilising wrangles over the administration's budget and its non-implementation of welfare reforms while establishing new structures to deal with the legacy of unsolved killings during the Troubles.

But the difficult questions of flying flags and controversial, often banned, marches have in effect been shelved with the creation of a special commission that will investigate individual localised issues such as a parade in North Belfast that has resulted in serious sectarian disorder.

The power-sharing government in Belfast will be handed £2 billion to cushion the impact of welfare reforms and cuts over the next decade that the parties finally agreed on.

The extra cash will also be used to fund a new institution to investigate the legacy of the Troubles, the treatment of victims from the conflict and the thousands of unsolved crimes from 1969 onwards.

All of the five main parties in the

Stormont executive indicated that they would be recommending that their membership endorse the agreement, which has 75 sections dealing with a range of contentious issues left over from the peace process.

The region may also be allowed to set its own corporation tax rate – closer to the level of the Irish Republic's 12.5 percent rate.

David Cameron said he was delighted to see a deal reached. "This agreement means the UK Government has been able to offer a significant financial package that opens the way for more prosperity, stability and economic security for Northern Ireland," he said.

The parties in Stormont were close to triggering an election as the two main forces in government – Sinn Fein and the Democratic Unionist party (DUP) argued over welfare reforms. Unable to set a budget last summer, the DUP threatened to pull down the government, claiming the administration was not viable.

The Irish foreign minister, Charlie Flanagan, who co-chaired the talks with the Northern Ireland secretary, Theresa Villiers, said that "in the bleak mid-winter" an agreement had been forged to bring about "brighter days in Northern Ireland."

First minister and DUP leader Peter Robinson calls the deal "monumental" with cash to ease welfare reforms that



THE POWERSHARING deal – which has been called the Stormont House Agreement – comes after 100 hours of formal talks between all parties and which First Minister Peter Robinson described as "an exhausting period."

could create 60,000 jobs and save the peace process.

Sinn Fein Deputy First Minister Martin McGuinness said the deal had the potential to give the Executive a "fresh start."

Flanked by party leader Gerry Adams, McGuinness hailed the fact that an agreement had been reached on long standing issues of division between the region's politicians. "I think it's been a remarkable achievement," he said

Significantly, the deal has found a resolution to the thorny and long running impasse over welfare reform implementation in the region. Essentially, it

overcomes nationalist concerns by enabling the Executive to establish and finance its own top-up fund to support those who will lose benefits when the policies are introduced.

But the centrist Alliance party and the nationalist Social Democratic and Labour party (SDLP) each expressed concerns over the details of the deal.

The Alliance leader and justice minister, David Ford, said that of the creation of a commission to deal with controversial marches "the can has been kicked down the road again."

But Ford said his party would still back the broader agreement, adding that the

Alliance "remains committed to holding others to account for the promises they have made."

The South Belfast MP and SDLP leader Alasdair McDonnell said that the deal fell short of the comprehensive agreement they had wanted.

McDonnell said it was disappointing that the agreement failed to include any new inquiry into the 1989 murder of the Belfast lawyer Pat Finucane and a bill of rights for Northern Ireland.

However, he said the SDLP would still back the agreement after consultations with the party's membership and also organisations representing victims of the Troubles.

Ulster Unionist party leader, Mike Nesbitt, said that while no party could give the agreement 100 percent, he would be recommending that his party give the deal "a fair wind".

The agreement does not mean that controversies such as the banned Orange Order parade along Belfast's Crumlin Road have been solved.

Orangemen and their supporters have organised a street camp since July 2013 in protest against the march ban.

Protests against the ban in that year triggered days of rioting and sectarian disorder along one of the most dangerous "sectarian interface areas" between the Protestant Shankill/Woodvale areas and the Catholic Ardoyne.

## Aer Lingus considering takeover bid from BA owner IAG

DUBLIN – Aer Lingus is considering a £1 billion takeover bid from International Airlines Group (IAG) – the parent company of British Airways and Iberia Airlines.

The Aer Lingus board said it was prepared to accept a sweetened offer worth 2.55 euros (£1.90) a share from IAG, although progress now hinges on major shareholders the Irish Government and Ryanair.

The government which holds a 25 percent stake in Aer Lingus wants reassurances over the key Dublin to Heathrow route.

Union leaders representing thousands of staff at the Dublin-based airliner said the proposed deal would leave the country's crucial air links to the U.S. and the UK in the hands of a London boardroom.

The Oireachtas (parliament) Joint Committee on Transport hearing into the proposed takeover heard Aer Lingus has 23 prime-time and two seasonal slots at Heathrow, which IAG would be better off using for lucrative transatlantic routes rather than flights to Ireland.

Within just a few years, IAG could scrap routes in and out of Ireland and use Aer Lingus' much sought after Heathrow slots for more lucrative long-haul flights, it was claimed.

Protecting Ireland's air links with Europe and the U.S. are vitally important in terms of inward investment, exports, business and tourism.

Furthermore, Irish TDs and senators were warned that any guarantees demanded in the event of a deal would be simply worthless as soon as the government gave up its stake in the national flag carrier.

Aer Lingus is the fourth busiest operator at London's Heathrow behind British Airways, Lufthansa and Virgin Atlantic.

In a bid to ratchet up pressure on the government, IAG has now offered of a five-year guarantee on the crucial Heathrow slots.

Willie Walsh, head of IAG, also committed to keep the Irish flag carrier headquartered in Dublin and an agreement never to sell its landing rights at the London airport.

IAG said it plans to operate Aer Lingus as a separate business with its own brand and management and to continue to provide connectivity to Ireland, while allowing it to benefit from being part of the larger airline group.

It said Aer Lingus would be part of the Oneworld Airline Alliance that it operates over the North Atlantic with Ameri-

can Airlines, taking advantage of Dublin's geographic position.

The prospect of a sale is a political mindfield for the government with an election within a year and a series of Labour Party members – the junior party in coalition – set against a sale unless they see cast iron guarantees on connectivity and jobs.

Currently, Aer Lingus directly employs 3,900 people, mostly in Dublin, with 2,100 of these described as ground staff in areas such as clerical, operative and back office roles.

There are also fears over what a sale would do to the airline's presence in Cork and Shannon.

The trade union SIPTU, which represents more than 50 percent of the workers at Aer Lingus, called for the sale to be blocked unless they get guarantees.

Captain Evan Cullen, president of Irish Airline Pilots Association, which represents 500 Aer Lingus pilots and owns a seven percent share in the airline, said management had a conflict of interest as they stand to make a windfall from any sale.

He said there was no other reason to sell a growing and profitable airline. "Aer Lingus does not need IAG, IAG needs Aer Lingus – that is a fact," he said.

Cullen said there would be an "incredible amount of financial gain" to a small number of managers involved in a takeover that would have huge benefits for IAG to the disadvantage of the country.



AER LINGUS mulls takeover offer from International Airlines Group (IAG) – the parent company of British Airways and Iberia Airlines.

*"We've highlighted a substantial risk of job losses at Aer Lingus if it's acquired by IAG."*

Aer Lingus is more profitable than IAG, on a like for like basis, has among the youngest fleets in Europe, the best agreements with air alliances, and one of the best hedged fuel contracts in Europe, according to Cullen.

The only benefit to Aer Lingus of a takeover would be better prices in buying new aircraft, but a strategic agreement with Etihad Airways on combined orders has already taken care of this, he said.

He also suspects IAG would be forced to sell off or mortgage Aer Lingus assets to pay for the takeover.

Cullen said British Airways' "neglect" of Scotland – which has a bigger population than Ireland and a similar sized

diaspora, yet only a fraction of its transatlantic traffic – did not bode well for Ireland in the event of a takeover.

Matt Staunton, of trade union IMPACT, which represents pilots, cabin crew and ground staff at Aer Lingus, said the acquisition would result in up to 1,200 jobs slashed in Ireland, while posing significant risks to the country's business and tourism.

Staunton told the hearing IAG's priority would always be its own commercial interests over Ireland's national interest.

"What really stands out in the statement by IAG is the complete absence of any reference to jobs," he said.

"We've highlighted a substantial risk of job losses at Aer Lingus if it's acquired by IAG. There's nothing in IAG's statement that lessens our concerns about Aer Lingus jobs."

Staunton said trade unions, chambers of commerce, the tourism industry and multinationals trading in Ireland have all voiced their opposition to the takeover.

A parliamentary committee in Dublin will continue to explore the potential fallout if the takeover goes ahead.



CATHRYN AND DANNY Quinn are Honorary Grand Marshals of Seattle's St. Patrick's Day Parade on March 14.



JUSTIN AND NATALIA McMahon with the soda bread loaves they baked at the 2014 soda bread class. This year's soda bread class will be held Saturday, February 28, at St. Patrick's Church Hall.



FORMER SEATTLE Deputy Mayor Tom Keefe, a/k/a St. Patrick, with U.S. National Boxing Champion Queen Underwood who boxed for the USA in the 2012 Olympics. St. Patrick and bodyguard Underwood will be in Seattle for the March 13 Seafair Pirates Landing of St. Patrick at south Lake Union.

## SEATTLE IRISH NEWS

### RECENT PASSINGS

- Harold Douglas (96), a native of Belfast, died in Seattle on January 29.
- Michael X. Nolan (84), a longtime proud member of the Irish Heritage Club, died in Seattle on January 16.
- Patricia Kuecker (79), a native of Dublin, died in Puyallup on January 3.
- Sister Anna Rourke, CSJP, a native of Co. Leitrim, died in Bellevue on December 24.
- Eva Salazar (66), the sister and sister-in-law of Eloise and Jim Cummins of Kennewick, died in Puyallup on December 23.
- Michael O'Sullivan, 90, whose father was from Co. Cork, died in Seattle on December 23.
- Julie Ann (Dennehy) Brown, 82, whose parents were from Co. Kerry, died in Tacoma on December 21.

### IRISH WEEK 2015 EVENTS IN SEATTLE

- **Saturday, February 28**  
– Irish soda bread cooking exhibition / class.
- **Saturday, March 7**  
– Irish soda bread contest.
- **Sunday, March 8**  
– Matt Talbot dinner
- **Friday, March 13**  
– St. Patrick's Day Mass for Peace, 10 AM  
– Mayor's Irish Week Proclamation Luncheon, Noon  
– Pirate's Landing of St. Patrick at South Lake Union  
– Green Stripe Laying on 4th Avenue
- **Saturday, March 14**  
– Irish Flag-Raising  
– St. Patrick's Day Parade on 4th Avenue, 12:30 PM  
– Irish Week Festival, Noon - 6 PM  
– Mayor of Galway Cocktail Reception
- **Sunday, March 15**  
– St. Patrick's Day Dash, 8:30 AM  
– Irish Week Festival, 10 AM - 6 PM  
– Irish Community Happy Hour, 5 PM  
– Friends of St. Patrick Banquet, 6:30 PM
- **Saturday, March 21** – Irish Genealogy Workshop, 9 AM – 5 PM

For all the details, visit [www.irishweek.org](http://www.irishweek.org) or call (253) 237-2811.

**GRAND MARSHALS** – Seattle's St. Patrick's Day Parade Committee has announced that Danny and Cathryn Quinn are the Honorary Grand Marshals of the 2015 St. Patrick's Day Parade.

Despite growing up in Co. Down about 20 miles from each other, Danny Quinn and Cathryn McPolin didn't meet until 1968 at an Irish party in Canada in Toronto, Ontario.

A year later they were married in New York and in 1975 moved to the Seattle area and settled in Edmonds.

Since arriving in Seattle 30 years ago, Danny and Cathryn have been heavily involved in Seattle's Irish community.

In the late Seventies and early Eighties, Cathryn served as secretary of the Irish Festivities Committee, the precursor to the Irish Heritage Club which then organized the St. Patrick's Day parade and Irish Week Proclamation Luncheon.

Danny was one of the original founders of the Seattle Gaels in 1979, and he also played Gaelic football on the team for



By  
JOHN  
KEANE

about 15 years.

He is still involved in the Irish community as an officer and past president of the Friends of St. Patrick in Seattle.

Over the years, they have been faithful members and supporters of anything Irish and their three children grew up enjoying parades, picnics and other Irish community events and activities, including Irish dancing and Gaelic football.

Now their grandchildren are also learning pride in their heritage. Congratulations to Danny and Cathryn on a well-deserved honor.

**IRISH AUTHOR** – To mark the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of WB Yeats, Irish author and writer Carmel Kelly is traveling from Ireland to Seattle this March to give talks on Yeats during the Irish Festival at the Seattle Center.

Carmel has a BA H.Dip LIS History and Women's Studies from University College Dublin and is currently with the Dún Laoghaire Rathdown Library Service.

She writes for children in both Irish and English, tours schools, libraries and book festivals around Ireland giving readings and writing workshops, and reviews books for Childrens Books Ireland.

**PARADE INVITES** – Seattle's St. Patrick's Day parade committee invites interested groups to apply to march and/or perform in the St. Patrick's Day parade on Saturday, March 14.

The parade is a family-friendly event which celebrates the Irish in us all. For more information, visit [www.irishclub.org](http://www.irishclub.org).

**SEAN-NÓS FESTIVAL** – The 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Sean-nós Northwest Festival is February 14-15 at The Evergreen State College in Olympia.

The festival offers two days of workshops on traditional sean-nós singing and set dancing, Irish language, music, and culture. No prior experience is needed.

Adult registration costs from \$40-\$110. Detailed information, including schedules, instructor bios, and online registration, are available at [www.seannos.org](http://www.seannos.org).

**GAA ONLINE** – Watch GAA games (Gaelic football, hurling and camogie) live from Ireland on your computer for 160 (about \$180) for a season pass, over 100 games total, by signing up for GAAGO at [www.gaago.ie](http://www.gaago.ie).

If you sign up by February 20, use code SGUS001 and the Seattle Gaels will receive a credit valued at \$20 for each pass purchased.

Any GAA game shown live on television in Ireland is available to watch on your computer using this service and the first games of the season were shown starting the weekend of January 31.

**DASH PARTY** – Irish Network Seattle, the Seattle Gaels and the Irish Heritage Club have arranged a St. Patrick's Day Dash sign-up party with special discount pricing not available online.

Join us for the Happy Hour Event at F X McRory's on Friday, February 20, 3-6 PM, to be part of the Irish community team and to receive the Irish team discount pricing!

Additionally, everyone who signs up will receive a \$5 coupon good at FX McRory's during the evening's Happy Hour, along with a VIP wristband for quicker access to the Dash Day beer garden at the Seattle Center Fisher Pavilion.

You can also pick up your bib and long-sleeve Dash T-shirt, so all you have to do on Sunday, March 15 is get to the start line.

**CELTIC HARP CLASSES** – A new five week term of beginning and intermediate Celtic Harp classes start Monday, February 23 in Seattle, and Tuesday, February 24 in Olalla.

Organized by the School of Magical Strings, the Seattle classes are held on Capitol Hill at 1655 - 10th Avenue E. For more information, visit [www.magicalstrings.com](http://www.magicalstrings.com).

**IRISH BASKETBALL** – Free tickets to Irish Night at Seattle University basketball at Key Arena are available on Saturday, February 28 with game time at 7:30 PM vs. Bakersfield.

Your friends and family are welcome to attend and all for free. To reserve your tickets, email your name and the number of tickets needed to [SUTickets@irishclub.org](mailto:SUTickets@irishclub.org) or call (425) 290-7839.

Tickets may be picked up any of the days prior to game time at T S McHugh's, First and Mercer.

**LONDON IRISH** – The London Irish ([www.london-irish.com](http://www.london-irish.com)) rugby football team will be in Seattle in May for some games versus the Seattle Saracens rugby football team.

LIRF is one of London's most famous clubs, founded in 1898 by a group of Irishmen who formed their own club for expatriate Irish.

Even though many of their players today may have little to no Irish connections, the club plays in green and white colors, and their mascot is an Irish Wolfhound called Digger. The team competes in the top division of English rugby union, the Aviva Premiership. More details later.

**LANGUAGE TEACHERS** – The North American Association of Celtic Language Teachers hold their 21<sup>st</sup> annual Conference in Portland, OR, from June 4-6 at Portland State University.

This year's theme "Celtic Languages: From the Viking Age to Modern Times" will explore the effects of the Viking 'invasions' of the Celtic Nations beginning in the Eighth Century.

The Association is a non-profit professional organization whose goal is to bring together Celtic language teachers and researchers in Canada and the United States and to foster contacts with others who are interested in promoting the teaching and learning of Celtic languages in North America. For more details, visit [www.naaclt.org](http://www.naaclt.org).

[Continued next page...]

# SEATTLE IRISH NEWS

**SEATTLE STARTUP** – Congratulations to Dubliner Mal Jones who was one of the judges at the recent Euro Seattle Startup weekend where budding entrepreneurs pitched their startup ideas and received feedback from their peers.

Teams which formed around the top dozen ideas (as determined by popular vote) then embarked on a 54 hour frenzy of business model creation, coding, designing, and market validation.

The weekend culminated with presentations in front of local entrepreneurial leaders along with critical feedback, and the possibility of being recognized as a promising new venture! See [www.euroseattle.startupweekend.org](http://www.euroseattle.startupweekend.org) for details.

**IRISH MUSIC WEEK** – Registration is now open for Cascadia Irish Music Week 2015 from July 19-25 at The Evergreen State College in Olympia.

Program director Randal Bays says

“Students hear the music all week long, played by the teaching staff and by fellow students.

“They participate in sessions, attend classes, hear talks by the teachers giving a wider context and historical background to the music.

“By the end of the week, students come away with some new tunes and a much deepened sense of how the music feels and sounds, as well as advice on technique from excellent musicians. All that plus a week of great fun with great people!”

Information and registration details can be found at [www.cascadiairish.org](http://www.cascadiairish.org).

**MISCELLANEOUS**

• Bremerton’s St. Patrick’s Day Parade is Saturday, March 14 at 10 AM starting from 6<sup>th</sup> & Pacific. Contact Tim Ryan at (360) 779-7667 for details.

• Seattle’s next Irish Book Club meeting is Tuesday, March 24. For details, e-mail [hudit@comcast.net](mailto:hudit@comcast.net).

# Fire Up the Oven and Get Out the Apron

## SLÁINTE – TO YOUR GOOD HEALTH!



By MAUREEN KEANE



**URPRISE** your family this St. Patrick’s Day with some authentic Irish

soda bread.

Between now and the big day, practice your basic baking skills so you impress all with your ability to produce the perfect loaf with confidence and ease.

Learning how to bake soda bread will also teach you a few basic baking skills.

Here in Seattle, we have our annual soda bread baking contest. *Sláinte* would love to see some of her readers enter the contest this year.

Contestants are limited to four ingredients: wheat flour, soda, salt, and sour milk.

You would think that with everyone using the same ingredients and most using the same recipe, that the breads in the soda bread contest would all taste the same. *Sláinte* wishes!

Here are the top five most important things to remember in baking soda bread.

1) For best results use a low protein (soft) wheat flour. Pastry flour, used to make cakes, is also low protein.

If you can’t find these flours, your next best choice is unbleached all-purpose flour which is a combination of low and high protein flours.

Avoid flours marked as hard wheat or winter wheat; they are high in protein and therefore high in gluten.

Gluten is the protein that traps the gas generated by yeast in yeasted breads.

However, since soda bread doesn’t use yeast as a leavening agent, gluten only makes soda bread tough and chewy instead of tender.

Also avoid flours marked “best for bread” or “bread flour,” they are high protein and meant for yeasted breads. Avoid all-purpose flour which contains baking powder.

2) Use the freshest ingredients you can find.

Don’t even think about using soda from that box of baking soda in the back of the fridge.

Yes, *Sláinte* knows it’s never been used but it’s not fresh either.

To test your baking soda’s effectiveness, mix a quarter teaspoon soda with two teaspoons of vinegar or lemon juice. The mixture should fizz immediately.

Flour should be fresh too. Buy from a local mill rather than using a dusty bag from a convenience store.

3) Measure and thoroughly mix ingredients. Making soda bread is a food chemistry experiment.

The amount of sodium bicarbonate (al-



kaline) must be just enough to balance the acidic ingredient (buttermilk).

Too much soda and the bread will taste bitter and “soapy” or be too dry.

Too much or too little acid and the bread will be too dense.

After combining the dry ingredients either sift them together or whisk the soda and salt into the flour.

Unevenly distributed soda is the cause of dark streaks in the bread.

Lumpy soda means less soda is available for carbon dioxide production causing too dense a loaf and who wants to bite into lumps of baking soda? Mix!

4) But do not mix or handle the dough for too long.

Mix the ingredients gently and just long enough to form a dough and immediately put the loaf into the oven.

Baking soda starts to react and release its gas as soon as it comes into contact with the sour milk.

Handle the dough too much and the gas will escape before the bread is baked.

The whole purpose of kneading bread dough is to form a network of gluten fibers for yeasted breads.

When yeast is not used to produce carbon dioxide, the gluten only makes the bread tough and chewy.

5) Use the correct ingredients.

Use baking *soda*, also called sodium bicarbonate or bread soda, and not baking *powder* which is a combination of soda and an acid (usually cream of tartar).

When you use both sour milk and bak-

ing powder, your dough now contains too much acid which reduces the amount of carbon dioxide gas produced.

Use flour and not self-rising flour. The latter contains more baking powder.

Use buttermilk or sour milk and not just plain milk.

With no acid in the dough, the soda is not activated and no carbon dioxide is produced.

You can sour your own milk by adding one tablespoon of lemon juice to two cups of milk.

Once you have the basic recipe down, you can start to try other more complicated ones.

An example of a basic soda bread recipe is this one from *The Ballymaloe Bread Book* by Tim Allen:

- 3 ¼ cups unbleached white flour
- 1 level teaspoon baking soda
- 1 level teaspoon salt
- 14 oz. buttermilk

For more information on how to transform these ingredients into soda bread, go to Maureen Keane’s website at [KeaneNutrition.com](http://KeaneNutrition.com).

To read about the history of soda bread try these sites: [www.sodabread.info/history](http://www.sodabread.info/history) or [www.europeancuisines.com/Peters-Mums-Soda-Bread-Recipe](http://www.europeancuisines.com/Peters-Mums-Soda-Bread-Recipe).

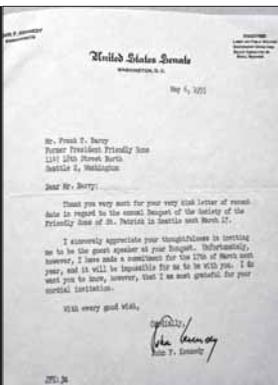
*Sláinte*’s favorite meal in Ireland is still tea, bread (soda), and butter.

Maureen Keane MS CN is the author of 14 books on health and diet and a member of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. Read her blog at [keanenutrition.com](http://keanenutrition.com).



A LIVELY CROWD attended the Irish Women’s Christmas dinner on January 11 at F X McRory’s in Seattle. (L-R) Josephine Melly, Karen Doran, Sharon Gillin, Niki Thornton Walsh, Marisa Westphall, Liz Shorten and Dolores Doherty with Mike McQuaid at rear right.

A 1955 LETTER signed by then-Senator John F. Kennedy will be among the items auctioned at the Friends of St. Patrick 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary banquet on Sunday, March 15, at the Knights of Columbus in Seattle. The Friends were founded in Seattle in 1941 and guests at the Diamond Jubilee Banquet will include Seattle Mayor Ed Murray, Galway Mayor Donal Lyons, and Washington Lt. Governor Brad Owens.






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P.O. Box 75123, Seattle, WA 98175 [www.irishseattle.com](http://www.irishseattle.com)

## 20 years since disappearance of Manic Street Preacher musician

CARDIFF – It is now 20 years since Welsh musician Richey Edwards of the Manic Street Preachers mysteriously disappeared just prior to embarking on a North American tour.

He was known for his politicized and intellectual songwriting which, combined with an enigmatic and eloquent character, has assured him cult status, and he is frequently cited as one of the best lyricists of all time.

Edwards disappeared on February 1, 1995 and was declared presumed deceased in November 2008.

The ninth album by Manic Street Preachers, *Journal for Plague Lovers*, which was released on May 18, 2009, is composed entirely of lyrics left behind by Edwards.

Much has been made about his sudden disappearance – which came against a backdrop of personal turmoil.

In 1994, Manic Street Preachers released their third album and dark masterpiece *The Holy Bible*.

With 70 percent of the words written by Edwards, a man who once famously carved the words “4 Real” into his arm in response to a journalist who questioned his band’s integrity, many sought to draw parallels between his state of mind and songs on subjects such as prostitution, anorexia and the horrors of the Holocaust.

In the run up to the LP’s release, Edwards was admitted to Whitchurch Psychiatric Hospital in Cardiff before being checked into the Priory Clinic as his alcoholism and self-harming spiralled out-of-control.

Less than two months on from smashing his guitar to smithereens at a sold out London show in Christmas, a now shaven haired Edwards appeared to be on the mend.

As well as writing lyrics for new Manic Street Preachers songs, the ever-professional and punctual university graduate prepared for an upcoming promotional tour of the U.S.

He and his band’s singer James Dean Bradfield checked into London’s Embassy Hotel ahead of a flight across the Atlantic the next day. But the following morning when Bradfield went to rouse his bandmate, no answer came from room 516.

When hotel staff opened up the room, they found the room empty – save for a handful of personal items.

His sister Rachel Elias said that immediately sent alarm bells ringing.

“Despite what people may think, his disappearance really was out of character for him. He was always constantly there, if not physically, in conversation with you,” she added.

“Even when he was touring, we always knew where he was. The idea he was acting out and walked off as to say ‘I’m not getting on this flight’ was not him.

“He was always passionate and professional about the band. He had never done anything like this before.”

The days that followed were pure agony for the family as well as his bandmates – who were all childhood friends.

Eventually his abandoned silver Vaux-



RACHEL ELIAS has spoken about the pain her family has suffered following the 1995 disappearance of her brother Richey Edwards of the Manic Street Preachers.

hall Cavalier was found in South Gloucestershire, however days and months passed with no real progress on his whereabouts.

Already emotionally exhausted by what had happened, his family said they were left further drained by the ordeal to come.

Elias said, “He was reported missing in Paddington Green Police Station because the hotel was nearby, yet his car was found near the Severn Bridge which involved Avon and Somerset Police and at some point he had returned to his flat in Cardiff which involved South Wales Police.

“Then there were the false gossip and rumours to deal with.

“People said all sorts of things in the initial stages – that he was hiding out at a fan’s house or that we knew where he was. It was just totally fabricated,” said Elias.

“That hampered the police’s involvement, they had to explore statements like that rather than just be focused on the investigation.”

However, Edwards’ sister refused to give in – tirelessly campaigning and working so other families going through

the same hell as her would be met with fewer barriers.

“Things have definitely improved. People have family liaison officers now and improvements have also been made in the way the police communicate with families of missing people,” Elias added.

As well as promoting the charity Missing People, which helped her family so much, she has also campaigned for changes in the law to those seeking to have their relative declared presumed dead when a body has not been found.

Elias wants people to remember her brother as a brilliant writer than a mere tragic figure of ‘cult of Richey’ caricature.

“The fact that he was really intelligent and sensitive and that he was the force behind the band their lyrics just seems to get forgotten. We’ve always been tremendously proud of Richard.

“He always excelled at whatever he did at whether that was at school, college and university or with the band.

“I suppose his legacy lives on in a way through the songs he wrote for the band – but his work is often set against the backdrop of his disappearance and his problems.”

## Royals decline gay marriage campaign

LONDON – The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge have declined to get involved in a campaign to pardon tens of thousands of gay men convicted alongside codebreaker Alan Turing whose story was told in the film *The Imitation Game*.

Benedict Cumberbatch and Stephen Fry are among the high profile campaigners who signed an open letter asking William and Kate to support the campaign.

In a letter to the British Government and published in *The Guardian*, campaigners call for the royal family to act and convince the government to pardon all those convicted under the outdated law.

A pardon could wipe clean the records of 49,000 other men prosecuted because of their sexuality, including 15,000 still alive today.

The letter states, “The UK’s homophobic laws made the lives of generations of gay and bisexual men intolerable.

“It is up to young leaders of today, including the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge, to acknowledge this mark on our history and not allow it to stand.

“We call upon Her Majesty’s government to begin a discussion about the possibility of pardoning all the men, alive or deceased, who like Alan Turing were convicted.”

Turing led efforts to crack the Nazi Enigma code and was hailed by Winston Churchill as the person who “made the single biggest contribution to the allied victory in World War II.”

He was convicted of gross indecency in 1952 and was chemically castrated. He took his own life in 1954.

Turing was given an official apology by the British Government in 2009, when the then prime minister, Gordon Brown, spoke of the “appalling treatment” he had been subjected to. Four years later, the Queen granted him an official pardon.



THE LUXURY Cromlix House hotel near Dunblane, where tennis star Andy Murray and fiancée Kim Sears are to marry on April 11.

## Date set for Andy Murray and Kim Sears wedding

DUNBLANE, Scotland – Tennis star Andy Murray is to marry his fiancée Kim Sears on April 11, it has been confirmed.

The wedding will take place at Murray’s Cromlix House hotel, close to his home town of Dunblane in central Scotland.

The couple, who have been together for about 10 years, got engaged last November.

Murray, a former Wimbledon and U.S. Open champion, bought Cromlix House for £1.8 million in 2013. It has since undergone a major refurbishment programme.

The former country house has been converted into a 15-room luxury hotel, which has its own 30-seat chapel and a restaurant overseen by legendary French chef Albert Roux.

It was named Scottish hotel of the year last year, just weeks after reopening its doors to guests.

In 2010, Cromlix hosted the wedding between Murray’s tennis-playing older brother, Jamie, and Alejandra Gutierrez, at which Andy acted as best man.

Murray and Sears, who are both 27, are understood to be planning a private wedding at Cromlix, with no magazine deals and only close friends and family present.

In a characteristically solemn remark on his Twitter account, he said, “This is not news,” although it was not immediately clear whether he was referring to media reports of his wedding date.



ANDY MURRAY and his fiancée Kim Sears have announced a wedding date after 10 years.

The date of the wedding was confirmed just days after Murray lost to Novak Djokovic in the final of the Australian Open.

Murray joked during an on-court interview at the tournament that he might wear a kilt with no underwear at the wedding.

Sears was caught on camera apparently swearing during her fiancé’s semi-final victory over Tomas Berdych, prompting comments on social media.

She laughed off the incident by wearing a “Parental Advisory - Explicit Content” T-shirt during the final.

Sussex-born Sears, who is the daughter of former Lawn Tennis Association head of women’s tennis Nigel Sears, met Murray at the U.S. Open in 2005.

She was once described by future mother-in-law Judy Murray as “the best thing to happen to Andy.”



PHOTO: Allstar/Black Bear Pictures/Sportphoto Ltd. BENEDICT CUMBERBATCH in his role as Alan Turing in *The Imitation Game*.

The letter continues, “Turing was one of the greatest heroes of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, a man whose work on the machines that deciphered the Enigma codes helped win World War II and who was pivotal in the development of modern computers.”

Turing was one of 49,000 men convicted of indecency under laws banning gay sex. He admitted in court he had formed a relationship with a friend, Arnold Murray, and was offered a choice between a prison term or undergoing a course of drug treatments aimed at controlling his libido.

## Guinness kidnapper dies after heart attack

DUBLIN – A criminal who was involved in one of the highest profile kidnappings in the Republic's history died suddenly on January 6 this year.

Michael Cunningham (65) is understood to have suffered a massive heart attack at his home in Ballyfermot, West Dublin.

In 1986, along with his younger brother John Cunningham, who is nicknamed the 'Colonel', Michael gained notoriety for the kidnapping of Jennifer Guinness. Her husband John was then the millionaire chairman of the Guinness Mahon Bank in Dublin.

The Cunninghams were arrested with associate Anthony Kelly after gardai surrounded a house in Waterloo Road in south Dublin eight days after Guinness had been abducted at gunpoint in her home in Howth.

For eight days they held Guinness in five different locations. At times she was made to travel in the boot of a car and in a cardboard box. She was chained to a tree and to a bed and at one stage was handcuffed to one of her captors.

The gang, armed with handguns and grenades, claimed to be members of the republican movement and demanded a multi-million pound ransom for her safe return.

However, a specialist garda unit tracked the kidnappers down to a safe house in Dublin's upmarket Waterloo Road. The gang gave themselves up after a tense stand-off with armed members of the



JENNIFER GUINNESS was rescued on the morning of April 17, 1986 following an eight-day kidnapping ordeal.

now-defunct Special Task Force and Central Detective Unit.

Michael Cunningham was jailed for 14 years while his brother John, the mastermind behind the plot, was jailed for 17 years. Kelly, who died in 2005, also received 14 years.

The brothers, who were originally from Ballyfermot, had cut their teeth operating with key figures in the Dublin underworld.

They had also been involved in armed robberies in Dublin and in the north of England.

At the time of their arrest in April 1986, the Cunninghams and Kelly were wanted for questioning by police in Leeds in connection with the murder two years earlier of Sergeant John Speed.

## Pope orders bishops to cooperate with sex abuse commission

VATICAN CITY – Pope Francis has ordered Roman Catholic bishops around the world to fully cooperate with a commission he set up to protect children from sexual abuse by clerics and to give the issue top priority even if it unearths new scandals.

The pope sent the letter to the bishops and heads of religious institutions a day before the commission, which he established last year, was due to hold its first full meeting on February 5.

In the letter, the pope says, "Everything possible must be done to rid the Church of the scourge of the sexual abuse of minors and to open pathways of reconciliation and healing for those who were abused."

"Families need to know that the Church is making every effort to protect their children ...priority must not be given to any other kind of concern, whatever its nature, such as the desire to avoid scandal, since there is absolutely no place in



POPE FRANCIS talks during his Wednesday general audience in Paul VI hall at the Vatican.

ministry for those who abuse minors," he said.

One of the members of the commission, Marie Collins of Ireland, herself a victim of sexual abuse, said that commission members had asked the pope to write a letter to thwart any resistance from bishops to its work.

The 1.2 billion member Roman Catho-

lic Church has been hit by scandal involving the sexual abuse of children by priests around the world in the past 15 years.

Since his election in March, 2013, Francis has several times vowed zero tolerance for offenders but victims of abuse want him to do more and make bishops who allegedly covered up the abuse accountable.

## Foreign law enforcement agencies allowed to tap Irish calls

DUBLIN – Foreign law enforcement agencies will be sanctioned to tap Irish calls and emails under a new statutory instrument signed into law by Justice Minister Frances Fitzgerald last year. Companies who refuse to comply with

an intercept order could be brought before a private court. *The Irish Times* reports that the tapping can only be used in cases where an investigation is underway and cannot be used at random.

## PSNI pursuing loyalist's Boston College tapes

BELFAST – Northern Ireland Police are seeking interviews a former loyalist prisoner gave to a U.S. university project as part of investigations into murder, attempted murder and robbery, the High Court heard.

A judge was told the force requires tapes of Winston "Winkie" Rea's account to Boston College in order to meet its legal duty to probe serious crimes.

Rea has issued proceedings in a bid to stop the PSNI obtaining the material. His lawyers argue a handover would be an unlawful intrusion on his privacy, based on no evidence of any wrongdoing on his part.

Last month he secured a temporary injunction as police were set to board a plane for America to get the tapes.

He was among dozens of loyalists and republicans who provided testimonies to researchers compiling an oral history of the Troubles, on the understanding they would be released only after they died.

In 2013, detectives investigating the murder of Jean McConville secured the transcripts of former IRA woman Dolours Price.

Rea, a son-in-law of the late UVF leader Gusty Spence, is now seeking to judicially review the Public Prosecution Service's attempts to obtain his interviews.



## Magna Carta copies brought together

LONDON – The four original surviving copies of the Magna Carta have been brought together under the same roof for the first time.

The document – one of the first steps in the journey towards parliamentary democracy – will go on show at The British Library in central London as part of its 800<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

More than 40,000 people entered a public ballot for the chance to see them with 1,215 winning the opportunity to visit the display.

The documents will be at the library for three days before they are taken to the House of Lords for another day, before two are returned to the library and the others go back to their homes at Lincoln and Salisbury Cathedrals.

On June 15, 1215 an embattled King John met the English barons who had backed his failed war against the French and were seeking to limit his powers.

The weakened monarch had little choice but to witness the sealing of what some say is the world's most important document, one that, symbolically at least, established a new relationship between

the king and his subjects.

Thus the original Magna Carta, 3,500 words in Latin on a calfskin parchment, came into being, its enduring relevance confirmed in the many legal cases in which it is cited today.

In a joint statement, the library and the cathedrals said, "King John could surely never have anticipated the enduring global legacy of Magna Carta when he agreed to its terms in 1215.

"Eight hundred years later, the international interest and excitement about this unification event is testament to the extraordinary significance and symbolic power of these four manuscripts," reads the statement.

"We are thrilled to be staging this moment in history together, as partners, at the start of the 800<sup>th</sup> anniversary year. For each of our institutions, this unique event marks the beginning of our own celebrations in 2015.

"The British Library, Lincoln Cathedral and Salisbury Cathedral will all be staging exhibitions and events later this year to mark the 800<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the sealing of this iconic document."



PHOTO: Universal History Archive/Un/REX

A WOODCUT FROM 1864 depicts King John and the barons signing the Magna Carta on the banks of the Thames at Runnymede on June 15, 1215.

## Taoiseach rules out Sinn Fein coalition

DUBLIN – Taoiseach Enda Kenny has categorically ruled out coalition with Fianna Fail or Sinn Fein after the next election in the Republic.

In his strongest rebuke yet to the idea of going into power with Fianna Fail, Kenny said he could see no circumstances where the party "should be given the opportunity to get back into the driving seat of government."

"I do not want to see this country handed back to those that wrecked it," he told RTE's *This Week*.

Speaking about Sinn Fein, he said they were nothing more than "a protest party" that it did not want to be in government.

Kenny gave some consideration to the idea of Fine Gael/Labour/Independents after the next election, adding that he had heard a number of "constructive suggestions" from independents.

Still, he said that Fine Gael would be putting up a "strong fight" in the next election, and that voters would see that the current coalition was the only parties with "a clarified agenda" to govern the Republic for the next three to five years.

# New Meegan Business Centre rises from the ashes after going through hell and red tape



**COQUITLAM** – On September 6, 2012, the long established offices of Mary Ann Meegan Insurance on Austin Avenue in Coquitlam burned to the ground.

Mary Ann's son Peter, who is manager of the business, held his mother's hand as they stood on the sidewalk and surveyed the pile of smoking rubble that was once their office.

Peter vowed to rebuild a bigger and better building even though they had just lost everything....computers and all their files.

As Peter relates, they didn't even have a pencil to start over, but within five days they had moved into a temporary office and were soon up and going again.

Peter also started working on the tedious and frequently frustrating task of securing all the necessary permits and documents to rebuild.

He credits a lot of his determination, pride of culture, and work ethic to his Irish mother, Mary Ann who is 86-years-old, and his father Jimmy who passed away in 1995.

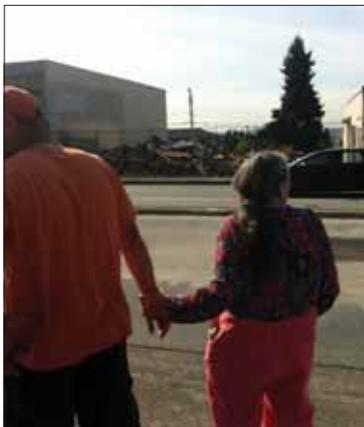
Jimmy and Mary Ann immigrated from Dundalk, County Louth in Ireland in 1957 and 1959 respectively, settling in the small coastal town of Ocean Falls in British Columbia.

Jimmy worked for Crown Zellerbach (paper products) and Mary Ann opened her own insurance agency, operating out of the family home. Mary Ann and Jimmy had four children: Brigid, Michael, James, and Peter.

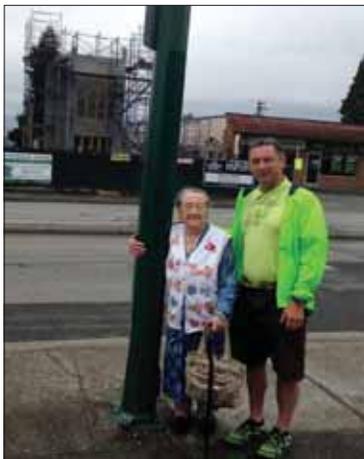
In 1972, Jimmy transferred to Crown Zellerbach's Fraser Mills operation and the family moved to Coquitlam. In 1973, Mary Ann opened her own insurance business at 1060 Austin Avenue.

Fast forward from the day Mary Ann

By **CATHOLINE BUTLER**



**DEVASTATED** following the fire, Peter and his mother Mary Ann survey the rubble that was once the Meegan Insurance agency.



**THE WORK** begins on construction of the Meegan Business Centre on Austin Avenue.

Meegan Insurance office burned down to February 28, 2015.

After all the trials and tribulations of the past, this is the day when Peter will be singing an Irish song and once again holding his mother's hand.

This time they will stand on the same sidewalk looking at the beautiful new three-story Meegan Business Centre that will be dedicated to Mary Ann and her late husband Jimmy.

These past two and a half years have been challenging with bureaucratic delays and red tape. but incredibly the luck of the Irish paid off. On St. Patrick's Day, last March 17, Peter finally got his building permit and a green light from Coquitlam City Hall to proceed.

The official opening date of February 28 for the Meegan Business Centre is an auspicious one for the family.

Peter explains, "February 28 would have been my dad's birthday, my birthday is the 29<sup>th</sup>, my brother's birthday is March 1. My dad died 20 years ago on March 1 and my brother died the same year in April. So, it's the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of their deaths.

"Normally, what I do on the anniversary of their death is take a can of beer to the graveyard. I have a few sips and then I pour it on the graves to share with my dad and brother.

"But, this year, I want to give my mom the keys to the new Meegan Business Centre. Afterwards we can go to the graveyard and say 'Dad, we did it'."

Speaking about the grand opening celebration at the Meegan Centre, Peter says "How do we plan for a party like this?"

At the last big celebration for their 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary there were hundreds of guests along with an Irish band in the office and the place was packed.

"That's what we'll be doing on February 28," said Peter. "We'll have Irish music and balloons and we're inviting all our customers and friends to join us for the opening of the Meegan Business Centre at 1060 Austin Avenue."



**PETER MEEGAN** had the best St. Patrick's Day ever last year when he was finally granted planing permission to proceed with construction of the new Meegan Business Centre. He credits his Irish parents Mary Ann and Jimmy for a lot of his determination and tenacity to make the project a reality.



**THE NEW** Meegan Business Centre officially opens in Coquitlam on Saturday, February 28 and Peter Meegan wants everyone to come and join in the grand opening celebration.

## Tributes for Bernard Jordan at the funeral of the 'Great Escaper'

**LONDON** – Mourners gathered at the funeral service of a war veteran who sprang to international prominence when he left his care home to attend last year's 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary D-Day events.

Bernard Jordan died aged 90 on December 30 – six months after earning the nickname the 'Great Escaper' for his cross-Channel escapade last summer.

Seven days after Jordan's death, his wife Irene also died, aged 88, prompting tributes to the couple who it emerged left their entire £600,000 es-

tate to the Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI).

The couple, who did not have children, had been married for 59 years and celebrated their golden wedding anniversary in 2005.

Around 150 mourners, including war veterans and RNLI members, packed St. Michael and All Angels Church in Brighton, East Sussex, for the couple's joint funeral.

Brighton and Hove mayor Brian Fitch paid tribute to Jordan's exploits in France, saying they showed his "determination, focus, selflessness and commitment" to honour a cause he believed in.

Bernie Jordan's disappearance to Normandy last June 5 sparked a police search that led to him being catapulted to international attention.

He had a great adventure crossing the channel on the ferry where he shared hugs, dances and songs with a Forties-style vocal harmony trio called The Candy Girls.

The Candy Girls were providing entertainment on the crossings for Brittany Ferries and hit it off with Bernie when they sang his favourite song *You Are My Sunshine*.

Bernard told the entertainers about his wartime heroics, which included diving to a sunken German submarine to salvage a decoder which helped identify other enemy vessels.

His whereabouts emerged only when a younger veteran phoned later that night to say he had met the senior and he was safe.

Royal Navy veteran Jordan told reporters on his return that his aim was to



**BERNARD JORDAN** gave his caregivers the slip to attend D-Day commemorations in Normandy last June.

remember his fallen "mates." He had decided to join British veterans, most making their final pilgrimage to revisit the scene of their momentous invasion, to remember the heroes of the liberation of Europe.

Some 156,000 Allied troops landed on the five invasion beaches on June 6, 1944, sparking an 80-day campaign to liberate Normandy involving three mil-

lion troops and costing 250,000 lives.

Jordan had hoped to return to Normandy this June. Following his journey last summer, Brittany Ferries offered him free crossings to D-Day events for the rest of his life.

On his 90<sup>th</sup> birthday, days after he returned from his caper, he was inundated with more than 2,500 birthday cards from around the world.