

the celtic connection

ISSUE 24 VOLUME 4

Proudly Serving Celts in North America Since 1991

MAY 2015



COVER ARTWORK: By Deirdre Keohane. [More about the artist on page 2]

THE FESTIVAL OF BELTAINÉ (also known as Lá Bealtaine, Beltany, Bealltainn, Beltain, Beltaine, Boaltinn, Boaldyn, Belotenía and Gwyl Galan Mai) celebrated on May Day the 1st of May marks the beginning of summer in the ancient Celtic calendar. The festival was marked with the lighting of bonfires and the movement of animal herds away from settlements to summer pastures. It is one of the four great Celtic festivals that include Samhain, Imbolc, and Lughnasad.

Eternity Found in the Twilight of Beltaine

By CYNTHIA WALLENTINE

Neither ahead of time, nor behind it, was this article written.

Twilight on May Eve shapes itself to letter, letter shapes to word.

Words like strung marsh marigolds mean something. In the working of it, little wonder so many ideas remain just notions.

The moon, rising between evening clouds in the east, will be full in a few days. Though the world has greened, leaves everywhere here are still stepping from the wood.

Elsewhere, the hawthorn blooms. The sun, though in set, is bright, clear, and young. In my space, the debris of winter remains.

One of the traditional tasks of an Irish May Day is the mending of fences, the repair of boundaries.

Tomorrow, I undertake the work of cleaning out chaff, pulling fast-growing weeds, and nurturing slowly emerging plants.

Shoring up and spreading out at the same time. Building and losing boundaries is the great work of life.

But tonight is Beltaine, expansion of spring to summer, opposite the contraction of autumn into winter at Samhain.

Such a very long time, it seems, since last Beltaine.

With enough years and seasons behind, it is easy to see the stories of life – the pain, the pleasure, the work – as curious actions against a background just coming into view.

The hands fall to the lap at the enormity of it.

On this evening in centuries past, and into tonight, bonfires dot hilltops, candles illuminate rooms, the imagination catches fire.

Though the sun stretches long, Beltaine belongs to the rising moon, the lamp of the night.

Between inner and outer fire, between lunar heaven and dusty earth, a co-

creative divinity stirs. Then as now, the greenwood whispers welcome as shadows deepen.

For in moonlight, limits and loss fall away and away. Even in solitude, the memories of life crowd in, beckoning, dancing, and laughing again for just a spell. Though spirits are abundant on this night, shades are few.

Drift your mind deeply enough into the fire and feel the darkness.

Gaze into the darkness without fear, and feel the release, the warmth, the continuance after this world. It is all there on this night.

Birds building nests fly home, the breeze picks up, thoughts thicken into the sum of a life. And the souls of those gone since last Beltaine, always missed, forever near.

In this season to the next, and from there into beyond, from life into death, from twilight that is neither day nor night. From between...Blessed Be.

[Read more on page 10]



BRITISH ELECTION: David Cameron wins surprise outright majority for Conservative Party. He is pictured above with his wife Samantha on the steps of Number 10 Downing Street after meeting with Queen Elizabeth at Buckingham Palace.

[More on page 7]



NICOLA STURGEON has been a revelation as Scotland's first female First Minister writes Harry McGrath from Edinburgh. Her party is celebrating their crushing victory in the British national election. The Scottish National Party (SNP) obliterated its opponents, taking 56 of Scotland's 59 seats in the Westminster parliament. This marked a spectacular gain from the six seats the SNP won in the last UK election in 2010.

[More on page 11]



IRELAND votes on a divisive same-sex marriage referendum on May 22. Taoiseach Enda Kenny (L) has campaigned to reassure voters same-sex marriage will not diminish church or faith-based unions.

[More on pages 14 & 16]

WIN FREE TICKETS OR CDS

Win a weekend pass to the **Vancouver Folk Music Festival** at Jericho Beach Park, Vancouver, on July 17-19 (see page 3 for details). Entry by May 29. Mark your entry: VFMF.

Win a free autographed CD of **Natalie MacMaster & Donnell Leahy's** new CD, *One* (see page 3 for details). Entry by May 29. Mark your entry: CD.

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.

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**TWO IRISH INSTRUCTORS
BRING GAELIC FOOTBALL
TO VANCOUVER SCHOOLS**

*Read our interview
with Lyn Savage
SEE PAGE 22*

Heartbreaking tributes to murdered Irish student Karen Buckley

MALLOW, Co. Cork – The north Cork town of Mallow ground to a standstill as enormous crowds gathered to express their sympathy with the Buckley family on the heart-breaking loss of their only daughter.

Some had even travelled from Scotland to show their support for the Buckley family, who have endured, as Mourneabbey parish priest Father Joe O'Keeffe admitted, "every parent's worst nightmare."

The removal was one of the biggest ever in Mallow and was marked by guards of honour from Karen's former schools, St. Mary's secondary and her nursing classmates from the University of Limerick.

A qualified nurse, 24-year-old Karen was studying at Glasgow Caledonian University for a masters degree in occupational health therapy when she went missing after a night out in the city on April 12.

Following a massive search operation, her body was found at a farm north of the city four days later. Courier firm operator Alexander Pacteau (21) has been charged with Karen's murder.

Karen's body was flown home to Ireland from Glasgow via a special Aer



KAREN BUCKLEY'S brothers carry her coffin from the funeral home in Mallow, Co. Cork.



ENORMOUS outpouring of sympathy for the family of the late Karen Buckley following her murder in Scotland.

Lingus Regional / Stobart Air flight on April 25.

The coffin was shouldered by Karen's heartbroken father, John (62), and her brothers, Brendan (32), Kieran (28) and Damien (27). Her devastated mother, Marian (61), was close by as it left the funeral home.

Her funeral Mass was held at the Church of St. Michael the Archangel, Analeen, with burial afterwards alongside her grandparents at St. John's Cemetery, Burnfort.

Earlier about 300 people attended a vigil in Glasgow's George Square for the tragic student.

Newry set to play host to annual Great Famine tribute

DUBLIN – The annual famine commemoration will take place this September in Northern Ireland for the first time, it has been announced.

Newry, Co. Down, will host the event which has been rotated between the four provinces since its inception eight years ago after what was described as a strong representation.

Heather Humphreys, Ireland's Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, said, "The annual famine commemoration is a solemn tribute to those who suffered in the most appalling circumstances that prevailed during the Great Famine."

"While the scale of suffering was greater in some parts of Ireland than in others, all parts of the island suffered great loss of life and the destruction of families and communities through emigration."

Northern Ireland Culture Minister Caral Ni Chuilin said there was cross party political support for staging the commemoration north of the border.

She said, "The famine was a time of unspeakable horror and hardship throughout Ireland. It was not held at bay by creed or boundaries drawn on any map."

"It is important that we take time to remember the plight of our ancestors who died from starvation and disease or who were forced into exile, never to return to their native shores."

"Nor can we forget those who died on the famine ships as they tried to escape

their plight in Ireland or the grief and pain of those who were left behind.

"No part of the island was spared the terrible atrocity of 'an gorta mor' (the great hunger) and it is fitting that the annual famine commemoration should be held in the north for the first time."

Ireland's Great Hunger Remembered at a Special Mass

VANCOUVER – A Mass will be offered at Holy Rosary Cathedral, 646 Richards Street in Vancouver, at 11 AM on Monday, May 18 for victims of Ireland's Great Hunger of 1845-48.

The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass will be celebrated by Father Buttner in memory of all who perished during Ireland's Great Hunger.

It has been requested by the Ireland Canada Monument Society to assist the Irish Hunger Committee who have organized similar masses in the USA and Ireland to coincide with the 170th anniversary of the beginning of Ireland's Great Hunger.

Over one million Irish died of starvation or starvation related diseases in the years 1845-51.

The Monument Society conveys sincere thanks to Father Pablo Santa Maria at Holy Rosary Cathedral for his assistance.

Prussin Music Summer Camps for Kids, Teens and Adults

VANCOUVER – Prussin Music, a family-owned, community-based music store in Vancouver, is pleased to announce that they are now open for registrations for their fourth annual summer camps season.

This year, Prussin Music is offering a bigger selection than ever before of fun and educational music camps for kids, teens and adults.

Have you ever thought about learning

the violin, or wanted to experience playing in an ensemble? Or, maybe your kids want to experience ensemble playing.

Perhaps you have a budding young songwriter, or a need to get those hyper but bored kids with too much free time to rock out at one of their rock camps.

Perhaps you have a budding jazz superstar. Or maybe you're finally ready to play your ukulele in front of others.

Prussin offers those camps for first time

to intermediate fiddlers. They even offer camps in music theory and ear training for those working towards their RCM Exams. There's lots for a family to explore.

Drop in and visit their store located at 3607 West Broadway in Vancouver. Check out their summer camps page on their website: www.prussinmusic.com/music-school-mainpage/summer-camps, or call (604)736-3036 for more details or to register.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Our cover artist this month is Deirdre Keohane, a first generation Irish-Canadian who recently returned from Co. Cork Ireland where she worked as an artist for the last 16 years.

Deirdre has a BFA from Crawford College of Art, Cork and in 2006 graduated with her H.Dip in Art Education.

During her time in Ireland she was very involved in many local community art projects and founded the Clonakilty Community Arts Centre. In 2012 she designed Mary Black's latest CD cover, *Stories from the Steeples*.

Alongside of her community work, Deirdre has continued to paint and exhibit her oils on canvas and her magical work reflects her surroundings.

Deirdre's work has also been collected by Irish Office of Public Works and many private buyers in Ireland and North America.

Recently, her artwork was chosen by the Clonakilty Town Council as a gift for the visiting President of Ireland, Michael D. Higgins.

She will return to Ireland in August this year to present an exhibition of her work in Allihies Copper Mine Museum in Co. Cork.

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Husband and wife team join forces to create 'best fiddle album ever recorded'



NATALIE MacMaster is a globally acclaimed Cape Breton fiddle player who has sold over 200,000 albums.

Donnell Leahy is the incendiary musical leader of the double platinum selling, festival headlining Celtic family group Leahy.

The two musical prodigies met as teenagers, found individual massive career success, and eventually reconnected and were married, becoming the first couple of Celtic music.

Today the famous couple have six children, and perform together to sold out crowds in theatres across North America and the UK. They never, however, found the opportunity to record together – until now.

It was a chance meeting of Natalie with legendary producer Bob Ezrin (Pink Floyd, Alice Cooper, Deep Purple) at sessions he was producing for Scottish-born Canadian singing star Johnny Reid that led to the unlikely musical match between the star producer and the Celtic couple.

Smitten with their sound, Bob recruited Justin Cortelyou (Taylor Swift, Ke\$ha, Alan Jackson), to co-produce, and the two headed to Cape Breton to record the Celtic couple with ace session mu-



NATALIE MacMaster and Donnell Leahy have just released *One*, their first recording collaboration.

sicians Mark Kelso, Mac Morin, Tim Edey, Jamie Gatti, Rachel Aucoin and Sabin Jacques.

When asked about their experience recording with such an iconic producer, Natalie offered, "Bob Ezrin is so musical, truthful and honest in how he works. He heard the music the same way we did."

Donnell added, "This album is far beyond anything we ever imagined it being."

Bob Ezrin explains how exciting it is to

work with people who are masters at their craft.

He said, "Both Natalie and Donnell are truly brilliant musicians whose instruments have become a natural extension of their bodies. They are such accomplished players that whatever they think of they can produce on their violins. It's absolutely magical!"

There is energy and freshness, and unparalleled musicality on *One*, a completely instrumental album with creative medleys in the Celtic style mixed with originals, with the exception of one track, a deeply emotional vocal lament *Cagaran Gaolach* sung by Natalie – marking her first ever lead feature vocal to appear on an album.

Some of the unconventional approaches used in the studio for this fiddle-centric album included distorted electric guitars on the driving up tempo *Fiddler's Despair*, and two players on one piano on *Pastiche for Anne* and a drum kit made of paint cans and a cardboard box on *Joyous Waltz*.

Natalie and Donnell embarked on the first leg of an expansive North American tour in February – the majority of dates sold out in advance – billed as "Visions From Cape Breton and Beyond", a show which will feature many of the songs from *ONE*.

"We really can't imagine ourselves doing anything else," says Donnell. "All of this coming together was inevitable."

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ONE Natalie MacMaster + Donnell Leahy

A Month For Reflection: Celebrating 30 Years of Music

VANCOUVER – This month sees the 28th anniversary of **The Rogue Folk Club** and also the 30th anniversary of my radio show, *The Edge On Folk*, on CiTR FM 101.9.... That's right. Three decades of music.

Check out Roguestory on www.roguefolk.bc.ca for a list of all the bands and performers who have played at The Rogue down the years. It's under Folk Music Resources, and the list is in reverse chronological order.

You'll find names like **Silly Wizard**, **Four Men & A Dog**, **Altan**, **Capercaillie**, **Ron Kavana**, **June Tabor**, **Oysterband**, **Battlefield Band**, **Craobh Rua**, **Dervish**, **Lunasa**, **Doug MacLean**, **Liam O'Flynn**, **Sileas**, **Luka Bloom**, and so many more! It's been an incredible 28 years of Roguery!

I pretty much know where I have been and what I've been doing on a Saturday morning for the last 30 years.

I've been presenting and assembling radio shows and programming concerts for all those years.

The Rogue is marking these two occasions with a couple of concerts: The Rogue anniversary is on Sunday, May 10 with Argentine guitar sensation **Gonzalo Bergara** and his gypsy jazz quartet, featuring fiddler / chanteuse **Leah Zeger** at St. James Hall (3214 West 10th Avenue).

Then on Saturday, May 30 it's a double bill of Canadian Celtic Music – in both official languages – featuring P.E.I.'s **Ten Strings & A Goatskin** and Quebec's **Bon Debarras**.

This concert is also at St. James Hall.

Ten Strings & A Goatskin are a guitar, fiddle and bodhran trio, featuring **Caleb and Rowan Gallant** (bodhran and fiddle, respectively), two nephews of **Lennie Gallant**, the popular songwriter from Rustico, P.E.I. and **Jesse Periard** on guitar.

They are young, energetic and enthusiastic. And very good!

Their debut CD, *Corbeau* (the French word for crow), features some powerful instrumental medleys of traditional reels and original compositions.

There are also songs including a frenetic cover of Cyril Tawney's *Grey Funnel Line*, the trad. French song *Parlez-Nous A Boire*, and a song Caleb co-wrote with his esteemed uncle about – literally – moving a house to defy a greedy landlord!

We saw them in Kansas City recently at the Folk Alliance conference. This will be a wild party!

The more so because the other band that night is the Quebecois trio **Bon Debarras**, another young band blending the traditional with a variety of influences and having a great time doing it.

They play guitar, mandolin, accordion, washboard, and harmonica and combine Quebecois folk music with step-dancing and global influences for a show that is full of fun and inventive energy.

On May 15 **Bluegrass** fans can mar-



By
**STEVE
EDGE**

THE ROGUE FOLK CLUB

vel at the voices of California singers **Laurie Lewis and Kathy Kallick** as they pay tribute to two Ozark mountain singers – **Vern Williams and Ray Park** – who migrated to California many years ago, and inspired dozens of musicians to take up bluegrass in the California sun.

Laurie – who plays a mean fiddle – and Kathy are joined by a brilliant band and they released a CD of *Songs of Vern & Ray* earlier this year.

On Sunday, May 17 Cajun music fans get a rare chance to dance to some real down-home Louisiana Zydeco, Cajun and “Swamp Pop” with **The Revelers!**

Founding members of stalwart bands **Red Stick Ramblers** and **Pine Leaf Boys**, **The Revelers** are about to launch their second full-length CD.

This fabulous band features fiddle, accordion, sax, bass and drums and will get the joint rockin' for sure!

On May 22 **Chris Ronald and Deanna Knight** – two Vancouver-based songwriters – will showcase their original songs, each backed by two outstanding musicians.

Chris hails from Derbyshire and came to Canada a decade ago. His latest CD,



TEN STRINGS & A GOATSKIN are a young, energetic and enthusiastic trio from P.E.I. They feature a guitar, fiddle and bodhran trio, with Caleb and Rowan Gallant (bodhran and fiddle, respectively), and Jesse Periard on guitar. They will play The Rogue on Saturday, May 30.



On Sunday, May 17 Cajun music fans get a rare chance to dance to some real down-home Louisiana Zydeco, Cajun and “Swamp Pop” with **The Revelers**. This fabulous band features fiddle, accordion, sax, bass and drums and will get the joint rockin' for sure.



Timelines, was nominated for a Canadian Folk Music Award last fall. Rightly so. There are some outstanding songs on it.

He will be accompanied by **John Ellis**

on guitars and such, and **Rob Becker** on bass.

Deanna Knight is best known for her work with **The Hot Club Of Mars**, but she's also a fine songwriter and we

look forward to hearing her own songs at The Rogue. She will be joined by **Van Django's Finn Manniche** on cello and guitar and **Mother Of Pearl's** pianist **Brenda Baird**.

We are squeezing these splendid shows into the merry month of May to make up for the fact that we'll be away for three weeks in June.

Margaret and I head to Ireland for a little tour taking in Dublin, Donegal, Roscommon, Galway, Clare, and Dingle.

It's a holiday, but we couldn't go without experiencing some music, so we're also going to the Doolin Folk Festival to see the likes of **Sharon Shannon**, **We Banjo 3**, **Paddy Keenan**, New Zealand's **Aldoc**, and a band called **No Crows** – amongst others. Should be a blast!

We get back just in time for two evenings with American songwriter **Tom Russell** at St. James Hall.

One of America's most impressive songwriters, Tom's latest project is an epic double CD called *The Rose Of Roscrae*.

It's a pocket history of the American west, with strong roots in Ireland, and encompassing tales of Belgian missionaries in Mexico, Sioux warriors, ranchers, outlaws, broken hearts, and lost loves.

The CD features guest singers including **Maura O'Connell**, **Gretchen Peters**, and even the late **A.L. Lloyd!**

In concert on **June 26 and 27** he'll be accompanied by the excellent Portland guitarist **Thad Beckman**, but there will be many more “ghosts” dancing in the room with him!

Festival season will soon be upon us, and there are plenty of treats in store. I'll have previews of **Island Musicfest**, **Harrison Festival of the Arts**, **Vancouver Folk Music Festival**, **Islands Folk Festival**, **Mission Folk Music Festival**, **Shorefest**, and more in next month's issue.

CelticFest 2015: 12 full days of the best traditional and contemporary Celtic culture



ALAN DOYLE, best-known as the lead singer for Newfoundland's beloved **Great Big Sea**, was among the headline acts at this year's **Vancouver CelticFest**. His show on March 6 at the Vogue Theatre, co-presented with **Live Nation**, was a sell out.

By **JOHN COUGHLAN**
Chair & President

Vancouver Celtic Festival
VANCOUVER – The 2015 festival was held from March 6 to 17 with 12 fun-filled days of both ticketed and free events to engage the public with traditional and contemporary Celtic culture.

As we entered year eleven of the festival, we presented 14 ticketed events and offered a wide range of programming with more events than ever before.

Overall attendance for the festival was 213,856 and we were thrilled with the response from the public.

On March 15 and 15, Celtic Fest closed down Granville Street between Nelson and Robson once again for Celtic Vil-

lage which attracted 60,000 people.

Included within the framework of the Celtic Village was the Doolin's Music Stage offering four bands a day, Tom Lee Music Hall (which offered dance, workshops and a play), vendors, and the Kids' Celtic Zone.

As usual, the main event was the St. Patrick's Day parade on March 15.

This was well attended in excess of 150,000 people and brought the most diverse Celtic groups out with more dance and pipe bands than in the past.

This started off with the VPD Drill Team and continued with a wide array of marching pipe and drum bands, drill teams, dance groups festival sponsors, VIPs, and so much more.

In the fall of 2014, CelticFest finally redid their website.

This was the first time since the original website was created and a total overhaul made it more user friendly for

the amount of events and programs now provided under the festival.

This new website has the ability to showcase so much more on all the events as well as additional information on the artists and venues.

Social media also played a significant role with a massive increase on both Facebook and Twitter.

The Festival would not have been a success without the help and financial support of our sponsors, our staff, volunteers and board members.

To everyone who participated, who gave us their counsel, ideas and assistance, who shared their inspired talents – their music, art and culture with us – thank you!

To you the public, without you attending and supporting our events, there wouldn't be a festival, so thank you for attending. We look forward to seeing you next year!

A taste of the extraordinary sounds and sights in store at the 2015 Van Folk Music Fest

VANCOUVER – The Vancouver Folk Music Festival has announced the 38th festival line up, and among the 60 acts from over 14 countries slated to perform July 17-19 in Jericho Beach Park are a number of amazing artists from the UK. Here is just a sample of what's in store.

Perhaps the most well known name coming to the festival is the legendary Richard Thompson.

Thompson co-founded Fairport Convention in the 1960s – the group that virtually invented British folk rock.

His career has seen him top charts, win numerous awards, named by *Rolling Stone Magazine* as one of the "Top 20 Guitarists of All Time," and recognized as one of the world's most critically acclaimed and prolific songwriters. He performs on Friday night.

Another veteran troubadour with a larger than life reputation, the charismatic Rory McLeod is also on the festival roster.

McLeod is a one-man soulband, poet and storyteller, singing his own unique upbeat, witty, and often outspoken tunes.

His songs are about all kinds of people, richly coloured characters, family, parting, travelling, love, despair and politics. To see Rory live is to be in the rare presence of a true, totally engrossing, entertainer.

Since bursting on to the folk scene at the end of the 90s, Sam Lee has blazed a trail as an outstanding singer and song collector.

How many traditional English folk singers do you know who come from North London, studied at Chelsea School of Art, worked as a forager and wilderness expert while moonlighting as a burlesque dancer?

This was until a chance encounter led to the door of the great Scottish traveller singer Stanley Robertson, and an extraordinary four-year apprenticeship.

He was given entry into the arcane, living world of traditional song that few outside the traveller and gypsy communities have ever experienced. See the one and only Sam Lee perform, and learn more.

There are fresh faces coming too. If you love the pipes, there are two groups for you! Breabach is an energetic five-piece band from Glasgow that features twin bagpipes, whistles, fiddles, and bouzouki – and known for their high-stepping live shows.

Since launching their career as winner of an Open Stage Award at Celtic Connections 2005, they've been voted "Best Group" and "Best Live Act" at the Scots Trad Music Awards, and have gained a world-wide following. Now it's our turn to kick up our heels.

Ross and Jarlath are Ross Ainslie (Scottish bagpipes, whistles) and Jarlath Henderson (uilleann pipes, whistles), two vastly talented young men who have joined forces to create a pipe sound that pushes the boundaries of what both Scottish and Irish instruments can achieve on their own. Dubbed "the new



THE LEGENDARY Richard Thompson co-founded Fairport Convention in the 1960s – the group that virtually invented British folk rock. He is among the 60 acts from over 14 countries slated to perform at the 38th annual Vancouver Folk Music Festival from July 17-19 in Jericho Beach Park.

stars of Celtic music," they play pipe tunes that explode with energy.

And these are just a few of the artists from around the world coming to this year's folk festival – a sample of the extraordinary sounds and sights in store.

For a full list of performers, go to the festival's website at thefestival.bc.ca – and plan to take in a weekend of unique and amazing music from England, Scotland, Ireland, Canada and beyond, July 17-19 at Jericho Beach Park.



PHOTO: Frederic Aranda

SAM LEE has blazed a trail as an outstanding singer and song collector since bursting on to the folk scene in the late 90s. A chance encounter led to the door of the great Scottish traveller singer Stanley Robertson, and an extraordinary four-year apprenticeship where he was given entry into the arcane, living world of traditional song that few outside the traveller and gypsy communities have ever experienced.



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Gonzalo BERGARA

Friday, MAY 15

Singing the songs of California bluegrass legends Vern Williams & Ray Park, a superb band led by

LAURIE LEWIS & KATHY KALLICK

Sunday, MAY 17

Cajun / Zydeco from Louisiana

THE REVELERS

Friday, MAY 22

A Celebration of BC Songwriters

CHRIS RONALD
DEANNA KNIGHT

Saturday, MAY 30

Two brilliant Celtic-inspired party bands - in both official languages!

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Royal baby named Charlotte Elizabeth Diana

LONDON – The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge have named their daughter Charlotte Elizabeth Diana, Kensington Palace has said.

The fourth in line to the throne will be known as Her Royal Highness Princess Charlotte of Cambridge.

She was born on Saturday, May 2 in the Lindo Wing of London's St. Mary's Hospital weighing 8lbs 3oz (3.7kg).

Charlotte, the feminine form of Charles, has a long royal pedigree and became popular in the 18th Century when it was the name of George III's queen.

The King bought Buckingham House in 1761 for his wife Queen Charlotte to use as a family home close to St. James's Palace – it became known as the Queen's House and is now Buckingham Palace.

Charles is the name of two former kings and of the Prince of Wales, the princess's grandfather. Charlotte also has



THE DUKE AND DUCHESS of Cambridge emerged from the Lindo Wing of London's St. Mary's Hospital with their new baby girl wrapped in a white blanket just after 6 PM on May 2.

more recent connections for the royal couple.

On the duchess's side, it is the middle name of her sister Pippa Middleton and on the duke's it is the name of his cousin Charlotte Spencer, Earl Spencer's youngest daughter.

According to figures from the Office for National Statistics, Charlotte is the 21st most popular girl's name in England and Wales with 2,242 babies being given it in 2013. Elizabeth is 39th in the list but Diana is not in the top 100.

HSBC threatens to leave the UK over Cameron's EU referendum

LONDON – Britain's biggest firm warned of the "uncertainty" caused by Cameron's pledge of an 'in/out' referendum.

During the election campaign, banking giant HSBC has threatened to move its headquarters away from the UK – and gave a stark warning about the economic risk of David Cameron's plan for an EU referendum.

HSBC is worth £120 billion by stock market value, but the bank's chairman Douglas Flint listed the economic uncertainty created by the risk of the UK going alone.

HSBC has been headquartered in London since 1992 – but an informal meeting of investors is said to have led to questions about remaining in the UK capital.

HSBC has been hit very hard by the bank levy, which was introduced by George Osborne in 2010, and the ringfencing rule requiring separation of its high street arm from the investment banking operation also introduced by the chancellor.



HSBC unleashed a political storm when it announced it was reviewing its London head office, where it has been based since 1992 after buying Midland bank.

The bank contributed \$570 million to the Bank Levy in 2011, of which \$340 million was for non-UK related activity.

The bank makes 80 percent of its revenue outside of the UK and the levy, which is expected to jump to \$700 million this year, has been seen as a direct cost of being in the UK.

However, HSBC chairman Douglas Flint made clear the biggest threat to the economy is Cameron's plan for a referendum in 2017 – which could see Britain leave the EU forever.

"One economic uncertainty stands out – that of continuing UK membership of the EU," Flint said.

Poet Laureate refuses to pen a Royal baby poem

LONDON – Her role is to pen odes and craft poems to mark occasions of importance and commemorate national events. So it should come as a surprise that the Poet Laureate, Glasgow-born Carol-Ann Duffy, has apparently declined to compose a verse for the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge's second child.

However, the lack of a poem to commemorate the royal birth is nothing new – with Duffy also snubbing Prince George's arrival in 2013, with her spokesman at the time claiming she was too busy.

Duffy is a Professor of Contemporary Poetry at Manchester Metropolitan University, and was appointed Britain's Poet Laureate in May 2009.



GLASGOW-born Carol-Ann Duffy is Britain's first female Poet Laureate.



CHARLES, the Prince of Wales with Irish President Michael D. Higgins and his wife Sabina on April 24 as they visit V-Beach cemetery to mark the 100th anniversary of the Gallipoli campaign during the First World War.

Tributes paid to WWI Gallipoli dead

LONDON – Prince Charles was joined by Prince Harry, and Irish President Michael D. Higgins as he laid flowers on graves of the British and Irish soldiers who died 100 years ago during the disastrous Gallipoli operation.

The ceremony was held at V-Beach on April 24, close to the tip of the Turkish Peninsula, at a cemetery which is half the size of a football pitch but contains the bodies of almost 700 men.

In late evening spring sunshine, with birds tweeting and the smell of spring flowers in the air, the poignant visit came as the culmination of a day of remembrance.

The calm, low-key visit to V-Beach where Royal Dublin and Royal Munster Fusiliers led the way, and who were so badly caught in enemy fire that the sea turned red, was a contrast to the pomp of the international service joined by Turkish President Recep Tayyip

Erdogan and the prime ministers of New Zealand and Australia.

Earlier, the princes met descendants of British and Irish Gallipoli veterans on board the Royal Navy's flagship HMS Bulwark, anchored in the middle of the Dardanelles straits which were the cause of the battle in 1915.

The idea to knock the Ottomans out of the war and open a sea route to Russia was Winston Churchill's, but because of hopeless planning, hostile conditions and heroic defending, the operation was halted eight bloody months later, having cost 58,000 Allied lives.

Some 87,000 Turks died defending their home soil. The amphibious assault started at dawn on April 25, 1915 as wave after wave of British, Irish, French, Australian, New Zealand and Indian troops attacked heavily defended beaches, through barbed wire, and raced up cliffs through scrub.

Morris dancer following in the footsteps of Kemp

LONDON – A man has re-enacted Will Kemp's 16th Century journey as he danced from London to Norwich, a distance of 100 miles (160 kilometres).

Freelance journalist Rick Jones, 58, followed in Kemp's footsteps ahead of the celebrations for the 400th Shakespeare anniversary next year.

Will Kemp was an actor, a jester and a friend of William Shakespeare who morris-danced from London to Norwich in 1599.

This year, Jones, from Catford – a district of south east London – set off from London Bridge on April 23. He danced his way through Essex and Suffolk before arriving in Norwich on May 1, despite being stopped by police and enduring pain from stinging nettles and blisters. He officially finished his dance on May 6 at St. John Maddermarket church.

"I had a real adventure," said Jones, 58. "I met loads of people and that becomes the story, really. I was stopped by the police in Suffolk who wondered what was up when I was dancing down the A134 outside of Bury St. Edmunds."

It is thought Kemp embarked on his trip, to prove how popular he was with the



RICK JONES danced about 12 miles a day through East Anglia. He finished his journey in Norwich despite having a run-in with the police.

public, after falling out with Shakespeare when he was turned down for a role in Hamlet.

His journey began at Southwark cathedral, where he was joined by a fellow UEA graduate, comedian and writer, Arthur Smith. From there, he danced through Romford, Brentwood, Chemsford, Braintree, Long Melford, Bury St. Edmunds, Thetford, Hingham, and finally on to Norwich.

Dressed in garb similar to Kemp's, complete with jester hat and Morris dancing handkerchiefs – Jones described the trek as "very, very tiring."

UK General Election: A night of broken dreams and Tory euphoria

LONDON – British Prime Minister David Cameron hung tightly to the keys of 10 Downing Street after his Conservative Party defied the opinion polls predicting a hung parliament, by surpassing the 325 seats needed to form a majority government in the House of Commons.

The Conservatives won 331 seats out of the entire 650 available nationwide.

Had Cameron's party won 325 or less as the polls predicted, the PM's party would have needed an alliance with any of the smaller parties to form a majority government.

Unlike in 2010 when there was a hung parliament and it took days to do a deal with another party, Liberal Democrats to form a coalition government, Cameron has all the aces by virtue of his party securing more than the required number of seats to have a majority in the House of Commons.

But it was a day of calamities for the two main opposition parties, Labour and

the Liberal Democrats (Lib-Dems).

Not only did each lose over 40 seats, the leaders of both parties, Ed Miliband and Nick Clegg, resigned from their positions just after lunchtime May 7.

It was also a dark day for UKIP, as they too performed woefully at the polls. Their leader, Nigel Farage, also left his post, after failing to convince voters in his own backyard. He lost the seat to the Conservatives.

The Conservative leader is now beginning the process of putting together the new government. George Osborne has been reappointed as chancellor, Theresa May as home secretary, Philip Hammond as foreign secretary and Michael Fallon as defence secretary.

In their first editions since the full elec-

tion result, British newspapers said that Cameron had pulled off a triumphant victory thanks to a surge in support from so-called shy Conservatives.

However, they also warned he now faced a tough battle to keep Scotland in the United Kingdom and Britain in the European Union.

The election exposed deep divisions on these issues and Cameron avoided gloating in his victory speech, promising to "bring our country together."

He promised Scotland the most devolution "anywhere in the world" saying he would move ahead as fast as possible with a plan to give more powers to Scotland, which voted overwhelmingly for the pro-independence Scottish National Party.

"In Scotland, our plans are to create the strongest devolved government anywhere in the world with important powers over taxation, and no constitutional settlement will be complete if it did not offer also fairness to England."

He also pledged to press on with a renegotiation of Britain's relationship with the EU then hold an in-or-out referendum on the outcome, by the end of 2017.

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| Thyroid problems | Enlarged liver, liver diseases including cirrhosis |
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'I believe the hot air circulating Britain is seriously affecting the ozone layer'

HELLO from sunny Bournemouth. The news this month is all about running. Firstly, The Maldon Mud Race has just taken place in Maldon Essex. Three hundred enthusiasts, in fancy dress, attempt to dash across thick mud and over the river Blackwater.

The race can only take place when the tide is low enough and contestants run from one bank of the river, through the water, then negotiate 600 yards of mud to the other bank and back again.

Originally there was a barrel of beer on the far bank and a pint had to be downed before returning, which to my mind gives a reason for doing it, but sadly the beer has disappeared and the event is now purely a charity event.

Thousands of people line the river banks to watch and hundreds of thousands of pounds are raised for charities.

A week ago 900 runners took part in the Bournemouth 10 kilometre (6.5 miles) charity fun run.

Three hundred of them were sent on an unscheduled extra three kilometres (1.5 miles) detour because a marshal sneaked away, for a toilet break, leaving a junction point unmanned.

Some of the racers were reported to be in tears and I suppose I should feel sorry for them but having had prostate problems in the past, I confess that my sympathy is with the marshal. I know what it feels like, and when you have to go, well you just have to go.

In London last weekend 38,000 people took part in the London Marathon with most of them running for charity raising in excess of £53 million.

A marathon is a running event of 26 miles, 385 yards.

A legend states that in the year 490 BC a Greek soldier, named Pheidippides, was sent from the battlefield of Marathon to inform the citizens of Athens that the Persians had just been defeated and the city state was safe.

He ran all the way and died of exhaustion after giving the news. There is no definite proof that this run happened, but in 1896 when the modern Olympics were held in Athens, the organisers were seeking an event recalling the ancient glory of Greece. They decided that a race from Marathon to Athens would fit the bill.

Last year there were over one thousand marathons run in the USA and Canada alone, and you can imagine the huffing and the puffing emanating from these noble athletes.

Well it is nothing compared to what is being generated by our politicians as they run a marathon race in this general election to win control of the UK.

I believe the hot air that is circulating Britain at the moment is seriously affecting the ozone layer.

The battle for 10 Downing Street is building to an excitement level not seen in this country since Margaret Thatcher bought a new handbag.

With only two yawn-packed weeks to go the promises are getting wilder.

The Green Party wants to give everybody money. The Conservatives want everybody to own their own home.

POSTCARD FROM BOURNEMOUTH



By
ELFAN
JONES

Labour wants a fairer society, where everybody is happy except the rich who are nasty and wicked, and the Liberal Party doesn't want to give us anything but begs us to forgive them for supporting the Tories for the last five years.

UKIP doesn't want to give us anything either, but wants foreigners to have less.

Finally there is the Scottish Nationalist Party who is laughing its argyle socks off and looks likely to wipe the floor with everybody north of the border.

It appears that at the moment the SNP,

a party who fought so hard to break away from a British parliament, could end up holding the balance of power within it.

We go to the polls on May 7 by which time everybody will be so exhausted, bored and confused that the result could well be Yorkshire will vote for independence.

Essex will pull out of Europe and the nation's capital will move to Glasgow and if the readers of the *Sun* newspaper get their way the prime minister will be the person with the largest breasts.

This week unseasonably warm weather swept into southern Britain (see ozone layer comment above) causing train delays and cancellations.

Temperatures hit a record 23 degrees which is nearly nice and warm.

Passengers sweltered in crowded carriages as trains were ordered to go slow because overhead wires had overheated.

A spokesman for National Express East Anglia, stated that it was the wrong type of heat.

He apologised for the chaos, but it should have been explained to him that the wrong type of heat fits into the same category of problems as leaves on the track in autumn, and the wrong type of snow in winter.

These are all perfectly natural phenomena that only occur on British railways.
*Kind regards,
Elfan*



AT THE LONDON MARATHON, 38,000 runners took part this year, raising £53 million for charity.

Death row Briton 'begins goodbyes' before facing firing squad

LONDON – British grandmother on death row in Indonesia has revealed she has started writing goodbye letters to her family and is making preparations for her own execution in the knowledge "I might die at any time now."

Lindsay Sandiford, 58, from Cheltenham in Gloucestershire, is to be shot by a firing squad in Indonesia for being a cocaine mule.

Writing in the *Mail on Sunday*, Sandiford said she has started writing goodbye letters to her family, having run out of time and money to seek clemency from authorities.

She tells how she would like to see her granddaughter, who was born after her incarceration, "but at the same time I feel it would be better if she doesn't know me."

Sandiford said she was now the only

death row prisoner left in Kerobokan prison and the Indonesian authorities want all executions for drug offences done by the end of the year.

Originally from Redcar, Teesside, she was sentenced to death in January 2013 in Bali after being convicted of trafficking drugs.

She was found with cocaine worth an estimated £1.6 million as she arrived on the island on a flight from Bangkok, Thailand, in May 2012.

Under police interrogation she claimed to have been coerced into carrying the drugs by a criminal gang that had made threats against her family, and took part in a sting operation to arrest several other individuals she alleged to be part of a drugs trafficking ring.

In December 2012, she was convicted of drug smuggling at Denpasar District



MORE than 5,000 enthusiasts attend the British Field Meet at VanDusen Gardens each year. This event is the largest of its kind in western Canada.

Annual All British Field Meet on Victoria Day Weekend

VANCOUVER – The annual nostalgia fest known as The Greatest Show on British Wheels – All British Field Meet, ABFM 2015 is all revved up and ready to start celebrating 30 years.

It was on a Victoria Day weekend in 1985 when the first show was staged in the parking lot of Vancouver British car dealer MCL Motorcars.

Interest from car owners prompted a move to the more prestigious facilities at VanDusen Botanical Garden the next year where the event has blossomed to over 500 British built classic beauties featuring the widest range of models to be seen at any show in North America.

More than 5,000 enthusiasts attend this event making it the largest of its kind in western Canada.

"This year we are celebrating 60 years of the popular MGA sports car, TVR cars and Royal Enfield motorcycles as the featured marques of the event," said Patrick Stewart event co-chair.

The celebration begins on Friday, May 16 with a nogg'n natter pub-style reception and silent auction held in the Old English style Abercorn Hotel from 6-9 PM.

"This year we are celebrating 60 years of MGA sports cars, TVR cars and Royal Enfield motorcycles..."

It continues on Saturday, May 17 on the lawns of VanDusen when the main event will feature brass, jazz and pipe band music, concessions, swap meet stands, artist's gallery, restoration demonstrations and sponsors/vendors booths plus the latest dealer 'future classic' models, all complementing the spectacular display of classic British machinery.

A very special garden party for enthusiasts and those merely looking for a walk down memory lane.

On Sunday, May 18 a 120-car run from Vancouver to Whistler takes place for registered British classics where the cars are the main attraction at Whistler's Olympic Plaza.

Event details including advance public ticket sales: www.westerndriver.com.



LINDSAY SANDIFORD said she is the only death row prisoner left in Kerobokan jail and is awaiting her fate.

smugglers recently executed.

She said the pair "touched the lives of a great many people" after helping to rehabilitate fellow prisoners.

"The executions have forced me to think about how I am going to handle the situation when my own time comes," she said.

"I won't wear a blindfold. It's not because I'm brave but because I don't want to hide – I want them to look at me when they shoot me."

Court and sentenced to death by firing squad in January 2013.

By contrast, the others involved in the case were convicted of lesser drugs-related offences and received custodial sentences. One of the ring leaders paid bribes to officials and got a minimum six-year sentence.

Prosecutors had recommended Sandiford should also receive a custodial sentence because of her willingness to cooperate with police, but the panel of judges overseeing the hearing felt her actions had undermined Indonesia's anti-drugs policy and concluded there were no mitigating circumstances in her favour.

Last month, she said she had been "deeply saddened" by the "senseless, brutal deaths" of Australians Myuran Sukumaran and Andrew Chan, who were among the eight convicted drug

100th Anniversary of the sinking of Lusitania commemorated in Cork

THIS year will mark the 100th anniversary of the sinking of the *HMS Lusitania* – one of the most controversial acts of the First World War.

She was launched by the Cunard Line in 1906, at a time of fierce competition for the North Atlantic trade and for a brief period was the world's largest passenger ship.

The ship was fitted with extraordinary splendour. "They used King Louis XIV's palace, in Versailles, for their blueprint for the grand saloon and various public rooms, which were a vision in white and gold, lots of gilding, mirrors and rich carpets," says Patrick O'Sullivan, author of *The Sinking of the Lusitania*.

"It easily captured the speed record in 1907, and it took Germany 21 years to outpace the performance of the Lusitania.

"It was the first liner to have telephones and air-conditioning. It had running hot and cold water. It had two regal suites for royalty and the fare was the equivalent of 19 years' wages for a captain."

In 1915, the Germans introduced unrestricted submarine warfare in retaliation for the British naval blockade of the English Channel and North Sea, which was strangling German commerce.

On May 7, 1915, the Cunard ocean liner was en route to Liverpool from New York when she was torpedoed by the German U-Boat.

She was running parallel to the south coast of Ireland, and was roughly 11 miles off the Old Head of Kinsale when the liner crossed in front of U-20 at 14:10.

Eighteen minutes after the torpedo struck, the bow struck the seabed while the stern was still above the surface, and in a manner similar to the sinking of *Titanic* three years earlier, the stern rose into the air and slid beneath the waves.

Of the 1,962 passengers and crew aboard *Lusitania* at the time of the sinking, 1,191 lost their lives. As in the sinking of *Titanic*, most of the casualties were from drowning or hypothermia.

In the hours after the sinking, acts of heroism amongst both the survivors of the sinking and the Irish rescuers who had heard word of *Lusitania's* distress signals brought the survivor count to 764, three of whom later died from injuries sustained during the sinking.

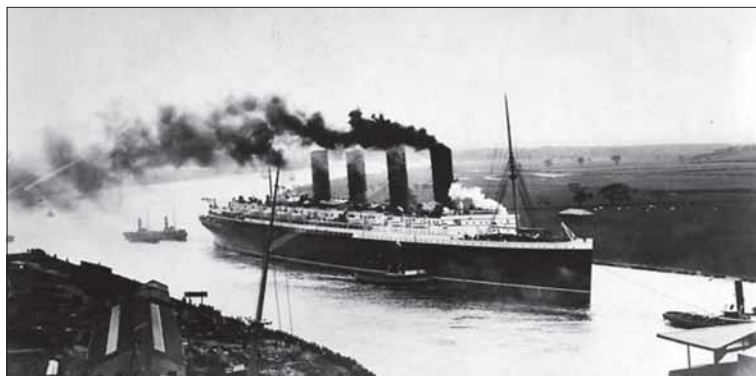
Cobh (Queenstown at the time) was the centre of the rescue efforts and hundreds of small boats set forth to try and rescue survivors and recover bodies from the sea.

Survivors were brought to Cobh where they were accommodated in hospitals, lodging houses and in private homes.

A total of 148 victims of the disaster are buried in the Old Church cemetery, one mile outside Cobh. More victims are interred at Saint Multose Church, Kinsale.

To commemorate the 100th anniversary of the sinking, a number of activities were planned in Cork.

In Cobh a large programme of events



THE HMS LUSITANIA was launched by the Cunard Line in 1906 and for a brief period was the world's largest passenger ship.



THE SINKING OF THE LUSITANIA by Irish/Canadian artist Deirdre Keohane. Timothy Keohane was the coxswain with the Courtmacsherry Lifeboats, the first rescue boats to arrive on the scene.



THE LUSITANIA was fitted with extraordinary splendour. It had running hot and cold water and was the first liner to have telephones and air-conditioning. It had two regal suites for royalty and the fare was the equivalent of 19 years' wages for a captain. This is a drawing of the first class dining saloon in the style of Louis XVI.

was held, culminating in a visit by President Michael D. Higgins on May 7.

This included a wreath-laying ceremony with the president along with the British, German and U.S. ambassadors placing wreaths at the Lusitania Peace Memorial in Cobh.

At 9:15 PM, a flotilla of small boats, each illuminated with white lights, sailed from Roche's Point towards Cobh to re-enact the rescue efforts.

Irish Defence Minister Simon Coveney officially opened the centenary memorial weekend on Saturday, May 2 with a series of events in Courtmacsherry, Co. Cork.

As visitors watched a flyover by an

Irish Coast Guard helicopter, a replica of the RNLI Courtmacsherry lifeboat was put on display.

This brought to mind the crew of the lifeboat Keiza Gwilt who rowed for over three hours from Barry's Head to beyond the Old Head of Kinsale on May 7, 1915, to search for survivors from the *Lusitania*.

At the commemoration ceremony, a team of rowers replicated the heroic efforts of the lifeboat crew of 12 rowers, two coxswain and a bowman.

The original crew included a father and son, John and Jerry Murphy, as well as Timothy Keohane whose son, Patrick, went to the South Pole with arctic explorer Captain Scott.

Many of those who performed at the commemoration are direct descendants of the 1915 Courtmacsherry RNLI Lifeboat crew, including brothers Brian and Micheal O'Donovan who shared the coxswain duties for the row. The O'Donovans are direct descendants of Tim Keohane.

The sinking of the *Lusitania* caused an international outcry, especially in Britain and across the British Empire, as well as in the United States, considering that 128 of 139 U.S. citizens aboard the ship lost their lives.

The Germans argued that the *Lusitania's* manifest showed it was carrying munitions destined for Britain and was a legitimate target.

To this day questions remain as to whether or not the *Lusitania* was carrying a secret cargo of 50 tonnes of high explosives that might have caused the secondary explosion after the torpedo struck.

The ship's sinking provided Britain with a propaganda opportunity, which helped shift public opinion in the United States against Germany and influenced America's eventual declaration of war two years later, in 1917.

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DON the sheepdog was accused of “taking control” of a tractor and taking it onto a busy Scottish motorway on April 22, leading to miles of tailbacks.

Farmer's dog drives tractor onto motorway

EDINBURGH – A farmer whose sheepdog took “control of a tractor” and ended up on a busy motorway has spoken of his relief that nobody was hurt in the incident.

The bizarre event, which caused tailbacks on the road, was reported on the morning of April 22 by Traffic Scotland at junction 13 of the M74 near Abington in South Lanarkshire, Scotland.

The transport body tweeted: “M74 (N) J13-RTC due to dog taking control of tractor... nope, not joking. Farmer and police at scene, vehicle in central res.”

It later emerged that the sheepdog in question was Don, who had been sitting alone in the passenger seat of his owner's farm vehicle when the farmer went to tend to a lamb.

Owner Tom Hamilton, of Kirkton Farm in Abington, explained, “I was checking the sheep up on the hill and I got out of the Gator (utility vehicle) to see a lamb. I left the Gator sitting and the dog was sitting on the seat.

“I'd almost got back to it when it started to move. I ran after it and I fell. The next thing, it was going down the bank, across the motorway and it hit the crash barrier in the middle.”

Hamilton said he first felt shock upon seeing the events unfold before his eyes, with Don still sitting in the truck.

That later turned to relief when he realized no cars or lorries had hit his vehicle.

“I was glad I didn't hear a crash or anything because I couldn't see the motorway,” he said.

“A road maintenance man came along at the same time and stopped the traffic, so that helped, and then I went down and got it and came back up the bank again.

“I was so relieved to see there wasn't a smash up. There could have been a right smash, it was a busy road. It's a relief no lorries or cars hit it. You were listening for a crash.”

Hamilton said his state of shock was such that he initially forgot to collect Don from the scene, but soon returned to get him.

It was reported that the dog had leaned on the controls of the tractor, taking it from a field on to the road. But Hamilton believes the handbrake probably just wasn't on tightly enough.

He said, “The handbrake was on but it hadn't been up to the last nick. It couldn't have been on tight enough.”

The truck's windscreen was smashed but it suffered no other damage.

Don has a slightly sore front foot but is otherwise said to be fine.

The incident caught people's interest on social media and shortly afterwards Traffic Scotland provided an update: “M74 (N) at J13 - Route is clear from earlier incident and dog is fine. Has to be the weirdest thing we have ever reported! No delays in area.”

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Tartan Day Ceilidh 'a most enjoyable evening'

Dear Editor:

I am writing to thank you for the tickets I won for the Tartan Day Ceilidh. My friend and I had a most enjoyable evening. The RCMP officers were very friendly and the music and Scottish dancers were excellent.

Regards
Grainne Murphy, Vancouver, B.C.

A Blessing for Beltane Eve

Bless, O God, true and bountiful, myself, my spouse, and my children, everything within my dwelling from Beltane Eve to summer's ending.

From sea to sea, and every river mouth, from wave to wave, and every waterfall, bless the kine that leave the stall, bless the sheep that depart the fold, bless the goats on the mount of mist.

May Thou attend them and keep them blest, Thou being who attends to me as I bend my knee to Thee.

– Adapted from *The Beltane Blessing* by Carmina Gadelica

Spectacular annual gathering for Beltane Fire Festival in Edinburgh

EDINBURGH – Thousands gathered on Calton Hill on Thursday, April 30 evening to celebrate the annual Beltane Fire Festival – a spectacular event watched by a global audience of more than 10,000 people.

While their cousins down south are dusting off their sandals, in the harsher Scottish climes where winters are frequently a feat of endurance, spring is celebrated with far more pomp and ceremony.

Hundreds of volunteers take part each year, drumming and dancing with fire, in body paint and outlandish costumes. It is a mystical night of pagan pageantry crammed with stirring twilight creatures, fire dancers, flame throwers and giant, glowing toadstools.

The modern Beltane Fire Festival is inspired by the ancient Celtic festival of Beltane which began on the evening before May 1 and marked the beginning of summer.

The modern festival was started in 1988 by a small group of enthusiasts including the musical collective Test Dept, with academic support from the School of Scottish Studies at the University of Edinburgh.

Since then the festival has grown, and now involves over 300 voluntary collaborators and performers with available tickets often selling out.

While the festival draws on a variety of historical, mythological and literary influences, the organizers do not claim it to be anything other than a modern celebration of Beltane, evolving with its participants.

Originally an event with a core of a dozen performers and a few hundred



THOUSANDS gather for the world-famous Beltane Fire Festival on Calton Hill in Edinburgh on the eve of May 1. The celebration is inspired by the ancient Celtic festival to mark the end of winter and coming of summer.



THE MAY QUEEN and her handmaidens lead the procession at the start of the annual Beltane Fire Festival.

audience, the event has grown to several hundred performers and over 10,000 audience.

Key characters within the performance are maintained, though reinterpreted by their performers, and additional participants incorporated each year.

Originally, the festival was free and only lightly stewarded, however, as the event has grown in popularity, due to the capacity of the hill, funding requirements, and Edinburgh Council requests, the festival has in recent years moved to being a ticketed event.

New York's Tartan Day an 'unfortunate mongrel'

NEW YORK – A former clan leader has dismissed New York's annual celebration of Scottishness as an “unfortunate mongrel.”

Susan McIntosh said Tartan Day had no significance for Scots, was poorly-attended, and barely noticed by the media.

McIntosh, until recently the president of the North Carolina-based Council of Scottish Clans & Associations, said the event should go back to the drawing board.

The 17th parade took place through the streets of the city on April 11.

Designed to appeal to the 14 million Americans who claim Scottish ancestry, the event is possibly best known in Scotland for former First Minister Jack McConnell's decision to attend wearing a pin-striped kilt and Jacobite shirt.

McIntosh, writing in *Scots Heritage* magazine, claimed the event was an “unfortunate mongrel of a commemoration,” “poorly attended” and “media thin” compared with other “ethnic hoedowns.”

According to McIntosh, part of the

*“Let's start over.
Let's think bigger.
Let's begin from the
ancestral Scottish
grassroots and
build upward.”*

problem for the Scots-American celebration was a decision by congress in 2008 to officially anoint April 6 as a Tartan Day based on a “flawed interpretation” of the U.S. Declaration of Independence.

“The line connecting the Declaration of Independence and the Declaration of Arbroath is faint at best and totally made up at worst,” she said. “Yet it is the line that dominates our celebrations.”

To make matters worse, this year's parade had been held on April 11 – “a day of no significance to Scots.”

McIntosh, secretary of the board of the Clan McIntosh North American Society, added, “Let's start over. Let's think

bigger. Let's begin from the ancestral Scottish grassroots and build upward.

“Let's work with Scots all across the globe to craft a Scottish celebration of which we can all be proud. How about a global Outlander Day?”

An Edinburgh-based promoter agreed with McIntosh and said that Tartan Day “doesn't resonate with young Scots.”

The promoter, who spoke to *The Scotsman* newspaper and asked to remain anonymous, added, “I know young designers who won't go to Tartan Week because it's just not relevant.”

However, Alan Bain, chairman of the American Scottish Foundation – the organiser of New York's Tartan Day parade – insisted McIntosh's views were “misguided” and “misinformed.”

He said that this month's event was their “biggest parade ever” with contingents from eight Scottish universities marching, which showed that it was relevant to contemporary Scotland.

However, one million people turned out to watch New York's Columbus Day parade to celebrate the Italian-American culture.

Twice as many again turned out to commemorate St. Patrick's Day.

Election Fever in Scotland: Have the Scots gone mad or under the spell of a cult?



DINBURGH – For the last half century or so, Scottish voting patterns in Westminster elections has been entirely predictable.

Scotland votes Labour above anything else and could previously be relied on to send a strong contingent of Labour MPs on the road to London the day after the votes were counted.

In fact, in the general election of 2010 Labour retained exactly the same 41 constituency seats that it won in 2005.

With the election a week away, however, that pattern seems set to change dramatically. The most recent poll says that 54 percent of Scots voters intend to choose the Scottish National Party with only 20 percent opting for Labour.

Almost as remarkably the Conservative Party, which has only MP in Scotland, is now polling just three percent behind Labour. If these numbers hold up on election day, they could mean that the SNP will win all 59 seats north of the border.

Under normal circumstances, the poll might be dismissed as rogue.

However, there is no such thing as normal circumstances in Scottish politics these days and the poll's findings are consistent with other recent polls that have tracked increasing support for the SNP.

All this has left some people here scratching their heads.

The SNP were, of course, front and centre in the Yes campaign for Scottish independence which lost by 10 points in last September's referendum.

This was supposed to rule out the question of independence for a generation or forever, depending on who you listened to.

A potential bi-product, some thought, would be a decline in the fortunes of the SNP which has independence as its *raison d'être*.

Instead, the opposite has happened and the search for explanations has begun.

The most obvious factor is the rise and rise of Nicola Sturgeon who became Scotland's First Minister when Alex Salmond resigned in the wake of referendum defeat.

Sturgeon has been a revelation as Scotland's first female First Minister and has hardly put a foot wrong in the campaign.

Originally from a working-class background in Ayrshire in the west of Scotland, Sturgeon makes the male leaders of the main UK parties seem either out-of-touch with Scotland, or second rate, or both.

She shone in a televised national debate and has taken to the towns and streets of Scotland meeting and greeting ordinary Scots.

She also works her own social media and many have been surprised to get immediate responses from her on Twitter.

In Scotland, her main opponent is a life-long Westminster politician called Jim Murphy who became leader of Scottish Labour after his predecessor re-



**By
HARRY
McGRATH**

signed complaining of 'branch office' treatment from London.

Murphy returned to Scotland with some baggage having previously been associated with the right wing of the party and supportive of the war in Iraq.

Murphy has had trouble countering Sturgeon's positive message about 'making Scotland's voice stronger at Westminster' and has resorted to negative campaigning.

His repeated warning that a vote for the SNP will hasten another Conservative Government and/or a second referendum is getting the rubber ear, as they say over here.

This is not to say that the prospect of a second referendum is not an issue.

Sturgeon has gone to great lengths to explain that this election is not about another referendum unless there is a 'material change' (Scotland being

dragged out of Europe against its will, for instance) or the democratic will of the people in Scotland demands one sometime in the future.

In the meantime, she is offering a different brand of politics than that offered by the main UK parties: a progressive one that curbs austerity, supports social justice, and is pro-immigration and anti-nuclear weapons.

Even those who would most welcome it are expressing disbelief at the prospect of the SNP advancing its seat total from the six that it currently holds in Scotland to 59.

The final throw of the dice for those who want to slow down the SNP 'juggernaut' is tactical voting i.e. choosing a candidate from a party one wasn't originally planning to vote for because they have the best chance of defeating the SNP.

With less than a week to go to the election at the time of writing, it seems unlikely that this will have much effect even if voters can be persuaded to try it.

While we wait, there is a lot to muse about. The party which supports independence is promising to work positively at Westminster.

Meanwhile the Conservatives, generally seen as staunch defenders of Union, are talking up EVEL (English votes for English laws) which seems destined to drive the Scots even further away.

Ditto some elements in the UK media which have run opinion pieces declar-

ing that the Scots have gone mad or are under the spell of a cult.

One of the less publicized findings in the recent poll, however, tells an interesting story.

The turnout in Scotland for the election is expected to be about 80 percent, higher than in the rest of the UK and far higher than Scottish turnouts in recent years.

This new level of political engagement is attributed to last year's referendum and that, at least, is one positive outcome that everyone can agree on.

POSTSCRIPT: It is now the day after the election and just about everything that was predicted to happen in Scotland has happened.

The SNP won 56 of the 59 seats with Labour, the Liberal Democrats, and the Conservatives winning one each.

Many of the biggest names in Scottish

politics lost their seats under remarkable circumstances.

For instance, Shadow Foreign Secretary Douglas Alexander lost his Paisley seat to a 20-year-old woman who will soon be taking her exams at Glasgow University.

By contrast, the pollsters got the UK wide picture horribly wrong.

Instead of the neck-and-neck contest that they predicted, the Conservatives won 99 more seats than Labour and will form a majority government.

Three national leaders have already resigned.

Where we go from here is anybody's guess.

One thing that seems certain is that there will be a referendum on Britain's membership of Europe which, once again, could see Scotland charting a different course.

Mhairi Black: Youngest British MP in centuries

GLASGOW – Mhairi Black, the SNP candidate who beat Douglas Alexander in Scotland, has become the youngest MP in centuries, as she was elected at the age of 20.

The political student, who is in her final year at Glasgow University, has become the so-called "Baby of the House," the youngest successful candidate since at least the 1832 Reform Act.

She follows in the footsteps of previous youngest MPs, the current incumbent Pamela Nash, who was elected aged 25 years in 2010.

Previously, Bernadette Devlin, elected in Mid Ulster in 1969, held the title of youngest ever female MP at 21 years. In 1666, 13-year-old Christopher Monck, Earl of Torrington, was returned as an MP in Devon.

Black defeated Labour's Douglas Alexander to take Paisley and Renfrewshire South. Alexander was first elected when Mhairi was just a toddler.

Alexander, a long-time Labour Party heavy-hitter, is a former Cabinet minister and such a shrewd veteran of political campaigns that he was Labour's campaign chief.

He was also a member of the shadow



MHAIRI BLACK, a young SNP candidate beat Labour incumbent Douglas Alexander who has held the Paisley and Renfrewshire South seat for almost 20 years.

cabinet – the group of politicians from the opposition party who would head up ministries if in power.

If he had been elected, and had Labour come to power, he would have become the new foreign secretary.

But in the end, her 23,548 votes outstripped her opponent – Alexander ended the night with 17,864 votes – overturning the veteran's huge majority from the 2010 general election.

Alexander has represented the area since 1997, and this marks the first time for 70 years that the constituency has not been a Labour seat.

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PHOTO: L'Osservatore Romano/Pool photo via AP
POPE FRANCIS talks with a delegation of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious in the pontiff's studio at the Vatican, on April 16, 2015.

Vatican ends contentious investigation of U.S. nuns with olive branch

THE Vatican has officially ended a controversial three-year investigation of American nuns with a face-saving compromise that allows Pope Francis to close the book on one of the more troubled episodes that he inherited from his predecessor, Benedict XVI.

"We are pleased at the completion of the (investigation), which involved long and challenging exchanges of our understandings of and perspectives on critical matters of religious life and its practice," said Sister Sharon Holland, president of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious (LCWR), the umbrella group of nuns that had been under investigation, in a statement released following a meeting in Rome with the Vatican's top doctrinal officials.

"We learned that what we hold in common is much greater than any of our differences."

A brief statement from Cardinal Gerhard Mueller, head of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF) and leader of the effort to rein in the nuns, who were seen as too liberal, shed little light on what the long-running investigation achieved and seemed aimed at moving past the contentious saga.

Mueller said he was confident that the mission of the nuns "is rooted in the Tradition of the Church" and that they are "essential for the flourishing of religious life in the Church."

The original report, issued almost exactly three years ago, had accused the nuns of promoting "certain radical feminist themes incompatible with the Catholic faith."

In another indicator of the thaw in relations, the delegation of American nuns met later with Francis for 50 minutes in a warm encounter that seemed to underscore the sisters' affinity for the pope's focus on social justice and his pastoral outreach to the world.

"Our conversation allowed us to personally thank Pope Francis for providing leadership and a vision that has cap-

"We were also deeply heartened by Pope Francis' expression of appreciation for the witness given by Catholic sisters through our lives and ministry..."

tivated our hearts and emboldened us as in our own mission and service to the church," the nuns said in a statement.

"We were also deeply heartened by Pope Francis' expression of appreciation for the witness given by Catholic sisters through our lives and ministry and will bring that message back to our members."

Both the nuns and Mueller's office agreed not to speak further to the media for the next month, and the joint statement and final report seemed to represent a quiet and merciful end to what had been a noisy showdown between Rome and the nuns – and one the Vatican never seemed likely to win.

The investigation of the LCWR, a network of Catholic sisters that represents about 80 percent of the 50,000 nuns in the U.S., had been a public relations headache for Rome since April 2012.

That's when the Vatican's doctrinal office surprised the nuns – and the American hierarchy – by publishing a harsh assessment of the LCWR and announcing plans to effectively take over the group and institute a sweeping overhaul.

Mueller's office charged that the American sisters were straying too far from traditional doctrines in the theological

speculations of some members and said the sisters were focusing too much on social justice issues, such as caring for the poor and advocating for immigrants.

The CDF was also upset that many sisters were active in promoting health care reform in the U.S.

The Vatican office also said the LCWR members should spend more time advancing church teachings on sexuality and abortion.

The sisters rejected those charges, calling them "unsubstantiated," and the report sparked a furor in the U.S. and an outpouring of support for the nuns. The controversy was yet another crisis that dogged the final year of Benedict's troubled papacy.

Many U.S. bishops were also frustrated at having to answer for a Vatican investigation they had nothing to do with and often disagreed with.

The nuns took a more low-key approach, expressing a willingness to discuss the outstanding issues with the Vatican while defending their priorities and commitment to social justice and the kind of theological inquiry that riled conservatives.

They also made it clear they might drop their official Vatican affiliation rather than agree to unacceptable limits on their autonomy.

When Francis was elected two years ago, it was widely expected that he would try to wind down the investigation, and he signaled that he did not want to waste much effort on such internal disputes.

The final report issued on April 16 indicated that the nuns acceded to some oversight of their publications and choice of speakers for their annual conference to ensure doctrinal orthodoxy, and both sides agreed to a new set of statutes for the LCWR.

Both sides also reaffirmed a commitment to maintaining unity and keeping the faith and spiritual practices of the Catholic Church at the heart of their common mission.

How implementing those recommendations will play out in the coming years is somewhat unclear, but the report seems to make it clear that both sides are eager to put the episode behind them.

Record number of women become nuns in UK

LONDON – The number of women in Britain becoming nuns has reached a 25-year high according to new figures from the Catholic Church.

The number of women taking their holy vows has trebled in the past five years from 15 in 2009 to 45 last year.

From a low of just seven women joining the sisterhood in 2004, that figure has been steadily rising for the past decade.

Experts say women are being drawn to become nuns because there is a "gap in the market for meaning in our culture" which the religious life offers.

Theodora Hawksley (29), was until recently a postdoctoral researcher in theology at the University of Edinburgh.

But at the beginning of the year she decided to bid farewell to her friends in Scotland and career as an academic, and begin her training to become a nun.

She joined the Congregation of Jesus in January and is now living in their house in Willesden, north London, while taking the first steps towards making vows of poverty, chastity and obedience.

Explaining why she chose to become a nun, Hawksley, originally from Hertfordshire, said, "In one sense it is a bit like trying to explain to somebody why you are marrying the person you are. You can list their qualities, but in the end it is a relationship of love."

"But on the other hand, I was drawn to it by wanting a greater freedom in being able to give myself to God and the world."

"I don't have to worry now about practical things like making a career for myself. I'm free to go where I'm needed and meet people at the margins."

And she is not the only young woman choosing religious life. According to church figures, 14 out of the 45 women who entered convents this year were aged 30 or under.

Hawksley said, "There is another person in an order in London and she is 27 and we meet to chat. You are not on your own. It is an unusual life choice, but you are not the only one making it. There are plenty of people asking themselves the same questions."



EXPERTS SAY women are being drawn to become nuns because there is a "gap in the market for meaning in our culture" which the religious life offers.

She admitted some of her friends were a "bit bewildered" when she revealed her plans, but most have been very supportive.

While to most people the word nun conjures up images of older women dressed in the traditional habit, dubbed "penguin suits" because of their distinctive black and white look, Hawksley said her order tends to dress down in t-shirts and jeans.

"Unless you really knew what you were looking for, you wouldn't know it was a nun," she said.

Father Christopher Jamison, director of the Vocations Office of the Catholic Church, said, "There is a gap in the market for meaning in our culture and one of the ways in which women may find that meaning is through religious life."

Sister Cathy Jones, religious life vocations promoter at the National Office for Vocation, said, "We are never going to be at the place we were at 50 years ago, Catholic culture was at a very different place."

"But the fact that more women are becoming nuns than there has been in the past 25 years shows that as a generation we have turned a corner."

"We are not going to be as we were in the past when our work was very visible with hospitals and schools and so on. But nuns may be doing more hidden work with trafficked women, for example, or as counsellors."

"That may not be as visible, but nonetheless is vital work the Church is doing."

And she agreed that some women, having seen the poverty which has afflicted parts of Britain during the economic downturn, many have been driven to work with those who are struggling.

She said, "It doesn't tend to be those who are coming from quite vulnerable places who become nuns. But there are people who want to be reaching out to those on the margins, who join."

Last year, BBC Northern Ireland political reporter Martina Purdy quit her 25-year career in journalism to become a nun. She entered the Adoration Sisters last October.

In a statement posted on her Twitter page explaining her decision, she said, "I know many people will not understand this decision. It is a decision I have not come to lightly, but it is one I make with love and great joy."

Tragedy on the Mediterranean: 30,000 migrants 'may drown' trying to reach Europe in 2015

THE death toll from capsizing disasters in the Mediterranean Sea stands at 1,727 so far in 2015 – 30 times higher than the 56 fatalities by April 21 last year, according to the International Organisation for Migration (IOM).

It came as a European plan to tackle the emergency was criticised for not going far enough.

IOM said the total of 3,279 migrants deaths in the Mediterranean last year could be surpassed within weeks. Spokesman Joel Millman said that at the current rate the total for this year could reach 30,000.

The dire estimate came as the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) said the number killed in the shipwreck off the coast of Libya in mid-April is now believed to be more than 800.

Spokesman Arian Edwards said this made it "the deadliest incident in the Mediterranean we have ever recorded."

The UNHCR said there were around 850 people on board, including 350

Eritreans and people from Syria, Somalia, Sierra Leone, Mali, Senegal, Gambia, Ivory Coast and Ethiopia.

Only 28 people are known to have survived the tragedy and they arrived in Catania, Sicily. Children are believed to have been on the boat, but none have been found.

Carlotta Sami, of UNHCR, said migrants looked "exhausted, fragile, astonished to see so many people waiting for them" when they arrived in Catania.

Two alleged people smugglers, including one believed to have been the captain of the ship, have been detained by Italian authorities, according to reports.

Claims emerged today that the boat capsized after accidentally colliding with another ship which came to its aid.

Proposals include strengthening the Triton patrolling service and seeking a military mandate to seize and destroy



FOR EUROPE-BOUND migrants, desperation outweighs risks. Pictured above, migrants crowd an inflatable dinghy as members of the Italian coast guard approach them off the Libyan coast in the Mediterranean Sea on April 22.

people-smugglers' boats, backed by increased budgets for Frontex, which manages the borders of the 28-nation bloc.

But Labour's shadow home secretary Yvette Cooper described the response as "painfully weak" and said the EU needed to restore a properly-funded search and rescue mission, after the

Italian Mare Nostrum operation was halted last year.

Maurice Wren, chief executive of the Refugee Council, said the response to events in the Mediterranean was "inadequate" and Europe had to "raise its game."

He said, "The immediate issue is to ensure that people who do board rickety

boats in Libya, setting sail for Europe, are given as much opportunity to reach safety, reach land safely. Europe should surely have no interest in simply refusing, turning its back on people in desperate need of help."

Former foreign secretary William Hague said there was no "quick fix" to the "absolutely catastrophic" loss of life.

He told the BBC Radio 4 *Today* programme there had been sound reasons for stopping the previous operation, which rescued people right up to the border of Libyan territorial waters, because more people were dying but he said the current operation was also not working.

His successor Philip Hammond said Cameron would attend the summit willing to agree British support "for anything that will end this appalling situation in the Mediterranean but insistent that we link with a clear programme to tackle the problem upstream."

He said, "Tackle the traffickers, the criminal trafficking gangs, tackle the conditions in the countries of origin and countries of transit that are forcing people to get under the control of these traffickers and take some appalling risks."



HMS BULWARK is on patrol in the Mediterranean.

British Navy Rescues Refugees in the Med

LONDON – The Royal Navy's flagship has rescued more than 100 refugees adrift in the Mediterranean – its first mission since being deployed in the region.

HMS Bulwark was despatched to the Mediterranean on May 4 as part of David Cameron's promise to help tackle the migrant crisis, which has cost the lives of nearly 1,800 people this year.

The 19,000-tonne assault ship picked up 110 migrants today after inspecting a suspicious rubber boat. With the help of the Italian coast guard, the migrants were taken to land.

The prime minister pledged the ship on April 23 ahead of an emergency EU summit to discuss how European countries could cooperate to prevent the deaths of thousands this summer.

Speaking outside the Brussels meeting, Cameron said, "Saving lives means rescuing these poor people, but it also

means smashing the gangs and stabilizing the region.

"Now Britain, as ever, will help. We'll use our aid budget to help stabilize neighbouring countries. And as the country in Europe with the biggest defence budget, we can make a real contribution."

Cameron also pledged three Merlin helicopters to the rescue effort.

HMS Bulwark, a landing platform dock, is designed to put ashore Royal Marine commandos in assaults by sea, by boats launched from the dock compartment, and from two helicopters from the deck.

It has a nautical range of 8,000 miles and can carry up to 700 troops on top of a crew of 325.

The MoD said earlier that the prime minister had made clear to the European Council that Britain would play a role in tackling the current crisis in the Mediterranean, but would not offer refugees asylum in the UK.

Pier 21: Canada's history told through immigrants' voices

HALIFAX, NS – If you came from another country to live in Canada, do you remember what happened on your first day here? How did you feel? What surprised you?

As the days went by, turning into weeks and then years, how did you adjust to your new life?

The answers to those questions, and more, outline the experiences of millions of immigrants to Canada. Most Canadians – or our ancestors – came from somewhere else and share similar histories.

Whether the stories are happy or sad, they are told at the newly expanded Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21 in Halifax, Nova Scotia, often through the immigrants' own voices.

Voices like John O'Connor, who came to Canada in 1967 to accept a teaching position in Humbolt, Saskatchewan. He remembers well his first experience with snow.

"The first year, people said to me, 'Oh, you'll regret wanting to see the snow', but I enjoyed it immensely. The second year, uh, not as much," says O'Connor.

"And the third year, I had met up with another fellow from Ireland, and he said to me, 'Let's go skiing.'

"And I said, 'Okay'. I didn't know that we were going downhill... I never became a model skier, but I enjoyed it so much."

Each person has unique experiences, and immigrants are of varying races, religions, political beliefs or national origins, says the museum's CEO Marie Chapman.

Some may flee war, famine, or persecution; or seek new economic and edu-



PHOTO: Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21.

ARCHIVAL photo of Pier 21 in Halifax, Nova Scotia – once the major point of entry for all new arrivals into Canada.

ational opportunities; others come for love or adventure.

Immigrants have been instrumental in shaping Canada into the nation that it is today, so the individual and collective stories are essential facets of our national history, she says.

Sharing them creates greater awareness of newcomers' contributions to the nation, as well as nation-wide empathy for the immigration experience.

The Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21 is located at the historic Halifax Seaport and was once a major entry point into Canada.

Opened to the public in 1999, the museum originally told the stories of the over 1.2 million people who passed through its gates.

The museum underwent substantial renovations in 2015, doubling its original size, making space for more exhibits that tell the larger story of Canada-wide immigration, from hundreds of years ago to the present day.

Organized around the themes Journey, Arrival, Belonging and Impact, the new exhibits describe first impressions, including details about passing through customs and obtaining documents, find-

ing a place to live and shopping for necessities.

The museum also tells the stories of new Canadian adventures, like discovering new foods and new words, learning to dress for the weather, making friends, finding jobs, exploring the country, getting involved in sports or leisure activities, and carving out new lives. Somewhere during this process, Canada begins to feel like home.

The museum shares the stories through traditional exhibits of photos and artifacts like shipping crates, trunks, luggage, and personal treasures.

Innovative digital technology allows visitors to see the waves of immigration since the late 1400s, and hear immigrants' voices describing personal experiences.

Immigrants and their families are represented in the exhibits, and there are opportunities to contribute personal immigration stories to Canada's history.

Interactive exhibits have museum visitors boarding a rail car west to settle the prairies, smelling spices that reflect diverse ethnic backgrounds, dressing in period costumes, exploring accommodations on a trans-Atlantic ship, and participating in other hands-on exhibits, including some specifically for children.

A film, genealogical research, and temporary exhibits help round out the museum's offerings.

"The museum will continue to evolve as more immigrants come to Canada, and we collect their stories, too," Chapman said.

The renovated Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21 will reopen May 5, 2015.

Ireland's divisive referendum on same-sex marriage

DUBLIN – Voters in the Republic of Ireland will make history on May 22, by holding the world's first national referendum on legalising same-sex marriage.

The vote marks a pivotal moment in the evolving relationship between Church and State, pitting religious leaders against the government in an historically conservative and Catholic country.

The Church has urged the public to reject the proposal, while the major political parties say it is a civil not a religious matter and are campaigning for a Yes vote.

Opinion polls suggest 78 percent of people are in favour of altering the constitution to allow gay couples to marry. But former Equality Minister and government Chief Whip Pat Carey believes the final result will be much closer.

"In the major urban centres the Yes campaign is getting a good reception," he says, "but a lot of people in middle Ireland and among an older age group still don't feel comfortable about it."

Carey came out earlier this year aged 67. He says his decision was not borne out of "bravery" but a desire to "energize" the Yes campaign.

"I am sorry I didn't speak out earlier but I didn't have the confidence or the courage," he said.

"It seems to have resonated with a lot of people in my own age bracket. I have got some very sad letters. There is a great deal of torment out there."

Homosexuality was illegal in Ireland until 1993, and Carey believes a generation of gay men and women now deserve "some generosity" from the Irish people.

Catholic bishops and family rights campaigners argue that a Yes vote would encroach on religious beliefs and have implications for the welfare of children.

Keith Mills, an agnostic, gay man and member of the Mothers and Fathers Matter group, believes gay and lesbian couples are already catered for by the Civil Partnership Act of 2010, and have adequate next of kin and taxation rights.

Same-sex marriage would lead to gay couples adopting and using surrogates, he believes, depriving children "of a mother and father."

"Marriage is the gel that brings a couple together to raise a family. That should not be redefined," he added.

Rory O'Neill, an LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender) activist and drag queen considers such arguments "constitutionally bogus."

"The referendum asks if two people should enter in to marriage regardless of their sex. It has nothing to do with surrogacy or adoption or gay families," he added.

Last year, O'Neill hit international headlines when he made an impassioned speech about homophobia; dressed as his alter ego Panti Bliss.

"This feels personal. Referendums in Ireland, especially on social issues, always get a bit nasty," he told the BBC.

The two sides' positions have become deeply entrenched.

Activists from the No camp say they are regularly "shouted down" by their



RORY O'NEILL, also known by his stage name as Panti Bliss, is a drag queen and gay rights activist from Ballinrobe, County Mayo, Ireland. He said the vote is a horrible situation for the LGBT community and believes the issue should have been dealt with in parliament, rather than in public.

Why is Ireland holding a referendum?

- Seventeen countries, and some states in U.S. and Mexico, have legalised same-sex marriage through legislation or court rulings.
- Canada became the fourth country in the world, and the first country outside Europe, to legalize same-sex marriage nationwide with the enactment of the Civil Marriage Act which provided a gender-neutral marriage definition. Laws in Finland and Slovenia are pending.
- Ireland wants to change its constitution to extend civil marriage rights to same-sex couples.
- Any constitutional amendments must be approved by parliament and then put to the people in a referendum.
- On May 22 Ireland will ask its citizens if "marriage may be contracted in accordance with law by two persons without distinction as to their sex."
- Only Irish citizens who are registered and living in the state can vote.
- Past referendums have been very divisive. In 1995, after fierce debate, a vote to legalise divorce narrowly passed by 51% to 49% line.

Yes side opponents, while LGBT campaigners say they have been subjected to demeaning posters and pamphlets, including one that likened voting for same sex marriage, to voting for Sharia Law.

O'Neill believes the issue should have been dealt with in parliament, rather than in public.

"I would have much preferred if it had happened through legislation.

"Now we are having to argue that we are ordinary, good people and the whole

country gets to decide. It's actually a horrible situation to be in."

Michael Kelly, editor of the *Irish Catholic* newspaper, says the eventual outcome will depend on turnout.

He will be voting No on the day, as he believes marriage is "a unique institution between a man and a woman."

"A lot of the Yes vote is quite soft," he said.

"While there is a lot of warmth towards this, people don't feel that strongly about it."

390,000 Irish Catholic Parish Registers to go Online

DUBLIN – The entire collection of Catholic parish register microfilms held by the National Library of Ireland (NLI) will be made available online – for free – from July 8, 2015 onwards.

On that date, a dedicated website will go live, with over 390,000 digital images of the microfilm reels on which the parish registers are recorded.

The NLI has been working to digitize the microfilms for over three years under its most ambitious digitization programme to date.

The parish register records are considered the single most important source of information on Irish family history prior to the 1901 Census.

Dating from the 1740s to the 1880s, they cover 1,091 parishes throughout the island of Ireland, and consist primarily of

baptismal and marriage records.

Ciara Kerrigan, who is managing the digitization of the parish registers, said, "This is the most significant ever genealogy project in the history of the NLI."

Digitization means that, for the first time, anyone can access these registers without having to travel to Dublin.

Parish registers include information such as the dates of baptisms and marriages, and names of the key people such as godparents or witnesses.

"The images will be in black and white, and will be of the microfilms of the original registers," explained Kerrigan.

There will not be transcripts or indexes for the images. However, the nationwide network of local family history centres holds indexes and transcripts of parish registers for their local areas.

Liz Keogh of the Irish Embassy meets Vancouver Irish community

VANCOUVER – Elizabeth (Liz) Keogh, Second Secretary with the Embassy of Ireland in Ottawa was in Vancouver recently to help expedite a shipment of lamb from Ireland with Canada Customs. While here she took the opportunity to meet several members of the local Irish community, including members of the White Rock Irish Club, the Irish Women's Network, members of the board of Vancouver CelticFest, and *The Celtic Connection*.



LIZ KEOGH was welcomed by members of the White Rock Irish Club on her recent visit to Vancouver. She is pictured above on the back row, second from right.



LIZ KEOGH and members of the White Rock Irish Club relaxing at Jimmy Flynn's Celtic Snug on the waterfront in White Rock.



ELIZABETH (Liz) Keogh (L), the Second Secretary with the Embassy of Ireland in Ottawa and Maura De Freitas (R), Publisher/Editor of *The Celtic Connection* newspaper.

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.

– KLSMC, PMKMC, MJF, DF, ADB, CSKB, CC, CKB, LC, SLMKR, CTX

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

Publication of this prayer is \$25 monthly (Canadian residents include 5% GST)

Website 'brings Irish heritage home'

DUBLIN – More than 130 3D images of ancient monuments and buildings have been created to bring to life some of the country's most important heritage sites.

The models of places as significant as the passage tomb at Newgrange and the monastery at Skellig Michael are so detailed they make it easier to view engravings and other features which may be missed by the naked eye.

Other symbolic sites include the Hill of Tara, Derry City Walls, the Poul nabrone dolmen, Glendalough, Clonmacnoise, high crosses and the intriguing Boa Figure.

Heather Humphreys, Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, said the data would benefit education, tourism and conservation work.

She said, "How many of us have been inside the passage tomb at Newgrange, or have scaled the heights of Sceilg Mhichil?"

"This fascinating website will give members of the public a much closer look at many of our best known heritage sites.

"We have such an incredible array of



SKELLIG MICHAEL is among the symbolic sites brought to life in 3D on a new website. The remote island off the coast of Kerry was the site of a monastic settlement founded between the 6th and 8th Century. It was continuously occupied until its abandonment in the late 12th Century. The remains of the monastery, along with most of the island itself, became a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1996.

ancient monuments in this country; this website effectively brings them right into your home."

The 3D scans will be hosted on a new website www.3Dicons.ie where users

can access images, a video, 3D models, a location map and information on its historical and archaeological significance. It is part of a European project to bring together heritage sites on one portal.

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MEMBERS of the Young Conway Volunteers marching in a circle while playing the *Famine Song* outside St. Patrick's Church on Donegall Street in Belfast on July 12, 2012.

‘Outrageous’ sectarian behaviour outside Catholic church with ‘Famine Song’

BELFAST – Thirteen members of a loyalist flute band have been convicted of provocatively playing a sectarian tune outside a Catholic Church.

A judge ruled that they took part in a rendition of the *Famine Song*, aggravated by hostility, while marching in a circle at St. Patrick's Chapel in north Belfast.

He said, “This was outrageous and inflammatory behaviour which could have precipitated serious public disorder.”

Three of the defendants received five-month suspended prison sentences for their actions during a Twelfth of July parade back in 2012.

Fines of £300 were imposed on all but two of the youngest accused, while binding over orders were also handed down.

The defendants, members of the Young Conway Volunteers, fought the charges and denied playing the controversial tune.

Instead, the band members claimed to have been performing the Beach Boys hit *Sloop John B*. Played to the same music, that song has the lyrics “I feel so broke up, I wanna go home.”

The *Famine Song* which make reference to the 1840s Great Famine of Ireland is sung by some loyalists in Northern Ireland and Scotland. It is often sung by fans of Scottish football club Rangers due to rival Celtic's Irish roots.

The song is normally directed at Irish people, those of Irish descent or those with perceived affiliations to Ireland.

Senior judges in Scotland have declared the *Famine Song* racist due to its sectarian nature. It includes the line ‘The famine's over, why don't you go home?’

It is often heard at loyalist marches in Northern Ireland despite the Great Famine being an event that impacted the whole of Ireland.

The episode outside the church marked the first in a series of flashpoint incidents at the Donegall Street location.

During a contested hearing at Belfast Magistrates Court, defence lawyers played songs by a Swedish folk singer, a Star Trek enthusiast and football fan chants – all to the same tune – in a bid to have their clients cleared.

Paul Shaw, band leader on the day of

“I find there was a studied and deliberate piece of conduct which involved their playing and marching, not just past this church, but deliberately remaining within feet of the doorstep.”

the parade, was the only one of the accused to give evidence.

He said they had been forced to stop outside the church due to a break in the parade and started up the Beach Boys tune to ward off lethargy among members tired from the previous night's celebrations.

Insisting there was never any plan to offend, he revealed that he later penned a letter to local Catholic parishioners. “That was to explain the band in no way had any intention to cause any upset to anybody,” he told the court.

However, District Judge Paul Copeland rejected the defence case, finding that the band could have behaved differently as they waited to march on.

“They had choices to make; they didn't stand and wait quietly, they didn't disperse for the short period of time available to them, they didn't march in silence to a drum beat, they didn't sit down, join supporters or family and take a break,” he pointed out.

“Instead... I find there was a studied and deliberate piece of conduct which involved their playing and marching, not just past this church, but deliberately remaining within feet of the doorstep.”

Emphasising the context of the situation at St. Patrick's, he said the *Famine Song* has entered into the “reertoire” of loyalist band music.

Gay marriage turns into key Northern Ireland battleground

BELFAST – The Northern Ireland Assembly has rejected a proposal calling for the introduction of gay marriage, after debating the issue for a fourth time on April 27.

A total of 96 MLAs took part in the vote and 49 voted against the Sinn Féin motion calling for civil marriage equality for all, with 47 in favour.

Sinn Féin, the The Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP) and five Alliance MLAs supported the motion. The Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) opposed it and the Ulster Unionists were given a free vote on the issue. Of 53 unionists, only four voted yes.

The issue has become a key battleground in the upcoming Westminster election following a motion tabled in the Northern Ireland Assembly by DUP minister Paul Givan that would effectively exempt people with ‘strongly held’ religious convictions from equality laws – allowing them to discriminate against gay people.

The bill comes after family-run Ashers Baking Company – which is based in Newtownabbey – was told it discriminated against a gay rights activist by declining to include a slogan on a cake order that said ‘support gay marriage’.

The dispute made international headlines and the company is being taken to court after the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland took on the case on behalf of the customer.

Controversy surrounding Northern Ireland's DUP Health Minister, Jim Wells, featured heavily in the debate.

The minster has issued a public apology after he was recorded on camera making comments linking gay relationships and child abuse.

Wells announced his resignation after it was confirmed that police are also investigating an incident involving a lesbian couple during a door-to-door election canvas by Wells in County Down.

It is alleged that he called at the couple's house, and during a conversation was critical of their lifestyle.

He is due to step down on May 11 to spend more time with his seriously ill wife, but Sinn Féin said his resignation should take immediate effect.

Sinn Féin's Catriona Ruane expressed sympathy over his wife's illness but said he should have resigned immediately after linking child abuse to gay parents. She said Wells had “violated” his pledge of office by making his original remarks.

“No matter how much pressure someone is under there is no excuse for the comments that were made. What make the comments even worse was that they were made by the health minister who had taken a pledge of office, who is responsible for safeguarding children,” she said.

Earlier, DUP leader Peter Robinson has asked people “not to take on the characteristics of a lynch mob” over the controversy surrounding Wells.

“We need to be very careful on these issues that we have some proportionality,” he said.

“This was a comment made by a minister who for a considerable number of months has carried on his work during the day and been sitting beside his wife during the night as she's been fighting for her life.”



FAMILY-RUN Ashers Baking Company was at the centre of controversy when it refused a cake order which included the slogan ‘support gay marriage’. The cake was ordered for a civic event in Bangor Castle Town Hall, County Down, to mark International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia. It was hosted by Alliance councillor Andrew Muir, who said another bakery accepted the order.

Ulster Unionist MLA Danny Kinahan told the Assembly he was supporting the Sinn Féin motion for marriage equality although he was “proud” that his party had given its MLAs a free vote on the motion.

“At school and in the army I believed – and I'm ashamed to say – I joked, carried by the flow, that gay lesbian and such matters were wrong and could be laughed at. I'd never really sat down and thought about it,” Kinahan said.

The UUP MLA said his eyes were opened to discrimination when one of his colleagues, who he described as an “excellent soldier” left the army after failing a vetting process for promotion.

“I want a society here in Northern Ireland where no-one is made to feel a second-class citizen to any extent and certainly not due to sexual definition. I

want no discrimination whatsoever on account of religious belief or sexual orientation,” Kinahan said.

Alliance MLA Chris Lyttle told MLAs his party “is committed to delivering a shared society for everyone based on religious and civil liberty and equality for all regardless of age, gender, disability, race, ethnicity or sexual orientation and to stand against discrimination or stigmatisation of any kind.”

Northern Ireland is the only part of the UK without same-sex marriage – as weddings began in Scotland, England and Wales in 2014. Crown dependencies of Jersey and Guernsey both have same-sex marriage legislation in the works.

The Republic of Ireland is also set to vote on proposals for same-sex marriage on May 22.

Two men arrested after attacks on SF councillors' cars

DERRY, Northern Ireland – Two men have been arrested in Derry in connection with the latest in a series of attacks on the homes and properties of Sinn Féin representatives in the city.

It follows attacks on cars belonging to two of the party's councillors.

Shortly before 1:50 AM on May 6, police received reports that a car parked in the Kildrum Gardens area of the City had been set on fire.

Extensive damage was caused to the engine block of the car as a result. That car is the property of Councillor Collie Kelly.

Shortly before 2:30 AM it was reported that the front and rear windscreens of a car parked in the Oakbridge Park area of Shantallow were smashed. That car belongs to Councillor Sandra Duffy.

Two men aged 17 and 23 were arrested in the area of Oakbridge Park on suspicion of criminal damage and are currently in custody assisting police with their enquiries.

In recent days, there have also been incidents centred on the family homes of Deputy Fire Minister Martin McGuinness and Martina Anderson.

Foyle MLA Raymond McCartney says the party will not be deterred from its work

NI doctor convicted of assault after her drink was spiked

BELFAST – The story of a Northern Ireland doctor convicted of assaulting police officers after having her drink spiked with a date rape drug has made international headlines and been featured in the women's magazine *Cosmopolitan*.

It comes as a petition calling for justice for Dr. Eireann Kerr has now almost 10,000 supporters from around the globe including the UK, Germany, Canada and the United States since its launch.

The 34-year-old said she had been "overwhelmed" by the support from people.

Eireann, who lives in south Belfast but is originally from Strabane, had been on a Christmas night out with medical colleagues on December 13, 2013 when the incident occurred.

A judge agreed she had been drugged without her knowledge, but he said his hands were tied by the law and so he had no choice but to convict. She will now be investigated by the General Medical Council and could potentially be struck off.

The doctor was working as an anaesthetist at Altnagelvin Hospital at the time. She described waking up in a police cell without belongings, covered in bruises and not knowing how she got there as the most "traumatic event" she had experienced.

She posted on her Facebook page, "I feel overwhelmed by the support both in Northern Ireland and now further afield. I'm glad this message is finally getting out to all young women (and men) out there. Drink spiking is a real threat – the victims of this crime need to be supported and the criminals caught."

Cosmopolitan reported online that new research has found half of all women aged between 18 and 34 feel they're forced to leave drinks unattended on a night out – thanks to rules such as 'no drinks on the dancefloor'.

During the court case it emerged that a hair strand test showed that Dr. Kerr had the date rape drug gamma-Hydroxybutyric Acid HB in her system.

Among the thousands who have signed the petition was Anthony Larkin from Germany who wrote, "The judgment is not fair."

Ruth Jones from Edinburgh said, "I am a young trainee doctor and realize this could have happened to myself or any one of my friends. I applaud her bravery."

And Denise Marshall from Washington DC said, "The court needs to do the right thing in this case and overturn the conviction of Dr. Eireann Kerr as she was the victim."

Eireann was given a two-month conditional discharge which is now being appealed.

Her lawyers are also asking the Public Prosecutor to justify why the case was taken.

In a recent statement, the PPS said, "We consider that it is in the public interest to prosecute those cases where there is evidence of an attack on emergency services staff, such as police, particularly when injuries are sustained by those staff."

"In the particular circumstances of this case, we offered the defendant a caution which she refused. We note that in subsequent court proceedings, the de-



DR. EIREANN KERR, pictured with members of her legal team, is fighting to clear her name after her drink was spiked on an evening out with friends. She was convicted of assaulting police when they intervened.

endant was found guilty and sentenced accordingly. We respect the sentencing decision made.

"We can confirm that we have received from the defence team notice to appeal the court's decision and this matter is

now subjudice. We will not provide any further comment on this case at this time."

The public petition calling for justice for Eireann Kerr can be found at <http://tinyurl.com/koxp4kh>.

Phil Farrington: Last 'Irish pardon' WWII soldier dies at 94

DUBLIN – The last known surviving Irish soldier to have been pardoned for leaving the Irish Defence Forces to fight for the Allies in World War Two has died.

Phil Farrington was involved in the liberation of the Belsen concentration camp, but had been jailed as a deserter when he returned to Ireland on leave.

He was among a group of servicemen who received an Irish Government pardon in 2013, following a two-year campaign.

Farrington died in a Dublin hospital on the morning of Saturday, May 2 at the age of 94.

Having gained independence from Britain less than a generation earlier in 1922, the Republic of Ireland remained neutral during the Second World War.

At the time, the Irish Government referred to the global conflict as "the emergency."

Farrington was among a number of Irish soldiers who went absent without leave (AWOL) from the Irish Defence Forces and joined the British Army to fight against the Nazis.

However, instead of being treated as war heroes, many were treated as criminals when they returned to their native land.

In 1945, the then Irish prime minister Éamon de Valera passed an emergency powers order, outlining the punishments for "desertion in time of national emergency."

Many servicemen were dismissed from the Irish Defence Forces, lost their pensions and were barred from holding jobs paid for by the state.

Peter Mulvany, who led the Irish Soldiers Pardons Campaign from 2011 to 2013, said that when Farrington first joined the British Army, he became a member of the Royal Sussex regiment.

When he returned to Ireland on army

leave during the war, he was arrested and put into a prison in Cork.

"On his return to the Irish Defence Forces, he went absent again and joined the Royal Pioneer Corps," Mulvany told the BBC.

"And it was with the Pioneer Corps in Germany he was involved in Belsen's liberation."

Farrington spoke about the harsh treatment he received as a detainee in Cork in the book *Spitting on a Soldier's Grave*, written by Liverpool author and veteran, Robert Widders.

The Irishman recalled how the inmates were never allowed to speak to each other and were given very little food.

"We were in jail through the winter," he said. "It was freezing cold without any bedding or heating. And once a week we'd all be hosed down with cold water. Sometimes we had to stand to attention for hours in the freezing cold."

Farrington's story was also included in a BBC Radio 4 documentary called *The Disowned Army*.

Mulvany started the campaign after Queen Elizabeth's visit to the Republic of Ireland four years ago, the first state visit by a British monarch since the partition of Ireland.

"The cordial response from the Irish public to the Queen's visit to Ireland in May 2011 suggested that there would be a chance of success to seek redress from the Irish Government for these blacklisted soldiers and their families," Mulvany said.

In 2012, the Irish Government apologised for the way Irish Second World War veterans were treated by the state.

In May 2013, the Irish parliament passed legislation granting a pardon to the almost 5,000 soldiers who left the armed forces to serve with the Allies during the war. The bill also granted an amnesty and immunity from prosecution to the servicemen.


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How is immigration reform like the human body?

Sláinte likes to compare the human body to a nation and the 37 trillion cells that make up the body to that nation's citizens.

Some of your cell-citizens prefer an exciting life in the immune system army that defends the body from invaders while others prefer the quiet life of making toenails for your foot.

Your nation/body is a busy place and there are more than enough jobs for everyone. However, not all your cell people are citizens.

Microbes such as bacteria, fungi (which includes yeasts) and viruses sneak across the body's borders from the environment outside the body.

Some of them are there for nefarious reasons; they want nothing more than to sicken and kill cell citizens. But most of them are just looking for a better life inside the body and all they ask in return for their work is room and board.

These microbes can be found wherever the inside of the body comes into contact with some part of the outside including the skin, the nose and lungs, the urogenital tract and the digestive tract.

Collectively these communities of microbes are called the 'microbiome'. How many immigrants can be found in your microbiome?

Not that *Sláinte* wants to scare you, but your microbiome contains approximately 100 trillion microbial immigrants compared to your 37 trillion cells.

That's right, there are more of them than there are of you. Given this knowledge, wouldn't you rather keep your microbiome happy?

The stakes are high. A number of disorders are associated with changes in the microbiome include psoriasis, childhood-onset asthma, obesity, inflammatory bowel disease, functional bowel diseases, colorectal cancer, and cardiovascular disease.

This list will undoubtedly grow. There has been an increase in autoimmune disease in recent decades that some researchers believe may involve a disordered microbiome. Others think the same of inflammation which is present in most chronic diseases.

The microbiome found in the gastrointestinal tract is of special interest. Some microbes survive digestion in the stomach and small intestine to take root in the large intestine.

There they form a type of garden. This garden produces a wide variety of metabolites many of which can pass into the bloodstream and enter the body.

This includes vitamins like vitamin K and B complex, amino acids, short-chain fatty acids that provide energy for colonic cells, and signaling molecules that influence the immune army.

They also help to digest fiber that the human cells cannot and protect the intestinal barrier from pathogenic bacteria.

Studies suggest there is a role for the microbiome in the regulation of anxiety, mood, cognition and pain. Quite a bit of important work for an immigrant population.

Taking antibiotics is like going into a microbial community and machine gun-

SLÁINTE – TO YOUR GOOD HEALTH!



By
**MAUREEN
KEANE**

ning the population – both the bad and the good guys are going to die.

Only take them if they are necessary. Then follow your physician's directions exactly so you don't have to repeat a course of treatment. Ask your doctor about a probiotic supplement.

Initiate immigration reform in your body. The term 'probiotics' refers to foods that contain live bacterial cultures.

Encourage this kind of immigration by eating fermented foods such as a good quality yogurt, kefir, miso, tempeh, kombucha, kimchi and sauerkraut.

Raw green peas contain a probiotic naturally even though they are not a fermented vegetable.

You can also eat small amounts of soft fermented cheeses like parmesan, gouda and Swiss.

Sláinte suggests you avoid taking probiotic capsules as a supplement and get them instead from food. Some stud-

ies have shown quality control to be a problem.

Increase the amount of 'prebiotics' in your diet. Prebiotic foods contain carbohydrates that bacteria burn for fuel.

Oats, legumes (beans), onions and artichokes are especially good sources but a diet rich in vegetable and grain fibers will also contain lots of the soluble fiber to feed your bacterial immigrants and their children. They, in turn, will produce short chain fatty acids to fuel the colonic cells.

Help regulate your immigrants by getting enough vitamin D (talk to your doctor about a supplement). Avoid high fat diets. Research has shown that a high fat diet reduces the types of bacteria found in the gut.

Changing to a low-fat, high-plant fiber diet from a high-fat, high-sugar diet was able to cause measurable positive changes in the microbiome in just a single day.

Research into the microbiome is in its infancy so take everything you read about this field with a large grain of salt.

Science has yet to prove that changes in the microbiome cause specific diseases. Remember, it wasn't that long ago when all our ills were blamed on a lack of antioxidants!

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.

Aer Lingus pilots saved plane and 46 passengers

DUBLIN – A quick-thinking Aer Lingus Regional pilot and co-pilot saved their plane and 46 passengers by flying into a rain shower to clear sea salt which had completely caked their aircraft windscreen.

The revelation came as an Air Accident Investigation Unit (AAIU) report released earlier this month praised "the good airmanship" of the crew of the ATR-72 flight from Manchester to Cork whose skill averted a potential accident at 10: 50 PM on January 2, 2014.

The build-up of sea salt on the windscreen, caused by stormy conditions during their flight over the Irish Sea, is one of the rarest challenges faced by pilots.

In the case of the seven-year old ATR turbo-prop attempting to land at Cork Airport, the 40-year old female pilot and her co-pilot were shocked to realise a thick layer of white sea salt had caked over their windscreen as they were attempting to land.

The condition of the windscreen was only apparent to the pilots, whose entire flight was conducted in darkness, when they had to abort their first attempted landing at Cork due to a significant increase in indicated airspeed because of the stormy conditions.

"The aircraft then positioned under radar control for a second approach to the same runway," the AAIU report revealed.

"Its track brought it south of (Cork), close to the coast and at times over the

sea. During this time, a thick layer of sea salt formed on the front windcreens, obscuring the flight crew's forward visibility.

"As it was not possible to acquire the necessary visual references for landing, a second go-around was flown."

The bulk of the salt is believed to have gathered on the windscreen when the plane had descended to a height of 1,000 metres (3,000 feet).

But the quick-thinking pilot and co-pilot immediately flew into an area of heavy shower activity – and used the rain in an attempt to wash clear the windscreen.

The pilot has over 5,000 hours flying experience and, critically, over 4,700 hours have been logged on the ATR-72 type.

"A small portion of the commander's windscreen was cleared. A third approach was flown to a successful landing," the AAIU report added.

"The pilot commenced her successful final approach to Cork peering through "this small gap (washed) in the salt residue. At the time, the first officer still had no visual reference," the AAIU report pointed out.

Two other planes reported similar sea salt build-up on their windcreens that night but none as severe as the Manchester flight.

The AAIU pointed out that the flights of two of the aircraft involved that night, both French-built ATR-72s, found that the windscreen wipers were ineffective in clearing off the salt.



IN THE EARLY part of the 20th Century, County Donegal Railways was the quickest and easiest way for passengers to get around the county but today there appears little evidence that its cities and towns were once connected by rail lines.

Fond memories of a County Donegal rail connection



IN COUNTY DONEGAL today, there appears little evidence that its cities and towns were once connected by rail lines.

However in the early part of the 20th Century, County Donegal Railways was the quickest and easiest way for passengers to get around the county.

When rail service was provided, what had once taken days to travel by horse and cart took only hours by train.

Travel by rail in Ireland started in 1834 when a line was built between Dublin and the port of Dun Laoghaire (then known as Kingstown).

In no time new rail lines connected cities throughout Ireland. Shortly after the Great Famine, a rail line was planned along the River Finn between Strabane and County Tyrone and Stranorlar in County Donegal.

This, the first line in County Donegal, opened in 1863.

The Finn Valley Railway made stops at stations in Clady, Castlefin, Lisooly, and Killygordon. The next step was to build a branch from Stranorlar to Donegal Town through the Barnesmore Pass.

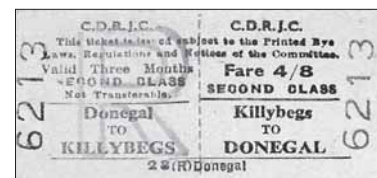
This was completed in 1882 by the West Donegal Railway, although the company had financial difficulties that required them to stop short of the town by four miles.

Passengers had to get to Donegal town by horse-drawn cars at an additional cost of sixpence. The extension to town wasn't completed until 1889.

The Finn Valley Railway and West Donegal Railway merged in 1892 to become the County Donegal Railway Company.

Rail lines from Donegal Town to Killybegs and Ballyshannon were added in 1893 and 1909 respectively.

Meanwhile, the line from Stranorlar to



COUNTY Donegal Railways round trip tickets stub from Donegal to Killybegs.

Glenties was opened in 1893.

At that time, to match the rest of the country, the rail system switched from standard to narrow gauge and changes had to be made at railway stations constructed earlier as well as to the original rail line from Strabane to Stranorlar.

A branch was constructed from Strabane to Letterkenny in 1909.

Another line from Letterkenny was extended to Burtonport, and another was extended from Letterkenny to Carndonagh in Inishowen with a spur off to Derry City.

After years of steam locomotives, County Donegal Railways became pioneers in using diesel-powered locomotives in the 1930s.

However, the automobile was providing more and more personal travel during those years, and the days of train travel in Donegal were numbered.

The lines of County Donegal Railways started shutting down in 1949. By 1960, all of its lines were closed. The last train from Stranorlar pulled into Strabane in December, 1959.

Donegal Railways Heritage Centre in Donegal Town has artefacts and historical details of rail travel in Ireland. See: www.donegalrailway.com

In Fintown, part of the line that ran past Lough Finn has been restored and used as a rail tour attraction. See: www.antraen.com.

Quote of the Month

"It is one of my sources of happiness never to desire a knowledge of other people's business."

– Dolly Madison. U.S. First Lady 1768-1849

[Dolly was renowned for her social graces and hospitality and contributed greatly to her husband, James Madison's popularity as President of the United States. He served two terms as president from 1809 to 1817.]

Bloody Sunday: The Bridge from Selma to Derry

Crossing a bridge in a time of high political tension can be a metaphor for transformative political change.

Just as members of the American Civil Rights Movement's holding firm on their right to cross the Edmund Pettus Bridge in their Selma-Montgomery march was a watershed moment for that movement, so too was the attack on non-violent civil rights marchers as they crossed Craigavon Bridge in Derry City by the Royal Ulster Constabulary on October 5, 1968 in the history of our island.

It was the beginning of the end of the Northern Irish State.

Similarly, too, in January 1969, in homage to the Alabama march, a group of civil rights marchers in Northern Ireland, mainly students under the banner of the People's Democracy, organised their own version of Selma to Montgomery: A Belfast to Derry march.

The Northern Irish Civil Rights seekers were attacked en route, most savagely at Burntollet Bridge, just outside Derry, having conducted themselves peacefully all the way from Belfast.

The outrages at Burntollet, and at Craigavon a few months earlier, exposed the extreme violence of the State to television viewers and newspaper readers outside the Northern Irish State.

The incident was instrumental in helping to rally support of a people whose non-violent demonstrations defeated the state's sole weapon, the jackboot. Much the same publicity victory as back in Selma.

Selma, a film released earlier this year, is an attempt to re-create the drama that surrounded that city in 1965.

It shows that President Lyndon Baines Johnson's alignment with the civil rights campaign was a crucial catalyst for reform, and the U.S. president's insistence on triangulating the issue was a devastating blow to white supremacy.

As LBJ put it, "In Selma...many were brutally assaulted. One good man, a man of God, was killed...There is no Negro problem. There is no Southern problem. There is only an American problem."

The film excels in its vivid depiction of brutality. LBJ knew very well the emotive power that non-violent protest could have when met by recalcitrant statist aggression; non-violent protest played well on television, because it swung public opinion in favour of the demonstrators like little else could.

As LBJ put it, "Pretty soon, the fellow that didn't do anything but follow...he'll say, 'Well that's not right, that's not fair.'"

Violence, the shock of which film audiences may think themselves immune by its pervasiveness in cinema, is hugely unsettling in this film, something achieved through the authentic portrayal of attacks on innocent people and in the exactitude of the human suffering.

As soon as the battle charge comes from mounted policemen against marchers on their first attempt to cross the Edmund Pettus Bridge, the crowd disperses in chaos.

The cattle prods, the billy rods, the horse-whips wielded against the marchers is startlingly well captured.

THE VIEW FROM IRELAND



By
**MAURICE
FITZPATRICK**

Back in Northern Ireland, civil rights campaigners faced comparably sinister members of police (the RUC colluded in the Burntollet attack) and members of government too: As unionist politician, William Craig, stated to a cheering audience, "when the politicians fail us it may be our job to liquidate the enemy."

In *Selma*, the initial tactic of LBJ in his negotiations with Dr. Martin Luther King is to procrastinate.

LBJ insists that the issue of voter registration in the South and its corrupt administration was but one of the myriad concerns of the White House (the veracity of how this disagreement between King and LBJ is shown in the film has been contested by historians as well as Andrew Young, King's deputy).

Implacable, King refuses to allow Johnson to buy time.

Selma does not give full scope to LBJ's political acuity, and that is unfortunate. Film scripts have immemorably created simplistic conflicts between lead characters: The noble person faces the dastardly capitalist; the reactionary puts obstacles in the way of the heroic moderniser.

But King and LBJ had much in common, more than this film suggests – their reading of the situation in the South being a good example of their common ground.

Like Northern Irish Civil Rights leader John Hume, King knew very well how to force the government's hand when he wished.

King, exiting jail in *Selma*, declared that he was on his way to see LBJ, realising that that comment to the media guaranteed his entry into the Oval Office – LBJ wanted to avoid scenes outside the White House of the magnitude that his predecessor, JFK, had to face.

Selma adroitly weaves between the streets of the South and the Oval Office.

Both *Selma* and *Derry* were the sites of cataclysmic events that propelled an entire transformation of the political landscape of their countries.

Bloody Sunday in Selma, on March 7, 1965, caused a huge expression of public sympathy in the U.S., and it was ultimately an unstoppable advance for the Civil Rights Movement towards gaining the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

After Bloody Sunday in Derry on January 30, 1972, Northern Ireland's parliament in Belfast fell within a few months, establishing direct rule of Northern Ireland from London.

Selma implies that King did not lead the first Selma march due to a family crisis.

Hume did not march on Bloody Sunday in Derry because on the previous Saturday, January 22, he had led an anti-internment march on Magilligan Beach,

just outside Derry, at which the British army disgraced itself by opening fire with rubber bullets on women and children who marched into "a prohibited area."

With conditions so volatile, Hume urged other civil rights marchers not to march the following week on the streets of Derry; when they did not heed his instructions, the army fired live rounds on protesters and murdered 14 people.

The continued role of John Lewis, played in *Selma* by James Stephens, is also important: film audiences in the U.S. in particular will know that Lewis went on to have a long career in U.S. Congress.

In April 2014, Congressman Lewis walked across Derry's Peace Bridge – a bridge that runs parallel to Craigavon bridge – where he was greeted by the mayor of the city and John Hume.

Given that Lewis also leads an annual walk across the Edmund Pettus Bridge into Selma, the symmetry of the occasion was remarkable. Lewis also saw the Dr. King and John Hume mural in Derry's Bogside area.

Out of these sites of anguish and schism come peace commemorations, peace bridges and high calibre film productions.

As the half century anniversary of the Craigavon and Burntollet attacks approaches, another symmetry, a film on the Belfast-Derry march, is in order.



BLOODY SUNDAY – The march gets underway in Derry led by the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association on January 30, 1972. Both Selma and Derry were the sites of cataclysmic events that propelled an entire transformation of the political landscape of their countries.



BOGSIDE mural in Derry with Nationalist Leader John Hume, Martin Luther King Jr., Mother Theresa, and Nelson Mandela.

Experts warn false dawn beckons for returning Irish emigrants

DUBLIN – The Irish Government is overestimating how quickly emigrants will return home and the boost they will bring to the economy, experts have warned.

Specialists say an influx of emigrant couples, individuals and families over the next couple of years will put increasing pressure on the housing and rental market.

Previous homeward migration trends also suggest that returning emigrants will face many psychological challenges upon their return.

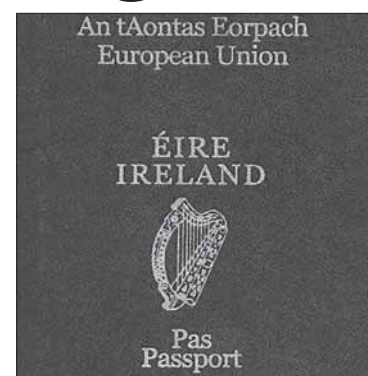
Dr. Mary Gilmartin, who specialises in migration research at Maynooth University and is the author of a new book, *Ireland and Migration in the 21st Century*, said she is not seeing any pragmatic evidence that the government is prepared for return migration.

She said, "I see rhetoric about wanting to get people to return, but I don't see any evidence of any practical things that are directed towards making it easier for people to return."

Gilmartin says she believes emigrants will have difficulties accessing mortgages and other loans without a credit history.

"I don't think the rate of return will be as high as predicted and I don't think the economic situation is as positive as government suggestions indicate."

As part of the Government's Spring Statement, Finance Minister Michael Noonan pledged to lure tens of thousands of emigrants home with more favourable tax measures.



"The upheaval of moving a family is such that I can't see people engaging in that kind of upheaval to move a family back again quite so quickly."

A spokeswoman from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade said the new proposals are "an important step" in returning to net inward migration by 2017.

However, Gilmartin argues a lot more must be done before emigrants living in Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the United States book permanent flights home.

"It's a very patchy recovery. Some areas are doing well, but other areas are still struggling.

"The upheaval of moving a family is such that I can't see people engaging in that kind of upheaval to move a family back again quite so quickly," she said.

As part of his St. Patrick's Day address in March, Taoiseach Enda Kenny said 2016 will be the year where the number of our people coming home "will be greater than the number of people who leave."

Dr. David Ralph, assistant professor of sociology at Trinity College Dublin, warned many emigrants may be attracted back under false pretences.

Ralph, who did extensive research on Irish returning from the U.S. during the Celtic Tiger, contests this prediction.

"Will there be a rush? I don't think so, I don't think the economy is necessarily buoyant enough to create the return seen during the boom years," he said.

He also anticipates problems with welfare entitlements as access to certain social assistance payments, including Jobseeker's Allowance, partly depends on length and purpose of any absence from Ireland.

He believes slower, organized return is more sustainable.

"If we have a housing crisis in Dublin as it stands and up to 50,000 Irish people return, then we are going to have an even bigger housing crisis because they will move to urban areas," he said, adding that part of the over-heating of the economy from 1996 to 2006 was due to the rush of return migrants.

"The rate of return migration during the boom further fuelled the property frenzy, so if it does happen, we need to keep an eye on the property market."



FOLLOWING HIS LECTURE about the 1916 Easter Rising, Professor Conor Mulvagh shares a laugh with Mary Shriane, while in the background are Jeff Payne, John Keane and Danny Quinn.



PAUL REYNOLDS, Moderator Fidelma McGinn, Rozarii Lynch, Padraic Jordan and Mal Jones were the panelists at a Business & Networking Panel Discussion sponsored by Irish Network Seattle on April 23.



PROFESSOR Conor Mulvagh responds to questions from Aidan O'Callaghan, Mick Spillane and Danny Quinn following his lecture about the 1916 Easter Rising.



JUSTIN TAFT (Owner: Ridgeback Café and The Hanger Café), Elaine O'Toole (Amazon.com) and Una McAlinden (Former Executive Director of ArtsEd), attending a Business & Networking Panel Discussion sponsored by Irish Network Seattle on April 23.

SEATTLE IRISH NEWS

PASSINGS

• Mike Browne, 75, a native of Co. Wicklow, died in Port Angeles April 12.

Ar dheis Dé go raibh a anam dílis - May his faithful soul rest at God's right hand.

IRISH FILMS – Among several new Irish films featured at this year's Seattle International Film Festival, which runs from May 14 – June 7, is *One Million Dubliners*.

This documentary that provides a tour of Ireland's Glasnevin Cemetery which holds more bodies than the living population of Dublin and which is steeped in Irish history.

Another Irish film *Glassland* received much acclaim at the Sundance Film Festival while *The Hallow* is a dark and terrifying fairy tale monster movie.

For all the details as to dates and times, visit siff.net.

LONDON IRISH – The London Irish Rugby Football (LIRF) team will be in Seattle in May for a game on Tuesday, May 23 at Magnuson Park 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 a club for expatriate Irish.

Even though many of their players today may have few Irish connections, the club plays in green and white colors, and their mascot is an Irish Wolfhound.

LIRF competes in the top division of English rugby union, the Aviva Premiership.

Former Seattle Gaels player Ed Harkin reminds me that he played 'fly half' on the London Irish Rugby Club team in 1959! More details at seattlesaracensrugby.com.

MEMORIAL DAY MASS – The annual Memorial Day Mass will be celebrated at the Seattle area's Irish Pioneer Cemetery, St. Patrick Cemetery in Kent, at 10:30 AM on Monday, May 25.

The four and a half acre cemetery is located one mile east of I-5 on Orillia Road at 204th Street, just east of Sea-Tac Airport.

Founded by Limerick-man Richard O'Connell in 1880, the cemetery is the resting place for numerous Irish-born Seattle pioneers and they are especially remembered on Memorial Day in addition to remembering those who have given their lives in service to this country.

All are welcome but bring a lawn chair! For information, contact: Mass@irishclub.org, or call (425) 290-7839.

MAY 28 SINÉAD FUNDRAISER – Sinéad Cadden, a native of Co. Clare and currently a bartender at Fadó, has been diagnosed with Non-Hodgkin's lymphoma.

Her friends are trying to raise money to help cover her medical expenses and to provide support.

A fundraising auction and raffle is being held on Thursday, May 28, at Fadó, with live music from the The Kennedy Brothers.

If you have been to Seattle's Fadó



By
JOHN
KEANE



PROFESSOR Conor Mulvagh listens to a question from Catherine Boyle watched by Aidan O'Callaghan and Mick Spillane following his lecture about the 1916 Easter Rising.

PHOTOS: by Brendan Shriane

Irish Pub at 1st and Columbia in the past 10 years, or the Owl n' Thistle or the Irish Emigrant in the years before that, you have met Sinéad.

Check the May 28 event out on Facebook (search under A Pint for Sinéad) or donate at gofundme.com/qeeaa88.

U.S. CITIZENSHIP MEETING – On Saturday, May 30 at 1 PM, a free U.S. citizenship information meeting will be held at F X McRory's for those members and friends of the Irish community who want to find out what's involved in becoming a U.S. citizen.

The main goal is to get questions answered, to outline the application process, explain how to apply, what documents are required, what's involved in taking the "test", the ramifications of dual Irish-U.S.-citizenship, etc.

Organized by Irish Immigrant Support, the program will be led by Christine Trigg, immigrant legal services co-ordinator at St. James Cathedral, with assistance from immigration attorney Tahmina Watson.

If you're interested in attending, call (425) 290-7839 so we have an idea of how many will attend.

GAELIC SPORTS – Join the Seattle Gaels on Saturday, June 13 for the largest Irish sports tournament in the Pacific Northwest!

The 8th annual Seattle Gaelic games will feature matches in men's and women's Gaelic football, camogie, and hurling.

Teams will travel from all over the Pacific Northwest, including from Missoula, Montana; Calgary, Alberta; Portland and Corvallis in Oregon; Vancouver, B.C.; and Seattle.

If you've ever wanted to see all your favorite Irish sports in action, this is the day to do it.

Games are played at Magnuson Park starting at 10 AM and continuing non-stop until about 5 PM. Free admission all day!

IRISH BASEBALL – Irish Night at the Seattle Mariners is Wednesday, June 17, 7:10 PM, for the game vs. the World Series Champs, the San Francisco Giants.

The reduced price tickets include a free Irish night Mariners cap, Irish entertainment in center field before the game by the Tara Academy Irish Dancers and the Seattle Police Pipes and Drums.

Seattle's Irish Police Chief Kathleen O'Toole will throw out the first pitch.

Visit: mariners.com/Irish for tickets and other details.

BLOOMSDAY – The Wild Geese Players of Seattle will present a staged reading of two chapters of James Joyce's *Ulysses* on Saturday, June 20 at 2 PM in the Ketcham meeting room on level 4 of the Seattle Public Library in downtown Seattle.

For this year's reading of *Ulysses*, the Wild Geese Players are continuing last year's approach of following Joyce's timeline for June 16, rather than reading the chapters in strict linear order.

Chapters 2 ("Nestor") and 5 ("Lotus-Eaters") will be interwoven to highlight the parallel journeys of Bloom and Stephen during the novel's ten o'clock hour.

The reading is free to the public, and should be finished by 4 PM.

The Wild Geese Players have been staging readings of Irish literature, by writers such as James Joyce and W. B. Yeats, in Seattle since 1998.

For more information, visit wildgeeseseattle.org.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

• Seattle's Repertory Theatre continues performances through May 17 of *Outside Mullingar*, the Tony Award nominee for Best Play.

It's a romantic comedy set in rural Ireland about two lovelorn farmers.

• The Irish Cultural Society of the Pacific Northwest host Féile Portland, an Irish language intensive weekend, on May 16 and 17 at the Renaissance School in Southwest Portland. Call Brian Ó hAirt at (314) 974-7073 for details.

• The next Irish Seniors' luncheon is Saturday, June 20 at 12 noon at the Wilde Rover Irish Restaurant in Kirkland.

Seniors and their guests are welcome to attend at \$10 pp for the buffet lunch. Reservations are required. Call (425) 290-7839.

• Irish Day at the Races at Emerald Downs is Sunday, June 28, 2 PM. Call (425) 290-7839 for free admission tickets.

• Irish Community Picnic at Lake Sammamish State Park, Sunday, July 19, noon-dusk. Free admission. Call (425) 290-7839 for details.

• Ceol Cascadia's Irish Music Week is July 19 - 25, 2015, at The Evergreen State College in Olympia.

Early registration has been strong and if you're thinking of registering don't delay. Visit cascadiairish.org for details.

• Join the Irish language choir which will be singing for the Mass in Gaelic in October.

New voices welcome, with a little Gaelic or a lot! Contact miriamjdoyle@gmail.com.



PROFESSOR CONOR MULVAGH UCD with some local Seattleites following his lecture about the 1916 Easter Rising at the University of Washington. The event was attended by almost 200 people. (L-R) John Keane, Jeff Payne, Josef and Liz Olsen, Thea Tilley, Professor Mulvagh, Danny Quinn, Mary and Frank Shriane, and Brendan Shriane.

Proposal to build Titanic style tourist centre to celebrate DeLorean

BELFAST – A former senior executive in the ill-fated DeLorean Motor Company has called for the opening of a Titanic-style tourist centre in Belfast to celebrate the iconic car.

Barrie Wills, who was director of purchasing for the Dunmurry-based automotive plant, has blamed former Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher as well as John DeLorean for the failure of the stainless steel gull-winged sports car in 1982.

He also claimed the distinctive rust-proof car would still be in production employing thousands of people if Thatcher and his former boss had behaved properly.

The Tory PM turned down all of DeLorean's pleas for more money to rescue his firm which had been bankrolled to the tune of £80 million by the previous Labour direct rule administration.



A GULL-WINGED DeLorean car stands in the shadow of one of Belfast's Harland & Wolff giant cranes. There are still 6,500 of the 9,080 DeLoreans produced in the Eighties still on the roads of the world today.



He said, "If they had been able to get on, there would still be a company in Northern Ireland producing up to 100,000 vehicles a year as a subsidiary of a major global corporation. All it needed was for two people to behave properly."

Wills was in Belfast for the first, and

possibly last, reunion of some of the 2,500 workers who turned DeLorean's dream car into a reality before his company collapsed.

More than 200 people including suppliers travelled from all over the world for a series of events including a visit to the old factory and its test track. A number of DeLorean owners also had their cars on show.

Wills, who is one of the organisers of the reunion, said the continuing popularity of the DeLorean should be exploited by Belfast with the building of an interpretative centre telling the story of the car and its owner, who was later accused and cleared of fraud charges.

He was also acquitted after the FBI arrested him in a multi-million pound drugs bust in Los Angeles.

Wills, who is bringing out a book about the DeLorean Motor Company in October, said Belfast should cash in on its links with the car, especially in the wake of its movie fame through the *Back to the Future* trilogy where the vehicle was transformed by a mad scientist into a time machine.

The films are still popular with successive generations of teenagers and Wills said, "What there needs to be in Northern Ireland is a DeLorean equivalent of the Titanic Belfast centre, maybe not on the same scale but I think it would be a major draw.

"The ship and the car were both failures but they were both glorious failures.

"I describe DeLorean as the greatest near-miss in the history of the global automotive industry."

John DeLorean has been widely condemned as a conman who used government money to fund his glittering lifestyle.

But enthusiasts say that DeLorean, who died in 2005 at the age of 80, delivered on his promises and created much-needed employment.

Wills said, "John said he would build a car which would last 25 years.

"It's now 35 years on and there are still 6,500 of the 9,080 DeLoreans which were produced in the Eighties that are still on the roads of the world today. I doubt if any other car brand could claim the same."

Choctaw Kindness Remembered

MIDDLETON, Co. Cork – Plans are underway to erect a sculpture that memorializes the aid that the Choctaw people sent to Ireland during the Great Irish Famine.

In 1847, the Choctaws pulled together \$170 to send to the starving Irish populace, a sum that is reckoned to be worth more than \$5,000 today.

The gift established a bond between the Choctaws and the Irish that is still recognized to this day.

In 1992, a delegation from Ireland trekked a 500-mile path from Broken Bow, Oklahoma, to Nanih Waiya, Mississippi, following the route (in reverse) so many Choctaws had taken on the Trail of Tears in 1831.

In 1995, Irish President Mary Robinson visited the Choctaw Nation, where she

was made an honorary chief.

Now, a sculptor is creating a memorial in Co. Cork to pay tribute to the suffering of the Irish and the kindness of the Choctaw.

Alex Pentek expects his "Kindred Spirits," an arrangement of nine massive stainless-steel feathers, to be completed shortly. It will be installed in Bailic Park, in Middleton, Co. Cork.

Pentek explains on his website that the work is "an empty bowl symbolic of the Great Irish Famine formed from the seemingly fragile and rounded shaped eagle feathers used in Choctaw ceremonial dress."

It is estimated the sculpture will cost some \$100,000, and invitations to attend the opening have been extended to the leadership of the Choctaw Nation.



ONE of the massive stainless-steel feathers being created by sculptor Alex Pentek for 'Kindred Spirits,' which will commemorate the assistance Choctaw people gave the Irish during the Great Famine in 1847.

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Vancouver welcomes two Irish instructors to help bring Gaelic football to local schools

VANCOUVER – Lyn Savage and William Harmon of the Ladies Gaelic Football Association Dublin, Ireland, arrived in Vancouver on April 22 to train coaches and referees in the “Ready Steady Coach” workshops.

Lorraine Muckian an influential ladies Gaelic football player with the Vancouver Irish Sporting and Social Club saw the need for the coach workshops and spent considerable effort and influence to make the visit of Savage and Harmon a reality.

For five whirlwind days, Savage and Harmon visited schools from Vancouver, Surrey and Delta to demonstrate and train children about the sport of Gaelic football.

What they probably wouldn't have anticipated was the warm welcome and enthusiasm with which they were greeted, not only by the children, but by the teachers, many of whom are eager to incorporate the game as part of their physical education programs at the schools.

In all, this visit has provided the ISSC with a great legacy, with four “Ready Steady Coach” tutors, one ref/ rules tutor, 14 members through the RSC course, 12 local PE teachers, eight members through the rules refresher.

The visit has provided a much appreciated boost to the club, and they plan to promote the course at the Western Canada tournament in August.

Just before leaving Vancouver to return home, Lyn Savage, National Development Officer for the Ladies Gaelic Football Association, spoke to *The Celtic Connection* about her visit to B.C.

Q: Lyn can you tell me a little bit about your visit and the work you were doing here?

A: (laughs) Well, it's been very busy with both William and I training up coaches here so that when we leave they can actually train other coaches and help make it more sustainable.

It was mainly for youth coaches but also the tutors were for anybody interested in coaching. The tutors that we have been training up will be able to deliver our “Ready Steady Coach,” which is the name of the course.

So, instead of waiting for someone to come from Ireland, they can deliver the course themselves.

Q: Which schools did you visit to teach the course?

A: On Thursday we were in Delta and



By
**CATHOLINE
BUTLER**

actually coached some kids at a school there. On Friday we were in Surrey at Clayton Heights, and on Saturday we trained coaches in downtown Vancouver.

On Sunday we trained more coaches in the Surrey region, and on Monday we spoke with eleven physical education teachers from the Vancouver School District on their Pro-D day.

We spent three hours there training-up Canadian teachers to be able to include Gaelic football as part of the sports in their schools and we had a really good morning.

Q: What kind of response have you been getting at these schools?

A: Amazing response to be honest. Since we met with the coaches it's obvious that sustainability in the sport is key. So, even if all the Irish were not here, the sport would continue to keep going.

It's very much about us creating a base and the kids absolutely adore the sport and they have been brilliant.

We actually had one teacher who was there at our session on Friday and was back again on Saturday because she wants to have it played in the school.

Also, we had a total of 12 teachers who were very enthusiastic and want to start playing Gaelic football in their own schools. So, it was very positive.

Q: As you probably know Ronan Deane is very involved with the youth Gaelic football here in B.C. and he has been doing a great job going into the schools to teach the games. He mentioned that Gaelic football might become one of “THE” games in the future. What are your thoughts on that?

A: Well, I suppose you will find the sport is really taking off all over the world.

The fact that even the teachers today

VANCOUVER IRISH SPORTING AND SOCIAL CLUB



LYN SAVAGE, Ladies Gaelic Football Association (LGFA) Tutor was in Vancouver last month to help train coaches and referees in the “Ready Steady Coach” workshops.



VANCOUVER ISSC participants in the “Ready Steady Coach” workshop.



VANCOUVER School Board Secondary Pro-D Day, “Ready Steady Coach” course participants.



GROUP TALK, South Delta Secondary School visit with Stephen Burns.

were saying that every skill that you see in Gaelic football, you can see in every different sport that the kids are probably already playing.

So, it's easy to pick-up Gaelic football. All you need is a ball. You don't need loads of helmets and different equipment, and it's easy to get it started. I think that's what made it such a success.

For ourselves, we have covered all over the world from Asia to North America. We had a team from South Africa over to Ireland, so the game has really taken-off.

In Canada, in the ladies section, actually both sections, but particularly the ladies section still keeps that recreational side to it.

That makes it easy for girls who have never tried the sport to come and start. I think that's what's going to be very important here. There will always be a place for newcomers.

For Canadian people born and bred, and whatever age, they won't feel that they missed the boat on that but can all feel involved, and I think that's key.

Q: When you describe Gaelic football, is it a combination of soccer and football, or how would you describe it?

A: (laughs) That's what we have been trying to describe these past few days.

It would be a little bit of a mixture of soccer because obviously you're going to use your feet.

The big difference that people find hard to grasp, is it's a bit like rugby but not so rough. It is very much a tactical sport and it's related in a lot of ways to Australian football rules apart from the contact.

You're kicking it out of your hands. It's very much a catch and kick and hand pass game. Even today in the schools, the teachers were asking if you can first pass the ball from one player to the other a bit like volleyball, but it's also a bit like rugby. And when you're kicking it, you're kick passing it.

So, it's a bit like the goalkeeper in the soccer, they can kick the ball out of their hands.

The teachers who attended the “Ready, Steady Coach” training were very enthusiastic and took part in playing and found it a fun game. They were going to introduce it into their own physical education classes.

In speaking with Ronan Deane, and the excellent work he is doing here in Vancouver with the Youth Gaelic football program, he stressed making it as easy as possible for the children to get involved with Gaelic football.

The fact that it's a fun game and doesn't cost the parents a lot of money is a definite plus. That's where you have sustainability.

I think the most beneficial thing of the whole weekend is that the coaches and referees that were trained can now give their own workshops.

They won't have to be waiting for someone to come from Dublin and teach another “Ready Steady Coach” tutor training workshop.

For more information about Youth Gaelic Football and the courses offered, contact Ronan Deane at: ronandeane@hotmail.com.



SOUTH DELTA Secondary School visit with Stephen Burns.

Rugby international league player dies aged 29

LONDON – A Welsh international rugby league player has died after suffering a suspected cardiac arrest during a match on May 3.

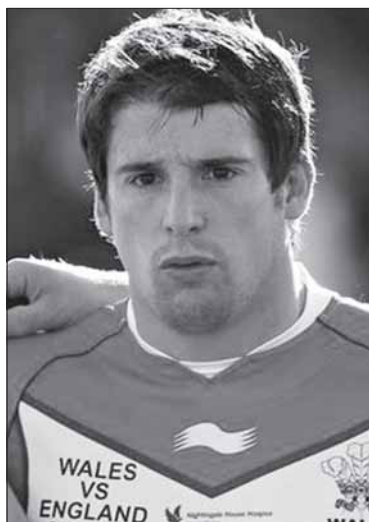
Keighley Cougars half-back Danny Jones, 29, who was a father of five-month-old twins, collapsed after being replaced early in the League 1 match at London Skolars.

He was treated by the match doctor and paramedics at the ground in north London before being taken to the Royal Free Hospital.

But the Rugby Football League (RFL) said that despite extensive efforts to resuscitate him, Jones died at the hospital.

His club paid tribute to him in a statement posted on Twitter, saying their thoughts were with his widow Liz and their children.

“Danny was much loved and highly respected by all at the club and in rugby league. He was the life and soul in the



KEIGHLEY COUGARS half-back Danny Jones has died after suffering a suspected cardiac arrest during his club's League 1 match at London Skolars, the Rugby Football League on May 3.

“dressing room,” they said. “He achieved over 1,000 points and 150 appearances for Keighley Cougars and he will be sorely missed.”

Jones was taken off after only four minutes of the match at the New River Stadium on White Hart Lane after apparently complaining of feeling unwell.

An air ambulance was called and he was taken to the Royal Free and the game was abandoned.

Jones is the second rugby league player in just over six years to die after collapsing during a match.

Wakefield forward Leon Walker, who was 20, fell ill during a Wildcats reserve game with Celtic Crusaders in Maesteg in March 2009. It was later discovered that he had an undiagnosed heart defect and a coroner ruled that he died from natural causes.

Just six months earlier, in October 2008, Wakefield's Cook Island international Adam Watene, 31, died after collapsing during a training session.

Leeds half-back Chris Sanderson died on the pitch in a match in 1977.

Scottish Football Association and Celtic FC to be part of Pacific Soccer Coaching Conference

VANCOUVER – Vancouver United FC has spearheaded the development of a multi-day soccer coaching conference to be held on the opening weekend of the 2015 FIFA Women's World Cup.

The conference is a joint initiative of several local soccer clubs who share a commitment to raising the level of coach education within our club community.

Over 170 coaches from across British Columbia have already registered for the event which is being hosted from June 5-7 at the Fortius Sport & Health facility in Burnaby.

Scottish Football Association

In conjunction with the conference, the Scottish FA will deliver a four day seminar on developing coaches who work with players at 12 years and under.

This four day coach education session provide participants with insight into how the Scottish Football Association (SFA) provide their young players a platform from which to progress their skills and how the Scottish FA encourages coaches to continually improve.

The session will comprise of presentations in player development at this key “youth stage” and share the methodology of the Scottish FA's coach education pathway for children.

The seminar tutor is Ritchie Wilson, Head of Community Development at the Scottish Football Association.

Celtic Football Club

Celtic FC staff will be delivering both on and off field coach education sessions at the conference.

Willie McNab is currently in his eighth year with Celtic Football Club where he manages the Club's International Programme and coaches the Under 13 Youth Academy team.

He is also the lead coach for Celtic FC's Central Scotland Development Centre.

Willie currently holds a UEFA A License, Scottish FA Advanced Youth Licence and Scottish FA Advanced Children's Licence.

Willie has also held youth academy coaching positions at Hibernian FC and Heart of Midlothian FC and has previously worked for the Scottish FA as a Football Development Officer within two regions of Scotland.

Vancouver United FC has the respon-

sibility of growing the game of soccer for approximately 4,000 boys and girls between the ages of five and 17, making it the largest community soccer club in the City of Vancouver.

The mission of Vancouver United FC is to create new levels of community participation, activity and spirit on the strength of comprehensive soccer programs and the most inclusive club for players, coaches, officials and families.

For more information about the conference go to: www.pacificsoccercoachingconference.org.

Celtic win Scottish Premiership title after Aberdeen lose



DUNDEE, Scotland – Celtic have won the Scottish Premiership title after nearest challengers Aberdeen lost to Dundee United at Tannadice.

After defeating Dundee 5-0 on the evening of May 1, Celtic knew any points dropped by the Dons would ensure a fourth straight championship.

Ronny Deila has secured the league title and the League Cup in his first season in charge of the club.

“We have achieved a big thing,” Deila told his club's official website. “Hopefully there will be more and more.

“Defensively we have been unbelievable the whole season and we have hardly conceded a goal. Offensively we have been getting better and we scored five beautiful goals against Dundee on Friday night.

“We have worked so hard for this and finally we are there and can start thinking of next season. There is always high

pressure here and I put high demands on myself as well.

“Today we just have to enjoy it and be happy that we are champions. I'm happy with a lot of the work we have done and we are going to enjoy this night and show we are champions next Sunday [against Aberdeen at Pittodrie].”

Deila's men are likely to be presented with the Premiership trophy after the home match against Inverness Caledonian Thistle on May 24.



How a Scotsman helped put a pipe tune on the UK hit parade

IF IT hadn't been for Pete Kerr, the tune *Amazing Grace* would not have become as popular as it is today.

By DOUG GRANT



Kerr was born in 1940 in the village of Lossiemouth in the northeast of Scotland.

At a young age he was a piper and later learned the clarinet, going on to play with the Clyde Valley Stompers, a very popular Scottish trad band (for traditional jazz in Europe read Dixieland in North America). This music was very popular during the 50s and 60s.

This was the era of British trad jazz players like Acker Bilk, Chris Barber, Kenny Ball, Ken Colyer, and Humphrey Lyttelton.

Then along came the Beatles, the Stones, the Who and the Animals and swept everyone aside while the music industry went through big changes.

Pete decided he had had enough of travelling and found a job back in Scotland, initially, as a freelance record producer with Waverly Records.

When they were taken over by RCA Records, he remained with them in the post of Scottish music record producer.

At this time big changes were also taking place in the British Army with the amalgamation of many of the old regiments, including the Royal Scots Greys and the Prince of Wales' Dragoon Guards (Carabiniers) to become the Royal Scots Dragoon Guards.

The Commanding Officer of the Greys, Colonel Mickey Blacklock, contacted Pete to ask if RCA would be interested in making an LP (long playing) record of regimental music due to be played at the amalgamation parade in Edinburgh.

The record would be called *Farewell to the Greys*.

RCA Records, by this time responsible for the Scottish record scene, initially declined the request. Pete persisted and RCA finally agreed if the regiment bought the first 1,000 copies.

Pete had only a very basic portable recording unit which he took to Redford Barracks, Edinburgh and completed the recording in one day over two three-hour sessions. At the end, they found that they were one track short.

The Bandmaster Warrant Officer Herbert and Pipe Major Jimmy Pryde told Pete that they had been experimenting with combined bands with a tune called *Amazing Grace*, recently made popular by Judy Collins.

It was recorded in one take and Pete felt prickles on the back of his neck.

Having been a piper, he recognized the beautiful blend of sound between the pipes and military band instruments. It was passed on to RCA with the recommendation that a single be cut. RCA declined...who would listen to bagpipes?

The album *Farewell to the Greys* was eventually released. One night, on his late night radio show, DJ Keith Fordyce played the track *Amazing Grace*.

The program was inundated with letters and phone calls and the rest is history. RCA was forced to bring out a single which sold millions.

Amazing Grace was in the British hit parade for 24 weeks and at one point was second only to Frank Sinatra's *My Way*.

Judy Collins and the Royal Scots Dragoon Guards spent a total of 94 weeks in various hit parades around the world. About 13 million records have been sold worldwide.

Today it is still one of the most requested tunes on the bagpipes and has been adopted for funerals and remembrance services.

As well as being one of Scotland's most successful writers, Pete went on to become a tenant farmer in Scotland and later an orange farmer in Mallorca, Spain.

Amazing Grace was first published in 1779 with words by poet John Newton:

*Amazing Grace how sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me
I once was lost, but now I'm found
Was blind, but now I see.*

Spring Sale at the Cambrian Hall

Another successful fundraiser



ALL PHOTOS By Catholine Butler



SOME OF THE LEAD organizers of the sale – (L-R) Pat Morris, Gillian Rogers (social chairperson), Alcwyn Rogers (publicity), Heather Davies, Neville Thomas (welcome doorman), Carol Smythe (sale co-ordinator) and Antone Minard (vice-president).



HAPPY SERVICE preparation group – (L-R) Christine Hunter, Beti Darvell-Jones, Jackie Chapman and Lorraine Mansell.



THE EVER popular baking and home-preserves table.



JOAN THOMPSEN and Pat Morris with food preparations at the annual spring sale.

By EIFION WILLIAMS

VANCOUVER – The Vancouver Welsh Society's spring sale at the Cambrian Hall on April 18 proved to be as popular and successful as last year's sale.

Prospective customers were once again lined up outside the hall before the 10 AM opening time and business was brisk for most of the day. As expected, the traditional Welsh baked goods and preserves table again proved most popular.

The silent auction was also very successful, with over 50 items or services offered for sale, thanks to the many businesses, groups and individuals who donated items. Many of those in attendance also took advantage of the refreshments offered in the lower hall.

Social committee chair and spring sale organizer Gillian Rogers was pleased with the sale results and says that profits from the sale matched those of last year.

Gillian and the other social committee members wish to thank the families and friends of Welsh Society members who volunteered so much time and effort into making the sale a success.



ALL-THINGS-WELSH table with Nerys Haqq and Rhoda Hughes.



The Cambrian Hall, is a heritage building located on East 17th Avenue just off Main Street and has been home to the Vancouver Welsh Society for 83 years.

Favourite Quotes

"Though they sink through the sea they shall rise again;
Though lovers be lost love shall not. And death shall have no dominion."

And death shall have no dominion
-- Dylan Thomas
[1914 - 1953]



WELSH DIVISION memorial commemorating the memory of the Welshmen who died in the Battle of Mametz Wood.

Welsh Memorial of the Battle of Mametz in the First World War

OVER the next three-and-a-half years many countries will be commemorating particular events that occurred during the First World War a hundred years ago. Some notable commemorations having already taken place.

Last month, Australia and New Zealand remembered their nations' terrible loss of life in the Battle of Gallipoli where Turkish forces inflicted heavy casualties on the Anzacs, the Australia and New Zealand Army Corps, an event that contributed significantly to the two countries' independence from Britain.

Two years from now, Canada will remember the Battle of Vimy Ridge, where the Canadian army corps won a memorable victory that is rightly seen as the country's coming-of-age event.

During the centenary years other countries such as England, France, Russia, Germany and the United States will also hold ceremonies of remembrance in honour of their nations' Great War casualties.

Almost an entire generation of young men perished in what was ironically referred to at the time as 'the war to end all wars'.

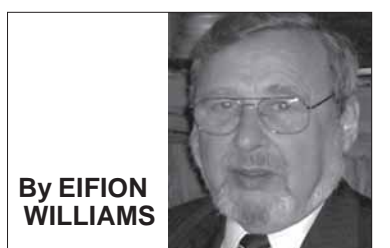
Welsh soldiers also distinguished themselves in a battle that is today little remembered or commented on because it was part of the larger Battle of the Somme.

A month after the start of the war a group of prominent members of the London Welsh community met in a London concert hall and appealed to Welsh pride and patriotism, urging their fellow Welshmen to do their bit as duty and honour were at stake.

The call generated headlines throughout Wales in both English and Welsh. By the end of February, 1915, 20,000 men had volunteered for what eventually became known as the 38th (Welsh) Division.

The unit went into action at the Battle of Mametz Wood in July, 1916, on the opening day of the Battle of the Somme.

Many historians have made the case for commemorating Mametz Wood as a national battle for Wales.



By EIFION WILLIAMS

The battle involved the Welsh Division being asked to advance through a forest north-east of Amiens and break through enemy lines.

After five days of fighting, 4,000 Allied troops and a similar number of Germans lay dead or injured.

The square mile of forest was eventually taken after being totally destroyed. It was retaken within weeks and held by the Germans for the rest of the war.

The Battle of Mametz provoked an outpouring of writing. Several famous war poets, including Siegfried Sassoon and Robert Graves, served with the Royal Welsh Fusiliers. Sassoon was awarded a Military Cross for bravery after mounting a one-man assault on the German lines.

Two Welsh writers, Llewelyn Wyn Griffith and David Jones, wrote graphic accounts of the battle.

Poet Owen Sheers said recently, "At Mametz there were soldiers from all across Wales fighting alongside second and third generation Welsh from London, side by side with Scots, Canadians and many more."

Today, there is a Welsh Division memorial on an open field facing Mametz Wood guarding the memory of the Welshmen who died here.

It consists of a vivid red dragon tearing at barbed wire atop a granite plinth. Embedded in the memorial are the regimental badges of the South Wales Borderers, the Royal Welsh Fusiliers and the Welsh Regiment.

Like so many battles during the First World War, the bravery of the Welsh Division at Mametz Wood was an exercise in futility. Yet, like all the countries that sent men to die in the war, these Welsh soldiers deserve to be remembered by their fellow countrymen.

In recent years the Battle of Mametz has become a defining battle of the Great War for many Welsh people.

Last summer a re-creation of the Battle of Mametz Wood was held in open country near Usk, Monmouthshire, sponsored by National Theatre Wales and inspired by Owen Sheers' poem *Mametz Wood*.