

the celtic connection

ISSUE 24 VOLUME 2

Proudly Serving Celts in North America Since 1991

FEBRUARY 2016



MUSIC, SONG, AND DANCE will resound through the streets of Vancouver from March 10 to 17 during the 12th annual CelticFest Vancouver. See pages 3 & 4 for a listing of all the exciting events scheduled. Headline events include the Irish Rovers and Ireland's chart-topping Damien Dempsey.



THE 1916 Easter Rising was a turning point in Ireland's history. This year the 100th anniversary will be marked in Ireland and throughout the world with an extensive programme of events. Pictured above is the General Post Office, a key site during the Rising. Read more on pages 12, 13, and 20.

LEARN TO PLAY ONE OF IRELAND'S NATIONAL GAMES WITH THE JP RYAN HURLING AND CAMOGIE ACADEMY

Dating back to legendary folkhero Cú Chulainn, hurling is considered to be the world's fastest field sport

[READ MORE ON PAGE 15]



WIN FREE TICKETS

Win a pair (2) tickets to **Festival du Bois**, winner will have a choice of tickets for either Saturday or Sunday, March 5 or 6. Maillardville's Music Festival, Mackin Park, Coquitlam (See pages 5 & 7 for details). Entry by February 26. Mark your entry: Festival du Bois.

Win a pair (2) tickets to **John McDermott Traditionally Yours** in concert April 15, at North Vancouver Centennial Theatre. Calgary Jack Singer Concert Hall, May 13. Edmonton Shctor Theatre at the Citadel, May 15. (See pages 5 & 7 for details). Entry by March 25. Mark your entry: John McDermott, North Vancouver or John McDermott, Calgary or John McDermott, Edmonton. One entry per location.

Win **author Kevin Dooley's** newest novel: *A Dog's Breakfast*. A surreal fiction based on family and social experience and one that encompasses Irish racial memory. Entry February 29. Mark your entry: Kevin Dooley.

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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FANS FLEE in terror as gang drug war escalates in Dublin with brazen daylight shooting at boxing weigh-in. [More on page 17]



INTENSE discussions took place in London on January 30 to draft a proposal aimed at keeping Britain in the European Union. Pictured above: Prime Minister David Cameron (R) and Donald Tusk (L), president of the European Council, at Downing Street following the negotiations. [Read more on page 23]



CELEBRATIONS are held around the world on March 1 to honour St. David — the patron saint of Wales. Many Welsh people wear one or both of the National symbols of Wales to celebrate St. David: the daffodil or the leek on this day. The leek arises from an occasion when a troop of Welsh were able to distinguish each other from a troop of English enemy dressed in similar fashion by wearing leeks. Younger girls sometimes wear a traditional Welsh costume of a long woollen skirt, white blouse, woollen shawl and a Welsh hat.

[Read more on page 24]

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St. Brigid's Day: Nine things you may not know



We have endured a long, dark and cold winter but longer, brighter evenings are finally on the way as of February 1 which marks the first day of spring, and is also known as Lá Fhéile Bhríde, Saint Brigid's Feast Day.

Here are a few facts you may not know about St. Brigid's Day and the saint herself who is also known as 'Mary of the Gael':

1. St. Brigid's Day, on February 1, officially marks the start of the pagan festival of spring.

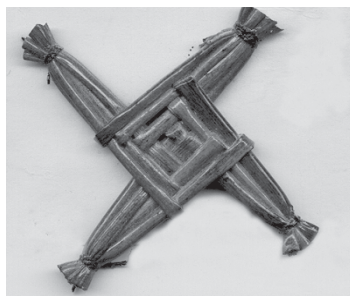
2. It is also known as 'Imbolc', or the Feast of Brigid. It celebrates the arrival of longer, warmer days and the early signs of spring.

3. 'Imbolc' literally means "in the belly" in the old Irish Neolithic language.

4. It is one of the four major "fire" festivals, referred to in Irish mythology. The other three festivals are Beltane, Lughnasadh, and Samhain.

5. Brigid is one of Ireland's patron saints and was known also as a fertility goddess in Celtic mythology.

6. She is often referred to as 'Brigit of Kildare', and was said to be the founder of several monasteries of nuns, including that of Kildare. She is also associated with perpetual, sacred flames, and there is also a shrine dedicated to her in Kildare.



7. According to tradition, Saint Brigid was born at Fochart (or Fothairt), near Dundalk in Co. Louth.

8. One of the most common traditions of the day is to make a Saint Brigid's Cross. These crosses are relatively simple to make, and traditionally, Brigid's crosses are made on Brigid's Eve, January 31. They are usually made from fresh rushes, but you can also use straws if you don't have them. They are made in a cross shape with a square shape in the middle and then four arms coming along each side.

9. Some believe that the crosses have the power to protect the owner's home from harm.

A Wintered World Turns to Spring

By CYNTHIA WALLENTINE

By the Celtic calendar, it is now Spring. Imbolg and St. Brigid's Day on February 1, assures us it is time to look forward.

Yet it is hard not to look back. Last year in this space, I mourned the murder of Kenji Goto. How many have suffered and died since then, in barbaric, theologic wars?

Bombs and battles spark waves of migration that will change the face of history for generations to come.

From the long past come the rituals that became the traditions of the Celtic year. Rising like dawn mist to us, Neolithic and Bronze Age observations about life, death, and human nature ground our respect for the cycle of the human soul, from birth to death and to the Blessed Otherworld.

As days grow longer, and darker weather recedes, it would be easy to set aside sorrow and worry as one gazes upon Brigit, the maiden goddess of the Celtic spring. But Brigit herself is also a sooty, underground smithy, not far removed from the crone Cailleach.

As the patroness of craftspeople, and fertility, Brigit's gaze is fixed up and down, backward and forward – for no artisan, nor wise soul – reaches that realm untried.

Art, of mind or hand, requires a knowing that is bestowed only upon testing – at your craft, or at life. True knowing is an attitude that holds young and old, bitter and sweet, past and future.

Most would avoid that kind of testing, and they would not be wrong. But almost all are thrust to it, by circumstance, calling, and consequences unforeseen when choices were made.

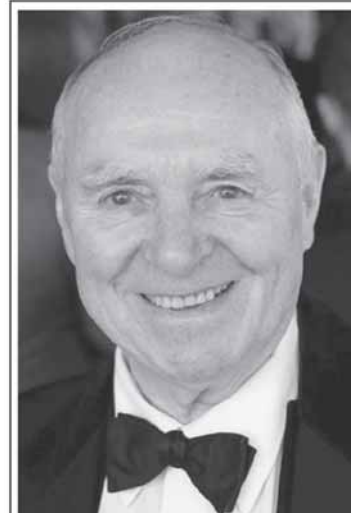
It is the real living of life, and it is what allows the soul to mature into immortality, rather than perish in the mortal dust.

Spring, the most beautiful season, in my mind, speaks of the unsettled nature of things. Not here or there, not then, but now. While the past holds weight, it is passed, and there truly is no direction to go – except forward.

May you travel light and long, and may, one day, your soul be wise and live forever. Blessings of Brigit to you.

ST. BRIGID – MARY OF THE GAEL

O Brigit. Mary of the Gael, may thy protection never fail, spread thy mantle over me where'er I pass, where'er I be. In weather foul, or weather fair keep me in thy loving care 'til I rest, my journey's over, with God and thee for evermore.



MADDEN, Michael Boyle
Passed away peacefully on January 31, 2016 in New Westminster at the age of 79. He will be sadly missed by his loving wife, Arlene, and by his children; George (Janet), Patrick (Cathy), Selina, Michael (April), Siobhan (Mark), William, and Sean; 13 grandchildren; and one soon-to-be great grandchild. Michael was a lifetime member of the Knights of Columbus and he was very active at Holy Rosary Cathedral in recent years. He was a professional musician, an entertainer, and a past president of the Vancouver Shamrock Celtic Supporters Club. Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated on Thursday, February 11, 2016 at 10:00 am at Holy Rosary Cathedral, 646 Richards Street, Vancouver, preceded by a Viewing at 9:30 am. Private interment to follow.

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Storm Henry: Winds so strong waterfalls flowed upwards

EDINBURGH – Scotland was battered with strong winds and rain by Storm Henry on February 1 but an extraordinary video from the Isle of Mull shows that it wasn't all doom and gloom – it shows the incredible sight of a waterfall flowing upwards.

As winds reached upwards of 80 miles per hour in some coastal regions, the waterfalls on the Ardmeanach Peninsula on Mull were defying gravity.

It was captured at around midday by Reuben O'Connell, who works for Isle of Mull Cottages, as he visited one of the company's properties.

He told the Press Association, "I happened to see that from the gardens of one of our properties.

"It was about as strong as winds get around here and you sometimes see these things and think it is quite spectacular.

"That is what is nice about the island – it is quite dramatic in this sort of weather.

"The impressive spectacle was in a part of the island known as The Wilderness and has clocked up more than 900,000 views on the letting organisation's Facebook page."

But despite amazing people online,

O'Connell (35), said the sight was not that unusual for the area.

"We see the waterfall being blown backwards occasionally, but this one was particularly dramatic," he said.

Stunning views are commonplace on Mull in Argyll and Bute, most famous for its colourful town of Tobermory.

Storm Henry is the third named storm to hammer Britain in recent weeks, following Storm Frank and Storm Gertrude. It caused more chaos by leaving roads blocked and cutting off power.

A total of 28 flood warnings had been issued by the Scottish Environment Protection Agency and the Forth Road Bridge was closed after winds reached 84 miles per hour.

Parts of Moray and Aberdeenshire were hit by flooding as 45-foot waves were whipped up by the winds.



THE ISLE OF MULL, where waterfalls were blown back uphill during Storm Henry. The spectacular sight was captured on video by a caretaker for Isle of Mull Cottages and since he posted the phenomena online, it has clocked up more than 900,000 views.

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VANCOUVER
Celebrating
Celtic Culture

CelticFest

VANCOUVER

MARCH 10-17 2016

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THE IRISH ROVERS



THURSDAY, MARCH 17, VOGUE THEATRE
Celebrate St. Patrick's Day with the
international ambassadors of Irish music!

DAMIEN DEMPSEY



Special pre-festival concert w/ Ireland's
chart-topping folk music hero
w/ special guests Vagabonds
SATURDAY, MARCH 5, IMPERIAL 19+

VANCOUVER WELSH MEN'S CHOIR



w/ De Danaan Irish Dancers, piper Tim Fanning & Ballyhooley
FRIDAY, MARCH 11
ST. ANDREW'S WESLEY CHURCH

CELTICFEST CEILIDH

SATURDAY, MARCH 12, IMPERIAL
w/ Blackthorn, Mairi Rankin, Pat Chessell,
BC Regiment Irish Pipes and Drums,
Shot of Scotch dancers + many more!



MOLL

Irish playwright John B. Keane's uproarious comedy
ST. JAMES HALL: MARCH 10, 12, 14
DENTRY'S IRISH GRILL: MARCH 11, 13, 16



SHARON SHANNON

SUNDAY, MARCH 13, ST. JAMES HALL
Irish trad-folk accordion legend
co-presented with Rogue Folk Club



DOOLIN'S IRISH PUB WHISKY TASTINGS

MARCH 14: WHISKY 101 INTRODUCTION
MARCH 15: WHISKY 201 INTERMEDIATE
MARCH 16: ADVANCED FOR CONNOISSEURS
Includes 5 scotch/whisky samples **19+**

CELTICFEST KICK-OFF

W/ HALIFAX WHARF RATS
THURSDAY, MARCH 10
DOOLIN'S IRISH PUB 19+



CELTIC VILLAGE

Saturday & Sunday, March 12 & 13
Celebrate all things Celtic all weekend long,
with great music, dance, swordplay, workshops, food
– and shopping too. Come on down!

**FREE
DOWNTOWN
EVENTS**

ST. PATRICK'S DAY PARADE

Sunday, March 13, 11am



TICKETS
and INFO

www.celticfestvancouver.com

DOOLIN'S
IRISH PUB



Canada



THE GEORGIA STRAIGHT
Premiere Media Sponsor

12th Annual CelticFest Vancouver: Music, song, and dance - March 10 to 17

Vancouver streets, concert halls, and pubs will resound with the sights, sounds, and vibrant spirit of Celtic culture with the 12th Annual CelticFest Vancouver from March 10 to 17.

The festival features a range of great ticketed shows, along with many free events and activities for the whole family.

A special pre-festival concert featuring Irish folk music hero Damien Dempsey on March 5 will set the scene for the great entertainment to come.

CelticFest also proudly presents music icons, The Irish Rovers on St. Patrick's Day, March 17.

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

"We're looking forward to an amazing festival," says Executive Festival Producer, John Coughlan.

"We welcome folks from all across the region and beyond to join us in an exciting celebration of traditional and contemporary Celtic culture, from great concerts and performances to special events and, of course, the wildly popular Celtic Village and the St. Patrick's Day Parade."

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

Special pre-festival concert - DAMIENDEMPSEY

Saturday, March 5 at 8 PM

- Imperial, 319 Main Street

Tickets: \$50 general/\$75 Premium Seating | 19 years +

Don't miss a special pre-festival concert featuring chart-topping Irish folk music hero, Damien Dempsey.

This northside Dublin-born singer-songwriter's music has been described as "traditional Irish music fused with reggae, rock and folk put through a grounded, working class, worldly-aware yet caring consciousness."

From his 2000 debut album, *They Don't Teach This Shit in School*, his has been a unique and important voice in Irish music and culture. His fans and collaborators have included Brian Eno, Sinéad O'Connor, Bob Dylan, U2, and Morrissey.

Known for his dynamic live shows, the festival is thrilled to bring this award-winning, platinum-selling artist to Vancouver in what is sure to be a sell-out show.

Celebrate St. Patrick's Day with THE IRISH ROVERS

Thursday, March 17 at 8 PM

- Vogue Theatre, 918 Granville Street

Tickets: \$35/\$45/\$50

They've been delivering their unique brand of musical joy for 50 years, and now for the first time, CelticFest welcomes the rollicking, rousing ambassadors of Irish music and good cheer to the festival!

Hear the much-loved songs of revelry that have won over generations of fans the world over.

This is a must-attend concert for fans of the iconic band on their last world tour. Where else would you want to be on St. Patrick's Day?

CelticFest Kick-Off Celebration

HALIFAX WHARF RATS - Thursday, March 10 at 7PM

Doolin's Irish Pub, 654 Nelson Street - Tickets: \$5 (at the door) 19 years +

Join us for CelticFest's official opening kick-off featuring the rousing Maritime and Celtic sounds of Halifax Wharf Rats.

Their mix of East Coast sounds, clas-

sic rock, Canadian folk, and Irish and Scottish pub tunes will have the room, and everyone in it, jumping!

VANCOUVER WELSH MEN'S CHOIR with special guests DE DANAAN IRISH DANCERS, PIPER TIM FANNING & BALLYHOOLEY -

Friday, March 11 at 7:30 PM

St. Andrews Wesley Church, 1022 Nelson Street

\$30 general | Premium Seating \$40 | \$27 students & seniors

The Vancouver Welsh Men's Choir returns to CelticFest's 2016 lineup after a sold out 2015 show.

On March 11, the festival presents the glorious 80-voice Vancouver Welsh Men's Choir in concert, with De Danaan Irish Dancers (opening), Piper Tim Fanning and the dynamic band, Ballyhooley.

Steeped in the rich Welsh vocal tradition, the choir present a repertoire of folk songs, spirituals, show tunes, and Canadiana in the stellar acoustics of St. Andrews Wesley Church.

Founded in 1980, the choir is now in its 36th season, and under the dynamic leadership of Music Director and well-known soloist Jonathan Quick, assisted by accompanist Karen Lee-Morlang.

CELTICFEST CEILIDH -

Saturday, March 12 at 8 PM

Imperial, 319 Main Street -

\$25 advance | \$30 door | 19 years +

The festival welcomes back, by popular demand, the CelticFest Ceilidh with a roster of Celtic gold.

This popular event is hosted this year by Michael Viens and Blackthorn (house band), joined by many other favourite local artists.

On tap to perform: the BC Regiment Irish Pipes and Drums, Pat Chessell, Mary Brunner, Mairi Rankin, Brian Flanagan (Halifax Wharf Rats), The Fight Outside, Shot of Scotch, and many others.

For the first time this year, the Ceilidh will also feature renowned dance caller, Glasgow-born Duncan MacKenzie.

This kick-up-your-heels night of music and dance is the beating heart of the festival, selling out every year.

'MOLL' - STANDING ROOM ONLY THEATRE - March 10 - 16



THE IRISH ROVERS headline on Thursday, March 17 at the Vogue Theatre, 918 Granville in Vancouver. On their last world tour, these ambassadors of Irish music have been delivering their unique brand of musical joy to delighted audiences for 50 years.



DAMIEN DEMPSEY will perform a special pre-festival concert on Saturday, March 5 at the Imperial, 319 Main Street.

St. James Hall, 3214 W. 10th Avenue
March 10, 12, 14 @ 8 PM
Dentry's Irish Grill, 4450 W. 10th Avenue:
March 11 @ 8 PM
March 13 @ 1 PM,
March 16 @ 7 PM \$20

After a successful run of *The Weir* in 2015, Standing Room Only Theatre returns to CelticFest 2016 with a production of *Moll* by award-winning Irish playwright John B. Keane.

This uproarious comedy that parodies the goings-on in a rural presbytery in Kerry in the 1970s has been described as "side-splittingly funny."

It recently had an extended run due to phenomenal public demand at Dublin's Gaiety Theatre.

Vancouver audiences will have the chance to laugh and delight at this witty story at two Vancouver venues.

DOOLIN'S IRISH PUB WHISKY TASTINGS

Doolin's Irish Pub, 654 Nelson
March 14 @ 7 PM (Whisky 101 – an introduction for beginners) \$30
March 15 @ 7 PM (Whisky 201 – intermediate tasting) \$60
March 16 @ 7 PM (Advanced Whisky Tasting – for connoisseurs) \$85
Each event includes 5 scotch/whisky samples 19+ years

There's weeknight fun to be had, as CelticFest presents the Doolin's Irish Pub Whisky Tastings on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday – March 14, 15 & 16.

This year, CelticFest offers opportunities for aspiring, intermediate and veteran whisky aficionados to come out and taste.

The Introduction to Whisky 101 opens the doors to the spirit world for those seeking basic knowledge and insights.

For the first time they are offering an intermediate Whisky Tasting 201 for those who already have an appreciation and some knowledge, but are seeking more.

For the third tasting, true whisky enthusiasts have an opportunity to learn even more at the "for connoisseurs" session.

SHARON SHANNON
Sunday, March 13 at 8 PM
St. James Hall, 3214 W. 10th Ave. - Co-presented with the Rogue Folk Club - Tickets: \$40/\$36 for Rogue Folk Club Members

In association with the Rogue Folk, CelticFest presents the eclectic Irish trad-folk accordion legend Sharon Shannon.

While never losing sight of her roots in Irish folk music, Shannon has undertaken a musical journey which has included collaborations with Bono and Adam Clayton, classical violinist Nigel Kennedy, reggae legend Denis Bovell, the Kodo Drummers of Japan, as well as Steve Earle, Jackson Browne, Emmy-Lou Harris and Alison Krauss.

Her reputation for great live shows and her global connections have lead to successful concert tours around the world, including performances in the UK, Europe, Japan, Australia, the United

States, Canada, and Africa.

PUBS & RESTAURANTS Participating pubs and restaurants will offer an array of performances by musicians, bands and dancers throughout CelticFest, up to and including St. Patrick's Day on March 17.

CelticFest 2016 continues its tradition of offering a variety of great FREE events for all to enjoy.

On the weekend of March 12-13, The Celtic Village returns to Granville Street between Robson and Nelson with music, dance, fun and frolic, food – and great shopping, too!

This FREE street fair features performances by some of B.C.'s finest Celtic music groups on Doolin's Music Stage at Granville and Robson.

Folks can hear the rich harmonies of Blackthorn, the passionate, smoky vocals and Celtic-fuelled sounds of the Pat Chessell Band, Nova Scotia's Sarah Ann Chisholm, more than a pint of fervor and charm from The Clannns, fiery young folk quartet Elsay, Nova Scotia's fiddle, singing, step-dancing sensation Mairi Rankin, and the lively and energetic West Coast Fiddlers.

Look for the captivating antics of street performers: The Green Man can be found delighting passersby in the Village, and Academie Duello will be back to showcase historical sword play in action!

Visiting villagers can shop at the street market for an array of Celtic treasures and the works of talented artisans, and sample from a wide selection of food and fare.

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

Throughout the March 12-13 weekend, Tom Lee Music Hall on Granville Street hosts a series of fascinating (and, again, free) CelticFest Performances and Workshops.

Performances include: Royal Scottish Country Dance Society's Demonstration Team and the Eire Born Irish Dancers.

Musicians and Celtic music appreciators alike will enjoy a series of informative and entertaining workshops: Guitar Workshop with Tim Readman, Pennywhistle Workshop with Michelle Carlisle, Bodhran Workshop with Blake Williams, and a Fiddle Workshop with Mairi Rankin.

The St. Patrick's Day Parade, CelticFest's fun and fabulous signature event, paints downtown Vancouver in a glorious emerald green on Sunday March 13, starting at 11am.

The parade route flows north along Howe from Pacific to Georgia Street, drawing spectators from far and wide to cheer on lively parade participants.

Marching pipe and drum bands, Celtic music groups, acrobats, drill teams, Irish & Scottish youth dance groups, and more all come together for a lively, fun and colourful spectacle.

To join the parade, complete an entry form by February 15 at www.celticfestvancouver.com

Event tickets and the full festival schedule is posted online at www.celticfestvancouver.com Single tickets range from FREE to \$85.



ADELE

Adele says Trump doesn't have permission to use her music

LONDON – British singer Adele made it clear that she has not given permission for anyone to use her music for political campaigns.

Adele's spokesman issued a statement after Republican U.S. presidential contender Donald Trump played Adele's 2011 hit *Rolling in the Deep* at rallies in Iowa, and Mike Huckabee released a YouTube parody of her 2015 single *Hello*.

"Adele has not given permission for her music to be used for any political campaigning," the singer's spokesman said in an e-mail.

The spokesman did not say whether Adele, whose new album *25* was the biggest seller in the United States last year, was contemplating legal steps to prevent the unauthorised use of her music.

John McDermott

Traditionally Yours



Apr. 12 Victoria McPherson Playhouse: 250 386 6121
 Apr. 14 Chilliwack Cultural Centre: 604 391 7469
 Apr. 15 North Vancouver Centennial Theatre: 604 984 4484
 Apr. 16 Duncan Cowichan Performing Arts Centre: 250 748 7529
 Apr. 17 Courtenay Sid Williams Theatre: 250 338 2430
 Apr. 18 Nanaimo The Port Theatre: 250 754 8550
 Apr. 19 Campbell River Tidemark Theatre: 250 287 7465
 Apr. 21 Vernon Performing Arts Centre: 250 549 7469
 Apr. 23 Kelowna Community Theatre: 250 762 5050
 Apr. 24 Kamloops Coast Kamloops Hotel Theatre: 250 374 5483

May 7 Saskatoon Broadway Theatre: 306 652 6556
 May 8 Regina University Theatre: 306 525 9999
 May 13 Calgary Jack Singer Concert Hall: 403 294 9494
 May 15 Edmonton Shctor Theatre at the Citadel: 780 425 1820
 May 24 Grande Prairie Cardinal Theatre: 780 538 0387
 May 27 Red Deer Memorial Centre: 403 755 6626

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www.johnmcdermott.com or www.shantero.com

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St. George's Anglican Church Hall
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 Tickets: \$30.00 – Call: 604-455-0095

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Festival du BOIS 2016
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www.festivaldubois.ca

Fate of St. James Hall – Home of The Rogue – to be announced on Saturday, February 13

VANCOUVER – The big news this month is that **St. James Community Square** has been saved from the developers! The United Church – the former owners – have sold the building, which houses St. James Hall, the venue for Rogue Folk concerts since 2004.

The sale went through at the end of January. We are all very happy and relieved!

Not only does the Square house Rogue shows, it is also home to the Vancouver Youth Symphony, Phoenix Gymnastics, a Day Care, a Japanese pre-school, and a host of other community groups.

Over 500,000 “users” per year step inside the venerable venue, which has been operated as a community centre by the St. James Community Square Society (at break-even, with no operating funds from government) for over 22 years!

The society will continue to run the operation. We cannot yet say who has bought it, but all will be revealed on **Saturday, February 13** at 11 AM in the hall, with an official announcement by the new owners during a VYSO rehearsal.

Later that day **The Rogue** hosts **Còig** – arguably Canada’s finest Celtic band these days. We will have a special celebration at the show. Còig is a trad. quartet from Cape Breton.

The name means five in Gaelic, but they are now a four-piece, with a CD under the name Còig, so changing the name to four wouldn’t make sense either!

There are two fiddlers steeped in the tradition – **Chrissie Crowley** from Margaree and **Rachel Davis** from Baddeck. Rachel also sings in both Gaelic and English.

Jason Roach from Cheticamp is the pianist, and **Darren McMullen** rounds out the quartet on a variety of stringed instruments – and vocals. He is also from Nova Scotia, although not from Cape Breton.

He also plays in **David Francey’s** band and is a renowned recording producer as well as a brilliant musician.

The band released *Carols* – a Christmas CD in December, which is remarkable for the variety of musical styles and influences – everything from classical to Celtic with many innovative ideas along the way.

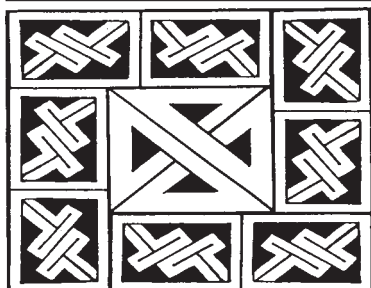
It is most definitely not another in a long line of seasonal recordings released by all and sundry over the years; theirs is an inspired collection with meticulous attention to detail and fabulous musicianship and arrangements.

This reflects their approach to traditional music as well. While staying true to their Cape Breton roots, they continue to absorb influences and ideas from ground breaking string ensembles like **The Punch Brothers** and Scotland’s **Treacherous Orchestra!**



By
**STEVE
EDGE**

THE ROGUE FOLK CLUB



One of the finest sights – and sounds – in Canadian Celtic music is witnessing the two girls fiddling and stomping, hair-flying every which way, as they soar into the tunes – driven by McMullen’s guitar and Roach’s inspired piano accompaniment.

We will leave plenty of room for dancing! For more information about the band, visit www.coig.ca. Tickets and concert information are to be found on www.roguefolk.bc.ca.

The following week I’m off to Kansas City for the annual **Folk Alliance International** – a conference / festival / workshop extravaganza featuring over 2,500 musicians, presenters, radio DJs, festivals, and music lovers.

It’s one of the highlights of the year for me (along with the Edmonton Folk Festival in August, it has been one of the inspirational “pillars” of my year for over 25 years!).

I usually return exhausted and exhilarated – bearing one hundred more new CDs and a treasured stash of memories.

Too bad I’ll miss **Matt Andersen’s** concert on the 18th at The Vogue, though. The New Brunswick guitarist is one of the most soulful singers around, and he has a new CD, *Honest Man*.

From **February 25 to 27**, The Rogue hosts three quite distinct concerts on successive nights at St. James Hall.

We kick it off with Washington DC sextet **The Bumper Jacksons**, making their Vancouver debut – en route to Wintergrass in Tacoma.

Their infectious blend of early New Orleans jazz and country blues features trumpet, clarinet, trombone, resophonic guitars, banjos, washboard, and the sultry, playful vocals of **Jess Eliot Myhre**.

I have been listening to their two CDs (*Sweet Mama Sweet Daddy Come In*, and *Too Big World*) obsessively for the



Còig – a trad. quartet from Cape Breton is arguably Canada’s finest Celtic band these days. They play The Rogue on Saturday, February 13.



Irish accordion diva Sharon Shannon plays a Vancouver concert for the first time in 15 years at St. James Hall on Sunday, March 13....following the annual CelticFest Vancouver St. Patrick’s Day Parade.

past 12 months or so, and am very excited about their show. I hope Vancouver can give them a warm welcome. Check them out on www.bumperjacksons.com.

The following night, one of my favourite singers returns after a two year absence: **Eilen** (prod: Eel-uhn) **Jewell**. The Iowa singer / songwriter has a uniquely gripping voice and style – part **Loretta Lynn**, part **Bessie Smith**, but quintessentially her own.

Her music could be described as alt. country but that would miss the heavy influence of country blues, and would tend to overlook the amazing guitar work of **Jerry Miller** – one of the best rockabilly guitarists on the planet.

Check out their live, extended version of *Shakin’ All Over* to feel the power and humour in his playing – with tips of the hat to **Chuck Berry**, **Keith Richards** and more in his style. www.eilenjewell.com.

On **Saturday, February 27**, Victoria’s celebrated singer, bassist, and banjoist **Oliver Swain** brings his **Big Machine** band (featuring **Richard Moody** and

Adrian Dolan of **The Bills** amongst its ranks) and a brand new collection of songs – *Never More Together*.

Ollie has a three-octave vocal range, and a unique songwriting style replete with catchy riffs and memorable melodies and lines.

A former member of bands like **The Duhks**, **Red Stick Ramblers**, and **Outlaw Social**, Ollie has a solid grounding in Celtic, Cajun, Folk, Bluegrass and gypsy jazz. Come and hear what he and his fine band have to offer. www.oliverswainmusic.com.

The opening act is **Twin Bandit**, two young women from Victoria with a distinctively harmonious folk-based singing style.

The beginning of March sees two of Canada’s most celebrated folk acts: B.C. stringband extraordinaire **The Bills** (**March 3**), and PEI singer / songwriter **Lennie Gallant** (**March 4**).

The Bills have a new CD, *Trail of Tales*, coming out this month on Borealis Records. Fabulous harmony vocals, and virtuosic musicianship (**Marc Atkinson**

on guitar, **Adrian Dolan** on fiddle, accordion, etc., and **Richard Moody** on fiddle are three of the best players you could wish to hear) are trademarks of this band.

Lennie Gallant has 11 albums to his name, two in French and the rest mostly in English. He is one of the country’s finest storytellers in song, and will be backed by his trio.

Saturday, March 5 is a VERY BIG day for folk music in the Lower Mainland!

Festival du Bois takes place in Mackin Park, Maillardville (Coquitlam), with amazing food, brilliant music, and French joie de vivre flaunted unashamedly all over the park and inside the big tent.

Le Bruit Court Dans La Ville (Andre Marchand, Lisa Ornstein & Normand Miron), MAZ (Quebecois folk-jazz), Reveillons (trad. dance music from Quebec), and many more exciting acts perform at this year’s festival. Check out the schedule on www.festivaldubois.ca and flaunt some Frenchness.

The event also runs on Sunday, March 6, so that’s where I’ll be!

A little further east, the amazing fiddler and step dancer **April Verch** brings her trio to New West’s **Anvil Centre** on the 5th.

Meanwhile, back in Vancouver, there’s a **Contra Dance** at St. James Hall, and the truly wondrous singer **Aoife O’Donovan** brings her new CD – aptly titled *The Magic Hour* – to The Biltmore Cabaret!

Portuguese fado singer **Antonio Zambujo** brings his fine band to **The Blueshore Stage** at Capilano University – also on **March 5!**

And that same night, at **The Imperial**, Dublin’s chart-topping folk music hero **Damien Dempsey** performs a gala pre-festival show for CelticFest Vancouver!

So much great music in one night! What to choose? Where to go? Oh my

CelticFest Vancouver is one of the city’s most enjoyable cultural celebrations, and this year’s line-up not only features the aforementioned Mr. Dempsey – five days before the festival begins per se, it also features famed Irish trad band **De Danann** – five days after St. Patrick’s Day – at **The Rogue**.

The Irish Rovers play a farewell gig on the 17th at **The Vogue Theatre** on Granville Street. Perfect!

The **St. Patrick’s Day Parade** takes place on **Sunday, March 13** this time, and that evening Irish accordion diva **Sharon Shannon** plays a Vancouver concert for the first time in – I think – 15 years, at **St. James Hall**.

Full information on the festival can be found on www.celticfestvancouver.com.

The festival program book can be found at all 7-11 stores and music venues and stores around town – including The Rogue at St. James Hall, of course.

I’ll have more about CelticFest Vancouver in next month’s column.

And you can hear music by all these performers on my radio show *The Edge On Folk* every Saturday from 8 AM to noon on CiTR FM 101.9 (streamed live on www.citr.ca).

Slainte
Steve Edge

John McDermott: A delectable evening of story and song



THE JOHN McDERMOTT...TRADITIONALLY YOURS tour across western Canada kicks off on April 12 in Victoria, B.C. and continues with dates in British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba.

JOHN McDERMOTT is an international recording star and household name with platinum, double-platinum, triple-platinum albums and multiple Juno nominations.

Besides his stellar musical career, he is also known for his commitment to veterans' causes which have earned him the U.S. Congressional Medal of Honour Society's Bob Hope Award, the Ted Williams Globe & Anchor Award from the USMC.

Here at home, he received a commendation from the Canadian Minister of

Veterans Affairs for his ongoing work, which includes his foundation McDermott House Canada.

This facility is dedicated to improving care in the final stages of terminal illness and providing a warm, welcoming place to stay for Canada's veterans, military, first responders and their families.

In concert, whether he is sharing the stage with a topnotch group of musical friends or touring the world as part of the famed Three Irish Tenors, McDermott continues to enchant audiences with his beautiful voice and sensitive renditions.

Though time and travel have introduced him to a wealth of new material and experiences, he manages to incorporate that diversity into his performances, while retaining the beguiling sense of humour that endeared him to audiences from the beginning.

His new western Canada tour will be launched on April 12 at the Victoria McPherson Playhouse in Victoria, B.C. and wraps up in Red Deer, Alberta on May 27.

Dates include Chilliwack, North Vancouver, Duncan, Nanaimo, Campbell River, Vernon, Kelowna, Kamloops, Winnipeg, Brandon, Saskatoon, Regina, Medicine Hat, Lethbridge, Calgary, Edmonton, Grande Prairie, Lloydminster, and finally, Red Deer.

The tour features songs from his latest release, *Traditionally Yours*, as well as a variety of favourites from his vast recording catalogue.

This will be a delectable evening of story and song, delivered with charm and grace by the consummate craftsman himself, John McDermott.

For tickets and a full schedule of tour dates, visit: www.shantero.com or www.johnmcdermott.com.

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

COQUITLAM – On the first weekend in March, Coquitlam's Mackin Park is the place to be when the 27th annual Festival du Bois returns with great music, dance, food and fun for the whole family!

The lilting sounds of fiddle and accordion, the captivating rhythms of foot percussion, and the enticing smell of hot poutine and tourtière will fill the air as Festival du Bois warmly welcomes folks of all ages, cultures and languages to come and have some fun.

Folks who go every year already know it is a wonderful (and very affordable) festival experience. For those who've not attended, why not bring your family and friends and give it a try?

Running from March 4-6, the festival features brilliant traditional and contemporary folk, roots and world music and dance with a francophone/French Canadian flair.

Fans of Celtic music will find lots to enjoy and appreciate what's on stage.

The 2016 list of artists includes three legends of Québec's traditional music scene – Lisa Ornstein, Normand Miron, and André Marchand.

Collectively known as Le Bruit court dans la ville (the buzz around town), these veterans of groups like La Bottine Souriante and others are true musical masters.

Also on tap, RéVeillons! gathers up choice tunes from varied eras of Québécois music, playing jigs, reels, French songs and step dances with a dynamic joie de vivre.

Washington State's Sonerion plays traditional Fest Noz or Night Party music



Maz start with traditional Québécois tunes then travel through the depths of modal jazz into trance-inducing modern grooves.

from Brittany, France – performing at the festival with the dancers of Les Bretons de Québec.

The musicians of the Gabriel Dubreuil Trio draw from Irish, Scottish and North American traditions in their eclectic, tradition-based music.

For more adventurous listeners, Maz invites you to hop on a wild flying canoe to a world of original compositions, starting with traditional Québécois tunes then traveling through the depths of modal jazz into trance-inducing modern grooves.

The Benin-born percussionist/musician Yoro Noukoussi will draw you into the sights, sounds and rhythms of West Africa.

Award-winning Acadian pop/rock artist Danny Boudreau and his group, Danny Party, add even more exciting musical diversity to the mix. And those are just a few of the artists on tap!

The festival opens Friday night, March 4 at Place des Arts, nearby Mackin

Park, with a concert featuring two extraordinary prairie gals.

Saskatchewan-born folk/rock singer Annette Campaigne (Folle Avoine, Hart Rouge) and Winnipeg songstress and violinist Raine Hamilton join forces in a night of music that will fire you up and touch your heart.

And over the weekend, in addition to the Grand Chapiteau concerts, there are special workshops that illuminate the historical and geographical pathways of traditional French and Celtic music in the Workshop Tent.

You will not want to miss these fascinating and entertaining sessions that feature a number of festival artists. The Youth Zone offers shows and activities for kids of all ages, including Alberta's spoon and saw-playing phenomenon Le Bûcheron (Gilbert Parent).

Be prepared to encounter delightful characters around the site, including sightings of the mystical, plaid-wearing, Ernestine.

Leading up to the festival weekend, The Atrium Gallery at Place des Arts hosts ILLUMINIMO - New Works in Light Sculpture, an exhibit by artist Sylvie Roussel-Janssens starting February 19 (free).

The third annual Dîner en Plaid, an evening of traditional French Canadian food, craft beer, and music, happens at an undisclosed location Wednesday, March 2. The dress code? Plaid!

Festival tickets start at \$15 per day for adults, with special rates for kids, students, seniors, families and weekenders. Children 5 and under are free. Full festival info and tickets at festivaldubois.ca.



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EILEEN JEWELL

Saturday, FEBRUARY 27
Victoria bassist / banjoist / singer
**OLIVER SWAIN'S
BIG MACHINE**

Thursday, MARCH 3
BC Stringband with new CD!
THE BILLS

Friday, MARCH 4
Great Canadian songwriter (PEI)
LENNIE GALLANT

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Veteran Broadcaster Terry Wogan has died, aged 77



THE LIMERICK-BORN presenter Terry Wogan was one of the best-loved radio and television personalities in the UK and Ireland. Irish Prime Minister Enda Kenny said Wogan acted as a bridge between Ireland and Britain, entertaining audiences on both sides of the Irish Sea.

LONDON – Veteran BBC broadcaster Sir Terry Wogan has died aged 77, after a short illness, his family confirmed on January 31.

Limerick-born Wogan began his broadcasting career in his native Ireland, but secured his status as a British audience-magnet with his eponymous television chat show, which ran for up to three times a week for a decade from 1982.

His many guests included Rock Hudson, Dolly Parton, Raquel Welch, Lee Marvin, Mel Brooks and Anne Bancroft.

Renowned for his wit and sense of humour, colleagues called him a “true gent” and “a broadcasting legend.”

Wogan began his broadcasting career in Dublin with RTE, his broadcasts often interrupted by a mouse-infestation of the Henry Street building in Dublin.

In a career that spanned five decades, his best-loved shows included *Wogan*, *Children in Need* and his hosting of the Eurovision Song Contest.

He is also credited for helping musicians such as Daniel O'Donnell and Foster

and Allen to stardom by airing their records on his radio show.

When he was in charge of the BBC television game show *Blankety Blank* for four years from 1979, audiences exceeded 20 million.

His weekday breakfast programme on Radio 2 (1972-84 and 1993-2009) reached eight million listeners.

And quite certainly some of the many millions who watched the Eurovision Song Contest, which he covered on radio and then television from the early 1970s to 2008, did so more for his facetious commentaries than for the music.

President Michael D. Higgins has led the tributes, describing him as “one of the great figures of broadcasting.”

British Prime Minister David Cameron said Britain had lost a “huge talent.”

He was appointed OBE in 1997 and KBE in 2005. Dual citizenship made it possible for him to use the title Sir.

Terry Wogan is survived by his wife Helen, whom he married in 1965, two sons and a daughter. Another daughter died in infancy.

Singer Dolores O'Riordan 'air rage' incident sentencing

LIMERICK – Cranberries singer Dolores O'Riordan will be sentenced later this month for head-butting and spitting on a police officer following an alleged air rage incident, a court has heard.

The multi-million selling artist pleaded guilty after being arrested at Shannon Airport on November 10, 2014 after a disturbance on a transatlantic flight.

Judge Patrick Durcan told Ennis District Court, “The court's judgment is ready.” The sentence will be handed down on February 24.

O'Riordan was not in court after being excused by the judge at the previous hearing.

The singer, who has since been diagnosed as suffering bipolar disorder, admitted four offences including assault and obstructing a Garda during the incident following an Aer Lingus flight from New York's JFK airport.

As she was being arrested O'Riordan told officers that she was an icon and the Queen of Limerick.

The trial heard she accused a Garda officer of groping her and sexually assaulting her during the arrest, a claim which has since been retracted.

A number of medical reports were given to the judge with the court told that medics have suggested the singer was suffering hypomania, sleep deprivation and paranoia at the time of the incident.

The 44-year-old mother of three children who lives in New York, had sepa-



CRANBERRIES singer Dolores O'Riordan will be sentenced this month for a 2014 'air rage' incident. She was onboard an Aer Lingus flight from New York to Shannon when the altercation took place. She accused a Garda officer of groping her and sexually assaulting her during the arrest, a claim which has since been retracted.

rated from her husband in the months before her arrest.

Following the incident, she was admitted to a residential facility for ongoing medical treatment.

Since her arrest, O'Riordan gave an extremely vulnerable interview with

Barry Egan of Ireland's *Sunday Independent* where she discussed her bipolar disorder,

Her mother, Eileen, earlier told the *Limerick Leader* that Dolores has suffered a major nervous breakdown following the split from her husband of 21 years, Duran Duran tour manager Don Burton.

O'Riordan and Burton have three children together, Taylor (16), Molly (13), and Dakota (9), who remain with their father in his native Canada.

According to Egan the two split in mid-September 2014 and since then O'Riordan had been living in hotels in New York.

“She has not slept properly in two months and her moods are, at best, erratic,” he writes.

“Everyone around Dolores wants to see her come out of this dark place in her life — but it is a dark place she has been in, if truth be told, nearly all her life.

“She was raped at the age of eight for four years. A sex abuse victim is always a sex abuse victim.”

In the most recent interview, Egan asked O'Riordan if she will see a counselor, to which she replies, “Sure, I am a counselor. Aren't I counseling the world? Aren't I after healing billions of people around the world?”

“I think you get to a point in life where you can't really feel pain. You can't feel it. You can sing like a bird and heal people.

“People look at you and see a product. They don't see a soul. They see an empty hole,” she added.

CELTIC MUSIC REVIEW

KAILYARDERS *King of the Jolly* *The Black Well*

Kailyarders are a local Celtic trio that rose like the phoenix from the ashes of Three Row Barley.

Colin Wade the lead vocalist and prolific songwriter writes about 100 songs a year.

He has a impressive background in the Celtic culture and song having blended voices with the Vancouver Scottish Gaelic Choir, performing in Scotland, Nova Scotia and Nashville.

Wade has a strong voice that gives depth of feeling to tales of sea shanties, mists and ghost ships, to tragic coal miner songs or the sadness of immigration and compassionate unrequited love.

Many of the songs that Wade has written are reflections of time spent in the Maritimes and Scotland. The songs all tell a story like a novel in song.

Chris Williscroft is a gifted instrumentalist playing mandolin, banjo, guitar and bass. He also looks after sound for the group.

Bruce McKillican also brings years of performing Celtic songs to Kailyarders. He plays a variety of jigs, reels on penny whistle, bodhran, percussion, accordion and lends his vocals to both lead and back up.

Kailyarders have released two CDs – *King of the Jolly* and *The Black Well*.

Songs on *King of the Jolly* include *Maritime Girl*; *Married to the Sea*;



King of the Jolly; *Stornoway*; *Y-shaped Coffin* and *Ghostships of Kerrigans Isle*.

Songs on *The Black Well* include *A Mile Straight Down*; *The Black Well*; *Where The Wildflowers Grow*; *A Young Man's Heart*; *Mrs McGrath*; *Molly At The Rail*; *Highland Lover's Song*; *Stinkin of this n'that*; *Celtic Christmas*.

Don't miss Kailyarders when they play next in your neck of the woods...you're sure of an enjoyable evening.

For more information on upcoming shows, visit: www.kailyarders.com.

– Catholine Butler

Winterruptions 2016: Vancouver's favourite winter festival

VANCOUVER – Vancouver's favourite winter festival celebrates its 11th year with music, dance, film, theatre, art, food, craft, indoor and outdoor activities, and so much more!

Granville Island's exciting and eclectic Winterruption Festival runs from February 19 to 21, with a stunning range of events and performances all across the Island. Winterruption promises something surprising around every corner - most of it free of charge. The festival gathers art, music, dance, theatre, film, family fun, gastronomy, outdoor celebration and more into one big, exciting winter celebration for everyone.

Festival highlights include Pop Up Dances, where traditional, popular, and classical dance 'pops up' in unexpected places around the Island over the weekend, and a special screening of *A Ballerina's Tale*, about Misty Copeland, the first African-American principal dancer of the American Ballet Theatre.

There are performances by Jacky Essombe, jazz at Performance Works, Improv Comedy from Theatresports, Chix on Stix and face painting, a chance to make maple taffy, beautiful art, exhibits, food, Meet Your Makers Artisan Brewery and Distilleries Tours, and more. The full schedule of over 40 events and activities is at winterruption.com.



TOP 10 CELTIC HITS FOR FEBRUARY

Celt In A Twist is local contemporary Celtic radio heard weekly on AM 1470, CJVB in Vancouver.

www.worldbeatcanada.com

The following is the *Celt In A Twist* Contemporary Celtic Top 10:

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Linelis</i> by Plantec - <i>Kontakt</i> on Coop Breizh. 2. <i>The Diamond</i> by Alba's Edge - <i>Run to Fly</i> on Paddledoo Music. 3. <i>Stanley Park</i> by Aofie O'Donovan - <i>The Magic Hour</i> on YepRoc. 4. <i>Gazaremsan</i> by Jocelyn Pettit Band - <i>Caravan</i> on Independent. 5. <i>Kometens Hale</i> by Jansberg - <i>Terra Nova</i> on GO' Danish. 6. <i>The Irish Brigade</i> by The 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Mahones - <i>The Hunger & The Fight Pt. 2</i> on Whiskey Devil Records. 7. <i>The Vapourer</i> by Spiro - <i>Welcome Joy and Welcome Sorrow</i> on Real World Records. 8. <i>The Five Mile Chase</i> by Battlefield Band - <i>Beg & Borrow</i> on Temple Records. 9. <i>Queen of Argyle</i> by Blackthorn - <i>Open Skies</i> on Independent. 10. <i>Catch Me</i> by The Real McKenzies - <i>Rats in the Burlap</i> on Fat Wreckchords.
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Celt In A Twist Pick Of The Month:
Plantec - *Kontakt* (Coop Breizh)

Pierce Brosnan plays ex-IRA member in new film



DO YOU recognize the man in this picture? You could be mistaken.....it's actually Pierce Brosnan on set in London this January filming his new movie in which he plays an ex-IRA man turned government official. Sound familiar?

LONDON – Pierce Brosnan has sported a look remarkably similar to Gerry Adams for a new film, in which the former Bond actor plays an ex-IRA man turned government official.

Brosnan was snapped in a smart suit and tie, with a greying white beard and glasses in a look many have said bears an uncanny resemblance to the current Louth TD and Sinn Féin president Adams.

Gerry Adams has always denied being in the IRA.

Brosnan (62), is playing the character of Liam Hennessy for a film based on the book *The Chinaman* by Stephen Leather.

In retaliation to the storm around the similarity between the pair Gerry Adams took to Twitter saying: "I never knew Pierce Brosnan was so good looking."

He also recorded a humorous 'interview' with *An Phoblacht* where he did an impersonation of the former Bond star. Adams said, "The name's Brosnan, Pierce Brosnan."

The Jackie Chan action thriller has a working title of *The Foreigner*. It created some drama of its own in London on February 7 during a film sequence when a bus was blown up on Lambeth Bridge. The stunt sparked panics to emergency lines as the scene was reminiscent of the 7/7 bombing where 13 died at Tavistock Square.



THE scene on Lambeth Bridge when a film crew blew up a bus in a stunt for the new Jackie Chan film *The Foreigner*.

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Refugees welcomed in Scotland and Canada

EDINBURGH – There was a time when the town of Rothesay on the Isle of Bute was the holiday destination of choice for many a Scottish family.

My own family were regular summer visitors to Rothesay when its glory days were fading but still detectable.

The boarding house we stayed in was called “Madeira Villa,” the name indicative of a last ditch attempt to re-imagine Bute as serious competition for the newly accessible sun destinations in Portugal and Spain.

In retrospect that campaign was doomed from the start. Rothesay had (and still has) a belaboured line of palm trees on the seafront and many a child was persuaded into the freezing sea by adult cries of “It’s warmed by the gulf stream.”

But Bute’s days as a holiday destination were numbered as soon as its clientele turned away from the ferries that plied the River Clyde and towards the planes at Glasgow airport.

Today you have to look closely to detect signs of Bute’s former glory.

The ferry slip at Wemyss Bay, which connects the mainland to the island, has room for hundreds of prospective foot passengers but few folk make their way down it now.

On the Rothesay side, the most notable tourist attraction is the restored Victorian toilets which once served the people disembarking from the ships.

Towards the end of 2015, however, 15 Syrian refugee families arrived on Bute, the national media descended on the island, and Rothesay sparked to life again.

Local people donated clothes and money, food banks rallied around and volunteers helped prepare houses for the new islanders.

My personal connection to Rothesay was revived in 2009 through a Scotland/Canada cultural engagement project called “this is who we are.”

Among other places, it linked Rothesay on Bute with Rothesay in New Brunswick.

Remarkably, my old compadre on the project, photographer Graeme Murdoch, is now living on Bute and involved in the effort to support the Syrian refugees.

When I contacted Graeme, the eighth named storm of the winter had just hit, carrying winds of over 100 km an hour.

The Syrian families were issued with hot water bottles when they arrived but that must be little comfort in the face of an onslaught that, I take no pleasure in recording, is called Storm Henry (or Harry).

However, Graeme tells me that “The Syrian families seem to have settled well in spite of the weather and some sourness from a sector of islanders.

“It is fair to say they have added to the community and the few who speak English make for engaging conversation. The men all want a card school!”

As soon as Storm Henry allows him off Bute, Graeme is going to Edinburgh to visit a large Asian supermarket and “load my car with bulk produce for the families: rice, couscous, vine leaves,



By
**HARRY
McGRATH**

Medjool dates, chick peas, pomegranate sauce....and prayer mats.

“Then we can have a ceilidh, with added spice.”

What is happening on Bute is a kind of morality tale sitting inside a much bigger story.

Small, local acts of kindness like Graeme’s contend with wider agendas driven by fear and suspicion.

One British tabloid, for instance, reported that a local woman was “rudely abused” by a Syrian teenager in Rothesay as he passed in a car, even though the group contains no teenagers and no cars.

Fortunately, the cause of these “New Scots,” and those who will follow them to other parts of Scotland, is bolstered by the support of the Scottish Government which has consistently spoken out in their favour.

International Development Minister Humza Yousaf, erstwhile visitor to Vancouver, set the tone by stating that he is “deeply proud of the Scottish people



PANORAMA from Canada Hill on Rothesay, Isle of Bute, Scotland. Bute folk once gathered at the summit to watch their relations depart for Canada from the harbour below.



HEADLINE on two national newspapers welcoming refugees.

who have extended the warmest possible hand of friendship to our newest neighbours.”

The pro-refugee narrative adopted by Yousaf and other Scottish ministers is remarkably similar to that of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and his newly elected Canadian Liberal Government.

Perhaps this synergy will form the basis of a new chapter in the “special relationship” between Scotland and Canada, but that’s a column for another day.

In the meantime, the importance of a positive attitude to the refugee crisis cannot be overstated.

Within a few days of each other, Scotland’s *The National* newspaper and the *Toronto Star* ran front pages with related headlines. One said “Welcome to Scotland”; the other “Welcome to Canada.”

Back on Bute, the new arrivals are settling in under the shadow of “Canada Hill” which is the high point behind Rothesay.

They say that Bute folk once gathered at the summit to watch their relations depart for Canada from the harbour below.

Scotland’s long history of mass emigration demands that it provide the same welcome in Scotland that its own emigrants anticipated in Canada and elsewhere.

The number of Syrian refugees on Bute is, by comparison, very small but their story augers well for the bigger challenges ahead.

Harry McGrath is based in Edinburgh, Scotland. Follow him on Twitter: @harrymcgrath2.

At least 10,000 child refugees have disappeared and some could be in the hands of traffickers

ROME, Italy – At least 10,000 unaccompanied child refugees have disappeared in Europe, the EU’s criminal intelligence agency has said, as it warned many could be in the hands of traffickers.

Brian Donald, Europol’s chief of staff, said the children had vanished after arriving in Europe and registering with state authorities.

“It’s not unreasonable to say that we’re looking at 10,000-plus children,” he said.

“Not all of them will be criminally exploited; some might have been passed on to family members. We just don’t know where they are, what they’re doing or whom they are with.”

Over one million migrants and refugees arrived in Europe last year. Europol estimates that 27 percent of them are children.

“Not all of those are unaccompanied, but we also have evidence that a large proportion might be,” Donald told the British Sunday paper, *The Observer*, adding that the 10,000 is likely to be a conservative estimate.

Some 5,000 of the children have disappeared in Italy, while 1,000 have gone missing in Sweden.

The comments come days after David Cameron announced Britain would



AUTHORITIES dealing with Europe’s refugee crisis have lost track of about 10,000 unaccompanied children amid fears that organized crime gangs are beginning to exploit the vulnerable youngsters.

work with the United Nations and take hundreds of unaccompanied children from refugee camps in Syria and surrounding countries.

Ministers have asked the UN to flag “exceptional” cases where children in refugee camps near Syria have genuinely been separated from their families.

However, he rejected calls for the UK to take 3,000 orphaned refugees who have reached Europe amid fears it could encourage more to make the perilous journey.

The charity Save the Children has urged Britain to accept 3,000 children immediately. It estimates 26,000 minors arrived in Europe last year without adults, and are at risk from traffickers and sex abusers.

Save the Children Italy spokesman Michele Prosperi said that Europol, “sounded an alarm that is based on a real risk” because thousands of minors don’t stay within the system of migrant protection.

“They find themselves in a very vul-

nerable condition, and can be subject to violence or pressure,” Prosperi said.

They look at the traffickers not as a threat but as people who are trying to help them finish their journey, he added, and are very reluctant to tell anything about their treatment to aid workers or officials in Italy for fear that their plans to continue onward will be jeopardized.

Refugee crisis in Europe

More than a million migrants and refugees crossed into Europe in 2015, sparking a crisis as countries struggle to cope with the influx, and creating division in the EU over how best to deal with resettling people.

The symbolic milestone was passed on 21 December, the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) said, with the total for land and sea reaching more than 1,006,000.

The figure covers entries via six European Union nations - Greece, Bulgaria, Italy, Spain, Malta and Cyprus.

The vast majority arrived by sea but about 34,000 made their way over land via Turkey.

Winter has not stemmed the flow of people - with 54,518 people reaching Europe by sea since the start of 2016.

SFU Pipe Band brothers recognized by VPD for bravery

VANCOUVER – Two Langley brothers, both members of Simon Fraser University's world renowned Pipe Band and SFU students, have been awarded the Vancouver Police Board's highest civilian honour, the Certificate of Merit, for their roles in saving a life in August 2014.

The two are among a group of individuals being honoured by the VPD at a ceremony at the Roundhouse Community Centre.

Brian and Graham Haddon were recognized for their role in assisting at a motor vehicle accident in Vancouver.

At the time of the incident, the pipe band members (Brian, a piper and Graham, a drummer) were driving with their family along Marine Drive in morning rush hour on their way to the Vancouver airport – en route to the World Pipe Band Championships in Scotland, a trip that they make annually to compete with the SFUPB.

As they passed beneath the Knight Street overpass they heard horrific screams after a motorcyclist, waiting to merge onto Marine Drive, appeared to have been run over by an SUV coming down the ramp.

As they drove past they saw a woman, still straddling the motorbike, pinned under the front of the SUV.

The family pulled over and the brothers jumped out, running back into rush hour traffic and attempted to lift the SUV off the motorcyclist.

Together with their father and another motorist they were able to provide enough space between the woman on



(L-R) Vancouver Police Chief Constable Adam Palmer, Brian Haddon, Graham Haddon and Vancouver Police board member Sherri Magee.

the ground and the car that she could be slid out.

"The traffic was heavy and moving quickly at that time of the day and we were very concerned that all of the people involved at the scene had the potential to be injured by the passing cars being driven by distracted drivers, most looking at the rescue effort instead of the road – some even taking pictures with their phones as they drove past at 60+ kph," recalls mom Lori Haddon. "It was a very dangerous situation for everyone involved."

Haddon says during the rescue Brian sustained a burn to his calf from the exhaust pipe of the motorcycle while holding the SUV up in the air, but held on despite the pain, as he knew that the woman beneath could be injured further if the SUV moved lower and squeezed her body between the SUV and the road.

Once the motorcyclist was out of danger on the side of the road the Haddons rendered first aid to her until the Van-

couver Fire Department crew arrived. As soon as the VFD took over her care, the family got back on the road in time to make the flight to Edinburgh.

Brian, 20, is a third-year health sciences student and hopes to become a Vancouver police officer. Graham, 19, is in second year arts but is studying sciences and math, with the goal of pursuing a degree in biomedical physiology and kinesiology.

After he completes his degree at SFU he will train to become a respiratory therapist.

The brothers have been members of the SFUPB organization since 2002, when they were barely school-aged (seven and five years old), advancing through all the levels of the Robert Malcolm Memorial Pipe Band, the juvenile division of the SFUPB.

They won the World championship with the Grade 3 band in 2012 – and that same year, were promoted to the elite senior band.

Nicola Sturgeon criticises Scotland Bill funding deal

EDINBURGH – Scotland stands to lose billions of pounds over the next few years under Treasury proposals for devolving new powers, the first minister has warned.

The Scotland Bill, which the UK Government wants to enact before Holyrood elections in May, will devolve new powers over tax and welfare, as agreed after the Scottish independence referendum.

Alongside the discussions in parliament about the contents of the Scotland Bill, politicians in Westminster and Holyrood have been in lengthy talks over a "fiscal framework," laying out how much Scotland can borrow and how much it will receive annually from the Treasury.

Both sides say they are keen to find an agreement by mid-February.

David Bell, professor of economics at the University of Stirling, said the framework was "arguably more important" than the Scotland Bill.

The Scottish Government and councils are responsible for about 60 percent of public spending in Scotland. But they raise little revenue directly themselves, so their £30 billion of annual spending



NICOLA STURGEON

is mostly funded by grants from the Treasury.

The change in those grants from year to year is determined by the so-called Barnett Formula: a longstanding, contentious calculation which sets the grants to Scotland according to relative population shares.

Both London and Edinburgh are committed to keeping the Barnett Formula, which has historically resulted in a higher level of per capita public spending in Scotland.

But after further devolution, Scotland will be able to raise more money for itself and funding from London will fall.

The thorniest issue in the negotiations led by John Swinney, deputy first minister, and Greg Hands, chief secretary for the Treasury, concerns how the new grant should be calculated and adjusted from year to year.

The key area of disagreement is over

the extent to which Scotland could lose out if its population continues to grow more slowly than that of the rest of the UK. The SNP is worried that it would not be able to expand its tax base sufficiently to avoid losing out.

The nationalists want the adjustment to take account of Scotland's demographics. If grants were indexed according to per capita tax revenues, Scotland's finances would be protected from its weak population growth.

"The per capita model is one of the factors that is being discussed", said the SNP official. They said that "we want there to be an agreement but the first minister has made clear we won't sign anything that damages Scotland."

The two sides dispute whether the proposals on the table meet the principle of the post-referendum Smith Agreement that neither Scotland or England will be left worse off by devolution.

A spokesman for the UK Government said, "We are committed to agreeing to a fiscal framework which delivers the principles set out in the Smith Agreement. Smith was clear that Scotland should hold Scotland-specific risks, while the UK should hold UK-wide risks. We want to agree to a framework that is fair to Scotland and fair to the rest of the UK."

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MEMBERS of the Irish Heritage Society of Canada at the Irish seniors' Christmas luncheon – L-R [FRONT] George McDonnell with Tony and Gwen McCamley. [BACK] Teresa McDonnell.



L-R [FRONT] Sister Mary Kate, Gertrude and Peter Markin with Nicki Murphy. [BACK] Imelda Weafer, Brenda Warren, Pat Murphy, June Condon, Sister Catherine, and Pat Magee.



MEMBERS of The Irish Benevolent Society of B.C. at the Hilton Hotel Metrotown on December 10 – L-R [FRONT] Marie Morris, Sharon Brown. [BACK] Maura De Freitas.



L-R [FRONT] Mary Hatch, Anne Heaney, Barbara May, and Margaret Ward. [BACK] Paddy Hatch, Eamonn Ward, Bernard Ward, Molly Brown and Kevin Boggan.



(L-R) Alister Todd, Margaret Todd, Eileen Henriuville, with Joan and Tom McLoughlin.



L-R [FRONT] Bill and Marie Miller, Nuala Griffin, and Lilian Kelly. [BACK] Gerry Griffin, Doug Browne, Betty Allen, Margaret Browne, Eilis Courtney and Mike Kelly.



L-R [FRONT] Sam and Flora Young with Marie Drew. [BACK] Cynthia Young, Fran McMahon, and Bernadette Ray.



JIM SPEIRAN and Thomas O'Flynn proudly display their Vancouver Irish Sporting and Social Club ties. Both were elected Honorary Co-Presidents at the recent ISSC annual general meeting. They are pictured in December here at the Irish seniors' luncheon at the Hilton Hotel Metrotown in Burnaby, B.C.



ENTERTAINERS extraordinaire – Mary Brunner on fiddle with Michael Viens on guitar and vocals.



Irish seniors welcome the return of annual luncheon

By CATHOLINE BUTLER

VANCOUVER – On December 10 the Irish Heritage Society of Canada and the Irish Benevolent Society of B.C. co-hosted the Irish seniors' Christmas luncheon at the Hilton Hotel in Burnaby.

Every table in the banquet hall was filled to capacity while the room and tables resplendent with Christmas decor.

There was an air of excitement and anticipation as guests sat down to a delicious dinner of turkey and ham with all the Christmas trimmings.

Local Celtic musicians, Michael Viens and Mary Brunner provided excellent Celtic and Christmas songs and music before and during the luncheon.

One can't help noticing all the smiles and laughter among the seniors at these luncheons. It's obvious how much they enjoy meeting up with old friends to catch up on all the news. It also provides an opportunity to meet new friends.

As with every Irish senior luncheon, the microphone is turned over to the floor after the meal and the guests entertain their fellow countrymen with singing and dancing, storytelling and jokes...and there is no shortage.

These luncheons are like a big old-fashioned house party with some amazing talent in the room. There's never enough hours in the afternoon to hear all the songs and stories.

No doubt a lot of effort goes into organizing these events and a great deal of thanks goes to the board of directors of the Irish Heritage Society of Canada and the Irish Benevolent Society of B.C. for their work.

It is so gratifying to see such joy on the faces of our Irish seniors who have done so much to provide the infrastructure, clubs and organizations that we enjoy today.... it's one way of saying thanks and letting them know how special they really are.

This year the Irish Heritage Society has now submitted a new grant application to the Department of Foreign Affairs of the Irish Government to present another round of luncheons.

Watch *The Celtic Connection* for more news updates and dates of the next Irish seniors' luncheon.

View Google's virtual tour of Ireland's 1916 Easter Rising sites

DUBLIN – Google is taking Ireland's 1916 Easter Rising commemorations global with a virtual tour through the key sites and events of the rebellion.

Rare and previously unpublished material will be just a click away to millions worldwide with the new online exhibition, narrated by Hollywood star Colin Farrell.

Using Google technology, users can tour central Dublin locations as they are to-

day and through photos, stories and statements witness what happened there during the uprising 100 years ago.

The rising in Dublin was a seminal moment in Irish history which ultimately led to partition and the creation of both the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland.

Throughout this year there will be more than 40 state ceremonial events held as part of the Ireland 2016 Centenary Pro-

gramme, while events are also planned throughout the UK and further afield.

The virtual tour is part of a collaboration between Google, the National Library of Ireland, Military Archives, Glasnevin Cemetery Museum, the Abbey Theatre, the Royal Irish Academy and Trinity College Dublin.

The Dublin Rising 1916-2016 Tour can be accessed at <https://dublinrising.withgoogle.com/>

100th Anniversary of the Easter Rising 1916-2016 Commemoration Banquet

VANCOUVER – Organizers with the Vancouver Easter Rising Committee have announced the guest speaker for the 1916 Commemoration Banquet.

Chris MacManus of the Sligo/Leitrim Constituency in Ireland will be the honoured guest at the banquet on April 23 at the Hilton Hotel Metrotown in Burnaby.

This spectacular gala banquet evening to commemorate the 100th anniversary of Ireland's 1916 Easter Rebellion, includes music and entertainment with performances by Blackthorn, Pat Chessell, Jimmy Cole, Rebecca Blair, (harpist), and the De Danann Irish Dancers.

The 1916 Easter Rising, a key moment on Ireland's path to independence. This historic anniversary will be marked in Ireland and throughout the world as a major occasion with an extensive programme of events.

A year-long Easter Rising commemorative programme with the emphasis on remembrance and reconciliation has been unveiled by the Government of Ireland.

There is also a substantial international dimension to the Rising commemorations with Irish diaspora around the world.



Ray Bassett, the Ambassador of Ireland to Canada has said, "The events of 1916 had a seminal effect on the long road to an independent State in Ireland.

"Therefore, this historic anniversary will be marked in Ireland and throughout the world as a major occasion. Those of us who are of an age, can remember vividly the commemorations in 1966 for the 50th anniversary.

"From the outset, I want to make it very clear that the commemoration of 1916 does not belong to any group, individual or even the Irish State. It is part of our common heritage.

"Therefore here in Canada, I am seeking to promote the widest community participation. The commemoration here will, in the main, be decentralised and local.

"We are requesting all organisations to include the commemoration in their calendar of events for 2016. Some organisations have already indicated to us that it will be an intrinsic element in their 2016 programme. I would greatly encourage this approach.

"Against that background, I would envisage a year-long list of activities, by necessity these will likely peak around Saint Patrick's Day and even more especially around 23 April, the actual date of the Rising."

For tickets and information about the 1916-2016 Commemoration Banquet at the Hilton Hotel Metrotown in Burnaby on Saturday, April 23, call Bernard Ward at (604) 218-7524 or George McDonnell at (604) 948-2885.



Women's Role in 1916 Rising Examined at free lecture at SFU

By ITA KANE-WILSON

VANCOUVER – Ireland's commemoration of the centenary of the 1916 Easter Rising will be marked in Vancouver by a series of community events throughout the month of April.

For the Irish Women's Network of BC, the role of women in the Easter Rising is something they wanted to acknowledge and provide a platform for discussion.

In collaboration with professors Willeen Keough and Dara Culhane from the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences at Simon Fraser University, the IWN is very pleased to announce a free public lecture followed by a reception and community gathering on April 7, 2016 at 7 PM in the Segal Rooms, SFU Harbour Centre, 515 West Hastings Street.

The talk by Dr. Mary McAuliffe is entitled: 'Realists and Idealists: Women of the Easter Rising, 1916'.

Almost 300 women, either members of Cumann na mBan or the Irish Citizen Army, participated in the Easter Rising. Who were these women and what motivated them to become involved in a violent uprising?

IRISH WOMEN'S NETWORK OF BC



By researching their involvement in the various nationalist, feminist and socialist movements of the first decades of the Twentieth Century, we can chart their 'routes' to revolution.

Understanding the motivations of politics, class and gender allows the more nuanced, balanced, complex histories of the Rising to emerge.

Dr. Mary McAuliffe is a lecturer in Women's Studies at University College Dublin. She is a specialist in women's radicalism in early Twentieth Century Ireland and has published her work widely in four books, seven edited/co-edited books, and numerous scholarly journals.

She was also co-producer/historical consultant/script-writer for the documentary *Cumann na mBan 100* (Broadcasting Authority of Ireland) and a key contributor to Dublin's artistic and legacy project titled *1916: Richmond Barracks*.

On the eve of her visit to Vancouver, she and co-author Liz Gillis will launch a new book with Four Courts entitled *Realists and Idealists: 77 Women of the Easter Rising*.

The IWN wishes to sincerely thank all the sponsors involved including the SFU Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences Dean Speaker's Fund, the Embassy of Ireland, Ottawa, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, SFU, Dept. of History, SFU Dept. of Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies, SFU and Cafe Minerva.

To register for the event, please go to: <http://websurvey.sfu.ca/survey/231703936>.

To check out other commemorative events happening across Canada, go to the Embassy of Ireland's website to find out more at: www.dfa.ie/irish-embassy/canada/news-and-events/2015/commemorations-in-canada.

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IRISH NEWCOMERS INFORMATION AND NETWORKING SEMINAR

When: Saturday, March 5, 2pm – 5pm

Where: BCIT Downtown campus, 555 Seymour St, Vancouver

Free seminar for all Irish Newcomers; learn from a HR consultant about job hunting, making your Irish CV into a Canadian resume, information interviews and tips for finding a job. Network with established members of the Irish community; make new friends and pick up other useful tips about settling in Vancouver.

Social gathering afterwards (venue TBA).

To register for this free seminar, go to:
www.surveymonkey.com/r/mar5seminar

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THE Seton House of Prayer is operated under the auspices of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Nelson, B.C. This year Okanagan Irish Society will participate in a fundraising Celtic concert to support this peaceful ecumenical retreat centre.

Seton House of Prayer: A peaceful retreat house for those of all faiths

KELOWNA, B.C. – Each year in the City of Kelowna there is an annual fundraiser in aid of Seton House of Prayer, a beautifully located retreat centre in the hills above the Upper Mission area of Kelowna.

This wonderful facility is operated under the auspices of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Nelson. Their outreach is ecumenical.

As a result, the staff of the retreat centre welcome many individuals and groups from various faith communities and service groups to spend a few hours, a day or a weekend in an atmosphere of peace and silent reflection while enjoying the beauty of nature.

The annual fundraiser for Seton House this year is a theatre production.

On April 21, Ceol na hEireann (Music of Ireland) of the Okanagan Irish Society, together with dancers from the Blakey Okanagan School of Irish Dance, some of the diocesan priests, members of the Kelowna Pipe Band and the staff of Seton House are putting on a Celtic concert at the Kelowna

Community Theatre on Water Street in Kelowna.

All are donating their time and talent to Seton House, with the result that all funds raised from this venture will go to Seton House of Prayer.

Doors to the foyer of the theatre will open at 6 PM, doors into the theatre will open at 6:30 PM and the concert will begin at 7 PM. This will be an evening of great live entertainment while a silent auction will be conducted in the foyer of the theatre ahead of the concert and during the intermission.

Tickets are \$25 each and can be purchased from any member of the Ceol na hEireann band, all parish offices in the Kelowna area, Loaves and Fishes downtown Kelowna and at the door of the theatre the night of the concert.

Everyone is invited to support this worthy venture. Seton House of Prayer is there for all, when we need a quiet place, a place of refuge, a place where we can quite openly say: "Thank you God."

For further information about the theatre concert, call Ethna Tutt at (778) 480-4996. For further information about Seton House of Prayer, call Donna at (250) 764-4333.



Seton House also welcomes those who come from beyond the diocese of Nelson who wish to visit for a few hours or a few days. Staff have tried to create an atmosphere of prayer and devotion at Seton House and everyone is encouraged to experience the quiet of this holy ground for an hour, a day, a weekend or longer. Guests can walk the outside Way of the Cross; spend time with Mary in Mary's Grove; walk the Labyrinth; spend time with the Blessed Sacrament in St. Joseph's Chapel. Pictured above is a sculpture of St. Francis of Assisi, the patron saint of animals.

1986-2016: Celebrating 30 years of Irish Culture in Calgary



ALGARY – Martin Cowman, a founding member of the Irish Cultural Society recently shared some early memories of the club which celebrates its 30th anniversary this year.

In the early 1980s a group of Irish immigrants decided that Calgary, as a burgeoning metropolis, was in need of a society which would reflect the cultural uniqueness of their backgrounds.

As in most North American cities there had been attempts to establish an Irish club in Calgary, all of which had failed, probably for a lack of focus on true Irish culture – enough said!

The 1980s group, spearheaded by a man whose vision has now come to fruition, Dan Bolger, formalized the Irish Cultural Society.

The society was incorporated under the Alberta Consumer & Corporate Affairs Department on February 10, 1986. During the period 1986 to 1990, the founding members met in each other's homes, and work bees were set up for newsletter mail-outs.

A more formal strategy session was held in a meeting room in the Carriage House Hotel on Macleod Trail, at which an interim board of directors was elected.

A decision was made at one of these meetings to acquire a more permanent facility for the pursuit of the objectives of the proposed society.

Cowman said, "Since I was then an accredited real estate appraiser (AACI), my knowledge of available properties throughout the city was sought."

He describes how the present location of the Irish Cultural Society clubhouse was established in northwest Calgary.

"After some research I discovered a Parks Department storage depot, located at 6452 - 35 Avenue NW which was in a state of disrepair at the time.

"After further investigation, I discovered that because of its condition and historical importance to Bowness, the community was prepared to endorse, in principle, a leasing arrangement which would see the property improved to acceptable community standards.



MARTIN COWMAN

"More importantly the building was considered surplus to the Parks Department Inventory. After discussions with the appropriate city departments and the ward alderman, a letter of intent to lease the property was signed and was later formalized by a lease agreement executed by the Irish Cultural Society and the City of Calgary."

The records are now available for research at Calgary City Hall Archives.

Cowman continued, "An amusing sidebar to the above is that at the time the deal was sealed, the Hell's Angels clubhouse was in the next block.

"This was considered an added security for the centre by some Irish cynics, as the clubhouse was under almost constant surveillance by the police department!"



BUNRATTY HALL at the home of the Irish Cultural Society in Bowness, NW Calgary, set up for a banquet. Over \$500,000 was raised by volunteer-driven bingos to help with renovations and upgrades.

With the premises secured, renovations of the newly-leased building were undertaken. To bring it up to occupancy standards major interior improvements were necessary, including new flooring, cladding, interior wall replacements, plumbing, etc.

"The cost for upgrading of the building was funded by volunteer-driven bingo proceeds. I was honoured to be bingo director at that time, and over a four-year period we raised \$500,000.

"This money was spent on renovations to give us the great centre we enjoy today. As a personal observation, our success has been due to a commitment by the members to work together in a true spirit of cooperation and respect for each other and the Bowness community."

Martin says a solid contingent of volunteers helped raise the funds to renovate the cultural centre with a least 15 to 20 members at every Saturday bingo night.

"It goes without saying that grant monies received over the years from the Alberta Provincial Government and the City of Calgary were spent judiciously and helped immeasurably in upgrading the Irish cultural centre."

The Irish Cultural Society has been going strong for 30 years now, and this year will host an extra-special celebration at this year's Green Tie Affair on March 12. Tickets available at: www.eventbrite.ca/e/the-green-tie-affair-tickets, or e-mail: calgaryics@gmail.com.

NOVENAS

NOVENA TO THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

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

– PKM, MJ, CC, CK, ED, RD, LM

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

NOVENA TO ST. ANTHONY

O Holy St. Anthony, gentlest of Saints, your love for God and charity for his creatures, made you worthy, when on earth, to possess miraculous powers. Encouraged by this thought, I implore you to obtain for me (request). O gentle and loving St. Anthony, whose heart was ever full of human sympathy, whisper my petition into the ears of the sweet Infant Jesus, who loved to be folded in your arms; and the gratitude of my heart will ever be yours. Amen. – SVS

NOVENA TO ST. CLARE

God of mercy you inspired Saint Clare with the love of poverty. By the help of her prayers may we follow Christ in poverty of spirit and come to the joyful vision of your glory in the Kingdom of Heaven. We ask this through Our Lord Jesus Christ, Your Son, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen. – SVS



FEBRUARY PRAYER FOR PROTECTION

Watch, O Lord, with those who wake, or watch, or weep tonight, and give Your angels and saints charge over those who sleep. Tend Your sick ones, O Lord Christ. Rest Your weary ones. Bless Your dying ones. Soothe Your suffering ones. Pity Your afflicted ones. Shield Your joyous ones, and all for Your love's sake. Amen.

Learn to play one of Ireland's National Games

By COLIN O'FLYNN

VANCOUVER – For the first time ever, the JP Ryan's Club will be running a hurling and camogie academy for beginners who are interested in learning the skills of Ireland's national sport.

The club is looking for men and women over the age of 18 to participate in the six week program, which will teach you the basics of the sport.

There will be a total of 12 practice sessions, each session will concentrate on a different core skill but will progress in a manner that will require the skills previously learned to carry out the new skill of the evening.

Coaching will be hands on and every player will receive the attention he/she needs to master the new skills.

Training will be run twice a week for six weeks beginning in the third week of March to the end of April. At this point, the regular hurling and camogie season will commence for anyone who wants to continue playing for the summer.

Equipment will be provided for the six week program for rent with the option of purchasing outright also.

Please visit the JP Ryan Club website at www.jprianshurlingacademy.com for costs, locations and date/times. You can also contact us on info@jprianshurlingacademy.com or visit Facebook J P. Ryan's Hurling Academy Vancouver.

ABOUT THE ACADEMY

Hurling and camogie are native Irish sports that have been played for more than 3,000 years and hurling is considered to be the fastest field sport in the world.

JP Ryan's Hurling & Camogie club has shown great growth within the Irish community in Vancouver since its in-



THE JOSEPH P RYANS women's camogie team won the 2015 North American Intermediate Camogie Championship Cup at the championships in Chicago last year.



THE NORTH AMERICAN Junior A Hurling Champions 2014, Vancouver's Joseph P Ryans men's hurling team. They took the cup in Boston, Massachusetts where 120 teams, and 2,500 players competed for North American bragging rights in several grades of men's and ladies Gaelic football, hurling, and camogie.

ception, but it is time to expand the game of hurling further than this.

We believe that everybody should have the opportunity to take part in our game and enjoy it as we do!

The Academy was created with the intention of achieving the following goals;

1. To Increase the number of people playing hurling in Vancouver
2. To give new hurlers the basic knowledge and skills of the game
3. To build a sustainable core group of permanent Hurlers that can contribute towards creating an enjoyable and competitive local league in the near future.

Two informative and fun events for Irish in Vancouver

VANCOUVER – It's a lovely night for a quiz and Thursday, February 18 will be just that so get yourselves down to Rainier Provisions, 2 West Cordova, Vancouver by 8 PM for a table quiz.

Limited spaces available so don't delay. \$10 per person; 4 people per table. Great prizes. Funds raised will be used in support of Irish in Vancouver so come out and support yourselves. RSVP to theirishinvancouver@gmail.com.

IRISH IN VANCOUVER



Irish Newcomers: Come to a free information and networking seminar on Saturday, March 5. Sponsored by the

Irish Government's Emigrant Support Program, this seminar comes highly recommended by previous attendees as extremely informative and helpful with updating your resume, job searching, information interviews and lots more.

Established Irish community members are encouraged to come along to welcome newcomers and share their experience. Registration important — www.surveymonkey.com/r/Mar5seminar.

Ireland/Canada driver license exchange agreed

DUBLIN – Irish driving licences will be recognised in Newfoundland and Labrador in Canada, and their licences recognised here, under a new deal reached between the two governments.

Previously, Irish people moving there had to register as a learner and take another test because their Irish licence wasn't recognised and they couldn't swap it for a local licence.

The lack of recognition was also a hindrance for Irish people returning to Ireland, if they had done their driving test in Canada's most easterly province.

Under the agreement holders of a full Irish driving licence

who take up residence in Newfoundland and Labrador will be able to automatically exchange their licence for a local one without having to re-sit their test.

It follows similar agreements reached between Ireland and Ontario in 2014, and Manitoba in 2015.

Three other Canadian provinces – New Brunswick, Saskatchewan and British Columbia – unilaterally exchange local licences for Irish licences. But there is still no agreement in place for the provinces of Alberta, Nova Scotia, Quebec or Prince Edward Island.

Road Safety Authority is continuing to work with the other Canadian provinces to secure similar agreements.

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Hume: From Politics to History

THE VIEW FROM IRELAND



By
MAURICE FITZPATRICK

LAST November John Hume's wife, Pat Hume, appeared on Miriam O'Callaghan's *Sunday with Miriam* programme, on RTE Radio 1, to speak about her husband in advance of the launch of a book on his life and work.

Of all the issues covered in the conversation, the one that caused most comment in Ireland related to John Hume's health condition.

He has, Pat Hume explained, been suffering from dementia for many years and his memory has now deteriorated very considerably. Pat Hume praised the people of Derry City for their compassion and support for her husband: taxi drivers who see him wandering in the streets stop and ensure that he gets home safely.

Derry, she stated, is a dementia friendly city. The public outpouring of sympathy for Hume's health, however, is more a reflection of Ireland's view of Hume than the fact that he suffers from a relatively common affliction.

Hume is a figure of rare stature in Ireland, both North and South. In the North, he is inevitably associated with the party he co-founded, the SDLP (Social Democratic Labour Party), and seen as the dominant nationalist political leader of the latter part of the twentieth century, albeit one who was also largely accepted by unionists as a sane and sensible voice throughout his career.

In the South, Hume was for four decades an enormously authoritative political figure. National newspapers, the national broadcaster and successive governments looked to Hume far more than to anyone else as a touchstone for Northern affairs. An interpreter and educator, Hume's authority on the Northern Irish crisis outstripped that of anyone else on the island.

It is fitting, given his older age and the indebtedness that Irish people feel towards Hume, that an insightful and wide-ranging collection of essays on Hume should issue just now.

Editors of *John Hume: Irish Peacemaker*, Sean Farren and Denis Haughey, assembled an illustrious group of politicians, diplomats and academics to assess John Hume's work and legacy in this book.

President Bill Clinton, in his Foreword to this book, praises "John's unwavering willingness to elevate principle and peace over person and party."

Hume belongs to that rare species of politician who create a mandate based on conviction rather than the impulse



JOHN HUME, former leader of the SDLP, pictured in his home city of Derry.



of self-advancement. It is consistent therefore that when the moment came to "bring the IRA in from the cold" he was willing to do so even at great expense to his party electorally.

Along with the Ulster Unionist Party, the centrist parties' hold in the North hollowed out in the wake of the Good Friday Agreement (1998) and more especially after the St. Andrew's Agreement (2006).

Those resolutely opposed to compromise and power-sharing for decades, did just that when the prospect of holding power in their own hands presented itself.

For a sweep of clearheaded analysis of the Troubles and the Peace Process, Sean O hUiginn's chapter is outstanding.

A former Irish Ambassador to the USA, he touches on the importance of U.S. involvement in this book; Nancy Soderberg's chapter develops this theme.

Soderberg staffed Irish affairs for President Clinton, as she had done for Senator Ted Kennedy before.

She traces U.S. Congressional support for an equitable agreement in the North in tandem with the support of the White House, from President Jimmy Carter's 1977 promise of support through to the presidency of Bill Clinton.

Full awareness of the work that legislators did, and the uninterrupted commitment of Speaker Tip O'Neill in particular, is unfortunately all too often airbrushed out of history now, supplanted by a simplistic reading of the Peace Process as having begun with the "Adams visa (1994)."

Soderberg's historical markers serve as useful correctives against that perspective.

Amid the rostrum of these well qualified commentators on Hume, it may be churlish to identify the absence of other contributors, particularly since all of the dimensions of Hume's career and achievement are certainly impossible to fully encompass in one volume.

Still, the testimony of his deputy leader during the 1980s and 1990s, Seamus Mallon, could have given this book an added clarity.

Mallon's commentary on Hume in recent years has been critical of his "nar-

rowness" and "selfishness."

Does Mallon hold Hume responsible for the increasing marginalisation of the SDLP in Northern Irish affairs?

Mallon's criticisms aside, he continues to fulsomely acknowledge Hume's extraordinary capacity and achievement. In their implacable opposition to violence and their commitment to constitutional politics, they always remained united.

This book ends with a chapter by Pat Hume detailing the human and familial side of her husband.

Mother to his five children, Pat Hume held down a job as a teacher and yet also managed to be her husband's political manager all her life. (She generously acknowledges the support of friends, family and neighbours in achieving that balancing act).

She also credits astute police work which alerted her to the worst attacks and threats to her home: it was repeatedly bombed, the threat that members of her family could be kidnapped or harmed was constant, and occasionally the family had to evacuate.

When her health started to suffer in the late 1980s as a consequence of this harassment, a weekend house in Donegal became a haven from the chaos of Derry and a succour to the family.

In Donegal, after a life of extreme stress, international travel and an exhausting schedule, John Hume now enjoys peace.

As Auden wrote of Melville: "Towards the end he sailed into an extraordinary mildness, and anchored in his home and reached his wife. And rode within the harbour of her hand..."

Hume is a familiar figure in local restaurants and bars and it is not unknown for him to walk into a restaurant – either in Donegal and Derry – and for everyone to stand up.

Historical figures emerge more slowly than political ones, but when they do their permanence is far more secure.

Hume's political career concluded more than a decade ago and the delicate shift towards seeing his place in Irish history as distinct from his presence within the contemporary political landscape will become more pronounced as time passes.

This book plays an admirable part in the ordering and chronicling of Hume's role in Irish history. Time itself will do the rest.

[*John Hume: Irish Peacemaker*, Edited by Sean Farren and Denis Haughey is published by Four Courts Press.]



FOUR former Anglo Irish Bank executives are on trial accused of conspiring to mislead existing and potential investors, lenders and depositors.

Anglo Irish Bank former execs stand trial

DUBLIN – The trial of four former executives of Anglo Irish Bank and Irish Life & Permanent got underway before an enlarged jury of 15 members on Monday, January 18.

The case is expected to last up to 20 weeks and all four executives deny attempting to mislead investors over value of deposits.

The defendants are former Anglo finance director Willie McAteer (65) with an address at Greenrath, Co. Tipperary; John Bowe (52) from Glasnevin in Dublin, who was head of capital markets at the bank; Denis Casey (56) from Raheny, Dublin who was chief executive of IL&P and Peter Fitzpatrick (63) from Malahide, Dublin who was IL&P's former director of finance.

They are charged with conspiring to create the false impression to prospective investors that deposits in Anglo Irish Bank were approximately 7.2 billion euro larger than they really were in the year ending September 30, 2008. All have pleaded not guilty.

A list of nearly 100 witnesses was read out including the names of at least 14 members of the Garda Bureau of Fraud Investigation, employees from Morgan Stanley, the Central Bank, Credit Suisse and former employees of Anglo and IL&P.

It is alleged that this conspiracy was done with the intention "to induce existing and potential depositors, lenders and depositors to Anglo to make decisions concerning their deposits, investments or loans on the assumption that deposits from non-bank entities were much larger than they really were."

In his opening address to the jury, prosecution

counsel, Paul O'Higgins SC, said the case concerned events which allegedly occurred between March 1 and September 30, 2008, when Anglo provided its end of year accounts.

O'Higgins claimed that in the days before September 30, 2008, the accused conspired to make financial transactions from Anglo to Irish Life & Permanent, involving Irish Life Assurance, and then bank to Anglo, so as to appear customer deposits were greater than they were. He said these customer deposits were "actually funded indirectly by Anglo."

O'Higgins said that at some time on September 29, 2008 Anglo discovered it had no more money to keep things moving so it stops for a period as it could not access money.

Between September 29 and September 30, "the money does the rounds six more times" so that by September 30 the "reporting snapshot" gave the totally false impression of customer deposits of 7.2 billion euro, he claimed.

O'Higgins said it is alleged that Fitzpatrick and McAteer authorised these transactions, Bowe "knowingly authorised and implemented" them and Casey authorised them, with the purpose of "bolstering the Anglo customer deposit base" and leaving Anglo "looking a lot healthier" than it otherwise was.

He said that the whole purpose of the scheme, was to "produce the temporary illusion that non-bank deposits had been made to Anglo in a massive, massive sum."

He claimed this was to disguise the reality that "non-bank deposits were declining at a rate that Anglo feared would alarm those who viewed Anglo as a going concern."

The centre of Dublin is getting ready for a major change

DUBLIN – A new vision of what a serious overhaul of College Green might look like has been laid out by Dublin City Council.

The plan – which has been in the works since 2014 – will see private cars completely removed from the area.

Some of the proposals were put forward last year as part of the Dublin City Centre Transport study, a joint publication between Dublin City Council and the National Transport Authority.

At a meeting of the council, specific details of the appearance of the new

square and access for vehicles were discussed.

Dublin City Council's head of technical services Brendan O'Brien gave an outline of the shape that the area will take.

The new pedestrianized area will cover a large area in front of the Bank of Ireland building at the top of Dame Street.

Vehicles will still have access along the front of Trinity College – but these will be restricted to buses, cyclists, and possibly taxis.

"This sounds the death knell for the private cars in College Green," said Councillor Paddy McCartan, going on to note that the move had the broad support of

the council.

Along with the large area on Dame Street, the current plans will also see Suffolk Street pedestrianised, with access restricted to loading before 11 AM – rules similar to the ones already in place on Grafton Street.

A number of councillors questioned whether Bank of Ireland would be willing to remove railings from the front of its building as part of the project.

City architect Ali Grehan said that a design team will be brought in to assist with the project, and that the changes will be "very sympathetic" to the historical buildings in the area.

Dublin boxing weigh-in shooting: Continuity IRA claim responsibility

DUBLIN – Fans attending a weigh-in ceremony for a Dublin boxing event fled in terror as a group of gunmen opened fire inside the Regency Hotel on Friday, February 5.

Mel Christle, president of the Boxing Union of Ireland, said the gunfire started within seconds of the final weigh-in ceremony.

Irish police, An Garda Síochán, now believe at least six people were involved in a targeted attack in which one man was killed.

The man who died was named as David Byrne (33), from Raleigh Square in Crumlin in the south of the city.

Two other men were injured. One has since checked himself out of hospital while the other who was shot in the chest remains in serious condition.

Police said three of those involved in the attack wore police-style SWAT team uniforms.

Those dressed in the police uniforms were armed with assault rifles.

Dissident republicans have now claimed they carried out the shooting. The Continuity IRA (CIRA) said it also plans to carry out further attacks “on drug dealers and criminals.”

Irish police said they were “keeping an open mind in relation to the criminal groups involved.”

Detectives have said it is too early to specify a motive but there is speculation that the attack could reflect tensions within Ireland’s top cocaine-smuggling gang.

The CIRA spokesman claimed Byrne was targeted because he had been involved in the killing of Alan Ryan in Dublin four years ago.

Ryan (32) was a leading member of another dissident republican group, the Real IRA. He was shot dead in September 2012.

Initial suspicion immediately fell on a deadly criminal feud involving the family of the boxer headlining Saturday’s planned fight, Jamie Kavanagh.

The 25-year-old Dubliner, who confirmed via Twitter that he was unhurt in the incident, was scheduled to contest the vacant WBO European lightweight title.

It was to be his first fight in Dublin since the gangland killings of his father, Gerard, and uncle Paul, both of whom were henchmen in the drug-smuggling empire of Christy Kinahan.

Gerard Kavanagh was gunned down inside an Irish bar in Spain’s Costa del Sol in September 2014.

Paul Kavanagh was shot to death behind the wheel of his parked car in Dublin in March 2015.

Both men were suspected of pocketing money being collected from Dublin dealers on behalf of Kinahan’s Spain-based cocaine empire.

The Kinahan cartel is considered the most powerful drugs importation mob in the history of the State, which some estimate could be worth up to one billion euro.

Christy Kinahan (59) is the leader of the cartel but is rarely in Ireland, as he spends most of his time in his six million euro luxury villa on the Spanish coast.

Tensions remain high in Ireland as emergency services attended the scene of a further attack on the evening of Monday, February 8, where a man was shot dead in what is believed to be a reprisal attack.

Named locally as Eddie Hutch, the brother of gangster Gerry ‘The Monk’ Hutch, he was reportedly shot nine times after two gunmen burst into his home in Dublin’s north inner city.

Edward Sr. worked as a taxi driver and was not considered to be a violent criminal, instead being linked to money-laundering schemes for his brother.

An Garda Síochán have set up a number of checkpoints in a city-wide operation to prevent a further escalation of the violence.



THE Regency Hotel was the scene of a shooting in Dublin where one person was killed and a number of others injured. Gunmen opened fire at the hotel on February 5 during a weigh-in for WBO European lightweight fight.



EDDIE HUTCH Senior [pictured left], with his son Ross, who won 33,000 euros on RTE’s Winning Streak last year on behalf of his brother Eddie Junior. Eddie was shot dead by two gunmen at his home in Dublin on the evening of February 8 in what is believed to be reprisal for the earlier killing of David Byrne at the boxing weigh-in on Friday.

Taoiseach announces general election date in a tweet

DUBLIN – The opening volleys have been fired in what will be one of the Republic’s shortest ever general election campaigns.

Taoiseach Enda Kenny has announced on Twitter that the poll will be held on February 26.

The taoiseach told the parliament he was seeking its dissolution but only revealed the date of the poll in a video message on the social networking site.

Kenny made the announcement before travelling to President Michael D. Higgins’ official residence, Aras an Uachtaráin in Dublin, to formally ask him to dissolve the 31st Dail.

The new Dail, or lower house of parliament, will sit again on March 10 after what will be one of the shortest general election campaigns in Irish history.

In his video message, Kenny fired the opening salvo of the three-week campaign by stating Ireland was on the verge of collapse and its international reputation was in tatters when he came to power five years ago.

He said, “Our public finances are back on track, the economy is growing again – faster than any country in the EU – 135,000 more people are back at work, and there is no more bailout, no more troika and no more dead banks. Ireland is now clearly moving in the right direction.”

Kenny’s centre-right Fine Gael party and his junior coalition partners Labour hope to return to power, with a key campaign message being stability during economic recovery.

Labour leader and tanaiste (deputy prime minister) Joan Burton said the coalition was a “very united” government that had turned the country around.

“The real test of any government is whether they leave the country in a better place and I will say with the Fine Gael-Labour Government we have definitely done that,” she said.

Fianna Fail leader Micheal Martin attacked the taoiseach for not allowing anyone else to speak in the Dail before its dissolution, saying he had hoped to

pay tribute to veteran party colleagues not seeking re-election.

“I thought it was a shabby end to a shabby government,” he said. “I presumed I would get that opportunity, but people saw the taoiseach made a speech and ran out of the house – it just didn’t look well in terms of the national parliament conducting its business.”

Sinn Féin leader Gerry Adams also criticised the taoiseach’s closing of parliament as a “pathetic end to a pathetic government.”

Mark Zuckerberg announces new Facebook facility for Ireland

DUBLIN – Facebook is building a new 200 million euro data centre in Clonee, Co. Meath.

Two thousand construction jobs will be created and it is expected around 150 jobs will be announced on a long-term basis once the centre is operational by the start of 2018 at the latest.

Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg says it will be one of the most advanced and energy efficient data centres in the world. He also said they are glad to be investing further in Ireland and the community in Clonee.

Clonee Data Center will feature the latest server, storage and network designs developed through the Open Compute Project, and will be powered by 100 per cent renewable energy.

In a Facebook post, Zuckerberg said, “One interesting engineering detail is that we’re cooling the facility with outdoor air, but because this is near the Irish Sea we’ll be using an indirect air cooling process to filter the salt from the air.

“I’m proud to share that Facebook’s sixth data center is now under construction in Clonee, Ireland. This will be our second European data center, after Luleå in Sweden.”



ENDA KENNY made his election announcement in Dublin on February 3.



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PHOTO: Kerry Brown.

SAOIRSE RONAN as "Eilis" in *Brooklyn*. The film adaptation of Colm Tóibín's internationally celebrated novel is now out in theatres.

An Irish emigrant story played with a charming sweetness and sensitivity

Those of us who are immigrants and particularly the wave of immigrants who left Ireland in the Fifties and Sixties should not miss seeing the wonderful evocative movie *Brooklyn*.

This was the Ireland I was born into and the Ireland I left in the Sixties. The old Ireland – I often say I was born in the Eighteenth Century and was hurled into the Twenty-First Century.

To return to the movie, there was hardly a word or scene I did not relate to, I had tears streaming down my face from nostalgia mostly and gratitude that the director John Crowley hit the nail on the head.

I will not give the story line away because I really want everyone to see this movie but I do want talk about those times. The leading part – Eilis – was played by the gorgeous young actress Saoirse Ronan.

Watching the movie I felt Eilis' dissatisfaction and frustration with her life, I felt she was me. The feelings I had back then were still with me – of not accepting the dead end job, the dead end social life and the predictability of it all.

I knew I would leave Ireland, there was so much I hated about those times and on the other hand there was the closeness of a large family and good friends.

Those Fifties sexless clothes, the dreadful little hats, particularly the hat Eilis' mother wore and the modesty.

We were modest, I was just freshly out of boarding school, where we had to drape our dressing gown over our shoulders and try and wash our arm pits.

I loved the bathing suit scenes and changing on the beach – we all did it back then. Our family had the same contraption of two big towels stitched together.

Oh boy, do I remember those rugby dances – the hope that we might meet some tall dark and handsome man and the humiliation of being the wallflower.

I think I spent more time escaping into the ladies to wait until the next dance.

The fact that I went week after week, paid my five shillings knowing the chances were very high I would be a

wallflower but as they say *hope springs eternal*. We all thought those rugby fellas were full of themselves but we fancied them all the same.

Another of my favourite scenes was the parish dance for the homeless lonely men at Christmas. It was genius and that lovely side of Ireland.

It managed to convey caring and understanding yet the sadness of being homeless and the hardship these men endured.

It was so nice to cast a good parish priest – an understanding man who looked after his flock.

The men in the scene at the dinner had such wonderful craggy faces, it was so poignant to see their enjoyment of the moment and of being together.

The letters to and from home, it was a weekly high point getting letters and reading the news from home.

The yearly phone call – how could one compare those distant times before Skype and cheap phones and the fact that now everyone has a phone.

The awkwardness of youth, the effort to make small talk – this was the Ireland where confidence was not encourage or fostered – we all remember the phase – she is too big for her boots – pride comes before a fall etc. etc.

So, of course, knowing your place and staying there was expected. We all remember the snobbery and class distinction in small towns.

The hierarchy being the solicitor, the doctor and further down the line the small business owners, etc. I was a farmer's daughter, so I think that was near the bottom. Farming back then was sheer drudgery.

Coming of age and first love, it was certainly a far cry from our present time. The lovely innocence of youth combined with shyness and stoic courage – it was all there in that movie – go and see it.

Submitted by Maurice Fitzpatrick who was educated at Trinity College Dublin and holds graduate degrees from Ireland and Japan. He wrote and co-produced the RTE/BBC documentary film *The Boys of St. Columb's* and is also author of a book entitled *The Boys of St. Columb's*. He is a lecturer at the University of Cologne and he writes a column on Irish affairs.

Middle East and eastern Europe the origin of Irish DNA

DUBLIN – Genome analysis shows mass migration of Stone Age farmers from Fertile Crescent and Bronze Age settlers from eastern Europe was the foundation of Celtic population.

Just over 5,000 years ago, there lived an Irish farmer with black hair and dark eyes. Her DNA spoke of ancestors mostly Middle Eastern in origin, and she would have looked more like a southern European woman than a fair-haired Irish woman.

But just 1,000 years later, her world was full of blue-eyed easterners. This quick transition to Ireland as we know it, genetically speaking, is likely due to a massive migration that occurred sometime during those 1,000 years.

The evidence comes from a study published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, where geneticists from Trinity College Dublin and archaeologists from Queen's University Belfast sequenced the genomes of four ancient citizens of Ireland to unlock the secrets of their origins.

Ireland is particularly interesting to geneticists, because it seems like a place where many ancient peoples may have converged.

For starters, the pre-historic residents there showed a smooth transition from hunting and gathering to farming, and then from stone to metal working.

It's likely that changes like these were driven by newcomers with new ideas, but we can't assume that the original inhabitants of Ireland didn't just come up with these life changes on their own.

But even the genes of the modern Irish hint at a melting-pot past. They have some of the highest levels of certain genetic mutations, including the one that allows adult humans to tolerate dairy.

Several mutations that promote dangerous illnesses, like hemochromatosis (excessive iron retention) and cystic fibrosis are also more prevalent than they are elsewhere in the global population.

Study author Dan Bradley, professor of population genetics at Trinity College Dublin, explained that recent technological and methodological advances in ancient DNA analysis allowed his team to produce full genomes for the four skeletons used in their research.

They were surprised to see how different the Neolithic woman, who was found in Belfast in 1855 and lived over 5,000 years ago, was from the three male skeletons analyzed, who were found off of Rathlin Island in 2006.

With just 1,000 years separating them, their genomes shouldn't have looked so strikingly different – which suggests that some major migration really must have occurred.

"It was a surprise to see several genetic elements typical of the modern Irish genome, both of interesting genes but also of more anonymous DNA fragments, appearing in the Bronze Age specimens," Bradley said of the more recent skeletons.

"These genomes when taken as a whole are more like modern Irish, Scottish and

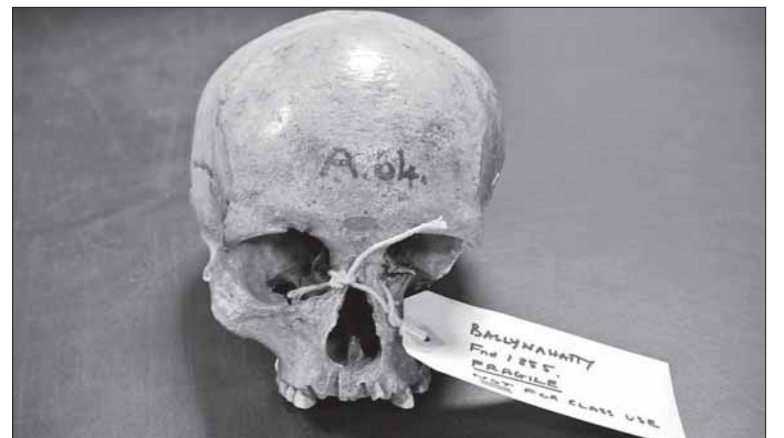


PHOTO: Daniel Bradley, Trinity College Dublin

EXCAVATED near Belfast in 1855, the bones of this farmer had lain in a Neolithic tomb chamber for 5,000 years. Her DNA has now been sequenced.

Welsh – insular Celtic populations. This suggested some large degree of establishment of the genetics of these populations 4,000 years ago."

The Bronze Age men even had the genetic mutation for hemochromatosis, which is now so common in Irish populations that it's sometimes called a Celtic disease.

The differences between these men and the ancient farming woman speak of a "profound migratory episode" in the 1,000 years between their lifetimes, Bradley said.

Based on the men's DNA, the researchers suspect that their ancestors may have come to Ireland from the Pontic Steppe – the area of Eastern Europe that sits over the Black Sea, including what's now the Ukraine.

For now, this probable migration is still quite mysterious. We know it must have occurred sometime between about 5,000 years ago and 4,000 years ago, but scientists will have to sequence the genomes of more skeletal remains from before, during and after that period to confirm just how and when the migration took place.

Britain approves controversial genetic experiments

LONDON – In a landmark decision that some ethicists warned is a step down the path toward "designer babies," Britain has given scientists approval to conduct gene-editing experiments on human embryos.

The researchers won't be creating babies – the modified embryos will be destroyed after seven days. Instead, they said, the goal is to better understand human development so as to improve fertility treatments and prevent miscarriages.

The decision by Britain's Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority marks the first time a country's national regulator has approved the technique.

Permission isn't required in many countries, including the U.S. and China. The U.S. does not allow the use of federal funds for embryo modification, but there is no outright ban on gene editing.

Gene editing involves deleting, repairing or replacing bits of DNA inside living cells in a biological cut-and-paste technique that scientists say could one day lead to treatments for conditions such as HIV or inherited disorders such as muscular dystrophy and sickle cell disease.

A team at London's Francis Crick Institute, received the OK to use gene editing to analyze the first week of an embryo's growth.

The research will "enhance our understanding of IVF (in vitro fertilization) success rates by looking at the very earliest stage of human development,"

said Paul Nurse, director of the institute.

No embryos will be transferred into women. They will be allowed to develop from a single cell to around 250 cells, but then will be destroyed.

Peter Braude, a retired professor of obstetrics and gynecology at King's College London, said the mechanisms being investigated by Nakan and her colleagues "are crucial in ensuring healthy, normal development and implantation" and could help doctors refine fertility treatments.

The technique Nakan's team plans to use is known as CRISPR-Cas9, a relatively fast, cheap and simple approach that many researchers are keen to try.

Critics warn that tweaking the genetic code is a slippery slope that eventually leads to designer babies, where parents not only aim to avoid inherited diseases but also seek taller, stronger, smarter or better-looking children.

Many religious groups, including the Catholic Church, argue that manipulating embryos amounts to "playing God." Some scientists have voiced concern that tinkering with genes might have unintended consequences not apparent until after the babies are born.

"This is the first step on a path that scientists have carefully mapped out towards the legalization of genetically modified babies," David King of the advocacy group Human Genetics Alert said last month when British regulators took up the issue.

Arrest of Lance Corporal 'J': A milestone in the pursuit of justice for shooting victims

By NEIL DOHERTY

With the arrest of Lance Corporal "J" of the Parachute Regiment on suspicion of murder on Bloody Sunday 1972 in Derry's Bogside marks a milestone in the pursuit of justice for the 14 people who died.

Lance Corporal "J" was questioned on suspicion of having killed William Nash (19), John Young (17) and Michael McDaid (20) and the shooting of William Nash's father Alexander who survived. The three young men were all killed at the Rossville Street Rubble Barricade.

Lance Corporal "J" claimed he fired at a nail bomber and missed, and another soldier Corporal "E" claimed he fired at a man with a pistol.

The Saville Report investigating Bloody Sunday rejected the claims of Lance Corporal "J" and Corporal "E," saying they had lied and the men were unarmed. Saville said, "We reject each of those claims as knowingly untrue."

The report further claimed that none of the dead were "posing a threat of causing death or serious injury" to the soldiers.

Soldier 027, testifying before the Saville Commission, totally rejected the claims of his fellow soldiers that they had come under fire by any of the dead, and claimed that Lance Corporal "F" and Soldier "G" were probably responsible for eight or 10 of the deaths.

Lance Corporal "F," according to Saville, killed Patrick Doherty, Michael Kelly, Bernard McGuigan and possibly William McKinney and James Wray.

As the investigation continues into the killings, it is likely that many more soldiers will be arrested for questioning.

These will include Private "R" responsible for shooting Jackie Duddy, Private "U" responsible for killing Hugh Gilmore, Private "H" for the killing of William McKinney and James Wray, Corporal "E" for the killings at the Rubble Barricade.

Other soldiers who will probably be arrested for causing deaths on Bloody Sunday include Corporal "P" and Private "L" and "M."

The treatment of the dead at the Rub-

ble Barricade will also be a major issue in the investigation.

As documented in Don Mullan's book *Eyewitness Bloody Sunday*, the bodies of William Nash, John Young and Michael McDaid were left on the Rubble Barricade for half an hour after being shot, and people, including Nash's father, were prevented by the soldiers from going to their assistance.

It is believed that at least one of the young men was still alive when they were flung like garbage into the back of a Saracen, which then disappeared.

The bodies were not taken to Altnagelvin Hospital for at least another hour. The bodies of these young men were the only dead removed by Saracens from the killing fields of the Bogside.

Many Derry people suspect that the mystery surrounding the treatment of these bodies and the delay in getting them to the hospital was in order to concoct a plausible story from an army viewpoint with respect to how they died, and to make a claim that the deceased had been handling weapons.

Don Mullan in his book stated "The forensic evidence against Young, Nash

and McDaid was very positive. There probably wasn't a hair on their head which wasn't contaminated. It certainly proved that they were in very close proximity to people using guns – the Paras."

The arrest of Lance Corporal "J" is a signal that, after 43 years, the investigation into the murders of 14 people on Bloody Sunday is advancing in earnest.

The investigation into the killings is consistent with the much-appreciated comments in the British House of Commons by Prime Minister David Cameron on the release of the Saville Report.

He stated "The conclusions of the report are absolutely clear. There is no doubt. There is nothing equivocal. There are no ambiguities. What happened on Bloody Sunday was both unjustified and unjustifiable. It was wrong."

[Neil Doherty was responsible for bringing Ivan Cooper to Toronto one week after Bloody Sunday. Cooper was an organizer of the Bloody Sunday March, and is portrayed in the film *Bloody Sunday*. Doherty has been active over the years in seeking a new inquiry into Bloody Sunday].



PHOTO: *Eyewitness Bloody Sunday* by Don Mullan.

AT THE RUBBLE BARRICADE, Rossville Street. Don Mullan is just feet away from Michael Kelly who has been hit. A few seconds later Michael McDaid enters the scene (top left). Dressed in his Sunday best, McDaid has his back to the Paras. Five or six paces later he was hit in the left cheek by a bullet.



PROTESTERS in Derry carry pictures of civilians who were killed a year earlier in the Bloody Sunday massacre.

Ex-British Soldier, 66, Arrested in Bloody Sunday Massacre

BELFAST – The Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) arrested a 66-year-old man last November in connection with Bloody Sunday, the infamous massacre of unarmed civilian marchers by British soldiers in Derry on January 30, 1972.

It was the first time anyone has been arrested in the massacre, for which the British Government formally apologized in 2010.

The former soldier, whose name was not released, was arrested in County Antrim and taken to a police station in Belfast for questioning.

The BBC reported that the ex-soldier was a former lance corporal – identified in a 2010 report by the pseudonymous initial "J." He is believed to have been involved in three of the 13 killings that day. A 14th victim died months later.

Lance Corporal "J" was a member of the Parachute Regiment, the Army unit most hated by Catholic nationalists during the Troubles, the 30-year struggle over the status of Northern Ireland.

Five months before Bloody Sunday, members of the regiment fatally shot 11 unarmed civilians in Belfast. In retaliation, the Irish Republican Army blew up the regiment's base in Aldershot, England, in 1974, killing seven people.

The Troubles, which claimed 3,600 lives, largely ended with the 1998 Good Friday agreement, when paramilitary groups like the IRA agreed to cease

hostilities and the governments of Britain and Ireland, along with the major political parties in Northern Ireland, agreed on a complex set of power-sharing arrangements for the British territory.

In 2010, after a 12-year, \$283 million investigation, a government inquiry led by an eminent jurist, Lord Saville, found that "a serious and widespread loss of fire discipline" had allowed the massacre to take place.

The report, which exceeded 5,000 pages across 10 volumes, exonerated the victims, concluding that the soldiers had fired the first shot and had given no warning before opening fire. Some of those killed or wounded, the report found, were either fleeing or trying to help other victims.

The report refuted the findings of an earlier inquiry, conducted immediately after the massacre by a former army officer, Lord Widgery, that had largely exonerated the army and attributed the killings to armed protesters who it said had provoked the attack. That inquiry has come to be seen as a whitewash.

"What happened on Bloody Sunday strengthened the Provisional IRA, increased nationalist resentment and hostility toward the army and exacerbated the violent conflict of the years that followed," the Saville inquiry found.

"Bloody Sunday was a tragedy for the bereaved and the wounded, and a catastrophe for the people of Northern Ireland."

Tackling questions about violent past will help N. Ireland move on says judge

BELFAST – Lord Justice Weir has concluded a two-week review of dozens of the most highly-disputed legacy cases which are awaiting inquests decades after the killings took place.

They span allegations of security force misinformation to frame the IRA for bombings, state collusion in loyalist murders, inept police investigations, and IRA men shot dead by the army as part of a claimed policy of shooting to kill in which civilians were killed in the cross-fire.

Some cases could take years to proceed to full inquest, the review has heard, while others could be ready to begin within a year. One inquest could be linked to more than 100 other murders.

Lack of money to search for and proc-

ess documents has been a constant refrain from lawyers for the Police Service of Northern Ireland and watchdogs which scrutinize them as well as the Ministry of Defence, and Lord Justice Weir has posed serious questions to the government about its resourcing of investigations into past murders.

He said, "The purpose of this was to try and break the logjam and move these cases along, which is in everyone's interests, not just the next of kin but the people of Northern Ireland who want to see this chapter of life dealt with properly and put to rest."

He addressed the widow of a Catholic police officer – father-of-eight Sergeant Joseph Campbell – who was shot dead as he closed a police station in 1977.

"You have had a long wait and I hope we can do something to move this on because it has gone on a long time –

too long."

A new structured approach to investigating Northern Ireland's contested past – and the release of money to pay for it – has been stalled by a disagreement between Sinn Féin and the British Government over its refusal to disclose information relating to national security.

The state argues that it has a duty to protect life, including those secret agents who informed it of the workings of paramilitaries and may have helped save countless lives but who have also been implicated in the most murky of killings.

Republicans contend that, more than 20 years after armed groups first declared a ceasefire, the government owes a duty of full candour on its own role during three decades of conflict in which more than 3,600 were killed and thousands of others injured.

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ATHENA TERGIS will perform at the 1916 Centenary Concert at the UW's Brechemin Auditorium on Saturday, February 27.



ANNE-MARIE FYFE and historian/literary-critic, Cahal Dallat, will explore the intersections of Irish history with poetry, song and story during performances at the Seattle Center on March 12 and 13 during the Irish Festival.



A NATIVE of Co. Tyrone, folk musician Emmet "That Irish Guy" McElhinney will perform at the Seattle Center on March 12 during the Irish Festival.



THE EMERALD BARDS, Bruce Simpson, Bruce Cosacchi and Bill Barnes, will perform at the Friends of St. Patrick Banquet on March 17.

SEATTLE IRISH NEWS

PASSINGS

• Tom Davey, whose late wife Wynn was from Dublin, died in Seattle in early January.

• Joe Brennan, who died in Co. Leitrim on January 12, was a brother of Seattleites Ann Dolan, Seamus Brennan and Leo Brennan.

• Pat Keane (81), who died near Kells, Co. Meath on January 11, was a brother of Seattle's John Keane.

• Patrick "Des" McArdle (76), a native of Co. Down, died on December 12 in Bellingham.

• Monica Clifford (52), wife of Limerick-native Tom Clifford, died on December 10 in Bellevue.

• Sr. Anne Philomena Charles, OSF (81), a native of Co. Leitrim and sister of Mary Charles of Edmonds, died December 5 in Tacoma.

2016 IRISH WEEK in SEATTLE

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 20: Irish Soda Bread Cooking Exhibition/Class, 1-5 PM, St. Patrick's Church Hall.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 27: 1916 Centenary Concert, UW's Brechemin Auditorium.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 29: Leap Day Dash Deal & Party, 4-7 PM, F X McRory's.

SATURDAY, MARCH 5: Irish Soda Bread Contest, 2-3 PM, T S McHugh's.

FRIDAY, MARCH 11: St. Patrick's Day Mass for Peace, 10 AM, St. Patrick's Church.

• Mayor's Proclamation Lunch, Noon, F X McRory's.

• Landing of St. Patrick on South Lake Union, 6 PM.

• Green Stripe Laying on 4th Avenue, 7 PM.

SATURDAY, MARCH 12: Irish Flag-Raising & St. Patrick's Day Parade. 12:20 PM, 4th Avenue at James.

• Irish Festival, noon – 6 PM, Seattle Center Armory.

• Irish Network Mayoral Reception, 5-7 PM.

SUNDAY, MARCH 13: St. Patrick's Day Dash, 8:30 AM.

• Irish Festival, 10 AM – 6 PM, Seattle Center Armory.

• Matt Talbot Dinner, 6 PM, F X McRory's.

THURSDAY, MARCH 17, ST. PATRICK'S DAY: Irish Community Happy Hour, 5-7 PM, Knights Of Columbus Hall.

• Friends of St. Patrick Banquet, Seattle, 5-9 PM, Knights of Columbus Hall.

SATURDAY, MARCH 19: Irish Genealogy Workshop, 9 AM-5 PM, Luther Memorial Lutheran Church.

SUNDAY, MARCH 20: Seattle Gaels Field Day, 12 noon, Magnuson Park.

For more information on any of these events, visit WWW.IRISHWEEK.ORG

HONORARY GRAND MARSHAL – Casey McNerthney is the Honorary Grand Marshal of Seattle's 2016 St. Patrick's Day Parade.

With this being the 1916 Centenary and Casey being a great-grandson of Lily (Kempson) and Matt McAlerney, Casey



By
JOHN KEANE



CASEY MCNERTHNEY, the Honorary Grand Marshal of Seattle's St. Patrick's Day Parade. Casey is a great-grandson of 1916 combatant Lily McAlerney who died in Seattle in 1996.

is representing in the parade all the descendants of Lily Kempson, the last surviving 1916 combatant who died in Seattle in 1996, aged 99.

Some of Lily and Matt's other descendants will also be marching in the parade along with him.

Casey was fortunate to get to know Lily well, as did many of her other great-grandchildren, and he loved hearing stories about her life in Ireland and her escape to Seattle after the 1916 Rising collapsed.

He only wishes he had asked more questions. Casey is an executive producer at KIRO 7 television in Seattle and previously was a reporter at the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*.

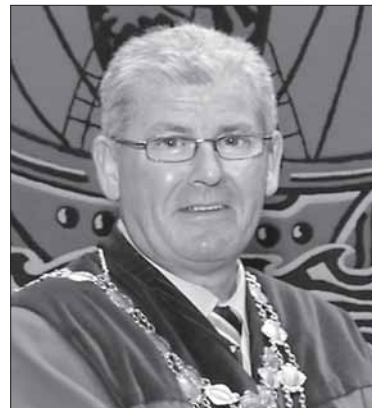
SEATTLE EVENTS MARKING

THE 1916 CENTENARY

• **CENTENARY CONCERT** – On Saturday, February 27, 2016, at 7 PM, there's a 1916 Centenary Concert in Brechemin Auditorium at the UW with performances by Irish folklorist and musician Mick Moloney accompanied by violinist Athena Tergis.

Co. Limerick native Mick Moloney

[Continued next page]



MAYOR Frank Fahy of Seattle's Sister City of Galway who will visit Seattle in March for the St. Patrick's Day Parade and other festivities celebrating St. Patrick's Day.



IN 1914, James Connolly (L), head of the Irish Citizen Army, poses with Lily Kempson, a member of Cumman na mBan and a 1916 combatant who died in Seattle in 1996.



LILY KEMPSON (front center) poses in Belfast with friends in 1914 after they had joined Cumman na mBan, the women's paramilitary organization. On Kempson's right is Ina Connolly, the daughter of James Connolly who was one of those executed after the 1916 Rising.

SEATTLE IRISH NEWS

[Continued from page 20]

holds a Ph.D. in folklore and folklife, and has recorded and produced over 40 albums of traditional music.

In 2013, he received Ireland's Presidential Distinguished Service Award from President Michael D. Higgins.

Fiddler Athena Tergis moved to Ireland when she was 18 and immersed herself in Irish traditional music.

She was a featured artist in the new show *Heartbeat of Home* from the producers of Riverdance for their North American premier. For more information on the February 27 concert, call (425) 582-2688 or visit www.irishclub.org.

• **IRISH FESTIVAL LECTURES** – Saturday and Sunday, March 12 and 13, there will be Talks and Exhibits on the 1916 Rising during the Irish Festival at the Seattle Center, with special emphasis on Lily Kempson, a combatant during the Rising in Dublin who died in 1996.

A native of Co. Wicklow, in 1914 Lily joined Cumman na mBan, the republican women's paramilitary organization, when she was living with James Connolly's family in Belfast.

In 1916 she was involved in the takeover of St. Stephen's Green and later of the College of Surgeons.

She escaped capture after the Rising collapsed and came to Seattle where she had an uncle. When she died in Seattle in 1996 aged 99, she was the last surviving 1916 combatant.

• **WEEKEND CENTENARY PROGRAM** – April 23-24, a weekend 1916 Centenary Program is being planned at Antioch University in downtown Seattle. The program will include lectures, panel discussions, art exhibits, Irish music, poetry readings, and other cultural activities that highlight the prelude to Irish self-determination.

For updated information on all of these events, visit www.irishclub.org.

• **GALWAY MAYOR** – Galway Mayor Frank Fahy will be in Seattle for Irish Week 2016 for the various events on the weekend of March 11-13. Fahy was first elected a member of the Galway City Council in 2011 and was elected mayor in 2015.

He lives in an area of Galway called Menlo Village, a Gaelic speaking area where his family has lived since 1640.

Gaelic is his first language and he promotes the speaking of Irish whenever he can and especially on civic occasions.

Fahy visited Seattle in March 2013 as deputy mayor and in September 2014 hosted a Seattle delegation in Galway that included the Seattle Police Pipes and Drums Pipe Band as well as Seattle Mayor Ed Murray.

On this Seattle visit he will be accompanied by his wife Geraldine along with Galway City Executive Joe O'Neill and his wife Kay.

• **MORE FRIENDLY** – Seattle's Friends of St. Patrick was a male-only organization until 1989, but the Philadelphia chapter of the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick this year will induct their first female member, Irish Ambassador to the U.S. Anne Anderson.

The Friendly Sons was founded in Philadelphia in 1771 to provide relief to newly arrived Irish immigrants.

The group welcomed both Catholics and Protestants, and included signatories of the U.S. Declaration of Independence



among its founding members.

The Seattle group's annual dinner is this year being held on St. Patrick's Day, March 17. Visit www.fosp.org for details.

• **THE IMMORTAL IRISHMAN** – Tim Egan, the Seattle-based Pulitzer-prize winning author and *New York Times* columnist, launches his newest book at Seattle Town Hall on March 1.

Called *The Immortal Irishman: The Irish Revolutionary Who Became an American Hero*, the book is about Thomas Francis Meagher who was exiled to Tasmania in 1848 after the failed Young Irelander Rebellion.

Meagher escaped from Tasmania and made his way to the U.S. where he led the Irish Brigade from New York in many of the fiercest battles of the Civil War.

Meagher's dream was that Irish-American troops, seasoned by war, would return to Ireland and liberate their homeland from British rule. Very proud of his Irish heritage, Egan is descended on his mother's side from the Lynches of Galway.

• **WASHINGTON GENEALOGY** – The December issue of *Irish Lives Remembered*, the free online Irish genealogy magazine, has an article on 'Tracing your Irish ancestors in Washington State'.

Among the articles is one on Teresa Lapin Eldridge, the woman from Co. Armagh who became known around Bellingham as the "first pioneer woman of northwest Washington," and also an article on the Irish ancestry of Seattle's mayor, Ed Murray. Check out pages 38-47 online at <http://bit.ly/1TyMywO>.

• **PORTLAND 1916 CONCERT** – On March 6, at the Sherwood Center for the Arts in Sherwood, OR, Téada presents "reAwakening."

Téada is a traditional Irish music band with a truly worldwide reach. Inspired by the remarkable artistic flourishing of the Irish at home and abroad in the 100-year period from 1916 onwards, reAwakening sets historic musical and song material beginning from the early Twentieth Century to a backdrop of archival video footage and still images from the 1916 Rising. Visit brownpapertickets.com for tickets and details.

MISCELLANEOUS

• This could be the last St. Patrick's Day for Seattle's premier Irish import store, Galway Traders, at least in its current location on 15th Avenue NW at 75th Street in Ballard.

• Thursday, April 14 the Tacoma Rangers will be hosting the second annual Irish Night with the Tacoma Rainiers at Cheney Stadium.

• Cascadia Irish Music Week 2016 will be from July 17-23 at The Evergreen State College in Olympia, and registration is now open at cascadiairish.org.

• Congratulations to South Sound Irishman Tom Quinlan who is running for a position on the Pierce County Superior Court.

'I'm lucky to be alive' – Irishman who drank from the same cup as poisoned KGB agent Litvinenko

DUBLIN – An Irish musician who was in the same London hotel where Alexander Litvinenko was given a fatal dose of poisoning by polonium in November 2006 has revealed that he's lucky to be alive.

Derek Conlon got radiation poisoning after drinking from the same teacup as Litvinenko.

Conlon, a musician, was playing piano in the bar an hour after the former Russian agent Litvinenko was slipped the dose of polonium in November 2006.

Speaking on *The Ryan Tubridy Show*, Conlon, who is originally from Glasnevin, revealed how he was "completely contaminated by the incident."

"Litvinenko was there an hour before I started playing that particular evening. Nobody suspected anything until a day or two later when they sealed the bar off.

"I arrived there to go to work and was told I couldn't get in until the following week. When a week had passed, I heard on the news that there was testing going on for polonium."

A form of nuclear material only found at Russian nuclear facilities, polonium is fatal when administered in small quantities.

However, Conlon was originally told he wasn't at risk as it wasn't airborne or couldn't pass through paper.

"Apparently the dishwasher was broken and I drank from the same cup as Litvinenko. It had spread over the whole bar and the whole place was contaminated.

"The entire bar was contaminated. It had to be gutted and restructured.

"Even my microphone was covered in polonium. It was everywhere. It was a reckless act. These guys took so many lives in danger. It is insane what they did."

On his deathbed, Litvinenko accused Russian president Vladimir Putin of ordering his assassination. In January an inquiry said that Putin 'probably' approved poisoning of the former KGB agent.

Conlon said he only became aware of the seriousness of the incident when he arrived for work a couple of days later and saw that the entire bar had been shut down.

Although Conlon said he hasn't yet developed any symptoms, he still undergoes check-ups every six months.

"It has really increased my chances of catching certain cancers. What happens with polonium is that it does a lot of damage when it originally attacks your body and then it leaves.

"But over the space of years – depending on the dosage – you can see the initial damage. So now I am tested over six month periods.

"If you catch a cold or a spot turns up somewhere on your body, you are very cautious about it. You can become paranoid about it. Hopefully nothing will come of it."

Although he said he often thinks about the incident, Conlon considers himself 'lucky to be alive'.

"Now I try and live life in the fast lane and I appreciate things more. I try and live for the moment and not worry about the small stuff."

On his deathbed, former KGB agent Alexander Litvinenko accused Russian president Vladimir Putin of ordering his assassination. In January an inquiry said that Putin 'probably' approved the poisoning by polonium.



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KEITH WILLIAMS (68), a retired coal merchant from Penygroes near Swansea in South Wales, recently discovered that he is the son of the 35th Sultan of Perak – who lived in a stunning palace with golden domes in Malaysia.

Rain and gloom with a few bright spots in between

Happy New Year! The weather is miserable and to add to the misery I foolishly bet that I could go three weeks with no alcohol at all. Not even cough medicine.

The bet was for a month but I got dispensation for Burns Night which I argued was a big deal in Wales. (The English are quite gullible when it comes to Celtic matters).

Today it is wet, cold, with grey clouds that have the ability to sit on your shoulder. It has been like this for weeks.

The newscasters tell us it has been the wettest month since Noah built his Ark, and there are floods all over the country.

Mind you they said that last year and the year before, in fact they say it every year, so possibly the BBC might just be digging out old bulletins to save money.

At the time of writing, the village of Eglwysrw in Pembrokeshire has had rain every day for the last 82 days and is on the verge of claiming the record as the wettest place in Britain over the last 100 years.

The current record was set in 1923 on the Scottish island of Islay when it rained consecutively for 89 days.

In Eglwysrw, Brian Llewellyn owner of the local garage and shop stated that every cloud has a silver lining because sales of waterproofs, umbrellas and wellington boots are 40 percent up.

Keith Williams, a retired coal merchant known locally as Keith y glo (Keith the coal) from Penygroes near Swansea in South Wales, has discovered that his father was the Sultan of the Malay state of Perak.

The sultan was educated at Oxford and Harvard and was co-chairman of the United Nations High-Level Panel on Humanitarian Financing.

While in England, he dated a young

POSTCARD FROM BOURNEMOUTH

By
ELFAN
JONES



trainee nurse named Elizabeth Rose.

She fell pregnant by him and was whisked back to her home in Swansea and the handsome young prince was sent back to Malaya to avoid a scandal. When the baby was four months old he was given up for adoption.

Williams knew he had been adopted as he had black hair and darker skin, but had a happy family life and never worried who or where his real parents were.

His daughter persuaded him to attempt to discover his origins and trace his biological parents.

He eventually found that his mother was still alive living in the Peterborough area, and it was through her that he discovered that his father was a member of the Malaysian monarchy.

Toward the end of last year, Williams travelled to Perak and the Welsh language television channel S4C filmed the journey.

Despite having been in touch with the relatives by e-mail, he sadly did not receive a friendly welcome.

His half-brother, with whom he had built a good rapport unfortunately died shortly before he left for Malaya and Williams believes that perhaps the surviving relatives feared he would wish to claim his inheritance as the first born of the former sultan, or perhaps they just didn't need any coal.

In the UK January is the season of Wassailing, much loved by cider drinkers in the South West of England, the

Vancouver Orpheus Male Choir enjoyed a successful Welsh tour

By EIFION WILLIAMS
VANCOUVER – Last September and early October the Vancouver Orpheus Male Choir undertook a 12-day, seven-concert tour of Wales, accompanied by a number of their Lower Mainland supporters.

The 34-member choir, with music director Liana Savard and accompanist Barry Yamanouchi, performed with several of the best male choirs in Wales.

Welsh male choirs are known worldwide for their powerful performances and the Orpheus Choir found it thrilling to perform with the best of them in joint presentations of popular choral numbers.

Choir member Alan Sanderson reports that the Orpheus Choir has a similar repertoire to Welsh choirs but that during the tour they sang mainly Canadian songs as a fresh offering to their Welsh audiences.

According to Alan, some traditional Welsh eyebrows may have been raised at some of the Orpheus's more light-hearted numbers and choreography, but he says the performances were very well received and sales of Orpheus CDs were very brisk.

Wales is a small country in area, so choir members could stay in a few major cities while making daily trips to outlying smaller locations.

During several nights' stay in Cardiff, the choir performed with the joint Cwmbach-Mountain Ash Choir in Mountain Ash and with the Ebbw Vale Choir.

While based in Swansea, the Orpheus Choir performed with the Whitland Male Choir and also performed and renewed acquaintance with the Llanelli Male Choir.

The Llanelli Choir, led by conductor Eifion Thomas, has visited Vancouver twice in recent years.

The Orpheus Choir then moved on to Aberystwyth, where they performed with the Aberystwyth Male Choir before journeying through the beautiful Snowdonia National Park to Llandudno and a performance with the Colwyn Male Choir.

The choir's last stop was Wrexham, where they joined the Brymbo Male Choir in the beautiful centuries-old church of St. Donawd's in Bangor-on-Dee.

main cider producing area of the country.

The word comes from the Anglo Saxon phrase *Waes hael* meaning good health and the Wassailing ceremony consists of hanging toast on the branches of cider apple trees to attract the robins who are good spirits and will help the trees grow and produce good strong apples.

Sticks are banged together to drive off the evil spirits, then for reasons unknown a person called the Green Man leads a dance around the orchard, and then everybody falls down.

During and possibly before the ceremony, everyone drinks kidney crippling quantities of cider or Wassail, a beverage of hot mulled cider mixed with spices and honey, which is why they all fall down.

There are several varieties of the ceremony but the end result is the same.



MEMBERS of Orpheus Choir in full voice.



[LEFT PHOTO] CHOIR accompanist Barry Yamanouchi and Llanelli Choir conductor Eifion Thomas. [RIGHT PHOTO] LIANA Savard and Choir member Barry Hancock enjoying a post-performance reception.

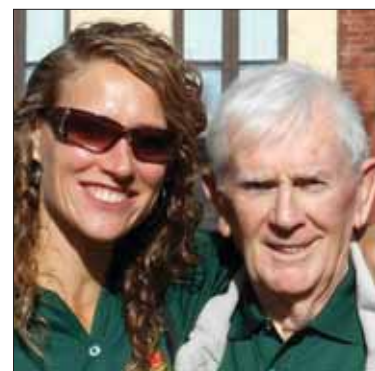


During the tour, the choir members also visited several historic sites, including the National History Museum in St. Fagan's, Dylan Thomas's Boathouse in Laugharne and the Italianate town of Port Meirion in Gwynedd.

The tour also coincided with the opening games of the Rugby World Cup. The Canadians were able to absorb a typical Welsh rugby atmosphere while watching the Wales-England game in their hotel bar in Cardiff.

According to Alan Sanderson, this Welsh tour by the Orpheus was a dream come true for choir members but it would probably not have come about without the enthusiasm and commitment of choir member Eric Davies, who managed to convince any sceptics that the tour was achievable.

Choir members are grateful to Eric for his enthusiasm and perseverance and also to the members of the tour committee and director Liana Savard and accompanist Barry Yamanouchi for



MUSIC DIRECTOR Liana Savard and choir member Eric Davies, who inspired the choir.

making the tour such a success.

The Orpheus Choir have announced that they will perform a joint concert with the award-winning Colwyn Male Choir in Vancouver on Sunday, August 28, the venue to be announced later.

Back in Wales on a Penarth beach, just outside Cardiff, scientists have discovered the fossilised skull and 40 percent of the skeleton of a Dracoraptor hanigani which dates back over 200 million years.

It resembles the red dragon, the Welsh national symbol, and puts paid to the belief, held by hundreds of men who are married to Welsh women, that their mother-in-law is the original Welsh dragon.

Finally, it was announced that it stopped raining in Eglwysrw on the 85th day, so unhappily for them they did not achieve the record. It did start to rain again on the 86th day, but I doubt that this was much of a consolation.

All for now.

Best wishes,
Elfan



A long history of cider-making in the South West of England.



THE SCENE outside Kensington Palace on the morning of Tuesday, February 9 after a man died after setting himself on fire.

Man dies after setting himself on fire outside Kensington Palace

LONDON – Police from Kensington Palace, the London home of the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge, were reportedly first on the scene when a man died after setting himself on fire.

Paramedics and firefighters were called to the scene after 3 AM on the morning of Tuesday, February 9, but the man was pronounced dead at the scene.

According to the *Evening Standard*, officers stationed at the royal household were the first to respond to the incident, involving a man in his forties.

They reportedly tried to douse the flames with a fire extinguisher before attempting to provide first aid.

A spokeswoman for Scotland Yard said police were called at 3:06 AM and “found a man ablaze.” London Ambulance Service and London Fire Brigade also attended, she said, but despite their efforts the man was pronounced dead at 3:42 AM.

She said the incident was not being treated as suspicious or as terrorist related, and the man’s actions are not thought to have been a form of protest.

Police had earlier been alerted after a man walked out of a central London hospital after presenting with mental health problems, the *Standard* reported.

A statement from Scotland Yard read: “Officers in Westminster were called by a central London hospital at 12:06 AM on Tuesday, 9 February after a man in their care had failed to return.

“Police carried out enquiries to trace this missing man at his home address and two associated addresses but the man, aged in his forties, was not present.”

A large police cordon remained in place at the scene within sight of the palace on Tuesday morning.

LONDON — The European Union offered a proposal on February 2 intended to keep Britain as a member of the bloc, setting out compromises on hot-button issues like immigration and setting up a referendum as early as this summer on whether the country wants to retain close ties to the Continent or go its own way.

The proposal, drafted by the European Council president, Donald Tusk, addressed all the issues that British Prime Minister David Cameron had insisted be revisited if he was to campaign to keep Britain in the union.

But it remained vague on some crucial points, and in any case was unlikely to sway those most committed to Britain’s exit from the bloc.

Cameron’s task in the months before the referendum is to rally enough supporters of continued membership and win over enough of those on the fence to avert a vote to leave, a choice that many predict could have global ramifications.

Written after weeks of diplomacy, the dense texts still need to be approved by leaders of the other 27 members of the bloc, who, along with Britain, will meet for a crucial summit meeting in Brussels this month. A deal there could pave the way for a British referendum as early as June.

Not only would a British exit from the bloc cause acute economic uncertainty in and beyond Britain, it could also trigger an existential crisis for the union, which has struggled in vain to react coherently to a growing wave of migration from the Middle East and elsewhere.

Cameron called the new plan a “very strong and powerful package,” adding

that, while there was no final agreement and more work was needed, “strong, determined and patient negotiation has achieved a good outcome for Britain.”

Immediate reaction was divided along well-established lines, with critics of the European Union denouncing the proposals as insubstantial.

Nigel Farage, leader of the U.K. Independence Party, called them “truly pathetic.” Steve Baker, a Conservative Party lawmaker who also wants Britain to quit the bloc, said that “nothing in it would stand up to serious scrutiny.”

But Carolyn Fairbairn, director general of the Confederation of British Industry, a business lobby group, described the offer as “an important milestone on the way to a deal that could deliver positive changes to the EU that will benefit not just the UK, but the whole of Europe.”

The most delicate issue on the table was Cameron’s call for the right to restrict welfare benefits for non-British citizens of European Union countries, namely by limiting access to “in work” payments that typically supplement the earnings of low-wage employees.

These curbs could apply for up to four years, and the documents published state that the scale of immigration into Britain would justify them. However, it also stipulated that there would need to

be a final agreement among the 28 nations for the restrictions to kick in.

Cameron’s welfare proposals were seen by some nations, most notably in Eastern Europe, as a breach of the principle that all European Union citizens should be treated equally.

Another proposal ensured safeguards for the large financial sector in Britain, which decided to keep the pound rather than adopt the euro. The British Government worries that, as the 19 nations that use the single currency integrate further, rules might be skewed against European Union nations that do not.

Offering such guarantees to Britain is sensitive in some eurozone nations, such as France.

In another concession, European Union legislation could be blocked if enough national parliaments oppose a measure, though critics doubt that that would be easy to deploy.

Cameron’s enthusiasm for the plan is crucial because those who want Britain to stay in the bloc believe his opinion will prove decisive with the public in a referendum.

He argues that, inside Europe’s single market, but outside its euro single currency and the passport-free Schengen travel zone, Britain could have the “best of both worlds” if it succeeds in its negotiation.

Britain voted in 1975 to stay in what was then called the European Economic Community, which it had joined two years earlier, but has held no plebiscites on European issues since.

Cameron said that, providing that the deal is reached, he would not argue that “the European Union is now a perfect and unblemished organization” but that “on balance, Britain is better off” inside it.

Northern Ireland abortion laws ‘breach human rights’

BELFAST – Northern Ireland’s near blanket ban on abortion breaches human rights legislation, a High Court judge has said.

The landmark judgment delivered to Belfast High Court could pave the way for a relaxation of the region’s strict laws, which prohibit women accessing terminations even in cases of rape, incest or where there is a diagnosis of fatal foetal abnormality.

The case was brought by the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission (NIHRC).

In his decision, Justice Mark Horner referred to the European Convention on Human Rights, saying, “In the circumstances, given this issue is unlikely to be grasped by the legislature in the foreseeable future, and the entitlement of citizens of Northern Ireland to have their Convention rights protected by the courts, I conclude that the Article Eight rights of women in Northern Ireland who are pregnant with fatal foetal abnormalities or who are pregnant as a result of sexual crime are breached by



THE UK’S 1967 Abortion Act does not extend to Northern Ireland. Anyone who performs an illegal termination could be jailed for life.

the impugned provisions.”

The UK’s 1967 Abortion Act does not extend to Northern Ireland, where abortions are illegal except in limited circumstances where the life or mental health of the mother is in danger. Anyone who performs an illegal termination could be jailed for life.

Legal argument from both sides was heard over three days in June. Deliver-

ing his judgment over more than two hours, Judge Horner said the failure to provide exceptions to the law in certain circumstances breached a woman’s right to privacy.

In cases of fatal foetal abnormality (FFA), he concluded that the mother’s inability to access an abortion was a “gross interference with her personal autonomy.”

The judge said, “In the case of an FFA there is no life to protect. When the foetus leaves the womb, it cannot survive independently. It is doomed. There is no life to protect.

“It is not proportionate to refuse to provide an exception to the criminal sanctions imposed on the impugned provisions.”

Speaking outside the court, Les Allamby, NIHRC chief commissioner, described the ruling as “historic.” He said, “We welcome this landmark ruling. I think it is a good day for human rights.”

But anti-abortion campaigner Bernadette Smyth expressed disappointment. She said, “We have to look at these very rare cases and provide better support for women. Killing a child in all circumstances is wrong.”

Encouraging signs for future of the Welsh language

CARDIFF – A new survey has revealed that the number of fluent Welsh speakers has remained stable over the last decade but the number of speakers in what were regarded as the Welsh-speaking heartlands has fallen.

The Welsh Language Use Survey for 2013/2015 shows that the number of people in Wales who consider themselves fluent has risen from 317,000 in 2005 to 319,000 over the last 10 years, while the number of people who say they use Welsh daily has risen from 342,000 to 361,000.

The numbers of people who speak some Welsh if not fluently rose to 12 percent of Welsh people, up from nine percent in 2004/06.

However numbers of fluent speakers have fallen in several Welsh-speaking heartlands. In Gwynedd it fell by 2,100, from 69,000 to 67,100. On the Isle of Anglesey the number of fluent speakers fell from 28,000 to 26,000.

Carmarthenshire saw the number of fluent speakers fall from 53,600 to 51,600, while in Ceredigion numbers fell slightly from 26,600 to 26,000. However Cardiff and Rhondda Cynon Taf saw large increases in those who consider themselves to be fluent speakers.

The capital’s number of fluent speakers rose from 14,800 to 21,800, while in Rhondda Cynon Taf it rose from 11,200 to 16,600.

The survey found that more than half of Welsh speakers try to use Welsh at least occasionally when dealing with public organisations. Officials have compared the figures, conducted in surveys between 2013 and 2015, with a survey completed between 2004 and 2006.

Heini Gruffudd, chairman of campaign group Dyfodol i’r Iaith, said, “My first reaction is really one of great encouragement that, in despite of the last census, the actual numbers of Welsh speakers is holding up and increasing in many parts of Wales.

“The onus now is on the government and policy makers to ensure that people can use their Welsh at work and facilitate the use of Welsh on the high street, so fluent people have more opportunity to use the language, rather than concentrating on personal rights to use the language.”

St. Dwynwen's Day Celebration at the Cambrian Hall

By
EIFION
WILLIAMS



VANCOUVER – In what has become a tradition in recent years, the Vancouver Welsh Society celebrated St. Dwynwen's Day at the Cambrian Hall on Saturday, January 30 (the actual feast day falls on January 25).

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

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

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

Audience members also enjoyed desserts and fresh fruit platters prepared by the Society's Social Committee.

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

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

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

At the January 30 celebration, David

Llewelyn Williams gave a fascinating account of the events in Dwynwen's life.

Following his presentation David distributed a St. Dwynwen's Day card to each member of the audience.

The stark beauty of Llanddwyn Island was later shown in a video presented by Paul Lievelesley, who visited the island last summer.

A short film, *The Exiled Mind* by Ron Davies of Manchester, showed a selection of beautiful Welsh landscape scenes, accompanied by descriptive words and music that aroused nostalgic memories in many audience members.

The love theme continued throughout the evening. Popular singer Sharon McInty-Burrell, accompanied by Ruben Federizon, sang a selection of well-known sentimental love songs.

During the course of the evening the audience also participated in communal singing of Welsh love songs in both Welsh and English.

David Llewelyn Williams and several participants also amused the audience by reading out a number of entries in what has become a traditional St. Dwynwen's Day limerick competition.

The Vancouver Welsh Society is now preparing for St. David's Day events. There will be an open house at the Cambrian Hall on the evening of St. David's Day, March 1, while the annual St. David's Day Dinner will also be held at the hall on Saturday, March 5.

Further information on these events will appear later on the Welsh Society's website.



ST. DAVID'S Cathedral is considered the holiest site in Wales. It is one of Britain's oldest cathedrals and it stands on the site of a Sixth-century monastery founded by Dewi (David), a Celtic Christian monk.

St. David's Cathedral: An important site of Christian pilgrimage

ST. DAVID'S Cathedral in Wales, one of Britain's oldest cathedrals, stands on the site of a Sixth-century monastery founded by Dewi (David), a Celtic Christian monk.

Considered the holiest site in Wales due to its relics of St. David, the cathedral was a major pilgrimage destination throughout the Middle Ages. It remains a thriving church today.

David was born in the year 500, the son of St. Non and a prince of Ceredigion. Legend states that Non gave birth to him on a cliff top during a violent storm.

The present cathedral stands on the site of the monastery he founded in the inhospitable area known as 'Glyn Rhosyn.'

David and his followers lived a simple life; they refrained from eating meat or drinking beer. David's symbol, now a national symbol of Wales, is the leek.

David rose to become a bishop in the church and made several pilgrimages including one to Jerusalem during which, tradition states, he brought back with him a stone which now sits in an altar in the south transept of the cathedral.

The best known miracle associated with David is said to have taken place when he was preaching in the middle of a large crowd at the Synod of Llanddewi Brefi.

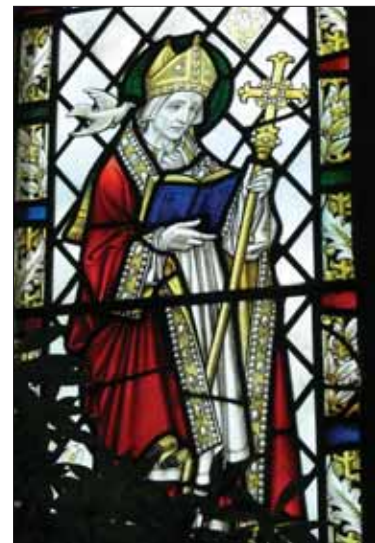
When those at the back complained that they could not hear him, the ground on which he stood is reputed to have risen up to form a small hill so that everyone had a good view. A white dove settled on his shoulder, a sign of God's grace and blessing.

David died in the year 589 and the monastery is said to have been 'filled with angels as Christ received his soul'. His final words to his followers were: "Be Joyful. Keep the Faith. Do the little things that you have heard and seen me do."

In the Twelfth Century Pope Calixtus II declared St. David's Cathedral to be a place of pilgrimage.

It was at this time that the medieval shrine was constructed and situated in the presbytery, close to the High Altar.

Pope Calixtus II also stated that the shrine was so important that two pilgrimages to St. David's were equivalent to one to Rome, three were equivalent to one to Jerusalem.



STAINED glass window of Dewi (St. David) depicted with a white dove on his shoulder, a sign of God's grace and blessing.



ST. DAVID'S DAY celebrations are now held both in Wales and around the world.

lent to one to Jerusalem.

Since then the path of pilgrimage has been trodden by hundreds of thousands of individuals.

The destruction of the shrine during the reformation caused a steep decline in this important religious practice; however, throughout the periods of religious and political turmoil pilgrims have continued to visit the site.

St. David is the patron saint of Wales and he is remembered at home and abroad on March 1. Tradition holds that he died on that day in 569. The date was declared a national day of celebration within Wales in the Eighteenth Century.



ORGANIZER and master of ceremonies David Llewelyn Williams.



PHOTOS: Heather Davies
SHARON MCINTY-BURRELL



MEMBERS of the Vancouver Welsh Society enjoying St. Dwynwen's Day celebration. In the foreground is Neville Thomas.

WELSH PEOPLE SHOULD BE ON THE MONEY, SAYS PLAID CYMRU MP

CARDIFF – Wales should be allowed to issue its own banknotes with famous Welsh people while the name of the Bank of England should be changed to avoid causing offence to the other Home Nations, a Plaid Cymru MP has suggested.

One of the aims of the Bank of England and Financial Services Bill is to provide flexibility to Scotland and Northern Ireland on who can issue sterling bank notes in those countries.

Wales remains the only nation in the UK that is not allowed to produce its own distinct bank notes.

Jonathan Edwards, the Plaid Cymru MP for Carmarthen East and Dinefwr, has urged the government to change that.

At the moment the Lloyds Banking Group holds the rights for the Bank of Wales brand and Edwards wants them to be given the right to issue Welsh notes.

"I believe such an outcome would come as a much welcome boost to Welsh national character, the recognition as an equal nation and as an economic entity," he said.

Edwards said that other countries in the UK are able to celebrate and commemorate historic landmarks and prominent people on their bank notes so Wales should be allowed to do the same.

He suggested that ex-prime minister David Lloyd George and Aneurin

Bevan, the architect of the NHS, could be possibilities for Wales.

He said the likes of Charles Darwin and William Shakespeare who appear on notes currently circulating in Wales have no link to the country.

He said, "Many pounds of many Welsh people over many years have contributed to the UK through an industrial revolution to bank bailouts.

"I deem it entirely appropriate that Wales's contribution and standing within the sterling zone is recognised and would right what seems to me to be a clear injustice."

Meanwhile, Edwards also suggested the name of the Bank of England should be changed to the Sterling Central Bank.