

the celtic connection

ISSUE 27 VOLUME 5

Proudly Serving Celts in North America Since 1991

JULY/AUGUST 2018

HIGHLIGHTS INSIDE THIS ISSUE



JIM KELLY, Ireland's Ambassador to Canada, recently sat down with *The Celtic Connection* to discuss Ireland's current position in the Eurozone and its evolving relationship with Canada, in particular the new Consulate of Ireland which will open in Vancouver this September. [Pages 10 & 11]



BREXIT CHAOS: British Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson has resigned following a contentious Tory Cabinet meeting over EU exit strategy on Friday, July 6. The news follows the resignations of Brexit Secretary David Davis and his deputy Steve Baker. The announcements have plunged Prime Minister Theresa May's government into crisis. Jeremy Hunt, who had been serving as health secretary, will be the new foreign secretary. Davis was replaced by staunchly pro-Brexit lawmaker Dominic Raab. Pictured above (L-R): David Davis, Boris Johnson, Theresa May.

[Read more on page 9]



OVER half a million people are expected at Pope Francis's Mass in the Phoenix Park on August 26 – but gardaí say they will be ready if a million turn up. It will be one of the biggest security operations undertaken in Dublin for 30 years.

[Read more on page 13]

Moments of bliss now seem rare but the magic is still there for those who seek

By MAURA DE FREITAS

MIDSUMMER, a time of revery and enchantment when nature is ripe and filled with abundance in anticipation of the coming harvest.

In the folklore of former centuries, midsummer was a time when fairies and their mischief were afoot. It is also a time of romance and the supernatural ...and wonderful memories.

As a child, I remember lying in the long grass on a warm summer's day when I lived on a farm in the country.

My whole being was filled with peace and contentment as I watched the clouds drift through the sky overhead.

I was aware of the natural world around me alive with movement as it flour-



FAIRY LIGHTS by Margaret Tarrant [1888-1959]. Margaret was born in Battersea, a suburb of south London. She studied at the Clapman School of Art and later at the Guildford School of Art. In the 1920s, Tarrant helped to popularize fairies in a long-running series of titles on the theme such as 'The Forest Fairies', 'The Pond Fairies', and 'The Twilight Fairies'.

ished and buzzed with energy, while the intoxicating fragrances of summer filled my senses.

Those days seemed endless – time felt still and a moment could be eternity.

The troubles of the world seemed very far away then, but realities today bring

home the realization that time is fleeting and these moments of bliss are rare.

But the magic is still there dear friends, and my wish for you this summer is that you find it and savour that child-like wonder and enjoy the beauty of the season.



PAT HARTNETT, captain of the Fraser Valley Gaels, was presented with the Senior Men's trophy – Tom Butler Cup – by John O'Flynn at the Western Canada GAA Championships in Regina in 2016. Read more about the GAA and this year's Championships to be held on the weekend of August 4-5 on pages 18 & 19.

Win Free Tickets or an Irish Breakfast Basket

• Win a pair (2) weekend passes to the Canmore Highland Games in beautiful Canmore, Alberta on September 1-2 (see page 3 for more info). Entry by July 27. Mark your entry 'Canmore'.

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IN ADDITION to a successful music career, singer Annie Lennox has also worked to raise awareness of numerous humanitarian causes, particularly on behalf of women and children.

Annie Lennox is the new chancellor of Glasgow Caledonian University

GLASGOW – Annie Lennox has been installed as the first female chancellor of Glasgow Caledonian University.

The singer-songwriter and social activist said she was “humbled and awed beyond measure” to be appointed to the position at the university.

She pledged to use her ceremonial leadership role to further the university’s mission to promote the common good during a special ceremony at its Glasgow campus on Monday, July 2.

The Eurythmics star succeeds Nobel Peace Prize winner Professor Muhammad Yunus in the role of chancellor.

She said, “I am humbled and awed beyond measure. I only wish my parents, grandparents and great grandparents could be here today to witness this special occasion, as it would have filled them with pride and disbelief, proving in some way that miracles can sometimes happen. After all, it’s with thanks to them that I am here in the first place.”

The new chancellor said she has no degree herself but could be described as “an honorary graduate from the school of life.”

She added, “I come from a long line of hard-working Scots from the times

when class boundaries, economic identities and gender roles were very firmly established.

“Young women from working-class backgrounds gaining university degrees were as rare as kangaroos in the Antarctic.”

Students and staff were joined by invited guests including Olympic rower Dame Katherine Grainger, singer-songwriter Midge Ure OBE and Scottish actor Martin Compston at the ceremony.

First Minister Nicola Sturgeon gave a speech while Scotland’s Makar Dr. Jackie Kay, the nation’s official poet, read a specially-commissioned poem to commemorate the occasion.

The singer has sold more than 83 million albums worldwide during a musical career spanning four decades. As well as her time as part of Eurythmics, she has had a solo career and has been recognised with numerous musical awards.

She has also worked to raise awareness about the HIV/AIDS pandemic and received an OBE from the Queen in the New Year’s Honours list in 2011 for her humanitarian work, recognizing her contribution in raising awareness of the pandemic as it affects women and children.

Unseen Change Tips the Balance of Autumnal Days to Come

THE summer solstice has passed. At June 21, the bright year begins to dim, even as most celebrate the start of the summer. So it is that change occurs quietly long before it is apparent to the visible world.

The signs of Lughnasadh, the mature year, are apparent in ripening crops, restless seed, and a certain change in the air that humans recognize as autumn.

Sometimes it arrives in a glance over the water, a scent on the breeze, a curling leaf, or a slightly cooler moment during the dog days. Though you would be hard pressed to explain why, you know that autumn, or something, is coming.

As it is with the seasons, so it is with the senses. When pressed to the core, we live by intuition, by gut sense of who or what we can trust.

Intuition is a mixey thing, it gets scrambled into religion and fate, when a sudden thought or feeling holds us back from a step, journey, or decision that would have otherwise proven difficult from which to recover.

Depending on your narrative, you have your own stories as to why you inexplicably avoided injury or worse.

Sadly, on the list of tips passed around by experts to avoid active shooters is the age-old admonition to “Trust your gut instinct.”

It is a horror that we have returned to such a barbaric age that each cell must be wakeful at all times in order to avoid what could be a slaughter at the supermarket, school, or on a boulevard.

A flash of intuition itself is a byproduct of a process of which we know little.

A pre-cognitive gift from the seamless function of the body, brain, and perhaps something beyond both or not.

By CYNTHIA WALLENTINE



Because pattern recognition is a primary function of the brain, it makes good sense that a human, as a whole, has the capability to understand at a gut level far more than literally meets the eye.

We sometimes know enough to step or move away, or take a different route, or simply not go there today. If not our lives, often intuition saves our sanity.

Since the advent of the Trump administration, the receding superpower of the United States has become a macabre carnival.

When a narcissist is at the helm of home or country, the goal is chaos, simply for the sake of chaos.

Whether civility in the U.S. can be restored when this bizarre episode is over remains a question.

Meanwhile, those who remain rational in the U.S., and those abroad, can only watch the signs.

Children taken from parents, devastating policies enacted on a whim, insipid, childish name-calling from the highest office.

A looming trade war between America and Canada is born of the small-minded ignorance and powerlessness of a handful of people who have the ability to push a deceitful agenda at the expense of decency, thoughtfulness, and vision.

Sniff the air, trust your gut, have and show respect for others.

If there is positive movement on the horizon, it will come from those who resist erosion of honesty, intelligence, and compassion when faced with threat to self and others.

Like the autumn, change occurs long before it is visible in the physical world.

We cannot see where this will go, but we can sense it. We cast our vote with our own beliefs and behavior every single day.

Take in the restless seed at harvest, plant it deep, and wait for spring.

Cynthia Wallentine is based in the United States. She has been writing mythology and social commentary columns for *The Celtic Connection* since 1993.

Prayer for Refugees and Migrants

WILDERNESS God, whose Son was a displaced person in Bethlehem, a refugee in Egypt, and had nowhere to lay his head in Galilee.

Bless all who have nowhere to lay their head tonight, who find themselves strangers on earth, pilgrims to they know not where, facing rejection, closed doors, suspicion and fear.

Give them companions in their distress, hope in their wandering, and safe lodging at their journey’s end.

And make us a people of grace, wisdom and hospitality, who know that our true identity is to be lost, until we find our eternal home in you.

Through Christ, our rejected yet risen Lord. Amen.

— Archbishop Justin Welby
St. Martin in the Fields, London



THE CELTIC CONNECTION

ISSUE 27 VOLUME 5 - Established in 1991

#452 - 4111 Hastings Street, Burnaby, B.C. V5C 6T7

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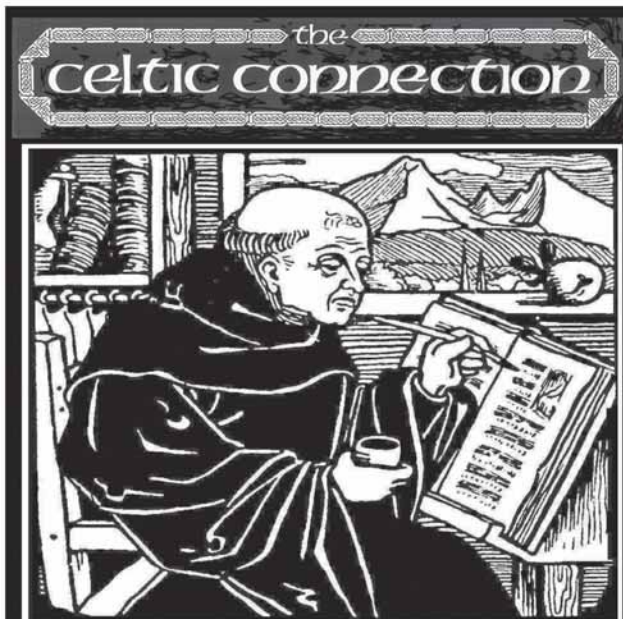
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Distribution: Arlyn Lingat • Allison Moore • Linda Robb • Frank Dudfield in Surrey • Eifion Williams in Burnaby & Coquitlam • Laurie Lang in Coquitlam • Joanne Long in Mission • Bill Duncan in Maple Ridge • Deirdre O’Ruairc in White Rock • Nanci Spieker, Tina Bonfield and Heather Murphy in Seattle • Oliver Grealish in Edmonton.

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Canada Post Canadian Publications Agreement 40009398



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Recovery Day: A Free Event to Celebrate Overcoming Addiction

NEW WESTMINSTER – Mark your calendar for the 7th annual Recovery Day BC event happening at 6th Avenue and 6th Street in New Westminster, from 12-5 PM on Saturday, September 8, 2018.

Orchard Recovery Center is proud to have been a part of a team that initiated the Recovery Day movement in 2012, and continues to support the movement year after year.

Recovery Day BC is Canada's largest mental health and addiction awareness event.

THE ENTERTAINMENT

This year's event features a free concert with Matthew Good at 4 PM, as well as other live music, a kids zone, over 90 mental health and addiction information booths, free McDonald's coffee, free speaker presentations on

health care, a memorial exhibit, and much more.

Whether you are in recovery from a drug or alcohol addiction, an ally to someone who is in recovery, looking for addiction recovery resources, or you just think that sobriety is awesome you're invited! Everyone is welcome to celebrate recovery.

Now in its seventh year, Recovery Day BC is once again shutting down the streets of New West for this substance-free, wicked-awesome and family-friendly event.

Part music festival, part street party, and part educational event, Recovery Day BC is a celebration, a rally, and a tool to raise awareness for recovery while reducing the stigma of addiction.

THE GOAL

Recovery Day aims to celebrate recovery while remembering those lost due to addiction. With over 10,000 people who attended the 2017 event, organizers want to bring awareness to Canadians in recovery from alcohol and drug addictions.

Alongside families, friends, and allies, their goal is to speak with one voice, to send a message that recovery is possible.

This gathering helps to change public perception of what recovery from addiction looks like, and promote public policy change across the country.

On September 8, people in recovery from addiction will join with friends and family to build awareness, challenge societal stigma, and celebrate the role that recovery plays in improving life for individuals, families, and communities.

They firmly believe that recovery saves lives and they envision a world in which recovery from addiction is a common, celebrated reality – a world where individuals will not experience shame when seeking help.

Participants are passionate about sharing the faces, voices and stories of recovery in hopes of inspiring and inviting others to join them on the rewarding and diverse path to wholeness.

This September, be present to stand alongside thousands of others who are proud to be clean and sober from drugs and alcohol, as well as their allies.

From humble roots in Vancouver, Recovery Day has grown into a national phenomena with events taking place all across the country. For more information, head to RecoveryDayBC.ca.

The Orchard is an internationally accredited drug and alcohol treatment center operating on Bowen Island since 2002, and provides a full complement of treatment options to build a solid foundation for recovery.

From residential primary care starting with detox, to continuing care outpatient program in West Vancouver, as well as family and alumni services, they provide ongoing support for a lasting recovery.

The Orchard is committed to eradicating the stigma of addiction and fostering a new, sustainable culture of recovery. They build strong communities of recovery that, in turn make meaningful contributions to society as a whole. They are leaders in the growing recovery advocacy movement in Canada and they celebrate recovery!

To learn more, visit online: OrchardRecovery.com.

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The Highland Games
Sunday, September 2, 8 am - 5:30 pm
Join us for a full slate of outdoor events comprising the Highland Games: Pancake breakfast, highland dancing, piping and drumming, heavy sports, tug of war contest, sheep dogs, clan tents, Celtic market, Scotch tasting, traditional food and beverages, beer tent with live music, food trucks, massed bands and more.

The Canmore Ceilidh
Sunday, September 2, 6 - 11 pm
THE MUDMEN
The evening Ceilidh is a spirited celebration of music and dance, kitchen-party fashion, Scottish country dancing, Highland Dance, Irish Dance, guest pipe band, and live Celtic music by the Mudmen, and a variety of other acts for your entertainment all evening long!

Advance tickets & bundles available online now:
canmorehighlandgames.ca

Those lazy, hazy, crazy days of summer... filled with great festivals and lots of music!

VANCOUVER – It's summer in western Canada, and that means it's folk festival season with some of the finest musical events on earth happening out here in B.C. and Alberta.

The Rogue hosted two bands from the impressive line-up of this year's Harrison Festival of the Arts (www.harrisonfestival.com) this past week – **Laura Cortese & the Dancecards** and **The StepCrew**.

On Thursday 12th, **Martin Simpson**, one of the finest guitar players on the planet will grace the stage at St. James Hall in Kitsilano before he heads over the Strait of Georgia to appear at Courtenay's Island Musicfest – along with some fine Celtic bands like **The Fretless**, and **The StepCrew**, and PEI's remarkable singer **Irish Mythen**. (www.islandmusicfest.com).

Arguably the finest acoustic guitarist in the U.K., and certainly one of the very best players you'll find *anywhere*, Martin Simpson's latest CD, *Trails & Tribulations*, continues an ever-evolving and increasingly impressive catalogue of albums showcasing his mastery of traditional music from both sides of the Atlantic.

Martin grew up in England, first absorbing the Blues and Folk records in his older brother's collection and then embarking on a solo career as a teenager opening for bigger names at folk clubs all over the country.

He later teamed up with the amazing trad singer **June Tabor** and they released a series of superb albums in the 1970s and 1980s before Martin moved to the States.

There he made several instrumental albums on **Shanachie Records** – exquisite renderings of trad ballads, where he built in all the power of the words and the sentiment expressed – without vocals!

He also made an instrumental album of gospel tunes, and his mastery of the blues really came to the fore as he continued his sojourn from upstate New York to Santa Cruz and then New Orleans.

He returned to England a few years ago, where he married Roy Bailey's daughter Kit and they now live in Sheffield with their young daughter Molly.

If anything he has become even more prolific in his recorded output – and even more impressive on guitar, banjo, and voice.

His renditions of songs like *Fair Annie*, *Lord Gregory*, *Spoonful*, *Heartbreak Hotel*, *Reynardine*, and *Masters of War* are as powerful as any you'll hear. His own songs like *Never Any Good*, *Ridgeway*, and *Maps* are equally memorable.

If you love traditional music, blues, guitar, Dylan, banjo, Celtic music – or any or all of the above – you can't go wrong with a Martin Simpson concert! Don't miss this rare chance to hear him in town. For tickets and information go to www.roguefolk.com.

Unfortunately, Island Musicfest runs



By
**STEVE
EDGE**

THE ROGUE FOLK CLUB



MARTIN SIMPSON, one of the finest guitar players on the planet will grace the Rogue stage at St. James Hall in Kitsilano on Thursday, July 12.



SHARON SHANNON, the extraordinary Irish accordionist makes a return to this year's Edmonton Folk Music Festival, August 9-12.

on the exact same weekend as the **Vancouver Folk Festival in Jericho Beach Park** (July 13 - 15).

There's not a great deal of Celtic music there, either, but don't miss Irish songwriter **Mick Flannery**, and **Jayne Stone's Folklife**, featuring superb trad singer **Moirá Smiley**.

You'll also surely love the Cajun / Zydeco sounds of **Louisiana's Steve Riley & The Mamou Playboys** (my personal favourite Cajun combo) and the delicious Quebecois groove of **Les Poules a Colin**. (www.thefestival.bc.ca)

The **Mission Folk Festival** runs July 20 - 22 in Fraser River Heritage Park, 80km east of town on Hwy 7. **James Keelaghan**, **David Francey**, **Gabriel Dubreuil's Early Spirit**, **Pharis & Jason Romero**, **Viper Central**, and local Irish bard **Brian O'Brien** are among the performers this year. Pretty impressive line-up, I reckon! (www.missionfolkmusicfestival.ca)



VIPER CENTRAL will feature at this year's RogueFEST at Granville Island's new Chain & Forge stage. This free outdoor event runs from noon to 6 PM on Sunday, July 29.

Meanwhile over in Duncan B.C., Islands Folk Festival features the likes of B.C. stringband **Aerialists**, **James Keelaghan**, **The Sweet Lowdown**, and **Oliver Swain**. (www.islandsfolkfestival.ca)

The **Filberg Festival** in Comox runs August 3-5 with **Jim Byrnes**, **The Paperboys**, and **Tiller's Folly** among the performers on their wonderful site. (www.filbergfestival.com)

Over the mountains in Canmore, AB, they have one of the most friendly and musically interactive festivals in the country – the **Canmore Folk Festival** takes place August 4-6 and their eclectic selection of musical guests includes two brilliant duos from Nova Scotia – **Cassie & Maggie**, and **Dave**

Gunning & J.P. Cormier. (www.canmorefolkfestival.com)

The festival I rate as the finest in North America – if not Earth! – the **Edmonton Folk Music Festival**, takes place in Gallagher Park August 9 -12. Co. Clare's **Sharon Shannon** makes a welcome return this year, and another great accordionist from just up the road in Galway – **Mairtin O'Connor** – brings his fine trio along with **Gloaming** vocalist **Iarla O'Lionaird**.

Scotland's **Breabach**, and **Rura**, and the seemingly ubiquitous **StepCrew**, **James Keelaghan**, **Jayne Stone's Folklife**, and **Martin Simpson** will add more sumptuous trad music to the Rolls Royce of folk festivals. (www.edmontonfolkfest.org)

Salmon Arm Roots & Blues rounds out the festival season August 16 - 19 and that man Mr. Simpson will be there, along with the likes of **The Paperboys**, and the wonderful English trad duo **Hannah Sanders** and **Ben Savage**. (www.rootsandblues.ca)

Of course, all these festivals will feature a lot more than just Celtic and trad, so why not explore their websites and venture out to witness the music and the unique vibe of these mighty fine Canadian festivals!

The Rogue holds a festival of its own on Sunday, July 29.

RogueFEST is a free musical event with a beer garden and food trucks on Granville Island's new Chain & Forge outdoor stage.

The event runs from noon to 6 PM, with **Sue Malcolm's Slow Pitch Jam**, **The Rocket Revellers**, **Viper Central**, and **Van Django** conjuring up some magical sounds in genres ranging from Bluegrass to Gypsy Jazz, and Old Time Stomp to Rockabilly!

You can read more about this event, and take a look at our fall season on www.roguefolk.com I think you're really going to love the music at St. James Hall this fall!

*Slainte!
Steve*

P.S. tune in to **The Saturday Edge On Folk** every Saturday from 8 AM to noon on CTR FM 101.9 and www.citr.ca to hear music by all these performers as well as heaps of new releases – and old favourites too!

Irish singer left fighting for life after spider bite while on Australian tour

DUBLIN – Legendary Irish singer Mary Coughlan said she was left fighting for her life following a spider bite while on tour in Australia.

Coughlan was hospitalised for five days after being bitten during the sell-out tour. The vocalist said she noticed a bite on the end of her finger shortly after waking up in Alice Springs.

"Over the next few days it turned into a rash all over my body," Coughlan told the *Irish Sun* on June 29. "I went to a medical centre and they told me it was most likely caused by a bite from a non-poisonous spider."

After being prescribed antihistamines, Coughlan said she pushed on to finish the rest of her tour – but fell seriously ill on her return to Ireland.

"I thought I was dying. I was in hospital for five days with what the doctors said was blood poisoning," she said.

But Coughlan said that her brush with death wasn't the worst of it. Obviously unsatisfied with its Northern Territory life, the creepy crawlly had accompanied Coughlan on the journey home.

"I got better but what freaked me out was finding a spider had followed me all the way back from Australia," she said.

Coughlan said she found the uninvited guest when unpacking her luggage following her return home from hospital.



MARY COUGHLAN

"I had bought some Ugg boots for my granddaughter in Sydney, and carried them around with me as I played Can-

berra and Melbourne," she said.

"Now back home in Ireland, I could see a spider crawling out on to the floor. We had no idea what sort of spider it was but my son-in-law killed it. It freaked me out that the spider that bit me could have followed me home from Australia.

"My daughter was sure it was the spider that did the damage but you can't be sure. It's just a lesson to be careful not to bring back little bugs from abroad."



U2 to develop visitor centre in Dublin's docklands

DUBLIN – The long-planned U2 visitor attraction in the docklands area of Dublin City is set to become one of Ireland's top tourist attractions.

The visitor and exhibition space will house and display a range of the band's memorabilia from their long-spanning career.

The attraction is to be constructed on the site of their current recording and rehearsal studio where the band recorded many of their best known albums, including 1997's *Pop*.

It will include a revamp of the group's original studio, which has been their base for more than two decades, plus several exhibit areas, an auditorium and a café.

There is already a permanent U2 exhibition at the Little Museum of Dublin on St. Stephen's Green but the capital has no public spaces or landmarks to recognize the band's achievements.

Fear of Drinking release new album... almost 10 years after first recorded

By CATHOLINE BUTLER

VANCOUVER – Celtic/folk music partners Tim Readman and Gerard Kerr recently released their fourth album entitled *Live in Zurich*.

Readman is a musician, songwriter, producer and music journalist originally from County Durham in England, while Gerard Kerr is from Southland, New Zealand.

The two musicians met in Vancouver and formed Fear of Drinking in the 1990s and made a name for themselves while touring across Canada, the U.S., and beyond, playing folk clubs, night spots and folk festivals.

They recorded three albums which garnered considerable airplay and built a solid reputation for humour and harmony with tales of coal and sheep, and love gone wrong.

The name came about when Tim and Gerard each had day jobs and played music at night. After their gig was finished they would often joke about their fear of drinking with their day job in mind. The name stuck.

Interestingly, their new album *Live in Zurich* was actually recorded during their legendary 1999 European tour. So, you may ask why is the album only now being released in 2018?

It's an intriguing story and, initially, a devastating one for the duo.

In a recent conversation, Tim explains how it happened.

"The main reason that we were in Europe was to play a festival in Zurich. The show was recorded and afterwards we spoke with Ueli Brunner, the sound engineer who promised to post the tape to us a bit later."

Unfortunately there was a communication breakdown and after a long delay, Tim and Gerard finally learned the audio file couldn't be located.

It was only later when it was discovered that the master tape was not lost at all – it had simply been misfiled in the wrong folder.

When the missing tape was finally received, they were delighted to discover that it was an excellent quality recording.

Tim said, "We were over the moon and decided to put it out in an album."

One poignant song on the new album is *Aftermath (The Mining Rant)*, written by Tim Readman. It recalls the 1984 coal miners' strike when the UK workers tried to form a union.

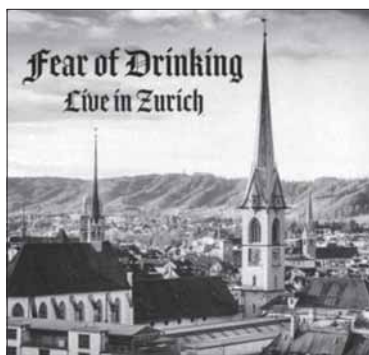
Readman spoke about that strike and how it influenced his music saying, "the song was written after the miners' strike in England and I emigrated in 1987."

"I was inspired to write this because a very good friend of mine, who is a well-known English folk singer called Jez Lowe had released an album with songs about the strike."

"I'm from Durham where there were three coal mines and it had a huge effect on my family, friends and neighbours."

"At that time, a lot of false news and misinformation was being reported in the papers about what really happened. The song was actually taken from a lot of newspaper reports."

"When the strike was over and all the



VANCOUVER based musician, songwriter, producer and music journalist, Tim Readman is originally from County Durham in England



DURHAM 1984 during the UK miners' strike.

pits were closed down, you finally started to read more factual accounts about what had really happened.

"It was not economics as had been reported previously, the miners were essentially striking to make a living. The government at the time didn't want strong unions."

"Margaret Thatcher, who was then the prime minister of Britain, called the miners 'the enemy within' and made it sound like the miners were all crazy terrorists as opposed to people just standing up for their rights."

As with a lot of folk songs, Readman's songs document real people and events, and help to keep their story alive.

He also spoke about another track on the album called, *Flanagan*, written by Gerard Kerr.

"Barney Flanagan was a very well-known publican who kept a bar in New Zealand. He was an Irishman, who was a drinker, a gambler and a womanizer."

"It tells the story about the last day of his life and nothing changes. He goes to the bar, starts gambling, and in the middle of the card game passes away."

"But, as portrayed in the song, he is visited by the angel of death just as he is about to play the winning card."

Tim added, "This is pretty typical of folk songs, generally written about real people, and sometimes with just a bit embellishment."

The Seaham Song, written by Readman/Naomi Readman is another track with some great, fast and furious fiddling.

Tom Neville and Victor Smith are both excellent fiddlers, really bending the elbow into the bow.

There are nine tracks on *Live in Zurich* with a mixture of traditional music and original songs, and it's a very good and lively listen.

Although, officially retired off the road in 2000, Tim and Gerard have since reformed and now play the odd show whenever the fancy takes them.

You can catch Fear of Drinking in concert at the Mission Folk Music Festival from July 20-22.



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TOP 10 CELTIC HITS FOR JULY

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:

1. *Sinead Maire's* by Lunasa - Cas on Lunasa Records.
2. *Do People Still Do This?* by Aidan O'Rourke - 365: Volume 1 on Reveal Records.
3. *Asphalteuse* by Genticorum - *Avant l'Orage* on independent.
4. *Rainy Tuesday Morning* by Pat Chessell - *I Confess* on independent.
5. *ID Circulaire* by MAZ - *ID* on Production MAZ.
6. *'S Trusaidh mi no Coilleagan* by Daimh - *The Rough Bounds* on Independent.
7. *Le Laurier Blanc* by Les Poules A Colin - *Morose* on Independent.
8. *The Brocca Set* by Pete's Posse - *The Conversation* on Epact Music.
9. *Drums of Chelsea* by The Go Set - *One Fine Day* on ABC Music.
10. *Reptiles (We Woke Up)* by Flogging Molly - *Life is Good* on Vanguard.

Celt In A Twist - Pick Of The Month:
AIDAN O'ROURKE - 365: Volume 1
(Reveal Records)



WORK underway as Glasgow prepares to jointly host the 2018 European Championships in partnership with Berlin.

Glasgow 2018 European Championships

GLASGOW – A new era in world sport will get underway this summer as Glasgow and Berlin host the inaugural European Championships from August 2-12, 2018.

Glasgow and Scotland will host six sports (Aquatics, Cycling, Golf, Gymnastics, Rowing and Triathlon) across 12 venues in partnership with the city of Berlin which will host the Athletics.

It is hoped the joint partnership will elevate the status of European Championships in each sport and attract a large continental audience.

As part of the event Glasgow will host the European Cycling Championships, including the Road Race and Time Trial cycling events which provide an historic opportu-

nity to join the roaring crowds which will greet the best riders from across the continent as they race past iconic city sights.

A total of 52 nations will take part in seven sports – the biggest multisports event in the U.K. since the 2014 Commonwealth Games.

More than 3,000 athletes will travel to Scotland as part of a total delegation of around 8,500 including officials and media.

Another 1,500 athletes will compete at Berlin 2018 – athletics will be held at the Olympic Stadium, with road races and race walking events held throughout the city.

With a potential television audience of up to 1.3 billion across Europe set to watch the action, Glasgow and Scotland will again be in the spotlight during these free events.

Hemochromatosis awareness raised at this year's Toronto Fringe Festival

TORONTO – Hemochromatosis awareness has broken through to the fringe – the Toronto Fringe Festival, that is.

Hemochromatosis has a role in *Robert*, an new award-winning play written and co-directed by Briana Brown, a 2014 Masters graduate in creative writing at the University of British Columbia.

A witty and graceful comedy, *Robert* delivers laughs and heart while taking on difficult questions of identity, grief and loss....with a set of bagpipes.

Briana Brown summarizes saying, "Kat and James are waiting for their father to die. Not exactly estranged, but certainly not close. The two struggle to make conversation until James reveals the worst secret he possibly could."

A key plot point of the story is the father's genetic condition, and Briana's Scottish background provides the springboard for the story's heritage component highlighted by plaid, bagpipes and Celtic genes.

As she wrote the story, Briana realized she needed to name the hereditary condition that causes the demise of the father.

She searched for something that was known for its difficulty to be recognized by doctors and commonly mistaken for other medical issues.

After a month of what Briana describes as "dating" a few different genetic conditions, she landed on the perfect fit: hereditary hemochromatosis.

"It was by chance, and slightly eerie how perfectly it worked within the context of what I'd already written," said Briana.

Hereditary hemochromatosis is a disorder most commonly seen in persons of Celtic and Northern European heritage.

Globally, the incidence of the disorder is highest in Ireland and Brittany (France). In Canada, the incidence in the general population is approximately one in 300.

Hemochromatosis is a genetic metabolic disorder that causes the body to retain and store excessive amounts of iron.

Left untreated, the iron builds up in in tissues and organs where it can cause a number of debilitating and potentially



PLAYWRIGHT Briana Brown delivers laughs and heart in her new award-winning play *Robert* which examines identity and loss...with a set of bagpipes.

"It is such a common condition, yet so under-recognized"

fatal complications and diseases.

Because early symptoms can be non-specific and attributed to many other causes, hemochromatosis can be difficult to diagnose until more extensive damage has occurred. Even then, hemochromatosis is often overlooked as the root cause in a disease.

Early symptoms can include fatigue, joint pain and impotence in men or menstrual irregularities in women.

Later complications can include type II diabetes, heart disease, thyroid issues and cirrhosis.

Diagnosing the disorder early is the key to preventing complications. Treatment involves the drawing off of blood, similar to a blood donation but on a more frequent basis.

Briana joined several Facebook hemochromatosis groups to learn the medical terminology and casual ways people talk about the disorder.

She worked with Janelle Hanna and Chris Baker, the two actors who portray the siblings, helping them to wrap their heads around the different combinations of genetic inheritance of the disorder.

Prioritizing accuracy and respectfulness to hemochromatosis sufferers and their families, Briana has high hopes that she has been successful, but confided that she would love someone to approach her after watching the play to let her know if she was off base.

When asked if during her research for the play she worried that she would potentially find something that would expose her own genetic risk for a fatal condition, Briana replied with an emphatic "Yes!"

Now that she is aware of hemochromatosis and how it can affect those with a northern European background, she keeps an eye out for the warning signs in her own family.

A brief description of hemochromatosis with a link to the Canadian Hemochromatosis Society's website www.toomuchiron.ca is included in the show's program.

Robert will certainly help raise the profile of this under-diagnosed disorder.

"It is such a common condition, yet so under-recognized.

"I was fascinated to discover that a mission is currently underway to promote awareness," said Briana, "particularly through the governments of key countries where people are most at risk. It's hard to believe something so prevalent can still be so unknown."

Receiving its world premiere at the Toronto Fringe Festival, *Robert* is playing on site July 4-14 at St. George the Martyr, 197 John Street, Toronto, Ontario. Tickets are available at fringetoronto.com.

[The Canadian Hemochromatosis Society's mission is to strengthen the well-being of Canadians affected by iron overload through its programs designed to foster awareness and early detection of hemochromatosis. You can support this mission with a donation to the Canadian Hemochromatosis Society, 285 – 7000 Minoru Blvd., Richmond, BC V6Y 3Z5. More information can be found at www.toomuchiron.ca/celtic.]

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President Trump Will Reportedly Meet with Queen Elizabeth in July

LONDON – Donald Trump will reportedly meet with Queen Elizabeth during his controversial visit to the UK this month.

The trip will take place on Friday the 13th – after Trump stops off in Brussels for a summit of NATO leaders.

According to reports, the U.S. president will not receive the full fanfare of a state visit on the one-day trip.

Trump will likely visit the British monarch at Windsor Castle and will also meet with Prime Minister Theresa May while in the country.

Downing Street has insisted the invitation for a full state visit still stands, but there is no timetable for it to take place.

Back in January, Trump canceled a trip to the United Kingdom amid threats of protest. He tweeted that the reason was because he was unhappy that the U.S. embassy was moving.

Trump claimed displeasure at Barack Obama having sold the previous premises in Mayfair for “peanuts” and building a 1.2 billion dollar replacement. The sale of the building was signed off when George W. Bush was still in the White House and was reportedly made for security reasons.

Human rights groups have vowed to protest against the visit. Amnesty International UK’s director, Kate Allen, said, “When Donald Trump arrives on these shores, we and thousands of our supporters will very definitely be making our voices heard.”

“Since moving into the White House, Mr. Trump has shown an impatience bordering on intolerance toward peaceful protests, the media and even the democratic process itself.”

The Liberal Democrat deputy leader, Jo Swinson, said her party would protest against Trump’s visit. “It is our opportunity to stand in solidarity with all the people he has abused and denigrated,” she said.

The visit was initially announced in January of 2017 during Theresa May’s visit to the White House, when she extended an invitation to President Donald Trump and the first lady.

“I have today been able to convey her majesty the Queen’s hope President Trump and the first lady would pay a state visit to the United Kingdom later this year, and I’m delighted the president accepted that invitation,” May said at the time.

The notion of Trump meeting with the Queen immediately prompted a petition to block the visit. It has since garnered nearly 1.9 million signatures.

“Donald Trump’s well documented misogyny and vulgarity disqualifies him from being received by Her Majesty the Queen or the Prince of Wales,” reads the document.

The controversy was compounded by deeply unpopular statements Trump made on Twitter, following the terrorist attack at London Bridge, about Mayor Sadiq Khan.

There are plans to fly a giant inflatable figure depicting Donald Trump as a baby over London during his visit. The plan was given the green light by Mayor Khan.

Campaigners raised almost £18,000 for the helium-filled six-metre high figure, which they said reflects Trump’s character as an “angry baby with a fragile ego and tiny hands.”



DONALD TRUMP will visit the UK this month for the first time since being elected. Human rights groups have vowed to protest against the visit.



THE REVELATION that two more people have been exposed to the nerve agent Novichok has shocked people in Salisbury, England. The couple, Dawn Sturgess and Charlie Rowley, were found unconscious on June 30. In March ex-Russian spy Sergei Skripal and his daughter Yulia were poisoned with the same nerve agent.

UK couple poisoned by Novichok nerve agent

LONDON – Two people found unconscious in a UK town were poisoned with the same nerve agent as ex-Russian spy Sergei Skripal and his daughter Yulia, police say.

On Sunday, July 8 it was reported that Dawn Sturgess (44) has died following exposure to the nerve agent Novichok, bringing new urgency to the four-month-old diplomatic standoff in which Britain has accused Russia of sending the poison in a botched attempt to kill the former spy.

Sturgess and her partner Charlie Rowley (45) were found unconscious at a house in Amesbury on Saturday, June 30.

Authorities believe the couple was exposed to Novichok, a resilient and resistant military-grade nerve agent developed by the Soviet Union in the 1970s and 1980s.

Novichok takes effect within minutes, blocking messages from the nerves to the muscles causing bodily functions to collapse.

Charlie Rowley remains in a critical condition in hospital.

Police say the most likely hypothesis is that this is leftover Novichok from the attack back in March.

England’s chief medical officer, Sally

Davies, said, “I want to reassure the public that the risk to the general public remains low.”

The revelation that two more people have been exposed to the nerve agent Novichok has shocked people in Salisbury.

Residents have experienced months of disruption and anxiety since the poisoning of the Skripals in March. Now many are wondering whether, despite a clean-up operation, their city is safe.

Russia has denied any involvement.

In recent months, investigators have said little about the evidence they have gathered and they have named no suspects. And the Skripals recovered, allowing the crime to fall off the front pages.

Sturgess’s death is likely to change that, forcing Britain to reassert its suspicions just as Russia is enjoying an international spotlight as host of the 2018 World Cup.

“It becomes a murder, and it’s involving a British national rather than a Russian national,” said James Nixey, head of the Russia and Eurasia program at Chatham House, a research group in London. “It stiffens resolve where resolve was ebbing.”

It also presents another urgent challenge for the British authorities: The contamination, it appears, was more widespread than initially thought.



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For more information: www.vancouverfiddleorchestra.ca

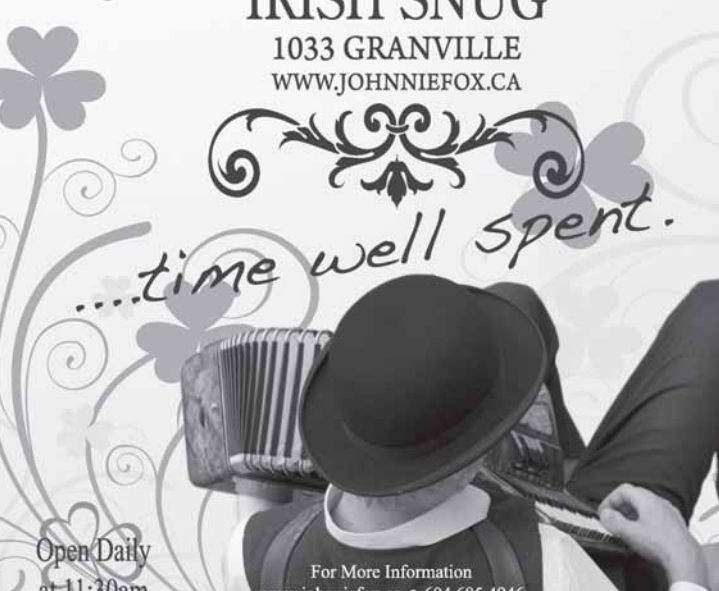
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The Scottish Dilemma: England or ABE for the World Cup

EDINBURGH – The first World Cup that I watched when I lived in Vancouver was Mexico '86. Both Scotland and Canada were in it, though not for long.

Canada, as those of a certain vintage will remember, lost all three group games without scoring a goal. Scotland scored one goal, lost two games, drew one and was sent homewards to think again as quickly as Canada.

Hindsight, as they say, is 20/20 but it didn't strike me at the time that it would be a wee while before I again had two teams to support in the same world cup.

Scotland qualified in 1990 and 1998 and defeats by Costa Rica in the former and Morocco in the latter helped ensure the same outcome as 1986.

Canada, as any long suffering Canadian soccer fan will tell you, have now gone 22 years without gracing the finals of the world's premier tournament.

This brings us neatly to Russia 2018 and who to support in the absence of one's *choix du coeur*.

As sure as night follows day, Scotland's failure to qualify for the world cup finals will itself be followed by a debate about whether or not the Scots should support England.

This year is no exception and the debate may even have provided a little more heat than usual when the Scotland Office decided to fly the English flag over its premises in London to show support for manager Gareth Southgate and his team.

The debate is neatly divided between the rational and the visceral. The rational side centres, to some extent, on the character and personality of manager Southgate himself.

He recently described his team in these terms, "We have a chance to affect something bigger than ourselves."

"We're a team with our diversity and youth that represents modern England and in England we've spent a bit of time being lost as to what our identity is and I think as a team we represent that modern identity and hopefully people can connect with us."

Southgate has the most ethnically diverse squad ever to represent England at the world cup and his celebration of its diversity is a breath of fresh air compared to some of the narratives that accompanied Brexit.

His young players interview well and seem to take their cues from the manager when dealing with the public demands that are placed upon them.

They also, incidentally, play a style of football which is easy on the eye compared to some of the England teams of the recent past.

Yet Southgate and his team notwithstanding, I found myself letting out an involuntary "Yes" when Tunisia scored against England in their first game.

And friends who watched it in the pub tell me that there was much whooping and dancing around by people wearing ABE (Anyone But England) t-shirts.

One possible explanation is that this is a reaction to some English commentators who are quick to engage in national stereotyping and are never far from a "cheating foreigner" calumny.



By
**HARRY
McGRATH**



Perhaps the insufferable commentators are just a handy excuse for not supporting England, but I prefer it to the various "Scotland jealous and parochial" explanations that get bandied around.

As often happens, the most concise take was to be found on Twitter. One person tweeted "I don't support England because I'm not [expletive deleted] English."

Meanwhile in Canada the obligation

to support the giant southern neighbour, muted at the best of times, was removed entirely by the failure of the United States to qualify and there's some hope for the future via the prospect of Canada co-hosting World Cup 2026 with Mexico and the U.S.

The 2026 finals will be expanded from 32 to 48 teams and FIFA is to decide next year which of the hosts will get automatic qualification. If it decides in favour of all three, then Canada's ship will have come in 40 years after it qualified for Mexico.

We're a long way from the 1930 to 1954 era when Canada didn't even enter the tournament and the 1962 World Cup in Chile when the Canadian Soccer Association withdrew the team before the initial qualifying rounds.

It forfeited the \$250 entrance fee on the grounds that the Canadian team was unlikely to beat both Mexico and the U.S. to qualify and, even if it did, the CSA couldn't afford the trip to South America for the finals.

Contrast this with the so-called "blank cheque" arrangement for 2026 which put paid to Vancouver's chances of becoming a host city.

An optimist might point out that we have skipped over Qatar 2022 where the dark blue of Scotland and the red of Canada may yet swelter in the Al-Bhayt or Ahmed bin Ali stadiums.

I wouldn't hang my hat on it though. Scotland and Canada in the same finals in anything other than curling remains a distant prospect. 2026 it is. Or never again.

England reaches World Cup semi-final for the first time since Italia 90 SWEDEN 0 - 2 ENGLAND

ENGLAND has reached the World Cup semi-final for the first time since Italia 90 as Harry Maguire and Dele Alli struck either side of the interval to beat Sweden on July 7 in Samara, Russia.

Gareth Southgate's side will now face Croatia in Moscow's Luzhniki Stadium on Wednesday, July 11 after overcoming a stubborn Sweden challenge in this quarter-final, with help from a magnificent display by goalkeeper Jordan Pickford.

Maguire, outstanding once more, broke the deadlock on the half-hour when another England set-piece bore fruit - Leicester City's powerful defender flashing a header past Sweden keeper Robin Olsen from Ashley Young's corner.

Everton keeper Pickford then snuffed out Sweden's hopes of recovery with a superb save from Marcus Berg, before England sealed their victory after 58 minutes when Alli headed in Jesse Lingard's cross at the far post.

Pickford denied Viktor Claesson and then Berg one more time to secure his first World Cup clean sheet as England closed out this landmark win with something to spare.

Southgate and his England players repeated the scenes from the dramatic penalty shootout win over Colombia as they celebrated in front of joyous supporters at the final whistle - one step closer to history and with expectation levels raised once more as they stand one game away from football's greatest occasion.

The Three Lions are in the last four for only the third time. They went on to win their home tournament in 1966 but lost to West Germany on penalties in 1990.

But the peculiar way this World Cup has shaped up means they will now play the team ranked 20th in the world for a place in the final - against either Belgium or France.

England boss Gareth Southgate said, "We knew it was going to be such a different game from the other night, to come back having had extra-time and penalties, with the emotions of it to lift ourselves through a completely different test."

"I can't speak highly enough of the whole squad and whole group of staff because it is so united in there."

"The level of work has been great and their commitment to each other, you don't get through with just 11 players. They are all top people and are the reason we are in the semi-final just as much as any other."



GLASGOW School of Art's famous Mackintosh building will be partially demolished after fire guts it for a second time on Friday, June 15. The building was still under restoration following a smaller blazer four years ago.

'Heartbreaking': Fire guts Glasgow School of Art for second time

GLASGOW – The Glasgow School of Art has been devastated by a huge fire. Flames tore through the famous Mackintosh building while it was undergoing a major restoration, only four years after parts of the building were destroyed by a smaller blaze.

The building now appears to have been gutted by the fire and had its roof and upper floors destroyed.

Glasgow City Council has confirmed parts of the building need to be demolished after surveys found the structure had moved more than previously thought.

Firefighters were unable to enter the building because of fears its walls might collapse. More than 120 firefighters and 20 appliances were called to tackle the blaze, which began late on Friday, June 15 and spread to a neighbouring music venue, the O2 ABC.

Residents said the heat was so intense it could be felt several streets away, with chunks of blazing timber and debris raining down on neighbouring streets.

Police evacuated 27 people from nearby properties as a precaution, but there were no reported casualties.

The building was designed by the art nouveau architect and designer Charles Rennie Mackintosh, whose designs extended to the smallest detail, including its furniture, lamps and glass inlays.

Its most famous feature was its library, which housed many rare and archival materials as well as original furniture and fittings, and was gutted by the 2014 fire.

The city celebrated the 150th anniversary of Mackintosh's birth just a week earlier, when one of his other famous buildings, the Willow Tea Rooms nearby, reopened after a refurbishment.



RESIDENTS said the heat was so intense it could be felt several streets away, with chunks of blazing timber and debris raining down on neighbouring streets.

Distressing scenes at Grenfell Public Inquiry

LONDON – A woman collapsed outside the Grenfell Tower public inquiry, others were seen burying their faces in their hands and people flooded from the room in tears, as footage of the fire was shown without warning.

The devastating blaze killed 72 people and destroyed the 24-storey Grenfell Tower, a residential tower block in North Kensington, London, England, on June 14, 2017.

The inquiry was ordered by Prime Minister Theresa May on the day following the fire.

The first two weeks of the inquiry, led by retired judge Sir Martin Moore-Bick, were given over to hearing tributes from relatives of those who died.

The film had formed part of a commemoration to the Choucair family, three generations of whom died in the fire.

Many affected were seen burying their faces in their hands and people flooded from the room in tears.

Inquiry staff were supposed to notify those in attendance, including many survivors and bereaved relatives, before images of the tower appeared.

Instead, phone camera footage flashed on both screens at the Millennium Gloucester Hotel, South Kensington, showing flames engulfing the block.

Acknowledging his failure to warn survivors about the shocking imagery, Bernard Richmond QC said, "I'm sorry that the warning that should have been put out didn't get put out."

It was later learned that someone had hit a switch by accident to cause the video to run.

The dramatic development came towards the end of a second emotional day at the inquiry when 13 victims were commemorated: Debbie Lamprell, Maria del Pilar Burton, Rania Ibrahim, her daughters Fethia and Hania, Khadija Saye, Mary Mendy and the six members of the Choucair family. Hesham Rahman was also due to be honoured.

Survivors have told the inquiry of their anger at the fire brigade's advice to stay inside, which discouraged many families from fleeing the flames and smoke.

In later testimony, one of the first firefighters to enter the Grenfell Tower inferno broke down in tears as video footage of his arrival at the flat of origin was played to the inquiry.

Charles Batterbee, a crew manager at North Kensington fire station, was one of two officers tasked with extinguishing a kitchen fire on the fourth floor of the block.

The firefighter was led from the room by an usher, wiping his eyes as he walked while the inquiry was paused.

He is the second firefighter to become distressed while recounting the night of the blaze at the hearing.

Earlier, Michael Dowden, the watch manager who was in charge of the operational response for the first hour of the blaze, wept after seeing footage of the burning tower.

Storm Clouds Over Europe as EU Leaders Meet in Brussels

LONDON – As European Union leaders prepared to meet in Brussels for the last time this year, three major items dominated the agenda: Brexit, defense and migration.

Advance preparations, however, have hardly gone to plan.

British Prime Minister Theresa May arrived in the Belgian capital reeling from a parliamentary defeat on Brexit, just as her European counterparts were set to back moving on to the second phase of Brexit negotiations.

The British parliament voted in favor of an amendment that gives it the right to approve or reject any Brexit deal reached by the government.

Tensions surrounding the EU's migration scheme also boiled to the surface again on the eve of the summit, with European Council President Donald Tusk criticizing mandatory relocation as "ineffective" and "highly divisive."

While his comments were denounced as "anti-European," the scheme has been far from successful.

Of the 160,000 migrants planned to be relocated, only 32,000 have found a new home. Meanwhile, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia and the Czech Republic have fiercely opposed the plan from the start and have repeatedly refused to accept asylum seekers.

According to reports, the four countries, which together make up the Visegrad group, said they were prepared to commit around 35 million euro



THERESA MAY arrives at the European Council summit in Brussels on Thursday, June 28.

(\$41 million) towards beefing up the EU's border protection scheme, instead of taking in migrants.

Tusk also issued a "last call" for the UK to agree on its position on Brexit, saying the "most difficult" issues were unresolved and "quick progress" was needed if agreement was to be reached by the next meeting in October.

The UK is due to leave the EU on March 29, 2019, and negotiations are taking place on what their future relationship will look like.

The government had talked publicly about two potential customs options.

One, a customs partnership, would mean the UK applies the EU's own tariffs and rules of origin to all goods arriving in the country, intended for the EU.

The other, known as maximum facilitation or max-fac, aimed to employ new technology to remove the need

for physical customs checks where possible.

The government has now deemed both options practically or politically undeliverable.

But May must sell her plans to her Brexiteer backbenchers too and some are nervous that she is watering down her intentions.

Writing in the *Daily Telegraph*, Tory backbencher Jacob Rees-Mogg says the PM risks a revolt if the type of Brexit she promised is not delivered.

He and other members of the 60-strong group of Eurosceptic Tory MPs he leads, known as the European Research Group (ERG), would reject a deal that did not amount to a clean break with the EU.

A deal which restricts the UK's ability to make trade agreements with other nations or control migration could not be accepted, he said.

Downing Street announced that it has now produced a third model for han-

dling customs after the UK leaves the EU.

Details of the new plan have not been revealed publicly but senior ministers will discuss it at Chequers, the prime minister's country retreat, on Friday, July 6. Theresa May hopes to resolve cabinet splits on the shape of Brexit at this cabinet meeting.

She has said the UK will then publish a White Paper setting out "in more detail what strong partnership the United Kingdom wants to see with the European Union in the future."

BREAKING NEWS: British Foreign Secretary Boris Johnston has resigned his position shortly following the resignations of Brexit Secretary David Davis and his deputy Steve Baker. Davis says the deal agreed by Tory ministers at Chequers means the UK is unlikely to leave the customs union and the single market when it leaves the EU on March 29, 2019.

Victims remembered on 30th anniversary of the Piper Alpha disaster

ABERDEEN – A service was held in Aberdeen on July 6 in memory of the 167 men who died in the Piper Alpha offshore disaster.

The names of 167 men who lost their lives 30 years ago were read aloud at a special memorial service held at the Piper Alpha Memorial Garden in Hazlehead Park. It was attended by their relatives and friends along with politicians and representatives from the oil and gas sector.

The ceremony marks three decades since explosions ripped apart the oil installation off Aberdeen in the world's worst offshore industry catastrophe.

On that night, there were more than 220 men on board Piper Alpha, with most in the accommodation section and more than 60 working on the night shift.

Shortly before 10 PM, there was a gas leak on the North Sea platform. A series of explosions followed and, minutes later, it was engulfed in a fireball. By the time the rescue helicopters arrived, flames were reaching 300 feet and could be seen from 70 miles away.

The smoke and fire made evacuation by helicopter or lifeboat impossible, and many people gathered in the accommodation area.

Remaining there meant certain death. With the platform ablaze and exploding, some men jumped 175 feet into the North Sea. Others plunged from lower levels or clambered down ropes and hoses before plummeting into the



PIPER ALPHA was a North Sea oil production platform operated by Occidental Petroleum (Calcedonia) Ltd. The platform began production in 1976, first as an oil platform and then later converted to gas production. It was destroyed in an explosion on July 6, 1988.

water. There were only 62 survivors that night in what remains the world's worst offshore disaster.

Lord Provost of Aberdeen Barney Crockett, who laid a wreath, said, "The shocking events of that night 30 years ago are imprinted on the Aberdeen memory forever.

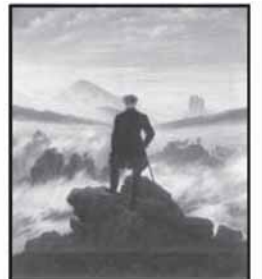
"We will never forget that 167 men died in the Piper Alpha tragedy, which is why it is so important that the City of Aberdeen and industry come together for this Act of Remembrance.

"We want to let those affected, particularly the families, know that we stand shoulder-to-shoulder with them and that our thoughts are with them now and forever."

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New Vancouver Consulate will be the first expansion of Irish diplomatic presence in Canada since 1939

VANCOUVER – When we first met Jim Kelly in the autumn of 2016, he had only recently arrived in Canada to take up his new position as Ambassador of Ireland to Canada.

Since then there have been remarkable changes both at home in Ireland and on the international stage. The result has been enormous social and political upheaval, leading to both optimism for the future and deep concern and confusion in many quarters.

On a local level, two exciting developments have been the signing of the CETA agreement between Canada and the European Union, and the announcement by Ireland's Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade of a new Irish Consulate planned for western Canada.

The new Consulate, to be located in Vancouver, will be the first expansion of Ireland's residential diplomatic mission in Canada since the opening of the Irish Embassy in Ottawa in 1939.

Ambassador Kelly was in Vancouver recently and he sat down with *The Celtic Connection* to discuss Ireland's current position in the Eurozone and its evolving relationship with Canada.

Interview by Maura De Freitas

CC: When we last met you had just recently arrived in Ottawa. Since then we have witnessed a time of great change both at home and abroad.

JK: Yes, that's absolutely right Maura. As you say, I was here about six months at that stage and one of the things that we spoke about at the time was the bi-lateral relationship between Ireland and Canada.

The piece that I felt was absent was a level of intensive political and diplomatic engagement between the two countries that reflects the extent of the historic links of the diaspora and the strong people-to-people links in particular.

What I found at that stage was that there had not been a visit by an Irish Government minister to Canada for 18 months and similarly no visits by Canadian ministers to Ireland.

That seemed to me to be very unreflective extent of the connections, so one of the things I prioritized was to work with the various chambers and agencies, along with the community, to help to generate a closer level of political engagement here in Canada and at home with the people in Dublin.

Since then, we've had a really transformed situation. In 14 months, we've had 14 members of the Irish Government here after a period when there weren't any.

We've had two visits by successive Taoisigh – Enda Kenny and Leo Varadkar – we had Prime Minister Trudeau in Ireland in between, we've had three ministerial trade missions, we've had Canadian ministers and parliamentarians visit Ireland as well.

So, the political and diplomatic relationship now much more fairly reflects the reality of the level of connections there are between the two countries.

And there are a couple of factors that have helped push that change.

CC: CETA being one of those factors? [The Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement known as CETA is a free-trade agreement between Canada, the European Union and its member states.]

JK: Yes, CETA has been a key element of it.

CETA was a long time in the making – eight years – and the opportunities that it provides in terms of abolishing tariffs – almost all tariffs – opening procurement markets between Ireland and Canada – including at the municipal and provincial level – easing barriers to doing business in terms of recognition of qualifications, in terms of allowing people to take temporary postings to explore possibilities, have all made Ireland and Canada a much more attractive proposition to each other in terms of doing business.

We're seeing that playing out now in practice. There has been a real increase in the level of interest from Ireland in trying to get into the Canadian market, also as a gateway to North America generally.

For those reasons and others, there has also been an increase in the level of investment from Canada in Ireland as well.

CC: Another development is the first official Irish Consulate in Canada to be established here in Vancouver. That announcement was made in 2017 by the Tánaiste, Simon Coveney.

JK: Yes, this will be the first expansion of our diplomatic footprint in Canada since the embassy first opened in 1939, so it's a major development from that point of view.

It reflects both developments in Canada and the government's approach more generally, so in a broader sense the government under the new Taoiseach Leo Varadkar is very committed to the idea of increasing Ireland's global footprint.

Not just diplomats, but in terms of agencies dealing with trade and investment and tourism. Increasing Ireland's level of engagement on the ground across the world where we have these markets, where there are tremendous opportunities.

I think that reflects a changing international situation such as what's going on with Brexit, NAFTA (North American Free Trade Agreement) – changes in the world that mean we really have to reach out for more like-minded partners.



IRISH AMBASSADOR Jim Kelly presenting a donation from the Irish Abroad Unit to Lar Quigley, the president of the new Irish Canadian Chamber of Commerce, Vancouver Chapter. [For more information about ICCCVan, visit their website at www.icccvan.ca.]

Canada, of course, is a great example of a like-minded partner with a very outward-looking view of the world.

CC: Hence the new IDA office in Toronto [Ireland's inward investment promotion agency].

JK: Exactly. So, one of two key parts of that are coming to Vancouver now.

Canada is obviously a huge country and when we opened an embassy here in the late 1930s it was a different place, and we essentially still have the same staffing levels in Ottawa.

This is now a time when our connections and requirements to have service to help those connections flourish are much greater.

Having a Consulate with a residential presence in the west is a really important part of that. The reality is, as you know, that we are five hours flying time away from here in Ottawa.

I try to get out here as often as I can and I think what is going on in the west is enormously important to us in many ways and we recognize that, but there is no substitute for having some sort of a residential presence as well.

To be honest, from the moment that I took up the job, even before I came out here, we were discussing the idea of trying to do that at some point.

Thankfully, the taoiseach and the government have seized the opportunity since so many government ministers have come out and seen it for themselves, including our own minister Simon Coveney when he came out in March of last year.

They get the opportunities that are there, and opening an IDA office as well which will be in Toronto before the end of the year will be another key part of that.

So, those are two elements of our ongoing strategy in Canada: To have a residential presence in the west to help service the increasing needs of the growing Irish community in Vancouver, in British Columbia, and beyond; and to help leverage the growing trade and economic opportunities under CETA and also under Brexit as well.

CC: We'll come back to Brexit but before we finish you mentioned Frank Flood will be the new Irish consular representative here in Vancouver. Can

you tell me a bit about his background?

JK: Yes, Frank is currently our ambassador to Estonia based in Tallinn. He's a very experienced diplomat. He's been in the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade since the mid-1990s, and he has served in a number of different areas and locations.

For example, he served several terms in the secretariat in Belfast, he worked with Irish Aid, and worked for the United Nations Development program in Africa as well. He also served as our vice-consul in Boston.

So he has a very rounded experience covering across all sorts of areas in terms of dealing with Northern Ireland, dealing with trade, dealing with aid, and I think a very experienced and knowledgeable diplomat, and I think he will be a real contributor to the Irish community here in Vancouver as well.

He is very much looking forward to his new posting.

CC: Can you give me an idea when he will be arriving?

JK: Well the plan for the Consulate is that he will arrive in September with his wife Orla and the aim will be to set up, initially of course because you are starting from scratch, a temporary premises that will allow them to begin operating straight away.

That will probably be for about the first year with the aim to getting a permanent office in place by the summer of 2019.

It does mean that he will be up and running from September of this year, so we are very much looking forward to that.

CC: Hopefully this will now take a bit of pressure off staff at the embassy in Ottawa but we're always very pleased to see you here in Vancouver.

JK: Well, I've been here for a couple of days now. I was here to launch the new local chapter of Ireland Canada Chamber of Commerce.

It was a great turnout in a very nice location, a very promising start for the Chamber, and a very diverse group from a number of different sectors.

I sense a real enthusiasm and a real energy about the idea of an Irish Chamber that will work to build networks for people here but also to help sup-

port what the agencies are trying to do on the trade and investment side.

So, they will be great allies for the consul when he comes here and he, in turn, I know will be very keen to support what they want to do.

Similarly, I spoke to Aine Coady who is setting up the new Vancouver Irish Film Festival with her team as well.

So, that's something very exciting on the cultural side and obviously cultural diplomacy and promotion of Irish culture is something that is very important to us given how important the film industry and digital media is here in Vancouver and B.C.

I think that's great timing and I think there is a great appetite in the Irish community and beyond for an Irish Film Festival in Vancouver.

CC: It's an exciting time for the Irish community here in Vancouver with a new wave of young, dynamic and highly educated Irish arrivals.

JK: It's very interesting. When you come here it's very tangible. Even speaking with other trade missions, and I've seen a couple of them today, they too are well aware of the increased presence of younger Irish people in the city in a whole range of different areas.

As you say, they are very competent, they're highly educated, they're extremely keen to do well.

What I find interesting is another reason why the Consulate is so badly needed, is that the conventional story has been people come here when things are bad at home on the economic side.

But in actual fact the economy in Ireland is very strong and has been for three or four years, and people are continuing to come because it is a fact that many young people want the opportunity to live in different environments, in different cultures, for a couple of years, sometimes they will stay longer, but they are interested in that opportunity.

There are so many young people here already that it has reached a critical mass that most people looking at going abroad at that age in Ireland know somebody here in Vancouver or in Toronto, and we see in both those cities

[Continued next page]



TEAM VIRFF at Vancity Theatre on June 16 for the launch of the Vancouver Irish Film Festival with the screening of *The Drummer & The Keeper*. (L-R) Áine Wanderer Geoghegan, Padraic Coffey, Bernard Sloan, Emma Ní Nualláin, Karen Bracken, Sascha Seyschab, Karen Downey, Áine Coady, Laura Brunnock, Marguerite Butler, Teresa Toolan and Cathal Dunphy. [To learn more about the Vancouver Irish Film Festival, e-mail Áine Coady at: vancouveririshff@gmail.com, or online at: www.virff.org.]

[Continued from page 10]

the numbers continuing to grow quite strongly at a time when the economy is performing strongly in Ireland.

CC: I'm glad to hear that the economy is doing well in Ireland because it is a time of some uncertainty, particularly in light of Brexit. You mentioned earlier about the confusion surrounding Britain's exit of the European Union.

JK: I suppose the first thing to say in relation to the economy, for the benefit of your readers, is that after some very difficult years, through the financial crisis and beyond, we've had quite a turnaround.

The Irish economy is the fastest growing economy in the Eurozone for the past four years, so that's a very serious and sustained recovery and I'm sure people who have visited home will have seen for themselves how things have changed quite dramatically in recent years.

It is encouraging that the economy has continued to grow strongly even with the shadow of Brexit looming over it.

Brexit is a very serious challenge to us in many ways in Ireland, in particular in relation to the border which has obviously become frictionless and effectively quite invisible in the period since the signing of the Good Friday Agreement [April 1998], and the end of the conflict that took place back then.

When you cross the border now, you really only know it when your mobile phone beeps and the provider changes. That's a real signal of just how intangible the border really is.

Nobody in Ireland, and indeed in fairness, nobody in terms of the government in London or Brussels, or anywhere else wants to see that returned to where it was for political reasons, for economic reasons, and psychological reasons.

But the challenge of course is that the UK, having decided to leave the European Union presents really serious problems in terms of what the future relationship will be and what the implications be at the border.

The [Irish] Government's response to this has been to address four concerns that we have.

The first is in relation to the peace process and the border.

The second is in relation to the economy more generally and trade with the UK which obviously continues to be very important for us, although it is obviously a lot less concentrated than it would have been historically.

When we joined the European Union, more than half of Ireland's exports would still have gone to the UK at that point, now it's more like 14 or 15 percent.

So, it's much less concentration, but it's still an important market, particularly for small and medium enterprises, and in agriculture for example. Addressing that is very important to the government.

The preservation then of the common travel area, allowing Irish and British citizens to move freely between the two countries has also been a key concern and that, we are quite happy now, will be preserved with whatever future agreement comes up.

And the last is the whole question of the union which is perhaps self-evident, but it is important to note that it is our future as well.

It is very important to note that, at this time of uncertainty with Brexit looming, what has actually happened is that all the polling indicates that unprecedented large percentage of Irish people are now in favour of our European membership.

Whereas historically it would have been between 60-70 percent, the most recent survey about two weeks ago shows that 92 percent of Irish people believe that Ireland's EU membership is essential for us and is part of our future.

That's very encouraging because it shows that there is a real clarity that goes beyond the government or political opinion per se.

It encompasses a very broad national consensus which means that the government is in a position to act with real authority in terms of managing our position with regard to Brexit, with regard to the border issue, and with regard to trade and so forth.

Also, just to stay on the border issue, what the government has done and what our negotiators have done working as part of the EU has been to secure a political agreement to what's called the 'backstop'.

So, if there is no agreement in terms of resolving a frictionless border in a future UK/EU trade arrangement, that there will be a 'backstop' that ensures the provisions of the single market of the customs union that relate to areas covered by the Good Friday Agreement in terms of north/south cooperation, that they will continue to be in place.

There will be alignment for those areas, so that is part of the political agreement around the withdrawal of the UK.

These are complicated issues that are still being worked through in many ways but politically that has been agreed and the challenge now is, if you like, to turn that into a legal withdrawal agreement.

That is where the discussions and the debates are now taking place.

Our view in Ireland and the Irish Government's view is that we would pre-

fer, of course, if the UK would never leave the European Union, but they have decided to do so, as is their right by the referendum, we would ideally like to see them remain in the single market – the customs union – which would ensure that there would be no additional impediments in relation to the border.

The taoiseach is on record for saying that the limits of the future British relationship with the union are those set by Britain's own red lines, so it's really up to them to decide if you like what sort of relationship it is they want.

You will see from following the British media, the international media, that there are a great deal of contradictions within their position in terms of what they actually want and a great deal of internal political debate going on within the British Government, the British parliament, and until such time it is really clear what it is they want, it is very difficult to say where the future relationship will end.

What we can say with certainty is that the Irish Government is completely committed to ensure no return to a hard border and the 'backstop' will be an important part of that if it is the case no agreement is reached.

CC: Ireland has also recently undergone significant social upheaval in terms of the role of women and the church, particularly in light of the recent referendum to repeal the eighth amendment to the country's constitution, allowing the government to overhaul an abortion law which has been among the most restrictive in Europe.

JK: It is very interesting. It is a period of enormous social change if you like

in Ireland, I think both the referendum last weekend and the marriage equality referendum in particular in 2015 illustrated how much things have changed and how quickly.

As you say, the issue that was put before the people last weekend is a very complex and emotive issue.

The debate that took place – which I followed from a distance here – was a very emotional one about which people care a great deal about on either side and which was very passionately debated.

What was interesting was that in the end these decisions are for the people and the people rendered a very clear verdict which in effect reversed almost precisely the result of the 1983 referendum.

I suppose this is an illustration – and I offer this with no comment on it one way or the other – of just how much things have changed in Ireland.

So, I can imagine for people who have been away from Ireland for a very long period it may have come as quite a surprise – it probably came as quite a surprise to people in Ireland to an extent, given that most of the polling suggested that it would be quite close.

But, the people having rendered their verdict, the government will move to legislate on the basis that they indicated prior to the referendum.

CC: One last question with regard to issues encountered by Irish people wishing to return home after living abroad for a period of time. Crosscare Migrant Project recently released a report on some of the difficulties encountered by people who wish to return.

JK: You do hear stories of issues about people who wish to reintegrate, issues around car insurance, around health insurance, driver's licenses, and so forth. There are real complexities there.

One of the things that our ministry,

working with Crosscare and others, is looking at is identifying what the key impediments are and how to address them. So there is a certain amount of work ongoing on the research side to get a clear sense of the hierarchy of what the difficulties are.

And then I suppose it will then be up to the government to identify how can you resolve some of those.

It is work that will probably take some time as it will involve different policy areas and different ministries, but I suppose what is encouraging – or at least what I hope is encouraging for people – is that there is an increased understanding and awareness of these difficulties now and the need to try to resolve them.

Some will be resolved more easily than others but it is certainly well understood now within the Irish Abroad unit, which is the section within our ministry which deals with these issues, that supporting when they are abroad is one side of the coin, but also supporting them in their efforts to return and reintegrate is the other side of the coin.

More attention than before is now being given to that working with organizations such as Crosscare. So the government is working to try to find ways to address those issues.

Embassy of Ireland, Canada

An Boinn Gnóthaí Eachtracha agus Trádála
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

[The Embassy of Ireland in Canada is located at Suite 1105, 130 Albert Street in Ottawa, Ontario, K1P 5G4. For more information, call (613) 233-6281, or visit their website at: www.dfa.ie/irish-embassy/canada. More details on the new Irish Consulate in Vancouver will follow in the September/October issue of *The Celtic Connection*.]

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New Ireland Canada Chamber of Commerce formally launched in Vancouver in May

By MIKEY SMYTH

VANCOUVER – Ambassador Jim Kelly was in Vancouver on Monday, May 28 to formally launch the sixth and newest Ireland-Canada Chamber of Commerce.

In attendance to welcome the new Ireland-Canada Chamber of Commerce Vancouver (ICCCVan) was a room full of leading Irish figures and professionals from across the Irish business community in Vancouver.

Guests were welcomed upon arrival with live trad music and were later treated to a magnificent sunset on the 28th floor of the downtown offices of McKinsey & Company, who generously sponsored and hosted the event.

Ambassador Kelly and the Irish Embassy in Ottawa also showed their support and commitment to the new Chamber by presenting a donation to the Chamber on the night.

As president of the newly formed ICCCVan, Lar Quigley welcomed guests and outlined the vision and mis-



PHOTOS: Courtesy of Mark Montgomery
ICCCVAN BOARD OF DIRECTORS and volunteers with Ambassador Jim Kelly at the launch of the new chamber in Vancouver on May 28.

sion statement of the new Chamber, "ICCCVan has been created to support and connect Irish professionals in Vancouver."

Similar to its sister Irish Chambers in Montreal, Toronto, Ottawa, Edmonton and Calgary, the new Vancouver chapter intends to host several networking events throughout the year.

It will serve as a support service to those who are looking to connect with like-minded professionals to advance their careers or business, whatever sector that may be.

In his opening remarks to guests, Ambassador Kelly provided an update on the new Irish Consulate that is planned to open in Vancouver in September.

The ambassador noted the fact that

both the new diplomatic Consulate and Chamber in Vancouver launching in 2018 is a clear indication of the growing Irish community in Vancouver.

This is in fact the second iteration of the Irish Chamber of Commerce for Vancouver, which originally ceased operating in the early 1990s.

The backstory for the establishment of the new Chamber is indeed a reflection of the new Irish demographic that has arrived in British Columbia post-2008 recession.

Founded by a handful of 30-something-year-olds in early 2017, and of-

ficially incorporated on October 2, 2017, the ICCCVan founding members recognised the lack of support for senior Irish professionals in Vancouver and sought to address this.

With a large influx of highly educated and skilled Irish people making the move to Vancouver, B.C. over recent years, it is no surprise to see a gathering of accomplished, senior professionals coming together to establish ICCCVan once again.

ICCCVan's mission statement therefore is simple, to support and connect Irish business owners and professionals across the province from across all sectors.

Indeed, the professional backgrounds of the board of directors of ICCCVan is an example of how the Irish workforce have established themselves across this city – tech, entrepreneur, law, finance, events, and energy.

ICCCVan will host its next event and networking opportunity for members in September/October 2018, to coincide with the arrival of the new Irish diplomatic Consulate for western Canada.

The chamber is now actively reaching out to the Irish community across the province and encourages Irish people across all sectors to sign up to ICCCVan's mailing list to receive the latest news and event notifications from the Chamber.

[If you would like to learn more about ICCCVan or become a member to avail of its membership benefits, visit their website at www.icccvan.ca.]



ICCCVAN Chairperson Keith Martin addressing guests at the new Chamber's inaugural event.



RACHEL QUINN, Siobhan O'Connell and Eilis Courtney representing the Irish Women's Network of B.C. were among the guests at the launch of the new ICCCVan.



TREVOR CARROLL, Lara Chibuk, and Lar Quigley at the ICCCVan reception.

Apple scraps \$1 billion Irish data center over planning delays

DUBLIN – Apple has ditched plans to build an 850 million euro (\$1 billion) data center in Ireland because of delays in the approval process that have stalled the project for more than three years.

Apple announced plans in February 2015 to build the facility in the rural western town of Athenry to take advantage of green energy sources nearby, but a series of planning appeals, chiefly from two individuals, delayed its approval.

Ireland's High Court ruled in October that the data center could proceed, dismissing the appellants who then took their case to the country's Supreme Court.

"Despite our best efforts, delays in the approval process have forced us to make other plans and we will not be able to move forward with the data centre," Apple said in a statement ahead of the Supreme Court heading in May.

"While disappointing, this setback will not dampen our enthusiasm for future projects in Ireland as our business continues to grow," the company said, citing plans to expand its European headquarters in County Cork where it employs over 6,000 people.

Ireland relies on foreign multinational companies like Apple for the creation of one in every 10 jobs across the economy and sees major investments such as data centers as a means of securing their presence in the country.



The government is in the process of amending its planning laws to include data centers as strategic infrastructure, thus allowing them to get through the

planning process much more quickly.

A similar Apple center announced at the same time in Denmark was due to begin operations last year and Apple announced in July that it would build its second EU data center there.

"There is no disputing that Apple's decision is very disappointing, particularly for Athenry and the west of Ireland," Ireland's Minister for Business and Enterprise Heather Humphreys said in a statement.

"The government did everything it could to support this investment. These delays have, if nothing else, underlined our need to make the State's planning and legal processes more efficient."

Irish construction firms hiring amid growth

DUBLIN – Ireland's construction firms have continued hiring amid a strong pace of growth in the sector.

The latest Ulster Bank Construction Purchasing Managers' Index stood at 58.4 in June. While that compared to a stronger 61.8 reading in May, any figure over 50 represents expansion - any reading below that indicates contraction.

Simon Barry, chief economist for the Republic of Ireland at Ulster Bank, said the May figure was "extremely elevated".

He said that the reading for June "is still very much a level which signals ongoing rapid gains in activity".

"The latest results, as well as anecdotes from survey respondents, continue to highlight that housing and commercial remain areas of particular strength within the sector, albeit that there was some cooling of growth momentum in June from the exceptionally rapid rates recorded in May," said Barry.

Pilgrims face tight security to see Pope in Phoenix Park

DUBLIN – Pilgrims planning to attend a Mass celebrated by Pope Francis in Dublin's Phoenix Park will face a two kilometer traffic exclusion zone, strict security vetting and a potential wait of up to five hours to exit the park afterwards.

The Phoenix Park event – expected to prove one of the highlights of the Papal visit on August 25-26 – is being strictly limited to 600,000 people for health and safety reasons.

It will mean one of the biggest security operations undertaken in Dublin for 30 years.

The authorities face a complex task to cordon off the park to traffic while providing suitable transport links, given the large number of elderly and infirm people expected to attend.

It is expected that one-in-five of those attending the event at 3 PM on Sunday, August 26 will be aged over 50 years.

One official acknowledged that "this (demographic) poses its own logistical challenges."

Special transport arrangements are also being examined for the disabled, the ill and the elderly who plan to attend the Phoenix Park ceremony. However, the



POPE John Paul II at the Phoenix Park during his visit to Ireland in 1979. Upon arrival, the Pope kissed the ground as he disembarked. Afterwards he flew by helicopter to the Phoenix Park where he celebrated Mass for 1,250,000 people, one third of the population of the Republic of Ireland.

bulk of the 600,000 people attending will be expected to walk up to two kilometers to the event.

Park access will be restricted for several days before the papal event to allow for erection of stages and support facilities.

Upwards of 5,000 emergency services personnel will be on duty for the event. A strict air exclusion zone will also be in place for the ceremony.

The first and only previous papal visit to Ireland took place in September 1979, when over 2.5 million people attended events in Dublin, Drogheda, Clonmacnoise, Galway, Knock, Limerick, and Maynooth.

It was one of John Paul's first foreign visits as Pope, who had been elected in October 1978. The visit marked the centenary of the reputed apparitions at the Shrine of Knock in August 1879.

A delightful and thought provoking book offers a spiritual dialogue between generations

WONDROUS LIFE:
A Grandfather and Grandson
Journey Through Life Together,
to Share and Discover
What Lies Beyond
By Pat Cash
ISBN 978-0-9784807-3-8

By CATHOLINE BUTLER

Irish-born, 82-year-old retiree, Pat Cash believes that the key to retirement is to keep moving and not sit watching television but get involved in something you like to do.

Cash has heeded his own advice and done just that in writing books and plays.

He and his family divide their time living part-time in Arizona and South Delta, British Columbia.

Cash wrote and produced two one-act plays entitled, *Leabeg* and *Rathrobin*, that he entered in playwrighting contests in Casa Grande, Arizona. It was after writing these plays that he decided to begin writing books.

He recently published his fourth book entitled *Wondrous Life*, a faith-based dialogue between a grandfather and grandson about prayer, good and evil, and eternity.

The grandfather answers the grandson's faith-based questions from the time he starts elementary school through high school to university, and finally the real world.

The conversation continues up until the grandfather's last days, as he explains to his grandson why he does not fear death but looks forward with excitement to his next chapter in eternity.

As a former volunteer Parish Religious Education Program teacher (PREP), I felt *Wondrous Life*, would be an excellent tool for PREP teachers since many

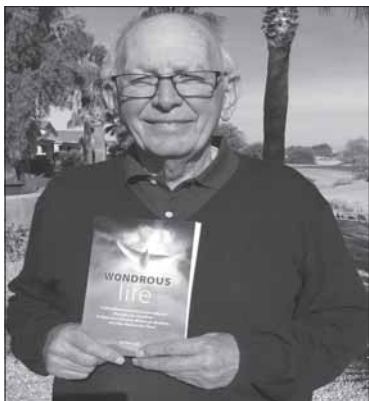


PHOTO: Courtesy of BC Catholic
PAT CASH is pictured above holding a copy of his book *Wondrous Life*.

of the questions students ask are answered in this book right from grade one to seven.

Speaking about the grandfather in the book, Cash said, "the grandfather is like myself, Irish background and Catholic."

Books also written by Pat include: *How to Organize Successful Charity Golf Tournaments*; *MINDS...An Irishman's Memoirs of the 40s, 50s and 60s*; *ABC Why Stop at G...Imaginative accounts of the origin of music illustrated with examples of the relationship between music and math*.

Pat is well-known in the Vancouver area and some years ago he, and a group of like-minded Irish, got together with the express purpose of raising funds to build an Irish Centre.

"Unfortunately," Cash said, "that idea fell apart and we had to give all the money back but as a result I met a lot of people and many have become lifelong friends."

"I have always liked meeting people and I have always been involved in one thing or another."

Before retirement, Cash was an IT systems specialist who spent his working life in the mining, engineering and construction industries and consulted on IT for the Archdiocese of Vancouver over the years.

He has given presentations in Arizona and South Delta to other seniors about how to publish books themselves and leave something behind, a legacy. How to write their memoirs or write stories.

Wondrous Life is available online through Amazon, Kindle, and ISSUU.

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.
– PMK, MJK, CC, CB, CLF, KLKSK, BC

Novena to St. Joseph

Oh glorious St. Joseph, thou hast power to render possible even things which are considered impossible, come to our aid in our present trouble and distress. Take this important and difficult affair under thy particular protection, that it may end happily. (Name your request.) O dear St. Joseph, all our confidence is in thee, let it not be said that we would invoke thee in vain and since thou art so powerful with Jesus and Mary, show that thy goodness equals thy power. Amen. St. Joseph, friend of the sacred heart, pray for us. [For favour received.]

Publication of a novena is \$25 monthly



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Bordering on a Meltdown: *'If your destination is Northern Ireland within the UK, I wouldn't start here'*

THE VIEW FROM IRELAND



By
**MAURICE
FITZPATRICK**

If the Irish border could speak for itself, what would it say?

Would it start with a preamble along the lines that it is sorry for all the problems it has caused?

It might add that it never meant to do any harm and hoped that when it inserted itself in Ireland (then just emerging from an acrimonious civil war) it could do some good?

It would certainly mount the defense that it was sent by England.

There has been enough misunderstanding about the border without any further speculation, which would be misinterpreted and used against it.

Fortunately, a Banksy style anonymous Twitter account, @BorderIrish, has in fact given voice to the Irish border in which the border becomes clear as day.

Taking the trouble to set up and maintain a Twitter account on Brexit's impact on the border may well constitute more effort and planning than the British Government has expended so far in relation to the sole land frontier it will have with the European Union when it leaves.

In any case, the Twitter handle has had some cracking results.

There are some brilliant formulations about the border: "I'm an a priori aporia"; "The new manager says 'we're leaving the Premier League. It's protectionist. We're going to play in a Premier League', he says. The crowd chants, 'You don't know what you're doing'."

The border, if it had a conscious existence, could not but be a political animal. Still, it might blush at quite how much political negotiation currently orbits it.

On these subjects, @BorderIrish, strikes an indignant tone: "I currently: – hold together two countries that were once in military conflict – am porous enough to allow two clashing identities to live in peace – allow extensive free movement of goods and people – am as beautiful as the setting sun. So don't tell me I could be smart."

The border, as presented in @BorderIrish, sounds a good deal smarter than some of the politicians who have pronounced on it, and who are now rudderless in obstreperous waters.

This showed above all when the minister "in charge" of the UK exiting the European Union came up with a whopper of a solution to all our problems in



"It's so small and there are so few firms that actually use that border regularly, it's just beyond belief that we're allowing the tail to wag the dog in this way." – Boris Johnson

late May: David Davis does not want to move the border, nor does he want to remove the border – he wants to widen it.

His vision is a form of a demilitarized zone between Ireland – North and South – a 10 mile border zone.

Someone needs to inform Davis where the border lies in Ireland in parts there is hardly a few miles between the border and the Atlantic Ocean or the Irish Sea.

Widening it would involve a form of land reclaim that has not happened since the construction of the great dikes of Holland began in 1000 AD.

It is time that Davis got that pencil off his ear and started to sketch out plans.

Doubtless Davis has thought this through already and has incorporated it into his Brexit policy.

But the latest news is that Davis is apparently considering resigning from his post. So we may not have a wide border after all.

The EU heads of government will meet as part of the European Council at the end of June to discuss Brexit.

In advance of the summit, the Irish Minister for Foreign Affairs, Simon Coveney, on June 2 demanded that the British Government produce a written description of its plan for Brexit, and for the Irish border.

He said, "In the next two weeks, we need to see written proposals. It needs to happen two weeks from the summit."

That this demand emanated from Dublin was unfortunate as it was always more likely to stoke the ire of the British than to achieve its objectives. It feeds into an absurd perspective that Dublin's policies in relation to Brexit are purely opportunistic.

Sure enough, Britain's Foreign Secre-

tary, Boris Johnson, seemed to see it that way.

In leaked remarks, Johnson had this to say to his prime minister, Theresa May, about the Irish border on June 6: "It's so small and there are so few firms that actually use that border regularly, it's just beyond belief that we're allowing the tail to wag the dog in this way."

"We're allowing the whole of our agenda to be dictated by this folly. You've got to face the fact there may now be a meltdown."

Johnson's speech ended in extolling how well Donald Trump would handle the debacle, if he were in charge of Britain (enough said).

This jolt happened to Theresa May just before she flew to Quebec for the G7 Summit, presumably to give world leaders a progress report on Brexit.

A recent poll among Northern Irish voters showed that 42 percent of people supported leaving the UK and joining a United Ireland. A further 13 percent were undecided.

The Northern Ireland Act (1998) provides that if the majority of people in Northern Ireland vote to join a United Ireland, then that constitutional change is guaranteed.

As Brexit negotiators reel from one calamity to the next, the momentum of Northern Ireland exiting the UK and becoming part of Ireland/ EU grows more and more pronounced.

And what is the position of the Democratic Unionist Party, the sole representation of the Northern Ireland electorate in the British House of Commons, on this momentum?

They remain gung-ho for Brexit.

As a United Irelander might say to a diehard Unionist: "If your destination is Northern Ireland within the UK, I wouldn't start here."

Hard Brexit could force Dutch firm Philips to quit UK

AMSTERDAM – Dutch electronics firm Philips has warned it may shift production out of Britain in the event of a hard Brexit, saying it was "deeply concerned about competitiveness" of its operations there.

The Amsterdam-based group employs about 1,500 people in Britain, most notably at its factory at Glemsford in Suffolk making baby care products for export.

Philips is the latest company in a chorus of major industrial players – which also includes Jaguar Land Rover, BMW and Airbus – to warn about the negative impact of an acrimonious split between the UK and EU.

Brexit chaos: PSNI chief claims 'no-one in charge' of border preparations



PSNI chief George Hamilton.

BELFAST – Northern Ireland's police chief George Hamilton has revealed the level of chaos surrounding preparations for the border in Ireland after Brexit, claiming that no-one is in charge.

Hamilton told MPs there was no "go-to coordinator" who was "actually taking responsibility" for the project – as he warned of the risk from organized crime and dissident terrorists.

The chief constable revealed he had yet to submit a business case for how to bolster border policing because he was "trying to find a mechanism and an audience" for doing so.

"We feel like we are in the dark around all of this – we don't have that go-to coordinator to assist with us, to tell us what the requirement is," Hamilton said.

The evidence was described as "very troubling" by Sylvia Hermon, an independent Northern Ireland MP – while the DUP's Ian Paisley said it "sounds like a shambles."

Hamilton also revealed he had yet to

have a meeting with Theresa May about the Brexit threat to the border – and that he had not met her at all since last October.

"There are so many issues to be dealt with, in such a short period of time, that things are not getting the attention they require," he told the Commons Northern Ireland committee.

And he added, "The clock is ticking – time is running out."

The prime minister's lack of attention to the crucial issue was attacked by Lady Hermon, who described it as "extraordinary."

"She was the home secretary for six years. She is well aware – above many in the cabinet – of the delicacy and the difficulties that the PSNI is going to face, whether it's a soft or a hard Brexit."

Confirming the renewed terrorist threat from a harder border, Hamilton said, "The new IRA themselves have come out saying that – they have talked about Brexit being an opportunity for them. That would be our assessment."

The EU had demanded progress on the Irish border controversy by the EU leaders' summit June 25 to July 3 – but none is now expected to be made before the autumn.

The issue is caught up in cabinet disagreements over future customs arrangements, which the prime minister hopes to settle at a Chequers "away day" on July 6.

She has promised "no physical infrastructure", but anti-EU Tories have demanded the UK plough ahead with pulling out of the EU single market and customs union – leaving the question of future border checks to Dublin to decide.

British-Irish intergovernmental group to meet amid ongoing stalemate in North of Ireland

DUBLIN – The British-Irish Intergovernmental Conference will take place for the first time in over a decade. It will be held in London on July 25.

The last meeting of the conference took place in 2007, ahead of devolution being restored in March of that year.

Established under the terms of the Good Friday Agreement, the BIIGC focuses on bilateral agreement between the United Kingdom and Ireland.

There have been calls for it to be convened amid the continuing uncertainty posed by Brexit and the lack of the Executive and Assembly in the North which fell apart in a row over a renewable heat incentive scheme.

The Irish Government will be represented at the meeting by Foreign Affairs Minister Simon Coveney and Irish Minister for Justice Charlie Flanagan.

The Conservative Government will be represented by David Lidington MP and Secretary of State Karen Bradley.

The conference is set to discuss the effective operation of the Good Friday Agreement institutions and north-south security cooperation.

The tánaiste said, "We look forward to this meeting of the British-Irish Intergovernmental Conference in accordance with the Good Friday Agreement."

"Both governments as co-guarantors of the Agreement are fully committed to working together to achieve the earliest operation of the devolved institutions, and to working together for the mutual benefit of all of the peoples of these islands."

The meeting follows on from a one-on-one meeting between Taoiseach Leo Varadkar and British Prime Minister Theresa May on the margins of the European Council meeting in Brussels.

IRISH CLUB OF WHITE ROCK

Warm and dynamic Irish club offers a warm welcome in the Surrey/White Rock area

WHITE ROCK – Summer has finally arrived, so there's no excuse for not coming to visit White Rock.

Located just a short distance east of Vancouver, White Rock has a large Irish community and a wonderful Irish club which extends a very warm welcome to both visitors and newcomers alike.

There is something happening each month with the Irish Club of White Rock.

In May a social was held at the Artful Dodger pub in Langley to hear Happy Hour, a Maple Ridge-based band who play Celtic inspired music.

A large crowd from the Irish Club attended and were well entertained very late into the evening – an excellent night was had by all.

The Irish Club held another pub social at Sawbucks in White Rock in June to hear another favourite – Pat Chessell and his band.

There was a big turn out from the Irish Club and the club extends many thanks to Pat Chessell and his band members, especially Andrea Taylor who played several solo pieces – she is incredible. Everyone had a wonderful night.

In July, the Irish Club will host its annual summer picnic on Sunday, July 22 at Redwood Park, 17900 - 20 Avenue in Surrey starting at 2 PM. Admission is \$10 for adults and \$20 for families and includes hamburgers, sausages, salads, etc.

Everyone is advised to bring their own drinks and lawn chairs along with sun-screen as it is expected to be a very hot day. Games and music are planned for children and adults and if you plan to attend, please e-mail organizers to confirm at: whiterockirishclub@gmail.com.

The Irish Club is also a strong supporter of the Fraser Valley Gaels football club which will host this year's Western Canadian Championship at Burnaby Lake Rugby Club on the August long weekend.

The Irish Club will provide volunteers and support to Fraser Valley Gaels with this event.

Recently, Irish Club of White Rock president Sharon Woods and James Woods attended the Fraser Valley Gaels' fundraiser and pub quiz and made a \$500 donation on behalf of the Irish Club of White Rock.

If you plan to visit White Rock, there is always a gathering every morning at approximately 10 AM at Tim Horton's on 152nd Street/17th Avenue, with a lively discussion on world events and events happening in Ireland. Always a welcome at the table.

Irish Club of White Rock has been a vibrant part of White Rock for over 30 years, it has a long history here. If you are new to White Rock/Surrey, the club extends a very warm welcome and invites you to come out to their next event.

For more information, contact president Sharon Woods (Galway) (604) 338-3553, or secretary Deirdre O'Ruairc (Dublin) (604) 803-0773. Check out and put a like or share their facebook page, or e-mail irishclubofwhiterock@gmail.com.



SHARON WOODS (centre), president of the Irish Club of White Rock, with members of the Fraser Valley Gaels (L-R) Denis and Sinead Ryan and Vincent Crowley.



THE IRISH CLUB of White Rock are proud supporters of the Fraser Valley Gaels football club who will host this year's Western Canadian Championship at Burnaby Lake Rugby Club on the August long weekend. Members recently presented the Gaels with a cheque for \$500 to support their fundraiser. Pictured above (L-R): Killian Foley, Denis Ryan, Adam Moore, James and Sharon Woods, and Paddy Hartnett.



CHARLOTTE MARRUJO, Jo Devine, Kristine Simpson and Sinead Ryan enjoying a night out with the Irish Club of White Rock.



JAKI GRAY, Evelyn Schober, Janette Watson, Mary Fynes and Maureen Phillips enjoying a pub social evening with the Irish Club of White Rock.



MADONNA NIXON (second from right) with her sister Kimberly, Chris and her mother Anita Nixon. The photo was taken at the 2013 Spring Sprint in Edmonton to benefit the Brain Tumour Foundation of Canada. Madonna passed away that October.

A fitting tribute to a cherished member of Edmonton Irish Centre

EDMONTON – The Irish Centre in Edmonton recently hosted a Paint Nite fundraiser in memory of one of their own members, Madonna Nixon.

The fundraiser was for a very worthy cause, and the Nixon family – Anita, Chris and Kimberly – expressed a deep appreciation and a heartfelt thank you to the Irish Centre for hosting it.

Madonna loved to paint and she was an Irish dancer for many years until a brain tumour forced her to stop and eventually took her from her loved ones at the tender age of 26.

The fundraiser which was held on Friday, May 11 with 71 people who showed their artistry while paying tribute to Madonna, helped raise \$1,065 for the Brain Tumour Foundation of Canada.

The Irish Centre was a very fitting venue for the fundraiser as it was one of Madonna's favorite places.



MEMBERS of the Irish Centre in Edmonton raised over \$1,000 for the Brain Tumour Foundation of Canada in memory of Madonna Nixon.



FRIENDS gathered for a night of fun at the Irish Centre in Edmonton where a Paint Nite fundraiser was held on the night of Friday, May 11.



THIS IMAGE was picked by the Nixon family for the Paint Nite fundraiser at the Edmonton Irish Centre to benefit the Brain Tumour Foundation of Canada in memory of Madonna who loved flowers.

SEATTLE IRISH NEWS

PASSINGS

- Jerry O'Leary (88), a native of Cork, died in Edmonds on June 24;
- Joan Furlong (95), a native of Dublin, died in Bellingham on June 23;
- Tom Meehan (79), a longtime member of the Irish Heritage Club, died in Arlington June 9;
- Calvin Springer, Jr. (72), a native of Belfast, died in Vaughan, south of Bremerton, May 24;
- Maggie McSweeney Cornell (82), a native of England who grew up partly in Ireland, died in Seattle on April 22;

Ar dheis Dé go raibh a h-anam dílis
May their faithful souls
rest at God's right hand



By
JOHN
KEANE



IRISH COMMUNITY PICNIC – Seattle's Irish Community Picnic is Sunday, July 16, from 2-5 PM (note later start time) at Lake Sammamish State Park in Issaquah (exit # 15 off I-90).

Games and fun for the entire family, admission is free and all are welcome. Free hot dogs and hamburgers will be provided but bring your own beverages and a dessert to be shared.

There's a covered picnic area and several BBQ grills if you bring charcoal.

The games start at 3 PM with tug-of-war, sack-races, water balloon toss, etc. More details at (253) 237-2811.

IRISH BASEBALL – Irish Night at the Seattle Mariners is Tuesday, July 25, 7:10 PM vs. the San Francisco Giants at Seattle's Safeco Field.

Get there early to watch the Tara Academy Irish Dancers and the Seattle Police Pipes and Drums perform in center field about 30 minutes before the game, while the ceremonial First Pitch will be thrown out by Irish Consul General Robert O'Driscoll.

Reduced price tickets (\$34 & \$44) are available at mariners.com/Irish and they include a free Irish Heritage Night Mariners Cap.

There will also be a drawing for R/T tickets to fly from Seattle to Dublin on Aer Lingus. For more details, call (253) 237-2811.

CEOL CASCADIA CONCERT – The annual Ceol Cascadia Teachers' Concert will be Saturday, August 11 at 8 PM at Wedgwood Presbyterian Church, 8008 35th Avenue NE, Seattle.

The concert will feature the instructors from the previous week's Irish Music Camp in Olympia and will include: Randal Bays, Manus McGuire, and Nathan Gourley (fiddle); Patsy Hanly (flute); Angelina Carberry (tenor banjo, tenor guitar, and mandolin); Josephine Marsh (button accordion); Liam O'Brien (anglo concertina); Frank Kilkelly (guitar); and Mairead Casey (dance).

Visit Brown Paper Tickets (/event/3500206), or cascadiairish.org.

GAA REPORT – The Seattle Gaels continue their preparations for participation in the North American GAA Finals in Philadelphia on the Labor Day weekend, August 31-September 2.

On June 9, they hosted a very successful Emerald City Cup tournament in Seattle with teams participating from Oregon, Montana, Canada, and Seattle for games of camogie, hurling, and

men's and women's Gaelic football. More details at SeattleGaels.com.

WYOMING GAA – The Cascade Youth Gaelic Games, a program of Seattle's Irish Heritage Club, is partnering with the University of Wyoming to include Gaelic football within the university's curriculum for their student PE teacher candidates.

The university, located in Laramie at an elevation of 7,220 feet (1.3 miles) above sea level, intends to make it a graduation requirement that their student teachers plan and perform a three week Gaelic football unit in their middle school and high school practicum assignments.

This will mean that about 45 new PE teachers every year will head off into their working careers with solid experience incorporating football into their PE units.

Wyoming might be on the way to becoming the U.S.'s next hotbed of home-grown Gaelic football talent.

IRISH JOBS – Amazon Web Services (AWS), a subsidiary of Seattle's online giant Amazon, will create 1,000 jobs in Ireland over the next two years at the firm's current Dublin sites in Blanchardstown, Tallaght, the city center, and north Co. Dublin.

AWS offers cloud services spanning computer power, database storage and content delivery.

Among the jobs are engineers for software development, network development engineers, data centers, systems and support; solutions architects, security and big data specialists, development operations engineers, and technical management positions.

FREE MEDICAL CARE – Seattle/King County Clinic is a volunteer-driven free clinic for people in need that occurs for four days each year in KeyArena at Seattle Center.

Tickets are distributed each day on a first-come, first-served basis, for people seeking dental, vision and/or medical care.

The next clinic will be September 20-23 and all are welcome.

The clinic is targeted at people who struggle to access or afford healthcare.

The only requirement to receive service is that a person waits their turn in line to get a free admission ticket at the beginning of each clinic day.

For additional information, visit www.seattlecenter.org/patients



A PIPER led a Knights of Columbus Honor Guard and four priests in a procession following Mass at St. Patrick Cemetery on Memorial Day. Participants laid a wreath on the grave of a U.S. Army veteran while *The Last Post* was played by a trumpeter.



(L-R) MAURA BARNES, Caron McMahon, John Keane (rear), Frank Gill, Nanci Spieker and Kay McKenna are pictured above cleaning up the kitchen after the Irish seniors luncheon on June 23.



CAROLINE LEE, president of the Irish Network, and Conor Lyne, Irish Network technology officer, were Honorary Stewards of the Irish Network Seattle Purse at Irish Day at the Races on July 1. They are pictured above in the paddock before the race.

or call (206) 684-7200.

IRISH 'MERCER GIRLS' – 154 years ago, on May 17, 1864, to increase the supply of teachers and women and to help balance the gender ratio, the first 'Mercer Girls' – women who had been recruited by Asa Mercer in Massachusetts – arrived in frontier Seattle following a five-month journey by ship to



MARY SHRIANE, Kathy Burns and Betty Egan enjoying Irish Day at the Races at Emerald Downs on July 1.

Panama, by train across the Isthmus of Panama, and by ship again to Seattle.

Among the first group of 11 coming to Seattle were two Irish women, Sarah Jane Gallagher and Ann Murphy.

Nineteen-year-old Sarah brought with her a portable organ and ended up as the first music teacher at the Territorial University of Washington, now the University of Washington.

In 1865, she married widower Thomas Russell, and their son George later became Seattle's Postmaster.

After Thomas's death in 1882, Sarah operated the Russell Hotel, the only hotel to survive the Great Seattle Fire of 1889.

Sarah died in 1897 and is buried next to her husband at Seattle's Lake View cemetery.

MISCELLANEOUS

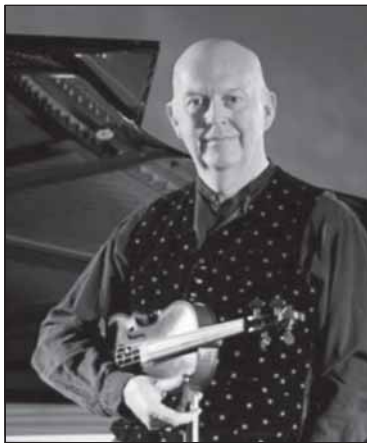
• Ceol Cascadia Irish Music Week is at the Evergreen State College in Olympia August 5-11. Visit cascadiairish.org;

• City Councilor Niall McNelis is the new mayor of Seattle's Sister City of Galway, succeeding Pearce Flannery, the Galway Mayor who visited Seattle this past March;

• Best wishes to Flanagan's Craft Pub in downtown Puyallup, managed (and partly owned) by Dubliner Karl Ashmore.



(L-R) MAURA BARNES, David McCourt and Bernadette Noonan pictured at the Irish seniors summer luncheon.



MANUS MCGUIRE, an Irish fiddle player from Co. Sligo and one of the instructors at the Irish Music Camp in Olympia, will perform at the Ceol Cascadia Teachers Concert in Seattle on Saturday, August 11



(L-R) MARY SHRIANE, Kathleen Byrne (visiting from Carlow) and John Keane pictured at the Irish seniors summer luncheon.



HAPPY 21ST BIRTHDAY wishes to Daisy Jacobsen. She is pictured above with her father David Jacobsen (Irish Heritage Club president) on June 26.



TOM KEEFE of Seattle is pictured above in Galway outside the shop owned by the new Galway Mayor Niall McNelis which has a wall mural showing a signpost to Seattle.

Irish Government uses star power in bid for UN Security Council seat

NEW YORK – Ireland formally launched a charm offensive in New York City in a bid for a seat on the United Nations Security Council. The government is hoping to secure a two-year term on the council in 2021.

Taoiseach Leo Varadkar and Tánaiste Simon Coveney arrived on July 1 to push the case for Ireland which faces competition from Norway and Canada for the solitary seat.

Outside UN headquarters, the taoiseach laid a wreath to commemorate Irish peacekeepers who lost their lives while on UN service, and an Irish exhibition area was erected with various tents and stalls to showcase Irish food, culture and music.

Bono, along with former president Mary Robinson and the taoiseach addressed crowds from the stage during the afternoon, while UN ambassadors were invited to a U2 concert in Madison Square Garden in the evening.

Ireland won two-year rotating terms on the Security Council in 1962, 1981 and 2001.

Winning a seat on the UN Security Council forms part of the government's 'Global Ireland 2025' initiative, a plan launched in recent weeks to increase Ireland's global footprint.

The government wants to expand diplomatic links with new embassies around the world. It also hopes to boost export markets and tourism.

The plan states that Ireland will pro-

mote its values of peace, humanity, equality and justice through the campaign for election to the UN Security Council, adding that "if successful, this will place Ireland at the heart of UN decision-making on matters of vital importance, including international peace, security and development."

The United Nations Security Council is frequently criticized for being ineffective. Permanent members like the U.S. and Russia can simply use a veto if they don't like the resolution being discussed.

Second Trump pick for U.S. Ambassador to Ireland drops out

DUBLIN – A report in the *Irish Times* indicates that the Department of Foreign Affairs does not expect an American ambassador will be sent to Ireland this year after a second wealthy Donald Trump supporter who was tipped to take the job dropped out.

Ireland has had no American ambassador since U.S. President Trump dismissed all Barack Obama's political appointees, including Kevin O'Malley in Dublin, after his inauguration as president in January 2017.

Simon Coveney, the foreign affairs minister, had expected Trump to announce last St. Patrick's Day that he was appointing Edward Crawford (80), an Ohio billionaire with Cork roots, but the announcement failed to materialize after the dismissal of Rex Tillerson as secretary of state in March.

Crawford, who raised funds for Trump's election campaign and whose businesses include tool manufacture for military, aeronautics and commercial industries, is no longer being mentioned in Washington as the next ambassador.

No new name has been floated since Mike Pompeo replaced Tillerson as secretary of state.

Trump's first choice as Irish ambassador was Brian Burns (82), a Florida businessman whose forebears emigrated from Kerry. He withdrew from consideration for the post in June 2017 citing health reasons.

Coveney and his officials have repeatedly raised concerns about the Irish vacancy with the U.S. administration and with Reece Smyth, the chargé d'affaires in the Dublin embassy who was appointed deputy chief of mission in September 2016.

Of the 50 European countries Ireland along with Luxembourg, Switzerland, Hungary and Belgium are the remaining countries without an ambassador since Trump was elected.

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PHOTO: U.S. State Department
THE Chancery Building at the Embassy of the United States of America in Ballsbridge, Dublin 4, Ireland.

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RCMP Constable Constable John Yamashita (centre) is pictured above with Ronan Deane and Tara Philips with the ISSC Youth program.

Who knew Canada's world-renowned Mounties are also great footballers?

VANCOUVER – The Irish Sporting and Social Club of Vancouver has been running a Gaelic Games program for youth for nearly 10 years.

The youth program focuses on two key aspects: One is the summer Gaelic Games Camps for the families in the community, which allow children from three to 18 years to try out and play hurling and Gaelic football.

Secondly, the program reaches out to schools, allowing children from different backgrounds to play these unique sports.

In that time, the ISSC Youth Development team of volunteers has reached out to nearly 6,000 secondary and primary students in the Lower Mainland of British Columbia.

As Irish people abroad, it is always a thrill to see kids with different accents, different ethnicities and from many diverse cultures playing our games.

At Clayton Heights Secondary School in Surrey, B.C., recently, Tara Philips and Ronan Deane of the ISSC were facilitating matches on the field, and grade 11s and 12s (16-18 year olds) were contesting keenly in a match.

It was great to watch the kids putting the skills they had learned into practice in a match-setting.

Suddenly, a police officer in full uniform and equipped with all his policing paraphernalia entered the fray.

When the ISSC referee asked the officer if there was a problem, Constable

John Yamashita calmly asked if he could join in. And he did.

I never thought I would say these words, but the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), the world renowned Mounties, are great footballers.

Not only did Constable John compete gamely, but as a man trying Gaelic football for the first time, he made an incredible 'block down' to save an almost certain goal.

Later, Constable Yamashita returned without all his gear and participated in another match with a grade 12 leadership class.

During the school year, the Surrey RCMP Youth Unit works closely with its school and community partners to increase positive youth-police engagement in one of the largest school districts in the Province of British Columbia.

It was a pleasure for the ISSC and the GAA to have been a party to this very unique interaction between a Canadian school and its local law enforcement.

The club will play Gaelic Games on Saturday, July 14 (10 AM) at Bridgeview Park in Surrey, B.C. Be sure to drop by and check it out. You never know who you might see playing.

For more information about the ISSC Youth Development Program, e-mail: youthvancouverissc@gmail.com, or online at: www.isscvancouver.com.



CONSTABLE Yamashita participated in a recent training match at Clayton Heights Secondary School in Surrey, B.C.

IRISH SPORTING & SOCIAL CLUB

Vancouver GAA Summer Season underway with lots of friendly rivalry

By AISLINN RICE

VANCOUVER – After a competitive start to the season with the ISSC Spring League there was no rest for the wicked!

On May 18, eighty ISSC players, both men and women, traveled to Victoria to participate in a mini GAA League within the Highland Games.

What else would one want to do on the long weekend only play some competitive football and hurling against our rivals Fraser Valley Gaels. This was the first year that Fraser Valley Gaels attended the games.

The games took place on the Saturday of the long weekend, with the finals on the Sunday.

The sun was splitting the stones for the entire weekend, but all teams and players played with great skill and determination to win the silverware.

JP Ryan's hurlers brought two teams over: Downtown and Kitsilano.

Despite being teammates, there was no holding them back from showing the spectators their raw talents with a slitor.

Both teams reached the final after defeating Fraser Valley Gaels hurlers.

The men battled out in the final on Sunday morning with Kitsilano winning the lovely glass trophy.

Unfortunately, the men's football was not as lucky this time.

They fought till the end in the extreme heat, but Fraser Valley Gaels robbed the silverware in the last few minutes. The rivalry continues!

The ISSC ladies footballers brought over two very strong teams who played against themselves and the Fraser Valley Gaels' new ladies team on the Saturday.

This Victoria trip was a huge success for all players involved and it proved to be a fantastic bonding trip, not only for the teammates but also for the rival clubs.

June kicked off the start of the first ever sanctioned Vancouver Summer League.

The league consists of the three football teams in Vancouver: ISSC, Fraser Valley Gaels and Éire Óg.

JP Ryan's hurling and camogie teams are playing games amongst themselves as challenge and practice games.

Ladies football is formed of ISSC and Fraser Valley Gaels junior teams.

Round one took place in sunny Surrey on Sunday, June 17, hoisted by Éire Óg.

ROUND 1 RESULTS

Senior Men's Football

ISSC 1-11 – Fraser Valley Gaels 1-11

Senior Men's Football

ISSC Celts 2-13 – Éire Óg 0-14

Women's Junior challenge game

ISSC 0-12 – Fraser Valley Gaels 0-5

Fantastic games of hurling and camogie were displayed by the JP Ryan's teams. Two great challenging and skillful games.

The youth of the ISSC came to show off their developing skills and how they are the real up-and-coming stars of the ISSC.

Our youth programme started on June 5 with training twice a week and mini-games days coincided with the Summer League.

The Youth Programme will run right

up until August 12.

If you are interested in getting your child involved in the wonderful world of GAA and the ISSC or would like further information, please e-mail: youthvancouverissc@gmail.com.

YOUTH SCHEDULE

Training: July 10, 31, August 7 – Clark Park @ 6:30 PM

Games: July 14 – Bridgeview Park Surrey @ 10 AM

August 12 – Crescent Park @ 10am

For updates on training days, times and venues for all codes, visit the ISSC Facebook page at: www.facebook.com/isscvancouver. Likewise, for all updates and upcoming events, see online: www.isscvancouver.com.

If you have any questions or queries about the Vancouver Irish Sporting and Social Club, e-mail: isscvancouver@gmail.com. All new members are welcome to join throughout the season.

SEASON SCHEDULE 2018

July 14 – Vancouver Summer League:

Round 3- Hosted by ISSC; August 5-6 – Western Canadian Championship in Vancouver hosted by Fraser Valley Gaels;

August 12 – Vancouver Summer League: Semi Finals;

August 19 – Vancouver Summer League: Finals;

August 31 – North American Championship in Philadelphia.



ISSC GAELIC football team in Victoria, B.C. for the mini GAA league on May 19-20.



ISSC LADIES FOOTBALL teams who travelled to Victoria, B.C. on the May long-weekend (May 19-20, 2018).



JP RYAN'S HURLERS – Downtown and Kitsilano teams in Victoria, B.C. for the mini GAA league on the May long-weekend.

FRASER VALLEY GAELS

Western Canada GAA Championships coming to the banks of Burnaby Lake in 2018

"The English concept of sport arises out of a secure social structure, gradually built up during centuries of peace.

The Irish concept arises out of an insecure social structure, the development of which has been uneven and progress made through successive outbreaks of violence.

It is the difference between a pleasant form of social intercourse and a psychological need."

— Patrick McNabb, Limerick Rural Survey, Third Interim Report: Social Structure, Tipperary, 1962, p. 50.

By COLM O'FLAHERTY

IT WAS January 1959 when Patrick McNabb made the journey west to Limerick.

A recent philosophy graduate of University College Dublin, McNabb had been sent to Limerick by Muintir na Tire, an ecclesiastical organisation devoted to rural affairs, in order to contribute to the Limerick Rural Survey, a government-funded study of the issues facing Irish rural life during an era of social and economic change.

After a year spent compiling research and conducting interviews amongst the people of eastern County Limerick, McNabb's findings were published as part of the Limerick Rural Survey, in the form of fascinating sociological reports, taking in everything from the structures of farm families and rural communities, to the dancehall culture, as well as the above account of Limerick hurling.

Despite being enlivened by such colourful insights, the essay was for the most part a chronicle of a dying society, a society that was crumbling under the pressures of poverty, class prejudice, and emigration; a society that was eroding across the waves.

Although a lot has changed since McNabb's findings were first published, emigration has retained a prominent, though perhaps not so ominous, presence in Irish society.

In many cases, the reasons that young people choose to leave the country have remained the same, whether it be the prospect of more attractive jobs abroad or purely a sense of adventure.

Of course, some of the push factors have changed.

McNabb reported that many young women left Limerick due to a lack of eligible farmers.

Although no exact statistics are at hand for the current generation of Irish émigrés, it is doubtful that too many began their Canadian journey by throwing down the personals section of the *Farmers Journal* and deciding there and then to forsake the prospect of road frontage for the promise of western Canada's wide-open spaces.

It is doubtful too that, when prospective emigrants are considering their move abroad, the opportunity to play GAA in a foreign country figures too highly as a motivating factor.

And for those who do choose to play our native games on foreign soil, the question "Why am I doing this?" is one that crops up at least once during the season.

Sometimes it arises when you're just in the door from work, throwing your football boots and a sullen banana into your gear bag, before heading back out into the rain.

Other times, you find yourself asking this question on a bright summer's day, when all of your friends are at the

beach, but you're crammed into a car, heading out to a rugby pitch in the suburbs.

It can be a difficult question to answer at times, although McNabb's idea of a "psychological need" perhaps helps to explain why we do it; others might simply argue that it is, perhaps, psychological help that we need.

Whatever the case, there will be a gathering of Gaels by the banks of Burnaby Lake this year, when the sun stretches its long rays upon the first weekend of August.

Hundreds of Irish expats will congregate at the Burnaby Lake Sports Complex for the 2018 Western Canadian GAA Championships, which will feature competitions in ladies and men's Gaelic football, hurling, and camogie, as well as food, drink, and entertainment for all who gather.

Five clubs from four cities will be competing for sporting honours this year.

Making the trek across the Rocky Mountains will be the Calgary Chieftains and Edmonton Wolfe Tones, both hoping to bring trophies and glory back to the province of Alberta.

They will face a strong challenge in Vancouver, whose GAA scene has experienced a boom of sorts in the last decade.

Three clubs from the city and its environs will be taking part this year, with Éire Óg, who played their first games earlier in the spring, making their tournament debut.

They will be joined by the city's oldest active GAA club, the Irish Sporting and Social Club of Vancouver, along with the hosts of this year's tournament, Fraser Valley Gaels.

This will be the 14th edition of the Western Canadian Championships, and it will be the first time that Fraser Valley Gaels perform the role of hosts.

Background

The club was still in its infancy when it first participated in the Championships in 2014; it was so young, that in fact the team took to the field in a borrowed set of Ukraine soccer jerseys, their own kit having failed to materialize on time.

The club had only been formed earlier in the year under the initiative of former Derry Senior goalkeeper Eoin McCloskey, who was aided by fellow



THE FRASER VALLEY GAELS have firmly established themselves just a few short years after the club was first established in 2014. In September 2017 the team [pictured above] won the USGAA Intermediate Football Championship at the GAA Treasure Island Field in San Francisco.

founding members Vinny Crowley, Peter Agnew, Ian Corrigan, and Denis Ryan.

The first training sessions took place at Sullivan Heights, a community park located at the intersection of 144 Street and 64 Avenue in Surrey, in the spring of 2014.

Each session lasted for 30 minutes, Ryan recalls, "followed by six cans each in the car park."

Denis doesn't say what was in the cans. Whatever it was, it seemed to contain the recipe for success, as the team won the Junior Men's Football title that year.

This year's teams are driven by a new generation of players, but Fraser Valley Gaels remains a club at heart; past players, along with their wives and children, generously lend their time and support, while founding members such as Vinny Crowley and Denis Ryan regularly drop by at training to offer their wealth of tactical knowledge and gnomic wisdom.

Today's teams also honour the traditions and standards set by the 2014 side.

This year, in addition to the rigorous training being undertaken, the expertise of the club's nutritionist Ronan Monaghan has been brought on board.

"Beer is good for the bones," Ronan advises. "It's full of silicon. So drink plenty for a good recovery."

The club, in conjunction with Willie Donnellan of Donnellan's Irish Pub on Granville Street, has ensured that plenty of beer will be available at the weekend, so that participants will have the opportunity to test Ronan's research findings.

This year's championships are not only significant for the Valley because of their role as hosts, but also because the club will be fielding a ladies team in the tournament for the first time.

Although only recently formed, the ladies side will be hoping to continue the competitive form that they've maintained since their establishment in 2017.

Meanwhile, the Valley's men's team

will be contesting the Senior Football competition as defending champions, having won the Tom Butler Cup for the first time in 2016.

It was a title that we hoped to defend last summer, and we all still wish that we could have done so.

As the tournament approached in July, the team had been preparing for the journey to Calgary when news of a tragedy came through.

The loss of David Gavin

There was no option but to call off the 2017 Western Canadian Championships, although a number of those who made the trip to Calgary that weekend played games in his honour, and David's life was later remembered in a competition played in his name in Salmon Arm, B.C., in October of last year.

There is no upside to a tragedy like this, but it does remind us to savour what good moments in life we are lucky enough to enjoy.

These moments can come and go, often without noticing; the poet Jean Toomer remarked that life "bends joy and pain, beauty and ugliness, in such a way that no one may isolate them."

And it is true that we cannot isolate these moments, only witness and marvel as they skim and shimmer across our lives, passing lightly on a summer's evening with our friends, or on a rainy evening on some far-off rugby pitch in the suburbs, or on any evening in a car park with six cans each.



THE LOSS of David Gavin in 2017 was felt not only amongst his family and friends in Mayo and Vancouver, but across the Irish community at large.

These moments come as the blood rushes through our veins in a test of our courage and skill, our wit and our fight, and as we appreciate the same qualities in others.

They come as we relish the vibrancy of a culture that can lie crumbling in the fields of east County Limerick, only to thrive more than half a century later on the shores of the Pacific Ocean, standing with the same strength and beauty as the glistening mountains that rise above.

And when you ask yourself why you're doing it, any of those moments should provide a good enough answer.

Fight star McGregor says he regrets New York melee

NEW YORK – Mixed martial arts star Conor McGregor has told of his regret for a backstage melee at a New York arena, and is in plea negotiations to resolve charges in the case.

The incident took place on April 6 at a media event to publicize a series of UFC fights at a Brooklyn arena. He is charged with three counts of assault and one count of criminal after a video of the fracas at Brooklyn's Barclay Center went viral.

After a brief court appearance on June 14, the 29-year-old Irish fighter and his co-defendant Cian Cowley remain free on bail. They are due back in court July 26. "I regret my actions that led me here today," McGregor said outside court afterwards. "I understand the seriousness of this matter and I'm hopeful to get it resolved soon."

Sunshine, fields of lavender, wonderful wines, and sumptuous meals makes Provence a magnet

GREETINGS from Gordes which is a picturesque village in the South of France.

Nominated as one of the prettiest villages in the country, the honey coloured stone houses are reminiscent of the Cotswold area of England but without the rain.

If you saw the film *A Good Year*, starring Russel Crowe and Marianne Cotillard then you can picture the area because this is where it was filmed.

Although just a hamlet, the weekly market attracts large numbers and deservedly.

Apart from all the local food on sale, many of the stalls offer products hand-made by the artisans in the area, which is such a pleasant change from the mass produced tat that one finds in markets around the world these days.

Sunshine, fields of lavender, wonderful wines, a million varieties of cheese, fresh fruit and vegetables, from local producers, and a relaxed way of life makes it a magnet for the British.

Consequently, most local people are bilingual, or at least do not look at you with disdain when you strangle their language in an attempt to communicate.

The French and the English are very similar in that respect – they both expect the world to speak their language and if you don't...then you must be an idiot.

Many years ago I was working in Paris and was enjoying a tippie in the hotel bar when a lady from Chicago announced to the barman, in a strong American accent, that it was her first trip to Europe and she was in love with Paris.

Then she added, "it is really incredible, have you noticed that just everybody here can speak French, even the little children."

When I finished choking on my beer I left wondering if the Parisian barman would suddenly not be able to speak English or just kill her.



TROYES is a picture-postcard little town located on the Seine river about 150 kilometres (93 miles) southeast of Paris. This area is known as the Champagne region of Northern France.

POSTCARD FROM PROVENCE

By
ELFAN JONES



THE CROSS OF LORRAINE located in the little town of Colombey-les-Deux-Eglises in Champagne-Ardenne in France is dedicated to General de Gaulle and the main historical events that marked his life.



My wife and I left the UK 10 days ago and drove from London to Folkestone. We drove the car onto the train and rode through the channel tunnel into France.

The first stop was Troyes which for some French reason is pronounced "Twrah".

A beautiful place and is a perfect example of how a medieval town would look in the Twenty-First Century.

An inner city of Tudor-style buildings housing modern shops, offices, bars and restaurants. It is absolutely charming and you would be forgiven for thinking that you had wandered onto a film set.

The next morning we headed south through the Champagne area stopping only to sample and buy from a vineyard in Colombey-les-Deux-Eglises where Charles De Gaulle lived.

Just before the village is a monument to De Gaulle comprising of an imposing 141-foot high Cross of Lorraine, which is a heraldic cross consisting of a vertical line crossed by two shorter horizontal bars.

It was the symbol of the Free French forces led by De Gaulle during the Second World War.

After one of many disagreements with De Gaulle, Winston Churchill is reported as saying that everyone has a cross to bear and his was the Cross of Lorraine.

Having just Champagne for breakfast is perhaps not the best preparation for a 300-mile drive, but it gave me the courage to face the maniacs on the French motorways.

Second stop was Dijon, the home of mustard, the start of the Burgundy wine trail and capital of the Burgundy region.

An attractive city, but 20 miles further south is Beaune which is filled with wine shops, delicatessens, and little boutiques as well as the famous medieval hospital, a beautiful, unmissable tourist destination.

Between the two towns are many of the villages that give their names to France's famous wines, and one is Gevrey Chambertin where we stopped for breakfast.

On entering a small cafe, I again thought we were on a film set.

Three old men were standing around a high table drinking wine. Locals were walking in with baguettes under their arms and ordering coffees, and two of them were wearing typical French striped t-shirts.

All that was missing was an accordion player with a beret and a woman doing the Can-Can.

A pleasant visit to a vineyard later we were on our way to Orange which of course is not pronounced Orange but more like a growl.

We were now truly in the South of France, not the trendy part like Nice or Cannes, but the more scruffy part, less touristy but it boasts the most intact Roman theatre in Europe which is still in use.

It was built in the First Century A.D. and regularly used for operas and concerts.

This was our final stop before driving to a luxury villa that our friends have rented outside Gordes.

As I sit here by the heated pool nibbling on a grape and sipping from a flute of De Gaulle's Champagne, I fancy a week here will be no hardship.

Best wishes
Elfan



PICTURED [LEFT] Paul Robeson [1898-1976] was an American bass-baritone who became famous both for his cultural accomplishments and for his political activism. He was a powerful campaigner against racial segregation in the United States and a strong supporter of unions and the working class. [RIGHT] Welsh bass-baritone Bryn Terfel will star in a musical biopic depicting the life of Paul Robeson who is remembered in Wales for his support of the striking Welsh miners in 1929.

Major Welsh festivals to be held in Cardiff and Washington, D.C.

VANCOUVER – The Vancouver Welsh Society has no major events planned for the summer but as in past years several members will be attending popular Welsh Festivals in North America and Wales.

A few plan to attend the annual Royal National Eisteddfod of Wales, to be held this year in Cardiff, August 3-11.

In addition to the traditional ceremonies of the Crowning and Chaining of the Bard, there will be some additional highlights this year to celebrate Wales and the Nation's capital.

An innovative event will be *Carnifal y Mor* (Sea Carnival) whose aim, according to the organizers, will be "to celebrate the energy, strength and diversity of Welsh cultural life in the capital city, across the country and its links across the world."

The carnival will begin at 10:30 on the evening of Saturday, August 4 at the Welsh Millennium Centre.

The colourful singing and dancing procession will then proceed to Cardiff Bay, ending up at the Wales National Parliament Building where large screens will display the diversity of the people who have contributed to building the modern Cardiff.

On the evening of Friday and Saturday, August 3 and 4, Sir Bryn Terfel will star in a musical biopic depicting the life of African-American stage and film actor Paul Robeson.

The production is entitled, in Welsh: *Hwn yw fy Mrawd: Paul Robeson – Arwr I Gymru, Arwr I'r Byd* (This is my Brother: Paul Robeson – Hero to Wales, Hero to the World).

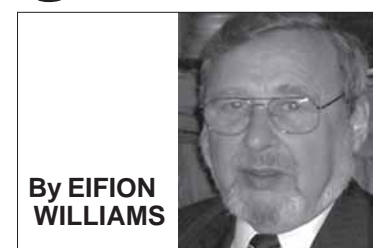
Paul Robeson possessed a beautiful rich bass-baritone voice and was a major international star during the first half of the 20th century.

He also gained a law degree from Columbia University and was an acclaimed athlete, having played briefly in the NFL.

Above all, he was a powerful campaigner against racial segregation in the United States and a strong supporter of unions and the working class.

While on a visit to London in 1929 Robeson met some striking Welsh miners and joined them in a protest march. For the rest of his life he maintained a strong bond with the Welsh, especially the South Wales miners.

His left-wing views and campaigns



By
EIFION WILLIAMS

against racism led to his being black-listed in the U.S. by the House Un-American Activities Committee during the McCarthy years of the 1950s.

The Saturday night performance in Cardiff will be 60 years to the day since Paul Robeson addressed the National Eisteddfod for the last time in Ebbw Vale, where he shared a platform with Aneurin Bevan, founder of the National Health Service.

Some Welsh Society members will also be attending the North American Festival of Wales (NAFOW) in Washington D.C. with events being held both in the city of Washington and across the Potomac in Alexandria, Virginia.

The festival is hosted by the Washington D.C. Welsh Society and is partly sponsored by the Women's Welsh Clubs of America.

The main event at the festival will be the traditional National Gymanfa Ganu but visitors will also enjoy a wide selection of concerts, seminars, exhibitions and informal gatherings, including spontaneous evening singing sessions.

A big attraction at the festival will be the tours to historic locations around Washington and Northern Virginia.

In addition to a tour of the city of Washington itself, there will also be a visit to the Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville Civil War battlefields, which will include information on Welsh-American participation in the Civil War. Another tour will visit George Washington's home at Mount Vernon and a cruise on the Potomac.

The NAFOW event is held in a different location every year and attracts visitors from Welsh societies across North America.

Several Vancouver Welsh Society members have been actively involved in NAFOW over the years and are looking forward to another opportunity to participate in an event that brings Welsh expats and descendants together to celebrate Welsh culture and traditions.