

# the celtic connection

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Proudly Serving Celts in North America Since 1991

FEBRUARY 2019

## Inside This Issue

IRISH GOVERNMENT Minister of State for the Diaspora and Development, Ciarán Cannon, will be in Seattle, Washington next month during this year's upcoming Irish Week celebration. He is expected to attend the St. Patrick's Day Parade in Seattle on Saturday, March 16. While travelling, Minister Cannon will also visit Calgary, Alberta and Vancouver, British Columbia. Dates to be confirmed next issue of *The Celtic Connection*. [Pages 2 & 21]



## Saint Brigid: Mary of the Gael and triple goddess of light, fire and healing

ONE of the oldest celebrations marking the beginning of spring and which has a rich history in Ireland, Scotland and the Isle of Man is Imbolc – or Saint Brigid's Day. This ancient Gaelic festival is observed on February 1.

Imbolc celebrations are held by some pagan communities in the northern hemisphere, to observe the astronomical midpoint between the Winter Solstice and the Spring Equinox.

It is named after an Irish word originally thought to mean "in the belly" – although it can also be translated as "ewe's milk."

Many Christians observe the date as the feast day of Saint Brigid. The day is referenced in some of the earliest Irish literature, an indication of its significance throughout Gaelic history.

In Ireland the saint is often remembered by making a traditional St. Brigid's Cross – a symbol which many believe will protect a household in the year ahead.

The culture of St. Brigid of Kildare (AD 451-525) encapsulates every aspect of Celtic religion. The original Brigid was a threefold goddess of light, fire, and healing.

When Christianity replaced polytheism, the attributes of the goddess were transferred to the saint of the same name. It is possible when the changeover came, a priestess guardian of the shrine of Brigid became identified with the goddess herself.

St. Brigid was the foundress of the Christian shrine of Kildare. Until 1220, a perpetual fire, tended by 19 nuns, burned in a shrine near her church at Kildare. The fire was surrounded by a fence made of stakes and brushwood, inside which no man was allowed to enter.

She is remembered as the epitome of kindness and charity and many miracles are attributed to her, including those of curing lepers. There are many stories of her assisting the poor, freeing slaves and interceding on behalf of unfortunate people.



COVER illustration by artist Molly Brewer [About the artist on page 21]



ACTORS dressed as soldiers and holding 'machine guns' stand with a protester at a mock checkpoint near Newry, Co. Down. Hundreds of protesters gathered to warn British Prime Minister Theresa May that a hard Irish border risks destroying Northern Ireland's hard-won peace. [Read more on Brexit pages 8, 18, 19]



**ST. DAVID'S DAY** – March 1 is St. David's Day, the national day of Wales, and has been celebrated as such since the 12th Century. Modern day celebrations usually involve the singing of traditional songs followed by refreshments such as *te bach*, a tea with *bara brith* (famous Welsh fruit bread) and *teisen bach* (Welsh cake). A Welsh stew, named *cawl* containing lamb and leeks, is also traditionally consumed. St. David's symbol is the leek and he is typically depicted holding a dove. [More about St. David's Day festivities in Vancouver on page 24.]

### WIN A FREE GIFT BASKET OR A FREE CD

WIN a fabulous pair (2) tickets to the **John Cleese** concert at Queen Elizabeth Theatre, Vancouver on Saturday, May 25. Tickets are valued at \$260 in Centre Orchestra. Mark your entry 'Cleese' and include your name and daytime telephone number. Entry by March 7.



WIN an 'Irish Basket' with a large Paddy pie, Irish white pudding & black pudding sausages from Black Pudding Imports in Langley. Check out their weekly sales on Facebook. (See page 9 for more info). Mark your entry Black Pudding and include your name and daytime telephone number. Entry by March 7. All entries by e-mail only to: cbutler@telus.net (only one entry per person).

**CELTICFEST VANCOUVER 2019 Events Round-Up**  
Pages 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7

### CELEBRATING THE WOMEN OF IRELAND

More recently, the feast has become a celebration of Irish women around the world and known as *Lá Fhéile Bríde: Ag Ceiliúradh Mná na hÉireann* (St. Brigid's Day: Celebrating the Women of Ireland).

From London to Warsaw to Washington, events are held around the world celebrating the talent and creativity of Irish women with art exhibitions, music, poetry, dance.

What started as an Irish community event at the Embassy in London last year has grown into an international festival, spanning six countries in Europe and five states in the U.S. over five days.

On the Pacific coast, the Consulate General of Ireland in San Francisco hosted an evening to celebrate Irish and Irish American women in the Bay area.

The Irish cultural evening held at the University of San Francisco on February 1 included an insightful panel discussion with special guest speakers including Irish poet Eavan Boland.

The Department of Foreign Affairs chose St. Brigid's Day to showcase women in the Irish diaspora, and build a programme of international events offering an alternative celebration of Irishness to St. Patrick's Day, according to a spokeswoman.

The St. Brigid's Day events are funded by the Department of Foreign Affairs' Emigrant Support Programme, which provides around 12 million euro to support diaspora events and Irish community organisations worldwide each year.

The new festival is part of the Irish Government's effort to develop Ireland's reputation on the world stage through culture, under the Global Ireland 2025 programme announced in 2018.

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## IRISH CONSULATE GENERAL IN VANCOUVER

# Looking ahead to St. Patrick's Day and an upcoming visit with Ireland's Minister for the Diaspora and International Development



By **FRANK FLOOD**  
Irish Consul General  
Vancouver

**V**ANCOUVER – Opening of the new Consulate General Office in Vancouver: A case of, so far, so good!

It is now three months since the opening of the Consulate General Office of Ireland in Vancouver at the end of October and thanks to the support of the Irish community and the Irish Embassy in Ottawa, it is certainly a case of so far so good.

The Consulate's office is based in the German Consulate premises in Canada Place which had some free space which they have kindly made available to us.

The great support we have received from our German hosts in Canada Place

has made us all feel very welcome and ensured we could open to the public on schedule and provide as much a service to the Irish community as is feasible from a temporary office premises.

We have already had a mission from Dublin and thanks to the great work of Deputy Consul General Luke Hanlon we have identified a possible premises for a permanent office which hopefully will open, all going well, in the first half of next year.

We have also been very fortunate to have found Katherine Kiss and Krystel Aquino, our two new local staff officers whose enthusiasm, local knowledge and skills have helped us get off the ground so quickly while still keeping our sense of humour.

Krystel is the office manager and also leads on organising all our events and trade functions which is the easy part as she also has to organise my programme and activities.

Katherine is our finance and consular officer who leads on our consular services and support, finance and media side.

Above all, my wife Orla Ní Bhróithe and I, have been made to feel really very welcome and the genuine friendship and support of the Irish community has made British Columbia already seem like a home away from home.

*"...my wife Orla Ní Bhróithe and I, have been made to feel really very welcome"*

Everywhere we have gone since we arrived, from Victoria to Whistler, we have come across Irish people who are working hard, doing well and enjoying life in western Canada.

The number of young Irish in particular whom we have met, who are all so confident, positive and outgoing is very impressive.

When you hear comments such as "send me another Ciara," you get a sense of how appreciated the Irish workers are and how they are great ambassadors for Ireland in their own right.

## TWO IMPORTANT MAPPING PROJECTS

On a practical level the support from the Irish Women's Network and the new Vancouver Chapter of the Ireland-Canada Chamber of Commerce has meant that we have been able to launch two important mapping projects which will guide the work of the new Consulate. Both projects are being funded by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and will be carried out this year.

The community mapping project be-

ing led by the Irish Women's Network aims to clarify firstly how many Irish organisations there are in British Columbia, where are they located and what is their contact details.

At the individual level, work has already begun to establish how many Irish are in British Columbia, where they are living, and what challenges do they face.

The objective is to try to ensure that the Consulate can use its limited resources to best support the Irish community and provide consular support and assistance in the future.

On the trade side the new Vancouver Chapter of the Ireland-Canada Chamber of Commerce is being funded by the Consulate to develop an online trade directory which will work to establish who is doing, or seriously interested, in promoting trade and investment between Ireland and British Columbia.

The engagement of the local Irish business community is key to guiding the trade activities of the Consulate in support of our State agencies.

Already this year, consultations with local Irish mining contacts have led, for the first time, to Irish participation in the Roundup conference in Vancouver with delegates from Geoscience Ireland and Ireland's earth science research group ICRAIG attending the

event including a business breakfast organised by the Consulate.

I am conscious that one of the key roles of the Consulate will be to help act as a focal point for the vibrant but dispersed Irish community.

## COMMUNITY OUTREACH

To help promote greater awareness and mutual support, the Consulate has already held two Irish community representative breakfast meetings.

The most recent community breakfast meeting in January was used to help clarify what activities are being held around St. Patrick's Day and how the Consulate could best support these activities.

The forthcoming visit of Minister Ciarán Cannon T.D., to Calgary, Vancouver and Seattle for the Saint Patrick's Day period will be a highlight for the Consulate and will be used to mark the formal opening of the new Consulate.

Minister Cannon has responsibility for the Diaspora and International Development so a major focus of his visit, in addition to trade and promoting bilateral relations will be to engage with the Irish community.

I am sure Minister Cannon on a personal level will want to meet with as many members of the Irish community as he can and will, no doubt, receive a great Vancouver *céad míle fáilte*.



Ard-Chonsalacht na hÉireann | Vancouver  
Consulate General of Ireland | Vancouver  
Consulat général d'Irlande | Vancouver

**The Consulate General of Ireland in Vancouver  
wishes everyone a happy St. Patrick's Day!**



**Hope you will support and enjoy these Irish community events**



### FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 22

#### 'Changed Utterly'

Jericho Arts Theatre  
Feb 22 - March 16

**'A play based on the words of Constance Markievicz and some of the principle participants of the 1916 Easter Rising in Ireland written and directed by Joan Bryans'**  
[www.vitalsparktheatre.com](http://www.vitalsparktheatre.com)  
[www.brownpapertickets.com](http://www.brownpapertickets.com)  
or (604) 224-8007 ext. 3

### SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 23

#### Irish in Vancouver's Got Talent

St. Mary's Ukrainian Cultural Centre  
7 PM to 2 AM  
Information: Facebook @isscvancouver  
**"Come show your support!"**  
Tickets: [www.eventbrite.ca](http://www.eventbrite.ca)  
Details on Facebook: ISSC Vancouver

### SATURDAY, MARCH 9

#### Coig in Concert

Presented by the Rogue Folk Club  
St. James Hall – 9 PM  
Tickets: [www.roguefolk.com](http://www.roguefolk.com)

### SATURDAY, MARCH 16

#### The BMO St. Patrick's Day 5K Run

Stanley Park – 9:30 AM  
**"Come for the race, stay for the party!  
All while supporting Diabetes Canada."**  
Register: <http://stpatrickss5k.com>

#### CelticFest Vancouver Ceilidh 2019

Scottish Cultural Centre  
7 PM to 11 PM  
**"Music, Dance, and Craic! Kids under 12 free."**  
Tickets: [blackthornband.eventbrite.com](http://blackthornband.eventbrite.com)

#### St. Patrick's Day Dinner and Dance

Presented by the Irish Club of White Rock  
Hazelmead Golf Club – 5:30 PM  
**"A night of delicious food, music, and dancing."**  
Tickets: (604) 803-0773 or (604) 536-3360

### Museum of Surrey Celtic Fest

Museum of Surrey  
1 PM to 4 PM  
**"Celtic dancing, music, and crafts. Free for everyone"**  
Information: [www.surrey.ca/culture-recreation/28439.aspx](http://www.surrey.ca/culture-recreation/28439.aspx)

### Gaelic Games and Youth Training Event

Andy Livingstone Park  
11 AM to 1:30 PM  
**"Come enjoy Gaelic Soccer and Camogie. Local and visiting coaches will be holding a youth training camp. Fun for everyone!"**  
Information: [www.isscvancouver.com](http://www.isscvancouver.com) or  
Facebook@isscvancouver

### Vancouver Welsh Men's Choir Concert

Christ Church Cathedral  
7:30 PM  
**"Celebrate St. Patrick's Day with Vancouver's largest all male choir."**  
Tickets: <https://vwmc.ca> or  
[www.brownpapertickets.com](http://www.brownpapertickets.com)

### SUNDAY, MARCH 17

#### St. Patrick's Day Family Celebration

St. James Hall  
1:30 PM - 4:30 PM  
**"Fun for all ages with live music, crafts, face painting, Irish language, Wolfhounds, Gaelic sports, and more!"**  
Admission: Free

### SUNDAY, MARCH 20

#### Ímar in Concert

Presented by the Rogue Folk Club  
St. James Hall – 8 PM  
Tickets: [www.roguefolk.com](http://www.roguefolk.com)

### WEDNESDAY, MARCH 27

#### Lúnasa

Kay Meek Arts Centre  
7:30 PM to 9:30 PM  
**"Acclaimed Celtic quintet Lúnasa has embraced and refined traditional Irish music for over two decades."**  
Tickets: <https://kaymeek.com/events>



# CELTIC FEST VANCOUVER

FEBRUARY 22 — MARCH 20, 2019

**IRISH IN VANCOUVER'S GOT TALENT**

HOSTED BY ISSC VANCOUVER AND CELTICFEST

FEB 23 ~ St. Mary's Ukrainian Culture Centre ~ \$20



**CELTIC FEST CEILIDH**

MAR 16 ~ Scottish Cultural Centre ~ \$20-\$25



**WELSH MEN'S CHOIR**

MAR 16 ~ Christ Church Cathedral ~ \$27-\$40



**Changed Utterly**

written & directed by Joan Bryans

**'CHANGED UTTERLY'**

FEB 22 TO MAR 16 ~ Jericho Arts Theatre ~ \$14-\$28

## IRISH IN VANCOUVER GOT TALENT

St. Mary's Ukrainian Culture Centre  
3150 Ash Street  
Saturday, February 23  
Tickets: \$20  
[www.eventbrite.ca](http://www.eventbrite.ca)  
Details on Facebook: ISSC Vancouver

## 'CHANGED UTTERLY'

Written and directed by  
Joan Bryans

Jericho Arts Theatre  
1675 Discovery Street  
Preview: February 21 - \$14  
February 22 - March 16  
Tickets: \$24 - \$28  
[www.vitalsparktheatre.co](http://www.vitalsparktheatre.co)  
[www.brownpapertickets.com](http://www.brownpapertickets.com)  
(604) 224-8007 ext. 3

## WELSH MEN'S CHOIR

Christ Church Cathedral  
690 Burrard Street  
Saturday, March 16  
Tickets: \$27 - \$30  
Premium Seating: \$40  
<https://vwmc.ca>  
[www.brownpapertickets.com](http://www.brownpapertickets.com)

Act Theatre  
11944 Haney Pl, Maple Ridge  
Sunday, March 17  
Tickets: \$15 - \$30  
<https://vwmc.ca>  
[www.theactmapleridge.org](http://www.theactmapleridge.org)



## CELTIC FEST CEILIDH

Scottish Cultural Centre  
8886 Hudson Street  
Saturday, March 16 - 7pm  
Tickets: \$20 - \$25 (12 & under free)  
[www.blackthornband.com](http://www.blackthornband.com)  
[blackthornband.eventbrite.com](http://blackthornband.eventbrite.com)

## ST. PATRICK'S DAY FAMILY CELEBRATION

St. James Hall  
3214 West 10th Avenue  
Sunday, March 17 - 1:30pm - 4:30pm  
Admission: Free  
LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

## Presented by Rogue Folk Club COIG IN CONCERT

Saturday, March 9 - 9 PM  
Tickets: \$30

## ÍMAR IN CONCERT

Wednesday, March 20 - 8 PM  
Tickets: \$28

St. James Hall  
3214 West 10th Avenue  
Tickets: [www.roguefolk.com](http://www.roguefolk.com)  
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<b>Friday, February 8th</b> Lapp / Nisbet / Freeman / Kierah <b>BC Fiddle Night</b>	<b>Wed., February 20th</b> Supreme Songwriter from TO! <b>Danny Michel</b> ON
<b>Saturday, February 9th</b> Louisiana Zydeco/ Swamp Pop <b>The Revelers</b> USA	<b>Thursday, March 7th</b> Harmonica man w/Blues Mongrels <b>Carlos del Junco</b> ON
<b>Sunday, February 10th</b> Rare acoustic show <b>SOLD OUT</b> <b>Ashley MacIsaac</b> NS	<b>Saturday, March 9th</b> Canada's finest Celtic band!! <b>Coig</b> NS
<b>Monday, February 11th</b> Two great trad. trios <b>Genticorum</b> PQ <b>De Temps Antan</b> PQ	<b>Sunday, March 10th</b> Bluegrass / Acoustic wizardry! <b>Dirty Kitchen</b> USA <b>Ickes &amp; Hensley</b> USA and many more to come

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

# If it's Celtic/trad tunes you want ....you'll find it all at The Rogue

## ROGUE FOLK CLUB



By  
**STEVE  
EDGE**



**VANCOUVER** – Last year **The Rogue Folk Club** received a grant from **Creative BC** to help produce the inaugural Rogue Fiddle Festival – **The Driven Bow**.

The event featured six diverse bands from around B.C. showcasing many different styles of fiddle music from Latin to Celtic, Old Time to Gypsy Jazz – and even Metis-style with dancers from B.C. (and Arizona and New Mexico who just happened to be in town for the Talking Stick Festival!).

It was a wonderful event, with three full-length concerts at St. James Hall in Kitsilano, and six participatory workshops in the rooms downstairs.

There were two major provisos of that Creative BC grant in 2018: all the musicians had to be from B.C., and we would not be able to ask Creative BC for funding for this event again.

So this year the **Second Annual Driven Bow Festival** will take place **February 8 - 11**, once again at St. James Hall (3214 West 10th Avenue in Kitsilano.)

This time there will be bands from Louisiana, Cape Breton, and Quebec as well as B.C.

The Festival kicks off on Friday, February 8 with a unique evening of **'Creative B.C. Fiddlers In The Round'**.

The concert will showcase some of the most creative, versatile, and downright brilliant fiddlers from the Lower Mainland and Vancouver Island, featuring **Daniel Lapp** from Victoria, **Kierah Raymond** from White Rock, **Kathleen Nisbet** of East Van's Viper Central (she led last year's Metis fiddle band at our event), and **Trent Freeman** of The Fretless.

They will be accompanied by **The Bills'** multi-instrumentalist **Adrian Dolan** and **The Paperboys'** percussionist **Robin Layne**.

We anticipate an evening of stories and tunes and jams and a uniquely intimate public meeting of minds and fiddle bows. And more!

Workshops with Daniel, Kierah, Kathleen, and Trent will take place the following afternoon downstairs at the hall.

Full details can be found on the Rogue website [www.roguefolk.com](http://www.roguefolk.com).

On **Saturday February 9**, the special guests are Louisiana sextet **The Revelers**, an exceptionally powerful zydeco / swamp pop combo with fiddle, accordion, sax, and guitar backed by bass and drums – and the exquisite vocals of drummer **Eric Frey**.

They sing in English and Cajun French and are guaranteed to have the dance

**QUEBEC TRAD** trios **Genticorum** and **De Temps Antan** will close the Driven Bow Festival with playful French chansons will have everyone smiling and dancing and having a whale of a time – even if some of us don't quite catch the meaning behind all the lyrics! They play The Rogue on Monday, February 11 at St. James Hall. Pictured above: De Temps Antan.

floor bouncing with happy feet two-stepping and waltzing and jitter-bug-ging the night away!

Their previous three concerts at The Rogue have all been sold out, so make sure you get a ticket and bring those dancing shoes!

The **Sunday, February 10** evening concert is a very rare treat: Cape Breton's mercurial fiddler **Ashley MacIsaac**, in an acoustic duo with brilliant Victoria guitarist **Quinn Bachand**.

They first toured together 10 years ago, and we are thrilled that **Ashley** is coming all the way over to this coast to celebrate that anniversary with a concert and workshop at **The Driven Bow Festival**!

The evening concert is already sold out, but workshops earlier in the day will be an added treat. (Ashley will present one of these!). Full details on the Rogue website.

**Quinn** and his sister **Qristina** – herself a very fine fiddler and gorgeous singer – will open the concert with a short set of their own music before Ashley shreds his bow and stomps away in his distinctive style!

On **Monday, February 11** the festival wraps up in fine style!

Quebec trad trios **Genticorum** and **De Temps Antan** have both played here several times before – with one or two sold out shows at The Rogue for each of them.

They both have great new CDs, and their repertoire of crooked tunes and playful French chansons will have everyone smiling and dancing and having a whale of a time – even if some of us don't quite catch the meaning behind all the lyrics!

There's something for everyone at this year's Driven Bow Festival! Come on down to St. James hall to catch one or more shows (hopefully you've already purchased a pass for all four concerts – for the price of three!).

If you're a fiddler yourself, check out a workshop or two (pay at the door) and learn from some of the most inspirational teachers in North America.

Even if you're not a fiddler, we are 100 percent certain you'll love the concerts.

What better way to banish the winter doldrums than to celebrate the music and cultural heritage of this amazing nation (and its offshoot "cousin prov-

ince" at the mouth of the Mississippi – Acadian Driftwood, anyone?) than to experience a weekend of fiddle-driven Roguery?!?!? Full details and tickets are on [www.roguefolk.com](http://www.roguefolk.com).

The following week I'm off to Montreal for the **Folk Alliance Conference**. I think I'll be staying indoors the whole time!!

Probably spend some extra time in bed, too (it's at the hotel where **John & Yoko** staged their famous Bed-In back in 1969, and that room can be rented by the hour for photo sessions and music video tapings!).

I'll hear lots of great music and come back with a case full of CDs and contacts for future concerts, to be sure.

There are three more shows at St. James Hall in February: two of them are **Capilano University's Global Roots Series** shows with American guitar masters **Jim Campilongo** and **Luca Benedetti** (**Sunday, February 17**), and Australian Blues & Slide Guitarist **Jeff Lang** (**Friday 22**).

Sandwiched in between these concerts is the return of the brilliant Canadian songwriter **Danny Michel** from Ontario (**Wednesday 20**). That show looks like selling out.

There have been some very exciting planning meetings lately around the idea of keeping alive the wonderful **CelticFest Vancouver**.

The Rogue will 'bookend' this year's event with concerts by the brilliant Cape Breton Celtic quartet **Coig** (**Saturday, March 9**) and the stunning new 'supergroup' **Imar**, from Glasgow (**Wednesday, March 20**) at St. James Hall.

I reckon **Coig** is the Number One Celtic band in the country.

The two fiddlers – **Chrissy Crowley** and **Rachel Davis** – deliver some jaw-dropping sets of fierce tunes (and relentless foot-stomping), and Rachel sings exquisitely in Gaelic and English.

They are joined by the percussive piano of Cheticamp's **Jason Roach** and the many talents of **Darren McMullen** on a variety of stringed instruments and whistles – and vocals.

(Check out the marvellous rendition of **Peter Gabriel's Solsbury Hill** to hear Darren in fine voice!)

**Imar** features two Manx lads – **Tomas Callister** on fiddle and **Adam Rhodes**

[Continued on page 5...]

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THE ROGUE will 'bookend' this year's CelticFest Vancouver with concerts by the brilliant Cape Breton Celtic quartet **Coig** (Saturday, March 9) and the stunning new 'supergroup' **Ímar**, from Glasgow (Wednesday, March 20) at St. James Hall. Pictured above: Coig.



ÍMAR from Glasgow play The Rogue on Wednesday, March 20 as part of the upcoming CelticFest Vancouver.

[...Continued from page 4]

on bouzouki, plus Cork's **Ryan Murphy** on uilleann pipes and flutes, **Adam Brown** (also of Scots band **Rura**) on bodhran, guitar and vocals, and the impish concertina-wielding Glaswegian with Iranian roots, **Mohsen Amini** (from the Scots trio **Talisk**).

In full flight their sound is both exhilarating and rather unbelievable. Not many players can cram so many notes into a tune – without letting up! They are totally amazing musicians! Lots of fun, too!

On **Saturday, March 16** Vancouver's **Blackthorn** will play for a **Ceilidh**

at the Scottish Cultural Centre Hall (8886 Hudson Street in Marpole).

The following day, on **March 17**, there will be a **St. Patrick's Day Family Celebration** at St. James Hall from 2 PM to 6 PM.

It will feature a short concert set by **Brian O'Brien and company**, an **open drop-in Irish music session**, as well as **face-painting** and **kids' entertainment**, and all manner of activities involving the **Irish Sporting & Social Club**, local **Irish / Gaelic speakers**, **Irish wolfhounds**.

In the evening there will be a concert with **Tim Readman & Shona Le Mottee and Friends**, and probably another band as well.

Full details will be announced on the Rogue website and in the March issue of *The Celtic Connection*.

Maillardville's wonderful annual celebration of all things Francophone — **Festival du Bois** – takes place **March 22-24**. No details available yet, so head over to [www.festivaldubois.ca](http://www.festivaldubois.ca) to check for updates.

At the end of March, don't miss the long-awaited return of **Lúnasa** (at West Van's Kay Meek Theatre on **March 27**) and Irish harpist / singer **Maire Ni Chathasaigh** with her husband, the brilliant English guitarist **Chris Newman** (at St. James Hall, **Friday, March 29**).

I hope you can tune in to **The Saturday Edge On Folk** every week from 8 AM to noon on CiTR fm 101.9 in Vancouver and [www.citr.ca](http://www.citr.ca) – where it's streamed live, and years worth of podcasts are archived, as well.

The March 2 show will be CiTR's **Fundrive Edition**, so there will be lots of premiums and special ticket and CD bundles for everyone who pledges to the show.

Also, don't miss special features for **St. David's Day** (March 1, so I'll spin some Welsh music on the 2nd), **St. Patrick's Day** (the March 16 show), and **Festival du Bois** (the following weekend.)

I'd like to thank **Padraic Slater** for recommending young Irish piper / flautist **Louise Mulcahy** to me the other day. She's amazing!

You can hear her on my radio show, as well as the new CD from **Karan Casey**, and the latest **Celtic Colours Live** CD Vol. 6 – and lots more besides.

Slainte,  
Steve

Maillardville's Music Festival  
30<sup>e</sup> ANNIVERSAIRE  
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# Role of Constance Markievicz examined in new play about the 1916 Easter Rising

*All changed, changed utterly:  
A terrible beauty is born.*

– W.B. Yeats, *Easter, 1916*  
1916 Dublin – the eve of a rebellion that will impel Ireland on its way to Independence – Constance Markievicz, third in command of the military, is ready, “be the chances great or small.”

The odds are indeed against them: A group of rebels will face 20,000 British soldiers. Constance is not your average rebel – born an aristocrat, rich, Anglo-Irish, married to a Polish Count, she gives everything up for her country and its people.

*Changed Utterly* is a new play created and directed by Joan Bryans which examines the events of the Easter Rising in 1916 and the role of Constance Markievicz.

Presented by Vital Spark Theatre at Jericho Arts Centre in Vancouver from February 22 to March 16.

We follow Constance in her transformation from rich playgirl to committed rebel. Watch as she and her fellow rebels battle against enormous odds to victory.

All with conviction, yes, but also with songs, poetry and even a bit of fun. They are Irish after all!

*Changed Utterly* is a theatre verbatim play. The actual words of the participants are used together with the songs and poetry of the day.

It stars Naomi Wong as Constance, with Tyus Bro, Christopher Brown, Carolyn Costigan, Breanne Doyle, Alyssa Hanson-Smith, Amy Laity, Gordon Law, Matt Loop, Kurtis Maguire, Celeste Musseau, and Jeremy O'Driscoll.

Directed by Joan Bryans, with assistant director Frances Herzer, musical direction by Pat Unruh, choreography by Allyson Riley, set design by Chris Bayne, lighting design by Mimi Abrahams, costume design by Kate Pierre, props by Barbara Walsh, and is stage managed by Andy Sandberg.

*Changed Utterly* runs February 22 to March 16, Thursday through Saturday at 8 PM, Sundays at 2 PM, plus matinee (as well as evening performance) on Saturday, March 16. [Preview: Thursday, February 21. Tickets \$14. Talk-back night: Thursday, February 28.]

Tickets: \$28, seniors and students \$24 from [www.brownpapertickets.com](http://www.brownpapertickets.com), or at the door. Reservations (604) 224-8007, ext 3. More information online at: [www.vitalsparktheatre.com](http://www.vitalsparktheatre.com).

## Countess Markievicz: Irish revolutionary and first woman elected to Dáil Eireann

DUBLIN – While Countess Markievicz became a renowned Irish revolutionary figure known for her leadership in the 1916 Easter Rising, her early life gave little indication of her future role in the struggle for Irish freedom.

She was born Constance Gore-Booth on February 4, 1868, the daughter of a wealthy Anglo-Irish landlord, at the family estate in Lissadell, Co. Sligo.

She started out as an art student early on in life, having attended London's Slade School of Art.

While in Paris, aged 25, she continued studying art and met her husband and namesake, Casimir Dunin-Markievicz. He was self-styled as Count Markievicz, although his title has been the subject of dispute.

Following her marriage, she became known as “Countess Markievicz.” The couple had only one child, Maeve Ally, who was born in Lissadell in 1901.

Before her revolutionary activities in helping the Irish Citizen Army, Markievicz was an advocate for the poor in Dublin.

In 1908, Markievicz became actively involved in nationalist politics in Ireland. She joined Sinn Féin and Inghinidhe na hÉireann (‘Daughters of Ireland’), a revolutionary women’s movement founded by the actress and activist Maud Gonne.

She played a dramatic role in the women’s suffrage campaigners’ tactic of opposing Winston Churchill’s election to Parliament during the Manchester North West by-election, flamboyantly appearing in the constituency driving an old-fashioned carriage drawn by four white horses to promote the suffragist cause.

A male heckler asked her if she could cook a dinner, to which she responded, “Yes. Can you drive a coach and four?”

In the 1916 rising, she became a fully-fledged officer in the Irish Citizen Army and fought in St. Stephen’s Green during the uprising, eventually surrendering and sentenced to death.

Because she was a woman, however, Markievicz was spared the death penalty and given a life sentence much to her dismay as she just wanted to die with her comrades.

When informed of the clemency, she replied, “I do wish your lot had the decency to shoot me.”

One year later, in 1917, the Countess was given amnesty and released from Ailsbury Gaol in England.

In 1918, Markievicz, a member of Sinn Féin, was the first woman to be elected to Westminster Parliament in London, but due to the abstentionist policy of her party in refusing to swear allegiance to the monarch, she refused her seat in parliament.

## IRISH SPORTING & SOCIAL CLUB VANCOUVER

# A full schedule of Gaelic games and upcoming activities in 2019

By NIAMH BARRY

## IRISH IN VANCOUVER’S GOT TALENT

VANCOUVER – ISSC Vancouver and Celtic Fest are delighted to invite you to join us on the night of February 23 for the very first Irish in Vancouver’s Got Talent. We can promise a jam-packed schedule of local talent and an opportunity to see some familiar faces take to the stage.

The event will be hosted at the Ukrainian Cultural Centre. Tickets are now on sale for \$20 from eventbrite. Check the ISSC Vancouver facebook page for a direct link.

## ST. PATRICK’S DAY

To celebrate St. Patrick’s Day a tournament will be held in Andy Livingstone Park from 11 AM to 1:30 PM. This will be a great opportunity for participants and spectators to celebrate the day and Irish games together. Keep an eye on the club social media accounts for detailed schedule updates.

ISSC will also host a youth training session as part of the club’s St. Patrick’s Day Gaelic Games activities at Andy Livingston Park on Saturday, March 16.

Sunday, March 17 will see the club have a stand and activities at the Irish Families Celebrations being hosted at St. James Hall venue (3214 West 10th Ave) between 2 - 5PM. All youth from all backgrounds are more than welcome to come and give the skills of the games a try.



CONSTANCE Markievicz, known as Countess Markievicz.

She was the first Irish woman to be elected to parliament and one of the first female politicians at the time, serving as the Minister of Labor between 1919 and 1922.

In 1926, she, along with fellow revolutionaries Eamon De Valera, Sean Lemass, Gerry Boland, and Frank Aiken, branched off from Sinn Féin to form another party, Fianna Fáil, after extensive talks.

A year later, in June of 1927, Markievicz had become ill with peritonitis and was swiftly brought to St. Patrick Dun’s Hospital for urgent care and eventually surgery.

After a month-long battle with the illness, she passed away in the early hours of the morning of July 15, 1927.

At her bedside were Casimir and Stanislas Markievicz, Eamon de Valera and Hanna Sheehy-Skeffington.

In death Constance Markievicz was even more openly appreciated and acclaimed than in life.

Three hundred thousand people attended the funeral to pay tribute to “the friend of the toiler, the lover of the poor”, the words of Eamon de Valera, who delivered the funeral oration at Glasnevin Cemetery, Dublin.

## VISITING GAA COACH

ISSC is working in collaboration with Fraser Valley Gaels this year to host a GAA-trained coach from St. Mary’s University for a six-week program that will focus on promoting Gaelic Games in target schools in the greater Vancouver area.

The coach will also run an evening program of skills development academies for adult beginners for Gaelic football, hurling and camogie.

Additionally, the ISSC is looking at introducing the Ladies Gaelic Football Association’s Gaelic for Mothers and Others program into the club during this time also.

If you are interested in getting involved in a non-competitive team that’s focus is on learning, or re-learning, the skills of women’s Gaelic football and having the craic, whilst maybe getting a little fitter contact Lorraine Muckian at [developmentvancouverissc@gmail.com](mailto:developmentvancouverissc@gmail.com). Dust off those boots or runners and come join in the fun!

## YOUTH GAELIC GAMES

The visiting coach will spend four weeks in schools teaching the skills of women’s Gaelic football, camogie, hurling and men’s Gaelic football.

They will also facilitate skills-development camps in both weeks of Spring

Break which runs from March 18 - 29.

On the mornings of March 19-21, ISSC will host a three hour camp each day in the Lower Mainland of Vancouver and FVG are hoping to host a camp in White Rock the week of March 25-29.

If interested, contact Ronan Deane at [youthvancouverissc@gmail.com](mailto:youthvancouverissc@gmail.com) to sign up or for additional information.

We are also planning for our ISSC Youth Summer Camp sessions, with sets of camp dates provisionally organised, for June, July and August. Dates and venues will be advertised shortly on the clubs’ social media accounts.

## VANCOUVER

### SPRING FOOTBALL LEAGUE

Following on from the success of last year’s women’s and men’s Gaelic football Vancouver Spring League, the ISSC will host the competition again, with the first set of games kicking off on Friday, March 22 at Empire Fields (7-9:30 PM).

Five weeks of games will be run off over the months of March and April again this year.

All are welcome to participate, with a number of teams being entered from the various codes. Contact [isscvancouver@gmail.com](mailto:isscvancouver@gmail.com).

## DATES TO REMEMBER – 2019 SEASON

### Vancouver Spring League

March 22	Round 1
March 29	Round 2
April 5	Round 3
April 26	Final

### Victoria Highland Games

May 18 - 20	Victoria
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### San Diego 7’s

May 25 - 27	San Diego
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### Western Canadian Championships

June 29 - 30	Edmonton
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### North American Championships

August 23 - 25	Leesburg, Virginia
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### Vancouver Gaelic Games League & Championship

June 2	Round 1	Burnaby Lake
June 10 - 14	Round 2	Burnaby Lake
July 8 - 12	Round 3	Burnaby Lake
July 22 - 26	Round 4	Burnaby Lake
July 29 - August 2	Round 5	Burnaby Lake
August 10	Finals	Burnaby Lake



## TOP 10 CELTIC HITS FOR FEBRUARY

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

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

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

1. *Step Up* by Afro Celt Sound System - *Flight* on ECC Records.
2. *Bi Bi Box* by Vishten - *Horizons* on independent.
3. *Pack it Up* by We Banjo 3 - *Haven* on independent.
4. *Fear of Falling* by Merry Hell - *Anthems in the Wind* on Merry Hell Records.
5. *Borderline* by Skerryvore - *Evo* on Tyree Records.
6. *The West Highland Line* by Dolphin Boy - *The Highland Swing* on Skye Records.
7. *The Little Grisan* by Sver - *Reverie* on independent.
8. *Santy Ano* by Pat Chessell - *I Confess* on independent.
9. *Botany Bay* by Fear of Drinking - *Live in Zurich* on Big City.
10. *Vekkula in Memoriam* by Tsuumi Sound System - *Blinking Light* on independent.

**Celt In A Twist - Pick Of The Month:**  
**Afro Celt Sound System - Flight**  
**(ECC Records)**



# Toe-tapping tunes and great craic at the CelticFest Vancouver Ceilidh

By MICHAEL VIENS

VANCOUVER – Everyone is invited to join Blackthorn and guests for a full night of music, dance and craic at the CelticFest Vancouver Ceilidh 2019 on Saturday, March 16.

Door open at 7 PM at the Scottish Cultural Centre and featured guests include the Irish Pipes & Drums, Shot of Scotch Vancouver, and the De Danaan Irish Dancers.

I was first offered the opportunity to produce a ceilidh for CelticFest Vancouver in 2016.

The one stipulation I recall being given was that the event be more ceilidh-like.

They had had ceilidhs in previous years for the festival but they were held in theatres which meant it was more of concert where the audience was able to watch some very talented performers on stage but not really participate.

So, having been to and performed for



PHOTO: Keith Dunn

BLACKTHORN will headline the 2019 CelticFest Vancouver Ceilidh.

**CEILIDH:** A c  ilidh or c  il   is a traditional Irish or Scottish social gathering. In its most basic form, it simply means a social visit. In contemporary usage, it usually involves a social event at which there is Scottish or Irish folk music and singing, traditional dancing, and storytelling.

many Irish and Scottish ceilidhs, I felt I understood the request when I set off on my quest to organize a full night of fun, inclusive entertainment.

Four years later, I am excited once again to be working with a fabulous team of performers, production staff and volunteers to present a memorable night of music, song and dance for everyone to enjoy at this year's CelticFest Vancouver Ceilidh.

There will be a traditional acoustic session led by fiddler Annie Brown in full flight when the doors open at 7 PM.

The show will kick off around 8 PM with a set from the BCR Irish Pipes and Drums. We've organized a Vancouver Celtic super group, the Grand Ceilidh Band, to supply the music for the evening.

The Grand Ceilidh Band will consist of Blackthorn members: Michelle Carlisle, Rosie Carver, Tim Renaud and Michael Viens, joined by some talented musical friends, including Annie and the Johnnie Fox's Sunday Choir regulars: Catherine Flynn, Kevin Fink and Lucas Ross.

They'll open with a couple of rousing feature numbers and then play for the called dances throughout the evening which will be ably led by our dance caller, Alison Moen.

Everyone is encouraged to participate in the called dances – don't worry that you have two left feet, Alison will keep the dances simple enough for all levels, and as someone once graciously told me as I fumbled about on the dance floor at a ceilidh on Cape Breton Island: "just keep moving!"

In between called dances, you'll get a chance to relax and sing along with Blackthorn and friends aka the Grand Ceilidh Band! And, of course, you're always free to leap about to the beat of your own drum.

We'll also have featured dance performances by the fabulous Eire Born Dancers and Shot of Scotch Vancouver to inspire us all.

You don't have to be Irish or Scottish to enjoy the night but be sure to wear some comfortable dancing shoes and it is a good excuse to kilt up should you be so inclined!

This is a family-friendly, licensed event. The Mama's Fish and Chips truck will be on location again as well as a good supply of Taytos from BC Bia.

We look forward to seeing you there! Tickets are going fast so be sure to order yours today at <https://celticfest-vancouver-ceilidh.eventbrite.com>

**GETTING THERE:** the Scottish Cultural Centre is easily accessible from downtown Vancouver. The #10 Granville Bus goes to the Marpole Loop which is a couple of blocks away or you can take the Canada Line Skytrain to the Marine Drive Station and connect with the #10 Granville Bus from there.

Tickets: Adults: \$25, Students/Seniors: \$20, 12 & under free. Available at: <https://celticfest-vancouver-ceilidh.eventbrite.com>.

## Jane Byrne: This year's Celtic Person of the Year



JANE BYRNE

VANCOUVER – Harry Cussen, president of CelticFest Vancouver, and the Board of Directors for CelticFest have announced the 2019 Celtic Person of the Year. This year's winner is Jane Byrne a long-serving member of the Vancouver Welsh Society.

One cannot think of anyone more deserving of being selected for this award than Jane Byrne.

Born in the Upper Swansea Valley town of Ystradgynlais, Jane grew up in a Welsh-speaking, chapel-oriented mining community, where she and her siblings all benefitted from the value placed on education.

She became the first of her family to qualify as a teacher.

After several years teaching in Wales, Jane and her brother and sister set sail for Canada in 1959 and settled in Vancouver where they initially lived with their Uncle Ben, a Canadian First World War veteran who had emigrated from Wales at the turn of the century.

The three quickly found employment in the Lower Mainland and pursued further studies at university while becoming involved with other Welsh exiles in the Vancouver Welsh Society.

While attending UBC, Jane met and married Dr. Peter Byrne, a native of Ireland, and they raised two sons in a truly Celtic Canadian home.

There are few members of the Vancouver Welsh Society who have contributed as much as Jane to the Welsh community in Vancouver over the past 60 years.

From the beginning she was part of a young professional group of Welsh expats who brought life and energy to the Society.

While finding a home-away-from-home at the Cambrian Hall, Jane participated fully in the life of the Welsh Society.

As much as her career and professional responsibilities allowed, Jane accepted increasing leadership roles, serving as chair of a very active social committee for more than 10 years.

Jane served as a director and vice president of the Society for over a decade and was president of the Welsh Society for a further 10 years.

As part of her duties she faithfully encouraged and shared in organizing Society events such as the Gymanfa Ganu, St. David's Day Celebrations and welcoming events for visiting individuals and groups.

She also served as chair of the very active social committee for many years.

For the past several years, Jane has organized and presided over the monthly bilingual religious services at the Cambrian Hall and has been active in promoting the Welsh language whenever possible.

The award will be presented at Christ Church Cathedral in Vancouver on Saturday, March 16 and the evening will feature entertainment by the Vancouver Welsh Men's Choir. For more information, see: <https://vwmc.ca>, for tickets: [www.brownpapertickets.com](http://www.brownpapertickets.com).

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



IRISH SPORTS and SOCIAL SOCIETY EDMONTON

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### Upcoming Events

#### February

##### Feb 17 – Family Day Celebrations

Breakfast from 11AM – 1PM, lots of activities for the kids, including a bouncy castle and face painting



#### March

##### Mar 15 – St. Patrick's Day Dinner Dance

Irish Lamb Dinner, Irish Dancers.

Tickets \$50 for members, \$40 senior members and \$60 non-members. Tickets available at the bar

##### Mar 17 – St. Patrick's Day Celebrations

Tickets \$20 Gaelic games in the morning, three bands, Irish food and drinks all day



HAPPY  
ST. PATRICK'S  
DAY!



#### Open Mic nights are back!

February 8 and 22 and March 8 and 22  
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# WAS THERE REALLY A LIFE BEFORE BREXIT??

**I**HAVE always regarded the majority of our politicians as being a self-seeking, dishonest, lying, incompetent rabble, but latest events has shown that they have sunk to new depths. What a shambles.

In 2016 the people of Britain voted to leave the European Union, and the date agreed for our exit was March 29, 2019.

Last week, Prime Minister Theresa May finally presented her 'Plan A' Brexit deal to parliament to be voted on for approval.

This deal has been two-and-a-half years in the making but was rejected, suffering the heaviest defeat in modern parliamentary history.

I think King Charles I was the last ruler to suffer such a defeat, and he was executed in 1649.

It was expected that May would resign having completely failed in two years negotiations with the Europeans.

But no, she survived a vote of no confidence because the Conservative members of parliament supported her, declaring that it was in the best interest of the country for her to remain as prime minister.

In the last general election in 2017 Theresa May was so well thought of by the electorate that she managed to lose a healthy Conservative Party majority and only remains in power with the help of the Democratic Unionist Party.

There was no mention of the fact that if she had lost the confidence vote it would have led to a general election and probably several members of the government be out on their ear looking for a proper job.

This week May bounces back with 'Plan B' which is exactly the same as 'Plan A' except it is called 'Plan B'.

In September 1945 Lloyd Olsen, a farmer in Fruita, Colorado beheaded a chicken, but missed the jugular vein leaving one ear and part of the brain intact.

The chicken survived for 18 months, was still able to balance on a perch and walk clumsily. It became known as Miracle Mike.

In the Houses of Parliament we have 650 Miracle Mikes staggering around in circles. Trouble is we have to feed them and they are costing us a fortune.

Back in the real world, in Wales, the residents of Harlech are claiming that they have the steepest street in the world, a record currently held by Baldwin Street in Dunedin New Zealand.

The Guinness Book of Records indicates that Baldwin Street has a gradient of 35 percent but the Welsh challenger, Ffordd Pen Llech is 36 percent.

The gradient is not the only criteria; the street must have houses, be a public thoroughfare and be paved. Ffordd Pen Llech qualifies on all accounts.

Mayor of Dunedin, David Cull told Sky News, "If the Welsh street turns out to be steeper we will call on the gods of earthquake and tilt our street a little more and regain the title."

Freya Bentham, councillor and café manager in Harlech retorted, "The Kiwis can say what they like, but the

## POSTCARD FROM BOURNEMOUTH

By  
ELFAN  
JONES



**MIRACLE MIKE** the headless chicken made headlines after refusing to die despite losing its head. Our writer draws a parallel with the current British Conservative Party led by Theresa May.

measurements will speak the truth."

It may sound petty, but having lost the last 25 rugby matches against the New Zealanders it is wonderful to think we might win this one. COME ON WALES!!

Finally, were you aware that in darkest deepest East Anglia where incest is



**BRITISH** Prime Minister Theresa May speaking in the House of Commons last month following defeat of 432 to 202 against her Brexit deal. This deal has been two-and-a-half years in the making but was rejected, suffering the heaviest defeat in modern parliamentary history. Despite this, she survived a vote of no-confidence.



**SCULPTURE** of Boudicca, Queen of the Iceni, on Westminster Bridge opposite the British Houses of Parliament in London, England.

PHOTO: Wikipedia

popular and people have extra toes, the sport of Siberian husky racing is thriving?

East Anglia is not famous for snow but the British Siberian Husky Racing Association is now in its twenty-third year and the annual championship is entering its final stage.

It has been quite difficult to gather information about this sport as the first picture I found appeared to be a lady on a bicycle chasing a fluffy white dog.

Subsequent photos showed competitors standing on converted tricycles being pulled by Huskies through the forest. There was no snow but they seemed to be having fun.

I confess that its existence came as a surprise, but then East Anglia has always been portrayed as a rather strange part of Britain.

It consists of three rural counties, Suffolk, Norfolk, and Cambridgeshire, although people would argue that it also includes the county of Essex.

Essex which has many picturesque villages became infamous as the place where London's gangsters took their victims to be disposed of and latterly as the home to young men, known as Chavs who sport Burberry check caps and indulge in anti-social behaviour.

The young ladies, known as Essex girls are reputed to have dubious morals apparently wearing fur coats but no knickers.

Historically East Anglia was the home of the Iceni, a Celtic tribe who were led by their warrior queen Boudicca.

In the year 60 or 61 A.D the Iceni arose in revolt against the tyranny of Roman rule but despite Queen Boudicca's efforts they were slaughtered by the Europeans.

This sounds familiar, we are back to Brexit.

*All for now,  
Elfan.*

## Theresa May reported to be 'planning snap general election in June'

**LONDON** – Theresa May could be planning for another snap election in June, according to reports.

Advisors at No.10 are thought to have started drawing up plans to extend Article 50 – the clause which triggered the UK's withdrawal from the EU.

It is believed ministers are considering delaying Brexit beyond the March 29 deadline in order to allow the prime minister more time to secure the backing of Parliament over a new deal.

The *Mail on Sunday* and the *Sunday Times* both quoted sources as indicating that the new plan would aim to protect May from being ousted as the leader by those who want someone else to renegotiate trade arrangements with the EU.

It is thought that the date for a general election could be June 6.

At the moment, polls indicate that the Conservatives are seven points ahead of the Labour Party.

Speaking on the *Andrew Marr Show* on the morning of Sunday, February 3, Home Secretary Sajid Javid dismissed speculation of a snap general election in June.

He said, "the last thing we want is a general election," emphasizing that the government is still hoping to secure a time limit or unilateral exit mechanism for the Irish border backstop, meaning customs checks can take place away from the physical border.

He denied the newspaper reports saying, "the last thing we want is a general election, the people will never forgive us for it. They want politicians to get

on with the job. They have been given a very clear mandate, now it's our job to get on with it."

Meanwhile, the prime minister has vowed to "battle for Britain" to secure a new Brexit deal in Brussels and bring the country together.

Writing for the *Sunday Telegraph*, she said, "When I return to Brussels I will be battling for Britain and Northern Ireland, I will be armed with a fresh

mandate, new ideas and a renewed determination to agree a pragmatic solution that delivers the Brexit the British people voted for, while ensuring there is no hard border between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland."

She said that Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn supported her bid to win new protections to ensure a deal over the Irish backstop – despite not voting for it in the Commons.

## BBC forced to explain why PM is off to Brussels in a WWII Spitfire

**LONDON** – At the end of the BBC Six O'Clock News on January 31, a newsreader told viewers that the prime minister would be returning to Belgium in an attempt to renegotiate her Brexit deal.

But instead of sharing footage of Theresa May, the announcement was illustrated by black and white footage of the fighter aircrafts flying and landing.

The mismatched clip proved to be an immediate hit online, with social media users deeming it "accurate and appro-

priate" and "absolutely brilliant."

Editor of the show, Paul Royall, has since said the video was intended to be a foretaste of a different segment on the new Battle of Britain museum in London.

Within minutes it was on social media sparking a debate whether the footage was intended or not.

Pro-Brexiteers claimed it was a way of showing 'true British spirit'.

Others posted pictures from *Dad's Army*, a BBC television sitcom about

the British Home Guard during the Second World War.

However some Remainers, thought the slip-up showed pro-Brexit bias on the part of the BBC.

Lisa Huts, said she was "not buying it" and said it showed Britain was pushing for a hard Brexit. "This fits too well in the 'let's get back to former glory, we won the war after all' rhetoric that was peddled a lot on the BBC lately," she said.

That was enough to prompt one Twitter user to claim that was because there were no Polish pilots available – more than 140 airmen from Poland flew during the Battle of Britain.



# The days of celebrating Burns as a 'Jack-the-lad' are well and truly numbered

EDINBURGH – They say that life accelerates as you grow older. That's certainly true of the Burns Season. It seems about a week since the last one.

In Scotland, the season rarely passes without controversy and this year was no different. A journalist tweet-trolled "I hate Burns Suppers" and got the reaction he was looking for.

To me, "Burns Supper" is not the uniform concept that his tweet (deliberately) implied.

When I was with SFU's centre for Scottish Studies, my record for speaking at Burns Suppers was five in a week and it's safe to say that no two were the same.

They included suppers conducted with all the seriousness of a Tridentine Mass and those that were strictly for laughs.

Venues ranged from an old folks home in the Fraser Valley to the salubrious Vancouver and Terminal City clubs; audiences that were all men by design or all women because their husbands had passed away.

If I had to pick my two most memorable, however, they would be the "Over the Sea to Sky Highway" Burns supper which played out in the Legion Hall in Pemberton and "Gung Haggis Fat Choy" which filled the cavernous Floata restaurant in Chinatown.

At the former, my speech had to compete with the live broadcast of a Canucks-Canadians hockey game. At the latter, the supper included haggis won tons and various types of tentacles.

Above all, these two imaginative versions of the Burns Supper were unforgettable for the fact that they brought together communities that have not always had the easiest of relationships.

In the Pemberton Legion, there were a number of Wallaces from the Lil'wat First Nation, initially watching the hockey game but turning their attention to Burns when the Canucks took a 6-0 lead (I don't think I am making that up).

At the Floata, I spoke a bit about the Janet Smith case in 1924 which brought to a head the racial tensions that already existed in Vancouver.

The aftermath included the kidnapping of a Chinese house boy accused of the Scottish woman's murder and a Presbyterian minister's promotion of the KKK of Canada.

I was still meditating on *le temps perdu* and the potential reconciliatory power of Burns Suppers when I spotted an article in the *Globe and Mail* entitled "A toast to Robbie Burns, and a complex legacy that resonates still."

The article opens with a stereotype linking the Burns lines "O wad some Power the giftie gie us / To see ourselves as others see us!" to the notion that Canadians are natural outsiders, a trait they inherited from the Scots who came to Canada.

It could be, however, that this "outsiderness" is not a character trait so much as the natural condition of a nation that borders another with a much larger population and greater political clout.



By  
**HARRY  
McGRATH**



**THE BURNS** statue in Stanley Park in Vancouver harkens back to the age of Scottish political power in Canada, especially in civic politics.

Pierre Trudeau famously said that living next to the United States was like sleeping with an elephant and "one is affected by every twitch and grunt."

Scotland is currently getting a hard lesson in the same principle as it watches its neighbour twitch and grunt its way out of the European Union, taking Scotland with it.

In colonial Canada, however, Scots were insiders. The article lists the many Burns statues erected across Canada, focussing mainly on the variety of designs and structures. But these statues don't just commemorate Burns.

They hark back to the age of Scottish political power, especially in civic politics. Burns was a way that the Scots could distinguish themselves within the British colonial project in

Canada while remaining a key part of it.

The history of the Burns statue in Stanley Park is particularly instructive.

According to papers held in the City of Vancouver Archives, the Parks Board initially wanted the statue erected beside Lost Lagoon but its Scottish promoters felt it would not be seen on that low ground and be desecrated by seagulls.

Eventually they were able to bludgeon the Parks Board into giving them permission to site it on high ground at the entrance to the park where, of course, it stands to this day.

The unveiling in 1928 was performed by Ramsay MacDonald and the dignitaries in the "reserved area" included a provincial premier, an ex-premier, the acting mayor, a vice-admiral and a commander-in-chief.

Nobody thought to seek permission from the three Coast Salish Nations – Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh – upon whose traditional territories the statue now stood.

There is certainly a case for examining the complex legacy of Burns in Canada especially around the three Ps – poetry, power and politics – though the *Globe and Mail* article doesn't really make it.

Instead it harks back to last year's controversy in Scotland when former national poet Liz Lochhead described Burns as a "sex pest" and a brouhaha ensued.

Lochhead was careful to distinguish between the man and his poetry and it's been noticeable this year that the main people carrying the torch for Burns have been women.

First Minister Nicola Sturgeon spoke in London and Culture Minister Fiona Hyslop went to Ireland.

The days of all-male Burns suppers celebrating the poet as a kind of "Jack-the-lad" are well and truly numbered.

## Scottish First Minister to visit U.S. and Canada

EDINBURGH – Nicola Sturgeon will visit North America in early February in a bid to strengthen trade and cultural links between Scotland and the U.S. and Canada.

The visit by the first minister was announced as new figures revealed the U.S. remains Scotland's top export destination country, with an estimated £5.5 billion of exports in 2017 – up by 11.1 percent from the previous year.

Canada continues to be a top 20 export destination worth £580 million in 2017. This will be the first visit to Canada by a first minister in more than 10 years.

Sturgeon will undertake trade and culture engagements in Washington DC, New York, New Jersey, Ottawa and Toronto during the five-day visit.

These include an address at Georgetown University to discuss Brexit and Scotland's future and the launch of the Scotland is Now campaign in Canada.



**NICOLA STURGEON** will make first visit to Canada in 10 years in February.

The first minister said, "Scotland has a longstanding relationship with North America across family, friendship, culture and business.

"The latest figures released just this week show how important our trade relationship with North America is for our economy.

"This visit will build on the existing links between our countries and provide new opportunities for us to work together."

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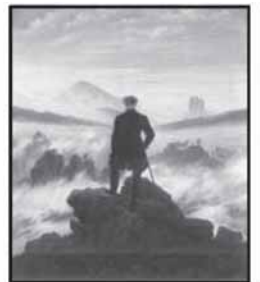
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PICTURE POSTCARD: Snow covered houses in Gold Hill in Shaftesbury, Dorset.

## February brings extreme weather across the UK leaving many stranded

CORNWALL – Extreme winter conditions brought misery for hundreds across the south west of England as temperatures plummeted overnight February 1.

Cornwall and the southwest were the worst hit, with up to 15 centimeters of snow on high ground. Many air travellers were hit by long delays and cancelled flights.

Hundreds of schools were closed and an amber weather warning – the second-highest alert – was in place overnight on February 1 across Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Hampshire, Oxfordshire and Surrey.

Although the amber warning was lifted by the Met Office the following day, a yellow warning remained in place for Wales, southern England, the Midlands and the east coast of northern England and Scotland for a second day.

Temperatures of minus 16C were forecast in eastern Scotland, making it the coldest night in almost a decade.

The average overnight temperatures in February are around 1-2C for southern England, with Scotland usually hovering around -3C.

Many drivers were forced to abandon their cars due to the weather and power cuts were reported across the area.

In Cornwall, more than 100 people sought refuge at a pub high on Bodmin Moor after heavy snowfall hit the A30, leaving motorists stranded overnight on January 31.

Some of those reaching the Jamaica Inn, which was made famous by Daphne Du Maurier's classic novel of the same name, reported trudging through snow for several miles after more than 12 centimeters of the white stuff brought "chaos" to the cross-country route.

The pub's 25-year-old general manager, Sammy Wheeler, said groups and families, many with pets and young children arrived in droves after around 100 cars got stuck on a nearby stretch of the A30.

"A lot of people have abandoned their cars. Some of them have walked a good three, four or five miles," she said. "People were fed up of being in a cold car and they were running out of fuel."

Each of the inn's 36 rooms were full,



A LINE OF CARS stuck in the snow on the A30 near Bodmin Moor in Cornwall. Drivers were forced to abandon their cars due to the weather and many took refuge at the Jamaica Inn.



AFTER a heavy snowfall hit the A30 in Cornwall, many found refuge at the Jamaica Inn high on Bodmin Moor. The historic inn dates back to 1750 when it was used as a staging post for changing horses and a base for smugglers. It was also the setting for Daphne Du Maurier's 1936 novel *Jamaica Inn*, which was made into the film *Jamaica Inn* in 1939 by Alfred Hitchcock.

with some being shared by complete strangers.

Meanwhile makeshift dormitories

with mattresses on the floors were set up in other parts of the pub, including 15 beds in the restaurant another five in the lounge.

## Alex Salmond denies attempted rape and sexual assault after court appearance

EDINBURGH – Former Scottish First Minister Alex Salmond (64) faces 14 charges in total, which also include indecent assault and breach of the peace.

Salmond appeared at Edinburgh Sheriff Court, in the city's Chambers Street, on January 24 charged with attempted rape and sexual assault.

He was charged with two counts of attempted rape, nine counts of sexual assault, two of indecent assault and one breach of the peace during the brief hearing in private.

Salmond, whose address was given as Aberdeenshire, made no plea during the hearing and was released on bail.

The date of the next hearing in the case has not yet been fixed.

Addressing reporters outside the court, shortly after the sitting, Salmond said, "Let me say at the outset, I am innocent of any criminality whatsoever."

"Now that these proceedings, criminal proceedings, are live, it's even more important to respect the court, and, therefore, the only thing I can say is I refute absolutely the allegation of criminality and I will defend myself to the utmost in court."

"I have got great faith in the court system of Scotland. I have got recent cause to have great faith in the court

system of Scotland – that is where I will state my case."

Earlier this month, the former SNP leader – who resigned his membership of the party in August 2018 – won a procedural case against the Scottish Government over the process of its investigation into harassment allegations against him.

In the case, referred to in Salmond's statement in court, Scottish Government's handling of the allegations against Salmond was ruled unlawful by the Court of Session in Edinburgh.

At the same time, Police Scotland had been investigating following the complaints of harassment.

Salmond was Scotland's first minister from 2007 to 2014.

He guided the party to a narrow Scottish election win in 2007 and then led a minority government as he became Scotland's first SNP first minister.

In the 2011 election, he led the party to a majority win, meaning the SNP's manifesto pledge to hold an independence referendum could be delivered.

But the result of the 2014 referendum – a 55 percent to 45 percent vote to stay in the UK – led to him stepping down as first minister and SNP leader.

He lost his Gordon constituency seat at Westminster to the Conservatives in the 2017 General Election.



TENNIS superstar and British number one Andy Murray has announced his planned retirement from the sport later this year due to severe pain in his hip, the result of repeated injuries.

## Andy Murray bids an emotional farewell at Australian Open

MELBOURNE – Andy Murray may be forced to quit tennis after the Australian Open after revealing that an initial plan to retire after Wimbledon in the summer is under threat due to his debilitating hip injury.

The former world number one struggled through an emotional and tearful press conference on January 11, following a practice match against Novak Djokovic in which he was forced to stop playing before the finish.

Speaking at a press conference in Melbourne, the 31-year-old said, "I'm not sure I'm able to play through the pain for another four or five months."

Murray was on the verge of tears as he entered the press conference room and, asked how his hip was feeling, managed to say "not great" before being overcome by his emotions and having to leave the room.

He returned after several minutes to deliver his devastating news, saying, "Obviously I've been struggling for a long time. I've been in a lot of pain for about 20 months now."

After another pause while Murray sat with his head on the desk, he was asked whether this might be his last tournament.

"Yes I think there's a chance of that for sure because I'm not sure I'm able to play through the pain for another four or five months," he said.

Murray contested his first-round match against Spain's Roberto Bautista Agut at the Australian Open but that may prove to have been the final match of his illustrious career.

He bowed out after a first-round loss that brought a prolonged standing ovation from the crowd at the Melbourne tournament. He said, "If this was my last match, as you say, it was an amazing way to end the game."



# Young Scots have a duty to protect Gaelic, says SNP MSP

EDINBURGH – Young Gaelic speakers have a duty to pass on the language to the next generation, according to SNP MSP Kate Forbes.

Forbes made the comments ahead of delivering the first annual address in memory of John Macleod at Edinburgh University.

Macleod, the former president of *An Comunn Gàidhealach* – the Highland Association, died suddenly a year ago.

The organisation was set up in 1891 to help support and promote the Scottish Gaelic language, culture and history at local, national and international level. It is also organises the Royal National Mod.

Macleod worked to encourage young people in the Gaelic community throughout his life.

Forbes, who worked with Macleod while convener of the cross-party group on Gaelic, said she was honoured to deliver the address, paying tribute to the late *An Comunn Gàidhealach* president.

“He was a man who recognised his responsibility to safeguard and invest in the language,” she said.

“Most critically, he saw that the next generation needed to pick up the baton.”



THE LATE John Macleod, former president of *An Comunn Gàidhealach*. He was a passionate advocate of the Gaelic language.

She added, “The title of the address captures the sense that as we have inherited a great heritage, we have an even greater responsibility to pass it on.

“I will be discussing the role of young people in taking the language beyond the school gates and into their daily lives.

“We have seen a beautiful musical and cultural revival in Scotland – and it seems fitting that the lecture should fall during Celtic Connections – but we want that to include the language.”

The annual lecture is supported by the Department of Celtic and Scottish Studies of the University of Edinburgh.

## Emiliano Sala: Missing plane found off the English Channel

CARDIFF – The wreckage of the plane that vanished with the Premier League footballer Emiliano Sala (28) on board has been found within hours of a search starting in the sea off the Channel Islands.

A search boat hired privately by Sala’s Argentinian family – thanks partly to a crowdfunding appeal – located the wreckage on the morning of February 3.

The crew passed the details of the location on to government investigators, who used a remotely operated underwater vehicle (ROV) to examine the spot.

There was no immediate official confirmation of what was found but the shipwreck specialist leading the private investigation, David Mearns, said the plane had been discovered.



TRAGICALLY the young 28-year old Argentinian football star Emiliano Sala, who had recently signed with Cardiff City Football Club record of £15 million, died aboard a small aircraft after it disappeared en route from France.

He said it had been located by the privately hired vessel FPV Morven, which had passed the information on to the UK Air Accidents Investigation Branch (AAIB).

Mearns said the AAIB had moved its vessel, the Geo Ocean III, to the spot and visually identified the wreckage with an ROV.

He said the family of Cardiff City striker Sala and the pilot, David Ibbotson (59), had been informed and the AAIB would be making a statement shortly. It is believed it will be up to the AAIB to recover the vessel.

No information about whether any bodies were in the plane was given. Two seat covers from the aircraft washed up last week on the coast of France.

Sala, who had recently signed with Cardiff City, was onboard the Piper PA-46 Malibu which departed from Nantes, France before disappearing off the radar over the English Channel on Monday, January 21.

After three days of scouring the Channel, Guernsey officials had made the difficult decision to call off the search saying there was little chance those on board survived.

But the Sala family pleaded for the search to continue and appealed for help. More than £290,000 was raised for a private search and over 60,000 people signed an online petition demanding the search for the missing aircraft continue.

Cardiff City had signed Sala for a club record of £15 million to bolster their attack and he was due to start training the day after he went missing.

Owner Vincent Tan said the news of the plane’s disappearance “shook everyone at Cardiff City FC to the core.”



ROSS GREER (L), a 24-year old Green Party Scottish Minister appeared on *Good Morning Britain* live from Glasgow following his controversial Twitter comments. Host Piers Morgan (R), engaged in a heated debate with Greer over claims Winston Churchill was a “white supremacist and mass murderer.”

## Piers Morgan and Ross Greer in live TV spat over Winston Churchill

LONDON – One revels in his reputation as the UK’s most outspoken daytime television presenter. The other is a Green Party Scottish Minister, relatively unknown – until recently at least – outside of Scottish political circles.

*Good Morning Britain* host Piers Morgan engaged in a heated verbal exchange on January 29 with Ross Greer over the unlikely subject of Sir Winston Churchill.

Greer, the youngest representative in the Scottish Parliament, had been invited to appear on the breakfast show to expand on his controversial opinion that Churchill was a “white supremacist mass murderer.”

He was responding to a Conservative Party tweet marking the anniversary of Churchill’s death calling him “the greatest Briton to have ever lived.”

Morgan, a former tabloid newspaper editor, said, “There’s a younger generation... who decide to twist history to suit a narrative that people like Winston Churchill are evil people who should be condemned.

“You have not presented a single positive thought process about Winston Churchill at all. You are saying the man who saved us from the Nazis was no better than the Nazis themselves.”

To Greer, he added, “You know what I find revolting, you. I find what you said about Winston Churchill and your sneering, smirking performance today as you denigrate this great national icon, I find you revolting and offensive.”

Greer, elected in 2016 aged just 21, was defiant over the row. He said, “This is the real, verified history of Churchill and the one known throughout much of the world.”

He added, “If that’s uncomfortable to some here, it’s just a sign of how uneducated Britain is of our own shameful history.”

His Twitter comments came the day after the rest of the UK, including Prime Minister Theresa May, marked the anniversary of Sir Winston’s death on January 24, 1965, aged 90.

Greer, who represents West Scotland stood by his comments saying, “This is about taking a rounded view of history. Here in the UK we’re unable to talk about this without people like yourself having a tantrum. It’s very snowflake of you.”

But Morgan retorted, “I’m not snowflake about Winston Churchill. I know he was a flawed character. I also know he almost single-handedly saved this country from the abyss in World War II.”

Morgan’s co-presenter, Susannah Reid, added, “You seem to be articulating a completely isolated, unique, version of history. Everybody celebrates Sir Winston Churchill.”

Greer suggested in turn, “If you go to India, Ireland, Kenya... they absolutely don’t.”

The Green MSP’s final words before the interview concluded were, “The future is ours, goodbye.”



FLOWERS AND TRIBUTES left outside Cardiff City Football Club after Argentinian Premier League football star Emiliano Sala went missing onboard a small aircraft over the English Channel.



PIERS MORGAN: “I know [Winston Churchill] was a flawed character. I also know he almost single-handedly saved this country from the abyss in World War II.”



## EIRE BORN IRISH DANCE CO.

# Irish dance legend Violet Moore paved the way for one of the top performance troupes in Canada

**V**ANCOUVER – The name Violet Moore is synonymous with Irish dancing and culture in western Canada.

Honoured in 2015 at the World Irish Dancing Championships as a Legend of Canada for her pioneering work as one of the first Irish dancing teachers in western Canada, she paved the way for many others to follow in her footsteps, teaching Irish dancing first to second generation Irish and then to the wider community in Vancouver.

Rebeca Coloma, Nora Pickett and Leslie Wilson, teachers at the De Danaan School of Irish Dance and their renowned performance troupe, Eire Born Irish Dance Co., are three of hundreds, if not thousands of students to have started their dance careers at the Violet Moore School of Irish Dance.

## PICKETT ACADEMY

Nora Pickett began the Pickett Academy in 1995 and her students made their mark at home in the Lower Mainland and internationally with substantial competitive and non-competitive accomplishments.

Among bringing her beginners to the top of the podium at the Western Canadian Championships and the North Americans, her students also proudly brought home many World Championship, All Scots and All Ireland medals.

After she founded the Eire Born Irish Dance Co. in 1997 to continue her passion of performing that Violet instilled in her from age eight, Nora and her dancers went on to perform thousands of shows locally, nationally and internationally together.

Eire Born has performed with Natalie MacMaster, Coco Rocha in New York, at Expo in Neuchâtel, Switzerland, in Whistler and many more unique places.

## DE DANAAN SCHOOL OF IRISH DANCING

In 2000, Leslie Wilson opened the De Danaan School of Irish Dancing.

Under guidance from Leslie over 20 years, De Danaan dancers stood upon the podium at the All-Ireland, All-Scotland, Great Britain, Western Canadian, North American and World Championships.

Leslie's dancers have also performed in festivals, ceremonies and concerts locally, provincially and internationally since 2000. De Danaan dancers have coveted roles in *Riverdance*, *Heartbeat of Home* and *Rhythm of the Dance*.

When Leslie stepped back from directing and teaching full time, she passed the torch to her daughter, Rebeca Coloma.

Rebeca was well able to take over as the artistic director of De Danaan having had the benefit of Violet's tutelage in her early years; and, later, Leslie and De Danaan's former guest teacher, two-time World Champion Stephen McAteer from Toronto.



VIOLET MOORE in 2006.



**TALENTED** Marijana Dugandzic with the Eire Born Dancers placed 13<sup>th</sup> at the World Irish Dance Championships in 2018.

Competitively, she consistently medaled internationally and won the title of Western Canadian Champion.

She led the performance troupe at major events such as the 2010 Winter Olympics Medal Ceremony and concerts with Beoga, Cherish the Ladies, Natalie McMaster, Eileen Ivers, and Liz Carroll.

After branching out to build on their

Violet Moore School foundations, Nora, Rebeca and Leslie found that it made sense to join forces once more.

In 2017, they merged the Nora Pickett Irish Dance Academy and De Danaan School to become The De Danaan School with The Eire Born Dance Co. as one of the top Irish dance performance troupes in Canada.

But perhaps the biggest honour for De Danaan and Eire Born is to continue the legacy of Violet Moore in prioritizing performance opportunities at seniors homes at the grass roots community level.

Eire Born has often performed over 100 shows per year, but nothing brings joy like putting a smile on the face of the seniors who may not have the mobility to easily access entertainment and culture in the community at large.

Seniors homes always have members who light up with delight at seeing the intricate art form of Irish dancing, especially when they see the little five and six-year-olds' feet flying!

During the Eire Born shows for seniors, you can often see more than a few tapping feet of audience members who are brought back to their own childhood memories of dancing the Fairy Reel or the Trip to the Cottage.

Their shows bring multi generations together as the seniors' families come join the fun with the lively music and awe-inspiring dancing!

Another Violet Moore legacy carried forward is a local Irish dance competition to support the Western Canadian and Western U.S. dance communities at large.

## THE CAIRDEAS FRIENDSHIP FEIS

Each October, the Eire Born Dance Co. host the successful and super fun "Halloween and Friendship Themed" competition (Feis) called The Cairdeas (Friendship) Feis at Collingwood School in West Vancouver.

For the last four years it's been on the third Saturday in October and this year will mark the fifth annual.

Irish dancing has something to offer everyone at any age. To try out a class, child or adult, contact [info@eireborn.net](mailto:info@eireborn.net), or to book an Eire Born Irish Dance Show e-mail [bookshow@eireborn.net](mailto:bookshow@eireborn.net). You can find them on Facebook at De Danaan Dance and on Instagram @dedanaandance. Follow @eirebornirishdanceco to find out where you can catch one of their several performances throughout the 2019 St. Patrick's Day season!



**EIRE BORN** dancers outside Mahony and Sons Burrard Landing in downtown Vancouver following a St. Patrick's Day performance last year.



**LESLIE WILSON**, Rebeca Coloma and Nora Pickett, at the 2017 merge party for the De Danaan School and the Nora Pickett Irish Dance Academy.



**DANCER** Fred Nguyen started with the De Danaan School of Irish Dance at the age of 9. He is pictured above with Nora Pickett, Rebeca Coloma and Malia Pickett while on tour in Vancouver with *Riverdance* in 2018. He is currently touring with *Heartbeat of Home*. Aspiring young champion Malia is off to the World Irish Dancing Championships to compete in the under 11 category in April this year.

## Ireland-Canada Monument Project: Latest News

**VANCOUVER** – Late in 2018, the Ireland-Canada Monument Society gave the go-ahead to PWL Partnership, Landscape Architects for the monument project to proceed with the design of the monument area at Wainborn Park.

The component that will include Irish Canadians names to be honoured and artwork honouring contributions of the Irish to Canada.

### A New Design

On January 9, 2019, Society directors, Brendan Flynn, Teresa McDonnell, Claire Fox and David O'Sullivan met with the PWL Partnership senior design

team members to review a computer model of the proposed monument at Wainborn Park.

The design was forwarded to fellow directors, Eddie Reynolds in Dublin and Ciara O'Kelly in Montreal. All of the directors supported proceeding with the design.

The design has been forwarded to Vancouver Park Board and a meeting will be held on February 21 at the Park Board offices in Stanley Park.

Watch the Ireland Canada Monument website homepage [www.irelandcanadamonument.com](http://www.irelandcanadamonument.com) and the next newsletter for reports and decisions.



## IRISH WOMEN'S NETWORK

# Nollaig na mBan celebrated by women across Canada

By EILIS COURTNEY

VANCOUVER – The Irish Women's Network of BC and three of its offshoots (IWN Ontario, IWN Victoria and IWN Quebec) simultaneously celebrated Nollaig na mBan on January 6.

In Vancouver, 40 women – some here over 45 years and others just three months – gathered in Mahonys at Stamps Landing, as has been the practice for the past number of years, and enjoyed an afternoon of conversation and networking.

In Ottawa, the IWN Ontario saw a record 60 women brave the cold weather to get together in the Heart & Crown, a favourite location for IWN gatherings.

The IWN-QC celebrated Nollaig na mBan in the Celtic charm of the Fa-



PHOTO: Grainne McElroy

IRISH WOMEN'S NETWORK Victoria gathered at a local restaurant for a Nollaig na mBan celebration on January 6.



PHOTO: Helen Morris

IWN Ontario braved the cold weather for a record gathering of 60 women at the Heart & Crown in Ottawa this year.

## Have your say in 'Mapping the Irish' in B.C.

By EILIS COURTNEY

VANCOUVER – Have you ever wondered how many Irish citizens live in B.C.? What are the Irish community organisations supporting them? What is the employment profile of Irish citizens? Who else, apart from Irish citizens, makes up the Irish community in B.C.?

With your help and thanks to two exciting benchmark projects commissioned by the new Consulate General Office of Ireland in Vancouver these are questions that will soon be answered.

The Consulate in Vancouver is one of 13 to open globally in a bid to increase the scope and impact of Ireland's presence internationally.

The Ireland-Canada Chamber of Commerce Vancouver and the Irish Women's Network of B.C. have been enlisted by the Consulate to take the lead on these pioneering projects.

Given the large Irish community and the significant trade potential which is understood to exist, the main initial priorities for the Consulate General Of-

fice of Ireland in Vancouver will be to:

- Develop high-level business, community and political contacts, to promote Ireland's prosperity;

- Enhance engagement with the growing Irish community and their networks, including consular support in British Columbia;

- Develop the Consulate General as a focal point for the large and growing number of ministerial visits and for the wider friends of Ireland and Irish community in British Columbia.

In this context, the new Vancouver Chapter of the Ireland-Canada Chamber of Commerce will lead on the development of a trade directory, while the Irish Women's Network with the support of the University of British Columbia will lead on the mapping of the Irish community in British Columbia.

The Community Mapping Project (CMP) will be conducted in three different parts:

- a) compilation and display of data from the census and other government

sources on where the Irish are located; b) community meetings in various key areas in B.C. to explore the needs of the community; and c) a survey of Irish community organisations in B.C.

We are calling on all B.C. non-profit community organisation, group, network, or Facebook page which supports or serves the Irish community and/or promotes Irish culture and heritage, to take part in the short survey.

It will only take about five minutes to complete the one-page survey and the information received will be invaluable in mapping where the organisations are in B.C. and how they are supporting our community.

Please respond by March 1 to have your group included in a presentation report being prepared for March 17, 2019.

More information will be shared as the project proceeds.

If you have questions or comments, go to [www.irishwomenbc.net/irish-community-mapping-project](http://www.irishwomenbc.net/irish-community-mapping-project) or email [irishwomensnetwork@gmail.com](mailto:irishwomensnetwork@gmail.com).



PHOTO: Emma Tynan

IWN BC Chapter gathered at Mahony & Sons Stamp Landing – (L-R) Eilis Courtney, Anne Tynan and Leanne Ardley.

ther Thomas McEntee Reading Room.

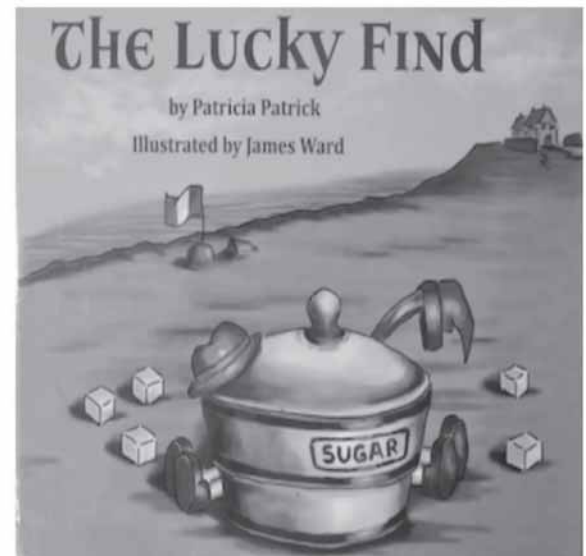
This soothing study sanctuary replete with hundreds of books on Ireland in Concordia University's School of Irish Studies is the regular meeting place for IWN-QC in Montreal.

And in Victoria, connected and inspired by the recent visit of the new Irish Consul General of Ireland, 20 women gathered for brunch in a local

restaurant and had such a great time that they plan to meet again soon.

It is inspiring to see how the IWN has grown and spread its tentacles across the country to link women within their own cities and as well as inter-city.

Links to the IWN-ON and IWN-QC can be found on the IWN-BC website [www.irishwomenbc.net](http://www.irishwomenbc.net).



A Wonderful Irish story for St. Patrick's Day!  
Order information at: [patriciaspublications.com](http://patriciaspublications.com)



### IRISH NEWCOMERS' INFORMATION AND NETWORKING SEMINAR

When: Saturday March 30<sup>th</sup> 2019, 2pm – 5pm

Where: BCIT Downtown Campus, 555 Seymour St, Vancouver

Free networking seminar for all Irish newcomers; learn from an HR specialist about job hunting, changing your Irish CV into a Canadian resume, information interviews and tips for finding a job – Network with established members of the Irish community; make new friends and pick up other useful tips about settling in Vancouver. Social gathering afterwards (location TBA).

To register for this free seminar, go to:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Seminar30Mar2019>

More info: Go the calendar entry on March 30<sup>th</sup> at [www.irishinvancouver.com/whats-on.html](http://www.irishinvancouver.com/whats-on.html)

Sponsored by the Irish Government's Emigrant Support Program



# New Study Finds ‘Celtic Curse’ May Cause Higher Levels of Serious Disease than Expected

By CYNTHIA WALLENTINE  
Two recent studies warn of the dangers and disability caused by hemochromatosis, also known as the “Celtic Curse.”

Though hemochromatosis is the most common genetic disorder in the western world, it is particularly prevalent in individuals and families from

throughout Celtic regions like Ireland, Wales, and Scotland.

In those with hemochromatosis, the body absorbs too much iron.

Interestingly, genetic hemochromatosis is thought to have developed out of the need for indigenous peoples to survive in conditions where little meat was available.

The resulting genetic mutation boosted child-bearing capabilities of tribes that might otherwise have perished.

Today, the disorder can be effectively treated, but studies published in the *BMJ* and *The Journals of Gerontology: Medical Science*, warn that healthcare providers should be on the lookout for associated disease.

The studies highlight findings that include:

- Individuals diagnosed with hemochromatosis may be four times as likely to suffer disease of the liver;
- Risk of death is increased among men with the genetic mutation who are diagnosed with liver cancer;
- Risk of arthritis and frailty is doubled;
- Likelihood of diabetes and chronic pain increases in those with hemochromatosis.

For the study, research teams looked at the health data of 2,890 people in Britain who have the two genetic mutations that cause hemochromatosis.

This large study found that one-in-five men, and one-in-10 women in the susceptible group, are likely to suffer additional diseases, compared to those without hemochromatosis.

Lead author, Dr. David Melzer notes, “The hemochromatosis mutations were thought to only rarely cause health problems.

“We’ve shown that hereditary hemochromatosis is actually a much more common and stealth disease, which is also seen in older people.

“We now need to test ways to screen and diagnose hemochromatosis earlier. It’s exciting to think that better care might prevent so much unnecessary disease.”

Authors note that a recent U.S. study found that 50 percent of men with the mutation, and 25 percent of women with the genetic mix-up are likely to be diagnosed with hemochromatosis, and of those, nine percent will eventually suffer serious liver disease.

Symptoms of hemochromatosis can be mistaken for normal signs of aging.

If you are of Celtic background, and even if you are not, talk to your doctor about easy screening for hemochromatosis.



THE GOOD NEWS is treatment for Hemochromatosis is simple: The excess iron is removed by a procedure known as phlebotomy, which is the drawing off of a unit of blood, using the same technique as a blood donation, but with a much higher frequency.



## Attracting too much iron?

We help Canadians affected by hemochromatosis access expert information, support and guidance so they can live longer, healthier lives.

[toomuchiron.ca](http://toomuchiron.ca)



# Hemochromatosis: ‘Stealth’ condition more damaging than first realized

TWO new studies show that hereditary hemochromatosis is linked to higher rates of diseases than previously thought.

The research was led by a team from the University of Exeter in the United Kingdom, the University of Connecticut, and the National Institute on Aging Intramural Research Program.

Hemochromatosis is an inherited condition that causes the body to absorb too much iron from the diet.

The excess iron accumulates over time, damaging organs and tissues in the process and potentially leading to disease.

In Canada, an estimated one in 300 people carry the two gene mutations responsible for the majority of hemochromatosis diagnoses.

In the new studies, published in *The BMJ* and *The Journals of Gerontology: Medical Sciences*, researchers looked at a general population of nearly 500,000 adults in the UK and found that one in 156, carry the two genetic mutations for hemochromatosis, approximately double the current Canadian estimate.

The study also found that by an average age of 63, 20 percent of men and 10 percent in women developed iron overload or diseases such as liver disease, arthritis and diabetes, compared to those without mutations.

The data suggested that even more disease developed at older ages. Additionally, the researchers found that 5.8 percent of all liver cancers in men occurred in those with the two hemochromatosis gene mutations.

Professor David Melzer, from the Universities of Exeter in the UK and Connecticut in the USA, who led the research, said, “The hemochromatosis mutations were thought to only rarely cause health problems.

“We’ve shown that hereditary hemochromatosis is actually a much more common and stealth disease, including in older people.

“We now need to test ways of screening and diagnosing hemochromatosis earlier. It’s exciting to think that better

care might prevent so much unnecessary disease.”

The good news is treatment is simple.

The excess iron is removed by a procedure known as phlebotomy, which is the drawing off of a unit of blood, using the same technique as a blood donation, but with a much higher frequency.

Depending on the amount of stored iron, phlebotomies may need to occur once a week or even twice a week until iron levels are lowered to acceptable levels.

Once acceptable levels are reached, they are maintained with periodic phlebotomies at the hospital.

Many individuals can also maintain their iron levels through blood donations at Canadian Blood Services and help to save other lives in addition to their own.

Raymond Fynes, president of the Canadian Hemochromatosis Society, said, “The results from this study emphasize just how common and damaging hereditary hemochromatosis is, especially among people with a Northern European ancestry.

“I encourage those who are experiencing persistent symptoms such as fatigue and joint pain, or who have hemochromatosis in their family, to speak with their doctor for testing.”

More information on hemochromatosis, including a self-assessment, screening guidelines, genetics and other resources can be found at [www.toomuchiron.ca](http://www.toomuchiron.ca).

[With files from University of Exeter Medical School Press Release, January 2019.]

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. Please support this mission with a donation to the Canadian Hemochromatosis Society, 285 – 7000 Minoru Boulevard, Richmond, BC V6Y 3Z5. More information can be found at [www.toomuchiron.ca/celtic](http://www.toomuchiron.ca/celtic).

## Kevin Vickers stepping down as Canadian Ambassador to Ireland

FREDERICTON — Former House of Commons sergeant-at-arms Kevin Vickers says he is retiring next month as Canada’s ambassador to Ireland, potentially setting himself up for a bid to become New Brunswick Liberal leader.

Vickers, hailed as a hero for helping to end the 2014 attack on Parliament Hill, said in a bilingual Facebook post he will retire from the position effective March 2 and return to his home in Trout Brook, Miramichi, New Brunswick.

“To all my friends and to the people of Ireland I wanted to say a special thank you. You received me with open

arms and the warmest of welcomes. I shall not ever forget your kindness, affection and grace,” he wrote.

Vickers has been touted as a possible candidate for the leadership of the New Brunswick Liberal party to replace Brian Gallant.

In December, Vickers indicated an interest in the job but at the time said he was a “long ways from making a decision.” The New Brunswick Liberals will choose a new leader on June 22 in Saint John.

Vickers, born and raised in Newcastle, N.B., has held the ambassador post since January 2015.

“Ireland is the home of my ancestors. Serving Canada as ambassador has been a special privilege. I have worked hard often working seven days a week for months at a time but not without results,” he said on Facebook.

He said multi-lateral trade between Canada and Ireland grew 31 percent last year alone, and there has been seven new direct flights announced between Canada and Ireland since his arrival.

Vickers has a long career of public service, including 29 years in the RCMP. He served as sergeant-at-arms for the House of Commons between 2006 and 2015.



## All graduates from Irish third level colleges welcomed at the Irish Graduates Association

By PATRICIA RYAN

*Irish Graduates Association*

VANCOUVER – The Irish Graduates Association will hold its next dinner on Saturday, May 25, at the Shaughnessy Golf and Country Club.

The Irish Graduates Association wishes to extend a warm welcome to the new Consul General of Ireland, Frank Flood and his wife Orla Ní Bhroithe.

Frank Flood arrived in Vancouver this past summer and has already made a positive impact and contribution to the Irish community. We are delighted to welcome him as guest speaker at our dinner.

The Irish Graduates Association had its beginnings as The UCG Graduates Association.

We were a group of people who graduated from UCG (now NUI Galway) who wanted to connect socially from time-to-time.

Back in 1989 we were few in number, about 30 people. Our first president, Dr. Edward McGivern, advised that, if we wanted to survive and thrive, we needed a larger pool of people in our group.

So, we extended membership to all university graduates from across the island of Ireland.

Our group grew and we had members from every university except Trinity College, which had its own vibrant alumni association at that time.

The next evolution came when we decided to include all third level educational institutions and, by then, Trinity had also joined us.

Now we welcome graduates from all third level colleges in Ireland, and their friends! One big happy family.

We get together with irregularity. We usually have a big dinner with a guest speaker every couple of years.

We have also hosted cultural events such as an art exhibition by a visiting Irish artist, readings by a visiting Irish author and receptions for people like Sean Kelly and his cycling group.

We love the feeling of getting together in a room with food and drink and just having a chat and catching up on the latest stories from Ireland and from our daily lives here.

Our group affords a nice opportunity for younger or recently arrived graduates to connect with those of us who have been here for a while, in a supportive, friendly and social setting. Membership fee is the price of your dinner ticket!

The Irish Graduates Association welcomes new members, young and old. We look forward to meeting you and hearing your story at one of our social gatherings

For more information, or to book for the dinner on Saturday, May 25, at the Shaughnessy Golf and Country Club, e-mail contact Patricia at: patricia.irishgrads@gmail.com.

## Woman finds her biological mother alive after a 61-year search

DUBLIN – In an endless cycle of bad news, this recent story held a remarkable twist – Irishwoman Eileen Macken spent 61 years searching for her birth mother, only to find her alive and well and living in England at the age of 103.

Once describing herself as “Ireland’s oldest orphan,” the 81-year-old Bethany Home survivor rang into *Liveline* a year ago in a bid to find her biological mother.

Following the broadcast, a genealogist contacted Eileen and worked alongside her for over a year to help her in her search.

The result was astounding when they not only located her birth mother, but learned she was still alive – ending a search that began when she was just 19.

Sharing the news that they found her, She told radio listeners that she has since seen one old photograph of her mother, has spoken to her on the phone and now wants to meet her in person.

She explained that she first started the search for her birth parents to find out about her medical history for her children.

“The doctors couldn’t understand why don’t you know this, why don’t you know that. I got a bit upset once and I said, ‘Because I’m an orphan, I



EILEEN MACKEN, who was raised in Bethany Home in Dublin, during a ceremony last year where a new memorial stone in Dublin’s Mount Jerome cemetery was unveiled listing the names of 70 babies who died at Bethany Home. The headstone was organised by the Bethany Home Survivors Group.

know nothing, absolutely nothing’.”

Now married to husband Ronald with two daughters and a son, she said that she always longed to have blood relatives who could be there in times of trouble.

Not only did she discover her birth mother, but she now has two brothers.

She said, “I’d say they’re in their mid 70s. The half brothers are like myself only younger, probably about 20 years younger.”

Born in a doctor’s surgery on Dublin’s

THE first big event of the year for the Irish Club of White Rock is the annual St. Patrick’s Day dinner dance on Saturday, March 16. It is held at the Hazelemere Golf and Tennis Club, 18150 - 8th Avenue in Surrey.

This event sells out a few weeks ahead of time so everyone is advised to purchase their tickets well in advance. Tickets will be on sale shortly for \$60 all inclusive.

The Irish Club of White Rock extends a very warm welcome to all the new Irish to the area.

In April the club will hold its annual general meeting and anyone interested in joining the executive team or help plan upcoming events and socials is urged to contact either Deirdre O’Ruairc or Sharon Woods.

The Irish Club of White Rock is a very active club, just a 45-minute drive from Vancouver.

Every morning around 10 AM there is always an Irish meet-up at Tim Horton’s located at 1767 -152nd Street in Surrey. The group enjoys great discussions on world politics, etc. On Sunday the group gathers about 12:30 PM.

Anyone interested is invited to contact the club and attend one of the upcoming events.

For current information, follow the Irish Club of White Rock on Facebook or call president Sharon Woods at (604) 338-3553 or secretary Deirdre O’Ruairc at (604) 803-0773.

### IRISH CLUB OF WHITE ROCK

## Plans underway for the annual St. Patrick’s Day Dinner Dance



IRISH WHITE ROCK Christmas gathering – Philip Reynolds, Aoife Woods, Denis Ryan.



IRISH WHITE ROCK Christmas gathering – Bernie Rochford, Dolores and John Wynne.

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# Heartache and shock at Donegal funerals for four young men

DONEGAL – Hundreds of people attended the first of four back-to-back funerals for a group of young men killed in a road crash in Donegal on Sunday, January 27.

Daniel Scott, from Gortahork, John Harley and Shaun Harkin, both from Falcarragh, and Mícheál Roarty, from Moneybeg, died in the single-vehicle crash near Magheraroarty, Gortahork.

The men, all in their twenties, were from the local area. They were travelling in a Toyota Corolla hatchback when it crashed near a bridge on a minor road. The four were declared dead at the scene.

They were saying goodbye to each other as one prepared to start a new job abroad. Daniel Scott was due to leave for work in Denmark the following week.

The deaths of the four childhood friends, who were all involved in the local community, including being members of both local soccer and GAA teams, has sent shock waves through West Donegal.

Grieving families were left “shattered, distraught and bereft” by the youthful lives cut short, said Father Sean O Gallchoir at the funeral of Mícheál Roarty at Christ the King church in Gortahork.

The priest appealed to everyone, “Drive with care, drive with attention, drive safely so that no harm will befall anybody. The car, as we can see, is a lethal weapon.”

He added, “Life is busy, we are all in a



THE DEATHS of four young men has sent shockwaves through west Donegal and through the heart of their local parishes. They are pictured above (L-R) – Shaun Harkin (22), Mícheál Roarty (24), John Harley (24) and Daniel Scott (23).



THE FUNERAL cortege of Mícheál Roarty in Co. Donegal.

rush and in a hurry, we all have deadlines – but deadlines sometimes can result in dead lives.

“We are all precious, fragile, brittle, easily broken. Our community is full of broken hearts.”

## Excavation work on site of former mother-and-baby home starts in 2019

DUBLIN – Taoiseach Leo Varadkar has said the first excavations at the site of the former Tuam mother-and-baby home will begin in the second half of 2019 and that government does not know what it is “getting into” yet with the initiative.

Speaking to reporters at an end-of-year interview, he said legislation would have to pass through the Oireachtas before the work began but that the Cabinet had agreed to a “phased approach” to the forensic excavation and recovery of the remains.

Following on from the work of Co. Galway historian Catherine Corless, who gathered death certificates for 796 infants linked to the home, a Commission of Investigation into mother-and-baby homes found “significant quantities” of human remains in disused septic tanks in Tuam.

The mother-and-baby homes were institutions generally run by nuns where women who became pregnant outside marriage gave birth. Many of these babies were adopted, often by Catholic families in the U.S., in return for a donation.

The Bon Secours Sisters, which ran the home in Galway from 1925 to 1961, has offered 2.5 million euro towards the cost of the excavation. The State faces a bill of up to 12 million euro.

Varadkar said the government had begun the work of identifying experts while the legislation makes its way through the Oireachtas ahead of any excavations.

The initial work at the Tuam site will focus on the remains known to be in the chambers identified by the commission. Remains that are recovered will be analysed and, where possible, identified.

“We’ve never really done this before in Ireland, on this scale, so we’ve a lot to set up, and a lot to learn before we do it,” he said.

“We’re not entirely sure what we’re getting into, but as a government we’re convinced this is the right thing to do, to remove the remains and to give those children a proper, decent burial they didn’t get and if possible to identify some of them if we can, if the technology allows that.”

Katherine Zappone, the Minister for Children, wrote to Pope Francis on the issue after his visit to Ireland last year.

She explained the history of mother-and-baby homes in Ireland, the high mortality rates in them and the burial of children on the grounds of the former home in Tuam.

The minister sought from the Pope that the church “accept its responsibilities and make reparation for its party in a

very shameful chapter of Irish history.”

In a three-paragraph response on Vatican-headed paper, dated November 13, the Pope said he was praying that “efforts made” by the government and the Catholic Church in Ireland will help “face responsibly this tragic chapter in Ireland’s history.”

He made no reference to a financial contribution to the excavation of unidentified human remains from the site of the former home.



THE SITE of a mass grave for children who died at a former home for unmarried mothers in Tuam, Co. Galway.



IRELAND’S GREAT HUNGER museum at Quinnipiac University in Connecticut opened with great fanfare in 2013 under the guidance of former university president Dr. John Lahey.

## Ireland’s Great Hunger Museum at Quinnipiac University under threat of closure

NEW YORK – There is deep concern about the future of the much acclaimed Great Hunger Museum at Quinnipiac University in Connecticut.

In a recent statement, Lynn Bushnell, vice president for public affairs at Quinnipiac indicated that the university is in the process of re-evaluating the university’s focus and how its resources will be directed.

She said, “The university is in the midst of a rigorous and comprehensive strategic planning process around the critical priorities of student learning and institutional excellence.

“Given our many student-centric priorities, our hope is that Ireland’s Great Hunger Museum identifies diverse sources of support for its programs and initiatives, including philanthropy.”

The threat to the facility, which was opened with great fanfare in October, 2013, follows the retirement last year of Quinnipiac president Dr. John Lahey and the arrival of a new president, Dr. Judy Olian.

According to reports, Quinnipiac’s campus community radio station is now slated for closure and the withdrawal of a Quinnipiac marching unit from the New York St. Patrick’s Day Parade has been confirmed.

“As for the parade, while we enthusiastically support its important goals and underlying spirit, we are redirecting university resources to more immediate needs that serve students on

the campus,” said Bushnell.

Bushnell, who has been at Quinnipiac for a number of years and was a close associate of former president Dr. John Lahey, was editor a few years ago of a lavish hardcover book celebrating 250 years of the parade.

That book, written by parade historian John Ridge, was published by Quinnipiac University Press.

Whatever about the absence of the marching contingent – certain to be a disappointment to those who made up that contingent – the closure of the museum would be treated with widespread dismay in the Irish/Irish-American community.

Bushnell, said, “Ireland’s Great Hunger Museum at Quinnipiac University is not facing imminent closure, however, its situation is serious.”

“The university has asked the museum to become a self-sustaining institution and is giving the museum some time to build a donor base.

“If the museum is to continue, it needs the financial support of the community.”

The website for the Irish Great Hunger Museum says, “One of the best ways to support the museum is to become a member. There are many different joining levels, and every contribution directly supports the museum.”

To learn more about supporting the museum visit their website at: [www.ighm.org/support.html](http://www.ighm.org/support.html).



# New hope for tackling antibiotic resistance found in ancient Irish soil

By CYNTHIA WALLENTINE

Myth and modern science mix in new research that reveals alkaline soil from the Boho region in County Fermanagh, Ireland, could prove useful in the battle against multi-drug resistant bacteria.

A recent study published in the journal *Frontiers of Science* explains the sampling and testing of soils from a Boho graveyard.

The study finds that soil from the Boho Highlands is home to a unique strain of bacteria that is effective in combating so-called superbugs.

The study was undertaken by an international team of scientists hailing from Northern Ireland, Brazil, Iraq, and Wales.

One of the researchers, Dr. Gerry Quinn, is a former resident of Boho, and was aware of stories and practices that pointed to the soil of the region as having healing properties.

Located in Northern Ireland, near the border with the Irish Republic, the region has a rich history of monuments and artifacts of archeological and historical interest.

The landscape matches the variation in the peoples that have lived upon this ground for thousands of years.

The area has limestone karst, similar to that found in the Burren in the west of the Republic of Ireland.

The region is also home to peat bog, wetland meadows, and mountains well known for their cave systems.

## THE NEED FOR NEW MEDICINES

In the developed world, antibiotics are widely used to treat infections.

Bacterial and fungal infections that once blinded, deafened, or killed humans were temporarily pushed back by the development of antibiotics in the late 1920s. Viruses are not affected by antibiotics.

Since then, the overuse of antibiotics for an enormous variety of human and animal needs has resulted in bacteria that are no longer vulnerable to the classes of antibiotics we have to fight them.

The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates 1.3 million people in Europe will die of multi-drug resistant bacterial infection by 2050.

In the United States, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) describe antibiotic resistance as one of the greatest public health threats "of our times."

The Boho research arises from a growing field of study called ethno-pharmacology.

Scientists in this area are looking at folk and traditional medicines that might be of use in contemporary medicine.

## HEALING TRADITIONS IN BOHO LEAD TO DISCOVERY OF BENEFICIAL BACTERIA

In this study, researchers explored whether organisms found in Boho might be effective against six dangerous multi-drug resistant bacteria.

Collectively, the six organisms are known by the acronym ESKAPE.

Through genomic sequencing, the research team identified a previously



DR. GERRY QUINN said the next step was to identify the antibiotics in the soil.



SACRED HEART CHURCH, Boho, Co. Fermanagh – Can the soil from this churchyard fight bacteria?



Located in Northern Ireland, near the border with the Irish Republic, the Boho region in Co. Fermanagh has a rich history of monuments and artifacts of archeological and historical interest.

unknown bacterium which they named *Streptomyces Myrophorea*.

The bacteria are effective against four of the six ESKAPE bacteria, including Methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*, better known as MRSA.

The Boho region has long been known for its healing tradition.

The study reports occupation during the Neolithic era, about 4,000 years ago, and later by the Druids, some 1,500 years ago.

In the Christian era, the Sacred Heart Church in Toneel North stands close to inscribed Neolithic stones, a combination frequently found in Ireland and Scotland as Christian churches supplanted sanctuary ground of older religions.

In Boho, folklore holds that a bit of soil from the graveyard, particularly the grave of a parish priest, has healing capabilities.

Soil samples for the study were collected from an alkaline escarpment region on the church grounds.

Legend has it that a bit of the soil,

wrapped in a cotton cloth, can cure common infections of the throat, neck, and mouth.

Researchers suggest early indigenous residents, living close the soil, discovered the infection inhibiting abilities of the soil passing the knowledge down for thousands of years.

In addition to the newly named bacteria, scientists have yet to examine other organisms collected in their soil samples.

They hope to create new antibiotics that can advance the cause of humanity against continually adaptive pathogens.

Interestingly, the anti-microbial properties of the Boho, Ireland, soil are similar to those discovered in the soils of Kisameet Bay, British Columbia, Canada.

Those soils too were used for traditional healing practices by the Heiltsuk First Nations people.

What was once old, is now new. These and other studies reinforce the ability of the past to inform and assist our global future.

**We're Here to Help.**

Athena Theodorakakis, Ryan Crean, Christina Koh, Anne Plunkett-Bumley, Sherry Moreau, Steven Colon, Megan Johnson, Chris Bradshaw, Gabe Rogan, Aaron Morrison, Taylor Meers, and Mike Crean

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FORENSIC officers inspect the remains of the vehicle used as a car bomb on an attack outside Derry Court House on January 19.

## 'No going back' is the message at rally against violence

DERRY – A rally opposing dissident republican violence was held in Derry in the wake of a car bombing in the city on the night of Saturday, January 19.

It was organised by the Northern Ireland Public Service Alliance (NIPSA) trade union following a series of attacks, disruption and threats in recent weeks.

These culminated in the explosion outside the courthouse in Bishop Street which has been blamed on the New IRA.

The same organisation was thought to be behind security alerts across the city on January 21 sparked after vehicles were hijacked at gunpoint and abandoned.

It led to the Housing Executive and Royal Mail withdrawing services from parts of Derry, although these were restored the following day.

NIPSA president Patrick Mullholland said, "In the wake of Saturday's bombing at the courthouse in Derry, and subsequent paramilitary and police activity in the city, public sector union NIPSA, which represents staff at the courthouse, has initiated a protest in opposition to paramilitarism, sectarianism and repression under the slogan 'No going back'."

"Those who carried out Saturday's bombing in Derry aim to drag us back into futile conflict."

"Their actions achieve nothing but whipping up sectarian tension and potentially legitimising attacks on democratic rights. The bombing put the lives of ordinary people at risk, including NIPSA members."

"The trade union movement – representing workers from all backgrounds – has a proud tradition of standing up against sectarian forces from all sides, especially when workers are under threat."

He added, "We've called this protest to allow working people to send a clear message to these groups – no going back!"

Two men in their twenties have been arrested over the explosion which happened as people were socializing in nearby venues.

The police said that they had received a tip off that a device had been left at the courthouse in the center of the city on January 19.

Officers began evacuating people from



PROTESTERS standing in solidarity with NIPSA, the public service alliance trade union, after a car bombing in Derry last month.

nearby buildings including hundreds of hotel guests and a large number of children from a nearby church youth club.

Around 10 minutes later a bomb exploded in a delivery vehicle parked outside the building. There were no reports of injuries.

"This attack was unbelievably reckless," Assistant Chief Constable Mark Hamilton said in a statement released the following day.

"Fortunately it didn't kill anybody but clearly it was a very significant attempt to kill people here in this community," he said.

The police later released CCTV footage from before the attack which showed a group of young people walk past the vehicle on Bishop Street.

The attack comes at a time when there are concerns for what Britain's looming departure from the European Union will mean for the border between Northern Ireland, which is part of the U.K., and the Irish Republic, which will remain part of the E.U.

The border is currently more or less invisible and there are no checkpoints. Some fear the reinstatement of a physical boundary risks a return to a bloody 30-year-conflict known as "The Troubles," rekindling tensions that might spill over into violence.

A 1998 peace deal known as the Good Friday Agreement ended decades of conflict.

## Protesters at Irish border highlight Brexit as peace threat

NEWRY, Co. Down – Hundreds of protesters have warned Theresa May that a hard Irish border risks destroying Northern Ireland's hard-won peace.

A mock checkpoint manned by actors dressed as soldiers and customs officers was constructed close to the border in Co. Down on Saturday, January 26.

Machine gun-toting 'soldiers' were camouflaged in green and black and concrete blocks were craned into place across the road as a backdrop for a string of angry speeches by anti-Brexit campaigners from across the island.

If the UK leaves Europe without a deal, the free flow of goods could be disrupted by the creation of a hard frontier on the island, the European Commission has said.

Demonstrator Tom Murray, from Co. Donegal, said it is the British prime minister's responsibility to sort out the issue.

He said, "Ireland will not be made to suffer the folly of the Tory party. We are the ones who will be suffering for the mistakes made in Westminster."

"We will not accept this border, we demand that London sort out the problem that they created."

Murray added, "All the peace and prosperity that we have enjoyed will be destroyed by a hard border."



A MOCK concrete brick wall was knocked down by demonstrators in Newry in protest of a hard border between Ireland north and south. Security towers in the hilly and remote area near the city of Newry were decommissioned in 2003.

Sinn Féin leader Mary Lou McDonald and deputy leader Michelle O'Neill were also spotted at a demonstration near Carrickcarnan, Co. Louth.

McDonald held a large hammer and knocked down a symbolic wall as dozens of people watched.

It is more than 20 years since the 1998 Good Friday Agreement which largely ended decades of violence.

Security towers manned by the British Army in the hilly and remote area near the city of Newry were decommissioned in 2003 as it ended conflict-era operations in Northern Ireland in support of the police.

The Irish and British Governments

have said they want to avoid a hard border after Brexit, and multiple sources have said Britain's withdrawal from the EU should not prompt a return to violence.

Some security sources have argued that if customs checks are put in place, police will be required to protect them and that could leave officers at risk from dissident republicans.

The Police Service of Northern Ireland has received extra resources for Brexit but have officially envisaged light-touch, community-style policing.

Dublin's Foreign Affairs Minister Simon Coveney said it would be difficult to avoid installing new infrastructure following a no-deal Brexit.

## UK might seek extension to Article 50 if Brexit deal not reached until March

DUBLIN – Ireland might help the UK secure a delay to Brexit if Theresa May's government came forward with credible reasons for seeking one.

A senior member of her Cabinet, Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt, said that an extension to Article 50 may be needed if a Brexit deal is not agreed until late March.

Hunt, who was speaking on BBC Radio on February 1, said it was "difficult to know" if negotiations with Brussels would run until the eleventh hour, but confirmed "extra time" may be needed to pass legislation.

His comments were quickly downplayed by the UK prime minister's office, which said her position was "unchanged," adding, "We will be leaving on March 29."

Hunt's suggestion was echoed by Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn, who said it was "possible" Article 50 would need to be extended in order to secure a deal.

A potential delay would receive a mixed response from the EU but Dublin would offer support if it helps get a deal across the line.

Taoiseach Leo Varadkar has already privately told Fine Gael TDs he would "not have a problem with any extension to Article 50."

Hunt said, "I think it is true if we ended up approving a deal in the days before March 29, then we might need some extra time to pass critical legislation,

*"It is possible that there will have to be an extension in order to get an agreement because we cannot leave the EU on March 29 without an agreement."*  
– Jeremy Corbyn



BRITAIN'S Prime Minister Theresa May with Irish Taoiseach Leo Varadkar at 10 Downing Street.

but if we are able to make progress sooner then that might not be necessary.

"We can't know at this stage exactly which of those scenarios would happen."

He said it was still possible to reach a deal and the UK Government was not ruling out any potential solutions, including a technological solution to solve the Border question.

Meanwhile, Corbyn said, "It is possible that there will have to be an extension in order to get an agreement because we cannot leave the EU on March 29 without an agreement."

"Crashing out would mean problems of transport, problems of medicine supply, problems of supply to the food processing industry that does just-in-time deliveries – and that simply is not acceptable."





IAN BLACKFORD, the Scottish National Party Westminster leader claimed British PM Theresa May had effectively “ripped up the Good Friday Agreement” after MPs passed an amendment saying they would support her Brexit withdrawal deal if the controversial backstop plan was replaced with “alternative arrangements.”

## DUP react angrily to claim the Brexit vote ‘ripped up Good Friday Agreement’

LONDON – Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) deputy leader Nigel Dodds has reacted angrily to claims that an amendment to Prime Minister Theresa May’s Brexit deal has effectively “ripped up the Good Friday Agreement.”

The Scottish National Party’s (SNP) Westminster leader Ian Blackford made the claim after MPs passed an amendment saying they would support May’s Brexit withdrawal deal if the controversial backstop plan was replaced with “alternative arrangements.”

The backstop plan, aiming to prevent a hard border on the island of Ireland, has been opposed by the DUP who say it would create a trade border in the Irish Sea and could leave Northern Ireland tied to the EU indefinitely.

Tory party Brexiteers also opposed the plan, saying it did not deliver on Brexit promises.

The EU and Irish Government have been adamant that May’s withdrawal

deal cannot be renegotiated and have rejected the possibility of changing the backstop plan.

Speaking in the House of Commons after the vote on January 29, Blackford said the amendment had “ripped up the Good Friday Agreement.”

“We were told the backstop was there to protect the peace process but tonight the Conservative Party has effectively ripped apart the Good Friday Agreement. This House should be ashamed of itself,” he said.

However, North Belfast MP Dodds quickly rebuked the claims, saying they were “utterly reckless.”

The DUP deputy leader said he was speaking on “behalf of both communities in Northern Ireland.”

“To say that this vote tonight drives a coach and horses through the Good Friday Agreement, it does nothing of the sort,” he said.

“It is utterly reckless to talk in those terms. The fact of the matter is, that nobody in Northern Ireland, no political party is advocating any kind of hard border on the island of Ireland

## Justin Trudeau offers solidarity to Ireland as no-deal Brexit looms

OTTAWA – Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has offered his solidarity to Ireland as the Brexit crisis continues to edge towards a no-deal scenario.

The prime minister discussed the situation with Taoiseach Leo Varadkar during a phone call on January 30.

A note released by the office of the prime minister suggests the conversation was much more cordial than one Varadkar shared with British Prime Minister Theresa May around the same time.

The pair discussed a number of international events including the situation in Venezuela.

Trudeau also spoke to the taoiseach to the case of two Canadian citizens who are currently under “arbitrary detention” in China and a third who is facing the death penalty.

Varadkar then updated his counterpart on the situation regarding the UK’s reneging on backstop which is designed to prevent a hard border on the island of Ireland.



CANADA’S Prime Minister Justin Trudeau (R) walks with Taoiseach Leo Varadkar (L) during the Montreal Pride parade in Montreal, Quebec on August 20, 2017.

A spokesperson for the prime minister said, “The two leaders discussed the implications for Ireland of the United Kingdom’s withdrawal from the European Union.

“They agreed on the fundamental importance of protecting the Good Friday Agreement for the peace process

in Northern Ireland, and recalled Canada’s role in achieving the Agreement.”

Canada and Ireland share an important trade relationship, in particular due to CETA, the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement between the European Union and Canada signed in 2016 after seven years of negotiation.

and we certainly do not advocate what others advocate which is creating borders within the United Kingdom or breaking up the United Kingdom.

“This is a significant night because for the first time the House by majority has expressed what sort of deal will get through and will have a majority, and we will work with the prime minister to deliver the right deal for the United Kingdom.”

SDLP leader Colum Eastwood described the vote as an “affront on the Good Friday Agreement.”

“Tonight, London decided that the interests of the people in Northern Ireland were secondary to the needs of the Conservative Party,” the Foyle MLA said.

“Let me be clear, the people of Northern Ireland did not consent to this. We will continue to engage with the Irish Government to ensure that the backstop, as reiterated by Brussels, will not be undermined in the slightest.”

## Brexit shock: A third of UK firms set to relocate in the event of no deal

LONDON – A third of UK companies are planning to move their businesses abroad in the event of a no deal Brexit, a new survey has suggested.

The Institute of Directors (IoD) surveyed 1,200 of its business members and found that 16 percent were already planning to relocate while a further 13 percent are “actively considering” leaving the UK.

The IoD is a business organisation for company directors, senior business leaders and entrepreneurs.

It is the UK’s longest running organisation for professional leaders, having been founded in 1903 and incorporated by Royal Charter in 1906.

The most recent report indicates that the majority of companies surveyed were considering premises in the EU.

More than one-in-10 firms have reportedly already set up businesses outside the UK as Theresa May’s government continues to fail at gathering enough support from MPs for her deal.

The IoD’s interim director general Edwin Morgan described how recent headlines have seen large businesses leaving the UK, but that these most recent figures suggest small businesses also have concerns about the impact of a no deal Brexit.

He said, “We can no more ignore the real consequences of delay and confusion than business leaders can ignore the hard choices that they face in protecting their companies.”

Major international companies such as Panasonic and Sony recently relocated from the UK to the EU.

The survey which includes directors, senior business chiefs and entrepreneurs of 30,000 companies, found that 11 percent had already relocated with five percent claiming they will relocate due to Brexit fears.

European trade agencies and business networks said “hundreds” of UK companies were currently in the process of transferring their operations to the EU before March 29, according to BBC Newsnight.

The number of UK companies that have moved their operations to the EU has apparently doubled since the 2016 referendum, according to Belgian government agency Hub.Brussels.

The agency claims that since the Brexit vote, between 95 and 100 companies created a new legal entity in Brussels.



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IRISH AMBASSADOR to the U.S. Dan Mulhall with Daidí na Nollag (Father Christmas) at the Irish Seniors Christmas luncheon.



IRISH AMBASSADOR Dan Mulhall with some of the volunteers who organized Seattle's annual Irish Seniors Christmas luncheon on December 8.

## Make Your Own Irish Soda Bread

IRELAND offers some pretty great traditional Irish food...and only some of them involve potatoes.

One of the most quintessential Irish menu item is brown bread – also known as soda bread. Everyone has memories at home of this delicious bread served fresh and warm from the oven covered with butter.

Made with a coarser flour than most bread it is allegedly much healthier and best homemade as the mass produced version just isn't the same.

With St. Patrick's Day on the horizon, you might want to try your hand at baking some of your own delicious Irish soda bread.

We've included some prize-winning recipes here you might enjoy and with a traditional Irish stew to accompany this delicious bread. *Bon appetit.*

### IRISH BROWN BREAD

3 cups of whole wheat flour  
1 cup all purpose flour  
1 heaped teaspoon baking powder  
1 teaspoon baking soda  
½ teaspoon of salt  
2 cups of buttermilk

#### Method:

Combine dry ingredients and mix well. Add buttermilk, stir with a wooden spoon. Turn dough out on to a lightly floured board and knead lightly until smooth, shape into a ball, place on a floured cookie sheet and with the back of your fingers press down to flatten. Cut a cross to divide the dough. Bake at 350° F for 50 minutes. Place on a wire rack to cool.

### RAISIN BREAD

4 cups of white flour  
1 ½ cups of raisins  
1 heaped teaspoon baking powder  
1 teaspoon baking soda  
½ teaspoon of salt  
2 cups of buttermilk

[This is a slightly fancied up Americanized version of the Irish classic, with some currants or raisins added to the base.]



#### Method:

Combine dry ingredients and mix well. Add buttermilk, stir with a wooden spoon. Turn dough out on to a lightly floured board and knead lightly until smooth, shape into a ball, place on a floured cookie sheet and with the back of your fingers press down to flatten. Cut a cross to divide the dough. Bake at 350° F for 50 minutes. Place on a wire rack to cool.

### IRISH SODA BREAD (WHITE)

4 cups all purpose flour  
1 heaped teaspoon baking powder  
1 teaspoon baking soda  
½ teaspoon of salt  
2 cups of buttermilk

#### Method:

Combine dry ingredients and mix well. Add buttermilk, stir with a wooden spoon. Turn dough out on to a lightly floured board and knead lightly until smooth, shape into a ball, place on a

floured cookie sheet and with the back of your fingers press down to flatten. Cut a cross to divide the dough. Bake at 350° F for 50 minutes. Place on a wire rack to cool.

### TRADITIONAL IRISH STEW

1 ½ pounds of lamb cut up and trimmed  
2 onions (fair size)  
6 potatoes – peeled and cut up  
2 carrots – peeled and sliced  
Some fresh parsley  
Salt and pepper  
3 cups of water

#### Method:

Place all ingredients in a large covered pot on the stove at a low heat, and cook slowly for about 1 ½ to 2 hours. If not thick enough mix a tablespoon of cornstarch and add just at the end and stir frequently.

Enjoy with a steaming cup of hot tea!



MEMBERS of the Irish Heritage Club and other volunteers meeting on January 13 to plan Irish Week 2019 in Seattle.



THE NEW Board of Directors of the Seattle Gaels: (L-R) Oisín Desmond Keely – Vice Chair; Ranko Asari – Treasurer; Vanessa Asari – Chair; Joseph Lavy – Secretary.



WALKING on the viaduct towards the end of Seattle's St. Patrick's Day Dash on March 12, 2000 with the Kingdome straight ahead. The Kingdome was imploded just two weeks later on March 26, 2000 while the viaduct is coming down in the next few weeks.



# SEATTLE IRISH NEWS

## PASSINGS

- Peggy Prendiville (92), a native of Co. Kerry, died in Tacoma January 24;
- Sister Esther Aherne (83), a native of Cork who joined the Tacoma Dominicans in 1952, died in Tacoma January 15;
- Annie Chambers, the mother of Seattle's Sean Chambers, died in Co. Mayo January 9;
- Betty Gardner (94), a native of Co. Donegal, died in Seattle December 23.

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

**MARCH 16 PARADE** – You're invited to participate in Seattle's 48th annual St Patrick's Day Parade being held on Saturday, March 16, 2019.

The Parade starts at 12:30 PM from City Hall Park at 4th and Jefferson in downtown Seattle, and travels north on 4th Avenue, ending at Pine Street and Westlake Park where the Reviewing Stand is located.

There is no charge to participate unless you are a for-profit entity, and individuals are welcome to march behind their provincial banner of choice without any pre-registration. See [irishweek.org](http://irishweek.org) for more details.

**DIASPORA MINISTER'S VISIT** – Irish government Minister of State for the Diaspora and Development, Ciarán Cannon, will be visiting Seattle in March to participate in our St. Patrick's Day celebrations.

The Galway native will also be visiting Calgary and Vancouver, B.C., and his flight details to Seattle are not yet confirmed, but we expect him to be here for Seattle's St. Patrick's Day Parade at noon on Saturday, March 16.

**MAYOR'S VISIT** – Also visiting Seattle from Ireland for Irish Week 2019 is the Mayor of Galway, Níall McNelis.

A Labor Party member on the Galway City Council since 2009, he is also a member of the European Union Committee of Regions.

This will be his first visit to Seattle, but since he was elected mayor in July he has already hosted many Seattle visitors in Galway and says he is looking forward to meeting old friends again in Seattle.

He even has a Seattle photo on the wall of his jewelry shop on Quay Street, right beside the Seattle Sister City Stone Monument.

To meet Mayor McNelis, just come to any of the March 15-18 Irish Week events listed below.

**35th DASH** – The Irish Heritage Club has been involved since the very first St. Patrick's Day Dash was run on the Viaduct on March 17, 1985, from Jake O'Shaughnessey's at 1st and Mercer to F X McRory's beside the Kingdome.

Jake's closed in 1995, the Kingdome came down in 2000, F X's closed in 2017, and now the Viaduct is closed and will soon also be gone, but wonderful memories of those early St. Patrick's Day Dash runs will remain with the fantastic mountain views available while running or walking the race.

This year's 35th annual St. Patrick's Day Dash will be held on on Sunday, March 17 – see [stpatsdash.com](http://stpatsdash.com).



By  
**JOHN  
KEANE**



**GALWAY MAYOR Níall McNelis**  
who will be visiting Seattle for  
Irish Week 2019.



**WATERFORD native, the late John Duggan, coaching a soccer game in the 1970s. He is being inducted into the Washington Youth Soccer Hall of Fame.**

**FOUR DECADES** – 2019 is the 40th anniversary of the founding of the Seattle Gaels in 1979 with the first game played in Vancouver the following year.

There was a Gaelic football team in Seattle in the late 1950s and early 1960s which played games against Vancouver teams and also against a team from San Francisco in 1964, but the first GAA team from the Pacific Northwest to affiliate with the North American GAA was the Seattle Gaels.

Planning for the 40th anniversary celebrations in April falls to the newly elected Seattle Gaels Board of Directors: Vanessa Asari – Chair; Oisín Desmond Keely – Vice Chair; Ranko Asari – Treasurer; Joseph Lavy – Secretary; and Tom Van Acker – Registrar.

Congratulations and best wishes in their efforts to promote Gaelic football, hurling and camogie in the Seattle area!

**LIAM BOYLE** – *The Irish Times* had a great story about the Antrim team which won the All-Ireland U-21 Gaelic Football Championship in 1969.

The captain of that team was Liam Boyle who just this past September moved back to Belfast with his wife Tara after living in Seattle for the past 21 years.

That 1969 team was the only Antrim team ever to win an All-Ireland Gaelic Football Championship.

While living in Seattle, Liam was very involved with the Seattle Gaels organizing and promoting Gaelic football,

hurling, and camogie, and also the Irish language. Read the full story at <http://bit.ly/2Uppg8M9>.

**WINERY DISCOUNT** – Best wishes to Irish Heritage Club members Tim Gamble and Teresa Spellman Gamble, the new owners of Tinte Cellars Winery in Woodinville.

The Gambles have also now brought Cullin Hills Winery and William Church Winery under the Tinte label.

Teresa, the daughter of the late Governor John and Lois Spellman, took Irish dancing in her youth and in recent years she and Tim have regularly attended Irish events around St. Patrick's Day.

Any Irish Heritage Club member who visits the winery tasting rooms during Irish Week will receive a discount on purchases. More details at [tintecellars.com](http://tintecellars.com).

**HALL OF FAME** – Co. Waterford native John Duggan, who died in Tacoma in 2004, is being inducted posthumously into the Washington Youth Soccer Hall of Fame, and his son John will represent him with the other inductees from the 1980s and 1990s at the Tacoma Stars game on Sunday, February 24.

John Sr. was one of the pioneer immigrant soccer coaches from the 1960s that helped make Washington state a soccer powerhouse.

When he left Ireland in 1953, he had no soccer background but did have a long history as a player, coach and manager of Gaelic football and hurling teams.

In 1969 in Tacoma, he began coaching a soccer team of neighborhood eight and nine-year-olds and helped develop them into one of the best soccer teams in the U.S.

In 1976, his U16 boys team was crowned Washington State Champions and also won the Western Regional Championship.

They went on to participate in the North American Youth Soccer Championship in Las Vegas where they finished second in the nation.

Three of his players, Jeff Stock, Mark Peterson and Jeff Durgan, went on to have successful professional soccer careers, while 13 others went on to successful collegiate soccer careers.

In 1978, John became soccer coach at the University of Puget Sound and was there until 1987 when he retired.

During those years, John also coached a Tacoma Gaelic football team which won the Pacific Northwest Championship in 1983.

A wonderful Irishman, he was always a credit to where he came from.

## MISCELLANEOUS

• The Cascadia Irish Music Week is July 21-27 at The Evergreen State College, Olympia and you can select Irish music classes based on your instrument and skill level. Early sign-ups have been very strong! See the schedule of classes and registration at [ceolcascadia.org](http://ceolcascadia.org).

• Dunagan Brewing Co. at 1126 Commerce Street, Tacoma, regularly hosts Celtic sessions and Irish music bands in downtown Tacoma, with live Irish music every Saturday. They are also very good supporters of the Tacoma Rangers GAA club.

# 2019 Seattle Irish Week

- **Saturday, February 23** – Irish Soda Bread Cooking Class;
- **Saturday, March 9** – Irish Soda Bread Contest;
- **Sunday, March 10** – Matt Talbot Dinner;
- **Friday, March 15** – St. Patrick's Day Mass for Peace; Mayor's Irish Week Proclamation luncheon; Landing of St. Patrick; and Green Stripe Laying on 4th Avenue;
- **Saturday, March 16** – St. Patrick's Day Dash; Irish Flag-Raising; St. Patrick's Day Parade; and Irish Festival Seattle;
- **Sunday, March 17** – St. Patrick's Day Dash; and Irish Festival Seattle;
- **Monday, March 18** – Irish Network Seattle Business Breakfast with Minister Ciarán Cannon;
- **Saturday, March 23** – Irish Genealogy Workshop;
- **Sunday, March 24** – Seattle Gaels Field Day.

**For all the details,  
visit [IrishWeek.org](http://IrishWeek.org)**

## ABOUT OUR COVER ARTIST

Our cover artist this month is Molly Brewer. She is a freelance illustrator working in both digital and traditional media. Elements of her work tend toward the fantastical, historical, mythological, and ornamental. Clients include *Astonishing Adventures* magazine, *Dark Valentine* magazine, Optimystical Studios, and Perna Studios. She is also available for private commissions, including personal sketch cards.

Molly is a graduate of the illustration program at Lesley University College of Art & Design (formerly the Art Institute of Boston). She is based out of Portland, Maine, where she lives with her husband, author and designer Alan MacRaffen, and their cat Husker.

For more information about her artwork, see her Facebook page: Molly Brewer Arts & Illustration.



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# GLOBAL POLITICAL MELTDOWN HAS NOT YET REACHED IRELAND

## THE VIEW FROM IRELAND



By  
**MAURICE FITZPATRICK**

**t**HE World Economic Forum Annual Meeting at Davos, Switzerland scheduled this year from January 22-25, assembled national leaders and industry moguls who swapped notes about the real state of the world.

One of the huddles surely most worth being privy to is the one when the mics are turned off at Davos.

This year's discussion was bound to focus on growing instability and political resistance in the USA, Germany, Russia, Turkey, Italy and Brazil.

We are living through a moment of great tension between interest groups advancing the globalisation project on the one hand, and the increasingly fervid demands of those left behind by it on the other.

The elites who convene on Davos' snowy peaks discuss, above all, the uncertainty of Brexit and the potential of contagion from the gilets jaunes (yellow vests) movement in France.

First up, France. The yellow vests have mustered the most vociferous protests seen in the country for half a century.

Ostensibly sparked by a hike in fuel prices, the yellow vests have paralysed town and city centres every weekend since in November 17 to demand a better standard of living.

They have exhibited great determination against water canon and riot police, while the violent wing of the operation has been just as implacable – threats against French politicians are mounting.

President Macron is seriously undermined by the movement while his chief rival, Marine Le Pen and her hard-right party, National Rally, continue to make gains – currently Le Pen's party has the edge on Macron's party in the polls.

If Macron lasts his full term, he will be in office until 2022. By then, Le Pen (whom Macron beat in the 2017 presidential run-off by two votes to one) may be more palatable to the majority of French voters.

Le Pen's agenda is to remove France both from the eurozone and from the EU, which would cause the collapse of both.

This is exactly the sort of radical economic change that the yellow vests may ultimately be inclined to embrace.

Things are no steadier across the English Channel in the UK where the British parliament overwhelmingly voted down the government's Withdrawal Agreement from the EU.



THOUSANDS of people took part in a protest march in Dublin to highlight the housing crisis in Ireland in December. At the demonstration Tina McVeigh, co-chair of the National Housing and Homeless Coalition and a member of Dublin City Council, told marchers it was the fourth anniversary of the death of homeless man Jonathan Corrie "yards from Leinster House." She said the government had promised an end to homelessness but the problem remained and numbers had worsened.

Brexit was always ill-conceived and now there is a stalemate despite the need for urgent action.

The UK and France are the fifth and sixth biggest economies in the world and their political structures have not been so rattled since 1945.

So far, the economic and political upheavals that our near neighbours are experiencing have not in any significant way washed up on our shores.

Yet it is inevitable that Ireland will soon be profoundly affected.

If extreme politics were to emerge in Ireland, what issues would animate them?

The first obvious iceberg on the horizon is the prospect of Britain leaving the EU without a deal, and the hardening of the Irish border, which would almost certainly provoke violent incidents and mass resistance.

Alloyed with these new political realities, the drastic housing shortage in Dublin and other cities could engender radical political action.

Consider, for example, the surge in support for Peter Casey last October towards the end of his lacklustre presidential campaign, after comments he made about Travellers.

What was less remarked upon was that he made his comments about Traveller housing.

It is the housing crisis, combined with the threat of eviction of mortgage-payers in arrears throughout the country, that is kindling the awaiting match in Ireland.

Any existing party – or one not yet formed – that wishes to make housing reform its sole agenda will start with a solid support base.

Today Irish political parties instinctively gravitate to the political centre-right with the exception of Sinn Féin whose dubious left-wing identity is a barrier to its progress into government in Dublin.

For that reason, Sinn Féin seems increasingly unsure of its position to the left of the political spectrum.

For instance, in an amateurish bid to brandish its left-wing credentials, Sinn Féin sent strong representation to mark Nicolás Maduro's inauguration in Venezuela in January.

This is the same Maduro who inherited 'Chavismo', a socialist banana republic established by his predecessor, Hugo Chavez, in 2013.

Maduro has held power in spite of multiple coups against him, spiralling corruption, his imposition of marital law to counter specious threats, and the widespread impoverishment of his people – a tenth of Venezuelans have fled since Chavez took power in 1999, and this year inflation is on course to hit 10 million percent.

The Venezuelan president is not recognised by any near neighbour in South America, nor by dozens of western countries, while the U.S. has imposed economic sanctions and threatened military action against Maduro's regime.

Sinn Féin leader Mary Lou McDonald, justifying the decision to endorse Maduro, said, "The important thing is that countries freely select their political leaderships and freely elect their governments and their government officials."

Well, if that is "the important thing," Sinn Féin's presence in Caracas was all the more egregious because Maduro unblushingly rigged the election.

If Sinn Féin wishes to score points by positioning itself on the left, support for Maduro's regime is not the place to start.

Something that might pay dividends for Sinn Féin would be to seize upon the nascent Irish version of the yellow vest movement which, bolstered by Sinn Féin's impressive organisational machine, could gain traction.

Surely, though, the global problem of wealth misdistribution requires a global response.

As labour has migrated from assembly lines into systems and logarithms, so too has revenue.

The beneficiaries of this new economic system must make some acknowledgment of its impact on the disemployed working and lower middle classes, and accede to redistribute money accordingly.

For as long as they do not, expect many more scenes along the lines of London, Venezuela and Paris.

We live in a precipitously changing world, and it is high time for political leaders to confront that reality – and lead.

## SDLP and Fianna Fail 'historic partnership' a bid to break deadlock in Northern Ireland politics

BELFAST – The SDLP and Fianna Fail have announced an "historic partnership" in a bid to break the "cycle of vacuum and division" in Northern Ireland politics.

SDLP leader Colum Eastwood, speaking in Belfast on Thursday, January 24, said the people of Northern Ireland had been failed by politicians since Stormont collapsed more than two years ago.

He said, "I hope and believe it [the partnership] marks an important contribution in finally breaking the cycle of vacuum and division which has failed our people over the last two years."

The SDLP and Fianna Fail have been engaged in lengthy talks about finding a way forward together politically.

Eastwood said his discussions with Fianna Fail leader Micheal Martin began as a direct result of the Brexit referendum result and the collapse of Stormont.

"Our engagement since then has always been focused on how we collectively respond to the defining change which

*"I hope and believe it [the partnership] marks an important contribution in finally breaking the cycle of vacuum and division which has failed our people over the last two years."*

the politics of these islands are currently experiencing," he said.

"As political leaders, we have thought deeply as to how best to respond and act right now – and how best we respond and act for the generations to come."

The SDLP leader referenced the recent car bomb in Derry, saying it "underlined the fragility with which we are now living."

"As we should all know by now, political vacuums never end well in Northern Ireland," he said. "It is a disgrace that our people have been asked to live with it for this long."

"Faced with this deepening crisis, our

challenge is to think deeper and to look longer. We understand that it will not be enough to just firefight the consequences of Brexit – to do so it too narrow a response to what is too big a moment in our history."

The Foyle MLA said the parties will cooperate on building better public services, "uniting Ireland's people" and finding a way to make politics work in Northern Ireland.

He said the SDLP membership will have the "final say" on the partnership, but said he was confident the partnership was right for his party and the people it serves.

Fianna Fail leader Michael Martin said he was proud the two parties had

agreed to work together and they "have shared much and have achieved much over the years."

"So it was obvious that we should discuss ways that we might work together at this time of crisis," he added.

"The focus of our discussions has, at all stages been on how to develop a new agenda for Northern Ireland and for Ireland as a whole.

"There is a desperate need to shift the focus away from an obsession with who holds power and onto the much more important issue of what is done with that power."

The Fianna Fail leader added, "There is also overwhelming admiration for the SDLP for its bravery, vision and leadership at critical moments – for the fact that in the face of dramatic odds it has remained a powerful voice for a nationalist and republican vision of our future."

"It is a non-sectarian party which has proven time and again that it puts people before politics. That is why we are very happy to agree the partnership which is being announced today."



## Poetry Corner

### The Irish Heather

I will arise and go now and to the Heather I'll go  
No cabin will I build there yet find shelter from the rain  
And the lilt of Irish barmen rightly so  
Sounding from the rafters and softly from the Shebeen  
Pure goodness will I find there for goodness comes pouring slow  
No crickets will I hear there but Scott and Cahill cracking up  
And cheerfully shall I pay before I go  
For the few pints of plain on my tab  
I will arise and go now for always I do think  
Of the velvety head on the glass of good cheer  
That's there for the world to kiss and to drink  
A toast to St. James's Gate and to Arthur a tear

*Sainte Mhath!  
- Eitel Timm*



### Reflections on Brigid, Mary of the Gael

Bright and fiery arrow,  
Blaze kindly into my life.  
Sainted bringer of spring,

Grow ever more verdant and lush.  
Mistress of poetry and craft,  
Dance on my tongue and in my hands.

Guardian of the water and wells and herbs,  
Warm my hearth and open the door to compassion.

Thank you exalted one, for the nourishment of milk and words,  
For the protection of your threadbare cloak,  
For the peace that abides in your care.

Bless you for the four fires,  
and the thawing earth.

Brigid, I promise my best effort  
and the lightest laugh in your name.

## NOVENAS

### Novena to the Blessed Virgin Mary

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

— PJMK, MJK, CC, CB, CLKLKS, LF, HM

### Novena to St. Joseph in a difficult problem

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. —JMDF, CC, CB

Publication of a novena is \$25

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# McDonald's loses 'Big Mac' trademark case in EU

BRUSSELS – McDonald's Corp. has lost its rights to the trademark "Big Mac" in a European Union case ruling in favor of Ireland-based fast-food chain Supremac's, according to a decision by European regulators.

McDonald's was not immediately available to comment on the decision, which the company can still appeal.

The ruling allows other companies as well as McDonald's to use the "Big Mac" name in the EU.

Supremac's said it can now expand in the United Kingdom and Europe. It said it had never had a product called "Big Mac" but that McDonald's had used the similarity of the two names to block the Irish chain's expansion.

"Supremac's are delighted with their victory in the trademark application and in revoking the Big Mac trademark which had been in existence since 1996," said founder Pat McDonagh.

"This is a great victory for business in general and stops bigger companies from 'trademark bullying' by not allowing them to hoard trademarks without using them."

In April 2017, the Irish firm formally submitted a request to the European Union Property Office (EUIPO) to cancel the use of the Big Mac and Mc trademarks that McDonald's has registered in certain classes.

Supremac's had asked the EU regulator that this take effect on the basis that McDonald's is engaged in "trademark bullying; registering brand names...which are simply stored away in a war chest to use against future competitors."

Now, the landmark Europe-wide judgement, that has immediate effect, EUIPO said that the multinational had not proven genuine use of the Big Mac trademark as a restaurant name – or as a burger.

"It follows from the above that the EUTM proprietor has not proven



PAT MCDONAGH, of the Galway-based franchise, said "never mind David versus Goliath, this unique landmark decision is akin to the Connacht team winning against the All Blacks."



MCDONALD'S CORP. has lost its rights to the trademark "Big Mac" throughout the European Union as a result of the decision

genuine use of the contested EUTM for any of the goods and services for which it is registered.

"As a result, the application for revocation is wholly successful and the contested EUTM must be revoked in its entirety. According to Article 62(1) EUTMR, the revocation will take effect from the date of the application for revocation, that is, as of 11/04/2017."

McDonald's has historically been "extremely litigious" in the area of trademark law and typically does not lose, said Willajeanne McLean, a law professor at the University of Connecticut.

In 1993, McDonald's won a court order blocking a dentist in New York from selling services under the name "McDental." In 2016, McDonald's

defeated an effort by a Singapore company to register 'MACCOFFEE' as an EU trademark.

McDonagh said that the judgement represents a victory for small businesses all over the world.

"It doesn't matter how big or how small you are, it's great that you can get a hearing from the European office. I'm delighted with the result; I was hopeful for a positive outcome – but not to the extent to which we won," he said.

"It's been a long road, nearly four years, but it was worth it to help protect businesses that are trying to compete against faceless multinationals.

"Never mind David versus Goliath, this unique landmark decision is akin to the Connacht team winning against the All Blacks."

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THE WOODEN DRAGON looks out over the A5, near Tregarth, Gwynedd in Wales. Police have warned drivers not to slow down to look at it after an accident and numerous near-misses.

## 25-foot dragon causing havoc on a Welsh road

TREGARTH, Wales – It's not something you read about every day – a giant dragon causing traffic chaos in Wales.

It sounds like something from a fantasy story – or the Mabinogion, possibly. However for motorists using the A5, near Tregarth, that's exactly what they're being confronted with.

In this case it's actually a dragon carved from a fallen tree which has become something of both an attraction and a hazard for passing motorists.

The dragon, which is known as *Y Ddraig Dderw*, (The Oak Dragon in Welsh), can be seen between the trees at the road side.

With an imposing 12-foot wingspan and baring rows of sharp wooden teeth it is quite the sight.

"There has already been one accident and numerous near misses on this section of road which really does require a driver's full concentration," said North Wales Police in a statement posted to their Bangor and Bethesda Facebook page, urging drivers to find somewhere safe to park if they want to view the sculpture.

The 25-foot beast is the work of sculptor Simon O'Rourke, who spent nearly a week wielding a chainsaw to carve the dragon from a fallen oak branch at the request of the property owners.

O'Rourke said he had been "completely overwhelmed" by the response to the sculpture whose creation he documented on Facebook.

Videos of the "Dragon of Bethesda," which he called it before its official naming, have been viewed thousands of times on his Facebook page.

Some online commentators compared it to the dragons of Skyrim, the award-winning fantasy computer game made by a developer coincidentally called Bethesda.

"It's bigger and in a more public way than some of the other things," said the 40-year-old who was born in Liverpool but now lives in Wrexham.

"The tree effectively fell in such a way that it was sticking out over the outcrop. I think it's one of those things where, with the positioning of it, there's no way it could have been moved as it's too heavy and too big."

The property owner, who did not respond to requests for comment, commissioned O'Rourke to carve the huge branch into a dragon which was completed in mid-January.

Since then it has been causing quite a stir on the narrow country roads.

Asked about how much of a distraction to motorists the dragon was causing, O'Rourke said, "You drive through somewhere like Birmingham and you've got huge screens and billboards that are actually trying to distract you and catch your attention.

"A wooden dragon is less intrusive than those screens but I think it's just the case that it doesn't matter what happens, when you're in control of the car you should be paying attention to the road."

## A Year of Celebrations upcoming for the Vancouver Welsh Society

VANCOUVER – This year the Vancouver Welsh Society is celebrating the 90th anniversary of the Cambrian Hall.

The hall was officially opened on Saturday, September 1, 1929 by Marion Malkin, wife of the mayor of Vancouver.

The iconic building at 17th Avenue, just off Main Street, is recognized by Welsh communities across North America as the only Welsh hall built specifically for that purpose.

Plans are already under way to officially celebrate the anniversary later this year.

A joint concert featuring the Orpheus Choir and guest artists is scheduled for October 5, followed by a *Gymanfa Ganu* (hymn-singing festival) on October 6.

A Cambrian Hall festival will be held on November 1-3, details to be announced.

An innovative Welsh Society event, to be held some time during the summer, will be an historic walking tour of the area around the Cambrian Hall.

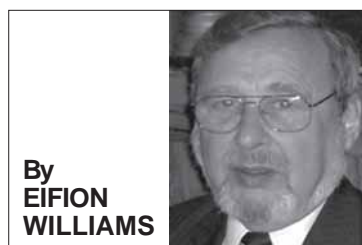
This will be conducted by Vancouver historian and walking tour guide John Atkin.

Atkin, a member of the Vancouver Heritage Foundation, has explored many areas of the city and offers interesting and offbeat insights into the city's architecture, history and neighbourhoods.

This walking tour will be of special interest to long-time patrons of the Cambrian Hall, who cannot fail to have noticed the rapid changes along Main Street and the Mount Pleasant neighbourhood in recent years.

The Welsh Society's regular annual events are also currently in the planning stages.

On St. David's Day, March 1, there



By  
EIFION  
WILLIAMS



will be an open house at the hall, while the St. David's Day dinner will be held on Saturday, March 2 at the same venue.

The annual spring sale and silent auction will be held on Saturday, April

27. This is always a popular event and has in recent years proved to be the Welsh Society's most profitable fund-raiser.

In addition to these events there will also be occasional pub nights and twmpath dance events.

The twmpath, a Welsh version of the barn dance or ceilidh, has proved to be very popular with young and old alike.

The next twmpath will be held on March 26 with the Rattlebone Band and a caller.

One other coming event that has always proved popular with audiences is the Vancouver Orpheus Choir's Pig and Whistle.

This fun event will be held at the Cambrian Hall on Saturday, February 23.

Further information on all the above events can be found on the Welsh Society's website at: [www.welshsociety.com/Lab5](http://www.welshsociety.com/Lab5).



THE Welsh Society of Vancouver is celebrating the 90th anniversary of the Cambrian Hall this year. It was officially opened on Saturday, September 1, 1928 by Marion Malkin, wife of the mayor of Vancouver. The iconic building at 17th Avenue, just off Main Street, is recognized by Welsh communities across North America as the only Welsh hall built specifically for that purpose.

## 'Welsh Spirit' alive and well at the Cambrian Hall

By EIFION WILLIAMS

VANCOUVER – Several ongoing Saturday afternoon events under the title Welsh Spirit have recently been held in the Red Dragon lounge at the Cambrian Hall.

The series was initiated and organized by Welsh Society member Pat Morris.

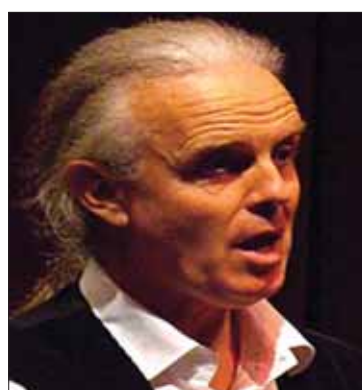
The aim of Welsh Spirit is to present traditional and cultural events through films, talks, legends, music, history and other topics that form part of the Welsh experience.

The meetings are open to the public and have so far proved to be well-attended and very successful.

The last Welsh Spirit event of 2018 was a presentation on Saturday, December 15 by master story-teller Hugh Lupton of tales from the Mabinogion.

Englishman Hugh Lupton is a great nephew of Arthur Ransome, author of the famous children's novel *Swallows and Amazons*.

The audience was held spellbound by



MASTER storyteller Hugh Lupton shared many popular Welsh medieval tales.

Lupton's telling of the popular Welsh medieval tales.

On Saturday afternoon, January 26, a St. Dwynwen's Day celebration was held at the Red Dragon. This annual event is usually held in the evening but was held this year as one of the Welsh Spirit series of events.

As he has done in past years, David Llewelyn Williams acted as Master of Ceremonies.

David began the afternoon program with a brief outline of the familiar story of St. Dwynwen, the Welsh patron saint of love, a girl thwarted in love who has become the Welsh equivalent of St. Valentine.

The love theme was continued throughout the afternoon, with communal singing of popular Welsh love songs in Welsh and English.

Sharon McIntee-Birrell gave beautiful renditions of some familiar love songs from her repertoire, accompanied by pianist Reuben Federizon.

Welsh Society members Alwyn Rogers and Jackie Jones-Chapman also pleased the audience with a duet of the popular song *Suo Gan*.

A popular feature of the annual St. Dwynwen's Day celebration is a limerick competition. As usual, audience members found the limericks very entertaining and enjoyed participating in selecting the winners.



THE WELSH SPIRIT series aims to present traditional and cultural events through films, talks, legends, music, history and other topics that form part of the Welsh experience. Pictured above at the St. Dwynwen's Day celebration held at the Red Dragon is master of ceremonies David Llewelyn Williams (L) and singer Sharon McIntee-Birrell (R) who gave beautiful renditions of some family Welsh love songs from her repertoire.