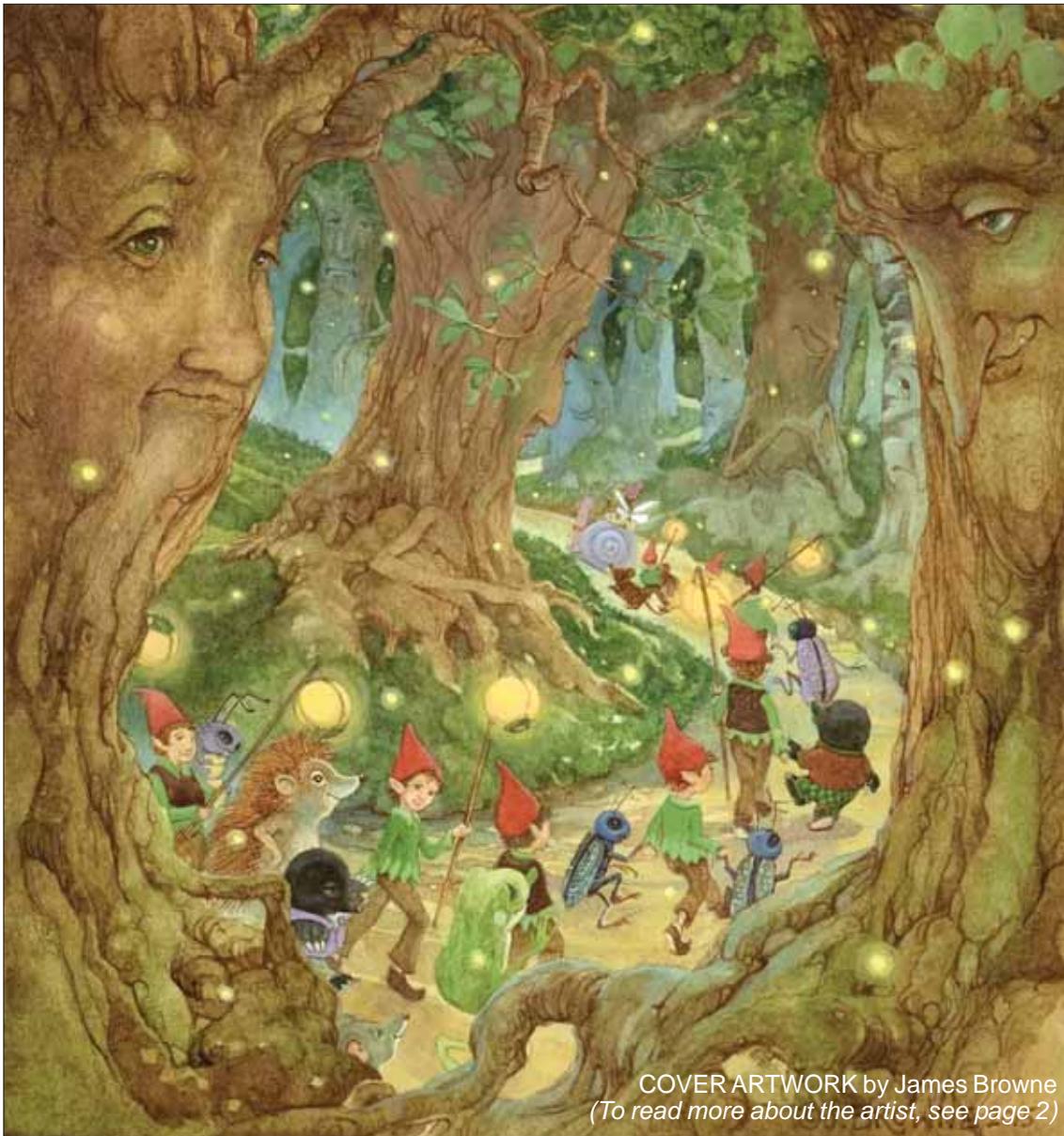


the celtic connection

ISSUE 28 VOLUME 5

Proudly Serving Celts in North America Since 1991

JULY/AUGUST 2019



COVER ARTWORK by James Browne
(To read more about the artist, see page 2)

The Afternoon of Lughnasadh Beckons as the Year Moves toward Twilight

By CYNTHIA WALLENTINE

High noon of the year has passed. The Celtic year spirals toward autumn, picking up speed toward harvest and the fallow fields that follow.

For the Celts, the span of a day and a night represent all of time.

The light and the dark represent a “microcosm of time and indeed of the whole world,” according to writers Alwyn and Brinley Rees in their seminal work, *Celtic Heritage*.

As our world spins off on viral bits and social media superficiality, the days and nights of our lives maintain their place, steadily advancing the unseen agenda of each life and the tide of each generation. Lives join, lives fall off. And the tide surges forward.

Although the sun beckons us to go outside in this season, the bright year has already passed zenith.

In a glade seen by no mortal eye, the Holly King has again assumed the mantle of the year. The Oak King, ruler of the bright year, steps back.

The leaves speak more loudly than they did just one month ago, as they reach maturity and begin to understand their own brief destiny.

Each living thing has its seasons. In any day of our lives, we are born, we live, and we retire, eventually it adds up to a lifetime.

So what does the autumn bring us?

Morningtime, the season and time of learning to inhabit a place or a body, has long passed.

At noon, the fullness of youth has flown by too.

Nimble limbs begin to surrender agility by afternoon, but the eye can see farther and understand more than ever before.

The light has changed. Newness is exchanged for depth, and some people, due to life or happenstance, begin to understand the unseen things moving at twilight.

But it is yet afternoon of this day, this year, and this life.

The slippery nature of time allows us moments of eternity to hold dear the days and souls that have passed, while at the same time nudging us on to the work we do to maintain our hearth in the here and now.

In the afternoon of the Celtic year, the festival Lughnasadh arrives at twilight on July 31. From mere seeds of ideas we harvest the fruits and food of our labors.

Change is afoot as the year draws to a close at Samhain.

Enjoy the sun, hear and experience the breeze of the afternoon of this day.

May Lughnasadh provide us grace and succor as we move toward evening, the restless season of Samhain.

Inside This Issue



PHOTO: Led by Donkeys

WHAT STARTED as a “guerrilla billboard campaign” led by a group calling itself ‘Led by Donkeys’ has grown to an online following of thousands. The group co-ordinated a massive banner at a protest march through central London earlier this year demanding a second Brexit referendum. The banner mocked hard-line former Brexit secretary David Davis with one of his old statements reading, “If a democracy cannot change its mind, it ceases to be a democracy.” The march was a formidable sea of humanity that organizers estimate numbered around one million. [Read more page 6]

AILBHE SMYTH is a leading Irish activist and former head of Women’s Studies at UCD. She was also one of Time Magazine’s ‘Most Influential People’ of 2019. She was in Vancouver to attend the UN Women Deliver conference last month. If you missed her inspirational talk don’t worry she will be back in Vancouver to attend the first Brigid~St. Brigid Festival in Vancouver at Simon Fraser University Harbour Centre campus on Saturday, February 1, 2020. [See pages 14 & 15]



WIN FREE TICKETS

WIN a pair (2) of tickets to see Skerryvore from Scotland at the Centennial Theatre in North Vancouver on Saturday, October 5, or McPherson Playhouse in Victoria on Sunday, October 6. (See page 3 for details). Mark your entry: Skerryvore and specify which show you wish to attend, either Centennial Theatre or McPherson Playhouse. Include your name and daytime telephone number. All entries must be submitted by e-mail only by September 2 to cbutler@telus.net (Only one entry per person).

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THE VICTORIOUS Vancouver Harps Football Club at the B.C. Provincial Championships in Nanaimo with both trophies on display.

Victory for Vancouver Harps FC at the B.C. Provincial Championships

By **BARRY HANLON**
VANCOUVER – The Vancouver Harps FC had a huge victory this year at the B.C. Provincial Championships.

The team won the over 35's Championship "B" in Nanaimo on the second weekend of May.

The team plays in the Vancouver Men's Soccer League over 35 Division 1 and qualified for the B.C. Provincials

by coming third place in their 2018/2019 league season.

This is a massive achievement and the first time that any Harps team have achieved this success. Paul Stack is the manager of this team and is a well-known figure in the local Irish community.

The Vancouver Harps FC also won an over 30's tournament at Squamish, B.C. this year which consisted of 72 teams in total. Paul Stack was once again the manager of this team.

Two former ISSC members return to Vancouver to watch their daughter at Irish dance championships



THE MACKIN FAMILY – (L-R) Arlene, Tiernan, Liam, Maeve, Ossian with Niall in front.

By **SUE CANNON**
VANCOUVER – It was great to experience the North American National Irish Dancing competition in Vancouver the week of July 2.

It was even more remarkable to watch the daughter of two members of the

Vancouver Irish Sporting and Social Club from the early 1990s.

Maeve Mackin, the daughter of Liam and Arlene, was in Vancouver along with her parents to compete at this prestigious event.

Liam and Arlene were very active in the ISSC in both Gaelic and soccer, with Arlene being one of the first mem-

bers of the women's GAA team in Vancouver. She is also the reason a women's Shamrock Rovers team was started.

Liam was also a member of both the Gaelic and soccer teams but will admit Gaelic was his real game in which he led the Harps to several championships.



MAEVE MACKIN, daughter of Liam and Arlene who were ISSC members in the 1990s.

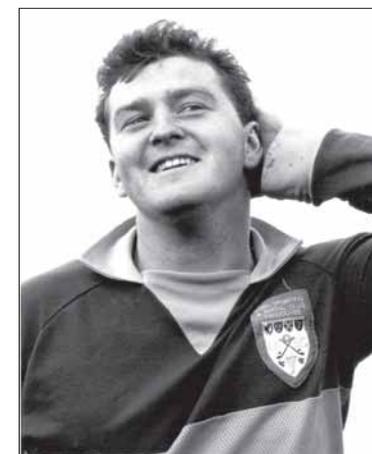
The couple met on the Gaelic pitch when Liam was coaching the women's team. They married and moved to the United States for Liam's work.

They set up home there and are raising their three children – Ossian, Maeve and Niall – in Henderson, Nevada after residing in San Diego, California for several years.

The family has always travelled back and forth to Vancouver Island as their oldest son Tiernan still resided there until recently when he moved to northern Canada for work.

It was lovely catching up with Arlene and she was very happy to show her daughter where their family all started.

We wish Maeve much success in her dancing career and the Mackins all the best and hope the whole family blesses Vancouver with a visit soon.



LIAM MACKIN in his earlier days when he led the Vancouver Harp to several championships in the 1990s as captain of the team.



ABOUT OUR COVER ARTIST

JAMES BROWNE (born 1951) is an American-born painter now active in Paris and Oaxaca (Mexico). He was most well-known in the 1980s for his rough semi-figurative paintings, bearing affinities to Jean-Michel Basquiat and East Village painting of the time, but with influences from primitive art and classical Western modernism. To learn more about this artist or order his work online, visit: www.jamesbrowne.net.

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MEET OUR DISTRIBUTION TEAM
 Meet our team who work through all kinds of conditions to deliver each issue of *The Celtic Connection* to you our valued readers.
 [See page 24]

Annual Recovery Day: A celebration of drug and alcohol addiction recovery

NEW WESTMINSTER – Save the Date! Saturday, September 7 is the eighth annual Recovery Day BC event, happening at 6th Avenue and 6th Street in New Westminster, from 12 noon to 5 PM.

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

This year's free event features a concert with Canadian rock legends Trooper, with a total of eight bands across four stages, as well as 10 health and wellness speakers, a kids zone, over 150 mental health and addiction information booths and vendors, a memorial exhibit, and much more.

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

Now in its eighth year, the city is once

again shutting down the streets of New Westminster for this substance-free and family-friendly event.

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

Recovery Day aims to celebrate recovery while remembering those lost due to addiction. With over 20,000 people who attended the 2018 event, organizers want to facilitate a gathering of Canadians in recovery from alcohol and drug addictions.

Alongside families, friends, and allies, the goal is to send a message to the world that addiction is treatable, and recovery is possible.

This event aims to change public per-

ception of what recovery from addiction looks like, and promote public policy change across the country.

On September 7, 2019, people in recovery from addiction will have a place where they can join with friends and family to build awareness, challenge social stigma, and celebrate the role that recovery plays in improving life for individuals, families, and communities.

Envision a world where recovery from addiction is a common, celebrated reality – a world where individuals will not experience shame when seeking help.

Organizers are passionate about sharing stories of recovery in hopes of inspiring and inviting others to join them on the rewarding and diverse path to wellness.

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

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

The Orchard Recovery Center

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

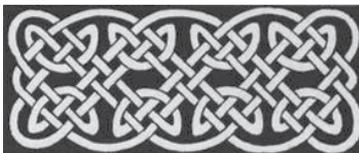
The Orchard is an internationally accredited drug and alcohol treatment center operating on Bowen Island since 2002, and provides residential programs ranging from 10-90+ days.

From primary care starting with medically assisted detox, to a continuing care outpatient program in West Vancouver, as well as family and alumni services, Orchard provides ongoing support for a lasting recovery.

Lorinda Strang, executive director and co-founder [personal recovery established 1989], said, "The Orchard is committed to eradicating the stigma of addiction and fostering a new, sustainable culture of recovery."

"We build strong communities of recovery that, in turn make meaningful contributions to society as a whole. We are leaders in the growing recovery advocacy movement in Canada and we celebrate recovery!"

To learn more, visit OrchardRecovery.com.



Prayer of Thanks for the Harvest

We bless you, God of Seed and Harvest,
 And we bless each other,
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 And the love that created it,
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Saturday, July 6th Quinn Bachand's gypsy jazz combo w/ guests Zigue PQ Brishen BC	Thursday, August 1st Superb Canadian Blues/Roots trio TriContinental BcOnAb
Tuesday, July 9th Grammy-winning bluegrass swing Cathy Fink & Marcy Marxer USA	Tuesday, August 13th Trad. Inspired songwriters Sarah Jane Scouten John Smith BC / UK
Monday, July 15th Brilliant Nordic fiddles & song Scandinavian String Alliance DK/SE/NO	Thursday, August 15th Superb Canadian Blues/Roots trio Chris Frye & The Analog Ghosts BC <i>and many more to be announced</i>
Monday, July 29th BC Entertainment Hall of Fame honours Rick Scott & Joanie Taylor Pied Pumkin Roots & Grooves BC	St. James Hall (3214 West 10th Ave.) Tickets & Info (604) 736-3022

It's Summer Festival Time: Music, Sun and Fun!

VANCOUVER – It's a busy summer for music lovers, with several festivals around B.C. and Alberta.

Meanwhile The Rogue is presenting a rare summer series at St. James Hall (3214 West 10th Avenue in Kitsilano) to spice things up even more!

On July 9 two-time Grammy winners **Cathy Fink** and **Marcy Marxer** make their Rogue debut.

Wonderful string players and harmony singers, they combine Appalachian songs, bluegrass and swing into a joyous celebration of all things Roots!

Then we're off to Courtenay for **Island Musicfest** (July 12-14). Not much Celtic music on hand, but it's always a most enjoyable event and the site is spectacular.

I love the shady grove stage and the cool river and the shelter of the Barn. Then we have to zoom back to town for the next Rogue shindig.

Another band making its only B.C. appearance of the year: the **Scandinavian String Alliance** (July 15).

Brilliant young fiddlers and singers **Maja Kjaer-Jacobsen**, **Anna Lindblad** and **Elise Wessel Hildblum** – who also plays flute – hail from Denmark, Sweden and Norway respectively. Collectively known as **Fru Skagerak** they have two albums to their credit.

They will be joined by Danish fiddler **Kristian Bugge** and fellow countryman **Morten Alfred Hoirup** on guitar and vocals. Denmark boasts the largest collection of folk ballads in Europe and the fiddle music will appeal to Celtic music fans as well as exiled Nordic folks.

The following weekend it's the **Vancouver Folk Music Festival** in Jericho Beach Park, where Celtic music fans can relish a rare appearance by Newfoundland's **The Dardanelles** (right up there with **Coig** in my humble opinion as Canada's finest trad. Celtic combo) and their wonderful singer **Matthew Byrne**.

Quebec's top trad band these days is **Le Vent du Nord**, and they will be there too!

I'll be broadcasting *The Saturday Edge On Folk LIVE* from the park that day.

The following weekend it's the **Mission Folk Music Festival** (July 26-28 in Fraser River Heritage Park).

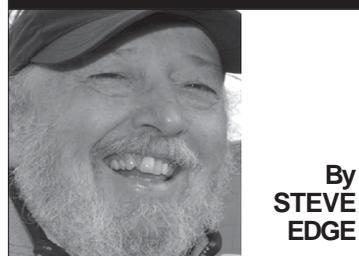
I'm looking forward to hearing the likes of **Zigue, Plasse & Beaton, Pierre Schryer & Andy Hillhouse**, and plenty more playing Celtic and acoustic roots in that glorious park!

Veteran B.C. performer **Rick Scott** will be inducted into the B.C. Entertainment Hall of Fame on July 29.

To mark the occasion we are thrilled to be able to present a one-time only reunion of Rick's seminal folk trio **Pied Pumkin** (with **Shari Ulrich** on fiddle and vocals and **Joe Mock** – visiting from his home in France – on guitar and vocals).

Pied Pumkin not only created the acoustic stringband / jam band phenomenon in the 1970s they also pioneered the independent recording "industry" with their infectious blend of danceable tunes and memorable songs – with lengthy extemporized "jams."

ROGUE FOLK CLUB



By
STEVE
EDGE

Great fun! **Rick Scott** excels on dulcimer and vocals and his shows are always fun! His latest project is *Roots & Grooves*, with the amazing pianist **Nico Rhodes**, who will also perform this night. Veteran jazz singer **Joani Taylor** will also be inducted.

She is recovering from serious illness but we hope she will be able to sing a song or two as well.

On August 1, following the Rogue AGM at 6 PM, Canadian guitar trio **Tri Continental** bring their new CD, *Dust Dance*, to The Rogue.

Bill Bourne (who once toured and recorded with Scotland's **Tannahill Weavers**), **Lester Quitzau** and **Madagascar Slim** play everything from blues to rock to African grooves and their shows are totally compelling.

English singer **John Smith** will make his B.C. debut at The Rogue on August 13. His latest CD, *Hummingbird*, is a unique collection of traditional songs and one or two originals given his unique treatment.

His rich voice and concise guitar work make this album one of my favourites of the year so far. He was so popular at last year's Edmonton Folk Festival that they've invited him back – which is a rare honour.

He also made an excellent impression at the **Folk Alliance** in Montreal in February so we are delighted to be able to bring him here for his first B.C. gig.

Joining him on the bill is **Sarah Jane Scouten**, who was raised on Bowen Island in a household rich with Celtic music, bluegrass and trad. ballads.

A fine songwriter, she now makes her home in Luxembourg and it will be a real treat to hear her back at St. James Hall with her fine trio.

We're off to Edmonton after that! The 40th annual **Edmonton Folk Festival** takes place August 8-11 in Gallaher Park.

What a great lineup again, including **Dervish** (Eire), **Talisk** (Scotland), **Genticorum** (Quebec), **Socks In The**

Frying Pan (Eire), and **Irish Mythen** (Eire / PEI).

On August 15, **Chris Frye** – lead singer and guitarist with **The Bills**, brings his other band, **The Analog Ghosts**, to The Rogue to launch their second CD – and first for over a decade – *Two Sides Of Canadiana*. This is a fine band with a big horn section and the new songs are very catchy and enjoyable.

After that Margaret and I are off to Denmark for the wonderful **Tonder Festival** (August 22-25, featuring the likes of **Imar, Dervish, The Unwanted, Julie Fowles, Finbar Furey, and Heidi Talbot**) and then a brief trip to Holland.

I'll have a review of this festival – and all the local festivals (Musicfest in Courtenay, Vancouver, Mission, and Edmonton) in the next issue.

In September, **The Rogue** kicks things off with a CD launch by local songwriter **Babe Gurr** (6th), and some very exciting Celtic music from **Alasdair Fraser** and **Natalie Haas** (20th) and **Tannahill Weavers** (26th).

Finally, a few new CDs of note arrived at Rogue Towers over the last few weeks: **Rhiannon Giddens** teamed up with Italian multi instrumentalist **Francesco Turrisi** in Dublin last August and they made a stunning album of traditionally inspired songs called *There Is No Other*.

Eliza Carthy has a great new solo CD with songs written by some esteemed characters like **Kipling, Swift, and Peter Bellamy**. It's called *Restitute* and her voice sounds better than ever these days!

Dervish just launched a CD called *The Great Irish Songbook*, which sees them backing up some wonderful singers like **Steve Earle** (on the gorgeous *Galway Shawl*), **Imelda May, The SteelDrivers, and Kate Rusby**, but the other standout track for me is **Donal Og** with **Cathy Jordan** in fine voice.

Kate Rusby also has a new CD, *Poets Philosophers & Kings*, and the title track is wonderful. In fact it's a really great album.

I look forward to seeing her in Edmonton and Tonder. (Speaking of "repeat offenders," **Irish Mythen** also has a new CD, *Little Bones*, and she's playing at Island Musicfest, Vancouver Folk Festival, Mission, Edmonton AND Tonder!!)

You can hear music by all these performers and much more besides on my show **The Saturday Edge On Folk** every Saturday from 8 AM to noon on CTR FM 101.9 and www.citr.ca.

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SARAH JANE SCOUTEN, who was raised on Bowen Island joins English singer John Smith at The Rogue on August 13.

Taoiseach Leo Varadkar Joins Police at Dublin Pride Parade

DUBLIN — Taoiseach Leo Varadkar joined police officers from both sides of the border at Dublin Pride on Saturday, June 29.

In a Twitter message, he said, "It's a real honour to be here at Pride. It's only the third time I've been, my second time as taoiseach and the first time joined here with the gardai and the PSNI, also defence forces and the public service too."

"So a really great turnout and a beautiful day in Dublin city so happy Pride everyone," he said.

"It's really important that we say to anyone who is anybody who is thinking of joining our public service, whether it's the civil service, the defence forces or the gardai that we're an inclusive employer and if you're gay or lesbian, or bisexual, transgender we understand that and you'll be welcome."

He also said, "It's also a really important message to young people to kids: you only live once – be the person you are."

Garda Commissioner Drew Harris said it was very important that members of the gardai were participating in the parade in uniform.

"We are here for a number of very good reasons, one to show that we're a diverse organization, we want to be an inclusive organization and being here in uniform is a physical manifestation of that," he said.

"Secondly we're here to protect people from hate crime and we ask people who are subject to, or victims of, hate crime and hate incidents that they report those incidents."

"And lastly this is about us demonstrating to all of our staff that we're an inclusive organisation and we want diversity within An Garda Síochána."

But Commissioner Harris said he could understand why some members of the LGBT community were not happy with the gardai's involvement.

"I can understand, they have a right to protest and that's their entitlement, but we are here for the right reasons and we're here with good intent and we want to illustrate that we in 2019 are here to protect all the people of Ireland, including the gay community," he added.

More than 60,000 people attended this year's Dublin Pride march, organizers said.

It has been 50 years since the Stone-wall riots, which was a catalyst for the Pride movement, which was mentioned by Grand Marshal Will St. Leger at the beginning of the celebrations in a moment of poignancy to how far campaigners have come.

The first LGBTQ rights demonstration in Ireland took place when eight people protested anti-gay laws outside the Department of Justice in June 1974.

Over the course of four decades, it has become one of the biggest national – and international – celebrations.

Pride celebrations are earmarked for around the country over the coming weeks, including parades in Limerick, Galway, Cork and Belfast.



LEO VARADKAR joined police officers from both sides of the border at Dublin Pride on Saturday, June 29.

Irish museum voted Europe's leading tourist attraction

DUBLIN – The Dublin Irish emigration museum EPIC was awarded a prestigious award at the 26th annual World Travel Awards in Portugal last month.

It was voted Europe's leading tourist attraction, beating such locations as the Eiffel Tower, Greece's Acropolis and Barcelona's Sagrada Familia.

The museum was given the distinguished award just three years after opening its doors to the public at The CHQ Building in Dublin's docklands.

It opened in 2016 as a 15 million euro "fully digital museum" in 2016, with interactive displays exploring the far-reaching influence of the Irish diaspora.

The museum, which will welcome more than 300,000 visitors this year, shows the far-reaching influence of Irish peo-

ple and covers 1,500 years of Irish history.

It tells the powerful story of 10 million Irish people who travelled abroad to start a new life, including the contributions they have made, and the enormous influence they had and continue to have on the world.

The museum takes visitors on a journey of emigration from Ireland, to the far corners of the globe including America, Canada, New Zealand and Australia.

Visitors get hands-on with Irish culture and its past – swiping through video galleries, dancing through motion sensor quizzes, listening to remastered audio from 100 years ago and watching videos that bring Irish history to life.



THE 2019 Western Canada Rose of Tralee Sarah O'Shea, a structural engineer from Calgary (originally from Cork) is pictured above (centre) with Katie Dooley and Katherine Quirke after her crowning in Edmonton, Alberta. She will now attend the Rose of Tralee Festival in Ireland this August where women from around the world meet each year to represent their respective communities.

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Led By Donkeys 'billboard crusaders' launch Anti-Brexit campaign

LONDON – Led by Donkeys is one of the most engaging and creative anti-Brexit campaigns in the U.K. It was created by its four founding members in December 2018.

Their main campaign consists of billboards containing past statements by pro-Brexit politicians which appear to undermine their political position.

Initially run as a guerilla operation for the first few billboards, it was then expanded into a crowdfunded campaign that legitimately purchased the advertising space it used.

They have stated that their name derives from the phrase "lions led by donkeys" used to describe soldiers in the First World War.

In March 2019 their posters and banners were a prominent feature of the 'Put It To The People's Vote' demonstration in central London. The march was a formidable sea of humanity that organizers estimate numbered around one million.

In the same month, an advertising truck displaying anti-Brexit messages paid for by Led by Donkeys accompanied the pro-Brexit March to Leave.

The multinational outdoor advertising operator JCDecaux refused to display their posters, giving the reason that they were "too political."

In April 2019, the Brexit Party set up an official website at thebrexitparty.org, but did not register the corresponding .com domain at thebrexitparty.com, allowing Led by Donkeys to register a parody website at that address.

In May 2019, the members of Led by Donkeys finally showed their faces in an interview for *The Observer* – revealing that they are four current or former Greenpeace employees – James Sadri, Oliver Knowles, Will Rose and Ben Stewart.

Despite claims by the political blogger Paul Staines (Guido Fawkes) that the campaign was orchestrated by Greenpeace, the group insist it is an "amateur operation" and that other Greenpeace employees were not aware of their involvement.

The idea for Led by Donkeys began with a throwaway joke made in December 2018 by four men drinking in a North London pub.

"I think it was around the time of Theresa May pulling her first meaningful vote," said organizer Ben Stewart.

An old tweet from David Cameron had gone viral: "Britain faces a simple and inescapable choice – stability and strong government with me, or chaos with Ed Miliband."

The four, Stewart says, "were just pissing ourselves with laughter."

More seriously, they were worried about the former prime minister deleting the tweet; they saw it as proof of the "folly," in Stewart's words, of British political leaders during the Brexit era.

"And then someone pointed out the window, and there was some billboards outside, as there are in any big city. We said, 'Why don't we just slap it up on that billboard and call it a tweet you can't delete?'"

The group was immediately taken with the idea. After consulting an online



ONE OF THE FIRST posters to go up, in January. It has a quote by Dominic Raab, one of the former U.K.'s chief Brexit negotiators who backs a 'No-Deal' Brexit and more recently a former Tory leadership contender. It reads: "I hadn't quite understood the full extent of this but.... we are particularly reliant on the Dover-Calais crossing."

tutorial from a painter and decorator, they purchased some high-vis jackets, a ladder, and a bucket of wallpaper paste.

They then spent a day near the A10 in North London plastering the tweet over an ad for Halifax.

Posting their handiwork online on their new, specially prepared "Led by Donkeys" Twitter account, they thought they would get no attention. By the next day, they had over 3,000 followers, and were being bombarded by suggestions of where to do it next.

What initially started as a "guerrilla billboard operation" soon evolved into a crowdfunded movement drawing in tens of thousands of pounds to buy up legitimate billboard space.

The relationship with their online followers, says Stewart, has been essential. Their first crowd-funding round raised £67,000 in two hours (they were hoping for £10,000).

Stewart says that the effectiveness of the group's tactics has something to do with relationship between offline and online speech.

"We discovered that if you take a digital format, a digital message and you put it up on a six-meter-by-three-meter billboard in a town centre, in a physical space, it forces that politician to own those words," he says.

Bringing an online quote into the offline world seems to overcome the Internet's ephemerality; it makes a statement more substantial.

Brexit: UK International Trade Secretary blames MPs over deal delay

LONDON – Opposition in parliament to a no-deal Brexit has hindered UK efforts to replicate an EU trade deal with Canada, says International Trade Secretary Liam Fox.

Buzzfeed News has reported that Canada is refusing to extend its existing deal with the EU to the UK if there is no Brexit agreement.

Fox said "mixed signals" from Parliament had made it "very difficult" for ministers during talks. But Labour said Fox had been "stubborn and ideological."

The EU's deal with Canada, known as the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) has been in force provisionally since September 2017.

Some 98 percent of all tariffs on goods traded between Canada and the EU have become duty free since then.

The UK hoped Canada would agree to "roll over" CETA in the event of no deal in order to maintain continuity, but it appears those efforts have stalled.

Many MPs, including the chancellor, have insisted they will do everything possible to stop the UK leaving without a deal on October 31, although both men vying to be the next prime minister say they would be prepared to accept it.

"Countries were negotiating with us on the basis that there would be potential of a no-deal exit," Fox told MPs on the International Trade Committee on July 3.

He continued, "The progress was very advanced; in fact we reckoned above 99% of agreement. [But] the signals coming from our Parliament were conflicting."

"If Parliament continues to be inconsistent, it's very difficult for the government to maintain a consistent position in terms of negotiations."

He also said government plans to cut tariffs in the event of a no-deal had made the Canadians think they would benefit if CETA were not rolled over.

Around 87 percent of imports by value would be eligible for zero-tariff access under the temporary scheme.

But the international trade secretary said not agreeing to permanent post-Brexit arrangements would put Canadian exports at risk.

Shadow international trade secretary Barry Gardiner said Canada would be at a "significant advantage" if the CETA deal were not rolled over.

"The government's foolish approach will ensure that they do not have to offer trade preferences in return," he said.



BRITISH Conservative leader hopeful Jeremy Hunt has enlisted the aid of former Canadian Tory leader Stephen Harper to lead his Brexit negotiating team should he win the leadership race.

Jeremy Hunt picks Canada's ex-PM Stephen Harper to join Brexit negotiations

LONDON – *The Sunday Times* reports a major coup for British prime minister hopeful Jeremy Hunt.

He wants a Canadian-style Brexit trade deal, so he's recruited former Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper to lead his Brexit negotiating team and secure a similar free-trade deal with Brussels if he wins the keys to Downing Street.

Harper led Canada for nine years, six of which included negotiations with the EU for a free-trade deal that was signed in 2016, the year after he left office.

The former prime minister says he's willing to help the next British prime minister negotiate a divorce deal with the European Union — but he's not taking sides in the race to decide who will be the next resident of Number 10 Downing Street.

He tweeted that he's "willing to assist whoever serves as the next leader of the UK Conservative Party on trade matters, should they wish."

But as the current chair of the International Democrat Union, an alliance of conservative-leaning political parties from across the globe, Harper says he must remain "neutral in all member party leadership races."

Also lined up by Hunt is Rona Ambrose, the former Interim Conservative leader in Canada.

The UK Foreign Secretary said he got to know Ambrose when she was Canadian health minister, but who more recently was one of Canada's non-partisan team negotiating changes to the North American Free Trade deal after Donald Trump became U.S. president.

Hunt further revealed that Oliver Robbins, Theresa May's chief negotiator, will soon leave and that he would replace him with Crawford Falconer, the Scottish-born New Zealander who is the chief negotiator at the Department for International Trade.

In a dig at Johnson, Hunt said, "To break the impasse with the European Union we need a tough and skilled negotiator, not empty rhetoric."

"In Crawford Falconer you have someone who is respected as the toughest trade negotiator in the world."

"I'm also good personal friends with Rona Ambrose. These are people who know how to get a tough deal."

"I'm also good personal friends with Rona Ambrose. These are people who know how to get a tough deal."

Landing Harper will be seen as a coup by Hunt to mirror George Osborne's luring of Mark Carney from Canada to run the Bank of England.

The challenge for Hunt is that the next leader will not be selected by the voters but by Tory grassroots, who take a tough line on Brexit. That is why he has dramatically hardened his position on Brexit promising to "turbocharge" preparations for no-deal.

"We will know by the beginning of October if it's going to be possible to negotiate a deal that we are going to be able to get through the House of Commons," Hunt said. "If it isn't, I'll take us out without a deal."

In a bid to match Johnson's rhetoric, Hunt told *The Sunday Times* he would not sign a "blank cheque" for Brussels and signalled he would withhold some of the £39 billion exit bill that May agreed to pay if Britain does not get a deal.

Hunt said, "As a businessman I always paid my bills. That being said, if we leave without a deal I will not hand over a penny more than is legally required of us. Anyone who thinks I am going to write a blank cheque to the European Union is sorely mistaken."

The foreign secretary also said he "won't countenance" a deal with Labour to remain in a customs union, and said he would press for technological solutions to prevent a hard border in Ireland.

"There's not a great deal of difference between Boris's position and my position," he claimed. "We both want to change the withdrawal agreement. We both want to get out by October 31."

Welsh Spirit events highlight rich culture of literature and mythology

VANCOUVER – One of the recurrent characters in Celtic literature is Merlin (Myrddin in Welsh), who has been variously described by poets and writers as a wise man, an enchanter, a prophet and a magician.

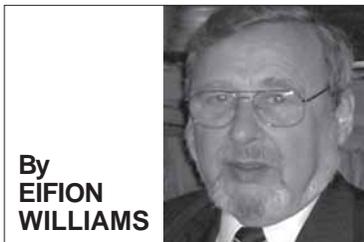
In a presentation at the Cambrian Hall on Saturday afternoon, June 15, Celtic Scholar Antone Minard gave a fascinating talk on the enigmatic ‘magician’.

During his talk, Antone screened excerpts from some of the works in Celtic literature and mythology in which Merlin is mentioned.

He then discussed whether Merlin was an actual person or a mythical figure whose prophecies were used by Welsh writers over the centuries to justify their own interpretations of history and legend.

Welsh Society members are always impressed with Antone’s wide knowledge of Welsh literature and legend.

He maintained in his presentation that according to his research there is no hard evidence that Merlin existed but that his ‘prophecies’ were used by later writers to justify or explain current or historical events.



By EIFION WILLIAMS



DR. ANTONE MINARD

Antone’s scholarly talk was the latest in a series of Saturday afternoon Cambrian Hall events held under the umbrella title of ‘Welsh Spirit’, initiated and promoted by Welsh Society member Pat Morris.

The aim of the series is to hold a monthly Saturday afternoon event to illustrate some aspect of Welsh culture.

According to Pat, many older members are unable to attend Society events in the evening and many of the events are unsuitable for families.

Since last fall, there has been a wide variety of Welsh Spirit events with themes from Welsh poetry, story-telling, music, movies and history.

The Spirit even extended to a gathering at the Pint Pub in downtown Vancouver to support Wales in the Six Nations rugby tournament.

Among the most popular Welsh Spirit events was a presentation of an episode of the Mabinogion by acclaimed story-teller Hugh Lupton and a presentation “In Praise of Poets” on the works of R.S. Thomas and Dylan Thomas by David Llewelyn Williams and David Webb, respectively.

The afternoon session in January celebrated the Welsh Society’s annual St. Dwynwen’s Day festival.

The May event saw a joint celebration with the Dylan Thomas Circle of Thomas’s poetry, including a presentation by acclaimed poet and writer Owen Sheers.

All Welsh Spirit events are free and open to Welsh Society members and guests.

Refreshments of Welsh fare such as Welsh cakes, shortbread, bara brith and cream scones are served at the events.

Ideas for future Welsh Spirit events are always welcome. The series will resume in September.



MERLIN was the Medieval Embodiment of Overcoming the Devil according to Twelfth Century scholar Geoffrey of Monmouth’s *Life of Merlin*.



Welsh Heritage weekend

Celebrating the 90th anniversary of the Cambrian Hall

Friday October 4th: an informal evening at the Red Dragon, commencing at 7:30 pm

Saturday October 5th: a concert at West Point Grey United Church featuring Welsh artists and the Vancouver Orpheus Male Choir

Sunday October 6th: a Gymanfa Ganu (Singing Festival) at the Cambrian Hall, commencing at 2 pm

Patrons must be 19 years or over for the Friday event.



www.WelshSociety.com

Cambrian Hall, 215 East 17th. Ave.

UK Art Fund Museum of the Year: St. Fagans in Wales wins £100,000 prize

CARDIFF – A Welsh museum made up of re-erected ancient buildings has been named the Art Fund museum of the year 2019.

St. Fagans National Museum of History beat four other contenders to secure the £100,000 prize.

The Cardiff museum completed a £30 million redevelopment last year, adding new exhibitions and hands-on workshops to its collection of historical buildings.

Founded in 1948, St. Fagans is one of Wales’ most popular heritage attractions.

It has more than 50 buildings that were moved to the site from locations around Wales allowing visitors to take a walk through Welsh history, from prehistoric times to the present day.

The last Welsh institution to win the prize was the Big Pit National Coal Museum in 2005. The award, Britain’s biggest single art prize, was known as the Gulbenkian Prize at the time.

HMS Caroline in Belfast, Nottingham Contemporary, Pitt Rivers Museum in Oxford and V&A Dundee also made this year’s shortlist. Each will receive £10,000 in recognition of their achievements.

Stephen Deuchar, Art Fund director and chair of the judges, said it was “a truly democratic museum” that “lives and breathes the culture, history and identity of Wales.”



ST. FAGANS National Museum of History in Cardiff where recent additions include a reconstructed Iron Age farmstead.

“It was made by the people of Wales for people everywhere,” he continued. “I can’t think of a single person who wouldn’t enjoy visiting this incredible place.”

Artist Jeremy Deller presented this year’s prize to David Anderson, director general of National Museum Wales, at the Science Museum in London on July 3.



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Norfolk: Where 'More than 300 snails slug it out as 'Fastest Snail in the World'

POSTCARD FROM MUSKOKA

By
ELFAN
JONES



MY WIFE and I have just returned from an absolutely wonderful holiday in Ontario.

We stayed with our friends who live in a beautiful town called Niagara-on-the-Lake which is one of the most picturesque places in North America.

The town has a feel of a genteel bygone age, where people say "Good morning or hello" as you meet on the street and it is an obvious destination for retirees wanting to get away from the hustle and bustle of city life.

There is much to do if you want to; play golf, sail or go kayaking on the Niagara River, visit the falls, or just sit and enjoy a glass of wine from one of the many wineries that enrich the region.

Despite the obvious charm of the town and its surroundings, the highlight for me was a crimson sunset which was just magnificent.

The Toronto skyline, 30 miles away across Lake Ontario, glowed and there was an inexplicable line that framed the distant city.

In 50 years of travelling in Europe, the Far East and Africa I have never witnessed such a breathtakingly beautiful sunset.

From Niagara we travelled to Muskoka Lakes region.

How can I describe the area? Well as you good folks in Canada say "You know what... totally awesome eh?"

Back in the U.K. and back to the same political pantomime.

The race is on for a new Conservative leader who will then automatically be the new prime minister.

Boris Johnson was the hot favourite but over the weekend the police were called to his home by neighbours after they heard his girlfriend shouting "You have ruined my sofa with red wine, you are spoilt. You have no care for anything. Get off me and get out!!"

I realise that this is tabloid tittle tattle, but after over two years of Brexit drudgery it is quite entertaining.

Since Boris became a well-known politician, first as mayor of London and then as a government minister, he has been called a racist, a misogynist, a liar, a cheat and a coward, so if he does win the Conservative Party leadership and become prime minister we will have our very own mini Donald Trump in charge. (Is there a maximum age for immigration into Canada?)

Actually, I hope he does win because I am convinced he believes himself to be a second Winston Churchill who is itching to have a go at Johnny foreigner. Whatever he does is bound to be more interesting than the misery the country has just endured.



NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE is a town in southern Ontario. It sits on the shores of Lake Ontario, at the mouth of the Niagara River. It's known for its wineries and the summer Shaw Festival, a series of theatre productions. The flower-filled, tree-lined old town features 19th-century buildings, mainly along Queen Street. Near the river, Nineteen Century Fort George was built by the British to defend against American attacks.



CARRIE SYMONDS is a 31-year-old PR executive currently in a relationship with 55-year-old prospective British prime minister Boris Johnson. The couple made headlines recently when police were called to their home after neighbours heard a loud altercation in the early hours of Friday, June 22.

After months of sunshine last year, this summer has not started yet, which is disappointing.

One warm day is followed by dull cloudy weather then rain, but as usual there are scores of events to keep a visitor occupied.

Part of the fun of writing this column is finding out the weird and wonderful events that take place in the U.K. and I have just found a couple of good ones.

The first is the World Snail Racing Championship to be held in Norfolk on July 20.

Quoting Google "More than 300 snails slug it out for the title Fastest Snail in the World."

Anyone with a snail can enter and the winner receives a silver tankard which is stuffed with lettuce.

I don't know if that will have the same excitement as Formula One British Grand Prix (July 12-14) but it could be a very enjoyable if somewhat quiet day out.

Finally an event we have missed: The Titchborne Dole in the village of Titchborne Hampshire on Mach 25.

In the Thirteenth Century Lady Mabella Titchborne was dying from a wasting disease.

This generous woman requested, as a dying wish, that her husband would annually dole out farm produce to the poor.



THE TITCHBORNE Dole is an ancient English tradition still alive today. It takes place in the village of Titchborne near Alresford in Hampshire every year.

He was not as kind-hearted as his spouse, but agreed on the condition that he would only give produce from the area that his dying wife could crawl around with a lit torch.

Remarkably Lady Titchborne managed to crawl around 23 acres before the torch went out.

Every year since her death the locals line up, and in a ceremony receive a gallon of flour which is blessed by the parish priest.

On that happy note, I am off to make a piece of toast.

Best wishes,
Elfan.



PHOTO: Duncan McGlynn/Scottish Parliament Pool Picture
THE QUEEN and Prince Charles were greeted in Edinburgh by Lord Provost Frank Ross and his wife the Lady Provost, Hanna Ross.

Holyrood marks 20th anniversary: Queen speaks of 'great affection for Scotland'

EDINBURGH – The Queen addressed MSPs at Holyrood on June 28 to mark the 20th anniversary of devolution, at a time of constitutional upheaval over Brexit and plans for a fresh referendum on Scottish independence.

She also spoke of her "great affection for Scotland" and said that she "fondly remembered" opening the parliament, and said that it "continues to be at the centre of Scottish public life."

The Queen, who was accompanied by Prince Charles, spoke to each of Holyrood's party leaders personally as well as addressing them in the debating chamber.

The modern parliament was set up two years after Scotland voted overwhelmingly for devolution in a referendum in 1979.

It initially sat at the General Assembly in Edinburgh before moving to its £431 million purpose-built home at Holyrood in 2004.

The Queen was last in the landmark building in July 2016, marking the opening of the fifth session of the parliament.

She told MSPs that it was with "great pleasure" that she had been present at each stage of the parliament's lifetime, "including on landmark occasions such as today."

She said, "This chamber continues to be at the centre of Scottish public life, as an important forum to engage and unite diverse communities and also a home for passionate debate and discussion.

"Through new initiatives you continue to strive to be responsive and accountable to the people you serve, and to engage and involve those who might not otherwise participate in political debate."

The Queen also said it was her "sincere hope" that MSPs would "work tirelessly to improve people's lives and strengthen the bonds of friendship and partnership both at home and abroad."

In response, First Minister Nicola Sturgeon said the parliament may only be 20 years old, but "has long come of age."

She said there had been times in the early years when "the sense of challenge possibly outweighed the sense of optimism," but said the hopes expressed for Holyrood in 1999 "to a great extent have been vindicated."

And she said that while politics can seem "more divided than ever," parties "can maintain our commitment to working together in the common good," saying even political opponents are "united by our desire to do our best for the people."

Other party leaders also addressed the special occasion, with Scottish Conservatives leader Ruth Davidson saying that Holyrood was "knitted into the fabric of our society," adding that "there is consensus that as a process, devolution has made our country stronger."

The Queen was preceded into the chamber by the mace and Crown of Scotland, while a fanfare was played by the brass ensemble from the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland.

A ceremony took place to mark the occasion featuring performances of music, poetry and song celebrating Scottish culture.

It included performances by the National Youth Choir of Scotland, singer Karen Matheson and a band fronted by folk musician Phil Cunningham.

Scots Makar Jackie Kay performed a poem about the lifetime of the parliament titled *The Long View*, which included sections in Gaelic and British Sign Language.

And the monarch was piped out of the chamber by MSP Stuart McMillan, with members then joining in to sing *A Man's a Man for a' That* by Robert Burns.

The Queen signed the parliament's guest book and was presented with a bouquet of flowers by 13-year-old Ewan Carmichael, before she was driven back across the road to Holyrood Palace.



NICOLA STURGEON (L) and Mark Drakeford have pledged to work together to try and keep the U.K. in the European Union.

Scottish and Welsh leaders alarmed at hard-line no-deal Brexit rhetoric

MANCHESTER – The Scottish and Welsh Governments have pledged to work together to try and keep the UK in the European Union ahead of a ministerial meeting in Manchester on June 28.

Nicola Sturgeon and Mark Drakeford called on whoever replaces Theresa May as prime minister to “change course and rule out” a no-deal Brexit, which they warned would significantly damage the economy.

The SNP leader raised her concerns when she met David Lidington, the de facto deputy prime minister, ahead of the British-Irish Council (BIC) summit.

In a joint statement, the Scottish and Welsh leaders said, “We are becoming increasingly alarmed by the increase in hard-line rhetoric about a no-deal Brexit and a debate focussed on policy proposals for leaving the EU which have no basis in reality.

“Severe economic damage is already being done as a result of Brexit uncertainty impacting economic opportunities as companies will be making decisions on their future on long-term competitiveness – as workers at British Steel, Ford, Honda, and elsewhere can witness.

“We believe leaving the EU without a deal would be disastrous for the economies within these islands and for the livelihoods of hundreds of thousands of people.”

The statement continued, “A no-deal Brexit would deeply damage the reputation of the UK as a reliable international partner and undermine the Good Friday Agreement and the peace process on the island of Ireland.

“The next prime minister must pull back from the brink of a no-deal Brexit and be honest with the public. If they continue on their current path, the UK looks increasingly likely to crash-out of the EU in just four months time.

“The EU will not simply cave in to demands to re-open the Withdrawal Agreement, and claims that we could both leave without a deal and still benefit from tariff-free trade with the EU have been disproved.

“The new prime minister must change course and rule out ‘no-deal’ under any circumstances.”



THE PASSAGE tomb at the prehistoric Bryn Celli Ddu site leading to the inner chamber.

4,500-Year-Old Burial Site Revealed next to prehistoric monument in Wales

CARDIFF – Excavations are underway on the 4,500-year-old Bronze Age burial cairn known as ‘Bryn Celli Ddu Bach’ located off the north coast of Wales on the island of Anglesey.

Experts are hoping to learn more about it and its relationship to Bryn Celli Ddu burial chamber, one of the most important prehistoric monuments in Wales.

University of Cardiff archaeologist Ffion Reynolds said the cairn showed the site remained a “special location” centuries after the chamber was built.

The “passage tomb” is aligned to coincide with the rising sun on the summer solstice.

The *North Wales Chronicle* reports that the burial mound, which sits next to the famous, 5,000-year-old passage tomb of Bryn Celli Ddu, is under excavation until July 7.

In a landscape dotted with Neolithic and Bronze Age monuments, Bryn Celli Ddu, which translates to The Mound in the Dark Grove, was first excavated in 1865 and reconstructed in the 1920s.

Researchers have already found panels of rock art, evidence of cremation, bone, flint tools, pits and prehistoric pottery sherds. What lies buried deeper within the mound still remains to be seen.

“The Bryn Celli Ddu site is a really complicated landscape, it appears to have been used as ritual landscape for thousands of years after it was first built,” Seren Griffiths, one of the dig directors, told the *North Wales Chronicle*.

“Generations of people would have known of its significance, we see a lot of superimposition of human activity on the site.”

The Celtic Druids arrived on Anglesey about two millennia after the construction of Bryn Celli Ddu, adding to the long and rich history of the island.

Bryn Celli Ddu was also built to coincide with the rising sun on the summer solstice. On June 21, the longest day of the year, the sun’s rays beam down the passageway, lighting up the inner chamber.

Within the mound is a polygonal stone chamber that was reached via an eight metre (26 foot) long passageway. At the back of the chamber, archaeologists found a carved stone with a serpentine design.

In 2017, archaeologists discovered the 4,500-year-old burial cairn, one of four, while conducting a geophysical survey around Bryn Celli Ddu, revealing that Bryn Celli Ddu was connected to an even larger prehistoric complex in the surrounding area.

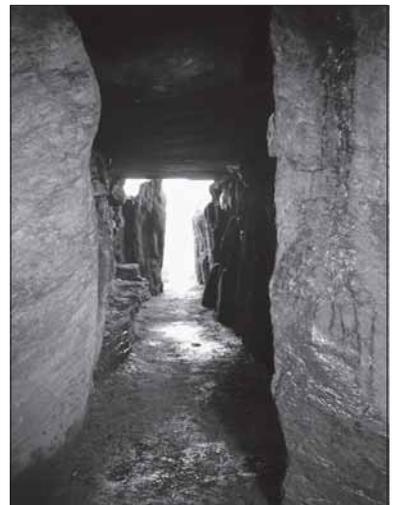


PHOTO: [Right] BRYN CELLI DDU burial chamber is aligned to the sun and is lit during the summer solstice.

Are you .Scot yet?
 .Scot is the domain name for the worldwide family of Scots
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TOP 10 CELTIC HITS FOR JULY
Celt In A Twist is local contemporary Celtic radio heard weekly on AM 1470, CJVB in Vancouver.
 www.worldbeatcanada.com.

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

1. <i>Ocean Child</i> by Flook - <i>Ancora</i> on Flatfish Records.	7. <i>Step Up</i> by Afro Celt Sound System - <i>Flight</i> on ECC Records.
2. <i>The Airt O The Deil</i> by Yoko Pwno - <i>ArteFacts</i> on Skye Records.	8. <i>The Old Road to Garry</i> by The Gloaming - <i>The Gloaming 3</i> on Real World.
3. <i>Isle Of Skye Reel</i> by Soulsha - <i>Carry It On</i> on Independent.	9. <i>Something to Say</i> by The Town Pants - <i>Something to Say</i> on independent.
4. <i>Typhoon</i> Nozaki by Vasen - <i>Rule of 3</i> on NorthSide.	10. <i>The Capable Wife</i> by Coig - <i>Ashlar</i> on Coig Music.
5. <i>Borderline</i> by Skerryvore - <i>Evo</i> on Tyree Records.	
6. <i>The Rambling Irishman</i> by	

Celt In A Twist - Pick Of The Month:
Soulsha - Carry It On (Independent)

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The Film Industry in Scotland is echoing Vancouver's success

EDINBURGH – I was recently persuaded to watch a romantic comedy called *Always Be My Maybe*.

Set in San Francisco, it tells the story of childhood sweethearts who fall out but meet again as adults for an easily-anticipated denouement.

My interest was sustained, however, by San Francisco sites that looked very familiar even though I have only been in that city twice.

The pub that the protagonists met in looked a lot like The Roxy on Granville Street, the houses were typical of the Vancouver suburbs, and I could have sworn that an awards ceremony they attended was hosted in the Vancouver Art Gallery.

The clincher came when the couple visited San Francisco's Chinatown and a Translink bus passed behind them.

The process was repeated a few days later when three characters in a broadly similar movie could be seen running round the track at Point Grey High School before relocating to a diner in Fort Langley.

The viewer, meanwhile, was asked to believe that they were in Virginia.

This, of course, is nothing new. I vaguely remember waking up in a cin-



By
**HARRY
McGRATH**



MARY Queen of Scots was filmed in Scotland.

ema towards the end of *Mission Impossible 4* to find Tom Cruise on Granville Island pretending to be in Seattle.

Scotland too has a history of playing somewhere else in films.

Twenty years ago my sister and her husband answered the door of their Glasgow west end tenement to find a location scout for an adaption of Edith Wharton's *House of Mirth*.

He wanted their flat to impersonate a New York brownstone and, before long, Gillian Anderson was having makeup applied in their living room.

More recently, *The Wife* starring Glen

Close had Glasgow standing in for Stockholm.

Unlike Vancouver, however, filmmakers seem increasingly happy for Scotland to play itself, as in *Outlander*, *Mary Queen of Scots*, *Robert the Bruce*, *Wild Rose* and so on.

This growth of Scottish film is largely the work of Screen Scotland which, to quote from its website, "is the new dedicated partnership for screen in Scotland, delivering enhanced support for all aspects of Scotland's screen sector."

Its broad remit includes a Screen Commission which provides information on locations, crews, talent and facilities; a funding support arm; infrastructure development including studio facilities; educational outreach and audience identification.

The "Made in Scotland" section of the website lists 45 films as "some of the productions either shot in Scotland, or which were originated by or involved Scottish-based talent."

When Screen Scotland was launched last year, it announced a £3 million Broadcast Content Fund to "support the development and production of distinctive high-quality projects for television broadcast, digital broadcast and streaming platforms" and it promised to create a "clear and distinct brand."

As the chair of DotScot Registry, one of the most satisfying aspects of this branding is its Internet identity.

Screen.scot is everything we had hoped a .scot domain would be when we first applied for it: concise, expressive and identifying the Scottish connection while going global.

It was much in evidence, for instance, when David Mackenzie's *Outlaw King* opened the Toronto Film Festival last September after filming in numerous locations around Scotland.

Look out for screen.scot at key film festivals around the world, underpinning Scottish film premiers and promoting Scotland's producers, talent and locations.

Whether Scotland is playing itself in films or pretending to be somewhere else, everyone wants to attract the tourist gaze as a kind of after-bonus.

When I was a student at Stirling University back in the day, the nearby Wallace Monument was practically deserted.

Cue *Braveheart* (filmed mostly in Ireland) and an explosion of buses and cars disgorging folk on Abbey Craig upon which the Victorian Gothic tower stands.

Fast forward to May 2019 and the people of St. Abbs in the Scottish Borders are twinning their town with the fictional village of New Asgard to celebrate the fact that *Avengers: Endgame* was partly filmed there.

It's hard to imagine what Hulk, Thor, Captain America, Black Widow and the rest would make of the picturesque little harbour village, though it does have a lifeboat station and there is some excellent fish and chips to be had just four miles down the coast at Eyemouth.

"Going tae the pictures," as they say here, used to mean going to see the sights and hear the sounds of America. Nowadays, you are almost as likely to find your own place looking back at you.



ANGUS MACFADYEN starring in the new Robert the Bruce film.

Cinema chain bows to pressure to screen new 'Robert the Bruce' film

EDINBURGH – The cinema giant Cineworld has been forced to make a u-turn after angry Scots started a campaign against the chain for not screening the new film *Robert the Bruce*.

The film is about the 14th-Century Scottish King who launched a guerilla war against the larger English army.

The film focuses on a winter in which the whereabouts of Robert the Bruce are in doubt, telling one of several stories that survive in historical accounts.

Following a series of military losses, with his army in tatters and the success of his rebellion in doubt, Robert retreats from the battlefield.

Alone, injured, and pursued by fortune-seekers intent on collecting a bounty placed on his head by King Edward of England, he finds refuge in the croft of a peasant woman and the three children in her care – a teenage nephew, a young niece, and her own son.

They care for him, forging a powerful bond, even though their clan is aligned with England. This connection inspires Robert with a deeper under-

standing of the patriotism of ordinary Scots, which drives his passionate return to the national stage and, ultimately, to victory and independence.

Cineworld faced backlash on social media in Scotland, and a petition was started with 5,000 signatures, after the cinema chose to not show the film, hailed as the sequel to *Braveheart*.

Other cinema chains, including Vue and Odeon, are all showing it but Cineworld claimed the decision was for "commercial reasons."

Actor Angus Macfadyen, who plays Robert the Bruce in the movie, also hit out saying "there is nothing to fear but fear itself."

Now, Cineworld has confirmed it will show the feature film in five of its cinemas, including Glasgow Silverburn, Aberdeen, Dundee, Edinburgh and Falkirk.

After hearing the news Macfadyen shared his delight and thanked fans for their support on Twitter. He said, "Thank you everyone. A well orchestrated campaign which reminded me of Bannockburn."

British at risk of losing their human rights

LONDON – The former Children's Laureate said he is worried by calls to abandon the European Convention on Human Rights.

Sir Michael Morpurgo has warned that Britons risk losing their human rights if they continue to take them for granted.

The 75-year-old author said many had forgotten how flouting European people's basic freedoms had directly led to the "barbarity" of the Second World War and the Holocaust.

Morpurgo, a former Children's Laureate, spoke during an event to launch Fly The Flag week at London's Somerset House.

The performance, celebrating 70 years since the creation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, featured a flag designed by Chinese artist Ai Weiwei.

He told the Press Association that Britain's pursuit of the "capitalistic dream" had thrown the future of its

people's human rights into doubt.

He said, "We have become, as a people, so used to our human rights that we forget we have them."

"There is even a spirit in the country where they don't really matter, they say we've got too many of them and they interfere with our capitalistic dream."

"That's the real worry – that we take the thing too much for granted now."

"And when you think, for hundreds of years people have gone to the stake and been imprisoned and tortured and abused in order that we can speak our minds and have freedoms and rights that in previous generations were just to be dreamed of."

He also urged people to remember the "wonderful" suffragettes who secured women the vote, warning that their "brave" sacrifice should not be forgotten.

Some 150 organisations were involved in the week-long event, including advocacy group Liberty, Amnesty International, the National Theatre, Tate, Sadler's Wells and Fuel.

Canmore highland games

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Sun shines on big crowds at new BC Highland Games venue

By MIKE CHISHOLM

Exec Director, BC Highland Games COQUITLAM – The Loch Lafarge monster did not appear, but almost 10,000 people did, filling Lafarge Lake Park for the BC Highland Games & Scottish Festival's 88th year of piping, dancing and caber throwing at its new venue in Coquitlam.

Performance and competitive pipe bands performed on the main stage and The Meadow, Highland dancing took place on a new stage overlooking Lafarge Lake and the cabers and hammers filled the air over the new festival lawn opened in time for the June 15 Games and renamed the Lew Ross Scottish Heavy Event Field for our event only.

As executive director of the Games, I oversaw the relocation from Percy Perry Stadium to the new venue.

We spent 27-years at Percy Perry Stadium, but changes to the field, including artificial turf and permanent fencing created a difficult environment for pipers and pipe bands who have long complained about the venue.

Additionally, heat from the artificial grass, echoing from the covered stadium and a lack of shade all contributed to the move to the new venue.

Lafarge Lake is part of the overall Town Centre Park in downtown Coquitlam.

What was once an industrial gravel pit is now a festival site, created by the City to host events like the BC Highland Games, Canada Day and Kaleidoscope festival. Easy access via Skytrain makes this a much better location for the Games.

Thanks must be given to Coquitlam city council for moving up plans to redevelop the underused BMX jump park into the new festival lawn one year ahead of schedule to accommodate the Highland Games.

The field opened on June 10 and five days later hosted its first event: the RE/MAX Scottish heavy events.

Big crowds surrounded the field, which was also home to the Ceilidh Stage at



A CABER TOSsing competitor at the 2019 BC Highland Games.

the south end of the field where The Paperboys and other Celtic musicians and groups performed.

Scottish country dancers, various performers and the grand finale massed pipe bands used the Main Stage.

The Traditional Stage, set up in a grassy and treed hollow, allowed a number of Celtic musicians to jam and entertain crowds gathered around.

The final performance of the massed pipe bands on the main stage was a fitting ending to a great Highland Games in the new location.

From the organizing committee perspective, everything went quite smoothly.

This is a massive annual undertaking staged with the support of the BC Pipers' Association, the BC Highland Dancing Association, the United Scottish Cultural Society and the heavy events association.

Additionally, 35-committee members work throughout the year to plan for the Games, working out details far in

advance to avoid any problems.

In 2019, we faced some of the biggest challenges to the Games in many years.

Our decision to move was made in 2018 with nothing but a promise from city government to create the new heavy event field.

Additionally, we had never held a games in this venue, so space and proper placement of tents, stages, washrooms, fences and events had to be settled, in some instances, on the day of the Games.

It was an exercise in patience and flexibility, and our committee rose to the challenge.

Our cultural tent was moved at the last minute to a more remote, but ultimately better location which drew overflowing crowds all day long.

The pipe band competition was moved to The Meadow, impacting on the stock dog demonstration and a few other activities but providing a high-profile location for one of the Games key events.

The traditional stage with Michael Viens and other musicians was a popular spot but subject to crossover sounds from other events.

And there have been other issues that will be dealt with by next year. Bathrooms were in short supply, as was potable water. Both will be fixed for 2020. The City is installing a permanent washroom with flush toilets and running water near the children's area.

This will be built and open by the end of 2019. The City is planning to tear up The Meadow and replace it with a new, irrigated grass field, similar to the Ross heavy event field, creating a more level and pleasant area for band and solo competitions.

I have heard from a number of people, in particular seniors, that it was difficult to navigate the pathways and trails. We will fix this next year so there is more space to move around the venue. We will add more washrooms and signage.

Is the location ideal? No, it is not. But it does fix many of the problems we faced in the old venue and as many people have commented, the new location "felt like a village." This is more in line with what a Highland Games is supposed to be.

So, what's coming up for next year? We will be back at Lafarge Lake on June 20, 2020 with new bands and events. If you made a suggestion on how to improve things online or via e-mail, it will be read and changes will be made. What won't change is the atmosphere of the Highland Games.

We will continue to focus on the competition aspect of the Games (piping, dancing, heavy events), drawing the best competitors in all fields to the Coquitlam Games.

We will expand our program, possibly to a second day to accommodate a growing number of events, activities and vendors.

And we are looking at a multi-cultural element to the Games, welcoming other immigrant communities to celebrate with us, one of the original immigrant communities to B.C. We will still have great Celtic music, whisky school, dancing and frolics.

The BC Highland Games is growing. And we look forward to seeing you again in 2020.



THE DELTA Police Pipe Band in competition at Lafarge Lake Park.



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THE SFU Pipe Band at this year's BC Highland Games in Coquitlam.



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The atmosphere was incredible on an Irish music Alaska cruise

By DANIEL O'DONNELL

RECENTLY I had the pleasure of visiting Alaska for the first time on the cruise of a lifetime promoted by Gertrude Byrne Promotions with lots of Irish entertainers and holidaymakers who came from all parts of the world.

While I was blown away by the beauty of Alaska and its stunning scenery, what really stood out for me, and what I would say about most people on the cruise, was the atmosphere on the ship.

No sooner are you onboard you become one big community, and for seven days you party together to the music, morning, noon and night.

The hardest thing to do on the cruise was to go to bed because some of us did not want to miss out on fabulous music.

I have gone on holidays on numerous cruises, and while I enjoyed them, they are totally different to these cruises run by Gertrude Byrne.



THE IRISH MUSIC CRUISE is hosted by Gertrude Byrne Promotions on Holland America's Vista-class ships. The luxury vessels are the only full ship Irish charter cruises in the world.

The atmosphere as I mentioned, is something special and it is comprised of a number of things.

For a start, the Irish performers bring their unique style of entertainment to the trip, which the holidaymakers on board just love.

From the moment the ship sets sail there is a party somewhere as only the Irish can generate. Everyone joins in straight away.

The people on the cruise are there for one purpose and this is to have fun and enjoy themselves. They all have a connection with Ireland or our music or both.

When you're moving around the ship everybody is chatting and laughing together and they're getting to know one another. It is a joy to see and experience.

The one piece of advice that I would

say to people who are thinking of going on one of Gertrude Byrne's cruises for a rest....stay at home!

There is so much music, dancing and entertainment in a day that you will never be able to take it all in if you don't stay up until breakfast.

All of the entertainers get a chance to mingle with all of the guests onboard so that is a great experience for us as well.

What I always love about Gertrude's cruises is that it gives me the opportunity to meet up with other artists and to see them doing their shows.

In our busy lives we don't get to that back home.

I went to every concert on the cruise and I enjoyed every one of them. It's a cruise holiday like no other.

You get off the ship and see different



IRISH MUSIC superstar Daniel O'Donnell will headline the All Star Irish entertainment on the next cruise leaving San Diego, California for the magical Mexican ports of call next February 22-29.

places, and then you come back onboard to a beautiful dinner and evening show, followed of course by a lot of dancing.

I have now been on five All Star Irish Cruises run Gertrude Byrne Promotions and I can say that anyone that goes will not be disappointed.

There is usually 2,000 guests onboard and they all get off with a special feeling in their heart.

It is amazing how many people are now friends that they would never have met if it were not for the cruise.

Next year we are off again and this time we are headed to the beautiful Ports of Cabo San Lucas, Puerto Vallarta and many more from San Diego, California from February 22-29, 2020.

I can't wait and maybe you will join us.

Ballot to decide if Irish diaspora should be allowed to vote for president

DUBLIN – Irish voters are likely to decide on whether or not to extend the vote in presidential elections to Irish citizens abroad in October.

Tánaiste Simon Coveney and Minister for Local Government Eoghan Murphy have been given approval to draft the general scheme of a Bill to amend the Constitution to allow the Irish diaspora a vote.

If the referendum is to adhere to Taoiseach Leo Varadkar's preferred date of October, the full Bill will have to be published by the end of July, along with the proposed amending legislation.

This will allow enough time for a referendum commission to be established and have sufficient time to conduct its work. That will involve a lot of work. The proposal will be scrutinised by the Oireachtas committee on foreign affairs before the heads of Bill are published.

The full Bill will then need to be signed off by the government ahead of its last meeting before the summer break, which is provisionally scheduled for mid-July.

Over three years ago, in 2016, the Convention on the Constitution, while declining to reduce the term of the presidency from seven years to five, voted in favour of extending the vote in presidential elections to Irish people living abroad.

That decision dovetails with the government's Global Ireland 2025 policy,



which wants to harness potential of the large and diverse Irish community living abroad.

The government has said that many countries worldwide already provide for voting by those of their citizens resident outside the State.

In a statement, the government said, "The presidency serves a very different function to the Dáil and Seanad.

"This referendum will be about re-imagining a presidency for the Twenty-First Century, a presidency that represents the Irish nation not just the State, and that is elected by all citizens."

Such an alteration will involve many logistical changes. The period of the election campaign will be extended from 60 to 90 days.

This will allow sufficient time for a postal ballot to issue to electors resident outside the State and for ballot

papers to be completed and returned in good time for the election.

There are many other practical hurdles to surmount in advance of the next presidential election in 2025, should the referendum pass.

Those will include the registration of voters from outside of the State, how they would vote, and where they would vote as well as extensive information campaigns.

There would also have to be arrangements for counting potentially hundreds of thousands of postal votes.

However, the biggest material change will be that voters in the North will be able to vote in presidential elections. That has the potential to hugely influence the outcome.

Groups representing Irish emigrants have long campaigned for them to have voting rights. There has been a debate on the merits of extending the franchise.

Some have argued against allowing Irish citizens living abroad to vote in general elections on the basis they do not have to experience the government that has been elected, or are not fully aware of the actual situation on the ground in Ireland.

In 2011, an online poll conducted among Irish emigrants based in the U.S. suggested that their preference for the presidency was David Norris. There are an estimated one million Irish citizens living abroad.

THE IRISH CLUB OF WHITE ROCK

A vibrant community thrives in this beautiful seaside setting

By DEIRDRE O'RUAIRC

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

The Irish Club of White Rock is a social group which includes White Rock and surrounding areas. It began unofficially in the early sixties and was officially launched in 2004 with Brendan Hamill as the first president.

The club supports Irish arts and culture and is open to all Irish and those of Irish heritage or to those who just want to enjoy Irish culture.

Upcoming events this summer include the annual barbecue on Sunday, July 28 in Redwood Park at 18th and 176th Streets in South Surrey.

Cost is \$10 per person or \$20 per family with food, games and entertainment all included. To participate, call today to add your name to the list.

The children's annual Halloween party will be held on Sunday, October 27 for \$10 per family which includes Halloween treats and games. There will also be several pop up events throughout the year.

For timely updates, visit the Irish Club of White Rock Facebook page, or become a member and receive all the e-mails on upcoming events.

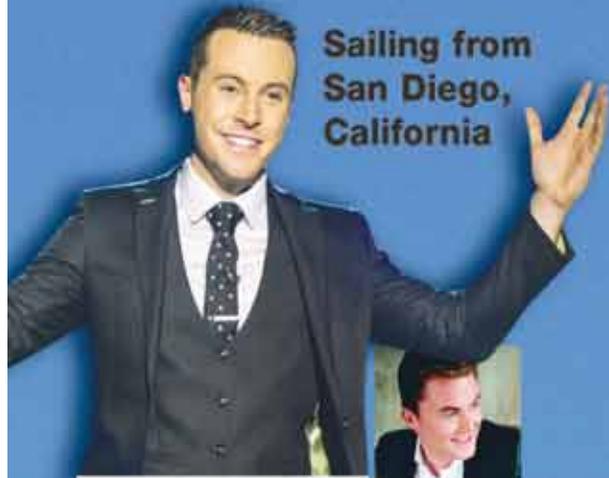
The Irish Club of White Rock is also a strong supporter of the Fraser Valley Gaels and many members travelled to the Western Canadian Championships in Edmonton on June 29-30 to support the team.

White Rock is a beautiful seaside community, only a 45-minute drive from Vancouver straight out Highway 99. It has a lot to offer and summer has arrived in White Rock, so be sure to drop by for a visit.

You're also invited to share the news with any friends and family who might be moving to White Rock and surrounding areas. For more information about the Irish Club of White Rock, call Sharon Woods (president) at (604) 338-3553, or Deirdre O'Ruairc (secretary) at (604) 803-0773.

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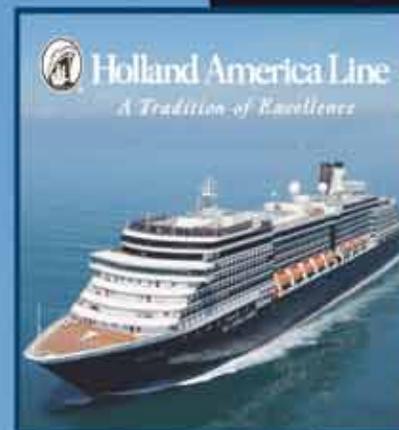
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Ailbhe Smyth: One of Time Magazine's 'Most Influential People of 2019'

IRISH WOMEN'S NETWORK



JENNIFER BOURKE, the new Irish Vice Consul in Vancouver, with Ailbhe Smyth and Eilis Courtney, the president of the Irish Women's Network. The reception at the Vancouver Club on June 5 was co-hosted by the Consulate General of Ireland, Vancouver and the Irish Women's Network.



PHOTO: Courtesy of the Consulate General of Ireland, Vancouver VICKY DILLON (L) is the Gender Equality Policy Lead at the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and Emma Warwick (R) is the Department's Global Health and HIV/AIDS Policy Lead at the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. All speakers at the June 5 reception were delegates at the UN Women Delivery Conference in Vancouver.

By KATHRYN McKIERNAN
VANCOUVER – A very special event was hosted by Consulate General of Ireland, Vancouver in collaboration with the Irish Women's Network (IWN) at The Vancouver Club on June 5.

Over 50 guests attended the reception to hear an inspirational talk by Ailbhe Smyth, a long-time activist and campaigner on feminist, LGBTI+ and socialist issues.

Ailbhe and other Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFA) staff were attending the UN Women Deliver conference in Vancouver, and the IWN jumped at the opportunity to hold a special reception event with Ailbhe as the star speaker.

There was a great mix of long-time members of the IWN, Irish newcomers and other conference attendees present.

DFA staff included Vicky Dillon, Gender Equality Policy Lead. She spoke about the most recent policy documents released and gave a brief outline of their importance.

Emma Warwick was also in attendance as the Global Health and HIV/AIDS Policy Lead, and spoke about the harrowing reality of inequity and injustice regularly encountered by Irish Aid workers.

Following Vice Consul Jennifer Bourke's welcome on behalf of the Consulate General of Ireland, Eilis Courtney, president of the IWN, proudly introduced Ailbhe.

I was excited to meet and experience the energy of Ailbhe Smyth, and I wasn't the only one.

Ailbhe is known for her work in social movement politics and was former head of Women's Studies at UCD.

She was the founding director of the Women's Education, Research and Resource Centre (WERRC) and was also a member of the Strategic Executive of the victorious referendum campaign for marriage equality in 2015.

In 2014 Ailbhe co-founded and is now Convener of the Coalition to Repeal the Eighth Amendment, a broad cross-sectoral platform of over 100 organizations and groups. Essentially she has been fighting for women's right to choose for over 35 years!

To say Ailbhe has a special sort of palpable energy is an understatement.

She captivated the room with her wit, engaging manner and passionate, intelligent thoughts on the reality of feminism, politics and culture in Ireland (and around the world).

Ailbhe discussed the process of social change in Ireland, the Repeal movement and the Marriage Equality movement.

She joked that at the marriage equality count she was already campaigning for Repeal the Eighth.

She laughed at the memory of people telling her to "enjoy this victory before jumping into the next project."

Having been in Ailbhe's presence though it doesn't surprise me that this was the reality.

She is everything you imagine. Forward-thinking, passionate, energised and inspirational and everyone at The

Vancouver Club on June 5 could feel that.

Ailbhe spoke with pride about how she received phone calls during the Repeal movement from various parts of Canada.

Irish people looking to know how they could support the movement. She expressed how overwhelmed she was by this.

I happened to meet one of these women who made that call to Ailbhe from Toronto.

She spoke about how it was such a thrill to 'close the loop' so to speak and meet Ailbhe face to face. I get the feeling it was a thrill for Ailbhe too.

Needless to say, everybody wanted a minute (or two) with Ailbhe following her talk.

It was a wonderful evening, the type where people left feeling better than when they arrived. Energised, inspired and uplifted.

Ailbhe is an inspirational feminist fighting the good fight, and that's reason enough to feel hopeful.

Ailbhe's main message was that we must keep going on in solidarity, in hope, in unity and in belief that we can actually make a better world for everybody, and not just in Ireland.

If you're reading this wishing you had been there to see one of the 'Most Influential People' as listed by TIME 100 in April 2019, don't worry. I have good news.

Ailbhe is coming back to Vancouver and will be the featured speaker at the inaugural St. Brigid's Day Festival to be held at Simon Fraser University Harbour Centre on February 1, 2020. See you there.

Update on the Community Mapping Project

IRISH WOMEN'S NETWORK

VANCOUVER – The Irish Women's Network is very excited to report that there are now 42 groups registered as part of the Community Mapping Project.

These groups stretch across British Columbia from Metro Vancouver, the Okanagan, Victoria and Prince George.

There is a wide range of groups, including sports, dance, music, social and cultural and all provide support for and connect the Irish community in B.C.

In early May, Irish Consul General Frank Flood, his wife Orla Ni Bhroithe, and Eilis Courtney, president of the Irish Women's Network, travelled to Kelowna for meetings and community events coordinated by the Okanagan Irish Society.

These activities included a focus group with community members as well as a wonderful evening of music by Ceol na hEireann raising funds for a local retreat centre.

Thank you to the community in Kelowna for the warm welcome.

Planning is underway for a similar trip

to Prince George towards the end of the summer.

If you represent an organisation, group or Facebook page which supports the Irish community in your area, make sure you complete the survey so your group is included.

Please also share this with any Irish contacts you know in B.C. to make sure their organisations have the opportunity to get on the list.

The new website will be launched in September but in the meantime, the current list of groups is temporarily located on the IWN website, so check out the list as well as the background on the project: www.irishwomenbc.net/irish-community-mapping-project.

Brigid/St. Brigid's Day Festival

VANCOUVER – The first annual La Fheile Bride: Ag Ceiliuradh Mna na hEireann (St. Brigid's Day: Celebrating the Women of Ireland) comes to the west coast of Canada on February 1, 2020.

This event is a collaboration between the Irish Benevolent Society of B.C., the Irish Women's Network of BC and Simon Fraser University.

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.

It has become a celebration of Irish women around the world and from London to Warsaw to Washington, events are held celebrating the talent and creativity of Irish women with art exhibitions, music, poetry, dance.

Planning is now underway for the Vancouver Brigid/St. Brigid celebration. Watch upcoming issues of *The Celtic Connection* for more details or visit the Irish Benevolent Society of B.C. Facebook page for updates.



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CONSULATE OF IRELAND, VANCOUVER staff pictured at the Irish Community Representatives meeting (L-R) Krystel Aquino, Luke Hanlon, Frank Flood, Jennifer Bourke, and Katherine Kiss.

CONSULATE GENERAL OF IRELAND, VANCOUVER

‘The team’s biggest challenge is communication, so sign up for the Consulate’s new e-mail contact list!’

VANCOUVER – The initial opening phase for the Consulate in Vancouver has involved a great deal of outreach and positive engagement with the Irish community and business sectors.

The support of the Irish community and the level of interest in promoting stronger trade linkages has been beyond expectations.

So much so that the opportunity is being taken in July and August to regroup and reflect on how things have gone since the Consulate opened at the end of October, and how best to harness the enormous goodwill towards Ireland there is in British Columbia.

On the administrative side, the Consulate has signed a lease for our new permanent office in the Manulife Place building on the corner of Thurlow and West Pender in downtown Vancouver.

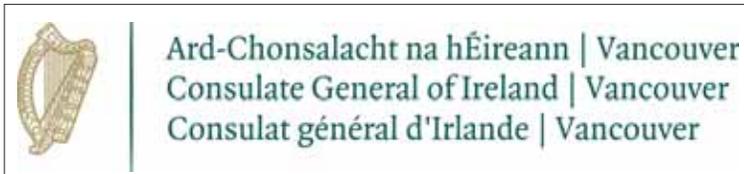
We are really pleased with the new premises and while it will not open to the public until next June, around one-third of the 400 square metre floor area will be used for Irish business purposes and community event space.

At present, we are still at the design stage but it is 16 times larger than our temporary office so needless to say, the sooner it opens the better for all concerned.

Eilis Courtney with the Irish Women’s Network and University of British Columbia continues to make great progress on the community mapping side.

This project, which is expected to be completed by October and is funded by the Consulate, has identified over 40 Irish community groups in British Columbia.

I have had the pleasure of taking part in the first Irish community focus group meeting in Kelowna in May, which raised a number of interesting



issues including how to access pension entitlements in Ireland.

The meeting was followed by a reception that was also organised by Eilis and Pearse Walsh, the Chair of the Okanagan Irish Society.

On the trade side, the Vancouver Chapter of the Ireland-Canada Chamber of Commerce has produced the first draft of the Ireland-BC on-line trade directory, which looks very professional, user friendly and attractive.

This project is funded through the Consulate and is expected to be completed by October.

We have also had three trade missions (mining, tourism and education) to Vancouver in the first half of this year as well as the very successful visit of Minister Ciarán Cannon over the St. Patrick’s Day period.

The latest trade mission in June was on the education side and was led by Marianna Costello of the Enterprise Ireland office in Toronto. The delegation involved representatives of the Colleges of Technology in Athlone, Carlow, Cork, Galway/Mayo and Sligo.

While only here for five days, their programme, which was facilitated by Armagh man Colin Ewart of B.C. Colleges, involved a conference in Whistler and college visits in Kelowna, Vancouver and Victoria. We fully expect this mission to lead to concrete academic linkages at undergraduate and graduate levels.

The opportunity was also taken by the Consulate to host the first Irish Alumni event, which was attended by around 100 participants including Ambassador Jim Kelly who gave the keynote address.

In June, the Consulate also funded and took part in receptions for the Irish in construction and the Irish in mining and exploration (which was co-funded by Equity Exploration Services).

The most successful recent event was probably the talk in June by Ailbhe

Smyth who got a standing ovation for her presentation on promoting women’s rights in Ireland.

The event was the Consulate’s contribution to the UN Women Deliver Conference in Vancouver and was organised in collaboration with the Irish Women’s Network.

These events have highlighted the biggest challenge for the Consulate at present, which is communication.

The key issue is how do we ensure that all members of the Irish community are aware of what is being organised by the Consulate and the Irish community?

In order to help address the communication challenge, one initiative we are taking is to set up an e-mail contact list.

The idea is that anyone who wants to be kept informed of any Consulate events and updates can do so by signing up to the e-mail list on the Consulate’s website events page at www.dfa.ie/irish-consulate/vancouver/news-&-events.

In line with data protection requirements, anyone can unsubscribe from the list at any time by e-mailing the Consulate at vancouvercg@dfa.ie.

Finally, I would like to welcome Jennifer Bourke, as the new Vice Consul in the Consulate.

We are very fortunate to have a diplomat of her experience and capability, coming to us from her former position as Deputy Head of Mission in the Irish Embassy in Bangkok.

Luke Hanlon returned home at the end of May after having successfully led the establishment of the temporary office and finding us the permanent premises in Manulife Place. We wish them both every success in their careers.

Le gach dea-ghuí
Frank Flood
Consul General of Ireland,
Vancouver

St. Patrick’s Parish hosts Car-Free booth and features a visit by St. Patrick himself

By SHAWN CHESSELL
VANCOUVER – Irish eyes were smiling on Main Street, as volunteers from St. Patrick’s Parish took to the street to showcase their community on Car-Free Day.

This is a day in which 21 blocks of Main Street are closed to vehicular traffic and the street takes on the atmosphere of a fair.

This year’s Main Street Car-Free Day took place on June 16 and members of the St. Patrick’s church choir and ukulele band performed for passers-by, while parish volunteers led interested people on tours of the church, which was reconstructed in 2000.

A “Chat with a Catholic” booth was hosted by pastor Father James Hughes to field questions from interested Car-Free-participants and “St. Patrick,” played by a local seminarian, made an appearance to have his photo taken with people of all ages

Though it was the first appearance by St. Patrick, it was the fifth year that St. Patrick’s Parish has hosted a booth at Main Street’s Car-Free Day.

Fr. Hughes says that the decision to take part stems from a commitment to playing a positive role in the larger community.

“People often think of parishioners as being only the people who attend church on Sundays,” he said, “but a parish really consists of all those who live within parish boundaries; I want the people of Mount Pleasant to know that we are here to serve their spiritual needs.”

The parish initiative seems to be working. Two random onlookers who were impressed by the ukulele band have since joined its ranks and parish volunteers report that over 300 photos were taken with “St. Patrick” and over 100 people took part in church tours.



OVER 300 photos were taken with “St. Patrick” at St. Patrick’s Parish on Main Street during Car-Free Day on June 16. Over 100 people took part in church tours while the “Chat with a Catholic” booth was hosted by pastor Father James Hughes.



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A great gathering of friends at the Irish Graduates Association dinner

VANCOUVER – The Irish Graduates Association hosted their annual banquet on Saturday, May 25 at the Shaughnessy Golf and Country Club.

This year's featured speaker was Frank Flood, the new Irish Consul General in Vancouver.

As usual, it was an evening filled with wonderful connections for the Irish diaspora in Vancouver and organizer Patricia Ryan reports, "a great evening was had by all."



PHOTO: Andrew Pike

IRISH GRADUATES ALUMNI in Vancouver (L-R) Sean Mullany, Charlie O'Sullivan, Frank Ryan, Patricia Ryan, Frank Flood, Andrew Pike, Helena Dwyre, Judith Pike, Stanley Fenton, Margaret Fenton.



FRONT ROW (L-R) – Ronan O'Neill, Maryse Power, Shane Duggan, Emma Duggan, Darra Murphy, Helen Murphy. BACK ROW: Fergal Donnellan, Sarah Mansfield, Ciaran Keogh.



PATRICK FAY, Heather Fay, John Murray, Harry Cussen and Hanna Kiezik.



THOMAS WOOD, Angela McWhirter, Lydia Lovinson and George McWhirter.



ALAN NIXON, Barbara Yorke, Alan Yorke, Joanne McBrinn, Helen Martin, Justin Martin and Gail Nixon.

Education in Ireland building Canada-Ireland education links

VANCOUVER – An Irish graduates alumni reception jointly hosted by the Irish Consulate of Ireland, Enterprise Ireland and the Irish Graduates Association, was held in the Grand Ballroom of the Vancouver Club on Wednesday, June 26.

It was attended by around 100 participants including Ambassador Jim Kelly who gave the keynote address.

The purpose of the event was to welcome the first Education in Ireland visiting delegation to British Columbia. Their mission is to build Canada-Ireland education links.

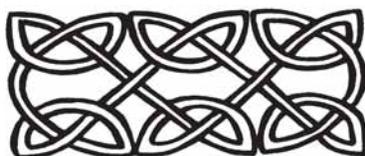


PHOTO: Courtesy of the Consulate General of Ireland, Vancouver

GUESTS attending the event (L-R) Frank Flood, Consul General of Ireland in Vancouver; Eoin Kiveney, International Coordinator, Athlone Institute of Technology; Marianna Costello, Education in Ireland, Education Officer for Canada; Jacinta Dalton, Head of Galway International Hotel School; Jim Kelly, Ambassador of Ireland to Canada; Iain MacPherson, Planning & Operations Excellence Manager, Sligo Institute of Technology; Lucia Reynolds, Education in Ireland, Regional Manager N. America & Brazil; Gerard O' Donovan, Head of Faculty of Business & Humanities, Cork Institute of Technology; Cait Noone, VP International & Engagement, Galway Mayo Institute of Technology; Donal McAlister, International Affairs Manager, Institute of Technology Carlow.



SARAH MANSFIELD and John Cheevers at the Irish University Graduates dinner at the Shaughnessy Golf and Country Club in Vancouver.



ORLA NI BHROITHE, Frank Flood and Patricia Ryan.



DEIRDRE RYAN, Anne McElroy, Anne Marie Corrigan, Howard Michelson.



LIZA COPELAND, Frank Ryan, Patricia Ryan, David Robinson and Lorna Robinson.

Vancouver's Irish Consul General Visits Kelowna for outreach with local community

KELOWNA, BC – The Okanagan Irish Society in Kelowna was delighted to welcome the new Irish Consul General in Vancouver Frank Flood and his wife Orla Ní Bhroithe to Kelowna on May 7 and 8.

Society members facilitated a number of visits to local companies and organizations where discussions took place on Ireland's interest in increasing trade between Ireland and Canada.

Highlights of the meetings included a meeting with Kelowna Mayor Colin Basran, tours of Okanagan College and Kelowna's High Tech facility – Accelerate Okanagan.

The consul general also met with Invest Kelowna, the Chamber of Commerce, the Film Commissioner for the Okanagan and was interviewed on local radio station AM 1150 with Phil Johnson.



AM 1150 INTERVIEW by Phil Johnson with Frank Flood the Irish Consul General, Vancouver.

On Tuesday evening, May 7, approximately 20 representatives of the Irish community met with the consul general and Eilis Courtney, president of the Irish Women's Network of B.C., to discuss their needs and expectations from the Consulate along with the new Irish Mapping initiative.

This was followed by a reception for the Irish community in the Okanagan at the Rotary Centre of the Arts which was attended by about 35 people.

On Wednesday evening, May 8, Frank Flood and Orla attended the excellent Celtic Fusion 4 fundraiser concert at the Kelowna Community Centre. The group also managed to take the couple on a tour of two of the area's renowned local wineries.

The consul general was very impressed with this beautiful area, the strength and vibrancy of the Irish community, the outstanding Celtic musical concert, and the potential for trade opportunities between Ireland and businesses in the Okanagan.

Okanagan Irish Society president Pearse Walsh said, "We look forward to a return visit by the consul general and his wife in the not too distant future!"



FRANK FLOOD at Okanagan College with Dean Philip Ashman.



THE FOCUS GROUP with members of the Okanagan Irish Society, attended by both Irish Consul General Frank Flood and Eilis Courtney, president of the Irish Women's Network of B.C.



PEARSE WALSH, president of the Okanagan Irish Society; Frank Flood, Consul General of Ireland, Vancouver; Colin Basran, Mayor of Kelowna; Robert Fine, Business and Entrepreneurial Manager City of Kelowna.

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Tánaiste warns risk of disorderly Brexit is 'significant'

TÁNAISTE SIMON COVENEY has warned that the chances of a disorderly Brexit have never been higher and the Government now considered the risk of this outcome on October 31 as "significant." The Minister for Foreign Affairs said he will bring a detailed update on the government's contingency planning across all departments and State agencies to Cabinet on July 9. Once agreed, Coveney said the documents will be laid before the Oireachtas and published in full ahead of a Dáil debate on Brexit preparations later in the week.

‘A Shared Home Place’: New memoir stands with the best work written on Northern Ireland

A TIME when exemplars of good politics are all but absent, the recent publication of Seamus Mallon’s memoir, *A Shared Home Place*, is an event indeed.

Its pages reveal a personality completely committed to the political process in the teeth of the almost insuperable obstacles of the Northern Irish Troubles.

As a former deputy leader of the Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP) and a former deputy first minister of Northern Ireland, Mallon’s role in recent Northern Irish history has been crucial.

While the second half century of Northern Irish politics has been deeply traumatic, there is no doubt that it would have been much worse but for such people as Seamus Mallon.

Mallon’s background in the predominantly Protestant village of Markethill, Co. Armagh, is key to the solidity he was to display as a politician.

No Catholic with ambitions of advancing in society was welcome. The Catholic school where Mallon’s father taught and where he himself was principal for a time lay outside the village: a metaphor for the way society was organised.

Ascendancy bred raw hostility during the Marching Season every July: neighbours who were ordinarily friendly grew vicious.

Yet, as with Seamus Heaney (a man who was also born into the heartland of Protestant Ulster) acknowledged: ‘it was a place of community as well as division’.

Mallon made fostering that community fabric his political life’s work as a means to defuse the toxic division.

The precondition of doing so, he argued from the outset, was a total embrace of political means coupled with complete rejection of violent means.

As Mallon wrote elsewhere, “the mission of politics is to try and solve apparently intractable problems with the power of words and accommodation of the other person’s viewpoint rather than the rattle of gunfire and the naked screams of sectarian hatred.”

As joint first minister of Northern Ireland with the unionist leader David Trimble, Mallon presided over an historic achievement: for the first time since the creation of the Northern State, a power-sharing assembly, reflective of the population’s communities, successfully withstood the many plots to destroy it and administered Northern Ireland.

Trimble, a difficult man, established early in the assembly a name for imploding.

Mo Mowlan, the remarkable British Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, once claimed that her every meeting with Trimble culminated in his storming out.

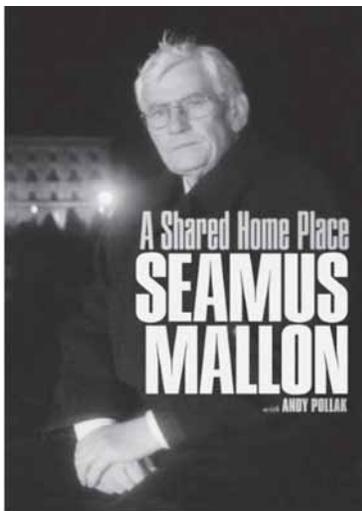
Mallon’s own capacity to be difficult is also well-known, but his instincts in heated moments are very different. Mallon is a bullish demander; a born confronter; a stayer.

In his face-offs with Trimble, Mallon

THE VIEW FROM IRELAND



By MAURICE FITZPATRICK



“The mission of politics is to try and solve apparently intractable problems with the power of words and accommodation of the other person’s viewpoint rather than the rattle of gunfire and the naked screams of sectarian hatred”

learned to lock the door to pre-empt Trimble’s walk outs. Through working together and travelling together, the two grew fond of each other.

Mallon writes movingly about the many tragedies that pockmark the last two generations in Northern Ireland.

Throughout the Troubles Mallon attempted to attend every funeral in his constituency, irrespective of which ‘side’ was bereaved.

Two sets of funerals, which he jointly attended with Trimble, form pivot moments in his memoir.

One was the funeral of two young men from Poyntzpass, lifelong friends, one a Catholic and the other a Protestant, who were murdered by Loyalists.

Within a month Mallon and Trimble led their parties to sign the Good Friday Agreement.

Similarly, at a time of high tension in Northern Ireland (July 1998, in the wake of the Drumcree Standoff) the attendance of Trimble and Mallon at the funeral of the three Quinn brothers – small children who were killed when their home in Ballymoney was petrol-bombed – enabled people to find the courage to continue to support the political process.

Policing, Mallon argues, is the kernel of the North’s stability: “It is only through justice that we can create peace.”

It is therefore unsurprising that one of Mallon’s central undertakings and achievements as deputy first minister was replacing the RUC, whose policing had been compromised through collusion with Loyalist terrorists and which was inhospitable to the Catholic population, with a reformed police force (the PSNI) which has broad-based support.

He also worked assiduously to ensure that the IRA decommissioned its arms.

The closing three chapters of the book attempt to articulate a proposal that the Good Friday Agreement requirement of 50 percent plus one in referenda in Ireland, North and South, to establish Irish unity ought to be revisited.

To Mallon, the vista of a very slight majority is unsettling and threatening to the real unity required for the successful constitutional unity, which is unity between people.

While the sincerity and beneficence of his proposal cannot be doubted, it is, sadly, very hard to see it working.

The enormous success that the Good Friday Agreement with its support of ‘the two governments’, the political parties in Northern Ireland and the majority of the electorates North and South is seriously undermined by the ongoing inertia at Stormont.

Reconsidering a fundamental provision of the Agreement at this time risks both deepening the division that ruptured the assembly, and steering the focus of more towards numerical support in favour or against Irish unity.

It is also jarring as the memoir form is not easily amenable to launching new political departures.

Even so, it does nothing to diminish the value of this book, which stands with the best work written on Northern Ireland.

The importance of Mallon, now aged 82, giving us the story of his political life cannot be overstated.

Mallon’s role in maintaining constitutional politics during the Troubles, in negotiating and implementing essential provisions for shared government is immense. (U.S. Senator George Mitchell has referred to Mallon as one of the best negotiators he has ever met).

Above all, Mallon’s courage an alternative title for the memoir might be ‘Standing Your Ground’ and authenticity in all aspects of his political life rings through these pages.

I loved this book.

A Shared Home Place by Seamus Mallon (with Andy Pollak) is published by Lilliput Press.



THE STORMONT Parliament Building in Belfast is the seat of the Northern Ireland Assembly, the devolved legislature for the region. The Assembly has been suspended since its collapse in January 2017.

Parties need ‘time and space’ to reach Stormont agreement says NI Secretary of State

BELFAST – Secretary of State Karen Bradley has said that Northern Ireland’s political parties need “time and space” to agree a power-sharing deal.

Bradley was speaking on July 1 ahead of a round-table discussion with the parties and Irish Foreign Minister Simon Coveney.

Politicians had earlier said that any deal would have to be reached before the summer period, with parading season contributing to rising tensions in Northern Ireland.

However, Bradley said that she did not believe an “artificial deadline” should be placed on the talks process.

She told the BBC that “difficult issues” remain outstanding in the talks process. “The fact is the politicians are there, there’s a will around the table and there’s a will in the room.”

The Secretary of State declined to state whether the previous eight weeks had moved the parties any closer to com-

promise on the outstanding sticking points.

The Northern Ireland Secretary said she was more focused on facilitating a Stormont return than who would be replacing Theresa May as prime minister.

“The important thing for me is that there are no distractions to restore the executive,” Bradley said. “My view is that we need to focus on that today.”

The Assembly collapsed when the late deputy First Minister Martin McGuinness resigned over the RHI Scandal in January 2017.

The latest round of talks started after the murder of journalist Lyra McKee by dissident republicans in Derry in May.

Talks between Sinn Fein and the DUP collapsed in February 2018 after a disagreement over an Irish Language Act.

The parties also remain at loggerheads on same-sex marriage.



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, LMC, ST

Novena to St. Peregrin

O blessed St. Peregrin, who was miraculously cured of an incurable cancer, I come before you on behalf of all those who suffer with cancer, especially (name person). I ask that you plead for them, asking God to bless their doctors with the wisdom and knowledge needed to bring their cancer into full remission or cure them of it completely. As they are being treated, ask the Lord to grant them the grace and strength to bear their illness with courage, patience and dignity. St. Peregrin, wonder-worker, I am confident in your help for all those afflicted with cancer, especially (name person). Amen.

Publication of a novena is \$25



THE PARENTS of murdered Irish schoolgirl Ana Kriegel, Geraldine and Patric, on a bench after they planted a white cherry blossom tree in her memory.

Parents of murdered schoolgirl Ana Kriegel plant cherry blossom in her memory

LEIXLIP, Co. Kildare – The parents of the late Ana Kriegel planted a tree in memory of their daughter on June 29.

It was a white cherry blossom planted on a sunny patch of lawn just by the patio of the Leixlip Manor Hotel.

As the sun came out over the garden, Geraldine Kriegel told a crowd of more than 200 people that her daughter was there in spirit.

She read a short speech, “We are grateful to the owners of the Leixlip Manor Hotel and, of course, Majella, for this lovely idea of having a special place to remember Ana.”

Geraldine thanked their friends for organising everything for them and everyone there saying, “Thank you all for coming to join us today and for the wonderful support that all of you have given us over the past year.”

A hearty round of applause went up and several faces among the crowd blinked furiously to hold back tears as they planted the tree.

A wooden bench with a plaque stating “Forever loved, forever cherished, Ana Kriegel” was also unveiled next to the cherry blossom tree. Ana’s parents took a seat on the bench, holding the plaque between them. It was an emotional moment.

Majella Kernan-Finlay, the general manager of the Leixlip Manor Hotel, explained how the ceremony came about. The Kriegels held a reception there after Ana’s funeral last year.

“The day of the funeral, I suggested that if they wanted, we would plant a tree in the garden in her honour and a place to sit, so they could come and watch it blossom,” said Majella.

“They loved the idea. Geraldine and Patric chose the spot where the tree was planted and where a seat would go beside it.

“They also chose a white cherry tree. It flowers in May which is the month that Ana died,” she said.

Ana Kriegel was found murdered in an abandoned farmhouse in Lucan, Co Dublin, in May 2018 after she had been reported missing by her parents.

She had turned 14 not long before she was killed. She had a passion for singing and swimming, and liked laughing, dancing, and being with her family.



ANA KRIEDEL

Ana was born in Russia in February 2004, and adopted by the Kriegels at the age of two-and-a-half.

But the first-year student also suffered horrific bullying and was endlessly tormented in the months leading up to her death.

She was targeted on social media through her Snapchat and YouTube accounts.

On the first day of the murder trial, Geraldine Kriegel told the court her daughter was very vulnerable and despite looking older than her 14 years, she was a “child on the inside.”

After the verdict, her father told media their daughter Ana was “our strength.” Her mother said, “Ana was a dream come true for us, and she always will be. She’ll stay in our hearts forever loved and forever cherished. We love you, Ana.”

Two 14-year-old boys were found guilty last month of her murder. They are the youngest convicted killers in the history of the Irish State

Both boys have been granted anonymity due to their age, and were referred to as Boy A and Boy B throughout the trial.

Boy A was also found guilty of aggravated sexual assault in a manner that involved serious violence to her.

The trial attracted considerable media attention and public interest throughout Ireland.

A close relative of Ana’s who did not wish to be identified said the last year had been “extremely hard” for the family. She said, “Moments like this can help us celebrate Ana’s life.”

Hemochromatosis: The early diagnosis that almost wasn’t

By GREG HEWITT

IN FEBRUARY 2017 I was 22-years-old and half-way through my first year of school at the Canadian Memorial Chiropractic College.

I began experiencing symptoms of fatigue, trouble concentrating and increased frequency of migraine headaches.

I thought that the increasing demands of my education were to blame for these symptoms so I made an appointment with my family doctor to get medication to manage my migraines. She referred me to a neurologist for further testing and medication.

I saw the neurologist in late June 2017. As a part of his new patient intake he ran a wide variety of blood tests including a ferritin test.

I had the blood tests done by a private lab company and signed up for the online results service. Later that week I got an e-mail saying my results were in and upon logging in I saw a red exclamation mark beside some of the numbers.

My ferritin level was 1391 ug/L (normal is 22-275) and my liver enzymes were elevated. I thought to myself “that can’t be right” and noticed that it said the tests had been repeated and confirmed. This left me to quite frantically search google to find an explanation.

This was the first time I had ever heard of hemochromatosis. Soon after I called the neurologist’s office and was booked in for an appointment about a week later.

The following week which included my twenty-third birthday was filled with stress and uncertainty. In early July I went in to the neurologist’s office and he confirmed that hemochromatosis was likely the cause of the elevated ferritin level.

He was surprised to see this condition manifesting in someone so young. He had previously diagnosed hemochromatosis in a 45-year-old female referred to him for migraines but at this point she had many of the typical presenting symptoms such as bronzing of the skin and liver issues.

The neurologist sent for genetic tests which eventually confirmed that I have the most common genetic variant which leads to iron overload (homozygous C282Y allele of the HFE gene).

He prescribed medication for my migraines, referred me to a hematologist and a genetic counselor for further management.

I saw the hematologist in late July and began weekly phlebotomies (blood lettings) in early August. Within the first few treatments my liver enzymes had normalized.

I saw the genetic counselor in October who recommended my first-degree relatives get ferritin tests.

She also recommended that since my heritage is largely from the United Kingdom and Eastern Europe, I talk to my extended family to consult their physician if they were experiencing any symptoms of hemochromatosis. No one else in my family has been diagnosed with hemochromatosis.



GREG HEWITT

I went for phlebotomies consistently every 1-2 weeks until May of 2018 at which point my ferritin was down to 31 ug/L, well below the upper limit of normal.

Since then I have had none of my previous symptoms and my migraines have decreased in frequency.

In February 2019 I had a ferritin level of 154 ug/L and was advised to donate blood. If this trend continues, I will likely have to donate blood 2-3 times a year to maintain my ferritin levels at 50 ug/L.

My understanding of migraines is that they have many triggers such as diet, sleep, caffeine, alcohol and exercise. Each person has different triggers that add up to reach migraine threshold and provoke a migraine.

The neurologist said that migraines and hemochromatosis are not convincingly linked by scientific research but iron does play a role in some neurological conditions.

I would have had migraines without the iron overload, but I do think the excess iron exacerbated my migraines. Both migraines and hemochromatosis are common conditions so it is not entirely unusual to find someone with both.

I cannot express how incredibly grateful I am for my early age of diagnosis. I know it has added years to my life. What has impacted me the most about my whole experience is that at so many

points my condition could have gone undiagnosed.

If I had just accepted my migraines, as I had up to this point, I never would have gone in to my family doctor.

If my family doctor had decided to prescribe me medication in that first visit without specialist investigation I would not have been diagnosed.

I am sure many doctors would agree that a neurologist referral for every case of migraines would be a burden on the healthcare system. Ultimately, if the neurologist had not decided to check that one box on the test order form I would not have been diagnosed.

Since my diagnosis, I have learned about hemochromatosis in many of my courses. Every time the professor paints the same picture of a patient presenting with symptoms of late stage complications of hemochromatosis. They are invariably surprised when I walk up to them after class and tell them I have hemochromatosis.

I am also incredibly grateful for the work that the Canadian Hemochromatosis Society does to educate healthcare providers and empower hemochromatosis patients to advocate for the best possible care.

If you suspect that you or a loved one has hemochromatosis it is very important to advocate for a ferritin test.

Some healthcare professionals still believe hemochromatosis is a rare condition that presents only in the middle aged to elderly and therefore do not screen for it in younger people.

This is an important public health issue because as many as one in 300 Canadians have hemochromatosis.

Hopefully one day my early age of diagnosis becomes the standard rather than the exception to the norm.

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.

If you have benefitted in any way from the work of the society, please support its 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.

Protesters glue themselves to Dept of Climate Action

DUBLIN – Members of Extinction Rebellion Ireland glued themselves to the doors of the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment on July 8 to highlight what they say is “the Government blocking the Climate Emergency Measures Bill.”

The bill seeks to ban oil and gas exploration in Irish waters.

The bill was due to proceed to committee stage last month but the government said it needed a ‘money message’, which would require government support in order for it to pass.

Government ministers approved submitting a “reasoned response” to People Before Profit TD Bríd Smith, who tabled the bill, to explain why the government is using a money message to block the bill.

Paul McCormack-Cooney, who is taking part in the protest said: “Science is telling us that we have 12 years left to turn the ship around and that it will only work if we start immediately.”

Earlier this year Ireland became the second country in the world to declare a climate and biodiversity emergency.

2019 World Irish Dance Champion: A first for Edmonton Irish dancers

EDMONTON – The Mattierin School of Irish Dancing was established in Edmonton in 1993.

Two of their lead dancers, sisters Olivia and Londyn Nachtigal, returned home recently from the World Irish Dance Championships where both girls competed against top dancers from around the world.

Olivia earned a top five placement for the second year in a row finishing fourth, while Londyn was crowned 2019 World Irish Dance Champion in her category.

This is a first for Edmonton and only the second time in the history of the World Championships that a western Canadian won the title.

Having danced from a young age, Olivia and Londyn Nachtigal have risen to great competitive success having both achieved North American Titles, Western Canadian Oireachtas titles (seven times each), being undefeated at all western Canadian feiseanna for the past four years, and in the top five in the World Championships.

Londyn became western Canada's first female to win the prestigious 2018 and 2019 All Ireland Championships and Olivia was crowned the 2018 Great Britain Champion and NAFC Junior Belt Champion.

Their most recent success was at the 2019 World Irish Dance Championships where Olivia earned her spot on the box for the second year in a row, finishing fourth in the girls 17-18, while Londyn was crowned the ladies U20 World Irish Dance Champion 2019.

This is an unbelievable achievement and a first for Edmonton.

The Nachtigal girls had the honour of being featured on the cover of the November 2017 issue of *Irish Dancing Magazine*, as well as being named ambassadors for Feis App, the latest world-wide platform for all things Irish dance.

Both young adults have gained professional dance experience while on tour with the Irish Dance Theatre and Carol of the King, were accepted into and attended the Riverdance Summer School in 2017 and 2019, were featured as soloists in Shumka's 2018 production of the *Nutcracker* and are



LONDYN NACHTIGAL from Edmonton, Alberta – 2019 World Champion.

OLIVIA NACHTIGAL – Fourth place World Irish Dance Championships.



MATTIERIN SCHOOL teachers Jessica Bell TCRG, Rebecca Bell TCRG, and Merv Bell TCRG pictured with Londyn Nachtigal.

interested in joining *Riverdance* in the future.

Between dancing and training in and out of the studio, Olivia is in Grade 12 and is graduating from Strathcona high school this June and Londyn is a full

time student at the University of Alberta.

Both girls also have full time jobs and are wonderful role models to the dancers in their studio, Mattierin, and worldwide.

SEATTLE IRISH NEWS



IRISH HERITAGE CLUB volunteers who helped organize the very successful Irish Week 2019 celebrations in Seattle were treated to a dinner in their honor at Salty's in West Seattle.



(L-R) JOHN KEANE, Dónal McKeivitt, Danny Quinn, Frank Shriane and Tommy Jordan were some of the people who helped found the Seattle Gaels in 1979. They are pictured above at the Marriott Hotel on Seattle's waterfront to celebrate the team's 40th anniversary.



GUESTS (L-R) Sarah Fetterly, Katie Wahler, Laura Spangenberg, Molly Hughes, Ranko Asari, Vanessa Asari, Paula Konomos at the evening celebrations to mark the Seattle Gaels 40th anniversary. All seven will be representing the U.S. on camogie or Gaelic football teams competing in the Renault GAA World Games 2019 in Waterford from July 28 to August 1.

New U.S. Ambassador to Ireland officially begins his service



EDWARD CRAWFORD the U.S. Ambassador presented his credentials to the President of Ireland Michael D. Higgins at a ceremony in Áras an Uachtaráin on July 1. The accreditation ceremony marks the formal appointment of a new ambassador to Ireland.

DUBLIN – Edward Crawford has officially begun his term as Donald Trump's United States Ambassador to Ireland.

Edward F. Crawford presented his credentials on July 1 to President of Ireland Michael D. Higgins at a ceremony in Áras an Uachtaráin (the presidential residence), officially assuming the office of United States Ambassador to Ireland.

Crawford (81) an Ohio businessman and entrepreneur has now officially taken on the role as U.S. Ambassador 891 days after President Donald Trump's inauguration.

Since Democrat Kevin O'Malley left the position in January 2017, Chargé d'Affaires Reece Smyth has filled the role.



FATHER Bill Treacy's Phelan relatives from Ireland, his nephew, niece, grand-nephews and grand-nieces joined the Co. Laois native as he celebrated his 100th birthday at Camp Corey, the former Camp Brotherhood which he founded in Mount Vernon in 1968. Pictured above (L-R) Killian, John, Niamh, Fr. Treacy, Briege, LaReina, Marion and Finn.

SEATTLE IRISH NEWS

PASSINGS

Dan Nolan, 89, a native of Kerry who has lived in the Seattle area since 1948, died in Seattle June 12.

Ar dheis Dé go raibh a anam dílse
– May his faithful soul rest at God's right hand

JULY 14 IRISH RACES – Irish Day at the Races at Emerald Downs is Sunday, July 14 at the racetrack in Auburn.

For coupons for free admissions and free race programs contact (253) 237-2811.

Irish Day features Irish music, stepdancers, free kids activities (pony rides, inflatable slide, face painters), etc., along with thoroughbred racing. For reserved seating or dining reservations, or for more information, contact Emerald Downs directly at (253) 288-7000.

JULY 25 IRISH BASEBALL – Irish Night at the Seattle Mariners is Thursday, July 25, 7:10 PM vs. the Detroit Tigers at Seattle's T-Mobile Park.

Get there about 30 minutes early to see the Tara Academy Irish Dancers and the Seattle Police Pipes and Drums perform in center field before the game.

Reduced price tickets (\$29 & \$41) are available at mariners.com/Irish and they include a free Irish Heritage Night Mariners Cap. For more details, call (253) 237-2811.

JULY 26 CASCADIA CONCERT – The annual Ceol Cascadia Teachers Concert will be Friday, July 26 at 7:30 PM at The Evergreen State College Longhouse in Olympia.

The concert will feature instructors from the previous week's Irish Music Camp and will include: Antóin MacGabhann, Nathan Gourley and Randal Bays on fiddles; Mairéad Casey, sean-nós and step dance; Tim Collins, Anglo concertina; Pauline Conneely, tenor banjo/mandolin; Johnny Óg Connolly, button accordion; Eamonn Cotter and Catherine McEvoy, flutes; Frank Kilkelly, guitar; Mick O'Brien, uilleann pipes; and Miray Campbell, tin whistle. For more information, visit Cascadia Irish Music Week on Facebook.

100TH BIRTHDAY – On May 31, 2019, Co. Laois native Fr. Bill Treacy celebrated his 100th birthday with his Irish relatives who had traveled from Ireland, New York and Cairo (Egypt) for the occasion.

In addition to other celebrations, there was also an Irish community mass and senior luncheon on June 15 to celebrate the life of a Fíor-Ghael



By JOHN KEANE

an agreement for IAG to buy 200 Boeing 737 MAX planes.

The vote of confidence comes while the plane is still grounded after deadly crashes in Ethiopia and Indonesia that killed 346 people altogether.

A former CEO of Aer Lingus before becoming CEO of IAG, Walsh was also an Aer Lingus pilot back in the days when Aer Lingus flew only Boeing aircraft.



DUBLINER Deirdre Murphy will be a Fulbright Foreign Language Teaching Assistant at Gonzaga University in Spokane for the next 12 months where she will be teaching Irish.

(a genuine Irishman) who has provided sustained and distinguished service to the Seattle area's Irish community since he came to Seattle in 1945.

Still hale and hearty, we wish him "health and long life" as he starts his second century!

40TH ANNIVERSARY – Founded in 1979, the Seattle Gaels celebrated their 40th anniversary on June 8 with an all-day Gaelic football, hurling and camogie tournament followed by a 40th anniversary celebration in a Seattle waterfront hotel that was attended by a large and lively crowd.

It also included a congratulatory video message from Ireland's Ambassador to the U.S., Dan Mulhall, which can be viewed online at <http://bit.ly/2KGRupi>.

The person who traveled furthest to attend the party was Tommy Jordan who came all the way from Australia to participate.

BOEING BOOST – Willie Walsh, the Irish chief executive of IAG, parent company of Aer Lingus, British Airways, Iberia and other carriers, gave a huge and timely boost to Boeing at the Paris Air Show when he signed

FULBRIGHT SCHOLAR – Starting in August, Dubliner Deirdre Murphy will be a Fulbright Foreign Language Teaching Assistant at Gonzaga University in Spokane, where she will spend a year teaching Irish and also taking classes.

Currently an elementary school teacher in Dublin, she is a graduate of University College Dublin, and also spent a year studying at the University of California, Santa Barbara.

Fulbright Irish Student Awards are grants for Irish citizens to complete postgraduate research in the U.S. for a period of up to one year. While in Spokane, Deirdre also hopes to be able to participate in some of our Irish events in Seattle.

AOH START-UP – The Ancient Order of Hibernians (AOH) is attempting to re-establish a local division in the Seattle/Tacoma area.

Founded in 1836 by Irish immigrants to protect Catholic churches and clergy from attacks from nativist mobs, today the AOH is the largest Irish Catholic organization in the U.S. with over 50,000 members.

They advocate for a free and united 32 county Ireland, lobby for fair Irish Immigration reform and engage our community with donating millions of dollars a year to charity. Members must be male over age 16, of Irish birth or decent, and a practicing Catholic. For details, e-mail Ciaran McShane at: AOHtacoma@gmail.com.

GALWAY MAYOR – Independent Galway City Councilor Mike Cubbard has been elected as the new mayor of Seattle's Sister City of Galway, while Councilor Donal Lyons was elected to the position of deputy mayor.

They will serve until the next mayoral election in June 2020. It is Mike Cubbard's first time to serve as the city's first citizen on what is his second term on the Council.

A City Council voting pact means that the position of mayor will be held by independent members over the next number of years. Mayor Cubbard replaces Mayor Níall McNelis who visited Seattle this past St. Patrick's Day.

MISCELLANEOUS

- If you need an experienced live-in nanny or home-based childcare, a former leader in Scouting Ireland and former Montessori assistant is interested. For a resume, contact Sharon at sharon1_crandall@outlook.com.

- Irish Music Seisún at JJ Mahoneys in Redmond on the first Thursday of each month at 7 PM.

- Ceol Cascadia Irish Music Week is at the Evergreen State College in Olympia July 21-26. Visit cascadiairish.org

- To watch a re-cap of Irish Week in Seattle, visit: <http://bit.ly/2Ye6vC6>.



ABOUT 140 people attended open-air Mass at St. Patrick Cemetery on Memorial Day after which a bagpiper and a Knights of Columbus Honor Guard laid a wreath on the grave of a U.S. Army veteran while the *Last Post* was played by a trumpeter

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St. Martin's Parish: A treasured historical landmark and a testament to the early Irish Catholic immigrants

IF YOU drive along the winding Martindale Road in Low, Quebec, you'll spot a small ornate country church – a tidy red-brick structure topped with three silver steeples.

By **DON KEALEY**

[Ed. Note: Low is in the La Vallée-de-la-Gatineau Regional County Municipality of western Quebec, Canada. It is situated along the Gatineau River north of Wakefield, and is located within Canada's National Capital Region.]

Close by sits a white stucco rectory – once residence for the parish priest; across the road a hillside cemetery looks out over the serene, green Gatineau Hills.

Farther south along Martindale Road, in the line of vision of the church, stands an unusual memorial to its first cemetery – a triple cenotaph and a tall limestone Celtic cross.

This is the history of that church, St. Martin de Tours, and its cemeteries, which have been serving the Catholic community since it was built more than 150 years ago.

To tell the story, we need to go back to the proclamation of the Municipality Township of Low in 1858. At that time, this area was a farming settlement made up of predominantly Irish Catholic immigrants.

The Roman Catholics in Low didn't have their own church. Instead they were classified as a mission of St. Joseph's Parish in Upper Wakefield (renamed Farrelton in 1887).

The St. Joseph's resident priest served both communities, and Catholics in the Martindale/Low area had to make their way to St. Joseph's Church if they wanted to participate in Sunday worship.

However, this presented difficulties because the distance to travel from Martindale to Upper Wakefield was about five miles in each direction, along the challenging old Gatineau Road of the 1800s. Some congregants attended church masses in Low held in private homes or nearby schools.

In 1861, the congregation acquired 100 acres of land in Low, intending to build a mission church; however, they were divided on the choice of this site, so nothing proceeded and the land appears to have been eventually sold off.

Finally, in 1869, the congregants accepted a donation of 30 acres of land in Martindale from a local farmer, Patrick Sullivan.

The following year, 1870, a small 68 by 35 foot wooden church was built on this site, at a cost of \$2,845. Two years later it was blessed by Bishop Guigues as St. Martin de Tours, a mission church of St. Joseph Parish.

In early 1874 John Thomas Sullivan was recorded as the first burial in the newly-consecrated cemetery grounds, located to the south of the church.

During the 1880s, records show much-needed repairs were made to the church, an altar was added, and statues of the Blessed Virgin and St. Joseph were acquired, as well as a large

steeple and a bell, which was christened "Mary Ann Alice".

Almost 20 years later, in 1891, the Ottawa Diocese agreed to the creation of St. Martin Parish in Low. A contingent from the mission church had convinced the diocese, after guaranteeing funds to improve their church, build a rectory next door for a resident priest, and support that priest with a salary of \$600 a year.

St. Martin de Tours became the parent church of the new St. Martin Parish, and in 1892 Father L.S.D. Blondin was appointed to be its first resident priest, taking up residence a year later in the newly-built rectory.

The little wooden church was expanded and improved over time, including a major retrofit in 1898 when it was clad with over 29,000 red bricks.

A local family, the Martins, were parishioners at St. Martin de Tours who wrote regularly to one of their brothers, William, who lived in the United States. They often referred to the church and priest in their letters. In 1893, Ellie (née Martin) Tucker wrote to her brother:

"I forgot to mention before that Low has at last become a parish with a resident priest. He is French, name Blondin.

"Our church is pretty well finished with a harmonium or cabinet organ which no one plays on. [It has] fine statues of the Sacred Heart, the Blessed Virgin, St. Joseph and St. Patrick. Father Blondin believes in ceremonials and has high masses with incense etc. and any number of altar boys every Sunday."

Two years later, another brother, James, wrote: "...last year (Martindale Parish) erected a presbytery [rectory] at the cost of \$2000. Father Blondin, our present pastor, is bound to Christianize the parish and has very nearly everyone of his flock in the associations of the Holy Family and League of the Sacred Heart.

"The latter is likely to do some good as its members are bound to approach the Sacraments four times (at least) in the year and to abstain from blasphemy and public drinking."

In 1895, Ellie commented on the priest again, writing: "We think we are quite far enough at three and a half miles (from the church), but we have to be there every Sunday as Father Blondin is extremely strict."

"One of the first Sundays he was in charge of us he saw Mrs. F. and Mrs. G., who live near the church, drove away early in the morning to pick blueberries.

"The priest happened to see them going and during his sermon asked the prayers of the congregation for their conversion.

"There and then the priest and people knelt down and said five pater noster and Aves for the conversion of the erring ones!"



PHOTO: Adrienne Herron

SET IN THE SERENE, green Gatineau Hills, St. Martin's Catholic Church was built more than 150 years ago in a farming settlement made up predominantly of Irish Catholic immigrants. Today's hillside perspective of the St. Martin Parish property, looking to the east, 2018.



PHOTO: The Celtic Connection
JIM KELLY the Ambassador of Ireland to Canada at the commemorative ceremonies held in 2016 at the Martindale Pioneer Cemetery.



PHOTO: The Celtic Connection

FATHER LARRY McCORMICK celebrates mass at St. Martin's Parish in September 2016 during ceremonies to mark the dedication of two bronze plaques located at the Martindale Pioneer Cemetery.



PHOTO: Adrienne Herron
THE HEADSTONE of the first resident priest at St. Martin Parish, Father Léonide Sureau dit Blondin (the only priest buried in the St. Martin Catholic Cemetery),

Father Blondin served as priest for St. Martin Parish until his death in 1905 at the age of 43.



PHOTO: Adrienne Herron

THE METAL SIGN hanging beside the church, with its shamrock and fleur-de-lys symbolizing the parishioners' Irish and Quebec heritage, 2018.



PHOTO: Collection of Don Kealey.

AN EARLY undated photo of the St. Martin Parish property, taken from the cemetery, showing the church with its three steeples.

[Continued on page 23]



PHOTO: Adrienne Herron

THE MARTINDALE cenotaph and Celtic cross, a memorial on the site of the former Martindale Pioneer Cemetery, 2018.



PHOTO: The Celtic Connection

FATHER LARRY MCCORMICK of St. Patrick's Basilica in Ottawa, Catholine Butler, and Jim Kelly, the Ambassador of Ireland to Canada, at the 2016 ceremony to recognize those responsible for the Martindale memorial.

Around 1900, Martin O'Malley and William Farrell donated land for a cemetery across the road from the church, and it became the active burial ground for St. Martin Parish, which includes the Our Lady of Sorrows mission in nearby Venosta.

It is known as the St. Martin Catholic Cemetery, and to date there are over 700 people buried in the cemetery, many in unmarked graves.

Familiar Low-area Irish names can be spotted on the gravestones including names like Brennan, Cahill, Cuddihy, Gannon, Hickey, Kealey, O'Connor, Sullivan, McCambley, McLaughlin and McGoey, just to name a few.

Many of these names have been immortalized in the writings of award-winning local author Brian Doyle, including his book *Up to Low*.

A number of the cemetery's tombstones are inscribed with Irish symbols such as shamrocks, reflecting the Irish heritage of so many who rest there.

The names of many francophone parishioners can also be spotted throughout this holy ground such as Mayer, St. Jean, Larocque, Prud'homme and Pilon.

The original cemetery, on the south of the church, which had been active from 1874 to about 1900, was abandoned.

It would eventually be known as the Martindale Pioneer Cemetery. Former St. Martin parishioner Catholine Butler (who was born Elaine Gannon) wrote about its sad demise:

"Once there was a variety of headstones on its grounds – some just a single white cross, others ornately carved with images of shamrocks and harps. However, time wore away many of the names and dates carved into the stone and by the 1960s the old cemetery was in total disrepair."

A booklet on the cemetery's history described what happened next.

The cemetery [had] been left unmanaged and there were so many trees that it was nearly impossible to walk through it.

"Discussions rose to decide what to do with the first cemetery south of the church. It was decided in 1968 by resolution of the wardens to level the

"Fundraising took place, and under the leadership of Catholine Butler a triple cenotaph was commissioned, engraved with the names of the 169 individuals buried there, and erected near the former cemetery in August, 1977.

"Catholine Butler also led the way in the funding and creation of a 12-foot high Celtic cross, which was installed and dedicated five years later, in September 1982."

This cross honours the first Irish families of the Martindale, Low and Venosta areas, and celebrates their Irish roots.

Many of these families had survived the horrors of oppression and famine in their native Ireland, battling sickness, starvation, extreme weather conditions and the loss of many family members on their journey to a new beginning in Canada.

Numerous communities throughout the Gatineau Valley were established because of the dedication, hard work and perseverance of these early emigrants from Ireland.

In September 2016, thirty-four years after the dedication of the Celtic cross in 1982, another celebration of sorts took place at the site of Martindale Pioneer Cemetery memorial.

Local musicians Howard Hayes and Ronnie Martin played and sang traditional music to an appreciative crowd.

A gathered group of locals and dignitaries dedicated two recently-installed bronze plaques, detailing those responsible for the memorial's creation.

Catholine Butler wrote that it was "a day of heartfelt messages, of singing and laughter, of dancing and rain, and a solemn celebration. A truly Irish-inspired event."

In attendance that day was Jim Kelly, who was (and still remains in 2019) the Irish Ambassador to Canada.

In his short address, Ambassador Kelly noted that while he had been privileged to visit Irish famine memorial sites in Ireland, the United States and elsewhere, the Martindale Pioneer Cemetery memorial was one of the most impressive.

He remarked: "When we were coming out of the church above, my wife Anne said to me 'Doesn't this remind you of the church in Granagh?' which is Anne's local church in County Limerick.

"It occurred to me that for those who survived the horrors of the Great Famine, there must perhaps have been some small comfort in the familiarity of this beautiful countryside in what many of them would have known before in their life in Ireland."

The Martindale Pioneer Cemetery memorial remains a treasured historical landmark, nestled in the rolling hills in the heart of the Gatineau Valley.

Like many other religious communities, St. Martin Parish has seen a decline in regular attendance at its church services and the parish rectory stands vacant.

However, the spirit of its parishioners remains strong, and they hold onto their religious traditions. This Catholic church and its cemeteries are a testament to the many traditions to be admired and preserved in the Gatineau Valley.

NOTE: This article was originally published by the Gatineau Valley Historical Society (GVHS) in Volume 45 of *Up the Gatineau!*, its annual local history journal, and is reprinted here with the express permission of the Society. For more details on the GVHS, a not-for-profit organization located in Chelsea, Quebec, see www.gvhs.ca.



A POIGNANT ceremony was held at Cap-des-Rosiers in the Gaspé area of Quebec on July 4 to pay homage to the victims of the Carricks shipwreck of 1847. The ceremony was attended by members of the clergy, descendants of the survivors of the shipwreck, dignitaries from the Gaspé region, representatives of Parks Canada, along with Laura Finlay, Second Secretary with the Irish Embassy in Ottawa, as the representative of the Government of Ireland.

Irish Famine victim remains finally laid to rest in Canada

GASPÉ, Quebec – A solemn ceremony was held at Cap-des-Rosiers in the Gaspé area of Quebec on July 4 to pay homage to the victims of the Carricks shipwreck of 1847. This is the location of the Irish Memorial, north of the Forillon National Park.

The bones of three children washed up on a beach at Cap-des-Rosiers following a storm in 2011. The remains of 18 others, mostly women and children, were uncovered by archaeologists on the beach in 2016.

Experts have now said the remains were from the 1847 Carricks ship from County Sligo carrying victims fleeing the Irish Famine.

The famine killed more than a million Irish people and forced about a million more to emigrate after blight devastated the potato crop.

The Carricks ship was carrying 180 emigrants when it sank off the coast of Cap-des-Rosiers en route to the Port of Quebec.

Only 48 people survived the accident and, according to historical accounts, 87 bodies recovered from the shipwreck were buried on the beach.

During the very moving ceremony, a speech by Georges Kavanagh (himself a descendent of the survivors of the Carricks shipwreck) gave attendees a deep insight into the harsh conditions and difficult journey faced by the souls aboard the ship.

Parks Canada said analysis carried out by the bioarchaeology laboratory at Montreal University indicated the 21 individuals found had followed a rural diet mostly based on potatoes, and suffered from diseases associated with malnutrition.

The memorial to the Irish was built in 1900 in memory of the lost passengers of the Carricks shipwreck, and features the ship's bell which was found in 1968 on a beach on Quebec's north shore.



PHOTO: Parks Canada
ARCHAEOLOGISTS examine the 1847 Carricks shipwreck at Cap-des-Rosiers beach in Quebec.

Canada's National Revenue Minister Diane LeBouthillier said the discovery was "very significant for Irish families whose ancestors were Carricks passengers."

"During the Great Famine of Ireland in 1847, Canada became the home of many Irish immigrants," she said.

"The tragic events of the Carricks shipwreck are a startling reminder of just how difficult the journey was for the travellers and that not everybody was lucky enough to reach their new home. This shipwreck reflects an important part of Canadian history."

Speaking to the CBC, Isabelle Ribot, associate professor of bioarchaeology at Montreal University, said the discovery was in keeping with local oral history, which suggested there was a mass grave of shipwreck victims on the beach.

"Our skeletons reflect what we eat," she said, adding that the bones found belonged to people who had suffered chronic health problems likely caused by the famine in Ireland.

"Knowing the context and knowing there are descendants of the people who survived, it is very emotional and very sensitive," she said.

It is estimated that 100,000 fleeing famine victims set out for Canada in 1847 alone and that 20,000 of them died on the voyage or at the quarantine station at Grosse Isle.

Meet our distribution team who spring into action to deliver each new issue of *The Celtic Connection*

VANCOUVER – There are a lot of pieces to putting a newspaper together, it's a bit like a jigsaw puzzle with each piece interconnected and each dependant on the other.

Advertising, interviews, columns and articles are all forwarded to our editor for final proofreading and assembly. When the final product goes to the printers, we all wait with anticipation to see the results as the papers roll off the press.

That's when things start to heat up on the distribution and delivery side. It's a hectic time as drivers start arriving in to pick-up their routes and rush off to get on the road as soon as possible.

It's also the time when we can draw a sigh of relief as we know the papers are finally dispatched to our drop-off points and off to our various locations.

We feel a sense of achievement with each new issue, particularly knowing it will soon be in your hands – our loyal readers.

We thought we would pay tribute to our distribution team this month and introduce you to some of those dedicated people who work through all kinds of conditions to make sure you receive the latest issue of *The Celtic Connection* as soon as possible.



COLLEEN, CATHOLINE, LINDA AND ALLISON are pictured above sitting on stacks of our March issue of *The Celtic Connection*.



FRANK delivers in Langley and Surrey.



JOANNE distributes papers in Maple Ridge and Mission area.



DEIRDRE AND KATHLEEN along with Mary (not pictured) deliver in the White Rock area. They also deliver to the Irish Club of White Rock.



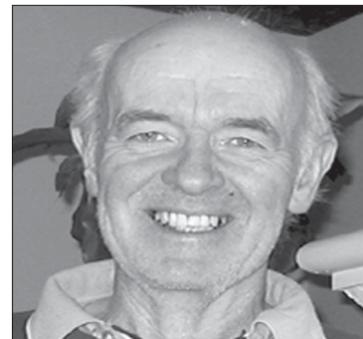
EIFION delivers in Vancouver, Burnaby and Burnaby Heights. He also delivers to the Cambrian Hall at Main and 17th Avenue in Vancouver.



HAZEL navigates the traffic and construction to deliver to downtown Vancouver.



BO delivers to Vancouver, South Granville, False Creek and Granville Island.



OLIVER delivers papers in the Edmonton area.



ARLYN prepares the papers for mailing to our subscribers.



HEATHER delivers in Seattle and she is pictured with her granddaughter Ava who helps with deliveries. She is pictured above alongside (L-R) Brendan and David who also deliver throughout the Seattle area.

Fadó: The video game merging Irish myths with modern tech

DUBLIN – As a video game hero, St. Patrick is certainly an untapped resource.

So, too, is St. Bridget, a figure who can be interpreted from Irish mythology as either a “very ancient, pre-Christian or even pre-human person who came to Ireland thousands of years ago,” or as “a young woman working in the first millennium.”

That's according to Fionn Keeley, the Irish creator of Fadó, an independent role-playing game (RPG) based on the figures and legends of Irish mythology, including Fionn Mac Cumhaill, Cú Chulainn and – yes – the Salmon of Knowledge.

With countless franchises built from mythology – from the Scandinavian spectacle of the Thor films to the beloved adventures of Lara Croft in Tomb Raider – it is clear that folklore and legends are highly bankable.

But this is particularly true when it comes to gaming: folklore, like video games, are collaborative and open to endless interpretations.

Interpretation or not, a foundation of knowledge is necessary if you're go-

ing to play fast and loose with the Salmon of Knowledge. Keeley explains that his first port of call was to draw up a “flow chart” of the legends he knew and develop it from there.

Drawing on resources from Library Ireland, University College Dublin and University College Cork, which have large sets of translations of Irish texts, and Dúchas, Keeley verified the stories he wanted to develop.

With Dúchas, in particular, Keeley dove into the history of Ireland using its interactive map of resources, where clicking on a specific area in the country will bring up collected accounts of

local customs and traditions. Cultural practices and customs also need translating and contextualising, particularly for players who are not Irish.

“People were a lot more preoccupied with oaths,” Keeley says, “and if you put someone under your protection, if anyone ever harmed them, that would be enough to start a war over.

“There's one particular concept, which was a geas – a semi-magical promise, “it's almost like a curse, but it's something that a particular person can't ever do.

“There's some that are like, you can never refuse hospitality, or you can never eat dog meat.”

We're going to bet Cú Chulainn came up with that last one.

Although Fadó is not yet released, Keeley presented a demo of the game at Dublin Comic Con in the summer of 2018, which received a lot of positive feedback and attention.

“It's very close to the release of a first part,” Keeley says, adding that his plan is to release chapters one by one or do a soft release, followed by a larger release of content.



PHOTO: Fadó
NEWGRANGE as you've never seen it in the new video game created by Irish designer Fionn Keeley. Fadó is an independent role-playing game based on the figures and legends of Irish mythology.