

January 2015

DÚCAS

Irish American Cultural Institute Newsletter



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Welcome to the latest edition of the IACI e-news. Founded in 1962, the IACI is the leading Irish American cultural organization. The IACI is a federally recognized 501(c)(3) not-for-profit national organization devoted to promoting an intelligent appreciation of Ireland and the role and contributions of the Irish in America.

Sincerely,
Carol Buck
Irish American Cultural Institute

Save the Date—IACI Washington's St. Patrick's Day Ball



Each year, the IACI honors a distinguished Irish-American for their contributions to arts & culture, community, heritage, or business with the presentation of the Annie Moore Award. Annie Moore, a 15 year old from County Cork, Ireland, was the first immigrant processed at Ellis Island on January 1, 1892, and is representative of the contributions of the Irish to this country. The Irish American Cultural Institute conceived and developed the project that resulted in statues of Annie Moore being placed at Ellis Island and Cobh, her departure point in Ireland.

This year's honoree is John A. Brennan, MD, MPH is the Executive Vice President for Barnabas Health and the President and CEO of Newark Beth Israel Medical Center and the Children's Hospital of New Jersey.

The award will be given at the IACI Washington's St. Patrick's Day Ball, Saturday, February 28th, at the Madison Hotel, Morristown, NJ. Entertainment will be provided by Celtic Cross. Please visit <http://www.iaci-usa.org/washingtonsirishball.html> for more information.

IACI Donates Irish Library to Ireland's Great Hunger Institute at Quinnipiac University

First editions and rare copies of works of many of the giants of Irish literature will now be more accessible to historians and students, thanks to the generosity of the Irish American Cultural Institute.

The institute has donated its library of nearly 4,000 books of Irish interest to Ireland's Great Hunger Institute at Quinnipiac University, Dr. Peter Halas, chairman of the Irish American Cultural Institute, and Christine Kinealy, director of Ireland's Great Hunger Institute, announced in a joint statement.

The library, with notable valuable editions that have been collected over 50 years, includes the works of many of the greats of Irish literature, including works by Lady Gregory, W.B. Yeats, J.M. Synge, James Joyce, George Bernard Shaw and Sean O'Casey. Also included in the collection is a Dublin newspaper, "The Weekly Irish Times," which was published in 1916 in the immediate aftermath of the Easter Rising, which proved to be a pivotal event in the winning of Irish independence.

The library also includes a complete 50-year collection of 'Eire-Ireland,' the IACI published leading Irish studies academic journal, with ongoing semiannual editions that will continue to be added to the collection.

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Library Donation (continued)

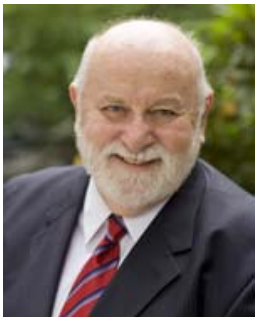
"The Irish American Cultural Institute, board members, director, chapters and members are pleased and excited to join Quinnipiac University and The Great Hunger Institute in a mission to promote and appreciate Irish history with the donation of our library," Halas said.

Kinealy, who also is a history professor at Quinnipiac, said, "The books in the IACI library are an excellent resource for teaching and for scholarship. We are delighted that the Irish American Cultural Institute has chosen the Great Hunger Institute to act as stewards of its wonderful collection. We are working with the staff in the Arnold Bernhard Library at Quinnipiac to make the books available to students and researchers. We see this donation as the beginning of a wonderful partnership between the two institutes."

Robert Smart, dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at Quinnipiac, said, "The addition of the IACI collection to Ireland's Great Hunger Institute and the Arnold Bernhard Library at Quinnipiac is a major step toward making the institute a powerful engine for student scholarship on campus. Students now have access to a wide and deep catalog of texts on Irish literature, history, culture and society—many of them original editions—which can become the portal to a rich understanding of Irish studies. The collection will also have much value for external scholars who will no doubt see these additions to our library holdings as an indication of the centrality of Quinnipiac University in the expanding field of Irish studies."

Founded in 1962, the Irish American Cultural Institute is the leading Irish American cultural organization in the United States. It offers programs on both sides of the Atlantic that support and promote Irish and Irish-American artistic and cultural initiatives.

Located at Quinnipiac University in Hamden, Ireland's Great Hunger Institute is a scholarly resource for promoting the study of the Great Hunger, and its causes and consequences, in North America. The Great Hunger occurred from 1845-52, when blight destroyed virtually all of Ireland's potato crops for consecutive years. The crop destruction, coupled with British governmental indifference to the plight of the Irish, who at the time were part of the United Kingdom, resulted in the deaths of more than 1 million Irish men, women and children and the emigration of more than 2 million to nations around the world. This tragedy occurred even though exports of food and livestock from Ireland continued and, in some cases, actually increased during the years of the Great Hunger. For more information about the institute, visit www.quinnipiac.edu/great-hunger-institute.



It Is A Blessing To Be Irish

By Raymond Aumack

Irish Heritage: Each year leading up to St. Patrick's Day, I have a little fun telling Irish stories and I hope everyone can relate to them. Like all of us from many beginnings, I have a great deal of pride in my Irish heritage, in the history and legends of Ireland and her heroes, and now, in her enviable step from being one of the poorest of the third world countries into a nation of real influence among the nations of the world..

However, it is very important for the one out of eight Americans who have an Irish ancestry to remember our roots, our heritage, and to remember where we have come from to have a better appreciation of who we are and where we are going. What does it mean to be Irish and how does our Celtic past influence our lives and the people we have become?

Americans may often be full of "baloney, but the Irish possess the gift of **Blarney**. Bishop Sheen once defined baloney as flattery laid on so thick, it cannot possibly be true and blarney as flattery so thin, we love it. It is the irresistible charm and the way with words that can simultaneously flatter and deceive, but never with the intent to offend.....well, almost never, maybe. the Celtic

Irish music is loved the world over and Riverdance, Celtic Woman, and Celtic Thunder prove it. But the music comes from God. Traditional Irish music flows from the sound of the wind flowing over the hills, especially the Burren in County Clare. It is the sound of the songbirds hovering over the western cliffs. It is the sound of the restless sea battering the shore. The bass sounds are the roar of the wind in a storm. Baritone sounds are the bleat of the animals, the mooing cows, and the neighing horses. Tenor sounds are the songs of the birds and the laughter of children. A musician will announce that he received the tune from a shepherd in County Cavan. The shepherd heard the sounds of the earth and with a little imagination came up with the tune.

It Is A Blessing To Be Irish (*continued*)

Turlough O'Carolan (1670 – 1738) is to the harp in much the same way as Stradavarius is identified with the violin. Every harp he made is a precious musical instrument. He is also the composer of a considerable body of music. He traveled the length and breadth of Ireland to play the harp and sing in every community and great house that he could find. His accomplishments are all the more marvelous when you consider he was blinded by small pox at the age of 14. He has an American connection. He wrote the stirring music to which Francis Scott Key added the words that became our national anthem.

Irish Poetry and Literature is very special. It began with the seanchai, the story-teller. Going back into ages before Patrick arrived on the scene in the fifth century, it almost appears that the Irish language was constructed for poetry and stories. The story is told that when Oscar Wilde was taking his exams at Oxford, the hours allotted for the exam were passing and he had not picked up his pen. The examiner had read the story of the marriage Feast of Cana and the students were required to write an essay on the scene.

Just before time was expended, Wilde picked up his pen and wrote, "The water saw its Lord, and blushed." He had a great career as a playwright, so I presume he passed the exam. Seamus Heaney and William Butler Yeats are Nobel prize winners. The Irish can also boast of Jonathan Swift, Samuel Beckett, James Joyce, Sean O'Casey, Brendan Behan, and George Bernard Shaw among many others including Edna O' Brien, Maeve Binchy, Sebastian Cabot, Colm Toibin, and many other men women whose prose reads like poetry and whose stories rise from the land and the hearts of its people.

Pubs are often thought of as taverns where undisciplined men would go to drink. Nothing could be farther from the truth. Pubs offer camaraderie, good food, music, a meeting place for the community, and an atmosphere suitable for families. It is here that politics, history, stories, music, and dance might be shared. In the rural villages it is clear that the most important institutions in the community are the two churches, one Catholic and one Protestant, and the pub. I love pubs. A pint of Guinness can last an hour and each sip improves as you make your way to the bottom of the glass. The Irish monks of long ago thought they made a wine so rich they called it, the water of life (Uiska Beatha – pronounced whiska baha and from whence comes our word, whiskey.) Irish Pubs are found in every major city of the world and it seems as if a new one opens each and every month in America. One of the requirements for a tavern to be called a pub is that it provides live music.

Legends.

The legends of the Celts and the Druids are preserved in oral history that is gradually being rediscovered and written. There is an element of truth in all of these legends. That is why they were told in the first place, to communicate truth. Did you know that St. Brendan was in America 900 years before Columbus? The Chronicals of St. Brendan, a son of County Kerry, describe a fantastic voyage with stops in Iceland, North America, up the St. Lawrence River to the regions of the great lakes, and all the way down the east coast of America. We have found their tools and settlements, so it must be true. When they saw the forests of North Carolina, they thought they had found the Garden of Eden. Brendan sailed to the southern tip of Florida before he turned left and sailed back to Ireland. We also know that Lief Erikson, Columbus, and Amerigo Vespucci were aware of the Chronicals and even had Brendan's maps. Columbus was such a great navigator, he missed his targeted destination by more than 2000 miles.

And then there is **St. Patrick**. He was not the first Christian missionary in Ireland but he was the most effective. In the mid fifth century a Celtic king in northern Ireland, known as Niall of the Nine Hostages, captured a young Brit named Maewyn Succat during one of his raids. He was the grandson of a Christian Monk and was considered patrician by the Romans, and hence, his adopted name of Patrick. Patrick was a slave in Ireland for six years, earned the trust of his captors, and became well-versed in their language and customs. He left Ireland and traveled to France where he studied for the Priesthood. Twenty years after he left Ireland, he returned to start his ministry. He successfully imposed Catholic theology blended the existing Celtic culture and modified only those practices that conflicted with Christian teaching. He established a system of monasteries that, by extension, became towns and villages. Christianity took hold of Ireland and never let go. Long before women in orders became an issue, Patrick appointed Abbesses to lead communities that became the cities and villages of Ireland.

No one wrote a biography of Patrick and all that we have of his writings is a prayer called the "Breastplate." He must have been a fascinating person because the Irish would not tolerate less. His legend has lived a long time, so it must be true.



The Power of Irish Wisdom

By Renee' Gatz, Author of Wise Words and Witty Expressions
www.reneegatz.com

Make peace with it—simple words that when strung together offer wise advice for bringing calm and perspective to any situation that causes consternation. It makes sense. Instead of creating a lot of negative energy by focusing on how arbitrary, unfair or annoying a challenge is, we adjust our mindset to finding a way toward acceptance and in doing so take back our peace. This is easier said than done, but better than the alternative of living in discontent.

By making peace, we do not surrender to unacceptable behavior or forgo taking steps to improve a poor situation. Making peace means having the willingness to accept things as they are rather than maintaining hostility that they happened. Through an attitude of acceptance, we are better positioned to rationally develop solutions that are more likely to bear fruit and allow us to move forward. Acceptance and peace do not ensure that a solution will come easily and quickly, and they do not promise that we will not have to make peace again and again as we work to resolve the issue. Acceptance and peace do position us well to meet the challenge with an open mind and a positive attitude. This provides the forward trajectory necessary to resolve the problem and ultimately become stronger for the experience.

When we don't have peace as we move through difficult situations, we make a bad situation worse. The absence of acceptance and peace invites self-pity to take up residence in our minds and our hearts. This destructive emotion encourages a lamenting of our woes that only brings us further and further away from our peace. This use of energy and time will not make the situation easier to bear or banish it from our lives. It will only serve to erode our spirit, making us less than rather than greater for what the difficulty was intended to teach us. The good news is that our peace is always accessible by merely changing our approach to how we view the challenges in our lives.

Each challenge we face provides us with an opportunity to learn but not every challenge can be resolved. These situations provide us with the opportunity leverage our inherent wisdom to know the difference between giving up and moving on. When we have done all we can, sometimes the lesson is about closing one chapter in our lives and beginning another. This choice is not about giving up but rather about accepting that a specific time in our life has taught us all it can and that it is time to embark on new opportunities. Making peace with that choice means that we don't feel as if we were pushed out or wasted our time but that we are grateful for what we learned and wish those that we leave behind well. By entering our new chapter with a peaceful heart, we ensure our happiness and future success.

Peace within us creates peace within the world. It is conscience choice we make each day. When we elect to make peace with our lives, we **lead by example**. We can never know who is watching and learning from us but we can rest assured that how we choose to embrace life will have an impact on ourselves and those around us. By making peace with our lives, our challenges don't consume us. Instead we ensure joy and light can find their way into our lives and the lives of those around us helping to create a more harmonious world for all.

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Jersey Shore Chapter News

The Jersey Shore Chapter invites you to attend their monthly presentations:

2/9/15 "GLENN CEOL" TRADITIONAL IRISH MUSIC

3/9/15 MICHEAL OMAILLE SAINT PATRICK

4/13/15 CHRISTINE KINEALLY FAMINE CONTRIBUTIONS

5/11/15 (HENRY, McNALLY) REBELLION TO REPUBLIC 1

Donation \$15, Seniors & Students \$10, IACI Members and Sponsors are welcomed guests. Light refreshments will be served. For more information, please contact Chapter President Peter Halas, MD, halasfam@aol.com.

Central New York Chapter News

The CNY-IACI celebrated its annual Féile na Bliana Nua at Inn of the Seasons on January 11th, welcoming the new year with music, food and fun. After enjoying a delicious lunch, we were entertained by the multitalented Deirdre McCarthy and the McCarthy Family, by harpist and singer Natasha Kakoroski, and by 'party pieces' by our own Lucht Ceoil and other members.

February activities will include our Film Series with Dr. James McKillop, which will be held on 3 consecutive Tuesdays, February 3, 10, and 17th. The films (in order) will be *Calvary*, *The Boys and Girl from County Clare*, and *Langrishe, Go Down*.

We will soon be making plans to take our place in the Syracuse St. Patrick's Parade. The parade will be held on Saturday, March 14. This year's theme is "Marching Into Spring" - a hint to the Syracuse weather about what we'd like.

Finally, we were saddened by the death in early January of our longtime active member and friend Francis Patrick Murphy, Jr. Frank had been a member of the IACI since at least 1972 and was on the original board when the CNY chapter was founded in 1985.

A true scholar of Irish history, literature, music and language, Frank was a community resource on all things Irish. Everyone from his grandchildren to our Representative in Congress could ask his advice and turn to him for answers, and he shared his expertise with the CNY-IACI in presentations on a variety of topics.

He was also a Renaissance Man - a chef, a musician (playing Irish music on the Button Accordion), an expert sailor, an outstanding woodworker and clock maker and a successful businessman.

Descended from the "famine Irish" who came to Central New York in the late 1840's and early 1850's and were successful farmers, Frank was one of the authors of our multi-media presentation "An Gorta Mór."

He was a generous and frequent host for Perceptions Series speakers and for parties, both at his home and at his camp on Skaneateles Lake.

Frank will be greatly missed by many people. We extend our deepest sympathy to his family.