



NUAUGHT

Community Newsletter of St. Patrick's Society of Montreal

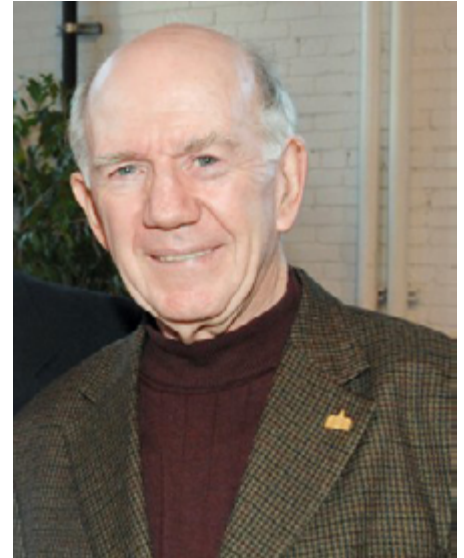
DECEMBER
2021

A MAN FOR ALL SEASONS TO BE HONOURED WARREN ALLMAND PARK

Kevin Callahan had the honour of working with Warren Allmand both in the *Coalition for Peace in Ireland* and at *Rights and Democracy*. In our cover story, he outlines how and why Somerled Park in NDG will be named for Warren Allmand.

On August 11th 2021, Montreal City Council voted in support of a motion by long-time city councillor Marvin Rotrand to change the name of Somerled Park in NDG to Warren Allmand Park. This is a fitting tribute to the immense contribution Warren Allmand made not only to his NDG constituency, but also to his native city of Montreal, and indeed to all of Canada. Among many other organizations, Warren was an active member of the St. Thomas More Institute for adult education, and he himself was indeed a "man for all seasons". He was a lawyer, a human rights advocate, a politician, an athlete (he still played for his hockey team "the Rusty Blades" when he was in his 70s), and a great humanist. Aside from representing NDG for 32 years, Warren was Solicitor General (1972-1976), Minister for Indian Affairs and Northern Development (1976-1977), and Minister for Consumer and Corporate Affairs (1977-1979). He was a driving force in passing Bill C-84 which abolished the death penalty in Canada and was also one of the first politicians in Canada to address the needs and demands of the indigenous Peoples of Canada in a respectful and serious way. After his three decades in parliament, he went on to head the Canadian government human rights group Rights and Democracy and then serve one term as a Montreal City Councillor for NDG.

The city council motion was supported by a letter from Saint Patrick's Society president Ken Quinn as Warren was deeply proud of his Irish roots and very active in the Montreal Irish community. He was a member of Ciné Gael, the St. Patrick's Society, the United Irish Societies of Montreal, and the Coalition for Peace in Ireland. Passionate about human rights and never afraid to speak his mind, Warren felt he had to do what he could to promote a peaceful and just resolution to the conflict in the North of Ireland. In 1994, he was instrumental in getting a visa for Sinn Féin president Gerry Adams to enter Canada to speak to politicians and Canadian Irish communities. This initial step heralded much greater involvement by the Canadian government in the Irish peace process with General John de Chastelain overseeing decommissioning of paramilitary weapons and Chris Patten leading an independent commission on policing. In the late 90s, the Orange Order was insisting on pushing sectarian Loyalist marches through small Nationalist areas as a provocative attempt to undermine the recently signed and still fragile Good Friday Agreement. For three straight summers, Warren led Canadian delegations to observe these marches and ensure that the British government acted in a fair way. Warren and the delegates met with all parties involved, including community groups, Gerry Adams, the reverend Ian Paisley, British Secretary of State for Northern Ireland Mo Mowlam, and Ronnie Flanagan, head of the Royal Ulster Constabulary. The patient work of the Canadian delegations helped defuse the situation and made it clear to that British government that it had to



take its responsibilities and not tolerate sectarian provocations. Warren played a key role in defusing the tensions around the marches and strengthening the peace process and the Good Friday Agreement. In 2009, along with Gerry Adams, Warren was a keynote speaker at a conference on Irish unity in Toronto organized by Friends of Sinn Féin Canada and attended by 300 people. It was his hope that the Irish peace process and a strengthened commitment to human rights would lead to a united Ireland. For Warren, his Irish identity meant an active involvement both in the Montreal Irish community and in support of positive developments in Ireland itself.

Due to the pandemic, there will be no ceremony to mark the renaming of the park for the moment, but it is hoped that next summer will see an official opening of Warren Allmand Park. The Irish community should turn out in force to honour one of its best.



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

BY KEN QUINN

It has been some time since Nuacht has been published. Know that your Society and its Executive and Board continues to progress in the best interests of the Society.

As you know, in late Spring the Society planned an online trivia night following the success of the trivia session held immediately after the Virtual Luncheon. Unfortunately for us, the weather was nice. Most people probably preferred to be outdoors after dinner than glued to their computer screens at another Zoom event. Consequently the decision was made to cancel the event with an eye towards holding an in-person trivia night when conditions allow.

The Society's Golf Committee worked diligently to organize a tournament worthy of raising funds for the Society. I am pleased to say that through the committee's diligence, the Golf Tournament was an unqualified success thanks to Chairman David Dubeau and his team of passionate committee members.

We are most appreciative of the hard work of Christie Brown and the Nomination Committee in shaping the Executive and Board of Directors for the upcoming year. We are sad to see Mary McGovern and Andrea Stanford step away from the Board but are pleased to see Lori Morrison, Shawn O'Donnell, and Kim Sullivan join the Board.

I am thankful for former Secretary Louise Guimond's attention to detail as Society Secretary and sad to see her return to the ranks of the directors. I have always said, no matter which organization I was referring to, that Secretary of any organization is the most thankless position (or least thankful?) of any organization. I am thankful that Louise is maintaining her position on the Board as a Director and looking forward to Martina Branagan's increased involvement as she assumes the position of Society Secretary.

Things within your Society and the community are still very much in flux, owing to the uncertainty brought about by the pandemic. Please do keep your ear to the ground, follow our Social Media channels, and monitor your e-mail. We do hope to have a Society Luncheon and will report about the activities of our sister societies as well as our progress regarding the Luncheon.

At this time of the year, I want to wish you and your family the very best of the Holiday Season. On behalf of all Executive and Directors, we wish you a Merry Christmas in all safety and security. We look forward to seeing you when conditions permit.



NUAHT

Community Newsletter of St. Patrick's Society of Montreal

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Submissions for Winter edition: Jan. 15, 2022

VIRTUAL SPS AGM

BY KEN QUINN

Given the current government restrictions on having gatherings in private locations, Saint Patrick's Society's Annual General Meeting took place over Zoom on December 8, 2021.

In his opening remarks at the AGM, SPS President, Ken Quinn joked that he was called the "Pandemic President" and recalled the immediate past-president, Christie Brown's comment from last year, "our first ever, and hopefully last, virtual Annual General Meeting".

Among those thanked were all the members for believing in the society and the support it gives to cultural, charitable and educational endeavours within the community; the entire board of directors for serving in exceptional circumstances and for all the ideas they contributed; Pat and Bernadette Short for the use of their dance studio for last year's AGM and the virtual luncheon on March 17, 2021; the two Office Administrators, Katie Irving and Robin Brodrick; outgoing board members Mary McGovern and Andrea Stanford as well as Louise Guimond, stepping down as Secretary while remaining on the board. The President also remembered members who have died and their various contributions to the community: Robert (Bob) Dobie, Brian O'Neill Gallery and Catherine Polson who was serving as a director on the board. We have three new board members: Lori Morrison, Sean O'Donnell and Kim Sullivan, champions and supporters of the society who do so much for the community.

Membership is down in part because we have lost some members to death and also, because of the lack of opportunities to meet in person due to the pandemic. Hopefully, things will improve on the COVID front and we can arrange events that rally the community together.

It was noted that as a result of the pandemic, the SPS focused primarily on supporting the community through donations to food banks and a list of those organizations helped was provided in the AGM booklet. We also managed to run two very successful events: the first Annual St. Patrick's Luncheon that leveraged technology creatively to gather us together to celebrate St. Patrick's Day and the recent 25th Annual Golf Tournament that had record attendance and raised a record amount to help support our cultural, charitable and educational endeavours. And yes, we missed the SPS Ball...

Volunteers are invited for two key areas of communications:

1. the **SPS WEBSITE** is an important tool for the Society. It is a repository of information about the Society, and also facilitates payment (event tickets, donations and membership). As Ken Quinn enters into his final year as president, we hope other members will express an interest in helping to maintain the site.
2. **NUAHT** is your newsletter. If you have stories you want to tell, information or news you want to share with a broader community (our readership is worldwide), please send an article to nuacht@spsmtl.com

In the meantime, if there are any changes in your contact details, or your email address, do let us know so there is no interruption in the delivery of important and relevant information to you, the members.



SPS COMMITTEE AND EVENT CHAIRS

Charity Luncheon	Pamela McGovern
Communications	Carol McCormick
Community Award	Martina Branagan
Governance and Protocol	Christopher Deehy
Investment Committee	Paul Doyle
Golf Committee	Dave Dubeau
Charitable Giving & Sponsorship Committee	Christopher Deehy
Membership Committee	Martina Branagan
Nominating Committee	Christie Brown
Strategic Planning	Vacant
Youth Wing	Caitlin Moynan

Thank you to our committee chairs for all your hard work and dedication to the society

ADVERTISING RATES FOR NUAHT

Size	One issue	Four issues	Saving
Card size	\$75	\$200	\$100
1/4 page	\$150	\$350	\$250
1/3 page	\$200	\$500	\$300
1/2 page	\$250	\$700	\$300

All submissions are to be forwarded directly to our editor, Martina Branagan at nuacht@spsmtl.com

The deadlines for submissions are usually: September 3rd, November 15th, January 15th and May 15th.

Rates do not include layout or art. Please submit all art work in JPEG/PDF, sized accordingly. Rates do not include GST and PST, if applicable.

THE SPS COMMUNITY AWARD

BY MARTINA BRANAGAN

Sunday, December 5, 2021 marked International Volunteer Day which is an international observance mandated by the UN General Assembly in 1985. It offers an opportunity for volunteer-involving organizations and individual volunteers to promote volunteerism, encourage governments to support volunteer efforts and recognize volunteer contributions to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at local, national and international levels.

St. Patrick's Society also recognizes the contribution of volunteers with the SPS Community Award that is presented annually at the SPS Luncheon, usually to just one recipient. Since the luncheon was cancelled in 2020, we presented two SPS Community Awards on St. Patrick's Day this year:

1. the 2020 SPS Community Award winner, [Peter O'Brien](#), Founding Chair, Canadian Irish Studies Foundation and
2. the 2021 SPS Community Award Winner, [Mr. James Acker](#), founder of [rugbysoupe.com](#), an organization that began during the pandemic, in his own kitchen, to prepare and deliver meals and other necessities to Montreal's homeless.

In 2022, the award will be 28 years old, having been first presented in 1993 to Reverend Russell Breen, the then pastor of St. Patrick's Basilica here in Montreal, for the wonderful restoration work that was accomplished.

So, at a time of the year when we really notice how much volunteers do in our communities, it is fitting that we invite all our readers to nominate your choice for the SPS Community Award 2022.

How do you choose? It's easy. We have two categories and your nominee can fit in either of the two or both:

1. To honour a person within the Irish community who has served in low-profile positions yet who has worked wholeheartedly for the good of the whole community.
2. To honour a Montrealer of Irish descent who has assumed a broader mandate to serve beyond the borders of our local Irish societies. His/her achievements bring honour to us all and it is fitting that we acknowledge such commitment.

Over the years, St. Patrick's Society has seen a broad and worthy selection of nominees. While there can be only one winner each year, we are always in awe at the talents and time people invest in worthwhile causes that make a difference. A list of previous winners is posted on our [website](#).

We'd like to take this opportunity to thank you for your submissions last year and to encourage you to submit your nomination for 2022 as soon as possible. Please visit the SPS webpage under the News Tab to complete the [nomination form](#).

The closing date for nominations for the **2022 SPS COMMUNITY AWARD** is **Friday, January 14, 2022**.



Mr. James Acker



Mr. Peter O'Brien

PROVIDING FOR AT-RISK SENIORS

BY SAINT COLUMBA HOUSE

The last eighteen months have been a difficult time for everyone. However, those who are among our most vulnerable were particularly hard hit. As a result of the pandemic, at Saint Columba House, we pivoted and expanded our **Take Out** program (Meals on Wheels). We prepared and delivered 10,500 hot meals over 35 weeks in 2021 to at-risk seniors living within Point Saint Charles. The program grew. We went from serving 30 at-risk seniors to 60. These seniors live with mobility and/or health concerns within our community and they have little to no support system. We went from 5,250 meals to 10,500 meals, and from 1,475.76 kilos of food to 2,951.52 kilos. Each hot meal followed the Canadian food guide and supplied a source of protein, starch, vegetables, soup or salad, fresh fruit, a dessert, and a carton of milk. For many of our seniors, this is their sole meal daily. Hot meals were delivered every Monday to 60 participants with 5 days' worth of meals supplied. All food was labeled and dated.



Within our community, 1 in 2 seniors live with a low income of 20,000 dollars or less annually and 50% live alone. Social isolation is a prevalent, pressing issue for our participants as the majority are Anglophones with little to no support system. Within Point Saint Charles, all services are offered predominantly in French and all programming is unilingual French. We are the sole organization within Point Saint Charles that offers Anglophone services.

To meet the increase in demand and ensure timely food

delivery, we created a food delivery position, incurred higher gas costs to deliver food, higher raw food costs, and food container costs.



Historically, we work closely with the Community Clinic of Pointe Saint Charles for referrals for our Take Out program. During the pandemic, as demand for this service increased, our Project Coordinator directly took calls to reduce wait times. The local Community Clinic estimates that the need for this service among seniors with health and/or mobility challenges has a list of approximately 200 seniors. Due to the need for food security among at-risk seniors, we adopted a pay if you can model to ensure that financial ability was

not a barrier. As our capacity essentially increased by 100%, we adapted by introducing a phone chain of University Psychology students to ensure that participants in this program could still receive a weekly 20-minute phone call to break their social isolation. Weekly reports were given to our Project Coordinator who would then follow up with any concerns.

The funding provided by Saint Patrick's Society allowed us to help to cover these additional costs and ensure food security for 35 weeks for at-risk seniors. Without additional funding to cover 35 weeks, we would not have been able to continue to service this number of participants and would need to return to our pre-COVID-19 numbers effectively ensuring that the incremental 30 at-risk seniors living in our community would remain unserved and experience mounting food insecurity and increasing social isolation.

We are very grateful for the support that Saint Patrick's Society has given Saint Columba House to help make this program possible.



FESTIVAL BLOOMSDAY MONTREAL

BY KEVIN WRIGHT



Festival Bloomsday Montreal continued its tenth anniversary celebrations by presenting a few events outside the regular time reserved for the festival. The first of these events was held on October 3: a concert of traditional Celtic music featuring [Kate Bevan-Baker](#), [David Gossage](#) and [Sarah Pagé](#) collectively known as Bùmarang. What made this event even more special was that it was our first event with a live audience since the pandemic began. Masks were required as well as vaccination passports. Because the Wheel Club in NDG is fully equipped to broadcast on the net, we also had audience members across the globe.

On November 14, our second event, also a hybrid production broadcast from the Wheel Club, was a series of readings featuring the work of [Suzanne Aubry](#), along with readings of the same passages

by her translator Martina Branagan. Already up to eight volumes, the story of Fanette deals with the life of an Irish orphan, Fionnuola O'Brennan, who comes to Quebec at the height of the Famine in 1847. Interspersed in the readings was music appropriate to the selections performed by Jonathan Moorman and Sean Dagher, two members of the group [The Swindlers](#).

An interesting fact about the author is that she is a direct descendant of the first Irish person in Canada who came to Quebec in the seventeenth century via France. Tadgh O'Brennan's name underwent several permutations to finally become Tec Aubry because people could not pronounce his Irish name.



Our next event will be on February 2, 2022, James Joyce's birthday and the hundredth anniversary of the publication of Ulysses. Among the presentations will be an interview by Dennis Trudeau with Kevin Birmingham, the best-selling author of *The Most Dangerous Book: The Battle for James Joyce's Ulysses*.

Later in the same month, we will present a reading of a play about a tourist couple trying to rekindle the spark in their marriage when a body washes up on the beach in Sligo. Talk about a fifth wheel!

To be able to see the concert, the readings from Fanette, or to get updates on James Joyce's birthday celebrations, or the play, go to our website: bloomsdaymontreal.com.

Please be safe! Nollaig shona dhaoibh! Happy Christmas to all!

DEATH OF A CHIEFTAIN, WHAT A LEGACY!

BY MARTINA BRANAGAN

Paddy Moloney, the Irish musician, composer, arranger, and producer, who co-founded the world renowned and successful folk music group, “The Chieftains”, died at the age of 83 on October 11, 2021. President Michael D Higgins and his wife Sabina Higgins attended the funeral at St. Kevin’s Church in the village of Glendalough Co. Wicklow. where a set of uilleann pipes and a tin whistle were laid on the altar in his memory. Numbers were restricted due to COVID-19, but many fellow musicians were among those who gathered to pay their last respects and members of the band accompanied the cantor during the service.

He is sadly missed by so many fans the world over. He was the only surviving original member of the group. Tributes poured in after Paddy’s death, most of them celebrating his immense contribution to our traditional music.

Music was Paddy Moloney’s lifeblood. At his requiem Mass, his son, Aonghus Moloney explained that their dad loved performing but with COVID, he could not, and tours were cancelled. It was the first time in seventy years that their dad could not play to an audience, do what he loved most and that’s when his life faded.

He also loved where he came from. He was known to say, “I’m Paddy Moloney from Dublin, Ireland, the greatest city in the world.” Indeed, Paddy Moloney was raised in Donnycarney, in the north of the city of Dublin, and began playing music at the age of six. It was his mother who bought him his first whistle, a plastic tin whistle. His was a musical family, who used to sit around, tell stories, and play music every night. “Music became everything to me, even more important than eating,” he said. At eight years old, he began learning how to play the uilleann pipes from the piper, Leo Rowsome and he later added the bodhrán and the bosca ceoil (button accordion) to the list of instruments he could play.

After he left school, Paddy worked in accounting with Baxendales, a large construction firm. This supported him while he worked on his music. It is also where he met Rita O’Reilly whom he would marry. A man with a musical vision, he experimented with musicians in duets and trios, including playing in Ceoltóirí Chualann, the traditional group led by the composer and musician Seán Ó Riada. It was in 1962 that “The Chieftains” (a name which was inspired by the Irish poet John Montague) was formed with Sean Potts and Michael Tubridy, and the band’s distinguished and distinctive sound was borne.



Paddy Moloney @ RTÉ

When he had recorded several albums with The Chieftains, Paddy left Baxendales in 1968 on the invitation of the Hon. Garech de Brún, to work full-time in the music industry as the Managing Director of Claddagh Records. He managed the label for seven years including helping to develop Claddagh’s catalogue and its market. During this time, he also produced, co-produced and / or supervised forty-five albums across a variety of genres for the Claddagh label (folk, traditional, classical, poetry and spoken word).

In 1975, The Chieftains turned professional, unheard of in traditional music at the time and so, paved the way for other groups who followed. Over their more than fifty-year career, Paddy and The Chieftains worked with a diverse range of artists including Paul McCartney, Mick Jagger, Elvis Costello, Sinéad O’Connor, Van Morrison, and Luciano Pavarotti. Paddy was the main composer and arranger of The Chieftains’ music. To add to his long list of accomplishments, he also composed music for films, including Braveheart, and Gangs of New York.

The Chieftains made Ireland’s traditional music popular, not just in Ireland but around the world. They were nominated eighteen times for Grammy Awards and won six. The Irish government formally acknowledged them as cultural ambassadors in 1989.

We offer our condolences to Rita O’Reilly, Paddy Moloney’s wife and an artist herself, his three children, Aonghus, Pádraig and Aedín (actress and producer), and his many friends throughout the world.

What a legacy! Go raibh míle maith agat, a chara agus suaimhneas síoraí do d’anam.

We wish to thank the following who contributed articles, photos and ideas to this issue of NUACHT:

Ken Quinn
Jim McDermott
Andrea Standford

Kevin Callahan
Mike Burns
Kevin Wright

Pat Short
Ken Wilson
Sarah Clark

Dave Dubeau
G. Scott MacLeod
Laurie McKeown-Thomassin

THE LUCK OF THE IRISH

BY DAVE DUBEAU

PHOTOS: LAURIE MCKEOWN-THOMASSIN

The luck of the Irish was evident once again as it was a beautiful, sunny, warm September afternoon for St. Patrick's Society 25th annual Golf Tournament. It was the Society's first in-person event since March 2020. It was obvious that people were anxious to renew old acquaintances and make new ones as a record number 172 golfers participated. Because of Covid restrictions, the format was completely different from past events. Despite a few glitches the mood was positive, and people were happy to finally partake in an in-person event.



The revenue generated was a boost for the Society and will facilitate the charitable donations to deserving organizations. I would like to thank all the golf participants, sponsors and the countless volunteers who contributed to the success of the tournament.



The committee is hard at work with the planning of next year's tournament, hopefully with fewer restrictions.

Finally, I would like to wish everyone a joyous holiday season.



THE LUCK OF THE IRISH CONT.



COUNTDOWN TO CINÉ GAEL MONTRÉAL'S 30TH SEASON!

BY KEN WILSON

Ciné Gael Montréal remains cautiously optimistic ahead of what we hope is our 30th season.

It's still difficult to believe what transpired after beginning such a promising season in January 2020. We had been very fortunate to present, in collaboration with Concordia's School of Irish Studies, a sold-out performance of the premiere of the film, **Lost Children of the Carricks**, in the much larger D.B. Clarke Theater at Concordia University.

The unprecedented response fueled our hopes for the 2020 season but all that fervour was extinguished in a matter of weeks as safety concerns rooted in the pandemic, accelerated.

Earlier this year in what should have been our 29th season, a lockdown was in effect and removed any possibility of physical gathering. However, in an effort to offer something resembling a film festival, we collaborated with the Irish Film Festival Ottawa to promote an online virtual film festival in April. The films included two that we had originally planned to present in 2020, **A Bump Along The Way** and **Rosie**.



Ever since the 2020 season was cancelled, **Antoine Maloney** was quite resourceful in curating a collection of web links to various Irish film resources on the internet and ensured that the **Ciné Gael Montréal** community was invited to watch the multitude of streaming opportunities for these films.

Furthermore, within our own community, we would also like to share some good news. Our very own **Ciné Gael Montréal**



committee members, Kester Dyer and Patrick Brodie have begun new journeys of their own: **Kester Dyer** has started a new position as Assistant Professor in Film Studies in the School for Studies in Art and Culture at Carleton University and **Patrick Brodie** is now the FRQSC Postdoctoral Fellow in the Department of Art History and Communication Studies at McGill University. We wish both of them the best of luck in their new endeavours.

We return to the original question which is whether we will be presenting films at the de Sève Cinema at Concordia University in 2022. At this point we are cautiously optimistic but much will depend on the actual situation on the ground with respect to COVID-19. We have planned a slightly shorter season and because of the fluid situation surrounding physical gatherings, we intentionally chose a later start to the season. The current plan is to present five evenings of films starting in March and end the season in early May. More news will be forthcoming in January when health guidelines can be determined with more certainty.

To stay updated, please visit <https://cinegaelmontreal.com/> for details and follow us on Facebook.



IRISH DANCING GREATS

BY PAT SHORT



Aselin Bates 1st place UNDER 15



Nolan Short All-Canadian champion under 9



Thomas Black 1st place under 9



Michaela Isaacson 2nd place



Left: James Houghton, 1st place;
Centre: Bernadette Short;
Right: Emille Choeniere-Shields, 2nd place



***Congratulations to all
who participated in
Calgary, October 2021***

PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

LAUNCH

Mike Burns and G. Scott MacLeod launched their *Water of Life* graphic novel series and presented their films *The Irishman* and *The Saga of Murdo MacLeod* on the 28th of October, 2021 at the Cinémathèque québécoise for the 16th edition of the Festival interculturel du conte de Montréal. The event was well attended and was followed by a discussion; and question and answer period hosted by Jocelyne Lamoureux.

The *Water of Life* graphic novel and film series can be ordered through their online store at <https://www.macleod9.com/store.html>

Mike Burns and G. Scott MacLeod would like to thank Le Festival interculturel du conte de Montréal, Stéphanie Beneteau, Ilia Castro, Jocelyne Lamoureux, the staff at the Cinémathèque québécoise, Nuacht and St. Patrick's Society of Montreal, Conseil des arts et des lettres Québec, the National Film Board of Canada and all of their Go Fund Me supporters for making this project possible.



CHAIRPERSON, LBPSB



See Judith Kelley's profile:
<https://fusion.lbpsb.qc.ca/commissioners-web-profile/jkelley>

Judith Kelley began her new mandate as chairperson of the Lester B. Pearson School Board on October 1, 2021. She won by acclamation back in August 2021 when no other candidate filed to be a potential candidate for the position.

Ms. Kelley has served on the English-language school board's council of commissioners for ten years and has almost four decades of teaching experience.

Ms. Kelley plans to build on and secure the LBPSB school success plan. Cindy Finn, director general of the LBPSB, stated "On behalf of the administration and staff of the Lester B. Pearson School Board, I would like to congratulate Judy Kelley on her new role. She brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to the position as well as a keen understanding of the different issues that are brought to council for discussion and approval," ... "Her input on various issues is always appreciated, and I am confident she will help council and administration navigate through some of the priority dossiers we are facing, notably in the areas of promoting equity, inclusion and diversity and ensuring the health and safety of our community in light of the ongoing pandemic."

The school board is part of a group of nine English boards that mounted a legal challenge to Bill 40, legislation adopted by the provincial government to change all school boards in Quebec into service centres.

PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

SPS VP Chris Deehy presented with Rita Adams Award



Saint Patrick's Society vice-president Christopher Deehy was awarded the **RITA ADAMS SAORISE NA HÉIREANN AWARD** at the 2021 on-line gathering of Friends of Sinn Féin Canada on November 28th. The annual award is named after the late Rita Adams, an Irish woman who was active in Toronto for decades on many human rights issues, but especially in relation to Ireland. It is awarded to a Canadian in recognition of his/her contribution to the promotion of peace and unity in Ireland. The keynote speaker at the gathering Mary Lou McDonald, Sinn Féin president and leader of the official opposition in the Irish parliament, congratulated Chris on his receiving the award and thanked him for his hard work over the years with the Montreal-based Coalition for Peace in Ireland in the cause of peace and Irish unity. She noted that Chris had participated in a Canadian observer team monitoring contentious Orange marches in Nationalist areas in 1999 and has been involved in organising 1916 commemorations in Montreal. Previous winners include Larry Bradley, the owner of the Heart and Crown pub in Ottawa, and Calgary businessman Alex O'Donnell.

Quebec MNAs **Marwah Rizqy** (St-Laurent) and **Gregory Kelley** (Jacques-Cartier) tied the knot on September 18, 2021. They are the first sitting-members to wed in the history of the National Assembly.

Greg is the opposition critic for Indigenous affairs, as well as for English-speaking Quebecers. Marwah is the Liberal party's opposition critic for education.



<https://www.montrealarabic.com>

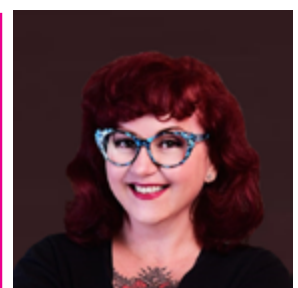


Mr. **Peter McQueen**, Projet Montréal was re-elected as City Councillor for the Borough of Côte-des-Neiges–Notre-Dame-de-Grâce.

Mr. **Patrick Whitham** (Electoral Division 3) won by acclamation for the Lester B. Pearson School Board.



Ms. **Lori Morrison** is Electoral Division 1 commissioner at the Lester B. Pearson School Board. She was recently installed as Chair of the Board of Directors of the Forest and Stream Club, a luxurious and exclusive private club in Dorval.



BREXIT BLUES MAY BRING ABOUT A NEW IRELAND

BY KEVIN CALLAHAN

While still dealing with the pandemic, Ireland is also facing a rapidly changing political landscape provoked by Brexit, the intransigence of Ulster unionism, and the duplicity of Boris Johnson's Tory government. Last December, British Prime Minister Boris Johnson negotiated with the European Union and signed the Protocol on Ireland/Northern



Recent march calling for a vote on Irish unity. Sinn Féin's Michelle O'Neill on far left.

Photo: unknown author, licenses under CC BY

Ireland which kept Northern Ireland largely within the EU economic zone. This prevented a hard border on the island, which would have violated the Good Friday Agreement and threatened the Irish peace process. This complex agreement effectively created a border in the Irish Sea.

Almost immediately, the Democratic Unionist Party, which to this day has not endorsed the Good Friday Agreement, screamed betrayal and threatened chaos in Northern Ireland if the Protocol were not scrapped. Johnson himself began calling for the Protocol to be renegotiated even though he had just negotiated and signed it. In October, after long negotiations and many confrontations, the European Union offered several concessions that were applauded by business leaders in Northern Ireland, who said that what the EU was proposing exceeded expectations. Nonetheless, the proposals were immediately rejected by Brexit Minister Lord Frost who said the UK wanted to rip up the Protocol. It is increasingly obvious that Boris Johnson is not interested in making the Protocol work because he sees non-stop conflict with the EU as popular with his pro-Brexit base. For him, Northern Ireland is just an occasionally useful bargaining chip. There is now a real possibility of a serious trade war between the UK and the European Union if Johnson continues his dangerous game of brinkmanship and double-dealing over the Protocol. Moreover, the Biden administration has made it clear that there will be no new trade agreement between the US and the United Kingdom if the Good Friday Agreement is undermined by Brexit.

Meanwhile, in Northern Ireland, the spring and summer were marred by some scattered rioting, organized by illegal paramilitaries, in Loyalist areas of Belfast. Unionist politicians have been refusing to attend all-Ireland ministerial meetings set up under the Good Friday Agreement even though a High Court declared such a boycott illegal. In a further escalation, Northern Ireland First Minister and Democratic Unionist Party leader Jeffrey Donaldson (the third leader within a year) is now threatening to collapse the Northern Ireland Assembly if the Protocol is not scrapped. This clearly electoral move is a

desperate gamble on the part of the DUP as its popular support is in free fall. However, responsibility for the current crisis is largely due to previous DUP intransigence.

When the DUP held the balance of power in the British parliament while Theresa May

was UK prime minister, the party howled for a hard Brexit and sabotaged May's compromise deal with the European Community. May's 'backstop' would have prevented a hard border between Northern Ireland and the Irish Republic and respected the legally binding Good Friday Agreement. Instead, the DUP supported soon-to-be prime minister Boris Johnson who promised that there would never be a border in the Irish Sea. True to form, Johnson soon bowed to reality (and legality) and threw the DUP under the proverbial bus. He negotiated and signed the Ireland/Northern Ireland Protocol that keeps the region under EU standards. The DUP is now hoisted on its own proverbial petard and appears increasingly desperate. Johnson has been happy to use Unionism to threaten the EU but has shown himself to be a fickle ally.

During the summer, the DUP met with illegal Loyalist paramilitaries to discuss opposition to the Protocol Agreement, and there were sporadic incidents of violence in Loyalist working class areas. It has also reneged on an agreement for an Irish language Act, which would give official status to the Irish language in Northern Ireland. Meanwhile, it has seen its popular support decline from 23% to 13%, with unionist voters heading either to the even more extreme Traditional Unionist Voice or the moderate Alliance Party. Donaldson's threat is clearly designed to win back voters by waving the traditional 'No Surrender' flag of hardline unionism. The problem for the DUP is that this strategy is unlikely to work. Many unionist voters are simply fed up with DUP's antics, seeing the party as out of touch and a political dead end. Moreover, the nationalist Sinn Féin party is at 24% in the polls in the North and is likely to be the largest party after the election set for May 2022. Sinn Féin leader Michelle O'Neill would then become First Minister and a referendum on Irish unity would be increasingly likely. Indeed, Sinn Féin is calling for public forums all over Ireland and in the Irish diaspora to discuss what a new united Ireland might look like. Ironically, the DUP's refusal to compromise or concede on anything may inadvertently promote a logical and obvious solution to the Protocol conundrum – a united Ireland.

SOLE CANADIAN RECIPIENT

2021 PRESIDENTIAL DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD FOR THE IRISH ABROAD

BY MARTINA BRANAGAN

On December 2, 2021, at Áras an Uachtaráin, **MS. BRIDGET BROWNLOW** met Ireland's President Michael D. Higgins on the occasion of the presentations of the Presidential Distinguished Service Award for the Irish Abroad 2021/2020. She was the only Canadian among the 2021 recipients of this service award and the sole winner in the category of "Peace, Reconciliation & Development" in recognition of her work with the Northern Ireland / North of Ireland Peace Education and Conflict Resolution Program.

Ms. Brownlow is President of Peaceful Schools International (PSI), Saint Mary's Conflict Resolution Advisor and a part-time faculty member of St. Mary's University (SMU), Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada where she teaches in the Department of Political Science, The Irish Studies Programme and at the Faculty of Education. She is also vice president of the Charitable Irish Society of Halifax. In 2020, she was awarded the World Peace Tartan, in Halifax in recognition of the Peace Education Program she founded at St. Mary's University.

Now in its eighteenth year, the Peace Education Program is a partnership between SMU and PSI. Students at SMU help to facilitate peace education and conflict resolution workshops with children in elementary schools in Nova Scotia and overseas. The program has grown to include conflict management and peace education training and partnerships with colleagues at Yale University and Queen's University, Belfast. Throughout the pandemic, Ms. Brownlow has continued to offer virtual weekly training sessions

overseas. As this edition of Nuacht goes to press, she is also facilitating in-person training with members of the Orange Order, Loyalist and Republican youth, the Irish Republican Socialist Party, Sinn Féin and a cross-community workshop with teachers and parents.

The fundamental principle of Peaceful Schools International is to educate for peace from the youngest age possible.

PSI has a Youth Consultancy Committee whose ideas and opinions form the basis of their projects. That committee is comprised of young people between the ages of 4 and 15. They are "tasked with using their creativity to be peacemakers in their communities."

Other Irish dignitaries present at the awards ceremony were Micheál Martin, Taoiseach (Prime Minister) and Simon Coveney, T.D., Minister for Foreign Affairs and Minister for Defence.

In his address, President Higgins recognized the diaspora who "...worked tirelessly to promote peace and reconciliation in our world." In doing this, they represent Ireland, "our nation and its Irishness with generosity and dignity, and enhance our reputation across the world." In his October 22 announcement, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Simon Coveney, T.D. acknowledged the award recipients as "some of the finest members of our global family, our diaspora," and as constant beacons for Ireland and the values we hold dear, in the "ever-changing world we live in".

Editor's Suggestion:

Let's consider inviting Ms. Brownlow to give a lecture here in Montreal and a workshop to university students with a view to getting involved to alleviate the situation we see evolving in some areas of Montreal.

For the [speech](#) from Ireland's President, Michael D. Higgins:

<https://president.ie/en/diary/details/president-hosts-distinguished-service-awards-ceremony-2021/speeches>

Note:

The Presidential Distinguished Service Award for the Irish Abroad is neither an honours system nor does it confer any legal entitlements upon the recipients.

In order to be eligible for consideration, nominees must be habitually resident outside the island of Ireland and are required to satisfy the following additional requirements:

- (i) have rendered distinguished service to the nation and/or its reputation abroad;
- (ii) have actively and demonstrably contributed to Ireland and/or its international reputation and/or Irish communities abroad in at least one of the listed categories;
- (iii) have a track record of sustained support and engagement with Ireland and/or its international reputation and/or Irish communities abroad over a period of not less than 5 years;
- (iv) or have given sustained and distinguished service on a global or international issue of importance.

The scheme is managed by the Department of Foreign Affairs and a High Level Panel established to make recommendations to Government. This Panel includes: Mr Joseph Hackett, Secretary General of the Department of Foreign Affairs (Chair), Mr Martin Fraser, Secretary General of the Department of the Taoiseach; Ms. Orla O'Hanrahan, Secretary General to the President; and four representatives from the non-Government sector.

Nominations were made by Irish communities abroad through Ireland's network of Diplomatic Missions.



IN MEMORIAM

A gentle and humble priest went home to the father on July 27, 2021. Rest in peace, Fr. Mike McKenna.

Born June 18, 1929, one of fourteen children, Fr. McKenna was ordained to the priesthood on May 26, 1956. His ministry involved working in parishes, hospital chaplain and ministry to those who were housebound, sick and dying. Even after he “retired”, he remained active right up until his 90s, serving as the spiritual director of the diocesan Legion of Mary, regularly celebrating Masses in parishes and participating in diocesan events. Even in March of this year, he renewed his driving licence.

On July 27, 2021, at the age of 92, he died peacefully at Montreal’s MUHC Palliative Care Unit. A celebration of his life was held on Wednesday, September 15, 2021 at 11:00 AM at St. Kevin Parish church, 5600 Côte-des-Neiges, Montréal. He was buried the same day at Sainte-Sophie cemetery in the Laurentides, 485 Montée Masson, Sainte-Sophie.

Fr. McKenna leaves to mourn four surviving siblings – Catherine, Dorothy, Sr. Monica, CND, and Regis (Francine) – brother-in-law Leo, and many nieces and nephews.

We extend our sincere condolences to the McKenna family, to Fr. McKenna’s close friends, and to all those who were touched by his ministry.



Fr. Michael McKenna (1929-2021)

If you would like to know more about his ministry, please read the [In Memoriam](#) entitled “A hidden but not forgotten ministry”, written by Eric Durocher of the Office for English Pastoral Services that appeared in “The Grapevine”, <https://us17.campaign-archive.com/?u=b836394aeebd8327dcfa37914&id=e5671a81df>



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GOLDEN GREETINGS WITH A SONG

BY JIM MCDERMOTT



Thomas and Linda Malcolmson, two longtime friends, were wed half a century ago in Auckland, New Zealand on August 31, 1971. It seems like only yesterday.

Back in the mid-1960s, Thomas and I made numerous voyages to the South Pacific. Thomas, originally from County Antrim, fell in love at first sight with his beautiful New Zealand born wife, Linda. They settled in Wellington, the charming capital city of New Zealand, and raised two children and a very adorable grandson.

I have been back to New Zealand a couple of times since I attended their wedding and would have participated in their golden wedding anniversary festivities, but the pandemic ruined my travel plans. A couple of days before their milestone, I contacted the CBC radio show “All in a Weekend” and their charming producer, Jill Walker graciously did the honour of playing a favorite song from the late sixties: the “The Sloop John B” by the Beach Boys. The lilting sea shanty with its fabulous harmonies brought back great



memories. Ah! Those were the days and we thought they would never end.

TELLING OUR TWISTED HISTORIES PODCAST

BY ANDREA STANFORD

All episodes of the Montreal-produced CBC podcast [Telling our Twisted Histories](https://www.cbc.ca/listen/cbc-podcasts/906-telling-our-twisted-histories) have now dropped on CBC Listen and everywhere podcasts are available.

The series reclaims Indigenous history by exploring 11 words whose meanings have been twisted by centuries of colonization.

Directed by Ossie Michelin and hosted by Kaniehti:io Horn (Letterkenny, The Man in the High Castle), the podcast guides listeners through conversations with more than 70 people from 15 Indigenous communities whose lands now make up Quebec, New Brunswick and Labrador.

<https://www.cbc.ca/listen/cbc-podcasts/906-telling-our-twisted-histories>



IRISH STUDIES AT CONCORDIA

AVAILABLE IRISH STUDIES COURSES FOR ALL CONCORDIA STUDENTS IN WINTER 2022

Ireland in the Atlantic World / IRST 398 E / HIST 398 C

Prof. Ted McCormick / Tuesday, Thursday 10:15-11:30

Modern Irish historiography has often focused on ideas about the Irish nation and on the formation of the modern Irish state, as well as on empire and diaspora in modern Irish experience. This course examines Ireland before the nineteenth century from a wider geographical perspective, setting it in the context of the early modern Atlantic world. Building on recent research that both compares and connects Irish and other histories, it pursues several themes: Ireland as a site of colonization and resistance from the later middle ages onward; Ireland as a model or “laboratory” for early modern imperial expansion elsewhere; Ireland as a part of larger Atlantic economic, political, and cultural systems and networks; and Irish people and groups as historical agents in Atlantic Europe, Africa, and the Americas.

The Irish Troubles in Film & TV / IRST 398 I / FMST 398 E

Prof. Patrick Brodie / Friday 13:15-17:15

This course will introduce students to the complex film and media landscape associated with the Northern Ireland conflict. Students will explore how news media and documentaries have presented the many sides of the 1972 Bloody Sunday massacre, analyzing Hollywood representations of nationalist and loyalist communities, learning the role of political solidarity through film and media and questioning the recent increased media focus on the aftermath of Northern Ireland conflict in the post-Brexit period.

Indigenous Language and National Literature in Ireland / IRST 398 F / ENGL 398 D

Prof. Máirtín Coilféir / Tuesday 11:45-14:30

This course examines the debates on languages, nationalities and cultural authenticity in Ireland from the nineteenth century to the present day. Taking as its focus the contact and conflict between the island’s indigenous language, Irish, and its lingua franca, English, students will explore the many ways in which language can reflect and shape art, politics, culture and identity. With an emphasis on the discourse of indigeneity in Ireland, students will consider in particular the roles of poetry, prose, journalism, oral literature, and the media in sustaining a modern language. By drawing on their own linguistic experiences, especially in the context of Montréal/Québec, students will be expected to augment course discussion on topics such as minoritised languages, bilingualism, government policy, indigenous culture, and the politicisation of speech.

Irish Songs of Exile in North America / IRST 498 A

Prof. Gearóid Ó hAllmhuráin / Monday 11:45-14:30

Department permission required. This course examines the role of music and music makers as carriers of Irish cultural memory in North America since the early nineteenth century. An advanced interdisciplinary seminar, it will draw on new theoretical and methodological currents in memory studies, historical anthropology, space-place, and soundscape studies. It will focus on the eclectic lifeworlds of musicians, singers, dancers, and collectors who facilitated the dispersal of Irish soundscapes from Newfoundland to California, and the interlocking ethnoscapings, technoscapes, mediascapes, ideoscapes and financescapes that framed them.

The Global Irish / IRST 303 AA / HIST 398 CC (3 credits)

Prof. Jane McGaughey / Tuesday 17:45-20:15

This interdisciplinary course examines the Irish experience of emigration, exile, resettlement, and diaspora, emphasizing the Great Famine and its legacy in shaping Irish communities in Canada and elsewhere. It highlights debates about the impact of the Famine, the significance of Grosse Île in Irish and Irish Canadian cultural memory, the relationship between Irish emigration and nationalism, immigrant women and how Irish communities adopted a self image of exile.

ALL IRISH STUDIES COURSES ARE PLANNED FOR IN-PERSON DELIVERY. FULL COURSE DESCRIPTIONS FOR ALL IRISH STUDIES COURSES GIVEN IN THE WINTER 2022 SEMESTER CAN BE FOUND [HERE](#).

AROUND TOWN

THE IRISH NUTCRACKER

The Irish Nutcracker is a unique show that promises to be an Irish Christmas celebration for the whole Montreal-Irish community to enjoy!

Irish dance teacher and choreographer, Bernadette Short has created an Irish version of the classic Nutcracker tale and it's back to delight us again this year. Dancers from the Bernadette Short School of Irish Dancing, and invited musicians and singers will tell the classic Nutcracker story with an Irish twist! These talented performers will use music, song and dance to tell this festive tale.

In this production, the young Clara becomes **Ciara**, the Christmas celebration takes place in an **Irish family's kitchen**, (where else?) not an elegant parlour and at her family's annual Christmas céilí, Ciara receives the Nutcracker toy from her **Uncle Ryan** instead of the mysterious Herr Drosselmeyer. After the guests have left, Ciara falls asleep with the Nutcracker doll and is transported to the **Land of the Sweets**, a dreamland of Irish snowflakes, sugar plum fairies and candy canes!

Short began choreographing the Irish Nutcracker in 2017, using Irish and classical music, with some newly composed music.

WHEN

Sunday, 19 December 2021

Matinee: 3 PM

Evening: 7 PM

WHERE

Pierrefonds Community High School
13800 Boulevard de Pierrefonds
Montréal, QC H9A 1A7



Organized by Ville Marie Feis in association with the Bernadette Short School of Irish Dancers



COST

General Admission Adults: CA\$27.54

General Admission Kids 10 and younger: CA\$16.93

Tickets are now available via **Eventbrite**.

Matinee 3pm: <https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/214841515757>

Evening Show 7pm: <https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/214840793597>

After such a challenging couple of years through the pandemic, the dancers, choreographers, and crew are extremely keen, and enthusiastic about returning to the stage!

VACCINATION PASSPORT, ID AND MASK REQUIRED FOR ADMISSION.

CLÁR IMEACHTAÍ 2021-2022 EVENTS

DATE	DESCRIPTION	CONTACT
December 15, 2021	St. Patrick's Society Christmas Reception @ Hurley's Irish Pub	See article page 19.
December 19, 2021	The Irish Nutcracker, 3PM & 7 PM, Pierrefonds Comm. High School	
March 17, 2022	SPS 188 th Annual Luncheon	
April 1, 2022	Charitable Giving Deadline #2	
TBD	26th Annual Golf Tournament	

LINDA LEITH

ESSAYS ON HER JOURNEY FROM READER TO WRITER

Vivid stories from a Canadian literary icon, who shares a life spread across continents and immersed in books.

In this series of essays, Linda Leith tells us of her journey to become a writer and discoveries about herself and the art of writing until she becomes the renowned novelist, essayist, translator and literary curator we know today.

But Linda Leith's journey is anything but easy and much of that stems from having never been told, but having lived the experience of her father's psychiatric breakdown or his subsequent shock therapy for what was then called manic depression.

As this secret is kept hidden, Leith's father uproots the family from Northern Ireland to various European cities as he reinvents himself as a corporate executive. Leith is educated in all those cities.

Eventually, the family moves across the Atlantic to Montreal. It's there, in her first year of university, that Leith is inspired by Madame de Staël: a writer and salonnière, banished from Paris by Napoleon himself. With none of Staël's advantages—no wealth, no social status, no château on Lake Geneva—Leith can scarcely imagine a salon, but she is drawn to Paris, and dreams of becoming a writer and one day, a modern-day salonnière.

This dream fuels her education in London, her marriage and writing in Budapest, and—finally—her journey back to Montreal where she meets a community of writers and readers who she works with to transform the city's literary scene with Blue Metropolis...

As Leith publishes, translates, and curates, she also comes to terms with her troubled father and the secrets of her childhood.

The Girl from Dream City was published by the University of Regina Press on April 10, 2021.





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Editor's opinion

The Girl from Dream City is an intriguing read. It is not only because of Ms. Leith's approach to the "memoir" but also because of the insights into becoming a writer, what was involved with setting up and running Blue Metropolis, the first multilingual literary festival, and the evolution of her relationship with her past that was as difficult and challenging as it was exciting. At times, pragmatic and at others literary, this series of essays will provide insights into why Linda Leith was named as Officer of the Order of Canada in 2020. Congratulations from us all!