



The world feels a somewhat smaller place



Source: Celebrating a champion of Irish-Canadian education

It is with great sadness that we learned of the passing Saturday, January 23, 2021 in Knowlton of Life Member Brian O'Neill Gallery. Mr. Gallery was Chairman Emeritus of the Canadian Irish Studies Foundation. Having joined the Society in November 1964, at the time of his passing Mr. Gallery had the second longest tenure of any current member.

Brian Gallery was born in 1934, the son of John O'Neill Gallery and Katherine Hingston and was baptized at St. Patrick's Church. In 1967 he married Nancy Grant MacNaughton in Brockville, Ontario. Together they had three daughters; Ann, Mary, and Elizabeth who gave them seven grandchildren.

Mr. Gallery graduated from Loyola College with a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1957 and quickly immersed himself in the publishing industry. He was an Alderman and Commissioner of

Public Services for the City of Westmount from November 1975 to November 1983 and served as Mayor from November 1983 to November 1987. Mr. Gallery was a Director and Acting Chairman of Canadian National from 1986 to 1989 and Vice-Chairman of CN from 1989 to 1990. He was a Director of the Export Development Corporation from 1993 to 1997.

Among his numerous directorships, Mr. Gallery served on the boards of the St. Mary's Hospital Foundation (a hospital his grandfather, Dr. Donald Hingston founded), of La Famille Le Moyne Société Historique, past Chairman and Director of the Brome Lake Land Foundation, and former director of the PC Canada Fund. He also served as Chief Agent of the Progressive Conservative Party of Canada.

Of the many activities Mr. Gallery involved himself in, it is without a doubt his dedication

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SPS PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

BY KEN QUINN, PRESIDENT, SPS

In normal times, right about now our Ball and Luncheon committees would be hard at work organizing the jaw-dropping events we are so accustomed to. Unfortunately, these are not normal times. We will not be deterred. Despite having to cancel the Annual Charity Ball this year, we are determined to maintain an Annual Luncheon, with a twist. Because of the pandemic and out of an abundance of caution the Luncheon Committee headed by Pamela McGovern is hard at work organizing a VIRTUAL St. Patrick's Day Luncheon. I want to thank Pamela and her committee for the work they are doing in putting this together from scratch. We will be sure to keep our members and the community informed, including more information in this edition of your newsletter.

The Community Award Committee met recently to discuss the nominations before it. In recent years, the committee met at Hurley's Irish Pub to come to a decision in a collegial manner on a quiet weekday night. Of course, the pandemic also prevented this from happening. The nominations were numerous and of great and impressive quality from various walks of life. The committee's decision came after much fruitful discussion. Given the reality we are currently experiencing and the great work the recipient has accomplished with his team, I am thrilled with the selection. In an effort to encourage you to read the entire newsletter I invite you to continue your reading to find out who we are recognizing this year. Martina Branagan and her committee are to be congratulated for their important work. The Golf Committee under the chairmanship of David Dubeau recently made the decision to push the tournament back from the traditional mid-June timeframe to September, again owing to the effects of the pandemic. More information is available in this edition.

While the in-person Society activities are suspended, the fundraising continues. We are pleased to have offered beautiful Festive Christmas gift baskets. The project was a success with positive feedback from those who supported it. Special thanks must go to Christie Brown, Carol McCormick, Mark Gallagher, Martina Branagan, and Pat Short as well as everyone who promoted our efforts or helped in any way, big or small. We are only as strong as our foundation, which is our membership.

I am saddened to learn of the recent passing of two longtime Society members, Mr. Robert (Bob) Dobie and Life Member Mr. Brian O'Neill Gallery. Further information can be found in this edition. However, let us remember Mr. Dobie's service to the community through his activism and Mr. Gallery's service through his various projects, including as co-founder of the Canadian Irish Studies Foundation in 1996. They will both be greatly missed.

As I mentioned in my remarks at the Annual Meeting, some of you may or may not know that your St. Patrick's Society is registered with the CRA as a charity. As such the funds that you donate are eligible for a tax receipt. Please consider donating to the Society, which is made easy through our website. Your generous donations and those of your friends and families throughout the years have played an important role in the Society's ability to support the numerous charitable, cultural, and educational organizations in the community. Each and every donation is appreciated.

I know you will support our endeavours and projects.

Please do not hesitate to reach out to me should you have any suggestions or concerns either through e-mail (right) or the office at (514) 481-1346.

NUAHT, Community Newsletter of St. Patrick's Society of Montreal

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THE WORLD FEELS A SOMEWHAT SMALLER PLACE

By KEN QUINN

to the School of Irish Studies at Concordia University that will have a lasting impact on the educational landscape of the City of Montreal and, indeed, the country. In 1995, Mr. Gallery co-founded the Canadian Irish Studies Foundation and there was no looking back. Funds raised through the foundation contributed to the creation of numerous scholarships in support of many students in their academic pursuits as well as to the establishment of Concordia's Centre for Canadian Irish Studies, now known as the School of Irish Studies.

For his role in building the School, the Concordia University Alumni Association presented Mr. Gallery with the Humberto Santos Award of Merit in 2010 as well as an honorary doctorate from the university. Accolades also came from Canada's Irish community: Mr. Gallery was honoured by the United Irish Societies of Montreal in 1993 to serve as Chief Reviewing Officer of the annual parade. He received the St. Patrick's Society's Community Award in 1997, was selected Irishman of the Year by the Erin Sports Association in 2000, and received Life Membership in the St. Patrick's Society in 2008.

Additionally, Mr. Gallery was awarded the Medal of Merit by the Canadian Port and Harbour Association in 1983, the Commemorative Medal for the 125th Anniversary of Confederation in 1993, the Queen's Golden Jubilee Medal in 2002.

"With the passing of Brian Gallery, the world feels a somewhat smaller place. His larger-than-life personality, his warm, powerful voice, his renowned tenacity in pursuit of his goals, and his unwavering commitment to his vision inevitably combined to make believers of all those he approached for support."

- Dr. Michael Kenneally, Principal, School of Irish Studies

For further information please see the [obituary](#) published online in the Montreal Gazette.

To honour his memory through a donation to The Brian O'Neill Gallery Irish Studies Scholarship Fund, please visit the [Foundation's web page](#).

Please keep the Gallery family in your thoughts and prayers.

SPS Committee and Event Chairs

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

Advertising Rates for Nuacht

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 15th, 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.

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

AND THE SPS COMMUNITY AWARD WINNER 2021 IS...

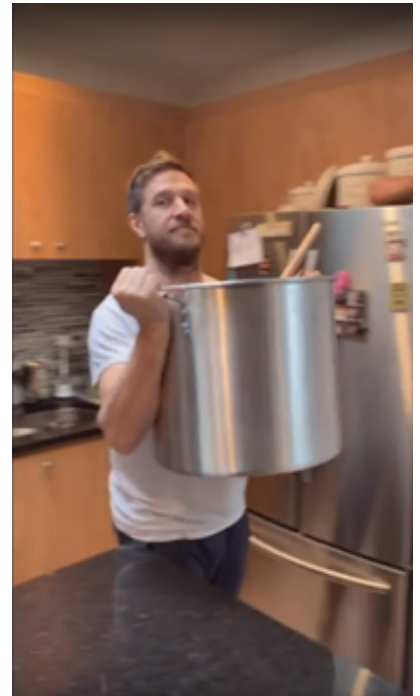
By MARTINA McLEAN

This year, the SPS Community Award Selection Committee met over Zoom on Monday January 25, 2021 at 7 p.m. We had many nominees to consider, all whose achievements warrant recognition, reflecting the breadth of the important volunteer work being done within and beyond our Irish community. We stand in awe and admiration at the diverse gifts of time, talents and treasure these nominees offer in service to our heritage and / or their broader communities. We thank all those who recognize this important work by submitting nominations in both categories by the closing date of January 22, 2021.



Unfortunately, we could only choose one person. It is our honour, privilege and pleasure to announce that the recipient of the SPS Community Award for 2021 is **MR. JAMES ACKER**, current **President of the Montreal Irish Rugby Football Club** that featured in the last edition of Nuacht. Serving within and beyond the borders of our local Irish societies, his brainchild is Rugby Soupe (rugbysoupe.com), borne during the COVID-19 outbreak here in Montreal, with the aim of minimizing food insecurity for the city's homeless population. Known as a "man of action", James began buying the ingredients and cooking soup at home. You can even find a recipe and watch him do so on the Rugby Soupe website.

The achievements of **Rugby Soupe** are already remarkable. This non-profit organization has delivered more than 65,000 meals to date. James says that "I haven't asked a single person for help, yet we're now 30+ people involved in the effort. (...) More than the food, we've given a boost to the cooks and front-line workers from these organizations [those who help the homeless population of Montreal]. 15\$ produces 50 servings [of soup]. We're making an impact on food insecurity and are perhaps seeing a sharing economy of the future where food insecurity simply doesn't exist. (...) There are at least eight local rugby clubs now implicated [in Rugby Soupe] directly: Town of Mount Royal RFC, Sainte-Anne-de-Bellevue Rugby Club, Parc Olympique Rugby Club, Rugby Club de Montreal, Westmount Rugby Club, Montreal Wanderers Rugby Club, Beaconsfield RFC and the Montreal Irish Rugby Football Club."



There are always opportunities to get involved with Rugby Soupe as a chef, driver, grocery shopper, contributor or to donate food and clothing items. You can sign up [here](#).

Please join us at our Virtual SPS Luncheon on March 17th, 12 noon to 2 p.m. when we will present both the 2020 SPS Community Award (to Mr. Peter O'Brien) as well as to Mr. James Acker for 2021.

For further information on the history of the Community Award which was first awarded in 1993 and to see a list of past recipients, please visit the Society's [website](#).

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the members of the SPS Community Award Selection Committee for all the preparation in advance of the meeting on January 25, 2021, for their availability to attend a Zoom meeting and for their insights and openness when we met to make our final selection.

To learn more about Rugby Soupe, to get involved or to make a donation, please visit: <https://www.rugbysoupe.com/>

2021 VIRTUAL ST. PATRICK'S LUNCHEON

By PAMELA MCGOVERN

St. Patrick's Day is an opportunity to celebrate our heritage. It is a day to celebrate what it means to be Irish, and of Irish descent.

As we continue to battle the coronavirus, the St. Patrick's Society of Montreal has decided to move the March 17 Annual Luncheon online. No matter where you are in the country and the world, you can join us for the festivities!

The Society is pleased and excited to announce [HIS EXCELLENCY EAMONN MCKEE](#), (right), Ambassador of Ireland to Canada as Guest Speaker. Dr. McKee became Ambassador of Ireland to Canada in October 2020 when he virtually presented his credentials to the Governor General. While we know Dr. McKee is looking forward to travelling across Canada when opportunity allows we, too, are looking forward to greeting him in person when it is safe.



The Society will also present its 2020 and 2021 Community Award recipients. Circumstances prevented the Society from properly recognizing [MR. PETER O'BRIEN](#) as the 2020 Community Award recipient. We are pleased to be able to finally do this. The Society will also present [MR. JAMES ACKER](#) with the 2021 Community Award.

Tickets are now available for purchase online for a very reasonable 25\$. Monies raised at this event go back into the community. We appreciate your continued support. We invite you to also make a donation at the same time if you're able. It's as simple as entering a Quantity of 1 next to your preferred Patron level.

2021 VIRTUAL
ST. PATRICK'S DAY LUNCHEON
Wednesday [March 17, 2021](#)
12:00-14:00

GUEST SPEAKER
[His Excellency Eamonn McKee](#), Ambassador of Ireland to Canada

Ticket: \$25 each
Information on meal options to come.

[Patron Levels](#)
Harp Level \$500
Shamrock Level \$150
Friends of SPS \$50

Please contact Katie Irving at office@spsmtl.com or call 514-481-1346 to purchase tickets.

Tickets can also be directly purchased from the website at:
[2021 Virtual Luncheon | St. Patrick's Society of Montreal \(spsmtl.com\)](https://www.spsmtl.com)

*Proceeds of the Luncheon will go to charities including Resilience Montreal, Chez Doris and Benedict Labre House.

CÉAD MÍLE Fáilte

IRISH STUDIES COURSES

WINTER 2021

The Irish in Montreal

Irish Mythology & Folklore

‘What’s that tune?’ Irish Traditional Music Appreciation

Research Methods in Irish Studies

Classics of Irish Theatre

Irish Cultural Traditions in Quebec

James Joyce

Norman & Tudor Ireland

Rebellions in Ireland and the Canadas

Introduction to Spoken Irish

BREXIT BEGINS AS IRISH UNITY VOTE LIKELY

By KEVIN CALLAHAN

On January 1st, the United Kingdom formally left the European Union. December was a roller coaster of intense negotiations, British bluffs to leave without an agreement, and intense international pressure over respecting the Good Friday Agreement and the Irish peace process. In the end, British prime minister Boris Johnson blinked and signed an agreement that largely acquiesced to EU demands and, most importantly, prevents a hard border on the island of Ireland.

The Tory government had been threatening to abandon the Protocol Agreement it had negotiated and signed a year before. This move would have violated international law and the Good Friday Agreement. The incoming Biden administration made it clear that the UK would have no trade treaty with the US if the Irish peace process was put in jeopardy. In Canada, both the House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee and the International Trade Committee unanimously passed resolutions calling on the government to ensure any future trade deal with Britain is consistent with the Good Friday Agreement. The respective resolutions were moved by the NDP's Jack Harris MP of Newfoundland and Daniel Blaikie from Manitoba and were passed unanimously.

This international pressure removed any last hope of being able to walk away from the EU without an agreement, so, at the end of the day, Britain agreed to live up to its commitments in terms of the Good Friday Agreement and the Protocol on Ireland and Northern Ireland. This has essentially drawn a border in the Irish Sea and creates a situation where Northern Ireland is effectively under two jurisdictions. It seems likely that this betwixt and between position is untenable in the long term and will eventually move in one of two directions. Either the Protocol will be abandoned to integrate the six counties more into the post-Brexit UK (favoured by the Democratic Unionist Party), or there will be a referendum on Irish unity (favoured by Sinn Féin). The majority in Northern Ireland, unionist, nationalist, or other, voted in favour of remaining in the EU during the 2016 Brexit vote, and that opinion remains the majority one. Moreover, recent polls have shown for the first time that an overall majority in the North supports the idea of

a united Ireland. In a thought-provoking article in the Irish Times (see link below), Professor Brendan O'Leary of the University of Pennsylvania, writes that a vote in Irish unity is inevitable and that the discussion about what a united Ireland would look like and how it could be achieved must begin now. Now that the dust of the Brexit debate is settling, the question of Irish unity is likely to dominate the Irish political landscape for the next decade. A poll published this January for the Sunday Times shows that a majority (51%) now favour a vote on Irish unity in the next 5 years and that a majority of Northern Irish voters think there will be a united Ireland within 10 years. As we enter the centenary of the partition of Ireland in 1921, Irish Canadians should welcome and encourage an informed debate on Ireland's future.

For further information, visit these articles:

<https://www.irishtimes.com/opinion/a-referendum-on-irish-unity-is-coming-whether-we-like-it-or-not-1.4454681>

<https://www.irishtimes.com/news/ireland/irish-news/poll-finds-majority-favours-holding-a-border-poll-in-next-five-years-1.4466826>



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SIMON MCDONAUGH HUMANITARIAN AWARDEE 2021

By PATRICIA MULQUEEN

Most in the community will recognize Patty-Ann McCann as the longtime Vice President - Organization of our organization, a role she has filled with distinction since April 2011 after serving as a Deputy Parade Director in 2010. She has served as a marshal since 1999 and even served as chairperson of the United Irish Societies' Banquet Committee for the year 2000.

While Patty's United Irish Societies' activities are wonderful and appreciated, her selection as recipient of the Simon McDonaugh Humanitarian Award in 2021 is in large part due to her extensive involvement with the Girl Guide movement.



Patty joined Brownies in Montreal's Notre-Dame-de-Grâce neighbourhood at St. Augustine Church at the age of seven and has subsequently been involved with the Girl Guides of Canada for 35 years and counting.



After moving out west, Patty was a Guide Leader in Banff and Canmore, Alberta and upon her return, in Pincourt and Dorval, Quebec. She was privileged to take a patrol to Camp 101 in Roscommon, Ireland which coincidentally involved 101 Canadian Girl Guides. Patty has participated in two interprovincial camps, one being in Smithers, BC and the other in Guelph, Ontario.

She is proud of having had a positive impact on hundreds of girls, including her daughter, Victoria, and that she has continued the tradition of empowering girls through the Girl Guides. Victoria has been a member of the Girl Guides of Canada for almost 20 years of her 26 years of life.



Simon McDonaugh's quiet dedication to a humanitarian lifestyle is remembered through the United Irish Societies of Montreal and this annual award. From 1940 to 1979 he served the organization and the annual parade as its Chief Deputy Marshal. During those years he was the inspiration to the marshals and members for the successful implementation of the parades. For many years he took the responsibility, with his colleagues, to build the reviewing stands for dignitaries to review the parades.

For her quiet volunteerism and for her dedication to the empowerment of girls, the United Irish Societies of Montreal is pleased to present Patty-Ann McCann with the 2021 Simon McDonaugh Humanitarian Award. We are certain her associates with the Girl Guides of Canada concur with this selection.

On a personal note and on behalf of the United Irish Societies of Montreal we congratulate Patty on this well-deserved community award.

A BEAUTIFUL DAY IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD

By JIM McDERMOTT

NUACHT

Last year, life was a sweet peach. Who on earth could have imagined that an airborne virus would invade and upend our lives and leave us in a state of hibernation and social distancing restrictions?

Back in December 2019, I was immensely proud to be the first Irish man to cycle over the St Lawrence river but who would have thought my ride over the bridge would lead to a pandemic pathway which was unknowingly lurking in the air and preparing to pounce.

Recently I've been paraphrasing Joni Mitchell's song "Big Yellow Taxi" and Paul McCartney's "Yesterday". Their lyrics say it all. "You don't know what you've got till it's gone" and "All our troubles seemed so far away". Now sadly, they might be here to stay.

Enclosed a reflective piece that I wrote in the Gazette and on the newspaper website, there are pictures taken by the Gazette photographer John Mahoney.

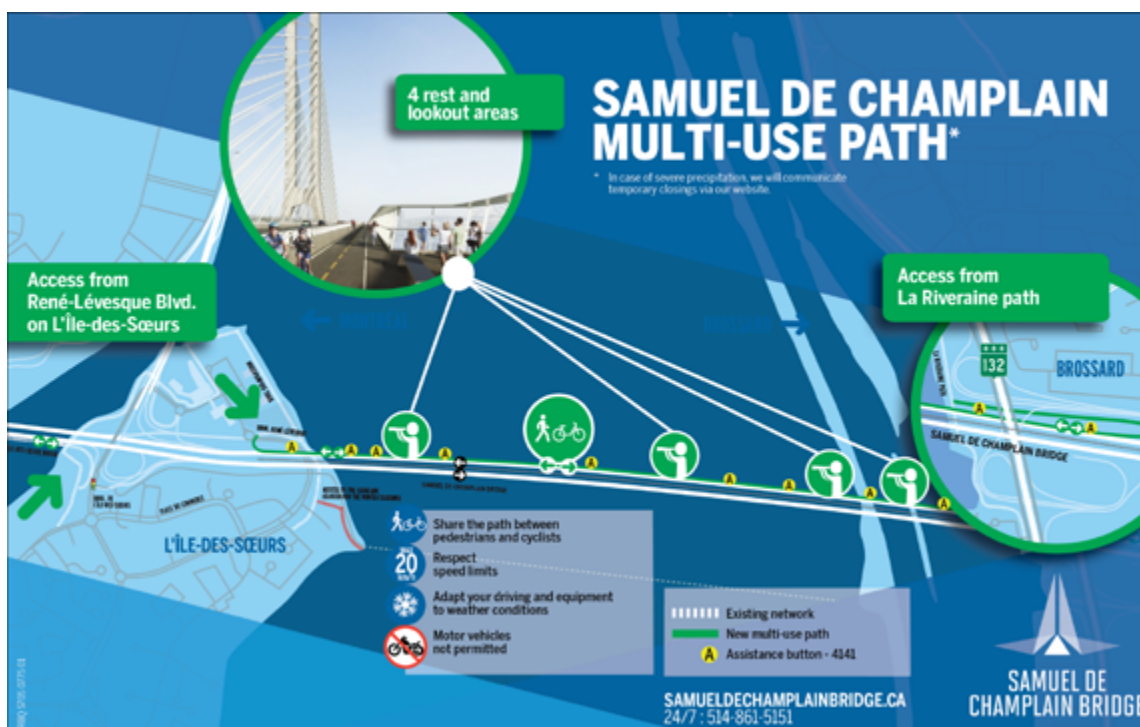
Re: "Multi-use path opens on Samuel de Champlain Bridge" (Montreal Gazette, Dec. 23)

First published in the Montreal Gazette, December 28, 2019

At the official opening of the [Samuel de Champlain Bridge multi-use path](#), I felt exhilarated and giddy venturing over the bridge's dizzying heights.

On the Montreal side, participants were warmly greeted by bridge company representatives, who handed out candy canes and copies of a beautiful book containing pictures and illustrations of the bridge's construction. The atmosphere became very festive when a cyclist broke out a bottle of champagne. Small plastic glasses were swiftly handed out to at least 20 cyclists and pedestrians, who drank a hearty toast to the historic beginning of a long-awaited multi-use path. Several in the crowd let out an enthusiastic cheer of appreciation when the gate opened.

During my passage, I paused at two of the structure's four amazing lookouts. The beauty of Montreal's skyline from such a high elevation truly was a sight to behold. From another vantage point, I looked down at the shimmering St. Lawrence River and could sense the icy river's serenity. I also spotted a jogging Santa, who was merrily hoho-hoing at every step of his jaunt. It was a monumental day filled with treasured memories. As Mr. Rogers would have said: "It was a beautiful day in the neighbourhood".



WHY WE MUST CRITIQUE IMPERIALISM

By PRESIDENT MICHAEL D. HIGGINS

This article was first published in *The Guardian* on 11 February 2021.

Ireland is currently engaged in a process of recalling the transformative events of a century ago which culminated in Partition of the island. Six of the nine Ulster counties remained in the United Kingdom and the rest of the island opted for self-determination and what would become an independent Republic.

As President of Ireland, I have been engaging with our citizens in an exercise of ethical remembering of this period. This is not only to allow us to understand more fully the complexities of those times. It is also to allow us to recognise the reverberations of that past for our societies today and for our relationships with each other and our neighbours.

A feigned amnesia around the uncomfortable aspects of our shared history will not help us to forge a better future together. The complex events we recall and commemorate during this time are integral to the story that has shaped our nations, in all their diversity. They are, however, events to be remembered and understood, respecting the fact that different perspectives exist. In doing this, we can facilitate a more authentic interpretation, not only of our shared history, but of post-sectarian possibilities for the future.

This [journey of ethical remembering](#) has allowed us to examine the nature of commemoration itself and how it might unburden us of history's capacity to create obstacles to a better, shared future. It has entailed uncomfortable interrogations of the events and forces that shaped the Ireland of a century ago and the country we know today. Class, gender, religion, democracy, language, culture and violence all played important roles, and all were intertwined with British imperialist rule in Ireland.

It is vital to understand the nature of the British imperialist mindset of that time if we are to understand the history of coexisting support for, active resistance to, and, for most, a resigned acceptance of British rule in Ireland. While our nations have been utterly transformed over the past century, I suggest that there are important benefits for all on these islands of engaging with the shadows cast by our shared past.

In my work on [commemorations, memory, forgetting and forgiving](#) I have sought to establish a discourse characterised by what the Irish philosopher Richard Kearney calls 'a hospitality of narratives', acknowledging that different, informed perspectives on the same events

can and do exist. The acceptance of this fact can release us from the pressure of finding, or subscribing to, a singular unifying narrative of the past.

In previous years I pursued this task by addressing issues neglected in the public discourse or in the historiography: Irish participants in World War I, the struggle of trade unionists, and what was suffered, and achieved, by women activists in campaigning for the vote, and by those excluded on the basis of social class.

More recently, I have given the title '[Machnamh 100](#)' to a series of reflections which examine the period 1920-1923, including the War of independence, Civil War and Partition. 'Machnamh' is an Irish word encompassing reflection, contemplation, meditation and thought. The next seminar, which I will host on 25 February, will examine the motivations and practices of imperialism and of resistance to it, how both reacted to changing local and global circumstances.

As I reflect on the topic, I am struck by a disinclination in both academic and journalistic accounts to critique empire and imperialism. Openness to, and engagement in, a critique of nationalism has seemed greater. And while it has been vital to our purposes in Ireland to examine nationalism, doing the same for imperialism is equally important and has a significance far beyond British/Irish relations.

It may be fruitful to consider the relationship of what has been titled – and not without dissent – the 'European Enlightenment' within the project of imperial expansion for an understanding of how the mask of modernity has been used for cultural suppression, economic exploitation, dispossession and domination.

Such consideration also helps explain a reluctance in former imperial powers to engage now with their imperialist past and to examine that past with descendants of those previously colonised, many of whom still live with the complex legacies of that colonialism.

As I reflect on the instincts of those who have defended imperialism, I can see how the tool of an alleged 'progressive modernity', could be so effective. Those on the receiving end of imperialist adventurism were denied cultural agency, assumed to be incapable of it, and responsible for a violence towards the 'modernising' forces directed at them.

WHY WE MUST CRITIQUE IMPERIALISM

From the perspective of the British imperialist mind of its time, attitudes to the Irish for example, were never, and could never be, about a people who were equal, had a different culture, or could be trusted in a civilised discourse of equals. From the perspective of the Irish who had their own ancient language, social and legal systems and a rich monastic contribution to the world, this view had to be resisted.

Some resistance was through an intensified cultural activity, literature, poetry, music and song. Others sought it within the domain of parliaments or through exerting political pressure from engaged emigrant populations in the United States. In other circumstances, the Irish found it through covert and overt violence. Most resorted to available strategies of escape through emigration, or survival within the Empire, with a widespread, if suppressed, anger over humiliation experienced or remembered.



President Michael D. Higgins

Both the imperialists and those they dominated developed a strategy of accommodation. At home in Britain, the imperialist experience was transmitted down through the classes; there was perhaps the glow



associated with belonging to a global empire that could distract from problems of class rejection, an unjust society or an exploitative economic system. But anti-imperialist struggles weren't free of the traits of Empire either. They also at times lacked a consciousness of class exploitation.

At its core, imperialism involves the making of a number of claims which are invoked to justify its assumptions and practices – including its inherent violence. One of those claims is the assumption of superiority of culture and it is always present in the imperialising project. Forcing an acceptance on those subjugated of the inferiority of their culture as a dominated 'Other' is the reverse side of the coin.

Injustices perpetrated in the name of imperialism, and in resistance to it, often had a brutalising effect, leaving a bitter residue of pain and resentment, sometimes passed down through generations and left available to those willing to reignite inherited grievances.

What [our current reflection](#) consists of, I suggest, is not the offering of a set of competing rationalisations for different kinds of violence. Instead it is about understanding the contexts in which they occurred.

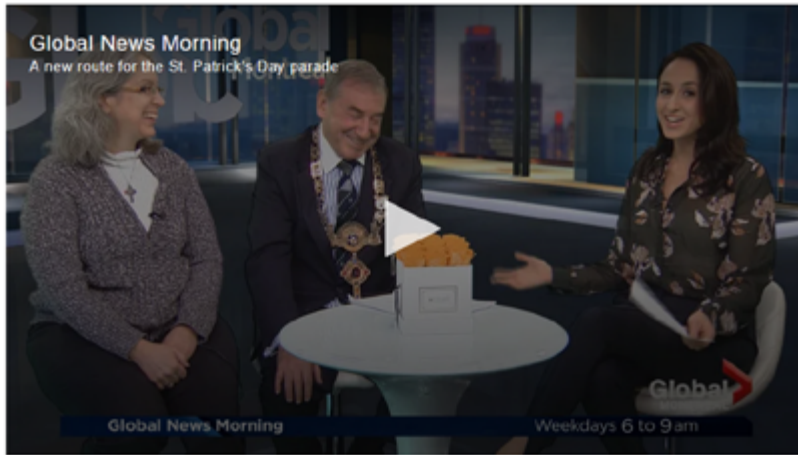
The rewards for this will come in the form in restoring the connection between moral instinct and public policy. That is an authenticity for which so many of our citizens, on this shared, vulnerable planet, yearn.

LIAM DALY HERITAGE AWARD RECIPIENT 2021

BY PATRICIA MULQUEEN

The Liam Daly Heritage Award was created by the United Irish Societies of Montreal in memory of a man closely associated with numerous organizations within the Irish community. First awarded in 2004 to April O'Donoghue of the Montreal International Celtic Festival, this year's recipient, just as Mr. Daly was, is closely associated with a number of organizations in the community. Like Mr. Daly, Paul was born and raised in Ireland in a town known for its annual Salmon Festival, a town called Ballina in County Mayo.

Paul settled in Canada in 1971. His name first popped up in the United Irish Societies archives in 1973, when he was named a delegate to the UIS from the Montreal Irish Rugby Football Club (MIRFC). Clearly, he quickly got busy building relationships. Like many of the Irish immigrants, Paul gravitated towards the Montreal Shamrocks Gaelic Athletic Club and was captain of the team for a time. He also played rugby with the MIRFC,



even serving as president. He has served as a St. Patrick's Society director, was president and co-founder of the Ireland-Canada Chamber of Commerce and presided over the UIS for the 2018 and 2019 parades. Speaking of parades, Paul was also honoured in 2012 when he served as Grand Marshal, joining a very long list of distinguished individuals and the first Irish-born Grand Marshal since Dr. Michael Kenneally was honoured in 2003.

To me, what makes this award so special, and I am sure he will concur, is that Paul co-hosted The Irish Show on CF Cable 9 and Videotron

with Liam Daly. Of course, I can recall watching the Irish Show on CF Cable and seeing Paul's many interviews. I also have memories of seeing Paul and Liam and others around the reviewing stand at Phillips Square in the early to mid 1990s after they had completed the live broadcast for the shut ins and those otherwise unable to head downtown for the annual celebration.

It is special enough when an Irish-born person engrained in Montreal is selected to receive this award. In my estimation it is a memorable occasion when an Irish-born person who knew and worked with Liam is chosen.

Congratulations, Paul, on this well-deserved recognition. I know Liam is looking down with that twinkle in his eye. Everyone in the community is looking forward to meeting up with you again when conditions permit.



Paul Loftus (left) and former Lord Mayor of Dublin, Nial Ring (2018-2019) stand in front of Former Dublin Mayor, Sean Loftus's Family crest

THANK YOU FROM THE ERIN SPORTS ASSOCIATION

BY TIM FURLONG

To say the least, 2020 was a trying year. The Covid-19 pandemic is something that we have never seen before. The whole world has been affected and within the Montreal Irish community, the Erin Sports Association is no exception. A mere two days prior to our main fundraiser, the Annual Irishman of The Year Breakfast, honoring our 2020 Irishman of The Year, Mr. Joseph Quinn, we had to postpone and eventually cancel the event due to the Government's Covid-19 protocol and preventive measures. At the time we were not sure what to expect but we were of the mindset that the pandemic would eventually ease, and we would be able to return to normal within a few weeks or even months. Well, here we are in February of 2021 and we still find ourselves under Covid-19 preventive measures and will be for some time to come.



Preparing the baskets

Unfortunately, again due to the pandemic, we also had to cancel our very popular American Thanksgiving Dinner Event. Guests would have enjoyed a day of watching football, including a homemade turkey dinner, while participating in a raffle and auction. All proceeds raised on this day go to a Children's Christmas Party, food baskets for needy families, and to supply food for many senior lunches we prepare during the year.



Toys and senior basets at the Good Shepherd

Losing two major fundraisers forced us to find other ways to support our charitable endeavors. We came up with a couple of different ideas. We decided to reach out to the community which has supported us throughout the years. Communicating through social media, we requested sponsorship for 100 children so that we could buy a Christmas gift (toy) for each child. The response was overwhelming. We also held a raffle by selling tickets online, again through social media. With the help of many generous donors who provided the prizes and many supporters buying tickets, the raffle was a huge success. Despite the current situation, we received many donations and were overwhelmed by people's generosity and willingness to help those less fortunate. It is because of this generosity, in donations and support that The Erin Sports Association can carry on our mandate and continue our charitable endeavours throughout the Community.

The monies received went a long way to ensuring that 115 children received a gift at Christmas, 72 food baskets were handed out to families in need and seniors alike. Hopefully, this helped them have a nicer Christmas and a brighter outlook for 2021.

We are looking forward to hosting our events once again soon so that in the near future we can take the opportunity of honoring our Irishman of The Year, Joe Quinn, who now holds the record as the longest current Irishman of The Year.

On behalf of The Erin Sports Association, we would like to thank everyone that contributed to help us make our fundraisers a huge success. Please stay safe and until we can gather again in larger numbers, be well.



Dawson Club 2020 - toys

THE IRISH INFLUENCE IN THE MONTREAL FIRE DEPARTMENT

BY THOMAS IRELAND



Young Wayne has a dream

Joining the small-town Volunteer Fire Department as a Junior Firefighter sounded like a great idea for a young inquisitive 12-year-old **WAYNE CONWAY**, whose ancestors came to Canada from Ennistymon, County Clare. "Like many of the kids my age of Irish heritage growing up in Shannon, Quebec, we played sports and participated in community activities,

but I was always up for a new challenge. We were very fortunate to be surrounded by several Irish Cultural Activities through the Catholic Women's League, the local Irish dancing group and our well-known annual Shannon Irish Show, for which the well-respected Bernadette Short would come to Shannon and give Irish dancing lessons to the community".

After several years working as a volunteer firefighter, in 1989, young Wayne, aged 16, decided to apply to the all-French Provincial Firefighting School known as IPIQ in Laval, Quebec, and was already somewhat aware of the contribution of the Irish to the firefighting profession.

Now, many years later, after an impressive 32-year career



with the Montreal Fire Department, **LIEUTENANT WAYNE CONWAY** is starting to look back on his career and plan ahead for his retirement. "I am thrilled to have had the opportunity to work alongside many other great firefighters whose love of the job and love of the Irish culture we shared.

It's the best job in the world" he says.

Wayne is very proud of his contribution but also understands that many firefighters of Irish heritage have

come before him. The Montreal Fire Department was founded in 1863. Some of the very first fire chiefs shared some Irish lineage. Joseph Bronsdon, the Montreal Fire Department Chief in 1841 was part British and part Irish. William Patton, another Fire Chief of Irish heritage was to follow him in 1875. This led the way for others to lead the department as chiefs such as Christopher Carson and Patrick Doolan, whose life story is for another day. In the years to come, firefighters with names like Kelly, Choules, O'Rourke, Mulloy, Whelan, Hamill and McManus would join the ranks of the Montreal Fire Department. Firefighter Patrick McManus, age 37, would go on to perish in the terrible Woodhouse Furniture Store fire in April 1963.

In the years to follow, many fire departments in the



Wayne at his Dad's graveside

surrounding Montreal suburbs would be led by firefighters from well-respected Irish families such as the Quinn's and the O'Reilly's among others. A younger generation of firefighters of Irish heritage would follow in their footsteps, with names like Walsh, Kiley, Murphy, Bambrick, Mooney, Metcalfe, Feeney and Rafter. On January 1st, 2002, twenty-three separate fire departments on the Island of Montreal merged into one new department named Service de Sécurité Incendie de Montréal. The department now has over 2,300 members and although many things have changed, some things have not.

For those of Irish heritage, the sense of belonging could not be greater. In 2017, Lieutenant Conway, along with firefighters **SHAWN MOONEY** and **FRANK RAFTERS**, formed a new Montreal firefighter brotherhood called the **EMERALD SOCIETY OF MONTREAL**. This new

THE IRISH INFLUENCE IN THE MONTREAL FIRE DEPARTMENT

CONT. FROM PAGE 14

initiative was put forth to promote camaraderie in the profession for those of Irish heritage, with the ultimate goal of helping others and giving back wherever possible, all while having fun. Thus far, local charities such as Nazareth House, AJOI – Action Jeunesse de L'Ouest de L'Île (West Island shelter for youths), the West Island Assistance Fund (WIAF) and the Teresa Dellar Palliative Care Residence have benefitted from the proceeds of Emerald Society events.

Frank Rafters, a veteran firefighter with over 30 years on the job is a well-known name to many in the community and the firefighting profession. "I followed in my Dad's footsteps" Frank said. Rafters father, Rick

Rafters had a 30-year career and finished as a Lieutenant. "He was always looking at ways to promote his Irish heritage and as it happens, so do I". Frank still loves the job and looks forward to coming to the station after all these years. "If I can have some fun and do some good to help others at the same time, then I'm always willing and available."

The younger firefighters coming on to the job today have some great role models to look up to. For those of Irish heritage, the torch is theirs to hold high.



Young Frank Rafters



Frank Rafters fire-fighting on a frigid winter's day

IN MEMORIAM

St. Patrick's Society is saddened to learn of the recent passing of longtime society member Robert (Bob) Dobie.

A member since 1986, Mr. Robert (Bob) Dobie was one of our members with a greater public profile than most. He was involved in the Anglophone Rights movement, in the union movement, and politically with the Quebec Liberal Party.

After his retirement, he helped found the Holy Cross Residence for seniors in the Ville Emard area, which he ran with pride until a number of months ago.

May he rest in peace!

Robert (Bob) Dobie, 78, of Montreal, died January 11, 2021. He is survived by his loving wife of 56 years, Sheila O'Carroll, his children Paul (Darlene), the late Brian, Monica (Keith) and Kevin (Jackie) as well as his adored grand-children Collin, Lauren, Noa and Jonah, as well as his faithful dog Abbott. He was brother to Ron, the late Louise, Carole and Johanne. Bob was a proud husband and father. He loved his family, with whom he celebrated his life to the fullest. Professionally, he touched the lives of countless people throughout his lengthy career in education, trade unionism, politics and seniors' housing.

Born in Montreal, Bob began his career in education at Sarsfield School in Pointe St. Charles and went on to teach at other schools across the city, including St Ann's in Griffintown and James Lyng High School in St Henri, among others. He later became a champion for the rights of teachers in Quebec as a union leader in times of great struggle during the early and mid-1980's, when serving as Secretary General of the Provincial Association of Catholic Teachers (PACT). During this time, he was a tireless defender of Anglophone community rights.

Following his retirement from education, he helped found Holy Cross Residence for seniors in 1986, which he ran with pride until July 2020 – his personal legacy. This community is at the heart of the neighbourhood

of Ville-Émard-Côte St Paul, where Bob lived most of his adult life, housing seniors from its Anglo, Francophone and Allophone community.



Bob was a staunch Quebec Liberal Party member and activist. He devoted countless days to the party and to politics. He campaigned relentlessly for the people and policies he believed in. He worked with many senior politicians, some of whom rose to cabinet positions both provincially and federally. He loved politics, one of his life's passions.

Bob Dobie was an enthusiast for life, a bon vivant. He was a very generous man. He loved travel, food and good times – a true original, a classic. Bob will be truly missed.

To celebrate his full and accomplished life, a more appropriate memorial service will be held at a later date.

Many thanks to all for the outstanding care at CHSLD Réal-Morel and the Royal Victoria Hospital's Cardiac Care Unit.

In lieu of flowers, the family ask that donations go to John's House, Anne's House and Nazareth House. <https://nazarethcommunity.com/donate-now/>

The private service was held at Kane & Fetterly funeral home on Saturday January 30th, 2021 at 11 a.m. with live streaming of the service at the following link: <https://www.kanefetterly.qc.ca/en/>.

AR DHEIS DÉ GO RAIBH A ANAM!

SCHOOL OF IRISH STUDIES AT VIRTUAL OPEN HOUSE WINTER 2021


By MARION MULVENNA

NUACHT



The School of Irish Studies has its own zoom room within the online Open House platform. We invite potential students and your families to visit virtually, chat with us, see our screen share information and of course ask your questions about our multi-disciplinary program and its many benefits.

VICTORIA KELLY (left), who is doing a Double Major in Irish Studies and Biology, and the 2019 Queen will be among us and happy to chat with you!

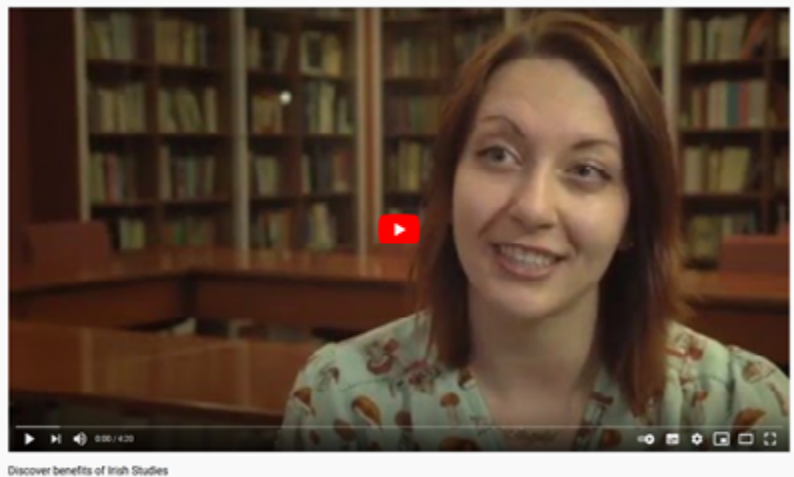
When: Saturday, February 20th 9 a.m. – 1 p.m. 

Registration link: <https://www.concordia.ca/admissions/open-house.html>

Contact anytime for further information:
Marion at marion.mulvenna@concordia.ca

Video-School of Irish Studies: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M_iis5u1b3k&feature=youtu.be

We hope you will join us!



Irish Studies students in McEntee Reading Room.

IRISH DANCING RESPONDING TO THE NEW REALITY

By PAT SHORT

YOUNG ACADEMY OF IRISH DANCE (QUEBEC)



Lockdown is not stopping the Young Academy. With classes every day of the week available online, we have managed to keep our dancers active! We just finished off two weekends of workshops online for our dancers to learn new steps as we continue to prepare for the year ahead, whether competing in person or online.

The Young Academy is currently taking registrations for beginners. Our program allows dancers to learn Irish Dance online and have resources to help with their at home practice.

For information, please email youngirishdance@hotmail.com or visit us at: www.youngacademyirishdance.com

BERNADETTE SHORT SCHOOL OF IRISH DANCING



We brought back our annual St. Valentine's Day School Competition and ran it as an on-line event on Sunday, February 14, 2021. It was open to all Short School students (NDG, Kirkland, Chateaugay, Shannon (QC), Cameron and Plattsburgh (NY).

This was a major undertaking and would be impossible to run as an open Feis, as we continue to grow with and gain experience with the worlds of zoom, Cisco and Survey Monkey. We will keep you posted in the next edition on how we managed virtually.

For further information please e-mail Bernadette@shortschoolirishdance.com

THE MORAN ACADEMY OF IRISH DANCE

After a successful zoom webinar recital to showcase our dancers before Christmas, we have started back to on-line classes this week. While it is difficult to adapt to the new method, it is great to see the love of Irish Dancing being passed on to the next generation. We are looking forward to a time when all the Montreal schools can come together again.

For information please e-mail Eileenmoran28@hotmail.com

MARIE-CLAUDE ROUSSEAU

Classes take place in Quebec on Saturdays and in Verdun on Wednesdays. Enquiries: M.c.rousseau@videotron.ca



INTRODUCTION TO IRISH DANCE!!



Get ready for **St Patrick's Day** with
The Bernadette Short School of Irish Dancing!!

5 WEEK INTRODUCTORY COURSE

(on zoom)

Choice of classes for adults, children or
parent & child together!!

Dates of classes: February 16, 23, March 2, 9, 16
6PM-7PM Cost: \$50

Click on the link in the post to register!!

THE MONTREAL SHAMROCKS DOCUMENTARY

By MARTINA McLEAN

NUACHT



Congratulations to The Montreal Shamrocks Gaelic Athletic Club (GAC) on a great achievement - you are now in your 73rd year and with a story to tell, you do it so well!

Your documentary about your first 70 years, 1948-2018, premiered on Youtube, on Friday December 18th at 8pm EST.

If you haven't viewed the video, it's well worth a watch: <https://youtu.be/G4OsTKstCSg>

Produced by Gra Productions in Montreal (<https://gra-productions.com/>), the celebratory documentary features Patrick Bourke interviewing many familiar faces, past presidents, club captains, coaches, past and current players, with photos and live recordings of sports action and a great soundtrack. It's fascinating to hear about the successes over the years, to see the medals these champions won, to learn when and how women became involved, and to hear the acknowledgements leading to those successes. Likewise, we hear about the challenges, the highs and lows. Commitment is key and this involves the whole community as well as donations because the major expense is hiring space for practice and play.

Montreal Shamrocks GAC is a family that celebrates its camaraderie and sporting heritage. Canada's oldest GAA club, the club was founded in 1948 and continues to promote Ireland's national sports of Gaelic football and hurling to the community of Montreal. It competes in the Eastern Canadian Division against teams from Ottawa, Quebec City, Halifax, and PEI. The club also hosts the largest annual tournament of Gaelic games in Canada each year, with over 300 players attending from across Canada and the US. From all walks of life, many of the club's players have also represented Canada at the GAA World Games which is held every three years, joining over 1,300 players from around the world.

The Shamrocks club now has over two hundred players with men, ladies and youth teams, 80% of whom are non-Irish, not to mention well-run leagues, ladies and men's football, hurling and camogie.

From January until October each year, the Montreal GAA Super-league is played weekly and includes teams from Griffintown, Goose Village, Verdun, NDG, St Henri and Pointe St Charles, as well as from Concordia University.

And let's not forget the Youth Programme with their twenty foundation coaches offering summer camps.

To learn more about the Montreal Shamrocks, visit <http://montrealshamrocks.com/>. You can also donate to help them with their ambitious plans for continued growth. They are also on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/montrealshamrocks/>

COMHGHAIRDEAS to the club and may it continue to grow from strength to strength!



THE MIDNIGHT COURT - WHAT A PERFORMANCE!

By KATHLEEN FEE

The Midnight Court by Brian Merriman, translated by David Marcus.

Presented by Festival Bloomsday Montreal live online on Zoom, January 6, 2021. See recording on YouTube. Read by Kathleen McAuliffe (the Maiden), Julian Casey (the Poet and the Jossier), and Kathleen Fee (the Bailiff and the Judge). Music by Bùmarang. Directed by Elsa Bolam. Commentary: Dr. Elaine Bander, Kevin Wright, and Martina Branagan. Technical Production: Edmund Nash. Hosted by Dennis Trudeau.

January 6, 2021 Festival Bloomsday Montreal kicked off their 10th anniversary year with an on-line presentation of *The Midnight Court*, a saucy, satirical poem over 250 years old.

What is *The Midnight Court* all about? At the heart of *The Midnight Court* is a trial in which the women of Ireland accuse the men of shirking their duties in the bedroom. And it gets pretty graphic with vivid descriptions of what should be happening and isn't! The poem is a first-person account by a young man who falls asleep under a tree and is awakened by a ghastly ogress who drags him off to observe the trial. Soon he himself is hauled before the judge, accused of remaining a bachelor for too long. It's a merry romp that uses a battle of the sexes to shine a humorous light on very real social and economic issues we're still grappling with to this day: the status of women, unequal distribution of resources, sex, marriage, the birth rate, priestly celibacy... At the *Midnight Court*, with the benevolent Queen Aeval presiding, women get to have their say. And they don't hold back!

How does that tie in with Bloomsday? The theme chosen for Bloomsday Montreal this year is Origins. We'll be exploring the origins of Joyce's thinking, his life, his family, his taste, his style, his inspiration. And how better to begin than with a 250-year-old Irish poem that is as earthy, as irreverent, as iconoclastic, as beloved and as vilified as Joyce's work. A glance at any of the many translations of *The Midnight Court* is enough to show that Joyce must have known the poem—and not just the opening lyrical pastorate often taught in Irish language class. In her analysis, Dr. Elaine Bander points out numerous echoes and conjunctions.

What made you decide to present it? A call to the Irish community inviting proposals for projects and performances for our festival led to an invigorated line-up in 2019. Events included a variety of offerings such as a chamber opera by Vaughn Williams based on J. M.

Synge's play, *Riders to the Sea* and a musical concert with commentary exploring Nora Barnacle's traditional soundscape.

As we began planning our 2020 festival, singer and actor, Kathleen McAuliffe, suggested *The Midnight Court*. She first performed it at Dun Guaire Castle in the west of Ireland where the entertainment featured the literature, poetry, music, and stories of County Clare. Her dog-eared copy of the 1953 translation into English by David Marcus has travelled with her ever since.

She and I had met years ago at the Centaur Theatre playing sisters in *Dancing at Lughnasa* by Brian Friel directed by Elsa Bolam so it seemed logical to ask Elsa to direct. We recruited award-winning local actor, Dublin-born Julian Casey, and, in November, 2019, met for an initial read-through in a light-filled Lachine condo. A small, select audience laughed in all the right places so we slotted it into the schedule for June.

Of course, once COVID-19 took us all by storm, our in-person events were cancelled and *The Midnight Court* was shelved. We did manage a somewhat curtailed festival online including a virtual walk through Irish Montreal, an international academic panel, and readings from the great work. All to be found at bloomsdaymontreal.com/past-events.

Our success with the Zoom webinar platform made me think it was worth exploring a virtual reading of *The Midnight Court*. After all, the pandemic has pushed real live court hearings online so why not a fictional one? Then things fell into place. The Festival board wanted to begin producing events throughout the year in addition to our June extravaganza. Why not present the reading on January 6, the 12th day of Christmas, the Feast of the Epiphany. Epiphany features prominently in a number of Joyce's stories and the 12th and final day of Christmas is celebrated in Ireland as Women's Christmas, *Noillaig na mBan*. It's a day when traditionally women get together to relax while men take over the household duties. Nowadays, women in Ireland organize dinners and fundraisers for women's causes. But imagine life for women in rural Ireland centuries ago. The men might get away to market a few times a year but women lucky enough to have a home and family would rarely be able to leave their isolated farmsteads, let alone have the time and leisure to meet other women and discuss their actual lived experience unfiltered by the church or other ideologies.

How did you prepare?

Beginning in mid-October we three actors rehearsed over

THE MIDNIGHT COURT - WHAT A PERFORMANCE!

BY KATHLEEN FEE

Zoom once or twice a week with Elsa Bolam directing and Kevin Wright giving feedback. We worked on the text, trimming some sections to keep the whole event to just over an hour in length. The way the poem is structured makes it relatively easy to do online since there is no back and forth dialogue. Each of the five characters speaks in turn. Moving forward we began rehearsing with our technician, Edmund Nash, on the Zoom Webinar platform to incorporate music cues and set up pre-and post-reading commentaries.

There were many, many things to manage as we figured out how to use the medium to its advantage. Costumes, background, lighting, framing, music cues, where to put your script so you can read and keep looking at the camera, where to position the microphone so it's close enough to capture your voice but out of sight.... It was a huge learning curve, especially for Elsa who has spent her life directing plays in three dimensions. A stage has a left and right, a back and front, an up and down. Every space on the stage communicates. And on stage actors can be seen from head to toe, in movement, in relation to one another, to the space, and to the audience. So dealing with three separate rectangles with a disembodied head in the middle was quite a challenge.

We had to get clearance for any materials used online.

For our visual theme, the Celtic knot, we looked at hundreds of images but couldn't be sure they were copyright free.

What translation to use? After weeks of looking we found Irish novelist Ita Daly, widow and literary executor of translator, David Marcus, who gave us permission to use his translation for our event and make it available on our website.

We worked with Celtic music trio, **Bùmarang**, to find excerpts from their new album to enliven the reading.

We asked retired literature prof and Jane Austen guru, Dr. Elaine Bander, to enlighten us on the cultural, literary, and historical underpinnings of the original poem—composed in Irish in the 1770s and passed down through oral tradition for a century—as well as an overview of its numerous translations, especially the rollicking version we were using.

We sought out trilingual translator Martina Branagan to fill us in on **Nollaig na mBan**.

We invited veteran journalist, Dennis Trudeau, to host and insisted that Festival Bloomsday Montreal president, Kevin Wright, share his passion and insights with our audience.

Technician, Edmund Nash, made sure we all looked and sounded as good and as consistent as possible Zooming into the ether from our own homes using our own cameras, screens, and microphones. A power failure in west-end Montreal just a few hours before the show almost derailed the whole shebang!

So, how did it turn out? Very, very well. Elaine Bander was a font of information giving us a real sense of the period in which the poem was composed. The readings went smoothly with music cues coming in bang on time. Kathleen M. and Julian looked great! My unstable internet connection left my segments blurry but fortunately, I could be heard. I have now rerecorded them.

Over 300 separate devices around the world connected to our live performance on Zoom and YouTube. From Montreal, of course, and across Canada, numerous places in the US and from Australia, New Zealand, England, and Ireland. We have been showered with compliments and as more people access the recording online, plaudits continue to pour in.



Julian Casey (the Poet and the Jossier)



Kathleen Fee (the Bailiff and the Judge)



Kathleen McAuliffe (the Maiden)

PEOPLE IN THE NEWS



St. Patrick's Society

would like to congratulate

MARGARET & PETER SHEA

who celebrated

their 50th wedding anniversary

on February 6, 2021

COMHGAIRDEAS LIBH!

IN MEMORIAM



St. Patrick's Society

would like to extend our deepest condolences

to the family, friends and colleagues of

JUDITH (JUDY) MOSEYCHUCK SCHURMAN

who passed away suddenly on February 1, 2021

She will be sadly missed by the community and

Bloomsday Montreal in particular.

We will feature a tribute to Judy in the next issue of Nuacht.

Her [obituary](#) has a beautiful poem entitled "To my love".

St. Patrick's Society

regrets to let you know that

CATHARINE MCKENTY

whom we congratulated in Nuacht's winter 2020 edition

sadly died peacefully on January 22, 2021.

Donations to the Fulford Residence,

1221 Guy, Montréal, QC, H3H 2K8.

Please visit her [obituary](#) for a summary of her life.



St. Patrick's Society

is also sad to announce that

after a courageous battle with cancer,
former SPS member **BARRY HOLDBROOK**
passed away peacefully on January 29, 2021.

He is mourned by Lorraine Paulez,
his children Vicki, Stephen and Nancy, and his family.

A memorial service will be held at a later date.

All donations are to Canadian Cancer Society.

St. Patrick's Society

would like to express our sympathies to John O'Shea and family

on the passing of his wife of 44 years,

PATRICIA O'SHEA, (née Gaudet)

on April 8, 2020.

The family is grateful to the caring and professional staff

at the Sunrise Residence, DDO over the past five years.

Donations in memory of Pat may be made to the Canadian Alzheimer Society.

Please visit the [obituary](#) for further details.

AR DHEIS DE GO RAIBH A N-ANAMNACHA!



STRANGE FLOWERS BY DONAL RYAN

By LAURIE McKEOWN

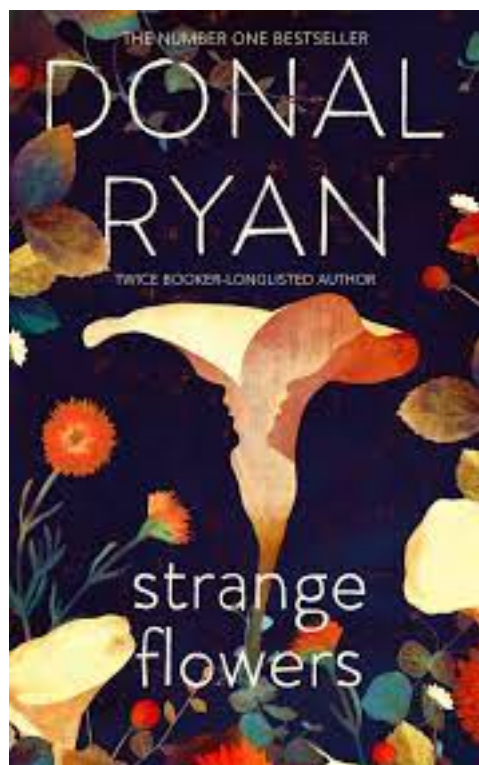


Photo: Penguin Random House.
Copyright Donal Ryan 2020
(Doubleday 2020, United Kingdom)

Irish tenant farmers Paddy and Kit Gladney's lives are torn apart when their twenty-year-old daughter, Moll disappears unexpectedly in 1973. Out of the blue, their prodigal daughter returns five years later, a miracle to be welcomed home, yet, the years of her absence are not questioned. Moll is unforthcoming as to why she left, but slowly the mystery unravels about where she has been and what she has done.

This multigenerational family drama by Donal Ryan is set in a small Catholic rural village of Knockagowny in County Tipperary, Ireland. Donal Ryan treats the reader to a cast of diverse characters who encounter shocking events that test their religious faith, the very foundation which their lives are built on. The theme of religion is woven gently throughout the novel with some chapters titled Genesis, Exodus and Revelation. Near the end of the novel, there is a story written by one of the characters, the narrative of the blind man cured by Jesus. The metaphorical tale is from the perspective of the blind man, "and he sat and closed his eyes and prayed to God that he would wake soon and be blind." This story parallels the theme of the main narrative; the duality of religion and its contradictory ability to stimulate an injudicious fear of other things while bringing consolation in times of need.

Donal Ryan also tackles such topics as violence, love, family dynamics, racism, sexuality, loss and a tiered social system and weaves them into the narratives of village life in rural Ireland in the 1970s. The reader will slowly discover Moll's secrets and those of the people around her and those of her family, neighbours and outsiders. Her social life unravels

and the facts of her disappearance are finally laid out and it's then that the reader learns why Moll left in the first place.

This is a short novel at 208 pages but is brimming with delightful story telling. Donal Ryan has a masterful way of describing landscapes which allows the reader to be in the moment along with the characters. The twists and turns of the plot kept me guessing till the end only to find that the secret Moll has kept is not her only one. I highly recommend this book. I look forward to reading more Donal Ryan novels, especially [The Spinning Heart](#), his debut novel, which was longlisted for the Booker Prize in 2013 and voted the Irish Book of the Decade in 2016. I have a copy of [Strange Flowers](#) if anyone would like to borrow it.

Donal Ryan was born in Nenagh, Tipperary in 1976. He is the author of five novels and one short story collection. Ryan has won numerous awards for his fiction, among them the Guardian First Book Award and the European Union Prize for Literature. Donal Ryan lives in Limerick with his wife and family.

We wish to [thank](#) the following who contributed articles and/or photos to this issue of [NUACHT](#):

Christie Brown
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Kevin Callahan
Janice Young
Marion Mulvenna
Tom Ireland

Carol McCormick
Tim Furlong
Kathleen Fee
Patricia Mulqueen

SPS GOLF TOURNAMENT - SEPTEMBER 2021

By Dave Dubeau



Despite the impending winter weather and the pandemic, more positive times are in the future. The SPS Golf Committee met to discuss the future of the 2021 Golf Tournament. We have decided at this time that it would be best to postpone the Annual event to September 2021. We hope that this postponement puts us in a better position to host the Tournament in the Fall.

Thank you and we hope to see many of you in September!

It will be the first in-person event for the Society in more than a year. Take the

opportunity to renew old friendships and make new ones. Rest assured the tournament will be held in as safe an environment as possible. More specific information will follow in subsequent issues.

If anyone has questions, concerns or suggestions, feel free to contact me: ddubeau7@gmail.com



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