



Back to the Basilica: SPS Christmas Concert returns to its roots

By Anne Forrest

After a three-year hiatus, the Annual St. Patrick's Society Christmas Concert is returning to its original home, St. Patrick's Basilica. Fifteen years ago, a few members of the St. Patrick's Society, Lynn Doyle, Nicole Tinmouth, Mabel Fitzgerald and Antoine Maloney orchestrated the first concert which brought together many Irish descendents to celebrate the start of the Christmas season. Each year the profits raised from the concert have been used to help fund some of the monies used in the Grants Programme of the Society and various groups in Montreal have benefited either through a charitable, cultural or educational grant.

In reminiscing about the 1993 concert, Antoine Maloney fondly remembered the efforts that he and Jimmy Heaslip went to in order to set up risers for the visiting choirs. Thanks to FACE school (who provided these) and Kings Transfer Vanlines, a sturdy stage was installed. Kathleen Dunn also recalls that the Knights of Columbus smartly dressed in tuxedos served as ushers that evening. The organizers had hoped that the Basilica's own choir would be part of the concert, but time constraints made this impossible. However, Lynn Doyle found a suitable alternative: two large choirs – the St. Lawrence Choir and the PSBGM Chorale. Erica Phare, who was Assistant Director of

NEWSLET
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ST. PATRICK'S SOCIETY OF MONTREAL
"Celebrating 175 years of community service"
 is pleased to present their
16th ANNUAL CHRISTMAS CONCERT
 Featuring
**CONCERTO DELLA DONNA
 MONTREAL MALE WELSH CHOIR
 SAINT PATRICK'S BASILICA CHOIR with CAROLE McCORMICK
 BERNADETTE SHORT IRISH DANCERS**
**WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 3, 2008
 7:30 P.M.**
**SAINT PATRICK'S BASILICA
 454 RENÉ-LÉVESQUE BLVD. WEST
 MONTREAL**
 Please visit our website at
www.spsmtl.com
 for more information on the performers.
TICKET PRICE: \$15.00
 CALL SPS OFFICE:
 ERIN MATHESON
 514-481-1346
office@spsmtl.com
*Join us for a wonderful evening
 of music and song.*

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A Word from the President

Dear fellow members and friends of the Society; greetings from Africa! The coastal city of Durban, in the Zulu Kingdom of KwaZulu-Natal in South Africa to be precise, where it pains me greatly to tell you that preparations for Christmas celebrations are in full flow even though the temperature is hovering around the mid twenties and rising.

Without dwelling too much on my trip, I could not help thinking, as we flew over the Democratic Republic of Congo, the third largest country in Africa, a country which has a grand total of 180 kilometres of paved road and has been at civil war for more than 20 years, of how lucky we are to live in a country such as Canada (and we sometimes think that we have problems). Truly, this great continent appears to have been abandoned and deserves so much more. Perhaps, with an African-American as President-elect in Washington, there might be reason for hope. Can SPS help? Surely, it provides food for thought.

Closer to home, it has been both a busy and exciting five months since I assumed the role of SPS President. To recap quickly; we have been entertained on a very successful Friendship Cruise (Captain Sandy hopes to keep the crew intact for future voyages); we have heard the thoughts of publisher Niall O'Dowd regarding the policy a Democratic US Government might adopt towards the continuing peace process in Ireland and the status of Irish living in America without work visas; and we have also had a very successful launch of our new website.

At the General Meeting at St. Patrick's Square on September 30th, the Board approved the applications of 16 new members, and also the disbursement of just over \$50,000 to 31 worthy recipients. On behalf of the Society, I offer a hearty welcome to our new members and congratulate both the recipients and all SPS members and friends who contributed to the various fund raising efforts. Keep up the good work as we look forward to a banner year in 2009!

All of our committees are hard at work to ensure the success of the key events for our 175th Anniversary. Nonetheless, I would like to specifically mention the Strategic Planning Committee which has now begun its task in earnest under the stewardship of Paul Dunne. The ensuing discussions have the potential to be exciting, revealing and very possibly provocative. The opinions of all members as well as those of the greater Montreal Irish community (and perhaps not so Irish) are vital input if the exercise is to achieve its mandate of defining the very purpose of the SPS and establishing the near, intermediate and long-term strategies which will enable us to achieve our stated mission. At the end of it all, the planning team expects to deliver its report and recommendations to the June 2009 AGM. The report might well show that we are doing everything that we need to be doing. If so, great, then it should be a case of steady as we go. On the other hand...well, let's wait and see. Don't forget to make your voice heard! I urge you to join in the fun by contacting the various Committee Chairs.

As Christmas approaches, I look forward to celebrating the season with many of you at our annual concert in the familiar surroundings of St. Patrick's Basilica on December 3rd, and then meeting with you at our Christmas Reception on December 10th at the Montreal West Curling Club.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to everyone.

Alistair O'Hara
November 2008



NUACHT, Community Newsletter of St. Patrick's Society

Editorial Board: Anne Forrest (Editor)
E-mail: nuacht@spsmtl.com

Mary McDaid
E-mail: mary.mcdaid@mcgill.ca

Martina McLean
E-mail: mcleans.mtlqc@sympatico.ca

Scott Phelan
E-mail: scottphelan@laboutiqueelectronique.com

Proofreading: Maura Druda

Advertising: Erin Matheson
E-mail: office@spsmtl.com

Printing: Imprimerie Marion Printing
5685 Laurendeau
Montreal, QC H4E 3W5
Tel: (514) 769-3378

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Please address all contributions to the Editor at the Society Office.

Tel: (514) 481-1346; Fax: (514) 481-9048;

E-mail: office@spsmtl.com

St. Patrick's Society of Montreal
St. Patrick Square
6767 Côte St. Luc Road, #1
Montreal, QC H4V 2Z6

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www.spsmtl.com

If you haven't yet checked out the NEW St. Patrick's Society website, don't wait a moment longer. This comprehensive and friendly site has been well planned and provides a vast amount of background information on the Society. Want to see what the photos in this issue look like in colour? Follow the links and download this edition of *NUACHT* by visiting the *NUACHT* section at www.spsmtl.com. You can read back issues dating from October 2002 as well! Visit the **new** official St. Patrick's Society website today!

Disclaimer:

NUACHT occasionally publishes material of a controversial nature. It wishes to state that one of the purposes of this newsletter is to share opinions submitted and it welcomes comments from readers.

What's new in St. Patrick's Society

Each year, SPS distributes grants to those members of the Montreal community who have made significant contributions of their time and energy to benefit others. There are three categories of recipients: Charitable, Cultural, and Educational.

On November 5th, 2008, the following St. Patrick's Society Grants were approved by the Board of Directors:

Charitable

Benedict Labre House
Camp Caritas
Generations
Good Shepherd Community Centre
Mini-Prix Council of Churches
Nazareth House
Newman Centre
NOVA
Refuge Juan Moreno
Share the Warmth
St. Columba House
St. Leonard's House
St. Willibrord's Soup Kitchen
Royal Canadian Legion Veterans' Fund

Cultural

Ancient Order of Hibernians
Chateauguay Academy of Irish Dancing
Cine Gael Montreal
Colleen Curran
Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Eireann
Comhrá Montreal
Irish Dancing All Schools Championship Fund
Montreal Gaelic Athletic Association
Montreal Irish Rugby Football Club
Moran Academy of Irish Dancing
Point St. Charles Outreach Fund
Siamsa School of Irish Music
Ville Marie Feis

Educational

Loyola High School
Marianopolis College
Thomas More Institute
Villa Maria High School

These deserving recipients will be recognized for their contributions at the St. Patrick Society's Christmas Reception which will be held on December 10th at the Montreal West Curling Club.

We wish them continued success with their endeavours as they work to support the community.



For the benefit of those members of the Society who may not know who was appointed to the Executive and Board for 2008-2010, here is what you requested:

EXECUTIVE

President

Alistair O'Hara

Vice-Presidents

Andrea Bobkovicz
Scott Phelan
Patrick M. Shea

Treasurer

Paul Dunne

Secretary

Christie Brown

Immediate Past President

Mary McDaid

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Tom Brady	Thomas Mulcair
Edward Brennan	John Mulholland
Robert Brodrick	Matthew Rooney
Paul Doyle	Edward Short
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Sandra McDonough	Irene Woods
Frank McMahon	Daniel Zangwill



John Little named Irishman of the Year 2009



St. Patrick's Society is delighted and proud that Dr. John Little (SPS President 2004-2006) has been chosen for this prestigious honour. NUACHT will provide a profile of John in the February issue.

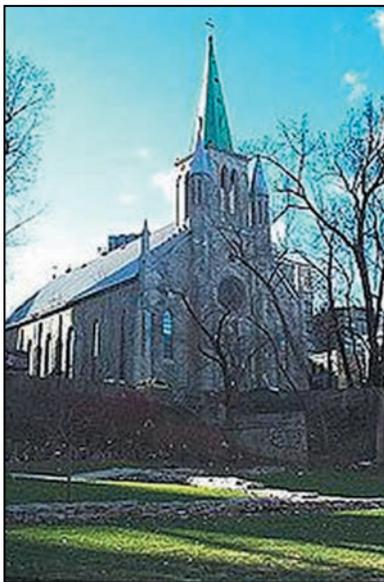


Concert (cont.)

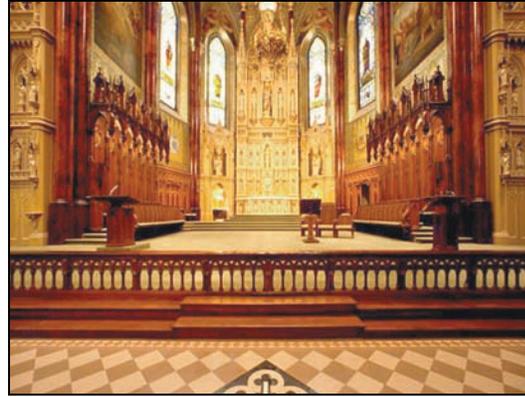
the SLC at the time, directed both groups. As someone who sang in the adult choir that evening, I have vivid memories of lovely music-making in a magnificent setting.

During the following years, well-known Montreal choirs took to the stage at the Basilica. These included the Montreal Police Fraternity Choir, the 22-voice Armonia Vocal Ensemble, the St. Patrick Basilica Choir, the Montreal Welsh Male Choir, the Montreal Intracultural Choir, the St. Lambert Choral Society (under the direction of David Christiani), and the Beverly McGuire Ensemble. In 2003 the Orpheus Choral Group from Ottawa travelled to be part of this Christmas celebration. Dancing was introduced early on and members of Bernadette Short's School of Irish Dancing have delighted many audiences; in particular, Celtic Grace have been very popular. Soloists included Carol McCormick and Beverly McGuire, well known in the Montreal Irish community.

In 2002 and again in 2003, Carmel Kilkenny, of CBC fame, was the emcee. It was in 2003 that SPS made a special donation to Sun Youth in gratitude for the help that organization extended to the families of two Irish rugby fans who were killed in a tragic accident when visiting Montreal. Although a new sound system was finally installed in the Basilica in 2004 (after years of complaints!), the Society made the decision to relocate to the new Loyola High School Centre for the Performing Arts in 2005.



St. Patrick's Basilica



The concert's magnificent "stage"

The decision to move to NDG was explained by Robbie Brodrick, who was the new Concert Chair: "After 12 years at St. Patrick's Basilica downtown, we thought it was time for a change... and we figured it would be a good opportunity to show off the new auditorium as well as to remind everyone of Loyola's Irish roots." He was right. The 750-seat auditorium provided an excellent venue. The 2005 concert, appropriately, featured the Loyola High School Band and two choirs – the Loyola High School Choir and the Queen of Angels Academy Choir – all led by John Pasquini. The soloist was Sandra D'Angelo. As ever, Celtic Grace proved to be a star attraction.

For me one of the highlights of this concert was the late Ernie Butler, emcee, who managed to keep things moving when technical glitches occurred (there are always problems when a new facility is being used for the first time). I also recall that the lighting in the balcony was inadequate and made going up and down the stairs rather dangerous.

In 2006, the People's Gospel Choir presented a moving programme of spirituals. Also, that night, Celtic Grace introduced a first: five male dancers. Last year's concert was memorable in many ways. For starters, there had been a heavy snowfall that day and parking was extremely difficult. The show began late and ended very late(!), attendance was poor, and Andrew Carter, emcee, seemed ill at ease. Iwan Edwards' Chœur des enfants de Montreal stole the show and were a hard act for the Greater Montreal Chorus of Sweet

Adelines to follow. Again, Celtic Grace were terrific but their performance was too fleeting.

This year, to mark the 175th Anniversary of the Society, the Annual Christmas Concert will return to its original home, Saint Patrick's Basilica on Wednesday December 3rd, 2008, featuring Concerto Della Donna, the Montreal Male Welsh Choir, Carol McCormick and her accompanist, John Gilbert, and the Bernadette Short Irish Dancers. Red Shannon will be on hand as emcee. It promises to be a great evening.



Way of the Cross – postponed: a message from AOH President, Victor Boyle

I hesitate to use the word "cancel" as this event was important to Father McEntee. However, it has been difficult to get a replacement this year.

For those who have not participated in the past, the AOH walks the Stages of the Cross at the Cote des Neiges Cemetery. Father McEntee had chosen 14 Celtic Crosses (some of historical reference) as the Stations.

The "way" is guided by an interviewer and at each stage an interview takes place in play format. We were assigned roles at the start. Most of the people who participated found it both entertaining and spiritual. Much like our beloved Father Tom himself.

We hope to have things back on course for next year and will keep everyone posted.
Victor Boyle

PS – Just a note to say that our good friend Denis Delaney, who joined us each year, did not play the role of Jesus as Father Tom advised against type-casting.....



BEING IRISH: ÊTRE IRLANDAIS

AN EXHIBITION AT MCCORD MUSEUM OF CANADIAN HISTORY

Celebrating over 250 years of the Irish presence in Quebec

Community participation is paramount to the success of this Exhibition on the Irish in Quebec. This is now your opportunity to reflect on your Irish heritage and its impact on your own Quebec experience; this is your opportunity to ensure that your family's Irish-Quebec footprint is revealed.

MCCORD MUSEUM would like to hear our **COMMUNITY VOICES** and asks of all of you:

“What connects you to your Irish roots?” It may be a recipe, a souvenir, a picture, a song, a home movie or...? Please tell the McCord about it!

To participate: send a text of one paragraph (up to 150 words) with an attachment if you like (picture, document, etc.) to the following email addresses:

spsmontreal@hotmail.com

irlandaisirish@mccord.mcgill.ca

irishpbs@bellnet.ca

McCord will advise you directly on whether it can be incorporated into the diverse exhibition displays. St. Patrick's Society and the Irish Protestant Benevolent Society, as co-sponsors of this event, will also ask your permission to place your photographs/texts on their respective websites.

For direct information or if you have any other queries about this request, please contact Mary McDaid: [H] (514) 487-5303 or [C] (514) 267-5303

This Exhibition will explore the meaning of being and staying Irish in Quebec.
It is our story – please be a part of it!

Oireachtas competition: November 7-9, 2008

By Patrick Short

It was an early rise for the Shannon Dancers as they boarded their bus at 5:30 a.m. at the Irish Centre on St. Patrick Street, in the tiny municipality of Shannon, bound for Montreal and then on to Niagara Falls for the 2008 Oireachtas, the Canadian Regional qualifying event for the World Championships of Irish Dancing. A second bus left Baie d'Urfe with the Montreal area dancers, a total of 44 competitors along with many of the parents of our hopefuls.

The three-day event brought many tears of joy along with a few sobs from those who thought they had given better of themselves. The Oireachtas is for dancers in Championship level and is divided into groups by age. The solo competitions were run on Friday and Saturday and the Céilí teams competed on Sunday. Our Quebec contingent had dancers from The Bernadette Short School and the Moran Academy and came from many areas of Montreal, Chateauguay, Shannon and Laval.

Stephanie Coull, winner in 2007, repeated her fine performance again this year and took away the Senior Ladies competition. The Senior Men's was won this year by Michael Keane. Both these dancers come from Montreal West and dance for The Bernadette Short School. Other Short dancers who qualified for the World Championships were: Meaghan Kilmartin (under 11); Orla Mahon (under 13); Caitlin Kilmartin (under 15); Natasha Woytiuk (under 18) and Elspeth McMurray (under 20). Many



Marie Short and the two 8-hand céilí winning teams

other Short dancers earned medals and finished in the top twenty of their competition; a considerable feat when many events had seventy to ninety dancers competing.

The Moran Academy had two representatives and both were recognized by the judges and received “points on the board.”

We left Niagara, a very happy bunch of dancers and parents. A great sing song and many a recitation entertained us as we sped back to Montreal after another very successful Oireachtas for our dancing schools.

The 2009 World Championships of Irish Dancing will take place in Philadelphia from April 5th to 12th, 2009.



Cine Gael's 2009 season: the story so far.

By Dana Hearne

Cine Gael is gearing up once again for the new season. We have made some changes in our programming. The 2009 season will be more streamlined and just a little shorter – five evenings of films instead of seven. And, for this year at least, we have decided that we will not offer our special extended weekend of films with guest director or actor. The weekend has always been the most difficult feature of our programme to organize because of the nature of the lives of directors and actors who might have to cancel a Cine Gael engagement at the last minute because they are needed elsewhere; or might not be able to make the commitment in the first place for the same reason. We are also simplifying our opening and closing receptions which, this season, will be wine and cheese receptions and will take place in the atrium outside the Cinema de Sève

We are currently in the process of tracking possible films - some from the offerings at last year's Galway Film Fleadh and many more from the very impressive programme of Irish films at this year's Fleadh. Some of the favourites on our wish-list include: *Our Wonderful Home* by Director Ivan Kavanagh described as "a devastating look at the new Irish family and a timely critique on the death of the Celtic Tiger"; *Kisses* by Director Lance Daly, one of the favorites in this year's Galway festival, a film that combines the darker side of life as well as the magic, wonder and mystery of it – "a sheer delight" according to the critics; *Gabriel Byrne: Stories from Home* by Director Pat Collins which has been described as a wonderful "poetic and lyrical portrait of a man who, through his life and career, exists in a self-imposed exile"; *Dambé: The Mali Project* directed by Dearbhla Glynn, a film which captures the magic and beauty of Mali and West Africa and celebrates culture and the power of music; Bob Quinn's latest film *Vox Humana (notes for a small opera)* so named because operas are larger than life and the homeless, alcoholic anti-hero "is a small statistic in a society such as ours." This is just a small taste of some of the feature films we are tracking.

One of the films you can count on for our evening of short films is *New Boy* based on a Roddy Doyle short story (from the collection *The Deportees*) which has already picked up a number of top prizes including the IFTA for Best Short. You can also expect an interesting mix of styles including animation and Irish-language shorts.

Tentative dates are as follows: Friday, February 13; Friday, February 20; Friday, March 27 (this will be our evening of shorts); Friday, April 17; Thursday, April 30.

Check out our website for further up-dates at www.cinegaelmontreal.com.



Readers' feedback

NUACHT – always a most interesting and informative read with regards to our Montreal Irish Community – actually, to be more accurate, – our whole Quebec Irish Community. BUT, – I'm sorry, – I simply couldn't stop laughing at that photo of the two Dragon Boat Ladies. It must have driven you bananas to have to look at that picture of the two young ladies, the Misses Aisling O'Gorman and Maeve Francoeur in their lovely red McGill University t-shirts with the word "MEDICINE" mis-spelled in French or English - whichever language was intended. Obviously there would have been no way the photo spelling error could have been corrected in "any" proof reading, but I would have thought that NUACHT would have at least left the photo out of the September issue simply out of embarrassment for McGill's Medical Faculty.

Come to think of it, I've often wondered why Medical Doctors' handwriting has always been so illegible. Perhaps we now know the answer – it's probably because they can't spell. But then again, guess that also doesn't say much for the teaching of English in grade school either, does it?

Murray E. Quinn

(And leave out the picture of those two lovely ladies? Ed.)

I have never dared opine on the content of NUACHT although a number of your articles have been very critical of the Montreal Roman Catholic Church and some of its agencies. However your article on the late Cardinal was completely unbalanced and I could not restrain myself from offering some comment.

I went to Wikipedia for a biography of the candidate for Beatification and found content in the range of 6742 words + -. 385 + - words were devoted to the suggestion of his homosexuality. This represents 4.5% of the article.

The NUACHT article attributed to Mr. Neil McKenty was 686 words + - and 309 + - were devoted to the suggestion. This represents 45% + -.

I leave the conclusion to you, the Editorial staff.

Patrick Short

(It is not the objective of NUACHT to offend anyone. We felt the article to be balanced and well intentioned. The question of Newman's sexual orientation has not been (and probably never will be) resolved. Ed.)

In the September issue, p.2, the new President shared his thoughts with us. However, I wonder, why was his name not affixed to the piece? I think it's Alistair O'Hara, but now I'm not sure. Does he have a ghost writer??

Anon

(Our apologies! Our mistake ... and it won't happen again. Please see p.3 for a complete list of the newly appointed Executive and Board of Directors. Ed.)



Not your typical evening of Irish dancing!

By Anne Forrest

On Friday evening, November 21st, four fortunate friends found themselves five rows from the front of the Salle Wilfrid Pelletier stage in Place des Arts. The occasion was a live performance of Michael Flatley's *Lord of the Dance*, now in its 11th year. These seats, which were in the centre of the row, represented the first prize awarded by Montreal's Ireland-Canada Chamber of Commerce at their Pub Quiz, held October 2nd at McKibbin's Pub on Bishop Street.

In fact, it was the St. Patrick's Society team consisting of Tom Brady, Mary McDaid, Scott Phelan and myself that won these great tickets. Our team, "St. Pat's aka the Glorious 175th," faced many a challenging and often horrendously tricky question. Luckily for me, my teammates knew most of the answers and we raced into the lead, which we held, from the first round onward.

Unfortunately for Tom and Scott, they had to forgo their prizes as family commitments prevented them from attending the show. Great gentleman that they are, they kindly donated their tickets to Erin Matheson and Margo Heron who happily jumped into the vacated seats.

As for *Lord of the Dance*, it was an unforgettable performance. For me it was a first; I had never seen anything like this before. From the opening moments when the pyrotechnics began and the music burst out of the stacks of speakers on both sides of the stage, I was transfixed. Created, choreographed, produced and directed by Michael Flatley, the show moved slickly at a remarkable pace.

I'd planned to credit individual performers on their agility or musicality. However, this has proved difficult as the skimpy 8 1/2" by 11" (folded) programme provided no information whatsoever as to who played which role. Even the official website to which I turned for help, lists the group that was on stage at PDA as "Troupe 2" and merely offers three choices for the parts of Lord, Dark Lord and Morrighan, and two for Saoirse. Which of them strutted their stuff in front of me might forever have remained a mystery had I not googled these names and others. I finally tracked one down via a Hungarian website! Don McCarron starred in the title role. He was good, albeit somewhat conceited. When he first appeared, Mary muttered, "Cowboy Joe goes to Las Vegas." I wondered why he wore a belt on which his name was inscribed: was there any doubt that he was the hero of the piece? His rival, Don Dorcha, the Dark Lord, was played by Adam McSharry and he was my favourite, coming across as evil incarnate but possessing a mischievous streak that was quite endearing. The Irish Colleen, Saoirse, – Louise Connolly – and Morrighan, the Temptress, – Gillian Norris – were equally competent, although Gillian seemed to have more spark.

Others who deserved special mention were the two blonde and athletic fiddlers who were able to jump around and play simultaneously. They were very good and clearly enjoyed what they were doing. Erin, the Goddess, had a lovely, resonating and

lilting voice and she was particularly easy on the eye in her dark green gown and cloak. However, I'm still unclear as to what purpose her role served in the plot. And there was the ever-lively Sprite, an elfish creature who appeared to be playing a pipe (but we suspect that this was dubbed) clad in a multi-sequined, luminescent jump suit.

Then there were the various groups (corps de ballet?) who executed their movements brilliantly and with great energy: the Warriors, the ominous-looking Warlords, the Clan of the Celts and the Girls of Ireland. The hard-shoe dancing was very exciting and the stage shook to the noise of their heels and toes (although, we think additional sound was added for better effect). One number was somewhat inappropriate (I think it was called "Breakout"), when the Girls suddenly stripped off their skimpy dresses to reveal hot pants and bikini tops! "*Lord of the Dance goes to Hollywood,*" seethed Mary. Later, the Clan entered wearing psychedelic outfits of lime green, shocking pink, orange and lemon. For Erin this spoiled her favourite number in the show, "Siamsa."

All things considered, I'm pleased I was able to attend this performance. It was well choreographed, had extremely effective lighting techniques, made use of a simple yet dramatic set, and was very entertaining. The almost sold-out crowd was enthusiastic as it applauded the troupe and was offered at least four brief encores. Alas, the inadequate stage at Place des Arts cannot really accommodate such a large group and we noted that in the finale, "Planet Ireland," fewer than half the troupe was on stage.

Congratulations to Unicorn Entertainments Inc. on this production and thanks to them for donating the four tickets to Jonathan Sullivan, director of ICC. We wish Troupe 2 every success as it continues its cross-Canada tour.



Don McCarron, *Lord of the Dance*



St. Columban project on track for 2009

By Fergus V. Keyes

In 2005, a group of descendants of the original settlers in St. Columban began a project to restore the old cemetery and build a monument to those early Irish settlers who arrived in Canada around 1830.

With the project entirely financed by donations, the effort has been up and down over the last three years but definitely is on track for work to begin in the near future.

One of the group, Kelley O'Rourke Thommassin, relocated to her home in Montreal, all the broken stones that had been unceremoniously thrown in the bush behind the Church a number of years ago. And she has been working on cleaning the stones and matching the fragments, while at the same time, discovering new information about some of our ancestors.

Earlier this year, we entered what I would call the slow bureaucratic stage which included meeting with the Fabrique (Church Wardens) of the Parish of St. Columban. As you may know, Catholic cemeteries in Quebec are the property of the local Church. A number of descendants met with the Fabrique earlier this year to determine the location, and the size and the design of the monument: I am pleased to report that everyone involved has now agreed on these details. It will consist of three walls surrounding a large cross toward the front of the cemetery. The broken stones will be inserted into the wall. We are also hoping to include some benches, and there is already a rose garden in the area.



St. Columban descendants at start of project, October 2005

A second difficulty is that St. Columban, which is not far from St. Jerome, seems to exist in some kind of a micro-climate and is generally a little colder than Montreal. This results in more frost and thaw movement and may have been one of the causes of the stones falling over. So, Ken Neil, another group member has been investigating the best possibility for a foundation that will last well into the future. I don't want to bore you with details, but Ken has to determine how deep to dig the foundation for the monument,

how wide it should be, what materials to use, etc. And, he is trying to find a foundation and brick contractor who is both available and willing to build at a reasonable cost.

We had been planning to start work this fall, but it appears that we will have to wait until Spring 2009. But, in some ways, 2009 might be a better time since we will be able to build in the year of the 175th anniversary of St. Patrick's Society of

Montreal and this would be appropriate since SPS has provided our project with tremendous support from the beginning. We also intend to include some notation on the monument that recognizes this SPS involvement.

Finally, we continue to update our web site at www.stcolumban-irish.com which you might wish to visit. Many, many people of Irish ancestry in the Montreal area are descendants of this first large group of Irish Catholics that settled in St. Columban yet may not be aware of the connection.



Tara's golfers enjoyed a great season

Tara is a unique organization. Consisting of keen golfers and their supporters, it runs a series of tournaments (some are two-day events) at different favourite courses both in Quebec and northern New York state. Usually the players relax over a fine meal after their games on Saturdays. This past summer afforded Tara members many opportunities to experience fine golf. Prizes were awarded for "closest to the pin," "low gross," and "hole-in-one." Golfers dream of achieving the latter, and for Kay Farrell, her dream came true at Craigwood, Lake Placid, when she scored a hole in one on the 17th hole. Kay took home \$150.00 in prize money for this feat.



Photo: Linda McPherson

Hole in one scorer, Kay Farrell

Tara Golf Circuit for 2009

- May 16** Opening Tournament for members & guests at Hemmingford Golf Club, Hemmingford, Qc (opening dinner)
- June 20** 2nd Tournament at Mountain Acres Golf Course, Qc
- July 11** 3rd Tournament at Craigwood Golf course, Lake Placid, NY
- July 12** 4th Tournament at Craigwood Golf course, Lake Placid, NY (Best Ball)
- August 8** 5th Tournament at Riviere Rouge, Qc
- Sept 12** 6th Tournament at Adirondack Golf Course, Plattsburg, NY
- October 3** 7th Tournament at Caughnawaga Golf Course, Qc (closing dinner)



To join Tara, contact Carole Dery: carole@hudson.net

A Canadian in Ireland: dancing her way through university

By Pamela Cotter

My name is Pamela Cotter and I am the only Canadian in the BA in Irish Music and Dance at the University of Limerick, Ireland. My story begins back in May 2006 when I applied to the programme on a whim. I was studying at McGill University, pursuing a career in teaching even though my true passion was dance. I began tap dancing with the Ethel Bruneau Dance Studio when I was 11 years old. I absolutely loved having an excuse to scratch up the floor and make loud noises with my feet. It was not until a few years later that my focus turned to Irish Dancing. Traditional music was always present in our house since my ancestors were Irish. The Montreal St. Patrick's Day parade was also a much-anticipated yearly event in which I regularly took part – first as a Girl Guide and later as a dancer on Bernadette Short's float. My love of traditional music and dance simply continued to grow over the years. I was soon taking fiddle lessons with Siamsa School of Irish Music in Montreal; from there it was only a matter of time until I realized I would not be happy unless I could continue my passion for "Trad" on a full-time basis.

I had seen the BA programme advertised in the Irish Culture and Dance magazine but never really gave it any thought other than that I would probably not be accepted. The programme only accepts twenty five students a year, and not being a world champion myself, I thought I stood as much of a chance as a snowball in a microwave. To this day I still don't know what got into me, but I decided to send in an audition video and application just for kicks. A few weeks later I was interviewed on the phone at 6 a.m. and before I knew it I was buying luggage and trying to figure out if my hair dryer would work in Ireland!

I was born and raised in Montreal, Quebec and had never travelled further than Alberta. This would be my first big trip on my own and I was terrified. While it was an honour to be accepted into the only university in the world which offers a BA in Irish Music and Dance, it also meant a big change in my life. I sent in the paperwork to McGill stating that I was leaving the course, gave my two weeks' notice at my jobs, said my good-byes to my family and friends and moved to a country nine hours away from where I had spent nearly two decades of my life.

The first month at UL (University of Limerick) was certainly not the smoothest of times. At our first day of orientation, we were advised to find someone from our home country with whom to socialize, or we would suffer from culture shock and ultimately become consumed with depression. I was then told there were no other Canadians. While trying to remain positive, I spent my first week drenched and regretting my decision to move to Ireland. Just when I was ready to throw in the towel, I had my first dance class and remembered why I had come. We were brought in for a quick run-through of steps, and four hours later we were given a break. We were then told to return the next morning bright and early for technique class with Colin Dunne. I went home that night with blisters the size of Toronto on my heels and I could hardly lift my legs up the stairs ... and I can't remember a time in my life when I was happier. That first dance class was a window into what the

next four years of my life would be and I could not stop smiling.

During my first semester at UL, I had classes in Irish dance history, movement awareness, yoga, Irish language, audio technology and popular culture, not to mention weekly technique classes with Colin Dunne, private lessons with Anne Burke and several hours of ensemble classes. We also were given master classes with Breándan de Gallaf, Michael Ryan, Tarik Winston and the Dagda Dance Co. In addition to all this, the course requires students to learn a second performance area, therefore, I have continued the fiddle and am simply loving it. (Though I do not think my roommates would feel the same way!)

While choosing to leave Canada was the hardest decision I had to make, it was also the best thing I could have done. Not only I am learning so much about dancing as a whole, but I am having life experiences that I would otherwise never have had. All this and I have not even told you about my performance opportunities or travels around Europe!



Pamela Cotter is now a third year student studying the BA in Irish Music and Dance at the University of Limerick, Ireland. She began tap dancing at the age of 11 with the Ethel Bruneau Dance Studio in Montreal, Quebec. After several years of competing, she decided to add Irish dancing to her repertoire and joined the Bernadette Short School of Irish Dancing. While her studies began in the Faculty of Education at McGill University, her heart was really in Traditional Music and Dance. Pamela was accepted to the University of Limerick in May 2006 and is determined to pursue her dream of becoming a professional dancer upon graduation. While she is currently living in Limerick, she returns home to Canada at least twice a year to visit her family.

In the next issue of *NUACHT*, Pamela will tell us more about her exciting and sometimes traumatic experiences as she settles into life in Limerick.

“This will always be your home.” The trip of a lifetime.

By Fergus V. Keyes

Earlier this year, my sons, Andrew and Derek, announced that in honour of my 60th birthday (which is actually this December) they would take me to Ireland in September. They mentioned the fact that my heritage is 100% Irish, and then added the comment that they were surprised that, with my lifestyle, I would even make it to 60. (This second remark - I choose to ignore!)

So on September 19th, off we went for ten days, and to what I can only describe as a “trip of a lifetime.” I know it is a cliché – but having travelled extensively, I can honestly say that this Ireland trip was really, really special. Perhaps, three men travelling together provides for a different adventure from that of an average couple on holiday. (It definitely affords more visits to more pubs!)

We landed in Dublin, rented a car, and then drove to Belfast. Although I had been in Ireland some 40 years ago, I had never had a chance to visit the North. In Belfast, we took a “Black Taxi Political Tour” and saw all the fascinating murals,



A Belfast mural

and the “wall” that still stands between the Protestant and Catholic neighbourhoods – some ten years after the Peace Accord to settle the “Troubles.” We also went to Londonderry (called just Derry in the South - as I was reminded, when we were

back in the Republic). Londonderry (or Derry) is a great walled city and is certainly worth a visit. We continued up and around the North West coast to witness an absolutely terrific view. People talk about the green of Ireland – but I was astonished at how gorgeous the lands actually looked.



An Irish ruin amidst the green

To detail the whole trip would take forever, but the highlights included a visit to the Giant’s Causeway; a stop, of course, at Bushmill’s and a wee taste; and a visit to Blarney Castle (Yes, I’ve heard all the stories about Blarney Castle being a

tourist trap, etc.) – but we found it very neat and, yes, I did kiss the stone!

One special event was a visit to Kilkenny where after tramping through a number of graveyards, we decided that the original Keyes family to arrive in Canada, around 1830, likely came from a small village called Clough (but pronounced as Clock) in the district of Castlecomer, Kilkenny. After an afternoon in the local pub, (we seemed to have spent a lot of time regrouping in a pub), and having explained our family history quest, at some point, the barmaid asked me “And how long will you be home?” I mentioned that my family had left some 200 years ago, so perhaps it was a bit of a stretch to call this village “home” – to which she replied “Perhaps – but this will always be your home!” Her comment seems to sum up nicely all the warmth and friendliness that we experienced throughout Ireland.



(l. to r.) Fergus, Derek and Andrew enjoying a wee taste

We spent time in Carrickfergus, Killarney, Galway and many, many other towns and cities throughout all of Ireland (each place with a story too long to relate) – and ended the trip with three days in Dublin.

In the 1960s, I had found Dublin to be a tad gray and a bit depressed – but boy, how times have changed! Dublin is now really cosmopolitan and lots of fun – great restaurants, great pubs, and many great people. We visited all the Dublin sites including the Post Office where the rebels fought the British in 1916 and the jail where a number of them were executed. And, of course, no trip to Dublin is complete without a tour of Guinness – and another wee taste.

It was difficult to board the plane to return home to Montreal, yet I thought how easy it was for us to take a plane from Canada to Ireland and back compared to the many, many days that my ancestors endured in an old ship crossing the cold Atlantic.

But in the end, I would certainly like to visit Ireland again – like I said “It was the trip of a lifetime.”



An Irish Montrealer who has made a difference

By Audrey O'Breham

A few months ago, *NUACHT* was approached by Audrey O'Breham who felt that not enough recognition had been given to Montreal women of Irish descent. Audrey wanted to rectify that by getting *NUACHT* to publish a series of profiles featuring women who have made significant contributions to the Irish community. SPS member, Patricia Burns, is the subject of the first of these articles. We invite readers to suggest other fine individuals for future consideration.

Recipient of the 2004 Liam Daly Award for her two books, Patricia Burns got her feet wet in the Irish community by first joining the adult class of the Bernadette Short School of Irish Dancing. "That was my first involvement other than as an observer," she says.

This was only the beginning of Burns' contribution to the Irish community. Following in her father's footsteps, who was himself very active in this community, Burns became involved in St. Patrick's Society, with which she partnered for the writing of her first book, *"The Shamrock and the Shield: An Oral History of the Irish in Montreal"* (1998).

Describing the history of the strong Irish presence in Montreal, her first book outlines the institutions which the Montreal Irish community first established and used to affirm its cultural identity on this side of the Atlantic. The

founding of the St. Patrick's Day Parade is used to mark a turning point and indicates the increased Irish presence in Montreal. "By 1834 there were sufficient Irish in Montreal to organize the first Parade." Burns goes on to record the establishment of St. Patrick's Basilica in 1847 – the first church opened for the Irish Catholics.

Underneath this lies an undeniable need and pride of sharing her own history of a bygone era, which she says she inherited from her father, James Lawrence Burns. "As a child, my father took all of us to the events in Griffintown. I loved the atmosphere and the Irishness of it all," she said. "It was a happy memory for me and I suppose I wanted to record the Irish community so others could share their memories of a long-gone community."

Her second book, *"They Were So Young: Montrealers Remember World War II"* (2002), was inspired by a more distressing and disturbing event: a visit to her cousin's grave in Normandy, at the Bretteville-sur-Laize cemetery. Once again bringing in her own personal experience, Burns recounts that as she walked amongst the graves, she was heartbroken to see that most of the soldiers were teenagers. "There were three boys of 16 years and one French-Canadian lad who died at 15! Who couldn't be affected by



Patricia Burns, author and historian

that?" The book is a testimony to the pain and sacrifice which affected so many families.

A retired elementary-school teacher, Burns taught at St-Dominic's and St-Raymond's in the Montreal Catholic School Commission until 1967 when she left to have a child. She returned to the French education sector after raising her daughter Erin Olizar-Fowler, and became an ESL teacher in schools in Chateauguay and Mercier.

Her love of teaching, culture and people, brought her to teach set dancing, along with Sheila Brown, at the Siamsa School of Irish Music. She describes this activity as being her favourite involvement in the Irish community. Oddly enough, she had never done set dancing before. "I used to come home from a day of teaching, plug in a video of an Irish set dance, learn it and then rush to Wesley United Church to teach it," she recounts with a laugh.

Burns truly considers the Irish community her extended family. She describes compiling her first 'Irish' book and the community's acceptance of it as her most memorable experience with her 'Irish' relatives. "I could not have written my first book without the help of Dr. Michael Kenneally and the Cultural Committee of St. Patrick's Society," she adds.

Burns remains very modest about her significant contribution to Irish culture with the Irish community of Montreal. She is very proud of being part of what she considers a warm and supportive group. As humble as Burns may be, this community certainly retains the fruits of her influence, talents and personal experiences. She has contributed to shape our view and understanding of the Irish history of Montreal, and has certainly done her bit to promote and make the Irish culture accessible. "I think we had a lot of fun."



Patricia is presently working on yet another book – the history of Montreal during the war (1939-1945). Ed.

Visit the Culture Café and rediscover your community

By Ariadne Decker

If you are reading this article, you are probably interested in the Irish culture and live in Montreal. Like you, I am interested in a culture that is foreign to Montreal, namely the German one. Due to people like you and me, I launched a website called Culture Café at www.culturecafe.com.

What is Culture Café? It's a new website meant to serve as a central location for connecting people with their cultural heritage in the place where they're living. The idea for Culture Café came from my personal struggle to connect with my German heritage while living in Montreal. I was trying to raise my children with the German culture and language in order to safeguard our heritage and was looking for a German-speaking babysitter, a German mother's playgroup, the wonderful stories and television programs that I grew up with as a child, and any other ways to immerse myself and my children in the German culture. The search for each of these was time-consuming and difficult. Although there were actually hundreds of resources, businesses, organisations, and events available for German-speakers in Montreal, there was really no single place for me to find out about all of them. I set out to talk to other communities in Canada and the United States and found that my frustration was shared across most cultures. I felt that the need for a site like Culture Café was tremendous and hence, I set out to build it.

Culture Café's goal is to provide a free and easy place for anyone who knows about or is in charge of a cultural event, group, business, or organisation in a city to tell other people about it. Then if anyone interested in that specific culture in the given city visits Culture Café, they will immediately be presented with relevant available cultural resources. The website is taking advantage of modern technology and following the trends of how more and more people are finding information on the web today. The idea is for everyone to benefit. For example, those offering a product or service to the Irish should be able to tell people about it and those looking for Irish resources should be able to find them easily. The Irish community, like the German community, is fairly well organised compared to other cultures. However, the fact remains that there are many great initiatives

and events that are not obtaining the visibility they deserve and are being overlooked by people looking for this type of information. In addition, one of the most interesting things that I discovered while doing market research for this project is that more than a third of the people who consume cultural information do not even have these cultural roots, but simply enjoy the culture for personal reasons. These are not people who are members of our cultural societies and not necessarily looking at each of our individual society's websites to find out what's happening. In addition, much of the younger generation, even if it does share our cultural roots, is not joining the traditional cultural societies and is missing what they have to offer. The German Society in Montreal, for example, is struggling to find younger members, but there is certainly not a shortage of young people in Montreal who want to connect with the German culture. These people are simply looking for cultural information in non-traditional places. Not reaching these people is truly a missed opportunity.



Ariadne Decker

How can the Irish community in Montreal make use of Culture Café today? The site is already packed with a list of businesses and organisations for the Irish culture in and around Montreal. If you know about any others not already listed, please add them, or if you manage the business or organisation already listed, please claim it, which will give you the ability to change or enhance it. Likewise, if you know about an Irish event or group, please add it for all Irish-culture-lovers out there to enjoy.

Culture Café is very young and is always looking for feedback. If you have any thoughts on what we can do better, please get in touch via email at info@culturecafe.com. For more information on Culture Café, please visit our site at www.culturecafe.com.



Mistranslated out-of-office reply leads to confusion

By Anne Forrest



*Cymru am byth**

Swansea Council contacted its in-house translation service when designing a bilingual sign barring heavy-goods vehicles from a road in an area of the Welsh city. But as the translator was not available, they received an automated e-mail response in Welsh saying: "I am not in the office at the moment. Please send any work to be translated."

Unaware of the real meaning of the message, officials had it printed on the sign under the English, which reads: "No entry for heavy-goods vehicles. Residential site only."

The council took down the sign, near an Asda supermarket, after Welsh speakers spotted the mistake. Welsh-language magazine *Golwg* printed photographs of the offending sign after the gaffe was pointed out by readers.

Managing editor, Dylan Iorwerth, said: "We have been running pictures of this kind of thing over the past few months. "It's good that people want to have bilingual signs, but unfortunately they don't make sure someone with a real knowledge of Welsh checks the work through all the different stages. As in this case, there can be a terrible mistake."



**Cymry am byth does NOT translate to Merry Christmas!*

Canadian Irish Studies continues to grow and consolidate

By Michael Kenneally

St. Patrick's Society scholarship winners announced

This year's St. Patrick's Society Scholarship in Canadian Irish Studies has been jointly awarded to three Masters students: Sonya Ocampo-Gooding, Deanna Del Vecchio and Laurel Hart.

Sonya Ocampo-Gooding is working on an interdisciplinary project on Irish iconography with both historic and contemporary resonances. She will be using her funding to take up an invitation to conduct research at the Trinity Irish Art Research Centre at Trinity College, Dublin.

Deanna Del Vecchio and Laurel Hart are working on installation artwork on the subject of Griffintown. The project is envisioned as a public commemoration to take place at Concordia that will draw on both scholars and members of the public, using art as a means of community expression.

These winners were chosen on the basis of academic excellence by the Irish Studies Scholarship Committee.



Deanna Del Vecchio & Laurel Hart



Sonya Ocampo-Gooding

Dr. Gearóid Ó hAllmhuráin will be the 2009 Peter O'Brien Visiting Scholar

This will be Dr. Ó hAllmhuráin's second position as a visiting scholar at Concordia. He has dedicated his career to promoting the preservation of Irish traditional music, folk life and culture and is currently the Jefferson Smurfit Corporation Professor of Irish Studies and Professor of Music at the University of Missouri-St. Louis. Author, ethnomusicologist, anthropologist and professional musician, Dr. Ó hAllmhuráin is also a recognized authority on the cultural impact of the Great Irish Famine. He has taught courses at University College Cork, St. Francis Xavier University, Nova Scotia, the University of San Francisco, Concordia University and the University Missouri-St Louis. He is the author of the well-known *A Pocket History of Irish Traditional Music*, now in its third edition. As part of the O'Brien position, Dr. Ó hAllmhuráin will also deliver a public lecture on a Canadian Irish Studies topic to be announced.

Summary of fall lectures

The fall 2008 public lecture series was highly successful and well-attended, featuring eight visitors from Ireland, Scotland, the US and Canada. The season began with the third annual St. Patrick's Society Lecture in Canadian Irish Studies by Niall O'Dowd. The Centre's second lecture was delivered by Michael Cronin of Dublin City University's Centre for Translation and Textual Studies.

An event of particular note this fall was the inaugural Ann Saddlemeyer Lecture in Canadian Irish Studies. Dr. Saddlemeyer recently donated over 850 literary and critical texts from her private collection to the Centre. To recognize this generous gift and honour Dr. Saddlemeyer's pioneering work in Irish literary studies, the Centre established an annual public lecture in her name and Professor Saddlemeyer graciously agreed to inaugurate the series with a lecture entitled, "Lady Gregory, the Theatre, and the Ballad." She delivered an enthralling lecture to a standing-room only crowd gathered in Concordia's EV Amphitheatre.



Prof. Ann Saddlemeyer

Christopher Murray, former director of the Drama Centre at University College Dublin, led our second annual Colloquium in Canadian Irish Studies with a set of lectures on Irish theatre over two days. Next, the Writers Read at Concordia series presented a reading by Irish poet Louis de Paor that was enjoyed by students, faculty, and members of the community. Other lecturers included Nessa Cronin of the National University of Ireland at Galway, and Visiting Scholar in Canadian Irish Studies Katie Gough of the University of Glasgow.

The season's final event was the seventh annual Bishop Neil Willard Lecture by Linda Cardinal, the 2008 Peter O'Brien Visiting Scholar. Cardinal, currently Chaire de recherche sur la francophonie et les politiques publiques at the University of Ottawa, presented a lecture of particular interest to the community, which looked at Ireland and Quebec in comparative perspective.

Winter Courses in Canadian Irish Studies

History of Ireland - This course will be taught by Dr. Ronald Rudin.

Twentieth Century Irish Plays II - This course will be taught by Kate Bligh.

James Joyce - This course will be taught by Michael Kenneally.

Summer Courses in Canadian Irish Studies

Two summer courses are envisaged for 2009. These are Gender and Nation: Irish Women in Politics, Culture and Society and Field Studies in Ireland, an independent study style course involving a period of study in Ireland during the summer. For more information, please e-mail Kester at cdnirish@alcor.concordia.ca.

Stay informed

The CCIS maintains ongoing contact with its academic and community constituents through a weekly e-Newsletter sent to more than 1,500 subscribers. It lists Irish academic, cultural and social events. To sign up: E-mail cdnirish@alcor.concordia.ca. Tel: (514) 848-8711 Web: www.cdnirish.concordia.ca.



Everything you want to know about the potato but were afraid to ask

No Small Potatoes

By Elizabeth Johnston

Sound Proof Press

156 pages

\$20.00 (plus shipping & handling)

Reviewed by Anne Forrest

When Elizabeth Johnston's article "Potato appeal takes on a whole new meaning" was published in *NUACHT* (Feb. 2008), I looked forward to reading her book once it was released. It did not disappoint me. *No Small Potatoes: A Journey (More Than Meets the Eye)* is a compelling read. Well researched, this slim paperback should interest environmentalists, concerned citizens and potato lovers everywhere.

For me, a potato is a potato is a potato. I admit that I usually buy whatever seems to be the best-priced spud in the store (although, thanks to my husband, I've become conditioned to seek out those grown in P.E.I.). Now I'll pay closer attention to the different kinds that are available, although according to Ms. Johnston, they represent a mere handful when one considers that in Peru there are over 5,000 naturally occurring varieties of potato.

In addition to outlining the history of the humble tuber, Johnston examines the role now played in its cultivation by such mega seed corporations as Monsanto. In fact, I had not fully appreciated the inherent dangers that may occur when we consume genetically modified vegetables. My concern, which is shared by the author, is that as consumers we are not given adequate information about any such modifications.

The writer has thoroughly researched her subject primarily by visiting and interviewing potato farmers in Ireland, Peru and P.E.I. It is fascinating to read about the practices they have in common and their genuine love for the potato. In particular I appreciated the very detailed account of the time spent by Johnston in Peru's Lake Titicaca district, home of the Quechua people. Her experiences at the Potato Park (PoPa), where the potato has been grown for over 8,000 years, showed me how little I know about this major food source.

However, Chapter Three, "Magyar Maverick," which occupies over a quarter of the book, is the one that made a lasting impression. Johnston travelled to Hungary to meet Arpad Pusztai, a nutritional scientist who, in 1998, was involved in a potato scandal in the U.K. and was unfairly vilified. After he reported that his research indicated that genetically modified potatoes were unsafe to eat, his employer, the Rowett Institute, withdrew support, Dr. Pusztai was ostracized by his peers, and he subsequently spent years trying to clear his name. Also, to understand how governments are at the mercy of big corporations, this chapter is a must read.

Elizabeth Johnston intersperses many historical and cultural anecdotes into what is a largely technological text. She



A few of the potatoes available at the market in Puno, on the shores of Lake Titicaca

emphasizes the importance of sharing knowledge and experience, repeatedly pointing out that great things can happen when people work together for the common good.

A dozen colourful photographs compliment this fine little book that has very few typographical or constructional errors. Timothy LaSalle, PhD, CEO of the Rodale Institute, sums it up most succinctly: "A good read. A call to action."

No Small Potatoes may be obtained by going to www.elizabeth-johnston.com or to www.Amazon.com.



A treasure and treat for the eyes

The Heart of the Farm

(A History of Barns and Fences in the Eastern Townships of Quebec)

Text by Louise Abbott

Photographs by Louise Abbott and Niels Jensen

Price-Patterson Ltd., Montreal

306 pages

\$49.95

Reviewed by Anne Forrest

This informative and beautifully illustrated book is a real treasure. It is a work of art crafted by two people whose love for the Eastern Townships of Quebec comes across on every page. SPS member, Louise Abbott, wrote the text and together with her husband, Neils Jensen, took the magnificent photographs. When I next drive through this area, I will look at the farm buildings from an entirely new perspective.

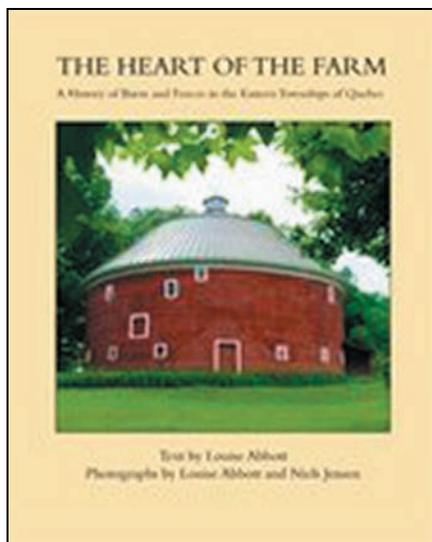
The historical background that Abbott provides is almost overwhelming. She gives a detailed account of the evolution of the Townships beginning with the late 1700s and the 1792 royal proclamation that granted settlers rectangular lots of approximately 200 acres. Vivid descriptions of the hardships encountered by the early farmers and the wonderful communal

Cont. p.15

Treasure (cont.)

spirit that enabled them to overcome these difficulties are enthralling. I clearly pictured the lengthy building process, the log shanties, the “raising bees,” and the multi-purpose barns. This was subsistence farming.

Abbott’s fascination for barns is compelling. Separate chapters examine the diverse types: the Dutch Barn; the Colonial English Barn; the Quebec Long Barn; the High Drive Barn; the Polygon Barn; and the Round Barn. As settlers made their home in the Townships, they introduced structures with which they were most familiar. Barns were not only used for storing hay, grain and straw, but also for such tasks as threshing and sheep shearing. They served as shelter for animals and, in early times, “circuit riders,” visiting preachers, held services in these spacious buildings. One chapter explains why and how barns were painted. Interestingly, whitewash was introduced by French Canadian settlers and red paint – cheap and readily available – by European immigrants. Most structures, however, were left unpainted. Sadly, today, weathered timber-framed barns are being dismantled and transported to enhance the properties of wealthy Americans and Canadians by adding an authentic rustic touch.



Fences, needed to prevent livestock from straying and to delineate property lines, are dealt with in detail. I did not know that these could be so varied. Early settlers used snake fences that originated in the States in the 1600s. Later, stonewalls were introduced and today barbed-wire fences predominate.

The book has taught me a lot about the social and economic conditions experienced in the Townships over the past 200 years. I had not appreciated the large influx of American settlers after the War of 1812, nor that of the European settlers, the Irish and the Scots stayed the course longer than did the English! Abbott also discusses the differences between the traditional Anglophone farmstead and the “seigneurial long-lot system” of the French Canadians – one that did not adapt well to the rolling terrain of the area.

Abbott tells us about Orville Sweet (barn framer for over 50 years), the origin of country fairs, the arrival of the railway, the development of cheese production, the recent importance of pig farming and much, much more. As she says in her foreword: “We believe that the rural built heritage of the Townships deserves to be studied attentively and commemorated proudly.” I endorse her opinion most sincerely. Read this well-researched book and you will agree.



Joe’s show now celebrates 63 great years!

As 2008 marks the 90th anniversary of the end of the first World War, New Year’s Eve will be special for many of the residents of the Ste-Anne’s Military Hospital. Since 1945, members of the Point St. Charles Legion have put on a show for the veterans. Started by Frank Monroe, who passed away in 2004, this event is eagerly anticipated by the audience and performers alike.



Joe Mell in Point St. Charles, November 11, 2008

SPS member, Joe Mell, joined the New Year’s Veterans’ Hospital Shows, of which he is now chairman, when he returned from serving in Korea in 1952: this will be his 57th one. During the late morning of December 31st, four groups of entertainers, including dancers in full costume, and 60 Legion members tour the hospital, spending time with each patient and distributing gifts and other goodies. At 1:00 p.m. the show is staged in the auditorium before about 200 veterans.

This year’s performance features the following from the Montreal Irish Community: Salty Dog; Belfast Andi and friends; musicians from Comhaltas, Siamsa and Innisfail; Beverley McGuire; Kathleen McAuliffe; Colleen Bartley; Johnny Maloney; Brian Foran and others. The show is opened by a professional dance group - the Lorna Wayne Dancers who close with the Can Can to the great delight of the Vets. Bernadette Short’s Celtic Grace Dancers are part of the show; back-up music is by John Reno and his Ambassadors; and Ron Jenkins is on the key board and sound. A group of younger volunteers, led by Carly Meredith and brother Ryan, work as back-stage runners. Food for 200 is provided by Ann Broden.



A relaxed Joe Mell

The Legion depends on funding for this event from various organizations in the business and charitable sectors of the Montreal community. If you would like to contribute to this worthy activity, please contact Joe Mell at joe-car@webtv.net. The men and women who so gallantly served our country deserve your support for this annual holiday remembrance.



Homecoming Weekend at Loyola another class act

By Bob Shaughnessy '61

Homecoming Weekend at Loyola High School traditionally starts on the Friday night of Thanksgiving weekend. This year over 450 alumni attended the annual beer, oysters and smoked meat extravaganza. They began to arrive at 6:00 p.m. and by 7:30 the Atrium was rocking. The evening has caught the imagination of our Alumni and each year the venue gets better. The highlight of course, was the gathering of the clans of the anniversary years, the fifth, tenth and so on. But the evening was not entirely their domain. Alumni from all years appeared out of nowhere and renewed old friendships and told tall stories. There was electricity in the air and as the evening progressed, plans were made to continue the evening so well begun. By eleven o'clock, various groups were heading downtown to revisit "old watering holes." All were accounted for by Monday morning!

The beer was once again provided by none other than that brew master of note, Victor Lukoshius '87. The whole operation was most efficient as the beer was cold and the line-up was short. But most important, that great smile that only Victor can give, greeted one and all and set the tone for the evening. A huge thank-you to Tom Mallon '75 who manned the oyster table and made sure nobody lost a finger – there was no shortage of those slippery critters. The smoked meat was once again provided by Lesters and the four cutters kept the line-ups of hungry beasts to a minimum.



Mark Shalhoub & Scott Phelan conducting the live auction

There was a live auction, handled by Mark Shalhoub '86, the master of the smooth voice. It's always a challenge to out shout some 450 revellers who are more interested in catching up with what is going on with their buddies than what Mark is trying to pawn off on them. He was

good. The live and silent auctions are the sole source of funds for the Alumni Association which is committed to raising money to permanently endow a bursary that will be given to a needy student who attends Loyola. The value of this bursary is approximately \$125,000.00. As you can see, it will be a long-term project since part of the monies we raise also goes to help the activities of a number of charities (including the NDG food bank) and other expenses the Association has (including a cheque of \$1000 each year to the graduate who receives the Loyola Medal at graduation).

On Saturday afternoon, a number of alumni from the reunion years, showed up and celebrated mass in the High School Chapel with Fr. Gerry Mathieu, S.J. Then it was off to cocktails



The Led Zeppelin tour – members of the Class of 1978

and dinner with their classmates at various restaurants across the city. And so, another great evening became part of the lore of Loyola. It is always a treat to see classmates reconnect after so many years and to see how genuine and happy everyone is when they reminisce about those special times growing up in the land called Loyola. We will gather again next year on Thanksgiving Weekend, when once again, classmates will be able to step back in time. 'Til then, good health and God bless.



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Paul Dunne, Principal

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People in the news ...

Congratulations to **Tom Mulcair** on retaining his seat in Outremont. Now that running for re-election is over, he's slowed down and is walking, not roller-blading, in the West Island.

Congratulations also to **Tom Brady** who quietly got married to **Ingrid Nanning** in October. SPS wishes them every happiness.

And babies seem to be everywhere! **Patrick** and **Sara Shea** introduced **Hugo Tierney Shea** to the world on September 30th, at St. Mary's Hospital in Montreal. **Hugo** weighed in at 7 lbs., 13 oz. We're also delighted to report that former Bernadette Short Irish Dancer, **Paula Malolepszy** of Montreal West gave birth to daughter, **Fiona**, on November 3rd. **Paula** and fiancé **John Coté** are thrilled.



Liam Shea shows off brother Hugo

In September, the Society gained 16 new members. It is happy to welcome the following individuals and hopes that they'll enjoy being part of this great organization: **Teresa Bowyer, Elisabeth Bradshaw, Zenny Bryniawsky, Ann Cruise-Broden, John Gilroy, Stephannie Glezos, Mildred Griffin-Gagnon, Maura McKeon, Evelyn Meaney, John Meaney, Winifred Ann Ruth O'Callaghan, Caitlin O'Hara, Barbara Rainsforth, Ray Reynolds, Garleen Tomney-McGann, and Robert Wilkins.**

Our roving reporter in Kabul, **Ned Eustace**, shares his first impressions of this Afghan city:

It's cold, incredibly polluted, primitive and dangerous. The city has no redeeming features save the occasional magnificent mosque. I have seen beggars, very young and very old, terribly maimed, legless and blind, male and burquered female. Rambling herds of goats and sheep feed on garbage piled on side streets, their shepherds close by. Guns everywhere. Police pick-up trucks with machine guns mounted on the cabs. Hand-held rifles with RPGs in the hands of patrolling cops. Street names like Chicken Street selling just that, almost to the total exclusion of anything else. But for all of that, ordinary people are friendly and seem happy enough. All look older than their years. During my first week lunch appeared magically on my desk each day made up mostly of nan-bread and rice served by a young lad who, with another guy, seemed to be sort of assigned to me. I later discovered they had not been paid in four months but in the spirit of traditional Afghan hospitality they were sharing their own meagre food. I still don't know why anyone is fighting for this place.

We all wish Ned a safe return so that he can enjoy Christmas with his family and friends.

A Christmas recipe

Chewy Gingerbread!

SPS Office Manager, Erin Matheson has been making these cookies for years; they are a family favourite and treat. Try this easy recipe and stock up your larder for the festive season ahead. As Erin anxiously/eagerly prepares for the birth of her second child who is due in early January, you can be sure that she's already done her Christmas baking!

Ingredients

- ½ c butter
- 1 c packed light brown sugar
- ½ c white sugar, plus ¼ c for rolling
- 2 large eggs
- ½ c molasses
- 2 tbsp vegetable oil
- 2 c flour
- 1 tsp baking soda
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- 1 tsp ginger
- 1 tsp allspice
- ½ tsp coarse salt

Method

1. Mix butter, brown sugar, and ½ cup sugar until smooth, about 3 minutes. Mix in eggs, one at a time, followed by molasses and oil.
2. Gradually mix in flour, baking soda, cinnamon, ginger, allspice and salt.
3. Cover dough and refrigerate until firm – overnight.
4. Preheat oven to 325°. Put remaining ¼ cup sugar in a bowl.
5. Using an ice cream scoop, form balls of dough and roll balls in sugar to coat.
6. Bake 3 inches apart on parchment-lined cookie tray for 17 minutes. Rotate baking sheets halfway through baking time.
7. Let cool completely on tray and store cookies between layers of parchment!



*Merry Christmas and a Healthy
and Happy New Year from the
NUACHT team*



A great Christmas gift for music lovers

Three priests are creating musical history in Northern Ireland. In their late forties, Father Eugene O'Hagan, Father Martin O'Hagan and Father David Delargy are in charge of parishes in the Diocese of Down and Connor and have been singing together for 35 years. On November 18th, their latest album of beautiful and spiritual songs, *"The Priests,"* was released by Sony BMG Music Canada. Well-loved favourites such as "Ave Maria," "An Irish Blessing," "O, Holy Night," and "Panis Angelicus" are featured. Priced at under \$15.00, this CD would make a good stocking stuffer.



It was at St. MacNissi's College, near Carnlough in Co Antrim, where they met and realised their musical prowess as a singing trio. Nicknamed *Holy Holy Holy* by their peers due to their shared determination to enter the priesthood, they were encouraged to pursue their singing by a priest in the school.

After St. MacNissi's, they trained at The Seminary in Belfast where they all studied under the Belfast-based singing teacher

Mr. Frank Capper MBE. Following this, they completed their training at the Irish College in Rome. It was there that Eugene took singing lessons from Sergio Ballani and shortly thereafter the combined and rare talent of the three young men was recognised. They were invited by the Pope's private secretary to sing for the Pope in the sacred liturgy.

The Priests' careers overlapped once again as they all eventually returned to Ireland, where they began their work in various special ministries. Each now lives the life of a full-time parish priest, tending the spiritual needs of their parishioners and official duties at all church services including those to mark the christenings, marriages and funerals of members of their Catholic community.

The Priests also have a new podcast on their website called "Thoughts and Reflections" where they discuss a chosen topic. Check out www.thepriests.com (Official website with music, videos, news, and more) and www.youtube.com/thepriestsofficial to see videos of live performances by The Priests.



Listen – podcast – download – the Irish Show any time

You are now able to tune in to the Irish Radio Show whenever you want. Every show that has been recorded in 2008 is available for your enjoyment. Recent programmes include the following:

November 1st

- A tribute to Aly O'Brian
- Ken Doran and Joey Elias invite you for a charity event: HELP, a Beatles Tribute
- Scott Phelan unveils the new St. Patrick's Society's new Website
- Ricky Mabe calls in to talk about his role in the comedy Zach & Miri Make a Porno
- We chit chat with Micheal Black, from the famed Black family, about The 18th Annual Irish Fest Cruise
- Jonathan Moorman blesses us with his music and an interview.

November 15th

- Camille Vanasse and Andrey Gagne from the horse-riding charity – <http://www.ranchplus.org/>
- Elizabeth Johnston talks about the launch events for "No Small Potatoes"
- Barack Obama's Irish roots are celebrated in song
- We talk to Katie Gough about her upcoming lecture "Slave Ship Zong."



NUACHT extends sincere condolences to Kimberly Sullivan whose father passed away earlier this month.

Around Town

Help to kick off SPS's 175th year!

On Wednesday, December 10th, St. Patrick's Society will celebrate the Christmas season by holding its annual Christmas Reception at the Montreal West Curling Club, 17 Ainslie Road. This event is limited to members and the 31 recipients of the Annual Grants. The party which features festive music and song gets underway at 7:00 p.m. Be sure not to miss it and send your RSVP to Erin at (514) 481-1346 or office@spsmtl.com by December 5th.

ICCC moving up in the world

The annual Christmas Reception hosted by the Ireland-Canada Chamber of Commerce moves to a new location this year – The Royal Bank Lounge, on the 41st floor of Place Ville Marie. This event will take place on Thursday, December 11th from 5:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Guests of Honour include His Excellency Mr. Declan Kelly, Ambassador of Ireland to Canada and His Excellency Mr. Anthony Cary, CMG, British High Commissioner to Canada. Hors d'œuvres, an open bar, musical entertainment and door prizes will be offered. The price for members is \$50.00 (if paid in advance) or \$60.00 at the door and for non-members. Please advise ICCC by email at contact@icccmtl.com or call (514) 845-0973 before December 8th if you plan to attend.

Start the 'Season' with the Queen's Selection Evening

The Queen's Selection Evening – a few hours of fun and entertainment – is always a great start to the Irish Season. This will take place on Saturday, January 24th at Buffet Sorrento, 1275 Dollard, LaSalle. At this event the Queen and Court will be selected. These outstanding young women will represent the Montreal Irish community for the 2009 season and at the 2009 St. Patrick's Day Parade.

The contest is open to single females of Irish descent who are Canadian citizens; they must be permanent Montreal and surrounding area residents between the ages of 18 and 25. Also that evening, the Grand Marshal and Chief Reviewing Officer will be sashed and presented with their gifts.

UIS hope that their members and those of the Sister Societies will attend this event. If you have never been to a Selection Evening before, why not come out this year and see just how great it is.

The cost is still \$20.00 for adults and \$10.00 for children under 12. Tickets are available by calling Elizabeth Quinn at (514) 894-5087. Tables of 10 or 12 are also available and should be reserved in advance.

Craic agus Comhrá

For obvious reasons, there will NOT be a *Craic agus Comhrá* on the last Thursday of December, Christmas Day. However, be sure to plan to attend the first one of 2009 on January 29th at The Irish Embassy Pub & Grill, 1234 Bishop St., from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. Finger food is provided. These sessions are fun and offer great networking opportunities.

A January afternoon at the Pub

St. Patrick's Society invites you to join them at the pub for a warm bowl of Irish stew, a pint and, of course, a few traditional tunes to continue the St. Patrick's Society 175th Anniversary Celebrations! This will take place on Sunday, January 18th, 12:30 p.m. in Hurley's Irish Pub, 2nd Floor, 1224 Crescent St. Ticket Price: \$30, includes: Irish stew, salad, pint of choice, coffee, dessert & gratuities. To purchase your tickets, please call the Society office at (514) 481-1346 or send an e-mail to office@spsmtl.com.

Another Pub Quiz coming soon...

For those of you who love a challenge, ICCC is planning another of its very popular pub quizzes. The tentative date is either February 4th or 5th. At press time the venue has not been confirmed, but in all probability it will be in Hurley's Pub, 1224 Crescent St. As usual, the price to compete will be \$20.00 for ICCC members and \$25.00 for non-members. This will include one free drink and hors d'œuvres. Prizes will be awarded to the winning teams as well as door prizes. For more information, e-mail contact@icccmtl.com.

Copies of *fragile boys, fragile men* now available

fragile boys, fragile men – reviewed in *NUACHT*, September 2008 – may be ordered by going to www.borealispres.com. The book is also in the Chapters/Indigo catalogue and can be ordered through them. Harold Griffin, author of this short story anthology, would also be happy to mail copies directly. Contact Harold by e-mail at halgriffin@sympatico.ca or by snail mail: 94 Galt, Vaudreuil, Dorion J7V 1L3.

NUACHT Advertising Rates

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Business Card	\$75.00	\$250.00
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Half Page	\$400.00	\$800.00
Full Page	\$400.00	\$1,300.00

To place an ad. or to get more information, please call Erin Matheson: (514) 481-1346 or email office@spsmtl.com

We would also be pleased to help you with the design of your ad.

Please Note:

If you are receiving *NUACHT* and have not paid your annual subscription or would like to be put on the *NUACHT* mailing list, please remit \$10.00 to Erin Matheson at the Society Office.

2008-2009 CALENDAR OF EVENTS / CLÁR IMEACHTAÍ 2008-2009

DATE	EVENTS	FURTHER INFORMATION
Nov. 27	ICCC <i>Craic agus Comhrá</i> , The Irish Embassy Pub & Grill, 1234 Bishop St., 5:30 p.m.	ICCC 845-0973
Nov. 30	UIS General Meeting and Christmas Draw, St. John Brebeuf Church, 1:30 p.m.	Elizabeth Quinn (450) 672-5087
Dec. 3	SPS Christmas Concert, St. Patrick's Basilica, 7:30 p.m., \$15.00	Erin Matheson 481-1346
Dec. 5	Innisfail Members' Christmas Party, NDG Legion, 7:00 p.m. (buffet at 9:30 p.m.), Guests \$10.00	Ann Broden (450) 465-3421
Dec. 10	St. Patrick's Society Members' Christmas Reception, Mtl. West Curling Club, 17 Ainslie Rd., 7:00 p.m.	Erin Matheson 481-1346
Dec. 11	ICCC Christmas Reception, 1 Place Ville Marie, 41 st floor, 5:30 p.m.	ICCC 845-0973
Dec. 20	UIS distribution of Christmas Baskets, Margaret Healy's house, 8:00 a.m.	Elizabeth Quinn (450) 672-5087
Jan. 18	SPS Irish Stew lunch, Hurley's Irish Pub, 2 nd Floor, 1224 Cresecent St., 12:30 p.m., \$30.00	Erin Matheson 481-1346
Jan. 18	UIS General Meeting, St. John Brebeuf Church, 1:30 p.m.	Marlene Demers 366-3623
Jan. 24	UIS Queen's Selection Evening, Buffet Sorrento, 1250 Dollard, LaSalle, 7:00 p.m.	Colleen Murphy 426-4588
Jan. 29	ICCC <i>Craic agus Comhrá</i> , The Irish Embassy Pub & Grill, 1234 Bishop St., 5:30 p.m.	ICCC 845-0973
Feb. 8	UIS General Meeting, St. John Brebeuf Church, 1:30 p.m.	Marlene Demers 366-3623
Feb. 13	Cine Gael, De Sève Cinema, Concordia, 7:15 p.m.	Lynn Doyle 481-3503
Feb. 20	Cine Gael, De Sève Cinema, Concordia, 7:15 p.m.	Lynn Doyle 481-3503
Feb. 26	ICCC <i>Craic agus Comhrá</i> , The Irish Embassy Pub & Grill, 1234 Bishop St., 5:30 p.m.	ICCC 845-0973
Mar. 6	St. Patrick's Society Ball, Marriott Chateau Champlain Hotel	Erin Matheson 481-1346
Mar. 7	Erin Sports Assoc., Irishman of the Year Breakfast, 9:00 a.m. \$60.00	Mabel Fitzgerald 989-1539
Mar. 8	UIS Mass of Anticipation, St. Gabriel's Church, 11:30 a.m.	Ken Quinn 247-3296
Mar. 15	185 th St. Patrick's Parade, noon, Fort & St. Catherine Street	UIS 366-3623
Mar. 17	St. Patrick's Society Luncheon, Hilton Bonaventure Hotel	Erin Martheson 481-1346
Mar. 26	ICCC <i>Craic agus Comhrá</i> , The Irish Embassy Pub & Grill, 1234 Bishop St., 5:30 p.m.	ICCC 845-0973
Mar. 27	Cine Gael: An evening of award-winning short Irish films, De Sève Cinema, Concordia, 7:15 p.m.	Lynn Doyle 481-3503
Mar. 28	UIS Awards Banquet & Dinner Dance, Buffet Sorrento, 1250 Dollard, LaSalle, 5:00 p.m.	Mike Kennedy 368-2066
Apr. 17	Cine Gael, De Sève Cinema, Concordia, 7:15 p.m.	Lynn Doyle 481-3503
Apr. 19	UIS General Meeting, St. John Brebeuf Church, 1:30 p.m.	Marlene Demers 366-3623
Apr. 20	UIS Mass for Deceased Members, St. John Brebeuf Church, 7:30 p.m.	Ken Quinn 247-3296
Apr. 30	Cine Gael: Closing Film & Reception, Atrium outside De Sève Cinema, Concordia, 7:15 p.m.	Lynn Doyle 481-3503
June 16	SPS Annual Golf Tournament, Belle Vue Golf Club	Erin Matheson 481-1346



Andrea T. Bobkowicz
Investment Advisor

1 Place Ville Marie
Suite 1805
Montreal, Quebec H3B 4A9
Telephone: (514) 871-4339
1-800-361-8838
Fax: (514) 871-5031
E-Mail: andrea.bobkowicz@nbf.ca

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