



Concordia University creates School of Canadian Irish Studies

Culmination of fifteen years of growth

By Michael Kenneally

The recent creation of the School of Canadian Irish Studies by Concordia University is a story that has its beginnings in the early 1990s. With the support of St. Patrick's Society, two courses in Irish History and two courses in Irish Literature began to be offered on a regular basis at Concordia University. I was invited to teach the Irish Literature courses, one in each semester. Gradually, the number of courses increased (18 in the current year), as did the subjects being taught. In 1996, the Canadian Irish Studies Foundation was established and began raising funds to provide financial support for courses, for the Irish Public Lecture Series and other ongoing activities. Over 160 distinguished academics, public figures such as Prime Minister Dr. Garret FitzGerald, Nobel Laureate Seamus Heaney, and Presidents Mary Robinson and Mary McAleese, and writers such as Colum Tobin, Nuala Ni Dhomhnaill, Sebastian Barry, and Patrick McCabe have come to Montreal.

In 2002, the Centre for Canadian Irish Studies was created and began to offer both a Minor and Certificate in Canadian Irish Studies. The Canadian Irish Studies Foundation, under the dynamic and committed leadership of Brian O'Neill Gallery, with the support of many individuals, of St. Patrick's Society, the Irish Protestant Benevolent Society, the United Irish Societies and other associations in Montreal created twenty two annual scholarships now valued at twenty-two

thousand dollars. The Canadian Irish Studies Foundation also began to fund the Annual Peter O'Brien Visiting Scholar and a temporary position in Irish Literature. A high point in this path of development was reached in 2008 when, through the efforts of Brian Gallery, the Government of Quebec and the Concordia University Foundation donated \$2-million and \$1-million respectively to endow the Johnson Chair in Quebec and Canadian Irish Studies. Meanwhile, an average of 600 students were taking courses annually in subjects such as Literature, History, Religion, Language, Geography, Economics, Political Science, Women's Studies, Film, Ethnomusicology, Visual Arts and Theatre. Since inception, approximately 7,500 have enrolled in Canadian Irish Studies.

Cont. p.4



Being Irish O'Québec's proud banner. See story, p.5

NUACHT

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A Word from the President

Spring is sprung and winter is but a distant memory. The grass is green, the sky is blue and the links are open which means that the St. Patrick's Society 14th Annual Charity Golf Tournament is just around the corner. So to all golfers, please join us on June 16th at Club de Golf Belle Vue, Ville de Léry, Quebec. This wonderful summer social event is a major contributor to the Society's cultural, charitable and educational endeavours. All this and sunshine guaranteed. But, before looking forward to the summer months ahead, it is surely worth reviewing the multitude of events which occurred over the long but not soon forgotten 2009 Green Season.

Beginning in mid February with the UIS flag-raising ceremony at Place Ville-Marie and continuing through the Queen's Pageant (congratulations to Erin Mackasey and her court), the sashing of our own Dr. John Little as Erin Sports' 2009 Irishman of the Year, Mayor Tremblay's reception at Montreal City Hall, the Green Mass on the morning of the Parade, the post-parade party and finally on to the UIS Parade Awards Banquet, the 2009 edition was indeed of epic proportions especially with the Parade being held on the Sunday following March 17 rather than the one before. A marathon perhaps, but I enjoyed every minute and I congratulate everyone involved for making this such a special time in Montreal. We should be proud of the very real and very much alive community in which we continue to thrive. Long may it continue.

From the Society's perspective, the Ball and Luncheon were magnificent successes. Christie Brown and Andrea Bobkowicz headed up the respective committees and both had promised something special in our 175th anniversary year.

A capacity crowd filled the Chateau Champlain ball-room on March 6th to welcome our 2009 Guest of Honour, Mr. Justin Trudeau,

and to bid on some wonderful items in the silent auction which has become a regular feature at the Ball in support of our Patrons' Fund. This year, with the focus on assisting the younger generation, the Fund will benefit the Montreal Children's Hospital Foundation and the Trevor Williams Foundation. Our sincere thanks go to our co-chairs of the 2009 Patron's Fund, Rob Braide and Jim Killen. And also to the generosity of the donors who contributed items for auction.

On March 17th, some 500 guests attended a spectacular luncheon at the Bonaventure Hilton and all left with smiles on their faces having been treated to the wit and wisdom of guest speaker Derek Drummond who was skilfully introduced, or was it set-up, by George Bowser. My congratulations and thanks to all the volunteers involved. Their enthusiasm and dedication merits our recognition and appreciation.

Of course, with 2009 being the 175th anniversary of SPS, we were involved in another significant project which recently came to fruition. On March 19th, invited guests assembled in McCord Museum for the launch of the "Being Irish O'Quebec" exhibition. From the outset, this has been a joint initiative of the St. Patrick's Society and the Irish Protestant Benevolent Society. I extend my sincere thanks to IPBS President Mike Nelson for the whole-hearted collaboration he and his members have shown throughout. Thanks to all who served on our joint Committee, particularly Jim Cherry, Tony Waite, Brian Mitchell, John Lemieux and Patrick Shea whose efforts at many levels made this Exhibition a reality and to Tom Brady who patiently chaired the committee through its deliberations, and still survives to tell the tale.

Finally, I especially want to recognize our immediate past-president, Mary McDaid, who came up with the crazy idea in the first place! Thank you, Mary, for giving us this opportunity. It is to the honour of the St. Patrick's Society that we could realize this exhibition in the context of our 175th anniversary. The exhibition continues until next April, so if you have not yet seen it there is plenty of time.

On June 18th, we will have our AGM at the McCord Museum and Lorraine O'Donnell will guide us on a private tour through the exhibition. We will also review the results of the Vision 2009 community survey which is currently being conducted by the Strategic Planning committee. If you have not yet completed the survey you can access it on the SPS web site home page. Please note that SPS members should also have received an invitation to complete a second survey. If not, please contact the office for more details.

Looking ahead, several 175th events are in the offing under the stewardship of Matt Rooney. There is talk of a train ride to the Eastern Townships, a wine tasting and another cruise on the river.

On a more poignant note, recently I attended a funeral service of an old golf buddy. Listening to the eulogies, I was saddened that we had lost touch and realised that I could have done more to maintain the friendship. Life does have a habit of getting in the way, but in the end it's all about the relationships we have with others and the mutual respect that goes with them.

Enjoy the summer everyone! Did I mention the Golf Tournament on June 16th?

Alistair O'Hara



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www.spsmtl.com

Report of the SPS 2009 Nominating Committee

By Christie Brown

In accordance with Article 4 of the By-Laws of St. Patrick's Society of Montreal, the immediate past-president of the Society, Mary McDaid, convened and chaired a meeting of the Nominating Committee, consisting of the following past-presidents of the Society: John Little, Lynn Doyle, Peter Shea and Brian O'Neill, and now proposes the following slate of Officers and Directors for the year 2009-2010:

President	Alistair O'Hara	
Vice Presidents	Andrea Bobkowicz	
	Scott Phelan	
	Patrick Shea	
Treasurer	Paul Dunne	
Secretary	Christie Brown	
Directors		
	Thomas Brady	Ed Brennan
	Karen Bright	Rob Brodrick
	Paul Doyle	John Lemieux
	Sandra McDonough	Frank McMahon
	Thomas Mulcair	John Mulholland
	Matthew Rooney	Robert Travers
	Hugh Whalen	Dan Zangwill

According to the Constitution of the Society, a copy of the report of the Nominating Committee must be delivered to all members. This will be done by letter from the Society's Secretary, by inclusion in the May edition of *NUACHT*, the Society's newsletter, and by entry on the Members' section of our website: www.spsmtl.com

All further nominations shall be received no later than **Friday, May 29th, 2009**, to:

Christie Brown, Secretary
St. Patrick's Society of Montreal
6767 Cote St. Luc Road, Suite 001
Montreal, QC H4V 2Z6

Such nominations shall be submitted in writing, signed by three members in good standing, with the written consent of each nominee.

Please join us for the **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**
This will be held at 6:00 p.m. on Wednesday, June 18th, 2009 in the McCord Museum of Canadian History, 690 Sherbrooke Street West. We look forward to your attendance.



This 175th Anniversary Luncheon was a HIT!

By Andrea Bobkowicz

On March 17th, close to 500 members of Montreal's Irish community sat down for a delicious meal (lamb, this year – and not chicken or salmon!) at the Hotel Bonaventure. Guest speaker, Dr. Derek Drummond, spoke from the heart about many subjects that moved the audience to tears, tears of laughter. It was a delightful lunch that included a witty introduction by Mr. George Bowser. One of our own, Dr. Michael Kenneally received the SPS Community Award and recognized the tremendous support of his family which allowed him the opportunity to build a legacy for Montreal, Quebec and Canada.

As Chairman of this event for the first time, it was a thrill for me to host everyone. I first started coming to the SPS luncheon back in 1993 and was in awe of the magnitude, the quality of the speakers and the thriving English-speaking business community in the heart of Montreal. The SPS Annual Luncheon is only possible with your support and the backing of our corporate tables which I would like to acknowledge and thank for their contribution:

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Lavery de Billy
National Bank Financial
St. Patrick Development Foundation
St. Patrick's Basilica



One of the Society's finest ties the knot



Photo: Mary McDaid

Anne-Marie Bismuth and Ed Short

NUACHT congratulates the happy couple seen above who got married on a very chilly Sunday afternoon (May 17th). The wedding took place in La Toundra Hall, located in the Canada Pavilion on Île Notre-Dame.

The People Page normally found on p.17 of *NUACHT* will return in September. Patrick Short obviously had more important business to attend to this month!



AOH celebrates the Celtic Cross Centenary (1909-2009)

By Victor Boyle

This year's annual pilgrimage to Grosse-Île and the Irish Memorial marks the AOH Celtic Cross Centenary in a three-day celebration beginning on Friday, August 14, 2009. Planning for this event began five years ago and has involved visits to more than 17 US states last summer. Many reservations have already been received from the US, Ireland and Australia.

The work to erect the Cross took years. The work to keep the Cross, and those who perished, forever in our thoughts has taken generations and could not have been done without you. It is so very important that you join us for this very special occasion.

Participants in the three-day event can take advantage of special rates at one of 14 preferred hotels. For those interested in the Saturday festivities only, you may travel by luxury coach from Montreal to Berthier sur Mer with same day return.

The celebration begins with the Ice-Breaker at the Hilton Quebec from noon to 5:00 p.m. for registration and meeting old and new friends. This is followed by dinner and live entertainment in the Grand Ballroom at 7:00 p.m.

On Saturday morning, the three boats taking you from the Old Port for a scenic ride along the great St. Lawrence River will meet with the two boats of day passengers arriving from Berthier sur Mer as they dock at Grosse Île. On the island, enjoy a boxed lunch before walking up Telegraph Hill for the rededication ceremonies. (The grounds have been restored to the way they looked a hundred years ago, and, whereas last year only 20-25

people could be accommodated at the foot of the Cross, there is room for over 1000 this year.) For the first time in the island's history, there will be walking access to the eastern part of the island. Enjoy the newly renovated Anglican church thanks to the generosity of the Irish Protestant Benevolent Society and marvel at the new interpretation centre in the Lazaratto.

Relive the experiences of the passengers from 1921 at the Disinfecting Centre, celebrate with entertainers or find a quiet place for reflection. Parks Canada employees will be stationed throughout the island to answer any questions you may have. Mass will be held at 3:30 p.m. at the Irish Cemetery. Later, when you arrive at the Old Port of Quebec, enjoy some of the many charms of the ancient walled city before returning to your hotel.

On Sunday, plan to attend Mass at St. Patrick's Cathedral in the heart of Quebec City, followed by an informal farewell reception before the journey back to Montreal or stay and participate in the Sea Shanty Festival* of Quebec.

Space is limited so an early reservation is suggested. The island will be closed to the public on August 15. Only guests of the AOH will have access.

For more information, visit AOH at www.aoh-2009.com or email us at Reservations@aoh-2009.com.

* See p.17 for more information on the Sea Shanty Festival.



School (cont.)

Concordia University's creation of the School of Canadian Irish Studies is a landmark moment in this evolution and lays the foundation for future exciting growth. The School will provide more independence and flexibility for Canadian Irish Studies to evolve in the coming years. In July, 2009 Gavin Foster, an Irish Historian, will take up a full-time position in the School where he will join me and the appointee to the Johnson Chair. Courses taught by the three of us will be augmented by part-time professors and some full-time professors in other departments. We hope to add additional professors in the coming years, so that a full complement of courses can be offered on a regular basis by permanent professors who will be financed and housed in the School.

These accomplishments have been achieved as a result of the extraordinary collaboration between Concordia University and the Irish community in Montreal and across Canada. This community involvement is most dramatically represented by the Canadian Irish Studies Foundation which has distinguished Directors and Trustees from all regions of the country and receives the patronage of His Excellency Declan Kelly, Ambassador of Ireland to Canada, the Rt. Hon. Paul Martin, former Prime Minister and the Hon. Jean Charest, Premier of Quebec. The success of Canadian Irish Studies can be

traced to the support of many groups and individuals – Faculty and Administration at Concordia, the Concordia University Foundation, thousands of enthusiastic students, the extraordinary financial commitment of the Canadian Irish Studies Foundation from donors across Canada, and the support of the Government of Quebec, the Government of Canada and the Government of Ireland, the active participation of Irish associations in Montreal and many, many individuals across the country. These successful ingredients have culminated in the creation of the only School in Canada offering programs dedicated to studying and teaching Irish history and culture as well as the Irish experience in Canada.

By any standards, this accomplishment is quite remarkable and the university-community collaboration is unique in Canada. I believe that the School of Canadian Irish Studies is now a central institutional presence in Montreal serving as a mirror to the Irish community by reflecting back to young and old an understanding of their history and culture. The School will continue to energize and give focus to the Irish community in Montreal and Canada for many generations to come. Everyone who has participated in, or contributed to, the success of the School of Canadian Irish Studies should feel a deep sense of pride that the Irish have successfully turned a dream into a dynamic and valuable educational institution with a growing national and international profile.



McCord hosts conversation on being Irish

By Kathleen Dunn

Concordia's University of the Streets Café strayed from its usual weekly neighbourhood café venues to hold its March 26th conversation at the McCord Museum. The topic was, "Aren't we all a little Irish?" Lorraine O'Donnell, Guest Curator of the Being Irish O'Québec exhibit, was the guest speaker.

The fifty or so participants toured the exhibit first for an hour, which I discovered is not enough time to take it all in, then gathered in a downstairs conference room to "converse." We talked about what it means to be Irish, why people seem to cling to and proclaim their Irishness, the importance of passing on family lore, and the like.

Lorraine spoke about her involvement in the Exhibition and the challenges and pressures she faced in deciding what and what not to include. The advantages of this type of exhibition are obvious, she said, "making history and heritage known and relevant today." She then pointed to a few dangers in staging such an exhibit, such as idealizing a community, or glorifying a community's contributions to history, or ghettoizing a community, or creating ethnic tourism. She described ethnic tourism as turning an authentic celebration into a spectacle having little or nothing to do with its original meaning.

My own contribution to the conversation was to say that I now understand why the shamroguery (called shamrockery at the McCord) had to be part of the exhibition despite the risk of contributing to ethnic tourism. That is what the general public knows of the Irish. But when they come to the McCord they will see and learn a whole lot more about the Irish. It made me realize also that this exhibit is meant to be but an "aperçu" and not an academic history of the Irish in Quebec. For my taste, it gives a good overall feeling and is brief enough to be graspable.

Fellow SPS member Maureen Kiely also participated in the conversation. "What struck me," Maureen told *NUACHT*, "was that a lot of the people in attendance were not Irish, but they had the same feeling that we all have a certain responsibility to pass on family history to our children." Maureen told the group how grateful she is that her late father took the time to record his memories on tape and how pleased she is that the Kiely family was able to contribute a forge and several other items for the Griffintown portion of the exhibit.



ST. PATRICK'S SOCIETY OF MONTREAL

would like to thank its sponsors for their support during this 175th Anniversary year.





PROUD OF OUR



175 YEARS!

LETKO
BROSSEAU

St. Bridget's Refuge / Father Dowd Memorial Home

By Fergus V. Keyes

Many people, particularly those of Irish descent, are familiar with the plight of the immigrants during the Famine of 1847 in Montreal. They know that many died during their voyage in the cold Atlantic; or on Grosse Île, or in the fever sheds set up on the Montreal side of the Victoria Bridge in proximity to the Black Rock. And, they know that any numbers of young orphans were adopted by their fellow mainly French-speaking Catholics. And that others, moved to the west – to Ottawa, Kingston, and Toronto, etc.

But there is one group that is somewhat forgotten: the young adults, too old to be adopted but left alone in a strange country after their families had perished during the journey from Ireland; or the father or mother, whose spouse had died and they found themselves in a strange country with young surviving children and no resources to go any further; or the individuals who had a physical or mental handicap. Who took care of these people?

As the scope of tragedy became apparent, the authorities talked to Bishop Ignace Bourget, since the greater majority of immigrants were Catholic, and he, in turn, asked the Grey Nuns for their help. As a temporary measure, the nuns moved with some of these immigrants to an old house at the St. Gabriel Farm from September 1847 until February of 1848. The Nuns next set up a refuge in a small building on St. Lawrence St., but soon their resources ran out. But the need continued, so the Nuns next opened a shelter in a house on Craig St. (now St. Antoine).

Finally, the legendary Father Patrick Dowd arranged for a former home of the clergy of St. Patrick's, on Lagauchetiere Street, to be transferred as a refuge – which then became St. Bridget's Home. During the next 20 years more than 200,000 needy individuals were helped – young women without work, the homeless and destitute, and the aged and the infirm.

Around 1928, the name of St. Bridget's Refuge was changed to the Father Dowd Memorial Home.

Father Dowd

Born in Ireland, November 24th, 1813, he was ordained to the priesthood on May 20th, 1837. Arriving in Montreal in June 1848, he founded Bridget's Refuge on Lagauchetiere Street. This was eventually renamed the Father Dowd Memorial Home in 1928, long after Father Dowd died of pneumonia on December 19th, 1891. Four Bishops and 200 priests attended his funeral



Then ...

...and now



The Grey Nuns operated St. Bridget's/ Father Dowd until about 1944 when the care was transferred to the Sisters of Providence of St. Vincent de Paul from Kingston. Both religious orders offered unselfish service freely to these people in need. They also kept a register of many of the individuals whom they helped.

In 1975, Monsignor Dubee, pastor at St. Patrick's announced the new site for the Father Dowd Home on Hudson Rd. in the Cote des Neiges district where it continues to operate under the authority of the Quebec Health and Social services network.

Recently, Father Dowd merged with St. Margaret's Home and St. Andrew's Home to continue to provide excellent English language long-term care. There is a single volunteer Board of Directors and the operations are under the management of Carole McDonough, the Director General for all three homes.

However, it should never be forgotten that, in the days before the Government became involved in Social Services, that it was the religious orders (not only the Catholics, but also Anglicans, Presbyterians, etc.) who came to the aid of individuals in great need. These many men and women gave their lives (sometimes literally as in the fever sheds at Point St. Charles) to provide comfort and care to the less fortunate. All citizens of Montreal owe them a great debt of gratitude.

(See the internet for additional details about the history of Father Dowd. Fergus Keyes is the current President of the Board of Directors for St. Andrew's; St. Margaret's & Father Dowd.)

First page of register kept by Grey Nuns (1860)

A night to remember!

By Marilyn Meikle

St. Patrick's Society Annual Charity Ball was held on March 6th at the Marriott Chateau Champlain. Close to 400 guests were in attendance. The evening began with cocktails at 7:00 p.m. A special Patrons' Reception, graciously sponsored by Power Corporation, was held in the Maisonneuve Room, on the 36th floor of the hotel. Ball Patrons were invited to mingle with honoured guests, including Patrons' Fund Co-Chairs Jim Killin (General Manager L'Equipeur, Eastern Canada) and Rob Braide (President of Braide Media). Honoured guests from sister societies were piped into the Patrons' reception by Graham Batty. Guest of Honour, Justin Trudeau (MP for Papineau) was accompanied by Ball Chair, Christie Brown.

At 8:00 p.m., guests were ushered into the Ballroom. Striking calla lily centerpieces (NDG florist) graced each table and keepsake programmes were at each place. The Honour Party was piped into the Ballroom and announced by MCs Rob Kemp (CHOM morning man) and Kim Fraser (CJAD).

Pre-dinner entertainment was the Bernadette Short Celtic Grace Dancers. Guests enjoyed heart-stopping *a capella* routines, delicate soft shoe numbers, and precision choreography created by Bernadette's daughter, Marie Short. The group comprised many Canadian National Irish dance champions.

Not long after, SPS President Alistair O'Hara and Fiona MacGeachy opened the dance floor with Trudeau and Brown – a nerve-wrenching task with *So You Think You Can Dance* Stars Jean Marc Généreux and France Mousseau watching! Three's Company Orchestra led by Luc Campeau provided the music throughout the evening and guests filled the dance floor. During the main course, guests were treated to a special performance by the Joanne St. Laurent Quartet.



You could eat your hat!

The five-course meal was scrumptious. In honour of the 175th anniversary of the Society, the Chateau Champlain created a special dessert. Guests were each presented with miniature top hats created from lemon cheese cake with white chocolate brims. Even the hat band and buckles were edible!

The Silent Auction ran throughout the evening. Together the Patrons' Fund and the Silent Auction raised twenty-four thousand dollars to be divided equally between two very worthy charities: The Montreal Children's Hospital Foundation and The Trevor Williams Kids Foundation.

At 1:00 a.m., after the last dance, those still in the mood for a party moved next door to enjoy traditional Celtic music graciously sponsored by Hurley's Irish Pub.



A fine-looking quartet: Justin Trudeau, Christie Brown, Fiona MacGeachy and Alistair O'Hara

Ball Chair Christie Brown would like to thank her Committee of dedicated volunteers who worked tirelessly to bring the Ball to fruition. Special thanks also go to the Society's 175th Anniversary Sponsors, Hurley's Irish Pub, Letko Brosseau, and McAuslan Brewery. Says Christie, "We wanted to make the evening memorable in honour of our 175th and I think we came through with flying colours! We hope to see everyone again next year."



Cover of menu based on that of 1908



Looking ahead to the 2009 Montreal Irish RFC season

By Ian Sorg

Once again the rugby season is upon us, and the Montreal Irish are hard at work preparing for the 2009 campaign. Following the club's successful 2008 season: two Cup wins for the men's teams and both women's teams making it to playoffs, the club is proud to announce that their men have been promoted to the A Division (the highest possible in the province). An increase in recruitment and interest in the club has allowed us the opportunity to field three men's and two women's teams for the first time ever.

Men's coaches, Andy Plimer and Andy Tolson, have to date prepared the boys well who have won all their pre-season games by healthy margins. A rigorous and well-coordinated off-season workout and practice schedule is paying dividends.

The women also come into the season in the A Division, and have been training with new-found motivation in the form of new coach, Mr. Eric Pages. Eric has previously been very successful in the province, coaching the ETS Patriotes team.

The Montreal Irish Junior program is once again up and running under coach John Weller. Children from the ages of 13-18 have been encouraged to join us in order to promote the sport of rugby, as well as produce future stars of the senior men's and women's teams.



Photo: Neale McDevitt

The Montreal Irish Rugby Football Club huddle before the big game

All of the Montreal Irish RFC teams are ready for the upcoming season and we hope you can join us from the sidelines in cheering us towards another successful season. You can find information concerning the schedule on our website: www.mirfc.ca.



The United Irish Societies of Montreal elect new executive committee

By Anne Forrest

On a sunny Sunday April 19th, the UIS membership gathered at St. John Brébeuf Church hall to elect their slate of officers for the 2010 season.

Assuming the presidency is Ken Quinn. Ken joined the United Irish Societies in 1992 as a marshal. After several years as a member, he was invited to assume the role of treasurer, a position he held until 2002 when he moved to become vice-president organization. In 2007, Ken was acclaimed to the position of senior vice-president.

Mike Kennedy, senior vice-president, is a newcomer to the United Irish Societies, having served the previous two years as banquet committee chairman. Under his leadership Mike and his team turned a profit on the three events he was responsible for organizing: the 2008 Banquet, the 80th Anniversary Gala, and the 2009 Banquet.

Vice-president organization, Beverly Murphy, is back for another year organizing the parade, the 2009 parade being her first. Beverly made history when she assumed the position last year becoming the first female to hold this post.

Jane Skelton continues in her role as treasurer. The management of UIS funds is secure in the hands of this seasoned veteran.

Rose Quinn returns for another year as recording secretary with the responsibility of keeping an accurate account of the records of the meetings. UIS are pleased that Rose, with all her expertise and experience, is staying on.



Photo: John Gilroy

UIS president, Ken Quinn, and his predecessor, Marlene Demers

Another new kid on the block, Mildred Griffin-Gagnon, assumes the role of

corresponding secretary, responsible for maintaining a record of all incoming and outgoing correspondence. Millie joins the elected executive after two years as telephone committee chairperson.

UIS look forward to yet another successful year under "new" management!



Pam's story: her Cashel "gig"

By Pamela Cotter

When starting the BA in Irish Music and Dance at the University of Limerick, we were told that the first semester our 3rd year would be spent on Co-operative Education. This would be eight months (June – December) of paid work experience with the intention of giving us a taste of the “real” world, and hopefully make contacts for our future careers. While I had experienced a “stage” during my time in the Education Faculty at McGill University in Montreal, co-op proved to be an entirely different adventure.

During the months leading up to co-op, I spent countless hours researching possible dance-related careers and constructing a proper CV and press pack. Fortunately, one of my best friends in Canada is a professional photographer and I was able to get my headshots done over Christmas holidays. Everything seemed to be falling into place for me. In September 2007, I auditioned for my first dance show in Co. Tipperary and a few weeks later was offered the position at *Brú Ború* for June 2008 – September 2008. Not only did I have the bulk of my co-op organized, but two other dancers in the degree program got positions in the show as well which would make the summer all the more fun.

The show *Brú Ború* is based in Cashel, Co. Tipperary, at the foot of the beautiful Rock of Cashel. The first few weeks were filled with rehearsals and costume fittings and my days were consumed with wonder and excitement. We were all so busy getting ready for opening night that we didn't take the time to notice the size of the town. It was not until it came to our first few days off that we soon realized it would be a long summer. While the views were amazing and the food was unforgettable, the town on the other hand... was the length of one street. The show only kept us busy a few hours a day and the rest of the time was our own. For those who have never been there, Cashel is one of those small towns that only has two buses every day, is an hour from any major city, has no internet access due to the Castle causing interference with wireless signals, and our apartment had no TV. Let's just say the troupe and I rented almost every DVD in the video store.



Pam and her partner, James, performing the Cashel set dance

Small town flaws aside, however, the show was an experience of a lifetime. I got to spend my nights dancing and entertaining people from all over the world. From the start, I was included into the fast paced Ensemble numbers, and the fun Set Dancing pieces. A month into the show the director discovered I had Cape Breton training and asked me to perform a solo each night. It is impossible

to describe the rush I got from dancing in the spotlight night after night. Originally my solo would lead into the boys “Brush Dance.” The boys took great pleasure in “sweeping” me off stage after my solo so they could begin their number. After a few weeks of joking around backstage with the brush myself, I was included in their dance as the first female Brush Dancer ever to hit the stage at *Brú Ború*. The audience was always very receptive and gave a standing ovation no matter the night.

After the show, the musicians and dancers would have an informal session (*Teach Cheol*) which gave the audience a chance to interact with the performers and play a few tunes themselves. I will never forget the night a little Italian girl who spoke barely any English approached me. She pointed to her proud mother holding a camera and requested a photo with me. She looked at me as though I was a famous movie star and I've never felt happier!!

During the summer, *Brú Ború* was featured on RTE's “Nationwide” (TV show), written about in several newspapers and even performed at the *Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann* in front of 3000 people. While dancing in front of thousands was a thrilling experience, nothing compared to the week my mother flew over to see the show. The first night she sat in the audience, the concertina player approached me and asked if it was my mother in the front row. According to the musician, not only am I the spitting image of my mother, but her smile was so big she could have been hired to do toothpaste advertisements. Having someone from home in the audience watching me perform on stage made the whole experience feel real. There was now a witness to my dance career and proof that a person can follow their dreams and succeed. When September finally rolled around, it was difficult to leave everyone but I was promised a spot for the next year should I wish to return.

The end of *Brú Ború* was certainly not the end of my co-op placement. In the next few months I ventured out as a dance teacher for the Dance Masters of Ireland and was later recruited as a dancer on the Irish Harp Orchestra's Germany tour. If only there were more space on the page for me to elaborate; I suppose you will just have to catch me in the next issue!

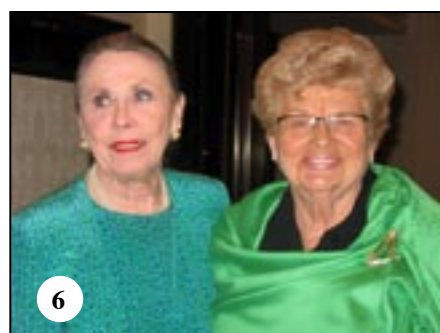
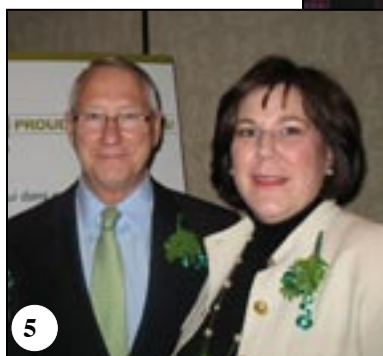


Pam and her mom, Linda

Pamela Cotter is now a third-year student taking a BA in Irish Music and Dance at the University of Limerick, Ireland. Pam is sharing her interesting experiences with NUACHT readers as she pursues her dream of becoming a professional dancer upon graduation. This is the third contribution from a very active young lady.

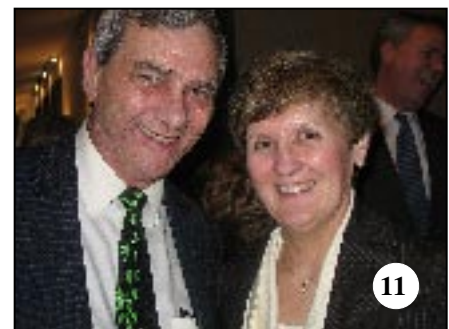
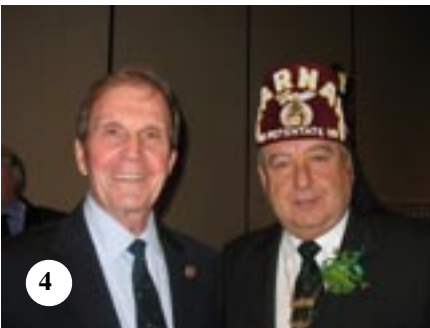


Memories of the 2009 “Green” Season ...



1. Dr. John M. Little (Irishman-of-the-Year Breakfast)
2. Dr. Derek Drummond & Alistair O'Haraa (SPS Luncheon)
3. Royal Court and dignitaries (City Hall)
4. SPS presidents: Mary McDaid, Peter Shea, Lynn Doyle, Dr. John Little, Alistair O'Hara & Brian O'Neill (Erin Sports Pre-sashing)
5. Mayor Gérald Tremblay & Andrea Bobkowicz (SPS Luncheon)
6. Bev Rozek & Mabel Fitzgerald (SPS Luncheon)
7. Peter McAuslan, sponsor 175th Anniversary (SPS Luncheon)
8. Lee McLenny – American Consul General (SPS Luncheon)
9. *Standing:* Gavin Kenneally, Marie Short, Marlene Demers, Rhona Kenneally, Mary McDaid & Peter Shea;
Seated: Bernadette Short, Fiona MacGeachy, Dr. Debbie Josephson, Honora O'Shaughnessy, & Kathy Mullins.

... breakfast, lunch, ball, parade and exhibition



1. Jim Killen, Patrons' Fund Co-Chair, & partner (SPS Ball)
2. Rob, Robyn and Helen Brodrick (SPS Ball)
3. Rob Braide, Patrons' Fund Co-Chair, arriving at Ball (SPS Ball)
4. Ron Pilon & Sir Stephen Roberts (SPS Luncheon)
5. Frank McMahon's niece and 6-month-old great niece (Parade)
6. Tom Mulcair & Paul Doyle in pedicab (Parade)
7. Marianna O'Gallagher (Being Irish O'Québec Vernissage)
8. Caitlin Marie Matheson Lunt (Being Irish O'Québec Vernissage)
9. Daniel Johnson, Pierre-Marc Johnson & Dr. Victoria Dickenson (Being Irish O'Québec Vernissage)
10. An ax: one of the exhibits (Being Irish O'Québec Vernissage)
11. Fergus V. Keyes & Mary McDaid ((Being Irish O'Québec Vernissage)

It's a wrap! Another successful season for Cine Gael Montreal

By Heather Macdougall

At the gala closing on April 30, Karl Gardner of the Embassy of Ireland in Ottawa commended Cine Gael for providing “a real tour of Ireland” in 2009. And he was right! Even with a shorter, streamlined season, the Cine Gael programme this year managed to include films from Ireland past and present, North and South, urban and rural.

There was also a record number of Cine Gael memberships sold this year. The seating capacity of the de Sève Cinema was pushed to the limit with sold-out crowds on a few occasions, beginning with the opening film, Lance Daly's *Kisses*.

The second film of the season was a delightful black and white comedy. *This Other Eden* (Muriel Box, 1959) is a cinematic gem that had been out of circulation for several decades until it was rescued from the archives and restored this year in honour of Ardmore Studio's fiftieth anniversary celebrations. A big thank you to the Irish Film Archives in Dublin for making this screening possible.

Our annual evening of short films again drew a sell-out crowd eager to see the latest batch of award-winning films from Ireland. The diverse program was introduced by Dr. Jason King of Concordia's English department. He focused on the Oscar-nominated *New Boy*, based on Roddy Doyle's short story by the same name, which he described as one of those rare examples of a film that is better than the written original. High praise indeed from a professor of literature! According to the audience ballots, the overwhelming favourite was the

animated fairy-tale-with-a-twist, *Granny O'Grimm's Sleeping Beauty*. Runners-up were the Irish-language *Rolla Saor* and the documentary *God and Napoleon*.

Our final two films were Canadian co-productions. *Fifty Dead Men Walking*, directed by Ottawa-based Kari Skogland, was chosen by the Toronto International Film Festival as one of the top ten Canadian films of 2008. The film was based on the true story of an IRA informant who tries to find his way through complicated community relationships during “the Troubles.” Derry-born Montrealer Padhraig Mac Lochlainn introduced the film and gave the audience an idea of what it was like to grow up in Northern Ireland. The closing gala was a real red-carpet event, with the director and two of the producers of *Love and Savagery* in attendance. Producers Kevin Tierney and Barbara Doran introduced the film, which follows a geologist from Newfoundland to Ireland, where he falls in love. The Montreal-based Tierney was a familiar face to many in the audience, and he joked that he seems to pick his projects based on what will get a screening at Cine Gael! After the screening, director John Smith graciously answered audience questions and then chatted more casually with Cine Gael members over a well-deserved glass of wine at the reception.

For more information on these films, past programs, or Cine Gael Montreal in general, visit www.cinega尔蒙real.com. Cine Gael would like to thank all our sponsors and our members for making this year such a success. We are already looking forward to next season. See you in February!



Belfast Mayor's visit all too short

By Georges Bériault

Sinn Féin's Tom Hartley, Mayor of Belfast visited Canada from April 6-10 2009, making stops in Halifax, Montreal, London, Toronto and Hamilton. During his whirlwind tour, the mayor met with municipal leaders to discuss the peace process in Ireland and to strengthen ties between Belfast and these Canadian cities. The tour was organized by Friends of Sinn Féin Canada and by all accounts was a genuine success.

Mayor Hartley was in Montreal on April 7th. Early that morning we drove to Kahnawake for a 10:00 a.m. meeting with Grand Chief Michael DeLisle, members of the band council and Kahnawake community leaders. He gave the Mohawk council an update on the peace process and was able to hear and discuss issues common to both their communities. He then did a taped interview with the Kahnawake media.

His next stop in Montreal was the *Being Irish O'Quebec* presentation at the McCord Museum. A photo-op followed by a guided tour with McCord Museum's Executive Director. Victoria Dickenson gave him some real insight into Quebec's vibrant Irish past. I should note here that over the years, the mayor has been giving tours of Belfast, especially that city's two major cemeteries for the West Belfast Festival now held

every August. The Belfast Festival is becoming a huge draw for tourism throughout Europe. Recently Mayor Hartley published a book on one of his cemetery tours earning him the nickname “Tombstone Tom.” After a lovely lunch and more conversation with Ms. Dickenson, he gave an extensive interview for *Le Devoir*.

The next stop for Mayor Hartley's growing entourage was for a meeting with Mayor Gerald Tremblay of Montreal. The meeting was arranged by Warren Allmand and included not only signing the 'Golden Book' but an impromptu guided tour of the city hall assembly. On this occasion, the mayor was presented with a miniature of a work of art done by a Shanghai artist on the theme of peace. Mayor Hartley presented Mayor Tremblay with two books on the history of the city of Belfast.

Later that evening Mayor Hartley was the keynote speaker for a lively meeting at Hurley's Pub. Guests included the Consul General of Cuba, Thomas Mulcair of the NDP, Warren Allmand, and Arthur Sandborn of Greenpeace.

It was unfortunately over too soon.



Abortion: a black-and-white issue?

By Neil McKenty

If you are Irish and Catholic, chances are you are a fan of Notre Dame, home of “the fighting Irish” football team and arguably the most prominent Catholic University in the United States. Friends of Notre Dame have been upset this spring about the controversy swirling about the Golden Dome.

The problem began when the President of Notre Dame, Father John Jenkins, a priest of the Holy Cross Congregation that runs the university, invited President Obama to speak at the school’s graduation ceremonies and to receive an honorary degree. President Obama accepted. Then all hell broke loose. Conservative Catholics and leading prelates brought pressure to bear on the University to withdraw the invitation to Obama claiming that he is “pro-abortion” because he supports choice and embryonic stem cell research.

The head of the United States bishops conference, Cardinal Francis George of Chicago, said the university’s decision was an “extreme embarrassment” to Catholics and added: “Whatever else is clear, it is clear that Notre Dame didn’t understand what it means to be Catholic when they issued this invitation.”

The local bishop, John D’Arcy, announced that he will not attend the graduation and an on-line petition by the Cardinal Newman Society against the invitation has collected thousands of signatures. Pro-life groups on the Notre Dame campus have organized demonstrations. Pro-life activist Randall Terry rented a house near the campus to mount a campaign to stop President Obama from speaking. Terry’s website features a photograph of the President between pictures of Judas and a graphic photograph of an aborted fetus.

All this furore begs the question whether it makes any sense to regard abortion as so crucial an issue to relations between Catholics and a secular government that no other consideration carries any weight.

It is interesting that the question has a somewhat different answer here in Canada than it does in the States. The American bishops seem frustrated that their Catholic flock is not more militant on the issue of abortion. A Gallup survey of polls on religious attitudes over the past three years shows that Catholic views on issues such as embryonic stem-cell research and legalized abortion are little different from their non-Catholic fellow citizens. (I expect the figures would be about the same here in Canada.)

But Canadian bishops seem far less aggressive than their American counterparts. Canada has no abortion law at all. So far as I am aware, even though we have had a series of Catholic Prime Ministers – Trudeau, Clark, Turner, Chretien, Martin – the Canadian bishops have mounted no consistent campaign to pass such a law. There

is much less controversy about abortion in Canada than there is south of the border. Very few prelates here are threatening to withhold Communion from pro-choice Catholic politicians.

But the current controversy at Notre Dame raises questions related to abortion in both countries. And the main one is whether for Catholics abortion trumps every other issue when it comes to public discourse. After all, President Obama has a political agenda that promises greater social justice and equality, more harmony between the races, environmental reforms and he favours social measures that would reduce the need for abortion.

No bishop has suggested that President Obama should be silenced because he has not promised to end the death penalty, which is also part of Catholic teaching on the sanctity of life; nor that his predecessor should have been rejected because he engaged his country in torture and an unjust war in Iraq, where untold innocent lives were lost.

Nor are all Catholic voices impugning the President. John Quinn, Archbishop Emeritus of San Francisco, highlighted the danger for Catholics if they adopted what he called the “clenched-fist approach.” He has urged that “It is in the interests of both the church and the nation if both work

together in civility, honesty and friendship for the common good, even when there are grave divisions, as there are on abortion.”

Father Jenkins is standing by his decision, saying the invitation to speak at the graduation ceremony “should not be taken as condoning or endorsing his [Obama’s] positions on specific issues regarding the protection of human life.” A survey of letters to the student newspaper, The Observer, indicated that while 70 per cent of alumni were opposed to Obama speaking at the university, 97 per cent of the graduating class approved of him speaking.

It is interesting that the Vatican has made no comment on the President’s visit to Notre Dame. There is a precedent for this silence. In 2007 the French President Nicholas Sarkozy — twice divorced and a supporter of legal abortions — received the title of honorary canon of the Basilica of St. John Lateran, and neither the Vatican nor the diocese of Rome had any problem with it.

The Catholic journal, The Tablet, underlines the central issue for Canadian and American Catholics in this controversy. “It seriously damages the whole Catholic contribution to democratic politics to treat abortion not only as a black-and-white issue, with no shades of grey, but as the unique black-and-white issue that trumps all others.”



A picture is worth a thousand words

Heart and identity: Irish in the diaspora

By Patricia O'Rourke



Language requires an effort of the mind but the desire to know a language is an attraction of the heart. Unless that attraction is deeply rooted, the new language is unlikely to take.

I had always meant to learn Irish. Concordia's flyer for Modern Irish, appealing to people like myself, self-

described members of the Irish diaspora, used the phrase "*Tír gan teanga, tír gan anam*," ("a country without a language is a country without a soul," attributed to Pádraig Pearse) which I somehow internalized as "he who has lost his language has lost his soul." The idea grabbed my attention because it spoke to my long-standing desire to understand a little about my ancestors by learning the language they used. Mawkish as it may sound, I often felt as I imagined an adopted child might feel until it knew the identities of its birth parents. My distant ancestors spoke a language different from my own and all I knew of Irish were road signs and song titles. Something was missing.

I was born in the North of England to parents of Irish heritage. And, like so many Manchester Irish, we were quietly but secretly proud of our Irish roots. My love of all things Irish began in very early childhood, not only with music but also with the poem "I See His Blood Upon The Rose," written by Joseph Mary Plunkett, just before the British executed him in 1916. My father read it to me as nighttime prayer and, through it, I fell in love with the rhythms of language and the power of poetry. But it was not this, but another poem, that led me to want to learn the Irish language.

I came to Canada at the end of primary school but returned in 1964 to work in Manchester. Wanting to know Irish, I asked my roommate, Helen from Mayo, to teach me a little. She patiently spelled out, and translated, Pádraig Pearse's "*Mise Éire*," that famous poem about the *Cailleach Bhéara* (the old woman of Beare). I had forgotten this poem until I enrolled in Modern Irish at Concordia, in the autumn of 2008. The visiting poet Louis de Paor read it out and every word sprang fresh into my mind as if 44 years had not passed since my first learning of it.

Poetry and music bind emigrants together. We may have forgotten our language and many of our customs, but fragments survive in our collective consciousness. One could argue that every time a language dies a whole way of thinking disappears. However, the fact that many diaspora Irish lost their language but not their identity seems to argue the opposite. Perhaps the language does survive, in attenuated form: in translations of Irish songs or in a turn of phrase particular to the Irish language learned from a mother or a grandfather. Such tantalizing fragments of language reach out across the ruptures of time, begging for understanding. "Will you not come closer and learn how beautiful I am?" it whispers seductively.

And so I ventured closer to Irish, signing up for Modern Irish even though I have never considered myself to be particularly

good at learning languages. Could I possibly risk sitting in a classroom to learn a language described to me by one of our unofficial teaching assistants as "harder than French but certainly easier than Mandarin"? Could I do my part to preserve a language that some consider moribund.


It is not easy to preserve a language that, outside Ireland, finds rocky soil indeed in which to put roots. While the founders of Israel managed to take a liturgical language, Hebrew, and recreate it as the national language of the country, English has probably made too many inroads into Ireland for Irish ever to be as dominant as Hebrew is in Israel or as French is in Quebec. To an outsider, Irish looks more like a second than a first language, in spite of its visibility on street signs and government documents. Yet, while one can be Irish without the language, many see it as an essential part of identity and want to encourage its use. Every politician, I am told, needs his or her "*cúpla focal*."

People living outside Ireland do not necessarily see the language as the special preserve of those with Irish blood. Irish is simply a language worth preserving and interesting in its own right. This is evident in the make up of the Irish language class at Concordia and in the background of the students at the Irish immersion weekend, organized by Comhrá in Prévost, Québec. Students of Irish may be of many origins: Francophone, Métis, Russian, Japanese. The immersion weekend teacher was a Romanian who like me, fell in love with Irish, he said, because of a poem "*An Chéim Bhriste*" by Áine Ní Ghlinn. He said it spoke to him so profoundly that he spent four years learning Irish at Comhrá.

One can get along very well in the world without Irish. But, then, I imagine one might get along without art, or music and what an impoverished world that would be. Learning another language keeps the mind agile and open. It offers insight into other ways of thinking and other worlds.

I don't know what my long-dead ancestors would make of the desire on the part of 21st century Canadians to learn a language with no utility here whatsoever, but those of us fortunate enough to have readily accessible Irish classes should be grateful that we are alive at a time when the learning of this language has never been easier. Douglas Hyde, founder of the Gaelic league, could not have envisioned an Irish language version of the television cartoon, South Park, on TG4 and would probably be horrified at the use to which the language is put. But popular culture, in Irish, makes the language compelling, fun and easier to learn.

After twenty-six classes, once a week, I can buy bread, admire a neighbour's coat and plaintively ask "*Cá bhfuil an madra?*" before realizing that the family pet is, after all, only "*sa ghairdín*." Well, one has to begin somewhere. We are concentrating on the poetry of everyday life, entertainingly presented to us by Martina Branagan in songs, games and easily digestible grammar. The poetry of the soul is there, waiting.

I don't know if I have found my soul but I certainly feel more content, more complete, maybe even more Irish, in spite of my passport. 

What's new at the Centre for Canadian Irish Studies

By Kester Dyer

Irish Government to fund visiting scholars at Concordia

The Government of Ireland has chosen the School of Canadian Irish Studies at Concordia University to host two visiting scholars in Irish language and culture for the 2009-2010 academic year. This is a prestigious recognition and an auspicious beginning for the School of Canadian Irish Studies. The Government will fund a senior and junior Visiting Scholar, and each will teach a course and conduct research during a nine-month visit to the university. The junior scholar will offer Irish Linguistic and Cultural Traditions while the senior scholar will teach Translating Ireland's Cultural Identities. The primary emphasis in both courses will be to access the rich cultural, folkloric and musical traditions and contexts of the language.

Gavin Foster joins School of Irish Studies

Gavin Foster comes to Concordia's School of Canadian Irish Studies from the University of Notre Dame where he is finishing his PhD in Modern European History. Complementing his concentration in Irish and British history, Gavin has been actively involved in the interdisciplinary field of Irish Studies via Notre Dame's Keough-Naughton Institute of Irish Studies. Before beginning his doctoral studies, he lived in San Francisco where he completed his BA (SFSU, 1994), worked and played the drums semi-professionally. (He remains a frustrated student of the Irish bodhrán). Gavin and his wife Susanne could not be more thrilled about moving to Montreal this summer.

Irish Studies scholarship news

The Irene Mulroney Undergraduate Scholarship Fund received a \$10,000 donation which means that the total fund will now generate an annual scholarship of \$3,300. The Chair of the Canadian Irish Studies Foundation, Brian O'Neill Gallery, extends his deep appreciation to Mr. Mulroney for supporting this scholarship, named in honour of his late mother.

Deanna Del Vecchio and **Laurel Hart**, joint recipients of the St. Patrick's graduate scholarship for their art installation project looking at the Griffintown neighborhood and Irish history in Montreal, have successfully completed the first phase of their project.

Rhona Richman Kenneally awarded prestigious funding to explore Irish food culture and women's identities

Dr. Rhona Richman Kenneally has been awarded a \$109,000 grant by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) to study Irish food culture and women's identities in mid-twentieth-century Ireland. This four-year project will examine how the home can be explored as a site of agency for Irish women who ushered in significant changes in 1950s and 60s Ireland through their embrace of the forces of modernity, including electrification and the consequent transformation of the kitchen.

Visiting Irish researcher investigates parliamentary reform

The School of Canadian Irish Studies welcomes **Dr. Mary Murphy** from University College Cork's Department of Government. She is currently conducting research on parliamentary reform in Ireland and investigating the debate on parliamentary reform in Canada. Dr. Murphy will be working at the School until late July 2009.

Public Lecture by Dr. Claire Connolly

As part of the annual Fall lecture series, the School of Canadian Irish Studies will welcome **Professor Claire Connolly** from the Cardiff School of English, Communication and Philosophy who will deliver a public lecture on October 1st 2009. Dr. Connolly's research interests include the British and Irish novel in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries; Irish and Scottish Romanticism; Ireland and cultural theory; contemporary Irish writing and Irish-Welsh cultural relations.

Award-winning Northern Irish poet Sinéad Morrissey

As part of Concordia's annual Writers Read event, **Sinéad Morrissey** will deliver a reading of her poetry at the De Sève Cinema on September 11th 2009. Born in Co. Armagh in 1972, Morrissey received her BA and PhD degrees from Trinity College, Dublin, where she also won the Patrick Kavanagh Award in 1990. She has published four collections of poetry, *There Was Fire in Vancouver* (1996), *Between Here and There* (2001), *The State of the Prisons* (2005), and *Through the Square Window* (2009). She is lecturer in creative writing at the Seamus Heaney Centre for Poetry, Queen's University, Belfast. Morrissey's poem "Through the Square Window" won first prize in the 2007 British National Poetry Competition.

Fintan O'Toole to deliver fourth St. Patrick's Society Lecture in Canadian Irish Studies

One of Ireland's most respected political and cultural critics, **Fintan O'Toole**, has recently been confirmed as speaker for the St. Patrick's Society's Annual Public Lecture for 2009. Born in Dublin in 1958, O'Toole has been a columnist for the Irish Times since 1988 and was drama critic for the New York Daily News from 1997 to 2001. He has also been drama critic of In Dublin magazine, The Sunday Tribune and Literary Adviser to the Abbey Theatre. He has received several awards including the AT Cross Award for Supreme Contribution to Irish Journalism (1993). Among his publications are *The Politics of Magic: The Work and Times of Tom Murphy* (1987); *The Disappearance of Ireland* (1994); *The Irish Times Book of the Century* (1999); and *The Irish Times Book of The 1916 Rising* (2006).

Stay informed of Irish-related academic, cultural and social events via our mailing list. To get on this list, email us at cdnirish@alcor.concordia.ca. To find out more about our courses, programmes and scholarships, email us or call (514) 848-8711 or check out our website at www.cdnirish.concordia.ca.

If you are interested in taking any courses in Canadian Irish Studies please contact the School of Canadian Irish Studies. Independent students and seniors can also take these courses. Seniors can audit courses for a nominal fee.



Red leaves the Irish Radio Show for greener pastures

By Scott Phelan

After five years in Montreal and just over four years as the co-host of CJAD's The Irish Radio Show, Redmond (Red) Shannon is heading to Toronto, where he will become an assistant producer for the CBC.

Red was born and raised in Limerick, Ireland, where he graduated from the University of Limerick with an undergraduate degree in aeronautical engineering. Leaving his home town in 1998, Red travelled and worked in both the UK and the USA before ending up in Montreal, working for an Irish-based company. Feeling that his heart was not truly in engineering, Red started working in radio, and finally went to Concordia to take a diploma in journalism. He has just graduated and recently earned a journalism scholarship prize from the CBC, to work for the summer as an assistant producer on CBC Newsworld's Morning News show.

Red will be greatly missed as the engaging and enthusiastic co-host of The Irish Radio Show where he has laboured since the show started in March of 2005. To get the job, Redmond had to audition at CJAD by interviewing our own Neil McKenty, and shortly afterwards the judging panel appointed Red as Ernie Butler's co-host. "Ernie helped me figure out that this was for me," said Red. "He was a lot of fun to work with and he taught me how to use the microphone and develop my on-air persona and figure out the mechanics. He was also very motivating; you know, if you were a little down he'd sing a song or something to get you going again."

After Ernie passed away, Redmond and the show's producer, Kimberley Sullivan, took up the reins and continued on with the valuable work of the Irish Show. The show was moved from its bi-monthly, Saturday spot, to become CJAD's first podcast, with new programming available on the first and fifteenth of each month. Since November 2007, listeners can tune in at leisure and hear the show, commercial free! With thousands tuning in every month, The Irish Show continues to have a huge audience for their mix of great interviews, music, comedy and local Montreal Irish cultural goings-on.

If Red and Kimberley had their way, Red says: "We would make being back on the air on a regular basis our number one priority. The best would be to have the podcast, but also a regular time slot. Sure we have tons of listeners from around the world, but we do have fewer Montrealers listening in than we might have. I mean, I even spoke to an Irish fellow who had moved to Siberia and contacted us through the site. He was setting up an Irish pub there as well!"

Red has interviewed many fascinating people over the years but two of his favourites were Paul Martin "who was just a very nice man and wanted to talk more about Pdraig Harrington winning The British Open than about politics," and Rabbi David Rosen, "a former Chief Rabbi of Ireland, who was very entertaining and informative."

So even though Red is a little blue about leaving, he's excited by the new challenge that this opportunity presents and has found a great little spot to live just west of Toronto city centre.

Kimberley Sullivan (the Montreal Canadiens' newest Bell Centre star as well!) will now be

helped-out by Nicola Morgan, from Ireland, (who is also about to start the same Concordia journalism program that Red has just completed), St. Patrick's Society's own Paul Dunne and regular Irish Show contributor, Karen Bright.

Bon voyage, Redmond, and we all hope that your success in Toronto will some day bring you back to your friends in Montreal!



Photo: Kim Sullivan

Red Shannon at work at CJAD



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Sea Shanty Festival ties in with AOH annual pilgrimage

By Anne Forrest

On Sunday, August 16th, the *Fête des chants de marins* (The Sea Shanty Festival) has dedicated a day of activities to commemorate Irish heritage and the Ancient Order of Hibernians' 100th anniversary of the Celtic Cross on Grosse Île. There will be a family musical picnic – lunch included – to be followed by an afternoon show entitled *Un air d'Irlande*. The presentation will feature the Shannon Irish Dancers as well as performers from the USA and Québec who are taking part in the festival. There will also be some free time to participate in other activities of the festival or to enjoy the village that has the distinction of having been named Cultural Capital of Canada in 2005.

Following the Mass to be held in St. Patrick's Cathedral on that Sunday morning, a bus will take participants to Saint-Jean Port Joli, returning to Quebec City at 8:00 p.m. Enjoy a day in the Québec countryside, visiting the Maritime Museum of Québec in L'Islet, where you will have the pleasure of hearing one of the world's foremost sea shanty singers from Australia, Mr. Danny Spooner.

The price of this excursion is \$75.00 and if you wish to register for this package please call or e-mail before July 3rd 2009:

Fête des chants de marins

(418) 598-9993

Chants.marins@globetrotter.net

Jean Parent

Président de la Fête des chants de marins



Reflections: stories written by Montreal's Irish immigrants

By Ann Fortune

The Irish people are known for their story telling, for their poetry and for their song and dance. So when COMHRA wanted to raise funds to support their Irish language programme, it was natural that they would turn to one of these very Irish traits for a project.

A unique book called *Reflections* is the result. It is a 212-page collection of personal stories written by first-generation Irish immigrants living or who have lived in the Montreal area. We think it is a great read and that anyone with Irish roots or an interest in things Irish, should own a copy.

All profits from the sale of *Reflections* go to keeping Irish language classes alive in Montreal.

To get your copy, send a cheque for \$20.00 made out to M.I.L.S.C (Comhra) to:

Ann Fortune

89 rue Philippe

Chateauguay, QC

J6J 3C9

Be linn (join us) every Monday night from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. at O'Regan's Pub on Bishop Street for an informal conversation session. Regular classes resume Monday, Sep. 4th at Loyola High School. For more information, call Ann Fortune at (450) 699-1962 or (514) 238-4909.



Congratulations to St. Patrick's Society of Montreal for 175 years of community spirit.



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Listen to the Editor!

By Kim Sullivan

Three great shows are either now on-line or coming up soon, including an interview with the editor of *NUAHT*, Anne Forrest (May 15). Here's what's in store for you:

May 1

- Dr. Michael Kenneally gives us a quick update about Concordia's Canadian Irish Studies' Programme;
- Karen Bright interviews Dr. Rhona Kenneally on the topic of traditional Irish cooking;
- Paul Dunne discusses St. Patrick Society's Vision Project;
- UIS's new president, Ken Quinn, visits us;
- Nicola Morgan speaks with Audrey O'Breham about her part in the musical *Jesus Christ Superstar*;
- Ronan Corbett, from the GAA, invites you to a new season of Gaelic Football;
- Luke Forand tells us about his Irish adventure that got him on the radio, plus he plays us a little tune!

May 15

- Prof. David Wilson tells us about The Orange Order of Canada, the topic of the Second Annual Irish Protestant Benevolent Society's lecture in Canadian Irish Studies;
- Geneviève Codère reviews Montreal's Fine Arts Museum's Eyes Wide Shut Fundraiser;
- Mayoralty candidate, Louise O'Sullivan, talks politics;
- Anne Forrest divulges the secrets behind *NUAHT*.

June 1

- Dr. Ellis Ward phones in from Galway to introduce us to the book *Bird's Nest Soup*;
- Karen Bright excites our taste buds with a new recipe;
- Linda Leigh tells us about the success of this year's Blue Metropolis Montreal International Literary Festival;
- Johanna Donovan takes us through one stop of her journey in Ireland and shares ideas for your next Irish travels;
- Irish Band Classified is back with an update and new music.

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Mayo Memorial and Peace Park now open

This unique memorial commemorates all the men and women from County Mayo who lost their lives in world wars and conflicts during the past century. The brainchild of Michael Feeney, of Castlebar, the project has cost over € 500,000. It is now a major tourist attraction. Visit the web site www.mayomemorialpeacepark.org which contains information about the Mayo Peace Park. At this time, the site has yet to be updated with film and commentary of the official opening ceremonies over which President Mary McAleese presided on October 7th, 2008.

The May 1 show is Redmond Shannon's last edition as co-host of the Irish Show and I would like to thank him for four years of support and help, professionalism and amazing friendship! Good luck in Toronto. You will be truly missed!

Letters to the Editor

First, I would like to congratulate you on a wonderful edition of NUAHT. I have never seen so much news of interest in so few pages. It was interesting from start to finish. I would only like to correct you on one item on page 10 - second paragraph. Ms. Edith Cavanaugh, the proud recipient of the Simon McDonaugh Humanitarian Award was certainly present at the Selection Evening, as she is on most occasions. She proudly supports all Irish events. We drove Edie to Buffet Sorrento on that cold Saturday evening.

*Sincerely,
Marilyn Coleman*

A Few Good Men

That was an interesting article, "Montreal's earliest firefighters proud to be Irish" by Fergus V. Keyes (Feb. '09). It reminded me of Mr. Arthur Downey, a retired City of Montreal firefighter of St. Kevin's Parish. I met him in the Hibernians when I was a member in the 1960s. He didn't say much, but he was always there at our meetings with his support... I also remember Mr. John Lucey, the last English-speaking postmaster in Montreal. He was a past-president of the United Irish Societies of Montreal and the Hibernians... also Mr. Jake McConomy, another past-president of UIS. When he retired he was appointed a fire marshall for Montreal... and also Mr. Dolan from Dublin who was the last English-speaking bus driver in Montreal when he retired.

*Thank you and God bless,
John D. Rooney*

Former secretary of St. Patrick's Society of Montreal.

Around Town

Dorval Historical Society and the Irish

Donald Pidgeon will be the guest speaker at the upcoming meeting of the Dorval Historical Society. His subject will be the Irish of Montreal and the St. Patrick's Day Parades. The meeting will take place on Wednesday, May 20th, in the Sarto Desnoyers Community Centre, 1335 Lakeshore Road, Dorval, at 7:30 p.m. For more information, give Don a call at (514) 636-6474.

Jesus Christ Superstar

On May 30th, 2009, Le Prado will be presenting *Jesus Christ Superstar* at Centre Calixa-Lavallée, Le Plateau Mont Royal, 3819 Calixa-Lavallée (situated in Parc Lafontaine). Audrey O'Breham, one of our contributors, will be appearing in this show. There will be two performances: 5:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. Tickets are \$15.00 for adults and \$10.00 for students (must present student ID card). Seats are on a first-come, first served basis. For more information, contact Le Prado (514) 849-8992.

ICCC offers summer activities

The *craic agus comhrá* (fun and conversation) gatherings organized by the Ireland-Canada Chamber of Commerce will continue throughout the summer on the last Thursday of each month. You are invited to join the members and friends at The Irish Embassy Pub & Grill, 1234 Bishop St., just south of St. Catherine St. from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. These networking events are proving highly popular as attendees get to exchange information in a relaxed and friendly atmosphere. Finger food is provided courtesy of the pub.

Then on Tuesday, June 9th, ICCC hosts its annual Networking Summer Social from 5:30 p.m. This will be held in Hurley's Courtyard (weather permitting) at which complementary food will be served. For further information on both events, please contact info@icccmtl.com.

Another 175th Anniversary celebration

The annual SPS Golf Tournament will be held on Tuesday, June 16th, 2009. While we are celebrating our 14th year of the St. Patrick's Annual Charity Golf Tournament, the Society is celebrating 175 years of service to the Irish Community. This year we will be featuring some special gifts for every player in addition to the approximately \$10,000 worth of donated prizes that we give out each year. This is a fun tournament featuring "Mulligans," "Gimmes," and "no more than two over par" on any hole.

The price of \$125 includes: green fees, golf cart and roast beef dinner with two carafes of wine for each table of eight. The tournament is open to all members of the Society as well as to all friends and supporters of our charitable efforts. There is a 12:45 shotgun start. Book early as only 144 golfers can be accommodated. For more information, call Tod at the St. Patrick's Society office (514) 481-1346.

St. Patrick Square to turn thirty

St. Patrick Square and St. Patrick's Society have enjoyed a long relationship that predates the construction of the building. It was back in the late 1970s when several members of the Society were instrumental in creating the original board of Directors. These pioneer Directors had the vision to identify the need for building a pre-retirement community for autonomous individuals 55 and over.

The Square will be celebrating its 30th anniversary on September 16th with a gathering of the current Board of Directors, Members and all the tenants for an unveiling of their new Wall of Gratitude. St. Patrick Square is now able to provide receipts for charitable donations and is taking this opportunity to formally recognize past donors. Look for a full story of the anniversary in the September issue of *NUACHT*.

Comhaltas returns to Montreal

Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann will return to Montreal on Thursday, October 1st after an absence of three years. There are now more than 40 cities in North America which are asking for a visit from the Comhaltas Tour Group and it will probably be another three years before they will be in Montreal again after this year's performance. This year's North American Tour will be an all-Canadian event.

The Tour Group lands at Trudeau Airport on September 29th and will present an opening concert in Shannon, Quebec. This will be an historic first for that Irish community, which is located so close to Grosse Île. The location for the Montreal concert will not be in the Oscar Peterson Concert Hall as it is not available. This year's venue will be announced shortly. An active committee is already in place and tickets will be handled by Carole Mell, Sandy McDonough, Beverly McGuire and Eunice Conroy. The Bernadette Short Dancers will again be on hand to add a touch of local Montreal flavor to the evening.

This year will mark the 35th anniversary of the first Montreal visit by *Comhaltas*, when they were hosted by Leo's Boys of Point St. Charles back in the year 1974.

NUACHT Advertising Rates

	<u>Per Issue</u>	<u>Yearly (4 Issues)</u>
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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.

2009 CALENDAR OF EVENTS / CLÁR IMEACHTAÍ 2009

DATE	EVENT	FURTHER INFORMATION	
May 20	Dorval Historical Society: Sarto Desnoyers Community Centre, 1335 Lakeshore Rd., Dorval, 7:30 p.m.	Don Pidgeon	636-7474
May 29	AOH Anniversary Mass for Father Thomas McEntee, St. Gabriel's Parish, 7:00 p.m.	Victor Boyle	928-7196
May 30	ICCC <i>Craic agus Comhrá</i> , The Irish Embassy Pub & Grill, 1234 Bishop St., 5:30 p.m.	ICCC	845-0973
May 31	AOH Walk to the Stone. Mass at St. Gabriel's – 10:30 a.m. – followed by Walk.	Victor Boyle	928-7196
June 3	"Bit of craic and a few pints" – meet ex-pats & other Irish immigrants – Brutopia, 1219 Crescent, 8:00 p.m.	Thomas Monahan	262-2079
June 9	ICCC Networking Summer Social, Hurley's Courtyard, 1225 Crescent St., 5:30 p.m.	ICCC	845-0973
June 16	SPS Annual Golf Tournament, Belle Vue Golf Club, \$500 foursome, \$125 single, 12:45 shotgun	Erin Matheson	481-1346
June 18	SPS Annual General Meeting, McCord Museum, 6:00 p.m.	Erin Matheson	481-1346
June 20	Tara Golf Tournament Mountain Acres Golf Course, Qc	John O'Shea	697-8889
June 25	ICCC <i>Craic agus Comhrá</i> , The Irish Embassy Pub & Grill, 1234 Bishop St., 5:30 p.m.	ICCC	845-0973
July 11/12	Tara Golf Tournament, Craigwood Golf Course, Lake Placid, New York	John O'Shea	697-8889
July 26	AOH Mass in the Park, at the Griffintown–St. Anne Park, 4:00 p.m.	Victor Boyle	928-7196
July 30	ICCC <i>Craic agus Comhrá</i> , The Irish Embassy Pub & Grill, 1234 Bishop St., 5:30 p.m.	ICCC	845-0973
Aug. 8	Tara Golf Tournament, Rivière Rouge, Qc	John O'Shea	697-8889
Aug.14-16	AOH Annual Pilgrimage to Grosse Île and Quebec City, Centenary of the AOH Celtic Cross	Victor Boyle	928-7196
Aug. 27	ICCC <i>Craic agus Comhrá</i> , The Irish Embassy Pub & Grill, 1234 Bishop St., 5:30 p.m.	ICCC	845-0973
Sep. 12	Tara Golf Tournament, Adirondack Golf Course, Plattsburgh, New York	John O'Shea	697-8889
Sep. 24	ICCC <i>Craic agus Comhrá</i> , The Irish Embassy Pub & Grill, 1234 Bishop St., 5:30 p.m.	ICCC	845-0973
Sep. 25	SPS Annual Irish Studies Lecture, Speaker: Fintan O'Toole, Concordia's De Sève Cinema	Kester Dyer	848-8711
Oct. 3	Tara Golf Tournament & Closing Dinner, Caughnawaga Golf Course, Qc	John O'Shea	697-8889
Oct. 29	ICCC <i>Craic agus Comhrá</i> , The Irish Embassy Pub & Grill, 1234 Bishop St., 5:30 p.m.	ICCC	845-0973



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