



Doris Rooney: a woman with a Czeched past

By Anne Forrest

No, that isn't a typo in the headline! Contrary to what many of you may have assumed, Doris Rooney's roots are not of Irish origin but Czech.

As an eight-year-old and only child, Doris Hille left her birthplace of Sudetenland and settled in Pictou, Nova Scotia, with her parents. After completing high school in New Glasgow, she attended St. Francis Xavier University and later spent two years working in the Registrar's office there.

In 1963, Doris moved to Montreal, worked at CIL, then met and married Frank Rooney who, luckily for us, introduced her to the Irish community which became like an extended family to her.

During the early years of her marriage, Doris taught at Notre Dame Secretarial School (better known as the Mother House) and spent a year in Nassau (the Bahamas) as a secretary. When her two daughters – Brenda and Erin – were 12 and eight, she started leading a course at the Thomas More Institute and is still doing so today.

It was in January, 1990, when the then SPS office manager left unexpectedly that Doris was appointed in her place. During the 16 plus years in this position, she still found time to take her Bachelor of Arts degree at the Thomas More Institute through Bishop's University.

What memories of the St. Patrick's Society will Doris enjoy in her retirement? She had



Doris Rooney and John Little at the University Club, Montreal

nine bosses who she claimed were patient and forgiving of any errors on her part. The first of these SPS presidents was Don McNaughton, back in the days when the only activities were the Ball, Luncheon and meetings — however, Ned Eustace can attest to the excitement that some of these generated.

The month preceding St. Patrick's Day was always stressful. To her relief, in recent years, the Ball Committee was chaired by Alistair O'Hara whom she regards as the most unflappable person she has ever known. Working on the seating plans for both the Luncheon and the Ball was a task that she particularly enjoyed. She tried to be a matchmaker by placing single ladies at tables with eligible men. Unfortunately, the men often failed to show — much to the disappointment of these hopeful females.

In recent years, Doris has worked on the SPS Golf Tournament with Paul Doyle and Wayne Hogan whom she praises for their dedication and organizational skills. In fact she suggests that

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NUACETT

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A Word from the President

It is with both pride and pleasure that I assume the office of President of St. Patrick's Society, and I am grateful for the confidence that has been placed in me. I am fortunate to have the support of a strong Board and Executive, all of whom are committed to promoting the charitable, cultural and educational mandates of the Society. These mandates are priorities in all our fundraising events: the Christmas Concert, Annual Lunch and Ball, Golf Tournament and Patrons' Fund. Our strongest public voice is that of *NUACHT*, our quarterly Society newsletter – its quality of content and presentation is thanks to an excellent Editorial Board and it reaches the entire community and beyond. I am grateful also to my predecessor, Dr. John Little, whose presence as Immediate Past President will build on the contributions he has made over the last two years and maintain a necessary continuity for our membership. It is a pleasure, therefore, that our first public event of this new year is the inauguration of the St. Patrick's Society's Annual Lecture in Canadian Irish Studies. This new addition to the Society's permanent calendar is John's legacy and the annual event will be introduced on Friday, September 22nd, 2006, at De Sève Cinema, Concordia University. Our inaugural speaker will be the Honourable Dr. Garret FitzGerald, former Prime Minister of Ireland, who will speak on "Imagining Ireland in 2020." I hope you will be able to join us on this very special occasion.

The Society is embarking upon a journey into Community: that of our own membership, of our Sister Societies, and of the broader Irish community. True to our mandate as a benevolent society, we will ask how the Community's needs are met and how we can help each other to the benefit of all. As our Committee Chairs begin anew to organize the major events of the coming year, they are buoyed by the knowledge that their efforts last year enabled the Society to disperse a total of \$60,000 across a wide spectrum of recipients.

A core aspect of any community is its common history – and that will be a major focus of this new term. We are fast approaching the Society's 175th anniversary (1834-2009) and following consultation and discussion within the Society, we have submitted to the McCord Museum our initial proposal for an exhibition on *The Irish in Quebec, 1800-1950*. If our proposal is accepted, then we will call upon the whole Irish community to lend your interest and enthusiasm, your contribution and good will to make this exhibition a Community success. It is impossible to speak of Quebec History and ignore the Irish contribution to our Province. There are too many links – and it is my hope that this exhibit will enable us to present those links, in all their varied expressions, to the greater Montreal and Quebec community that, whether it remembers it or not, bears the stamp of the Irish in its midst.

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I am keenly aware that I am the first President in 19 years not to have the steady and reliable support of Doris Rooney in our Society office at St. Patrick Square. Doris's contribution is certainly going to be regarded as 'one for the history books' and it is with great appreciation and respect that I thank her for her steadfast presence and commitment throughout so many years and wish her a well-earned and very, very happy retirement. Doris's participation in our search committee for her successor resulted in the excellent appointment of Geri Newell, our new office manager, whose voice you will soon come to recognize at (514) 481-1346, along with her commitment and careful attention to the needs of the Society and its members. I am very pleased to welcome Geri aboard and assure her of the support of the Board in all her endeavours on our behalf.

I wish you all a most enjoyable and successful new *Irish Year* and I look forward to the many events ahead in our calendar. If we are successful in our goals, it will be the result of the collaboration we all bring to our Community table.

Mary McDaid
September 2006

Mary McDaid was born in Sligo and raised in Derry with Irish roots in the North and the South. She became a Canadian citizen in Vancouver on St. Patrick's Day, 1977 and, in 1989, settled in Montreal where she became involved in the city's Irish community. She has worked at McGill University since 1990 and is presently Assistant to the Dean of Arts. A member of Cine Gael and a member of St. Patrick's Society for several years, she has served on the Board and Executive, been Editor of NUACHT and Chair of the Cultural Grants Committee. She is also on the Board of the English Speaking Catholic Council, occasional contributor to the Montreal Catholic Times, and to the Ignatian Spirituality Centre. 

AGM marks change of leadership



Outgoing President John Little handing over the chain of office to Mary McDaid

At the St. Patrick's Society Annual General Meeting held at Loyola High School in June, a large number of members enjoyed the presentation of the various reports. Geri Newell was introduced as the successor to Doris Rooney, and Joyce Duberry spoke about her roots in Montserrat. Refreshments, delicious as ever, were provided by Peggy Regan of the Gryphon Tea Room on Monkland Avenue.

John received a silver platter and Doris was presented with a bouquet of flowers as they were thanked for their contributions to SPS. 🍀

A job too good to pass up on

Taking over the reins from Doris is Geri Newell who together with her husband, Patrick Gillen, has been a member of SPS for the past five years. She was introduced to the Society and recruited by Patrick Dunn with whom she worked at the time.



Geri Newell

After working at Imperial Tobacco for 37 years, Geri was delighted to accept the position of office manager when it was offered to her. She wanted to do something that would be beneficial to the community as well as working with people whom she enjoys and respects. It was an offer she couldn't refuse.

Geri has a passion for genealogy and is descended from the Corriganes of Enniskillen, Ireland, and the Newells of Kent, England. (This issue of *NUACHT* should be of great interest to her!)

During the past five years, Geri has been involved with the Christmas Concerts and the Grants Committee.

We wish her every success in her new position. 🍀

The "Luck of the Irish" continues

The St. Patrick's Society held its 11th annual golf tournament on June 20th, 2006. After playing the 1st hole in heavy rain, another sold-out crowd of 144 golfers and their guests enjoyed the sunshine on the next 17 holes, followed by a roast beef dinner, wine and door prizes for all.

Incoming President, Mary McDaid, welcomed golfers, dinner guests and extended her gratitude to the organizing committee. Preliminary results suggest we earned \$13,000. Top golfers were, Denyse Rolland, Cathy Smith, Geoff Cole, and Fran Wall.

The 12th Annual Golf Tournament will be held on Tuesday, June 19th, 2007, at Club de Golf Belle Vue. Mark your social calendar now! 🍀

Wayne Hogan

In Memoriam

Kirk Macgeachy, 1950-2006

August 20th was a sad day when we learned of the sudden death of Kirk Macgeachy, one of Montreal's most beloved Celtic musicians. Born a Scot, Kirk had a soft spot for Irish music and endeared himself to the Irish community with his regular gigs at Hurley's Irish Pub every Thursday, and sessions at St. Patrick's Ball and Ville Marie Feis, among countless others. He was a well known figure at Celtic and folk festivals not only in Montreal but across Canada, the U.S. and Europe.

"Kirk always made himself available for the Feis and for our fundraisers to send dancers to the World Championships," Pat Short, President of Ville Marie Feis, told *NUACHT*. "And he always made sure he surrounded himself with the best musicians," Pat added. Those same musicians paid tribute to Kirk during the funeral service at the standing-room-only Montreal West United Church and at the wake afterwards at Hurley's. From the moment the Scottish piper led the coffin into the church until the toe-tapping music and clapping followed it out, the mood had changed from sorrow to joy. Kirk would have loved that. As one of the eulogists noted, even though he had a Ph.D. in Geology, "what Kirk really wanted was to be a minstrel."

Kirk is survived by his mother in Scotland, a brother in Australia, a sister in England. His Montreal family includes his wife of 35 years, Patricia, his sister, Dr. Fiona Macgeachy, his brother-in-law, Alistair O'Hara, his niece and nephew Caitlin and Conor O'Hara. He will be missed by the students, faculty and staff at John Abbott College where he was a senior member of the department of geology and geography and taught geology and oceanography, and by the Gossage brothers, Dave, Bill and Thom, with whom he formed the band *Orealis*.

A memorial service was held in Kirk's hometown of Anstruther and his ashes were scattered in the Highlands of his beloved Scotland. 🍀

Fréamhacha – or getting back to your roots...

By Martina McLean

What is it that makes us wonder about our roots? Why is there a lucrative industry surrounding tracing one's roots? In the Irish context, it is believed that it is the Irish abroad who have this driving need to trace their ancestry as a means of connecting to their people and heritage. However, as one who tried to create a family tree when I was in my early teens in Dublin, I remember that it was more interesting to spend time with the older generations exploring their individual stories in other eras and other places than to piece together the requisite information to complete the family tree on either side of the family. It was compelling to learn that someone by the name of Priestley converted to marry the love of his life, that my maternal grandfather, orphaned at nine, left school to provide for his siblings and married my grandmother, "above his station" as she was an educated piano teacher and that my Aunt Dina wasn't my Aunt at all but my Mother's cousin who had been orphaned at a young age too and looked after by my grandparents as a member of their family. However, the label "orphan" ensured that she could never become a nun, although she did become a saint in the eyes of many.

As I remember this uncompleted family tree, I understand why to be Irish and proud of it was a mantra we grew up with. Much of that sprang from childhood influences including regular reminders that my maternal grandfather fought side-by-side with de Valera at Boland's Mills in 1916. How I wish I had known him to understand his story! Apparently our roots are mixed with my mother's people, descending from the Picts and my father's from the Normans. That probably explains the interest in languages and the reason why I'm the only blue-eyed female that tans easily! More of it related to the recognizable Celtic characteristics manifested everywhere I went among the extended family such as putting other people first, ensuring that every guest was fed and watered first before any serious discussions occurred, sharing from what we had, humility, a love of music and song as well as a sincere reverence for the dead who had a three-day send-off and are never far from us in another dimension.

However, as far back as I can remember, I always felt a gap and much hesitation when I couldn't utter the phrase "I'm Irish born and bred" for the simple reason that I was born on the Mediterranean. So, my diverse, multi-cultural heritage and foreign birthplace rendered it important to me to state my national identity with pride and some emphasis.


Then consider the various words in the Irish language to make more exact distinctions on levels of Irishness: "*Éireannach*" (from Ireland), "*Gael*" (Irish), "*Gall*" (foreigner, mainly denoting English), "*Gaeilgeoir*" (Irish speaker), "*Gall-Ghael*" and "*Angla-Éireannach*" and even "*Gaeltacht*" (place where Irish is spoken as the first language). I can't help but think that this is why we're such good wordsmiths too!

Alex Haley got it right when he wrote of his novel, "Roots is not just a saga of my family. It is the symbolic saga of a people." For this reason, I wonder what "truly Irish" signifies when there are more people in the Irish diaspora than reside in Ireland where the cultural diversity is growing with the new immigrants to our homeland. Just as there are numerous dialects in Ireland that identify the source of our individual local identities (making my English cousins giddy with the delight of Irish exoticism on every annual holiday), so too are there different flavours of Irishness globally reflecting the complex influences, values, beliefs, culture, history, and traditions of our time and place. Those who have nurtured their connections with Ireland will share these reference points and that is what gives us a sense of recognition in one another which is always so warming and welcoming.

Little did I know four years ago that I would be putting down roots here. Now, I understand why it is so easy for new Irish immigrants like myself to feel so at home here in Montreal. Thank you to the Irish community for the "*Céad míle fáilte*."

For those of you interested in tracing your roots, you might be interested to know that following a six year campaign by the Genealogical Society of Ireland to provide a proper legislative framework for the delivery of genealogical and heraldic services by the State, a Bill was initiated in *Seanad Éireann* by Senator Brendan Ryan on 8th May 2006. The Genealogy & Heraldry Bill, 2006, "*an Bille Ginealais agus Araltais 2006*" will reform the provision of heraldic services by the State and it will make these services more accessible to the ordinary citizens of Ireland and the Irish Diaspora. It will create a new and less expensive procedure for obtaining a Coat of Arms for individuals, institutions, clubs and corporate bodies.

Download the bill from this link:

www.oireachtas.ie/viewdoc.asp?DocID=5472&&CatID=59 

Feadóg On-Line for would-be whistlers

Want to learn how to play the tin whistle? James Donohoe has developed an exciting new music tuition initiative called Feadóg On-Line, accessible to all interested students regardless of where they live. It has proven to be highly successful, winning a National Digital Media Award in 2005. Donohoe, a music teacher and producer in Roscommon, Ireland, believes that every child (and many adults too!) should have the chance to experience the wonderful gift of music. He chose the tin whistle because it's small, inexpensive, has a wide range

of notes, can be played in many keys, and can be used to teach techniques common to other instruments. He has based his courses on live classes and includes video clips, audio clips, backing tracks, on-line crosswords and much more. As someone who has taught the tin whistle for over a decade, he is aware of the pitfalls and highlights them. He will also give advice by email to registered students.

Try the live class demo at www.feadogonline.com. You won't be disappointed. 

St. Patrick's Orphanage records – an update and other good news

By Ned Eustace

Last year when we published two articles on the history of the Orphanage and its successor organization, The St. Patrick Development Foundation, we understood that the records of the Orphanage and the school's registers had been lost or, at the very least, misplaced. There was an unconfirmed indication on a website that a school board might have them but, as far as our limited inquiries could ascertain, no one had accessed them in recent memory; and the Foundation did not have them, or much else of an historical nature, catalogued at that time.

Well, Eileen Sweeney-Cotton of Cap d'Espoir in the Gaspé, inspired by our articles and driven by a need to prove that she had been a resident in the Orphanage and educated in English, did some digging. We recently received the following e-mail from her:

Just wanted to let you know that I contacted Mr. Pion at the Montreal School Commission. He was able to find the years that I attended St. Patrick's Orphanage and St. Kevin's. Now, my granddaughter will be able to attend English school. Her mother will always speak to her in French and my son and I will speak to her in English. Isn't that a wonderful gift we are giving her!

*Sincerely,
Eileen Sweeney*

Indeed it is, Eileen, and with the publication of this article Mr. Pion may become a busy man. And for those who may be interested, here's how to get in touch with him:

M. Bernard Pion,
Commission scolaire de Montréal,
Service des services corporatifs,
Gestion des documents - administratives et archives,
3737, rue Sherbrooke Est., Bureau 50,
Montréal, QC, H1X 3B3

Doris (cont.)

they never be allowed to retire! Another responsibility was that of folding and mailing *NUACHT* four times a year — a daunting task when the publication was 20 pages. Husband Frank and her daughters were frequently encouraged to lend a hand.

Although I've known Doris for only four years, I'll always remember how she would press plates of food on me to take home after the Christmas Reception and the AGM. Somehow she managed to find caterers who provided goodies that were different and delicious. And I'll not forget how helpful she was as I struggled to acquire an understanding of what SPS was all about as I put *NUACHT* together.


For Doris, retirement won't be dull. She plans to travel more - especially in the month of March - and hopes to spend more time at the gym, do more volunteer work, perfect her roller-blading skills, and play lots of scrabble at a lake up north with friends.

We've also had the following e-mail from Rob Smith:


As a former resident of St. Patrick's Orphanage I was wondering if you would be willing to run a "Where are you now" type of column. It would be helpful for those of us who have lost old friends we grew up with. There are some from my past whom I would dearly love to meet again. These were pretty informative years and there are many footprints as it were that have been left in my "life-person" that I would like to walk with again....maybe you could even call it: "Footprints and lost trails!"

If there are others who share Rob's interest in getting in touch with fellow former residents - and we know that there are some in Canada and the USA - please let *NUACHT* know and we'll take it from there.

In the same articles we mentioned that around 1862, the second Director of St. Patrick's Orphanage, Fr. Michael O'Brien, a native of Aughnagar, Co. Tyrone, Ireland, acquired a plot of ground in the Notre Dame des Neiges Cemetery, for the interment of children belonging to the Orphanage. And, in the words of the Hon. J. J. Curran, K.C., son of one of the founding Trustees, it stood as "a thing of solemn beauty, in the heart of the burial ground" up to at least 1902. Well, with the help of the staff at the Cemetery, a small mausoleum has been located that matches the time period and was acquired by one Michael O'Brien with the upkeep subsequently funded from his estate. We cannot be certain if it is the "missing" grave site or if the O'Brien is indeed Fr. Michael (he was laid to rest in the crypt at Notre Dame Basilica) but, in any event, this mausoleum is empty and there is no record of its ever having been used.

In bringing a Trustee of the Foundation up to date on these developments, I was told that "some progress" has been made in assembling the records of the Orphanage. Let's hope we can look forward to hearing more in due course. 

At a dinner held at the University Club in her honour, Doris was presented with a bracelet which she wears constantly and with wine which, alas, is long gone. After expressing her thanks to John Little for organizing the dinner, Doris jokingly said that she would be only a phone call away and would compute consulting fees accordingly! Because of the abundant knowledge she has of society members, she also threatened to indulge in serious blackmail should she ever be short of money!

Doris, we'll miss your great sense of humour, your friendliness and generosity and wish you a happy and fulfilling retirement. Thank you for everything. 

Getting started on your family history

By Antoine Maloney

In the early '90s, my younger son, Ned, came home from school with a project to prepare a family history chart. Both my parents had passed away by then, but I knew that my Aunt Laura in Constable had kept meticulous records of Maloney family marriages, births and deaths.

She was able to give me details on the Maloneys and the Starrs – the Irish Canadian Starrs! – back to the mid-1800s. Ned and I prepared his family history chart using what we'd gathered on both sides of the family.

Getting started

If you've thought about doing genealogical research on your family, this article may provide the spur to get started. I describe the resources I've used to research my family history and that of friends since the early '90s.

When I started compiling my family history, the World Wide Web was just coming into existence. I started by relying on the stories, old documents and photos, and notes of my relations. Now, the Web has become an invaluable resource of genealogy databases, text, and communities working hard on their special interests – which will frequently match up to your special interests.

The Web has become so important, particularly for beginners, that we've prepared a *NUAHT* web page to accompany this article. It offers you links to all of the resources my article mentions, and many others that you'll find useful.

www.stpatrickssociety.com/nuachtgenealogy.htm

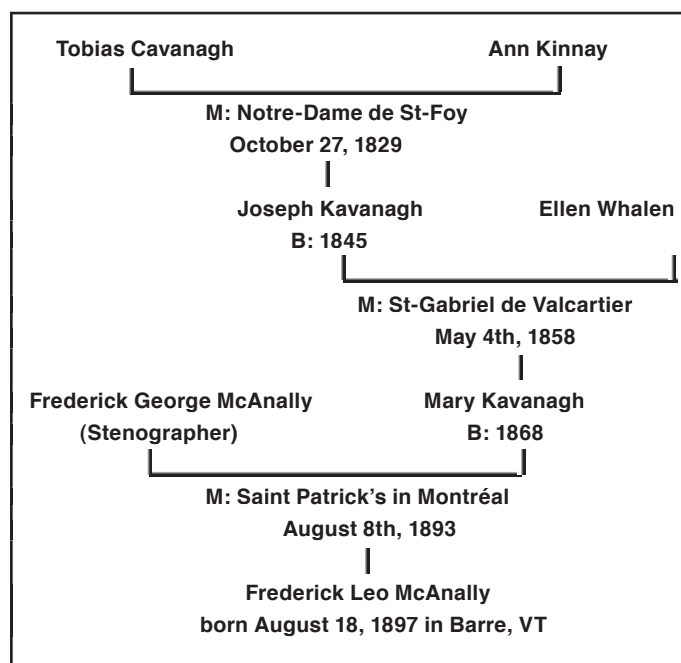
What is Family History?

Family history research is the compiling of the names of your parents, when and where they were married and lived, the occupations they pursued, the children they had, and the birth and death dates of each individual – and then doing it again for their parents, and so on. Along the way you'll find yourself matching up photographs, birth and marriage certificates, records of gravestone inscriptions and maybe pew rental records from St. Patrick's Basilica.

How big can this get?

Go back to 1800 and you have something in the order of seven generations – and 127 individuals if you don't include anyone outside your direct lineage. My Dad had 14 brothers and sisters – 12 who lived – my Mom had three siblings. Because I knew my aunts and uncles, and many of my great-aunts and uncles, the chart I've prepared for our family is very 'fat' in the recent generations.

There are two common ways of diagramming a family unit. Either way you're going to create a lot of paper if you get interested.



All to say, that you should organize yourself well with folders for your accumulated research and use a computer to create your core family history. Choose a record-keeping system that you're comfortable with and will be easy to access.

Names - Locations - Dates

Those lists of marriages, births, and deaths that my Aunt Laura gave me were a great start on my ancestors. Names – locations – dates are the currency of family history research; they're what allow you to find and confirm connections – to assure yourself that you're on the right track. The start of your research will be greatly helped by names – dates – locations from the late 1800s and early 1900s which will be the key to accessing the research resources now available.

What research resources I've used

The Web evolved rapidly during the '90s and has become invaluable to me in my research. Close to home, the Quebec National archives at 535 Viger Avenue East in Montreal are open Tuesday through Sunday from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.; on Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday they're open till 10:00 p.m. They suggest that first-time visitors arrange for a consultation by calling (514) 873-1101 x6270. Our web page offers many other links.

Resources on the Internet

I'm going to tell you about some of the very interesting research results I've been able to find on the internet. There are links to all of these at the *NUAHT* web page that accompanies this article.

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Getting started (cont.)

There's a plaque on the inside west wall of St. Patrick's Basilica which lists parishioners lost during the Great War, WWI. One of the names is Frederick Leo McAnally, one of my father-in-law's uncles.

The Canadian Government maintains a website with digitized Attestation documents, the sign-up papers, from WWI and I found them for Fred Leo McAnally when he enlisted for WWI. At a related site, I found the records memorializing his death at age 20 in June 1918.

One of the most heavily visited genealogy sites on the web is the Family History website maintained by the Mormons or Latter Day Saints [LDS]. They have a wealth of easily searched information including the census results for 1881 in Canada and the UK, and 1880 in the United States.

The LDS census site allows you to find an individual and the family that he or she was part of as recorded in the census. You'll find their names and ages, occupations, and religion.

marriages in Québec between 1760 and 1935 in family name order. The Men's volumes show the husband's name, the names of his parents, the name of his spouse and her parents, and the date and location of their marriage. The Women's volumes are in order of maiden name. The Archives also have similar indices for the Protestant side.

Working with the Drouin Men's book, means that one can find an ancestor's marriage, his father's name, then his father's marriage, and move rapidly back through many generations. One can also scan down the list looking for other marriages where the same parents are named, finding brothers. This same process can then be done in the woman's book. Your basic family chart can be assembled very quickly for Québec-based families.

The date and location/parish of each marriage is the connection to the Archive's microfilm records. It's surprisingly easy to find the right microfilm spool and load

1881 Census from LDS web site

Name	Marital Status	Gender	Ethnic Origin	Birth Date	Age	Birthplace	Occupation	Religion
Patrick MACNALLY	M	Male	Irish	1839	42	Quebec	Shoemaker	Catholic
Mary (McCurrach)	M	Female	Scottish	1841	40	Scotland		Catholic
Freddy (Frederick George)		Male	Irish	1865	16	Quebec	Clerk	Catholic
Ste Lawrence Ward, Montreal, Montreal, Quebec								

Another Canadian site has indexed the 1901/1906/1911 censuses and when you find a family you can also see a digitized version of the census worksheet that was completed on the night the census was taken. There are actually two worksheets, the other one listing the street address where the census was conducted.

For those of us with British ancestors, there are 1901 census records and excellent indices of Birth-Marriage-Death for the British Isles. I found May (Mary) Magee in the 1901 census of Holyhead, 11 years old, my maternal grandmother with her parents and brothers and sisters.

The internet offers many, many family research resources; use those family names and locations you collect and go exploring.

The Québec Marriage index and microfilm


The Québec National Archives have the multi-volume collection of Drouin marriage indices as well as many other easily used indices, with microfilms of the original parish registries.

Drouin Genealogical Institute undertook a massive effort to transcribe marriage register records – for Catholic parishes. These sets of reference books, one set for men, one for women, record the basic details of virtually all the Catholic Parish

it up on the microfilm reader. You can adjust the orientation of the film and scan through by date to find your ancestor's marriage - or christening or burial. Once you've found it, you can adjust the size and orientation and print the microfilm image for inclusion in your family history records.

Fred Leo McAnally's mother was a Kavanagh. In the marriage indices, I was able to find Tobias Cavanagh (an example of the fluidity of name form and spelling). That took me to microfilm, and in the 1829 marriage registry of Notre-Dame de St-Foy, I found extra information not in Drouin: the mother and father of Tobias were from County Carlow, while his wife's parents were from County Tyrone. One will also usually see the names of the witnesses, often the names of brothers or sisters of the couple.

Conclusion

I've experienced enormous pleasure doing family research for my family and for friends. It's not everyone's cup of tea, so if you get keen, don't be put off if you get yawns from others in your family – or even find them shrinking back in horror at “digging into the past.” There are lots of us around to share your enthusiasm and offer counsel. If you have long experience in doing genealogy, we look forward to your letters of advice and encouragement. 

How the Sheas (and Neil) arrived in Canada

By Neil McKenty

You might think the name Coolcappa describes one of those iced coffee drinks we enjoyed during the summer. In fact it is a small village on the border of Limerick from where my Irish ancestors, the Sheas, set out for the New World in June 1825. (Coolcappa comes from the Irish *Cuil Cheapach* meaning “corner of the village plots.”) This spring, my wife, Catharine, and I spent a morning there mucking around the parish graveyard in the warm rain, looking for names on the weathered gravestones that might give us a clue about who was left behind. We also chatted with the lovely woman who keeps the grocery store-post office clean as a whistle and filled with laughter from her wonderful Irish stories.

Of course the Sheas (also called the O’Sheas) are one of those storied Irish families that came from a long lineage working its way back through hill and dale, war and peace to the early bogs and mists of ancient Ireland. Here we catch up with them early in the nineteenth century when the Sheas had long been farmers in County Limerick. Unfortunately, the economic situation in the early eighteen twenties was grim. In 1821 the potato crop failed, causing great distress among the lower classes who subsisted mainly on a diet of potatoes and buttermilk.

To deal with this situation the British government decided to underwrite the costs of sending carefully selected families from the south of Ireland to Upper Canada, giving them free land (70 acres) and supplying them with tools and a year’s supply of rations. At one stroke this policy would reduce suffering in Ireland and provide more men for the militia in Upper Canada, still nervous after the war of 1812.

... many thousands applied, sick of their poverty and lack of prospects at home.

To get this scheme off the ground, the British government contacted the Attorney General of Upper Canada, Sir John Robinson, who turned to his elder brother, the Hon. Peter Robinson, at that time the Member of Parliament for York. Quickly, Peter Robinson travelled to Ireland and began lining up volunteers to leave for the New World. Although only a limited number could be accommodated, many thousands applied, sick of their poverty and lack of prospects at home. And this despite the fact Robinson was peppered with questions concerning the presence of bears, wolves and marauding Indians.

By the summer of 1823, the first group of emigrants sailed from Cork, arriving in Quebec City after a voyage of eight weeks. These settlers then traveled to the Bathurst District, made up of the present day counties of Lanark, Renfrew and Carleton. Many of them settled in Ramsay Township close to the modern towns of Almonte and Carleton Place. The second phase of Peter Robinson’s emigration plan began two years later, in the spring and summer of 1825. It was this group (2,024) that

included my own ancestors, the Sheas, who were booked on the good ship *John Barry* with a total passenger list of 253.

Along with Michael 16 (my great-grandfather) there were eight other Sheas in the family. These included Michael’s parents, Thomas (born in Coolcappa 1781) his wife, Bridget (1786), and his siblings Jeremiah (1806), Michael (1808), John (1810), Mary (1813), Thomas (1815), Johanna (1819) and baby Dennis, who was just two years old when the ship sailed at the end of May at 10 a.m., the “morning fine and almost calm.”

...Mr. Burnie kept a diary which gives a vivid account of life on the *John Barry*

Each ship in the flotilla (there were nine others besides the *John Barry*) included a ship’s surgeon, ours being Mr. William Burnie, a Scot, who had graduated from the University of Edinburgh medical school seven years earlier. Almost as important as the medical care he dispensed was the fact that Mr. Burnie kept a diary which gives a vivid account of life on the *John Barry*.

The voyage was not an easy one. Soon after boarding, the passengers began to experience two discomforts that were to plague them throughout, seasickness and inadequate sanitary facilities. Mr. Burnie wrote: “Two days at sea all the men were up and they sprinkled and scraped the decks. Women generally sick. Up all beds and every person off the berths deck. Had the decks swept and the under berths cleaned out. Washed clothes.” That evening at seven there was a welcome diversion, “music and dancing.”

On Monday morning “Timothy Callaghan was detected taking another man’s flour cake, and punished after being found guilty by twelve of his peers by cleaning the water closet for two days.” Many days the seas were rough and the passengers bilious. “Strong gales with thick fog. At times heavy rain. Heavy sea from S.W. ... Many sickly. Mrs. Slattery, Callaghan, Groves, seasickness. Tim Reagan fever. Sullivan constipation ... gave lime juice to those who wish it.”

Sometimes the nausea boiled over into a quarrel: “A violent fight with much scurrilous gab between Mrs. Owens and Mrs. Blackwell. The former is a noisy, quarrelsome woman, Blackwell little better. Well matched at tongues.” There were several miscarriages: “Another abortion – Dennis Mahoney jaundice, Pat Regan fever, Mrs. Condon bowels ... Mrs. Grave and Baragy seasick.”

Mr. Burnie quickly established a routine whereby the men scrubbed the decks and “All women washed clothes and hung them on the proper lines.” Meals soon became a problem because some items were foreign to the settlers (like the Sheas) “who threw the cheese and plum cake overboard or complained they were being poisoned. Cocoa was provided for the men who rejected

Cont. p.9

Sheas (cont.)

it. They preferred tea, which was only doled out to the women.” Several of the men (Michael Shea perhaps) disguised themselves in female clothing in order to get tea for themselves when rations were given out.

Tea was not the only problem. So, apparently, was the cook. On June 8, Mr. Burnie wrote in his journal: “At 1 p.m. Dinner people wrangling with the cook. They say he boils their provisions too much for the sake of the liquid. He denies it, but says they put it in so irregularly that some of it will be overdone. He threatens giving up the cooking. I settled the dispute by allowing everyone to take out his meat when he likes.”

Indeed, with no refrigeration, the diet was barely tolerated and sickness was endemic. As the weather worsened, the male passengers were obliged to take their turn at pumping out the ship several times a day. A number of passengers developed fever. Sanitary conditions were also deteriorating. The latrines were so inadequate that people took to creeping up on deck to relieve themselves at night. The weather worsened. On June 12, the surgeon writes: “Heavy gales and thick with rain. People between decks, some praying, some crying out murder, some swearing. A few believe the sailors to be getting out boats and leaving them.”

Little did ... Bridget know that within a few weeks she would lose another member of her family.

After making Newfoundland on June 19, the surgeon made a list of the ill including “Mrs. Regan who brought forth a daughter in the 7th month” and, ominously, “the baby Dennis Shea.” On June 27, the surgeon listed his patients as “10 sick, 2 very ill (Dennis being one) ... People dined on deck. Weather fine and clear.” It was not fine for “baby Dennis.” His parents and eight siblings surrounded his cot, telling their beads long into the night. It was less than ten days from the sight of Quebec when Surgeon Burnie wrote in his journal: “Midnight departed this life Dennis Shea, aged 17 months 9 days.” Little did his grieving mother, Bridget, know that within a few weeks she would lose another member of her family.

Two days later the *John Barry* struck a sand bar, began to take on heavy water, many of the passengers panicked and some of the crew threatened mutiny before the officers managed to put things right. On July 7, six weeks after it left Cork Harbour, the *John Barry* docked in Quebec and was boarded by the Harbour Master.

Next day Tom and Bridget Shea and their brood, along with the other passengers boarded the Steam Packet, *Swiftsure*, for the trip to Montreal. The ship sailed at eight in the morning the temperature being 88 degrees. The next day the emigrants from one of the other ships arrived in eight bateaux. “I consider his people more unruly than mine,” Mr. Burnie wrote with satisfaction. Beyond Three Rivers they “reached The Cedars

where we buried the [Mahoney] child in the church yard. Indians very troublesome, wanting money for drink. Others tossing the luggage about and squabbling with the people.”

That was the surgeon’s last entry. The Sheas and the rest then made their way overland to Lachine where bateaux were waiting to transport them to Prescott and on to Kingston.

Meanwhile Peter Robinson himself had gone to the Newcastle District (later named Peterborough after himself but then known as Scotts Plains) to reconnoitre a travel route before returning to Prescott to pick up his charges. “On the eleventh of August, I embarked 500 on board a Steamboat and landed them the next day at Cobourg, a distance of one hundred miles; the remainder of the settlers were brought up the same way, the boat making a trip each week.”

The route from Cobourg to Rice Lake (and then on to Scotts Plains at the head of the Otonabee river) was a thick wasteland of rocks and trees, an almost impenetrable forest. We can only try to imagine how Thomas and Bridget Shea and their six children would view this forbidding wilderness, most of it unknown except to native people. I find it hard to imagine myself although it is in this very area that I and many other descendants of Thomas and Bridget grew up. We went to Cobourg for school picnics, swam in Rice Lake and at least once a year excitedly looked forward to seeing the races at the Peterborough Exhibition.

Meanwhile, as he recounted, the resourceful Peter Robinson had “two scows” made, which were “transported on wheels from Lake Ontario to the Rice Lake.” No wonder Robinson found it difficult to recruit the manpower necessary to trundle these scows, each 56 feet long, on wheels over twelve miles of makeshift road laboriously cut out of the wilderness.

At last after much huffing and puffing, everyone arrived at Scott’s Plains, now downtown Peterborough. Lots were chosen and it is my understanding that Tom and Bridget and their children settled some miles from Peterborough in Asphodel township on what later was called the Shea line running between Norwood and Hastings on the Trent River, a road that Catharine and I discovered again on a sunny August day this summer.

Bridget, who had lost her baby, Dennis, almost in sight of Quebec City a few months before, now lost her husband Tom...

Sadly, in 1826, not long after they arrived in Asphodel, another tragedy struck the family. Bridget, who had lost her baby, Dennis, almost in sight of Quebec City a few months before, now lost her husband Tom who was drowned in Rice Lake at the young age of 45, leaving her a widow, aged 40, with six children.

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Some roots are better left in the ground

By Ned Eustace

To most of us growing up in rural Ireland, family roots were not terribly important. We were conscious of being in an old country with a history and mythology reaching back into the mists of time and some had a vague awareness of having a Norman or, God help us, Anglo-Irish, or Celtic, by which we meant “real” Irish, heritage. (I recently heard that there is no Celtic race – apparently it’s more of a movement that passed common beliefs, values and cultural icons onto certain chosen peoples, to coin a phrase. Watch for it, now they’ll all want to be Irish.)

The Eustaces are of Norman stock – the original name being Fitzeustace. One of our ancient homes in Ireland is now Clongowes Wood College, a renowned very expensive private boarding school run by the Jesuits for the sons of the higher Irish castes. I learned this late in life and have often wondered how the good fathers got their hands on our house and if there’s any chance of getting it back. Given the value of Irish real estate now, it would greatly help my pension plan. But I digress.

Members of my mother’s family, her maiden name was Frisby, claimed and were very conscious of noble roots and, much to my father’s annoyance, never stopped talking about them. This preoccupation may have been an attempt to recover from the effects of an historic error in judgement. It seems that on the maternal side the Frisbys had, a few generations previously, allowed the Tipperary Kennedys to marry-in. The Kennedys were a notorious band of tinkers or, to be more politically correct, travellers or travelling people ... Irish gypsies, not to be confused with Romany gypsies, the latter a superior class altogether! The Frisbys insisted they were descended from an Italian nobleman who had accompanied the Papal Nuncio, Cardinal Giovanni Rinuccini to Ireland in 1645. The good Cardinal, arriving in the port of Kinsale – no doubt in

time for the Annual Gourmet Festival - had come to meet the few remaining Irish princes to get concessions for the Irish Catholic Church and maybe to arrange for them to rough-up an English Protestant or two into the bargain. The princes, led by Owen Rua O’Neill, were preoccupied with setting up a new parliament and had been meeting at the Confederation of Kilkenny since 1642 trying to do so, enjoying the occasional pint. Anyway, the conniving cleric’s efforts came to nothing and his eminence went back to Rome in 1649 with little to show for his trip other than the effects of more than a few fine parties in my home town.

My late father, a socialist, Gaelic language scholar, teacher, union leader and all-round egalitarian, tiring of all this Frisby lineage rubbish clamouring for respectability, as they saw it, set about searching the heraldic archives to see if he could confirm their noble rank once and for all. Instead he found the Eustace family crest – a very elegant and noble motif showing stags rampant with resplendent, glowing, haloed crosses between their antlers – confirming we were, as ever, defenders of the faith. But, he claimed, there was nothing at all about Frisbys. Undaunted, or probably not wanting to be accused of failing to try hard enough, he went further and using his skill as

an Irish language scholar, searched out the etymology of the word Frisby. His sources suggested it was derived from the Old Irish phrase “*mac an fear seirbhíseach*” meaning “son of the servant man” (which phonetically could, with a generous stretch and a few drinks, be linked to an anglicisation that roughly sounds like “mackfrizbi”). Accepting the Cardinal Rinuccini connection, he silenced the Frisbys for evermore by suggesting that they were either descended from his eminence who, after all, was the servant of the big man himself in Rome, or, alternatively, they were the progeny of an Italian sailor on shore leave! Some roots are better left in the ground!



Galway, July 2006 –
“Truth in the booze”

Sheas (cont.)

Fortunately, Bridget’s eldest son “Darby” (Jeremiah) was old enough to qualify for land. Bridget, now listed by the authorities as the “Widow Shea” received one cow, two blankets, three axes, meat, flour and other necessities. At the time of his father’s death, Michael, my great-grandfather was 17. He would have worked with his brothers clearing the forest and caring for his mother. About 10 years later, he married Ann Myles, 20, from Cork, the daughter of Thomas Myles and Honorah Connell. Not quite two years later their first child, Catherine, was born. Michael and Ann went on to have ten more children including William born in 1850 and Jeremiah in 1856.

William Shea was my grandfather. He grew up on a farm in Asphodel Township not far from where I later lived in the

village of Hastings. He was a spare man over six feet tall with a trim white moustache who for many years had been a motorman on the street cars in Peterborough before returning to Asphodel to take up farming in earnest, living in one of those impressive solid red brick houses just outside Norwood at the western end of the Shea Line. He had married Bridget McCarthy, born in 1856, and they had two children, my mother, Irene and her sister, Geraldine.

My grandfather, who spent many happy hours fishing for pickerel in the Trent River, died at the age of 89 in Hastings just as war was breaking out in 1939. His father, Michael, died at the age of 83 in Asphodel in 1891. It was just over 60 years since he had left Coolcappa to board the *John Barry* at the city of Cork for the wilds of Asphodel.



On visiting the Flying Boats of Foynes

By Jim Kirby

If you drive west along the main coastal road (N69) from Ireland's third city, Limerick, and head in the direction of Tralee, you will light upon the small village and port of Foynes. Surprisingly, in front of you, will be an airport control tower and what appears to be the rear tail plane of an aircraft. Here is the world's only flying boat museum, and in its own way one of the finest aviation heritage sites anywhere in the globe. The journey is about 45 minutes from Shannon Airport.

On 9 July 1939, Pan Am's luxury flying boat, "Yankee Clipper," a Boeing 314, landed at Foynes. It was the first commercial passenger flight on the direct route between the United States and Europe. During the late 1930s and early 1940s, this quiet town on the Shannon Estuary became the focal point for air traffic on the North Atlantic. Many famous politicians, international businessmen, film stars, active-service men and wartime refugees passed through Foynes. From 1939 to 1945, Foynes really was the centre of international aviation.

Whilst Ireland was neutral, most passengers coming through Foynes were top-level military and diplomatic personnel with high priority on transatlantic flights. Many were on active duty and travelling with false passports, the most famous one of all being Sir Winston Churchill. Humphrey Bogart, Bob Hope and Gracie Fields were other celebrities and VIPs who chose the air as a way to cross the Atlantic in those dark war years.



The Pan American Flying Boat "Yankee Clipper"

On June 22nd, Charles Blair, chief pilot for American Export Airlines, took off from Foynes for the United States. His flight plan included the usual refuelling stop at Newfoundland - but this was to become the first non-stop commercial flight from Europe to New York. His Vought-Sikorsky VS44 flying boat needed a little less than one gallon of fuel per mile. Approaching Newfoundland, Blair had about a thousand gallons of fuel left and as many miles to go to New York but, as he wrote later, he was "beginning to toy with the idea of going all the way." As he taxied into the flying boat base at La Guardia Airport, New York 25 hours and 40 minutes after leaving Foynes, there were just 95 gallons left in the reserve tank. Amongst his passengers on this occasion was Admiral Cunningham of *Sink the Bismarck* fame. This was a remarkable journey. Captain Charles Blair, who married the Dublin-born Hollywood movie icon Maureen O'Hara, was sadly killed in 1978 flying a Grumman Goose amphibian in the Caribbean.

With the opening of the international airport across the estuary at Shannon, Foynes closed as a seaplane base in 1946. It was not until 1989 that a group of enthusiastic locals managed to open a small museum in memory of the past, and, being Irish, an eye to tourism and the future. Tony Ryan of Guinness Peat Aviation (GPA) fame, Aer Lingus and of course the founder of Ryanair has been a major benefactor. The museum has been a great success, but the one thing it lacked was a real seaplane. All has now

changed with the recent arrival at the museum of a full scale replica of the Boeing 314 flying boat, of which, by the way only twelve were ever built. Who should be at the unveiling but none other than the widow of Captain Blair, a sprightly 86 year old Maureen O'Hara. Remember her in *The Quiet Man* with John Wayne; that was a while back. So now with a €2M investment it is set to become a major tourist attraction for the south west region of Ireland. The B314 reproduction, built by top film industry set builder, Bill Fallover, has still to have its tail plane added and some finishing parts have to be added to the control tower.

The museum is remarkable with its 60-seat film theatre, fascinating historical displays, simulators, special children's area and a "Treasures Room" plus a large covered central area suitable for receptions and conferences. But the real star is the B314 Yankee Clipper seaplane, exact in every detail and complete with its luxurious honeymoon suite. The aircraft sits in

a special water pool display area. The aircraft challenged the ocean liners and provided the same class of luxury. Seven-course meals were provided in the 14-seat dining room and a very well-equipped galley, 1930s in style of course. By today's standards, the flight deck is enormous, in theory at least nearly able to take a full sized snooker table. The washrooms are large and the seating, whilst hardly meeting FAA safety standards, very comfortable. There was sleeping

accommodation too, much the same as proposed in Boeing's new 747-800 and the Airbus A380. Cruising speed of the aircraft was a stately 190 mph and whilst on the North Atlantic only 35 passengers were carried in five separate cabins, the aircraft could accommodate up to 75. Of the 12 aircraft built, three were lost in accidents (only one with fatalities) and the last one was destroyed by fire in 1951. For any sharp aficionado of Indiana Jones, *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, the Harrison Ford film, featured what was supposed to be a Boeing 314, but in fact was a Shorts Solent. The museum has hopes of getting its hands on a real Shorts flying boat; there are some about, but acquisition is costly.

This year some 50,000 tourists from overseas are expected to join the Irish at home who will visit the museum. Locally in the whole Shannon area the government is making €30 million available and there is another great investment being made at the site of the Cliffs of Moher, with an interpretation centre and a cut into the cliffs themselves to allow a safe, fantastic view of the sea crashing into the sides. I will report on those developments in a later article. One footnote is to remind everyone that Irish coffee was invented at Foynes. After a long night flight from Newfoundland it was one very special way of warming up passengers. Further information can be found at www.flyingboatmuseum.com.



A St. Columban Irish epic by Claude Bourguignon

By Kathleen Dunn

Claude Bourguignon is a walking encyclopedia, especially when it comes to the Irish settlement of St. Columban (now known as Saint-Colomban) in the Lower Laurentians near St. Jerome. Much of what he knows is contained in the recently published revised edition of *Saint-Colomban: Une épopée irlandaise au piedmont des Laurentides*. The rest is in his head or in the filing cabinets full of documents and artifacts which he has been gathering since 1978 and storing in his St. Columban home. As a freelance journalist and ethnographer, he is called upon to use that knowledge for a variety of publications and to speak at heritage, cultural and historical gatherings.

In a telephone interview recently, Claude recounted the story of a certain Elizabeth Casey who walked to St. Jerome with a sack of flour on her head to barter for ribbon for her wedding dress. I asked if that was the same Elizabeth Casey who married my great-great grandfather James Grace in 1838. It was. Claude remembers details like that and he remembers family links like mine. With such stories, he has kept our roots alive and nourished countless family trees. Needless to say, he has been a fabulous resource for the committee striving to restore damaged tombstones in the St. Columban cemetery.

Claude has no Irish roots of his own. His interest in all things Irish began with weekends and summer vacations at the family cottage in St. Colomban in the sixties. He then used his first-hand experience of the St. Columban Irish for a project during his student days in ethnology at Laval University in Quebec City. At first it was the architecture that attracted him but it didn't take long for him to expand his interest to include people.

It took him ten years to assemble enough material for the first version of his book which was published by *Éditions d'ici là* in 1988. The new version benefits from another close-to-20 years of research and includes chapters on the geography of the area, the first settlers, local industry, the economy, religious practice, education, the growth and decline of the area, architecture, and modern times.

The book is filled with photographs, some of which are arranged by original lot numbers and corresponding family names. What struck me about these photos, and what makes the book of interest to more than just St. Columban families, is that they remind me of the farms around St. Alphonse de Rodriguez, an Irish settlement in Lanaudière where my mother was born at the turn of the last century and her father and grandmother before her. In fact, Claude sees St. Columban as an "archetype" of Irish settlements throughout Quebec that got their start in the 1820s. So, as much as his book may be about the Keyes and the Brophys and the Skellys and the Purcells of St. Columban, to mention but a few, it is really about all the Irish who came to Canada and their struggle to clear the land and to make a new life for themselves. The poor soil, the inhospitable climate, the poverty, the isolation, all added up to a hard life indeed.

The book is full of details about the growth and decline of the St. Columban Irish settlement. Some readers may look for, and

find, information relating to their own families such as the Phelans who ran the Post Office and the general store for generations, or the Alexander Mackenzies who, according to the 1861 census cited in the book, ran a grist mill, an oatmeal mill, a carding mill, a fulling mill and a saw mill. Others will pick up on more general information such as that

collected by Monique Benoit for her 1980 thesis at the Université d'Ottawa. She learned, for example, from poring over the baptism registers from 1831 to 1851, that 46.5% of the parents and/or godparents could write. She comments: "À Saint-Colomban, la paroisse la plus pauvre de la région, mais peuplée d'Irlandais catholiques, le taux d'alphabétisation est deux fois plus élevé qu'à Saint-Eustache." Interestingly, we learn that Father John Falvey, the Irish-born parish priest who ministered from 1840 to 1879, shared his love of reading by running a lending library from the presbytery.

When the Irish first responded to Father Patrick Phelan's invitation to settle the Sulpician-owned land, the government supplied them with farm implements such as ploughs, scythes, picks and spades as well as blankets and utensils for setting up house. Of course, they had to build their houses. Subsistence farming seems to have become the order of the day and, just like in Ireland, the soil was best suited to growing potatoes. The Irish preferred open hearths for cooking and heating. When they eventually could afford stoves such as their French-Canadian neighbours had, the Irish found their houses to be over-heated. Each family had a woodlot and was required to provide a half-cord of wood to heat the parish church and presbytery which they had helped to build.

It would appear that the Irish started to abandon their farms after two generations on the land to take advantage of more lucrative opportunities in Montreal, Ontario and the United States. From 1861 on, there was a steady decline in the number of families from a peak of 896 to 676 in 1871, 590 in 1881, 395 in 1891, to 324 in 1901, a phenomenon which Claude says was fairly common throughout the Laurentians at that time. Gradually Eastern Europeans moved in, then cottagers, and now St. Colomban has been completely transformed into a bedroom community of over 8,000.

Claude writes that his objective in compiling this publication was to make it "un instrument de sensibilisation à la richesse de notre patrimoine collectif." I believe he succeeded. There are no immediate plans to translate the book into English, unfortunately. Copies are \$39 plus postage through him at 1-(450) 438-8077 or claud.bourguignon@videotron.ca. As an incentive, he will e-mail buyers a 48-page listing of the original settlers by lot number.



Fergus Keyes
and Claude Bourguignon(r) with
the first version of Claude's book



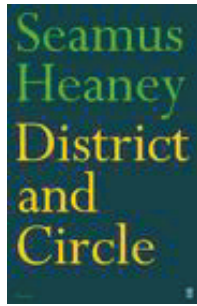
Anyone who isn't impressed isn't listening

District and Circle

By Seamus Heaney.

Faber and Faber; 76 pages; \$28.95

Reviewed by Ned Eustace



Contemporary Ireland, particularly Northern Ireland, has produced many fine poets in both the Irish and English languages. Of these, the best known to Montrealers is Nobel Laureate Seamus Heaney, who was present in the Spring of 2002 for the official launching of the Centre for Canadian-Irish Studies at Concordia University.

His first collection, *Death of a Naturalist*, appeared in 1966 and in some ways this new collection, *District and Circle*, has echoes of it but with no hint that Heaney, now in his mid-sixties, is writing in the autumn of his days. Among the fifty pieces are many with the same powerful and beautifully honed memories of childhood found in the first collection. "Anahorish 1944" records his recollection of the arrival of American troops in Northern Ireland ...

Hosting for Normandy.
Not that we knew then
Where they were headed, standing there like
youngsters
As they tossed us gum and tubes of coloured sweets.

"Youngsters" surely gives the hint he is seeing the faces of young men now going to wars perhaps for reasons less clear than 1944.

This collection for me is marked by its accessibility. No doubt this is partly due to our overlapping time periods and our coming from similar beginnings – he from an Ulster farm and I from a rural townland in Kilkenny. But the accessibility also works because of the march of familiar things across the pages from bare hands through cast iron, to trains. The poems are in many cases partly built – if that's the right word – around things we know: wooden tubs, sledge hammers, creosote railway ties, tin whistles, sub-way trains, a Boston fireman's badged helmet, harrow pins, anvils and even a hair-cut ("a clip"). A fine example is the poem that gives the collection its title, *District and Circle* – a reference to two rail lines of the London Underground. For anyone who has travelled on it or in the Montreal Metro there is immediate connection. Even the musician (to whom he almost gives but does not give a coin) is found there:

Tunes from a tin whistle underground
Curled up a corridor I'd be walking down
To where I knew I was always going to find
My watcher on the tiles, cap by his side,
His fingers perked, his two eyes eyeing me
In an unaccusing look not to avoid,
Or not just yet, since both were out to see
For ourselves.

This magnificent poem inevitably but perhaps unintentionally fills the reader with a sense of the horror of last year's terrorist attack

on the London Underground simply with the words

A resurrection scene minutes before
The resurrection, habitués
Of their garden of delights, of staggered summer.

But *District and Circle*, as used in the title of this, his 12th collection, catches another theme; that of looking at familiar places and returning to matters already addressed. It has the sense of coming full circle. It is full of second thoughts and those are the source of its familiarity and similarity to earlier work. There are deeply personal poems of love, of meeting childhood friends, of bird song and of death. "To Mick Joyce in Heaven" deals with the passing, I suspect, of an older adult confidant and friend from childhood who had been a medic in WWII who was ...

A demobbed Achilles
Who was never a killer,
The strongest instead
Of the world's stretcher-bearers,
Turning your hand
To the bricklaying trade.

And, he continues ...

A softness preserved you.
You spoke of sex also,
Talked man to man,
Took me for granted:
The English, you said,
Would do it on Sundays
Upstairs, in the daytime.

As a sort of counterpoint to this there's another called "Brancardier" – a stretcher-bearer – concerning a pilgrimage to Lourdes with imagery both religious and commercial, as behoves that place.

Running through the collection is a largely unsaid concern for the future, an anxiety, best caught indirectly in "Anything Can Happen" a translation from Horace, Odes, 1, 34:

"Anything can happen, the tallest towers
Be overturned, those in high places daunted,
Those overlooked regarded. ..."

Heaney has remained close to home and down to earth in this collection, yet, with the powerful language and imagery that has justly earned him the accolade as one of the finest poets of his generation, he captures in a few words the global tension of our times. Another reviewer, referring to previous collections, has said: "No one will mistake *District and Circle* for *Station Island* or *District and Circle* for *Field Work*; but anyone who isn't impressed isn't listening."

For those who enjoy poetry, this collection (available at Nicholas Hoare Books) is a must have.



Montserrat: the other Emerald Isle

By Ned Eustace

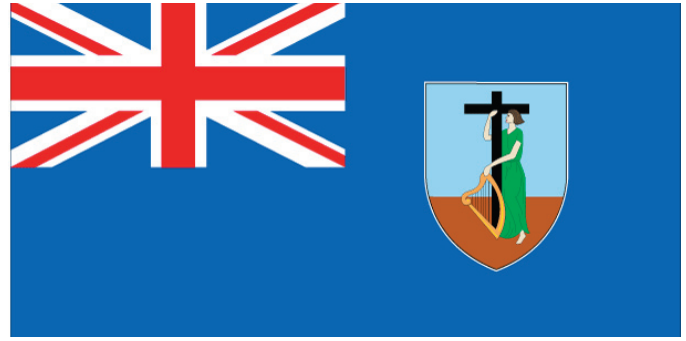
I was not quite 18 as I took my seat for the first time in a lecture room at University College Dublin. Nervous and tense in my new surroundings and more than a little concerned about embarking on a course in statistical mathematics, I looked around and caught the eye of a young black man, sitting slightly apart and alone, who, I thought, must be even more stressed than I as he clearly had just arrived from Africa. He might even be one of the Black Babies from the missions that my meagre pennies, donated weekly, had gone toward converting to the true faith for these many years, as I came up through the Irish school system. I reached out, feeling very pleased with myself overall – self-righteous even – continuing my Christian duty of charity by welcoming him, temporarily of course, to Ireland, saying, “Ned Eustace, I’m from Kilkenny.” He replied, somewhat reserved but not unfriendly, “Paddy Hackett, Kingston, Jamaica.” I had just had my first encounter with the Irish-Caribbean.

Since then I have met Mikey Murphy, an Australian aboriginal from Alice Springs, who is a very articulate tour guide at Ularu – it’s not polite to call it Ayer’s Rock any more. There have been near countless others over the years whom I’ve run into while scuba diving in the Caribbean: Doyles in Nassau; Kellys in the Virgin Islands; and even an O’Reilly in Cuba – none of whom would be especially welcome as Irish in Dublin then or now.

However, I’ve still not been to that most Irish of Caribbean islands, Montserrat. A British protected territory, Montserrat was badly hit by Hurricane Hugo in 1984. One way or another, it has spent most of the past twenty-two years reeling from the ravages of Mother Nature. It was devastated, and two-thirds of the population, currently estimated at 9,500, fled abroad because of the eruption of the Soufriere Hills Volcano that began on 18 July 1995 and has endured volcanic activity since, with the last eruption occurring in July 2003. The severe volcanic activity has put a damper on this small, open economy and half of the island is expected to remain uninhabitable for another decade.

Periodically, I had heard passing references to the Irish on Montserrat, supposedly (and possibly incorrectly) descendants of Catholics fleeing Cromwellian Ireland (1649-1660). As we were doing an issue of *NUACHT* focused on family roots, it seemed a good time to look deeper. It’s quite the story.

A 1979 issue of the British *Radio Times* said, “In a remote corner of the Leeward Isles there lurks a tiny British dependency which not only boasts the normal West Indian complement of blacks ... but where the ethnics are called by Irish names, where local hideaways include Cork, Kinsale and Sweeney’s Well, and there is a shamrock carved over the door of the Governor’s house ... an island replete with such typically West Indian names as O’Garra, Riley and O’Connel, which prints stamps with the Irish harp on and whose funky inhabitants speak a charming Irish brogue, the like of which would do no shame to the hills and dales of Kerry.”



Well, ignoring the patronising tone of the piece, the bit about the Irish brogue is a bit of a myth apparently. In 2005 J.C. Wells of University College London concluded that “... in terms of linguistic influence ... the Irish contribution to Montserrat has been vanishingly small. Of the vaunted ‘soft Irish brogue’ the Emerald Isle of the Caribbean retains barely the tiniest trace.”

However, that Montserrat has strong Irish influences is certainly true, but why Montserrat became so Irish is still a matter of debate. Among the factors suggested are over-population in nearby islands, ethnic prejudices, political disputes, and even linguistic differences. From an early date – Montserrat was colonised in 1632 – it seems clear that English authorities looked on the remote island as a safety valve to diffuse tensions among their West Indian subjects. A surprisingly large number of the recalcitrant subjects were Irish indentured labourers – little more than slaves but that distinction, though slight, was important – who, having satisfied the terms of their contracts, were more or less free to do as they pleased. Certainly, by the third quarter of the seventeenth century, Montserrat had become the most Irish island in the West Indies. A 1678 census shows a vibrant community of almost 1,900 Irish men, women and children. Family names suggest that most came from Cork, with smaller contingents from Clare, Donegal, Galway, Tipperary, Waterford, Westmeath and Wexford. Numerically larger Irish colonies had already existed on other English islands. But on Montserrat, seven of every ten whites were Irish. Even with Montserrat’s slaves added in, the Irish still made up more than half of that Island’s population up to 1800.

To understand the nature of the Irish connection, and who ruled whom, however, it is necessary to examine what we mean by “Irish.” There are at least four categories in 17th century Ireland: Gaelic Irish, Norman-Irish, New English and Ulster Scots. All four were found in Montserrat and each usually acted differently although they did operate in concert when necessary. The Gaelic-Irish were by far the poorest, tended to be Catholic and were ruled over by the others in much the same way as in Ireland. Collectively speaking, the Montserrat Irish were, to an unprecedented extent, ruled by Irishmen: at least six of the island’s seventeenth-century governors were Irish-born.

Cont. p.15

Montserrat (cont.)

Montserrat became an English colony in about 1632 when her governor, Anthony Brisket, a Wexford man, opened it as a place for Irish Catholics who had discovered that while the English (and their other Irish brothers) welcomed them as labourers, they were unwanted as neighbours. These Irish flocked to Montserrat and by 1680 outnumbered the English by two to one. There is evidence of a Catholic church on the island by about 1650 and a succession of Irish Catholic governors, most notably Sir William Stapleton from Thurlesbegg, Co. Tipperary. In the middle of the seventeenth century, sugar began to replace tobacco as the island's cash crop. Tobacco could be profitably cultivated on small farms but sugar required an initial heavy investment. Some Irishmen had the necessary means such as John Blake of Galway, but most of the sugar plantations belonged to Englishmen and most of the Irish were poor and relegated to the steep, mostly uncleared densely brush-laden and tree-covered slopes, where they practised subsistence agriculture. Sugar also meant slaves and there were about 1,000 on the island in 1678, 3,500 in 1708 and nearly 9,000 in 1755. By 1800, the slaves were in the majority.

Incidentally, there's no evidence that the Irish treated slaves any better than the other colonists – we are, in that regard at least, not exceptional. Montserrat, however, never became a typical English West Indian island, where African slaves vastly out-numbered a handful of whites and racial mixture hardly ever took place. In the eighteenth century, Montserrat had two oppressed races. It was perhaps natural that the poorer Irish and Africans, both at the bottom of the social structure, worked, drank and made love together. An Afro-Irish population came into existence and when the sugar boom ended in the 18th century, new arrivals of Africans ceased. The process of Afro-Irish mixing therefore accelerated and each generation was more racially mixed than the one before.

In the early nineteenth century, most of the Afro-Irish deserted the Catholic Church in favour of the Methodists, who had taken a leading position in the campaign to abolish slavery. Oddly enough, this island of less than 40 square miles is divided into a Protestant North and a Catholic South, but it has never experienced a hint of sectarian violence. On Montserrat, questions of religion, race and colour are considered rude.

The Irish in Montserrat, regardless of religious faith, celebrated St. Patrick's Day as a Christian feast from early on. But it has evolved – not always easily – from a day of purely religious observance to a six-day festival of secular celebration. March 17 has been a statutory holiday since 1985. The shift from a solely religious celebration began in the 1970s with the increasing sense of national identity among Montserratians. Under this influence it evolved, despite Church and some local white opposition, into a celebration of the emancipation of the slaves and the historic resistance to their European overlords, who were English, Scots and Irish. Specifically, it commemorates a failed slave revolt on March 17, 1768, and the execution of nine ring-leaders, now revered as national heroes. However, the evolution continues, as the celebrations are increasingly blemished by the influence of tourist industry entrepreneurs who have not been slow to see the commercial possibilities of an annual celebration of the green

on an island in the sun. Happily, government authorities and right-thinking people with a sense of history and culture are pushing back incipient “Shamroguery” and other stereotypical so-called Irish buffoonery as is seen in Dublin, Boston, New York and elsewhere – would that it were not so in a few other places! Here's wishing them luck – Irish or otherwise - on all fronts.



Joyce Duberry


It's always good to make another Irish connection and at the SPS 2006 Annual General Meeting in late June, Joyce Duberry, President of the Montserrat Association of Montreal, spoke eloquently of her homeland and its links to Ireland. Ms. Duberry was born on Montserrat but her father and mother took her off to England at a very early age.

The Montserrat Association of Montreal maintains the spirit of good-fellowship and mutual understanding, not only in its community but also with other associations and communities. The Association held its 34th Annual Celebration on September 16. The proceeds from this event are going towards scholarship awards from “The Evelyn James Bursary” aimed at youth with the objective of encouraging and giving financial assistance to promote continuing education both during and after high-school.

Another way to research your roots

By Kathleen Dunn


If you have ever strained your eyes trying to read the handwriting in old church registers, you will appreciate the work that Sheila Hennessy-Brandl and other researchers do on behalf of the **Quebec Family History Society**. She and fellow QFHS member Robert Dunn indexed the 1800 marriages and 9000 baptisms listed in the St Ann's registers from 1873 to 1899 and the result is a huge typed alphabetical volume which is available from the Society for \$67.00. Sheila has also indexed the 12,500 baptisms and 3000 marriages at St. Patrick's Parish from 1873 to 1904 and that volume is available for consultation at the QFHS offices in Pointe Claire along with a smaller volume of 1300 marriages for the same parish for the years 1859 to 1866. She is now working on some 8000 baptisms for the same time frame. Sheila's next project is to tackle the registers of St. Gabriel's Parish in Pointe St. Charles where her own ancestors lived for more than a hundred years.

Genealogy is fast becoming one of the world's favourite pastimes, with thousands of people deriving fun and satisfaction from tracing their family trees. If you would like to know more about how, where and when your ancestors lived but have no idea where to begin, the Quebec Family History Society is the place for you. Membership includes a quarterly publication *Connections*, access to an extensive library, a monthly lecture series, a variety of workshops, and a chance to meet interesting people with similar interests. Who knows, you might even encounter a long-lost relative or friend. Founded thirty years ago, the QFHS is an invaluable resource for any amateur genealogist. Check out www.qfhs.ca or call (514) 695-1502 for more information or to join. 

And the tourney winner is ...

Montreal Irish Tournament honours, and \$3,000, go to Burlington Centaurs of Ontario who won an exciting battle with USA Rugby Super League team, Boston RFC, in the final of the Montreal Irish Labour Day tournament. When it was over, Burlington lifted the Des O'Neill Trophy and the \$3,000 first prize for the second year in succession. They had managed to hold off a strong Boston side who rallied in the last 20 minutes to provide spectators with an encounter full of the cross-border rivalry seen at the national level in recent years. Burlington overcame a very talented and disciplined US Naval Academy team in the earlier rounds as Boston rose above fellow USA Rugby Super League contenders, Charlotte, to contest the event final.

Eric Hough, President of the Montreal Irish Club said, "I was delighted and excited to see such good teams in attendance at this year's event and I expect to see even more top US and Canadian teams enter the event next year during our 50th year Golden Jubilee Celebrations. He added, "The prize money proved attractive as did the event upgrades which included a courtesy bus service between the Club grounds and downtown Montreal."

For more details, visit www.montrealrugbytournament.com. Preparations for the 2007 tourney will begin soon so be sure to check us out to secure a spot for next year! 

Canadian Irish Studies' happenings

St. Patrick's Society's inaugural lecture

Dr. Garret FitzGerald has spent so much time with the Irish Community in Montreal that he is now considered one of the family! So, when Dr. John Little initiated an annual lecture series and nursed it through the various approval procedures of the Society, he won everyone's support when he proposed that inaugural speaking honours should be offered to Dr. FitzGerald, the relative from across the water!

The purpose of **St. Patrick's Society's Annual Lecture in Canadian Irish Studies** is two-fold: firstly, it affirms the Society's long-term commitment to support education values in our community and, secondly, it becomes a major event in the Society's Fall calendar that always seems so silent between September and early December!

We are delighted to collaborate with Dr. Michael Kenneally, past-president of the Society and Director of the Centre for Canadian Irish Studies, in establishing a series that will support the Centre's goals, while creating an annual community event that will promote academic excellence on a variety of topics of interest to all of us. The topic of the inaugural lecture on September 22nd is: *Imagining Ireland in 2020*. (See location details below.)

New scholarship in honour of Seán Treacy

Friends of the late Seán Treacy, a much-loved and sadly missed teacher at Comhrá Irish language school, have gathered their energies and resources together to raise enough money to fund a new Scholarship at Concordia. This scholarship will be awarded annually to a deserving student of Canadian Irish Studies and will be inaugurated as early as this September.

Congratulations to Comhrá for their continued efforts in preserving an important aspect of Montreal's Irish heritage. Most of the funds for this award were raised through the production and sale of an Irish calendar which reflects positively on the level of commitment and fellowship which endures in Montreal's Irish community.

Reading group to be formed

A reading group is being formed which will focus on short stories and novels by contemporary Irish writers. If you would like to participate in this group, e-mail the Centre for Canadian Irish Studies at cdnirish@alcor.concordia.ca.

Free public lectures at Concordia

Friday, September 22nd


Public Lecture by Dr. Garret FitzGerald

"Imagining Ireland in 2020."

7:30 p.m. – de Sève Cinema, McConnell Building, Concordia University, 1400 de Maisonneuve Blvd. West.

Friday, October 13th

Public Reading by Canadian Novelist Charles Foran

Charles Foran, whose latest novel *Carolan's Farewell* deals with 18th century Irish harper, Turlough O'Carolan, will read at Concordia in October. Contact the Centre for further details. 

People in the news ...

By Kathleen Dunn

Have you seen the sign “Irlande à Montréal?” on Highway 40 at the eastern tip of the island? Dublin-born **Tom and June Hutchinson** checked it out this summer and found, much to their delight, the Club de Golf de l’Île de Montréal, complete with shamrock logo and golf links “just like in Ireland.” This club, which is located off Exit 87 at Sherbrooke Street East and rue Damien-Gauthier, is open to the public and boasts two equally challenging par-70 courses designed by Irish architect Pat Ruddy. The website www.golf-de-montreal.com claims, “These incredible Irish influenced creations on Quebec soil will leave no golfer indifferent.” The Hutchinsons agree.

Nuacht contributor **Neil McKenty** will be co-hosting John Main Day on Saturday, September 30th, at the Unitas Centre near the Georges-Vanier Metro station. The day begins at 9:30 and includes panel and group discussions with the theme “Meditation: The Search for Meaning.” Neil’s topic is insights into the life and teaching of John Main, the Benedictine Monk who introduced the practice of Christian meditation to Montreal thirty years ago. As the author of John Main’s biography *In the Stillness Dancing*, Neil knows of whom he speaks. To register or learn more, call 514-485-0009 or e-mail unitas@bellnet.ca.

On a recent business trip to Sofia, SPS Vice-President, **Ned Eustace**, learned that his translator, Filipina Filipova, was soon to accompany a group of Bulgarian MPs and senior bureaucrats to meetings with Irish government officials in Dublin. In response to his warning about the peculiarities of Irish regional accents, she responded, “I think I’ll be fine. I teach Irish Studies at the University of Sofia.” Prof. Dr. Filipova then invited Ned to a lecture by the Director of the National Museum of Ireland, Dr. Patrick Wallace. There he met the Irish Ambassador, Geoffrey Keating, who invited him for a pint on his next visit. There are four Irish pubs in Sofia!

As a result of the publicity *NUAUGHT* gave to the St. Columban grave sites project led by **Fergus Keyes** and others, the story was picked up in March by the Ottawa Citizen for its St. Patrick’s Day centre-spread. This, in turn, led to an invitation to present the project and demonstrate their website to the British Isles Family History Society’s annual conference in Ottawa this month. Bravo!


Martina McLean, will be teaching the new Irish Language course in the Canadian Irish Studies Program at Concordia

University. Martina was born in Gibraltar, of Irish parents, and grew up in Ireland where, she says, “I had some terrific teachers and the knowledge was compounded with visits to the *Gaeltachts* of Connemara and mostly Donegal’s *Gort an Choirce*, in Letterkenny.” Those teachers encouraged her to sit her *Ceard Teastas* while still an undergraduate. Martina is a qualified teacher with a Higher Diploma in Education from Trinity College, Dublin, an MA from St. Patrick’s College, Maynooth, and a Licentiate in Speech & Drama from Thames Valley University. She has taught English and French as well as Irish, piano, singing/choir, speech and drama. In Montreal since 2002 as product marketing manager for a telecommunications company, Martina has shared her love of Irish culture with Comhrá since 2003 and with *NUAUGHT* since last year (see p. 4).

Genealogist **Sheila Hennessy-Brandl** has passed along a humorous note about the hazards of her hobby. Following are one man’s New Year’s resolutions circa 1852: “(1) No man is truly well-educated unless he learns to spell his name at least three different ways within the same document. I resolve to give the appearance of being extremely well-educated in the coming year. (2) I resolve to see to it that all of my children will have the same names that my ancestors have used for six generations in a row. (3) My age is no one’s business but my own. I hereby resolve to never list the same age or birth year twice on any document. (4) I resolve to have each of my children baptized in a different church—either in a different faith or in a different parish. Every third child will not be baptized at all or will be baptized by an itinerant minister who keeps no records. (5) I resolve to move to a new town, new county, or new state at least once every 10 years—just before those pesky enumerators come around asking silly questions.”

SPS member and three-time bestselling author **Sheila Kindellan-Sheehan** is at it again. Her fourth book, *An Easy Mark*, will be launched on September 23rd at Chapters Pointe Claire. This one is billed as a multi-faceted whodunit set in Montreal and a follow-up to *Cutting Corners* and *The Sands Motel*. This time round, her heroine’s father becomes President of St. Patrick’s Society! Shades of her own father’s career? Sheila’s father, Dennis Kindellan, was SPS President in 1967-69.





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Around Town

New Canadian musical at Centaur

Theatre Panache will present 13 shows of *Brigit's Reel* at the Centaur Theatre in Montreal from September 15th to 24th, 2006. This new Canadian musical play written by Trish Barclay and Marc Desormeaux, is a spellbinding love story about an Irish immigrant and a French Canadian chanteur.



Marc Desormeaux and Trish Barclay

Heather Markgraf-Lowe of Theatre Panache will direct this production.

Brigit's Reel, set in the early twentieth century, features over 20 original and traditional Canadian folk songs played and sung by Marc Desormeaux, Trish Barclay and Glenn Roy.

Tickets ranging in price from \$15.00 to \$33.00 for *Brigit's Reel* are now available from the Centaur Theatre box office. Please call (514) 288-3161.

Library and Archives Canada join National Archives of Ireland in symposium

Saturday, September 23rd will bring together specialists in Irish-Canadian studies from across Canada and Ireland. The symposium will be held at the University of Ottawa's Residential Complex, 90 University Avenue, Ottawa. For more information, visit www.collectionscanada.ca/whats-new, e-mail webservices@lac-bac.gc.ca or call (613) 947-5887.

Comhaltas concert back again

Another reminder that Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann, will return on Sunday, October 15th, 2006. Visits to Montreal by the Group occur only every couple of years because of the increasing demand for the group to perform elsewhere. For tickets, contact Carole Shaw, (514) 935-3961, Sandy McDonough (514) 697-6918 or Beverley McGuire. (514) 767-2105. The concert will be held at the Oscar Peterson Concert Hall (Loyola Campus) 7141 Sherbrooke St. W. at 7:45 p.m. Tickets only \$12.00.

Siamsa: 'a pleasant musical diversion'

In addition to the six Céilís that are held throughout the fall and winter, Siamsa offers weekly group classes for both adults and children in traditional Irish fiddle, whistle, harp, bodhrán, set dancing, and Irish drama. New this year are tin whistle and fiddle lessons for kids. For information on the tin whistle classes, contact Kelly Symons at (514) 581-3078 or by email: ambrosemoloney@gmail.com. For fiddle classes, contact Jessica Gal at (514) 488-3409 or by e-mail: kissafrog@whale-mail.com. As usual, the Céilís feature Irish traditional dancing to the Siamsa Céilí Band: the caller is Bill White. Held at the Royal Canadian Legion, 5455 de Maisonneuve West, NDG, these events are fun evenings of great exercise and include raffles and super prizes. To find out more, call Bill at (514) 483-6262.

Change of venue for GAA Golf tournament

The GAA will now hold its Annual Golf Tournament at the Lafleur Golf Course, Route 207 St. Isidore Rd., Kahnawake on Saturday, October 7th, beginning at 9:00 a.m. A round of golf is \$27.00 per person. You are encouraged to make up teams of four in advance or simply show up. In addition to trophies for both men's and women's low score, there will be many other awards. You are asked to donate a spot prize valued between \$10 – \$20. To register or for more information, e-mail: montrealshamrockgaa@gmail.com. This event will be run by John O'Shea.

ICCC update

Be sure not to miss CARREFOUR 2006 to be held 3:30 p.m. to 8:30 pm, Tuesday, 7th November, 2006, Delta Hotel Centreville, 777 University Street, Montreal. This event, organized by thirteen European Chambers of Commerce and Trade Commissions, is expected to have over 80 exhibitors and attract over 1,000 visitors. The ICCC has been involved in organizing this event since its inception. Further information can be obtained by contacting the Chamber office (514) 845- 0973 or by e-mail: contact@icccmtl.com.

The Ireland Canada Chamber of Commerce will hold its annual Christmas Reception at the University Club, 2047 Mansfield on Thursday, December 14th from 5:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. It is expected that Declan Kelly, the new Irish Ambassador, will attend. Chamber members and their friends are invited to celebrate the season. Please contact Diana James at (514) 845-0973 for more information. It's a great evening. See you there!

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Brush up your Irish with Comhrá

Although the Irish classes are now in session, it may not be too late to enrol. They are held at Loyola High School, 7272 Sherbrooke St. West, on Monday evenings from 7.00 p.m. to 9 p.m. from September 11th through December 18th - cost \$56.00. Three levels are offered, including a class for beginners. No previous knowledge of Irish is required, only the will to learn.

An Irish language immersion weekend will take place Friday November 3rd to Sunday November 5th, at the Laurentian Lodge in Prevost. All levels of classes will be offered, from beginners to advanced, as well as Irish music, dance and singing workshops. The fee is \$160 which includes shared accommodation and six meals.

For further information please visit our website at www.comhra.org or contact Diane Gratton (450) 699-1962 or 514-238-4909.

Erin Sports turns 75

The Erin Sports will be celebrating their 75th anniversary on October 28th, 2006. A Dinner Dance will be held at Il Gabbiano (formerly Lapierre Buffet) at 1550 Lapierre St., LaSalle. Cocktails will be served from 6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m., followed by a four-course dinner and an open bar. Entertainment will be provided by the Clahanes and a DJ, Sound Check. Tickets for this not-to-be-missed event are \$75.00 and may be obtained by contacting Barry Holdbrook at (514) 762-1882.

UIS Selection Evening relocates

The Selection Evening for the 2007 St. Patrick's Parade Queen and Court will take place on January 20th, 2007. Due to escalating costs and an increasing deficit each year, UIS had the choice of either raising the price of the ticket or changing the venue. The organizers chose the latter.

This year's event will be held at Buffet Sorrento, 2170 Dollard, LaSalle, Quebec. The UIS has used this restaurant every year as their Banquet venue and have always been very pleased with the service and support of the staff.

Buffet Sorrento can meet the needs of this event and has the following advantages:

- ambiance and décor similar to the hotel
- ample parking at no cost
- lower liquor prices
- snacks on the tables
- Guinness

Each year, the incredible talent displayed by the confident and poised young Irish women amazes those in attendance. Evaluating this public speaking contest is an extremely difficult job for the judges. Another great evening which includes great entertainment lies in store.

Tickets will be on sale starting in November and will remain at \$20.00 per person. Group bookings are available (10 per table). To book ahead, please call either Colleen Murphy at (514) 426-4588 or Elizabeth Quinn at (514) 894-5087.

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A special date for 2007

The St. Columban Gravestone Restoration Committee fundraising concert on January 27th, 2007, at the Oscar Peterson Hall will be a family affair. The line-up will feature the band Tüna whose seven members include Dave, Bill and Thom Gossage; Bernadette Short's Celtic Grace Dancers; and narrators Michael Kenneally and Peter Gossage. The Gossage brothers' maternal grandmother, Annie Skelly, was a fiddler born in St. Columban. Their mother Audrey O'Rourke Gossage and their cousin Kelley O'Rourke Thomassin are the concert co-ordinators. Committee chair, Fergus Keyes, describes the event as "a fundraising extravaganza whose objective will be – not only to honour our own Irish ancestors who arrived in the 1820s – but also to celebrate all immigrants who left their homes with hope, to settle in North America. And the other objective is, of course, to raise enough funding to repair the Cemetery. With any luck this event might allow us to consider starting the restoration project as early as next Spring." Check the website www.stcolumban-irish.com for developments as they occur.

NUACHT

2006-7 CALENDAR OF EVENTS / CLÁR IMEACHTAI 2006-7

DATE	EVENTS	FURTHER INFORMATION	
Sep. 22	Inaugural St. Patrick's Society Lecture, 7:30 p.m., De Sève Cinema, Concordia	Geri Newell	481-1346
Sep. 22	Innisfail General Meeting, Corn Roast & BBQ, 1610 Stephen, Verdun, 6:00 p.m., \$10.00	Ann Broden	(450) 465-3421
Sep. 30	Tara Golf, Hemmingford Golf Club	John O'Shea	697-8889
Sep. 30	Innisfail Memorial Mass, St. Patrick's Basilica, 12:10 p.m.	Ann Broden	(450) 465-3421
Sep. 30	Montreal Shamrocks GAA vs. Brampton, 2:00 p.m. Venue TBA	Redmond Shannon	651-1584
Sep. 30	GAA 80s Night, 8.00 p.m., O'Regans Irish Pub	Redmond Shannon	651-1584
Oct. 7	Irish Radio Show, 5:00 p.m., CJAD 800AM	Kimberley Sullivan	947-7661
Oct. 7	GAA Annual Golf Tournament, Lafleur Golf Course, Kahnawake, from 9:00 a.m.	Redmond Shannon	651-1584
Oct. 14	Siamsa Céilí, NDG Legion, Addington/de Maisonneuve, 8:00 p.m., \$8.00	Bill White	483-6262
Oct. 15	Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann concert, Oscar Peterson Concert Hall, 7:45 p.m., \$12.00	Carole Shaw	935-3961
Oct. 19	St. Patrick's Society Grants Applications' deadline	Geri Newell	481-1346
Oct. 19	GAA Pub Quiz Night, 8:00 p.m., O'Regans Irish Pub	Redmond Shannon	651-1584
Oct. 21	Irish Radio Show, 5:00 p.m., CJAD 800AM	Kimberley Sullivan	947-7661
Oct. 28	Erin Sports Assoc., 75th Anniversary, Buffet Il Gabbiano, Lapierre, LaSalle, 6:30 p.m., \$75:00	Barry Holdbrook	762-1882
Oct. 28	GAA Halloween Party, 8:00 p.m., O'Regans Irish Pub	Redmond Shannon	651-1584
Nov. 4	Irish Radio Show, 5:00 p.m., CJAD 800AM	Kimberley Sullivan	947-7661
Nov. 4	AOH "Stages of the Cross" Walk, Notre Dame des Neiges Cemetery	Victor Boyle	928-7196
Nov. 7	ICCC's Carrefour 2006, Delta Hotel Centreville, 777 University St., 3:30 to 8:30 p.m.	Diana James	845-0973
Nov. 14	St. Patrick's Society General Meeting, 7:00 p.m., St. Patrick Square	Geri Newell	481-1346
Nov. 18	Irish Radio Show, 5:00 p.m., CJAD 800AM	Kimberley Sullivan	947-7661
Nov. 18	Innisfail Corned Beef & Cabbage Dinner, 1610 Stephen, Verdun, 6:30 p.m.	Ann Broden	(450) 465-3421
Nov. 18	Siamsa Céilí, NDG Legion, Addington/de Maisonneuve, 8:00 p.m., \$8.00	Bill White	483-6262
Dec. 2	Irish Radio Show, 5:00 p.m., CJAD 800AM	Kimberley Sullivan	947-7661
Dec. 6	St. Patrick's Society Christmas Concert, Loyola High School, 7272 Sherbrooke W., 7:30 p.m.	Rob Brodrick	482-9733
Dec. 9	Innisfail Members' Christmas Party, location TBA	Ann Broden	(450) 465-3421
Dec. 12	St. Patrick's Society Christmas Reception, Loyola High School, 7272 Sherbrooke W., 7:30 p.m.	Geri Newell	481-1346
Dec. 14	ICCC Christmas Party, University Club, 2047 Mansfield, 5:30 p.m to 8:00 p.m..	Diana James	845-0973
Dec. 16	Irish Radio Show, 5:00 p.m., CJAD 800AM	Kimberley Sullivan	947-7661
Jan. 20	UIS Selection Evening, Buffet Sorrento, 1270 Dollard, LaSalle, \$20.00	Colleen Murphy	426-4588
Jan. 27	St. Columban Restoration Committee Fundraising Concert, Oscar Peterson Concert Hall	Fergus Keyes	935-3769
Feb. 2	Cine Gael 2007, Opening Night, De Sève Cinema, Concordia, 7:00 p.m.	Lynn Doyle	481-3503
Feb. 9	Cine Gael 2007, De Sève Cinema, Concordia, 7:00 p.m.	Lynn Doyle	481-3503
Feb. 13	St. Patrick's Society General Meeting, 7:00 p.m., St. Patrick Square	Geri Newell	481-1346
Feb. 23	Cine Gael 2007, De Sève Cinema, Concordia, 7:00 p.m.	Lynn Doyle	481-3503
Mar. 2	St. Patrick's Society Ball, Chateau Champlain Hotel	Christie Brown	554-2958
Mar. 9	Cine Gael 2007, De Sève Cinema, Concordia, 7:00 p.m.	Lynn Doyle	481-3503
Mar. 10	Erin Sports Assoc., Irishman of the Year Breakfast	Barry Holdbrook	762-1882
Mar. 11	UIS Mass of Anticipation, St. Gabriel's Parish, 11:30 a.m.	Marlene Demers	366-3623
Mar. 16	St. Patrick's Society Luncheon, Queen Elizabeth Hotel, 11:30 a.m.	Paul Dunne	942-5529
Mar. 16	UIS Irish Mingle, Cheer's downtown, 1:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., \$10 (get your tickets soon!)	Rose Quinn	(450) 671-7217
Mar. 18	St. Patrick's Parade, noon	Ken Quinn	932-0512
Mar. 24	UIS Annual Parade Awards Banquet & Dinner Dance, Buffet Sorrento, 6:00 p.m., \$65	Margaret Healy	932-5250
Mar. 30/31	Cine Gael 2007, De Sève Cinema, Concordia, 7:00 p.m.	Lynn Doyle	481-3503
Apr. 13	Cine Gael 2007, De Sève Cinema, Concordia, 7:00 p.m.	Lynn Doyle	481-3503
Apr. 16	UIS Mass for Deceased Members	Marlene Demers	366-3623
Apr. 26	Cine Gael 2007, De Sève Cinema, Concordia, 7:00 p.m.	Lynn Doyle	481-3503
May 27	UIS Mass for Famine Victims, St. Gabriel's Parish, 11:30 a.m.	Ann Broden	(450) 465-3421
May 27	AOH Annual March to the Stone, 11:30 a.m.	Victor Boyle	928-7196
June 12	St. Patrick's Society Annual General Meeting, St. Patrick Square	Geri Newell	481-1346
June 19	St. Patrick's Society Golf Tournament, Bellevue Golf Course	Geri Newell	481-1346

St. Patrick Square

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