



# Dane County Shamrock Club, Inc.

## Newsletter

Volume 18, Issue 11

May 2021

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### ~ Message from the President:

*Subbing this month for Ryan Dunn is Harry McCarthy*

I hope everyone had a great St. Patrick's Day celebration even though we couldn't be out and about as normal. And now, we can all enjoy the beauty of spring!

**Our next event** is the club picnic planned for July 13<sup>th</sup> at McKee Park in Fitchburg which we hope will be able to run as planned. We'll keep you posted as the time gets closer and we follow Covid protocol. We hope for a large turnout and to have a time to celebrate being Irish and getting together! It's has been a long time. We do have some new members that we hope to meet and get to know while enjoying a meal together.

**Coming up** is Halfway to St. Patrick's Day on September 17<sup>th</sup>. We'll hope that we can get together to enjoy a local brew!

**Please continue** to check out both our website and Facebook to keep informed. There's been lots of good information out there. Our thanks to DeeAnn Martin and Amanda Conway for keeping them updated.

#### Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/DaneCountyShamrockClub/>

**Website:** <https://danecountyshamrockclub.org/>

**We are still in need** of new board members for Secretary, Membership Chair and Sunshine Chair.

Amanda Conway volunteered to fill-in for Secretary in the absence of an appointment to the Board. She is also our Vice-President and getting double duty! Our many thanks to Amanda during this interim.

**If you have interest in any of these positions**, please contact Ryan Dunn at [ryandanieldunn@hotmail.com](mailto:ryandanieldunn@hotmail.com) or 414-801-0055. **The club needs you!!**

### ~ Mother's Day

The Greeks paid homage to the mother of their gods and the Romans dedicated an annual spring festival to the mother of their gods. In the 16th century a celebration called Mothering Sunday was inaugurated - a Sunday set aside for visiting one's mother. The oldest child would bring a "mothering cake," which would be shared with the whole family. Family reunions were the order of the day.

Anna M. Jarvis died in 1905. She had started a campaign for a national day to honor all mothers. Her mother was known as "Mother Jarvis" was an Appalachian homemaker. She worked to eliminate unsanitary conditions. At the time there were many special days for men but none for women. On May 10, 1908 service was held at the Grafton, WV church where Anna's mother had taught.

In 1914, President Woodrow Wilson signed a bill designating the second Sunday in May as a legal holiday to be called "Mother's Day".

**Happy Mother's Day!**



## ~ *What's in a Name?* *Duffy*

Duffy is a surname of Irish origin meaning descendant or grandson. It was an old Irish first name meaning "Black." The name also has connotations derived from Spain, Latin America and Italy. Variations of the name include Duffey, Duffee, Dohey, Doohey and Dowey. The name originated in Connaught. The center of their territory was Lissduffy, near Strokestown. It produced a number of ecclesiastics. The Archbishop of Tuam was Ambassador to Henry II in 1175. Duffys are now most numerous in County Monaghan.



- ♣ Brian Duffy was a former NASA Astronaut.
- ♣ Charles Gavan Duffy, Irish poet
- ♣ George Gavan Duffy, Irish politician
- ♣ James Duffy, publisher
- ♣ Joseph Duffy, Catholic Bishop
- ♣ Martin Duffy, Irish filmmaker.
- ♣ Richard Duffy was a flying ace during WWII.

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## ~ *Roderic O'Connor – Last High King of Ireland*

Roderic O'Connor was not a favorite of his father. He was one of over 20 sons of his father. He was born in 1116. In 1136, he and his brother Aedh took advantage of a low in their father's fortunes to stage a rebellion. Aedh was blinded but Roderic was protected by the Archbishop of Connacht. He staged another rebellion in 1143. He was arrested and spent a year in prison. The Archbishop of Armagh sought his release in April 1144 along with his confederates.

Donnall O'Connor was chosen as the favorite son and successor. Roderic O'Connor began raids into O'Rourke lands in 1146. He improved his status. Donnall began to lose favor in 1147 and his fate was sealed when he was arrested in 1151. Roderic then had a solid claim as his father's heir. Roderic successfully raided Thomond where a great victory was won at the Battle of Moin Mor. Roderic remained active in suppressing the O'Brian's of Munster. This divided Munster in half with O'Brian taking Thomond and McCarthy taking Desmond. McLochlain traveled south with his army in 1153. Roderic and his battalion of West Connacht troops were setting up camp near Fordruim, County Westmeath when they were attacked. Many of the troops were slain. O'Connor brought fleets of men north and defeated McLochlain.

Roderic's father died at his capital of Dunmore, County Galway. Roderic O'Connor became king of Connacht without any opposition. He arrested three of his 22 brothers to prevent them from rising up against him. McLochlain assumed the High Kingship and began a war of attrition using their regional allies against one another. McLochlain put his own person as king of Meath. He evicted other kings to Connacht. Roderic responded by plundering and burning areas around Derry and Strabane. When McLochlain was returning north, Roderic entered Munster in the south where he overturned the political settlement of McLochlain.

Roderic O'Connor died in 1198 and is buried at Clonmacnois, County Offaly. His last descendant to hold the kingship of Connacht died in 1233. The last known descendant was Niall, a grandson, who was killed in 1242. Roderic had six wives and 13 children (there may have been more).



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~ *Gus O'Connor's Pub* is located in the small village of Doolin in County Clare in the West of Ireland. The Pub dates back to 1832. It is situated on the Wild Atlantic Way and has many tourist destinations in the area including the Cliffs of Moher, the Burren and the Aran Islands. It is one of a few establishments in the area that allowed musicians to play live music. O'Connor's is known for its traditional Irish music and people came from far and wide to hear the type of music sessions heard here.



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*Our Members with May Birthdays:*

- |    |                   |
|----|-------------------|
| 2  | Bill Kinney       |
| 3  | Ryan Dunn         |
| 4  | Dave Mahoney      |
| 6  | Mike O'Brien      |
| 10 | Jane Connors      |
| 19 | Jerry Murphy      |
|    | Mary Jane Swanson |
| 23 | Jackson Heinrichs |
|    | Stephanie Lowden  |
|    | Kathy Purtell     |
|    | Sara Roe          |
| 31 | Joe Herr          |

## ~ A WEE BIT OF IRISH HISTORY



**Tobernalt Holy Well** means "well in the cliff." It is said to have healing powers for body pain. Tobernalt is associated with the Penal Times in Ireland. This was a period when the English controlled the property, education, and religious rights of the Catholics in Ireland. Tobernalt became a secluded refuge for the celebration of Mass in the early years when the laws were enforced harshly. People flocked to Tobernalt from surrounding areas. Priests were hunted and traveled in disguise. People often started out the night before in small groups to arrive at Tobernalt before dawn. They did not know when the next mass would be celebrated at Tobernalt.

The history of Tobernalt Holy Well predates the arrival of Christianity. When the Celts settled, Tobernalt became the main area for the festival of Lughanasa, the harvest festival. It was Christianized to be called Garland Sunday and became a day of religious devotions. It was a day to show hospitality to strangers. It was also a day to visit graveyards to honor the dead.

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**Miami Showband Massacre** - On July 31, 1975, three members of the Miami Showband were killed in County Down. The incident was considered one of the worst atrocities of "The Troubles." The three band members were gunned down at a fake checkpoint as they traveled home from a gig in Bainbridge, County Down. The incredible story is now available on Netflix.

The shocking murders of three innocent musicians on a lonely border road created enormous shockwaves throughout Ireland and abroad. The checkpoint was thought to be an official British Army one. The fake checkpoint was manned by the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF). They grew apprehensive as they were lined up on the lonely road. Two of the gunmen (UVF) placed a camouflaged bomb furnished by the British in the rear of the vehicle. The bomb was set to explode shortly after the band was allowed to continue on its way. The bomb went off prematurely killing the two who planted the bomb. The UVF gunmen began shooting at the band. Three members were killed. A British officer at the scene was later captured and executed by the IRA. The plan was for the bomb to go off in the vehicle and have the band labeled as terrorists.

Stephen Travers who was badly wounded, has been searching for the truth. He has been thwarted at every turn. Travers hopes the documentary about the brutal attack reaches millions of viewers. It is a story that highlights the injustice and failure of violence to effect social change.

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**Michaela McAreavey (Nee Harte)** - A murder investigation of Irish woman Michaela McAreavey, who was strangled while honeymooning in Mauritius in January 2011, is set to take a new direction conducted by the Central Criminal Investigation Department. Widower, John McAreavey has been critical of the previous Police investigation. John McAreavey is a native of County Down. Their wedding took place in County Tyrone. Mauritius is a popular tourist destination for Irish on holiday.

Michaela returned alone to her hotel room for a snack. Investigators believe she was wrestled to the ground when she entered her room and strangled. She was placed in the bath with the water running. Her husband found her a short time later. She was a 27-year-old schoolteacher. Thousands of people came out for the funeral which was held in the same church where Michaela and John were married.

The following year, a trial of two resort employees was held. An innocent verdict was delivered. In 2015, John McAreavey remarried. In 2017, John traveled to Mauritius to offer a reward for information about the killers. In 2019, John McAreavey, his sister Claire and Mark Harte, and Michaela's brother published a podcast. "Murder in Mauritius" which provides details of the harrowing events of her murder along with the shambolic murder trial.



**Sean Heuston – Irish Republican** was born in 1891 in Dublin. He worked as a railway clerk in Limerick. He joined the Irish Volunteers and became an officer. He gave lectures on Irish history and Irish language. In 1913, Heuston was transferred to Dublin. He played a prominent part in the Easter Rising of 1916. He was director of training for the Irish Volunteers, Vice commandant of the Dublin Battalion and Commander of the 5th company on the south side of Dublin. His orders from James Connolly were to delay the advance of British troops. He had 26 volunteers and his position became untenable against the number of British troops which numbered about 400.

Their position was almost completely surrounded. The British began closing in and were hurling grenades into their building. The Irish were hopelessly outnumbered and were running out of ammunition. It was decided that they had to surrender. The British troops that had given them such a stiff battle and caused were infuriated when they saw such a small force and caused so many casualties. The Irish troops were forced to march with their hands behind their heads to the Royal barracks. They were lined up on the parade grounds and were attacked by the British soldiers, kicked, beaten, and spat upon. Heuston was transferred to the Richmond barracks where he was tried by court martial and found guilty and sentenced to be shot. The sentence was carried out on May 8, 1916. He died at the age of 25.

The Sean Heuston Bridge and Heuston Railway Station in Dublin are both named in his honor. A statue of Sean Heuston was erected in Phoenix Park, Dublin.

**Goban Saor**, was a skilled builder in Irish history. He was born in the year 560 in Turvey in North County Dublin. He became popularly recognized as St Gobban. He was employed by many monks and saints to build churches, monasteries, round towers, and stone castles. Goban Saor is the son of Tuirbe Tragmar (thrower of axes), a figure whose magical axe would hold back the sea after it was thrown on the strand.

He traveled extensively in Ireland, England and even the continent constructing buildings. He would remain in an area for a lengthy time living in a tent like structure. Masons had their own private signs. Goban Saor's symbol of a cat with two tails which can be viewed at the Swiss Cottage at Cahir, County Tipperary.



*Stone carving of the Gobán Saor*

A story is told that while building a monastery, the monks demanded that he lower his agreed upon price. They removed his ladder to force his agreement. Goban began to slowly dismantle the stones tossing them to the ground making another way down. The monks returned his ladder and agreed to pay him the original price.

Goban can be compared to Goibniu, the Irish god of smithcraft. The book "The Wonder Smith and His Son" is the retelling of fourteen tales about Goban Saor by Ella Young. Goban is buried at St. Brigid's cemetery at Thurles, County Tipperary.



### **Meanings of Ulster County Names**

- ANTRIM** - means "lone ridge," est 1400.
- ARMAGH** - means "Macha's height," est 1584.
- DERRY** - means "oak wood," est 1585.
- DOWN** - means "the fort," est 1520.
- FERMANAGH** - means "Men of Manach," est 1584.
- TYRONE** - means "Land of Eoghan," est 1585.

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### *~ The Irish Priest* By Patrick Fleming

A number of years ago, on one of my many roots trips to Ireland, I met an elderly priest in a rural parish in County Cork. He said he had been to New York City once for a conference but since funds were limited, he found an affordable hotel in the Bedford-Stuyvesant neighborhood of Brooklyn.

Having done research there for the Department of Education, I knew how dangerous a neighborhood it was. It was so violent, that they had neither postal service nor telephone service. He told me after he booked into the hotel, he changed into his civilian clothes and decided to take a walk in the neighborhood at dusk.

After leaving the hotel, he walked past two of “New York’s finest” (cops) and walked east for many blocks. The locals were extremely friendly, greeting him, saluting, waving, cheering him on, etc. After an hour of walking, he decided to turn back to the hotel. As he passed two policemen, one of them said, “Good night father!” The elderly priest was surprised that this cop knew he was a priest, and he also knew Americans don’t say, “Good night”. He turned and asked the cop how he knew he was a priest. The cop said, “You can’t fool a Tip man father! Your highwater mark (the white neck) and your black shoes gave you away and only an Irish priest would be dumb enough to walk these streets at night. We have been behind you for the last hour!”



### *~ In Memoriam*

Kenneth Ring was born May 17, 1946 and passed away on March 19, 1921. Ken grew up on a farm in Mazomanie, the son of Walter and Isabelle Ring. Ken was a professional message therapist for 46 years and is survived by Sally, his wife and Rebecca his daughter. Donations may be made to Agrace Hospice or Public TV, or Radio. There will be a celebration of life in the summer of 2021. Ken was a past member of the Dane County Shamrock Club.

~ *The Ballad of the Clonmel Road* by Michel McGettigan

My mother, Eileen Thiede had been to Ireland eight times by 1999. She was anxious to share her experiences with her grandchildren and me, so in May of that year, she gifted us with an unforgettable trip to the land that she loved. We saw many wonderful sights including the Cliffs of Moher, the Aran Islands, Dingle, Kinsale, Blarney, Cobh, Dublin and Bunratty Castle, so much to see and it was amazing. The most memorable though, were the days that we spent in Dungarvan, Waterford County and the home to our cousins the Byrne family. They invited us to spend an evening in their country home in Coolnasmear and joined us for an evening on the town. We were also able to visit the site that was the birthplace of my Great-Grandmother Kate Dwyer Bernard and the Parish Church Kilgobnet in Knockenpower.

One afternoon my four sons decided to take a drive to see the Rock of Cashel, as they had heard so much about it. I need to explain that in Dungarvan, there is a statue of a famous race dog by the name of Master McGrath. Hence the directions given to my sons were as follows: "Take the main road out of town until you see the dog, and then turn onto the Clonmel road." The four Lads had a great trip to Cashel, but the best part of their journey was the song that they composed on the way. "The Ballad of the Clonmel Road."

The song was later recorded by my son Danny and his wife Selina and given as Christmas gifts to all in our family. We enjoyed the uplifting melody and sang along as we played the CD. My mother thought that our cousins in Ireland should hear it too, so she mailed them a copy. Their daughter Clare, an Elementary School teacher, loved the song so much that she taught it to her students and made a video of them singing it. The Clonmel Road song had made its way back to Ireland, close to where it began.

In Feb. of 2019, Eileen's family gathered at our home after her funeral to raise a glass and share some memories. My son Joel Bitney stood and sang all of the verses of the Clonmel Road song in honor and in memory of his Grandmother and the trip of a lifetime.

The first two verses of the song:

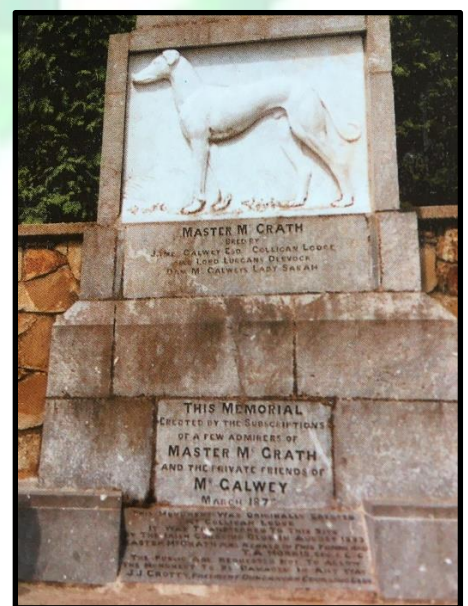


The Clonmel Road, the Clonmel Road, it's the Clonmel Road for me  
If ever I'm lost and don't know where to go, on the Clonmel Road I'll be.

The Clonmel Road, the Clonmel Road, it's the Clonmel Road for me  
The reason I drive on the Clonmel Road, it takes me back to my family.



*The Family - Eileen Thiede, center; Michel McGettigan, 2<sup>nd</sup> from right*



*The Dog*



**DANE COUNTY SHAMROCK CLUB, INC. – BOARD OF DIRECTORS & COMMITTEE CHAIRS**

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**June Newsletter Deadline** ~ Newsletter articles are written by Harry McCarthy unless otherwise indicated and set-up by Pat McCarthy. We encourage members to submit articles on their Irish travels, special interests and photos. Please submit articles for the June newsletter to Harry McCarthy at [pmmccarthy@charter.net](mailto:pmmccarthy@charter.net) or mail to 2656 Mica Rd., Fitchburg, WI 53711 by May 20, 2021.

HAPPY   
*Mother's  
 Day*

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