



# Dane County Shamrock Club, Inc. Newsletter

Volume 18, Issue 8  
February 2021

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### ~ Message from the President by Ryan Dunn

#### Greetings Shamrock Club Members!

And here we are in the midst of a glorious Wisconsin winter! As I type this, the wind is howling, the sun is pretty much set (at 5:22 pm) and I believe the wind chill is approaching zero, yay! Days like this...I must be honest, I miss Florida. But I tell you what they're NOT doing in Florida: snowmobiling, skiing, ice fishing, snow-shoeing; just to name a few things. I myself actively engage in two of the aforementioned four winter activities. I've also found an indoor golf simulator to keep busy in other ways (thanks to my in-laws for that hook up!). Also, I'm in the middle of a 7-day paternity leave. Allllll day long with a 3-month-old; inside. As the saying goes, "the days are long but the years are short." As most of you are parents, you can certainly empathize with the statement. I spent five months with Patrick when he was a baby and those got to be some long days indeed, but true to form, he's already four. I wouldn't trade that time for the world as we have a great relationship, much of which can be attributed to our five months together. With that said, not necessarily sure I'd do it again. But our pandemic continues and as it goes, affects everything we're doing. Normally I'd take Violet (somewhere?) but I'm obviously not too keen on doing that.

As such, it appears our St. Patrick's Day Parade is cancelled for yet another year; which essentially means we'll be cancelling our St. Patrick's Day luncheon as well. Hard to believe, but the last large social gathering for a great many of us was our St. Patrick's Day luncheon from last year. Since we have no ceremony



to honor anyone, we have decided to suspend nominations for our annual "Irish Person of the Year" award until we are able to pay tribute to said person as in years past. With that, congratulations continue to go out to Dr. Sharon O'Mahar for carrying the title of "Irish Person of the Year" for two consecutive years!

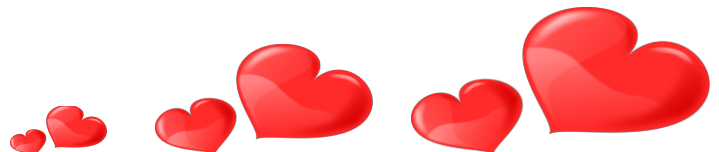
In club news, we're in need of a secretary and a membership chair. If you are interested in serving on our Board of Directors, please let me know.

Somewhat related, Brexit is now official. I just read a wonderful article which insinuated it was only a matter of time until we have Irish unity! Northern Ireland is expected to hopefully leave the United Kingdom and join the Republic of Ireland due to Brexit and the ramifications which come with it insofar as it affects the Emerald Isle. Politically speaking, I think this is something we can ALL agree is a beautiful thing. While the realistic side of me is continuing to use a "wait and see" approach, the fact it's being discussed is obviously a step in the right direction.

Also, if you have not renewed your membership with the club, nothing like the present time to do so...and remember to spread the word about the DCSC, as I have always said, our greatest resource is YOU our members who can help to inform people about us and what we do!

Cheers,

Ryan



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

### *Molloy*



Molloy means noble chieftain. The clan is associated with County Offaly. The Clan is that of the Southern O'Neills and descended from Niall of the Nine Hostages. The name is mostly often found in East Connaught and Offaly. The "O" has been almost completely dropped by the family.

- Francis Molloy was born in Meath around 1600. He became a priest and professor of Theology at St Isadore's College in Rome.
- Charles Molloy (1646-1690) was a legal writer who compiled work on marine law.
- James Lymab Molloy (1837-1909) made his fame as a songwriter and some of his songs are still popular today such as "Bantry Bay" and "Just a Song at Twilight."

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## ~ *Matt Molloy's Pub*



Matt Molloy's Pub is one of the best known pubs in the West of Ireland. It's located in Westport, County Mayo and is owned by Matt Molloy of the Chieftains. The pub is famous for its sessions which may happen at any time day or night. You may be lucky enough to see Matt himself at a session. The pub is often full which adds to the atmosphere. This is an intimate Irish music venue that you will never want to leave.



*Matt Molloy*



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## ~ *Saint Brigid*



Practically every house in Ireland has a St. Brigid's cross on a wall. St. Brigid herself remains popular centuries after her death. She was born into slavery and was renowned for her charitable acts and life-long commitment helping the poor. She was inspired by St. Patrick. Brigid vowed to join a convent as a child, however this was opposed by her father who had promised her in marriage to a wealthy man. She prayed that her beauty be taken so that she would no longer be desirable to men. Her prayers were answered but her beauty was restored later in life.

St. Brigid's cross was woven in her honor. Her father was an Irish Chieftain. As he lay while death approached, Brigid prayed for him while calming him and weaving the cross from rushes. The cross became known for warding off fire, hunger and evil. The cross became synonymous with St. Brigid and is one of the most identifiable Irish symbols in the world. St. Brigid's Day is celebrated on February 1.



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*Our Members  
with February Birthdays:*

19 Natalie Dunn  
Harry McCarthy

26 Don Cosgrove  
Susan Hanley Grady



## **~ A WEE BIT OF IRISH HISTORY**



### **~ MV Ranga**

The MV Ranga was a 1,586-ton container ship owned by a Spanish shipping company. The ship was chartered to Iceland and was on her maiden voyage from Vigo to Reykjavik. The ship lost power during a storm and was wrecked at Dunmore Head on the Dingle Peninsula, County Kerry in March 1982. The local rescue team saved fifteen crew members and the remaining crew was taken off by helicopter.

The ship was a total loss as she broke up into two parts and created oil pollution. In 1989, the company Eurosalve tried to scrap the ship but this failed due to a

lack of accessibility to the wreck. The stern section was removed in 1991 due to the filming of "Far and Away" which included a scene at Dunmore Head. Only the bow and scattered pieces of the wreckage are visible today.

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### **~ Patrick Fleming – Irish Outlaw**

Patrick Fleming was born into a family of potato farmers at Athlone. His parents leased their land. They lived in a one room house with Patrick and his 8 siblings. At age 13 he went to be of service to the Countess of Kildare. He reportedly neglected his studies and was discharged from her service. He was soon taken into the service of the Earl of Antrim. The Earl discharged Fleming in disgrace. Before leaving, Fleming was alleged to have stolen money and other items. He fled to Athenry in Connaught hiding out until he thought it was safe to go to Dublin.

Fleming joined a house robbing gang and it was said that he robbed more houses in 6 years than were robbed in Dublin in that time. When his fame made it dangerous for him to remain in Dublin, he set out for the Bog of Allen where he became a highwayman. He robbed the rich and poor alike. He also formed a gang in the Barnsmoor Mountain area near Colorockiedie Woods. They robbed over 125 men and women. Some of the gang members were captured and hanged. Fleming was said to rob notable people such as the Archbishop of Armagh and the Bishop of Raphoe. He also robbed the Bishop of Tuam. Lady Baltimore was traveling with her son when they met up with Fleming. He kidnapped the son and demanded ransom.

Fleming was captured in Munster after robbing a nobleman and taken to prison in Cork. He was able to escape through the chimney of the prison avoiding being hanged. He continued with some vicious robberies, murdering 5 men, two women and a 14-year-old boy, He maimed and injured others. Sir Donagh O'Brien resisted the robbery and Fleming cut off his nose and ears. Fleming's landlord turned him in to the police. The landlord soaked the gang's firearms in water before the sheriff arrived. Fleming and 14 of his men were taken to Dublin prison and hanged on April 24, 1650. Poems about Fleming were the basis for the ballad "Whiskey in the Jar."

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### **~ Grianan of Aileach**

Grianan of Aileach translates to Sun Temple of Aileach. It's one of Ireland's impressive circular stone hilltop enclosures and is believed to date back to 1700 BC. Located on top of Greenan Hill in County Donegal, it was built by the O'Neill dynasty who used it as a gathering place for clans to discuss important matters. This clan only reigned supreme between the 5th and 12th centuries. Grianan of Aileach is one of the sites indicated on Ptolemy's map which was produced in the 2nd century and is Ireland's oldest surviving map.

The original stone fort did not survive. It was destroyed by Murtagh O'Brien, the King of Munster, in 1101. In 1830, a church and a burial mound were identified. Restoration was begun in 1860 by a group from Derry called the Irelanders who would go to the site each Sunday and repair and rebuild the monument from 1874 to 1879 resulting in what we see today. The future of the 2500-year-old site is uncertain as walls are falling apart.

## ~ *Capital Punishment in Ireland*



Early Irish law discouraged capital punishment. Murder was usually punished by fine and killing the murderer was done only when the fine could not be paid. English law provided the model for Irish law after the Norman conquest of Ireland. A death sentence was mandated for any felony established by common law but extended by Acts of Parliament. Reforms passed in 1827 allowed for transportation and penal servitude for many capital crimes. In 1861, the law reduced the number of capital crimes from over 200 to murder, treason, and piracy. The last public hanging in Ireland took place in 1868 after which executions were confined behind prison walls.

The execution of the leaders of the Easter Rising in 1916 turned public sympathy in favor of the rebels. There were 24 rebels executed during the Irish War of Independence starting with Kevin Barry. Munster was under martial law and 13 were shot in Cork and 1 in Limerick. The "Forgotten Ten" were hanged in Mountjoy Prison which helped turn opinion against the Dublin administration. The Irish Republican Army would execute pro-unionist civilians for spying or collaborating with the British. The IRA members carried out assassinations and other murders. During the Irish Civil War, the military was authorized to impose death sentences on anti-treaty forces and the government executed 81 captured anti-treaty fighters by firing squad.

In the 1920s, executions were relatively common for murderers. During this period, 55 men and women were sentenced to death but received a reprieve; 42 were found guilty of murder and 13 were guilty of infanticide. The only woman executed was Annie Walsh who was found guilty of murdering her husband and she was hanged at the age of 31 in 1925. During World War II, increased IRA activity led to 6 executions. Harry Gleeson was hanged in 1941 for the murder of Moll McCarthy but was granted a posthumous pardon in 2015.

In 1954, Michael Manning, a 25-year-old man from Limerick, became the last person executed in Ireland. Capital punishment in Ireland was prohibited in 1990, having been abolished for most offenses including murder in 1964. Subsequent death sentences were commuted by the President to terms of imprisonment. A constitutional amendment passed in 2001 forbids the reintroduction of the death penalty.

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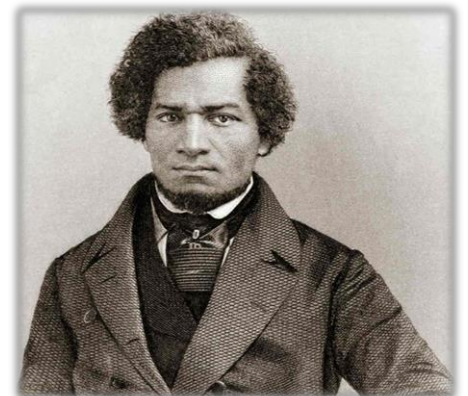
## ~ *Frederick Douglass – An Escaped Slave*

Frederick Douglass was advised to flee the US and to travel to Britain and Ireland to escape slavery. Douglass was the target of every slave catcher and slave owner. He had developed amazing influence among anti-slavery advocates. He became the voice of his fellow slaves. Douglass could bear witness to the evils of slavery. To avoid physical harm, Douglass went abroad crossing three thousand miles in twelve days. He is covered with the gray fog of Ireland, sits next to white men, dines at the same table, treated with kindness, and never told "We don't allow blacks in here."

Douglass would encounter Daniel O'Connor in Ireland. O'Connor was against slavery which was uncommon among political leaders at that time. Douglass met O'Connor when he made a speech in Dublin. O'Connor was an advocate for religious and civil liberty wherever tyranny exists in the world. The fire of freedom was burning in his heart. Douglass was introduced to O'Connor after his speech. He invited Douglass to speak and he was well received by the large crowd.

Douglass gave two lectures on slavery and then left for Wexford where two meetings were held. From there he would go to Waterford, Cork and then to Belfast which detained him in Ireland for a month. This tour allowed Douglass to sell his book "My Bondage and My Freedom."

The "Frederick Douglass in Ireland" exhibit is at Ireland's Great Hunger Institute and there is momentum to rename Cork street after Frederick Douglass.



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*Valentine's Day, also called Saint Valentine's Day or the Feast of Saint Valentine, is celebrated annually on February 14. It originated as a Western Christian feast day honoring one or two early Christian martyrs named Saint Valentine and is recognized as a significant cultural, religious, and commercial celebration of romance and love in many regions of the world.*

***St. Patrick Folklore***

There definitely was a St. Patrick. He was born in Britain as Maewyn Succat. Around 400 AD at the age of 16, he was kidnapped from his home on the west coast and taken to Ireland to become a slave who worked as a shepard. After 6 years, he escaped and returned home. In a dream he received his call to preach the Gospel. He spent the next 15 years in a monastery preparing for his work as a missionary. When he became a priest, his name changed to Patricius and eventually to Patrick. Although there were some Christians living in Ireland at the time, it was Patrick who spread Christianity throughout the land and organized the church into existence.

- ♣ The Irish wear a shamrock on St. Patrick's Day because legend says St. Patrick used the Shamrock to explain the Trinity.
- ♣ Blue was the color originally associated with St. Patrick, but green is now favored.
- ♣ It is probably not true that St. Patrick drove the snakes out of Ireland because snakes were not native to that country.
- ♣ St. Patrick's Day is the traditional day to plant peas and cabbage. To make them grow well, you needed to plant them while wearing your nightclothes.
- ♣ Irish New Years tradition calls for enjoying a pastry called bannocks.







## . . . . News of Interest

- ♣ Archaeologists uncovered the remains of a Viking child during an excavation near Dublin Castle. They also uncovered Ireland's oldest prison cells.
- ♣ Prime Minister Michael Martin plans to visit the White House on St. Patrick's Day. The visit is very significant to Ireland.
- ♣ Bradley Edwards has been found guilty of the murder of an Irish woman, Ciara Glennon, in 1997 in Perth, Australia. He was also guilty of murdering Jane Rimmer in the same area.
- ♣ Mick Mulvaney, US Envoy, visited London and met with Members of Parliament and discussed the UK's departure from the European Union. He visited the Belfast and Dublin governments to discuss U.S. policy. He has not been able to travel since March 2020 because of the pandemic.
- ♣ The Belfast International Homecoming was held in October 2020. The purpose was to welcome back Belfast's global family to discuss how to build a better Belfast.
- ♣ Donegal Airport has been voted the most scenic airport in the world. It is located at Carrickfinn.
- ♣ Conal Fagan from County Derry has served as Notre Dame's Leprechaun mascot since 2018. He is the first Irish born leprechaun at the school.
- ♣ Dunkin Donuts became available in Ireland in September 2020. The store now has 137 locations in Europe.
- ♣ Bruce Springsteen has Irish roots. His ancestor Christy Gerrity was from Rathangan. He married Catherine Kelly in 1827. They had eight children. The family emigrated to New Jersey in 1853.
- ♣ The Irish Famine Museum has launched "The National Famine Way." It's located in Strokestown Park, County Roscommon. Visitors may get a passport which allows them to check off 27 landmarks they have visited. The interactive trail follows the route that famine emigrants took; they walked from Strokestown to Dublin in 1847 where they boarded coffin ships.
- ♣ Archaeologists in Ireland made a major discovery revealing a 5,500-year-old megalithic passage tomb cemetery. Two burial chambers were covered by a cap stone which is 131 feet in diameter. The new find is believed to be 500 years older than Newgrange.
- ♣ Pierce Brosnan is set to star in "The Last Rifleman" which is based on the true story of a WWII veteran. The story is about Bernard Jordan who at the age of 89 escaped from a care home, took a bus, boarded a ferry to France and made his way to Normandy for the 70th anniversary of D-Day. Brosnan is a native of Drogheda, Ireland.
- ♣ The iconic Shamrock Shake from McDonalds celebrates 51 years in 2021. Sales of the Shamrock Shake helped build the first Ronald McDonald House.
- ♣ The five largest cities in Ireland are Dublin with a population of 1.1 million, Cork has 200,000, Limerick has 91,000, Galway has 77,000 and Waterford has 50,000.
- ♣ "Blood" is an Irish hit drama deemed a "must see." It is a twisty drama that critics are raving about which is now available on Blue-Ray and DVD.
- ♣ The Irish Catholic Church will now allow weddings on Sunday. Outdoor weddings will also be permitted. There is a backlog of weddings because of the pandemic.
- ♣ Joe Biden's ancestors emigrated from counties Mayo and Louth in the 1800s.
- ♣ Ireland holds the #6 spot for beer consumption in the world.



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

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**March 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 March newsletter to Harry McCarthy at [himac98@charter.net](mailto:himac98@charter.net) or mail to 2656 Mica Rd., Fitchburg, WI 53711 by February 20, 2021.

### Classic Irish Books to Read During the Pandemic

**"Judith Hearne"** (1955) by Brian Moore-A sympathetic woman destroyed by herself

**"The Last September"** (1929) by Elizabeth Bowen-Portrait of a young woman coming of age at end of British rule

**"Tristram Shandy"** (1760) by Lawrence Sterne Comic-Account of the life of Tristram Shandy

**"How Many Miles to Babylon?"** (1974) by Jennifer Johnston-Story of friendship of two Wicklow boys during WWI



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