



# Dane County Shamrock Club, Inc. Newsletter

Volume 18, Issue 3  
September 2020

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### ~ Message from the President by Ryan Dunn

**Hello and welcome to fall,**

**As I type this**, it's closing in on 90 degrees and it is STICKY. This is not the late Wisconsin summer weather I look forward to this time of year. But it hasn't really been the typical, idyllic Wisconsin summer either. When we lived in Florida we'd always come up for Irish Fest in August when the weather here was gorgeous. Coming out of the August swelter of Florida it was such a relief. Now we're in Wisconsin and visit Florida in January or February and to get out of the cold...what I need to do is visit Florida in the summer again to make me realize how good I have it here weather-wise.

**I do hope** this finds everyone doing well though, keeping your wits about you and making the best out of the current situation we are in. Seems most people have found at least something to do to resemble some type of normalcy.

**With that said**, we are also hoping to do something normal as well – **CELEBRATE OUR IRISH HERITAGE!!** As of now we are **TENTATIVELY** planning a “Half-Way to St. Patrick’s Day” celebration on Thursday, September 17<sup>th</sup> at 7.00 pm at Erin’s Snug Irish Pub, 4601 American Pkwy, Madison, near Sun Prairie. Again, this is a tentative plan, but we will confirm either way a week or so beforehand. Erin’s Snug has outside seating though and I think we can make the most of it. Joe Herr has already agreed to be our leprechaun for the event, so we have that going for us...

**As we are** still in the midst of a hundred years’ celebration of Irish Independence and the Anglo-Irish

War, we’re already in talks about how to commemorate the event but we will have more information on it in the future as we don’t plan to actually hold an event until next year.

**Special thanks** to Lauren Klink and Joan Bernstein for their “Get to Know a Member” contributions to this month’s newsletter, as well as some photos. Their questions/answers are in this month’s newsletter. I’ll be emailing others along the way, please keep an eye on your email box!

**We’ve had a couple** other submissions for our newsletter as well so **THANK YOU** for those contributions. As always, if you’re interested in adding to the newsletter, please get in touch with me or Pat and Harry McCarthy, our newsletter editors.

**We are still checking** out other online entertainment options for us to be involved in. There has been some talk of enlisting an Irish storyteller, so please, stay tuned for more information on that, hopefully we can make that happen and hopefully everyone can join!

**In closing**, please continue to stay safe and sane during these times. Remember to do your part in helping EVERYONE get through this in as safe a manner as possible.

*Sláinte!*  
Ryan



. . . . .

~ *What's in a Name?*

**Griffin**



The surname Griffin means peaceful. The name was originated in Wales. They came to Ireland with Strongbow in the 12th century. The source of the name is a legendary monster, the gryphon, and is used for someone who is fierce or dangerous. They originally settled in County Clare and their stronghold was in Ballygriffy near Ennis. They were forced southward into Counties Kerry, Cork and Limerick. Their stronghold became centered at Ballygriffin, County Kerry. Strongbow awarded the families large tracts of land in the Province of Munster after the original Norman invasion. Griffin has become a common Irish surname.



~ **Anthony Raftery, March 30, 1779 to December 25, 1835** *By Bill Raftery, Club Member*

Born and raised in County Mayo, he was the survivor of nine siblings dead of smallpox which left him blind. He lived by playing his fiddle and performing songs and creating poems on demand in whoever's abode who would have him. As a young adult, he left County Mayo for reasons unsure today. One "story" was a falling out with his patron, Frank Taffe, whose mother may have taught Anthony to play the violin.

Thereafter, his life was spent wandering through County Galway entertaining those who would accept him with song and verse. Often his poems would include references to his host. His work on occasion could be humorous and cynical simultaneously. If annoyed, it could be caustic. To appreciate a reading of his work, the reader should imagine the scene of a dim interior of a thatched roof cottage with a peat fire on the hearth. His audience local peasant folk gathered for some special occasion; a saints day, or remembrance of '98, with poitin or even legal spirits in abundance.

None of Anthony's poems were written, but descended orally by those who were taken with them. They were discovered by Douglas Hyde, who on a hunting foray heard "an old man singing sweetly to himself" Contae Mhaigh Eo, (County Mayo). He had the man teach him the song and with others thus collected, published "The Songs and Poems of Raftery" in 1903 at his own expense. Hyde became scholar of the Irish language, diplomat and first President of Ireland.

Anthony's works are extensive and most are rather too long to be included here in this mere introduction to him and his work, but I include one of his most quoted short poems here;



*Antoine Ó Raifteirí (also  
Antoine Ó Reachtabhra,  
Anthony Raftery)*

I'm the Poet Raftery,  
A man of hope and love,  
There's no light in these eyes,  
My peace is undisturbed.

As I wander on my way,  
By my heart's light I go,  
I'm worn out and weary,  
At the end of each road.

Consider me now,  
With my face to the wall,  
Playing music for pockets,  
That hold nothing at all.

Perhaps more of Raftery's poems, and those of W. B. Yeats, may be included here in the future, for these works and those of Synge, and others, are the treasure of Irish culture.

Author's comment; I find the English versions of Anthony's works interesting in the stories, but the rhyme, meter and lyricism may be lost in the translation. Oh, for someone to sing his work!





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**Our Members with September Birthdays**

- 1 Mary Lou Feller
- 8 Gus Nemoir
- 16 Oscar Ryan
- 21 Carol Ann Brunet
- 23 QB Klink
- 27 Susan Morrison

## ~ A WEE BIT OF IRISH HISTORY



### ~ Notre Dame Nickname

Everyone knows the Notre Dame nickname is the "Fighting Irish." There is now a movement requesting a name change. The school has defended the nickname and the leprechaun mascot amid calls to abandon them.

Over the years they had nicknames of the "Rovers" and the "Ramblers." Later, Notre Dame was called the "Terriers" and had an Irish Terrier as a mascot. Lou Holtz, former football coach, defended the team's nickname and leprechaun logo. He claims "Fighting Irish" dates back to 1924. The Ku Klux Klan was known for attacking Catholic vents. Irish college students joined together to disrupt a KKK meeting. The KKK wanted to show its power by holding a picnic and parade in South Bend, the most Catholic area of Indiana. Around 500 students stormed the meeting and ripped off Klan members hoods and robes. They stopped arriving members and forced them away from the meeting. This is where the name came from and argue that the school should retain the name and logo and deny that they are racist or offensive.

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~ **Carthy's Islands** are not remote but are inhospitable. They are midway between Castle Island and the Calf islands in Long Island Bay in West Cork or between Schull and Baltimore. They form part of a broken line which once formed a peninsula until the sea rose after the last Ice Age flooding the low-lying areas.

Carthy's Islands is a mini archipelago in its own right. The main island to the west is Carthy's Island which is a mere 150 meters in length and 100 meters wide. It has a reasonable elevation of 14 meters in height. To the East is a long high inhospitable reef which is split in two. There are several smaller craggy reefs. Dangerous currents rip between these islets. Strong winds and bad weather may attack the islands.

There is no sign of human habitation on the islands. There is evidence of sheep grazing on the main island. There is soil enough to grow crops. There are records indicating that Daniel Leahy rented seven acres from Richard Marmion between 1847 and 1864. It is probable they did not live on the islands. There are no records of archaeology sites on the islands. There are no wedge tombs or standing stones. The islands were named for the local Carthy clan.

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### ~ Sheemore Ambush



On March 4, 1921 as people left church in Gowel on First Friday. They were met by three trucks carrying Royal Irish Constabulary members. The men were lined up and searched but nothing was found and there were no arrests. The church had been identified as a place where IRA volunteers often attended. Father Edward O'Reilly was friendly to the volunteers. After the church was searched, the police left in the trucks.

About two miles down the road, on the slopes of Sheemore, IRA volunteers awaited the trucks. They had received advance word and took up positions on an 80-foot-high rock face. The IRA opened fire on the convoy. The members of the convoy tried to take positions, but the police ran, and the soldiers crouched behind a low wall. After a gunfight, the IRA withdrew but the British did not follow them. They gathered up their casualties and returned to their base at Carrick-on-Shannon. The IRA had no casualties and the British had seven casualties.

The IRA volunteers were from the County Leitrim Brigade. The Black and Tans later undertook reprisals in Carrick-on-Shannon including Temperance Hall in Gowel. IRA Memorial was erected at Sheemore, County Leitrim.

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### ~ Black & Tans



The Black & Tans arrived in Ireland for the first time in March 1920. They were a force of Temporary Constables recruited to assist the Royal Irish Constabulary in maintaining control over the IRA during the Irish War of Independence (1920-1921). They were British ex-soldiers who became a murderous militia released from jails. They were an elite force intended to take the battle to the IRA.

The Black & Tans were ordered to Ireland in 1920 by Winston Churchill. Many books have been written about the Black & Tans and the atrocities committed by the group, The Ulster Special Constabulary were even worse than the Black & Tans when it came to murder and mayhem.

## ~ *Get to Know a Member*

As Ryan mentions in his article, this is a new column for us to get to know one another better. A series of questions was sent to randomly, selected members and their responses are summarized below. Thank you, Joan and Lauren!

### ~ *Joan Bernstein*

I have been member of the DCSC since 2016. My maternal grandmother, Mary Brady, was 100% Irish. Unfortunately, I never had the pleasure of meeting her as she died when my mother was 9. Mary's parents (my great-grandparents) were Patrick Brady and Mary McPhillips and resided in County Cavan.

In my spare time I enjoy traveling, hiking, golfing, boating, reading, happy hours, listening to music, Badger football and basketball games, and spending time with family and friends.



I had the amazing experience of visiting Ireland in 2016. My son, Jeff, and I went on a small tour which included stops in Dublin, Galway, Killarney, and Cork. It was the 100-year anniversary of the Easter Rising so it was especially informative. In the photo, you'll see me hiking the Cliffs of Moher, which was my favorite experience of the tour.

I have seen the movies, Michael Collins and The Wind That Shakes the Barley. During Covid, I was introduced to the Netflix series Derry Girls which has been a fun diversion.

Jeff has exposed me to a lot of Irish music and history, particularly of the Easter Rising and The Troubles. I also learned a lot about James Joyce and his inspiration for his short story, The Dead, when we were in Galway. I'm looking forward to visiting Ireland again in the not-too-distant future!



### ~ *Lauren Klink*

I have been a member of the DCSC for 2 years. My dad's mother (my grandmother) was English and Irish. Her name was Gertrude Connor. I'm unsure of their original location, but I do know they immigrated through Ellis Island and settled in New York City. I have heard that the Connor's were pretty scrappy during their time in the Big Apple before heading out "West" to Wisconsin.

I'm sure that the people with toddlers are chuckling at this question "What do you do in your spare time". (I have a 4 year old). Okay, if I had spare time, you'd find me enjoying some frosty beverages with friends and family hopefully by a pool. I also enjoy a morning run out on the country roads by my house.

I have not been to Ireland (hopefully someday). However, I have travelled quite a bit abroad: England, France, Australia, Jamaica, and the Cayman Islands. I was lucky enough to spend 3 months in both England and Australia. Domestically, my family moved around quite a bit and I have actually lived in 7 states!

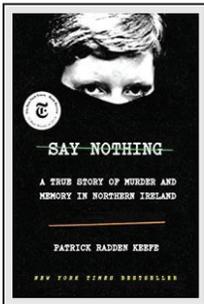


Although I don't have a picture of Ireland to share, I do have a picture of my son who is Irish through both me and his dad.

In America is by far my favorite Irish movie which is a semi-biographical movie about the director who moved to New York from Ireland in 2002. I enjoyed it because it was a new story of Irish immigration which helped show how some things changed and some things remained the same from the times in which our distant relatives immigrated to the United States.

Although I'm not a golfer, I think golf is really interesting for the country of Ireland. For a country of its size, it has a lot of golf courses (over 400 if you include the 9-hole courses).

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**~ Book Review - Say Nothing, A True Story of Murder and Memory in Northern Ireland by Patrick Radden Keefe, Doubleday, NY 2019**

*Reviewed by Stephanie Lowden, Club Member*

“Jean McConville was thirty-eight when she disappeared...” and so begins a story so complex and riveting that I could not put it down until the last page was read. This is a true story that reads like a murder mystery. It is a story of 1970’s Belfast, of Delours and Marian Price, idealistic young women who believed in peaceful protest until they and their fellow marchers were brutally ambushed. It’s a story of Brendan Hughes and Gerry Adams and many others whose names are less familiar. Jean’s story would not be so unusual if she were a man. Lots of people disappeared during the “Troubles” but most of them were men. Jean was a widow, raising ten children. And most people knew who was responsible for her murder, but none would come forward. This is a story of good and evil and the blurry line that separates them.

Keefe does a superb job of weaving the history of the “Troubles” with the murder of an otherwise ordinary woman. A woman just trying to raise her children amidst the mayhem of competing factions and the terrible violence they created for people trying to survive from day to day.

*Say Nothing* takes the reader from Belfast, Northern Ireland to Boston, Massachusetts and a history project in which “soldiers” of the NRA told tales they thought would remain secret until their deaths. But that was not to be. And that’s another story within the story.

Pick up this book. It reads like the best of novels. But it’s all true.



**~ In Memoriam**

**~ Member News ~**

John "Jack" Murphy, age 88, passed away on August 18, 2020. Jack was a long-time member of the Shamrock Club.



He was born in Mount Horeb. Following the Korean Conflict, he returned to the UW Madison and graduated with a law degree in 1959. He married Dorothea Ives in 1959. He was the City Attorney for Superior and Fond du Lac. He moved his family to Madison in 1968 when he became the Assistant Attorney General for the Wisconsin Justice Dept. He is survived by his wife and six children. His funeral was held on August 22 at Our Lady Queen of Peace Church. The Shamrock Club made a donation to Luke House in Jack’s memory. Our condolences to his family.



## . . . . News of Interest

- ♣ General Cornwallis returned to England after his surrender to Washington and was appointed Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. He was in charge of the trial of Wolfe Tone without regard for legal procedures or precedents so the only outcome would be Wolfe Tone's execution.
- ♣ The Deerfield Residence has been the official home to the US Ambassador in Ireland since 1927 and is located in Phoenix Park, Dublin.
- ♣ A gathering is planned for the O'Neill Clan members in 2021 to take place in O'Neill, Nebraska. O'Neill was a civil war general and the founder of the town.
- ♣ Noah Donohoe was a 14-year-old teenager from South Belfast who went missing on June 21. He was last seen riding his bike on Queen Street in Belfast.
- ♣ The first known map of Ireland dates back to 140 AD. A famous Greek cartographer named Ptolemy created the map which is extremely accurate. He lived from 87 to 150 AD. It is believed that St. Brendan used his maps on his journeys.
- ♣ The Protestant Orange Order was forced to cancel their July 12 marches because of the pandemic.
- ♣ Plans are being considered for a high-speed train route connecting Dublin and Paris via a ferry between Cork and Brest. The estimated cost would be \$1.24 trillion. People could get from Dublin to Cork in 1 hour 10 minutes.
- ♣ Hazel Chu was elected the 352nd mayor of Dublin. She is only the 9th woman and the 1st person of color to hold the position. Chu's parents emigrated from Hong Kong in 1970 and Chu was born in Dublin.
- ♣ The Irish book of the month for July was "Jump" by Daniella Moyles. "Jump" debuted at #2 on the best sellers list.
- ♣ Major renovation plans are set for the Cliffs of Moher. The multi-million-dollar project will include a tunnel for pedestrians, improvements to the visitor center, parking, Cliff Walk and others.
- ♣ Millions of Irish birth, death and marriage records are available online.
- ♣ Guinness has issued a program "Raising the Bar" in which they will use \$100 million to support major hospitality hubs around the world.
- ♣ Matt Damon congratulated the Dalkey school graduates and has been in Dalkey since the lockdown on March 27.
- ♣ Notre Dame v Navy football game scheduled to played in Dublin on August 29 has been canceled. The Universities of Illinois and Nebraska are scheduled to play in Dublin on August 28, 2021.
- ♣ Friends of Sinn Fein is the fundraising arm of the political party. It raised \$294,000 between November 2019 and April 2020. The annual dinner was held in Manhattan.
- ♣ Drombeg Stone Circle is also known as Druid's Altar. It is located near Skibberean in County Cork. The word Drombeg means "small ridge." It is one of the most visited sites in Ireland.
- ♣ A swarm of flying ants was detected on radar moving over Ireland. This usually takes place on warm, humid, windless days. The flying ant season lasts until the end of August.
- ♣ The Wishing Chair Foundation supports American students studying in Ireland. It takes its name from a scenic spot in County Donegal.
- ♣ A circus elephant named Cindy visited Castlerea, County Roscommon in 1953. Cindy died in Athenry in 1972. Castlerea offered a gravesite. The grave was marked with a stone in 2014.



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

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FACEBOOK	Ryan Dunn & DeeAnn Martin	See above	<a href="#">See above</a>

**October 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 October newsletter to Harry McCarthy at [himac98@charter.net](mailto:himac98@charter.net) or mail to 2656 Mica Rd., Fitchburg, WI 53711 by Sept. 20, 2020. Thank you.

### Calendar of Events

- September 17** Half-way to St Patrick's Day Party, TENTATIVE, 7.00 pm at Erin's Snug Irish Pub, 4601 American Pkwy, Madison
- October 21** Board Meeting, 7:00 p.m., via Zoom



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