



# Dane County Shamrock Club, Inc. Newsletter

Volume 18, Issue 6  
December 2020

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~ **Message from the President** by Ryan Dunn

### **Happy Holiday Time!**

Nothing quite like the week of Thanksgiving to *really* set the stage and get in the holiday spirit. While The Dunn Family are staunch advocates of NO Christmas décor until after Thanksgiving, I must say, it's been nice to drive around and see a sprinkling of lights and blow-up Santas and what not. To each his own, but especially during times like these, whatever it takes to bring a little smile to your face is certainly a good thing.

Unfortunately, as most everyone knows, there won't be a Christmas Party this year. With that said, we have sent out renewal forms so if you have not sent yours in yet, please do so! I'd like to say we have some exciting events planned for 2021, but...who knows? (I mean, we do, but if the plans actually come to fruition...that's the real crux of the matter). We're also happy to accept registrations and payments on our website, too.

As I was not able to put too much into last month's newsletter, I can use this time to let everyone know Natalie and I welcomed our daughter Violet into the world on Monday, October 26<sup>th</sup>. She came in at a whopping 9.2 pounds, almost 2 pounds heavier than her brother. Speaking of, Patrick is in love with his baby sister and likes giving her lots of kisses and hugs and certainly seems to enjoy petting her head (sometimes to the chagrin of mom & dad). All is well with mom and baby though and we're very fortunate to have the assistance and support of family and friends.

In club news, we are in the need to fill a few positions, so if you are interested in stepping up, please let us know as quickly as you can.

Dee Martin has been our secretary for a few years but will be stepping down at the end of 2020. Jeff Bernstein has led our membership drive and chaired that area with zest for the last couple years but is headed out west after he graduates in a few weeks. And we're still in need of a Sunshine Chair.

I hope people have been able to get their fair share of online Irish culture though. One of the great things about our current situation is the numerous ways people have adapted to the isolation, and one way has been the plethora of online concerts (of really any genre of music).

Lastly, as we have just celebrated the season of thanks, and are now entering our season of giving, PLEASE keep in mind we are so, so much closer to one another than any political differences there may be. Like John McCain said: "Our shared values define us more than our differences. And acknowledging those shared values can see us through our challenges today if we have the wisdom to trust in them again."

Please continue to stay safe, smart...yet have a little fun as well; we're Irish after all.

**Best,**  
**Ryan**





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

Smith is the fifth most common surname in Ireland. It is an occupational name referring to anyone who works with metal. The name first appears in Ireland in County Cavan. They were originally McGowan. The name was changed to appear more English. Smith was already a common name in England by 1500 and many who immigrated to Ireland brought the name with them. In 1890, more than half of the Smiths of Ireland were in Ulster. The surname is especially common in Antrim, Cavan and Dublin.

- **Edward Smyth** (1662-1720) was chaplain to William of Orange and Bishop of Down.
- **Charles Smith** (1715-1756) was an Irish topographer and author of county histories.
- **James Smith** emigrated to Pennsylvania, practiced law and signed the Declaration of Independence.
- **John Smithwick** (1660-?) founded Smithwick brewery.
- **Michelle Smith** (1969) is an Olympic swimmer winning four gold medals at the 1996 Olympics in Atlanta becoming the first Irish athlete to win an Olympic gold medal.



## ~ *John Hume, Peacemaker*



John Hume died on August 3, 2020. Hume was born in Derry in 1937. He was an Northern Ireland politician who was a founding member and leader of the Social Democratic & Labor Party from 1971 to 2001. He served as a member of the European Parliament, the UK Parliament and the Northern Ireland Assembly. He was the recipient of the 1998 Nobel Peace Prize.

Hume is regarded as one of the most important figures in recent political history of Ireland. He was one of the architects of the Northern Ireland Peace Process. He was named "**Ireland's Greatest**" in a public poll in 2010. Pope Benedict XVI named Hume a Knight Commander of the Papal Order. His great grandfather was an immigrant from Scotland into County Donegal. Hume was a prominent figure in the Derry Citizens Action Committee which aimed to improve the situation in Derry for everyone and maintain a peaceful stance by preventing violence during marches or sitdowns. He became the youngest leader of the Irish League of Credit Unions.

While a member of the UK Parliament, he protested the internment of hundreds of suspected Irish Republicans without trial. He challenged the Special Powers Act. Hume was involved in secret talks with the British government, Sinn Fein which led to an agreement in 1985. The talks continued and led to the IRA ceasefire in 1994. He helped broker the Good Friday Agreement. Hume retired from politics in 2004. In his final years, Hume suffered from dementia and died in a nursing home in Derry at the age of 83. There is a mural in Derry's Bogside commemorating Nobel Peace Prize winners John Hume, Martin Luther King, Mother Teresa and Nelson Mandela. John Hume's role in the Irish Peace Process will never be forgotten.



## ~ *Sinsinawa Mound*



In 1842, Father Samuel Mazzuchelli purchased 800 acres in southwest Wisconsin. He built a log church one mile south of Sinsinawa Mound to serve the Irish settlers who came to the area as miners and farmers. After 40 years, the parish had grown to 75 families. A bigger church was needed and the large Irish community favored building a new church at Sinsinawa Mound but the church was built on the prairie and named after St. Joseph. Pope John Paul II declared Father Mazzuchelli the Venerable.

The Mound Complex houses retired Nuns and is open to retreats and conferences. It contains a chapel, gift shop and a bakery. A try of their pies, breads and other baked goods is a must. The Complex has continued to expand as more women joined the congregation.



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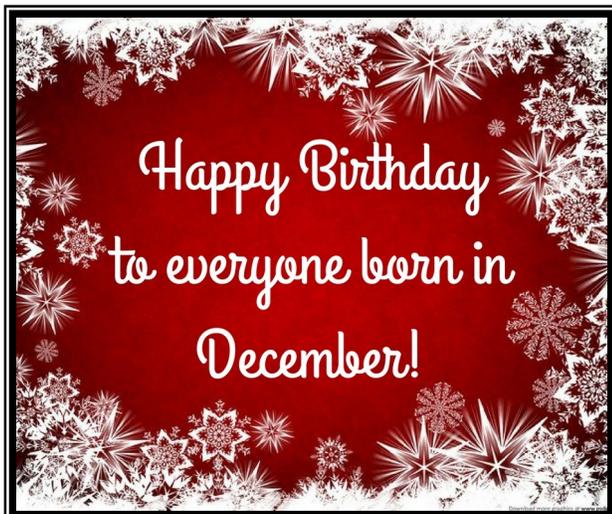
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- 2 Jan Ogden
- 10 Larry Lowden
- 18 Jeff Bernstein
- 26 Nancy O'Brien
- 30 Dr. Shannon O'Mahar

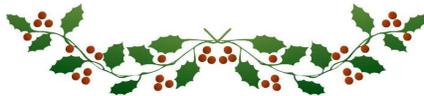
## ~ A WEE BIT OF IRISH HISTORY

### ~ Ballina Claims Victory

Ten of Joe Biden's great grandparents were born in Ireland. Edward Blewitt provided Biden's connection to Ballina, County Mayo, a town of about 10,000 residents in the west of Ireland. A mural of Biden was created by local artists. He has many distant relatives in the town. Ballina is located in a beautiful part of Ireland with lakes, mountains and forests in the surrounding area. James Finnegan, Biden's great grandfather, arrived in New York in 1850 from Carlingford.

The Carlingford community hosted Joe Biden in 2016. Ireland's prime minister, Michael Martin was one of the first world leaders to congratulate Biden on his victory. Ballina is twinned with Scranton, Pennsylvania which is home of the first woman president of Ireland, Mary Robinson who was elected 30 years ago.

Ballina celebrated the Biden victory with balloons and American flags, they held a "Ride for Biden" with cars traveling through town, passing the Cathedral, crossing the bridges over the River Moy and finishing in front of the Biden mural in the town square.



**Mussenden Temple** is a small circular building located on the cliffs near Castlerock, County Derry, high above the Atlantic Ocean on the northwestern coast of Northern Ireland. It is perched on the cliffs overlooking Downhill Strand. Erosion has brought it closer to the edge. It was built in 1785 as a library and modelled after the Temple of Vesta in Rome. The National Trust attempted to stabilize the cliff to prevent the loss of the Temple.

The walls of the Temple were lined with bookcases. A fire was kept burning constantly in the basement, which prevented the books from becoming damp. The work was performed by Michael

Shanahan and it provided employment for the poor of the district. The National Trust property encompasses the Mussenden Temple and Downhill Castle. In 2007, the Temple obtained a license to hold civil weddings.



### ~ Escape from Maze Prison

The Maze Prison escape occurred on September 25, 1983. The Maze Prison is located in County Antrim, Northern Ireland and was also known as "Long Kesh" and was a maximum-security prison and was considered to be one of the most secure prisons in Europe. It held prisoners convicted of armed paramilitary activities during the Troubles. In the biggest escape in UK history, thirty-eight IRA prisoners escaped from Block 7 of the prison. In addition to a 15-foot-high fence, each Block was encompassed by an 18-foot-high concrete wall topped with barbed wire and all gates were made of solid steel and were electronically operated. Six handguns had been smuggled into the prison. By 2:30, the prisoners had taken control of the Block by taking prison officers hostage at gunpoint and preventing them from sounding the alarm. The hostages were forced to give up their uniforms and car keys. At 3:30 a truck arrived delivering supplies. Thirty-seven prisoners climbed into the back of the truck and one lay on the floor of the cab pointing a gun at the driver. They were able to open the main gate and it was closed after thirty-five breached the perimeter. Twenty prison officers were injured during the escape, thirteen were beaten, four stabbed, and one died of a heart attack.

The escape was a propaganda coup and morale boost of the IRA who referred to it as the "Great Escape." In 1984, nineteen prisoners appeared in court on charges relating to the death of prison officer and sixteen were charged with his murder. All sixteen were acquitted because the judge could not connect the stabbing with the heart attack. All were captured and returned to prison except for twelve who are still on the run. The prison break was dramatized in 2017 in the movie "Maze".



## ~ *Ryan's Whiskey Corner*

Hello and welcome to my “Whiskey Corner.” I’d like to use this space to talk about what I’ve been sipping on lately, call it recommendations or maybe what I wouldn’t necessarily order or buy again, but just a little column to let you into my basement bar.

This month’s addition is “*The Quiet Man*,” an 8-year-old Single Malt Irish Whiskey, made in Derry. For starters, when I’m looking for a new, Irish whiskey to sample, I’m looking for something of good/great quality which isn’t going to cost a lot. What do I mean by “a lot?” I would generally characterize anything over \$50 as a lot, but there are times when I am willing to spend a lot on something of high quality. But in this case, *The Quiet Man* was around \$35 at Total Wine.

On to the whiskey, it is matured in an oak bourbon cask and specifically “recasked and finished in first-fill bourbon barrels (for an unmistakable Irish Flavor).” Is it unmistakable? Well sure, I suppose in so far as Irish Whiskeys taste GENERALLY alike. The Quiet Man also makes a Blended Irish Whiskey which I have not tasted but costs less than the 8-year-old.

### “*An Fear Ciuin*”

The story of *The Quiet Man* (An Fear Ciuin in Gaelic, pronounced: On Fee-ar Q-in) is one of a boy whose father tended bars for over 50 years in Belfast and at times would take his son with him. The son, Ciaran Mulgrew, remembers the time fondly, recalling the laughter, craic and distinct, pleasant aromas associated with the pubs. He got older, made a whiskey and called it An Fear Ciuin after his father.

I prefer to drink my whiskey, or basically any kind of decent, hard liquor, with one big ice cube. The website ([www.thequietmanirishwhiskey.com](http://www.thequietmanirishwhiskey.com)) describes its palate as tasting a hint of honey, warm vanilla and spicy oak with a very smooth finish. Overall, I would agree with this assessment.

Would I recommend it? Absolutely! I wouldn’t necessarily say it’s vastly different from other Irish whiskeys of the same ilk (upper-tier Jameson varieties) but it’s good and pairs nicely with a cigar (just kidding, I have no idea as I don’t smoke, but I’m sure it does!). To be fair, you won’t find a lot of whiskeys I wouldn’t recommend as taste is obviously very subjective, but this is good and I would say I will most likely purchase another bottle of it in the future.

### *Slainte, Ryan*



### *Best Irish Films*

#### **2019**

*Black 47*  
*Float Like a Butterfly*  
*Rosie*  
*The Dig*  
*The Hole in the Ground*

#### **2020**

*A Bump Along the Way*  
*Arracht*  
*Calm with Horses*  
*Extra Ordinary*  
*Ordinary Love*

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**~ St Nicholas**

Saint Nicholas Day is celebrated on December 6 and December 19 in Eastern Christian countries. St. Nicholas lived during the 4th century and was Bishop of Lycia, Turkey. He was canonized soon after his death in 346 AD and was buried in Myra, Turkey. In 1169, his remains were moved to Italy. The church of St. Nicholas was built at Jerpoint, County Kilkenny by distant relatives. According to historians, the remains of St. Nicholas were brought to Ireland by two Irish crusaders and buried at Jerpoint.

St. Nicholas was known for his good deeds and generosity. He gave anonymous gifts to the poor. The Santa Claus legend grew up around him in western European countries.



***In Memoriam***



**Joseph N. Herr** of Hartford, WI passed away at the age of 82 on October 31, 2020. He is survived by his son, Joe Herr (Lauren) who is a club member and many other family members. Joe is known as Madison's Leprechaun and was the club's Irish Person of the Year for 2019. A private funeral mass was held on November 4.

In lieu of flowers the family asked for donations to be given to Logan's Heart and Smiles Foundation ([www.logansheartandsmiles.org](http://www.logansheartandsmiles.org)).

*Our thoughts and prayers are with the Herr family.*



## News of Interest

- ♣ Cork has closed the main streets in the shopping area to vehicles and opened them to outdoor dining due to the pandemic. This is now a pedestrian only area which is full of restaurants and maintains social distancing.
- ♣ "The Shadow of Violence" is the story of a hired gun who has to decide where his loyalties lie. The movie was filmed in western Ireland and is based on the short story "Young Skins."
- ♣ The Irish Great Hunger Memorial is just north of Battery Park in Manhattan. The memorial has an engraved stone from each of Ireland's 32 counties which were part of a gift from President Mary McAleese. The stone cottage in the memorial was originally built in the 1820s on the west coast of Ireland. The cottage was shipped to New York and reconstructed.
- ♣ The world's highest remote Irish pub is located 3,450 feet above sea level in Namche, Nepal (the Gateway to Mount Everest). The pub opened in 2011.
- ♣ Guinness contains relatively high levels of iron and antioxidants and its lower calorie and alcohol content makes it a healthier choice than alternatives.
- ♣ Ireland used to offer a pint of Guinness to blood donors. The practice ended in 2009.
- ♣ Staff at Spike Island Prison in Cork Harbor uncovered a 230-year-old staircase which was built in 1790. They also discovered a tunnel which runs beneath the walls. It was blocked by new construction which began in 1804. Spike Island housed more than 2,000 prisoners at a time and was a depot for convicts headed for Australia. It was closed as a prison in 2004 and opened as a tourist site in 2015.
- ♣ The distinctive Gaelic prefix "O" or "Mac" which preceded names dates from the 10th century. The prefix "O" signifies "grandson of or "descendant" and "Mac" signifies "son of." The prefixes often tended to be discarded beginning in the 17th century because it was a time of religious and cultural persecution and renewed colonization by England.
- ♣ Ireland was cut off from Britain by the rising sea level around the year 6000 BC.
- ♣ Knockdrin Castle in Mullingar, County Westmeath is for sale for \$5 million. The castle was built in 1810 by Richard Levinge (1745-1848). The estate contains 500 acres.
- ♣ Andrew Mooney who studies at Trinity College received a congratulatory message from Taylor Swift upon receiving his PhD degree.
- ♣ Claudia Morris, a resident of Colorado, donated a water tank and trailer to the Navajo Nation. Morris has roots in counties Galway and Mayo. Her ancestor immigrated in 1848 from Claremorris, County Mayo. The Navajo Nation has the highest coronavirus rate in the US.
- ♣ The ancient Irish myth of King Lir, his four children and his wife Aoife form the basis of the classic ballet "Swan Lake."
- ♣ Northern Ireland was created in May 1921 when the partition of the island took place. Plans for the centenary celebration are underway.
- ♣ The Guinness Whopper will be available to Burger King customers in South Korea for a limited time. The alcohol content has been removed but the Guinness taste remains.
- ♣ The filming of the Viking epic "The Northmen" has begun. It stars Nicole Kidman and William Defoe. Ireland's north coast has been chosen to replicate the Icelandic landscape.
- ♣ Current weather conditions in Ireland are favorable for the spread of Potato Blight.



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

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

**January 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 January newsletter to Harry McCarthy at [himac98@charter.net](mailto:himac98@charter.net) or mail to 2656 Mica Rd., Fitchburg, WI 53711 by December 18, 2020. Thank you.

### Classic Irish Books to Read During the Pandemic

**"The Third Policeman"** (1967) by Flann O'Brien-It remained unpublished until his death in 1966 and then found a large cult following.

**"The Book of Evidence"** (1988) by John Banville-Drifter murders servant girl while attempting to steal a painting.

**"The Butcher Boy"** (1992) by Patrick McCabe - A schoolboy retreats into a violent fantasy.

**"Stumpet City"** (1969) by James Plunkett - Historical novel set in Dublin between 1907 and 1914.



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