



Oct. 2004

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Of Heroes, Hurleys and Hounds

As a young boy, Setanta was given over to the care and training of his uncle, King Conor MacNessa of Ulster. He was seven, ten, or another age of relative tenderness when he went out to play a game of hurling with the older boys. His skillful playing soon drew the attention of the warriors of the Red Branch of Ulster, as he outplayed all others on the pitch that afternoon. However, as the gates of Emain Macha were locked, and the dogs were set loose to patrol the night, Setanta was forgotten. Suddenly, a loud and ferocious fight was heard, as one of the dogs was engaged in battle. When the household members arrived at the scene, the large dog was found dead, the sliothar, or ball, found wedged in his throat, the result of an amazingly accurate swing by the boy. The dog's keeper, Cullan, was heartbroken over the untimely demise of his best canine. The boy then said he would take over the training of a dog to replace this hound, and until he was ready, he would use his spear and shield to defend the fort. Thus, he gained the name Cu-chullain, or the hound of Cullan.

Cuchullain would later achieve lasting fame as the defender of Ulster during the Tain Bo Cuailgne, or the Cattle Raid of Cooley. He would die on the battlefield after slaying many of the men of Connacht in battle. The dog he had slain was most likely an Irish wolfhound.

Irish wolfhounds have been a part of the Irish culture for millennia. These large animals are immediately identifiable, imposing creatures standing higher than most young children. Along with Cuchullain, many other of the characters of the Ultonian cycle, (the stories of the Red Branch, or Craobh Rua) took on the additional name of hound. According to

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author TW Rolleston in “Celtic Myths and Legends”, among those listed were Curoi, Cucorb, and Bealcu, as the dog was known for its valor and fighting ability.

Mention is made of the Uisneach taking 150 hounds with them in their flight to Scotland in the 1st Century. Irish hounds undoubtedly formed the basis of the Scottish Deerhound. Pairs of Irish hounds were prized as gifts by the Royal houses of Europe, Scandinavia and elsewhere from the Middle ages to the 17th century. They were sent to England, Spain, France, Sweden, Denmark, Persia, India and Poland. In the 15th century each county in Ireland was required to keep 24 wolfdogs to protect farmers’ flocks from the ravages of wolves. Ironically, it was the ban of the exportation of the wolfhound by Oliver Cromwell that more than likely saved them from extinction. Already, the numbers had been dwindling, as the loss of wolves in Ireland reduced the need to keep such large animals to protect flocks.

The breed was revived in the 19th century, as both a working dog and a symbol of Irish nationalism. Capt. G A Graham, a dog breeder, set about obtaining some of the few remaining hounds of the wolfhound type that could still be found in Ireland, and with the use of Deerhound blood and the occasional outcross of Borzoi and Great Dane, he eventually achieved a type of dog that bred true in every generation. The results were ultimately accepted as a legitimate revival of the breed. Again, Irish wolfhounds are prized across the globe, as can be attested to at the Milwaukee Irish Fest.

But this is not the only native Irish breed, nor the oldest. That title might belong to the Kerry Beagle. Long known as the “old Southern hound,” and is also listed in ancient texts as being called “Gadhar”, it is known for its hunting ability. According the Irish Kennel club, the other canines include: The Irish Setters, of which there are two breeds, the Red and White Setter, and the Red Irish Setter, with the former the older of the two; The Irish Water Spaniel, first listed in 1600’s; the Irish Terrier; the Kerry Blue Terrier; the Irish Soft Coated Wheaten Terrier, most likely the oldest of the four terrier breeds; and the Irish Glen of Imaal, a small but tenacious creature used in dogfights and to rat barns, but is said to be a wonderful and loving family pet.

In late August 2004, the Milwaukee Hurling Club championship game was held, and the Milwaukee Ale House edged out the Shamrock Club Griffins, 17-7. Two thousand years after Cuchullain’s accurate and deadly swing, young men and women are still playing the sport that inspired one of Ireland’s greatest heroes. No dogs were lost in this match,

however.

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Dane County

Our first fall 2004 meeting was held on September 14, at the Coliseum Bar in Madison. Our October meeting will be on Tuesday, October 12 at the same location starting at 6 p.m. for the Board meeting and at 7:15 p.m. for the General meeting. The general meeting will be of a musical/historical theme. Our slate of officers is complete with Shannon Byrnes joining us in the capacity of secretary. Welcome aboard Shannon!

I have some good news to share with everybody. The Dane County club is a supporter of “Fitchburg Days”, which is held each year in late May. The club provides volunteers to man the various booths and activities associated with the three day event. This year we were inundated with three days of heavy rains which kept attendance down and caused a financial shortfall. This in turn put the 2005 event in jeopardy. To the rescue came the Pancake Cafe restaurant which gave to the committee its profits for one full day. This generosity will allow us to stage “Fitchburg Days” next year. If you want to express your gratitude, the Pancake Cafe has two restaurants in the Madison area. For those who may not be aware of it “Fitchburg Days” features a Celtic/Irish theme with emphasis on crafts and entertainment.

Finally, if any other club branches would be interested in a joint trip to say a Brewer’s game in the late Spring, please contact me. You can reach me at ccimgmt@supranet.com or (608) 833-0009.

– **Bob Kerans, President**

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Rock County

UPCOMING EVENTS

- OCTOBER 19 – Potluck dinner at 6 p.m., Regular Membership Meeting, 7 p.m.
- NOVEMBER 16 – Regular Membership Meeting, 7 p.m.

Plan now to come to our October meeting and Potluck Dinner. Bring your own table service, beverage and a dish to pass. The Club will furnish coffee. Mark that date on your calendar, Oct. 19th. Bring a friend with you, they just may like to join our club. Our program for the October meeting will be a video about Ireland.

We had our annual picnic in August and it was enjoyed by all. It was a beautiful evening and the bugs were few and did not cause us any problem. There was plenty of food and, oh, what a wonderful variety.

We look forward to a large turnout at our October and November meetings.

– **Tom Kennedy**

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Milwaukee President's Message

October is such a golden month in Wisconsin we should take a moment to reflect on the beauty of the state, and the outstanding events that made our summer so special. Do you know the jack O'lantern originated in Ireland? They carved turnips instead of pumpkins to frighten the bad spirits. They brought the tradition to America where it continues. The Celtic celebrations fit in well with their new Christianity and were approved about 867 AD by the church.

If you have been in the ICHC lately, you noticed the redecorating efforts of our members Ed Mikush, Tim O'Brien, and Daryl Pluskota. They have spent countless hours in this endeavor, so give them a thank you for their work. Stop and tell them you appreciate it and will do your part to keep it looking so well.

The Shamrock Club Griffins of hurling team fame did very well in the playoffs. We are proud of the efforts of our members as part of the sport.

This month finds us back in the Bradley Center with member Cate Harris as the Chair. Cate and her team captains are always looking for your help, even as a standby. This fund raising effort is used for overall operating expenses, educational events, and donations. Please try to volunteer if you are a new member since it's a nice way of meeting our other members. If you meet some of the Currach Club or

Hurling team members there, tell them thanks for helping us.

Please start thinking about the Holiday Folk Fair at State Fair Park. We operate a food booth chaired by members Pete and Fran Dundon. Noreen Barclay chairs the retail item sales, and a person to be named later chairs the cultural exhibit. General Chairperson Kris Pluskota is always looking for additional help, and all Irish need apply. We will also feature the dancers from Cashel-Dennehy this year. This event is a wonderful place to see old and new friends from throughout the world. You can visit our cultural area, and see all the ethnic dancers from so many countries. You can visit the world for the price of admission, or enter free as a volunteer.

This month finds our meeting moved to the Irish Fest Center in Wauwatosa. We will tour the John J Ward Music Archives, and Barry Stapleton will speak to us on the history of Irish music. Barry is a former Shamrock Club President, show your support and attend this meeting.

You are all reminded to think of donating to the Club if you can't volunteer at events, or have a schedule requiring two PDAs. If you donate to the Shamrock Club, it's a charitable donation as we are a 501c3. A donation for a particular event or in memory of someone is welcomed.

See you at the next meeting.

– Julie Smith

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Milwaukee Honoree Dinner

The Honoree Dinner is to be held on Sunday, November 7, 2004. Cocktails at 6 p.m. followed by dinner at 6:30 p.m. Serb Hall at 51st and Oklahoma will be the venue for this family style dinner. Cost is \$15 per person. See Kristine Pluskota for sign up and details (414) 768-8876 or dkplus@tds.net.

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Bradley Center

We are starting up the Bradley Center fundraiser again. We need captains for it, as well as full teams of volunteers. Call

Cate Harris at (414) 321-5153. Dates and teams will be announced soon.

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An Evening of Irish Poetry and Music

On October 7 Eamonn Wall and Gearoid O hAllmhurain will be appearing at UW-Milwaukee Hefter Conference Center, 3271 N. Lake Drive, at 7:30 p.m., October 7.

Eamonn Wall is a poet and essayist and Jefferson Smurfit Professor of Irish Studies at U. of Missouri-St. Louis. Gearoid O hAllmhurain is a musician and also Jefferson Smurfit Professor of Irish Studies at U. of Missouri-St. Louis.

Both men are distinguished in their fields. Wall has three books of poems, all published in Ireland by Salmon Publishing, available in US from Dufour Editions. His collection of literary and personal essays, *From the Sin-E Cafe to the Black Hills*, was published by University of Wisconsin Press and received the Michael Durkan Award from the American Conference for Irish Studies as the best book published in the fields of Language and Literature in 2000. Gearoid O hAllmhurain is a native of County Clare and holds five world championship Irish Music titles as a concertina player, piper, and member of the Kilfenora Ceili Band. He has two solo albums from Celtic Crossings label and is author of the best selling *A Pocket History of Traditional Irish Music*.

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Color Guard News and Notes

The Shamrock Club of Wisconsin's Color Guard, Pipes and Drums have a motto — "Pride and Honor" — and at no time during the 2004 performance schedule was this more evident than during the month of August.

Participating in the Dousman Derby Days parade (Aug. 1) and the Sheboygan Brat Days parade (Aug. 7) – in which the Unit was selected to lead over 100 units – allowed your Color Guard Pipes and Drums to once again display, with respect,

the Shamrock Club of Wisconsin with outstanding dignity. On Sunday, Aug. 15 the group was once again honored by being chosen to lead the Wisconsin State Fair “Veterans” parade, receiving loud and appreciative applause all along the entire parade route. Muskego Fest (Aug. 29) and the St. Francis Labor Day Parade (Sept. 5) were as well received and successful as any event in which the Unit has performed this year.

While the St. Patrick’s Day Mass, Parade and Events are the highlights which kick-off every new parade season, so is then, Irish Fest the pinnacle of our performances as we near the end of another season of representing the Shamrock Club of Wisconsin. Hours and hours of extra effort and practice, in fine tuning musical performances and movements/formations put the Unit in a position to once again put on a performance that was truly extraordinary! For the first time ever the Shamrock Club of Wisconsin Color Guard, Pipes and Drums combined their musical program with a continuous flow of formations by the Color Guard to present an overall spectacular performance, honoring all the values, traditions, and heritage that are Irish. We, the Color Guard, Pipes and Drums, hope you were as proud of us as we were proud to represent the Shamrock Club of Wisconsin at Irish Fest 2004.

During such an extraordinary event such as Irish Fest there are those who deserve to be acknowledged for their special efforts. This year’s Irish Fest is no exception!

SPECIAL THANK YOUS

To Pipe Soloists – Rich Pfeiffer, Carter Carroll, Bobby and Brigid Hammill and Bennett Stephens.

To Color Guard Members – Beth and Luanne Andrews, Tom Blaha, Linda Braley, Del Canon, Peter and Nathan Cobb, Craig Glaser, Dan McCormack, Karen Nielson, and Pat Tierney.

To Shamrock Club Banner Carriers – Sean and MacKenzie Carroll, Kris Garsombke, Sue and Dale Pruess, Kris Pluskota and family.

To Chuck McLaughlin – for coming out of retirement to lead the Unit at Sunday’s Mass and Parade.

To all members of the Color Guard, Pipes and Drums – for their extra efforts in continuing the legacy of the Unit with “Pride and Honor”!

And a Very Special Thank You to Dick Tierney – who after many, many years of dedication to the Unit, honored us all

with his final performances at Irish Fest events. Your kindness, dedicated participation and most of all your friendship will never be forgotten! Thank you, Dick!

SPECIAL REMINDERS

- Don't forget to mark your calendar for April 2005 for the Shamrock Club of Wisconsin Color Guard, Pipes and Drums "Silver Anniversary Dinner Dance" celebrating 25 years of representing all that is Irish with "Pride and Honor". More information to be forthcoming in future editions of Emerald Reflections.
- If you would like to participate in the Unit's final weekend in Door County at the Sister Bay Festivals, Oct. 15-17, please contact Rich Pfeiffer for more information and details on a great weekend getaway!
- For the most accurate and up to date information regarding the Unit, log on to "www.SCCGPD.org".

FINAL PARADE / EVENT SCHEDULE

- OCT. 2 – A.O.H. Mass and Dinner, St. Rose's Church, 4 p.m.
- OCT. 16 – Door County Sister Bay Festivals, 10:30 a.m.

If you would like to have the Shamrock Club Color Guard, Pipes and Drums appear in a parade, special event or family occasion – or you would like to join the Unit as a banner carrier, color guard, piper or drummer, please contact:

Richard Pfeiffer, Director
Shamrock Club Color Guard, Pipes and Drums
Telephone: (414) 769-1250
E-mail: milwpiper@cs.com

– **Richard Stover**

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AOH at St Rose's

Join the AOH Milwaukee Division on Saturday, October 2, as the Division, in cooperation with St. Rose Parish, hosts the annual Irish Mass of Remembrance and the William Ryan Drew Scholarship Spaghetti Dinner. Mass begins at 4:30 p.m.

at St. Rose Catholic Church, 544 North 31st Street, Milwaukee, and the Spaghetti Dinner begins immediately after Mass at St. Rose School. Tickets are only \$5, and proceeds are contributed by the Hibernian Foundation to support St. Rose School, Nativity Jesuit Middle School, Notre Dame Middle School for Girls, and local Irish charitable activities.

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Celtic Women First Friday Lecture Series

Oct. 1, 2004. Topic: "Power Drinking in Iron Age Europe". Speaker: Bettina Arnold PhD, Professor of Anthropology at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

Dr. Arnold spent the summers of 2000 and 2002 in Germany, excavating early Iron Age burial mounds on the Danube River. The symbolic meaning of alcohol in Iron Age Europe can be partly reconstructed by grave goods in the burials of Iron Age chieftains.

It is time once again to anticipate our First Friday lectures at the ICHC. All begin at 5:30 p.m. and are complete by 7 p.m. They are held in Parlor A at the ICHC, 2133 W. Wisconsin Avenue, Milwaukee. Everyone is welcome including men. \$5 admission for all. We will serve tea and "biscuits". You may call the ICHC for more info at (414) 345-8800. Please join us.

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Hallamor Fall Series Concerts #2 and #3

PADDY REILLY
SATURDAY OCTOBER 16, 2004

For the last three decades, Paddy Reilly has delighted audiences all over the world and has become Ireland's best known balladeer. He has the marvelous gift of being able to take a new song and with his special touch, make it sound

as if it has been part of the tradition forever. Examples of this are heard in The Fields of Athenry by Pete St. John

and The Town I Loved So Well by Phil Coulter. He was the Hallamór's very first performer in 1996. We welcome

him back! This concert is sponsored by The John M. Sisk Family Trust.

BAAL TINNE

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 30, 2004

Baal Tinne (pronounced "Bahl Tinnuh") was founded in the early eighties by flute player Noel Rice from Geashill, County Offaly, Ireland. This five member Irish music group is based in Chicago. Baal Tinne is proof that innovation just may be the most enduring quality of Irish music. "The tunes we perform are orchestrated and arranged to bring Irish music into the realm of listening music, without losing the tradition – that comfortable, familiar sound of Celtic music. And indeed, you can dance to it." This concert is sponsored by Dr. Bill Crowley.

Concerts begin 8 p.m.

ICHC • (414) 345-8800

Tickets: \$19 Adv/reserved, \$21 Door

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St. Patrick's Help Fund

St. Patrick's Help Fund is in desperate need of school supplies and non-perishable foods. Please place in container at each meeting. However, donations can be brought to the ICHC any time during the week. Questions? Call Katy Voss (414) 352-6479.

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New Members

NOTE: Please send your dues to your Membership Chairperson in your chapter. All names and addresses are listed in Emerald Reflections.

Milwaukee – Vince and Katie Agnew Family; Sandroy Chamorro Family; Barbara Darby; John P. Dunn; Brian Flannery Family; Guy Henderickx (from Edegem Belgium); James Patrick Hoyt; Bridget and Mark Kirkish Family;

Stewart Oliver Family; Mike Riley; Terrence P. Riley; Anna Sherry; Lawrence and Catherine Smith; Tim and Sharon Tehan Family; John and Barbara Williams Family;

MEMBERSHIP REPORT MILWAUKEE CHAPTER:

- June: two people did not renew.
- July: five people did not renew.
- Aug.: 33 people have not renewed as of August 31.

This is a lot better than last year. In October I will have a better report on Single and Family memberships for the Milwaukee Chapter.

– Tom Smith

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