



**Apr.  
2005**

## The Amazing Healy Family

*by Brian Witt*

When Michael Morris Healy left Galway in 1815 for Canada, little did this 19-year-old realize he would start a mini-revolution. After winning a lottery for 1,500 acres of land near Macon, Georgia in 1818, Healy went on to do what the average Irish immigrant of the time did when he needed help: he bought slaves. A successful cotton farmer, at one time his holdings were amongst the largest in his county. He was also one of the largest slave owners in the area, owning 500 individuals, whereas his neighbors averaged about 14 on their holdings. But in 1829, one of the women he bought as a slave became his common-law wife. Mary Eliza Clark was the daughter of a Spanish-French planter and a woman from Mali.

Together, this union was to produce nine children who survived infancy, James, Hugh, Patrick, Sherwood, Martha, Michael, Josephine, Eliza and Eugene. However, the “one drop rule”, in which anyone who had any black blood was considered black, also meant that the children of this union were considered slaves. In fact, at one point someone offered to buy some of the children, which elicited the response of Michael sending the dogs after him. Michael and Eliza realized that if he died the children could be taken from her and sold. These parents took the drastic step of sending the children away.

The first stop for James was a Quaker school on Long Island, New York. But a trip on a steamship from Washington to New York led Michael to meet John Bernard Fitzpatrick, the Catholic bishop of Boston. Fitzpatrick convinced Healy to

### CONTENTS:

[The Amazing Healy Family](#)

[Shamrock Club of Rock County](#)

[Dane County Shamrock Club](#)

[Milwaukee President's Message](#)

[Shamrock Club of Lafayette County](#)

[Nomination of Officers](#)

[Memorials](#)

[Young Members News](#)

[Noted Speakers](#)

[Program at the ICHC](#)

[Irish President to Visit Irish](#)

[SHAMROCK CLUB HOME](#)

[EMERALD REFLECTIONS ONLINE NEWSLETTER](#)

[PHOTO OF THE MONTH](#)

[MILWAUKEE CALENDAR](#)

[WISCONSIN CALENDAR](#)

[MIDWEST CALENDAR](#)

[JOIN CLUB](#)

[MARCH ST. PATRICK'S DAY EVENTS](#)

[MILWAUKEE CHAPTER](#)

[STATE CHAPTERS](#)

[COLOR GUARD](#)

[LINKS OF IRISH INTEREST](#)

[WISCONSIN MARCH EVENTS](#)

[VENUES](#)

[Sign My Guestbook](#)



[View My Guestbook](#)



Email:

[Fest](#)[Milwaukee's  
Parade Day  
Events 2005](#)[Donn's Poetry  
Corner](#)[Shamrock Club  
at the  
Milwaukee  
Museum  
March 6](#)[Spring  
Hallamor Series:  
Tartan Terrors  
and Altan](#)[Color Guard  
News and  
Notes](#)[Celtic Women  
Lecture Part of  
Larger Scottish  
Celebrations](#)[St. Patrick's  
Help Fund](#)[Welcome New  
Members](#)[Milwaukee  
Calendar of  
Events](#)[Wisconsin  
Calendar of  
Events](#)

send his children to the newly opened school in Worcester, Massachusetts, the College of the Holy Cross. James, age 14; Hugh, age 12; Patrick, age 10; and Sherwood, age eight were all sent to the school. Michael, Jr. would arrive six years later. There the boys were all baptized, confirmed, and educated by the Jesuits. Martha was sent to attend school in Montreal.

In 1850, both Michael and Eliza were to die within months of each other. Eugene went south to rescue the remaining children, who were all under the age of five. He made the journey in spite of the fact that he was considered a fugitive slave in the eyes of the law. The younger girls were left at the convent school that Martha attended, and Eugene was raised in the college.

James was ordained at the Cathedral of Notre Dame in Paris, and was made secretary and chancellor of the Boston diocese, in which he was Fitzpatrick's assistant, and very much in the public eye. In 1875, he would become the second bishop of the diocese of Portland, Maine. His brother Sherwood would follow him to Paris for his own ordination at Notre Dame in 1858, and would become James' assistant in the Boston diocese. He was named rector of the Cathedral of the Holy Cross in Boston at the age of 34. Patrick would work in the Boston diocese after his ordination in Europe, and would later be posted to Georgetown University, where he initially taught Jesuits in training. Later, after the leadership of the school was convinced that his ancestry would not be a problem, talk was made of his "Spanish" lineage, he was made a dean, and taught the general student population. At the age of 39, Patrick Healy would take over as president of Georgetown University.

Martha, the oldest girl, was briefly a member of an order of religious sisters in Montreal before she left the convent, married an Irish immigrant, and lived out her days in suburban respectability outside Boston. Josephine became a nun in a Canadian nursing order, and died at a relatively young age. The youngest Healy girl, Eliza, joined a Canadian teaching order, became Sr. St. Mary Magdalen and directed an academy in St. Albans, Vermont, for 15 years. She helped to establish a college for her order, the Congregation de Notre Dame, on Staten Island, and served as the superior of several convents in the United States and Canada.

Of the other brothers, Hugh was to die at the age of 21 in a boating accident, after having established a hardware business in New York City. Eugene would always be at loose ends in his life, spending most of it as a gambler and often as an inmate in the penal system.

And then there was Michael. At the age of 14, he was sent to France to further his education in a seminary. Partly, the priests at Holy Cross were at wits ends over his rebellious nature. However, a year later, he went to England and signed onto a British merchant boat that was bound for the South Pacific. At the age of 24 he returned to Boston to join the U. S. Treasury Department's Revenue Cutter Service, the forerunner of the Coast Guard. Soon afterwards he was awarded an officer's commission. In 1865 he married Mary Jane Roach, the daughter of Irish immigrants.

Mike Healy was to become the de facto power in the waters off Alaska. The sale of Alaska by Russia to the United States caused a power vacuum, as the end of Russian law was not followed immediately by American law. Rather, the territory was allowed to fall into near anarchy. As a result, pirates and scoundrels ruled over the lands and seas from 1867 until the early 1880s.

One of the more destructive and wasteful methods of sealing was pelagic sealing, in which seals were hunted in the sea, causing many of the animals to sink to the bottom of the ocean if they were not netted immediately. Pelagic sealing also depleted the numbers of seals, because many of the animals in the water were females. The seals would then be skinned, and the remainder would be tossed back into the ocean. The effect on seal populations was seen almost immediately.

A number of these sealers were also rum runners, selling alcohol to the Indians and the Inuit of Alaska. Entire communities were wiped out as a result of the poisoning effect. "Roaring Mike" was a plague upon these men, ramming boats, dumping skins, and emptying the contents of rum and whiskey barrels into the waters of the Bering Sea. Although an alcoholic who would lock himself in his cabin with his parrot during his sullen rages, he had no tolerance for the trafficking of the highly addictive rum.

Mike Healy had an interesting partner in improving the lot of the natives. His name was Sheldon Jackson, a diminutive teetotalling Presbyterian minister who would rail about the evils of Catholicism. Together they started the reindeer herds in North America, importing them from Siberia. News of his efforts spread far. The irony notwithstanding, Michael Healy became the most famous "white man" in Alaska.

But Mike Healy's reputation for drinking, action and anger caused him to fall from favor with the Cutter Service over a number of incidents, including the chaining of a number of rum

runners and their subsequent lifting above the deck of their ship for a number of minutes. In 1895 he was demoted, and his beloved ship, the “Bear”, was taken from him. In 1900 he was restored to rank, and given the “McCulloch” to captain in the Alaskan waters. Shortly thereafter he suffered a nervous breakdown that caused him to be hospitalized. He would die in 1903.

The Healys were, for the most part, American success stories. When asked to establish their racial make-up, they were generally identified for their Irish heritage, not their black. They all suffered from racial prejudice, some early on, others throughout their lives. Patrick was often not allowed to stay in Jesuit residences, or the bed he slept in was destroyed after he left. James traveled all of Maine in the course of two years, trying to show the members of his see that he was just a priest. Mike was to be awarded the most ironic slur. During his trial, a passenger stood up and said that he was nothing but a “damned Irishman.”

Patrick had a hall named after him on the Georgetown campus, and the Coast Guard commissioned a research ship and cutter in Michael’s honor in the late 1990s. But without the love and caring of their parents, and the desperate measures they took to secure their children, these amazing Healys might never have accomplished what they did.

## INDEX

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# Shamrock Club Of Rock County

## UPCOMING EVENTS

- **APRIL 19** – Potluck Dinner 6 p.m., Regular Membership Meeting 7 p.m., Program 7:30 p.m.
- **MAY 17** – Regular Membership Meeting 7 p.m.

At our April meeting, Ruby Walton will talk to us about remembering and writing our memories down. She has been teaching Reminiscing classes for many years and has compiled and edited a book, “Hopscotch Hobos and Foxholes” a Kaleidoscope of Memories. These memories were written by members of her classes. Some of our fellow club members have stories in that book.

Don’t forget the potluck supper at 6 p.m. Bring your own table service and a dish to pass. The club will furnish the coffee.

Can we have a good turn out for this program? That is up to each one of you members.

– Tom Kennedy

## INDEX

---

### **Dane County Shamrock Club**

The major events for March 13 through March 17 were all successful. Activities planned for the next few months include a presentation on Tuesday, April 12, 2005, on “The Status and Role of the Catholic Church in Modern Day Ireland.” Guests from other club branches are more than welcome to attend. The presentation will be at The Coliseum Bar and will begin at approximately 7 p.m. and will follow our Board Meeting.

There is no formal meeting for the month of May, but the club will be donating volunteer hours to “Fitchburg Days”, which will be held May 22-24, 2005, and will emphasize an Irish/Gaelic theme. Again all are invited.

The quarterly state board meeting will be held at R and R Kelly’s on Fish Hatchery Road in Fitchburg from 12 Noon to 2 p.m. After the meeting you can drop in on “Fitchburg Days.”

We will again sponsor a stage for the Madison Feis on June 4, 2005, which is a competition among young Irish Dancers. It is regional in scope and should attract 1300 to 1500 competitors. Volunteers for various functions are also welcome for this one day event.

For more information you can contact me at (608) 833-0009 or email me at [ccimgmt@supranet.com](mailto:ccimgmt@supranet.com).

– Bob Kerans, President

## INDEX

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### **Milwaukee President’s Message**

Ireland in April is truly a vision of the greenest greens anywhere. Add to that the brilliance of the daffodils in every yard, and you will enjoy a visual treat like none other. We look forward to spring in Wisconsin arriving at some time or another, and even the few days that may tease us with some

unseasonably warm temperatures are a welcome treat.

This is the last month to nominate someone for office, so be sure if you are interested, to attend the meeting along with your nominee. We only grow stronger with dedicated men and women willing to take on these leadership positions to serve the club and the community. Please be willing to step up to the plate, and join the board to even further enhance the Club.

We are certain you enjoyed our many activities in March. The wonderful Easter Rising Mass at the ICHC was pleased to see the return of Father Michael Maher as the celebrant, and we thank Ed and Betty Mikush for their work in making it all possible, and to Bob and Peg Hamill and family for providing the continental breakfast.

Muriel Crowley and her volunteers who represented the Club at the Milwaukee Museum on March 6 bringing a view of Ireland to all the visitors in just a few hours time deserve kudos. Thank you Muriel, for your dedication and talent.

I believe our Color Guard, Pipes and Drums members outdid themselves this year at the Mass at St. Patrick's Church, and then onto the parade where they led everyone in the downtown extravaganza. Parade Chair Tim O'Brien and his committee brought a colorful and exciting event to the downtown area again this year. We thank Westown Association for their support as well as the individual merchants and business owners. The Shamrock Club can be proud of our parade, and look forward to the next year. If you rode the Shamrock Club trolley, you know what fun it was to represent the Club. Bless all of our great volunteers for the fabulous post parade party at the ICHC. We believe this to be a family event second to none in the area. Kris and Daryl Pluskota were the co chairs, and were everywhere at once. Added to the activities this year was the breakfast at the ICHC after the mass at St. Patrick's. This activity plus an entire day of fabulous entertainment was our pleasure to bring to the Milwaukee area.

Chuck and Bonnie McLaughlin need to be congratulated on their work for the last 20 years in organizing the mass at St. Patrick's. Father Rick Abert was the celebrant and we welcomed his return. Our honorees and invited guests were able to begin a very long day with reverence and an uplifted spirit from this mass. Bob Harold did us all proud with the music and the choir direction.

We hope you enjoyed the 45th anniversary celebration at the general meeting. It was a treat to see so many friends join us

and especially gratifying to be able to present Irishman of the Year Ed Mikush, Irish Rose Noreen Barclay and Parade Marshal Richard Stover. These three people have brought the Club pride in heritage, hard work, and giving hearts. We thank all of you for what you have given us.

See you at the next meeting.

– Julie Smith

## INDEX

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## **Shamrock Club of Lafayette County**



The Shamrock Club of Lafayette County celebrated St Patrick's Day on March 12 and 13, with our parade in downtown Darlington, and our Mass in honor of deceased members of the club at Holy Rosary Church in Darlington. Brunch followed.

Monthly meetings are held at JR's in Darlington, 1 p.m. on the second Sunday of each month.

## INDEX

---

## **Nomination of Officers**

Nominations for officers of the Shamrock Club's Milwaukee chapter will take place at the April meeting. Persons nominated must be members in good standing, have dues paid in full, and be present at the time of nomination. Elections will

take place at the May 5, 2005 meeting, starting at 6 p.m.  
Nominations made prior to the April meeting are:

- President, Julie Smith
- Vice President, Kris Pluskota
- Secretary, Karen Nielson
- Treasurer
- Parliamentarian
- Membership, Tom Smith
- Trustee, Richard Pfeiffer

## INDEX

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### **Memorials**

Donations to the Shamrock Club have been received in the name of Lawrence (Larry) Coffey. The donors are: Trish Slazwedel; John Hampel; Cheri Katzung; Julie Plantz; Ron Schindel; Denise Meden.

## INDEX

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### **News of Young Members**

Erin Canon received a Superior rating in harp solos at the recent National Federation of Music Festival. This is her 3rd consecutive year receiving a Superior rating, and she has now earned a trophy.

Cate Harris' grandson, Andy Harris, has been awarded an internship with the Jacksonville Jaguars of the National Football League as an equipment manager. He will leave for Jacksonville on July 1.

## INDEX

---

### **Noted Speakers Program at the ICHC**

The ICHC's annual spring Noted Speakers Series continues April 7 and May 5 with Aidan O'Sullivan and Joseph Gallagher.

#### **AIDAN O'SULLIVAN**

Archaeological Discoveries of Early Medieval Ireland

Thursday, April 7; 8 p.m.

Through recent archaeological and historical studies, archaeologists have discovered how our early ancestors used both places in the landscape and material culture to express social identities during a time of constant change. Aidan O'Sullivan's research transforms our previous knowledge of this formative era and gives a deeper insight into who we are today.

This lecture, illustrated with many pictures of recent discoveries, will shed light on recent archaeological insights into the ways that people organized their houses, dwellings, fields and route ways. It will discuss the types of objects that people used in daily life, to prepare food, to work the land or to display their wealth and social status. The presentation will also explore how the introduction of revolutionary agricultural practices (e.g. dairying and large-scale cereal production), transformed both the Irish landscape and the society that inhabited it.

Dr. Aidan O'Sullivan was raised in the Wicklow Mountains just to the south of Dublin. He completed a B.A. and M.A. in archaeology and early Irish history from University College Dublin (UCD). He's worked for several years as a professional archaeologist, excavating medieval sites in Britain and Ireland. He has published several books and articles on the archaeology of Ireland and lectured extensively at conferences throughout Europe and North America. Aidan completed his PhD in 2003 from NUI Maynooth and he currently lectures at UCD.

### **JOSEPH GALLAGHER, HERITAGE OFFICER**

The Traditional Irish Cottage: Past, Present and Future  
Thursday May 5; 8 p.m.

The traditional Irish cottage remains a focal fixture part of Irish heritage, culture and tourism. The real value may not lie in its picturesque beauty but in its ability to explain the natural, built and cultural heritage in a form that is accessible to everyone.

Using regional illustrations, the presentation will draw upon slides of aspects and images of traditional cottages to suggest some common types, unique features, and traditional technology of the structure. The discussion will explore perceptions of the traditional Irish cottage, identify prospects for its preservation or destruction and reinforce its intrinsic value and picturesque beauty.

Joseph Gallagher grew up in County Donegal, Ireland. He holds a B.A. degree in Geography and the higher diploma in

Education from the National University of Ireland, Galway and an M.A. in Cultural/Historical Geography from the University of Illinois. After returning from the U.S. in 1993 he spent ten years as a Senior Lecturer in Geography at University College Chichester, England. Joseph is currently pursuing his PhD in Geography from the University College London. In July 2003, Joseph was appointed as Donegal's first Heritage Officer. He works to preserve, promote and enhance the natural built, and cultural heritage of County Donegal.

Our Noted Speakers Program which brings the best and the brightest speakers direct from Ireland to the ICHC is co-sponsored by the Irish American Cultural Institute, UWM's Center for Celtic Studies, and the ICHC Cultural Arts Committee in cooperation with the Shamrock Club of Wisconsin.

## INDEX

---

### **Irish President To Visit Irish Fest**

The President of Ireland, Mary Mc-Aleese, will be attending the 2005 Mil-waukee Irish Fest, Irish Fest executive director Jane Anderson announced. More details of her visit will be made known as they are released.

## INDEX

---

### **Milwaukee's Parade Day Events 2005**

The Shamrock Club held its Parade Day events on March 12. A full house was seen at the Mass. The Parade marched on, despite wind chills in the teens, and occasional flurries. The Post Parade Party at the ICHC was a success.



Pictured from top to bottom:  
*Sign greets parade viewers*  
*Parade Director Tim O'Brien*  
*The Konkels staff the door at the Post Parade Party*

*Patrick Nehring shows his New Dublin pride  
Parade judges  
The Band Ce at the Post Parade Party  
Gaelic Storm rides the Irish Fest Float*

## INDEX

---

# Donn's Poetry Corner

## Rivers

*by Donal Og Raidagh*

Ogham, aum, umm.  
Streams within streams,  
flowing along, picking up debris.  
Questions asked on questions.  
Do Irish Buddhists hesitate?

## Western Ireland in Six Days

*by Donal Og Raidagh*

Daily travels in a car,  
Point to point, a to be.  
Being there today, another  
there tomorrow, no time  
To see the splendors of Eire.

## INDEX

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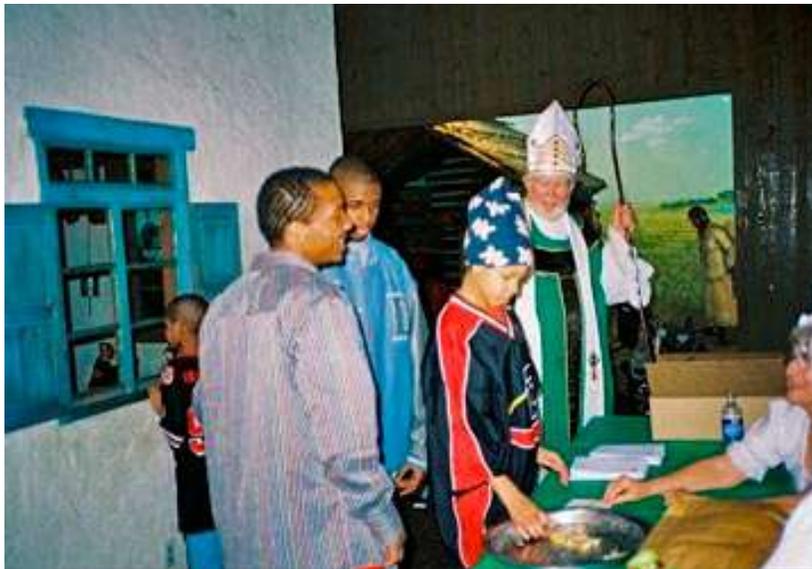
# Shamrock Club at the Milwaukee Museum March 6

The Shamrock Club was at the Milwaukee Public Museum on March 6 in the European Village. Muriel Crowley coordinated the day's event.

Our St Patrick, Tom McAleese, was to incorporate current events of Pope John Paul's illness into the lore of Ireland's patron saint. One visitor looked up at him, and said, "I heard on television you were sick."



*Noreen Barclay, Irish Rose, and Carol Clark, demonstrated knitting at the Milwaukee Museum.*



*Tom McAleese as St Patrick informs and entertains visitors.*

## INDEX

---

### **Hallamor Spring Series**

#### **TARTAN TERRORS**

Saturday, April 2, 2005

\$15 advance / \$17 door

The Tartan Terrors, North America's premiere Celtic Comedy Event, are professional performers known for taking traditional Celtic music and dance, mixing it with a little rock and roll and blending in their own unique Scottish comedy.

"I've seen the Tartan Terrors and I rank them up there at the

very top in music, dance and comedy. This is a show that will leave you smiling long after the performance is over. Don't miss them or you will be missing a memorable event in family entertainment." Marting Lager, CT Television.

## **ALTAN**

Thursday, April 14, 2005

\$19 advance / \$21 door

Well into its second decade together, Altan has cemented its status as one of the most critically acclaimed and successful traditional Irish bands of all time. While individually, the band's five members are masters of their respective instruments, collectively Altan is one of the most exciting groups in contemporary traditional music, combining technical brilliance with emotional depth. Formed in 1985 by Belfast flute-player Frankie Kennedy and Gweedore singer and fiddler, Mairead Ni Mhaonaigh, Altan achieves artistic excellence and demonstrates a respect for the tradition and the people who keep it alive. The music is comprised mostly of jigs, reels, polkas, songs, mazurkas, strathspeys, barn dances and hornpipes .

Concerts begin 8 p.m.

ICHC • (414) 345-8800

– Gwen Sisk, Publicist

## **INDEX**

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## **Color Guard News and Notes**

April 23, 2005—circle this date on your calendar! This Saturday evening will be the night of the 25th Silver Anniversary Dinner Dance. There will be a wonderful dinner, dancing, acknowledgments and a raffle. This event is for everyone! It is an opportunity to recognize and honor the support of all the members of the Shamrock Club of Wisconsin without whose faith and backing would not have allowed the Unit to come this far and to say "Thank you!" to past members of your Color Guard, Pipes and Drums for 25 years of representing the Shamrock Club of Wisconsin and all that is Irish—with Pride & Honor!

We encourage all members, of all chapters throughout the state — unit members and those who are not — to please consider attending this lovely Irish evening.

## **SINCERE SYMPATHIES**

The Shamrock Club Color Guard, Pipes and Drums would like to express its deepest sympathies to Joe Hughes and his family on the passing of his father, Joseph Gerard Hughes, Sr.. Born May 26, 1921 and borne to eternal life February 25, 2005. To the Hughes family: you are always in our hearts, our thoughts and our prayers.

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**

## INDEX

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# Part of Larger Scottish Celebrations

The Celtic Women Lecture Series is a part of a wonderful package of things Scottish, April 1–3, at the ICHC and April 6 at the UWM Hefter Center. After soaking up all things Irish in March, come and see what the Scots have to offer in April. This year should see the beginning of great Scottish April events, to continue in the years to come, centered around our National Tartan Day. The admission fees are modest and family-friendly. Here is what is on tap:

### **FRIDAY, APRIL 1**

Lecture Series 5:30 - 7 p.m.

Bob McWilliam

“The Wisconsin Official Tartan”

Bob designed a beautiful tartan for Wisconsin which is wending its way through the State Legislature to become “official” (like the violet, etc). He will present a framed piece of the tartan to ICHC president Tom Wiseman, for permanent display in the ICHC Lending Library. Bob will describe all of the colors and meanings of the tartan and why it is important to have our own State Tartan. Lecture admission is \$5 per person, with tea and cookies for all.

The Celtic Women have a supply of WIS. TARTAN

BUTTONS which will be sold for \$2 each to benefit the upcoming Celtic Women Conference in October.

## **SATURDAY, APRIL 2**

The entire ICHC building will be taken over by Scottish activities, displays, food and entertainment. The bars will be open on all three floors, clan tables will be on display, men in kilts will strut the halls!!, the famous Wisconsin Scottish Raffle will take place and much much more will be offered.

The “Tartan Terrors” will perform for the Spring Concert #3 in the Hallamór Series. This is a Scottish band that specializes in humor and comedy as well as good Scottish music.

Admission to the concert is \$15 in advance or \$17 at the door. No other admission required for the evening which begins at 6 p.m. (concert at 7 p.m.)

The evening will be a fund-raiser for Wisconsin Scottish as they prepare for their annual Highland Games in September.

## **SUNDAY, APRIL 3**

Sit-Down Ceilidh at 2 p.m. with Flora MacDonald Gammon as mistress of ceremonies. Flora is very well-known to the Celtic Women of this area; she will be on hand for the entire Scottish weekend. The ceilidh will include appearances by Billy Mitchell Pipe Band, the Caledonian Dancers, Ian Day, Charlie and Beth Johnson as well as Flora herself on the mountain dulcimer and leading the musical bits.

Admission to the afternoon ceilidh is for adults: \$7 advance, \$10 at the door; children \$5. The ceilidh is a fund-raiser for the Conference of Celtic Women October 20-22 at the ICHC.

TARTAN DAY 2005 will be Wednesday April 6 at the Hefter Center, 3271 N Lake Drive. Three distinguished speakers directly from Scotland will present their combined talks, and admission is free!

- Richard Finlay, “Scotland and America: the 20th Century Connection”.
- Lizanne Henderson “Scottish Folklore in America”
- Ted Cowan “Two Declarations; Scotland 1320, America 1776”.

These professors are sponsored by the UWM Center for Celtic Studies. The evening begins at 7 p.m. This night and all of the above mentioned events are open to the public. A rare opportunity to experience Scottish culture, a week that should not be missed!

## INDEX

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### **St. Patrick's Help Fund**

St. Patrick's Help Fund is in desperate need of 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.

## INDEX

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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 – Sarah M. Herbert; Edward and Leona Mcdermott.

#### **MEMBERSHIP REPORT MILWAUKEE CHAPTER:**

- JANUARY: 22 memberships up for renewal, 19 paid, 3 dropped for nonpayment.
- FEBRUARY: 38 memberships up for renewal, 19 paid, 19 due.
- MARCH: 94 memberships up for renewal, 2 paid, 92 due.

– **Tom Smith**

INDEX

