



Feb. 2005

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Ireland's Disappearing Boglands

by Brian Witt

Ireland has long been known for its rich peatlands, bogs filled with life and decaying matter. Peatlands or bogland once covered roughly one sixth of Ireland's land surface, about 1.1 million hectares. The smell of burning peat in Ireland, especially in the western part of the country, provides, depending on your frame of mind, a natural perfume or a noxious air quality. The bogs of Ireland have also provided a heated and long running argument for many over the future and the present of the bogs.

Peat began to form in Ireland 9000 years ago, first as wood-peat, then successively as fen-peat, wood-fen peat and sphagnum-peat. This process took 2000 years as blanket and raised bog began to cover most of the western seaboard, particularly Kerry, Galway, Mayo, Leitrim and Donegal, and parts of the central and northern midlands. Bog-growth continued from 7000 to 5000 years ago when it slowed down dramatically though there has been gradual growth ever since.

The Irish, and many Europeans, have used peat to heat their homes for thousands of years. In pre-famine times the west of the island was dotted with houses made of peat, in which a family would live in the sod house for a year, or two at most, then tear it down, rebuild with fresh peat, and use the old house as fuel for the fires. The rise in disease during the latter parts of the famine, especially in 1847, was the result of a too-wet harvest season for both peat and straw. This in turn caused houses to be utilized for longer periods, and thus housed the insects that spread the infections that caused the worst of the deaths.

Turf Peat Briquettes were made in Derrylea, near Monastereven, Co. Kildare in the 1860s, by a process, which varies little from that in use today. Peat was used for heating, for animal bedding, as a soil conditioner, as charcoal for use in iron smelting, to make paper

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and as fire lighters. Developments in the peat industry in Ireland were in parallel with developments in the Netherlands, Sweden, Germany and Russia, where substantial peat deposits were also exploited. There was a constant interchange of technology between Ireland and the rest of Europe.

Bord na Mona, or the Irish Peat Board, was founded by decree of the Irish government in the 1940s, and many of the bogs were nationalized. Early on, it was recognized that the bogs could be used to generate electricity. The Electricity Supply Board built power stations in Portarlinton in 1950 and Allenwood in 1952. Within 25 years, by the early 1970s, the raised bog under cultivation was yielding four million tons of peat per year.

Many Irish have wondered about the effects of such rapid depletion of the bogs. If a tourist happens upon the bogs while traveling, they will see large tracts of exhausted acreage resembling strip mines. On the one hand, environmentalists say that the consequence of this activity has not only been to destroy thousands of hectares of bog, it has also threatened the existence of peatland eco-systems and the multitudes of species dependent on them. Others will point out that the power stations allowed Ireland in the 1950s and 60s to finally set up grids that gave rural homes electricity for the first time.

Still, at this juncture, the bogs have disappeared, and are now at around a quarter of a million hectares. Conservation groups are complaining that the ESB is still using out of date power plants that are inefficient and use more peat than needed. There is also the complaint that suburban gardeners are being sold Irish peat when the rest of Europe has gone to selling compost. Many feel that BnM is unresponsive and unconcerned.

The Dutch have entered the bog discussion. The bogs of the Netherlands fueled, literally, the Golden Age of Holland in the fifteenth century. They were completely destroyed in the headlong rush to advance the economy. But because they have no bogs left at home they turned to Ireland and raised funds to buy four bogs. This project was led by the Dutch Foundation for Conservation of Irish Bogs and is being sponsored by the World Wide Fund for Nature (NL). Scragh Bog, County Westmeath was the first bog bought by the Dutch and given as a gift by Prince Bernhard of the Netherlands to the Irish people in 1987.

But, as BnM points out, they provide jobs to many of the communities that surround the bogs. And if they shut down completely today, there would be a negative impact on the local economies. Still, as Bord na Mona has pointed out, they only have about thirty years worth of reserves of boglands, and they are not going to purchase any more.

Both sides have taken positions on the issue of the future of the bogs. The Irish Peatland Conservation Council is trying to buy up

the remaining bogs, and protect them in a nature conservancy. They are also selling shares in the bogs. These share certificates allow people to have a visible sign that they have a part of ancient Ireland in their possession, even if it is only symbolic. The group is also raffling off a Kerry pony, consistent with the feeling that compost be given more prominence.

Bord na Móna has laid out plans that will deal with the future of the worked-out bogs. BnM recognizes the importance of peatlands as sites of scientific and archaeological study. Under their plans, the new landscape, which will evolve, after industrial peat production is finished, will be a mosaic, dominated by forestry and grassland, but interwoven with a patchwork of diverse wild habitats.

The Irish landscape has changed dramatically over the past hundred years. Preservation of the oldest parts of it will take work, but it appears there is a common ground that all groups seem to recognize: that a rich part of the island's heritage cannot be readily replaced.

For more information on the Irish Peatland Conservation Council, go to their website at <http://www.ipcc.ie/index.html>. For more about Bord na Mona, and its position on the bogs, go to <http://www.bnm.ie/index.htm>

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Dane County Shamrock Club

On Tuesday, January 11, 2005, Dane County Shamrock Club had its January meeting at which I gave an hour presentation on "The Irish in America." Our February meeting will be on Tuesday, February 8, 2005, featuring another historical topic. As usual all meetings, unless otherwise noted, are at the Coliseum Bar. Make sure you check the next Emerald Reflections for an update on all Irish/Celtic activities for March 13 through March 17 in Madison.

– **Bob Kerans**

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Shamrock Club Of Rock County

UPCOMING EVENTS

- **FEBRUARY 15** – Chili Mix 6 p.m., Regular Membership Meeting 7 p.m., White Elephant Exchange to follow
- **MARCH 15** – St. Patrick's Day Party at the Senior Center, 5:30 p.m. (no regular monthly meeting)

At the February meeting, everyone bring a batch of your favorite homemade chili for the “Chili Mix”. After we have had our fill of chili, there will be the business meeting followed by a “White Elephant Exchange.” Join in the fun. Bring something that you have enjoyed for years, but now do not have room for or do not want anymore, and maybe someone else will enjoy it. This is a good way to get rid of your old treasures, which you no longer think of as treasures.

On March 15, the Shamrock Club will be working with the Senior Center, as we did last year, sponsoring the St. Patrick’s Day Party. There will be a fine Irish dinner at 5:30 p.m. and hopefully we will have “Casey’s Fancy” back again this year to entertain us with a lot of Irish music. More details next month. You can make your reservations at our February meeting.

– Tom Kennedy

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Milwaukee President’s Message

February 1 marks the feast day of St. Bridget in Ireland. Bridget is one of three patron saints in Ireland, the other two are St. Patrick and St. Colmcille. Ireland is the only country with three. The day is considered to be the first day of Spring, unlike Wisconsin, where we wait another day for a groundhog to inform us of when we can expect spring’s arrival. We all know that Spring is always elusive here. For such a short month, we find many holidays, and even St. Valentine’s Day.

This month at the general meeting, we will announce the honorees for 2005: Irishman, Irish Rose, and Parade Marshal. The first couple to serve together as parade marshals were Dick and Rosemary Quinlan in 1991. The first Irishman chosen was Msgr. Kelly of St. John’s Cathedral in 1963. The Irish Rose honor was begun in 1973 with Jeanne McCue as the chosen lady. This year’s honorees will help us celebrate our 45th anniversary in March. Honorees are asked to attend the St. Patrick’s mass, the parade and post parade, and any functions throughout the year whenever possible. This would include Irish Fest’s daily parades, and the mass, during the August festival. The naming of our honorees reminds me that in 45 years, we have lost some very fine men and women from our club. Please remember them in your prayers.

At our February meeting we must appoint a finance committee at the Board meeting. Please consider volunteering for this most important committee that determines funding and budgeting. The

committee is headed by our Treasurer Pat Fitzgibbons. If you are a student, please come forward to see the workings of a non-profit group as a member. This would certainly look great on your resume, and your input would be appreciated.

We should be on the alert to sell our raffle tickets for our scholarship fund. When you see them in the mail please buy them or ask for more to sell. This important function is taken care of by the Quinlan family. Tickets will be for sale at general membership meetings through April. This funding can be used by a college student of any age to help monetarily with any Irish or Ireland related studies. In order for the club to continue this funding, each of us needs to be a sales rep for the Club.

Our guest speaker for this month will be local historian John Gurda. Please be there to hear the history of the Irish in Milwaukee, and bring a friend to enjoy his presentation. Mr. Gurda has written several books and will be able to respond to your questions with certainty, or perhaps you will be able to enlighten him on the subject. In either case, we look forward to his being at the meeting.

All of us are looking forward to our March activities with great anticipation. There will be more information as it becomes available. Be sure to look at our web site --<http://shamrockclubwis.com> for the most accurate and up to date information.

See you at the next meeting.

– Julie Smith

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Donations are Tax Deductible

Please consider a donation to the Shamrock Club so that we can continue our mission to bolster all things Irish. Because the Shamrock Club is a non-profit 501(c)(3) corporation, donations to the Club are tax deductible. The Shamrock Club provides the community with the annual St. Patrick's Day Parade, the Irish exhibits at the Folk Fair, Emerald Reflections newsletter, scholarships for Irish studies, and support for many other Irish related activities and groups. The Club is a volunteer organization whose intent is to foster Irish traditions and culture in Wisconsin. The money needed to provide these services comes from membership dues, income raised at various events, and donations.

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Nomination of Officers

Nominations for officers of the Shamrock Club's Milwaukee chapter will take place at the March and April meetings. Persons nominated must be members in good standing, with dues paid in full, and must be present at the time of their nomination. Elections will take place at the May 5, 2005 meeting. Elections will start at 6 p.m. that evening.

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News of Young Members

Lance Corporal Jason Hass (Marines) received the 2004 Wisconsin Military Achievement award on 11/07/04. The award was presented to the family by Governor Doyle. Jason is currently serving our country in Fallujah, Iraq. He is a member of the Honor Guard, Toys for Tots, and a mentor in the Young Marines. He is the nephew of Kristine Carrigg Pluskota.

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Shamrock Club Loses Irish Roses

The Shamrock Club and the Milwaukee Irish community lost a pair of Irish Roses in early January, within days of each other. Bernice Reilly and Mary Stephens were both former Shamrock Club Milwaukee chapter Irish Roses. Both were extremely active in the Irish community in Milwaukee for many years.

Bernice was known in the early years of Milwaukee Irish Fest as the voice of the festival, as she maintained the information line to the festival from her home. She was the longtime membership chair for the Milwaukee chapter of the Shamrock Club. She was also honored to ride in the front of the parade as Parade Marshal one year.

Mary Stephens was Irish Rose in 1983. She instilled in her many children a sense of Irishness, and that gave this city and state a true gift. Her daughter Julie is the President of the Milwaukee chapter of the Shamrock Club. Her granddaughter Bridget is the founder of the Glencastle Irish Dance School, and for many years turned out champion dancers at Trinity. Mary's other children, Michael, Mary, Kathleen, Pat and Terry, are involved with the Shamrock Club, Irish Fest, the Emerald Society, and sundry other groups.

The Shamrock Club has lost a number of good folks this year. A listing of members who died, from all chapters, will be assembled later this year. Please send in the names of anyone who we have

said goodbye to this past year.

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Celtic Art Exhibit

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 4

A new Celtic art exhibit by local artist Julie San Felipe will have its grand opening on Friday evening, February 4, following a musical performance by Sheila Shigley at the Celtic Women Lecture Series. The exhibit, "Poetic Dreams" will begin at 7 p.m. at the Irish Cultural and Heritage Center, featuring a wine and cheese reception with the artist. Her works are based on The Book of Kells and other ancient Irish art; her watercolor paintings are combined with calligraphy and are more contemporary. She weaves poetry and favorite songs into her original landscapes and people, animals, greenery and letters. Modernizing the traditional "over and under" weaving using knots, spirals and other ancient symbols keeps her connected to her Celtic heritage.

While living in Milwaukee for most of her life, it's the Wisconsin trees, wildlife, pets, friends, dancers, and the natural clockwork of the seasons and stars that find their way as subjects into her paintings. Since 1999, Julie has taught Celtic Calligraphy at the ICHC. The exhibit is free and open to the public.

CELTIC WOMEN FIRST FRIDAYS

Friday, February 4, 2005: Sheila Shigley. "The Kinship of Cornwall, Brittany and Wales in Song" Sheila is a member of the wonderful Madison Celtic vocal ensemble known as Navan. She also teaches Celtic traditional singing for the University of Wisconsin, and works as a folk music archivist in her "spare time". Sheila will lecture and sing, and we will learn of the similarities in tune, story and imagery of these three Celtic nations.

The February Lecture will be one of the happy times when we combine a First Friday Celtic Women lecture with the opening of a great new art exhibit at the ICHC. Come for the lecture - stay for the exhibit. The artist, Julie San Felipe, will be there in person to greet you and talk about her wonderous Celtic art on display. Have a little wine and cheese to mark the event. The art opening is free and open to the public. The lectures have a \$5 admission for all, and also open to the public.

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ICHC Concerts February 7

Hearts on the Avenue 2005

Dennis Janzer will be making command return performances when he presents his annual Valentine's Day concerts at the ICHC on February 7. Joining Dennis will be piper Rob McWilliams. Rob and Dennis have collaborated on many performances and compositions over the years. If you haven't heard the organ in the Hallamor played, this can be one of the more memorable shows of the year for you, especially with Dennis at the keyboard.

A matinee concert will begin at 2 p.m., and an evening performance at 7 p.m. Call (414) 345-8800 for more information.

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Color Guard News and Notes

The Shamrock Club of Wisconsin Color Guard, Pipes and Drums wish to express our sincerest hopes and prayers that each and everyone had a very Happy Thanksgiving, a truly Blessed Christmas and 2005 will be a really wonderful New Year for all!

Typically, the months of November through February the Color Guard, Pipes and Drums have little or no parades/events on their schedule. However, the Unit is not dormant in its activities nor in its representation of the membership of the Shamrock Club of Wisconsin. The Color Guard, Pipes and Drums continued their tradition of caring and giving to those who are less fortunate, during the holidays. Once again, the members of the Unit stepped forward with their own donations for their program, "Food for Thanksgiving." The group was able to purchase five turkeys, two hams, plus all the "fixin's" which included potatoes, peas, corn, cranberries, stuffing, gravy, biscuits and for dessert, four apple pies and four cherry pies. We thought this would help at least seven families but much to our surprise, there was enough food to feed over 70 people who otherwise would not have any kind of a Thanksgiving dinner.

In addition, your Color Guard, Pipes and Drums continued their tradition/program of "Clothing for Christmas". The members of the Unit were able to donate hundreds of clothing articles: coats, sweaters, shirts and slacks, shoes, sweatshirts, gloves, and caps and much, much more. If you can imagine, the group filled over 20 of the large leaf bags and even added Christmas bows and ribbons to make the gifts look more festive. To see the look on the faces of Father Jose Moreno, Father Wm. Brennan, St. Patrick's Church Secretary Jenny Barrantes and the members of St. Patrick's church who helped us bring everything inside. The look of appreciation, the look of gratefulness, cannot be put into words! It was a feeling that reminded me of something I was taught growing up:

*What lies behind Us and
what lies before Us are
tiny matters compared
to what lies within Us!*

And Truly! Your Shamrock Club of Wisconsin Color Guard, Pipes and Drums once again represented the Members of the Shamrock of Wisconsin with Pride and Honor! We would be remiss without saying “Thank You” to Julie and Tom Smith and Bob Voss for being at St. Patrick’s Church to help with the delivering of the food and clothing and to all the members of the Color Guard, Pipes and Drums and their families for their contributions!

In the next edition of Emerald Reflections you will see a reservation form for the Color Guard, Pipes and Drums 25th Anniversary Dinner Dance. Reservations will be accepted on a first come basis. So make sure you get your reservation in as soon as possible, so you don’t miss out on what will be an extraordinary evening!

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

MANDATORY ATTENDANCE:

Color Guard, Pipes and Drums mem-bers who wish to be part of the St. Patrick’s Day Parade downtown and Mass at St. Patrick’s Church are required to attend the Unit’s monthly meetings during January, February and March. Meetings are held the first Thursday after General Membership Meetings.



*Pictured at Christmas time are: (left to right) Richard Stover,
Father Jose Moreno, Bob Voss, Rich Pfeiffer, and Father Wm.*



Partaking in the Thanksgiving greetings are: (left to right) Tom Smith, St. Patrick's Secretary Jenny Barrantez, Julie Smith, and Rich Pfeiffer.

– Richard Stover

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St. Pat's Mass Flower Donations, Memorials, and Honors

Memorials and donations to honor living individuals will be taken at the Milwaukee February and March general meetings to help defray the cost of flowers for the St. Patrick's Mass, March 12, 2005. Names will be printed in the Mass Booklet. Mail orders can be taken up to March 3, 2005. Make checks payable to the Shamrock Club. Contact Chuck and Bonnie McLaughlin; 12007 W. Walker St., West Allis, WI 53214; (414) 771-0458. Thank you.

– Chuck McLaughlin

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20th Annual Special Mass To Honor St. Patrick

Will be held prior to the St. Patrick's Day Parade

Saturday, MARCH 12, 2005
8:30 a.m. at St. Patrick's Church

723 South 7th at Washington Street, Milwaukee

Sign reader for hearing impaired

Shuttle Bus: from ICHC rear parking lot (2133 W. Wisconsin Ave.) to St. Patrick's Church and after Mass return to Parade Route or parking lot for just \$3 per person. Bus to leave sharply at 7:45 a.m. for the Church

Tickets for bus can be purchased by mail or at the Shamrock Club February and March General Meetings

All-You-Can-Eat Pancake Breakfast after Mass: \$6 Adults / \$3 Children under 12

For Bus reservations or information contact:

Chuck and Bonnie McLaughlin

12007 W. Walker Street, West Allis, WI 53214; Phone: (414) 771-0458

Send self-addressed, stamped envelope. Make checks payable to Shamrock Club

Mail reservations for BUS ONLY by submitting:

Name : _____

Address : _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Phone : _____

Number of Reservations : _____

Amount \$: _____

Bus Reservations will not be taken after March 3

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Parade Day Events

SATURDAY, MARCH 12, 2005

The Milwaukee River will be dyed green on parade day, March 12, at 10:30 a.m. The boat will start out at Pere Marquette Park on the Milwaukee River at Kilbourn.

The Parade will begin at noon and last approximately 90 minutes. Step-off is in front of the Grand Avenue Mall. The Shamrock Club of Wisconsin, Inc. has produced the parade continuously since 1967. 2005 is the 162nd anniversary of Milwaukee's 1st St. Patrick's Parade.

1ST ANNUAL ST. PATRICK'S PARADE 5K RUN

A 5K run will take place prior to the parade at 11 a.m. in downtown Milwaukee. Race proceeds will benefit the MACC Fund. Start point will be in front of Mo's Irish Pub and finish to be Pere Marquette Park. Don't worry about the exact route... all but one of you will have someone to follow. Post-run party at Pere Marquette Park to follow.

Registration is \$17 online, by mail or in person. Register through March 5, 2005. There will NOT be any race day registration. Register early – this event will be capped at 4,000.

We will NOT mail your runner number. Runner number, computer chip for timing and T-Shirts MUST be picked up on race day between 9 and 10:30 a.m. inside the main entrance of the Grand Avenue Mall (approximately one block from the starting line). Runner will be responsible for returning chip at the finish line. Runner will be charged \$30 if the chip is not returned.

Medals will be given to the top three finishers in each competitive division. Special medals to the top male, female and wheelchair participants.

Prizes will be awarded to the runners in the best costumes. All runners 21 and over are eligible to win a trip for two to Ireland compliments of the Bluegreen Corporation.

To register on line: <http://saintpatricksparade.org/sprintRun.html>.

To Register in person: Mo's Irish Pub; 142 W. Wisconsin Ave.; Milw., WI 53203

For information contact race directors: Bill Jahnke (414) 282-5702; Shamrock Bill@wi.rr.com or Jack Noonan (414) 769-9675.

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Shamrock Club of Wisconsin 39th Annual St. Patrick's Day Parade

Saturday, MARCH 12, 2005

Noon – Downtown Milwaukee

Step-off is in front of the Grand Avenue Mall on 3rd and Wisconsin,

Proceeding east to Plankinton,
North on Plankinton to Kilbourn,
West on Kilbourn to Old World 3rd Street,
North on Old World 3rd Street to Juneau,
East on Juneau to Water Street,

The Parade will feature 130+ units and will include clowns, local politicians and celebrities, floats, bagpipe and marching bands, Irish and Celtic organizations

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Shamrock Club Post Parade Party

Saturday, MARCH 12, 2005

1–6 p.m. (Doors Open at 12:20 p.m.)

Irish Cultural and Heritage Center 2133 West Wisconsin Avenue,
Milwaukee

Four stages of continuous entertainment

Bands, Irish Dance Schools, Scottish Dancers, Bagpipe Bands,
Children's Area

Food and Beverages available!!!

Adults \$6 / Children (6-12) \$3

Volunteer needed: call Kristine and Daryl Pluskota (414) 768-8876

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Milwaukee Celebrated Christmas 2004

About 150 people attended the Shamrock Club's Christmas Party in Milwaukee on December 6. Thank you to Kerri Jo Pfeiffer for her preparations, and to vice-president Kris Pluskota for her work on the evening.



Kris Pluskota and Kerri Jo Pfeiffer.



Members of the Irish Fest Choir performed.



Santa's Elf - Dawn Fleming.

Brendan Heart Fund Benefit

On March 6, 2005, between the hours of 1 and 6 p.m., the Emerald Society of Wisconsin will be sponsoring the 15th annual benefit for the Brendan Heart Fund of Children's Hospital of Wisconsin.

The Emerald Society of Wisconsin, an organization of members of the criminal justice system, held the first Brendan Benefit in 1990. The Benefits have always been held prior to St. Patrick's Day at Derry Hegarty's Irish Pub, 5328 W. Bluemound Ave. This Benefit is designed to be a family event and we continue to be a family oriented event. The cost of the attendance has the family in mind, \$5 in advance, \$6 at the door, and children under 15 are free.

The afternoon's entertainment will feature Blarney and the Glencastle Irish Dancers. Blarney is a well known Irish group that has delighted its audiences for 20 plus years. Blarney will entertain you as they sing songs from their extensive library of Irish Music. There is no doubt that you will hear many of your favorites. We are also featuring the Glencastle Irish Dancers, and proud to say that this dance school is headed by one of the Emerald Societies members, Bridget Jaskulski. You will be thoroughly entertained by the skill of the dancers as they perform the intricacies of Irish Dance. In addition to Blarney and Glencastle, we will be featuring our "monster raffle", and the Greater Milwaukee Fire & Police Pipes and Drums.

Mark this date, March 6, on your family calendar and join us for a fine afternoon of Irish Song and Dance. Information can be obtained at the below addresses.

Mailing Address: Emerald Society of Wisconsin; P.O. Box 24;
Milwaukee, WI 532001-0024

Web: <http://www.emeraldsociety.us>

– **Thomas W. McKale, Chairman**

RTE News of Ireland

SUPERQUINN TAKEN OVER

BY CONSORTIUM

The family-run supermarket chain, Superquinn, has been taken over by a consortium of private investors in a deal worth €350 million. The chain headed by Senator Feargal Quinn has sold a majority of the company to a group called Select Retail Holdings. Under the agreement Simon Burke, an Irish man who headed Hamley's toy store in Britain, will become the new executive chairman of Superquinn.

HUNDREDS PAY RESPECTS TO FORMER MINISTER

Hundreds of people have been paying their last respects to the late Eileen Desmond. The removal of the former Minister for Health and MEP for Munster took place this evening to her local parish church in Carrigaline, Co Cork. She will be buried alongside her husband Dan, following Requiem Mass tomorrow morning at 11 a.m.

RTE'S "YOU'RE A STAR" TO AID TSUNAMI

RTE show revenue to go to Tsunami Crisis. You're a Star television viewers were benefiting the victims of the Tsunami disaster, when they voted for their favourite performer in the RTE show in early January. The revenue, excluding taxes from the votes by text or phone – mobile or landline – is to go to three Irish charities, Concern, Trócaire and Goal, involved in the Tsunami crisis. This follows an agreement between RTÉ, the production company Screentime/Shinawil, service providers Esat BT and Phonovation, and telecom operators Eircom, Meteor, O2 and Vodafone. Five of January 9th's six acts were voted through to the next stage of the competition. They were: Jade, Donna and Joseph McCaul, George, David Hope and Ann Harrington. David Hope from Shannon topped the poll, but 20 year-old Dubliner Sinead Hand was voted out of the show as she received the least number of votes.

CORK BECOMES EUROPEAN CULTURE CAPITAL

A 600-metre serpent, ten giant hillbillies, 2005 balloons and 3.5 tonnes of fireworks, as well as 180 performers have all helped launch Cork's year as European Capital of Culture. More than 80,000 people flocked to the city centre for a massive carnival after President Mary McAleese formally opened the year at a civic ceremony at City Hall.

The city centre was closed off to traffic as some 180 performers from all over the world brought the streets to life at ten individual

stages from Patrick Street to Grand Parade.

The afternoon finished with a spectacular fireworks display and a theatrical performance on the River Lee by Waterford Spraoi.

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State-wide Meeting

The next State Board Meeting will be held in Madison, the location to be announced, on February 12, 2005. Please plan on attending.

– **Cate Harris, President**

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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.

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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 – Kendellens Family: John, Liz, Kevin, Laura, Brigid, Maggie, Sean (referred by Irish Fest); Ken and Rita Tehan (referred by Ken Tehan, Jr.).

Membership Report Milwaukee Chapter:

- Oct.: 31 memberships up for renewal, 28 paid, 3 dropped for nonpayment.
- Nov.: 33 memberships up for renewal, 23 paid, 10 due.
- Dec.: 20 memberships up for renewal, 9 paid, 10 due.
- Jan.: 22 memberships up for renewal, 3 paid, 19 due.

– **Tom Smith**

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