



April 2006

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A Trip to the Land of the Little People

For many years, the late editor of Reflections, Bob Higgins, would write an April column that was a flight of fancy in time for April Fools Day. Tom Kennedy of the Rock County Chapter has agreed to let us in on the story of a wee man who frequents parts of Rock County each March.

by **Thomas Kennedy**

In 1978 we made our first trip to Ireland. It was a wonderful trip and we met many relatives for the first time but that is another story. What I want to tell you about today is something that happened to us during our visit to Ireland. It was an occasion which few, if any other travelers to Ireland, have ever had the privilege of experiencing. It has had a lasting effect on our lives.

Our relatives live in County Meath and County Louth. These counties are about 30 miles north of Dublin, and County Louth is the smallest of all in Ireland. There is a vast amount of history in this part of the island. The Boyne River runs through this area and the Battle of the Boyne was fought here in 1690. The powerful English forces, under the command of William of Orange, out fought the Jacobite forces under King James, and helped end the Gaelic way of life in Ireland.

We had rented a car and after a day or two of driving on the left side of the road, it was easy for us to navigate. We decided to experience some of the history in the valley before traveling to other parts of Ireland. Newgrange, a burial mound over 5000 years old, was our first stop and then on to Mellifont Abbey and the ruins at Monasterboice. As we were driving through the countryside, south of Ardee, we came across a side road named Jumping Church Road. That sounded interesting and aroused our curiosity, so we drove down that road. We soon came to the Jumping Church and as luck would have it, Paddy O'Shea, the unofficial caretaker

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Email:
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of this old ruins and cemetery, was there. Paddy works at the horse farm across from the Jumping Church and in his spare time works on the church grounds.

Paddy told us about the Jumping Church and how it got its name. Back in 1715, a man who had been excommunicated from the church, had fallen off of a scaffold and was killed. His family wanted his body buried inside the walls of this old church ruins, but the parish priest would have no part of it because that man was not in good standing with the church. Finally under force of arms, they made the priest bury the deceased within the church walls. That night there was a terrible storm and when people came by the church the next day, that section of the wall had jumped inward about three or four feet and left the grave outside the church wall.

I told Paddy, our names were Tom and Mary Kennedy and we were from the United States enjoying our travels around Ireland. He asked me if my name was really Thomas Kennedy. I assured him, that was my name. Paddy then asked if I believed in the wee folk. I laughed, but did not give him a direct answer, but thought to myself, if I tell him yes, he will probably try to sell me the O'Connell Bridge in Dublin. After a long silence, neither one of us speaking, Paddy broke the stillness and told me that the woodland behind the church was an Enchanted Forest, where some of the small ones lived. He then said, "I want to take you back to that woodland to meet a Leprechaun whose name is Tomas Cinneide, I think you might be able to help him." Again I thought, here comes the sales pitch for the O'Connell Bridge.

As we slowly walked back to the woodland, Paddy told me Tomas Cinneide was the Irish spelling and pronunciation for Thomas Kennedy and he assumed God must have sent me to help my namesake. He then told me the sad story about Master Cinneide and why he was taking me to meet him. When Tomas was a young man, he went to school to learn the shoemaker trade because the Leprechauns are the shoemakers for the elves and fairies and all of the other little people.

Now, Tomas was not a good student, instead of paying attention in class, he would idle away his time daydreaming and thinking up tricks he could play on others. When those young gnomes finished their schooling, each one had to make a pair of shoes for Fergus, the King of all the Leprechauns. It was then Tomas was sorry he had not concentrated, because when he presented his brogues to the King, and the King put them on, those shoes pinched his toes and he got blisters on his heels. The King became so angry with Tomas for not focusing on his studies in school, he took away his pot of gold, he took away his power to grant wishes, and told Tomas he could not stay in Ireland on St. Patrick's Day. And during that time, when he is away from Ireland, he is to be the same size as people in the land where he is staying.

When we arrived at the woodland, we sat down on a fallen tree trunk and rested. Paddy remarked that we would have to be very quiet and listen very carefully. After ten minutes, he whispered, "I hear something." I listened, but didn't hear anything. Then, I heard a wee voice and looking down by my feet, there stood a tiny, tiny man about 12 inches tall, dressed all in green.

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He sounded very upset as he said, "Paddy, who are these people you have brought back here into the woodland?" Our guide replied, "I thought maybe he could help you as his name is the same as yours, only in English."

Paddy then turned to me and asked if Mary and I would take Tomas into our home for just a few days, around St. Patrick's Day? I looked down at Tomas. He was sitting on a stone sobbing and crying his little heart out. I felt so sorry for that small creature, I was almost in tears myself. I asked Tomas if he would like to come to our home for a few days, during his time of banishment. The tears stopped flowing and he had a big smile on his face and he threw his arms around my ankle and hugged me. I laid out the rules: there would be no shenanigans and he would have to do some community service while he was staying with us. He asked what community service was. I told him he would have to visit the children in some of the schools and visit the elderly in nursing homes. He agreed with that and seemed very pleased to do so.

Tomas has kept his agreement with me and has done community service each year while he is staying with Mary and me. He visits some of the schools and nursing homes in Rock County. Tomas has been coming over, to spend a few days with us, each year now, for about 25 years and we hope he will continue to come for many more years. He has become like one of our family.

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South Central Honors George Havey and Corky Powers



George Havey and Corky Powers

POWERS "IRISH-BY-OSMOSIS"

The South Central Shamrock Club has chosen Corinne "Corky" Powers as the Irish Rose for 2006.

Powers is the daughter of Walter and Frieda Dixon and was born in Detroit. After graduating from high school in Detroit, she earned a degree in art education from Michigan State University and worked on her master's degree at the University of Wisconsin. Powers taught art education in the

Wauwatosa School District from 1953 to 1983.

Corky married Tom Powers and the couple recently celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary. They had three children, Bernadine Marie Powers of Chicago, Daniel John Powers of Brookfield and Loretta Ann Kettler of Platteville. Corky and Tom have six grandchildren.

Upon retirement, Corky and Tom moved to Hillpoint, where they own and operate a 214-acre tree farm. Tom was recently recognized as Outstanding Tree Farmer by Sauk County and the five-county southwest Wisconsin Tree Farm District.

Powers is a member of St. Patrick's Church at Loreto. She was an active member of the Wisconsin Educational Association from 1953 through 1983. A past member of the Wauwatosa Curling Club, she served as president of Wauwatosa Granites, the Women's Division of the Club. She was a member of Westmoor Country Club in Brookfield. Until moving to Hillpoint, she curled with the Portage Curling Club for a few years.

Powers has been a loyal member of the South Central Shamrock Club, has served as decorating chairperson for the club's special events. Powers states that she is "Irish by osmosis" only. The South Central Shamrock Club feels that anyone who lives with an Irishman for 50 years is quite qualified to be named "The Irish Rose for 2006."

HAVEY NO STRANGER TO IRELAND

George D. Havey has been named "The Irish Man of the 2006" by the South Central Shamrock Club.

George was born to George A. and Winnifred C. Hamil Havey and was raised in Lyndon Station. His Irish heritage can be traced back to his maternal great-grandfathers, Edward J. Scully from County Offaly and Peter Hamil of County Monaghan in Ireland and George's paternal grandfather, Patrick Havey was from County Kildare in Ireland.

Before joining the Army, Havey attended high school in Mauston. In the Army he was assigned to the 138th Army Engineers during World War II serving in Bavaria and Germany. After attaining the rank of sergeant, Havey was honorably discharged in September 1946. In 1947 he began working for the railroad starting as a fireman and working his way up to engineer. After 35 years of service, he retired from the Canadian Pacific Railroad.

On Dec. 6, 1980, Havey married Rita Kerigan at St. Cecelia's Catholic Church in Wisconsin Dells. No children were born to this marriage, but Rita's daughter, Linda, has been like a daughter to George, and Linda's son, Logan, is a true grandson. Linda is married to Dr. Bernard Micke of Madison. Rita was diagnosed with cancer in December 1991 and passed away January 19, 1992.

Havey is a lifetime member of St. Mary's Catholic Church in Lyndon Station, a lifetime member of the Knights of Columbus, Veterans of Foreign Wars and a 33-year member of the Elks Club. After his retirement from the railroad he worked for the Riverview Corp. in Wisconsin Dells, working at

the “Old River Mini Golf Course” and also worked part time as a bartender. He was chosen the grand marshal of the 150th Centennial Celebration of Lyndon Station in 2004.

Havey has visited Ireland many times and, after going through the proper channels, has been granted dual citizenship. He maintains that dual citizenship and plans another visit this year.

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Rock County

UPCOMING EVENTS

- **APRIL 18** – Regular meeting at 7 p.m. followed by the White Elephant Gift Exchange
- **MAY 16** – Regular meeting at 7 p.m.
- **JUNE, JULY, AUGUST** – There will not be any monthly meetings.

After our April meeting we will have the White Elephant Gift Exchange which we have had at the Christmas Party in other years.

Do you have any item around your home, which you have enjoyed for many years, and now you think it is time to get it out of your home and let someone else enjoy that item just as much as you have enjoyed it? Just think how you will enrich another person’s life by participating in this White Elephant Gift Exchange.

As in the past, there will not be any meetings during the summer but we will have our annual picnic in August. There will be more information about the picnic at our May meeting and in the June and July Emerald Reflections.

– **President Tom Kennedy**

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Milwaukee President’s Message

Have we reached the 4th month of the year already? Wow, this wonderful time of year brings us every kind of weather Wisconsin has. The preview of warmer days and getting back out in the yard and garden, reminds us to plant or move our rose bushes. Try planting the beautiful St. Patrick’s rose with its green tinged yellow roses, and you’ll have a visual treat all summer.

Are you still catching your breath from March? Did we create memories for all of you or what? It started with the March general meeting with the Shamrock Color Guard Pipe and Drums concert, after the awarding of the plaques and sashes to our honorees. The next night was a lovely reception hosted by Joe and Catherine Donovan, John Maher, and Kris Pluskota, and was second to none. Then onto the mass on March 11th with Father Terry Brennan at St. Patrick's Church, where the sacred music as led by Bob Harrold and choir was inspirational. This mass is a wonderful tribute to St. Patrick, and is chaired by Chuck and Bonnie McLaughlin, my thanks to them for this. Thanks to all the Irish dance schools for sending representatives, the Knights of Columbus, the Emerald Society, Irish Fest, the ICHC, the AOH, and all other Irish groups. What a great way to begin the day with a tribute to the saint that brought Christianity to Ireland.

Did you try the pancake breakfast at the ICHC hosted by the AOH? Every effort was made to continue the breakfast tradition, and we thank the AOH for coming forward and doing this. Then you could have taken the bus downtown with other members to be part of the parade, while Sue Suit and her kitchen crew prepared the food for the rest of us for the post parade party. Thank you to all the people that forego the parade to stay behind to prepare for the crowds coming in afterwards. They're the best.

Our parade directors, Mike Boyle, Mike O'Leary, and Mark Smith should be so proud of the job they did to prepare and deliver one of the few parades we have in this city. Mike O'Leary worked his heart out to increase our sponsorship dollars, and will receive all the kudos for doing this. Mike Boyle and his talented daughters Erin and Meghan provided us with youth volunteers, and a parade layout the military would envy. Mark Smith used his talents with administration and dedication. Richard Champion and his volunteers acted as "block captains" providing direction and security before and after the parade. You won't be surprised to know that Kris Pluskota, as part of this team, did the sponsor billing, and all the contact mailings. This is a major undertaking, which made the work of the others easier. Also, a big thank you to our web master Brian Witt for the updated web site and the traffic it's generated. All of these people should be thanked for their dedication.

The post parade party was special. For the price of admission, you saw music, singing and dancing second to none, and we know you shopped at our retail sales area under Noreen Barclay's supervision. Did you buy raffle tickets from the Quinlan family? Did you know they're in charge of the bar too? Did you buy a raffle ticket from Tom Smith? Or, did you sign up as a new member? Thanks to Ed and Betty Mikush, Bob Mikush and his daughter Bridget, plus Marianne Fisher for the clean up detail. This family must have batteries somewhere in their backs. Oh, and Marianne did all the work to keep the monies under control as treasurer.

You were out on March 17th? What was the best thing to do? Some of my family members do an annual Irish bus brigade, and that's all I will tell you about it. They tell me they do have fun, but we'll just take their word. What traditions does your family have for that day? There are more Irish people

on that day than any other, and we welcome them all.

Don't forget this is the last month to make your nominations for club officers. The person must be a member, and be present to accept, so if you want to run for office, please be there and make it known. Voting is done at the May meeting. I've served my term limits and you will be electing a new president, and trustee. The other officers are eligible to run again, and I hope they will.

Now don't forget our Easter Rising Mass at the ICHC at 9:30 a.m. with Father Michael Maher on April 16, of course. Betty Mikush will chair the mass, and this family mass, will be followed by a continental breakfast. We look forward to it.

See you at the next meeting.

– Julie Smith, President

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Shamrock Club of Wisconsin Honoree Dinner

Sunday, June 11, 2006

Please join us in honoring the Irishman of the Year John G. Maher, Irish Rose Kristine Carrigg Pluskota, and Parade Marshals Joe and Catherine Donovan.

Serb Hall, 5101 West Oklahoma Avenue, Milwaukee, WI

Cost: \$25 includes tax and tip

Cocktails 5 pm (Cash Bar) • Dinner 6 pm

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Number of people attending: _____

Sit down dinner choices:

_____ Stuffed Pork Chops

_____ Lemon Chicken

_____ Beef Stroganoff

Make checks payable to the Shamrock Club of Wisconsin and mail to:

Tom and Julie Smith
1107 South 26th Street
Milwaukee, WI 53204

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Spring Hallamor Concerts #3 and #4

Luka Bloom
Saturday, April 15, 2006

Luka Bloom was born in Newbridge, County Kildare, Ireland and began his career touring at age 14 with older brother Christy Moore. He has performed with legendary bands such as the Pogues, the Hothouse Flowers, and the Violent Femmes. Luka's reputation as a skilled guitarist and uplifting performer has grown and his solo career has allowed him to balance his own works with reinventions of songs by a diverse range of writers. He accompanies himself on electronic-acoustic guitars and other instruments which he has named Rudy, Judy, and other names to be discovered at the concert!

Seamus Kennedy
Saturday, April 22, 2006

Belfast native, Seamus Kennedy has delighted audiences throughout the United States for almost thirty years with his exceptional musical skills and unmatched repartee. His trademark is his on-going interaction with his audience, encouraging them to relax and enjoy themselves, and get into the act, singing along to silly lyrics and daft ditties. The result is an evening with great songs, fast paced humor and genuine fun. He can, however, sing more somber ballads such as "There Were Roses" and then you can hear a pin drop. Call the ICHC at (414) 345-8800 with questions or to order tickets.

8 pm Concerts

Doors open at 6:45 -- Opening acts at 7 pm

Tickets: \$19 advance, \$21 day of concert

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Nomination of

Milwaukee Officers

Nominations for officers of the Milwaukee chapter will take place at the March and April meetings. Persons nominated must be members in good standing of the Shamrock Club, with dues paid in full, and must be present for their nominations. Elections will take place at the May 4, 2006 meeting.

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Easter Rising Mass

Sunday, April 16, 2006; 9:30 a.m.

Celebrate the Mass In Honor Of the 1916 Easter Rising

Continental Breakfast to follow

Irish Cultural and Heritage Center
2133 West Wisconsin Avenue,
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

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ICHC Shamrock Fund Raiser

The ICHC Shamrock Fund Raiser is a way to raise needed funds for the ICHC. Mailings went out in March. Purchase a shamrock for \$1, and help keep the ICHC vital and alive.

– Joe Hughes

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Color Guard News and Notes

By the time this issue has rolled out, the Green Season has come and gone.

Our hopes were pinned on tolerable March Milwaukee/Chicago weather (kilts are pretty drafty, you know!) and a great time in Savannah's St.

Patrick's day Parade.

Did you know that the Savannah St. Patrick's celebration is the 2nd largest in the U.S.? We're very excited to have the chance to represent our club, and the state of Wisconsin in that parade. Thanks again to the Shamrock Club and its members for its support.

We couldn't have done it without you.

We've got a lot going on for 2006!

Our fearless leader is well on the mend; Holly's engaged; Bobby's off to college; Noel's playing in the New York City Tartan Day Parade; Dan's back from a month long sojourn Downunder (even took his pipes); Brigid and Will came back for our trip; Alicia is now a nurse – WOW; Neil and Rand took flight as new pipers; Roc is back after a few years respite from playing. There is so much more to come from all of us....

We're working really hard to add technically more difficult tunes to our repertoire. Look for us to field a much larger band than in seasons past – 18 pipers (a new record), a large drum section and our ever-excellent color guard.

We are still in need of color guard members for this season! No experience needed, just the love of wearing a kilt and a desire to have fun.

We look forward to seeing you in 2006!

– Noel Tylla, **guest columnist, 3rd Year Piper**

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Tartan Day Week (April 2-8)

In 1998 the U.S. Senate declared that April 6 would be National Tartan Day, in honor of contributions made by citizens of Scottish descent. Last year several Milwaukee groups banded together to celebrate "Tartan Day Week" for the first time. The tradition continues in 2006 with several days of variety with a Scottish flavor. Events at the ICHC will be alive with festive tartans, kilts, bagpipes, dancers and music. The Hallamór will be decorated with tartans all week.

Clan Donald will host a "Kirkin' o' the Tartan" on Sunday, April 2 at 2 p.m. This is a very festive ceremony in the Hallamór, followed by whiskey-tasting in the Parlors.

On Thursday, April 6, the actual Tartan Day, UWM will host Scottish speaker(s) at the Hefter Center.

Back at the ICHC on Friday, April 7, Flora MacDonald Gammon will

emcee a Sit-Down Ceilidh at 7 p.m. This will be a feature of the First Friday Lecture Series for the Conference of Celtic Women, surrounded by the many tartan banners in the Hallamór.

This event and all the others are open to the public. Another fund-raiser follows on Saturday, April 8 for the Wisconsin Scottish Highland Games as they take over the ICHC with bands, Scottish food and drink, and their famous raffle.

Come and join in these colorful events and share the fun enjoyed with Scottish heritage.

– **Jean Bills**

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Celtic Women First Friday Lectures

April 7, 2006

Topic: Tartan Day Sit-Down Ceilidh

Speaker: Flora MacDonald Gammon

Part of the tradition begun in 2005 at the ICHC to celebrate National Tartan Day, Flora returns to emcee the Scottish Sit-Down Ceilidh in the Hallamór.

She brings to us her pure voice, mountain dulcimer, and a vast knowledge of Scottish history as she blends the talents of other singers, musicians and dancers in a wonderful evening of entertainment. Flora is music director for the Grandfather Mountain Highland Games in North Carolina. Note: This month's session begins at 7 p.m.

Lectures are held in Parlor A of the ICHC usually from 5:30–7 p.m. Admission is \$5 and all are welcome, including members, non-members and men. More information on the many upcoming programs is available by calling the ICHC at (414) 345-8800 or on the ICHC web site: [www.ichc.net]. Parking Note: Please observe the posted signs designating the lots where parking is allowed for the ICHC. Thank you.

– **Jean Bills**

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Milwaukee Annual Parade Raffle

The Shamrock Club 40th Annual Parade Raffle in support of the Shamrock Club Scholarship Fund is taking place again. The raffle will be held on Thursday, April 6, at the Shamrock Club General Meeting, at 7:30 p.m. All money and ticket stubs must be returned by that time.

Top prize is \$1000, second prize is \$200, third prize is \$100, fourth is \$50, and three prizes of \$25 each. Tickets are \$2 each, three for \$5, and six for \$10, or twelve for \$20.

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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 – Karen Kestel.

- January: 25 memberships up for renewal, 20 paid, 5 due.
- February: 40 memberships up for renewal, 32 paid, 8 due.
- March: 87 memberships up for renewal.

– Tom Smith

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