



Jan. 2009

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“Mna na h Eireann” – The Women of Ireland

by Brian Witt

Everyone knows that the Irish woman is not like other women. There is a special quality that is only found in the feminine part of the Irish race. It can be strength, beauty, wisdom, or just a life filled with color. Whatever it is, the Irish woman has been a formidable force in the world for millennia. Here are a few of those *Mna na h Eireann* – the women of Ireland.

QUEEN MAEVE – Queen Maeve of Connacht was a central actor of the Irish mythological saga, the *Tain*. One of the strong female characters in Irish history, this queen was always determined to get what she wanted, even if that meant bringing her kingdom into battle against Ulster’s legendary warrior, Cu Chulainn. The war was all for the sake of a brown bull. The reason she wanted the bull was because her husband, Ailill, the king of Ulster, had a white bull in his possession and she was determined to make sure that she owned a bull that was as good as, if not better, than his. The result was the bloody battle between Connacht and Ulster that saw the defeat of the western army, and the death of Cu Chulainn. Maeve’s tomb is supposed to be at the top of Knocknarea, or hill of the queen, outside Sligo.

GRACE O’MALLEY – Known as the “Pirate Queen”, this sixteenth-century clan leader not only captained her own ships, she carried out raids on English fleets which dared to sail to her territory. She also visited the court of Elizabeth the First and managed to secure the release of her son from prison and regain property and lordship rights for him from the queen.

The woman best known as Granuaile, an Anglicized version of her name in Irish, (Graine Ní Mháille), was born in Mayo in about 1530. Grace grew up on Clare Island off the coast of County Mayo. She was a woman very much ahead of her time and even when she married, she became the de facto leader of the

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O'Flaherties, the clan of her first husband. She was married as well to a member of the Burke clan of Clews Bay. She is buried on Clare Island. She died there in 1603, the same year as Elizabeth the First.

LADY GREGORY – Augusta Gregory was born Isabella Augusta Persse in 1852 in County Galway, and married a fellow member of the Anglo-Irish gentry, Sir William Gregory, in 1880. She was hugely interested in native Irish folklore and was also a playwright in her own right. Many of the leading lights of the Anglo-Irish literary movement, such as W. B. Yeats and J. M. Synge, visited her at her home in Coole Park in County Galway and it became a center for the literary movement. Lady Gregory is best known as a co-founder, along with W.B. Yeats and others, of the Abbey Theatre in Dublin.

CONSTANCE MARKIEVICZ – She was a revolutionary, labor activist, and the first female Member of Parliament elected to Westminster. She was born Constance Gore-Booth in 1868. She married Count Casimir Markievicz, a Polish nobleman she met in Paris. She was a member of a landed County Sligo family whose estate was at Lissadell. She was a commander in the 1916 Easter Rising.

She was a committed Irish republican and founded nationalist movements for young boys and for women. She was the Minister for Labour in the cabinet set up by the *Dail*, or Irish parliament, of 1919. She felt that the Anglo-Irish Treaty of 1921 was a betrayal of the Irish Republic, and opposed it until her death in 1927.

LOLA MONTEZ – Lola Montez was born Eliza Rosana Gilbert in Limerick in 1821. She was a dancer and courtesan, was the most notorious woman of her day. At 16, she eloped with an officer in the English army, whom she left five years later. Montez started her career as a dancer in London. She achieved fame initially when she followed the composer Franz Liszt to Europe. According to Liszt, Lola caused such a fuss that he had to lock her in their hotel room, pay the bill, and leave promptly. She then moved on to have an affair with King Ludwig of Bavaria. Lola Montez moved to San Francisco in 1851, and married Patrick Hull in 1853. She would later work with poor women in New York. At the age of 39, in 1861, she suffered a stroke, and died a few weeks short of her 40th birthday, of pneumonia. She was buried in New York.

MARIA EDGEWORTH – Born in 1767, this daughter of an Anglo-Irish landowner was a collaborator with her father on a modern guide for the education of children, but she found fame in her own right as the author of books such as “Castle Rackrent”.

Maria Edgeworth was one of a family of 22 children who lived on their father's estate in County Longford. Her father was a liberal landlord, and believed in educating his children according to the ideas of Rousseau. She died in 1849.

GREER GARSON – For many years, Greer Garson told people she was born in Belfast, and then moved to London. As one of MGM's major stars of the 1940s, Garson received seven Academy Award nominations, winning the Best Actress award for Mrs. Miniver (1942). She was often cast as the leading lady opposite Walter Pidgeon.

She was born Eileen Evelyn Greer Garson in London in 1904, it turns out. She appeared on television during its earliest years, in the 1930s, most notably in a thirty-minute production of an excerpt of Twelfth Night in May 1937. This is the first known instance of a Shakespeare play performed on television. She died in 1996 in Texas.

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South Central Shamrock Club January News

Happy New Year to all! January is membership renewal month.

Membership for Family is \$25 and includes *Emerald Reflections*.

Single Membership is \$20 and includes *Emerald Reflections*.

Make checks payable to: South Central Shamrock Club

Send to: Dana Horkan-Gant
610 Vine Street
Reedsburg, WI 53959

Any questions call 524-6821 regarding memberships.

Remember to include your birthdays, anniversary dates and email address if you wish to be notified by email.

We need new members and it takes all of us to recruit young Irish blood! Thanks!

January Birthday Wishes to: Roger Stieve 1/20, John Delmore 1/18, John Bill 1/24, Pat Frederickson 1/30, Kate Birdsell 1/30.

Sunday, January 18 at 4 p.m. is the South Central Shamrock Club Meeting. Place: Voyageur Inn, Reedsburg, WI

Don't forget to sell, sell raffle tickets!

Respectfully submitted,

– **Dana J. Horkan-Gant, Membership Chair**

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Milwaukee President's Message

2009! Happy New Year to all of our members and their families. The Shamrock Club will celebrate its 49th year of operation in March of this year. We certainly need to be proud of this accomplishment, and look forward to continued success.

Just to remind you that our meeting in January is on the 8th due to New Years Day of course. We will be gathering at the Irish Fest Center for the evening, and Archives Director Barry Stapleton will have a lecture prepared for all of us that will enhance your Irish music knowledge. If you have a person in mind to nominate for any one of our honoree positions, bring it to the meeting, mail it or even e-mail if you like. You must be a member to do this, and a member to win. The question comes up every year, and is a requirement of our bylaws. There are many members honored in the past that continue good works within the club, and some that have moved onto other interests. Nonetheless, I'm sure they are proud of past achievements and accomplishments in bringing the club this far, and for so many years.

Have you made or broken your resolutions for the new year? The most common resolutions always involve people wanting to lose weight, go to the gym more often, and improve their health. Not a bad idea at any time because we need to start shaping up for all that's happening this year and next. Only two months until the St. Patrick's Parade downtown under the direction of Mike O'Leary, and his mighty group of helpers. Westowne Association continues as our co-sponsor, and will be at our board meeting this month to discuss details. Any member is welcome to attend these meetings but just remember we start at 6 p.m. in January due to the selection of the honorees. The post parade party always needs many volunteers, and this year is no different. The post parade party will try a free entry this year to entice more folks to drop in for the fun. We will need a new chair for the mass to replace Bonnie and Chuck McLaughlin after 20+ years, as they have chosen to step down. This will be a hard act to follow, as the beauty and reverence of the mass has been a splendid start to the celebration, and the McLaughlins' have done this to perfection. Please notify me if you would like to be the new chair of this very wonderful tradition.

Let us know if you tried any of the delicious recipes in the December *Emerald Reflections*. We are always asked to provide this feature, and perhaps you brought one to the Christmas party. Brian Witt has not revealed if they are his own personal recipes, or if he tested them first. Brian didn't reveal if his wife Mary was given the day off while he did all the work either.

If you weren't at the last meeting, will you be at this one? We all want to see you there.

– Julie Smith, President

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Annual Scholarship Raffle

During February, March and early April we will sell our tickets for the Shamrock Club Scholarship Raffle. Tickets have been mailed. Please do what you can to help us to support our scholarship fund. Since the scholarship was reinstated, we have given away over \$10,000 to college level students. Since 1972, we have given away \$25,000 to students. The scholarships are for Irish studies related programs, and is open to all college level students. We also have a scholarship for pipers and drummers to attend the yearly Piping and Drumming School in Milwaukee, (the Ted Nestor Scholarship, open only to Shamrock Club members).

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50th Anniversary Committee

The 50th anniversary committee is looking for ideas for the Shamrock Club's celebration. Planned so far are a trip to Ireland, a dinner dance in September 2010, and a commemorative book. The commemorative book's editor, Brian Witt, is going to be looking to get biographies from our past presidents and honorees, Irish Roses, Irishmen, and Parade Marshals. We are also looking to have photos taken of all of past presidents and honorees. Look for notice of when we will be taking photos.

We are also looking for members to share their memories of the past half century. Memories can be happy, sad, or otherwise, long or short.

If you have any suggestions, or would wish to join the committee, please contact Josh Walton at [joshwalton1@yahoo.com].

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Bylaws Vote in January

There will be a vote by the general membership on the bylaws changes listed in the December, 2008 *Emerald Reflections* at the general membership meeting on January 8, 2009.

– Josh Walton, Parliamentarian

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Sean Nós Milwaukee 2009

Saturday, February 28 to Sunday, March 1

A warm welcome awaits you as tradition and talent from the hearth of Ireland comes to the heart of America for our 7th Annual Sean Nós Milwaukee. Our unique cultural weekend features classes in the Irish language, workshops in traditional singing and old style dancing, movies, concerts and presentations. Throughout the weekend you can also visit *Siopa Gaeilge*, our Irish language books and media shop. You will find a broad selection of Gaelic books and CDs, including *Sean-Nós Cois Locha*, our award-winning CD. *Beidh réimse leathan d'ábhar ar fáil idir leabhair, cheol, chúrsai Gaeilge agus gach uile áis eile don fhoghlaimoir Gaeilge.*

Our Sean Nós singer / instructors and language teachers include world renowned instructors from all across the Gaelic world. Sean Nós Gaeltacht Milwaukee 2009 kicks off on Saturday, February 28 with “The Gathering”, complete with an opening breakfast reception, introductory classes, our keynote address and an evening concert followed by an informal late night session. On Sunday, at the “The Scattering”, we will wrap up the classes and workshops, come together to plan future connections and ongoing exploration of our Gaelic culture. We will sing our Sean Nós Gaeltacht Milwaukee anthem *Mala Neifin* together and view an exciting new Gaelic language movie.

Registration for the entire weekend is \$125, which includes admission to all events, workshops and classes of your choice, breakfast and lunch Saturday, breakfast on Sunday and transfers to and from the County Clare. A special room rate will be available at the County Clare, a lovely Irish Inn on Milwaukee’s east side near the lake. To avail of this room rate you must contact Gabrielle at the UW-Milwaukee Center for Celtic Studies and register for Sean Nós Milwaukee. Also a \$40 deposit, part of the \$125 weekend fee, ensures a warm welcome at Sean-Nós Milwaukee 2009. Send deposit to UWM Center for Celtic Studies, P.O. Box 413, Milwaukee WI 53201-0413.

For more information, email: [schnei34@uwm.edu].

On the Web: [<http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/celtic/>]

Phone: (414) 229-6520

Bí linn! Join us for the convivial cultural weekend that is unique in North America!

Sean Nós Gaeltacht Milwaukee is sponsored by the UWM Center for Celtic Studies and Craobh Curtin Conradh na Gaeilge with support funding from the Irish Department for the Gaeltacht Rural and Community Affairs.

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Color Guard News and Notes

Hope you all had a very festive New Year or Hogmanay Celebration ringing in the bells for 2009. I spent it with Milwaukee Scottish and their shindig at the lovely ICHC on New Year's Eve. It was a blast and a very excellent way to ring in the new Year. I hope you also all caught our very own Super Dave Culver in the Rose Bowl Parade. I'm so proud of him. So proud. I hope he'll give us a report on his travels for February's issue.

2009 marks my 6th year with this group. Can you believe it? It seems like yesterday when I first started to learn. It's an ongoing process as you can guess, and far, far from done. They say it takes seven years to learn the pipes properly. I suspect I'm on the 10 year plan, like in College! A very large thanks to my tutor Sarajane who is always patient and encouraging. Being an adult student of this instrument proves more difficult than starting when you're young. But I'll make it someday. Even if it takes me 20 years!

Speaking of the bagpipes before I forget. Something to mark down in your calendars. I have once again signed up to march in New York City's Tartan Day Parade being held April 4.

I've missed it the past two years, but will again be able to meet up with my Scottish friend, Thomas Grotrian for the post parade party at the St. Andrew's Society. I received an email a few days ago from a New York pipe band that invited me to march in their block with them as they saw I was coming alone. Of course I accepted and look forward to making pipe band friends as well in the Big Apple. Maybe by that time, some of my friends in the SCCGPD will join me for the weekend in marching down 6th Avenue! (hint hint!) [www.Tartanweek.com].

Asides, the band is taking a well deserved break for a few more weeks and then it's back to practice mid-January. By press time,

it's a mere eight weeks to our 2009 March debut. You'll hear new music, and see new faces. Watch the website for more details and impromptu gigs before then [www.sccgpd.com].

Speaking of new faces, a wee welcome to Cara, an early Christmas present for Pipe Sargent Mike and Lea Cornell (7lbs, 6oz). I've heard she has the lungs to play the pipes. Also, another member is expecting in June of this year, but I'll keep a secret until closer to the due date.

And a last note, a special hug to a friend in the group that's in need. You know who you are. Just want to let you know I'm thinking about you.

More news in February, I'll spare you the boring details of my current sewing projects to fill the space.

Until then my friends;

– Noel Tylla, 6th year piper

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First Friday Lectures

Our First Friday lectures began in September of 1997 and continue now into the twelfth year without interruption. We invite everyone to stop in at a lecture that interests you and enjoy a couple of wonderful hours on wildly various Celtic topics. They are truly gems in our midst.

Greene Hall at 3347 N. Downer Ave. on UWM campus is a very Celtic-like venue and very user-friendly for parking, wheelchair ramp, etc. We aim to please with a cup of tea, cookies, and often even more. 5:30 – 7 p.m. \$7 admission keeps us afloat and your attendance keeps us going. Our lectures are scheduled into the fall season of 2009 – you can pick up a copy of the schedule at any lecture.

JANUARY 9, 2009

(NOTE THIS IS THE SECOND FRIDAY)

TOPIC: “Celtic Sports for Celtic Women”

SPEAKERS: Kristen Scheuing & Cory Johnson

The Milwaukee Hurling Club and the Irish Currach Club of Milwaukee are thriving in our own backyards. These ancient Celtic sports are available for interested persons to learn and participate, and they involve women as major players. Cory and Kristen will describe their sports, the local teams and how we can watch them play or get involved.

COMING SOON:

- “Women’s Tales from the Seven Celtic Nations”
- “Genealogy for Dummies”
- “Ladies Ancient Order of Hibernians”

– Jean Bills

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**Cheese Days 2008
in Monroe, Wisconsin**





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A Half Century Of the Shamrock Club

In anticipation of our fiftieth anniversary, we will do occasional glances back into the pages of *Emerald Reflections* and the *News and Notes*

March 1977 – Donn Goodwin, Editor:

Shamrock Club Dancers Dancing News

What a wonderful month this is going to be – we plan on dancing our way through it!

We're all looking forward to participating in the Club Parade, Saturday, March 12, and we'll be topping off the evening with a performance at the Knights of Columbus on Wisconsin Avenue.

On Monday the 14th, we'll be back celebrating St. Patrick's Week with the senior citizens at their headquarters in Washington Park, and then with the folks at Benjamin Health Care Centre. That evening we will be dancing at the P.A.C. with the famous Bards.

On St Patrick's Day itself the festivities will be in high gear, so everyone everywhere celebrates the "Irishness". The folks at Friendship Village Centre and at St. Matthew's Catholic Church know how to celebrate in high style, and we'll be dancing at parties given by both on St. Paddy's Day.

For those who will not yet have had enough partying, St. Peter and Paul's Parish will be celebrating on March 19th, and we will be dancing for them.

So that is where your dancers will be during the month of March, bringing traditional Irish dancing and music to each new group of people we can meet.

We wish you a fun filled March. (Mary Eileen Geary TCRG and Mary Griffey)

Thank you

Our special thanks to Johnny Logan, Mike Hegan, Bill Travers, Gorman Thomas, and the Brewers for the program at our last meeting. (Rod Keenan)

Yes, Saturday, March 12th Will be a Great Day for the Irish

St. Patrick, (Pat McMahan), is cultivating his beard. Our lovable leprechaun, (John McMahan), is starching his green tails, and Mitchell Street is planning a green stripe down its mall. (Danny O'Donoghue, Parade Chairman, 1977)

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Nominations For Irish Honorees

Nominations for the Irishman of the Year, Irish Rose, and Parade Marshal will continue to be taken in January. Nominations must be in by the January board meeting. Each nominee must be a club member to be eligible. Send nominations to Shamrock Club, 2133 West Wisconsin Avenue, Milwaukee, WI 53233.

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Post Parade Party March 14

The Shamrock Club's Post Parade Party plans are underway. The Post Parade Party will feature these groups and performers: *Green Tea, Blarney, athas, Celtic Keep, Ian Gould* and *Steel Bonnets*. The *Shamrock Club Color Guard, Pipes and Drums* will open the Hallamór performances at 1:15 p.m. *Blarney* and the *Caledonian Scottish Dancers* will be performing upstairs, and Parlor B will feature *athas, Celtic Keep, Ian Gould* and *Steel Bonnets*. Along with the Color Guard, *Green Tea, Rince Nia* and *Cashel Dennehy* will be in the Hallamór. A third school will be announced soon.

The party runs 1–6 p.m. at the Irish Cultural and Heritage Center, 2133 West Wisconsin. The party is a part of the Shamrock Club's events on March 14, including Downtown Saint Patricks Parade Milwaukee.

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24th Annual Mass In Honor Of St. Patrick

The Shamrock Club of Wisconsin's 24th Annual Mass in Honor of St Patrick will take place on Saturday, March 14, 2009 at 8:30 a.m. Milwaukee Bishop William Callahan will be the celebrant of the Mass. It will feature readings in Irish and English, the Shamrock Club Color Guard Pipes and Drums, most Irish organizations, including dance schools, and more. The Shamrock Club Choir, under the direction of Bob Harrold, will be singing the liturgy.

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Festival of Trees



Marianne Fisher and Kris Pluskota at the Boy Scout's Festival of the Trees with the Shamrock Club's tree.

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Milwaukee Celtic

Our fall season is completed. We will start our mid-winter season on January 2 at the Uihlein Field indoor center. Uihlein Field is located at 70th and Good Hope. Our schedule will be posted soon online, and in the February *Reflections*. The Celtics are proud to be playing in the Shamrock Club colors under the sponsorship of the Milwaukee chapter, and are proud to be Shamrock Club members. We are having a jersey sale this fall. They will be about \$50 each. Contact Mike Simons at [mav2101@hotmail.com] or [m.simons@dercoaerospace.com] to order.

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Members Doings

Congratulations to Maeve Smith on winning 2nd place in the Western Region Oireachtas for girls U8. There were 128 girls in this competition. Brian Smith was part of the soccer team winning 1st place in their league and added to the record by never being scored upon.

Erin Stephens was awarded her license to practice law earlier this month, and is the daughter of Terry and Kathy Stephens.

Dan and Chrissy Wiesehuegel have moved to Random Lake for an opportunity with the fire department.

Bobby and Sheila Hamill will be spending a semester in Spain.

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Sunshine Club

Mike and Lea Cornell are the proud parents of Cara. Tom Blaha recently had surgery. Dan Gleeson, brother of John, died recently in Ireland. Our condolences to the Gleeson family.

If you have any information about members, please contact me, Joe Donovan, (414) 259-8040.

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