



Oct. 2010

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Samhain Celebrations and Games

by Brian Witt

November 1 is *Samhain*, the Celtic New Year. It is that time when the harvest is collected, the days are getting shorter and darker, and the cool of winter is knocking at the door. *Samhain* means "Summer's End."

It was also the festival of the dead, when the boundary between the world of the living and that of the dead was the thinnest, and with the slaughter of animals and the death of crops, it allowed the dead to reach back through the veil of life and death.

For those of us living in a world of continual light, it is hard to imagine what the darkness meant to the Gaels. With light that was provided only by the hearth and tallow lamps, and had to be preserved for the whole of winter, it was the beginning of a season of night noises, cold and preserved food.

In the country year, *Samhain* marked the first day of winter, when the herders led the cattle and sheep down from summer's pastures to be closer to home. Hay that would feed them during the winter would be stored in the farm's outbuildings, secured against winter storms. The harvest had to be gathered, as the faeries and pucas would attack every growing plant with their breath, killing whatever standing crops might remain.

Members of the household worked together to create the stores of salted meat and preserves. Peat and wood for winter fires were stacked high near the hearth.

Samhain was when farmers would check their herds and grain supplies, and decide which animals would be slaughtered. It is a custom still observed by many who farm and raise livestock because it is when meat will keep until the freeze would come.

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With the death of summer grasses, it was harder to keep cattle fed without being able to forage.

Bonfires played a large part in the festivities. The bonfires were fueled using the dead stalks of crops, and other organic material. On occasion, the bones of cattle were tossed in, in homage to the pre-Christian sacrifice rituals. Villagers would extinguish all other fires in the village. The hearths of homes were lit using the bonfire flames, therefore creating a bond amongst the families. When two bonfires were built side by side, people would walk between the fires in a purification ritual.

With death came a desire to avoid the dead. People would dress to avoid having their families come back and impose upon them, so they would dress up in costumes or masks to disguise themselves. In Scotland, and some parts of Northern Ireland, men and women would exchange clothing, in case dead relatives, or those who had a reason to hurt the living, could recognize them by their wardrobe. The resultant confusion of those who passed on would protect them.

The carving of turnips into lanterns with faces was also done to protect those who were carrying them. These turnips were not the red variety, but rather a larger white turnip, more closely related to the rutabaga. It is also called the swede. (It wasn't until the Irish and Scots came to America that they found the pumpkin was better for such purposes.)

With the costumes came the guisers, men, and then children, in disguise, who would go door to door looking for food or drink, or money. At the time of mass transatlantic Irish and Scottish immigration that popularized Halloween in North America, Halloween in Ireland and Scotland had a strong tradition of guising and pranks.

Games and divination practices are associated with *Samhain*. Among them were those dealing with marriage, weather, and the coming fortunes for the next year. One such method was to slice an apple in half, and then eat it by candlelight before a mirror. A future spouse would then appear over your shoulder.

Dunking for apples was a marriage divination. The first person to bite an apple would be the first to marry the next year. Peeling an apple was a sign of your life span, as the longer the unbroken apple peel, the longer your life was destined to be.

Dreaming stones would be collected with closed eyes from a stream, while saying, "I will lift the stone, As Mary lifted it for her Son, For substance, virtue, and strength; May this stone be in my hand, Till I reach my journey's end," would be placed under a pillow, a dream would be asked for that would give guidance or a solution to a problem, and the stones would bring it.

Enjoy the start of the new Celtic year. Enjoy the bounty of the harvest, and have a happy Halloween.



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Milwaukee President's Message

Greetings! Fall is my favorite season: the days seem brighter, the air seems crisper, the colors brighter and the nights are cooler and the cider warmer. It's time for the World Series, Badgers and Packers and your favorite high school football team.

But before we turn our attention to fall, let's remember the efforts of all our Shamrock Club members who volunteered during Irish Fest especially Kris and Daryl Pluskota and their 40 plus volunteers who ran a very successful and profitable retail booth and to Denis Donohoe and his crew in the cultural area who signed up 23 new members.

Fall means Halloween and for the October meeting, our Sergeant-at-arms, Veronica Ceszynski, asks that members attend in Halloween garb, as little or as extravagant as you want to go. And bring a dish or dessert to pass for the meal that now starts at 6:30 just before the start of the meeting.

The AOH William Ryan Drew Spaghetti Dinner is October 2 at St. Rose of Lima Church. The event starts with a speaker at 4 p.m., with Mass to follow where the Shamrock Club's Irish Rose and Man of the Year have been invited to do the readings. The dinner follows in the school hall.

The Shamrock Club Pipes and Drums and Color Guard continues to grow under the direction of Rand Harteau and Dan McCormack. If you are interested in joining or know some one who is please inform Rand or Dan.

It's Folk Fair time at the Wisconsin State Fair Expo, November 19-21. This year marks the 30th anniversary of the Folk Fair whose theme this year is Peace. Please volunteer for the retail booth headed by Kris and Daryl Pluskota (or at least help set up or tear down the booth), the food booth, again serving the prize winning Irish Stew in a bread bowl, buttered potatoes and many other delicacies with head chef Mary Culver or the culture booth run by Denis Donohoe who will again demonstrate the Irish step dance. Please volunteer at the next meeting with the area chairs or with general chair Malkin Wallace. And if you can't work, at least buy your admission tickets from 30 year Folk Fair volunteer Muriel Crowley.

As a club we are always interested in new group activities so I am asking the membership if they have any suggestions. Would

anybody be interested in a casino bus trip this winter or maybe a run down to Arlington Park next summer?

Any other ideas?

As they say in the newspaper trade, this issue went to press before we could get a review of the 50th Anniversary Dinner Dance but I guarantee all had a grand time on a most memorable evening.

See you at the next meeting

– Josh Walton, President joshwalton1@yahoo.com

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2010 HOLIDAY FOLK FAIR

**State Fair Park
November 19, 20, 21, 2010**

The Shamrock Club must sell 125 Holiday Folk Fair Tickets
Any unsold tickets must be purchased by the club at full value.

HELP US MEET OUR GOAL!

If you are a teacher, please contact us on advance tickets.

SAVE NOW ON ADVANCE SALE FOLK FAIR TICKETS

Please send me _____ advance sale Holiday Folk Fair Tickets
at \$8 each.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State: _____

Zip: _____

Make your ticket request to:
Folk Fair Tickets
c/o ICHC
2133 W. Wisconsin Ave. Milwaukee, WI 53233

Your tickets will be sent to you by return mail and are good on any
of the three days of Folk Fair: November 19, 20, 21.

**MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO:
SHAMROCK CLUB OF WISCONSIN**

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Volunteers Needed For Holiday Folk Fair

We will need help in a number of areas. If you would like to work a four hour shift at the Holiday Folk Fair, please contact the Shamrock Club's Holiday Folk Fair Chairwomen: (General) Malkin Wallace, (414) 234-0653, or [Malkin218@aol.com]; (Food) Mary Culver at [redheadgardener@hotmail.com]; (Sales) Kris Pluskota, at (414) 345-8800 or [director@ichc.net]; or (Cultural) Denis Donohoe, (262) 309-0723 or [djvdonohoe@sbcglobal.net]. Or contact us at our e-mail address, [volunteers@shamrockclubwis.com]. You will receive the annual Folk Fair participant pin, plus admission for Folk Fair for all three days. Our Dance School Coordinator is Bridget Jaskulski. She can be reached at [Bridget@GlencastleIrishDancers.com]

Admission is as follows: Adults \$8 in advance. Tickets will be available for sale at the October and November membership meetings. You can also use the accompanying order form to purchase tickets via mail. As a sponsoring group of the Fair we need to sell a number of tickets or make up the cost elsewhere.

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October Repast

For the October meeting the Shamrock Club will provide chicken casseroles. Please bring your own hot dishes as well as salads, veggies, and desserts. Fall goodies and Halloween treats, apples or the wonderful items you grew this summer are needed.

Members really seem to like the community spirit evolving from our pre-meeting dinners and are bringing their appetites along with friendship. Because more people are coming early to eat and chat your food specialties are welcomed. We serve about 60 people

Questions? Comments? New ideas? Call Veronica at (414) 228-8621 and I'll be glad to hear from you.

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John Doyle and John Williams at ICHC on Oct. 16

Guitarist John Doyle and button accordion/concertina player John Williams, two of the most influential and celebrated performers of traditional Irish music, will present a duo show at the Irish Cultural and Heritage Center, 2133 W. Wisconsin Ave., Milwaukee, at 7:30 p.m. on Saturday, Oct. 16. The concert marks the first in the ICHC's fall Hallamor series.

Pre-concert music in Quinlan's Pub will be provided by the exciting and innovative Milwaukee quartet *Myserk* from 6:30-7:15.

Founding members of the groundbreaking Irish-American band *Solas* in 1995, Doyle and Williams each moved on to solo careers as well as collaborations with a who's who of other artists. A recent collaboration for Doyle and fiddler Liz Carroll led to a 2010 Grammy Award nomination for the album *Double Play* in the traditional world music category.

Born in Dublin into a family of musicians and singers, Doyle was called "a dream guitarist" by *Irish Edition*. He pioneered a highly rhythmic, sophisticated approach to Irish guitar and set a new standard for the instrument. Because of his contemporary approach along with his gifts as a songwriter, vocalist and producer, Doyle is credited with playing an essential role in the ongoing renaissance of Irish traditional music.

Williams was born in Chicago and absorbed the heart and vitality of his family's County Clare roots during summers in Doolin. Williams has five All-Ireland titles to his credit and was the first American to win first place in the Senior Concertina category. A multi-instrumentalist, he has been featured on numerous TV and radio programs including *A Prairie Home Companion* and *The Grand Ol' Opry*. His piano playing is heard on the Academy Award-nominated film score for *Road to Perdition*, where it is "performed" by Paul Newman and Tom Hanks.

Tickets for the show are \$19 in advance and \$23 the day of concert with discounts for students and groups. The subscription price for the three Hallamor concerts is \$51.30. To order online, visit [www.ichc.net]. Tickets may also be ordered by calling (414) 345-8800.

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Retail Booth

A huge *Thank You* goes out to everyone who helped with the

retail booth at Irish Fest and Wisconsin Scottish Highland Games. Daryl and I appreciated your enthusiasm, energy and above all your confidence and support in our new endeavors. We had a lot of exposure at both events and are looking forward to Holiday Folk Fair on November 19, 20, 21, 2010 at State Fair Park. Please call me at (414) 345-8800 or email [director@ichc.net] to sign up for your shift. We need to have names and addresses of volunteers into the Holiday Folk Fair office by October 15, 2010.

Again, Thank You !

– Kristine & Daryl Pluskota

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Color Guard News & Notes

Hello Everyone; We have arrived at October! Halloween this month, the Celtic New Year. All sorts of spooky noises and scary sights. The band is coming to a close on our season, and that is hard to believe. We will be a part of the AOH's Mass of Irish Remembrance at St. Rose of Lima Church and Hall. We will play for the Mass at 4 p.m. See us in Sister Bay Parade on October 16, too.

We enjoyed the concert we played at the Anniversary Dinner Dance at the Humphrey Scottish.

Let us all have a fantastic Halloween

– Noel Tylla, 7th year piper

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Donate to the Shamrock Club

The Shamrock Club is a 501(C) (3) corporation. If you donate to us, you can write this off on your taxes. Donate to our Scholarship fund, our general fund, or to the parade. Thank you!

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Milwaukee Membership News

What a successful Irish Fest this year. I would like to welcome the following new Members joining in August of this year: Deanna Amidzich, Shane Liam Bagin, Mathew Cohen, Tony Connolly, Ted & Michelle Davis, Lizbeth A Devalkenaere, Deb Felder, Diana & Denise Gerber, Susan M Gordon, Jackie Harcourt & Family, Kathy Karth, Quinn Kopplin, Mary Krajnak, Kathy & Louis LaFrance, Tom Mauermann, Martha Morrison, Jeannine Olson, Mary Quirk-Johnson, May Jo Runnue, Brian Sneed, Janis Strucel, Steve Sullivan, and Keith & Brandy Watson.

We now have our new durable static cling Label/Stickers that will last longer and can be easily placed on windows in cars and homes without worry of fading. Please let me know via e-mail or find me at the October meeting and I will give you one.

The Milwaukee Chapter as of August 31, has 390 Members with 196 Family and 194 Single memberships. Statewide our Membership totals 530 Members.

Please be sure to have your memberships renewals in before November 1 for those who's expire 10/31/2010.

– Denis Donohoe, Membership Chair

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By-Laws Review

The Shamrock Club will be holding its bi-annual review of the bylaws. If you have suggestions, or would like to join the by-law committee, contact Tom McAleese at [mcaleese@wi.rr.com], or call (414) 536-5306.

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Milwaukee Hurling Club News



Shamrock Club Griffins Co-Captains Brian Leonard (left) and Dave Goelz present Josh Walton the team hurley, picture and jersey.

Sunday, August 29th brought us to the end of another successful Milwaukee Hurling Club season as the McBob's Gael Winds took on Packy's Dublin Blues in the MHC championship. From the initial throw in to the end of the first half, both teams were feeling out the opponent, trying to create a mismatch here or there and that resulted in relatively few scores. In the second half, McBob's opened up a nine point lead, but thanks to a goal and a couple of points by Packy's, they were able to shave the lead down to four.

McBob's nearly immediately responded with a goal of their own to bump the lead to seven and added a couple more points to ice things as the final whistle sounded. Congratulations to both McBob's and Packy's for a fine match and also to all of the players and supporters of the MHC – everyone's involvement makes the club what it is!

MHC Championship: McBob's 3-10 (19) Packy's 2-5 (11)

The MHC sent four teams down to Chicago's Gaelic Park over Labor Day weekend for the NACB championships. The MHC was represented in camogie, Junior A hurling and Junior C hurling.

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Milwaukee October Meeting

Please wear something in the spirit of Halloween for the October meeting. Costumes would be great, but pins, hats, costume jewelry would also be great.

– Dawn Fleming

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Celtic Soccer Ready to Defend 2009-10 League Title

by Joel Carstedt



Milwaukee Celtic's Al Moss presents Josh Walton with the WASA trophy at the September meeting.

It wasn't long ago that the Celtic Soccer Club lifted the trophy, claiming the 2009-2010 1st Division League Tournament Championship. And already, the men in green are excited to defend their title and lay claim to not one, but TWO new trophies. That's right, the Celtic Soccer Club has moved up to the Reserves Division, and will continue to field a team in the lower, 1st Division League. Al Moss feels the expansion is the direct result of winning.

"People want to play with the best," said Moss. "We proved last season that we were the best and now more people want to be a part of it. We know it'll be a challenge for us to move up to a higher league, but we are confident the boys will protect our 1st Division Title while we go after another one in the Reserves Division."

Team Captain, Abdallah Elsayed, had a different approach to the expansion?

"It's a direct result of all the support we've received over the years from the Shamrock Club," stated the midfielder. "They've done so much for us and now, we can have two teams spread the word about our club and our Irish faithful. They take their soccer seriously too and we're proud to represent them. Be sure you put in your article that I say 'Thank you Shamrock Club of Wisconsin!'"

Consider it done, Abdallah. Celtic will be returning most of their players from last year, while the Reserves Squad will also be

welcoming back former player, now coach, Dan Della to oversee development.

The Fall 2010 Campaign kicked off for both squads on Sunday, September 12. Come join us in cheering on CELTIC! (And don't forget to wear your green!)

2010 FALL SCHEDULES

1st Division

(All at Polonia Soccer Fields)

- Sun Oct 10 vs Polonia (3 p.m.)
- Sun Oct 17 vs Racine Spartans (12:30 p.m.)
- Sun Oct 24 vs USA Palermo (3 p.m.)
- Sun Oct 31 vs Verdi (12:30 p.m.)

Reserves

(All at games start 12:30 p.m.)

- Sun Oct 3 vs Croatian Eagles at Croatian Park
- Sun Oct 10 vs Bavarian at Bavarian Soccer Fields
- Sun Oct 17 vs Milwaukee Brewers at Brown Deer HS
- Sun Oct 24 vs Milwaukee Kickers at Uihlein Soccer Complex
- Sun Oct 31 vs Milwaukee Sport Club at MSC Soccer Fields
- Sun Nov 7 vs Serbian SC at Caledonia Soccer Fields

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Celtic Women First Friday Lectures



Tom Callen, Dr Tim Campbell

October 1st will bring our community the good news of the Saint Patrick Centre in Ireland. The local chapter is now over two years

old and thriving under the leadership of Tom Callen. The Friends of Saint Patrick (FOSP) were on exhibit in the cultural tent at Irish Fest where Dr. Tim Campbell, president, and others from Downpatrick were busy spreading the word about the Centre. It will be a place to visit when next we go to Ireland.

DATE: Oct. 1, 2010, 5:30-7 p.m.

TOPIC: "Friends of St. Patrick: Young Ambassadors Program"

SPEAKER: Tom Callen, ? president Milwaukee Chapter
[tom.callen@callenconstruction.com]

The Saint Patrick Center, located in County Down, Ireland has chapters all over the world, known as Friends of St. Patrick. The Milwaukee Chapter offers scholarships to young people (age 20-25) each year to spend 15 days in Northern Ireland, becoming informed and influential individuals who can actively represent the northern part of Ireland throughout their lives. Recent Ambassadors will tell of their experiences.

All lectures are held on the UWM campus Greene Hall, 3347 N Downer Ave. Admission \$7. The lecture schedule can be found at the CWW web page [<http://celticwomenworldwide.ning.com>].

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Mustard's Retreat Returns to ICHC Parlour Nov. 6

Nationally-known folk duo Mustard's Retreat will bring their mix of original music, along with songs from America's traditional song bag and a generous dash of tall tales, to a concert in the intimate Parlour of the Irish Cultural and Heritage Center, 2133 W. Wisconsin Ave., Milwaukee, on Saturday, Nov. 6, at 7:30 p.m.

This will be a return visit for the Michigan-based duo who performed a concert for at the ICHC in 2009.

Michael Hough and David Tamulevich have been engaging audiences at many of this country's most prestigious venues and festivals for over 30 years. Their musical partnership was formed shortly after they discovered a mutual love of music while working as short-order cooks in Ann Arbor in the 1970s. With Relish, the title of the most recent of nine critically acclaimed recordings, harkens back to their culinary roots but also reflects the enthusiasm and joy they bring to their concerts.

In addition to gorgeous voices, both are superb musicians with Michael playing electric bass and acoustic guitar and David playing 6- and 12- string acoustic guitars as well as tin whistle, harmonica

and dulcimer.

General admission for the show is \$12 and \$10 for students. For information and reservations, call (414) 332-8521. For information on the ICHC's Hallamor concert series and all other ICHC events, visit [www.ichc.net] or call (414) 345-8800.

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Members' Doings

Sharon Murphy spent a long weekend in Las Vegas recently. Michele McCormack recently competed in the Fleadh Cheoil in Ireland, in the category singing in English, over 18. Beth and Luann Andrews returned from their cruise overseas. Members Rich Watt and Katie Swank Watt were married in August.

Jerry Hill was elevated to the Dignity of the Grand Cross of the Sovereign Military Order of the Temple of Jerusalem in June, at West Point Military Academy, West Point, New York. This is the highest honor that can be bestowed on a Knight or Dame of the Order.

If you have done anything you want us to know about, send it to [Membersdoings @shamrockclubwis.com].

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Sunshine Club

Dick Stroud was hospitalized, and is now in long term rehab at Sacred Heart. Tom McAleese was hospitalized with pneumonia. Muriel Crowley is still in rehabilitation.

Sue Suit recently lost her father. The mother of Daryl Pluskota also died recently. Chuck and Bonnie McLaughlin lost their son in August. Please keep them in your thoughts.

If you have any news for the Sunshine Club, please call us at (414) 344-0688. We have a new email address. Please note: [slainte41-shamrock27@yahoo.com].

– **Maggie and Tom Blaha**