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Fáilte!

Big Sandy from Fort William

As a young lad, intrigued by my imagination, I often crept up to the attic to inspect a mysterious wooden trunk. I knew nothing about its contents, other than it protected a treasured connection to the past. Among the items inside was a collection of letters and photos from Scotland. The photos included one of my grandfather at age 29, sitting on a rock in front of St. Francis Cave on the Isle of Eigg with a reference to "the massacre cave" inscribed on the back. Another photo was of a young Darby policeman.

My grandfather passed away before I was born, so I was unable to ask him about the photos. In 1969, my sister Anne travelled to Scotland and met with the late Ranald MacDonald of Glen Uig. Upon viewing the photos, Ranald immediately recognized the Darby policemen as "Big Sandy from Fort William." Big Sandy and his sisters, Bella and Katie, all in their 80s, couldn't make the connection with my sister Anne, but did recall stories of Eachin America bringing his mother Sarah (MacLeod) back to Scotland in 1889. That single photo of the Darby policeman, and the visit to Big Sandy, brought together a multitude of relatives on both sides of the Atlantic - relationships long lost to time, distance and faded memories. We became aware of the misery experienced by those left to mourn the loss of family and friends; the moving story of Isabella, the one married sibling left behind when her father, mother, sisters, brothers and grandparents all left the Isle of Eigg, never to be seen again - the one exception being the return of mother Sarah in 1889. Life continues. It did so in Scotland, and it does so here in North America.

The Massacre Cave

As legend has it, in 1577 the MacLeods of Skye attacked the islanders of Eigg. The islanders took refuge in St. Francis Cave only to have the MacLeods set fire at its entrance thereby asphyxating everyone inside. In all my trips to the Isle of Eigg, I was never able to visit St. Francis Cave. This past July, I made the trek with members of my family, including my daughter Alison who, at age 29, sat on the same rock in front of St. Francis Cave as did her great-grandfather, 126 years earlier.

Our Condolences

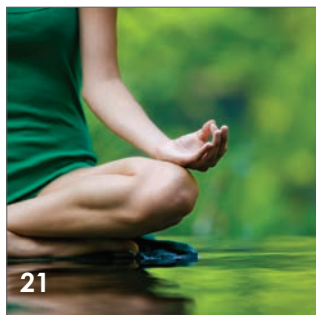
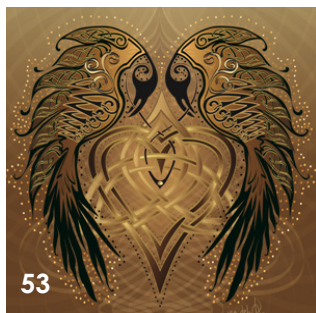
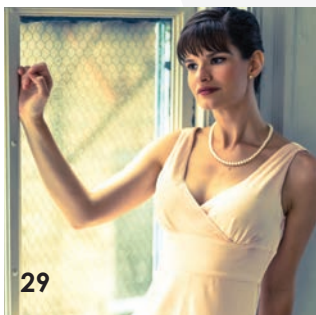
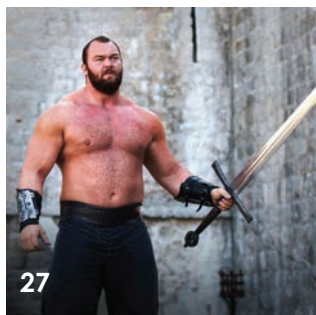
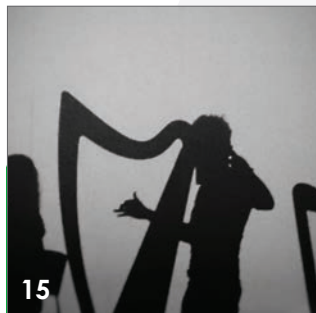
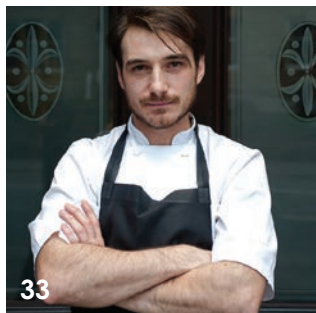
In the past month the Celtic community lost three dedicated Gaels; Rev. Malcolm MacDonnell of Judique, Cape Breton, was a Gaelic speaking scholar and past president of St. Francis Xavier University in Antigonish, Nova Scotia; Rev. Neil McKenna, was a drummer with the Antigonish Legion Pipeband that won several North America Championships and placed 3rd in the World Pipeband Championships in Grade 2 in 1976; Ed Neigh was a competitor, instructor, judge, an authority on piobaireachd, and a great man. To all families we offer our most sincere condolences.

Enjoy and May God Bless
Angus (Marcie) Macquarrie, Publisher



INSIDE

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DE a |DOL



Welsh government answers an inquiry in Klingon

“Trekkies” in Wales were recently surprised when the Welsh government responded to a question about UFOs in a fictional language. Shadow Health Minister Darren Millar tabled three questions to the government, including “What consideration has the Welsh government given to the funding of research into sightings of unidentified flying objects in Wales?” Aptly, the government provided their answer in Klingon – a language used by aliens of the same name in the Star Trek television and movie series. In the alien text, the answer looked like “jang vIDa je due luq. ‘ach ghotvam’e’ QI’yaH-devolved qaS” – which roughly translates into “The minister will reply in due course. However this is a non-devolved matter.” In other words, the issue can only be resolved by the full UK parliament.

Students travel the old Isle of Man railway in wheelchairs

Earlier in July, two students from the Isle of Man made their way across the old railway line for charity. And though it is not unusual for folks to walk the trail from Douglas to Peel, the pair faced added difficulty. Aeden Kennaugh of Castletown and Reece Moffitt of Willaston both have Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy. The condition causes them to tire easily, and both men are in wheelchairs. In spite of the bumps and the heat, the duo were able to complete the 19-kilometer trek with the help of two able-bodied friends from the Isle of Man College. Thus far, Kennaugh and Moffitt have raised almost £1,000 for the Pahar Trust Nepal, a charitable organization that supports schools for students with disabilities.



Ginger Pride takes Europe by storm

It is estimated that only two to six per cent of people in the world have red hair. Since it is such a rarity, don’t redheads – or gingers – have something to be proud of? Luckily for gingers - and for people who love them – the two-year-old Redhead Day UK is gaining momentum. Recently, English ginger Stuart Parry announced that he is planning an even more elaborate event for 2016 - an all-out “Ginger Pride” festival. Along with a gingerbread decorating competition, the gathering will also feature live music and family-friendly events. Similar celebrations already take place in other parts of Europe, including the yearly Redhead Convention in Cork, Ireland and the annual Roodharigendag (Redhead Days) festival in Breda, Holland.

Inflatable Irish pubs for rent

If you loved those inflatable castles when you were a kid, well, there’s an adult version of them now. A Boston-based business has started renting out inflatable pubs - Irish pubs, to be precise. Inflatable pubs have become very popular across Europe, and “Paddy Wagon” owners Michael McNamara and Eoghan Cahill decided it was time to bring them to the United States. The Paddy Wagon website was launched in June. Since then, they have been booking birthdays, graduations, and even weddings. The exterior of the bar is designed to look like a traditional Irish pub, with faux brick walls and a thatched roof. Inside, there are windows, tables, a fake fireplace, and a full bar where drinks can be served. In addition to the portable pub, they will also provide Irish food and entertainment.



Have an interesting tidbit to share with our Celtic community? Drop us a line anytime at editor@celticlife.ca

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first word

In the fifth installment of a year-long, six-part series examining Celtic culture, Peter Kuch - the inaugural Eamon Cleary Professor of Irish Studies and co-director of the Centre for Irish and Scottish Studies at the University of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand - shares his perspective on what it means to be Celtic today.



Shortly after I was appointed as the inaugural Eamon Cleary Professor of Irish Studies at the University of Otago in Dunedin, New Zealand, I was stopped in the street by a passer-by who recognized me from a photograph published in the local paper. My son, who has a doctorate in carbon markets, was with me. After some polite exchanges, I was quizzed about my Irish heritage.

I politely explained that I did not have an Irish heritage. I was born in Australia, educated in Wales and in England, and had held academic posts in England, Ireland and France before returning to Australia. Smiling, I remarked that my dedication to Irish culture came from what I loved rather than who I was or where I came from. I must have appeared mildly defensive, because, after the person left, my son gently put his arm on my shoulder and said, "Dad, you don't have to be a virus to be a virologist!"

I suppose I could have deflected the enquiry because I am one of those fortunate people who gets paid for what they love doing. But my son's remark has stayed with me as a reminder of how limiting labels can prove, how quickly they can place issues and people, and how rapidly they can restrict conversation.

My first request, after I had been appointed, was to ask the Pro-Vice Chancellor, Humanities, if I could dispense with the job description and invite the faculty to discuss what they would like to contribute to an Irish Studies program. He obliged, and we had some very productive meetings. In academic terms, what resulted was a Minor in the Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Laws that was made up of courses in History, Literature, Theatre and Film.

Some, like Modernism: Joyce, were more focussed than others. Some, as with Irish and Australian Film: Contested Identities, were based on contrasts and comparisons and on historical connections. Others were more traditional - courses one would expect to see in a reputable Irish Studies program.

What soon proved exciting was the discussion about aims, objectives and content. What was meant by Irishness? In what ways did our offerings take account of 'varieties of Irishness', a term at the time, as Seamus Heaney wryly remarked, that was 'all the go.' If Scottish Studies came on board, how would the two relate to one another? And what about this word 'Celtic'?

For me 'Celtic' was somewhat problematic as, on the one hand, I was a graduate of Jesus College, Oxford, the home of the Chair of Celtic Studies established in response to Matthew Arnold's seminal, *On the Study of Celtic Literature* (1867). I was now at a University that had been founded in 1869, at a time when Arnold's ideas were very much in the public domain. But, on the other hand, even as a student, I had quickly become aware of how problematic 'Celtic' was for many Irish writers.

Joyce had crisply dismissed it as 'cultic twalette' in *Finnegans Wake*. In *Our Irish Theatre*, Lady Gregory had admitted that she had 'never quite understood what was meant by the Celtic movement.' Perhaps, she added with a twinkle, it was a movement to 'persuade the Scots to begin buying our books, while we continued not to buy theirs.' W.B. Yeats, in his letters and in his poetry written in the early 1900s, had chartered his imaginative development by

rejecting a 'Celtic' for an 'Irish' mode. And so on.

In the event Arnold's 'Celtic', like my son's 'virus/virologist' proved thought provoking. Arnold had opined, "The sooner the Welsh (and presumably Irish and Scots) language... disappears as an instrument of the practical, political, social life of Wales, the better."

Arnold wanted to relegate 'Celtic' to 'what it has been, what it has done.' "Let it ask us to attend to that," he averred, "as a matter of science and history: not to what it will be or what it will do, as a matter of modern politics." But 'Celtic' had become a social, cultural and political force. It had resisted being quarantined as irrelevant and antiquarian by virtue of its inclusiveness; its defence of modes of thought subversive of materialism; and by restoring significance to tradition.

Finally, the openness of the word had proved its strength. According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, Celtic did not enter the English language until 1607. By 1656 it was still sufficiently vague for Thomas Blount to include it in his 1656 *Glossographia*, or, a dictionary interpreting all such hard words of whatsoever language now used in our refined English tongue. At present the online OED lists 6 distinct uses of the word and 6 derivatives, ranging from 'Celticism' to 'Celtic Tiger.'

Had it occurred to my son, he could very well have remarked that you don't have to be a Celt to enjoy the Celtic. Many, and hopefully all, of my students in the Irish Studies program at the University of Otago are making that discovery.

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UP FRONT

Jenefer Lowe's love of Cornish culture includes a passion for music, dancing and language...



Jenefer Lowe's background is a mix of Cornish, English, French and Scottish, but it is the Cornish element that took hold, directed her studies, and brought her to work that matches her passion.

She is currently the development manager of the Cornish Language Partnership, a public/voluntary sector initiative created to preserve and promote the region's language. Along with Lowe, the Partnership employs two part time education officers, a project officer and a support officer.

Lowe credits her mother with inspiring her to learn the Cornish language and the country's history.

"During my childhood, we lived out of Cornwall and my mother was dying to move back. She became more interested in her heritage and tended to devour anything and everything about Cornwall. As she read more about the Cornish language she became more fascinated with it. Learning it was something she could start while still living away, and I studied it alongside her."

Despite the distance, the family travelled to Cornwall regularly, and - like her mother - Lowe fell in love with the country and its customs.

"I was already predisposed to an interest in language and tradition, as I was brought up with a strong sense of family history."

Her commitment to the culture strengthened when the family returned to Cornwall to live full time.

"For me it became more than an interest, and I went to work for a degree in Celtic Studies."

Preserving and promoting an older language can be slow and tedious at times, admits Lowe. There are, however, many small victories and milestones.

"Often, what we as a team hail as a great victory can seem inconsequential to others. Really we are looking at a generational change and there is no quick answer. We have concentrated on raising the visibility and making the learning of the language accessible to everyone, but we have little resource and have to continually make the case to government for the support we do have."

Last year the Partnership ran a novel campaign asking people to send in 10-second clips of themselves speaking Cornish.

"The results exceeded our expectations, and it was great to see small children using Cornish once again in films from all around the world - in particular from the Cornish Diaspora in the United States, Canada, South Africa and Australia."

The work done in the Partnership office, according to Lowe, is merely the tip of the iceberg.

"We are hugely dependent on an army of volunteers who teach, organize activities, publish, and generally push Cornish forwards, as they have done since the start of the revival in the early 20th century."

While the efforts of enthusiastic helpers have been wonderful and welcome, Lowe says a stronger professional component will go a long way towards securing a solid future for the language.

"We need the language to be taught properly in the schools, with time to be made in the curriculum for children to learn about their culture. We need the government to provide long-term sustainable support in order to give a measure of security which would enable better strategic planning. We need more teachers and more resources!"

The rewards, she notes, come with seeing children get excited about their Cornish heritage.

"Sometimes everyone needs to look back 50 years to see how far we have come. When I started learning in the 1970s, there was no funding resource, no official recognition or support, and no real visibility in the landscape. We now have bilingual signs, general support and are probably one of the only languages that is on the increase, however slow the rate may be."

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Born and raised in Dublin, Cllr Criona Ní Dhálaigh has served on Dublin City Council since 2006, and was appointed as Lord Mayor of Dublin this past June. Recently, she answered our Seven Celtic Questions.

SEVEN CELTIC QUESTIONS

What are your Celtic roots?

My Irish ancestors were bards, poets and public representatives.

Why are those roots important to you?

I am following a noble Gaelic tradition. As first citizen of Dublin, I am entrusted with carrying that tradition forward, and my heritage and language are important things to highlight during my tenure.

What does it mean to you today to be of Celtic heritage?

Our Irish language and culture are what sets us apart from other Anglophone countries. The great music, song, art, and history are an integral part of being an Irish person. Many of these poets and dreamers were central to the revolutionary phase in Irish history which we are commemorating at present. As an Irish speaker I use my native tongue on a regular basis. It is a part of who I am and an expression of my pride in being Irish. As first citizen, I have a role in fostering a greater use and understanding of our first language amongst our citizens.

How are you involved with the Celtic community?

I am involved with Irish language organizations. I am also involved in one of the oldest Feiseanna in Dublin - Feis Átha Cliath - which promotes Irish culture

through music, song, dance and Irish language. I also attend céilí as often as I can and love both rince céilís and set dancing.

Why is it important to keep Celtic culture alive?

Our culture is constantly evolving and developing. We have seen a great increase in the use of Irish in particular in urban areas. We have a fantastic national TV service called TG4 and a radio station called Raidió na Gaeltachta which serves the whole country. There are websites and publications, community organizations, sporting and heritage groups who all do wonderful work in promoting our Celtic heritage. We need to be conscious though that our Gaeltacht areas are under extreme pressure and the state needs to give much more practical support if they are to remain as vibrant areas where our language and heritage are alive and available for all to enjoy.

Is enough being done to preserve and promote Celtic culture generally?

There has been incredible work done by the community and voluntary sector for many years. We have a wonderful annual celebration of Irish language and culture called An tOireachtas. Our music and dance are well served nationally and internationally by Comhaltas Ceoltoirí Éireann. Our sports are fostered by

the GAA. But the phenomenon of homogenization and globalization of culture puts pressure on all cultures and we therefore must make sure we support our indigenous heritage. We also need to keep our culture contemporary, embracing new forms of communication and media, new artistic expressions whilst respecting who we are and where we came from. Government and the state have a key role in this process.

What can we be doing better?

It is important the government departments, local authorities, state sponsored bodies and other public organizations make a bigger effort to support our native language and culture. The Welsh are leading by example in this regard. The language there is given equal status in signage, translations, legislation and support services. We could certainly try and emulate their success.

We also need to up our game on the implementation of the 20 Year Strategy for the Irish Language. This would have a long-lasting impact for all our citizens.

As a Sinn Féin representative, I am also conscious of the need to have an all-Ireland approach to promoting our heritage and culture, and the GAA and Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann are great examples of how this can be developed.

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The Celtic Harp Orchestra



For Italian composer Fabius Constable, every concert is a conquest...

Of the more than 800 concerts that Fabius Constable has performed in recent years, one of the most memorable was playing in shelters in Japan during the tsunami-nuclear crisis of 2011.

"Receiving a medal from the Italian president and playing for the Japanese prime minister could be considered career highlights as well," he adds. "Playing with Carlos Núñez was a wonderful moment, as was performing with Andrea Bocelli."

Constable hails from Lombardy - originally a crucial Celtic core called Gallia Cisalpina - which might explain his passion for Celtic music, especially the harp. In 2002, he formed the Celtic Harp Orchestra. It took hundreds of calls and emails, but he managed to bring 44 harpers together for a concert on Mont Blanc, France, during the region's annual Celtica Festival, performing in front of 4,000 people.

"I really wanted an experience like this to be part of my life," he shares. "My family history is full of artists, musicians, writers, painters, and so I looked to the past for inspiration. I believed that it was the right place and the right time to revive the Celtic harp in Italy."

As if on cue, the orchestra went on to international success, performing in Ireland, France, Spain and Germany, playing at castles, cathedrals, and even archaeological sites. Despite the extensive touring, the musicians still found time to produce four albums.

Their debut recording, *Got the Magic*, was released in 2003.

Got the Magic - a "live concert without an audience" - was recorded at Rocca Brivio Sforza - a villa dating back to the 17th century near the city of Milan. Sounds of nature can be heard in the background, and none were cut or edited in post-production. In the years that followed, the group released *The Myst* (2005), which has been sold and played worldwide; *Tale of the Fourth* (2008); and *Three Letters to the Moon* (2010), on which Constable composed some of the pieces by himself.

"Celtic music has a past because of its soul, and a future be-

cause of the many ways it can evolve. Tradition, fusion, innovation and preservation of the musical heritage are the four dancers of this beautiful ballet."

Though several of the group's members were not born into Celtic culture - some are from Switzerland, Spain, China, Germany and Japan - they have an appreciation for the music all the same, and a unique variety of instruments at their fingertips, including 17 Celtic harps. The orchestra also features fiddles, cello, flutes, a solo soprano singer, a choir, drums, guitars, bass, and even a koto - a traditional Japanese stringed instrument.

Despite the success, finding and maintaining a place in today's musical landscape is not without its challenges.

"The type of music that we are performing is not exactly what you might call mainstream," admits Constable. "The audience is very select."

Still, he continues, the rewards are many. "The gift of the present, the

smiles on the faces of my musicians, the laughter and the tears on the faces of the audience, and - most of all - simply allowing the music to flow."

Constable and his Celtic Harp Orchestra will continue to let the music flow this year and into 2016, with concerts already planned at a beautiful medieval castle in middle Italy, in the crypts of an ancient cathedral, at Roman ruins in southern Italy, and in Japan.

And, if you happen to play the Celtic harp, the group just might have a spot or two available on the bandstand.

"Every now and then we hold auditions," he smiles. "We always welcome those wandering harpers who want to challenge themselves, and who are as passionate about Celtic music as we are."

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Celtic Lightning

Canadian author and historian Ken McGoogan connects the Celtic dots with his latest book...



What are your own roots?

My roots are Scottish, Irish, and French Canadian. In Scotland, DNA research led me to meeting Jim McGugan, a long-lost “cousin” who lives in Arbroath; and from there to the island of Gigha in Kintyre, where our earliest ancestor is buried. In Ireland, I have tracked my ancestor Michael Byrnes to New Ross, County Wexford, where he was a contemporary of Patrick Kennedy, a forebear of American president John F. Kennedy.

Why are those roots important to you?

Tracking my roots drove me to scrambling around on Cruach MhicGougain in Kintyre, and to having many other fun adventures. The process not only gave me a whole new sense of self, but inspired two books: *How the Scots Invented Canada* and *Celtic Lightning: How the Scots and the Irish Created a Canadian Nation*.

Unearthing my own roots inspired me to conceive of what I call “cultural genealogy.” Canadian intellectuals hunker down with geographers and sociologists. That’s a mistake. We assume geography’s limitations and cease investigating our collective past at the western edge of the Atlantic Ocean. Instead, like genealogists, we should keep sleuthing. This nation’s history crosses the Atlantic. And, given that nine million Canadians trace their roots to Scotland and Ireland, it does so more often to those two countries than to anywhere else.

What inspired you to become a writer?

My father was an amateur movie-maker. He wrote scripts and starred as a Humphrey Bogart-type character in several black-and-white films that aired to an audience of family and friends. Beyond that, I think a sense of being different had something to do with it. In *Celtic*

Lightning, I describe growing up first-language-English in a French-speaking resort town north of Montreal. As a teenager, I resented being called “Anglais” when I was Scottish, Irish, and French. Being misunderstood made me want to set the record straight. I began writing and discovered that, hey, nothing is more fun than telling stories and giving people a piece of your mind.

Are they the same reasons you do it today?

To tell the truth, I love everything about the creative process. I love doing research – in the archives, certainly, but also “on the ground.” I love wrestling with languages, making words say what I want them to say. I love the back and forth that happens between the conscious and the unconscious, and the calling forth of something out of nothingness.

What are the challenges of the profession?

First, you have to master the craft. Malcolm Gladwell wasn’t far off when he suggested that any competency begins after 10,000 hours of focused practice. Apart from that, the main challenge is financial. Making a living as a writer has never been easy. These days, it is harder than ever.

What are the rewards?

Any craftsperson knows the pleasure of creating something that works. To bring a book into existence is thrilling. To publish one that changes the way people think, that makes a difference, is enormously satisfying.

What motivated you to write *Celtic Lightning*?

I had been investigating my ancestry, and fell to thinking, well, here’s an ancestor who lived in Kintyre in the 1700s. I wondered, what was going on then and there?

Like his contemporaries, my ancestor was part of that broader present. And I realized that his “present” – the events and people that shaped him – is through him part of my own history. And that led me to the idea of cultural genealogy, to Richard Dawkins and the transmission through time and across space of ideas and values.

What did you learn during the process?

I realized that Robert the Bruce and Theobald Wolfe Tone belong to Canadian history. And that the same is true of Daniel O’Connell, Somerled of Argyll, Jonathan Swift, Flora MacDonald, Oscar Wilde, William Wallace, and Grace O’Malley. These figures are our forgotten ancestors. They played leading roles in shaping the foundational values that have created the Canadian Nation.

How did you feel when the book was completed?

I felt that I had written what is possibly my best book.

What has the response been like so far from those that have read it?

First readers have hailed the book as original and well-written, describing it as an important addition to the Canadian conversation.

What’s next on your creative agenda?

I have signed on to write a fifth book about Arctic exploration. The recent discovery of the *Erebus*, one of the lost ships of Sir John Franklin, has proven wonderfully synchronistic.

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Diane Byrnes

For almost 30 years, Diane Byrnes has brought Irish music to the airwaves via her Pittsburgh-based radio show Echoes of Erin

Diane Byrnes fell in love with Irish music over three decades ago. In fact, the lifelong Pennsylvania native was so taken with the genre that she began taking Irish dance lessons.

Byrnes' newfound passion soon had her attending local and regional Celtic events as well, and, sure enough, the idea to organize bus trips and bring along like-minded folks wasn't far behind. "I had a brilliant time at these gatherings," she notes by email. "It was an experience I simply had to share."

Those shared experiences led to discussions with a friend about the need for more Irish music in the Pittsburgh area, and within months the pair had partnered to push the genre via area concerts.

"We promoted many musicians, and had some really great shows," recalls Byrnes. "One of our goals was to eventually develop a radio program to promote the artists we were bringing to town."

Eighteen months later, her wish came true when she was contacted by WEDO 810AM radio station manager, John James. A local Irish radio program was transferring to WEDO, and James sought the support of Byrnes' business. She arranged to visit the station the following week. When she arrived, however, the station manager was in a state of panic; the program's host had changed his mind at the last minute. Despite her inexperience behind the microphone, Byrnes volunteered to host a show of her own.

Twenty-eight years later, Byrnes is still enamoured with Irish music and culture, and Echoes of Erin continues to broadcast on WEDO each Sunday from 12:30 p.m. to 2 p.m. in the Pittsburgh area, and online via the station's website.

"I love sharing with my listeners every week," she says. "I have all ages of people tuning in - from young children to elderly adults. Some listeners have told me Echoes of Erin is the best Irish radio program in the country. I am honoured to receive such accolades."

Along with promoting Irish music, the program aims to "stimulate discussion of political and social issues, introduce topics of interest, and teach Irish history" through a variety of segments, including reports from regular correspondents and interviews with both prominent and everyday Irish.

Past guests have included the likes of Gerry Adams, president of Sinn Féin; Paddy Maloney of the Chieftains; Mairead Nesbitt of Celtic Woman; and Joanie Madden of Cherish the Ladies.

Themed shows are also on the agenda, with in-depth looks at the Easter Rising of 1916, the Hunger Strikes, Women in Irish History, and Michael Collins.

At the heart of the show, however, is Irish music, from classic "trad" tunes and rebel songs to contemporary Celtic rock and "some stuff you may have never heard before."

As a companion to her weekly broad-

casts - which are archived for fans on WEDO's website - Byrnes keeps an updated playlist and a regular blog available online.

And while her core market remains the United States - specifically Ohio, northern West Virginia, northern Maryland, and southwestern Pennsylvania - the wonders of technology means that Echoes of Erin is also enjoyed in Canada, Australia, Ireland and elsewhere.

Despite the growing exposure, however, Byrnes admits that it can be a challenge to keep the show going.

"Some years are better than others. There isn't any financial gain for me, so finding enough funding is always difficult. Sometimes I have had to pay for airtime and other expenses out of my own pocket. Still, the community relies on me to bring them music, news, and information on topics of interest - I could not let them down."

As such, she would love nothing more than for Echoes of Erin to celebrate its 30th anniversary in 2017.

"After that I will take it one step at a time. I have had such brilliant experiences with the people I have met and the places I have traveled. Money could not replace any of this. It has all been very fulfilling and rewarding."

"I love what I do, and pray I can do it the rest of my life."

www.pittsburghirish.org/echoesoferin
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CelticYoga

A bit of Irish wit and whimsy can only enhance the restorative powers of yoga, according to Yogi Therese Fleischman

As the owner and operator of Celtic Spirit Yoga in Sandy, Oregon, Therese Fleischman draws on her own background and experience to bring an Emerald Isle flare to her busy practice.

"In my studio I share stories of my family, Irish culture and spirituality," says the renowned Yogi. "The Irish are known for their wit and wisdom, so the students learn lots of Irish words and phrases such as 'oxters' instead of underarms, and all the various phrases that involve 'craic.' It seems I've got my father's gift for storytelling."

Along with that Celtic heritage, she puts her own positive spin on life to place her students at ease, and help them to feel at home.

"I try to create an atmosphere of lightness and fun, as we all get enough of a dose of the serious side of life every day."

Born and bred in working-class Ballina, County Mayo, yoga was totally foreign to Fleischman as a youngster.

"I grew up in a poor neighbourhood with hard-working parents who were devoted to their family. They realized the importance of a good education and they sacrificed their whole lives to provide proper schooling for 11 kids."

Her mother was a talented dressmaker, and her father was a bricklayer.

"My mother took the time to learn the craft before she was married. And I laugh when I hear all the talk about organic food these days, as everything we had to eat was cooked from scratch, including all kinds of homemade bread baked daily."

Her father, whom she credits as being a great singer and a master storyteller, cycled up to 50 miles a day for work in Ireland, but often had to take various jobs in England to support the family.

An older sister, Veronica, first encountered yoga in secondary school.

"I got the bug from her," recalls Fleischman. "There was very little information about yoga back then. Even books were hard to find. I remember I found a book in London once on a visit there. It was a rare find at that time, and it was mostly photos of an old guru doing really complicated postures. I still have the book in my library."

She and her sister later took their teacher training together. Fleischman then left Ballina to work in Dublin, before immigrating to the United States in her thirties.

"Initially, my yoga practice was for my own interest, but when I discovered the infinite spectrum and wisdom of yoga and the benefits that came - not just to the physical body but to the mental and spiritual body as well - I wanted to share my passion with others."

The rewards of teaching yoga, she adds, have been greater than she ever imagined.

"The students share themselves and their lives with me. So many special relationships are created, and the blessings the students bestow on me are infinite. It's an incredible and inspiring experience to watch the students improve in their practice and see them blossom into greater aspects of themselves."

Her clients come from all walks of life and for different reasons.

"I like to think their lives are enriched because of what they experience at Celtic Spirit. My slogan for the studio is 'Coming Home to Yourself' and, in a way, it is a place where they can be themselves. Whether they come with heavy hearts or filled with the joys of life, they find a sanctuary where there are no judgments, no expectations to be different or something they are not."

Her studio has also served as a sacred space for her students to create supportive and sustainable relationships.

"They find a sense of community where they get to know each other through the ups and downs of life. Of course, they get all the benefits of yoga too."

On the verge of returning to Ireland to reconnect with family, friends, memories and the landscape of her youth, Fleischman considers herself a work in progress.

"There is an Irish phrase - 'Ni thagann ciall roimh aois' - that means sense or wisdom comes with age. I hope that my intuition will keep guiding me on the right path and that the wisdom I acquire will inspire me to inspire others."

www.celticspiritryoga.com



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With a rich Irish history and a world-renowned wine, the Kelly Family Vineyards bring the green to California's Napa Valley..

The Kelly Family Vineyards is a unique American business with a proud Irish heritage.

Owner Gene Kelly recently researched those roots.

"The first Kelly in our family emigrated over from outside Dublin in the mid 1930s for political reasons, settling in upstate New York," he shares via email. "The first born Kelly in North America was Henry Allen Kelly, who migrated to Minnesota to settle with his family. In 1968, our branch of the Kelly Family expanded westward from Minnesota, settling into the world-famous Napa Valley."

Gene's father, Harold Kelly, was a driving force behind the preservation of the area's agricultural community.

"My father was part of the agricultural conservation movement back in the 1970s," continues Gene. "At that time there were people who wanted to demolish Napa and turn it into condos. He simply wouldn't hear of it."

As a former city councilman, and founding member of the Land Trust of Napa County, Harold was recognized for his life-long contribution to the conservation movement; along with being honoured with the Earl Thollander Award from the Napa faction of the Sierra Club, he also received the 2013 Lifetime Achievement Award from Land Trust of Napa County. As well, he was profiled in James Conaway's book *Napa: The Story of an American Eden*.

Perhaps Harold's greatest honour, however, was that his passion for preservation was passed along to his son.

"I always had a desire to own a vineyard," says Gene. "When the property came up for sale in 2012, my wife Paula and I jumped at the opportunity."

Today, the Kelly Family Vineyards is a small-scale winery nestled in the Oak Knoll District of Napa Valley. The Oak Knoll District is an American Viticultural Area (AVA), which means it's designated specifically for wine grape-growing. According to Gene, the area is planted largely for Merlot, Chardonnay and Cabernet Sauvignon.

"My own personal favourite is our 2012 Merlot. It is our flagship wine and it is excellent. It is an extremely unique Merlot

with a more floral nose than most."

To get your hands on the Merlot – or any other Kelly family wine, for that matter – wine lovers have to place an order for delivery. There is also the option of three different levels of Kelly Family wine club membership.

"We only blend 100-500 cases of wine per type," explains Amanda Carpenter, coordinator of the Kelly Family wine club. "And everything is done by hand."

She adds that the wine club gives the Kelly Family some idea of who is enjoying their produce. "We market to a lot to Kellys, obviously. We also set up shop at a number of Irish gatherings and music festivals, where we can meet our customers face to face. That is the best way for us to do business."

Gene agrees.

"We really value the family relationship and connection," he says, "and we wouldn't have that if we sold through traditional retail outlets. That personal, hands-on approach also highlights how our wine is different from others in the storefront; most wines on the market now are primarily made on a large scale through machine processing."

The Kelly Family wine is also noted for its eye-catching label.

"The logo is our Kelly Family Crest," explains Gene. "The center shield, motto, and knight are derivative of the original O Ceallaigh Clan crest. We added antique rifles to represent my work as an international firearms dealer and professional gunsmith, with my own professional gunsmithing school. We rounded out the logo with grapes to represent the family's long standing connection to the wine community in Napa, creating a family crest that is truly representative of who we are."

Currently, the business is looking for wineries in Ireland to partner with.

"The idea is still very much in its infancy," explains Carpenter. "Our hope is to connect with folks back home and share our unique Celtic heritage and product with them."

www.kellyfamilyvineyards.com



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Ships of 1801

A vibrant and vital musical drama, The Year of the Burning captures one of the most violent periods during the clearing of the Scottish Highlands

Photo credit to Scope Digital Media

A kaleidoscope of music, story, song and dance, *The Year of the Burning* is the third in a trilogy of musicals about the Highland Clearances presented by Nova Scotia's Ships of 1801 Society.

The story, which will be staged at the Spatz Theatre on September 19 in conjunction with this year's Halifax Celtic Festival, tells the terrible tale of the burning-out of the people of Sutherland, in the north of Scotland, in the early 1800s.

Festival president Rick Grant says the show ties into the festival's goal of promoting Gaelic language and culture. "We have an educational component to our event and we see a good match here."

With a piper, a fiddler, and a small but versatile orchestra, the show features more than 20 original songs sprinkled with traditional Gaelic pieces.

"Ours is a Celtic story in every way," says producer Duncan MacDonald. "But it is also an immigrant story, so people of any background will find lots to identify with while enjoying the music."

Like previous shows in the trilogy, *The Year of the Burning* takes place on board a ship bound for Nova Scotia. The Highlanders, who had farmed the same small crofts for generations, balked when served with eviction notices as they believed they owned their cottages. Patrick Sellar, the ambitious land manager hired by the wealthy Duke and Duchess of Sutherland, met stubbornness with fire, torching the roofs of their blackhouses. Even as the Highlanders staggered away through the smoke, their lands were turned over to grazing sheep.

MacDonald points out early Nova Scotia history is largely an oral tradition.

"It was music and storytelling that sustained our pioneers through tremendously difficult times and that is at the heart of our show. It is in these forms that their history was recorded, so it is fitting that this is how we remember them 200 years later."

Bitter and broken, with Sellar's curses ringing in their ears, the Highlanders recount their particular heartbreaks as the journey unfolds.

"As it must have been on any immigrant ship, we have a varied cast of characters, including some nearly beaten and some who summon amazing grace and resilience.

Most are fictional, but we pulled a few people from history and built around them."

In the cases of land agent Sellar and an aging scribe named Donald MacLeod, MacDonald was able to make use of their own words as found in their writings.

"MacLeod provides a first person account of the burning of a village, with the smoke rising over the houses, children crying, dogs barking and the Highlanders milling about in confusion and despair in the wake of a visit from Sellar and his fire razers."

A prodigious letter writer, Sellar was given to frequently expressing his low opinion of the Highlanders.

"He considered them stupid, stubborn

and backward, calling them wood stealers, poachers, thieves and illegal distillers of whisky," notes MacDonald. "He also believed them to be idle and lazy, claiming they'd rather drink than work their farms."

Sellar's opinions are challenged by one of his victims, a sharp-tongued widow named Henny Munro. She succinctly sums up what Sellar did not understand about the Highland character, and it often falls to her to rally her shipmates by inviting singing and dancing.

"Many of these Highlanders had a deep conviction that there would be a better day ahead, if not for themselves, then certainly for their children."

It was that view that brought the MacGillivray family to pioneer in Nova Scotia in 1791. They left behind a young son to be trained as a piper. With the demise of the clan system, piper John MacGillivray decides to join his family in Nova Scotia and a bit of poetic license is employed to place him on the same ship as the exiles from Sutherland.

"His mother, Janet, who has sheltered a steady stream of dispossessed Highlanders, waits on the shore of the Northumberland Strait, hoping to see her son again before she dies," explains MacDonald. "She becomes a beacon for the people on the ship."

Surnames such as Murray, MacKay, Sutherland, Gunn, Thompson, MacKenzie, Ferguson, Douglas, Ross, Graham, MacCallum and Munro were common among the burned-out who began anew in Nova Scotia.

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SESQUICENTENNIAL



Pleasanton Games

This September, the Scottish Highland Gathering and Games in Pleasanton, California celebrates its 150th anniversary...

The Scottish Highland Gathering and Games have been taking place in northern California for 150 years. Floyd Busby has been involved with the event for the last 28. Over the phone, he recalls how he got on board.

"A friend of mine had a son who originally intended on taking over production of the festival's print program. He realized quite soon that he was in over his head, so the organizers got a hold of me and I've been doing it ever since. About a decade ago, I took over promotions and advertising as well."

A longtime member of the Caledonian Club of San Francisco, Busby is quite familiar with the organization's history with the games.

"The group was founded in 1866, putting together their first event that same year right in downtown San Francisco. That was the main site each year for decades - even through the earthquake of 1906!"

Today, the two-day festival takes place at the Alameda County Fairgrounds in Pleasanton - an hour's drive east of the city. Though the locale is one of the largest of its kind in California, the games are always packed; in recent years, the event has attracted more than 900 pipers and drummers, and approximately 35,000 people total.

"The games have become, arguably, the biggest in the world," claims Busby. "And we think our numbers are going to be even higher this year."

He attributes that success to consis-

tency; the festival's format hasn't changed much over the last three decades, with pipe bands, Highland dancing, and heavy athletics at its core.

Interestingly, the heavy athletics regularly feature competitors from a number of different countries and ethnic backgrounds. Contrary to popular belief, Busby says it's not just for Scottish athletes.

"One of the very best heavy athletes - he retired a few years ago - was an African-American from Massachusetts. Like many others through the years, he was a 'Scotsman for the weekend.'"

Or, perhaps, Scotswoman.

"One thing I believe we can take credit for creating was the women's division in the heavy events," states Busby. "This started with a young lady who became champion in all eight competitions. Since then, the women's division has continued to grow, and it is now a vital component of our gathering."

There's also an amateur division, and one for older folks, where the caber is lighter and shorter.

This year's attendees are in for a special surprise, as the games will be welcoming a "celebrity guest" of sorts; Haþór Júlíus Björnsson, also known as Gregor Clegane (or The Mountain) from Game of Thrones will be there. The athlete-turned-actor hails from Iceland and stands at a whopping six feet, nine inches. According to his IMDB profile, Björnsson was his country's Strongest Man in 2011 and 2012, and was a top-three finalist in the World's Strongest Man competition from 2012-2014.

"A lot of folks, especially young people, will be coming just because this guy will be there," Busby says. "He will be signing autographs and such, but he's also challenging the world's top pros."

Björnsson will be competing in the weight for height, which involves tossing a 58-pound piece of iron over a crossbar. Hopefully, the other athletes will be prepared. Björnsson's Game of Thrones character is renowned for his ruthlessness; in season four, he literally crushes the skull of a fellow character.

Busby adds that the games are about more than the athletics - as with previous events, this year's agenda includes a full slate of live musical acts, food and goods vendors, a whisky tasting, sheep dog trials, a "Coos and Clydesdales" showcase, a vintage car exhibit, a clan village, and numerous activities for children.

"We are known as one of the most family-friendly games in North America," he says. "There is always something for everyone here."

And, of course, there are the pipes.

"They are the soundtrack to the entire weekend. I love the closing ceremonies each year, when the U.S. Marine band plays alongside a Grade 1 pipe band. This year, the Marine band joins the L.A. Scots.

"And, for me, that alone will be worth the price of admission."

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Kristyn *Murphy*

Whether she is singing gospel, opera, Broadway tunes, folk music, or Celtic songs, vocalist Kristyn Murphy is hitting all the high notes



Born and bred near the magnificent coast of Maine, vocalist Kristyn Murphy admits that she is very much a product of her upbringing and environment

"I grew up in an American-Protestant home, heavy on the Irish and Scottish traditions," shares the 20-something singer via email. "My Mum's side is Scottish and came to the U.S. by way of Nova Scotia, and my Dad's family is of Irish descent and arrived before the famine.

"Mid-coast Maine, specifically, is home to many pockets of Irish. For example, Belfast, Maine, which was named by a group of Scots-Irish, has many traditions that have been kept alive over the generations. One way Belfast celebrates its heritage is by hosting a Celtic music festival every year. As a child, I don't think I ever went to a festival or event in this area that didn't include live Irish, folk, or maritime music."

Under those influences, Murphy's passion for her profession began at an early age.

"I can't remember a time when I was not interested in music, but I do remember the first time I truly fell in love with music and felt the desire to sing; I was seven, watching a modern film adaptation of Verdi's *Rigoletto*. By the time I was eight, I decided that I wanted to pursue music as a career. I gave my first solo performance at my sister Erin's wedding. It was that first performance that really opened my eyes to the power of sharing stories through music."

Growing up in a supportive church family, Murphy started singing at Sunday services.

"Faith has always played a huge role in my life and has greatly influenced my music. I discovered early on that singing sacred music was a great way to practice the storytelling aspect of singing. Although nobody else in my immediate family sings, I grew up in a home in which music was very important. My Dad listens to a lot of Irish folk music - which is all about storytelling - and he still encourages me to keep adding Irish tunes to my repertoire."

After years of performing almost strictly sacred music, her exploration of other genres has created a unique, hybrid style.

"I like to describe my sound as 'Kristyn Murphy,'" she smiles. "It is a multifaceted sound, with influences from Irish, Scottish, Broadway, and folk music. I sing with a small ensemble: piano, violin, cello, percussion and guitar. I take away or add, depending on the setting or piece. I find inspiration in artists like Julie Andrews, Doris Day, Liam Clancy, and Johnny McEvoy."

In recent years, the popularity of Celtic music has helped Murphy to grow her fan base.

"Groups such as Celtic Woman and Celtic Thunder have brought Celtic music into the spotlight on a larger scale, making it more accessible to people who might not otherwise be exposed to the music. Michael Flatly did the same thing with Irish dance and music with his show *Lord of the Dance*. There are many, many musicians that keep Celtic music alive on a much

smaller scale. Celtic music is diverse, and has influenced everything from punk rock to American folk - it is never static."

Likewise, her reasons for singing are also dynamic.

"I sing because I love to sing ~ that basic foundation has not changed..."

"As I matured, the stories or ideas that I share are maybe a little deeper and more fully explored. Singing is a great way to get people thinking about certain topics, to ask questions, to bravely share opinions. I have always been interested in history, and recently I have been focusing on using music as an avenue to preserve history and culture by performing a series of benefit shows at venues that are important to communities, such as museums, heritage centers, churches, old theatres, libraries, etc. I think sometimes music is seen only as a luxury entertainment, sometimes we forget that as a people what we create musically is representative of who we are, what we have been through, what we hope for, and desire."

The rewards, she continues, are many.

"As a performing musician you have the opportunity to reach a lot of people, to explore many topics, to make statements, and tell stories all through music. As a recording artist you can create something that lasts forever. You can give entire history lessons in one song, or you can write and share a personal story. Communication through music is invaluable; people sometimes listen to the words of a song more than they would listen to somebody talking. Music can touch people on an emotional level. Music is fun, sad, and healing. The hard work and endless practice that goes into creating quality music is satisfying, and provides a sense of accomplishment."

The vocation is not without its challenges, however.

"One of the hardest things is to convince folks to take that first listen. As an independent artist establishing a full-time



career, I am still building a team. Having somebody to help with booking and promoting is important. Right now I am doing many things myself, with the help of a small team, but all of this behind-the-scenes business is time consuming, and takes away from rehearsal time. Obviously artists with a large company backing them, or artists with large sponsorships, might be able to do some things a little easier because they have ready funding. However, I don't think that needs to be the reason for an artist not to create and share. Sometimes I think that people don't realize that although music is entertainment, it takes a lot of time, energy, and money to produce."

As such, Murphy's latest effort, *A Time to Remember*, was a labour of love.

"This was a huge project to undertake, and I literally put a bit of myself into it. I cried, I laughed, I stressed and rejoiced. I emptied my bank account multiple times, recorded and re-recorded things. I spent many, many hours working with producer Dan Bouza during the mixing process. We mixed and remixed and then mixed again. I worked with a wonderful photographer

from Bangor and put my Master's degree in Interactive Media to good use and designed the CD artwork and did other promotional work. I have neither a large team nor a company with a large amount of money backing me. If I could do it myself, I did, and when I couldn't I called my small team, and we got things done together."

As she looks ahead to the coming year, performing and promoting the new recording, Murphy remains mindful of her heritage.

"When I was young I didn't really pay as much attention to what inspired the culture around me. When my family ate meat and potatoes at almost every dinner or oats for breakfast, I didn't think *oh these meals are very Irish*, or *such and such seems very Scottish*.' When I was in school I didn't think *oh the songs we sing in chorus are Celtic*. So, though I grew up with a good deal of Celtic culture around me, I didn't recognize it as being anything but the normal way of life simply because this area has such a huge history of Irish and Scottish families.

"Now I look back on my upbringing and see how these 'everyday traditions' helped shape who I am today.

"And they will be things I eventually pass down when I have children, as they are ingrained in my fiber. I understand why my Dad always suggests another Irish tune for me to learn each time I open my mouth. I am so grateful that I have somebody in my life that is so insistent that I help preserve culture in this way. I think it is important for us to understand our family culture, and why we do things certain ways. I have been doing a lot of family research lately so that I can better understand our customs, and so that I can share some family stories and interesting history in my concerts. Right now, this is my way of preserving and promoting our unique culture."

www.kristynmurphy.com



Kristyn Murphy

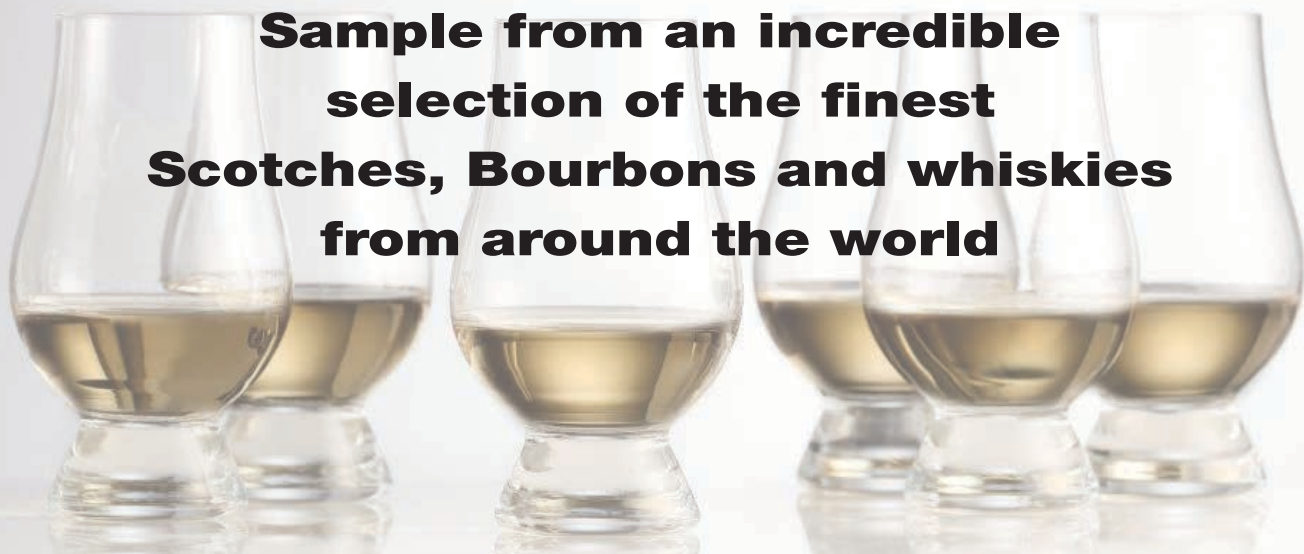
A Time to Remember

American soprano Kristyn Murphy makes all the pieces of the musical puzzle fit with her debut recording *A Time to Remember*. The vocalist breaks down borders, crossing genres seamlessly from classical to gospel to Broadway, Celtic and folk. The resulting sonic hybrid is greater than the sum of its parts, as Murphy's lovely lilt hovers gently over *Shine the Light*, *If I Were a Blackbird* and *Morning Has Broken*. The fiddle is featured on both *Green Fields of France* and *Home From the Sea*, while the sprinkling of maracas on *Mary's Boy Child* is a nice touch. While admittedly not for every ear, there is no denying the singer's incredible voice. As such, Murphy is one to keep an eye on in the coming years.



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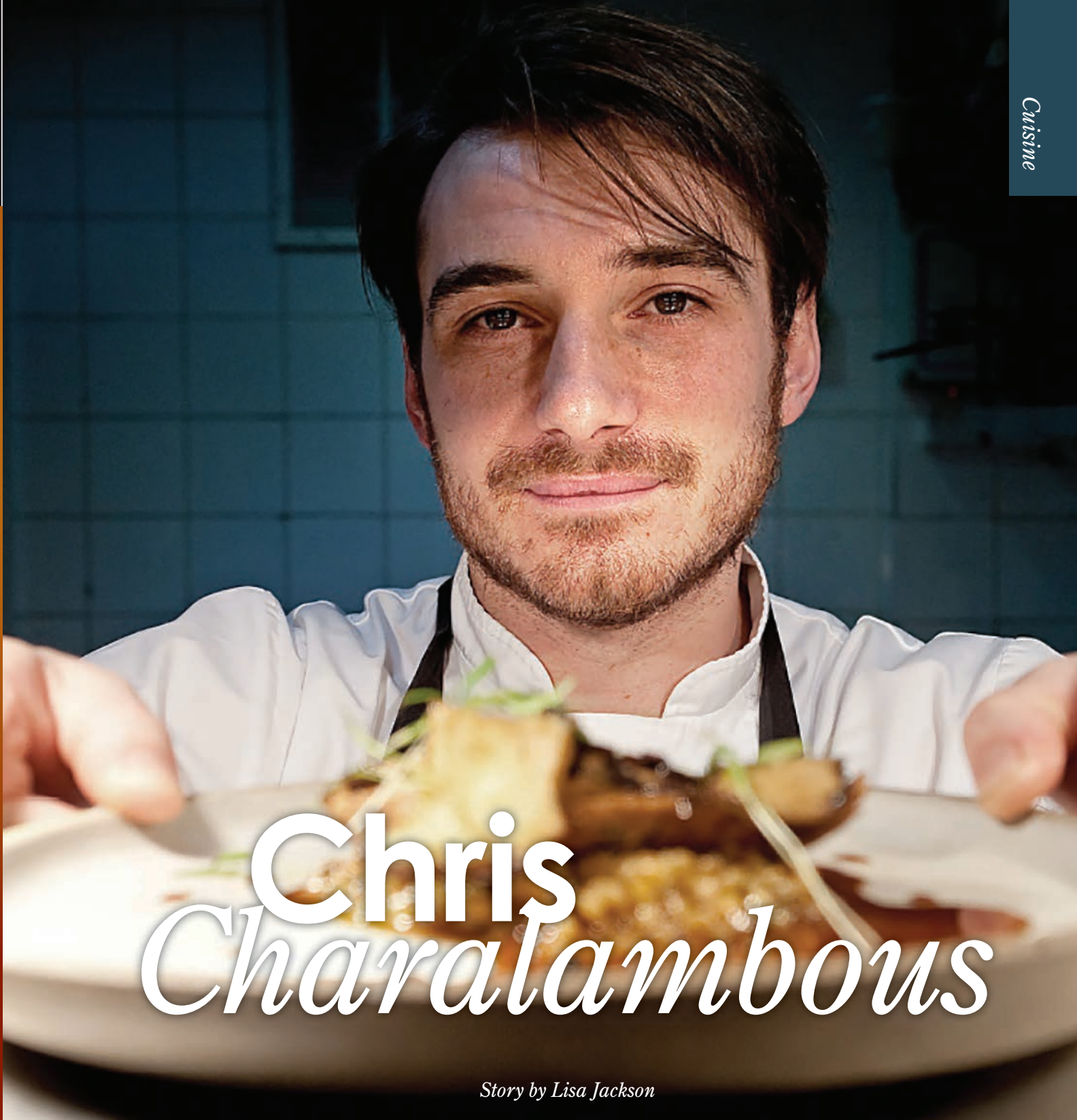
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Chris *Charalambous*

Story by Lisa Jackson

*For Scottish Chef Chris Charalambous,
the grocery aisle starts in the wild*



“We go out foraging in the park,” shares Scottish Chef Chris Charalambous by phone from his home in Glasgow. “It’s only a two minute walk from the restaurant’s front door. We’ll pick flowers, hogweed, wild garlic, wild leeks, and use it on the menus.”

When he’s not rooting around in the bushes, Charalambous is a Celtic chef and the owner of Cail Bruich, an award-winning restaurant in Glasgow. As a young cook and restaurateur, the talented thirty-something has quickly made a name for himself as a gastro guru and go-getter. He opened his first restaurant early in his career, a move that he attributes to “sheer naivety.”

“I was 24 years old and didn’t have a clue what I was doing,” he laughs. “But I loved cooking and working hard. I was working for other people, but I wanted to work for myself. It just seemed like the right thing to do at the time.”

In 2006, Charalambous opened his restaurant in Glasgow’s West End, adjacent to the city’s botanical gardens. Meaning “eat well” in Scottish Gaelic, Cail Bruich is a small family-run eatery that offers contemporary Scottish cuisine, using both the freshest ingredients and French cooking techniques. Given that Glasgow is what he calls “a meat and two veggie city,” Charalambous’ daring new menu was a bit of a risk. But trusting his gut turned out to be right.

“Seven years later, we’re still here, and we’re still making good stuff,” he smiles. “I have tried to make slow changes, and offer the diner something they wouldn’t normally eat. I’ve had fussy people eating raw ox heart and saying they loved it! It’s really just a matter of perception most of the time.”

Since opening, Cail Bruich has earned two AA rosettes, and a

place in the Michelin Guide. In 2013 and 2014, it was named “Best Restaurant” at the Scottish Entertainment Awards. But before becoming an entrepreneurial chef, Charalambous grew up cooking with his mother in the family kitchen.

“My mum was a big inspiration,” he says. “She used to get calls at random hours in the evening asking her to make meatballs. She was a fantastic cook who created her own opportunities. Luckily, that rubbed off on me.”

Charalambous’ mother may have been his first mentor, but he later advanced as a professional chef by interning in Copenhagen with Chef René Redzepi and the team from Noma, a Michelin two-star eatery that was ranked “Best Restaurant in the World” in 2014, and which often holds a wait time of three months or more for reservations.

“Noma is not just a restaurant, it’s a way of life,” muses Charalambous. “There are 35 chefs and 15 waiters. So there’s one member of staff for every guest.”

The experience was a career milestone that altered his cookery practice.

“It’s cutting edge, new-Nordic cuisine, and I met people that really changed my way of thinking and attitude towards food. I learned to be more adventurous, and to challenge the diner’s palate.”

Back in Glasgow, Charalambous incorporated those ideas into his own kitchen; cuisine based on purity, simplicity and freshness, reflecting the changing seasons, and created in consideration of the environmental impact. As such, the aim is to make traditional recipes using local products, while reviving and adapting some of the older techniques, such as marinating, smoking and salting.

“We try to buy as local as possible, and go by what’s in season,”

he notes. "The scallops, the lamb, the beef, the duck – it's all Scottish. It all comes from within a couple of hours of the restaurant."

Buying local is key, but environmental impact is also of utmost importance. Following this manifesto, Cail Bruich's menus revolve around the seasons, and Charalambous taps into a network of local food providers and expert foragers who supply ingredients to his kitchen.

"There's only so much we can get in the city central," he says. "So, one of my guys will pick in the countryside. I also have relationships with foragers further up north and down south who can pretty much get me what I want."

Foraging is more than just eating the freshest food possible, however. As Charalambous explains, it's about reviving a connection with nature.

"There's something quite satisfying about going out in the morning, and picking something nice. You're feeling it, picking it, and you're serving it. When you do that, you're not going to just buy a bag of salad greens and shove it on a plate."

Of course, taste matters too. As the chef states, it's not enough to pick greens; making foraged produce "delicious" is the "ultimate goal" at Cail Bruich.

"Right now, it's quite warm and we're using some elderflowers," he says. "They give off a wonderful kind of apple, vanilla, marzipan flavour. For dessert, we're making an elderberry and yogurt sorbet."

Bounty blooms in Scotland's warmer months, inspiring delectable dishes such as wild garlic soup and blackberry soufflé.

"The mushroom season is just starting in Scotland," he points out. "We're really famous for Chanterelles, a small yellow mushroom that smells almost like apricots, and we're pairing that with locally reared duck from a farm that's about an hour and a half drive from Glasgow."

"There's a wonderful thing called hogweed at the moment. It's almost like a vegetable, like asparagus. You cook it, and that goes with a stuffed saddle of lamb, which is absolutely delicious."

In with the new doesn't necessarily mean out with the old, though. Like a gastronomic wizard, Charalambous fuses Scottish classics with seasonal ingredients.

"Glasgow is famous for Tunnock's Teacakes. It's a biscuit with a meringue coated in chocolate. We're making a teacake with sea buckthorn, a wild berry that primarily grows on the east coast, tak-



ing an old recipe and making it modern."

"We also have a haggis bonbon on the menu. It's a canapé, deep fried in a homemade sauce."

As Glasgow's gastronomic scene evolves - with small shops and bars popping up across the city - Charalambous contends there's a huge range of dining and drinking options, from Chinese to modern Scottish to a simple sandwich and a coffee. But what he appreciates most is the laid-back vibe in Glasgow's restaurants.

"We're a working class city, very unpretentious, and it's more about a relaxed feeling. The guys out there are cooking some good stuff, and occasionally get Michelin Stars or awards, but it's simply tasty and that's what people want."

Along with cooking for patrons, Charalambous connects with communities to get people excited about food. He participates in monthly wine and food events, and at certain times of the year, takes small groups on foraging walks.

"We forage for a couple of hours and then go back to the restaurant," he says. "I'll introduce the produce, do a couple of demos, and then cook a five-course lunch."

Scoring a spot on these rare walks can be tough, but Cail Bruich's newsletter offers the inside scoop for email subscribers. And this September, Charalambous is participating in Scotland's first restaurant festival, Let's Eat Glasgow, where top chefs and food and drink producers across the West of Scotland will serve up a sensational farm to fork menu.

"We're getting out to reach those who maybe can't afford to eat at our restaurants," he exclaims, "so underprivileged families and children will get a fine meal that day."

The festival provides the opportunity to positively influence eating habits in Glasgow, which he dubs "the heart attack capital."

"We've got a real problem with that," he says. "We're trying to make people aware of what they're putting in their mouths."

Festivals, foraging, and food activism aside, Charalambous has tentative plans to open a new eatery ("something more relaxed") within the next four years. But when asked what else lies in his immediate future, he pauses.

"What's next? I'm going on holiday next week, does that count?"

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Two Hearts Beat as One

Despite years of division in Northern Ireland, two traditional adversaries are learning to make beautiful music together.

Celtic Life International correspondent Eimear O'Callaghan explains...

As dusk settles, Derry's imposing, historic walls cast a shadow across the waste ground where groups of youths stand guard over dozens of wooden pallets, stacked high for their Twelfth of July bonfire. Red, white and blue painted curb stones proclaim boldly, as does stark white graffiti on a black wall, that the Fountain is loyalist territory - the last Protestant enclave on Derry's nationalist west bank.

A nineteenth century Irish melody, Star of the County Down, drifts incongruously through the open doors of the primary

school. It's the twice-weekly practice night for the William King Melody Flute Band - the pride of this small, close-knit community.

The musicians don't fit the stereotype of Northern Ireland's 600 Protestant marching bands. Except for the side drummers, they are seated. And their denim jeans, running shoes, baseball caps, and two Manchester United soccer shirts belie the fact that these 30 'ordinary' looking men are Ireland's seven-time Melody Flute Band champions.

Conductor Derek Moore introduces my untrained ear to the sound of the piccolo, distinctive above flutes, side drums and cymbals. The instrument is in the large but nimble fingers of a bald, middle-aged man in a black hoodie, who's scanning the music sheets on the silver stand before him.

"That's Ali," Moore whispers, "one of the best piccolo players in the country. That piccolo's 120 years old. It belonged originally to the Owen Roe O'Neill Flute Band - one of Derry's old, Catholic, republican bands."



Moore, a bandsman for 45 years, implicitly acknowledges the common musical tradition that underlies a ground-breaking engagement between Protestant marching bands - the most public manifestation of unionist culture - and the nationalist, Irish music tradition.

Relationships are flourishing, as members of the Londonderry Bands Forum and the Irish cultural organization, An Gaeláras, bring musicians together to talk and perform as never before.

Throughout the nineties, when Protestant marches commemorating the Siege of Derry signaled ferocious rioting in the city, this peace-building initiative would have been inconceivable. But a unique agreement hammered out with nationalists, and the recently-brokered Maiden City Accord, mean that - unlike in Belfast - the Apprentice Boys and the Orange Order parade through Derry/Londonderry without controversy.

As coordinator of the Forum - comprising 15 bands - Moore wants to dispel "preconceptions and misconceptions" about marching bandmen. "For too long, we've been misrepresented and misunderstood. Catholics going to school with bodhráns and fiddles are classed as musicians. Young Protestants, playing flutes and drums, are classed as thugs.

"Our bands want to be recognized as musicians," he continues. "We play a huge repertoire of classical, military, American and Scottish music. We play mainstream traditional Irish tunes too - but to a slowed down marching beat. Most of what we play is steeped in all our pasts. It's doesn't belong to any one side."

Former side drummer, Kenny McFarland, is chairman of the Forum and helped establish the Pride of the Orange and Blue, a "blood and thunder" flute band. For him, involvement with the nationalist tradition reconnects Protestants with a part of their culture from which the majority have been excluded, or excluded themselves.

Standing beneath a blue and white Scottish flag, fluttering from a lamp-post in the Tyrone village where he works, the Forum chairman admits, "We haven't bothered to tell the story of our culture. People don't understand it. As soon as we're born, we reach for the drumsticks. I was a drummer, as were my father and grandfathers. I've just left my baby grandson, banging two saucepan lids like cymbals.

"For 40 years, it didn't bother me what people thought of us. I knew that nationalists saw us as bigoted, two-headed monsters. But the band was my life - practicing, parading, fund-raising - and I

was proud to be involved."

McFarland led his first pipe band when he was eight, shortly before the Troubles started and his family fled Derry's nationalist 'city side.'

"My father was an Orangeman and told me stories about 'ceilidhing' and following great fiddlers around Protestant town-lands like these. That connection with the traditional tunes has disappeared."

Two years ago, when the world's biggest Irish traditional music festival - Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann - came to Northern Ireland for the first time, An Gaeláras invited the Protestant bands to participate.

"I remember thinking this is mental, it's crazy," McFarland shares. "People who've spent years making sure we couldn't march are urging us to take part. But the idea kept niggling at me. The notion of a huge festival coming to our city and our culture not being represented bothered me.

"Discussions about music gradually led to a sort of trust being established and we realized the invitation to participate was genuine. We knew how good we were, so - why not?"

The Fleadh attracted a reported 430,000 traditional music enthusiasts to Derry over eight days. One drizzly evening, the Churchill Flute Band, resplendent in scarlet and white military-style uniforms, performed before an enthusiastic audience in a city centre car park. Three other Protestant bands played at 'gig rigs' across the River Foyle.

After 'the William Kings' marched with the nationalist St Joseph's Brass Band in the Walled City Tattoo, they presented them with a plaque inscribed "Divided by history, united by music." And when the Fleadh went to Sligo last year, the Pride of the Orange and Blue paraded confidently through the west of Ireland town, before joining a ceilidh band on stage. 'Fluters' and drummers played alongside fiddlers and pipers, aside a huge banner declaring, "Connecting People through Culture."

"There's a belief that Northern Protestants didn't and don't play traditional music," says the Rector of Galway, Archdeacon Gary Hastings, "because it's seen as part of nationalist culture. It's not true."

Despite his Ulster Protestant upbringing in unionist East Belfast, the Church of Ireland clergyman is an accomplished traditional musician and Irish speaker. His 700 year-old church, St Nicholas' - visited by Christopher Columbus in 1477 - regularly hosts tradi-

tional sessions.

While researching his book, *With Fife and Drum*, Hastings realized that 'Orange' and 'Irish' music shared a common background. "Two hundred years ago - before Ireland was partitioned - everybody, apart from the very wealthy, enjoyed the same popular music, whatever their religion. In cultural terms, Irish, Scottish, traditional, orange and green don't really exist independently of each other."

He explains, for example, that marching band favourite Shanghai Lil is a slowed down version of a traditional reel *The Swallow's Tail*. The *Boyne Water* exists in the Irish tradition as *Rosc Catha na Mumhan* or *The Battlecry of Munster*.

"Orange music, whatever it is, happens here. It's been adopted, adapted and developed and it's not done the same way anywhere else. It's as Irish - and traditional - as anything on this island."

While that assertion challenges purists on both sides, the response to the flute bands' engagement with nationalists is overwhelmingly positive. An education program about tolerance, acceptance and band tradition is being delivered to 600 15-year-olds. Plans are underway for joint tuition and for using music to gain educational qualifications.

Workshops have already taken place in An Cultúrlann, Derry's £4.5 million Irish cultural centre. The eye-catching building has won major awards for its zig-zag, pinball-like design, with one judge commending its "arms open wide to the whole community." Appropriately, Protestant bandsmen have played there for nationalist audiences and performed a drama about band tradition, *The Pride*, to a packed house.

In the ground floor cafe, Gearóid Ó hEára from An Gaeláras switches momentarily into Irish to order a chicken wrap and

describes what's happening as "seismic."

"We're all on a learning journey, using music as a common denominator," says the life-long republican and former Sinn Féin mayor. "If we meet together as musicians, we can break down the history and hostility between us."



"The hallmark of this engagement is brutal honesty. Nationalists form their opinion of flute bands from years of negative, sectarian images on the six o'clock news."

"This process is about, 'You can be a loyalist, a bands-person, a Presbyterian, whatever. Be who you want to be and I'll meet you where you are. You'll meet me as who I am. But let's have a conversation, a dialogue.'"

When Derry hosted Ireland's Pan Celtic Festival last Easter, a unionist band joined the Parade of Nations to Waterloo Place - the spot where violent clashes after an Apprentice Boys' parade triggered the start of 'the Troubles' in 1969.

"After playing there with a nationalist band," Ó hEára says, "one of the bands-people reminded me poignantly that it was the first time in 46 years they'd been allowed to march there. It shows what's possible when people work and talk together."

The encouraging reaction to the Fo-

rum's outreach work has given them "the confidence to move forward," Moore explains, "and say, 'this is who we are. This is what we do.'"

The emboldened Forum accepted an invitation to address the annual conference of Irish Republican party, Sinn Féin, in March. "It was our biggest opportunity to put our message across and face down our biggest detractors."

"One of our band members was shot dead by the IRA in 1975 - ten bullets in his back, a few streets from here. There were people in that conference who were probably involved."

"But if we keep looking back, not looking forward, we'll go nowhere. One of the things we're trying to instill into young ones - and it's controversial - is that the past is now past. We have to go forward."

The William King band has transformed itself from the body set up 40 years ago to distract young unionists and loyalists from the violence engulfing the city. The swaggering teenagers - wearing bow ties and home-knit jumpers, with crimson berets sporting orange plumes - have evolved into disciplined, accomplished musicians. They perform now in smart crimson uniforms with white peaked caps, and march with military precision, playing expensive musical instruments.

Graffiti on the wall in the Fountain suggests a community under siege but the Protestant bandsmen's new found confidence and pride suggest otherwise. "We're still two communities, but music can unite us in a personal way," McFarland notes. "For us, it's about getting rid of the idea that we're insulated, on our own, 'just flute bands.' We're musicians, showing we can hold our heads high and play with anybody. All of a sudden, we're not the enemy."



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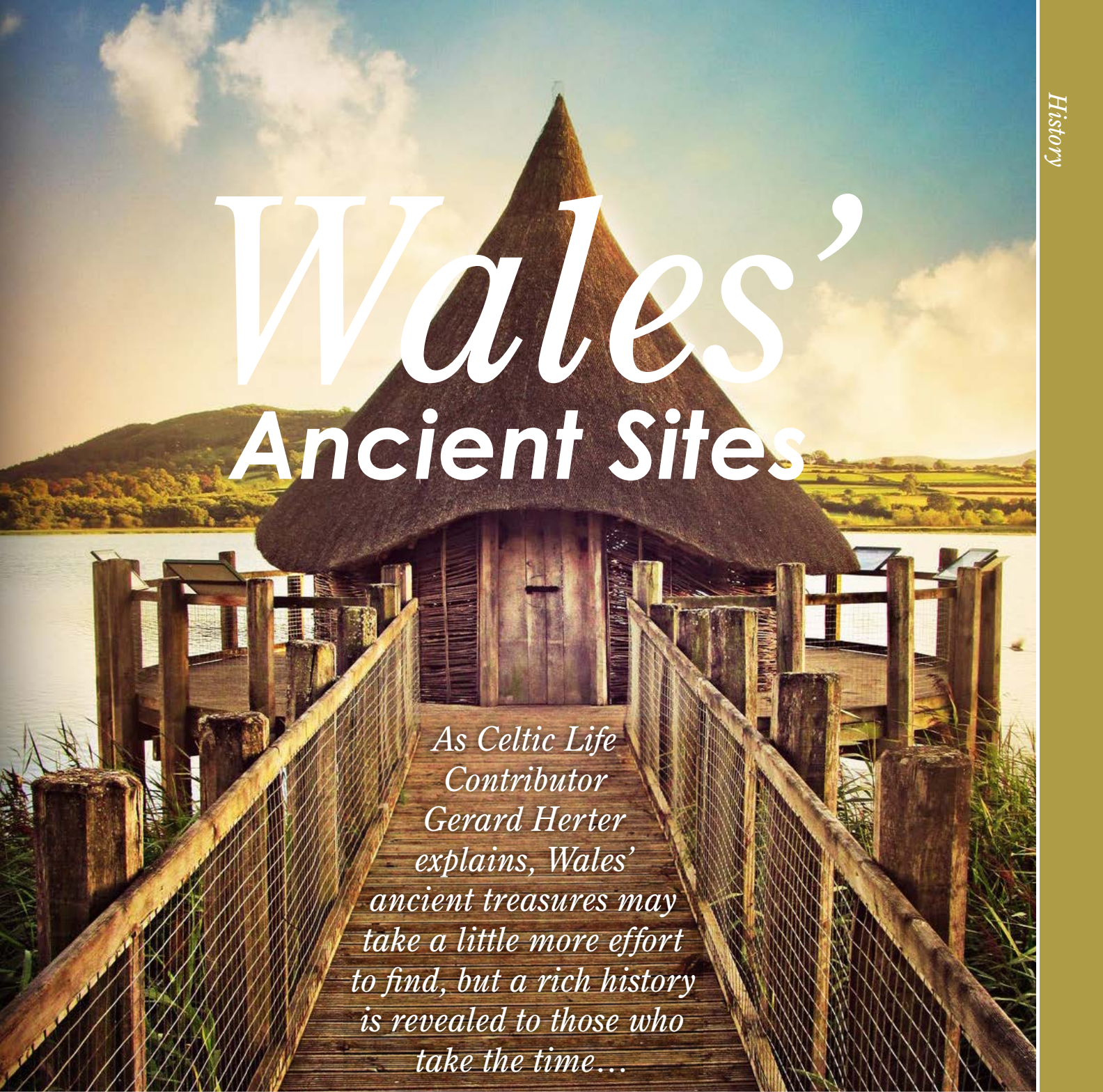


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Wales'

Ancient Sites

As Celtic Life Contributor Gerard Herter explains, Wales' ancient treasures may take a little more effort to find, but a rich history is revealed to those who take the time...

Our journey started in Cardiff. After exploring the castle and other crowded tourist attractions in the city, my wife Lori and I longed for the peaceful solitude of the countryside. We did not have to travel far for our first encounter with megalithic Wales; Tinkinswood Burial Chamber, a few miles southwest of Cardiff in the Vale of Glamorgan, proved to be an excellent place for

an introduction to the country's ancient culture.

Tinkinswood shares a field with cows and sheep. As elsewhere in Wales, farmers are required by law to allow visitors to traverse their fields for access to the sites.

This type of burial chamber is known as a portal tomb or dolmen. Dating back 6,000 years to the Neolithic period, Tinkinswood consists of a 40-ton limestone

capstone measuring 24 feet across, suspended by several large upright stones. The structure was once covered by a mound of earth.

We walked beneath the capstone, where hundreds of human bones were found during excavation. The tomb is all that remains of a prehistoric village's residents, whose existence left many untold mysteries, including how they managed to

erect the massive capstone.

Because of the lack of recorded history, Wales' ancient sites are focal points for oral folk tales and legends, and Tinkinswood has a couple of ill-fated ones; a person who spends the night on one of three special days of the year will either die, go mad, or become a poet. As well, dancing here on the Sabbath can have dire consequences, as a group of ladies purportedly found out - a collection of boulders to the south of the chamber are thought to be all that is left of them.

What makes Tinkinswood ideal for first time visitors are the audio recordings that tell the story of the ancient people who once lived here. Four separate audio selections covered the Neolithic Period, the tomb builders, building a tomb, and further exploration.

Another smaller burial chamber of similar structure, St. Lythans, sits about a mile away. A walk along the Millennium Heritage Trail connects the two sites, and we were content to observe St. Lythans from the road before moving on.

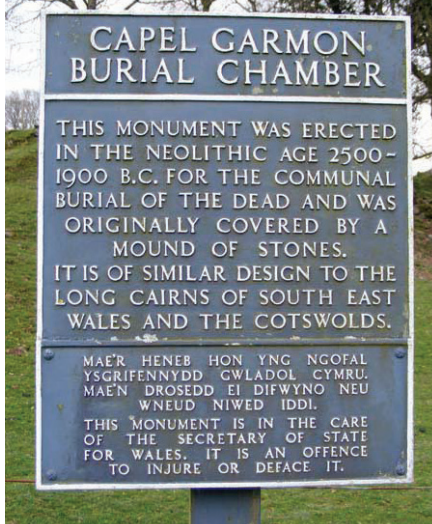
Heading north, we stopped briefly at Llangorse Lake in Brecon Beacons National Park to take in the crannog there. While some ancient lake dwellings date back to the Neolithic period of Tinkinswood, the Llangorse Crannog was built around 916 AD.

A crannog is a defensive dwelling built out on a lake. Common in Ireland and Scotland, Llangorse Crannog is the only known one in Wales. The remains of the actual crannog form a small, uninhabited island 40 meters from shore.

We viewed the site from a platform extending out from the water's edge, where the government service, Cadw, maintains an authentic reconstruction at the Welsh Crannog Center. Inside and around the conical, thatched roof structure, we read displays of the life and legends from the time the crannog was active. Apparently built for a royal household, bits of history suggest a tragic end, when a king's wife and dozens of others were killed by a Saxon army.

Continuing north, we eventually reached Snowdonia and settled in for a few days near Betws-y-Coed, at the charming Tan-y-Foel Country House. The next morning, we met our guide Bernard Owen, a seasoned purveyor of Celtic history.

Finding the lesser known sites can be a challenge along the narrow, poorly marked lanes of rural Wales. So when Owen recommended we check out another



er intriguing spot - Fairy Glen - we gladly accepted his offer. Soon we were driving along a lushly overgrown wood, beside a narrow ravine. Fairy Glen is known more for its mystical scenic beauty than for specific fairy sightings.

Stopping to peer down the Glen's shallow gorge, we saw a small, ancient, unmarked stone bridge spanning the chasm. Though the main part of Fairy Glen is reached by a footpath out of Betws-y-Coed, Owen had brought us to a remote section with a centuries-old bridge that few visitors would see. He pointed out that the twelfth-century bridge was originally used to drive cattle across to the other side of the stream which flowed below.

Later, we were escorted to a 4,000 year-old prehistoric burial chamber at Capel Gorman in the heart of Snowdonia.

We bid Owen adieu and drove on to the Isle of Anglesey, just north, across the Menai Strait, where the passage tomb of Bryn Celli Ddu revealed more glimpses into the lives of early Welsh inhabitants. Aptly named, meaning the "mound in the dark grove," the portal tomb was buried under a mound of grass-covered earth, much like it would have been thousands of years ago.

The sun produced sharp shadows as we entered the 28 foot long chamber. On a cleft inside were trinkets, including a doll, feathers, fruit, a shaft of wheat, and a fork. These were likely from a modern day recreation of an ancient ritual. Outside, remnants of a stone circle - or henge - are evident, forming a ditch around the monument. A unique carving found near a ceremonial pit is known as the "Pattern Stone" for its winding serpentine decorations. The immediate area of the mound is fenced to protect it from nearby grazing livestock. Plaques on the fence describe the burial chamber and henge. Another unique aspect of Bryn Celli Ddu is the alignment of the chamber; the configuration is designed to catch the sun's rays at daybreak on the summer solstice.

After, we toured the Bronze Age copper mines on the nearby Great Orme headland next to Llandudno.

The copper mines are an extensive labyrinth of tunnels dating back 4,000 years. We descended deep into the excavated hillside formation, originally dug out with stone hammers and animal bones during the Bronze Age. Estimated to have been worked for a thousand years, the mines were dormant until Roman times, and again until more recently. The vastness of the site attests to its richness of

metal resources, and the huge economy that thrived for so long because of it.

With our next historic destination in the southwest of Wales, we stopped overnight in coastal Aberystwyth. While there, we drove through scenic Rheidol Valley to Devil's Bridge, finding history here similar to that of the unmarked bridge at Fairy Glen.

Devil's Bridge is an amazing amalgam of three bridges from three different ages, each one built atop the other. Though visible from the road, a steep rocky path through the wooded vale leads to even more spectacular views of waterfalls created by the river flowing under the bridges.

The topmost bridge is practically new at a little more than a hundred years of age. Beneath it, the second bridge dates to the 1750s. The oldest and bottom-most bridge, which bears a resemblance to the one at Fairy Glen, is thought by legend to have been created by the Devil himself to trick unsuspecting peasants. More likely is that the builders were eleventh century monks from the nearby Strata Florida monastery.

Continuing south to Pembrokeshire Coast National Park, we returned to the Iron Age at Castell Henllys, which translates as "castle of the old court." Originally an early hill fort, the site now boasts an excellent reconstruction, on the ancient foundations, of four large roundhouses and a granary. Based on its size, as many as 150 people may have lived here in the several thatched roof structures supported by "wattle and daub" walls and fireplaces. Considered a well defended enclave on a hill, various protective techniques were employed, such as the strategically placed upright stones that would slow and snag attackers, making them vulnerable to the inhabitants.

Unlike many of the remote historic sites, Castell Henllys is complete with visitor center and gift shop. The excavation and authentic re-creation makes the locale popular for archeology training, school children's visits, and ritual reenactments.

Nearby, in Pembrokeshire, is Pentre Ifan (Ivans Village), considered the best preserved Neolithic burial chamber. It is striking, standing out fully exposed on a hill. I easily walked under the capstone that was suspended eight feet in the air - a 16 ton, 16 foot long boulder, delicately balanced on three other stones for over 3,500 years.

This monument is one of only three in Wales to have been preserved by the Ancient Monuments Protection Act of 1882.



Though burial pits were found beneath the dolmen, no bones were located. Various fairy legends are associated with this site, including one that tells of child-like fairies dressed as soldiers, guarding this "portal" to the Otherworld.

Our final ancient site in Wales carries a legendary name; Arthur's Stone sits high on the Cefn Bryn ridge near Reynoldston, along the scenic Gower Peninsula of South Wales. A path leads up an open field to the perch of the prominent stone, which commands a sweeping view down to the Bristol Channel of the Irish Sea in the distance.

Dating back to 2,500 B.C., and another of the Neolithic burial chambers protected by the Ancient Monuments Protection Act, Arthur's Stone's principal feature is the 25 ton, eight foot high capstone. Measuring 13 feet long by 8 feet wide, the capstone is supported just above the ground by several relatively small boulders. Deposited during the last Ice Age, this structure is thought to have been created by the digging out of soil beneath the capstone while inserting the supporting standing stones.

A number of legends surround this site, the main one drawing from the capstone's shape, which is much like a huge pebble. King Arthur was said to have tossed a pebble he found in his shoe. Travelling some seven miles before landing at this spot, the stone grew from having been touched by the king, and was lifted up out of admiration by the adjoining local stones. A 10-ton chunk lying next to Arthur's Stone gave rise to a legend that it was struck off the main stone by the sword of St. David, patron saint of Wales, who deplored the druid worship here. Finally, young druid maidens were known to test the faithfulness of their beloved by making a cake offering and then circling the Stone three times on hands and knees. If their intended appeared before they finished, they knew he would be a faithful husband.

Back near Cardiff, we wrapped our visit with two fitting attractions; St. Fagans Natural History Museum, just outside of Cardiff, and the National Museum in the capital city center. St. Fagans, is an outdoor reconstruction of dwellings in Wales' rural past. Though most are from recent centuries, there is a Celtic village re-creation that provides context from the ancient era. The National Museum takes history back to the geologic creation of Wales and follows the ancient story forward in an exhibit titled "The Evolution of Wales."

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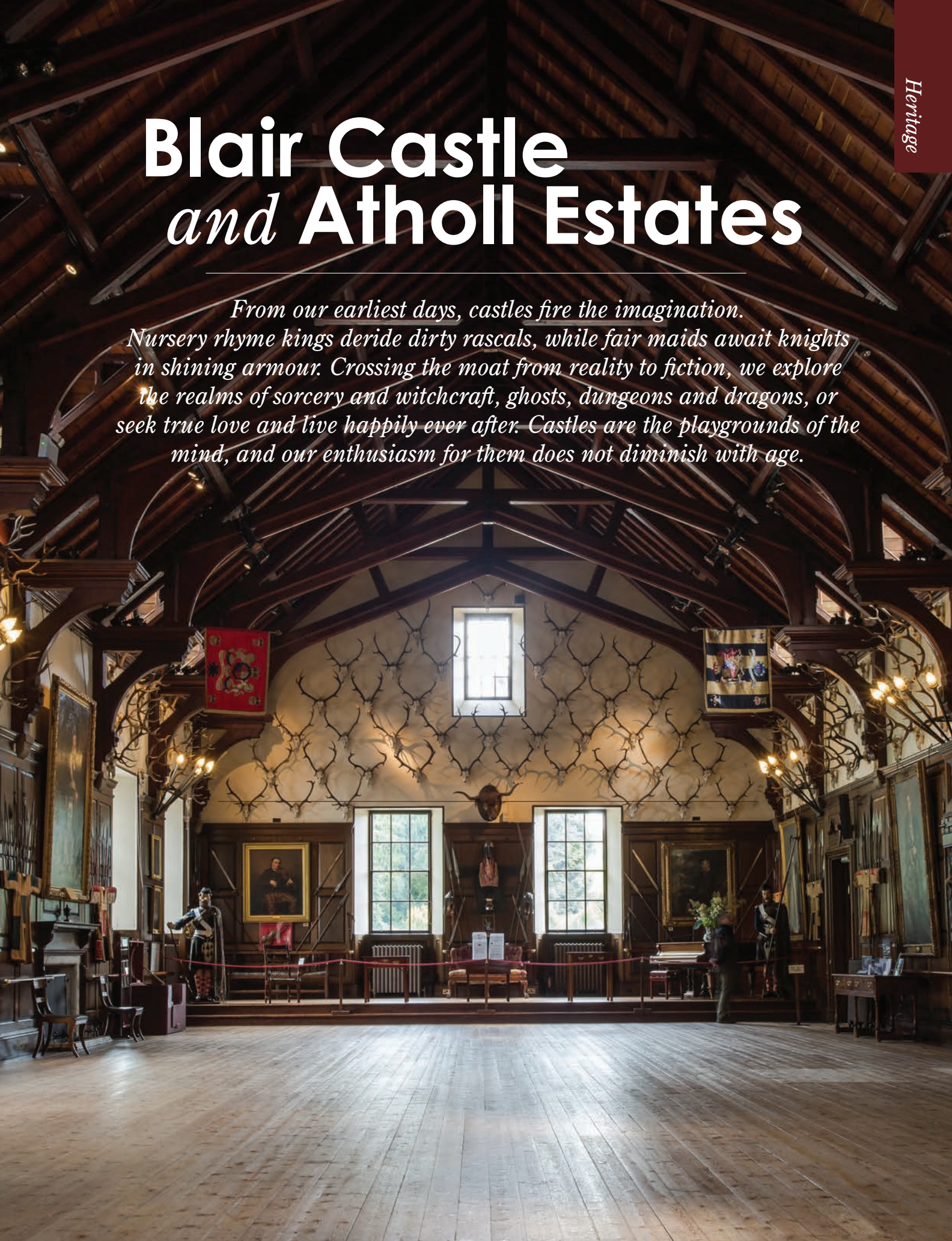
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Blair Castle *and* Atholl Estates

From our earliest days, castles fire the imagination. Nursery rhyme kings deride dirty rascals, while fair maids await knights in shining armour. Crossing the moat from reality to fiction, we explore the realms of sorcery and witchcraft, ghosts, dungeons and dragons, or seek true love and live happily ever after. Castles are the playgrounds of the mind, and our enthusiasm for them does not diminish with age.





So it was, that once upon a time - not so very long ago - I headed north through the enchanted land of Perthshire in search of Blair Castle. In the deep, dark forests near Pitlochry, I spotted its imposing white walls topped with turrets, crow-stepped gables, pitched slated roofs, tall chimneys, and crenellated towers, all punching through the shadowy green envelope of trees.

Blair Castle is the focal point of Atholl Estates that once covered 350,000 acres (141,640 hectares) of the Scottish Highlands. Founded almost 750 years ago, the current building, with its many subsequent alterations and additions, occupies a once-strategically important site in the strath of Garry, the main route through the Grampians between Perth and Inverness. Today, the estate covers 145,000 acres (58,680 hectares), making it one of the largest in Scotland.

James II of Scotland granted the earldom of Atholl to his half brother, Sir John Stewart, in 1457. It was then passed to the Murray lineage in 1629, where it remains to this day. The second Murray Earl was granted the Marquis of Atholl title in 1676, and the second Marquis of Atholl became its first Duke in 1703. Like many families, the Stewarts and Murrays of Atholl have seen their fair share of romance, love, wars and in-fighting. All of these things have shaped the history of this place, but it is ultimately the families' success that has created both the estate I now pass through and the imposing castle, whose doors stand open before me.

Inside the Baronial-style entrance hall, walls festooned with swords, shields, rifles, bayonets and body armour confront me. It is a stark reminder of my nation's turbulent past, and a symbol of the power that is Blair Castle's heritage. I tour through rooms of impressive dimensions, bedecked with elaborate plasterwork, and filled with heirloom treasures.

Unlike many such collections, these are not objects gathered impersonally from disparate corners of the globe. Rather, they reveal a more intimate story of those who have passed through these walls. Magnificent portrait and landscape paintings, musical instruments, hand crafted furniture, and stunning embroidery work tell tales of how its inhabitants lived, worked and played.

Famous guests - both invited and uninvited - have stayed at Blair Castle, including Mary Queen of Scots in 1564, Oliver Cromwell's troops, who seized the spot in 1650, and John Graham - Viscount "Bonnie Dundee" - who conquered the castle for the Jacobites in 1689, and whose body was returned to the premises later that same year following the Battle of Killiecrankie. There were further sieges of Blair Castle by both Government and Jacobite troops during the 1745-46 uprising. Robert Burns stayed here in 1787, and it was following a visit to the nearby Falls of Bruar that the Bard, moved by the lack of vegetation around the waterfalls, wrote one of his lesser-known works, The Humble Petition of Bruar Water.

Undoubtedly, the castle's most famous visitor was Queen Victoria, who stayed here for three weeks in 1844. Impressed by the





way the Duke's men, The Atholl Highlanders, looked after her, she presented them with colours - giving them the right to bear arms, thus creating the only private army to exist in Europe today.

Keen to explore the wider estate, I joined former head gamekeeper Sandy Reid for a guided tour of the rolling Atholl hills. Reid came to the estate from Aberdeen when he was only fifteen years old. He began as a pony boy, looking after the Highland ponies used to bring culled deer off the hills, and he continued working here for over fifty-five years before retiring. He still helps out during the summer months, running tractor rides and Land Rover safaris. As we drive up the hills behind Blair Castle, Reid knows exactly where to find red deer, black grouse, golden plovers, hen harriers and mountain hares.

The main field-sport on the estate is red deer stalking, which doubles as a part of its deer control program. In the absence of natural predators, the population of wild red deer that roam the Scottish Highlands must be managed. Atholl Estates is a member of a regional deer management group, monitoring populations and recommending culls to member estates in order to maintain a healthy balance between habitat, deer welfare and economic sustainability.

The estate also offers grouse shooting. Grouse populations run in cycles, controlled by their densities. If numbers get too high they become diseased, and the population plummets. Culling maintains the optimum number for breeding. Additionally, salmon and trout fishing opportunities are available on rivers and lochs around the area. The estate also controls predators - mainly foxes and carrion crows that live off ground nesting birds such as grouse, golden plover and hen harriers.

I asked Reid about the biggest changes he had seen over the years. Tapping the dashboard of the Land Rover, he replied, "Mechanization, and the vehicles in particular. It is so much easier to move over large areas now. Also, modern all-weather clothing is so much better than in the past when everything got wet, heavy and had to be cleaned and dried out."

We got out of the vehicle at 2,750ft (838M) in the Atholl Hills. From this domain of the golden eagles, I could see the vastness of the estate all around me, and I pondered the responsibility and economic challenges that go with such custodianship.

"The biggest issue is maintaining income flow to keep up with operating costs," notes Andrew Bruce Wootton, who has been general manager at Atholl Estates since 2000. "Service charges, material costs and changes in regulations all increase much faster than rents and trading revenues."

As with many modern businesses, diversification is needed to tap into additional income streams. "Tourism - the castle, park, lodges, functions, events and field sports - and hydro electricity make up about 60% of our turnover," he confirms. "Forestry, farming, let farming, let affordable housing, and property development make up the balance."

The estate caters well to its visitors. There are excellent accommodations in traditional Victorian and modern timber lodges, along with a 300-space caravan and camping park set in stunning, mature parkland. The recently restored Hercules Garden, with its Chinese Bridge, summerhouse and lily ponds, provides a tranquil environment for visitors and wildlife alike.

Wootton notes the estate's education program. "Our most significant educational activity is the provision of a ranger service, which is active in the local schools and communities, running programs both in and out of their curriculum. We also work with the Wilderness Foundation to provide camping breaks on the estate for disadvantaged children from urban areas."

Although the domain hosts events throughout the year, Wootton says that this year's horse trials are of particular significance. "We have hosted a three day event for over 25 years, and have been recognized by the Fédération Equestre Internationale (FEI) for over 20 years. In 2008 we became a Concours Complet International (CCI) triple-star event, one of only four in the UK. This year, between the 9th and 12th of September, we are hosting the FEI European Championships. This is the last opportunity for nations to qualify for the 2016 Olympics. We are expecting around 60,000 people through the gate for this - almost twice our normal attendance figure."

Blair Castle is definitely a jewel in the Perthshire crown, and I left Atholl Estates much enlightened about its history and the men and women who shaped it.

*Words and photos by Tom Langlands
www.tomlanglandsphotography.com*



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Silvia Pellegrino

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I was born in Rome, Italy, but I grew up on the enchanting island of Sardinia. Every family trip to Rome was an occasion to go check out the capital's latest fashions and replenish my already overflowing wardrobe.

By the age of 18 I had already devel-

oped my own style, and I was eager to learn and dare more. I was fortunate to study fashion design at the Central Saint Martins College in London.

For me, fashion has always been something extremely intimate, a powerful tool to develop my own language and

express myself. My past collections narrate the story of my personal experiences - what inspires me, and the amazing people I have met on this journey.

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whoever will be wearing the piece will feel both attractive and comfortable. Tartan is always a big, big love affair for us, so we always include some distinctive Scottish pieces.

What makes good design is the love and intention you put in it. Every detail

must be cured - from the choice of the fabrics, the color combination and the tailoring to the font type used on your swing tags.

My creative process is definitely inspirational. I have too many ideas, and sometimes it's hard to prioritize which

ones should become reality. I am a perfectionist and a workaholic. If I could, I would work forever because I truly love my job!

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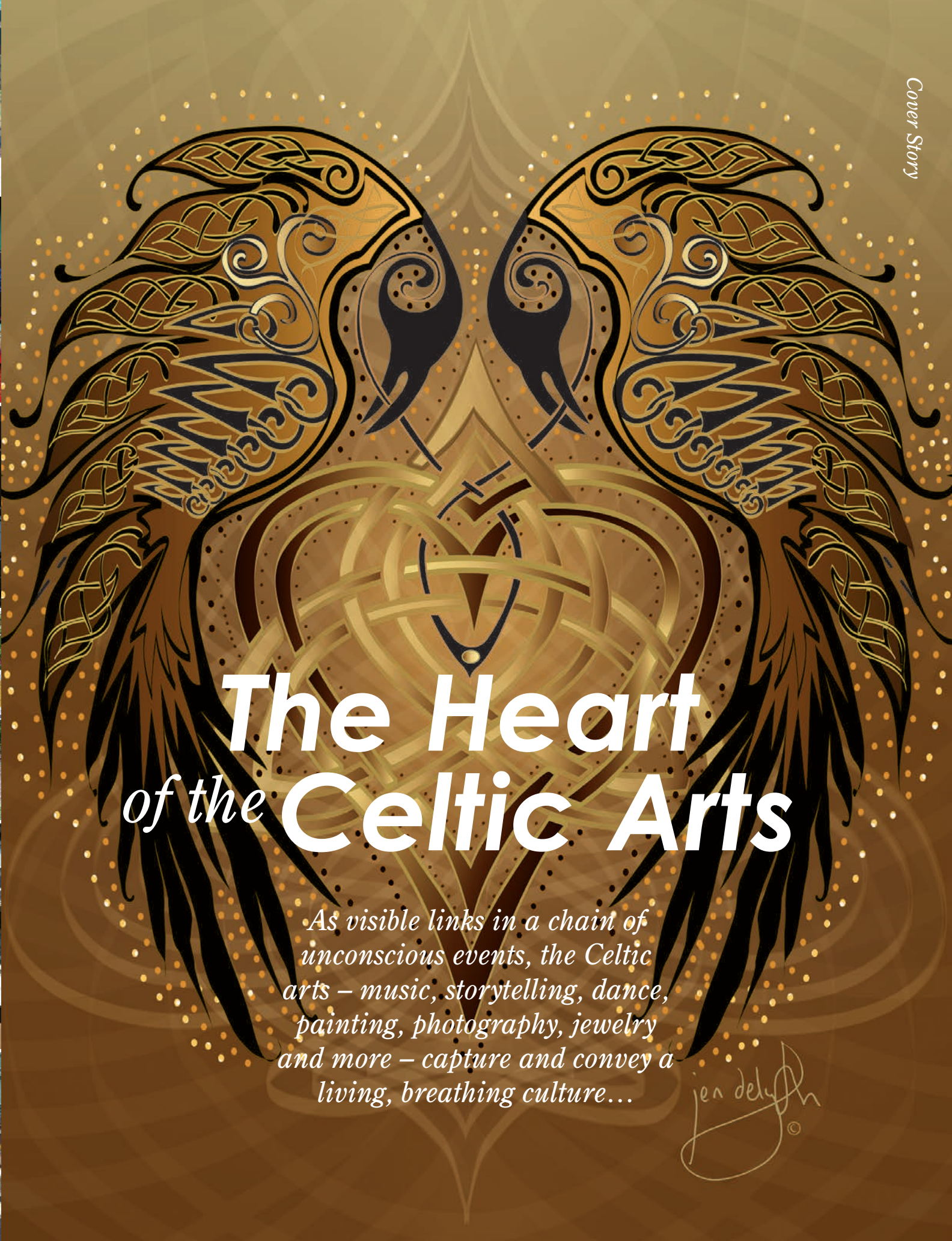
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The Heart *of the* Celtic Arts

*As visible links in a chain of
unconscious events, the Celtic
arts – music, storytelling, dance,
painting, photography, jewelry
and more – capture and convey a
living, breathing culture...*

Jen Dely

“We Are Everywhere” shouts the slogan on the Celtic knot tee-shirt. The colourful chemise hangs inside a vendor’s tent at the Antigonish Highland Games in Nova Scotia, alongside a kaleidoscope of Celtic-themed clothing, accessories, jewelry, instruments, glassware, ceramics, paintings, photographs, books, magazines, CDs, movies and miscellaneous trinkets.

Dozens of curious customers mull about the display, many wearing family tartans, crests and kilts, looking to take a piece of their past home with them. The selection is endless, and the sentiment is clear; Celtic culture is alive and well here, and everywhere.

As evidenced at Highland Games, Celtic Festivals, retail outlets and online stores, the Celtic arts are flourishing. And while some creative types contend that they remain marginalized economically, the numbers tell an encouraging story; since 1990, the niche-market sector has

grown into a world-wide \$100 million per-year industry.

There is both rhyme and reason for that evolution; the Celtic brand has gone global, materials and resources are easier for artists to obtain, websites and social media networks have increased artist visibility exponentially, and the rise in numbers of both baby-boomers and the “Creative Class” means that more disposable time, income and attention is available for the arts.

Perhaps, however, it is something more primal - more familiar – that keeps us going back to that vendor’s tent at the Games, that retail outlet or that online store.

Like the tributaries of a river that trickle out to the sea, the veins of Celtic art flow to and from our collective heart, beating with a rich and rhythmic cultural identity. It is here – in this heart-space of belonging – where classic and contemporary art and archetypes converge, reaching deep to reflection, reminding us of who we are and of where we come from.



Jen Delyth

Visual artist Jen Delyth grew up in South Wales, near Swansea, Port Talbot, and the beautiful Gower Peninsula. Her heritage is a mix of Welsh and Cornish.

“My great-grandfather - I remember him as a very old man, sitting in his armchair by the fire with his cloth cap and pipe. He came to work in the steel works of Port Talbot, when the tin ran out in Cornwall, at the turn of the century.”

A self-taught artist, Delyth followed her heart to California when she was 25, settling into the San Francisco Bay area.

“I was quite homesick at first - we call

it *Hiraeth* in Welsh - longing for the homeland - and my love and respect for the rich culture of my home country grew stronger as I realized what I had left behind, or perhaps what I had brought with me.”

She has been fascinated by folk tales and mythology since her childhood.

“My mother shared her love of Welsh culture with me. When I came to California in 1985, I was captivated by mythologist Joseph Campbell’s wonderful lectures with Bill Moyer. He talked about the wisdom traditions at the heart of folk cultures around the world – but did not seem to focus much on the Celtic – which lies at the roots of our own western tradition. That inspired me to use the ancient visual language to start “dialoguing” about the mythic symbols and figures of my own culture, and to shine a light on the power and spirit within our natural world.”

To her surprise, her initial works were well received.

“I quickly realized that there is a strong connection here for many people whose ancestors made the journey to the new world.”

Following the “modern primitive” tribal arts movement of the 1980s - especially the strong interest in Celtic spirituality from Christian and pagan communities, ecologists, healers and nature lovers - Delyth launched her art and textile business, connecting with publishers, setting up a studio, and traveling to Celtic events and celebrations across North America.

“Making a career with Celtic Artwork has been possible for me because of the interest here, in a way it may never have blossomed back home, where we often take it somewhat for granted.”

She is encouraged by the revitalization of Celtic culture in Wales.

“I love going home and seeing the news, soap operas and great programming all in Welsh on the television. Today the Welsh language is more widely spoken and encouraged, and not repressed as it was in my grandmother’s time. We are a modern Celtic nation, forwards looking, and proud of our cultural heritage. In the “immigrant” countries of USA, Canada, Australia and elsewhere, I meet many folks at shows who appreciate their Celtic heritage.

“Celtic culture is a living tradition – recalling the past as it reinvents itself.”

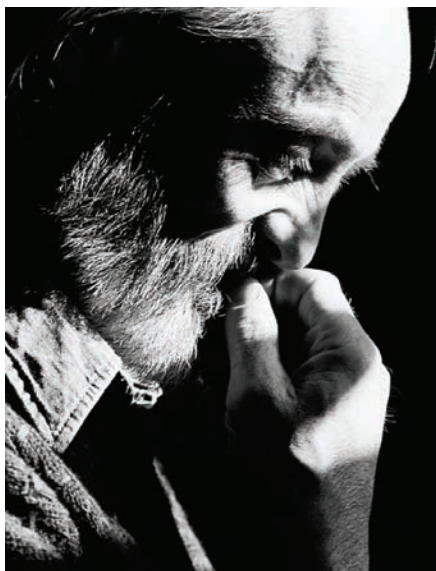
www.celticartstudio.com

Mike Burns

Montreal storyteller Mike Burns is well aware of his roots.

“I was born and bred in Cahirciveen, Co. Kerry, Ireland in 1953. I am the eldest of five children. My family has been in Iveragh for generations - the Burns are from Sneem. My great-great grandfather, Cornelius Burns, moved to Cahirciveen in 1867 after the Fenian Rising. He was a

cart-wright. The O'Connells - my mother's people - were fishermen from Beginis, a small island beside Valentia. My grandfather, Mortimer, was one of the 1500 people who went out in Easter 1916. He was interned in Frongoch. He escaped later and went on his keeping in Kerry and West Cork during the War of Independence. Then we have O'Sheas and Keatings in the family too - all South Kerry to the bone."



The shanachie's gift of the gab came naturally as a youngster.

"We had no television until I was 14 - nobody did. And no phone. There was the radio, or the one film a week at Ma Breen's cinema, and that cost a tanner - not a thing that was always in plentiful supply.

"So around the turf fire was the place to be when the nights were lengthening. And our door was always open. You never knew who would arrive and pull up a butter-box or a stool. People in Ireland had great respect for a good singer or a good teller - they still do. So I grew up with that reverence and appreciation. I still have it."

Burns' passion for a well-timed turn of phrase, or the naming of places, was passed down to him from his father.

"There was great meaning in the old Gaelic names. An example - 5 or 6 miles from the house I was born in, there is a pass in the mountains called "Bealach Oisin." Well, that would bring you the story of Oisin on his journey back from Tir na n'Og on Niamh Cian Oir's horse, 2000 years ago."

Human beings, he believes, are storytelling creatures.

"We are hard-wired to look for pattern, for meaning, for narrative.

We have been doing this for tens of thousands of years, ever since the advent of fire and language."

"I know a quare few stories, and I love to introduce people to our culture, our old ways.

They say at home that the only way to keep a story is to give it away. There's great pleasure in a good night of storytelling - both for the teller and for the listeners. As I mature, and now with grown-up children of my own, the stories speak to me in new ways, and it is fascinating to find new insight in these tales that I have known for nigh on 60 years."

Ruth Keggins

Born and bred on the beautiful Isle of Man, singer-songwriter Ruth Keggins is a product of her environment.

"My Dad's family has lived here for hundreds of years. My Mum is half-Manx, going back many generations, and half-Scottish."

Like Delyth and Burns, Keggins was exposed to Celtic culture from a young age.



"My Mum sang to me all the time, and my Dad played a lot of folk and traditional music records in the house and on our family trips up to the Hebridean Islands and around Ireland. I started learning music formally when I was about ten - I begged my parents to let me have flute lessons at school. I spent many happy years in orchestras, bands, choirs and playing Manx traditional music before going away to study music at University."

The rewards of pursuing her passion have been immeasurable.

"I feel privileged to be able to spread awareness about our music, language and culture."

"For example, I was touring in Norway recently and people were really intrigued about the Isle of Man and very excited to hear that it has the oldest continually running parliament in the world - established by Vikings!

"Learning songs in other languages has been really exciting for me also - I sing in a group called the Norwegian-Manx Collaboration, and I also have been singing in Irish and Scottish Gàidhlig, alongside Manx, in a new Inter-Gaelic vocal trio called Aon Teanga. Irish and Gàidhlig are very similar to Manx Gaelic, but still different enough to give your brain a workout."

Keggins is impressed with efforts to keep Celtic culture alive.

"Speaking from first-hand experience in Europe, and my perception of what is going on in North America, it seems that those people who are already working to preserve and promote Celtic culture are doing a fantastic job. As a Celtic traditional musician, of course I would love for more people to discover the richness of Celtic culture and heritage."

www.ruthkeggins.com



Craig Weir

At just 22 years of age, Dundee, Scotland-born piper Craig Weir has already been playing for 13 years.

"My Great Uncle Jack plays the bagpipes and offered to teach me the instrument. I never had an interest in music at all until that point, but my family suggested that I give the pipes a try. After him, I moved on to other tutors, including Ryan Kennedy, Morag McKenzie and Harry Ellis.

"I never ever thought I would enjoy playing as much as I do now. Music is such a massive part of my life."

Weir says that he continues to play, not only for himself, but also to bring greater attention to Scotland's national instrument.

"Playing for the Dalai Lama in 2012 was a massive honour, and a day I will never forget. This past January I performed on stage with Queen and Adam Lambert on the Glasgow date of their world tour. Then, in July this year, I performed on stage with my favourite band, The Libertines, as they headlined Scotland's biggest music festival in front of 80,000 people. I have been very lucky to see many parts of the world through my concerts, including the U.K., Ireland, Switzerland, China, Belgium, Faroe Islands, Germany, USA, France and Italy."

He prides himself on being able to perform both classic and contemporary styles.

"It is important to play traditional marches, strathspeys and reels because these are the traditional sounds that people associate with the bagpipes. However, music is always evolving and the pipes should not be left behind in that. This was one of the main reasons that I formed my new band Gleadhraich - we fuse bagpipes with rock, pop, ska, and all sorts of genres and styles. I hope that in doing so people of all ages will be more encouraged to pick up the instrument."

www.gleadhraich.com

Jason McCarthy

Growing up in Drogheda, Co. Louth, Ireland, Jason McCarthy fell in love with photography as a teenager.

"My art teacher handed me a book of black and white photography, and its deep and gritty nature had a profound effect on me. I found it so compelling that I decided I would get involved in photography. The reason I shoot is the same today; I still love black and white portraits - there is something timeless about them."

Though his calling hasn't changed, McCarthy's creative process has.

"In the past my work relied entirely on inspiration, but I learned that hard work and perseverance is the only way to get better at my craft.



"Inspiration is always the initial thing that gets me motivated to work, but without commitment and determination I would never finish anything."

A good photograph, he shares, provokes emotion and carries an atmosphere.

"It's not so much about excellent technique. Some of the most compelling shots are the ones that were taken with no thought of technique, but captured something special. Without artistic vision, shots can be technically perfect but quite monotonous.

"That said, a singular photo without any context is easily achievable by anyone. There is no hard work or sacrifice needed. Having a bigger body of work that is cohesive is what distinguishes the best photographers. The process of forming a wider body involves much thought and sacrifice, and will be sure to leave a more lasting impression."

McCarthy's latest book project is called *Surface*. It is a year-long effort to document his home town of Drogheda through portraits and landscape.

"I've been here for three decades now, and it's the last place I want to be at times. The project is an exercise in overcoming this feeling of dissatisfaction, and digging deeper to see beyond the 'surface' level of things. It's very much an exercise in determination, as I am aiming to take around a thousand portraits in total.

"When you're in a place long enough,

things get overly familiar and you start to take them for granted, and even get negative about what you see. Through the portraits - which will be the predominant force of the book - I want to present a positive theme of community that recognizes and highlights the everyday people of my home town."

He notes that the once predominantly Celtic landscape of Drogheda has evolved over time.

"There is so much ethnic diversity, which did not exist when I was in school. I want to celebrate that through my pictures and bring about an awareness that I feel this generation is losing. It's easy to lose sight of the profound depth of the everyday person and the everyday experience."

www.jasonmccarthy.ie

Sophie Darley

Born to French parents of Irish descent - her father is from Lorient, Brittany, and her mother is from Paris - painter Sophie Darley has spent a lifetime trying to capture and convey the Celtic spirit of Bretagne's people.



"The goal of my work is to uncover the essence of the modern Breton; someone who is cheerful, cheeky, feels good about themselves, and who loves their life and their environment. Actually, I think almost everybody can identify with my characters. A good painting is a reflection of the soul."

Since first exhibiting her work a little more than five years ago, Darley has caught the attention of the region's arts

community for her colourful and playful paintings.

"I can't stop working with my hands, and I have learned to work with a lot of different materials and techniques, including clay, metal, wood, resin... I guess I am just curious about everything in art.

"This is a wonderful place to be a creative person."

"There are, and there always will be, great artists in Brittany in all disciplines. I may have my own little universe on the go with my work, but meeting people and having them share their world with me is very inspiring and important to my process."

Modern technology has enabled her to do what was impossible just a few years ago.

"I use Photoshop all the time to manipulate photos that eventually become paintings. As well, I have made my website a virtual gallery, and social media networks have allowed me to have my work seen and known easily and quickly to large numbers of people."

www.bretonnesdarley.net

Carmen Hunt

Cornish dancer Carmen Hunt understands the importance of having an online presence also; she attracts an array of adults and young people to her workshops via the World Wide Web.



Hunt teaches three different types of Cornish dance; social, set and step.

Social dances are popular at feasts and special occasions. These include the

"furry" dance - a processional dance which winds its way from one part of town to the other.

Set dances are similar to some Irish set dances and Scottish long-ways set dances, while step dances showcase solo dancers or sets of dancers in the same tradition as Scottish sword or pipe dances.

"Many Cornish dances are associated with a particular place, or with the farming, mining and fishing industries. I think this adds to the distinctiveness of this style of Celtic dance."

A self-professed 'choreologist', Hunt is most interested in classic and contemporary cross-cultural collaborations between Irish, Scottish, Breton, Manx, and Cornish styles of dance.

"I love the music and rhythms, the similarities and distinctiveness, and the 'feel good' factor."

Efforts to keep Celtic culture alive in Cornwall, she says, are paying off.

"St Piran's Day is typically when you see young people become interested and get involved. In Perranporth, for example, a few hundred school-children join the annual procession, gathering with their parents and grandparents for singing and dancing. Also, when there are Cornish street musicians you will likely find young people joining in with the simple Cornish social dances. More recently, the annual celebration of Cornish Culture in London - Kernow in the City - brings younger generations together to celebrate our heritage."

www.scootskernow.blogspot.ca

Una O' Boyle

Growing up in West Belfast during the Troubles wasn't easy. The peace and prosperity of recent years has brought opportunity to Northern Ireland silversmith Una Boyle, however.

"I have been in business for over two decades, and Banshee Silver has evolved from this in the last few years. With growing optimism in Belfast, and with the birth of my son, I decided to go back to college to study silversmithing. I experienced an overwhelming burst of creativity and ideas which have manifested themselves in my own particular take on jewelry design."

"My work is inspired by my love of Celtic mythology, and our unique landscape and history."

O'Boyle's core products include pen-

dants, earrings, rings and bracelets.

"While my own designs are very much inspired by Celtic Ireland, they reflect a more contemporary look. I design every piece of jewelry myself after immersing myself in a subject - ancient Irish legends, or after visiting the megalithic sites of Ireland. Every piece of jewelry has its own story, and I also design for clients if they have an idea or particular story themselves. My motto is "Deanta le croí agus anam!" - made with heart and soul."



She believes it's time to infuse some new energy into Celtic culture

"People are getting a bit tired and jaded of the "same old, same old" Celtic look. Ireland itself has moved on a lot since I was a kid, and I think that Celtic culture must reflect this in newer, bolder, contemporary designs and artwork. I think this also galvanizes an interest among the younger generation too. After all, they are the future."

www.bansheesilver.com

Coda

"I hope and believe that future generations will also value their rich and vibrant heritage," agrees Jen Delyth. "Celtic culture has always been intertwined with the arts, and it will be for years to come. It is a living, breathing culture, and one whose blood flows to and from the hearts of people all over the world. Indeed, we are everywhere..."





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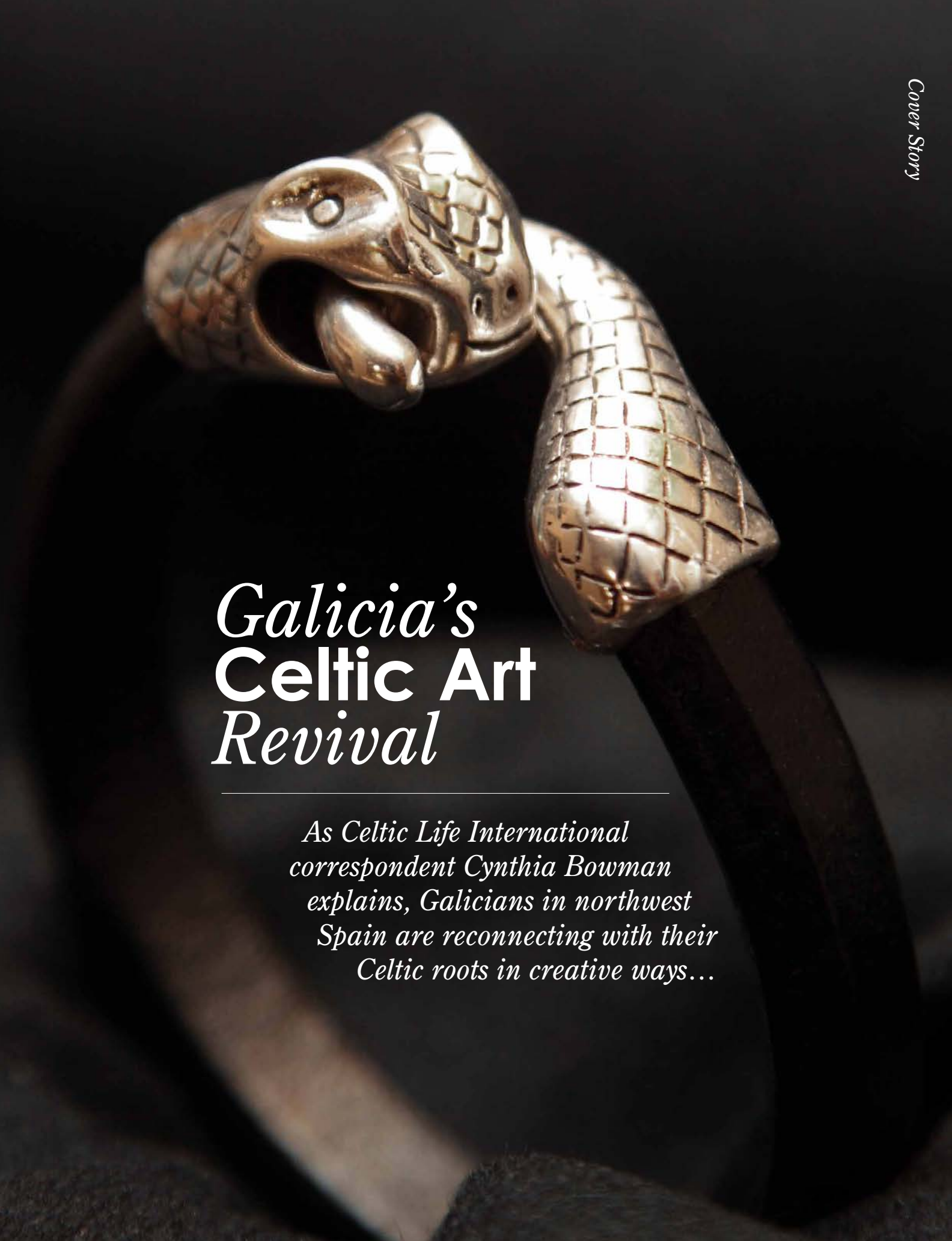
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Galicia's Celtic Art Revival

*As Celtic Life International
correspondent Cynthia Bowman
explains, Galicians in northwest
Spain are reconnecting with their
Celtic roots in creative ways...*



The largest and oldest piece of Celtic jewelry in Spain has returned to the Museo Provincial in Lugo, Galicia. After nearly a year of negotiation, and a purchase payment by the regional Galician government of nearly 2.9 million Euros to the family that owned it, the Torc of Burela is officially owned by and for the people of Galicia.

The torc, a solid gold, four pound collar necklace dating back to the second or third century B.C., is the heaviest Iberian torc ever found. The collar was traditionally worn by Celts of high rank, and depicted gods and goddesses of Celtic mythology. The Burelan torc was of special interest to the Galician government for two reasons; the ornate detail displays unique craftsmanship, and another pair of significant Iberian-Celtic torcs from Galicia were lost to the British Museum.

Celtic artisans have long been famous for their exquisite, geometrically-patterned jewelry, metalwork, weavings and other crafts. The artists of Galicia continue to express their Celtic heritage by working in the ancient arts brought to Spain more than 2,500 years ago by their ancestors. New partnerships between government agencies and artists' associations, like Artesanía de Galicia, have seen a successful revival of the ancient Celtic-influenced arts.

While most visitors come to walk the Camino de Santiago, the interest in the local crafts movement is growing. Artisans offer visitors plenty of interesting cultural



activities including demonstrations, organized workshop tours, lessons, and quality craft fairs throughout the region.

Craft fairs occur year round in Galicia, but are most abundant in the summer months, often occurring in conjunction with the numerous local holidays and events. Two of the most popular craft fairs

are the Feria de Artesanía Mostrart in Coruña in August and the Feria de Artesanía San Froilán in October. The latter is held on one of the most important feast days in Galicia, honoring San Froilán, patron saint of the city of Lugo.

Artists welcome visitors daily to their workshops to view live demonstrations. The Galician Artisan Association's website lists more than 100 workshops to visit throughout the region. An organized map is also available with a craft driving route to the workshops, which are often located in the scenic, green, hilly countryside that Celtic settlers once found so familiar.

When asking a Galician artist to describe how their Celtic roots influence their work, many become perplexed at the question. It's like asking a fish to describe how they breathe underwater. The Celtic influence runs deep in a Galician's blood; it is in the language, their way of being and the landscape. To ask them to differentiate, identify and describe how the influence operates in their life is difficult. The best way to know and understand the influence is by seeing their work. I spoke with some of the artists leading the Celtic arts revival.

Lola Touron of Cestería Viva (Living Basketry) is as ethereal as the dryads, or tree nymphs, of Celtic mythology. She works in the art of primitive basket weaving and follows ancient Celtic traditions of tree worship and honoring. "I collect the materials in the forest during the moons, asking permission from the trees," she says. She is not only interested in her craft's origins, but in the origins of ancient Celtic culture as well. Her dedicated re-





search has recovered ancient basket weaving techniques. She teaches the rediscovered lost art to students.

Ana Novo, designer and owner of the boutique Tres Caracoles in Lugo, specializing in leather and jewelry, describes her heritage eloquently; "Living in Galicia makes it inevitable to be influenced by the Celtic world since it is all around us - the land, the forts, the torcs, our music. Many of the barns of the Galician coast are decorated with Celtic symbols. While many of my customers are locals, a growing number are visitors who mistakenly associate the Celtic triskele symbol as Galician, because they see it in countless places. I proudly explain that although the triskele is not Galician, Galicians are as Celtic as the triskele. I show my Celtic roots and pride in all my work. It's even in my company's logo."

Galeria Honorino Freire is a Lugo-based jeweler specializing in Celtic gold, silver and azabache stone jewelry and reproductions. Mythical symbols are incorporated in their jewelry infused with the power of the symbol's meanings. Custom Claddagh and Wedding Knot rings are among the best sellers, as well as any piece featuring the deep black gemstone, azabache, or jet. Celtic superstitions are alive today; no Galician leaves home without an azabache stone to protect against the evil eye.

The Centro De Recuperacion de Cultura Popular (Center of the Recovery of the Collective Culture) is a gift shop, museum and workshop. Situated in a hillside medieval castle called Castelo de Sobroso, it houses a permanent exhibition of traditional textile crafts and clothing. The center's aim is to preserve and promote the traditional textile weaving crafts by offering work space to local weavers while hosting regular demonstrations and work-

shops to visitors of the castle.

Sagardelo, established in the early 1800s, specializes in fine ceramics. Although globally known as a Galician brand, Celtic influences and motifs are prominent in their work. Their 14 galleries in the region display their wares for sale in museum-quality settings, rich with historical illustrations of the people, art and culture of Galicia.

In Galicia the phrase "or coitelo" describes a spiritual purpose. Pepe Jomaca channels this purpose to create knives in the Riotorto Valley, where the largest concentration of blacksmiths in the world reside. "It is a completely traditional and ancestral art. In Riotorto only 10 families of artisan blacksmiths specialize in the manufacture of hand forged knives," he explains. The rich, historical influence of the land dates back to the time when the Celts arrived in Galicia and settled. "In



this place, items have been found from the Castrexa (Iron Age) period. Noteworthy is the Riotorto torc, dated between the third and first centuries B.C. and kept at the Provincial Museum of Lugo. Other objects of gold and bronze, such as handles and earrings were also found," he adds.

"Or coitelo" is a common thread for the artists and associations that are bringing about the revival of the ancient Celtic arts in Galicia. They're not only committed to preserving their patrimonial culture, but in teaching and endowing the secrets of ancient Celtic artistry to future generations for the world to recognize and appreciate.

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Ancient Academia *in the* **Celtic World**

*As Celtic Life International correspondent Joseph
Worthington explains, the University of St. Andrews
in Scotland has a rich and robust history*



The Celtic world has a prestigious academic legacy spanning over six centuries, producing hundreds of thousands of the most well educated alumni who have shaped the world in which we live. Educated Celts graduated from their universities, founded and developed important institutions in their own countries, and many immigrated to found the thriving Celtic communities in the colonies and dominions. Without the Ancient Celtic academic institutions, the most important of which still exist and thrive today, the world would be a very different place.

Originally founded in 1410 by Augustinian Priests who had been expelled from the University of Paris as a result of the Papal schism, and from the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge because of the Anglo-Scottish Wars; the remoteness of the town of St Andrews in the north-east of Scotland enabled the newly established Society of Higher Learning to flourish. Courses in philosophy, logic, divinity and law became popular amongst clergymen who had chosen to attend lectures in St Andrews. From 1411, the Bishop of St Andrews, Henry Wardlaw, petitioned the Avignon Antipope Benedict XIII to grant the society university status. Numerous Papal Bull letters were written, and on 28 August 1413 the University of St Andrews was officially created, to become the 3rd university in the English speaking world.

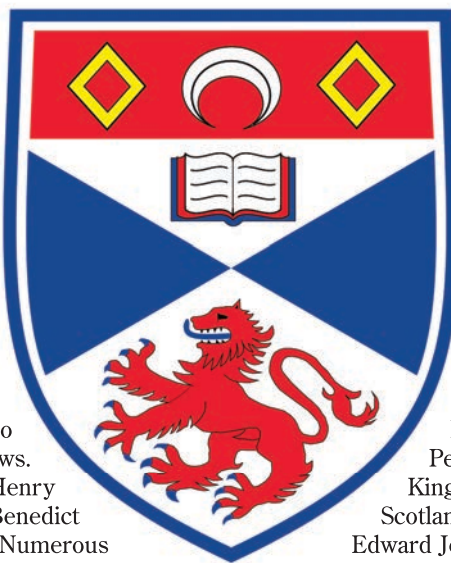
The new university divided into a series of colleges, each with their own unique buildings; St John's College, which would later be renamed St Mary's College, was founded in 1418 and focused on theology and arts; St Salvator's College was established in 1450, and St Leonard's College in 1511. After many centuries of

financial problems and dwindling student numbers, the university decided to accept women into their degrees by offering Lady Literate in Arts degrees from 1889. This degree was groundbreaking at the time; not only was St Andrews the first university in Scotland to offer women degrees, it also allowed women to become as equally educated as men. As a result of the university's

long history and prestigious heritage, the institution became popular amongst the world's upper classes, and has retained this position since.

The University of St Andrews has some of the most famous alumni of any university in the whole world, not just the Celtic world. Three signatories of the US Declaration of Independence achieved degrees from St Andrews; James Wilson, who became the first justice appointed by President George Washington to the Supreme Court of the United States; John Witherspoon, who was President of Princeton University; and Benjamin Franklin, founder of the University of Pennsylvania. Other notable alumni include King James II of Scotland, founder of the Church of Scotland John Knox, creator of the Smallpox vaccine Edward Jenner, and the current Duke and Duchess of Cambridge, Prince William and Kate. St Andrews instilled Celtic traditions and knowledge unto all of its alumni, which are now also being instilled through the institutions and businesses that they established. The Ancient Celtic academic experiment proved successful.

Many of the Ancient buildings first used when the university was founded are still in use for lectures today; the legacy of St Andrews' founding fathers and Celtic academic pioneers live on.





As you travel around this Ancient town, as the strong winds blow from the sea and the chilly air travels down from the north, it becomes obvious how influential the university buildings have been in shaping the landscape of this centre of knowledge and learning. St Salvator's Quadrangle is the oldest remaining part of the university still standing, located at the heart of the town. The Medieval college chapel, bell tower, tenement building and Hebdomodar's building have existed since 1450 and are just as grand and impressive now as they would have been then. The light grey and orange square Jacobean-styled building with ornate carvings, sash windows, and numerous spires surrounds a neatly manicured grass lawn hidden from passers-by. St Salvator's Quad is typical of Scots Celtic building style in the Medieval period, but not many of these buildings exist in such splendour and majesty as this integral part of the university, nor is it possible elsewhere outside of St Andrews to see how a town has been built around a university, rather than a university built around a town.

St Mary's College building is just as impressive as St Salvator's. Built from traditional Scottish grey stone in 1538, it is complete with bell tower above the main entrance, a thorn tree inside its quad - which is said to have been planted by Mary, Queen of Scots - and the King James library, inaugurated by King James VI of Scotland, who would become King James I of England and Ireland. St Mary's College also boasts a unique Roundel, a rounded wall protruding from the building. To enter the St Mary's Quadrangle you must pass through dramatic crested gates with the motto "In Principio Erat Verbum" which are the first words of the Gospel of John, meaning "In the beginning was the word," paying homage to St Andrews position as a place of religious learning. Of the many medieval buildings still standing in St Andrews, this one is arguably the most prestigious given its history. As you explore St Andrews town it is not hard to find a building that is, or at one time was,

an integral part of the learning landscape of this prestigious Celtic academic institution.

With age comes traditions and customs, and St Andrews is no different. Some of the customs are very Celtic in nature, and are unique to St Andrews. Every new student, until recently, had to take the Sponsio Academica oath in Latin; promising to obey university bylaws and paying homage to St Andrews' position as one of the few ancient universities. Another uniquely St Andrews tradition is gown wearing. Red gowns are worn by undergraduates, and black gowns by Divinity and postgraduate students, on all manner of occasions including at Union Debating society meetings, at formal dinners, and during church services. On St Andrews day gowns are often worn all day. Raisin Week is a bizarre but entertaining, and exclusively St Andrews tradition. Historically, first-year students (bejants/bejantines) would be assigned "parents" who would guide them through their academic life; to thank these parents a pound of raisins was given as a gift. Today this has evolved into the giving of bottles of wine. In return, "parents"

give the students a Latin "Raisin Receipt" which is carried everywhere throughout the day. Raisin Week culminates in a foam fight, and any bejant who has a spelling mistake on their receipt must sing the Gaudie (formal graduation song).

In the Reformation years, St Andrews witnessed many Protestants labelled heretics. Along with exploring all that this historic town has to offer with its medieval buildings and traditions, keep an eye out for initialled cobblestones scattered around town. These mark spots where Protestants were burned at the stake. In



1528 Patrick Hamilton was burned, and according to student legend, anyone who steps on his cobblestone will be cursed to fail their degree. Don't be surprised if you see students jumping over 'JP'

St Andrews is one of the most prestigious universities in the world, founded on Celtic traditions and with a uniquely Scottish mind-set.

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Since its creation in 2009, Concordia University's School of Canadian Irish Studies has earned a high-profile international reputation in teaching and research. With six full-time distinguished professors, annual visiting scholars from Ireland, a prestigious public lecture series, and a wide choice of undergraduate and graduate programs, the School has become one of the world's pre-eminent locations for the study of Ireland and the Irish Diaspora.

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Concordia School of Irish Studies

Last year, Concordia University's School of Irish Studies in Montreal welcomed a record 900 students into its courses.

That growth has been steady since Michael Kenneally began his work there in 1991. Originally from Ireland - and now the principal of the School of Irish Studies - Kenneally came to Canada after high school. When he first began teaching at Concordia, people questioned whether courses in Irish studies would be of interest to students.

"We were asked to offer just one course on Irish literature," he recalls. "So, I put it out there and the response was very positive."

Funding for additional Irish classes proved to be a challenge.

"I got involved in the Irish community here," says Kenneally. "We created the Canadian Irish Studies Foundation, which has trustees and directors across Canada. The idea was to raise funds that would be invested, and the interest on those investments would help to develop Irish studies at Concordia."

With the help of individual donors, contributions from corporations and government funding, the dream of an Irish Studies department at Concordia became a reality in 2009. The faculty now has six full-time professors and two visiting Irish scholars each year. Since 2013, students have been able to major in Irish studies, while others sign up for minors or register in courses as electives. Interestingly, notes Kenneally, most of the students are not of Irish descent.

"It goes beyond that; we teach specific courses about Ireland as a case study for much larger issues. Yes, the course is ostensibly about whatever aspect of Ireland it might be, but it resonates and has implications on a much larger, global level; theatre, history, literature and language - we offer great learning opportunities for undergrads with a wide range of interests."

"And," he adds, "we are still growing and offer generous scholarships to students."

www.concordia.ca/artsci/can-irish-studies.html

scottish gaelic



The Atlantic Gaelic Academy

According to linguists, adults over 10 years of age need formal teaching to become fully fluent in a new language. Bob Leonard, executive director of the Atlantic Gaelic Academy (AGA), says that his school is designed to accomplish this.

"We have a formal system to teach students to read and write, as well as speak the language," he explains via email. "We have a pronunciation guide, with sound files, spoken by a native Gaelic speaker, for each word. Therefore, the proper pronunciation of words is available to students at any time, day or night. We also have dialogues and stories with sound files. These tools help develop a good accent, or 'blas.'"

Approximately 130 students enrol in the AGA each year. At one time, the facility offered in-person classes across Canada's east coast. In recent years, the school switched to a strictly online format.

"The AGA has developed a unique system, making the learning of Gaelic available throughout the world," shares Leonard. "The classes are 'live', with students and the teacher in their own homes, and everyone connected at the same time into a live class. The classes have all the attributes of in-person classes, but with added benefits. This type of class has proven to be preferable and highly effective in teaching a language as it tunes the ear to hear and understand the language better, there are less external distractions, and students are in a more relaxed environment, which is more conducive to learning a language."

Leonard - who started the AGA over eight years ago - is a native of Cape Breton and was exposed to Celtic culture growing up. All of his ancestors spoke Gaelic, including his mother. He calls it an "ancient, creative and beautiful language."

"The Gaelic language is part of my heritage and roots," he notes, "and your roots form part of your identity. It is important to know where we come from, and to appreciate the tradition and culture of our ancestors."

www.gaelicacademy.ca

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The Appeal of Ardbeg

Scotland's west coast Hebridean Island of Islay is a place where Scottish-Celtic traditions, language and culture remain strong. The island has a long and rich history, but today is best-known for its eight active distilleries – nine, if you count the distillery on the nearby island of Jura. Interest in, and demand for, the area's whiskies is so strong that two more distilleries are planned.

Every spring the island celebrates Feis Isle, or the Islay Festival, a ten-day long celebration of island life, music and, of course, whisky. Feis Isle attracts whisky pilgrims from all over the world, and this year's draw was the strongest yet. Two of the island's distilleries, Ardbeg and Laphroaigh, both marked their 200th anniversaries. I had the great pleasure of attending Feis Isle this year, and it was a once-in-a-lifetime experience. Each distillery had its own festival day, and their efforts did not disappoint attendees. As good as each of these individual festival days were, however, it was the Ardbeg night-before party that left the strongest impression upon me.

The distillery invited its most ardent admirers from around the world to bring along their favourite bottle of Ardbeg. For the whiskies, it was a literal homecoming. The Ardbegians obliged, bringing with them some of the most sought after bottles of Ardbeg on the planet to share. I had the pleasure of sampling several; Lord of the Isles, the original Kildalton, rare independent bottling, and multiple different vintages from the 1970s, including a handful from the distillery's most celebrated vintage 1974.

The Ardbeg Distillery is located on Islay's southern coast, and is the eastern-most of the three distilleries

which produce the smokiest and peatiest whiskies in Scotland. In Scots-Gaelic the name Ardbeg translates to "small headland." Whisky production has happened here since as far back as 1798, with commercial production beginning in 1815. By the 1860s, it was a very large operation with more than sixty employees and its own town.

Today, the distillery's whisky is beloved for its big, earthy, peaty and maritime elements. Ardbeg's malt is peated to 55 parts-per-million (phenols), making it one of the smokiest whiskies in Scotland. Though it is highly phenolic, the distillery's stills lighten what would otherwise be a very heavy spirit, softening it by adding fruity characteristics. Years of maturing in the oak add further layers to the spirit, imparting flavours and, over time, rounding its sharp edges. When young, like the 10 Year, Ardbeg is big, heavy and medicinal. Over time the spirit becomes more delicate, fruity and tropical. Older expressions - like the 17 Years, the Airigh Nam Beist, and some

of the legendary 1970s vintages - have almost magical flavour profiles.

Finding older Ardbeg isn't easy. The distillery was closed from 1981 to 1989, and production continued on only a limited level until 1997. Over the last 15 years, it has had to bottle both young and old whisky to meet demand and keep the brand alive. As a result, there isn't much older stock available. That is why the homecoming tasting at Ardbeg was so special. Within a generation, there will be older expressions of Ardbeg available again. But will they be as special? The faithful believe they will. For now, here are four currently available expressions with which to toast 200 years!

Ardbeg 10 Year; The distillery's flagship expression has won accolades the world over, it is also becoming popular in cocktails like the Ardbeg Ceaser. **\$78**

Ardbeg Corryvreckan; Named for the famous nearby whirlpool is big, bold and spicy having been partly matured in French oak. This is Ardbeg almost untamed. **\$115**

Ardbeg Uigeadail; Named for the loch of the same name which is the distillery's water source the Uigeadail has a heavy sherry influence adding raisins, chocolate and dark fruits. **\$108**

Ardbeg Perpetuum; The distillery's 2015 special release is a tribute to its past, testament to the present and a toast to its future. Lighter, creamier and more delicate than the other expressions. **\$130**

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Mike was born, raised and continues to live in Wales. He has taught at the University of Wales and is able to provide a unique insight into the ancient land of his birth. He has been providing tours in Wales for over 20 years.

For visitors with Welsh ancestry Dragon Tours offers a service to help you trace your family tree in Wales. Mike has helped numerous clients in this way and can even provide a genealogy tracing service prior to your arrival and can assist in your use of libraries, record offices and archives when you are here. We have helped many people find 'the old family home' and even long-lost relatives! We can plan your tour around places where your Welsh ancestors lived and/or combine a general tour of Wales with visits to places of family interest.

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doing a very good job.) But there is a long history of people from these Celtic nations becoming masters of the craft in countries where wine making is a much more well established profession (and with much more favorable weather conditions.)

One of my favorite vineyards (not in Bordeaux but in my beloved Rhone Valley) is Domaine de Mourchon, near the beautiful medieval hillside village of Seguret. The vineyard was established in 1998 by Walter McKinlay from Scotland. He and his wife, Ronnie, used to sell an excellent Vacqueyras (from the southern Rhone) in their restaurant at the Udney Arms, Aberdeenshire, in the 1970s. Thus began their love of wines from the region and ultimately, the establishment of their family business there.

Irish winemakers have long had a connection with Bordeaux. Some of the most famous clarets in the world are produced by Chateaux with Irish ancestry; Leoville-Barton and Langua-Barton were both founded by Irishman Thomas Barton, and John Lynch from Galway founded Chateau Lynch-Bages. Other Irish names firmly connected to influential Bordeaux Chateaux include Phelan, Kirwan, Boyd, Dillon and Clarke. One reason for this was the popularity of claret in Ireland in the 1700s (an era when claret has been described as 'the Guinness of its day.')

I find it very interesting, and satisfying, that some of the best drinks in the world are made by us Celts. Normally the Scottish, Irish and Welsh are known for their wonderful skills in the production of whisky, stout and beer, but please let us not ignore our contribution to the world of wine - both in production and consumption.

Dr. Michael Davies is an author, historian and wine expert in Wales.
www.dragon-tours.com



Wednesday night is 'Steak Night' at The Conway pub in Pontcanna in Wales' capital city, Cardiff. I am very fortunate that my brother Sean lives in this leafy suburb, just a ten minute walk from the hustle and bustle and tourist attractions of the city centre, but containing some of the country's best kept secret places to eat and drink. Sean's lovely bachelor pad is regularly invaded by family members wishing to enjoy the attractions of his enviable location. Last Wednesday, poor Sean had to sleep on his own sofa as my wife, son, mother and myself descended on him from the mountains of mid-Wales to take him up on his offer to join him for dinner at The Conway.

The steaks were excellent, locally sourced, and sold by the butcher's shop, literally just around the corner on Cathedral Road. Sean and I had T-bones, amazing value for the quality at £15 UK each. This included a glass of house wine. I chose the Argentinian Malbec, usually a great steak accompaniment. I was not disappointed.

Obviously, a mere glass was not going to be enough to sustain the Davies clan, and I was delighted to be given the task of choosing a bottle to continue proceedings. I was immediately intrigued by a claret from the Graves appellation called Chateau de Seuil (2011 vintage.)

I was especially intrigued because the wine list stated that a Welsh family had been making wines in this lovely area of France since 1988.

I was not surprised to see a Welsh connection on a wine list in Wales, especially in Pontcanna which has a lot of Welsh speakers and is very proudly Welsh. I was a little surprised, however, to find that the 'Welsh' wine was actually from the Bordeaux region (arguably, the most renowned wine growing region in the world) and that it was almost the most expensive wine on the list. I am frequently curtailed by my family from gravitating towards the back pages of the wine list, but fortunately for me the very modest food prices at The Conway were complemented by very reasonable wines by the bottle.

I always decide on my wine, and then choose the food to go with it...

The claret in question was a £27 UK a bottle at The Conway. To be honest, I would have been very happy to pay a higher price, as this is an excellent wine and it helped us finish off our steaks magnificently.

This wonderful find got me thinking about other people of Celtic heritage who had achieved fame in the wine world. It is very difficult to make wine in Wales, Ireland or Scotland (not that it stops some people from trying and






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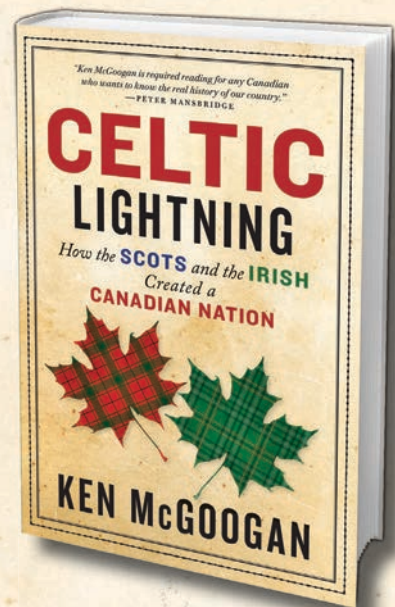
In the nineteenth century, two charged traditions came together and gave rise to a Canadian nation. That is when Celtic lightning struck.

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Whether you fancy a pint of ale, a dram of the good stuff, a hearty meal or great conversation, these three spots will bring you back for the Craic!

The Celtic Tavern *Denver, Colorado, USA*



Located in the recently renovated lower downtown district of Denver, the Celtic Tavern sits just a few blocks from both Coors Field and Mile High Stadium, home to the city's major-league sports franchises. Originally constructed in Dublin, the popular pub has become a hub to the city's rabid fan-base, offering an extensive Celtic-based menu for wannabe athletes of all ages, including Miner's Corned Beef and Cabbage, Donegal Fish and Chips, and Galway Bay Seafood Casserole – each a tender, tasty treat. The nightly buffet is an excellent option also, with a strong cross-section of edibles from the Emerald Isle.

The bar is beyond stocked with over 60 Irish, Scottish and American whiskies and bourbons, and the list of domestic and imported beer, ales and stouts is equally impressive. Daily off-track betting brings in the crowds, as does the weekly traditional music sessions. The venue hosts a number of events for local charities, and even doubles as a wedding chapel! And those looking for a big-league smoke to savour with their spirits will want to drop by Delaney's Cigar Bar and Lounge next door for the area's best selection of stogies. Indeed, as the bar claims, "food by day, fun by night."

The Highlander *Paris, France*

I have two friends from Edinburgh who recently spent a week touring Paris' famed Left Bank district. Exploring museums, galleries, studios and bookshops by day, and frequenting cafes, restaurants and bars by night, the duo stumbled upon a slice of home away from home on la Rue de Nevers near Pont Neuf. Judging by their numerous (and often hilarious) postings to Facebook, Instagram, and their travel blog, The Highlander is your best bet for a wee dram in the historic French capital. While the bar's food offerings are minimal-to-none at most, the pair had ample opportunity to sample a selection of spirits, including an array of excellent blended and single malt Scottish whiskies from Islay, Arran, Orkney, Dura, Skye and Speyside. An evening devoted to the merits of the pub's strong stock of both Irish whiskies and American bourbons was apparently memorable (though it is doubtful they remember), as was a late-afternoon blitz of Belhaven beer. All the while, the torrid twosome were able to keep one eye on their sacred football matches, with the other firmly on the local femmes fatales. "Throw in a few friends, a little live music," they wrote, "and voila; you've the ultimate man cave."



O'Casey's Irish Pub *The Hague, Holland*

Boasting a bevy of beers, ales, stouts and over 30 whiskies, along with the area's best selection of big-screen TV's, there's no shortage of company at O'Casey's Irish Pub. The Dutch love their soccer and rugby, and though local and regional matches are usually blacked-out, games from across the globe are broadcast daily. All that testosterone will surely work up an appetite, and the bar is ready to handle your hunger with a small but formidable menu, including scrumptious Irish stew, fish 'n' chips, traditional cottage pie, sausage and colcannon, and what is reputed to be the finest classic Irish breakfast in Europe.



O'Casey's is best known, however, for their beefy burgers – each smothered in the eatery's famous BBQ sauce. A small sampling of finger foods and lighter pub fare is also available. The spot also hosts weekly trivia nights, and live "trad" music each Friday. During the summer months, be sure to enjoy 'Sarah's garden', a cozy and quaint backyard terrace that

overlooks the Royal Palace and horse stables. When the weather turns, the Irish-inspired and designed décor, and the warm and welcoming personable staff, make this the go-to spot for both residents of The Hague and weary travelers.





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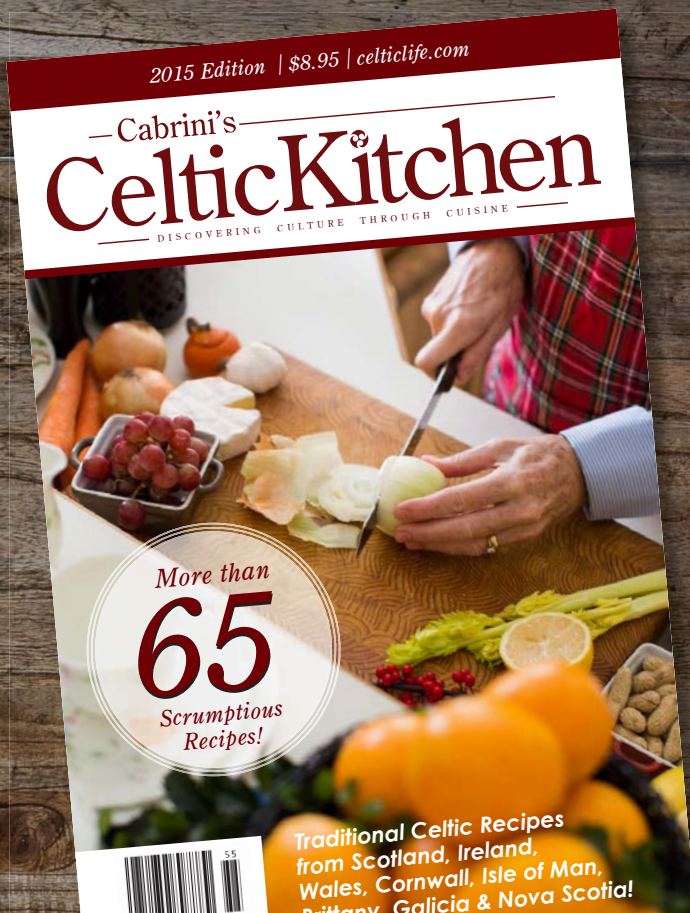
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Cabrini's Kitchen

Mary Touesnard's Oat Cakes

Summer is a great time to reconnect with family and old friends, so imagine my delight when I received a note from a friendship that spans over 30 years. It comes from Bob Durning – a gentleman who piped with my husband, Marcie, back in 1983. As time changes, so do lives. As it turns out, Bob developed a love for cooking. He has kindly given me permission to publish his correspondence in my column.

Hello Cabrini,

I enjoy the recipes in every issue and have saved all of your Cabrini's Celtic Kitchen books. I have attached a recipe for oat cakes that I got from my wife's cousin and modified it a bit. Cooking is my big hobby now since I can't play the pipes like I used to. I have known Marcie since we were practicing with The Halifax Police Pipe Band.

My wife's cousin Mary Touesnard, who lived next door to my wife in River Bourgeois, Nova Scotia, served us tea and oatcakes while we were visiting her one time. They were the best oatcakes I have ever tasted. I asked her for the recipe and she gave her family recipe to me. I have been using this recipe ever since with a slight change to it. Mary is a Cameron, originally from the Margaree Valley, Nova Scotia, so it is a good Inverness County recipe. ~ Bob Durning

INGREDIENTS

*1 cup white sugar
3 cups flour
3 cups rolled oats
2 teaspoons salt
1 teaspoon baking soda
1 cup butter
1 cup shortening
1 teaspoon vanilla
4 tablespoons boiling water*

INSTRUCTIONS

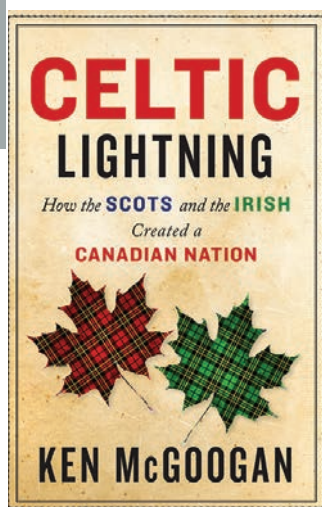
*Mix dry ingredients, cut in butter and shortening.
Add vanilla and water.
Form into a ball and roll out on a floured surface to approximately ¼ inch thick.
Sprinkle with flour.
Cut into squares and place on an ungreased cookie sheet.
Bake in a 375°F oven for 12-15 minutes.*

NOTES:

Place plastic wrap on top of dough to roll out dough. I put parchment paper on the cookie sheet. My new stove cooks them better at 400°F.

Ith do shàth! Cabrini

P.S: I would like to invite all readers to send me their favourite recipes, and their favourite memories that go with them. Please send to: cabrini@celticlife.ca



Celtic Lightning
By Ken McGoogan
Harper Collins
400pp / \$32.99

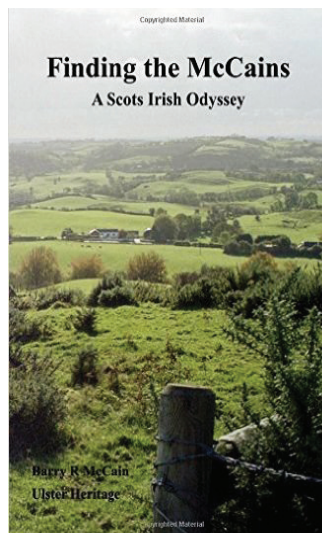
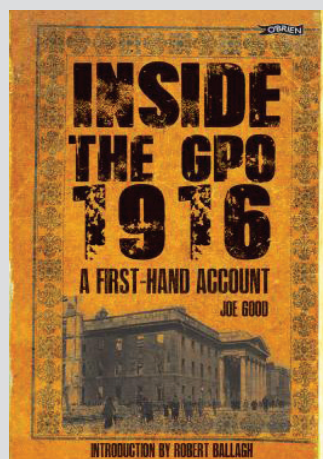
It's hard to argue Ken McGoogan's credentials. With a dozen books under his belt, along with multiple awards, the Canadian author-historian-professor has been connecting the Celtic dots for decades. In his latest effort, the scribe draws upon his extensive experiences travelling Ireland and Scotland in search of the ever-elusive Canuck identity.

With almost one-third of Canadians claiming Celtic heritage, many of the core values inherent to those countries have washed up on these shores, including independence, audacity, democracy, pluralism and perseverance. By examining the lives of thirty individuals, McGoogan skillfully sketches the lines across the waters from "ye' ould countries" to the new world, highlighting the impact of immigration and settlement. Though set atop the 49th parallel, a similar case could be made for America. ~ SPC

**Inside
The GPO 1916**
By Joe Good
O'Brien Press
320pp / €11.99

With the Emerald Isle set to celebrate the centennial anniversary of the 1916 Easter Rising next year, those with an abiding passion for revolution will absolutely absorb Joe Cook's first-hand account of the renowned rebellion.

Originally penned as a memoir of sorts in 1946, and since edited by the scribe's son, the work chronicles the English author's crossing to Dublin and his conscription into the Irish Volunteers. Alongside stories of daring exploits are snippets of insight into the lives of Patrick Pearse, James Connelly, Thomas Clarke and others. Perhaps most revealing are the snapshots of Good's close friend Michael Collins. More than a glimpse into personal history, *Inside The GPO 1916* is a portrait of a land and a time at the crossroad of independence. ~ SPC



**Finding the
McCains**
By Barry R. McCain
Ulster Heritage
234pp / \$14.75

While the power and popularity of online genealogy searches have pushed Irish and Scottish ex-pats into their past, American author and historian Barry R. McCain makes the case for digging though the dirt and the DNA with this compelling hunt for his family's history. All but disappearing after their flight from Scotland to Ireland in the late 1500s, only oral accounts of the McCains remained in the new world, specifically the US southeast.

In 2008, after hundreds of years separated by time and an ocean – and with the help of genetic testing - the family finally reconnected, sharing stories of Redshanks, Iníon Dubh, Mary Queen of Scots, the Earls of Argyll, the Ulster Migration, and more. A must read for anyone passionate for their ancestry. ~ SPC

**Waiting For
a Star to Fall**
By Elaine Cremin
Independent
326pp / \$12.80

The tale of Irish immigration to America has been often told. Irish-American author Elaine Cremin does well to tell it differently with her debut novel *Waiting For a Star to Fall*. Firstly, the contemporary context of one young woman's travels from Cork to New York makes for a fresh take to an ages-old journey. Secondly, the YA format brings a youthful perspective to the small-town-girl-in-the-big-city storyline. As such, Alyson Hughes and her girlfriends are immersed in the whirlwind of careers, NYC nightlife, and romantic liaisons. Both characters and plotline are solid, and the strong narrative arc will have readers pushing through pages. The real treat here, however, is the author's homespun warmth, wit and wisdom, all of which welcomes audiences of all ages and backgrounds. ~ SPC





Kodaline

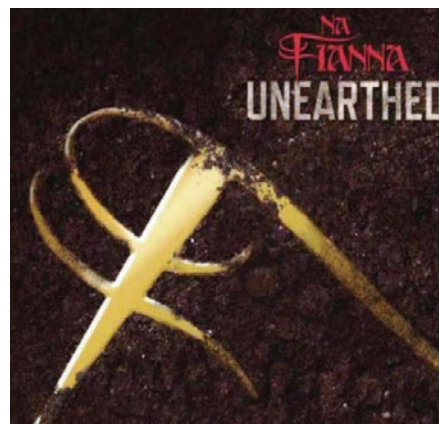
Coming Up For Air

After the unexpected success of 2013's debut release *A Perfect World*, many expected Kodaline to fall short with their sophomore effort. Instead, the Irish quartet upped the ante with this terrific 15 track recording. Buoyed by the first single, *The One*, *Coming Up For Air* is a mini-pop masterpiece - chock full of catchy beats and memorable melodies. With a nod and a wink to Coldplay, Snow Patrol and fellow Dubliners U2, the foursome of friends turn just the right mix of guitars, bass, drums, keyboards and vocals into a recipe for sonic success; *Ready, Play the Game*, and *Human Again* are all fun and frolic, while *Better* and *War* are both tender and touching. Be sure to see the band on tour this fall. ~ SPC

Na Fianna

Unearthed

Arguably one of the best contemporary Celtic bands around, Irish trad-rockers Na Fianna bring it all home to roost with their third full-length effort, *Unearthed*. By turns rollicking and rustic, tracks such as *Step it Out Mary*, *Star of the County Down*, *Toora Toora Lay*, and *Irishman* showcase the band's willingness to place their own stamp on traditional tunes. Both *The Ballad of Oisín* and *The Lakes of Pontchartrain* are sure to bring a tear, while the upbeat acoustic guitars of *Working on a Building* and the stirring accordion of *Nothing But the Same Old Story* succeed at evoking the ghosts of early Waterboys and Hothouse Flowers. As such, *Unearthed* is a powerful, poignant and passionate release, and one of the finest Celt-Rock recordings of 2015. ~ SPC



Sorren MacLean

Winter Stay Autumn

Fans of City & Colour, Iron & Wine and Gordon Lightfoot will love this collection of quirky little folk-pop songs. MacLean's warm and welcoming vocals float like clouds over the well-crafted melodies of *Science or Fiction*, *Bootlace Chases* and the terrific title track. Similarly, the Scottish singer-songwriter's fine fret-work on the gentle *Old Pier* and the rolling *Rows & Rows of Boxes* highlights both great musical ability, and a wise-beyond-his-years mastery of musical composition and arrangements. That said, in a music marketplace over-crowded with good, young troubadours, how does someone like MacLean make a name for himself? If *Winter Stay Autumn* is any indication of what is to come, he should simply "keep on keepin' on" with this winning formula of honest and homespun song-smithery. ~ SPC

Kyle Carey

North Star

One of the nicest and hardest working artists in the Celtic music world, singer Kyle Carey has established a strong and loyal fan base with her relentless roadwork. When she is not on tour, the vocalist calls her connections into the recording studio; her sophomore effort, *North Star*, features the likes of fiddler Chris Stout, harpist Catriona McKay, and cellist Natalie Haas. The result is pure "Gaelic Americana" - 11 heartfelt songs from the U.S. heartland that bridge the gap between Scotland, Ireland and the new world. The best of both worlds are at play on *Northern Lights*, *Cairistiona*, and *Sios Dhan an Abhainn*, and Carey's southern roots shine through with both the banjo-infused *Casey Jones*, and the soft-sweet tones of *Stone Creek*. Lovely album! ~ SPC



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Glen Coolen

Though Glen Coolen first appeared on the Eastern Canadian Celtic festival scene as a young Highland dancer, he was quickly captivated by the pipes

Today, along with being one of the most in-demand musicians in Atlantic Canada, Glen Coolen is the co-founder - with Gaelic singer Patricia Murray of Prince Edward Island - of the Re-Jigged Festival, an edgy, up and coming Celtic celebration that takes place in Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, each autumn.

Coolen's passion for Celtic culture is deeply rooted; he and his sister made the festival rounds with their parents from an early age.

"My mom and dad were not performers, but they loved the music and wanted us to be involved," the 44-year-old tells Celtic Life International by phone. "So that is how we spent our summer vacations; at Highland games and festivals in Antigonish, Montreal, Maxville, and anywhere else we could get to. I didn't have much of a chance of avoiding the music."

He acknowledges that young male Highland dancers were a rare species at the time, which might explain why piping seemed more appealing.

"Whatever it was, I took easily to the bagpipes, and I've been playing since I was about nine-years-old."

Coolen began on the great Highland bagpipe, joined the Dartmouth Boys Pipe and Drum Band - later renamed the Dartmouth and District Pipe Band - and was soon performing and competing extensively.

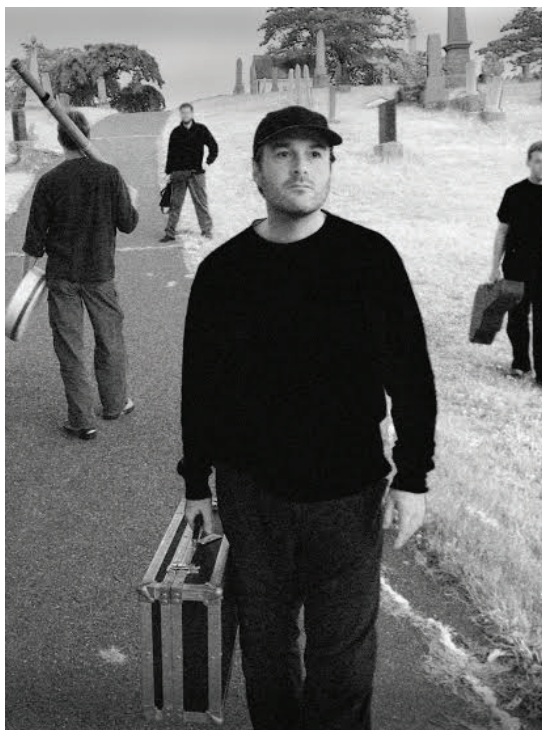
"It eventually got pretty hectic at the festivals," he recalls. "I'd be playing personal solos, pipe majoring with my band, and accompanying the dance competitions."

In his late teens, Coolen got his hands on a set of small pipes, an instrument more traditionally played in the Scottish Lowlands and the north of England.

"On the festival circuit we were always

trading stories, musical recommendations and CDs, so I was introduced to quite a variety of music. The small pipes pushed me in a new direction."

The beauty of the small pipes, he notes, was that he could play along with other instruments easily, and it was actually possible to talk over them.



"The fingering was the same as with the Highland pipes, but they were more forgiving and more open to experimentation."

These days he is most often playing the Irish or uilleann pipes and low whistles.

"I love the whistles," he notes. "Myself and a few others hold sessions around Halifax, generally in pubs, a couple of times a week. Some are performances and some are just casual gatherings. With Irish mu-

sic you can hear the same tune played several times a night but it will always be different."

As these sessions are usually held in pubs, audiences have to be over the legal drinking age to attend, making it a challenge for younger people to become better versed in Irish music.

"That's why Seph Peters (Nova Scotia multi-instrumentalist) and I started offering workshops. The response was very good, and a group of us with different skills decided to create a small festival. We named it Re-Jigged, which seemed to sum up our approach. We're in our sixth year now, growing it slowly and deliberately."

Performances, he adds, will make up only one third of the October 23-24 festival, which brands itself as "new trad Celtic" music and dance.

"The rest is about learning and sharing. There's lots of traditional stuff but it won't be quite what people have heard before. We are very open to new twists, and to experimentation."

A trained architect - who currently works as an artistic director and set designer in the film industry - Coolen has more than 70 films and documentaries to his credit. He also has a Celtic music show on a local radio station, and two albums in the works - one is a solo collection, and the other is the third offering from his well-know, long-standing band MacCrimmon's Revenge.

He expects his eight-year-old daughter, Aileigh, will begin playing the pipes next year.

"She is learning piano and harp so she's about ready for the pipes. Her mother is a fiddler, so she hasn't much of a chance of avoiding the music."

www.rejiggedfestival.com





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Lizzy Hoyt

By her own admission, fiddler-singer-songwriter Lizzy Hoyt is "a true Canadian mashup"...

"My mother's side is Scottish, Irish and English," says award-winning Canadian musician Lizzy Hoyt by email, "while my father's side is French-Canadian, Irish and Latvian."

"Because of that heritage," she continues, "my connection to Celtic music is very strong. It actually makes me feel like my bones are vibrating."

Those bones have been rattling for as long as Hoyt can remember.

"Music has been my life," she explains. "And if life is a journey, then so is my music. In truth, they are one and the same. They are not separate."

That journey began at a young age; with two musicians for parents, Hoyt was surrounded by melody throughout her childhood, and began studying the violin when she was just four years-old.

"I started to pursue fiddling more seriously in my teens," shares the songstress. "It was around this time that I also picked up the guitar and mandolin, and started to write songs."

By the age of 15, Hoyt had snagged her first professional gig as a fiddler for Canadian country singer Eli Barsi. Over the next few years, Hoyt continued to work with Barsi as a fiddler, mandolin player, and backup vocalist. She also collaborated with a number of other artists, including Maria Dunn, Tracy Millar, and Samantha King.

Her dedication to music didn't stop her from pursuing a formal education, however, and in 2009 she graduated from the University of Alberta with a BA in sociology.

As a testament to her first love, the 20-something troubadour already has four albums to her name – the most recent being 2014's *New Lady on the Prairie*.

Amazingly, she has accomplished it all without a record label.

"I am a self-managed, self-booked, independent artist. So, really, there are two challenges at play here; one is taking care of the business side of my career, and the other is writing, rehearsing, recording and touring."

Thankfully, the rewards outweigh the challenges.

"I get great pleasure from knowing that I am giving something 'good' to this world; I hope to bring joy to others through music, perhaps touch them in some small way and help them to connect to something."

It's not just fans that have connected to Hoyt's music.

In 2012, she beat out 11,000 other applicants to win "Best Female Artist" honours at the 8th International Acoustic Music Awards. She has also been a Canadian Folk Music Award nominee for "Traditional Singer of the Year," and was named a finalist in both the John Lennon Songwriting Contest and the USA Songwriting Competition. Perhaps most poignantly, in 2013 she was awarded the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medal by the Governor General of Canada for her outstanding

contribution to commemorating Canadian veterans and history for her song *Vimy Ridge*.

Critical acclaim aside, Hoyt is content to continue challenging herself as an artist.

"As time has passed, I feel my fiddling is stronger and more nuanced. My guitar playing is more rhythmic and detailed. My voice is getting stronger and warmer."

She acknowledges the strong Celtic presence in her music.

"My instrumental skills are largely based in traditional Irish, Scottish and Canadian music. That said, I listen to many types of music, so there are influences from other genres as well. I strongly identify with the storytelling component of folk music, and they are some of my favourite songs to write, sing and hear. And folk music often contains the core ingredients of a good song; an honest message, and a solid sense of craftsmanship in both the words and the music."

Things show no sign of slowing down for the singer-songwriter; this summer, she was in Italy to sing in a baroque opera. Then, she returned home to play festivals in Ontario and Alberta. And this fall, she will be back on the road, touring across Western Canada. A major tour is also planned for the spring of 2016.

"I am very thankful I have had the opportunity to visit so many parts of Canada and the world," smiles Hoyt. "It really has been an amazing journey so far."

www.lizzyhoyt.com





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The Red Thistle Dancers

Californians John and Jennifer Kelly share a love, and a love for Scottish dancing

Since 1973, husband and wife John and Jennifer Kelly have been part of San Francisco's iconic Red Thistle Dancers – both as dancers, and as president and artistic director respectively. The group is renowned for both its Scottish country dancing and its Highland dancing.

"Country dancing is the old ballroom dance of Scotland," explains Jennifer. "It is meant for people to participate in, not just to watch. By turns, Highland dancing is intended for the highly talented to demonstrate their skills."

Both Kellys were raised in England. Jennifer grew up in Surrey, though her paternal grandmother was born in Northern Ireland. She embraced all forms of dance from an early age.

"I loved to dance and took ballet, folk and ballroom dance classes, and learned some Renaissance dancing whilst at college in London," she remembers. "I decided to take Scottish dance when I moved to the Surrey/Kent border at the start of my teaching career, and soon found myself shuffled into an advanced class. This was a fast moving group, and as a virtual beginner I worked hard to keep up."

John is a native of Bristol, but his father's family came from Denny Mills in Stirlingshire, Scotland. He hails from a long line of musicians, and it was his fiddle-playing father who introduced him to Scottish dancing at a Hogmanay ball.

"Since I wasn't going to get up and make a fool of myself, he gave me a large Scotch which provided the courage to permit me to struggle through the Circassian Circle," he recalls with a smile. "It was the start of many happy years of dancing."

John went on to become president of



the Cambridge University Strathspey and Reel Club, meeting his future wife while both were taking dance lessons. The couple married in 1963, and immigrated to California three years later. It wasn't long before Jennifer pulled together a small group to practice dance techniques, which eventually evolved into the Red Thistle Dancers.

The Kellys note that the name of the troupe represents a bridge between the past and the present.

"It was chosen to highlight the fact that, though there were few native born Scots in the troupe, many had Scottish connections. The group reflects the diverse nature of Californian society, and so we decided that the Red Thistle, found growing here, would serve well as a symbol of both our Scottish heritage and current home."

Along with being a good-standing member of the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society, the group is registered as a non-profit organization and is incorporated in the State of California. It currently has about 30 dancers of varying ages, each of whom has gone through an extended trial period to ensure technical competence and compatibility with the rest of the group. They regularly perform at local and area concerts, Highland games and other ethnic gatherings, theatre events, private functions and weddings, and feature both country and Highland dancing.

Current president of the troupe, Lin Pettengill, says it was a chance invitation that originally brought her to the Red Thistle Dancers many years ago. She has stayed on for decades.

"We have a lot of fun trying to be the best dancers we can possibly be," says Jennifer. "This is no ordinary dance class – there's lots of choreography to learn, teamwork to build on and footwork and technique to practice, practice, practice. The striving for perfection is what keeps me involved today."

www.redthistledancers.org





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Festival Celtique de Québec - September 9-13

Come discover the “Celtitude” of la belle province this September! The Festival Celtique de Québec aims to reconnect local and area residents, as well as those from away, with their history and heritage by celebrating the culture of the peoples of Ireland, Scotland, Brittany, Wales, Cornwall, Galicia and the Isle of Man. This year, the renowned gathering celebrates its 10th anniversary with traditional music and dance, a parade, exhibitions, seminars, sporting events and several competitions. In past years, heavyweight athletes have participated in the 17 lb open stone, the 56 lb weight for distance, the 22 lb hammer throw, the caber toss and the 56 lb weight for height. In 2013, the fête even added a “festive” twist – throwing a St. Ambrose beer barrel! If beer tossing isn’t your cup of tea, you can still test

your physical fitness at interactive workshops with the athletes. Spectators can also enjoy demonstrations by regional dance troops and musicians, and if you are looking to tickle your taste buds, beer and whiskey tastings are also on the menu. As always, there will be plenty of exciting and engaging entertainment and activities for the wee ones. www.festivalceltique.com

Trenton Scottish Irish Festival - September 11-12

Celebrate a quarter-century of Celtic traditions this September at Centennial Park in Quinte West, Ontario. The Trenton Scottish Irish Festival (TSIF) is a two-day event that kicks off on Friday night with a Military Tattoo and live music, including headliners The Barra MacNeils. If you haven’t heard the Cape Breton-based MacNeils in concert then do yourself the favour - the renowned family/group has been going strong for almost 30 years. You will need tickets to get into those opening night festivities, but the following day is free and open to the public. Saturday starts with a parade through the downtown area, and continues all day long with activities scheduled until well after the sun goes down.

Along with traditional music and dance, the gathering will also feature strongman challenges. For those interested in learning more about their own Celtic roots, there will be plenty of ancestry information available in the heritage tent. If you are hoping to take home a souvenir or two, the festival’s “vendor village” offers a fine sampling of art, jewelry, clothing and costumes. As TSIF festival organizers say, “be sure to get out your kilt and bring the whole clan.” www.trentonscottishirish.com



Charleston Scottish Games and Highland Gathering - September 17-20



The Charleston Scottish Games hosts one of the largest annual piping and drumming competitions in the southeast United States. Now in its 44th year, the games are pleased to announce Clan MacLeod as its honoured clan in 2015. Professional and amateur athletes alike can compete in the heavy athletic events, including the sheaf toss, the caber toss, and the stone of strength. Dancing will once again be a major attraction – attendees can enjoy both Highland dancing and Scottish country dancing. Other on-site activities include a Scotch whisky tasting, a beer garden,

a tartan ball, a Border Collie demonstration, and a rugby exhibition. Games and activities for kids ages 12 and under will also be on the agenda. Musical entertainment will be provided by Seven Nations, a band that hails from Florida and combines elements of American pop and rock with Highland bagpipes and fiddle. Castle Crossing will also be rockin’ audiences with their fusion of traditional Celtic and modern Americana music. The festivities don’t stop there, however; on September 19, the games’ after-party will be held at renowned local pub and eatery My Father’s Moustache. The following morning, a Kirkin’ o’ the Tartan will take place at nearby First Scots Presbyterian Church. www.charlestonscots.org





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of concerts, hundreds of community events, workshops, community meals, spectacular scenery and our renowned hospitality when the fall colours are at their peak.

Celtic Colours, in cooperation with Cape Breton University, is pleased to present the 2015 edition of the North Atlantic Fiddle Convention during this year's festival.

NAFC





Aztec Highland Games - October 3-4

For two full days of athletics and Celtic music, make your way to New Mexico this fall. The annual Aztec Highland Games features eight different heavy events, including the sheaf toss, the weight over bar, the Braemar stone, the Scottish light and heavy hammer throw, the light and heavy weight throw, and the caber toss. A full slate of music is on tap again this year also, including main stage attraction The Angry Briars from Kern County, California. Local bands appearing include the Big'ns, Celtic Knot, Gypsyfire, the Kitchen Jam Band, Mad Haggis and Patrick Crossing. As always, there will be a variety of pipe bands and dance groups at the games. In past years, the festival welcomed the Westwind Pipes and Drums, Mac-Tire of Skye Pipes and Drums, Order of the Thistle Pipes and Drums and Southwest Skye Pipes and Drums. And, in 2014, the festival showcased both a Highland dance troupe and an Irish dance group. Though the gathering currently doesn't offer dance competitions per se, it hopes to do so in the future. Groups interested in putting together dance exhibition performances for this year's event can contact festival organizers directly via their website. www.aztechighlandgames.com

Celtic Colours International Festival - October 8-18

Cape Breton Island comes alive with the sights and sounds of Celtic culture for 11 days this October, as Nova Scotia's signature festival again offers up a wealth of workshops, dances, concerts and community suppers. The Buddy MacMaster Fiddle Camp kicks off the celebrations on Oct. 8 with a performance at the Celtic Music Interpretive Centre, featuring 10 of the Island's best fiddlers onstage at once! In all, there will be 47 concerts over the course of the festival, including appearances from the likes of Ashley MacIsaac, Loreena McKennitt, and the Barra MacNeils. For fans of visual arts, the gathering features several exhibits, including a "fibre show" of quilts, woven goods and knit items, a market road-show, and an Aboriginal art and culture display. Those looking to try their hand at crafting will want to attend a Celtic knot quilting session with Norma Marchant in Baddeck. The art of cuisine is well represented also, and hungry attendees can enjoy a cornucopia of Celtic breakfasts, Thanksgiving dinners, lunch-hour ceilidhs, and more. Be sure to bring your camera, as the region's spectacular fall foliage is in full bloom – it is called Celtic Colours for a reason. www.celtic-colours.com



Re-Jigged Festival - October 23-24

Are you ready to re-jig? Then be sure to head over to Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, for the annual Celtic music and dance festival that's bigger than ever. This year, Re-Jigged will feature more than 25 intensive seminars in music and dance, including bodhran, fiddle, Irish flute, uilleann pipes, tin whistle, Celtic harp, songwriting and more. Also on the agenda are both a full-day percussive dance workshop, and a children's Gaelic program. Renowned artist and composer Scott Macmillan will lead a half-day workshop known as the Re-Jigged Celtic Music Ensemble. Seminar spaces fill up quickly, so those interested in attending are encouraged to register early online. Once again, Re-Jigged will showcase a myriad of local and international musical acts in 2015, including Irish sisters Michelle and Louise Mulcahy, who will headline the opening Friday night concert. Also appearing are Bon Débarras, a trio from Montréal who will delight audiences with their banjo, accordion and harmonica-flavoured folk music. Be sure to catch the band, as well as other "new traditional" musicians at the Saturday night Gala Concert at Christ Church Hall. A late night ceilidh closes off the event, where attendees are encouraged to hit the dance floor for some after-hours fun. www.rejiggedfestival.com





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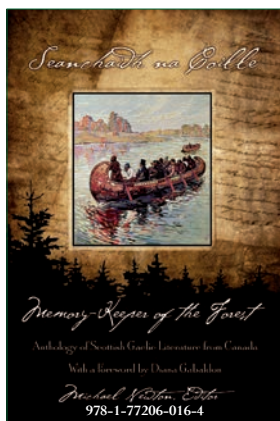


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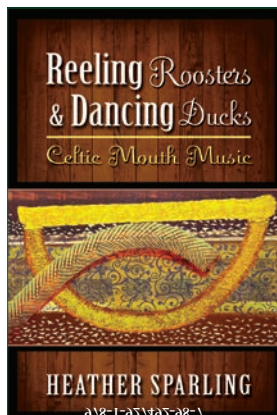
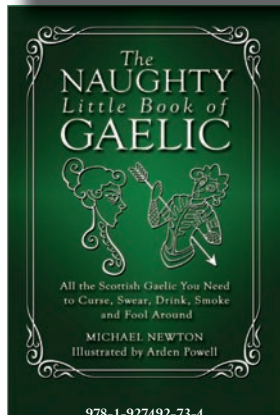
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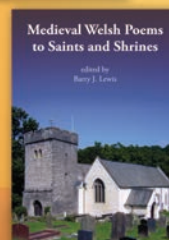
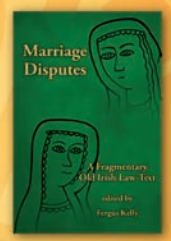
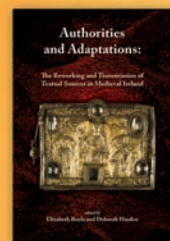
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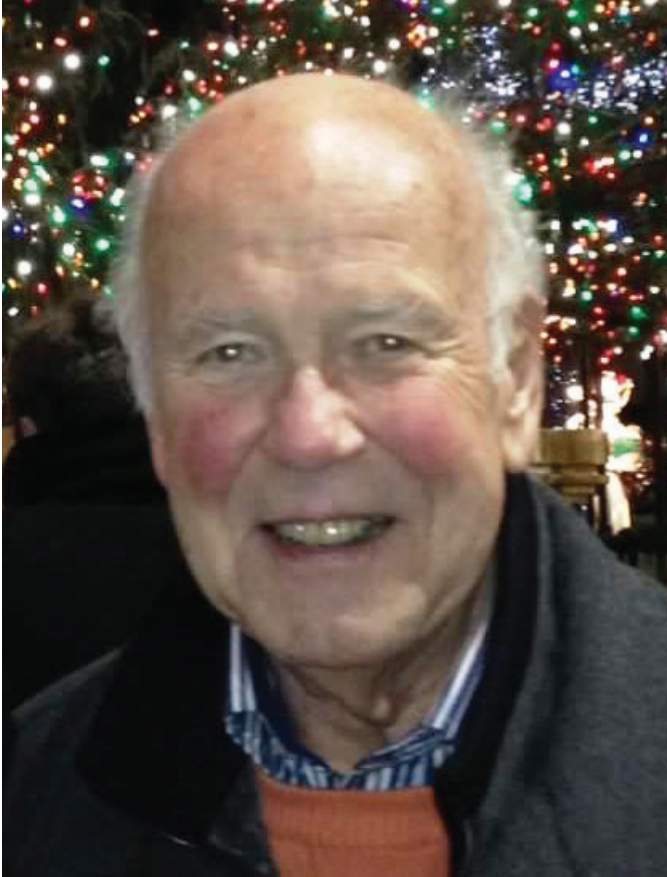
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Kenneth Clare

1934-2015

When word came on July 12 that my father had passed, it was a shock, though not a surprise.

Dad had been sick with Metastatic Pleomorphic Liposarcoma – an aggressive form of cancer – since last September. After several stays in hospital in recent months, Dad died peacefully in his sleep at his Montreal-area home, where he had returned for a little over a week – just enough time to put his house in order, and enjoy a last scotch, cigar and steak.

And while my brother, my sister and I were relieved that his ordeal was over, no one is ever truly prepared for the loss of a loved one.

He has since been remembered for his courage, his dignity, and for his tremendous generosity - particularly with his grandchildren, whom he adored. All of us will miss his infectious laugh, the mischievous twinkle in his eyes, and his perpetually rosy cheeks.

I visited him at the hospital as often as I could over the last year, including a week of day-long visits last December, a long weekend in May, and another five days in June. The last time I saw him was, fittingly, on June 21 - Father's Day. That day, as with much of our time together, we talked politics, economics, history, travel and family. As was the case so often, our discussion brought up our Irish roots.



Dad's interest in his family heritage came to him later in life, and he visited Eire on "fact-finding" missions several times over the last 20 years. Aside from a distillery tour of western Scotland – my father's passion for single-malt was well-noted in both his eulogy and at the ensuing reception – he only had (smilin') eyes for the Emerald Isle.

That interest grew after my appointment as Managing Editor of Celtic Life International, and he was my first phone call upon returning from my recent travels through Ireland, Northern Ireland and Wales. We shared stories and compared notes and, between the two of us, were able to piece together some semblance of our family history.

From what we found, the earliest known records of the Clares are from Normandy, France; the names "Clair" and "de Clair" denote "of the clearing" and - given that connotation - it is likely that the original family members owned large tracts of land.

The first evidence of Clares outside of France came after the Battle of Hastings in 1066, when Baron Gilbert de Clare was named First Earl of Pembroke. Much of Gilbert's family settled in Suffolk.

Gilbert's son, and perhaps our most renowned ancestor, Richard de Clare – better known as Strongbow – led the Anglo-Norman landings in both Wales, and later, Ireland. In Eire, he served as both Lord of Leinster and as the country's Justiciar.

A descendant of Richard - Thomas de Clare - established the community of Clarecastle near Ennis in the mid-late 1200s, from which the county eventually took its moniker in 1590. It was there that the family name was 'Irishcized' to Clár, and later, simply Clare.

Interestingly, today there are very few Clares left in western Ireland – most branches of our family tree there were cut down by war, invasion, eviction, unemployment, and, in more "recent" times, famine.

The years during and immediately following the famine saw many of our ancestors scatter across Ireland, Northern Ireland, Scotland and the U.K. Others made their way to the new world, including my father's grandfather's family, who came to Canada

in the late 1800s. Records show that my great-grandfather, Albert Ernest Clare, married Lucy Henrietta Reid – an Ulster-Scot from Newry, County Down - in the Montreal area in 1902. They had two children; my grandfather, Kenneth Sr., and my Great Aunt Millie.

While his Irish heritage was always noted and celebrated, the Welsh connection came as a revelation to Dad. Wales was a country he had never considered visiting, though he put it on his agenda after reading of my 2014 trip there. In particular, he was fascinated with our link to the magnificent Caerphilly Castle, north of Cardiff.

Those historical family connections helped to connect my father and I - "rooting through our roots" brought us closer together. Dad urged me to continue that quest, and I have; with each new discovery of our shared heritage, I am reminded of his infectious laugh, the mischievous twinkle in his eyes, and his perpetually rosy cheeks.

~ Stephen Patrick Clare



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