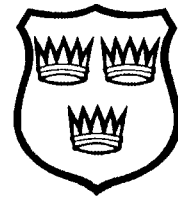




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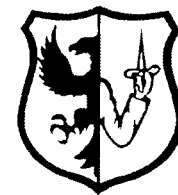
United Irish Cultural Center, Inc.



2700 - 45th Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94116

Tel: 415-661-2700 Event Hotline: 415-741-8803

E-mail: info@irishcentersf.org www.irishcentersf.org



Volume XLIX No. 4
April 2024

2023-2024

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BOARD MESSAGE

Irish American Heritage Month Celebrated with Success in California



Liam Reidy

March 2024 marked a significant achievement for Irish Americans as California joined in honoring Irish American Heritage Month, following a proclamation by President Joe Biden at the White House. This declaration was reinforced within the state by the passing of California Assembly Concurrent Resolution I49 at the state Capitol in Sacramento on March 14th.

State Capitol Visit — The atmosphere at the state capitol was charged with pride as supporters of the measure, including Consul General Micheál Smith, Vice-Consul Jennifer Chadwick and visiting Irish Senator Jerry Buttimer, UICC board members Leo Cassidy and Redmond Lyons, gathered to witness the resolution's journey through both the California State Senate and Assembly. With resounding bipartisan support, the resolution was met with enthusiasm and approval from lawmakers in both chambers.

Assembly Members James Gallagher, Lisa Calderon, Damon Connolly, Heath Flora, and Matt Haney introduced the resolution in the Assembly, while Senate Bill was championed by Mike McGuire, the Pro Tempore leader of the California State Senate.

Century of Relations — The resolution, jointly passed by both houses, commemorates the 100th anniversary of diplomatic relations between the United States and Ireland. It also highlighted the significant contributions of Irish Americans to the country and the state of California, emphasizing the importance of celebrating Irish American Heritage Month throughout March, with particular emphasis on St. Patrick's Day.

In a statement, the legislature declared, "Everyone's Irish on St. Patrick's Day," underscoring the inclusive spirit of the celebration. The resolution further directed the Chief Clerk of the Assembly to transmit copies to key figures including Ireland's Ambassador to the United States, Geraldine Byrne Nason, and other dignitaries.

Reflecting on being present for the historic occasion, you could feel a great sense of pride and accomplishment resonating among attendees. I thought to myself "Wow!" Here we are in the political halls of power in the fifth largest economy in the world, taking center stage, which encapsulated the significance of the moment for me.

Concurrent Resolution I49 — The successful passage of California Assembly Concurrent Resolution I49 not only recognizes the vibrant heritage of Irish Americans but also underscores

(President's Message continued on page 2)

(President's Message continued)

the state's commitment to honoring and celebrating cultural diversity. As Irish American Heritage Month concludes, its impact on fostering unity and appreciation for diverse cultural contributions remains palpable across California.

Irish American Success Story — While walking the halls of the state capitol building, I couldn't help but marvel at the prominence of Irish Americans on this stage. Their journey, rooted in the waves of immigrants who sought refuge from famine, pursued economic opportunities, and escaped political upheaval, has woven a tapestry of pride in their Irish ancestry. John Downey was the first foreign born Irish governor of California (1860-1862) and more recent Irish American governors with Emerald Isle heritage include Edmund Brown (1959-1967) and his son Gerry Brown (2011-2019) and current Governor Gavin Newsom (2019-2024). Through the annals of history, Irish Americans have wielded significant influence, shaping the very essence of American society across realms of culture, politics, business, and beyond. This narrative persists to this day.

Preservation of Irish Culture — At the heart of this pride lies a steadfast commitment to preserving and celebrating Irish traditions. From the toe tapping beats of traditional music to the spirited movements of dance (there was Irish dancing through the halls of the State Assembly on March

14th!), from the lyrical beauty of language to the savory delights of cuisine, Irish American communities across the nation unite during Irish American Heritage Month. Through vibrant festivals, spirited parades, enlightening cultural events, and educational endeavors, we all pay homage to our heritage. These gatherings stand as poignant reminders of the enduring spirit and resilience that define the Irish people, both in their homeland and scattered throughout the world.

St. Patrick's Season — With just two days to celebrate the St. Patrick's season on site at the Irish Center this year, we had record attendances both on March 16th after the parade and again for St. Patrick's Day which coincided with the GreenFest block party. We sold out of corn beef dinners on March 17th. It was delicious based on the number of positive reports from happy UICC members. A special thanks to all the musicians and Irish dancers who did so well entertaining the crowds.

Spring Membership Drive — Our spring membership drive is now on, and we welcome you to continue supporting us here at the Center. Contact Maggie 650-892-4050

Summer Camp — Our Summer camp has already over 75 participants signed up for the annual camp which starts on June 10. Registration is open throughout the spring until the camp is fully enrolled. The camp is ideal for kids aged 6 years and up.

Leo T Walsh Scholarship — Many thanks to all those donors and supporters who have once again contributed to the annual scholarship awards. The deadline for applying is now passed and the judges are busy reviewing the entrants. The award ceremony will take place in May. Good luck to all the eight graders and high school seniors who applied for a scholarship.

Céilí on the Lake — On April 27th and 28th, there is an Irish Dance and music Festival at the Beautiful Lagoon Park, Marin County Fairgrounds. The Irish Center will be represented at the event with an Information Booth, while many of our members will be playing music and step dancing at the festival. More details at www.ceilionthelake.com/

Thank you to the Staff & Volunteers — A big thank you to our event staff Aileen, Wheatley and Heidi, the team of part time workers and volunteers for the trojan work undertaken all through the month of March.

Go raibh maith agaibh go léir!

Liam Reidy, President
lreidy@irishcentersf.org

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APRIL CALENDAR

■ APRIL 4, THURSDAY

Irish-Brazilian Night (*Movie & Musician*)

The Man Behind the White Guitar

St. Francis Room ~ 7:00pm

■ APRIL 6, SATURDAY

- Karl McHugh Band in Concert ~ 6:00pm - 8:00pm

■ APRIL 13, SATURDAY

- Irish Genealogy Club Zoom ~ 11:00am - 1:00pm

Beth Winegarner, talking about her book *San Francisco's Forgotten Cemeteries*. All are welcome

2023 club leads: Pati Traktman & Nancy Sanchez

Email: IrishGenealogyClub@gmail.com

- Irish Marvel, Past and Present ~ 11:00am - 1:00pm

Marvels group will be attending the Genealogy presentation. Questions?

Contact Lisa Hilmoe at Hilmoe.gleason@gmail.com

- Ms. Nancy's Read Aloud ~ 3:00pm - 3:45pm

Musical instruments and storytelling in the Library

■ APRIL 27, SATURDAY

- Trad Seisun with Cormac Gannon ~ 4:30pm - 7:30pm

SAVE THE DATE 2024

•
WEDNESDAY MAY 8

Máire Ní Chathasaigh and Chris Newman
(Irish Harp and Guitar) in the Emerald Room

•
FRIDAY MAY 10

Irish Heritage Night at the Giants with the UICC

•
SATURDAY JUNE 8

Kate Kennedy Day

Cypress Lawn Cemetery

1370 El Camino Real, Colma

•
JUNE 10 - 28

Irish Camp ~ Youth Summer Camp

•
FRIDAY JUNE 28

"The Songs of Ireland"

Irish Summer Camp Production

•
SATURDAY JULY 19

Amateur Boxing Night with our partner
Fire in the Ring Boxing Club

•
SATURDAY AUGUST 24

3rd Annual Rock the Gates Summer Fleadh

•
SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 15

Robert Emmet Day

Golden Gate Park Band Concourse

•
SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 21

Irish Pipers of San Francisco Dinner Dance

•
SATURDAY OCTOBER 5

Oktoberfest

•
SATURDAY OCTOBER 19

Emerald Dinner Dance

•
SATURDAY OCTOBER 26

Amateur Boxing Night with our partner
Fire in the Ring Boxing Club



Three 1-week sessions
New 6-7 age group added
Final Show June 28 @ 7 pm

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falconassoc@earthlink.net

PATRICK J. DOWLING LIBRARY

APRIL 2024

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AND INSTAGRAM

LIBRARY HOURS

THURSDAYS AND FRIDAYS 2:30 - 5:30PM
SATURDAYS 1:30 - 4:30PM

GREETINGS FROM THE LIBRARY

Constance Markievicz Club

The three piece green costume with gold buttons, gold trim, and gold CMC initials on the collar was recently donated.

After doing research, we learned that this costume belonged to the Constance Markievicz Club, a club that dates back to the late 1930's. The club held a multitude of dance fundraisers at the Knights of the Red Branch supporting Irish prisoners dependents, Irish Republican Army Veterans and other various causes.



Eddie and the Vinyls

The Library has a grand selection of vinyls dating back many decades. Just recently we had Eddie Kane who was playing with Derek Warfield and the Young Wolfe Tones, share the story about the H Block record that was created in 1978. Around 300 records of the original launch survived after the release was raided and destroyed. Our library has a one of the original copies.



Scholarship vists

During the month of March, the Library had many wonderful visitors doing research for the Leo T. Walsh Scholarship. Best of luck to all who submitted an essay.



For all the bird watchers out there, heading to Ireland.

The Tale of Diarmad and Gráinne, a national Irish school curriculum mythological story about love and adventure.



IRISH WORD OF THE MONTH
"SEANCHAI"
MEANS
STORYTELLER AND BEARER OF
OLD LORE

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Go on an exciting adventure around Ireland with this new book.

COLLECTION HIGHLIGHTS



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LIBRARY PROGRAMMING FOR APRIL

Read Aloud with Ms. Nancy

Saturday, April 13th 3:00 - 3:45pm

In person in the Library

Designed for children ages 2 to 10.

Transport young minds to Ireland through beloved stories and timeless tales every month on the second Saturday.

Irish Genealogy Club

Saturday, April 13th 11:00am - 1:00pm

Member's Room In person & Live on Zoom

Beth Winegarner, talking about her book

San Francisco's Forgotten Cemeteries

All are welcome!

Irish Marvels

Will attend the book event in place of a meeting.

Trad Seisuin with Cormac Gannon

Saturday, April 27th 4:30 - 7:30pm

In person in the Emerald Pub

The Library will have our collection of music of the 1916 Easter Rising on display.



Do you have time on your hands? The Library could use your help.
Contact Jennifer Drennan at Library@irishcentersf.org or 415-661-2702



IRISH IMMIGRATION PASTORAL CENTER

DEYOUNG MUSEUM TOUR





WEDNESDAY, 03 APRIL, 2024

12:45 P.M. - MEET IN LOBBY AT DEYOUNG

Docent Tour begins at 1:00 p.m. and is an hour - then you are free to explore the remainder of the museum or have lunch in the café. Entrance to museum & tour are free.

LIMITED SPACE. REGISTRATION REQUIRED - visit linktr.ee/sfiipc or call Christina at 415.432.2552

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Tuesday, April 23, 2024

10:30 a.m. - 12 noon

United Irish Cultural Center

St. Francis Room
2700 45th Avenue, San Francisco

Cost: \$5

For more information, call Christina at 415.752.6006 or email wellness@sfiipc.org

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March / April 2024 | Museum Operating Hours
Thursday-Saturday 10 am - 4 pm



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THE UICC TOOK CENTER STAGE AT A CROSSROADS FESTIVAL PANEL DISCUSSION

Great to welcome guests curious about the history of Irish arts and culture community organizations in the San Francisco Bay Area to a special Irish American Crossroads event held at the UICC on Sunday, March 10 as their 2024 festival kicks off.

The panel talk, entitled— Preservation and Innovation: Irish and Irish-American Arts, Culture and History in the San Francisco Bay Area—gathered leaders of local prominent Irish arts and culture organizations to speak about their motivations and future visions for the work of their respective organizations. Participants included Tony Bucher, President of the Irish Literary and Historical Society and Columnist for the Irish Herald; Anne Cassidy Carew, Vice President of the United Irish Cultural Center, Co-Chair, Keepers of the Steps Program; and Eileen Mize, Co-



Anne Cassidy Carew, Tom Bucher, Eileen Mize.

Chair of Keepers of the Steps Program, Marketing Team Member of the United Irish Cultural Center. Unfortunately, Catherine Barry, Founder/Director of Irish Culture Bay Area, Board member of SF Irish Film, Co-Director of the Irish Oral History Archive of the San Francisco Bay Area as well as Susan Keith, Chair, Comhaltas Ceoltóiri Éireann, Cooley-Keegan Branch were unable to attend as previously planned due to illness.

Anne Cassidy Carew gave a wonderful overview of all the programming at the UICC stressing the wide array of offerings and commitment to cultural preservation. She cited past leaders and members, such as her own late father Gerry Cassidy, as being the “giants upon whose shoulders we stand” especially as the Center embarks on a major capital campaign and building project that will provide space for the growth in programs and events that serve the greater Bay Area community.

Eileen Mize spoke about the origins and development of the Keepers of the Steps program—one of the cultural programs of the UICC that is near and dear to Eileen. She refers to her efforts in the history and preservation of Irish Dance in the San Francisco Bay Area as a “passion project” and credits her early interest to her own dance teacher and longtime friend Annie McBride. Eileen talked about the current exhibition at the San Francisco Historical Society which opened on February 29 and will be on display through May as well as some exciting future plans.

Thanks to Crossroads Director Margaret McPeake for organizing such a unique chance to engage in a vital discussion, and as she concluded the panel — “This may well be Part I of an on-going discussion.”

PHOTO EXHIBITION DURING ST. PATRICKS FESTIVAL



We were delighted to be able to welcome photographer, Irish artist Annie Holland back for a photographic exhibition called “Textiles of Rural Ireland” and her sister, Kathleen Holland, who debuted a new collection of Claddagh jewelry over the St. Patrick’s Day weekend events. Annie Hollands trip was supported by Laois County Council and Culture Ireland.

OUR UICC COMMUNITY



OUR NEWEST MEMBER

Welcome to Sunset resident Tom Golden who became a UICC member during the St. Patrick's season. Tom is photographed here with Vice-President Anne Cassidy Carew. Tom tells us that his wife Dawn also became a member! Have you joined yet? Our spring membership drive is ongoing now!



SURPRISE VISIT FROM ARIZONA

Valerie McGrew was in San Francisco for the month of March and stopped by the Patrick's J Dowling Library on one of her many visits to the Center. Valerie was the Patrick J Dowling Librarian between 2011-2019, but relocated to Surprise, AZ in 2020. Her new home is about 30 miles northwest of Phoenix.



TRIP DOWN MEMORY LANE

Thank you to Kathleen Manning who shared this wonderful photograph of the UICC Board of Directors in 1986. It's hard to believe it's from 38 years ago!

Front Row: Pat Dillon (RIP), Mary Looney (RIP), Frank Leonard, President (RIP) and Kathleen Loftus (RIP). Back Row: Gary O'Reilly (RIP), Kathleen Manning, Gerry Cassidy (RIP), Cathie O'Shea, Jim Busby (RIP) Jim Horan, Brian Sullivan (RIP).

Have an old photograph related to the Center? Send it along to us with a caption and we can broadcast it to the world!



PAST BOARD MEMBER VISITS THE CENTER

Past board member Patti Lee Dolan who served on the board from 1979-1981 was at the Center in early March to attend a birthday party with Ed Benedetti. Patti has lived in Napa for the past four decades but still finds time to visit the Irish Center.



MUSICAL YOUTH 2024

Seamus Stannard playing the fiddle during a recent music lesson with teacher Dan Cotter at the Center.



**ACTIVE RETIREMENT CLUB
OUTREACH PROGRAM**

MASS & LUNCHEON

It is April and the start of Spring!! There will be pastels and tulips to welcome you to our monthly Mass and luncheon!!

Come enjoy the warmth of friendship and the joy of community as you connect with old friends and make new acquaintances.

Fr. Donal Burke, our favorite Capuchin, will celebrate Mass at 12 noon followed by a hot buffet lunch hosted by A Black Tie Affair.

Thursday, April 11, 2024

12 noon Mass
followed by buffet luncheon

United Irish Cultural Center

St. Patrick's Room
2700 45th Avenue, San Francisco

Tickets \$30

Advance registration required

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or contact Christina at 415.432.2552 or wellnessesfiipc.org

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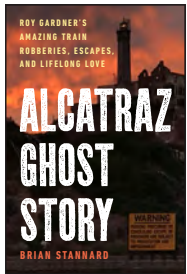
As Bhean Eileannaí Tuairiscíoch agus Tríonóir
Départamhnaí de Thairseach agus Tuairiscí

OUR UICC COMMUNITY CONTINUES...



YOUNG IRISH PIPERS

Our young Irish pipers were busy during the St. Patrick's season. They had their first official engagement at the 44th Annual St. Patrick's corned beef dinner St. Cecilia's on March 2. The Pipers also performed at St. Anne's of the Sunset, and St. Gabriel's parish festivals. If you have someone in your family that wants to play the bagpipes then reach out to us at the Center to get information on the apprenticeship program for young pipers.



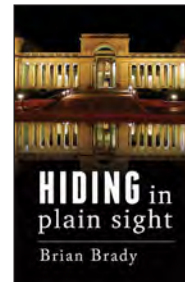
ALCATRAZ GHOST STORY PUBLISHED

Congratulations to UICC member Brian Stannard who recently published a book about Alcatraz inmate Roy Gardner, entitled "Alcatraz Ghost Story". Brian's book spans an incredible amount of San Francisco history: the 1906 Earthquake, the 1934 Big Strike on the waterfront, the 1939 Golden Gate International Exhibition on Treasure Island, and of course Alcatraz! Look for a book talk and signing at the Irish Center later this spring



BRIAN BRADY PUBLISHES SECOND BOOK!

UICC member Brian Brady's (retired SFPD) second book (Hiding in Plain Sight) will be launched on April 2nd, 2024. Brian's first book ("Oh, What a tangled web") was published in October 2020. Look for a book signing at the Center later this spring.



KOTS DOWNTOWN EXHIBITION

Irish Center Summer camp Director Máire Clerkin visited the Keepers of the Steps exhibition with Eileen Mize in late March.



THE GIFT OF COMICS

A special thank you to Sean Callan and his brothers Joe, Francis and Brian who donated over 350 kids comic books to the Dowling Library recently. Among the titles donated were: Roy of the Rovers, Beano, Dandy, Buster and Shoot. Anyone who grew up in Ireland in the 1970s and 1980s will remember fondly these comic books available in their local shops and newsagents throughout Ireland. Thank you Sean!





TEA DANCE & SOCIAL

SUNDAY, APRIL 21, 2024
2:30 - 5:00 P.M.

ST. FRANCIS ROOM, UICC
2700 45TH AVENUE, SAN FRANCISCO

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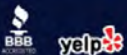
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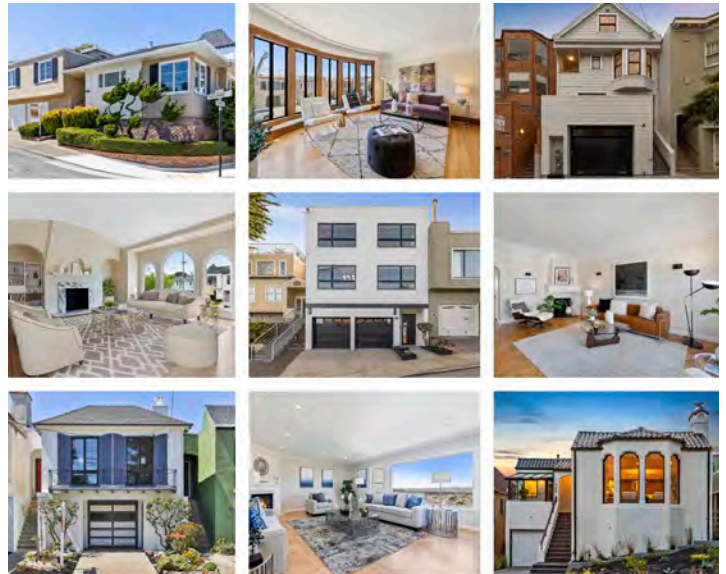
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AND CONTINUES...



Joe & Annie O'Reilly.

*Hibernian Newman
Lunch 2024 continued...*



Mary & Tom Hunt,
2024 St. Patrick's Day Grand Marshal.



Kevin & Shelia Birmingham with Shannon McAuliffe.



Tara Moriarty, Amy Bullock and Katie Talbott.



Mark Farrell in conversation
with Dan Cotter.



John and Mark Farrell with Dan Cotter, Monica Keaveney, and Pilar Manning.



Matt Boschetto with Liam Reidy.



Liam Reidy, John and Mark Farrell with Stephanie Reidy.

AND CONTINUES...



NEW CHAPLAIN FOR THE LAOH

Embracing her Irish heritage and her new role as Chaplain with the San Francisco Ladies Ancient Order of Hibernians, Sr. Cathy Murray, OP was delighted to march in her hometown's 173rd San Francisco St. Patrick's Day Parade on Saturday March 16. Sr. Cathy grew up in the Sunset, attended St. Rose Academy, and became a Dominican Sister of San Rafael where she has enjoyed ministries in social work, vocations and preaching, leadership roles, as well as serving as a promoter of social justice and peace. Recruited for her Chaplain post by longtime family friends Elaine and John O'Rourke, Sr. Cathy is enjoying getting more in touch with her Irish ancestry. She just acquired her Irish passport this past year and enjoyed a trip to Ireland with her brother Stephen Murray and her niece.



HIBERNIAN NEWMAN LUNCH 2024

John Duggan (Westlake Joes, Daly City) was named Hibernian of the Year at the annual fundraising luncheon on March 15th in downtown San Francisco. UICC Board member Suzie Sheedy did a great job as the MC for the event.

Kevin Buckley.



Saint Ignatius students Evan Driscoll, Con and Jimmy McKeon and James McFadden at the Hibernian Newman Lunch on March 15.



Monica McGuire & Sean Canniffe.

George & Kay Gubengay.



Mary & Liam Frost.

Lisa Nevin, Peggy Nevin and Debbie Carey.



AND CONTINUES...

ST PATRICK'S PHOTO GALLERY



IRISH FLOAT WINS FIRST PRIZE IN PARADE

The United Irish Cultural Center parade float stops for a quick photo opportunity in front of City Hall, March 16th, 2024. Included on the ground left to right are: Daniel Laurie, Consul General Micheal Smith, Senator James Buttimer, City Attorney David Chiu, Mayor London Breed, Liam Reidy and Leo Cassidy. The Irish Center float won first prize in its category in the parade. Included on the float are Supervisor Aaron Peskin, Lotus Wong along with Pat and Ute Goggins.



PHOTO COURTESY OF KEMELY VISUALS



Emerald Pub Meet Up
UICC supporters Cathy and Craig Viehweg with long time friend Tom Corsiglia on March 17 in the Emerald Pub.



Chairman of the Irish Senate Visit
Senator James Buttimer, Consul General Michéal Smith with Redmond Lyons at the Green Fest Block Party.

2024 Block Party on March 17
Current board member Redmond Lyons with past Vice-President of the Board; Mark Burke and past Secretary Molly Burke.



Past and Present Board Members
Former board Treasurer (2020-2023) Craig Viehweg, with Mark Gorman (broad member) and current Treasurer Jeanne Connolly at the center on St. Patrick's Day.



IN MEMORIAM

PATRICK O'SULLIVAN

November 24, 1931 ~ March 5, 2024



Patrick passed away peacefully on March 5, 2024, surrounded by his loving family. Pat was a loving husband to Eileen O'Sullivan (predeceased) for 60 years and an adored father of Margaret and Dennis O'Sullivan (predeceased).

Patrick had 20 siblings and he is predeceased by 19 of them. He was fond of saying that he was one of 21. He is survived by his sister, Theresa Kelleher from Millstreet, Co. Cork, Ireland and numerous nephews and nieces throughout the United States and Ireland.

He was born on November 24, 1931, on a farm on Claraghlea Mountain, Millstreet, County Cork, Ireland. After secondary school, he served his apprenticeship training as an auto mechanic in Coleman's Garage, Millstreet. Upon successful completion of the program, he embarked on his journey to the United States. In 1955 he immigrated to San Francisco where he had two sisters: Eileen Villalobos and Joan O'Sullivan McSweeney and a third sister, Sheila Becker, in Detroit, Michigan. In 1958, he married the love of his life Eileen McCarthy from Dunmanway, West Cork, Ireland. He met her at a dance in Millstreet where she worked as a registered nurse and midwife.

While Pat continued his profession as an auto mechanic, he remained passionate about helping others. He fixed many a friends' car when needed and you could often hear the Irish laughter amongst his friends as he was fixing their car in his driveway. Pat and Eileen raised their two children in the sunset district of San Francisco where they lived for the remainder of their lives.

Pat enjoyed all things Irish and was very proud of his Irish heritage. He was deeply involved in the San Francisco Irish community. He was one of the founding members of the UICC and was a part of the manual workforce that went into physically building the center in the 1970s. For decades, during the St. Patrick's Day parade he loved leading the march holding the American flag followed by the gorgeous array of flags representing each of Ireland's 32 counties. Throughout the years, he spent many family vacations visiting friends and family in County Cork.

He will be forever remembered for his kindness to others, love for his family and friends, his engaging smile and his quick Irish wit. He will be greatly missed by his daughter Margaret who adored him, as well as his many nieces and nephews and friends.

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IRISH HERITAGE ON DISPLAY IN THE OLD MINT BANK VAULT

By Eileen Mize

The United Irish Cultural Center's Keepers of the Steps program opened their latest exhibition to great acclaim and fanfare aptly on Leap Day and on the eve of Irish American Heritage Month—February 29, 2024. The exhibit entitled, *Irish Dance—Celebrating the Roots, Rhythms, and Rituals of the San Francisco Irish* is a special collaboration with the San Francisco Historical Society and is housed in the lower level of their museum located in the original SF Mint in the heart of the Financial District. The special exhibit explores how Irish dancing has fostered community and celebrated culture since the city's inception, with stories, images, and ephemera going back to the Gold Rush days some of which are serendipitously displayed in a bank vault from that era!

The Opening Night Reception drew a healthy crowd of people both new to and familiar with Irish Dance, which is one of the goals of the program. As UICC Vice President and "Keepers" Committee Co-Chair Anne Cassidy Carew shared in her opening remarks, "San Francisco is a small city, and even smaller in the dance world. These are the stories that connect us and keep our heritage alive."

Vice Consul Jennifer Chadwick commended the group's efforts and underscored its important role in the



Opening Night Feb 29th, 2024 — Left to right: Leo Cassidy, Eileen Mize, Noreen Boyle, Captain Jack Hart, SFPD, Anne Cassidy Carew, Vice-Consul Jennifer Chadwick and Liam Reidy.

Irish diaspora. The Consulate, which facilitates grant applications for the Government of Ireland's Emigrant Support Programme—of which the Keepers of the Steps program is a beneficiary—remarked on the impressive rate of growth of the program. The committee attributes this to an unmet need. Organizers say, "There is very little written about the history of Irish dance, and so it is incumbent upon us to record these stories—and with a sense of urgency before stories are lost."

The keynote was an animated and inspired address from Captain Jack Hart of the SFPD who shared his own Irish dance story in the context of embracing his proud Irish heritage and how it has shaped his life. He

delighted the crowd with his personal accounts, a quick song reminiscent of his dancing days with the Murphy School of Irish Dance at the Ethnic Dance Festival, and concluded with a quick, and rousing step or two—spry as ever!

The evening was marked by fine entertainment from the Boyle Irish Dance Academy—instructor Noreen Boyle Heavey, TCRG is a member of the Keepers committee and brought some dancers to add to the evening along with San Francisco's newest Rose, Maggie Baglin on pipes.

The 100 gathered guests had plenty of time to take in the exhibit and view the dress collection in the old bank vault. Stories were exchanged, memories made—and shared! Irish Dance has touched so many lives over so many decades—the theme alone provides a common ground and connects us all. The committee, led by Anne Cassidy Carew and Eileen Mize, consists of Noreen Boyle, Anne Baglin, Jamie O'Keefe, Kathleen Martin McKeon, and Jennifer Drennan.

The Keepers of the Steps Exhibition will be on display at the San Francisco Historical Society Museum, 608 Commercial Street, in San Francisco's Financial District through the end of April 2024. Museum hours are Thursday–Saturday 10 am–4 pm—the historic building alone is worth a look. And while you are there, you'll find that the Irish Dance history exhibition pairs nicely with the SF Historical Society's concurrent exhibit featuring the Museum of Performance + Design's, San Francisco On Stage with historical artifacts from the SF Ballet and Opera.

To learn more about the program and collection efforts visit <https://irishcentersf.org/programs/keepers-of-the-steps>.

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A Community Outreach Program of the Irish Immigration Pastoral Center Active Retirement Club



Head to the bookstore or library and pick up the next title for **The Reading Room**, our virtual **Book Club**, at **7:00 p.m.** on **Wednesday, May 15, 2024!**

Paul Lynch's fifth novel, **Prophet Song**, is the **winner of the Booker Prize 2023**. On a dark, wet evening in Dublin, scientist and mother-of-four Eilish Stack answers her front door to find the GNSB on her step. Two officers from Ireland's newly formed secret police are here to interrogate her husband, a trade unionist.

Ireland is falling apart. The country is in the grip of a government turning towards tyranny and Eilish can only watch helplessly as the world she knew disappears. When first her husband & then her eldest son vanish, Eilish finds herself caught within the nightmare logic of a collapsing society. How far will she go to save her family? And what - or who - is she willing to leave behind?

Exhilarating, terrifying and propulsive, **Prophet Song** is a work of breathtaking originality, offering a devastating vision of a country at war and a deeply human portrait of a mother's fight to hold her family together.

Join us on **Wednesday, May 15, 2024** at **7:00 p.m.** for another lively and entertaining discussion! Link at linktr.ee/sfiipc

We will meet over **ZOOM** on the **third Wednesday of every OTHER month** (May, July, September, and November) from **7:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.**

The next two books are:

Did Ye Hear Mammy Died by Seamas O'Reilly [July 17]

The Bee Sting by Paul Murray [September 18]

THE READING ROOM



The Reading Room

Wednesday, May 15, 2024
7:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

Zoom Link at linktr.ee/sfiipc

A Community Outreach Program of the Irish Immigration Pastoral Center, San Francisco

UNITED IRISH CULTURAL CENTER



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