



March 12, 2024

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**St. Patrick's Day Parade Float to Celebrate Unity of Chinese and Irish Workers  
in the Historic Transcontinental Railroad; Heralds Plans for Future Exhibition**

**SAN FRANCISCO, CA** — In a groundbreaking act of cultural collaboration, Chinese and Irish cultural leaders are uniting to pay homage to the pioneering spirit of the ancestors who built the United States' first Transcontinental Railroad. At the heart of this year's St. Patrick's Day Parade will be a distinctive float that commemorates the sacrifices and achievements of the Chinese, Irish, and all laborers involved in the project—with special acknowledgment of the impressive feat of laying 10 miles of track in a single day on April 28, 1869. Look for Parade Unite #31 at the annual parade Saturday, March 16, 2024, which begins at 11:30 am at 2nd and Market Street and heads toward SF City Hall. [Parade Unit Info: United Irish Cultural Center of San Francisco (UICC) #31]

In late February 2024, amidst Chinese Lunar New Year celebrations and on the brink of Irish American Heritage Month, an important intercultural meeting was hosted at the Irish Consulate in San Francisco. The gathering brought together community leaders and local politicians who jointly announced the creation of a special exhibit at the UICC's forthcoming new building. This exhibit will feature a replica of the celebrated laurel tie, sections of railroad ties and tools, alongside stories of the diverse workforce that constructed the railroad. Notably, the tracks, sourced from San Francisco's Irish Hill, will be generously donated to the museum of the new Irish Cultural Center, destined to become a significant tourist attraction, with other artifacts going to a display in the Chinese community.

“This endeavor is a testament to our commitment to celebrating our rich heritage and the bonds that unite us,” state UICC leaders. “We are forging not just physical structures, but cultural and generational connections. We eagerly anticipate welcoming guests to this monument of unity, perseverance, and hope.”

### **Historical Context and Continued Legacy**

The completion of the first Transcontinental Railroad in 1869 at Promontory Summit, Utah, marked a significant milestone in American history, made possible by the tireless efforts of many, including notable contributions from Chinese and Irish workers. The remarkable achievement of laying 10 miles of track in one day on April 28, 1869, stands as a testament to their dedication and hard work. This milestone, along with other significant contributions, will be commemorated at the Irish Cultural Center on April 28, celebrating the anniversary of this historic feat.

The dedication to honoring these workers has been bolstered by the efforts of the Friends of the Laurel Tie and collaborations with local historical and cultural societies. These partnerships have facilitated educational outreach, presentations, and commemorations, culminating in the inclusion of a special float in the 173rd San Francisco St. Patrick’s Day Parade for 2024.

“Let the ‘laurel tie’ symbolize the laborers—Chinese, Irish, Italians, emancipated African Americans, Mormons, and all who toiled to build this monumental project, just as the Gold Spike is associated with its financiers. The laurel, an ancient emblem of victory, fellowship, and peace, aptly represents the unity forged in connecting our nation,” shares Patrick Goggins of the Friends of the Laurel Tie and the United Irish Cultural Center.

***We invite the community to join us in celebration at the parade on March 16, 2024,*** to celebrate the unity and determination of the diverse groups who came together to construct the Transcontinental Railroad, showcasing the incredible accomplishments possible through collective effort.

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