

Newsletter of the Irish-American Society of New Mexico www.irishamericansociety-nm.com

FEBRUARY 2024

Note: Irish-American Society meetings are usually held on the second Friday of each month, **except during July and August** (and for special events), at the German American Club at 4821 Menaul Blvd NE.

Next Meeting:
Friday, February 9
7 PM at the GAC
A Musical Performance by
Bagpiper Aden Kemp!

Suzanne "Aden" Kemp has spent an active life as a Great Highland Bagpiper in the state of New Mexico and internationally. She is the former President and Pipe Major of the Mac-Tire of Skye Pipes and Drums, growing a small group of 7 original members to over 30



active pipers and drummers from 2007 to 2015, creating the one of the largest pipe bands in New Mexico at the time. With 25 years of performance and competitive experience, she has played her bagpipe all over the country and has gone as far as Spain and Egypt with pipes in hand. Her most recent international adventure took her to Ireland where she competed at the All-Ireland Pipe Band Championships with the Grade 4, Hugh O'Connor Memorial Pipe Band (HOCMPB), based in Phoenix, Arizona. While the HOCMPB regroup from Ireland, there is now some consideration of performing in The Festival Interceltique de Lorient, in Brittany, France, where Aden may once again play for an international audience. For our February meeting, Aden will discuss her trip and competition in Ireland. She will then finish on the bagpipes with the set she and her pipe band competed with at the All-Ireland Pipe Band Championships.

We hope to see you there and we hope that you will bring a sweet or salty snack to share!

Your membership dues for the year 2024 are now due!

To renew (and we hope you please do!), you can go online and pay with a credit card (www.irishamericansociety-nm.com), or you can mail in a check with the updated application form on the last page of this newsletter. Or you can pay by cash or check at our February meeting.

2024 Board Members and Committee Chairs

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	careng225@msn.com	908-	Welfare	dbhardy725@gmail.com	
		0786			
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	dbhardy725@gmail.com	259-	16	Office: (505)830-5 Toll Free: (877)830-5	
		3016		Fax: (505)830-5	
Past President	Karen Wall	909-	100	James.mccabe@kofc.	

583-1545





Logos68540@gmail.com

Would you like to place a sponsorship in the Irish Times newsletter?

Business-card-sized ads are a mere \$5 a month. Larger-sized ads can be negotiated with the editor, Ellen Dowling (edowling@standuptrainer.com 505-307-1700). Your sponsorship will also appear on the IAS website

(www.irishamericansociety-nm.com) at no extra charge.

505-259-

3016 505-307-

1700

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President's Message

By Caren Garcia

Our meeting on January 12th was a smash with entertainment by *Wandering the Burren*. Their experience and skill made for a wonderful evening of Celtic music. In February, we'll have Aden the Piper, who is going to provide a presentation on her recent travels as a performer as well as her music.

Special thanks and recognition are in order for long-time IAS member Don Hardy, who provided a donation of \$1000 in honor of his late wife, Fran.

For those who may have procrastinated, please don't forget to renew your membership. Make the most of the benefits by coming out to meetings and enjoying the entertainment and socializing. Put the St. Patrick's Day Party on your calendars too—Saturday, March 16th.

We have a big announcement to make! The IAS will be moving our meetings in April to a new location. We will be meeting at the Ramada Plaza by Wyndham, located at 2020 Menaul Blvd, just a little bit west of our current location and about a half block east of University Blvd. on the south side of the road. Their bar and grill is attached to the room! We can't wait to make the switch! [Editor's Note: I hear the parking is way better too!]

Hope to see you soon!

Treasurer's Report							
December 1 – 31, 2023* Kathy Wimmer, Treasurer							
Category	Income	Income Catego		Expenses			
Membership—electronic/Square (less fees;			Ck#333: Brightburn Academy of				
see expenses)	\$290.00		Irish Dance, Christmas Party	-\$100.00			
Membership—cash/checks	\$160.00		Square fee (membership)	-\$11.20			
	4.0.00		Ck#334: James C. Sharp, for Duke	* 1 = 0 0 0			
GAC associate membership	\$20.00		City Ceili Band, Christmas Party	-\$150.00			
			Check Card—USPS Post Office				
IAS T-shirt sales	\$20.00		Box fee for 6 months	-\$124.00			
Christmas party donation jar	\$72.00						
Christmas party raffle/silent auction	\$191.00						
Total Income	\$733.00		Total Expenses	\$385.20			
			IAS Account prior month's				
			ENDING balance	\$4,594.91			
			Plus Income (current month)	\$733.00			
			Less Expenses (current month)	(-\$385.20)			
			*Ending Balance as of date of				

report

\$4,942,71

Membership Report

By Molly Martin

Cead Mile Failte: A hundred thousand welcomes to new member Ryan Force! We are excited to have you as a new member. We now have a grand total of 182 members: one student, 63 single, and 118 family memberships. Hope to see you all at our next meeting.

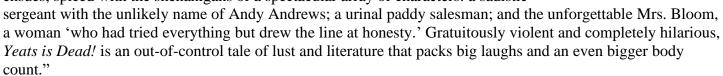
Renewal time is upon us. Please feel free to contact Kathy Wimmer or me to get your renewal done, or you can renew online on the IAS website: www.irishamericansociety-nm.com

The Irish Book Club

If you are on Facebook, just type The Irish Book Club into the search bar (or click on https://www.facebook.com/groups/2022642747761043/) and you'll find us. Our book for December was *Yeats is Dead!* by Joseph O'Connor (et al); in January we'll be discussing *Close to Home* by Michael Magee; in February we'll talk about *The Wren*, *The Wren*, by Anne Enright.

Yeats is Dead! (by Roddy Doyle, Conor McPherson, Gene Kerrigan, Gina Moxley, Marian Keyes, Anthony Cronin, Owen O'Neill, Hugo Hamilton, Joseph O'Connor, Tom Humphries, Pauline McLynn, Charlie O'Neill, Donal O'Kelly, Gerard Stembridge, and Frank McCourt)

Amazon's description: "Fifteen of Ireland's brightest and most entertaining authors came together to benefit Amnesty International, resulting in this raucous, raunchy, and diabolically entertaining mulligan stew of a novel. *Yeats is Dead!* is an elaborate mystery centered around the search for something more valuable and precious than anything else in Ireland—an unpublished manuscript by James Joyce. A madcap chase ensues, spiced with the shenanigans of a spectacular array of characters: a sadistic



Most IBC members thought this novel was a hoot and a half. "It's the first time 15 Irish writers have worked together without publicly saying something unpleasant about each other," says Roddy Doyle. Here's a snippet from *the Guardian* review: "The fun of *Yeats is Dead!* is the utter contempt with which each author treats those who came before him. Of the five characters introduced by Doyle in chapter one, three are dead by chapter five." And from our own Kathy Wimmer: "I have to say, I enjoyed the hell out of *Yeats Is Dead!* Yes, the writing was uneven with some chapters much better than others, depending upon the writer, etc. But before I read it, I had no idea that each writer wasn't following a skeleton outline and didn't know what characters would still be around by the time they got to their chapter. I thought it was a hoot that writers who liked particular a character they intended to feature would find out that character had died before the writer got a chance to take their turn. I enjoyed all the twists and turns in the minds of each of the writers, as they received what had been written up to their point, and could do whatever they wished. Some of it was so crazy and farfetched but overall I enjoyed this book tremendously because it was just a romp."

The Aran Sweater

By Elena Gallegos

Brrr! It's chilly outside and way past time to take out that Aran sweater! If you don't own an Aran sweater, well, what are you waiting for? I sheepishly admit that I don't own one, but, understandably, wearing your Aran sweater here in New Mexico would be more of a fashion statement than for practical purposes. To that end, the ingenious, humble origins of the Aran sweater began in the Aran Islands off the west coast of Ireland.

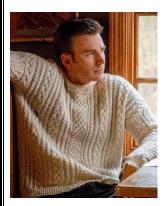
The classic Aran sweater was originally made from local sheep's wool sheared by hand, washed in an acid solution of water and sheep's urine, tangles and knots removed with carding combs, and spun into yarn. One sweater contains over 100,000 stitches and can take weeks to knit by hand. They are recognizable for their intricate stitching and known for the folkloric and

religious imagery behind the designs.

Aside from weather protection, it is said that Aran fishermen also wore the sweaters as a religious ward against the treacherous seas. Further, each family clan developed their own combinations of stitches and patterns and closely guarded their designs. It is said that the family members of drowned fishermen who washed up on shore could be identified by the stitching patterns of the sweater.

This nostalgic story brought tears to my eyes, but it may not be entirely true. What?!? That's right! The myths behind the meaning of the stitching and the story of identifying drowned fishermen are fruitions of someone else's imagination. In her book, *Aran Knitting (New and Expanded Edition)*, Alice Starmore sets the record straight. The meanings ascribed to the Aran stitching patterns come from an article written by Heinz Keiwe, which was eventually collected into a book by him, *The Sacred History of Knitting*, published in 1967. The German author simply made up the stories behind the stitching. In fact, he had never been to the islands or spoken to anyone who had knitted an Aran sweater.

As for the other story that the Aran sweater also functions as an identification tool for poor, drowned islanders, it may have come from Irish playwright John Millington Synge. In his 1904 play, *Riders to the Sea*, the drowned character is identified by the stitching in the stocking made by a family member. To muddy the waters some more, however, J.M. Synge did spend some time on the Aran Islands and wrote a memoir simply titled, *The Aran Islands*.



Misconceptions aside, the sweater (or jumper if you are from across the pond) has truly become a cultural icon and a part of popular culture. Who wore it better? Chis Evans in the movie *Knives Out* comes to mind. What about Taylor Swift donning the garment to promote her album *Folklore*? Better yet, you can take your dog out in style in a doggie Aran sweater. I think our newsletter editor looks grand as well!

[See next page!]

Show Us Your Aran Sweaters!

Ah, so I think the marvelous Elena Gallegos (previous page) has thrown down the sweater gauntlet: Who among our members has an Aran sweater?? Send in your selfies and see them in the next newsletter! (Email them to edowling@standuptrainer.com.)



OK, I'll start. Here is me on the left in my Aran sweater. So exceedingly warm to wear! I bought it in Ardara, Co. Donegal, at Kennedy's in 1997. I think the last time I wore it was on the ferry from Galway to the Aran Islands. If I'm ever marooned on a deserted island near ANTARCTICA, I hope I'm wearing this sweater. And here is my brother Mike, who lives now in Germany and says the sweater is even too warm to wear in northern Europe!

I personally think the most famous Aransweater-wearing people were the Clancy Brothers and Tommy Maken. How those



guys managed to perform on stage in those oh-so-toasty-sweaters without fainting from the heat is beyond me.



And here's some more info about Kennedy's Aran sweaters:

A family business since 1902, Kennedy of Ardara was created by Connell Kennedy and his wife Etta, as a general drapery and boots store on Front Street, Ardara, Donegal. However, by the mid-1930s, the company was concentrating solely on handknits. This was as a result of customer demand and Donegal being synonymous with hand knitting.

By 1960, Kennedy knitwear was employing 800 handknitters, mostly cottage workers, knitting at home. Today, Kennedy of Ardara continues to produce the very best in Irish knitwear with a focus on handknits, in Ardara across the road from the old family home. You can find more info on their Facebook page: https://www.facebook.com/KennedyAranKnitwear/

And an interesting factoid about the name Kennedy: Kennedy is the Anglicization of the Gaelic *O Cinnéide*, meaning "ugly-headed." The clan homeland was near Killaloe in Co. Tipperary, and was part of the Dál gCais tribal grouping. The clan claims descent from a nephew of Brian Boru, King of Ireland. The name is the sixteenth most numerous in Ireland, and is strongest in counties Tipperary in the south and Roscommon in the west. The most famous Kennedy is of course John F. Kennedy, who was 35th president of the US.

And speaking of knitting . . .

The Sheep of Ireland

By Caren Garcia



Until I went to Ireland, I was not aware that there were many varieties of sheep that look very dissimilar from their cousins. Based on childhood stories, the ones I read about were mostly white, with a few exceptions who were black, right? I visited a sheep ranch where the owner put on demonstrations with his sheep dogs on how sheep were herded and how the dogs received commands. Below are a few photos and some information about sheep.

Few varieties of sheep have been in Ireland for very long, as the old breeds have been "outbred" over time,

so most were imported. The loss of the indigenous breeds was also partly due to the years of The Great Hunger.

As of December 2018, there were 3.73 million sheep in Ireland. The most common types are the Scottish Blackface and the Lowland or Suffolk varieties. There are also Leicester Border and Blue Face Sheep, Cotswold, and several others. The largest number are found in Counties Donegal, Galway, Mayo, Kerry and Wicklow. Galway and Kerry have their own breeds. Wool production and sheep meat are an important niche for the Republic of Ireland in the European Union economy. Their biggest customers are the United Kingdom and France. (These stats come from before the ill-conceived Brexit move by the UK.)



Now you know more than you ever thought you would about the sheep of Ireland. And for the dog lovers, the sheepdogs receive their orders via special whistles.



[NOTE: The photos are mine. A source for most of the information was https://askaboutireland.ie/
"Sheep Farming," and the Hillwalk Tours website: https://www.hillwalktours.com/hiking-ireland/]

And a little sheepish humor:

After a sheepdog gets all the sheep in the pen, he reports back to the farmer: "All 40 accounted for."

"But I only have 36 sheep," says the farmer.

"I know," says the sheepdog. "But I rounded them up."

Why are Irish Place Names so Hard to Pronounce?

From Ireland XO

It's no secret that Irish signage can be the undoing of even the most seasoned traveler. Even Irish natives know how easy it is to get a place name pronunciation wrong when they are not local to the area.

Every dialect and district has its own distinct way of pronouncing addresses, and that goes for the Irish language as well. Like many places in Europe, most of Ireland has bilingual road signage so you'll see both Irish and English versions of the place name displayed.

People of a variety of linguistic backgrounds have left their mark on the island of Ireland—the Gaels, the Vikings, the Normans, the Ulster-Scots, and the English. It wasn't only Gaelic words that had to be adapted to English phonology and spelling. Dublin's Camden Street, for example, is pronounced "Candem Street" by the locals. And this trait is not unique to Dubliners. The site of an ancient Gaelic battle, in County Roscommon, the hill of Canbo is also known locally as "Cambo." So which version is right? It all depends on who you're talking to!

Just before the Great Famine, when the Ordnance Survey men first set out to map and record Irish places, there were no standardized spellings. The Irish language scholar John O'Donovan toured the island at that time taking great pains to get it right. You can see that the transcriber did his best with transcribing *Inis Tíog* (Inish-TEE-og) in Co. Kilkenny as *Inistioge* (Inish-teeg). However, the jury is out on how *Eochaill* (O-oh-kill) in Co. Cork became *Youghal* (yawl/y'all).

There are cases aplenty where great care was taken by a landlord to translate a place name and in those cases, the Ordnance Survey recorded both; e.g., Cnoc an Anama (the hill of souls) was known as Knockananima or Soulmount.

The Gaelic word *dubh* (black) can be pronounced as "dove" or "doo" depending on the region too. Does that mean Dublin and Doolin were both named Blackpool? Possibly. Dublin was the Viking town of "Blackpool" but Doolin, on the edge of the Burren, was more likely to have been "Blackland."

This brings us to place names that are in Irish only. In the 1920s, immediately following Irish independence, any places that were named for the king or queen of England were changed to their original Gaelic name using Irish phonology. Queen's County was thus renamed Laois (pronounced "leash") and its capital town, Maryborough (named after Queen Mary), reverted to Portlaoise (Port-LEASH). The port of Queenstown became Cobh (cove) and Kingstown became Dún Laoighre (Doon Leera or Dun Leery).

Not to worry, plenty of people in Ireland don't know the correct local pronunciation and newsreaders are no exception. Omagh (OH-ma) was mispronounced by many journalists. Barack Obama was also thrown by the "gh" and called it "Omack." Even the BBC got caught out reporting Drogheda (Draw-heh-dah) as "Droe-gay-da."

Don't forget there is no "th" sound in the Irish language, so that is why you may get confused by trees and turds (threes and thirds) and Thurles (TUR-less) in Ireland.

Tongue twisters abound, but ah sure that's half the fun! Visitor mispronunciations give the locals a great laugh so don't be discouraged, it's a conversation starter!

Support Your Local Irish/Scottish/Celtic Musicians/Performers

Bardic Sisters

Storytelling, narratives, readings and poetry with and through musical accompaniment. Gwen Easterday and Kathy Wimmer on Celtic harps, other folk instruments, and vocals. Contact Kathy at kmillewimm@comcast.net (505-249-7012).

Colleens and Lassies

Featuring Irish and Scottish songs and tunes with Mary Templeton and Kathy Wimmer on fiddle, Celtic harp, and other instruments. Contact Kathy at kmillewimm@comcast.net (505-249-7012).

Saoirse ("seer shih," Irish for "freedom")

Celtic music from Scotland, Ireland, Brittany, and Galicia, spiced with jazz and world beat. Contact: Harlow Pinson at hpinson@indepthl.com or 994-2135.

A Jug O'Punch

A trio playing Irish music galore! Contact Suzanne Taichert: suzannetaichert@gmail.com

The Duke City Ceili Band will entertain you with fast paced jigs and reels, lilting waltzes, and rousing sea shanties from the Irish traditional repertoire. Find them on Facebook or contact Jim Crowley: jabbas40@yahoo.com.

Michele Buchanan, Harper 765-1288 (tmbuchs@gmail.com)



Mountain Road

Featuring Dain Forsyth on flute, whistles, bodhrán, and vocals, and Scott Estes on DADGAD Guitar and Irish Bouzouki, Mountain Road provides gorgeous airs, driving reels and jigs, stories and songs for all occasions.

Contact: dleeforysthe@gmail.com
https://www.tradbodhran.com/

Rye Creek

Folk, Irish, western and good old mountain music. Contact Terry Ryan Axline, 293-8924 (neomexicana@hotmail.com) or Ron Trellue, 505-362-2551 (trellue@swcp.com) or visit www.myspace.com/ryecreeknm.

Celtic Coyotes

Traditional music from Scotland, Ireland, Wales, and Brittany. Contact: Doug Cowan celticcoyotes@yahoo.com (710-0583).

Friends Forever

Michael and Donna Coy play Celtic, Folk, Cowboy and Originals. Contact: 296-2017 or 250-4429; mmcoy3@msn.com.

Sullivan & Forsyth: Irish Traditional Fiddle & Flute

Eileen Sullivan and Dain Forsyth's classic combination of fiddle and flute is rare these days, and these two deliver from the heart. Contact: Dain at dleeforsythe@gmail.com.

Irish Setters (on the left)

A Celtic folk band playing traditional Irish tunes and songs on fiddle, banjo, guitar, and bass. Contact: Erika Gerety (erika@unm.edu)

Culture All Around

Dance Classes:

Brightburn Academy of Irish Dance (formerly Celtic Steps Arizona/New Mexico), at the McDermott Athletic Center, 801 Loma Colorado, Rio Rancho. Call 505-415-4390 or visit https://www.brightburnacademy.com for further information.

Ceili dance classes are held every Wednesday at the GAC. The **new** time is 6:30 - 8 PM, \$5.00. No experience necessary! (For info, call Steve Laverty at 505-688-4756.)

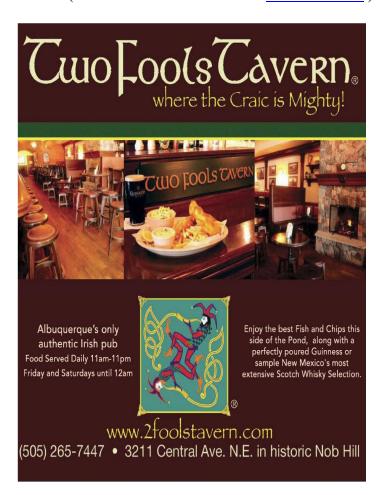


FOR INFORMATION ON CLASSES FOR CHILDREN AGES 4 & UP, AS WELL AS ADULTS,
SEE OUR WEBSITE OR CONTACT KATE PADILLA, MSW, AT
(505) 415-4390
OR BRIGHTBURNACADEMY@GMAIL.COM

https://www.brightburnacademy.com

Celtic Music on the Radio and the Web:

- ♣ The Thistle and Shamrock program, featuring Fiona Ritchie, airs on KANW 89.1 FM, Sundays at 12:00 noon.
- ♣ Celtic and Beyond, with co-hosts Ellie Blair and Kelly Clement, 7:00 PM each Wednesday on KTAOS 101.9 FM. (Also broadcast on the Web at www.ktao.com.)



Free Genealogy Research Days!

Interested in learning more about your family history but don't know where to start? Come to THE GENEALOGY CENTER at the ABQ Library (2nd floor), on the corner of 5th and Copper, where volunteers will help you one-on-one in your quest. Celtic Research is held from 1-3 PM on the last Tuesday of the month.

Free parking for two hours at the parking garage on the SE corner from the library, just get your ticket stamped at the library.

Questions? Contact Robert Harper at robertharper48@comcast.net

Calendar of Events

IAS Events

Date	Day	What
February 8	Thursday	IAS Board of Directors meeting, 7 PM on Zoom. All members are invited
_	-	to attend. (Email Kathy Wimmer for the link.)
February 9	Friday	IAS General Meeting and Program, 7 PM at the GAC. Performance and
_	-	talk by bagpiper Aden Kemp!
March 7	Thursday	IAS Board of Directors meeting, 7 PM on Zoom. All members are invited
	·	to attend. (Email Kathy Wimmer for the link.)
March 16	Saturday	The IAS Annual St. Patrick's Day Party! Details to come.

Celtic/GAC Events

The GAC phone number is 888-4833 (call after 4 PM) (The Club is closed Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Sunday—unless a special event is happening.)

February 1, 8, 15,	Thursdays	Albuquerque Traditional Irish Music Open Session from 7-9 PM at
22, 29		Hops Brewery, 7222 4 th Street. For more info, contact Harlow Pinson at
		hpinson@indepthl.com.
February 4 & 18	Sundays	Two Leaf Clover (Nikelle Gessner and David Garcia) play for Sunday
		Brunch at Two Fools Tavern every 1 st and 3 rd Sunday of the month from
		11 AM – 2 PM.
February 6 & 20	Tuesdays	Irish Sessions at the Taos Ale House/Burger Stand, 401 Paseo del
	,	Pueblo Norte (across from the Post Office), from 7-9 PM. For more
		information, call Jamie at 575-779-1018.
February 6, 13,	Tuesdays	The Irish Slow session meets Tuesdays at 6:30 PM in the Manzano
20, 27		Mesa Multi-Generational center, near Central and Eubank. For info,
		contact Kip Malone on Facebook.
February 7, 14,	Wednesdays	Ceili Dancing Classes at the GAC, 6:30 - 8 PM, \$5.00. No experience
21, 28		necessary! (Call Steve Laverty at 505-688-4756 for info.)
February 7, 14,	Wednesdays	Celtic Music Session at the Singing Arrow Community Center (13200
21, 28		Wenonah Ave SE) from 5:45-7:45 PM. This is a sheet-music-
		discouraged (but not prohibited) format and the music is the High & Dry
		list. For more info, contact Bob Deaver (bpdeaver@gmail.com).
February 18	Sunday	Jazz Sunday at the GAC, jam session and performance, hosted by the
		Rio Grande Jazz Society. Dancers welcome! \$5 entry for non-members.
		Free for current members of the GAC. 2:00 to 5:30 PM.
February 20	Tuesday	Sullivan & Forsyth: Irish Traditional Fiddle & Flute perform at Trail
		Rider Pizza from 5:30 to 7:30 PM. Trail Rider Pizza is located at 12165
		State Highway 14 N, Suite B2, Cedar Crest, NM 87008.

Irish-American Society of New Mexico

Membership Application/Renewal Form

Please Check One:	p Application
First Name:	Last Name:
If this is a renewal, has your contact in	nformation changed? Yes No
Address:	
City:Phone:	State: Zip:
Please choose your membership level	<u> </u>
Student (\$25) Individual	(\$30)
person)* * If you opt to add the additional GAO	Membership to the German-American Club (\$5 per C fee to a family IAS membership, please indicate which we a GAC associate membership card (and add \$5 per
	ewsletter by US mail (instead of electronically), please noual membership to help offset the costs of mailing and
Enclosed is a total of \$	
1 0	le to "The Irish-American Society" and mail to: 35, Albuquerque, NM 87192-3435 OR
You can also visit our website (www	w.irishamericansociety-nm.com) and pay by credit card.
How did you hear about us?	
	e: https://www.facebook.com/The-Irish-American-Society/-Mexico-175569365825710