



IRISH TIMES

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

AUGUST 2021

Note: Irish-American Society meetings are usually held on the second Friday of each month, except during July and August (and for special events). In the Before Times, the meeting location was the Memorial Hall at the First Unitarian Church, 3701 Carlisle Blvd NE, SW corner of Comanche and Carlisle (where someday we may meet again).

Next Virtual Meeting: Friday, August 13th, 7 PM

Newgrange: Neolithic Complex of Treasures

Once again, the amazing Maya Sutton will be visiting us virtually (you will remember that she spoke to us by Zoom on “Celtic Animals” last year) and sharing with us the latest research on the ancient site of Newgrange in Co. Meath. As Maya puts it:

Newgrange in Ireland is a magnificent huge stone and turf mound built 5,200 years ago. Its long interior passage “awakens” at the winter solstice sunrise. Archaeologists now grasp that Newgrange is the centerpiece of a complex of Neolithic treasures. In 2018, another large mound was unearthed nearby, its megaliths highly decorated with 5,000 year-old carvings. A drought revealed earthmarks of immense henges (or circles) once made of timber. Soon 40 more “monuments” were discovered via geophysical imaging. In 2020, DNA from a bone of a Neolithic male buried inside Newgrange revealed that his parents mated by incest. What more awaits discovery?



Dr. Maya Magee Sutton is a dual citizen of the U.S. and the Republic of Ireland. Her grandfather was born in Co. Meath, close to Newgrange and the Hill of Tara. Dr. Sutton received her PhD from UNM, where she taught for 35 years. She has taught Celtic Mythology at UNM for 10 years.

NOTE: As we have done for past Zoom meetings, the link to the event will be sent out shortly before 7 PM on August 13th. IAS members will be sent the link automatically. Feel free to forward the link to any friends who might be interested.

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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 307-1700).

Your sponsorship will also appear on the IAS website (www.irishamericansociety-nm.com) at no extra charge.



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President's Message

By Ellen Dowling

Hope everyone is stay cool and fully vaccinated! Little by little, we see that more and more things are opening up, and a return to “normality” is on the horizon. The IAS is planning an in-person picnic on September 12th (more details to come in the September newsletter), the German-American Club is open again (and, as is reported, with a “wall” separating the main hall from the smoky bar), and the Edgewood Celtic Festival is going full kilts ahead for October 16 & 17! (I think soon I will need to bring back the Calendar of Events, as events are actually starting to happen!)

For all of our events, we can sure use your help. The picnic committee needs volunteers to help set up and then clean up after the picnic, and we need folks to help out with our booth at the Edgewood Celtic Festival. Volunteering is a great way to meet others in the Society (in REAL LIFE), so let me know if you want to help.

We're also looking ahead to our Christmas Party in December, and trying to find a suitable venue. If you know of a place that would be appropriate for us, please let me know.

One change to our scheduled events this year: Bill Nevins has suggested that we postpone our presentation on the San Patricios to next year, as it will be a better event in person than over Zoom. So our only event in September will be the picnic. October 8th, we will Zoom with author T.J. English (*Paddy Whacked*) and then author Terence Winch (*Seeing Eye Boy*) on November 12th.

The IAS Board has decided to continue with all board meetings on Zoom, as it is so convenient. But let me remind you that all members are always invited to join our board meetings—just let me know so I can send you the link!

Thanks again to Irish author Caelainn Hogan, for her wonderful presentation on her book, *Republic of Shame*, at our July 1st special meeting. (See our review of this book on p. 6.) Caelainn also sent us the link to *Breaking the Silence*, an in-depth discussion of the Mother and Baby Homes situation in Ireland today:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-Vj7wmTvdls>

Membership Report

By Gwen Easterday

Céad Mile Fáilte: A hundred thousand welcomes to new member, Aurora Craig-McBride and her family (Jude McBride, Orion Parsons, and cousin Thomas McBride Martin). And many thanks to those current members who have renewed for 2021. As of July 15th, 2021, we have 51 individuals and 50 family (x 2) RENEWALS for a total of 151 members, thus far in this second year of the pandemic. We're still holding at 28 IAS members who have selected to be Associate Members of the GAC. [Note: Which is now open again!]

Message from Norita Callahan: RONALD MCDONALD HOUSE STILL SEEKING PULL-TAB DONATIONS! The aluminum or steel pull tabs donated from beverage cans or ANY kind of canned food (6000 + pounds annually) generate funds to offset the House expenses. YOUR donations make a significant impact and are very much appreciated. Thanks this month to Phyllis Martinez & Terry Heslin, Bruce & Cindy Miller, and Barbara Nagey.

Treasurer's Report May 2021

Kathy Wimmer, Treasurer

Category	Income	Category	Expenses
Membership—electronic (Square)	\$38.09	U-Stor-It monthly storage fee	\$40.00
Membership—cash/checks	\$40.00	Ck# 244: Kate Padilla, for Brightburn Irish Dancers; dance fees for 8 dancers at the US National Dance Competition in Phoenix	\$800.00
GAC membership	\$5.00		
Total Income	\$83.09	Total Expenses	(\$840.00)
		IAS Account prior month's ENDING balance	\$10,683.10
		Plus Income (current month)	\$83.09
		Less Expenses (current month)	(\$840.00)
		Current month's Ending Balance	\$9,926.19

Nationals Step Dancing Results:

[Note: As described in last month's newsletter, eight dancers from Brightburn Academy participated in the competition in Phoenix in July, and we were happy to support their efforts. Congratulations to all!]

Here is a list of how each individual dancer placed:

Clare Padilla U17 solos: Recall in her age group, 50th place overall.

Magdalena Padilla U14 solos: No recall in her age group, but danced better than she has ever before.

Eva Campbell U14 solos: No recall in her age group, first time at a Major.

Jillian Sanders U12 solos: No recall in her age group, first time at a Major.

Ciara Dusenbery U12 trad set: No recall in her age group, first time at a Major.

Alison Chavez U10 trad set: Recall in her age group, 7th place overall.

Max Padilla U10 solos: Recall in his age group, 4th place out of Preliminary Champs, 7th place overall.

Jossilyn Sanders U9 trad set: No recall in her age group, first time at a Major.



Irish Music Review: *Lankum*

By Bill Nivens

LANKUM, whose group name derives from an unsavory character in an ancient British ballad, are a contemporary Irish folk music group from Dublin, consisting of brothers Ian and Daragh Lynch, Cormac MacDiarmada, and Radie Peat. The group formerly performed and recorded under the name “Lynched” (after the two brothers) but changed that name when they became aware of the ugly history of that word in the USA. Now entering their twenty-first year performing together, Lankum have released three highly-praised albums, filled large halls, and played tiny venues like Albuquerque’s Winnings Coffee House—and they’ve never lost their edgy approach and sly sense of humor in all these years.

Lankum’s signature sound is like no other band’s, as they fuse acoustic instrumentation, haunting drones, astute lyrics and joyfully eerie vocals into an Irish gumbo that stays with the listener long after the album has stopped playing or the concert has ended. They have gained worldwide acclaim for their first two albums (*Cold Old Fire* and *Between the Earth and Sky*) and captivating, often euphoric live performances. Their third album, *The Livelong Day*, successfully blends alternative folk and psychedelia. It takes both the earthly and alien elements of their sound to create an immersive, otherworldly sonic landscape. The album’s standout song, “The Young People” surprises by evolving from a waltz-tempo lament about youth suicide into a strangely hopeful chorus.

On *The Livelong Day*, the band honor the sacredness of traditional Irish songs such as “Wild Rover” while allowing them to metamorphose—to expand, grow, and breathe. Drawing on their interest in varying styles and genres, from Germanic “Krautrock” to drone to ambient to Brian Eno, they balance this disparate array of tastes to create droning music that is dark, rich and raw. “Drone is a big part of traditional music because the Uilleann pipes are indigenous to Ireland,” the band explains, continuing “so we’re ramping up that history and taking it as far as we can.” When Lankum deconstruct and reassemble a traditional song, their involvement is never passive. The members push the songs as far as they can possibly go – at times leaving them bare and true to history, but often taking that bareness a step further – making that which is barren completely desolate.

“In this album we wanted more percussive elements, more rhythm, more movement,” Lankum say of the new record’s sound, “It’s a combination of being desperately depressing and hopeful at the same time.” “We don’t want to be fossilizing or archiving these songs, we want to be pushing and accelerating them further. Their multi-sensational quality creates a visual atmosphere that you can step into and actually find it very difficult to bring yourself out of.” This quality, more than anything else, is what makes Lankum truly anarchic. The way in which these songs, some of them written centuries ago, live and ring true in our modern lives is central to the band’s purpose. One hopes that Lankum will bring their emotional gripping original music to New Mexico in the coming year or two, as the pandemic fades and we go out dancing again.

[This article draws from the band’s own publicity and from my email interview with the members of Lankum for *No Depression* magazine.]



Here is a link to Lankum’s version of “The Wild Rover”:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5rukIHD7rNY>

The Irish Book Club

One of the best things about being an online book club is that there need be no interruptions during this trying time. 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 discussion in July is *The Last September*, by Elizabeth Bowen. In September, we'll be discussing *White City*, by Kevin Power.

***Republic of Shame*, by Caelainn Hogan**

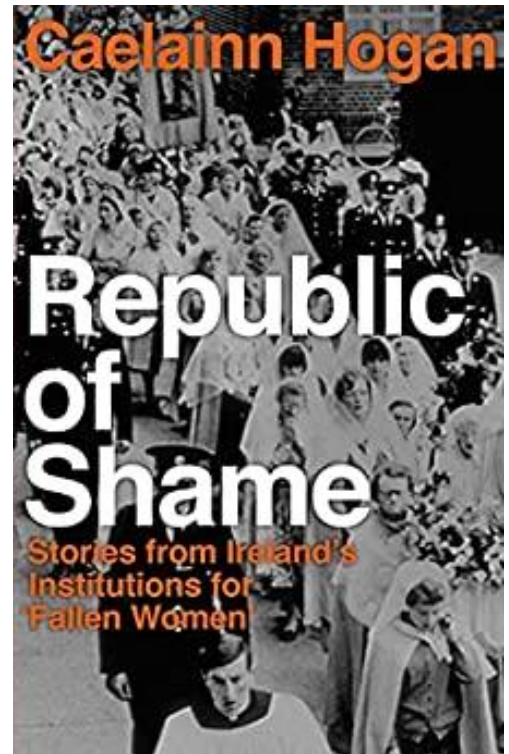
The subtitle says it all: "Stories from Ireland's Institutions for Fallen Women."

From Ellen: "If Caelin Hogan's exhaustive study of the atrocities carried out in the name of 'decency' at the hands of the Irish Catholic Church doesn't make your blood boil, I don't know what will. This is a hard read, but oh so necessary. It reminds me of the recent horrors unearthed in Canada, where indigenous children were separated from their families and their native culture, and then discarded when they conveniently died and seemingly left no trace of themselves (as we did here in the US, sadly). The Sisters of Bonne Secour likewise seemed just as happy to be rid of 'illegitimate' babies, discarding their bodies in a sewage pipe beneath the grounds of the Mother and Baby home in Tuam."

From the book: "When illegitimacy and sexual transgression needed to be hidden even in death, when the institution of the family was more venerated and protected than the human beings who constituted it, when superficial respectability outweighed compassion, the result was mass graves."

From Amazon: "Until alarmingly recently, the Catholic Church, acting in concert with the Irish state, operated a network of institutions for the concealment, punishment, and exploitation of 'fallen women.' In the Magdalene laundries, girls and women were incarcerated and condemned to servitude. And in the mother-and-baby homes, women who had become pregnant out of wedlock were hidden from view, and in most cases their babies were adopted, sometimes illegally. Mortality rates in these institutions were shockingly high, and the discovery of a mass infant grave at the mother-and-baby home in Tuam made news all over the world. The Irish state has commissioned investigations. But the workings of the institutions and of the culture that underpinned it—a shame-industrial complex—have long been cloaked in secrecy and silence. For countless people, a search for answers continues."

Caelainn Hogan, a brilliant young journalist, born in an Ireland that was only just starting to free itself from the worst excesses of Catholic morality, has been talking to the survivors of the institutions, to members of the religious orders that ran them, and to priests and bishops. She has visited the sites of the institutions, and studied Church and state documents that have much to reveal about how they operated. Reporting and writing with great curiosity, tenacity, and insight, she has produced a startling and often moving account of how an entire society colluded in this repressive system, and of the damage done to survivors and their families. *Republic of Shame* is an astounding portrait of a deeply bizarre culture of control."



Member Spotlight: Loni Muisener

By Elena Gallegos

I was delighted to talk to my friend Loni Muisener for this month's newsletter. She has been an IAS member for about thirteen years and, surprisingly, it will be her first time in the member spotlight. Loni and her husband Gerry moved to Albuquerque from Phoenix, and he was hired as a musician to play for the St. Patrick's Day party at the German-American club. The party was cancelled, but lucky for us they joined the IAS.

Loni is from Casper, Wyoming and is looking forward to going back this year for her 46th high school reunion. She has a bachelor's degree in psychology from Colorado State and a master's degree in counseling from Gallaudet University. Loni works for All Faith's as a counselor and also interviews potential foster parents. Both jobs keep her busy and are emotionally taxing, so I asked Loni how she relieves stress? With Irish dance of course!

I know Loni through Irish dance. We danced ceilis and Loni always came ready to dance and made it amusing with her funny jokes and sense of humor. We did a lot of laughing at ourselves. She began dancing individually and in ceilis in the mid-90s after she watched Riverdance. She thought, "Hey, these people look fit and happy!" Since then, she has danced competitively in both forms here and in Phoenix. Watching Loni dance, one would not know that she has MS. She was diagnosed in 2002, but that hasn't stopped her. Before COVID, she attended Norita's ceili classes and also took classes at the Brightburn Academy of Irish Dance. She is looking forward to resuming dance classes as soon as possible.

A few years ago, Loni went to Ireland with her good friend (and IAS Board Member) Molly Martin (see the January 2021 newsletter). I asked for a memorable Loni-Molly experience: She said they went to a pub north of Dublin the night before their last night where there was live music. The musicians played "Walls of Limerick" and she and Molly got up and danced the ceili to the music. The crowd cheered and there was great craic all around. In Killarney, they were at another pub (I'm getting a feel for their trip), and Loni asked the musician to play "Galway Shawl" because they were going to Galway the next day. The guy wouldn't play it, but Loni persisted until he finally confessed that he didn't know it. When they were leaving the pub, a grandfather, his grandson, and two other male relatives sang the entire song for her. Now that's Irish hospitality!



Loni is a very busy lady with two jobs and a husband, so here are Loni's quick five picks about favorite Irish or Irish-American people, places, or things:

1. Favorite food: The fish chowder she had in Ireland (probably at a pub!).
2. Favorite ceili: "Walls of Limerick" because of the special memory from her Ireland trip.
3. Favorite Irish dancer: She has two, Sandra Inniss, TCRG, and Kate Padilla from the Brightburn Academy of Irish Dance.
4. Favorite drink: A Dublin Apple. It's made with Michael Collins whiskey, Apple Pucker, and cranberry juice.
5. Favorite song: Due to time constraints she didn't get a chance to answer this question but I'm going to go out on a limb here and say "Galway Shawl."

Thank you, Loni, for the great interview. We hope to see you soon when in-person meetings resume.

8 of the Weirdest and Most Wonderful Irish Superstitions

By Rachael O'Connor, [The Irish Post](#)

Ireland is famous for its myths and legends. You've probably heard of the Banshee and Tír na nÓg, but it's the smaller, everyday superstitions that really give a view into the old Irish mindset. Some of these old wives' tales have spread all across the world, thanks to the stories told by immigrants of generations long past, but some have stayed particularly ingrained in Irish culture. Whether you're a native to the Emerald Isle or have grown up on stories from your Irish ancestors, how many of these unique myths have you heard?

1. *The Cutlery*

When people say the Irish have a superstition about everything, they mean literally everything. It seems like back in the day not a single thing could happen without some wise old person making a prediction about it, and it goes as far as dropping a piece of cutlery. So according to myth, if a knife falls on the floor you will have a gentleman visitor. If a fork falls on the floor you'll have a lady visitor. And if a spoon falls on the floor you'll have a child visitor.

So if you're stuck at home bored on a Friday night just start throwing your kitchen utensils around—if the legend is to be believed you'll soon have a party going!

2. *The Magpies*

Everyone in Ireland knows this one. If you're a tourist and you find yourself wondering why the Irish seem to spend a lot of time waving at nothing, don't worry, because it's not ghosts. Well it might be, but most of the time it's magpies. Why do we wave at magpies? Well because of the rhyme, of course! You might be familiar with it:

One for sorrow, two for joy
Three for a girl and four for a boy,
Five for silver, six for gold,
Seven for a secret never to be told.

A lot of people take this very seriously (Myself included). It's terrible luck to see a lone magpie—to break the curse you have to salute it. On the other hand, the more magpies you see the luckier you'll be—a friend of mine knows someone who saw no less than eight magpies sitting in a row. She went out and bought a lottery ticket, and wouldn't you know it, she won—and subsequently got a tattoo of those eight magpies. It's real lads.

3. *The Wind*

Second only to the boogeyman, the wind was the most ominous threat you could ever receive. Who else heard this as a kid? "If you don't stop pulling that face the wind will change and you'll be stuck that way!"

(Who else still pulls stupid faces in photos twenty years later just to spite the wind? Either that or my face actually did stick that way.)

4. *The Banshee's Comb*

There's a pretty strong possibility that this superstition was made up to teach kids not to pick up random dirty stuff off the street, but in certain places in Ireland there's a myth that you should never pick up a comb you find on the ground. Why you ask? Well, it might belong to the Banshee of course! And may God help you when she comes looking for it

5. *The Red-Haired Maiden*

Just because Ireland has one of the highest concentrations of ginger hair in the world doesn't mean we don't engage in some light bullying (otherwise known as "slagging"). There are a myriad of myths and superstitions about red haired women in particular:

If you're selling at the market and see a red haired maiden, turn back because you'll sell nothing that day. (Although if you turn around and go home, yeah, it's pretty certain you won't sell anything at the market that day.)

Another one is if you meet a red-haired woman first thing in the morning, you'll have bad luck all day. Bad news for anyone who's married to one!

I'm starting to think whoever came up with these stories was just mad jealous of some beautiful red-haired woman

6. *The Hearse*

Death is a weirdly prevalent part of Irish culture. We talk about it, sing about it—and follow superstitions about it. We've all heard the legend of the Banshee, whose scream you hear before someone close to you dies. Another old myth in Ireland is that it's bad luck to count the number of cars behind a hearse on its way to the graveyard. What happens if you count the cars? Well, according to legend, the number of cars following the coffin is the number of years you have left to live. Ah, we Irish are a cheery bunch.

7. *The Wedding Boot*

There are loads of Irish wedding superstitions, but the strangest and possibly the funniest is the legend of the boot. Apparently it brings good luck to a marriage to throw an old shoe after one or both of the members of the happy couple, either the morning of the wedding or after the ceremony. Maybe this symbolized the hope that this would be the only "boot" they would get once they were married—i.e., that they would be together forever and no one would be booted out of the house.

If you plan to follow this superstition, be sure to let the bride know what exactly it is that you're doing—my mother says that her father followed her up and down the hallway on the morning of her wedding, throwing the boot after her, picking it up and throwing it at her again. A confusing start to the big day, but it seems to have worked!

8. *The Child of Prague*

As everyone knows, the weather in Ireland is, well, to put it (very) lightly—unpredictable. To try and give ourselves a sense of stability or hope, or whatever you want to label it, we have several superstitions when it comes to weather. Maybe you've heard of "A red sky at night is a shepherd's delight, a red sky at morning is a shepherd's warning" about predicting the weather, but in this case we actually try to control it.

The day before a big event—usually a wedding—families will put out a statue of the Child of Prague in the garden. This is supposed to signal to God that there is good weather needed down below. If the head falls off the statue that doubles your luck, which means there are a lot of "accidental" drops leading up to the big day.

Even though Ireland has started to move away from its religious roots, everyone knows the power of the Child of Prague. On any given day when the sun is shining, you're guaranteed to hear someone mention that somewhere in the country, a Child of Prague is doing its job.

Support Your Local Irish/Scottish/Celtic Musicians/Performers! (Especially Now!)

Shenanigans

Celtic and American Folk with a twist, variety of instruments and vocals. Contact: Kathy Wimmer (249-7012 kmillewimm@comcast.net)

Iscuma ("It Doesn't Matter")

Traditional Irish and Celtic music with Kathy Wimmer and Marc Roberts. For information, contact Kathy at 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: suzytmusic@earthlink.net

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)



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.

The Singing Coyote Sisters

Donna Coy & Michelle Palmer perform Celtic, Folk, Gospel, and Sing-A-Longs. Contact: 296-2017 or 730-1985 mmcoy3@msn.com

Celtic Singers of NM Looking for More Singers!

Celtic Singers of NM, which formed over 20 years ago, is a non-audition singing group that sings phonetically in Gaelic, Gaidhlig, Welsh, Broad Scots, English, and one in Manx, all Celtic songs. We do "waulking" the wool demonstrations at all the festivals, sing at retirement homes and most any venue that can hold a dozen or more singers. Everything is free, music, practice CDs, etc., and we normally rehearse every 2nd and 4th Sunday afternoons from 2 – 4 pm. Contact Michele Buchanan at 765-1288 or tmbuchs@gmail.com.

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.themacsports.com/brightburn-irish-dance> for further information.

♣ **Ceili dance classes** are held every Wednesday at the GAC at 7:15 PM, \$4.00. No experience necessary! Call Norita Callahan at 298-2708. [Indefinitely postponed. ☹]

Celtic Music on the Radio and the Web:

♣ **The Thistle and Shamrock** program, featuring Fiona Ritchie, airs on KANW 89.1 FM, Mondays at 6:00 PM.

♣ **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.)





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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

Irish-American Society of New Mexico

Membership Application/Renewal Form

Please Check One: ☐ Membership Application ☐ Membership Renewal

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____

If this is a renewal, has your contact information changed? Yes ☐ No ☐

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Please choose your membership level:

☐ Student (\$10) ☐ Individual (\$20) ☐ Family (\$25) *

☐ (Optional) Additional Associate Membership to the German-American Club (\$5 per person)*

* If you opt to add the additional GAC fee to a family IAS membership, please indicate which members of your family should receive a GAC associate membership card (and add \$5 per person to your total dues):

☐ (Optional) If you receive your newsletter by US mail (instead of electronically), please consider adding an extra \$5 to your annual membership to help offset the costs of mailing and postage.

Enclosed is a total of \$ _____

Please make checks payable to "The Irish-American Society" and mail to:
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You can also visit our website (www.irishamericansociety-nm.com) and pay by credit card.

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