

Seanchaí Cois Fharráige

THE SEASIDE SEANACHIE

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE IRISH AMERICAN CULTURAL SOCIETY OF SOUTH JERSEY

P.O. Box 195, Absecon N.J. 08201

Website: <http://home.comcast.net/~iacssj>

TOP IRISH
BALLADEER,
TOM BRETT
PERFORMS
TUESDAY
JANUARY 21, 2014
ABSECON
AMERICAN LEGION
7:30

IRISH TUNES THE
WAY YOU LIKE
THEM

NAYSAYERS
WRONG!

CHRISTMAS
LUNCHEON
DATE AND
LOCATION
A HUGE SUCCESS

THANKS TO HELEN
AND LORETTA

WITH SOME HELP
FROM OUR
FRIENDS

It all started a while back, when a club member wanted to go on a trip to Ireland with Irish balladeer Tom Brett, but his 2013 trip was already booked. She suggested maybe there were more club members like herself who would want to travel, perhaps in 2014. She asked what the club might do to help her out. Well, we've invited Tom to be the January program, not first and foremost for the infomercial on his annual tour, but primarily to have this top Irish ballad singer in the area bring us his musical gifts. On his tour to Ireland, he performs music every night along with local talent. We have asked that he tell us about his past November trip and to bring brochures. So come Tuesday night, January 21 to the Absecon American Legion, New Jersey and Mill Roads, to hear some great familiar Irish tunes sung the way you like them and perhaps learn about a trip that might interest you. Light refreshments and a business meeting will follow.

There were the naysayers. Third week in December?-Too close to Christmas. No one will come. Why move to Atlantic City Country Club-it's a big change from Smithville? Nobody will come. But the naysayers (and I was one) were totally wrong. And those in favor of the date and location (primarily Helen) were absolutely right. We came --some 94 of us -- to the beautifully decorated AC Country Club and we had a ball. The excellent \$25 lunch was not designed to make money but the silent auction was. It did-- a robust \$675 in profits. Helen led the gift getters with thirteen, but she had a lot of help from Kathy Arleth, Pat Creegan, Walt Murphy, Judy Gallagher, the McFaddens, Kathy Byrnes, Pat Scully, Kay and Celeste Noble, and Jeanette Minio. Loretta Scheetz with some at-table help from Peg Creegan made the gifts attractive and the drawing efficient. Thanks to all who worked so hard to prove the naysayers wrong.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I would like to wish everyone a Happy New Year and hope the Christmas season was good to all. I would also like to thank Helen for all her hard work to make this year's Christmas luncheon the best and most well attended luncheon so far. I hope everyone who was able to make the luncheon enjoyed the afternoon. Don't forget to mark your calendars for this year's St. Patrick's Mass. This too should be a big event for the Irish Cultural Society. This year, make the resolution to attend the meetings and also the Ceilis. Thanks to all for a great 2013 and we look forward to an even better 2014.

William Gottschall, President

SPECTACULAR
CEILI CLOSES
OUT 2013

NEXT ONE,
EQUALLY
GREAT?

SEE FOR
YOURSELF
JAN 25, 2014
8PM

SOMERS POINT
AMERICAN
LEGION

ST. PATRICK'S
LITURGY PLAN
BEGINS

CELEBRANTS
AND CHOIR
EXPANDED

Jim Gillon reports: The December Ceili, as traditional, started with the Gay Gordons dance. As the dance ended, the double doors at the front of the hall opened, and the vestibule filled with new arrivals. We learned that Dr. May, our violin/fiddle player informed the group about the Ceili. Among the visitors was cello player, Dr. Kevin Hunter, a local, who sat in with the band. Also, we met Kevin's brother, Tom, from Seattle Washington, with his daughter Cara, who treated us to three step dances. In addition, the lovely Gabriel, who entertained us in the past with step dancing, playing tin whistle and Bodhran, arrived with her two year old who required her undivided attention, a good sign she will be keeping the tradition alive. The remainder of the group joined dance lines which extended the full length of the hall. Will we have equivalent surprises next ceili? Come and see, it is scheduled for January 25th at 8:00 pm, American Legion Hall, 1st and Pennsylvania Ave, Somers Point. Your \$5:00 donation at the door will help feed the hungry through the efforts of the Holy Redeemer Food Bank.

You might think January is a little early to be planning the St. Patrick's liturgy And you would be right if we were planning a normal Mass, but this 30th anniversary Mass is anything but normal. For example, take the subject of the celebrant. We expect a Bishop to celebrate, which makes this out of the ordinary from the start. Add to that, we are inviting the four priests who are club members, Msgr. Michael Coyne, a founding member of the club, Msgr. William Hodge, Fr. Patrick Brady, and our host pastor, Fr. Paul Harte to concelebrate. To add strength in numbers to the music of the liturgy, the OLS parish choir will sing. Club member are urged to join with them. They will have mandatory practice on Tuesday nights, Feb 27 and March 6, 7:30-9 PM at Our Lady of Sorrows Church.

YOUR DUES
HELP PAY FOR
YOU

IF YOU HAVE
PAID,
THANKS

IF NOT,
PLEASE

For those of you who have already paid your dues—thank you and you can take the rest of this paragraph off. Skip to next paragraph where the topic is a Christmas mystery. For those of you who are delinquent (I think that is the proper term), come on. We count on you to cover the cost of you. Your newsletter, your meeting place, your programs, your bragging rights about your Mass in honor of St. Patrick, your sharp marching unit in the Annual Boardwalk Parade honoring St. Patrick. And we don't ask much, \$15 for a family membership, \$10 for just you. If you are coming to the meeting, bring your dues with you. If you are not, mail them to IACSSJ, PO Box 195, Absecon NJ 08201. We are still a little early in the campaign for threats, but only a little.

LOGO GEAR
EASILY
AVAILABLE

FOR ALL EVENTS
IRISH IN 2014

No, it wasn't there. You checked under the tree, went through all the gifts, rechecked the garbage bag with the wrapping paper, made sure neither the dog nor cat dragged it off some place. No, it most certainly wasn't there. And you really wanted a couple of those cool IACS logoed shirts and the baseball cap. Not a problem—I know where you can get them at after Christmas prices (which are the same as before Christmas and Christmas prices, \$20 for the shirt, sweat or polo, and \$10 for the cap). And have them delivered in time for the parade. Place your order with and pay Pat DeLuca 641-2979. There that was easy.

ONE VERY MUCH
LIVE;
THE OTHER ON
TAPE DELAY

YOU CAN HAVE
IT ALL

CELTIC SPRING
AND
SUPERBOWL

FEB 2, 2014

Yes, it is the same day as Super Bowl but since your favorite team is probably not involved, you might prefer watching live one of the great treasures of Irish entertainment in our area, and watching your DVR version of the game later. The "it" above is the annual Celtic Spring concert held at Sacred Heart Church in Camden. Monsignor Doyle's Christmas decorated church is a gorgeous setting. The music is terrific, headed up by Timlin and Kane with an all-star group of musicians which includes club favorite, award winning, Haley Richardson on fiddle. And there will be dancers. The entrance fee is zero; while the free will donation at intermission goes to Heart of Camden, providing low cost housing to the working poor. This year's concert starts at 4 PM on Sunday, Feb 2. If you plan to go and want simple, safe driving directions call Dick Noble. If you have room for others, or if you would like to find a ride, call Dick, 652-1679 and he will see what he can do.

THIS FIRST
OPPORTUNITY
FOR
SCHOLARSHIP
APPLICATION
IS
NEARLY THE
LAST

WAITING IS A
MISTAKE

IF YOU HAVE AN
APPLICANT,
START NOW

LOOKING FOR A
HUGE DONATION
OF FOOD AND
CLOTHING

It begins and then it is almost over. We are talking scholarship application opportunity here. We announce it in January and in April it is done. Waiting to get your student started in the process is never a good idea because the process itself takes some time. There are forms to be filled out, some by other people who aren't singularly dedicated to your applicant as you might be. For example, there is a transcript. There is also a requirement for a letter of recommendation. This year's deadline bumps up against Easter week, a time that school schedules are not normal with Spring breaks and time off for religious holy days. Should we mention that teenagers don't always share your sense of urgency? Their written requirements which include their community service activities, their extra curricular and work experience and their essay on future goals gets the old "round tuit" treatment. Over the years, our panels of judges have seen scholarships disqualified for lack of one requirement or another, often with the notation on the application "on the way". The applicant's performance is what will be judged in the competition for the two \$2000 Scholarships. But the completion of the paperwork in a timely fashion is absolutely necessary to allow that performance to be judged. Kathy Arleth, Linda Carson and Joe Walsh will continue to serve the IACS as the scholarship selection committee. Laurie Crowell will chair the scholarship program. The current forms are on the club website, <http://home.comcast.net/~iacssj>. They are also available by request from Laurie, 645-2159. Laurie will mail the applications to you or give them to you at a meeting. Recall the January meeting is already the next to last meeting before the application deadline which is April 14. You need to get started now if you have a relative who is a graduating high school senior or in college. The complete criteria can be found on the Applicant Requirements form.

With November's donation of food and for the first time , clothing, so enthusiastically received by the St. Nicholas of Tolentine Food Bank and the lack of donation in December, we are hoping for a huge surge to start the New Year. The year is new, but the need is not, so we ask that you extend yourself a little extra and bring your non-perishables and gently used winter clothing to the January meeting. We will insure it gets to our area's working poor.



THE PIPER

JANUARY 2014

IRELAND'S ONLY TRUE ARD RI

County Clare and indeed all of Ireland are gearing up to memorialize the millennium anniversary of the death of Brian Boru who was the only true High King of all of Ireland. The origin of his cognomen Boru or Borúma (Tributes) is believed to relate to a crossing point on the river Shannon where his tribe sent a cattle tribute to a larger clan to which they owed allegiance. However, later legends suggest that it was because he collected monies from the minor rulers of Ireland and used these to rebuild monasteries and libraries that had been destroyed during Norsemen (Viking) invasions.

He was born around 940, the younger of two sons of Cennedig, head of Dal Cais, one of the royal free tribes of Munster. He started life second in succession in a minor tribe which had been driven into the area at the mouth of the Shannon between Clare and Kerry. Brian's brother, Mahon, being the eldest, succeeded Cennedig as chief of the Dalcassians. Being hemmed into Clare by the Norse Leader, Ivar of Limerick, Mahon was willing to accept terms but Brian, seeing almost all of the Dal Cais tribe including his mother brutally murdered by a Norse raid when he was only a child, refused to be any part of such a truce. He deserted Mahon with a group of soldiers. After a number of petty battles, Brian had trained an excellent Dalcassian army to face the Norsemen. The feud between himself and Mahon ended. Mahon renounced his truce with the Norsemen and the two brothers joined their forces. The two men triumphed, completely overtaking Ivar's forces and marching on Limerick while Ivar fled back to the Norse lands. Mahon ruled Munster peacefully for eight years. However, Ivar returned to Ireland and plotted the murder of Mahon. In 976, Mahon attended what was supposed to be a peaceful meeting for reconciliation, where he was seized and murdered. Brian, at age thirty-five, became the new leader of the Dalcassians.

After Mahon's death, Brian not wanting a bloodbath between his forces and Ivar's, honorably challenged Ivar to open combat, which he won killing Ivar. Brian succeeded his brother as head of the Dal Cais and immediately took the field against his brother's enemies. In 978, he defeated the King of Cashel in battle. Step by step, he established himself in the Kingship of Munster and fortified the province. In 983 and 988, his fleets ravaged Connaught and plundered Meath.

Meanwhile, another great leader had arisen in the North, Malachy the second, the Ui Neill King of Tara. Malachy was born in 948, became King of Meath and in 980, "High King" This he achieved at the battle of Tara where he overthrew a Norse Army and took Dublin. A clash between Brian and Malachy was inevitable. At last, in 998, they met and divided Ireland between them, Brian becoming the King of the South and Malachy of the North. But by 1002, the joint sway of Malachy and Brian could not last. Malachy, unable to gather enough support to take on the mighty forces of Brian, allowed Brian peacefully to take over his lands.

This was the greatest moment in the history of native Ireland. Brian, by his title, "Ard Ri", was claiming the monarchy of the whole Gaelic race. Before Brian and Malachy, Ireland was divided in to a number of petty kingdoms, sometimes at peace, sometimes at war with one another. The Vikings themselves joined in the struggles between the Irish kingdoms. There was no one king up to this time who was responsible for the defense of Ireland against the Vikings and had control over the entire island. .

Brian's rule was a time of unsurpassed glory, prosperity and happiness. He promoted the arts and learning. He is credited with having originated surnames. His patriotism and personal sacrifice brought the clans together, under one king, for the only time in Irish history. Brian had much to do to lift Ireland out of the ruins of the Norse Age. He rebuilt ruined churches, built others, he sent overseas to replace lost books and artifacts and did all that he possibly could to heal the wounds of the past two centuries of Norse pillage.

However, in 1013, the Leinstermen and the Dublin Vikings revolted against Brian. Mael Morda, King of Leinster, allied himself with the Dublin Vikings and went to war with Brian. The Dublin Vikings sought allies overseas. The Earl of Orkney came with a large force, while other Viking contingents came from as far afield as Iceland and Normandy. On April 23, 1014, Good Friday, forces under Brian's son Murchad met and annihilated the Viking coalition at the Battle of Clontarf, near Dublin. After the battle, a small group of Norsemen, fleeing from their defeat, stumbled on Brian's tent, overcame his guards, and murdered the elderly king. He was eighty-nine when his army faced the armies of the Norsemen at the Battle of Clontarf. Brian's warriors won the day, but Brian was dead, as were his son and grandson. The days of Ireland's finest king were gone. In the words of his eulogist, "Brian was the last man in Erin who was a match for a hundred."

His body was brought to Armagh, where it lay in state in the Cathedral for twelve days before burial. The bones of Brian Boru are said to be buried in the North Wall of Saint Patrick's Church Of Ireland Cathedral, in Armagh. In the west wall of the North Transept is a granite slab, placed there in 1914, commemorating the burial on the north side of the cathedral of Brian Boruimhe Boru High King of Ireland.

The Viking presence in Ireland continued after Brian's death but their military power was crushed. They remained in the country as traders and intermarried amongst the native Irish. Victory at Clontarf broke Norse power in Ireland forever, but Ireland largely fell into anarchy after the death of Brian. Ireland was never again to have a true "ARD RI".