

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

Webs: www.iacssj.org / Twitter: <http://www.twitter.com/iacssj>

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IF YOU MISSED
THE MEETING ON
FEBRUARY 17th -
YOU MISSED A LOT

You missed all the fun of singing along with Tom Brett and yelling “Whiskey”! at the right moment. We all missed Ginny but you missed Doris Lopez, Betty Weber and Kay Noble organizing some fine snacks. You missed a real action-packed – but brief – Business Meeting. You missed Christine’s announcement about the scholarship (see below). You missed John Corey stepping up to fill the parade leadership role (see below). You missed a chance to sign up for a part at the Mass in honor of St Patrick (see below). You missed the request to fill Ginny’s role in the kitchen for the Social after the Mass, and then missed Kathy and Dan Simione stepping up to help (see below). You missed a chance to sign-up to make soda bread or scones for said Social – but bring them anyway. It’s easy! (see below). You missed being part of the 20 big bags of food for the St. Nicholas Food Bank. You missed the request from Helen Riso to assist with the Club correspondence (see below). A lot!

SCHOLARSHIPS

Chairperson Christine McCullough announced that the Club will again be giving out two \$500 scholarships. Christine has Tim Brennan, Kathy Simione and Kathy Arleth as committee members. There are new application forms, so guarantee your applicant has an up to date copy by having them download it from our website: www.iacssj.org It is available under “IACS Information” then “Forms”. The essay will now be on how Irish culture is included in the applicant’s life. Other qualifications remain the same: a graduating high school or college student who has not won one before, has at least a B average and a club member sponsor who can accurately be described as an “active member”. The sponsor must document his/her specific participation in IACSSJ. The application MUST be in our PO Box 195 Absecon NJ 08201 on or before Friday April 15th to be considered.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

It's March! I hope everyone is planning on going to the Saint Patrick's Mass. Please consider bringing soda bread or some other treat and dropping it off at the hall before Mass. We also need more marchers for the parade. Enjoy the holidays.

Rich O'Brien

THE MOST
INSPIRATIONAL
DATE ON OUR
CALENDAR, THE
MASS IN HONOR
OF ST. PATRICK,

WEDNESDAY,
MARCH 13th

Father Patrick Brady will celebrate the Liturgy of the Feast of St. Patrick at 7 PM on Wednesday, March 14th at Our Lady of Sorrows Church. He will be joined on the altar by our host, Our Lady of Sorrows pastor and club member, Fr. Paul Harte. We will have a bagpiper head the entrance procession. Both the Ancient Order of Hibernians and the Knights of Columbus Fourth Degree Honor Guard will add to the pageantry and solemnity of the occasion. We'll again sing our favorite hymns and take up a collection that becomes our March food donation to St. Nicholas of Tolentine. After Mass there will be our usual lively Social in the Hall next door - Irish treats and good company. The address is 724 Maple Avenue, Linwood, NJ 08221. This is a warm and inspirational evening celebrating our Irish Heritage. Please bring your friends.

BAKERS, USHERS,
AND MORE
BAKERS NEEDED

We also need another usher, please call Walt Murphy at 609-927-0180. For the Social we still need kitchen assistance but mostly soda bread, scones, and the like. (See below for recipes) You can drop them off before the Mass in the Hall.

WE LOVE A
PARADE – JOIN
US!
SATURDAY,
MARCH 9th

Our many thanks to John Corey for stepping up as our Atlantic City Boardwalk St. Patrick's Day Parade leader for 2019. We hope you will join him on the Boardwalk. You'll get an attractive badge to wear, and then take a leisurely stroll along the Boardwalk, greeting friends and strangers, while projecting Irish culture in our area.

AGAIN: THOSE
DETAILS

This year the route is a little shorter. The Parade starts on March 9th at 12:00 noon at Rhode Island Ave (by Ocean Casino) and ends at Arkansas Ave (between Bally's and Caesar's). John Mistler, the piper for our St. Patrick's Mass will be this year's Grand Marshall along with Norman Wilson, who was our piper last year. Recommended dress is Club wear, an Aran sweater or anything green – your choice!

WE NEED YOUR
DIRECTION –
BUT NOT MUCH
OF YOUR TIME

After many, many years of faithful service, Helen Riso has finally – and uncharacteristically - asked for help. She is ready to pass along the baton of her role as Corresponding Secretary. This position is a voting member of the Executive Committee and is responsible for sending the Club's "snail mail", mostly cards. If you believe in the mission of the Irish American Cultural Society and want to influence its future direction but don't have a lot of time to commit – this is the job for you. You attend both monthly meetings: Board and General (with July and August off) and spend less than an hour sending correspondence. Intrigued? If you would like to discuss this further, please contact Rich O'Brien 609-404-3402.

HOW MANY
CENTENARIANS
DO YOU KNOW?
ONE MORE ON
MARCH 11th

Speaking of Helen Riso ... on Monday, March 11th, she will celebrate her 100th birthday. If one gets better with age, she's got to be pretty darn close to perfect by now! Our heartfelt congratulations to her on reaching this amazing milestone.
Enough said.

IRISH IN THE
AREA

It's that time of year again! Here is some of the Irish entertainment in our area:

- Blondage Sings Irish Favorites, March 14th, Ocean City Arts Center, Ocean City NJ
- Jamie and the Quiet Men plus the Baloney Brothers, March 9th and March 17th, McGettigan's 19th Hole, Galloway, NJ
- Celtic Woman April 4th Academy of Music, Philadelphia, PA
- First Friday Irish Happy Hour with Tom & Bill, April 5th, Josie Kelly's Public House, Somers Point, NJ

PAT DELUCA –
CEILI REPORT

February's Ceili continued to bring in new faces to join in the dancing and singing. Our South Jersey Ceili band was accompanied by Joe McGonigle and Bob Galbraith on the vocals. Dr. May and three of her colleagues joined in on their instruments with the band. Later in the evening, Dr. May had two of her young students perform two lovely Celtic tunes on their fiddles. A fun time was had as regulars and visitors participated in Ceili dances. March's Ceili will be held on Saturday March 30, at 7:30 pm, at the American Legion Hall, 1st. and Pennsylvania Ave. Somers Point, N.J.

MORE DANCING
FUN - CEILI
LESSONS

Irish dancing lessons, (Set dancing & Ceili dancing) are offered Thursdays, 7:25 PM At the Christ Episcopal Church, 157 Shore Rd., Somers Point. Small fee \$4.50. Contact Ed & Bonnie Quigley: 609-398-8636

An idea so good, it bears repeating:

Please try our easy recipes to for yummy baked goods to bring to the Social after the Mass in Honor of Saint Patrick. Have fun!

SODA BREAD:

1 1/2 cups buttermilk 1 tbsl double acting baking powder,
2 tbsl butter, melted 1/2 cup sugar 1 1/2 cups dark seedless raisins
3 cups all purpose flour 1 egg, slightly beaten
1 teaspoon baking soda 1 teaspoon salt

Preheat oven to 350• Grease pans and set aside. In medium bowl, combine buttermilk, butter, egg, and raisins. Set aside. In large bowl, combine dry ingredients with pastry blender or two forks, tossing together for about 1 minute. Add buttermilk mixture and mix until combined. Spoon into prepared pans. Bake 40 to 45 minutes. Leave bread in pan for about 1 minute. Remove to wire rack to cool.

OATMEAL SCONES

1/2 cup sugar 2/3 cup melted butter
1/3 cup milk 1 tablespoon baking powder
1 egg 1 teaspoon cream of tartar
1 1/2 cups all purpose flour 1/2 teaspoon salt
1 1/2 cups quick Quaker Oats 1/2 cup raisins or currents

Preheat oven to 425°. Add butter, milk and egg to dry ingredients. Mix until moistened. Stir in raisins or currents. Shape dough into a ball. Place on floured board. Shape into an 8inch circle and cut into wedges. Bake on greased cookie sheet for 12 to 15 minutes



THE PIPER

MARCH 2019

SHAMROCKS

A while back, Mary Mulcahy, a long time friend from County Cork, laughed at us when we called the three leaf Shoprite special, Shamrocks. Turns out, the shamrock is thought by many Irish people globally, to be grown exclusively in Ireland, in Irish soil. Some sources would argue that this is a myth however and was perpetrated by entrepreneurial business people and owes more to their marketing wizardry rather than to horticulture truth. Their wizardry was used to sell the shamrock as an Irish idiom, rather than it being a fact. The shamrock can, in fact, be found growing all over the world; England, Tasmania, South Africa, North America, to name just a few of the places

The traditional Irish shamrock belongs to the white clover family [*Trifolium repens*], a common lawn weed [spelt seamróg in Gaelic] which means summer plant. Occasionally, a fourth leaf will appear, making it a four-leafed clover, which is said to bring good luck and good fortune to the person who has found it.

Shamrock, the emblem of Ireland, is synonymous with St. Patrick and his teaching of Christianity to the pagan Irish, using the three-leafed shamrock to explain the concept of the Holy Trinity [The Father, Son and Holy Spirit]. Back in my day, we called them Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Some would suggest that he used the shamrock to deliver his Christian message.

However, some sources say that the first mention of shamrock in the English language was noted in 1571 by the Elizabethan scholar Edmund Campton. His work "Booke of the Histories of Irelande" described very vividly the habits of the 'wilde Irish' and their tendency to eat shamrock [shamrotes, watercress, roots, and other herbes] to feed themselves. This description of Irish habits castigated the Irish over many centuries, and when famine struck, particularly the Great Famine of 1884/85, the issue of eating shamrock reared its head again. Now as history tells us, the Irish did eat all sorts of grass and berries to keep themselves alive during the Great Hunger tragic times. What happened, however, was that all these herbs did become popular over the centuries - not only the Irish but many other cultures recognized that herbal plants, including shamrock, could be used for medicinal purposes. Today, herbal shops have grown rapidly.

Shamrock has been symbolic of many things in Ireland and dates back to the Celtic Paganism and Druid era's as the number three was a mystical number and sacred in the Celtic religion, and which had a very long and colorful tradition in even more ancient Celtic cultures. Up until the 17th century, the Irish wore a special wooden cross made from reeds, specifically for St. Patrick's Day [similar to a St. Bridget's Cross]. Then in the late 18th century, the shamrock was adopted as an emblem of Ireland by the Volunteers of 1777. It did not, however, become widely popular until the 19th century, when the emerging Nationalist movements took the shamrock along with the harp as their National emblems.

Some sources would suggest that this act of displaying an Irish emblem by the Nationalist movements was a causal factor in the shamrock being banned from all Irish Military regiments on St. Patrick's Day. The Crown decreed that all Irish regiments were forbidden to display the shamrock on their person. However, this single act by the Crown may have done more to establish the shamrock as Ireland's National emblem than anything else! It was also the catalyst for the creation of the famous Irish ballad - The Wearin 'O' The Green.

"Oh Paddy dear, and did ye hear the news that's going round?
The shamrock is forbid by law to grow on Irish ground!
No more St. Patrick's Day we'll keep; his color can't be seen,
For there's a cruel law again' the wearing o' the Green!"

The lyrics may have indeed stirred the hearts and souls of all Irish men wherever they were, there are, however, a couple of contradictions in the lyrics. It is very likely that St. Patrick wore vestments of blue, not green, and since the shamrock grew wild in Ireland and was not cultivated, there was no way that the Crown could have successfully banned the growth of the shamrock on Irish soil. But sure what's the harm in injecting a little bit of conjecture into an Irish ballad when the heart and soul are being torn apart...

So bearing all the above in mind, Nathaniel Colgan, a 1900s to early 20th-century botanist, set out to discover the true identity of the Irish shamrock. He asked people from all over Ireland to send him samples with the roots attached, [which he was inundated with]. He planted every single one of the samples, labeling them carefully, so that when they grew and matured, he was able to identify different plants, the small hop clover, and the wood sorrel, or oxalis, and one he called Black Medrick.

All of this is a very long time ago - that was then and this is now. That St. Patrick used the shamrock to teach us the mystery of the Holy Trinity is still up for debate as it was never mentioned in any of his writings. So, that of itself remains a mystery. On the other hand, Triads, or groups of three, were of major significance in ancient Ireland; so it is quite possible that the shamrock may have been used by early Christian teachers because, not only could it instantly illustrate and explain an important belief, it would also have been symbolically acceptable.

So what does a "Corker" know from shamrocks anyway. We believe we and Shoprite have genuine shamrocks-and belief is all you really need.