



IRISH TIMES

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

MARCH 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 Ramada Plaza (2020 Menaul Blvd NE.)



**Next Event:
Saturday,
March 16
Noon to 4 PM at
the Ramada Plaza
2020 Menaul NE**

**The Annual IAS
St. Patrick's Day
Party!
(Details on p. 6)**



Yum! Wonder if there'll
be Irish Soda Bread at
our St. Pat's Party?

Your membership dues for the year 2024 are past 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 St. Pat's Day Party. (Thanks to all who have renewed so far!)

2024 Board Members and Committee Chairs

President	Caren Garcia careng225@msn.com	505-908-0786	Health & Welfare	Don Hardy dbhardy725@gmail.com	505-259-3016
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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 505-307-1700). Your sponsorship will also appear on the IAS website (www.irishamericansociety-nm.com) at no extra charge.

President's Message

By Caren Garcia

All the signs that spring is approaching are here, so I think the royal rodent Punxsutawney Phil may be right about a change coming soon. A special thanks to all who came out on February 9th to the inaugural meeting at our new location at the Ramada Plaza. Everyone spoke well of the new venue. We enjoyed hearing about Aden's trip to Ireland for the All-Irish Pipes competition and hearing some tunes.

Our next event will be the much-awaited St. Patrick's Day Party. Please reserve a spot (email edowling@standuptrainer or call 505-307-1700) by March 12, as seating is limited. Last year there was standing room only, so reserve seats now! It's a potluck, so bring a dish to share.

Did you know there is an Irish-American Hall of Fame? It's in Chicago. The 2024 inductees include former Skylab astronaut, physician, and pro tennis player Joseph P. Kerwin and Ed Ward who helped found the Milwaukee Irish Fest and the Ward Irish Music Archive to preserve Irish music whether recorded or on cylinders! Also being inducted is Sister Patricia Crowley, a former teacher, Director, and Prioress, and tennis champion John McEnroe.

We have a lot of new members whom we would like to welcome and hope our old reliable members will greet the new faces they see at our meetings. I was so pleased to see everyone chatting and enjoying the snacks at the February meeting. Give yourself a treat and come join the social time at our monthly sessions. See you at the BASH!

Treasurer's Report January 1 – 31, 2024*

Kathy Wimmer, Treasurer

Category	Income	Category	Expenses
Membership—electronic/Square (less fees; see expenses)	\$320.00	Square fee (membership)	-\$12.74
Membership—cash/checks	\$375.00	Square fee (newsletter ad)	-\$2.04
GAC associate membership	\$45.00	Ck#335: GAC, Associate memberships Fe. 2023 – Jan. 11, 2024	-\$145.00
Newsletter sponsorship (Square)	\$60.00	Ck #336: Susan Sponar for Wandering the Burren, Jan. general meeting entertainment	-\$100.00
To help defray the cost of hard copy mailing	\$10.00	Ck#337: GAC, General meeting hall rental, Jan. 12, 2024	-\$150.00
Donation "bucket" to help defray the cost of monthly meetings	\$9.00		
Donation from Don Hardy, in memory of Fran Hardy	\$1,000.00		
Total Income	\$1, 819.00	Total Expenses	\$409.78
		IAS Account prior month's ENDING balance	\$4,942.71
		Plus Income (current month)	\$1,819.00
		Less Expenses (current month)	(-\$409.78)
		*Ending Balance as of date of report	\$6, 351.93

Membership Report

By Molly Martin

Cead Mile Failte: A hundred thousand welcomes to new members Susan Sonar, Patricia Hirschl, and Hannah Albers to the Irish-American Society! We are excited to have you as new members. We now have a grand total of 181 members: one student, 64 single, and 116 family memberships. Hope to see you all at the St. Patrick's Day Party on March 16th! The new venue is great, and the party should be as well.

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

And look who answered the call to SHOW US YOUR ARAN SWEATER!



Jennie and Dave Barnaby show off newly purchased Aran sweaters in the Aran Room at an Irish clothing store in Spittal, Co. Galway.

Anybody else?

Volunteers Needed!

Please considering volunteering for a few hours at the Rio Grande Valley Celtic Festival and Highland Games over May 4-5. The Festival will again be co-hosting the exciting USA Cycling Collegiate Road National Championships.

Four hours of volunteer work will get you a two-day pass, a grand time all weekend, and the undying thanks of the Celtic community. Please visit the website and check out the details and options under the VOLUNTEER tab at <https://www.celtfestabq.com/>

We are once more collecting pull tabs for the Ronald McDonald house!

Pete McKenna has graciously volunteered to take over one of Norita's beloved causes: Please bring your aluminum pop top tabs to the meetings; they will be collected and taken to the Ronald McDonald house to support their care of critically ill children in New Mexico. Thanks to last month's contributors: MacTíre of Skye Pipes and Drums, Derek Kerr, and Tom Windes.



Balloon Fiesta Park
Albuquerque NM

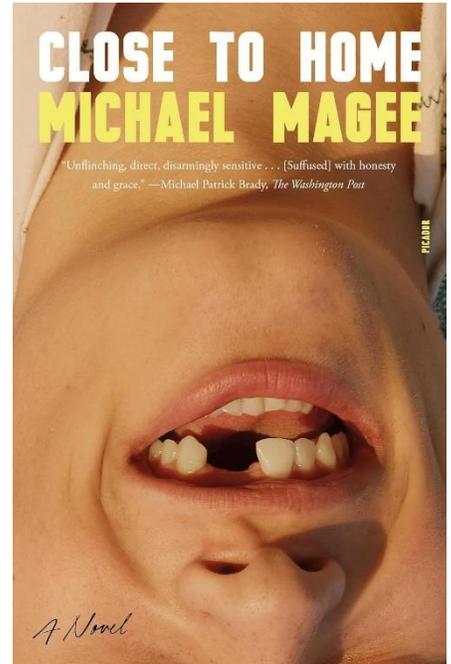
The Irish Book Club

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 *Close to Home* by Michael Magee; in February we'll talk about *The Wren, The Wren*, by Anne Enright; and in March we'll discuss *Terry Brankin Has a Gun*, by Malachi O'Doherty.

Close to Home by Michael Magee

Amazon's description: "While growing up in West Belfast, Sean does everything he's supposed to do. He works hard, he studies, and he—mostly—stays out of trouble. The thirty-year conflict is over, he's told, and his future is lit with promise. But when Sean returns home from university, he finds much of the same—the same friends doing the same gear in the same clubs; the same lost brothers and mad fathers; the same closed doors; the same silences. There are no jobs, Sean's degree isn't worth the paper it's written on, and no one will give him the time of day. One night, he assaults a stranger at a party, and everything begins to come undone.

Close to Home begins with this sudden act of violence and expands into a startling portrait of working-class Ireland under the long shadow of the Troubles. It's a first novel drawn from life, written with the immediacy of thought. It's about what happens when men get desperate, about the cycles of loss and trauma and secrecy that keep them trapped, and about the struggle to get free."



And a discussion by IBC members:

Kathy Wimmer: "Okay, I read about 1/3 of the book (read by "listening") and skimmed some. I just got so depressed spiraling down with the main character that I had to see if there was any hope in the book. I have gone back to the parts I've skimmed over and I intend to really finish this book, but it'll be a while." Ellen Dowling: "I read and finished the whole book, but kept thinking I would have to give it up more than once because it was so gloomy and boring. Sigh. I think I may just be tired of books about teenagers living through The Troubles in Belfast." Kathleen L. Stanton: "Ah you two. I found the ending actually hopeful, with Sean pulling away from his self-destructive friends and becoming more comfortable with living among people orbiting around Queen's University. And most importantly, he can see a future for himself." And Bill Nevins: "Oh yes, I read this novel some weeks ago, and enjoyed it immensely. While much of what the book describes in peace-process post-"Troubles" Belfast and among Irish youth is disturbing or even depressing, I do think that the main character and the book itself are ultimately resilient and realistically hopeful. I look forward to future works by this author Mr. Magee."

And this just in from *The Irish Post*:

Belfast-based author Michael Magee has been longlisted for a prestigious book prize for his debut novel *Close to Home*. The book, which tells the story of two working-class brothers in post-Troubles Northern Ireland, has been longlisted for the Swansea University Dylan Thomas Prize, it was revealed today (January 25). Magee admits his novel was inspired by his own childhood growing up in west Belfast. It won the Rooney Prize for Literature 2023 and was shortlisted for the Waterstones Debut Fiction Prize 2023."

Come Join Us!



The Annual IAS St. Patrick's Day Party

Saturday, March 16th, 2024

Noon-4:00 PM

At the Ramada Plaza

2020 Menaul NE



Entry Fee

\$10 Adults; \$5 Children (5 to 12 years); free for under 5 years

(The entry fee is used to pay the performers and the event rental.)

Tickets may be purchased in advance at www.irishamericansociety-nm.com

or at the door with cash, check, or credit card.

Featured Entertainment

12:30 PM: *Jug O'Punch Band*

1:30 PM: *McTeggart Irish Step Dancers*

2:00 PM: *Shenanigans Band*

3:00 PM: *Two Leaf Clover Band*

Audience Participation Ceili Dancing!

Pot Luck!!

Please bring a dish to share and mark your utensils with your name.

Cash bar provided by
the Ramada Plaza
(coffee, tea, water complimentary)

Reservations due by March 12:

Email (edowling@standuptrainer.com) or call (505-307-1700) Ellen Dowling
and tell her how many are in your party and what dish you will be bringing.

Member Spotlight: Mary Lou Worthen

By Elena Gallegos



I had the pleasure of interviewing Mary Lou Worthen for this month's spotlight. Enchanted by all she saw and heard at last year's Rio Grande Valley Celtic Festival, she picked up a membership form at the IAS tent and joined shortly thereafter. She especially liked the textile tent where the ladies sat tating and singing waulking the wool songs, which she quickly learned and sang along with them.

Worthen is her deceased husband's surname, which is Welsh in origin. Her maiden name is McDonald and through a DNA test she confirmed her ancestry is 51% Scots-Irish and 48% Italian. Her father was born in Arkansas, and is of Scots-Irish descent. His ancestors originally settled in the Appalachian region because the area reminded them of Northern Ireland. On her mother's side, her great-grandparents came from Italy before the turn of the century when only the base of the Statue of Liberty was there to greet them. Her grandparents told her stories of the conflicts between the Italians and the Irish in New York City. Everyone was in need of work. Eventually the family moved to the country town of Morristown, New Jersey, where Mary Lou is from.

Mary Lou came to New Mexico to attend UNM and it was there that she met her husband. They both taught school after graduation. In 1977 they opened their business, Worthen Memorials, Inc., which specializes in engraving headstones and other markers. She is semi-retired from the business, which her son now manages.

Mary Lou loves to travel and for her next adventure she and her granddaughter are going on a dream trip to Africa. They will visit Tanzania and go glamping on the Serengeti. As an avid traveler she has been to Italy a couple of times, as well as Denmark, Spain, Costa Rica, and the list goes on. However, it would not be complete without a trip to Ireland, which she did about twelve years ago.

Reflecting upon her trip to Ireland, she said it always brings a smile to her face because of the people they met and the stories they told. To her it seems like only yesterday that she and her daughter traveled around Ireland by car, looking over the Cliffs of Moher, and traveling the southern route to Dublin. Along the way they stayed mostly in BnBs. From Cork they took a ferry to Cobh, where many Irish left for America. On one of their stops, they were in a pub in Dingle singing Elvis songs with the locals and imbibing in just a wee bit of wine, beer, and cider.

From Ireland they went on to Scotland. They visited a museum in Glasgow, which she describes as having a weird assortment of things. A self-proclaimed "duffer," Mary and her daughter walked the greens of St. Andrews golf course. From Inverness, they visited the museum at Culloden and Loch Ness. Their last stop was Edinburgh, where they enjoyed the tattoo of the marching bands.

Mary Lou loves to dance and will often go dancing with some girlfriends at the senior center where they offer line dancing classes. She is also a volunteer at the Open Space Visitor Center for the City of Albuquerque Parks and Recreation department and she frequently walks the Open Space trails around Albuquerque and reports trails that need tending.

When she is not traveling, dancing, or working, she often visits her family. She has two children, three grandchildren, and two great-grandsons.

The Tailteann Games

By Caren Garcia

We are starting to hear ads for the upcoming Summer Olympic Games to be held in Paris, but did you know that there had been an ancient Gaelic version? The Tailteann Games (or in Gaelic the *Áenach Tailteann/Aonach Tailteann*, known in the Middle Ages as the Tailtin Fair or Festival of Taltii), were games associated with the celebration of lives of those recently deceased in pre-Christian Ireland. They also honored the goddess Tailtiu. Near Teltown in County Meath, there is an earthen complex dating back to the Iron Age, where the festival was historically celebrated in medieval times according to legend. The event is referenced in the *Book of Invasions*, where we are told that Lugh Lamhfhada, a master craftsman, founded the games to mourn the death of Tailtiu, his adopted mother. (He had buried her in a mound that originally bore her name but was renamed Tailteann.)

The celebration occurred during the last two weeks of July and ending on August 1st, the pagan holy day of Lughnasadh, which is still celebrated today, and which honors the god Lugh. According to legend, the games began around 1600 BCE, but possibly as early as 1829 BCE. Other sources document that the games were again being held in the 6th-9th centuries CE but ended after the Norman Invasion.

Originally, the festival encompassed three phases of activities: First was the celebration of the dead, which took 1-3 days; then the announcement of new laws (while they had everyone's attention, why not?); and then the games, which also honored the dead. During the first phase, mourning songs were chanted by participants followed by memorial songs performed by the Druids. The recently deceased were then cremated on funeral pyres. Bards and Druids were employed to spread the word about the new laws, after which a bonfire was lit to seal the deal. To celebrate the passing of the honored dead, the games then began, most of which we still use to test our athletes: the long jump and high jump, foot races, spear toss, wrestling, boxing and sword fighting, as well as swimming, hurling, horse and chariot racing, and archery. Unlike today, these ancient

athletes also competed at story-telling and singing, jewelry-making and other skills. (This is something that has always separated Gaelic people from many other peoples—the value that is and was placed on what we would call the Arts, rather than only athletic prowess.) At the end, there was a mass wedding for couples who did not know one another! These were evidently arranged marriages. They were given a year plus one day to commit or divorce on the “hills of separation.” What a concept!

During the first revival of the Games in Medieval times, the event involved religious rites (naturally), including handfasting ceremonies that were entered into on a trial basis, much like the earlier version of arranged mass marriages. Devised by the Irish Druids, this practice was nixed in the 13th century! Oh, and there were also horse races and strength competitions.

During the years of the Irish Free State, the Games were revived as part of the efforts to regain an Irish identity lost to the many years of cultural repression. The newest iteration began on August 1st and lasted a week. The government established an office specifically to oversee the games and attract world leaders and celebrities from around the world to showcase the new Ireland, taking their cues from the modern Olympic Games. They hoped to bring in tourists and demonstrate unity on the isle, but it ultimately had the opposite effect as divisions within the newly founded state became increasingly public.

MARCH 9

A TRIBUTE TO
Shane MacGowan

HOSTED BY
the Reelers

WITH SPECIAL GUESTS
AMANDA MACHON, FELIX PERALTA, REBECCA AND STONEY OF THE RANDOMATICS,
AMANDA KOOSER, DUSTIN AND KIT OF THE SQUASH BLOSSOM BOYS, BILL NEVINS, AND MORE!

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\$15 ADVANCE \$20 DOOR

The modern version of the Games was held in 1924, 1928, and 1932. The first was the most successful effort, but even this one took an inordinate time to get together. With the establishment of the Dáil Éireann in 1919, Sinn Fein championed the revival of the Games. With encouragement from the likes of Eamon de Valera, the Dail voted to provide the funding and, once the Anglo-Irish Treaty was finalized, the Provisional Irish Government moved forward with plans for the Games. However, the outbreak of the Irish Civil War resulted in postponement until 1924. Partisan politics continued to threaten organizational efforts.

Ultimately, the first modern Games, the Aonach Tailteann, was held August 2-17, 1924, in Croke Park, and included a massive line-up of events: jumping, weight throwing, decathlon, swimming, diving, cycling, rowing, boxing, rounders, yachting, motorboat racing, golf, tennis, gymnastics, wrestling, weight lifting, motor cycle and car racing, billiards, chess, Gaelic football, hurling, handball, and camogie. Banned were Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA) sports such as soccer, rugby, hockey, and cricket! An automobile race through Phoenix Park was the most popular and well-attended event. Winners of the most prestigious events would be awarded bronze statues of Queen Tailte.

Once again the element of the Arts was present. Besides the sporting games, there were competitions in Irish dancing, poetry and prose, drama, public speaking, and storytelling, painting, and crafts. These events were announced in both Irish and English. Musical competitions were held for singers, brass instruments, and pipe bands.

The Games were scheduled to follow shortly after the Olympics, which benefited attendance, including many internationally known athletes. Much like the spectacles of the modern Olympics, opening ceremonies saw attendance of 20,000 and involved a dramatization in which Queen Tailte entered the stadium accompanied by her nobles wearing 11th-century costumes bearing spears and leading Irish wolfhounds. They were followed by competitors representing Ireland, England, Scotland and Wales, Australia, New Zealand, the U.S., and South Africa. Additionally, there was a fly-over by the Irish Air Corps, and a choral interlude followed by a hurling show match between Ireland and Scotland. No less than W.B. Yeats spoke at the opening banquet stating that, "Out of a period of terror of strained hearts and tragic incident we are reverting to normality." The event was, however, conducted by candlelight due to an on-going worker's strike!

The Games next took place in 1928 following the Olympics in Amsterdam (from which athletes were invited to attend, some did, and some didn't choose to show up). Motor sports were again the big hit with the Irish attendees. Unfortunately, the subsequent Games in 1932 followed the Olympics held in Los Angeles and were therefore too far away to bring in visitors or foreign athletic stars to participate. In other words, this one was a flop. In 1936 the Games were delayed while the government decided if they were worth it; in 1938, it was finally decided—they were not. Of course the decision involved politics, but the GAA also opposed continuing with them. As the island became more politically divided, cooperation became more unlikely, so an event that was intended to showcase Irish solidarity fell by the wayside.

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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)

Calendar of Events

IAS Events

Date	Day	What
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 on p. 6.
April 4	Thursday	IAS Board of Directors meeting , 7 PM on Zoom. All members are invited to attend. (Email Kathy Wimmer for the link.)
April 12	Friday	IAS Monthly Meeting and Program: A lecture on William Butler Yeats by Dr. Michele Buchanan.

Celtic Community Events

March 2	Saturday	Celtic Musician Bob Deaver performs at the Erna Fergusson Library (3700 San Mateo NE at Comanche), 11:00 AM to noon.
March 3 & 17	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.
March 5 & 19	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 (jaima@taosnet.com).
March 5, 12, 19, 26	Tuesdays	The Irish Slow Session meets Tuesdays at 6:30 PM in the Manzano Mesa Multi-Generational center, near Central and Eubank. For info, contact Kip Malone on Facebook .
March 6, 13, 20, 27	Wednesdays	Ceili Dancing Classes at the GAC , 6:30 - 8 PM, \$5.00. No experience necessary! (Call Steve Laverty at 505-688-4756 for info.)
March 6, 13, 20, 27	Wednesdays	Celtic Music Session at the Singing Arrow Community Center (13200 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).
March 7, 14, 21, 28	Thursdays	Albuquerque Traditional Irish Music Open Session from 7-9 PM at Hops Brewery, 7222 4 th Street. For more info, contact Harlow Pinson at hpinson@indepthl.com .
March 9	Saturday	A Tribute to Shane MacGowan , 7:00 PM at the Lobo Theatre. Over 30 of our favorite Pogues' songs will be covered by the Reelers (Nikelle and David Garcia, Casey Mraz, Justin McLaughlin, and Dave Purcell). \$15 advance; \$20 door. (https://holdmyticket.com/event/427499)
March 19	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: 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 (\$25) Individual (\$30) Family (\$35)

(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:
P.O. Box 13435, Albuquerque, NM 87192-3435

OR

You can also visit our website (www.irishamericansociety-nm.com) and pay by credit card.

How did you hear about us? _____

You can also visit our Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/The-Irish-American-Society-of-New-Mexico-175569365825710>