

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>

CLAN SUIBHNE
(SWEENEY)
BRINGS
VET DAY
PROGRAM

“CELTIC MUSIC OF
THE GREAT WAR
AND BEYOND”

TUESDAY,
NOV 18, 2014
7:30

NO CLUB
TRANSPORTATION
TO CELTIC
CHRISTMAS
CONCERT

BUT

BUS
ALTERNATIVES
ARE AVAILABLE

The Irish government will mark the 100th anniversary of World War I when thousands of Irishmen were killed, more than any other conflict, by laying a wreath at the Cenotaph in London. The Irish American Cultural Society will mark that anniversary with a special program, “Music of the Great War and Beyond.” offered by Clan Suibhne (Sweeney) November 18, at 7:30 at the Absecon American Legion, Mill and New Jersey Avenues. The duo each play a variety of instruments and do vocals in what they call “Greengrass” musical style.. And what is that, you may ask? Before there was Bluegrass, Appalachian and Old-Time music, there was “Greengrass” music, the folk music of Ireland, Scotland and Wales. It was the origin of many music genres of today. Clan Suibhne’s “Greengrass” is a blend of American & Celtic Nations Folk. Following the program, the Clan will stay to chat with you during the usual social time. There will be a short but important meeting to close out the night.

There didn’t seem to be sufficient numbers committing to the Celtic Twilight Christmas Concert to warrant organizing a bus, but we would like to encourage you to think seriously about attending the concert. It features all time favorites, Phil Coulter and Andy Cooney. So the music should be grand and seasonal. It benefits the South Jersey Scholarship Fund that provides assistance to attend Catholic Schools, so the cause is a good one. The date is December 6, 2014 at the TD Bank Arts Center, in Sewell NJ. Bus transportation is available from Our Lady Star of the Sea Church in Atlantic City for \$50, includes bus and ticket, 344-0287 and Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Galloway, \$99 , includes dinner, bus and ticket, 652-0008.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Congratulations to the three winners of the raffle, especially our two club members. Thank you to all who bought tickets and a special thanks to those that sold tickets at all the events this year. I hope to see everyone at the meeting. Remember to bring your food for Monsignor Hodge's people and to pick up your tickets for the Christmas luncheon so you can come out for some holiday fun. Extra forms will be available.
Rich O'Brien

Joe Walsh, long time club member and a key one-third of our current scholarship selection committee, has asked to leave that job. Like the true professional he was as a committee member, he recruited a replacement, Mike Garvin. We profoundly thank Joe, and the two who will continue, Kathy Arleth and Linda Carson, for great work in fine tuning our selection process. Mike Garvin, a founding member of the club, with many contributions since then such as president, ceili band leader, Elderhostel lecturer, brings experience and expertise to the position. He serves on a similar committee in his home town of Longport. Thank you Mike, for volunteering.

Jim Gillon reports: The next ceili is scheduled for November 29th at the earlier start time of 7:30 pm. The earlier start time went smoothly for the October Ceili, but the announcement by Diana of her retirement move to Florida was a rough adjustment. Diana, a retired school teacher, has been a student of the dance, and a participant and promoter of the ceili. She will be missed, but where ever she goes there will be music and dancing, and if she follows her instincts and applies her innate talent - teaching. For continuation of the drama, "Come to the Ceili" at the 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.

A Christmas suggestion for that hard to shop for who has pride in Irish Cultural Society membership? May we recommend the new three piece package, the hunter green short sleeve shirt, long sleeve sweat shirt and baseball cap are all complemented by the smart looking society logo. The coordinated set costs a mere \$50 and if you already have some items, each can be purchased separately, shirts for \$20 each, \$10 for the cap. Contact Pat DeLuca at 641-2979 to insure delivery before Christmas.

WE'VE TOLD THE
STATE-

NOW WE WILL
TELL YOU

WE NETTED
\$8039
FROM
THE 2014 RAFFLE

THE WEATHER
WASN'T
FAVORABLE
BUT OUR
MEMBER
SELLERS
RESCUED THE
DAYS

RAFFLE WINNERS
NAMED; TWO
WERE MEMBERS

CLUB MEMBER
ENTERS
DELAWARE
VALLEY HALL OF
FAME

All of the numbers are in for the 2014 raffle and they have been reported to the State. Bottom line: we netted \$8,039 after allowing for prize costs and printing. That was about \$550 less than last year, the figure approximates the difference in member's sales. Member sales this year accounted for \$3917 with Kay Noble's \$205, Barbara Lang's \$175, and Fr. Brady's \$100 leading the way. Out of Ireland sold \$762 worth, \$53 more than last year. We sold \$63 more in over all site events despite the loss of three venues from last year. However, we added four new ones this year, including two very profitable events sponsored by Msgr. Hodge.

Poor weather hampered our two final and crucial sales events at Smithville. The best efforts of Jeff Hawarden Mickey O'Brien, Mike Farrell, Ed and Ann Triggs, Laurie Crowell, Bud and Marie Knight with daughter Connie, Sandy Dierolf, Ginny Atkinson, Doris Lopez, Rosemary O'Dowd, Mark Holloway, Dan and Claire Lawler, Pat Deluca, the Nobles, Kay, Celeste, Rick and Dick and Walt Murphy fell some \$614 short of last year, but still pulling in \$1186. The AOH Irish Fest produced just over \$1000 in its rain shortened opportunity. We are indebted to John Corry, Pat Creegan John and Joann Sloniewski Tom and Pat Gilligan, Brian and Noreen Lawlor, Ginny Atkinson, Pat Scully, John and Kay Connelly, John and Maureen Keys, Joe and Eleanor McGonigle, Celeste Noble and Rich O'Brien, Mike McBride, Rosemary O'Dowd, Jim and Dolores Logue, the Pete Finley family and Walt Murphy, who braved the elements.

The drawing saw two club members take home prizes, Cathy Ferrick, the \$300 in Irish Crystal, and Laurie Crowell, the \$150 Irish knit sweater. The grand prize winner was June Nugent of Northfield who purchased her ticket at the Renaissance Faire in Smithville.

Not since Sister Frances Kirk has an IACSSJ club member received the high recognition from across the river that Emmet Ruane is receiving. Emmet was inducted into the Delaware Valley Irish Hall of Fame on November 9th at the annual Awards Dinner at the Irish Center in Philadelphia. Congratulations Emmet, well deserved for your contributions to Irish culture in our area especially when it comes to music and hospitality.

ONCE MORE,
SAME AS BEFORE

CHRISTMAS
LUNCHEON
REPRISES LAST
YEAR

DECEMBER 20,
2014

1200 COCKTAILS
1 pm DINNER

CHOICE OF
MENU,
\$25 PER PERSON

CLIP THE
COUPON,
MAIL IT TO
HELEN

TRAVEL TO
SOUTHEASTERN
IRELAND ON
YOUTUBE

You don't want to mess with success, and success she had! Helen Riso defied the naysayers who suggested a change in venue and a later date was the formula for disaster. Nevertheless Helen stayed the course, changed the venue and the date and still produced one of our best Christmas luncheons ever. So we will try it again. The date is still close to Christmas, Saturday, December 20, but is when all of your Christmas turmoil should be behind you. You have a chance to relax and enjoy. The location is again the Atlantic City Country Club, and why not? Last year's feast would be hard to beat, especially at the \$25 per person tab. Your food choices are the same, Chicken Francaise, Baked Alaska Salmon or Sliced Tenderloin of Beef. Since last year's timing worked out well, we will gather again this year around noon, figuring to sit down to eat around 1 PM. As is her custom, Helen is keeping our holiday entertainment close to her vest, but we know we can anticipate a seasonally joyful time. She has arranged again for wonderful baskets you can bid on. Everything looks primed to repeat the success. All you need is to fill out then coupon at the bottom of this page with your menu and tablemate preferences. Then mail it with a check made out to IACS for \$25 a person to Helen Riso, 619 Pitney Road, Absecon , NJ 08201. Be sure to mail it in before December 10 to insure you have a place at the table of your choice. Recall, all are welcome, members and non-members alike.

Member Mickey O' Brien has pointed out a series on Youtube created by her friend, Jim Owers. They are narrated beautiful Postcards from the Rivers of Time. They feature scenes from mainly southeastern Ireland. To check them out, go to Youtube.com, and type Jim Owers in search. Then enjoy.



THE PIPER

NOVEMBER 2014

NO ORDINARY PRIEST-A SAVIOR

Monsignor Hugh O'Flaherty was no ordinary priest. At 6'2" he had a commanding presence and a debonair style. He was a keen golfer and mixed easily with high society. Although highly respected as a theologian, he will be best remembered for the extraordinary courage he showed in saving 6500 people from death at Nazi hands.

Born in Cork in 1898, Hugh O'Flaherty grew up in Killarney where his father was steward of Old Killarney Golf Club. In 1918 he enrolled in Mungret Jesuit College in County Limerick and four years later was posted to Rome to complete his studies, arriving just as Mussolini came to power. He was ordained in 1925 and was assigned to the Vatican Diplomatic Service. As a young man he represented the Vatican in Egypt, Haiti, Santo Domingo and Czechoslovakia. Named Monsignor in 1934, he returned to Rome in 1938 where he was appointed to the Holy Office.

Monsignor O'Flaherty loved golfing, and at one time he was the amateur golfing champion of Italy. He played regularly with Count Ciano, Mussolini's son-in-law, and ex-King Alfonso of Spain. His wide social network and connections would prove invaluable when Germany occupied Italy and he set to work to alleviate the terror of the regime. He toured Prisoner of War camps, finding men who had been declared missing in action and using Vatican Radio to reassure their families. In 1942 he began to hide Jews and anti-fascists who were being persecuted by the Germans and Italians, placing them in monasteries and convents, in his own quarters, in apartments he rented himself and the homes of sympathetic Italian families who risked their lives to help. Ironically, many were concealed in the German College of the Vatican. It is estimated that he saved 6500 refugees of all nationalities and creeds. At one time a safe house in the Vatican sheltered 18 Americans, 8 British soldiers, one Irish Guardsman, several political refugees, a Protestant clergyman and an Italian pilot. No one who sought assistance was refused.

Of course, he did not work alone. The Rome Escape Organization, as the operation was called, consisted of people from all backgrounds. Three of his most trusted aides were military men, all escaped prisoners of war. He also had close contact with the British Ambassador to the Holy See and his butler, who was a genius at obtaining items on the black market. Delia Murphy, wife of the Irish Envoy to the Vatican and her daughter Blon were supporters. The Envoy himself was bound by the Irish policy of neutrality, but Delia and Blon were free to act independently. Throughout all this, the Gestapo was aware of Monsignor O'Flaherty's activities and watched his every move. The Vatican State was neutral, so he was safe within its boundaries, but he risked his life every time he left its protection.

On one occasion he was at the Palazzo of his friend Prince Fillipo Doria Pamphili, who was a generous supporter, when the Gestapo stormed in. Monsignor ran down a flight of stairs to the basement where a delivery of coal was arriving. He quickly hid his clerical robe, tore his shirt, blackened his face and climbed up the chute to escape on the coal truck. His appearance was distinctive, given his height and the cassock of a monsignor, but he was a master of disguise. There are stories of him moving around Rome in open view dressed as a postman, street cleaner and, on occasion, a nun! His actions really got under the skin of the Germans, but it was as if he had divine protection and eluded his enemies every time. He once dressed a woman as a Swiss Guard and she escaped through the occupied city. Another time he smuggled a man with appendicitis into Santo Spirito Hospital where he was operated on by a German surgeon, with German officers everywhere, and no one was the wiser.

The head of the SS and Gestapo in Rome was driven to fury. He ordered a line to be painted marking the boundary of neutral Vatican territory. O'Flaherty boldly stood most evenings just inside the line in full view of patrolling soldiers, waiting for people to approach him. Frustrated, the Gestapo arranged for him to be taken under promise of safe conduct to the Hungarian Embassy. There the ambassador told him that while his courage was admired, he had gone too far. If he ever stepped beyond the white line again, he would be immediately arrested. It made no impression on the monsignor, and he continued on as before, defying the Nazis. He was playing a game of life or death, not only for himself but for those who relied on him.

When Rome was liberated by the Allies in 1944, Monsignor O'Flaherty insisted that German prisoners be humanely treated. Modest and self-effacing in his personal life, he was relentless and forceful when it came to humanitarian issues. His mission was to help those in need and not to judge. When his arch enemy, the Colonel of the Gestapo, was sentenced to life imprisonment, Monsignor visited him every month, and in 1959 his former nemesis was baptized into the Catholic Church.

He was recognized internationally after the War—awarded the US Medal of Freedom, made a Commander of the British Empire and named Righteous Among Nations by the State of Israel. A tree stands in his honor in the Holocaust Museum in Jerusalem. Granted a pension by the Italian state, he refused to take it.

When asked why he was prepared to help the Nazis after the War, Monsignor O’Flaherty famously replied “God has no country,” and he lived his life true to this simple, inclusive belief.