



# IRISH TIMES

Newsletter of the  
Irish-American Society of New Mexico  
[www.irishamericansociety-nm.com](http://www.irishamericansociety-nm.com)

January 2025

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 Monthly Meeting:**  
**January 10, 2025**  
**7 PM**  
**at the Ramada Plaza**  
***A Musical Performance by***  
***the Rye Creek Band!***



Rye Creek is an Albuquerque band that plays traditional as well as more contemporary Irish, folk, and western music. The group has been performing for over 30 years at venues like O’Niell’s Pubs, Summer Nights, the Rio Grande Valley Celtic Festival, the Sunflower Festival in Mountainair, and the Taos Inn. Band members are Ron Trelue (guitar), Terry Axline (violin and more), Jessica Kamali (bass, mandolin, and violin), Mike Murphy (violin and mandolin), and Catherine Hubbard (percussion).

For the Irish American Society meeting on January 10<sup>th</sup>, we will be playing many of our favorite traditional Irish songs for you to sing with us, including *I Tell My Ma*, *Finnegan’s Wake*, *Red is the Rose*, *Go Lassie Go*, *Star of the County Down*, and *Whiskey in the Jar*. Come join us for a fun sing-a-long!

**We hope to see you there and we hope you will bring a sweet or salty snack to share!**

**Notice: Your membership dues for 2025 are due on January 1<sup>st</sup>.**

\$35 for a family membership; \$30 for a single; and \$25 for a student. You can pay by filling out the membership form on the last page of this newsletter and mailing it with your check to the IAS; or you can pay by cash in person at our January 10<sup>th</sup> meeting; or you can pay by credit card by going to our website:

[www.irishamericansociety-nm.com](http://www.irishamericansociety-nm.com)

We can’t keep this Society going without you, so **THANKS FOR YOUR SUPPORT!**

## 2025 Board Members and Committee Chairs

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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](mailto:edowling@standuptrainer.com) 505-307-1700). Your sponsorship will also appear on the IAS website at no extra charge.

## President's Message

By Caren Garcia



Here's hoping everyone has a Happy Yuletide and a Merry Christmas, as well as any other occasions that December brings along for you. It is officially winter now and I for one am glad for the mild weather we have had. So many folks around the country are having a hard time of it and we in New Mexico are enjoying an enchanted season. The New Year is upon us and may it be a happy and prosperous one for one and all.



The IAS Christmas Party was a wonderful opportunity to get to see people we have been missing and make new acquaintances. We want to thank the Duke City Ceili Band (pictured above), who were very accommodating to us and are always fun to hear. They played for the Duke City Ceili Dancers as well, who encouraged audience participation to learn the steps. Special thanks to them for sharing their talents and time! Finally, the Brightburn Academy of Irish Dance (on the right) gave us a fabulous performance. (I think a lot of folks come just to see them dance.) We had an incredible selection of raffle items, and many people left with something special. The Taylor Ranch Community Center was a great venue for us this year. The windows let in the sun and set a festive scene. Credit goes to the Board Members who did most of the work preparing for and cleaning up after the event. And special extra thanks to Jim Brauer and RoseMarie Keating, for providing the sound for our party!

Come hear the Rye Creek band perform January 10<sup>th</sup> and get a free ticket for our Door Prize! Happy New Year!

## Membership Report

By Molly Martin

**Cead Mile Failte:** A hundred thousand welcomes to our newest members: Robert and Mary Tanner! We are happy to have you.

We have a grand total of 133 members, including 1 student membership, 40 single memberships, and 92 family members.

We've almost made it through the Holiday season. YAY!!! Happy New Years to you. Hope to see you all at the general meeting in January and don't forget to bring your membership renewal payment. [You can also mail in your renewal by using the last page of this newsletter, or you can pay by credit card at [www.irishamericansociety-nm.com](http://www.irishamericansociety-nm.com) ]

## Treasurer's Report November 1 – 31, 2024\*

**Kathy Wimmer, Treasurer**

Category	Income	Category	Expenses
Check card credit: Ramada Hotel for Nov. 8 meeting	\$6.10	Square fee: Membership	-\$1.32
Membership: cash/checks from our Nov. meeting	\$30.00	Check card (POS): Ramada Hotel, general meeting Nov. 8	-\$152.50
Membership: electronic/Square (less fees—see expenses)	\$35.00	Ck #387: Erika Gerety for the Irish Setters entertainment for Nov. 8 meeting	-\$100.00
Donation from Gabe Garcia to be added to the IAS donation of tickets to the Sacred Heart Cathedral performance	\$205.00	Ck #391: Sacred Heart Cathedral, for sponsoring 8 students/8 adults, at \$35/ticket, for Irish tenor Emmet Cahill's concert on 2/7/25, which will benefit the parish school. This represents a donation of \$355 from the IAS and \$205 from Gabe Garcia (who used to be a member of the parish and school in Gallup).	-\$560.00
Misc. donation of \$5 at Nov. 8 meeting	\$5.00		
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$281.10</b>	<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>-\$813.82</b>
		IAS Account prior month's ENDING balance	<b>\$4,641.55</b>
		Plus Income (current month)	\$281.10
		Less Expenses (current month)	(-\$813.82)
	<b>Loss/Gain</b>		-\$532.72
		<b>*Ending Balance as of date of report</b>	<b>\$4,108.83</b>

*An invitation from our sister organization, The St. Andrew Scottish Society!*

### Hogmanay

**Join us as we ring in the new year at Midnight – SCOTLAND TIME!  
(5:00 PM sharp in Albuquerque\*)**

We'll celebrate 2025 on **Tuesday, December 31** from **4:30 to 6:30**  
at **The Tatted Bee Brewhouse**  
11500 Menaul Blvd NE, Albuquerque, NM 87112  
Drinks available for purchase at the Brewhouse;  
bring some food to share. For potluck coordination, and to RSVP,  
contact Colleen Wolfe: [kathirish7@gmail.com](mailto:kathirish7@gmail.com)

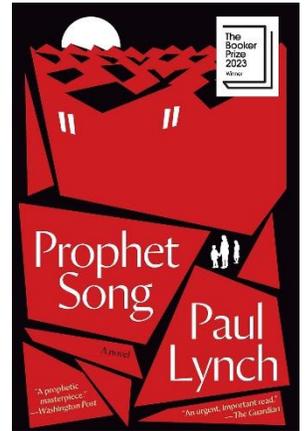
**\*Special countdown to "Scotland's midnight" at 5:00 PM**  
**Other Hogmanay fun and frolic planned!**

## 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 November was *Prophet Song* by Paul Lynch; for December, we read *Quickly, While They Still Have Horses*, by Jan Carson; and for January we are reading *Traveler* by John Heagney.

### *Prophet Song*, by Paul Lynch

**Amazon's description:** "On a dark, wet evening in Dublin, scientist and mother-of-four Eilish Stack answers her front door to find two officers from Ireland's newly formed secret police on her step. They have arrived to interrogate her husband, a trade unionist. Ireland is falling apart, caught in the grip of a government turning towards tyranny. As the life she knows and the ones she loves disappear before her eyes, Eilish must contend with the dystopian logic of her new, unraveling country. How far will she go to save her family? And what—or who—is she willing to leave behind? The winner of the Booker Prize 2023 and a critically acclaimed national bestseller, *Prophet Song* presents a terrifying and shocking vision of a country sliding into authoritarianism and a deeply human portrait of a mother's fight to hold her family together."



The Book Club members were gobsmacked by this book. And member Bill Nevins wrote this review: "There is that old story of how a frog dies. It's put into a pot of cold water, which is then put over a flame and the hapless, unsuspecting amphibian boils to death instead of leaping out to safety. That's roughly the situation of the main character, Eilish, and her fellow unsuspecting citizens of Ireland in a near-future when 'the National Party' has been elected into power and steadily turns up the heat to a boiling point of murderous, full-bore fascism. By the time intelligent, accomplished mother and professional Eilish realizes that she and her surviving family should have already gotten out of the country, it is far too late to do so safely. In this chilling, Booker Prize-winning novel, author Paul Lynch takes us inside the slowly-unfolding nightmare that is his protagonist Eilish's mind. Eschewing paragraph breaks and quotation marks, Lynch nonetheless pulls his characters and his readers along on an increasingly terrifying but plausible 'bad trip.' There is little explanation of how fascism rose to seize power in Ireland, a country seen as a model of contemporary liberal democracy (but which, like the USA, has recently seen overtly-fascist eruptions in public places). But, through a series of sharp shocks, it does happen there. (As it can't happen here—or could it?) The personal and public atrocities mount up and we readers see them happen as Eilish does and we cannot look away or un-see them. It's a great novel, well deserving of the praise and awards it has received."

***And speaking of IAS and Irish Book Club member Bill Nevins, he has a new book of poetry just published!***

*Light Bending: Collected Poems of Bill Nevins*, edited by Alan Abrams  
Paperback \$15.95 166 pages ISBN: 979-8-9911983-4-9

*Light Bending* is a collection of poetry that includes such topics as growing up in the Catholic Church and evolving belief; Irish culture and poetry, and Irish and Irish-American poets; peace and warfare, including the Irish troubles and the peace process; and the loss of a son, a US soldier killed in action in Afghanistan.

Sligo Creek Publishing of Maryland.

<https://sligocreekpublishing.com/books-for-sale>

## Member Spotlight: Ryan Force

By Elena Gallegos



I had the pleasure of speaking with fellow member Ryan Force, who graciously answered some questions by email.

### **How long have you been a member of the IAS and how did you become interested in the IAS?**

I joined the IAS about a year ago. I never had the opportunity to join organizations in other places, and I wanted to start mingling with people who share the same roots.

### **You mentioned that you are from New Jersey. Why did you come to ABQ and how long have you been here? What do you like about living here?**

I moved to NM in 2014 with my beautiful wife. She is originally from northern NM and wanted to come back home. I love the craft beer here.

### **Sounds like New Jersey has a large Irish-American population. Did you belong to an Irish society there?**

#### **What is St. Patrick's Day like in NJ?**

NJ does have a large Irish population and St. Patrick's Day is great! It is a big party that often spreads out into NYC. I was never a member of the associations, but I knew several members of the JC Irish American Association.

### **Do you have a favorite Irish food and/or a recipe you like to make?**

Corn Beef and cabbage with soda bread! Call me old fashioned.

### **Is your last name pronounced Force or Forcé? Is it a Celtic surname?**

It's not a Celtic surname. I am Irish on my mother's side.

### **Have you done a genealogy or genetic test?**

No genealogy. However, when my aunt told me our family is from Co. Cork.

### **Do you want to include your career or retirement status?**

Currently I am a real estate broker with Realty One of New Mexico.

### **What are some Irish cultural things you like to do?**

This past year is when I started to participate in activities. Seeing some Irish step dancing and listening to some pipes was fun.

### **Do you have any hobbies or things you like to do in your free time?**

Bowling.

### **10. Do you have children, pets, such as a Celtic dog, or other?**

We have two English Springer Spaniels.

## In Ireland, History is Everywhere

By Caren Garcia

History buffs have their own way of seeing the world. Same goes for touring a place that seems to be literally covered with historical sites. How do you narrow it down and pack your trip with the things you really love? Here are some suggestions that may help you as you plan your visit or just inform you if you are a history lover. (I took most of the pictures in this article in 2019.)



If we are going in order of distance from the present, the Hill of Tara is a good place to start. An archaeological site and ancient ceremonial grounds, it was once the seat of the High Kings of Ireland. While many clan leaders were known as kings, allegedly those crowned on this site were Kings of All Ireland, a more prestigious title. It is a site of immense mythological and historical significance, featuring burial mounds and standing stones dating back to the Iron Age. There is even an entrance to the underworld at the base of the hill; unfortunately, it is closed off with an iron grate, but we can imagine what might have been inside in pre-Christian days. The site is said to have a strong spiritual aura for those who are attuned to it.

Perched on the edge of a 300-foot cliff on the Aran Island of Inis Mór, Dún Aonghasa is a prehistoric stone fort that offers breathtaking views of the Atlantic Ocean. Believed to have been built in the Bronze Age, the fort's circular structure and dramatic location make it one of the most impressive archaeological sites in Ireland. A ferry ride is needed to reach this; it's all part of the adventure. Visiting the site involves a walk along a rocky path between cow and sheep pastures but is well worth the trek for this view off the cliff into the wild Atlantic below.



An easy stop for castle lovers would be Dublin Castle, which contains State Apartments and the Gothic-style Chapel Royal. It was an administrative headquarters for the English government in Ireland, so has some bad history.

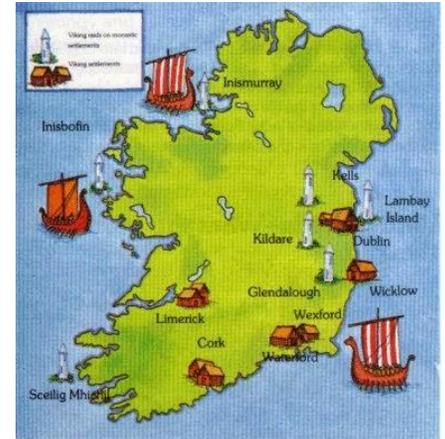


The Rock of Cashel is hard to miss, as it stands on some very high ground and is a photo bug's dream come true. The seat of the kings of Munster in Medieval times, it is associated with legend of St. Patrick as well.

Please don't discount the more famous Blarney Castle because of its fame. As an American, I expected it to be kitschy, but it wasn't. The gardens alone are well worth a visit, especially the Witch's Garden. This enormous yew (on the right) was one of my favorite things to see.



If your interest is Viking Ireland, then a great starting place is the Dublinia Museum, a part of the Christ Church Cathedral. There is even a Medieval/Viking Quarter of the city. A visit to other Viking-settled towns is the next step: Waterford, Wexford, and Cork.



If you are into Irish migration and the Great Famine, there is a lot to see. Of course, what is often called the Potato Famine is known in Ireland as the Great Hunger. If you've been told it was primarily due to the failure of the potato crops due to blight, you'd have heard the version promoted by those who allowed masses of Irish men, women, and children to die while their crops were shipped to England and other points to be sold for profit. There was everything from cabbages to sheep being taken to port past dying peasants lining the sides of the road. The National Famine Museum is in Strokestown, Co. Roscommon; the

Doagh Famine Village is in Inishowen, Co. Donegal (a sort of living history experience that includes houses and buildings in the style of the period); the EPIC Irish Emigration Museum in Dublin; and a replica of the famine ship the Jeanie Johnston in the Dublin Docklands, which carried 2500 emigrants from Tralee to North America.



And finally, for those who want to delve into the times known worldwide as The Troubles, visit the Free Derry Museum in that hidden gem of a city, and follow it up with the Black Cabs Tours of Belfast. You can visit the Kilmainham Gaol, a former prison where rebels involved in the 1916 Easter Rising were imprisoned and now a poignant museum, and the GPO Museum in Dublin. The GPO Building is the oldest known operating Post Office in the world. It was used as the Headquarters of the Irishmen involved in the 1916 Rising and also the site of their surrender. Its columns still display bullet holes from that struggle, which was

instrumental in bringing about Irish independence.

I hope you have enjoyed this article—and that it has spurred a desire to see some of the sites!



**St. Andrew Scottish Society of New Mexico Annual**

*Robert Burns Dinner  
& Dance*

**A Magical  
Journey  
Through  
Space and  
Time**

**Menu Entrees**

- Fillet Mignon or
- Honey Glazed Salmon or
- Roast Vegetable Strudel

**January 25, 2025  
Embassy Suites Hotel  
Sierra Ballroom  
1000 Woodward Pl. NE  
Albuquerque, NM 87102**

**\$85.00**

**Per Guest**

**5:00pm-10:00pm, Cocktails 5:00-6:00, Tickets Available On Website  
<https://sassnm.org> or make check payable to SASSNM, mail to P. O. Box  
37288, Albuquerque, NM 87176. Table reservations available.**

**For more information call John McKenzie (505)908-1065**

**Piping, Storytelling, Poetry, The Reelers Celtic Band**

## 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.brightburnacademy.com> for further information.

**Ceili dance classes** are held every Wednesday at the GAC. The **new** time is 6:30 - 8 PM, \$5.00. No experience necessary! (For info, call Steve Lavery at 505-688-4756.)

### Celtic Music on the Radio and the Web:

♣ **Larry Kirwan's Celtic Crush radio show** happens on The Loft station on SIRIUS XM radio according to his schedule (times in ET). Eclectic styles of music from Ireland, Scotland, and the world's "Celtic music" diaspora! Great fun! More info: [https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLNloyz-LHidbztD\\_eGnKScyMQr-NWxVrq](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLNloyz-LHidbztD_eGnKScyMQr-NWxVrq)

♣ **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](http://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 (2<sup>nd</sup> floor), on the corner of 5<sup>th</sup> 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.

## Calendar of Events

### IAS Events

Date	Day	What
January 2	Thursday	<b>IAS Board of Directors meeting</b> , 7 PM on Zoom. All members are invited to attend. (Email Kathy Wimmer for the link.)
January 10	Friday	<b>IAS Monthly Meeting and Program: A musical performance by the Rye Creek Band!</b> (See p.1 for info.)
February 6	Thursday	<b>IAS Board of Directors meeting</b> , 7 PM on Zoom. All members are invited to attend. (Email Kathy Wimmer for the link.)
February 14	Friday	<b>IAS Monthly Meeting and Program:</b> A presentation by Renata Golden, author of <i>Mountain Time: A Field Guide to Astonishment</i> , her essay collection about the Chiricahua Mountains on the Arizona/New Mexico border contrasted with <i>Cnoc na dTobar</i> near her grandparents' homelands in Kerry, Ireland.

### Celtic Community Events

December 31	Tuesday	<b>Hogmanay celebration hosted by the St. Andrew Scottish Society!</b> (See p. 4 for info.)
January 2, 9, 16, 23, 30	Thursdays	<b>Albuquerque Traditional Irish Music Open Session</b> from 7-9 PM at Hops Brewery, 7222 4 <sup>th</sup> Street. For more info, contact Harlow Pinson at <a href="mailto:hpinson@indepthl.com">hpinson@indepthl.com</a> .
January 5 & 19	Sundays	<b>Two Leaf Clover (Nikelle Gessner and David Garcia)</b> play for Sunday Brunch at Two Fools Tavern every 1 <sup>st</sup> and 3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday of the month from 11 AM – 2 PM.
January 7, 14, 21, 28	Tuesdays	<b>The Irish Slow Session</b> meets Tuesdays at 6:30 PM in the Manzano Mesa Multi-Generational center, near Central and Eubank. For info, contact <a href="#">Kip Malone on Facebook</a> .
January 8, 15, 22, 29	Wednesdays	<b>Ceili Dancing Classes at the GAC</b> , 6:30 - 8 PM, \$5.00. No experience necessary! (Call Steve Lavery at 505-688-4756 for info.)
January 8, 15, 22, 29	Wednesdays	<b>Celtic Music Session</b> 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 ( <a href="mailto:bpdeaver@gmail.com">bpdeaver@gmail.com</a> ).
January 21	Tuesday	<b>Sullivan &amp; Forsyth: Irish Traditional Fiddle &amp; Flute</b> perform at <a href="#">Trail Rider Pizza</a> from 5:30 to 7:30 PM. <a href="#">Trail Rider Pizza</a> is located at 12165 State Highway 14 N, Suite B2, Cedar Crest, NM 87008.
January 25	Saturday	<b>Annual Robert Burns Night Dinner, hosted by the St. Andrew Scottish Society!</b> (Details on p. 9)

# 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](http://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>