IRISH TIMES

Newsletter of the Irish-American Society of New Mexico <u>www.irishamericansociety-nm.com</u>

JULY 2023

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 German American Club at 4821 Menaul Blvd NE.



Flowers of the Forest

Editor's Note from Ellen: This issue of the *Irish Times* will have some pictures and tributes for our dear Norita Callahan, who passed away on May 29. (Thanks to Elena Gallegos for helping compile.) As long-time Membership Chair of the IAS, Norita

knew everyone.

Flowers of the Forest is the title of a Highland bagpipes tune commonly played at funerals and memorials, commemorating the Battle of Flodden in 1513 (which the Scots lost). The song, written in Scots Gaelic, is also known as *The Floo'ers o' the Forest (are a' wede away)* and describes the grief of women and children at the loss of their young men. You can read more about it <u>here</u> and you can listen to the tune <u>here</u>. We refer to this tune in the newsletter whenever we sadly have to report a member's passing. Norita, you're getting the whole first page here. (i) (Norita frequently used the smiley face in her reports. (i))

As of this writing, we have not heard anything about a memorial service for Norita, only that the family is using <u>Salazar Funeral Homes</u>, where you can plant a tree in her name. As soon as we hear anything, we will let everyone know by email alert. (If you are reading this and do not use the internet, please call me at 505-307-1700 and let me know if you want me to call you when I hear of any plans.) Our condolences of course to her family, especially her husband and waltz partner extraordinaire, Ken Callahan.



This is my favorite picture of Norita (taken by amazing photographer Rachael Rodgers) doing one of the things she loved most: leading a Ceili session.

For all of you who danced with her, chatted up potential new members at the Celtic Festival with her, helped her decorate the GAC with all her "creatures" (as she called them), or got a Christmas present from Santa and his assistant "elf," these newsletter pages are for you. (For our newer members, please bear with us as we mourn our treasured friend.)

My own farewell: Norita, you were the soul of the Irish American Society. Dear friend, partner in many "crimes," ineffable newsletter proofreader, I cannot imagine the IAS—or me—without you.

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Would you like to place a sponsorship in the *Irish Times* newsletter?

Jim McCabe

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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.

JULY 2023

President's Message

By Caren Garcia

Happy Summer Vacation everybody! It's so nice to be in the time of year when we slow down and maybe take a long-awaited trip. To make that happen, the Board takes some time off from sponsoring events and holding regular meetings. We are, however, still working on plans related to the September 17th Joint Irish-American (IAS) and Scottish Society (SASSNM) Picnic! Mark your calendars now because it's gonna be a blast! We have reserved the Pavilion at Elena Gallegos Open Space for the occasion. You will be getting a detailed email about this closer to the end of summer break. We have a busy September, as we also have a general meeting on the usual Friday, September 8th, when McTeggart's Irish Step Dancers will perform for us.

This edition of the *Irish Times* is dedicated to one of our founding members who has been an integral part of the IAS since before anyone can remember. Norita Callahan was a force to be reckoned with and an irreplaceable part of the organization. Her tiny shoes will never be completely filled and I for one will miss her every day. I hope you find something inspiring in the messages of love and respect recorded in this issue.

Finally, thanks to the Celtic Coyotes for providing a wonderful evening of entertainment for us at our June meeting. We always enjoy spending time listening and singing along with them. Special thanks to Bill Weber for making a special donation to further support musicians performing for the IAS!

Membership Report

By Molly Martin

Cead Mile Failte: A hundred thousand welcomes to our newest member, Mary Lou Worthen!

Our membership totals are as follows: 1 student, 56 individual memberships, and 54 (X2) family memberships. That makes for a grand total of 164 members for July.



On the left is a photo of Norita with TONS of pull-tabs ready to go to the Ronald McDonald House. For quite some years now, Norita collected these from various members and then sent them on to Ronald. At this time, we don't know who is going to take over this task. We'll keep you posted.

And here is Rachael Rodger's comment on her picture of Norita on the front page:

"Norita Callahan was tiny but mighty, and I'm so sorry to hear she's passed away. I didn't know her as well or as long as so many in this community, but when I met her seven years ago, she was instantly kind, supportive and welcoming. I appreciated that so much. I liked and respected her tremendously.

Last year I took this photo of her teaching Irish Ceili dancing at the Rio Grande Valley Celtic Festival and I was super happy with it when I took it because I actually managed to capture what I was trying for and encapsulates her perfectly to me: Tiny mighty teacher, a glowing heart at the center of happy dancing people. Duke City Ceili Band was performing on stage at the 2022 Rio Grande Valley Celtic Festival and members of The Irish-American Society of New Mexico were dancing, along with festival attendees"

Treasurer's Report As of May 31, 2023*							
Kathy Wimmer, Treasurer							
Category	Income	Category	Expenses				
Membership—cash/checks at Celtic Fest and May general meeting.	\$140.00	U-Stor-It monthly storage fee (electronic payment #985049)	-\$40.00				
Membership—electronic/Square online and at CF and meeting (less fees—see expenses)	\$105.00	Square fees: Memberships	-\$4.59				
GAC associate membership	\$5.00	Square fees: t-shirt sales	-\$8.17				
IAS t-shirt sales at the CF (cash/checks)	\$325.00	Square fees: hats	-\$0.50				
IAS misc sales (cash) at the CF (stickers, etc.)	\$3.00	Square fees: stickers, banners	-\$0.21				
IAS t-shirt sales at CF and meeting electronic/Square (less fees—see expenses)	\$205.00	Ck #320: Dain Forsythe, May general meeting for the Half Ramblers.	-\$100.00				
Electronic/Square IAS hat sales at CF and meeting (less fees—see expenses)	\$10.00	Ck #321: Caren Garcia, Elena Gallegos Picnic Area rental for the IAS/SASSNM joint picnic (9/17/23)	-\$250.00				
Electronic/Square misc sales (stickers, banners) at CF and meeting (less fees—see expenses)	\$6.00	Office of the NM Secretary of State: State tax filing fee (\$10 plus \$1.95) service charge)	-\$11.95				
Amazon Smile quarterly donations (final)	\$23.93						
Total Income	\$822.93	Total Expenses	\$415.42				
		IAS Account prior month's ENDING balance	\$5,146.93				
		Plus Income (current month)	\$822.93				
		Less Expenses (current month)	-\$415.42				
		*Ending Balance as of date of report	\$5,554.44				

Funeral Service for Derek Swinson:

For those of you who knew him, Derek's wife Jo Ann has informed us that his funeral service will take place on Wednesday, July 12th, at 11 AM at St. Mark's Episcopal Church (421 Rickmond NE). From his obituary: "Dr. Derek B. Swinson passed peacefully at home with his wife, Jo Ann, at his side, on March 11, 2023. Born in Belfast, Northern Ireland on November 5th, 1938, he grew up in the coastal town of Bangor in County Down, Northern Ireland, where his love of sea, music and theater was



fostered. He Thought he would be a lawyer or an actor, instead a scholarship provided him with an honors degree in physics from Queens University Belfast. Then with his accordion in tow and drawn to nearby ski areas, which peaked his newest interest in skiing, he pursued post graduate studies in physics at University of Calgary Alberta Canada. He also ventured into the Irish music scene in Calgary and with two other musicians, the original Irish Rovers were formed. Thinking a Physics PHD would provide a more consistent income than performing with a band, he accepted a position at UNM, where he was a respected professor for 30 years, often entertaining his students with his music." We don't have enough fingers to count the many times Derek entertained the IAS with his accordion playing, singing, and raconteuring. Rest in peace, dear friend.

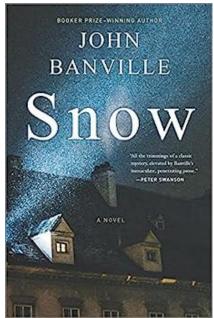
The Irish Book Club

If you are on Facebook, just type The Irish Book Club into the search bar (or click on <u>https://www.facebook.com/groups/2022642747761043/</u>) and you'll find us. Our book for May was *Snow* by John Banville; in June, we discussed *The Informer* by Liam O'Flaherty. Next up for July is *A History of Loneliness* by John Boyne.

Snow by John Banville

From Amazon's description: "The incomparable Booker Prize winner's next great crime novel—the story of a family whose secrets resurface when a parish priest is found murdered in their ancestral home. Detective Inspector St. John Strafford has been summoned to County Wexford to investigate a murder. A parish priest has been found dead in Ballyglass House, the family seat of the aristocratic, secretive Osborne family.

The year is 1957 and the Catholic Church rules Ireland with an iron fist. Strafford—flinty, visibly Protestant and determined to identify the murderer—faces obstruction at every turn, from the heavily accumulating snow to the culture of silence in the tight-knit community he begins to investigate. As he delves further, he learns the Osbornes are not at all what they seem. And when his own deputy goes missing, Strafford must work to unravel the ever-expanding mystery before the community's secrets, like the snowfall itself, threaten to obliterate everything. Beautifully crafted, darkly evocative and pulsing with suspense, Snow is 'the Irish master' (*New Yorker*) John Banville at his page-turning best."



Anne McLoughlin, an Irish Book Club member, summed it up this way: "A Dublin detective brought down to rural Ireland to investigate the mysterious death of a priest in the home of an aristocratic family. The inspiration clearly came from a real-life scandal that happened in Ireland many years ago. I guessed the reason for the murder at a very early stage—fairly obvious, but that didn't bother me. Set in a snow-covered County Wexford, there is a great sense of place and the various characters felt very real, especially some of the minor ones." We all had a great time positing our theories as to who the murderer is. (Spoiler alert!)

Irish novelist John Banville was born in Wexford in Ireland in 1945. He was educated at a Christian Brothers' school and St Peter's College in Wexford. He worked for Aer Lingus in Dublin, an opportunity that enabled him to travel widely. He was literary editor of the *Irish Times* between 1988 and 1999. *Long Lankin*, a collection of short stories, was published in 1970. [The Irish Book Club discussed this book in January of 2021.] *The Book of Evidence* (1989), which won the Guinness Peat Aviation Book Award and was shortlisted for the Booker Prize for Fiction, *Ghosts* (1993) and *Athena* (1995) form a loose trilogy of novels narrated by Freddie Montgomery, a convicted murderer. The central character of Banville's 1997 novel, *The Untouchable*, Victor Maskell, is based on the art historian and spy Anthony Blunt. *Eclipse* (2000), is narrated by Alexander Cleave, an actor who has withdrawn to the house where he spent his childhood. *Shroud* (2002), continues the tale begun in *Eclipse* and *Prague Pictures: Portrait of a City* (2003), is a personal evocation of the magical European city. *The Sea* (2005) won the 2005 Man Booker Prize. His latest novel is *The Infinities* (2009). He received the Franz Kafka Award in 2011. John Banville lives in Dublin. (https://literature.britishcouncil.org/writer/john-banville)

JULY 2023

More Norita . . .

I met Norita and Ken through Harlow Pinson's Celtic Slow Session class at UNM Adult Ed in around 2007. I tried Ceili dance/folk dance, but unfortunately got very dizzy and nauseous from spinning, as well as having two left feet LOL. Over the years as I performed Celtic music at the IAS with both Saoirse and Jug O' Punch, Norita has always been there. She encouraged me to wear more Celtic jewelry on St. Pat's Day, which I have done since knowing Norita. We will honor her memory by carrying on Celtic dance and music traditions, with joy :-). Blessings to her family. This will be a rough go for Ken and her daughters, my thoughts are with them.

> Suzanne Taichert, Celtic musician and local piano instructor



Norita's glass plaque says, "Presented to Norita Callahan, For a Lifetime Promoting Irish Music & Dance in New Mexico, 2023." I am just not prepared to be without the fireball that was Norita Callahan. She welcomed me and made me feel like I was a valued member of the IAS community. I was so glad to be a part of the presentation of an award for her many years of dedicated service to all of us through teaching Ceili dancing among many other things. She was so happy and surprised. I'm glad the chance to honor her was not missed.

Caren Nicholson Garcia, IAS President

She was the heart of the IAS. She kept everything organized and kept us on our toes. She will be sorely missed.

Kris Drake

Ah, dear darling Norita. Yes, indeed, my clearest early memories of the IAS are of Norita cheerfully urging me onto the dance floor despite my utter lack of knowledge of Irish country dance, and her great patience in helping me to learn at least a few steps. When I later visited a pub in Galway that featured Irish country dancers, I just had to envision Norita there happily joining in. Then I think of Norita smiling and chatting at the meetings of the club and at the Hops brewery music sessions more recently. (The picture is from January 2022 at Hops Brewery.) Ah dear darling Norita. Dancing in all our hearts. The song from <u>Clannad, *Rince Philib a'Cheoil*</u>, is about dancing in the Irish countryside, which reminds me of those grand times with Norita. The craic was always Mighty!

Bill Nevins



JULY 2023



Luisa Gignac is one of Norita's long-time friends (and former Hospitality Chair for the IAS), and she sent these early pics the one on the left is from 1993 and the one below is 1998 (with Luisa and her late husband Ed, Ken Callahan, and of course Norita).





IAS Past President Karen Wall snapped this pic (to the left) of Norita and Ken waltzing at our last Christmas party in 2022.

I met Norita at the Rio Grande Valley Celtic Festival some years ago, when I was associated with the St. Andrew Scottish Society. Whenever I would attend the games I would look for her because she reminded me of my mother—they're both Irish, white haired, and short, although my mother is a bit taller than Norita was. I would greet her, hug her and always looked forward to seeing her there. I got involved with the IAS in November of 2021, attending the monthly meetings and enjoying the programs they had. At the urging of a few of the Board Members, I became one too in January of this year. I always looked forward to seeing Norita at the Board meetings as well as the monthly gatherings. I miss her smiling face and her go get 'em attitude. I wish I'd known her better and longer. Belinda Martorelli, IAS Board Member



Norita in Ireland in 2013.



Norita helping Don Baker make the haggis for the SASSNM Burns Dinner in 2013.



Norita at her surprise 75th birthday party in 2009.

Norita and Hallowe'en (AKA Samhain)



On the left, former IAS secretary Pete McKenna dances with a cute pup. On the right, the winners of the costume competition in 2005. Can you identify the winners?











And many of you will remember Santa's helpful Elf at our annual Christmas party. Note that neither Santa (Don Hardy—also in the pic on the left with late wife Fran)—nor the Elf were able to console the unhappy Xzavier (your newsletter editor's grandson) in 2014.



Support Your Local Irish/Scottish/Celtic Musicians/Performers

Bardic Sisters

Storytelling, narratives, readings and poetry with and through musical accompaniment. Gwen Easterday and Kathy Wimmer on Celtic harps, other folk instruments, and vocals. Contact Kathy at <u>kmillewimm@comcast.net</u> (505-249-7012).

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 <u>kmillewimm@comcast.net</u> (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 <u>hpinson@indepthl.com</u> or 994-2135.

A Jug O'Punch

A trio playing Irish music galore! Contact Suzanne Taichert: <u>suzannetaichert@gmail.com</u>

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: <u>dleeforysthe@gmail.com</u> <u>https://www.tradbodhran.com/ensembles</u>

Rye Creek

Folk, Irish, western and good old mountain music. Contact Terry Ryan Axline, 293-8924 (<u>neomexicana@hotmail.com</u>) or Ron Trellue, 505-362-2551 (<u>trellue@swcp.com</u>) or visit <u>www.myspace.com/ryecreeknm</u>.

Celtic Coyotes

Traditional music from Scotland, Ireland, Wales, and Brittany. Contact: Doug Cowan <u>celticcoyotes@yahoo.com</u> (710-0583).

Friends Forever

Michael and Donna Coy play Celtic, Folk, Cowboy and Originals. Contact: 296-2017 or 250-4429; <u>mmcoy3@msn.com</u>.

The Singing Coyote Sisters

Donna Coy & Michelle Palmer perform Celtic, Folk, Gospel, and Sing-A-Longs. Contact: 296-2017 or 730-1985 <u>mmcoy3@msn.com</u>

Thursdays at 6 PM Open Irish Music Session

Hops Brewery 7222 4th St NW, Los Ranchos De Albuquerque

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IRISH DANCE

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SEE OUR WEBSITE OR CONTACT KATE PADILLA, MSW, AT (505) 415 - 4390

OR BRIGHTBURNACADEMY@GMAIL.COM

https://www.brightburnacademy.com

Culture All Around

Dance Classes:

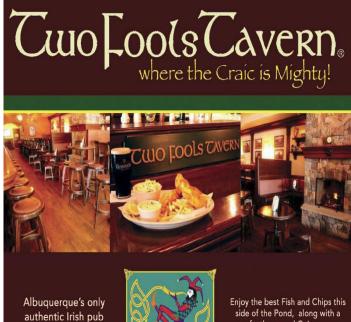
Brightburn Academy of Irish Dance (formerly Celtic Steps Arizona/New Mexico), at the McDermott Athletic Center, 801 Loma Colorado, Rio Rancho. Call 505-415-4390 or visit https://www.brightburnacademy.com for further information.

Ceili dance classes are held every Wednesday at the GAC. The **new** time is 6:30 - 8 PM. \$3.00. No experience necessary! (For info, call Susan Green at 505-948-1415.)

Celtic Music on the Radio and the Web:

★ The Thistle and Shamrock program, featuring Fiona Ritchie, airs on KANW 89.1 FM, Sundays at 12:00 noon.

★ 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.)

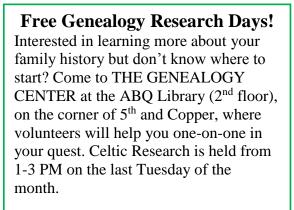


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Questions? Contact Robert Harper at robertharper48@comcast.net

Calendar of Events

IAS Events

Date	Day	What			
Notice: There are no General Meetings in July and August.					
August 3	Thursday	IAS Board of Directors meeting, 7 PM on Zoom. All members are invited			
		to attend. (Email Kathy Wimmer for the link.)			
September 7	Thursday	IAS Board of Directors meeting, 7 PM on Zoom. All members are invited			
_		to attend. (Email Kathy Wimmer for the link.)			
September 8	Friday	IAS Monthly Meeting and Program, 7 PM at the GAC. Irish Dance			
		performance by the McTeggart step dancers!			
September 17	Sunday	Annual IAS/St. Andrew Scottish Society Joint Picnic, noon to 4 PM at			
		the Elena Gallegos Picnic Area. (Details to come.)			

Celtic/GAC Events

The GAC phone number is 888-4833 (call after 4 PM)

(The Club is closed Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Sunday—unless a special event is happening.)

July 11, 18, 25	Tuesdays	The Irish Slow session meets Tuesdays at 6:30 in the Manzano Mesa	
		Multi-Generational center, near Central and Eubank. For info, contact	
		Kip Malone on Facebook.	
July 5, 12, 19, 26	Wednesdays	Ceili Dancing Classes at the GAC, 6:30 - 8 PM, \$3.00. No experience	
		necessary! (Call Susan Green at 505-948-1415 for info.)	
July 5, 12, 19, 26	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 (<u>bpdeaver@gmail.com</u>).	
July 6, 13, 20, 27	Thursdays	Albuquerque Traditional Irish Music Open Session from 6-9 PM at	
		Hops Brewery, 7222 4th Street. For more info, contact Harlow Pinson at	
		hpinson@indepthl.com.	
July 2, 16	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.	
July 16	Sunday	Jazz Sunday at the GAC, jam session and performance, hosted by the	
		Rio Grande Jazz Society. Dancers welcome! \$5 Entry for non-members.	
		Free for current members of the GAC. 2:00 to 5:30 PM.	

Irísh-Amerícan Society of New Membership Application/Renewal Form	Mexíco
Please Check One: Membership Application Membership Renew	val
First Name: Last Name:	
If this is a renewal, has your contact information changed? Yes 🔲 No 🗖	נ
Address:	
Please choose your membership level:	
□ Student (\$10) □ Individual (\$20) □ Family (\$25) *	
 (Optional) Additional Associate Membership to the German-American C person)* * If you opt to add the additional GAC fee to a family IAS membership, pleas members of your family should receive a GAC associate membership card (at person to your total dues): 	se indicate which
Optional) If you receive your newsletter by US mail (instead of electron consider adding an extra \$5 to your annual membership to help offset the cost postage.	
Enclosed is a total of \$	
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