



# IRISH TIMES

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

APRIL 2021

Note: Irish-American Society meetings are usually held on the second Friday of each month, except during July and August (and for special events). In the Before Times, the meeting location was the Memorial Hall at the First Unitarian Church, 3701 Carlisle Blvd NE, SW corner of Comanche and Carlisle (where someday we may meet again).

## Next Virtual Meeting: Friday, April 9<sup>th</sup>, 7 PM

### Lecture: One Hundred Years of Irish Independence, 1921-2021



Larry Kirwan, our speaker for our Zoom meeting in April, is a Wexford, Ireland-born New York City-based playwright, novelist (*Rockaway Blue* is his latest), songwriter, and Irish history expert, most famous as lead singer of the long-running *Black 47* rock band. (See more about his music on p. 9 of this issue.) His talk, with a Q&A, will focus on the turbulent times of the Irish War of Independence from Great Britain ("The Tan War"), the Treaty which ended that war and established the Irish Free State, and the short, bitter Irish Civil War that immediately followed the signing of the Treaty. A key player in this dramatic history was General Michael Collins, the ruthless anti-British Crown rebel leader who headed the new-born Irish Free State Army in battle against his former comrades in the anti-Treaty Irish Republican Army. On a visit to his home County of Cork, General Collins was assassinated by an IRA sniper. That monumental loss to the Irish people is dramatically re-told in Larry Kirwan's famous song, "The Big Fella, Michael Collins," from the *Black 47* album, *Home of the Brave*. (The IAS thanks the New Mexico State Poetry Society for helping to support this event.)

NOTE: As we have done for past Zoom meetings, the link to the event will be sent out shortly before 7 PM on April 9<sup>th</sup>. IAS members will be sent the link automatically. Feel free to forward the link to any friends who might be interested.

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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) 307-1700).

Your sponsorship will also appear on the IAS website ([www.irishamericansociety-nm.com](http://www.irishamericansociety-nm.com)) at no extra charge.




## President's Message

By Ellen Dowling

**Wow!** That's the best word to describe our amazing virtual St. Patrick's Day Party on March 14! First, I'd like to thank all the "content artists" (internet speak, ha!) who contributed to our event: IAS Poet Laureate Bill Nivens, for his "Owed to the Potato" (see p. 5 for the complete poem); board member Suzanne Taichert for the Irish blessings; Miranda Rensburger playing the harp; board member Maureen Riley and Larry Compton for the Irish trivia; the Jug O' Punch band; the retelling of "The Fate of the Children of Lir" by the Bardic Sisters (Kathy Wimmer and Gwen Easterday); the Brightburn Academy of Irish Dance step dancers; board member Larry Compton for the St. Patrick Breastplate reading; Dirk Mewes and the Back Lane Boys (including the Irish uilleann pipes!); Aden Kemp on the Scottish Highland Pipes; the Duke City Ceili Band; and the closing sing-along of "The Parting Glass," with Kathy Wimmer.

Secondly, thanks to all who made this wonderful event possible: our treasurer, Kathy Wimmer (also our Zoom wrangler and script writer), St. Pat's Committee Chair Maureen Riley, and committee members Gwen Easterday, Larry Compton, Suzanne Taichert, and Bill Nevins. Great job, all of you!

And last but not least, those generous folks who made donations to the IAS in support of the party and the Society in general: Pete McKenna, Libby Casarez, Patty Wiemers, Edie Henderson Brooks, David Rensberger, John Roche, Bill Nevins, Mary Lou Garrett, Karen Wall, and Don and Fran Hardy.

Looking ahead: We are truly honored to have such a well-known musician, author, and all-around amazing Irishman as Larry Kirwan coming to Zoom with us at our April 9<sup>th</sup> meeting. Thanks to our Programs Director, Bill Nevins, for making the arrangements. This is indeed the centenary year of the Irish War of Independence, so we are really looking forward to Larry Kirwan's presentation. (And yes, we hope he will play us a tune or two.)

## Membership Report

By Gwen Easterday

**Céad Mile Fáilte:** A hundred thousand welcomes to new members Michael Fanning, Mary Lou Garrett, Theresa Kelly, Dianne Phelan Muller & Dworkin Muller! Thanks, also, to returning members Bob and Vikki Bryers—we are glad you are back. And, finally, many thanks to those current members who have already renewed for 2021.

As of March 18<sup>th</sup>, 2021, we have 41 individuals and 40 family (x 2) RENEWALS for a total of 122 members, thus far in this start of the second year of the pandemic. While we are sad to see so many members decide not to renew, we are grateful for the folks who have stuck with us this past year and also for the folks who have decided to join for the first time this year.

Just a note to let you know, if you also paid the extra \$5 for an associate membership to the GAC, your cards will come as soon as possible—please be patient with me. We understand the German American Club (GAC) is still not currently permitted to be open, so you probably don't need the cards just yet. However, if the GAC should suddenly open, please let us know you need your card right away, and we'll do our best to get that to you. So far, there are 24 of us who have also elected to be Associate Members of the GAC. I know, I know—y'all are still waiting for your GAC Associate member cards! And remember, you won't receive an IAS membership card unless you've also paid to be an associate member of the GAC.

### **Message from Norita Callahan:**

RONALD MCDONALD HOUSE STILL SEEKING PULL-TAB DONATIONS! The aluminum or steel pull tabs donated from beverage cans or ANY kind of canned food (6000 + pounds annually) generate funds to offset the House expenses. YOUR donations make a significant impact and are very much appreciated. Thanks this month to Kari & Steve Laverty and family, Sarah Erb Mitchell in MT, and Barbara Nagey.

## Treasurer's Report February 2021

**Kathy Wimmer, Treasurer**

Category	Income		Category	Expenses
Membership—electronic (Square)	\$209.75		U-Stor-It monthly storage fee	\$35.00
Membership—cash/checks	\$210.00		Ck# 224: Larry Compton (Feb. newsletter mailing supplies)	\$87.29
GAC membership	\$30.00		Ck# 225: Attracta Fahey: Feb. poetry salon honoraria (\$50 from IAS; \$50 from Jules Poetry Playhouse; \$50 from NM State Poetry Society)	\$150.00
Donations towards IAS Poetry Salon Honoraria: Jules Poetry Playhouse--\$100 NM State Poetry Society--\$100	\$200.00		Ck# 226: Adrian Rice: Feb poetry salon honoraria (\$50 from IAS; \$50 from Jules Poetry Playhouse; \$50 from NM State Poetry Society)	\$150.00
Donations to IAS from Michele Buchanan; Maria Carew; Heidi Hermanson; Billy Brown	\$112.34			
Donation to defray newsletter mailing costs	\$5.00			
Amazon smile quarterly donations	\$20.65			
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$787.74</b>		<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>(\$422.29)</b>
			IAS Account prior month's ENDING balance	\$8,727.39
			Plus Income (current month)	\$787.74
			Less Expenses (current month)	(\$422.29)
			Current month's Ending Balance	\$9,092.84

### ***Last month's question to the members: If you have an Irish ancestor (or a relative still living in Ireland), can you tell us something about them?***

Michele Buchanan: "My Irish grandfather came from Cork, and emigrated to Chicago. When I was three, he gave me an autoharp, as lap harps were pretty non-existent in those days. Surprise, surprise! When I retired from teaching, playing the harp became my next vocation. He must have planted that seed, as I'd never played an instrument before. Someday I'll play for the IAS again, maybe team up with Gwen and Kathy."

Bill Nevins: "Mrs. Anna Kiley (Eagle), my great-grandmother (my father's grandmother), emigrated to the USA (Connecticut) from Cahir town in County Tipperary sometime late in the 1800s. She lived until I was in my early teens so we spent many fine years together. I also have Irish ancestors who came to America much earlier in history. Two of them fought in the Union Army in the American Civil War."

Karen Wall: "With a name like Wall, I'm pretty sure I have some never-met relatives still in Ireland, but don't know anything about them. "Wall" is a very old name there, originally de Valle, which was the name of one of the original invading Norman families to settle there, so my original ancestors in Ireland were Norse who mixed with the Irish and here I am! Waterford Crystal still maintains their American distribution center in Wall, NJ, which is named for my ancestor, Garrett Dorsett Wall, who is listed among notable names from Ireland. He was a politician, judge, and US Senator for NJ back in the mid-19th century. When I was in Waterford a couple of years ago, I shared my last name and found a lot of locals knowing our history there."

## Owed to the Potato

by Liam Mor MacNavin (Bill Nevins)

Oh dear potato, what do we owe  
to thee?

In this humble Ode, we may  
surely see!

Oh proud potato, you bear many  
names—spud, mashup, hoboos  
ice cream cone, freedom fries  
pommes frites chips and crisps.  
Pommes de terre, mon cher!  
You bring us divine gifts of  
fish-n-chips, tato skins,  
shepards pies, some pure tato-  
vodkas, lots of peelings to peel  
when we're assigned KP—  
And endless happy munching as  
we watch tv!

Potato dear, you're a friend of  
every locked-down pandemic-  
couch potato,  
And that's no mistake!  
Potatoes are good, potatoes are  
cheap  
They fill up our bellies and roll  
through our sleep  
Potatoes have eyes, but I doubt  
that they see  
How much they are loved by  
the likes of you and me,  
For when we're unconscious in  
sweet land o' nod  
We dream of taters a-growing  
'neath our holy sod

So to whom do we owe thanks  
for the gift of the potato?

The truth, dear Irish friends is  
that we'd never have any spuds  
French fries or chips or roasted  
and loaded  
If the indigenous folks of the  
Americas hadn't cultivated  
them

For long centuries and gifted  
them to us Europeans.  
So, yes, the Irish potato is the  
Native American potato  
By right of hard work and skill  
at planting and nurturing  
And that is the truth for all to  
see. *Go raibh maith agat*,  
thanks, you say?  
"You're very welcome,  
indeed," say our generous  
indigenous friends!

Fun fact: Irish potato candy  
contains absolutely no traces of  
potato!  
Imagine that!  
Yet in Scotland the Brave,  
potato cakes made of mashed-  
up spuds  
Are called tattie scones  
But in Northern Island the good  
folks fry up their mash into  
paddies called fadge.  
And of course, fish 'n chips is  
everybody's choice after a pub  
crawl, natch!

What's in a name? Let's play  
the spud name game!  
In old Irish Gaelic, bedad, it  
was *práta* they were called,  
From which we get the Irish  
word praties,  
As in the praties are roasted  
Come in and eat your fill.

"Potato" derives from the  
Haitian "batata,"  
And New World Potatoes first  
came from Peru  
Where they were called patata  
Or shalaina and papas by the  
Incas and Spanish--

They came in nearly every hue  
Purple, red, yellow and blue--  
But the only tato-clones that the  
haughty Empire would permit  
into Ireland had to be starchy-  
white.

"Potato Head" him—or her—  
self used to be titled Mishter  
Potato Head  
but cancel-culture neutered the  
poor chap,  
and now I suppose potayto they  
is potahto them--  
A-hem! What can ye say? It's a  
strange new day,  
Fiddle dee dee rye oh day do  
dee do day!

As Famous Seamus that big-  
shot poet told us well,  
We'd do better to dig taters than  
to drink our way to hell  
For heaven's warmth waits for  
those that dig turf  
And them that's too lazy?  
Well . . .  
A chilly dog's breakfast is all  
the likes of them are worth.  
Yer man Heaney had a rare way  
with the words, mind ye.  
Let's hear a snip of those very  
Seamussy words right now,  
from his great poem "Digging,"  
for sure:

"The cold smell of potato  
mould, the squelch and slap  
Of soggy peat, the curt cuts of  
an edge  
Through living roots awaken in  
my head."

Ah, sure, my own head has felt  
that way of a morning after last  
night's fun, Shamie,  
But don't that just warm yer  
heart and start your taste buds  
salivating  
For a plate of ketchup-drenched  
fries? Up Cork Up Tipp Up  
Down,  
Up the Rah, Hoo-hah, Up the  
Spuds!  
And wash 'em down with a  
flowing mug of creamy  
Guinness suds!

Now when back in the darker  
days of Irish history  
Black 1847 that time of famine,  
the Great Hunger/*An Gorta Mor*  
It's a mystery as to why the  
potato went black with blight,  
And our British landlords did  
not try to feed us  
When they cut off all our food  
except our potatoes  
Which had mostly gone  
blackish and turned into mush  
For the crop had failed and  
we'd nothing at all  
but stumps and grass and  
prayers to feed our old ones,  
wee kids, and all.  
The Widow at Windsor Victoria  
the First and her callous Lords

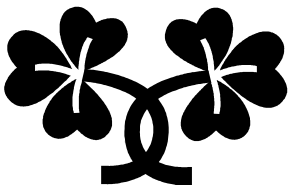
Told us starving Papists to  
convert for free soup, or go  
straight to the County Hell  
Or to the USA, Canada,  
Australia, Mexico, Liverpool,  
the Big Smoke or  
—well, anyplace we could find  
a square meal and a job!

'Twas terrible troubled times,  
indeed, *mo chroi*, don't you  
see?  
But can we Irish not forgive and  
forget as good folk must?  
And make nice with our English  
neighbors and their local  
Shoneens?  
Well, time may tell for  
DeValera's rotting in the Dirty  
Dust and  
Since Brexit we Paddies back in  
Eire are feeling fairly fine,  
hitched up to the European  
Union party line,  
with its jobs and bucks, you see.  
While poor Britain cracks up  
drifting along to the cold North  
Sea  
And Victoria's great grand-  
daughter sits her royal self  
down  
on her shaky St. George's  
throne. All alone.  
With only her crown. And nary  
a roast potato nor a daycent cup  
of tea.

Ah but St. Patrick's Day  
approaches and we've fun to be  
had  
And there's no use weeping  
over old times and sad . . .  
So lift up yer glasses and toast  
the tuber that makes us all glad.  
Here's a cheer to the potato,  
may it never fail again! Amen!  
And may rainbows and  
leprechauns guard each row of  
growing spuds  
For sure 'tis the Irish future that  
looks grand for the likes of us

Thus this ode to the potato,  
That noble tuber, doth conclude,  
And we hope you all now see  
the sweet and bitter truth  
How the potato has been a  
fierce friend in sooth  
And stood by the Irish in  
troubles and such  
And now is our stalwart pal to  
the end  
To which is owed so very, very  
much.

And come tell me Sean  
O'Farrell where the rising is to  
be  
At the auld spot by the river  
right well known to you and  
me!



## Flowers of the Forest

We were saddened to hear of the passing of Sharon Busboom on March 7<sup>th</sup>, at age 69. While not a member of the IAS, Sharon was a long-time member of the St. Andrew Scottish Society and actively involved, for many years, with the Rio Grande Valley Celtic Festival, where she worked with many of us in the IAS to set up our booth at the Festival. Several years back, she was named "Honored Guest" at the Festival.



May She Rest In Peace.



## The Irish Book Club

One of the best things about being an online book club is that there need be no interruptions during this trying time. 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 discussion in March was *Hamnet* by Maggie O'Farrell. In April, we'll discuss *Big Girl, Small Town*, by Michelle Galen.

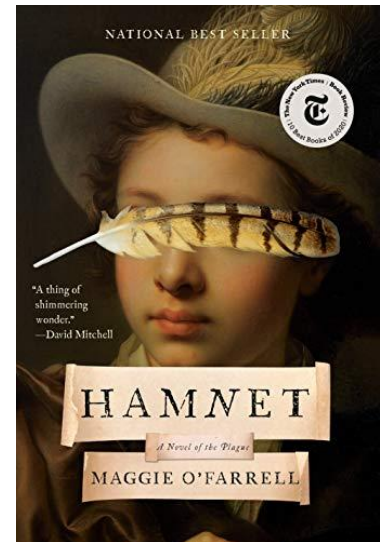
### *Hamnet*, by Maggie O'Farrell

Amazon's description: "In 1580's England, during the Black Plague, a young Latin tutor falls in love with an extraordinary, eccentric young woman in this 'exceptional historical novel' (*The New Yorker*) and best-selling winner of the Women's Prize for Fiction.

Agnes is a wild creature who walks her family's land with a falcon on her glove and is known throughout the countryside for her unusual gifts as a healer, understanding plants and potions better than she does people. Once she settles with her husband on Henley Street in Stratford-upon-Avon, she becomes a fiercely protective mother and a steadfast, centrifugal force in the life of her young husband, whose career on the London stage is taking off when his beloved young son succumbs to sudden fever.

A luminous portrait of a marriage, a shattering evocation of a family ravaged by grief and loss, and a tender and unforgettable re-imagining of a boy whose life has been all but forgotten, and whose name was given to one of the most celebrated plays of all time, *Hamnet* is mesmerizing, seductive, impossible to put down—a magnificent leap forward from one of our most gifted novelists."

The Irish Book Club's take: "OMG, I don't even know where to begin with *Hamnet*, by Maggie O'Farrell. An absolutely amazing book, one of the best I've read in this group. It's a story that fills in the few facts of Shakespeare's personal life—that he was the son of a discredited glover; that he married Anne (here called Agnes) and had three children: Susanna and the twins Judith and Hamnet; that he left his family in Stratford to go do theater in London; that his son Hamnet died at age 11, probably of the plague; that he made a lot of money in London, not from his plays, but from his ownership in the theater; and that he returned to Stratford and bought a huge house. But who was Anne/Agnes, really? And what was their love and marriage really like? And what happened the night Judith became ill with the plague? This wonderful book answers all those questions."

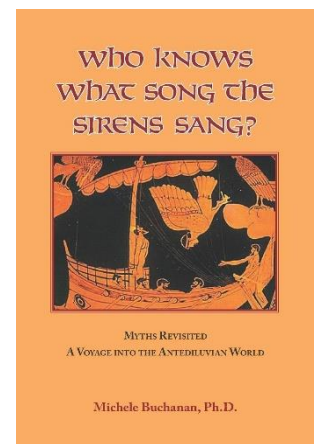


### And also available on Amazon:

#### *Who Knows What Song the Sirens Sang?*

IAS member Michele Buchanan's latest book.

From Michele: More than a few people asked for a sequel to *Scota's Harp*, so I wrote another 100 pages or so. It's small, but a good finish to the situation I left my hero in. It's \$13.95 on Amazon or at the local bookstores, and \$10 if you ask in person. Or if we ever get to have another festival, I'm selling them as a bundle for \$30 together. (You can contact Michele at [tmbuchs@gmail.com](mailto:tmbuchs@gmail.com).)



## Member Spotlight: Don and Fran Hardy

By Tracee Edwards



I was first introduced to Don and Fran Hardy (AKA the fantastic Mr. & Mrs. Claus) at the IAS Christmas Party in 2019. Later that December, I saw the Hardys again as Mr. and Mrs. Claus at my neighbor's Christmas party. (They are mutual members of the Albuquerque Rose Society.) It seems the Clauses were everywhere I turned, spreading cheer and happiness. It really is a small world.

I next saw the Hardys at a few IAS meetings before the COVID pandemic hit, but then we were on lockdown and the IAS was unable to meet. I had the pleasure of working with them for the IAS Virtual Christmas Party this last year and am so happy that I was given the opportunity to interview them now, telephonically, for the Member Spotlight for the newsletter.

I am interested in how people end up living in a particular place. Were you born there? Did your car break down and you decided to stay? Did you re-locate due to a job? I asked this of the Hardys, and they said

they both grew up in places with extreme winter weather and knew they wanted to live in a warm climate. Fran grew up near Pittsburgh, and Don was born and raised in western New York. They resided in Florida for 18 years before moving to Albuquerque. Fran retired from the US Postal Service while in Florida, and in 1994, Don took a job with Sandia National Labs and they headed west. Albuquerque provides them the pleasure of four mild seasons that they love.

The Hardys met in the summer of 1972. Fran had graduated high school in 1971 at 17, and once she was 18 was able to start working. Don had graduated college and did not have to go to Vietnam (gratefully) as he flunked his vision test. He decided he would work that summer before starting his graduate studies. They both started working at the same amusement park and so began three years of dating and 45 years of married life! Don and Fran joined the IAS in the late 1990's . . . Don thinks it may have been 1997 at Summerfest. Some of their favorite IAS memories are the members they have met throughout the years, St. Patrick's Day parties, and of course the Christmas parties. The Hardys especially enjoy being Santa and Mrs. Claus and have done so for about 10 years.

I asked them if they had any Celtic ancestry, and Don said he is a mixture of everything. He did the "23 and Me" DNA test and is 59% UK and the rest European Continent. Fran's maiden name is McGinnis. She is 1/4 Irish and 3/4 German.

The Hardys celebrated their 10<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary in 1985 with a trip to Ireland. They took a two-week bus tour around the coast. They said it is hard to pick a favorite place, but they loved Dublin and the Ring of Kerry. They also enjoyed all the ruins. They said the Irish were so kind, and they had two sweet experiences of that kindness. They were looking for a store in the rain and an elderly lady asked them if they needed help. The lady said she did not know where the store was and went about her way as the Hardys continued to look. Then the lady came back and found the Hardys as she had located the store for them. Another act of kindness they experienced was when they had been walking about sightseeing and then got on the bus back to the hotel. The bus was crowded and a nun insisted Fran take her seat and wouldn't take "no" for an answer even though Fran was much younger than the nun. Don and Fran said the most wonderful thing about the trip was that they made good friends on the visit that they continue to be in touch with to this day.

We finished the interview with discussing something positive that has happened this past year despite COVID and all the restrictions. Don said that due to technology we have been able to stay connected virtually. We have realized that we are able to adapt and enjoy life.



## Larry Kirwan's Music—An Introduction!

By Bill Nevins

Larry Kirwan, who will visit the IAS via Zoom on April 9<sup>th</sup>, is a playwright, novelist (*Rockaway Blue*), and casual historian who is famous as leader/songwriter of Irish-American rebel-rockers the Black 47 band, dubbed "The House Band of New York City."

Born in Wexford, Ireland and now a US citizen, Larry wrote most of the Black 47 songs, often in praise of Irish and American heroes. His dramatic vocals and searing Stratocaster guitar blend with Black 47's keening, jazzy uilleann pipes, trombone, sax, bass, and drums in cheerful bravado. Black 47, who were the most danceable and most thoughtful of all Irish-diaspora bands, retired from the stage a few years ago, but their recordings live on.

Indeed, generations of young Irish Americans seeking their historical roots gravitated to Black 47's stirring shows and albums. No other band covered topics as divergent as the bloody anti-draft riots that shook New York City during the US Civil War, the deadening boredom of 1950s Ireland, and the Irish people's long independence struggle and their survival as immigrants (in "Americkay"). Paradoxically, for all their heavy subject matter, Black 47 were also known as a good-times party band. Kirwan himself has baldly asserted, "I love to drink!" and celebrated working folks' right to sometimes raucous group celebrations.

But as you get older, even in the world of rock 'n' roll, you find that life is not all happy parties. There's a weight to it all, brought on by the accumulation of years, of tears, of losses and loves, griefs and memories.

That's the tough reality that Kirwan chews on in his great solo album, *Kilroy Was Here*, done in a very different style from Black 47. Stripped away is the bombast, but history and life affirmation remain in Kirwan's poetic lyrics and gentle vocals, accompanied by strings, soft horns, and acoustic guitar. Author Malachy McCourt joins Larry in the hilarious satirical song, "History of Ireland, Part One." In Kilroy's centerpiece song, "Life's Like That, Isn't It?," an Irish boy cherishes his father's love, yet stoically accepts that, life being what it must be, he will see his dad only fleetingly over the years. Kirwan's own father was a merchant seafarer, forced by economic realities to leave his family for long voyages to South America and beyond. Kirwan's autobiographical young hero joins his strong mother in her lonely pain, yet uses the guitar his visiting father gave him to carve a niche for himself in the world. He never forgets the song he wants to sing for his dad, and at the end of the day, he sings that song very well, indeed.

You can listen to that song right here on YouTube:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z7ZX4rF12Go&list=RDz7ZX4rF12Go&index=1>

To get to know their music, I recommend the Black 47 collection albums, *St. Patrick's Day Party*, *Rise Up*, and *Funky Ceilidh*, as well as Kirwan's solo recordings. But you really can't go wrong with any Black 47 purchase, and many of their performances can be found for free on YouTube. Larry also hosts a weekly radio program, "Celtic Crush" on Sirius XM subscription radio.

You can buy Larry Kirwan and Black 47 albums on Amazon or, better, directly from their website:

<http://www.black47.com>

Fair warning: Larry Kirwan's music is addictive! You will go back for more!

## Board Member Spotlight: Bill Nevins

By Suzanne Taichert

### *How did you first get involved in the IAS, and why did you decide to serve on the Board of Directors?*

I joined the IAS not long after I moved to New Mexico from the east coast in May 1996. I've enjoyed the friendly get-togethers and holiday parties and especially Norita Callahan's Irish dancing lessons, though I still have two left feet! The IAS meetings reminded me of Irish-American pub-style gatherings back east that I missed, such as the McSwiney Club in Philly and such. It has been a rare honor to serve as IAS Programs Director this year and I hope to keep on keeping on with that job.



### *What are your favorite things about Ireland and Irish Culture?*

The music, the poetry, the *craic* (fun), warmth, and endless “gab” that informs Irish culture and society. The Peace Process which ended the long “Troubles” and, I hope, will endure as we move peacefully towards a 32-county united Ireland. I have never felt lonely or bored in Ireland. Also, I admire the grit and resilience of the people of Ireland. They have endured profound suffering, from The Great Famine Hunger to the present Covid 19 lockdown, with perseverance, community spirit, and not a small amount of grim wit. The Irish can laugh even in the face of death, as many Irish writers have demonstrated. I think it's a heritage they have kept from their very healthy ancient tribal Gaelic society.

### *Have you traveled to Ireland, and if so, what were your favorite locations?*

Oh, yes, I am blessed to have visited Ireland many times—north, south, east, and west, since 1971. I love the whole island, but among my top favorite places are Doolin in County Clare, the Aran Islands, the pubs of Galway, Sligo, Derry City and North Belfast, the hills of Donegal, the bustling streets and museums of Dublin, the wee towns of Limavady and Coalisland with their cheerful locals, all the wild Irish coast lands, and any place in Ireland where I can share a pint and a chat with the likes of my dear Irish friends Tony O'Hara, Fergus O'Hehir, Mary Nelis, Bernadette McAliskey, Ray Collins, and Joe McCooley! And every place in Ireland where one can meet new friends—which is most anywhere on the island!

### *What are your current hobbies and interests?*

Well, I retired from teaching at UNM a few years ago, so that Jeannie and I could travel, visit our families and spend more time on our mountain forest land near Angel Fire. I still write magazine articles and poetry, and I am working on a third book. I read a lot, with an abiding interest in Irish history and lore. And Jeannie, who is herself a fine musician, often gets me up and dancing when there is an Irish jig or reel in the air! And, truth be told, in these tough times, I spend some time fondly remembering friends who have passed and smiling at the memories of those friendships.

### *Anything you would like to add about yourself, words of wisdom, etc?*

Well, I daresay that few who know me well would consider me a “fount of wisdom,” though I do appreciate my friends' toleration of my foibles and eccentricities. And them that don't like me—well, you know how that song goes! (Laughs.). I've always liked that old Irish saying, “If you didn't laugh, you'd cry!” I try to laugh as often as is sanely possible. Thanks a million for this interview, Suzanne!

## 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.themacsports.com/brightburn-irish-dance> for further information.

♣ **Ceili dance classes** are held every Wednesday at the GAC at 7:15 PM, \$4.00. No experience necessary! Call Norita Callahan at 298-2708. [Indefinitely postponed. ☹]

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

♣ **The Thistle and Shamrock** program, featuring Fiona Ritchie, airs on KANW 89.1 FM, Mondays at 6:00 PM.

♣ **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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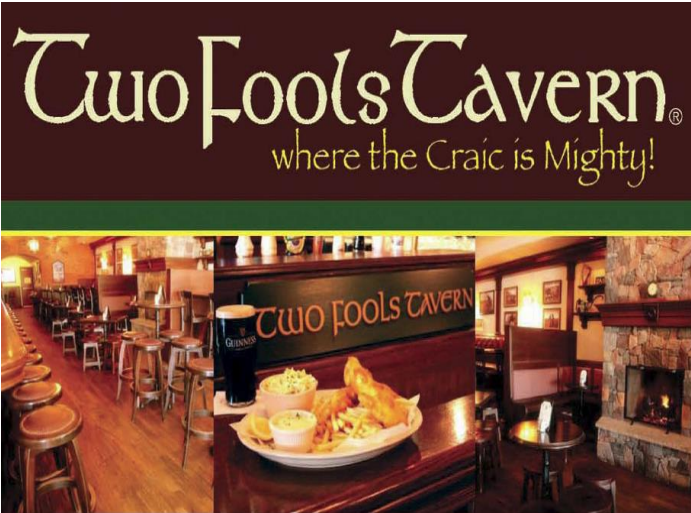
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### Free Genealogy Research Days!

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.

Questions? Contact Robert Harper at [robertharper48@comcast.net](mailto:robertharper48@comcast.net)

# 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: \_\_\_\_\_

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Please choose your membership level:

☐ Student (\$10) ☐ Individual (\$20) ☐ Family (\$25) \*

☐ (Optional) Additional Associate Membership to the German-American Club (\$5 per person)\*

\* If you opt to add the additional GAC fee to a family IAS membership, please indicate which members of your family should receive a GAC associate membership card (and add \$5 per person to your total dues):

\_\_\_\_\_

☐ (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 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

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OR

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