



IRISH TIMES

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

OCTOBER 2022

Note: Irish-American Society meetings are usually held on the second Friday of each month, except during July and August (and for special events). For all future meetings, we are back at the German American Club at 4821 Menaul Blvd NE.

Next General Meeting: **Friday, October 14th** **7 PM at the GAC** **A Celtic New Year Performance** **by** ***The Bardic Sisters!***

The Bardic Sisters will reprise the program they created last October for an event called "Spooky Las Cruces," where they performed outside the Branigan Cultural Center as part of its *Samhain* celebration. *Samhain* (pronounced "sow-in"), in a literal translation, means "summer's end" and is the Irish Gaelic word for November. *Oíche Shamhna* means "Eve of Samhain" or, as we call it, Halloween.



The Bardic Sisters are a music/storytelling duo, comprised of Gwen Easterday and Kathy Wimmer, and featuring Celtic harps. They will tell a story from County Cavan called "Michael and the Haunted House," and will accompany a *Samhain* tale, "Nera's Adventures in the Otherworld," with sound effects and tunes such as "She Moved through the Fair" and "King of the Fairies." The tale includes the zombie-like creatures called the *Sluagh Sidhe*. There might even be an appearance of two ghosts from the Belfast Harp Festival of 1792!

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

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

Business-card-sized ads are a mere \$5 a month. Larger-sized ads can be negotiated with the editor, Ellen Dowling (edowling@standuptrainer.com 505-307-1700). Your sponsorship will also appear on the IAS website (www.irishamericansociety-nm.com) at no extra charge.



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President's Message

By Karen Wall

Slainte friends! Here we are in September already! It was good to see you all at our first meeting after the summer break, and we were all greatly entertained by Rye Creek! Some even started a sitting mosh pit up front. I heard the picnic was fun and yummy. (Family health issues kept me at home.)

It's almost time to start planning the next rounds of Celtic gatherings. If you feel so inclined, consider being part of the planning team or volunteer. There are some good perks to it! Our annual Christmas party is coming up on December 11, 2022 from noon to 3 PM at the German-American Club. We need someone to head up the committee for planning. It should be great craic! Speaking of balloons . . . our very own Balloon Fiesta is coming up in October, and I'm sure it will be a great time to be there and see people's faces. Maybe one day we will see a leprechaun or pot o' gold-shaped balloon up in the air!

I'm curious about who in our group enjoys genealogy and the like. I recall early in my membership there was a column in the newsletter that would highlight someone's last name and its history related to Ireland or the Celts and Norse. It's fun learning about people and where they came from. Wouldn't it be fun to see some more names and history?! [Editor's Note: If anyone would like to take over the "What's in an Irish Name" monthly column, please let me know.]

Membership Report

By Caren Garcia

Céad Mile Fáilte: A hundred thousand welcomes to our new member Kathy Wade and returning members Monya Kmetz and family. As of September 1st, we have 54 individual, 1 student, and 49 (x 2) family memberships, for a total of 153 members.

Message from Norita Callahan: RONALD MCDONALD HOUSE STILL SEEKING PULL-TAB DONATIONS! Lots o' pull-tab baggies/cans from Marie Gignac and the staff at Mauldin's Flowers, AND McTire of Skye Pipe & Drum Band. Also Luisa Gignac, Rosalie & Dennis Pfeiffer, and Peter McKenna & Janet Patterson. Huge thanks to all!

Treasurer's Report As of August 31th, 2022*

Kathy Wimmer, Treasurer

Category	Income		Category	Expenses
Membership—electronic/Square (less fees—see expenses)	\$40.00		U-Stor-It monthly storage fee	-\$40.00
			Square fees (memberships)	-\$1.76
			Check #291: Ellen Dowling (reimburse for GoDaddy website domain renewal)	\$20.17
Total Income	\$40.00		Total Expenses	\$61.93
			IAS Account prior month's ENDING balance	\$8,041.11
			Plus Income (current month)	\$40.00
			Less Expenses (current month)	(\$61.93)
			*Ending Balance as of date of report	\$8,019.18

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 August is *Thin Places* by Kerri ni Dochartaigh; for September, we're reading *The Glorious Heresies* by Lisa McInerney; and in November, we'll discuss *We Don't Know Ourselves* by Fintan O'Toole.

Thin Places by Kerri ni Dochartaigh

From Amazon's description: "Both a celebration of the natural world and a memoir of one family's experience during the Troubles, *Thin Places* is a gorgeous braid of "two strands, one wondrous and elemental, the other violent and unsettling, sustained by vividly descriptive prose" (*The Guardian*).

Kerri ní Dochartaigh was born in Derry, on the border of the North and South of Ireland, at the very height of the Troubles. She was brought up on a council estate on the wrong side of town—although for her family, and many others, there was no right side. (One parent was Catholic, the other Protestant.) In the space of one year, they were forced out of two homes. When she was eleven, a homemade bomb was thrown through her bedroom window. Terror was in the very fabric of the city, and for families like ní Dochartaigh's, the ones who fell between the cracks of identity, it seemed there was no escape.

In *Thin Places*, a luminous blend of memoir, history, and nature writing, ní Dochartaigh explores how nature kept her sane and helped her heal, how violence and poverty are never more than a stone's throw from beauty and hope, and how we are, once again, allowing our borders to become hard and terror to creep back in. Ní



Create Something This Year!

When my lovely wife Beverly asked for a custom seal for her correspondence, it took just a day to create the examples you see here.

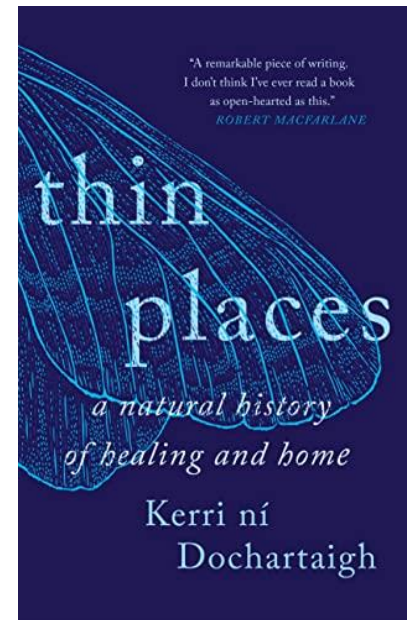
This is the magic of 3D printing: no matter who you are or what your level of expertise, we can bring any idea to life as a physical object.

It's been a rough couple of years and we're all tired of being stuck at home ... why not break out of the grind and create something new instead?

Contact us and we'll get your project started!



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Dochartaigh asks us to reclaim our landscape through language and study, and remember that the land we fight over is much more than lines on a map. It will always be ours, but—at the same time—it never really was."

And from an Amazon reviewer: "This will be brief, as others have expressed, better than I could, some of my issues, e.g., a bit too long, a bit confusing and/or vague at times. Agreed. However, I LOVED this book. Wild, raw, dangerous, frustrating, lyrical, dazzling, gut-wrenching. The author's battles with addiction, depression and deep trauma, juxtaposed with the rugged, healing natural beauty of Ireland were brilliantly articulated. This book will haunt me for a long time."

Member Spotlight: Suzanne Taichert

By IAS Member Elena Gallegos



I had the pleasure of speaking with IAS member Suzanne Taichert who, at the time, was enjoying the NM State Fair and awaiting the Arabian horse show. Although she does not ride often, she loves horses. Her mother, Zane Bergen Taichert (from Long Island, NY), was a gifted equestrian who owned two Arabian dapple-grey horses. Suzanne was also a photographer for the Sparks family farm located here in ABQ in the South Valley. She said she learned to move around a herd of horses by sticking out her elbows while photographing them. It was a magical experience for her. She also did a slide show on Celtic horses and ponies some years ago for an IAS meeting explaining how the ancient Celts revered and cared for their horses.

Suzanne has a BA in music from the University of Southern California. While at college, her roommate introduced her to Rae Dawn Chong, and they collaborated in 1978 in Los Angeles on a song played in the movie *Stony Island*. On another occasion, she met Carol King and went to one of her recording sessions. She said that was a high point of her life! In 2017 Suzanne received the Jazz Award from the NM Music Awards for the instrumental "Paulo's Run" from her CD *Emerge*. Todd Lowry and other local jazz musicians collaborated on that

recording, and her album of 1990s songs was judged by one of the Pointer Sisters!

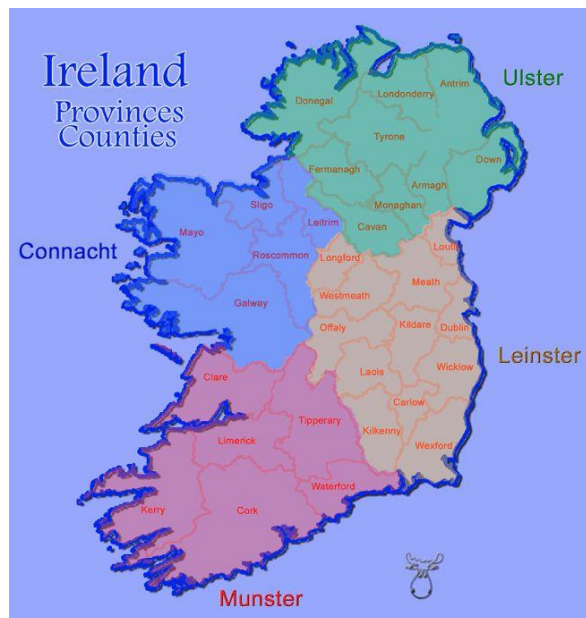
Suzanne was born in Santa Fe, but grew up in Albuquerque. After living in California for a decade, she moved to Florida and lived there for another decade. While in Florida she experienced five major hurricanes! During this time, she raised her daughter, Rane, and taught her to sing and play cello. (Her daughter still resides in South Florida and is a talented belly dancer and videographer.) She returned to NM in 2005, and shortly thereafter, she signed up for a Celtic music continuing education class at UNM, which was being taught by Harlow Pinson from the Celtic band *Saoirse*. She started playing at the Celtic slow sessions at the Blue Dragon and eventually joined *Saoirse*. She credits the ABQ Celtic music community for motivating her to play Celtic music. Since then, her other musical ventures include singing with the NM Celtic Singers, playing harp in the Canterbury Harp Ensemble, and playing the organ at St. Stephen's United Methodist church. She also teaches piano and harp at the NM School of Music.

We have also seen Suzanne play in the band *A Jug O' Punch*, where she plays the Celtic harp, keyboards, percussion, and sings lead. The band released an album in February entitled *About Time*, which features traditional Irish music. (It's available on thumb drive and CD. Please ask Suzanne or Cleve Sharp about purchasing; \$10 donations are appreciated so they can do a future project focusing on their youngest member, fiddler Grace Broadhead.)

Suzanne is partial to classical music and loves Chopin and Rachmaninov. For Celtic music she enjoys listening to *Solas* and *Lúnasa*. For Scottish music she listens to Jim Malcolm and for rock it has to be Tom Petty. She is also partial to a local band, the Curio Cowboys, a Western swing band run by her second cousin. One of her favorite local/national songwriters is Todd C. Lowry, who will be recording an album of original Celtic style music very soon. She also enjoys the "smooth jazz" sounds of ABQ trumpeter Ryan Montano. She hopes that more venues will be supportive of musicians and would love to one day see a Celtic Community Center in New Mexico.

Political Divisions of Ireland

By IAS Membership Chair Caren Garcia



For those of you interested in doing family genealogy research, one of the first things you will see that may be confusing is that there will be up to two names after the village or city being cited. If you do get a village name, it may appear like these examples: Carrigafoyle, County Kerry, Munster, Ireland; or Loughgall, County Armagh, Ulster. Most people are familiar with the county designations, but the latter one may not be as familiar; it is the province. The Provinces of Ireland have been around since long before the counties. In fact, it is said to be the oldest fact of Irish political history. The map on the left will help a lot with your searches. Meath has been considered a province at some time in the past, and theoretically there should be five of them, but before 1610, there were more of them. They were formerly administrative divisions but are not any longer; they are important historical divisions and are often mentioned in relation to historical and cultural events. In the Middle Ages they were ruled by “over kings” who by the 10th century had

been demoted to lords.

Another complication is that there are two kinds of parishes within these entities. There are civil parishes and religious parishes, and they may not coincide with each other. This is a very tricky part of your research. You will need to know whether it is a civil or religious parish you are asking about in order to get a reliable result from your searches.

Ever heard of townlands? These are geographic divisions of only 100-500 acres that are only found in certain areas of Ireland and the Scottish Western Isles. They are Gaelic in origin and predate the Norman occupation. There are over 1,000 of them in the county of Dublin and over 64,000 in Ireland, including both the Republic and NI.



The Banshee: The Ghostly Celtic Wailing Woman!

By IAS Member Bill Nevins

One of my scariest childhood memories was being terrified while watching the otherwise silly old Disney movie *Darby O'Gill and the Little People*. [It's the part where The Banshee appears in the Irish night to frighten old Darby and his pals.](#) Cheesy movie special effects aside, the banshee is a very real, very spooky manifestation of the ever-creative Irish imagination which has haunted we (and wee) Celts down the centuries, both back in the old country and here in America when her tale is re-told, often around Hallowe'en or Samhain time.



What—or who—is this banshee? Let's first look at her name itself. In the Irish or Scottish Gaelic languages, *bean* (pronounced *bann*) is the word for woman, while *sí* (pronounced *shee*) is the word for the *tumuli* mounds that dot the Irish countryside and are believed to be homes to the powerful ancient fairies or “little people” who are thought by some to still inhabit a mystic invisible realm just out of sight of human eyes but who can appear to the unwary or misfortunate on occasion. (The fairies may be a manifestation of the magical *Tuatha De Danaan* people, who mythology tells us once inhabited Ireland but who long ago disappeared “underground” and into another dimension.)

So, the banshee is a female fairy, but not a happy one! Her *keening* (wailing, screaming calls perhaps sounding a bit like that of a coyote or of a bull elk in rut) is not a welcome sound. (It is said to sometimes shatter glass.) To the ears of believers, the banshee's keening heralds the death of a family member or loved one, even of one who has died or is about to die far away. When several banshees appear at once, it indicates the death of someone great or holy. Hearing the banshee is said to be a sure sign that one is of ancient Celtic Irish or Scottish stock, perhaps from an aristocratic line!

Some versions of banshee lore claim that the woman, though called a fairy, was really the ghost of a murdered woman, or of a mother who died in childbirth. She is said to wear a dark cloak and to have long streaming hair and eyes red from weeping. She's rather similar to *La Llorona*, the New Mexico “ditch witch” who also frightens adults and children in many an old fireside story.

Now, cynical or more scientifically minded folks may scoff, “It's just the wind making those noises.” But hey, I have been caught unawares on a dark, misty west-of-Ireland night by odd sounds and vague shapes on a back road. And while some might say those were only wandering, mooing cows and that I might have that night taken a “wee drop-of-the-pure” at the local pub myself, I am here to tell you it can be a frightening experience! As Shakespeare's *Hamlet* tells his pal, “There are more things in Heaven and Earth, Horatio, than are dreamt of in your philosophy.”

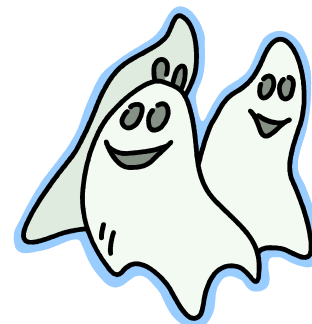


You may scoff, but hey—we are all mortal, aren't we? So, next time you hear a strange wailing sound of a dark moonless night. “Ask not for whom the banshee wails. She may well soon wail for thee!”

Happy Hallowe'en/Samhain, dear readers!



**Hallowe'en
AKA
Celtic New Year Celebration**



**Saturday, October 29th, 2022
at the German-American Club
4821 Menaul NE**

**6:30 to 10:00 PM
Variety Dance Music By
*Ray & Eva***

\$10 Adults – 18 & under free!

Costume Prizes - Judging at 8:00 PM
(Costumes always optional! We need folks to be judges, too!)

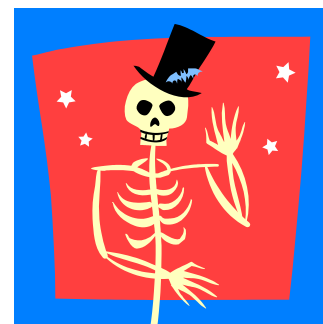
**Please bring a salty or sweet snack to share
Coffee/Tea Provided – Cash bar**

**Sponsored by
The Irish-American Society
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**For more information,
contact Norita Callahan
(noraabq@yahoo.com, 298-2708).**



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 kmillewimm@comcast.net (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 kmillewimm@comcast.net (505-249-7012).

Saoirse ("seer shih," Irish for "freedom")

Celtic music from Scotland, Ireland, Brittany, and Galicia, spiced with jazz and world beat. Contact: Harlow Pinson at hpinson@indepthl.com or 994-2135.

A Jug O'Punch

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

The Duke City Ceili Band will entertain you with fast paced jigs and reels, lilting waltzes, and rousing sea shanties from the Irish traditional repertoire. Find them on Facebook or contact Jim Crowley: jabbas40@yahoo.com.

Michele Buchanan, Harper

765-1288 (tmbuchs@gmail.com)

Mountain Road

Featuring Dain Forsyth on flute, whistles, bodhrán, and vocals, and Scott Estes on DADGAD Guitar and Irish Bouzouki, Mountain Road provides gorgeous airs, driving reels and jigs, stories and songs for all occasions.

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

Rye Creek

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



Celtic Coyotes

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

Friends Forever

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

The Singing Coyote Sisters

Donna Coy & Michelle Palmer perform Celtic, Folk, Gospel, and Sing-A-Longs. Contact: 296-2017 or 730-1985 mmcoy3@msn.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, \$2.00. No experience necessary! Call Norita Callahan at 505-298-2708.



FOR INFORMATION ON CLASSES FOR CHILDREN AGES 4 & UP, AS WELL AS ADULTS,
SEE OUR WEBSITE OR CONTACT KATE PADILLA, MSW, AT
(505) 415-4390
OR BRIGHTBURNACADEMY@GMAIL.COM

<https://www.brightburnacademy.com>

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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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 (2nd floor), on the corner of 5th 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

Calendar of Events

IAS Events

Date	Day	What
October 6	Thursday	IAS Board of Directors meeting , 7 PM on Zoom. All members are invited to attend. (Email Kathy Wimmer for the link.)
October 14	Friday	IAS Monthly Meeting and Program : A Celtic New Year Celebration with the Bardic Sisters! (Details on p. 1.)
October 29	Saturday	Halloween/Samhain Celtic New Year Celebration , co-hosted by the GAC and the IAS, 6:30-10:00 PM. (See flyer on p. 8 for details.)
November 3	Thursday	IAS Board of Directors meeting , 7 PM on Zoom. All members are invited to attend. (Email Kathy Wimmer for the link.)
November 11	Friday	IAS Monthly Meeting and Program : A musical performance by fiddler Nikelle Gessner.

Celtic/GAC Events

The GAC phone number is 888-4833.

October 1-3	Friday-Sunday	Aztec Highland Games , Riverside Park, Aztec, NM. https://www.aztechighlandgames.com/
October 4, 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 .
October 5, 12, 19, 26	Wednesdays	Ceili Dancing Classes with Norita at the GAC , 6:30 - 8 PM, \$2.00. No experience necessary! (Call 505-298-2708 for more info.)
October 6, 13, 20, 27	Thursdays	Albuquerque Traditional Irish Music Open Session from 7-10 PM at Hops Brewery, 7222 4 th Street. For more info, contact Harlow Pinson at hpinson@indepthl.com .
October 9	Sunday	ABQ Folk Festival : International, national, regional and local artists, including Celtic players the Dark-Eyed Juncos, the Sheep Stealers, and Wilson and McKee. The National Hispanic Cultural Center, 1701 4th St. SW, from 10 AM to 9 PM. Single advance tickets are \$25, \$35 for families. Info at abqfolkfest.org .
October 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.
October 21	Friday	The British Empire Revisited . Four panelists and their moderator will assess the contemporary legacy of colonialism in the British Empire, focusing on the Celtic peoples of Scotland, Wales, Ireland, and the peoples of the first nation outside the UK to leave the empire—India. The Celtic Studies Center at UNM, 2100 Mesa Vista Hall, 12 noon to 1:30 PM. (For info, contact Caleb Richardson at cwr@unm.edu .)

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 (\$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 \$_____

Please make checks payable to "The Irish-American Society" and mail to:
P.O. Box 13435, Albuquerque, NM 87192-3435

OR

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

How did you hear about us? _____

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