



IRISH TIMES

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

November 2024

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 Meeting
November 8, 2024
7 PM
at the Ramada Plaza
A Musical Performance by
The Irish Setters!



The ***Irish Setters*** are an Irish folk music band formed in Sabinal, New Mexico in 2016 by lead vocalist Beth Crowder with a backup band made up of mostly Albuquerque musicians: Pat Aruffo, Bill Balassi, Erika Gerety, and Dave Para. The group originally played traditional Irish songs from Beth's repertoire, with a few additions from others, but with the more recent addition of Dave Para, the band now has a new fount of traditional songs from his repertoire. The band has played annually for St. Patrick's Day at The Capital Bar in Socorro for years. Occasionally the band is able to squeeze in some other performances such as the Festival in Socorro and the Herb Fest.

Beth Crowder, an accomplished musician/singer and music teacher, sings beautiful lead vocals and plays guitar and occasional drum or bass. Dave Para, a professional folk musician for 40 years with his late wife Cathy Barton, is a forceful singer and multi-instrumentalist. Mostly Dave plays guitar and banjo, but there could always be the occasional leaf, jaw harp, gourd banjo, mouth bow, dulcimer, or mandolin. Pat Aruffo, fiddle player extraordinaire with flare, can beautifully play a tune, but her real strength is in improvisation and backing up any kind of music you want to throw at her. Bill Balassi, a guitar player with finesse, can play anything from swing to old-time to Americana, Rock, and Celtic. Erika Gerety, who plays an upright bass bigger than herself, holds down the bottom end while supporting Beth and Dave with harmonies.

This event is free and open to the public, so invite your friends!
Coffee and tea will be provided; there is a cash bar adjacent.
We ask that you bring a sweet or salty snack to share.

2024 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 505-307-1700). Your sponsorship will also appear on the IAS website (www.irishamericansociety-nm.com) at no extra charge.

President's Message

By Caren Garcia



Well, we finally made it to fall weather. I hope everyone is enjoying the change of seasons. We are off to a great start with our monthly programs. We had a good turnout and a lively interesting discussion with Dr. Maya Sutton about the Celtic origins of Halloween and a good number of folks joined in the spirit of the season and wore costumes. One lucky person won a copy of Dr. Sutton's latest book. (All those present at our meetings have a chance to win the door prize, something different every month, so come join us and get your free ticket for the prize!) We will be having a musical session in November. Feel free to get up and dance if the spirit moves you! Our guest performers will be *The Irish Setters*.

Your Board of Directors has been busy making sure there are performers and activities through the winter months. We are excited about the programs we have been working on. Next month you will be getting a roster of the proposed Board for the new year, and you will have the opportunity to comment, approve or disapprove of any or all of that roster. Those members who do not respond will be considered to have approved the roster, as is our usual process. Happy Samhain to All!

Membership Report

By Molly Martin

Cead Mile Failte: A hundred thousand welcomes to our newest member, Anne T. Gross. We have a grand total of 127 members, including student, 40 singles, and 86 family memberships.

The holidays are coming up fast. I wish everyone a wonderful Thanksgiving!

Ronald McDonald House Tab Collection Continues

Norita sez: "Put your pop-top in and shake it all about"



Aluminum pop-top tab collections are underway again for the IAS. Please bring your pop-top tabs to the meetings, where they will be collected and taken to the Ronald McDonald house to support their care of critically ill children in New Mexico.

Thanks to this summer's contributors:
Mac-Tire of Skye Pipes and Drums
IAS Members
Tom Windes

Treasurer's Report September 1 – 30, 2024*

Kathy Wimmer, Treasurer

Category	Income	Category	Expenses
Check card credit: Ramada Hotel for May10 meeting	\$6.08	Square fee: membership	-\$1.17
Square: single membership (minus fees)	\$30.00	Check card (POS): Ramada Hotel, general meeting September	-\$129.38
		Ck #382: Albuquerque Folk Festival sponsorship	-\$100.00
		Ck #384: Bill Nevins, September general meeting entertainment	-\$100.00
		Check card (POS) CABQ Online, rental of Taylor Ranch community center for Christmas party on 12/14/2024	-\$129.38
Total Income	\$36.08	Total Expenses	-\$482.67
		IAS Account prior month's ENDING balance	\$5,486.96
		Plus Income (current month)	\$36.08
		Less Expenses (current month)	(-\$482.67)
	Loss/Gain		-\$446.59
		*Ending Balance as of date of report	\$5,040.37



Flowers of the Forest

We were saddened to learn of the death of long-time IAS member and Past President, Paul McDonough, on September 15, 2024. He was 75 years old.

Paul's dream was to establish a Celtic Community Center in Albuquerque (akin to the wonderful facility in Phoenix). He and the late Jay Vandersloot worked diligently towards this end, with their goal, alas, still in the future.

Paul was active in both the IAS and the St. Andrew Scottish Society. He was always a dependable volunteer (if Paul said he would show up to help, he never let us down), and we can't really imagine future IAS/SASS picnics without him manning the grill in the hot sun. He will be missed.

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 September was *The Searcher* by Tana French; in October we read *The 32: An Anthology of Irish Working-Class Voices*, by Paul McVeigh; and for November, we are reading *Prophet Song* by Paul Lynch.

The Searcher, by Tana French

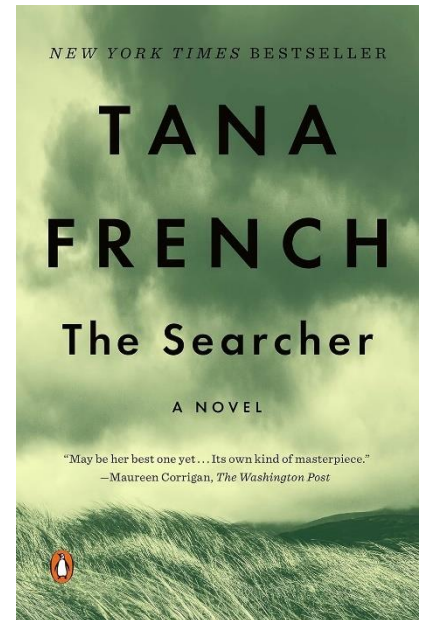
Amazon's description: "Cal Hooper thought a fixer-upper in a bucolic Irish village would be the perfect escape. After twenty-five years in the Chicago police force and a bruising divorce, he just wants to build a new life in a pretty spot with a good pub where nothing much happens. But when a local kid whose brother has gone missing arm-twists him into investigating, Cal uncovers layers of darkness beneath his picturesque retreat, and starts to realize that even small towns shelter dangerous secrets."

"One of the greatest crime novelists writing today" (Vox), French weaves a masterful, atmospheric tale of suspense, asking how to tell right from wrong in a world where neither is simple, and what we stake on that decision.

In *The Searcher*, an American cop from Chicago, unamicably divorced and with a complicated relationship with his daughter, decides to leave the hurly-burly of the precincts of the big city and settle into a cosy little hamlet in the wilds of rural Ireland. Ah, but there's no escaping the mysteries that follow and enfold him. Like the inhabitants of last month's novel, *The Valley of the Squinting Windows*, the dwellers of the tiny town of Ardnakelty know each other's business and are delighted to find that a stranger has come to town to give them more to gossip about. Then the questions arise: Who is this morose young teenager who keeps hanging around, seemingly interested in carpentry and determined to find out what happened to her older brother, Brendan?

In the Book Club, Caren Garcia thought *The Searcher* was "very well written. You can picture everything from the descriptions. It doesn't read like an Irish-authored book, but does justice to its setting." And Kathy Wimmer was delighted that there would not be a "deal breaker" for her in this book (that is, that no dogs would be harmed). "And I'm so glad Tana French didn't break that deal with the book (there are dogs in the book, and a litter of adorable puppies—and also bizarre sheep killings. And some volatile characters. The deal breaker would have been to mix those puppies in with the violence. WHEW!!! So glad that didn't happen. And so I can say that it was a very good book and an exciting read, even with the slow pace at the beginning. I found myself getting lured in with the slow pace, with just a hint of encroaching danger until it escalated."

Tana French (born 10 May 1973) is an American-Irish writer and theatrical actress. She is a longtime resident of Dublin, Ireland. Her debut novel *In the Woods* (2007), a psychological mystery, won the Edgar, Anthony, Macavity, and Barry awards for best first novel. *The Independent* has referred to her as "the First Lady of Irish Crime." She is the creator of The Dublin Murder Squad series, which includes *In the Woods* (2007), *The Likeness* (2008), *Faithful Place* (2010), *Broken Harbour* (2012), *The Secret Place* (2014), and *The Trespasser* (2016). From *The New York Times* review "As her devotees already know, French doesn't write genre books or thrillers. She writes full-bodied novels in which crimes happen to have been committed."



Member Spotlight: Erika Gerety

By Elena Gallegos

I had the pleasure of interviewing Erika Gerety for this month's member spotlight. If you had the opportunity to attend the Albuquerque Folk Festival this past September at the National Hispanic Cultural Center, you have Erika to thank for organizing a great music line-up! **[And be sure to come to our November 8 meeting, where we will be entertained by Erika's band, the Irish Setters.** That's her with her big bass on the front page of this newsletter.]

The origins of Erika's interest in folk music and Irish music began with her family. Her dad is Peter Gerety, and if you don't recognize the name, you sure will recognize the face! He has acted in numerous movies and TV shows. Before that, in the early 60s, he and his sister, Anne Gerety and Tom Hill (Erika's aunt and uncle) were theater actors in Rhode Island. There they met the Clancy Brothers when the brothers were actors, before they became musical performers and producers. After plays at the theater, they would all head to the beach and the brothers would play Irish folk music. The Clancy's played a big part in Peter Gerety choosing a career as an actor. Famous singer Odetta would join them, too. That is where her father learned many of those folk songs, and of course he passed his love of Celtic music to his daughter. Her father was also friends with the McCourt brothers. Malachy sang at her Aunt Anne's funeral. Of him, Erika says that he had a beautiful singing voice. Malachy and her father also performed some poetry and songs together in New York.

Erika's parents divorced when she was young, so she would spend time between her mother's house in Taos and her father's house in Rhode Island. In Providence, her step-mother would host Celtic jam sessions at their house playing Clancy Brothers' songs and others. Her dad learned to play the Celtic banjo. She said it was part of her foundation for Celtic music. Her mom has Irish ancestry as well. Her maiden name is Kelley and her father came to Connecticut from Newfoundland as a young adult. She remembers that her grandfather's favorite meal from childhood was "bubble and squeak" using what sounded like leftover corned beef and cabbage.

Though only officially an IAS member for a year, Erika has been involved in the Celtic community in ABQ since she moved here in 1991. After receiving a mandolin for Christmas, she started going to the Blue Dragon jams where she met many fellow IAS members. She says she probably met Norita there, too. She would also meet some members of the band Virginia Creepers at the UNM duck pond and play with them as well. At that time, The Virginia Creepers would play for Ceili dances at the home of George and Noami VanStry. In addition, there were jam sessions in the Physics building at UNM, where she met Bill Howden. He invited her to go to the 2nd annual ABQ Folk Festival, where she has been volunteering ever since.

In addition to playing the mandolin, Erika plays the guitar and the stand-up bass. She notes that the stand-up bass is not used much in Celtic music and cites the band Lunasa as one of the Irish bands that incorporates one into their music.

In addition to running the ABQ Folk Festival, Erika helps her husband coordinate the music for the Big Muddy Folk Festival in Missouri (he is from there). She also sits on the advisory entertainment board for the Santa Fe Trad Fest. Further, she books the dance bands for the NM Folk Music and Dance Society (FolkMADS). She also writes the grants for the AFF, and she and her husband, Dave Para, can be heard hosting the "Folk Routes" radio show about once a month on KUNM. In addition, the two play in five bands (four of them together) including Cheap Shots, Snorty Horse, the Albuquerque Megaband, and The Irish Setters.

Erika and Dave Para got together after they both lost their spouses. They found strength, love, and harmony in shared grief but also in music and in producing music festivals. Together they host performances in their back yard amphitheater, where they also got married during COVID.

Dave was a professional musician, with his late wife, Cathy Barton, playing all over the country for over 40 years. Erika worked for UNM as a Program Advisement Coordinator and Graduate Advisor for the Anthropology department. Though retired now, she says she is busier than ever.

Autumn in Ireland

By Caren Garcia



If you have not had the opportunity to experience Autumn on the Emerald Isle, this is for you. I want to share some photos from around the countryside and the spirit of the season with you all, because it is such a beautiful time of year. The Autumnal Equinox has just passed (September 21-22), just after the full Harvest Moon. The name says it all. It is a time for reaping what we have sown, shaking away the chaff from our lives as well as our crops, and preparing ourselves for the dark days to come. This is never more true than in Ireland, where average high/low temps in October-

December range from 58-48 degrees (F)/47-39 degrees (F). Gathering up food for the impending cold season was a must for our ancestors, as is getting a grasp on what is most important to us in our lives before we are hemmed in by foul weather or cold, hard events.

The Fall is a perfect time for long walks in the countryside or along the coast, scenic drives and attending festivals. Be flexible, as some days will be too rainy, but the next may be glorious. The crowds are much smaller, so it makes for a more intimate visit. October is the time to see fall colors, as you would expect, and in November Christmas markets pop up for shoppers in Dublin, Wexford, Belfast, Cork, Galway and villages everywhere.



Galway Christmas Market



Waterford Christmas Market



If it rains, there are always the castles, churches, and museums to see, or just be a bit more Irish and take a stroll anyway!

It makes for a great excuse for spending some time in a pub listening to music and enjoying the fare.





Pub in Co. Donegal



Pub in Co. Down



Castle Ruin in Autumn



Dramatic Co. Cork

I hope you enjoyed the mental vacation to Ireland in Autumn. It was fun for me too. Not to be ruled out for future travels!

And a wee bit o' Irish humor:

An elderly Cork man owned a large farm for several years and he had a large pond on the far end of his property. It was properly shaped for swimming, so he fixed it up nice with picnic tables, horseshoe courts, and some apple and peach trees.

One evening the old farmer decided to go down to the pond since he hadn't been there for a while. He grabbed a big white bucket to bring back some fruit before starting the long walk to the remote area. As he neared the pond, he heard voices shouting and laughing with glee. As he came closer, he saw it was several young women skinny-dipping in his pond. He made the women aware of his presence, and they all went to the deep end.

One of the women shouted to him, "We're not coming out until you leave!" The old man frowned. "I didn't come down here to watch you ladies swim naked or make you get out of the pond naked."

Holding the bucket up, he said, "I'm here to feed the crocodile."

Some old men can still think fast.

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: John Brinduse: jbrinduse@swcp.com

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)

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.

Sullivan & Forsyth: Irish Traditional Fiddle & Flute

Eileen Sullivan and Dain Forsyth's classic combination of fiddle and flute is rare these days, and these two deliver from the heart. Contact: Dain at dleeforsythe@gmail.com.

Irish Setters

A Celtic folk band playing traditional Irish tunes and songs on fiddle, banjo, guitar, and bass. Contact: Erika Gerety (erika@unm.edu)



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.



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>

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

♣ **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.

Calendar of Events

IAS Events

Date	Day	What
November 7	Thursday	IAS Board of Directors meeting , 7 PM on Zoom. All members are invited to attend. (Email Kathy Wimmer for the link.)
November 8	Friday	IAS Monthly Meeting and Program : A musical performance by The Irish Setters! (See p. 1.)
December 5	Thursday	IAS Board of Directors meeting , 7 PM on Zoom. All members are invited to attend. (Email Kathy Wimmer for the link.)
December 14	Saturday	IAS Annual Family Christmas Party! 11 AM to 2 PM at the Taylor Ranch Community Center. (Details to come in the December newsletter.)

Celtic Community Events

November 7, 14, 21	Thursdays	Albuquerque Traditional Irish Music Open Session from 7-9 PM at Hops Brewery, 7222 4 th Street. For more info, contact Harlow Pinson at hpinson@indepthl.com .
November 3 & 17	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.
November 5 & 19	Tuesdays	Irish Sessions on the first and third Tuesdays at the Taos Ale House/Burger Stand, 401 Paseo del Pueblo Norte (across from the Post Office), from 7-9 PM. For more information, call Jamie at 575-779-1018 (jaima@taosnet.com).
November 5, 12, 19, 26	Tuesdays	The Irish Slow Session meets Tuesdays at 6:30 PM in the Manzano Mesa Multi-Generational center, near Central and Eubank. For info, contact Kip Malone on Facebook .
November 6, 13, 20, 27	Wednesdays	Ceili Dancing Classes at the GAC , 6:30 - 8 PM, \$5.00. No experience necessary! (Call Steve Laverty at 505-688-4756 for info.)
November 6, 13, 20, 27	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 (bpdeaver@gmail.com).
November 19	Tuesday	Sullivan & Forsyth: Irish Traditional Fiddle & Flute perform at Trail Rider Pizza from 5:30 to 7:30 PM. Trail Rider Pizza is located at 12165 State Highway 14 N, Suite B2, Cedar Crest, NM 87008.



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) 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>