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Welcome to the latest edition of the IACI e-news.

Founded in 1962, the IACI is the leading Irish American cultural organization. The IACI is a federally recognized 501(c)(3) not-for-profit national organization devoted to promoting an intelligent appreciation of Ireland and the role and contributions of the Irish in America.

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Irish Finesse

by

Raymond D. Aumack

June Gilliam was feeling very good about herself. She had turned in her dissertation, her consuming task of the last two years. She had researched the role of the Black matriarchy in Philadelphia from the time of Black emancipation to the present. Her work had been read and scrutinized by her dissertation committee, all of whom were very enthusiastic about it. Her almost sole recreation during the past two years had been her volunteer work at the Jesuit Urban Ministry and joining friends for an afternoon long brunch after Mass on Sunday morning. Her oral defense has been scheduled for April.

As she brushed through her long, black, silky hair, she thought of Brian Garvey who was on his way to pick her up for Mass and the weekly Sunday afternoon gathering of friends to which she so looked forward. Life was starting to look great. Brian was a new and surprising romantic interest in her life. He was an attorney who was adamant about establishing his own career course in the chaotic maze of Philadelphia lawyers. He will eventually join his father's firm, but he wanted to do that on his own terms and present himself as an accomplished attorney. He was already considered by his peers as brilliant and fair in the field of criminal law. There would be no down time in his career. In this world of active crime, there was constant work.

He was also the brother of her close friend, Maeve Garvey, and they have known each other for years. Brian was always the teasing older brother. It was interesting how differently the thirty somethings looked at each other as they entered the third decade of life.

Brian had no problem with June being Black. He had known her for a decade as his sister's friend, a wonderful person, and a marvelous friend to him. The combination of her African heritage and Irish roots resulted in a strikingly beautiful woman.

When the doorbell rang, June was ready and walked to the door to admit Brian. She reached for her coat as they reached for each other for a good morning kiss. Brian was extremely courteous, something that his father had drummed into all of the boys, and Maeve as well. Respect everyone as you would want to be respected. Though they were all schooled in traditional conservative American values their education was balanced by Catholic Christian social values.

Maeve was their leader in that direction. With the fiery enthusiasm of the Irish warrior queen who shared her name, Maeve was a genuine spokesperson for justice. She was an attorney by training and was never ashamed to use her skills, especially with the Jesuit Urban Ministry on behalf of those unjustly treated. While she was extremely successful and financially secure, she earned very little as an attorney, but she piled up a lot of pro bono credits that she looked on as building blocks for her house in heaven. For all of her progressiveness, she was a fiscal conservative and that financially anchored her business and her well-paid employees. In addition, she was a trained and certified psychotherapist, and the credential and skill was important for her consulting work. The bulk of her income came from the successful consulting firm that she founded. She, herself, now had a net worth of over one million dollars. However, no one would even suspect that. While she owned her luxury condominium outright, her friends often thought, "Poor Maeve, saddled with a huge mortgage and being so young. No wonder she isn't married."

Maeve is a self-made millionaire. She accepts advice from her dad and insists on paying an hourly fee for consulting work when she needs the help of his firm, especially for accounting and tax help.

Maeve and June often worked together on behalf of the Jesuit Urban Ministry and the two were a formidable force against the agents of the manipulation of the poor.

They were a little early for Mass and the group now took up a pew and a half in the center of the Church. The Mass was a High Mass complete with a magnificent choir, incense, processions, and congregational singing. Paul was the homilist and he discussed life's surprises, an expression of the full net when Jesus asked Simon Peter to throw it on the other side of the boat after a fruitless night on the water. It was Peter's shocked surprise that the net was filled to bursting. He concluded that the congregation were the Peters of our day. In spite of our fears and our perceived inadequacy, Jesus asks us to enter into the mission of the Church. Those homilies always made Maeve squirm, feeling that she wasn't doing enough. However, as much as she does, she does it without fanfare.

After Mass, they drove across the bridge into New Jersey to their favorite hideaway in Cherry Hill. The afternoon was filled with enthusiastic conversation, laughter, story-telling, and finally the high-class charity balls that Maeve and Patrick attended over the holidays. Maeve asked Patrick to present his fund-raising idea for the Jesuit Urban Ministry. Theresa asked about the amount of money such an event could generate. Patrick deferred to Maeve for that answer. Maeve suggested that they could raise over one million dollars after expenses. She said that she could count on her dad's firm to be the lead sponsor so that every responsible company in Philadelphia would want to participate. We'll plan it for October and make it a harvest festival. The big money comes through the auction. Gifts are donated and then raffled. I know an auctioneer from Sotheby's, and he can squeeze the water out of a stone. We'll provide first line entertainment. We have a connection to U2's Bono. There are no guarantees, but we can ask him. He has his own plane. We will need a huge committee. Companies will provide committees for printing, mailing, raffle tickets, decorations. No problem recruiting. This will be the biggest event of the year, and every upwardly mobile person in the city will want their name in the menu book.

If you go into it with Patrick, we'll be the executive committee. We will outline the work that has to be done and monitor it.

"Where will we do it?"

Maeve shrugged her shoulders. "How about the 76ers' basketball arena?"

"Wow, that sounds big time."

"Well, we all heard Paul's sermon last week, 'Speak boldly.' Maybe we can prove someone was listening."

Paul laughed, "Can you possibly mean that people don't listen?"

"We did, Paul," shouted Maria, to everyone's laughter.

Maeve volunteered to put together a plan with Theresa and recruit her father's law firm by next week. I would like to have a million dollars in cash and gifts before the event.

Patrick thanked everyone. Already the idea sounded like fun.

Theresa and Maeve walked together to the ladies' room.

"Thank you for this. It is the most daring thing we have ever done. I'll talk with the Jesuits tomorrow."

"Great, we'll need all their contacts."

Theresa shyly asked, "Can I come over tonight with a gallon of ice cream?"

“Of course,” said Maeve. “Sounds like a pothole in the road of life.”

“More like an earthquake,” said Theresa. “I’ll be over by six.”

At six sharp, the doorman rang to ask if he should send Theresa up. Sure enough, Theresa got off the elevator with a gallon of ice cream.

“Come in, I just put the fireplace on.”

“Thanks, I need all the props you have for this drama.”

“As you know, Paul and I have been working with our respective Spiritual Directors. They haven’t asked us to break up. Both are asking us to make a decision.”

“What is your decision?”

“I haven’t made one. I’ve thought a lot about it over the last few days. This is first ice cream binge. I’ve been teary but I haven’t bawled over the options. My spiritual director is concerned about me. He feels it is not fair to require me to be celibate and chaste. I really love Paul, but in my heart, I know that Jim is right. Things are alright at the moment but think ahead five years. I get the drift. In the heat of our love I thought I could live like a nun. Nine months later, I know I can’t. I can’t live in a sexual relationship with him either. I couldn’t live with myself. Paul tells me that his spiritual director is telling him the same thing, that he isn’t being fair to me.”

“They were discussing options such as career choices for Paul. I don’t want to ask Paul to leave the priesthood. I can’t really live with that and neither can he for that matter. His spiritual director suggested the possibility of joining the Episcopal Church. I really can’t live with that either. That would be like becoming a Republican.”

“We prayed over it together following the spiritual direction to reflect on Paul’s Letter to the Corinthians on the nature of love with an emphasis on the selflessness of love. I feel like I am the blame for everything.”

Maeve put down her ice cream and found a bottle of wine and poured out a couple of glasses of Merlot.

“Don’t look for fault, Theresa. Only terrific people fall in love. It is not your fault or his. You found each other at this moment in life and your synapses clicked together. I know it was a wonderful experience for both of you and you have to count that as a blessing. Maybe it’s the Holy Spirit’s blessing that you found each other at the precise time you needed each other. I know you felt the loneliness of being single at the events of the holidays, especially at my parent’s dinner and on New Year’s eve. It was noticeable at least to me.”

Maeve pulled her bible off the shelf and started reading from 1 Corinthians 14. and stopped short at verse 5.
“Love is not rude, does not seek its own interests.”

Maeve paused for a long moment. “You guys had it, a real glimpse of what God is like, and I confess, I know that feeling. Your personal interests were served well, and no matter how hard you want to cling to them, love is not only for yourself but also for the beloved. I guess most people grow into that, but you and Paul have circumstances that inhibit that. The Episcopal Church is far too conservative for Paul and both of you are committed Roman Catholics in spite of all of our problems. I think if you continue on the path you have been on, you will experience an unhappiness that is not part of your beautiful nature. Your respective Spiritual Directors were insightful and saw the road ahead.”

“What does the Holy Spirit think about people like me who broke all the rules?”

“First of all, get off the guilt trip. You didn’t break any rules; you fell in love and you now know how wonderful that is. You’ll need a mourning period but now you know what it is like to open your heart like you did for Paul. Beside I don’t think the Holy Spirit respects any laws. There is a lifetime of living and loving ahead of you.”

“You’re right about my sense of loneliness when I wasn’t with Paul. Yes, thank God for John on New Years eve. He paid enough attention to me for me to have fun. That felt good.”

“I’m sure that John would like to spend a lot more time with you. In fact, I know he would.”

“Does John know about Paul?”

“John is very smart and observant. I’m sure he has figured that out but is far too discrete to say so. John has also gotten tired of being the playboy of the western world. You know as well as I do that John is your friend and will continue to be your friend, no matter what. If circumstances were different, both of you would have turned the heat up by now. John will never judge or criticize you. If he is interested in you, he’ll let you know, but will also wait until you’re ready. Love is patient, said a wise man.”

“When did you become so damn wise!”

“I’m not that wise. I just love you and I want to treat your pain without treating you like a client. When you’re in pain, I ache.”

“Will you be my Spiritual Director?”

“Absolutely not! I’m looking forward to a lifetime of joy with you. I hope we can always talk things out with each other.”

“Paul is going to ask for a leave of absence and go out to Notre Dame. I have a strong feeling that he is going to end up staying there.”

“You will always love him, but differently. I love the guys I dated, at least some of them, but as time goes on, life goes on and all of us have made new relationships. I have no contact with any of them anymore. Before Patrick, I can count the dates that I have had in the last three years. My business took away all the energy of my libido.”

“Patrick is good for you?”

“Patrick is perfect for me. I love him to pieces. I have all the feelings for Patrick that you have for Paul. Maybe, I know I don’t show it, but God is amazing. He has given me a glimpse of himself and Patrick is the centerfold of this book.

“While we are talking about Patrick, will you be my Maid of Honor?”

“Yes, screamed the wide-eyed Theresa. I will be honored to be your Maid of Honor,” as she threw her arms around Maeve.

“You are my best friend and the sister I never had.”

“Thank you and thank you for tonight. I don’t know what I’ll do if John calls me.”

“Don’t worry about it. John is really a very sensitive soul. Remember, if God closes a door, a window is left open.”

“Eeeeah!”

“Your right. That is trite. I don’t believe that God opens or closes doors. He taught us to do that.”

“Much better. Thank you.”

“Take the ice cream with you. I have to fit into a wedding dress in eleven months.”

“And I have to fit into a Maid of Honor gown, but I might still need a little ice cream.”

The next morning, after consulting with Dave to make sure she wasn’t needed around the office, Maeve called her father to ask if he had time to see her this afternoon. After checking respective schedules, they decided on a 3:30 appointment. Then Maeve called her mother. She was having dinner with John at their club at six and thought she would stop by beforehand for no reason other than to visit.

During a coffee break with Susan and Dave, they sat in their break room talking about the proposed fundraiser. Dave was impressed with the idea and became even more impressed when they discussed hypothetical details. Maeve told them that she was seeing her father this afternoon and that would be the first shovelful and the foundation of the project.

“You know,” said Dave, “this is not going to be bad for business.”

“I hadn’t thought of that,” said Maeve. “Let’s keep our eye on the ball. Our focus is the Jesuit Urban Ministry. Remember, doing the right thing sometimes has costs as well as rewards. We’ll deal with either or both when we have to.”

“It is a massive undertaking,” remarked Dave.

“I’m ready for massive,” laughed Maeve.

“It was the idea of the Greek god at the end of the table,” smiled Susan.

“Yes, it was,” replied Maeve, “and I kick myself because I never thought of it. I guess it is because I never went to those charity balls with a perceptive date. Besides, he is an all Irish god.”

“Any new marriage plans,” said Dave.

“We’ll be starting our Pre-Cana next week.”

“Oh, please tell me as much as you care to about that. I don’t want to invade your privacy, but I might like to try that myself,” said Susan

“You can’t try that by yourself, you will need a partner. Have you and Michael progressed that far already?”

“Not really, but I told you at thanksgiving that I thought he was special. I also have a sense that he thinks of me as special. We are enjoying each other’s company. In a bygone era, they would say we are going steady.”

“Dave, our wedding will not be a charity ball or a social cotillion. A very wise woman once told me that when the time comes, to pay attention to the marriage and not the wedding. I want friends like you guys around me. Of course, we’ll work out wedding details along the way in our Pre-Cana discussions. Theresa will be Maid of Honor, so the second plan is in place, the first being the selection of the groom.”

Dave almost fell off his chair laughing. He knew Theresa well and would be her mentor when she entered the firm.

Later in the afternoon, Maeve walked into her father’s office. She caught her mother’s eye and waved. Her dad’s secretary had been expecting her, knowing that Maeve would be on time for her appointment to the second.

Maeve told the story to her dad of Patrick’s fundraising idea for the Jesuit Urban Ministry. She made the ask very quickly. “Dad, will your firm be the lead sponsor for a city-wide effort to raise significant funds for the Jesuits.”

“How significant,” asked Dave?

“One million net.”

“That is a big ask,” responded Dave.

They sat in a pregnant silence, with Maeve’s eyes never moving off of her father’s.

Dave’s stone face cracked into a smile. “I love it. Count us in. How much do you want?”

“Dad, I want a million in hand before the event. Most of that will come from sponsorships and will more that cover expenses. I want this to be the classiest event in Philadelphia. I want to repeat it every other year, with a golf tournament on alternate years, at our club, of course. I’m having dinner with John tonight and I want to run that by him. I know it is a Board decision, so I’ll give him a year to work on that. I don’t know what to ask of you as a lead sponsor. I need your advice on that. I do know that every company and law firm in Philadelphia will follow your lead.”

“We are pretty generous with our charity contributions. Suppose I commit for two hundred and fifty thousand. I’ll have to run it by our partners, but I don’t anticipate a problem.”

“Can we start with contacts among your clients? It will be on Jesuit Urban Ministry letterhead. I have to talk with the 76ers. I’ll want them to donate the arena and we will pay the support staff. We’ll create a PR event to announce your firm as the Lead Sponsor and that will happen before any solicitations.”

“When will this take place?”

“I’m thinking sometime in October depending on the 76ers’ schedule.”

“If any of my staff can help, I’ll assign them to you.”

“Anyone who has worked on events like these would be a big help.”

“You know that there are companies who do this work.”

“Really! Is it alright if I ask mom to research them? I’d like to interview them. My original instinct is that I would create a central committee to monitor assignments that we would give to contributing companies.”

“Your charm will go a long way if you have someone else carry the water. You can do what you planned but these are people who already know the nuts and bolts.”

“Dad, how could I ever live without you?”

“You’ve never had to deal with that,” laughed Dave. “You don’t know how proud you have made me that you and Patrick have taken this project on and that you have asked for my help. I am excited by this project. Let’s go for it.”

Fr. Paul came to grips with what he wanted to do all afternoon. He picked up his phone and called the Chancery Office. A receptionist answered the phone. Paul gave his name and asked for the Archbishop. After a long pause the receptionist asked the nature of Paul’s business with the Archbishop. Paul answered that he was one of the pastors of the Archdiocese, thinking that the need of a subordinate to communicate with his boss would indicate that the nature of the business would be self-evident. There was again a suspiciously long pause. The receptionist again asked about the nature of Paul’s business. Paul said that he would discuss the nature of his business with the Archbishop. Again, a long pause. The receptionist indicated that the Archbishop couldn’t take his call and that he could leave a detailed message. Paul, dealing with a life-changing issue, was getting more than a little annoyed, and told her that he was leaving for Notre Dame in Indiana for about three months. He was leaving his associate, Fr. Milos, in charge and would return around Easter-time. He smiled to put a twinkle in his voice and thanked her very much.

He sat back in his chair and held the phone in his hand and within a minute, it rang.

This is Archbishop Touhy, Father, returning your call.

“Oh yes, your grace, I left you a message.”

“What is this about going away for three months.”

“My Spiritual Director is encouraging me to take a break, make a retreat, and explore the opportunities for doctoral studies.

“And this will take three months, Father?”

“That is what my Spiritual Director recommended for my own good and the good of my parish community.”

“We will not authorize doctoral studies and will not pay for them.”

“Understood, your grace.”

“What about your parish?”

“Fr. Milos is perfectly capable of handling the parish. As you are well aware, we have access to two retired adjuncts. The parish should run better than most.”

“Keep in touch with us about your explorations.”

“I will and thank you, your grace.”

Paul was relieved that he didn't have to meet with the archbishop but appalled, at the same time, that a pastor could be dealt with in such a cavalier manner.

He called Theresa's cell phone thinking that she was still at the Jesuit Urban Ministry. When she answered, he recommended dinner in the evening. He would tell her during dinner about his decision to go to Notre Dame. He would pick her up at her apartment.

As the clock struck six, Maeve walked into the club dining room. John was in the kitchen talking with the chef. He waved to her and told her to grab her favorite table by the glass wall. He would be just a minute.

He greeted her with a warm hug, and they settled themselves for a pre-dinner drink.

“I have two things on my mind, John, and they should take up the whole meal on your dime.”

“You know that I would never let you pay. I'll just charge it to dad's account.”

“Ouch, he just committed to give me a quarter million dollars.”

“Maeve proceeded to tell him about Patrick's idea for the Jesuit Urban Ministry. Today was the first day of activity on the project that she discussed with Theresa and her other friends.

“She had unfolded the idea for their father, and he was excited about the project. He agreed to be the lead sponsor at \$250 thousand.”

“No wonder your business is soaring. You are hypnotizing potential; customers.”

“Not a bad idea, I didn't have to do anything. I asked him what he thought, and he gave the quarter million-dollar answer.”

“Wow! Good on you.” John had an enormous respect and love for his sister but couldn't resist teasing her.

She kicked him gently under the table.

“Where do I fit into this picture,” asked John.

“I would like to do the gala ball thing every other year. On the alternate years, I would like to run a major golf tournament.”

“We can't do a professional tournament. The costs are prohibitive. Besides, while this is a challenging course, it is not a professional course. We can do a great local tournament. We haven't done anything like that yet, but I sure would like to try.”

“Can you give us the club and the course free of charge? We'll pay for staff, food, and drink, valet parking, and whatever else.

“I'll have to bring it to the Trustees. Dad is the chairman emeritus and I'll bring him to the meeting. I don't anticipate any resistance.”

The waiter came for their dinner order. Maeve ordered lobster since John was paying and John ordered filet mignon.

Maeve genuinely enjoyed the evening with her brother. They made small talk about the Sunday brunch group, and about the budding relationship between June and Brian and Michael and Susan.

Our brothers are lucky that you have such nice friends. Isn't June finishing graduate school?"

"She'll be Doctor Gilliam in a couple of months. She loves the volunteer work at the Jesuit ministry and teaching at the high school. I don't think that she has considered any other job choices."

"I heard about the way you guys tear apart both the lawyers and their clients for being manipulators of the poor. I am told that the two of you are a force to be reckoned with."

"Sadly, I have a lot of fun with that. The lawyers are cheap and inadequate. Many of them are unprepared. June and I are a good team. Most of the cases are housing situations."

"You don't get paid for any of that, do you?"

"Well, I am a volunteer. Besides, I almost never have the opportunity to practice law. Most of my corporate situations are settled out of court. I just pull the strings."

Both had dessert, since John was paying.

"Tell me about Theresa."

"Theresa is well and happy, and she is definitely not gay. She is in a relationship that is coming to a gentle end."

"Would that be with Fr. Paul?"

"Did you hear any gossip or is that just an educated guess?"

"They have been very discrete. I figured that out at your Thanksgiving dinner. I can't tell you what tipped me off. While she didn't have a date for New Year's eve, I had fun dancing and talking with her."

"Does that mean you are interested in her?"

"I am very interested in her. Maeve, I have dated every single girl in Philadelphia and on Thanksgiving, I realized that what might be the love of my life is right in front of me. I've known this for years. But she was my little sister's best friend."

"John, she is very open to dating you. As expected, her relationship with Paul is coming to an end. Paul is going back to Notre Dame for the next three months. They had a beautiful relationship together. Paul is committed to priesthood. Both have been in Spiritual Direction and they realize that however beautiful their relationship is, it could never work. Theresa says that she couldn't live with herself if Paul left the priesthood. Both Spiritual Directors point out how unfair it is to her to continue in a celibate and chaste relationship. Today it will work but it won't five years from now. Theresa did not take any vows."

"John, she likes you very much. Take a chance with her but be cautious. I don't think her heart is broken. She is very realistic. I think the relationship with Paul opened her heart to loving moreso than ever before. However, those feelings for Paul are still there and will continue to be for a while."

“Be gentle, understanding, and patient. You already know how wonderful she is. Nurture that and protect it.”

“When did you get to be so wise and how did you learn about human nature?”

“You forgot that I am a psychotherapist. I don’t practice but I use the skills in my work.”

“Just don’t get too romantic too soon. You already know her probably better than anyone else you ever dated. Let yourself grow on her and she will love you forever.”

“By the way, Theresa doesn’t know about this conversation. Between us, it never happened.”

The dinner conversation between Paul and Theresa was, at best, uncharacteristically awkward. Both knew the guillotine blade was dangling over their romantic lives and would come crashing down any minute.

“I’ve spoken with the Archbishop and told him I was taking three months off.”

“He didn’t object?”

“Ha, he wouldn’t even see me. I called for an appointment and his receptionist wouldn’t put me through to him until I told her my business with the Archbishop. I told her I was going to Notre Dame for three months. After we ended the call, I held the phone in my hands and counted the seconds until the phone rang. His grace was returning my call. He made it clear that he wasn’t authorizing further studies and he would not pay for them. There was no discussion of permission. No mention of my work in the archdiocese for the past decade. No blessings, no thanks, just the request to keep in touch with him.”

“I called Notre Dame and informed my friends that I was coming. I have a room and meals. I will leave sometime tomorrow. I’ll hang around for a while, make a retreat, and try to figure out the next step. I haven’t packed any heavy stuff like books. I’m just taking some clothes.”

“How are you doing?”

“Paul, I’ll probably love you forever. I have enough to distract me and plenty of ice cream in the freezer. Maeve and Patrick are already working on the big fundraiser. The guys gave me the go-ahead for the project. That will be all consuming for the next ten months. Maeve’s wedding is in December and I am her Maid of Honor. Yes, I do have enough to distract me, but it will never fill the absence of you.”

“Now I feel guilty.”

“Not at all intended and totally inappropriate.. I’m going to try to step up my social life. The fundraiser preparation should give me a lot of opportunities to do that. You have opened that previously closed door for me and I loved what we had. Paul, I have no regrets. How can I ever regret being in love with you? We are both responsible adults and loving Christians. I believe we handled our relationship responsibly. However sad, this is still a beautiful moment. Lovers part but we are still lovers and the world holds new adventures for each of us. Don’t ever tell me that you are sorry. I won’t accept an apology for sharing the greatest adventure of my life.”

“Can I call you?”

“I certainly won’t stop you, Paul, but think about that. The next responsibility we have is to build a future on the experience we had together. My hope is that we can share friendship in that future. When that becomes a reality,

it will be favorable for both of us. You'll probably come back for Maeve and Patrick's wedding. I don't want that not be awkward for either of us.

Theresa got up from the table, leaned down and kissed Paul, and said goodbye.

When she got home, she had a good cleansing cry followed by a big dish of ice cream.

When she got into bed, she called Maeve.

"I just left Paul. He is on his way to South Bend tomorrow. The break is clean and decent and don't dare say you are sorry. I have no regrets and no need for sympathy, except for the quiet love of my friends."

Maeve said through her early sleep, "the future is bright and beautiful because the past was. Reach out and grab for the rainbow."

"Good night, my friend."

About ten days later, John Garvey walked into the Jesuit Urban Mission offices.

"Theresa, hi. I've got a vanload of golf clothes that we were never going to sell along with a flock of windbreakers that were left behind. I thought some folks here could use them."

"John! What a delightful surprise! I haven't seen you since New Year's eve and I've missed you. Let me get some help to empty your van and treat you to a cup of Jesuit made coffee."

"I would rather a mug of tea, and I also brought some pastries."

“Bloomsday” in Dear Old Dublin

David Hanley, my former landlord (when I did my Grad School Term “Abroad”) near Rathfarnham in Dublin (15B Bus, to the end of the line for 8d - the price had recently gone up), **is personally responsible for the “Bloomsday Celebration”** in Dublin. Back in 1971, on the 16th of June, he asked me to meet him under the arch in Saint Stephen’s Green (containing the names of all those poor (Irish) fools, members of the British Army, who were killed for the enrichment of those who profit from England’s imperialism, fighting against the Boers in South Africa). He was going to treat me to an historically significant glass of burgundy wine, to wash down some gorgonzola cheese and brown bread, at a place called “*Davy Byrne’s Moral Pub.*” **This was the venue, and the menu, for Leopold Bloom’s famous lunch on the 16th of June, 1904, in the novel *Ulysses.***

The date was chosen by Joyce, for his *magnum opus*, because it was the day he met Nora, the love of his life. The fictional Leopold Bloom (an Irish Jew) was the principal character in the novel - although his (equally fictional) wife, Molly Bloom’s, soliloquy is rightly regarded as one of the most significant literary passages in the English language.

“*Davy Byrne’s Moral Pub,*” however, was, and continues to be, quite real.

In walked the pair of us, and David ordered two glasses go burgundy wine. The Davy Byrne’s barman didn’t have a bottle of burgundy behind the bar. David requested that he go down and check the cellar - with the same result. David then requested gorgonzola cheese, again no joy. Nor was there any brown bread in the house that day. An exasperated David Hanley (himself an employee of Bord Fáilte (Irish Tourist Board) - whose specialty was the conducting of VIP tours) turned to me and said, “**Mark my words, this will never happen again.** Let’s get out of here.”

David went to his boss at **Bord Fáilte**, and secured his agreement to publicize “Bloomsday” in 1972, if the owner (who had not been on the premises while we were there) would agree. [During Joyce’s lifetime, some of his Irish literati contemporaries in Dublin used to observe “**Bloomsday**”, every June 16th, in his honor.] The owner, without hesitation, agreed, and every year, beginning in 1972, “Bloomsday” has exceeded expectations.

In **2004, the centennial year of June 16th in *Ulysses***, nearly all of which takes place on the 16th of June 1904, there was a week-long “**Bloomsday**” celebration in Dublin. On the Wednesday of that week, the 16th, it was nearly impossible for the mere tourist to get into Davy Byrne’s Moral Pub, for the **most famous pub grub** in Irish literary history (and perhaps in the literature of the entire world). While we were there as part of an Irish literary bus tour (which included Yeats, Synge, O’Casey, Oscar Wilde, etc., and Brother Edmund Ignatius Rice - founder of the Irish Christian Brothers), organized by Professor Vincent Maher of Iona College (where I spent a happy year, and two summers) we couldn’t get into the pub for the famous grub until the following day. I purchased an XL t-shirt (all other sizes having been sold out the day before), which I gave to a larger Blind Hogan, back in New York - who wears it proudly, to this day.

For years after the centennial - for the benefit of those who couldn’t be in Dublin on the **16th of June** - some New York area pubs have offered a “**Bloomsday Special**” - burgundy wine, gorgonzola cheese and brown bread (e.g., Dunne’s Pub in White Plains; O’Lunney’s Times Square Pub in the City; The Quiet Man Public House in Peekskill).

So, on this, and on every 16th of June, think not only of Joyce, and of Molly Bloom’s magnificent soliloquy, but also of **David Hanley**, whose initiative provided the spark that ignited the on-going “**Bloomsday**” celebration.

For anyone curious to see the look of this current “Bloomsday Celebration” seminal man, **David Hanley**, find you a copy of ***Ireland a Terrible Beauty***, by Jill and Leon Uris (New York: Bantam Doubleday Dell, 5th Edition, 1978). [While Leon Uris was researching for ***Trinity*** in 1971 (published in 1976), his wife Jill, an

expert photographer - with an artist's eye, was taking pictures all over Ireland.] One of the photos in the book (which is a treasure of a collaboration between Jill and Leon Uris) is of an imposing man, in a suit, and with a large flowing, flaming red beard, walking, obviously with a purpose, beside a solid wooden fence, somewhere in Baile Átha Cliath — captioned “*A Dubliner*”.

Actually from Patrick's Well Road (or, perhaps Saint Jude's Terrace) on a ridge beyond Garryowen in Limerick, and, quite possibly with a bit of Limerick Viking in his DNA, David is not misidentified as “A Dubliner” in that the only man I ever met with a more detailed, and in-depth, knowledge of dear old Dublin than David Hanley was Éamonn Mac Thomáis, himself (the folk historian of Dublin, author of *Me Jewel an' Darlin' Dublin, Down Dublin Streets 1916*, etc., with whom I later occasionally stayed in Ballymun, myself — but that's another story, for another time...). †

Liam Ó Murchadha – Member, Irish American Cultural Institute since 1965

Irish History – March

2nd 1933 - Vote to remove the Oath of Allegiance is carried.

1934 - Wearing of Uniform (Restriction) Bill carried.

3rd 1942 - Gas rationing introduced.

5th 1867 - Fenian rising in Dublin, Tipperary, Limerick, Clare and Cork.

1936 - W. T. Cosgrave again nominated President of Fine Gael.

6th 1988 - The SAS controversially kill three IRA members in Gibraltar.

7th 1887 - The Times publishes the first in a series of article accusing Parnell of being involved in crime.

1957 - Fianna Fáil return to power in the Republic.

1965 - Mass is said in the vernacular for the first time.

8th 1966 - Nelson's Pillar in Dublin is blown up.

10th 1932 - The new Fianna Fáil government releases 23 political prisoners.

1934 - Women banned from National Athletic and Cycling Association events.

1944 - The United States alleges that Ireland's neutrality is acting in favour of the Axis Powers.

11th 1926- De Valera resigns as President of Sinn Féin after one of his proposals is defeated.

13th 1846 - 300 tenants evicted from Ballinglass.

1944 - The British government bans travel between Great Britain and Ireland.

14th 1984 - Sinn Féin leader Gerry Adams is shot and wounded.

1991 - The Birmingham Six are freed after 16 years wrongful imprisonment.

15th 1953 - 10,000 civil servants march in Dublin, demanding a just wage.

16th 1939 - De Valera is greeted by Benito Mussolini in Rome.

1953 - President Roosevelt asks the American Congress to support a United Ireland.

1964 - Seán Lemass launches 'Ireland Week' in London.

1988 - Michael Stone kills three people at an IRA funeral.

1991 - Dublin becomes the European City of Culture.

17th 1931 - First St Patrick's Day parade in the Irish Free State.

1933 - Éamon de Valera gives the first State reception since the foundation of the Free State.

18th 1934 - General Eoin O'Duffy addresses 2,500 Blueshirts in the Trim Market Square.

1964 - The Agricultural Ministers of the North and the Republic, Harry West and Charles Haughey, meet.

19th 1969 - Ireland receives its first loan from the World Bank.

20th 1920 - Mayor of Cork Thomas MacCurtain killed by the RIC.

1935 - The army intervenes in a bus strike by providing lorries for transport.

1941 - Bread rationing is introduced.

1979 - Huge anti-PAYE demonstration in Dublin.

21st 2001 - Ireland confirms its first case of foot and mouth disease in many years.

22nd 1949 - The Irish government leases a residence in the Phoenix Park to the United States for 99 years.

1969 - Civil rights demonstrations all over Northern Ireland.

1987 - Irish National Lottery is launched.

24th 1968 - An Aer Lingus plane, St Phelim, crashes near the Tuskar Rock killing 57 people.

26th 1935 - 72 Republicans arrested in the Free State.

29th 1887 - Irish Crimes Act introduced in response to the National Land League's boycott of landlords.

1940 - Fire destroys the upper part of St Patrick's College, Maynooth.

30th 1849 - Doolough Tragedy: famine victims are forced to walk through the night to appeal for famine relief, resulting in many deaths.

1939 - The Treason Bill passes its final reading at Dáil Éireann.

1979 - The Irish government ends the parity of the Irish pound with sterling.

31st 1976 - Sallins Train Robbery.

1978 - 6000 people protest the building of civic offices on a Viking site.

1999 - Irish Land Commission dissolved after 108 years existence.

Irish Trivia

Who is the Cork born Grand National winning jockey, now a commentator, who famously said winning the National was "better than sex?"	Mick Fitzgerald
Which iconic Irish racehorse was named after a Scottish mountain?	Arkle
Vincent and Aidan are two great Irish racehorse trainers of the past and present who share the same surname. What is it?	O'Brien
Complete the name of this Nineties/Noughties Irish TV series 'Don't Feed The ???????'	Gondola
Which famous Irish comedian was briefly a physics lecturer before becoming a children's TV presenter and stand-up comedian?	Dara O'Briain
What phrase was used for the boom in the Irish economy in the Nineties and early Noughties?	Celtic Tiger
What North-western Irish lough is actually the estuary of the river of the same name?	Lough Foyle
Which Irish county is further north than many parts of Northern Ireland?	County Donegal
Which Irish city is known as The Marble City?	Kilkenny
What is the nickname of the Kilkenny hurling and football teams?	The Cats
Complete the lyric of this famous song with the title: " I wish I was in	Carrickfergus
What is the name of the famous folk song, written by Pete St John, that tells of a man deported to Australia for stealing corn at the time of the Famine?	Fields of Athenry
'Fields of Athenry' is a song sung by the fans of which Scottish football club, which has widespread support in Ireland?	Celtic
What is an Irish Moiled?	A breed of cattle
What are crubeens?	Cooked pig's trotters
Name the Irish singer born on the Falls Road in Belfast in 1966, probably best known for his version of You Raise Me Up?	Brian Kennedy
What is the name of the Irish fruit loaf that had objects baked in to it at Hallow'een?	Barmbrack/barnbrack
Which Irish dramatist (d. 2015), was described as 'The Irish Chekhov'?	Brian Friel
One of the best known plays of Brian Friel was made into a film starring Meryl Streep, Dancing at ????????	Lughnasa
When is the pagan Irish festival of Lughnasa celebrated?	Early August
What is the correct Irish name of the ball used in hurling?	Sliotar



Irish American Cultural Institute Launches New Irish Language Course

The Irish American Cultural Institute (IACI), John Walsh Jersey Shore Chapter, is pleased to announce the launch of its inaugural Irish language course to be held on Thursday evenings from 7 p.m. to 8 p.m. at the Sea Girt Lighthouse, 9 Ocean Avenue, and will run for 10-weeks beginning on February 28 and will run through May 2, 2019.

The Irish language, which is over 2,500 years old, has experienced a resurgence in recent years. In 2018, the Irish Government implemented *Blian na Gaeilge*, a year-long program of inclusive events to celebrate the Irish language and to encourage increased participation worldwide.

The IACI language course will be facilitated by Mícheál Ó Máille, a native of Connemara, Co. Galway, who grew up speaking Irish. Ó Máille, an award-winning teacher, has experience instructing all levels of language training in immersion programs across the U.S. and abroad. He is a member of a number of various Irish language organizations, including *Daltaí na Gaeilge* and *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann* and has hosted the Irish radio hour at WRSU, Rutgers.

Ó Máille observed that, "In 2018, there was an unprecedented level of renewed interest in Irish language programs. In 2019, the goal is to build on that momentum by offering classes to our local community. We hope to encourage everyone—beginners and fluent speakers, students and adults—to join us as we study the language that is an integral part of Irish culture and heritage. All are welcome! In addition to learning some Irish, I promise there's sure to be a bit of *ceol agus craic* (music and fun) along the way! *Bígí linn* (join us)!"

For a fee of \$150 per person (just \$15 per class), each student will receive instructional material for the ten-week course. To register, send a check for \$150 per person to IACI Committee, 19 Racquet Road, Wall, N.J. 07719. Please include your phone number on the check. The deadline for registration is February 20, 2019. To ensure that the workshop is rewarding for all participants, attendance will be limited to the first 25 people who register. For additional information, or to ask questions, contact Barbara at 732-280-7439.

The IACI is a federally recognized not-for-profit organization whose purpose is to promote an intelligent appreciation of Ireland and the role and contributions of the Irish in American culture. It is the only Irish-American organization that has as its patron The President of Ireland.