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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 American Happiness

By

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Maeve Garvey Malone was feeling a little queasy all day. She felt like she was just going through the motions during work. She was thinking that she was going to have a baby any minute and now she was coming down with something as well. She was the full size of an expectant mother, as was her Chief Operating Officer, Susan Boyd Garvey, her brother Michael's wife. They avoided walking together in the corridors of their office complex. They would not go to the next floor to Theresa Malone Garvey's office without using the elevator and never together.

Their previous means of local motion was to run up the stairs, two steps at a time. And yes, Maeve Garvey was the sister of Michael and John Garvey who were married to Susan Boyd and Theresa Malone, the sister of Maeve's husband, Patrick. Maeve's brother Brian married Dr. June Gilliam Garvey, the Executive Director of the Jesuit Urban Mission. They were also all related by deep friendship.

As solicitous as always, Susan suggested that maybe Maeve could have a short day to go home for a long nap. She was feeling a little tired herself and was planning a short nap on the couch in her office. She thought she would turn off her phone, have her secretary take care of calls, and she would rest between three and four. She felt even more tired when she woke up. Theresa called Susan's husband, Michael, to tell him that Susan shouldn't drive home.

Maeve was sleeping when Patrick came home from St. Joseph's University. He adjusted the blanket over her and went into the kitchen to prepare a supper. He always marveled at all the machinery in the kitchen that was hardly ever used. While rummaging around he found a Bookbinder's menu and decided to phone in an order for delivery. Knowing that their baby was due any minute made Patrick a bundle of nerves. He committed to being a brave partner and went through the Le Maze program to be as involved in the birth as much as a new father could. Waiting for the food delivery he sat and watched the news on television while practicing the breathing techniques.

Michael and Susan were pleased that Theresa called him. This was just one of the benefits of working with friends who genuinely loved you. Maeve was Susan's mentor and her first assistant. She was a tough one but a brilliant student in the business department and the only one to respond to Maeve's ad. Maeve and her colleague, Dave Martin, led Susan through a year-long tutorial to blend her enthusiasm, excellent academic experience and, her natural brilliance combined with an exposure to the real world of an extremely busy startup company. As time went on, Susan revealed a number of unexpected skills such as extraordinary computer skills, art, writing skills, and communications skills. She was also a very teachable student. Susan became Maeve's "right hand" and when the company was reorganized with employee ownership, Susan was promoted with the title, Vice President and Chief Operating Officer. When Dave retired, Susan became the company's business manager as well.. Maeve had assured her that she herself had made so many mistakes in starting the company

and they would work together through any blunders. Susan never blundered. She was a marvelous support to Maeve's chief executive role.

Dave Martin had agreed to return for three months to provide company leadership during the interim following the birth of the leadership babies.

Dave knew that Maeve and Susan would be making appearances at the office. Theresa ordered cribs and playpens along with stuffed animals and toys appropriate for infants. She was very excited about meeting the babies.

Maeve awoke from her nap when the food delivery arrived. Being favored Bookbinder's customers, the delivery provided food for at least three days. Patrick came into their bedroom, sat down on the bed beside her, and gently kissed her. "I feel better after that nap," she dreamingly said. "I think our child is starting to make her way out. I haven't had any real contractions, yet."

"Well, just relax and we'll let nature take her course."

"Easy for you to say." she responded.

"I know, you are the center of the show now. You have the entire spotlight. Would you like something to eat? I ordered dinner tonight and they sent enough food for a week. I'll spread the food out on the countertop. When you come into the kitchen, you can pick what you like."

"Thank you, Patrick. You will be a great dad because you are a great husband.."

Both plated their dinner and went into the living room to talk and watch the evening news on television.

The same drama was playing out in the apartment of Michael and Susan Garvey. Michael picked up Susan at work. Susan was explaining that she didn't know what happened. She planned a nap between three and four but when she woke up she felt disoriented and tired. She didn't feel tired when she took her nap. She just planned it into an otherwise busy day. She woke up feeling exhausted and disoriented. Theresa noticed it right away and just chatted with her to distract her from her work. "This baby will be here tonight or tomorrow," thought Theresa. "This baby is starting to find his way out. Meanwhile, Susan should not be driving if she is disoriented." After she called Michael, she went downstairs just to chat as they frequently did at the end of the work day. When Michael got her home, they just sat in front of the TV and chatted about the news of the day while Susan picked gently at her dinner.

Before going to bed, Michael made sure that the hospital valise was properly filled. Almost as soon as they went to bed, the first contractions started. They were also veterans of Le Maze training and knew that there was going to be a long night ahead. Michael would be with her every step of the way, assisting her with breathing, making sure that she was comfortable. He had cold cloths for her forehead. They talked casually between contractions. Both chatted amiably with the nurses and with the doctor when she came in for periodic checks.

During the night, when Susan was well along the pathway to delivery, another patient, and then a third was brought into the delivery area. Each patient had enough privacy. It was when the nurse told Michael to take a break and maybe get a nap in, that he went out into the waiting room and met Patrick. Both had a good laugh and introduced themselves to the doctor and nursing staff as brothers-in-law. "Great." sarcastically responded one of the nurses. "Neither child will ever have their own birthday party." "Not to worry," said Michael, "I'm sure Susan has that all worked out."

Patrick called Theresa to tell her she was about to become an aunt and requested that she call Susan's mother, the Garveys, and Brian and June. The babies' birthday will probably be tomorrow.

At about 3:00 AM Susan was wheeled into a delivery room. A half hour later, Maeve was moved into an adjacent delivery room. Both babies arrived at 4:10:10. Both Patrick and Michael were ecstatic as active participants in the birth of their children and cemented a new relationship level with their wives. Brigid Theresa Malone weighed in at seven pounds, ten ounces and Michael David Garvey weighed in at eight pounds. It wasn't until they took the babies away to clean them up that both Maeve and Susan were told that their respective births took place in adjacent rooms. Both children were born at exactly the same time.

After both were cleaned up and resting in their hospital beds in the maternity area of the hospital, and each baby was brought into the room, they called their mothers. Each baby gurgled for the grandparents.

Patrick taught his class the next day, cancelled his office hours to phone both his brothers. He spent the rest of the day at the hospital.

"Ah, you are a good man, Patrick. Theresa called us earlier to tell us we are uncles." Of course it was late in the day in Ireland and we couldn't be happier. Both of us can't wait to meet your daughter and Susan and Michael's son."

Peggy Boyd, Susan's mother, was ecstatic. She reflected on how much her life had changed. She was getting constant praise for the quality of her work as Banquet Manager at a well-respected country club. She was living happily and comfortably in an apartment that her daughter owned. She was so proud of her daughters, Susan as the COO of her company and Janice working as a teacher. Now she has a grandchild and is thrilled about it. The only thing lacking was a social life. She made friends at work. Most of the people with whom she worked were younger and only wanted to go out to the local bars and restaurants. She wasn't dating although she had been asked out many times. She enjoyed her parish community and would truly enjoy sharing the news of her grandson's birth. Everyone remembered Susan and frequently asked for her. She sent cards for various holidays to her imprisoned husband, and she knew that Susan also wrote to him. Neither one ever received a response. Peggy knew that she was done with him. Fr. Fred once thought she was eligible for an annulment. She would call him in the morning. Meanwhile, she fell back to sleep with a smile on her face. Her grandchild put it there.

There were stunning squeals of joy when Patrick wheeled Maeve and the baby into Susan's room. Brigid Theresa Malone and Michael David Garvey, now cousins, were introduced to each other. Neither child was terribly excited. In fact, neither one bothered to wake up. "Not to worry," said Susan, "they will be great friends for the rest of their lives."

Susan laughed wondering if Theresa had sold the company, yet. "That is why we brought Dave back for the next three months, said Maeve. I have faith in Theresa. She will do well. Look at what she did for the Jesuit Mission starting without any money at all and without any help. Don't forget, she became 'Mother Theresa' throughout the entire city of Philadelphia, raised enough startup money, built an effective program, and planned for the future. Jim paid all the bills that Theresa told him to pay. Fr. Jim is a spiritual dynamo and a lousy businessman. He was lucky to have Theresa. Dave will teach Theresa everything that he taught us. Also, look at what Theresa has done for us so far. Revenues and profits are soaring."

Michael and Theresa arrived together. Theresa was so excited to see those beautiful babies. Everyone was taking their pictures with their telephone cameras. Then Father Jim and June arrived. "We have to keep our reunion down," said Susan, "or the nurses will have to break it up." Brian and John Garvey unobtrusively slipped in. "Brigid, Dave and Peggy will be here tonight. My parents are picking up Peggy at home."

“These children are absolutely beautiful,” said Fr. Jim, as he blessed them both. “I want to live long enough to see them grow up.”

The gathering lasted another forty minutes before the nurses announced that it was the babies’ feeding time and only the fathers could stay.

Dierdre was ecstatic at the births. She and Tommy had discussed having sex before their marriage. He willingly accepted Dierdre’s plan. Tommy would move in with Dierdre, and though they would be living together, they would not have sex until after their wedding. Talking it out released the pressure both were feeling. Tommy also came to terms with Dierdre’s wealth. She convinced him that he wasn’t a fortune hunter since he didn’t know anything about her fortune.

On a beautiful Saturday morning in May, a letter arrived from General Macy, a recently promoted four-star Commandant of the Marine Corps. The letter from General Macy was hand delivered by a very smart looking Marine. As she sat with her coffee, Dierdre prayed that it wouldn’t be a summons to return to active duty. As far as she knew, she was totally finished. Dierdre read the letter twice before letting out a ”yahoo.” Tommy came running into their kitchen. Dierdre handed him the letter.” They are awarding me the Congressional Medal of Honor and my team will be awarded Silver Stars. We will keep our previous awards. The day will start with breakfast with the President. Tommy, you will be with me every step of the way. Spit shine your shoes. Now that the war has slowed down to almost no action, they investigated my last two years, the only years I was in active combat. So many soldiers stated that I had saved their lives. Remember, I was in fifty combat operations. To me, everything was routine, I was always concerned with the safety of my team as well as the soldiers we rescued. I was concerned with protecting the wounded. I felt we were safe as long as we held together. And we did. Our training regimen always paid off. Tommy this is exciting. It will mean I can push back that nasty congressman and will definitely tell the President my plans. My friends in Rochester will be so proud. They will make a big deal about this, Tommy. Are you into it? Are you ready for it? Mr. Garvey and everyone with whom I work will be so excited.”

Tommy got up and hugged her tightly. “I am so in to it. I am one of the guys who testified. I hoped this would happen. I didn’t want to say anything. I took a day off from work and skipped down to Washington for my testimony and returned by supertime. I expected this would happen, but I couldn’t be sure until the letter arrived.”

“Oh Tommy, I am so glad we met in that stupid trench. I wasn’t sure any of us would survive.”

“A clever military strategy that you set up on the spur of the moment scared them into retreat. Dierdre, I watched you. You were as cool as possible. You didn’t even have your rifle on automatic. With every single shot in rapid succession an enemy soldier fell. It was an amazing display of skill and courage. I had a leg wound from a ricochet. Bullets were flying all over the place. They outnumbered us big time. When your team started firing and throwing grenades, they ran in retreat.”

“Yeah, that was the plan. Thank God, it worked.”

It was a Saturday morning. The babies were coming home today. Dierdre called Dave Garvey, her boss at home, to tell him the good news.

Dave was ecstatic. “Dierdre, we are so honored that you are on our staff.”

“I didn’t want to call anyone else. I don’t want to upstage the babies.”

“Don’t worry, Dierdre. I don’t think there is much chance of that, but I will let all your friends know.”

Dave immediately called John and Theresa and the chain of telephone calls started. Patrick told Maeve when he arrived at the hospital to pick them up as did Michael when he came for Susan. Later in the day Theresa called everyone just in case someone was missed. They would all be at Mass in the morning, anyway. Theresa called Fr. Fred.

The next day at Mass was a joyous event. Before the homily, Fr. Fred announced that the sisters-in-law and co-workers gave birth at exactly the same time on Wednesday morning "The babies are here today, our newest parishioners. We'll have the blessing for new mothers right after Mass. Another exciting announcement is that one of our newer parishioners, Marine Captain, retired, Dierdre O'Rourke, has been notified that she will receive the Congressional Medal of Honor for her courage in combat as the leader of a crack Search and Rescue team. She will receive this award from the President early next- month."

The church resounded with an uproar of applause. At the end of the Mass, the organist played the Marine Hymn as the recessional. After greeting parishioners, Fr. Fred came to the front of the church with Maeve, Susan, Patrick and Michael. "This is a ritual your mothers may have experienced. It was called 'Churching.' " Fr. Fred read the blessing for new mothers and another for new fathers. He also spontaneously blessed the babies. Both babies slept through everything.

Fr. Fred would join them for lunch today.

Lunch was an exciting event. Two new members were admitted into the luncheon group, and neither one of them could care less.

Of course, there was great excitement over the announcement of Dierdre's Medal of Honor.

True to form, Dierdre quickly passed over the Medal award to keep the babies and their mothers as the center of attention. She did outline her dream for the Jesuit Urban Mission. Everyone at the table had money and they all wanted to be included among the donors. Dierdre said she was planning to put up one million dollars. Nobody blinked. Dierdre was thrilled. She raised pledges for seven million-dollars and she hadn't even finished her lunch yet.

The entire luncheon was a love fest and a celebration of friendship.

The following evening, Dierdre and Tommy were at their pre-Cana meeting with Fr. Fred. The topic was, "In good times and bad; in sickness and in health." They chose this as a topic for discussion because Dierdre's mom died young from cancer. A cell went crazy through no fault of hers. Her father's was also a totally unexpected death. There were dangerous elements in his work but equipment safety, while almost guaranteed, could fail in spite of frequent safety checks.

Tommy's parents problems were self-inflicted. When life wasn't going well, they literally drank themselves to death.

Both Tommy and Dierdre were combat veterans dealing frequently with life and death situations. Tommy was diagnosed with PTSD and successfully treated it. Dierdre had every test in the Marine handbook and showed no signs of PTSD or any combat wounds, physical or psychological. Dierdre attributed that to the Marine Training Manual and her own contribution to training: The Marine Training Manual, plus drilling on marksmanship, training in hand-to-hand combat far above and beyond the Marine manual (never used), total dedication to each other as a team, sharing quarters, recreation, spirituality (praying together regularly), daily training was so intense, actual combat seemed like a walk in the park. Both were raised up several levels by Dierdre's courage. She was not a 'gung ho' crazy lady. She always said that her every move was carefully planned and practiced.

She would never ask anyone to duplicate what she could do. She had a unique confidence in herself. Her team practiced these maneuvers over and over again. In combat, she was capable of assessing the situation, deploying her team, and engaged the enemy with confidence. That was very obvious to the soldiers in the field who were being rescued in life and death situations.

In the beginning, Dierdre's teammates did not buy into her program. During one of their first engagements, Dierdre pulled off a dramatic maneuver at great personal risk to protect them after they made a foolish move. That evening, back at the base, both came to her to apologize. Dierdre accepted their apology and asked them if they wanted to live long enough to be able to go home. Obviously, the answer was affirmative. Dierdre replied, "I can't guarantee that any of us won't be hurt. But if you pull a stunt like you did this afternoon, I can guarantee that we'll all be killed. Get a good night's sleep. We're not getting a day off until we go home. We'll start with breakfast and prayer. Be ready for eight hours of hard work."

After a few difficult rescues, the three became known as "The Ladies from Hell." "The Guardian Angels", "The Marines A Team." Their fame was well known among the troops, but their heroism never reached high command. Since they hadn't been wounded, it was presumed that they had an easy day. It wasn't until troops were mustering out that they began to hear stories about the team's exploits in battle. That began the investigation. There was a little high staff annoyance that Dierdre received the Croix de Guerre from France. Nobody bothered to find out why. There was nothing but routine in their reports until they started to realize that Dierdre had made extraordinary courage under fire, routine, time and time again.

When Dierdre and Tommy finished talking out the potential problems they might never see, they were reassured of their commitment to each other. Tommy rose from his chair. He couldn't kneel because of his war wounds. He walked over to Dierdre's chair, opened the box and presented to her the diamond ring that would symbolize their engagement. "Dierdre, will you marry me?"

Oh Tommy, Yes! Yes! Yes! Yes!

She jumped up and kissed him passionately.

Fr. Fred started clapping from his darkened corner of the room.

Meanwhile, in another corner of Philadelphia, while Tommy and Dierdre were embarrassing Fr. Fred by canoodling in his living room, Grace O'Malley and Charlie Colombo were finishing their discussion with an afterthought about celebrating ethnic national holidays. Grace pointed out to Charlie that the Feasts of St. Patrick and St. Joseph were only two days apart. Charlie suggested they could dedicate the entire week to ethnic celebration, including the rites of Spring which will begin on the Saturday of that week.

"And what would they be," asked Grace? "We'll use our frivolous imaginations and change them every year," replied Charlie.

"Before we leave," Charlie said, "I have something that I need to ask you."

He left his chair to kneel on one knee in front of Grace, pulled the small jewelry box out of his pocket, and opened it to reveal a diamond, elegant in its simplicity.

"Grace, will you marry me?"

Grace sat in stunned silence for a few brief seconds, and slowly smiled. "Of course, I will marry you. Yes! We planned that this way, didn't we?" She jumped up and passionately threw her arms around him and hugged and kissed him until Fr. Kelly started flickering the lights.

He laughed and joined into their hug. “Charlie warned me that this might happen tonight.”

“Oh Father, I’m only going to become engaged once in my life and this was perfect.”

“I called your dad this afternoon and asked his permission. He laughed and said that I had it all wrong. I have to ask you for permission.”

“Permission granted,” as she kissed him again.

Fr. Kelly summed up the evening for them but both Grace and Charlie were too excited to pay attention. They would meet again the following week.

At Grace’s home they sat and snuggled in front of the fireplace, comfortable with their love for each other and the commitment that evolved from it.

“When would you like to be married,” asked Grace?

“I’m open to anything. How do you feel about early November? The weather is usually nice in the first couple of weeks.”

“Is it alright if we married at St. Paul’s with Fr. Fred leading the ceremony and Mass.”

“That is definitely our parish.”

“Is it alright if we have the reception at John’s Club?”

Of course. I was hoping you would want to be there. What would you like to see on our honeymoon,’ asked Charlie?

“Lots and lots of ceilings.”

“You are wicked, and I love you for it. I’m trying to think of something different. What do you think about a Mississippi River cruise?”

“Wow, that is something I hadn’t considered at all, and I love it.”

‘I’m also dreaming about Iceland.”

“Iceland? I never would have thought of that.”

‘I saw a travelogue about Iceland. It is really lovely with mountains, lakes, glaciers and volcanos. The food is great, and they are extremely friendly to guests. It is easy to get to and we won’t lose days in the sky. St. Brendan the Navigator stopped there on his way to America about a thousand years before Columbus.”

“ I love.....the Mississippi cruise idea.”

“Do you mind if I get some travel material on it that we can peruse.”

“I know you love this house, and I do as well. Should I put my apartment up for sale?”

“Charlie, we have talked about this in pre-Cana. We are going to have a lot of money. And we’ll have my dad to manage it and make it grow. Do you mind if we live simply? We talked a lot about that. I just want to make sure you’re on board with the same vision I have.”

“I am. It is your money, and I would enjoy seeing you as philanthropist.”

“Charlie, we’ll discuss everything. The money will not be mine. It will be ours.”

“I have money saved and I was going to use it to pay off my parent’s home. Otherwise, I’ll be very happy living simply.”

“I love you, Charlie. What did I ever do right to deserve you?”

“I feel exactly the same way about deserving you.”

“Remember, my dad is coming tomorrow.”

“I’ll stay over at my apartment tomorrow night.”

The next day, Saturday, about mid-morning, Joe O’Malley pulled up in front of his daughter’s home in his airport rental car. Grace ran to the door and greeted him with a big hug.

“Your directions were excellent, and I also used the GPS in the car. I never used one before. I never went anywhere where I didn’t know where I was going.”

“So this is something of an adventure for you.” responded Grace.

“More than you know.”

“Come in, come in. Charlie is making breakfast for you.”

“I’m so glad Charlie is here. I love your house.”

“Thanks, Dad. I think the whole house can fit into your living room.”

“Don’t make comparisons. Grace. Your house is right-sized,” replied Joe.

“I don’t Dad, believe me.”

Charlie ran out of the kitchen and took Joe’s bag and positioned it next to the stairway.” She held up her left hand with the engagement ring on it.

“Dad, guess what we added since we spoke yesterday.”

Joe hugged her tightly. “I am so happy for you. Charlie called me for permission. I told him that I approve but you are the one he must ask for permission.”

Grace laughed, “I told him, permission granted.”

In the kitchen, Charlie had cooked a pound of bacon, created swiss cheese omelets, and a tray filled with Irish scones that he made from scratch.

“Wow, what a catch you made. He even cooks.”

“Truth be told, I used Grace’s recipe for both the omelets and the scones.”

“Dad, I’m going to spoil you this week. I am considered to be a good cook.”

“You’re going to be home next week.”

“Yes, I haven’t taken all my vacation in the last three or four years and company administration is on my case about it. I have to use it or lose it. So I am taking this week off and part of the next week for the Jesuit Center

golf tournament. So you have me exclusively for about ten days. Tomorrow you are going to meet my closest friends. After Mass, we go to a favorite Italian restaurant in New Jersey, just minutes away from St. Paul's Church where we'll be married."

"That sounds great. When is the wedding?"

"November 10, 2021, pending agreement with Fr. Fred Milos, our pastor and friend.

"Will you escort me down the aisle?"

"Yes, proudly and with pleasure."

That day was a day of rest and conversation. Grace was amazed at her father's comfort with both her and Charlie. He was interested in everything they had to say. They told him about their pre-Cana experience focusing on experience, because that is exactly what it was. They talked about their letters that were carefully tucked away in a marriage planning folder. They still had several sessions ahead of them and each one would be enlightening as well as energizing. They are also starting to plan their wedding. Dad, the planning is simple. We have a church, a reception room. We'll have the Byrne Bothers band for Irish and Italian music. John and Theresa will lead us with some Irish sing along and dancing. Theresa probably has mastered Italian by now and the flow of the intercultural entertainment should provide fun and laughter for everyone. We also have a tentative plan for our honeymoon. I know mom would have handled it differently but I'm no longer in that social circle. We'll send the local newspaper an announcement of our engagement as well as an announcement of our wedding. None of my so-called friends invited me to their weddings so I don't feel an obligation to invite them to mine. I grew to consider that social circle as an almost dedicant display of wealth and I don't want any part of it. That was partly why I never asked you for money. I wanted to make my own way. I worked part-time in college to earn spending money. My scholarship covered just about every need. June and Maeve also have real family and personal wealth. They also worked part-time and were active in sports. June was a national women's basketball sensation. All the glamor magazines were after her to pose for clothes and accept interviews. She didn't go near them because she didn't want to jeopardize her amateur status and her scholarship. Maeve was an equestrian champion. The three of us were three hundreds of a percentage point apart from being valedictorian."

"Were you disappointed?"

"Sure, I was disappointed, but you have met June and Maeve is just as nice. If you'll remember, both gave me great kudos in their speeches. We were accepted into Phi Beta Kappa together. And that was really fun. The three of us spent the day and the evening together and I got to know them even better. They were role models for me. We became friendly. We were in several classes together and were those classes ever exciting! We challenged professors every step of the way. I was never so involved or outspoken. I think our professors enjoyed the give and take as well."

"So you have become a flaming liberal."

"Ah! Let's just say that I am definitely not conservative. It is a refreshing change from the Pittsburgh environment."

"Truth to tell, I always vote for Democrats."

"Dad, that is a shocking revelation," Grace joked.

Joe was tired from the long trip and the early start and asked Grace if he could take a nap.

With Grace's blessing he went upstairs to the guest room.

While he was napping, Charlie returned from a food shopping expedition. They would build a dinner around veal cordon bleu.

The evening of family celebration was a refreshing change for Joe and he loved it.

The next morning the three drove into the center of Philadelphia and took a right-hand turn to the southern tier of the city to St. Paul's Church. The group gathered outside. Everyone oohed and ahhed over the babies, both of whom were wide awake and curious. The moms, Maeve and Susan, took them into the baby room so they could watch Mass through the windowed wall. Both babies breakfasted at the breast during the homily. Patrick and Michael would receive the Eucharist and take the babies while their wives received the Eucharist and caught a short break to the end of Mass.

After Mass, the caravan proceeded to their Italian Restaurant in New Jersey, ten minutes' drive away. Grace reintroduced her father to everyone giving him a brief biography of each one. When she introduced Joe to Dierdre, she proudly introduced her as a Medal of Honor winner. Joe took her hand and smiled at the diminutive redhead. Grace had told him about her battlefield exploits.. beginning with being an All-New York State Soccer player as he tried to grasp all the tales that Grace had told him about her. He was lost in the welcoming smile of Theresa whose tales were also told by Grace, the diminutive brunette with the radiant smile and her husband tall, athletic, still at the peak of fitness, John Garvey. There was a special warmth when he met Susan's mom, Peggy Boyd, enjoying a rare Sunday afternoon off.

When lunch was served, David and Brigid led Joe to a nearby private table so they could talk. Dave wanted to know if Joe was ever going to be an independent investment manager. They needed to get to know each other. David had also done his due diligence. He was impressed with Joe's success and wanted him to be his personal financial advisor.

"I'm managing accounts that I set up for all my children from the time we didn't have any money. There are multi millions of dollars in each account. Michael had to expand his offices with expanding business, and he bought a building. I encouraged him to take a collateral loan, but I am not sure it was the best advice.

My son, John, runs the country club we own. He does it very well. He is also the best attorney in Philadelphia where we grow outstanding attorneys. He doesn't have a practice, but he is an amazing resource for me and his brothers. He is a secret philanthropist. When the poor need anything, he manages to be there for them without any drama at all. He is a genius using the computer. Only Dierdre would surpass John's computer genius."

"Dierdre's story fascinates me," remarked Joe.

"She works for me and I am fascinated every day," replied Dave. "She saved our lives twice from attacks by the Colombian cartel, with the help of little Theresa the assassins bullet ripped through her hair as she was actually flying in the air and took out the assassin as he fired at her.

"My military friends tell me that even though she was in over fifty battles, she never flinched or appeared overwhelmed. In a trench battle with an overwhelming Talibane force that was about to overrun a US Company. She assessed the situation, deployed her team of two. Her team used automatic weapons and grenades to make the enemy think that they were lured into a trap. In the trench, she did not use the automatic setting on her weapon. She fired fifty single shots and hit her target fifty times. The soldier who is now her

fiancé was wounded before Dierdre got to the trench, picked up his weapon and started firing back at an overconfident enemy charge. Dierdre said she looked over and decided this was the man she is going to marry.”

Joe, everyone in this room is a person of considerable means, they are all devout Christian Catholics and each one has an amazing story. All of my children have amassed considerable fortunes on their own. My wife was a penniless immigrant who married an impoverished lawyer. Desmond came from Ireland at fifteen by himself. He started at Bookbinders as a dishwasher. With his pittance he started investing in everything Manny Bookbinder invested in. The pittance of pennies became millions of dollars. He lost his first wife to cancer. Maria is now his wife. At twelve years old, she and her family escaped a Castro assassination team and rowed over 100 miles to Miami Beach. Her father is now one of Florida’s leading immigration attorneys. Maria still teaches high school but has a Ph.D., has written a breakthrough book about communicating with the deaf, and every university in the country wants her on their faculty. Rosellen is Desmond’s daughter with his first wife. She came through terrible times and is now considered a leading scholar at St. Joseph’s. The big fella she is dating is a veteran and now a Law student. He also plays basketball for Villanova and they restored his scholarship. He is in line for a huge inheritance. It was his father who engineered the plot to kill our family. He was a colleague and a friend. His son is a close friend of John. And then, of course, there is June, a UPenn Ph.D., and one of Maeve best friends after rooming together for four years at Immaculata. She has written a marvelous book on the history of Black Women in Philadelphia. This entire room is an amazing story.”

“And you, Brigid, what do you do?”

Oh, I started the law firm with Dave. I still work there as a researcher, just to make sure they do every thing right. At one point we had two bassinets and a play pen in the outer office. I am a refugee from the eastern mountains of Donegal. I came here at age sixteen, by myself, took a job at Chestnut Hill College in the kitchen of the college. They gave me a scholarship in lieu of real pay. Then I met this handsome devil at a college mixer and the rest of my life was cast.

A few of us are immigrants. Maria has the most fascinating story. The family escaped from Castro’s Cuba in a stolen rowboat when she was 12. She is now Doctor Maria married to Desmond Dowd who himself was a fifteen-year-old immigrant. He got a job as a bus boy at Bookbinders, asked the owner to be his mentor. He took a room, registered at the local high school, and was a foreigner until he successfully led his school team to the Pennsylvania State soccer championship.

June is a mixed-race superstar academically and on the basketball court.”

“I met her, and I am super impressed. My daughter and she, along with Maeve knew each other at Immaculata University.”

“Of course, Grace is a royal Irish descendent, so I presume you are, too.”

“Ah, my great, great grandmother doesn’t have enough celebrity. However, I am reading history books and another that claims to be her life story.

Both babies were awake and seemingly enjoying the party. Laughter was ringing, stories, laced with lies were told. Theresa was holding Brigid Theresa and insisted that she was responsible for his birth, but that story would never be told. The ever-quiet Brian chimed in that Theresa told Maeve about the birds and bees. And so the gathering celebrated.

Dave and Joe made a business date for Wednesday at Dave’s firm.

Brigid made a dinner date for the following Friday evening, catered and served by Bookbinders. As she is aging she is discovering the joys of hosting a dinner party that isn't exhausting.

Lament for Thomas MacDonagh

By Francis Ledwidge

HE SHALL not hear the bittern cry
In the wild sky, where he is lain,
Nor voices of the sweeter birds,
Above the wailing of the rain.

Nor shall he know when loud March blows
Thro' slanting snows her fanfare shrill,
Blowing to flame the golden cup
Of many an upset daffodil.

But when the Dark Cow leaves the moor,
And pastures poor with greedy weeds,
Perhaps he'll hear her low at morn,
Lifting her horn in pleasant meads.

Thomas MacDonagh was one of seven signatories of the 1916 Proclamation of the Irish Republic

Tomás Mac Donnchadha was born on Lá Bríd 1878 in Cloughjordan, County Tipperary.

He was a poet, a literary scholar, and friend of William Butler Yeats, as well as a teacher of English and of French, first at Saint Kieran's College in Kilkenny (where he joined **Conradh na Gaedhilge – The Gaelic League**, and where the railroad station is now named for him), then at **Saint Coleman's College, Fermoy in Cork**, and, finally at **Scoil Eanna**, where he was both a lecturer and assistant headmaster, under Pádraic Pearse; MacDonagh was also a lecturer in English at the National University, where he developed a friendship with Eoin MacNeill. In 1910 he became the Irish tutor, and close friend, of Joseph Mary Plunkett – the two men later married sisters, Muriel and Grace Gifford.

In 1913 he was a co-founder, and named to the Central Committee, of the newly formed **Irish Volunteers**, as well as given command of the 2nd Dublin Battalion; he later became commandant of the entire Dublin Brigade. He organized the Volunteers, who participated in the **Howth Gun-running** in July 1914. He was on the General Council of the Irish Volunteers and Director of Training. 1915 saw Tomás Mac Donnchadha join the **Irish Republican Brotherhood (IRB)**, and, at the request of Tom Clarke, plan the Lá Lughnasa funeral of **Jeremiah O'Donovan Rossa**, where Pearse's oration would prove a major milestone on the road to the **Rising – Easter Week 1916**.

Mac Donnchadha had been co-opted onto the secret Military Council that planned the Rising; he set up a strong position at Jacob's Biscuit Factory in Dublin, on Easter Monday. His immediate superior was James Connolly, Commandant General of the entire Dublin Division. He was

assisted by Wexfordman Michael O’Hanrahan, and by Major John MacBride, Mayo Christian Brothers Boy, who had fought (Irish Transvaal Brigade) against the English in the Second Boer War. Mac Donnchadha was personally responsible for the initiative, which brought the **Hibernian Rifles** of the Ancient Order of Hibernians (AOH) Irish American Alliance into participation in the Rising.

Although his position was strong, and his men willing to continue the fight, Thomas MacDonagh surrendered on Sunday, 30th April, once the surrender order had been authenticated. After conviction by English court martial, **along with Tom Clarke and Pádraic Pearse, Thomas MacDonagh was executed, on 3rd May 1916**, by firing squad in the stone-breakers yard of Kilmainham Gaol in Dublin.

A pilgrimage to the GPO, to Arbour Hill and to **Kilmainham Gaol** can have the same psychological effect as the renewing of one’s baptismal vows.†

Ar dheis láimh Dé go raibh a anam uasal.

ON THIS DAY IN IRISH HISTORY - MAY

1st

- 1916 - Collapse of the Easter Rising.
- 1943 - Sir Basil Brooke becomes Prime Minister of Northern Ireland.
- 1969 - James Chichester Clark becomes Prime Minister of Northern Ireland.
- 1980 - The Derrynaflan Chalice discovered in a bog.

2nd

- 1945 - Éamon de Valera expresses his sympathy on the death of Adolf Hitler to the German Ambassador.
- 1982 - Ireland affirms its neutrality in the Falklands war and opposes EEC sanctions against Argentina.

3rd

- 1916 - Patrick Pearse, Thomas MacDonagh and Thomas Clarke are executed at Kilmainham Gaol for their part in the Easter Rising.
- 1933 - The Bill to abolish the Oath of Allegiance is passed.
- 1949 - The British government passes an Act guaranteeing that Northern Ireland will remain within the United Kingdom as long as the majority of its citizens want it to be.

4th

- 1916 - Joseph Plunkett, Michael O'Hanrahan, Edward Daly and Willie Pearse executed for their part in the Easter Rising. Chief Secretary of Ireland Augustine Birrell resigns.
- 1922 - Three day truce secured between both Pro- and Anti-Treaty forces.
- 1939 - The Prime Minister of Northern Ireland announces that conscription will not be extended to Northern Ireland.

5th

- 1916 - John MacBride executed for his role in the Easter Rising.
- 1918 - 15,000 attend an anti-conscription meeting in County Roscommon.
- 1941 - When Belfast suffers its third bombing raid, Dublin sends emergency crews to assist.
- 1970 - The Arms Crisis. Finance Minister Charles Haughey and Agriculture Minister Neil Blaney asked to resign after suspicions that they had supplied arms to the Provisional IRA.
- 1981 - Bobby Sands dies on the 66th day of his hunger strike at Long Kesh prison.

6th

- 1882 - Lord Cavendish and Thomas Henry Burke are murdered in Phoenix Park.
- 1924 - William Craig refuses to appoint a Northern Ireland representative to the Boundary Commission.
- 2000 - The IRA begins to decommission its weapons.

7th

- 1915 - The RMS Lusitania is torpedoed by German submarines eight miles off Kinsale, bringing America into the War.
- 1931 - An Óige established.
- 1969 - Tax exemptions announced for artists and others whose work has cultural merit.
- 1992 - Bishop Eamon Casey resigns following the revelation that he is a father.

8th

- 1916 - Eamon Ceannt, Con Colbert, Michael Mallin and Seán Heuston executed for their role in the Easter Rising.
- 1987 - The SAS kill eight IRA members at Loughgall.

9th

- 1912 - Second reading of the Home Rule Bill in the British House of Commons. A Unionist amendment is rejected.

10th

- 1912 - Andrew Bonar Law and Edward Carson both voice opposition to the Home Rule Bill.

1972 - A referendum on Ireland's membership of the European Economic Community sees a large majority in favour.

1973 - Erskine H. Childers wins the presidential election.

11th

1908 - British House of Commons votes in favour of the Irish Universities Bill.

1916 - During a session of the British Parliament, John Dillon of the Irish Parliamentary Party calls for an end to the execution of the Easter Rebels.

12th 1916 - James Connolly and Seán MacDiarmada are executed for their role in the Easter Rising.

1950 - Nationalist MPs in Northern Ireland ask the Irish government to give Northern-elected representatives seats in the Dáil and Seanad.

13th 1900 - Rift in the Parliamentary Party is healed, with John Redmond and John Dillon sharing a platform together for the first time in ten years.

1919 - IRA men Dan Breen and Seán Treacy are injured while rescuing Seán Hogan from custody in County Limerick.

1921 - Sinn Féin take 124 of the 128 seats available in the Southern Parliament.

1937 - A statue of George II in St. Stephen's Green is blown up.

1949 - Leading figures in the Republic of Ireland share a platform to protest the British government's stance on Northern Ireland.

14th

1974 - The Ulster Workers' Strike begins.

15th

1847 - Death of Daniel O'Connell.

16th

1917 - David Lloyd-George announces that he wants immediate Home Rule for 26 counties of Ireland. The remaining six counties are to be excluded for five years.

1926 - Fianna Fáil is founded by Éamon de Valera and Seán Lemass.

1945 - Éamon de Valera responds to Winston Churchill's criticism of Irish neutrality.

1954 - A huge Marian Year procession is held in Dublin.

17th

1880 - Parnell elected chairman of the Irish Parliamentary Party.

1916 - Bishop of Limerick Thomas O'Dwyer refuses to discipline two of his curates who have expressed republican sympathies.

1974 - Loyalists bomb Dublin and Monaghan, killing 31 civilians.

1976 - Tim Severin sets off in a voyage from Dingle to America in imitation of St. Brendan.

18th

1854 - Catholic University of Ireland formally established.

1996 - Ireland wins the Eurovision Song Contest for the seventh time.

19th

1928 - Foundation stone of Northern Ireland Parliament building laid at Stormont.

1932 - The Constitution (Removal of Oath) Bill is passed.

20th

1901 - A census shows that Ireland has a population of 4.5 million with Catholics outnumbering Anglicans and Presbyterians by three to one.

1918 - Anti-conscription meeting in Dublin.

1963 - Plans are announced for comprehensive schools and regional technical colleges.

21st

1956 - First Cork International Film Festival.

22nd

1957 - The Minister for Education announces that married women will no longer be barred from teaching.

1971 - The 'Contraceptive Train' brings contraceptives from the North to the Republic as a protest against their illegality.

1998 - The Good Friday Agreement endorsed by referendum on both sides of the border.

23rd

1964 - Official opening of the US Embassy in Dublin.

24th

1951 - Gardaí exchange shots with two men who try to bomb the British embassy in Dublin.

25th

1921 - Custom House in Dublin set on fire.

26th 1868 - Fenian Michael Barrett publicly executed in Clerkenwall, London.

27th

1936 - First Aer Lingus flight, going from Baldonnell to Bristol.

1941 - Winston Churchill rules out military conscription in Northern Ireland.

1960 - The last barge sails on the Grand Canal.

28th

1923 - Official end of Civil War.

1936 - Motion passed abolishing the Senate of the Irish Free State.

1970 - Charles Haughey, Neil Blaney, Albert Luykx and Captain James Kelly appear in court accused of conspiracy to import arms.

29th

1977 - Massive peace rally in Belfast.

30th

1924 - New licensing laws restrict pub opening hours and limits drinking to the over-seventeens.

1952 - Longer summer holidays for school children announced.

1983 - Inaugural session of the New Ireland Forum.

31st

1941 - Dublin bombed by the Luftwaffe with the loss of 34 lives.

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John Walsh Chapter

**Monday, May 10, 2021
7 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. ET**

“Memories of Our Fathers in the Irish War of Independence”



**Speakers: Cormac O'Malley,
Peggie O'Brien and Mícheál Ó Máille**

LIVE FROM IRELAND

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John Walsh Chapter

“Ireland Divided: Collins and De Valera”

Speaker: Lorcan Collins

Host of “Revolutionary Ireland” Podcast



LIVE FROM IRELAND

Monday, June 14, 2021

7 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. EDT

Online presentation



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Liz Gillis
Irish Historian &
Author



LIVE FROM IRELAND



Burning of the Custom House, Dublin, May 25, 1921

“Revolutionary Dublin, 1921”

Speaker: Liz Gillis

Monday, July 12, 2021

7 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. ET

Online presentation

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John Walsh Chapter

Dr. Helene O’Keeffe
University College Cork
Historian & Author



Dr. Helene O’Keeffe



Cork City Center

“Mapping the Burning of Cork”

Monday, Sept. 13, 2021
7 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. EDT
Online presentation

LIVE FROM IRELAND

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John Walsh Chapter

Dr. Mary McAuliffe
University College Dublin
Historian & Author



LIVE FROM IRELAND



“Outrage: Women's Experiences of Violence and War in Ireland, 1921”

Monday, October 11, 2021 EDT
7 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.
Online presentation

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John Walsh Chapter

Donal Fallon
Irish Historian,
Author & Broadcaster



Donal Fallon

LIVE FROM IRELAND

Michael Collins signing the Treaty



**“The Anglo-Irish Treaty &
Creation of the Irish Free State”**

Monday, Nov. 8, 2021
7 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. EST
Online Presentation