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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 Joy

by

Raymond D. Aumack

*Is Joy so elusive that we only capture it in fleeting moments of our swiftly moving lives? The Merriam Webster dictionary defines **joy** as “the emotion evoked by well-being, success, or good fortune or by the prospect of possessing what one desires.”*

Theopedia describes it more convincingly as “a chronic state of mind and an orientation of the heart.”

Father Fred stood with an altar server at the edge of the step up into the sanctuary, surrounded by six Jesuit priests from the Jesuit Urban Mission. The organist started playing a dramatic Handel piece as a wedding march.

Maeve Garvey Malone led the procession of bridesmaids. The organist started playing the wedding march. Maeve was followed by June Gilliam, Dierdre O'Rourke, Maria Costo Dowd, Grace O'Malley, Theresa Malone, and Rosellen Dowd, all women who were significant in the life of the Bride, Susan Boyd. When the bridesmaids settled into their places in the sanctuary, the organist who had been playing quiet transition music, struck up the O' Carolan Wedding March. Janet Boyd, Susan's sister started her walk down the aisle and when she had traversed half the length of the church aisle, Dave Garvey, scion of the Garvey family, and the founding president of Garvey Legal Associates, escorted the bride down the aisle. Susan Boyd was radiant, dressed in a simple white sheath wedding gown. She didn't have a veil but wore a headpiece of a simple garland of spring flowers. She held a bouquet of flowers in one arm and Dave's arm with her right hand. At the front pew of the church, Susan's mother, Marguerite, better known as Peggy, stood with Brigid Garvey. On the opposite side of the aisle were the groomsmen, Patrick Malone, Brian Garvey, Desmond Boyd, Charles Colombo, John Garvey, the best man, and Michael Garvey, the groom. David invited Peggy to leave her pew, he stepped back, and Peggy took her daughter's hand and placed it in Michael's. She kissed Susan's cheek, and then kissed Michael's cheek. David kissed Susan's cheek and shook his son's hand. He then led a joyous tearful Peggy into the pew. Janet took John's arm and they led the procession into the sanctuary. They each took their assigned seats. Fr. Fred, surrounded by Fr. Jim Keenan and

five other Jesuit priests, kindly greeted the wedding party and when they were settled at their kneelers, he welcomed all the visitor's to the parish church of St. Paul.

He commented on the radiant beauty of the women and the handsome dignity of the groomsmen. "This wedding will get newspaper coverage and the Royal Family of the Empire will be jealous of a Philadelphia "royal family." He then returned to his station in the sanctuary to begin the Nuptial Mass.

Janet read a passage from the Book of Wisdom that she, Michael, and Susan chose together. Bobby Byrne sang the psalm, also chosen by Janet, Michael, and Susan. Fr. Fred read from the Gospel of John, selected by Susan and Michael from the Last Supper prayer about Jesus' mandate of love. Fr. Fred then gave a beautiful homily about the joy of loving because it requires such hard work. He said that joy was a gift built into our humanity because life was definitely not easy. Difficulties may be few and far between, but whenever they weren't joy was always present. He finished by dramatically reciting the last verse of Jacque Brel's, *If we Only Have Love*.

After the homily, Fr. Fred called Susan and Michael to the center of the sanctuary, read the nuptial prayers and then invited them to recite their previously prepared and memorized wedding vows. They committed themselves to each other, boldly, for the entire gathering to witness and hear. They enjoyed a soft kiss after their vows and returned to their place in the sanctuary to the applause of the congregation. During the preparation of the gifts, Jimmy Byrne sang the Irish Wedding Song and Bobby Byrne interspersed the verses with the chorus of Leonard Cohen's *Alleluia*, leading the congregation.

After Communion, Fr. Fred invited the couple to the center of the sanctuary for the blessing and exchange of the rings. He read the final prayer of the Nuptial Mass imposing hands on Michael and Susan's heads for the final blessing. He pronounced them husband and wife. The congregation applauded with whistles and cheers. The Organist started playing Beethoven's Ninth Symphony and Bobby and Jimmy Byrne led the congregation in the *Song of Joy* printed in the carefully planned Mass booklet designed by Susan. The Garveys and Peggy walked down the aisle first, followed by the bridesmaids escorted by the groomsmen.

As they came to the rear of the church to greet the bride and groom, each person commented on the beauty of the Mass. One gentleman said that, "It felt like we all performed the wedding." And so many similar comments flowed. "We feel like we were married all over again."

A Protestant woman said, "I am so surprised. I never thought that Catholics were so joyful."

Yet another said, "I haven't been inside a church in years. If all the services are like this one, I'll come back."

The comments continued to be made to Michael and Susan about the beauty of the ceremony. Fr. Fred had discretely disappeared leaving the spotlight on Susan and Michael and the large wedding party in the rear of the church and outside on the steps. Dave, Brigid, and Peggy were at the foot of the stairs hoping for a quick getaway. However, they could not escape the greetings of their friends who were grateful for the invitation to the wedding. So many of Peggy's relatives were astounded at her beauty, charm, and assertiveness, long buried by her hate-filled and abusive husband.

At the front of the church, the organist thanked Jim and Bob Byrne for giving him the opportunity to play for them. "A well-planned liturgy, with great music really makes an impact. I'm glad that we had the opportunity to rehearse. You'll have to come by one Sunday to sing with our choir."

"It was our honor to sing with you," said Jim. "I loved the Handel piece and I really love that O'Carolan piece." "We had that at my wedding," contributed Bob. "We have to hustle to the club to get our band organized for the cocktails. Michael wants the drinking to be slow."

No one had to rehearse for this party. The room was beautifully decorated by Theresa and Maeve. The various wedding decorations complimented the natural elegance of the room. As, mother of the bride, Peggy abandoned her new role as the banquet manager for the evening, but the staff had previously assisted her with the detailed planning throughout the previous week. It was something of a tutorial for her.

The drinks were plentiful, the food was outstanding and acknowledged as such by Desmond Boyd and Manny Bookbinder, founder of Philadelphia's most famous restaurant. The Byrne Brothers band was properly low key during the cocktails and dinner portion of the evening.

When dinner was completed they gently introduced the dancing part of the evening with a few teasing traditional Irish jigs. The music built up some rousing Irish folk songs, a couple of rebel songs, and then they really let loose with some fantastic Irish and American traditional dance music. Theresa was in her glory whirling and twirling and doing Irish step dancing. She had earlier slipped upstairs to her apartment to get her hard shoes for dancing. To everyone's surprise, she must have taught her steps to John

who put on quite a show in his own right. June and Theresa led a step dance lesson that almost whole room participated in. Everyone was having a wonderful time and it reflected the joy of the bride and the groom.

Jimmy Byrne announced a guest duo for a slow dance romantic song. To everyone's shock, John and Theresa walked up to the platform. The fiddler played the haunting melody as an introduction. The large bass drum rolled, the guitar struck the opening chord, and Theresa and John began singing together, *Mo Ghile Mear*, a lovely love song in Irish. Brigid and Dave, as well as his brothers and sister, were aware of John's ability to sing a good song. No one else had ever heard him sing, and especially to sing with such quality. In another life he and Theresa could be professionals. Between verses John encouraged dancing and almost everyone in the room clung together to the rhythms of the ancient Irish slow dance. The song built to a crescendo with every instrument loud and glorious for the last verse. At the end of their song applause rang through the room.

Theresa thanked everyone and said that her fiancé, an understated genius, stayed up late one night and learned the entire Irish language, just for this song. "It is about an Irish Princess longing for her lover, dedicated to Garvey Consulting's Irish princess, our friend and colleague, the newly minted Susan Garvey, whose gallant lover is locked in her arms. By the way, the music and poetry for that song preceded any Irish recorded history."

The second song, our last, is dedicated to Michael and Susan, launching their life together. The metaphor is a voyage through life, written by the great Irish musician, Christie Moore, now living in New Jersey.

Susan and Michael stood on the dance floor pausing to listen to the songs dedicated to them, beautifully harmonized by Theresa and John. Both blushed and applauded enthusiastically, Susan and Michael had been gliding from table to table to work the room and speak with their guests, coming at last to their ecstatic parents. Susan felt badly that such joy was something that was beyond her father's ability to assimilate. He was still locked down in the prison mental hospital and had not yet been granted out of doors recreation. He may not have even been aware of the wedding. Susan wrote him a letter and sent him an announcement but received nothing in reply.

The evening finally wound down. Jimmy and Bob played and sang for an extra half hour at Michael's request.

Everyone was filled with a great spirit of joy that they would need when they would awaken happily hung over in the morning. They would remember this as the best wedding and reception that they had ever experienced.

After a night of beautiful love making, Michael and Susan took an early morning flight to Barbados. They would stay at a palatial Irish hotel and be just for each other for the next ten days.

Later in the week, Fr. Fred was returning from his walk when he saw Rosellen Dowd planting flowers in the front yard of their home across from the church. He stopped to chat but with a happy purpose. He asked Rosellen if she would manage the Parish Food Pantry. He knew that she would have the best back up in the world with her father, Bookbinder's Maitre D', in her corner.

She balked, telling Fr. Fred that she hoped to attend St. Joseph's University.

"Perfect," he said. "The job is part-time and flex-time. It won't take much time to learn the ropes. We have plenty of volunteers and I do not think we'll have to worry about money for a long time thanks to the Garvey family and your dad and Maria. There are plenty of experienced people who volunteer. If you can give me 20 hours a week, I can pay you \$20.00 an hour."

"Before I accept your offer, I would like to discuss it with my dad. He knows the food business and he will tell me if this is a fit."

"We're not trying to make money. That is my job. I need you to keep the place and the people organized."

"It sounds like something that I would like to do, and the commute will be perfect. I'll talk with you tomorrow."

"Thanks Rosellen, I would love to have you on the parish staff."

That evening, Rosellen spoke with Desmond and Maria about Fr. Fred's offer. "Before I jump in and disappoint him, I want to make sure that I can do what he expects. He said he wants me to keep the operation organized."

Desmond smiled, "Up until now, Fr. Fred was responsible for keeping the operation disorganized. Organizing is not one of his central skills. Anything that you do is bound to be an improvement."

“He said the hours would be flexible so they could mesh with my college schedule. Of course, I don’t have a college or a schedule yet. Patrick Malone, Maeve Garvey’s husband said that he could work that out for me.”

“Patrick is a full professor of Irish and English Literature and, as such, can award a scholarship,” remarked Desmond.

Desmond responded that he could help make things a little easier for her. “I would like you to use those rooms in the basement for study and an office. We’ll get you furniture and a laptop. I want to put a couple of fold out couches down there. If we have extra guests, you’ll still have the privacy of one of those rooms. Otherwise, you have all of them. I want that to be your work and study area. Sixteen hundred dollars a month is pretty good for a part time job. You’ll have that money for yourself. I can teach you some investment skills. I want you to be part of the family. Your upstairs bedroom is your domain. I would love us to eat together whenever we can with our divergent schedules. I want you to come with me tomorrow to get a car. I had in mind a gently used Volvo because it is a safe car as well as reliable. You will need that for getting back and forth to the college.”

“I want to remind you that though you are part of the family, you are an independent adult. That being said, we are always here for you. We don’t need to know where you are going, who you are with, or what time you will be home. We will be pleased with whatever you choose to share with us. It turns out that Maria is your new best friend and I am so pleased with that. When we married I had no idea if ever we would see you again, though I always prayed that we would. Your call was a complete surprise.”

“Maria is a complete surprise. She is such a wonderful person,” said Rosellen.

“What do you want to study? Do you have any ideas?”

“Yes, I want to major in Women’s Studies in a Sociology or Social Work curriculum. That is directly influenced by my experience with Whitey. Most significant was my experience with the Woman’s Shelter in Detroit.”

“God bless you. I am so pleased.”

“Dad, I hope you know how pleased I am and how indebted to you that I am.”

“You owe me no debt, Rosellen. You owe it to yourself to continue to be the best person you can be.”

“As far as Fr. Fred goes, ask him for a tour of the place, meet the staff, get an idea of what each one does, and then accept the job. I’ll be available to help you out where I can, but that is strictly between you and me. Take a notebook with you and write down everything you see.”

Rosellen grasped her father with a most intense hug. “That is on me. I thought I was so glib. I’m starting late, but I want to make you proud of me.”

“I am proud of you now, Rosellen. I want you to learn to take great pride in yourself. All the opportunity is out there in front of you.”

Rosellen called Fr. Fred the next morning. “Fr. can we take a tour of the facility? I’d like to see what I am getting in to. Also, if there are any volunteers around, I would like to meet them.”

“Great idea, Rosellen. Cross the street now and I’ll meet you in front of the rectory.” The two walked together down the block to a large warehouse. There was a gravel road appropriate for both cars and trucks. Already there were trucks lined up with deliveries. Fr. Fred walked around the corner and down the gravel road to the front of the warehouse. The big doors were open for the delivery and that was their entrance as well.

Jaime Santos came up to greet them. He was a paid volunteer who took charge of the morning shift when most of the deliveries were made. There were five volunteers off-loading the truck into wheeled carts for storage in the building.

“Our storage system is somewhat chaotic, and we are trying to organize it so that we know where everything is when we need it. We distribute food on Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday. We have a delivery service for the infirm that we manage on Saturdays. We distribute food to about 300 families each week. We get our referrals from the parish and the various social service agencies around the city. There are several food pantries throughout the city, and we help each other to fill supply orders as needed.”

“Do the others have the same number of clients each week?”

“Some have more but for all of us the volume ebbs and flows as life circumstances change?”

“What would those changes be,” asked Rosellen?

“Well , death, for instance. Some will move into nursing homes, others move in with their children. Some simply move out of town to find someplace that is less expensive, said Jaime. People who were unemployed get jobs. Those who are employed lose jobs.”

“Do you know where everything in the warehouse is?”

“More or less, mostly less.”

“How long are fresh foods in the warehouse?”

“Fresh foods go out with every package. Nothing fresh is stored for more than the week.”

“Where does all this food come from?”

“Donations are from restaurants, major food suppliers, bakeries, some vendors. Anything we need, we have to buy and that causes financial crises from time to time. The truck outside is delivering milk, juices, and various packages of prepared frozen meals. These are donated by Trader Joe’s. The big vendors such as Shop Rite, Whole Foods, Kings, Stop and Shop, Piggly Wiggly, and Acme are very helpful. They always save enough for a delivery here.”

“Do you have adequate refrigeration for refrigerated and frozen foods.”

“We do. Fr. Fred purchased new, updated units at the beginning of the year, thanks to Maeve Garvey.”

“I know Maeve.”

“Everyone in this great city knows Maeve.”

“Well thank you for the tour. This was a great help. By the way, how many volunteers do you have?”

If everyone came at once, we would have about 200. We have about fifty regulars who sign up for specific days. They are our core volunteers. The others show up when they can. In a crisis, we have telephone and e-mail appeals. We are never short-handed.”

“Well Father, you have another hired hand. I’ll be very pleased to help run this organization. I presume my father can help when I need him.”

“You can start formerly next week. I’ll have a letter out this week announcing your role.”

“I have not heard yet if I am accepted at St. Joseph’s University. It will be interesting to blend the two roles.”

Patrick Malone and Fr. Mannion, President of St. Joseph’s University, were locked in an intense conversation. Patrick had become the shining light of the English Literature Department and has become known throughout the country for his publications, all of which shine a spotlight on the academic excellence of St. Joseph’s University. Patrick’s academic rank entitled him to one scholarship that he wanted to offer to Rosellen Dowd. Fr. Mannion’s concern was that Rosellen’s high school record was mediocre at best, and there were no SAT or ACT scores. All he had was Patrick’s enthusiasm for her admission, his acquaintance with her father as one of Philadelphia’s best-known citizens, and Patrick’s pledge of academic success with the help

of tutors, at his expense, if necessary. Patrick's well thought out arguments, eloquently and intensely presented, including the recommendation of Rosellen's stepmother, St. Joseph's newest Ph.D. Maria Costo Dowd, gradually wore him down.

"Rosellen would be required to have her academic record scrutinized at the end of each semester. If she does not measure up to the minimum standards of an average student, she would have the scholarship withdrawn."

"Thank you, Father. I'll see to it that you will not regret this decision. I'll bring her the application and all the documents required. She wants to take two courses in the summer semester. I have a catalogue. She wants to develop a major in Women's Studies toward a degree in Sociology or Social Work."

Patrick rushed out to his office to telephone Rosellen with the good news. Her reborn life would flourish thanks to a little help from her friends.

Before she left the office for the day, Maeve stopped in at Theresa's office.

"Can you come by for a walk along the riverbank tonight? I'll buy you an ice cream cone when we get down to the end of the park."

The mistress of sarcasm responded, "Oh wow. How can a girl refuse and offer like that!"

"Don't be a smart-ass. Come around 8:30."

At exactly the appointed time Theresa greeted the doorman and Maeve said she would be right down. There was a smell of freshness in the air as the end of May blossoms shared their fragrance with the night.

"What's up," asked Theresa? "You sound distressed."

"I am distressed. I got my period again."

"Well that kind of anxiety is not going to help you get pregnant"

"I talked with Patrick about it. He said that he read that it takes a little longer for women in their 30's to become pregnant."

"That sounds like an old wives tale, not that you are. What book is he reading?"

"I don't know, I didn't ask. That was dumb of me, why didn't I ask?"

"Probably because you are being compulsive. You want it all and you want it now."

“You are probably right about that. I have such hopes and dreams about motherhood. I want a family like the family in which I grew up. I told Patrick that I want at least five children. At that time, he knew nothing of my finances and told me that he didn’t think we could afford five children.”

“And now he seems to agree with you?”

“Yes, Patrick has come a long way. He was once upset with me because we have financial security for a lifetime and more. He described a very intense debate he had with Fr. Mannion today. Mannion capitulated and Rosellen has been accepted for admission as Patrick’s annual scholarship.”

“Isn’t that reserved for a promising scholar?”

“Patrick and Maria believe that Rosellen has that in her.”

“Rosellen is a very sweet person but she has been out of action for quite a while.”

“Maria will whip her into shape. Rosellen is also working at St. Paul’s running the food pantry. Fr. Fred was desperate for good help. Desmond said he would back her up. As wonderful as that is, it is not helping me get pregnant. What are you going to do about that?”

”There is nothing I can do. That is your job.”

They reached the end of the park and stopped at the Dairy Queen. They then sat on one of the benches to watch the river and eat their ice cream cones.

“I still don’t have any answers. You haven’t earned your ice cream yet. I need answers.”

“You do know that babies are conceived as the result of sex. I presume that Patrick is cooperative.”

“Very cooperative and we are having a good time. Patrick is a terrific lover. I hope for your sake it runs in the family. When we talked about it, he recommended that we wait five months and then consult a fertility doctor.”

“Sounds like a plan,” said Theresa. “I hope you’re not killing my brother and making him an old man before his time.”

“What do you mean,” asked Maeve.”

“While it is none of my business, how often are you making love?”

“About seven times a week, eight if it is a slow Saturday.”

“Good God. Maeve. It is a wonder that either of you can walk.”

“What do you mean?”

“Sperm requires time for fertility.”

“Nobody ever told me that?”

“Obviously, they didn’t know who they were talking with. If a glass of wine a day is good for your health, a liter must be great.”

“What should I do?”

“First talk with Patrick. Give yourself a week off. The following week and there after restrict lovemaking to three times a week. Give it two months and see what happens. Finally, this conversation never happened. I don’t want my brother to think I’m spying on his love life.”

Maeve enthusiastically hugged her friend and practically danced the rest of the way home.

June and Brian stopped at the Mission to thank Father Keenan and the other Jesuits for participating in Susan’s wedding.

“Ah, we had great fun. I even danced some of the reels. I didn’t know you were such an accomplished stepper.”

“Maeve and I were so bored in college that she taught me to dance and we used to do it together at parties. It always livened them up a bit.”

“Listen,” said Fr. Jim, “I always say this, but I want you guys to be careful. Know who is walking behind you and in front of you. I’ll have to get Theresa back here to take care of you.”

“You have Dierdre here. She has taken on and defeated armies.”

“She has become a valuable asset at the clinic. She sleeps over here when she stays overnight.

“Well the last time the only problem we had was a bigot pastor at our church that my grandfather built. The new pastor is wonderful.”

“Well, just be careful. You guys are more likely to attract the ire of the rural Pennsylvania neo-Nazis.”

The break was an opportunity for June to recharge her batteries and they planned to spend their time at her parent’s home at Gettysburg. June was

well known in her community and the opportunity to meet old friends was something she was looking forward to.

Her sister was entering her senior year at the high school. As a super successful graduate June had been invited to be the commencement speaker for the class of 2021. She has also agreed to conduct a three-day Seminar for the entire senior class on race relations. June was already planning the program scheduled for March.

The program that she was planning included films, lectures, small group discussions, and the see, judge, act experience.

Ben and Jane were very excited to welcome them even though only a few weeks ago, they were present at Michael and Susan's wedding. A few of June's local relatives and Father Foley would join them for dinner. They had a nice relaxing afternoon just talking and enjoying the lovely surroundings of the pool patio. The pool was ready, but it was still a little too cool for swimming. June's adoring sisters hung out with the family all day. They wanted to know everything that June was doing. She was the role-model for their future lives.

Susan was going to college the following year and there was some excitement about researching colleges. Since her dad was a professor at Mount St. Mary's. Susan had an automatic scholarship. Her parents said that they would support her residence at the college. She was an outstanding academic and would finish high school at or near the top of her class. Susan was also an athlete with considerable success on the track team as a sprinter. There were no firm offers yet, but several colleges showed some interest. She was looking forward to discussing the pros and cons with June over the weekend. She was also disappointed that the white boyfriends she enjoyed so much were retreating to the cooler relationship of "let's just be friends." Like her older sister, Susan was super attractive. June promised Susan a walk after dinner so they could talk privately.

At dinner, Fr. Tom Foley was a delightful guest. A good listener, he was very much a part of the conversation but redirected most of it to June and Brian as guests of honor. June spoke about her new job as Executive Director of the Jesuit Urban Mission. She talked about the Urgent Care Center and their insurance business for the healthcare of the poor. They had 75 families in subsidized rental apartments in buildings that the JUC owned and the fifteen apartments housing the graduate volunteers whose service commitment with them was complete at the end of June. They were wonderful and she would miss them, but a new class of volunteers would begin to work with them by the end of July. She had plans for a continuing education experience for the new class, a need that she learned from the

previous class. Maeve, Theresa, and Maria, still volunteers, accepted the responsibility of developing that. June developed a curriculum based on the suggestions of the outgoing volunteers.

Brian was asked about the trials and the subsequent death in prison of the planner of the attack on his parents. Without too much focus on Sean's death, he talked about his parents and brother John's visit with Sean's wife and family. He also mentioned that Tom McNally agreed to be a groomsman at John and Theresa's wedding. He and his mother would attend Mass this Sunday at St. Paul's with our group of friends and with my parents, joining them at brunch at the restaurant we go to in Cherry Hill.

Jane's sister and brother-in-law were amazed at the work of June and Brian. Since they met him the previous year, they were in awe of him as well.

Later in the evening, June and her troubled sister, Susan, took a slow, talking walk toward a local ice-cream parlor about a mile and a half up the road.

"Susan, I was destined for Mount St. Mary's as well. And I think I would have loved it. I would have loved any college that I chose. When Scholarship opportunities started to pour in, I was overwhelmed. I visited them all. I rejected the athletic scholarship offers. Basketball was fun in high school, but it is a hard second job in college. The unwritten secret is that they own you. I wanted to study, have fun, and have my own life, and make my own decisions about it. Immaculata was considered one of the finest colleges in Pennsylvania. It didn't have the wild reputation of Villanova, for instance. My friend, Theresa, went to Villanova, and they offered a course in martial arts to ward off over-aggressive boys. She went all the way to a black belt. Martial arts weren't my thing. Immaculata was Catholic. I was and continue to be a committed Catholic. Though it was formerly an all-women's college, they had started accepting boys for the previous two years, meaning that it was still culturally a woman's college still learning to orient to males. There were a number of Black girls on campus so I wouldn't be excluded from social relationships. When they found out that I was interested in attending Immaculata, they offered me a basketball scholarship. I thought long and hard about that, but the players assured me that it was not a basketball factory. Basketball was fun. I arrived there, I didn't select a roommate and neither did the girl that became my roommate for the next four years. Maeve Garvey and I became best friends. Her parents opened their home to me in Philadelphia and became my Philadelphia parents. I am marrying Maeve's brother. My college and sorority sister will become my sister-in-law next month. I received my master's and doctoral degrees at the University of

Pennsylvania. Being a member of the Ivy League gives me entre to anywhere I want to go. I taught high school students for about ten years. I love my job with the Jesuits. My book will be published by the end of the year. And that is my story. I hope it helps you.”

“You put an awful lot of thought into your choice. You have no regrets?”

“I had the thoughts. I didn’t always know what I was doing. I loved basketball and I did play at Immaculata. But it wasn’t like playing for Villanova or Notre Dame. I had fun. I met great people. Yes, I wanted to be the best and I wanted to win. For the first time, I didn’t always win, and I had to learn to live with that. That is what competition is all about. It is supposed to build character. In high school, I was the top player in our entire region. At Immaculata, I was still the top player, but I learned to play with women who were great players as well.”

“I loved my courses and teachers. Maeve and I used to discuss classes and the ideas we were discovering. I was lucky to pick the school I always wanted.”

“What about dating?”

“We had only freshman and sophomore classes with men accepted into them. However, every college in the region seemed to have men who were interested in Immaculata women. I glibly say men and women, we were only eighteen and nineteen years old. We were still boys and girls in those early college days. Maeve and I were both barely twenty-one when we graduated. Neither one of us wanted a romantic relationship but we loved to date and party. I had both Black and White boyfriends. Maeve dated a Black guy for a whole semester. Our friends had great fun with that. I was dating a White guy. We had great fun and learned a lot about life. Yet, we were in a fairly safe environment. Neither one of us ever clashed with the neo-Nazis.”

“Study yourself first and determine what it is that you want out of life. If it is sports or pursuing an Olympic opportunity check the track and field records of the schools that interest you. When you visit them, be sure to interview the athletes. The coach’s job is to sell you their package. The athletes are likely to be more honest. If you want to teach like I did, look for the best school to do that and make sure you are certified when you graduate. If track is still fun for you, you can do that as well. If you want to follow dad’s career, study Finance and Economics. You have the talent to become a lawyer or a physician. Brian is Philadelphia’s top criminal lawyer. My friend Susan, who has married Brian’s brother, Michael, has an undergraduate Business degree as well as a Master’s in Business

Administration. The doctor in my clinic is terrific and he would be pleased to spend time with you. All of them will be pleased to speak with you. Come to Philadelphia during one of your week's off, stay with me, and interview them. Keep a journal about your thoughts and experiences.

By this time, they were at the ice cream store sipping milkshakes together. A couple of boys, Susan's high school friends, came over to chat with her. Both were White. June smiled at the introductions and felt very confident that Susan would have no problem with the future once she confronted her uncertainty.

On Monday morning, they met with Father Tom Foley, at the rectory, to go over the final details for their wedding. Father Jim will be the principle celebrant and they hoped that Fr. Tom would be among the concelebrants. In fact, they would like him to welcome the guests to the parish and introduce the Fr. Keenan and the other Jesuits when we get settled in the sanctuary. Many of the guests would be local and just as many would come in from Philadelphia.

Fr. Tom said that he had arranged with June's parents to have the rehearsal dinner in the school auditorium. This would be the parishes' gift to them. After all she was a relatively close descendant of the founder. Many of their friends, who were already coming to the nuptial Mass and reception at the nearby Marriott wanted to do something special for their local heroine.

Everything was in order. Brian gave Fr. Tom an envelope to cover the usual fees and provide a generous contribution to the Church. They had asked that in lieu of gifts, donations should be made to June's friend's soup kitchen.

After a wonderful lunch with her parents and sisters, Brian and June assured them that they could be reached on the cell phone. They can even talk with each other face to face. Emma said that she would introduce them to Zoom. June assured them that everything was in place and only trivial things would come up. On their way home, they stopped at the Marriott. Brian paid three-quarters of the anticipated bill. Dave had insisted on paying for their wedding. You can tell Dave Gilliam that they are beneficiaries of a founder's discount. Of course, June is the founder three generations removed.

The ride home that afternoon was very pleasant. There was a gratifying feeling that everything was under control. June talked about the conversation she had with her sister, Susan, and compared it with her own uncertainty about college. She was very happy about choosing Immaculata. Notre Dame and Villanova were very disappointed. She said that she almost

went to Notre Dame just for the opportunity to play for the great coach, Muffet McGraw. Then she did what she asked her sister to do, look into herself to see what she really wanted. She wanted a great college experience and a national spotlight would not provide that. Playing basketball, which she loved to do, for Immaculata, would do her fine. They won their sectional championship in each of her four years. She received a myriad of honors including election as Small College All American as well as recognition as one of the top scholar athletes of the country. She learned how to be great teammate as well as be a team leader. She was also a top of the line scholar. She became a best friend to Maeve, something she continues to cherish, and immeasurably strengthened her faith in God. She totally lived the Black experience. She was very proud of her Black heritage and always was proud of her Irish heritage. She loved teaching at the high school, but nothing compares with working as the Executive Director of the Jesuit Urban Mission.

Na Fianna Éireann and Easter 1916

Glaine inár gcroí -- Purity in our hearts

Neart inár ngéaga -- Strength in our arms

Beart de réir ar mbriathar -- Truth on our lips.

Na FIANNA ÉIREANN was founded in 1909 with the object of educating the youth of Ireland in national ideas and re-establishing the independence of the nation. After more than 700 years of enforced English rule, Ireland seemed to be in danger of slowly becoming a contented British province. Unemployment was widespread, poverty rampant and apathy the general condition of the people. Hopelessness seemed the birthright of every boy and girl born in those lean years. The older generations seemed embittered and dispirited. Pride of nationhood was at a low ebb.

The Gaelic League and the Gaelic Athletic Association, founded in the last quarter of the 19th century, had made great strides. They catered for the young adult population. But the boys of Ireland, whose keen young minds should have been educated in their country's heritage, needs and future, were neglected. Through education which Pádraig Mac Piarais would describe as “*The Murder Machine*”, the neglected youth of Ireland were falling prey to the bait of the tyrant. Some escaped their poverty by joining the British Army and helped their oppressor establish his rule in Africa and Asia. Others scraped a bare existence at home, with little opportunity to dwell on the plight of their country, or on their future.

In 1909 Countess Constance Markievicz decided to found an organization for Irish boys. The boys would be held together by the bond of their great love for Ireland. What mattered was honesty and willingness to undertake a life of self-sacrifice and self-denial for their country's sake. It was to be primarily an educational organization. She began at the Westland Row Christian Brothers School and in time became convinced that it would have to be run more on the basis of a "Boys' Republic" with a military-style organization. She invited Bulmer Hobson to assist, as he had previous experience of handling boys, having run a boys' organization in Belfast. At his request, inspired by the Fianna of third century Ireland, as John O'Mahony had been in 1858 when he named the Fenian Brotherhood, she called the organization *Na Fianna Éireann*. An Chead Sluagh was formed in Dublin on 16th August 1909, marking the actual founding. Con Colbert joined and soon rose to the rank of Captain; Colbert was also Centre of the John Mitchel Circle of the IRB, devoted to support of Na Fianna. The Fianna established hurling and football teams, pipe bands and ambulance-corps, in every part of the country. The Belfast Sluagh, wearing Fianna uniform, climbed Cave Hill, and standing at McArt's Fort just as Wolfe Tone had done, promised to work unceasingly for the independence of Ireland.

In 1911 **Liam Mellows** joined; **Seán Heuston** was then O/C of Limerick Sluagh. In 1913 Seán Heuston took charge of Sluagh Robert Emmet, and Liam Mellows became a full-time Fianna organizer, and never relaxed his ceaseless activity for the Republic until his death, with fellow Fianna Headquarters staff member **Joe McKelevey**, by a Free State firing squad on the feast of the Immaculate Conception, 8th December 1922.

Na Fianna played an active part during the **1913 strike**. When the **Irish Volunteers** were formed in the same year, the value of the work undertaken by Na Fianna became obvious. The senior boys were ready and competent to train the Volunteers and accustom them to discipline and, in short, to transform raw recruits into disciplined soldiers, much as West Point Cadets helped train the expanded US Army during America's Second War for Independence (1812-1815). Four Fianna officers were elected to the first Executive Council of the Volunteers and **Liam Mellows** became the first effective secretary. The Fianna drill halls and equipment were at the disposal of the Volunteers and they grew rapidly in strength, along with Na Fianna. Na Fianna was well represented at Bodenstown the same year when Pádraig Mac Piarais led the historic pilgrimage to the grave of Wolfe Tone. This remains an annual event for Na Fianna.

The year 1914 saw further progress for Na Fianna when the first handbook was put in the hands of the Organisation. 1914 also marked Na Fianna's first event of national importance, the **Howth gun running**. They marched from Dublin with the Volunteers, bringing their trek-cart with them, and were the first to reach Erskine Childers' yacht *The Asgard*. A Fianna officer was in charge of the cycle detachment at the Kilcoole gun running, which took place soon afterwards.

From 1915 onwards *Na Fianna Éireann* threw themselves wholeheartedly into anti-British activities; the funeral of O'Donovan Rossa was the occasion of a great display of strength. In 1915 the Fianna re-organised the Sluaighte into Brigade and Battalion formations to bring it into line with the Volunteers.

Seven years of intensive effort and dedicated service to the nation culminated in the glorious Rising of **Easter Week, 1916**, when Fianna officers were given command of important sections of the operations. A party of Fianna and Volunteers successfully attacked and destroyed the arms and munitions in the Magazine Fort in the Phoenix Park, thus signaling the start of the Rising. This party then proceeded to the Broadstone Railway Station, where the O/C of the Dublin Fianna was severely wounded in the attack. They also participated in the capture of the Linen Hall Barracks and the fierce fighting in North King Street. Seán Heuston was in charge at the Mendicity Institution on Usher's Island, and with his small garrison, defended his position for three days. Liam Staines, a member of "F" Sluagh, was severely wounded during the fighting there. Con Colbert was second in command in Marrowbone Lane and assumed command at the surrender.

Madame Markievicz with Michael Mallin, held the College of Surgeons with Citizen Army and some Fianna boys. Members of Na Fianna were engaged in the fighting in other parts also, and, in addition, carried out the dangerous work of dispatch carrying and scouting. Six Fianna boys were killed, several were wounded and **Seán Heuston** and **Con Colbert** were executed on May 8, 1916.

Liam Mellows, the Fianna organiser, led the **1916 Rising in the West**. He was in command of the Western Division of the Volunteers and planned to drive the British out of the West by capturing all posts and barracks there and then marching on Galway City. They captured the barracks at Clarenbridge and marched to Oranmore.

With the end of the Rising, **Liam Mellows**, with two loyal comrades, fled to the mountains - hunted outlaws. After four months on the run Mellows was instructed to go to **America** to campaign for funds for the Movement. His safe passage, and return, was arranged by Charlie Holt (father of Mary Holt Moore), who worked on a ship carrying Guinness to New York. Mellows worked ceaselessly for the cause in America until his return to Ireland in 1920.

With the release of the bulk of the internees in December 1916, *Na Fianna Éireann* HQ Staff was re-constituted under **Ard Fheinne, Countess Markievicz** (still in prison). Fianna took an active part in all militant activities, which included marching at the funeral of Thomas Ashe, the anti-conscription campaign and several raids for arms. The Annual Ard-Fheis in 1919 at the Mansion House **pledged its allegiance to the Irish Republic**, as the Fianna of today continue to do.

From 1919 to 1921, Na Fianna took an active part in the **Irish War for Independence**, the fight for freedom (also known as the First Defence of the Republic), throughout the country. They carried dispatches for the Irish Republican Army (IRA), reconnoitered barracks, etc., engaged in intelligence work of all kinds, rendered first aid to the wounded. Officers and senior scouts succeeded in securing arms and actively engaged the enemy on numerous occasions. The heroism of the boys of Ireland during this period would require many volumes.

At the Ard-Fheis held after the Truce, the Director of Organisation gave the strength of the organization as around 25,000; it had begun in 1909 with eight boys from a CBS in Dublin. At the general parade of all national bodies which took place in Smithfield, Dublin, to celebrate the Truce, the Fianna who paraded from the Dublin Brigade, under Garry Holohan, numbered 2,100 all ranks. Na Fianna Éireann, were true to their allegiance to the Republic and offered their lives in its defense; their sacrifices were very real. *Na Fianna Éireann* remains true to the **Irish Republic**, proclaimed in arms during **Easter Week 1916**, ratified by the Irish electorate 14th December 1918 (in a virtual national self-determination plebiscite), and by democratically elected representatives, **Teachta Dála Éireann (TDÉ)**, **Declared its Independence** through *An Chéad Dáil Éireann* (the First Dáil Éireann) on 21st January 1919. ###

ON THIS DAY IN IRISH HISTORY -AUGUST

1st

1906 - The Catholic hierarchy rule out mixed education at Trinity College, Dublin.

1915 - Funeral of Jeremiah O'Donovan Rossa, at which Patrick Pearse gives an oration.

1969 - A huge rally outside the GPO in Dublin protests events in Northern Ireland.

1980 - Eighteen people die in the Buttevant Rail Disaster.

3rd

1916 - Roger Casement hanged for treason.

5th

1969 - Severe sectarian rioting in Belfast.

7th

1957 - A war memorial in Limerick is blown up.

1986 - Peter Robinson, deputy leader of the DUP, is arrested for illegal assembly after a Loyalist mob takes over a village in County Monaghan.

8th

1980 - Ten people die in a hotel fire at Bundoran.

9th

1971 - Internment without trial is introduced in Northern Ireland.

11th

1927 - Fianna Fáil TDs join the Dáil for the first time.

1950 - At a meeting of the European Consultative Assembly in Strasbourg, Irish representatives vote against the European army proposed by Winston Churchill.

12th

1898 - James Connolly publishes the first copy of the Workers' Republic newsletter.

1946 - A plane carrying 23 French Girl Guides crashes in the Wicklow Mountains.

13th

1931 - Business resumes in the Four Courts following damage caused in the Civil War.

1969 - The Taoiseach Jack Lynch says on television that Ireland 'can no longer stand by' given the situation in Northern Ireland.

1995 - Gerry Adams tells a rally in Belfast that the IRA 'haven't gone away'.

14th

1903 - Wyndham Land Act passed, offering incentives to landlord to sell their estates.

15th

1838 - Government introduces relief work and a reduction in tithes for the poor.

1843 - Repeal meeting at Tara.

1969 - A night of violence and arson in Belfast. Sinn Féin calls for UN intervention and the boycott of British goods.

1998 - Real IRA bomb at Omagh kills 29 people.

16th

1879 - Land League of Mayo founded at Castlebar.

1969 - British soldiers are deployed in Belfast.

1982 - The Attorney General Patrick Connolly resigns after a wanted killer is found at his house.

17th

1922 - Dublin Castle is formally handed over to the IRA by the British.

1969 - Northern Ireland protesters clash with the Garda Síochána in Dublin.

18th

1911 - The British House of Lords loses its veto power beyond two years, making Home Rule possible.

19th

1989 - 10,000 people march in Dublin calling for Britain's withdrawal from Northern Ireland.

20th

1888 - Christian Brothers College founded in Cork.

21st

1962 - Former US President Eisenhower arrives in Belfast.

1970 - The Social Democratic and Labour Party is founded in Northern Ireland.

22nd

1922 - Michael Collins is killed in an ambush at Béal na Bláth.

23rd

1921 - Stormont Castle agreed as the Parliament building for Northern Ireland.

27th

1928 - Ireland becomes a signatory of the Kellogg Peace Pact.

1969 - The B-Specials begin to hand over their guns. British Home Secretary James Callaghan visits Belfast.

1979 - The IRA kill Lord Mountbatten, his grandson and the grandson's friend; on the same day, an IRA ambush at Warrenpoint kills 18 British soldiers.

28th

1835 - St. Vincent's Ecclesiastical Seminary opened at Castleknock.

1930 - Rembrandt painting found in an Irish cottage is authenticated.

31st

1994 - IRA announces a ceasefire.