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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.

Guest contributors are always welcome! Please note, the IACI is an apolitical, non-sectarian organization and requests that contributors consider that when submitting articles. The IACI reserves the right to refuse or edit submissions. The views and opinions expressed in this newsletter are solely those of the original authors and other contributors. These views and opinions do not necessarily represent those of the IACI or any/all contributors to this site. Please submit articles for consideration to cbuck@iaci-usa.org.

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IRISH CUSTOMS

On what day of the week was it regarded as being unlucky to cut your fingernails?	Sunday
What does the term 'luck penny' or 'luck money' mean?	This means returning a small portion of the sale price to the seller when a deal is made
What feastday is celebrated on February 1st?	Saint Brigid's Day
On St Brigid's Day people went from house to house carrying a straw doll. What was the doll called?	A Brideog
What is St Brigid's cross made from?	Rushes
What was put up into the rafters of a house, on St Brigid's Day, to protect against evil spirits?	A straw from the Christmas nativity scene
If a person drank nettle soup on May 1st, it was believed they would be free of what for a year?	Rheumatism
What day was considered lucky to sow potatoes?	Good Friday
What birds flying directly over a house were considered an omen of death?	Crows
When and what was 'Nollaig na mBan'?	January 6th - 'Little Women's Christmas' when men would take over the housework for the day!
In the west of Ireland what was a 'Foidin Mara'?	A 'stray sod' or 'enchanted' piece of grass whereby a person stepping on it would become disorientated and lost
It was believed unlucky to knit at night until you were certain who were asleep?	The sheep
A stocking filled with hot potatoes and applied to the throat was a cure for what ailment?	Tonsillitis
What was a besom and what was it used for?	A roughly fashioned short-handled sweeping brush made from a clump of birch cuttings, normally used to clean the hearth area of the kitchen
What was a ciseán ('cish-awn')?	A household basket crafted from reeds
What is meant by the term 'keening'?	When women family members would cry and wail over a relative who had died

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What was a 'Banshee'?	A fairy woman reputed to wail and cry at the impending death of members of certain families
Why did unmarried girls place slice of wedding cake under their pillows?	In the hope that they dream of their future husband
What is a Seanachai?	A traditional Irish storyteller/historian
Allegedly what will happen if you kiss the Blarney Stone?	You will get 'the gift of the gab (talk)'
What was the most popular way of finding a husband or wife in Ireland long ago?	Matchmaking
A famous annual matchmaking festival takes place in what county?	Lisdoonvarna, County Clare
Who or what were the 'Straw-boys'?	Groups of uninvited revellers dressed in top hats, masks and skirts of straw who arrived at weddings where they sang and danced
What day are you likely to see 'Wrenboys'?	St Stephen's Day
What is another name for 'Wrenboys'?	The Mummings
What was the significance of a horse or donkey shoe nailed above the door in an Irish house?	To bring good luck
Who would be the preferred first visitor to a house on New Year's Day and why?	A tall dark handsome man would bring good luck
What New Year's Day visitor was believed to bring hardship and grief to a house?	A red haired girl
What benefit was associated with May morning dew?	It was believed to be good for the complexion

ON THIS DAY IN IRISH HISTORY – SEPTEMBER

- 1st** **1913** - Protest by locked-out workers lead to serious riots in Dublin.
1939 - A state of emergency is declared by the Irish government.
1974 - Transition Year is introduced as a pilot scheme in three schools.
1994 - Transition Year is introduced to all secondary schools.
- 2nd** **1933** - United Ireland Organisation founded. It is to adopt the name of 'Fine Gael'.
- 3rd** **1939** - The Emergency Powers Act comes into force as Britain declares war on Germany.
- 4th** **1907** - Sinn Féin disrupt an Irish Parliamentary Party meeting.
1967 - CIÉ, a scheme for free school transport for older students, is introduced.
- 5th** **1926** - 48 people die in a temporary cinema in Dromcolliher when it catches fire.
1954 - KLM Flight 633 crashes leaving Shannon airport, killing 27 people.
- 6th** **1899** - The Countess of Shaftesbury laid the foundation stone of St Anne's Cathedral in Belfast.
1994 - John Hume, the Taoiseach Albert Reynolds and Gerry Adams meet to pledge support for democracy.
- 8th** **1893** - Second Home Rule Bill rejected by the Lords.
1908 - Patrick Pearse founds St Enda's school.
1921 - David Lloyd George makes a final offer to Éamon de Valera.
- 9th** **1887** - Three men killed by the police at an Irish National League demonstration at Mitchelstown.
1922 - First meeting of the Provisional Parliament (Third Dáil).
- 10th** **1928** - Irish pound issued.
- 12th** **1919** - The Dáil Éireann is declared illegal.
1938 - Éamon de Valera is elected President of the Assembly of the League of Nations.
1997 - Mary Robinson resigns as President of Ireland to take up a post at the United Nations.
- 13th** **1845** - *Gardener's Chronicle* announces that the potato blight has appeared in Ireland.
- 14th** **1921** - Sinn Féin put together a delegation to meet Lloyd George in London; it includes Michael Collins and Arthur Griffith.
- 17th** **1913** - Edward Carson declares that a Provisional Government will be set up if Home Rule is enacted.

- 18th 1867** - Thomas J. Kelly and Timothy Deasy escape while being transferred to jail in Manchester.
1922 - Constitution of Saorstát Éireann Bill introduced by W. T. Cosgrave.
- 19th 1923** - Fourth Dáil meet for the first time at Leinster House.
- 20th 1803** - Execution of Robert Emmet.
- 22nd 1959** - First conference of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions, which is not recognised by Northern Ireland.
- 23rd 1992** - The IRA destroys Belfast's forensic science laboratory.
- 25th 1971** - Rally in Dublin in support of civil disobedience in Northern Ireland.
- 26th 1932** - Éamon de Valera gives his inaugural speech as President of the League of Nations.
- 27th 1913** - 12,000 Ulster Volunteers parade at Balmoral to protest Home Rule.
- 28th 1912** - 'Ulster Day' on which the Ulster Covenant is signed.
- 29th 1979** - Pope John Paul II arrives in Ireland for a three-day visit.