

Foras Cultúir Gael Aontuighthe

United Irish Cultural Center, Inc.





Volume XLIX No. 2 February 2024

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BOARD MESSAGE

Reflecting on Nearly Fifty Years in the Community: A Retrospective and Future Outlook



Examining the construction timeline of the current Irish Center, as narrated in the Center's monthly bulletin from the early 1970s, it's notable that fifty years ago this month marked the commencement of the building emerging from the sand dunes at the intersection of 45th Avenue and Wawona. Progress was swift, with work proceeding at a frenetic pace. The groundbreaking ceremony had occurred just a few months prior, on Sunday, November II, 1973. Foundations were established by early December, and by the close of the year, the side walls were already in the process of being erected.

Liam Reidy Fundraising Efforts — In February 1973, the building committee announced the availability of the site on 45th Ave for purchase at a cost of \$100,000. The early contributions from membership sign-up fees and initial fundraising initiatives successfully raised enough funds to acquire the land and initiate the planning phase. Simultaneously, during the initial stages of construction, Tom Hayes, the Chairman of the Fundraising committee and Vice President, played a crucial role in orchestrating ticket sales to secure essential finances for the building's construction.

The estimated construction costs were projected to be \$300,000. To supplement funds, members of the local community extended loans to the Center, with an 8% annual interest rate paid back to the respective members. This collaborative effort reflected the community's dedication and financial support in bringing the vision of the Irish Center to fruition.

Framing Prediction — In May of 1973, while the plans for the building were progressing through the approval process at city hall, Tim Brosnan was summoned by President Liam Spiers during a membership meeting one evening. The question posed was about the timeframe needed to frame the wooden structure. Tim responded confidently, stating that it would "take 20 carpenters 15 weeks to frame the building." This moment underscored the determination of the group, highlighting their resolve to persist until the construction of the building was successfully accomplished.

Membership Roll Challenges — Despite the building committee's persistent efforts to achieve a target of 1000 signed-up members before commencing construction, the project proceeded with nearly 800 individuals on the membership roll. The hope was that additional people would join before the Center's anticipated opening in 1975.

Come on Down! — Once the foundation was successfully in place, a call for labor assistance at the construction site was disseminated through the monthly newsletter. Pat Brosnan, the individual overseeing daily operations, was in need of additional hands, and the bulletin emphasized that there was a role for everyone at 45th Avenue and Wawona. The message conveyed that one didn't need to be a carpenter to contribute, and the call for volunteers was inclusive, encouraging individuals with varying amounts of time, whether it be a few hours on a Friday or Saturday, or even a spare day off during the week, to come forward and join the efforts at the Center.

(President's Message continued on page 2)

Golden Anniversary 2025 — With slightly more than twelve months remaining until the golden anniversary of the inauguration of the United Irish Cultural Center on March 8th, 2025, we stand at the threshold of a new chapter with the 2025 Project rebuild. Spearheaded by community leaders, including Supervisors Joel Engardio and Myrna Melgar, and wholeheartedly endorsed by Mayor London Breed, Governor Gavin Newsom, and several former San Francisco mayors, this ambitious project serves as a testament to the collective determination and shared heritage that defines our community.

Vision and Support — The envisioned 120,000 square-foot facility transcends mere architectural achievement; it stands as a vibrant amalgamation of culture, innovation, and community spirit, poised to address the diverse needs and aspirations of the Bay Area community. With a budget of \$75 million, the project mirrors meticulous financial planning and enjoys widespread support. The decision to commence construction, backed by 75% of the required funds, underscores our shared commitment and responsible stewardship.

Community and Collaboration — At the heart of this initiative lies the unwavering dedication of numerous volunteers and the priceless pro bono contributions that have been instrumental in shaping the project over the past 2 I/2 years. Our robust committee structure, comprising the board, steering, building, and rising leaders, guarantees a comprehensive and inclusive approach to our endeavors.

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- 5. Close your mortgage and buy back your new home (Client Purchase).





Cultural and Technological Nexus — The new center will go beyond celebrating Irish heritage through lively cultural events such as the St. Patrick's Day parade; it also actively cultivates forwardthinking opportunities in areas like artificial intelligence and technology innovation, embodying the dynamic spirit of Silicon Valley.

Inclusive Amenities — From a top-floor restaurant and wellness facilities to dedicated spaces for education and community support, the center is meticulously designed to serve as a vibrant hub of activity, learning, and unity.

Commitment to Excellence — Our collaboration with esteemed architects and designers, notably the visionary Studio BANAA, underscores our unwavering commitment to crafting a space that is not only iconic but also enduring in its significance.

Building for the Future — In solidarity with individuals who served on the Board of Directors in 1974 and under the supportive gaze of our political and community leaders, we are not merely engaged in rebuilding; rather, we are actively reinventing and reinvigorating the very essence of our community. The Irish Cultural Center is poised to become a landmark of heritage, a beacon of innovation, and a welcoming home for all, echoing the diverse and dynamic spirit of San Francisco for generations to come.

Leo T. Walsh Scholarship — Applications for our annual scholarship program are now open for 8th Graders and High School Seniors entering the next level of their education. Completed applications are due on March 17th.

Summer Camp Registration — Registration is now open for the Annual Summer Camp taking place between June 10 and June 28 at the Center. Sign up by March 17th for the Early Bird Pricing. www.irishcentersf.org/irish-camp/

Benefit Concert a Success — Congratulations to UICC member Cormac Gannon for orchestrating a fantastic evening of Irish music on January 13th in support of the humanitarian charity MECA, dedicated to the Children of Gaza. Well done on contributing to such a meaningful cause!

Don't Miss Musical Events — I hope to see many of you at our special live music events this month including, The Hooks, Aoife Scott, and Derek Warfield and the Young Wolfe Tones!

Congratulations — Tom Hunt, from Co. Roscommon is this year's St. Patrick's Day Parade Grand Marshal. Michael Murphy (RIP) is the Honorary Grand Marshal. The annual dinner takes place at the Center on Friday February 23rd at 7.00pm



Liam Reidy, President lreidy@irishcentersf.org

FEBRUARY CALENDAR

■ FEBRUARY 3, SATURDAY

Cross Weaving Workshop $\sim 3{:}00 pm$ - $6{:}00 pm$ St. Brigid's Day Celebration lead by the Irish Marvels, Past and Present group

- FEBRUARY 4, SUNDAY
- Sean's Shadows ~ I:00pm Show/2:00pm Workshop Children's Puppet Show & Workshop
- St. Brigid's Day/Mary McDonagh
 Tribute Céili ~ 6:30pm 9:30pm
- FEBRUARY 8, THURSDAY
- Line Dancing with Lisa ~ 7:00pm 9:00pm Tickets for Line Dancing at irishcentersf.org
- FEBRUARY 10, SATURDAY
- Rose of Tralee Selection Night
- FEBRUARY 11, SUNDAY
- Super Bowl Watch Party ~ 3:30pm
 49ers v Chiefs Emerald Room
- FEBRUARY 16, FRIDAY
- •Aoife Scott in Concert

- FEBRUARY 17, SATURDAY
- Derek Warfield & the Young Wolfe Tones ~ 8:00pm
- FEBRUARY 18, SUNDAY
- \bullet Derek Warfield & the Young Wolfe Tones $\sim 4:00 \mathrm{pm}$
- FEBRUARY 22, THURSDAY
- Dr. Colman Ryan's autobiography book launch. St. Francis Room 7:00pm
- FEBRUARY 23, FRIDAY
- Grand Marshal Dinner ~ Honoring Tom Hunt and Michael Murphy (RIP) Honorary Grand Marshal
- FEBRUARY 24, SATURDAY
- Slow Irish Music Session Members Room ~ 2:00pm - 4:00pm
- Monthly Irish Music Session
 Emerald Bar ~ 4:00pm 7:00pm
- FEBRUARY 29, THURSDAY
- Line Dancing with Lisa ~ 7:00pm 9:00pm Tickets for Line Dancing at irishcentersf.org

SAVE THE DATE 2024

THURSDAY MARCH 7
Patrick Ball

"Come Dance with Me in Ireland" Yeats Show

FRIDAY MARCH 8 ~ 8:00pm The Black Brothers in Concert

SATURDAY MARCH 9 Amateur Boxing Night with our partner Fire in the Ring Boxing Club

> THURSDAY MARCH 14 Vince Keehan & Friends Paddy Egan & Nicola Stathers

Annie Holland Photo Exhibition St Francis Room ~ 7:00pm

> FRIDAY MARCH 15 The Hooks

SATURDAY MARCH 16 2024 San Francisco St. Patrick's Day Parade UICC Post Parade Party

> SUNDAY MARCH 17 St. Patrick's Day/Block Party







Josephine Brogan

We are stocking up for our St. Patricks Festival at the Center! Bread, Candy, Meats

CALL 415-264-8856

DEADLINE for March 2024 BULLETIN is February 15

Questions? Contact: Adrienne Verreos 415/468-4130 or email: falconassoc@earthlink.net





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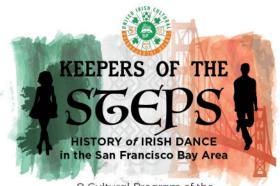
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A Cultural Program of the United Irish Cultural Center of San Francisco

Committed to exploring the history of Irish step dance in the San Francisco Bay Area, the collection celebrates the roots, rhythms, and rituals of one of the most enduring traditions of our Irish heritage.

UICC Exhibition-July 2024

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Dance costume details from our collection!



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Contact: Eileen Mize emize@irishcentersf.org

OUR UICC COMMUNITY



Happy Birthday to Sally Mulkerrins who recently celebrated her 89th Birthday pictured here with her son Michael and John Mulkerrins.



Podcaster and Black 47 Singer in NYC

New York residents Martin Nutty (Irish Stew Podcast), and Larry Kirwan (Musician and Writer) with Liam Reidy (UICC) at the Irish Consulates Office, NYC.



NYC Irish Consulate Reception

The NICCoNA convention in New York was hosted at the Irish Consul Generals Offices on Park Avenue in NYC on January II. Pictured here is Liam Reidy (UICC), Paul Keating (New Jersey), and Pat Fitzgibbons (Milwaukee Irish Festival).

Annual NICCoNA Meeting NYC 2024

The annual National Irish Cultural Centers of North America meeting took place in New York City from January II-I3. Over the course of two days, attendees participated in receptions, meetings, and artistic showcases, with events hosted at both the Irish Consulate Offices on Park Ave and the New York Irish Arts Center theatre on IIth Avenue. Engaging in conversations with leaders from Irish Centers across the country provided valuable advice and guidance, offering insights that will contribute to the growth and development of our own Center.



Peggy O'Donnell and Timmy Manning were spotted at the Kennelly Feis at the Center.



Dan McGovern, (Danville), Catherine Barry (SFArts) and Liam Reidy (UICC).

OUR UICC COMMUNITY CONTINUED...



Line Dancing Nashville Style!

Line dancing enthusiasts continue to pack the St. Patrick's room on Thursday nights. Here are some of the attendees on Thursday January 25 at the Center.



Michelle Clarke, Aisling Hanley, Jenny O'Donnell and Madison Beard.

Michaela Spillane, Eileen McHugh and Ann Marie Carr.

Honor your Irish Heritage

2024 LEO T. WALSH SCHOLARSHIP

Name an award after a loved one \} \$750-8th Grade Award \$1,000-Senior Award



Give a gift of Irish culture by making a tax-deductible donation to the UICC Leo T. Walsh Scholarship Program, benefitting 8th Grader and High School Senior finalists entering their next level of education.

Name a scholarship after your family, a relative, or beloved friend. Any and all donations gladly accepted; 100% tax deductible.

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For further information or question email: scholarship@irishcentersf.org.

John and Maureen Kennelly Memorial Feis 2024

Over 250 Irish Step dancers participated in the January Feis held in honor of John and Maureen Kennelly by their daughter Patricia Kennelly (TCRG). The two day (January 13-14) event drew dancers from throughout the state with a strong representation from southern California.here are some photos of the dancers from the weekend.



Rhys Lewis (Kennelly School) with friends.



U16 Scarlett Bounds and Kailyn Kindberg (Kennelly School).



Cailin Keegan (2nd), Dexter Collier (3rd) and Cora Gallagher (1st) U-13 Open Championship.



U15-18 Sami Dale, Kailyn McCarthy, Megan Dale and Hannah Havermeier (Rohan Murphy Irish Academy).



Mackenzie Freschi U-14 preliminary (Rohan Murphy).



Alice Beeson U-14 (Greene Academy).



Isabel Martinez U-14 (Greene Academy).



Ciarán Wallis (Kennelly School).

Feis 2024 continued



Patricia Kennelly with Liam Reidy (UICC President).



U18 Winners Maren Galvin, Emma Wong-Woo and Amelia Donovan.



Callum Karl U-14 (Murphy School).



Tilly Haskell and Tara Manning (Kennelly School).



Anneka Houghton (Murphy School).



(Keenan School).



U-12 Isla Forde (Whelan School) and Gemma Oh (McBride School).



Augie Storm (Kennelly School) U-12.



Dexter Collier (Greene Academy).





Cailin Keegan and Maddie Donnelly (Kennelly School).



... and more Feis 2024



U9 - Josephine Wallis (Kennelly School).



Kellyn Cowger (McGrath School) U-17 and over Preliminary Treble Reel Champion.



Rowan Mitchelson (Kennelly School).



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2024 San Francisco Rose Selection Night Saturday, February 10th

United Irish Cultural Center

St. Partrick's Room

For tickets and information visit sfroseoftralee.com or contact sanfranciscorosecenter@roseoftralee.ie







Congratulations to our 4th Annual Raffle Winners!

\$1.500 - Catherine D. \$500 - Mary Anne O. \$250 - Laura K.

Thanks for all the support. More than \$16,000 in tickets sold.

A special thank you to prize and mail underwriters and donors. A special shout out to Duggan's Serra Mortuary for the raffle ticket printing.

> The Raffle benefits the UICC's Leo T. Walsh Scholarship Program & the Patrick J. Dowling Library

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In Memoriam 🍄



Brendan Gerard Spiers October 5, 1957 ~ December 26, 2023

Brendan passed away peacefully with his family by his side at the age of 66. Beloved husband of Eileen; father to Aishleen and Christina; brother to Kevin (deceased) (Shari), Patrick (Patsy, [deceased]), Kathleen (Joseph) Silvestri, and Maura (Brian) Coulter; uncle, cousin, and friend to many.

Brendan was born in San Francisco, California to Eileen Teresa Spiers (deceased) and Liam Francis Spiers (deceased) on October 5, 1957. He attended St. Gabriel School and Archbishop Riordan High School, where he was inducted into the athletic hall of fame. He had a strong passion for soccer, going on to play for the San Francisco Glens and to later coach his daughters at St. Brendan. For over forty years, Brendan worked alongside his brothers Kevin and Patrick as a general contractor in San Francisco.

He married Eileen Frances Collins on August 24, I99I at St. Brendan Church in San Francisco, California. He was a devoted father to his two daughters and uncle to fifteen nieces and nephews. He loved to play golf, support his 49ers and Giants, and watch old westerns. Brendan will always be remembered for his generosity, humor and larger than life personality.

MARGARET "RITA" DUFFY
JUNE 28, 1937 ~ JANUARY 5, 2024

Margaret passed away peacefully on January 5th, 2024 at the age of 86. She was the beloved wife of John Duffy (deceased) for 58 years, loving mother to Bernadette (Anthony) and Brian and caring grandmother to Five Grandchildren: Nicholas, Sarah, Deirdre, Michelle and Leah.

Rita was born June 28, 1937 in Lackaghbeg Co; Galway, Ireland, to James and Catherine Moran, and moved to San Francisco in 1957. Beloved sister of Maureen Fitzgerald and Patrick Moran.

She was also sister to Eileen Spiers, Anne Donovan, Briget Roche, Michael Moran, Mattie Moran, John Joe Moran and Kathleen Ryder who are all deceased. She worked for Office and Professional Employees for many years as a secretary. After she retired in 1996 her greatest pleasue was spending time with her grandchildren.



2024 CULTURE IRELAND ARTIST SHOWCASE IN NYC

The best of contemporary Irish theatre productions was showcased at the Irish Arts Center in New York on Saturday January 13, 2024. UICC President Liam Reidy attended and was able to review a number of tour ready theatre productions which will be making their US debut this year.

While we look forward to hosting a number of smaller productions at the Center later this year and we look forward to the day when we will have our own state of the art black box theatre housed in our new building. Having our own purpose built small theatre will accommodate a greater variety of touring Irish and US based Irish theater productions.



Liam Reidy, with Nathalie Nugent O'Shea (Celtic Junction Arts Center), and Michael Mellamphy (Artistic Director, Origin Theatre Company, NYC) at the Culture Ireland showcase.

Shannon Barry, Director of Culture Ireland with UICC President Liam Reidy at the Irish Arts Center in New York City.







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Irish Immigration Pastoral Center & Consulate General of Ireland, San Francisco in partnership with the Coalition of Irish Immigration Centers







Applying for Irish Citizenship Webinar

Under the Irish Nationality and Citizenship Act of 1956, people born outside Ireland can claim citizenship if a parent was born in Ireland, but ALSO if a grandparent was born there.

Therefore, if you are an American (or any nationality) with an Irish grandparent, you have the right to claim Irish citizenship under this law.

This webinar will outline the eligibility requirements for Irish citizenship and give an overview of the process of applying for your foreign birth registration, including an outline of the documents you will need to provide.



Questions:

or email celine@sfiipc.org

Generously supported by



Monday, February 26, 2024 6:00 p.m. | Zoom

A Community Outreach Service of the Irish Immigration Pastoral Center of San Francisco



Irish Immigration Pastoral Center & Consulate General of Ireland, San Francisco

NEED HELP APPLYING FOR YOUR IRISH PASSPORT?

Check your passport expiration dates TODAY!

If you need assistance applying for your first Irish passport or renewing an expiring passport, the Consulate and IIPC staff teams are here to help!

Join us at the IIPC offices for one-to-one assistance with completing your online application and submitting your online photograph



THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 2024

from 4:00 p.m. (appointment only) 5340 Geary Boulevard, San Francisco Appointments at linktr.ee/sfiipc

Questions? Email celine@sfiipc.org or call 415.752.6006

Questions? IIPC is generously funded by:





Thursday, February 8, 2024

12 noon Mass

followed by buffet luncheon

United Irish Cultural Center St. Patrick's Room

St. Patrick's Room 2700 45th Avenue, San Francisco

Tickets \$30

Advance registration required

Call Christina at 415.432.2552, email wellnessesfiipc.org or visit linktr.ee/sfiipc to purchase online

Valentine's MASS & LUNCHEON

GUEST SPEAKER: Dr. Colman Ryan, Cardiologist

Will you be my Valentine? Celebrate the love on Thursday, February 8, with Mass at noon followed by lunch.

We are excited to welcome our special guest Dr. Colman Ryan, prominent cardiologist, who will talk with us about his new memoir, Heart and Soul.

Books will be available for purchase and Dr. Ryan will be available to meet and sign your book.

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JOIN US ON A VISIT TO



Join us for a road trip to Suisun Valley, where Mary & Joe Cassidy will welcome us to Bally Keal Estate Vineyards for a tour, wine tasting & lunch.

Situated on eighty acres in the picturesque Suisun Valley, Bally Keal Estate is a vibrant wine country destination. The event center, winery, brewery, and distillery offer the finest libations, all hand crafted on the estate to be enjoyed. We are excited to being you there!

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 2024

DEPART UICC 10:00 A.M. | RETURN 5:00 P.M.

TICKETS: \$80 AT LINKTR.EE/SFIIPC [BUS, TOUR, WINE TASTING, LUNCH INCLUDED]

CALL CHRISTINA AT 415.752.6006 OR EMAIL WELLNESS@SFIIPC.ORG

Head to the bookstore or library and pick up the next title for The Reading Room, our virtual Book Club, at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, March 20, 2024!

Longlisted for the 2023 Booker Prize and shortlisted for the 2023 An Post Irish Book Awards Novel of the Year, How to Build a Boat by Elaine Feeney is the story of how one boy's irrepressible dream finds expression through a community propelled by love out of grief.

Lyrical and compassionate, it's a novel about the courage of conviction and the power of the imagination to transform—and how sometimes the best way to break free of old walls is to build something beautiful within them.

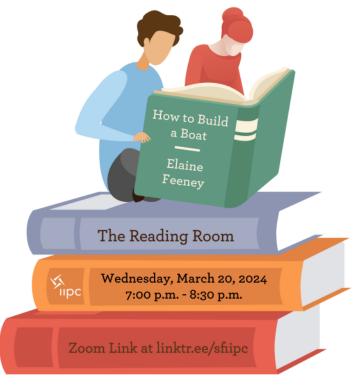
Join us on Wednesday, March 20, 2024 at 7:00 p.m. for another lively and entertaining discussion!

Go to linktr.ee/sfiipc to find the link! See you there!

We will meet over **ZOOM** on the **third Wednesday of every OTHER month** (March, May, July, September, and November)
from **7:00 p.m.** – **8:30 p.m.** You don't have to read every book to join The Reading Room. Choose only the books you are interested in reading, and remember, there is no shame in coming to The Reading Room with the book unfinished. We welcome everyone's input and observations.

The next two books are:
Prophet Song by Paul Lynch [May 15]
Did Ye Hear Mammy Died by Seamas O'Reilly [July 17]

THE READING ROOM



A Community Outreach Program of the Irish Immigration Pastoral Center, San Francisco

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Our monthly fees are substantially less than what you would pay elsewhere and we are just 15 minutes away from the UICC (taking Skyline Blvd or the 280 South).

Please call <u>Bridget Kelly - Administrator</u> to arrange a tour of the facility and enjoy a complimentary lunch.



UNITED IRISH CULTURAL CENTER



A California Nonprofit Corporation 2700 45th Avenue San Francisco, CA 94116 Telephone: (415) 661-2700 | Fax: (415) 661-8620 www.irishcentersf.org | membership@irishcentersf.org

Want to purchase a membership for a friend? Or for someone's Birthday? Want to make a donation to the Irish Center on behalf of yourself or in memory of someone? Want to support Cultural Programming or the Library? Make an Annual Appeal Donation? USE THIS FORM BELOW

MEMB	ERSHIP FEE SCHEDULE (Check One):					
	Single Membership Renewal (Dues) \$1	50		Couple Mei	mbership	Renewal (Dues) \$250
The te	rm for annual dues is 365 days from the date ors.	e your du	es are r	ecorded. Due	s are regul	lated by the UICC Board o
Nam	e #1:					
Nam	e #2 (Couple):					
MOL	INT TO PAY:					
EMBERSHIP (per schedule above)			\$	10	711	
ONATION (thanks for your generosity)			\$			
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