

TIS news

SPRING 2011

Tallahassee IRISH SOCIETY

Tallahassee Irish Festival & St. Patrick's Parade

St. Patrick's Day, Thursday, March 17th



The St. Patrick's Day Parade is back in town and this year it's on St. Patrick's Day, Thursday, March 17th, in downtown Tallahassee for the first time. It will start at 6:00 p.m. at the corner of Call and South Adams and proceed to City Hall at the heart of the Irish Festival. The Marines, the Pipers, the Celtic groups, the 20th Century Krewe from Spring Time and the kids will all be there handing out Irish goodies.

So let's make this a grand occasion by inviting all your relatives, friends, clansmen and neighbors to deck out in their finest greens to join you in the parade either as spectators or by joining in at the end of the parade with Irish families, or as my father Red Madden, used to say "people who are Irish or wish they were Irish" to have a good time. Bring your family flag if you have one or a sign with the family name on it. If you would like to put a unit in the parade please call me, **Jack Madden at 850-385-3696** for permission and details.

We need more parade marshals to help get the parade started so contact me if you would like to help at the same number listed above. This will be even better than in the past so put it on your calendar and help us to have the greatest turnout ever for this event.



Last year the Downtown Improvement Authority and the Tallahassee Irish Society held the inaugural Festival for St. Patrick's Day. Many thanks to Mike Sheridan for his part in getting the Festival off the ground, Regions Bank (our main sponsor), and all members, friends and neighbors that helped us.

This year will be even bigger and better! The 6:00p.m. Parade will be larger, two stages for music, vendors-some with Irish food, and lots of fun for all. Wrist bands for alcohol will not be sold this year, but given freely with proper ID. Cone will be the beverage dispenser and Clear Channel is handling promotion.

Happy New Year from the Executive Committee



Another year, another opportunity for a great TIS year. Please note the schedule of events and put them in your calendars. We are in great need of volunteers for the 3/17 Festival. Jack Madden needs three or four people to help lining up the parade, plus, we have a booth to man and the Parade to march in. Please let us know what area you will help in. Jack is going to send a plea to St. Patrick for a fine fair weather day instead of the fine soft weather day such as we had last year.

UPCOMING EVENTS

February 13 - Irish Whiskey Tasting



Join us for our Irish Whiskey tasting on Sunday, February 13, at Finnegan's Wake in the Manors at Mid-Town, beginning at 5:00 PM. Advance tickets are \$25 each, and tickets at the door are \$30. For advance ticket reservations call Jack Madden at 385-3696 or Finnegan's Wake at 222-4225. There will be food available at a modest additional cost. Music is by "The Ned Devines," with their delightful collection of traditional tunes and ballads.

March 17 - Downtown Irish Festival, 6-10 p.m., St. Patrick's Day!

April 3 - Birthday Party for Jack Madden, The Warehouse, 4-6 p.m.

April 17 - Irish Repertory Theatre - Sharkey and Pooch

May 11 - Small Group Guided Tour In Ireland

June, and July - Summer Break

August 8 - Board Meeting, 7 p.m., at Jack Maddens'

September - Watch for information about Half-Way to St. Paddy's Day

October 11 - Board meeting, 7 p.m., at Jack Maddens'

November 11 - Veterans Day Parade

November 13 - Pre-Holiday Potluck, 5 p.m. Westwood Clubhouse

December 2 - Listen and/or join in with Jane and Gordon Scott at Beef O'Bradys on Thomasville Road

Irish Repertory Theatre Presents Sharkey and Pooch, Winner of Celtic Knots Contest



The next Irish Repertory Theatre production will be staged during the FSU New Horizons Festival. **What:** Sharkey and Pooch, with the IRT Company Actors Jim McMurtry, Alan Kagan, Lanny Thomas and Ryan Burke. This play is the winner of the IRT Celtic Knots Playwriting Contest. **Where:** FSU Studio Theatre. **When:** Sunday, April 17. Check the TIS website for time and ticket information.

Tallahassee-Sligo Pen Pal Letter Program - Tim Kerns



Flash back almost eight years ago and some of you will probably remember when the Tallahassee-Sligo pen pal letter program was started by local TIS member Tim Lynch at the suggestion of Mrs Maisie McNabola, a teacher of the sixth class at Scoil Ursula in Sligo Ireland. The sixth class is generally comparable to our sixth grade where students are approximately 12 years old. The program began at Fairview Middle School in 2003 and later moved to Holy Comforter Episcopal School and then Trinity Catholic School.

We're pleased to report that the Tallahassee-Sligo pen pal letter program is alive and well and has been thriving the last two years on this side of the pond because of teachers and students from Montford Middle School here in Tallahassee. The program last year was directed by 7th grade Language Arts teacher Miss Colleen Dunn who has also been active in Irish cultural events locally for several years. This year the letter program is in the capable hands of veteran teacher Mrs Jan Graham who teaches 6th grade Language Arts.

The genesis of the program began with Maisie who believed it was a wonderful opportunity for children to communicate from great distances. She also felt that in this age of information technology it was important to have the ancient art of handwriting, the art of letter writing and, to have the young people experience the thrill of getting a personal letter. It's no coincidence that Tim Lynch is also a career educator and that he realized the benefit of such an experience. I'm told that in Sligo and, I know here in Tallahassee, the children read the letters among themselves and try to visualize the lifestyles of their pen pals. One of the Montford students recently wrote about their families love for hunting and guns and that they had, within the last week, shot a buck. No one in Sligo's sixth class knew what a buck was!\

Throughout the life of the program Tim has been assisted by Paul Burns and they've made regular visits to the respective schools. When visitors from Sligo are in town they usually don't miss a chance to take them to school here so students can experience firsthand the excitement of a visit from our Irish friends. And, on more than one occasion, Paul has visited Mrs McNabola's class at Scoil Ursula to dazzle the students with his knowledge of the likes of Sponge Bob Square Pants and all the latest video games, as well as sharing the fascinating facets of life in Tallahassee.

For the past two years I've also had the privilege of participating in the program and last year accompanied Paul and the then Mayor of Sligo on a visit to Colleen's class. This year I took the opportunity to take with me two very talented Irish traditional musicians, Jaime Hammack and Laura Keith who play the flute and fiddle respectively. After a fun and lively discussion with the students about names and how to pronounce them as well as a little geography and a discussion of what they wear in Ireland, we played a few traditional tunes for the class for the last 10 minutes.

James Connolly - Pat McCaffery



Looking backwards from the relative comfort of our own time and place on the planet, it's easy to scoff at contributions of men and women of earlier times to the march of Irish history. One of those "larger than life" heroes was James Connolly, one of the brave men executed by the British in the immediate aftermath of the "Rising of 1916." James Connolly was born in June 1868 in Edinburg, Scotland, to Irish immigrant parents from County Monaghan, John and Mary Connolly. Irish Catholics were greatly discriminated against in the Scotland of those days. His father worked as a manure collector, removing dung from the city streets each night. His his mother was a domestic servant who suffered from chronic bronchitis and died young from that ailment.

He was sent to St Patrick's School in the Cowgate, as were his two older brothers, Thomas and John. At the age of ten, James left school and went to work for the Edinburgh Evening News newspaper, where he worked as a 'Devil', cleaning inky rollers and fetching beer and food for the adult workers. His brother Thomas also worked there. At 14, James joined the British Army and served for nearly seven years, mostly in Ireland, but also a tour in India. The mistreatment of the Irish people by the army and the landlords had a powerful effect on Connolly, resulting in his deep hatred of the British Army.

Connolly married Lillie Reynolds in Perth in 1890. That spring they moved to Edinburgh where he joined his father and brother working as a labourer and then as a manure collector for the Edinburgh Corporation. They had two children, Roddy and Nora. James became involved in socialist and trade union circles and became secretary of the Scottish Socialist Federation, almost by mistake. At the time his brother John was secretary; but, after John spoke out in favor of the eight-hour day he was fired from his job with the corporation. While John looked for work, James took over as secretary. It was during this time that he also became involved with the Independent Labor Party. James and his family later moved to Dublin, where James eventually became leader of the Irish Labor movement when James Larkin fled the country in the aftermath of the collapse of the 'Great Lock Out' of 1913. In that role, Connolly formed the "Irish Citizen Army," which became the backbone of the famed "Easter Rising" in 1916.

Though he left school at 10, Connolly became self-educated by voracious reading, no doubt spurred in part by his early immersion in the world of the press, and learned to write very

well in the style of his time. Although not known as a writer to most moderns, he made huge contributions with both pen and sword to the cause of Irish freedom. As an example, here is an excerpt from Chapter IV in his "Labour in Irish History."

"Social revolts and political kites and crows"

The Steelboys were a more formidable organisation, and had their strongholds in the counties of Down and Antrim. They were for the most part Presbyterian or other dissenters from the Established Church, and, like the Whiteboys, aimed at the abolition or reduction of tithes and the restriction of the system of consolidating farms for grazing purposes. They frequently appeared in arms, and moved with a certain degree of discipline, coming together from widely separated parts in obedience, apparently, to the orders of a common centre. In the year 1772 six of their number were arrested and lodged in the town jail of Belfast. Their associates immediately mustered in thousands, and in open day marched upon that city, made themselves masters thereof, stormed the jail, and released their comrades. This daring action excited consternation in the ranks of the governing classes, troops were dispatched on the spot, and every precaution taken to ensure the arrest of the leaders. Out of the numerous prisoners made a batch were selected for trial, but whether as a result of intimidation or because of their sympathy with the prisoners it is difficult to tell, the jury in Belfast refused to convict, and when the venue of the trial was changed to Dublin, the Government was equally unfortunate. The refusal of the juries to convict was, probably, in a large measure due to the unpopularity of the Act then just introduced to enable the Government to put persons accused of agrarian offences on trial in a different county to their own. When this Act was repealed the convictions and executions went on as merrily as before. Many a peasant's corpse swung on the gibbet, and many a promising life was doomed to blight and decay in the foul confines of the prison cell. Arthur Young, in his Tour of Ireland, thus describes the state of matters against which those poor peasants revolted.

"A landlord in Ireland can scarcely invent an order which a servant, labourer, or cottier dares to refuse to execute . . . Disrespect, or anything tending towards sauciness he may punish with his cane or his horsewhip with the most perfect security. A poor man would have his bones broken if he offered to lift a hand in his own defence . . . Landlords of consequence have assured me that many of their cottiers would think themselves honoured by having their wives and daughters sent for to the bed of their master, a mark of slavery which proves the oppression under which such people must live."

The Irish in the American Revolutionary War - Paul Burns



Much has been written about the Irish Brigade in America's Civil War, the idea for a "foreign legion" unit having come from the "Wild Geese," as the Irish who fought in the various European wars were called. All-Irish units were formed in many countries—including France, Spain, and Austria—as the Europeans came to realize that the Irish made superior soldiers when properly trained.

At the time of the American Revolution, the French Army contained three Irish regiments, named after their organizers as the Regiments of Dillon, Berwick, and Walsh. The Regiment of Dillon saw the most service on the American side of the Atlantic, though elements of Walsh's regiment were the first to aid the American cause when they were assigned as marines to John Paul Jones's *Bonhomme Richard*.

In 1779, British troops and American Loyalist ("loyal" to the king) militia dominated the southern colonies. Savannah, Georgia, was the key port of the area, and General Benjamin Lincoln, commander of the American colonies' Continental Army in the south, was determined to take it. A French fleet was attacking British-controlled colonies in the Caribbean, and Lincoln asked its commander to help. Admiral D'Estaing sailed north to Savannah with part of his fleet, leaving the rest to guard newly conquered Grenada and Guadalupe.

Most French military documents of the time were destroyed in the later French Revolution, and American records did not dwell on the extent of French help rendered. But surviving documents show that Dillon's regiment was part of the French expedition to the Caribbean, and its 1400 Irish took part in the conquest of Grenada. About 500 of them eagerly volunteered to accompany D'Estaing north to fight more British. Various Dillons had been in command of the regiment of that name since it was formed in 1698. In 1779, the commander was Dublin-born Count Arthur Dillon, who later lost his head to the Guillotine. At least part of Walsh's regiment also was with D'Estaing in the Caribbean, and a company of it is believed to have been present at Savannah because officers known to be in that regiment were commended in a surviving French dispatch. The Dillon contingent probably was one of the regiment's two battalions.

The siege of Savannah was a disaster for the attacking force. About 4500 French (including Dillon's 500) and 2200 of General Lincoln's Americans surrounded Savannah fortifications defended by 2500 English troops and Loyalist militia. A lengthy siege was ruled out because D'Estaing, fearful of hurricanes, would not commit to more than two weeks. Lincoln reluctantly agreed to a frontal assault. Dillon was second in command of the French and led one of the attacking columns, spearheaded by his Irish detachment. The combined French-American force was beaten back by grapeshot with some of the heaviest casualties of the war—637 French and 457 Americans killed or wounded, including 63 of Dillon's regiment. Within days, D'Estaing had collected the survivors, loaded the ships, and sailed away.

The presence of Dillon's regiment at Savannah, augmented by a portion of Walsh's, is certain. Berwick's regiment did

not arrive in the Caribbean until 1782, and it missed both Savannah (1779) and Yorktown (1781). While some historians placed the Dillon and Walsh regiments at Yorktown there is no firm evidence of this. There were several Dillons at Yorktown, but they were officers in Lauzun's Legion and probably from a different Dillon family.

There were no all-Irish units in the Continental Army, though there were Irish aplenty. Twenty percent of Washington's troops were Ireland-born. Half of these had been shipped to America as convicts/indentured servants, and presumably had no love for the English. Nine of Washington's generals were born in Ireland—two major generals and seven brigadier generals. Of these, only Brigadier General Edward Hand from County Offaly was at Yorktown. There was another Irish general at Yorktown but, ironically, he was serving with the British forces. General Charles O'Hara, the illegitimate son of British General James O'Hara, second baron of Tyrawley, was born in Lisbon. He was the third general in his family, his grandfather having been Sir Charles O'Hara, first baron of Tyrawley, who—although born in Co. Mayo—was said to have been of the Sligo O'Hara family. Charles, the grandson, was second-in-command to British commander Lord Cornwallis. O'Hara had the dubious honor of representing Cornwallis at the surrender ceremony.

There were no all-Irish regiments in the British order of battle at Yorktown, though there were Irish among the rank-and-file. For example, the roster of the 76th Foot, a Scottish regiment that was at Yorktown, listed 114 Irish among its soldiers. The British army at the time was roughly one-third English, one-third Scottish, and one-third Irish. During the 1780s, the Dublin government was funding a British military reserve of 12,000 soldiers, and Cork was the primary logistical base for the British forces in North America. The city of Cork exhibited its loyalty to the king by offering an enlistment bonus. The Roman Catholic citizens of Limerick also did, offering one guinea to the first 500 to enlist there. There was an all-Irish regiment serving in the British army in America, the 105th Foot—also called "The Volunteers of Ireland." It was raised in the American city of Philadelphia by an Irish officer in the British army (Lord Rawdon-Hastings) and took part in the 1779 battle for Charleston, but it was not at either Savannah or Yorktown.

Mention should be made of yet another group of Irish who were peripherally involved in the American Revolution in a manner that had an influence on the battle of Yorktown. Spain had an Irish brigade consisting of three regiments—the Ultonia (Ulster), the Irlanda, and the Hibernia. The Hibernia was in Cuba at the time of the American Revolution and, in May 1781, 22 officers and 588 men from it participated in the Spanish conquest of Pensacola, Florida. After the British surrendered, they were allowed to sail to New York. This reinforcement of the British garrison in New York influenced the American and French decision to march against Cornwallis at Yorktown, rather than lay siege to New York.

Interested in Ireland's Northwest?



We are arranging a small-group guided tour of Northwest Ireland's many historic sites, stately mansions, castles, and some of the most beautiful scenery in Ireland. The tour will begin in Sligo the evening of 11 May and end there the morning of 17 May. Participants will arrange their own travel to and from our Sligo base (guidance provided if needed). The cost will be \$700-\$750 per person (exact cost depends on our numbers) which covers six nights in a Sligo hotel (Irish breakfast included), box lunches on tour days, various entrance fees, and a chartered bus.



DETAILS: From its base in Sligo town, the group will explore this little visited area of Ireland, returning each night to its hotel. Some walking will be necessary, but this will be kept to a minimum. In addition to County Sligo sites of interest, the group will visit such Donegal attractions as Killybegs and the Slieve League cliffs (said to be the highest in Europe), and the wild areas of north Mayo where St. Patrick was taken as a slave. And there is much to see in and around the ancient town of Sligo itself. After the tour ends, some may wish to stay additional days in Sligo, while others may wish to travel elsewhere in Ireland or visit Dublin before flying home. There are good train and bus connections to almost anywhere from Sligo. We can provide ample guidance or help.

RESERVATIONS: The group will consist of a minimum of 10 and a maximum of 15 people. To reserve, or for more information, please contact tour coordinator Jay Scott at 850-386-7218 or scottsjj@embarqmail.com, or Paul Burns at 850-893-0740 or pabloburns@comcast.net.

The Friends of Sligo Ireland Sponsorship of Irish Related Events - Tim Kerns



During the past year The Friends of Sligo (FOS) have had the pleasure of bringing to Tallahassee some truly talented musicians and singer/songwriters as well as World Champion step dancer Niall O'Leary for the organizations half way to St. Patrick's Day party.

This coming year promises to be no different in terms of talent, fun and a bit of culture from the Emerald Isle. Here are a couple events occurring during the first part of 2011:

- Feb 2d, House concert featuring Irish balladeer Brendan Nolan at the home of Tim and Shirley Kerns (currently sold out)
- April 14th, Jimmy and Marla's Mandozuke Meander 'Round the Sunshine State featuring Cork's own singer, songwriter, and storyteller Jimmy Crowley with champion mandolin player Marla Fibish. Appearing at The 5th Ave Tap Room.

Add Friends of Sligo, Ireland to your pages on Facebook to stay up to date on cultural events and activities featuring Irish entertainers.

Upcoming Gigs Featuring The Ned Devines

- The 13 Feb 2d Sunday performance at Finnegan's Wake 7-10 PM
- 12 Mar Good Shepherd Catholic Church with special guest Lynnsey Weissenberger
- 13 Mar 2d Sunday performance at Finnegan's Wake 7-10
- 17 Mar St. Patrick's Day at Finnegan's Wake
- 18 Mar St Patrick's Day con't, Dixie Theatre, Apalachicola, FL



Revisiting The 2010 Veterans Day Parade - Jack Madden



The Veteran's Day Parade last year was the best ever held here in Tallahassee. It was extremely well organized with over a hundred units attending including numerous bands, marchers, floats and organizations. The parade route traveled along Monroe Street for the first time in its history, and the attendance was tremendous and highly supportive of all the parade units and veterans. The Tallahassee Irish Society joined with the St. Andrew Society with our respective banners and marched behind the Tallahassee Pipe Band. We were all very proud to be a part of such a great event. We hope that next year we will have even more of our members participate and add a float and vehicle. God bless our veterans and our troops.

Tallahassee Irish Society

The Tallahassee Irish Society's exclusive activity is promoting Irish and Celtic heritage and history through cultural and social events in the greater Tallahassee community. The Society is non-political, non-religious, and not-for-profit and will not be involved in controversial issues.

TIS News promotes upcoming Irish events and cultural information. Submissions are welcome; please email articles and information to print@lithohaus.com. Members subscribe through their annual dues; non-member subscriptions are available.

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Finnegan's Wake
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Parade Route:
The St. Patrick's Day Parade will begin at the corner of Call & South Adams and proceed down Adams Street to City Hall.



Map to the Festival & Parade

Tallahassee Irish Society
1327 Silver Moon Drive
Tallahassee, FL 32312-3934