



**WORKING TOGETHER TO ESTABLISH AN IRISH CULTURAL CENTER IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA**

**The Irish Center of Southern California Inc., is a 501 c (3) Not for Profit Corporation Tax ID No. is 95-4442397**

We are a fundraising group **with no "paid" staff**. Our primary aim is to acquire a multi- purpose facility including a theater, library, social hall, meeting rooms, etc. Please send news re graduations, births, weddings, deaths, relocating, etc., to [eirebt@yahoo.com](mailto:eirebt@yahoo.com) **Our new mailing address is Post Office Box 901, La Canada, CA 91011.**

You will find the newsletter and updated information on our website at [www.irishcenter.org](http://www.irishcenter.org) It is not always possible to distribute information regarding death notices and events timely. However, if you have access to a computer chances are you can find the website. Check it a few times a week for updates and for the newsletter.

If you know someone who would like to receive this newsletter and who does not have a computer we will send a copy by U.S. mail. Let us know. This distribution is over 2800 e-mail addresses. We would like to thank those people who donated to the Irish Center to help us with expenses (including ink and postage for this newsletter)

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**FRIENDS OF IRELAND BREAKFAST MEETING (1st Tuesday of the month), at 9:00 a.m. at Katella Restaurant,**

**4470 Katella Avenue, Los Alamitos, CA 90720. RSVP (Pete Walsh, 714-200-7365) [pbeireanua@att.net](mailto:pbeireanua@att.net) . Call Pete Walsh to confirm the meeting.**

**ST. CORNELIUS CHURCH HALL, IRISH SOCIAL, from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. at 5500 E. Wardlow, Long Beach, CA 90808. " CANCELED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE**

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***DRAWING FOR TRIP TO IRELAND FOR TWO OR \$2,000 – APRIL 6, 2021***

**The Drawing for the Trip to Ireland for two, or \$2,000, will be held at the Breakfast gathering at Katella Restaurant - -on Tuesday, April 6, 2021. RSVP to Pete Walsh – 714-200-7365) [pbeireanua@att.net](mailto:pbeireanua@att.net)**

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**Information re events – Jim McDonough**

[irishmissive@gmail.com](mailto:irishmissive@gmail.com)

[www.irishartsandentertainment.com](http://www.irishartsandentertainment.com)

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## On their facebook pages

**Andy Cooney** Live Concert **Andy Cooney and his Band** FB page.:

<http://Facebook.com/Andy.cooney.band/>

**Patrick D'Arcy**

**John Whelan, Irish Button Accordion**  
(facebook Mondays)

**Ken O'Malley, facebook** Sundays at 2 p.m. .

<http://kenomalley.com>

**Dennis McNeil**

**John McKenna, Accordion**  
**Terry Casey (The Fenians)**

**John Whelan, Accordion, on Mondays**  
with John on facebook

**Daniel O'Donnell**

**Nathan Carter**

You can support your favorite musicians/artists' online facebook concerts. Remember that they lost their income for almost a year due to the Coronavirus.

## KEN O'MALLEY

calendar:<https://kenomalley.com/shows>

### WEBSITE:

The home page <http://kenomalley.com> shows all performances in a convenient monthly calendar format. information. **For last minute schedule updates, "Like" Ken O'Malley's Artist Page** <https://www.facebook.com/kenomalleyirishmusic>

**Contact John McNally at**  
[mcnally.realtor@gmail.com](mailto:mcnally.realtor@gmail.com)

(805) 804-7558 More great online events coming our way!



# IRISH FOOD HUB

**YOUR FAVORITE IRISH GROCERIES DELIVERED TO YOUR DOOR!**



## Wicklow Pancakes

Serves 4.

4 large eggs

600 ml of milk

4 ounces of fresh breadcrumbs

1 tablespoon of chopped parsley

Some chopped thyme

2 tablespoons of chopped chives or scallions

Salt and pepper

2 tablespoons of Butter

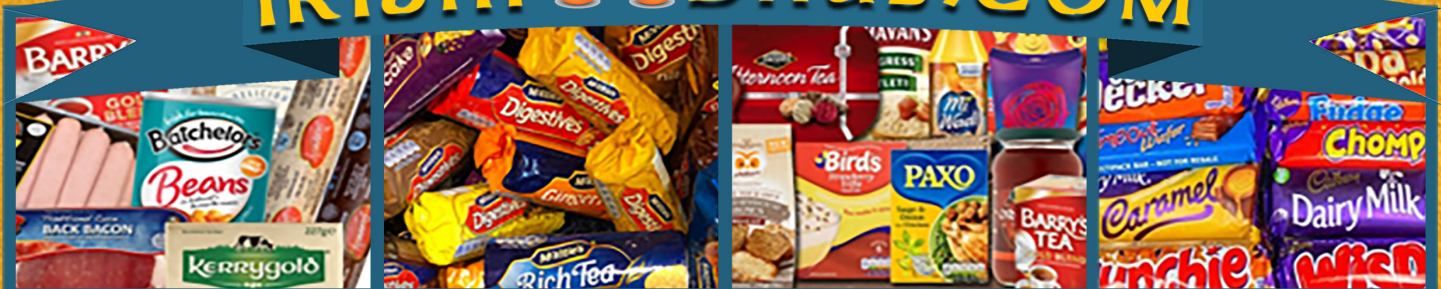
Lightly beat the egg, add the milk, breadcrumbs, herbs and seasonings, and mix well. Heat one tablespoon of butter in a pan until foaming, then pour in the mixture and cook over a low flame until it is brown underneath and just set on top. Put under the grill to finish. Serve cut into wedges with a knob of butter on each piece.



- GROCERIES
- CANDY
- CRISPS & SNACKS
- BREAKFAST ITEMS
- COOKIES
- DELI & MEATS
- BAKED GOODS
- HOMEWARE/GIFTS
- IRISH HAMPERS
- RECIPE BOOKS
- COOKING VIDEOS
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**GET ALL YOUR IRISH GRUB AT THE HUB!!!**

**IRISHFOODHUB.COM**



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## CLEARY IRISH DANCE

[t1Spomnsug4horedn](#) ·

We are so truly delighted to have the opportunity to host the **St. Ambrose Spring Feis** this year! JOIN US **May 29th & 30th, 2021** at the Los Angeles Marriott at Burbank Airport in beautiful Burbank, California! We have a ton of upcoming information to share!

Don't miss the chance to practice TWICE for the US National Championships on a replica stage setup (60x28ft and panel set back) in the Burbank Convention Center, with all competitions offered both Saturday and Sunday!

Syllabus will be available shortly with entries opening on [feisinfo.com](https://feisinfo.com) very SOON! 💜🍀

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## LETTERS

### Drogheda local Dr. Harry Barry/Emotional Healing: How to Put Yourself Back Together Again (March 2, 2021)

Jen Rivera <[jrivera@pegasusbooks.us](mailto:jrivera@pegasusbooks.us)>

To: [eirebt@yahoo.com](mailto:eirebt@yahoo.com) <[eirebt@yahoo.com](mailto:eirebt@yahoo.com)>

March 16, 2021

Dear The Irish Center of Southern California,

**Dr. Harry Barry** is a highly respected Irish author and physician, with over three decades of experience as a general practitioner. With a keen interest in the area of mental health and suicide prevention, **Dr. Harry Barry's** American literary debut, *Emotional Healing: How to Put Yourself Back Together Again* (Pegasus - March 2, 2021), explores how best to recover from loss, trauma, grief, and loneliness by helping us identify our emotions and providing the steps to emotionally heal ourselves.

When we experience trauma, loss, or grief the pain can feel as if it will last forever. We begin to wonder if our old selves—the ones who felt hope and happiness and joy—are lost to us. And our emotions can lead us into damaging behaviors that compound our problems. **Dr. Harry Barry** acknowledges there is no magic wand that will take our pain away completely, but he uses his clinical experience, combined with cognitive behavioral therapy, to show that emotional healing is always possible.

Drogheda local **Dr. Harry Barry** is interested in engaging with Irish American societies across the U.S. to share his holistic method for effective mental health management and help Irish Americans strive for emotional resilience. **Dr. Harry Barry** can discuss:

- Mental health concerns within Irish and Irish American communities
- How to heal from grief and build emotional resilience
- How to recognize, stop, and disempower panic attacks and anxiety
- How to overcome social anxiety
- America's readiness for healing in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic and ongoing threats to our democracy

Please let me know if you are interested in having **Dr. Harry Barry** speak with your organization and if you would like to receive a PDF or print copy of the book. Here are some links to prior interviews and articles:

- [Talks at Google – Flagging Anxiety & Panic](#)
- [Understanding Generalized Anxiety Disorder](#)
- [Dr. Harry Barry Explains How to Stop a Panic Attack](#)
- [Mind your head: experts talk about looking after your mental health](#)

All best wishes,

Jen Rivera  
Associate Publicist

[jrivera@pegasusbooks.us](mailto:jrivera@pegasusbooks.us) // (732) 241-3701

**\$27.95 • Hardcover • 978-1643136646 • 320 pages • 6 x 9 • Self-Help •**

**March 2, 2021** [www.pegasusbooks.com](http://www.pegasusbooks.com)

148 W 37th Street, 13th Floor, New York, NY 10018

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## IRISH HISTORY PODCAST - SOAP STYLE!

Mar 19 at 6:34 AM

**Martina Murphy** <martinacolm494@outlook.com>

To: eirebt@yahoo.com <eirebt@yahoo.com>

Greetings from Ireland!

I am literary manager at Down at Heel productions in Kildare, Ireland.

We have, in the last few weeks, launched a podcast FRACTURED - a family, a nation, a dream - telling the story, in soap format, of a family living through the Irish war of Independence and into the Civil war. (It was originally meant to be a two year long theatre project, but Covid came along...)

Anyway, we thought, as a promotor of Irish culture and heritage, you and your members might like to tune in. It's FREE and we release an episode Sunday nights.

Four episodes are up at the moment and once lockdown restrictions ease, we hope to have the other episodes recorded. It is an amazing project and we are trying to reach out to as many interested parties as we can.

Thanks for reading - stay safe.

Best wishes – Martina.

Here is the link -

**[downatheelproductions.podbean.com](http://downatheelproductions.podbean.com)**

**We are also on YouTube at Down at Heel Productions.**



[This Photo](#) by Unknown  
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***HAPPY MARCH BIRTHDAY TOM!***

From the St. Patrick's Day Dinner Dance Committee

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## EASTER IRISH HISTORY TALKS LIVE FROM BELFAST

Caroline McCoubrey <mccoubreycaroline@gmail.com>

Bcc: eirebt@yahoo.com

Hello,

**Clifton House, in Belfast**, would be really grateful if the below information could be shared with your members or within your next members newsletter if possible.

This Easter, Clifton House, the home of the Belfast Charitable Society and the original Poor House in Belfast, is running a special series of online talks at a time that would suit our **American neighbours** across the pond.

*Plots and Plotters, the history of the 1798 Rebellion* will take place at 6 p.m. UK time (10 a.m. in California / 11 a.m. in Texas / 12 noon in Chicago & New Orleans / 1pm in Ohio / 1 p.m. in New York) on the **7th, 8th and 9th April 2021** live from Belfast, Northern Ireland, via Zoom.

The one hour talk will explore the history of the reformers and rebels who made the Belfast Charitable Society a “hotbed of radical activity” in the 1790s. Hear about the Joys, McCrackens, McCabe & Cunningham who were on opposing sides of the 1798 United Irishmen Rebellion & how the Charitable Society, and its members, emerged from it, including Dr James Campbell White who went into exile in the United States.

Tickets are around \$7 per device (not per person). To find out more, or to book, please visit <https://cliftonbelfast.com/whats-on/month/2021-04/>

Thanks so much for your help and for sharing this information with your members. We greatly appreciate it.

If you would like any further information, please don't hesitate to contact me or follow us on Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/CliftonHouseBelfast>).

If you would **not** like to receive any further information from Clifton House, please also let us know by reply.

Thank you again, and we hope to see you next month at one of our online talks.

Kindest Regards

Caroline

Caroline McCoubrey  
Freelance Marketing Consultant on behalf of Clifton House, Belfast  
[mccoubreycaroline@gmail.com](mailto:mccoubreycaroline@gmail.com)  
07834278045

## REST IN PEACE

### *Mary S.M. Glenane*



Mary Glenane, of Laguna Woods, CA, was born on November 18, 1936 in Johnstone, Scotland. She was eternally welcomed into the loving arms of our Lord on January 10, 2021 at the age of 84.

Mary is survived by her three children, Peter (Amy), Ron (Susan), and Cheryl, and is the proud grandmother of Emma, Aidan, Liam, Maeve, Declan, Maire, Ciaran, and Darcy, all of Orange County, CA.

After growing up outside of Glasgow in Paisley, Scotland, Mary emigrated to Montreal, Canada with her parents, Richard and Ellen, and brother Richard. She met the love of her life, Peter Glenane, a native of Galway, Ireland, and they were married in Montreal on July 13, 1957. They then headed west and eventually settled in Santa Ana, CA, where their children were born.

Mary was a Santa Ana Unified School District employee for 25 years. Those years as a librarian at Adams Elementary and MacArthur Fundamental were filled with laughter and hard work alongside the many friends she made at both schools.

Mary's generous heart was evident to everyone with whom she came in contact. She volunteered to teach CCD at church, helped run Irish festivals at the Brothers of St. Patrick, and did outreach to the elderly and people experiencing homelessness. Always an avid reader, she also loved to travel: from Costa Rica to Russia, from Cuba to the Holy Land. Mary was quite handy and could fix almost anything; after Peter, her husband of 58 years, died in 2015, she began taking slip casting classes to learn how to make ceramics.

From the moment she first held her eldest grandchild Emma, Mary's greatest treasures have been her grandchildren. She spent time cheering them on at soccer games, track meets, and Irish dance competitions. She hosted grandkid sleepovers and taught them all how to play Bunco, complete with prizes she collected.

Mary was diagnosed with bone marrow cancer in June of 2020. Her beloved daughter Cheryl was her constant companion, by her side until the very end. The family is grateful for all of the caregivers who showed such compassion during Mary's last months.

A Vigil Service will be held on Thursday, January 21 at 7:00 PM at McCormick & Son Mortuary in Laguna Hills (indoors). The Vigil will also be live-streamed on Mary's Tribute Page on the McCormick & Son website. Mass of Christian Burial will be held on Friday, January 22 at 1:00 PM at St. Nicholas Catholic Church in Laguna Woods (outdoors). A private burial will be held at Holy Sepulcher Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the Literacy Project Foundation: <https://www.literacyprojectfoundation.org/>

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## ***Brian Owen Welsh***



It is with immeasurable sadness that we announce the passing of Brian Owen Welsh. Brian passed away peacefully at the age of 83 on December 12, 2020 in Weston, Connecticut with his wife and daughter at his side. Brian is survived by his wife Freda Welsh (née Doran) and daughter Carleigh Welsh; his brothers and sisters: Ned Welsh (Diane) Sue Welsh (Seamus O' Delaney) Tara Welsh, Brenda Welsh (Bill Feeney, deceased) and Kevin Welsh (Lynne); his nieces and nephews: Ned Michael Welsh, Christina Welsh (Jon Lee) Louise Welsh Dunlap (mother of Ned Michael and Christina) John Francis Estrada (Sandra Chavarria) Kieron Estrada (Charlyn Lynton-Estrada) Kelly Welsh, Kevin Patrick Welsh (Harmony) Katie Welsh (William Trujillo) Joe and Casey Welsh, Kealan and Marco Estrada, Edward, Jordan, Christian, and Alexander Welsh, Saoirse and Cianan Dwyer, Allie and Hailey Welsh, and Ciarán Estrada.

Brian will be missed and his memory treasured by his family, friends and the innumerable people whose lives he touched. Brian was born on May 1, 1937 in Manhattan, NY to Susan B. Swanton and Edward T. Welsh. He was acknowledged by all as his mother's "Ray of Sunshine". By the time Brian was a teenager, his mother and siblings had relocated to Los Angeles and formed "The Six Welsh Rarebits" who appeared on television and in numerous live performances of the Irish Jig and Song throughout Southern California, including the Coconut Grove on St. Patrick's Day and for JFK during his 1960 campaign. Brian graduated from Loyola High School in 1955 and a year later met his future wife Freda at a local Irish dance. As a son-in-law, Brian was devoted to his wife's parents Eileen and Peter Doran. Simply put: When Brian met Freda it was love at first sight. They were - and remain - inseparable. Their romance spanned the globe and decades, and made fairy tales and Hollywood musicals pale in comparison. Later, when he became a father, he was the most loving and incredible Daddy ever.

Brian's first career at Collier's (a division of Macmillan) was defined by his rising, star-setting record after record. He was unsurpassed as a salesman, then field manager, then regional manager. The position of National Trainer was created for him and with it he relocated with his family and in-laws to the East Coast. At a certain point, Brian knew he wanted to build things. He forged a new career as founder and CEO of Brian Custom Fencing, which reflected his love of design, drawing and his degree in engineering from LA City College.

Brian was an avid runner and completed two NYC Marathons and the second beat his personal record. Brian loved the dance floor and it loved him. There was no rug he could not cut. Brian loved the arts: music, dance, film, drawing, and photography. He was a gifted visual artist and a sensational cartoonist. He sported an alter ego known as "The Unknown Mustard" and had an utterly unique sense of humor. He was a singular and inveterate prankster. He loved to create and invent, to question, solve and think outside of the box. He loved travel but he could also transform any outing into an adventure. He wrote a number of songs, one of which - "I Want You Back" (which is about and dedicated to his beloved mother aka "Gigi")

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and “Sweet Sue”) made its live debut in 2019 at the Levitt Pavilion in Westport, CT performed by Gunsmoke.

Brian also loved to sing. His favorites included “Too Young” and “It’s a Lovely Day Today”. The latest song he was making his own was “I’ll Be Seeing You”. At the age of 78, he became the informal captain of his “Boxing for PD” club. Brian was still looking for someone who might be interested in sponsoring a silver fox middle-weight. A note on his Parkinson’s: Brian received his diagnosis circa 2006. He continued to work and remain active through the end of his life. He had an incredible team of doctors whom Brian treasured and who in turn admired his resolve and resilience.

Over the years, Brian’s many nicknames included “The Man of Action” and “Marathon Man” and most recently “Miracle Man”. Brian had a setback last September and he made an against-all-odds Herculean recovery. He was able to walk across his own threshold when he returned home this past February where he continued to stay safe and get stronger every day. Even on his last day with us, he was as vibrant as ever, enjoying life with a wit and mind that were both breathtakingly sharp. He’d come across this saying in the PD community that he thought bore repeating: “If you have met one person with Parkinson's, you've met one person with Parkinson's.” So, always remember to see the person, not their PD.

His adventures and achievements are legendary. Brian was lion-hearted, creative, brilliant, brave, generous, dashing, funny, compassionate and always an inspiration. His mentorship changed lives. He held his family dear. His love for his wife and daughter was monumental. Brian had plans for the holidays, the new year and beyond including but not limited to, writing a new song, submitting story pitches, shooting his next game of pool, and learning Spanish. And, as Brian would say: “Bye for now.”

Donations in Brian’s memory may be made to: The Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson’s Research online via the Tribute page: [tribute.michaeljfox.org](https://tribute.michaeljfox.org) or mail Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson’s Research. A Celebration of Life will be held when it is safe for family and friends to gather.

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Grief never ends,  
but it changes. It’s not a passage,  
not a place to stay. Grief is not a  
sign of weakness, nor a lack of faith.

**It is the price of love.**

(tinybuddha.com)

# LIAMSTREAM MEDIA PRESENTS!

## AN EVENING OF SONGS AND STORIES

**WHERE?** your backyard

**WHEN?** Friday/Saturday/Sunday, afternoon  
or evening, your choice

**WHO?** me, you, and a bunch of  
your friends and neighbors

**WHY?** because we're all fed up being  
stuck indoors, but we're not yet  
ready for crowds

**HOW MUCH?** \$150 gets you a 60-90 min.  
set of songs and stories (ceol agus craic)

### Contact Information:

Liam McLoughlin  
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INSTAGRAM: [@blockblocklin](https://www.instagram.com/blockblocklin)  
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# FINANCIAL FOCUS

## Be Conscious of Your Investment Environment

### Article 4 – April 19, 2021

On April 22, we observe Earth Day, an occasion that has inspired millions of people over the decades to take steps to clean up our world. Of course, your physical surroundings are important, but you also operate in other “ecosystems” – social, cultural and political. And you’ll need to consider your *investment* environment, too. How can you improve it? Here are a few suggestions:

- **Avoid “toxic” investment strategies.** The dangers of pollution helped drive the creation of Earth Day. As an investor, you also need to watch out for “toxins” – particularly in the form of unhealthy investment techniques. For example, chasing after “hot” stocks can burn you. In the first place, by the time you’ve heard of them, they may already be cooling off. Second, and probably more important, these hot stocks just may be wrong for the investment mix that’s appropriate for your needs. Another toxic investment strategy: trying to “time” the market by “buying low and selling high.” No one can really predict when market highs and lows will occur, and if you’re always jumping in and out of the investment world, you’ll likely waste time and effort – not to mention money. Instead of looking for today’s hottest stocks or guessing where the market is heading, try to create and follow a long-term investment strategy based on your goals, risk tolerance and time horizon.
  - **Reduce waste.** From an environmental standpoint, the less waste and garbage we produce, the better it is for our planet. As an investor, can you find “wasteful” elements in your portfolio? It’s possible that you own some investments that may be redundant – that is, they are virtually indistinguishable from others you may have. Also, some investments, due to their risk profile or performance, no longer may be suitable for your needs. In either case – redundancy or unsuitability – you might be better off selling the investments and using the proceeds to purchase others that can be more helpful
  - **Recycle wisely.** Recycling is a major part of the environmental movement. At first, though, you might not think the concept of recycling could apply to investing. But consider this: If you own stocks or mutual funds, you may receive dividends, and, like many people, you may choose to automatically reinvest those dividends back into the stocks or funds. So, in a sense, you are indeed “recycling” your dividend payments to boost your ownership stakes – without expending additional resources. And, in fact, this can be quite an effective and efficient way to increase your wealth over time.
  - **Plant some “trees.”** Planting trees has always been a key activity among boosters of the environment – with the recognition that their efforts will take years, or even decades, to reach fruition. When you invest, you must sometimes start small. By purchasing a limited amount of an investment and nurturing it over the years by adding more shares, you may one day have achieved significant growth. (Keep in mind, though, that there are no guarantees – variable investments such as stocks can lose principal.)
- By making these and other moves, you can create a healthy investment environment – one that can help you achieve your long-term goals.

*This article was written by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor. Edward Jones, Member SIPC\** Edward Jones is a licensed insurance producer in all states and Washington, D.C., through Edward D. Jones & Co., L.P., and in California, New Mexico and Massachusetts through Edward Jones Insurance Agency of California, L.L.C.; Edward Jones Insurance Agency of New Mexico, L.L.C.; and Edward Jones Insurance Agency of Massachusetts, L.L.C. [www.edwardjones.com](http://www.edwardjones.com)

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# Giant Killer: The incredible mysterious life of the shortest US soldier

A dwarf, a Vietnam hero, a CIA operative, and a homeless man the almost unbelievable life of Richard James Flaherty.

IrishCentral Staff

[@IrishCentral](#)

Mar 19, 2021



DAVID YUZUK

**A retired Miami cop spends three years trying to unearth the truth about a homeless gentleman he'd befriended. Was the shortest soldier in US military history a CIA operative who had been assassinated?**

On November 28, 1945, doctors in Stamford Connecticut's Regional Hospital intensely worked to save newborn Richard James Flaherty's life. His mother didn't know at the time of his birth that her blood type was Rh-negative which may lead to serious health problems—and death—in a second-born fetus. Richard's future, therefore, was sealed before he took his first breath. The complications caused a hormonal imbalance that stunted his growth. Medically speaking, Richard would be considered a proportionate dwarf. He was expected to only grow to the height of 4' 7" but Richard proved them wrong as he grew to 4' 9."

At 4' 9" and 97 pounds, Richard J. Flaherty was the smallest and most unconventional man to serve in the U.S. military and needed a congressional waiver just to join the Army. Bullied and ridiculed through basic training, Flaherty nonetheless achieved the kind of stature that's only dreamed of: He became a Green Beret Captain, earning the Silver Star, two Bronze Stars, and two Purple Hearts for his actions in Vietnam. Flaherty served with the 101st Airborne & the 3rd Special Forces Group.

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His decommission in 1971 due to the military budget downsizing (RIF Reduction in Force) was unexpected and devastating, and Flaherty sank into the murky world of private contract work. He is believed to have worked as a military contractor throughout Africa and most notably in Rhodesia and Angola.

During these ongoing operations, he gained a reputation for intelligence, and the CIA in the late 1970s recruited him to supply the Contras in Central America with weapons and cash. So began a wild adventure involving guns, cash, and High Altitude Low Opening parachute jumps into the Florida Everglades swamps. All of that ends when he's arrested for possession of gun silencers.



*Flaherty in the US Army.*

Abandoned by the CIA, Flaherty locates a smuggling ring stealing tons of explosives including a classified weapon from inside a U.S. Army base, and signs on to work the investigation undercover with the Federal law enforcement agency the ATF (Alcohol, Tobacco & Firearms).

Miami Police officer David Yuzuk befriended Richard J. Flaherty when the former soldier was living on the streets as a homeless man. After 15 years of friendship, Flaherty finally confessed, "It's time I tell you who I really am." Only 10 days later Flaherty would be killed in a bizarre hit and run.

After Flaherty's death, Yuzuk kept digging, researching, and confirming. He located witnesses and found documentation in a storage unit that revealed that even while homeless, Flaherty was still conducting clandestine missions around the world—Cambodia, Iraq, Jordan, Venezuela—but who was he working for? The CIA? Private contractors? Or were his missions something much darker?

"My three-year journey of discovery dragged me down the rabbit hole of CIA conspiracies and the hunt for stolen classified weapons—stretching from the bloody jungles of Vietnam to the dangerous streets of Iraq and Venezuela, all in search of the peripatetic Green Beret Captain Richard J. Flaherty," Yuzuk said.

Captain Flaherty's Irish lineage is traced back to his grandfather Joseph Patrick Flaherty who was born in the Aran islands and his grandmother Bridget Smythe was born in the village of Feakle next to the Sliabh Aughty Mountains.



*Green Beret Captain Richard J. Flaherty.*

## Flaherty's military bio

Flaherty attended Infantry Officer Candidate School and was commissioned a 2Lt on August 31, 1967. He was assigned to the 101st Airborne Division and went to Vietnam serving as a Platoon Leader and Recon Platoon Leader with companies B, C, and D, & E. He and his platoon were engaged in some of the heaviest fighting on the outskirts of Hue during the Tet Offensive. He earned the Silver Star, 2 Bronze Stars (w/V, 3OLC), and 2 Purple Hearts.



*Green Beret Captain Richard J. Flaherty.*

After his tour in Vietnam, he returned to the U.S. and attended the Special Forces Officer Course at Fort Bragg. Upon graduation, he was assigned to the 3rd Special Forces Group and assigned to the 46th Special Forces Company in Thailand. He served as an A Detachment Commander and Liaison Officer. In 1970 he was reassigned to the 10th Special Forces Group at Fort Devens. He served as both an A and B detachment Commander. He was discharged in October 1971 as a Captain.

Captain Flaherty's incredible life story was captured in the Amazon #1 Best Selling book, "The Giant Killer" available on Amazon as a Paperback, eBook, & Audiobook, and the award-winning documentary, "The Giant Killer Finding Flaherty" available worldwide on Amazon, Google Play, YouTube, iTunes, and Tubi. To learn more or comment about Captain Flaherty please visit The Giant Killer Facebook page.

*\* Born and raised in Brooklyn N.Y., David Yuzuk attended the University of Stony Brook on a football scholarship. After college David moved to Miami and became a 19-year veteran of the Aventura Police Department working as a uniformed road patrolman, undercover officer, and detective. In 2018 David was forced to retire due to a back injury sustained as a police officer. Retired, David enjoys writing, walking on hikes, and spending time with his dog Simon.*

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# John Millington Synge: Irish playwright, poet, and rebel

A look at John Millington Synge's life, from his early years to his untimely death.

Brendan Farrell  
Contributor  
[@IrishCentral](#)  
Mar 19, 2021



PUBLIC DOMAIN

*“Still South I went and West and south again through Wicklow from the morning till the night and far from the cities and the sights of man lived with the sunshine and the moons delight” - John Millington Synge.*

**2021 marks 150 years since the birth of the playwright and poet John Millington Synge.**

Synge’s life may have been short and tragic but it was lived to the full, driven by an open-minded, insatiable intellectual curiosity and respect for his fellow man and for nature. He would become a leading figure in the Irish literary movement and, along with W.B. Yeats and Lady Gregory, a director of the Abbey Theatre.

On This Day: “The Playboy of the Western World” opens at Dublin's Abbey Theater  
Synge came from staunch upper-middle-class evangelical Protestant stock with impeccable Church of Ireland roots. The Synoges had the “ unique distinction of providing, in a mere three generations, five Bishops for the Church of Ireland.” His comparatively modest upbringing in Rathfarnham, County Dublin belied his semi aristocratic ascendancy background.

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His father, John Hatch Synge, had been called to the bar and his Mother Kathleen nee Trail was also steeped in the Protestant Clerical tradition. Her father, the Rev. Robert Trail, was the son of “the Venerable the Archdeacon of Connor”. Robert Trail, an Antrim native, was a rabid Evangelical Christian mired in the political and religious intolerance of the Northern counties forever “waging war against Popery in its thousand forms of wickedness.”

John M Synge never knew his father who had succumbed to smallpox and tragically was buried on his son's first birthday. His mother was left with five children, (three had died in infancy during baby John's first year) but far from destitute as there were rental properties including an estate in Galway which provided a more than ample income for a respectable Victorian family.

Synge's first love was music and following his graduation from Trinity College, he would study at the Royal Irish Academy of Music. By this time, Synge had discovered Charles Darwin and Karl Marx and despite the concerns and the attempts at “conversion” to Evangelical Christianity by his mother the trajectory of his life was set. “He could derive no spiritual advantage from pretending to believe something that he found incredible.”

This damascene moment was succinctly summed up by Synge as “trading the Kingdom of Heaven for the Kingdom of Ireland.” This undoubtedly influenced his decision to abandon thoughts of a musical career for a medium that offered greater potential for expression and cultural appreciation.

Holidays were typically spent in Wicklow where the family would take summer lets close to the family seat at Glanmore near the village of Ashford. At Tomriland house, near Annamoe, Synge would draft his first trilogy of plays: *Riders to the Sea*, *In the shadow of the Glen*, and *The Tinker's Wedding*.

Wicklow was a source of great curiosity and Synge, despite sporadic outbursts of chronic ill-health, would often take to the road walking up to 20 miles a day gaining inspiration from characters he met along the way, their lyrical, peasant vernacular captured in powerful, rich naturalistic prose.

The Synges had been in County Wicklow for almost 100 years. Francis Synge, John's great-grandfather, had acquired the core of his estate in 1796 along with a large house then called Glenmouth which was picturesquely set overlooking the Glen with sea views to the south-east.

At great expense, Francis Synge embarked on a massive vanity project which would involve transforming the house and the Glen into a fitting location for a man of his perceived social standing. He commissioned Ireland's foremost architect, Francis Johnston, to redesign the house and by adding Turrets, bartizans, and castellations, Gothicized the building.

The resultant metamorphosis was Glanmore Castle, *Castle of the Great Glen*. The Castle was visible from the Glen below fulfilling his dream in it becoming the Glen's crowning glory. Francis Synge planted hundreds of trees at different heights in the Glen to produce beautiful combinations of foliage in spring and autumn and scattered cherry trees throughout the forest resulting in stunning displays of white spring blossoms. Viewing platforms were established on rocky outcrops giving fabulous vistas over the treetops or to the sea, and footpaths were created enabling circuitous walks.

## Walking in the footsteps of Irish literary giants

Following his death in 1831, Francis Synge's son John would carry on his father's work, adding more paths including "a great flight of five hundred rustic steps, winding up like a goat track among the trees on the steep side of the glen".

J.M. Synge adored spending time in Wicklow and especially in the Devil's Glen, of which he possessed an intimate knowledge. He had spent a considerable part of his childhood holidaying in its vicinity and would take great delight in escorting friends and visitors from his aunt's house nearby at Tiglin farm in the upper Glen, down to the waterfall or taking the cliff walk, winding along the precipitous upper glen path threading its way through a magnificent arch, which his grandfather, utilizing the labour of Welsh slate miners from his estate, had laboriously hand-cut through solid rock.

Although a Dubliner by birth, J.M. Synge considered himself a Wicklow man and would gain invaluable inspiration from its landscape and people. This would become very apparent in his writing and in his religious and political views which would cause deep consternation amongst his family, contrasting their deep-seated ultra-conservative ascendancy attitudes.

Synge's refusal to abandon his core principles would have a serious impact on his personal life. His marriage proposal to Cherry Matheson, a young woman from a pious Protestant family, would be turned down because of their opposing irreconcilable religious beliefs.

After a chance meeting with W.B. Yeats in Paris, Synge would, at Yeats's suggestion, further develop his naturalistic style by immersing himself in Irish Gaelic culture with visits to the West of Ireland and the Aran Islands which would be the setting for his masterpiece *The Playboy of the Western World*.

Synge would become firm friends with W.B. Yeats and his brother, the painter Jack B. Yeats. His relationship with Jack would result in an epic journey around Mayo and Galway which would prove to be, in the author's words, as 'out-of-the-way corners in Mayo and Galway that were more strange and marvellous than anything I've dreamed of.' These gems of social observation accompanied by Yeats' evocative drawings were commissioned and published by the Manchester Guardian to highlight the extreme poverty of the people living in "the congested districts." The articles and drawings would eventually be crystallized in the form of a book *Travels in Wicklow, West Kerry, and Connemara*, posthumously published with other articles in 1911 three years after his untimely death at 38 from Hodgkinson's disease.

## On This Day: William Butler Yeats wins the Nobel Prize in 1923

Synge was no stranger to controversy; in fact, he quite literally courted it. In 1905, he had fallen in love with Molly Allgood, a 19-year-old shop assistant with ambitions to become an actress. Under her stage name, Marie O'Neill, she would appear in many of the Abbey Theatre productions. Synge's creeping illness would cruelly manifest itself as tumescent neck glands which were now inoperable, cruelly thwarting the devoted couple's plan to marry prior to his death in 1909.

J.M. Synge is synonymous with his masterful comic drama "*The Playboy of the Western World*," unfortunately not just for its genius and perception, but largely for the effect, it had on the hyper-sensitive sensibilities of a pre-revolutionary, colonial Edwardian Ireland.

As demonstrated by the infamous “Playboy riots” and the ensuing opprobrium, following immoral references to ladies undergarments and perceived slights on Irish womanhood. The flames of Nationalist righteous indignation were dramatically fanned by Arthur Griffin, the Sinn Fein Leader who declared the play to be “a vile and inhuman story told in the foulest language we have ever listened to from a public platform.”

Synge’s measured response to the furor was brilliantly disarming: “We shall have to establish a Society for the Preservation of Irish Humour”

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