



CANADIAN CELTIC ARTS ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

Vol. 4 No. 2

Imbolc 2013

CANADIANCELTICARTS.CA EDITOR - Leah MORRIGAN: EDITOR@CANADIANCELTICARTS.CA

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Smaointean / Smaointe**

By Janice Chan, President

As I write this, it is - 15 C outside and spring is the farthest thing from my mind, yet it is only a little over a week until Imbolc. Celebrated in the Gaelic-speaking areas of the Celtic world - Ireland, Scotland, and the Isle of Man - Imbolc marked the coming of spring and the lambing season.

In Irish, Imbolc is called *Lá Fhéile Bríde*, and in Scottish Gaelic it is *Là Fèill Brìghde*, both names meaning "the feast day of Brighid", reflecting the influence of the Church. Even the North American Groundhog Day may have its origins in Imbolc. There is an old Scottish Gaelic proverb, recorded in the *Carmina Gadelica* that says:

Thig an nathair às an toll
Là donn Bríde,
Ged robh trì traighean dh' an-sneachd
Air leachd an làir.

The snake will come out of the hole
[On] the brown Day of Brighde,
Though [there would be] three feet of snow
On the flat ground.

Much like our Warton Willy, if a snake slithered out of the hole it had been hibernating in all winter on St. Brigid's Day and stayed to bask in the warmth on the flat stones around its mound, spring was truly on its way.

Imbolc celebrated the longer days that brought more light and warmth with bonfires and the lighting of candles. The holiday has always had close ties with the Brighid, the Irish fire goddess, who shares her name, if not the spelling of it, with the Christian Saint Brigid. The Celtic Brighid was the protector of poetry, crafts, healing, the home,



childbirth, smithing, cattle, and crops. She was much beloved for her gentleness, compassion and wisdom.

Whether or not the love of the ancient Irish for Brighid was transferred to the Catholic Saint Brigid, the two share more than the same name and feast day. St. Brigid was also loved for gentleness and kindness, especially towards the poor. She is the patroness of many of the same things as Brighid -- infants, cattle, poetry, and blacksmiths.

Both Brighid and Brigid are associated with a particular kind of cross woven of straw. In the Christian tradition, Brigid wove it from rushes gathered from the floor as she explained Christianity to a dying chieftain (or to her father in other versions of the story), in hopes of converting him. As Brigid finished making the cross, the chieftain accepted Christianity, and was baptized before his death.

However, the design of cross is probably far older in Ireland than the late-5th century Brigid. The same square with four



spokes pattern has been found on Celtic pottery and textiles in burial sites. Some consider it to represent a wheel of fire or a sun wheel, but its exact origins and meaning will likely never be known.

** Smaointean/Smaointe is translated as "Thoughts" from Scottish and Irish Gaelic respectively.

News from Celtic Studies

By Jean Talman

Celtic Studies classes started up again on January 7. We welcome writer Charles Foran who is teaching a



course on 20th century Irish literature, and Stuart Macdonald from Knox College who is offering a course on the Scottish Reformation. Mark McGowan is teaching a seminar course on the Irish Famine, and we welcome back Sarah O'Connor to Irish Cinema and Sean Conway who is teaching The Irish and Scots in Canada.

Our visiting scholar from The Ireland Canada University Foundation, Noel O' Murchadha, is teaching two courses in Irish language. Noel will give a public lecture on March 26. Noel is a hurler of some note in his native Ring, Co. Waterford, and returned there twice during the fall to play in important matches.

In April, Celtic Studies will co-host the annual conference of the Celtic Studies Association of North America (April 18-21). Keynote speakers will be Mairin Ni Dhonnchadha of NUI-Galway and Brynley Roberts of Aberystwyth. The conference will include the launch of a collection of essays in honour of recently-retired Ann Dooley, written and compiled by her friends and former students.

We regret the untimely passing of Eamonn O'Loghlin, hardworking supporter of many Irish community groups in Toronto, and we offer condolences to his family.



FEATURE

The Ireland Fund of Canada Artist-in-Residence

The Celtic Studies Program at St. Michael's College, University of Toronto, is pleased to announce Charles Foran as the Artist-in-Residence between February 25 and March 15, 2013.



Charlie Foran is the author of 10 books, including *Mordecai: The Life and Times*, a biography of Mordecai Richler, and *The Last House of Ulster*, a study of the Troubles, and *Carolan's Farewell* and *Kitchen Music*, both set in Ireland.

An early graduate of the Celtic Studies program at St. Michael's College, Foran holds a Master's Degree in Irish Literature from University College, Dublin. He has won many awards for fiction and non-fiction, including the Governor General's Literary Award and the Charles Taylor Prize, and has taught literature at universities in China, Hong Kong, and Canada.

During his residency, Charlie Foran will be available for consultation and conversation with U of T students, and friends of the

Celtic Studies program who'd like to explore their creative interests, or simply talk about writing and literature. He is also willing to look at short samples of creative work, by prior arrangement.

Foran's public events in Toronto are as follows:

Thursday, February 28, 2013 at 6 p.m.

Foran will talk about his own experiences as a young writer of Irish ancestry, including years of living in Ireland, and will read from his Irish-themed books, including *Carolan's Farewell* and *The Last House of Ulster*.

6 p.m. in Robert Madden Auditorium, Carr Hall, St. Michael's College, 100 St. Joseph Street. Free admission - no registration required. 416-926-7145 or celtic.studies@utoronto.ca

Thursday, March 14, 2013 at 6 p.m.

Foran will deliver a lecture titled 'Scaring Himself Silent:' Reconsidering Flann O'Brien's *The Third Policeman*.

6 p.m. in Robert Madden Auditorium, Carr Hall, St. Michael's College, 100 St. Joseph Street. Free admission - no registration required. 416-926-7145 or celtic.studies@utoronto.ca

To learn more, or to make an appointment, contact Jean Talman in the Celtic Studies office: email celtic.studies@utoronto.ca or phone 416-926-7145. To contact Charlie Foran directly during the residency, email: charlie@charlesforan.com. His office is located in Odette Hall, Room 021, St. Michael's College.

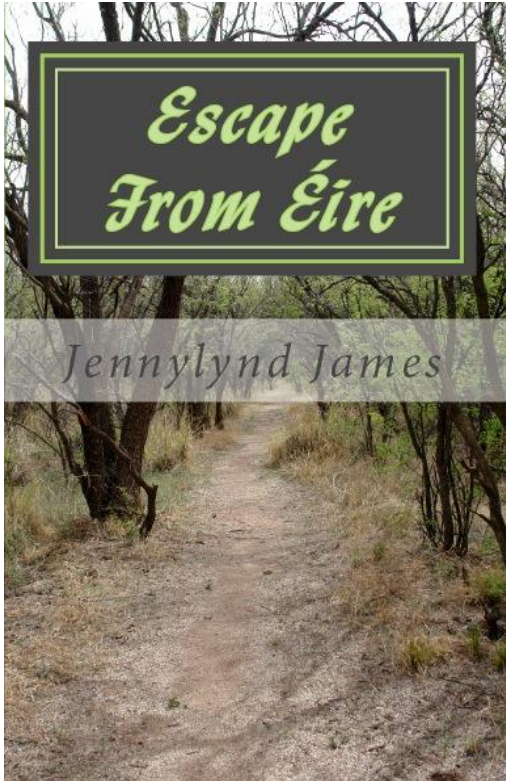
Celtic Studies acknowledges with thanks the generosity of The Ireland Fund of Canada in providing funding for the Artist-in-Residence program.



FEATURE

Escape from Éire: A Memoir of Love and Adventure in Ireland

By Jennylynd (Lindy) James



Escape from Éire is a memoir that gives insight into Irish attitudes and traits as seen through the eyes of a new immigrant. With a mix of warmth, joy, and hope, it explores the highs and lows of settling in a new country.

Humorous trials are endured like Irish speed dating, disastrous home renovations, and maniacal bosses. *Escape from Éire* shows how hard work and determination, combined with an easygoing, fearless attitude can bring great success against the odds. The story coincides with the fall of the Celtic Tiger.

Author, Jennylynd (Lindy) James was born and raised in Trinidad and Tobago. She studied Food Science at McGill University, Canada and worked in this field for over 15 years. Lindy worked in the food industry in Trinidad, Florida, California, the Republic of Ireland, and Canada. In Ireland, she developed Bad Boy Sauces, her own range of Caribbean style sauces and seasonings. She ran this business for five years with 'artistic flair'.

Her tumultuous life experiences and adventures while living in Ireland have been the inspiration to create this memoir *Escape from Éire*.



Lindy now lives in Bloor West Village in Toronto, where she has embraced self-expression in art, music, and writing as a new lifestyle. "Go raibh mile maith agat Éire. Thanks Ireland for all the wonderful memories"

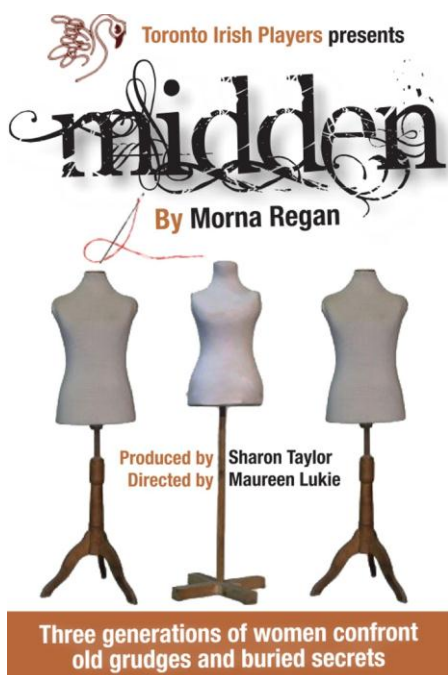
Written with warmth and generosity, the book shows the author's quest to start a new life, a new business, and a new love.

-Felice Gorica, TV Producer.

Purchase [Escape From Éire](#) online. Like us on [Facebook](#).



FEATURE



The Toronto Irish Players will present **Midden**, the Toronto premiere of the acclaimed play by Morna Regan, at the Alumnae Theatre, 70 Berkeley Street, Toronto.

Opening Night and Reception
February 21 at 7 p.m. Tickets: \$50.

Evenings at 8 p.m.
February 22, 23, 28; March 1, 2, 7, 8 and 9

Matinees at 2 p.m.
February 24
March 3

\$20 for regular adult tickets, \$18 for students and seniors, with a PWYC performance on February 28 (suggested minimum of \$10). For tickets and information, call 416-440-2888 or order on-line at torontoirishplayers.com.

Midden is the moving and funny story of three generations of women. Ruth has deserted her fiancé and run back to Derry after 15 years building a fashion business in America. On the eve of launching a branch in her home town, she looks for approval and assurance from her mother, her sister and her beloved but unstable grandmother, as old family grudges and deeply buried secrets are unearthed and brought to light. By definition, a midden is a domestic burial mound and, in common Irish usage, it's a heap of refuse; in the play, it's a metaphor for the layers of family history, fragments of memory, emotion and lies. *Midden* was first produced in 2001 by Rough Magic for the Edinburgh Fringe Festival and went on to be produced often in Ireland, Scotland and England, winning numerous awards.

The cast features Lucy Farrell as prodigal daughter Ruth; Barbara Taylor as her mother, Dolores; Cliona Kenny as Ruth's grandmother, Dophie, whose fading and confused memories dredge up the past; Sharon Taylor (Barbara's own daughter) as Ruth's under-appreciated sister Aileen, and Jennifer Hough as Ruth's boisterous business partner, Mabs McGinty. The play is directed by Maureen Lukie (who has directed *James Joyce's The Dead*, *Moonshine* and *Red Roses and Petrol* for TIP), but all of the women bring extensive stage experience to the table in a strong collaborative relationship. Sharon Taylor is also producing the play.

The Toronto Irish Players, established in 1975, have just been named Irish Person of the Year by the Ireland Canada Chamber of Commerce for their contribution to Irish culture in Canada.



FEATURE



Cyfarchion Dydd Gwyl Dewi - St. David's Day greetings for our Welsh members! Daffodils are worn on March 1, St. David's day, in Wales, and the following special St. David's Day recipe has been provided by Rex Williams – enjoy!

Pwdin Efa (Eve's Pudding)

4-6 medium cooking apples
¼ cup honey
¼ cup water
1 Tbsp. lemon juice

Topping:
2 eggs, separated
2 Tbsp. butter
1/3 cup sugar
½ tsp. vanilla
½ cup all-purpose flour
¼ tsp. salt
1 tsp. baking powder
1 cup milk

Peel, core and slice apples and place in an ovenproof dish. Mix honey, water and lemon juice, and pour over apples. Bake at 350 for 15-20 minutes to start apples softening.

Meanwhile make topping: Beat egg whites till stiff. Cream butter, add sugar, egg yolks and vanilla, and beat till fluffy.

Sift together dry ingredients, add to butter-sugar mixture alternately with milk, and beat to blend. Fold in egg whites. Spread topping over apples and bake at 350 for 30-40 minutes till topping is golden and apples soft.

Serve warm. Pour cream adds a special touch.

Serves 4-6

Canadian Celtic Arts Association 2013 Events Calendar

Tuesday, February 5

Set Dancing Class

Corktown Irish Pub, 175 Young St.,
Hamilton ON, 6 pm - 8:30 pm Set Dance
Class every second Tuesday, session every
Tuesday. For more information contact Ann
Gorman-McKinney 905.549.9867 or email
agormckinney@cogeco.ca.

Thursday, February 28

Celtic Studies Writer-in-Residence Lecture

St. Michael's College, Robert Madden
Auditorium, Carr Hall, St. Michael's
College, 100 St. Joseph Street, Toronto,
6 pm., free admission - no registration
required.

Charles Foran will talk about his
experiences as a young writer of Irish
ancestry, including years of living in
Ireland, reading from his Irish-themed
books, including *Carolan's Farewell* and *The
Last House of Ulster*. For more information
call 416.926.7145 or email
celtic.studies@utoronto.ca.



Friday, March 8

Ireland Fund of Canada's St. Patrick's Day Luncheon

Metro Toronto Convention Centre, South Building, Exhibit Halls F & G
Pre-lunch reception: 11am, lunch: 12:30 pm.
Post-lunch party: 3 pm
Individual Tickets: \$300
Join in to celebrate the 30th Anniversary of the Ireland Fund with traditional live Irish music, a three-course lunch, and an array of lively entertainment featuring Irish comedian and singer, Brendan Grace. For more information, visit ifoc.akaraisin.com.

Friday March 8 - Saturday March 9

Toronto Irish Film Festival

TIFF Bell Light Box, 350 King St. W., Toronto. Details to be announced January 31, 2013. See torontoirishfilmfest.com for more information.

Sunday March 10, 2013

Irish Person of the Year Luncheon

Toronto Hilton Hotel, 145 Richmond St. W., Toronto, 12:00 pm. For ticket prices call 905.773.4136.

The Ireland Canada Chamber of Commerce is pleased to award the Toronto Irish Players the title of Irish Person of the Year for 2013. The Irish flag will be raised at Toronto City Hall at 11:00 am before the luncheon.

Thursday March 14, 2013

Celtic Studies Writer-in-Residence Lecture

St. Michael's College, Robert Madden Auditorium, Carr Hall, St. Michael's College, 100 St. Joseph Street, Toronto, 6 p.m. Free admission - no registration required.

Charles Foran will deliver a lecture titled, "Scaring Himself Silent: Reconsidering Flann O'Brien's *The Third Policeman*." For more information call 416.926.7145 or email celtic.studies@utoronto.ca.

Friday March 15, 2013

Grand Marshal's Ball

Hilton Hotel, 145 Richmond St. W., Toronto. Individual tickets: \$150 each. Tables of 8 and 10 are available for \$1,200 and \$1,500 respectively.

Prices include a welcome reception, three-course dinner, three drink tickets and an evening of entertainment.

This year's Grand Marshal for the St. Patrick's Day Parade is Mr. Brian Farmer, a native of County Armagh, who was selected for his extraordinary contribution to the Gaelic Athletic Association in Canada. For more information see topatrick.com.

Sunday March 17, 2013

26th Annual Toronto St. Patrick's Day Parade

Downtown Toronto. Parade begins at 12 noon with the procession starting from Bloor and St. George (near old U of T Varsity Stadium). The parade will continue along Bloor Street down Yonge and finishes on Queen Street at Nathan Philips Square. For more information see topatrick.com.

Saturday March 23, 2013

Thurlough O'Carolan and the Italians

St. Luke's Anglican Church, 760 Somerset St. W. Ottawa ON, 7:30 pm. Tickets: \$12 general / \$10 seniors and students.

The Life and Times of an Irish Harper and his Italian contemporaries, Marcello, Geminiani and Tartini. Mary Muckle (harp, harpsichord), Kirsten Carlson (flute), with harpists Kelly Aminian and Kahlan Miron. Tickets available from The Leading Note, 370 Elgin St., Ottawa, The Folklore Centre, 1111 Bank St., Ottawa and at the door. For further information call 613.825.1379



Tuesday, March 26

Celtic Studies Speakers Series

6 p.m. in Charbonnel Lounge, St. Michael's College, 81 St. Mary Street. Free admission - no registration required.

Noel O Murchadha, Ireland Canada University Foundation Visiting Scholar, will give a lecture entitled, "I tell you with all due respect to him Keating is a fraud. His Irish is not true Irish:" Debates on constructing a standard written variety for Modern Irish". Call 416-926-7145 or email celtic.studies@utoronto.ca for more information.

Sunday April 6, 2013

Amadeus Choir of Greater Toronto's Celtic Celebration

Jubilee United Church, 40 Underhill Drive, Toronto, 2 pm and 7: 30 pm. Tickets: \$35 adults / \$30 seniors and students. Group rates available.

Favourite Scottish, Irish, and Maritime songs, and talented trio, Kettle's On. Additional highlights include a silent auction, games, cash bar, and delectable nibbles. For more information or to purchase tickets please contact the choir office at 416.446.0188 or email amachoir@idirect.com.

June 19 - 23, 2013

On the Edge: Transitions, Transgressions, and Transformations in Irish and Scottish Studies

Annual the Canadian Association for Irish Studies (CAIS) conference, Simon Fraser University, Harbour Centre, Vancouver, BC. Co-hosted by CAIS, Research Institute of Irish and Scottish Studies, and the University of Aberdeen. For more information see ocs.sfu.ca or call 416.926.7145

* All events and dates are subject to change. Please call the number provided to confirm any event listed.

To list your Celtic-themed event, email webmaster@canadiancelticarts.ca with the following information:
-date and time
-location with address
-admission cost, other details
-contact telephone number or email address

For further information, please visit canadiancelticarts.ca

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