



Muskegon Irish American Society

NEWS



JANUARY 2014



Join Us for the 14th annual pub party *featuring Conklin Ceili Band*

It is hard to believe that this is our 14th annual pub party! And returning to entertain us with their special brand of Irish music is the Conklin Ceili Band! The band is performing all over the region, and we are fortunate that our date fits their busy schedule. We will begin with a warm-up by our own Kevin Donovan, David McIntire, and Jim Mayo, followed by the Conklin Ceili Band.

Time flies, and three years have passed since we first opened Hennessy's Pub in January 2011 with our annual pub party. And now the tradition of our first event of 2014 continues there. Of course, Irish victuals and libations will be available, and there is no cover charge. Sunday afternoon football will be over, so break out of the winter blahs and join us for this great time at Hennessy's! No reservations necessary. See you there!

WHAT: Muskegon Irish American Society 14th annual pub party

WHERE: Hennessy's Irish Pub & Restaurant 885 Jefferson Street Muskegon, 231-728-3333.

WHEN: Sunday, February 16, 2014 1:30 - 4:00 p.m.

No Reservations & No cover charge



Bill Crimmins Named 2013 Irish Person of the Year

At our annual movie night in November, we named our Irish Person of the Year. This honor is not known to the recipient until the announcement is made by our President, Kevin Donovan. Our 2013 Irish Person of the Year is William (Bill) Crimmins.



William (Bill) Crimmins

Bill was born on April 23, 1919, in Boston. He was the third child and first son of nine children born to his parents, who had emigrated from Ireland in 1910. Two of Bill's siblings died as children, and in 1931 his father died of pneumonia. Suddenly, Bill's mother Nora was left to support seven children, with Bill being the oldest boy. Bill worked thirty hours a week in a grocery store while attending high school to help the family make ends meet. In World War II Bill initially received a hardship deferment because he was the sole support of his family, but in May of 1943 he was drafted into the Army. He served in Europe for the duration of the war, and was discharged as a sergeant.

Bill returned to Boston, and in 1946 he married the love of his life, Betty Grottendeck. While working full time, Bill attended night school for six years, and earned an engineering and management degree. He then embarked upon a remarkable business career with engineering positions in a number of states, especially with Brunswick. In 1984 he and Betty retired in Muskegon. In Muskegon Bill and Betty were very active in St. Francis parish, the Knights of Columbus, and our club. They raised a family of nine children, have twenty-eight grand children, and nine great-grandchildren. Betty passed away in 2008.

Bill and his family maintain strong ties to family and friends in Ireland, and he and Betty spent many happy times visiting there and hosting Irish visitors here. Bill is a great example for us all as our Irish Person of the Year. At 94 years young, he still has that twinkle in his eye and the mirth of his Irish heritage. **Congratulations to Bill Crimmins and his family!**



Dues Notice

Enclosed with this newsletter is our 2014 dues notice. Please pay your dues promptly they are critical to support our club's activities. **Thank you!**

Fr. Bill Langlois Celebrates 40th Anniversary as Priest

The parents of our fellow member Fr. Bill Langlois were members of our club from its earliest days, and after the passing of his Dad, also named Bill, Fr. Bill and his mother Ginny still attend as many of our events that



Fr. Bill and Ginny Langlois

his busy schedule allows as pastor of St. Patrick's Parish in Grand Haven. Recently his parish celebrated with Fr. Bill his 40th anniversary of ordination to the priesthood, and we join in congratulating Fr. Bill and wish him many more years of health, happiness, and blessings in God's service! By the way, Fr. Bill almost always wins one of our raffle prizes at our events, so have him buy your raffle tickets next time!

Past Event

Last November 6 about ninety members and guests attended our annual Irish movie night at the Muskegon Museum of Art. We first enjoyed desserts presented by our Vice-President, Kathleen Marek, and our Secretary, Jeanne O'Brien. We then honored our 2013 Irish Person of the year, long-time member Bill Crimmins. Our fellow member and movie critic extraordinaire, Bill Iddings, provided an introduction to our evening's film, *The Informer*. *The Informer* is a classic film produced and directed by Irish American director John Ford in Dublin in 1935. *The Informer* won four academy awards - Best Actor, Best Director, Best Screenplay, and Best Musical Score. To see the acting style from the those times and the artistry of John Ford in this black and white movie was a new experience for many of us. We thank everyone who made this night such a success, and we look forward to seeing you again next November!



Remembering Seamus Heaney

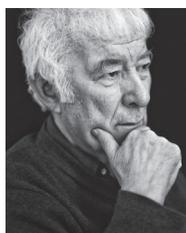
When the famous Irish poet Seamus Heaney died early last fall, we were remiss in not mentioning his passing in our newsletter. His story telling and poetry will live on as classics of literature. Some of us had the wonderful opportunity a few years ago to attend a reading he gave at Aquinas College in Grand Rapids. Here is an excerpt from his Wikipedia biography:

Seamus Justin Heaney (13 April 1939 – 30 August 2013) was an Irish poet, playwright, translator and lecturer, and the recipient of the 1995 Nobel Prize in Literature. In the early 1960s, he became a lecturer in Belfast after attending university there, and began to publish poetry. He lived in Sandymount, Dublin, from 1972 until his death.

Heaney was a professor at Harvard from 1981 to 1997 and its Poet in Residence from 1988 to 2006. From 1989 to 1994 he was also

“Walk on air against your better judgement”.

Seamus Heaney



the Professor of Poetry at Oxford and in 1996 was made a Commandeur de l’Ordre des Arts et Lettres. Other awards that he received include the Geoffrey Faber Memorial Prize (1968), the E. M. Forster Award (1975), the PEN Translation Prize (1985), the Golden Wreath of Poetry (2001), T. S. Eliot Prize (2006) and two Whitbread Prizes (1996 and 1999).

In 2012, he was awarded the Lifetime Recognition

Award from the Griffin Trust For Excellence In Poetry. His literary papers are held by the National Library of Ireland.

Robert Lowell called him “the most important Irish poet since Yeats” and many others, including the academic John Sutherland, have echoed the sentiment that he was “the greatest poet of our age”. Robert Pinsky has stated that “with his wonderful gift of eye and ear Heaney has the gift of the story-teller”. Upon his death in 2013, The Irish Independent described him as “probably the best-known poet in the world”.



The GREENING of Chicago for St. Patrick’s Day

The City of Chicago and Tourism Ireland have teamed up to make Chicago the greenest city in the world on St. Patrick’s Day! Beginning on March 10, every night green lights will start to illuminate various Chicago landmarks, culminating on St. Patrick’s Day with the entire city lighted in green.

In addition, between March 10 - 17, all Chicago restaurants, pubs, and other businesses are being ask to light up there premises in green. This green Chicago will be quite a spectacle to see!

Michigan Irish American Hall of Fame Dedication at Hennessy’s

At our pub party on Sunday, February 16, at Hennessy’s, construction of our club’s display of the Michigan Irish American Hall of Fame will be taking shape. We have put a lot of effort into creating our state’s only Hall of Fame memorializing the contributions of Irish Americans to our citizens, and we can be justifiably be proud of this accomplishment!

It is not too late to be listed on the display as a donor, and you can send your contribution with your dues to our treasurer, Bruce Duff, at the same address on your dues notice.



Most Popular Children’s Names in Ireland and the U.S.

It is fun to see trends in the names given to babies in Ireland and in the United States. According to the latest birth statistics from both countries, here are the top five names for boys and girls:

girls		boys	
Ireland	United States	Ireland	United States
Sophie	Sophia	Jack	Ethan
Emma	Emma	James	Jacob
Emily	Isabella	Daniel	Mason
Grace	Olivia	Sean	Noah
Lily	Ava	Connor	William



Special Waterford Crystal Raffle

Our club is receiving a state raffle license to conduct a raffle of a special large Waterford crystal vase throughout this year. You will be receiving details of the raffle in the near future. Proceeds from the raffle will be used to support our club's activities, especially the Michigan Irish American Hall of Fame. Thank you to our board members Dee Carlson and Joe Doyle for their leadership in this project!

Irish Language Lessons at Hennessy's

Irish language lessons are now being offered by an enthusiastic group, West Michigan Gaeltacht, at Hennessy's. There is no charge, and the participants are having a lot of fun. The meeting schedule can be found on the group's facebook page: facebook.com/wmgaeltacht

Saint Patrick's Party

March 7 & 8 at Fricano Event Center

Our Music Festival board has again planned a great community St. Patrick's party on March 7 & 8 at the Fricano Event Center. The hours are 5:30 - 11 pm on both nights, and tickets are only \$6.00 per person at the door or online at michiganirish.org. Live entertainment will include Crossbow, Bruno's Boys, and the Ardan Academy of Dance. Food and beverages will be available, and a fine silent auction. Don't miss the fun!



Downtown St. Patrick's Parade on Saturday, March 15

The Muskegon Jaycees club, with the support of Hennessy's, the Music Festival, and other Muskegon organizations and businesses, is sponsoring our area's St. Patrick's Parade on Saturday, March 15, to benefit local food pantries. Participants in the parade are asked to bring non-perishable food items to donate. Our club will be marching in the parade and we invite all members and friends to join us. The parade will leave Hackley Park at 11:00 am and proceed to Hennessy's, where an entertainment tent will be set up.



41st Annual Flagraising at Hennessy's on St. Patrick's Day

On St. Patrick's Day on Monday, March 17, our club will be raising the Irish flag in downtown Muskegon for the forty-first year in a row! The ceremony will take place at noon at Hennessy's. Afterward, we will gather informally at Hennessy's for a convivial noon hour get-together. Come and help us carry on this tradition!

Newsletter's New Look

After many years Neil Mullally is turning over much of the newsletter's creation to a fellow member and graphic designer, who wishes to remain anonymous. What a great new look and thank you!