



muskegon
irish
american
society

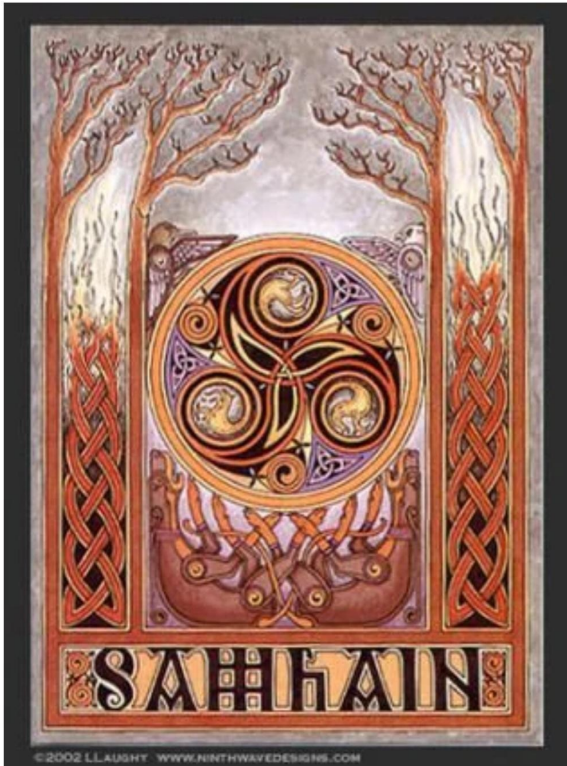


MICHIGAN
IRISH AMERICAN
HALL OF FAME



NEWS

Fall 2025



HALLOWEEN IN IRELAND

Halloween in Ireland has deep historical roots that trace back over 2,000 years to the ancient Celtic festival of **Samhain** (pronounced *Sow-in*). Samhain marked the end of the harvest season and the beginning of winter, symbolizing the transition from light to darkness. It was believed that on October 31st, the veil between the living and the dead was at its thinnest, allowing spirits to roam freely. To protect themselves and honor deities, communities lit large bonfires, extinguished hearth fires, and relit them from the communal blaze. People wore costumes to confuse or blend in with wandering spirits, and practiced divination rituals using apples and nuts to predict the future.

With the spread of Christianity, the Church introduced All Saints' Day on November 1st, and All Hallows' Eve on October 31st, absorbing many Samhain customs. Despite religious shifts, beliefs in spirits and protective fires persisted. Irish folklore added layers of supernatural tradition, including tales of the mischievous Púca, a shape-shifting spirit, and the Banshee, whose wail foretold death. Mumming and guising—where people dressed up and went door-to-door performing songs or skits in exchange for food—emerged as an early form of trick-or-treating.

One of the most iconic Halloween symbols, the jack-o'-lantern, also originated in Ireland. Inspired by the legend of Stingy Jack, who tricked the Devil and was doomed to wander the Earth with a glowing turnip, people carved grotesque faces into turnips to ward off evil spirits. Pumpkins only replaced turnips after Irish immigrants brought the tradition to America.

Today, Halloween in Ireland is a vibrant celebration that blends ancient mysticism with modern festivity. Events like the Macnas Parade in Galway and the Samhain Fires Ceremony in Meath revive old customs through storytelling, lantern carving, and immersive experiences. Halloween is not just a spooky night in Ireland—it's a soulful, magical season steeped in centuries of tradition.

Happy Irish Wanderers. "Origin of Halloween in Ireland." Happy Irish Wanderers, 31 Oct. 2022, <https://happyirishwanderers.com/origin-of-halloween-in-ireland>.



Michigan Irish American Hall of Fame 2025 Induction Ceremony



Inductee Jack M. Cahill
with Kevin Donovan and Neil Mullally



Inductee Sheila M. Cassidy
with Kevin Donovan and Neil Mullally



Inductee the late Michael J. Derrig
accepted by his daughter, Bridget Hines,
with Kevin Donovan and Neil Mullally



Inductee Kevin Donovan
with Neil Mullally



Inductee Thomas M. Murray
with Kevin Donovan and Neil Mullally



Inductee Joan O'Halloran
with Kevin Donovan and Neil Mullally



Audience Members



Michigan Irish American Hall of Fame - Class of 2025

L-R: Thomas Murray, Sheila Cassidy, Kevin Donovan, Joan O'Halloran, Jack Cahill, Bridget Hines (for the late Michael Derrig)

Earlier published biographies of the inductees are on our website.

Call for Nominations Michigan Irish American Hall of Fame - Class of 2026

Criteria for Nomination:

1. Nominations will be accepted for individuals of Irish American Descent, living or deceased, with substantial ties to Michigan who have made contributions in areas such as Public Service, Philanthropy, Business and Industry, Arts and Entertainment, Religion, Education, and Sports.
2. Nominees must have a meaningful connection to the state of Michigan, be of verifiable Irish ancestry, be a citizen of the United States and have made a notable contribution in one of the aforementioned areas.
3. Nomination forms are available through the Muskegon Irish American Society or can be completed online at www.michiganirishamericanhalloffame.org Nominations must include name of nominee, category and brief description of reason for nomination/candidate worthiness.
4. A committee appointed by the Board of Directors of the Muskegon Irish American Society will screen nominations and recommend selections to the Board for final approval.

Deadline for Nominations: The completed nomination form and any supporting materials must be emailed or posted on or before APRIL 1, 2026. Nominations received after this date may be considered for the following year.



Highlights from the Summer Barbeque



The **Muskegon Irish American Society** is always looking for new members! Please invite your family, friends, co-workers or anyone who loves all things Irish. We hold five events each year and membership is only \$25 per family! The application is on our website.

Upcoming Event

Winter Pub Party
Knights of Columbus
2915 Fairfield St., Norton Shores
Sunday, February 1, 2026
1 - 4 pm

In Remembrance



Treanor, John 1924-2025

John was born in County Monaghan, Ireland in 1924 and went on to live the *American Dream*. He was employed by Michigan Consolidated Gas Company, and was "The Irish Landlord" of several properties in Detroit. John played and coached in the Detroit Gaelic Football League, helping bring the winning team to the 1957 North American GAA Gaelic Football Championship! In 2024, at the age of 100, John was inducted into the *Michigan Irish American Hall of Fame*. His quick wit, life-long philanthropy, strong faith and love of his Irish heritage will be remembered by his wife of 71 years (Kathleen), 6 children, 11 grandchildren, 6 great-grandchildren, and a host of extended family members.