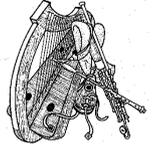




the Shenanigans



April (Aibreán) 2020 Newsletter of the Darling Downs Irish Club

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1. The union flag – many Irish people will be horrified to realise that the Union Jack actually contains a red saltire (diagonal cross) known as St. Patrick's Cross, representing Ireland. The flag originated when the Act of Union officially made Ireland part of Britain. The other diagonal is the saltire of St. Andrew, for Scotland, while the main vertical is the cross of St. George for England. The Welsh don't have a cross on the flag, a fact of which they are extremely proud.

Now for the Brexit complications – if Northern Ireland and Scotland remain in the E.U. what happens to the English flag? And what happens to that spot in the corner of the Australian flag?

2. Club Matters and Members' News and Stories:

- **Heard at the March members' gathering:** Mrs Feeney shouted from the kitchen, "Is that you I hear spittin' in the vase on the mantle piece?" "No," said himself, "but I'm getting' closer all the time."
- **The April Diary: Full Committee meeting:** Thursday 16th 7.00pm – **note change;**

Members' night and Traditional Irish Music sessions –SADLY SUSPENDED until further notice.

Quite a few members will NOT be going to Glen Innes next month - **CANCELLED.**

- **March Committee Meeting 1)** Review of the St. Patrick's Parade, including the cost of 5 police @ 3 hrs each!; **2)** on going lease arrangements; **3)** report from the QIA Dinner; **4)** roof leak escalating – carpet to be replaced – some flooring needs replacing; **5)** new Club shirts on order; **6)** high quality flags have arrived; **7)** naming of our hotel? **8)** 5 new national members approved – Bevan Conroy, Kevin Creed, Maree and Michael Keating, and Geraldine Roderick – 132 members now; **9)** wooden Irish Artifacts to be made available; **10)** application form to be made more user friendly; **11)** Cultural and Languages Festival in 2021 to have an Irish theme; **12)** the Club to participate in this year's Carnival of Flowers parade – watch this space; **13)** new e-mail address – see the header at the top of this newsletter.

- 3. WWW Sites:** Irish Chamber Music – www.irishchamberorchestra.com

4. News from Ireland:

- The majority of the population of Northern Ireland voted to remain in the E.U. Boris Johnson's negotiations – what next? A bridge between Belfast and Glasgow?

5. Bits and Pieces:

▪ An Irish Epitaph:

(Belfast Cemetery.)

Duffy: In loving memory of beloved Gerald: husband, father. Died 30/11/1989, aged 65 years: Told you I was sick!

▪ **Quote from James Joyce:** “Mistakes are the portals of discovery.”

▪ Why do bodhran players stand around outside a room? A. Because they never know when to come in!

▪ **Irish Heroines – lesser known: Mary Spring Rice** (1880 – 1924). An Anglo-Irish aristocrat who helped raise the funds to buy the weapons needed for the 1916 Rising, and then sailed out on the *Asgard* during the Howth gun-running of July 1914 to pick them up.

▪ **For those interested in learning a bit more about himself, search-engine “Saint Patrick Retold”, a scholarly work by Roy Flechner. It may challenge a few traditionally held beliefs, but keep the faith!!**

6. This month in history.

▪ At noon on Easter Monday 24th April 1916, the Easter Rising begins, the Irish Republic proclaimed.

7. ‘Tings ‘Oirish:

▪ **Who said this?** “When people ask me about the Irish character, I say look at the trees-maimed, stark, and misshapen, but ferociously tenacious.” (The answer at the end of this newsletter.)

▪ **This month’s Irish Blessing:**

May I see you grey and combing the hair of your children’s children.

▪ **Irish wisdom:** Better an old man’s darling than a young man’s slave.

▪ **Oscar Wilde (1854-1900) - monthly comment:** The world has grown suspicious of anything that looks like a happily married life.

▪ **W. B. Yeats’ poem:** “An Acre of Grass.”

Grant me an old man’s frenz;

Myself must I remake

Till I am Timon and Lear

Or that William Blake

Who beat upon the wall

Till Truth obeyed his call;

(Cont’d.)

This Month’s Limerick:

Poor Tolstoi was once put in jail

For forging the following tale,

“The troubles I’ve sent off

For writing to Checkov

While the Gogol was still in the mail.’

8. **Irish History: The Gathering Storm:** This revolutionary dream was far removed from the world of the Ulster Dissenters, who were also deeply attracted to the French Revolution, but for very different reasons. The Ulster Presbyterians had developed a sophisticated, self-contained culture which resented the petty restrictions placed upon them by the Dublin Anglican elite. They were perhaps the most politically literate group in Ireland and French doctrines had a natural appeal to them, familiar as they were with their own democratic structures of Church government.

(Cont’d.)

9. Words from President, Tomas.

Hello Folks,

Well for a social club the current situation with the Wuhan Flu is depressing but understandable. The committee are working with the Hotel Publican to lessen their financial burdens and of course our member nights and functions will have to be postponed until we can see each other again. We’re still working toward the new lease and club rooms, so who knows, we may have that ready and waiting for us. Speaking of the room, it will need a name, so put your thinking caps on and we will hold some sort of event to choose something appropriate.

Tomas

(Answer: Edna O’Brien – Irish novelist b 1930.)

