



IRISH SPIRIT

The St. Patrick Society Quad Cities, USA

Phone (563) 324-5000 • Visit our website: www.stpatsqc.com

Winter 2006

ST. PATRICK'S DAY WEEKEND 2006

MARCH 17-19

Before we know it, the annual **GRAND WEEKEND** will be here! Carrying on the "grand" SPS tradition of weekends past, plans are nearly finalized for another celebration of all things Irish: music, dance, merriment, and pageantry. We invite you to celebrate your Irish heritage throughout the weekend and show your support of the St. Patrick Society. Activities abound for everyone Irish and Irish at heart. Full details of all events can be found on the St. Patrick Society website: www.stpatsqc.com.

Gathering of the Clan Luncheon

As Irish luck would have it, this year's official Grand Weekend kick-off is on none other than St. Patrick's Day, **Friday, March 17th** from 11:00am to 1:30pm. Bring your clan to the Col Ballroom, 1012 W. 4th Street, Davenport to meet the Grand Marshal for Parade XXI, 2006 Irish Mother of the Year and the 2006 SPS scholarship winners. Enjoy musical entertainment by the Don't Be Brothers and your choice of a traditional corned beef or fish filet lunch served at noon for a cost of \$10. The Luncheon will also have a special new guest this year. Prepare to chuckle at the quips and comic revelry of this year's emcee, 2005 Grand Marshal, Tom Otting. To reserve your space, call Chairperson Kathy Douglas at 355-8214 or mail in the enclosed reservation form. Deadline for reservations and payments is March 13th. Forms can also be downloaded from the SPS website.

SPECIAL NOTE for Parking. A large number of parking spaces in the Burke Cleaners lot will be unavailable that day due to construction at the County Courthouse. Should alternative parking be needed, a free lot is available at 4th and Warren Streets.

SPS Scholarships

The St. Patrick Society will award two \$1,500 scholarships this year. These awards are available to any student (high school or college) who is related to a Society member in good standing. Applications are available through school guidance counselors or through download from the Society website. Applications must be received by March 1st. This is a great opportunity for any student wishing to further their collegiate studies. If your school does not have an application, contact Matt Wissing at 563-324-1705. The winners will be announced at the Clan Luncheon on March 17th.

Irish Mother of the Year Nominations

If you would like to honor this special lady in your life or another exceptional woman you feel is worthy of the title: Irish Mother of the Year, please send us a tribute of 150 well-chosen words or less, describing her general attributes and how she makes you feel. Nominees should be involved in family, church, and community, have a good sense of humor, and pride in their Irish heritage or their Irish spirit, if not Irish by birth. A panel of impartial judges will review all the letters. Deadline for all entries is March 1, 2006. Please send letters to:

St. Patrick Society
c/o Irish Mother of the Year
PO Box 4487
Davenport, IA 52808

The Mass & Grand Parade XXI



Saturday, March 18th.

The day begins at 10 am with Mass at St. Mary's Church in Rock Island. The annual Grand Parade, the only interstate St. Patrick's parade in the USA, begins at 11:30 am at the former Knights of Columbus building on the corner of 4th Avenue and 23rd Street, Rock Island. From there, the route follows the traditional path through the District of Rock Island, crossing over the Centennial Bridge and into downtown Davenport via Gaines, 3rd and Harrison Streets. This year, our Grand Marshals and Irish Mothers will have the luxury of riding in the Metrolink Trolley. Parade applications are available from Chairman John Scally, 309-788-2341. Application deadline is March 1st. Trophies will be awarded at the Col Bash. We encourage you to round up your family and enjoy some fresh air and exercise by walking in the parade. We hope to see many families competing for the

Best Irish Family Walking Group trophy again this year. The winning family will also be honored at 2006 Erin Feis on Sep. 17. Other trophies will be awarded in the following categories: **Best Irish Float, Best School Group, Best Commercial Entry, Most Unique Entry, International & Best Non-Irish, and Judges Choice.**



The Post-Parade Bash

Immediately following the parade, the annual bash will be held from 1 pm to 5pm at the Col Ballroom in Davenport. Admission is \$10, which also includes your 2006 SPS membership. Kids 15 and under are free. There will be more "South Side Irish" music from the Don't Be Brothers, plenty of tradition-

al, high-energy Irish step dancing from the Mullane Academy and delicious food, catered by Golick's Market. If you are interested in volunteering for the event, call the SPS phone number at 563-324-5000 or Pat Burke at 563-359-8016.

Irish Heritage Day



Now in its 11th year, IHD completes the weekend on **Sunday, March 19** from noon to 5pm. Once again, the event will be held at the Rogalski Center on the St. Ambrose University Campus located on the corner of Ripley and Lombard Streets. Traditional musicians, Stones in the Field, will entertain and accompany the Mullane Dancers. Cultural displays, children's activities, and refreshments will be available. Free will donations to fund this event are kindly accepted at the door. With rising event expenses, we encourage you to give generously, as well as purchase raffle tickets at the event. For more information, contact Culture Chairman, Jim Gilhooly, 563-323-6426.

ERIN FEIS SURVEY UPDATE



From Silia Smiley

We would like to thank all those members who participated in the recent survey to help our Erin Feis Committee and the Board evaluate this important function of the Society. As you know, Erin Feis originated as the funding source to pay the costs of hosting the Grand Parade each year.

By December 31, 2005, a total of 12.5% of the membership responded and we thank you for all your recommendations and thoughts. This information has been given to the Erin Feis Committee. They will present their final recommendations in February. To those who indicated an interest in working on a committee or being a candidate for the board,

you will be contacted by the chairmen of the committees very soon. Thank you again.

MULLANE DANCERS SHINE



Over Thanksgiving weekend, the Mullane Irish Dancers of the Quad Cities sent several 8-hand teams to the Oireachtas held in Columbus, OH. To attend this competition, the dancers had to qualify. Jan Foley says, "Some dancers from our school also danced with the Chicago teams and performed solo events. All did their very best and represented the Mullane Dance Academy quite nicely."

WHY WE CELEBRATE ST. PATRICK'S DAY



St. Patrick's Day, Ireland's greatest national holiday, marks the anniversary of the death of a missionary who became the patron saint of Ireland. With the exception of restaurants and pubs, almost all businesses in Ireland close on March 17th. St. Patrick's Day is traditionally a holy day - a time for spiritual renewal and prayers for missionaries worldwide. Many Irish attend mass before the serious celebrating begins.

In the United States and around the world, Saint Patrick's Day has come to be associated with everything Irish: anything green and gold, shamrocks and luck.



The Story of St. Patrick

The person who was to become St. Patrick, the patron saint of Ireland, was born in Wales about AD 385. His given name was Maewyn, and he almost didn't get the job of bishop of Ireland because he lacked the required scholarship. Far from being a saint, until he was 16, he considered himself a pagan. At that age, he was sold into slavery by a group of Irish marauders that raided his village. During his captivity, he became closer to God.

He escaped from slavery after six

years and went to Gaul where he studied in the monastery under St. Germain, bishop of Auxerre for a period of twelve years. During his training he became aware that his calling was to convert the pagans to Christianity.

Patrick was quite successful at winning converts. And this fact upset the Celtic Druids. Patrick was arrested several times, but escaped each time. He traveled throughout Ireland, establishing monasteries across the country. He also set up schools and churches, which would aid him in his conversion of the Irish country to Christianity.

His mission in Ireland lasted for thirty years. After that time, Patrick retired to County Down. He died on March 17 in AD 461. That day has been commemorated as St. Patrick's Day ever since.

Much Irish folklore surrounds St. Patrick's Day. Not much of it is actually substantiated.

Some of this lore includes the belief that Patrick raised people from the dead. He also is said to have given a sermon from a hilltop that drove all the snakes from Ireland. Of course, no snakes were ever native to Ireland, and some people think this is a metaphor for the conversion of the pagans.

One traditional icon of the day is the shamrock. And this stems from a more bona fide Irish tale that tells how Patrick used the three-leafed shamrock to explain the Trinity. He used it in his sermons to represent

how the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit could all exist as separate elements of the same entity. His followers adopted the custom of wearing a shamrock on his feast day.

Today, people celebrate the day with parades, wearing of the green, and drinking beer. One reason St. Patrick's Day might have become so popular is that it takes place just a few days before the first day of spring. One might say it has become the first green of spring.

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A bit 'o Parade history

Many cities throughout the world have St. Patrick Day's parades. New York held the first St. Patrick's Day parade in 1762. The idea soon caught on as a show of solidarity among the Irish-American community, who often encountered anti-Irish prejudice. In 1948, President Truman was the first American President to attend the New York St. Patrick's Day Parade.

While New Yorkers can claim the first St. Patrick's Day parade, Bostonians were actually the first to publicly celebrate March 17th in America in 1737.

IRISH SOUNDS AROUND TOWN



March 17th - The Don't Be Brothers perform at The Gardens, 13th & Washington Streets, Davenport, from 5pm to 8:00 pm.

Stephen's Green will appear at Pat McGuire's Irish American Grill at 6pm on these Tuesdays in 2006: **March 14, May 4, June 6, July 6, Aug. 1, Sept 5, Oct. 17, Nov. 21 and Dec. 19.** Reservations needed.

Ceili Club - Join the Club for Irish social dancing on Sunday, Feb. 5th from 2-5 pm at the Walcott Coliseum, 116 Bryant Street. A St. Patrick's dance to live music will also be held at the Walcott Coliseum on Saturday, March 18th, from 7:30 -10:30 pm. Contact Gerry or Pat at 563-386-7551 or log on to: www.netexpress.net/~gbade/ceili.htm

2006 MEMBERSHIPS

2005 Memberships have expired. Renew yours today by returning the form provided.

2006 St. Patrick Society Membership Application

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____

ZIP CODE _____

PHONE NUMBER _____

\$10.00 Yearly Renewal

Make checks payable to the St. Patrick Society.

HELP THE ST. PATRICK SOCIETY GROW! MAKE COPIES IF NEEDED.

Noel V. Ginnity Dublin's Traditional Irish Cabaret



A celebration
of everything
Irish in music,
song and dance.

TASTE OF IRELAND
CIRCA'21
DINNER PLAYHOUSE

2 Shows - March 9th
786-7733, Ext. 2