

August 2026

IRISH PRIDE STRONG in the OTTAWA AREA and the VALLEY

Whether it's sports, live entertainment or a social event, the Irish people show up to cheer, sing, dance and support the event. The August newsletter will cover a wide variety of events from Richmond ON to Killaloe ON. and a few stops in between.

I had the opportunity to visit several of these events and was amazed not only by the number of people involved but by the warm welcome and friendliness of participants and the audience. One kind soul not only lent me a chair but took the time to answer my questions. I definitely saw the warmth, quick wit, and deep-rooted hospitality for which the Irish people are noted.

If you get the chance to take in an Irish event don't miss the opportunity!

Lorraine O'Reilly



Wearing of the green in Killaloe ON.

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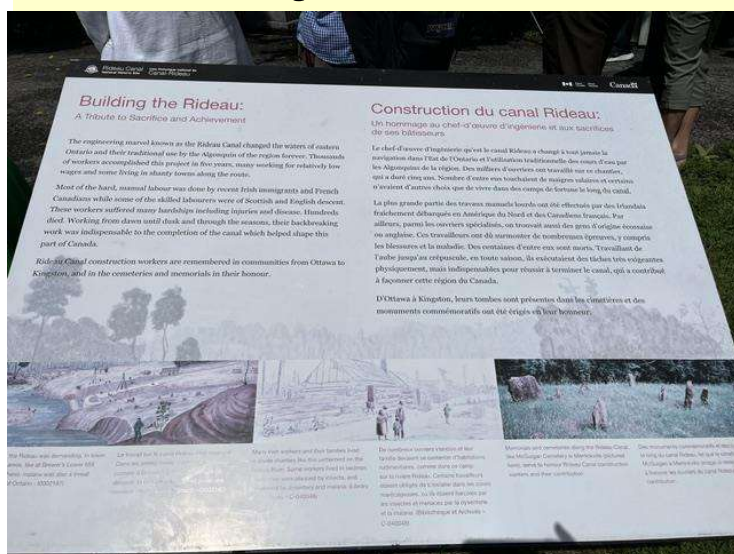
Still A Special Moment after 22 Years

On Monday, Aug. 3, the Annual Rideau Canal Celtic Cross Memorial Ceremony was held at Lock 2 on the Rideau Canal. The ceremony and Celtic Cross honour the numerous Irish laborers and their families who lost their lives constructing the Rideau Canal between 1826 and 1832.

This event is sponsored by the Ottawa & District Labour Council, the Bytown Museum, and the Irish Society of the National Capital Region. Though the location isn't easily accessible, many dedicated individuals attended the ceremony, including master of ceremonies (MC) David McFall, VP of the Irish Society of the National Capital Region as well as special guests, "Mother McGinty" and "Colonel By" who shared a few words. (pictured below)

A moment of silence was observed to honour those who died.

***May their souls rest in peace.
Ar dheis Dé go raibh a n-anamacha.***



Pictures submitted by Councillor Tim Tierney's office, Cathy Healy, and Craig Hamm



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Figure 1



Figure1 -4
Photos by C. Hamm



Figure 2



Figure 3



Figure 4

Engraved Symbols on the Celtic Cross

The granite Celtic cross has five engraved symbols:

- **Irish Harp:** Positioned in the center, it represents Irish heritage and the many Irish laborers who worked on the project.
- **Pick and Shovel:** At the top, symbolizes the manual digging tools used during construction.
- **Wheelbarrow:** At the bottom, represents the equipment used to transport earth and materials.
- **Explosion:** On the left, symbolizes the use of dangerous explosives to blast through rock.
- **Mosquito:** On the right, represents the ever-present pests and the toll of malaria and other diseases that killed many workers and their families.

A special **"THANK YOU"** to the following for making this ceremony so memorable:

- Jennie Quin, First Secretary, Embassy of Ireland;
- Tim Tierney, Riley Brocklington and Theresa Kavanagh, Ottawa city councillors;
- Father Stephen from St Patick Basilica;
- Courtney Gehling, Executive Director, Musée Bytown Museum;
- Seán McKenny, President of the Ottawa & District Labour Council;
- Tom O'Neill, president of the Irish Society NCR;
- David McFall, VP of the Irish Society NCR as MC;
- Bethany Basillion, piper
- Knights of Columbus as flag bearers,
- Susanna Doherty for singing the Canadian and Irish national anthems,
- Mother McGinty (Nora Pat Marshall).
- Colonel By
- Bryan Daly organizer of this great ceremony
- Irish Society for the lovely cake. *Lorraine O'Reilly*

City Councillors (l-r) Riley Brocklington, Tim Tierney and Theresa Kavanagh



Bethany Basillion





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Cake anyone?



Courtney Gehling



MC- David McFall



Seán McKenny



Susanna Doherty



Fr. Gerard Monaghan



Tom O'Neill

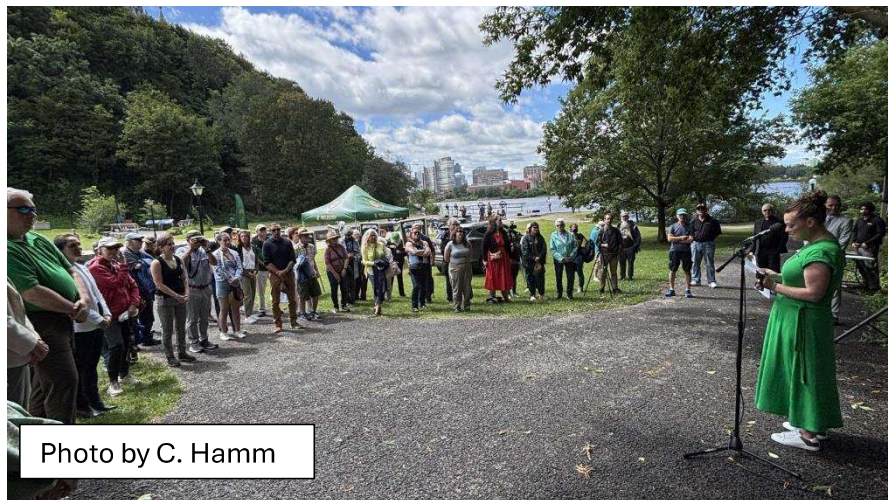


Photo by C. Hamm



We need to keep the memories going!





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An Entertaining Day at the Ambassador Jim Kelly Memorial Tournament

The Ambassador Jim Kelly Memorial Tournament, held on Aug. 8 at the Twin Elm Rugby Club in Richmond, was both exciting and entertaining. The event was hosted in collaboration by the Irish Communities of Ottawa, Éire Óg Ottawa Hurling Club, and Ottawa Gaels GAA. The day was filled with hurling games, Irish dancing, Gaelic football and live music.

Great job to everyone involved in organizing and running this wonderful event. People were friendly and didn't mind answering this newbie's questions about the games. A special thank you to Anne Martin, Jim Kelly's wife for her kind words of welcome and for presenting the trophy.

Congrats to the Montreal Shamrocks for winning the cup!

This is definitely on my list of events to attend new year!

Lorraine O'Reilly





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Dark Clouds didn't stop the dedicated players and fans!



Gaelic Football, a great game to play and watch.



Montreal Shamrock hurlers won the Jim Kelly memorial Cup.



Hurling “*iomanaíocht*” is a unique Irish sport!



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Camogie and Hurling

Camogie (ka-moe-gi) is an Irish team sport played by women on grass with a wooden stick (hurley) and a small ball called a sliotar (sli-ter). Camogie is played by 100,000 women in Ireland and worldwide, largely among Irish communities.

The name of the sport, camogie, was derived from the stick used in the game. From its inception, men played hurling using a curved stick called a camán in Irish. Women in the early camogie games used a shorter stick described by the diminutive form camóg. Today, both men and women use the same wooden stick known as a hurley although the length of the stick varies depending on the player's height.

Éire Óg Ottawa Hurling Club was founded in 2012 with the goal of bringing the great game of hurling to the National Capital Region.

In the past two years, Ottawa clubs have seen an increase in the numbers of Canadian born players who have taken to the game.

Barbara Ann Vocisano



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ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Sept 16, 2026

St. Patrick Basilica

Scavi

220 Kent St, Ottawa

7 p.m.

Interested in becoming a Board member?

Send your name to

secretary@irishsocietyncr.com



***Come on, join the team and help spread
some Irish Cheer across Ottawa and
throughout the Valley.***



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HALFWAY TO ST. PATRICK'S DAY PARTY

The Official Irish Festive Weekend Kickoff

THURSDAY, SEPT 17 | 5:00 PM – 9:00 PM

The Barley Mow — 1541 Merivale Rd, Nepean

LIVE IRISH MUSIC FEATURING
GAIL GAVAN, DAVE RYAN & SEAMUS COSTELLO



**CRAFT PINTS,
SIGNATURE SHAMROCK COCKTAILS,
& PUB FOOD SPECIALS
(BEST IRISH STEW IN THE CITY)**



Come for the music, food, and friendship.

..... 50/50 DRAW AND MEMBERSHIP APPLICATIONS

\$5 COVER

WITH PROCEEDS
GOING TO THE



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Of the National Capital Region





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HALFWAY TO ST. PATRICK'S DAY 2027

4 DAY PARTY!

SEPTEMBER 17TH, 18TH, 19TH & 20TH

4 DAYS OF IRISH MUSIC, PINTS & CRAIC
ACROSS OTTAWA!

IRISH SOCIETY OF THE
NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION



*Celebrating
Irish Heritage in Ottawa*



**THURSDAY
SEPT 17TH**



THE BARLEY MOW

1541 Merivale Rd,
Nepean

- Craft Pints & Pub Food Specials
- Live Music –
**GAIL GAVAN &
DAVE RYAN
SEAMUS COSTELLO**
\$5 COVERAGE CHARGE

**FRIDAY
SEPT 18TH**



D'ARCY MCGEE'S IRISH PUB

44 Sparks Street,
Downtown Ottawa

- Live Music
**HADRIAN'S WALL
5PM – 8PM**
\$5 GREEN TEA SHOTS
- Traditional Irish Fish & Chips & Live Tunes
NO COVER CHARGE

**SATURDAY
SEPT 19TH**



HEART & CROWN

67 Clarence Street,
ByWard Market

- Afternoon Gathering in the Irish Village
- Patio Vibes & Live Acoustic Sets
- Sue Fay Healy Irish Dancers
**TIM LOTEN DUO
PERFORMING!**
NO COVER CHARGE

**SUNDAY
SEPT 20TH**



HEART & CROWN

67 Clarence Street,
ByWard Market

- Sunday Afternoon Funday
- Family Friendly
- Live Traditional Irish Music
**MY DRUTHERS
FROM NEW ENGLAND
PERFORMING!**
NO COVER CHARGE

**ONE WEEKEND. FOUR GREAT PUBS.
ENDLESS CELTIC PRIDE!**

• COVER CHARGE MAY APPLY AT SOME LOCATIONS •

VISIT IRISHSOCIETYNCR.COM FOR DETAILS



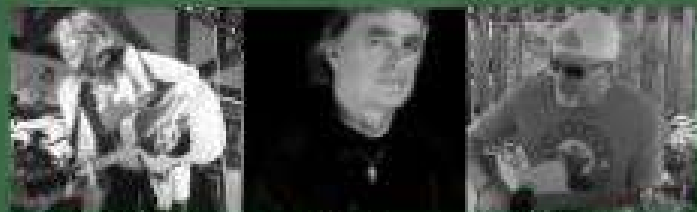


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The BARLEY MOW



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Gail Gavan

**Seamus
Costello**

Dave Ryan

**JOIN in on the FUN as
WE CELEBRATE
HALFWAY to
ST. PATRICK'S DAY**

The BARLEY MOW



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The Tim Loten Duo

Darcy McGee's



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Hadrian's Wall

HALFWAY TO ST. PATRICK'S DAY 2027
4 DAYS. 4 PUBS. ONE BIG CELEBRATION!

DAY 2 FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 18TH

The Irish Society of the National Capital Region

D'Arcy McGee's restaurant-pub
44 SPARKS ST, OTTAWA

Live Music by **CELTIC BAND HADRIAN'S WALL**
5PM - 8PM

GREAT IRISH MUSIC • GREAT FOOD COLD PINTS • IRISH CHEER!

SPECIALTY DRINK
\$5 GREEN TEA SHOTS

JOIN US FOR A NIGHT OF CRAIC!
SEPTEMBER 17TH TO 20TH

The BARLEY MOW



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My Druthers

Stay Informed

website:

<https://www.irishsocietyncr.com>

Instagram:

<https://www.instagram.com/ottawairishsocietyncr/?hl=en>



IRISH SETTLEMENTS in the OTTAWA VALLEY and AREA

Stop 3 Pembroke—The Heart of the Ottawa Valley

The City of Pembroke sits at the confluence of the Ottawa and Muskrat rivers. As with other settlements along the Ottawa River, Irish immigrants arrived and settled throughout the 19th century attracted by the possibility of work in the timber industry and, more importantly, land grants. The Irish left an imprint on local culture, traditions and genealogy and their spirit is inseparable from the Ottawa Valley's history.

During the 1820s, Pembroke grew and thrived as a headquarters for the timber trade and river-driving where logs were routed toward Ottawa's mills. Notable among Pembroke's early settlers and enterprisers was Peter White. A veteran of the Royal Navy, in 1828 White came to the area drawn by the expanding lumbering operations. White is said to have cut of the first tree in May of that year, thus beginning his timber operations. He hired the necessary workers and soon a blacksmith shop, sleigh maker, shoemaker, harness maker and mechanics were providing him with the hardware necessary to establish a thriving lumbering business. And many of those engaged by White were of Irish heritage.

From the mid-1830s on, the area evolved from a lumber hub into a regional center. Campbelltown, established in 1836 at the mouth of the Muskrat River, was amalgamated with Miramichi (later called Moffat, then Sydenham) on the other side, and renamed Pembroke. So, by 1858, Pembroke had village status. Then, in 1861, it was named the seat of Renfrew County, thereby solidifying its judicial and administrative roles. And 1877 saw Pembroke's incorporation as a town, which it remained until 1971 when it was granted city status.

Pembroke was also an early adopter of technology, including experiments on electric telephones in 1878 and commercial electric lighting in 1884. In fact, in the latter year, Pembroke became the first Canadian community to use commercial streetlights for high-output illumination powered by hydroelectricity.

Pembroke offers outdoor adventures and community celebrations throughout the four seasons. In warmer months, you can stroll along the scenic boardwalk at Waterfront Park or take in some musical entertainment at the Riverwalk Amphitheatre. There's also the Upper Ottawa Valley Heritage Centre for exploring an historic pioneer village with artifacts from the area's early Indigenous settlement and logging heyday. Or visit Riverside Park, a family-centred recreation area with a public beach, splash pads, sports fields and Ontario's tallest hand-carved totem pole.

Fall is the ideal time to view the vibrant red, bronze and orange foliage at the nearby Barron Canyon Trail in Algonquin Park, while winter brings the cold and snow – the ideal weather for snowshoeing, ice fishing, and snowmobiling on regional trail systems. And throughout the year, you can view downtown Pembroke's outdoor gallery of over 30 large-scale murals depicting the city's lumber, pioneer and cultural history.

Pembroke is a ninety-minute drive from Ottawa. So, whether you stay a day or more, no matter the season, you'll be able to find some activity to enjoy.

In an upcoming edition of the *Newsletter*, we'll visit Cobden, Ontario. Although not directly on the Ottawa River, but still related, Cobden shares historical roots with the region's Irish diaspora.

The information in this article was adapted from the following websites:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pembroke,_Ontario

https://localwiki.org/pembroke/IN_THE_BEGINNING

<https://www.pembroke.ca>;

https://transcanadahighway.com/ontario/pembroke/#google_vignette;

<https://tiaontario.ca/listing/city-of-pembroke/6644fc3ac57c3fbec130f5cf>

<https://media-003-ca.cdn.govstack.com/pembroke-ca/media/ajjctcnr/pembroke-heritage-murals-map.pdf>;

<https://www.bestwesternpembroke.com/area-attractions/>

<https://www.pembroke.ca/recreation-and-culture/visit-pembroke/festivals-and-events>



By Mary Catharine Carroll