



SEPTEMBER 2026

THE IRISH SOCIETY NCR HOLDS 1ST HALFWAY TO ST. PATRICK'S DAY EVENTS



The Halfway to St. Patrick's Day event spanned four days and included three pubs, from Merivale Rd. to Sparks St. to the Irish Village.

It kicked off at the **Barley Mow** on Merivale Rd on Sept 17. Manager Jennifer Dagenais Baldwin and staff did an amazing job not only decorating the pub but got into the spirit by donning different shades of green for the occasion. They even added special food items and drinks to the menu. I heard a second pot of stew had to be put on the stove!

Gail Gavan, Dave Ryan and Seamus Costello had the audience singing along and dancing to their lively music and did a grand job at getting audience participation!

Darcy McGee's Pub on Sparks St. held the Halfway to St. Patrick's Day Event on Sept. 18th. Hadrian's Wall kept the toes tapping with their energetic blend of Celtic and Canadian Folk music, incorporating traditional Celtic instruments. Fish and chips was the hit from the menu. Thanks to Lauren Drury and staff for opening your pub to the event.



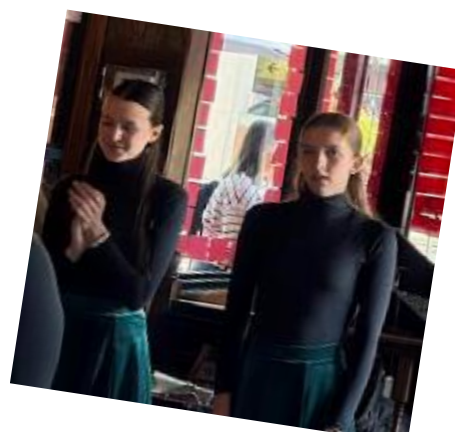
The weather cooperated on Saturday for an afternoon gathering in the Irish Village at the **Heart & Crown**. Here we found an East Coast Kitchen Party, with music by the Tim Loten Duo and high steps from the Sue Fay Healy Irish Dancers. Thanks Shauna Bradley and staff.

The four days were BRILLIANT! A big thank you (Go raibh maith agat!) to the three pub staffs,

the entertainment, the organizers of the individual events, the volunteers who sold 50/50 tickets and memberships. A big thank you as well, to all who came out to support the Irish Society and raise funds for the 2027 parade. "CHEERS FOLKS!"



Lorraine O'Reilly



A GRAND TIME WAS
HAD BY ALL WHO
ATTENDED THE
'HALFWAY TO
ST, PATRICK'S DAY
CELEBRATIONS!





Irish Society Donates Flag to St. Patrick Basilica

Today we are here to unveil the flag flown in Ottawa on March 7th, 2026, to mark the 39th St. Patrick's Parade as well as the Bicentennial of Ottawa (Bytown) and the start of the construction of the Rideau Canal.

Many Irish workers died during the construction and never made it home, so incorporating the 32 County Flag Float in this year's parade was a small dedication to them as we marched down Wellington Street and over the Canal.



What made this so important was who carried these flags: the students at St. Patrick's High School who do not have much, if any, Irish roots but are new Canadians proud to call Ottawa home.

The Irish Society of the National Capital Region wanted to present this flag as a thank you to St. Patrick's Basilica and Fr. Stephen for allowing us to honor Thomas D'Arcy McGee by planting a tree on Basilica grounds and blessing the largest Irish Walking Flag in Canada.

When you walk into the Basilica and pass by this mounted flag,

we want people to stop and pause to

recognize the contribution of the Irish to this city and country.

This event is solely for society membership, and we will be doing a more formal event later, which you will be invited to as well.

(T. O'Neill's speech.)





Irish Society
Of The National Capital Region
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AGM HELD SEPTEMBER 16

Lorraine O'Reilly

- ✿ There were no elections held as there were no new candidates who stepped forward to be on the Board.
- ✿ The Irish Society NCR has applied for and received a grant to finance putting a sound equipment in the Kildare room of St. Brigid's Centre for the Arts. This equipment may be used by other Irish communities in Ottawa. T. O'Neill will attend a meeting on Thursday to discuss cost of the required equipment. Fundraising will need to be done to cover some of the cost. This could possibly be a GO-Fund-Me page
- ✿ **2026 St. Patrick's Day Parade – March 7th, 2026**
There were **no requests** for police assistance or requests for First Aid during the parade.
Several sweatshirts need to be replaced.
- ✿ **2027 St. Patrick's Day Parade - March 6th, 2027**
 - **Jeff Cavanagh** – has been selected as the Grand Marshal for 2027 Parade
 - Have approached Giant Tiger and Rona to participate in the parade, sponsoring the train and lumberjack float, respectively.
 - Would like to see more bands and balloon costumes
 - Security remains a big cost item for a parade
 - The route for 2027 will remain the same
- ✿ Continue to **update and refresh the ISNCR Website**, and Instagram. Also looking at adding TikTok
- ✿ The board is actively working on **amending the constitution** to streamline board size and improve operational efficiency. Several articles need to be updated to reflect today's times and environment.
Members will be informed well in advance of the meeting.
 - Past president should be a resource not a voting member
 - Several lawyers are looking at the first draft
 - The number of sitting directors and the number of voting directors
- ✿ The Irish Society NCR has introduced a new event this year "Halfway to St. Patrick's Day". It is a 4-day event at 3 different pubs. Each event will have Irish music
- ✿ The Irish Society NCR in Partnership with Dunrobin Distillery is in the final process of designing labels and tags for the Irish- Canadian Blend of Whisky they plan to sell this year at \$100 a bottle for members. Bottles are to be pre-ordered, and arrangements are being made for several pickup locations.
- ✿ T. O'Neill would like to see the ISNCR involved in the beautification and clean-up of McDonald Garden Park. It was the original cemetery of Ottawa.
- ✿ Members of ISNCR are asked to let the board know if they are not receiving the monthly newsletter at the end of the month
- ✿ The Irish Society donates to a number of worthy causes that promote Irish arts and culture in the National Capital Region. T. O'Neill recognized that these donations are really community investments and should be recognized as such.
- ✿ The Irish Society is currently developing specific criteria to follow as we make decisions with respect to community investments, ensuring they align with the Irish Society's mission and values.
- ✿ Continuing to pursue **charitable non-profit status**
- ✿ We continue to apply for grants
- ✿ Tom O'Neill acknowledged the hard work and dedication Bryan Daly and Clare O'Connell Noon have done over the years for the ISNCR. L. O'Reilly recognized the contributions of B. Elliott as well.



AGM Continued:

Several requests were put forth by the members at large:

- Could we work closely with St. Patrick's Home?
- Is it possible to get a hard copy of the newsletter to members who do not have the internet?
- Is there any way the carpentry program at Algonquin College can help with the parade or a float from ISNCR?

A motion was put forth by Austin Comerton and seconded by Phil Donnelly

That all references related to March 17th in communications from the ISNCR be stated as St. Patrick and not altered in any way (Paddy, Pat etc.)

Motion passed.

The Board will do their best.

2027 ISNCR BOARD	
President - Tom ONeill	Director at Large - Jim Irving
Vice President – David McFall	Director at Large – Damien Curley
Treasurer- Eoin Ruane	Director at Large – Brittany Lauzon
Secretary - Lorraine O'Reilly	Director at Large - David Bahl
Membership - Cathy Healy	Director at Large - Deirbhile McDermott
Past President – Sean Kealey	Director at Large - Patrick Dion



IRISH SOCIETY NCR SOUND SYSTEM FUNDRAISER

*Help us purchase a new sound system for
Irish Society events, concerts, dances, parades
and community celebrations.*



HELP US REACH OUR GOAL OF **\$6,000.00**

*Support Irish music Irish culture
Irish community*

IRISH SOCIETY ANNOUNCEMENT

Earlier this year, the Irish Society of the National Capital Region applied for a City of Ottawa Cultural facilities funding grant for a new sound system in the Kildare Room in the Saint Brigid's Centre for the Arts. Our application was successful and we have been awarded a grant of \$10,000.00.

Over the next few weeks, the Irish Society will start fundraising to raise the \$6,000 remaining balance to pay for the state-of-the-art sound systems. Irish cultural groups will benefit directly from the project since the new sound system will be free to all non-profit groups that use the center.

We will be launching a GoFundMe page shortly and are planning other fundraising activities to reach our goal over the next few months. Keep your eyes open for these upcoming events.



Irish Society

Of The National Capital Region
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*When Irish eyes are smilin'
And Irish smiles are big,
When Irish hearts are hopeful
And the piper plays a jig,
When Irish stew is bubblin'
And the soda bread is hot,
And Irish tea is steepin'
In a little Irish pot...*

*When the room is warm with laughter
And the songs are bright and bold,
And there's poetry and magic
In the stories that are told...*

*Isn't it a blessing? Isn't it just grand
To know a little part of you belongs to Ireland?*

A Little Gathering of Thoughts on All Things Celtic & Irish

COMING OCTOBER 2026

To commemorate Ottawa 200, that is the 200th anniversary of the founding of Bytown, the Irish Society of the National Capital Region, in partnership with Dunrobin Distilleries, has created a limited-edition Bicentennial Whisky to mark this milestone.

Imported Irish whiskey from County Louth, the birthplace of Thomas D'Arcy McGee, is being blended with Canadian whiskey from Dunrobin Distilleries to make a unique Irish-Canadian whisky.

Proceeds from this commemorative whisky will go towards the 2027 St. Patrick's Parade. Members will have the opportunity to purchase the commemorative bottle before it is made available to the general public.

Members -\$100 per bottle

Non-members \$125 per bottle

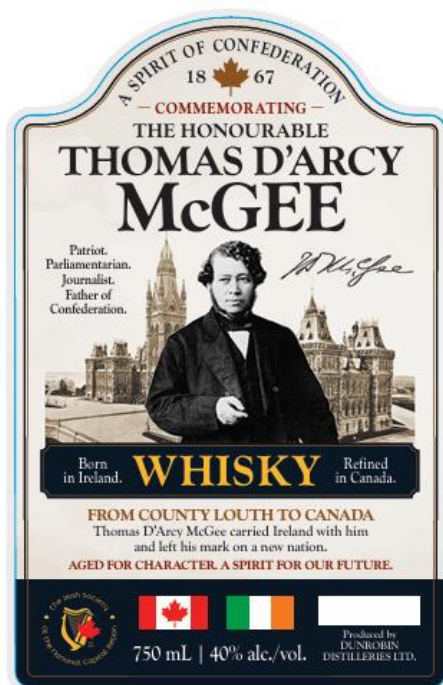


Did you know?

Blue eyes are actually the most common eye color in Ireland, appearing in over half of the population.

Green and hazel eyes appear at a much higher rate in Ireland than in most other parts of the world

When "Irish eyes are smiling," refers to a person's genuine happiness, warmth, and contentment, which lights up their entire face—particularly their eyes.





Irish Recognition in the Ottawa Sports Hall of Fame

A Legend was Made

The Ottawa Sports Hall of Fame (OSHF) opened on April 25, 1968, to recognize and celebrate the outstanding achievements in the history of local sports.

In addition to commemorative plaques honouring nearly 300 individuals, the OSHF continues to gather and display artifacts, photos, and memorabilia honouring our athletic heritage. There are several categories for recognition in the OSHF: athlete, builder, team and legacy.

In 2009, Alan 'Al' Charron was inducted into the Ottawa Sports Hall of Fame as an athlete for his outstanding and successful career in rugby. From 1986 – 1996, Charron played for the local Ottawa Irish team and lead them to seven league titles, two McCormick Cup titles and eight Ontario league titles.

Charron was part of the Ontario Provincial Men's Rugby Team from 1987 until 1996, which won two Canadian titles. He went on the play in 76 official international games with the National Men's Rugby team between 1990 and 2003. Creating memorable moments while defeating Argentina, Scotland, England, Wales and France. He served as team captain and was voted Canadian



Player of the year in 2001 and 2003. Charron went on to play in four Rugby World Cups.

He was inducted into the World Rugby Hall of Fame on Nov. 10, 2017.

Today, Charron remains active in the Ottawa sports community, as a leadership speaker, rugby ambassador and community advocate.

Throughout his career he was described a having 'relentless commitment' and had a reputation for giving his absolute best performance every single time.

Sláinte d'fhíorlaoch mór!

Cheers to a great legend!

Sources; <https://ottawasporhall.ca/about/>
<https://www.facebook.com/greg.pollock.1671/posts/great-article-on-al-charron-a-must-read/10165986414918268/>

Picture Greg Pollock's Post Facebook

Recent pic <https://kickasscanadians.ca/charron-al/>

Fun Facts

The Ottawa Catholic School Board is the only school board outside of Ireland to officially include Gaelic Football in its Grade 7 and 8 Physical Education curriculum.

The Ottawa Gaels Women's Gaelic Football team is an absolute powerhouse, holding the official record for the most league wins in their division.

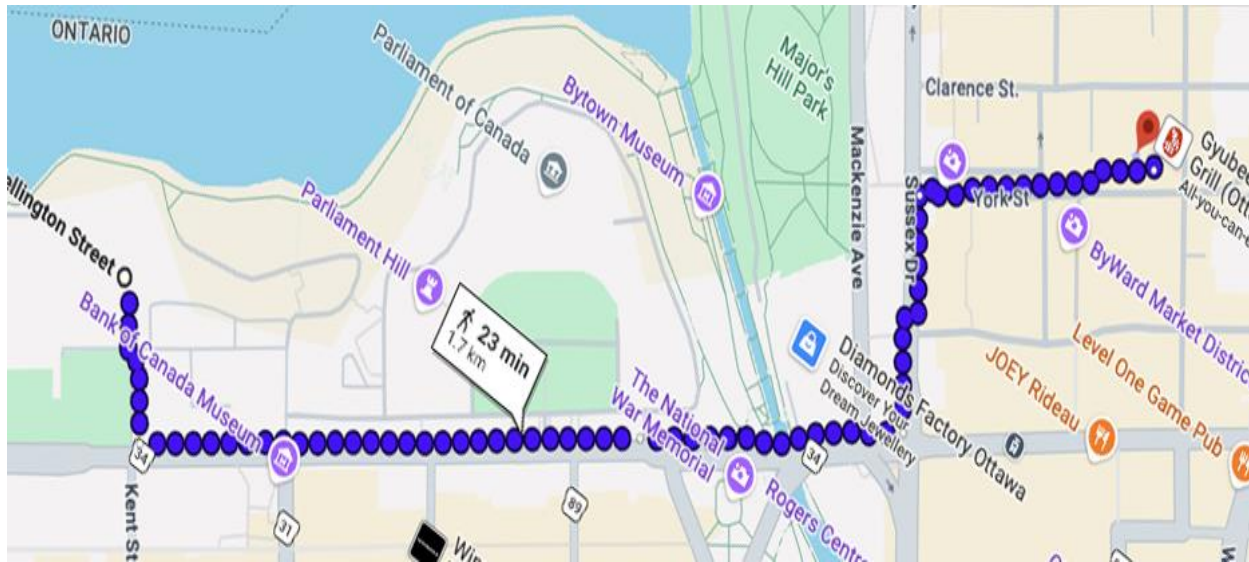
Lorraine O'Reilly





Ottawa's 40th St. Patrick's Parade

Saturday March 6th, 2027, 12 NOON



Registration for Floats is now open on our website

Irishsocietyncr.com

Once again, no entrance fee for 2027, however due to limited space applicants will be evaluated and screened.





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Towns of Ireland

Towns at Home

It doesn't take longer than an Irish mile to figure out we Irish like to name cities and towns in newfound places after the cities and towns in Ireland. Perhaps this custom is a way of claiming a new land as one's own, using the name of the town back in Ireland. I am sure the familiarity can comfort a new settler who longs for home.

Blackpool in Ireland was named by the British settlers that took over that area; soon after it became Dublin. Dublin is a combination of the two words that make up Blackpool: dubh meaning black

and linn meaning pool. Dublin, in Irish is referred to as Baile na cliath which loosely translates to "the city where the water goes over the rocks".

There are several towns and cities in Ontario that bear the same name as those back home in Ireland, including Enniskillen, Tyrone, Keady, Coleraine, Newry, Omagh and Donegal. Let's take a tour of some others in Ontario. Meet Dublin, Killaloe, Cavan Monaghan, and Creemore, ONTARIO!!!

First stop is Dublin, situated in Perth County just outside Ottawa. It was originally called Karenbrook; in honour of Irish immigrants, it was re-named Dublin in 1878.

Moving towards Barry's Bay you will find Killaloe. Killaloe is in Renfrew County and is famous for its lumber industry and wild turkey season. Killaloe was known for its weather station as it was the only station between Ottawa and North Bay. The weather station became famous across Canada between 1938 and 1972 as it was a designated site for aircraft communication.

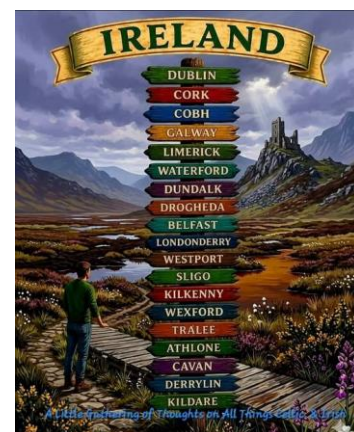
Next, we have Cavan Monaghan named after two counties in Ireland. Minutes from the Ganaraska Forest, the township has a rich heritage, local artists and plenty of farmland.



Finally, our last stop is Creemore, Ontario. Creemore is a former village, now part of Clearview Township, located in Simcoe County. It lies approximately 130 km north of Toronto, 40 minutes west of Barrie, and 20 minutes south of Collingwood and Georgian Bay. Creemore is the home of North America's smallest jail.

So, there you have it my friends; four stops in your Ontario tour that will remind you of Ireland!

by **Barbara Ann Vocisano**





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THE IRISH WEDDING

My niece was married this past month and in the midst of all the preparations I wondered about Irish weddings and what might be special about them. I found the following traditions and have even seen some of them.

Unique Traditions and Symbols of an Irish Wedding

Handfasting ("Tying the Knot"): An ancient Celtic ritual in which cords, ribbons, or a woven wool belt (*crios*) are wrapped around the couple's hands during vows to physically represent their union, and commitment. It offers a beautiful blend of tradition and individuality and is one of the oldest wedding traditions, thought to be the origin of the phrase *"tying the knot."*

Another niece did this at her wedding and it was impressive to watch as the celebrant explained its significance.



The Claddagh Ring: A traditional ring featuring two hands holding a heart with a crown, representing love, loyalty, and friendship.

The claddagh ring has been entwined in many aspects of the wedding:

- Used as a charm and tied into the bride's bouquet
- Stitched the Claddagh symbol onto a ring pillow,
- Engraved it on the groom's cufflinks,
- Used it on the wedding cake, and even
- Imprint it on cocktail napkins, invitations, programs, place cards, thank you notes, toasting glasses, and aisle runners.



There is even a saying associated with the Claddagh ring: "With my hands, I'll hold your heart and crown it with my love."

Lucky Blue: Instead of green, traditional Irish brides often wore blue as a lucky color that signified purity. It also ties back to Irish history when Ireland's flag was blue with a gold Celtic harp.

Blue accents are added to the wedding decor, bouquet, or other aspects of the wedding

In Ireland, a bride can wear a blue dress due to its cultural significance. Could this be the beginning of the tradition of the bride wearing, 'something blue'?

Horseshoes: Brides sometimes carry a lucky horseshoe (often porcelain or silver) for good fortune and protection. In Ireland, a horseshoe is considered a symbol of good luck and is presented to the bride on her wedding day to ward off evil spirits. The groom later hangs it in their home for protection. This Irish custom is still practised today, and you'll find that many households have

