



St. PATRICK'S SOCIETY OF HONG KONG LIMITED

G. P. O. BOX 615 HONG KONG

June 2002

Dia Dhaoibh, A Chairde,

March 2002 seems a long time ago but the Festival Events for St. Patrick were a resounding success – according to the ‘feedback’ from all quarters!

The General Committee held a Welcoming Reception in the beautiful home of Harry O'Neill, for special guests including the members of the Celtic Fusion, Past-Presidents of the Society. The “Spirit of Ireland’ Guest Artist, Richard Harvey and the Concert organizer Leanne Nicholls also joined us. The arrangements for Tony Brennan, Christy Sheridan, Mike Smith and Christy’s son Stephen to join us for the Ball, were smoothly co-ordinated on a voluntary basis by Society members Liz Hurly in Ireland and our own Carol Bloomfield here in Hong Kong.

More than 60 People attended the Mass in honour of St. Patrick at St. Joseph’s Church on the Saturday morning, with musical contributions by Tony Brennan of Celtic Fusion, supported by the Society’s members’ vocal –“choir” followed by Irish coffee and delicious home-baked Irish cakes arranged by ladies of St. Patrick including Maire Candy, Kath Malone and Susan Kennelly, together with other unsung heroines, the Filipina volunteers.

Many more joined the solemn Ceremony at the Cenotaph, including the Minister of Defence of the Republic of Ireland, Michael Smith, the Ambassador in Beijing, Declan Connolly, and officers of the Irish army and navy, their wives and friends. Unfortunately Jack Edwards of the British Legion, that stalwart of the ex-servicemen and women, was too ill to join us this year but Mr. Willie Mok represented the Hong Kong Ex-Servicemen’s Association. Following the “Last Post” from the Police Buglers and the Society’s official wreath laying ceremony, an unofficial wreath was quietly and anonymously placed on behalf of the Royal Naval Association (Cork branch).

The Cenotaph Ceremony was followed by a Reception at the Hong Kong Club for all those attending the ceremony, thanks to Darach Haughey.

The Children's Party, held at 12:30p.m. at the Grand Hyatt, was great fun. Attended by over 50 children, with Irish poems and Irish dancing by the children, lots of games and music from the Celtic Fusion, a 'fun time' was enjoyed by the children and their parents. Thanks to Catherine O'Brien, Clare Fogarty, Anne Noonan, Therese Beresford and others, most especially the children.

An older group enjoyed games on the pitch at Happy Valley. To quote from our Vice-President, Ronan Delaney's review of the match between the 8 HKGAA players and the Irish Naval Service LE Niamh Select, the "HGAA finely homed team immediately got off to a good start with a couple of early goals and well taken points, but the Navy fought back....". The final score was HKGAA 10-9 (39 points) to the Navy's 3-3 (12 points). With a swapping of shirts and flags, Delaney's Wanchai and Dublin Jacks in SOHO helped both sides to 'drown the shamrock'.



Saturday 16th March, ended with the Ball, held at the Grand Hyatt, Wanchai for the first time. The Ball was a 'sell-out' and commiserations to those who were unsuccessful, or neglectful, in getting tickets for the 'Event of the Season'.

The St. Patrick's Society diner and dance in honour of St. Patrick is always a 'hit', and nothing could go wrong. Celtic Fusion could have played all night, the speeches could have been shorter, the drink could have gone on all night!! Officially we finished at 3:00 a.m. but the hotel generously allowed a great number to continue for some hours. Your committee worked hard, before and on the night, to make sure that all was as well organized as possible and that the evening could be as informal and as enjoyable as possible. Special thanks to Clare Fogarty, Mary Taylor, our M.C. on the night Ian Candy, to Darach Haughey, and to Ross Cooper at the Grand Hyatt. A hearty thanks to Guinness and Delaney's, Wanchai for their support.

Photographs of the Ball may still be available from Peter Wong, Cambridge Studio, tel : 2522 3314.

Sunday saw many Irish families visiting the L.E. Niamh's Open Day. This Irish coastal vessel brought a 'touch of home' and fresh shamrock. The crew also enjoyed Hong Kong Irish hospitality and Wanchai!! The 100 plus contingent of the Royal

College of Surgeons of Ireland held a dinner at the Aberdeen Marina Club, at which Catherine O'Brien's Irish Dancers performed.

Monday night was a night of music, with the City Chamber Orchestra's foot-tapping 'Spirit of Ireland' at the City Hall, with Ian Candy as M.C., followed by the Celtic Fusion in a crowded Delaney's, Wanchai.

Thanks to Barry Griffin for arranging the Society's successful annual Curry Night in May at the Police Headquarters, Senior Police Officers' Mess. The night was well attended, and all had in a great view, across the bar, of the Harbour.



The Society arranged for a block booking, which became a series of block bookings, for over 100 members and their friends for the Chieftains 'sold out' concert at the City Hall on the 8th June. Forty years of the Chieftains music to celebrate the City Hall's 40th Anniversary!!

If you would like to have a copy of the Chieftains latest (their 39th) Album, 'The Wide World Over', you can purchase this at the HK Records at the best offer price of HK\$100 by showing your Membership Card. This offer is valid till the end of July!!

Annual Bloomsday Dinner at the Hong Kong Club on Friday 28th June. The theme "Sex and the City" may ring a bell. This evening is organized by Ian Candy, with Peter Kennedy directing.



Dress is Black Tie for men. Tickets, a mere HK\$700, for dinner and wine and excellent performance – book before the 26th June latest. First come, fist served.

'On the house' in July, with Membership Card, for member's first drink at P.J. Murphy's, Nathan Road, T.S.T. Standard drinks, including Murphy's and Guinness. This first drink includes any number of visits, but take your identification and St. Patrick's card. Thanks to Daniel Riley at PJ's. You can also get 10% discount at any of the Eclipse outlets, specifically at PJ's, with your St. Patrick's Card.

We are planning an 'Oyster Evening' at PJ's, in October possibly – check your diary.

Walk on the Wild Side – Wicklow Challenge – 3 days / 2 nights, one serious challenge – 13-15 September along a 77+K. Route through the Wicklow Mountains. What better way to prepare for a return to Hong Kong after the hot Irish summer??



For details (www.compaq.ie/wicklowchallenge).

Hike in Hong Kong is another of their challenges, bringing people from Ireland on a sponsored walk to raise funds for charity – ‘DEBRA IRELAND’.

Irish Nationality and Citizenship Act 2001

You may be aware of the tightening of laws of citizenship in respect of non-Irish spouses of Irish citizens. Basically you should register your marriage, or make a post-nuptial declaration, at an Irish Embassy or Consulate before the 30th November 2002. After that date a certificate of nationalization will be required and the conditions for this may include a period of residency. You have been warned – but for further details contact the Consulate of Ireland in Hong Kong at (852) 2527 4897 – Honorary Consul is Dr. Lee Chok-hung.

Golden jubilee of H.M. Queen Elizabeth II.

The Royal Over-Seas League has asked that I inform interested members of a planned Royal Jubilee Garden Party in the Autumn. Details from gardenparty@rosl.org.hk (send blank message for autoresponse).

Members leaving : Goodbye to popular and loyal members, Gabriel and Susan McCarrick who left for Dublin, Ireland, and Mary, Jack and Emilie Marmet who have gone to Perth, Australia, also our popular, ex-Membership Secretary, Clare and John Fogarty who left for Surrey, England. Our own Folk Father, Brian Lawless, leaves Hong Kong for Taiwan this summer. Singing for his super may well be necessary there. We, and their many friends, know how much they will be missed and wish them well.

If you know of any others who have left recently, let me know and we will try to make a mention for their friends in the Society.

Members joining : Mrs. Dervilla Campbell-Grieve was invited to join the Society's General Committee, following Clare Fogarty's departure.

New Arrivals : Congratulations to Mr. & Mrs. Conor Maguire on the birth of a first son and heir, and prospective member.

The St. Patrick's Society's Web-site is at <http://www.irelandhk.com>
The site is shared with the Irish Business Forum (I.B.F.) and the Hong



Kong Gaelic Athletic Association (H.K.G.A.A.). Thanks to Ian Carroll.

The Society's AGM celebrations will be held on Thursday 26th September at the Football Club. A good way to unwind with friends after the summer.

Sin a bhfuil, a chairde.

Tom

St.Pat News/June02