



# Irish American Heritage Museum

## November Newsletter

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Dear Members,

It has been a busy few months at the museum, and we are not done yet! Aside from all the talks we have planned, our Christmas market will be on December 4th at the Celtic Hall on New Karner Road, and our store has already started getting in fantastic knitwear and gifts from Ireland. We will have musical performances by Don Kelly and Rick Bedrosian, and Marni Gillard will be there to tell some Christmas tales. We will have Irish food and drink for sale too, and expect a really wonderful event. Do your holiday gift shopping at this market and help support the museum and local artists and crafters.

We have sent out notes about discounts that our members can get for tickets to Cherish the Ladies in December at the Troy Savings Bank Music Hall on December 7th, and for *The Irish and How They Got That Way* at Capital Repertory Theatre in November. Elizabeth will be the guest speaker for their *Behind the Scenes* performance, which is scheduled for Sunday, December 12th. We are also pleased to announce that an Irish music documentary "The Job Of Songs" by Director Lila Schmitz will have its world premier at the Documentary New York Film Festival, on November 14th at 11:00am and November 15th at 12:15pm both virtually and in person in New York City. Set in Doolin, an isolated village teetering on the western edge of Ireland, it explores a community of musicians seeking joy and connection through music as they face a modernizing world. These musicians explore what it means to exist in the old music, the long-standing tradition, and find community through the strumming of a guitar, beating of a bodhran, and sharing of a song. We are hoping that we can also have a screening here in our theater in late November, early December, so stay tuned!

You may have seen that the Museum received funding from the Irish government through its Emigrant Support Program, and we also received funds from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) through the American Rescue Plan grants program. We are working hard to be the preeminent Irish American museum in the country and are very thankful for this support of our institution. Support like this for museums is so essential to keep them open and operating. We are very glad that we are able to present so many talks and events to the public, which would not be possible without these grants and your support. Thank you to all those who tune in for talks - your attendance and interest in the events is vital when we apply for funding, so we can demonstrate that we service our community.

As I mentioned last month, we are proud to have received a Communities for Immunity award in support of our work to promote vaccine confidence in the Capital Region. As trusted community partners, museums and libraries play a critical role in building vaccine confidence and fighting the pandemic. To this end, we will host a series of talks discussing the Pandemic and History, Community, and Science and we will have a pop-up vaccine clinic when you can get vaccinated, a booster, or a flu shot. All participants will receive a tote bag with giveaways. Many of you can trace your roots back to ancestors who fled Ireland during the Great Hunger, a public health crisis which killed almost two million people, so we know how this kind of health crisis can disproportionately affect those in disadvantaged communities. The initiative is made possible with support from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) and is led by the Association of Science and Technology Centers and the American Alliance of Museums. [You can learn more about Communities for Immunity here](#). So don't rely on the luck of the Irish - get vaccinated!

Please be aware that going forward we will be streaming our events live on YouTube instead of Facebook. You do not need an account - simply visit the [Museum's YouTube page](#) and the live event will appear at the top of the page. You will be able to post comments and questions in the chat. For events that are online only, you are welcome to either register for the Zoom or watch on YouTube. We encourage participants who wish to ask the speaker(s) questions to join the Zoom. The videos will be made available on our Facebook page the next day.

Lastly, don't forget that November 30 is Giving Tuesday! Donations enable us to continue hosting unique events, constructing engaging exhibitions, and reaching people across the country and around the globe. There is no other Museum like us in the country, and dedicated supporters make all the work we do possible. Any gift helps - use the button below to donate.

Thank you for your continued support!



Elizabeth Stack, PhD

[Donate on Giving Tuesday](#)

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This month's poem is "November," by John F. Deane, from 2012. John was born on Achill Island in 1943, and is a poet and novelist. He founded Poetry Ireland and The Poetry Ireland Review in 1979 and is a member of Aosdána, the body established by the Arts Council to honor artists "whose work had made an outstanding contribution to the arts in Ireland". In 2007, the French Government honored him by making him Chevalier, Ordre des Arts et des Lettres.

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Frederic William Burton, (1816-1900) RHA, *The Aran Fisherman's Drowned Child* (1841).

*November*

Again the parlour has filled to overflowing  
with the beloved dead – and I

stand distraught outside the great blurred window  
looking in; little light where I am,

a soft persistent starlight; where they are, there are chandeliers,  
though the dead are distant, a little

indistinct; they have been blown, perhaps, through the open door  
into the hallway, like those several

beautifully veined and parti-coloured leaves, old gold and scarlet,  
from the trees that stand

bereft of summer, bare-head to the chilled and chilling  
sky; and have wandered in

through that other door we never opened, and though they are  
a little ruffled at the edges, a little

sere, they are upright and lightly swaying, the best crystal  
in their hands; grandfather, possibly,

in the far corner, by the walnut cabinet, a vague  
moustachioed figure, Nanna, wearing

her best of smiles, serving; closer, by the oil-lamp,  
motherfather, fathermother, relishing –

as they never did before – a happy foolishness; closer still,  
behind the net-curtained window, my

brother, cured of all ills, and laughing; there is a shadowy  
and shrouded host-like figure

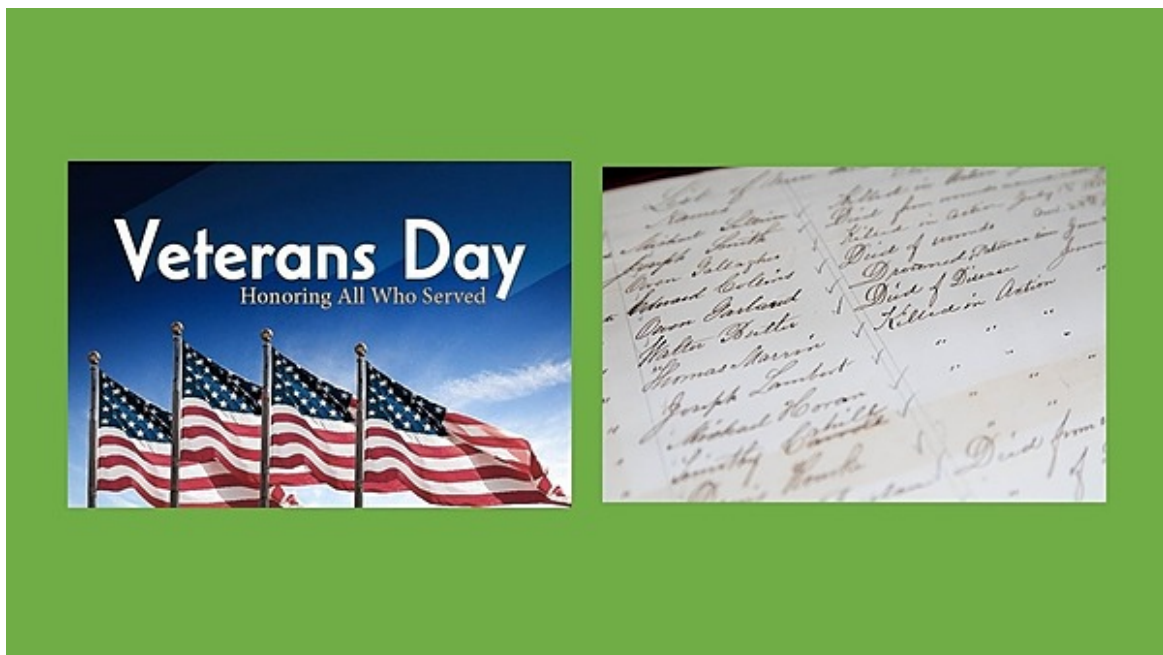
moving quietly amongst them, greeting them all with a little  
laughter. Ah well, we have allowed them

this one month to be amongst us, this first mustering  
of winter, as if they were not always there

before our consciousness, calling out against our grieving.

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## Culture Section



Armistice Day and Remembrance Day mark the anniversary of the end of World War I as major hostilities were formally ended at the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month of 1918, when the Armistice with Germany went into effect. In November 1919, President Wilson proclaimed November 11 as the first commemoration of Armistice Day with the following words: "To us in America, the reflections of Armistice Day will be filled with solemn pride in the heroism of those who died in the country's service and with gratitude for the victory, both because of the thing from which it has freed us and because of the opportunity it has given America to show her sympathy with peace and justice in the councils of the nations..." The original concept for the celebration was for a day observed with parades and public meetings and a brief suspension of business beginning at 11:00 a.m.

An Act (52 Stat. 351; 5 U. S. Code, Sec. 87a) approved May 13, 1938, made the 11th of November in each year a legal holiday - a day to be dedicated to the cause of world peace and to be thereafter

celebrated and known as "Armistice Day." In 1954, after World War II had required the greatest mobilization of soldiers, sailors, Marines and airmen in the Nation's history; after American forces had fought aggression in Korea, the 83rd Congress, at the urging of the veterans service organizations, amended the Act of 1938 by striking out the word "Armistice" and inserting in its place the word "Veterans." With the approval of this legislation (Public Law 380) on June 1, 1954, November 11th became a day to honor American veterans of all wars.

Since the American Revolution, the Irish have filled the ranks of the US military. From the father of the US Navy to modern-day operators, Irish-born immigrants and their descendants have wielded an unbreakable beam of American military power. In fact, radio commentator Walter Winchell claimed during a 1945 St. Patrick's Day broadcast that, "You can't strike the American flag without expecting to get hit back by some Irishman."

The Medal of Honor was created during the American Civil War and is the highest military decoration presented by the United States government to a member of its armed forces. The recipient must have distinguished themselves at the risk of their own life above and beyond the call of duty in action against an enemy of the United States. Due to the nature of this medal, it is commonly presented posthumously. Of the 3,464 Medals of Honor awarded as of September 17, 2009, an estimated 2,021 (58%) have been awarded to Irish-American recipients, more than twice the number awarded any other ethnic group and 258 Irish-born Americans have received the Medal of Honor, which represents more than half of foreign-born MOH recipients. A monument to these Irish-born Medal of Honor recipients is located at Valley Forge's Medal of Honor Grove was erected by the Ancient Order of Hibernians. The first Irish American to receive the Medal was Michael Madden, who received it for his actions in the American Civil War. The earliest action for which the Medal of Honor was awarded was to Irish American U.S. Army Assistant Surgeon Bernard J.D. Irwin for the engagement at Apache Pass, February 1861. The award was made three decades after the event and after Madden's award.

Nearly 200,000 Irish Americans served in the Civil War. In fact, there were so many soldiers from Ireland they established their own units, such as the famed "Irish Brigade" of the 69th Infantry Regiment. The Irish Brigade tragically lost more soldiers during the Civil War than all but two other units. During World War I, nearly 1,000 Irish-born Americans gave the last full measure of devotion in service of the United States. This number of immigrant dead was soon surpassed on the battlefields of World War II. Following World War II, Irish Americans served in Korea, where 28 were killed in action. Twelve years later in Vietnam, 24 were killed. The Irish American tradition of service continued into the 21st century. Irish men and women have served in all four branches of the US military during the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Here are some of the veterans who are mentioned in our exhibition on the Irish in the American Military.

Sergeant Major Dan Daly, who is one of only two Marines who have ever received the Medal of Honor - the Nation's highest military award - twice for separate acts of heroism, once in Haiti and once in the Boxer Rebellion.

Fr Francis Duffy, who is the most decorated cleric in the US Army and served as chaplain for the 69th Infantry Regiment ("The Fighting 69th"), a unit of the New York Army National Guard largely drawn from the city's Irish-American and immigrant population.

Audie Murphy, who received every US military combat award for valor available from the US Army for his service during World War II.

Cpl Patrick Sheahan, who was awarded the Silver Star posthumously for his service in Korea and waited 50 years to be recognized as a US citizen.

Major Patrick Brady, who was awarded the Medal of Honor for his service in Vietnam.

Lt Col Martha McSally, who was the first female US fighter pilot to fly in combat.

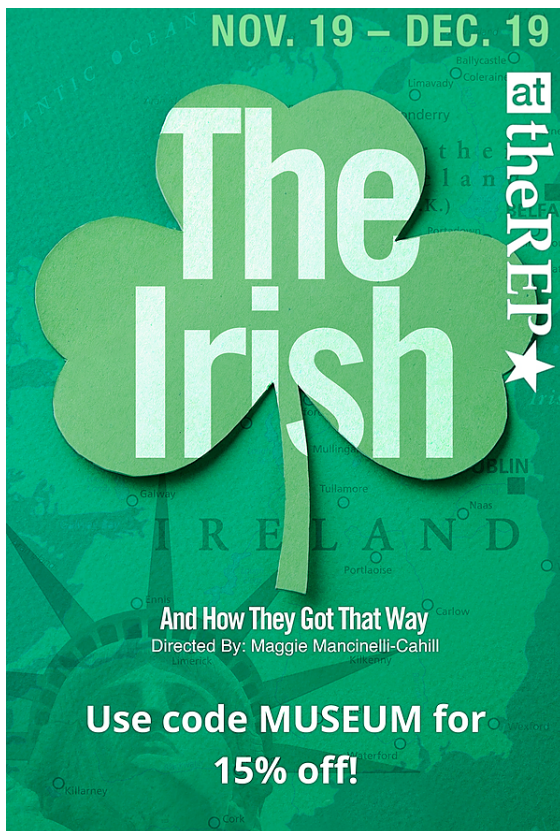
Lt Michael P. Murphy, who was awarded the Medal of Honor posthumously for his service in Afghanistan.

On October 26th, 1963, John F. Kennedy said, "A nation reveals itself not only by the men it produces but also by the men it honors, the men it remembers." As November is a time to honor and remember our dead in the ancient Celtic tradition of Samhain, we especially remember our veterans and their families this month.

Thank you to JFK Library; Veterans' Affairs; the Ancient Order of Hibernians.

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## Member discount for tickets to *The Irish and How They Got That Way* at Capital Rep!



We are delighted to announce that we are able to offer our members an exclusive discount for tickets to see *The Irish and How They Got That Way* at Capital Rep. The show runs from November 19 - December 19.

More information and tickets [here](#).

**Our members can receive 15% off their tickets by using the code MUSEUM at checkout, or by calling the box office at 518-346-6204.**

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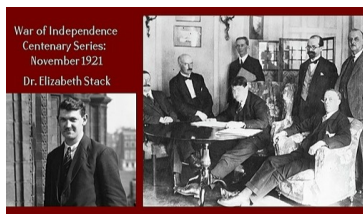
## November Events

*Unless otherwise noted, all events can be attended in person, or viewed live on [the Museum's YouTube page](#)*

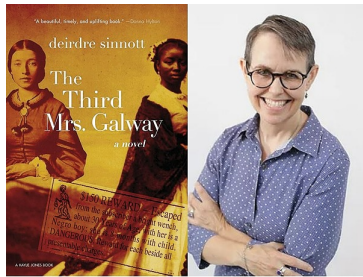
### **November 3, 7pm: War of Independence Centenary Series- November 1921**

We will look at the events of November 1921. The British delegation increase the pressure on the the Irish delegates as they debate central objectives like the Crown and the Empire. The Irish

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plenipotentiaries were in no position to bridge the gap between their position and that of the British.



**November 9, 7pm: *The Third Mrs. Galway*, with Deirdre Sinnott**

Within her home, Helen is haunted by the previous Mrs. Galway, recently deceased but still an oppressive presence. Her husband, injured by a drunken tumble off his horse, is assisted by a doctor of questionable ambitions who keeps a close eye on Helen. It's 1835 in Utica, New York, and newlywed Helen Galway discovers a secret: two people who have escaped enslavement are hiding in the shack behind her husband's house. Suddenly, she is at the center of the era's greatest moral dilemma: Should she be a "good wife" and report the fugitives? Or will she defy convention and come to their aid?

Author Deirdre Sinnott, a native of Utica, NY and a lifelong civil rights activist, will speak about her book, *The Third Mrs. Galway*.

**ZOOM ONLY, [register here](#)**



**November 11, 7pm: *Communities in a Pandemic - Successes and Challenges***

This online panel will feature several distinguished guests discussing how different communities have dealt with the pandemic and vaccination, including problems such as barriers to access and the spread of misinformation. Our panelists will include Leanne Howe, Director of the Institute of Native American Studies at the University of Georgia; Francis Sengabo, Operations Director of the Refugee and Immigrant Support Services of Emmaus in Albany; and Mardi Moore, Executive Director of Out Boulder County.

**ZOOM ONLY, [register here](#)**



**November 15, 7pm: *History in a Pandemic - Great Hunger Refugees and Disease***

Dr. Karen Sonnelitter, Assistant Professor of History at Siena College, will give a lecture about "Irish fever" and the widespread fear of refugees and immigrants as disease carriers during the mass immigration following the Great Hunger. During the Great Hunger in Ireland, the majority of deaths were attributed to epidemic diseases such as typhus fever and dysentery. Dr. Sonnelitter will discuss the relationship between the famine and the wave of epidemic diseases that struck Ireland in this period.



**November 16, 7pm: Author Caoilinn Hughes**

Author Caoilinn Hughes will discuss her novels, especially her recent work, *The Wild Laughter*. Set on a bankrupt farm in Roscommon, the novel is told from the perspective of the son who works it, in desperate fear of losing his ailing, beloved father. It's 2008, and the Celtic Tiger has left devastation in its wake. Brothers Hart and Cormac Black are waking up to a very different Ireland – one that widens the chasm between them and brings their beloved father to his knees. Hilarious, poignant and utterly fresh, *The Wild Laughter* cements Caoilinn Hughes' position as one of Ireland's most audacious, nuanced and insightful young writers. This book was the winner of the 2021 Encore Award and was the Irish Times and the Sunday Independent Book of the Year 2020.



### **November 18, 6pm: Behind the Butler's Pantry - Olana and the Lives of Irish Servants in the Hudson Valley**

Join Elizabeth in a virtual conversation about the lives of Irish American servants at Frederic Church's Olana. This conversation will use Church's history of employing Irish immigrants as a framework to consider the network of Irish domestic servants that existed in the region during the 19th century. Through their dialogue, the speakers will consider how Olana functioned as both a workplace and a home for Irish immigrants and take a broader look at the lives of domestic servants and the challenges they faced during this period. This event is organized by Olana. Tickets are \$5--more information and tickets available [here](#).



## **Communities for Immunity**

Museums and Libraries as Trusted Community Partners

[communitiesforimmunity.org](http://communitiesforimmunity.org)



### **November 21, 12pm: Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann Music Seisiun**

Join us for some "craic agus ceol" (fun and music) in a traditional Irish music seisiún. In this "open" session, anyone who is able to play Irish music is welcome. If you have a song to sing or a poem to recite, you are also welcome to take part! Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann is the primary Irish organization dedicated to the promotion of the music, song, dance and the language of Ireland.



### **November 23, 7pm: Old Ireland in Colour**

Join Dr. Sarah-Anne Buckley and Dr. John Breslin for a discussion of their book, *Old Ireland in Colour*. The book features stunning color restorations of nineteenth and twentieth century photographs of daily life in Ireland and abroad. Dr. Breslin will speak about his cutting-edge technology used to restore these photos, and Dr. Buckley will discuss her historical research and writing the captions for each of the more than 170 photographs. This is an ONLINE only event on our YouTube channel.



### **November 30, 7pm: Science in a Pandemic - From the Lab to the Community**

This event will cover immunology, public health, ethics, and more and as the panelists discuss scientific challenges and contributions during the COVID-19 pandemic. Our panelists include four professors from Albany College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences: Dr. Barry DeCoster, who specializes in philosophy and bioethics; Dr. Margaret Doll, professor of epidemiology; Dr. Wendy M. Parker, who focuses on health disparities; and Dr. Michelle A. Parent, who specializes in immunology and microbiology.

**ZOOM ONLY, [register here](#)**





*Help us celebrate our 35th anniversary!*

It's our birthday! This fall, the Irish American Heritage Museum is celebrating its 35th anniversary. While 2020 was not the grand re-opening we envisioned, we have a lot on the horizon and think this coming year will be one of the greatest in our history.

We are asking you to help us with "35 for 35," a gift of \$35 in celebration of our 35th anniversary to help us recover from the pandemic so that we can finally celebrate the way only we can—that is, with food, drink, and lots of music! Click the button below to donate.

Donate Today!

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One last thing! We are still collecting potato recipes for an upcoming project. If you have a recipe that you are happy to share, please click below!

I Have a Recipe!

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