

## November at the Museum!



**The Irish National War Memorial, Islandbridge, Dublin.**

### **November - time to reflect and give thanks while preparing for Christmas.**

This November is the 101st anniversary of the end of World War I. Most Irish people would be surprised to learn that an estimated 200,000 Irishmen served in the British army, with over 30,000 dying during the war. The men came from both the Catholic and Protestant communities on the island, as well as from the Irish diaspora communities of countries from across the British Empire and many other thousands of Irish heritage who fought in the uniform of the United States. The Irishmen who fought in the first world war were officially forgotten in post-independence Ireland. The end of the war coincided with a changed political climate. Redmond's call for men to enlist at Woodenbridge 20 September 1914, claiming that "the interests of Ireland - of the whole of Ireland - are at stake in this war," was rewarded with just six seats from 105 for the Irish party at the 1918 election. Home Rule was dead. The militant nationalism expressed by Sinn Féin was in the ascendancy. All had changed, changed utterly.

The armistice that ended World War One was signed just outside Paris in the early morning of 11 November 1918. To allow news of the armistice to spread across the battlefields of Europe the moment of the actual end of the fighting was pegged for 11 am that day. Fighting continued, on a small and localized scale, right through the morning and until the 11 am ceasefire. It is estimated that on the last morning of the war 11,000 men were killed or wounded. The last man to die in action, one minute before the armistice, was the American, Henry Gunther, who was killed in fighting near Meuse as he attacked a German machine gun position.

The final British soldier to die in the war was George Ellison. He had been born in York, and served as a regular soldier in the British Army until 1912. After he left he worked in coal mines outside of Leeds. With the outbreak of the war he rejoined the army, and was posted to the 5th Royal Irish Lancers. Ellison fought the first Battle of Mons in 1914, and was active in uniform throughout the war. After four years of fighting across the western front, Ellison and the 5th Royal Lancers found themselves back in Mons as the armistice approached. Patrolling in woods on the outskirts of Mons at around 9.30 am, Ellison was shot by a German sniper. In a strange symmetry that illustrates the sheer futility of the fighting between 1914 and 1918, and the meager gains in territory that either side made, Ellison died not far from where the first casualty of the war, John Parr, was killed in August 1914. Both men are buried near to each other at the St Symphorien Military Cemetery, just outside Mons. Given the changing politics within Ireland and the transformation in Anglo-Irish relations following the War of Independence, Ellison's 5th Royal Irish Lancers were disbanded, along with all other Irish regiments of the British Army in 1921.

It is estimated that 29 Irishmen died on 11 November 1918. These men died of illness or wounds inflicted in the weeks before; none of them were killed in action on Armistice Day itself. The last Irishman to die in World War One lived through Armistice Day. Private Thomas Farrell was a catholic from Lucan and was also enlisted, like Ellison, with the 5th Royal Irish Lancers. Farrell was injured in fighting around Mons on 10 November 1918. Despite being treated, and clinging to life throughout Armistice Day, Farrell died on 12 November 1918.

He wouldn't be the last man to die after the peace of his war time wounds. For those who made it home the physical and psychological scars took a heavy toll. Many struggled to find solace after the end of the war, and succumbed to homelessness, addiction and suicide. By way of one example, Guy Nightingale, a Major in the Royal Munster Fusiliers, who had led his men into the first day of fighting at Gallipoli in 1915, failed to readjust to life post-war. Nightingale fell into depression and alcoholism. On the 20th anniversary of the Gallipoli landings in 1935 Nightingale decided he had had enough and took his own life.

As news of the armistice spread across the western front the level of fighting generally decreased. This was not the case in those areas where the United States Forces were active. General Pershing of US Forces appeared to have been skeptical of the armistice and questioned whether the Germans would honor the ceasefire. As a result United States Forces were involved in heavy fighting on 11 November. Two major operations - crossing the River Meuse and taking the town of Stenay from German control (the last town to fall in World War One) - led to casualties of 1,300 for the Americans. Those who died in US uniform on 11 November included three Mayo-born men - Michael Garvin, Patrick Murray and Michael Walsh. Another man to die, originally from Kilfenora, County Clare, was Austin O'Hare. He was 30 years old when he was killed, and had emigrated to Massachusetts in his early 20's where he worked as a laborer. He is buried in the Meuse-Argonne American Cemetery and Memorial.

Ireland underwent profound changes during the years of the First World War. The country was transformed by the Easter Rising of 1916 and would find partial independence from Britain following the years of revolution and civil war, 1919-23. Some men who had fought in World War One joined the revolution and fight for Irish freedom, while many others quietly returned home and avoided war and conflict. Others fought lonely battles against injuries of the body or of the mind, haunted by the memories of World War One and the thousands who had died fighting with them.

The transformed politics of revolutionary, and later, independent Ireland, meant that having worn a British uniform in the 1914-18 war was something that was forgotten and not worthy of memorialization or commemoration. In Britain, and elsewhere across its Empire, World War One commemoration was a central part of public life each 11 November. Services of commemoration would end with the lines of Laurence Binyon: 'At the going down of the sun and in the morning, we will remember them.' For a long time, the Irishmen of World War One, whether they died on Armistice Day or before, were simply forgotten. (Memorialization to the dead of World War One did take place across Ireland, although often at the personal level, in private places or else commemorating specific groups. The best research list of WW1 memorials in Ireland is on the Irish War Memorials Site). In 1988 the Irish National War Memorial Gardens were formally dedicated and opened to the public.

Thomas Kettle, an Irish economist, journalist, barrister, writer, poet, soldier and Home Rule politician, wrote a poem, *To My Daughter Betty, the Gift of God*, four days before he was killed in action in Ginchy, September 9th 1916. Born in Dublin, supporter of the 1913 Strike, he became a member of the Irish Parliamentary Party and was Member of Parliament for East Tyrone from 1906 to 1910. Perhaps this poem best expresses the motivations of the ordinary men who enlisted in that fight - the war to end all wars.

In wiser days, my darling rosebud, blown  
To beauty proud as was your mother's prime,  
In that desired, delayed, incredible time,  
You'll ask why I abandoned you, my own,  
And the dear heart that was your baby throne,  
To dice with death. And oh! they'll give you rhyme  
And reason: some will call the thing sublime,  
And some decry it in a knowing tone.  
So here, while the mad guns curse overhead,  
And tired men sigh with mud for couch and floor,  
Know that we fools, now with the foolish dead,  
Died not for flag, nor King, nor Emperor,  
But for a dream, born in a herdsman's shed,  
And for the secret Scripture of the poor.

With thanks to Mark Cronin at Century Ireland, and Dr. Elaine Byrne at The Guardian.

PLEASE BE ADVISED THAT KEVIN JENNINGS IS NO LONGER ABLE TO SPEAK AT THE MUSEUM ON THE 30TH. WE WILL TRY TO RESCHEDULE.

**Toss the Feathers: A Musical Journey through Irish American History in Albany/Troy  
Irish American Heritage Museum  
Friday November 1st, 7pm**



Join us as Amy, Dave, and Dave describe the Irish immigrant experience in Albany and Troy. They will tell the stories of the Erie Canal, the Bridget maid, the Civil War and other elements of life which the Irish memorialized in music and song. There will be some traditional Irish music too to represent the fact that the Irish brought their culture with them. This is a rich and varied presentation of life in the nineteenth century for new arrivals carving out a life for themselves and dealing with all of the issues that immigration raises.

**Writing Good-bye to Loved Ones - Professor Jeffrey Berman, University of Albany  
Irish American Heritage Museum  
Tuesday November 5th, 7pm**



In a return visit to the Museum, Professor Berman will discuss his teaching on grief as well as his new book, *Mad Muse: The Mental Illness Memoir in a Writer's Life and Work*.

To deal with the loss of his wife in 2004, Jeff decided to share his grief with students in a classroom. The resulting course - which influenced his book, *Dying to Teach: A Memoir of Love, Loss, and Learning* (State University of New York Press, 2007) examines mourning in books including *The Book of Job*, *Wuthering Heights*, and *A Farewell to Arms*. Students also write about the death of loved ones and even their own deaths. Jeff believes that the grieving includes joy as well as sorrow and that those feelings must be expressed.

**Rambling House: Traditional Irish Music**  
**Irish American Heritage Museum**  
**Thursday November 7th, 7pm**



As usual, all are welcome to participate in this free evening of traditional Irish music and song brought to you by Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann (the Irish Musicians' Association). Bring your party piece or instrument! Audience participation welcome and encouraged by our friendly group. Hear traditional Irish music, and old songs, stories and poems in a traditional format that still happens in many Irish homes (and bars) today.

The motto of Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann is "ceol agus gaol" (music and kinship), and while headquartered in Ireland, there are branches of Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann all over the world. Light refreshments will be provided.

**Hooley at the Hall - Three Irish Voices in Concert**  
**CDIAA, 375 Ontario Street. \$15 members, \$18 non-members**  
**Saturday November 9th, 7pm**



Join us at the Capital District Irish American Association Hall for a great night of local talent. We will be serenaded by Three Irish Voices, who are recording a CD that night. The Three Irish Voices are a traditional Irish singing group, comprised of Mike Roche, Chris Gil and Mike Donegan and provide a vocal blend unlike anything around! They will be supported by Good Things and Steve Herubin. The pub will be open at 6pm and serving delicious food. We will have raffles too. This will be a special evening of music and craic, so call the museum now to reserve your seats.

**I Am of Ireland: The Work of an Honorary Irishman (Bob Blackmon) and Several Irish Artists**  
**East Greenbush Community Library, 10 Community Way, East Greenbush**  
**Sunday November 10th, 2pm Opening Reception**



The museum is proud to co-sponsor this gorgeous art show with the Halflight Gallery in Ireland. Once the show closes at the library, it will be moved to the museum for December and January. The Irish artists include, Pat Hennessey, Paul Henry, Padraig McCaul, Brigid Shelly, Bernie Power, Breda O'Brien, Rod Coyne, Mark Joyce, Matthew Ind, Margaret Cunningham, Janet Shaughnessy, Vanda Luddy, Olivia O'Carra, Paula Farrelly, and several others. The show title, "I Am of Ireland," comes from a poem with the same name by William Butler Yeats. Dr.

Elizabeth Stack, Executive Director of the Irish-American Heritage Museum will read the Yeats poem at the opening reception.

**Panel Discussion: Brexit - What Now?  
Dr. Richard Aldous, Dr. Peter Moloney, Dr. Elizabeth Stack  
Wednesday November 13th 7pm.**

Dr. Richard Aldous, Eugene Meyer Chair of British History and Literature at Bard College, Dr. Peter Moloney, Skidmore, and Dr. Elizabeth Stack, Irish American Heritage Museum, discuss the implications of the latest twists in the Brexit debate. We will discuss what are Boris Johnson's options now and what will happen if there is a general election in the United Kingdom, and try to understand the implications for Ireland and the border.



**Terry Golway - Frank and Al: FDR, Al Smith, and the Unlikely Alliance That Created  
the Modern Democratic Party.  
Thursday November 14th, 7pm**

Author, journalist, and historian Terry Golway tackles politics again in his latest book - a meticulous look at two great progressive New York governors who both wanted to be president - but only one would be successful. The two men could not have been more different: Roosevelt, a scion of Protestant wealth and privilege from Hyde Park, New York, and Smith, an Irish-Catholic kid, who grew up in the shadow of the Brooklyn Bridge and matriculated at the Fulton Fish Market University while Roosevelt went to Harvard. Golway says their cooperation and collaboration shows there is hope for a country which is increasingly polarized in our own time.



## The Annual Governor Hugh L. Carey Awards Gala

### Wolfert's Roost

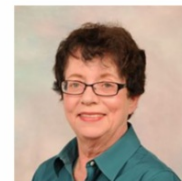
Friday November 15th 6pm



Join us on November 15<sup>th</sup> at 6pm, at Wolfert's Roost in Albany for the annual Governor Hugh L. Carey Awards Gala, benefiting the Irish American Heritage Museum. This year we are honoring Ken Raymond, CEO Prime Companies, and Joe and Kathy Condon, broadcaster and PR legend!



As always, this night is a celebration of friendship, culture, and community. Entertainment will be provided by Toss the Feathers, and surprise guests. There will be a silent auction and raffle, and guests can receive complimentary caricatures painted by Mark Gregory!

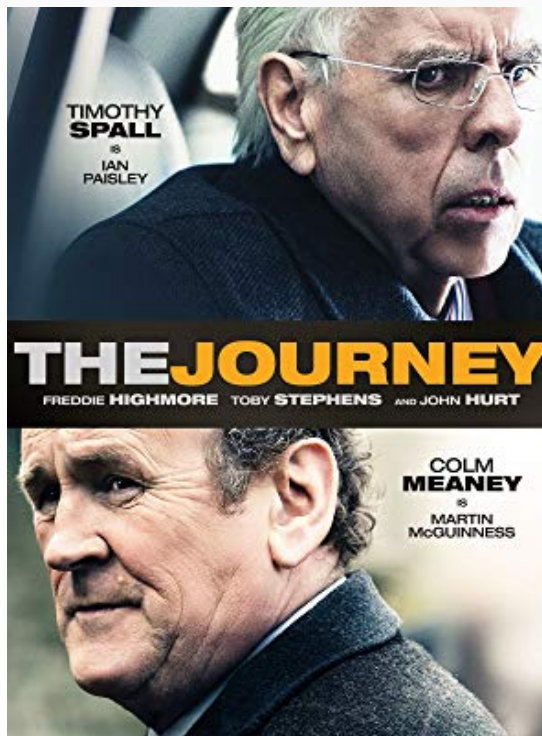


Tickets are \$100. Please call the museum to reserve your seats now!



## Movie Night: The Journey. \$5

Monday November 18th, 3pm and 7pm.



The Journey is the gripping account of how two men from opposite sides of the political spectrum came together to change the course of history. In 2006, amidst the ongoing, decades-long conflict in Northern Ireland, representatives from the two warring factions meet for negotiations. In one corner is Ian Paisley (Timothy Spall), the deeply conservative British loyalist; in the other is Martin McGuinness (Colm Meaney), a former Irish Republican Army leader who has devoted his life to the cause of Irish reunification. Opposites in every way, the two men at first seem to have little chance of ever finding common ground. But over the course of an impromptu, detour-filled car ride through the Scottish countryside, each begins to see the other less as an enemy, and more as an individual—a breakthrough that promises to at last bring peace to the troubled region. Driven by two virtuoso central performances, The Journey is a more-relevant-than-ever reminder of how simple humanity can overcome political division. John Hurt costars.

**Parker Cross stars in A Night in November by Marie Jones. \$5, \$7 non-members.  
Friday 22nd and Saturday 23rd 7pm, Sunday 24th November 2pm**



This is the stunning multi award-winning play from Marie Jones, writer of hit shows *Stones In His Pockets* & *Christmas Eve Can Kill You*.

*A Night in November* tells the story of Kenneth McAllister, a clerk in the local welfare office. Kenneth is a Belfast Protestant who has followed all the rules. He loved who he was supposed to love. He lived where he was expected to live. He fought who he was taught to fight. That is, until one night - a night in November - when he did the most exciting, outrageous, crazy, mad thing he'd ever done. Set against a backdrop of sectarian hatred and violence in Belfast, this is the story of how one man had a change of heart about his life.

This funny, passionate and heartbreaking show sees the actor Parker Cross flex his considerable acting skills, seamlessly shifting through dozens of characters.

**Triskele in a Christmas Show  
Irish American Heritage Museum  
Sunday, December 1st, 2pm. \$10 members, \$12 non-members**

Triskele is an all-female Celtic band in Albany. They are known for their stunning harmonies, singing the the Gaelic language and for their Irish wit. These ladies perform traditional, original and some modern Celtic/Irish music. Triskele not only performs, but educates the audience about the Gaelic language, traditional instrumentation, traditions, and Irish history and stories about growing up in Ireland. Come out and ring in the Christmas season with music by Triskele. They will perform both traditional Irish music along with Irish/Gaelic Christmas selections. This is a family friendly show. Book your seats at the museum now as space is limited.





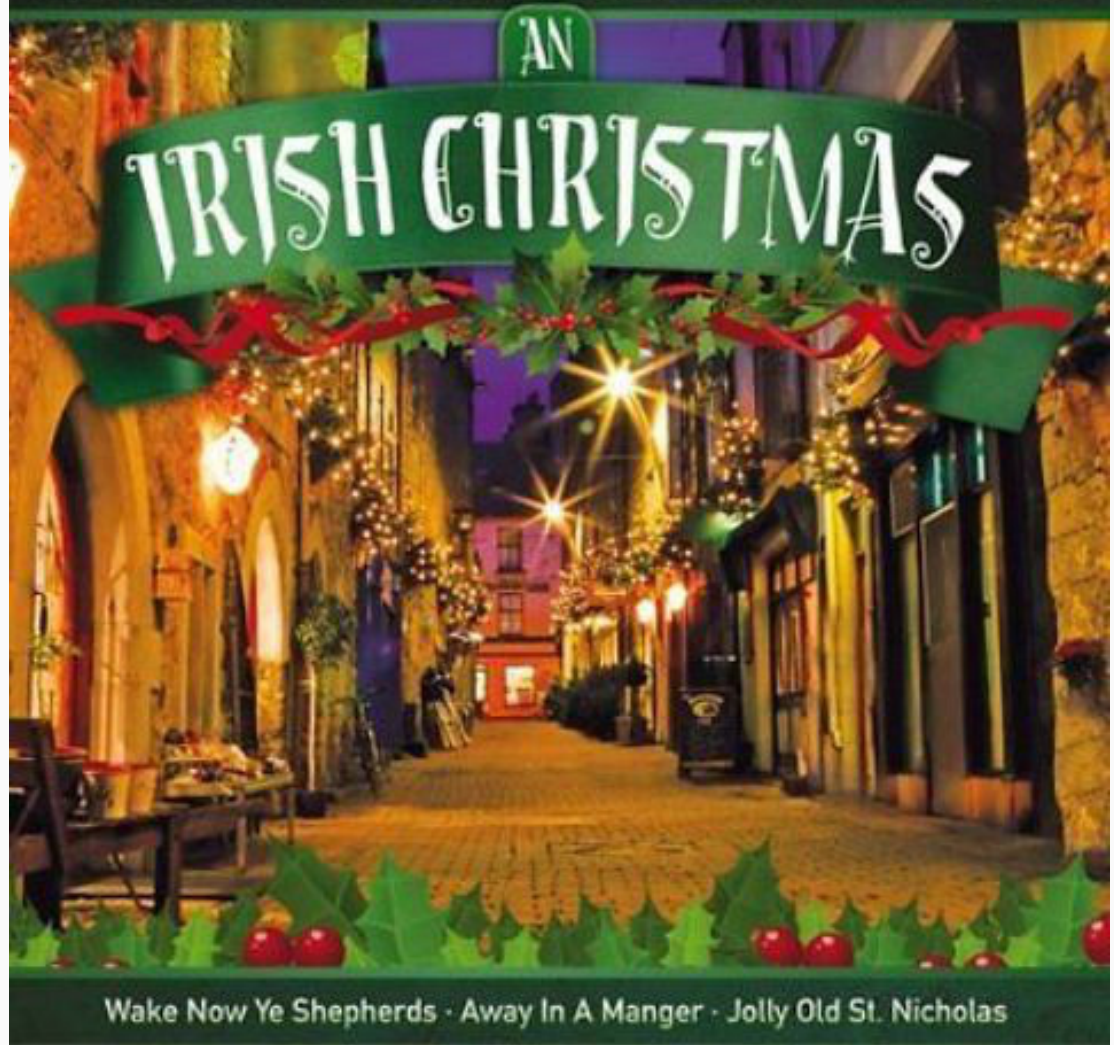
# Triskele



## **Annual Christmas Market Saturday, December 7th, 10 am - 5pm**

Our second annual Christmas market has all kinds of goodies, local crafts, beverages, jewelry, Irish soda bread, and books to help you get your Christmas shopping done. Join us for Irish hospitality and fun as well as your shopping needs. Of course we will also have a special visitor who is preparing for his busy night, but has time to call in to see us in Albany! Pdraig Timoney will provide some music to get you in the mood, and we will serve some warm treats to sustain you as you shop!

Christmas In Killarney · I Saw Three Ships · God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen



Wake Now Ye Shepherds · Away In A Manger · Jolly Old St. Nicholas

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