



**Oct.  
2007**

**CONTENTS:**

[Spooky Irish  
October](#)

[South Central  
Shamrock Club](#)

[Green Bay News](#)

[Milwaukee  
President's  
Message](#)

[Holiday Folk  
Fair](#)

[Advance Sale  
Holiday Folk  
Fair Tickets](#)

[Christmas Party  
December 6](#)

[Color Guard  
News and Notes](#)

[Celtic Women  
Conference  
News](#)

[Celtic Women  
First Fridays](#)

[Milwaukee  
AOH News](#)

[Milwaukee  
Celtic Football  
Sponsorship](#)

[Shamrock Club](#)

[INDEX](#)

## Spooky Irish October

*by Brian Witt*

The tenth month finds many planning for the celebration of Halloween at the end of the month. Halloween, the day before All Saints Day, was, for the Irish, the time when the curtain between this world and the next was at its thinnest. November 1 is Samhain, (sow-en). It is the Celtic New Year, the start of the darkest part of the calendar year. Samhain means "summer's end" in Irish. Samhain was also known as the Feast of the Dead, Oiche na Sprideanna (Spirit Night), when the deceased revisited the mortal world.

During the 8th century, the Catholic Church designated the first day of November as All Saints Day – all Hallows. Thus All Hallows Eve became Hallowe'en.

As it is the month of the feast of the dead, let's travel amongst the ghosts, specters and just interesting creatures of the otherworld that inhabit Ireland, and those lands that the Irish moved to.

There is the Bean Sidhe or Banshee, or female faerie, who makes her appearance when someone in the household is about to die. She haunts only the families authentic noble stock, the "high Milesian race" – those whose names have an "O", "Mac" or other prefix, or Norman-Irish poets. Her piercing caoine or keening is heard when someone dies. The Banshee is considered benign, but she supposedly has a sister sidhe who has a dark and evil side. The Lianhan Sidhe's sole purpose is to seek the love of mortal men. Their desire for her ultimately destroys them. She should not be confused with the Demon Bride, a beautiful but evil spirit who seduces her mortal victim with a kiss that steals his soul. He dies the death of a raving lunatic, haunted by the knowledge of his fatal mistake.

The Dearth-Dur is Ireland's legendary vampire. According to some tales, it can take the shape of a wan but pretty woman lingering amongst the graveyards waiting for young men to seduce and from

[SHAMROCK CLUB HOME](#)

[EMERALD REFLECTIONS  
ONLINE NEWSLETTER](#)

[PHOTO OF THE MONTH](#)

[MILWAUKEE CALENDAR](#)

[WISCONSIN CALENDAR](#)

[MIDWEST CALENDAR](#)

[JOIN CLUB](#)

[MILWAUKEE MARCH  
ST. PATRICK'S  
DAY EVENTS](#)

[MILWAUKEE CHAPTER](#)

[STATE CHAPTERS](#)

[COLOR GUARD](#)

[GIFT CENTER](#)

[LINKS OF  
IRISH INTEREST](#)

[VENUES](#)

[Sign My Guestbook](#)



[View My Guestbook](#)



Email:  
[Shamrock Club](#)

[Loses Hurling  
Final](#)

[Hallamor Fall  
Concert Series](#)

[Sunshine Club](#)

[Members'  
Doings](#)

[Milwaukee  
Calendar of  
Events](#)

[Wisconsin  
Calendar of  
Events](#)

whom she can drain blood and life away. The creature could be defeated by building a cairn of stones over its grave.

Lest one think that only female spirits have all the fun, the Gray Man or Far Liath comes in as a fog and covers land and sea with his cloak. As he covers rocks on the shore, ships crash upon them. He will also fill roads with darkness, in order to have travelers fall over cliffs to their deaths. The Dark Man or Far Dorocha travels on a black horse into our world to abduct humans that the Queen of the Good People desires. Although he never speaks, mortals invariably understand his commands and, unable to disobey, surrender their wills to his and mount up behind him.

Then there is the friendly Grogoch, who was originally a half human, half-spirit entity that was most commonly associated with the north of Ireland, as well as Scotland and the Isle of Man. Even though he has the power of invisibility, he will often allow certain trusted people to see him. He is quite a cordial creature, and he might help some lucky people with farm work or domestic chores. He just requires a bottle of cream to consider the deal even. However, he still fears the clergy, and will hightail it whenever a member of that class appears.

Changelings were the replacement for a mortal child who had been stolen by the faeries. Lest a beautiful child be stolen, people wouldn't mention its beauty. Parents would call for god's blessings, and then possibly spit upon the child, hoping to fool the faeries. Boys were dressed as girls in order to keep a child from being made prince-consort of the Queen of the Faeries. Changelings were very ugly and had voracious appetites, eating everybody around them out of house and home. Adults too, were sometimes kidnapped and the changeling would be recognized by its harsh voice and mean-spirited personality. This didn't mean one's brother-in-law was a changeling.

The Puca is best known to many as being the six foot high rabbit in the movie "Harvey". Pucas can take on a variety of shapes and sizes in order to wreak havoc and harm. However, as the legend goes, it's now less dangerous thanks to the legendary King Brian Boru, who is said to have tamed it and ridden it like a horse. They are said to take on the form of a horse or calf, rush between a person's legs, and take them for a wild ride.

The Dullahan, or Gan Ceann, (headless one), is the black rider who foretells death. Clad in flowing black robes, the Dullahan has no head on his shoulders. He carries it with him in his hand, and because he is endowed with supernatural sight, he will hold the head up high. This allows him to see great distances, even on the darkest night.

According to Bridget Haggerty, on her wonderful website, "Irish Culture and Customs", "if you watch his journey, you may be punished by either having a bucket of blood thrown in your face, or struck blind in one eye. The biggest fear of all, however, is if he stops wherever you are and calls out your name. This will draw out

your soul and you'll no longer be among the living. Unlike the Banshee, which is known to warn of an imminent death in certain families, the Dullahan does not come to warn." He is a definite sign of someone's demise. He has a fear of gold, and will shrink at the smallest piece of it.

According to Haggerty, "While no-one knows for certain how the Dullahan originated, it is thought that he is the embodiment of the Celtic fertility god, Crom Dubh, who was worshiped by an ancient king of Ireland, Tighernmas. Each year, Tighernmas sacrificed humans to Crom Dubh, and the usual method was decapitation. The worship of Crom Dubh ended in the sixth century, when Christianity came to Ireland and the old sacrificial traditions went out of favor."

And then there are the ghosts. W. B. Yeats wrote about them, saying, "Ghosts, or as they are called in Irish, Thevshi or Tash (taidhbhse, tais), live in a state intermediary between this life and the next. They are held there by some earthly longing or affection, or some duty unfulfilled, or anger against the living. 'I will haunt you,' is a common threat; and one hears such phrases as, 'She will haunt him, if she has any good in her.' One bad sign is if you see the ghost of yourself. It means you are about to die."

So, there you have it. You might be lucky this month, and only see the pucas or Grogochs, instead of the dearg durs or demon brides. Whatever you see, or meet, tell them to have a great Halloween. It is an Irish holiday, after all.

## INDEX

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## **The South Central Shamrock Club News**

*Next Meeting at the "Longley's Restaurant",  
Reedsburg, WI - October 21 at 4 p.m.*

Summer has ended, though the memories linger as we stroll through fall with vibrant colors of foliage preparing for winter. One of the highlights in August was a performance by "Beoga" a five piece group from Counties Antrim and Derry, in Northern Ireland, who graced us with their musical charm at St. Patrick's Church in Loreto, WI. Thanks to Mary Ellen and Patrick McCluskey a rare and lovely evening was shared with 150-200 fellow Irish friends and members who did not have the opportunity to hear them at Milwaukee Irish Fest, or if they did, were able to hear them again. A new brew to try is Lake Louie's selections of ales. Company Profile: "Established 2000, Lake Louie is a small brewery located on the beautiful shores of Lake Louie (actually a ¼ acre pond) just

outside of Arena in southwest Wisconsin. When we aren't swimming in summer or ice skating in winter, we're producing top quality local beers for local people. Currently offering English and American ales in kegs and pressure filled growlers to taverns, restaurants, and liquor stores. Our beers are being tapped by some of the finer public houses in the area. Really fun free tours on most Saturdays by appointment." Visit their website: [www.lakelouie.com].

In August a house fire struck a family of four in Lyndon Station, WI. Our president Tom Scanlon presented them with a check for \$100 from the club to help them with initial needs.

Don't forget to take time in October to visit your local apple orchards —always a great way to spend a fall day with family and friends.

October Meeting will be held at Longley's Restaurant, Reedsburg, WI on October 21st at 4:00pm.

### **An Irish Blessing For Hallowe'en**

by Maureen McCabe

*At all Hallow's Tide, may God keep you safe  
...From goblin and pooka and black-hearted stranger,  
...From harm of the water and hurt of the fire,  
...From thorns of the bramble, from all other danger,  
...From Will O' The Wisp haunting the mire;  
...From stumbles and tumbles and tricksters to vex you,  
May God in His mercy, this week protect you.*

slainte,

– Dana Horkan Gant  
South Central Membership Chairperson

### [INDEX](#)

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## **Green Bay News**

The Summer Vacation Auction this fall is at our October 15 meeting, held at the Downtown Holiday Inn, 7 p.m. We use the funds raised to support families we sponsor at Christmas. Pick up an item from one of your vacation destinations, valued at around \$15, wrap it up and bring it along. The winning bidder will see what he blindly purchased. It's a great meeting and great way to welcome everyone back.

## INDEX

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### **Milwaukee President's Message**

*Deireadh Fomhair. October. Is fearr go mór liom séisiún an fhomhar. Cuireann réceáil duilleogaí spraoi id' chos. And autumn is my favorite season, but, no, I do not like raking those leaves.*

October is here. The mosquitos are finally abating. It was probably one of the few times people have prayed for an early frost during beautiful summer weather. But this is a magical month, so look out for your deceased relatives walking about during the latter part of the month.

The Ancient Order of Hibernians will be holding their Mass of Remembrance and The William Ryan Drew Spaghetti Dinner at St. Rose of Lima on October 6. Our Color Guard Pipes and Drums will be a part of the celebration at the Mass. Speaking of the group, they performed beautifully at the Wisconsin Highland Games in September. They also drew a lot of interest.

I personally want to thank Noreen Barclay for her hard work these past few months, especially in light of the loss of her son Michael at the start of Irish Fest. Words cannot express the sorrow over her loss or the thanks for her participation in both the sales area and the Cultural area at the Highland Games.

We moved our meeting to the Irish Fest Center for October. We always travel in the fall, but this year we are a month early, mainly because of the Conference of Celtic Women conference at the ICHC the same weekend. Our guest speaker will be Dan Devine, who is a county supervisor for the West Allis-Greendale area. Many remember Danny as the bar manager at Nash's for a number of years.

Folk Fair 2007 will present us with challenges that we haven't had in the past, and none of our doing. However, as always, we have had people step forward to volunteer to chair the various areas. This year Mary Culver will be working with Pete and Fran Dundon in the Food area. Last year, one of the ethnic group's heads came to me and said he was always impressed by the turnout the Shamrock Club got at Folk Fair with volunteers. It made me smile for two reasons. The first is that we are always fighting to find people to work events. The second was that, as a group, he was correct. We had a better turnout than any other group. But please, volunteer. We need the help, in this, our largest fundraiser.

Bridget Jaskulski is our dance school coordinator, a newly created position. It came about in this fashion last year- "Brian, there is too much confusion here at Folk Fair over the dancers. I am going to take over coordinating the schools for the festival." And she walked away. Actually, she suggested we do so, and as she has

more experience with them, from her start as a Shamrock Club dancer to school owner, it made sense. And no, she is not that abrupt. Just that decisive.

Speaking of volunteers, Pat Fitzgibbons is stepping down as golf outing chair, and Pete and Dawn Fleming are also stepping down as picnic chairs. Thank you for your years of work on these events. You made them successful in the time you ran them.

Tom Smith is still recuperating after surgery. Keep him in your prayers.

In November, we are back at the ICHC for our meeting on the first. And our Christmas party is December 4 at the ICHC.

At the August board meeting, it was decided by the Board to hold the Mass in Honor of St Patrick on March 15. That is a week after the Parade and Post Parade Party. This will mean we will have our Easter Rising Mass one week later. It will also keep our ties to the holy day intact.

See you in Samhain. Or November..

– **Brian Witt**  
**Briangwitt@shamrockclubwis.com**

## INDEX

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## **Holiday Folk Fair**

### **November 16-18, 2007**

The annual Holiday Folk Fair will take place at State Fair Park November 16-18, 2007. We will be represented in three areas: Cultural, Food and Sales. We need volunteers for all three areas. If you can give us a four hour shift, please contact one of our area chairs. The general chair for 2007 will be Sue Dundon. We will have a new food co-chair, in Mary Culver. She is joining Pete and Fran Dundon for 2007.

If you would like to work a four hour shift at the Holiday Folk Fair, please contact the Shamrock Club's Holiday Folk Fair Chairmen, (Food) Pete and Fran Dundon at (414) 242-8245 or [petedundon@juno.com]; (Sales) Noreen Barclay at (262) 695-8563 or [nabarclay@earthlink.net]; or (Cultural) Pam Canon at (414) 276-8779 or [dpCanon@wi.rr.com]. Or contact us at our e-mail address, [info@shamrockclubwis.com]. You will receive the annual Folk Fair participant pin, and a coupon for food from the Shamrock Club food booth.

INDEX

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## **2007 HOLIDAY FOLK FAIR**

**November 16, 17, 18, 2007**

The Shamrock Club must sell 125 Holiday Folk Fair Tickets  
Any unsold tickets must be purchased by the club at full value.

To Order, mail your request to:

Muriel Crowley  
1020 Georges Ave.  
Brookfield, WI 53045

Include your name, address, number of tickets (at \$8 each) and a check made payable to the Shamrock Club of Wisconsin.

Tickets will be sent to you by return mail and are good on any of the three days of Folk Fair.

**HELP US MEET OUR GOAL!**

INDEX

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## **Christmas Party December 6**

The annual Christmas party will take place on Thursday, December 6, at the ICHC. The Club will provide the meat and beverages for the dinner. We ask that all members attending bring a dish to pass. In addition, in order to correctly order the right amount of food, we are asking members to reserve places for the evening.

INDEX

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## **Color Guard News and Notes**

I'm back from my trip to Scotland! It was breathtaking, still, after this, my 13th time there. I had a chance to see Melrose Abbey, where supposedly Robert the Bruce's heart is buried. Also saw Tantallon, Craigmillar and Crichton Castles. Everything is steeped in history and I'm fascinated by it. Maybe I should have paid more

attention in History Class. My plan is to see all of the castles in Scotland. For a mere 70 a year, you can get a pass that allows you to see all of Historic Scotland properties, as well as others in England, Wales and Ireland. Check it out at [[www.historic-scotland.gov.uk](http://www.historic-scotland.gov.uk)]. For those young un's, pick up a History book some day. You may find a world of intrigue and imagination you never thought possible in between the covers. I know I have, many years too late!

On the home front, another season is almost tucked away. September saw the band at the Highland Games (where many a compliment from piping judges was heard), the St. Francis Labor Day Parade and Present Music's Irish Stew performance. October is still as busy, and has the band at the AOH Mass and Dinner on Oct. 6, the Mayville Parade on October 7 and our year end blowout bash in Sister Bay Oct 12-14. Speaking of which, we'd love to have you up for the weekend with us. Many pipers from all over meet up and march with us for our last parade of the year. It's fun for all involved. Contact Rich Pfeiffer or myself for more details if you are interested.

Also coming sooner than you think is the Tartan Ball in early November!! I have my dress pattern cut and ready to sew for this year's dress creation. Wait til you see my dapper boyfriend in the smashing ensemble compliments of his mum. Green silk cravat and all. Hope to see you there.

Plans still continue for the band Christmas Party at Paddy's Pub. Stay tuned.

One more thing that I didn't have a chance to mention in last month's article. Congrats to everyone for the Irish Fest Performance. Despite the constant rain, we showed the attendees and other bands that we're the ones to watch for. I was so proud watching you from behind the stands as you went thru the drill Rich and I wrote. Life is funny sometimes and gives you a bad hand. But for me, even though behind the stands wasn't my 1st choice of places to be, I could see beyond my proud tears, that you nailed it perfectly yet again. It made me so chuffed and happy. We are the band to watch. Just wait, Milwaukee. We only get even better from here.

I'm going to keep this month's article on the short side, as it has to get to the printer yesterday. Sorry, Brian Witt. I'm a champion procrastinator. Thanks for your patience.

As always, our practices continue on Tuesdays, check the website where they are held. Maybe the weather will hold out and they'll continue at the Lakefront!!

Until November Celtic Aficionados!

– Noel Tylla, 4th year piper

## INDEX

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### **Celtic Women Conference News**

Maggie Cronin will return to Milwaukee with her new play “Greenstick Boy – A Love Letter”, which will premier at the conference. Maggie was a big hit back in 1999 with her first play “A Most Notorious Woman” about Grace O’Malley. Maggie is a most welcome Celtic woman.

Sheila Stewart of the Scottish traveller family The Stewarts o’ Blair, has been elected to the British Hall of Fame, with the induction taking place December first. This honor will be added to the Member of the British Empire (MBE), received from the queen some time ago. We will be pleased to welcome this distinguished singer and story-teller to our city. She will also appear at a special fund-raiser/bonfire event prior to the conference.

The Friday, Oct. 5 concert will feature two presenters from the conference and it is open to the public. The doors open at 6:30 p.m. Fiona Molloy and Sheila Stewart will share the stage, presenting Irish and Scottish songs in a most unique presentation. Admission is \$15; free to those registered for the conference. Complete information can be found at the web site [www.conferenceofcelticwomen.org](http://www.conferenceofcelticwomen.org)

Filling out the roster are these Celtic women representing the heritages of the Irish, Scots and Manx: Jean-Andrew, Bantry Bay, Lee Drinkwater, Katherine Forsyth, Susan Hyams, Marilyn Jacobsen, Maureen Jelks, Betsy McGovern, Carol McLernon and Gina Pierleoni.

The Conference of Celtic Women begins Thursday evening with a welcome reception, Oct. 4 at the ICHC at 6–9 p.m. Walk-in registrations are welcome. Full programming and meals on Friday and Saturday. All details are on the web site at [[www.conferenceofcelticwomen.org](http://www.conferenceofcelticwomen.org)] or call (414) 257-3770.

## INDEX

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### **Celtic Women First Fridays**

**Date:** October 5, 2007

**Topic:** Concert for the Conference of Celtic Women

**Entertainers:** Fiona Molloy and Sheila Stewart

Fiona will open the concert with an hour of Irish music. Sheila will

follow with an hour of traveller stories, songs and tales of her life as a traveller. Don't miss this one! (7:30 p.m. start.)

The public is invited to this concert for \$15 admission. (Regular First Friday Lecture-goers may attend for the usual lecture cost, but you must pre-register your name for this privilege. Call Jean before October 1st to get on the FF list for \$7 admission (414) 257-3770.)

## INDEX

---

### **Milwaukee AOH News**

The William Ryan Drew Spaghetti Dinner will take place on Saturday, October 6, 2007, at the St. Rose of Lima School. Mass will take place at the Church beginning at 4:30 p.m., immediately preceded by the speaker and awards ceremony. The dinner will follow immediately afterwards.

Upcoming meetings of the AOH Milwaukee Division include:  
Wednesday, October 10, 2007, at 7:15 p.m. at Derry's Pub. Milwaukee Mayor Tom Barrett is the scheduled speaker.  
Wednesday, November 14, 2007, at 7:15 p.m. Boulton, business reporter for the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, will be our guest speaker. The December 12 meeting is the annual Christmas party and new member initiation. It is at 6 p.m. at the ICHC. New members and a guest enjoy dinner at no charge.

## INDEX

---

### **Milwaukee Celtic Football Sponsorship**

The Milwaukee Celtic Football Club will be playing for the Shamrock Club, starting in the fall of 2007. The Shamrock Club is sponsoring the soccer team, which has been in existence since the 1990s, and has been the only team playing as an Irish team in the Milwaukee area.

Milwaukee Celtic S.C. is an amateur soccer team based out of Milwaukee. Comprised of players from Milwaukee and the surrounding communities, Celtic currently competes in the Wisconsin Adult Soccer Association's (WASA) Men's First Division. The team is managed and captained by Eric Scholz. The team will be playing under the Shamrock Club colors, with the

club's logo on their jerseys. In addition, all members of the team are joining the Shamrock Club.

The team's schedule will be posted in Reflections as soon as it is released.

## [INDEX](#)

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### **Shamrock Club Loses Hurling Final**

On Sunday, August 26, the MHC season came to a close with the championship match between the Shamrock Club and McBob's. The match kicked off with McBob's flying out of the gate and maintaining the pace through to the break. McBob's was able to move the ball well and capitalized on their efforts, heading into halftime with a 26-6 lead.

In the second half, the Shamrock Club, through their tightened play and determination, was able to inch closer but ultimately, McBob's offense was too much and they went on to win the MHC championship by a final score of 3-24 (33) to 3-12 (21).

On Sunday, September 3, the MHC Men's Junior B team beat Minnesota to become the NACB Junior B Champions. The NAGAA [[www.nagaa.org](http://www.nagaa.org)] Playoffs and Championships were held in Chicago at Gaelic Park. The MHC was represented in the Junior B and C Men's Hurling and Junior Camogie.

After two very hard fought games, the "B" team came through victorious in a decisive win of 4-19 to 1-11. Unfortunately, victory was not had for the "C" and Camogie teams, but both teams played extremely hard and can be very proud of the games that were played.

The Men's Junior B and C teams are proudly sponsored by Martin Donnelly and the M. Donnelly Corporation [[www.mdonnelly.ie](http://www.mdonnelly.ie)] in Dublin, Ireland.

On October 4, the MHC will sponsor a beer tasting contest at the Bavarian Inn in Glendale.

## [INDEX](#)

---

### **Hallamor Fall Concert Series**

**The Elders**  
**October 26, 2007**

The Elders, our October concert performers, will bring their high energy, Celtic contemporary music to the Hallamór concert series. These six Kansas City musicians blend their heritage into many of their own compositions that are virtually indistinguishable from that which is authentic and timeless. Their music, like the history of the Irish, ranges from happy hand clapping, foot stomping music, to the mournful and haunting. Fans of The Elders are known to drive hundreds of miles to see them perform – come see why! This is a concert for the young and the young at heart!

Irish Cultural and Heritage Center; 2133 W. Wisconsin Avenue  
414-345-8800

Tickets: Advance/reserved \$19, \$21 Day of Concert

– **Gwen Sisk**

[INDEX](#)

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## **Sunshine Club**

Noreen Barclay's son Michael passed away recently. Our condolences to Noreen and her family over their loss.

Tom Smith is at Mercy Rehabilitation Hospital after surgery in August. Mary Hippler was recently hospitalized. Keep them in your thoughts.

If you have any information about members, please contact me, Joe Donovan, (414) 259-8040.

[INDEX](#)

---

## **Members' Doings**

Holly Pfeiffer and Jason Heiden tied the knot in August. They had some really great bagpipe music for the evening.

Holly and Dave Delgado recently traveled to Texas.

[INDEX](#)