



May 2009

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The Elephant Angel

by Brian Witt

Recently, a story came out about the elephant in a Belfast yard during World War Two. There was all sorts of speculation about the mystery woman who cared for the pachyderm after the Belfast Zoo was vacated. Wire services picked it up, and the BBC World services broadcast the tale.

The reason for the sudden interest was that the Belfast zoo is celebrating its 75th anniversary, and decided it would make a great human-interest story. The woman had never been identified and the zoo knew her only as "the elephant angel". But as it celebrates its 75th birthday, the people in charge of the zoo decided to finally identify the elephant angel. It says it has many unusual stories from down the years, but is convinced that of the angel must be their most curious.

A pair of grainy photos showed two women sitting on a garden seat watching Sheila drinking out of a tin bucket beside the back door of the house.

According to Belfast Zoo manager Mark Challis: "The care provided by our mystery lady is unique to zoo history and we would like to make contact with her family and properly document this gap in our past." They launched a campaign to find the unknown caretaker, and, through a surviving relative, have found more information on her identity.

The 'elephant angel' and the "Backyard Elephant" has been solved. According to the Belfast Telegraph, the mystery Belfast woman who cared for a baby elephant in her back garden during the war years has been identified. The 'elephant angel' was Denise Weston Austin, who was one of the first female zookeepers at the Belfast Zoo. According to the Telegraph, "Along with her mother Irene, Denise took baby elephant Sheila in to her north Belfast home after it escaped an order to euthanize some of the more dangerous animals at the zoo. Nine lions, two tigers and a number of bears

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and wolves were killed on the orders of the Ministry of Public Security because of fears that they would escape and threaten the public if the zoo was damaged in a German bombing raid.”

The Luftwaffe, as a part of the “Battle of Britain” was bombing Belfast on a regular basis. The zoo looked like an industrial park from the air, so the zoo authorities decided to take action, in case of a bomb freeing the zoo’s animals. Other animals in the zoo at the time of the Belfast Blitz were not so lucky. The Ministry of Public Security ordered 23 animals to be killed in case they were set free by bomb blasts and proved to be a danger to the public

The Telegraph reported that her second cousin, David Ramsey from Belfast, described her as an “eccentric” lady who lived in an exotic home in north Belfast called Loughview House. “Mr. Ramsey also said that Sheila the elephant only lived with Ms Austin in the evening. He said: “When the Head Keeper, Dick Foster, left work, Denise took Sheila from her enclosure, walked her a short distance to her house at Whitewell Road, and walked her back up to the zoo in the morning; sometimes stopping at a shop, the Thrones Stores, on the Whitewell road for stale bread.

“It was also known in the area that she took Sheila for evening walks. During the night Sheila slept in the Austin’s garage. “Sheila was given hay from the family farm, which was of a much better quality than the zoo could provide during an era of rationing.” ?

The Telegraph article continued that “Sheila managed to stay hidden due to the large walls, which surrounded the house, and zoo staff were not aware of her second home until she chased a dog into a neighbour’s garden, breaking the fence.

“Neighbours brought the incident to the attention of the Head Keeper, whereupon Sheila had to remain in the zoo. Denise continued to visit Sheila in the zoo, particularly at night during Luftwaffe air raids, when she rubbed her ears to keep her calm. “

Ms Austin died in 1997, but her cousin said he believed she would have been “tickled pink with all the attention”.

Sheila apparently suffered no harm in her daily walks to and from the zoo, and staying in the garage. She went back to the zoo and lived for another quarter of a century, dying of a skin disease in 1966.

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**Wisconsin Shamrock Club –
State Advisory Board Meeting**

January 31, 2009

The Wisconsin Shamrock Club State Advisory Board met at the Claddagh Irish Pub in Middleton on January 31, 2009. Members present were John Delmore (South Central), Linda Pfaff and Joy McEivdree (La Crosse), Brian Witt (Milwaukee), Joan and Jack Kreuser (Green Bay) and Harry and Pat McCarthy, Jim Bennett, Cheryl Sullivan, Eileen Heinrichs, Karen Sommerfeldt and Sue Morrison (Dane County).

President John Delmore called the meeting to order. The minutes from the January meeting were reviewed and approved. The treasurer has \$200 held in the Dane County Shamrock Club account.

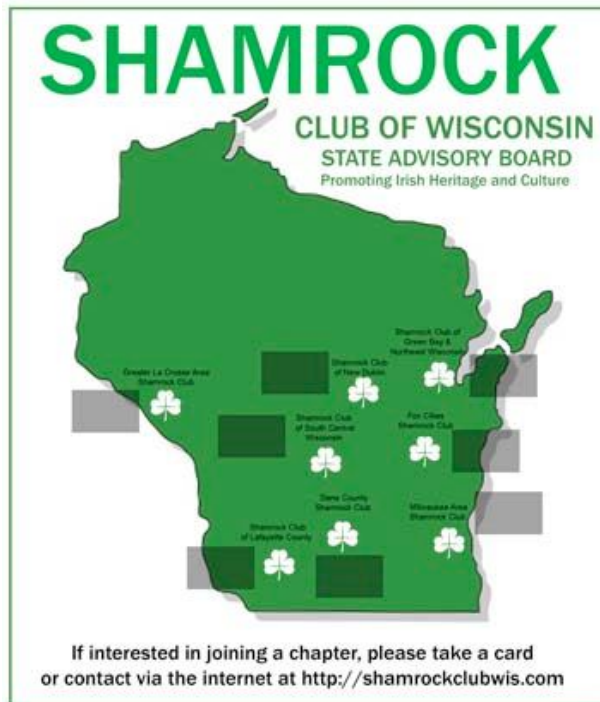
Clubs present shared current activities and concerns.

LaCrosse Irish Fest is scheduled for August 7-9.
[<http://www.irishfestlax.org/>]

Milwaukee Irish Fest is scheduled for August 13-16
[<http://www.irishfest.com/>]

(Milwaukee's Shamrock Club will celebrate its 50th anniversary in 2010 and 40 years of the advisory board – have any historical photos, please contact Brian Witt.)

To check out the various clubs' events, please see their websites. You may get to them all through the Milwaukee website:
[<http://shamrockclubwis.com/page11.html>]



Irish Pride

ASSIGNMENT TO ALL CLUBS: The Board reviewed and discussed the draft of the display that will be used at Irish Fest in the cultural tent. Business cards from each club will be used with the board. They will be placed in business card holders attached to the board in the general location of the club on the state map. A revised copy is attached. Clubs are asked to review the display and give comments to Harry and Pat McCarthy prior to the May meeting. Please email them by April 17. Clubs may use the display at their activities. A procedure for sharing the display will need to be discussed and a timeline for completing each club's business cards will need to be established. We expect to finalize the display at the May meeting. The display is planned to be 3' x 4'.

The next meeting will be held Saturday, May 2 at St. Brendan's Inn, 234 S. Washington St., Green Bay at noon. Mike Trulley will host the meeting. Please email Mike to let him know if you or anyone from your club will be attending. Mike's email address is [mtrulley@hotmail.com]. The website for St. Brendan's is [http://www.saintbrendansinn.com/] Travel directions and contact information are available on the website.

Hope everyone had a great St. Patrick's Day celebration!

Respectfully submitted,

– Pat McCarthy, Secretary

March 20, 2009

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South Central Shamrock Club May News



Photo of Irishman of the Year Atty. Bill Curran, (center) Sen. Dale Schultz, Irish Rose Mrs. Charlene (Patrick) Terry.

Oh my, how April 1st (April fool's Day) played with all of us with its teasing of snow flurries and dismal day till around 4 p.m. then the sun shone upon us. Thankfully May has arrived and the flowers and the grass are beginning to look like our favorite color "green". Well, if you have not heard our St. Patrick's Day Celebration was a success with one of our largest attendance so hats off to those who made the evening successful and to those who so generously contributed to the Marguerite Murray Scholarship Raffle. It was the first time in quite awhile we held a raffle and the response was remarkable. Thanks in kind to John and Jan Delmore, Bob Hanes, Bill Wilde and too many to mention. Senator Dale Schultz that evening presented a plaque to our Irish Rose Charlene Terry of Baraboo and Irishman Atty. William T. (Bill) Curran (see photo left).

May Birthday Wishes to: Rosemary Mitchell (5/18), Scott Dischler (5/22), Joanne Murray (5/25), and Arris Sullivan (5/25).

May Anniversary Blessings to: Bob and Kathy Howley (5/2), Roger and Mary Stieve (5/22).

Belated April Birthdays to: Jim Murphy (4/18), Ken Bentley (4/15), and Lori Gavin (4/23).

Galway Stopover 23 May To 6 2009

Galway to Welcome International Yacht Race

Discover the excitement of the world's premier yachting challenge, when the boats sail into the West of Ireland.

The round-the-world competition will visit some of the most prestigious ports in the world and will come to Galway in May / 2009 – the only stopover for Ireland and the U.K.

For more about the Volvo Ocean Race visit [www.volvooceanrace.org].

Irish yachting fans are keeping a keen eye on the Irish-Chinese entry, the Green Dragon, with a crew that includes Irish yachtsmen Damian Foxall, Justin Slattery and Ian Moore.

The Green Dragon began its journey in October 2008, when the race set sail from Alicante in Spain, on an 8 month journey of 39,000 nautical miles across the Atlantic, Indian and Pacific oceans. You can follow the Green Dragon's progress on www.greendragonracing.com.

From the 23rd of May to 6th of June, 2009, visitors to Galway will be able to join in the celebrations, as hundreds of pleasure and support craft gather on the water to mark the arrival and departure of the competing boats and to follow the exciting In-Port race which will take place during their stopover in Galway.

And the action won't just be taking place on the water - you can also look forward to a host of events on land including firework displays, live music and street performers, food and wine fairs and a street parade based on the city's maritime heritage. Find out more about the Galway Stopover, planned events and book accommodation at [www.letsdoitgalway.com].

For more information and ideas for holidays in Galway and the West of Ireland visit [www.discoverireland.ie/west].

Happy Mother's Day on May 10th (Mother's Day was celebrated in Ireland on Sunday, March 22nd.)

MOTHER

*When you're a child she walks before you,
To set an example.*

*When you're a teenager she walks behind you
To be there should you need her.*

*When you're an adult she walks beside you
So that as two friends you can enjoy life together.*

- Author Unknown.

Welcome new members: Hon. Thomas Curran, Jim Murphy and Rebecca Bria-Murphy and Jodi and Jamie.

Well Wishes to John Patrick McGowan, Jane Geoghegan, Jack Gavin, Mary Stieve.

If you know someone is in need of a bit of sunshine please contact Rosemary Mitchell at 524-8178.

A treat for all of us on March 21st to have our former 1998 Irish Rose – Alice Hickey share in our celebration with us. A big hello to her Irishman Michael who was our Irishman of the year in 2001!

May Meeting is Sunday, May 17 at 4 p.m. – Voyageur Inn, Reedsburg.

– Dana J. Horkan-Gant, Membership Chair

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Milwaukee President's Message



MHC Shamrock Club Griffins Captain Dan McAullife presents Julie Smith team hurleys.

May is another month in Wisconsin where we can expect lots to do both in and out of our homes. I look forward to planting flowers and vegetables, and just walking through the nurseries in the area is a pleasure. I've seen Mother's Day with snow, and others warm enough to abandon a coat. We are always looking forward to the events of the month with graduations, First Communions, and Memorial Day. My grandson Brian will be confirmed at St. Cecilia's in San Francisco this month, and I will be there with great pride watching another generation receive a sacrament.

We have completed our nomination process and we are hopeful you will be at the ICHC to vote on May 7. We begin at 6 p.m. with our Senior Trustee Noreen Barclay overseeing the voting process. Noreen will be assisted by Junior Trustee Kathy Donovan, and Trustee Mary Culver. Noel Tylla, our Membership Chair, will be there to verify your membership, or to take your dues as a new member or renewing member. The votes are verified and announced the same night, and in the offices where the candidates are running unopposed, we can congratulate them in

advance. Unfortunately, no one ran for Sergeant-of-Arms, I will have to appoint someone to the job. Please step forward if you are interested. We will be making this job somewhat easier for the person in charge, by giving them assistants, or asking members to help for a month. Sharing the load will be a fun task.

Let me apologize for the tardiness of the last *Emerald Reflections*. We were unaware our mailing permit had expired, and that delayed your mailing. We will try to not let that happen again, and hope you weren't inconvenienced. Also, remember to inform us of a new mailing address when you move to be certain you receive the newsletter. We also make it available online at our web site.

Congratulations to all our Milwaukee area dance schools that participated in the World's Championships in Philadelphia in April. This is indeed a great honor, and required many long hours of practice. You are a winner just by qualifying, and we hope you enjoyed the experience.

Another word on our post parade party, we received accolades on our decision of free admission. We were able to provide some families a day of entertainment that may not have been possible otherwise. Thanks to all of you that worked to make it possible, the spirit of Irish hospitality was in evidence that day. Linda Tuescher stated the retail area was very busy, and thanked Jean Bills for stepping in to act as cashier.

Remember to let Josh Walton know if you have items you want to include for our 50th anniversary CD. Josh will scan photos and return them to you. Please look to our 50th anniversary commemorative pin, on sale for \$5. Sales of these pins are to help with expenses for next year. Thanks to Heather Majusiak in assisting with this venture. We also ask you to help design our T-shirt contest for the 50th. Get your creative juices going and do this, or ask a friend to help.

I know you'll be with us in May, there's a chair open for you.

– **Julie Smith, President**

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50th Anniversary Committee

We will be selling our 50th anniversary pins at our monthly meetings.

If you have any suggestions, or wish to join the committee, please contact Josh Walton at (414) 443-0446 or [joshwalton1@yahoo.com].

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Milwaukee Parade Winners 2009

The following units were award winners for the 2009 St Patrick's Day Parade:

- Thomas Smith -- Best Irish Unit -- Glencastle Irish Dancers
- Best Float-- Milwaukee County Circuit Court Judges
- Best Marching Unit -- Milwaukee Hurling Club
- Best Musical Unit -- Shamrock Club Color Guard Pipes and Drums
- Best Parade Unit -- United States Marine Corps, Fox Company 2nd Marines
- Directors Choice of Merit -- Trinity Irish Dancers.

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Upcoming Meetings:

The Shamrock Club upcoming meetings will feature the following:

- June 4 – One of Milwaukee's dance schools; ICHC; 7 p.m.
- July – Installation dinner - tba

– Sandy Quinlan, VP

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Color Guard News and Notes

This month will be short, as I am just back from the New York City Tartan Day Parade – 750 pipers. It's quite amazing. The Merry Month of May is the start of our marching season, and everyone is welcome to join us as a banner carrier. On May 16, we will be in Door County for the Baileys Harbor Scottish Dog Parade. Then on to the Menomonee Falls Memorial Day Parade on the 25th. After that, we scoot downtown for the Milwaukee Memorial Day Parade. Then we have a new gig – we are on the main stage at 3 p.m. at the Oshkosh Irish Fest on Saturday, May

30. We have an hour to perform. We then move to the new location for the Milwaukee Highland Games on 6. – Hart Park in Wauwatosa.

Well, until we see each other, in June, that is it.

– Noel Tylla, 6th year piper

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Milwaukee Elections 2009

The 2009 Elections for the Milwaukee chapter will take place on Thursday, May 7, from 6 until 7:30 p.m. Here are the candidates for the following offices:

- President: Julie Smith
- Vice President: Sandy Quinlan
- Secretary: Malkin Wallace
- Treasurer: John Fisher
- Sergeant-At-Arms: No Nomination
- Trustee: Linda Tuescher
- Trustee: Josh Walton
- Membership Chair: Heather Majusiak -OR- Sandra Chamorro
- Parliamentarian: Tom McAleese

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Shamrock Club of Wisconsin (Milwaukee) Alphabetical Listing of 2009 Candidates' Statements

SANDRA CHAMORRO

My name is Sandra Chamorro. I live in Jackson, Wisconsin, and work in West Bend. I am originally from Managua, Nicaragua.

It is indeed an honor to have been nominated for the office of Membership Chair. I first joined the Shamrock Club in 2004, and became a member of the Shamrock Club Color Guard, Pipes and Drums, of which I still belong. In addition I volunteer for the Folk Fair and other Club events. I enjoy being a member of the Shamrock Club, and of the family atmosphere in the Club. I look forward to your support.

JOHN FISHER

John is a member of the Ulster Project Milwaukee. He is also a judge, with his wife Maryann, of the South Shore Water Frolics. In the past few years, they have also judged the annual Shamrock Club St. Patrick's Day Parade.

HEATHER MAJUSIAK

I have been a member of the Shamrock Club for three years. In that short time, it has become a true passion of mine. I first joined the SCCGPD, and worked hard to become one of the Sergeants, which is something I take very seriously. With the club itself, I am the coordinator for the Cultural Booth at the Folk Fair, I co-chair the Club Picnic, have been on the By-Laws Committee, and am on the 50th Anniversary Committee. I am hoping that as your Membership Chairman, I can not only keep all of our current members, but also gain many new members as well. I look forward to sitting on the board, and helping to make decisions that will move this Club forward another 50 years. Outside of the Club, I am also a speaker for Organ and Tissue Donation, my daughters' Girl Scout Leader, and love to spend time outdoors, and camping with my partner Allan, and my three daughters, Kylie, Adrienne and Ember.

TOM MCALEESE

Second generation Irish. Married, five children, six grandchildren. Shamrock Club member 25 years. Volunteer: Bradley Center, 10 years; Folk Fair, 15 years; Irish Fest Genealogy Booth 15 years; St. Patrick, seven years; Shamrock Club Secretary, two years.

SANDY QUINLAN

My name is Sandy Quinlan. For the last 18 years I have been the Director of the Grobschmidt Senior Center in South Milwaukee. I have been married to Kevin for almost 25 years, and have two daughters, Kelly and Kari. Kelly is a drummer and Kari is a piper in the Shamrock Club Color Guard, Pipes and Drums. I have been volunteering for the Irish community ever since I entered into the Quinlan family. I have worked at the Folk Fair, the Bradley Center, the post parade party, many pipe and drum fundraisers, and of course the annual raffle. I also volunteer for events at the ICHC and this will be my 26th year as a volunteer for Irish Fest where I serve as a beer captain at the McSorely stage.

It would be a great honor to continue to serve you as the Vice President of the Shamrock Club.

JULIE SMITH

I have accepted the nomination for president, and look forward to our great 50th anniversary coming in 2010. This past year has proven to be challenging with lots of work, and an enthusiastic board helping to make it all work. We have a great deal to do in the future, and must continue to grow our membership, continue to support our Celtic Soccer Club, Milwaukee Hurling Club,

International Folk Fair, St. Patrick's Day Mass, Parade and Post Parade Party. Our dance schools will be featured wherever possible, and our volunteer efforts will need to be expanded for all our endeavors. Our board will need to streamline activities to make the most of new technologies when possible. If you the members choose to re-elect me, I would consider it an honor. Please realize that this will be my last time running as your president so others can experience the great pleasure that comes with the office.

LINDA TUESCHER

Linda Tuescher has been a member of the Shamrock Club for many years. She volunteers for the Holiday Folk Fair, Irish Fest, Post Parade Party, and is the sales booth chair, and is the current board secretary. She is the past owner of the Irish Trader in Cedarburg.

MALKIN WALLACE

After 28 years away from Milwaukee, I returned home, and ended up joining the Shamrock Club on my return. I became a proud flag-carrying member of the Color Guard Pipes and Drums. I ran the Post Parade Party in 2007 and 2008. I have also served as sergeant at arms for two years.

I believe in giving back to the community, and I feel that as secretary, I can do that for the members of this club. Outside of the Shamrock Club, I'm a full time realtor with Shorewest Realtors and manging director of the West Allis Knights of Columbus, and a contributing member of the Rotary Club of West Allis.

JOSH WALTON

I have served as your Parliamentarian for the past two years and would be honored to continue my service to the Shamrock Club as a trustee. Also, I am currently serving as chairperson of the 50th Anniversary Committee.

I first joined the Shamrock Club in 1973 and have been a volunteer for the St. Patrick's Day Parade, Folk Fair, Bradley Center, and the annual picnic. In additon, I have been an Irish Fest volunteer since its inception. I am also a Past Grand Knight of the Bishop Brust (Wauwatosa) Council of the Knights of Columbus, as well as a past president of the St. Joseph's Benevolent Society.

I enjoy being a member of the Shamrock Club, and thank you for your support.

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Raffle Winners:

- Grand Prize - Trip to Ireland - Mary Finnerty, Glendale, WI
- 1st Prize - Golf Package at Brown Deer - Mary Culver
- 2nd Prize - Waterford Crystal - Catherine Woodruff - Vesper, WI
- 3rd Prize - Stay at County Clare - Barbara Baszynski - Wauwatosa, WI
- 4th Prize - Stay at St. Brendan's Inn, Green Bay - Laura Loomis - Franklin, WI
- 5th Prize - Stay at the Irish Cottage, Galena, IL - Mary Jean Nazario
- 6th Prize - Beleek Bowl - Betty Mikush, West Allis, WI
- 7th Prize - ICHC Package - Laura Sprinkel - Milwaukee
- 8th Prize - ICHC Package - John Brah - Wauwatosa, WI
- 9th Prize - ICHC Package - Heather Majusiak, Milwaukee
- 10th Prize - ICHC Package - Michael Dahm, Hartland, WI

Thank you to all who purchased tickets. We received about \$6000, which will net about \$4000 for the Scholarship Fund.

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First Friday Lectures

The springtime lectures at UWM's Greene Hall continue with "Pete" Kucik speaking on Friday, May 1 about Sir Henry Sinclair, the Scottish discoverer of America. Along with Columbus, St. Brendan and Prince Murdoc, they all are in legend and myth with their "discoveries". If you have time, reading "The Da Vinci Code" would provide a good background for this lecture.

The final lecture for this season will be a rarity for us. Isabel Mendez-Santalla, native of Galicia, is now residing in Milwaukee and will speak on Friday 5, about her native country. Join us from 5:30 – 7 p.m. with tea and munchies at 3347 N. Downer Avenue. Plenty of street parking at the door. Everyone is welcome!

– **Jean Bills**

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Sunshine Club

Welcome to twin girls, Isabella and Maggie, born on March 16 to member Jennie Ceszynski and her husband Carlo Dentice. The girls were really trying to wait for their mother's birthday on St.

Patrick's Day; but danced out a bit sooner. Long time club member Grandma Veronica Ceszynski is very proud of these new little Irish dancers.

Bob and Peg Hamill welcomed Braeden, the son of Sean and Cassie Hamill.

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

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