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A Most Impressive Man – Ted Sullivan

by Brian Witt

When the Milwaukee Brewers take the field for their season opener at Miller Park this month, most will not be aware that a pioneer of baseball is laid to rest less than a mile away. Timothy “Ted” Sullivan is buried at Calvary Cemetery. So, who is this man of baseball?



He owned a number of baseball teams. He managed a number of these teams, as well as playing for them. He coined the term, “Fan” for the people who followed the sport, and coach cars on railroads were known as “Sullivan sleepers” for the minor league players who had to use them. He was a man who founded a number of baseball leagues, including the Northwestern, Texas, and American leagues, and was one of the earliest proponents of American style “rugby,” which was the forerunner of our current football. He was a boxing promoter. He was a writer, penning humorous books and newspaper columns. And, for all that, he was mainly a lifelong resident of Milwaukee.

Ted Sullivan was born in County Clare on March 17 of either 1854 or 1856. He arrived in Milwaukee in 1865, following his brother Daniel to the city. Ted attended school in Milwaukee, and then went to Academy and College in St. Mary’s, Kansas in Potawatomi County. He took to the sport of baseball, and was captain and pitcher of the college team. In summers, he returned to Milwaukee to play for a semi-pro team called the Alerts.

While he was at St Mary’s, he met fifteen year old Charlie Comiskey, whose father sent him to the isolation of Kansas to get him away from the ball players in Chicago. This would backfire, as Sullivan took the younger man under his wing, or rather his pitching

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arm, and fed into Comiskey's love of the sport. He and Comiskey would be intertwined for the rest of Sullivan's life.

In 1876, Comiskey left college and joined the Milwaukee Alerts, where he stayed until Sullivan started the Dubuque Rabbits, which would be one of the nation's non-National League teams. It was stocked with a number of future major league stars. Sullivan's Dubuque experience led him to form the Northwest League in 1879. During this time, Sullivan and Comiskey joined the St. Louis University college baseball team, and married sisters Nellie and Nan Kelly.

Sullivan brought Comiskey and Bill and Jack Gleason with him to play for the St. Louis Brown Stockings, (now the Cardinals), and he managed the team in 1882 and 1883, until he quit, wherein his brother-in-law took over the reins. He then headed east, running the Virginia team; forming the Union Association; leaving Virginia, playing for Kansas City, starting the Western League, watching it fold in a matter of a year; starting the Southern League; and getting his Memphis club kicked out of the league. In 1886, he then returned to Milwaukee to start the Brewers and restart the Northwest League. However, he was kicked off his own team and out of his own league for turning a water hose onto the field and locking out the opposing team to get a delay of game.

In 1887, he was scouting for the Washington Senators of the National League, and he and the owner, William Hewett, came up with the idea of a farm system, a feeder for the capital city team. After a number of managerial stints, as well as seeing the Senators being removed from the roles of the National League, Sullivan turned his attention to American style rugby.

In 1891, he was promoting America's version of football in Europe, with little luck in gaining a foothold for the sport. (He also spent time at home in County Clare.) However, he was able to bring over an English team that played Harvard, Princeton, Johns Hopkins and Yale, and later to schools in Chicago, St. Louis, and into Canada. He went to Europe again in 1894, recruiting players for the various baseball teams who were looking to build up football squads.

Still, baseball was the siren that never stopped calling to him. Although he said in 1895 that he was stopping to concentrate on his writing, he was almost immediately back into baseball. From 1895 to 1910, he started the Western, South Atlantic (Sally), Federal, Texas, Virginia and Southern Leagues, and managed for about a dozen teams. In 1899, he, along with a number of friends, met in the kitchen of Henry Killilea, and reformed the Western League into the American Association. Henry, who owned the Milwaukee Brewers, and his brother Matthew Killilea, Connie Mack, Charles Comiskey, and Ban Johnson were the main drivers of this new league. Incorporation papers were filed in Milwaukee in 1900, and the name was changed to the American League that year. The Irish-American component of baseball was well on

display in the founding of the new group.

Killilea, an equally colorful Irish-American, sold the Milwaukee franchise in 1902, and would later buy the Boston Red Sox, owning them until 1905. Killilea would remain as legal counsel to the AL until his death in Milwaukee in 1929.

Sullivan had no active role in the operations of this new endeavor, though. He would continue to manage, and occasionally play, into his late fifties. He often worked with Comiskey, scouting for him until the 1920s. Ever the promoter, Sullivan organized a world tour of the New York Giants, and White Sox. The tour left the West Coast in November, 1913, and arrived in New York in March, 1914, after playing in Asia, Australia, Africa and Europe.

In 1925, while back in Ireland, Sullivan was trying to get the football teams from Kerry and Tipperary to come over to the States for a barnstorming tour. He also lectured across the United States about the history of baseball, and its aspects and the men who played the game.

The peripatetic nature of Sullivan, a man who always had to get into a new venture, start a new team, or a new league, promote a different sport, took its toll on his personal life. His marriage to Nellie Kelly ended early on, and he never remarried.

When he was in Milwaukee, he lived with his brother and sister-in-law, Daniel and Janet Sullivan. He was living with them when the American League was formed.

In spite of being in good health most of his life, Sullivan had a stroke in June, 1929, and died on July 5 at Gallinger Hospital, in Washington, D.C. He was returned to Milwaukee, and buried in Calvary Cemetery.

Baseball historian Brian McKenna has said that Sullivan has baseball's most impressive resume. That is true, and his story is that of fables. And that the fabulist was so well known, and so important to baseball, and is somewhat forgotten today, is very ironic. To Sullivan, it would be another chance to prove himself.

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Milwaukee President's Message

Greetings, What a month.

A great Mass. A great parade. A great post-parade party. And great honorees.

Thanks to Chuck McLaughlin who organized this year's mass in honor of St. Patrick and to Fr. Terry Brennan, and Fr. Michael Maher and Fr. Jose Moreno, co-celebrants. And thanks also to Chuck's coordinators, Maggie Blaha, Betty Mikush, Pete Dundon, John Hopkins, Gail Neville and Jack Noonan. And to all the participants and organizations including the Shamrock Club Color Guard, Pipes and Drums, Knights of Columbus 4th Degree, Emerald Society, and the Ancient Order of the Hibernians.

The 45th Annual Parade, under the direction of Kris Pluskota and Mike, Meghan and Erin Boyle, stepped higher, sounded louder and looked sharper and did the Club proud. We thank our partner the Westown Association, Stacie Callies, and the downtown merchants and businesses for their support. We look forward to a continuing partnership.

Our float was built and assembled again by Joe Hughes, Ken Tehan and Bob Hamill.

Our honorees: Parade Marshal Malkin Wallace, Irish Rose Patsy Grimes Tierney and Irishman of the Year Bob Towne, represented the club in grand fashion. Bright and proud smiles from each of them for the entire weekend. Thanks to Mary Culver who designed, sewed and stitched the new sashes.

The post parade party, under the direction of Al Moss (and his ever present clipboard) and the soccer club again presented a perfect family friendly afternoon of entertainment. Thanks to Barry Stapleton who coordinated the entertainment, the Victory Christian Academy for food service, and the Quinlan clan for beverage and hospitality service.

It was a great day as it always is and I thank all who contributed. I know I have not mentioned all by name but know your help is always appreciated.

April 24th is the Easter Rising Mass at the ICHC at 9:30 a.m. Brian Witt is the chair and Fr. Terry Brennan will again be the celebrant. Following the Mass will be Veronica's famous continental breakfast.

At our April monthly meeting we will again take nominations from the floor for the various offices for our May elections. Please nominate a worthy member who you feel would be an asset to this organization. The Irish despise an uncontested election. For entertainment, Sean Cavanaugh will give a performance on the uilleann pipes.

Sell your scholarship raffle tickets. Get more from Sandy Quinlan.

Happy Easter.

And see you at the next meeting. Bring a friend.

– **Josh Walton, President**
joshwalton1@yahoo.com

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Shamrock Club Scholarship Applications

The Shamrock Club's annual Irish Studies Scholarship Application is ready. Applications must be received by May 1, 2011 for consideration. Applicants must be of college age, and are encouraged to volunteer for Shamrock Club events. Applications are available at the ICHC and online for download. Please contact Tim O'Brien, scholarship chair, for more information, at (414) 444-1989.

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41st Annual Easter Rising Mass

The 41st Annual Easter Rising Mass will take place at the ICHC on Sunday, April 24, 2011. The Mass will start at 9:30 a.m. Father Terry Brennan will be the celebrant. The Shamrock Club Color Guard Pipes and Drums will again be a part of the Mass. A continental breakfast will be served after the Mass. We are asking for a free will offering to defray the costs of breakfast. The Mass honors the 1916 Easter Monday Rising in Dublin.

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Color Guard News & Notes

Hello Everyone! Welcome to the end of Green Season. It is winding down as we reach the Easter Season in 2011. I began my 8th season marching in March. How appropriate. Again, in honor of Tom Blaha, the Color Guard will carry a Red Remembrance Ribbon (attached to the Shamrock Club Flag) in every parade going forward

March was a busy month, and we had parades, concerts, and more going on. It also allowed us to show off our new tunes that

we have been practicing for months now. Our feet are recovering for a few weeks. The Milwaukee parade was a challenge, cold winds trying to beat up our pipes and reeds. We were excited about being a part of the New Dublin parade again, where the weather was better, and much, much warmer. It is always a lot of fun, and the bus trip is almost as good.

The Easter Rising Mass is April 24 at the ICHC. We will be doing the entrance. It is the 41st Mass, and an important part of the Shamrock Club's history. And it is always great to be a part of Milwaukee's history.

I am acquiring a new place to live, so this will be a short column.

See you at Easter with the bunny and the eggs. And the chocolates. We cannot forget the chocolates.

– Noel Tylla, 8th year piper

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Veronica's Cupboard

The April Meeting will feature "Tax Month Surprise", meatloaf again this year, a hearty old-fashioned fare. Needed: some salad and vegetable supplements as well as simple deserts. Keep in mind that pockets are depleted after taxes. The gathering begins at 6:30 in order to fill your plate before the 7 p.m. meeting.

Easter Rising Mass, April 24. A community brunch follows Mass. We need your offerings of coffee cakes, breads, spring goodies, etc. Lots of morning foods are necessary. This has become a large and popular gathering, people of all ages enjoy this family Easter get together. It has become the way many can connect with their family members before going off in separate directions. I do need help with set up on Saturday (at 10 a.m.) and with serving during the brunch. Each year we get new members as a result of our hospitality!

Call Veronica Ceszynski at (414) 228-8621.

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Nomination of Milwaukee Officers

Nominations for officers of the Milwaukee chapter will take place at the April meeting. Persons nominated must be members in good standing of the Shamrock Club, with dues paid in full, and must be present for their nominations. Elections will take place at the May meeting.

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2011 Parade Award Winners

The winners for our 45th annual parade, as selected by a panel of celebrity judges:

Best Marching Unit: Wisconsin Scottish/Highland Games/Clan Donald/Clan Young/St. Andrews Society

Best Musical Unit: Pioneer Drum & Bugle Corps

Best Float: Westown Association Board of Directors

Thomas J. Smith Award for *Best Irish Unit:* Shamrock Club of Wisconsin Color Guard Pipes & Drums

Best Parade Unit: Glencastle Irish Dancers

Parade Directors' Award Of Merit: O'Dell Irish Dancers

Parade Judges: Andy Tarnoff, OnMilwaukee.Com; Jon Donahue, M? Bank, Mary Fischer and Patricia Doyle Pollet, South Shore Water Frolics.

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Celtic Women First Friday Lectures



Brenna Briggs

Welcome to the world of an Irish American author who has lived in Ireland for several years, writing her books there. At present she is home in Wisconsin still writing her books about Liffey Rivers, step dancer and precocious young girl. Brenna has many tales to tell us of her “interesting” life. If you have ever entertained thoughts, or dreams, of living in Ireland, you will find Brenna’s take on it very informative and thought-provoking.

Liffey Rivers lives on in a series of books by Brenna; all of the Irish step dancers find her irresistible. See you there!

DATE: April 1, 2011

TOPIC: “Liffey Rivers: Irish Step Dancer Extraordinaire” (Easter is April 24)

SPEAKER: Brenna Briggs [brennabriggs@liffeyrivers.com]

Brenna Briggs has written a series of books about Liffey Rivers, a teenage Irish step dancer. Liffey has exciting adventures and solves mysteries to boot! Brenna is an Irish-American who spent several years living in Ireland while penning her first books about Liffey Rivers. She has appeared at the Irish Fest Hedge School speaking with a panel of Irish authors and often attends the dance feis’ in this area.

All lectures are held from 5:30 – 7 p.m. at Greene Hall, 3347 N. Downer Ave. on the UWM campus. Plenty of meter street parking at the door with a wheel chair access ramp. This is our 13th year of lectures without interruption. The public is invited as always. \$7 admission.

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Proposed By-Laws Revisions

The following changes to the Shamrock Club By-Laws have been recommended by the By-Laws Committee and approved by the Shamrock Club Board of Directors. These revisions will be discussed and voted on at the April Membership Meeting. Changes are underlined or struck.

ARTICLE III MEMBERSHIP

A. Membership shall be open to all persons ~~eighteen years or over~~ who are of Irish descent either in whole or in part, by relationship through marriage, or by a sincere interest in the purpose of this Club. The board of directors shall have final authority regarding acceptance of memberships.

B. Categories of membership:

1. Single- individual membership at least eighteen years old.
2. Family – members of an immediate family residing in the same household; At least one member must be eighteen years or older.

ARTICLE VI OFFICERS.

C. Duties of the officers:

1. The president shall be may conduct board votes ~~by poll on resolutions by electronic poll~~ with a full report at the next board of directors meeting:.....

ARTICLE VIII ACTIVITY CHAIRS

A. Activity chairpersons are appointed by the president and approved by the Board: they serve until removed by the president, or by resignation. ~~Activities may include, but are not limited to : St. Patricks Day parade, post parade party, and dinner dance; Irish Fest coordinator, sales booth: Holiday Folk Fair coordinator, food booth, sales booth and cultural booth: golf outing: Bradley Center coordinator: installation of officers, Color Guard Pipes and Drums.~~

The Director of The Color Guard Pipes and Drums will be recommended by the Color Guard Pipes and Drums members and approved by the Board.

C. The Activity Chairs will attend Board meetings when requested by the president to give a personal Report on specific activity.

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Celtic Women International Conference

The Celtic Women International Conference will take place April 29 to May 1 at the Irish Cottage in Galena, Illinois.

For more information, please call Gail McAleese at (414) 536-5306 or email her at [mcaleese@wi.rr.com]. You can also go to the CWI webiste at [http://www.celticwomen.org/conferences.htm]

– **Gail McAleese**

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Milwaukee Hurling Club Draft in May

The Milwaukee Hurling Club is gearing up for the 2011 season. We will have our draft in May, and opening day is May 15 at Brown Deer Park located at Good Hope and Range Line Roads. We will again have both youth and coed leagues.

The playoffs will be August 7, and the semi-finals are August 14, both at Brown Deer Park.

You can get updates at our website, [<http://hurling.net>], or follow us on Twitter at [http://twitter.com/Milw_Hurling].

This is the Shamrock Club's 12th season as a team sponsor.

– **Andy McKee**

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Milwaukee Celtic Opening Day May 1

The Milwaukee Celtic Soccer Team will be fielding a team in the WASA Reserve League for the spring season. Opening day is May 1 against the USA Palermo at Polonia. May 8 finds us playing United Serbian at Serb Hall, 51 and Oklahoma. On May 15, we play Serbian SC at Caledonia, 13th and Oakwood. May 22 has us hosting the Milwaukee Brewers at Brown Deer HS. And June 5 finds us against the Milwaukee Kickers at Uileihn Field. All matches are at 12:30 p.m. A more complete schedule, and team roster, will be in the May *Reflections*.

– **Kevin Hooley and Al Moss**

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Milwaukee April Membership News

I hope everyone had a great time during the St. Patrick's Day events! Given that the weather was a wee bit north of Ireland, that has never been a hinderance for us dedicated Irish celebrants in

keeping with the vision of St. Patrick and the pomp of Milwaukee.

Please welcome the following new members joining in February of this year: Meghan Boyle and Laura Fisher. They both have actually been family members since? a long time! and now are of age and residence to have their own memberships. If you don't know who they are, Meghan is the daughter of our Parade Director, Michael Boyle and Laura is the daughter of our Treasurer John Fisher, and they both have great big smiles.

The Milwaukee Chapter as of February 28 has 383 active members with 173 family, 192 single, and 18 complimentary (libraries, businesses, etc.) memberships. Statewide our membership totals 504 members where the others receive a copy of our *Emerald Reflections* newsletter with a reduced fee of \$14.

With the St. Patrick's Day season so fresh in our minds, please contact friends and other family members and tell them of the mission and fun that the Shamrock Club has and get them to join and participate in our events, fundraising and volunteering.

Please be sure to have your memberships renewals in before March 1 for those that expire on or before 4/30/2011.

We hope you can attend our April meeting and see you soon.

– Denis Donohoe, Member. Chair

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ICHC Ceilis

The Irish Cultural and Heritage Center has released its list of Ceilis for winter/spring. Entrance fee is \$8 Adults; \$5 Students / Seniors / Children. All proceeds benefit the ICHC. For more information please call Julie Clark at (414) 489-1110.

- April 1 – *Wise Maids*
- April 16 – *RíRá*
- May 6 – *áthas*
- May 21 – *Myserk*
- June 3 – *Nancy Maio & Jim McVeigh*

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You're Invited!

The Emerald Society of Wisconsin, Inc., cordially invites you to their meeting on Monday, May 2, 2011 at 7 p.m. at the Irish Fest Center, 1532 Wauwatosa Avenue, Wauwatosa, WI to hear guest speaker Tim Reilly, Vice Counsel General of the Chicago Irish Consulate.

Mr. Reilly will provide applications for Irish citizenship and speak about benefits of Irish citizenship for those of Irish ancestry who are eligible and answer questions about the process. He will also provide us with an update on issues of the day affecting Ireland which will be of interest to us all.

Seating availability and entrance to the hall will be on a first come basis. There is no charge to attend.

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45th Annual Shamrock Club Scholarship Raffle

- Grand Prize: \$1000
- 1st Prize: Brown Deer Golf Package
- 2nd Prize: ICHC Concert Series
- 3rd Prize: four Waterford Glasses with 12 year old bottle of Jameson
- 4-7th Prizes: Overnight stays at the Ambassador Hotel, County Clare, The Irish Cottage, Galena, and St Brendan's Inn, Green Bay

Drawing May 5, 2011 – 7:30 p.m.
ICHC, 2133 W. Wisconsin Ave., Milwaukee, Wisconsin

\$5 each – three for \$10 – six for \$20 – nine for \$30
For tickets, call (414) 571-0722 or (414) 690-0722

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State Advisory Board Meeting

The next Shamrock Club State Advisory Board Meeting will take place on Saturday, May 7 at noon at the new Dublin Square Irish Pub & Eatery, on the corner of 3rd and Main St., downtown La Crosse.

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Donate to the Shamrock Club

The Shamrock Club is a 501(C) (3) corporation. If you donate to us, you can write this off on your taxes. Donate to our Scholarship fund, our general fund, or to the parade. Thank you!

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Members' Doings

One of our members, Michael Malloy, has been acknowledged as a recipient of the Silver Beaver Award from the Milwaukee County Council, BSA. This is the highest award a Boy Scout council can present a volunteer in recognition of their service to youth. Betty Mikush has a Silver Fawn from her time in Scouting. This was the female equivalent of the Silver Beaver.

Erin Canon has had a busy couple of months. She competed in the All Irelands in dance, and she will be performing the role of Meg Giry in the Wauwatosa East production of "Phantom of the Opera."

Tom and Sue McKale have been traveling around the country, visiting grandchildren, all born between January and March. Their three daughters gave birth: Maureen in Texas, Molly in California and Meghan in Milwaukee. Meghan decided to give their travel budget a break, and had her baby in Milwaukee a few days after the parade.

Colleen Jaskulski recently performed in the Whitnall Players production of "Lucky Stiff." Her brother, Nathan, competed in the Padre Pio basketball tournament.

Lori Dahm recently spent time basking in the sun in Florida.

The late Chuck Ward was recently honored by Discovery World, with the dedication of the "Ward Pilot House," which is adjacent to the schooner replica.

If you have done anything you want us to know about, send it to [Membersdoings @shamrockclubwis.com].

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Sunshine Club

Muriel Crowley was hospitalized recently.

Grace Monroe Tylla, the grandmother of Noel Tylla, died recently. The mother of Mike O'Leary passed away in February. Please keep the O'Leary and Tylla families in your thoughts and prayers.

If you have any news for the Sunshine Club, please call me at (414) 344-0688. I have a new email address. Please note: [slainte4142-shamrock@yahoo.com].

– **Maggie Blaha**

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