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Nanuq of North Dublin?

.....
by Brian Witt

It appears that the Vikings weren't the first invaders to come from the north, and intermarry with the island's residents.

Scientists have discovered polar bears can trace their family tree to Ireland. Genetic evidence shows they are descended from Irish brown bears that lived during the last ice age.

When one thinks of the great behemoths of the north, Ireland isn't the first place of residence that comes to mind. One doesn't associate polar bears with buskers on Grafton Street, or sitting in the stone beehives on Skellig Michael in Kerry.

Modern polar bears share a distinct DNA sequence, passed down the female line, with their now extinct brown ancestors. However, the same DNA fingerprint is absent from other species of brown bear alive today.

It is thought the link arose from interbreeding between prehistoric polar bears and female brown bears when their paths crossed as the Irish climate cooled. Polar bears may have moved into what is now Ireland when the region was experiencing much cooler temperatures than it is today. At the same time, brown bears may have been pushed towards the coast by advancing ice sheets.

Warmer periods may bring the species together as melting glacial ice and rising sea levels force polar bears to retreat inland.

Scientists made the discovery after analyzing DNA in mitochondria – energy-producing structures within cells – that are only passed from a mother to her offspring. Dr. Ceiridwen Edwards, from Oxford University, a member of the international team that carried out the study, said: “Hybridization between ancient Irish brown bears and polar bears has led to the complete replacement of the original polar bear mitochondria. This maternal lineage is now present in all modern polar bears.”

Polar and brown bears are hugely different in terms of body size, skin and coat color, fur type, tooth structure and many other physical features. Polar bears are expert swimmers that will swim long stretches of ocean to find seals to eat. The arboreal inhabiting brown bears love to climb their forests trees, and have a varied omnivorous diet. But the world's largest carnivore seems to be able to mate successfully with their smaller cousins whenever they come into contact.

Climate change is believed to have produced mating opportunities for the two species at various times in the past 100,000 years.

The scientists extracted mitochondrial DNA from the teeth and bones of 17 bears found at eight cave sites across Ireland.

Ten Irish brown bears from the ice age period between 10,000 and 38,000 years ago had the maternal DNA that is now seen in every polar bear. Older pre-ice-age brown bears, dating to between 43,000 and 38,000 years ago, had a different genetic signature matching that of modern bears from eastern Europe.

Remains of the last ancient brown bears in Ireland, from 3,000 to 5,000 years ago, had yet another genetic fingerprint seen in modern western European bears. Only the ice age

brown bears carried the maternal genetic hallmark of polar bears.

“Environmental conditions appear to have played, and continue to play, a big part in the evolutionary history of polar bears,” said Edwards. “Today’s warming climate is again bringing modern polar bears into contact with brown bears in places like Canada and Alaska.” The research is published in the journal *Current Biology*.

The cross-species mating led to maternal DNA from brown bears to be introduced into polar bears, which became ‘fixed’ in the species about 50,000 years ago. The finding overturns previous theories that the genetic material came from forebears that lived on several Alaskan islands 14,000 years ago, according to researchers in the US and Ireland.

Study co-author Beth Shapiro, of Penn State University, said: ‘The bottom line is that the two species bumped up against one another for extended periods of time on different occasions, sharing both habitats and genes. Whenever they come into contact, there seems to be little barrier to their mating,’ said Ms. Shapiro.

She said modern day changes in the Arctic climate such as melting glacial ice and rising sea levels has led to sightings of several adult hybrid bears in the last five years. Those cross-breeds could have a role to play in the survival of certain species.

She said the findings could also help conservation strategies for the dwindling population of polar bears today.

But Charlotte Lindqvist, an evolutionary biologist at the University at Buffalo in New York, cautions that this conclusion is based on the analysis of just one gene and needs to be backed up by studies of other genetic material. “I question the reliability and strength of their results and conclusions,” she says.

Still, there may be a rush by Irish parents to name their new sons, “Art,” the Gaelic translation of bear.

Milwaukee July Membership News

What a great time enjoyed at Irish Fest this year. If you could not make it, you missed a very good time enjoying the music and friends plus a little refreshment and food to boot. It was great to see those walking the grounds wearing our new apparel with the new logo. We got a lot of good feedback on the design. The Color Guard also had their new parade banner and t-shirts as well, and will shortly be wearing new shoulder patches and drums skins as well with the new logo.

During the festival, we also had a great response from our membership in filling out our survey at our Cultural booth. I plan to have the results from the surveys by the October general meeting to share. If you did not get a chance to fill out a survey, they will also be available at our September meeting for you.

Please welcome our new member in July, Theresa Schneider. For July, we had 10 membership renewals and 0 membership drops from no-renewals in the Milwaukee chapter. As of June 30 the Milwaukee chapter has 362 members with 167 families, 176 single, and 20 complimentary (libraries, businesses, etc.) memberships. Statewide our membership totals 468 members where the others receive a copy of our *Emerald Reflections* newsletter.

Please be sure to have your memberships renewals in before September 30 for those who’s expire on or before 9/30/2011.

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

**– Denis Donohoe,
Membership Chair**

Milwaukee President's Message

Greetings,

I trust all have recovered from another great Irish Fest. It is always great to see so many of our members on the grounds volunteering in every capacity, from coordination and construction to transportation and tear down, for both the Shamrock Club and Irish Fest. Again thanks to all especially, Kris and the retail staff, Denis and his crew in the Cultural tent who spread the word and Brian Sneed for his efforts in acquiring new apparel that was seen throughout the grounds proudly worn by our members.

If you were not able to purchase a t-shirt, polo shirt or wind shirt never fear, orders will be taken at the next general meeting. Perfect for back to school wear.

I hope you were able to catch the Shamrock Club Color Guard Pipes and Drums in the daily parade, the Mass, their performance in the Crossroads or at the main gate Saturday morning welcoming those entering. No one has an excuse for missing them, they were everywhere.

Congratulations to both the Celtic Soccer Club and the Griffins Hurling teams for their great seasons. Dan Coates of the soccer team gave an update on the soccer club's success in the Summer season (the team had fewest goals scored against the team during the regular season and made the play-offs) and to remind the members that the fall season is just beginning. Check the calendar of events for time and place.

The Club will again have a retail and cultural booth at the Waukesha Highland Games over the Labor Day weekend. Volunteers are always needed. See Kris.

The Club is holding onto a block of tickets for the ICHC sponsored Halfway to St. Patrick's Day Brewers baseball game on Wednesday September 14. Get you reservation into John Fisher as soon as possible, free Irish themed Brewers baseball hats while they last. Cost is \$17 per ticket.

The ICHC Request Committee (for lack of a better title) held its first meeting. Many opinions were shared and many questions raised. The Committee will meet again September 6 at the Wauwatosa Library.

Enjoy the rest of you summer and see you at the next meeting. Bring along a prospective member.

P.S.: A special thank you to John Fisher and Brian Sneed for their donation during the Installation Dinner.

– Josh Walton, President joshwalton1@yahoo.com

Honoree Dinner

Mary Jo Kaufmann has agreed to head up this year's Honoree Dinner. There will be more details in the October *Reflections*.

Green Bay Diocese Trip to Ireland June 15 - 26, 2012

Experience a 12-Day Pilgrimage to Dublin, Killarney, Galway, Castlebar, Knock with Fr. David McElroy, O. Praem and Julianne Donlon-Stanz.

The event coincides with the 50th International Eucharistic Congress being held in Dublin June 10-17, 2012. During the pilgrimage you will see St. Mary's Cathedral in Killarney, Cathedral of Our Lady Assumed into Heaven and St. Nicholas in Galway, Cliffs of Moher in Burren, Newgrange, Knock and so much more.

Sponsored by The Compass, Green Bay's Diocesan newspaper. Contact Amy Kawula at The Compass, PO Box 23825, Green Bay, WI 54305-3825.

Phone: 920-272-8212. Toll free: 877-500-3580 ext. 8212 (area codes 920 & 715 only) [AKawula@gbdioc.org].

Shamrock Club Donates \$2,500 To Milwaukee Irish Fest

The Shamrock Club donated \$2,500 to Milwaukee Irish Fest, to underwrite the costs of the *Gaeltacht*, the Irish language tent. We are proud to support Irish Fest and its mission. In the past 18 years, we have given the festival \$35,000 for underwriting the *Gaeltacht*.

We also were underwriters of the High Cross in the Cultural Village in 1987.

Irish Word Of the Month

tolg - [tow lug] - Sofa

Irish phrase: *Cheannaigh mé tolg beag dearg.* [Can nigh may tow-lug beg durg.]

English translation: I bought a small red sofa.

The Wisconsin Highland Games Labor Day Weekend

The Wisconsin Highland Games will take place on Labor Day Weekend at the Waukesha Expo Center, Waukesha.

The Highland Games will feature a weekend of Celtic fun for the entire family! This includes Scottish and Irish heavy athletics; champion supreme pipes and drums competitions; Highland dancing competitions; live traditional and contemporary Celtic music; Scottish, Irish and American foods; St. Andrew's Pub tent; longbow tournaments and free instruction; battle axe and knife throwing; and living history: A Knight to Remember. In the cultural area you'll find arts, crafts, history, and lore. Discover your heritage in the Clans Area and don't miss Celtic Canines: dogs of the British Isles.

New This Year – Quidditch

Calling all Harry Potter fans—have you ever wanted to play Quidditch? Well now you can! Marquette University will hold demos and clinics at the Wisconsin Highland Games on Saturday and Sunday. The game is for young and old—no matter what your age, be sure to give it a try.

We will have live music, featuring some of the best in local and national acts. These include: 3 Pints Gone, Finn MacCools, Jiggernaut, and Dublin O'Shea.

Tickets are \$7 in advance and \$10 the days of the festival. For more information, go to [<http://wisconsinscottish.org>] or call (414) 517-5163.

Doors open Friday, Sept. 2 from 5 P.M. – 10 P.M., with Opening Ceremonies; Saturday, Sept. 3 from 9 A.M. – 6 P.M. The Pub Tent open until 10 P.M.; Sunday, Sept. 4 from 10 A.M. – 5 P.M.

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!

The Tossers In Concert Sept. 24 at ICHC

Melding traditional Irish music with punk rock roots. Chicago's *Tossers* will kick off the fall Hallamor Concert Series on Saturday, Sept. 24, at the Irish Cultural and Heritage Center, 2133 W. Wisconsin Ave., Milwaukee, starting at 8:30 P.M.

Hailing from Chicago's South Side, the six-member band is a staple in the Celtic, punk and folk scenes and have performed with and been compared to the *Pogues*, *Dropkick Murphys*, *Black 47* and *Flogging Molly*. Combining traditional instrumentation including fiddle, whistles, button box and mandolin with guitar, bass and drums, the *Tossers* play with a furious edge that teeters between rage and raucousness but also finds room for pensive Irish ballads.

Named irreverently for the derogatory meaning of "throw away," the band has been serious about expanding the boundaries of contemporary Irish music since the early 1990s. In contrast to their fiery live shows, their five albums are dedicated to "elegance and provocation" according to the band. *The Emerald City*, their sixth recording, is scheduled for a 2011 release.

"The *Tossers*... have been labeled as the truest modern folk band in years...with a wondrous array of early folk roots, yet taking interest with just a small bit of a rock drive. This sound is best left for ears only, instead of words." – Sputnik Music.

Tickets for the show are \$19 in advance and \$25 on concert day with a \$10 price for students with ID. There are also discounts for groups. The package price for all four concerts in the fall season is \$70. To order online, visit [www.ichc.net]. Tickets may also be ordered by calling (414) 345-8800.

Halfway to St. Patrick's Day With the Milwaukee Brewers

Come to Miller Park on Wednesday, September 14 as your Brewers take on the Colorado Rockies at 7:10 P.M. Bring the Brewers good luck while you honor your Irish heritage during the "Halfway to St. Patrick's Day" celebration!

The first 2,500 fans to purchase this package will receive a special green Brewers Cap and save some green, too, with \$17 Loge Bleacher tickets!

For questions, or to purchase tickets of 25 or more, please call (414) 902-IRSH (4774). For further questions, call (414) 345-8800.

Members' Doings

Dan and Patti Stotmeister recently went to Cape Breton for a dancing convention. Daughter Carrie Stotmeister, has been performing as a cast member of *Battle of the Dance*, which is a reformulation of a show begun in Majorca, Spain 30 years ago, and focuses principally on Flamenco and Celtic dance, hence battle of the dance. Carrie dances in the show and also performs as a fiddler. Carrie moved to L.A. in early 2010 after graduating from Roosevelt University in Chicago. She was a championship dancer with Cashel Dennehy for many years and later toured extensively with the Trinity Irish Dance Company before she moved to the west coast. Her parents saw her perform in the show three times in late March 2011 when they visited her in L.A.

Jacob Nowak competed in the Special Olympics in June in Stevens Point. He took second and third in his class in swimming. Good show!

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

Glenn's Corner Cupboard

The Shamrock Club dinner before meeting continues this year. Here is September's menu items: picnic time, brats and burgers provided. Bring a picnic side to pass, baked beans, potato salad, fresh fruit, chips, etc.

If you have any ideas you think we should try, contact me at [gnowak4@wi.rr.com] or (414) 466-8060.

– Glenn Nowak

Milwaukee Hurling

Our playoffs started on August 7, and the Griffins were the winners, and thus advanced to the semi-finals on August 14. The finals are set for August 28 at Brown Deer Park.

In September, our traveling teams will be heading off to San Francisco for the North American GAA hurling championships. Our teams did great last year, and our Camogie team placed.

You can also pick up your "Who Rocks – Shamrocks!" MHC tee shirt by visiting the Hurling Club site, [<http://hurling.net>].

Thanks for all who came to our Party at the Pitch on Sunday, August 14. We are always happy to see Shamrock Club members at our events.

No matter how it ends up, the season was a great one for us. Thanks always for your support.

– Dave Goelz

New Dublin News

The Shamrock Club of New Dublin will have a 1/2 Way to St. Patrick's Day Ceili on September 17 at the VFW Club House in New London from 3-6 P.M. featuring the McGuinness Session Band. Admission is free. We'll also celebrate our own 1/2 Way to St. Patrick's Day on September 19. We're already busy making plans for next year's celebration in New Dublin. We meet the first Monday of each month at Midtown Pub and Grill at 7:30 P.M. in downtown New London. New members are always welcome.

– Carrie Katerzyske
[<http://www.newdublin.com>]

Five Clues

Congratulations to Tom McAleese for last month's five clues answer of Liam O'Flaherty. He even got the answer of his cousin's name correct. That was the director John Ford, born Sean Feeney.

This month's five clues:

1. I was born in County Roscommon, the son of a British Army officer.
2. I had to leave Ireland in 1921, with a bounty on my head, after serving with Michael Collins in the Irish Republican Army.
3. I went to the United States, changed my name, and became an actor. Eventually, I would end up in Hollywood, where I would make 90 films.
4. Although married four times, the woman I was most associated with was Bette Davis.
5. I have two stars on the Hollywood Walk of Fame.

The answer will be revealed in next month's *Reflections*, and also at the September meeting. No prizes this time, just the joy of competition.

Dane County News

I have some good news to report. The current members of the board of directors have all agreed to keep their positions through the end of the year. Tess Mulrooney has agreed to fill the currently vacant vice-president position and will assume the president's position at a later date. This leaves the club with the necessary task of filling the board of directors at the end of the year.

The club also needs members to volunteer to serve on a committee for Christmas Dinner, St. Patrick's Dinner and the Irish Flag Ceremony at the Capitol. I am hopeful that a few members will step forward to help so these duties do not fall on only a few. Please contact me if you have any interest in helping with these events.

Our next meeting will be on September 20, 6 P.M. at the offices of Cosgrove Construction, 815 Forward Drive, (off Schroeder Road). We will not be ordering food but will be served dessert furnished by Pat McCarthy and Ann Walsh.

Plans for a Day Trip have been underway for some time although they have not been finalized. The tentative schedule calls for a trip to Milwaukee on October 8 with a stop at the Irish Fest Center (10 –11) to view their Irish music collection and display. This will be followed by lunch at an Irish Pub. The afternoon will be spent taking a tour of the Irish Cultural & Heritage Center from 1–3. Members asked for a day trip when completing the recent survey. I am sure members will find the day interesting and this will give an indication if future day trips would be worth the effort.

The cost of the trip will be determined after we know the number of people planning to attend so we can determine the type of transportation that will be required. If you have any interest in participating in the full-day event on October 8, please contact me no later than Friday, September 16 at (608) 277-0394.

Jingles Fest will be held Thursday, September 29, 2011, 5 to midnight Madison Masonic Center, 301 Wisconsin Avenue.

This is the second fundraiser for the Jingles O'Brien Youth Hockey Scholarship fundraiser and tribute to Jingles. You'll enjoy a tailgate buffet, hors d'oeuvres and a cash bar. Participate in a silent auction and raffle and listen to live music provided by Universal Sound. All proceeds go to the Jingles O'Brien Youth Hockey Scholarship Fund. Tickets are \$20 in advance, \$25 at the door. Order tickets by sending a check to: Jingles O'Brien Scholarship Fund, c/o Michael O'Brien, 28221 Allegheny Dr., Madison, WI 53719. If you have questions or would like to donate silent auction items or cash, contact Michael O'Brien (608) 698-5665 or Katy Semenchuk (608) 335-6652.

Dane County Shamrock Club Board Of Directors & Committee Chairs

President: Harry McCarthy

Vice-president/ Parliamentarian: Tess Mulrooney

Past President: Susan Morrison

Secretary: Phyllis Nelson

Treasurer: Tom Feeney

Membership Chair: MaryLou Feller

Sergeant-at-arms Trustee (July 2011): Kay Sweeney

Trustee (July 2012): Tom Feeney

Trustee (July 2013): Cheryl Sullivan

Hospitality & Sunshine Chair: Eileen Meely Heinrichs

Newsletter Co-editors : Harry & Pat McCarthy, (608) 277-0394 / Himac98@charter.net

– **Harry McCarthy**

[<http://danecountyshamrockclub.blogspot.com>]

La Crosse Shamrock Club News

We had a successful weekend at the La Crosse Irish Fest. Thanks for all who joined us.

Meeting Site Change: The Shamrock Club will now be meeting at View (former KC Hall on Hwy 16). Meetings will begin at 7 P.M. and members are encouraged to come at 6 P.M. to have supper before the meeting. We will also have our St. Patrick's Dinner Dance at View. Many people suggested getting a location that is more centrally located than Cedar Creek. Please attend and let the board know if you like the new location.

Sept. 10: Stepping-out-in-pink, Gundersen Lutheran

Sept. 24: Oktoberfest Parade

Sept. 29: Torchlight Parade, Northside

Oct. 19: Board Meeting, The View

Nov. 16: General Meeting, The View Fun night

Nov. 19: Rotary Lights Tree Trimming, Riverside Park

Nov. 25: Rotary Lights Parade Downtown La Crosse

Dec. 7: Christmas Party, Freighthouse

– Donna Finn

Ceili Dances

Join us at the Irish Cultural and Heritage Center, 2133 W. Wisconsin Ave., for family Irish dancing at its best! Our ceili dances are back, starting in September. Beginners and all ages welcome. Instruction begins at 7:30 P.M. and continues all evening. Music and dancing begin at 8 P.M.

The dances are called, and direction is given, by two of the Midwest's best ceili instructors, Gail McElroy on Fridays and Julie Clark on Saturdays.

September – December 2011

- Sat., September 17 – *Wise Maids*
- Fri., October 7 – *Ceol Cairde*
- Sat., October 15 – *Myserk*
- Fri., November 4 – *Frogwater*
- Sat., November 19 – *RíRá*
- Fri., December 2 – *Cream City Ceili*
- Sat., December 17 – *áthas*

Entrance is \$8 Adults, and \$5 for Students, Seniors, and Children. All proceeds benefit the work of the Irish Cultural & Heritage Center.

Sunshine Club

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

Celtic Women First Fridays



Maricolette Walsh

Welcome back to the Celtic Women First Friday Lecture Series as we begin our 15th year of presentations this September 9 (the second Friday). Maricolette Walsh, longtime Shamrock Club member, will be the featured speaker as she will relate her experiences while she served as Mayor of the City of Wauwatosa. Please join us for a pleasant evening of memories, tea and special treats.

Date: Sep. 9, 2011

Topic: "My Life as a Mayor"

Speaker: Maricolette Walsh

Maricolette Walsh served two terms as mayor of the City of Wauwatosa, from 1992-2000. In and out of public life she has been involved and active in numerous civic events. As a charter member of Celtic Women International Maricolette has been a great supporter of our conferences and lectures. She will let us in on her life behind the scenes.

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. 2011-12 is our 15th year of lectures without interruption. The public is invited as always. We offer tea and home-made snacks and promise a delightful couple of hours. \$7 admission.