

*Cumann Gaelach na Ginéimhe*  
**Geneva Irish Association**  
Association Irlandaise de Genève  
**Nuachtlitir / Newsletter**

March-April 2005



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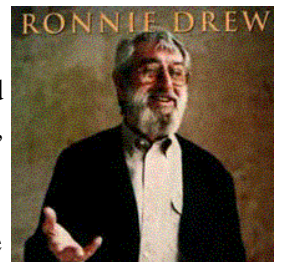
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Brian Cahalane

***An Evening with Ronnie Drew-16 April!***

He led The Dubliners and inspired the Pogues and U2. Hear him reminisce about the likes of Behan and Kavanagh. A hit show which also features master guitarist, Mike Hanrahan, it has been playing to packed houses in New York and Dublin. Venue is the Theatre Cite Bleue, 46 ave Miremont. (Plenty of parking or alternatively take the no.3 bus which takes you there). Tickets are CHF 30 each. Bar opens at 19h00 with the show starting at 20h00.



For reservations call 079-2173357, 079-4744706 or email [dmclean@ireland.com](mailto:dmclean@ireland.com).

Proceeds from this GLAS event will go towards an Ethiopian orphanage for children whose parents have died of AIDS and the Global Network of People Living with HIV/AIDS. It is being staged with the assistance of the Geneva Irish Association and the kind support of Anglo Irish Bank (Suisse) SA.

***G.I.A. Annual General Meeting—29 April!***

As one Committee term comes to an end, another is born! On Friday, 29 April the G.I.A. will be holding its Annual General Meeting (A.G.M.) which will allow Members to elect their new Committee for the year ahead, provide an opportunity to put forward ideas for events and make suggestions on how the G.I.A. can better serve you. The venue is the American Church Hall located just beside the Noga Hilton in Geneva. As usual there will be a happy half hour beforehand at 19h30 followed by at 20h00 the President's report on the year just past, the Treasurer's report on the state of the accounts followed by—elections! This year standing for nomination are:

Brian Elliott // Eamonn Laird // Brian Wall // Lorraine Maire // Dee Windsor  
Mairead Maguire // Ruth Creamer

Enclosed with this newsletter you will find a letter of proxy (for absentee voters) and a bulletin de versement to be used for your 2005/2006 subscription (CHF 75 per family/couple, CHF 50 per individual, CHF 25 retirees/au pairs).

So, to say a big thank you to the outgoing Committee and a big hello to the incoming Committee, we would like very much to see you all there on the 29th to raise a glass and get the new Committee year off to a good start.

**Quick Reminder of Upcoming Events:**

- **An Evening with Ronnie Drew**, Saturday 16 April, Theatre Cite Bleue, Geneva
- **G.I.A. annual committee elections**, Friday 29 April, American Church Hall, Geneva



## ***St. Patrick's Day Gala Dinner—12 March!***

Well, we can always be sure that when it comes to St. Patrick's Day the Irish come out in force and are only too eager to celebrate in style. This year we had a wonderful night over at the Hotel du Rhone. The hotel pulled out all the stops to ensure that everyone was well catered for when it came to food and wine! And our musicians made sure that we were well-entertained into the small wee hours of Sunday morning. Both Ambassador Whelan from Geneva and Ambassador Lynch from Bern were in attendance to enjoy the night with us. Prizes galore were given out during the raffle—in this connection a special word of thanks is extended to the Anglo Irish Bank, Browne's Travel, the Hotel du Rhone, the Irish Embassy, the Irish Mission, Charlie O'Neill's and Mulligan's who all donated generous prizes. Also, a word of thanks is extended to our musicians—the Irish Connection (Brian Wall, Kirsty Griffiths, Paul Carroll and Paula Hanley) and of course to our sound man—David Unitt.

Let's get cracking already on plans for next year!

## ***Swiss GAA!***

It's time for the village of Geneva to stand up and be counted. While our neighbours such as Paris have been winning trophies, we have slept. Time to awaken the giant. This is a call to all. Would you like to play Hurling or Gaelic Football. We are looking for Men and Women of all Nationality. By joining Genève Pats GAA club, this is your chance to play one of the most exciting sports in the world, and also get an opportunity to play other teams from around Europe for a European Championship!

All are welcome and skills will be learned from scratch so no worries if you've never played before. If interested in joining send an email to [swissgaa@hotmail.com](mailto:swissgaa@hotmail.com).

## ***Irish Folk Festival—13 October!***

For lovers of Irish folk music, this year the Irish Folk Festival will take place at the Casino Herisau (near St. Gallen) on Thursday 13 October.

Tickets are between CHF 42 and CHF 54 and can be bought online from [www.ticketcorner.com](http://www.ticketcorner.com) or call the hotline on 0900 800 800



### ***GET YOUR NEWSLETTER VIA EMAIL !***

In order to help us reduce our mailing costs for the Newsletter, we would like to be able to send it to you via email. Therefore, please send your email address to [geneva.irish@ireland.com](mailto:geneva.irish@ireland.com) where we will add you to our mailing database for future issues. We do realize that not everybody has email, so for those we don't hear from we shall continue to send you the Newsletter by regular mail.

## *Hill of Tara—Motorway Protest!*

Earlier this year, the Geneva Irish Association was approached by the Protect Tara International Campaign (PTIC) - a body established to protest against the construction of the new M3 motorway through the ancient grounds of Tara. More than 50 senior academics have joined the protest against plans to build a 4-lane motorway through the valley and create a 25 acre floodlit motorway exchange less than half a mile from the hill itself slicing through what historians say is a hinterland of settlements and burial grounds; not to mention the fact it is here that St. Patrick is said to have converted the Irish to Christianity, and in 1843 Daniel O’Connell addressed a gathering of 1 million in his campaign for an Irish parliament.

Archaeologists who have researched Tara say the 9-mile stretch of the motorway will mean the excavation of at least 28 sites and monuments in the road’s corridor which will ultimately be destroyed and lost. Many more sites will be affected with 40 archaeological zones within 500 m of the road corridor and around one site every 300 m along the road itself. National and international archaeologists have not been listened to in their plea for a different approach.

Astonishingly, the plans have been passed by Ireland’s planning board and are now sitting on the desk of Dick Roche, Minister for the Environment, who has the power to give the green or (hopefully) red light to what can only be considered as the worst case of state-sponsored vandalism that ever was inflicted on Irish cultural heritage. Even Charlize Theron thinks so and has lent her support to the campaign!

The PTIC have established online a petition which can be accessed through the internet by going to:

[www.petitiononline.com/Temair/petition.html](http://www.petitiononline.com/Temair/petition.html)

Already there has been huge response. As mentioned above, they contacted the G.I.A. and needless to say we were only too glad to add our name to a joint letter sent by the Irish abroad which would draw in the perspective of the Irish overseas who so value Irish heritage and culture. The text of the letter can be seen on the opposite page.

We encourage all our G.I.A. members and friends of Ireland to support the PTIC by partaking in the petition or by sending an email of support to: [contact@protect-tara.org](mailto:contact@protect-tara.org)



Dear Madam,

The royal estate of Tara is Ireland's premier national monument, encapsulating over 5,000 years of extraordinary history and mythology. The poet WB Yeats wrote: "Tara is, because of its associations, probably the most consecrated spot in Ireland." Both of the Irish national symbols, the harp and the shamrock, originate at Tara. These emblems have been promoted for decades throughout the world by the Irish Tourist Board to identify something unique about Ireland, and with great effect: Tara and its symbols have become readily recognisable motifs for Ireland and for what it is most prized internationally - its culture, rich history and beautiful landscape. Yet there are current plans to build a four-lane tolled motorway, the M3, at the foot of the Hill of Tara, with a major, floodlit, flyover-interchange only 1,200 meters from the summit. Motorways are generic, and can be seen everywhere; the entire landscape of Tara is one of a kind, unique in the world. It is because of such culturally rich and naturally beautiful places as the Tara landscape that so many visitors come to Ireland and return again and again. To damage Tara is to damage Ireland's tourist image and high international reputation. The commuters of Co Meath need solutions to their traffic problems, but this is an instance where it is possible to satisfy local needs as well as taking account of the wider national and international perspective, for there are other routes available for this motorway and other transport options. Heritage and culture do not have to be sacrificed for development. Short-term need and long-term vision can be combined by rerouting the M3 toll-motorway away from the Tara-Skryne valley, perhaps along the route east of Skryne which was originally favoured by the Government's own consultants, and remains the preferred option of all the Government's heritage advisers.

With distance the perspective always changes; and perhaps what is unclear in the detail of the debate in Ireland has greater clarity when viewed from abroad: a four-lane motorway through the Tara landscape will destroy the integrity and beauty of a priceless cultural treasure, which expert archaeologists, historians and Celticists state is a landscape not just of importance to Ireland but to the whole world. It is ironic that St Patrick's Day will be celebrated all over the globe, and the shamrock worn, in the same month as the Irish Government is set to decide the fate of the Tara landscape. Tara is the place where St Patrick first used the symbol of the three-leafed shamrock in his teachings to signify the Divine Trinity. To put a motorway through the grounds of royal Tara is to deface a national icon, akin to removing a leaf from the emblem of the shamrock. The landscape of Tara is indivisible and must remain entirely intact and undisturbed for the appreciation of not just the people of Ireland, but for all those around the world who cherish Ireland and its culture.

Yours,

FIONNUALA DEVLIN, Spokesperson, Protect Tara International Campaign, Berlin, Germany;  
STIOFAN O'FOGHLU, President, German-Irish Association, Rhine-Main, Germany;  
FINOLA KEATING, President of the Geneva Irish Association, Switzerland;  
MARY GAVIN, President, Irish Club Netherlands;  
FRANK McLYNN, President, German-Irish Association, Bavaria, Germany;  
ANN DOUGLAS, President, Irish Club of Belgium;  
MARKUS COLLIN, Chairman, Finnish Irish Society, Finland;  
ORESTE PERNA, Vice-President, Italian-Irish Intercultural Association;  
ROBERT SCOTT-MARTIN, Chairman, Celtic and Irish Cultural Society, England;  
NOEL PURCELL, President, Rhine Valley Irish Association, France;  
JUERGEN GOTTSCHALK, President, German-Irish Association, Wuerzburg, Germany;  
KARL BUXMANN, President, Friedberg Society for the Promotion of German-Irish Understanding, Ger-



*Ambasáid na hÉireann*  
*Embassy of Ireland*

**Irish Nationality and Citizenship Act, 2001**

**Urgent reminder of changes in the law concerning the  
acquisition of Irish citizenship through marriage  
(Post Nuptial Citizenship)**

The Irish Nationality and Citizenship Act, 2001, which entered into force on 30 November, 2002, provided for significant changes in the way in which individuals could acquire Irish citizenship through marriage. In fact, under the 2001 Act, it is now no longer possible for people who are married to Irish citizens since 30 November, 2002 to acquire Irish citizenship through Post Nuptial Citizenship.

However, the 2001 Act also provided for a three year transitional period, starting on 30 November, 2002, during which existing Post Nuptial Citizenship arrangements continue to apply. It is therefore still possible for an individual to acquire Irish citizenship through Post Nuptial Citizenship under the following conditions:

**if the individual married an Irish citizen prior to 30 November, 2002, and**

**if the Irish citizen spouse was or became an Irish citizen – otherwise than by Naturalisation – prior to 30 November, 2002, and**

**if the individual makes a Post Nuptial declaration not less than three years from the date of the marriage or the date the Irish citizen spouse acquired citizenship, whichever is the later, but before 30 November, 2005, ie the end of the three year transitional period under the 2001 Act, and lodges the complete and correct application to an Irish Embassy or Consulate before that date.**

The Embassy strongly advises that any individual who believes, on the basis of the criteria above, that they may still be eligible to apply for Irish citizenship through Post Nuptial Citizenship to contact the Embassy for further information **without delay**. The Embassy (tel. no. 031 352 1442; fax no. 031 352 1455; e-mail [irlemb@bluewin.ch](mailto:irlemb@bluewin.ch)) will be happy to provide advice and assistance.

Eligible applicants should note that, following the three year transitional period, ie after 29 November, 2005, Post Nuptial Citizenship applications may no longer be lodged at Irish Embassies or Consulates.

Embassy of Ireland, Berne, 11 March, 2005