

**April 2006 Aibrean**  
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**Joseph McManus**

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**Editors**

**Mary Ann & Oliver Kerr**

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**What a wonderful St. Patrick's Day celebration it was on March 11 past! We were blessed once more with blue skies and sunshine—thank you, St. Pat—and we played host to an even larger crowd than last year.**

Congratulations to the St. Patrick's Day Committee who worked so hard under the leadership of Michael O'Connor to make this a day when we were proud to be Irish.

The Breffni Irish dancers again danced up a storm and highlighted some of the youngest dancers we have ever seen. The Irish soda bread and homemade Irish whiskey cake sold out. The Tinkers' Booth was very successful this year. Thanks to Dolores Fitzgerald, Dorothy Kane, and crew and all who rummaged in their closets for hidden treasures for the Booth. Thank you Dan Fitzgerald for being such an eloquent MC and Oliver Kerr for playing second fiddle. Joe McManus, Ann McShane, and Judi Sherry at the Welcome/Info Booth assisted Henry and Carmen Kissane and we thank them heartily for a job well done. C.L. Conroy and John Kane made sure that our advertising was timely and well placed. Thanks to Mary Ann Kerr, Jan Paris, Naomi Flasco, and Janice McKay who served soda bread, whiskey cake, and Irish coffee.

Thanks also to our sponsors, vendors, exhibitors, entertainers, and technicians. The cleanup crew was great—Bill Gregory, Sean Hayden, Tom Lynch, Tom and Karen Dunn, and Oliver Kerr helped to fold the tents and to clean up the park before heading off into the night. Go raibh maith agaibh! Thank you all for a memorable day!

**Election Results and Installation of Officers**

Ballots for the election of officers and board members have been counted and you can see the results on the left margin.

Congratulations to our new president—long-time member and Celtic Cultural Series Director, Joe McManus. Chris Kelley was elected First Vice-President and Mary Ann Kerr was re-elected as Second Vice-President. John Doherty was elected Treasurer and Jan Paris as Recording Secretary. Oliver Kerr was re-elected as Historian. The Installation dinner will be at Parrot Jungle Island.

The **Jacaranda Room at Parrot Jungle Island** is the beautiful location on Watson Island, just off the MacArthur Causeway. The dinner will be **6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, May 23**. Invitations have been mailed. Get your reservations in early, as seating is limited. The price is \$35.00 per person. Checks should be made payable to the South Florida Emerald Society, Inc. Thank you **Janice McKay** for heading up the host committee. The folks in Ballintoy are proud of you!

### April Social is at the Miami Yacht Club

Bill O'Brien has arranged for us to meet at the **Miami Yacht Club** for our April Social on **Wednesday, April 19, 2006 at 6:30 p.m.** The Yacht Club has hosted our monthly Board meetings for many a year. It is on Watson Island just east of Parrot Jungle Island. After crossing the MacArthur Causeway Bridge, follow the signs for Parrot Jungle Island on your right. Drive past the helipad and the new Children's Museum, under the bridge, past Parrot Jungle, and turn left on the road to the Yacht Club. At the gate, press the speakerphone button and, when greeted, identify yourself as an Emerald.

Come and enjoy the company of your old friends and new members by the water's edge under a Miami moon. All Emeralds have bar and restaurant privileges at this quaint old Miami location, one of the benefits of your membership.

### May Board Meeting

The May Board meeting will be at the Miami Yacht Club on Watson Island on the McArthur Causeway on **Thursday, May 4, 2006 at 6:30 p.m.** Attendance of all Board members is expected and members are welcome to attend. Just identify yourself as an Emerald at the entrance gate and you can enter.

### Poetry Corner

Each month the Shamrock News presents a poem by an Irish poet. This month we bring you a little poem written by Irish poet and philosopher, John O'Donohue, who lectured at Barry University just a month ago on the ancient teachings, stories, and blessings of Celtic wisdom. It was wonderful

presentation with profound insights on universal themes of friendship, solitude, love, and death. The poem is entitled "Beannacht," the Gaelic for "Blessing." And these are our blessings for you and yours at this holy season.

### Beannacht

On the day when  
The weight deadens  
On your shoulders  
And you stumble,  
May the clay  
Dance to balance you.

And when your eyes  
Freeze behind  
The gray window  
And the ghost of loss  
Gets in to you,  
May a flock of colors,  
Indigo, red, green  
And azure blue  
Come to awaken in you  
A meadow of delight.

When the canvas frays  
In the curach of thought  
And a stain of ocean  
Blackens beneath you,  
May there come across the waters  
A path of yellow moonlight  
To bring you safely home.

May the nourishment of the earth be yours,  
May the clarity of light be yours,  
May the fluency of the ocean be yours  
May the protection of the ancestors be yours.

And so may a slow  
Wind work these words  
Of love around you,  
An invisible cloak  
To mind your life.

*John O'Donohue*

*P.S. A curach is a wood and canvas rowing boat that was commonly used in the West of Ireland.*

## New Members

Join us in extending a *cead mile failte*, a hundred, thousand welcomes, to our new members.

- **Jeffrey S. Bailey**
- **Caroline Burns**
- **David Gerhardt**
- **Mary Gerhardt**
- **Timothy O'Neill Mahon**
- **Margaret Yoder**

We look forward to getting to know them better at the April Social and to helping them become involved in the affairs of the Society (see below).

If you are a new member and never got your *official, monogrammed Emerald shirt*, please contact Gordon Aurora at Shoreline (305-259-5808) in the Southland Mall (formerly Cutler Ridge Mall). He will take your order and bill the Emerald Society. The cost was part of your initial dues. Existing members can also order and pay for replacement shirts from Gordon.

## Emerald Society Committees

1. **Membership**—Tom Lynch and Ann McShane
2. **Installation of Officers**—Janice McKay
3. **St. Patrick's Festival**—Vacant
4. **Christmas in Ireland**—Pat Novak
5. **Celtic Cultural Series**—Vacant
6. **Newsletter**—Oliver and Mary Ann Kerr
7. **Nominating**—Joe McManus
8. **July 4<sup>th</sup>. Celebration**—Carroll Cameron
9. **Bloomsday**—Oliver Kerr
10. **Socials**—Bill O'Brien
11. **Public Relations**—John Kane and C.L. Conroy.

If you would like to help on one of these please contact the Committee Chair listed above. They all need help and would welcome your assistance, large or small. You can find phone numbers and email addresses in the Membership Directory or on the website [www.emeraldsocietySFL.com](http://www.emeraldsocietySFL.com).

## Help Wanted

The **Celtic Cultural Series** is looking for a Chairman and additional members for the coming year. The series operates on a monthly basis from November through June of each year. Interested? Call Joe McManus for more information.

The **Membership Committee** is looking for assistance with making phone calls and following up with member contacts. Call Tom Lynch or Ann McShane for additional information.

The **Bloomsday Committee** is gearing up for the June 16 celebration and could use help. This is a one-shot event and is guaranteed to be fun. Call Oliver Kerr (telephone on page 1).

## **The St. Patrick's Day Committee, Inc.**

The St. Patrick's Day Committee is a not-for-profit 501 (c) 3 organization affiliated with the South Florida Emerald Society, which, in turn, is a 501 (c) 7 organization in the IRS code. We are devoting a separate section of the newsletter to the activities conducted under the umbrella of this Committee. We received grants in 2006 from the Miami-Dade Cultural Affairs Committee and from the Coral Gables Office of Cultural Affairs to help us conduct the St. Patrick's Day Festival on March 11, 2006.

### St. Patrick's Day Festival

Michael O'Connor, former President of the South Florida Emerald Society, volunteered to chair the event again this year. Weekly planning meetings were held at the offices of the Conroy Martinez Group in the Gables. Thank you, Michael and C.L! A final report on the Festival will be presented in the next newsletter.

All agreed that this year's festival was a spectacular success. The wrap-up meeting is scheduled for Monday, April 24, 2006 at the Cameron's place. *Contact Carroll at [cameronc@bellsouth.net](mailto:cameronc@bellsouth.net).*

## **The Celtic Cultural Series Sixth Season**

The Cultural Series is in its sixth season of presenting Celtic Cultural Programs in Miami-Dade County. Founded by Edward Cooke, a past-president of the South Florida Emerald Society, it has been directed most recently by member Joseph McManus with the assistance of his wife Barbara. Since Joe has been elected President, we need someone to take over the Series for the 2006-2007 season. Last Sunday's session in John Martins was a fascinating presentation **by Giles Kilcoyne** representing the **American College in Dublin**, which is affiliated, with Lyn University in Boca Raton. About 20 Emeralds, several with prospective students in tow, were in attendance.

The May session, which was to feature a lesson in Irish step dancing, has been cancelled because the presenter will be back in Dublin for a few weeks.

The June session will be the annual **Bloomsday celebration**. It features dramatic readings at Books and Books and a mini-odyssey around the block with flags, pipes, and drums to the **Bloomsday feast in John Martins**. This year **June 16** falls on a Friday so you have no excuse not to come out to **Books and Books** after work and **join us for a brilliant, really brilliant, literary feast**. Now is the time to rummage in your closet for those old hats and coats and frocks that your grandparents wore so that we can help create that 1920s feeling to our celebration.

We call your attention to the little lending library that the Series maintains upstairs at John Martins. There are books and other materials there that members can borrow while attending one of our Sunday sessions. Check it out. It operates on the honor system.

The South Florida Emerald Society, Inc.  
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