A YEAR TO REMEMBER!

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MISSION STATEMENT

The Friends of Harvard Celtic Studies, formed in 1993, participate in and support the numerous programs and activities of Harvard's Celtic Department. The primary mission of the Friends is to help fund the following programs:

- Stipends for students attending intensive language courses in Ireland, Scotland, Wales, and Brittany;
- Honoraria for visiting scholars and artists;
- Travel support for students attending conferences or workshops devoted to Celtic cultures;
- Assistance to middle and high school teachers in introducing Celtic literature and history to their students;
- Publications relating to research in the Celtic cultures.

Another important goal of the Friends is to make accessible to the community-at-large a rich and assorted presentation of Celtic culture and scholarship and to encourage non-academic members of the area's large Celtic community to partake of Harvard's Celtic activities. We welcome anyone who appreciates Celtic culture and wishes to participate in its dissemination.

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“Journeys Westward”

Nobel poet Seamus Heaney

That was the title of the first Kelleher Lecture, honoring the memory of John V. Kelleher and delivered on Thursday evening, Oct. 7, 2004, by good Friend and Nobel Prize poet, Seamus Heaney.

As kick-off for the 24th Harvard Celtic Colloquium, the inaugural Kelleher Lecture was masterful, pertinent, revealing, and moving, setting a standard to which all subsequent talks may aspire.

It began with the brooding memories and puzzling actions that attend James Joyce's short story “The Dead”. These ghostly presences were first recognized by John Kelleher as characters and business from an ancient Irish tale entitled Togail Bruidne Da Derga, ‘The Destruction of Da Derga’s Hostel’. The Joyce story ends with its protagonist, Gabriel Conroy, musing upon the journey west enjoined upon him by all those who had gone before, i.e., the past, a reality which must be honored.

The young Seamus Heaney had set forth on his own journey into the real, thanks to some terse but memorable words from none other than John Kelleher, and in the context of past presences brooding over present locales, he read from the original Scottish Gaelic and his own translation of “Hallaig” by Sorley MacLean, providing us a hauntingly beautiful memory of our very own.

Dr. Luft flies east.

Seamus Heaney with John Kelleher’s family (left to right): Brigid McCauley, Peggy Oates, Nora Stuhl and Ann Fisher

Diana Luft, PhD (2004) with Professors Ó Cathasaigh (left) and Ford

Almost as soon as she received her doctorate at Commencement in June, Dr. Diana Luft was on a plane heading for Cardiff in Wales. The recipient of a research fellowship from the University there, she was wanted immediately.

An excellent scholar of Welsh, Diana was a joy to have among us at Harvard. She made innumerable friends here, all of whom will miss her but love watching her professional career flourish.
Good Friend indeed.

At our Spring meeting in May the Friends paid special tribute to Donal Harriss of Lynnfield, an outstanding and longtime supporter of Harvard Celtic Studies, as had been his beloved wife, the late Evelyn Harriss.

Donal had a surprise up his commodious academic sleeves, having organized our students to say ‘thank you’ on his behalf in each of the Celtic languages. All in all, a lot of fun and infectious good spirits.

Thank you again, Donal. You richly deserve your crystal charger, the symbol of deep appreciation among your friends in the Friends.

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The thanksgiving choir and choirmaster

Hugh Fogarty losing it

Messrs. Bempechat, MacKay, and Stewart

Enjoying Donal, Una Barrett (r.) in a duo

Diana Luft in pre-doctoral mode.

Conhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann (CCE) still has need of Irish instruments for its Boston Music School. If any Friends can donate such instruments as the fiddle, accordion, bodhrán, tin whistle, harp, flute, or Uilleann pipes, please contact the CCE through Tara Lynch at 978-549-3702.

Continuing need for musical instruments
One Winter Céilí
to warm your heart and another on the way.

The 2004 Winter Céilí, as these photos show, held its own in the series of very pleasurable evenings. Prospects looked a bit bleak at the start, since neither Pat Ford nor Tomás Ó Cathasaigh were able to attend, but that just meant that MC Phil Haughey had to maneuver his way past Gene Haley’s poetry recitation to get to some fine music by Larry Reynolds, Charlie Bowen, Kate Chadbourne, and others.

NEW VENUE FOR 2005
The Céilí for 2005 will be held on March 3 at 7 PM in the Theatre Room of the Harvard Faculty Club. The main entrance to the Club is directly opposite that of the Barker Center, at 20 Quincy Street, Cambridge. Parking will be provided just around the corner at the Broadway garage on Felton Street. Call 617-496-6305 for any additional information.

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John V. Kelleher
memorial service: a well-attended, moving tribute.

A memorial service for the late John V. Kelleher, Emeritus Professor of Irish Studies in the Celtic Department, was held on May 17, 2004 in Harvard’s Memorial Church, filled nearly to capacity for the ceremonies by John’s family, friends, colleagues, and former students.

Rev. Peter J. Gomes, Pusey Minister in the Memorial Church, officiated, and Dr. Kathryn A. Chadbourne of the Celtic Department was vocalist, rendering a number of John’s favorite melodies, including Balfe’s “I dreamt I dwelt in marble halls”.

A popular professor for over thirty years at Harvard, John Kelleher was memorialized by three friends and former students: Dr. Gene C. Haley, a lecturer in the Celtic Department; Professor Seán Ó Coileáin, National University of Ireland, Cork; and Roger Rosenblatt, prominent essayist and broadcast commentator. They were followed by the eldest of John’s sons-in-law, Matthew ‘Pat’ McCauley; and lastly by Marlyn McGrath Lewis, another former student and Director of College Admissions at Harvard.

Following the service, a reception was held at the Gerry’s Landing home of Dr. and Mrs. Maurice Pechet.

Irish Chief Whip and Minister of State, Mary Hanafin, visits Harvard.

On March 16, 2004, the very eve of St. Patrick’s Day, the Celtic Department was delighted to host a reception for Mary Hanafin, T.D.

At the time, Ms. Hanafin was the Fianna Fáil Government Chief Whip and Minister of State of the Department of Taoiseach (i.e. Prime Minister). In September, 2004, however, she was appointed Minister for Education and Science, in recognition of the growing importance to education of the Information Society she has steadfastly championed for some years.

A member of a family prominent in government service (both her father and a brother have served in the Irish Senate), the Minister had previously been a secondary school teacher of Irish and Science before being elected to Dáil Éireann from Dún Laoghaire in 1997. Her rise through the ranks of government has been rapid and properly so, as her discussion of the issues and opportunities amply demonstrated.
Come visit our website . . .

Friends of

Harvard Celtic Studies

http://www.fas.harvard.edu/~celt_fcs
Larry Reynolds was the Friends’ guest of honor at their annual formal dinner in Loeb House on the evening of December 10, 2003.

As performer, preserver, and promoter, Larry has been the preeminent maestro of Irish music in New England for almost half a century. An outstanding fiddler himself, he came to Boston from his native Galway in 1953 and in 1975 founded a local branch of Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann, the association of Irish musicians, and served as its president and now chairman ever since.

About the time he was getting Comhaltas started, he also talked Séamus Connolly into bringing his family to Boston. Séamus, now Director of the Boston College Irish Studies Music, Song and Dance Program, was on hand at Loeb House to provide a moving introduction of his friend and fellow Irish musician.
Patrick Ford to head for the fairways;
Catherine McKenna accepts Celtic chair.

Just as we were sending this Newsletter to press, it was confirmed that Patrick K. Ford, the Margaret Brooks Robinson Professor of Celtic Languages and Literatures, will be retiring at the end of 2005. Pat will be succeeded by Professor Catherine McKenna (PhD 1976), currently of the City University of New York, a highly-respected scholar and administrator, regarded with great affection as an alumnus of the Harvard Celtic Department.

Members of the Friends Steering Committee are delighted to have this outstanding member of the family coming home for good.
In the next issue we will devote appropriate space to review and applaud Pat’s enormous contribution to the well-being of Celtic Studies at Harvard, as well as to set forth Catherine’s academic accomplishments and her thoughts for the years ahead.

Welcome, new Friends!

Mr. Seamus Boyle
Ms Vikki Boyle
Dr & Mrs Thomas E. Hachey
Ms Crosbie MacMillen
Ms Clair W. Reiniger McDiarmid

The Friends are delighted that you have decided to join us in furthering the cause of Celtic Studies at Harvard, and we look forward to your company and support at upcoming Friends events.

Another Winter, Another Winter Céilí!

Winter Céilí 2005: March 3, 7 to 9 PM, the Theatre Room, Harvard Faculty Club.

As announced on page 4 of this issue, the popular Winter event for 2005 will have a new venue. It is hoped that the brighter, more convenient, and somewhat more civilized surroundings of the Faculty Club’s Theatre Room will more than make up for the lack of a roaring fire.

Parking for the event (just a block away, at the University’s Broadway Garage on Felton Street) is perforce described as “limited”, but it has always been adequate for Friends and other Celtic Department events. For more information, call the Celtic Dept. front desk at 617-496-6305.

FRIENDS OF HARVARD CELTIC STUDIES MEMBERSHIP FORM

Please count me/us as members of the Friends of Harvard Celtic Studies in the category checked below. In addition to participating in Friends programs and activities, I will also receive a free subscription to the Friends newsletter.

Friend $100 per annum □  Patron $250 per annum □  Benefactor $500 per annum □

Checks should be made payable to The Friends of Harvard Celtic Studies.

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If you have questions about the Friends of Harvard Celtic Studies, please call 617-496-6305.