

Irish Heritage

Promoting the best of Irish and Anglo-Irish literature, music and young performers since 1974

NEWSLETTER

February 2011

Dear Friends,

This is a particularly busy time for the Committee of Irish Heritage as we prepare for a series of events starting with the next concert in our Young Musician Programme featuring Michael Trainor, violin, at the Irish Club on Wednesday 16th February at 7.30pm.

Michael is just 23 and from Belfast and has already achieved a great deal. He graduated from the Royal College of Music in London, where he has studied under Yuri Zhislin, Dona Lee Croft and David Juritz. He has performed in quartets for H.M. the Queen, Prince Charles and Bono from U2.

Michael has devised a wonderful musical programme for the event with a variety of music by Haydn, Bach, Barry, Paganini and Handel-Halvorsen. He will be joined by David Wigram, viola, for a number of pieces.

Tickets are £12 (£10 for paid-up Friends) and £5 for students and can be obtained from Kathy O'Regan, 28 Northolme Road, London N5 2UU (please send SAE): e-mail Kathy.oregan@hotmail.co.uk, or at the Irish Club on the night (subject to availability).

Our major event ***Refuge in Rome*** is on Friday 8th April 2011 in St James's Catholic Church, Spanish Place, London W1. It will tell the amazing story of Monsignor Hugh O'Flaherty in occupied Rome, where he and his associates hid and saved the lives of over 6,500 escaped prisoners of war, Jews and other civilians. It is surprising that the deeds of Monsignor O'Flaherty and his associates have been so overlooked in Ireland, but now, largely due to the efforts of the Hugh O'Flaherty Memorial Society based in his home town of Killarney, the true extent of his humanitarian work is at last being properly recognised. We hope that our event will attract an international audience including family members of many of the key members of Monsignor O'Flaherty's organisation.

You can learn more about the Monsignor and his Rome Escape Organisation from the excellent website www.hughoflaherty.com and read a detailed account of his activities in the book, "The Vatican Pimpernel" by Brian Fleming, published by Collins press (www.collinspress.ie). The 1983 film, "The Scarlet and the Black", starring Gregory Peck, Sir John Gielgud and Christopher Plummer is well worth viewing for its dramatic portrayal of the story – it is available at a very low price from www.amazon.co.uk. Among other things, you will learn that Monsignor O'Flaherty was awarded the CBE in the UK, the US Medal of Freedom with Silver Palm; he was honoured by the governments of Canada, Italy, France and New Zealand; and was honoured in Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial in Jerusalem in October 2003, forty years after his death, for having saved the lives of thousands of Rome's Jewish community. He was often referred to as "The Oskar Schindler of Killarney".

You may reserve tickets for this event by contacting Kathy O'Regan, see above. (All tickets are £20). We are delighted to have the support of the Kerry Association, London and the Mayo Association, London for this event.

