

OCTOBER 2023

# SHANNON ROVERS IRISH PIPE BAND 97TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION



John Colletti  
Managing Partner at  
Gibsons  
Steakhouse/Hugos Frog  
Bar and Fishhouse



Tom Fox  
Owner, Fox's Restaurants



John Wrenn  
President at Lakefront  
Hospitality Group



Congratulations to John Colletti,  
We are *Lucky* to have you on our team!



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## 97<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration

I can't believe another year has passed and we are once again celebrating the anniversary of the founding of the Shannon Rovers Irish Pipe Band. October is now the placeholder for many important causes ...Breast Cancer Awareness, Down Syndrome Awareness, Hispanic Heritage Month (there's a good story about San Patricio at the bar later if you're interested) but maybe we should petition for Shannon Rovers Awareness Month because each year you have come out to support us as we celebrate Irish culture and music at the 97<sup>th</sup> Dinner Dance.

This year, the band is honoring some of our longest running sponsors for their commitment to keeping the mission of the Shannon Rovers. As you'll see throughout the Dinner Dance, we've been blessed with folks who have made a lifelong commitment to bringing Irish music and traditions. Since its founding, the Shannon Rovers have performed in thousands of local, national, and international events. Our unique sound has welcomed distinguished visitors from all over the world to our wonderful city and touched the hearts of thousands with stirring traditional Irish music including marches and gentle Irish airs. However, it's the week in / week out performances in restaurants, pubs, and banquet halls across the region like those of our honorees tonight that have helped keep the spirit of live entertainment alive.

The Shannon Rovers "Club" was organized in 1926 by Tommie Ryan and a group of Irishmen, most of whom emigrated from Ireland in the 1920's, an historical period in Ireland. Today, 97 years later, we honor our long-standing sponsors in the restaurant business – some whom have been with us for decades. You may not know them by face as each operates with humility and grace. But they have certainly left their mark on our fair City of Chicago and have been avid supporters of the Irish community and the Shannon Rovers. They are John Colletti of the Gibson Restaurant Group, John Wrenn of Lakefront Hospitality Group and Tom Fox of Fox's Restaurants. Each of our members can tell you numerous stories and humorous anecdotes of times spent in each of their establishments or better yet Chicago institutions. If you haven't visited each of their locations, you are missing out. I like to think the common thread that seems to hold us all together is the genuine love of traditional Irish music – especially the skirl of the pipes.

All the members of the Shannon Rovers wish to **thank you** directly for your continued support. For it is only with your support through sponsorship ads and direct donations that we can carry on the traditions of the Irish.

Sincerely,

Patrick Leyden

Shannon Rovers Irish Pipe Band

97<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration Chairman



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BAND  
97TH ANNIVERSARY**



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A photograph of the Shannon Rovers, a traditional Irish bagpipe band, wearing kilts and playing bagpipes. The image is overlaid with a blue gradient and white text.

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As your local community bank, we've made it our mission to give back to the area we care about. That's why we're proud to support the Shannon Rovers, whose traditional Irish bagpipe music has been a staple of the Chicagoland soundscape since 1926. Sláinte!

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# National Anthems

## AMERICAN NATIONAL ANTHEM

### "The Star Spangled Banner"

O say can you see  
by the dawn's early light,  
What so proudly we hailed  
at the twilight's last gleaming,  
Whose broad stripes and bright stars  
through the perilous fight,  
O'er the ramparts we watched,  
were so gallantly streaming?  
And the rockets' red glare,  
the bombs bursting in air,  
Gave proof through the night  
that our flag was still there;  
O say does that star-spangled  
banner yet wave,  
O'er the land of the free  
and the home of the brave?



PHOTO BY ALEX CLANEY

## IRISH NATIONAL ANTHEM

### "A Soldier's Song"

We'll sing a song, a soldier's song,  
With cheering rousing chorus,  
As round our blazing fires we throng,  
The starry heavens o'er us;  
Impatient for the coming fight,  
And as we wait the morning's light,  
Here in the silence of the night,  
We'll chant a soldier's song.

#### Chorus:

Soldiers are we, whose lives are pledged to Ireland  
Some have come from a land beyond the wave,  
Sworn to be free, no more ancient sire land,  
Shall shelter the despot or the slave.  
Tonight we man the "beama baol"  
In Erin's cause, come woe or weal,  
'Mid cannons' roar and rifles' peal,  
We'll chant a soldier's song.

In valley green, on towering crag,  
Our fathers fought before us,  
And conquered 'neath the same old flag  
That's proudly floating o'er us.  
We're children of a fighting race,  
That never yet has known disgrace,  
And as we march, the foe to face,  
We'll chant a soldier's song.

#### Chorus

Sons of the Gael! Men of the Pale!  
The long watched day is breaking;  
The serried ranks of Inisfail  
Shall set the Tyrant quaking.  
Our camp fires now are burning low;  
See in the east a silv'ry glow,  
Our yonder waits the Saxon foe,  
So chant a soldier's song.

#### Chorus



Best Wishes  
to  
*tim & alexis*  
*le fevour*  
and  
*the shannon rovers*



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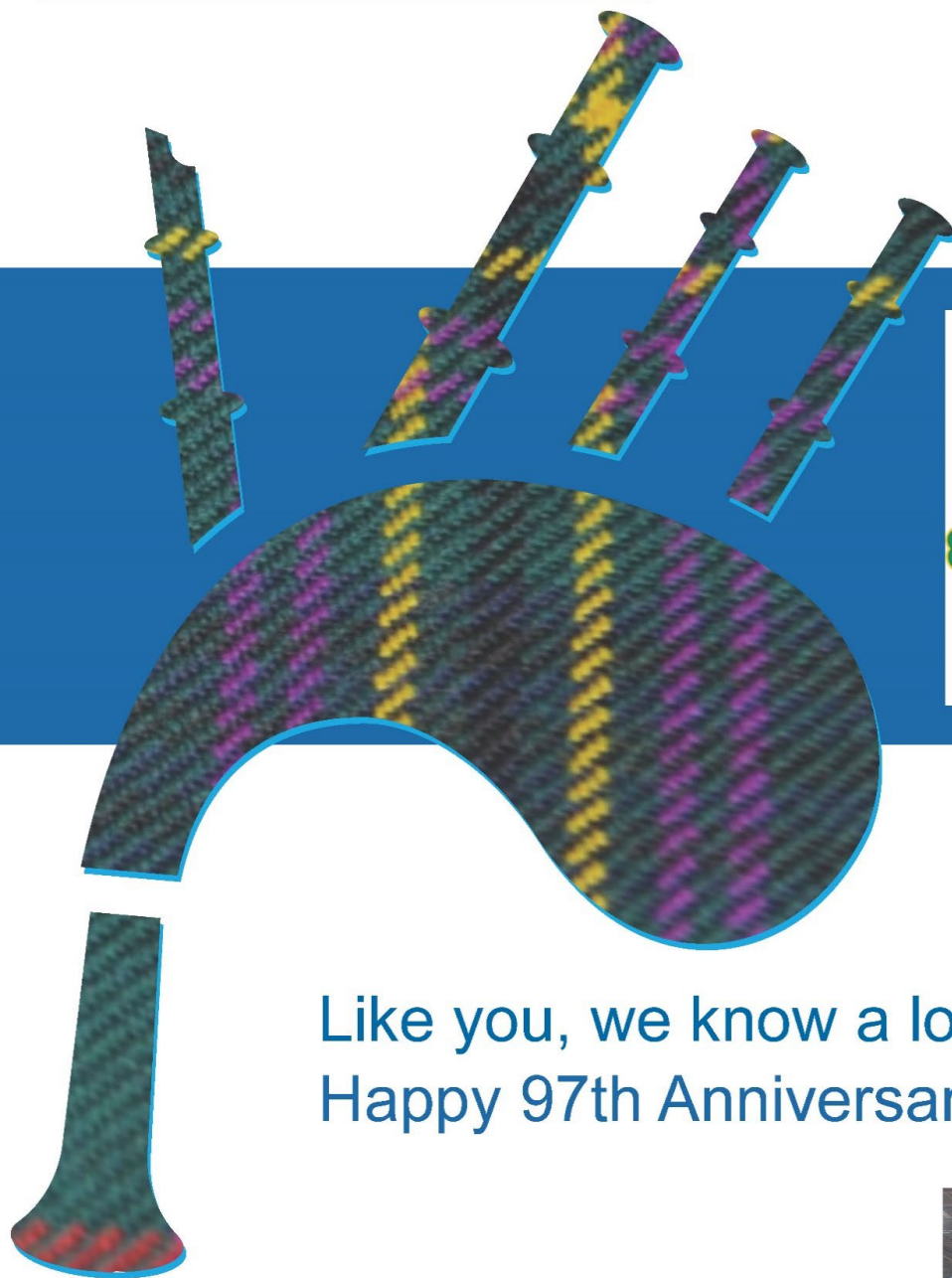




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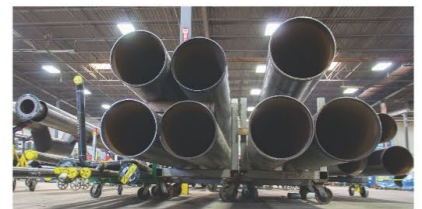
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October 2023

# THE MEETING OF THE BANDS

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*The Meeting of the Bands, by Sheila Murphy*



## THE BANDS

Those familiar with the Shannon Rovers have likely heard or read how our premier pipe band began in 1926 as a fife and drum band comprised of five men, led by Tommie Ryan. What most people do not know is the legacy of some of our members.

In 1932, as the Shannon Rovers were putting down their fifes and picking up the bagpipes, Tommie Ryan was recruiting men and women to form the Shannon Rovers Irish Pipe Band. Through the years, several members hailed from Arranmore Island, Co. Donegal. Having played for the Arranmore Pipe Band, the O'Hara's, O'Donnell's, and Boyle's were well-equipped to share their talents in Chicago.

The Boyles joined the Shannon Rovers in 1952 when the Chicago Shamrock Pipe Band disbanded. Bagpipers and brothers Phil, John, and Patrick were the uncles of current band member Danny Boyle. The Shannon Rovers quickly became a family affair for the Boyles, as Danny and his brother Phil joined the band in the 1960's. Danny married bagpiper Noreen Loftus, and both Danny and Phil were able to proudly march alongside their children as they, too, joined the band.

In the 1990s, at the encouragement of Danny's mother, Danny's then eight-year-old cousin, Kevin Murphy, took up the bagpipes and became a Rover. Kevin later returned the favor by encouraging his sister, Sheila, to become a snare drummer. As the Arranmore legacy lives on in the Shannon Rovers, so does the Arranmore Pipe Band. This September, the Arranmore Pipe Band made a historic trip to the United States to follow in their ancestors' footsteps to Beaver Island, Michigan, and Chicago.





For nearly 15 years, the Arranmore Pipe Band was led by Pipe Major Alec Brown. Alec, originally from Fife, Scotland, was a phenomenal piper who served as Pipe Major to the Black Watch Pipes and Drums before retiring on Arranmore Island. Alec dreamed of bringing the Arranmore Pipe Band to play in Beaver Island and Chicago. After working tirelessly to plan the trip for over a year, Alec, passed away unexpectedly in July. Generously, Alec's brother Tam, agreed to travel from Scotland to finish preparing the Arranmore Pipe Band and lead them on their journey to the States.

With great pleasure and powerful sound, the Arranmore Pipe Band and the Shannon Rovers Irish Pipe Band came together to bring the music of our forefathers to a welcoming crowd of over 200 at the Irish American Heritage Center in September. Following the performance, members of both bands had the opportunity to meet and learn from each other. It was truly an honor to be a part of this historical event, where two great bands with ties that date back to 1926, were able to share in their music and history.



Congratulations to the Shannon Rovers  
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# Celebrating 97 Years of Irish Tradition



We are proud to support the Shannon Rovers Irish Pipe Band and their efforts promoting the Way of the Gael in Chicago.

Congratulations to this year's honorees, John Colletti, John Wrenn and Tom Fox.



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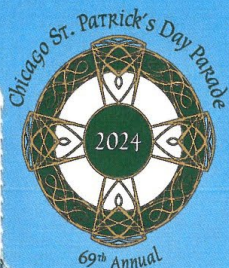




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# **Martin Maude**

## **EMBEDDED REPORTER**

**March 17th, 115 Bourbon Street with WGN News.**

**St Patrick's Day Extravaganza.**

**Start time 6:45 am.**

**On a cold, dark Friday morning, we packed up the car and headed down to the 115 Bourbon Street, Merrionette Park. It was an early morning Band job. My wife, Marita and I decided to take our two sons with us. Because nothing says a family outing like leaving the house at 5:00 a.m.**

**to play at a bar. (That's the Chicago way.)**

**We have never played the Bourbon Street Band engagement before, so this was our first experience. They had not done it for a few years, so we were excited to finally be part of it. What an experience! Just after 6am and the parking lot is already filled. We weren't sure what was going to happen next or what to expect, but we were pleasantly surprised the whole time. My sons, Emmett and Ryan enjoy coming to band engagements with us. This day was different.**

**They really wanted to come to 115 Bourbon Street because the WGN News Team would be there. We watch the Channel 9 Morning News Team religiously every morning. To actually see them in person – well that was all they needed to hear. There was no stopping them from coming along. When we arrived, our first surprise was the size of Bourbon Street. The place is massive! We get inside and we start wondering around, looking for other Rovers. Every room was packed but no Rovers to be found. We started asking the workers there and they point us to the back room. The bagpipers are “back there” they say. Well, there are bagpipers alright, but it's another group. How many “back rooms” does Bourbon Street have?**

**Finally, the Rovers start coming into the back room from the other halls. The Pipers do a tune up to ensure a tight performance for our friends at WGN and their TV audience. The Drummers, who are always ready to go, wait for them to finish. It turns out they want us to play a couple of times during the broadcast. Once during a new skit with the other pipe band for a Bean Bag Toss Game – except this was with bass drum mallets. Then, they had us line up and march into the Main Room where the newscasters were broadcasting on the Main Stage. While we were waiting to play, I get a text message from Emmett. He and Ryan got a selfie with Larry Potash, as he was walking thru the rooms. The little stinkers! How did they beat me? I didn't get a chance to meet Larry, but I did say hello to Paul Konrad when he was talking to us and a quick hello to Mike Toomey as he walked by. The most amazing part of that job, was how well it was organized. They would do the daily news stories, then a break to the Shannon Rovers playing, then a School Choir, then Irish Dancers, the Jessie White Tumblers. It was nonstop. They had entertainment going on in each room. It looks great on TV, but to see how they put it all together, amid the St Patrick's Day celebration was simply amazing. You can really see and appreciate all the hard work that goes into putting that Show together. Plus, I have to hand it to the South Siders, when they say they've been celebrating all day ...they mean it. We had a great time and look forward to playing there again.**



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**SALUTES**  
**THE SHANNON ROVERS**

# **Martin Maude**

## **EMBEDDED REPORTER**

**March 29th, Harry Caray's Tavern, Navy Pier.**

**Toast to Harry Caray- Mayor of Rush Street.**

**Start time 6:30 a.m.**

Once again, at 5:00 a.m, we load up the car and head to another bar in Chicago with our two sons, Ryan and Emmett. This time, we are heading down to Navy Pier, to play for a Toast to Harry Caray. Another new band engagement, we haven't played before. The timing is right and Marita and I can play together - which is always fun. This is our first time down at this engagement, so we made some newbie mistakes. We ended up parking at the far end of Navy Pier, not closest to the bar itself (my "Rover Senses" normally get me closest to the bar). We walk along the inside of Navy Pier, which is mostly closed at this hour. The Golden Rule in the Rovers is to never be late for a band job. Suddenly, we hear a single bagpipe tuning. We know we are close. We find the Tavern and the Rovers, so we are set.

The Staff running Harry Caray's treats us very well. They explain what's going on – which is would have been difficult for even the most seasoned partygoers. The bar is packed with people and all are excited to be there and Toast Harry Caray and vote him in (posthumously of course) as the "Mayor of Rush Street" for another term. We set up for the news segments. Play a few tunes. They yell cut when they go on break. In between the news stories, we get a great meal. Once again, our favorite Morning News Team is on the scene. WGN News is there reporting the event and checking in the anchors back at the WGN Studio. We play a few more times. Everyone is handed out a pair of giant Harry Caray type glasses including Cubs HOF Ryne Sandberg, Sox great Ron Kittle and Ryan Dempster as well as several Band Members who donned them during the gig in Harry's honor. During one of the breaks, we got a chance to chat with Ana Belaval and Pat Tomasulu - two of WGN News finest. Emmett and Ryan were standing right behind them during a news segment, so they got a lot of air time. We also got a picture with them at the end of the job. Another great Rover memory in the books. When you're with the Shannon Rovers, you end up playing in different and unusual places. You never know who you will meet and what you will be doing during the day, but it is always a great time. Were happy to bring our sons with, because they enjoy the experiences as much as we do. And naturally, we hope our music brings you joy and fond memories as well.





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Best wishes to  
The Shannon Rovers &  
Tim LeFevour,  
Alexis LeFevour,  
and Marty McAndrew

DeMARSH CONSTRUCTION  
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# ROVING IN THE BIG EASY

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OCTOBER 2023

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## Roving in the Big Easy

by Pat Van De Walle

While the we pride ourselves in spreading the way of the Gael in and around the Chicagoland area, every once in a while, the Shannon Rovers get the travel itch. There comes a time when we like taking our show on the road to celebrate with the great people of this country. Past trips have included marching in Savannah and Boston St. Patrick's Day parades, playing at the White House in Washington DC, entertaining lowans at the John Wayne Museum, and playing on the Auld Sod in Dublin, Ireland or down under in Australia. Since the pandemic, the Rovers had been confined to playing locally, but about a year ago, murmurs of another Rover Road Trip began in earnest. But where should we take our talents?

One night, over a pint or three, Tom Finnegan and Pat Van De Walle came up with what seemed like a natural fit: the Shannon Rovers should go New Orleans and play at Mardi Gras. Using his connections from his days attending Loyola University-New Orleans, Tom was put in touch with the chief organizer for Mardi Gras parades and his offer was met with great enthusiasm. "Yes! We would love to have the legendary Shannon Rovers from Chicago march in one of our parades!" In no time at all, we were booked in one of the biggest parades of the season - the Krewe of Endymion - on the Saturday before Fat Tuesday. A plan was hatched, and on February 17th, the Rovers headed to the Bayou. Once travel arrangements were secured and a hotel was booked, Tom and Pat worked on the agenda







. While marching in a major Krewe parade would be the tentpole event, we knew the Rovers were capable of spreading the joy to other areas of the Big Easy. After all, why spend one night in New Orleans when you can spend three? After speaking with his close friends John and Melissa Cruse, Pat set up a Friday night “Welcome Party” for all Rovers and guests at their home in neighboring Metairie. It was a chance for Chicago to meet and mingle with New Orleans – and the southern hospitality was on display as soon as we walked through the back gates of the Cruse home. We were greeted by friends and neighbors who had brought over traditional NOLA fare like gumbo, jambalaya, red beans and rice, and fried shrimp. In the Pavilion – their garage that has been transformed into a speakeasy worthy of being on Bourbon Street – the Rovers ate, drank, and performed for the neighborhood well into the evening.

After new friendships were formed and cocktails were polished off, we headed back to the French Quarter

. Saturday morning arrived, and we gathered in the lobby uniformed in our special Mardi Gras gear provided (once again) by our great friend, donor, and Color Guard member Pat Leyden.

We then boarded busses to the Endymion parade starting point in Mid City. While the Rovers have marched in many a long parade before, even we were surprised at just how long a route – over 5 miles – and how long of a day – over 8 hours – this endeavor would take. Equally as surprising were the size of the crowds from start to finish, some having set up their spots along the route up to two days beforehand. The largess of the floats in the parade was breathtaking and the seemingly endless amounts of beads, cups, and other doubloons thrown to parade goers was unbelievable. This included our custom made Shannon Rover beads (once again courtesy of our generous donors!) It was only a few strides in when we realized that this was not just a parade, but a full-on revival! Playing our best and armed with a few tunes prepared especially for the occasion, we marched on, careful to avoid the plastic frisbees at our feet and kicking strands of beads to the side.

AND THE PEOPLE LOVED US!





**Shannon Rovers Irish Pipe Band  
97<sup>h</sup> Anniversary Celebration  
“Way of the Gael”  
Program Book**

- ❖ Evening Entertainment
  - “The Boils” cocktail hour)& Orchestra 33 after dinner music
- ❖ Welcome for the 95<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Chairman
  - Patrick Leyden
- ❖ National Anthems
- ❖ Officers and Members
- ❖ Honorees - John Colletti, John Wrenn, Tom Fox
- ❖ Lisa Leyden Award
- ❖ Barbara O’Hara Award
- ❖ Best of the Shannon Rovers
- ❖ Sponsors



See the 97<sup>h</sup> Anniversary Program  
<https://shannonrovers.com>

## **The Barbara O'Hara Inspiration Award**

Each year we recognize one of our own for their contributions to the band and the Irish community. A tradition that goes back to 1994 when the Officers of the Band, with full backing of the members, recognized Barbara O'Hara for her years of service and dedication to Irish Community and Shannon Rovers. For Barbara that started with her 1<sup>st</sup> Chicago's St. Patrick's Day parade, as an officer for over 25 years, and continued until her passing. In all those years she never missed an opportunity to provide a kind word of support, to recognize other members for their achievements, to provide a subtle nudge in the right direction with things were going off track, or simply to give Michael Flatley some advice on his dance. It was only natural that the Inspiration Award would be named in her honor moving forward from 'on.

Last year, the Barbara O'Hara award went to Peg Macias, who has been the heart and soul of the Rovers ever since joining the Shannon Rovers. She possesses that little something extra - which can best be described as the Way of the Gael – spreading Irish culture through our music, laughter and storytelling. Peg's great gift to us has been her compassion and empathy - always there when you need a someone to listen.

2022-2023 has been a challenging time - getting back into the swing of things. However, there is no exception to this tradition of recognizing those that stand out. This year's honoree exemplifies the Way of the Gael. Tom Conway has been a dedicated musician and leader throughout his years with the Rovers. Always with a smile and never an unkind word. Rather, Tom leads by example - if something needs to be done....Tom is there to help out. No distance is too great and no punch line is too far reaching. Tom uses his humor and his infectious laugh to get things done.. Congratulations to Tom Conway and thank you for your service and inspiration.



## The Barbara O'Hara Inspiration Award



## The Barbara O'Hara Inspiration Award

















We heard “Thank You, Chicago!” so many times during the day that it instantly made us feel welcomed and appreciated. After the long and glorious parade ended (thankfully in front of our hotel,) the Rovers settled in for some well-deserved libations and rest and prepared for their Sunday adventures! Sunday bar jobs. That meant we HAD to play at the legendary Pat O’Brien’s. As we tuned up on St. Peter street, the crowds began to gather. People surrounded us to take pictures and videos, and our social media feeds were tagged. We made the bar Boondock Saints our unofficial home bar for the day. Once again, THE PEOPLE LOVED US. We marched triumphantly threw Pat O’s and on to their legendary patio. Patrons sipped Hurricanes and cheered for the Rovers as Pat Sullivan jumped up onto the fountain and gave his familiar Sermon on the Rovers. It was Sunday, and Pat O’Brien’s was Mardi Gras’ church. After an unforgettable set, we sat with patrons and met knew friends.

We headed to Frenchman Street - the musical heartbeat of New Orleans – and played in a couple of bar jobs there as well. We met two women who owned a bookstore and lived in a beautiful apartment above it. They invited the band upstairs to play on their balcony above Frenchman, with party goers below cheering us on. One of the women even pulled out her trombone and joined us for a rousing rendition of “When The Saints Go Marching in!” It was a glorious moment! From that point on, we walked the streets of the French Quarter, stopping to play when the moment struck us or when the hundreds of people in the street cheered for it. The scene was just as we had hoped it would be. In true Rover fashion, we talked our way onto another balcony bar above Bourbon Street and threw our beads to those below. It was on the balcony, as day turned into evening and people were spilling into the streets, that we all knew we had been a part of something special.







Pat and Tom toasted each other (probably for the 500th time that weekend) and as the plan they envisioned became a reality. As the night went on, Rovers took part in celebrations all around the great city of New Orleans. I am pretty sure most of us even made it home on Monday 😊. It was a trip for the ages, and we owe it in no small part to our fantastic donors for allowing us to make yet another out of town journey. Because of your generosity tonight in attending our Dinner Dance or purchasing an ad or buying raffle tickets, we are able to occasionally travel these United States and spread the celebration of our Irish music and culture.

For this trip and for all the ones to come, we Thank You. While traveling is fun and reinvigorating, Chicago is and will always be our Home. Our New Orleans experience last February got us in the right head space to go and play our hearts out during the St. Patrick's Day season. And no matter where we travel, we will ALWAYS return and play our very best for You.

Slainte!

Pat Van De Walle









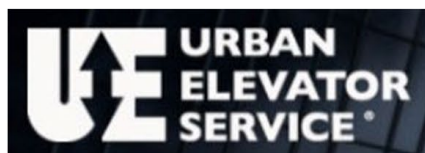
A low-angle, upward-looking photograph of two modern skyscrapers with glass facades, set against a dramatic, cloudy sky. The perspective creates a sense of height and scale.

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Tim LeFevour & Marty McAndrew





**Congrats to John Wrenn on all of your  
accomplishments and thank you for your  
friendship!**

**Wishing Tim LeFevour and all of the Shannon  
Rovers continued success and best wishes!**



**Sláinte!**  
**Luke Pesha & Family**





# TOR CONSTRUCTION

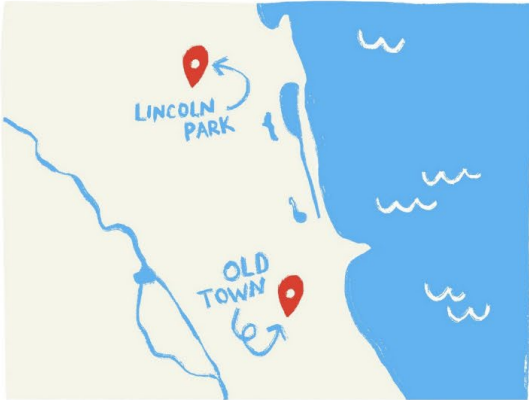
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FAMILY  
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Love,  
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# HAPPY 97<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY



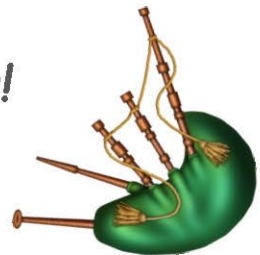
*Congratulations Shannon Rovers on 97 years!*

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Our dancers have a long history of performing at events across Chicagoland with the Shannon Rovers. We are always thrilled to share the stage and listen to the beautiful sounds of the pipes and drums.



*Here's to the next 97 years!*



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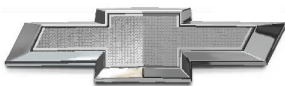
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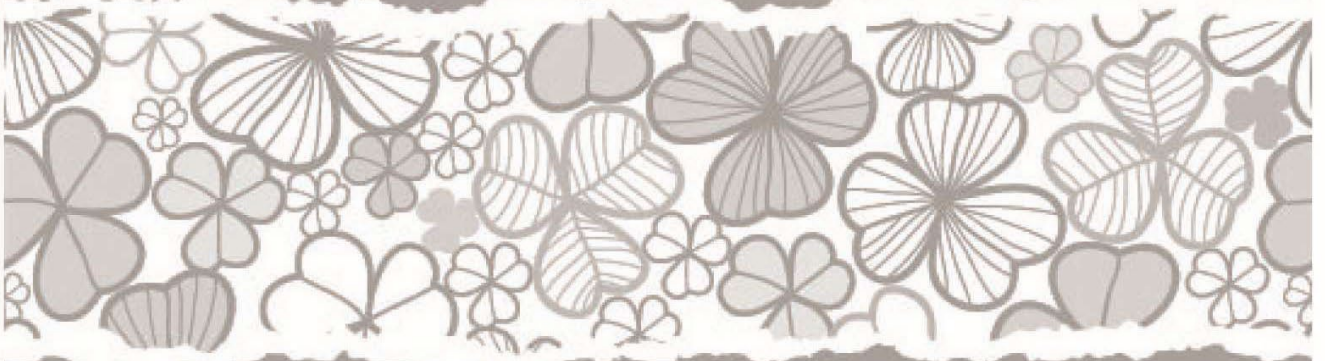
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BEST WISHES TO  
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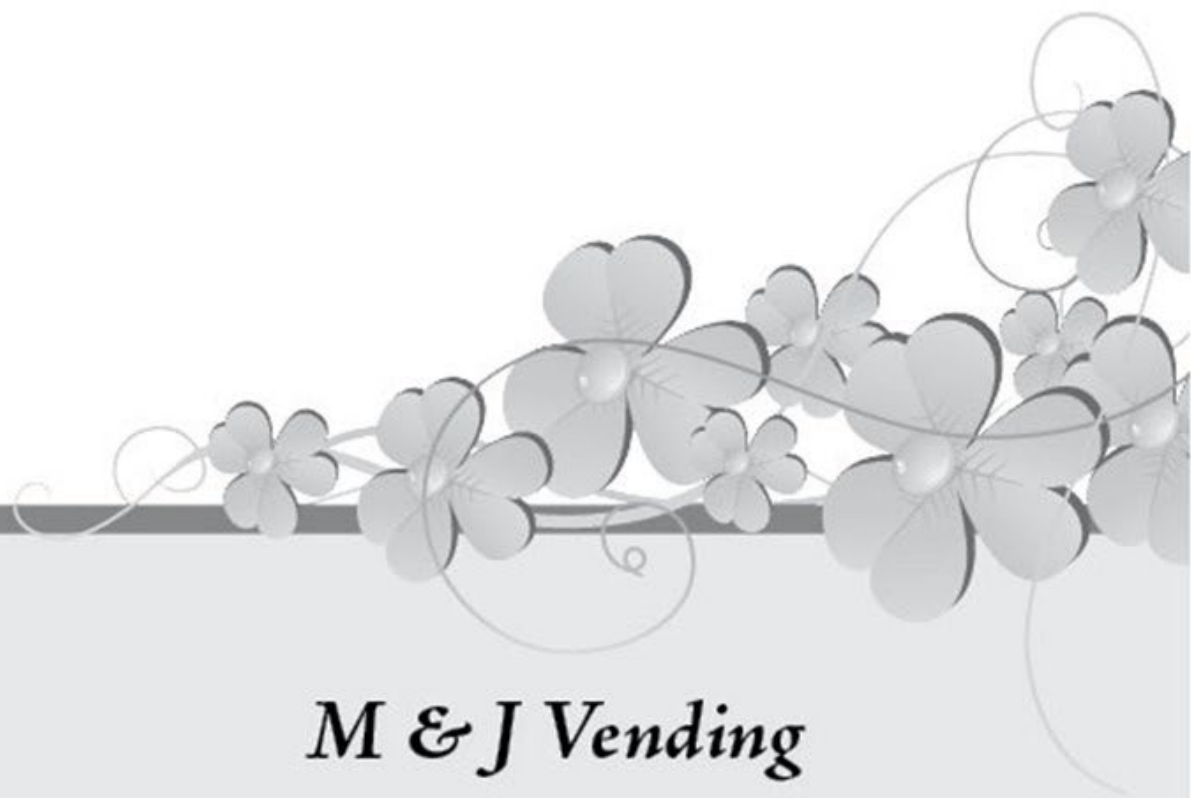
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TO THE  
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Tim LeFevour,  
and  
Marty McAndrew*



THE MICHAEL BRADY FAMILY WOULD LIKE TO  
CONGRATULATE THE SHANNON ROVERS IRISH  
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BAND ON 97 YEARS OF CELEBRATING IRISH  
HERITAGE AND MUSIC





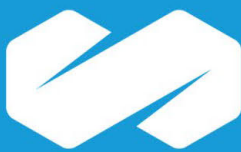
BEST WISHES TO DEAGLAN MCANDREW  
AND MARTY MCANDREW FOR  
SPREADING THE JOY OF IRISH  
BAGPIPE MUSIC AND LEADING THE  
SHANNON ROVERS ON ANOTHER  
SUCCESSFUL YEAR





CHEERS TO THE  
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FROM THE MCANDREW FAMILY



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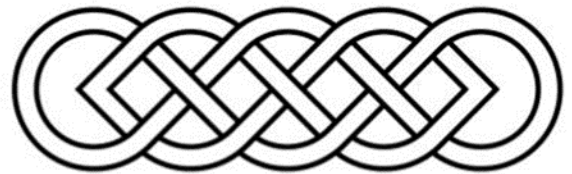
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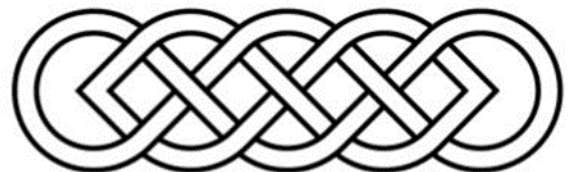


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# O'Neil's on Wells

*O'Neil's on Wells salutes all of the  
members of the Shannon Rovers  
Irish Pipe Band*

A black and white photograph of the Chicago skyline at night, with numerous skyscrapers illuminated against a dark sky. The city is reflected in the water in the foreground.

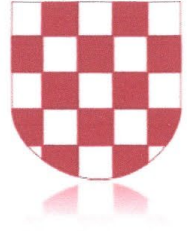
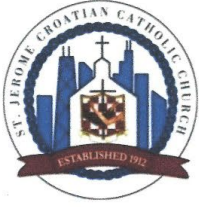
**Thank you!**

**Congratulations and best wishes  
to the  
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**And huge "THANK YOU" to  
Tim LeFevour  
Marty McAndrew  
and  
The Entire Pipe Band**

**From your #1 Fan  
Pam Munizzi**





CONGRATULATIONS  
to the  
**SHANNON ROVERS**

TIM LeFEVOUR  
MARTY McANDREW  
and the Shannon Rovers Pipe Band

See you next year, August 15th  
at our annual Croatian celebration of  
Velika Gospa  
The feast of our Blessed Mother!

Thank you for your continued support!

Father Antonio Musa, OFM  
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Father Gabriel Schibola, OFM  
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*and Tim  
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with*

*Congratulations to*

*John Colletti , John Wrenn and Tom Fox*

*from*

*Richard M.  
Daley*



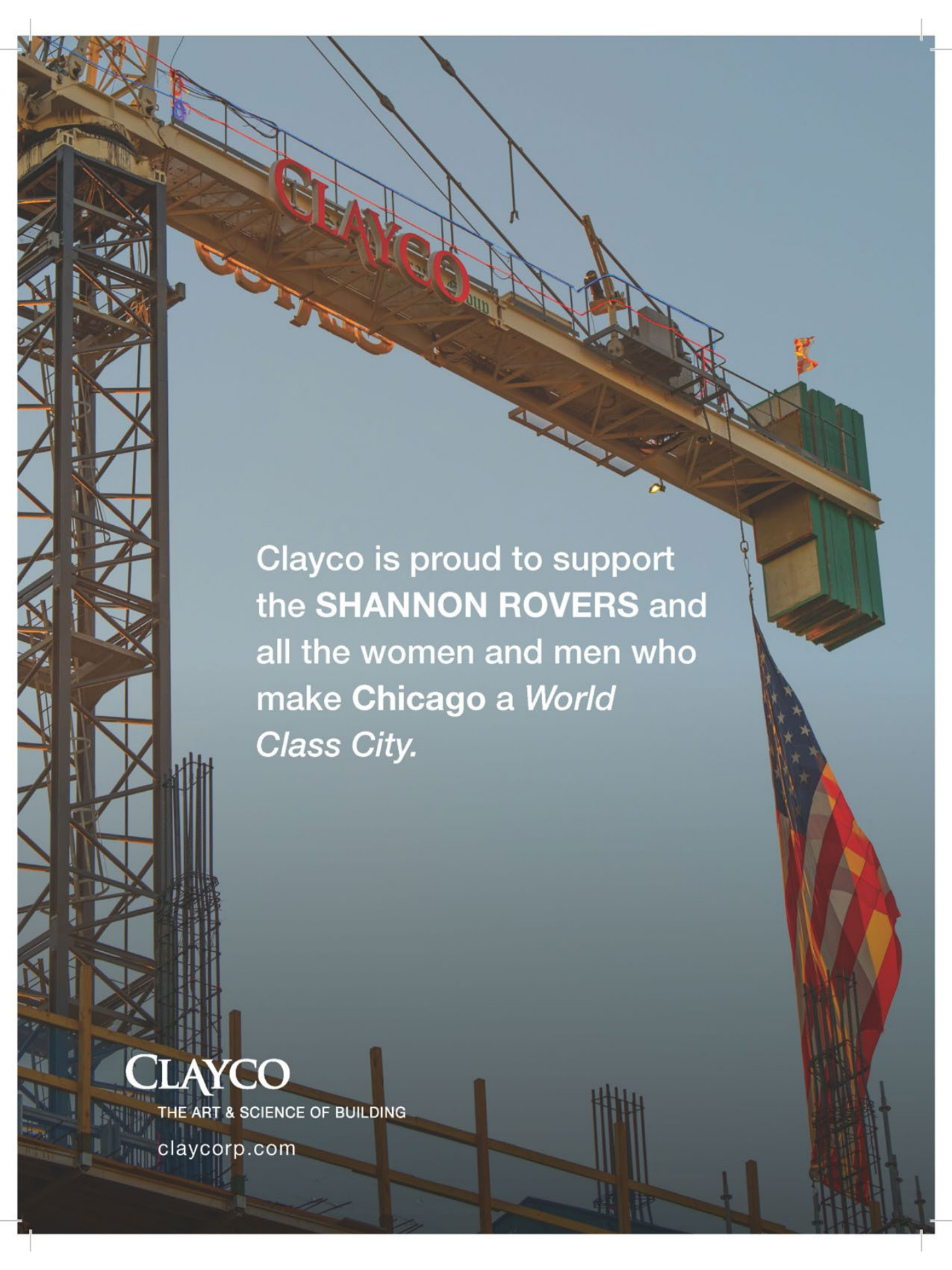
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**congratulations**  
to Tim LeFevour, Marty McAndrew,  
and The Shannon Rovers





*Congratulations to  
Alexis LeFevour,  
Tim LeFevour,  
Marty McAndrew,  
and  
The Shannon Rovers*

*From your friends at the  
**Chicago**  
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*May your home always be too small to hold all of your friends*



**Congratulations on being a proud Chicago tradition for 97 years,  
Shannon Rovers!**





# *Congratulations*

**Shannon Rovers Irish Pipe Band  
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