

Who was St. Patrick, really?

By Jennifer Cahill

Each year, on March 17, America holds a national Irish wake for the patron saint of Ireland, Saint Patrick.

We parade, hold parties, paste and pin green shamrocks, wear green clothing, and drink beer: usually domestic.

Until I got this assignment, I never asked myself Who Was Saint Patrick?

I began by asking the students of Penn State Capital College their opinions.

Tucked away in the back room of the Lion's Den I located engineering major Richard Cook. I asked what St. Patrick Day means to him and—who was Saint Patrick?

He looked at me with disbelief, and then responded, "It is a day which recognizes the Irish heritage."

"He was a leader of long ago," he said.

I gave Cook no points for original description.

Next, I approached Cindy Dagey and Kevin Kennedy, who were sitting at a table near the former smoking section of the cafeteria.

Cindy must have thought we were playing a word association game:

I asked, "What does Saint Patrick's Day mean to you?"

She quickly responded, "Green!"

I persisted with "who was Saint Patrick?"

She repeated, "Green!"

Kevin hesitated, so Cindy covered for him, "He thinks it's green too."

This interview reminded me of my favorite Dr. Seuss book, *Green Eggs and Ham*.

Cindy and Kevin sent me to the game room for expert opinion.

There I found Tomas Nagey, Mark Jordan, and Rob Lindey huddled around a video machine.

All three *claimed* to be of Irish heritage.

They were brainstorming their projection of Saint Patrick's Day 1989 activities.

"March Madness NCAA basketball, a party at our place and a hangover on the eighteenth."

I still needed to know more.

"Who was Saint Patrick?"

Rob Linden summed up his perception.

"A beer drinking little Irishman," he said.

Today the spirit of Saint Patrick's Day lives but many of the rituals have lost their meaning.

According to *The Encyclopedia Britannica*, Irishmen around the world celebrate the patron saint of Ireland on March 17.

In America this tradition was popularized by Irish businessmen, bar owners and the media, in New York and Philadelphia during the 1930's.

At the heart of this tradition dwells the work and Christian teachings of the missionary bishop Saint Patrick.

Surprisingly, he was not a native to Ireland.

He was born in 385 A.D. in the small town of Bannavem, which is thought to have been located in England or Scotland.

Berks County Jobs Event Scheduled

The Berks County Chamber of Commerce has announced that they will sponsor an employment recruitment fair this spring. Job Fair '89 will be held March 31 and April 1 in the Student Center at Albright College, Reading, Pa.

According to Chamber President Anthony F. Grimm, Job Fair '89 will provide an opportunity for candidates to maximize their visibility and availability with the job market.

"The Job Fair is an instrumental placement and recruitment tool that pays good dividends to everyone involved," Grimm said.


Close to 100 Berks County

employers will be participating in the two-day event. A cross-section of participants includes manufacturing, commercial, industrial, health, government, financial and service industries, to name a few.

The scheduled times for the Job Fair are Friday, Mar. 31 from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m., and Sat., April 1 from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Additional information about Job Fair '89 is available by contacting the Berks County Chamber of Commerce or your college Career Planning and Placement Office.

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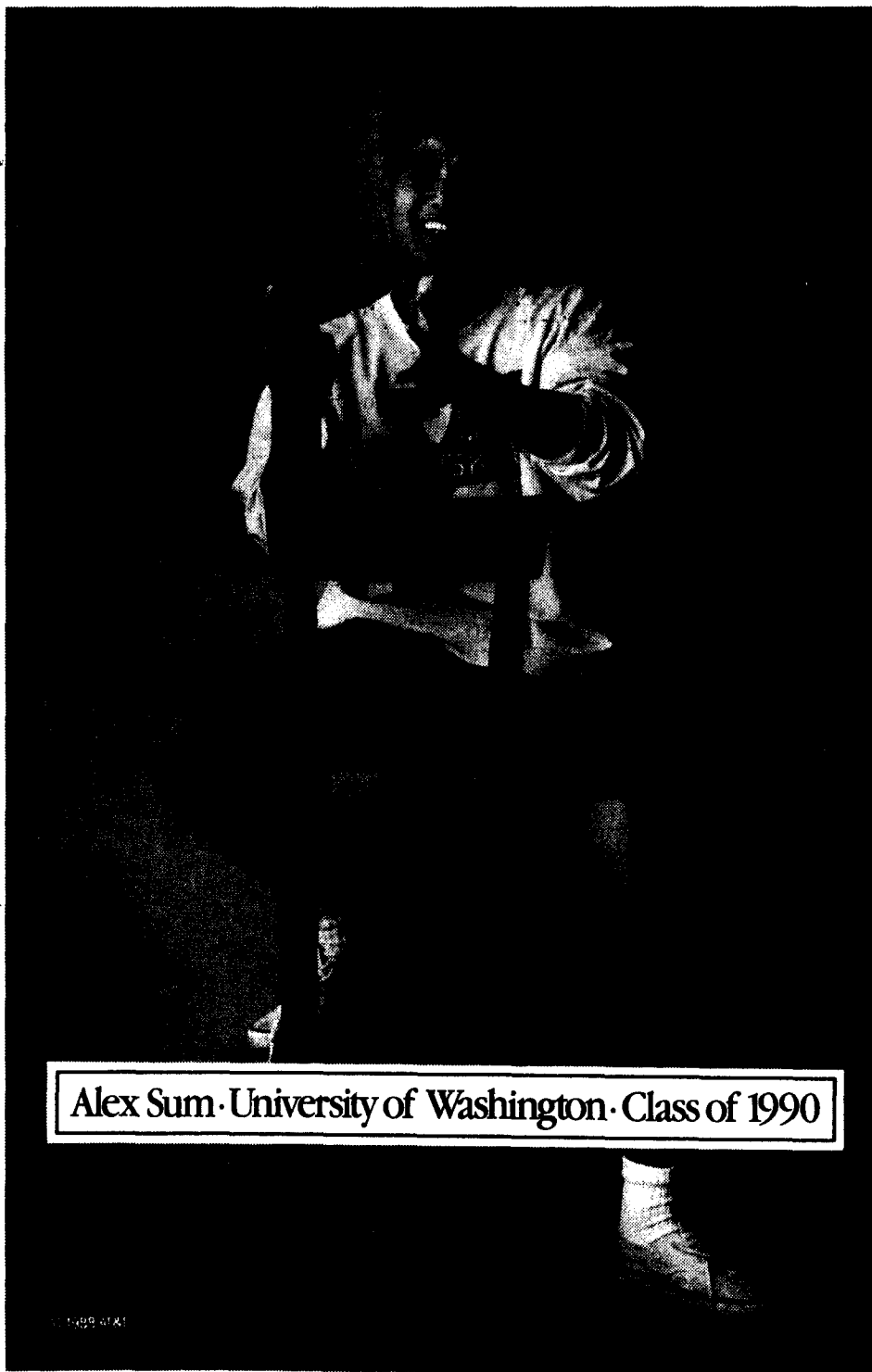


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