

Travel with Irish Rep

Galway Trip 2026 Trip

Traveller Bios

Irish Rep Team

Anna Collins

Hello, everyone! I'm Anna, hailing from Philadelphia but now residing in Brooklyn. I'm so excited to travel to Dublin once again with Irish Rep! I've been with IRT since 2022 and am delighted to be making my sixth trip to the Emerald Isle with such a wonderful group of travelers. I am a major nerd for James Joyce's *Ulysses*, which was the motivator for my first trip to Ireland – if you'd like to discuss anything Joycean with me, please don't hesitate to reach out!

Jim Bredeson

Hello! I'm Jim, Director of Development at Irish Rep for the past three years. I've lived in New York since 2008 and in Chelsea for most of that time, just a short walk from the theatre, with my partner Nick and our pie-bald dachshund, Wesley. We also spend as much time as we can upstate in Kingston, where you'll usually find me in the garden, invariably convinced that this year the hollyhocks will thrive. Outside of work, I enjoy coffee, live performances of all kinds, good lighting, and taking unnecessarily firm positions on subjects of very little consequence. I'm delighted to be returning to Galway and I look forward to sharing the week with all of you

Lisa Fane

My name is Lisa Fane and I am Managing Director of the Irish Rep. I live in Brooklyn with my wife Maggie and our fluffy yellow dog, Charlie. I grew up in Hollywood, California (in the hills to the left of the Hollywood sign), and began my theatre career at Hollywood High School, but I have lived in NYC for over 40 years. I've been with Irish Rep for 13 years and this will be my first Irish Rep trip to Galway! I love theatre and travel ...and especially travelling to see theatre! Looking forward to late night talks in pubs.

Ciarán O'Reilly

Ciarán is the producing artistic director of Irish Repertory Theatre, and thus too busy to write a bio. His celebrated production of *Ulster American* at Irish Rep will be presented this August at Dublin's Abbey Theatre. Recently, he's directed *The Weir* (a New York Times Critic's Pick), *Beckett Briefs*, *Philadelphia*, *Here I Come!* (which he also performed in), and countless other shows at Irish Rep. A native of County Cavan, Ciarán is delighted to be returning to Dublin for his second-ever journey on one of Irish Rep's trips.

Fellow Travelers

Bob Hand

I have been a longstanding fan of the Irish Rep and of Irish theater in general, but despite that (and my one-half Irish ancestry), I have never been to Ireland. This trip is a wonderful opportunity to experience both.

Carol Cate

I'm Carol Cate from Fairfield, CT. I'm officially retired, but work part time as a cashier at a clothing store. When I'm not doing that, I play golf, practice yoga, exercise and do cultural things whenever they arise. I'm not artistically blessed (that will be in my next life), but what I can do and what I'm good at and what I think is important especially for the actors we will see, is that I can applaud. Where would they be without an appreciative audience? Looking forward to meeting and clapping with the other Irish Rep travelers.

Carolyn Chave

Weaver, dancer, and costumer, I am half Scots, and thus share Celtic ancestry with the Irish. Bob and I divide our time between the West Village and a cabin in the Appalachian mountains where I weave and have costumed and choreographed local outdoor productions of Shakespeare, where Bob was house photographer, and our boys were actors. We have enjoyed the matchless quality of Irish Rep productions for decades.

Looking forward to the trip!

David May

Hi, I'm David. A founding partner in a 100-person NYC architectural firm for 45 years and looking forward to retiring later this year. While I can't add more theatre, concerts or opera to my schedule (ask my wife Doris), I am looking forward to spending more time riding my bicycles, hiking, drawing, taking photos, and most of all having fun with our 1+ year old granddaughter and family. This will be our third trip to Ireland, where the grass is truly greener, and the spoken word enchanting.

Denice Park

I have a doctorate in Clinical Psychology, specializing in a multitude of types of human diversity issues. I have a passion for travel, immersing myself into elements of cultures that differ from mine. I am a vocalist and play several instruments and attend as many displays of various types of art as I can: plays, dance presentations, orchestral performances, jazz/blues gigs, visual art installations, architecturally interesting/historically relevant structures, etc.

Doris May

Hi, I'm Doris, former piano/music teacher, currently Alexander Technique teacher...traveling with Irish Rep because I find myself at theater or music outings every week! This will be my 3rd trip to Ireland—first two with no rain—will it be a lucky 3rd? Hope so :)

Eileen McInerney

I'm Eileen, formerly a physician who gave that up to spend more time attending the performing arts. I fell in love with The Irish Repertory Theatre years ago and I'm looking forward to my third trip with them. I'll be leaving my life partner, Ava, with my neighbors where I know she'll be safe here in suburban New Jersey.

Eileen Arthurs

I'm Eileen Daley Arthurs, based in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, married to fellow traveler Rich, mother of three and collector of various part-time jobs while writing fiction, my first love. I suppose my Irish heritage has ever pulled me toward the Emerald Isle, and my MFA studies at St. Patrick's College in Carlow, Ireland convinced me that such inclination was indeed well-founded. I'm a fan of the Irish Repertory Theater in NYC, and Irish authors and performers in general. Late, great, Irish treasure/trainwreck Shane MacGowan claimed to pluck his songs from the air. I'm hoping to pluck whatever the Irish air holds in store for me.

Elizabeth La Blanc

Hi, I'm Elizabeth (aka Betty). I live in New York City and spend my time as a museum guide at the Met and the Museum of Natural History. My grandparents came from Donegal and I recently connected with some wonderful cousins on one side of the family who will be visiting Galway while we are there. Cousins on the other side came into my life in an unusual way which will make for a bit of dinner conversation.

Ellen Estes**Frank Estes**

I'm Ellen, from Connecticut – formerly a ballet dancer (with the Philadelphia Ballet Company), then an attorney, fund raising consultant, and life-long dance/theater person. My husband, Frank, and I met performing in musical theater productions at Yale – and now we enjoy watching and listening...and performing in community productions from time to time... We love Irish Rep – and their wonderful staff – and this is our fourth trip to Ireland with the company.

Glen Park

I am a scientist working in the pharmaceutical industry on the product development side and now semi-retired and continue to do consulting. I have been connected to theater in one way or another - but mostly as an observer - since high school. I am currently a Trustee for a small theater in a Seattle suburb. My family originated from Ireland (County of Cork) many years ago and this is my first official visit.

Grace Gorman

I'm Grace from NYC and CT. I'm looking forward to meeting everyone. This will be my first (long overdue) visit to Ireland. Inspired by a teapot, creamer and sugar bowl (which I cherish) that my great, great, great, great grandmother brought from Ireland as her dowry when she arrived in

NYC as a 16 year old, I have always wanted the opportunity to visit her homeland and am very excited to be doing that now. A career educator, after my retirement from full time teaching, I took on the role of tour guide at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Once a teacher, always a teacher. That and my 8 grandkids and kayaking in CT keep me pretty busy.

Helen Lang

One of my 'mothers' was my Irish nanny, Nellie, who took me as a youngster to her family's farm outside Ballycastle, where I spent a blissful summer surrounded by children and animals, gobbling wheaten bread and thick slices of bacon. Later, as a romantic teenager, I fell in love with Yeats and the Celtic legends. Still later, my ear was beguiled by Irish music and my feet by the dancing, which I still do on occasion. Now I am looking forward to visiting Galway, which I've never seen, with the brilliant Irish Rep folks and all you other theater and Eire lovers. I got a little carried away there, but I currently live in the Bay Area (CA) and work with incarcerated people writing their memoirs as part of the rehabilitation process and to inspire policy makers to strengthen support services for children and families.

Ina Lee Selden

After three careers (TEFL in Brussels, journalist in Rome, specialized travel planner in NYC), I am now a volunteer docent on the High Line. Since 2008, I have written Monday Therapy, a blog about New York, a city I adore.

Jean Winston

Hi. I'm Jean. I'm semi-retired and a talker and a reader and people watcher. I'm also a loud laughier and I love sarcasm... So even though this is obnoxious, I'll say it anyway: I have Irish genes (I heard all Americans say that and it's supremely irritating to the Irish but it's true!). I'm not single but my significant other doesn't travel so I count on my good friends to get me traveling. I'm superficial and a NY'er transplant to CA so I love fashion and makeup and musicals and Broadway. My sister has all the artistic talent, of which I have none—but I love & appreciate it tremendously in others! I like to sing (bad, bad voice) and dance (zero skills/talent!). This International Arts Festival in Galway seems to be tailor made for me so I'm very excited! I'm also a lightweight drinker but looking forward to sharing a pint with you all!!

Karen Keogh

I'm Karen, a social worker who has spent my career at the intersection of politics and public service. This is my third trip with the Irish Rep alongside my husband Mike, who serves on the board, and my first visit to Galway. Italian and Eastern European by birth, Irish by marriage. I was a theater kid in high school who never quite had the gumption to pursue it professionally, but I never lost my love for the stage.

Maggie Lally

My name is Maggie Lally and I am a theatre director and have been an associate professor in the Theatre Department at Adelphi for over 24 years. In my career, I have been intentional about directing productions that have social justice issues as core themes. I recently directed a neuroinclusive production of *The Curious Incident Of The Dog In The Nighttime*. I've created courses in Devising Theatre, Theatrical Outreach and the interdisciplinary course: Exploring Disability Through Theatre. I am half Irish/half Italian and my Lally ancestors hail from Loughrea, about 41 km from Galway. Maggie is travelling with her wife, Lisa Fane, general manager of Irish Rep.

Marcia Purcell

I've lived my adult life in Manhattan which is rather brave considering I come from Forest Hill, LA, pop 420ish to this day! I came to work for The New York Public Library and then for the second half of my career, Random House Publishing. I loved my work life. One terrific aspect of NYC is its theatre and Irish Rep is a gem! This will be my third trip to Ireland with the Irish Rep. I look forward to the unexpected!

Maurice Mandel

I'm Maury, a lifelong New Yorker and retired asset manager. Ina and I live in the heart of Manhattan's theater district, a stone's throw from Lincoln Center and a short ride from Irish Rep. I'm looking forward to returning to Ireland for immersion in Irish theater.

Michele Tortorelli

Originally from New Jersey, I escaped to Manhattan at 22 — though the real escape started at 16, traveling into the city alone for theatre, a taste for independence I owe to my British mother and the Irish grandmother who raised her. I developed an incurable attraction to plays about family dysfunction - O'Neil, Shepard, Letts! - maybe that's why I became a family law attorney? Now retired, I serve on the board of a non profit called Creative Capital which provides support to artists. I discovered the Irish Rep through Creative Capital and now my husband Tom (Kearns) and I are going to Galway! I wish I had retired sooner!

Mike Keogh

Hi, I'm Mike Keogh, a lifelong New Yorker and Partner at the government relations firm Bolton-St. Johns, where I help clients navigate government and public policy. Throughout my career, I've had the privilege of serving in city government, organized labor, and the legal profession, experiences that have given me a deep appreciation for how New York works and the people who make it work. I'm also proud to serve on the boards of the Citizens Budget Commission and Irish Repertory Theatre. After more than 60 years in Brooklyn, my wife, Karen, and I recently made the move to Manhattan, though I'll always consider myself a Brooklynite at heart. When I'm

not working, I'm trying to improve my Irish and Spanish, and, as a long-suffering Mets fan, I take inspiration from the Knicks and the Liberty. They remind me it's not a matter of if, but when.

Rachel Levit

Rachel was born in Brooklyn and grew up in Galveston, Texas. After marrying Roy, she lived in El Paso, where she taught fifth grade and devoted countless hours to volunteer leadership with a number of community organizations and nonprofit boards. Following their retirement, Rachel and Roy made New York City their home.

Rich Arthurs

My name's Rich and I'm from Pittsburgh most recently. I retired from careers in publishing and management consulting almost 10 years ago and have visited Ireland 5 or 6 times now. I missed the Steelers game in Dublin last season so figured I couldn't miss this adventure. I'm a huge fan of Shane McGowan and Shane Lowery

Roy Levit

Born and raised in San Antonio, Texas, Roy trained as a retinal surgeon in New York before establishing his practice in El Paso, where he enjoyed a distinguished medical career. After retiring, he and Rachel returned to New York City. Today, Roy shares his love of science and discovery as a docent at the American Museum of Natural History.

Thomas Kearns

Tom grew up in an Irish family in Queens and owes a lot to the Jesuits at Fordham. He is still active as a commercial real estate lawyer in NYC. Tom and Michele (Tortorelli) have been married for 40 years this September, and it's been 40 years since their first trip to Ireland. Thanks to board member Colleen Murphy, we have embraced theater at the Irish Rep — with *Ulster American* a particular favorite — and are excited to take that interest a step further with this trip to Galway. Looking forward to meeting the group, and FYI, I am always on the lookout for fellow online Strat-O-Matic Baseball players!