

DINING

O'Grady's Irish Pub brings bit of Ireland to Troy

EATING OUT IN THE SUBURBS

BY ELEANOR HEALD SPECIAL WRITER

With a "things Irish" fascination sweeping the nation, it was only a matter of time until it hit Troy in a big way. Big Beaver Road, the city's main corridor, became home to O'Grady's Irish Pub on Wednesday, March 4, with a grand opening benefiting the Boys and Girls Club of Troy.

In addition to Irish addiction is the escalating trend toward neighborhood pubs - informal gathering places for families and friends with good food at moderate prices. O'Grady's in Troy combines the best of both with an Irish-American twist.

Irish specialties such as Corned Beef and Cabbage, New O'Grady's Irish Lamb Stew, Shepherd's Pie, and homemade Crock-a-Leekie soup, a spin on the standard, have star billing. But the rest of the menu includes house-made items Americans like to eat.

This and more is the half-million dollar transformation of the former Horseshoe's Deli into a neighborhood pub seating 190. Friendly waitstaff questioned, "Doesn't this look like an Irish pub?" I had to say, "No." But that's not negative. This is not Dublin and Americans want more in their pub atmosphere.

However, there are many appealing "things Irish" about O'Grady's. Guinness and 15 other beers on tap get top billing. To complement, is a large 26-seat wooden bar, two double-sided fireplaces accenting cozy side rooms with polished wood floors and three dart boards in a game room, also housing two pool tables.

Some Dublin pubs have a TV for soccer fans. O'Grady's has 16 fed by five satellite dishes. Eight different sports events can be watched on-premise simultaneously! Table seating is comfortable at wood high tops or standard-size. A large portion of the

NEW SHOW The Second City "Down Riverdance" "The Second City Cast" Tix (313) 965-2222 SHOWS WEDNESDAY - SUNDAY Wed., Thur. & Sun. ONLY 120 LIVE COMEDY THEATRE OPEN FOR LUNCH & DINNER (313) 965-9500

O'Grady's Irish Pub Where? 565 W. Big Beaver, Troy, (adjacent to the Drury Inn) (248) 624-4770. Hours: 11-2 a.m. Monday-Saturday; noon to 1 a.m. Sunday. Menu: Irish theme, emphasis on fresh is best. Over 75 menu items from Irish specialties to Hebrew National award-winning corned beef to deep-dish Chicago-style pizza with crispy crust are home-made. Cost: Starters and soups \$3-\$7; burgers and sandwiches \$4-\$8; Irish specialties \$10; chicken, seafood, beef and ribs \$8.50-\$15. Reservations: Not accepted. Credit cards: All majors accepted.



Gathering place: David Kramer (left to right), Chef Jim Bolton, Stuart Kramer, Diane Kramer, and Brian Kramer at O'Grady's Irish Pub. Family-owned and operated, O'Grady's offers good food at moderate prices with an Irish-American twist.

floor is carpeted in dominantly green plaid accenting warm wood furnishings and a wide-open feeling. The brainchild behind this gathering place is Brian Kramer, partner and president of O'Grady's with his father, Stuart. Mom Diane is anxious to greet patrons and brother David is learning the pub business. This is a family-owned and operated pub where an owner will be on-site at all times.

Since 1992, Brian has worked his way up from dishwasher to a vice president of Duggans, partner in Payne's Woodward Inn in Berkeley and Woody's in Royal Oak. Stuart, recently retired from corporate life in Blue Cross Blue Shield, said he "always wanted to own his own business."

Jim Bolton, Oakland Community College culinary grad and former executive chef at Embassy Suites in Livonia, directs O'Grady's kitchen turning out 1,500 pounds of corned

beef weekly. His recipe recently won top award in Hebrew National's contest on "how best to cook corned beef" conducted in New York. Menu items showcasing the Guinness-flavored corned beef are on the sandwich board. They are served with creamy cole slaw and a pickle spear. English fries can be added for 95 cents. A cup of soup with any sandwich is \$2.25. A traditional corned beef Reuben can be turned into lighter fare with turkey. Whole turkeys are house-roasted and meat is pulled from the bone to make all turkey sandwiches. "Just like the day after Thanksgiving," Bolton quipped.

A number of menu items appeal to those preferring meatless selections. Bolton also lays claim to the "best pizza in town." His three-flour dough crust is handmade daily as is the pizza sauce from a recipe originating in Fano, Italy. One topping not to be missed is hand-cut pepperoni. A five-topping large pizza is \$15. Chef Jim is particularly proud of his perfected recipe for barbecued baby back ribs, original orchestration of Salmon with Honey Mustard and Planked White Fish. If imitation is the best form of flattery then the white fish makes the adage true. Bolton credits his chef friend

Randy Emert, executive chef at Paint Creek Cider Mill & Restaurant, for all the pointers on making it to perfection. On St. Patrick's Day, Tuesday, March 17, it won't be irreverent you'll see at O'Grady's. Neighborhood folks will be leaping to the music from WCSX-FM 94.7 from 6 p.m. to midnight. A live Irish band will also perform. A limited menu of corned beef and cabbage with mushroom potatoes, Irish stew and the highly-touted O'Grady Pub Burger will be offered. An old Irish proverb states, "Laughter is brightest where food is best." In a new-age, that's O'Grady's Irish Pub in Troy.

Just in case you missed it, or lost the paper. Here are some of the restaurants we've recently visited:

Mesquite Creek - Two locations, 45256 Ford Road, Canton (734) 414-0100; and 7228 Ortonville Road, Clarkston, (248) 620-9300. Opens 11:30 a.m. to 10 p.m. Sunday-Thursday; 11:30 a.m. to 11 p.m. Friday-Saturday. Menu: Steakhouse fare with great seafood. Mesquite Creek takes a Tex-Mex spin on everything they do, and uses Certified Angus Beef. Reservations: Sunday-Thursday for parties of eight or more. Credit Cards: All majors accepted. Cost: \$5-\$12 lunch; \$9-\$27 dinner. Children's menu available. Entertainment: Canton location - 7-11 p.m. Wednesdays, The Hits plays soft pop rock favorites. They perform 7-11 p.m. Tuesdays and Thursdays at Clarkston location.

Exiting out is a treat, and if you're hungry for steaks or seafood, comfortable Mesquite Creek aims to please. Owned by Brian Hussey of Ann Arbor and Mark Laramie of Plymouth, they just opened a second location in Canton and are celebrating their fifth anniversary in Clarkston.

Marvin's Bistro - 16800 Middlebelt, (between Five Mile and Six Mile roads) Livonia, (734) 522-5600. Opens 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. Monday-Friday; 4-11 p.m. Saturday. Bar stays open to 2 a.m.; closed to the public Sundays, open for banquets. Menu: American regional cuisine with an Italian/French influence. Cost: Lunch ranges from \$4.95-\$6.95; dinner \$6.95 to \$13.95. Credit Cards: All majors accepted. Reservations: Not necessary, but advised on Fridays and Saturdays. Carryout Available. Entertainment: Carl Larson and Ernie Horvath at the piano bar, 12:30-2:30 p.m. Monday-Friday; 7-10 p.m. Monday-Tuesday; 7 p.m. to midnight Wednesday-Saturday. Like her father, comedian Marvin Welch, Susan Anastasioiu, who named her restaurant Marvin's Bistro in his honor, enjoys entertaining, but she's a food person.

OCEAN GRILL AND SAND BAR Celebrates a Taste of the Tropics through Saturday, March 14 with authentic Caribbean cuisine, tropical cocktails and Island music. The restaurant is at 280 N. Woodward, call (248) 648-7001 for more information/reservations.

ENGORE RESTAURANT In the Quality Inn, 1801 S. Telegraph, Bloomfield Hills is celebrating St. Patrick's Day,

Saturday, March 14. Val Ventros blues Band will be performing. Irish fare including corned beef & cabbage will be served in the restaurant. Call (248) 335-3790 for more information.

BEVERLY HILLS GRILL Will mark their 10th anniversary on Monday, March 16. The restaurant on Southfield Road (just north of 13 Mile Road) in Beverly Hills will serve complimentary hors d'oeuvres in the

evening to celebrate their anniversary, and owners Bill and Judi Roberts will meet customers. Call (248) 642-2355 for information. The Beverly Hills Grill serves breakfast, lunch and dinner seven days a week.

BOYFORD INN St. Patrick's Day buffet featuring Irish soda bread, Colcannon and other Irish specialties served 5-8 p.m. Tuesday, March 17, 28000 Grand River (at 8 Mile Road) Farmington Hills, (248) 474-4800. There will be entertainment. Cost \$19.95.

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TUES.-SAT. SPECIAL Fish & Chips (baked or fried) All you Can Eat \$9.95 The Batsford Inn Farmington Hills (248) 474-4800

The Batsford Inn "St. Patrick's Day" All You Can Eat Irish Buffet Feast \$19.95 person Dinner Served 5-8pm Entertainment Included For Reservations Call (248-474-4800)

Mr. Z's STEAK HOUSE 537-5600 27331 Five Mile Rd. (Corner of Inkster) St. Pat's Party ALL DAY Thursday, March 17th ENTERTAINMENT STARTING AT 6:00 Corned Beef & Cabbage Potato Soup Irish Stew Green Beer

DON PEDRO'S AUTHENTIC MEXICAN CUISINE 24366 Grand River (3 blocks W. of Telegraph) CARRY OUT (313) 537-1450 MARGARITA MADNESS \$1.25

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