

Commonwealth of Massachusetts



A Proclamation

His Excellency Governor Deval L. Patrick

Whereas The Commonwealth of Massachusetts has the unique distinction of being the most Irish-American state in the United States of America, with 23% of all residents claiming Irish ancestry; and

Whereas The Irish-American community of Massachusetts has a distinguished tradition of celebrating St. Patrick's Day dating back to March 17, 1737, when the Charitable Irish Society of Boston, formed to assist fellow citizens in need, held the first Irish commemoration in the thirteen colonies; and

Whereas During the Irish Potato Famine of the 1840s and 1850s, thousands of Irish found refuge on our shores, quickly becoming part of the fabric of Massachusetts as police officers and firefighters, soldiers, tradesmen, mill workers, teachers and scholars, and public servants; and

Whereas Many Irish and Irish Americans, such as artist John Singleton Copley, musician Patrick S. Gilmore, astronaut Christa Corrigan McAuliffe, Senator Edward Kennedy and President John F. Kennedy, have made outstanding contributions to our Commonwealth and nation; and

Whereas Throughout the month, Irish groups across the Commonwealth are organizing parades, concerts, dances, literary readings and other special events designed to celebrate Irish heritage, history and culture,

Now, Therefore, I, Deval L. Patrick, Governor of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, do hereby proclaim March 2009, to be

IRISH HERITAGE MONTH

And urge all the citizens of the Commonwealth to take cognizance of this event and participate fittingly in its observance.

Given at the Executive Chamber in Boston, this fourth day of March, in the year two thousand and nine, and of the Independence of the United States of America, the two hundred and thirty-second.

By His Excellency

DEVAL L. PATRICK
GOVERNOR OF THE COMMONWEALTH



WILLIAM FRANCIS GALVIN
SECRETARY OF THE COMMONWEALTH