

Spot Checking

Food ★ Fun ★ Frolic
By Bill Williams

Everybody's Irish Monday

That seems to be the general consensus of opinion among the various restaurateurs around our town. At least they're hoping this'll be the case as they prepare for gala upon gala for St. Paddy's Day the 17th.

Take a name like **Maison Gerard**, for instance. Now who could possibly mistake that for Irish. But Gerard Uzan and his staff are preparing for a big one on that night and as he puts it "when real and adopted Irishmen are expected to turn out in large numbers."

They've even got a cocktail invented by Guy Claisy named the "Irish Parissienne" as a special for that day plus a whole bunch of other surprises so don't pass up **Maison Gerard** at 224 S. Beverly Drive in Beverly Hills that day.

Then Nick O'Ciacciarelli is pitching a lulu for you Monday, too, at his **Jet Room Lounge** that'll include noise makers, hats, the works, for your St. Patrick's Day fun with no cover, no minimum, and no admission policy prevailing. Yes, and lots of Irish songs, too, for you sing-along buffs with Bill Fulkerson noodling at the piano.

Bill is one of the most accomplished piano-men anywhere around. Not only does he know that keyboard in both directions but he knows tunes from away back as well as most of the current numbers. And all you have to do is request a particular tune and from somewhere in that huge piano bar he pulls it out. Bill says he used to play by ear but he kept getting his ear caught between the keys.

Speaking of the **Jet Room**, when owner Nick happened to mention one day that he was going to change the face of this spot and went on to explain just how, was sure it wouldn't work.

Boy, how wrong can a guy be! Went tooling by there one day recently and was immediately attracted to a "new face" on La Cienega (at Centinela). That's right, it was the face-lift job Nick had done on the front of the building and the improvement is amazing. Does wonders for what was previously "just another building in the block." Now the **Jet Room** stands out in the crowd. Whoever sold Nick on it knew what he was talking about.

Then in honor of the good Saint there's to be still another happening at **Millie Riera's Seafood Grotto** at 1700 Esplanade at Avenue I in Redondo Beach.

For that day a new libation has been concocted, probably by that ace mixologist "Major" and it's been named **Green Fann**, whatever that means, but it sure sounds zesty.

It's made with creme de menthe, blackberry brandy, and cream and is to be served after luncheons and dinners. How about that!

Remember, the **Seafood Grotto** is open every day and Fridays and Saturdays **Ricky Angelos** provides the entertainment. If you want to make a reservation, give **Millie** a holler at 375-1483.

Just what they've got in mind for you on St. Paddy's Day at the **Marina del Rey Hotel**, can't say but with **Page Cavanaugh** and his Trio playing there, you're bound to have a ball in the beautiful **Golden Galleon Room**, overlooking the marina.

And on Sundays it'll be Chuck

Niles Jazz Scene from 5 p.m. Should be a gas, too, with stars like **Shelly Manne**, **Ray Brown**, **Joe Sample** and **Bobby Hutcherson**.

There's no cover or minimum charge at the **Golden Galleon** and hotel manager, **Ernest Crouch**, urges your patronage. The **Marina del Rey Hotel** is located on Balli Way, just off Lincoln Boulevard, four miles north of International Airport.

Guess **Bill Fremont** had himself a whiling-dinger of a time on his recent trip to Europe, visiting his many old-time friends.

While there **Bill** took a side jaunt to Madrid and picked up some new ideas on Spanish cuisine from his Spanish restaurant friends, which he's now incorporating into his **Matador** menu.

And for you "little old wine tasters" he re-ordered some of that fine Spanish Rioja Vintage wines which have become so popular at **The Matador**. But don't hurry — remember how long it took for shipment of the last batch? Maybe they'll have better luck this trip, though. We can hope so anyway 'cause that's delicious wine.

This one couldn't come anywhere under the "almost nearly — not quite hardly" classification when we speak about St. Patrick's Day 'cause it's **Robaire's French Restaurant** at 348 S. La Brea. (Though there is a rumor that St. Patrick was a Frenchman . . .) That should tick the Irish off!

Anyhoo, **Robert Robaire** has recently introduced a new dish from the province of Normandy. It's roast rack of lamb vert pre covered with sherry wine and calvados brandy sauce, and it's something; comes with salad, au gratin potatoes, hot rolls, plus vegetable and all for \$4.50.

So St. Pat's Day or not, **Robaire's** serves over 30 different delectable French and domestic entrees and all reasonably priced. They're open every Tuesday through Sunday for dinners and banquet and if you care to make a reservation, dial 931-1246.

Speaking of Irish, heard a funny from **Robert Levin** (?) at the **Palm Springs Biltmore Hotel**.

Seems that during the recent rains he ran into a couple in the lobby and asked them how they were enjoying their stay at the hotel to which they answered that they were enjoying it very much but that "Myra was enjoying it more."

Well, **Bob** checked the register and found that there were only two persons registered to their room so quite naturally, he was curious.

Turns out that "myra" was their Cadillac that was inadvertently left out in the rain and they brought "myra" down to the desert to bask in the sun.

Well, that fine gent from the auld said, "Scotty" Scott, manager of the **Pen and Quill Restaurant** in Manhattan Beach always has something up his sleeve. That's right — his arm!

At any rate, he's now offering a complete new banquet menu for luncheons and dinners. Banquet rooms are available starting at \$2.50 per person for lunch and a buck more for dinner.

They can handle groups at the **Pen and Quill** from 20 to 700 people for meetings, anniversaries, weddings, conventions, bar mitzvahs or just about any

type of get-together you might dream up. So if you're planning a St. Patrick's branagan . . . well, maybe not a branagan, exactly. That might get a little sticky — but any other kind of a get-together, keep in mind the **Pen and Quill** and their vast accommodations.

Oh and hey, here's a thing! Should you desire a special gourmet dinner, they can take care of up to 20 persons for that and they're very special gourmet dinners, you can bet. All handled in the famous **Reuben Press Room**, named, no doubt, for former owner and newspaperman, the late **Bob Reuben**. If you want any further information on these facilities, call the **Pen and Quill** at 772-2257.

Ooops! Now here's a swinger! How's this grab you for St. Patrick's Day! **Lox and Bagels**, **Mexican Style!** Now wouldn't you say that was reaching a little?

But it's true! The **Amigos Family Restaurant** down in the **Marina del Rey** has this new Mexican chef and it seems he has a hang-up. He digs Kosher foods! And should you go in there next Monday and ask for it, they will very likely get corned beef and cabbage, laced with chopped lox and bagels, cooked in some zingy south-of-the-border hot sauce, just for body! Weeee! Let's go to **Amigos!**

And all you Irish Gringos will blow your minds over their new menu over that at 14160 Panay Way. That chef's crispy tacos, tasty enchiladas and fluffy rellenos'll put you away! And don't forget the wonderful albondigas and chili, plus, of course, guacamole and salads. Don't forget the great new steaks, shrimp platters and twin burgers at **Amigos**. So fine!

Then for the guy who likes a "wee taste" before dinner (during or after, as well!) there's the delicious **Amigoritas** and **Bloody Marias**. Great for openers. Eye-openers, that is!

Presiding, of course, is manager-partner **Senor Mike Donley**. (Now THAT'S Irish!) So when you go to the **Amigos Family Restaurant** in **Marina del Rey**, make yourself known to this transplanted Irishman! You'll like him!

Had a short memo from **Warren Ward** one day last week in which he was outlining the plans for his new **Raffles Restaurant** in Downey.

The **Raffles**, as you may recall, was for years located on

Degnan Street in Leimert Park but time marches on and progress must be recognized no matter how painful.

However, in this case, the only painful part to Mr. Ward is the actual move to the new location, plus, of course, the headaches thereby involved. But when they get set up, which will be along about the first of April at 7339 East Florence Ave. all will be veal cutlets. Just a short shot from the Torrance area.

The new spot is on the site of the former **Silver Saddle** in Downey, which many Torranceites will remember. Should make a fine dinner house for **The New Raffles**. The **Thistle Inn** on Glendale Boulevard is also one of **Warren Ward's** fine restaurants. So let's watch for this new opening. Won't make it for St. Patrick's Day, however.

Been by the new **Amigos Family Restaurant** in Torrance yet? Rally should make it in there soon and enjoy some of those fine south-of-the-border delights. This one's the **Amigos** in **Del Amo Shopping Center** in Torrance, y'know. These are franchise type deals, you see, so they might pop up just about anywhere.

Anyway, this one, too, could be a swinger for St. Patrick's Day. Even that well-known Irishman, **Ross O'Martin** and wife, **Olavee**, are regular visitors at the **Amigos**. Them along with a whole bunch of the other celebrities from the world of entertainment are discovering the tempting specialties available at **Amigos**.

And don't pass up this unusual wine cocktails. These, too, are high on the favorite list.

No St. Patrick's Party would be complete without mention of **Ronnie Fitz-Iwamoto** of the **Tea House Restaurant and Cocktail Lounge** in Torrance.

As usual, the **Tea House** will have their swingin' thing going for you down there with all the trimmings. Even **Sweet Rosie O'Song** and her ever lovin' **Louis Patrick** will be on hand to join in the festivities. Remember, however, Monday's always **Hawaiian Nite** at the **Tea House** so you'll have to put up with both. It's always a packed house on Mondays.

Then just down the street a ways at **Hop Louie's Latitude 20**, the St. Patrick's observance will take place Sunday when the **Sons of Erin** will celebrate along with **Hawaii's** Surrented Irishman, **Ernie Menehune**.

And just for the occasion, **Ernie** will include some fine Irish tunes just for you **Erinites**. The **Polynesian Revue** will include such old favorites as "Danny Boy" and "That Ol' Shilleleugh" as well as "One Paddle, Two Paddle" and other **Island** (and **Ireland**) favorites.

So up **Santa Barbara** way at **Alex Shustin's Santa Barbara Inn**, you know there'll be some "foin" Irish tunes fall on your "foin" Irish ears with such a group as the **Elayne Roberts Trio** on hand.

This talented group just com-

pleted a successful stand in Las Vegas as well as recently having finished a series of recordings. They're well-known for their versatility and fine dance music, appealing to all age groups.

It's an every nite thing in the **Sky Room of The Inn** for dancing and entertainment. Dinners are served from 5 p.m. and the cocktail lounge is open from 10 in the aye.

Meanwhile, over there on **Sepulveda** in the **Westchester** area, **Jim Marin's** pitching a whing-ding for your St. Patrick's Day fun at his **Melody Inn**.

It'll be a goodie, you can bet on Monday evening from five o'clock on. A corned beef and cabbage dinner on an "all you can eat" basis and all goes for an even buck. How about that!

Meanwhile, back in **Canton**, businessmen have a chance everyday to step out of their offices right into paradise. At least, so says one astute PR man of our acquaintance.

The thing is to have lunch at the **Tai Ping Restaurant** at 3888 Crenshaw Boulevard. Simple as that.

This is truly one of the most beautiful Cantonese restaurants in the southland featuring a fine array of both American and Cantonese lunch favorites and all most moderately priced. All goes toward making a welcome break into the everyday hassle of business with all its pressures.

Then, of course, if you stay over a bit longer — say like into the evening (this is of course not borrowing time from your boss!) you'll find enchanting entertainment in the exotic **Singapore Lounge**. Try it!

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BUDDY-BUDDY . . . And better **Bill Fremont** should feel "buddy-buddy" towards the gent sitting on his left one night recently while having dinner at the **Matador Restaurant** 'cause he could be a formidable foe. He's former football great, **Bill Radovich**. So, cool it. **Bill!** (Fremont, that is!)

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