

SOUTH OMAHA MURAL PROJECT



The Irish Mural



The South Omaha Irish Mural is an illumination of the historical and cultural contributions of Irish Immigrants to South Omaha. The design is inspired by the interwoven decorative pages of the Book of Kells as well as the expressive painterly style of Irish artist Jack Butler Yeats. These two styles exemplify the capacity of the Irish to work together towards complex social change while maintaining a lively cultural tradition. See back of page for a legend of symbols.

The mural is the latest to join the South Omaha Mural Project. A group of murals that celebrate South Omaha's immigrants from all over the world and the role they have played in creating our vibrant community known as the "Magic City". southomahamuralproject.com

A MIDSUMMER'S MURAL

southomahamuralproject.com
midsummer@cox.net
4808 S. 26th st., Omaha NE 68107
402-490-7026



Legend (Right to Left):

I. The Journey

The harp is the national symbol of Ireland, with a landscape of Ireland tucked inside

Long ship with rotted potato vines represents Irish immigration due to the Potato Famine 1845-1849

The first Irish came to Omaha as workers on the Transcontinental Railroad

II. Labor

George Park's National Construction Company's made bricks that built South Omaha's streets and businesses

George Park's mansion on 25th street was an early political hub, hosting Eamon De Valera and Woodrow Wilson

Irish workers played a major role in the packinghouse strikes of 1896, 1908, 1919, 1948, & 1964

Women made up 25% of packinghouse workers; a large number were Irish and worked at the Cudahy Packinghouse

Directories showed a large number of Irishman working the stockyards scales

Symbol of the Amalgamated Meat Cutters and Butcher Workmen Union

Trolley burned on 39th and Q during the 1935 streetcar strike

Irish commission firms such as Laverty and Brothers, J. W. Murphy and Donahue and Randle flourished in the South Omaha Stockyards

III. Faith

St Mary's church Window with stain glass pictures of St Agnes, St Bridget's, St Patrick's and St Mary's

(above) An early version of Father Flanagan's Boys Town was housed in the old German American Home

IV. Leisure

William "Pa" Rourke is the father of professional baseball in Omaha

Irish dancers keeping the tradition alive, seen dancing in the frame of the Roseland Theater, owned by Jim Murphy

V. Position and Politics

The Irish have acquired high political and legal standing in local, county, state, and national offices:

Four of South Omaha city's 13 mayors were Irish and representatives like John Cavanaugh and Glenn

Cunningham served in the United State Congress

The Irish played a profound role in South Omaha postal services, represented by the South Omaha Post Office at

4730 south 24th street, John P "Red" Munnelly was the Post Master General of Nebraska

Bobby Kennedy campaigned in South Omaha in the 1968 Nebraska Primary at Christie Heights Park

South Omaha's first Fire Chief, Donahue, and a young police officer, Eugene Mahoney, represent the Irish's large role in civil service

Duffy's tavern was the most famous Irish Pub in South Omaha and served as a local political meeting place that was frequented by local, state, and national leaders such as John F. Kennedy.

VI. Illuminated Figures

John P "Red" Munnelly, the renowned and politically active Post Master General of Nebraska and owner of Duffy's

Thomas Hoctor, the last Mayor of South Omaha City before it was annexed in 1915

George Parks, the man who built South Omaha with his construction company, having a discussion with

Jimmy Murphy the one-time World's Largest Hog Commissioner and owner of the Roseland Theater

Kitty Gaughan, who became renowned in gambling, taking her all the way to Las Vegas, creating a traditional Irish lace altar linen with

Anne Conroy Munnelly, the matriarch of the Cavanaugh and Munnelly family, representing the Irish Matriarch present in many South Omaha families

Monseigneur Halinan, beloved priest at St. Mary's, who worked diligently for the community and loved baseball