

There’s Irish, And There’s Donegal

By Ray O’Hanlon

March is yet to run its race as these words are being written.

Which means that it is still the appropriate month to celebrate that very particular Irish gift to the world: Whiskey. With the “e.”

March 3 was International Irish Whiskey Day. New York had its Irish Whiskey Festival in the run-up to St. Patrick’s Day.

And of the course there was the big day itself. Ireland and Irish products enjoy a unique opportunity with St. Patrick’s Day.

That opportunity has been stretched either side of the 17th. So it’s not too late to focus on a new Irish whiskey brand, more specifically a Donegal one.

Sliabh Liag Distillers, which bills itself as being Donegal’s first in 175 years, has harnessed March and all the attention to Ireland to launch what it calls “The Legendary Silkie Irish Whiskey Collection”



James Doherty.

Irish Whiskey with a Donegal twist.

in the U.S. market.

“In Donegal, Sliabh Liag Distillers has looked to tradition – to Irish heritage – to create a modern whiskey with a traditional smoky profile. Smoky whiskey was once the mainstay flavor profile of Ireland’s distilling output, but the flavor was all but lost over time as tastes changed to less challenging profiles,” said a release from the distillery which is located in Ardara.

Added the release: “Sliabh Liag Distillers was born out of the founder, James

Doherty’s dream to return to his ancestral homeland, Donegal. The inspiration for Silkie whiskey came from memories of those early years in Donegal.”

“In the mornings, I would head down to the kitchen, where beside the stove, grandad’s pipe would be sitting from the night before” says Doherty.

Grandad was a wonderful man, tall, strong, hard-working, and generous, with a mischievous twinkle in his eye. Eleven-year-old me would tug on his pipe and I can viscerally remember the

sweet tobacco, smoky and ashy aroma.

“It seemed to compliment the smell of the stove, the peat and my gran’s baking. Although it’s a morning moment, the whiskey is the taste of the night before,” adds Doherty, who serves as the vice chair of the Irish Whiskey Association which describes itself as “the representative voice within Drinks Ireland working to protest, protect and represent the Irish Whiskey category globally.”

More at www.slibhliagdistillers.com

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