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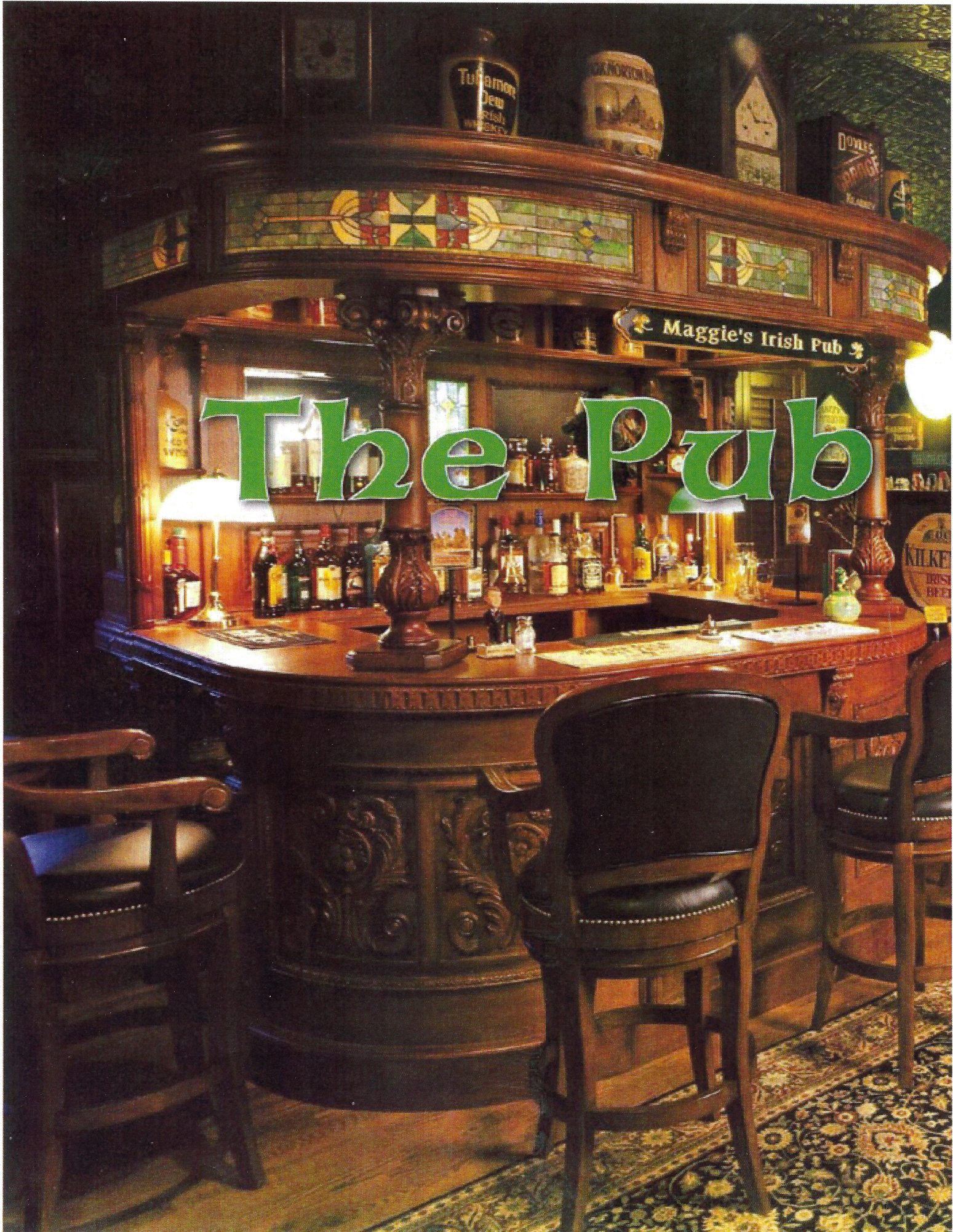
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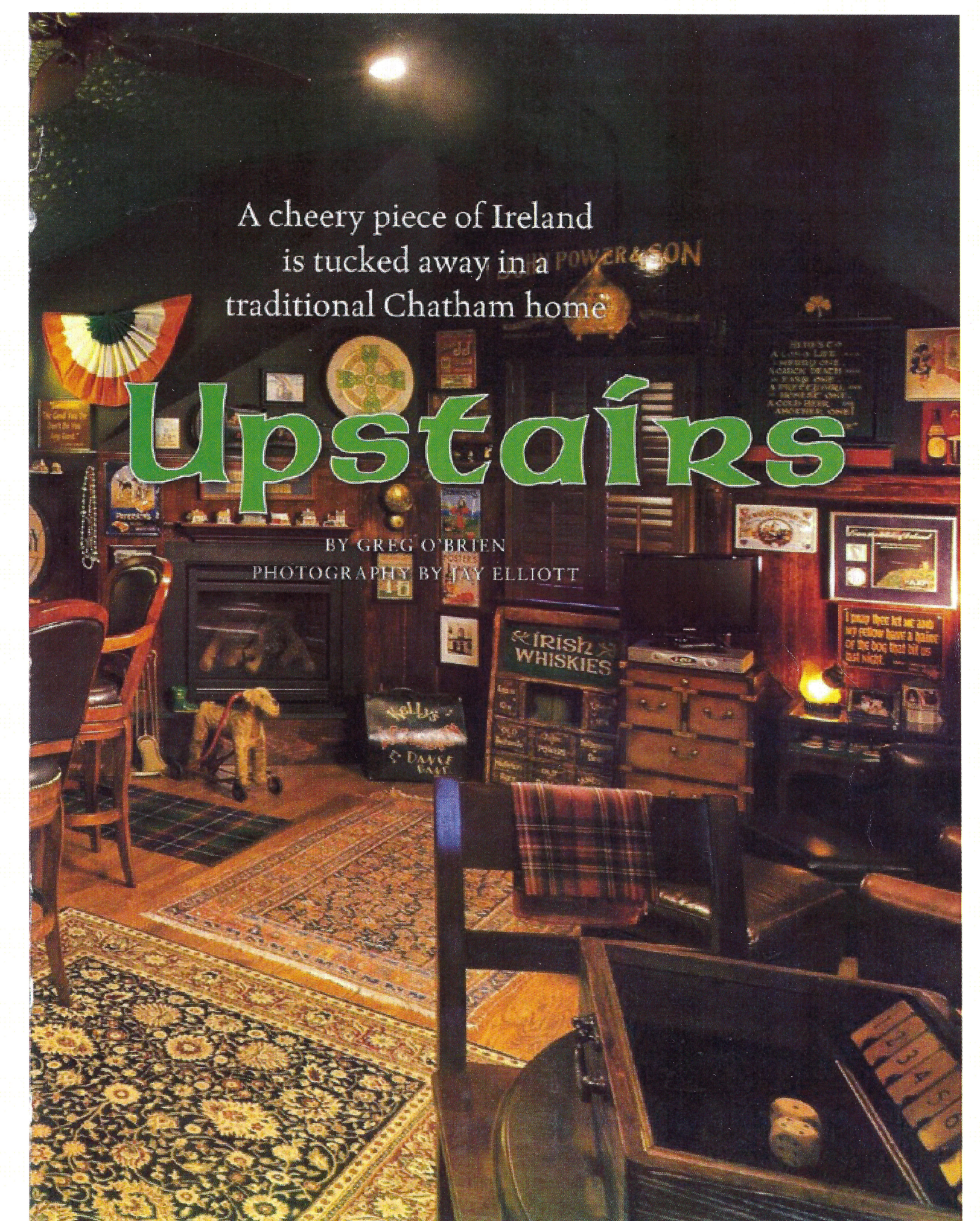
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AN EXPERT'S GUIDE
to Hosting a *Stress Free Party*

The Pub





A cheery piece of Ireland
is tucked away in a
traditional Chatham home

Upstairs

BY GREG O'BRIEN
PHOTOGRAPHY BY JAY ELLIOTT



The O'Briens and their friends gather around the authentic Irish bar in their Chatham home.

Hard to imagine in a community as quintessentially Yankee, Republican and properly Protestant as Chatham, a place first settled by the Nickersons whose English roots run deep, that you could find an authentic Irish Pub at the Cape's sheltered elbow.

On a narrow country way off Crowell Road in Chatham, there's a snug Irish pub for family and friends, as Irish as you'll see on the Ring of Kerry. But outsiders need not apply at "Maggie's," named after the O'Briens' loyal Welsh Terrier. At the private entrance, a sturdy oak door with a speakeasy window grill discerns a family tree. Proprietors John and Sandy O'Brien serve up classic Erie wit, Emerald charm and the best Irish whiskey south of Galway to friends and kin in this cozy, second floor 500-square-foot pub above the two-car garage of a remarkable Chatham Cape.

"We pour a fine beer and keep a good secret," Maggie declares on a quarterboard, hanging on a far wall just above another sign with a Belfast pub citation that proclaims: "Here's to a long life and a merry one, a quick death and an easy one, a pretty girl and an honest one, a cold beer and another one."

Brilliant, as the Irish would say.

The clever John O'Brien, the veteran Essex County Register





Maggie, the O'Briens' Welsh Terrier, is the namesake of the family's home pub. Below: Ashley and her cousins John (left) and Zack play the Irish game of Shut the Box.

smaller Irish pub at their Lynn home, and enjoyed a cubbyhole of one, a two-seater, at a previous summer house on Cross Street. The O'Briens have owned four summer homes in Chatham, moving on to Kendrick Harvest Way last June with their daughter Ashley, 14. She assisted the family in the pub's interior design, modeled in part after McDaid's in Dublin, a classic pub and rendezvous of Brendan Behan, the famous Irish poet, playwright and novelist.

Years ago, John and his wife frequented McDaid's on their honeymoon to Ireland, which included a stay at Dromoland Castle in Clare just outside Shannon. The ancestral home of the O'Brien clan for 900 years, it is now a luxury 375-acre estate.

You're starting to get the picture: John O'Brien is as much a part of Ireland, its beauty, history, humor, politics and lore, as Limerick is to the province of Munster. All this has far more to

of Deeds and former Lynn City Councilor, came up with the idea for lack of a better one. "Initially, we didn't know what to do with this room," he says, standing at the pub's ornate circular bar, a 19th century reproduction that was erected in five sections and serves up the finest Paddy's Old Irish Whiskey. "The last thing we needed was another bedroom because we'd find out that we had more relatives than we knew about. So we thought we'd do an Irish pub, a place where family and friends could gather around a fireplace."

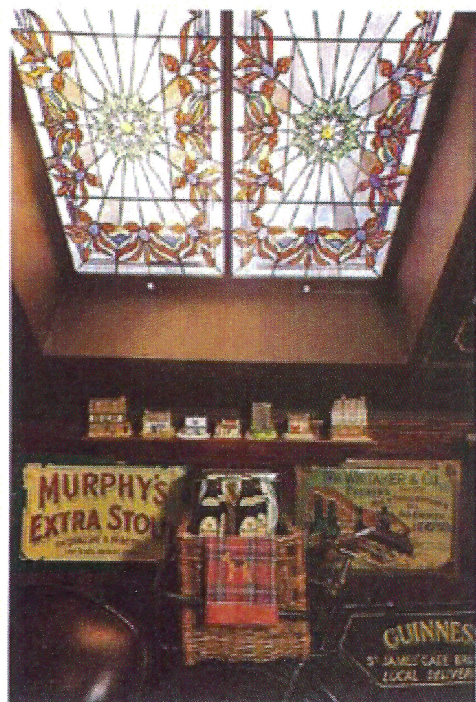
It also helps to have done this before. The O'Briens have a much



do with the spirit of the place than the spirits that flow from its pubs. John's wife, Sandy, a successful attorney in Lynn, is a washashore in Irish terms, a MacGregor with roots in Scotland and a Wellesley pedigree.

It was a marriage made in Cork or thereabouts. A partner in the truest form, Sandy today helps her husband search for Irish memorabilia from the homeland; they have struck the mother lode at Maggie's with its hardwood floors, cherry mahogany wainscoting, wood shutters, and emerald green tin ceiling. The walls are adorned with quarterboards and signs that shout of Dublin Whiskey, O'Brien's Old Fashioned Irish Whiskey, Norton's Brewery, and exaltations to "Vote Early, Vote Often, Vote O'Brien." A Celtic cross adorns a warming fireplace above a framed copy of original Irish sheet music: "Nora, My Irish Queen." Across the pub below a stained glass skylight

This beautiful stained glass window allows light to shine into the second-floor pub and on the vintage pieces the O'Briens have sourced from Ireland



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Maloney's Sardine Paste and Peggy's Homemade Potted Meat.

"A lot of Irish pubs were half pubs and half grocery stores," explains Sandy, noting that husbands were often dispatched for pickles and a pint.

Maggie's Irish Pub contains personal memorabilia as well, like the old wooden Lynn ballot box from John's Ward 6, Precinct 4. Just out of high school at age 19, O'Brien was elected a Lynn City Councilor in 1971, the year the city ran out of ballots. He was elected Essex County Register of Deeds in 1976, and has held that post since—the second longest tenure in the state.

Thanks to the resourceful craftsmanship of the Eastward Companies and the O'Briens' vision, Maggie's Irish Pub was shaped from sawdust. Don't expect last call here any time soon. ●

Left: The pub "proprietors" and Chatham homeowners with their dog, Maggie. Below: An English-style wooden phone booth with a working phone stands near the entry door.

rests in splendor an original Guinness delivery bike with a handlebar basket filled with bottles of unopened Extra Stout. Near the entry door is an English-style wooden phone booth with a working phone, a reproduction of the Third Irish Regiment's call to arms, and a Poor Seamen's Collection Box, urging donors to "give generously."

The centerpiece of Maggie's Pub is the oak-stained, canopy bar as archetypal as you'll find at McDaid's. Above the canopy are ceramic jugs of staples of the day, including Paddy's Pickled Onions, Duggan's Irish Clotted Cream,

