

# On the road, Cusack (and his mother)

By **Hannah-Louise Dunne**  
Showbusiness Reporter

**Biker: John Cusack in Dublin**

**EVEN** by the standards of Hollywood's strange stars it was a bizarre way to mark your dear old mom's 80th birthday. No doubt John Cusack's mother Nancy had expected something special when he invited her on a special visit to the auld sod - to celebrate her longevity.

But surely she didn't foresee his intention to strap her into a motorbike and bring her roaring around the potholed roads of Ireland - for ten hell-raising days and nights.

Perhaps Cusack, the star of *ConAir* and *Grosse Pointe Blank*, thought it was all a big movie set. The 43-year-old also signed up various other members of his family to take the journey on a number of three-wheel BRP Spyder roadsters.

He told his Twitter fans: 'I strongly recommend circling Ireland with family. It was my mother's eightieth birthday and she was a biker girl yesterday, literally, on the back of a trike, screaming through the late afternoon sun in the west Irish hills.'

He added: 'The Celt in her could not be stopped.' A low-key trip, the actor, who has just returned to the far safer

streets of Los Angeles, snubbed the limelight while here, and visited some picturesque spots around the country, as well as Belfast and Dublin.

In the capital for four days, they enjoyed a pint or two at O'Neill's pub, and picked up some samples of the Irish literary canon in Wicklow Street's Secret Book And Record Store, where he says he felt 'quite Irish'. He also 'bought some Beckett



poems'. And when they left the big city the Cusack group travelled to the west coast where they visited some of the landmark sites including the Cliffs of Moher and the Aran Islands, then it was off to try the Ring of Kerry.

He is still boasting about the visit and even has two BRP roadsters in his California abode. He may return on one of them, after saying: 'Ireland is a beautiful country and I have been amazed by the history and scenery.'

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**Doing 80: Cusack's mother Nancy**

## Gardaí quit as fears grow of extra tax on retirement

By **Alan Sherry**  
Crime Reporter

**GARDA** numbers are falling following fears that retirement lump sums are to be taxed on top of the pension and income levies.

Hundreds of senior gardaí have taken early retirement this year, and a recruitment freeze is exacerbating staff shortages.

National specialist units and others in Dublin which tend to target organised crime have been particularly badly hit as senior investigators leave. And the brain drain comes as gangland activity escalates.

Two weeks ago, Detective Superintendent Eugene Gallagher, who was second in command of the Bureau of Fraud Investigation, retired eight years early. The former head, Chief Superintendent Pat Brehony, left several months ago.

Meanwhile, Detective Superintendent John McDermott, second in command at the Criminal Assets Bureau, is to retire soon despite having four years left.

Three senior detectives in Dublin involved in major gangland investigations over the years have also quit early, in addition to numerous senior officers outside the capital.

The Garda Representative Association has warned that cutbacks and retirements are already having an effect on investigations.

Last week officers began a legal battle to have the pension levy declared illegal. The force is forbidden from striking, but more than 2,000 off-duty gardaí marched on Leinster House in February to protest against the levy.



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