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Campion to leave cautionary tales at the door

By Peter McDermott
pmcdermott@irishecho.com

Chris Campion intends to tell some of his best drinking stories at Bar Nine on 53rd Street on St. Patrick's night.

He will leave the cautionary tales, though, to the other 364 days of the year. "It even takes a while to get to in the book," he said, referring to his memoir "Escape from Bellevue," which

details his struggles with alcoholism.

The book, which was commissioned by Penguin following successful runs for his off-Broadway play, begins with his Huntington, L.I., childhood, where he was the fifth of six children born to an Irish-American couple from Woodside, Queens.

All sorts of factors in his 1970s and '80s youth appear significant in retrospect: the gift of a transis-

tor radio and earpiece for his First Communion led him to Scott Muni and WNEW; his older brothers' played in garage bands; and then a rock god moved in next door.

Campion has since had a tumultuous career with the indie band Knockout Drops, which is ongoing.

"I'll read some appropriate stories from the book. We'll sing Knockout Drops songs and some traditional Irish songs. And we'll throw in some Pogues," he said about Wednesday's event.

Some will feel that a person who has written a book subtitled "A Memoir of Rock 'n Roll, Recovery and Redemption" might not be the ideal person to



Chris Campion.

host a St. Patrick's party in a Manhattan bar. But Campion, a gifted mimic and storyteller, disagrees. "I'm sober, not dead," he

said.

"We're on pretty early, but I'm sure that we'll get some of the Parade stragglers," he said.

Campion has also adapted his act for salon-style parties. He brought what he calls "Escape from the House" to horseracing country in Kentucky last week.

"There were 40 or 50 breeders there, many of them from Ireland" he said. "It was great fun."

Chris Campion will be profiled in next week's Echo. The Bar Nine (53rd Street at 9th Avenue) event on St. Patrick Day's will begin at 8 p.m. For more on Campion go to www.escapefrombellevue.com.