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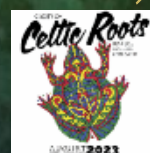
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GODERICH CELTIC ROOTS FESTIVAL, COLLEGE & KIDS CAMP 2023



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Issue No. 329 July 2023

FOREWORD SUMMER FESTIVALS MAKE THEIR MARK

High summer means Festivals and Summer Schools are popping up everywhere, from Ballyshannon to Clare from Sligo to Dungarvan, as far west as Texas and as late as October in Halifax, Nova Scotia. And George Murphy and The Henry Girls and dozens of acts are gearing up for a busy quarter of festival appearances.

We preview a number of important and long-standing events this month. The 51st Willie Clancy Summer School is a perennial hands-on highlight for players. If that gets your fingers itching and if you fancy a condensed regional experience, then head to Tubbercurry the week after to immerse yourself in the music of Sligo and Connacht. For an added dimension take in The Fiddler's Green Festival in Rostrevor, where you'll find out that music is just the medicine that Dr. Bruce Victor and Tommy Sands prescribe.

Take your time at the July summer schools and charge your batteries for a long summer of music. That enjoyment of the tradition works both ways as Seána Haughey told me in relation to the South Sligo Summer school. After four decades it is now part of the fabric of life in Tubbercurry, and like many other festivals around the world, the locals are proud to be part of it. That local support is a key element ensuring the tradition continues.

The 31st Annual Goderich Celtic Roots Festival, College & Kids Camp takes place August 7-13 along the beautiful shores of Lake Huron in Goderich, Ontario, Canada.

Preceding the festival is the Celtic College with instrument, singing, craft art and dance classes being facilitated by an incredible lineup of international artists.

Perhaps we'll see each other in a marquee over the next three months?

Until the next time.....

Slán
Seán L

Publisher : Robert Heuston
Editorial : Seán Laffey
Design : John Barrett
Text Editor
& Production : Emma Meade

**For Editorial, News, CD Reviews,
Tours & Advertising Enquiries Contact:**
Select Media
c/o Irish Music Magazine
4-5 Burton Hall Road, Sandyford
Dublin 18, Ireland
Tel: 01 6622266
Email : info@selectmedialtd.com

Contributors:
Aidan O' Hara, Deirdre Cronin, Grainne McCool, Anne Marie Kennedy, Clive Price, Reidin O' Flynn (RIP), John O' Regan, Edel McLaughlin, Paul Keating, Michael Lange, Mark Lysaght, John Brophy, Philippe Cousin, Alex Monaghan, Nicky Rossiter, Caroline Tatem, Chris Keenan, Frank Greally, Fergal Woods, Anita Lock, Mary Beth McCormack, Maryann McTeague Keifer (RIP).

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This membership is an online learning experience for adult Irish fiddlers looking to develop the real feel for Irish fiddling. If you are classically trained and looking to develop the right feel for a new genre, self-taught in fiddling and struggling when it comes to playing with good rhythm and groove, or wanting to join or be more of a leader in your local trad session, this membership is the accountability and skill-development element you've been looking for!

While there are plenty of tune tutorials involved, your development as a musician and Irish fiddler goes so much further than that. So while you will learn tunes, you'll also develop strength in areas like bowing, personal expression, learning how to blend with other trad instruments, confidence and ease in your playing, and much more! When you focus on a more holistic picture, you start to embody these concepts more subconsciously. Imagine learning a new tune, and because you know the notes + how to make a reel sound like a reel, it sounds like you've been playing the tune for years rather than minutes! It's a great feeling.

To get you to this point, as a member you'll receive access to a private video chat channel with Hannah for 1:1 feedback, a library of pre-recorded video tutorials, as well as group lessons to connect with a community of fellow fiddle enthusiasts. There is also an option to book online lessons with Hannah for an added fee outside of the basic membership package.

Start your two week free trial for the membership by visiting <https://learn.hannahharrisceol.com/studio>

Get to know Hannah through her online fiddle tips: <https://www.youtube.com/@HannahHarrisCeol>

ALBUM EYRE FROM MARY-GRACE AUTUMN LEEwww.marygraceautumn.com

Mary-Grace Autumn Lee from the Irish Folk band Seasons released her debut solo album *Eyre* on the hammered dulcimer on May 12th, 2022. *Eyre* is inspired by Charlotte Brontë's classic book *Jane Eyre*. The album is composed of traditional Irish tunes. This 11-track album

features talented guests including, Caroline Keane on concertina, Patrick Cummins on tenor banjo, Jonathon Sroun on flute, and Grace's siblings, Peter Winter Lee on guitar and bodhrán, Mary-Kate Spring Lee on harp.

In *Eyre*, Grace sought to create new roots in Irish music while paying homage to the tradition. Because the hammered dulcimer is not a traditional Irish instrument, Grace did extensive research to make these tunes sound traditional. The album has been receiving astounding reviews and praise from Ian Lynch's *Fire Draw Near*, *The Irish Echo*, *Wide is the Door*, *Thunder on the Plains*, *Dulcimer Player News*, and many others.

Grace hopes this record not only makes the hammered dulcimer more recognized in the tradition of Irish music but is also used as a resource for hammered dulcimer players who are interested in playing traditional Irish music. This album celebrates tradition while encouraging the creation of new roots. The album can be purchased on Grace's Bandcamp.

Grace is an award-winning hammered dulcimer player and competed at the All-Ireland Fleadh in Drogheda, Ireland in 2018. Grace lives in the eastern part of the United States in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. She enjoys performing, instructing, and collaborating.

<https://marygraceautumn.bandcamp.com/releases>

www.marygraceautumn.com

Facebook and Instagram: @thatdulcimergirl

MULTI-INSTRUMENTALIST COREY PURCELL RELEASES NEW ALBUM UNDAUNTED IN JUNECoreyPurcellMusic.com

Corey Purcell (of Poor Man's Gambit) is set to release a new solo album titled *Undaunted* in June (2023). Featuring Purcell on button accordion, cittern, bodhran, and vocals, the album also includes guest appearances by Deirdre Lockman (fiddle/vocals), Alan Murray (guitar), Zac Leger (whistle), Colin Farrell (whistle), Michael Coult (flute), and Clint Dye (guitar).

From driving ballads to expressive airs, *Undaunted* is a compilation of 6 songs and 6 sets of tunes, including 4 original instrumental compositions. The collection that Purcell presents serves to honour the tradition, while tastefully implementing some modern elements and contemporary stylistic approaches.

The majority of the tracks were recorded in 2021 during a solo five-day retreat to a friend's cabin in the forests of central Pennsylvania during the Covid-19 pandemic. Inspired by the hummingbirds that frequented the cabin during Purcell's afternoon recording sessions, he commissioned a painting of a hummingbird by Irish artist Mary Burke (now residing in Connecticut, USA). Once the painting was complete, he had it digitized, and modelled it into the artwork for the album jacket.

The album draws its name from the lyrics of the first track *The Banks of Sweet Dundee*, which recounts a young girl's stand against her uncle and ultimate triumph in the face of adversity. *Undaunted* also aptly applies to hummingbirds, who will fly up to 500 miles non-stop during their annual migration over the Gulf of Mexico.

***Undaunted* will be released on all streaming platforms on June 1st, in addition to physical copies being available through Purcell's website - CoreyPurcellMusic.com**

SOLITAIRE RECORDING STUDIOwww.solitairstudio.com/news

February 22nd saw the release of *Imprints* by Niamh Keane which was recorded, mixed & mastered at Solitaire. Niamh recorded two songs over four days & the second song is due for release in June.

Live location recording is a large part of what we do here at Solitaire. March 13 saw a live mix & record for Jameson Whiskey in Dublin featuring Soda Blonde, Soak & X Collective. March 25 was a live mix & record for Ciaran O'Neill in Cavan. April 2 saw a live mix for Colm & Laura Keegan in Dublin. April 4 was another live mix & record/mix/master at the studio for Powers Whiskey which included The Scratch, Andy Irvine and many more trad musicians recording both interviews & trad session.

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Laura Jo Callaghan recorded, mixed & mastered her first two singles here at Solitaire in 2022 & both were co-produced by Alan and Laura. Her debut single *Places* was launched July 29th 2022.

Laura recently entered her forthcoming single *Bright Eyes* into the Hot Press New Local Hero competition. Originally winning her local area beating 120 other entries with 12 judges unanimously voting for her song to represent Shannonside Northern Sound in the competition, she finally won the Wild Card title from the competition. This is a huge accomplishment considering that *Bright Eyes* is only the 2nd song that she has ever written. Watch out for its release in June and much more from this hugely talented lady.

For more information, Live/Studio recording, mixing & mastering contact: +353(0)87 2611655 or email info@solitairestudio.com.

www.solitairestudio.com/news

Instagram - @solitairestudio. Facebook – Solitaire Studio

AMELIA HOGAN : *TAKING FLIGHT*

Radio Release Date: 1 March, 2023

ameliasaverb@yahoo.com

Internationally-acclaimed Celtic music singer Amelia Hogan released her second solo album, *Taking Flight*. Hogan sings in the Sean-Nós “old style” of Irish music, as well as accompanied. Her new album features her first original composition in the title track, *Taking Flight*, a joyous harmony a cappella song, and includes 15 other traditional and contemporary works by modern songwriters. She is joined on the album by co-producer Ray Frank, Richard Mandel, David Brewer, Christa Burch, Rebecca Richman, Maureen Brennan, and Marla Fibish.

The album takes the listener through a series of emotions evoked by the last few years—grief, heartache, loss, and hope—before reaching a joy-filled conclusion. Although the individual tracks stand on their own merits, the album is intended to be listened to in sequence, as Hogan weaves a mysterious old magic to tell a complete story.

Named as one of the top 10 charting folk artists and top 10 albums of March 2023 by FAI, Hogan’s star is rising and she is taking bookings

now. Hogan has performed and collaborated with: Molly’s Revenge, Richard Mandel, Noctambule, Julie Henigan, Niamh Parsons, Shay Black, and more. “Hogan is a master, and *Taking Flight* is a masterpiece.” - Jerry Clark, Rambles.net.

Her voice on this album transports you out of time and place with haunting melodies and evocative storytelling.

To hear more, visit <https://www.youtube.com/Ameliaisaverb>, <https://ameliahogan.bandcamp.com/album/taking-flight>, and <https://ameliahogan.com> for bookings and enquiries.

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Custom work is also a specialty, so if there is a project or an instrument that needs carbon fiber replication, Carbony Celtic Winds can help. The selection of the material also creates flutes, whistles and pipes that are virtually indestructible so all instruments come with a lifetime warranty. Carbony Celtic Winds are used by professional musicians around the globe.

Check out the full line of products at www.Carbony.com and shots of our appearances at www.facebook.com/CarbonyCelticWinds

COMHAR’S MAY EDITION ON GAEL LINN AT 70

<https://comhar.ie/iris/>

Comhar’s May edition was given over entirely to Gael Linn. Many of the articles feature the importance of Gael Linn’s ground breaking music label which has over 300 publications.

Musician and author Tadhg Mac Dhonnagáin contends that it was because of Gael Linn that any form of contemporary Irish language arts was available to his generation. Former CEO of Gael Linn, Antoine Ó Coileáin, writes a scholarly overview of Gael Linn’s contribution to Irish language cinema and calls to mind, as do others, the potent impact of Gael Linn’s collaboration with the genius of Seán Ó Riada. Máire Nic Fhinn demonstrates the depth of her understanding of Gael Linn’s dedication to Irish music which she traces right up to today referencing Siansa, a national competition for emerging groups. Peter Browne provides a detailed and balanced consideration of Gael Linn’s production of records and acknowledges how Gael Linn moved with technology. He cites an interview he conducted with the great Micheál Ó Súilleabháin who underlined the depth of gratitude musicians owe to such recordings as those of Gael Linn in the preservation and promotion of our musical heritage.

In his piece Seán Ó Sé recounts how Gael Linn brought him and Seán Ó Riada together to perform, a meeting which ultimately changed the course of Ó Sé’s life and led to collaborations of international importance. In her article, Seosamhín Ní Bheaglaoich describes beautifully the magic created each time her father brought the gramophone out of the cupboard and when she first heard Gael Linn’s musical and song recordings. No one could provide a better overview of Gael Linn’s educational and cultural schemes than Seán Ó Ceallaigh





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who spent 47 years with the organisation. Likewise Pádraic Ó Ciardha displays his detailed knowledge of both Gael Linn and the TV industry when he reveals how Gael Linn applied to run the national TV service in 1957 with a 'can do' approach.

See <https://comhar.ie/iris/>

CLÍODHNA NÍ AODÁIN : *FULL CIRCLE - CELLOS FOR TREES*

www.thecelticcello.com/cellosfortrees

Following her highly successful albums *The Celtic Cello* and *Celtic Rituals*, award-winning Irish cellist Clíodhna Ní Aodáin presents her inspired single *Full Circle – Cellos for Trees*. *Cellos for Trees* is a call to action to plant 10,000 trees, initiated by Clíodhna Ní Aodáin, founder of The Celtic Cello, and Brenda Neece, founder of The Cello Museum.

Their vision is to invite cellists from all over the world to participate in creating a beautiful music video project. Clíodhna Ní Aodáin, an advocate of environmental regeneration, has composed a multi-track cello piece called *Full Circle – Cellos for Trees* as a call to action to plant 10,000 trees. There is a part for every cellist: Beginner – Intermediate – Advanced – Professional. Each cellist chooses a part to play, then makes a video of themselves playing under their favourite tree. The final video will combine these images to create a virtual forest of cellos and trees.

Full Circle – Cellos for Trees grows a musical tree from the seed to the roots to the trunk to the crown. Listeners will hear the magnificence of the tree as it grows. As the lyrical melodies build, the compelling groove drives deeper into the ground to support the glory of the tree as it emerges.

Clíodhna's Roots: Drawing on her background in classical and improvised music, Clíodhna opens an acoustic portal to another realm. As a solo artist she melds contemporary and traditional styles to create a new genre that evokes the atmosphere of the Otherworld.

Connecting to Nature: The early Celtic people cherished Nature and had a sacred reverence for their environment, an awareness that sadly has become displaced in our modern culture. With the track *Full Circle – Cellos for Trees* released on Earth Day 2023, Clíodhna encourages her listeners to renew their appreciation of our precious earth.

Find out more at www.thecelticcello.com/cellosfortrees

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DON "BANJO" SMITH NEW RELEASE COMING SOON

www.donbanjosmith.com

In the spring of 2016, Don "Banjo" Smith set out to make a follow up album to *The Rose Sessions* that he and Marty "Moonshine" McKernan released the year before, not necessarily of the same vein, but of the same quality. In order to achieve that goal, he again recruited Marty as his Co-Producer/multi-instrumentalist, and song contributor, and Bob Both (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bob_Both), of Twain Recording Studio in New Jersey, as Recording Engineer and Co-Producer.

The album is/was to be a Concept Album, similar to the one Earl Scruggs did in the early 70's (*Earl Scruggs with Family and Friends*), whereas Don would be featuring many of the very talented people he has performed with over the years. This has proven to be quite an undertaking with so far up to 14 different musicians, and several have been lost over this time, before they could be brought to the studio to record for this album. There are one or two more Don would like to bring in before this is over.

Don features the likes of frequent collaborator Marty McKernan, Jack Driscoll, Gary Oleyar, Mike Griffin, Mike Kobetitsch, Greg Jowaisas, Terry Kane, Jeanie Cassels, et al, playing a variety of instruments on a variety of songs, many of them Irish in origin. It was slated to be finished in the winter of 2019-20, but a break was taken in late Feb. to start playing during the busy season, and then Covid struck, and everything came to a grinding halt. Just as things were beginning to look up, new restrictions were put in place, keeping production stalled...but we didn't give up...on and off during 2021-2022, we put our noses to the grindstone, and with the help and encouragement of Bob Both, we finished recording, and started mixing in January of 2022.

We finally finished all of the mixing, and now the pre-production work (liner notes, credits, Album Cover Artwork) are in process prior to manufacturing, and we should be done and have the product in hand by late May/early to mid June. Look for it!!! – Don Smith.

Find Don at www.donbanjosmith.com

THE SOFIA – SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA

<https://bstreettheatre.org/>

The Sofia is a non-profit, entertainment venue and arts education hub based in Sacramento, California. Producing fresh, contemporary plays by its acclaimed B Street Theatre, the Sofia has consistently been named *Best Performing Arts Organization* by local media and readers' polls for the past 30 years. In 2018, with the opening of its new, award-winning 38,000 square foot venue, the Sofia added live music, comedy and dance to its offerings. Performances are year-round.

The Sofia is honoured to present artists from throughout the world to celebrate live music and share its beauty with the people of Northern California. Celtic music has become a particular favourite at the Sofia, which is reflected by the many Celtic acts presented at the Sofia since 2018, and scheduled in upcoming months such as *Dàimh*, *Tannahill Weavers*, *An Irish Christmas in America*, *Altan* and *We Banjo 3*. The Sofia is also committed to presenting, new and emerging Celtic acts in its smaller rooms such as Welsh band *The Trials of Cato* and guitarist *Shane Hennessey*.

There are three performance rooms at the Sofia to host events: one room seating 280 primarily for its B Street Theatre, one seating 380 for live concerts, dance and comedy, and one seating 80 for more intimate performances and events. All rooms are available to rent to the public and are complimented by a full bar with staff upon request. There is also a beautiful boutique hotel, two cafés and parking structure adjoining the Sofia.

Make sure to keep an eye on our website for what we have coming up: bstreettheatre.org and follow our Instagram: @thesofiasac

BRAD REID : *THE BRIDGE*

www.bradreid.ca

Nominated for a 2022 East Coast Music Award, and two 2021 Nova Scotia Music Awards, fiddler Brad Reid released his new album *The Bridge* on May 12, 2023. It follows Reid's 2020 release *NEW Scotland*, and represents how the fiddler sees his music connecting the old Cape Breton traditions with modern acoustic pop.

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Eirú (Silver)

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- 31 Button C/G Concertina
- Dovetailed reed slots
- 7 fold leather bellows
- Solid Exotic Hardwood Ends (Options Available)
- Riveted Round Post Levers, Responsive Action
- Drone Button
- Padded Leather Strap
- Solid Bespoke Hardcase with Strap [options on colour & style]
- Single card bellows with design options available (see website for details)



The Vintage

- Riveted Brass Concertina Reeds
- 30 button C/G
- Dovetailed reed slots
- 7 fold leather bellows
- Solid Exotic Hardwood Ends (Options Available)
- Riveted Round Post Levers, Responsive Action
- Padded Leather Strap
- Solid Bespoke Hardcase with Strap [options on colour & style]
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The Bridge features 10 brand new tracks of original tunes, drawing inspiration from the great Scottish and Cape Breton composers, along with contemporary pop and jazz artists like Taylor Swift and Herbie Hancock. Also an influence is Irish tradition bearer Martin Hayes, who said about his own music, that it "comes out of an old tradition, but it's continually growing [...] So we're just part of that."

Reid, whose background includes jazz saxophone and touring with Cirque du Soleil, chose piano and double bass to accompany the fiddle (omitting the guitar and percussion from his previous release). He takes advantage of the piano's versatility, sculpting the arrangements with stimulating new chords to compliment the fresh fiddle phrases, presenting that classic Cape Breton duo in a way that might be, according to Martin Hayes, "continually growing".

Musicians on the album include Troy MacGillivray, Kim Dunn, and Jennifer King - piano; Ron Hynes and Jamie Gatti - double bass.

Praise for Reid's music has come from publications like *Fiddler Magazine*, who called it "a true pleasure"; and *The Living Tradition UK*, describing it as "unpretentious, grounded, with a sense of history that is never precious".

For more www.bradreid.ca

SIMON MAYOR : CAROLAN

Fantasias on Themes by Turlough O'Carolan
mandolin.co.uk/carolan

New settings and musical explorations celebrating the melodic gems of Ireland's national musical treasure Turlough O'Carolan (1670-1738). mandolin.co.uk/carolan (sample tracks, videos, shop and more info).

"A demon on the mandolin, an angel on the fiddle: or vice versa?... Simon Mayor plays music that borders on the divine." (*Irish Music Magazine*).

In this landmark recording, Simon Mayor, one of the world's great mandolinists, goes beyond the written notes, bringing the melodies of Ireland's folk/baroque harper and composer firmly into the 21st century in a collection of vibrant and inventive new arrangements for mandolin family instruments (mandolin, mandola, mandocello, mandobass), string quartet and solo guitar.

The Henry Girls Summer Festivals 2023

July 17th-21st

July 21st

July 22nd-26th

July 30th

August 18th-19th

Sept 1st -2nd

Home With The Henry Girls

Earagail Arts Festival

Celti'Cimes Festival

Cambridge Folk Festival

Milwaukee Irish Festival

Kansas City Irish Festival

Ireland

Ireland

France

England

USA

USA



New album coming soon www.thehenrygirls.com

Simon writes: "I remember well the first time I heard Carolan's music. It would have been 1973 and I saw the Irish group Planxty. They played a couple of Carolan pieces and I was immediately captivated by the strength and grandness of the melodies. His music stayed with me over the years. I gradually wrote numerous arrangements of his pieces for solo guitar, as well as duets, trios and quartets, mostly for the residential mandolin workshops I regularly host.

"While these all formed a basis for the music on this album, I decided to go beyond simple harmonisation by varying tempos, incorporating changes of key and mode, and using the harmonic sequences as a basis for extemporisation."

Find out more at mandolin.co.uk/carolan

MAJOR CONFERENCES UNDERWAY FOR MUSIC AND HEALING

www.Artsawonder.com &

<https://www.facebook.com/artsawonder/>

Irish singer-songwriter and social activist Tommy Sands has joined forces with American psychiatrist and musician Bruce Victor to promote the ever-expanding role of music in both individual and social healing with conferences in both Ireland and the UK this year. At their first conference, which occurred at last year's Fiddler's Green Festival, Tommy and Bruce were joined by sean-nós singer Iarla Ó Lionáird, Dr. Gabriel Scally, Colum Gildernew, chair of NIA Health Board, former PUP leader Dr John Kyle, and Darin Weinberg, Professor of Sociology at Cambridge University.

For 2023, the focus at Fiddler's Green will be on music's role in "social healing" and will draw on Tommy's extensive work in the use of music for this purpose, both in Ireland and Middle East. Bruce will present research on how music and music education may enhance individuals' capacities for conflict resolution. Speakers will also include politicians from across the communities of Northern Ireland, who will speak from their own experiences. Fiddler's Green is open to all music fans, but Tommy and Bruce will also present an invitation-only event in Cambridge for an academic audience that will include speakers from the UK, the United States, and Israel.

Both conferences are being presented under the banner of the **Artsawonder** charity founded by Tommy, which promotes the use of music in the context of social healing. Said Bruce: "if Tommy's music produced a 'defining moment' in steering Northern Ireland toward peace, as was stated by then-deputy First Minister Seamus Mallon, then perhaps we should learn how to utilize music for more such 'defining moments'."

Find out more at www.Artsawonder.com &
<https://www.facebook.com/artsawonder/>

IRISH MUSICIAN ENDA REILLY BRINGS THE SOUND OF IRELAND TO FESTIVALS ACROSS THE US

www.endareilly.com

Irish singer and musician Enda Reilly is set to take the stage at several upcoming Irish festivals in the US, bringing his unique blend of traditional and contemporary Irish music to audiences across the country. With his soulful voice and expert guitar skills, Reilly is a rising star in the Irish music scene and a must-see for fans of Celtic music.

Reilly's latest single, *Gráinne Mhaol*, is a powerful tribute to the legendary Grace O'Malley, known as the pirate queen of Ireland. The rousing ballad showcases Reilly's impressive vocal range and his ability to infuse traditional Irish music with modern sensibilities. The single is available now on Spotify and other streaming platforms.

For those in the midwest USA, Reilly will be performing at several upcoming Irish festivals, including the Motor City Irish Fest, Penn Marr Irish Fest, Saline Celtic Fest, Buffalo Irish Fest, Pittsburgh Irish Fest, Milwaukee Irish Fest and Michigan Irish Music Fest. Don't miss the chance to see him live and experience the magic of Irish music.

For those unable to attend in person, Reilly will also be live streaming performances on Facebook and YouTube on June 3rd and July 1st at 12pm ET (5pm Irish time). Fans are encouraged to send requests to endareilly@gmail.com.

With his passion for Irish music and his commitment to preserving its rich traditions, Enda Reilly is a true ambassador for Irish culture. Don't

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ó chatalóg Gael Linn



Ar fáil ar dhlúthdhiosca & ar na hardáin dhigiteacha

miss the chance to see him in action at one of the upcoming festivals or online.

**For more information on Enda Reilly and his music, visit www.endareilly.com
Contact Enda Reilly at email: endareilly@gmail.com**

COSCÁN CELEBRATE 25 YEARS

www.coscan.ie

COSCÁN, the traditional band from Slane, Co. Meath are celebrating 25 years performing, composing and arranging new music. With 3 highly acclaimed albums, COSCÁN is Harry Long – whistles, Guitar, David Nevin – Bodhrán, Keyboards, Guitar, Gerry Doggett – Fiddle, John Shankey – Guitar. They have been busy composing and arranging new tunes and songs. Coming from the historic village of Slane, the home of that famous rock venue with its castle, COSCÁN continue to musically explore the Boyne Valley.

Their music blends elements of traditional music with more contemporary and experimental styles and continues to explore different options in recording. The band also have a number of videos on YouTube including the widely acclaimed *The Flame of Slane*.

Earlier this year COSCÁN showcased their music at Your Roots are Showing followed by a successful trip to France where they performed to wonderful audiences. They are currently performing their unique blend of traditional and original music and songs at Dublin's Taylors Three Rock for tour groups visiting Ireland. To start their 25 year celebrations they recently performed a sell-out show in the famous music venue Boyles of Slane.

You can find out more at their website, coscan.ie and on their Facebook page. For more information go to www.coscan.ie and <https://www.facebook.com/coscan.ie>

FIACHRA O'REGAN : NA BEANNA BEOLA ALBUM RELEASE

www.fiachrapipes.com

15 years after the release of Fiachra O'Regan's debut solo album *Aisling Gheal* comes *Na Beanna Beola*, which will be launched at Scoil Samhraidh Willie Clancy on Sunday 2nd July.



Fiachra O'Regan is an uilleann piper from Roundstone, Co. Galway and the new album is inspired by Connemara and its rich traditional culture.

Na Beanna Beola offers a generous 14 tracks on B & D uilleann pipes and tin-whistle, with occasional gentle backing from Fiachra's Grosse Isle bandmate, André Marchand on guitar. Tracks on the new album include slow airs which are taken from the sean nós singing tradition in South Connemara, a selection of traditional gems and a handful of compositions from local musicians.

Fiachra has won several All-Ireland titles on both uilleann pipes and whistle and is a founding member of the trio Grosse Isle (with André Marchand and Sophie Lavoie).

There are no gimmicks here and the approach for the album is very much personality over production, sensitivity over speed. You can expect to hear the full range of chanter, drones and regulators in action throughout the piping tracks. The mix of concert pitch pipes, flat pipes and accompanied whistle, as well as transitions from slow-airs to dance tunes will keep listeners hanging on until the last note of the last track.

***Na Beanna Beola* is available on Fiachra's website www.fiachrapipes.com or directly from Fiachra at info@fiachrapipes.com**

Please find more information at www.fiachrapipes.com and keep an eye on <https://www.instagram.com/fiachrapipes/> or <https://www.facebook.com/fflachra> for updates.

THE CONSEQUENCES : WHEN YOU WEREN'T LOOKING

<https://theconsequencesband.com/>

Trad music lovers are eagerly awaiting what promises to be a must-have album. With their debut album, *When You Weren't Looking*, The Consequences are becoming one of the most exciting new groups on the traditional music scene—as NY local Donie Carroll put it, "...a group to be reckoned with."

When You Weren't Looking is bound to be the first of many from The Consequences, a dynamic new band causing a stir with their unique, lively sound. Driven by a passion for exploring the colours and complexities of traditional and original tunes, Lexie Boatright (harp, concertina), Jake James (fiddle), Ryan Ward (piano, piano accordion), and Cara Wildman (bodhrán) are award-winning, seasoned musicians who have toured the United States, Canada, Mexico, Argentina, Puerto Rico, Ireland, and Japan, at venues such as Carnegie Hall, Gracie Mansion, and Chicago Auditorium Theater. They're highly sought after in the festival and teaching circuit and have been featured at Goderich Celtic Festival, Catskills Irish Arts Week, the O'Flaherty Irish Music Retreat, Gaelic College, Milwaukee Irish Fest, and Philly Folk Fest among others.

They are generating buzz with their engaging shows that blend experienced musicianship with levity and playful on-stage chemistry. Their captivating harmonies, vibrant energy, and driving rhythms are guaranteed to get you on your feet and dancing. Their debut album *When You Weren't Looking* features classic favourites alongside never-before-recorded newly composed tunes and a few rare old gems including a standout track highlighting the beautiful Turlough O'Carolan composition, *Planxty Robert Jordan*.

For updates on the album release, visit <https://theconsequencesband.com/> and @theconsequencesband on instagram and facebook <https://www.facebook.com/TheConsequencesMusic>

THE NASHVILLE CELTS

<https://www.thenashvillecelts.com/>

"The Nashville Celts" second record, *Traveling On* is now available on Spotify and all music streaming platforms.

The Nashville Celts are lead singer/fiddler Maggie Lander, Ric Blair on vocals, guitar, piano, and bodhran, Patrick D'Arcy (U2, Sting, Josh Groban) from Dublin, Ireland on uilleann pipes, whistle, mandolin, Matt Menefee (Bruce Hornsby, Mumford & Sons) on 5 string banjo/mandolin, dobro & vocals, and Fiachra O'Regan (Waterboys, Bill Whelan) from Connemara, Ireland on pipes and tenor banjo.

All of the songs on *Traveling On* were composed by band members Ric Blair and Maggie Lander except for the classic Irish song *The Parting Glass* and Irish trad instrumentals on the release. The first few songs on *Traveling On* draw more from the bands Nashville roots than their first record. Yet, with the consistent backing of the uilleann pipes, Irish whistles and dobro; along with the powerful vocals of lead singer Maggie Lander, whose voice has been described as Linda Ronstadt meets Adele.

The Nashville Celts recorded *Traveling On* in the famous Castle Recording Studio in Nashville, which is an actual Castle. Castle has a colourful history as it was built in 1932 by a Chicago mobster and has served as the birthplace to over 500 gold and platinum records. In making the new record, TNC was also joined in the studio by their friends Jeff Taylor (Bob Dylan, Elvis Costello, etc) on accordion, Byron House (Robert Plant, Alison Krauss) on bass and Natalya Kay (Gaelic Storm) on fiddle.

The songs of The Nashville Celts come from the heart. Band leader Ric Blair says, "If I had to make a choice, I would much rather be truly emotionally moved by the story in a song and lifted up by a rousing, lively up-tempo instrumental than to simply be impressed by technical musical wizardry alone. But, gratefully with this band, we have both. Each player is a super pro with amazing experience. Matt Menifee in particular is considered by many in the biz as being the most gifted banjo player in the entire world right now. But, the heart and soul of our music or any music in my book, again lies in the integrity of the story, the lyrics, the melody, the song."

When performing at Irish Festivals, TNC performs more of their up-tempo Irish tunes and songs. Their hybrid style has been compared to groups such as We Banjo 3 and Jig Jam because of the blending of spirited, driving and fiery traditional Irish melodies with bluegrass inflections which incites their audiences into a glorious, rapturous ebullience.

**The Nashville Celts are booked by: David Shaughnessy
@ UPTOWN ARTIST GROUP. email:
David@UptownArtistGroup.com phone: 816-304-7784**

SEÁN HEELY NEW ALBUM : *DRAMAGICAL* www.seanheely.com

It has been a while since 2018 when Seán Heely released his first album *Edge of the Bow*. Right at the tail end of the pandemic, he collaborated with duo partner Colin McGlynn and released *Homeport: Port na Dachaigh*.

Since 2018, Seán has become a force in the Celtic fiddling world: performing globally as a solo artist and with the Washington D.C based Seán Heely Celtic Band. He has become a fluent learner in the Scottish Gaelic (Gàidhlig) language and learned harp and bouzouki. He has also composed around 30 tunes some of which have made their way across the world.

July 2023 will see the arrival of Seán's newest full-length project *Dramagical*. Liz Carroll calls Seán "One powerhouse of a fiddler" and Seán credits Liz as inspiring him to compose tunes in the first place. He is honoured to have Liz fulfilling a producer role on the album.

Dramagical is a combination of the words dramatic and magical and was a word that Seán made up after encountering an indescribable scene in the Isle of Skye, Scotland. As it often goes for Seán, this inspiration from nature created music and thus the jig *Dramagical* was composed. There are also many references to the otherworld of Celtic culture: featuring titles like *The Charmed 3* and a solo fiddle piobaireachd called *The Horned God (An Té Adharcach or Cernunnos)*. Many of the tunes on the album are originals of Seán's but a listener can also expect to hear a few tracks with the full Seán Heely Celtic Band. Returning as a brilliant accompanist in guitar, piano, and bouzouki is All-Ireland singing champion Kevin Elam.

Based in the Washington DC area, Seán performs locally in venues such as the Kennedy Center and Strathmore Music center

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and his musical travels have taken him to Scotland, Ireland, South America, and Germany. The first public album release of *Dramagical* will be at the Grandfather Mountain Highland Games July 6-9 where the Seán Heely Celtic Band will be a headlining act.

To purchase the album and learn more about Seán, visit www.seanheely.com, email for interviews, bookings, queries: seanfiddlemusic@gmail.com. Follow Seán on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/seanheelyfiddle/> and Instagram Handle: [musicsean77](https://www.instagram.com/musicsean77)

WILLOS' : FROM NOW ON

www.willos.eu

WILLOS' are an International Folk band based in Siena (Italy). Canada – Ireland – Italy; In the line-up: Irish fiddler Stephanie Martin from Belfast; lead voice Fiona King from Toronto and 4 Italian musicians from Tuscany; Giulio Putti on bodhrán; Luca Mercurio guitars; Lorenzo Del Grande on flutes and Massimo Giuntini on uilleann pipes - one of the best-known pipers in Italy.

The band performs Celtic Music with Italian spices, a mix of their own original songs & compositions, unique arrangements and traditional tunes and has played over 700 gigs all over Europe. Their album *From Now On* released in May 2022 and their new single *Ghost Ship* released in February 2023 are receiving great reviews from America to Europe.

CD is available on all streaming platforms - Spotify, YouTube, Deezer, Apple Music, AmazonMusic. If you'd like to know more, check out Willos' at www.youtube.com/@willostrad, www.willos.eu, www.facebook.com/willostrad, www.instagram.com/willostrad & www.tiktok.com/willos_official

SHASKEEN IN 2023

www.shaskeen.net

Traditional Irish Music and Song has been at the forefront with Shaskeen for the last fifty-three years. Shaskeen is now a recognised cornerstone in the Irish Traditional and Folk scene.

With a musical line up with 8 people of vast experience, sporting four

front line singers, *Katie Theasby*, Vocals, Flute & Whistles, *Mary Liddy* Concertina & Vocals, *Johnny Donnellan* Bodhran & Vocals, *Dave Sanders*, Fiddle, Viola, Mandolin & Vocals, *Patsy McDonagh* on Accordion, *Geraldine Cotter* on Piano, *Eamonn Cotter* on Concert Flutes and *Tom Cussen* on Banjo & Mandolin.

There are hardly any bands playing traditional music and songs in Ireland today that has the heritage, cultural context, longevity and experience of SHASKEEN, a band of genuinely skilled musicians, no gimmickry, just instrument wizards, great variety in the tunes, straightforward arrangements, beautiful songs, a fierce and collective drive, mighty energy. *The versatility from this band is unlimited.*

So far the year 2023 has been very exciting for Shaskeen with lots of concert gigs around Ireland with highlights coming up at Major concerts in *The Town Hall Galway*, *Phil Murphy Weekend* in Carrig on Bannow, *The All Ireland Fleadh Cheoil* in Mullingar, *The Electric Picnic* in Stradbally.

Our Concerts are jam packed and entertaining from start to finish, with a host of reels, jigs, barndances and our Songs are of a wide & varied genre with delicate arrangements from Katie, Johnny, Mary & Dave.

Look out for Shaskeen's new single & video coming soon.

Please check out a few more recent video links etc.

https://www.shaskeen.net/video/Shaskeen-in-Cois-na-hAbna_39

https://www.shaskeen.net/video/Katie-Theasby_29

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d9g-hnt3Nqg>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0foBmD7c2_M

Check out. www.shaskeen.net

<https://www.facebook.com/shaskeen/>

KINN FOLK : 2023 ROBINSON EMERGING ARTIST

www.kinnfolkmusic.com

Virginia-based Celtic folk duo, Kinnfolk, have been named the Goderich Celtic Roots Festival's 2023 Robinson Emerging Artist. The announcement came following careful consideration by a jury of industry professionals and a 10-day public vote.

"We are thrilled to have Kinnfolk join us as the Robinson Emerging Artist winner," said Artistic Director Cheryl Prashker. "Their music is exciting, fresh and dynamic, and we know our audience will love them. We can't wait to see them on stage at the 31st Goderich Celtic Roots Festival." Kinnfolk will join international sensations, rising stars, and homegrown talent alike in entertaining loyal audiences flocking to Goderich, Ontario for the annual event.

Husband-and-wife duo Josh and Julie Kinn weave bouzouki, bodhran, and smooth vocal harmonies in their Celtic folk music from the heart of the Blue Ridge Mountains. Since forming Kinnfolk in late 2018, the pair have played at festivals and listening rooms throughout Virginia and beyond. Recently, the band received a grant from the National Endowment of the Arts and the City of Roanoke to create a body of work exploring the history, geography, and folk legends of their town. The resulting project, *Star Above the Mountain*, will be debuted to a live audience on June 30, 2023.

Visit Kinnfolk's website and social media pages to stay up-to-date with the project and other goings-on! www.kinnfolkmusic.com

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/kinnfolk.music>

Spotify:

<https://open.spotify.com/artist/5s9St6bgbQhi2tNUGC52rv?si=5ou3vagKsKrTfH-bvfo8Q>

Instagram: [@kinnfolk.music](https://www.instagram.com/kinnfolk.music)

YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCE3iCa3te-Z26XM-_YBy3Xg

THE FINNS GEAR UP FOR AUGUST ALBUM RELEASE

www.thefinnsmusic.com

The two brothers prepare to release their second studio album this August while they are back touring in the United States. This album is released after a highly successful live stream album and beforehand, their debut album *Creations*. Their live stream album, *Living the Stream*,

rachel hair
& ron jappy

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THE IRISH REVOLUTION

— PÓL BRENNAN —

IN THIS STIRRING SOUNDTRACK OF THE IRISH REVOLUTION, PÓL BRENNAN IS JOINED BY STEVE TURNER, AIDEN O'DONNELL AND NICK BAILEY, AS WELL AS HIS SISTER AND FELLOW CLANNAD MEMBER MOYA. HIS MUSIC CAPTURES THE RAW EMOTION SPARKED BY HISTORIC EVENTS SUCH AS THE GREAT HUNGER OF 1847 THROUGH TO THE IRISH CIVIL WAR IN 1922–1923 USING MOVING TUNES AND MOURNFUL MELODIES TO DEPICT THE SACRIFICES MADE BY THE IRISH PEOPLE IN THEIR QUEST FOR INDEPENDENCE.

LINER NOTES WRITTEN BY CATHAL GOAN.



ALBUM RELEASED FRIDAY 22ND SEPTEMBER | WWW.ARCMUSIC.CO.UK/ARTISTS/POL-BRENNAN.HTML

was released after a summer of livestreams during 2020 which saw over 250,000 viewers tune in to their social media channels weekly. The Finns became a part of fans' households main Saturday night entertainment making the absolute best out of a dark period.

The Finns music is recognised internationally after placing highly in the International Songdoor Contest and Women's Freedom Song Contest. Their music is very relatable and lovable and is rooted into the Irish music scene with the band playing countrywide at an array of events including indie, trad, rock and folk festivals. This August sees the long-awaited return to America with gigs planned for Boston, Detroit and Milwaukee Irish Fest with some more stops along the way. It's an exciting return for The Finns as they really find their groove in front of American audiences.

If you haven't met The Finns yet, they are a duo of brothers, Hugh and Ciaran Finn from County Laois in Ireland. They play banjos, guitars, percussion, bouzouki, tenor guitars and harmonicas, making the live set very interesting and with their strong harmonies shining through. The brother vibe is very enjoyable to watch as they entertain very organically. Catch them this August in North America and follow their social media accounts for more updates and news.

Find out more at www.thefinnsmusic.com and <https://www.facebook.com/thefinnsmusic>

TRAD STARS RACHEL HAIR AND RON JAPPY REUNITE FOR SECOND DUO ALBUM *Élan*

Out Now | On March Hair Records

www.rachelhair.com

Scottish traditional musicians Rachel Hair and Ron Jappy released their second duo album, *Élan*, on May 19, 2023. The album features a blend of Rachel's Scottish harp playing (clarsach) and Ron's acoustic guitar skills. The result is a refreshing and uplifting instrumental sound that is both unique and inspiring.

Élan means "with energy, style and enthusiasm" in ancient French, which the duo feels accurately represents their approach to music and

life. It follows the duo's 2019 album, *SPARKS*, and showcases their six years of performing together. The instrumental pairing of the harp and guitar links each track, providing a rich and complex sound that is unexpected from just two instruments.

The album features ten tracks, six of which include compositions by Rachel heavily inspired by Scottish traditions and culture, with the sleeve notes telling the stories behind each of them helping to provide context to the listener. The remaining tracks were carefully selected from traditional tunes and modern compositions by the duo's contemporaries and feature guest bodhran player Adam Brown (RURA, Ímar) on three tracks.

Rachel, a prominent Scottish traditional musician, discovered the clarsach through Fèis Rois in Ullapool, her hometown. She has toured worldwide, taught at Celtic harp festivals, and has released six critically acclaimed albums. Ron, originally from Findochty, a small village in North East Scotland is recognised as one of Scotland's foremost traditional and folk guitarists, having extensively toured the UK and Europe.

Recorded at Oak Ridge Studios in Glasgow, *Élan* was mixed and mastered by Andrea Gobbi at GloWorm Studios and made possible with funding from Creative Scotland.

To celebrate the album's release, Rachel and Ron are touring Japan and Australia in May and June 2023.

Élan is available on CD and all major digital platforms. For more information, visit www.rachelhair.com

CELTIC WORLD FORUM HOSTED BY ÉABHA MCMAHON

www.celticworldforum.com

Grammy nominated Irish singer Éabha McMahon will host a 3-Day event comprising a mix of talks, panels and workshops all connected to the world of Irish Traditional, Folk and Celtic Music, followed each evening by specially created concerts bringing the best in Celtic entertainment.

This unique event titled 'Celtic World Forum', will bring together Celtic music enthusiasts, experts and artists to explore and celebrate the rich and diverse traditions of Celtic music and culture.

The event promises to be informative, inspiring, and entertaining for all those who attend and an unforgettable experience for anyone passionate about the world of Celtic arts and also provide a unique opportunity to engage with leading experts and artists in the field whilst immersing in the past and present of Celtic music and culture.

Attendees will leave with a deeper understanding of the music, culture and history of Celtic entertainment as well as gaining practical knowledge on performance and other aspects.

As well as providing an enjoyable experience for those with a passion for listening to these styles of music it will also provide invaluable insights for singers and musicians that perform in these genres about the scale of the global audience for this style of music and the ways they can introduce their talent to an audience around the world.

Éabha McMahon has garnered world attention for her stunning voice, firstly as part of Anúna, then as principal vocalist with the globally successful Celtic Woman. She releases her solo music as AVA. For more details go to www.celticworldforum.com

COLM & LAURA KEEGAN LAUNCH BRAND NEW ALBUM THIS SUMMER


ColmKeegan.com

This Summer, Colm & Laura Keegan, Celtic music duo from the hit show Celtic Thunder, will return to the US to launch their brand new album *Colm & Laura Keegan: Live from Dublin*.

The award-winning musical duo will perform at Celtic Festivals in Milwaukee, Iowa, Michigan, and various locations along the East Coast and Mid-West.

This talented couple are no strangers to the US, having toured across every State as a solo artist and with Celtic Thunder over the past 12 years. However, due to recent pandemic travel

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restrictions and the birth of their third child last summer, this will be their first time performing together in the US in 4 years!!

A good night's entertainment is always guaranteed with this talented couple. Pick up your tickets now to enjoy an evening of original music coupled with Irish & Scottish favourites. You won't be disappointed.

All tickets and tour information are available from ColmKeegan.com

THE HENRY GIRLS TO HOST 5-DAY SONGWRITING RESIDENCY, "HOME WITH THE HENRY GIRLS," PRESENTED BY THE EARAGAIL ARTS FESTIVAL.

www.eaf.ie

The internationally acclaimed folk trio, The Henry Girls, are delighted to present their 5-day songwriting residency, "Home with the Henry Girls," in partnership with The Earagail Arts Festival. Taking place in the picturesque town of Malin, Co. Donegal, from July 17th to July 21st, this unique event will offer participants an immersive experience into the art of songwriting and performance. Through a series of workshops it will provide aspiring songwriters and music enthusiasts with the opportunity to collaborate and learn as they delve into the creative process.

Coinciding with the residency, The Henry Girls are set to release their highly anticipated new album, *A Time to Grow*. Recorded and produced by Tommy McLaughlin at Attica Audio in Donegal, this eagerly awaited album promises to captivate listeners with its enchanting melodies, intricate harmonies, and heartfelt storytelling, showcasing the group's signature blend of Celtic, folk, and Americana influences.

Tickets for the songwriting residency will be available through The Earagail Arts Festival www.eaf.ie

More information about the residency, album release, and The Henry Girls can be found on their official website www.thehenrygirls.com and their social media channels.

JOY DUNLOP RELEASES VIBRANT NEW GAELIC ALBUM CAOIR SRM08 www.joydunlop.com

Esteemed Scottish singer and Gaelic language advocate Joy Dunlop releases her third solo album *Caoir*, featuring contemporary recordings of traditional Gaelic songs.

Joy's first solo material to be released in a decade, *Caoir* (pronounced koor) means a blaze of fire, fiercely burning, flames or flashes – imagery which comes across in the album's undeniably vibrant and warming sound. Her pure, enthralling vocals burn brightest at the heart of it all, acting as the ember which breathes life to the skilled, heartfelt flames of musicianship that surround her on the recording. With its upbeat rhythms and captivating melodies and riffs, it's easy to imagine the album lighting a fire in listeners, as Joy's musical embers dance around venues and festivals across Scotland and beyond.

Joy's coveted singing career has led her all over the world, from Canada to Japan. She has been nominated as Gaelic Singer of the Year no less than four times and has a Royal National Mòd Gold Medal to her name. A much-loved broadcaster, Joy's face and voice are well-known from her wealth of television and radio work including as BBC Scotland and BBC ALBA weather presenter, BBC Radio Scotland Young Traditional Musician of the Year presenter and host of SpeakGaelic.

***Caoir* is available to buy on CD and to stream and download on all major digital platforms. For more information visit www.joydunlop.com.**

For more information on Joy Dunlop go to: www.joydunlop.com / Facebook @joydunlopoofficial / Twitter @joydunlop / Instagram @joydunlop / TikTok @joydunlop / YouTube @joydunlopoofficial / Bandcamp joydunlop.bandcamp.com



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THE SONS ARE RISING FOR GEORGE MURPHY

Mark Lysaght interviews George Murphy for Irish Music Magazine.



George Murphy, singer, songwriter and guitarist, who exploded on to the Irish music scene in 2003 at the age of 17 when he appeared on a TV talent show singing traditional ballads, immediately drew comparisons with the legendary Luke Kelly.

The strength and passion of his vocal delivery was incredible, especially given his tender age at the time, with Phil Coulter describing him as “the most exciting vocal find in Ireland” and offering to guide his career by producing the young singer’s debut album. In 2004, he released *Dreamed A Dream*, which reached Number One in the Irish charts and went triple platinum.

His second album was more diverse, including some original material and a move to more mainstream music, but did not have quite the same impact, so his third album involved a return to his folk and traditional roots. Having established a following in the USA, George moved there for a time, playing gigs and festivals and establishing a solid reputation. In 2017 he joined the High Kings (replacing Martin Furey) for a time before deciding on a return to singing the types of songs that had originally inspired him and working with like-minded musicians. The Rising Sons evolved from a local session held near George’s Dublin home, and rapidly gained momentum as a touring band until the COVID-19 pandemic put a temporary halt to live activities.

They used this unforeseen hiatus to good effect though, working on their repertoire and sound, so that by the time restrictions were lifted, they were able to rapidly resume where they left off, with even greater confidence in the effectiveness of the line-up: eight players including George, Declan Parsons (guitar, mandolin, whistles and vocals), Sean Regan (fiddle), Joey “The Bass” Hughes (electric bass), Shane O’Hanigan (percussion), Tommy Whelan (electric guitar), Jimmy Morrison (banjo, octave mandolin and harmonica) and George’s cousin David Brown on whistles and vocals.

I spoke with George via Zoom recently, just before he was due to perform a sold-out gig in Belfast, another first for the band. He was in good form and reflected on the sequence of events, which led him to where he is now.

Mark: “How do you feel about how The Rising Sons have developed?”

George: “We’re absolutely delighted to have major sold-out gigs, for something that started as a pub session to have grown these legs, it’s just incredible. It’s the first time in my career where I’ve genuinely felt that we have real artistic control and we are mapping it all out ourselves, without management or a record label dictating what happens. Now I’m able to guide things more directly with the help of the band and a trusted group of people. The band are largely in day jobs and have had music as a hobby for enjoyment, so it’s great to see them experiencing what it’s like to play at larger venues, something I got used to at a young age. Some of the band members have done lots of gigs over the years and they’re great players, but to get to this stage with them is a huge thrill.”

Mark: “How do the band manage to balance work with music?”

George: “We’re lucky in that Joey is a retired teacher and is available any time, other members can be flexible in terms of work commitments. At the start I was told that the idea of an eight-piece band with part-time musicians just wouldn’t work, and the advice was to trim it down to maybe three or four. But as a group, we decided that we would stick together and accept that we needed a more long-term approach. I was told that I was trying to push a square plug into a round hole but we stuck with it, because the members just wanted to be true to the music side of things and weren’t financially dependent on the band. Over time it really has worked out, because we took on gigs with the aim of impressing a small crowd on the basis that it would be bigger next time around. Most of the time that’s exactly what has happened and we’ve built up a very loyal audience.”

Mark: “On stage you’re all very natural, it really works, doesn’t it?”

George: “Well, it’s a pleasure for me to work with them and we make the audience comfortable too by slagging each other on stage, there are no egos and we are all equals. Having said that, we all have different backgrounds and a range of age groups, and we’re greater than the sum of our parts. With a band this size, we can operate quite well if someone isn’t available and we’re very flexible about how we can perform based

on whatever line-up is there. To some extent it operates as a session except that it's rehearsed and everyone knows what they're doing. What makes me really proud is that we've made it work by being honest with each other and the bigger gigs are beginning to happen."

Mark: "Tell me about the bigger gigs coming up?"

George: "Well, the big one this year is Vicar Street on September 28th, we're all really looking forward to that one and it's almost sold out already. We have other gigs around the country from July to September, including some folk festivals and the Fleadh Cheoil. Next year we have confirmed dates at Wexford Opera House on February 17th, Cork Opera House the following night, Ulster Hall on February 28th and the Millennium Forum on April 27th. I'm sure we'll be adding to these later this year, as there's huge interest in the band all over Ireland now."

Mark: "You feature electric guitar and electric bass in the line-up? Could you develop in a new direction with these instruments?"

George: "This was a very happy accident! When we were organising the original session, we had banjos, fiddles, whistles, bodhráns, mandolins, guitars etc. One week Tommy arrived in with an electric guitar, which wasn't expected by me. But he sat in with us and, like most good musicians, he understood when he should or shouldn't play."



Then, at the right time, he started playing and it really added something. Same thing with the bass, Joey arrived and knew that he didn't need to play all the time, so he might wait until halfway through a song and then give it a lift. I remember that Luke Kelly persuaded the Dubliners to use instruments like the piano years ago, even though the other members might not have agreed at the start. So as long as it sounds good, I feel we should be open to a range of instruments, Shane is taking drumming lessons, so that might mean a new approach to percussion too. The aim is to get him behind a full drum kit fairly soon."

"We are tending to pick more obscure items that we can put our own stamp on"

Mark: "Are you writing more original material?"

George: "Yes we are, we have studio time booked so we meet up each week and if the original songs are strong enough, they'll take priority over covers. While it sounds great to have all our own songs, we realise that we need to balance the material so that we do good covers along with our own compositions. We prefer not to do the more obvious standard traditional and folk songs, so we are tending to pick more obscure items where we can put our own stamp on them, so we are working hard to get the quality right. There isn't always enough time to get through everything, but I hope we can have a studio album completed over the summer."

Mark: "Will it get to the point where some members may need to consider going full-time?"

George: "We're lucky with some of the lads, one is retired and some others have reduced or shorter working weeks, or can get some flexibility if we get bookings on weekdays. Also, some are teachers and we can use their summer breaks to good effect for festivals and so on, which tend to happen around that time. We've also discussed the possibility of career breaks too, these decisions may be tough but it might be a great way of keeping things moving forward. We're just staying positive and letting things develop naturally."

Keep abreast with their positive vibes by visiting www.georgemurphymusic.com and through social media at www.facebook.com/therisingsonsirl

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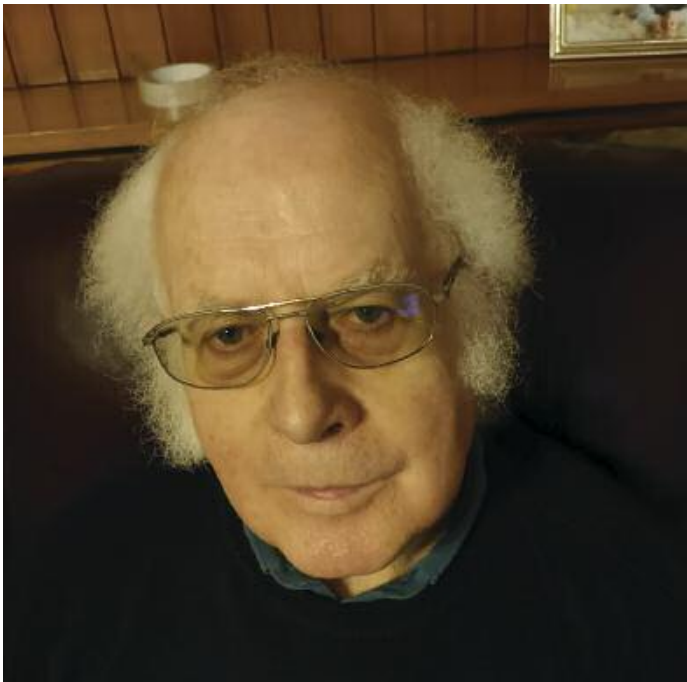
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SCOIL SAMHRAIDH WILLIE CLANCY 2023

Harry Hughes, Director of Scoil Samhraidh Willie Clancy, talks to Aidan O'Hara about the 2023 Summer School.



“Last year we marked the 50th anniversary of the summer school and this year we’re marking the fiftieth anniversary of the death of Willie Clancy in January 1973,” so said Harry Hughes, Director of the Willie Clancy Summer School, when I spoke with him about this year’s event in Miltown Malbay, County Clare.

The 51st Willie Clancy Summer School runs from Saturday 1 July to Sunday 9 July. It is now open for registration and features classes, concerts, lectures, céilís, workshops and more.

Harry added that next year they will be marking the 50th anniversary of Na Píobairí Uilleann coming to the summer school and taking over the piping workshops. “So, it’s a kind of series of 50th anniversaries,” he continued, “that sees us reflecting on the past and looking forward to the future and planning ahead.”

One would think that the School’s huge range of activities was enough to be going on with, but, as Harry said, they are always looking forward, and already there’s something new on offer this year. The School is very excited about a new course called *Know the Score: Read & Write Irish Traditional Music* designed by the Donegal fiddle player and traditional music educator Dr Liz Doherty.

“The course is for traditional musicians who want to learn more about the art of teaching traditional music,” Harry said, “and for traditional music tutors who want to upskill. Also, for primary school teachers who’d like to develop the skills to incorporate traditional music studies into their classrooms. It’s an interesting new course specifically designed for that, and it will be run in association with Dr Liz Doherty’s company *I Teach Trad* and will be certified by the Royal Irish Academy of Music.”

Harry was keen to draw attention to a presentation on Wednesday, 5 July, that will be delivered by James Morrissey, author, publisher, and currently the chair of Claddagh Records. “He’ll talk on Garech Browne, founder of Claddagh Records, and the part Willie Clancy played in establishing that important recording company.”

WILLIE DISCOVERED ON 1965 FILM

At last year’s summer school, Harry recalled the great excitement at the showing of a long-lost film that featured among others Willie Clancy piping and talking. The footage was discovered in The Irish Traditional Music Archive (ITMA) by Jack Talty and Maurice Gunning and this led Alan Woods of ITMA to track down Lennart Malmer, the Swedish filmmaker who made the film in 1965. Such was the enthusiasm shown when the film was screened last year it was decided to show excerpts of it again this year. It will be part of the closing presentation on Saturday afternoon, *Remembering Willie Clancy: Reflections on his Life and Legacy*.

Lennart travelled to Ireland to film traditional musicians and found himself in the company of some remarkable traditional musicians and singers. He met up with noted singer Joe Heaney in O’Donoghue’s pub in Dublin, and on a trip to Clare he attended the Fleadh Cheoil in Scariff where he heard musicians that included Sonny Murray, Martin Rochford and Brendan McMahon. His trip culminated with a journey to Miltown Malbay, where he met and filmed Willie Clancy and was invited into the uilleann piper’s home on the Flag Road.

Adding to the joy and excitement of the showing of Lennart’s film last year, was the presence of Lennart himself, aged in his eighties, still hale and hearty. He had been invited by ITMA and Scoil Samhraidh Willie Clancy to talk about his film, and pick up again on his journey which he started all those years ago. Lennart’s film, *Porter och Pipa*, is a fascinating snapshot of the lives and music of some of the finest musicians in the history of Irish traditional music.

“Taking part in *Remembering Willie Clancy*, Harry said, “will be musician friends of Willie’s who were influenced by him and other people who had come into his orbit during his lifetime.” They include the whistle player and piper Seán McKiernan, Pat Mitchell who wrote *The Dance Music of Willie Clancy*, the Kelly family, John and James, and Mick O’Connor and his family, the McCarthy family, Seán Talty, and many more. James Keane will be with us too. Sadly his brother Seán who was also invited passed away in May.”

MUIRIS Ó RÓCHÁIN HONOURED

“On that same Saturday evening,” said Harry, “we have a memorial concert in honour of one of the key founders of the Summer School, Muiris Ó Rócháin, a man of extraordinary energy who got the School off the ground and made the contacts that ensured its success over the years.” And seeing to that continued success is Harry and his hardworking committee, Éamon McGivney, Séamus Ó Rócháin, and Deirdre Comber. The challenging work of Registration Administration is done by David McDermott, and Maureen Kilduff is the able manager of Accommodation Information.



Photo : John Coffey

"In addition, we have a large number of support staff and volunteers, up to sixty in number, who look after the venues and the logistics of the Summer School that covers four communities in West Clare: Miltown Malbay itself, Spanish Point, Quilty, and Mullagh. The School caters for about a thousand students, with around a hundred and fifty tutorial staff, so you can see it's a major undertaking every year."

I put it to Harry that it must be quite a challenge for him and the committee to accommodate so many people over the week. "Yes, and it's particularly acute this year, as it was last year. During the two years of Covid there was no question of accommodation because we were online. Then when we came back in 2022 many of the older accommodation providers were no longer in the business, and other people who had started working from home were no longer in a position to lease rooms. But our very efficient accommodation team have seen to it that all who need accommodation are taken care of."

CLASSES & WORKSHOPS

The Willie Clancy Summer School rightly claims to be Ireland's largest traditional music summer school held annually since 1973 in memory of Willie Clancy. During the week, nearly a thousand students from every part of the world attend daily classes taught by experts in Irish music and dance. And what intriguing subject matters are dealt with for visitors and students alike.



Photo : Tony Kearns

On the opening day, Saturday 1 July, the subject of the Breandán Breathnach Memorial Lecture at 8.30 p.m. is "Against Christianity, learning and the spirit of nationality": Jazz and Irish Traditional Music in the early 20th Century. Presentation is by Dr. Conor Caldwell, lecturer in Irish Traditional Music at the University of Limerick. That is followed by a Céilí at the Mill Marquee, GAA grounds, Miltown Malbay.

"She's one of our foremost traditional musicians, and a great ambassador for Irish music." Harry was referring to tin whistle player Mary Bergin who will be the subject of this year's Tribute on Tuesday 4 July at 3.00 pm. "It will be facilitated by her long-term friend and fellow musician James Kelly," Harry added.

All that said, I have only touched on a fraction of the many events and programmes of this year's 51st Willie Clancy Summer School:

"The Summer School is very excited about a new course called Know the Score"

there are dancing lessons, piping classes and workshops, classes on fiddle, concertina, harp and accordion. And if instruments are of no interest to you, there are seminars and workshops that include a week-long immersion course in the history of Irish traditional music, song and dance. The course is conducted by Cathal Goan and Paddy Glackin and is accredited by the University of Limerick. Speaking of which: Harry spoke of another university that works in collaboration with the Summer School, Concordia University, Montreal, Canada. "A student from Concordia came on a scholarship to the Willie Clancy School and faculty members lectured and performed at the school in 2022," Harry said. "We are planning to progress this collaboration in 2023 and into the future."

All information and contact details for the summer school can be found at this website www.scoilsamhraidhwillieclancy.com

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TWO STARS SOARING

Frank Greally meets with Ger O'Donnell & Trevor Sexton for Irish Music Magazine.



Photo : Neill Corbett

A series of sold-out concerts and headline status at premier summer events like the Galway and Doolin Folk Festivals have Ger O'Donnell and Trevor Sexton in buoyant mood on a late April evening when I meet them for a chat in the Temple Gate Hotel in Ennis.

It was a special week for Ger O'Donnell as his recording of *Claddagh Lady*, a collaboration between himself and Johnny B. Broderick had soared to number 1 on the Irish iTunes Charts.

Claddagh Lady is a love story about Galway with the history of the Claddagh Ring running through it. Ger O'Donnell said: "when Johnny B

never been involved much with analog recording, but I've always kept up to-date with the digital side of things. I'm determined to do my best with my new recording studio build."

It was mutual admiration of each other's work as musicians, singers and songwriters that brought Ger and Trevor together. "I had come to greatly admire everything that Ger was doing and it turned out that he felt the same about what I was doing in the music field," Trevor said. "I went to meet Ger in 2018 and our first collaboration was Jimmy McCarthy's *Bright Blue Rose*. That turned out well and we have made serious progress together since then."

"My link-up with Trevor works on many levels," Ger said. "For a start, we have mighty craic. The mix of our voices is the closest thing I've come across to sibling harmonies. Everybody has a range in their voice, and mine and Trevor's are around 4-5 semitones apart. This is magic for harmonies and it generally makes the mix of our voices quite balanced. We have both unusually powerful voices, and we find that we don't have to hold back when the moment calls for it. Trevor has one of the finest voices I have ever heard. Harmonising with him is a great pleasure, and there's something about the mix of voices that make people seem to want more. He's also an unbelievable songwriter and a multi-instrumentalist."

Ger started out on his musical journey at age 8 playing a Fife that he inherited from his grandfather. Up to age 12 Ger looked destined to take the classical music route and perhaps end up playing in an orchestra. However, his love for the guitar took over. "I'm often asked how many instruments I play now and it's hard to put a number on that. I have some favourites, Guitar, Double Bass and some rarer animals like Mandocello, Hurdy Gurdy and Appalachian Dulcimer."

Both Ger and Trevor are prolific songwriters. *Lullaby* is the latest song from Ger, a beauty that he will soon record. *Fairytale* is a gorgeous composition by Trevor. Both artists write about real and deeply heartfelt life experiences. In January they released their first album together *The Alchemist's Stone*.

The month of June will be extra special for Ger and Trevor. On June 11th they play on the main stage at the Doolin Folk Festival and on June 14th

"In January they released their first album together *The Alchemist's Stone*"

sent me the lyrics I was struck by the imagery and I knew it was something I wanted to work on. We normally collaborate separately but with this song I called up to his beautiful and recently restored home in Galway to tease out the exact wording and layout for the song. I'm delighted with the final version that we decided on."

One other collaboration with Johnny B that is being eagerly awaited for release is a song titled *My Refuge* that has been recorded by the iconic Dolores Keane. "This is going to be very special and will be well worth waiting for," Ger said.

July will mark a major turning point in the musical careers of both Ger and Trevor who up to recently supported their families by performing individually and sometimes together at weddings and pub events. It's a big leap to make, but one that the two singer/songwriters are well prepared to take.

"It's the direction I was heading in before Covid," Ger said. "Over the past few years I used Facebook, YouTube and Instagram to build a very loyal and rapidly growing following and luckily that has resulted in greatly encouraging ticket sales for recent concerts. Without this, the concert route would have seemed far more risky and daunting."

Plans are also at an advanced stage by Ger for the completion of a recording studio at his home in Cratloe in County Clare. "I hope to have the studio completed by July," Ger said. "Recording wise, I've been doing that since I was a kid when I got my hands on a Commodore Amiga. I've

fans will be able to see them headline at the Galway Folk Festival in Monroe's. "The mind is absolutely blown to see that we are coming on stage in Doolin right after a performance by Christy Moore, one of my all-time musical heroes," Trevor said. It looks like Ger and Trevor are definitely heading in the right direction on their musical journey.

For more details and to support the Artists
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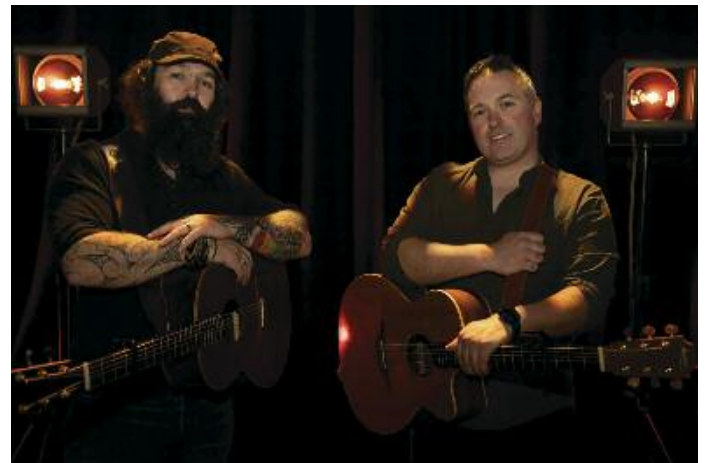
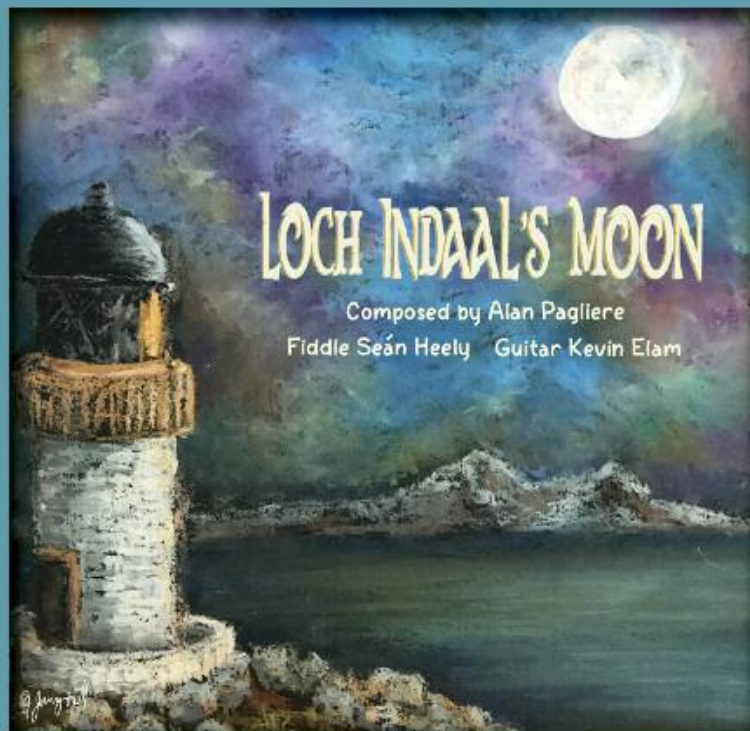


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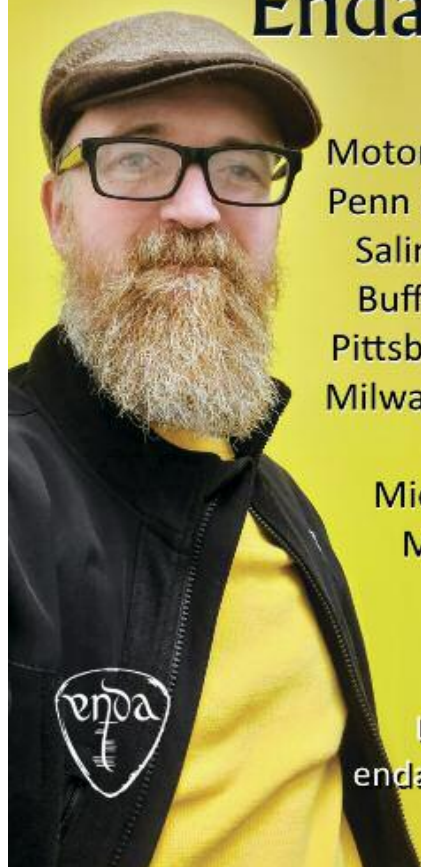
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COREY PURCELL'S UNDAUNTED

Like many musicians, Corey Purcell turned the Covid pandemic to his artistic advantage, putting time during the lockdown into creating his new album *Undaunted*, he tells Seán Laffey.



Corey Purcell is an award-winning Irish step-dancer and musician; I caught up with him via a web video link at his home in Allentown, Pennsylvania. Corey has an impressive CV, his Irish dancing has not only won awards but he's the go-to dancer when Danú tour the USA. He's been playing the button accordion since the age of 16, was taught by All Ireland accordionist John Whelan, and has even worked at Philadelphia based accordion store Liberty Bellows.

"Mic'ing the bodhrán in the studio was a challenge. In live gigs I put the microphone at the back of the drum, but in the studio the sound was a bit too deep so I tried it around front. As long as I didn't hit it with the tipper it seems to have produced great results."

Corey's Recording

"The majority of the tracks were recorded in 2021 when I took a solo trip to a friend's cabin in central Pennsylvania. Inspired by the hummingbirds that frequented the cabin during my afternoon recording sessions, I commissioned a painting of a hummingbird by Irish artist Mary Burke (now residing in Connecticut, USA), which I had digitized and modelled into the artwork for the project. The album draws its name from the lyrics of the first track *The Banks of Sweet Dundee*, but *Undaunted* also aptly applies to hummingbirds, who will fly up to 500 miles non-stop during their annual migration over the Gulf of Mexico.

"In terms of the content, it's half songs and half tunes, including 4 originals, which you could say are in the modern Celtic genre. I was very happy that I got to include some original numbers on the album in addition to the traditional and contemporary selections. I've been writing more tunes lately, and this is the most original music I've included on any album to date."

When asked about the selection process for the songs, Corey said: "To be honest, it's only through talking with you today that I've realised that there's a sort of theme running through most of the songs, tales of hardship and making it through despite the odds against you. A very pandemic appropriate theme I suppose." The songs on *Undaunted* are recognised Celtic folk classics: *The Banks of Sweet Dundee*, *The Dutchman*, *The Lakes of Pontchartrain*, *Arthur McBride*, *Jock Stuart*, and *Leon Rosselson's The World Turned Upside Down*.

"The songs centre on tales of hardship and making it through"

Corey has been touring with his band Poor Man's Gambit since 2015, and occasionally hits the road with master piano accordionist Rob Curto as accordion duo 'The Free Reeds'. He is planning an upcoming wedding to Poor Man's Gambit fiddle player Deirdre Lockman for June, 2023. *Undaunted* is his first solo project in almost a decade.

Corey's Instruments

Given Corey's background at Liberty Bellows, he knows a thing or two about accordions. He tells me he plays a Bertrand Gaillard B/C box. "Benny McCarthy of Danú recommended Bertrand to me, though I tried a different bass layout on this specific box. It has 12 basses, which are uni-sonorous, meaning you get the same note from them on the push and the draw. It takes a bit of getting used to, but once you have it down it opens up a lot of possibilities."

He also plays a Davy Stuart cittern (a luthier based in New Zealand). "I came to the cittern a bit later in my musical career. One of my first configurations was a duo with a banjo player. I wanted to be able to back some banjo tunes, so I did a bit of digging and found a second hand ZX10 model on www.thesession.org. While I do have a beautiful 4 course Foley as well, I like the extra low course of a 10 stringer for rounding out songs, and that first cittern is still my instrument of choice for most occasions."

Corey plays a custom Hedwitschak bodhrán, which he says is perfect for both stage and recording work. It has enough bass to underpin a tune or song, and is agile enough to follow the contours of a jig or a reel.

"I very much enjoy producing physical albums, but am also very aware of how accessible streaming makes your music. *Undaunted* will be available both as a physical disc, and on all streaming platforms June 1st!

Find out more about Corey and *Undaunted* at www.coreypurcellmusic.com



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CATSKILLS IRISH ARTS WEEK 2023

From East Clare to East Durham there is a sense of home in the Hudson Valley. Deirdre Cronin in conversation with Paul Keating, Artistic Director.

Photo : Marianne Mangan



There's a feel-good factor in chatting to journalist & Artistic Director Paul Keating about the upcoming Catskills Irish Arts Week in NY's East Durham - a buzz of anticipation too considering the line-up and the artistic ethos involved. Right now Paul's focus is firmly on the core vision of this very magical week starting on the 16th of July.

"Top quality artists from Ireland and brilliant US-based musicians in the mix as well. That's what Arts Week is known for."

In listening to Paul's enthusiasm for the multi-faceted talents of the musicians involved, it quickly becomes clear to me that Paul *himself* brings a diverse range of cultural richness to his role - that's partly down to his working life - as a highly-regarded journalist whose careers spans excellent publications including Newsweek, Paul is currently an evocative commentator on many aspects of traditional music for the Irish Voice.

But as he elaborates on the week to come, I'm struck by how his vision for Arts Week is linked in a specific and vibrant way to his deeply rooted West Clare heritage. Furthermore, as a Manhattan-born eighth and youngest son of two Irish immigrants, his connections to Ireland are never in danger of being dated - Paul is a very frequent visitor to Ireland, works with Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann, and has his finger on the cultural pulse.

His capacity for crossing continents is impressive - like the best of Irish traditional music itself, there's a certain grace and finesse at play in how Paul negotiates the challenges of air travel. He laughs when I ask him if that's maybe linked to his days of dance-teaching in best West Clare style.

"I can't comment on that, but yes, my momentum for a great Catskills Week is linked to the fact that I'm privileged to experience live music in Ireland on a regular basis. It's like this - the good people who are drawn back to our Festival have a sophisticated highly-tuned knowledge of Irish music - they'd all know the background and brilliance of Mary McNamara's concertina music - or the bright energetic fiddle music of The Kane Sisters from Connemara - but at CIAW, they get to *experience* and learn from these artists on a very different uplifting level."

He's right. And whether you're a tune-maker, tune-learner, a discerning tune-listener, a tune dancer, or even a tuned-out parent, your choices are many and multi-faceted.

Previous festival memories take on a mural effect, mirroring silver glints along the Hudson River, like the perfect image in how the wryly majestic Billy McComiskey loves teaching under his favourite tree, so apt for this generous mentor with all his living roots to this place that shaped his great music.

Or, the way Benedict Koehler's innate courtesy seeps into his lovely pipe music. Sunday sunshine at the meet-n-greet, excited families arriving from

all over America, collecting children's welcome-packs. Or the joy of meeting fit and feisty retired nurses from The Bronx, all of them set for non-stop dancing, but managing to sign up for Creative Writing class as well.

Paul outlines amazing connections. "Both artists and students really tap into a unique musical jubilation that happens when you bring musicians together from far and wide. Take an accordionist with the calibre of Danny O'Mahony, who brings us a very real sense of his native Ballyduff in Kerry with deeply expressive music of place."

We talk about the great sidebar to that where Danny's acclaimed trajectory was recently marked by the honour of inheriting the great Tony MacMahon's iconic accordion. Tony is one of the greatest living exponents of the accordion and this responsibility is testament to Danny's standing and reputation within the traditional arts community - and of course Tony was Mary MacNamara's uncle. Mary's own daughter, Gramam Ceoil's Young Musician of 2021 Sorchá Costello, will bring a fascinating dynamic - her fiddle music so linked to East Clare, Sorchá is also a recently qualified Music Therapist. Acclaimed flute-player & singer Nuala Kennedy brings her unique lyrical take on Irish & Scottish music.

Paul continues, "Irish artists like Diarmuid O'Meachair and Brenda Castles love to meet their fellow US-based musicians like Brian Conway, Rose Conway Flanagan, Joey Abarta, Jackie O'Reilly, Willie & Siobhán Kelly, Larry Nugent, Brendan Dolan, Patrick Ourceau, and more - the positive energy has to be seen to be believed - so great for any student of music."

I've witnessed what he means. Musicians move in a kind of collective creative flow all week, and that all shapes itself around epic concert line-ups every night, the bite and brilliance in the wall-to-wall sessions, and nicely contrasted with mellow Listening Room events.

One dance student said the week was a warm all-embracing musical feast for the senses - and was thrilled by dance-master Padraig McEneaney's unflagging energy mixed with a gorgeous sense of humour. Another visitor loved the warm hamlet-village feel, and the nice weather. Well-travelled and musically discerning Larry McCloskey commented. "I felt enveloped in East Durham conviviality the minute I got here."

Céilís were packed and terrific, such swing and brio in the music of John Reynolds and Margie Mulvihill, Pauline Conneely, and more. Great Cavan sisters at the helm, hoteliers Emma & Nichola Hand of the Shamrock House, like human dynamos - but with smiles! Their unstinting warmth matched by true professionalism.

Here's what I wish I knew before I came, so take note as it may impact your plans for 2023!

The accommodation is generally very good, all round. Ditto the general consensus on food. Good fish dishes and fresh veg in the Shamrock, real NY deli sandwiches at Lawyer's General Store. You don't need to drive everywhere, a newly-built proper 'Irish footpath' helps. Some session



Photo : Marianne Mangan

venues are further afield, carpools and cabs helped. Unlike a lot of festivals, events didn't clash, no need to suffer major FOMO (fear of missing out!).

Paul Keating is deeply aware that this year is also redolent with palpable sadness in the wake of savagely sudden losses suffered by the Catskills music community. The great musician Mick Moloney died on the 27th July. In November we lost the wonderful Réidín O'Flynn, Paul's friend, colleague and previous Artistic Director. In January, Mike McHale from Tusk passed away, his beautiful flute music gracing East Durham for decades. Then Donal Gallagher died, Killybegs native, a tireless supporter of CIAW.

In April, the community lost a stalwart & much-loved musician Jimmy Kelly. May they all rest in peace.

Paul articulates the challenges. "If you take the loss of Mick Moloney for example. People are still stunned and grieving - as I am! In the immediate wake of Mick's death, along with the loss of a much-loved friend, a lot of

real sense, this year's presentations somehow shaped themselves in a way that I know would tally well with Mick's own artistic values - and Réidín's too. Two outstanding and stellar friends of Mick, Dan Neely and Don Meade, will be integral to CIAW presentations."

Paul's words lift the heart! Mick would love this scintillating mix of Presentations - he often agreed with me that Dan and Don were indeed musicians of genial disposition, gentlemen and scholars in the absolutely accurate and best sense of that. Mick would also enjoy the fact that Mary MacNamara and The Kane Sisters have fascinating Presentations too. Bring it on! I'm reminded how Siobhan Long of the Irish Times once wrote that the "symbiotic fiddle players Liz & Yvonne Kane were not to be defined by sibling rivalry but sibling revelry instead!"

There's also talk of an East Clare Session in East Durham revisiting the famed Blacksticks Pub sessions in O'Callaghans Mills featuring County

"Musicians move in a kind of collective creative flow all week"

us wondered how best to honour his terrific commitment to CIAW. Mick's afternoon presentations were legendary - complex, accessible, informative but so entertaining. And then the loss of Réidín. This exact time last year, Réidín was very ill, but bravely committed to her work, and so I did my very best to support her endeavours. In the heel of the hurt, there was a welcome and very natural feel to how both Mick and Réidín were folded organically into our 2023 vision for Arts Week."

Paul Keating's parents loved to dance their beloved Caledonian Set on wooden floors around Rockaway Beach when they emigrated from County Clare, which somehow echoes in Paul now segueing onwards with graceful step in the poignancy of huge losses for the Catskills community.

"Meeting Mick Moloney in 1976 at the Bicentennial Celebrations in DC was life-changing in how we were suddenly exposed to concert stages in a *curated* style. From a personal standpoint, Moloney has inspired me ever since, he has advised me, encouraged me, and collaborated with me even up to his last week at the Catskills, one week before he died. And so in a very

Clare aficionados, Mac Namara and Costello, Willie and Siobhan Kelly, Patrick Ourceau and West Clare "blow-in" Kevin Crawford. Watch this space and book your place at Arts Week.

Liz Hanley was a great friend of Mick Moloney & was a fiddle-musician with Mick's Green Fields of America - this year I hope Liz sings Vincent Woods' song *Sanctuary* - her uniquely beautiful voice ringing out over the MJ Quill Concert stage:

*"Here this is home
blue green mountain
Ancestors' bones
here the heart can heal
The wounded mind restored
and made whole again..."*

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MEET RYAN YOUNG

Anita Lock interviews budding Scottish fiddler Ryan Young to discuss his music and upcoming projects.



Ryan Young's outstanding musicianship and continually-growing accolades precede him, beginning in 2017 when he received the 'Up and Coming Artist of The Year' at the Scots Trad Awards. 2022 garnered him the MG ALBA Musician of The Year nominee. Ryan was also nominated for Album of The Year and Folk Band of the year from the MG Alba Scots Trad Music Awards. In 2019, Young was also the only UK artist selected to perform at WOMEX, the prestigious World Music conference.

Anita: Tell us about your childhood musical beginnings?

Ryan: I first started learning Classical violin when I was in primary school. I was a very shy and quiet child and the lessons were short and part of a group. I didn't really take to it and would often hide at the back. The teacher always encouraged my creativity though. I still remember learning *Hot Cross Buns* and accidentally changing the tune into my own version. It wasn't until I saw Aly Bain playing on the TV that I really wanted to play. This was the first time I heard fiddle playing. My dad would often play Blues on the guitar at home, and I loved the way he used to bend notes. Shortly after hearing Aly Bain, I was given recordings of prominent fiddlers from County Clare and was delighted to hear that you could also bend notes on the fiddle.

Anita: Were there prominent musicians who inspired you to choose Scottish fiddling?

Ryan: Aly Bain will always be one of my heroes and is largely the reason I started playing. But the honest answer is that I grew up not really listening to traditional music. It was never played in my family home and there were very few people I knew locally who played. I can count the number of people I knew on one hand! I was learning Scottish tunes

from books, not knowing how they should sound. A local lady gave me some recordings of Paddy Canny, Tommy Potts and Bobby Casey so I ended up listening to more Irish than Scottish players. I couldn't have told you whether it was Irish or Scottish music I was listening to at the age. All I knew was that it wasn't Classical. But I loved it.

Anita: Your fiddle playing is distinctive. When and why did you develop your style?

Ryan: I've always messed around and altered tunes, ever since *Hot Cross Buns*. I never do it consciously though, it just seems to happen. I was learning tunes from old Scottish collections whilst not being a very good reader but also listening to recordings of Irish fiddlers whilst not really knowing what learning by ear was. I often get described as floating in the Irish Sea and sounding not quite Scottish and not quite Irish, but somewhere in-between. I did try and copy my dad with the way he would bend notes on the guitar though. I don't think I sound stylistically much different now to how I did then - in fact, I have recordings to prove it. I just didn't know what I was doing then and let what happened, happen. I try to hold onto that childlike naivety as much as I can and feel lost if I overthink. I later attended the traditional music school at the junior Royal Conservatoire of Scotland. My teachers said that I reminded them a little of Martin Hayes and gave me his *Live in Seattle* recording. This changed my life. It was like hearing everything I ever hoped to be. Martin has been my musical hero ever since.

Anita: When did you begin public performances, and which would you say are the most memorable ones?

Ryan: I was given lots of encouragement to perform when I was wee. I would often play for neighbours, locally at school or in the Church etc. I was also often asked to play at Highlander associations. This is essentially where people from the Highland and Islands, now living in the central belt would meet up and speak, sing and play Gaelic music at a concert. Playing for someone always meant more to me than playing on my own at home. It was something I found important, maybe because I was so shy and it felt like a way to communicate and be heard without having to use words. I feel extremely lucky to have played at so many wonderful festivals, in many beautiful countries and for lots of lovely people. It would be too difficult to choose as I genuinely love playing for people no matter where or what it is. If I had to choose though, I would say that playing at Feakle festival in County Clare will always hold a special place in my heart.

Anita: You have performed alongside musical icons. Tell us about that?

Ryan: I became obsessed with Martin Hayes and Dennis Cahill since I was given that recording *Live in Seattle*. I dreamed of becoming like a Scottish music version of Martin and would always ask guitarist or piano players if they could accompany the tunes like how Dennis might. Many years later - with a long story explaining how this happened - I was asked if I wanted to play at the Feakle Traditional Music festival in County Clare and that Dennis Cahill would be happy to accompany me. I had such an emotional feeling. I was playing in the locality of my fiddling hero, being accompanied by his long-time musical partner and another of my heroes. Dennis just did his thing and gave me so much encouragement. He was such a kind soul and I feel honoured to say he was a friend. I played with him a couple of times at the festival and these performances mean even more to me since his sad passing. I miss him.

Anita: What musical projects are you presently working on?

Ryan: Just before the first lockdown, something happened to my left hand and I felt like my ability to play was slowly leaving me more and more. I had been navigating some tricky waters around this time too and had lost a lot of confidence in myself. Then Covid spread around the world and things just seemed to be spiraling. It was such an awful time and I genuinely questioned whether I'd ever be able to play again. To cut a long story short, I eventually had an operation on my hand and I'm back playing, perhaps better than before. You know the way having lived through things only adds to someone's music. My soon to be released second album, and the accompanying podcast telling the story of me trying to record it

"Aly Bain will always be one of my heroes and is largely the reason I started playing"

whilst I couldn't actually move my fingers will be released very soon. I did re-record it two weeks ago because I'm now fully recovered; but the process of trying to do it pre-operation is all part of the story.

Anita: What do future projects look like?

Ryan: I haven't even released my second album yet and there are already plans for the third. My second album was delayed so much because of my confidence, health and Covid of course. Being able to play again has given me even more appreciation for music and I'm throwing all my efforts into everything I dreamt of doing. My third album will be produced by and involve a very exciting collaboration with a hero of mine. I never in a million years thought this would



happen and still can't believe it actually is. It is a little funding dependent - albums are expensive things - which is why I'm keeping my cards a little close to my chest.

Anita: What plans are in place for you in 2023?

Ryan: I'm touring a lot and playing all over the UK and Europe. But most excitingly, I'm fulfilling a lifelong dream by playing in Canada and the United States for the first time this August and September, before heading to Australia in December. I still can't really believe it.

For more details on Ryan www.ryanyoung.scot

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Photo: Owen O'Connor

ARTSAWONDER AND THE HEALING POWER OF MUSIC

“Music is foundational,” Bruce Victor tells Seán Laffey in a joint interview with Tommy Sands about harnessing the social power of music to help resolve conflict.



The Artsawonder charity founded by Tommy promotes the use of music in the context of social healing. Said Bruce: “if Tommy’s music produced a ‘defining moment’ in steering Northern Ireland toward peace, as was stated by then-deputy First Minister Séamus Mallon, then perhaps we should continue to develop the ability to utilize music for more such ‘defining moments’.”

Artsawonder will be a highlight of this year’s Fiddler’s Green Festival in Rostrevor where Tommy and Bruce will host an in-festival conference on music and social healing.

Psychiatrist and musician Bruce Victor was in his conservatory in California (regular readers may know him as the guitar and cittern player with the duo Noctambule), and Tommy Sands was taking a time-out from his niece’s birthday party in County Down. Tommy stepped away from the candles and cake to give his deep insight into the social power of music to heal both individuals and communities. Bruce’s clinical expertise is in treating people who are suffering from long-term mood disorders, whereas Tommy is well-known as a peace activist and has shown that music can go a long way to begin to resolve long-term conflicts.

“...children who received musical training became more empathic and pro-social than those that did not...”

When the Talks appeared to be faltering, Tommy’s song *Carry On till Peace will Come Again*, was sung outside of Stormont on the day before the Good Friday Agreement was signed. This simple act of joining an inclusive chorus which gave political leaders from both sides the opportunity to agree publicly with a smile without losing face was a first, small, but significant step towards what has been a quarter of a century of peace in the North.

Tommy tells me he was invited to Reno, Nevada to apply music to heal a difficult situation. “There were troubled kids in the State, who were up in front of judges on misdemeanour charges, and if found guilty would involve jail time which could well make them further damaged. Many were illiterate; they’d fallen through the education system. However, we asked them to write songs about their life experiences. I suggested they compose songs to the tune of *Twinkle Twinkle*; we recognise it here as a nursery rhyme, but it’s known across Europe and many traditions and has even been used by Mozart. It became a vehicle through which these marginal youths could give testimony. The method is still used to this day, to great effect.”

Bruce gives us a window into some of the therapeutic applications of music. He knows from personal observation of people with dementia,

that music is retained in the brain, long after they have lost significant portions of their memory or even ability to recognize friends and family. He suggests that the scientific community is coming to realise that music “is absolutely foundational in our psychological, social, cognitive, and even biological development.

“Studies have shown that children exposed to music early on in their development go on to become more empathic, more inclined to prosocial behaviour when compared to children without such training. Add to this the neurocognitive and neurobiological changes that are associated with growing up with music or music training and there will be an enhanced ability to engage in conflict resolution.”

I put it to Tommy, that for generations music in Ireland has been a way of ring fencing ourselves from others; each tribe has its tunes, and today’s challenge is to find music that can be owned and shared by both. “I am reminded,” Tommy says, “of growing up in County Down. Ours was what we’d call a rambling house, both my parents played music, and back in the 1950s and early 1960s neighbours would drop in for a chat and a tune. I remember watching hobnail boots beating time to jigs and reels and not knowing whether those boots held Nationalist or Unionist feet. That is something writers of new songs have to work at, especially in the North, where the future is about a shared and a cherished space.”

In May, Tommy and Bruce presented an invitation-only event in Cambridge for an academic audience that included speakers from the UK, the United States, and Israel. Bruce presented research on how music and music education may enhance individuals’ capacities for conflict resolution. Speakers also included politicians from across the communities of Northern Ireland, who spoke from their own experiences.

Find out more at www.Artsawonder.com or on social media at www.facebook.com/artsawonder/



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A TIME TO GROW WITH THE HENRY GIRLS

Gráinne McCool finds out what keeps The Henry Girls inspired.



Hailing from Donegal with a career spanning more than 20 years, The Henry Girls: sisters Karen, Lorna and Joleen McLaughlin are looking forward to a busy summer.

Gráinne: “You celebrated 20 years of The Henry Girls earlier this year. Was it a long 20 or has it flown by?”

Lorna: “It feels like only last year, but when I think of the amount that has happened in that time (including between us, four children) it feels like a very long time ago. It feels like a time to celebrate because in that period we have done so much, learned so much about music, learned a lot about ourselves and got to meet so many amazing people.”

Gráinne: “What inspires your writing?”

Joleen: “Our songs are often very personal so it may be about something that is happening in our lives at the time or a memory of something that has happened to us. We have also written songs for children that include songs about hot chocolate, icicles, snow bears and the aurora borealis!”

Gráinne: “How have you grown as a band in those years?”

Lorna: “Two decades of doing this really causes you to reflect, and ponder if you want to keep doing it, and the answer is yes, more than ever. We are the same women but also very different to those versions of us from 2003: those Henry Girls are like our little sisters now in my mind!”

Gráinne: “You do a lot of different themed shows. Do you have a favourite?”

Joleen: “It’s hard to choose. With the Boswell show and the children’s shows, it sometimes feels like taking on another persona, which is fun. But playing our own music is special, especially when people come up after and say it moved them or helped them in some way.”

Gráinne: “What are your summer plans?”

Karen: “The main focus for the summer is to finish our new album ‘A Time to Grow’ and get it ready for release. In terms of concerts and festivals we have our annual concert at The Earagail Arts Festival on 21st July in Carndonagh. This will be preceded by our ‘Home with The Henry Girls’ residency, also part of the Earagail Arts Festival. We’ll be back at the Celti’cimes Festival from the 23rd - 26th July. We are delighted to perform at The Cambridge Folk

Festival on 29th July. Then in August and September we are heading back to the US after quite a long hiatus. We are at the Milwaukee Irish Festival from the 17th -20th August and we will be making our first appearance at The Kansas City Irish Fest from the 1st -3rd September.”

Gráinne: “You have a new album in the pipeline. How different is this from your first collection of music?”

Lorna: “Our first collection was a lot of random covers and folk tunes. A couple of our original songs were very naive. But there were songs that really stuck with us, like *James Monroe* and *The Farmer Song*. Our new album is made of original music only, and that is something that took us years to build confidence towards. We are sometimes singing about personal matters, and that too can take time to build confidence to do. We are working with a young

“Our new album is made of original music only, and that is something that took us years to build confidence towards”

producer called Tommy McLaughlin, and he is giving us a fresh sound with synths and guitars. Ultimately, it sounds like us and we are excited for people to hear it.

“For us, writing music is a passion that goes beyond making a living, but we have been very lucky over the last twenty years that we have been able to do just that for the most part. As sisters we bring a diverse range of ideas and influences, which can lead to a multifaceted and eclectic sound. This collaborative process is great fun for us and even though at times it can be challenging, there is also a strong sense of support and encouragement for each other. This makes it a very special experience.”

Gráinne: “As sisters, what keeps the musical chemistry alive?”

Joleen: “I suppose maybe the fact that we know each other so well and feel very comfortable being together on stage, and therefore feel very relaxed as the pressure isn’t really on one person.”

You can follow The Henry Girls on social media and at their website www.thehenrygirls.com

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TRADITIONAL MUSIC ON THE RADIO

Áine Hensey of RTÉ Raidió na Gaeltachta tells Aidan O'Hara about two exciting music programmes the station has planned for the summer.



Áine Hensey is one of the senior music broadcasters at RTÉ RnaG and presents the popular music programme *Binneas Béil* Monday to Wednesday, 3pm - 5 pm, and *An Ghealach Gorm* on Saturday evenings, 9pm to midnight, a programme that features folk and country music, with artists such as Woody Guthrie, Joan Baez, Leonard Cohen, Richard Thompson and Mary Black, as well as emerging artists.

Our main purpose in meeting up was to learn about two new summer programmes she's producing on Raidió na Gaeltachta this summer: *Ar Bhruach na Sionainne*, every Wednesday at 1.30 pm, starting on 5 July, and *Camchuairt an Chonsairtín*, every Monday at 1.30 pm, starting on the 3rd of July.

Ar Bhruach na Sionainne will run for seven weeks, a programme that Áine and Máire Ní Ghráda, a lecturer in Irish at the University of Limerick, have been working on for the past number of years with the First-Year music students in the Irish World Academy of Music & Dance. "They are doing a degree in Performing Arts, and this is part of their Irish language module," Áine said, and continued with, "they're learning to do everything connected with broadcasting in terms of organising the programmes, organising the musicians, putting together running orders, writing scripts, recording the music and the scripts and then putting it all together."

"*Ar Bhruach na Sionainne* will feature a fantastic variety of music; they play with their classmates and they invite faculty members from the university to play, students from the other years, and students doing MAs and PhDs. And what's really nice is they bring people from home, as well, members from their own families or neighbours that they've

been playing with for years. So, we get a lovely variety of music from all over the country."

Áine said that they have musicians from Conamara, from County Limerick, Moate in County Westmeath, Cork, and various other parts of the country. "And it's a great opportunity for them to see how music broadcasting works and how programmes are made. It's also a great opportunity for Raidió na Gaeltachta to connect with a generation of musicians that are going to be our listeners for many years to come. So, it's one of those win-win situations."

The other programme runs for ten-weeks and is called *Camchuairt an Chonsairtín*, a series of concerts recorded during the Consairtín Festival which takes place in Ennis every year during the month of April. "The emphasis is on the concertina, as the title would suggest," Áine explained, "but not exclusively. We have duets, trios, and we have groups playing at the various recitals and concerts. Every year we do a thing at Consairtín where we celebrate new concertina CDs. So, among those performing are Jason O'Rourke from Belfast, Brenda Castles from County Meath and the third one of those is Pádraig Mac Aodhgháin from Cork. We also have recordings of fantastic and most unusual combinations of concertina and clarinet featuring Sárán Mulligan and Muirine Nic Róibín, and also from the night-time concert we have music by Tim Collins, Eamonn and Geraldine Cotter and Maeve Donnelly. And that's a lively performance."

"Ar Bhruach na Sionainne is a great opportunity for young musician to see how music broadcasting works"

"Our big night during Consairtín is our concert in Glór," Áine continued, "where we feature the Irish Concertina Orchestra, a group of young concertina players in their teens who have been brought together under the auspices of Music Generation Clare. We collaborated with them and commissioned a piece of music to be composed by Michael Rooney and Tim Collins to celebrate ten years of the festival and they performed that in Glór. And we had the Siansa winners *Binneas* on stage as well and then we had Mícheál Ó Raghallaigh and Michael Rooney together. We had Anthony and Aidan Quigley and Conal O'Kane, as well. So, all those concerts as well as performers from our *Siamsa na nÓg* series will be all broadcast as part of the *Camchuairt an Chonsairtín* series."

In winding up our conversation, Áine added that Raidió na Gaeltachta will be broadcasting from Scoil Samhraidh Willie Clancy and also at the Fleadh, and that Music Editor Neansaí Ní Choisdealbha will be at lots of the other festivals too, as well, recording material that will be heard in other programmes on RnaG throughout the year.

You can listen online at www.rte.ie/radio/rnag/



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THE LEGENDS SERIES

Chapter 26 : Jimmy Keane. An appreciation by Mark Lysaght for Irish Music Magazine.



Photo :Seán Laffey

There is definitely a phenomenon associated with Irish people who are dislocated from their native country; they often make a huge effort to expose their children to various aspects of their culture, sometimes with spectacular results. Piano accordion virtuoso Jimmy Keane is undoubtedly one of these, having devoted his life to Irish music on the instrument he is indelibly associated with.

Jimmy was born in London in 1958, to parents who were Irish-speaking, and his Connemara-born father was a noted sean-nós singer, while his mother hailed from Kerry. From an early age he was encouraged to play traditional music and as the family relocated to Chicago, USA, he was strongly influenced by Joe Cooley and Kevin Keegan along with many other musicians living in the area. By the early 1970s he was playing regularly with contemporaries such as fiddle player Liz Carroll and Michael Flatley on flute.

He excelled at competitions and has the distinction of achieving five consecutive All-Ireland titles on piano accordion, the last two at Senior level. What distinguished Jimmy's playing was his ability to incorporate aspects of playing styles associated with button accordion as well as other instruments such as pipes, fiddle and flute. This was very innovative at the time and nothing quite like this approach had been considered possible on a keyboard instrument up to then.

His breathtaking virtuosity brought him to the attention of Mick Moloney and Robbie O'Connell and they formed a trio, which recorded two acclaimed albums in the early 1980s. This line-up was

extended to include additional musicians such as Eileen Ivers on fiddle and Seamus Egan as well as Donny and Eileen Golden, which performed as *The Green Fields of America*. He also collaborated with various other musicians including Liz Carroll, Martin Hayes and the late Dennis Cahill. He was part of an extremely vibrant traditional music scene centred in Chicago, also performing extensively throughout North America.

In the late 1990s, seeking a new direction, Jimmy formed a trio called *bohola* (named after a town in Mayo (lowercase always used!)) with bouzouki player and singer Pat Broaders along with fiddle player Seán Cleland. Their eponymous debut album was feted by The Irish Voice as "one of the most impressive recordings ever by an Irish traditional music group". Their dynamic sound reflected a more modern approach and their tight ensemble playing enthralled audiences. A particular feature of their approach was the use of extended sets incorporating tunes and songs, with extremely effective use of dynamics to hold the attention. They recorded a number of albums and are still active as a duo (with Pat Broaders) to this day, since Seán Cleland is no longer involved.

Like many traditional musicians, Jimmy is usually involved in a number of projects which he juggles as needed. In recent years he has worked extensively with Liz Carroll, Joanie Madden, Robbie O'Connell, Mick Moloney and Dennis Cahill, the latter two now sadly deceased. He produced a deeply personal set of recordings and memories called *Horse* (his late father's nickname) in 2019, to great acclaim. He had originally recorded some material with his father in 1986 with the intention of completing a full album, but unfortunately Jimmy Senior passed away unexpectedly at the age of 60. The album has a total of 192 tracks spanning the period 1968 to 2019, a total of over twelve hours music accompanied by a 271-page set of liner notes that acts as a memoir of his life. It's an extraordinary insight into his life story and the range of factors contributing to his emergence as an acknowledged virtuoso on his instrument.

"Jimmy is a deeply charismatic character who inspires his fellow musicians to excel"

Jimmy's playing has attracted the highest praise from his contemporaries, with the late Professor Micheál Ó'Súilleabháin (a legendary composer, musician and academic) describing him as "the saviour of the piano accordion". His energetic and innovative approach has breathed new life into an instrument which had been fading in popularity, and there is no doubt that he has inspired a generation of younger musicians, with his influence apparent in the high quality of technical skill on display.

In person, Jimmy is a deeply charismatic character who inspires his fellow musicians to excel and reach new heights. He has an instinctive musical empathy with an innate ability to lock in to the heart of a tune. He also has a great sense of humour and refuses to take himself too seriously. He is admired, respected and loved by his contemporaries, and continues to engage and entertain his audiences wherever he appears.

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EXPERIENCE GODERICH 2023

August 7-13 (Souvenir Supplement)



Inside : Meet The Artistic Director, The College and Kids Camp, Festival Entertainment Line Up and more....



YOUR GUIDE TO GODERICH CELTIC ROOTS FESTIVAL, COLLEGE & KIDS CAMP

Join us on the shores of Lake Huron for the 31st Annual

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CELTIC FESTIVAL

KIDS' CAMP

ROOTS COLLEGE

2023



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College and Kids' Camp August 7th to 11th

Celtic Roots Festival August 11th to 13th

One Night Only Saturday, August 12th

Special Guest Appearance by

Loreena McKennitt

A "Back to Her Roots" Performance
featuring **The Bookends**



Bon Débarras

Cassie and Maggie
de Barra

Goitse

Hearthstone

Heron Valley

Morgan Toney

Ryan Young

Simon Mayor
& Hilary James

Steáfán & Saskia

The Consequences

The Murphy Beds

... and more to come!



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WELCOME MESSAGE

Photo : Paolo Brillo



On behalf of myself, Cheryl Prashker, your Artistic Director, the entire Board of Directors of the Goderich Celtic Folk Society, and our Founders Warren and Eleanor Robinson, I would like to welcome you to the 31st Annual Goderich Celtic Roots Festival, Celtic College and Kids Camp. This magical week takes place August 7-13, 2023, along the beautiful shores of Lake Huron in Goderich, Ontario, Canada.

The Goderich Celtic Roots Festival is an annual celebration of the music, craft, and culture of the seven Celtic nations and the immigrants of which form a strong historic background to Huron County. From a single memorial concert held in 1993 to honour the life of a local teacher, the Celtic Roots Festival has grown to include a week-long school of music, dance and craft art for adults, known as the Celtic College, and a parallel school for children ages 4-12 called the Celtic Kids Camp, a series of rural outreach mini-concerts, and a three-day traditional outdoor festival. The mandate of the Goderich Celtic Folk Society, our parent organization, and a registered charitable organization is to produce events which foster awareness, participation, and education in the world of traditional Celtic culture.

In August of last year, we had our first in-person festival after Covid. It was a huge success thanks to all our beautiful attendees, our top-notch volunteers and the incredibly talented musicians who came in from around the world to present their music.

The only question for us this year was, how are we going to top 2022 and the joyous feeling everyone felt from being at an in-person music festival again?

Well that is easy, do something our festival has never truly done before and that is have a headline act the likes of Canada's own, LOREENA MC KENNITT! We are extremely excited and proud to announce that Loreena McKennitt will be appearing at this year's Goderich Celtic Roots Festival on Saturday, August 12th. She will be accompanied by The Bookends of Stratford, ON.

"McKennitt's eclectic Celtic blend of pop, folk and world music has sold over 14 million albums worldwide. Her recordings have achieved Gold, Platinum and multi-Platinum status in 15 countries on four continents. She has twice been nominated for a GRAMMY® Award and has won two Juno Awards, as well as a Billboard International Achievement Award. She has performed in some of the world's most respected and historic concert venues, from Carnegie Hall to the famous Alhambra Palace in Granada, Spain and for dignitaries including the late Queen Elizabeth II and His Majesty King Charles III, and other heads of state. In 2004, McKennitt was awarded the Order of Canada and in 2013 was appointed Knight of the National Order of Arts and Letters of the Republic of France."

Loreena will be returning to her Celtic roots for her festival set on the Saturday night. "It will be a bit like going back to 'touch the stone' performing some of these traditional songs which inspired me so many years ago. Besides, this is really in my backyard," says McKennitt. "I first began performing in folk clubs in Winnipeg and folk festivals are in my blood. I miss them terribly and am so looking forward to being a part of them again this summer."

"We are extremely excited and proud to announce that Loreena McKennitt will be appearing"

The festival weekend (August 11-13) will take place in Lions Harbour Park and offer 3 days of festivities which will include 16 bands from Canada, Ireland, Scotland, U.K and the U.S appearing on 5 stages. There are 2 main stages, 2 workshop stages which is where we pair a few bands who have possibly never played music together before, give them a topic and let them loose! What usually happens is magic that cannot be recreated, and we find our afternoon workshops stages to be very popular among our attendees. We also have a dance stage that doubles as the kids' stage.

The music starts at noon until midnight Friday, Saturday and Noon until 9pm on Sunday. Our craft artisans are the best that Canada has to offer, and our food court will be sure to keep everyone's appetite satisfied. Our Kids Area promises to keep the young ones busy with all kinds of arts and crafts. Please make sure to visit our ever-popular craft beer tent while you are here.

Whether you have been to all 30 previous festivals or whether this will be your first visit to Goderich, we promise you a magical time, the best Celtic and Roots music the world has to offer, incredible sunsets and memories to last a lifetime.

See you in August!

Cheryl Prashker – Artistic Director



THE CELTIC FESTIVAL AND LINE-UP 2023

The Goderich Celtic Roots Festival now in its 31st year, is the oldest pan Celtic festival in North America.



Heron Valley

It is nestled in along the shores of Lake Huron in Goderich, ON also known as Canada's Prettiest Town. The festival is a three-day event starting on Friday evening August 11th and ending Sunday night August 13th and will be a weekend packed full of the best musicians the world has to offer.

This year, we are thrilled to welcome **Loreena McKennitt** to our festival for the very first time. Recently inducted into the Canadian Songwriters Hall of Fame, Loreena is known worldwide to her millions of fans and has sold over 14 million albums.

She will be performing a set of music that will have her returning to her Celtic roots and will be accompanied by **The Bookends** out of Stratford, ON. Loreena will be appearing for one set only on the Saturday night, August 12th.

Also appearing at this year's festival will be **Bon Débarras** who bring their blend of Quebecois folk music, traditional step dancing and global influences to Goderich.

Cassie and Maggie are 2018 JUNO nominees from Nova Scotia and sisters. Alternating between Gaelic and English, traditional and contemporary music.

De Barra which features Dublin born and Gaelic speaking brothers, Cormac, Fionán and Dónal. Their performances include traditional music that has been passed on for three generations.

Festival favourite **Goitse** is a multi-award-winning quintet from Ireland.

Hearthstone are five women who meld their voices into a strong harmonic unit to explore the song traditions of Ireland and Scotland.

Heron Valley are an energy fuelled traditional band from Scotland.

We will introduce Mi'kmaq fiddler **Morgan Toney**, a prodigious talent who is helping shape the future of Cape Breton music.

New to Goderich will be 2022 'Scots Musician of The Year' nominee **Ryan Young** bringing new and exciting ideas to traditional Scottish fiddle music.

Simon Mayor and Hilary James the world's foremost mandolinists and composers paired with an elegant singer.

Steáifán & Saskia from Ireland and the U.K who now make their home in Ontario. There will be fiddles, bodhran, whistles and much more.

The Bookends multi-instrumentalists who will bring you foot stomping reels to soaring airs.

The Consequences a new Irish traditional band exploring the colours and complexities of traditional and original tunes.

The Murphy Beds who are Eamon O'Leary and Jefferson Hamer present traditional and original folk songs with close harmonies and deft instrumental arrangements.

All the artists who appear at The Goderich Celtic Roots Festival will have different stage performances throughout the weekend. So, if you missed one act on Friday or even Saturday, you will



Morgan Toney & Keith Mullins





surely be able to catch them on Sunday at some point.

Each act has one Main Stage set, one Dailey Stage set (Formerly Main Stage 2) and will also appear in a few workshops throughout the weekend. It may be with their band or as a soloist.

Our two smaller workshop stages are the Greeting Stage and West stage, and these are where a lot of the magic happens during Saturday and Sunday afternoons. We pair artists together who may have never played alongside each other before. We give them a title to their workshop and off they go for a round robin. A few examples of past workshops have been: Scottish Melodies, Heavenly Voices, Fiddle Frenzy, Guitar Heroes, Music from the Emerald Isle and so on.

Our founder, Warren Robinson always loves it when we pair some of the younger artists with the veterans and see where they

“Our founder, Warren Robinson always loves it when we pair some of the younger artists with the veterans and see where they take the music”

take the music. The next thing you know, you have a musical experience that will happen in that moment and cannot be recreated anywhere else.

We do have a dance stage under a gazebo that doubles as a kids’ stage. This is where we alternate from having participatory dance classes which may include Social Dancing, Ottawa Valley Step, Irish Ceili Dancing, Quebecois Dance as well as dances and music for kids throughout Saturday and Sunday afternoons.

We have established grant prizes, awards and distinctions. We are proud of being a leader in this area. We award the Ernie King



Tradition Bearer for lifetime achievement, The Auleen Theriault Young Tradition for outstanding achievement under 35 years of age, an annual \$1000 scholarship to a graduating student proceeding to study music, sound or Celtic studies.

Now in its second year, the Robinson Emerging Artist Showcase is an international competition named after our founders Warren and Eleanor Robinson (with their permission of course). It draws artists from around the world and is co-sponsored by Dolmen Entertainment of Toronto.

Our jury of industry professionals gave us their top five and then it was up to the fans to vote for their favourite artist. We then put that together with the judges’ thoughts and this year the artist chosen was U.S based duo KINNFOLK out of Virginia.



Josh and Julie Kinn weave bouzouki, bodhran, and smooth vocal harmonies in their Celtic folk music from the heart of the Blue Ridge Mountains. In 2022, Kinnfolk received a grant from the National Endowment of the Arts and the City of Roanoke to create a body of work exploring the history, geography, and folk legends of their town. The resulting project, *Star Above the Mountain*, will be debuted to a live audience on June 30, 2023. Kinnfolk will be spending a few months taking part in a few online sessions as part of the artist development program that accompanies the showcase. They will then make their debut at the Goderich Celtic Roots Festival with us this summer.

We would be remised if we didn’t mention our craft artisan booths consisting of all Canadian made craft art, jewellery, pottery, and instruments which flow throughout our festival grounds.

There is a Kids Area located right near the Dailey Stage for the young ones to face paint, colour, do arts and crafts and have a shady spot to spend some time at.

Make sure to stop by our beer tent located by the Greeting Stage and sample some of the finest food vendors around.

Lions Harbour Park is the home of the Goderich Celtic Roots Festival. When you first look at the park, you might wonder if it really can fit 5 stages, many craft artisans, a kids’ area, beer tent and food vendors. Well, you might just have to come out August 11-13, 2023 and see for yourself how we turn the park into pure magic.

For further information
<https://www.celticfestival.ca/>



MEET THE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Anita Lock interviews artistic director Cheryl Prashker to discuss the Goderich Celtic Roots Festival, College & Kids Camp.



Photo : Jake Jacobson

What began as a memorial concert for a well-loved teacher turned into a festival of unimaginable proportions. Now gearing up for its 31st year, the Goderich Celtic Roots Festival (Aug. 11-13) has some of everything Celtic, including the week-long Celtic College (Aug. 7-11) for adults and children that leads up to the festival.

Anita: Tell us about your connection with the Goderich Celtic Roots Festival & Celtic College.

Cheryl: I first attended the event as a musician in 2011 with my Celtic band, RUNA. I was living in Philadelphia at the time. I remember having an immediate connection with the town, Lake Huron, and the people of Goderich. Two weeks later, an F3 tornado hit Goderich. It came off the lake and went straight through the park we use for the festival. It did a tremendous amount of damage to the town. Goderich also lost hundreds of its beautiful, very old trees. That October, while attending a music conference in Ontario, I wanted to touch base with the townspeople, so I paid another visit to Goderich. Later that year, I told the festival that even if RUNA was not invited to play in any given year, I would still like to come and teach at the Celtic College and Kids Camp, which I did each year. Fast forward to 2017 when Warren and Eleanor Robinson, the founders, and the Board of Directors, asked if I would be interested in taking on the positions of Artistic Director and General Manager. I did not hesitate to accept their gracious offer. I chose to move to the area and immerse myself in the community—a decision I am grateful I made.

Anita: What changes have occurred to make the festival unique compared to other festivals?

Cheryl: Like most festivals, there have been some small changes over the years, but for the most part, this festival has remained true to its beginnings and the founders' vision: to foster the preservation and continuation of traditional Celtic art forms through exposure to local audiences.



Anita: What features are in place for its 31st celebration?

Cheryl: We are thrilled to announce that our headliner will be non-other than Canada's own,

Loreena McKennitt. Loreena is a world-renowned, multi-award-winning singer-songwriter and harpist who was inducted into the Canadian Songwriters Hall of Fame recently. She will be returning to her roots, performing some of her early, more traditional Celtic songs.

Anita: Tell us about the festival's musical lineup.

Cheryl: **Bon Débarras** will be bringing their blend of Quebecois folk music, traditional step dancing, and global influences to Goderich. Festival-favourite **Goitse** is a multi-award-winning quintet from Ireland. Returning will be 2018 JUNO nominees from Nova Scotia, sisters **Cassie and Maggie**, alternating between Gaelic and English and traditional and contemporary music. We will introduce Mi'kmaq fiddler **Morgan Toney**, a prodigious talent helping shape the future of Cape Breton music. New to Goderich will be 2022 'Scots Musician of The Year' nominee **Ryan Young** bringing new and exciting ideas to traditional Scottish fiddle music and many more.

Anita: Tell us the history behind the Robinson Emerging Artist Showcase.

Cheryl: Our founders, Warren and Eleanor Robinson, have always been big supporters of up and coming artists. I wanted to have an Emerging Artist Showcase as I have been a judge for them at other festivals, and I wanted to honour the founders. During Covid, I talked with Michael Patrick Farrell of Dolmen Entertainment from Toronto, and we decided to team up together to put this showcase together. Our Emerging Artist for 2023 is **Kinnfolk** from the U.S.

Anita: Tell us about the history behind the Celtic College.

Cheryl: The College was the brainchild of Warren & Eleanor Robinson, who realized that there was an eagerness for people to learn more from the artists that they were watching on the 'workshop' stages at the festival.

Anita: Tell us about the Celtic Kids Day Camp and its history.

Cheryl: Much the same as the Celtic College for adults—the Robinsons knew it would be good for the local families to have a place to send their children to learn music and art. It also served as a place for the kids of the College attendees to have a place to be while their parents were taking classes down the hall.

For more details:

Goderich Celtic Roots Festival: <https://www.celticfestival.ca/home>

Celtic College: <https://www.celticfestival.ca/celtic-college>

Kid's Camp: <https://www.celticfestival.ca/kids-camp>



Photo : William Henry Photography

THE COLLEGE EXPERIENCE

The Goderich Celtic College was established for the third year of the festival in 1995.



Photo : Phil Main

Our founders Warren and Eleanor Robinson had travelled to many festivals and experienced what are called “workshops”. In Canada, for the most part, these workshops are not teaching sessions but rather where the festival will pair a few acts together on a smaller stage, give them a topic and away they go, round robin style.

The Robinsons soon realized there was a need for a place where people could go and learn from the incredible Celtic musicians who would already be on site. It was then that the Celtic College was born. It started out small for the first few years which is when Warren said, “Let’s go big or go home!”.

And so it grewand grew to be the largest one-week Celtic school in North America in terms of number of teachers. It now brings in approximately 200-250 attendees from across Ontario, Canada, the U.S and abroad and over 50 teachers.

The experience really is like no other. I will walk you through a typical day at The Celtic College.

We start off our day at 9am. There are 4 class periods on each day Monday through Thursday. You can choose to take something during all four classes or simply take 2 or 3 if you prefer.



© William Henry Photography

For example, period one may be intro to DADGAD guitar and then second period will be Irish dance, third may be intermediate Scottish fiddle etc.. These will be the same classes with the same teacher each day and together you may learn technique on a particular instrument, perhaps a few tunes or some songs throughout the 4 days. The classes we offer are of course different from year to year and are dependent on which artists are attending the festival.

There will always be many fiddle, whistle/flute, guitar, mandolin, tenor banjo, bodhran, piano, singing/harmony, and dance classes to choose from. If music is not what you are looking for, we also have arts and craft classes such as felting, silver-smithing, embroidering, mandala, and so much more.

Once your college classes are done, and you have had dinner at one of Goderich’s wonderful restaurants, you can stroll down to The Square (centre of town) and over to the bandshell.

This is where we present our “Teacher Concerts” each night, Monday through Thursday. This is a very special part of the Celtic College experience for our attendees, as this is where you get to see your teachers perform with their groups for a short set. It is free to the townspeople as well which gives them a small taste of what they can expect at the festival on the weekend. Once that is over at 9:30pm well then, we start the Ceilidh dance on The Square for one hour and this too is open to all with live musicians and a caller of course.

Our day is not done until we head over to the Park House restaurant where our hosts, Sherry, Herb and the entire Marshall family welcome us for our evening sessions. Every corner is packed with groups of musicians which include pros and students alike. In the piano room may be a slower session and upstairs is where we can find all our singers singing into the wee hours of the morning. Don’t forget, 9am comes quickly and we must get to class on time!

Once the college got off the ground, the Robinsons were thinking about a place they might be able to send their own grandkids, and this is when The Celtic Kids Camp started to take shape. It is for young children ages 4-13 to experience arts, crafts, music and dance for a period of 5 days. They learn about Celtic Culture at a young age and how it fits into the community they live in. The Camp has produced several wonderful young adults who started at our Kids Camp and have gone on to have careers as full-time musicians as well as sound and lighting people and for that we are very proud.

Our College and Kids Camp week is not over until we all head over to the festival grounds on Friday afternoon and present some of what we learned throughout the week up on the Dailey Stage and Kids Stage.

This is how we get the weekend that is The Goderich Celtic Roots Festival going.

For more details visit
<https://www.celticfestival.ca/>



Join us on the shores of Lake Huron for the 31st Annual

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CELTIC FESTIVAL

KIDS' CAMP

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2023

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August 7th to 11th, 2023

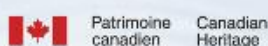
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Celtic Roots Festival
August 11th to 13th, 2023

Our College is led by instructors from all over the world while the Festival features an Artisan Village alongside international and award-winning musicians.

"Quite simply, the best Celtic festival on the planet."

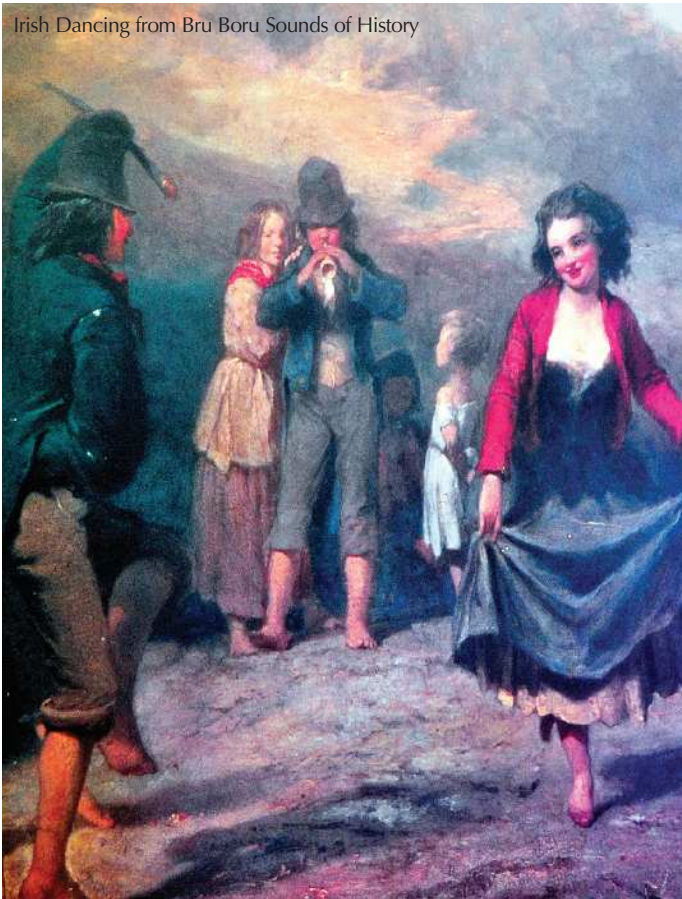
~ Discover Magazine



THE HISTORY OF IRISH MUSIC

In Part 11 of the current series Aidan O'Hara discusses the origins of Irish dancing.

Irish Dancing from Bru Boru Sounds of History



Because there is no specific reference in ancient manuscripts to what we would call dance or dancing, some people contend that there was no dancing in Ireland in ancient times. Breandán Breathnach, a leading authority on Irish music, states that the lack of specific references to the activity called dancing does not mean it was unknown in Ireland. The practice among British and continental Celts is well attested, “and the absence of such dances among people in Ireland sharing a similar culture would be remarkable”.

There are vague references to what might have been dancing at religious ceremonies in ancient Ireland, and it was not unusual to dance in a circle around a coffin at a wake! There are many references in print from the 17th and 18th centuries referring to “Irish air and dance music” but just the one brief specific reference to dancing prior to that in the 13th century. It is found in an early English poem: “Ich am of Irlaunde, Come and daunce with me in Irlaunde.”

What is lacking, however, is any description of dancing itself, and we are still in the dark about dance when the Irish called it *damhsa* – first mentioned in 1510 – and *rinnce* in 1588.

When the Normans invaded Ireland in the 12th century, they doubtlessly brought with them a dance they called the *Carol* that involved a singer surrounded by a circle of dancers responding to what he sang.

Over the following centuries dancing evolved, resulting eventually in three types of dance: the *Irish Hey*, the *Rinnce Fada* (the long dance), and the *Trenchmore*. Bagpipes and harps were the most common musical accompaniment.

Observers' Accounts of Dance

The *Hey* and the *Rinnce Fada* are mentioned in *The Complaynt of Scotland* (1549). In *Martin's Month's Mind* (1589), there is reference to “Irish Hayes, Jiggs and Roundelays”. In 1600, the English traveller and writer, Fynes Moryson, provides us with the earliest detailed account of dancing in Ireland:

“They [the Irish] delight in dancing using no artes of slow measures or lofty Galliards but only country dances whereof they have some pleasant to behold as ‘Balrudery’ and ‘The Whip of Dunboyne’ and they danse about a fyre (commonly in the midst of the room), holding withies in their hands and by certain straynes drawing one another into the fyre and also the matachine dances with naked swords which they make to meet in divers comely postures.” It is worth noting that many variants of sword dancing are found in Britain and the continent of Europe.

In his *Tour of Ireland* (1681), Englishman Thomas Dineley wrote: “They [the Irish] are at this day much addicted (on holidays, after the bagpipes, Irish Harpe, or Jewes harpe) to dance after their country's fashion, that is, the Long Dance.” In his book, *Teague Land: or A Merry Ramble to the Wild Irish* (1698), Englishman John Dunton states: “After the matrimonial ceremony was over, we had a Bag Piper and a blind harper that dinn'd us with their music to which there was perpetual dancing.” That statement and the book's

“Another occasion for dancing was at the pattern day, a tradition that can be traced back to early medieval times”

title tells us Dunton didn't think much of the Irish. He also states: “Sometimes they followed one another in a ring (as they say the fairies do) in a rude dance to the music of the bagpipe.”

Another occasion for dancing was at the pattern day, a tradition that can be traced back to early medieval times. People went on pilgrimage to a holy well or saint's grave, usually on the saint's feast day, and the day ended in merriment and amusements. In his history of Co. Westmeath, Sir Henry Piers wrote about a pattern day in 1682 where there was dancing. He wrote that “the more ordinary sort of people meet near the ale-house in the afternoon, on some convenient spot of ground and dance for the cake; here to be sure the piper fails not of diligent attendance: the cake to be danced for is provided at the charge of the ale wife”.

When James II arrived at Kinsale in March 1689 and was making his way to Dublin, an observer recorded “all along the road the country came to meet his majesty... the young rural maids weaving dances before him as he travelled...”

The Irish have long had a passion for dancing, and how it developed from the 18th century onwards will be explored in the next edition.

Reference

- Francis O'Neill, *Irish Minstrels and Musicians* (Chicago, 1913)
- Breandán Breathnach, *Folk Music and Dances of Ireland* (Ossian 1996)
- Helen Brennan, *The History of Irish Dance* (Lanham MD, 2001)

WARD IRISH MUSIC ARCHIVES

Mary Beth McCormack continues our series with Director, Barry Stapleton.



The original mission statement of Ward Irish Music Archives (WIMA) includes collection, preservation and dissemination of Irish music information. “We emphasize the dissemination side more than most archives because we want to share our information with as many Irish music lovers as possible. We realized that we needed another way to do that and after talking to lots of different institutions the need for travelling exhibits became obvious. Some places only disseminated internally and others simply weren’t good at it but everybody wanted to get more information out there,” said Barry Stapleton, WIMA Director.

Stapleton literally took that matter into his own hands and began building “topical, physical, educational exhibits that highlight our collections and can be transported to festivals and events all across the United States,” he said. Stapleton said as many as eight WIMA exhibits have been on display during festival season and over the years the exhibits have been seen at hundreds of other venues.

“In the beginning it really was pretty clunky,” Stapleton

in Cleveland, Dublin and Dayton, Ohio; Utica, New York; Los Angeles; Dallas; Chicago; Denver; Baltimore, Maryland; Spokane, Washington; and numerous fests in Wisconsin, Illinois, Michigan and Minnesota.

Stapleton said typically one or two travel along with the exhibits to talk about and display WIMA materials. “It’s a great marketing tool for us because people look forward to the exhibits and have come to associate them with both WIMA and Milwaukee. Part of our mission is to disseminate our collection and educate on Irish culture and heritage. The exhibits are meant to give those interested people a quick glimpse into a variety of the aspects of our culture and pique their interest so they can learn more and, or, come check out WIMA.”

Even more than sharing discoveries and artifacts from Irish cultural past and present populations, Stapleton said that he feels the exhibitions have helped strengthen WIMA’s relationship with other festivals. “I feel like the archives and exhibits have served to bring us all closer together and strengthened and built beneficial relationships.”

“The exhibitions have helped strengthen WIMA’s relationship with other festivals”

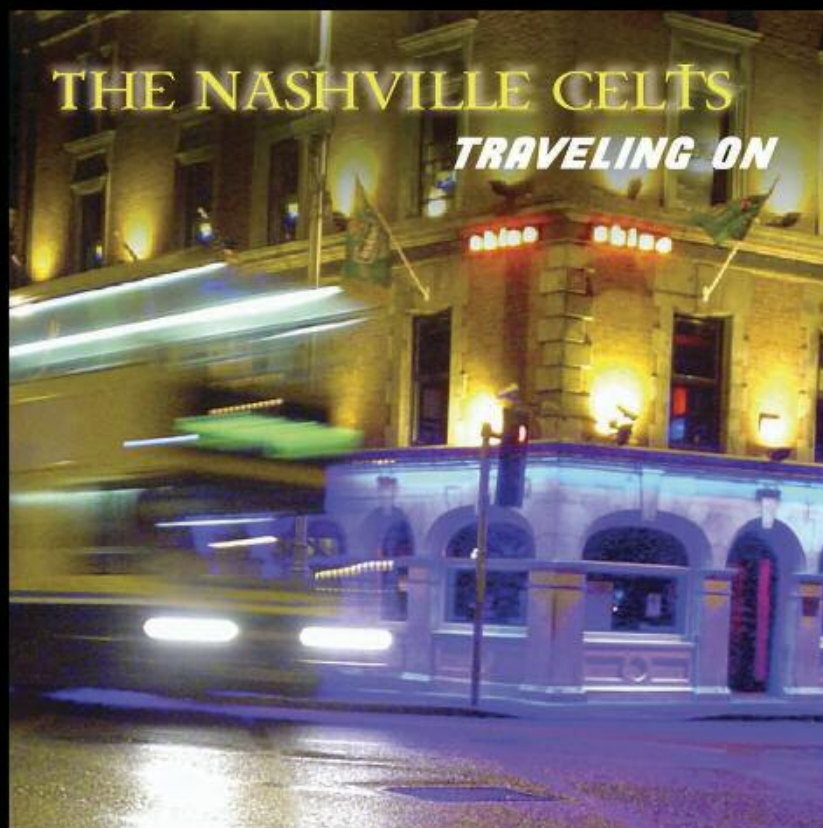
said. “We had a trailer and some two-by-fours and had to set up each display. Now we take some PVC pipe, some draping and velcro and our information is shown on 2ft by 4ft panels that are much more refined and can be transported in a car.” These days, Stapleton said, he has 15 exhibits that are “in rotation” and ready to go. “It’s costly to construct a new piece so we have what we need for now.” The displays don’t contain any original artifacts, Stapleton said, but striking illustrations and photos and fact-filled and appropriate content. He hopes, in the future, to put together a display of art associated with Irish music including illustrations from sheet music, LP and 45rpm recording cover art and any other visuals such as those depicted on the sleeves of 78rpm.

Stapleton said a different exhibit is selected to go on the road with him each year. So far they have made their way to festivals

Next month Irish Music Magazine will feature detailed descriptions of WIMA’s exhibits.



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MANDOLIN BASICS with Paddy Cummins

Brought to you in association with the Online Academy of Irish Music (OAIM).

The mandolin is a very old instrument, the origins of which go back to the lute of Medieval times. It is also fairly unique in the fact that it possesses four sets of double strings that give the instrument its rhythmic strumming patterns. Although there are three prominent types of mandolin available: the Neapolitan bowl-back, the arch-top and the flat-back, it is the flat-back mandolin that is most commonly used in the Irish tradition.

Paddy Cummins, the resident mandolin tutor for OAIM, teaches two courses: one for absolute beginners and a progressions course as a follow on. In these two courses you will learn all there is to know about one of Ireland's most recognisable and traditional musical instruments from a teacher who is as relaxed as he is knowledgeable about the instrument.

Paddy was born and reared in Drimnagh, Dublin and began experimenting with music aged nine. His first instrument of choice was the mandolin, as played by his father; then the guitar, before eventually being saddled with a banjo aged fourteen. Paddy attended some brief tuition at Comhaltas branches in Monkstown but is largely self-taught and spent his teenage years completely dedicated to his music practice.

He holds a first-class honours degree in Irish Music and Dance from the University of Limerick and was mentored there by John Carty. He also received masterclass tuition from established players such as Enda Scahill, Kieran Hanrahan, Cathal Hayden, Angelina Carberry and Brian McGrath.

In 2013 he founded a 7-piece traditional music group called Skipper's Alley and recorded an album with them which won the prestigious Loic Raison trophy at the Festival Interceltique de Lorient in France. Since then Skipper's Alley have featured on *The Late Late Show*, Ireland's flagship television show, as well as headlining gigs and festivals with other bands. Paddy still plays with Skipper's Alley and is also found gigging in Dublin's Temple Bar circuit, as well as being a much sought after private tutor.

"As a tutor, Paddy has a very laid back manner while his instruction is brilliantly clear... His relaxed style helps infuse the student of the mandolin with the correct attitude to learning, keeping tension at bay, and gently guiding the playing in a way that builds expertise gradually on a foundation of good technique and confidence"

The Course

Mandolin Basics is aimed at the absolute beginner mandolin player and as such starts with the very basics like how to hold the instrument, what keys the strings are tuned to, proper hand and finger posture on the fret bar, how to hold the plectrum as well as other good basic techniques. There is a progressive study of scales, plectrum motions, and ornamentation throughout the lessons. The course teaches a solid foundation from which to build your expertise as a mandolin player in the Irish music genre.

As a tutor, Paddy has a very laid back manner while his instruction is brilliantly clear. He shows both the proper and improper technique, which is very useful when guiding novice players. His relaxed style helps infuse the student of the mandolin with the correct attitude to learning, keeping tension at bay, and gently guiding the playing in a way that builds expertise gradually on a foundation of good technique and confidence.

POPULAR SESSION TUNES TAUGHT ON THIS 18 LESSON COURSE ARE:

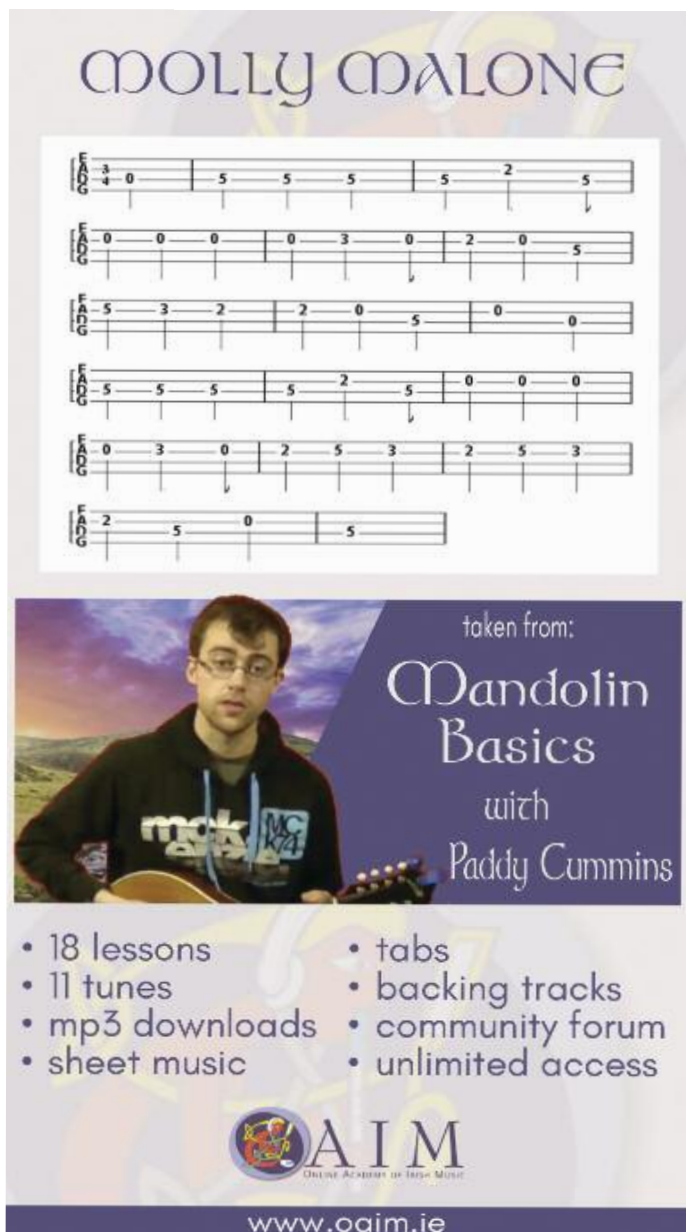
| | |
|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| Molly Malone | The Liltin' Banshee |
| The Kerry Polka | The Connacht Man's Rambles |
| The Foggy Dew | The Kerry Jig |
| Britches Full Of Stitches | Sporting Paddy |
| The Ballydesmond Polka | O'Carolán's Draught |
| | 48 Dogs In The Meathouse |

So from zero to Irish music mandolin hero, in just 18 lessons. If the mandolin is an instrument you've always wished you could play, put it off no longer! Grab a flat-back mandolin and plectrum and log on to oaim.ie and begin today.

This YouTube video is Lesson 1 in Mandolin Basics course:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5bjvSz_T8RM

Check out this Video on the Irish Music Magazine Facebook Page @ www.facebook.com/TRADIMM



MOLLY MALONE

taken from:

Mandolin Basics

with **Paddy Cummins**

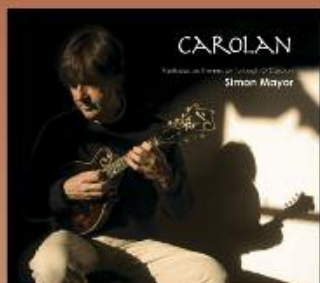
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-Rick Anderson, CD Hotlist

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-Jerry Clark, Rambles.net



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www.TheConsequencesBand.com

MOTOR CITY IRISH FEST**June 9th – 11th, 2023 www.motorcityirishfest.com****Irish heritage presented in music and song at the Motor City Irish Fest. Musical acts include bands from Ireland and the U.S.**

The Motor City Irish Festival, one of the premier Irish-themed events in Southeastern Michigan, recently announced its headline bands. Topping the marquee are, from Ireland, internationally renowned group Derek Warfield and the Young Wolfe Tones, and, from Foxborough, Massachusetts, the Gobshites. Many regional and local bands will add to the celebration of Irish heritage that takes place Fri. – Sunday, June 9, 10, and 11.

“We are so proud of the growth we’ve experienced over the last decade and more,” said Kevin Murphy, Festival Co-Chairman. “We started out in the parking lot of the Ancient Order of Hibernians Hall with a few local Irish bands, and now we are able to attract bands the calibre of Derek Warfield and the Young Wolfe Tones. It’s a great credit to our team of volunteers and the Irish-American community that supports us.”

In addition to Warfield and the Gobshites, the festival will feature, from Dublin, Enda Reilly, and regional favourites Blackthorn, Brother Crow, Wakefire, and many more. Typically, the festival hosts 20 or so bands throughout the weekend.

The festival includes many components that celebrate Irish heritage, including a cultural tent, Gaelic football demonstrations, and performances by up to six schools of Irish dance, but it’s the music that drives it. “It’s that music that touches the soul and keeps the Irish culture alive in our community,” said Murphy.

To learn more about the festival, go to www.motorcityirishfest.com

BLAS INTERNATIONAL SUMMER SCHOOL OF IRISH TRADITIONAL MUSIC AND DANCE**June 19th – 30th, 2023****www.blas.ie**

Now in its 27th year, the Blas International Summer School of Irish Traditional Music and Dance returns to the Irish World Academy at the University of Limerick this 19th June – 30th June. As per last year we are delighted to confirm face to face tuition with the traditional two-week course.

Blas has firmly established itself as one of Ireland’s most prestigious university accredited summer schools, drawing students from all over the world to spend two weeks gaining access to the expertise of some of Ireland’s finest artists, which in previous years included Dónal Lunny, John Carty, Siobhán Peoples, Kevin Crawford, Louise Mulcahy, Karan Casey, Jim Higgins, Ryan Molloy, Colin Dunne, Lauren Smyth, James Greenan and Ciara Sexton, to name but a few. In addition to expert tuition and masterclasses, Blas students can expect a whole range of activities including lectures on Irish traditional music and dance topics, Irish language classes, lunchtime and evening concerts, sessions, céilithe, field trips and above all, the unique opportunity to share tunes with some of Ireland’s leading traditional musicians.

Blas is also proud to present several free and ticketed public events over the two weeks, including the annual Francis Roche Memorial event, daily lunchtime concerts with Blas tutors, and a selection of evening concerts.

For further information on all aspects of Blas, including bursaries and our early bird discount, visit www.blas.ie
Breandan.deGallai@ul.ie

TUNEFEST 2023 IS BACK!**Dungarvan, Co. Waterford, June 22nd – 25th, 2023****Facebook @ TuneFest Dungarvan**

What a line-up we have for this year. Thursday, June 22nd we have Waterford’s Cinema Premier for opening night with ‘Tan Ann – Portraits

of Wild Wisdoms’ the creators, Cork man Conal Ó’Gráda, Tipperary man, Des Dillon & Waterford man Benny McCarthy. On Friday, June 23rd we have Dervish along with support act Tulua, a young energetic Wexford band. We will also have some great pub session trails.

On Saturday, we have our workshops with top tutors, Tara Breen – Fiddle, Liam O’Brien – Concertina, Diarmuid Ó’Meachair – accordion, Enda Scahill – Banjo, Robbie Walsh – Bodhran, Nuala Kennedy – Whistle. Once the workshop is over we go straight into a tutors and students concert.

Also on Saturday, we have a fun-filled family day, busking competition, Gig Rig, Trad Sessions, Book Launch with Joe Powers ‘Honey Talk Before Strangers’ along with more pub sessions. That night we have ÍMAR in concert & Danny & Tommy Dunford. Sunday we have our CD launch, and what a day we have lined up for you with FOUR CD LAUNCHES, Diarmuid O’Meachair, Paul Clesham & Conor Arkins, Tara Breen, Nuala Kennedy & Tony Byrne and Taobh Na Mara!

More pub sessions will take place, and Sunday evening we have by popular demand the famous Danú in concert & Taobh Na Mara, the current All Ireland Senior Ceili Band champions, a double act in The Park Hotel!

Dungarvan is the place to be from June 22nd to June 25th. Find out more at <https://www.facebook.com/tunefestdungarvan>

51st SCOIL SAMHRAIDH WILLIE CLANCY**July 1st – 9th, 2023****Miltown Malbay, Co. Clare****www.scoilsamhraidhwillieclancy.com**

Scoil Samhraidh Willie Clancy is offering a new course in 2023. **Know the Score: Read & Write Irish Traditional Music** is a course created and delivered by Dr. Liz Doherty (I Teach Trad) and certified by the Royal Irish Academy of Music (RIAM). Participants who complete the course will be awarded a CPD certificate.

The course is designed specifically for the traditional musician or teacher who wants to acquire technical skills and confidence in the teaching of traditional music. “The Course provides teachers with a framework for planning and delivering traditional music lessons, for learners of any age, on any instrument - including voice... The framework enables teachers to offer students a well-rounded learning experience....”

The Summer School is pleased to partner RIAM and I Teach Trad in providing this traditional music education initiative. This collaboration represents a further development in SSWC’s goal of establishing strategic partnerships for the promotion of traditional music and the exploration of learning and performing opportunities in the artform.

To register for this course go to: <https://bit.ly/WCSS-KnowtheScore>.

In addition to the formal activities on offer at the school there is the exuberant festival atmosphere generated by the many music sessions to be found, indoors and outdoors, in Miltown Malbay, Spanish Point, Quilty and Mullagh, the West Clare communities which host summer school events. Over 1000 students will participate in the school; and approximately 3000 extra visitors will experience a vibrant expression of traditional music in the communities which gave birth to Scoil Samhraidh Willie Clancy over 50 years ago.

For full details and updates on Programme, Registration, Accommodation, etc, see: www.scoilsamhraidhwillieclancy.com

SOUTH SLIGO SUMMER SCHOOL**July 9th – 15th, 2023****www.southsligosummerschool.com**

The 37th Year of the South Sligo Summer School of Traditional Music, Song & Dance is just around the corner! From the official opening by Tubbercurry native & cast member of the original ‘Lord of the Dance’ Desmond Bailey on Sunday evening to the closing céilí the following Saturday night, there will be a packed programme of classes, concerts, céilís and lots more happening from 9th to 15th July, all in Tubbercurry town centre.

Bookings are still open on our website www.southsligosummerschool.com for classes and workshops in fiddle, flute, whistle, uilleann pipes,

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Maeve O'Donnell

Méabh, Annie & Aoife Smyth **with** Marty Barry

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Mná na bPíob

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harp, button accordion, banjo, concertina, traditional guitar, bodhrán, traditional singing & lilting, sean nós singing, set dancing, sean nós dancing and mixed melody instruments for adults. Be sure of your place by registering online now. With participants already booked in from all over Ireland and from all corners of the world, we are very excited about this year's summer school – all events will be taking place in town and participants can look forward to a veritable feast of traditional music, song and dance with learning and enjoyment at the core.

For all programming details please refer to our website where you can also download and print our 2023 programme for your convenience. Accommodation queries can be emailed to nualamull@gmail.com and all other queries to anseo@southsligosummerschool.com

We are just fifteen minutes from Ireland West International airport and Tubbercurry is on the Galway – Derry Bus Route (No 64) while Ballymote Train Station, on the Dublin – Sligo line, is also just a 15-20 minute drive away. See you in Tubbercurry in July, bígí linn is bígí ag casadh cheoil ó mhaidin go hoíche!

CATSKILLS IRISH ARTS WEEK

July 16th – 22nd, 2023

www.CatskillsIrishArtsWeek.org

The Catskills Irish Arts Week is celebrating its 29th year as a week-long summer school devoted to the preservation and promotion of Traditional Irish music and dance under the auspices of the Michael J. Quill Irish Cultural and Sports Centre in East Durham, New York, the heart of the Irish Catskills. The CIAW will take place a week later than in the past beginning on Sunday, July 16 and a closing day-long festival on Saturday, July 22.

Our Irish teachers and performers include Liz & Yvonne Kane with John Blake, Mary Mac Namara & Sorcha Costello, Nuala Kennedy, Brenda Castles, Danny O'Mahony, Diarmuid O Meachair, Aisling Lyons, Deirdre Cronin for creative writing and Pádraig McEneaney for the Sets.

Stateside staff features Brian Conway, Rose Conway Flanagan, Siobhan and Willie Kelly, Kevin Crawford, Larry Nugent, Sean Quinn,

Eileen Clune Goodman, Pauline & Kathleen Conneely, Patrick Ourceau, Joey Abarta & Jackie O'Riley, Michael Stribling, Annmarie Acosta Williams, Liz Hanley, Billy McComiskey, Patty Furlong, Loretta Egan Murphy, Brendan Dolan, Alan Murray, Anna Colliton, Regan Wick, Brenda Dowling, Michelle Bergin, Nathan Gourley, Maura Mulligan (Irish language) and Cara Wildman.

Morning and Afternoon Classes daily from Monday July 17 to Friday July 21 along with late afternoon topical lectures from the staff, Evening Concerts and Barn Dance on the Quill Festival Grounds, Ceilithe all week in the famed Shamrock House with Fear A Tí Pádraig McEneaney. Irish Pub Sessions Galore including the intimate Listening Room all week. The Finale Festival on Saturday July 22nd on the Quill Festival Grounds will run from noon to 6 pm.

Online Registration is Open - Register today at <http://www.CatskillsIrishArtsWeek.org>. Updates at Facebook Page Catskills Irish Arts Week. Contact: Paul Keating, Phone 201-965-6598, Email : paulkeating@aol.com

BELFAST TRADFEST

July 23rd – 30th, 2023 www.belfasttradfest.com

Belfast TradFest, the pinnacle of world-class traditional music concerts, fiery pub sessions, and Ireland's fastest growing summer school of traditional music, is set to celebrate its 5th edition this July across Belfast UNESCO City of Music. The internationally renowned festival will mark this milestone with its most ambitious programme of music that will be showcased between Saturday 23rd July – Sunday 30th July 2023.

The 5th edition will be a momentous occasion for the festival, as it recognises the advancements and achievements since 2017 and all that organisers have overcome to bring people together, in a defining cultural celebration of the very best of traditional music, song and dance. It also acknowledges and celebrates the cultural diversity of the different traditions in Northern Ireland and is extremely proud of its work, bringing people together, in a shared celebration of traditional music from these islands.

This year's line-up of tutors features no less than 8 previous TG4 Gradam Ceoil Award recipients and amongst the list of world class talent appearing at the festival will be The O'llam, Joanie Madden, Mairtín O'Connor Band, Muireann Nic Amhlaoibh, Four Men & A Dog, Landless, McGoldrick, McCusker & Doyle, Elephant Sessions, Kathleen MacInnes, John Doyle, Brid Harper, Laoise Kelly, NXNW, Eadaoin Ní Mhaicín & many more...

Full programme at www.belfasttradfest.com

46th BALLYSHANNON FOLK AND TRADITIONAL MUSIC FESTIVAL

August 3rd – 6th, 2023 www.ballyshannonfolkfestival.com

2023 – Let's be havin' ya! Ireland's longest running folk festival is back!

For the past 46 years on the last weekend of July, the historic town of Ballyshannon in County Donegal has presented a Folk and Traditional Music Festival. We are now delighted to announce our fantastic line-up for 2023!

Thursday 3rd August – The Seeger Sessions Revival: High energy 2 hour-long on-stage celebration of American Folk. Tickets www.abbeycentre.ie

Showcase Competition: To give a platform to emerging talent, we have group and solo categories. Keep an eye on our social media for dates!

Legend Sessions: a tribute session of two musical greats; Paul Seeger will be joining the music of Donegal fiddler, Johnny Doherty who died in the Rock Hospital in Ballyshannon in 1980. This gig attempts to create the session that might have taken place if they had travelled through time and space to Ballyshannon. This year's session will be recreated by The Seeger Sessions Revival and Seamie O'Dowd, and really will be one not to be missed on Saturday 5th August 2023 in the Bridgend Bar at 12.30pm!

Festival Concerts – Live in the Marquee -Friday/Saturday and Sunday at 7.30pm: Featuring Dan McCabe, Sina Theil, Donal Lunny & Andy Irvine, Paddy Casey, George Murphy and the Rising Sons, Frankie Gavin & De Dannan and Fairytale of the Pogues with The Rapparees, Ademar O'Connor (2023 winner of the Fiddler of London Competition), Showcase winners and lots more.

THE 37th YEAR



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www.southsligosummerschool.com

Enquiries to:
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or 089-6111375

2023
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once again be of the highest calibre. With five days of music, song, dance, poetry, walks and talks, most people's tastes will be catered for.

The stellar line-up this year includes: Martin Hayes, Brian Donnellan, Cormac McCarthy & James Higgins; Meabh, Eoin & Niall Begley; Rick Epping, Seamie O'Dowd & Ruth Clinton; Danny O'Mahony & Michéal O' Raghallaigh; Muireann Nic Amhlaoibh & Donogh Hennessy; Lumiere; Pólka 4; Randal Bays & Frank Kilkelly; Edel Vaughan; Star of Munster; Conor Connolly & Andrea Palandri; Tulla Céilí Band; Music Generation; Fiddle Case, and many more.

Check www.feaklefestival.ie for more information and email : feaklefestival@gmail.com or visit Feakle Traditional Music Festival on Facebook for updates.

GODERICH CELTIC ROOTS FESTIVAL

August 11th – 13th, 2023 www.celticfestival.ca

The Goderich Celtic Roots Festival announces special guest multi-award-winning Canadian singer-songwriter and musician Loreena McKennitt – inducted recently into the Canadian Songwriter's Hall of Fame and who has sold over 14 million albums worldwide, will be appearing Saturday night Aug. 12th, as part of the festival's lineup. She will be returning to her roots of traditional Irish songs for her set.

The 31st Annual Goderich Celtic Roots Festival will take place August 11-13, 2023 at Lions Harbour Park on the shores of Lake Huron in Goderich, Ontario, Canada.

Preceding the festival, the **Celtic College** takes place August 7-11, 2023, with instrument, singing, craft art and dance classes being facilitated by our incredible lineup of international artists.

The **Celtic Kids Day Camp** is a chance for children aged 4 to 12 to take part in all things Celtic! At the same campus as the adult Celtic College, the Kids Camp follows the same daily schedule. The Kids Camp is divided into three streams by age: 4-6, 7-9, and 10-12. Students have the opportunity to experience song, tin whistle, harp,

guitar, fiddle, percussion, dance, drama, storytelling, and craft art with local professionals and masters from the Celtic College.

Some of the artists appearing at the 2023 Festival will be Bon Débarras, Cassie and Maggie, de Barra, Goitse, Heron Valley, Morgan Toney, The Murphy Beds, Ryan Young, Steáfán & Saskia, Simon Mayor & Hilary James and more to come!

For more information please visit us at

<https://www.celticfestival.ca/> or email us at festival@celticfestival.ca

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/goderichceltic>

Instagram: [@goderichcelticroots](https://www.instagram.com/goderichcelticroots)

SPARTA CELTIC FESTIVAL

August 11th & 12th, 2023

<https://www.spartacelticfest.org/>

The Sparta Celtic Festival, presented by ChoiceOne Bank takes place on August 11 and 12 in Rogers Park and Balyeat Field in Sparta Michigan, USA. The Event is FREE to enter.

Beginning at 5p.m. on Friday, the Entertainment lineup features local favourites "Whorled" and the "Barley Saints" with the "Steel City Rovers" from Canada. Two Irish Dance Schools will perform on opening night which boasts a great selection of Celtic Vendors, food and beverages and family activities in the playground and splash pad areas of Rogers Park.

On Saturday, August 12th the fun and activities spread into Balyeat Field with the return of the Highland Games, a car show and new Motorcycle show. An expanded Children's Area takes place from noon until 5p.m. and the grounds at Roger's Park are busy all day with Music and Dance on the Main Stage and in the Dance Pavilion! Entertainment on Saturday features: The Mona Shores Fiddlers, The New Brigade, Muskegon Regional Police Pipes and Drums, Selkie, CrossBow, Steel City Rovers, Wakefire and the "Leprecons". Up to eight more dance groups will be featured in a dance pavilion and on the dance stage.

Adding to the Celtic Theme, you will find Cultural demonstrations, Clan booths, vendors of all kinds, a Celtic living statue, magician and even a couple of large leprechauns! The Sparta Celtic Festival is the largest "Free Entry" Celtic event in the Midwest!

Follow them on Facebook at:

<https://www.facebook.com/SpartaCelticFestival/>

MILWAUKEE IRISH FEST TO FEATURE OVER 100 ACTS ACROSS 16 STAGES

August 17th – 20th, 2023

irishfest.com/lineup

Make plans to attend the world's largest Irish music festival, Milwaukee Irish Fest, along Milwaukee's beautiful lakefront in August! With over 100 music and cultural acts across 16 stages, you'll also find endless Irish and Celtic themed activities—Irish dancing, authentic Celtic cuisine, sporting events, Celtic canines and a cultural village where you can discover your Irish roots, watch a play, or meet a Celtic author. There's truly something for everyone!

This year's music lineup features Boxing Banjo, The Byrne Brothers, Cassie and Maggie, Chicago Reel, The Coronas, Derek Warfield and The Young Wolfe Tones, The Diddley Idols, Doolin', The Drowsy Lads, Eileen Ivers, Gaelic Storm, Goitse, The Henry Girls, Hermitage Green, Lisa Canny, Scythian, Shane Hennessy, Skerryvore, and Steam.

Making their Milwaukee Irish Fest debut are Colm and Laura Keegan, The Friel Sisters, Gross Isle, Merfolk, and Ulla. Dublin, Ireland's TradFest will return to Milwaukee to continue their music partnership with the festival. This year's TradFest performers are The Finns, MEGA-Trad, Polly Barrett, and Wallis Bird. **View the full lineup at irishfest.com/lineup and download the festival app, powered by CiderBoys, to view the schedule.**



Milwaukee Irish Fest is presented by its parent nonprofit organization, CelticMKE. CelticMKE is dedicated to preserving and promoting Irish, Irish American and Celtic cultures. The organization is also home to the Milwaukee Irish Fest Summer School, Milwaukee Irish Fest School of Music, the Ward Irish Music Archives, and the Milwaukee Irish Fest Foundation.

For more information about CelticMKE, please visit celticmke.com.

MASTERS OF TRADITION FESTIVAL

August 23rd – 27th, 2023

www.westcorkmusic.ie

Masters of Tradition celebrates its 21st anniversary this year and takes place from 23 – 27 August in Bantry, Co. Cork. Its mission remains the same as every other year – to journey to the heart of Irish music and provide a platform where subtle elements of the music can be heard.

As ever, the Festival is headlined by its Artistic Director *Martin Hayes*, the fiddler from East Clare, whose distinctive touch and extravagant virtuosity has brought the tradition to new levels.

The Masters of Tradition opened its doors in 2003 and since then it has welcomed such renowned names as Christy Moore, Scullion, Lisa O'Neill, Donal Lunny, Caoimhín Ó Raghallaigh, Altan, Andy Irvine, Liam O'Flynn, Mairéad Ní Mhaonaigh, Moya Brennan, Liam Ó Maonlaí, Iarla Ó Lionáird, Mícheál Ó Súilleabháin, Séamus Begley, John Spillane and many more. In recent years, the festival has evolved to include a number of collaborations with musicians from other traditions including Ricky Skaggs, chamber music quartet Brooklyn Rider, Swedish folk band Väsen, jazz musician Doug Wieselman and Indian pianist Utsav Lal.

Its programme has expanded beyond the main concerts in the intimate library of Bantry House and the historic St Brendan's Church in the centre of Bantry to include concerts on Whiddy Island, Garnish Island and in Bantry's oldest pub Ma Murphy's.

Programme and booking details will be announced on www.westcorkmusic.ie and on the festival's social media channels in the coming months.

Masters of Tradition is generously supported by the Arts Council and Cork County Council.

NIAGARA IRISH FESTIVAL (CANADA)

August 25th & 26th, 2023 www.irishmusicniagara.com

Irish Music Niagara presents the inaugural Niagara Irish Festival on August 25 & 26, 2023!

Celebrate Irish music, dancing and culture at Firemen's Park just minutes from breathtaking Niagara Falls, Canada.

Irish Music Niagara is a non profit organisation with the goal of sharing happiness through folk and Irish music. We are grateful for the support of the City of Niagara Falls, local businesses & local musicians to make this happen.

Friday night at Niagara Irish Festival will have the theme "Irish music by candlelight in the park", while Saturday's theme is "Jump Around!"

The Festival will be headlined by international Irish showman PADDYMAN, renowned for his authentic high energy shows (in Dubai and more recently in Canada!). Other notable acts include Bill Craig of The Irish Rovers, Canadian Folk Awards nominee Michael Darcy & Atlantic Drift, Daryl Gray, Brenyo Irish Dancers, Niagara Police Pipe Band, Hamilton Irish Arts Band, Irish set dancing with Maureen O'Leary & more talented acts on our main stage, unplugged stage & kids area.

Niagara Irish festival will feature a children's area, a cultural section and a VIP Area.

We are proud to promote local businesses and vendors offering a wide variety of Irish & Canadian food, drinks & artisan goods.

Niagara Irish Festival is held outdoors at Firemen's Park, in beautiful Niagara Falls, Ontario, Canada. Free parking is available. Gates open at 5.00 p.m. Friday and 11.00 a.m. on Saturday. Tickets and more information available from our website and social media page below:

Follow us on Facebook www.facebook.com/IrishMusicNiagara

A CELEBRATION OF CELTIC MUSIC AND DANCE

OCTOBER 19 - 22, 2023 · HALIFAX, NOVA SCOTIA



Nic Gareiss · Jake Blount · Six Hearts
Tim Edey · Simon Harmer
Caitlín Nic Gabhann · Ciarán Ó Maonaigh
plus more to be announced

15+ In-person Workshops · Online Master Classes

HALIFAX NOVA SCOTIA

Canada



rejiggedfestival.com

SCYTHIAN'S 8th ANNUAL APPALOOSA ROOTS MUSIC FESTIVAL
Return to Your Roots, Labor Day Weekend, September 2nd – 3rd, 2023
www.AppaloosaFestival.com

The 8th Annual Appaloosa Roots Music Festival, hosted by native Virginian band, Scythian, in their hometown of Front Royal, VA, is Labor Day Weekend, September 2-3, 2023. One hour from Washington, D.C., on the scenic Skyline Ranch Resort – nestled under the Blue Ridge Mountains – Appaloosa has featured Grammy Award winners and rising stars in Bluegrass, Americana, Folk, Celtic, and more.

The Virginia Tourism Corporation (VTC) awarded Appaloosa Festival a substantial grant as part of its 2023 Music Festival Sponsorship Program – *Virginia is for Music Lovers* – building Virginia's reputation as a music destination and putting Appaloosa on the map as Virginia's Roots Music Festival. Appaloosa was also named Best DC Music Festival Winner by Parklife DC, and Best Family-Friendly Festival Finalist at the FestX Awards in Las Vegas.

Appaloosa Festival is proud of being #WhereYouFindTheNextBig Thing, with Grammy award winners in our line-up, from day one: Sierra Hull; Billy Strings; Joel Savoy; Frank Solivan; Steep Canyon Rangers; and Molly Tuttle. This year, we continue the tradition of rising stars, with 15-year-old Winchester, VA native, Jake Kohn, who's taken the Country world by storm with his incredible voice, and the first artist signed to Kenny Chesney's new record label, and writer of his #1 hit *Knowing You* – Kat Haggins.

Appaloosa features free music workshops hosted by festival headliners, on-site camping, cabins, and chalets, local food and craft vendors, a kids zone, and a beer garden featuring Virginia craft beer and local choice wines. Appaloosa has made a name as a great family outing: with family packages, and kids 12 and under going free, and horseback riding, a petting zoo, fishing pond, playground, and mini-golf, for young and old alike.

The Appaloosa community also gives back: 10% of profits go to charity, with beneficiaries including the Veterans of Foreign Wars

(VFW) Post 1860 in Front Royal, VA, and the Appaloosa Blue Ridge Arts Foundation (ABRAF).

Line-up, ticketing, and accommodations may be found at www.AppaloosaFestival.com. Please contact Brian Lohmann, Appaloosa Festival Press Manager, for band interviews, or press passes: 703.599.8085 or brian.lohmann@gmail.com.

THE PITTSBURGH IRISH FESTIVAL IS SEPTEMBER 8-9-10, 2023
AT CARRIE BLAST FURNACES NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK
pghirishfest.org

The 32nd Annual Pittsburgh Irish Festival will be held September 8-9-10, 2023 at Carrie Blast Furnaces National Historic Landmark.

"We could not be more excited to present this year's Pittsburgh Irish Festival entertainment line-up," said Mairin Petrone, Pittsburgh Irish Festival Executive Director.

"The line-up features new bands, phenomenal solo performers, well-known favourites, Grammy winners and nominees, local Irish dance groups, a TikTok famous bagpiper, and more on four stages for non-stop fun and enjoyment."

Returning this year, a fifth stage presented by Five Farms Irish Cream where visitors can watch both professional and amateur bakers and chefs demonstrate the process of cooking and baking some delightful treats, most of which will feature Five Farms!

The Pittsburgh Irish Festival will welcome Gaelic Storm, The Screaming Orphans, RUNA, Enda Reilly, Eileen Ivers, The Brigideens, Ally the Piper, The Bow Tides, Bastard Bearded Irishman, Ryan Young, The Low Kings, Donnie Irish, and The Wild Geese, and more who will all be headlining acts on various evenings and stages.

Coming back for the third time after being a smashing success at the past two Festivals is The Real Irish Comedy Tour who will be performing on Friday and Saturday night of the Fest.

For full details and tickets pghirishfest.org

MICHIGAN IRISH MUSIC FESTIVAL RETURNS
September 14th – 17th, 2023 www.michiganirish.org

The Michigan Irish Music Festival, presented by Family Financial Credit Union, will return to Heritage Landing in Muskegon on Sept. 14 - 17th for four days of outstanding live music, culture, Irish food, beverages, shopping, and entertainment.

MIMF is pleased to announce festival entertainment including: Seamus Kennedy, Slide, Socks in the Frying Pan, Doolin', Eileen Ivers, Sharon Shannon, Paddy Keenan, One for the Foxes, Tossers, Malinda, Moxie Strings, Tallymoore, Colm & Laura Keegan and more.....

Look for some exciting changes and new activities at Irish Fest 2023. Continued improvements and a larger stage are on tap at the Grafton Street Area. Whiskey service will be available at our three main bars with craft cocktail options, and an expanded craft beer area. MIMF will feature two cultural stages and the Irish Store and Marketplace return for great "shopopportunities". Wee Ones' activities will be available, as well as a variety of food and Irish fare in our Celtic Kitchen. On Sunday, Catholic mass will be held at 11 a.m.

The Michigan Irish Music Festival will showcase over 25 musical acts on multiple covered stages, on the shores of Muskegon Lake in downtown Muskegon. MIMF is offering discounted pricing on single-day tickets and four-day passes when purchased online. (Children 12 and under remain free and ask about our Sunday discount day).

SCOIL SAMHRAIDH WILLIE CLANCY

Miltown Malbay, Co Clare

51st Annual Willie Clancy
 Summer School
 1st - 9th July, 2023



Photo: Eamonn McGivern

Tuition on uilleann pipes, whistle, flute, fiddle, concertina, button accordion, melodeon, banjo, harmonica, harp, step dancing, set dancing, Conamara sean-nós dance.

Workshops on the Irish and English language song traditions.

Dúchas an Cheoil/The Scope of Irish Music is a week-long course on the history of Irish traditional music, song and dance and accredited through the University of Limerick. For full details see www.blas.ie

A New Course:

Know the Score is a CPD course designed for traditional musicians and teachers. It is offered in partnership with I Teach Trad and certified by the Royal Irish Academy of Music. To register go to: <https://bit.ly/WCSS-KnowtheScore>

Lectures, recitals, concerts, film documentaries, céilíthe.

Information on Registration and Programme:

086-8773747/087-9500006/087-9264256 /Scoilwclancy73@gmail.com

Accommodation: 089-2320498 /kilduffmg@gmail.com

www.scoil samhraidh willie clancy.com

west | cork | music

20

Folk art is, indeed, the oldest of all the aristocracies of thought...
it refuses what is passing and trivial, the merely clever and pretty...
it is the soil where all great art is rooted.

W B Yeats 'Mythologies'

MASTERS Since 2003 TRADITION

BANTRY, CO. CORK

23 - 27 AUGUST 2023

CURATED BY MARTIN HAYES

www.westcorkmusic.ie



CURATED BY MARTIN HAYES

23 - 27 AUGUST 2023

BANTRY, CO. CORK



Irish Hooley at the Islington Assembly Hall



Friday 30th June 2023

7.30pm Doors, Tickets: £20/ £6 U18s

IMDL's annual profile and fundraiser event in the beautiful surrounds of Islington's Assembly Hall.

London Premiere of 'An Cosán Draíochta' composed by Johnny Óg Connolly plus more tba

RETURN TO LONDON TOWN 2023

FRIDAY 27TH - MONDAY 30TH OCTOBER 2023

LONDON'S 25TH ANNUAL FESTIVAL OF
TRADITIONAL IRISH MUSIC, SONG AND DANCE

The Crown Hotel, Cricklewood Broadway
and other local venues

Featuring:

Noel Hill and Brian McGrath / The London Lasses/ John Carty and Michael McGoldrick/ Pádraic Keane and Saileóg Ní Cheannabháin/ Harry Bradley, Dónal O'Connor and Libby McCrohan/ Sórcha Costello and John Blake (album launch)/ Pádraic MacDonnchadha, Pádraic Keane and Macdara Ó Faoláin (album launch)/ The Trad Gathering

Reduced B&B Room rates for Return to London Town Festival goers (Fri 27 - Mon 30 Oct) now available:

Single: £100/ Double: £110/ Triple: £120/ Quad: £130

Email: groupbookings@turnitcapital.com

and quote 'IMDL' in subject line for these special rates

All inclusive weekend Festival tickets for sale soon
returntolondontown.org

IMDL would like to thank all its current sponsors, partners and funders for supporting their work throughout the year



Advance tickets and passes for the Michigan Irish Music Festival are available online now. Stay tuned to the MIMF social media pages and website - www.michiganirish.org - for updates.

CORK FOLK FESTIVAL - NUMBER 44
September 28th – October 1st, 2023
www.corkfolkfestival.com

The Cork Folk Festival is gearing up for its 44th edition this autumn. The festival will pack in over 40 events from Thursday 28th September to Sunday 1st October.

Headlining this year's festival will be a trio of Ireland's finest musicians, accordion maestro Sharon Shannon, blues and jazz singer Mary Coughlan and senator and singer Frances Black.

Other headliners include the legendary 81-year-old UK folk singer Martin Carthy, Dingle songstress Muireann Nic Amhlaoibh with Gerry O'Beirne plus Donál O'Connor and Waterford singer Karen Casey will be presenting a series of newly composed songs. The festival will involve a concert commemorating the late singer, Diarmuidín Ó Súilleabháin featuring members of his family and musicians and singers from Cuil Aodha. Gals at Play will also feature this year with singers and composers Mary Greene, Brigid O' Neill, Molly O'Mahony and Siobhan O'Brien. The packed programme will include Dublin singer Daorí Farrell, Banjophonics with Damien O' Kane and Ron Block from California, Boruma Trio from Co Clare with Eileen O'Brien, Andrew MacNamara and Geraldine Cotter and a celebration of Sliabh Luachra music. The list of musicians booked for this year's festival is growing and it includes singers John Neville and Martin Leahy, accordionist Ruby Falvey and Cork singer Máire Ní Chéileachair.

As usual the festival will include a hectic programme of concerts in accordion, fiddle, flute and uilleann pipes, a céili mór, sean nós dancing, music workshops, trad sessions, a walking tour and Folk fest in the Fort.

All details will be published on our website, www.corkfolkfestival.com and we can be contacted by email cfolkf@gmail.com and phone 0872759311.

GALWAY BAY'S CELTIC MUSIC FEIS
October 17th – 22nd, 2023
www.celticmusicfeis.com

2023 will herald the 20th year of Galway Bay's Celtic Music Feis, celebrating Irish songs, ballads, players and bands that will be flooding Ocean Shores, WA with music and fun for six days this October.

Again this year the festival begins: Tuesday October 17th, 2023 and lasts until Sunday, October 22nd, 2023. An eclectic mix of Irish bands, choirs and dancers hailing from throughout the United States, Canada and, of course, Ireland will be rounding out this year's entertainment.

Buy tickets at www.celticmusicfeis.com

Visit our Facebook page

at www.facebook.com/GalwayBayIrishPubOS

Galway Bay Irish Pub - 880 Point Brown Ave NE - Ocean Shores, WA 98569 - 360-289-2300.

REJIGGED FESTIVAL
October 19th – 22nd, 2023
www.rejiggedfestival.com

The Rejigged Festival is back for its 14th annual celebration of Celtic music and dance, and this year's lineup is not to be missed. Taking place from October 19-22 at St. Andrew's Church in Halifax, NS, the festival will feature a fantastic mix of in-person and online concerts and workshops, catering to music lovers of all ages and tastes.

Headlining the festival are percussive dancer Nic Gareiss, musician and interpreter of Black folk music Jake Blount, and the fusion group Prince Edward Island's Six Hearts, made up of members of Vishtèn and The East Pointers. Other performers include multi-instrumentalist Tim Edey and renowned dancer Simon Harmer, promising a diverse and dynamic range of musical talent.

Rejigged's opening concert, *Autumn Lights*, will once again be available online, featuring Irish musicians Caitlín Nic Gabhann and Ciarán Ó Maonaigh. And for those looking to learn from the performers themselves, there will be 15+ in-person classes in music and percussive dance, as well as a series of online master classes and artist talks, all led by the festival's guests and luminaries.

"We're thrilled to be able to offer a mix of in-person and online events again this year," said dance programmer, Elizabeth MacDonald. "The Rejigged Festival has always been about bringing people together to celebrate Celtic music and dance, and we're excited to be able to do that in a way that works for everyone."

Tickets for the Rejigged Festival 2023 are available for purchase now, with options for both in-person and virtual attendance. For more information, visit www.rejiggedfestival.com

IMDL & RETURN TO LONDON TOWN
irishmusicinlondon.org & returntolondontown.org

IMDL's Annual profile and fundraiser – 'Irish Hooley at Islington Assembly Hall' will be held on Friday 30th June premiering music from two of Galway's finest composers within the traditional Irish idiom: Johnny Óg Connolly and Carl Hession. Johnny Óg Connolly's new suite of music 'An Cosán Draíochta' – written in honour of his father, melodeon player Johnny Connolly – will

36th International Festival of Traditional Irish Music

Feakle Co. Clare festival

Wednesday August 9th to Monday August 14th, 2023

Martin Hayes, Brian Donnellan, Cormac McCarthy & James Higgins |
 Meabh, Eoin & Niall Begley |
 Rick Epping, Seamie O'Dowd & Ruth Clinton |
 Danny O'Mahony & Micheál O' Raghallaigh |
 Muireann Nic Amhlaoibh & Donogh Hennessy |
 Lumiere | Pólka 4 | Randal Bays & Frank Kilkelly | Edel Vaughan |
 Star of Munster | Conor Connolly & Andrea Palandri |
 Tulla Céili Band | Music Generation | Fiddle Case | and many more.

Come to Feakle, Co. Clare and celebrate our wonderful culture with 5 days of music, song and dance embracing Concerts, Ceilis, Workshops, Sessions, Singing, Dancing, Poetry, Children's Events, Recitals, Walks & Talks

Tel: Gary Pepper 00353 61 924322 & 00353 87 9678020
or Tina Nelson 00353 87 6473537
www.feaklefestival.ie E: feaklefestival@gmail.com



44th Cork Folk Festival

28th September - 1st October 2023

Sharon Shannon, Mary Coughlan & Frances Black

Martin Carthy

Karen Casey

Diarmuidín Ó Súilleabháin Songbook

Gals at Play with Mary Green, Bridget O'Neill,

Molly O'Mahony and Siobhan O'Brien

Daoirí Farrell

Banjonics with Damien O' Kane & Ron Block

Boruma Trio with Eileen O'Brien, Andrew MacNamara

& Geraldine Cotter

A Celebration of Sliabh Luachra

John Neville & Martin Leahy

Ruby Falvey

Máire Ní Chéilgachair

Club Ceoil Ballyphehane

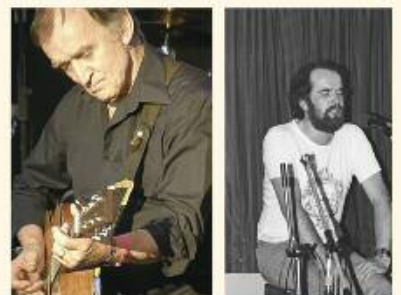
Douglas Comhaltas

Plus

Concerts in Box, Fiddle, Whistle & Flute and Uilleann Pipes, Céilí Mór, Sean Nós Dancing, Music Workshops, Trad sessions, Walking tour, Trad in the Fort

Find out more:

Phone: 087 2759311 Email: cfolkf@gmail.com Website: www.corkfolkfestival.com



feature 7 of Ireland's finest musicians, singers and dancers. Support on the evening will be by IMDL's youth project 'The Trad Gathering' playing music from the repertoire of Kerry fiddler, Julia Clifford.

Doors open at 7.30pm, Tickets (£20/ £6 U18s) available from irishmusicinlondon.org

London's 25th Festival of traditional Irish music, song and dance 'Return to London Town' opens its doors on Friday 27th October for 4 days of concerts, céilís, workshops, album launches and sessions in the beautiful surrounds of The Crown Hotel, Ashford Place and other local Cricklewood venues.

Featuring: Noel Hill and Brian McGrath / The London Lasses/ John Carty and Michael McGoldrick/ Pádraic Keane and Saileóg Ní Cheannabháin/ Harry Bradley, Dónal O'Connor and Libby McCrohan/ Sorcha Costello and John Blake (album launch)/ Páraic MacDonnchadha, Pádraic Keane and Macdara Ó Faoiláin (album launch)/ The Trad Gathering and more tba.

Reduced B&B Room rates are available at The Crown Hotel for Return to London Town Festival goers (Fri 27 – Mon 30 Oct): Single: £100/ Double: £110/ Triple: £120/ Quad: £130. Just Email: groupbookings@turnitcapital.com and quote 'IMDL' in subject line.

All inclusive weekend Festival tickets for sale soon at returntolondontown.org

PLANNING CONTINUES FOR ARMAGH'S PIPING FESTIVAL

William Kennedy Piping Festival

November 16th – 19th, 2023

wkpf.org

Planning for the 29th edition of the William Kennedy Piping Festival is now well under way, with at least 40 artists expected to appear in Armagh on 16-19 November. The music education

charity behind this major festival, Armagh Pipers Club, has developed the event over the years into a truly international and intercultural spectacle, featuring pipe-based music from almost every country and region with a bagpipe tradition.

In 2023, for example, the Swedish säckpipa player Olle Gällmo returns to the Festival bearing the prestigious title of Riksspelman, a folk music honour bestowed on him in 2008 three years after his first Armagh appearance. He will be partnered with the German piper and pipe-maker Matthias Branschke, with whom he has collaborated for some years. Other regions expected to feature this year include, of course, Ireland and Scotland, along with Northumberland, Iparralde (the northern Basque Country) and either Spain or Portugal.

The mechanical genius of William Kennedy (1768-1834), of Tandragee near Armagh, extended to making furniture and clocks, despite his going blind in childhood. He was honoured in the naming of the Festival, at its launch in 1994, because of his major innovations in the design of the uilleann pipes. An excellent biography of Kennedy appears in a compilation of lectures delivered at successive Festivals, and research since that publication has shown that his fame spread across the world in the years after his death.

The Pipers Club has applied for financial support for the 2023 Festival to Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon Borough Council, and will shortly submit an application to the Arts Council of Northern Ireland, which is a major funder of the Club's weekly music classes. The Club would like to hear from any commercial or philanthropic sponsors interested in helping it to make up the shortfall on funding and keep ticket prices affordable.

For further information visit wkpf.org, email : info@wkpf.org or info@armaghpipers.com or tel. +44 (0)7712 809933.



Tune Fest

June 23rd-25th
Dungarvan, Co. Waterford

Pub Session Trails • Street Busking
CD Launches & Recitals • Concerts
Open Air Gig Rig
Workshops

Fiddle - Tara Breen • Concertina - Liam O'Brien
Whistle - Nuala Kennedy • Accordion - Diarmuid Meagher
Banjo - Enda Scahill • Bodhrán - Colm Phelan

Tickets available on
Eventbrite.ie
www.tunefest.ie



Friday 23rd June:
DERVISH IN CONCERT



Saturday 24th June:
ÍMAR IN CONCERT



Sunday 25th June:
DANÚ IN CONCERT



Delightfully Irish

Michigan Irish Music Festival

presented by

FFCU

FAMILY FINANCIAL
Credit Union

Sept. 14-17th



Band Announcements

Seamus Kennedy

Slide

Socks in the Frying Pan

Doolin'

Eileen Ivers

Sharon Shannon

Paddy Keenan

One for the Foxes

The Tossers

Malinda

And more...

Heritage Landing
Downtown Muskegon

MichiganIrish.org

The **MART DOCK**

Budweiser

G&L

LANGLOIS
HOME FURNISHINGS
SINCE 1947

THE O'FLAHERTY IRISH MUSIC RETREAT

Gráinne McCool in conversation with Director Ken Fleming.

Photo : Andrew Simmons



The O'Flaherty Irish Music Retreat is an educational camp and musical event organised by The Traditional Irish Music Education Society in Texas. Named in honour of Irish immigrant Jim O'Flaherty who did so much to promote Irish music in the Lone Star State.

Gráinne: "This 3-day event is referred to as a 'Retreat'. How does that differ from a festival?"

Ken: "When I think of festivals, I think of music and dance performances on multiple stages, but also various cultural activities, food and product booths, and more. Our retreat is an educational event and because of its singular focus and its scenic location, we felt "retreat" would be the best way to describe it. Of course, at most retreats people just relax and chill. At O'Flaherty's, our students and staff are kept busy from dawn to late evening, so let's just say it's intensely satisfying."

Gráinne: "There are a lot of courses available over the course of the Retreat. Do they all fill up and what are the most popular?"

Ken: "We do place limits on enrolments for the courses due to our classroom sizes, so a number of them fill up. On our regular courses, the maximum enrolment is 18. The fiddle classes are our

Gráinne: "Who have you coming to play this year?"

Ken: "The instructors for this year's retreat are: Tara Breen: intermediate fiddle; Colm Broderick: uilleann pipes; Matt Cranitch: advanced fiddle; Dave Curley: mandolin; Cormac De Barra: harp; Colin Farrell: whistle; Nicole Fig: bodhrán fundamentals; Brid Harper: intermediate fiddle; Tess Hartis: fiddle fundamentals; Margaret Keefe: concertina fundamentals; Jack Maher: mandolin/tenor banjo fundamentals; Oisín McAuley: intermediate fiddle; Jacob McCauley: bodhrán; Rebecca McGowan: Sean-nós dancing; David McKindley-Ward: singing; Louise Mulcahy: flute; Alan Murray: bouzouki; Jim Murray: guitar; Pádraig Rynne: concertina; Enda Scahill: tenor banjo; and Sharon Shannon button accordion. Of the 21 instructors teaching this year, 12 are coming from Ireland."

Gráinne: "Is there a headline event, and if so, who will be performing?"

Ken: "Our instructor concerts each evening are "headline events" to us. We have an amazing performance hall at the camp, and our audiences each night are composed of musicians (students and professionals alike) from all over the U.S., Canada and Ireland. When our instructors perform in that setting, some of the most entertaining concerts imaginable happen."

Gráinne: "Are the lessons and workshops all music based? Are there any language ones?"

Ken: "The core courses are music based, and we also have Sean-nós dancing. Our workshops and enrichment classes normally are related to music, but they can also cover topics of Irish history and culture, Gaelic language studies, physical therapy, voice health, sound production and recording methods, instrument making and repair, and other interesting subjects that our students enjoy."

Gráinne: "The Retreat is now in its 20th year, is it still growing?"

Ken: "We were growing each year up until the pandemic struck in 2020. Like most camps similar to ours, we are recovering well, and we expect this year to see a return to our pre-pandemic numbers, which is 350 students enrolled. Because of our class caps and limited

"Of the 21 instructors teaching this year, 12 are coming from Ireland"

most popular courses and concertina, bodhrán, singing, flute and tenor banjo normally compete for number two. But our other courses are growing, so you never know what the next retreat will reveal."

Gráinne: "You also have a number of scholarships available. Who can apply for these?"

Ken: "We award a limited number of scholarships based on financial need to selected students who demonstrate musical ability with the potential for excelling within the Irish music tradition. Anyone age 12 and older can apply, and there are a number of steps required that are detailed on our website. We are very grateful to the many supporters who provide the funding to underwrite these scholarships. They have enriched the lives of many of our students."

Gráinne: "Do your instructor-led sessions turn into music sessions?"

Ken: "For the first time in our history, all of our instructors are asked to lead sessions, and they will be scheduled throughout the retreat. Clearly, being in the room listening to or playing Irish music with some of the best musicians alive today is fun."

classrooms, we can grow but not much more. For four nights and three days, we are a small but connected Irish music community, and many of us don't want to see O'Flaherty's become too big, where it would lose that neighbourly feel."

The O'Flaherty Irish Music Retreat runs from October 19th to 22nd at the Hoblitzelle Conference Center near Dallas, Texas. For more details and to enroll please visit www.oflahertyretreat.org



Photo : Andrew Simmons

Belfast Tradfest

23-30 JULY
2023



THE OLLAM | CLARE SANDS | MAIRTÍN O'CONNOR BAND | BRÍD HARPER
FOUR MEN & A DOG | EDWINA GUCKIAN | ELEPHANT SESSIONS
KATHLEEN MACINNES | LANDLESS | MCGOLDRICK, MCCUSKER & DOYLE
RÓIS | JOANIE MADDEN | LAOISE KELLY | MUSIC IN THE GLEN
CIARA MCCRICKARD TRIO | MUIREANN NIC AMHLAOIBH | FLUTOPIA | PRIDE CÉILÍ
MAEVE O'DONNELL, CIARA MAGUIRE & CATRIONA NÍ GHRIBÍN

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DUNGARVAN TUNEFEST 2023

Valerie O’Gorman in conversation with Seán Laffey for Irish Music Magazine.



Having had the pleasure of attending 2022 Dungarvan TuneFest, I was keen to hear about the festival’s plans for this coming June. The centre of Dungarvan will be a hub of traditional music song and dance over the weekend of June 23rd to the 25th.

TuneFest is a festival steeped in a region with a distinctive history and musical culture that continues to make ripples in the wider Celtic world. A few kilometres south of the town is the Ring Gaeltacht where there is still a thriving sean-nos tradition. Waterford was also the home of the Flanagan Brothers; their influential style was heard in the Dance Halls of New York one hundred years ago. Frankie Gavin rediscovered their jaunty energetic repertoire in 1976 when he visited the USA. Dungarvan was a major fishing port in the 18th and 19th centuries and for generations fishermen would sail west to the Grand Banks of Newfoundland, which they called Talamh an Éisc (The Land of Fish). Many settled there and today the Irish music of Newfoundland has a distinctive Waterford accent.

“Joe Power will be launching his new book at the Town Hall Theatre at 3pm on Saturday, check our website for more details on launches nearer the time.” Another event to catch is a new film from Benny McCarthy and Des Dillon; this will be shown in the excellent Dungarvan Cinema. “Des and Benny are so creative we are intrigued with what they’ve come up with this time.”

One key feature of the weekend will be four album launches on the Sunday afternoon. “Album launches are a way of giving back to the community, these launches will be free. Our first launch is with Paul Clesham & Conor Arkins, followed by Nuala Kennedy, Tara Breen and Tony Byrne, next up we have Diarmuid O’Meachair and to finish off the launch will be the 10 piece céilí band, the current All Ireland Senior Céilí band Champions for 2022, Taobh Na Mara.”

What of the big concerts? “The first concert of the June TuneFest will be with Dervish on Friday the 23rd. We have a band from Wexford called Tulua, a young energetic group of musicians who will be support act for Dervish, followed the next night with Ímar

“Family is at the heart of TuneFest, one of the big attractions for youngsters is our workshops”

Valerie is a respected organiser of Comhaltas in Waterford & her branch Comeraghs Comhaltas. Her children have grown up playing traditional music, competed and done very well at county, provincial and All Ireland levels and as they grow older are forming their own bands. “Family is at the heart of TuneFest; one of the big attractions for young people is our programme of workshops. These are with some of the country’s leading musicians. The tutors this year are: Fiddle with Tara Breen, Banjo with Enda Scahill, Concertina with Liam O’Brien, Bodhrán with Colm Phelan, Whistle with Nuala Kennedy and Accordion with Diarmuid Ó Meachair. These are renowned musicians and we are so lucky to have them with us in Dungarvan this year. Workshops commence at 10am, 9.30am registration on Saturday 24th June. There will be a Tutors and Pupils concert at 1pm on Saturday afternoon when parents can discover how well their children have progressed over the hours of tuition. It also introduces the children to stagecraft and if the performing bug bites there’s no end to the possibilities that lie ahead of them.

& support act local musicians Danny & Tommy Dunford. Then there is the closing concert on Sunday 25th of June with Danú and Taobh Na Mara. Afterwards there will be a massive session. Tulua will also play on the open air gig rig along with Booley House and the Taobh Na Mara Céilí Band. I might be a bit biased as two of my children play with Taobh Na Mara.”

And what of the session trail? “There will be an afternoon session on Saturday from 3:30pm at the Sailing Club. The venues this year are clustered around the large town square, with two concerts being held in Lawlors Hotel and the final concert will be in The Park Hotel. The many pubs in the square and adjoining streets host musician friendly sessions from Friday to Sunday night. There is something for everyone at this year’s festival. The talent that is coming to the town will be exceptional.

Finally, Valerie would remind prospective students that: “Our classes with our talented tutors are limited, so book your place now on Eventbrite.”

<https://www.eventbrite.ie/e/tunefest-2023-workshops-tickets-589817097817?aff=ebdssbdestsearch>.

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BALLYSHANNON FOLK FESTIVAL

Mary Daly, one of the organisers, chats to Gráinne McCool about the upcoming festival and just what keeps it going.



Running for more than 40 years, the Ballyshannon Folk Festival is gearing up for yet another successful bank holiday weekend this August, in Donegal.

Mary tells me that there's a real buzz about the town. "It's really starting to get very busy now. This is actually our 46th year so there's a real feeling that you are continuing the legacy of the festival, protecting the history and preserving it for years to come."

I wondered with the festival continuing to grow will there be anything new this year? I didn't expect there to be quite so much! "Building on last year's workshop with Declan Sinnott, we are expanding our educational workshops. Then there is our showcase competition, which will be held in Dublin. Each year we have people from all over Ireland and indeed internationally competing in this Showcase which holds a prize fund of €1000, but more importantly a slot on stage alongside some of the greats of the Folk and Trad scene. The local competition will also go ahead to support local up and coming acts."

Mary continues telling me about the festival's Sunday Folk Club. "Building on our twinning with Slainte Festival in France and we are delighted this year to be partnered with the *International Fiddler of London Competition* (which again raises the profile of the festival). And also following on from last year's success, there will be an extra concert in the Abbey Arts Centre on Thursday night, 3rd August. And my own personal favourite is the show that is stealing everyone's heart this year, 'The Seeger Sessions Revival'. I've already seen this show three times and it's outstanding. This 14-piece band is 'reviving' the spirit, energy and musical exuberance that was Bruce Springsteen's *Seeger Sessions* album and live shows. It's a high-energy two-hour celebration of American Folk with hits such as *Old Dan Tucker*, *Jesse James* and *American Land* to name but a few. This will be a huge hit at Ballyshannon Folk Festival. Tickets are available from www.abbeycentre.ie.

I asked Mary if people travel from far afield to Ballyshannon for the weekend. She surprised me when she said, "literally as far north to Alaska; all over Europe, UK, Ireland and the States".

Mary assures me that the town and its people are "very proud of its festivals".

With this year's festival just around the corner, who are the headline acts for 2023? Mary confirms some of our greatest musicians are coming to Donegal. "We have Dan McCabe, George Murphy, Paddy Casey, Frankie Gavin and De Dannan, The Rapparees, Dónal Lunny and Andy Irvine."

Just how important is this weekend for the county, I asked Mary? "Indigenous festivals like the Ballyshannon Folk and Traditional Music Festival provide a platform to encourage visitors to our town and region that otherwise would not have any reason to visit, thus generating substantial economic and socio-cultural benefits. Moving forward, post Covid, the annual calendar of events will prove vital to the economic sustainability of the town by giving people a reason to visit the area."

Mary continues by telling me about the importance of this festival as part of our Irish tourism. "Festivals and events have been identified as being an important component of the Irish tourism product offering. Festivals, such as Ballyshannon Folk and Traditional Music Festival provide opportunities to showcase culture, people and places, thereby greatly improving the visitor experience of Ireland and the Wild Atlantic Way. Ballyshannon Folk and Traditional Music Festival offers a

"Ballyshannon Folk and Traditional Music Festival provides many opportunities to showcase Irish culture, people and places"

high-quality product and represents and embraces the best cultural experience to visitors on the Wild Atlantic Way."

Finally, just why should people travel to Ballyshannon for this festival? Mary has the perfect response. "What's not to like; we have a fantastic line-up, great people and as they say you will come as strangers, and you will leave as friends."

Tickets for all the main events of the weekend can be found online at Eventbrite. The festival will host its annual showcase final on 30th June. Entry is open under two categories: bands and solo artists, who will compete for a total prize fund of €1,000. Entries close on 20th June.

Check out all the terms and conditions for the showcase and find out more about the festival schedule and line-up at www.ballyshannonfolkfestival.com



A REGIONAL GEM : THE SOUTH SLIGO SUMMER SCHOOL

Seán Laffey talks to Seána Haughey about this year's South Sligo Summer School, which runs in Tubbercurry from the 9th to the 15th of July.



Photo : Alastair Cassidy

Seán: "What is your own role in the Summer School?"

Seána: "The Summer School has been a central part of my life since the early 1990's when I came on board as a committee member. In more recent years my role has evolved to include coordinating the overall artistic vision and programming for the Summer School."

Seán: "Junior Davey is a name that looms large in the history of the Summer School?"

Seána: "Yes, Junior Davey was the tutor when bodhrán workshops were introduced to the Summer School programming in 1990 and he has

We are lucky to have a wide range of venues and spaces at our disposal in the centre of Tubbercurry, including local schools, business premises, the local community library and of course Saint Brigid's Hall, the central hub where many of the Summer School activities take place. Our class numbers are kept small and our tutors are flexible and understanding, working together to ensure that each participant is placed in the most appropriate class depending on their level of experience."

Seán: "Have you any advanced plans for CD launches?"

Seána: "At this moment I can confirm that the great Connemara box player, PJ Hernon, will launch his new melodeon album, *Ar Ais ar mo Dhúchas* at the Friday Night Concert on 14th July, in The May Queen, Tubbercurry, following an informal session and musical chat earlier in the day in St Brigid's Hall with PJ, which is open to all to attend. The Dartry Ceilí Band, led by Tubbercurry's own Philip Duffy, will be launching their new CD at the Monday Night Tribute Concert on 10th July in St Brigid's Hall. Whistle & Flute player and long-time tutor at the Summer School, Marian Egan is being honoured at this concert and a wonderful night's music, song and dance is assured."

Seán: "Can you describe the special character of the Summer School?"

Seána: "We take great pride in the standard of teaching at the Summer School. We were one of the first Summer Schools to offer bodhrán workshops. Likewise, our traditional guitar workshops, under the stewardship of Shane McGowan & Seamie O'Dowd, have been

"All of our tutors place an emphasis on Sligo and North Connacht repertoire in their classes"

taught at the summer school for most of the intervening years. Junior has made an immense contribution to both the success of the bodhrán workshops and to the standard of bodhrán playing locally and further afield and many pupils of all ages continue to benefit from his tuition."

Seán: "Is there an emphasis on a Sligo style or repertoire for Music Song and Dance?"

Seána: "We offer workshops in Sligo style fiddle for more experienced players. These workshops will be facilitated this year by Declan Folan & Oisín Mac Diarmada. All of our tutors place an emphasis on Sligo and North Connacht repertoire in their classes and many of the older generation of fiddle and flute players from the South Sligo area have a very close association with the Summer School. Our traditional singing and liling workshops will be facilitated this year by brother and sister Eoin & Siobhan O'Donnell who grew up in a musical family going back generations in Aclare, County Sligo at the foot of the Ox Mountains. The Tubbercurry and South Sligo Lancers sets are regularly included in the week's list of dances taught by Pat Murphy and these sets have been recorded for posterity by Pat at our Summer School."

hugely successful and have contributed in no small way to the wonderful eclectic nature of the week."

Seán: "Does the South Sligo Summer School connect with the wider community of Tubbercurry?"

Seána: "Many members of our community come on board as volunteers, helping out at registration and with stewarding and other essential chores during the week. We have great support from the local business community and many local people open their homes to welcome summer school participants. And weather permitting, we will once again gather at the closing of the week, to play tunes and bid farewell to what we all hope will be another memorable 'Music Week' in Tubbercurry."

Seán: "Is there anyone or any organisation you would like to thank for financial support?"

Seána: "We are most grateful to the Arts Council of Ireland, Sligo County Council Arts Service, M.S.L.E.T.B., Aurivo and the business community in Tubbercurry and South Sligo for their invaluable financial support."

For more details www.southsligosummerschool.com



Photo : Alastair Cassidy



Photo : Alastair Cassidy

REJIGGED IS MAKING NEW STEPS FROM OLD MUSIC

Seán Laffey talks to Patricia Murray and Christine Donnelly-Moan of Nova Scotia's Rejigged Festival, which will run in Halifax, Nova Scotia from October 19th to 22nd.



Patricia says this October's Rejigged Festival will be held at St. Andrew's Church in Halifax. From this space "we'll host three concerts and fifteen workshops. The concerts and workshops will be presented as a blend of in-person, live-streamed, and pre-record sessions. The quality of the performers and tutors is out of this world and includes luminaries such as Jake Blount, Tim Chiasson, Jake Charron, Tim Edey, Nic Gareiss, Emanuelle LeBlanc, Caitlín nic Gabhann, Pascal Miousse, Ciarán Ó Maonaigh and more!"

Christine tells me the first festival started in 2010 and earned a local reputation as a "small-but-mighty" festival. In 2020 Covid came along and while many festivals took a break, they re-jigged the festival as an online event. "In doing so, we extended our audience, and we saw the value of our streaming workshops. One workshop was run remotely from Scotland, and we had people from one town in Scotland tuning in to take the virtual classes. From now on Rejigged will be a blended festival!"

Patricia says there's a deep tradition of music and dance on the Canadian East Coast. "We've got Scottish, Irish, French Acadian, and First Nations culture here in the Maritimes. Christine adds a little local knowledge, "the culture is so strong here, through family connections and the social dimension of the music (also known as the kitchen party), songs, tunes, and steps are passed on from generation to generation."

Patricia shares the festival's mission: "Not only does Rejigged promote and feature local excellence, but we seek to bring in other traditions, from our own backyard, from across Canada, and the world beyond, that are sympathetic to our own. For fourteen years, this recipe has created magic on stage and now online."

Christine has a few words on their dance programme. "Our Director of Dance, Elizabeth MacDonald, has designed our dance program to give dancers, experienced and learner alike, in-person and online exposure to the rich depth and diversity that is percussive traditional dance. And to do that, in the past we've drawn on some of the world's

leading exponents, including Kieran Jordan, Joe McGuiggan, Siobhan Butler and Olivier Arseneault, to name only a few. This year, we're delighted to welcome Nic Gareiss, Simon Harmer, and Caitlín nic Gabhann, as performers and tutors, to their first Rejigged.

"Nic's speciality is percussive dance; he draws inspiration from Irish and Appalachian traditions among others. Simon Harmer has researched the Romany step dancing of the South of England. Caitlín nic Gabhann will present a pre-recorded online workshop on the Clare battering style."

Workshops on music will feature prominently. Tutors include Jake Blount, Tim Chiasson, Jake Charron, Tim Edey, Emanuelle LeBlanc, Pascal Miousse, Ciarán, Ó Maonaigh, and more. While most workshops will happen in-person in Halifax, a few will be pre-recorded, and several will be available to watch live, or later on Rejigged's YouTube channel. Whether viewers are in Canada, USA, Ireland, Scotland or beyond, they can watch and learn at their convenience.

"Rejigged promotes and features not only local excellence but brings in inspiring talent from beyond"

If the workshops are the heart of Rejigged, the concerts are its soul. Over the weekend three concerts will feature Irish musicians Caitlín nic Gabhann and Ciarán Ó Maonaigh, Americans Jake Blount and Nic Gareiss, and Tim Edey from the UK. Additionally, a newly-formed band called 6 Hearts will play. Patricia explains that the band is made up of players from Prince Edward Island, who were members of Vishtèn and The East Pointers. Both bands suffered bereavements over the past few years, and the new four-piece band has formed to remember and honour the two other hearts who are no longer with us. It should be an emotional concert blending the Acadian traditions of Vishtèn with the Celtic drive of The East Pointers."

In terms of organisation, Patricia says things are run with a small but dedicated crew. "There are 9 people on the board and we have around 20 volunteers who help out with the festival over the weekend. In terms of financing we work with local and national sponsors and are happy to acknowledge the support of the Government of Ireland's Emigrant Support Program. I think that shows that we have a special relationship with the old country."

Beat a path to find out more at www.rejiggedfestival.com



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Sat 23rd Sept. The Roscommon Arts Theatre, Roscommon
Sat 30th Sept. The Glen Theatre, Banteer, Co. Cork
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Sat 4th Nov. Cois na hAbhna, Ennis, Co. Clare
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SKERRYVORE IS THRIVING IN THE EYE OF THE STORM

Michael Lange catches up with Skerryvore's Daniel Gillespie and Alec Dalglish on tour during the launch of the band's 7th studio album *Tempus*.

Photo : Elly Lucas



Scottish band Skerryvore is touring with a new record deal, a new album, and a summer full of festivals. Accordionist Daniel Gillespie and singer-songwriter Alec Dalglish look ahead.

Michael: You're working with a new record company, Cooking Vinyl, home to The Proclaimers and many other international acts. What led you to this new arrangement?

Daniel: You & I being playlisted on BBC Radio 2 was a key factor, but so was our independent success and development. We already knew that Cooking Vinyl had a strong network within the music industry and we are delighted to now be part of that. It's not massively changed how we manage things and we remain heavily

locked down during the pandemic and couldn't do much, so I wanted to write something that said we're going to get through it and it's all going to be better again after all of the trouble everyone had for that couple of years.

Daniel: When we're thinking about making music, we're always thinking about the live show. That probably is one of the main reasons for the level of energy and positivity that we always try to bring to the music. Even back to *Everyday Heroes*, a hugely challenging time for everybody, we still wanted it to be a positive message about our NHS and connecting people when everyone was isolated.

Michael: You have a summer full of outdoor festivals, followed by a return to the U.S. and many UK dates in November-December. Is this about driving the album launch?

Daniel: Last year ended up being incredible because we had so many shows from COVID we were still carrying over and new shows came in, too. We've got great coverage in all the regions we want to cover this year. As we look farther out to 2024, we're hoping to do our first tour of Ireland and we'd like to return to Australia. That might not be until 2025, but we would like to get back there.

Michael: Putting nine guys on the road to make music is heavy lifting. You still seem to enjoy touring and each other's company and have fun with it. What's the key?

Alec: When the 4 of us started, we all got on well as pals and we happened to just play some music together. We've been keen that someone who joins the band needs to fit in and have that ability to get on well. We've got great musicians in the band, but it's been

“Getting to the BBC Radio 2 Playlist was a big deal because we’ve tried for ages”

involved in all aspects of the release but it was pretty much up to us to fund and record the album before licensing it over to them to promote and distribute.

Alec: They have a division which deals with licensing, so that they can put it forward for adverts or movies and things like that. We feel like one of those types of things might just be the kind of thing that breaks us into that next level.

Michael: *Tempus* singles *You and I*, *Together Again*, *Everything You Need* and *Eye of the Storm* all made the BBC Radio 2 playlists, and you've now hit over 20 million streams on Spotify. Do you feel you're already reaching that next level?

Alec: It's always been very slow, small, increments. We have worked for a long time, over 18 years. And I think getting to the BBC Radio 2 Playlist was a big deal because we've tried for ages. Now, we're rubbing shoulders with people who are in the top 20 of the charts all the time, so that definitely feels like another step up for us.

Michael: All 4 singles strike me as upbeat, encouraging songs with music videos that are positive without being preachy. Does this reflect where you are right now?

Alec: I think most of our music and most of the songs I write tend to be like that because I don't really feel like writing songs when I'm depressed, so none of those really ever come out. We were in

more important that they're just the kind of person we could go on with. What usually splits people up is when a few big egos clash and they think it's their band or everything has to go their way. We're about friendship and understanding each other.

Skerryvore's tour schedule, *Tempus*, and much more can be found at www.skerryvore.com



SEÁN KEANE (1946-2023)

An Appreciation by Aidan O'Hara.



There has been an outpouring of grief and sadness at the loss of one of the stalwarts of the world of Irish traditional music. Fiddle player, Seán Keane of The Chieftains died unexpectedly at his home in Rathcoole, Co. Dublin on 7th of May last, aged 76. Just a few weeks earlier one could see the delight on his face at meeting U.S. President Joseph Biden in Ballina, Co. Mayo.

There, too, on that memorable occasion was U.S. Ambassador Claire Cronin who said she was saddened to hear of Mr Keane's death and that Mr Biden was "genuinely moved to see The Chieftains together again for one last time". She added, "Seán's remarkable career saw him play with the world's greatest musicians and collect six Grammy awards with The Chieftains, bringing traditional Irish music to a new audience in the U.S. and around the world."

Through my work with RTÉ and CBC Canada, I met Seán and The Chieftains many times at home and abroad. In 1978, I arranged for the group to play for the Students' Union at Memorial University of Newfoundland in St John's. I well recall how Seán reacted with glee when his friend and colleague, whistle player Seán Potts, after their performance, came backstage sniffing loudly and asking, "Lads, what's that smell?" Paddy Moloney replied, "Seán Potts, that's Pot." Laughing, Seán Keane replied, "And all the time I thought the students were on a high from our music!"

But the students and guests were indeed mesmerised with The Chieftains' performance, not least Seán's own solo performances.

On hearing of Seán's death, there was this statement from ITMA (Irish Traditional Music Archive): "His professional career spanned nearly 60 years and his output was extraordinarily prolific, with The Chieftains, with musical confidantes Matt Molloy, Liam O'Flynn and many others and, strikingly, as an exceptional soloist."

Seán was born in Drimnagh, Dublin, in 1946, the son of a Co. Longford mother and a Co. Clare father, both of them fiddle players. Indeed, fiddle playing was deeply rooted in both families, and I never did get to share with Seán the knowledge that his great-grandfather, James Hanley, was a pupil of my great-granduncle, Longford fiddlemaster Thomas 'Blind' Kiernan (1807-87).

Seán was a member of Seán Ó Riada's group, Ceoltóirí Cualann in the 1960s, and some of its members were founding members of The Chieftains, which Seán joined in 1968. Earlier, he was a member of the Castle Céilí Band. His ITMA profile states that "his technical development was strengthened by formal tuition in the School of Music and attentive listening to the great gramophone-era recordings of the Sligo master fiddlers Michael Coleman, James Morrison and Paddy Killoran along with Dubliner Frank O'Higgins."

Seán always made time to attend the annual Scoil Samhraidh Willie Clancy, and he and his brother James, the brilliant

"One could see the delight on his face at meeting U.S. President Joseph Biden in Ballina, Co. Mayo"

accordion player, were both scheduled to be there again this year. Seán appeared on many radio and television programmes where he was profiled as a leading performer of Irish music. One such programme in 1981 was in the series *Hand Me Down* where he played solo before accompanying members of the Castle Céilí Band with the Mullagh Set Dancers. Last year, ITMA worked with Seán in making the documentary film *A Portrait of an Artist: Seán Keane* and it was shown at the Willie Clancy Summer School, Miltown Malbay, last July.

Besides recording on all The Chieftain albums, Seán made solo recordings: *Gusty's Frolics* (1975), *Seán Keane* (1982), and *Jig it in Style* (1990). There were also a number of collaborations: *Reel Away the Real World* (with Mick Moloney 1980), *Contentment is Wealth* (with Matt Molloy 1985), *The Fire Aflame* (with Matt Molloy & Liam O'Flynn 1993), and *Fire in the Kitchen* (with Paddy Moloney 1998).

Seán was a great family man, and his soulmate, Marie, from Ennistymon, Co. Clare, sadly died in March 2020. He said she was his bedrock, especially in rearing their three children, Páraic, Deirdre and Darach. Seán adored them and his grandchildren, and we at Irish Music Magazine extend to the Keane family, friends and fellow musicians our deepest sympathies. Suaimhneas síoraí dá anam uasal.

CELTIC CONNECTIONS 2023

Fergal Woods reports from Glasgow in the final of a 4-part series for Irish Music Magazine.



February 1st

Colin Hay and Hannah Rarity (Old Fruitmarket)

Another superb double-header featuring one of Scotland's best voices and the Scot who fronted Men at Work and now tours as a solo artist.

Hannah was accompanied by Innes White, John Lowrie and Lauren McColl and sounded wonderful. Heavily drawing from her recent album *To Have You Near* she has developed into a fine songwriter with several self-penned songs. Highlights were her breakthrough track *Neath the Gloaming Star* from her debut album, *She Must Be Mad*, *Hard Times*, *My Friend* and the lovely Gerry O'Beirne song *Shades of Gloria*.

Colin Hay's distinctive voice is as good as ever, his songwriting as strong and his stories and jokes better than almost any comedian you'd care to mention! Accompanied by just his guitar, voice and sharp sense of humour he played covers like *Waterloo Sunset*, originals like *Beautiful World & Agatha Bell* from his current CD, sing-alongs like *Are You Looking at Me?* and mega hits *Down Under* and *Who Can It Be*, all with hilarious/informative introductions.

February 2nd

Tonight's show featured the premiere of Duncan Chisholm's stunning new recording *Black Cuillin* and also the award-winning Gaelic songstress Kim Carnie.

Carnie's supporting cast included many artists who played on her album *And So We Gather*. Megan Henderson and Innes White sang lovely harmonies and were also featured instrumentalists along with outstanding sax player Matt Carmichael and Donald Shaw. Kim sang mainly in Gaelic with *She Moves Me*, *Night Hymn* and the jaunty *Nighean Sin Thall* being the highlights of an endearing set. Her band was augmented by a brilliant string section, many of whom featured in the opening concert.

Black Cuillin was inspired by the spectacular landscape of Skye, as much of Chisholm's material has been. The album was played in all its glory and its dozen tracks were supplemented by 4 or 5 older tunes.

There were really 3 groups on stage - a trad group, a rock group and an 8-piece string orchestra which produced the most ravishing tones. Duncan coaxed a beautiful sound from his fiddle and has a wonderful gift for harmonic invention, so we got to hear symphonic Celtic music at its majestic best. The ensemble was like a "Who's who" of today's vibrant Scottish scene and included Hamish Napier, Ross Ainslie, Jar Henderson, Patsy Reid, Innes Watson, Greg Lawson, Su-a Lee, and many more.

February 3rd

Mec Lir stormed the Fruitmarket with a powerful set delivered with clever arrangements and aggressive energy. The Manx foursome was augmented by the addition of Ciaran Ryan, Paddy Callahan, Isla Callister and Adam Brown with the added bonus of rock guitarist Lyle Watt to further beef up their sound.

The material is rooted in Irish trad but rocked up by Tom Callister's compositions and the power and precision of drummer Greg Barry. The group also gave us two new numbers along with most of their tracks from the *Livewire* CD. Best were *Flashback* and *Repeal the Union*, and David Kilgallon produced an unforgettable moment when the keyboardist came out front to solo on the Ax Synth!

Peatbog Faeries had a hard act to follow and were not helped by technical problems with monitors plus they initially played new material that hasn't yet bedded in properly. Fans were rewarded in the 2nd part of the show when favourites like *Spiders*, *Locks & Rocks* and *Strictly Sambucca* brought enthusiastic response and much dancing! Ross Couper, piper Peter Morrison and new boy Innes Watson were in sparkling form.

"Mec Lir stormed the Fruitmarket with a powerful set delivered with clever arrangements and aggressive energy"

February 4th

The afternoon concert was a celebration of the Vale of Atholl's piping history. The event was called "Names and Places" and the classic Pipe Band's album (1990) was revisited by the National Youth Pipe Band of Scotland, some original album contributors and the piping supergroup Tryst - who sport some of Scotland's finest pipers!

A special award was presented, recognising the achievements of Ian Duncan (brother of the famous Gordon), as longtime influential pipemaster.

The evening concert was titled "Celtic Runes" and featured Dreamers' Circus (Denmark), Frigg (Finland) and Glasgow's very own Kinnaris Quintet. These 3 outfits played some of the most original and best tunes of the entire festival, often sounding more classical than folk and with excellent fiddling by each. The only problem with the triple header was it restricted the time allotted to each! Kinnaris just played half a dozen tunes, with *Wonderful*, *Saltspring/Toria's 50th* and *This Too* (current album's title track) winning loud approval.

Frigg stuck the closest to traditional music but also write excellent original material. Best tunes were from their XX CD - *Juhlamarssi*, *Hakkisen Riili* and *Vep*.

Dreamers' Circus displayed brilliant musicianship. The 3 members are multi-instrumentalists and their compositions defy classification so anything goes from Vivaldi to a whistled pop tune. They got a marvellous reception for their performance and you could have heard a pin drop in the packed Concert Hall when they brought the volume down.

All 3 bands performed the encores together to cap a wonderful night's entertainment and bring my festival to a triumphant close.

Celtic Connections 2024 will run from January 18 - February 4. Keep in touch at www.celticconnections.com



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GABRIEL McARDLE
THE FERMANAGH BLACKBIRD
Farset Records FARSET20231, 14 Tracks, 46 Minutes
www.facebook.com/gabriel.mcardle.1

At 74 Gabriel McArdle proves it's never too late to release your debut solo album, and what an album it is. Gabriel sings and plays concertina and is accompanied by Dónal O'Connor on harmonium, guitar & tenor guitar, Ciarán Curran on bouzouki, tenor guitar & mandolin, Jim McGrath on button accordion & 12 string guitar, Pat McManus on fiddle, and by Darragh Murphy on uilleann pipes & whistles. The album was produced by Dónal O'Connor.

Emigration and the cavity it creates in the lives of couples is a recurring theme on this album. The first track *Erin Grá Mo Chroí* sees an emigrant fondly recalling his native land whilst sitting on the banks of the Hudson in New York. On *The Banks of Kilrea* the narrator is interloping on the conversation of two young people who are considering emigration (how times have NOT changed in Ireland).

Gabriel has an easygoing style, without artifice, histrionics or showmanship, his clear diction allowing the listener to absorb every nuanced phrase. This is a master class in how to sing traditional Irish songs in English. Having said that the title track is an instrumental piece; the harmonium sets a sombre mood as the fiddle draws into the scene with an achingly beautiful slow air. Gabriel joining later on concertina as the blackbird takes flight.

Bessie The Beauty describes the pleasures of a bucolic excursion from the shuttle-tied toil of the loom, the dander finds our singer entranced by the beauty of Bessie from Rossanure Hill. Gabriel conjectures this song may have been written by Peter McGuinness who was a schoolteacher and poet from Boho, County Fermanagh. Gabriel brings us another instrumental on track 7: *I Buried my Wife and Danced on her Grave & The Drumshanbo Jig*, a nice shift there from the major to the modal. He is backed by guitar on *Far From Erin's Shore*, in which an Irish emigrant meets a rich Texas beauty in Boston, but finds her no comparison to the charmers waiting back home near Enniskillen. He plays a selection of marches on the concertina: *The March of the Clan Maguire*, *The Pikeman* & *Daniel O'Connell's Visit to Parliament*, upbeat and intoxicating, we need to hear more Irish marches on traditional albums.

The final track *The Waves of the Silvery Tide* is about the murder of Mary, her lover's search for and subsequent discovery of her attacker and his execution. Gabriel had this song from his father. It sounds a grim story but the way he sings it with Ciarán Curran's backing would make you want to hear it all over again.

Hailed by many as a singer's singer, this is a legacy recording that will still be fresh and appealing in 100 years time.

Seán Laffey
ÍMAR
Awakening
Big Man Records BMANN005, 10 Tracks, 39 Minutes
www.imarband.com

It's hard to know what to say about Ímar that I haven't said before. Pan-Celtic prodigies packing a powerful punch, penning passionate yet pensive pieces, performances which are pretty much perfect, and that's just one letter of the alphabet. Their third album is more of the same, but fresher, feistier, furiously fast, and full of fine new compositions. Here is a band who can change up a gear from a reel to a jig or vice versa, and who keep the tension building through ten tracks without breaking a sweat. It does take a heavy toll on their jeans though. The front line of Mohsen Amini on concertina, Tomás Callister on fiddle and Ryan Murphy on uilleann pipes and flutes emphasises the Irish and Manx characteristics of the band, but there's a Scottish aspect too, and even elements of the darker p-Celtic traditions. In the engine room are Manxmen Adam Brown and Adam Rhodes, there's no better team on bodhrán and bouzouki, or indeed in a three-legged race.

Puns are on the menu for the opening mash-up *Bangers*, the Scotsman abroad with *Legal Tønder*, and the very irreverent *Neachtain's Wing*, which

is the only track here without a composition by Murphy, Callister or Amini. A couple of other traditional favourites raise their heads: *Paddy Kelly's* and *Rose in the Garden* (lovely girl, I knew her mother) but the rest of *Awakening* comes fresh from the fevered imaginations of these three heroes. Not that this is immediately obvious: listen to the set of island-scattering slides on *Splinter O'Neill's* and you could be set dancing in Sliabh Luachra, while *The Gift Horse* is not far behind with its red diesel polkas. Things slow down occasionally: Callister's *Imagine a World* is a moving slow air, *Waterhorse* ripples in rhythmic flux, and *Eoghainn's* hides a melancholy edge under its slow velvet march. The final *Tree of Life* is back to unbridled horseplay, galloping away over the horizon like the mythical figures, which inspired the album cover.

Alex Monaghan
SNAARMAARWAAR
Lys
TRAD Records, 9 Tracks, 36 Minutes www.snaarmaarwaar.be

An album full of strings, from the Flemish trio Snaarmaarwaar, all of the music was composed by Maarten Decombel and recorded at Studio Trad by Jeroen Geerinck. The gatefold cardboard sleeve lists very little information about the trio, but does have Flemish and English notes on each track. For those in the know, Snaarmaarwaar are one of the top folk bands in Belgium. Playing mandolin, mandola and guitar they are champions both of their native tradition and adept at writing new pieces of music, which neatly fit into the folk music culture of the Low Countries. For this album the trio shared one microphone, and played into it old style, which gives the album a live patina. They say the music reflects the river Lys that meanders between France and Belgium.

The trio are Jeroen Geerinck (guitar), Maarten Decombel (mandola) and Ward Dhoore (mandolin), and that's it, three lads playing strings standing around one microphone. But what a sound they make. *Black Frost* recalls the arctic air-ice that can capsize a ship, a riff softly underlays the track as the mandolin is handed the top line melody. The mood and tone changes halfway through when the guitar lifts the load of the tune. *Planchemouton* imagines the sheep country of Limousin in France, with two bourrées in a two-handed conversation between the mandolin and its big brother the mandola. Track 6 *Julos* was written in honour of the late Walloon singer Jules-Beaucarne; it's a continental waltz with a thoughtful middle section as if sadly remembering someone who has meant so much to them.

The album closes with *Fugenzo*, named for the first cherry blossoms that tell the world that winter is over. A gorgeous intertwining of perfectly pitched strings, simple and self-possessed, a quiet way to sign off. Like the river Lys the music flows effortlessly from the strings of Snaarmaarwaar.

Seán Laffey
DALLAHAN
Speak of the Devil
Own Label DLHN004, 10 Tracks, 44 Minutes
www.dallahanmusic.com

Jack Badcock (guitar/vocals), Ciarán Ryan (banjo), Benedict Morris (fiddle) and Andrew Waite (piano box and backing vocals) make up Dallahan, and that's all you need. Quite a change from album number two where every track was laden with guests, but this band has increased in confidence and coherence through their last release *Smallworld*, and now their fourth chapter is chock full of the solid Dallahan sound. What does that actually mean? Well, I'm pleased to say that the emphasis is still on instrumentals, which is not surprising with three of Scotland's most talented and innovative players on board. Ryan can hold his own on both sides of the Irish sea, while Benedict has a huge reputation as a fiddler in multiple groups and genres. Andrew takes the humble accordion to new heights: his chameleon chords and textured melodies are key to the character of Dallahan's music.

Six sassy tune sets span contemporary hornpipes and reels, jazzy waltzes and airs, Latin and Balkan rhythms, the three front men mightily backed by Badcock's guitar to give a full and rich sound throughout, not overproduced but overwhelmingly powerful. Four songs add to this intoxicating mix: the compelling *Marina* hints at an old Mexican tale of love and politics, the melancholy *Picture on the Wall* portrays grief and loss, *Rude Spanish Soil* might tell the romantic revolutionary side of the same story, and the gritty last song brings us back to Mexico in perhaps more recent but no less bloody times.

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Speak of the Devil is an album on the glittering edge of folk, all original but weaving in threads from so many traditions, yet never pulling the fabric out of shape. The final funky jig sums it up for me, wild and wonderful.

Alex Monaghan

ASSYNT

Where from Here

Own Label GAR002CD, 10 Tracks, 45 Minutes

www.assyntmusic.com

There's an echo of 1980s Glasgow-based band Ossian about some of this second album from top Scottish instrumental trio Assynt, which is quite a compliment. The instrumentation is similar: Graham Mackenzie on fiddle, David Shedden on highland pipes and whistles, and Innes White filling out the sound on guitar, but it's the purity and freshness of the music which really makes the connection with seminal recordings of forty years ago. *Where from Here* is mainly new compositions by the band, Mackenzie and Shedden with a bit of input from White, so it's no surprise that they get the best out of these tunes, assisted in places by the versatile Charlie Stewart on double bass.

It's easy to lose yourself in Assynt's music, the melodies are very engaging and the rhythms rock you gently, but they do rock! The opening *John Morrison of Assynt House* gives way to a trio of gently swaying Mackenzie pieces on *Gordon Stewart's*, picking up speed before Shedden's dreamy low whistle on *St Andrews Drive*. Tracks on this album have a way of building in volume and tempo, so that what started as a gentle float on a lilo suddenly turns into a white water rafting experience and you're just waiting to go over the waterfall: *The New Normal* is a good example, and *Rescues* is another. Maybe the clue is in the names. The title track provides an island of calm, misty tranquility on pipes and guitar, before a final blast of new traditional tunes in the piping idiom, a gripping end to a great selection of music.

Alex Monaghan

GEORGE SANSOME & MATT QUINN

Sheffield Park

Grimdon Records GRICD007, 11 Tracks, 47 Minutes

www.sansomequinn.bandcamp.com

George Sansome is an English folk singer and guitarist, noted as a member of the bands Granny's Attic, Queer Folk and Captain Bullhead, also for his ability to explore the essence of traditional and folk songs. Matt Quinn is a multi-instrumentalist and singer originally from Brighton, but now based in Sheffield, with lots of experience on the English folk and trad scene. For this album, the two have joined forces to produce a collection of their favourite songs.

Accompaniment is deliberately sparse with the focus on the vocal delivery, but both are skilled players with some lovely deft touches on guitar (Sansome) and mandolin (Quinn) complementing the singing, both harmony and solo. The opener *Tyne of Harrow* (collected from John Faulkner) is acapella, followed by *Tailor In the Tea Chest* and the title track, both of which feature lovely interplay between guitar and mandolin.

Their voices blend in a very satisfying manner, instinctively finding appropriate and natural harmonies, and the sound is expertly captured by producer Tom Wright, with the emphasis clearly on letting the songs and stories flow. There's a gorgeous version of *The Night Visiting Song* sung by Matt, who also excels on *My Son in Amerikay* (also recorded by Andy Irvine). *Thornaby Woods* allows George to shine, with a nice arrangement complementing the vocal perfectly.

Overall, the album is relaxed and thoughtful, and the songs are effortlessly delivered by two vocalists with a deep connection to their chosen material. Nothing is forced, and there is wonderful use of space in the instrumentation. *Lost In A Wood* features simple mandolin accompaniment at the start and then gradually ebbs and flows with instrumental and vocal harmonies. *The Death of Andrew* closes the album and expertly draws the listener into the sadness of the lyric. An inspiring collection from two stalwarts of the English folk scene.

Mark Lysaght

WESTWARD THE LIGHT

Flow Country

CDO11BSR, 9 Tracks 42 Minutes

www.westwardthelight.com

Glasgow based Westward the Light are: Charlie Grey (Hardanger D'Amor and fiddle), Sally Simpson (fiddle and viola), Owen Sinclair (guitar) and Joseph Peach (piano and harmonium).

There's almost a bond villain theme on the opening bar of the first set *The Rearrangement Reel*, the fiddle plays an agile riff, the backing is low and thunderous and continues in this fashion into *O'er Bogey* until there's a shaft of sunshine in the warp into *The Humours of Carrigahalt*. Joseph Peach is a find when it comes to new writers, his *Flow Country* could well become the *Josefin's Waltz* of this decade, and their interpretation of it on the fiddle will be a benchmark for years to come.

They go back to the start of the 19th century for a version of *O'Farrell's Welcome to Limerick*. This is a tour de force of restrained playing and features long notes on the fiddle that enhances the looping phrasing that this tune is famous for. There's something similar on the selection they call the *Dornoch Links*, its middle tune is guaranteed to be an earworm. Track 8 is called the *C Jig* on their Bandcamp page, an amalgamation of an unknown jig with *The Lads of Mull* and *Elizabeth's Big Coat*. There's a mature dynamic sensibility at work here, they hold back on the massive ensemble sound until the final tune in the selection, which adds to its impact.

Sally's soulful viola talks to us on the final track *The Braes of Rannoch*, a tune which defines the phrase 'a haunting air'. Westward the Light have taste in abundance, with the viola and Hardanger adding a depth rarely heard in traditional albums. This is a recording that will never become dated, this is a keeper not a sleeper.

Seán Laffey

CHARLIE LE BRUN

Breton

Own Label, 11 Tracks, 38 Minutes www.charlielebrun.com

A promising first album of 5 tracks in 2019, it was a record that called for more. That task is now completed with the publication of this excellent album of 11 tracks entitled *Breton*, named because this young musician and singer's roots are in Brittany, yet the contents reflect the fact that he lived in Ireland for more than ten years.

No surprise then that he combines the two musical cultures that have cradled him since his childhood in Brittany. His musical style is the result of a clever mix of traditional Breton, Irish and folk music influences.

Whereas on his previous album, which was purely instrumental, Charlie called on three musicians to assist him, this time he has teamed up with pianist Ryan Molloy to present us with a beautiful musical album, on which he alternates Breton tunes and Irish melodies, as well as several songs, thus revealing a beautiful warm voice.

Eight Breton songs and seven Irish tunes are delicately alternated in three suites. Although Breton and Irish traditions are present here, Charlie offers us several personal compositions. In particular the songs: *Lorient* and *Ar Redadeg* (The Race) and the tunes *An Hent Treuz* (The Sunken Path), *Annaig* or *Hanter Louar* (The Half Moon). A tribute to Alan Stivell with a cover of *Ev Chistr 'Ta Laou* (Cider Song), a very popular song in Brittany. And of course the Breton anthem *Bro Gozh Ma Zadoù* (The Old Country of my Fathers) set to the same melody as the Welsh national anthem.

Through an acoustic folk repertoire that nevertheless preserves the energy and dynamism of traditional music, Charlie Le Brun offers us an intimate glimpse into his own musical universe. A superb album that highlights the strong musical links between Brittany and Ireland.

Philippe Cousin

FIL CAMPBELL & TOM MCFARLAND

Shoreline

Glenshee Music 2023, 9 Tracks, 36 Minutes

www.filcampbell.com

A new album from this husband and wife duo, Fil from Belleek in County Fermanagh, and Tom from Belfast. Fil's 1992 debut album *The Light Beyond The Woods* set her off on a career as a singer, songwriter, and multi-instrumentalist. I recall meeting Fil at an IMRO songwriter's week in Maynooth University about 20 years ago and it's a pleasure to see that she still registers each of her compositions on this album with IMRO.



ARTSAWONDER

Major Conferences Underway For Music and Healing

Irish singer-songwriter and social activist **Tommy Sands** has joined forces with American psychiatrist and musician **Bruce Victor** to promote the ever-expanding role of music in both individual and social healing with Conferences taking place at **The University of Cambridge** and the **Fiddler's Green Festival**, Rostrevor, Co. Down this year.

Both conferences are being presented under the banner of the **Artsawonder** charity founded by Tommy, which promotes the use of music in the context of social healing.

"If Tommy's music produced a 'defining moment' in steering Northern Ireland toward peace, as was stated by then-deputy First Minister Seamus Mallon, then perhaps we should learn how to utilize music for more such 'defining moments'."

- Bruce Victor

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The duo augment their sound with invited guest musicians: Nicky Scott (Bass), Rod McVey (Keyboards), Ciara McCrickard (Fiddle), Nuala Curran (Cello), and Steve Cooney who plays guitars and bass on *First of February* and guitars on *People*.

The title track *Shoreline* has Tom's djembe playing a reggae Caribbean beat, he whispers his lines, "Are We There Yet?" A phrase many of us have heard from back seat toddlers on a day trip to the seaside, The fiddle is heard prominently on *People*, the vocals delivered in short phrases, the lyrics blending rhythmically on the message *People is all we have got*. This album is full of gentle folk songs that anyone can be at home with, accessible and humane. On *Don't Let The Old Man In*, a deep bass resonates over the guitar, Tom's voice is stronger here, a song about mortality and ageing, the crux of the message is that although we may clock up years of time and our bodies are weathered and worn, keep a young outlook on life and realise you wouldn't know you were old if you didn't know when you were born.

Fil takes the lead with a breathy vocal on *First of February*, the tune here has a medieval modal resonance, perfect for the days of an Irish winter, just a hop to St. Bridget's day and the smiling lifted heads of daffodils. Fil reflects on the future on the rocking, *The Days Gonna Come*, keyboard and a walking beat drive the song with a swagger. The duo swing towards trade-jazz on *The Devil and The Deep Blue Sea*, a song composed by Harold Arlen with lyrics by Ted Koehler. It's a classic and why wouldn't it be; Arlen wrote the song for the Wizard of Oz. Fil and Tom do keep good musical company.

Seán Laffey

EWAN MACINTYRE

Twenty First Century Fool

Broken Car Recordz BCR-005, 9 Tracks, 44 Minutes

www.ewan-macintyre.org

This album was made between lockdowns and curfews with its final iteration on the Isle of Skye. Driving drums lace this album of alt folk rock from Montreal-based Ewan Macintyre. Listen carefully and you'll detect a Quebecois zeitgeist here, no wonder as seven of the Province's finest young talents are Ewan's backing band. Electric guitars play repetitive riffs and an Acadian sounding box adds a counter melody in *Horizontal Man*, Ewan repeating the phrase: "No one knows just what's on the horizon". A sentiment we owned when the lockdown kicked in and the only future we had was uncertainty. Things are a little less stressed, in fact positively languid and dreamy on *Fall in Canada*, there's no sense of rush in this track. Track 3 is an Irish jig, which he calls *The Saturday Blues Jig*, played on mandolin with a fiddle weaving in and out. A bass rounds out the sound and there's direction and purpose in the playing here.

The Maritimes have a strong Gáidhlig tradition and Ewan adds to it with his original song *A Bhith Saor* (To Be Free is to Be Alone); the opening lines are more Morricone than Benbecula. The song starts with Ewan's solo voice but soon the piece fills out when Katrine Bouchard's Celtic fiddle adds an echo of the old country. The theme of the song is the paradox of the end of the age of oil and the fact that cheap transport made emigration possible. As our petroleum era comes to a close he ponders: "Our roots and heritage will be smashed against the rocks".

He tackles the theme of loneliness on another Gáidhlig song, the raucous *Seóladair nah- Inntinn* (Voyager of the Mind). This switches between the discordant and the pensive, its message is don't get lost in the static cadence of sitting, get up and enjoy each opportunity for action. The final track with guitar and fiddle, *Ode to The West* was inspired by the thought of a cold February in Thunder Bay when car failures and cancelled gigs plunged him into financial ruin. He ends with a positive up-tick, ruin is only temporary: "Trouble may have hit you hard but my heart sings to see you smile."

Seán Laffey

DAVID EDWARD BOOTH

All My Days

The Recording Booth TRBDBC2301, 9 Tracks, 34 Minutes

www.davidedwardbooth.co.uk

The new album from singer/songwriter/producer David Edward Booth features a host of talented guests including Texas founding guitarist Ally

Mcerlaine, Suffolk singer/songwriter Kelly Bayfield and Northumberland producer/multi-instrumentalist Ian Stephenson.

The album was recorded by David and his collaborators in Suffolk, Northumberland, London, Essex, West Sussex and Sweden over an 18 month period between late 2021 and early 2023. There's an inherent melancholy in some of David's lyrics, and in fact the album was finalised a few weeks after his mother's passing; he says that the grief actually gave him the required motivation to finish the project.

The album is inspired by places, notably the Peak District of his native Derbyshire or the wide expanses of the Suffolk coast where he now lives. This bubbles to the surface on *Another Me* which he prefaces with "Old, familiar landscapes have the power to take us back into our past, but also help us reflect on who we are now." His song resonates with blow-ins and immigrants in the telling line: "I don't know anyone but I know these towns."

He considers the paradox of parenthood in the song *Run*, it's the key single released from the album and it is on his Bandcamp page. Echoes of a guitar's vibrato from Ally Mcerlaine, Ian Stephenson's double bass holds the beat in check, Kelly Bayfield's chords on the piano mirror the drama of the lyrics. The conundrum is what is the balance between freedom and tough love, at what point have you let your child run free?

Perhaps David is best known as a producer and recorder of other people's songs, however by any measure, and by the yardstick of this album, he is a master of song writing and a compelling singer of mature, reflective adult folk.

Seán Laffey

MOHER

Phoenix

Own Label, 9 Tracks, 39 Minutes

<https://www.facebook.com/MoherBZH>

A four-piece based in Brittany playing mostly Irish music, Antoine Pihier on whistles and flute, Corentin Quimbert (guitar), Konan Gore (fiddle) and Anthony Debray on various percussion. Reading the liner notes (in English) they cite influences for each tune within a set and they are influenced by some of the greats of the tradition: Arcady, Vincent Broderick, Karen Tweed, Johnny Cunningham and many more.

Phoenix is a set of slow reels; the fiddle has a drawn-out sweetness in the long notes as if they've been drinking at the same fountain as Martin Hayes, not for long though as the whole shebang joins in with the whistle and bodhrán kicking up a dust storm. There's no let up as they blast on to the end with the *Galway Rambler*. The next track *Hervetimon* begins with Niall Vallely's *30th Anniversary Slip Jig* set of slip jigs, a warbling bodhrán under an interception of whistle and fiddle moves us into a frenzied *Herman the German* and closes on an emphatic bodhrán with Antoine Pihier's *Hervetimon*. They reference Sarah Allen and Flook for the slow reel *Gone Fishing*, here played on a low whistle, complete with chime bells and a high pitch frame drum. At over 5 minutes they have enough space to develop the tune into *Lead the Knave* on acoustic guitar.

There's a wonderfully earthy sounding flute on *Eye of the Fox*; initially paired with the bodhrán, it all too soon shifts into a full ensemble sound, the fiddle kicking in over a percussive guitar backing. Sparks are flying at this point, there's no let up until the final unison note from the fiddle and flute. They take us to the tropic of Mullingar with Alan Kelly's *Salamanca Samba*, an aperitif before *Milonga Para Missoes*, the trills on the whistle herald in some Latin fiddling as hot as a pimientos de padron. The *Frailach* hornpipe is like a sunny donkey ride, flopping from side to side, certainly a different take than Kevin Burke had on the tune. They follow it with *Ne Ke Short*, which they say is influenced by Les Pires. The album is rounded off with a set they call *McGoldrick's*, a selection of Michael McGoldrick's Reels and Lúnasa's *Kalyana*.

There's a welcome authenticity about this album, a little raw in places - that's more of an accolade than a criticism, *Phoenix* has energy and character, Moher cites many influences but in the end they've a recognisable sound and that's a hard feat to pull off.

Seán Laffey



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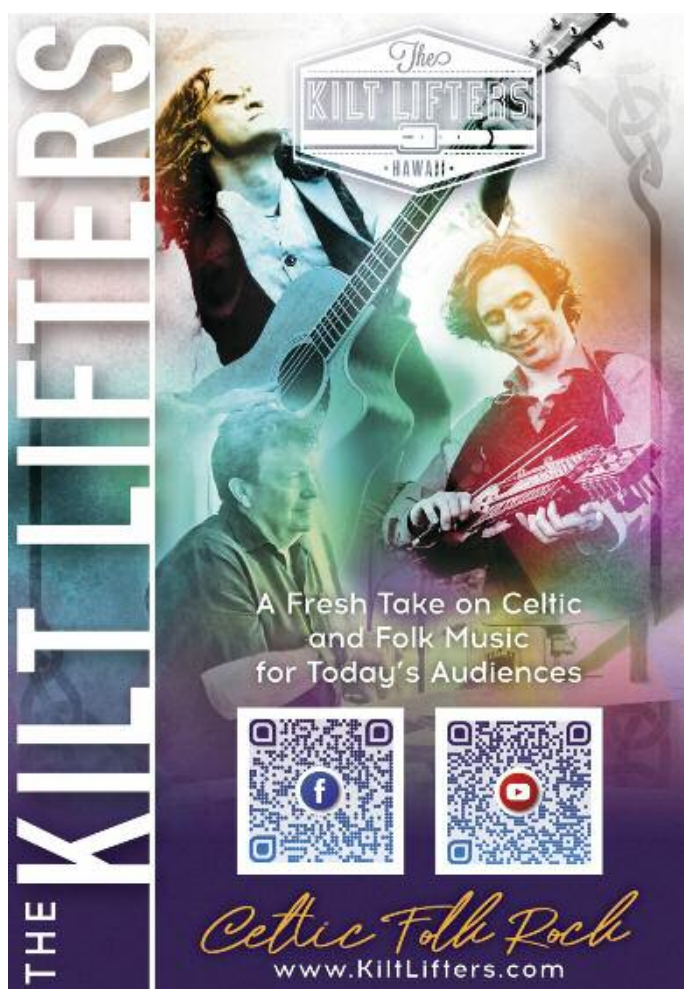


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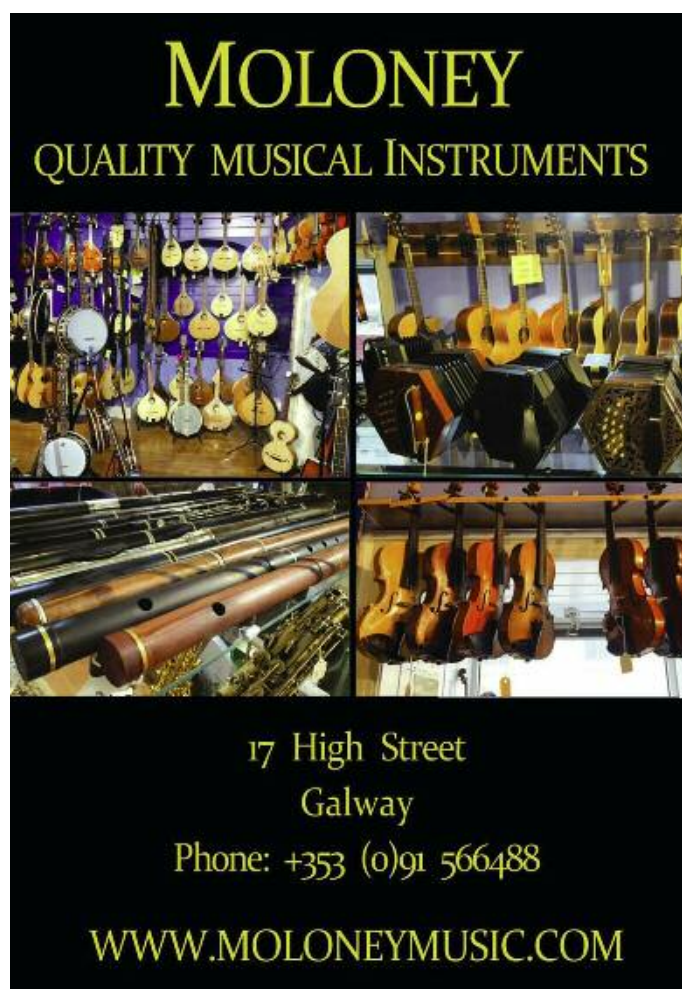
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SHAMROCK GREEN OR THE ISLE OF FRANCE

Seán Laffey finds historical hints embedded in this song about the fate of a shipwrecked Irish convict.

The song is on Kris Drever's *Best Of* double album, which we reviewed in our previous issue. Susan McKeown sang *Shamrock Green* on her 2004 album *Sweet Liberty*; she had the background from New York's Don Meade and the song itself from English folksinger Nic Jones and his 1977 album *The Noah's Ark Trap*.

The story is set on the Isle of France, the old name for Mauritius. The island was discovered by Arab sailors in 975 and was later known to the Portuguese as Mascarenes. It was colonised by the Dutch in 1598 and named after Prince Maurice Van Nassau, the Stadtholder of the Dutch Republic. France took possession of the island in 1715 and gave it the name Isle De France. The British occupied the island during the Napoleonic war in 1810 and were granted full possession after the Treaty of Paris (1814) when the island's name of Mauritius was restored.

The first convict ship from Ireland to Australia sailed in September 1791 and our convict's 6-year sentence would bring the earliest date of the song to 1797. However, clues in the song suggest a much later date. The letter to the Queen, indicates both British rule and Queen Victoria, also the key role of the Coastguard would put the song no earlier than 1822 when that organisation was founded (the French service was established in 1832, by then they had no jurisdiction over Mauritius). Known copies date to the mid-1800s when penal transportation was still operating to Australia, providing the song's contemporary relevance. Dan Milner believes the song originated as a broadside ballad sometime in the 1850s.

English folk song collector W. Percy Merrick obtained the song in 1900 from Henry Hills of Lodsworth, Sussex, it was published in *Folk*

Songs from Suffolk (1912). It was also collected by Ron Edwards in Australia and published in *The Big Book of Australian Folk Songs* (1976), his source was Mrs M. Webb of Cairne, Queensland, she was born in 1893 and had songs from her father. There are two versions in the Online Bodelian Ballads collection, one from an unnamed printer begins with the convict's sweetheart Polly bemoaning the cruel laws that have transported him and concludes on his return by the couple getting married. The syntax of those opening and closing verses make little sense and modern singers generally leave them out. The version below is from an undated broadside attributed to John Forth of 47

"This song appears on a Broadside from Brereton of Cooke Street, Dublin"

Market Place, Pocklington, East Yorkshire. Forth was registered as printer in the town in 1845 and his premises were rented from William Powell.

The Irish Traditional Music Archive in Dublin has a copy of this song under the title *A New Song Called the Convict on the Isle of France*, printed by Brereton of 56 Cooke Street, Dublin in the second half of the nineteenth century. There are over 300 Brereton broadsides in the ITMA collection, distinguished by poor spelling and cheap paper, many with incongruous woodcut illustrations. Perhaps they were rushed copies of already extant work, maybe a copy from Forth's broadside?

THE SHAMROCK GREEN Roud 1575

(C) Oh the sky was dark (F) and the night advanced,
(G7) When a convict (C) came to the (F) Isle of (Dm7) France,
(G7) And around his (C) leg was a (F) ring and (Dm7) chain,
(G7) And his (C) country (F) was of the (C) Shamrock Green.

I am of the Shamrock the convict cried,
That has been tossed on the ocean wide;
For being unruly, I do declare,
I was doomed a transport for seven long years

When six of them they were past and gone,
I was coming home for to make up one,
When the stormy winds they did blow and roar,
Which cast me here on this foreign shore.

Then the coastguard played a noble part,
And with some brandy cheered the convict's heart.
Although the night is so far advanced,
You shall find a friend in the Isle of France.

Then a speedy letter went to the Queen,
About the dreadful shipwreck of the Shamrock Green
His freedom came by a speedy post
To the absent convict they thought was lost.

God bless the coastguard, the convict cried,
You have saved my life from the ocean wide;
I'll drink your health in a flowing glass,
So here's success to the Isle of France.



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