
MOHAWK VALLEY IRISH CULTURAL EVENTS NEWSLETTER

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The Elders to Take the Stage at Rome's Capitol Theater

So you say your New Year's resolution is "I will not procrastinate someday"? Well, if that makes sense to you, you'll love this time-addled adage: "He who hesitates with his money plays the part of a fool." What this all means is that you've still got time to get tickets for the January 17th appearance of the Elders at the Capitol Theatre in Rome, and if you don't get one, someone else will. The Elders, from Kansas City, who burst into prominence on the east coast due in no small part to their inaugural appearance at the Great American Irish Festival in 2007, are coming back "home" for a very special 7 PM show, to help raise funds in support of Rome's Weed and Seed program.

The Elders -- fronted by Ian Byrne from County Wicklow, and backed by guitarist Steve Phillips, bassist Norm Dahlor, violinist Brent Hoad, drummer Tommy Sutherland, and keyboardist Joe Miquelon -- have set the American music scene on its ear, thanks to a skillful mix of amped-up roots rock, augmented with powerful vocals, blazing instrumentals and topnotch song writing; burrowing their way into the hearts of Central New Yorkers as well. If you were there last year, you saw an amazing metamorphosis take place, as over 1000 people -- most of them strangers to Celtic music/genre in general, let alone the Elders -- went from "Well, it's a good cause, but that doesn't mean I have to like it" to being active (and loud!) participants and rabid fans by the time the night was done.



The Elders after last year's Weed and Seed show

The concert will also include a performance from the YMCA Center for the Creative Arts (YCCA), a talented group of musicians who have performed and recorded with many famous performers (including a truly memorable goosebumps-raising performance at last year's Elders show), as well as a performance by dancers from the fabulous Butler-Sheehan Academy of Irish Dance. Proceeds from this concert will go towards Rome Weed & Seed's "Prudy Ellinger Scholarship Fund," which was established in memory of one of Weed & Seed's founding members. The scholarship fund is designed to benefit a local youth who wishes to further his or her education.

Tickets for the show are available at Gary's Music, Accents of Ireland, Rome Federal Credit Union, Rome YMCA, Oneida YMCA, and online at www.ymcatrivalley.org. Tickets are \$25 in advance, \$17.50 for children under 12 and Seniors, and the price that evening -- if they're still available -- will be \$30 at the door.

"Halfway to GAIF Hooley" Tickets to go on Sale to the Public

The Great American Irish Festival is hosting a "Halfway to GAIF Hooley" event on Sunday, January 18th, from 3:00 to 7:00 PM, at Harts Hill Inn in Whitesboro. This party -- a well-deserved respite from winter weather, Christmas shopping and fruitcakes -- will serve several purposes (like we need more than one?). First and foremost, it is an opportunity for the festival leadership and committee to express their sincere

thanks to the many volunteers, sponsors and other festival supporters...but it will be more than that. As it is six months prior to the next festival, it will provide the perfect opportunity to announce the headline performers for 2009. And, if those weren't enough reasons to attend, with the GAIF now being in charge of the St. Patrick's Day Parade, the Hooley – being the largest collection of Irishmen in Utica since July's festival and until the March 14th parade – is the perfect venue for the announcement of the selection of the St. Patrick's Day Parade Grand Marshal. There will be a complimentary buffet and beer (with a cash bar for other potables), and topping it all off, the party features musical entertainment; with international headliners and perennial GAIF favorites **The Elders**, with opening act, the area's own **Blarney Rebel Band**. How could this be any better? How about... inviting the general public! That's right, starting...wait for it, wait for it...NOW... a limited number of \$25 tickets will be made available for sale to the public, at Accents of Ireland in the New Hartford Shopping Center (other venues may be announced soon...check back at the GAIF web site for announcements). I hope you noticed the attention-grabbing underline there... these tickets – what few will remain after the original invitees lay claim to them – will not last long. And for those original invitees – the volunteers, sponsors and dignitaries – remember: Being invited is not enough. You must still let the party planners know whether or not you plan to make it. (Oooh! There's another underline; I'll bet that's important!). To that end, it is very important that you contact event coordinator Kate Barefoot, at kfbare@yahoo.com to let her know your intent. If you do not call, it's entirely possible that you may end up outside looking in. Why procrastinate? Call today.

2009 Parade Grand Marshal Announcement to be made on January 18th

Utica St. Patrick's Day Parade Director Kevin Dowling writes “Thank you to all who submitted a nomination for the 2009 St. Patrick's Day Grand Marshal. This year we had in excess of 50 nominations. The 2009 St. Patrick's Day Grand Marshal will be announced on January 18th, 2009 at the Halfway to the Great American Irish Festival Hooley.” The list of nominations, which came for the second year from the general public, was winnowed down by a committee of past Grand Marshals. Nominees were not required to be of Irish descent, but must have been someone recognized by the community for their ongoing commitment and contribution to Irish causes in the Mohawk Valley region. This year's Grand Marshal will take the reins from last year's marshal, James L. Kellmurray, in a very special ceremony in March.

Great American Irish Festival Update

Great American Irish Festival Volunteer Chairperson Claudette Johnson wanted us to remind you that the festival still needs volunteers for the 2009 festival, and that the Volunteer portion of the web site (www.gaif.us) is now open for the new season. She also notes that you need to sign up via the web page even if you've volunteered with the festival in the past. Several venues could use your help, and of course, volunteering 8 hours of your time over the course of the weekend makes you eligible to get all the great perks that aren't available to the general public. She, being too classy, does not want to rub it in that an invitation to this year's Halfway to GAIF Hooley would have been one of those perks. But I'm not her.

DaisyCutter to Perform at Kirkland Art Center

On January 9 at 8 pm, the Kirkland Art Center welcomes **DaisyCutter**, the latest collaboration of award-winning fiddler Sara Milonovich and masterful multi-instrumentalist Greg Anderson. Making a welcome return to the area, Sara and Greg are joined by several other luminaries of the New York music scene, including Natalia Zukerman (daughter of Pinkus Zukerman), Andy Goessling, Leo Traaversa and Ben Wittman, in what promises to be an eclectic evening of roots-rock, oldtime-newgrass, and worldbeat-jazz with Balkan and Celtic flavors. Tickets are \$15 for KAC members and \$18 for general admission. Call 853-8871 for ticket information.



Eileen Ivers and Immigrant Soul's Musical Odyssey Leads to Homer

On January 31st, Homer's Center for the Arts welcomes **Eileen Ivers and Immigrant Soul** for a very special performance in the Whiting Theater. Nine-time All-Ireland Fiddle Champion Eileen Ivers has been called a "sensation" by Billboard magazine and "the Jimi Hendrix of the violin" by The New York Times. The daughter of Irish immigrants, Eileen Ivers grew up in the culturally diverse neighborhood of the Bronx, New York. Rooted in Irish traditional music since the age of eight, Eileen proceeded to win nine All-Ireland fiddle championships, a tenth on tenor banjo and over 30 championship medals, making her one of the most awarded persons ever to compete in these prestigious competitions. Her virtuoso playing electrifies crowds wherever she plays, and she is matched every step of the way by her all-star band, as they seamlessly blend African and Latin percussion and bass, Irish instrumentals, and American soulful vocals. It is no exaggeration when the Washington Post writes of Eileen Ivers, "She suggests the future of the Celtic fiddle."



Tickets for the 8 PM show are \$25 for adults and \$20 for seniors (there is no charge for children under 14 or students with I.D), and can be purchased at center4art.org, or by calling (607) 749-4900. For best seating, it is recommended that you plan on arriving at 7 PM, where you can enjoy the Center's "Social Hour" and the exhibits in the Borg Warner Gallery until the performance begins. The Center for the Arts is located at 72 South Main Street, Homer; just 30 minutes south of Syracuse, and 80 miles southwest of Utica.

Syracuse's Westcott Theater Welcomes Enter the Haggis

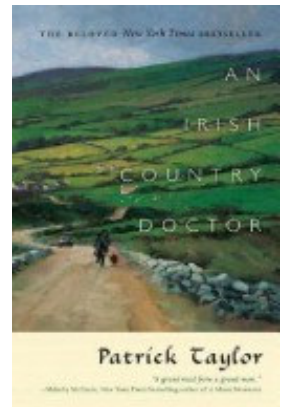
On Friday January 23rd, Toronto's **Enter the Haggis** comes back to the area, visiting Syracuse's newest performance venue: The Westcott Theater. A mainstay of the Great American Irish Festival, Enter the Haggis has built an international touring and recording career based on its unique approach to Celtic-based music and high-energy performances. The group's constant touring schedule has made them one of the biggest draws at Celtic and folk festivals throughout the world. The Westcott Theater – its canopy calls it simply "A theater and Performing Arts Center" -- is a 700 capacity venue, located at 524 Westcott St., about two miles from Syracuse University. Debuting in September 2008, the Westcott Theater is breathing new life into what began as The Harvard Theater, one of Syracuse's first cinemas, over 80 years ago. Doors open for the Enter the Haggis show at 8 PM, with the performance starting at 9 PM. Tickets, which are available on-line at <http://thewestcotttheater.frontgatetickets.com/>, range from \$10-14.

Bua CD Release Tour Extends to Central New York

The aptly named young quintet **Bua** – it means "innate gift" in Irish Gaelic – will be bringing their traditional musical show to two venues that have long been dedicated to preserving traditional art and music: the "[Old Songs Concert Series](#)" in Voorheesville, and "[6 on the Square](#)" in Oxford, NY. Comprised of some of America's most talented young musicians, the Chicago-based band Bua has been described by *Irish Music Magazine* as "...the essence of a superb band," and their sound as "...a throwback to the playing of the 1960s and 1970s, keeping the music down the path of tradition." On January 9th, you can catch them at the "Old Songs Concert Series" in the town of Voorheesville, NY, 10 miles west of Albany at 37 South Main Street. Tickets for the 8 PM show are \$2, with children 12 and under paying \$5. The following day finds them at "6 on the Square" in Oxford for a 7:30 PM show as part of the tour promoting their new CD **An Spealadóir**. Tickets are \$12 until the date of the performance, and then will be available for \$15 at the door.

Book Review:
“An Irish Country Doctor”
By Mark Sisti

Some books keep you up reading far into the early morning hours because the suspense is so overpowering that you need to get to the resolution, some because the plot is so engrossing you can't put it down, and others because the action is so propelling that it carries you along with it. “An Irish Country Doctor” by Patrick Taylor, on the other hand, kept my attention well past my bedtime simply because, like a party you don't want to leave, I liked the company I was keeping. I have been taken to task by one of our newsletter subscribers because so many of the books reviewed are, in her words, “too heavy.” That's not the case here; “An Irish Country Doctor” is a 1940's black-and-white comedy put to paper: good-natured, light-hearted, sometimes farcical, sometimes overly sentimental. And, as long as you don't come in to it expecting “Ulysses,” thoroughly enjoyable.



The time is the early 1960's, with references to early Beatles and a new band, The Rolling Stones (although some of the other references are anachronistic.) Young Dr. Barry Laverty is seeking employment in a place called Ballybucklebo, where he is considering taking a short-termed job as the assistant to the irascible Dr. Fingal Flahertie O'Reilly. Laverty's introduction to Fingal is inauspicious to say the least, as his first encounter with the rural doctor is to observe him physically hurling a patient out of his office. Barry, who is debating whether to specialize or whether to go into general practice, has second thoughts about working for such a volatile personality and considers many of the old doctor's viewpoints antiquated, but agrees to stay on temporarily and (to the surprise of no one who has ever seen one of those aforementioned movies) discovers that there's much more to Dr. O'Reilly than meets the eye. And, as we learn, there is more to the seemingly straight-laced Barry than first appearance would indicate, as he proves himself capable of standing up to the prickly old doctor when the situation calls for it (certainly better than he stands up to the doctor's dog, who is, shall we say, overly affectionate to Barry.) Eventually the two medics form a solid relationship, both personally and professionally, as Laverty learns that, not only is Dr. O'Reilly eminently capable and highly respected among the medical community, but there is almost always a method to his unorthodox treatment of his patients.

And what patients they are! Taylor populates Ballybucklebo with a cast of characters worthy of the most screwball of comedies. Yes, many of them are more caricature than characters (including, to some extent, both of the doctors) but they are also highly entertaining and believable. Whether it's the town drunk who still manages a healthy measure of likeability, the miserly small town businessman and politician, the eccentric cat lady, or the lovable and loyal housekeeper, the characters, who could easily come off as cardboard and one-dimensional, come alive through Taylor's wit, eye for detail and effective use of dialect (he also includes a glossary of the idiomatic phrases of the area, which will add to your vocabulary even if you don't need it to read the book.) The people in Ballybucklebo speak poetically without even realizing it, lending color to the most mundane phrase, and Taylor makes liberal use of local proverbs that you will find yourself adding to your conversation (including, incidentally, one brought back by those who went on the recent GAIF tour of Ireland, the saying which excuses a second drink: “A bird doesn't fly on just one wing.” Oddly enough, after going 53 years never hearing this proverb, I came across it in the last two books I read.) Taylor's medical experience adds a further layer of authenticity, so that we get a delightful, if sanitized, portrait of the life of a rural Irish doctor and the life of a small Irish village.

There is also, of course, a love story, a moral or two and an ending that, even if a little too pat and predictable, satisfies. In the end, everyone learns a lesson, including the reader: a book doesn't have to be great literature to be a great read.

From the Irish Kitchen (*recipes suitable for clipping*)

This month's recipe – “**Bailey's Chocolate Mousse Pie**” -- not too weight conscious for all those New Year's resolutions, but sounds ohhh so yummy!!!

INGREDIENTS:

6 oz. Ready Crust (graham/choc)	3/4 cup Bailey's Irish Cream
1 package Unflavored gelatin (env)	6 oz. Semisweet choc chips
1 tsp. Vanilla	2 cups Frozen whipped topping
3/4 cup Milk	Choc-dipped strawberries as garnish, if desired



METHOD

In a saucepan, sprinkle unflavored gelatin over milk. Let stand about 1 minute. Stir over low heat until gelatin is dissolved, about 5 minutes. Add chocolate and continue cooking, stirring constantly until chocolate is melted; stir in vanilla. Remove from heat and stir occasionally, adding Bailey's about five minutes after removal from heat. When mixture forms mounds when dropped from spoon, fold in whipped topping. Turn into crust. Garnish with more whipped topping and strawberries. Chill at least 4 hours before serving.

If you try this recipe, feel free to share your experience with all of us; and of course, if you have a recipe you'd like to share, please contact Beth Loftis at bloftis@verizon.net.

RANDOM RAMBLINGS

- ✿ **Black 47 Comes to Albany** On Saturday January 24th 2009, Black 47 – known for their “...unblinkingly political and thoroughly Irish form of rock 'n' roll...” -- will appear in concert at the Albany Irish-American Center at 375 Ontario St. in Albany. Doors open at 7:30 and the show will begin around 8:30 pm. Tickets are \$20 and all proceeds go to support charities both in the North of Ireland and the United States. Table reservations are available as well. For more information or to make a reservation or purchase tickets, contact Matt Nelligan at 518-729-4563 or i2000@hibernians.com. Matt also advises that people can also become sponsors of this event for as little as \$100.
- ✿ **The Only One Who Likes Change is a Wet Baby** MVICE ace reporter John “Foxy” Fox sent us this article from the Irish Echo, called “Pint To Remain The Same.” “In a time of shrinking finances and growing economic uncertainty there is at least one constant this holiday season: the Irish pint. Though it has a habit of regulating just about anything it sets its sights on, the European Parliament has decided to keep its hands off the old imperial pint enjoyed by Irish beer drinkers and visitors to the country for generations. The parliament adopted a proposal that will allow Ireland and the United Kingdom to pour beer into pint glasses. According to reports, the ruling covers pints of milk and beer as well as draft hard cider and also approves the use of miles for speed indications, road distances and signs in the United Kingdom. Meanwhile, there will be no time called on the pint of beer as the parliament has given an indefinite new lease of life to the old measurement.” Keep ‘em coming, Foxy; you might just get a paycheck some day. Right after we do.
- ✿ **It's “Mousse,” not “Moose”** An important community service announcement: Be sure to spell your search terms properly when using Google. Computers will do what you tell them to, and they will search for items as you've spelled them. So remember, when searching for a graphic to accompany a recipe, unless you're Sarah Palin, the proper spelling is “mousse.”

Celtic Club Calendar Finally, here's the Irish Musical and Cultural calendar for January.

Jan 2	Blarney Rebel Band	Piggy Pat's Pickled Pig Pub	Washington Mills	6-9 PM	Free
Jan 2	Pat Kane	The Blarney Stone	Auburn	8:30-11:30	Free
Jan 2-3	Hair of the Dog	The Parting Glass	Saratoga Springs	8 PM	\$13; resv. req.
Jan 3	Pat Kane	Kitty Hoynes	Syracuse	8 PM	Free
Jan 4	Pat Kane	Coleman's Irish Pub	Syracuse	4-7 PM	Free
Jan 4	Syracuse Irish Session	Wayside Irish Pub	Elbridge NY	4-7 PM	Free
Jan 9	Donal O'Shaughnessy	Piggy Pat's Pickled Pig Pub	Washington Mills	6-9 PM	Free
Jan 9	DaisyCutter	Kirkland Art Center	Clinton	8 PM	\$18, \$15 members
Jan 9	Bua	Old Songs Concert Series	Voorheesville	8 PM	\$20, 12 & under \$5
Jan 9-10	Hair of the Dog	The Parting Glass	Saratoga Springs	8 PM	\$13; resv. req.
Jan 10	Bua	6 on the Square	Oxford	7:30 PM	\$12 adv, \$15 at the door
Jan 10	Traditional Irish Session	Kitty Hoynes	Syracuse	2:00-5 PM	Free
Jan 11	Cassidy & McCale	Coleman's Irish Pub	Syracuse	4-7 PM	Free
Jan 16-17	Hair of the Dog	The Parting Glass	Saratoga Springs	8 PM	\$13; resv. req.
Jan 17	Rome Weed & Seed Presents: The Elders in Concert	Capitol Theater	Rome	7 PM	\$25 adv., \$17.50 students & senrs, \$30 at the door
Jan 18	Halfway to GAIF Hooley w/ The Elders and Blarney Rebel Band	Hart's Hill Inn	Whitesboro	3-7 PM	\$10 for GAIF volunteers; \$25 for guests/public
Jan 18	Syracuse Irish Session	Johnston's Bally Bay Pub	Syracuse	4-7 PM	Free
Jan 18	Donal O'Shaughnessy and Bryan Hyland	Coleman's Irish Pub	Syracuse	4-7 PM	Free
Jan 22	Craobh Dugan Open Session	Cafe Domenico	Utica	7:30-10:00 pm	Free
Jan 23	Blarney Rebel Band	Piggy Pat's Pickled Pig Pub	Washington Mills	6-9 PM	Free
Jan 23	Enter the Haggis	Westcott Theater	Syracuse	9 PM	\$10-\$14
Jan 23-24	Hair of the Dog	The Parting Glass	Saratoga Springs	8 PM	\$13; resv. req.
Jan 24	Black 47	Irish-American Center	Albany	8:30 PM	\$20
Jan 24	Traditional Irish Session	Kitty Hoynes	Syracuse	2:00-5 PM	Free
Jan 25	Flyin' Column	Coleman's Irish Pub	Syracuse	4-7 PM	Free
Jan 30-31	Hair of the Dog	The Parting Glass	Saratoga Springs	8 PM	\$13; resv. req.
Jan 31	Eileen Ivers and Immigrant Soul	Center for the Arts	Homer NY	8 PM	\$25; \$20 seniors; Students & 14 and under free

That wraps it up for this month. If you have a book you'd like Mark to review – “heavy” or not --, or a recipe to share, or a festival, concert or CD review of your own, feel free to contact us at sistia@roadrunner.com, bloftis@verizon.net or marksisti@roadrunner.com. As always, while we try to get things – prices, places, times, etc., -- as accurate as we can, sometimes we make mistakes. It always makes sense to call ahead to confirm some of these further-out trips.