
MOHAWK VALLEY IRISH CULTURAL EVENTS NEWSLETTER

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Black 47, Fenians Join Great American Irish Fest Lineup

The acts already announced for the 2006 Great American Irish Festival –Natalie MacMaster, Solas, The Prodigals, Enter the Haggis, Hair of the Dog, The Glengarry Bhoys, Cathie Ryan, Andy Cooney – would be enough for most festivals. In case anyone hasn't noticed by now, however, the GAIF is not like most festivals.

Not content with that stellar cast, the Great American Irish Festival has added another full festival's worth of world-class entertainment to the previously publicized list for its July 28-29 event. "This lineup is as good as any festival anywhere and cements the Great American Irish Festival's position as one of the pre-eminent Irish festivals in the Northeast, if not the nation," promised Festival Director Matthew Sullivan.



Returning to the GAIF stage this July will be the most exciting and provocative band in Celtic rock history, the fiery and irreverent Black 47. Also taking the GAIF contemporary stage will be the electrifying Fenians from California, and the hard-rocking Young Dubliners, as well as award-winning Capital-area favorites, the McKrells, Greenwich Meantime, featuring former members of the Glengarry Bhoys, and one of the hottest acts on the festival circuit, the McCabes.



Joining Solas on the traditional stage will be Scotland's Old Blind Dogs, who have received the "Band of the Year" Award at the Scots Trad Music Awards in the Queen's Hall, Edinburgh, and the Juno and East Coast Music Award-winning Irish Descendants, as well as popular Connecticut Irish balladeers the Kerry Boys. As if this wasn't enough, the festival also boasts the best Irish acts from throughout New York State, from western New York favorites Gerry Dixon and Seanache to the Southern Tier's Pat Kane and West o'Clare and Elmira's Donal O'Shaugnessy, as well as the area's favorite Celtic performers, The Blarney Rebel Band, Cliudan, John Gilligan, Rattlin' Bog and the legendary Vince Colgan.

Enter the Haggis back for "Another Round"!!

Enter the Haggis, the exciting young band from our neighbor to the north (no, not West Leyden), will be coming back to the area on **March 31st**, from 9-11 PM at the Beinecke Village Annex B at Hamilton College. From the minute they take the stage, the non-stop infectious energy of Enter the Haggis makes it impossible for anyone to stay seated. Veterans of the Great American Irish Festival, and invited back for the July 2006 festival by overwhelming popular demand, 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 performance, sponsored by the Campus Activities Board, is open to the public. Tickets are \$5, and will be available at the door.

...and Another In addition to their appearance at Hamilton College this weekend, Enter the Haggis will also be the featured performer at Utica College's spring fling "**Moosestock**," on **29 April**. The event is open to the public and is free. That bears repeating, doesn't it? **The event is open to the public and is free.**

Vince Colgan to Perform at Killabrew Saloon April 29

Irish balladeer Vince Colgan will perform a benefit concert for the Irish Political Prisoners Children's Holiday at the Killabrew Saloon on April 29, 2006. The show, which will begin at 7 p.m., will also feature a performance by dancers from the Butler School of Irish dance. There will be a \$5.00 donation for the performance. The Killabrew Saloon is located at 10 Clinton Rd., New Hartford.

The Irish Political Prisoners Children's Holiday is an organization which raises money to bring children from embattled Northern Ireland to vacation for a month with families in the United States. The IPPCH has no political or religious affiliation. For more information about the April 29 performance or the IPPCH, call 797-4486 or 768-2347.

More IPPCH News When we emptied the MVICE mailbag this month, a stack of letter fell out, and it came from the IPPCH Central New York Regional Coordinator, Frank Kealy. For those of you who don't know Frank, he is very, very passionate about the program; essentially its heart and soul in the area. Rather than try to paraphrase his letter, we've included it in its entirety.

It is with mixed feelings that I make the following announcement today. The very successful Children's program known fondly as the IPPCH (Irish Political Prisoners' Children's Holiday) is closing its doors, after twenty-five years. The people in Belfast feel that the Political problems in the North of Ireland are finally being addressed and sufficiently resolved to the point where the relief program is no longer needed. We here in the States must also realize that "Standing Down" is just one more step in the negotiations resulting from the "Good Friday Agreement."

For the Children's sake, and for our American families who have learned to love and welcome these kids into their homes each summer, we of the IPPCH will change our affiliation to the "Project Children" program for 2007 and beyond. Project Children is an American organization based in Greenwood Lake, N.Y. which was started by a New York City policeman named Denis Mulcahy. It is basically the same as our present program, except the kids need no ties to prisoners. It is more a cross-community group of "Fresh-Air Kids" needing to get out of the Big City scene for a month or so each summer.

Like I said earlier, it is a bitter-sweet blessing that we say good-bye to a program that has touched so many lives on both sides of the ocean, but we realize that progress comes with a price. We wish everyone with "Tar Anall" and the IPPCH in Ireland the best of luck with their self-help programs and we look forward to a long and lasting relationship with Project Children.

Frank Kealy
Mohawk Valley Coordinator
IPPCH/Project Children
Frankfort, New York

We'd like to offer our heartfelt thanks to Frank for his many years of selfless service to the IPPCH. His dedication to the program will never be forgotten by the hundreds of children and host families whose lives he's changed. We wish him continued success as he changes his focus to Project Children, a program we hope you will all support, just as you all have been so supportive of IPPCH functions in the past.

Solas at the Egg Loudly proclaimed as the most popular, influential and exciting acoustic Celtic band of the day – and a main headliner at this year’s Great American Irish Festival – Solas will be making an appearance at the Egg, in Albany, on **April 21st** at 8:00 PM. Tickets for the show are selling for \$24.

O’Connor’s Alexander Hamilton Inn To Run Irish Music Sunday April 2

Add O’Connor’s Alexander Hamilton Inn to the growing list of local clubs picking up on the Irish music resurgence. This Sunday, April 2, the Alexander Hamilton Inn, located on Park Row in Clinton, will feature the area’s top traditional Irish band, The Blarney Rebel Band, from 4-7 in the upstairs main bar. Blarney Rebel Band has built a solid following performing all types of traditional Irish music, from rollicking pub songs to traditional folk fare, from rousing sea songs to moving ballads, from stirring rebel songs to hand-clapping jigs and reels. Proprietor Patrick O’Connor is looking to make Irish music a semi-regular thing at the Alexander Hamilton Inn – and a packed house on April 2nd could go a long way toward helping ensure that it is! For more information, call 315-853-2061.

Random Ramblings

☘ **Irish Breakfast** Don’t forget that on the first Sunday of every month from 8:00 to noon, the Riverside Diner offers an outstanding Traditional Irish Breakfast; consisting of two eggs, Irish bacon, Irish Sausage, Black and White Pudding, two kinds of Irish Soda bread, a Broiled Tomato, toast, and coffee or tea, all for the low price of \$5.95. The next one will be on **April 2nd**. The Riverside Diner is located at 9663 Route 49 in Marcy.

☘ **G-Mac Jersey Raffle** A couple of months ago -- long before he became the Cinderella belle of the Ball in the Big East tournament – Syracuse University star guard Gerry McNamara graciously donated an autographed #3 SU basketball jersey to be raffled off to benefit children from embattled North Ireland; specifically, to help defray the costs of bringing over a couple dozen of them to Central New York for one month during the summer. The jersey -- which had been making the rounds over the past several weeks at area bars and other fine learning establishments -- is in a nice frame, with a surprisingly legible "Gerry McNamara #3" written in his own hand. And whereas some may have thought that he was over-rated a month ago -- and therefore, the chance to take home this jersey was over-priced at \$5 a chance -- people soon wasted no time jumping at the chance to own a piece of Syracuse basketball history. The lucky winner of this jersey was **Randy McIntyre**, a true SU hoops fan (in his office, he has a framed shot of Hakim Warrick’s legendary block, sealing the 2003 NCAA national championship for the Orange). The second prize, an IPPCH sweatshirt, was won by Roger Bonsel, and Jim Olmstead won an IPPCH t-shirt. Our congratulations to those lucky winners, and thanks to all who gave to the cause.

☘ **Volunteers Needed** The Great American Irish Festival is still soliciting volunteers for any of many areas, such as Marketing, Food Vending, Festival Merchandise, setup and cleanup. While these functions are currently staffed, more volunteers are needed so that one or two people aren't burdened with the full load. Anyone interested in volunteering for anything is asked to contact the Volunteer Coordinator, Claudette Johnson at camj322@aol.com, or to visit the GAIF website and complete the volunteer page.

☘ **“Best Of Ireland Tour”** November 5-13, 2006. This Escorted tour includes roundtrip airfare from Albany on Continental Airlines, two nights in Dublin, two nights in Killarney, two nights in Ennis and one night in Cabra Castle. Sightseeing includes Guinness Brewery, St. Patrick's Cathedral, Waterford Crystal, Blarney Castle, Ring of Kerry and the Cliffs of Moher. Price is \$1,449.00 per person based on double occupancy. For more information, contact Celia Antonik at JRP Travel (315) 796-8671 or email celia@jrptravel.com.

✚ **Riverdance** will be coming to the Mulroy Civic Center at the OnCenter, Crouse Hinds Theater, in Syracuse, from **May 16-18, 2006**. Tickets are on sale now, ranging from \$39.50 to \$70. (If those dates aren't doable, it'll also be in Rochester from May 5-7). For more information, call the OnCenter Box Office at (315) 435-2121, or visit <http://www.ticketmaster.com/artist/778497>.

✚ **The View from Floatside** Having experienced the Utica St. Patrick's Day Parade on a float for the first time, we have a renewed appreciation for the people who work so hard to put them together, and who ride them, regardless of the weather. Although the Great American Irish Festival float on which we rode and played did not take home a trophy this year, it was a great experience. Congratulations to the two floats who did reap the honors: Buttenschon Christmas Tree Farm, for best overall float, and – in their first year of competition -- Piggy Pat's took home the trophy in the Tavern category.

✚ **CGRP Raffle** John Gilligan, Eastern US Coordinator for the Concerned Group for Republican Prisoners (CGRP), writes: "On behalf of the Republican Prisoners on E4 landing - Portlaoise Gaol, I'd like to thank everyone who had purchased a ticket for our March 18th CGRP raffle. Over \$300.00 was raised to support the families of Irish Republican Prisoners. We will continue to aid Irish Republican Prisoners incarcerated for political activity against British occupation and will not forget nor abandon our prisoners." Winning the first prize, a handcrafted Bodhran, was Colleen Ninke of Watertown; second prize – a \$20.00 from the online CGRP Shop – went to Frank Kealy from Frankfort, and winning a \$10.00 certificate was Joe Fee from Clark Mills.

Celtic Club Calendar Finally, as promised, here's a look at some upcoming Irish Musical and Cultural events for April, suitable for posting:

Mar 31	Enter the Haggis	Hamilton College	Clinton	9-11 PM	\$5
Mar 31	Rattlin' Bog	Piggy Pat's Pickled Pig Pub	Washington Mills	5-8:30	Free
Apr 01	Pat Kane and West O'Clare	Kitty Hoynes	Syracuse	9:00 PM	Free
Apr 02	The Blarney Rebel Band	O'Connor's Alexander Hamilton Inn	Clinton	4-7 PM	Free
Apr 07	The Blarney Rebel Band	Piggy Pat's Pickled Pig Pub	Washington Mills	5-8:30	Free
Apr 07	Neil Emberg	Kitty Hoynes	Syracuse	9:00 PM	Free
Apr 08	Neil Emberg	Kitty Hoynes	Syracuse	9:00 PM	Free
Apr 14	Vince Colgan	Piggy Pat's Pickled Pig Pub	Washington Mills	5-8:30	Free
Apr 14	Dave Anthony	Kitty Hoynes	Syracuse	9:00 PM	Free
Apr 15	Dave Anthony	Kitty Hoynes	Syracuse	9:00 PM	Free
Apr 21	Causeway Giants	Kitty Hoynes	Syracuse	9:00 PM	Free
Apr 21	Rattlin' Bog	Piggy Pat's Pickled Pig Pub	Washington Mills	5-8:00	Free
Apr 21	Solas	The Egg	Albany	8:00 PM	\$24
Apr 22	Donal O'Shaughnessey	Kitty Hoynes	Syracuse	9:00 PM	Free
Apr 28	Old Friends	Kitty Hoynes	Syracuse	9:00 PM	Free
Apr 28	Blarney Rebel Band	Piggy Pat's Pickled Pig Pub	Washington Mills	5-8:30	Free
Apr 29	Vince Colgan IPPCH	Killabrew Saloon	Utica	7:00 PM	\$5
Apr 29	Enter the Haggis at Moosestock	Utica College	Utica	TBD	Free
Apr 29	Gerry Dixon & Seanache	Kitty Hoynes	Syracuse	9:00 PM	Free

That does it for April. As we leave, let us remind you that this newsletter is also available online at www.greatamericanirishfestival.com. Just click on the "Mohawk Valley Irish Cultural Events" button, directly under the "Countdown Clock." If you have anything you want to include in upcoming newsletters, PLEASE feel free to contact us at sistia@rl.af.mil, bloftis@adelphia.net or marksisti@adelphia.net. We would be especially appreciative to hear from anyone who wants to submit a review of any the events we've promoted. Until next month, have a very enjoyable and blessed Easter!