
MOHAWK VALLEY IRISH CULTURAL EVENTS NEWSLETTER

Volume 6, Issue 11

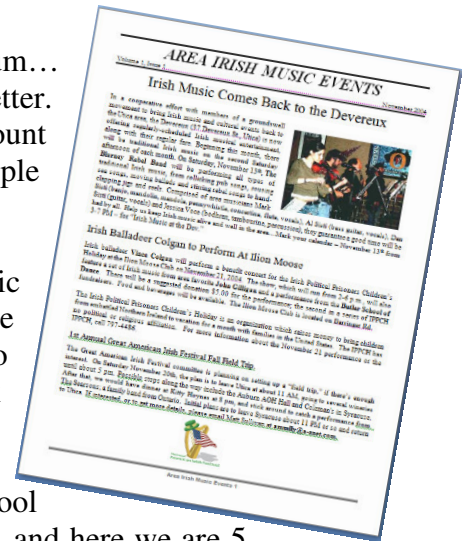
November 2009

Happy Birthday to Us, Happy Birthday to Us!

That's right, we're celebrating a birthday! With the issuance of this...um... issue, we begin our 6th year of writing and distributing this monthly newsletter. What started out in November of 2004 as a three page newsletter (if you count the IPPCH flyer we tacked on at the end) that we emailed to maybe 20 people now goes to over 800 people; dozens of whom actually read it!

Like Action Comics #1 or Amazing Fantasy #15 before it, "Area Irish Music Events," Vol. 1, Issue 1 (pictured at right) is a highly-coveted collectible whose worth can't be measured in dollars. Coins, maybe; dollars, not so much. And while there wasn't a whole lot to report on back then, we stuck with it, and kept pushing, and digging, and sleuthing and Googling, and reading and writing and formatting and stalling for time and padding lots of white space with extra superfluous words so we could surround this cool graphic with text so it wouldn't look stupid hanging into the next article... and here we are 5

years later, and – since we've done roughly 60 of these without getting a penny in salary -- five years less wiser. But being ignorant about what we were getting into didn't stop us five years ago, and it's not about to stop us now. So what do you say, are you ready? Let's get right into year #6!



Jeremy Kittel World Band Plays Old Songs Concert Series

On Saturday, November 21, the Jeremy Kittel World Band pays a return visit to Voorheesville, where they'll be performing as part of the acclaimed "Old Songs Concert Series." Jeremy Kittel, U.S. National Scottish Fiddle Champion and winner of six Detroit Music Awards leads an exceptional band whose musical roots transverse the world. With the drive of Celtic fiddling, spontaneity of jazz, soul of bluegrass, rhythms of Africa and Latin America, and intricacies of chamber music, the Kittel World Band consistently captivates audiences (including that of the 2006 Old Songs Festival). Rounding out the band is Kyle Sanna (guitar), Mathias Kunzli (percussion), and Nat Smith (cello). Tickets for the 8 PM show are \$20, with children 12 and under getting in for \$5.

Aoife Clancy and Robbie O'Connell Together at the Unison Theatre

Few families have influenced Irish music as much as the Clancys. Aoife (pronounced Eefa) Clancy, daughter of Bobby, brings a fresh new voice to folk music, ranging from traditional Irish songs to ballads to the best work of contemporary songwriters. Robbie O'Connell recorded 3 albums with the Clancy Brothers and recently performed at the live tribute to Bob Dylan at Madison Square Garden. Rolling Stone magazine described his performance as "breathtaking." And on Saturday, November 14th, they come together at the Unison Theatre, 68 Mountain Rd. in New Paltz, New York for a very special 8 PM performance. Tickets for the show are \$14 for members and \$19 for non-members. All tickets will be an additional \$2 at the door. For more information, visit <http://www.unisonarts.org/>.

Book Review:
“Love and Summer”
By Mark Sisti

Readers who remember the reviews in this newsletter of “Cheating at Canasta” and “The Story of Lucy Gault” (April ‘08 and March ‘07 respectively; go ahead, I’ll wait) are aware of my unabashed admiration for the writing of William Trevor, so the release of “Love and Summer,” his first full novel since “Lucy Gault,” was cause for excitement. It does not disappoint. The title sounds like some shallow romance novel with a bare-chested Fabio on the cover, and in lesser hands it might have been that book, but it’s with good reason that Trevor has been called the greatest living writer in the English language. It there was ever any doubt as to whether the title is deserved, it is thoroughly removed with “Love and Summer.”

Trevor writes with a deceptive and disarming simplicity that masks the depth and clarity of the writing. He is an absolute master at creating a fully fleshed out character with a few meticulously chosen phrases or details, and “Love and Summer,” set in the 1950’s in the small Irish town of Rathmoye, is no exception. While even the most peripheral of characters is fascinating enough to be the subject of his or her own novel, Trevor focuses on three main protagonists – Ellie Dillahan, a parentless young girl raised in a convent, her hard-working husband Dillahan, and Florian Kilderry, a recently orphaned photographer who is selling his large, decaying childhood home and planning to leave Ireland.

The novel opens as Florian, who has cycled into town to photograph the ruins of an old theater, begins taking pictures at a funeral. As a stranger in a small town he is noticed by all, and when he idly begins a conversation with Ellie, it garners some attention. The conversation blossoms slowly over the course of the summer into a friendship and, eventually, into something more. The problems of course, are twofold: Ellie is married to a good man for whom she has respect and admiration, although she may not love him, and Florian has his plans already made to leave at the end of the summer.

Ignore the plot summary; this is decidedly not the standard melodramatic love triangle. This is a brilliantly developed story about characters you come to like and care about. None of the people populating this novel are bad people. Ellie, while sheltered and naïve, is deeply caring, grateful to the nuns who raised her and to her husband who took her in, first as a maid, later as a wife. She works tirelessly and without complaint helping her husband run their farm. Dillahan is a simple but decent and hard-working man who has never recovered emotionally from the accident that killed his first wife and their child or from his silent guilt in connection with that accident. He reveals a clumsy but a touching gentleness in dealing with Ellie, and their conversations are natural and demonstrate a strong mutual affection; at the same time, the use of just his last name suggests a distance between them. Florian, for his part, is not a scoundrel who coldly seduces every woman he meets; the worst that can be said about him is that he is confused and rudderless. He has never forgotten an earlier companion, who he doesn’t even seem to realize he loved, and his conversation with Ellie is nothing more than mildly flirtatious and, begins, not as an attempt at seduction, but rather because, quite simply, he is lonely. With any girl more worldly than Ellie, the relationship would have gone no farther. But to Ellie he represents the things she has never even realized were missing in her life. When their relationship does progress, his guilt is palpable – he thinks at one point, “He hoped it would be difficult to forget Ellie Dillahan, that at least there would be that” – but he finds that forgetting Ellie may not just be difficult for him, it may be impossible. Plans are made for her to leave with him.

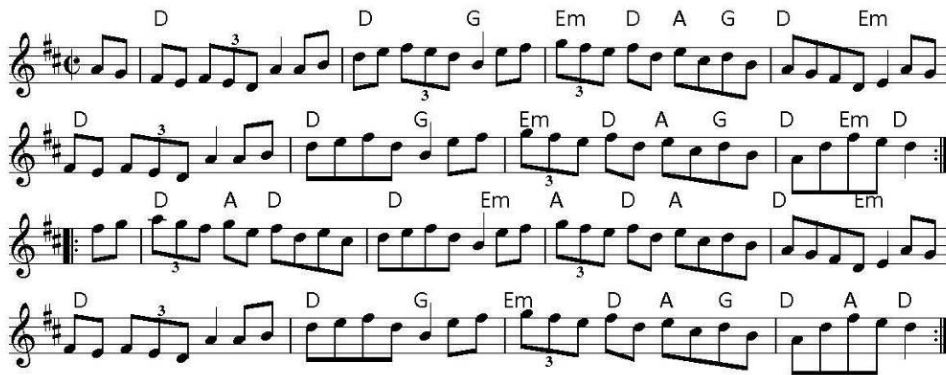
The novel is slowly, but perfectly, paced, very much like the pace of the rural life it depicts; the tempo only adds to the evocation of Ellie and Florian’s passions and frustrations, and the quickening of the narrative pace as the climactic end of summer approaches is so gradual and smooth as to be almost imperceptible.

Trevor also understands that everyone has a story. The story of Dillahan, Ellie and Florian is only one of the unspoken tales of loss and sacrifice that flow through Rathmoye. The characters, primary and secondary, are so vividly portrayed that it seems as though they go on living their lives even when you’re no longer reading about them, and they will stay with you long after you finish the book. Any author can make exciting events seem interesting. Trevor’s gift is in making the commonplace seem significant, in portraying the heroism inherent in everyday life. Through that gift, “Love and Summer” becomes an exquisitely fulfilling story imbued with gentleness and dignity.

Craobh Dugan “Song of the Month” (sized to conveniently fit onto something the same size)

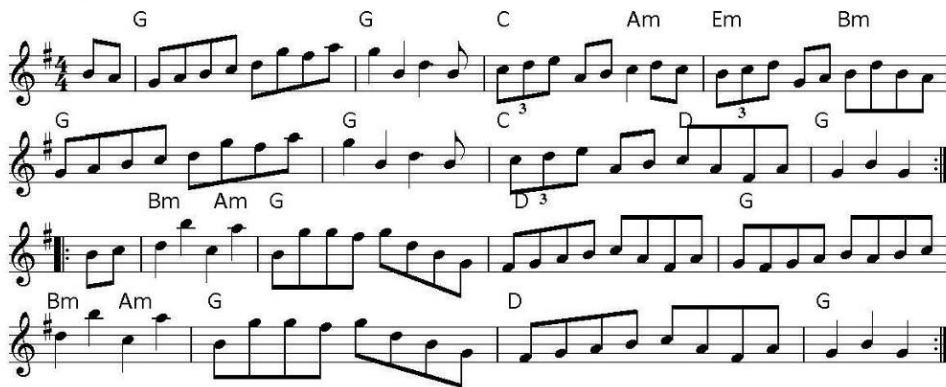
Here is a great pair of hornpipes suitable for fiddle, whistle, flute or finger-picking on guitar, banjo, or mandolin. These sound best when played at a moderate tempo, accenting the 1st and 3rd beats in a measure gives the bounce or lift heard in the great hornpipes.

Peacock's Feather



Four staves of musical notation for the hornpipe "Peacock's Feather". The music is in G major and 2/4 time. The first two staves are the main melody, and the last two are variations. Chords are indicated above the notes: D, D, G, Em, D, A, G, D, Em, D, G, Em, D, A, G, D, Em, D, D, A, D, D, Em, A, D, A, D, Em, D, A, G, D, A, D.

Glenbeigh



Four staves of musical notation for the hornpipe "Glenbeigh". The music is in G major and 4/4 time. The first two staves are the main melody, and the last two are variations. Chords are indicated above the notes: G, G, C, Am, Em, Bm, G, G, C, C³, D³, G, Bm, Am, G, D³, G, Bm, Am, G, D, G.

The usual caveat applies to the chords as given. These are SOME chords that will work with these tunes; they are not necessarily THE chords. Every session is likely to have different chord progressions for the same tune. While they will all work, it is considered good form to follow the chord progression used in the session you are attending, even if you think yours sounds better. These chords are given as an invitation to those musicians who may be less versed in this particular style of music to come out and join one of the many open sessions in the area, even if just for these songs.

Thistle and Shamrock Continues its Run

Thistle & Shamrock, the nation's most popular Irish radio program now in its 28th



year, can be heard Sundays at 11 to noon on WAER, 88.3 on the FM dial, and the same show is repeated on Sunday evening, from 7 to 8 PM, on WRUN-AM; 1150 on your dial. The one-hour weekly Celtic music series from National Public Radio, hosted by the engaging Fiona Ritchie, features Celtic music performances

captured on location and exclusive in-studio appearances by leading Celtic performers from both sides of the Atlantic. For more information, visit the Thistle & Shamrock home page at <http://thistleradio.com/>. Anyway, here is the programming schedule for the Thistle and Shamrock radio program for this month, and a very special month it is:

November 5: The Witness

Fiona talks with writer Jamie Jauncey about the role of music in his novel “The Witness.” Also a professional pianist Jauncey shares the music of his life, as well as introducing compositions inspired by the book.

November 12: Stretching the Boundaries

If you bend a tradition too far could you break it? Decide for yourself as we listen to some groundbreaking music from Celtic roots that leads us forward in new and unexpected ways.

November 19: Newly Hatched

Enjoy some of the latest recordings to arrive at the Thistle offices in the U.S. and Scotland.

November 26: The Wisdom of Pete Seeger

“There is hope for the world.” Pete Seeger: The Power of Song. Hear the reflections of one of the great figures of American folksong, along with music from a remarkable life, recorded during Fiona's visit with Pete Seeger.

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

This month's recipe... Apple Scones -- “This one is good all year long, but better in the fall, wherever you can find Granny Smith apples.”

Ingredients :

4 tbl cold butter - (1/2 stick)	1/4 tsp baking soda
1 1/2 cup all-purpose flour	2 eggs (1 for glazing)
1/2 cup wheat germ	1/2 cup buttermilk
1/4 cup sugar	1 Granny Smith apple peeled, and
1/2 tsp cinnamon	cut into 1/2" cubes -(about 1 cup)
1 tbl baking powder	

Method :

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Cut the butter into small (1/4-inch) chunks, rewrap it in the paper, and return it to the refrigerator. Combine the dry ingredients. Beat 1 egg and combine it with the buttermilk. Thread the butter through the dry ingredients with thumb and fingers, getting it to a gravelly texture. Comb the buttermilk-egg mixture into the butter-flour “gravel” then add the apple cubes, blending through the batter just enough to be able to make two equal sized balls. Flatten the balls to 2 disks 5 to 6 inches in diameter. Now “pizza-slice” each disk into four sections. Put the scones on an ungreased cookie sheet. Beat the second egg and brush it on the scones as a glaze. Bake for 20 minutes, until golden brown. This recipe yields 8 scones.

RANDOM RAMBLINGS

- ☘ **Stuffing the Thanksgiving Pig** On Friday, November 27th, Pat McCann of Piggy Pat's Pickled Pig Pub is putting on his annual Thanksgiving party, celebrating another great year in business, as well as the five year anniversary of his wildly popular Irish Happy Hour. Come enjoy the food, drink, prizes, raffles, dancers and music from the Blarney Rebel Band.
- ☘ **An Evening with International Irish Tenor Mark Forrest** “Come Walk with Me” is a time of music, meditation, prayer and healing. You are invited to attend St Joseph and St. Patrick Church, 702 Columbia Street, Utica, NY on Sunday November 8 at 7pm for an inspirational Moment in Time.
- ☘ **Traditional Irish Dance and Music Session** There will be a Traditional Irish Dance and Music Session at 7 PM, on Saturday, November 7th, to honor Comhaltas Hall of Fame inductees at the American Legion Post #1040, 16 West Poplar Drive in Delmar, New York. Irish musicians from Boston to Buffalo will convene during the day for the annual Comhaltas Northeast Regional meeting, followed by a Ceili dance and open session. Live Irish music provided for the Ceili by the Comhaltas Band, calling by Ron Bruschi. \$10 admission, free to Comhaltas members. A separate music session will be held at the same time in the bar area, downstairs from the dance. Refreshments available. For more information, call 518-868-2807, mvought1@verizon.net.

Celtic Club Calendar Finally, here's the Irish Musical and Cultural calendar for November:

Nov 2	Trad Irish Music Session	The Susquehanna Café	Bainbridge NY	5:30-8:30 PM	Free
Nov 3	"Nail Creek Sessions"	Nail Creek Pub	Utica	7:30-10 PM	Free
Nov 5	Traditional Irish Session	Marcellus Legion Hall	Marcellus, NY	4-7 PM	Free
Nov 6	Two Hour Delay	Kitty Hoynes	Syracuse	9 PM	Free
Nov 6	The Blarney Rebel Band	Piggy Pat's Pickled Pig Pub	Washington Mills	6-9 PM	Free
Nov 6-7	Hair of the Dog	The Parting Glass	Saratoga Springs	8 PM	\$13, res'v reqd
Nov 8	Cassidy-McCale	Coleman's Irish Pub	Syracuse	4-7 PM	Free
Nov 9	Trad Irish Music Session	The Susquehanna Café	Bainbridge NY	5:30-8:30 PM	Free
Nov 12	Traditional Irish Session	Marcellus Legion Hall	Marcellus, NY	4-7 PM	Free
Nov 13	Neil Emberg	Kitty Hoynes	Syracuse	9 PM	Free
Nov 13	Matt & Shannon Heaton With Bairbre Mccarthy	Caffè Lena	Saratoga Springs	8 PM	\$7.50 - \$15
Nov 14	Glengarry Bhoys	Revolution Hall	Troy, NY	6 PM	\$20 advance, \$25 at the door
Nov 14	Trad Irish Music Session	Kitty Hoynes	Syracuse	2-5 PM	Free
Nov 14	Neil Emberg	Kitty Hoynes	Syracuse	9 PM	Free
Nov 14	Aoife Clancy & Robbie O'Connell	Unison Theatre	New Paltz NY	8 PM	Members \$14, Non-members \$19 in advance
Nov 15	Donal O'Shaughnessy	Coleman's Irish Pub	Syracuse	4-7 PM	Free
Nov 15	Syracuse Irish Session	Johnston's Bally Bay Pub	Syracuse	4-7 PM	Free
Nov 16	Trad Irish Music Session	The Susquehanna Café	Bainbridge NY	5:30-8:30 PM	Free
Nov 17	Albany Street Sessions	Albany Street Café	Herkimer	7:30 PM	Free
Nov 18	Traditional Irish Session	Marcellus Legion Hall	Marcellus, NY	4-7 PM	Free
Nov 20	Donal O'Shaughnessy	Piggy Pat's Pickled Pig Pub	Washington Mills	6-9 PM	Free
Nov 20	Craobh Dugan Annual Mtg	Seton Center	Utica	7 PM	Free
Nov 21	Donal O'Shaughnessy	Kitty Hoynes	Syracuse	9 PM	Free
Nov 21	Jeremy Kittel World Band	Old Songs Concert Series	Voorheesville, NY	8 PM	\$20; 12 under \$5
Nov 21	The McKrells	The Parting Glass	Saratoga Springs	8 PM	\$8
Nov 22	The Blarney Rebel Band	Coleman's Irish Pub	Syracuse	4-7 PM	Free
Nov 22	Donal O'Shaughnessy	Shenanigans	Syracuse	5-9 PM	Free
Nov 23	Trad Irish Music Session	The Susquehanna Café	Bainbridge NY	5:30-8:30 PM	Free
Nov 26	Traditional Irish Session (it's Thanksgiving; call ahead)	Marcellus Legion Hall	Marcellus, NY	4-7 PM	Free
Nov 27	The Blarney Rebel Band	Piggy Pat's Pickled Pig Pub	Washington Mills	6-9 PM	Free
Nov 28	Hair of the Dog	The Parting Glass	Saratoga Springs	8 PM	\$13, res'v reqd
Nov 28	Trad Irish Music Session	Kitty Hoynes	Syracuse	2-5 PM	Free
Nov 29	Flyin' Column	Coleman's Irish Pub	Syracuse	4-7 PM	Free
Nov 30	Trad Irish Music Session	The Susquehanna Café	Bainbridge NY	5:30-8:30 PM	Free

If you have anything you want to share with us, feel free to send it to us (sistia@roadrunner.com, bloftis@gmail.com or marksisti@roadrunner.com), and we'll be happy to include it. In the meantime, Mark, Beth and I would like to wish you all a great Thanksgiving, and to remind you that November 11th is Veterans' Day... the day we pay tribute to the brave men and women who fought, and in many cases died, to preserve, defend and protect the freedoms that we enjoy every day.