
MOHAWK VALLEY IRISH CULTURAL EVENTS NEWSLETTER

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Elders, Enter The Haggis Return to Headline 2010 Great American Irish Festival

Fiery fiddles, blaring bagpipes and dazzling dancers will take center stage when The Great American Irish Festival comes to the Herkimer County Fairgrounds in Frankfort on Friday, July 23, Saturday, July 24 and Sunday, July 25. The official lineup was revealed for the first time at the Halfway to GAIF Hooley held January 31 at Hart's Hill Inn in Whitesboro. "We're very excited about this year's lineup," said Festival Director Matthew Sullivan. "We're bringing back old favorites and introducing our audience to new acts. With three days of non-stop entertainment, there is sure to be something for everyone. You don't have to be Irish to have a good time at the Great American Irish Festival."

Headlining the traditional stage at this year's festival will be an artist who has been called the Jimi Hendrix of the violin, Eileen Ivers, who was an original member of Cherish the Ladies, one of the highlights of a career that includes a stint with the original Riverdance Company as well as the garnering of nine All-Ireland fiddle championships, a tenth on tenor banjo and over 30 championship medals; Derek Warfield, historian, singer, songwriter, author and founding member and front man of one of the truly legendary bands in the history of Irish music, the Wolfe Tones; and Canadian superstars Leahy, a powerhouse of eight musical brothers and sisters, all of whom are multi-instrumentalists and accomplished step-dancers.

In addition to these luminaries, festival-goers visiting the traditional stage will also enjoy such world-class acts as Andy Cooney, fresh off a sold-out performance at Carnegie Hall; the Capital District's No.1 band, Hair Of The Dog; Belfast's McPeake, and the Keltic Kats from Kilkenny, Ireland.

For those whose tastes are a bit more contemporary, back to headline this year's festival will be high-energy festival favorites, Enter The Haggis and The Elders, leading a lineup that also includes the Glengarry Bhoys, The Prodigals, Texas Celtic rockers The Killdares, Pennsylvania funnymen Ceann, bare-knuckle Irish music from New York City with Shilelagh Law, and legendary Canadian Celtic punk-rockers The Mahones.

Adding to the non-stop entertainment will be a variety of other local and regional performers, including Central New York's most popular Irish performers, The Blarney Rebel Band, Rattlin' Bog, Vince Colgan, Pat Kane, The Stoutmen, Gerry Dixon, and hometown band Rory's Ghost.

In addition to the non-stop music, merchandise vendors from across the U.S. and Ireland, carefully selected from a list of applicants, will be selling Irish and Celtic merchandise, and a variety of food booths will be providing a taste of the Emerald Isle for festival-goers. Returning again this year will be the 5k run, bagpipe competition and Irish Mass. Campsites are also available.

Proceeds from the annual festival will be used to help establish an Irish Cultural Center in the Mohawk Valley on the site of the former St. Patrick's Church at the corner of Columbia and Varick Streets. The Herkimer County Fairgrounds is located just off Route 5s in Frankfort NY, just minutes from the New York State Thruway. For directions, tickets or more information, visit the festival web site at www.gaif.us.

Meet the Artists This year's outstanding GAIF lineup is as follows:

Leahy Picture the most impressive instrumental musical ensemble you've ever seen, every musician on the stage able to play several instruments and all of them proficient on each one. Now picture the most powerful



vocal group you've heard. Next, consider the most compelling dance troupe you've witnessed, each dancer more exhilarating than the last, building in a crescendo to an irresistible climax. Now, on top of all that, add a virtuoso soloist, perhaps the best in the world at his instrument, so good that other world-class performers hold him in reverence. Put them all together and you have the phenomenon that is Leahy, a Canadian powerhouse of eight musical brothers and sisters. The band's three acclaimed CDs—Leahy, Lakefield, and In All Things—have world-wide sales of over half a million copies. They have garnered numerous awards, including Junos for Best New

Group, Best Country Group, and Best Instrumental Album, the most played folk/roots song in Canada in 2004 and the Socan award for Folk/Jazz instrumentalist the following year. On stage Leahy brought audiences to their feet when they toured with pop superstar Shania Twain, who personally picked them after witnessing their standing ovation performance at the Juno Awards. At a time when Celtic music is all the rage, Leahy stands alone with its combination of ferocious music and fleet-footed solo and ensemble stepdancing.

Eileen Ivers and Immigrant Soul Eileen Ivers has been called a “sensation” by Billboard magazine and “the Jimi Hendrix of the violin” by The New York Times. Nine-time All-Ireland Fiddle Champion, London Symphony Orchestra, National Symphony at The Kennedy Center, Boston Pops, musical star of Riverdance, The Chieftains, Hall and Oates, Afrocelts, Patti Smith, Paula Cole, Al Di Meola, Steve Gadd, founding member of Cherish the Ladies, performed for Presidents and Royalty worldwide ...this is a short list of accomplishments, headliners, tours and affiliations that have established her as the pre-eminent exponent of the Irish fiddle in the world today. 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.”



Enter the Haggis From the minute they take the stage, the non-stop infectious energy of Enter the Haggis makes it impossible for anyone to stay seated. Returning to the Great American Irish 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 group's constant touring schedule has made them one of the biggest draws at Celtic and folk festivals throughout the world, and their recordings have been no less successful, from the band's 2002 recording “Enter the Haggis -Live!” to their most ambitious and successful recording yet, “Gutter Anthem,” which once again established the band as possessing tremendous flexibility without abandoning their respect for the traditional Celtic genre. In addition to their recordings, Enter the Haggis has also become stars of the small screen. A television

special on the group titled “Live at Lanigan's Ball” has aired on PBS affiliates throughout the U.S. and Canada, the band was recently featured on A&E's twice Emmy nominated “Breakfast With The Arts” program, and their meteoric rise to the top of the Celtic Rock world has continued with recent spots on the popular PBS program Out Of Ireland and on Live With Regis and Kelly.

The Elders The Elders, the most popular Irish band throughout the Midwestern United States, are a six-man group that melds the energy of rock with respect for Irish musical traditions. The Kansas City-based group has become famous for their high-energy rock shows that exude a fiery Celtic-influence and comical story telling that is true to the culture they represent. The Elders released their seventh album, “Gael Day,” in 2009, and the CD has been garnering accolades everywhere. Since forming in 1998, the Elders have brought their musical mix to theaters, festivals and pubs across the United States and Ireland, consistently attracting capacity crowds with their brand of amped-up roots rock, blazing instrumentals, powerful vocals and top-notch songwriting. Virtually unknown on the East Coast a few years ago, the Elders exploded onto the scene with a four-set performance at the Great American Irish Festival that immediately established them as GAIF favorites and cemented their reputation as one of the hottest acts on the festival circuit. The group consists of Norm Dahlor (bass, banjo, guitar and vocals), Brent Hoad (violin, mandolin and vocals), Joe Miquelon (keyboard and saxophone), Steve Phillips (guitar, mandolin and vocals) and Tommy Sutherland (drums and percussion) and, from County Wicklow, Ireland, Ian Byrne, (vocals and percussion).



The Prodigals The Prodigals are one of the most successful bands to emerge from the East-Coast Irish scene. Often imitated but never duplicated, the band combines brilliant original lyrics and melody with a genuine passion for the traditional music of Ireland and a funky energy that is pure New York. The roots of the music are unmistakably traditional Irish; the branches that shoot off delve into rock, worldbeat, jazz and punk, and the result has been called “the best Irish trad-rock band” by no less a source than the Village Voice. Fusing ancient melodies with rock rhythms, The Prodigals have emerged as the dominant force on the Celtic-music scene. Audiences are captivated by the raucous punk-inspired sound and the drum-and-bass rhythms from modern dance music and hip-hop, but their strong respect for Irish roots and a solid repertoire of time-honored tunes, along with rock-solid original compositions, has made them a hit with fans of traditional music as well as rock audiences. Dubbed “the kings of jig-punk,” The Prodigals have played throughout the United States, headlining the world’s largest Irish festivals (including every Great American Irish Festival since its inception) and they have received the #1 ranking by readers of the largest circulation Irish-American newspaper, the Irish Echo, beating out acts such as U2, the Saw Doctors, Black 47 and Van Morrison.



Derek Warfield and The Young Wolfe Tones In the world of Irish music, there is perhaps no name that resonates like that of Derek Warfield. Historian, singer, songwriter, and author, Derek is best known as a founding member and front man of one of the truly legendary bands in the history of Irish music, the Wolfe Tones. An outstanding singer, stage personality, composer of songs and historian of the song tradition, Derek Warfield is a legend wherever Irish roots have been put down. He enjoyed phenomenal success for some 37 years with the Wolfe Tones, with best-selling albums, number one hits, television appearances and shows in Carnegie Hall in New York and the Royal Albert Hall in London. He’s also been prolific as a solo artist, with eleven albums in just over a decade. Through his songs, music and lectures, Derek Warfield has been forceful in reminding the Irish at home and abroad of their debt to patriots of past generations and his recordings are a must for any serious student of Irish or Irish American history. Now the man often described as “Ireland’s greatest ballad singer” is bringing a new and exciting sound to his legion of fans in Ireland, across Europe and the United States, with his new band Derek Warfield and The Young Wolfe Tones, featuring a melding of one of the great voices in Irish music with some the finest Irish musicians from a younger generation, singer-songwriter Padraig Allen, banjo/mandolin player Damaris Woods and accordion and bodhran player Jim Woods.



The Mahones Canada's Favorite Irish Punk Rockers The Mahones were formed in 1990 at the end of the



bar at the now legendary Toucan Irish Pub in Kingston, (Ontario, Canada), over 100s of pints of Guinness Irish Stout and 1000s of shots of Jameson's Irish Whiskey. It was the brilliant idea of Dublin-born Finny McConnell and his musical brother/mentor Barry Williams to put together a band that sounded like The Clash, The Pogues, The Who, Shane MacGowan and The Popes, and The Waterboys. Eight CDs and 20 years later, The Mahones have headlined Irish festivals all over the world, including, among others, The Strummercamp Festival (Manchester, England), The Festival Interceltique (Lorient, France- the biggest in Europe), Irlanda In Festa 09 Festival (Bologna, Italy), Minneapolis Irish Fair (Minnesota, USA), Disneyland St. Patrick's Day Festival (Paris, France), Potsdam Celtic Rock Festival (Potsdam, Germany), Big Irish Night Festival (Amsterdam, Holland), The National Celtic Festival (Portarlinton, Australia), and The Celtic Nights Festival (Vienna, Austria). The Mahones have shared stages around the world alongside legends such as The Dropkick Murphys, Shane MacGowan and The Popes, Billy Bragg, The Band, The Buzzcocks, Steve Earle, Sinéad O'Connor, Flogging Molly, The Dubliners, Christy Moore and even Van Morrison to name a few.

Hair of the Dog Over the past decade, Hair Of The Dog has entertained thousands of fans of all ages with their unique blend of Celtic, rock, folk and bluegrass music. Their high energy sound, smooth four-part harmonies and tight instrumental attack has made them America's number one Irish folk band, and an international success as well. The band has sold thousands of their CDs, pitching them from stages shared with The Clancy Brothers, Seven Nations, Black 47, The Wolfe Tones, The Young Dubliners, Solas, The Paperboys, The Prodigals, Off-Kilter and the like. They tour Ireland annually, they've been to the Caribbean and they've appeared in concert at pubs and festivals across the US, including The Chicago Gaelic Park Festival, The Bethlehem Pennsylvania Celtic Classic, The Cleveland Summer Fest, The Hunter Mountain Irish Festival, The Coney Island Great Irish Fair, Irish 2000 Music And Arts Festival, The Capital District Scottish Games and the East Durham Irish Festival. Hair Of the Dog – which holds the distinction of being the only headline act to play all six Great American Irish Festivals – was featured as part of Project Children's 2005 compilation CD, "One Child At A Time," along with artists like, U2, James Taylor, The Chieftains, The Corrs, Mary Black and Carly Simon, and in 2007 released "Donegal," their first new studio recording in ten years and their most ambitious to date. The Albany-based Hair Of The Dog is a complete evening's entertainment, balancing humor with beautiful ballads, hot picking with Irish sing-alongs. Onstage or on disc, few acts can match half the fun or the musicianship of Hair Of The Dog.



Andy Cooney Christened by The New York Times as "Irish America's Favorite Son," Andy Cooney has taken the Irish-American music scene by storm. His outstanding voice and dynamic stage presence have made him a favorite with audiences throughout the world as he renders songs ranging from all-time favorites like "Galway Bay" and "Danny Boy" to his hit records "The Irish Wedding Song," "Boston Rose" and "Shannon River." In 1986, at age 19, Andy joined the well-known Irish bandleader, Paddy Noonan, as vocalist and toured with Paddy's show for several years while gaining national exposure for his talent and winning a place in the hearts of all those who heard him from coast to coast. Throughout the year Andy travels around the country touring with his own band, presenting a high-energy show that showcases the finest in Irish music, comedy and dance. Andy recently had his own special, "Andy Cooney – An Evening of Irish Classics" broadcast on PBS affiliates around the country, and on December 8, 2009, performed a sold-out concert at Carnegie Hall. Andy headlined at the inaugural Great American Irish festival, and the GAIF family is glad to welcome him back.



Ceann Ceann (pronounced “key-ann”) formed as an Irish rock band in Pittsburgh in 2006, and in just three years has become one of the most successful independent bands in the country. Ceann has made a name for



themselves as one of the most fun, entertaining, and musically adventurous bands playing music today. With their roots in Irish music, they mix in modern musical styles and a cutting edge sense of humor that has won them fans across the globe. They’ve been called everything from “A funnier version of Flogging Molly,” to “Adam Sandler meets the Pogues,” to “They Might Be Giants drunk on Guinness.” Admit it, it’s hard to pass on a band with a lyric like “You’re pretty on the inside/Too bad I’m an outside kind of pretty guy.” And we won’t even get into their Christmas song. Ceann continues to mix fun Irish music with their popular originals. While some of Ceann’s songs revolve around the culture of being Irish Americans, many of Ceann’s most popular songs have distinctively more contemporary themes. Their songs appeal far beyond the normal reach of Irish music and have given them access to unprecedented markets for an Irish band.

Glengarry Bhoys “Hard-rocking” and “bagpipes” are not two terms generally heard in the same sentence, but with the Glengarry Bhoys, it’s appropriate. The Glengarry Bhoys have established themselves through a devoted work-ethic of touring and recording as one of the top draws on the Irish festival and club circuit. The Bhoys have their roots in Glengarry, Ontario and their music draws on the unique blend of the French and Scottish musical heritage indigenous to the area. Their blend of traditional music, fused with the multicultural sounds of modern and contemporary Celtic music, has brought them international acclaim. Fiery guitar and bass, intense percussion and fiddle, teamed with pipes and vocals, make for a memorable performance.



Shilelagh Law Shilelagh Law is a five-piece acoustic tornado of Irish-American energy, specializing in traditional songs infused with modern mayhem. Their live shows in and around New York are legendary



tests of endurance and fortitude as they play for three to four hours straight, only stopping long enough for a fortifying beverage or two. 600 people waited on ridiculously long lines in the bitter cold to attend a recent show at Connolly’s in Times Square, and packed houses in

Brooklyn, Queens and the Bronx are common. With the 2009 release of “One and Nine,” their fourth studio album, Shilelagh Law, with its bare-knuckle Irish music, has cemented its reputation as the true standard bearer of New York’s proud Irish musical heritage.

The Killdares Originally formed in 1996, The Killdares have come to be known as one of the hottest,



cutting edge bands in music today—Celtic or otherwise. World-class musicians from all over the U.S., they have come together in Texas to create and perform a brand new version of hard-driving, alternative Celtic rock music. Blending traditional Celtic playing skills, power-pop accessibility, and straight up rock ‘n’ roll hooks, The Killdares have created a fresh new sound that’s blended with enough commercial edge to be instantly recognizable, always engaging, and appealing to fans of all ages. Presenting a perfect blend of rock, pop, and Celtic, The Killdares have established themselves as a unique team of musicians—stretching the boundaries of independent rock ‘n’ roll,

while bridging the gap between the traditional and the cutting edge.

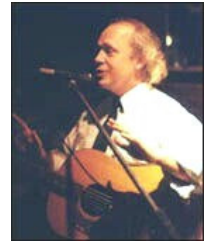
McPeake For generations of folk music enthusiasts the name of the McPeake Family of Belfast has stood for one of the most distinctive sounds in Irish music. Francis McPeake IV, the fourth generation of this world-famous musical dynasty and one of the few authentic uilleann pipers in the world today, has put together a revived band, “McPeake,” which is unique in the world of music with its fusion of original Celtic compositions and contemporary rhythms and styles. McPeake boasts 100 years of musical tradition, including their signature song, “Will Ye Go, Lassie Go,” penned by Francis McPeake Sr.



Keltic Kats Keltic Kats have grown out of the regular sessions that used to be held in the Anchor Bar in Graigueenamanagh, Co Kilkenny to become one of the most sought-after traditional folk groups in Ireland. After years of a rather fluid lineup in terms of personnel (as is usually the case with session bands) the prospect of a US tour in 2003 necessitated a more “settled” line-up, and so the group eventually evolved into its current lineup of Bob Grace - lead vocals, guitar; Danny Grace - lead vocals, mandolin, bodhrán, whistle; Joe O’Farrell - flute, banjo, harmonica, vocals and Matt Dunne - bass, bodhrán, vocals. Keltic Kats are currently working on their first CD and expects its release shortly.

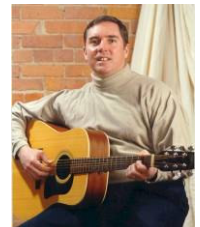


Pat Kane Pat Kane is a seasoned showman, having performed as a singer, dancer, actor, and instrumentalist since childhood. On his farm in the hill country of the Canisteo River, he was raised in the traditions of the Grange and of his Irish family. Pat’s cousins still run the family farm in West Clare, Ireland, which Pat visits often; hence, the name of the band, and his company, West o’Clare. Performing as a soloist or with his band, West O’ Clare, Pat Kane may entertain for hours without a break or repeat. On fiddle, guitar, and bodhran, he plays jigs, reels, square dances, and hundreds of ballads from Ireland and America. He has twice won first place for singing at the NYC Fleadh Cheoil and hosts a weekly radio show in Elmira, New York.



Vince Colgan The term is often too easily and inappropriately applied, but Vince Colgan is a true legend in central New York Irish music circles and beyond. A master storyteller as well as a consummate balladeer, Vince has entertained generations of Central New Yorkers and is now working on the next generation. The Great American Irish Festival is honored to welcome him back to its stages.

Donal O’Shaughnessy Donal O’Shaughnessy is a multi-talented performer, playing guitar, fiddle, keyboards, pipe organ, bodhran and mandolin. Donal is probably best known for his live performances. His quick wit and spontaneity with his audience keeps people in their seats until the very end of the night. He is also known for his work ethic as he rarely takes a break. On St. Patrick’s Day 1997 he played 12 straight hours only repeating a song if it was requested. Donal’s versatility with musical instruments and singing style makes every occasion special. Donal was the winner of the 1996 Fleadh Cheoil Mid Atlantic Regional Irish Singing Contest and placed seventh in the fiddle contest at the same event.



The Blarney Rebel Band The Blarney Rebel Band is group of musicians from the Celtic hotbed of Central New York 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. It’s all on display by a group of talented musicians boasting virtuoso musicianship and perfectly blended harmonies. Their most recent CD, “Buy My Soul,” has sold all over the world, including Holland, Scotland, Australia and throughout the United States and Canada. A cut from that CD, “Stand With Me Boys,” recently placed No. 1 in the Irish and Celtic Music Podcast Best of 2009 Listener’s Poll. The Blarney Rebel Band consists of Mark Sisti - banjo, mandolin, mandola, pennywhistle, concertina, accordion, flute, vocals; Al Sisti - bass guitar, vocals; Dan Sisti - guitar, vocals; Amanda Straney, fiddle, vocals; and Jessica Voce - bodhran, tambourine, percussion.



Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Eireann Craobh Dugan, the Central NY branch of Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Eireann, has been preserving and promoting the traditional music, song, dance and language of the Irish culture with weekly Céilí, music and language sessions for over thirty years. They perform for local nursing homes and also at a variety of other venues, including the St. Patrick's Day Parade, Celtic Festival at Rome Capital Theater, General Herkimer Historic Site concert, Utica Monday Night Heritage Celebration, Great American Irish Festival, Western Town Hall cultural series concert, and the Thea Bowman House concert.



Marc Bernier Marc Bernier is a Professional Chef, Musician, and Sailor with a diverse musical and professional background. No stranger to Sea Music audiences, he has spent over 15 years on staff at Mystic Seaport Museum; five years as a Mystic Seaport Chanteyman. He has worked as a musician and educator for the Clearwater program on the Hudson River, and has sailed as cook, deck hand, and entertainer on numerous traditional sailing vessels from the coast of Maine to Chesapeake Bay. A man with a big voice and varied instrumental skills, he is equally at home with Guitar, Mandolin, and Tenor Banjo while he sings. Marc's song repertoire comes mostly from Ireland, the UK, and Northeastern US, with a significant focus on pub songs and drinking songs, developed through years of research in the field.



Gerry Dixon Gerry Dixon comes from Buffalo by way of a little town called Kilrush, located at the mouth of the river Shannon, in County Clare at the southwestern end of Ireland. It was here that Dixon honed his craft, singing and playing traditional Irish music and telling stories of his culture. Gerry was greatly influenced by his family and renowned artists, such as Christy Moore and Finbar Furey. Like many others from Ireland, he not only sings, but also plays a myriad of instruments; including the guitar, tin whistle and bodhrán. With his performing skills and engaging personality, Gerry will take you on a memorable trip to the Emerald Isle.



Cassidy/McCale Cassidy/McCale is an acoustic Celtic duo from Syracuse, NY. The band's name comes from the surnames of two grandfathers, Millard Cassidy and Raymond McCale. Formed in December 2005, they play a variety of Irish and Scottish pub songs, rebel tunes and sea chanteys. The band – whose performances have been described as energetic and crowd pleasing – consists of Bryan Watson (guitar, vocals) and Matthew Douglas (guitar, vocals, bodhrán). Influences include The Clancy Brothers, the Dubliners, regional favorite Pat Kane and Canadian import The Town Pants. Relative newcomers, Cassidy/McCale hope to become a regular part of the growing Celtic folk scene in Syracuse and Central New York.



Sean McCabe Sean McCabe crossed the Atlantic in the mid-nineties and immediately upon his arrival in New York set about turning his musical dreams into reality. After a couple of years of playing the local Irish bar scene with Gregory Grene of The Prodigals and contributing two original songs to that band's first album, Sean formed his own band and called it "The McCabes," who soon replaced Black 47 as the Saturday house band at the now legendary Paddy Reilly's Irish music club. Now working as a solo act (in addition to continuing as frontman for the McCabes), Sean has several songs signed to publishing deals, and has now become a published author with his first collection of short stories, entitled "The Trials of Eoin Grady."



Rattlin' Bog Long-time veterans of the local Irish Music scene, Rattlin' Bog is made up of tenor Rick Kincaid and baritone Joe Rowlands applying their tight vocal harmonies to Irish folk music and accompanying themselves on various acoustic instruments, including six and 12 string guitars, banjo, accordion, melodica, penny whistles and harmonicas. Hailing from the Utica area, Rattlin' Bog encourages audience participation with its catchy musical performance and its irreverent good humor. They will be joined at the festival by upright bass player John Brett.



The Stoutmen For 10 years The Stoutmen have been belting out Irish and Scottish folk songs in and around the Binghamton area of Upstate New York. Their love of big harmonies really shows as they work to keep alive a style of singing made famous by the Clancy Brothers and Tommy Makem. You'll hear well-known and a few obscure songs that cover the breadth of the Irish and Scottish experience, including songs of drinking, rebellion, sailing, and humor. Consisting of Tim Lynch (vocals, guitar, octave mandolin, bodhran), Sean Walsh (vocals, guitar, pennywhistle, bodhran), Bob White (vocals, 12-string guitar, banjo), and Roy Bartram (vocals, bass, pennywhistle), the band has crafted a finely balanced show that really grabs an audience's attention.



Harp & Harmony Harp & Harmony is produced by Peggy Spencer Behrendt, Bachelor of Music Education, State University of NY at Fredonia, and Timothy Hume Behrendt, musician, Minister, counselor and author. They formed Harp & Harmony to not only share their musical talents but to promote and support the Shawangunk Nature Preserve, which they founded. Their performances have generated acclaim wherever they go. Harp & Harmony provides music on over eleven different instruments to provide toe-tapping Celtic music on Irish harp, whistle, fiddle and strum-drum.

Emerald Dawn Emerald Dawn is an acoustic Irish band based in Albany, NY. Consisting of Bob Lord on guitar and vocals and Dawn Lenahan on mandolin and vocals, they are very active on the Capital District music scene and were selected to play at last year's Irish2000 festival in Ballston Spa, NY. Playing both Irish and non-Irish venues, the group plays a broad range of traditional and contemporary tunes, all with their own distinctive touch of tight harmonies. Their extensive playlist and ability to get the audience involved is quickly making Emerald Dawn a favorite on the local music scene.

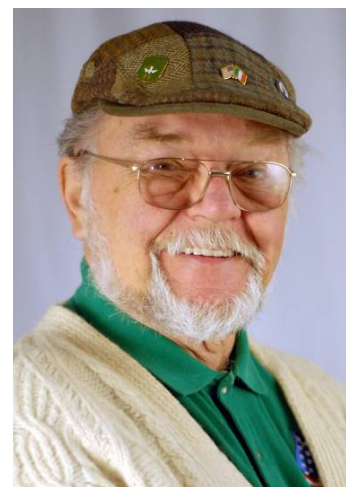


Rory's Ghost Inter-weaving traditional Celtic Fonn Mall (slow airs) music with a modern Rock twist, Frankfort's own Rory's Ghost is making its mark within the Celtic Rock genre. The band uses whatever musical means necessary, no matter how soft or heavy they have to play, to convey the passion and emotion of their songs. Band members include Devin Cool- Vocals, Guitars, Mandolin, Sitar, Tin Whistles, Harmonica, Harp; Daniel Swift- Backing Vocals, Bass, Acoustic Guitar; Matt Powers- Electric guitar, Acoustic Twelve String Guitar, Backing Vocals; Eric Watson- Drums, Backing Vocals, Bodhran, and Ryan Daman- Bagpipes, Tin Whistle.

Frank Kealy Chosen St. Patrick's Parade Grand Marshal

When Frank Kealy was informed that he had been chosen Grand Marshal of the 2010 Utica St. Patrick's Day Parade, he didn't immediately begin calling his friends and family. Not right away. "I thought it might be a hoax, that someone might be playing a joke on me," explained Kealy. Well, it was no joke. Kealy was chosen from among a list of worthy nominees to serve as Grand Marshal in recognition for a lifetime of devotion to his community and to his Irish heritage.

Frank Kealy has worked for the local Irish community in a number of capacities. He has been a member of the local chapter of the Ancient Order of Hibernians since 1995, serving at one time as secretary, and was the emcee/announcer for the McDonough-Hill School of Irish Dance from 1993-1999.



But his major contribution to local Irish affairs began in 2000, when he was approached to head up the Utica-based chapter of the Irish Political Prisoners Children's Holiday. The IPPCH was a joint Irish-American organization based in Belfast and Philadelphia which raised funds to bring children from embattled Northern Ireland for a month-long vacation in the United States. Over the next seven years, the IPPCH raised over \$100,000 and brought more than 100 children to the states, helping them escape for a short time from the war-zone that was Northern Ireland at the time. Throughout that time, Kealy played every role possible for the IPPCH, organizing fund-raising events, lining up host families, flying to Ireland to make arrangements, traveling to Boston or Philadelphia to pick up the children and bring them to Utica – sometimes even driving the bus – and invariably taking in a child or two when the original arrangements fell through for one reason or another. When the IPPCH went out of business in 2007, it was for a very good reason: all the children who were eligible under the program had already participated. “The IPPCH didn't end because of failure, but because it was such a success,” notes Kealy proudly.

In addition to his contributions to the local Irish causes, he has been an active member of the Frankfort Center Fire Department for 45 years, holding every elected and appointed office at one time or another. A lifelong resident of Central New York, Frank has been married to the former Dawn T. Lee for 51 years. Frank and Dawn have three sons, Daniel, Michael and Patrick, and two daughters, Colleen and Maureen.

Irish Supergroup Solas Returns to the Egg

Since they exploded onto the acoustic music scene, Solas, featuring multi-instrumentalist Seamus Egan, has made a major impact in both America and abroad as an Irish music supergroup whose live shows are among the finest and most exciting musical experiences in the world. And on Sunday, February 28th, you can see for yourself why Solas has been acclaimed by many as the most exciting Irish traditional group in the world. Throughout its tenure and personnel changes, Solas has been widely heralded for its virtuosity and its fresh approach to Irish folk music. It maintains deep traditional roots while exploring new ideas and pushing the boundaries. Solas (Gaelic for “light”) showcases Seamus Egan's skills on a variety of instruments. He is an All-Ireland champion on flute, tin whistle, mandolin, and tenor banjo, and also demonstrates his virtuosity on low whistle, guitar, bodhrán, and uilleann pipes. Solas also features All-Ireland fiddler Winifred Horan, who, in addition to being a former member of Cherish the Ladies, is a nine-time Irish step-dancing champion. Button accordionist Mick McAuley, vocalist Máiréad Phelan and multi-instrumentalist Eamon McElholm round out the all-star Solas line-up. Tickets for the 7:30 PM show are \$24, and can be purchased through the Egg box office, (518) 473-1845, or on-line at www.theegg.org. The Egg is located at the Center for the Performing Arts, in the Empire State Plaza, Albany, New York.



Utica's St. Patrick's Day Parade Needs You!

Since the Great American Irish Festival took the reins of Utica's St. Patrick's Day Parade, one thing has become painfully obvious: putting on a competitive, entertaining, family-friendly and safe parade...costs a lot of money! To that end, the parade committee has put together a fund-raising raffle to defray the costs of this year's event. For a mere \$1 per ticket (6 for \$5), you get a chance at three great prizes. Starting from the bottom, third prize is two tickets to Riverdance at the Stanley Theater on April 6th, plus dinner for two at the Celtic Harp AND four hours of limo service. Yes, that's the third prize! Second prize is Great American Irish Festival weekend gate passes for two, unlimited access to the hospitality tent (food and beverage), a merchandise basket and a meet and greet with the bands. And first prize is a private party for 25 people at the 1888 Tavern at the Matt Brewery (4 hours of food/beverage). Tickets are available at various venues around town, or you can get in touch with any parade committee member (or write back to us at this newsletter).

Blarney Rebel Band Takes Top Honors as “Best of 2009”

Local Irish musicians The Blarney Rebel Band took the top spot in the Irish and Celtic Music Podcast Best of 2009 Listener’s Poll. Their song, “Stand With Me, Boys” from their most recent release, “Buy My Soul,” was the top vote-getter among 20 winners gleaned from podcasts throughout the year.



The Irish and Celtic Music Podcast presents twice-monthly broadcasts of Celtic and Irish music by the best independent Celtic music groups from around the world. At the close of each show, listeners are asked to vote for the favorite song for that particular show. At the end of the year, all of the year’s winners of the Listeners’ Poll are featured as the Best of 2009, with listeners once again asked to vote for their favorite tune. This year the top honors went to the Blarney Rebel Band, consisting of Mark Sisti, Al Sisti, Dan Sisti, Jessica Voce and Amanda Straney. “Stand With Me Boys” had qualified as one of the Best of 2009 by finishing first in the poll following the June 4, 2009 podcast. “I know we’re supposed to say it’s an honor just to be mentioned,” said Mark Sisti, who penned the winning tune, “but winning is much cooler.”

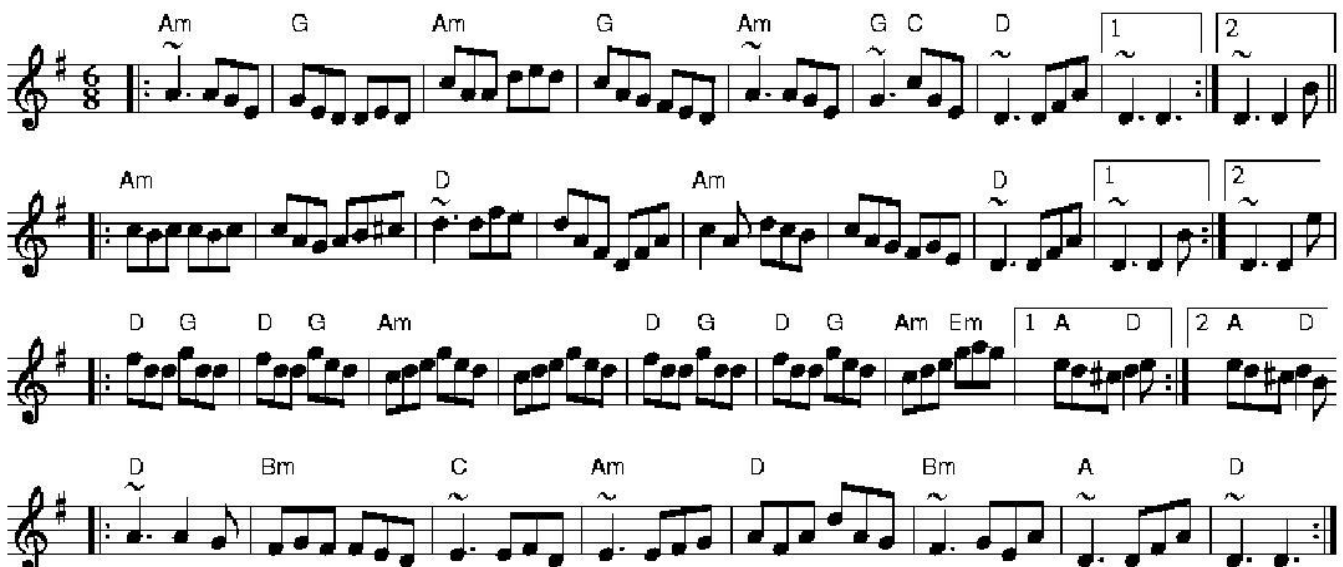
The Irish and Celtic Music Podcast, broadcast from Texas and New Orleans, recently was named the 2009 winner of the People’s Choice Podcast Award. With over 10,000 downloads of each show, the Irish and Celtic Music Podcast recently was named the most listened-to podcast on iTunes, the #1 distributor of podcasts, and was ranked 14th of all podcasts in the world.

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

From our friends Mike Hoke and Mark Sisti from Craobh Dugan, the Central NY branch of Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann, comes the next page for your ever-expanding session notebook. The Humours of Ballyloughlin – also known as “The Hurler’s March” -- is a great jig that incorporates many “turns,” “rolls” or “crans” often heard in traditional Irish music. The word ‘humours’ in a title denotes character or mood usually of a capricious or whimsical nature. It is used only in combination with a place name and always precedes it.

The Humours of Ballyloughlin

The Hurler's March



Rosin Up Your Bow for Kitty Hoynes' 3rd Annual "Fierce and Fiery Fiddle Fest"!

The weekend of February 5th and 6th at Kitty Hoynes Pub is going to be a special one for great music, fiddle players, or just for people who enjoy either. Besides powerhouse performances at 9 PM on both nights from those lovely ladies of the Ottawa Valley – Searson – Kitty's has lined up an impressive array of local and national fiddlers for a full afternoon of workshops and music on the 6th. The schedule of events is:

- 1 PM: Kitty's Irish music session featuring fiddlers Patrick Reynolds, Jonathan Chai and David Deacon with special guest Uileann Piper Nick Whitmer.
- 2 PM: "Wind & Wire" workshop on stage, presented by Jonathan Chai and Nick Whitmer. Session moves to dining room.
- 3 PM: Colleen & Erin Searson Fiddle workshop -- Bring your fiddle and learn a tune. Session on-going in dining room.
- 4:30 PM: Kitty's Irish music session with special Fiddle guests, main stage.
- 5:30 PM: "Tune Time" Fiddle workshop with Joe Davoli joined by his many students. Intermediate fiddlers will enjoy this workshop and learn a tune or two. Kitty's session group continues in dining room.
- 9 PM: Searson takes the stage highlighting fiddle tunes and their fiddle album "Ignite"

Irish dance schools will also perform throughout the day. Also, as times and schedule are subject to change, it's best to call 424-1974 if you're trying to catch a particular event.

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

This month's recipe... "Strawberry and Baileys Fool" – *Valentine's Day is a perfect day for fools! Relax, cupidits; a fool is (also) a cold dessert of pureed fruit mixed with whipped cream or custard. Undoubtedly, one of the prettiest fruit fools is made with strawberries, and this version adds Baileys Irish Cream for a little zip! Just follow this recipe from Dublin's Hibernian Hotel, and spend this Valentine's Day making a "fool for your love."*

Ingredients:

- | | |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| 1 pint strawberries, washed and hulled, with 6 reserved | 1/2 cup Baileys Irish Cream |
| 2 cups heavy cream | Confectioners' sugar, for dusting |

Method:

Chill six stem glasses while preparing the fruit. In a food processor or blender, purée the strawberries until smooth. In a small bowl, with an electric mixer on high speed, whip the cream until stiff. Add half the strawberry purée and the Baileys to the cream and blend until smooth. Remove glasses from refrigerator and divide the strawberry/cream mix into the bottom quarter of each. Spoon over the fruit purée, and continue to alternate layers of cream with fruit. Slice the reserved strawberries over the top of each glass and sprinkle with confectioners' sugar. Serves 6.

RANDOM RAMBLINGS

✠ **Comhaltas News** From our friends in Craobh Dugan comes this reminder: Weekly music sessions are held at Jim O'Looney's on Thursdays at 7:30. Weekly dance classes are held at the Seton Center on Fridays at 7:00. Monthly music sessions are on the first Tuesday at the Nail Creek Pub on Varick Street in Utica, and on the third Tuesday at the Albany Street Café in Herkimer. Our monthly Ceili is held on the third Friday at the Seton Center. On Feb 25th the musicians only will perform at the Oneida Public Library at a time TBA.

✠ **Rince Na Sonas Hooley** The Rince Na Sonas School of Irish Dance will be hosting a hooley from 3-8 PM on February 27th, at Meghan MacMurphy's Pub in Liverpool, NY. Tickets are \$5/dancer, \$10 (ages 5 and up) and \$40/household. Entertainment will be provided by The Blarney Rebel Band, with Rince Na Sonas performances throughout the day. A cash bar, food, water, soda, laughs and good times will also be available.

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

Feb 1	Trad Irish Music Session	The Susquehanna Café	Bainbridge NY	5:30-8:30 PM	Free
Feb 2	"Nail Creek Sessions"	Nail Creek Pub	Utica	7:30-10 PM	Free
Feb 4	Traditional Irish Session	Marcellus Legion Hall	Marcellus, NY	4-7 PM	Free
Feb 5	Causeway Giants	Coleman's Irish Pub	Syracuse	10 PM	Free
Feb 5	Woods Tea Company	Kirkland Art Center	Clinton	8 PM	\$18, \$15 mbrs
Feb 5	"Mostly Irish" Monthly Jam	Irish American Club	Amsterdam NY	7:30 PM	Free
Feb 5,6	Searson	Kitty Hoynes	Syracuse	9 PM	Free
Feb 6	3 rd Annual "Fierce and Fiery Fiddle Festival"	Kitty Hoynes	Syracuse	1 PM	Free
Feb 6	Irish Comedy Tour	Proctor's Theater	Schenectady	8 PM	\$29.50
Feb 6	St. James Gate	The Parting Glass	Saratoga Springs	9 PM	\$5
Feb 7	Syracuse Irish Session	Wayside Irish Pub	Elbridge NY	4-7 PM	Free
Feb 8	Trad Irish Music Session	The Susquehanna Café	Bainbridge NY	5:30-8:30 PM	Free
Feb 11	Traditional Irish Session	Marcellus Legion Hall	Marcellus, NY	4-7 PM	Free
Feb 12	Donal O'Shaughnessy	Piggy Pat's Pickled Pig Pub	Washington Mills	6-9 PM	Free
Feb 13	Trad Irish Music Session	Kitty Hoynes	Syracuse	2-5 PM	Free
Feb 14	Donal O'Shaughnessy & Brian Hyland	Coleman's Irish Pub	Syracuse	4-7 PM	Free
Feb 15	Trad Irish Music Session	The Susquehanna Café	Bainbridge NY	5:30-8:30 PM	Free
Feb 16	Albany Street Sessions	Albany Street Café	Herkimer	7:30 PM	Free
Feb 17	Traditional Irish Session	Marcellus Legion Hall	Marcellus, NY	4-7 PM	Free
Feb 20	Forthlin Road	The Parting Glass	Saratoga Springs	9 PM	\$5
Feb 21	Syracuse Irish Session	Johnston's Bally Bay Pub	Syracuse	4-7 PM	Free
Feb 21	Flyin' Column	Coleman's Irish Pub	Syracuse	4-7 PM	Free
Feb 22	Trad Irish Music Session	The Susquehanna Café	Bainbridge NY	5:30-8:30 PM	Free
Feb 25	Traditional Irish Session	Marcellus Legion Hall	Marcellus, NY	4-7 PM	Free
Feb 26	Donal O'Shaughnessy	Piggy Pat's Pickled Pig Pub	Washington Mills	6-9 PM	Free
Feb 26	Old Friends	Kitty Hoynes	Syracuse	9 PM	Free
Feb 26,27	Hair of the Dog	The Parting Glass	Saratoga Springs	8 PM	\$13, res'v reqd
Feb 27	Trad Irish Music Session	Kitty Hoynes	Syracuse	2-5 PM	Free
Feb 27	Rince Na Sonas Dance School Hooley w/The Blarney Rebel Band	Meghan McMurphy's Pub	Liverpool	3-8 PM	\$5/dancer, \$10 (ages 5 and up), \$40/household
Feb 28	Solas	The Egg	Albany	7:30 PM	\$24
Feb 28	Gaelic Storm	Historic Riviera Theatre	North Tonawanda	8 PM	\$25 adv, \$30 day of show

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. As always, while we try to get things – prices, places, genders, 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.