
MOHAWK VALLEY IRISH CULTURAL EVENTS NEWSLETTER

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March 2011

Utica St. Patrick's Day Parade – 187 Years of Irish Pride, Family Fun

It's a tradition unlike any in Utica's storied history. The Utica St. Patrick's Day parade, originated in 1824 by Utica's first mayor and pre-eminent Irishman, John C. Devereux, once again takes to the streets on Saturday, March 12th. Presented by the Great American Irish Festival, the parade starts at 10:00 AM at Oneida Square and continues down Genesee St. to Columbia St., with the Reviewing Stand once again located at the majestic Stanley Theater. The parade, which last year was the third largest in the state, will be led by this year's Grand Marshal, **the Honorable Michael L. Dwyer**.



Parade Committee Chairman Kevin Dowling and his team have assembled an impressive array of pipe bands, marching units, floats and other unique vehicles; however, it's not too late to get involved. The committee invites everyone in the community to showcase their civic organizations, musical groups, school groups, businesses or families in the parade. Participants are encouraged to incorporate an Irish theme into their float or entry. For more information, contact Kevin Dowling at assistant-director@gaif.us, or visit the parade web site at www.gaif.us/parade.

Parade Committee Conducts “Remembering the Great Hunger” Food Drive

As a way of giving back to the community, and in remembrance of one of the most horrific and defining periods in Irish history, the St. Patrick's Day Parade Committee is again conducting a food drive for this year's parade. The theme of the collection is “Remembering the Great Hunger.” On March 12th, St. Patrick's Day Parade attendees and marchers are asked to bring non-perishable food items to the parade (please be sure they are not past their expiration date), which will be collected and, along with any cash donations, will be turned over to Mother Marianne's West Side Kitchen at the St. Joseph-St. Patrick Parish Center. Named for Blessed Mother Marianne Cope, who grew up in West Utica and went on to devote the last 30 years of her life to the lepers of Hawaii's Molokai, this program also claims a unique tie to the local Irish community: It is located across the street from the future Mohawk Valley Irish Cultural Center; the site of the original St. Patrick's Church, which was built by a burgeoning Irish population who had come to America to escape the Great Hunger in the 1850s.

Chris Hoke, chairperson of the 2011 drive, has high hopes for a successful campaign that will result in much needed meals for several hundred of our “hungry neighbors,” and has arranged for several alternative ways in which people can help. Special barrels will be set up at the corners of the side streets this year for the parade units to drop their donations. Then, during the parade, vehicles from Adorino Construction will be escorted by Holland Patent National Honor Society students and Adorino employees walking along the parade route with wheelbarrows for collecting food items, and canisters for any cash donations that are offered in lieu of food. If you are interested in volunteering for the Food Drive, please contact Chris at (315) 827-4291.

And If You're Still Not Marched Out...

Utica is not the only place boasting a St. Patrick's Day Parade. Friday, March 18th, Old Forge promises "the best (and only) Irish Parade in the Adirondacks," starting at 5 PM down Main Street. Whether or not that claim is valid, what is inarguable is that it's the most unusual, with parade favorites the Synchronized Snowplows. The Old Forge Redheads, Old Forge Irish Setters Club (which still has many dogs, but no Irish Setters), the Precision Shopping Carts, and more. After the parade, everyone is invited to The Old Forge Fire Hall to sample Irish Stews that are made by local residents, and are judged for Best Irish Stew by the public. Soda bread and green beverages are also offered to everyone free of charge. Old Forge attorney Tim Foley also wanted us to tell you that he will be holding a pre-party gathering at 4 PM at his office at 2973 Rt. 28... On Saturday, March 19th, Camden will host its 10th annual St. Patrick's Day parade, starting promptly at 2 PM, with the line-up starting on Railroad Street. Line up is on a first-come, first-served basis. Awards will be given and a 50/50 raffle will be held at Katie & Karl's Restaurant on Harden Boulevard, with entertainment by the Moss Back Mule Band following the parade. Katie & Karl's will feature a traditional corned beef and cabbage buffet and Reuben sandwiches will also be available. For more information, contact the Camden St. Patrick's Day Parade Committee at camdenstpatsday@aol.com... Finally, The Sherburne St. Patrick's Parade Committee has chosen Lloyd Baker of Sherburne to serve as grand marshal for the annual parade that will step off at 1 PM on Sunday, March 6. The parade will begin at the Sherburne Fire Station and proceed up North Main Street (Route 12) to the Cotton Mill parking lot. Parade-goers can look forward to three bagpipe groups. New to the lineup this year is the New York State Corrections Emerald Society who will join returning favorites The Hobart Pipe and Drum Corps, and the Edward P. Maloney Memorial Pipe Band. Other annual participants include the Claddagh Ring Dancers and the Johnston School of Irish Dance and many others. As the parade is celebrating its 10th anniversary, the past nine grand marshals will also be riding together on a float. If you want to join in the fun, call Theresa Mastro at (607) 674-4573 or Kathy O'Connor at (607) 674-9744. Last minute participants are welcome to join the lineup the day of the parade.

Grand Marshal's Reception to be held at the Stanley

Marking the ceremonial "passing of the Shillelagh" from the previous parade Grand Marshal to this year's, the Utica Parade Grand Marshal's Reception will be held on March 8, 2011, in the lobby of the historic Stanley Theater. Last year's Grand Marshal, Frank Kealy, will be on hand to do the honors, when – flanked by an assemblage of past Grand Marshals – he hands off the shillelagh to this year's honoree, the Honorable Michael L. Dwyer. The reception, which runs from 5-8 PM, costs \$10. Food and refreshments are included, and providing entertainment throughout the evening will be the Blarney Rebel Band.

Catch a Preview of the High Kings

One of the headliners of this summer's Great American Irish Festival – the High Kings -- will be making a "reconnaissance tour" of the area, with three performances this month. The High Kings has become a cultural phenomenon, having been named Ireland's Folk Band of the year and winners of Irish Music Award's Top Traditional Performance Show. Boasting a musical pedigree that few can match, and fresh off record-breaking PBS showings, four musical powerhouses -- Finbarr Clancy of the legendary Clancy family, Brian Dunphy, son of well-known singer, Sean Dunphy, Martin Furey of the famous Furey family of musicians, and renowned vocalist Darren Holden -- have come together to create the most exciting Irish ballad group to emerge since The Clancy Brothers and Tommy Makem electrified the worldwide folk revival of the 1960s.

On March 11th, you can catch the gents at Syracuse's Westcott Theater for a special 8 PM show. Tickets are \$25 and \$30. March 12th finds them at the "North Country Goes Green" festival for a 7 PM show; tickets are \$10. Finally, on the 13th, they will be at The Egg in Albany for a 7:30 PM show. Tickets are \$30.

Seminal Irish Dance Productions Step Out

If it's high-energy, powerful, professional musical productions you want, you are in luck this month. The two most influential and breath-taking shows that literally woke the world to the majesty and grace of Irish dance – Riverdance and Lord of the Dance – will be giving you plenty of opportunities to get your fix. **Riverdance**, the show that started it all with its thunderous celebration of Irish music, song and dance, will play three performances at Albany's Palace Theatre, on March 4th (8 PM) and 5th (2 and 8 PM). If you've seen the show, you know why it's been called "an explosion of sight and sound that simply takes your breath away." Tickets for the show range from \$34.50 to \$59.50, and are available at the Palace's [web site](#) or via Ticketmaster.

Michael Flatley's follow-up project, **Lord of the Dance**, is a classic tale of good versus evil, based on Irish folklore that brings a passionate love story to life. Flatley, along with Dance Director Marie Duffy-Pask, hand picked the cast of over 40 dancers; each has achieved individual recognition as a national or worldwide dance champion. Described by the Los Angeles Times as "a showpiece extravaganza," Lord of the Dance is a mesmerizing blend of traditional and modern Celtic music and dance. This spectacular show continues its demanding touring schedule, with no less than four scheduled performances in the area this month. On March 11th, you can catch the show at the Rochester Auditorium Theater (885 East Main Street) for an 8 PM show. Tickets range from \$37.50-\$57.50 and are available at their [web site](#), the Auditorium Theatre Box Office, or by calling (800) 745-3000. On March 16th, the show will take place at 7:30 PM at the OnCenter in Syracuse; tickets are \$28 to \$62, and can be purchased via the OnCenter [web site](#). The 18th finds them at the Clemens Center in Elmira for a 7:30 show; call (607) 734-8191 or (800) 724-0159, or visit [here](#) for your \$39.50 to \$59.50 tickets. Right on the heels (haha!) of that performance, the show wraps up its New York swing with an 8 PM performance at Shea's Performing Arts Center in Buffalo. Tickets for that show range from \$32 to \$67.50, and can be purchased via Shea's [web site](#) or through any Ticketmaster outlet.

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

This month's recipe... "Brownies with Irish Cream Icing"

Ingredients:

Brownies:

4 oz. bittersweet chocolate
1 oz. unsweetened chocolate
1/2 C butter
3/4 C sugar
2 tsp. vanilla extract

1/4 tsp. salt
3 large eggs
1 C flour

Topping:

1/3 C Irish Cream liqueur (such as Bailey's)
8 oz. white chocolate, chopped

Method:

Pre-heat oven to 325 F. Line an 8" x 8" baking pan with aluminum foil, leaving at least 2 inches of foil overhanging on all sides (this will help you lift the finished brownies out of the pan and eliminate messy pan clean-up). Set aside. Melt chocolate and butter together in a heavy saucepan over medium heat, stirring constantly. Remove from heat and cool slightly. Whisk sugar, vanilla and salt into chocolate mixture, followed by the eggs, one at a time. Continue whisking mixture until it is shiny and smooth. Add flour and whisk just until blended. Pour batter into prepared pan and level top. Bake for about 35 minutes, or until cake tester comes out with a few moist crumbs clinging to it. Cool completely in pan.

Topping: Heat liqueur to a boil, remove from heat and whisk in white chocolate until it is completely melted and mixture is smooth. Refrigerate until mixture becomes thick enough to spread, stirring occasionally, about 30 minutes. Spread topping over brownies and refrigerate until cold. Let stand at room temperature for 30 minutes before serving. To cut, simply lift brownies, foil and all out of pan, peel off foil and cut!

Book Review:
“My Lady Judge: A Mystery of Medieval Ireland”
By Mark Sisti

In “My Lady Judge” by Cora Harrison, we are introduced to a likable, if a little too perfect, character, Mara O'Davoren, who serves as Brehon, or chief law-giver, in Ireland in 1509. (Ms. Harrison has since added more books to the series, including one just released, but I'm a firm believer in reading a series in order.)

Mara, only 36 years old, but already a well-respected brehon, or judge, runs a law school in the relatively remote region of Ireland known as the Burren. In celebration of the feast of Beltane, most of the village residents climb the nearby mountain to witness the lighting of the ceremonial bonfire. One, however, does not come back down: Mara's assistant, Colman, has been stabbed to death sometime during the evening. No one seems particularly upset with the death, and as Mara investigates, no one is forthcoming with information, although it is clear to her that many, if not most, must have seen the body.

As she investigates further she discovers the reason why no one is upset with Colman's death: he was a thoroughly unlikable person who was using his access to the Brehon's judgments to blackmail pretty much everyone in the village. Even though Mara herself didn't care much for Colman, it is still her responsibility to bring the guilty party to justice, even if he or she may have been partially justified, no matter who had done the killing. This, for me, was one of the problems with the mystery. There were too many suspects, all with the same motive, and none of them distinct enough to make them a more viable suspect than any other. When the solution is finally announced, it makes sense, but it could just as easily have been any of a number of characters.

But what made the book come alive for me was Harrison's technique of starting each chapter with a section of the Brehon law. The common sense of these laws as presented makes you look at our “civilized” judicial system and shake your head, and the contrast between these laws and the comparatively barbaric laws in place in England at the time is used to great effect. My particular favorite chapter preface discusses when a woman may retain her full “bride price” after a divorce: “1) If the man leaves her for another woman; 2) if the man is impotent or homosexual; 3) if he is so fat as to be incapable of intercourse; 4) if the man relates secrets of the marriage bed in the alehouse.” While the archaic language and frequent use of Gaelic phrases may be off-putting for some, these amusing and enlightening little passages do a great job of placing the reader in the time and setting of the story.

“My Lady Judge” is perfect proof that a book doesn't have to be deep, profound literature to be enjoyable. The writing, while a little too heavy on landscape descriptions, is unadorned and straightforward. Characters, with few exceptions, are not particularly fleshed out, and the mystery, while interesting, presents no startling revelations, no shocking discovery and no particularly brilliant detective work. The simplicity and lack of depth is not all that surprising, since Harrison is a well-known writer of children's books, and it doesn't detract from the story; in fact, it almost serves as a reflection of the simplicity of the way of life for the people of the Burren.

The comparisons between this series and Peter Tremayne's Sister Fidelma series are inevitable, and anyone who enjoys Tremayne's series will like this one as well. I thoroughly enjoyed it and most likely will read the others in the series. As those who read these reviews can attest, my taste in mysteries runs more toward the hard-boiled, and this certainly is not in that genre. It is more of a comfortable and relaxing read, more tea than whiskey, and sometimes, that's what we're looking for.

(Special thanks to Mary Beth Portley, Jervis Public Library Librarian, who said “SHHHH!”, I mean, who recommended this book.)

Craobh Dugan “Tune of the Month” – The Battle March Set –by Skip Mansur

The Irish month of March is upon us, so what better time to look at a set of marches? Irish marches are usually in quick 2/4 or 6/8 time (typically 110-120 beats per minute (bpm)), or a slower and typically notey-er 4/4 or common time (typically 90-100 bpm). Marches were originally used for military drills and music, often to help marching soldiers keep tempo during training drills, and remain a reminder of Ireland’s embattled history.

Presented this month is a medley of marches that are favorites at our local session. The set starts off with a slower 4/4 march, “Return From Fingal,” and is followed by two successively quicker marches. Fingal in Irish Fine Gall means ‘foreigner’s territory,’ and is another name for Clontarf, located just north of Dublin. “Fingal” is supposed by some to be the march played on the return of King Brian Boru’s troops after the Battle of Clontarf, a thousand years ago between Irish forces and the Danes on Good Friday, A.D. 1014. The Irish routed the Máel Mórda forces; however, a retreating band of Norsemen killed Brian. This tune is also sometimes confusingly known as “The Battle of Aughrim;” an event which occurred six centuries later than Fingal.

Return From Fingal (The Joy of Life)

Battle of Aughrim Set

EDor

Em D Em D Em March

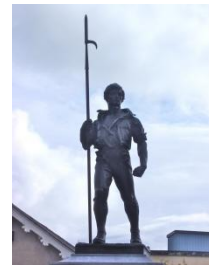
The second tune, “The Battle of Aughrim” (also known as “After the Battle of Aughrim”), is a bit quicker march in 2/4 time. This tune commemorates the last great defeat of the native Gaelic army (Jacobites) in Ireland by the forces of William III, on July 12th, 1691; marking the end of the old Gaelic aristocracy. Over 7000 died in the battle that day.

The Battle of Aughrim

ADor

Am C G Em Am G Em March

The last tune, “The Halting March,” also known as “The Pikeman’s March,” dates from the 1798 United Irishman Rebellion of a republican revolutionary group against the British rule in Ireland. From 1691 and the end of the Williamite war, Ireland had chiefly been controlled by a Protestant Ascendancy constituted by members of the established Church loyal to the British Crown. At particular checks in the tune, drilling pikemen would thrust their pikes toward their opponents. This tune is played at a fairly rapid tempo. Recalling last month’s notes on modes, these three tunes are all played in the Dorian mode, which is found by playing a scale starting on the second note, e.g., for A Dorian (which is in the Key of G), play from A up to the next A.



The Halting March

ADor

Am G Em March

Music of the Season There is so much going on this month, in order to keep the newsletter to a manageable heft, we're going to bulletize some of the many events going on in the general area.

- 🍷 **Runa** –Through their energetic and graceful acoustic melodies, fusion of styles from Ireland, Scotland, Shetland Islands, Canada, and the United States, Runa gives their traditional songs and tunes a fresh, elegant and deliciously mystical sound. On March 6th, they'll be returning to [Caffè Lena](#) in Saratoga Springs for a 7 PM performance. Tickets are \$15 advance; \$17 at door. Then on March 13th, they'll be appearing at “[6 On The Square](#)” in Oxford (the site of the former Night Eagle Café) for a 3 PM show; tickets are \$12 in advance, or \$15 at the door.
- 🍷 **Glengarry Bhoys** – These GAIF favorites are starting to tour more often, and this month they'll be performing at the BallyBay Pub in Syracuse on March 10th to help raise money for the Syracuse Irish Festival. Joining the group at this 7 PM show will be The Causeway Giants. Tickets are \$20.
- 🍷 **Munnelly** – You saw them at the 2008 Great American Irish Festival, and now you can see them again, on March 12th at the 8th Step at [Proctor's Theater](#) in Schenectady. Led by multi-award-winning accordion virtuosos/composer David Munnelly (The Chieftains), they delight audiences across America and Europe at festivals and concert halls, including The Kennedy Center, where families danced in the aisles to the band's exhilarating music. Tickets for the 7:30 PM show are \$22, and can be purchased [on-line](#).
- 🍷 **Lúnasa** Described as “The Bothy Band meets the Flecktones,” Lúnasa makes its long-awaited return to the area, when the celebrated group comes to the [Palace Theater](#) in Syracuse (2384 James Street) for a 7 PM show on March 16th. Celebrate St. Patrick's Day with the “hottest Irish acoustic group on the planet.” The show – a steal at \$22 – also features the Drumcliffe School Dancers.
- 🍷 **McPeake** We were treated to them at the inaugural GAIF Golf Tournament in 2009, and caught them a few more times last fall... and now McPeake can be yours to enjoy, as they'll be performing at a very special 8 PM concert at Munson-Williams Proctor Art Institute's Museum of Art Root Sculpture Court, as part of MWPAI's [Concert in the Court](#) series. Enjoy “100 Years of Irish Tradition”! Tickets for the concert are \$30.
- 🍷 **De Dannan** – The legendary group once described as “the Rolling Stones of Irish Traditional Music” is touring again. Founding members Alec Finn and Johnny ‘Ringo’ McDonagh will be joined by luminaries of Irish music who have played with the band over the years. On March 19th, they visit Homer NY's [Center for the Arts](#) for a rare 8 PM show. Tickets are \$30 for adults and \$25 for seniors (members get a discount), and students get in for \$10. This is truly a “must-see” event!
- 🍷 **Celtic Woman** – On March 23rd, Celtic Woman, a smash hit around the globe, returns to the [Palace Theater](#) in Albany with an all new live show! The awe inspiring vocalists Lisa, Chloë, Lynn and Alex, along with the mesmerizing Celtic violinist Máiréad, continue to capture the hearts of fans across the country on a whirlwind tour of America. Tickets for this 7:30 show range from \$32 to \$62, and can be purchased [on-line](#). For more information, call (518) 465-3334 or visit the Palace Theater website.
- 🍷 **Gaelic Storm** -- While Gaelic Storm plays Celtic music that hearkens back to the traditional music of Ireland, they are hardly traditionalists, adding modern sounds and drawing influences from American rock and pop as well as music styles from around the world (my favorite quote describes them as “... nicely out of sync with the norm”). On March 25, you'll get to see what the buzz is all about as Patrick Murphy (newly bald in support of St. Baldrick's Day – see below for more info on what that means) and Steve Swigger bring the band to [The Egg](#) in Albany for an 8 PM show you won't forget. Tickets are \$25.
- 🍷 **Celtic Crossroads, Searson, and the Blarney Rebel Band** will be taking turns performing at the [Turning Stone Casino](#), on March 17th. Celtic Crossroads is critically acclaimed as “...the most exhilarating and authentic show to come from Ireland in decades – not to be missed.” They will be kicking things off with a 3 PM show in the Event Center, for which tickets are \$25. Searson takes to the Showroom stage at 8 PM; \$10 will get you in. And finally, local favorites the Blarney Rebel Band start at 9 PM the Leopard Lounge...where they now sell beer.

RANDOM RAMBLINGS

- ✚ **Mass honoring Saint Patrick** Lest anyone forget the reason for this special and reverent Irish holiday, the John C. Devereux Chapter of the Ancient Order of Hibernians and the Ladies AOH have arranged for a mass honoring St. Patrick on March 11, 2011, at Saint Joseph-Saint Patrick's Church, 702 Columbia St. in Utica. There will be Irish music beginning at 6:30, and the mass proper begins at 7 PM.
- ✚ **Irish Flag Raising Ceremony** Utica City Hall will be the site of a now-annual Irish Flag Raising ceremony, when at noon on March 9th, St. Patrick's Day Parade Grand Marshal Michael Dwyer, along with Mayor David Roefaro, will raise the Irish flag to solemnly commemorate the storied past of Utica's Irish citizenry, and the many contributions they have made to the culture and history of the city. The ceremony, which is open to the public, begins in City Hall with a proclamation from the Mayor's office.
- ✚ **Talk the Talk** Our spoken-Gaelic expert, Tom Malley, writes: If you attend the Mass for St. Patrick on March 11th (above), when it comes time to offer a sign of peace, try saying "Síochán." This is the Irish word for "peace," and it's pronounced "shee-uh-khawn." The *kh* represents a sound similar to the *ch* in the German word "ach." And if you want to greet someone with "the blessings of St Patrick's Day to you," you might try: "Beannachtaí La Féile Padraig duit" (pronounced "Ban-acht-ee law fay-la Porr-ig dit"), or the short form, "Lá Féile Padraig duit."
- ✚ **"Nuacht as Craobh Dugan"---news from the Dugan Branch** Chris Hoke of Craobh Dugan reports that the Craobh Dugan Appreciation Dinner was held on Feb 13 and was attended by about 30 people. The night began with a nice meal, followed by a great session and ceili afterwards. She also announced that they are still seeking an appropriate venue for the Comhaltas North American Tour Concert, which will be coming to the area this fall for the first time in well over a decade. If you have any ideas, please let us or Chris know; there is a lot of work involved in putting together an event of this magnitude, and October 14th is not all that far off. Finally, we would like to join our friends in Craobh Dugan in congratulating Winnie Kauth, long time member of the branch, who was awarded the Ladies Ancient Order of Hibernians' "Mother Teresa Award;" recognizing her for leading an exemplary Christian life, quietly serving others and never seeking recognition. Congratulations Winnie!
- ✚ **"Brave a Shave"** In the Events Calendar that appears at the end of this newsletter, you'll see on Sunday, March 27th, a rather cryptic reference to an event at Kitty Hoyne's called "St. Baldrick's Day Fundraiser." No, it is not another St. Patrick's Day party... it's much more noble than that. What it is is one of hundreds of fundraisers organized by the St. Baldrick's Foundation, whose mission is "...to raise awareness and funds to Conquer Kids' Cancer by shaving heads on St. Baldrick's Day." What started in 2000 as a friendly challenge between three Long Island men has grown into the world's largest event for combating childhood cancer. Since that first "dare," St. Baldrick's Day fundraisers around the world have raised over \$87.5 million for the CureSearch National Childhood Cancer Foundation and the CureSearch Children's Oncology Group. With a record total of over \$360,000 raised at last year's event, Kitty Hoyne's is in the top ten of all St. Baldrick's events world wide! Their goal this year is to raise \$330,000 for childhood cancer research. To get involved in Kitty Hoyne's fundraiser or for more information on this worthy cause, check out www.stbaldricks.org. If you can't attend (or don't want to get shaved), donations are welcomed.
- ✚ **St. John's Presents "A Common Thread"** Contributor Ed Finnerty reports: "On Sunday, March 20th, we will be celebrating St. Patrick's Day with **A Common Thread** performing Celtic Music on the harp and violin at St. John's Parish Center, Third Street in Camden, NY. The performance will be from 2:00 to 4:00. Refreshments will be available. There is no charge to attend.... Also, St. John's Tour Group is planning a trip to Ireland from July 31 to August 9, 2011. If anyone is interested, please contact Ed Finnerty at (315) 245-2440 for more information. The tour is limited to 20 people at this time."

✚ **North Country Goes Green” Irish Festival** From March 10-13, Watertown plays host to their annual “North Country Goes Green” Irish Festival, at the State Office Building. The festival, promising three days of constant musical entertainment, supports **Project Children**, raising money to bring children from Northern Ireland to Northern New York for four weeks in the summer. This year’s festival features a lineup that includes the very popular **High Kings, McPeake, Searson, Cliudan, The Terry Mostyn Band, George Murphy** and **Beautiful Day**, a U2 tribute band. Admission to the festival is \$6 per person, with children 12 and under admitted free if accompanied by a parent. The McPeake and High Kings concerts are extra, at \$10 each. For additional information, visit <http://www.ncirishfest.com/>

✚ **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 a show at the Stanley Theater AND dinner for two at the Celtic Harp AND four hours of limo service. Yes, that’s the third prize! Second prize will get you Great American Irish Festival weekend gate passes for two and one-day access to the hospitality tent (food and beverage). And first prize is a private party for 25 people at the 1888 Tavern at the FX 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). Winners will be drawn on March 17th.

✚ **Irish Programming on WCNY** You’ll find Irish aplenty on WCNY this month, including Tommy Makem’s Ireland (Pt 1, March 12, 6 AM & noon; Pt 2, 7 AM & 1 PM); Smart Travels: Dublin and Beyond (March 12, 9 AM & 3 PM), and Smart Travels: Ireland’s West Coast (March 12, 11 AM & 5 PM).

✚ **Sad News** Earlier this month, we received the terrible news that of one of the funniest and friendliest guys in the Irish music community -- Patrick Halloran, front man and primary songwriter for the Pittsburgh-based band, **Ceann** -- tragically lost his life in a car accident coming down a snowy stretch of road in Mendon, Vermont, on February 1st. He and his band performed at last summer’s Great American Irish Festival, and we all hit it off instantly with Patrick, Jeff and the rest of the lunatics (as did they with us; witness their testimony that opens Shannon Straney’s video clip on the GAIF homepage, [here](#)). Yes, we were originally drawn to the band because of songs with lyrics like “I got a major miner shiner/From the father of a minor” and “You’re pretty on the inside/Too bad I’m an outside kind of pretty guy,” and albums titled “Rave, Rant, Lose Pants” and “Us Drunk Live,” but we soon got to know Patrick as a genuinely great guy who simply saw the world as too serious to take seriously. We have some great memories of him when he met up with us at the Celtic Harp after a concert at MVCC, and again as he slapped the table with wonderment and roars of laughter, fooled again and again by a sleight-of-hand magician in the GAIF VIP tent, long after the festival crowd had gone home. But if the sentiments on Ceann’s web site are any indication, each and every person on nearly six pages of recollections also recounted a different personal and humorous memory of their time with Patrick. And that may be the greatest epitaph of all.

Celtic Club Calendar Finally, here’s the Irish Musical and Cultural calendar for March:

Mar 1	“Nail Creek Sessions”	Nail Creek Pub	Utica	7:30-10 PM	Free
Mar 3	Traditional Irish Session	Marcellus Legion Hall	Marcellus, NY	4-7 PM	Free
Mar 4	“Mostly Irish” Monthly Jam	Irish American Club	Amsterdam NY	7:30 PM	Free
Mar 4	Pat Kane	Kitty Hoynes	Syracuse	8:30 PM	Free
Mar 4-5	Riverdance	Palace Theatre	Albany	8 PM (4 th , 5 th) 2 PM (5 th)	\$34.50-\$59.50
Mar 6	Runa	Caffè Lena	Saratoga Springs	7 PM	\$15 adv/\$17 door

Mar 6	Donal O'Shaughnessey	Coleman's Irish Pub	Syracuse	4-7 PM	Free
Mar 7	Trad Irish Music Session	The Susquehanna Café	Bainbridge NY	5:30-8:30 PM	Free
Mar 8	Parade Grand Marshal Reception	Stanley Theater	Utica	5-8 PM	\$10
Mar 10	Glengarry Bhoys	Johnston's Bally Bay Pub	Syracuse	7 PM	\$20
Mar 10-13	North Country Goes Green	Dulles State Office Building	Watertown	varies	\$6 (concerts \$10 ea)
Mar 10	Traditional Irish Session	Marcellus Legion Hall	Marcellus, NY	4-7 PM	Free
Mar 11	High Kings	Westcott Theater	Syracuse	8 PM	\$25-\$30
Mar 11	Lord of the Dance	Rochester Aud Theater	Rochester	8 PM	\$37.50-\$57.50
Mar 11	Donal O'Shaughnessey	Piggy Pat's Pickled Pig Pub	Washington Mills	6-9 PM	Free
Mar 12	Utica's St. Patrick's Parade	Genesee St.	Utica	10 AM	Free
Mar 12	Vince Colgan	Piggy Pat's Pickled Pig Pub	Washington Mills	3 PM	Free
Mar 12	Munnely	Proctor's Theater	Schenectady	7:30 PM	\$22
Mar 12	Trad Irish Music Session	Kitty Hoynes	Syracuse	2-5 PM	Free
Mar 12	Hair of the Dog	Parting Glass	Saratoga Springs	7 & 9:30 PM	\$15, res'v req'd
Mar 13	High Kings	The Egg	Albany	7:30 PM	\$30
Mar 13	Runa	6 On The Square	Oxford, NY	3 PM	\$12 adv/\$15 door
Mar 14	Trad Irish Music Session	The Susquehanna Café	Bainbridge NY	5:30-8:30 PM	Free
Mar 16	Lúnasa	Palace Theater	Syracuse	7 PM	\$22
Mar 16	Lord of the Dance	The OnCenter	Syracuse	7:30 PM	\$28-\$62
Mar 16	Traditional Irish Session	The Mill	Rome, NY	7:30 PM	Free
Mar 16	Traditional Irish Session	Marcellus Legion Hall	Marcellus, NY	4-7 PM	Free
Mar 17	Celtic Crossroads	Turning Stone	Verona, NY	3 PM	\$25
Mar 17	Searson	Turning Stone	Verona, NY	8 PM	\$10
Mar 17	Blarney Rebel Band	Turning Stone	Verona, NY	9 PM	Free
Mar 18	Lord of the Dance	Clemens Center	Elmira, NY	7:30 PM	\$29.50-\$59.50
Mar 18	Blarney Rebel Band	Piggy Pat's Pickled Pig Pub	Washington Mills	6-9 PM	Free
Mar 19	McPeake	Munson-Williams-Proctor	Utica	8 PM	\$30
Mar 19	De Dannan	Center for the Arts	Homer	8 PM	\$30, \$25 Srs, \$10 Students
Mar 19	Lord of the Dance	Shea's Performing Arts Ctr	Buffalo	8 PM	\$32-\$67.50
Mar 19	Blarney Rebel Band	New Hartford Shopping Ctr	New Hartford	1-3 PM	Free
Mar 20	Syracuse Irish Session	Johnston's Bally Bay Pub	Syracuse	4-7 PM	Free
Mar 20	A Common Thread	St. John's Parish Center	Camden	2 PM	Free
Mar 21	Trad Irish Music Session	The Susquehanna Café	Bainbridge NY	5:30-8:30 PM	Free
Mar 23	Celtic Woman	Palace Theatre	Albany	7:30 PM	\$32-\$62
Mar 24	Traditional Irish Session	Marcellus Legion Hall	Marcellus, NY	4-7 PM	Free
Mar 25	Gaelic Storm	The Egg	Albany	8 PM	\$25
Mar 26	Trad Irish Music Session	Kitty Hoynes	Syracuse	2-5 PM	Free
Mar 27	St. Baldrick's Day	Kitty Hoynes	Syracuse	11 AM	Free/donations
Mar 28	Trad Irish Music Session	The Susquehanna Café	Bainbridge NY	5:30-8:30 PM	Free
Mar 31	Traditional Irish Session	Marcellus Legion Hall	Marcellus, NY	4-7 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. As always, while we try to get things – prices, places, genders, etc. -- as accurate as we can, sometimes (but not often) we admit to making mistakes. It always makes sense to call ahead to confirm some of these further-out trips. In the meantime, chances are quite good that we'll see you out and about somewhere this month!