TRADITIONAL MUSIC & SONG

fonn

Vol. 2 No. 8 Spring 2026



ÓMÓS

about fonn

fonn is the Irish for an air or a tune. But it can also mean desire or enthusiasm. This magazine is enthusiastic about airs and tunes – traditional music and song. Our approach to traditional music and song is respectful. We respect those who work to preserve the tradition. Equally we respect those who explore the boundaries of the tradition by collaborating with musicians in other genres and styles. We believe in parity of esteem for both of these movements within traditional and folk music. They are complementary – not incompatible.

Editor:
Séamas Sheils

Contact **fonn**:
info@fonn.online
00-353-87-9626213

25 The Old Mill
Ratoath Co. Meath
Ireland

Mournful months

This edition of **fonn** leans heavily on obituaries and tributes – with an unusually large number of fatalities among high profile performers in the folk and traditional music communties of Ireland and Britain.

December saw the tragic loss of two great champions of the Scottish folk scene – singer-songwriters Robin Laing and Adam MacNaughtan – following closely on the death of the acclaimed Archie Fisher at the end of November.

In January we mourned the passing of two remarkable musicians from the most southerly and most northerly counties of Ireland. The remarkable Seán Ó Sé from Cork had long entered the firmament of legendary Irish singers through his ground-breaking association with the maestro, Seán Ó Riada, which continued with his son, Peadar Ó Riada, while the great Donegal fiddle master, Frank Kelly, was directly linked, through his cousin and playing partner, Hughie Gillespie, to Irish-American fiddle legends like Michael Coleman and Lad O'Beirne. February saw the demise of another remarkable fiddle player, Ted Sweeney, from Killeshandra in Cavan

In March three highly influential figures took their leave: the wonderful Nellie Weldon, Liam's muse, and the spiritual mother to successive generations of traditional singers in Dublin and beyond; the unique Dolores Keane, Ireland's queen of soul (to quote Nanci Griffith); and the creative genius behind Topic, Transatlantic and Leader Records, Bill Leader.

And while we had barely drawn breath from reflecting on the depth of ther loss to our community, two more stars in the Northern sky were extinguished in April: the awe-inspiring singer and harpist, Moya Brennan, and the guitar/bouzouki player and composer, Fintan MacManus, from Fermanagh via Cavan. By the month's end, one more name had been added to the mournful list – the singer and music organiser, Éilish Moore.

In a world where there is little comfort to be found in many of the major events of the day, we could ill afford to lose so many remarkable purveyors of the joy of living. Yet before their races were run, they passed on the baton by inspiring the next generations to ensure that the tradition continues. So the music they all shared will endure: it will be played: it will be sung: and it will continue to bring people together.







▲ Martin Carthy (Page 9)

GRACE NOTES 5-18

- Claire's a sharp shooter 5
- Ríona strikes gold 5
- Kennedy Piping Festival set to return.....6
- Belfast Tradfest… 7
- Podcaster Tara wins award.....7
- Aoife to reside in Cork.....8
- Music Network's fortieth anniversary.....8
- Martin Carthy retires from touring.....9
- Doctor Casey 9
- Masters of Tradition returns to West Cork 9
- University of Limerick honours Mickey Dunne 10
- Rhiannon misses out 10
- Trip to Birmingham on hiatus....11
- Liam is ITMA's Banner Man 11
- Orla takes up residence.....13
- Scoil Samhraidh Willie Clancy ...13
- Belfast gears up for Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann 14
- Dom is officially a famous American banjo player 14
- Sexist attitudes bedevil Scots folk scene – report 16
- Sick pics 17

LEGACY 19-32

- Vincent's vision 19
- Vincent Broderick composer ...20
- The last of the old Gaelic harpers 22
- Martin Wynne remembered ...23
- Memorial project seeks to honour legendary pipers.....24
- Putting Donegal's fiddlers in the picture 25
- Fundraising for new film on Mick Moloney.....26
- Time capsule available on Bandcamp 26

ÓMÓS 27-46

- Frank Kelly.....27
- Dolores Keane.....28
- Moya Brennan 32
- Moya: My Beautiful Friend by Mairéad Ní Mhaonaigh ...36
- Fintan MacManus 37
- Archie Fisher 38
- Robin Laing.....39
- Adam MacNaughtan.....39
- Seán Ó Sé.....40
- Nellie Weldon 43
- Ted Sweeney 44
- Éilish Moore.....44
- Bill Leader 45

▼ Seán Ó Sé (right) with Peadar Ó Riada (Page 40)





E. R. McLintock-Dix (Page 47)

MAJOR SCÉAL 47-60

The Unherlded Song Collector: E.R. McLintock-Dix by Seán Faulkner

SIGHT READING 61-74

- IFI streams Inishowen song film 61
- Potts by Potts....62
- The Music from the Liffey....63
- Christy's Cartlann 64
- New original tunes from McGoldrick 65
- Michael's year of songs....65
- Songs new and recycled 66
- Lost Tipp songs found 67
- Songs for Union maids 68
- Analysing protest music....69
- New tune book celebrates music of Hughie Galagher ...70
- New Cambridge Companion to Folk Music set to become valuable resource 71
- The pick of the crop....72
- Coming soon: Irish traditional music in Germany 72
- Women in Irish traditional music 73

SOUND CHECK 75-97

- New solo album from Teresa Hoga....75
- Making an Impression: Ruairí McGorman 76
- Genuine Negro Jig Re-issue....76
- Ground-breaking collaboration: Scahill and Anderson....77
- The Long and Winding Road...78
- Getting to the Heart: Begley and O'Connor 79
- Golden Stepping Stones....80
- Catherine's Homecoming 81
- Seán's stunning *Salamanca* 82
- Iconic album from 1970s re-released on digital 83
- New album from Woody....83
- Women pipe up 84
- Perfectly polished: Le Vent du Nord....85
- Mullach a tSí 85
- Shining Bright: Amelia Hogan.. 86
- Seeking Harmony: Barry Kerr.... 89
- Forged in Slíabh Luachra 90
- Glorious Mahalia tribute....91
- Sinéad's jewels....92
- Boxing clever 93
- Homérique: the stuff of legend 94
- Artful craft: The Weaving....95
- Just a tune at Firelight 95
- Maurice's swan song....96
- Ó Gráda Abú....96
- Songs that travelled 96
- Sligo's Atlantic Crossing....96
- Stranger sounds....97
- Divine creativity 97
- Tribute from a songbird 97
- Six lovely lasses....97

CODA 98-99

- Singing Session Directory....98

GRACE NOTES



Claire Loughran

Claire's a sharp shooter

Claire Loughran is to be the photographer-in-residence at the Irish Traditional Music Archive (ITMA) for 2026.

Over the course of the year, Claire's work will feature as galleries on the ITMA web-site, and her photographs will also be added to the ITMA's collections.

Raised in a family of Irish traditional musicians, Claire was immersed in the dynamic Irish traditional music scene in Belfast where she grew up playing fiddle and harp, and became a regular performer at festivals in Ireland and abroad.

She went on to teach music in Belfast for over ten years and is now a member of the all-female band, BIIRD.

Her love of music and creative flare has led her into music/festival photography – shooting live concerts for various artists including Beoga, The Olllam and Kneecap. She has also worked with festivals like Belfast Tradfest and Scoil Gheimhridh Gaoth Dobhair.

She is also an active member of Irish Artists For Palestine, having captured and documented many protests, demonstrations and fundraising events across Ireland.



Ríona Hely reigns supreme in Bonn Óir Seán Ó Riada (Photo: Darragh Kane)

Ríona strikes gold

SUCCESS IN BONN ÓIR SEÁN Ó RIADA

Concertina player Ríona Hely from Ennis, Co. Clare, is the winner of the 2026 Bonn Óir Seán Ó Riada Competition – receiving a gold medal and a cash prize of €2,500 at the event in the Rochestown Park Hotel in Cork in January.

Established by Peadar Ó Riada, the Bonn Óir Seán Ó Riada competition celebrates a different traditional instrument or set of instruments each year. This year the featured set consisted of metal reed instruments – the accordion, concertina and harmonica.



The gold medal

The judges were Mary MacNamara, Johnny Óg Connolly and Danny O'Mahony.

Hely's winning performance included John Kelly's *Old Concertina Reel* and *The Morning Star* followed by *The Walls of Liscarroll* and *Willie Coleman's Jig*.

The other fourteen finalists were Seán Ahern, Caitríona Fee, William Holmes, Colin Kadis, Caomhán Mac Gabhann, Joseph Mannion, Éabha Ní Mhurchú, Oisín Ó Brolacháin, Ciarán O'Connell, Ademar O'Connor, Amhlaoibh Ó Síocháin Ó Beoláin, Aidan Quigney, Colm Slattery and Annalise Whyte.

Ríona is a second-year music and Gaeilge student at University College Cork, where she received a Quercus scholarship in her first year.

She learned concertina in East Clare and has had a number of successes at Fleadhanna Cheoil. She is particularly influenced by the older concertina style – notably the playing of the legendary Clare musicians, Elizabeth Crotty and Kitty Hayes.

Previous winners of the competition have included: Aoife Ní Bhriain (fiddle), Cormac Begley (concertina) Tiarnán Ó Duinnchinn (uilleann pipes), Úna Ní Fhlannagáin (harp), Colm Broderick (uilleann pipes), Sorcha Ní Scolaí (uilleann pipes), Keelan McGrath (accordion), Éanna Ó Cróinín (uilleann pipes), Seán Gavin (flute), Oisín Morrison (harp), and Darragh Curtin (fiddle).



Seven pipers piping: *(all photos: fonn)*

Kennedy piping festival to return

The William Kennedy Piping Festival (WKPF) will take return later this year from Thursday, November 12 to Sunday November 15, 2026. Relaunched by the Armagh Pipers Club to celebrate its sixtieth anniversary, the festival will feature concerts, workshops, and traditional sessions in Armagh City. The ;ine-up for the event is still to be finalised. But the WKPF team is working hard to produce a memorable programme to celebrate the return.

Over its thirty years up to 2024, the WKPF hosted over 1,100 musicians from countries as diverse as Algeria, Belarus, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Czechia, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iran, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Macedonia, Netherlands, Portugal, Romania Spain, Sweden and the USA, as well as Ireland, Scotland, England and Wales.

Within those countries the festival featured many unique piping traditions: from Italy it presented pipers from Piedmont, Sardinia, Sicily and Southern Italy. The rich piping tradition of Spain brought representatives of the distinctive genres of Asturias, Catalonia, Galicia and Mallorca, a well as both the northern and southern regions of the Basque Country. France with no fewer than fourteen distinct historic piping traditions was not only represented by the Breton pipes but also the lesser-known instruments of Burgundy, Corsica, Gascony, the Massif Central and the Occitan region.

Along with all the impressive voluntary inputs, an undertaking of this magnitude also requires a strong and reliable financial underpinning. While the festival received consistent support over the years from Armagh City and District Council and later Armagh, Ban--bridge and Craig-avon Borough Council and from local businesses, the pivotal backing from the Arts Council of Northern Ireland was intermittent and variable – making the planning of the event increasingly fraught.

In the absence of sufficient public funding, the Armagh Pipers' Club – essentially an educational project – had to become a major funder, with up £20,000 expended annually from its own reserves.

In November 2025, the Club presented a smaller-scale William Kennedy Weekend, centred on a concert with the supergroup Lúnasa, supported by José Manuel Tejedor (from Asturias) and Sébastien Lagrance and Gaël Rutkowski (France). There were also many pub, hotel and youth sessions, and a lecture.



Highland piper: Ross Ainslie



Uilleann pipers: *(from left)* Paddy Keenan, Jar Henderson and John McSherry



Small piper: Brighde Chaimbeul



Belfast bound: Flook

BELFAST TRADFEST 2026 ANNOUNCES LANDMARK CONCERTS AT MANDELA HALL

Belfast TradFest featuring world-class concerts, vibrant pub sessions, and Ireland's fastest-growing summer school of traditional music, will return this summer from 26 July to 2 August 2026 across Belfast UNESCO City of Music

Previewing the highlights of the week-long celebration marking Belfast's designation of UNESCO City of Music, artistic director, Dónal O'Connor, said:

"Audiences can look forward to performances from Manchester fiddle legend Dezi Donnelly, the doyenne of Ulster musicians Bríd Harper, Breton flute master Sylvain Barou, the 'world's greatest tin whistler' Mary Bergin, rising singing star Piaras Ó Loráin, Conamara sean-nós dance champion Becky Ní Éallaithe, New York's finest Joanie Madden and Tyrone legend Cathal Hayden, alongside major concert acts including Solas, The Michael McGoldrick Big Band, Flook, Cherish the Ladies and Four Men and a Dog, with lots more across the week."

After nearly twenty years away, Solas will return to Belfast for their long-awaited TradFest debut. Now celebrating their thirtieth anniversary, the acclaimed ensemble reunites founding members with a powerful line-up for what promises to be an unforgettable performance on Friday July 31.

The Michael McGoldrick Big Band will perform on Sunday July 26. Led by flute, whistle and uilleann pipe player, Michael McGoldrick, this all-star ensemble will bring together leading voices from the traditional, folk and jazz worlds, including Dezi Donnelly, Donald Shaw, Alan Kelly, Parvinder Bharat, Ed Boyd, Alyn Cosker, Duncan Lyall, James Macintosh, Graeme Blevins and Sorren Maclean.

On Thursday, July 30, the Empire Music Hall hosts a double bill of The Bonny Men and an exciting trio of Bríd Harper, Sylvain Barou and Libby McCrohan.

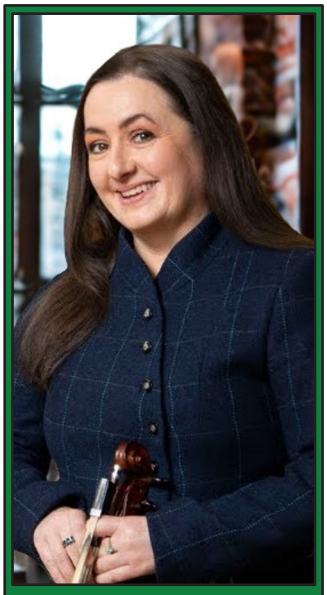
On Saturday August 1, Flook will be joined by special guests, An Chéad Ghlúin Eile (Étáin and Máire Ní Churraoin) for their biggest Belfast concert to date.

With more headline concerts, tutors, and special events yet to be announced, the full programme will be unveiled in June and will also encompass a summer school with world class tutors, a session trail, céilís, and a festival club.

Visit belfasttradfest.com to find out more and book now.



Making a welcome return to Tradfest: Michael McGoldrick



Tara Connaghan

Podcaster Tara wins big in Big Apple

Donegal fiddler, Tara Connaghan, scored an impressive success when her podcast, *In Tune with Tradition,* won five awards at the NYC Podcasting Awards in New York recently.

Tara won in three audience choice categories – Best Entertainment and Pop Culture; Best Interview; and Best Society and Culture –along with two of the categories determined by judges – Best Entertainment and Pop Culture; and Special Category Music.

Exploring the unwritten rules, shared experiences and stories that shape traditional music sessions, Tara's podcast was launched last July at the Willie Clancy Summer School with her first guest, Mairéad Ní Mhaonaigh of Altan.

Other guests have included Martin Hayes, Kevin Crawford, Siobhán Peoples, Enda Scahill, Shannon Heaton, Aimée Farrell Courtney, and Leonard Barry.

Tara from Glenties has played in a duo with fiddler, Derek McGinley; played as Co-Principal Fiddle with the Irish Memory Orchestra and is a founding member of the all-female Donegal fiddle group, SíFiddlers.

Aoife to reside in Cork



Traditional artist in residence at UCC: Aoife Ní Bhríain

Fiddler Aoife Ní Bhriain has been announed as the University College Cork (UCC) Traditional Artist in Residence for 2026.

UCC is one of six universities to partner with the Arts Council on this flagship programme, which reflects the diversity and richness of Ireland's creative landscape, with programmes spanning traditional arts, digital arts, literature and film. These awards jointly funded by the Arts Council and UCC, provide artists with dedicated workspaces and finances for their work. Born in Dublin to a family ofmusicians, Aoife Ní Bhriain has established herself as one of the most versatile musicians of her generation. Thanks to her musical heritage combined with her classical studies she has collaborated and performed with musicians such as fiddle player Martin Hayes, violinist Mariana Sirbu, Welsh harpist CatrinFinch and Oscar winning actor Tim Robbins.

She is a member of the Goodman Trio with whom she has explored the manuscripts of the music collected around Ireland in the1800s by Canon James Goodman.

Since 2021 Aoife has played with Welsh harpist Catrin Finch, releasing their debut album, *Double You,* in October 2023. Last November she released a new album *Cosán Casta* with pianist Cormac McCarthy.

Winner of the RTÉ Best Folk Musician of the Year, the prestigious Bonn Óir Seán Uí Riada in 2010, as well as seven All-Ireland titles, Aoife has also won prizes in international violin and chamber music events.

Music Network marks fortieth anniversary with three trad tours

To mark its fortieth annivesary, Music Network is backing a number of collaborative tours – including three of particular interest to fans of traditional music.

The first in February brought together fiddle player, Kevin Burke; box player, Dermot Byrne; guitarist, Jim Murray; and Noriana Kennedy on five-string banjo and vocals.

The second tour in May will feature the Séamus Egan Project featuring Solas co-founder, Séamus Egan, on flute, tenor banjo, whistles and nylon guitar; Jenna Moynihan on fiddle; Kyle Sanna on guitar; and Owen Marshall on bouzouki and harmonium.

The third tour in September will bring together vocalist, Pauline Scanlon; Muireann Nic Amhlaoibh on flute and vocals; John Doyle on guitar and vocals; and Tom Morrow on fiddle and viola.

Over the course of this year, Music Network will offer traditional music gigs in Clare, Cork, Donegal, Dublin, Galway, Kerry, Kildare, Leitrim, Limerick, Louth, Mayo, Offaly, Roscommon, Sligo, Waterford, Wexford, Wicklow as well as Liverpool, London and Paris.



Collaborators: JimMurray, Dermot Byrne, Kevin Burke and Noriana Kennedy *(Photo: Music Network).*

Founded by the Arts Council/ An Chomhairle Ealaíon in 1986, Music Network is the national music touring and development organisation.

The network's mission is to provide high quality live music accessible to communities throughout Ireland and help musicians to develop fulfilling careers.

A feature of Music Network's programming has been the intriguing collaborations it has facilitated – providing rare opportunities for diverse musicians to play together when they might not otherwise get the chance to do so.

The network's vision is of a culture which increasingly values live music in our everyday lives, embracing it as an essential part of a healthy, vibrant society.

Martin retires from touring

One of the most celebrated artists in British folk music, Martin Carthy, has decided to retire from touring on medical advice. The veteran musician – whose most recent album, *Transform Me Then Into A Fish,* received a Mercury Prize nomination – has been diagnosed with late-onset Alzheimer's Disease.

Martin's retirement was announced by his daughter, Eliza with the following message:

"A month ago, Martin, at 84, was diagnosed with late-onset Alzheimers Disease. While his doctor initially suggested that Dad would and should be able to tour in the Spring, and we were hoping to use the tour to say goodbye to Dad's many fans, it now appears that this won't be possible or advisable for his health.

"Dad sends his love and regrets to everyone hoping to see him one more time. I will fulfil these shows, and will try to honour his legacy as much as possible. Our family thanks you for your patience and love."

A key figure in Britain's folk revival of the 1960s, Martin has been at the forefront of the folk music scene for over six decades – one half of a remarkable duo with fiddler Dave Swarbrick, an early member of Steeleye Span, a member of The Watersons and subsequently Waterson: Carthy as well as participating in an array of musical projects in addition to his enduring career as a solo performer.

As a extensive collector and unique interpreter of songs, Martin has influenced countless music lovers – both amateur and professional.



Retiring from touring: Martin Carthy

Doctor Casey

Acclaimed fiddle player, Nollaig Casey, has been awarded a PhD by Queen's University Belfast for her doctoral thesis, *The music manuscript collection of Patrick O'Neill: its significance for Irish traditional music, with a critical edition of selected tunes from the manuscripts.*

Patrick O Neill's collection of approximately 25 books and periodicals from his library in Owning, Co. Kilkenny, is held in the National Library of Ireland and includes a highly significant, early source of Irish music.

A land-owner and miller, O'Neill (1765-1832) was one of the earliest collectors of Irish tunes and melodies. His music manuscripts are at MS 44,806. There is a detailed description of his life and work in The Golden Vale of Ivowen: between Slievenamon and Suir by Eoghan Ó Néill at LO 14934

Nollaig Casey, who was the Traditional Artist in Residence at University College, Cork in 2021, has been a leading performer in traditional music in Ireland and internationally. One of the Casey family of musicians – her sister, Máire Ní Chathasaigh, is a renowned harpist, while sister, Mairéad, is a multiple All-Ireland-winning fiddle-player, harper, tin-whistle player and singer – Nollaig is equally at home on classical and traditional stages as a former member of the RTÉ (now National) Symphony Orchestra as well as Planxy and Coolfin. Having played in a duo with her partner, the late Arty McGlynn, she is now performs regularly with Cherish the Ladies.

The conferring ceremony will take place in June 2026.



Dr. Nollaig Casey



The Breath: Ríoghnach Connolly and Stuart McCallum

Masters of Tradition to return to West Cork

The Masters of Tradition festival returns to Bantry in Co. Cork from August 19-23.

In a series of recitals and interviews, the festival's Artistic Director Martin Hayes will be joined by an impressive line-up including Clíodhna Ní Aodáin, Méabh Begley, Aoife Ní Bhriain and Cormac McCarthy, Ciara Ní Bhriain, Seán Doherty, Máirín Fahy and Patsy Broderick, Tiago Matias, Libby McCrohan, Louise Mulcahy, Liam O'Brien, Ciarán Ó Gealbháin, Charlie and Rowan Piggott, Richie Piggott, Kyle Sanna, The Breath, The Weaving, Ryan Young and more.

The full programme is avail-able at www.westcorkmusic.ie/masters-of-tradition/

General booking opens on April 29.

University of Limerick honours Mickey Dunne



Internationally acclaimed uilleann piper, Mickey Dunne, has been awarded the University of Limerick's (UL) President's Medal.

Acclaimed for his 'open style' of piping and exceptional craftsmanship as a pipe maker, as well as being a skilled fiddle player, Mickey Dunne is also a generous teacher and an innovative collaborator, inspiring pipers both in Ireland through his work with Na Píobairí Uilleann, where he is a Board member.

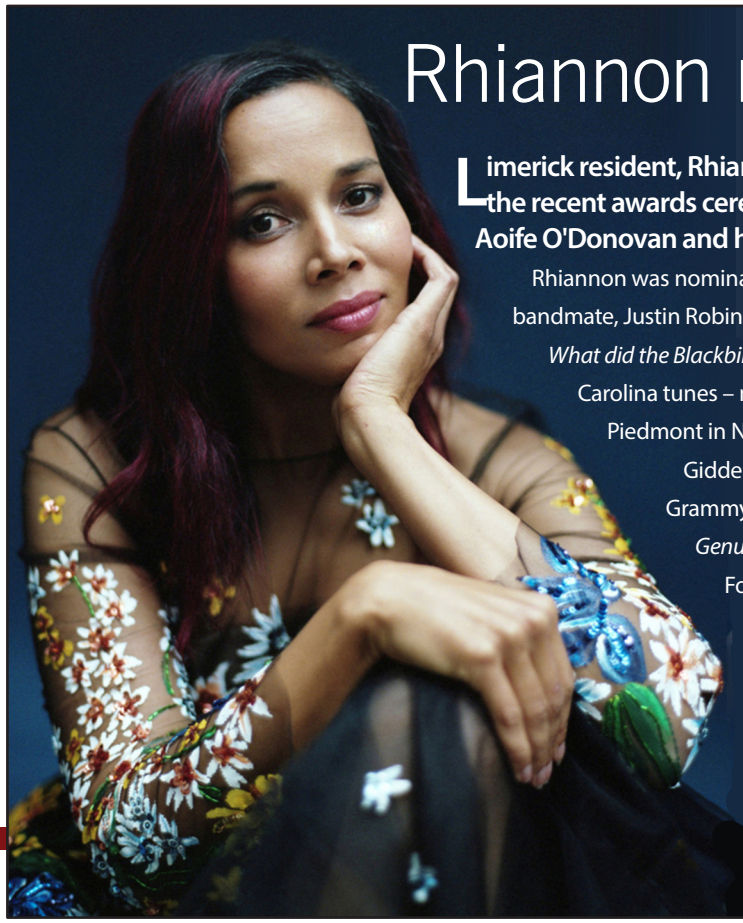
He has also contributed greatly to the undergraduate and postgraduate degrees in traditional music at the Irish World Academy of Music and Dance at UL, providing teaching, guidance and support to countless pipers since the inception of the Academy thirty years ago.

Steeped in the Traveller music tradition of his family, Mickey represents many generations of the Dunne family who were renowned for playing at fairs and sporting events. Mickey's two daughters, Bríd and Niamh, are prolific performers in their own right and are both graduates of UL.

At the awards ceremony, Mickey said: "this is not for me at all, this is for my father and my family and all the Dunnes – it is not for me. I don't know how to express it, but I am thrilled."

Formally instituted in 2023, the President's Medal recognises individuals or organisations outside the University for having made an outstanding contribution and having provided exceptional service to the University, the region, the State or internationally. The medal was presented to Mickey by the Acting UL President Professor Shane Kilcommins.

Rhiannon misses out



Limerick resident, Rhiannon Giddens, was denied her third Grammy at the recent awards ceremony in Los Angeles – losing out to Cork-rooted Aoife O'Donovan and her two bandmates in I'm With Her.

Rhiannon was nominated along with her former Carolina Chocolate Drops bandmate, Justin Robinson, in the Best Folk Album category for their duo album, *What did the Blackbird say to the Crow,* featuring eighteen of their favourite North Carolina tunes – many learned from their late mentor, Joe Thompson from Piedmont in North Carolina.

Giddens and Robinson previously shared a Best Folk Album Grammy with Dom Flemons as The Carolina Chocolate Drops for *Genuine Negro Jig* in 2011, while Giddens also took home the Best Folk Album prize with Francesco Turrisi for *They're Calling Me Home* in 2022.

Rhiannon is also one of a number of artists who have withdrawn from scheduled performances at the Kennedy Centre, since the board was largely replaced by a coterie of Trump loyalists led by the President, himself. Among the other performers are Linn Manuel Miranda and the cast of *Hamilton, Wicked* composer Stephen Schwartz, actress and writer Issa Rae, and banjoist Bela Fleck.

Trip to Birmingham on hiatus

The Trip to Birmingham traditional music festival is taking a break after a decade of continuous growth since 2014.

The festival organisers have announced that, despite of (or perhaps because of) this continued success, the pressures of running a festival are such that this year, "the time has come for us to put things on hold."

"To continue would be to do a disservice to the festival and all it encompasses. It is, therefore, with a heavy, but full, heart that we announce that Birmingham Tradfest will be taking a break."

From its first event in November 2014, with the Brian Finnegan Trio, Frankie Gavin and De Dannan headlining, Birmingham Tradfest has grown and developed to become an exceptional celebration of Irish traditional music.

In the ten years since its inception, the festival has been home to countless extraordinary and marvellous events and episodes: sessions that never stop, riotous festival clubs, astounding Molloy Award finals and many remarkable album launches.

At this point, it seems the break will be temporary, as the organisers signed off their announcement with the following:

"We hope to be back in the not-too-distant future, but, until then, we wish you all the best!"



Brum majors: NxNW at Birmingham Tradfest in 2023 (Photo: Birmingham Tradfest)

Liam is ITMA's Banner Man



Taking the Gradam: Liam O'Brien Young Musician of the Year in 2017 *(Photo: TG4)*

The acclaimed Clare concertina player, Liam O'Brien, has been appointed as the Digital Access and Development Officer for County Clare at the Irish Traditional Music Archive (ITMA).

A native of Miltown-Malbay, Liam studied con - certina under Noel Hill and was awarded the TG Gradam Ceoil as Young Musician of the Year in 2017.

As Clare Digital Access and Development Officer, Liam will be reponsible for the digitisation, cataloguing and increase in access to over 10,000 Clare-related materials currently housed as part of the ITMA's extensive collection in its Dublin headquarters. This three-year position – supported by the Michael Guinee Charitable Foundation – aims to provide the people of Clare with unprecedented access to their musical heritage – inspiring cultural engage-ment and contributing to the social, economic and cultural sustainability of the county.

"Along with being one of the country's finest traditional musicians, Liam O'Brien's deep grá for the music of Clare, along with his technical expertise and experience, uniquely qualify him to help ITMA archive, collect and make accessible Clare-related materials", said ITMA Chief Executive Officer, Liam O'Connor.

One of Liam's first major projects is to oversee the digitisation of the Bridie and Cyril O'Donoghue collection of over 1,000 cassettes – donated by Cyril's daughter, Cathy.



JOANIE MADDEN & CHERISH THE LADIES

DON STIFFE, GER O'DONNELL AND TREVOR SEXTON

PJ MURRIHY & SEAMUS SHANNON, PATRICK O'SULLIVAN

EILEEN O'BRIEN & JACKIE DALY, DONÁL MURPHY, NIALL MURPHY

JOSEPHINE MARSH & MICK KINSELLA, MARIAN CURTIN & THERESE MCINERNEY

KEELAN MCGRATH, JOHN PAUL REYNOLDS & CATHAL SLATTERY, NOEL MCLOUGHLIN

SET DANCE WORKSHOP EUGENE DONNELLAN, SET DANCING WITH THE CORTINA CEILI BAND

THE GRIFFIN, NEYLON & SHANNON FAMILIES, 'TRY THE PIPES' WITH NA PÍOBAIRÍ UILLEANN

YOUR MAN'S PUPPETS CHILDREN SHOW, SEÁN TALTY, SEÁN NEYLON, DONIE NOLAN

FRETLESS, THE HONEYBADGERS, MATT KELLY & JILL HARTY, EOIN CONWAY

TIM DENNEHY, MICHAÈL MARRINAN, BRUCE FOLEY, SHONA BLAKE, THE BROWN BROTHERS

RÓISÍN BRODERICK, BRIAN CLANCY, ALAN REID, EOIN MURPHY, MIKIE SMYTH, SEAN ONG

CONCERTS, WORKSHOPS, SONG & MUSIC SESSIONS, SET DANCING, WALTZING, JIVING

For Information Visit ~ www.facebook.com/joaniemaddensmaydayfestival

To Book Tickets Visit ~ https://joaniemaddensmaydayfestival.eventbrite.com

WILD ATLANTIC WAY
SLÍ AN ATLANTAIGH FHIÁIN

COMHAIRLE CONTAE AN CHLÁIR
CLARE COUNTY COUNCIL

visit CLARE



Orla takes up residence!

Renowned sean-nós singer Orla Ní Fhinneadha has been appointed 2025-2026 Sean-Nós Singer-in-Residence at University of Galway's Centre for Irish Studies.

Orla, from An Chloich Mhór, Baile na hAbhann, Co Galway, has many singing titles to her name, including a third place in the prestigious Corn Uí Riada at the Oireachtas in 2016.

The current holder of the prestigious competition Corn na mBán, Orla has been singing since she began attending sean-nós classes at primary school with Máire Pheitir Uí Dhroighneáin, who had a huge influence on her development as a singer, as did Orla's father, Jimi Ó Fhinneadha.

As a teenager she won several titles at Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann, as well as at the Oireachtas when she won the Under-35 category in 2012 and second place in Corn na mBán in 2014.

Left: Orla Ní Fhinneadha: Singer-in-Residence at the University of Galway.

Aside from singing, Orla is a primary school teacher in Spiddal. having achieved a B.Ed. at Mary Immaculate College in Limerick and an M.Ed. from UCD. Orla also teaches sean-nós singing to local children in Connemara.

She is also a television presenter with TG4. She combined both roles effectively during the pandemic as one of the co-hosts of *Cúla4 ar Scoil,* a television series aimed at primary school children who could not attend school due to the lockdown.

Orla has already begun to deliver workshops on the University campus which will continue into 2026. The workshops are free and open to the public.

The residency is funded by Ealaín na Gaeltachta, Údarás na Gaeltachta and An Chomhairle Ealaíon, in association with the Centre for Irish Studies at the University.



SCOIL SAMHRAIDH WILLIE CLANCY

Saturday July 4 to Sunday July 12

The annual Scoil Samhraidh Willie Clancy takes place in Miltown Malbay from Saturday July 4 to Sunday July 12.

Commemorating the renowned uilleann piper, Willie Clancy, the event has been running since 1973. While the core of the school is the teaching of instruments and set dancing both in formal classes and in the impromptu sessions in Miltown's hostelries, the programme also includes public lectures, workshops, recitals, concerts and céilidhe.

The week features a roster of morning classes and evening recitals given by top players on uilleann pipes, fiddle, flute, whistle, harp, banjo, concertina, melodeon, button accordion, harmonica and set dancing.



Owen Spafford

There will also be classes in spoken Irish as well as special dance workshops on traditional dances from Quebec.

The week will feature four major concerts: the TG4 Gradam Ceoil Award Winners; the International Concert; Óige an Chláir/ The Youth of Clare; and the Muiris Ó Rócháin Memorial Concert.

The programme also includes an afternoon of Traditional Singing in both Irish and English.

The nighly céilidhe will be supported by some of the country's most respected céilí bands including the Kilfenora, the Tulla, the Brian Ború, the Taylor's Cross, the Four Courts, the Micheál Sexton, the Dal gCais, and the Abbey Trio.

The festival will platform a range of presentations on diverse topics.

After the official opening of the summer school by singer and radio presenter, Brian Mullen from Derry, the annual Breandán Breathnach Memorial Lecture will be given by Harry Bradshaw on *2RN to Radio Éireann: Traditional Music and Irish Radio 1926-1951.*

Traditional fiddlers, music collectors and musicologists, Owen Spafford and Mikey Kenny will present a lecture on *Northern English Fiddle.*

Piper Seán Potts of the ITMA and fiddler Aoife Nic Chormaic of RTÉ's *The Rolling Wave* will present a lecture on *Lifting the Veil on Tommie Potts.*

Irish harp music reseacher, Kathleen Loughnane, will deliver a lecture entitled *A Harper's look at the Music Manuscripts Of Patrick O'Neill (1765-1832).*

Elizabeth Healy, a singer and song researcher with a particular interest in revenant ballads will present a lecture entitled *Beyond the Veil: Songs of Death, Grief and Resilience.*

Fiddler, Máire O'Keeffe, will lead a special tribute to the renowned traditional musicians and TG4 Gradam Ceoil Winners, Nicky and Anne McAuliffe from Sliabh Luachra.

The week will conclude with Seán Ó Riada's *Aifreann i nGaeilge* with Cór Chúil Aodha.



Aoife Nic Chormaic

BELFAST GEARS UP TO HOST FLEADH CHEOIL NA hÉIREANN 2026

The world's biggest celebration of traditional Irish music and culture takes place in Belfast from Sunday August 2 to Sunday August 9 when the city hosts Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann.

For one incredible week, the Fleadh will transform Belfast into a vibrant and immersive carnival of sound, colour, culture and craic. From lively pub sessions to headline concerts, pop-up street performances to prestigious All-Ireland competitions, the Belfast Fleadh is where tradition meets imagination.

The Fleadh promises thrilling performances by world-class musicians, dancers and storytellers; street sessions that spill into pubs, squares and hidden corners; céilí bands, traditional dance, language and pageantry as well as lectures, exhibitions and creative workshops – all of which play out against the backdrop of a major programme of competitions that will crown All-Ireland champions in a wide array of musical disciplines across a range of age categories.



Northern Ireland has hosted the Fleadh just once before - in Derry in 2013. Now, Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann returns in spectacular style, with over 800,000 visitors expected for this landmark event.

And, when the tunes wind down, Belfast hopes to become the perfect base for exploring more of the North's tourist attractions - from the Causeway Coastal Route to the Mourne Mountains and beyond.

Full details on all of the week's events will be announced in the coming months. For more information and updates on the Fleadh programme, please visit fleadhcheoil.ie.

Dom is officially a famous American banjo player

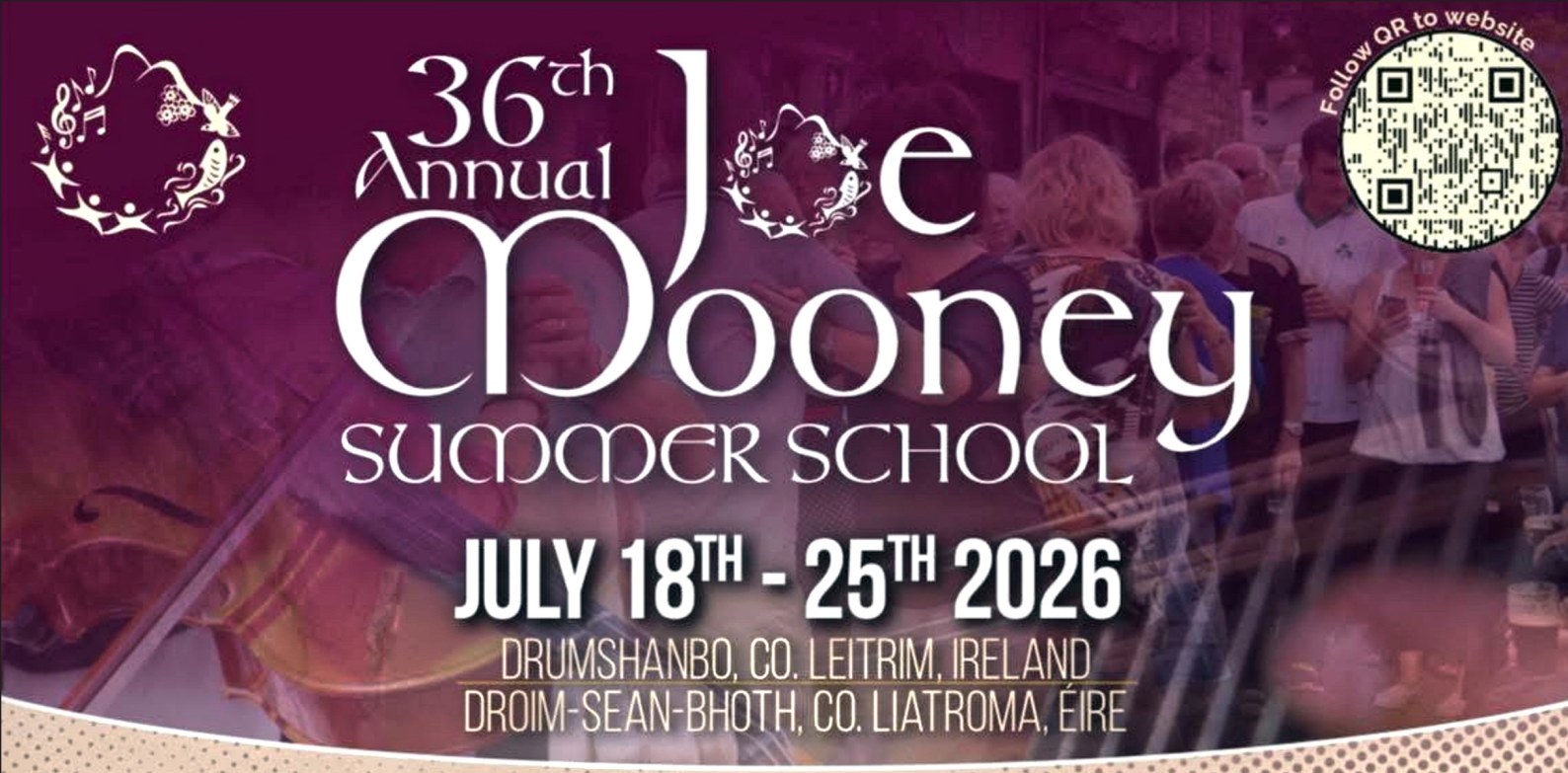
Multi-instrumentalist,Dom Flemons has been inducted into the American Banjo Hall of Fame in recognition of his efforts in promoting the instrument.

Flemons who is also a songwriter, storyteller, historian and radio host has twice graced the Grammy awards ceremony: as a solo artist for his album *Black Cowboys* (which earned a Best Folk Album nomination in 2018) and as a co-founder of the Carolina Chocolate Drops, for their album, *Genuine Negro Jig,* which won a Grammy for Best Traditional Folk Album in 2011.

One of Dom's former bandmates in the Chocolate Drops, Rhiannon Giddens, won the Steve Martin Prize for Excellence in Banjo and Bluegrass in 2016. So it appears to be only a matter of time before she joins him in the American Banjo Hall of Fame.



Dom Flemons: Banjo hall of famer



Follow QR to website

36th Annual Joe Mooney SUMMER SCHOOL

JULY 18TH - 25TH 2026

DRUMSHANBO, CO. LEITRIM, IRELAND
DROIM-SEAN-BHOTH, CO. LIATROMA, ÉIRE

CÉILITHE

At The Mayflower

MONDAY JULY 20TH
9:00 – 11:30pm
Rise the Dust Céili Band

TUESDAY JULY 21ST
9:00 to 11:30pm
Beartla O'Flatharta Céili Band

WEDNESDAY JULY 22ND
9:00 to 11:30pm
Glór na dTonn Céili Band

FRIDAY JULY 24TH
9:00 to 12:00am
Swallows Tail Céili Band

SATURDAY JULY 25TH
Open Air Céili 4.30 - 6.30pm on High Street & 9.00pm to 12.00am in the Mayflower
Pipers Cross Céili Band

CLASSES & WORKSHOPS

MONDAY - SATURDAY 9:30AM TO 1:00PM
Set dancing workshop
with Pat Murphy

MONDAY - SATURDAY 9:30AM TO 12:30PM
Junior Sean Nós Dancing
with Lillie Crossley & Catherine Cullen
Ages 5 - 12 and must register for the week

MONDAY & TUESDAY AFTERNOON @ 4PM
Two Hand Dancing
with Marie Garrity

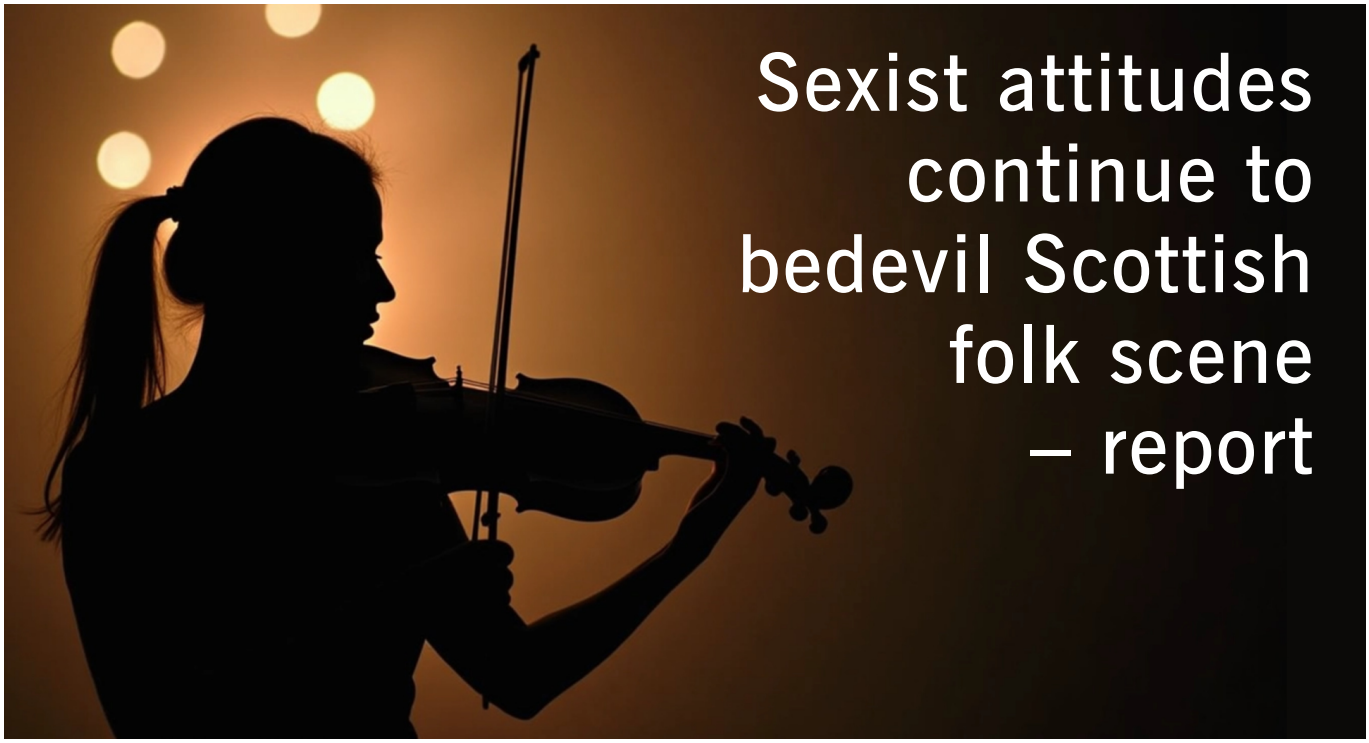
WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON 2:30 - 4:00PM
Irish step Dance Workshop
for ***Beginners*** with Roisin Lyons
Ages 8 to 16 years

THURSDAY AFTERNOON 2:30 - 4:00PM
Irish step Dance Workshop
for ***Advanced*** with Roisin Lyons
Ages 8 to 16 years

THURSDAY 4:00 - 6:00PM
Sean Nós workshop with Ronan Regan
Beginners and Intermediate

FRIDAY 4:00 - 6:00PM
Sean Nós Dancing Workshop
with Ronan Regan
Advanced

See website **www.joemooneysummerschool.com**
for class registration and accommodation list



Sexist attitudes continue to bedevil Scottish folk scene – report

Over 80% of women musicians have reported having been sexually assaulted or harassed while participating in the Scottish folk music scene, according to new research findings published recently.

Researchers at the Scottish Centre for Crime and Justice Research at the University of Glasgow surveyed 409 women musicians – consisting of working musicians (89%), music teachers (29%) and students (11%).

While many of those surveyed acknowledged that the folk scene is nurturing and culturally significant, the research also revealed that it contains the capacity for inequality, harm and exclusion.

The women who took part in the study disclosed personal experiences which included intrusive sexualised comments and advances, pressure to engage in sexual activities, harassment and stalking, domestic abuse, sexual assault and rape.

According to the survey, 75% of respondents have been subjected to sexualised questions or remarks.

Over half of those surveyed (51%) reported experiencing unsolicited sexual advances, while 42% faced non-consensual sexual touching. A worryingly high figure of 28% reported being pressured to engage in sexual activities.

Personal safety is also a key issue: 21% reported being victims of stalking or harassment while 17% experienced targeted online abuse.

The study found that 17% of respondents had been sexually assaulted or raped, and 13% reported experiencing domestic abuse.

Fellow musicians were often identified as the perpetrators in the majority of cases: with 72% saying their experiences involved music colleagues or peers, while 53% involved prominent musicians in positions of influence.

"The person was a 'much-loved character' on the scene, so he was believed – and I wasn't."

"I was raped by … a well-known musician in the scene. He followed me home after a session and refused to leave."

"I've had to lock myself in a car. I've had to leave gigs and go home, and I've had to continuously say no to a guy wanting to sleep with me. I've had married musicians kissing me… I've been hassled for ignoring drunken advances and called names. It puts me off the whole scene."

The impact of the power dynamic on the problem was also evident in some of the comments: One participant who was offered a "really good" job with a major band noted:

"Everybody knows them to have a great reputation. And then as soon as that meeting was done, it was like, 'okay, do you want [to] come back to my room?' Do you want to do some cocaine?' 'Do you want to, like, have sex?' And you're like, oh, okay, is this why I've been given this job, you know?'"

"There are men with influence running loose, many who are abusing that power for their own selfish gains."

Many women are sharing their experiences privately with colleagues, noting that the problem was widespread and hidden in plain sight.

Survey into Sexual Violence and Harassment in Folk Music in Scotland

75%
Experienced sexualised questions or remarks

51%
Experienced unsolicited sexual advances

42%
Experienced non-consensual sexual touching

Source: Scottish Centre for Crime and Justice Research at the University of Glasgow



Study lead: Dr. Kelly Johnson

"Of all my close friends working in the folk scene, I'd say nearly all of them have experienced sexual violence and/or harassment whilst working in this industry."

"Lots of women are talking about this among ourselves, and we all know a lot of incidents, either experiencing it ourselves, or friends and colleagues. It's a much bigger problem than people realise and it's taking place in plain sight."

Several respondents reported receiving explicit messages and images. One said a musician sent her an unsolicited video of a sex act captioned 'looking at your Instagram'. She added: "It made me feel horrible."

For some, the impact was so severe that they left the music scene completely: **"My experience has been so toxic that I no longer work in it. It is difficult to list all the different ways it has impacted me and how many incidents have taken place, from 'banter' remarks to assault."**

For more information on the issues raised in this article, please contact: in Scotland: The Bit Collective at https://www.thebitcollective.co.uk/ and in Ireland: FairPlé at https://www.fairple.com/





Harassment: Ben Gunnery *(Photo: Facebook)*

Sick pics

Man convicted after persistently harassing female musicians with sexually explicit images

In February 2026, fiddler Ben Gunnery received a twelve-month sentence, suspended for two years, after sending explicit images of himself without consent to two female musicians he had never even met.

These offences occurred in November 2025 – just four months after he had been found guilty of similar behaviour towards another woman – for which he had been sentenced to a two-year community order, counselling and told that if he re-offended again (after a previous conviction in 2023) he would go to prison.

In the latest case Gunnery found the two women online and within days was sending them unsolicited images of his genitals. One of the women was renowned folk musician, Eliza Carthy who said that Gunnery sent her "reams of pictures of himself naked and videos of himself masturbating."

Eliza and her co-complainant contacted police after seeing the BBC's interview with a previous victim, Anna Downes, also a musician who had waived anonymity to speak to the BBC about the images and videos from Gunnery that had left her so trauma-tised that she struggled to sleep.

A further investigation by the BBC found that Gunnery had been engaging in similar behaviour for over ten years.

Both Eliza Carthy and Angela Downes expressed disappointment at the relative leniency of the sentence in the latest case – since Gunnery had already been warned by the judge in the previous case that if he reoffended again, he would go to prison.

"Why make the law against cyber-flashing," asked Eliza, "and not uphold it? (We) outed ourselves for nothing."

Speaking of the latest judgement, Angela Downes noted that "the judge decided that Gunnery's offences reached the threshold for a custodial sentence. But because he showed remorse, his career as a violinist was over, he pleaded guilty and had engaged with rehabilitation, it would be a 12 month (6 for each of the victims) suspended sentence for 2 years.

"Bearing in mind he re-offended many times following my trial last year whilst apparently in rehabilitation, I struggle to see how he meaningfully engaged with the process…I feel completely dismissed and as if I may as well not exist as far as the criminal justice system is concerned."

Born in Dublin, Gunnery was reared in London of Irish and French parentage. During his career as a professional musician, the former All Ireland under 16 fiddle champion had toured internationally with shows like Riverdance, Gael Force and Celtic Legends and had supplemented the line-ups of a number of well-known bands.



Eliza Carthy *(Photo: Elodie Kowalski*

CÚIG LÁ
CEOIL
COMHRÁ
AGUS CROÍ

GALWAY FOLK FESTIVAL

JUNE 3RD - 7TH 2026

JUNE
3RD - 7TH
2026

THE DIVINE COMEDY

RICHARD THOMPSON • DAMIEN DEMPSEY

LISA O'NEILL • HOTHOUSE FLOWERS

MUIREANN BRADLEY • FLYTE • RÓIS

JAMIE MCINTYRE • SEÁN KEANE

BILL RYDER-JONES • BRÍGHDE CHAIMBEUL

NIALL MCCABE • MUIREANN NIC AMHLAOIBH

SEANCHOÍCHE • NOTIFY • CLADA

RÍOGHNACH CONNOLLY & HONEYFEET

ALL THINGS EVE • BEC O'MALLEY

ELIZABETH DAVIDSON-BLYTHE & DANIEL QUAYLE

HÁNT • HERON RED • HOW I BECAME A WAVE • LILY LYONS

MICHAEL MCGOVERN • NADIA REID • PADRAIG JACK

PAURIC O'MEARA • SEÁN LYONS • SEÁNIE Ó'LOINSIGH

WITHOUT WILLOW

PLUS MANY MORE TO BE ANNOUNCED



Monroe's Live Galway

SMITHWICK'S IRISH MADE RED ALE

FOR TICKETS AND MORE INFO SEE GALWAYFOLKFESTIVAL.COM

VINCENT'S VISION



ITMA UNVEILS MAJOR NEW RESOURCE

Vincent Broderick (1920-2008) was a flute player and prolific composer of tunes – as well as songs, stories and recitations.

The product of a close collaboration between the Irish Traditional Music Archive and the Broderick family, a major collection of material related to Vincent's music is now available through the ITMA website.

Two books of Vincent's compositions, published by Walton's Music, are still available: *The Turoe Stone* (1990) featuring 68 tunes and *The Turoe Stone, Vol. 2* (2007) featuring 51 more tunes.

Since he could not read or wrote music, Vincent's process was to record the tunes on tape and then send the cassette to his long-time friend and fiddler, Antóin Mac Gabhann to transcribe them for publication by Walton's.

As Vincent's son, Des, explained:

"I could not estimate the hours Antóin gave to this project, but his meticulous attention to detail was critical in the two publications of *The Turoe Stone* collections by Walton's Music. Vincent could not read music so he would sit at home with a small cassette recorder and record the tunes, then send the tapes to Antóin so he could transcribe the notes. These tapes are the basis for this collection, and we are delighted to share them with everyone who has an interest in Irish traditional music."

Along with digitised versions of Vincent's original tape recordings for the two books and many more that were not included in the Walton's books, along with introductions and stories behind the tune titles, the ITMA website now also hosts recordings of songs, tales and recitations along with a descriptive piece called *Ward's Eviction;* a collection of photographs from Vincent's life; recordings of his compositions performed by other musicians; interactive scores of five of his compositions; and recorded interviews with Vincent.

The first recorded interview with Vincent was conducted by Kieran Hanrahan in May 2004 following Vincent's TG4 Gradam Ceoil as Composer of the Year.

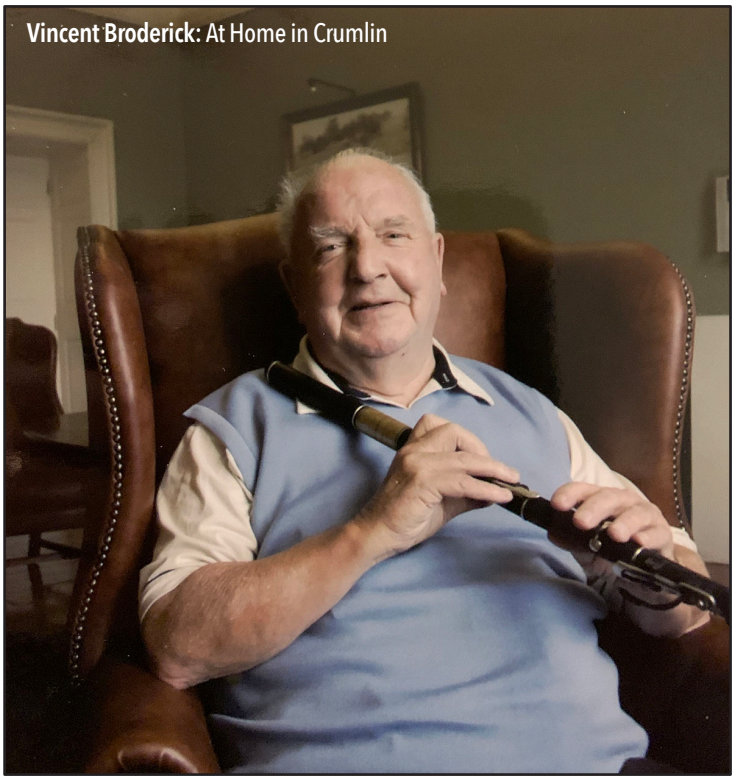
In the other recorded interviews Vincent is in conversation with Brian Lawler for *The Golden Era of Ceili Music and Dance, 1955–1970* series, 23 July 2001 – an oral history project supported by the ITMA between 1999 and 2004. All of the recordings in the project can be heard in the ITMA catalogues.

"Vincent's compositions are known for their originality and creativity," noted Des. "He had a unique ability to blend traditional elements with his own innovative ideas, creating tunes that are both fresh and deeply rooted in the tradition.

"Vincent's compositions have inspired countless musicians. His tunes are widely played and recorded, influencing the style and repertoire of many traditional Irish musicians.

"Listening to my father talking about his compositions provides valuable insights into his creative process, inspirations and the stories behind the tunes. I think this context will deepen the listener's appreciation and connection to the music.

"The Broderick family dedicate this collection to the memory of our wonderful Dad, Vincent, and our beloved brother, Larry, who was a talented flute player in his own right but sadly passed away suddenly in 2023."



Vincent Broderick: At Home in Crumlin

VINCENT

DES BRODERICK REFLECTS ON THE LIFE OF HIS COMPOSER FATHER

Vincent Broderick (1920-2008) was an All-Ireland champion, Oireachtas winner, a legendary flute player, prolific composer, award winner, skillful hurler, song writer, poet, teacher and loving husband and father.

Vincent Broderick was born in Carrowmore, Bullaun, near Loughrea in East Galway. He was one of eleven children – nine boys (of whom four died in infancy) and two girls.

He was first introduced to music by his mother at five years of age. She taught both him-self and his brother, Peter, the tin whistle. His first public performance was at a school concert.

Vincent remembered attending a concert of the famous Ballinakill Céilí Band with his brother, Peter, in 1932. The two brothers were asked to join the band for a few selections, and they were delighted. From then on, they were both invited to play at all sorts of occasions.

Vincent left school when he was 13 to help his father with turf cutting in the bog. When the men stopped for a rest they would all play tunes. Vincent became known for picking these tunes up quickly as he had a great musical ear.

A major part of local cultural life was the Mummers, or wren boys. These were groups of local musicians, singers and dancers who would travel about at Christmas time collecting money for the traditional 'Wren Dance'.

Vincent and Peter were actively involved for many years. The major influences of the time for the young lads were Joe Cooley, Joe Leary, Aggie White, Paddy Carty, Joe Mills and the great Son Donnelly.

Vincent was also a keen hurler and won the Galway Championship in 1950 with the local club St Killian's, which in time became the famous Sarsfield's club in Bullaun, Co. Galway.

In 1951 Vincent came to Dublin and joined the Pipers' Club. The members at the time included Leo Rowsome, Mrs Harrington, John Joe Gardiner, Willie Clancy, Seán Seery and many more. It was there that Vincent met Pat Brophy and the other Brophy brothers – joining them in the Brophy Céilí Band. In later years Pat's granddaughter, Claire, would marry Vincent's son, Vincent junior.

Vincent took part in the first Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann in Monaghan in 1952 earning second place in the concert flute competition. At the 1953 Fleadh in Athlone he won the concert flute competition and in 1954 at the Cavan Fleadh he won both the concert flute and the duets competition – the latter with Kieran Kelly.

In 1952 and 1953 Vincent also won the Oireachtas Feadóg Mhór competition. Vincent's brother Peter was also successful in the same period winning the All-Ireland in 1955 with a flute he made himself from a two-foot length of copper pipe. He played his own composition, *The Thatcher's Mallet.*

Vincent participated at many Fleadhs over the years, and he is fondly remembered in Robbie McMahon's song, T*he Fleadh down in Ennis,* about the 1956 Fleadh:

They came down from Dublin so hearty and gay
They brought Leo Rowsome to show them the way
Himself and Seán Seery they played all the day
With their flute player, Vincent O Broderick

Vincent met and married his wife Phyllis in 1955 and they had three sons – Larry, Vincent junior and Des. He worked as a plasterer and, although he experienced tough times in the construction industry, he was able to rely on his musical talents to help pay the bills.

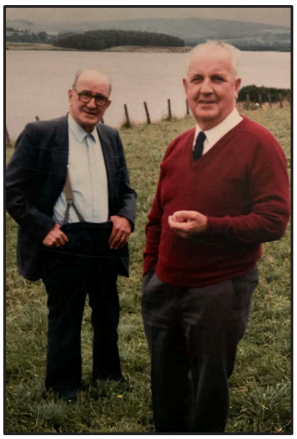
Traditional music was part of family life in the Broderick household as Larry (flute) and Des (fiddle) both played regularly with Vincent senior and with many other



Pipe and Flute: *(from left)* Leon Rowsome and Vincent Broderick.



Brodericks Plus One: *(from left)* Antóin Mac Gabhann, Des Broderick, Vincent Broderick, Vincent Broderick junior and Larry Broderick.



Peter (left) and Vincent Broderick



Peter's son: the late Pat Broderick

musicians who frequented the family home.

He notably played with Seán Ó Riada, Paddy Moloney, Seán Potts and Seán Keane at the first production of Bryan MacMahon's play, *The Song of the Anvil,* at the Abbey Theatre in 1960. This was just before Seán Ó Riada moved to Cork and the formation of the Chieftains.

Vincent was associated with the Kincora Céilí Band and was a founder member of the Éamonn Ceannt Céilé Band with Vi Preston, with whom he played for over 25 years. Vincent's eldest son, Larry, also a flute player, played with the band in later years.

Vincent had a long association with Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann and participated in summer Fonntraí and Seisiún shows and was a member of international tours to the UK, the USA and Canada.

As a member of the Pipers' Club CCÉ in Thomas Street, Dublin, he produced and took part in many All-Ireland winning Scoraíocht and Plearacha, along with his son Des, a fiddle player. He also taught tin whistle and flute every Saturday night in CCÉ headquarters in Monkstown.

In addition to his competition successes, Vincent also received many honours over the years, including the prestigious TG4 Gradam Ceoil for Cumadóir na Bliana (Composer of the Year) in 2003 and a Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann Award for his contribution to traditional music in 2008.

Vincent is best known as a composer of over 200 tunes, which is a remarkable feat given that he could not read music – he composed and remembered everything in his head.

Tune names were critical to him as a means of remembering his tunes. In choosing names for his compositions he was inspired by sights, sounds, life experiences, local history and folklore.

Most of the tunes have a story behind them and he was renowned for his story telling about his compositions. He has also composed poetry, songs and recitations.

He recorded his compositions on cassette tapes and sent them to Antóin Mac Gabhann for transcription. The results were published by Walton's Music in *The Turoe Stone* by *Volume 2* in 2007.

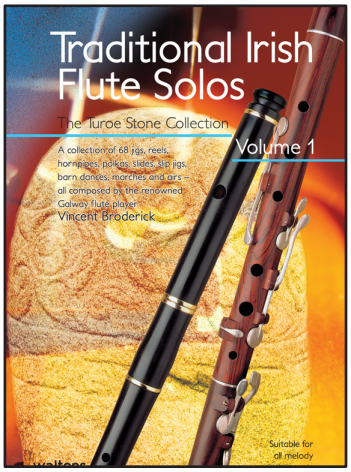
The Broderick family are especially grateful to Antóin Mac Gabhann who meticulously transcribed Vincent's tunes for these books. ITMA has since made these recordings available online.

Images of Vincent

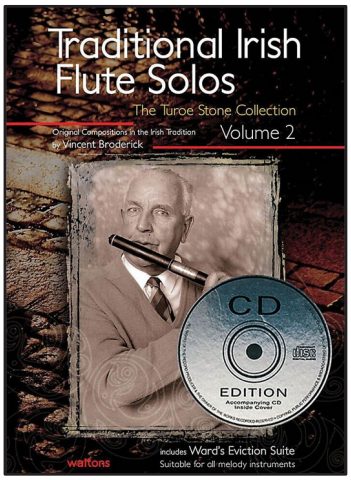








Vincent's tune books:
The Turoe Stone Volume 1 (above) and *Volume 2 (below).*





Eamonn Ceannt Céilí Band: Vincent Broderick on fife *(right).*



Flutopia: Matt Molloy *(left)* and Vincent Broderick



The historic picture: Patrick Byrne/Pádraig Dall Ó Beirn *(Calotype image by Hill & Adamson, Edinburgh, 1845).*



Collector: Edward Bunting

The twentieth annual Féile Patrick Byrne takes place in Carrickmacross, Co. Monaghan, from March 25 to March 29.

THE LAST OF THE OLD GAELIC HARPERS

The first Irish traditional musician known to have to been photographed was the harpist, Patrick Byrne or Pádraig Dall Ó Beirn.

Born around 1794 in Magheracloone in the Farney estate in County Monaghan – owned by the Shirley family – Patrick was the last noted exponent of the historical Gaelic harp in Ireland in the nineteenth century.

Patrick was enrolled as a pupil in 1820 in the harp school for young blind boys set up by the Irish Harp Society in Belfast – which records that he graduated in 1821 "having acquired con-siderable proficiency on the instrument (60 tunes)."

The main Shirley estate was in Warwickshire in England – not far from Stratford on Avon – where in 1829 Patrick was given the Shakespeare medal by the Shakespeare Club. He is performed at a number of other properties owned by the Shirley family in England.

Earl Ferrers provided the following testimonial: *The bearer of this, Patrick Byrne, is the celerbrated 'Irish Harper' and private harper to me.*

Contemporary newspaper accounts note that he only performed at private parties:

We ought perhaps to explain that Mr Byrne makes no public exhibition of his skill. It is only in private families and parties that he can be heard and we assure our fellow citizens that the dullness and monotony which so often pervade mixed company cannot be more agreeably relieved by the melodious strains of the Irish Minstrel.

Having come to the attention of London society, Patrick was appointed as Irish Harper to Prince Albert in 1841 – a position which required nightly performances in Balmoral in Scotland.

In 1845 he was photographed by Hill & Adamson in Edinburgh for a series of calotype images – which are thought to be the first photographs of any harpist worldwide and the first of an Irish traditional musician.

Returning to Co. Monaghan in 1846/47, Patrick was employed by the Shirley family as their harper.

He appeared in several newspaper articles of the time – celebrating his musical accomplishments.

The renowned collector, Edward Bunting, transcribed two pieces from Byrne, *Nurse Putting the Child to Sleep* and *Rose McWard* – the latter likely being his own composition in honour of a relative.

He is also known to have played *An Chuilfhionn* and *Brian Boru's March.*

In 1855 Byrne was honoured at a meeting in the Shirley Arms Hotel in Carrickmacross where he received a purse of gold, collected from the people of the town.

Patrick Byrne died while on a visit to Dundalk in 1863, where he caught a cold which appears to have progressed to pneumonia. Even though he was hospitaised, his decline continued.

He was eventually buried, as he had requested, in the Protestant cemetery at Cloughvalley, near Carrickmacross, with his tomb inscribed as follows:

Here lieth the body of Patrick Byrne, Harper to HRH the late Prince Consort, who departed this life at Dundalk April 8. 1863 in the 69th year of his age. May he rest In peace, Amen.

h/t SoundPost







Remembering Martin: Martin Wynne *(above)* and the Wynne Memorial in Ballinalack *(left)*.

MARTIN WYNNE REMEMBERED

A monument to the late Martin Wynne was unveiled in Ballinalack Community Park near Bunnanadden, County Sligo, in May 2025 – close to Martin's home place.

Born in 1913 in south Sligo, Martin Wynne grew up in a hot-bed of traditional music in the early decades of this century. Michael Coleman, James Morrison and Paddy Killoran were the best known of the many talented south Sligo fiddlers in the first half of the twentieth century.

So it was almost inevitable that Martin Wynne took up the fiddle at a young age. But it was just as inevitable in the depressed economic circumstances of the time that he would have to emigrate to earn a living.

When Martin left Sligo for London in the early 1930s, he had already composed some of the tunes for which he would later become famous. In London he met and played with musicians from all over Ireland with many adopting Wynne's compositions into their repertoire.

During his time in London, Martin played in the Garryowen Céilí Band, led by Sligo native, Johnny Muldoon. Martin often played with the Limerick flute player Paddy Taylor and the renowned Sligo fiddler, Joe O'Dowd, with whom he recorded a 78 rpm disc. When war broke out in 1939, Martin returned to Sligo.

In 1948, Martin decided to join the migration of Sligo fiddlers to the USA. After a short spell in Buffalo, Wynne moved to New York City, settling in the Bronx. He was too late to meet Michael Coleman and James Morrison, who had both died a few years earlier. But he did connect with Paddy Killoran and another of the great Sligo fiddlers, James 'Lad' O'Beirne.

O'Beirne's circle included fiddlers Andy McGann and Paddy Reynolds from Longford who was to become a close friend of Martin Wynne.

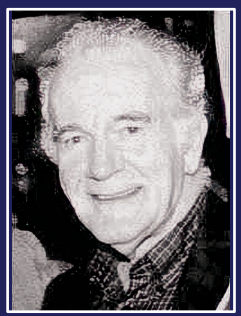
A shy and retiring man and a lifelong bachelor, Wynne did not record or play in dance bands in New York. But he loved a good session and was always ready to share a tune with younger players, most notably Brian Conway, who credits Martin with teaching him the intricacies of the old Sligo bowing style.



James 'Lad' O'Beirne



Paddy Killoran



Andy McGann

Towards the end of his life, Martin began to be acknowledged for his contribution to Irish traditional music. In 1989, when Sligo Town was selected as the host venue for Fleadh Cheoil na hEireann, Martin was named as the first honorary president in the Fleadh's history and flown back for a magnificent reception in his home town.

Back in New York in January, 1990, he gave a memorable, sold-out concert performance at the Eagle Tavern with the support of Paddy Reynolds, Brian Conway and Felix Dolan.

Two months later, he was one of sixteen top Irish fiddlers in the US who performed at an all-star fiddle concert in Boston College – which was recorded by Green Linnet Records under the title, *My Love is in America*.

Shortly afterwards, Martin's health began to fail. This, coupled with the ongoing effects of an assault outside his apartment in the Bronx, encouraged Martin to move into a nursing home, where he remained until his death on January 6, 1998.

MEMORIAL PROJECT SEEKS TO HONOUR LEGENDARY PIPEMAKERS



Precision engineering for musical excellence: A set of uilleann pipes made by the Taylor Brothers of Drogheda, New York and Philadelphia *(Photo: Nick Whitmer).*

A significant fundraising initiative is under way in the US to honour the renowned pipe-makers, the Taylor Brothers.

The Taylor Brothers Memorial Project has launched a Go-Fund-Me appeal to finance the installation of an appropriate tombstone on the gravesite of William and Charles Taylor in the Old Cathedral Cemetery in Philadelphia.

The Project organisers have set a target of $4.300 – of which over 80% has now been pledged.

Generally regarded as among the most creative of the nineteenth-century pipemakers in North America, William and Charles Taylor were originally based in Drogheda before emigrating to the New World.

William (born in Drogheda in 1834) and his half-brother, Charles (born in Mullingar 1848) learned their trade from their father, James, who was a piper, pipe-maker and church organ builder.

The brothers joined the family business and continued making uilleann pipes and war pipes in Drogheda after their father's death in the mid 1850s.

According to Chief Francis O'Neill in his book, *Irish Minstrels and Musicians,* William "grew up in the trade" of pipemaking. When his father realised that William had surpassed him as a performer on the pipes, "he lost all taste for playing himself thereafter."

Regarded as one of the best pipers of his generation, William was described by John Ennis in 1904 as "by long odds the ablest piper of the latter part of the nineteenth century. He was renowned for his marvelous execution on the chanter."

William was also well known as a piping teacher. Among his Irish students were renowned pipers, Nicholas Markey (1839-1914), Pat Ward (1846-1928) and George McCartney (alias McCarthy) (1843-1908).

According to the latter, William "used to frequent Baltray near Drogheda and play for the winter-evening and summer-night dances there and was the composer of the lively dance-tune, *The Lasses of Baltray.*"

After McCartney's death in 1908, his Taylor-made pipes were sold to the renowned Belfast pipemaker, Richard Lewis O'Mealy for £20.

The Taylors are believed to have left Drogheda for the US some time during the 1860s – there are no accurate records of the dates of their departure from Ireland and their arrival in the New World.

After arriving in America, Willie and Charles lived in a small premises in Manhattan in New York City where they rented a small workshop from another uilleann piper in exile – Tom Kerrigan from Longford – for whom, it is thought, the Taylors made their first set of uilleann pipes in America.

Richie Piggott has suggested that the Taylors may have also lived in New Jersey for a while before moving to Philadelphia in the mid 1870s.

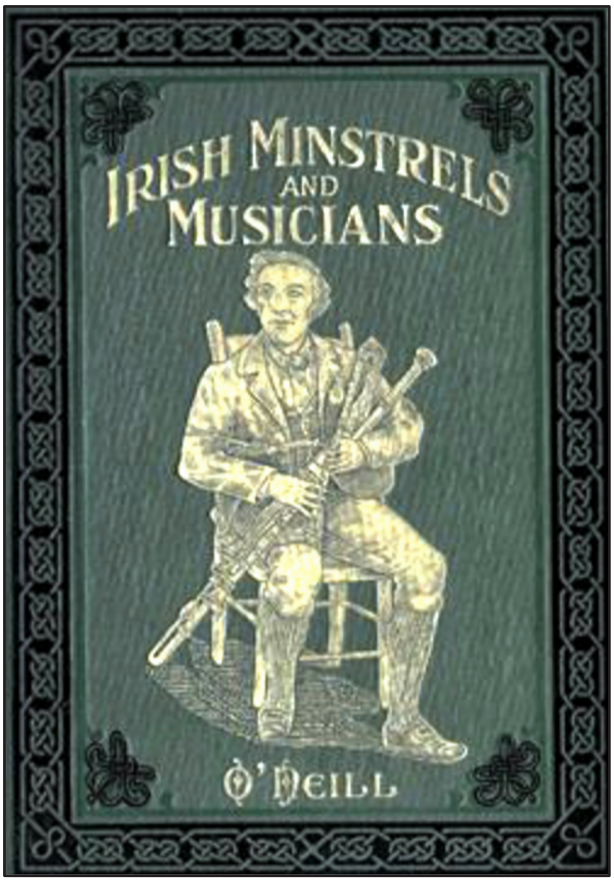
Once settled in their new base in Fitler Street in North Philadephia, the Taylor Brothers soon built a reputation as makers of first-class pipes – which incorpoated a number of design innovations – including wider keys, a shorter bass regulator and the addition of popping valves for chanters.

If you wish to make a pledge to the GoFundMe appeal can do so at https://www.gofundme.com/f/taylor-brothers-memorial-fundraising? ombstone.

Piping pupils (left): Nicholas Markey and Patrick Ward were both students of William Taylor before he emigrated with his brother, Charles, to the US.







The Chief's Choice: *Irish Minstrels and Musicians* by Chicago's General Superintendent of Police, Francis O'Neill.

The new pipes were also made in concert pitch and with the "wind" power to fill larger venues and hold their own in ensembles with violins and pianos.

As each set was made bespoke, Taylor pipes were expensive and no two sets were identical. Nevertheless, demand for their work was strong among pipers – both professional and amateur. Their style was subsequently copied by other makers.

William also gave piping lessons in the US: his pupils included Pat Touhey and Eddie Joyce who both became professional pipers.

Despite the acclaim for their work, the niche nature of the business and the brothers' overgenerous natures meant that they were close to penury when they died.

"They were sincerely lamented by all the Irish pipers in the land, for to them the death of the Taylors was a veritable calamity," Chief O'Neill noted.

The brothers died just over a year apart: William in 1892 and Charles in 1893. The cause of death in both cases has been attributed to either heart disease or tuberulosis. They were buried in a mass grave at the Old Cathedral Cemetery – with no headstone to mark their final resting places…yet!

(h/t Brendan Matthews and Nick Whitmer)



Piper Pat Touhey: reading a letter. *(Undated, perhaps circa 1910. From Tom Busby Collection of photographs, Na Píobairí Uilleann, Dublin).*



TG4 Gradam Ceoil 2024 Winners: Members of Cairdeas na bhFidiléirí *(Photo: TG4).*

PUTTING DONEGAL'S FIDDLERS IN THE PICTURE

A unique collection of photographic portraits of Donegal fiddlers has been assembled for public exhibition – in the county initially.

The exhibition ran in the Abbey Arts Centre in Ballyshannon from February 13-28, 2026, under the auspices of Cairdeas na bhFidiléirí – the Donegal traditional fiddlers' organisation.

The collection has been put together over a number of years by professional photographer and videographer, Dónal Glackin.

"Dónal comes from a family steeped in fiddle playing and is a fiddler himself," explained Cairdeas na bhFidiléirí Chairman, Aidan O'Donnell. "His portraits capture the nature and personalities of the fiddlers in a brilliant manner, but even more so was his ability to find a personality in each of their fiddles.

"Matching the fiddle portraits to their owners can be interesting and informative. Dónal Glackin is certainly a photographer of extraordinary abilities and this is clearly evident in this important collection," added Aidan.

Cairdeas na bhFidiléirí recently won a TG4 Gradam Ceoil for their work in promoting the development and transmission of Donegal traditional fiddle playing.

The project has been supported by the Arts Council with the aim of documenting each living Donegal fiddler over the age of eighteen. By the end of the project, the aim has been to create a visual marker in time, capturing the community of traditional musicians practising this celebrated tradition.

Much like the pioneering work of the great Irish music collector, Francis 'Chief' O'Neill, this unique photographic archive will afford future generations the opportunity of having a greater appreciation of the Donegal tradition bearers of the current era.

FUNDRAISING FOR NEW FILM ON MICK MOLONEY



An international fund-raising campaign is under way to provide the finance for a major new film on the musical life and legacy of the late Mick Moloney.

A recently launched GoFundMe initiative describes *Mind Yourself* as "the only authorized film to tell Mick's story – not only his unparalleled contributions to Irish traditional music, but also his deep commitment to culture, community, and the human spirit."

The team behind the film includes well known figures in the Irish music scene in the USA – including Dan Neely (Producer/Writer) and Séamus Egan (Music Director) who are joined by Eoin McGuigan (Producer/Director of Photography), Scott Esmond (Editor) and Fletcher Fischer (Executive Producer).

Part biography and part musical celebration, the documentary aims to capture the wit, warmth, and genius of Mick Moloney through never-before-seen footage, intimate interviews, and masterful storytelling.

The film will trace Mick's path from his early days in Ireland to his discovery and promotion of traditional Irish music in his homeland, in America, and on global stages across many continents until his death in July, 2022.

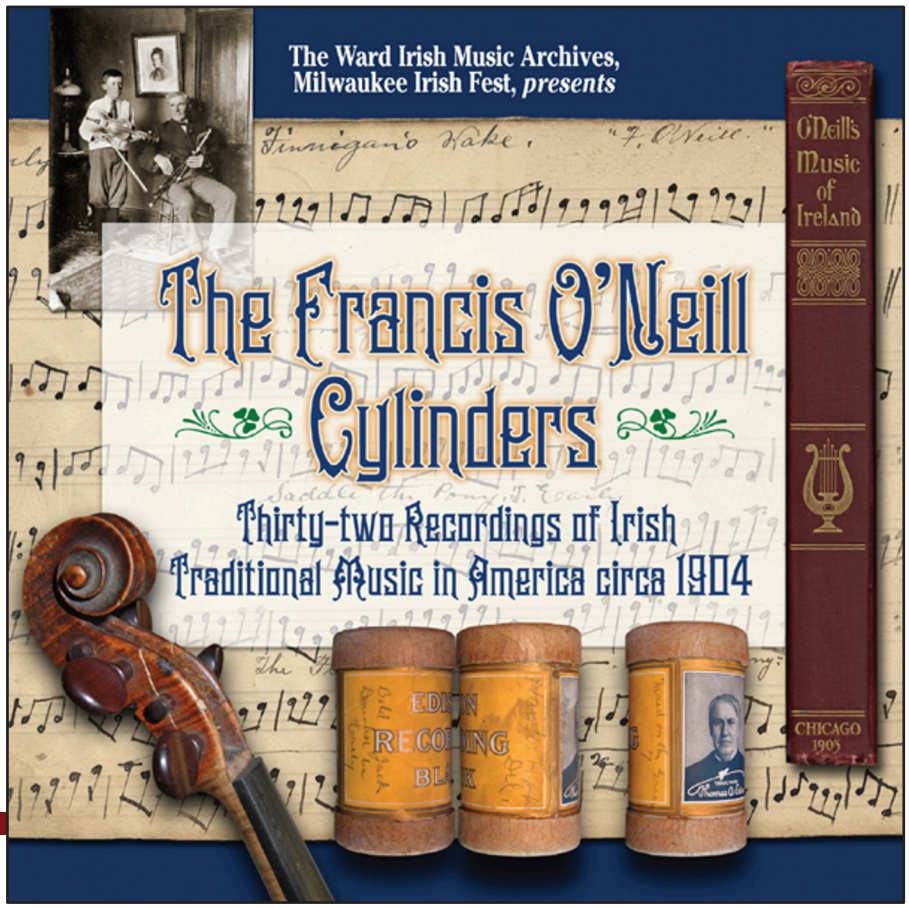
Over a lifetime of performing and exploring traditional Irish music, Mick advanced the culture of Irish music in America through research, interviews, performance, mentoring, and as a festival promoter and scholar. Through these endeavors he created a worldwide community of musicians, audiences, and scholars of traditional music and culture. His work as a folklorist led him to rediscover Irish tradition bearers whom he promoted.

Co-founder of the iconic Irish band, The Johnstons, as well as the US ensembles, Cherish the Ladies and Green Fields of America, Mick Moloney championed new voices, opened doors for women, and revealed the rich connections between Irish, African, and Appalachian traditions.

Through music, research, and storytelling, Mick built bridges across cultures and generations, leaving behind an extraordinary archive and an enduring legacy that continues to inspire.

Work on the documentary is continuing alongside the fundraising effort. The production team has already filmed 25 interviews, with more shoots planned in Dublin, Limerick, Barcelona, Philadelphia, New York City, Milwaukee and Chicago.

In order to do justice to Mick Moloney's substantial legacy, the team will incur major costs for crews, equipment, travel, performing rights, and so on. As Fletcher Fischer explains, "many of the arts grants we'd normally rely on have been reduced or disappeared altogether, making the GoFundMe initiative more important than ever." The funding target for the film is $15,000 – of which over $9,000 has been raised. The GoFundMe link is https://www.gofundme.com/f/mind-yourself-the-mick-moloney-story.



TIME CAPSULE AVAILABLE ON BANDCAMP

The Ward Irish Music Archive in Milwaukee has made The Francis O'Neill Cylinders available on Bandcamp.

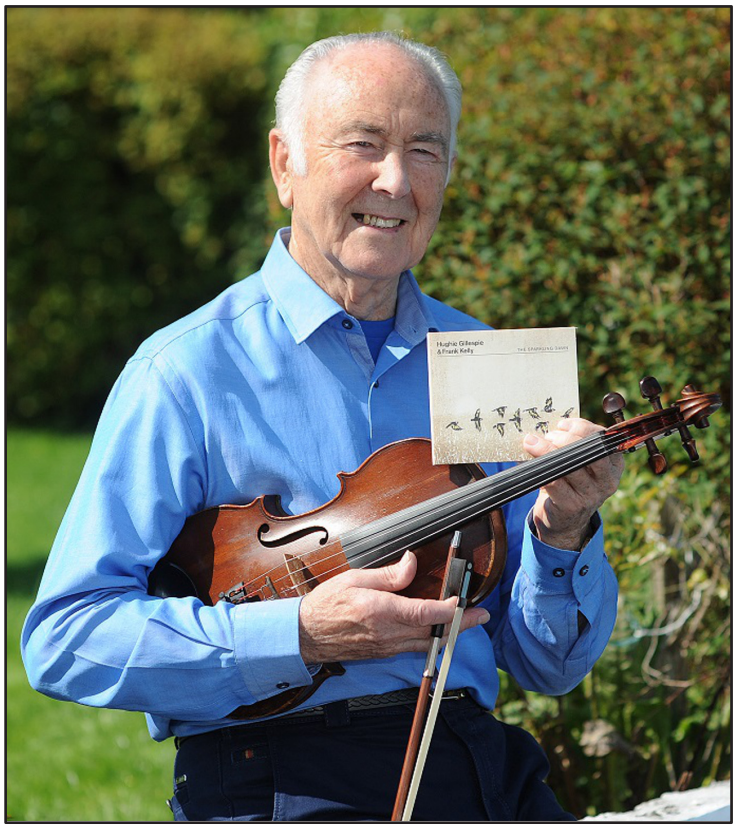
The Francis O'Neill Cylinders consist of 32 recordings of Irish traditional music in America circa 1904 – including performances from renowned uilleann piper, Patrick Touhey, as well as Chicago musicians James Early, Bernard Delaney, John McFadden and Edward Cronin. Originally recorded on wax cylinders, the Ward Irish Music Archives digitized these recordings for historical preservation.

While the CD version of the collection is only available to ship in the US, the digital version is available for unlimited streaming via Bandcamp and as a high quality download in MP3, FLAC and other formats.

The digital download includes a pdf version of the original liner notes and of the CD wallet information.

For more information, see Ward on Bandcamp.

FRANK KELLY



Frank Kelly: *(right)* at the album launch for *The Sparkling Dawn (Photo: Gerard McHugh)*

Donegal fiddler master, Frank Kelly, passed away in January 2026 after a short illness at the age of 90.

Widely recognised as one of the last great players of his generation from the Finn Valley area, Frank Kelly was born the youngest of twelve children in the townland of Mullaghaneary in 'The Glen', above Crossroads, Killygordon, near Stranorlar.

He began his musical education at the age of eight or nine on a tin fiddle made by Mickey Mór Doherty – *An Dochartach Mór* – probably the foremost fiddler in Donegal in the nineteenth and early twentieth century.

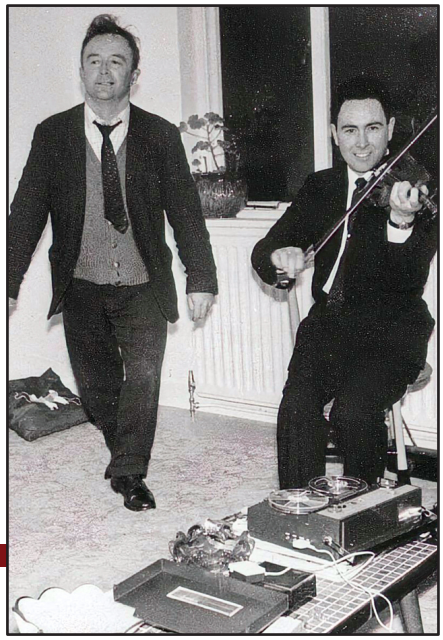
Frank's next fiddle was made from a shoe polish box by his grandfather.

As well as learning from local players, Frank also devoured the 78rpm records of renowned Irish fiddlers in the US such as Michael Coleman and Frank's cousin, Hugh Gillespie, who originally haled from Ballybofey.

When Frank was about 12, he met Hugh Gillespie when he came home from New York on holiday and received some impromptu coaching. When Hugh returned to live at Carrickmagrath, Ballybofey in 1964, the two played together several times a week until Hugh's death in October 1986.



Master Frank Kelly: aged 8 or 9 *(approx)*



In 1966 Frank played on Paddy Tunney and Arthur Kearney's album, *Ireland Her Own*.

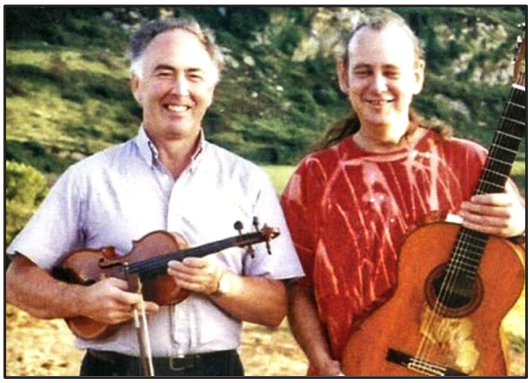
Frank won an All-Ireland senior fiddle title in Buncrana in 1979 and took part in the Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann (CCÉ) tour of North America that year.

He was active in Comhaltas for many years and went on to share stages and sessions with many of the leading figures in Irish traditional music, including "Simey" Doherty. Frank also enjoyed a long friendship with Tommy Peoples and was a driving force behind the regular CCÉ session in Crossroads.

To mark the tenth anniverary of Hugh Gillespie's death, Frank recorded an album of some of his mentor's favourite tunes, *Memories of Hughie Gillespie,* accompanied by Liam Deery on guitar. The album was initially released on cassette in 1996 before being made available on CD in 2019. In 2021, Frank released *The Sparkling Dawn,* a duo album featuring tracks remastered from home recordings made with Hugh Gillespie in 1967 – which now stands as an important tribute to the legacy of two great musicians.

Predeceased by his wife, Sarah, Frank is survived by his children, Tommy, Marie, Bernard, Frankie and Brigid, who are all talented traditional musicians, and by his partner, Rita Gallagher, the multi-award-winning traditional singer.







Frank Kelly master: left with Paddy Tunney; top right with Hugh Gillespie; middle right with Liam Deery; and bottom right with Rita Gallagher.

RIP DOLORES

So sad to hear of the passing of the great Dolores Keane. One of the purest and powerful voices of Ireland gone. Her beautiful recording of my song, *The Island,* in the mid-1980s was largely the one that made it so popular. I was privileged to sing with her several times and always came away thrilled and inspired.

Paul Brady

The wonderful thing about Dolores was that she took very intimate beautiful songs heard around the fire out into a wide open world.

So to be faithful to the integrity of the song and their tradition, you have to refocus your voice and your soul to make it relevant in a different world. And she did that.

Tommy Sands

Her voice was unique: she had universal appeal but was quintessentially Irish. So many memories of wild nights, back stage antics, tears and tall tales. Rest in peace, dear Dolly.

Eleanor McEvoy

The most pure beautiful singing voice ever in this world, I heard Dolores sing in Hogan's Bar in Bohermore in Galway many many years ago and to this day it …still is the most beautiful singing experience I have ever received.

We became good old friends and she had me as her guest on many shows…Dolores may have had a troubled life which she openly admitted in her beautiful interview with Tommy Tiernan but when she sang she lifted all our own troubles.

Don Stiffe

I am deeply saddened to hear of the passing of one of Ireland's finest singers, Dolores Keane. Dolores had the most beautiful voice that touched our souls.

Frances Black

Farewell Dolores Keane, you leave a legacy of song and music. A pub in Cologne called The Tinnef where yourself and John Faulkner played to 45 people in 1979 was the night I became a musician for real. The hours after the gig were just as inspiring as you made a 19-year-old feel part of something intangible but had much to do with a way of living.

Eoin O'Neill



Dolores Keane September 26 1953 – March 16 2026)

DOLORES KEANE

Dolores Keane was one of Ireland's most celebrated singers, with a voice that fused remarkable power with raw honesty and a rare emotional sensitivity. She became a major influence on generations of female performers,

A founding member of the Galway-based band Dé Danaan, she also enjoyed major success as a solo artist. Her recordings of songs such as Dougie MacLean's *Caledonia,* Paul Brady's *The Island,* Frank Fahey's *Galway Bay* and *Never Be the Sun* by Donagh Long have been acclaimed as definitive interpretations. The late Nanci Griffith, described Dolores as "the queen of the soul of Ireland" with "a sacred voice."

Speaking to *fonn* in 2019, Donal Lunny said: "Dolores always had truth in her voice. I produced one album for her on which she sang a Mick Hanly song, *My Love is in America,* and it was just amazing. Some takes were better than others and sometimes she might have a catch in her throat. But her singing was so instinctive it was like natural beauty. She never questioned it herself and never had to. I think among the best singers on a world level, she would be among an elite of about twenty on the planet at that time."

Born near Caherlistrane in East Galway, Dolores was raised from the age of four by her aunts Rita and Sarah Keane, who were well-known sean-nós singers. It was no surprise, therefore, that Dolores started singing at a very young age. She made her first recording for Radio Éireann in 1958, at the age of five. Dolores was also taught to play the "rudiments" of flute and whistle by her uncle Paddy,

Interviewed on the *Hand Me Down* series in the early 1980s, Dolores said it felt natural to sing with her family – having grown up surrounded by music at home. She recalled that musicians like piper Willie Clancy were regular visitors to the family home. Sessions in Caherlistrane often lasted days.

"I can never remember actually learning any of those songs," she said at the time. "I heard them so often, they were always in my head."

We're so saddened to hear of the passing of one of our greatest idols, Dolores Keane. Her songs, her voice, her courage were a constant source of inspiration in her solo and duet career, work with De Dannan but especially in her unison singing with her aunts Sarah and Rita.

The Friel Sisters

Dolores's death is a huge loss. Her personality just melted the hearts of everyone in Ireland. She was a wonder-ful personality. The kindest individual you could ever meet. Her voice was so distinctive. She was a big-hearted and super generous lady. It's just heart-breaking.

Frankie Gavin on RTÉ's Drivetime

In the sleeve notes to the Keane family's 1985 album, *Muintir Chatháin*, Dolores wrote:

My earliest recollections of music and singing were when I was about three years of age. My grandmother's house, where I spent much of my childhood, was often visited by many fine musicians and singers.

Among them were Willie Clancy, Máirtín Byrnes, Seán 'ac Dhonncha and many others from neighbouring villages. During the music sessions at the house, the 'noble call' operated among the gathered company and, even at the age of four or five, I was expected to do my bit. This encouraged me to learn songs and tunes.

Like all my brothers and sisters, I was fortunate to grow up in an atmosphere where learning songs and tunes was like learning to read or to walk. I remember Ulick McDonnell, an elderly neighbour, visiting the house and swapping songs with my grandmother. I remember my Uncle Paddy playing his flute, while visiting travelling people danced a set in the kitchen and I remember Ciarán Mac Mathúna coming to record songs for his Ceolta Tire *radio programme.*

As a teenager, Dolores began to sing at fleadhanna ceoil in both English and Irish. She also became a regular at the sessions in Hughes' Pub in Spiddal, where she met Frankie Gavin, Alec Finn, Johnny 'Ringo' McDonagh and Charlie Piggott,

In 1975, the five co-founded the traditional band Dé Danann (De Dannan) and in the same year released their debut album, *Dé Danann,* produced by Donal Lunny.

The group soon achieved international recognition and enjoyed major success in the late 1970s in the United States as well as at home, where their single, *The Rambling Irishman,* brought a major chart success in Ireland.







Top: **Dé Danaan 1975:** (from left), Johnny 'Ringo' McDonagh, Alec Finn, Charlie Piggott, Frankie Gavin and Dolores Keane.

Above: **John Faulkner with Dolores** *(Cover image from their album, Sail Óg Rua)*

Left: **Rita and Sarah Keane** at the Mayo Fleadh Cheoil in Shrule, Co. Mayo in the mid- to late-1980s *(Photo courtesy of John Murphy).*

With the band now established as a major force on the traditional music scene, Keane left to pursue new projects and was replaced initially by Andy Irvine (and subsequently by Mary Black, then Máire O'Connell and later Eleanor Shanley).

In 1977 she married multi-instrumentalist John Faulkner, an alumnus of Ewan MacColl's Critics' Group, and moved to London for a few years before eventually returning to Ireland in the early 1980s. In London, she worked with Faulkner on a number of film scores and programmes for the BBC as well as creating two bands: The Reel Union and Kinvara.

During this time Dolores recorded her first solo album, *There Was a Maid* in 1978, followed by two more albums with Faulkner, *Broken Hearted I'll Wander* (1979) and *Farewell to Éirinn* (1980).

On a personal level Dolores faced a difficult pregnancy before giving birth to their first child, Joseph, born with Bardet–Biedl syndrome.

In the mid-1980s, she rejoined Dé Danaan briefly – recording two more albums, *Anthem* and *Ballroom*. Her marriage to John Faulkner ended in 1988.

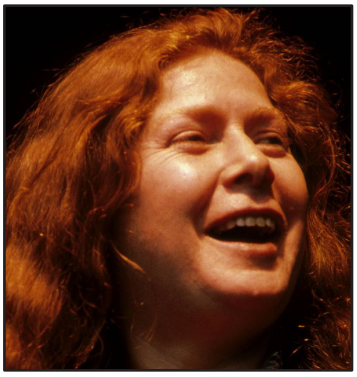
Returning to solo performance in 1988, she toured with Planxty and collaborated with The Chieftains on the album, *Bonaparte's Retreat*. She also released another solo album, *Dolores Keane,* followed by *A Lion in a Cage* in 1989. The title track, written by John Faulkner in tribute to Nelson Mandela, became Dolores' second Irish number-one single.

In December 1990, she made her theatrical début as the female lead in a new translation by Niall Tóibín and Michael Scott of Brendan Behan's *The Hostage*, with President Mary Robinson in attendance at the première.

In 1991 Dolores took part in the RTÉ/BBC television series, *Bringing It All Back Home*, illustrating the movement of traditional music and related genres between Ireland and North America. Keane performed in Nashville and Tennessee, with Emmylou Harris and Richard Thompson, and at home in Galway with her aunts Rita and Sarah.

In 1992, Keane was among the many female singers who contributed to *A Woman's Heart*. The album, which also featured Eleanor McEvoy, Mary Black, Frances Black, Sharon Shannon and Maura O'Connell, went on to become the biggest-selling album in Irish history. *A Woman's Heart Vol. 2,* released in late 1994, also achieved album chart success in Ireland.

Dolores' solo album, *Solid Ground,* was also released in 1994 to critical acclaim in Europe and America. In 1994, she also gave birth to her second child, Tara, with her new partner, Barry "Bazza" Farmer.



In 1995, Keane was awarded the Fiddler's Green Festival Hall of Fame award in Rostrevor, County Down, for her "significant contribution to the cause of Irish music and culture."

Another theatical engagement in 1995 saw Dolores in the Dublin production of J. M. Synge's *Playboy of the Western World*.

In 1997, Keane went to number one again in the Irish albums chart with a compilation album of her most loved songs. In her 1998 album, *Night Owl,* Dolores returned to her traditional roots.

In the late 1990 Keane toured with De Danaan again, playing to full houses in Birmingham, Alabama, and New York City.

Over her lengthy career in music, Dolores toured widely throughout Europe, North America and Australia, performing at leading festivals and concert venues.

Keane stepped back from recording and touring in the late 1990s, due to depression and alcoholism. She received extensive treatment for these conditions. She also lived with breast cancer.

She spoke publicly about the impact of living alone after her long-term relationship with Barry Farmer ended after twenty years. In an interview with the *Irish Independent* in 2014, she cited her struggles with alcoholism as one of the reasons they split up.

"I was not a nice person, you know? It couldn't have been easy for him. I hold no animosity towards Bazza - or indeed anyone. If I met him tomorrow morning the first thing I'd do is go down on my two knees and beg his forgiveness."

On the general impact of the stress of her singing career on her physical and mental health, Dolores told the *Irish Independent:*

I was fed up with the road. I was fed up with the songs I was singing. I was fed up with the approach of the bands I had and everything else. It was all the same old ding dong. I wanted to change all that. I wanted this new lease of life.

On the brighter side, Dolores learned that she was cancer-free in June 2014.

In April, 2022, Dolores received a Lifetime Achievement Award at the TG4 Gradam Ceoil awards at the National Concert Hall in Dublin, and in 2024, she received an honorary doctorate in Music from the University of Galway.

In 2023, Dolores starred in the RTE 1 feature length special, *Dolores @70,* recreating the music of Dolores and her family, in their homeplace at Carragh Cottage. As well as her brothers, Seán and Matt, and her sister Theresa, the film featured other family members; along with Paul Brady, Frankie Gavin, Tommy Sands, Mick Hanly, John Faulkner and Ger O'Donnell.

In 2023, Dolores also gave a memorable broadcast interview with Tommy Tiernan on RTE 1 TV in which spoke frankly about her trials and tribulations as well as the many highpoints in her remarkable musical journey. The interview offered a glimpse into the person behind the iconic voice, sharing moments of joy and reflection.



Doctor Keane: the President of NUI-Galway, Peter McHugh *(left)* bestowed an honorary doctorate on Dolores Keane. In her citation, Dr. Méabh Ní Fhuarthain *(right)* traced Dolores' journey from Carragh Cottage to worldwide recognition on the international stage. Dolores was delighted to accept the honour in the presence of her family.



Below: **Dolores on the Tommy Tiernan Show** (*Photo: RTÉ*))

Dolores died at home on March 16 2026, at the age of 72.

The tributes to Dolores were led by President Catherine Connolly who attended her funeral service in Kilcoona. along with her predecessor, Michael D. Higgins. The President described her as "one of the great voices of this island, and of the world".

"Shaped from childhood by the tradition of her aunts Rita and Sarah, she carried that forward with fierce, joyful intelligence, and she made it new. With De Danaan, in her solo work, on *A Woman's Heart* and in recordings that have become part of the fabric of Irish life she showed what it means to bring the full weight of yourself to a song.

"To all who loved her and were moved by her, and we are many," she added, "I say simply: a voice like hers does not leave us, it moves into the air and lives forever."

Ex-husband, John Faulkner, said: "Dolores was one of Ireland's finest singers. Her depth of feeling and interpretation will remain unmatched.

"I am honoured to have worked with her on the many iconic recordings we made together and having her distinctive voice, creating a unique depth and passion to many traditional songs and some of my compositions… She will leave a lasting legacy for future generations of musicians and singers – a legacy of which I am very proud to have been a part. It was a partnership which I will always treasure."









DOLORES' DISCOGRAPHY

Albums

Solo
- There Was a Maid (1978)
- Dolores Keane (1988)
- Lion in a Cage (1989)
- Solid Ground (1993)
- Night Owl (1998)

with Dé Danann / De Dannan
- Dé Danann (1975)
- Anthem (1985)
- Ballroom (1988)

with The Keane Family
- Muintir Chatháin (1985)

with John Faulkner
- Broken Hearted I'll Wander (1979)
- Farewell to Éirinn (1980)
- Sail Óg Rua (1983)

with Johnny Duhan
- Reefer and the Model (1988)

with Rita Eriksen
- Tideland (1996)
-

Major Compilations
- The Best of Dolores Keane (1997)
- Where Have All the Flowers Gone: The Very Best of Dolores Keane (2003)
- May Morning Dew (2004)
- Celebrating Seventy Years (2023)
- Anthology (2023)

Anthologies
- A Woman's Heart (1992)
- A Woman's Heart 2 (1994)
- Bringing It All Back Home – Influence of Irish Music
- In Spite of Ourselves (1999): Dolores duets with John Prine on *It's a Cheating Situation* and *In a Town This Size.*
- Irish Favourites with Clannad, Mary Black and Maighréad Ní Dhomhnaill (2002)
- The Essential Dolores Keane Collection (2007)

Singles & EPs

Solo
- Lion In A Cage (1989)
- Feel It In My Bones/Lion In A Cage (1990)
- One Golden Rule (1990)
- Heart Like A Wheel

with John Faulkner
- Galway Bay (1983)

with Johnny Duhan
- After The Dream / You Came Back Into My Life (1988)

with Mick Hanly
- My Love Is In America (1990)

with Emmylou Harris and Mary Black
- Sonny (1991)

with Seán Keane
- Like The First Time It's Christmas Time (1998)

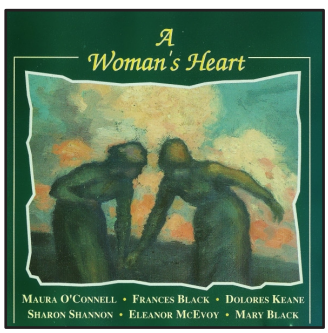
with Tommy Sands and Vedran Smailovic
- Where Have All The Flowers Gone (2002)

Note: Dolores Keane also features as a soloist, duettist or ensemble performer on individual tracks included on a substantial number of albums.









Moya Brennan was an iconic figure in Irish music, whose wonderful voice and multifaceted skills, including as a writer and instrumentalist, brought Irish music and culture to listeners all over the world.

From their beginnings playing in their family's pub, Tábhairne Leo, Clannad were for over 50 years one of the foremost acts in bringing Irish music and the Irish language to a global audience. Both with Clannad and in her solo work and collaborations, Moya leaves an exceptional legacy of music which will be enjoyed for generations to come.

Moya also showed great strength in speaking of her own personal experiences and served as an inspiration to so many others, including through her work on so many worthy causes.

President Catherine Connolly

The passing of Moya Brennan is a significant moment for Ireland. Her voice, carved from the beauty of her native Donegal, is the essence of this country itself, intangible and undefinable. A beautiful artist taken too early. Much love and condolences to her family and friends.

Anúna

We are heartbroken at the loss of our dear friend Moya Brennan. We had the great privilege of preforming on stage and recording with Moya many times over the years.

Dervish

Rest in peace, Moya, we are devastated. The most beautiful person in every way, to know you was to love you. Moya inspired so many of us, what a woman, what a legend. We feel so lucky and blessed to have shared the stage with her, to laugh with her, sing with her, to be in her presence was truly an honour for all of us.

She did so much for Irish music and to have her part of our Irish Women In Harmony tribe from the start was everything and more. She loved Irish talent, she was supportive, always cheering us on behind the scenes, singing with us any chance she could and Moya your legacy will live on forever. The last time we sang together with you was on International Women's day 2025. You and your beautiful daughter Aisling sang *In A Lifetime* together and it was such a stunning moment. We love you beyond and the impact you had on each and every one of us will stay in our hearts forever.

Irish Women in Harmony



MOYA BRENNAN

Moya Brennan August 4 1952 – April 13 2026)

Moya Brennan, singer songwriter, harpist and composer, died recently at the age of 73. Blessed with a voice of exceptional timbre, Moya along with her sister, Enya, and the rest of the members of the family band, Clannad, were pioneers of a new genre of "Celtic" music – inspired by Irish traditional music but played on synthisers and non-traditional instruments.

The eldest of nine children, Máire Philomena Ní Bhraonáin was born to Máire 'Baba' Ní Dhúgáin and Leo Ó Braonáin in Gweedore, Co. Donegal. From an early age, she was steeped in the Irish language. Her father, Leo Ó Braonáin, led the Slieve Foy showband, and her mother, Baba, was a music teacher and ran the local choir.

Moya attended the local primary school, Scoil Phádraig Dobhair – where her grandfather was principal and her grandmother was a teacher – before undertaking her secondary schooling at the Ursuline College in Sligo – the *alma mater* of singer and harpist Mary O'Hara.

After leaving secondary school, Brennan spent a few years at the Royal Irish Academy of Music in Dublin studying the harp, the piano and singing.

Alongside her academic education, Moya's cultural development took the form of regular performances with her siblings at her father's pub, Tábhairne Leo, in the village of Meenaleck, a short distance from the family home. Throughout her career, it remained her favourite place to share songs and music.

Following competitive success at the Letterkenny Arts Festival in 1973, Moya, with her brothers, Pól and Ciarán, and twin uncles, Pádraig and Noel Ó Dúgáin, were rewarded with a recording contract.

Originally called Clann as Dobhair (the family from Dore), they shortened it to Clannad in 1973 and began a journey that would lead them to major concert halls and festivals around the world. Younger sister, Eithne (Enya) joined the band in the early 1980s before leaving to pursue a solo career.

Below: **Doctor doctor:** Moya Brennan with Síle Denvir at Dublin City University in 2022.



In 1982 Clannad were commissioned to write the theme music for *Harry's Game,* a three-part Yorkshire television series about the Troubles. The impact of the song was such that a week after the series was broadcast, *Theme from Harry's Game* rose to No 5 in the UK pop charts – the highest ever position for a song sung in Irish. Their performance on *Top of the Pops* in November 1982 marked the first appearance of the Irish language on that TV programme. The song also earned an Ivor Novello award.The song is credited



Clannad: *(from left)* Pádraig Ó Dúgáin, Ciarán Brennan, Moya Brennan, Noel Ó Dúgáin and Paul Brennan.

solely to Paul in the liner notes of various recordings from 1982 to 1995, and to Paul and Ciarán in liner notes from 2003 and later. According to Moya, it was written "mainly" by Paul and Ciarán, with some input from her.

After the success of *Theme from Harry's Game,* the band scored further chart success with *In a Lifetime* which included a duet with Bono.

Clannad's soundtrack for the ITV series *Robin of Sherwood* in 1985 earned a BAFTA.

In 1994 Moya collaborated with Anúna on a special performance of *Siúil a Rúin,* arranged by Michael and John McGlynn for Amnesty International's *Voices of the Disappeared* event – which was filmed and later broadcast on RTÉ television.

In 1999 Clannad won a Grammy in the Best New Age Album category for *Landmark,* while a PBS America television documentary, *Music of Ireland: Welcome Home,* hosted by Moya, won an Emmy in 2011.

Clannad's music also featured in film and television, including *The Last of the Mohicans, The Angel and the Soldier Boy, Message in a Bottle* and *A Big Bold Beautiful Journey.*

Further recognition followed for Moya at the RTÉ Folk Awards in 2019 for Lifetime Achievement and an honorary doctorate in philosophy from Dublin City University in 2022.

Delivering the citation, Dr. Síle Denvir of DCU's Scoil na Gaeilge – who was herself named as Singer of the Year in the TG4 Gradam Ceoil awards in 2023 said:

"Moya has an innate ability to find the heart of music, to reach the essence of a song or a tune, and to make the ordinary extraordinary. Her many accolades, including a Grammy and an Emmy, are testament to this.

"Moya has played on the greatest stages in the world with many, many famous singers and musicians, but her generosity of spirit and grounded connection with her roots always bring her back home to the stage her father carved out for her and for her siblings in Tábhairne Leo in Mín na Leice."

Among the many famous singers and musicians Moya played with were The Chieftains, Hans Zimmer, Robert Plant, Mick Jagger, Shane MacGowan, Paul Brady, Brian Kennedy and Bono, who once described her voice as "one of the greatest the human ear has ever experienced."

A further accolade was announced in February 2024 when Moya was named Donegal Person of the Year.

As touring and recording with Clannad had tapered down in the new millennium, Moya explored other musical projects. As well as a total of nine solo albums (two of which were Grammy-nominated) she also engaged in new collaborations. One of these was rooted in Donegal with fellow Gaoth Dobhair native, Mairéad



Celebrating Lomax: Paul and Moya Brennan, at the 2018 première of the documentary, *Lomax in Éirinn* – in which Paul starred (📷 fonn).

Thinking of Moya Brennan and her family today, with sadness at her leaving, mixed with deep gratitude and respect for the musical richness which she gave to the world through her celebration and performance of songs, music and her native Irish language .

People around the world will have their own special memories of her beautiful recordings and concerts across the years and I would like to share this one, showing Moya's love for nature around us.

It's from 2019, not in a stadium or concert hall, but in a very quiet place during Fiddler's Green International Festival, when even the songbirds stopped to listen as Moya spoke for and sang to a special old tree in Rostrevor Oakwood.

For those who she has left behind and for those who have gone before us, may the joy and generosity of her spirit live and sing on.

Colum Sands

I am deeply saddened this morning to hear of the passing of Moya Brennan, one of the most beautiful people I know in the music industry. Moya was not only a wonderful musician and singer, she was a warm, generous and deeply spiritual soul who touched everyone she met.

I had the privilege of catching up with Moya this past January after she performed at the Tradfest Women of Note gig , and we had plans to meet again in August when I would be up in Donegal. Moya gave so much to Irish music and to the world, her voice with Clannad was unlike anything else, a sound rooted in the Donegal Gaeltacht that somehow spoke to millions across the globe. But beyond the music, it was who she was as a human being that will stay with me.

Frances Black

Moya Brennan was a maverick, a pioneer of traditional music and a giant in the international music scene. Her voice was so beautiful, so recognisable, she paved the way for all of us to sing in Irish on the global stage, and she was such a genuinely kind, supportive and generous woman, both in music and in her life.

She was proud to be Irish, proud to be from Donegal, proud to be an Irish speaker, and proud to be a woman in this industry. She wore her heart on her sleeve and was mighty craic. A singer, songwriter, musician and composer, her legacy will live on and she will be sorely missed.

FairPlé





Moya: performing with Clannad at the 2013 Festival Interceltique in Lorient
(Photo: XIIIfromTOKYO/Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0)

Ní Mhaonaigh (of Altan) and Kells sisters, Tríona and Maighréad Ní Dhomhnaill (of Skara Brae) whose paternal grand-parents were from Rann na Feirste. The quartet of friends recorded together in 2010 as T with the Maggies.

Around this time, Moya also began to perform and record with fellow harpist and vocalist, Cormac de Barra. They made five albums as a duo over a fourteen-year period plus another one as members of the much larger ensemble, The Crannua Collective.

Nevertheless she continued to tour with her band whose floating member-ship included at one time or another the following: Cormac de Barra, Clare Friel, Máire Breatnach, Cathal Ó Curráin, Éamonn Galldubh, Tiarnán Ó Duinnchinn, Éamonn de Barra, Fionán de Barra, Daithí Rua, Dave Curley, Paul Byrne, Yoshi Izumi, Will Keating, Sinéad Madden, Hughie Boyle, Rob Jones, Ewan Cowley, Lia Wright, Feargal Murray, Sam Jackson, Neil Kennedy, Deirdre Brennan, Aran Sheehy and Moya's husband, Tim Jarvis, and children, Aisling and Paul Jarvis.

In 2013 Moya launched another important initiative at Tábhairne Leo, in the form of Clubeo – a monthly open session for both new and established artists which has continued to this day.

Following the death of Pádraig Ó Dúgáin in 2016, the thoughts of the band's four remaining members began to turn towards undertaking one final world tour to bring the curtain down on Clannad's career as live performers – especially since Moya's own health was beginning to deteriorate.

Moya Brennan in 2006
(Photo: MaxPride/Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 Unported)

Below: Moya backstage at Glastonbury in 2011
(Photo: Redfern7/Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 Unported)



In 2020, a few months before she received a terminal diagnosis of pulmonary fibrosis, she was asked by Tommy Tiernan to sing a song in Irish on his RTÉ television show. Her simple unaccompanied rendition of Clannad's *Gaoth Barra Na dTonn* visibly moved her host.

Pulmonary fibrosis, which is a chronic progressive lung disease, is especially cruel for a singer since the scarring and stiffening of lung tissue makes it increasingly difficult to breathe and reduces the absorption of oxygen into the blood, leading to loss of energy.

Clannad released *In a Lifetime* to mark the band's fiftieth anniversary in 2020. An accompanying *In a Lifetime* Farewell Tour – to be rolled out over two years – was planned to begin in 2020 but had to be postponed due to the Covid 19 pandemic.

The tour eventually got under way in 2021 taking in the UK, Europe, Australia and North America – but had to be paused for a break after the death of Noel Ó Dúgáin in 2022. The tour eventually culminated in the band's final official Irish appearance at Dublin's 3Arena in February 2023 and a final show in London's Royal Albert Hall in October 2024.

In 2026, Moya performed at Dublin Tradfest and at Celtic Connections in Glasgow in January – and made her final Dublin appearance at the fiftieth anniversary celebrations of the *Hot Press* music journal in February.

In her autobiography, *The Other Side of the Rainbow,* published in 2000, Moya recalled her upbringing as the eldest of nine siblings in rural Donegal. Along with the highs of success in the music business, she also recounted low periods involving an abortion in 1972 and struggles with alcohol, cannabis and cocaine in the early 1980s.

In 1985 she married musician, Pat Farrell: the marriage ended after eighteen months when Moya suffered a miscarriage. She emerged from her "dark years" as a committed Christian with renewed faith.

In 1990 she married British photographer (and musician), Tim Jarvis, with whom she had two children – all of whom played with Moya's touring band.

An active philanthropist, Moya was a Goodwill Ambassador for the Christian Blind Mission Ireland. She also supported environmental causes.

Moya is survived by her husband, Tim Jarvis, her daughter Aisling and son Paul, her granddaughter Eden, her mother, Máire (Baba), her sisters, Deirdre, Enya, Olive and Brídín, and her brothers, Ciarán, Pól and Bartley. She was predeceased by her brother and co-manager, Leon.

MOYA'S DISCOGRAPHY

Albums

Solo
- Máire (1992)
- Misty Eyed Adventures (1994)
- Perfect Time (1998)
- Through Irish Eyes: A St. Patrick's Day Special (1998)
- Whisper to the Wild Water (1999)
- Two Horizons (2003)
- An Irish Christmas
- Óró – A Live Session (2005)
- Signature (2006)
- Heart Strings: Live with the Liverpool Philharmonic (2006)
- Canvas (2017)

with Clannad
- Clannad (1973)
- Clannad 2 (1974)
- Dúlamán (1976)
- In Concert (1978)
- Crann Ull (1980)
- Fuaim (1982)
- Magical Ring (1983)
- Legend (1984)
- Macalla (1985)
- Sirius (1987)
- Atlantic Realm (1989)
- The Angel and the Soldier (1989)
- Anam (1990)
- Banba (1993)
- Lore (1996)
- Landmarks (1998)
- Live in Concert (2005)
- Christ Church Cathedral (2013)
- Nádúr (2013)
- Turas 1980 (Live in Bremen) (2018)

with Cormac de Barra
- My Match is a Makin' (2010)
- Voices and Harps (2011)
- Voices and Harps: Affinity (2013)
- Timeless (2019)
- Voices and Harps IV: A Tribute to Mary O'Hara (2024)

with T with the Maggies
- T with the Maggies (2010)

with The Crannua Collective
- The Crannua Collective (2019)

with Minco Eggersman and Theodoor Borger
- Unifony III (2023)

Singles & EPs

Solo
- Jealous Heart (1992)
- Beating Heart (1992)
- Against the Wind (1992)
- Big Yellow Taxi (1994)
- Days of Dancing (1994)
- Perfect Time (1996)
- The Bug Rock (1998)
- The Light on the Hill (1998)
- Heal This Land (1998)
- Follow the Word (1999)
- Show Me (2003)
- Two Horixons sampler (2003)
- Tara (2004)
- Silent Night (2005)
- Carol of the Bells (2005)
- No One Talks (2006)
- Merry Go-Round (2007)
- Holiday Trio (2007)

with Clannad
- Dheanainn Súgradh (1974)
- Down by the Sally Gardens (1978)
- Mhorad 's Na Horo Gheallaidh (1981)
- Theme from Harry's Game (1982)
- I See Red (1983)
- Newgrange (1983)
- Robin (The Hooded Man) (1984)
- Now is Here (1984)
- Closer to Your Heart (1985)
- Scarlet Inside (1985)
- Almost Seems (1985)
- Robin of Sherwood (1986)
- In a Lifetime (1986)
- White Fool (1988)
- Something to Believe In (1987)
- Live and Learn (1987)
- The Hunter (1989)
- In a Lifetime (1989)
- A Dream in the Night (1989)
- Hourglass/Theme from Harry's Game (1989)
- In Fortune's Hand (1989)
- Why Worry? (1991)
- Mystery Game (1993)
- I Will Find You (1993)
- Seanchas (1996)
- Christmas Angels (1997)
- An Gleann (1998)

with Clannad, Tríona, Mairéad and Mícheál Ó Domhnaill and Donal Lunny
- An Bealach Seo 'Tá Romham/ Faoileán (1975)

with Cormac de Barra
- Sailing (2013)
- Ten14 (2014)

- **with Roger Shah**
- Morning Star (2011)
- Reasons to Live (2016)

with Shane McGowan
- You're the One (1995)

with Chicane
- Saltwater (1999)

with Grand Canal
- Green to Gold (2008)

with Raz Nitzan
- Find the Sun (2017)

with Magdalene Survivors Together
- From a Distance (2011)

with Trance Wax
- Rivers (2021)

with Liam O'Connor
- Strong in Numbers (2021)

with Mairéad Ní Mhaonaigh
- In My Life (2022)

Compilations

with Clannad
- The Collection (1987)
- Closer to Your Heart (1988)
- Pastpresent (1989)
- Themes (1992)
- The Family Tree *(Sampler)* (1993)
- Legend/Magical Ring (1995)
- Rogha: The Best of Clannad (1997)
- The Celtic Voice
- The Ultimate Collection (1997)
- In A Lifetime – The Ultimate Collection (1997)
- Magic Elements - The Best of Clannad (1998)
- An Díolaim (1998)
- The Best of Clannad on Gael-Linn (1998)
- Celtic Collection (1999)
- Greatest Hits (2000)

with Various Artists
- New Irish Hymns: The Complete Works (2005)

with Schiller
- Eine Zukunft Fúr Den Michel (2005)

with Mick Jagger
- Symphonic Music of the Rolling Stones



MOYA: MY BEAUTIFUL FRIEND

Máire Ní Bhraonáin. was a fellow proud Gaoth Dobhair and Donegal woman. I first met her when we were part of Aisteoirí Ghaoth Dobhair.

Both our parents were very involved in drama and music in the parish and all our spare time was practicing for plays or music shows.

So I met her on stage at rehearsals in Amharclann Ghaoth Dobhair. She was queen of the fairies and I was one of the fairies in a children's scene. She has always remained a 'queen' in my head. Someone to look up to and aspire to be like. I even asked for a harp as a present one year which I received.

Máire came along to help tune it and give me a lesson but saw my stumpy nails and insisted I grow them for the harp. As an aspiring fiddler, I explained that I needed them short for my fiddle so she laughed and asked me to make a choice! Moya has always been there.

I watched herself and Clannad rise to fame with pride. They paved the way for younger Gaeltacht musicians, like myself in Altan, to fulfill dreams of travelling the world with our Donegal

T with the Maggies: *(from left)* Tríona Ní Dhomhnaill, Moya Brennan, Maighread Ní Dhomhnaill and Mairéad Ní Mhaonaigh

music and song and play in iconic venues from the Albert Hall to the Sydney Opera house.

We both travelled the world for years in parallel universes and started meeting up again about 25 years ago at different events. Around then we decided to get together with Tríona and Maighread Ní Dhomhnaill and make an album. That's when we called ourselves 'T with the Maggies.'

That was a joyous fun time, of learning and making memories. We knew all the local songs anyway that we had learned growing up. But we also composed a few together which was fun. While rehearsing and meeting up again, we established a deep bond which made us all closer and sisterly. I was in my element singing with my childhood heroes!

We were always there for each other at celebrations and in times of need and loss. Moya loved to sing: she loved the song. Singing even helped her ill health.

When she opened her mouth something unearthly happened. It wasn't from this world, it was from another world. It lifted me into another reality. She herself didn't know where it came from, when asked, but it was definitely the combination of her being, her gentle soul, her other worldly quality. It touched my deepest being, it was more than Irish music, it was more than a country, a creed or place. It was the very essence of feeling, joy and sadness.

Máire had that rare quality of being gentle, fragile even innocent and open but also possessed the wisdom of life. She was strong, she had a strength of character but possessed it with dignity and gentleness.

She had a great sense of her 'trade' … the music business and tried to pass that on to the younger generation of budding singers in her monthly Clubeo in her father's pub, Leo's Tavern. I loved her company, she was 'uasal', always encouraging, kind and welcoming.

She passed away on Monday evening , when Gaoth Dobhair was soaked in the bright hues of gold as the sun was going down over Gola island. What an exit from the world stage, the queen was gone. I know that she is at peace now but I will miss my gentle, beautiful friend.

Mairéad Ní Mhaonaigh



Fintan McManus



Jig: Fintan McManus *(centre)* receives the NYAH Cavan Festival Jig of Life Award from Séamus Fay watched by his partner, Ann Donohoe



For the record: *(from left)* Gabriel McArdle and Fintan McManus during the filming of *Sé mo Laoch: Gabriel McArdle* for TG4 *(Photo: TG4).*

FINTAN McMANUS

Traditional musician, Fintan McManus of Belturbet, passed away peacefully on Saturday, April 4, in the care of his family and staff at Cavan General Hospital.

Originally from Lisnaskea in Co. Fermanagh, Fintan was a celebrated guitar and bouzouki player. He was also a highly accomplished whistle player and composer.

In a tribute to his late friend, Fermanagh melodeon player, Ciaran Kelly recalled their parallel musical journey:

"We went to University in Coleraine in the late 1970s along with Ciaran Curran (Altan) and others such as piper Joe McHugh, singer Brian Mullen from Derry and flute player Gary Hastings. The music in those years was fantastic.

"Fintan was a great guitar and whistle player who moved to the bouzouki where he developed his own style of accompaniment. He could lift and carry any session he joined, always supporting the tune instead of dominating it.

"He later made his own bouzoukis and guitars. He was a great composer of tunes, most notably the reel, *The Guns of the Magnificent Seven,* which travelled the world and was recorded by many groups and musicians.

"Fintan and I travelled many miles together to sessions in the 1980s. There were many adventures, escapades and laughs. The last time we played together was for Martin Donohoe at an event in Cavan in 2021. He will be sadly missed by the traditional music community in Fermanagh and Cavan and further afield."

These sentiments were shared by the organisers of the P. J. Flood Festival in Belturbet:

"Fintan McManus will be remembered as one of a kind, a gifted, gentle soul whose music and friendship touched countless lives. A master of the bouzouki, guitar, whistle, and tune, he played with legends yet remained deeply humble, always supporting the music rather than leading it.

"From sessions and festivals across Fermanagh, Cavan, and beyond, or in his studio, Fintan's warmth, humour, and generosity enriched everyone he met. Living in Belturbet he was a great friend to the festival and worked on it for several years. His kindness and talent will live long in the memories of the traditional music community he so enlivened."

Musician, producer and Belfast Tradfest director, Donal O'Connor recalled a memorable collaboration with Fintan MacManus.

"I had the privilege of inviting Fintan to join us for filming in Enniskillen during the making of TG4's *Sé mo Laoch: Gabriel McArdle* in February 2020. It was a real honour to have him there.

"He accompanied Gabie on *The Banks of Kilrea* and was, as always, kind, humble, and a truly beautiful player, bringing a depth and sensitivity to the music that lifted everything around him.

"Fintan had also recorded a couple of albums with my uncle Len Graham, and I always admired his accompaniment style, never intrusive, always perfectly judged, and his rare ability to support a song in a way that allowed the singer to fully shine. That kind of musicianship is a gift, and Fintan had it in abundance."

Fintan is survived by his wife Ann, brother Terry, son Mark, grandchildren James, Leo and Rebecca, as well as extended family and a wide circle of friends.

ARCHIE FISHER

Musician, singer and songwriter, Archie Fisher, who died in November 2025 at the age of 86, was a leading figure in the folk revival in Scotland from the 1960s onwards.

Performing both traditional songs and original compositions, Archie was known for his rich warm voice, which was to put to further use in presenting the BBC Radio Scotland programme, *Travelling Folk,* from 1983 to 2010, providing encouragement and exposure for many performers.

Born in Glasgow, Archie was raised within a family of singers. His father, John, a police inspector, sang light operatic and popular songs and was a soloist with the City of Glasgow police choir. Archie's mother, Morag (née Macdonald), originally from Vatersay in the Outer Hebrides, sang songs in Gaelic around the house.

Archie's sisters also sang: five of them would perform with Archie on a 1966 Topic Records album, *The Fisher Family: Traditional and New Songs from Scotland.* Two of his sisters, Ray and Priscilla (Cilla) went on to sing professionally live and on record.

A stint in the merchant navy after school exposed Archie to new musical genres in the 1950s – including Pete Seeger, The Weavers and Lonnie Donegan – which led him to buy a guitar and begin to perform at the newly opened Glasgow Folksong Club along with an informal group of singers known as the Broomhill Bums.

Dropping out of agricultural college, he moved to Edinburgh in 1960, where he became a regular performer at the Howff Folk Club along with Hamish Imlach, Billy Connolly and Bert Jansch.

Encouraged by Norman Buchan, Archie and his sister,Ray, recorded *Far Over the Forth,* an EP for Topic in 1961. They also recorded solo and duet tracks on the two *Edin-burgh Folk Festival* albums for Decca.

A regular slot on the STV show, *Here and Now,* followed for the Fishers as well as appearances on the BBC's *Hoot'nanny Show.*

But when Ray married and moved to Northumberland, Archie decided to continue as a solo performer.

His first solo album in 1968 and his third, *Will Ye Gang, Love,* in 1976, both focussed on traditional Scottish songs. But he also included his own compositions on his second album, *Orfeo* (1970).

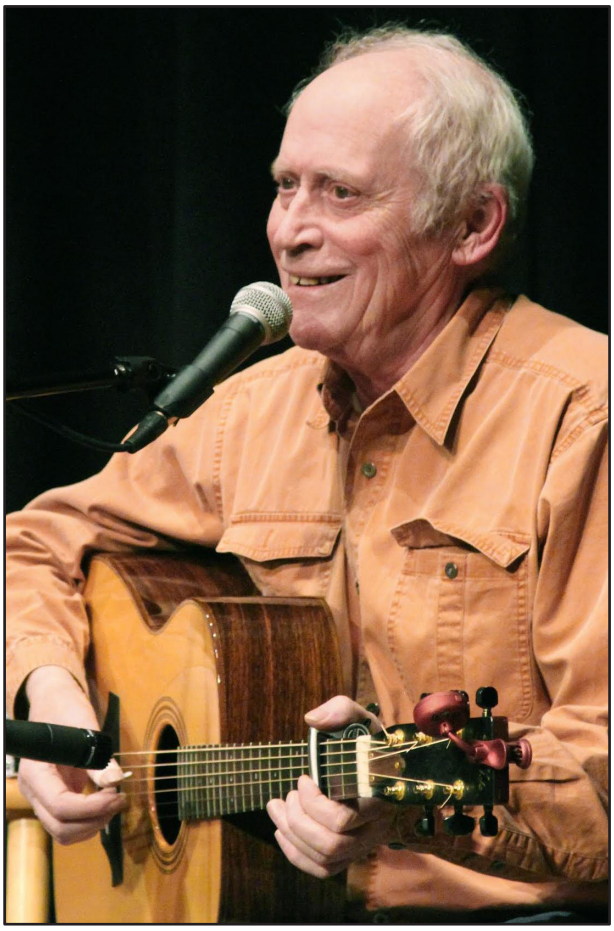
His own songs reflected the same narrative elements as the traditional repertoire. Among his best known songs were *The Final Trawl, Men of Worth, The Shipyard Apprentice, Dark-Eyed Molly* and the ballad, *The Witch of the Westmerlands*.

Archie also collaborated with Barbara Dickson on two albums – *The Fate o' Charlie* (1969), a collection of Jacobite songs, and *Thro' the Recent Years* (1970).

For many years, Archie lived in the Scottish Borders, where he kept horses and was a keen rider. Many of his songs reflected his love of the landscape and riding including *Ride Through the Rainbow, The Black Horse* and *Ontario Dust.*

Archie's 2008 album, *Wind-ward Away,* included previous-ly unreleased recordings from the 1970s. His final album, *The Best Times After All* (2019), featured his long-time Canadian collaborator, Garnet Rogers.



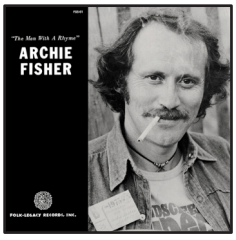


Man of Worth: Archie Fisher









Archie also worked with Liam Clancy and Tommy Makem – as a record producer as well as touring with them for five years.

Archie's career in broadcasting began when he produced radio documentaries for BBC Radio Scotland, which involved researching and singing songs on specific themes for schools radio.

His role as host of *Travelling Folk* from 1983 to 2010 involved interviews and live studio per-formances and special concerts as well as playing records.

Archie's eightieth birthday was celebrated at Glasgow's Celtic Connections festival with a con-cert featuring leading figures of the folk revival the years.

Donald Shaw, creative pro-ducer of Celtic Connections, said: "Archie Fisher was one of the great tradition bearers of the Scottish folk scene, and an inspiring, much-loved singer-songwriter before his success as a radio presenter.

"Songs like *Men of Worth* - his powerful tribute to Scots fishing - have become part of the contemporary folk repertoire, testament to his natural writing style."

Archie is survived by four daughters, Cindy, Aileen, Andrea and Rebecca, and a son, Rhys, three grandchildren, three of his sisters, Cilla, Audrey and Joyce, and by his long-term partner, Stephanie Tristam.

ROBIN LAING

One of Scotland's leading singer-songwriters, Robin Laing, died in December 2025 at the age of 72.

A musician, writer and poet, Laing from Edinburgh was also a leading authority on Scotch whisky, and chaired the tasting panel for the Scotch Malt Whisky Society.

Affectonately known as The Whisky Bard, many of his songs and stories were inspired by the culture around single malt whisky.

While much of his repertoire reflected the influence of singer-songwriters like Paul Simon and the late Stan Rogers, Laing was acclaimed as an interpreter of traditional Scottish ballads, fiddle tunes, and the songs of Robert Burns.

Folk Tap described Laing as possessing, "a pleasantly melodic voice and a beautifully clear guitar … a touch of Ralph McTell wi' an accent," while, *Folk Roots* called him, "a very sincere, likable and polished performer."

Among Irish singers, Robin Laing is probably best known for his beautiful song, *Ulysees,* which he recorded on his *Edinburgh Skyline* album in 1988

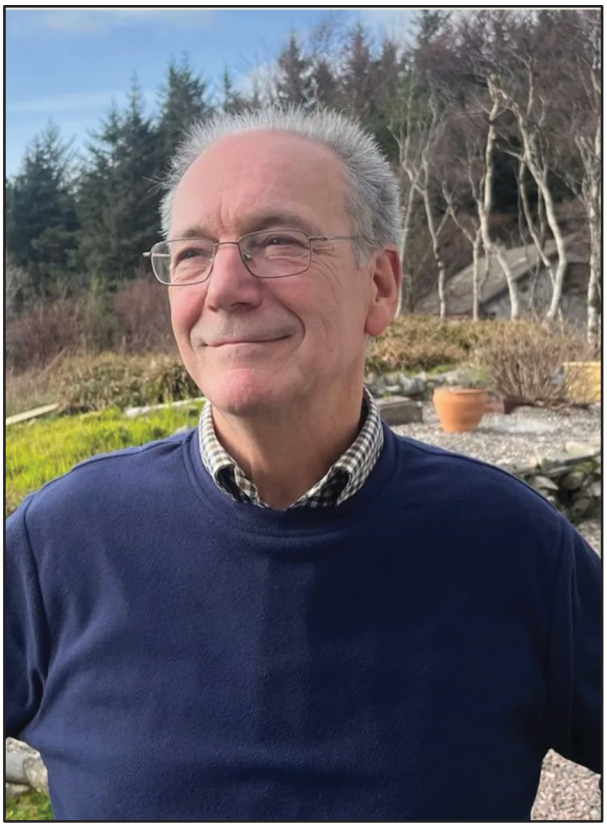
A supporter of the Stonehouse Folk Club in Scotland since its creation, he was also a founder member of the Traditional Music and Song Association of Scotland in Lanarkshire and was involved in establishing the Lanarkshire Songwriters Group over thirty years ago.

In a tribute to Laing after his death, Stonehouse Folk Club decribed him as "an inspirational songwriter and standard bearer of traditional music in Scotland and advocate of the whisky industry."

"His life and legacy is an inspiration to us all involved in celebrating and promoting traditional music and songwriting," the Club tribute continued, "and we pass on our condolences to Ursula his wife and children who are in our thoughts today and the days ahead.

"A toast was raised in his memory at Leadhills in a session last night as we sang an old favourite of many .. .*The Isle of Eigg.*

"Wha's like him? Damn few an' they're a' deid!"



ADAM McNAUGHTAN

Singer and songwriter, Adam McNaughtan, died in December 2025 at the age of 86.

Growing up in the East end of Glasgow, Adam achieved great acclaim as a singer, a songwriter and a collector of traditional songs. Among his special interests were songs of Glasgow; children's traditions; and the interaction between print and oral transmission.

At one time an Honorary Research Fellow in Scottish Studies at the University of Glasgow,he spent a year at the School of Scottish Studies in Edinburgh as Traditional Artist in Residence.

Alongside his musical interests, Adam worked as a schoolteacher at Cathkin High School and John Street Secondary in Glasgow and Dalziel High School in Motherwell, and subsequently as a bookseller.

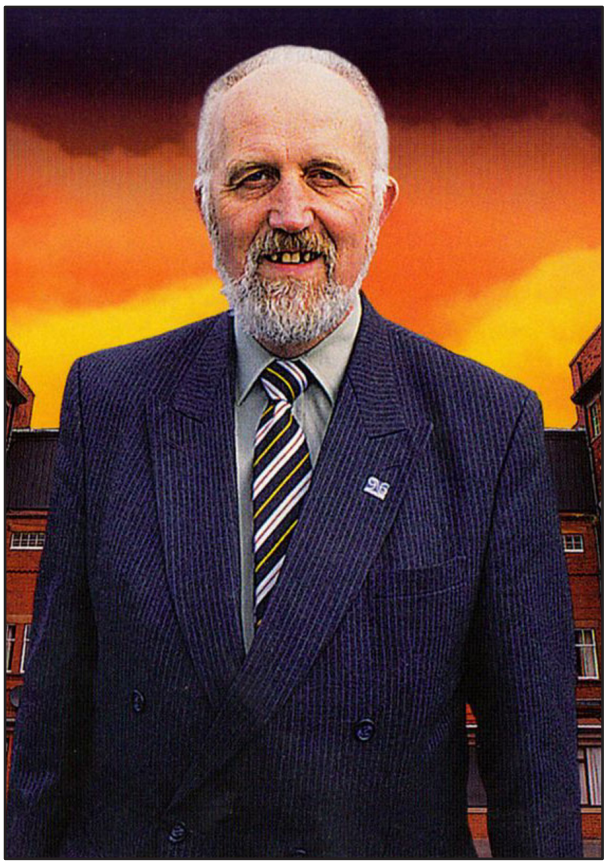
Among his most famous compositions are the Traveller anthem, *The Yellow on the Broom* – which has become a beloved folk club come-all-ye; the comic epic, *Oor Hamlet* – with its new take on Shakespeare's tragedy; and *The Jeely Piece* – his wry commentary on the policy of relocating families from tenements to high-rise flats – in which Adam imagined a parent throwing a jam sandwich from a tower block to a child playing on the ground below.

Adam was the subject of a special tribute night at the Celtic Connections festival in Glasgow in 2025.

One of the performers at the Celtic Connections tribute – who was also recently awarded Musician of the Year in the MG Alba Folk Awards – Siobhan Miller described Adam as "a writer, a collector and a performer. Observation was one of his great skills: he really saw the people and the communities around him."

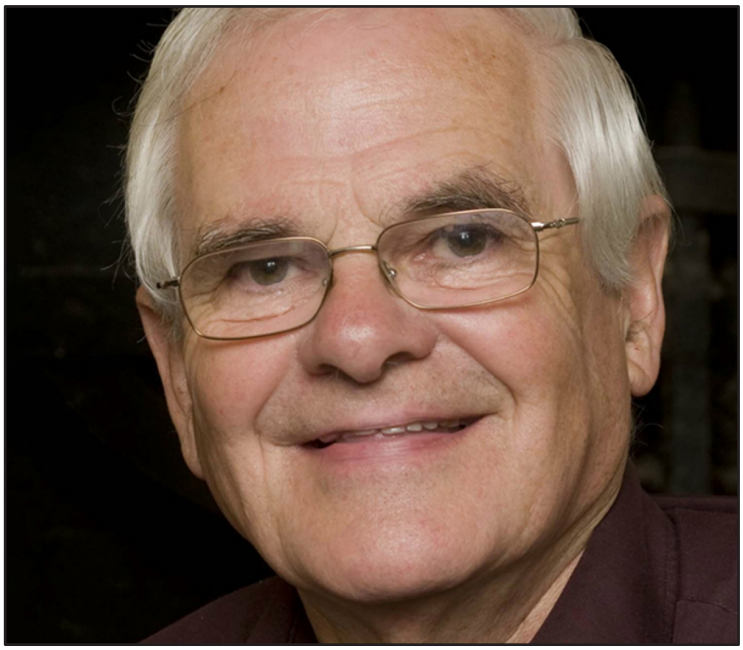
"*The Jeely Piece* song," she said, "is a perfect example…He had seen a programme about housing on the television and that inspired the song, which has been picked up across the generations.

"These songs have been taken forward into the folk music of today," added Siobhan Miller.



Oor Adam: the late Adam MacNaughtan singer, researcher and songwriter

SEÁN Ó SÉ



The renowned Irish traditional singer, Seán Ó Sé, died on Tuesday, January 13, 2026 – three days before his ninetieth birthday.

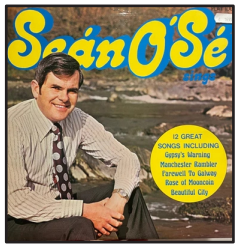
Born in South Terrace in Cork City, he was brought up in Laharn, near Ballylickey Bridge, close to where his parents taught at Coomhola Boys' School, near Bantry.

Seán completed his secondary education at Coláiste Íosagáin, Baile Bhúirne, between 1949 and 1953, before training as a primary school teacher at St. Patrick's College, Drumcondra.

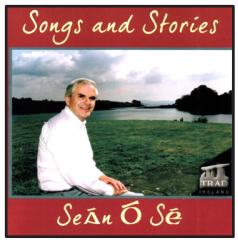
After teaching in Baltinglass and Bandon, Seán became principal of the newly opened St. Mary's School, in Knocknaheeny in Cork City in 1980 and remained there for the rest of his teaching career.

A gifted singer in English and Irish, Seán's first public appearance in 1959 ended in success at Feis na Mumhan, a radio appearance and gigs with Cabaret Gael Linn. He credited his vocal training by St Fin Barre's Cathedral organist John Horne for extending his range to two octaves.

But it was his association with Ceoltóirí Chualann – led by the visionary composer and musician Séan Ó Riada – that brought him to national prominence in the 1960s.







Below: :Seán Ó Sé *(right)* with Peadar Ó Riada *(Photo: TG4).*

Of course, any account of the collaboration between Ó Sé Ó Riada, however brief, cannot pass without mentioning their recording of the song, *An Poc ar Buile,* written by Dónall Ó Mulláin of Screathan, near Cúil Aodha about a mad puck goat – and which Ó Sé had heard the composer sing a few years before.

After Ó Sé made a demo tape of the song for Gael Linn, he was invited to meet Ó Riada.

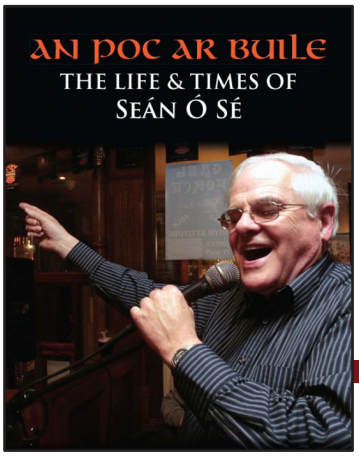
"The manager of Gael Linn at the time," recalled Ó Sé later, "… was a man called Roibard Mac Góráin, and we went out to his house in Stillorgan for the audition," said Ó Sé.

"Straight away he [Ó Riada] liked the voice and he decided there and then that we would go into a small studio at the corner of Stephen's Green… and we recorded a voice and piano version of *An Poc ar Buile.* He rang Mac Góráin and on that very day Gael Linn decided they would release it as an EP."

"The minute it came out it became a hit," added Ó Sé. "There was no official top 10 on any of the radio stations but it was certainly the first hit in the Irish language."

Indeed such was the impact of the song that not only did Ó







Award of a Lifetime: Seán Ó Sé with the TG4 Gradam Saoil in 2021 *(Photo: TG4).*



Meeting the President at the Ó Riada sa Gaiety Concert, March 1969: *(from left)* Seán Ó Riada, Seán Ó Sé, Niall Tóibín, President Éamon de Valera, Ruth Ó Riada and Breandán Ó Buachalla. *(Photo: Gael Linn)*

Sé earn the affectionate nickname, 'An Pocar,' but also, according to some, it transformed the landscape for traditional music and song in the 1960s by encouraging young people, in particular, to see value in their own culture.

To put it simply, for the first time in the history of the State, the Irish language became cool – and traditional music, for so long generally shunned – and even despised – in the cities and larger towns, finally began to be embraced.

Alongside this growth in general popularity that was to lead to the emergence of bands like Planxty, The Bothy Band and more, Seán Ó Sé's relationship with Ó Riada and Ceoltóirí Chualann also yielded acceptance on the concert stage – which was carried on by their direct successors, The Chieftains, and by The Gloaming and many more.

Though pivotal in his journey through song, *An Poc ar Buile* was not Ó Sé's favourite recording. That honour was reserved, of course, for the Cork anthem, *The Banks of My Own Lovely Lee*.

Ó Sé recorded "The Banks" with Ó Riada and the Radio Éireann Symphony Orchestra (as it was then known) in 1965, for the Louis Marcus film, *Rhapsody of a River*.

"The Banks," he declared, "was a fantastic recording because Ó Riada's arrangement was spectacular. I'd be proud of the fact that it's played at big Cork occasions even up to the present day."

The musical collaboration and close personal friendship between the two Seáns lasted seven more years until Ó Riada's premature death at the age of forty in 1971.



Dr. Ó Sé, I presume: UCC President Professor John O'Halloran *(left)* and Dr. Seán Ó Sé at the ceremony to confer an Honorary Doctorate in Music in recognition of Seán's life-long contribution to Irish music and heritage. *(Photo: Provision).*

PEADAR Ó RIADA ON SEÁN Ó SÉ

Dá fhaid í an lá tagann an oiche agus Dé Máirt seo caite chríochnaigh seal 90 blian ár gcara croí ceolmhar Seán Ó Sé ar an ndomhan seo.

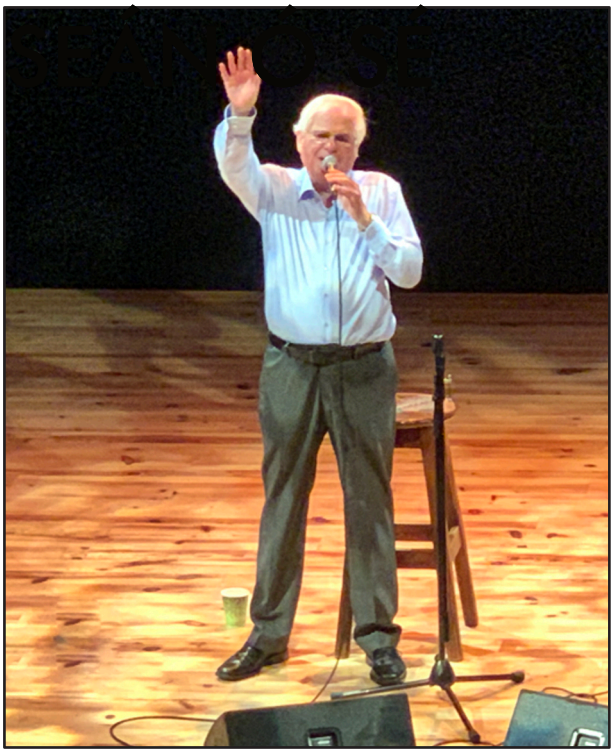
Fear uasal mánla cneasta é gur mhothaigh éinne a bhuail leis gur cara dhóibh é. Bhí sé lán de ghreann, dea humor, ceol agus seanchas is nior dhearúd sé riabh gur ó larthar Chorcaighe é. Cé go mothaighmíd uile uainn é agus uaigneas orainn i n'diaidh a imeachta uainn, is primhléid iontach ab ea a chomhluadar gealgáireach.

Bhí aithne agam ar ó 1962 agus b'é mo chrann taca igónaí ar mo ghualainn dheis ar ardán nó ísleán, le Cór nó ceoltoírí nó ag radaireacht pléasúra dúinn féin sa bhaile is ar fuaid na duichí. Beannacht Dé le Seán agus mar a deirfeadh Dónal Ó Liatháin "Nil sa bhás ach múchadha an choinnil roim gille na gréinne ag eirí" Marfidh sé igcónaí iná gcroithe.

Long though the day may be, the night always follows and last Tuesday our friend and musical hero, Seán Ó Sé left this world. He was noble, soft and gentle so much that everyone that met him felt he was their friend. He was always full of fun and good humour, music and story and he never forgot that he was a West Cork Bantry Beara man.

While we will all miss him and his very voice, and loneliness will catch us now and again, we must remember what a wonderful privilege it was to have his laughing loving company. My journey with him started in 1962. He was always my support at my right hand shoulder since 1971 whether on good or bad days. We trod many stages and churches together with Cór or Ceoltóirí and we spent many a day just meeting and wandering sometimes in the country around and more often singing songs and shooting the breeze. God rest his wonderful soul.

As Dónal Ó Liatháin said "Death is but the quenching of the candle in the bright light of the rising morning sun." Seán will always live in our hearts.



Salute: Seán Ó Sé at Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann in Drogheda in 2018 *(Photo: Fonn)*

Reflecting on the friend who was best man at his wedding in 1967 to Eileen Tangney, Ó Sé said in 2021: "There isn't a day since Seán Ó Riada died that he doesn't enter my consciousness at least once."

Ó Sé continued to collaborate with Seán Ó Riada's son, Peadar, as well as with many other respected artists for over six decades. With Peadar at the helm, he sang with a reconfigured Ceoltóirí Chualann on albums, *Through Banks of Mist* and *Dir Cúm Thóla is Cúil Aodha.*

As well as playing venues throughout Ireland, Seán Ó Sé also toured internationally with Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann visiting Havana, Moscow and Shanghai as well as Canada and the United States.

A contributor to many radio and television programmes and a popular and polished performer at numerous Fleadhanna Cheoil over the years, Ó Sé was recognised as Uachtarán an Oireachtais (President of the annual Oireachtas na Gaeilge festival of Irish literature, singing, music and dancing) in 2005. He also received the TG4 Gradam Saoil (Lifetime Achievement Award) at the annual Gradaim Ceoil event held in Belfast in 2021.

One of the most memorable of his recent performances was his rendition of *Ag Críost an Síol* with Peadar Ó Riada's Cór Cúil Aodha at Shane MacGowan's funeral mass in Nenagh in 2023.

Last October, Seán received an honorary doctorate from UCC in recognition of his immense contribution to Irish traditional music and heritage. In his address at the conferring ceremony, Dr Pádraig Mac Cárthaigh said that "Seán Ó Sé stands as one of the most distinctive and influential voices in the history of Irish traditional music and song.

"One measure of his significance in Irish cultural life is that a search of newspaper archives using 'Seán Ó Sé' with qualifying terms 'singer' or 'Ceoltóirí Chualann' returns in excess of 5,000 items."

In recent decades, he lived in Ballinlough, with his wife Eileen (who passed away in August 2025), and their three children, Áine, Con and Íde.





SEÁN'S DISCOGRAPHY

Albums

Solo
- Seán Ó Sé Sings (1973)
- Babaró (1975)
- Banks Of My Own Lovely Lee (1977)
- The West's Awake (1978)
- Heritage (1986)
- Songs And Stories (2012)

with Seán Ó Riada and Ceoltóirí Cualann
- Ding Dong (1967)
- Ó Riada Sa Gaiety (1970)
- Ó Riada (1971)

with The Frank Fitzpatrick Band
- Seán Ó Sé Sings at the Commodore Hotel (1969)

with Na Filí and Peadar Mercier
- One Day For Recreation (1978)

with Peadar Ó Riada
- Dir Cúm Thóla Is Cúil Aodha (2006)
- Through Banks Of Mist - Amhráin Fódhla (2014)

With The Turloughmore Céilí Band
- The Green Road (2008)

Compilations

Solo
Songs of Cork and Kerry (1999)

with Seán Ó Riada and Ceoltóirí Cualann
- Na Ceirníní 45 (1978)

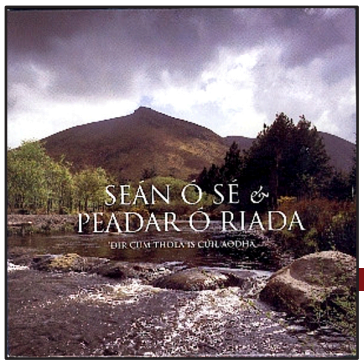
Singles and EPs

Solo
- Ceol Na Laoi (1967)
- Taimse Im Chodladh (1968)
- An Poc Ar Buile (1971)
- The Manchester Rambler (1971)
- Babaró/Maidini mBéarra (1974)
- The Bold Christy Ring (1977)
- Amhran na bhFiann / The Irish National Anthem (1990)
- Neilli (-)
- I Know My Love (-)
- The Strands Of Ballylickey (-)
- Farewell To Galway (-)

with Seán Ó Riada and Ceoltóirí Cualann
- An Poc Ar Buile (1961)
- Príosún Chluain Meala/The Valley Of Knockanure (1968)

with Seán Ó Riada
- Do Bhi Bean Uasal Inion An Phailtinigh (1971)
- Mo Chailin Ban (-)





NELLIE

Born in Dublin, Helena (Nellie) Heffernan grew up in the Liberties where she had befriended local singer, Liam Weldon.

They renewed their acquaintance in Coventry in the early 1950s where Liam was working and lodging with Nellie's sister and her family.

Nellie and Liam married and set up home in Dublin where they both became active in the emerging singing scene. In the following years, she and Liam were involved in sessions in Quinn's, Tailor's Hall, the Brazen Head, the Stew House, Merchant's, the Góilín, the Pavees Club at Slattery's of Capel Street and sessions with members of the Travelling community in Cherry Orchard – which inspired Liam's classic song, *The Blue Tar Road*.

Nellie also became Liam's muse inspiring exceptional love songs: the epic *Via Extasia* and the moving *My Love is a Well*.

After Liam died in November 1995, Nellie was pivotal not only to preserving his memory but also to transmitting an intense sense of the man and his work to new generations of young singers who were discovering his powerful songs and poetry.

In recent years she became the doyenne of the Cobblestone Pub, where she became an inspiration for young singers, particularly those who attended "The Night Before Larry Got Stretched" session.

This renewed interest in Liam and Nellie was reflected in the documentary film, *Dark Horse on the Wind,* directed by Myles O'Reilly and produced by Lorraine Kennedy. While the film featured contributions from performers like Damien Dempsey, Radie Peat, Daoirí Farrell, Lisa O'Neill, Thomas McCarthy and Niamh Parsons, the undoubted heart of the film was Nellie – engaging and heartfelt with a wicked sense of humour.

Helena (Nellie) Weldon (née Heffernan) died on March 10, 2026, at home in Ballyfermot. Nelly is survived by her sons – Séamus and Brendan – and daughters – Aileen, Deirdre, Grainne, Siobhán, Róisín and Fiona – and her sister, Carmel.



Nellie Weldon
Photos: Colm Keating



Liam and Nellie
Photo: Colm Keating



After her death, the organisers of The Night Before Larry Got Stretched, shared a special tribute:

"As many will know, for much of Larry's history, Nellie performed the honour of singing the final song of the night, a custom which formed an essential part of our gatherings, and one which was much missed of late, as Nellie's health kept her housebound in her final years.

"This tradition was initiated by Sinéad Lynch, one of our founders, who became something of a surrogate granddaughter to Nellie. Each month, Sinéad would collect Nellie from the front bar, accompanying her through the hordes to a seat in the middle of the room.

"In later years, it became a familiar sight, about thirty minutes before the end of an evening, to see the Red Sea parting to reveal Nellie, shuffling on her walker, flanked on either side by her son, Shay, and her loyal friends, Eamonn Hunt and Colm Keating.

"In time, Nellie became something of a matriarch to young singers in Dublin, offering words of encouragement, her razor sharp humour, and stories of her late husband Liam, who was never far from her thoughts.

"When called upon to sing the final song of the night, it was a rare occasion that Nellie chose not to sing one of Liam's songs, which, more often than not, was a love song composed in her honour. Only those who witnessed them will recognise how special these moments truly were."

They go on to note that, although there "have been many influential elders" who have passed through the doors of the session over the years, "it is almost impossible to imagine the story of 'Larry without Nellie's warm and encouraging presence."

Touring in the US, Macdara Yeates wrote that to hear Nellie sing a song "was a masterclass – in humility, in listening, in being a kind and good-humoured neighbour and, as her beloved Liam would say, in 'letting the song sing the singer.'"

Members of the Góilín were also fulsome in their appreciation of their former stalwart:

"A wave of sadness rippled through An Góilín Traditional Singers when the news came that our good friend Nellie Weldon had died. She was, as most people know, held in great affection among us. This was because she was, simply put, a lovely lady.

"She was also held in high regard as a traditional singer, of course. Her pure clear tone, her honest emotion and her commitment to the song made you pay attention. You had to listen. You pricked up your ears when she sung. You let your heart follow her as she brought you away, into the magic of the song.

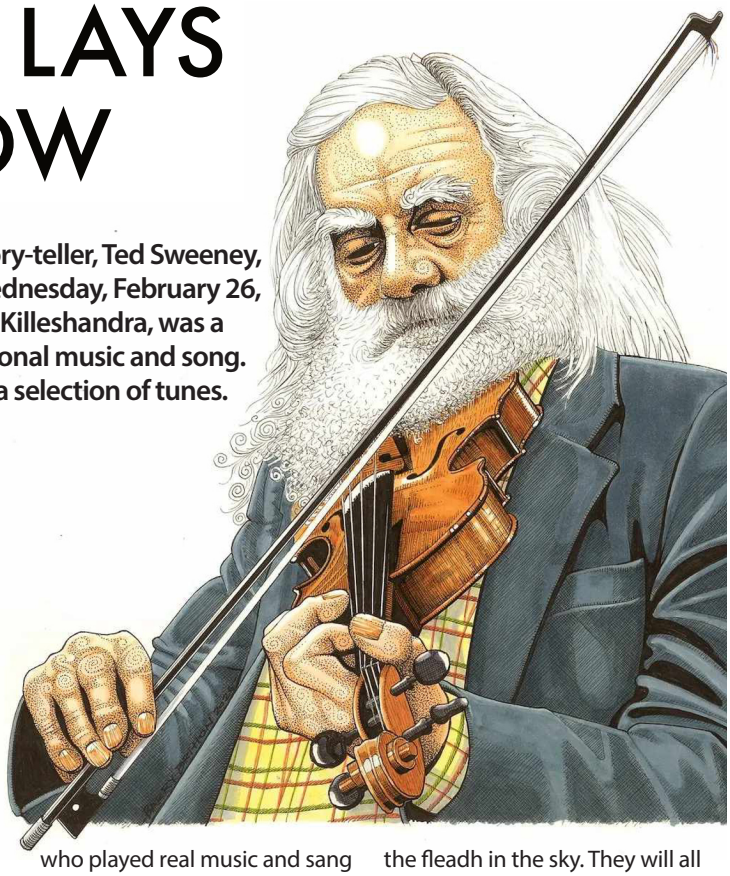
"No airs and graces, just her love of the song and her humility in the way she sang it, cast that spell upon you and upon all the company.

"And so now, as her late husband Liam Weldon would say in his exquisite song for her *Via Extasia*, "... the last wild leaf has fallen."

"Fall it must, but her family and friends can take some comfort from the fact that as this cherished leaf falls, it comes to rest gently on the waiting dust below. Go raibh suaimhneas síoraí aici. As she might say herself: 'Sin a bhfuil.'"

TED SWEENEY LAYS DOWN HIS BOW

Renowned Killeshandra traditional fiddler and story-teller, Ted Sweeney, passed away unexpectedly but peacefully on Wednesday, February 26, at the age of 72. His funeral at St Brigid's Church, Killeshandra, was a celebration of Ted Sweeney's life and his love of traditional music and song. with dozens of musicians on hand to pay tribute with a selection of tunes.



Right: **Ted Sweeney** as he appeared in the poster for the 2026 TradFest Killeshandra, painted by Barry Britton.

Among the many accolades that followed Ted's passing came this from the Cavan Town Branch of Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann:

"Ted was an inspiration and much loved and respected figure throughout the traditional music community. His quiet and unassuming nature endeared him to all musicians, young and old and his selfless contribution to traditional music will be his lasting legacy."

Ted was particularly remembered for teaching tin whistle lessons weekly and was lauded for his lifelong devotion to Killeshandra Leaguers Gaelic Football Club. His membership of the Killeshandra Wren Boys troupe which toured the US was also recalled fondly.

In a further tribute to Ted, Martin Donohoe from Cavan noted that "from the first jigs and reels I heard in the 1980s and tried to learn,Ted was near, listening and encouraging.He talked about normal people who played real music and sang real songs, *The Hare's Paw* reel and the local Killeshandra version of *Dune Reel Hill* that he learned from Packie Phair, John P. O'Reilly, Bobby Hand and Tommy Curran. Ted played with John Kelly, Tommy Finn, Peter Horan, Joe Ryan. They were greats and Ted Sweeney was also great…Rest easy and enjoy the fleadh in the sky. They will all want you."

Ted was also fondly remembered in Dublin's traditonal music venue, The Cobblestone.

Ted is survived by wife Siobhán, children Síle and Pádraig; siblings Marian, Séamus, Gerry, Tom, Phelim and Carmel.

ÉILISH MOORE



Eilish Byrne (née Moore)

One of the leading figures on the Dublin traditional and folk music scene in the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s, Éilish Moore died in April 2026.

A fine singer, Eilish Moore was probably best known as a music organiser – through her involvement in very successful folk clubs in The Meeting Place in Dorset Street, Mother Redcap's near High Street and the Dublin Resource Centre in Temple Bar.

Eilish also ran the inaugural Dublin Folk Festival in the 1970s with a remarkable line-up featuring The Bothy Band, Clannad, Dé Danann and the brother, Christy.

A sister of Barry (Luka Bloom) and Christy Moore, Eilish also performed as a solo artist. She was a founder member of The Fallen Angels – the all female band that originated in the Meeting Place in1987 when Éilish and co-organiser, Joan McDermott, decided to devote one night a week to female performers who had very few opportunities in Dublin at that time.

Joined on stage by Frances Black, Maire Breathneach and Mandy Murphy, they became so popular that they decided to form a band – which lasted for a number of years with Joan McDermott continuing as a member.

In later years, Éilish took up art – mounting an exhibition in Ranelagh and contributing cover art for Christy's album, *Where I Come From*.

In a tribute following her death, Mike Hanrahan of Stockton's Wing wrote: "She gave so many young musicians a start and always with a warm welcome. My first Dublin gig was with Eilish and I had many more after that with Maura O'Connell, Stockton's and Ronnie Drew. Their house was an open house… She had folk clubs in The Meeting Place, Mother Redcaps, a few gigs in Inchicore and countless community support gigs. Always helping people. She created the first Dublin Folk Festival and I will never forget Carnsore point. That was an incredible event."

Éilish is survived by her husband, Peter Byrne, and children, Róisín and Conor – as well as siblings, Christy, Andy, Barry and Ann.

LEADER LAYS DOWN HIS FINAL TRACK



Legendary recording engineer and producer, Bill Leader died on March 31, 2026, at the age of 96.

A key figure in the British folk music revival of the 1960s and 1970s – when the available technology was often quite limited – Leader produced records by most of the leading figures of the time as an employee of both Topic and Transatlantic Records and the founder of his own labels, Leader (for "traditional artists") and Trailer (for "revival" artists).

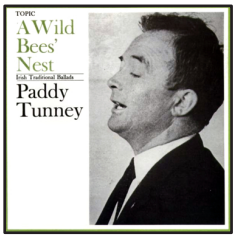
Born to British parents in New Jersey, USA in December 1929, Bill Leader returned as a child with his famly to England where he was brought up in Dagenham, Mottingham and Shipley – nursing a childhood ambition to become a recording engineer.

Having secured work in the film library of the Polish Embassy, as a stepping stone to a career in the film industry, Leader got a job with Topic Records where he began recording some of the Irish traditional musicians who were in London in the late 1950s, as well as releasing an album of Rambling Jack Elliott's work.

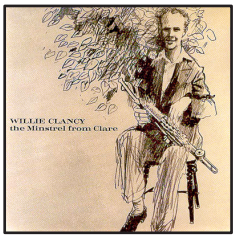
In order to supplement his modest wage from Topic, he took a job in Collett's record shop in London's Oxford Street, which specialised in folk, blues and jazz music. This led to a meeting with Nathan Joseph who had just set up Transatlantic Records and took Bill on as a part-time producer.

Part of the legend of Bill Leader was his ingenuity in overcoming the limitations of the equipment available at the time. In the 1960s, Leader's flat in Camden also doubled as a DIY recording studio with blankets and egg boxes providing makeshift soundproofing for his semi-professional Revox tape recorder. John Renbourn described early recording sessions involving Bill "setting up the tape machine in the sink and having us play in the broom cupboard."











Others recall Bill drilling a hole in a bedroom floor where the recorder was set up and dropping a microphone down to the room below where the artists would perform.

In 1969, together with his second wife, Helen, he set up two record labels, Leader and Trailer Records. The Leader label was intended for recordings like those made by Alan Lomax, with extensive academic liner notes. The Trailer label was focused on the potentially more commercial revival scene.

Recognition

Although Bill Leader eventually left the recording industry to head up the Audio Department at the University of Salford, he was duly acknowledged in 2009 when Topic Records celebrated its seventieth anniversary with a boxed set entitled *Three Score and Ten*. As well as a biography of Leader, the accompanying book lists classic albums, including many engineered or produced by Leader.

At the 2012 BBC Radio 2 Folk Awards in Salford, Leader was further honoured for his oustanding contribution to folk music, with the 'Good Tradition' award, presented by one of his former collaborators, Christy Moore.

The final accolade came in 2013 when he was presented with the English Folk Dance and Song Society's Gold Medal by Mike Harding from Manchester , another of Bill's recorded artists.

Roll-Call of Recorded Talent from Britain and Ireland

During his career in the record industry Leader was involved in recording many of the emerging stars of the British folk scene like The Watersons (including the ground-breaking *Bright Phoebus* by Mike and Lal Waterson), A.L. Lloyd, Ewan MacColl, Peggy Seeger, Dick Gaughan, The Young Tradition, Peter Bellamy, Bert Jansch, Nic Jones, The Ian Campbell Folk Group, Gerry Rafferty, Archie and Ray Fisher, John Renbourn, Hamish Imlach, The Spinners, The High Level Ranters, Swan Arcade, Mike Harding, Tony Rose and Lou Killen.

But of particular interest to Irish audiences was the remarkable roll-call of Irish artists who were recorded or produced by Leader including Paddy Tunney, Séamus Ennis, Willie Clancy, Frank Harte, Christy Moore, Liam O'Flynn, The Boys of the Lough, The Johnstons, The Dubliners, Dominic Behan, The McPeakes, Margaret Barry and Michael Gorman, Sweeney's Men, Martin Byrnes, Séamus Tansey, Tír na nÓg, Finbarr and Eddie Furey and the Grehan Sisters.

Bill's intervention was frequently significant in enhancing – or at the very least consolidating –the reputations of many of these artists.

For example, he collaborated with Christy Moore on the seminal *Prosperous* album for his own Trailer label – with the line-up that would eventually become Planxty whose influence continues to this day. Bill's work with Paddy Tunney involved three albums: *A Wild Bees Nest, The Irish Edge* and *Ireland Her Own*.while his collaborations with Willie Clancy *(The Minstrel From Clare)* and Séamus Ennis *(Masters Of Irish Music Vol.1)* they ever made.



fiddle course

with Liam O'Connor

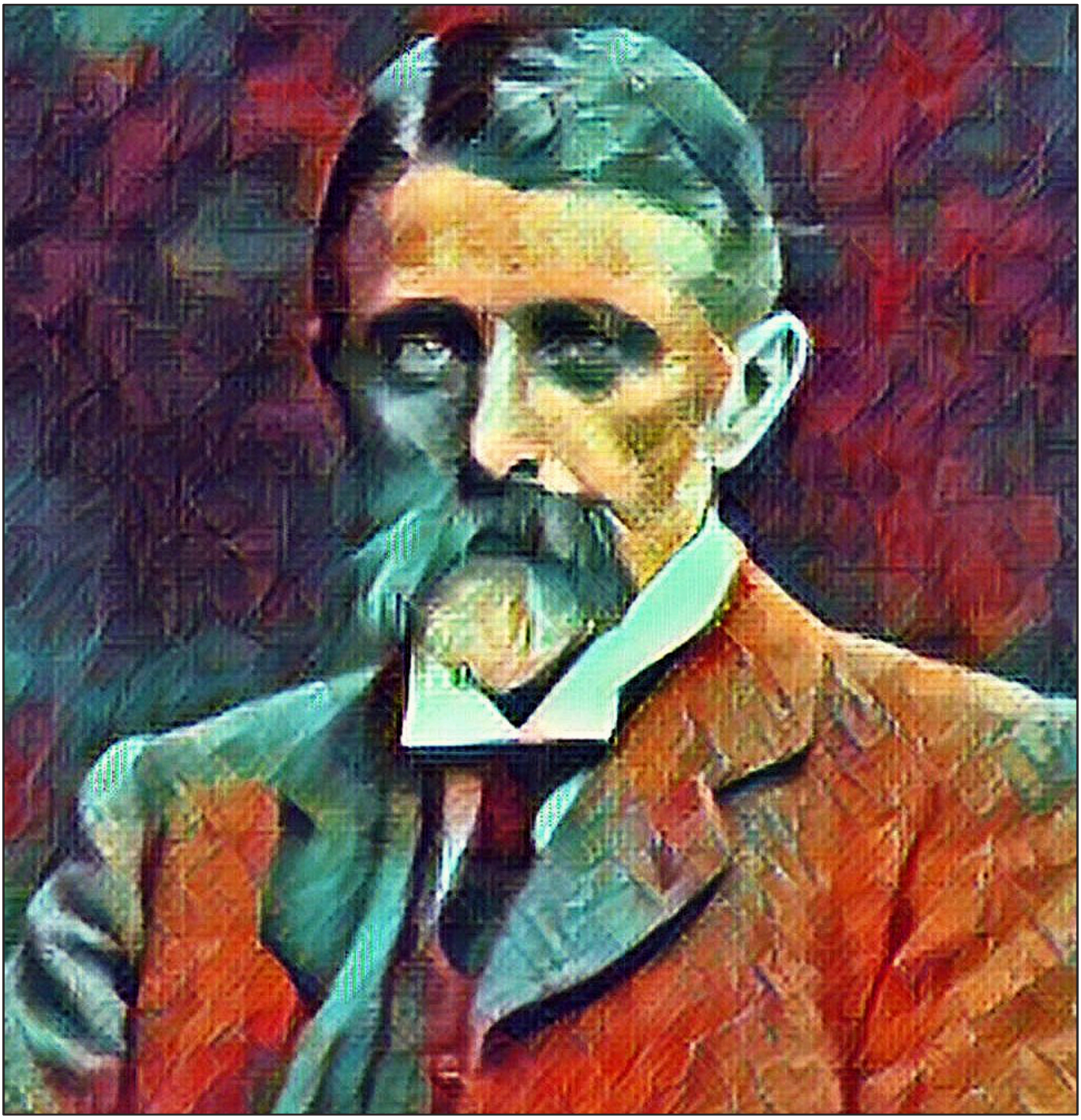
September 6th - September 11th

Join us for an immersive week of Irish traditional music on the Dingle Peninsula. This adult-focused course is designed to help you refine your technique, phrasing, rhythm, and ornamentation, while guiding you toward developing your own style of traditional fiddle playing.

Airt

Airt, Feothanach, Baile na nGall, Trá Lí,
Co. Chiarraí, V92 PK10

airtcentre@gmail.com



THE UNHERALDED SONG COLLECTOR

E. R. MCLINTOCK-DIX: THE BIBLIOGRAPHER WHO PRESERVED CHAPBOOKS & BALLAD SHEETS



Seán Faulkner

COLLECTING SONGS

In the golden age of song collecting in Ireland reseachers, like Tom Munnelly, Séamus Ennis, Séan Corcoran and Len Graham, were able to transcribe and record songs directly from source singers. With the passage of time, as most source singers have either been recorded or departed for the great rambling house beyond the rainbow, the main focus of song research has tended to shift towards the historical material archived in library stacks.

Seán Faulkner from Drogheda has spent many hours in the National Library of Ireland and similar repositories – where he discovered the fruits of the labours of Ernest Reginald McClintock-Dix, a remarkable cataloguer of printed material – books, pamphlets and broadsheets – which also included a trove of songbooks and ballad sheets.

Although it was widely thought that Dix had no great interest in the content of the material he was collecting and cataloguing and that his focus was solely on adding entries in his archives, Seán Faulkner believes that the Dublin-born bibliographer had a particular interest in publications containing early Irish songs and ballads.

Seán is available to present talks on the legacy of Ernest Reginald McClintock-Dix.



Ernest Reginald McClintock-Dix

SOME DUNDALK SONG BOOKS

In October 1907, the County Louth Archaeological Society's journal Vol.1, No.4 included two articles about Ernest Reginald McClintock-Dix and his interest in songbooks and single sheet printings containing old ballad songs.

The first article, *Some Dundalk Song Books,* was penned by Dix, himself, and referred to four song books – sometimes called chapbooks – that he possessed at that time. These four songbooks contained a total of sixteen songs and were printed in Dundalk, dated from 1806-1808.

The second article, *Some Local Sheet Ballads*, was contributed by Henry Morris about a collection of single sheet ballads located in the Royal Irish Academy (RIA), where they still reside today.These single sheet ballads – sometimes referred to as broadsheets – were as Morris described "arranged for the Academy by Mr. E. R. McClintock-Dix."

In the article, Morris went on to list eleven of the songs which he thought were of local interest. These songs were listed as *Bold Treanor O, The Flower of Balli(y)bay, Lament for the Murder of Caraher, The Lamentation and Downfall of Eliza Donald, Liberty's Battle, Loss of the Ship Newry, The Royal Blues of Shercock-town, The Rose of Ardee, The Shady Groves of Sweet Ardee, Usurpation Conquered and Alexander Dawson.* The article included a sentence or two describing each song.

In Dix's own article in the County Louth journal he listed the names of the songs in each of the four books, which were dated as he indicated, and included a place of printing, in this case Dundalk. However, unlike many similar books printed throughout the country at the time, none of the four books included a printer's name. It is likely though that they were printed by one of the two printers active at that time in the town, namely Joseph Parks or J. Corry.

In appearance the four books seem to have been printed by the same printer. The four books are also included in a report that Dix completed for the RIA in 1905 entitled *Report on Dundalk Songbooks held by the RIA.*

The songbooks mentioned in this report – 48 in total and containing 145 songs – were not collected or donated by Dix, other than the four he collected and owned himself, but rather were catalogued and reported on by him for the RIA.This report can be accessed in file SR/23/G/31 in the Academy. The report runs to 19 pages and tells us that the first date given for such songbooks is 1798 and the latest date for printing is 1822.

In examining Dix's four books it is worthwhile looking at the origin of some of the songs, in particular a number that are clearly of British origin. I do not propose to examine all the songs in these four books but rather to look at a small number of them that represent popular songs of the day, and not just for "the Anglo Irish of Dundalk and its neighbourhood " as Dix described, but likely to a much wider audience.

In the first book, the first song, called *Grattan and Latouche,* is an election song which likely refers to the 1806 parliamentary election for the Dublin constituency where Henry Grattan was successful but John Latouche was not.

Such songs were commonplace at the time and there are a number of them concerning Louth elections urging the electorate at the time to support candidates including Sir Patrick Bellew, John Foster and Alexander Dawson. Indeed Dawson, who stood for the Louth Constituency in 1826 representing the Radical Party is the subject of a song mentioned in Morris's 1907 article, albeit in a broadside printing. These songs are included in books similar to the ones owned by Dix and were also printed in Dundalk.

The second song in the first book, *The Beautiful Maid,* was written by the English writer Thomas Dibdin (1771-1841) and was sung by John Braham in Covent Garden Theatre Royal in the comic opera called *The Cabinet*. It was published by Joseph Dale c. 1808. This would indicate that songs originating in Britain quickly found their way into the Irish repertoire.

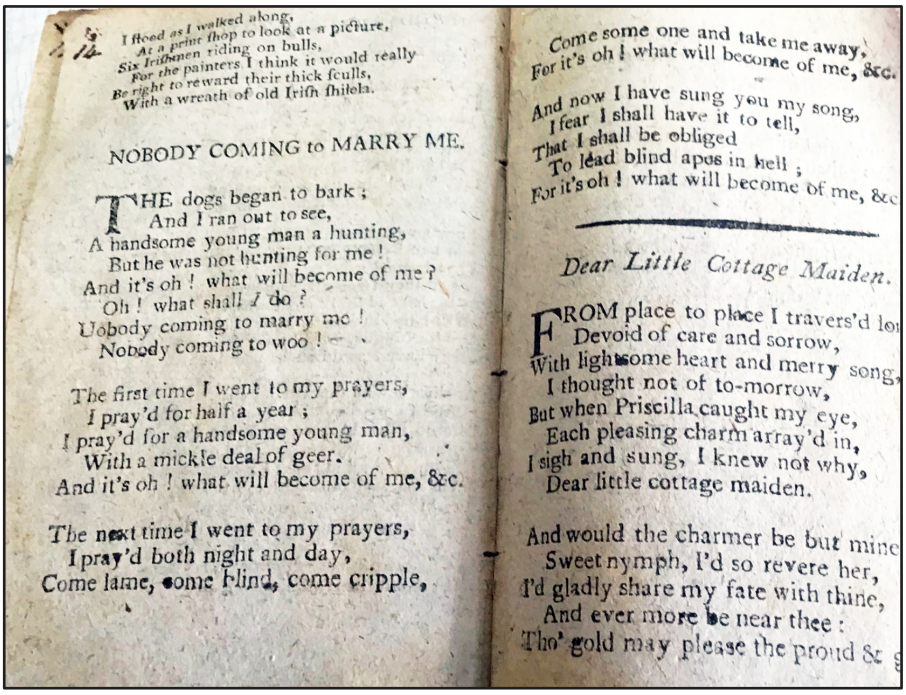
The fourth song in this book, *Nobody Coming to Marry Me,* is important in that it answers a question posed by Dix towards the end of his article as follows: "It would be interesting to know if any of these ballads are still sung or known in the County Louth," Dix comments.

A version of the song was also published in August 1806 by Laurie & Whittle and sung by a Mrs. Jordan at The Theatre Royal London, and appears to be part of a bigger work called *Miss Bailey's Ghost*. It was later collected in Wiltshire and is included in a publication called *Folk Songs of the Upper Thames,* 1923.

However, in answering the question posed by Dix in 1907 about it being sung at that time in County Louth, all I can add is it was most likely being sung as early as the 1950s by the Usher/Carolan family from the Hill of Rath, north-west of Drogheda under the title, *My Father's a Hedger and Ditcher.* In 1982 Mary Ann Carolan included the same version of the song as was recorded in Wiltshire on her LP released on the Topic label called *Songs from the Irish Tradition* (TSDL 362). This version is cited by The Silly Sisters and by Jane and Amanda Threlfall who also recorded the song. The song continues to be sung in Droegheda by Mary Ann's son, Pat Carolan and by Gerry Cullen of the Voice Squad.

As Mary Ann learned many of her songs from her father Pat Usher (Snr), who was born in 1868 and died in 1962, it is quite likely he knew the song when Dix was asking the question in 1907.

Versions of the song can be found in the National Library Ireland indicating it was written by Thomas Cooke (1782-1842) with versions being printed by S. Holden, Parliament Street, Dublin as early as 1798.



I stood as I walked along,
At a print shop to look at a picture,
Six Irishmen riding on bulls,
For the painters I think it would really
Be right to reward their thick sculls,
With a wreath of old Irish shilela.

NOBODY COMING to MARRY ME.

THE dogs began to bark;
And I ran out to see,
A handsome young man a hunting,
But he was not hunting for me!
And it's oh! what will become of me?
Oh! what shall I do?
Nobody coming to marry me!
Nobody coming to woo!

The first time I went to my prayers,
I pray'd for half a year;
I pray'd for a handsome young man,
With a mickle deal of geer.
And it's oh! what will become of me, &c.

The next time I went to my prayers,
I pray'd both night and day,
Come lame, come blind, come cripple,

Come some one and take me away,
For it's oh! what will become of me, &c.

And now I have sung you my song,
I fear I shall have it to tell,
That I shall be obliged
To lead blind apes in hell;
For it's oh! what will become of me, &c

Dear Little Cottage Maiden.

FROM place to place I travers'd lo
Devoid of care and sorrow,
With lightsome heart and merry song,
I thought not of to-morrow,
But when Priscilla caught my eye,
Each pleasing charm array'd in,
I sigh and sung, I knew not why,
Dear little cottage maiden.

And would the charmer be but mine
Sweet nymph, I'd so revere her,
I'd gladly share my fate with thine,
And ever more be near thee:
Tho' gold may please the proud &c

Book One: Nobody Coming to Marry Me (Royal Irish Academy)

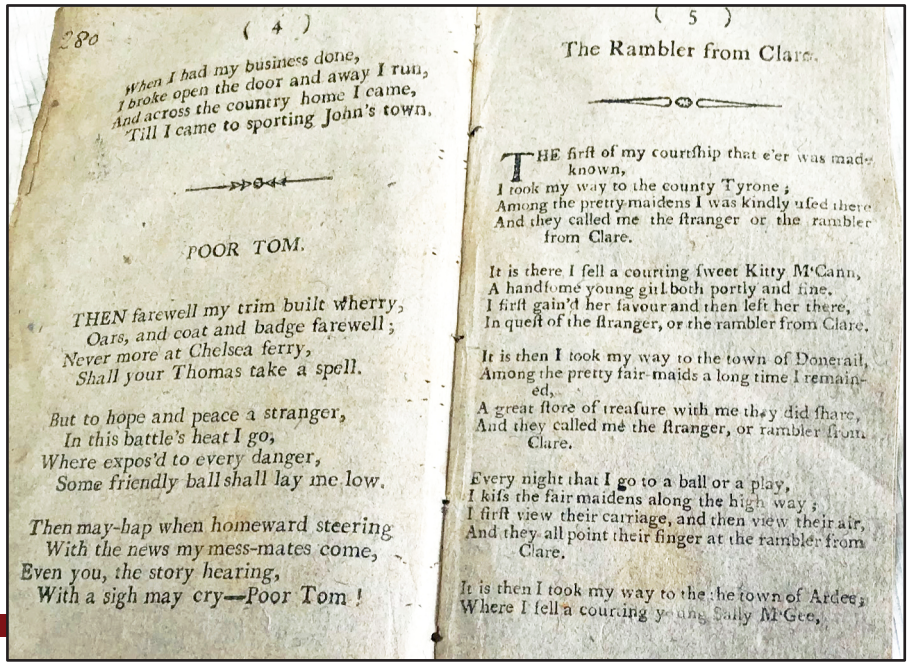
The second book, printed in 1807, includes the song, *Drinking Song for the Ladies,* which is attributed to a Charles Dibdin (1745-1814)

In the third book a song called *The Habit Shirt and Pogey* is singled out for comment by Dix, primarily because it includes two verses in Irish. In the original article referring to the two Irish verses, Dix goes on to assert "they would not be put there if their readers or hearers knew nothing but the 'Bearla' and shows the ballad singers catered a little for the Gael as well as the Gall."

A habit shirt, in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, was a ladies fashion item worn on the upper body and made from a lace or muslin material. The earliest reference to a habit shirt in a song I have come across – other than the one printed in Dundalk – is on a broadsheet printed in Birmingham by a Theophilus Bloomer (1796-1827) in a song entitled *The Habit Shirt*. Copies of this broadsheet ballad are to be found in the Madden Collection, Cambridge University Library and in Cecil Sharp House, London where it can be found in *The Broadside Collection,* Vol.2 (acc.2061, Mfilm97) (VWML) p204b.

In Ireland *The Habit Shirt* appeared in Joyce's *Old Irish Folk Music and Song,* 1909, collected in Erris, Mayo by William Forde from Mr. Flattely. It is numbered 364 in The Forde Collection. A similar song was also collected in Ballyvourney, County Cork by Martin Freeman in 1913-14. The version in the Freeman Collection was sung in Irish but with an English translation included.

None of these songs makes any reference to a "Pogey," leaving the Dundalk printed song unique in this regard, as well as being printed 100 years before Joyce or Freeman published their works. In general terms the *Habit Shirt* songs collected here and in England are disparaging towards women. Mostly they indicate that some of those women who wear the habit shirt may well be pretending to be more "sophisticated" than they are.



280 (4)

When I had my business done,
I broke open the door and away I run,
And across the country home I came,
Till I came to sporting John's town.

POOR TOM.

THEN farewell my trim built wherry,
Oars, and coat and badge farewell;
Never more at Chelsea ferry,
Shall your Thomas take a spell.

But to hope and peace a stranger,
In this battle's heat I go,
Where expos'd to every danger,
Some friendly ball shall lay me low.

Then may-hap when homeward steering
With the news my mess-mates come,
Even you, the story hearing,
With a sigh may cry—Poor Tom!

(5)

The Rambler from Clare.

THE firft of my courtfhip that e'er was made known,
I took my way to the county Tyrone;
Among the pretty maidens I was kindly ufed there
And they called me the ftranger or the rambler from Clare.

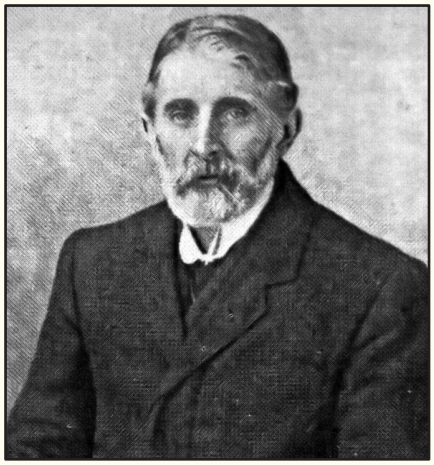
It is there I fell a courting fweet Kitty M'Cann,
A handfome young girl both portly and fine.
I firft gain'd her favour and then left her there,
In queft of the ftranger, or the rambler from Clare.

It is then I took my way to the town of Donerail,
Among the pretty fair maids a long time I remained,
A great ftore of treafure with me they did fhare,
And they called me the ftranger, or rambler from Clare.

Every night that I go to a ball or a play,
I kifs the fair maidens along the high way;
I firft view their carriage, and then view their air,
And they all point their finger at the rambler from Clare.

It is then I took my way to the the town of Ardee,
Where I fell a courting young Sally M'Gee,

Book Four: The Rambler from Clare (Royal Irish Academy)



Ernest Reginald McClintock-Dix

ER CASE NOTES



The McLintock-Dix Family: *(from left)* young E.R., Emma *(mother)*, Julia *(sister)* and Henry *(father)*.

Born in Dublin on April 8, 1857, Ernest Reginald McClintock-Dix was a qualified solicitor, book collector and cataloguer and Irish language enthusiast.

Known as 'ER,' Ernest Reginald was the eldest son of Henry Thomas Dix (1825-1902) and Emma Patience McClintock. The Dix family had arrived in Ireland from England in 1779 and many were engaged in the legal profession. ER had been apprenticed with his father's legal firm in Dublin at its offices in Upper Sackville Street (now O'Connell Street) and subsequently in Clare Street.

ER's mother, Emma, lived originally in Seatown Place, Dundalk, where she had been born in 1830. Her father, John McClintock, was an MP for Louth. Emma married Henry Dix in 1854 and died in 1894. She was a sister to Francis Leopold McClintock (later knighted), who, as an Arctic explorer, had been involved in trying to locate the remains of Lord Franklin who had perished in a vain effort to find the North West Passage in the late 1850s.

ER was well known for his love of old books and Irish printed material and was recognised as an energetic collector. Between 1891 and his death in 1936, he published approximately 200 articles on Irish bibliography. In *Ernest Reginald McClintock-Dix (1857-1936) Irish Bibliographer* (1937), Percy Kirkpatrick describes ER as a founder member and first President of the Bibliography Society of Ireland established in 1919. Kirkpatrick also tells us that the first intimation of ER's bibliographical interests, was given in a letter to *The Irish Builder* on March 15, 1898 (vol. x1, p45), where he stated that he owned 45 books printed in Dublin between 1621-1700.

It is generally recognised that his most important work was *A Catalogue of Early Printed Books (1601-1700)* which had five reprints between 1898 and 1912. He also documented early printed material in provincial counties and towns including Drogheda, Armagh and Monaghan, to name just a few.

In 1908 he was elected to the Royal Irish Academy and presented sixteen papers there between 1900 and 1921.

In a transcript of her *The Emmet and Devlin Lecture* in 2010, Dr. Marie Kennedy noted that books collected by ER are held in the National Library, Dublin City Libraries, Trinity College Library and Marsh's Library. He is estimated to have donated around 8,000 books and pamphlets to the NLI and in the region of 700 to Dublin Libraries.

ER was active on the Dublin social scene: the Casement papers in the NLI show that he was in contact with Roger Casement on a number of occasions. One entry dated June 18, 1913, saw him express the hope that the two would see each other at Dr. Hyde's the following evening. ER also corresponded with Pádraig Pearse, with one letter expressing regret at being unable to attend a concert by the boys of St. Enda's.

He was married to Elizabeth Rachel Leech (1880-1958) – better known as Úna Bean Uí Dhíosca – an Irish language enthusiast, teacher and a published author, writing under the pen name, Breanda. A cousin of the noted artist W. J. Leech, Úna was also a founder member of the Irish Countrywomen's Association and President of the Irish branch of War Resisters' International.

ER and Úna had no children of their own but fostered two boys – one of whom Reginald Peter Vignoles (1925-2007) was originally from Torquay in England. Following his upbringing by ER and Úna, he became a successful actor in Ireland adopting Peter Dix as his stage name,

Before joining the RTÉ Players, Peter acted with the Dublin theatre companies at the Gate and the Olympia. He also spent some time in Manchester with the Joan Littlewood Theatre Workshop with whom he toured Scandinavia and Czechoslovakia in the company of Ewan McColl and Peggy Seeger.

Peter's son, Julian Vignoles, recently retired from a senior executive post in RTÉ where his responsibilities included managing Irish participation in the Eurovision Song Contest.

ER died on May 2,1936, at his home in Rathfarnham, and was buried in Crumlin.

The National Library holds further information on the Dix family in the Séamus Ó Casaidhe papers (MS10663) which includes a copy of *Annals of the Dix Family in Ireland* collated by ER in 1909. *(h/t Dictionary of Irish Bibliography, contributor C. J. Woods)*



Úna Uí Dhíosca



Peter Dix (Vignoles)



Julian Vignoles

The fourth book contains two of the three songs that Dix refers to "having a local subject" – these being *The Sporting County Meath Boys* and *The Rambler From Clare.*

The third song, *Grattan and Latouche,* is the one mentioned earlier from the first book.

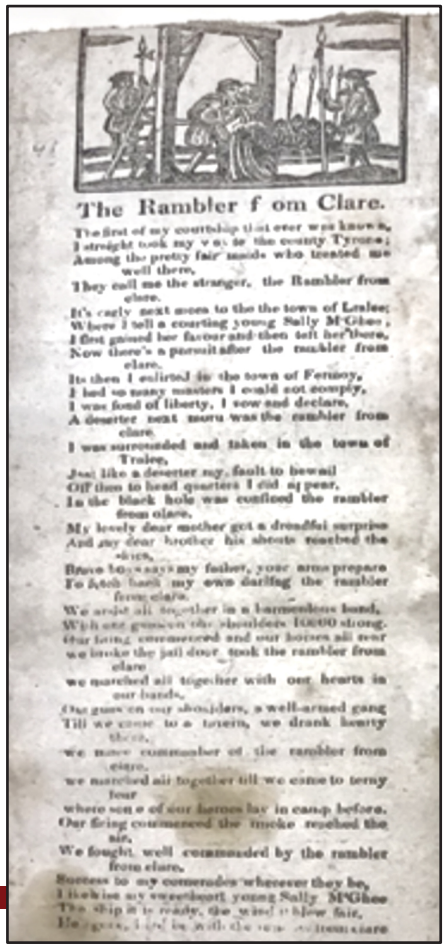
The Rambler from Clare is interesting in that the song is widely regarded – including by Colm Ó Lochlainn in *More Irish Street Ballads,* 1965 – as a "United Irishman" song related to the 1798 rebellion. In his *Glimpses into the 19th Century Broadside Trade, No.12: The Rambler from Clare,* Roly Browne is of the view that the earliest broadside printing of the song was unlikely to have been before 1838. While the Dix song, printed in 1806 has practically the same first verse as the better known 98 version of the song:

"The first of my courtship that ever was known
I straight took my way to the County Tyrone
Amongst the pretty fair maids they used me well there
And they called me the stranger or Rambler from Clare".

after the first verse, the prime character in the song has no involvement with revolt or rebellion and finally means to settle in Drogheda with Sally McGee whom he met in Ardee, and set up a "housekeeping and things for to sell business."

Sally McGee is also the object of the Rambler's affections in the 98 version of the song. This raises the question, for which I do not have an answer, was the first verse from the Dix song "borrowed" from a very early printing of the 98version or *vice versa.*

While Dix was engaged regularly with the RIA in the very early 1900s, the four books



The Rambler from Clare Broadside



Born in Co. Monaghan, Henry Morris or Énrí Ó Muirgheasa (1874-1945) was a teacher and subsequently a school inspector for the Irish Department of Education. Actively involved in the revival of Irish language and antiquarian studies, Morris is probably best known as a collector of eighteenth and nineteenth century Irish manuscripts and for recordings of oral tradition and folklore in Irish in the North Louth and South Armagh area during the 1940s.

were not to be found there. I eventually located them in Dublin City Library, Special Collections, Pearse Street, in file number 821-008.

THE MORRIS LIST

The songs mentioned in Henry Morris' article, *Some Local Sheet Ballads,* are still to be found in the RIA at 3.C.37,and not 27, as he indicated in his article. In the RIA at 3.C. 38 and 3.C. 39, there are two additional hardback volumes of broadside ballads arranged in a very similar manner to 37 and it seems most likely that these were also arranged by Dix for the Academy.

However, returning to the original Morris article from 1907, he suggested that eleven of the 87 songs may have a local interest. He went on to list these songs with a short note on each of them.

A number of the songs that Morris thought could be local were included in Jim Johnson's book, *Humours of Dundalk*, published in 1985, which is available from the County Louth library. Having examined the full list of 87 songs there are fifteen more songs that could qualify as having a North Leinster/ South Ulster relevance.

At No. 13 on the original list is a song called *The Dying Declaration of Bernard McCann* – which refers to a murder committed by McCann after the Maze Races in 1813. In the song he murders Owen McAdam, escapes to a successful married life in Galway, where he is recognised ten years later and returned to Downpatrick for trial, convicted and subsequently hanged. His working life in Castleblaney and Dromore along with his birthplace, Newtownhamilton, are cited in the song.

No. 18 is called *The Farnham Lass* – a song of male unrequited love for Margaret who has a lover fighting in Spain. The song mentions Farnham Estate, Cavan and Kilmore.

No. 29 is *Hugh McGoldrick and the Quakers Daughter* located in Cavan with mentions of Cavan, Lord Belmont and Loch Erne.

No. 33 on the list is *The Lady of the Lake* about a ship which sailed from Belfast and was lost off the banks of Newfoundland in 1833. The song mentions friends left behind in Cavan, Monaghan and Tyrone as well as referring to George Monaghan ending his days near "Sweet Cootehill town."

At No. 34 on the list is a song called *A Lamentation for Most Rev Dr. Kelly*. Kelly was the Catholic Primate of All Ireland 1832-1835 and died at his home in Drogheda in 1835.

No. 41 is a version of a song called *The Lisburn Lass,* accompanied by a handwritten note on the original sheet indicating it was bought in County Louth, suggesting the song was sung in that locality.

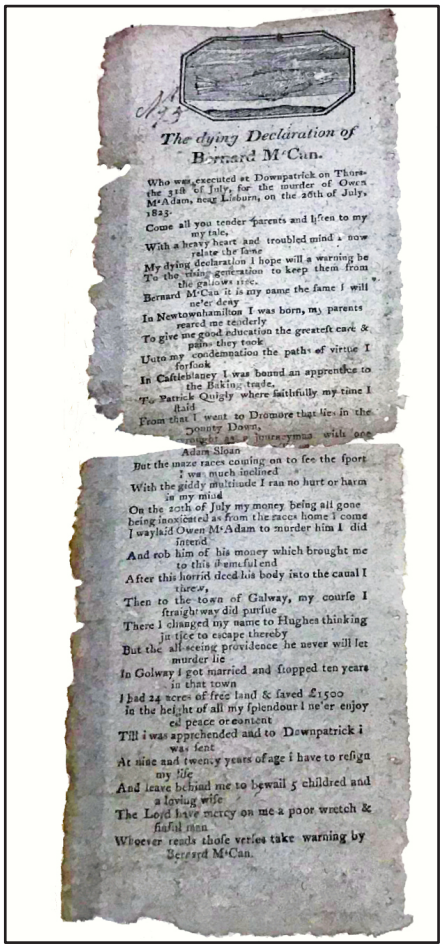
No. 51 on the list is a song called *The North Lamentation,* with the opening line:

In the year of twenty-nine,
July the twenty-second,
in Armagh town of high renown
How dreadfully we sweated".

The song also mentions Enniskillen, Manorhamilton as well as Dan O'Connell.

No. 60 is called *In Praise of Noble Taaffe and Fitzgerald.* Again an election song which mentions Smaremore, Ardee and Fane Valley. A song from 1829 according to the first line.

No. 63, *The Rake of Kells,* concerns a young rake called Ryder lamenting his waywardness and advising bachelors to disown rakish behaviour, while in No. 71, *Sacrilege in the Chapel of Ardee,* an unnamed perpetrator is accused of placing a sheep's head, in the chapel.



The Dying Declaration of Bernard McCan Broadside

No. 72, *Sheil and Dawson,* is an election song exhorting the electors of Louth to vote for Sheil and Dawson, most likely in the 1831 election, when, incidentally, John McClintock of Drumcar was a losing candidate.

No. 75, *Sweet Bewley Grove,* is a love song with a happy ending set near Beaulieu House, Queensboro, Drogheda. This song was collected from a Mary Parker in Drogheda in 1841 by H. Hudson, and was most likely composed/written by John Sheil who was resident in Drogheda at that time.

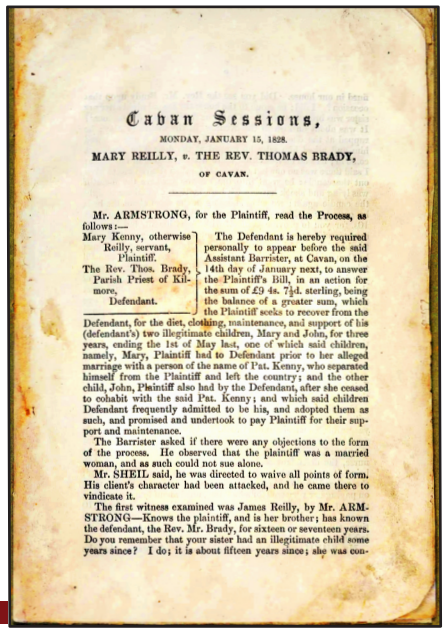
The printed version of the song contained in the hardback volume in the RIA is missing some lines. But when I examined some fragments of songs in envelopes, that Dix had advised the RIA to maintain, I came across two different fragments of the song that enabled me to form a complete version of it.

No. 76, *The Trial of Rev. Thomas Brady,* the priest is accused by Mary Reilly of fathering her two children – a crime of which he is acquitted. The song references Cavan, Kilmore and Ballyhilland.

No. 82, *The Warringsford Lamentation,* includes references to Warringsford, near Tullyniskey, in the Parish of Garvagey, as the song tells us "near Dromore in the County Down" which at the time was in the ownership of the Knox family. The estate failed, the Squire Knox in the song was forced to exile and the estate and its buildings fell to ruins. This is the only song on the list that includes an author, in this case a William Tuft.

No. 87, *The Reverend Mr. Waters,* sings the praise of a clergyman with "His body laid in the Church of Louth".

While none of the sheet ballads include a printing date, most of the local songs that refer to actual historical events such as elections or shipwrecks can be confidently dated to the 1820-1830 period. This would suggest that the songs were written and composed during this period. Given that 26 of the 87 songs on the Morris list have some local connection to the northeast region, it is also possible that the songs may have been collected or assembled by a single individual



Cavan Sessions,

MONDAY, JANUARY 15, 1828.

MARY REILLY, v. THE REV. THOMAS BRADY, OF CAVAN.

Mr. ARMSTRONG, for the Plaintiff, read the Process, as follows:—

Mary Kenny, otherwise Reilly, servant, Plaintiff. The Rev. Thos. Brady, Parish Priest of Kilmore, Defendant.

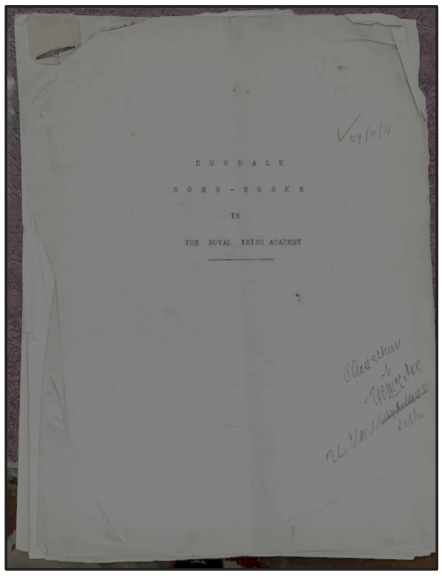
The Defendant is hereby required personally to appear before the said Assistant Barrister, at Cavan, on the 14th day of January next, to answer the Plaintiff's Bill, in an action for the sum of £9 4s. 7½d. sterling, being the balance of a greater sum, which the Plaintiff seeks to recover from the Defendant, for the diet, clothing, maintenance, and support of his (defendant's) two illegitimate children, Mary and John, for three years, ending the 1st of May last, one of which said children, namely, Mary, Plaintiff had to Defendant prior to her alleged marriage with a person of the name of Pat. Kenny, who separated himself from the Plaintiff and left the country; and the other child, John, Plaintiff also had by the Defendant, after she ceased to cohabit with the said Pat. Kenny; and which said children Defendant frequently admitted to be his, and adopted them as such, and promised and undertook to pay Plaintiff for their support and maintenance.

The Barrister asked if there were any objections to the form of the process. He observed that the plaintiff was a married woman, and as such could not sue alone.

Mr. SHEIL said, he was directed to waive all points of form. His client's character had been attacked, and he came there to vindicate it.

The first witness examined was James Reilly, by Mr. ARMSTRONG—Knows the plaintiff, and is her brother; has known the defendant, the Rev. Mr. Brady, for sixteen or seventeen years. Do you remember that your sister had an illegitimate child some years since? I do; it is about fifteen years since; she was con-

The Cavan Sessions Report of the trial of Rev. Thomas Brady – which inspired a ballad.



DUNDALK
SONG-BOOKS
IN
THE ROYAL IRISH ACADEMY

The Cover of Dix's Report on Dundalk Songbooks in the Royal Irish Academy

in the northeast region during the 1800s and were subsequently acquired by the RIA before being arranged and bound by Dix in the early 1900s.

A second bound volume of sheet ballads that I referred to earlier and which was likely arranged by Dix, is to be found at 3 C 38 in the RIA and contains 26 single sheet songs all printed by Haly, Hanover Street, Cork. This volume includes a handwritten note which would appear to suggest these songs were purchased at the "Fair of Castletown-Bearhaven on 11th October 1854".

Another bound volume of sheet ballads found at 3 C 39 includes 54 single sheet ballads and includes two songs with connections to the northeast region, namely *The Maid of Lough Gowna Shore* and a song called *The Black Horse* – an army recruiting song referencing Charles Fagan from Armagh Town. I suggest that this volume was also arranged by Dix. A point of connection between this volume and Dix's four song books is that the song, *The Rambler from Clare,* the 98 version, is included in this volume.

While the material mentioned in the two County Louth journal articles related to Dix and his songbooks are important, they represent but a very small part of his total activities in collecting and cataloguing early Irish printed material. For example the Joly Collection,which is the largest collection in the NLI, contains in the region of 25,000 items while The Dix Collection in the NLI contains in the region of 8,000 books and pamphlets printed in Ireland, making it the second largest collection by volume in the NLI.

Among the items in the Dix collection there are at least 200 items containing songs or ballads. Dublin City Libraries also contains an extensive collection of material donated by Dix, amounting to almost 700 items, many of these in The Special Collection area in Pearse Street Library. A number of these items are songbooks or contain songs. There are also three reports compiled by Dix for the RIA, in the early 1900s,two that are specifically related to early printed songbooks in Ireland while the third report catalogues the Irish songbooks that were held by the British Museum at that time.

THE RIA'S DUNDALK SONG-BOOKS

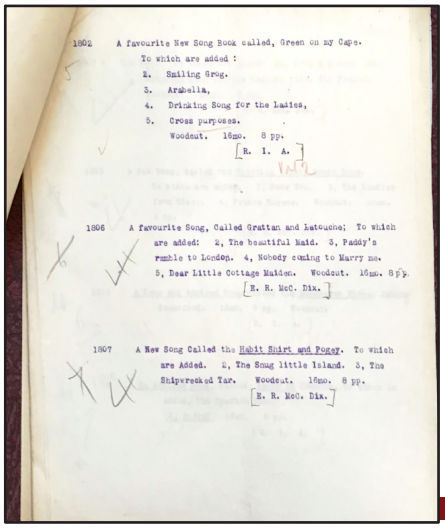
In the Royal Irish Academy at SR/23/G/31 there is a *Report on Dundalk Song-books* held by RIA at that time compiled by Dix. The report is in typed form and while there is no printed date on the report, the notes included with it suggest that it was completed in 1905. The report runs to 19 pages and lists information on 48 small songbooks printed in Dundalk.

The photograph below gives an indication of the format of the report, listing the song titles, size of the book, number of pages and the presence of a woodcut impression, generally of the front page. The report runs in chronological order.

The earliest date given for a printed songbook from Dundalk is 1798 with the last entry in the report indicating a date of 1822. The four books owned by Dix are included in the report along with 44 others in the posseesion of the RIA at the time. The books include 145 songs with very few repeats. The songs are a mixture of local, national and English songs along with some religious hymns.

The local titles include *The Maid of Lurgan Green, The Praises of Lisleigh, Temple Hill, A Sorrowful Lamentation of the Mourne Fishermen, The Maid of Monaghan* and *The Maid of Dundalk*. Songs originating in England include *A Touch on the Times, Black Eyed Susan, The Middlesex Flora, The Battle of Waterloo* and *The Royal Blackbird.* The hymn books – three in number – include such titles as *The Hymn of Saint Francis, A Hymn on the Fourteen Stations of the Cross* and *Divine Hymns.* Other Irish songs featured are *Bessy of Dromore,* a County Tyrone song, *Phelim's Rambles to London, Paddy Carey's Fortune, The Priest and the Lass* and *The Irish Soldier's Farewell to Spain.*

These forty-four books are currently located in volumes 12-B-11 and 12-B-17 in the Academy. It is worth noting that one of the songs listed above, *Middlesex Flora,* which was printed in Dundalk in 1813, was still being sung in Drogheda in the 1850s and is included in a list of songs and melodies compiled by the Drogheda artist, Bernard Tumalti, that were popular at that time in the town. This Tumalti list can be viewed in the RIA at 3 C 4(1).

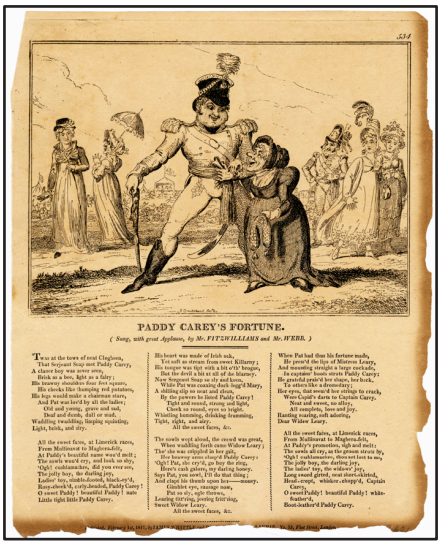


1802 A Favourite New Song Book called, Green on my Cape.
To which are added:
2. Smiling Grog.
3. Arabella,
4. Drinking Song for the Ladies,
5. Cross purposes.
Woodcut. 16mo. 8 pp.
[R. I. A.]

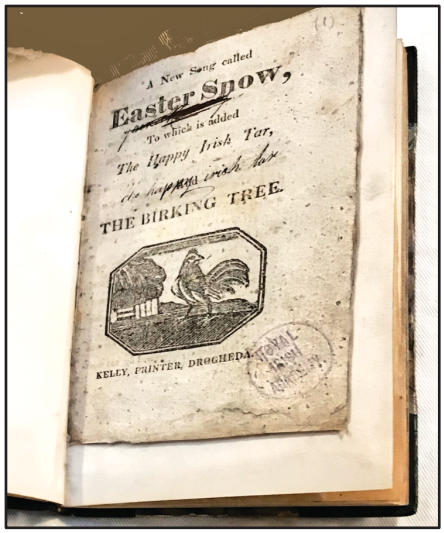
1806 A Favourite Song, Called Grattan and Ratcliffe; To which are added: 2, The beautiful Maid. 3, Paddy's Ramble to London. 4, Nobody coming to Marry me. 5, Dear Little Cottage Maiden. Woodcut. 16mo. 8 pp.
[R. R. McC. Dix.]

1807 A New Song Called the Habit Shirt and Pogey. To which are Added. 2, The Snug little Island. 3, The Shipwrecked Tar. Woodcut. 16mo. 8 pp.
[R. R. McC. Dix.]

A page from Dix's Report on Dundalk Songbooks in the Royal Irish Academy



Paddy Carey's Fortune Ballad Sheet



Easter Snow in a song book printed by "Kelly, Printer, Drogheda."



Thomas Moore – whose songs and poems feature in a number of the books.

This report, as well as the two other reports that Dix undertook for the RIA, i.e., *The Irish Songbooks held by RIA* and a report on *Irish Songbooks listed in the British Museum,* warrant further detailed research.

The Irish Songbooks in the Library of the Academy

Shortly before 1906, Dix undertook to re-arrange the collection of ballad songbooks held by the Academy at that time. He had already written a report for them, with a handwritten date 31-3-1905, entitled *Report upon the Irish Songbooks and Ballads with reference to their being bound or otherwise arranged.* This report ran to seven typed pages and was presented to the RIA on January 27,1906 (ref: *Irish Book Lover,* January 1911, vol. 11, no. 6).

In this report Dix offered the opinion that: "the British Museum is the only place I know of with a like collection." On page two of the report he set out the towns that the books had been printed in and indicated the number of books printed in each town.

These books are now bound in six 12mo volumes of varying bulk in the Academy. The date, September 2,1905 is stamped on the inside cover of each of the books indicating when the books were assembled and or lodged with the Academy.

The books were arranged by place of print and where dates were known then in chronological order. For example one of the six volumes, currently located at 12-B-12 in the Academy, contains only Dundalk printed songs while 12-B-15 is made up of primarily Dublin printed songs. 12-B-16 contains printings from Belfast, Monaghan and Strabane.

In all there are 119 individual songbooks bound into the six volumes. The greatest number, 47, were printed in Dundalk. Because some had no place of print identified, at least 19 – and possibly as many as 25 – were printed in Dublin. Armagh accounted for one, Drogheda two, Waterford five, Limerick five, Belfast had eleven, Monaghan and Newry eight each, while Omagh, Strabane and Derry had one each. Ten listed no location. Dix noted there were none from Ennis, Cork, Tralee, Wexford or any western town. The earliest printed date given was 1797and the latest 1829.

Easter Snow

In one of the Drogheda books, printed by "Kelly, Printer, Drogheda", with no given date printed there is a song called *Easter Snow.* Dix, in his paper on a list of books, etc., printed in Drogheda 1801-1825 and included in *Irish Book Lover,* Vol.1V, August 1912, No 1, indicates a date (1825?) for this small book. In the book, alongside two other songs entitled *The Birking Tree* and *The Happy Irish Tar, Easter Snow* is described as a "new song." This song has long been associated with Roscommon, with *Easter Snow* thought to be a derivative of a local townland there.

Of interest to singers of traditional songs is that the Drogheda printed version is a much longer song, with eight verses, than the version commonly sung across Ireland currently, which generally extends to three or four verses. Other than the Drogheda printing of the song, the earliest printed version that I could establish appears to have been by The Poets Box, Glasgow in 1855 and includes seven verses.

While in Ireland the song is generally associated with the Tunney family from the early 1950s, there are a number of more recent recordings of the three-verse song available by artists including Rita Gallagher and John Lyons.

In the same report Dix writes that "the songbooks in question were generally of 4 leaves or 8 pages with a very crude wood-cut print on the front or title page. The name of each song or ballad was given at the top of the first page with the woodcut print below. In some cases the printer, place of print and date is given but in other instances only two of the three are given and in a small number of cases no such information is given."

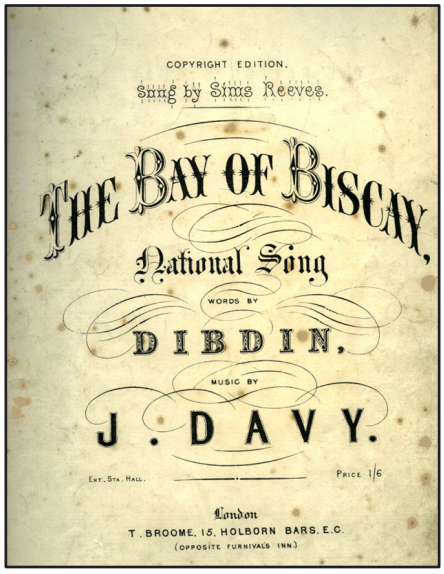
He was, however, confident that if the book had a printer given, location and date could most certainly be determined. He goes on to state "the paper was generally coarse, the type bad, old and worn and the printing wretched and full of errors." Kelly of Waterford was sometimes an exception to the foregoing.

The contents varied, some dealing with religious songs or hymns, others dealing with local events, murders, hangings or shipwrecks.

Some songs were in praise of local heroes, beauties or place, public or national events included *The Union, Catholic Emancipation* and *The Battle of Waterloo.* Scottish and English songs included *Jervis Taking the Spanish Fleet, Highland Mary* and *Black Eyed Susan.* A number of books included poems or lyrics by Thomas Moore – *Dear Harp of My Country* being one such poem/song.

Well known songs like *The Bay of Biscay, Groves of Blarney* and *The Burial of Sir John Moore* were also featured. As expected, place of printing sometimes influenced content, those from Belfast more likely to include songs in praise of the Orange Society and also feature more Scottish and English ballads. Two of the books printed in Limerick contained every second line in phonetic Irish in Roman print. The average size of the books was five and a half to six inches in length and three and a half to three and three quarter inches in width. Dix also included the metric equivalent of 140/152mm long by 89/95mm wide. Dix also wrote that woodcuts could be used to fix dates, printers and places of print.

Each songbook as a rule contains from two to six ballads, very occasionally containing just one.



The Bay of Biscay Song Sheet

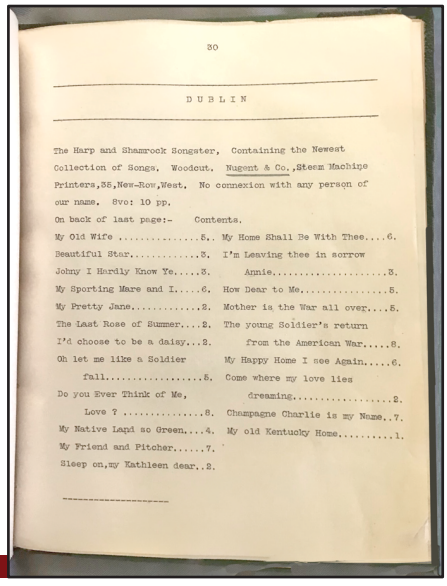
IRISH SONGBOOKS AND BALLADS IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM

In 1906 Dix prepared a report for the RIA on the Irish songbooks and ballads held in the British Museum at that time. The report ran to close to 100 typed pages and included the press marks for each book. The report deals with the songbooks from four geographical areas: Dublin, Limerick, Monaghan and Waterford. There is no indication as to why he chose only these four areas. He had previously indicated that the same institution held a number of songbooks printed in Dundalk. I have not cross referenced the songs included in the report with institutions here that hold records pertaining to printed songs and ballads to establish if there are any songbooks listed in the report that do not appear to have a copy here.

From Dublin the report includes up to 300 songs printed mainly by well known printers of songs and ballads including Nugent, New Road West, William Powell with two different addresses and songs printed between 1835-1855. Songbooks printed by T. Caldwell and R. Grace were also included along with a number of books attributed as *Printed and Sold by Hawkers*. The section dealing with Limerick songbooks, which is 37 pages long, lists 96 books containing over 300 songs. All of the books were printed by S.B. Goggin, 15, George's Street, with the exception of two books printed by James Connor, at the Sign of the Mercury, opposite the Custom House. These Connor printings are listed on pages 11 and 12 of the Limerick Section.

Among the songs, which are a mixture of local, English and Scottish songs, are a number of hymns i.e., *Jesus, Mary and Joseph* together with a hymn on *Elias the Prophet*. The printing of hymns in songbooks is also a feature of songbooks printed in Dundalk and other northern towns in the late 1700s and early 1800s.

From Monaghan there are five books, three songbooks and two of a general nature. The first of the general books is entitled *The Pretty Green Coated Boy* and the second *A Paraphrase on the Explanation of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass*. Nathaniel Greacen is named as the printer of the two general books while F. West, Dublin Street printed two of the song books with C. Gass, also from Dublin Street printing the third song book.



30

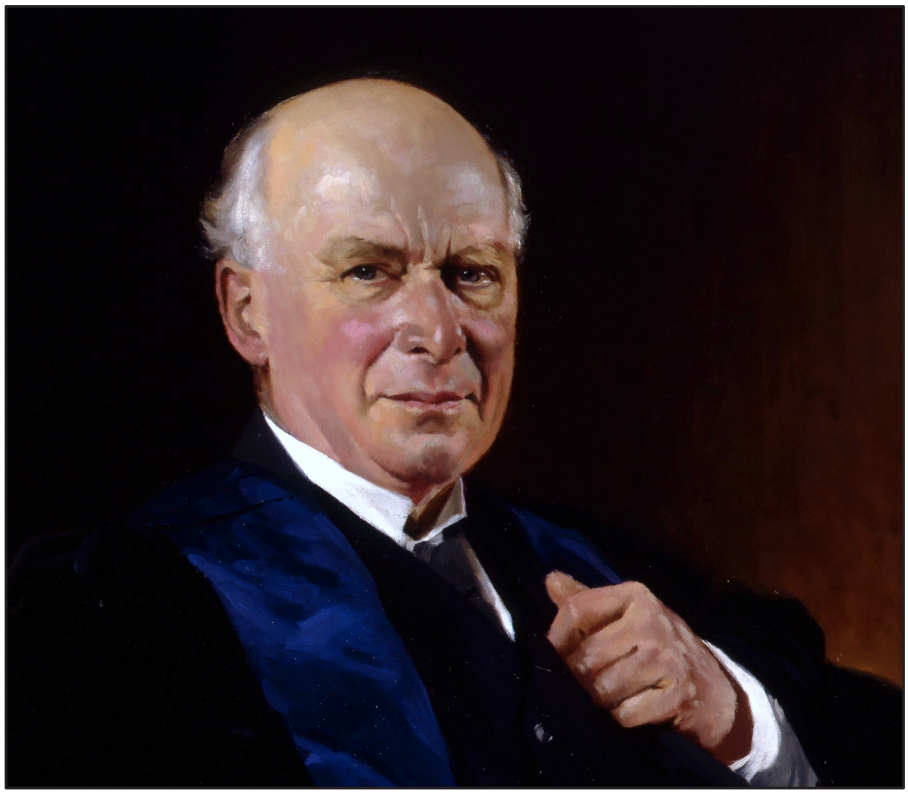
DUBLIN

The Harp and Shamrock Songster, Containing the Newest Collection of Songs. Woodcut. Nugent & Co.,Steem Machine Printers,35,New-Row,West. No connexion with any person of our name. 8vo: 10 pp.

On back of last page:- Contents.

My Old Wife .....5.	My Home Shall Be With Thee....6.
Beautiful Star.....3.	I'm Leaving thee in sorrow
Johny I Hardly Know Ye.....3.	Annie.....3.
My Sporting Mare and I.....6.	How Dear to Me.....5.
My Pretty Jane.....2.	Mother is the War all over....5.
The Last Rose of Summer....2.	The young Soldier's return
I'd choose to be a daisy...2.	from the American War.....8.
Oh let me like a Soldier	My Happy Home I see Again.....6.
fall.....8.	Come where my love lies
Do you Ever Think of Me,	dreaming.....2.
Love ? .....8.	Champagne Charlie is my Name..7.
My Native Land so Green....4.	My old Kentucky Home.....1.
My Friend and Pitcher.....7.	
Sleep on,my Kathleen dear..2.	

A page from Dix's report on the Irish songbooks and ballads held by the British Museum



Ernest Reginald McClintock Dix's Biographer: Thomas Percy Claude Kirkpatrick (Royal College of Surgeons Ireland)

I have not been able to establish why Dix undertook to compile the report or indeed to establish if he undertook the work himself or had some assistance from other parties here or in England. Nevertheless I believe that he would not have undertaken the work involved if he did not have a particular interest in the subject matter of the report.

From the reports Dix completed for the RIA he appeared to me to have had a keen interest in and a good general knowledge of the contents and nature of the topics included in these comments. This is illustrated by his ability to distinguish between the geographical origins or particular songs, i.e., citing if particular songs originated in England, Scotland or here in Ireland.

Looking at the time and other resources necessary to complete the work associated with these reports again confirms my view that he had more than a passing interest in early Irish printed songbooks. Also from the evidence of the RIA internal proceedings it appears that the work on the songbooks was undertaken with no evidence of external assistance, save some advice from an external bookbinder.

Even in current times, with all the technology now available to assist with such work, I estimate that there would be a number of weeks' work in compiling the reports on the Irish based books while the British Museum books report – if travel to London had been necessary to conduct the research – would have been a time-consuming and costly exercise.

It is also possible that Dix's interest in the songbooks may have been influenced by musical connections in his mother's family. There are documented references in the local Drogheda press to music and songs being played and sung after harvest time at the McClintock residence in Dromiskin.

His cousin Frank McClintock, based in Drumcar, County Louth, was also recognised as a fine musician and was friendly with Charles Villiers Stanford who, in 1905, edited *The Complete Collection of Irish Music* originally published by George Petrie,1855.

ER's brother, Leopold,was also recognised as a musician and is credited with early arrangements of the Irish hymn, *Be Thou My Vision,* now commonly sung to the air, *Slane,* which is better known among traditional singers as *The Banks of the Bann* or, in Drogheda, *The Banks of the Boyne.*

Another indication of Dix's interest in Irish songbooks is that while we already know of the four Dundalk songbooks owned by Dix in 1907, he also asserted: "I have a good many too, mostly bound in volumes, or put in cases according to their locality," when replying to an article concerning songbooks by Mr. Marshall, Belfast, in *The Irish Book Lover,* vol 11, October, 1910, No 3.

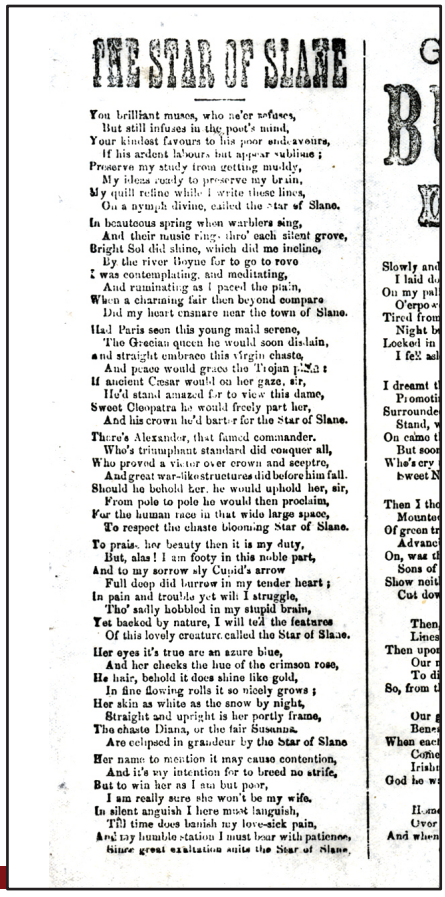
SONGBOOKS DONATED TO THE NLI

The Dix Collection in the National Library Ireland comprises c. 8,000 items donated by Ernest Reginald McClintock-Dix to the NLI. In some instances he was known to appear at a library reception desk, take a book or books from his pocket and deposit them with the library, according to Dr. Marie Kennedy's *Emmet and Devlin Lecture* in 2010.

A simple on-line search of the main catalogues in the NLI combining the terms "Dix" and "songs" produces over 120 individual items. The material contained in these individual holdings are publications containing songs, chapbooks and or songbooks donated by Dix.

The holdings include song material originating from Limerick, Clonmel, Castleblaney, Waterford, Cavan, Cork, Drogheda, Strabane, Omagh, Derry, Downpatrick, Armagh, Belfast, Nenagh, Newry, Dundalk and Dublin. Some of the dated publications reach back as far as 1749 (Dublin) with later ones dated in the 1850s from Derry, Cork, Castleblaney and Downpatrick.

It is noticeable looking at the places of origin of the material that there is very little material from the midland and western counties. Dix himself had made a similar comment on the song material held in RIA. Much of the material he donated to NLI could already be found in the RIA and possibly other institutions here and in the UK: but it is likely that there are a number of publications /songs that may not be easily found elsewhere, or indeed other than in NLI.



THE STAR OF SLANE

You brilliant muses, who ne'er refuses,
But still infuses in the poet's mind,
Your kindest favours to his poor endeavours,
If his ardent labours but appear sublime;
Preserve my study from getting muddy,
My ideas ready to preserve my brain,
My quill refine while I write these lines,
On a nymph divine, called the Star of Slane.

In beauteous spring when warblers sing,
And their music ring- thro' each silent grove,
Bright Sol did shine, which did me incline,
By the river Boyne for to go to rove
I was contemplating, and meditating,
And ruminating as I paced the plain,
When a charming fair then beyond compare
Did my heart ensnare near the town of Slane.

Had Paris seen this young maid serene,
The Grecian queen he would soon disdain,
And straight embrace this virgin chaste,
And peace would grace the Trojan p[illegible];
If ancient Cæsar would on her gaze, sir,
He'd stand amazed for to view this dame,
Sweet Cleopatra he would freely part her,
And his crown he'd barter for the Star of Slane.

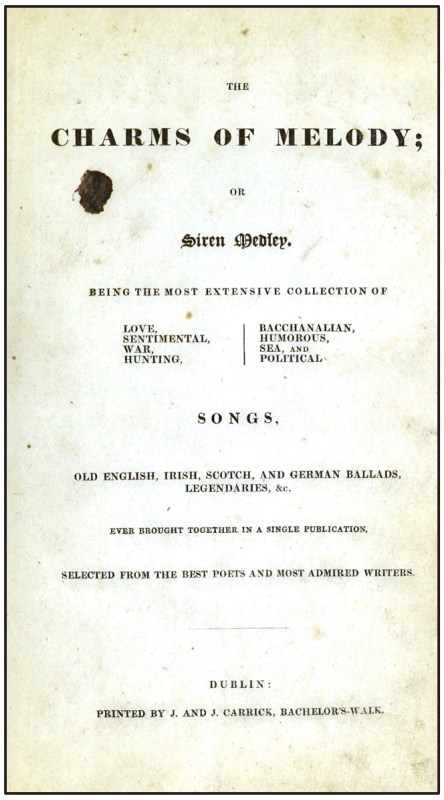
There's Alexander, that famed commander.
Who's triumphant standard did conquer all,
Who proved a victor over crown and sceptre,
And great war-like structures did before him fall.
Should he behold her, he would uphold her, sir,
From pole to pole he would then proclaim,
For the human race in that wide large space,
To respect the chaste blooming Star of Slane.

To praise her beauty then it is my duty,
But, alas! I am footy in this noble part,
And to my sorrow sly Cupid's arrow
Full deep did burrow in my tender heart;
In pain and trouble yet will I struggle,
Tho' sadly hobbled in my stupid brain,
Yet backed by nature, I will tell the features
Of this lovely creature called the Star of Slane.

Her eyes it's true are an azure blue,
And her cheeks the hue of the crimson rose,
Her hair, behold it does shine like gold,
In fine flowing rolls it so nicely grows;
Her skin as white as the snow by night,
Straight and upright is her portly frame,
The chaste Diana, or the fair Susanna
Are eclipsed in grandeur by the Star of Slane

Her name to mention it may cause contention,
And it's my intention for to breed no strife,
But to win her as I am but poor,
I am really sure she won't be my wife.
In silent anguish I here must languish,
Till time does banish my love-sick pain,
And my humble station I must bear with patience,
Since great exaltation suits the Star of Slane.

The Star of Slane Broadside



THE

CHARMS OF MELODY;

OR

Siren Medley.

BEING THE MOST EXTENSIVE COLLECTION OF

LOVE, SENTIMENTAL, WAR, HUNTING,

BACCHANALIAN, HUMOROUS, SEA, AND POLITICAL

SONGS,

OLD ENGLISH, IRISH, SCOTCH, AND GERMAN BALLADS, LEGENDARIES, &c.

EVER BROUGHT TOGETHER IN A SINGLE PUBLICATION,

SELECTED FROM THE BEST POETS AND MOST ADMIRED WRITERS.

DUBLIN:

PRINTED BY J. AND J. CARRICK, BACHELOR'S-WALK.

From the files I have examined, the following ones give an indication of the scale of songs contained in the Dix collection and should be seen just as a sample or selection of the songbooks Dix deposited with the NLI and not a fully complete list.

Dix Waterford 1836 (found at call number LO 560 and LO 561) consists of 53 songbooks with an average of three or four songs in each book. There are a number of duplicate books in the files leaving about 40 different publications. All were printed by W. Kelly, Waterford in the year 1836. The clarity of print and paper used in the Waterford songbooks are of a noticeably superior quality to practically all of the other songbooks from the same period in the Dix Collection – a point Dix himself made about the Kelly, Waterford material held in RIA.

Of interest to north Leinster/south Ulster, singers and collectors of traditional songs are the two songs by the Drogheda-based songwriter John Sheil (1784-1872) namely *Hannah Healy the Pride of Howth* and *The Star of Slane* which would suggest that his songs had reached a very wide national – as well as – local audience.

Dix Derry, 1806-1809, contains forty songbooks, with in the region of 120 songs. The books are all printed by John Buchanan, who interestingly for the time names Derry and in some cases London-Derry as the location for the printings. The Derry printed songs are slightly different in tone to the songs printed further south in that they include more Scottish and English songs than their southern counterparts. There are also a number of "Masonic" songs included that you do not generally get in books printed elsewhere.

Dix Derry, 1854, includes *Poetical Remembrance* by Robert Young who was sometimes called "The Fermanagh True Blue". Robert was generally associated with lyrics supportive of the Orange Order and The Union with Britain. This publication also has a number of songs of a less contentious nature including a number concerning agricultural practices.

Dix Achill – the collection of the most westerly printed of the songbooks donated by Dix – consists of a single book of hymns printed for churches in Cavan, Belturbet and Ballyhaise. It includes hymns printed for specific occasions including nativity, baptisms, confirmations and holy communion.

Dix Boyle, 1833, again is composed of psalms and hymns while Dix Dublin includes song related material from 1749, 1776, 1777, 1799,1805 and 1825 but only includes a total of eleven chapbooks in total. The 1749 item is a publication called *Universal Melodist* by Augustus Long and is similar in nature to items from 1776 and 1799.

The 1776 and 1799 items, called *Charms of Melody* and *Siren Melody,* consist of individual copies of these publications bound together in volumes. The 1776 printings are by "J. Colles, Dame Street at the Corner of Temple Lane." Each publication includes hundreds of songs and poems, many by established English, Scottish and Irish writers of the day.

In a publication of the *Universal Melodist,* third edition, 1825 the contributors include W. Scott, Lord Byron, R. Burns, T. Moore, Dibdin, Campbell, Shakespeare and Gay. The female contributors include Anna Maria Parter, Lady Morgan, Miss R. Gale and Miss Balfour.

Dix Dublin 1805 includes the eleven chapbooks mentioned above. While the printings are thought to be from 1805, even though there is no printed date on the front page, there are a number of issues that lead me to believe that this may not be the case in all instances.

In particular, one of the chapbooks includes a song called *Louth Election Song* which urges the electorate to support Sir Patrick Bellew, from Barmeath, and at the same time excoriates the Foster family, from Collon. Sir Patrick first stood for Parliament in 1831, so it would appear unless the song is referring



John Foster from Collon whose family was targetted in the *Louth Election Song.*



Robert Burns – whose songs featured in many of the songbooks catalogued by Dix.

to another election, the date of 1805 would need to be re-examined. Also in this song a reference is made to O'Connell who first stood for Parliament in 1828, even though it was 1830 before he could take up his seat.

This is another pointer towards this particular songbook being printed nearer 1830 than 1805. A further consideration about the 1805 date is that the books include a number of songs that are widely attributed to John Sheil, including *The Star of Erin* and *The Orangeman's Lamentation*. In 1805 John Sheil was 21 years old. Although he was probably capable of writing songs at that age, it was not until 1820s when he began to be recognised as a composer of songs, many of which were printed by Patrick Kelly at his premises in West Street, Drogheda. (There is another reference to early Sheil songs in the file containing Monaghan printed books).

There are possibly thirteen songs by John Sheil in these books, according to John Moulden. These include *The Orangeman's Lamentation, The Orangeman's Auction* and *The Noble Ribbon Boys.* Of particular interest here is that these three songs may well be the first "political" songs composed by Sheil to appear in small song books that we are aware of. Sheil wrote many "political " songs that appeared in his collections called *Sheil's Shamrocks* which were printed in the 1830s and 1840s. For example volume 1 is dated 1835 and volume 14 dated 1846.

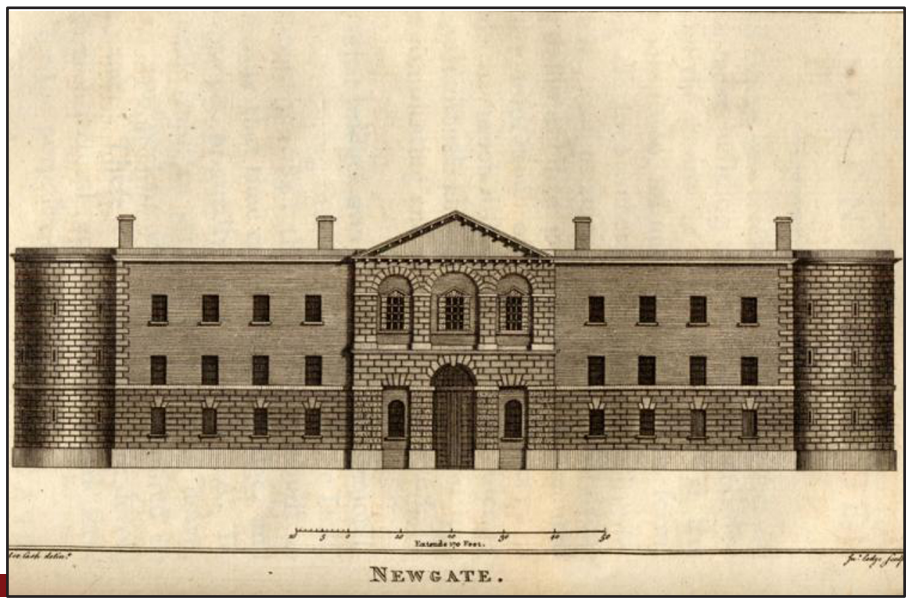
The three "political" songs mentioned above are likely to have been printed in advance of the larger collections, which contained up to 50 pages in some instances and included up to 14 songs.

Dix Dublin includes a copy of *The Jovial Songster,* published at Golden Lane, with a pencil note adding the name Thomas Ritsen, bookseller. It is unclear if Ritsen was also the publisher of the book. The book includes a number of songs that are sometimes described as "Newgate Slang Songs." It does not include *The Night before Larry got Stretched* but does include what could be described as a follow on song called *Larry Coffey.*

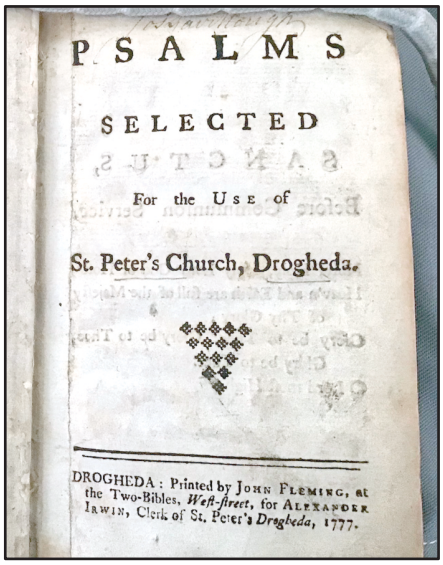
Dix Monaghan, 1822, contains ten songbooks. Included in the ninth book is a song called *The Star of Erin's Isle.* This may well be another song by John Sheil, bearing many of the hallmarks of his simple love songs including his standard format of eight verses of eight lines in each. The song references county Louth landmarks including Barmeath, Dysert, Clonmore and Grange. While a copy of the same book caught my attention on a visit to the British Library, it does not appear in any of the collections of Sheil songs that we are aware of.

Dix Cavan, 1816, has a small number of songbooks printed by James O'Brien that feature a number of songs of Scottish origin including Burns' *A Red Red Rose, The Birks of Aberfeldy* and *Wilt Thou be my Dearie. A Red Red Rose* also appears in the Monaghan songbooks, printed by F. West, Dublin Street, which would appear to indicate it was popular in those border areas.

Dix Drogheda contains 44 separate items with the earliest date for printing indicated as 1777. There is also song material from 1783, 1816, 1826, 1831, 1839, 1850 and 1861. The 1777 item is a book of psalms printed by John Fleming at The Sign of the Two



Newgate Prison in Green Street, Dublin, opened in 1781 and was closed in 1863. It replaced a prison of the same name which was located near Cornmarket on the south side of the river Liffey.


PSALMS

SELECTED

For the Use of

St. Peter's Church, Drogheda.

DROGHEDA: Printed by JOHN FLEMING, at the Two-Bibles, *West-street*, for ALEXANDER IRWIN, Clerk of St. Peter's *Drogheda*, 1777.

The title page of a book of Psalms, printed for St. Peter's Church in Drogheda.

Bibles, West Street Drogheda, specifically for St. Peter's Church. In keeping with the conventions of the time, this book includes a list of subscribers to the printing. There are similar psalm and hymn books printed by Fleming for the same church in 1783, some printed for John Holland and some printed in Drogheda by A. McDougall in 1850, all for St. Peter's Church.

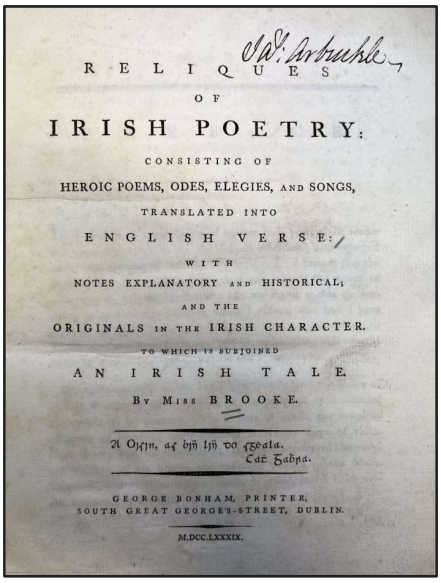
Dix Drogheda 1826 includes six songbooks printed "For the Flying Stationers" with one of the books featuring the John Sheil song, *The Star of Slane.* For a long time this song was thought to be one of the first by Sheil to be printed locally. But in the light of recent discoveries, this is no longer certain in my opinion, and more research is necessary to establish the earliest date for a printing of a Sheil song, either locally or nationally.

What is certain about Sheil songs being printed locally is that in Dix Drogheda (non dated) there are eleven songbooks printed by Patrick Kelly, West Street, Drogheda, "printed in the present year," which is not identified, and these contain many John Sheil songs.

These are simple love songs that identify townlands and towns associated with the female principals of these songs. These include *The Flower of Navan, The Flower of Drogheda, Bessy Brown of Ballybay, The Gem of Gormanstown, Rachel the Ruby of Rush, Lucy Lynch of Lurgan Green, The Maid of Dunleer, The Maid of Mornington, Mary Melvin of Malahide, The Pride of Beaulieu, Mary of Ringsend, The Star of Sweet Dundalk, The Pink of Duleek, The Beautiful Balbriggan Maid, The Queensboro Lass, Skerries Ashore* and *Ally of Ardee.*

Indeed Sheil did not write many romantic songs where males were the featured sex: *The Hero of Bonny Carlow* and *The Hero of Donore* were exceptions in this regard.

All of these songs, and many more from the eleven songbooks, are included in Sheil collections which were subsequently published at separate dates in the 1830s. Some of these collections are to be seen in the NLI, the Irish Traditional Music Archive and the Vaughan Williams Memorial Library in London.

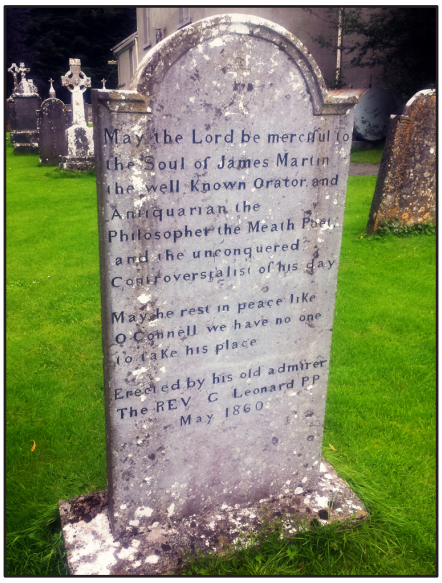


RELIQUES
OF
IRISH POETRY:
CONSISTING OF
HEROIC POEMS, ODES, ELEGIES, AND SONGS,
TRANSLATED INTO
ENGLISH VERSE:
WITH
NOTES EXPLANATORY AND HISTORICAL;
AND THE
ORIGINALS IN THE IRISH CHARACTER.
TO WHICH IS SUBJOINED
AN IRISH TALE.
By Miss BROOKE.

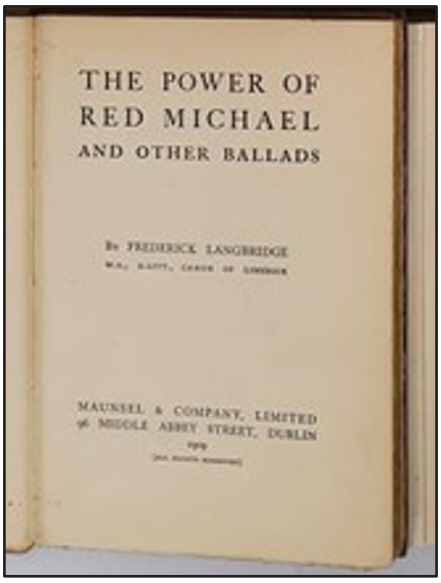
Ar Oisin, ag bhi Isi do Gheala.
Cat Gabha.

GEORGE BONHAM, PRINTER,
SOUTH GREAT GEORGE'S-STREET, DUBLIN.
M.DCC.LXXXIX.

Title page of *Reliques of Irish Poetry* – one of the books donated by Dix to Dublin City Libraries.



Gravestone of James Martin from Meath, author of *Cottage Minstrelsy* – one of Dix's donations.



Title page of *The Power of Red Michael and Other Ballads* – another of Dix's donations.

SONGBOOKS DONATED BY DIX TO DUBLIN CITY LIBRARIES.

Among the 700 items that Dix donated to the Dublin City Libraries are a number of books containing songs and ballads. These are held in the Special Collection area in Pearse Street Library. Among the items that include songs are:

Reliques of Irish Poetry by Charlotte Brooke, 1789, which includes songs.

Ballad Sheets printed in Dublin by Brereton, Lr. Exchange Street, in two lots.

Cottage Minstrelsy, 1843, James Martin.

Lays of the War and Miscellaneous Lyrics, Barry M.J.,1856.

A Collection of 54 Song Books, bound in one volume, mainly printed in Dublin.

A collection of nine small songbooks from the Ulster counties.

Four small songbooks, printed in Dundalk, owned by Dix in 1907.

Twenty-six small songbooks, some from Scotland and England but the majority printed in Waterford by Kelly.

Poets and Poetry of Munster, 1860.

The Power of Red Michael and Other Ballads, 1908, Langbridge.

As I did not inspect all 700 items in this collection, it is possible that there may be other items there that include songs. While some of the books, songbooks and ballad sheets included in the collection can be found in other collections in Dublin, there are a number of the songs, or particular versions of songs,included that may be difficult to locate elsewhere.

Among the interesting lots, at call number 821-008, is a bound volume of 54 small songbooks all of which are printed in Dublin. While many are identified as just "Dublin Printed," Caldwell, 50, Capel Street, Dublin and Williams, New Row, Dublin are identified as printers of a small number of these books. In this bound volume there are close to 200 songs. Most of them are included in other collections in the RIA and NLI and while most of the books are undated they appear to have been printed in the early 1800s. There is at least one of the books (No. 50) dated 1815.

The first song that caught my attention, in the first book is a version of *The River Ban,* with a given tune, *Mayo.* This is the same song that is included in *The Irish Song Tradition,* Ossian Publications,1976, by Sean O'Boyle, although O'Boyle lists it as *The Banks of the Bann.*

The version included in the Dix book has 12x4 line verses as opposed to 6x4 in O'Boyle: it also names the male character as William Anger, not Archer, as named by O'Boyle. An additional geographical reference, as well as the mention of Rathfriland, in the Dix song is that Archer is "from sweet Moneyflan."

O'Boyle dates the song from the nineteenth century. This particular book is identified as being "Printed at the Book and Stationary Ware House, 75, Thomas Street" and is date stamped by the library 23-7-24. In book No.



Title page of *The Poets and Poetry of Munster* – one of Dix's donations to Dublin City Libraries.

39 there is a song called *The Heirs of Fingal* that I have so far been unable to locate in other publications or institutions. In the fourteenth book of the 54, there is a good version of the Dublin song, *May Bush,* printed at Wholesale and Retail Book Shop and Stationary Warehouse, 3, Mary Street, Dublin. This song is also included in *Old Dublin Songs* by the Folk Music Society of Ireland, edited by Hugh Shields, 1988, as well as in other publications.

Call number 821-008 also includes a folder containing nine small song books: six from Monaghan, two from Cavan and one from Armagh. These books contain a total of 35 songs. One of the Cavan books, from 1816, includes a number of Scottish songs.

The nine books are date stamped 23-7-24 by Leabarlanna Puiblidhe Baile Átha Cliath, indicating that they were donated by Dix some years before his passing. The Armagh printer is identified as Young, Printer, Armagh. Of the two books originating in Cavan one was printed by a James O'Brien, the second book has no given printer. Greacen of Monaghan printed three of the Monaghan books, F. West of Dublin Street, Monaghan, printed two while C. Gass of Dublin Street is identified as the printer of the other one.

Call number 821-008 also includes the four books that Dix owned, as he reported in the County Louth Archaeological Society journal in 1907. These four books are date stamped 23-7-24 by Dublin City Libraries and were most likely donated by Dix around that date. The books and the songs contained in them are mentioned earlier in this article.

In call number 025508- 8001 there are 225 single sheet ballads contained in a box folder, generally two single sheet ballads to each transparent folder held in the box. The vast majority of the single sheets were printed by Brereton, Dublin, some by Warren, Printer, Kilmainham, Dublin, and a small number by the English printer J. Pitts, 6, Great Andrew's Street, 7 Dials, London. The small number printed by Pitts may well be the earliest of the sheets in the box to have been printed,

as we know from Leslie Shepard's book concerning Pitts that he was printing in London as early as 1802 and is known to have moved to Great Andrew's Street in 1819.

Brereton, on the other hand, was known to have been operating around 1860-1870 with some suggesting he was printing as early as 1853. The songs relate to the general topics of songs being printed at that time including emigration, politics, sporting events, religious hymns, romance, songs of place and murder ballads. There are a small number of English and Scottish songs included on the sheets. The emigration songs include *The Emigrant's Farewell to Donegal* and *A New Song on the Emigration of Ministers.* Political songs include *The Release of Political Prisoners* by Charles Jackson and *The Deeds of O'Connell.*

Incidentally Jackson is one of a very small number of authors of the songs identified from the sheets. The sporting songs include a number relating to racing including *The Sporting Races of Kanturk, The Sporting Races of Cavan* and *The Bold Benicia Boy.* The hymns include *The Armagh Cross* and a hymn on the *General Judgement Day.*

Songs of place include *Sweet Newcastle Shore* and *The Curragh of Kildare* while the murder ballads feature *A Lamentation of Mary Connor,* who was killed by her son, as well as *The Lamentation of Wm. Healy for the Murder of his Wife and Child.*

The English songs include *The Wager* and *Sally and her True Love Billy* while the Scottish songs include *Annie Gray* and *Caroline of Edinburgh Town.* The songs of romance include *The Pride of Lisburn Town* and *Kissing at the Window.* Most, if not all, of the songs attributed to Brereton can be found in other collections here and elsewhere, including the collection by the printer held in the Irish Traditional Music Archive.



Tradition Bearer: Mary Ann Carolan

In call number 821.08 there are an additional 87 single sheet ballads, again primarily printed by Brereton. Here there are a number of duplications of sheets contained in call number 025508 8001, *Caroline of Edinburgh Town* being one of these songs. Of interest to Drogheda singers is that *Caroline of Edinburgh Town* was included in the repertoire of Mary Ann Carolan and is still sung today by her son, Pat Carolan. This list also contains a nine-verse – as opposed to the more common eight-verse – version of the John Sheil song, *The Rights of Man.*

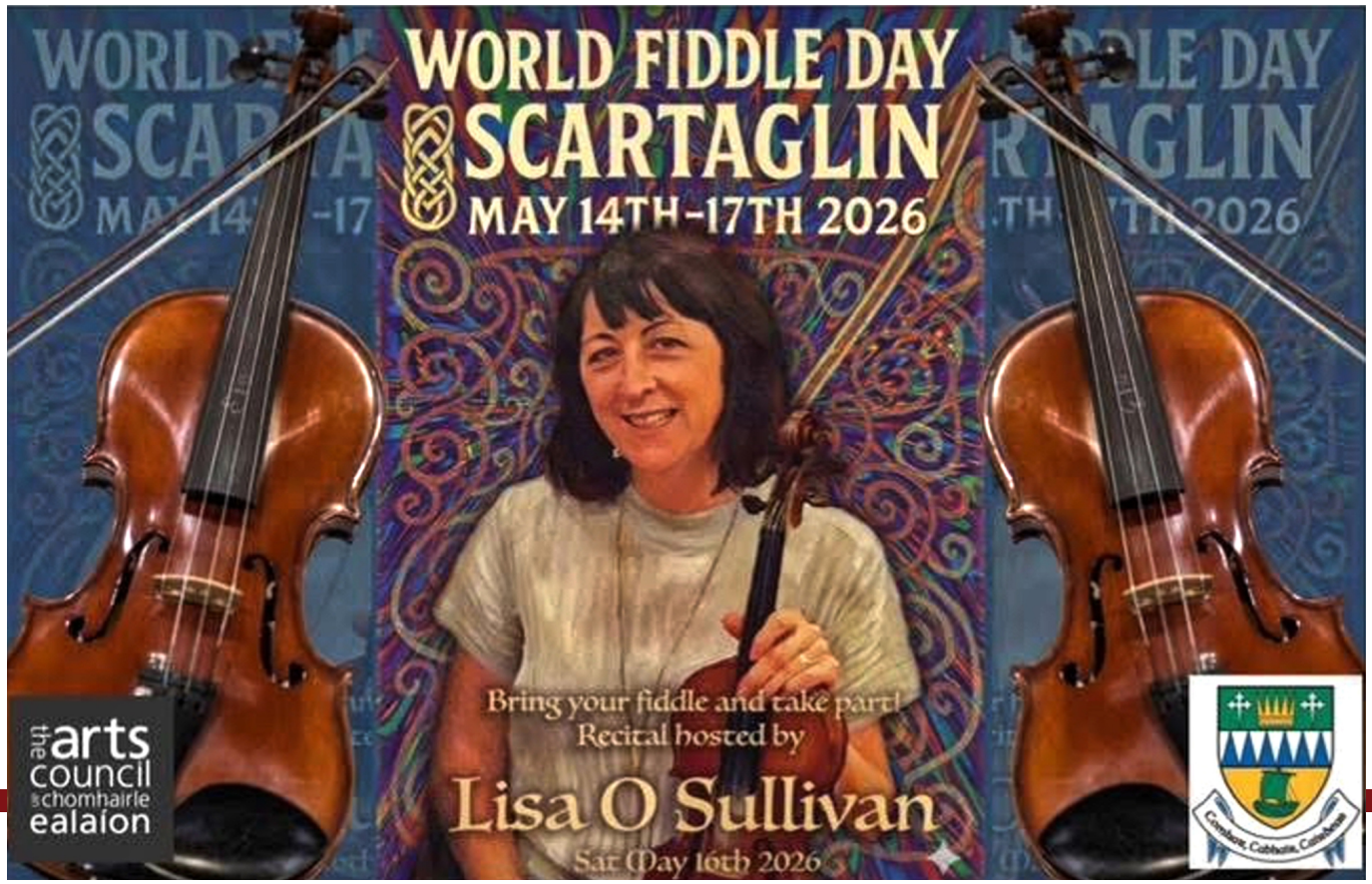
The twenty-six small songbooks, found at Ex 000 354 858001 are made up of one book printed in Newcastle, England; two books printed in Stirling, Scotland; four books printed in Drogheda for The Flying Stationers with two of these dated 1826; one book printed in Cavan, one book printed in Dublin; one book printed in Omagh; one book with no location or printer given; and fifteen books printed by Kelly, Waterford.

Of particular interest in this file is that a number of the song books, numbers 13, 14, 17 and 22, are in an uncut form. By this I mean that the books consist of two printed pages, printed back to back, with pages 1, 4, 5 and 8 printed on one side and pages 2, 3, 6 and 7 printed on the reverse. This enabled the printer to cut and fold the pages in a particular manner so that the numbered pages could appear in proper sequence and consequently the songs, where they spanned two or more pages, would also appear as a complete song.

While Ernest Reginald McClintock-Dix is most commonly known for his general bibliographic activities related to early Irish printed materials, he is seldom recognised by traditional Irish song collectors and singers for his contribution to preserving and cataloguing old Irish songbooks.

While his work in this area is of particular importance to traditional singers and collectors in the north Leinster/South Ulster area, demonstrated by his work for the RIA in the period 1905-1910, his subsequent activities in collecting, preserving and later donating to the NLI and DCL early Irish printed song-books deserves some attention on a national level. But perhaps the best way to acknowledge his legacy is to transmit the songs by singing them.

I wish to acknowledge the support and encouragement of my late wife, Elizabeth, in undertaking this research project.




Comhaltas
Fleadh Nua.com
CÉILITHE
STREET SESSIONS
PUB SESSION TRAIL
LUNCHTIME CONCERTS
CAFÉ SESSIONS
CIORCAIL COMHRÁ
CONCERTS
SINGING SESSIONS
CD LAUNCHES
REEDMAKING
WORKSHOPS
FILM
MAY 23
JUNE 01
2026
CONCERTS
O'Connell: The Liberator
Sunday 24 May @ 8pm
glór • €24
Bríd Harper & Ryan Molloy
Thursday 28 May @ 8pm
St Columba's Church • €20
Aos Óg – Fuaim Inchicronan
Friday 29 May @ 7pm
glór • €20
The Kilfenora Céilí Band
Saturday 30 May @ 8pm
glór • €30
An Traidisiún Beo
The Living Tradition
Sunday 31 May 8pm
glór • €24
CONCERT BOOKINGS
glor.ie • 065 684 3103
BOOKING FEE €1
Paolo Soprani
the Fleadh down in ennis!
Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann
75
Bliain ag fás
Fáilte Ireland
WILD ATLANTIC WAY
SLÍ AN ATLANTAIGH FHIÁIN
glór ENNIS
visit CLARE
An Roinn Cultúir, Cumarsáide agus Spóirt
Department of Culture, Communications and Sport
Dílis dór nOibreacht
COMHAIRLE CONTAE AN CHLÁIR
CLARE COUNTY COUNCIL
hAcois na hABHNA
THE LIVING TRADITION


sean nós dance
workshop
with Stephanie Keane
May 8th - 10th
Join us for an immersive weekend exploring new steps and rhythms in reels, jigs, and polkas. Develop musicality, deepen your sense of rhythm, and learn tools for improvisation to help you find and refine your own personal style.
Airt
Airt, Feothanach, Baile na nGall, Trá Lí,
Co. Chiarraí, V92 PK10
airtcentre@gmail.com

SIGHT LINES

IFI STREAMS INISHOWEN SONG FILM

The Irish Film Institute has agreed to stream the Inishowen Traditional Singers Circle film, *It's a Fine Thing to Sing,* on its online player IFI@Home.

The 60-minute documentary by award-winning director Bob Gallagher features Ian Lynch (Lankum), Ye Vagabonds and the Henry Girls arranging and singing six songs associated with Clonmany and Buncrana singers: Roseanne McGonigle, Mary Ann Canny, Dan McGonigle, Corney McDaid and Inishowen visitor Packie Manus Byrne.

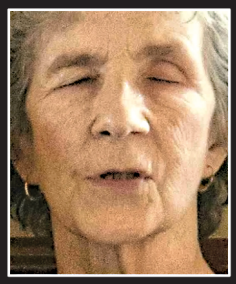
The recordings are set within Inishowen's stunning landscape, interwoven with atmospheric archival recordings of the original singers and interviews with contemporary members of the Inishowen song community.

To stream the film from the IFI will cost €4.99 – with each rental lasting for three days. So once you start watching, you have 48 hours to finish. The facility is only available in the Irish Republic at present but the ITSC hopes it will be available worldwide soon.

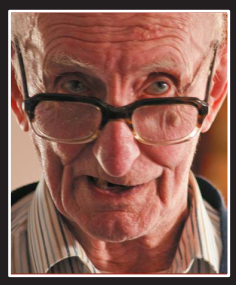
Under the arrangement with the Irish Film Institute, the ITSC will receive 50% of the rental proceeds – which will be used to support its programme of song events and projects.



Corny McDaid



Roseanne McGonigle



Packie Manus Byrne



Ian Lynch



Bob Gallagher



Ye Vagabonds

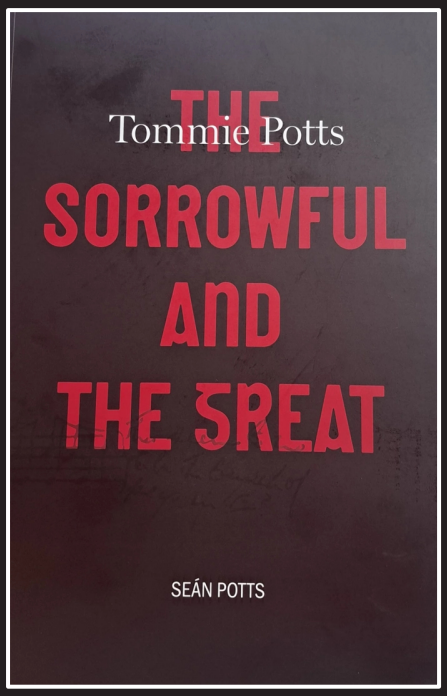






Left: Tommie Potts

Above: Seán Potts on the pipes at the William Kennedy Piping Festival



POTTS BY POTTS

NEW BIOGRAPHY OF FIDDLE GENIUS

The first comprehensive biography of Tommie Potts' life and unique artistic process has been published by the Irish Traditional Music Archive.

Written by Tommie's grandnephew, Seán Potts, *The Sorrowful and the Great* charts the course of the fiddle master's formative years in the fertile musical environment of his family home in Dublin's Liberties where both his father, John, and brother, Eddie, were noted uilleann pipers, and where some of the country's leading traditional musicians were frequent visitors.

Seán also highlights Tommie's eleven-year career as a full-time fire-fighter which was marked by the trauma of the 1936 Pearse Street tragedy.

As a musician Tommie was a brilliant but controversial fiddler: he was generally reluctant to play in public – partly because he had developed an idiosyncratic improvisational style, often developing variations on traditional tunes which included classical and jazz elements, which were not always appreciated by the general public or by traditionalists.

The book also reflects on Tommie's enduring relationship with the leading traditional musicians of County Clare, his friendship with the late Mícheál Ó Súilleabháin and the story of the recording of The Liffey Banks album in 1971 – on which Séamus Ennis commented:

To my mind he is away above some of our heads and has achieved something very worthwhile.

Seán also assesses his ancestor's continuing legacy. While he may have been ahead of his time in many repsects, his genius has not only been recognised but embraced by many contemporary musicians including fiddle players, Martin Hayes, Aoife Ní Bhriain and Liam O'Connor.

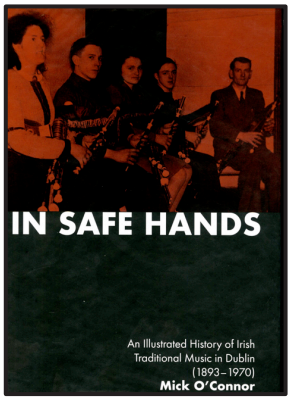
Apart from his family connection, Seán Potts, is not only an accomplished piper but also the son of Seán Potts Senior, the whistle player and founder member of The Chieftains

Accompanying the publication of this biography has been a tune-book, *The Unbroken Music of Heaven,* consisting of a selection of Tommie's most exemplary arranged melodies and compositions housed in the ITMA's collections, carefully transcribed and annotated by fiddler, Aoife Ní Bhriain.

While the initial run of the tunebook sold out rapidly, it has since been reprinted and is available from the ITMA shop at itma.ie/shop for €30.



The Castle Céili Band: *(from left)* Joe Ryan, Benny Carey, Seán Keane, Paddy O'Brien, Bridie Lafferty, John Kelly Sr, Michael Tubridy, Mick O'Connor and John Dwyer. 1962. *(From Mick O'Connor's Personal Collection)*





Author: Mick O'Connor

THE MUSIC FROM THE LIFFEY

MICK O'CONNOR'S LABOUR OF LOVE

Over forty years in the making, *In Safe Hands* is a history of Irish traditional music in Dublin from the late nineteenth century to the 1970s recounted by the veteran musician and researcher, Mick O'Connor.

In the book's introduction, O'Connor explains that the book is "the culmination of over forty years of research, writing and reflection. It has been driven by a deep desire to document and honour the vibrant community of individuals who have preserved and enriched the tradition of Irish music."

Mick delivers on this desire in generous fashion with over 550 pages featuring interviews with leading musicians, first-hand experiences and many rare images from Mick's own extensive collection of photographs and memorabilia.

The book covers the period from the formation of the Gaelic Leaague in 1893 through the Feis Ceoil competitions, the various iterations of the Pipers' Club, the teaching and transmission of traditional music during the lean years through to the "revival" of the 1960s – concluding in 1970 which also marked the death of the pivotal figure of Leo Rowsome – to whose memory the book is dedicated.

The book also includes biographies of almost 200 tradition bearers, along with many previously unpublished photographs.

O'Connor, of course, has been a central figure in Dublin's musical life since the 1950s when he came to prominence as one of the founder members of the Castle Céilí Band from Drimnagh along with Seán Keane, Michael Tubridy, James Keane and others.

O'Connor's long-time friend and Luke Kelly's biographer, Des Geraghty, commented on *In Safe Hands:*

This mighty story of traditional music in the city of Dublin from 1893 to 1970 is much more than a history or a scholarly record of its subject.

It is a life-long harvest of musical material and illustrations which reflect the author's own love and enthusiasm for traditional music and for the music makers. It is a unique treasury of information, pictures and illustrations supported by well-researched material on all aspects of the music revival in Dublin.

Mick O'Connor's book puts a truly human face on the musicians, the bands and the groups who have contributed to that development; and also traces the evolution of the music itself. It tells the personal stories and illustrates the nature of the people involved; and it gives us a valuable insight into their lives.

It also explores very well the difficult circumstances in which the tradition has had to develop over seventy seven years, from virtual extinction to its current status. It demonstrates the intimate relationship of the music with our struggle for freedom, cultural expression, pride and self respect as a people.

The piping tradition rightly has a very special place in this story, from the early marching bands to the céili bands old and new, and the pipers and players of all descriptions. The author, with the heart and history of a piper himself, places the product of his remarkable research and his personal passion for the music in the safe hands of the current crop of young uilleann pipers."

CHRISTY'S CARTLANN



A new film documentary, *Cartlann Christy Moore,* produced by the Irish Traditional Music Archive (ITMA) and funded by TG4 was premiered on New Year's Eve, 2025 *(Photo: TG4)*

After turning 80, Christy Moore donated his personal collection of music memorabilia to the ITMA.

This collection contains a vast store of rare manuscripts, recordings, letters, setlists and unseen lyrics that opens a window into a creative spirit and social conscience that has shaped generations.

For more than fifty years,his music has reverberated throughout the world – both as a solo performer and as a member of two ground-breaking bands: Planxty and Moving Hearts.

A legendary singer, collector, storyteller and activist, the songs that he sings help to tell the story of Ireland – the good and bad, the triumphs and hardships.



Influence: Radie Peat



Legacy: Paddy Glackin

Directed by acclaimed musician and film-maker, Ciarán Ó Maonaigh, Cartlann Christy Moore uses these collections to explore Christy's life and music at a level never captured before.

The film features new interviews and recordings of Christy, along with contributions from former President Michael D. Higgins, as well as artists including Paddy Glackin, Radie Peat, Tríona Ní Dhomhnaill, Liam O'Connor, DJ Próvaí of Kneecap and poet Paula Meehan.

"I love the idea of my songs being in the archive," said Christy, "and some young person in Australia or America, Clare or Belfast, being able to go on a website and get the words and hear the tune and the melody and have the chords."

"Songs have a power within them to draw us in, affect us and cause us to go forward with laughter, or to shed a tear, or to stand up and be counted. Those things are what make great songs."

Encountering Christy Moore and his personal collections, director Ciarán Ó Maonaigh was struck by the sheer vastness of his output over almost sixty years.

"Countless songs and melodies that are engrained into our consciousness as Irish people. His focus, energy and all out to commitment to song was fascinating and awesome to behold."

"It is a tremendous honour," added ITMA Chief Executive, Liam O'Connor, "that Christy Moore is placing his trust in ITMA to illuminate his artistic philosophy, his deep gratitude to those who preserved songs before him, and to inspire younger generations to continue composing in the traditional ballad form he has mastered."



Director and Musician: Ciarán Ó Maonaigh

The documentary is available to view on the TG4 player at this link.



Composed: Michael McGoldrick

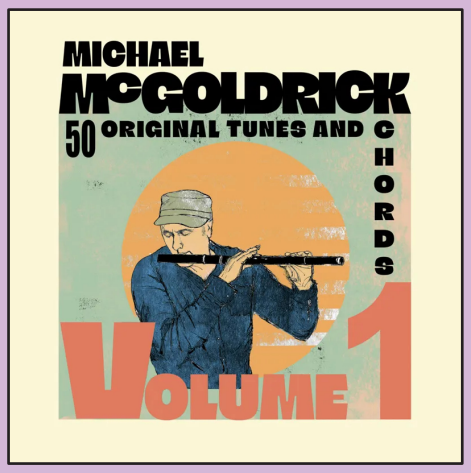
NEW ORIGINAL TUNES FROM McGOLDRICK

Multi-instrumentalist and composer Michael McGoldrick has published a new collection of fifty original melodies with accompanying chord suggestions, arranged for players at a range of levels.

The new tune book, *50 Original Tunes & Chords: Volume 1*, reflects McGoldrick's mix of traditional roots and contemporary writing, offering reels, jigs, and other dance forms aimed at both practice and performance.

A companion digital audio download comes with recordings of all fifty tunes, by McGoldrick supported by Donald Shaw on piano and Innis White on guitar.

The tracks play at a slower practice tempo to support learning and play-along use, giving players a clear guide to phrasing, rhythm, and accompaniment options.



MICHAEL'S YEAR OF SONGS

The Traditional Irish Song Calendar/Féilire Amhrán Traidisiúnta na hÉireann 2026 was launched beforeChristmas.

Created by singer Michael Steen in collaboration with multimedia artist Dan MacDonald (aka Spitzer Space-Telescope), the calendar is a beautifully crafted product that combines traditional imagery with modern technology to lead readers through centuries of music, story, and heritage to over 300 songs in Irish and English from all regions.

In the calendar, one featured song is assigned to each month, with other songs allocated to individual days throughout the year – such as feast days, seasonal rituals and anniversaries of cultural and historical events, like Bloomsday, St Stephen's Day and the 1798 rebellion of the United Irishmen.

For example, in January 2026, the song of the month, *In The Month of January,* is accompanied by seventeen other songs spread over the course of the month.

By scanning the associated QR codes, readers can follow the links to the *songcalendar* website to see and hear the songs performed by a variety of artists including stalwarts like the late Frank Harte along with emerging voices from across the country.

The calendar also offers access to rare archival photographs bringing the songs and singers to life.





Calendar Boy: Michael Steen
(Photo: Colm Keating).

Originally from Detroit, Michigan via Portland, Oregon and now based in County Meath, Michael Steen is a song collector and researcher with a particular interest in the singing tradition of West Cork and of singer and fiddler, John O'Connell, above all.

He is also a regular at An Góilín in Dublin – where he recently joined the organising committee. He has also become a familiar face at the Inishowen Traditional Singing Weekend in recent years, where he met his partner, the traditional singer, Annie Hughes.

If you are interestd in buying a copy of the calendar, follow this link for details.

SONGS: NEW AND RECYCLED

Rachel Uí Fhaoláin launches *In the Singing of Songs Volume 2*



Family Circle: At the launch of *In the Singing of Songs Book 2* were Cú Chulainn Ó Faoláin, Rachel Uí Fhaoláin and Éire Ní Fhaoláin *(Photo: John O'Faoláin)*

Published in October 2025, *In the Singing of Songs' Book 2* is the second in the series of books of newly composed songs in the traditional style. As was the case with the first book, this second intergenerational collection was compiled and edited by Rachel Uí Fhaoláin.

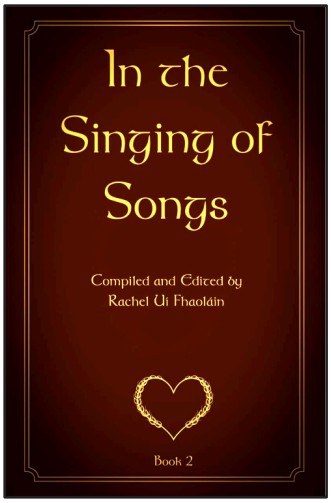
The thirty-two songs and recordings range from the local through the national to international and even universal themes.

While most of the songs are in English, two are in Irish: Éire Ní Fhaoláin's sean-nós ballad of an emigrant far from home and Bill Breathnach's celebration of the Meath Gaeltacht of Rath Chairn. Rachel Uí Fhaoláin also offers a macaronic – with lines in English, Irish and Welsh.

The collection includes four settings of poems by the Carnew poet, William Granger (1901-1994) on local themes – three set to pre-existing airs (sung by Rachel, by Éire and by Alberta Lathan respectively) and one set to a newly composed air by Éire and her brother, Chulainn.

There are six more songs of place – mainly located in Wexford. Etty Kilbride commemorates Ballyellis while clients of the Taghmon Day Centre join Rachel in praise of the Centre's founders, staff and volunteers.

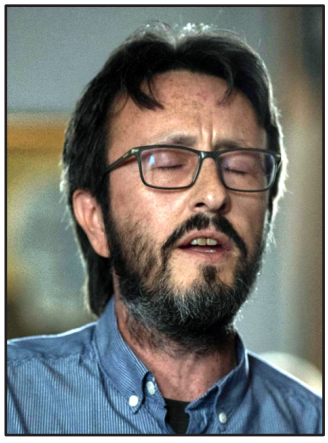
Simon Oak celebrates the recent Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann in Wexford while



Marianne McAleer recalls a day spent outdoors on Mount Leinster. The neighbouring county of Wicklow is also recognised in songs composed by Anne Mulhall and by John Reilly respectively.

Local history also offers further inspiration in two songs about 1798 by the late James Armstrong and by Rachel Uí Fhaoláin respectively and another by Frank Spiers about a ship-wreck off the Donegal coast.

Two songs were sourced in or inspired by the 1937 Schools Folklore Collection.



Gavin Byrne: Tribute to Wexford singer, Paddy Berry.



Ellen MacIsaac: Immortalises her great-uncle in song.



Marianne McAleer: A day on Mount Leinster.



Frank Greally: remembers an exceptional athlete.



Rita Gallagher: sings anti-war song inspired by Gaza genocide.

Seven songs were written as tributes (even if indirectly) to specific individuals: Gavin Byrne's tribute to Wexford singer, Paddy Berry; Tommie Linnane's wry take on an encounter with the late Frank Harte; Dave Barron's recollection of a rambling house host; Ellen MacIsaac's memorial to her great-uncle: Colm Brennan's biographical ballad about Kathleen Browne; Frank Greally's tribute to a special athlete: and Andreana Fay's story of a survivor of the Magdalen Laundries.

The Magdalen Laundries also loom large in a song composed by Des Geraghty while Jonny Tennant contributes a powerful anti-war ballad.

The terrible futility of war – and the genocide in Gaza – is also explored by Séamas Sheils in a song sung by Rita Gallagher, while Gaza also inspires a second offering from Colm Brennan.

The children's section of the book, *Ag Canadh trí na Séasúir,* contains newly composed songs in the traditional style, in both Irish and English, written by Rachel and her two children, Éire agus Chulainn.

The publication of this new book also serves to celebrate the tenth anniversary of the North Wexford Traditional Singing Circle (NWTSC).

While firmly rooted in Gorey, the NWTSC has developed a richly deserved national reputation attracting participants from all over the country and, indeed, overseas. Long may it continue.

The Songs

1. **The Ballyellis Cross:** [W] Etty Kilbride; [A] Etty Kilbride; [S] Etty Kilbride
2. **Scenes of '98:** [W] James Armstrong; [A] *Teddy O'Neill;* [S] Noel Armstrong
3. **The Patriot Lovers:** [W] The Schools Collection; [A] Rachel UÍ Fhaoláin; [S] Rachel Uí Fhaoláin;
4. **The Back o' the Hills:** [W] William Granger; [A] *Carrig River;* [S] Rachel Uí Fhaoláin;
5. **An Dara Craiceann:** [W] Rachel Uí Fhaoláin; [A] *The Bannow Mother's Lament;* [S] Rachel UÍ Fhaoláin
6. **Amhrán an Cumhha:** [W] Éire Ní Fhaoláin; [A] Éire Ní Fhaoláin; [S] Éire Ní Fhaoláin.
7. **Gorey Long Ago:** [W] William Granger; [A] *The Inside Car;* [S] Éire Ní Fhaoláin
8. **Southward with the Slaney:** [W] William Granger; [A] Éire & Chulainn; [S] Éire & Chulainn
9. **Harbour Home:** [W] William Granger; [A] *Lord Courtown;* [S] Alberta Lathan
10. **Sing Us A Song, Paddy:** [W] Gavin Byrne; [A] Gavin Byrne; [S] Gavin Byrne
11. **At the Fleadh Cheoil in Wexford:** [W] Simon Oak; [A] Simon Oak; [S] Simon Oak
12. **Under a Skylark Sky:** [W] Marianne McAleer; [A] Marianne McAleer; [S] Marianne McAleer
13. **The Turret Gunner's Farewell:** [W] Ellen MacIsaac; [A] *When a Man's in Love he feels no Pain;* [S] Ellen MacIsaac
14. **Caitlín de Brún:** [W] Colm Brennan; [A] *An Bóithrín Buí;* [S] Colm Brennan
15. **Gaza 2023:** [W] Colm Brennan; [A] *An Bonnán Buí;* [S] Colm Brennan
16. **The Old Town:** [W] Séamas Sheils; [A] Séamas Sheils; [S] Rita Gallagher
17. **Dearest Child:** [W] George MacDonald; [A] *The Parting Glass;* [S] Rachel Uí Fhaoláin
18. **Clover Valley:** [W] Taghmon Day Centre & Rachel Uí Fhaoláin; [A] *Slaney Valley;* [S] Rachel UíFhaoláin, Éire & Chulainn
19. **The Keepers of the Flame:** [W] Dave Barron; [A] *The Bantry Girl's Lament;* [S] Mary Butler
20. **The Ballad of Eileen Patricia Toner:** [W] Andreana Fay; [A] *Fáinne Geal an Lae;* [S] Andreana Fay
21. **Magdalene Mothers:** [W] Des Geraghty; [A] Des Geraghty; [S] Des Geraghty
22. **Tomnafinogue:** [W] Anne Mulhall; [A] Anne Mulhall; [S] Anne Mulhall
23. **Sweet Arklow Town:** [W] John Reilly; [A] John Reilly; [S] John Reilly
24. **Bring Our Boys Home:** [W] Jonny Tennant; [A] Jonny Tennant; [S] Jonny Tennant
25. **Oíche í Ráth Chairn:** [W] Bill Breathnach; [A] *The Gardens where the Praties grow;* [S] Bill Breathnach
26. **The Man who Stole my Seat;** [W] Tommie Lehane; [A] *The Maid of Cabra West;* [S] Tommie Lehane
27. **The Ballad of Neil Cusack;** [W] Frank Greally; [A] Frank Greally; [S] Frank Greally
28. **The Livelihood;** [W] Frank Spiers; [A] *The Bonny Ship the Diamond;* [S] Frank Spiers

29. **An Fháinleog:** [W] Éire & Chulainn; [A] Éire & Chulainn; [S] Éire & Chulainn
30. **Cuckoo's Corner:** [W] The Schools' Collection/Rachel Uí Fhaoláin; [A] *Love will You Marry Me;* [S] Éire & Chulainn
31. **The Blackberry Harvest Dance:** [W] Rachel UÍ Fhaoláin; [A] *The Field Mouse's Ball;* [S] Rachel Uí Fhaoláin
32. **Sneachta Bán:** [W] Éire & Chulainn; [A] Éire & Chulainn; [S] Éire & Chulainn

Key: [W]: Words [A]: Air [S]: Singer

LOST TIPP SONGS FOUND

A new book of songs from Tipperary has been produced by song researcher, Bill O'Brien.

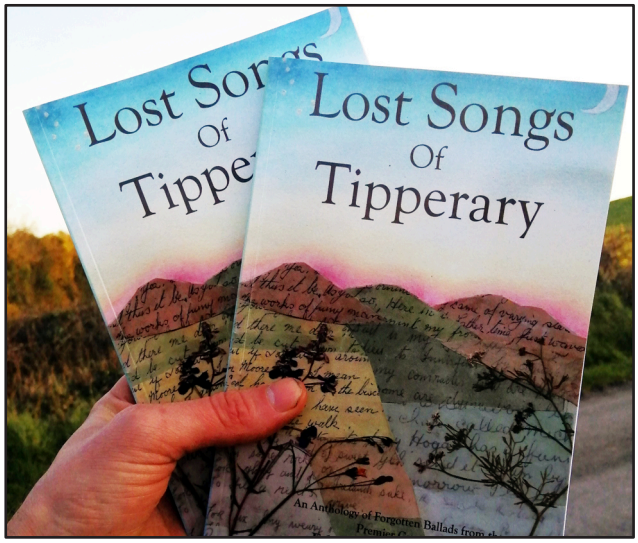
While the book includes some songs which I sung in sessions around Ireland, it also contains a number of obscure and relatively unheard songs, ballads and poems – hence the title *Lost Songs of Tipperary.*

It also includes notes on their history, folklore and guidance as to how they might be sung.

The book is available for €15 through Ebay at https://ebay.us/m/V3eCil.

Bill, who hopes to complete a volume for every county in Ireland over the next decade, also hosts a podcast on the same topic at https://shows.acast.com/lostsongsofirelandpodcast which is available on all major streaming platforms.

The songs included in the book are:



- The Cows of Roscrea
- Ballagh War Pipers
- The Boys of Ballagh
- I Love You Tipperary
- The Boys of Old Roscrea
- The Old House in the Glen
- Kilcommon My Home
- Clonoulty My Home
- Sweet Lovely Rossmore
- The Ballad of the McCormick Brothers
- Rare Clonmel
- The Women of Clonmel
- Where the Mulcair River Flows
- Newport Town
- Sarsfield's Ride to Ballyneety
- Galloping O'Hogan
- The Night I Rode with Sarsfield
- The Moonlight Drill
- The Station of Knocklong
- Dan Breen
- Kilclooney Woods
- The Ballad of Peter O'Neill Crowley
- Jack from Killaloe
- Song about Landlords, their Agents and Pets
- A Chuisle Ghil Mo Críodhe
- Ashgrove Old Bard
- Darby Ryan, The Bard of Ashgrove
- Land War
- Rebel on the Run
- (A New Song on) The Town of New Tipperary

SONGS FOR UNION MAIDS

ITMA DIGITISES 2003 SONG BOOKLET





A collection of trade union songs related to women at work, has been digitised by the Irish Traditional Music Archive (ITMA) so that it is accessible on the ITMA website..

Songs for Union Maids was originally produced by the trade union, SIPTU, for its National Women's Forum held in Galway in 2003.

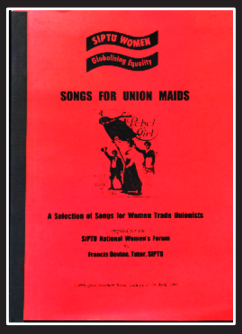
Labour historian and singer, Francy Devine, who was involved in producing the publication in 2003, said:

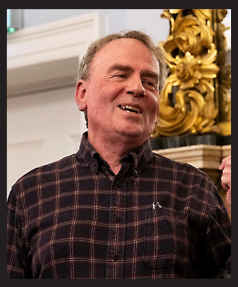
"Workers have always sung. Some songs, such as shanties or field songs, reflected the rhythm of the work, hoisting sails or picking cotton, while others, like blues, expressed grievances against poor conditions or exploitation.

"Songs were inherent in the world of work. Women workers, although often excluded from paid work or confined to low paid, poorly organised sectors like domestics, clothing or cleaning, have a rich tradition of song."

"Within the collection are two songs that had become anthems for women workers, *Bread and Roses* and *Union Maid,* both were of American origin.

"Other songs such as the *Bantry Girls' Lament* and *Salonika* are from the Irish tradition. All these works bring to life often hard times but also the spirit of the women workers who sang these songs as they strove for a better times for themselves and their families."









ITMA Librarian, Róisín Conlon, added:

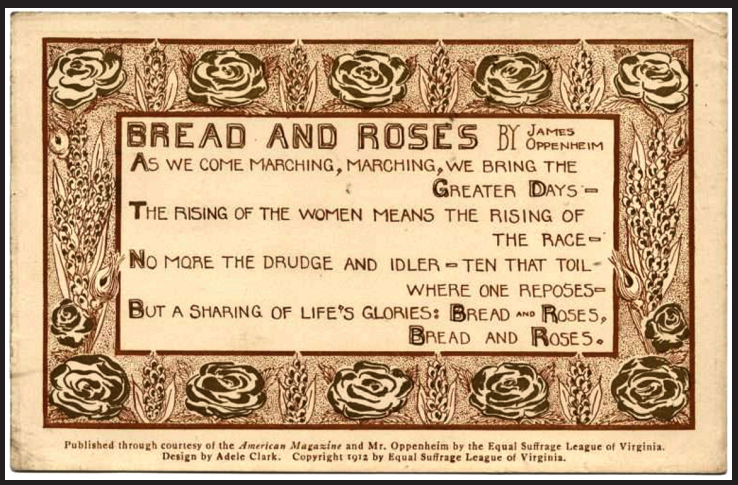
"*Songs for Union Maids* stands out as a collection which pays tribute to the indelible role women have played in the global workers' rights movement, as workers, activists, and artists.

"We are delighted to make it a part of our online collection as an educational resource and document for both the present and future public."

The songs in the collection include traditional ballads – as well as more modern offerings. In addition to Woody Guthrie's *Union Maid,* the collection also features songs by Peggy Seeger, Ewan MacColl, Joe Hill and Patrick Kavanagh.

The Songs:

- The Ballad of Joan Oakden
- Bantry Girl's Lament
- Bread and Roses
- The Doffing Mistress
- Four Strong Women
- I'm Gonna be an Engineer
- The Jute Mill Song
- The Coal Owner and the Pitman's Wife
- Laundry Workers' Song
- Mrs McGrath
- Raglan Road
- The Rebel Girl
- The Recruited Collier
- Rosa Luxembourg
- Salonika
- Strong Women Rule Us All
- Ten Young Women and One Young Man
- Union Maid
- Your Daughters and Your Sons


BREAD AND ROSES BY JAMES OPPENHEIM

AS WE COME MARCHING, MARCHING, WE BRING THE GREATER DAYS—
THE RISING OF THE WOMEN MEANS THE RISING OF THE RACE—
NO MORE THE DRUDGE AND IDLER—TEN THAT TOIL—WHERE ONE REPOSES—
BUT A SHARING OF LIFE'S GLORIES: BREAD AND ROSES, BREAD AND ROSES.

Published through courtesy of the *American Magazine* and Mr. Oppenheim by the Equal Suffrage League of Virginia.
Design by Adele Clark. Copyright 1912 by Equal Suffrage League of Virginia.



Protest: The graphic that accompanies Bruce Springsteen's recent protest song, *The Streets of Minneapolis. (Image: Columbia Records)*

ANALYSING PROTEST MUSIC

The Oxford Handbook of Protest Music is currently in development by the Oxford University Press's academic imprint, Oxford Academic, under the joint editorship of Eric Drott and Noriko Manabe.

The publication will feature a collection of articles covering a wide range of aspects of the broadly defined music of protest.

Unusually perhaps, Oxford Academic have taken a decision to publish individual articles online in advance of the publication of the entire collection in print. In this way, the table of contents will continue to grow as additional articles pass through the review process and are added to the Oxford Academic website.

Below is a list of the articles published so far – which can be read at https://academic.oup.com/edited-volume/59485?

- Introduction: Rethinking Protest Music *Eric Drott and Noriko Manabe*
- Beyond Strike Songs: Hearing Voice in Musicking at Work *Marek Korczynski*
- Argentine Rock: From Castaways to Allegorists *Mara Favoretto*
- Why 1976? Explaining the Rise and Fall of Protest Music *John Street and others*
- Mahraganat Music: Protest on the Margin *Mounira Soliman*
- Protest Song, Tradition, and the Performativity of Resistance in the Palestinian National Movement *David A. McDonald*
- The "Swinish Multitaude," Political Song, and Transatlantic Print in the Age of Revolution *Glenda Goodman*
- The Islamic State as Social Move-ment Organization and the Concept of Protest in Its Anashid *Jonathan Pieslak*
- Valentyn Sylvestrov on the Maidan *Peter J. Schmelz*
- How Does a Boycott Sound? *Andrea F. Bohlman*
- HONK! Activism: Alternative Brass Bands as Political Projects *Reebee Garofalo*
- Nonlyrical Dimensions of Protest Music *William G. Roy & Ashley Gromis*
- Puritans and Protest Songs in Revolutionary Britain *Angela J. McShane*
- "What's a Hero?": Music, Memory, and Martyrdom in Postcolonial Zimbabwe *Jennifer W. Kyker*
- The Rise and Fall of Hardbass Flash Mobs in the European Far Right *Benjamin R. Teitelbaum*
- Listening to Geographies of Responsibility in Post-3.11 Japan: Affective Alliances and Jinta-la-Mvta's Antinuclear Music *Marié Abe*
- "Our Rebellions Are Also Festivals": Fêtes Politiques and Popular Music in 1970s France *Jedediah Sklower*
- An Intertextual Public Sphere: Protest Songs of Hong Kong's Umbrella Movement in Cyberspace *Sheryl Man-Ying Chow*
- Moving Beyond the Pamphlet: Transformations in Colombian Protest Song in the 1970s–1980s *Joshua Katz-Rosene*
- Climates of Dissent *Benjamin Tausig*
- Getting Protest Songs to the People: Alternative Networks and Independent Media in Twentieth-Century Pre-Internet USA *Anthony Seeger*
- Who Can Stop the Drums? Fiestas as Sites of Popular Organization in Venezuela *Sujatha Fernandes*
- Is Heavy Metal Protest Music? *Jeremy Wallach & Esther Clinton*
- Pirate Protest Music *Patrick Burkart & Martin Fredriksson*
- Classical Music as Protest Music *Esteban Buch*
- Seguimos en la Lucha: The Continuing Narrative of Mexican Immigrant and Chicano Protest Music *Cathy Ragland*
- Dissonant Voices in China's Harmonious Society: From Cassettes to WeChat, Nation to Anashid *Rachel Harris*
- Troubling Vocality: The Human Microphone and Parahuman Attunement *Andrew Niess*
- The Political Legacy of Woodstock: Rock Music Festivals and Protest *Andy Bennett*
- Music, Memory and Protest: Ukraine's EuroMaidan as Digital Revolution *Adriana Helbig*
- Chinese Protest Songs of the Twentieth Century *Frederick Lau*
- Parsing Protest in the Democratic Republic of the Congo: A Mixtape *Chérie Rivers*
- Hood Politics: Hip-Hop and Its Political Voice *Lakeyta M. Bonnette-Bailey & Lestina M. Dongo*
- Music, Media, and Anarchism in the "Oaxaca Commune" *Alexander Stewart*
- What Is This Thing Called Protest Music? *Eric Drott*
- Intertextuality in Protest Music: A Typology *Noriko Manabe*
- Marshallese Articulations of Protest *Jessica A. Schwartz*
- Sociopolitical Song in India: Negotiating Universal Values and Local Causes *Peter Manuel & Chris McGuinness*
- Straight Edge Punk: Life-style Movements at the Intersection of Music Subcultures and Social Movements *Ross Haenfler*

NEW TUNEBOOK CELEBRATES MUSIC OF HUGHIE GALLAGHER



A new tune book featuring 29 original tunes by Hughie Gallagher of Coventry Comhaltas, along with a thirtieth tune, composed by Joe Gibson from Letterkenny and dedicated to Hughie's memory, was launched in the summer by the Branch's Vice Chair, Micheal Fitzgerald, at the recent All-Britain Fleadh.

A stalwart of Comhaltas in Coventry, Hughie was originally from Clonmany, in Co. Donegal and later moved to Letterkenny.

As a young boy of about 9 or 10, he learned to play the one-row melodeon and developed a love of music.

When Hughie came to Coventry, he met Vincent Tighe in the mid 1970s who helped him to become proficient in the button accordion. Joining Comhaltas, Hughie went on to become influential in the Irish music scene in the British Midlands and further afield.

A well known and respected within Comhaltas, Hughie served as chairman of the Coventry Branch for over thirty years. He was an outspoken advocate for engaging young people. Known for nurturing and passing on his music, Hughie was a highly regarded teacher and adjudicator.

He was a teacher of the button accordion, and on many occasions he would walk into the back room of the Hearsall Inn, where the Coventry Branch meets, and hand out slips of paper with tunes written out and gather all the students and teachers together to pass on a new tune.

He adjudicated countless regional and county fleadhanna, over 25 All-Britain fleadhanna, and over twenty All-Ireland fleadhanna. was a highly regarded adjudicator and teacher.

Hughie was also a skilled repairer and restorer of accordions. But above all else, Hughie was a musician. He immersed himself entirely in the music, and absorbed as much of it as he could. He had an understanding of the nuances of regional styles and the styles of different players.

He was a familiar face at sessions all over the Midlands and at sessions on his regular visits back to Donegal.

Not only was he a skilled and confident performer, but he was an accomplished composer and 29 of his compositions have been made available in the tunebook.

Hughie passed away in October 2020. Following his passing Úachtarán of Comhaltas, Vincent Jordan, delivered the eulogy at his funeral.

To get a copy of the Hughie Gallagher Tunebook, please contact Coventry CCÉ at coventry@comhaltas.co.uk

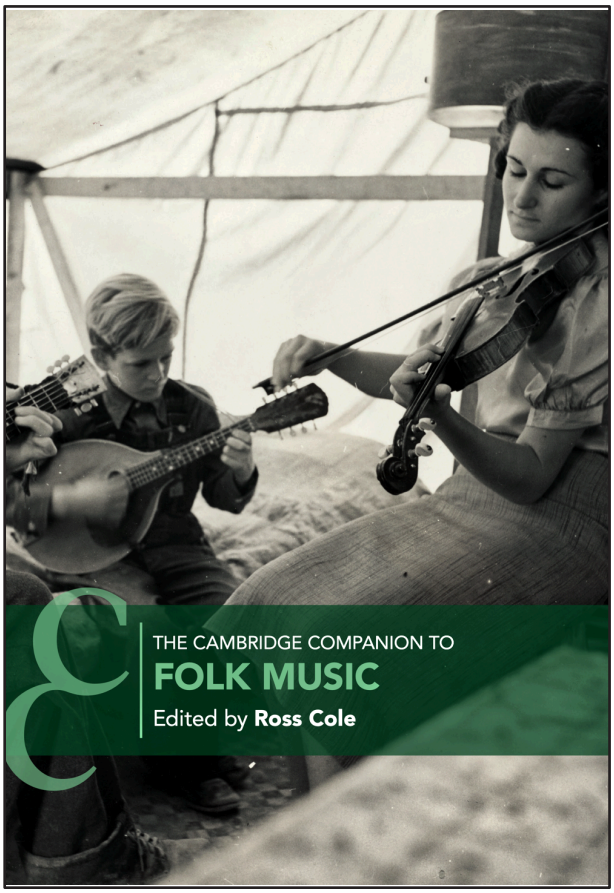
h/t: Erin Watson



Hughie Gallagher with Michael Fitzgerald *(Photo: CCÉ, Coventry Branch)*



Hughie Gallagher with `Hannah Nixon *(Photo: CCÉ, Coventry Branch)*




Angeline Morrison


Jon Boden


Yale Strom.


Peggy Seeger

NEW CAMBRIDGE COMPANION TO FOLK MUSIC SET TO BECOME VALUABLE RESOURCE

***The Cambridge Companion to Folk Music* is a groundbreaking introduction to folk music and song focusing on questions of community, representation, politics, and popular culture.**

Edited by Ross Cole, Associate Professor of Music at the University of Leeds, with contributions from a distinguished international team of authors, the companion is an indispensable resource for rethinking the convergence of sound, heritage and identity in the twenty-first century.

A unique addition to the literature, it highlights the fundamentally hybrid and (post)colonial dynamics that have shaped people's cultures around the globe, from the Appalachian mountains to the Indian subcontinent. It provides students with new critical paradigms essential for understanding how and why certain musical traditions have been characterised as 'folk' – and what continues to inspire folkloric imaginaries today.

The twenty specially commissioned chapters explore folk music from a variety of perspectives including ethnography, revivalism, migration, race, class, gender, protest, and the public sphere. Among these chapters are four perspectives from practising artists: the world-renowned performers Peggy Seeger, Angeline Morrison, Jon Boden, and Yale Strom.

The Cambridge Companion to Folk Music is publihsed by the Cambridge University Press
ISBN: 9781009407601

It costs €32.68 (digital and paperback) or €105.04 (hardback)

Chapter Titles and Contributors

1. The Idea of Folk Music *Ross Cole*
2. Observing and Collecting *Jeff Todd Titon*
3. Folk and the Public Sphere *Timothy Hampton*
4. Towards a Critical Folk Music Studies *Brahma Prakash*
5. Fiddler on the Hoof: Reminiscences of an Ethnographer *Yale Strom*
6. Complementary Modalities in Celtic Music *Joshua Dickson*
7. Thinking About the Words to Folks' Songs *Dianne Dugaw*
8. Folk Instruments *Maeve Carey-Kozlark*
9. Folk Dance in a Global Frame *Theresa Jill Buckland*
10. An Introduction to Introductions *Jon Boden*
11. Folk Music and Nationalism *Katharine Ellis*
12. Colonialist Hierarchies *Erin Johnson-Williams*
13. Reviving the Folk *Britta Sweers*
14. Music, Migration, and Belonging *Helen Phelan with Hala Jaber, John Nutekpor and Ewa Żak-Dyndał*
15. Mythopoeic Singing or, The Mythopoeic Singer *Angeline Morrison*
16. Reclaiming Black Folk Music *Katrina Thompson Moore*
17. Women in the Margins *Elizabeth Bennett*
18. No Neutrals Here: Folk, Class, Labour *Mark Steven*
19. Protest Song and the Popular Voice *Oskar Cox Jensen*
20. Multiple Identities *Peggy Seeger*





Above: **Producer:** Tommy Hayes

THE PICK OF THE CROP

Musician and film-maker, Tommy Hayes, assembled an impressive line-up of traditional musicians to contribute to his documentary, *The Garden where the Praties Grow,* which considers the history of potatoes and their cultural significance in Ireland.

Premiering in July 2025, the film featured musical contributions from Karan Casey, Mick O'Brien, Fergal Scahill, Carl Corcoran, Michelle Mulcahy, Róisín Chambers, Pat Quinn and Colm O'Donnell as well as Tommy Hayes, himself, and sean-nós dancer, Siobhán Butler.

Above: **'Tattie Hokers':** *(from left)* Siobhán Butler, Karan Casey, Carl Corcoran, Mick O'Brien, Tommy Hayes, Fergal Scahill, Michelle Mulcahy, Anthony Hughes, Colm O'Donnell and Pat Quinn

Film sequences featuring information on the history of potato cultivation and growing techniques (including interviews with growers, potato breeders, environmentalists, scientists, historians and a chef) were interspered with musical performances.

Airs and songs were sourced from the Irish Traditional Music Archive where Tommy spent time researching and then selecting the seventeen pieces which would best fit the film's narrative based on the agricultural year from planting through to harvest.

The Great Hunger is an important episode in the story. Two songs were chosen for this section of the film: *The Praties They Grow Small Over Here* – which was written during the Famine, and Declan O'Rourke's *Poor Boy's Shoes.*

The musical sections of the film were shot by director, Anthony Hughes, at the Irish Seedsavers building in Scariff, Co. Clare. The dimensions of the building meant that ensemble performances had to be shot with minimal, if any, close-ups, within a relatively limited timeframe.

However, the stength of the musicians' commitment to the project ensured that they rose to the occasion magnificently.

"My hope for this project," observed Tommy Hayes, "is that it will introduce people –and especially younger people – to the very rich musical tradition associated with the food we eat, while making audiences aware of the history, tradition and diversity of all the produce that appears on our tables."

The Garden Where The Praties Grow premiered at the Blas Summer School in the Irish World Academy of Music and Dance at the Univerity of Limerick.

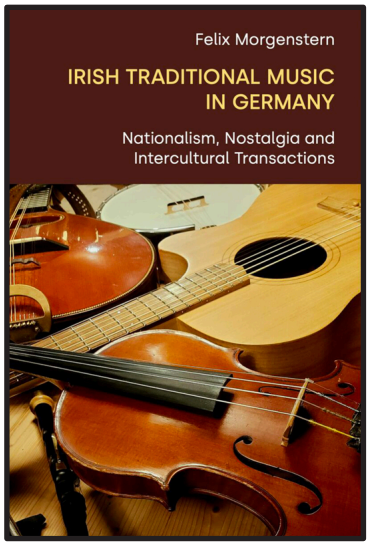
The theme of music and food has a particular appeal for Tommy Hayes: his first film, made in 2009, was *Apples in Winter.*

COMING SOON

A new book from uilleann piper and bodhrán player, Felix Morgenstern, is due for publication in July. *Irish Traditional Music in Germany: Nationalism, Nostalgia and Inter-cultural Transactions,* is set to be published by Sheffield-based Equinox Publishing as part of its Transcultural Music Studies series.

Felix was supported by Research Ireland in bringing this project to fruition in the form of a Government of Ireland Postdoctoral Fellowship at the University of Limerick .

Originally from Berlin in Germany, Felix is based in Graz in Austria when he is not in Ireland researching and/or playing traditional music.



JOANNE BREAKS NEW GROUND IN BOOK ON

WOMEN IN IRISH TRADITIONAL MUSIC

Joanne Cusack's Women in Irish Traditional Music is the first book of its kind to engage with the larger subject of women in commercial Irish traditional music.

The book traces the status, experiences, and reception of women in Irish traditional music.

Joanne Cusack considers the experiences of performers in the various commercial arenas of Irish traditional music and Irish dance, while also engaging in critical discussions of choice, agency, feminism and sexualisation.

Her book reveals how the commercial music industry continues to place women within a stereotypical idealised role or occupation.

The book provides more insight into the legacy of women-led bands and compilations as well as their impact on Irish traditional music over five decades.

Its findings on commercial dance shows are equally significant. While these shows had a positive impact on performers, at the same time they enforced gendered, racial and heteronormative expectations.

Drawing on extensive ethnographic and statistical research, the book finds strong evidence that women and other marginalised practitioners continue to face greater challenges and different expectations when maintaining a professional career and participating in Irish traditional music.

It also uncovers characteristics and dynamics related to the recreational and commercial spaces of the Irish traditional music and Irish dance scene that enable harmful and predatory behaviour.

Cusack's findings aim to support understandings and aid future legislation for creating a safe, inclusive, fair, and equitable performance space for all.

Published by Boydell & Brewer, the book has received positive endorsements from Mary Robinson (former President of Ireland and United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights), Prof Sean Williams (Professor of Ethnomusicology and Irish Traditional Music at Evergreen State College, USA) and Dr. Jack Talty (traditional musician and Lecturer in Irish traditional music at University College Cork).

With striking cover artwork by Claire Prouvost, the book was officially launched at the Irish Traditional Music Archive in September 2005. It can be bought directly from Easons, Amazon, Dubray, University Books, and Boydell & Brewer at this link. 35% discount code: BB135 (when you buy directly from Boydell & Brewer).





JOANNE CUSACK

Dr. Joanne Cusack is a postdoctoral researcher, button accordion player and FairPlé activist. A graduate of Dundalk Institute of Technology, she is currently based at Maynooth University where she is working on the Research Ireland funded project, *(In)visible work: understanding and measuring research translation into policy,* with Prof Peter McNamara, Dr Olga Ryazanova, and Dr Bastian Rake.

In 2018, Joanne co-founded the volunteer feminist grassroots organisation, FairPlé, with the aim of achieving gender balance in the production, performance, promotion and development of Irish traditional and folk music.

As a FairPlé activist, Joanne has made presentations at several events including most notably at the Oireachtas Joint Committee to discuss a safe and respectful working environment for the arts in October 2021.

She has also worked on a number of policies and documents relating to equity and safety including an anti-harassment policy, bystander guidelines, and a resource and support document for sexual harassment – some of which were created in collaboration with Dublin Rape Crisis Centre and sister organisation, Safe Arts of Ireland.

In May 2023, Joanne acted as a consultant on the development, distribution, and advertisement of Safe To Create's new *Report + Support* initiative (in connection with the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media).

Joanne is also currently working on European co-operation for safety and inclusivity in the arts and cultural sectors.



SKERRIES
TRAD WEEKEND
5th - 7th June

A weekend of Irish traditional music by the sea

Friday 5th June

Carlos Sweeney McCartin

The Little Theatre

Saturday 6th June

Téada

The Lark Theatre

Sunday 7th June

Kilfenora Céilí Band

Skerries Community Centre

Recitals

Gerry O'Connor
Sorcha Costello
Mícheál & MacDara Ó Raghallaigh
Harp Recital
Tutor's Recital

Pub Sessions • Concerts • Recitals • Workshops • Rambling House
Céilí • Family Session • Adult Slow Session • Teen Session • Singing Sessions

SOUND CHECK



Songbird: Teresa Horgan

NEW SOLO ALBUM FROM TERESA HORGAN

***Amethyst* is the debut solo album from singer and multi-instrumentalist Teresa Horgan *(above)* from Buttevant in Co. Cork via Dingle in Co. Kerry,**

Supported by an impressive line-up of collaborators, including Pauline Scanlon, Barry Kerr, Gerry O'Beirne, Niamh Varian-Barry, Martin Brunsden and Donogh Hennessy, Teresa says that the album reflects her many musical influences, "from our local choir to McCarthy's Pub in Buttevant, and now the vibrant music scene in Dingle. It's been a joy to create."



"This album is dedicated to my beautiful Mam, Margaret, who passed away in 2022. A constant source of love and encouragement, her passion for music inspired me, my Dad, and my sisters, Catherine and Breda; all of whom feature on this album alongside dear friends.

"The title, *Amethyst,* was inspired by Mam's eyes – green amethyst seemed to capture her perfectly, as she was truly a gem. I'll be forever grateful for her support in helping me pursue my love for music."

With a particular affinity for Slíabh Luachra music, Teresa Horgan was immersed in music from a young age, playing whistle, flute and singing with her family and travelling to festivals, and other genres.

In recent years, Teresa has toured extensively with pan-Celtic group, The Outside Track, with whom she has recorded three studio albums. She previously toured and recorded with award-winning traditional group, FullSet – recording two critically acclaimed albums with them.

She also released a duo album with guitarist Matt Griffin in 2015, called *Brightest Sky Blue.*

She has shared the stage with some of the best in Irish, Scottish and Canadian traditional and folk music during her travels in Ireland, Britain, Europe, Australia, South Korea, North America, and other places.

She has also played at major music festivals including Celtic Connections in Glasgow, Celtic Colors in Cape Breton, Nova Scotia, and several other international music festivals.

Track Listing

1. Far Across the Ocean
2. Strong Women Rule Us All with Their Tears
3. Peggy Gordon
4. Tear My Stillhouse Down
5. Éamonn an Chnoic
6. Ghosts
7. Wee Weaver
8. Will Jobling
9. I Wonder What is Keeping My True Love This Night
10. Deeper Well
11. Sovay
12. Sweet Willam's Ghost
13. No Ash Will Burn
14. The Willow Tree



Stepping out front: Ruairí McGorman

MAKING AN IMPRESSION

Released in December 2025, *Rian/Trace* is the debut solo EP from bouzouki player, Ruairí McGorman, recorded over several weeks at his home in County Meath.

The recording is a personal reflection of the wide range of influences that have shaped McGorman's musical approach.

Best known as one of the leading accompanists in Irish traditional music, Ruairí McGorman has appeared on sixteen albums to date – including the acclaimed 2023 release *Keane Connolly McGorman,* which garnered two RTÉ Radio 1 Folk Awards nominations in 2025 in the for Best Folk Group and Best Folk Album.



He is greatly influenced by the traditional music scene of the 1970s, most significantly De Danann and the music of Alec Finn.

While rooted in the bouzouki, *Rian/Trace* also features Ruairí on guitar, harmonium and bodhrán.

The result is an intimate, finely balanced recording that highlights both his deep grounding in the tradition and his unique musical sensibility.'

Track Listing:

1. Maurice O'Connor
2. Napoleon Crossing the Rhine
3. An Ciarraioch Mallaithe
4. Kit's Dream/Bright Skies
5. Sí Beag Sí Mor
6. An Coisir



GENUINE NEGRO JIG TO BE REISSUED

To mark the fifteenth anniversary of the release of the Carolina Chocolate Drops' Grammy award-winning album, *Genuine Negro Jig,* Nonesuch Records agreed to re-issue it in January 2026.

The band was formed in 2005 by Rhiannon Giddens, Justin Robinson and Dom Flemons with the joint mission of preserving the music of their mentor, Joe Thompson, and honouring the Black string band traditions that helped create American roots music, according to Dom Flemons.

"When *Genuine Negro Jig* became our first major label release on Nonesuch, I anticipated that it would be a huge success and not only did it top the Billboard Bluegrass charts but we won a Grammy for Best Traditional Folk Album.

"From 2005 until 2009 we had independently built a large following and the momentum for our group was continuously growing at all our shows, the early days of social media and in the world of academia.

"So, when *Genuine Negro Jig* was released in 2010 it featured all of the fan favourites and all of the songs that made our group famous," he added.

This re-issue of *Genuine Negro Jig* includes the original Joe Henry-produced album and nine bonus tracks: seven previously unreleased tracks plus a 2025 remaster of *City of Refuge* and a 2025 mix of *Memphis Shakedown.* It dropped on January 23 and can be ordered on https://www.nonesuch.com/new-releases.

Track Listing:

1. Peace Behind the Brigge
2. Trouble in Your Mind
3. Your Baby Ain't Sweet Like Mine
4. Hit 'Em Up Style
5. Cornbread and Butterbeans
6. Snowden's Jig
7. Why Don't You Do Right?
8. Cindy Gal
9. Kissin' and Cussin'
10. Sandy Boys
11. Reynadine
12. Trampled Rose
13. Avalon
14. Georgie Buck
15. City of Refuge
16. Will Adams Breakdown
17. Jack O'Diamonds
18. Bring It Home
19. Here Rattler
20. Little Rabbit
21. Memphis Shakedown



Out of the Darkness: Enda Scahill *(left)* and Joel Andersson

GROUND BREAKING COLLABORATION

***The Dark Well* was the first full album ever recorded featuring Irish music on banjo and harmonica – but this was far from a traditional duet album from two masters musicians, Enda Scahill and Joel Andersson.**

Released in May 2025, the album expands the boundaries of Irish traditional music by drawing in world-class guest musicians from across the globe, creating a sound that is rich, dynamic, and deeply immersive.

Recorded in Galway by Ray Diamond, this unique collaboration between Scahill and Andersson, re-imagines the tradition with breathtaking virtuosity and innovation.

Enda Scahill is one of the most influential figures in the world of Irish banjo, known for his flawless technique, deep musicality, and trailblazing approach to the instrument.

Founder of We Banjo 3, Enda has pushed the boundaries of banjo music, blending tradition with modern artistry. A winner of the prestigious Steve Martin Banjo Prize, he is widely regarded as one of the greatest Irish banjo players of all time.

Joel Anderson is an extraordinary harmonica player, bringing an unparalleled depth of tone, expression, and technical brilliance to the instrument in a way rarely seen before.

As the founder of J.A. Harmonicas, Andersson is an internationally renowned builder of custom harmonica: his instruments are played by some of the biggest names in blues, jazz, and beyond.

As well as the two principals, *The Dark Well* also features a highly impressive line-up of guest performers, including percussionist, Francesco Turrisi; guitarist Simon Crehan; pianist Utsav Lal; fiddler Ross Holmes; double bassist Jason Sypher; banjo player Russ Carson; and fiddler Mary Frances Leahy.

Track Listing

1. O'Neill's March
2. The Gravel Walks
3. Sail Away Ladies
4. The Porthole of the Kelp
5. Old Man Dillon
6. Slides
7. The Green Mountain
8. The Showman's Fancy
9. The Hag With the Money
10. The Wind That Shakes the Barley



ONLINE LESSONS

Tin Whistle - All levels
- **Uilleann Pipes - Beg./Int.**
- **Repertoire Building**
- **One-off "brush up" lessons or weekly lessons available**

www.colleenshanks.com
colleen.shanks.music@gmail.com



On the one road: *(from left)* Aoife Ní Bhríain and Cormac MacCarthy

THE LONG AND WINDING ROAD

A new album by Aoife Ní Bhrían and Cormac McCarthy, was released in November 2025. *Cosán Casta* was a deeply considered and intimate work that re-imagines Irish traditional music through original compositions, reinterpretations of archival tunes, and a fusion of classical and jazz idioms.

The record pays homage to the music Aoife and Cormac grew up with, the musical language they heard and spoke in their family homes.

Originally from Bayside in North County Dublin, Aoife moves effortlessly between classical and traditional fiddle playing and is widely acknowledged as a virtuoso in both.



Her earliest musical influences were her father, Mick O'Brien – the renowned uilleann piper who received the TG4 Gradam Ceoil as Musician of the Year in 2024 – and her mother, Fidelma, a banjo player and music teacher.

Pianist, composer, arranger and conductor, Cormac McCarthy from Cork has also been noted for his capacity to perform effectively across a variety of musical genres.

With a Masters in composition from the Cork School of Music and a Masters in Jazz from DePaul University in Chicago, Cormac has also collaborated with a number of traditional artists including Martin Hayes in the Common Ground Ensemble.

For both Aoife and Cormac, music is deeply tied to confidence, a sense of place, and a feeling of authority.

To play their own music, to have trust not only in the notes but the nuances, the quirks of stylistic ornamentation, and the interpretation of the manuscripts collected before their time, brought them on a path of discovery, helping them find their voice and bring to life their own interpretation of tradition to life.

Having both left Ireland to pursue their music studies, to discover, develop and explore their practice within the worlds of jazz and classical genres, "it became apparent very quickly that the musical accent of our own traditional music was one that cannot be disguised or gotten rid of easily," says the pair.

"This accent defines how we approach music of all genres but also how we express the truest version of ourselves."

A mix of the old and new, the album tells "the stories of who we are and where we come from but also the story of the journey our music has taken us on throughout our careers.

"The paths we have taken have been by no means straightforward and the twists and turns on our musical journeys have always directed us back home – to where the music started.

'Is fada an bóthar nach bhfuil casadh ann.'

Track Listing

1. Cailleach
2. Coffee Club
3. Cosán
4. A Mháire
5. Butterfly
6. Cosán Casta
7. Gallagher's Frolics
8. Crowley's
9. Ducko
10. Planxty SK
11. Casta
12. Salamanca



Dynamic Duo: Cormac Begley *(right)* and Liam O'Connor

GETTING TO THE HEART

The long anticipated duo album from concertina player, Cormac Begley, and fiddler, Liam O'Connor, *Into the Loam,* was released in August 2025 to co-incide with Scoil Samhraidh Willie Clancy.

The sense of anticipation had been stimulated by the occasions when two virtuosi had performed together – demonstrating a complementarity that made their partnership greater than the sum of its parts.



From the renowned West Kerry traditional music family, Begley has redefined the playing of his instrument in Ireland with his mastery of the entire concertina family from the delicate piccolo to the robust bass – with the latter, in particular, demonstrating Cormac's muscular playing to avail of the instrument's percussive as well as melodic potential.

After his critically acclaimed solo albums, *Cormac Begley* (2017) and *B* (2022), and with two prestigious honours (a Seán Ó Riada Award in 2014 and a nomination for Instrumentalist of the Year at the 2018 RTÉ Radio 1 Folk Awards), Begley has estasblished himself as the pre-eminent concertina player of his generation.

O'Connor, from an equally renowned family of Dublin musicians, has long been known for his intricate style and expressive tonal palette.

The winner of multiple All-Ireland and Oireachtas titles as well as the TG4 Gradam Ceoil as Young Musician of the Year in 2002, Liam's previous recorded work has included *Dublin Made Me* (with uilleann piper Seán McKeon, 2009) and *The Loom* (2017). Since 2019, he has also been the Director of the Irish Traditional Music Archive.

In a remarkable compilation of music, perhaps the album's most stunning track was *Bogadh faoi Shúsa*. It was epic – in its conception, its scope and in its execution. The track began with a variation on the Ulster ballad, *The Flower of Magherally-O,* before transitioning into the title tune (sourced from P. W. Joyce's 1909 work *Old Irish Folk Music and Songs)*. The musicality, the technique and the energy which was sustained throughout the track's nine-plus minutes was incredible.

In the comprehensive sleeve notes that accompany the album, Begley and O'Connor acknowledged their musical influences – grounding their exploratory endeavours within the tradition while at the same time pushing its boundaries. In doing so, they infused energy and life into the river of the sound.

Track Listing:

1. Ryan's Rant
2. The Boyne Water & Máirseáil MacMahon
3. Master Crowley's & The Roscommon Reel
4. Bogadh faoi Shúsa
5. The Reel with the Beryle & The Green Groves of Erin
6. Doherty, Cronin & Canny
7. An Roilleach/Sara's Reel
8. Eochaill
9. Tom Ganley's No.1
10. Ríl Mháirtin Shéamuis
11. Carmel Mahoney Mulhaire's Reel



Guest: Seonaid Aitken



Guest: Julie Fowlis

GOLDEN STEPPING STONES

Scottish traditional band, Staran, released their second album, *Gold from Ruins,* to widespread acclaim in October 2025. 'Staran', meaning path, trail or stepping stones in Gaelic, reflects the themes of 'places' and 'moments' that run through their music. The result of this collaboration is a rich and cohesive sound; atmospheric and textural with acoustic instruments at the heart of it.

Produced by Iain Hutchison and John Lowrie, the new album had been widely anticipated since the release of their eponymous debut album in 2021 and in the wake of a number of critically acclaimed performances at prestigious international festivals such as Celtic Colours in Cape Breton and Celtic Connections in Glasgow. The final track on the new album – *Jinibara* – was pre-released in May.

The band is composed of established musicians in their own right – a meeting of musical minds that traverses a diverse range of styles and backgrounds.

While the overall sound is rooted in Scottish traditional music, there are undoubtedly flashes of inspiration from genres like jazz, minimalism and experimental electronica.

The band features Kim Carnie (vocals), John Lowrie (piano), Jack Smedley (fiddle), Innes White (guitars) and James Lindsay (bass).



Track Listing

1. The turning
2. Meta's
3. Duan Callaig
4. Time to Fly
5. Roro
6. Skírr
7. Cholla mo Rùin
8. Cherish the Day/ Redhythe Point
9. Gura thall ann an Sòaigh
10. Jinibara



Staran

Although seven of the tracks are original compositions, they are based on elements from ancient songs, stories and folklore. The others are traditional Gaelic songs in exciting arrangements.

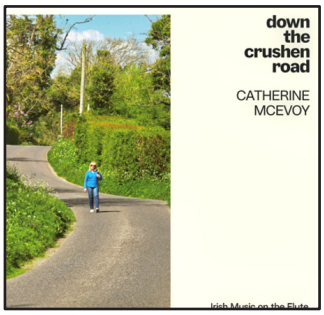
A bonus is the presence of even more luminaries of the Scottish music scene including Julie Fowlis (vocals), Matt Carmichael (tenor sax), Ailis Sutherland (smallpipes), Kristan Harvey (violin), Patsy Reid (viola), Alice Allen (cello) and Seonaid Aitken (violin), who was also responsible for the string arrangements.



Guest: Ailis Sutherland



A Kind of Homecoming: Catherine McEvoy



Track Listing

1. Blessing Black Cow/ Dick Cosgroves
2. Farewell to Gurteen/ Queen of the Rushes
3. Tim Collins'/Peggy McGrath's
4. Molly St. George
5. Peter Wyper's/Grace's Hornpipe
6. The Flowing Bowl/Market Day
7. Paddy Kelly's/Macdara's Rambles
8. Richie Dwyer's/Paddy Kelly's
9. The Buck from the Mountain/ McPartlin's Style
10. Caught in the Surf/Climbing Erin
11. Iarla's Waltz/Farewell to Erin/ Black-Eyed Sailor
12. Galloping O'Hogan/ The Lad from Cisco
13. Mulhaire's/McFadden's
14. Jackie Coleman's/ Mickey Kiernan's

CATHERINE'S HOMECOMING

Down the Crushen Road **marked Catherine McEvoy's long-awaited return to the studio, her first album since *The Home Ruler*.**

Launched in July, 2025, at Scoil Samhraidh Willie Clancy, the new album captures the same grace, depth, and clarity that have made Catherine a cornerstone of Irish traditional flute playing.

Born in Birmingham of Roscommon parents, Catherine has acknowledged the late Josie McDermott as one of the primary influences on her flute playing.

Moving to Ireland in 1977, Catherine soon came to prominence as one of the ground-breaking female flute players of her generation.

While today no-one questions the capability of women to play the flute. it is worth remembering that in Catherine's lifetime there were those who claimed that women "lacked the lung power" to play the flute well.

Such was her pivotal contribution to Irish traditional music that Catherine was duly recognised in 2019 when she was awarded the TG4 Gradam Ceoil for Musician of the Year.

For this album she was joined by her nephew, Paddy McEvoy, on piano and her son, Ruairí McGorman, on Greek bouzouki, as the recording blended the familiar warmth of the Sligo-Roscommon style with fresh textures and a gentle, contemporary edge.



Influence: Josie McDermott

A highlight of the album is the inclusion of several of Catherine's own compositions, seamlessly woven into a repertoire of traditional dance tunes and reflective airs.

Named after the McEvoy/ McGorman's childhood boreen in Meath, *Down the Crushen Road* not only represents a return to her musical heartland but also an act of solidarity –100% of proceeds of the album are earmarked for Medical Aid for Palestine/ Ireland Aid for Palestine.

A moving, thoughtful album that reaffirms Catherine McEvoy's artistry and compassion in equal measure.



Track Listing

1. The Salamanca/Trim the Velvet
2. The Gold Ring/
   The Hearty Boys of Ballymote/
   Paddy's Green Island
3. Mrs. Galvin's/Corney Drew
4. The Lark in the Clear Air
5. Carolan's Welcome/
   The Rocky Road to Dublin
6. Darby Gallagher's/
   The Walls of Liscarroll
7. The Green Jacket/
   The Whistling Postman
8. James Connolly
9. Paddy Clancy's/Cherish the Ladies
10. The Fair-Haired Boy/
    The Pigeon at the Gate
11. Ráiteachas na Tairngreacht/
    Ríl Inisbearachain
12. Larry O'Gaff/Nead na Lachan
13. Cad é Sin don té Sin/
    The Green Fields of America



Consummate performrmer: Seán McKeon

SEÁN'S STUNNING SALAMANCA

Seán McKeon's long awaited second solo album, Salamanca, was a remarkable piece of work. Released in August, 2025, the album demonstrates the wonderful panoply of melodic and harmonic elements available to an uilleann piper of consummate skill gripped by a unique creative energy.

Complemented by extensive sleeve notes, the album's thirteen tracks range from classic reels like *The Salamanca, Trim the Velvet, The Fair-haired Boy, The Green Fields of America* and *The Pigeon on the Gate* (set in Seán's unique arrangement) and Johnny Óg Connolly's *Ríl Inisbearachain* to jigs like *Paddy Clancy's. Cherish The Ladies* and *The Gold Ring* (most commonly played as a fiddle tune), from hornpipes like *Mrs. Galvin's* and *Corney Drew* to song airs like Patrick Galvin's *James Connolly* and the early nineteenth century Gaelic aisling, *Ráiteachas na Tairngreacht* as well as the harp tune, *Cad é Sin don té Sin*.

While some might be overburdened by the weight of a musical pedigree that includes Na Píobairí Uilleann chief executive, Gay McKeon, as his father and pianist and fiddler, Mary Corcoran as his mother, Séan McKeon has fully embraced his heritage to develop an outstanding level of mastery of his instrument.

Beginning on the tin whistle at the age of 6, within two years he had progressed to the uilleann pipes with lessons from Seán Óg Potts.

By the age of 15 Seán had amassed a total of five Fleadh Ceoil na hEireann titles and before the age of 18 he had won the senior Oireachtas solo competition.

Seán has performed with Noel Hill, Seán Keane and Steve Cooney as well as forging an exciting duet with fiddle player Liam O'Connor. Seán was awarded the TG4 Gradam Ceoil Young Musician of the Year in 2005.

With this album *Salamanca,* Seán McKeon has not only confirmed the promise of his youth but also enhanced his status among the front rank of uilleann pipers in Ireland.



Ensemble: Seán is also a member of The Black Bank Folk

ICONIC ALBUM FROM 1970s RE-RELEASED ON DIGITAL

The band, The Irish Tradition, revitalized the traditional music scene in Washington, DC, in the 1970s. The trio of Brendan Mulvihill (fiddle), Andy O'Brien (vocals, guitar) and Billy McComiskey (accordion and concertina) was originally formed as hired entertainment for the opening of The Dubliner pub in the Commodore Hotel in 1975.



The Irish Tradition: *(from left)* Billy McComiskey, Brendan Mulvihill and Andy O'Brien.

The group's initial residency proved so popular that they remained weekly performers for years afterwards, establishing the pub as a hub for traditional music throughout the country.



Catchin' the Tune, the group's first album, was recorded in 1976, with the band perform-ing a repertoire of reels, jigs, airs and ballads with a depth of emotion and technical precision that has remained peerless.

The album has continued to be so influential since its release that Smithsonian Folkways decided to re-issue the album as a digital download.



The Irish Tradition: *(from left)* Brendan Mulvihill, Andy O'Brien and Billy McComiskey

Track Listing

1. Tobin's/Rabbit in the Field
2. Lord McDonald/Jenny's Wedding
3. Spencer the Rover
4. Tinker Doherty/Fox Hunter/Patsy Hanley
5. Pat Burke's/Go to Sea Once More Planxty Johnston
6. Month of January
7. The Irish Tradition
8. Green Groves of Erin/Finbar Dwyer
9. Dear Irish Boy/I Loved a Lass
10. The Irish Tradition/Dawn Rising/ Big Wheel



Track Listing:

VOLUME 1

1. This Land Is Your Land *(Woody's Home Tape)*
2. Biggest Thing That Man Has Ever Done
3. Howie, I'd Like To Talk To Yuh *(spoken word)*
4. Deportee *(Woody's Home Tape)*
5. Great Ship
6. Pastures of Plenty
7. Jesus Christ
8. I'm a Child Ta Fight
9. Innocent Man
10. I've Got To Know
11. Backdoor Bum and the Big Landlord

VOLUME 2

1. I Just Want To Tell You Fellers *(spoken word)*
2. Peace Call
3. Ain't Afraid To Die
4. Buoy Bells from Trenton
5. Einstein Theme Song *(with spoken word)*
6. One Little Thing An Atom Can't Do
7. Forsaken Lover
8. My Id and My Ego
9. Lifebelt Washed Up
10. Funny Mountain
11. You Better Git Ready

NEW ALBUM FROM WOODY GUTHRIE

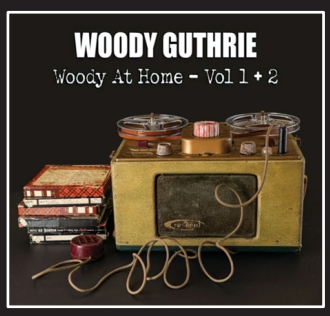
***Woody at Home* is a two-volume secret treasure trove of Woody Guthrie's home recordings – that Woody could not release in his lifetime – a life cut short by Huntington's disease.**

These raw and intimate home. tapes were originally written, performed, recorded and engineered by Woody on a one microphone reel-to-reel analogue tape recorder at 3 3/4 IPs in 1951-1952 at the family's apartment in Beach Haven, Brooklyn. They were never intended for commercial release, – but were made as Woody's musical introduction to his new publisher.

Thanks to recent technological advances Woody's recordings have now been fully restored so that we can hear Woody's lyrical take on historical events, on love, on stories of the disenfranchised and ignored, and, of course, on the fight against fascism.

Issued in August 2025 on Shamus Records, this new collection contains 22 previously unreleased recordings – including 13 new songs by Guthrie.

The album includes never before heard record-ings of *This Land is Your Land, I've Got to Know, Pastures of Plenty* and the only recording by Guthrie of *Deportee (Plane Wreck at Los Gatos)* with new music.





Bean na bPíob: Louise Mulcahy



Bean na bPíob: Colleen Shanks



Bean na bPíob: Emer Mayock

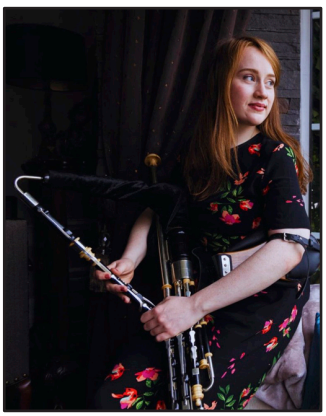


WOMEN PIPE UP

In September 2025, Na Píobairí Uilleann (NPU) launched a new album, *Mná na bPíob Uilleann: Volume 2* – the highly anticipated follow-up to the acclaimed first volume in the series released in 2023.

The release of two albums featuring performances by a total of thirteen exceptional female pipers is part of NPU's long-term aim of encouraging more women to play the pipes.

Despite historical evidence to the contrary, the uilleann pipes had developed a reputation as a "male" instrument in the once highly gendered world of traditional music.



Bean na bPíob: Muireann Ní Shé

However, thanks to the efforts of pioneering pipers like Máire Ní Ghráda, a new wave of women pipers have emerged led by double All-Ireland champion, Louise Mulcahy.

To ensure that the wave becomes a permanent feature of the future of uilleann piping, NPU is acting on the principle if "if you can't see it, you can't be it," by making sure that women pipes are seen and heard.

The new album features six women pipers – Louise Mulcahy *(from West Limerick),* Colleen Shanks *(from Michigan via Clare),* Sheila Friel *(from Donegal via Glasgow),* Jane Walls *(from Moneyglass in Co. Antrim),* Lottie Cullen *(from Co. Wicklow)* and Deb Quigley *(from Newtownards in Co. Down),* each playing three tracks on the eighteen-track album.

Track Listing:

Lottie Cullen
1. Jackson's Walk to Limerick/ The Frieze Britches *(Jigs)*
2. The Steamboat Hornpipe/ The Showman's Fancy *(Hornpipes)*
3. The Wise Maid *(Reel)*

Colleen Shanks
1. Hedigan's Fancy/ The Whinny Hills of Leitrim *(Slip Jigs)*
2. The Flax in Bloom/ Sean Reid's *(Reels)*
3. The Fairies' Hornpipe/ The Pub on the Square *(Hornpipes)*

Louise Mulcahy
1. The Munster Jig/Old Hag You Have Killed Me/An Buachailín Buí *(Jigs)*
2. Bean Dubh A'Ghleanna *(Air)*
3. Barr na Cúille/Winter Apple/ Ban-Chuisleannach *(Reels)*

Deb Quigley
1. The Fleadh at Tulla/ Mind Your Foot on the Teapot *(Jigs)*
2. An Druimin Donn Dileas/ The Mountain Hornpipe *(Air & Hornpipe)*
3. The Broken Pledge/ The Achonry Lasses *(Reels)*

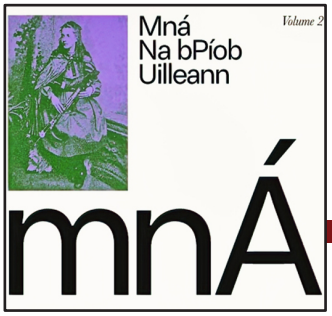
Jane Walls
1. Cailín na Gruaige Doinne *(Air)*
2. Carolan's Concerto *(Harp Tune)*
3. The Humours of Ballyloughlin/ An Buachailín Buí *(Jigs)*

Sheila Friel
1. Iníon A' Bhaoghailigh *(Air)*
2. Scatter the Mud/Kissing & Drinking/ Morrison's *(Jigs)*
3. McSweeney's Lament *(Air)*

The seven pipers featured on the first album include Emer Mayock, Claire Fennell, Marion McCarthy, Maeve O'Donnell, Pamela Schweblin, Rita Farrell and Muireann Ni Shé, again playing three tracks each.

The success of the recording project has been such that *Mná na bPíob Uilleann Volume 3* is already being planned.

Volumes 1 and 2 are both available from the NPU shop at shop.pipers.ie





▲ **Any Way the Wind Blows:** Le Vent du Nord

PERFECTLY POLISHED

Released in October 2025, *Voisinages,* was the new album by the acclaimed Québecois traditional band, Le Vent Du Nord, celebrating community in its various guises.

Le Vent du Nord has established an international reputation for the quality of their musicianship, for their exciting repertoire and for their invigorating live performances.

The band's principal composer and player of the piano and the *vielle à roue,* Nicolas Boulerice, said that the album's title (which means neighbourhoods) "emerged as a rich way to talk about all the neighbour-hoods on this album: musical or political neighbourhoods, neighbourhoods of minds or ideas, as well as the everyday neighbourhoods of our neighbours in life."

The tracks on the album encompass the old and the new from *Par-Dessus Le Pont* – inspired by an eighteenth century row between two neighbours – to *Bienvenue* – a suite of three new compositions by fiddler Olivier Demers, who also contributes another suite: *Du Nord Au Sud.*

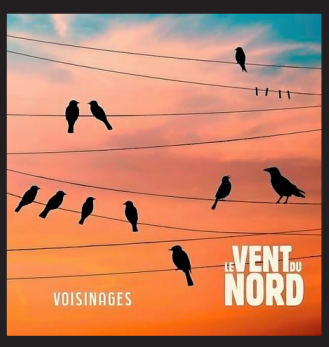
Among Nicolas Boulerice's compositions on the album is a timely song espousing the need to fight for the dignity of the weak and to care for our neighbours – a message that wouldn't go amiss for Canada's southern neighbours.

The final track of the album is a new composition by fiddler André Brunet, *Fleur Radieuse,* written for his wife Evelyne.

Their latest album is full of stories of neighbours, songs and tunes old and new, and songs borrowed from neighbouring musicians, all celebrating the power of community in making music through generations.



Composed: Nicolas Boulerice



Track Listing

1. Par-dessus le Pont
2. Bienvenue
3. Le Pari de Jeanne
4. Le Canotier
5. L'Acadie
6. Fleuve
7. La Lettre
8. Du Nord au Sud
9. Une Nuit dans les Auberges
10. Carillon
11. Salut Réjean
12. Fleur radieuse

SIDE TRACKS



Duo: Aoife and Liam

MULLACH A' TSÍ

A duet album by concertina player, Aoife Nic Dhomhnaill and fiddle player, Liam Lonergan, *Mullach a' tSí* was released in October 2025,

The album is largely unaccompanied, with the occasional track featuring sean-nós dancing from Caoimhe Ní Mhaolagáin.

The distant yet ever-present lure of the fairy realm and the boundary between the seen and the unseen was a theme reflected throughout the album.

The selection of tunes and airs was steeped in folklore, from the echoes of long-past tragedies to the haunting laments of Ulster chieftains and ancient battles between the Milesians and Tuatha Dé Danann.

The choice of repertoire highlights the duo's reverence for the old masters, while embracing contemporary compositions and arrangements, and traversing regional styles from Donegal to Sliabh Luachra.



SHINING BRIGHT

HOGAN'S TRIUMPH





Support: Marla Fibish, who played at the Masters of Tradition festival in Bantry in 2018.

Released in April 2025, *Burnished* by Amelia Hogan includes both traditional and more contemporary folk songs.

The latter group includes songs by contemporary writers like Dominic Behan, Karine Polwart, Gordon Bok and Trevor Peacock, along with Amelia's own *Rolling In the Gold,* while the traditional songs are drawn from the national canons of Ireland, Scotland and the United States.

Amelia Hogan, is blessed with a wonderful vocal ability which is very well served by the thoughtful accompaniment provided by a remarkably accomplised group of musicians including Marla Fibish, Christa Burch, John Weed, Jimmy Murphy, Maureen Brennan, Richard Mandel, Steve O'Neill, Skyler Blakeslee and the late Ray Frank.

Burnished explores the connections between people and places – including folkloric elements. According to Amelia, *"the album highlights familiar, often overlooked folklore about real places, sharing the hidden magic found in connecting with the natural world and its spirits of place, or* Genius Loci.

"It also reflects on the emotional impact of remembering an animist perspective (what happens when we act as if everything around us is conscious?), where we share our space with everything around us – both seen and unseen. Through this, I encourage us to approach our relationships mindfully – with people, nature, and the world we co-inhabit."

Highlights among the album's traditional repertoire include a soulful rendering of *(Poor) Wayfaring Stranger,* an American spiritual known to have been first published in 1858; as well as a vibrant version of *Dh'eirich Mi Moch Madainn Chetein* – a traditional Scots Gaelic work song from South Uist sung to accompany the soaking, beating and shrinking of wool as a key process in the manufacture of tweed.

Other material on the album includes a heartfelt rendition of Dominic Behan's *The Patriot Game,* given renewed currency as a warning about the manipulation of patriotic fervour by disingenuous leaders.

Burnished is a worthy successor to her previous album – the highly acclaimed *Taking Flight.*



Track Listing

1. Rolling in the Gold
2. Blue is the the Eye
3. They Call the Wind Maria
4. The Snow Hare
5. Wayfaring Stranger
6. Patriot Game
7. Little Yellow Roses
8. Home By Bearna
9. Bay of Fundy
10. Come Away In
11. The Laverock Sang
12. The Haunted Hunter
13. Dh'eirich Mi Moch Madainn Chetein
14. Who Will Watch the Homeplace

FIDDLE FAIR 2026

BALTIMORE * IRELAND



FESTIVAL UPDATE!

MAY 7–10

IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE

A TRIBUTE TO STEVE COONEY (IRL)

THE COMPLETE RECORDINGS OF HEZEKIAH PROCTER (CAN) * THE ONLIES (USA)

SPAFFORD CAMPBELL (ENG) * AOIFE NÍ BHRIAIN & CORMAC MCCARTHY (IRL)

BRÍD HARPER, CIARÁN Ó MAONAIGH, BECKY NÍ ÉALLAITHE & CATHAL Ó CURRÁIN (IRL)

+ UNNI BOKSASP, ASTRID GARMO, MAGNUS WIIK AND LARS ERIK ØYGARDEN (NOR)

VÄSEN (SWE) * THE MÁIRTÍN O'CONNOR TRIO WITH KATHLEEN MACINNES (IRL & SCO)

GRAINNE BRADY & JOHN MCCARTIN (IRL) * CLAUDIA SCHWAB (AUT) * WOWAKIN (POL)

LENA JONSSON & JOHANNA JUHOLA (SWE & FIN) * MATT MOLLOY, JOHN CARTY & BRIAN MCGRATH (IRL)

+ SESSIONS, WORKSHOPS, FILMS, MUSICAL BOAT TRIPS, WALKING TOURS, EXHIBITIONS AND A WHOLE LOT MORE

WWW.FIDDLEFAIR.COM

arts council funding traditional arts

Baltimore Fiddle Fair

Comhairle Contae Chorcaí Cork County Council

DOOAGH FOLK FESTIVAL

11 - 13 SEPTEMBER 2026
ACHILL ISLAND

Damien Dempsey
Lúnasa
Dervish
Dan McCabe
Karen Casey Trio
Des Cafferkey
SuperCéilí
GrádDee & The Achill Lads
Na Píobairí Uilleann
The Bolden Eagle Pipe Band

& more to be announced

Sessions, Workshops, Recitals & Talks

Visit dooaghfolkfest.ie for tickets & info

Follow us @DOOAGHFOLKFEST

Proudly Sponsored by:
deucalion aviation
Chongie Aviation Services
artemis AEROSPACE
CELAIRION
IALTA

SEEKING HARMONY



IN THE CRY OF THE CURLEW

Barry Kerr's latest album, *Curlew's Cry,* offers both traditional and original compositions inspired by the curlew as a sound source and as the subject of extensive folklore.

While Barry has been widely celebrated as an accomplished uilleann piper and flute player – as well as being an acclaimed multi-instrumentalist, singer and visual artist – he eschews his principal instruments on the *Curlew's Cry* in favour of guitars and bouzouki with light touches of bodhrán and keyboards.

This predominantly string accompaniment creates space for the vocals – Barry's own impressive voice, of course, with support from a trio of wondeful singers – including his partner, Síle Denvir, Pauline Scanlon and Cathy Jordan.

Track Listing:

1. The Curlew's Cry
2. Three Thousand Rivers Deep
3. The Snows They Melt the Soonest
4. Lullaby for a Lost Child
5. She Knows Things
6. Life on the Edge
7. The Holy Ground
8. Mother Earth
9. You Rambling Boys of Pleasure
10. Sportsmen Bold

Alongside well sung classic traditional ballads like T*he Snows They Melt the Soonest* and *You Rambling Boys of Pleasure,* Kerr also includes two particularly stunning original songs: *Of Sportsmen Bold* – which sounds to all the world like a traditional hunting song – and the very moving *Lullaby for a Lost Child* – Barry's response to the ongoing genocide in Palestine incorporating the *seoithín seothó* motif from the old Gaelic lullaby and so reframing the song as an appeal to the universal human values of sympathy and solidarity.

In Irish folklore, the curlew holds a deep symbolic presence, often associated with omens and the Otherworld. The curlew's mournful, whistling cry was often believed to be a call from the spirit world, especially in liminal spaces like bogs and shorelines. These birds were thought to signal the presence of spirits or the Sídh. At home on Lough Neagh, fishermen were wary of venturing out on the water when a curlew was calling from high in the clouds. The curlew's cry has been poetically interpreted as a lament, connecting it to themes of sorrow, exile, and longing in Irish literature and oral tradition.

The auspicious folklore surrounding birds in our tradition fascinates me, and the practice of augury runs deep in our pre-history. In this modern world, and at this crossroads in our relationship with our environment, we can reflect on the traditions of our forefathers to again find meaning and hope, so that we can once again live in harmony with our natural world, our environment and each other.

This album has been a long time in the making – not in the sense of studio time and the recording process, but as an outworking of thoughts and memories, of stories and truths within myself. In it, I hope you find a sense of the love that I have found in its creation. I have gathered together songs I have written and songs that I cherish. There are common threads and messages running through each, and meaningful connections that I have discovered in the singing of them.

Barry Kerr

Another song with an anti-war sensibility is *Three Thousand Rivers Deep,* co-written with Cathy Jordan, and with a somewhat seductive air which belies a very stark message:

For a million years we have been grieving
At the sight of young men leaving
Tears are flowing through our land
Three thousand rivers deep.

Produced by Gerry O'Beirne, whose composition, *The Holy Ground,* also appears on the album. the full line-up of musicians on *Curlew's Cry* also features Barry on guitar and bouzouki; Gerry on acoustic and electric guitars, nylon guitar, resonator guitar, ukelele and keyboards; Donogh Hennesy on acoustic guitar; Síle Denvir on keyboards; and Cathy Jordan on bodhrán.





Sons of Slíabh Luachra: *(from left)* Aidan Connolly and Bryan O'Leary.

FORGED IN SLÍABH LUACHRA

The remarkable traditional music heartland of Slíabh Luachra was the inspiration for *The Groves of Gneeveguilla,* a fine album by Aidan Connolly and Bryan O'Leary, which was released in November, 2025.

The legacy of the great fiddle master, Patrick O'Keeffe, and his many illustrious students was explored by fiddler, Aidan Connolly, and button accordionist, Bryan O'Leary, in fifteen thoughtfully curated tracks.

From Tureencahill, Gneeveguilla, Co. Kerry, Bryan O'Leary is the grandson of button accordionist, Johnny O'Leary – one of the key figures in Slíabh Luachra music – who in 2003 received the TG4 Gradam Ceoil for Lifetime Achievement.

Eleven years later, Bryan received the TG4 Gradam Ceoil asYoung Musician of the Year – continuing his family's legacy to a new generation.

Though born and reared in Dublin, Aidan Connolly was introduced to the music of Slíabh Luachra by his mother Eileen Moynihan, a tin whistle player from Gneeveguilla, and his uncle Con Moynihan, a fiddle player now living in Castleisland.

Aidan's grandfather, Paddy Moynihan played with Johnny O'Leary at dances in Thady Willy's Hall in Gneeveguilla,

The younger duo first began to perform together at the Patrick O'Keeffe Festival in 2022, alongside Brian Mooney. Since then, they have begun to play together more regularly – with their repertoire mainly drawn from their explorations of old sources such as those contained in the Handed Down Sliabh Luachra Archive, founded by P.J. Teahan.



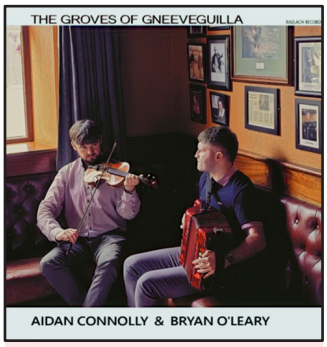
Statue: Johnny O'Leary



Uncle: Con Moynihan



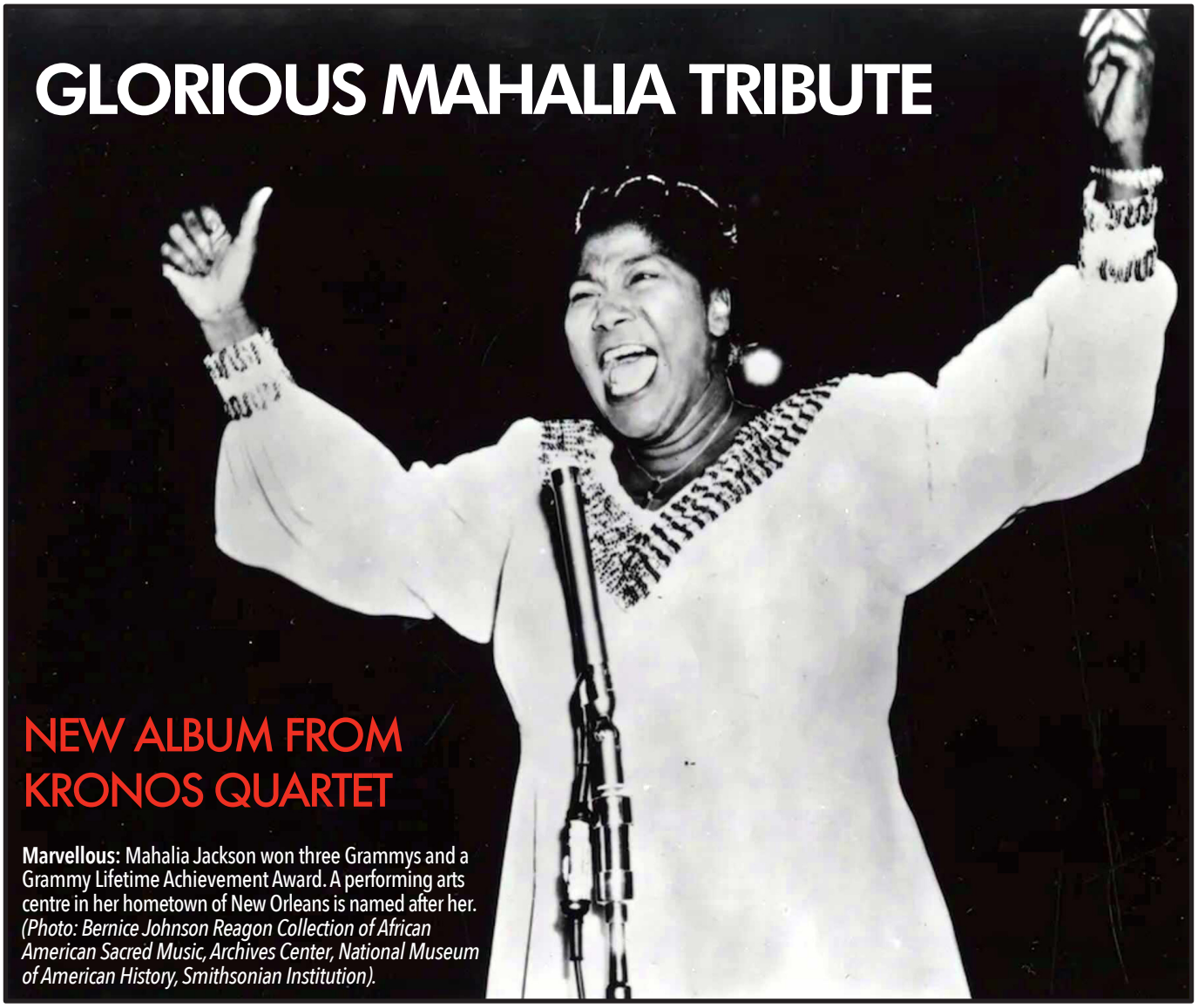
Legend: Johnny O'Leary



Track Listing:

1. The Groves of Gneeveguilla/ Gleanntán Cross
2. The Roadster/Denis Murphy's/ John Murphy's
3. The Brosna/Blackwater Banks/ Johnny O'Leary's Bean an Tí
4. Dan O'Leary's/Con Tadhgo's
5. The Cordal/Dark Girl Dressed in Blue/ The Enchanted Hairo
6. Robert the Minnow/ The Old Slipper Shoe
7. The Gentleman Dónal O'Leary/ A Trip to Mountcollins
8. The Harvest Field/The Tureencahill
9. The Kilcummin Lass/ Connie Fleming's
10. Molly Myers'/ The Humours of Glencollins
11. Sweet Donoughmore
12. Courtown Harbour/ Willie O'Connell's
13. Daithín Davy/Weaver Flynn
14. John Murphy's/The Currow/ Tranquility in Tureencahill
15. Merrily Kiss the Quaker/ The Dingle Regatta

GLORIOUS MAHALIA TRIBUTE



NEW ALBUM FROM KRONOS QUARTET

Marvellous: Mahalia Jackson won three Grammys and a Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award. A performing arts centre in her hometown of New Orleans is named after her. *(Photo: Bernice Johnson Reagon Collection of African American Sacred Music, Archives Center, National Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution).*

Midway through Martin Luther King Junior's historic speech at the 1963 March on Washington, a voice rang out from behind him: "Tell them about the dream, Martin!"

That voice belonged to Mahalia Jackson, Dr. King's close friend and one of the most revered gospel singers of the twentieth century.

Released in April 2026 on Smithsonian Folkways, Kronos Quartet's new album *Glorious Mahalia,* uses that moment as a springboard to explore the depth of Jackson's musical craft, her impact on the civil rights movement, and the friendships she forged throughout her career.

The album features new works by Stacy Garrop and Zachary James Watkins that incorporate archival audio of Jackson singing and speaking with WFMT radio host, Studs Terkel, as well as an interview with King's lawyer and speechwriter, Clarence B. Jones recorded for this release.

Kronos Quartet also performs Jacob Garchik's new arrangement of the Antonio Haskell composition, *God Shall Wipe All Tears Away,* inspired by Jackson's 1937 recording of the gospel masterwork.



Glorious Mahalia is available for preorder now alongside the release of the first single, *Glorious Mahalia: IV. Sometime I feel like a motherless child* which sees Kronos Quartet playing along to Jackson's 1950s performance of the spiritual, accompanied by pianist and collaborator, Mildred.

Born in October 1911 in New Orleans, the "Queen of Gospel Song" had a strict religious upbringing. Her musical activities were initially limited to singing in the church choir and secretly listening to recordings of Bessie Smith and Ida Cox.

Joining Chicago's Greater Salem Baptist Church Choir when she was 16, her remarkable contralto voice soon marked her out as a soloist. .

Smithsonian stays committed to its cultural mission

In the current distorted climate in the United States – with the President recently complaining that civil rights era policies resulted in White people being "very badly treated" – it is to the credit of Smithsonian Folk-ways that it endeavours to sustain its commitment to promoting cultural inclusion.

Mahalia Jackson is not only a cultural icon from a minority community but also an artist who, along with Odetta Holmes and Harry Belafonte, were actively involved with the civil rights movement led by Martin Luther King.

SINÉAD'S JEWELS



Released in November, 2025, Sinéad Willox's *Seoda Uladh* (Jewels of Ulster) reimagines lesser known traditional songs from the Ulster canon, with one song representing each of the nine counties and an additional track "for good luck."

Featuring ballads in both English and Irish, Sinéad's collection reflects the cultural traditions, history, and shared heritage of Ulster through music, song and story.

Each song begins with a place, a memory, a story, a piece of home or with one of the journeys that create such a powerful connection between the listener and the song.

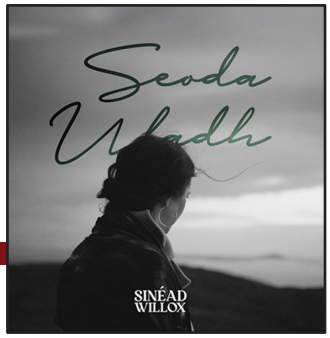
Armagh native, Sinéad WIllox has long been acclaimed for her distinctive vocal talents. A winner of multiple All-Ireland Oireachtas titles in duet and trio performance, Sinéad has been singing since childhood and brings both depth and versatility to her craft.

Alongside her music, she has a strong theatrical back-ground, performing with the Bardic Theatre Donaghmore, the Phoenix Players Porta-down, the Clonmore Players, and the River Tall Theatre Company.

Since 2016, she has performed as Constance Markievicz in the touring production of *Blood Upon the Rose*.

The recording project first began in 2023 and under the careful guidance of producer, Seán Óg Graham, features contributions from some of Ireland's finest musicians.

As well as Seán Óg, himself, the instrumentalists on the album include Cathal Hayden, Séamie O'Dowd, Pádraig McGovern, David Bell, Rory Madden, Colin Henry, Kieran Leonard and Conor Crimmins with vocal support from Eva McRory, Karen Kirby, Helen Cassidy and Daniel Donnelly.





Studio Time: *(from left)* Colin Henry, Cathal Hayden, Sinéad Willox, David Bell and Rory Madden

Track Listing

1. Ballyronan Maid
2. Gleanntáin Ghlas' Ghaoth Dobhair
3. The County Down.
4. Cavan Girl
5. My Belfast Love
6. Sweet Omagh Town
7. Dobbin's Flowery Vale
8. Buachaill ón Éirne
9. Banks of the Bann
10. The Shady Woods of Truagh



Box of Tricks: Gerry Hanley *(centre)* with Carl Hession *(left)* and Mairín Fahy *(right).*

BOXING CLEVER

Galway box player, Gerry Hanley, finally released his debut album with the somewhat intriguing title of *In The Middle of It* with the steady hand of Carl Hession overseeing production as well as providing accompaniment on keys.

Released in August 2025, the album largely draws from the traditional canon, highlighting Hanley's solid technique allied to great drive and lift.

As Gerry himself explained. "It's not trying to be flashy or fashionable. It's traditional music, the way I heard it growing up, from the famous and not-so-famous players."

His style is firmly rooted in his Galway heritage. Originally from Claregalway and Ballinasloe respectively, Padraig and Eileen Hanley's house in Castlegar was filled with music and song.

Gerry's father, Padraig, was also an accordion player, and house sessions with visiting musicians were regular events in the Hanley household, where Gerry absorbed the two Galway playing styles by osmosis.

Gerry's first teacher was Tommy Mulhaire. His early promise was rewarded at age twelve, when his mother took a trip to Walton's Music Shop in Dublin to buy a Paolo Soprani accordion,which Gerry still plays to this day.

Among his musical inspirations were Joe Burke and Joe Cooley. He met Cooley in 1973 after his return from the US, and shortly before his death.

Describing Cooley, Gerry said: "He had an inspiring way of playing and meeting him was a very powerful and emotional moment."

After years of playing at sessions, concerts, festivals and fleadhanna, Gerry had honed his technique with confidence and imagination in approaching the recording project.

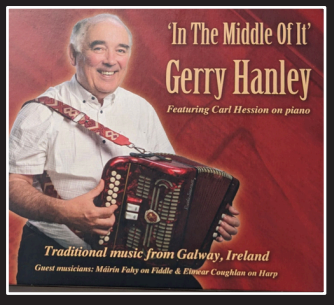
In The Middle of It is a journey through the heart-land of Irish traditional music. The album beautifully blends Gerry's renowned solo performances with support from guests, Mairín Fahy on fiddle, Eimear Coughlan on harp along with Carl Hession, a friend since school days.

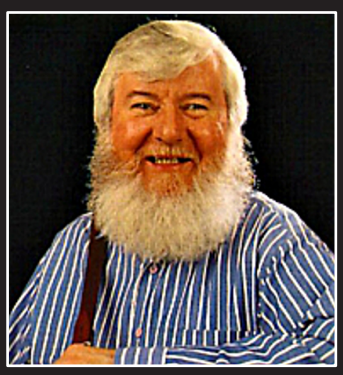
When he is not playing, Gerry has a keen interest in uncovering the stories behind the tunes, the tunemakers and the tune carriers and exploring their history and significance.

"It's all about keeping the tradition alive and sharing the joy of this amazing music.".

This album is dedicated to the memory of Gerry's parents, Padraig and Eileen. "They gave us everything," said Gerry, "I never knew life without the sound of an accordion."

Reflecting his personal and musical journey, *In The Middle of It* captures the spirit of the music Gerry Hanley grew up with. It is in the truest sense of the phrase, a labour of love.





Influence: Joe Burke



Influence: Joe Cooley

Track Listing:

1. Land of Sunshine/Mulhaire's #9/ Laura Mulhaire's *(Reels)*
2. 10 Litre Bucket/Catherine's *(Jigs)*
3. Eanach Dhúin *(Fonn Mall/Slow Air)*
4. Old Road to Garry/Carmel Mahoney *(Reels)*
5. A Roll of the Dice/Ride a Mile *(Slip Jigs)*
6. Paddy Fahey's *(Slow Reel)*
7. Jackie Coleman's/Bird in the Bush/ Jenny's Wedding *(Reels)*
8. Tommy Mulhaire's/Paddy Fahey's/ The Piper's Chair *(Jigs)*
9. Slopes of Benbulben/The Swan on the Lake/The Showman's Fancy *(Hornpipes)*
10. Fr. Kelly's (Lough Derg)/Dooney Rock/Mooncoin *(Jigs)*
11. Sheehan's/The Longford Tinker/ Mulqueen's *(Reels)*
12. Nova Scotia/Kevin Loughlin's/ Buttermilk Mary *(Jigs)*

HOMÉRIQUE: THE STUFF OF LEGENDS

The latest album from the Québecquois-Irish ensemble, Grosse Isle, celebrates epic heroes from the traditions of the two lands.



The songs and music of *Homérique* combine legendary characters with historical figures, including that of the white lady of the fall Montmorency; the Irish pirate Gráinne Mhaol; the Métis Louis Riel; and the Acadian Étienne Hébert.

Combining material written in three languages (French, English and Irish), the album ranges from catchy songs with the typical Québec "footstock" to tragic laments, such as songs about tragic deaths on construction sites in Québec, and during the Great Hunger in Ireland.

The album is also tap into a variety of instruments typical of traditional Québec and Irish music including the Quebec style playing of fiddler Sophie Lavoie from Lac-St-Jean, as well as the piping and whistle-playing of Fiachra O'Regan from Roundstone in Connemara, backed by the tasteful accompaniment of François-Félix Roy on guitar.

The album includes three songs written by Sophie Lavoie. The first, *Gráinne Mhaol aux Cheveux de Braise,* is inspired by *Óró 'sé do bheatha 'bhaile,* Pádraig Pearse's adaptation of an older song, where Sophie's lyrics detail the famous meeting between the Irish 'Pirate Queen' Gráinne Mhaol and Queen Elizabeth I.

Mathilde La Dame Blanche is the legendary ghost who haunts the waterfalls of Montmorency in Québec. from which she threw herself in a dramatic tragedy.

Finally, *Étienne Hébert d'Acadie* tells of the resilient Acadian who, after being deported during the Grand Dérangement, embarked on a ten-year search for his three brothers and his friend, which ended in success.



The remaining songs on the album come from the traditional repertoire of Québec and Ireland. *Johnny Seoighe le Survenant* is an adaptation of the sean-nós song from Connemara set during the Great Famine.

Louis Riel is a bilingual adaptation of a text written by Louis, himself, in which he describes his longing to see his beloved sister Henrietta, after he had been exiled to the USA for five years.

Eileanoir a Rún is the classic sean-nós song written by the seventeenth century poet and harpist, Cearbhall Óg Ó Dálaigh, who, it is said, fell madly in love with Eleanor Kavanagh when asked to play at her wedding.

White and Murphy is a wood-shanty song taken from the singing of the late Jimmy Kelly from Shannon in Québec. It tells the story of one of the many tragedies that have occurred in the logging camps around North America.

The tune repertoire of *Homérique* also blends both traditional and original material. *Le Roi Renauld* is an instrumental version of one of the oldest songs in the québécois repertoire, dating back to the Middle Ages in France which commemorates King Renauld who died of his wounds on his return from war.

The album also includes compositions from John Carty *(Seanamhac Tube Station)* and Paddy O'Brien *(The Coming of Spring),* as well as Sophie Lavoie's *Pleine Lune* and *Victor Delamarre* – the latter celebrating a famous weightlifter from Sophie's home town of Lac-Saint-Jean. Victor's idol was Louis Cyr, named as the strongest man in the world.

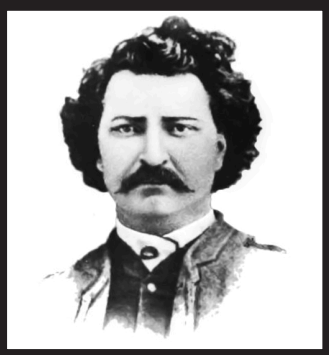
Despite his height of 5'5", Victor set many records, which include defeating Louis Cyr at a weightlifting contest in 1914. The tune is fittingly followed with *Louis Cyr en 6/8,* Sophie's jig adaptation of Jean-Claude Mirandette's reel, *Louis Cyr.*

The final two tracks on the album are two instrumental pieces, *Padraic Pearse's Set,* and *Louis Riel l'Exilé* – each of which is a musical tribute to a political activist whose life was ended prematurely by execution.

Both Riel and Pearse were poets and writers, with a strong belief in the preservation of their respective cultures. Both became leaders of movements aimed at independence and self-determination which involved both men drafting proclamations for their respective causes.



Padraig Pearse



Louis Riel

Track Listing

1. Gráinne Mhaol aux Cheveux de Braise
2. Máire Gaillimhe/The Rocky Road to Dublin
3. Mathilde la Dame Blanche/ Seanamhac Tube Station
4. Eileanóir a Rún
5. Etienne Hébert d'Acadie
6. Le Roi Renaud
7. The Reverend Brother's Jig/The Coming of Spring
8. Johnny Seoighe le Survenant
9. Victor Delamarre/Louis Cyr en 6/8
10. Pleine Lune
11. White & Murphy
12. Pádraic Pearse's Set
13. Louis Riel l'Exilé

ARTFUL CRAFT



The Weaving: *(from Left)* Owen Spafford, Cáit Ní Riain and Méabh Ní Bheaglaoich.

Bringing together the musical traditions of Kerry, Tipperary and Yorkshire, Méabh Ní Bheaglaoich, Cáit Ní Riain and Owen Spafford – otherwise known as The Weaving – have produced an album imbued with the driving rhythms of Corca Dhuibhne, fierce dance music and raw harmonies.

Dlúth agus Inneach/Warp and Weft "is about embracing our musical connections, finding the dances, tunes and songs that we hold in common and celebrating the different musical accents with which we play them.

"The aim was not to homogenise our approaches but to explore ideas of local identity and place through our own respective back-grounds. We feel this is particularly important in reference to the historic cultural oppression that the Irish language and music has faced under English rule.

"There is an honouring and healing of colonial history that can be found in sharing the traditional music of England and Ireland and while this is not a political project there is something inherently political about celebrating the music of two connected but historically divided communities.

"The fact that we can now share a stage sharing music and song is testament to the power of art to cross social boundaries and international borders. Music for us is about celebrating people and the natural world – and woven into traditional music is the love we hold for our family, friends and communities and the land we call home."

Born into the renowned musical Begley family from the West Kerry Gaeltacht, Méabh Ní Bheaglaoich's background has influenced her energetic instrumental playing and sensitive singing style..

Traditional singer, multi - instrumentalist, Cáit Ní Riain from Upperchurch in Co. Tipperary grew up in the renowned music pub, Jim of the Mills, where she was exposed to a constant stream of musicians and singers.

Fiddler and composer, Owen Spafford from Leeds with a keen appreciation of vernacular music from around the world is equally comfortable in traditional, experimental, and improvised music.



Track Listing

1. Éamonn an Chnoic
2. Scatter the Mud/Elizabeth Kelly's/ The Kerfeunteun
3. An Buachaillín Bán & Sportsman's Hornpipe
4. Warp & Weft/Martin Wynne's No.2
5. The Flower of Sweet Strabane
6. Young Tom Ennis
7. Winder's/Cronin's Kitchen/For Mikey
8. Dán Lae Breithe
9. Paddy Cronin's/Denis Murphy's No.2/The Hare in the Corn
10. Creef Fair/The Lily
11. My Bonnie Blue Eyed Lassie
12. The Five Servants/The Curragh Races/The Lakes of Sligo

Just a Tune at Firelight

Just released is the much anticipated second album from Firelight Trio. *Midnight Followed* is a collection of new compositions which celebrate the trio's broad, pan-European influences with elements of Scottish, Irish, French, Scandinavian, klezmer, jazz, classical and contemporary among others.

Midnight Followed is entirely written and arranged by the band's members, displaying a marked confidence as each of the trio have contributed music reflecting his or her own background and experience. Together they have managed to create a collection of great variety which nevertheless hangs together.

Originally from London, Phil Alexander has a PhD in Ethnomusicology from Goldsmiths College and is a British Academy Fellow at Edinburgh University, researching Jewish music in early twentieth-century Scotland.

Besides leading Scottish band, Moishe's Bagel, Phil has collaborated with a range of musicians, including Norma Waterson, Martin Carthy and Eliza Carthy, Salsa Celtica, harpist Catriona McKay and jazz trio, Tangalgo.

Based in Scotland, Ruth Morris is a multi-instrumentalist, specialising in nyckel-harpa, fiddle, whistle and piano. As well as Firelight Trio, she has also played with Gavin Marwick's Journeyman Project, The Galloway Agreement and Whirligig. As a result of travelling internationally for music, she has added tunes from Central France, Brittany, Scandinavia and Eastern Europe to her extensive Scottish and Irish repertoire.

The third member of the trio is Edinburgh fiddle player, Gavin Marwick, who has performed at hundreds of festivals, concerts and dances across Europe, North America, Africa, Asia and Australia.





Track Listing

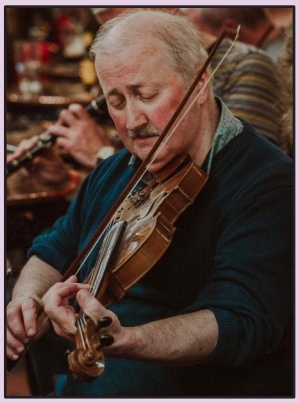
1. Dirty Euro/Viridian Skies/Storm in a Teacup/A Hatful of Euros
2. Left Bank Reels - The Dragonfly and the Gauloise /The Yellow Jersey
3. Sunday Jig/Ellen Galford's
4. Praying Mantis/The Plague of Wasps
5. Tune for Tomorrow
6. The Malmi Polka
7. Jericho Bridge/The Darkest Hour/ Just Before the Dawn
8. The Boy and the Bear/Midnight Followed
9. Life on the Road/Six Weeks to Náměšť

MAURICE'S SWAN SONG



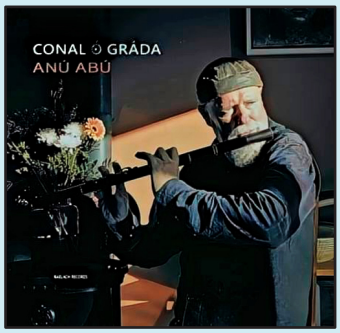
Released by County Derry's Maurice Bradley in January 2025 before his untimely death in May, *Óran na hEala* features a wonderful selection of traditional tunes delivered in great style on uilleann pipes and fiddle with very tasteful accompaniment from Ciaran Kelly on bouzouki/guitar and Melissa Emmons from Cape Breton on piano.

Produced and arranged by Maurice Bradley and Nathan Murray, the album also includes contributions from an impressive array of guests including Niall Hanna, Rachel McGarrity, Brona Graham, Anthony Davis, Chris McGlone and Eamon Murray.



Finale: Maurice Bradley

Ó GRÁDA ABÚ



Released in February 2025, *Anú Abú* is an album of original compositions by flute player, Conal Ó Gráda. Drawing from Ireland's myths, landscape and people, the music is charged with Conal's inimitable playing style. The recording comes with a comprehensive bilingual booklet, offering colourful insight into the stories and inspirations behind the music.

Conal was joined by Caoimhín Ó Fearghail on guitar and Greek bouzouki; Colm Ó Murchú on bodhrán; Caitríona Frost on percussion and Benny McCarthy on accordions.



Conal Abú: Conal Ó Grada

SONGS THAT TRAVELLED



In *Remembered in Exile: Songs and Ballads from Nova Scotia,* released in April 2025, Màiri Morrison and Alasdair Roberts collaborate with Canadian arranger Pete Johnston on a set of traditional songs with Scottish roots collected in Canada's maritime provinces by folklorist Helen Creighton (1899-1989).

Recorded in Nova Scotia with Pete and a group of Canadian musicians, Màiri and Alasdair give life to ten far-travelled Scots ballads and Gaelic songs, which managed to find their way across the Atlantic Ocean carried by Scottish emigrants.



Exile: Roberts and Morrison

SLIGO'S ATLANTIC CROSSING



Released in June 2025, *Across the Atlantic* by flute player Conor McDonagh from Killavil, Co. Sligo, and fiddle player Andrew Caden from Bethesda, Maryland, focusses on Sligo traditional music on both sides of the Atlantic.

With impeccable musical backgrounds, Andrew and Conor exhibit great chemistry – with their interplay producing some wonderful effects. Produced by the revered fiddle and banjo master, John Carty, the album also includes contributions from Catherine McHugh, Ryan Sheridan and John Blake.



Atlantic: McDonagh and Caden

STRANGER SOUNDS



Released in January 2026, *The Ranger and the Stranger* is the new album from Áit Ait who are an experimental folk duo focused on reinterpretations of traditional songs – dark and deep, bright and sparkling; full of noise and life. Based in St. Paul's in Minnesota, Áit Ait is Aja McCullough (song) and Patrick Maun (sound)..

The track listing is drawn from the traditional canons of Ireland and Britain: *Aililiú na Gamhna; How Could I Live at the Top of a Mountain; The Sea Apprentice Boy; The Rocks of Bawn; The Red-Haired Man's Wife; What's Keeping My True Love; One Morning in May; The Dark-Eyed Rover;* and *The Holland Handkerchief*.



Strange: Maun and McCullough

DIVINE CREATIVITY



Released in September 2025, A' Chailleach by award-winning Gaelic singer-songwriter, Kim Carnie, highlights the voices and stories of women across generations.

"This album celebrates the poetry and strength of female Gaelic voices," said Carnie, "I wanted to explore themes that people don't often associate with the tradition - love charms, incantations, personifications of death and old rituals - and bring those texts to life in a new sound world." With all but two melodies self-composed, Kim is joined by an impressive array of backing musicians and vocalists including Julie Fowlis and Jerry Douglas.



Female strength: Kim Carnie

TRIBUTE FROM A SONGBIRD



Éinín an Cheóil is a beautiful Irish-language album based on a selection of songs from a handwritten book of more than 200 songs collected by Fiona Tyndall's Tyndall's father, Buadhach Tóibín. His transcription included musical notation to enable Fiona and her siblings to sing them.

Following her father's death, Fiona decided to record some of those songs. Continuing the intergenerational dimension, Fiona's daughters, Aisling and Caoimhe, also contribute vocals to the album. An impressive line-up of musicians also lends support, including Seán Whelan and Tim Edey.



Songbird: Fiona Tyndall

SIX LOVELY LASSIES



The Irish Lassies are a six-piece American folk band from New York's Finger Lakes region. Despite the name, they are all male with a unique style that makes use of six-part harmonies to render soulful ballads with strength, passion and imgination.

Immigration Stories blends Appalachian folk storytelling with traditionally-inspired sounds, crafting a uniquely original album. Drawing from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, it chronicles the real-life stories of the immigrants who made the precarious journey to America in search of a better life for themselves and their families. Through these songs, the album strives to capture the fear, the tragedy, and the triumph of those journeys.



Laddies: Immigrants

SINGING SESSION DIRECTORY

The directory lists regular weekly and monthly singing sessions with the day they *usually* meet. You are advised to check by logging on to the organiser's website or social media account. If you have a session for inclusion in the directory, please send details to info@fonn.online.

Amhrán Session, The Commercial, Catherine St., Limerick. *First Sunday*

Athy Singing Session, Paddy Dunne's, Woodstock St., Athy, Co. Kildare. *Alternate Mondays.*

Ballincollig Singing Session, Oriel House Hotel, Ballincollig, Co. Cork. *Last Thursday*

Ballinrostig Singing Session, Poc Ar Buile, Ballinrostig, Whitegate, Co. Cork. *Third Monday*

Ballyboughal Singing Session, Oldtown House Pub, Ballyboughal, Co. Dublin. *Every Tuesday*

Ballybrittas Singing Session, The Final Furlong, Main St, Ballybrittas, Co. Dublin. *Every Tuesday.*

Ballycotton Singing Session, The Blackbird Bar, Ballycotton, Co. Cork. *Third Thursday*

Ballyhahill Rambling House, Community Hall, Ballyhahill Co. Limerick. *Third Wednesday*

Ballymurn Singing Session, Dan Nolan's Bar, Ballymurn, Co. Wexford. *Last Friday*

Ballynagree Rambling House, The Laine Bar, Ballynagree, Co. Cork. *Last Wednesday*

Banagher Singing Session, Lyon's Pub, Main St, Banagher, Co. Offaly. *Third Monday*

Bandon Singers Club, Ray O'Mahony's Bar, Bandon, Co. Cork. *Second Sunday*

Belfast Singing Session, American Bar, Dock Street, Belfast. *First Wednesday*

Birr Singing Sesssion, The Thatch, Crinkill, Birr, Co. Offaly. *First Monday*

Blackbird Singing Session, *Second Tuesday on Zoom*

Blarney Rambling House, Blarney Castle Hotel, The Square, Blarney, Co. Cork. *First Monday*

Booterstown Singing Session, The Old Punchbowl, 116 Rock Rd, Booterstown, Co. Dublin. *Every Wednesday.*

Boyle Singing Session, Wynne's Pub, Main St, Boyle, Co. Roscommon. *Third Saturday*

Bray Singers' Circle, Tennis Club, Vevay Road, Bray. *Third Sunday*

Brosna Rambling House, Josie McCreesh's, Brosna, Co. Kerry. *Second Thursday*

Carlow Singing Session, Carlow Town Hurling Club, Oakpark Drive, Cartlow. *First Tuesday*

Carrigallen Singing Session, Charlie Farrelly's Bar, Carrigallen, Co. Leitrim. *First Friday.*

Carrignavar Rambling House, Community Hall, Carrignavar, Co. Cork. *First Saturday*

Cashel Singing Session, Brú Ború Heritage Centre, The Kiln, Cashel, Co. Tipperary. *Every Tuesday.*

Castleconnell Singing Session, Brad-shaw's Pub, Castleconnell, Co. Limerick. *Every Tuesday.*

Chapel Gates Singers Club, Tubridy's, Cooraclare, Co. Clare. *Last Friday.*

Ciorcal na nAmhráin, Shamrock Bar, Fal-carragh, Co. Donegal. *Third Wednesday*

Clé Abhaile, Zoom session of the Clé Club. *First Monday* www.cleclub.org

Clé Club, Liberty Hall, Dublin 1, *Third Wednesday*

Clew Bay Folk Club, Matt Molloy's Pub, Bridge St. Westport, *Second Sunday*

Clondrohid Singing Session, The Local, Clondrohid, Macroom, Co. Cork. *Alternate Mondays.*

Clounmacon Rambling House, Com-munity Centre, Clounmacon, Listowel, Co. Kerry. *Second Friday*

Connolly Session, Carney's Bar, Connolly, Co. Clare, *Last Saturday*

Coppeen Rambling House, Barrett's Bar, Coppeen, Co. Cork. *First Friday*

Cork Singers Club, An Spailpín Fánach, Main St, Cork, *Every Sunday.*

Croonerista Social Club, CIE Sports & Social Club, Inchicore Sq. North, Inchicore, *Second Friday*

Crossabeg Rambling House, The Forge, Crossabeg, Co. Wexford. *First Sunday*

Crown & Shamrock, Crown & Shamrock Inn, Antrim Rd, Belfast. *Second Monday*

Dan & Molly's Singing Circle, Dan & Molly's Bar, Ballyboy, Kilcormac, Co. Offaly. *Third Wednesday*

Donnelly's Session, Donnelly's of Barna, Co. Galway. *First Wednesday*

Donoughmore Rambling House, Pat Barry's Pub, Lackabane, Donoughmore, Co. Cork. *Second Wednesday*

Doon Singing Session, Moore's Pub, Doon, Co. Limerick. *Every Tuesday.*

Down Singers' Circle, Imperial Bar, Bangor, Co. Down. *Third Saturday*

Drinagh Singers Club, Connolly's Gaelic Bar, Drinagh. *First Sunday*

Drogheda Singers, Fairgreen Bar, Drogheda. Hybrid live and Zoom. *Every Wednesday*

Dromagh Rambling House, Sandpit House, Dromagh, Co. Cork. *First Tuesday*

Dundalk Singing Circle, The Wee House, Anne St, Dundalk. *Every Tuesday.*

Dunmanway Singing Session, The Greyhound Bar, Dunmanway. *Last Friday.*

Eblana Sessions, Eblana Club, Eblana Ave, Dún Laoire. *Third Saturday*

Ennis Singers Club, Café on the Green, Lifford, Ennis. *Second Friday*

Ennistymon Singing Session, Cullinan's Bar, Church St, Ennistymon. *Third Tuesday.*

Feakle Singing Session, Shortt's Bar, Feakle, Co. Clare. *Second Saturday*

Ferbane Singing Session, Hiney's Pub, Ferbane, Co. Offaly. *Second Tuesday*

Ferns Singing Session, The Thatch Bar, The Square, Ferns, Co. Wexford. *Third Thursday.*

Galway Singing Session, Dew Drop Inn, Mainguard St, Galway. *Every Wednesday.*

Glin Rambling House, Barrett's Bar, Main St, Ballygiltenan North, Glin, Co. Limerick. *Fourth Tuesday*

Góilín Traditional Singers, Teachers' Club, Parnell Sq, Dublin. *Every Friday.* www.goilin.com/

Horse and Jockey Singing Session, Horse and Jockey Hotel,Horse and Jockey, Co. Tipperary. *Last Tuesday*

Howth Singing Circle, Abbey Tavern, Howth, Co. Dublin. *First Thursday*

Hughes' Bar Session, Hughes' Bar, Ballinamore Bridge, Co. Galway. *Third Friday*

Inchicore Singing Session, Small Changes, 120 Emmett Rd, Inchicore. *First Saturday*

Inishowen Traditional Singers' Circle, alternating between North Pole, Drumfries, Inishowen and McFeeley's Bar, Clonmany, Inishowen. *Second Friday* www.inishowensinging.ie/

Jim O' The Mills, Upperchurch, Co. Tipperary. *Every Thursday.*

Killala Bay Folk Club, Lynn's of Killala, Co. Mayo. *First Friday*

Kilmaley Singing Session, Bogdale House, Kilmaley, Co. Clare. *Third Saturday*

Kilmallock Rambling House, Deebert House Hotel, Deebert, Kilmallock, Co. Limerick. *First Tuesday*

Kiltealy Rambling House, Kiltealy Hall, Kiltealy, Co. Wexford. *Second Sunday*

Kinvara Singing Circle, Green's Bar, Kinvara, Co. Galway. *First Monday*

Knockanure Rambling House, Community Centre, Knockanure, Co. Kerry. *First Thursday*

Knocklougha Rambling House, Knocknagoshel, Co. Kerry. *Third Tuesday*

Lackagh Session, The Cottage, Heritage Museum, Lackagh, Co. Galway. *First Monday*

Limerick Singing Session, The White Horse Tavern, Limerick. *Third Monday. On Zoom second and fourth Monday*

Liscarney Rambling House, Community Centre, Liscarney Co. Mayo. Every *Thursday.*

Listowel Rambling House, Kerry Writers' Museum, The Square, Listowel, Co. Kerry. *Last Thursday*

Lord Edward Session, The Lord Edward Bar, Christchurch Pl, Dublin. *Second Tuesday.*

Mallow Rambling House, GAA Centre, St. Joseph's Rd, Mallow, Co. Cork. *First Tuesday*

Muine Bheag Singing Session, Lawlor's Bar, Kilcarrig St, Muine Bheag, Co. Carlow. *Third Friday*

Mullagh Singing Session, Moroney's Bar, Mullagh, Co. Clare. *Third Friday*

Mullingar Singing Circle, Daly's Bar, Oliver Plunkett St, Mullingar. *First Sunday*

Myshal Rambling House, Myshal Hall, Myshal, Co. Carlow. *First Friday*

Navan Singing Circle, The Lantern, Watergate St, Navan. *Second Tuesday.*

Newcastlewest Rambling House, Desmond Complex, Gortboy, Newcastlewest, Co. Limerick. *Third Friday*

Newmarket Rambling House, An Cultúrlann, Church St, Newmarket, Co. Cork. *Second Saturday.*

Night Before Larry Got Stretched, The Cobblestone, King St North, Dublin 7. *First Sunday except January, July and August.*

Nightingale Singing Session, American Bar, Dock Street, Belfast. *Third Tuesday*

North Wexford Traditional Singing Session, French's, Main St, Gorey. *Last Tuesday*

Oilgate Singing Session, The Slaney Inn, Oilgate, Co. Wexford. *Second Friday.*

Port Laoise Singing Session, Ramsbottom's Bar, Main St, Port Laoise. *First Thursday*

Portumna Singing Session, Curley's Bar, St. Brendan's St, Portumna, Co. Galway. *Every Thursday.*

Rainbow Singing Session, McHugh's Bar, Glenfarne, Co. Leitrim. 5pm-8pm. *Fourth Sunday*



Robbie's First Friday, Cnoc na Gaoithe CCE Cultural Centre, Tulla, Co. Clare. *First Friday*

Scartaglin Rambling House, Heritage Centre, Scartaglin, Co. Kerry. *Second Monday*

Séamus Ennis Arts Centre, The Naul, Co. Dublin. Hybrid live and Zoom. *Third Thursday*

Shanaglish Singing Session, Whelan's, Shanaglish, Gort, Co. Galway. *Last Friday*

Shannon Singing Session, Wolfe Tone's GAA Club, Shannon, Co. Clare. *First Wednesday*

Singing in the Crane, Crane Bar, Sea Rd, Galway. www.facebook.com/david.larkin.3975

Skerries Folk Club, Upstairs in Joe May's Pub, Harbour Road, Skerries. *Last Sunday*

Skibbereen Singers Club, The Corner House, Bridge St, Skibbereen, Co. Cork. *First Friday*

Sliabh Liag Singing Circle, Evelyn's Central Bar, Carrick, Co. Donegal. *Last Monday.*

Sligo Traditional Singers' Circle, Durkin's Bar, Ballinacarrow, Co. Sligo. *Second Wednesday*

Song Central, Chaplin's Bar, Hawkins Street, Dublin 2. Second *Sunday*

South Roscommon Singers Circle, Murray's Bar, Knockcroghery, Co. Roscommon. *First Thursday*

Sperrins Traditional Singing Circle, Ponderosa Bar, Glenshane, Co. Derry. *Third Friday*

Sunflower Folk Club, Sunflower Bar, Union Street, Belfast. *Every Thursday*

Tarbert Rambling House, Community Centre, Tarbert, Co. Kerry. *Last Saturday*

Tarred & Feathered Folk Session, Clontarf Golf Club, Donnycarney Rd, Dublin *Second Monday*

Templemore Singing Session, O'Sullivan's, Killea, Templemore, Co. Tipperary. Secon*d Monday*

Tuam Singers Club, Reapy's Bar, Tullinadaly Rd, Tuam. *Third Monday*

Waterfall Singing Session, O'Shea's Bar, Waterfall, Co. Cork. *Last Thursday*

West Limerick Singing Club, Ramble Inn, Main St, Abbeyfeale, Co. Limerick. *First Friday*

Wexford Traditional Singers' Circle, Mary's Bar, John's Gate St, Wexford. *Third Friday*


DÚN
LAOGHAIRE
FOLK~FEST
curated by Foggy Notions
BONNIE "PRINCE" BILLY ANDY IRVINE
JACQUI MCSHEE'S PENTANGLE
BROADSIDE HACKS PRESENTS BRIGHT PHOEBUS REVISITED
FEATURING MARRY WATERSON, ELIZA CARTHY, DARAGH LYNCH (LANKUM),
MATT DEIGHTON, MARTYN BAKER & BEN NICHOLLS
DESTROYER (SOLO) BRIGID MAE POWER
ELLIE O'NEILL ART LORIGAN TESSA ROSE JACKSON
AONGUS GAREFOWL RUA RÍ ROISIN GOWEN
PAVILION THEATRE
SEP 9TH - 13TH 2026