



# Irish Music & Dance Association

April  
2022  
Aibreán

40<sup>th</sup> Year, Issue No. 4

The mission of the Irish Music and Dance Association is to support and promote Irish music, dance, and other cultural traditions to insure their continuation.

## Isn't It Grand, Boys – to be Back Together Again!

Wasn't it grand to be back at Landmark Center for  
IMDA's 40<sup>th</sup> Annual St. Patrick's Day Irish Celebration and  
Day of Irish Dance!

*To have the music fill the Cortile and lift our spirits once again!  
To have the Brian Boru Irish Pipe Band sweep through once again!  
To feel the excitement of the dancers, ready to delight the audience once again!  
To hear the rumble of the dancers' feet once again!  
To have a cup of tea with the music in the Tea Room again!  
To see the little ones decked out in St. Patrick's Day finery once again!  
To be educated in a fascinating seminar once again!  
To be transported by fine Irish theatre once again!  
To see friends again!  
And to have your impression of traditional music challenged a bit!*

Thank you to everyone who came out to help celebrate a return to something closer to normal. We appreciate your being willing to trust the process, to bring your vaccine cards and your family and friends and your enthusiasm for IMDA's traditional salute to St. Patrick's Day. And thanks to those of you who tuned in from near and far for the live stream of the main stage. We were delighted to be able to share the experience with you.

Together, we enjoyed the things we always love about being at Landmark Center – the outstanding music from our wonderful local musicians, the intricate footwork and the brilliant smiles of the dancers, the intimate setting for music in the Weyerhaeuser Auditorium, the warm welcome of music with treats in the Tea Room, a nibble of one of Sara's pies, a glass of Harp or Guinness, a bit of shopping. Your support, in the form of your ticket purchase, means the world to us!

**AND One Hundred Thousand Thanks** to the wonderful volunteers who came back and pitched in to make the events happen. The volunteers make all of it possible!





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## Thank You to Our Sponsors and Partners!

Thank you to our friends at **Irish on Grand** for their sponsorship of our Volunteer T-Shirts for IMDA's St. Patrick's Day Irish Celebration! Volunteers were looking good – and were easy to spot among our many guests. IMDA is grateful to **Maeve O'Mara and Liam O'Neill of Irish on Grand** for their continued support!

Thank you to Cormac O'Sé and the Celtic Junction Arts Center for their support of the Tea Room at Landmark Center. Cormac made sure that the artists sounded just right by providing the sound equipment. We're delighted to have such wonderful partners!

Thank you to our friends at Peak Printing in St. Paul. Peak printed the beautiful programs for St. Patrick's Day and is our regular printer for the printed version of the IMDA newsletter.

Thank you to our partners and hosts with **Minnesota Landmarks** at **Landmark Center**. Our events are showcased in a beautiful historic building that serves as a cultural center for music, dance, theater, exhibitions, public forums, and countless special events. Landmark Center celebrates the cultural diversity and collective history of the community and provides a gathering place for organizations and activities that enhance the quality of life in our community. IMDA is honored to be a part of their mission.





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## Landmark Center Audiences Enjoy Cross-Cultural Performances on St. Patrick's Day

Audience members at the IMDA's 40<sup>th</sup> Annual St. Patrick's Day Irish Celebration on March 17 had the pleasure of seeing two engaging cross-cultural performances, each of which involved crowd-pleasing collaborations between local Irish musicians and their counterparts from "non-Irish" cultural/artistic organizations.

### Cumar on the Main Stage

The group's name means "confluence" in the Irish language. The presentation explored the intersection of the traditional rhythms of West African drumming with the traditional melodies of Irish dance music and song. This is an outgrowth of a collaboration between a group of traditional Irish musicians and two master drummers from Guinea, West Africa.

The musical partners for this project are three instructors from the Center for Irish Music - Sean Egan, long-time traditional musician and member of several Celtic music groups, fiddler Mary Vanorny, and multi-instrumentalist Laura MacKenzie - with West African drummers Fodé Bangoura, artistic director and lead drummer for Duniya Drum and Dance, and Alhassan "Sana" Bangoura, lead dancer and choreographer for Duniya Drum and Dance.

The participants have enjoyed the opportunity to learn more about each other's traditions and hope that the project will continue to foster connections between the communities. The group has been selected to be one of the Southern Theater's performance partners for their upcoming 2022-2023 season.





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## The McNordiques on the Weyerhauser Stage

The McNordiques blend Celtic, French and Scandinavian music in a way that shines through to make your toes wiggle with joy. The McNordiques are Tom Klein on uilleann pipes, Dan Newton on accordion, and Renee Vaughan on nyckelharpa. Together, it's a unique sound.

IMDA members will be familiar with the uilleann pipes, often called the Irish pipes. The uilleann (pronounced ill-en: Irish for "elbow") pipes are the bagpipe of Ireland and one of the world's most complex folk instruments. Incorporating a sweet, rich tone and built-in chordal and rhythmic accompaniment, the uilleann pipes possess a character and soul not found in any other instrument: at once beautiful, haunting...and appropriate for so many of life's great moments and occasions.



Attendees at previous IMDA St. Patrick's Day celebrations will also know Dan Newton, "Daddy Squeeze" who has appeared with Tom as the Bellows Brothers. Dan has been playing offbeat accordion music since 1987, when he won the Nebraska State Accordion Contest at the Czech Festival in Wilber, Nebraska. He has used the squeeze box for playing all kinds of music not normally associated with free-reed instruments, as well as standard accordion material.

Daddy Squeeze also enjoys mixing up styles and genres that don't generally seem compatible. "Music out of context", or "Ethno-clectic Bop" is the result of his genre-bending experiments with Celtic, Tex-Mex, Creole, Blues, Jazz, Scandinavian, Polka and pop music.

Renee plays traditional Scandinavian music on the nyckelharpa, an instrument that has been around in one form or another for over 700 years. The sound is both rustic and ethereal. She enjoys high energy slängpolska and minor key schottis. Renee has played for the King and Queen of Sweden, but her most consistent and attentive audience is her dog, Goosey.

The McNordiques have continued their collaboration, playing locally at venues from the American Swedish Institute to the Waldmann. Keep an eye out for more opportunities to see and hear this unique group.

The IMDA's hope is that these two exciting and innovative collaborations helped demonstrate that when artists from different backgrounds unite to create and present performances that celebrate their mutual artistic interests, the end results include high quality entertainment and an enhanced understanding of (and appreciation for) the traditions of cultures other than one's own. At a time when so much attention is being devoted to building walls, the IMDA believes that the world would be better served by creatively employing the universal love of music and dance to help build bridges. Look for information on the next IMDA Cross-Cultural Challenge in future newsletters.



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## IMDA Recognizes Dedicated Dancers

By Jan Casey

The Decade of Dance Award is IMDA's recognition of the commitment some students make to Irish dance. The dancers who receive this award have studied Irish dance for at least 10 years; for most, it represents the majority of their lives. They have shared a unique element of Irish culture with audiences in settings from community festivals and concert halls to nursing homes and schools. Along the way, they delight audiences, have fun, make friends, travel the world, and serve as very visible and engaging ambassadors for Irish culture.

The awards were presented on the Main Stage at IMDA's Day of Irish Dance at Landmark Center. The dancers received a certificate and a special Decade of Dance medal – and a very generous round of applause.

This is the seventeenth year that this award has been presented; over the years, IMDA has recognized a total of 250 dancers.

Heartfelt congratulations to these dedicated dancers and to their families who support and encourage them.

*Jan Casey serves on the IMDA board and coordinates the Decade of Dance Program.*



**Read the following pages for this year's recipients, and some of their favorite memories of Irish dance!**



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**Abby Arsenault** ~ *Shamrock School of Irish Step Dance*

“Three special pre-game performances dancing at the Timberwolves games.”

**Mary Carter** ~ *Rince na Chroi*

“Doing the thing I love surrounded by the people I love.”

**Erin Flanders** ~ *Onórach Mulhern Geraghty School of Irish Dance (OMG)*

“Erin’s favorite Irish Dance memory is when she was at Cooper’s Pub on St. Patrick’s Day watching the dancers, seeing all the sparkle and being asked to go on stage with them. It was then that Erin’s dance career started, when she was just three years old!”

**Bridget Gerber** ~ *O’Shea Irish Dance*

“My favorite Irish Dance memory is performing at St. Patrick’s Day with some of my closest friends. It’s rewarding to see the audience enjoy the show and share in the excitement of performing with the entire cast before we go on stage.”

**Julia Gill** ~ *Rince na Chroi*

“I have many favorite memories, from traveling to dance in new places to performing in small shows, especially at retirement homes. The residents there are always so friendly and genuinely love seeing us dance and talking to us about Irish dance, our costumes and, of course, our wigs!”

**Evan Johnson-Odegard** ~ *Shamrock School of Irish Step Dance*

“My favorite Irish dance memory is when I finally took 1<sup>st</sup> place in the reel and hornpipe to allow me to advance to Preliminary Championship level of competition.”

**Kaitlin Macklin** ~ *Shamrock School of Irish Step Dance*

“Dancing at Irish Fair after COVID and coming back after college. It was great to reconnect with everyone and dance again. I also loved dancing at the Minneapolis-St. Paul airport in 2018 for all the incoming fans, for the Superbowl.”

**Maggie McCarty** ~ *Rince na Chroi*

“My favorite memory of Irish Dance was performing with The Wild Colonial Bhoys at Irish Fair 2021 and cheering on all my friends during our performances.”





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## **Payten Miller-Zarambo** ~ *Rince na Chroi and Mactír Academy of Irish Dance*

“I have been in Irish dance almost my entire life as I started when I was three. Back then I was so proud of my ‘quack’ steps. I love Irish dancing as we fly with our leaps. I even love going to Irish on Grand to get new shoes as it is as close to being to Ollivanders (from Harry Potter) that one can get as they watch you take a few steps and then, a quick ‘no, no – those are not quite right’. I don’t have one favorite memory but something I love to do is perform - whether it is outside at Irish Fair or inside at a feis, the Landmark Center, a senior home or a school. I love cheering on others when they dance as well. Irish dance makes so many people happy including me. Which is a huge part of why I love Irish dancing. The fact that dancing for someone makes them smile, makes my life better.”

## **Julia Nelson** ~ *North Star Irish Dance*

“One day when everyone was present for class, we all began by working hard on a new, unique movie-themed Irish dance. With new movements and different skills, we all had fun learning together. The class ended with us eating candy and having personal and interesting conversations. It really meant a lot to me because I got closer to those friends that day. I think EVERYONE really bonded well during that class.”

## **Norah O’Brien** ~ *Rince na Chroi*

“My favorite memory of Irish dance was whenever we would do family dances at From the Stage to Your Heart.”

## **Ciara O’Shea** ~ *O’Shea Irish Dance*

“Spending time with my friends at competitions and performances. Especially laughing with them.”

## **Jane Paddock** ~ *Rince na Chroi*

“Performing in the Family Dance, with my sister, at From the Stage to Your Heart show and all the friends I’ve made.”

## **Lucille Rein** ~ *Rince na Chroi*

“I had an opportunity to perform at a county fair in Aberdeen, South Dakota, with a group of fun classmates with Rince na Chroi. We performed in front of people who typically don’t get to see Irish Dance.”

## **Karlie Renner** ~ *Shamrock School of Irish Step Dance*

“Last year during COVID, the Shamrock girls and boys got together at a park and did a mini show for friends and family. I loved it because it reminded me of how much I love dance because we didn’t get to perform that year. Also, every Irish Fair is always a blast.”





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## **Julia Ross** ~ *Rince na Gréine*

“My favorite Irish dance memory is when CRN Nationals was in Minnesota and so many of the younger dancers at our studio, including some of my students, got to watch us dance and cheer us on. It was great to get to show them what they could do some day and to have their support.”

## **Lillian Ross** ~ *Rince na Gréine*

“My favorite memory was visiting my current studio for the first time. As soon as we arrived in the door, I knew it was where I wanted to be. My coach has the biggest smile and I felt at home when I was there.”

## **Greta Seyfarth** ~ *O’Shea Irish Dance*

“I love getting to travel to competitions with my friends and winning fourth for my trad set at Oireachtas.”

## **Reghan Sikorksi** ~ *McNulty School of Irish Dance (Bloomington, ID), Caitrin Academy of Irish Dance (PA), O’Shea Irish Dance, Rince na Chroí*

“Reghan has enjoyed performing in schools, pubs and community events. Being able to bring joy through dance to others is my favorite part. A funny memory happened while dancing at a pub in Farmington, MN. Right as a server walked by with a tray full of drinks, I stepped forward to do a high kick and knocked all the drinks to the floor. It was both a mess and funny all at the same time.”

## **Grace Sims** ~ *Eilís Academy of Irish Dance*

“Favorite memories of Irish dance are dancing with Ring of Kerry, competing at Oireachtas, St. Patrick’s Day and all of the fun shows leading up to St. Patrick’s Day as well as doing Irish Fair every year. Additionally, that moment when you finally get your first solo outfit.”

## **Austin Sween** ~ *O’Shea Irish Dance*

“When I did my first team. I remember having so much fun dancing with all my friends and that helped build relationships that last still to this day.”

## **Henry Sween** ~ *O’Shea Irish Dance*

“My favorite Irish dance memory was when I qualified to dance at the World Championships.”

## **Chelsea Vaglica** ~ *Mactír Academy of Irish Dance*

“My favorite memory of Irish dance was when I qualified for solos at Oireachtas after only been in PC (Preliminary Championship) for two months.”







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## Educational Grants Available for the students of Irish Arts

By Jan Casey

The Twin Cities Irish community is rich with opportunities to participate in Irish cultural events of all kinds – music, dance, language, and more. The Irish Music and Dance Association is delighted to be able to encourage the study of the traditional arts of Ireland by making funds available for additional study in many areas of Irish culture.

The IMDA Educational Grant program is designed to give a helping hand to students who have already made a commitment to their art – whether it be Irish dance, Irish music, learning the Irish language or whatever interests the student. The grants are typically between \$300 and \$700 and are available for use in 2022 and 2023. The IMDA asks the recipients to bring their new skills back to the community by participating in an IMDA event. As they continue to learn and grow, the recipients add to the vitality of our community and help to preserve these traditions for future generations.

Students of any age are eligible, with their application including the recommendation of a teacher or elder in the community who is familiar with their work. The 2022 application deadline is April 15, 2022.

Previous recipients range in age from 8 years old to adult and include musicians, dancers, Irish language students, and a costume designer. They have used their grants for tuition to programs near and far, for travel expenses and to help with the purchase of their own musical instrument.

Here are a couple of examples among recent recipients:

**Dancer Brenda Gant** of Wayzata, who dances with the *Hudson Academy of Irish Dance* in Wayzata, used her grant for preparation and travel to Nationals.

**Musician Adrienne O’Shea** of Mendota Heights is using her grant to help with the expenses associated with recording her debut album which showcases her singing and flute and whistle playing.

**Musicians Joe DeGeorgeo** and **Morien McBurnie**, both of Minneapolis, used their grants for travel expenses that allowed them to attend FleadhFest 2021 in Sligo, Ireland.

**Harpist Hannah Flowers** of Forest Lake used her grant to study a new instrument – the fiddle. Hannah felt “that learning another instrument, the fiddle, to a high level will help me gain a deeper knowledge of dance tunes and melody playing and improve my musicianship.”

If you are interested or know a student of one of the traditional arts of Ireland who would be, look for the program description and the 2022 application on the IMDA website - [www.imda-mn.org/educationalgrants.html](http://www.imda-mn.org/educationalgrants.html)

*Jan Casey coordinates IMDA’s Educational Grant Program.*



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## IMDA EDUCATIONAL GRANTS AVAILABLE

**Money for Mu\$ic  
Dollar\$ for Dance  
Ca\$h for Cultural Study**

- Students of any age are eligible
- Previous grants have been for tuition, travel, time to study and instrument purchase
- Previous recipients include dancers, singers, musicians, Irish language students and a costume designer

**Apply by April 15, 2022  
Funds to be used by the end of 2023**

**APPLICATIONS AT [WWW.IMDA-MN.ORG](http://WWW.IMDA-MN.ORG)**



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## The Gaelic Corner- By Will Kenny

Until relatively recently in its history, Ireland was very much a rural, agricultural society. That meant, of course, that domestic and farm animals were part of daily life. As a result, there are plenty of idioms based on these animals, many of which we have sampled from time to time in this column.



But this month I'd like to explore animal conversations, if you will. For these animals communicate with one another, and their human owners communicate with them as well.

In English, we can hear a "dog barking" (*madra ag tafann*), a "hen clucking" (*cearc ag sclugaíl*), a "pig grunting" (*muc ag gnúsachtach*). For the most part, Irish works like English, with different words for the sounds different animals make.

The one wrinkle that comes to mind is with animals that "bleat." In English, both goats and sheep "bleat." But in Irish, they apparently bleat with somewhat different accents. When that cute little lamb is bleating away, that is *méileach*. But when a goat is bleating, that's *meigeallach*. (And a man who is wearing a goatee is also referred to as *meigeallach*, *meigeall* meaning a "goat's beard" whether it is on a goat or on a human.)

What is perhaps more interesting is the way English speakers and Irish speakers talk to animals. One of the most striking observations I've come across on this topic was a mention in an account by the famous bilingual writer Breandán Ó hEithir. He was writing about his boyhood (early 1940s) in the Aran Islands, a largely Irish speaking community. He mentioned, in passing, that it was the custom to speak English to horses and dogs, but to speak Irish to cattle and cats!

And that is not the only interesting thing about, as Dr. Doolittle might say, talking to the animals. Although we don't think about it much in a modern, urban environment, talking to animals is something all of us have done, and we know that there are different calls for different animals.

So if someone shouting, "Come! C'mon, boy!" there's a good chance there's a dog involved. I can't see anyone yelling that to a cat, much less various farm animals. And even us city-dwellers can imagine chanting, "Here, chick, chick, chick" when it is time to feed the poultry.

In the rural Ireland of some time ago, naturally, people who spoke to the animals enjoyed, shall we say, a diverse audience.

The call of *Pis! Pis!* ("pish! pish!") is used to get a cat's attention. It is no coincidence that the words *pisín* ("pish-eeen") or *piscín* ("pish-keen") mean "kitten." But a dog was more likely to hear *Sas! Sas!* ("sahs").

At least in the old days, there were fine distinctions among the farmyard birds as well. *Tiuc! Tiuc!* (close to "chuck") might be used to gather the chickens, but the ducks got *Fíni! Fíni!* ("fee-nee"), while the geese heard *Beadai! Beadaí!* ("baddy").

And what do these creatures say back? English-speaking ducks clearly enunciate "Quack! Quack!", as everyone knows. But Irish-speaking ducks are more likely to say *Vác! Vác!* ("vawk").

So if you have tried talking to the animals and had little success, maybe you have simply been using the wrong vocabulary.

I don't know what sound to make to call together current and new learners of the language, so I'll just tell you that the Irish College at Celtic Junction, in collaboration with Gaeltacht Minnesota, is offering an Irish language workshop April 22-24. This will get you started if you've never studied the language, or enhance your skills no matter what level of ability you currently enjoy.

Links for more information about the workshop can be found on our home page [www.gaelminn.org](http://www.gaelminn.org).

*Ná díol do chearc sa lá fliuch.*  
"Do not sell your hen on a wet day", or perhaps,  
"Put your best foot forward"



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## TUNE OF THE MONTH

### The Blackberry Blossom

*reel*

G G G am  
G/B D G G am D  
G G D G am D  
G G D em am D

Spring is getting underway and soon we'll be seeing all sorts of fruit and berry blossoms! Wild blackberries are common in both Ireland and the United States, so it's no wonder there is a tune that pays them homage. This reel shares the name with a popular fiddle/bluegrass breakdown, and has been recorded many times as far back as 1916 (accordion player John Kimmel), and James Morrison on *From Ballymote to Brooklyn* in 1936, and more recently on *Life is All Checkered* by Nathan Gourley, Laura Fedderson, and Brian Miller.

Respectfully submitted by Rosa Wells on behalf of the Center for Irish Music (CIM), a traditional Irish music school based in St. Paul, located inside the Celtic Junction Arts Center. We publish a tune each month with dots (sheet music), suggested chords and some basic background information including how CIM is connected to the tune. To hear a recording of the tunes or to print sheet music, go to the archive under 'resources' on the Center for Irish Music website: [www.centerforirishmusic.org](http://www.centerforirishmusic.org)



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## **An Leabhragan**    *(The Bookcase)*

**Nora: A Love Story of Nora and James Joyce** —Nuala O'Connor  
*Harper Perennial 2021*

In 1904 Nora Barnacle was working as a maid at Finn's Hotel in Dublin. A practical, no-nonsense working girl, her life was changed forever on a June day when she met James Joyce, fledgling author and poet. Theirs was to be a lifelong love, in spite of frequent uprootings two steps ahead of unpaid rent, travels, rising fame for Jim, hangers-on, famous friends and rivals, drunken revels. Through the years of change and upheavals Nora was the constant north-star who kept her Jim on track and often, alive (Joyce suffered from many physical ailments, including eye diseases, indigestion, bilious liver, and other maladies, through which Nora nursed him).

A beauty at twenty when Joyce met Nora, she retained her vitality through the decades, causing Joyce bouts of jealousy and self-doubt. His was the literary genius; hers was the art of survival through periods of child-rearing, poverty, flits from abandoned rentals, uncertain literary successes. Labeled "filthy" and anti-Christian, Joyce's books were rejected four times as often as they were accepted for publication, especially in Catholic-ruled Ireland and Puritan-founded America. Somehow, love and loyalty to each other survived, despite James and Nora's obvious class differences and personalities. Nuala O'Connor has invented believable dialogues and daily life between these two near-mythical Irish figures. She has brought the period of 1904 to 1951 to vivid and colorful life, through two world wars, unrest and changes in Ireland and the world. Dublin-born herself, Nuala O'Connor understands Joyce's love of---and exile from---his beloved Dublin. She builds a portrait of this Irish couple as real and believable as any written. Nora is a terrific read and could have as easily been titled *Nora: Portrait Of an Artist's Wife As A Force of Nature*.

*Sherry Ladig is a Saint Paul-based trad musician and a former reviewer for the Hungry Mind Bookstore's newsletter, Fodder. Sherry welcomes ideas for books of Irish or Irish American interest to review, or - write a review yourself! Sherry may be reached at [ladig-dunquin@msn.com](mailto:ladig-dunquin@msn.com). Happy midwinter reading!*



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## Northwoods Songs: Irish Songs from Lumberjacks and Great Lakes Sailors

By Brian Miller

### The Town Passage



The Town [of] Pas-sage is large and spa-cious and si-tu - at-ed u - pon the say, It is nate and



da-cent and qui-et ad - ja - cent to the cove of Cork - on a sum-mer day; There you can



slip in\_\_ to take a dip - ping for-ninst the ship-ping\_\_ that at an - chor ride, Or in a



wher-ry\_\_ cross o'er the fer - ry to Ca - re - goloe\_\_ on the oth - er side

The Town Passage is large and spacious and situated upon the say,  
It is nate and dacent and quiet, adjacent to the cove of Cork on a summer day;  
There you can slip in to take a dipping forninst the shipping that at anchor ride,  
Or in a wherry cross o'er the ferry to Caregoloe on the other side.

Mud cabins swarm in this place so charming with sailors' garments hung out to dry,  
And each abode is snug and commodious with pigs melodious in their straw-built sty;  
Oh, the pigs are sleek and well contented, their odor fragrant it scents the air,  
Oh, the beef and biskie, the pork and whisky, it would make you frisky if you were there.

It's there the turf is and lots of Murphies; Dead Spratts and Herring and Oyster Shells,  
Nor any lack of good tobacco, but what is smuggled by far excels;

It's there you'd see Peg Murphy's daughter peeling praties forninst the dure,  
With me aunt Delaney and Bridget Haney, all blood relations to Lord Donoughmore.

There is ships from Cadiz and from the Barbadoes, but the lading trade is in whiskey punch,  
Or you can go in to where one Molly Bowen kapes a nate hotel for a quiet lunch;  
But land or deck on you can safely reckon, whatever country that you came from,  
On an invitation to a jollification by a parish priest called Father Tom.

Of ships there is one fixed for lodging convicts, a floating stone jug of amazing bulk,  
And the hake and salmon playing at Back Gamon swim for diversion all around her hull;  
There English peelers keep brave repalers who soon with sailors must anchor weigh,  
From the Emerald Island ne'er to see dry land until they spy land in Botany Bay.



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“The Town Passage” (aka “The Town of Passage”) is one of a tight-knit family of songs, all sharing the same melody and poetic style, that came out of eastern County Cork in the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. The first song in the chain seems to have been one written by a forgotten poet in praise of the famous Castlehyde in Fermoy which was composed by a local poet in the late 1700s when the building was newly built. (Castlehyde was the seat of the Hyde family that would later produce Ireland’s first president Douglas Hyde. It is also currently owned by famed Irish-American dancer Michael Flatley!)

Another Cork poet, Richard Alfred Millikin (b. 1767) is believed to have taken “Castlehyde” as a model for his song “The Groves of Blarney” which he composed around 1798 in honor of that town located southwest of Castlehyde and just northwest of Cork City. Millikin’s song became a sensation among the singing classes of Ireland and crossed the ocean to North America where it was printed on song sheets. Thomas Moore (b. 1779) took the melody from “The Groves of Blarney” for his hit “The Last Rose of Summer” around 1805. Moore’s song is not related to Cork aside from taking this melody.



A third Cork poet, Francis Sylvester Mahony (aka Father Prout, b. 1804) used the melody and style of “The Groves of Blarney” in 1834 to create “The Bells of Shandon” – the only song in the bunch to celebrate an icon within Cork City itself. “The Bells” is also more earnest in tone with less of the tongue-in-cheek faux-praise present in “Castlehyde” and “The Groves of Blarney.”

Interestingly, poet Mahony/Father Prout returned to the more light-hearted approach when he created yet another song “The Town of Passage” to the same melody and form. Passage (now called Passage West) is just southeast of Cork City on the way to Cobh. This song was printed by Thomas Crofton Croker in 1839.

“The Town of Passage” has not been found often in tradition. It does, however, turn up in Michael Dean’s 1922 songster printed here in Minnesota! Above I have married Dean’s text to the melody used for an oral tradition version of “The Groves of Blarney” collected in Newfoundland in 1975 by Aidan O’Hara from the singing of Ellen Emma Power. You can hear Power’s singing at [itma.ie](http://itma.ie).

Father Prout aka Rev. F. Mahony from  
*The Final Reliques of Father Prout.*

*Northwoods Songs features a new song each month pulled from my research into old songs collected in the pine woods region that stretches from New Brunswick west through northern Minnesota. In the 1800s, a vibrant culture of singing and song-making developed in lumber camp bunkhouses and on Great Lakes ships. The repertoire and singing style were greatly influenced by Irish folk repertoire and singing styles. Many singers in the region had Irish background themselves.*

*Each installment of Northwoods Songs is also published online at [www.evergreentrad.com](http://www.evergreentrad.com). My hope is that others will learn some of these songs and make them their own as I have. -Brian Miller*





# Irish Music & Dance Association

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## Smidiríní\*

(\*Irish for 'Bits and Pieces')  
by Copper Shannon

*Comhghairdeas le (Congratulations to) Evan Lowe* who won the Áine O'Shea Memorial Cup in the over 18 hard shoe special and placed 6th over all in the over 18 championships (with almost 40 competitors) in the Áine O'Shea Memorial Feis in Dublin Ireland. Evan dances with O'Shea Irish Dance.

*Comhghairdeas le (Congratulations to) Dáithí Sproule* and the traditional Irish group **Skara Brae**. Skara Brae is receiving the Gradam Ceoil - Grúpa Ceoil TG4 Music Group Award. The awards, now in their 25th year, recognize those who have advanced, strengthened and preserved traditional music in Ireland. Each year, an independent panel of selectors chooses six award-winners in the categories of: Young Musician; Singer; Hall of Fame; Composer; the Musicians' Award; and the main award of Traditional Musician of the Year. **Paddy O'Brien** is a previous recipient.

"A new award introduced this year; the Music Group 2022 goes to Skara Brae. Skara Brae's emergence in the early 1970's rejuvenated an interest in Irish traditional singing at a time when it was in danger of dying out. They produced a unique, ground-breaking sound which challenged the traditional view of sean-nós singing but remains fresh and innovative to this day. Skara Brae are sisters and brother Tríona, Maighread and Mícheál Ó Domhnaill (1951-2006) and Dáithí Sproule. Skara Brae's distinctive sound is rooted in the tradition whilst also taking inspiration from emerging pop and folk acts of the 1960's such as The Beatles, Bob Dylan, and Joan Baez. A new, young emerging audience were grabbed by Skara Brae's raw, edgy, fresh sound and their 1971 album continues to inspire generations of traditional Irish singers and musicians to this day."

## Looking for the IMDA Community Calendar?

The IMDA Community Calendar is your go-to place to find out what's happening in Irish music, dance, literature and cultural events in the Twin Cities and beyond.

Find it at [www.imda-mn.org/calendar](http://www.imda-mn.org/calendar).

The calendar on our website is updated often – and is “searchable” for your favorite artist, venue or type of event. Check it out – and return often!

The Center for Irish Music – Come check us out at  
The Celtic Junction Arts Center  
836 Prior Avenue, St Paul MN

*Please check the website for information on our full range of instruction in traditional Irish music, language, culture and fun.*

For class schedule and other information call or email  
651-815-0083 [admin@centerforirishmusic.org](mailto:admin@centerforirishmusic.org)

Or visit our website  
[www.centerforirishmusic.org](http://www.centerforirishmusic.org)

Dedicated to Handing Down the Tradition  
[www.IMDA-MN.org](http://www.IMDA-MN.org)





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## Irish Arts Week and new classes from CJAC's Irish College of Minnesota

*The Celtic Junction Arts Center (CJAC) is expanding both its in-person and virtual educational offerings during Irish Arts Week, April 18-May 1.*

Building on the success of CJAC's Irish College of Minnesota and its collaboration with Gaeltacht MN, the first-ever *Deireadh Seachtaine Gaeilge* (Irish Language Weekend) will be held in-person at The Celtic Junction on April 22-24. Registration is open to all levels of Irish speakers, including those brand new to the language, and can be found at [celticjunction.org/DSG-2022](http://celticjunction.org/DSG-2022).



The Irish Arts Week is a community festival to share Irish arts, culture, and more with the public. Program offerings include free online educational classes, free in-person dance classes, hybrid concerts, Agus & Im (an in-person bread-making experience in the Irish language), and more. Information on all activities can be found at [celticjunction.org/IAW-2022](http://celticjunction.org/IAW-2022). Visitors from CJAC's sister organization, Aonach Mhacha in Armagh, Northern Ireland, are even coming to St. Paul to participate!

CJAC's Irish College of Minnesota launches its spring quarter on April 9. Expect a variety of classes in Irish, history, literature, spirituality, musicology, poetry, mythology, and the Celtic creative arts. Classes range from one to sixteen sessions and are available on a rolling basis. All classes are currently scheduled to be online. Browse classes at [celticjunction.org/college/](http://celticjunction.org/college/).

The Celtic Junction Arts Center (CJAC) is a 501c3 non-profit art and cultural center located in the Midway neighborhood of Saint Paul, MN. Voted "Best Irish Center/Festival in North America" by Irish Central's Creativity and Arts Awards, CJAC hosts concerts, classes, and events. CJAC is home to several independent organizations including the Center for Irish Music, the Irish Fair of Minnesota, and O'Shea Irish Dance. Learn more at [celticjunction.org](http://celticjunction.org).



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## Deireadh Seachtaine Gaeilge *Irish Language Weekend in Saint Paul*



**April 22-24**

**Tosaitheoirí go  
Cainteoirí Líofa**  
*Beginners to Advanced*

[celticjunction.org/DSG-2022](http://celticjunction.org/DSG-2022)

*Presented by CJAC's Irish College of MN and Gaeltacht MN*  
Held at Celtic Junction Arts Center, 836 Prior Ave N, St Paul, MN 55104

**REGISTER  
NOW FOR**

**SPRING CLASSES**  
[CELTICJUNCTION.ORG/COLLEGE](http://celticjunction.org/college)

[www.IMDA-MN.org](http://www.IMDA-MN.org)



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## IMDA Members and Donors

**The Irish Music and Dance Association wishes to thank these members for their support:**

Teresa McCormick  
Mike O'Connor  
Kelly Rynda

**New and renewing supporting members will receive the following:**

- A one-year (January to December 2022) subscription to the IMDA's monthly email.
- "Priority listing" for bands, organizations, pubs and businesses in our popular on-line Community Resources Directory, used by people who are seeking local Irish musicians, bands, dancers and entertainers for performances, ethnic festivals, and other events.
- Public recognition in a section of future IMDA newsletters and in related posts to the IMDA web site and Facebook page.

### **IMDA Board**

President	Amber Ladany
Vice President	Jan Casey
Treasurer	Maureen Engelhardt
Secretary	Cindy Ladany
Newsletter Editor	Bridget Dinter
Board Member	Michele Berg

### **Newsletter Submissions**

We welcome our readers to submit articles of interest, news, and notices of events to be published in the newsletter. The deadline is the 18th of the preceding month.

Send to: [editor@irishmusicanddanceassociation.org](mailto:editor@irishmusicanddanceassociation.org)

**Questions? Comments? Contact Us!**

[info@irishmusicanddanceassociation.org](mailto:info@irishmusicanddanceassociation.org)

[www.IMDA-MN.org](http://www.IMDA-MN.org)



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**Ceili CORNER** By Bhloscaidh O'Keane  
Check [www.lomamor.org](http://www.lomamor.org) for all up-to-date Irish folk dancing information.



## IMDA Membership

Demonstrate your support of live Irish music, dance and cultural activities by becoming a member of the Irish Music and Dance Association. Become a supporting member by making a financial contribution. Member bands, businesses and organizations receive priority listing in the IMDA Community Resources List.

All IMDA members receive the newsletter by e-mail.

<b>Name:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
<b>Address:</b>	<b>How did you hear about us?</b>
<b>Membership Type (circle one)</b> Individual \$20 _____ Family \$25 _____ by US Mail \$35 _____ Band/Organization/Business \$25 _____ Name _____ (Name of Band/Organization/Business)	
<b>Interests (circle all that apply)</b> Music      Dance      Theatre      Language      Volunteer	
<b>E-mail Address:</b> _____ <b>Phone Number:</b> _____ Your monthly newsletter is delivered electronically via e-mail. Please advise us at <a href="mailto:info@IrishMusicandDanceAssociation.org">info@IrishMusicandDanceAssociation.org</a> if your e-mail address changes .	
Supporting members who contribute \$35+ annually may receive their newsletter by U S Mail. ___ Request US Mail Tear out the above form and send it with a check made out to "IMDA" to: The IMDA Membership Coordinator c/o Jan Casey 400 Macalester St. St. Paul, MN 55105 Or visit the IMDA website ( <a href="http://www.imda.org">www.imda.org</a> ) to pay electronically.	

[www.IMDA-MN.org](http://www.IMDA-MN.org)