

The mission of Irish Arts Minnesota is to support and promote Irish music, dance, and other cultural traditions to ensure their continuation.



IAM Honors Tom Klein – Don’t Miss It!

The IAM Honors evenings are a lovely tradition – the opportunity to recognize the very special people who “keep the fires burning” – helping to ensure that Irish music and dance continue to thrive in our community. Be sure that “IAM Honors Tom Klein” is on your calendar for **Nov. 11 at the Celtic Junction Arts Center**.

We have lots of music planned for the evening – Tom will perform with his musical friends from the McNordiques and his old friends from the Clumsy Lovers will re-gather, too! Add in some IAM Educational Grant recipients – it promises to be a great evening.

Tickets are \$15 and [are available in advance through the Celtic Junction](#) or at the door. Bring a dessert to share, and there is a cash bar. Proceeds help to fund the IAM Educational Grant program.

See you at the Celtic Junction!



Irish Dancer Keen to Pass on her Love of Irish Dance

By Jan Casey

Dancer Julia Ross, 18, of Champlin, has been dancing since she was four. She learned tap and ballet before discovering Irish dance. Julia dances and teaches with Rince na Gréine in Hopkins. A champion dancer (“Craobhgrád”), Julia has competed in National championships, as well as winning in the Canadian Open Championships and in the Australian Open Championships. Julia teaches Irish dance and hopes to become a certified teacher (“Oide Damhsa Cumann Rince Naisiunta” or ODCRN), through the program offered by Cumann Rince Náisiúnta (CRN).

Julia tells us that “My teaching journey is probably the most important part of my dance career to me.” Having begun as a 13-year-old assistant, Julia now teaches on her own with Rince na Gréine. She tells us that teaching is important to her for many reasons. She is delighted to be able to share her passion for Irish dance, saying “I love getting new kids involved with Irish dance, and watching them fall in love with it the way I have. I have helped young students learn their first steps, perform for an audience for the very first time, and win their first medals in competition.”

Julia used her IAM Educational Grant for travel to Ireland this last summer for the CRN World Open Irish Dance Championships in Killarney, Ireland. This was Julia’s first trip to Ireland and her first time at a world competition. Julia used the trip to start her teacher training, the perfect opportunity as the only certified CRN teacher trainers are in Ireland. This is the beginning of a long process for Julia, requiring extensive study as well as a significant amount of time teaching to achieve her goal.

Julia has performed extensively in the community, including at IAM’s Day of Irish Dance, Irish Fair, and community festivals as well as performing with bands Ring of Kerry and JigJam.

Her recommender tells us that Julia is a devoted and respected teacher, ready to go the extra mile for her dancers. Her recommender advises that Julia “takes initiative when she sees something that needs to be done or a dancer that needs extra help, which ensures that all dancers get the attention and help that they need.” And Julia is engaged with her dancers, paying attention to their interests and lives outside the studio. Her recommender feels that “Julia already has all the qualities of an amazing dance teacher, and the clear next step for her is working towards her ODCRN.”

Irish Arts Minnesota is delighted to help this dedicated dancer continue to grow as a dancer and as a teacher.

Jan Casey serves on the IAM board and coordinates the IAM Educational Grant Program.





Irish Arts Minnesota

November
2022
Samhain

40th Year, Issue No. 11

November Reminders: Cross Culture Exchange and Give to the Max Day!

Cross Cultural Exchange Applications - Deadline November 15

Starting March 2018, Irish Arts Minnesota (IAM) added a new cross-cultural component to the programming for its Landmark Center activities on St. Patrick's Day weekend. Exposure to the music, dance, and customs of ethnic groups other than one's own can help bridge gaps, foster understanding, and promote mutual respect. The IAM Cross-Cultural Grant provides funding for unique, collaborative projects that showcase the rich traditions of communities the world over.

Details on the application process, including required forms, are available on the Irish Arts Minnesota website - www.IrishArtsMN.org.

Written proposals regarding joint cross-cultural performance pieces will be accepted via email by IAM through 11:59 pm on November 15, 2022. Proposals and questions should be sent to info@irishartsmn.org.

The maximum award amount is \$1,500.

Support Irish Arts Minnesota
on Nov. 17



www.irishartsmn.org



Irish Arts Minnesota

November
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40th Year, Issue No. 11

Help IAM Design the 2023 Irish Dancer T-Shirts!

Have a clever idea? Share it with Irish Arts Minnesota for our special edition Dancer T-Shirt. Sales of these t-shirts benefit IAM's Educational Grant Program as well as helping to strengthen our local Irish dance community.

Last year, we asked for help from the community to develop a design and had a great response to the challenge. Dancer **Ava Motl**'s striking design was selected! We would love to do it again!

The contest is open to anyone regardless of age.

The prize:

- Bragging rights
- \$50 in cash
- One of the t-shirts that **you** helped design

Considerations:

As you think about this, please keep a couple of things in mind.

- Generally, our designs have been line drawings and graphics in one color on a colored shirt. You select the color shirt and the print color.
- Don't use copyrighted graphics or images.
- Think about a design that will appeal to everyone- all genders and ages.
- Complete rules and release form are available through Irish Arts Minnesota's Facebook page.
- Submit entry to Grants@Irishartsmn.org
-

This is a fundraiser for Irish Arts Minnesota's Educational Grant Program, so we're looking for a design with broad appeal.

Put on your thinking cap and submit a design by Nov. 15, 2022.

The Gaelic Corner- By Will Kenny

Heads up! This column is all about, well, your head.



Ceann is the Irish word typically used to translate "head," in the literal sense of a part of your body. But in either language, we probably refer to the "head" in more idiomatic ways as much as we do the body part.

If you take a tumble "head over heels" in English, that will be *tóin thar ceann*, or "butt past head," in Irish. And while you may be covered "from head to foot" with something, in Irish that will be *ó mhullach go sáil*, meaning "from summit to heel." Of course, the "summit" or "highest point" of your body is your head.

Ceann and "head" map reasonably well in a number of more figurative expressions. When we say of some lad, *Tá sé ramhar sa cheann*, we pretty much mean that "He is fat in the head" and that he doesn't pick up subtleties. And if we note that, *Chuaigh sé ina ceann di*, we mean, "It went to her head," whether we're talking about praise and flattery turning her head, or simply about that third glass of wine.

As you would expect, "He has a good head on him," *Tá ceann maith air*, refers not to his physical head, but to the fact that he is smart. And if a woman has a "long head," *ceann fada*, it again is not the shape that's in question. It means she is far-seeing, that she looks ahead.

We all know that "holding your head high" indicates confidence, and even pride. In Irish, we go so far as to say, *Tá a cheann sa spéir aige*, "He has his head in the sky," very high indeed!

By contrast, when someone has a *ceann faoi*, "head under," that person is downcast or even ashamed. Indeed, to put someone's head *ceann faoi* is to "humiliate" that person. After that, we might say *Níl tógáil a chinn aige*, "He has no lifting of his head" to express, "He is utterly disgraced."

Nor are humans the only things that have heads in these two languages: *ceann tairne* quite literally means the "head of a nail," for instance, and *ceann teaghlaigh* very directly expresses "head of household." *Ceannlíne* is a straightforward translation of a "headline," while the "headlight" on your car is a *ceannsolas*.

Coins have "heads" as well, when calling "heads or tails." But in Irish that "call" has traditionally been *ceann nó cláirseach*,

Is fearr maol ná bheith gan cheann
"Better to be bald than to be without a head"

literally, "head or harp." Of course, up until the Euro came in, Irish coins carried an image of a harp on one side.

When we say we "can't make head nor tail" of something, we don't refer to the coin and the harp. We might say, *Ní féidir liom bun ná barr a fháil air*, "I can't get bottom or top of it." But we might also say, *Ní féidir liom tóin ná ceann le fáil agam air*, "I can't get bottom (your body's bottom) or head of it."

Ceann is a tricky word for students for a couple of reasons. One is that it appears in several forms, using grammatical "cases" that few Irish words use. Depending on grammatical context, *ceann* might look like *cinn* or *cionn*. Another is that besides meaning "head," *ceann* is commonly used to express "one" (as in "one of them," *ceann acu*), or "end" (of a rope, street, etc.), or even the roof of a house.

So in the saying, *Is fearr dhá chloigeann ná ceann*, that *ceann* is the "one" meaning. The noun *cloigeann*, literally meaning "skull", is used for "head" in this saying, which translates, "Two heads are better than one." *Cloigeann* is probably used more often to refer to a "head" than in its original meaning of "skull."

That saying is accurate, of course. Indeed that's *chomh cinnte is atá ceann ar do mhúineál*, "as sure as it is that you have a head on your neck." I'd even go so far as to say, *Mura fíor é bain an ceann díomsa*, "If it's not true, (you can) take my head off!"

And what do we say when we deal with a person who reacts angrily and "bites your head off"? We use that *cloigeann* here, again, *an cloigeann a bhaint de dhuine*. But in Irish, it is also common to say, *an tsrón a bhaint de dhuine*: "to bite off a person's nose"!

We're mild mannered folks at Gaeltacht Minnesota who won't bite off anything! Check us out at www.gaelminn.org.

TUNE OF THE MONTH

Tuamgraney Castle



Am Am C C D G

5 Am Am C C G 1. Am 2. Am

10 Am Am G 1. G

14 Am Am G Am

18 2. G Am Am C C G Am

In honor of Martin McHugh, accordion player and pillar of the local Irish community whom we lost last month, this tune is selected from his album *The Master's Choice* and was often played by him at local sessions. Marty was a mentor and a source of encouragement to many generations of young Irish musicians and several of his favorite tunes are included in the CIM Common Repertoire collections. This hornpipe has been played in sessions for decades, with perhaps its first transcription appearing in *O'Neill's 1001: The Dance Music of Ireland*, published in 1907. Its name refers to a tower in East County Clare constructed by the O'Grady family in the 15th century. Tuamgraney is derived from the Irish "Tuaim Gréine," meaning "Tomb of Gráinne."

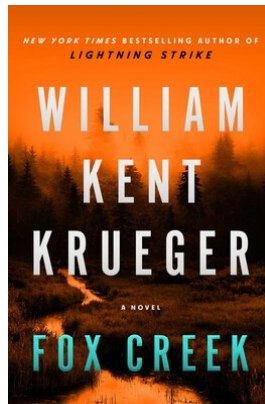
Respectfully submitted by Rosa Wells on behalf of the Center for Irish Music (CIM), a traditional Irish music school based in St. Paul, located inside the Celtic Junction Arts Center. We publish a tune each month with dots (sheet music), suggested chords and some basic background information including 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



836 Prior Ave North, St. Paul MN 55104

On Leabhragan (The Bookcase)

Fox Creek — William Kent Krueger — *Atria/Simon & Schuster 2022*



Although Cork O'Connor is officially retired you can't keep a policeman from getting involved solving a kidnapping and abduction case. Particularly when his wife Rainy and the ancient Ojibwe healer Henry Meloux are taken at the same time that Henry's student is abducted. Winter is coming soon to the North Country, snowstorms are predicted at any time. Time is running out to track the mysterious group of hunters and Native tracker who have taken the three hostages. Behind the kidnapping is a dark organization bent on stealing northern wilderness to exploit its natural resources. The kidnapped woman somehow holds the key to the riches the mercenaries are seeking.

In this twenty-second book in the popular Cork O'Connor mystery series set in the far North Woods of Minnesota, Kent Krueger does not disappoint. Readers have come to expect a thrilling plot, believable and relatable characters (especially the Anishinaabe friends, relatives, and colleagues who populate the books) and a deep sense of community in the North Woods, a community frequently threatened by outside evil and greed. One of the best characters is *mide* (healer) Henry Meloux, a wise elder at least one hundred years old, and undisputed spiritual leader of his tribe as well as healer to all residents of Aurora, Minnesota. When Henry, his pupil, and Cork's wife all disappear at the same time, Cork enlists the help of local law enforcement and a tracker to find the hostages before the harsh conditions threaten their lives. But it seems the hunters and their prey are going deeper into the woods as the snow begins to fall heavily and fast. Can Cork find them before the winter claims them all? And what is the motive behind the abductions, mere corporate greed or a high-level governmental coverup?

As winter knocks on our own door, I can't think of a better read for the season than *Fox Creek*. You will want to take a short hike on a well-marked trail and then curl up in front of a fire with hot chocolate, a cat or dog friend, and this book. After you've enjoyed this one, I suggest a ramble through all the Cork O'Connor mystery series books, beginning with *Iron Lake*. You won't find more entertaining winter reading!

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, Irish-American, or local interest to review, or---write a review yourself! She may be reached at ladig-dunquin@msn.com. Happy November reading!

Northwoods Songs: Irish Songs from Lumberjacks and Great Lakes Sailors

By Brian Miller

My Eileen is Waiting for Me



I am al - ways light - heart - ed and ea - sy - , not a care in the wor - ld have
I , Be - cause I am loved by a Co - leen - - - I -
could - n't help like if I'd try ; She lives - - far a - way - - o'er the
moun - tains - where the lit - tle thrush sings in the tree , In a
ca - bin all co - vered with i - vy - - - my Ei - leen is wait - ing for
me . It's o - ver yes o - ver the moun - tain - - where the lit - tle thrush
sings in the tree , In a ca - bin all co - vered with i - vy - -
- my - Ei - leen is wait - ing for me .

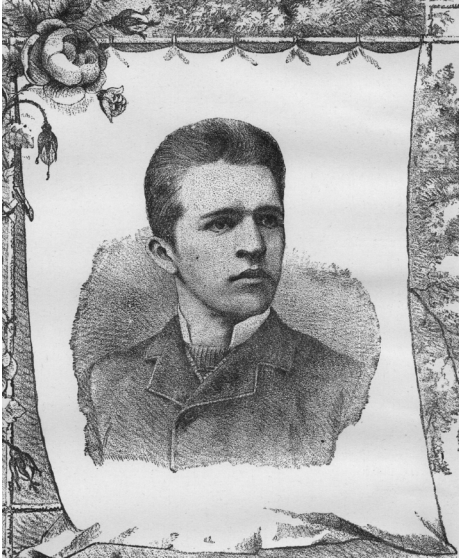
I am always light hearted and easy, not a care in the wide world
have I,
Because I am loved by a Coleen I couldn't help like if I'd try;
She lives away over the mountains where the little thrush sings in
the tree,
In a cabin all covered with ivy my Eileen is waiting for me.

Chorus

It's over, yes over the mountain where the little thrush sings in the
tree,
In a cabin all covered with ivy my Eileen is waiting for me.

The day I bid good-bye to Eileen, that day I will never forget,
How the tears bubbled up from their slumber, I fancy I'm seeing
them yet;
They looked like the pearls in the ocean as she wept those tears of
love,
Saying, "Barney, my boy, don't forget me until we meet again here
or above."

Though mountains and seas may divide us and friends like the
flowers come and go,
Still these thoughts of my Eileen will cheer me and comfort
wherever I go,
For the imprints of love and devotion, surrounded by thoughts that
are pure,
Will serve as a guide to the sailor while sailing the wild ocean o'er.



William J. Scanlan. From the cover of the sheet music for "Over the Mountain" available from the Library of Congress at [loc.gov](https://www.loc.gov)

recording by Uncle Dave Macon and a rewrite, by Fiddlin' John Carson, called "The Grave of Little Mary Fagan."

Dean's melody is unrecorded but Abbott sang it to a similar melody to that used by Martin McHugh. The above is a marriage of Dean's words from 1922 with McHugh's melody circa 2022 (based on McHugh's album *The Master's Choice*.)

With the passing of beloved musician Martin McHugh this past month, I chose a song that was a favorite of his. Martin played "My Eileen is Waiting for Me" as a waltz at countless sessions and dances and would sometimes sing bits of the words if you were lucky!

It turns out this song has a long history in Minnesota. Mike Dean printed his version in his 1922 songster *The Flying Cloud* under the title "Allanah is Waiting for Me" (a curious and possibly misprinted title because in Dean's actual song lyric the name is Eileen). It was also in the repertoire of Ontario singer O.J. Abbott who called it "Over the Mountain."

"Over the Mountain" was the original title when, in 1882, the song was composed by celebrity tenor William J. Scanlan, a second generation Irishman from Springfield, Massachusetts. Scanlan sang it in the play "Friend or Foe" which he performed at the Grand Opera House in Saint Paul in April 1885. The song reached Ireland by the early 1900s where it was found in a County Cavan manuscript in 1905. By the 1920s, the song's melody and sections of its lyrics began a new life in American country music after a

GRAND OPERA.
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ENGAGEMENT EXTRAORDINARY
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MR. W. J. SCANLAN,
("PEEK-A-BOO!")
Under the Management of AUGUSTUS PITOU, Supported by a Carefully Selected Company, Presenting
Monday Evening and Wednesday Matinee,
Bartley Campbell's Powerful Drama,
"FRIEND AND FOE."
Tuesday and Wednesday Evenings,
Fred Marsden's Romantic Irish Drama,
"THE IRISH MINSTREL"
HEAR SCANLAN IN HIS POPULAR SONGS.
Prices—Evening, \$1, 75c, 50c and 25c; Matinee, 75c, 50c and 25c

Ad for Scanlan's performances at the Grand Opera House in St. Paul from the April 12, 1885
Minneapolis Sunday Tribune

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. My hope is that others will learn some of these songs and make them their own as I have. -Brian Miller



Martin McHugh

By Sam Dillon

Martin McHugh, an accordionist who kept Irish traditional music alive in Minnesota after a previous generation of players disappeared and, over the decades of music-making that followed, inspired an extraordinary revival with his soulful renditions of jigs, reels and other tunes, died this past week at his home in St. Paul. He was 92.

McHugh emigrated from rural Ireland in the 1940s, joining a community of traditional musicians already playing for immigrant crowds in St. Paul's pubs and dance halls. Over the following two decades, however, older Irish players died, moved away, or indulged other pursuits.

McHugh and his button accordion -- he called it his "box" -- played on for half a century, attracting a following of fervent young admirers. Today St. Paul is well-known for its rich traditional Irish music scene, and people involved in the revival trace its origins to McHugh, the lone survivor of an earlier era.

"Marty was the memory bank who connected us to the living tradition that is Irish music," said Mary MacEachron O'Driscoll, a fiddle player who began learning McHugh's music in the 1970s and played with him for years in a St. Paul-based céilí band.

McHugh's admirers recalled him as an inveterate wise-cracker and teller of often-hilarious yarns about crackpot neighbors, legendary musicians, quirky priests, and others who populated the rural Ireland of his youth.

McHugh learned his music as a child on his family's shared melodeon -- a simple accordion with one row of buttons instead of keys -- working out the fingering to dance melodies he heard on a wind-up gramophone. He eventually developed his own renderings of hundreds of reels, hornpipes, polkas, and other tunes. "His music is sweetly complex, filled with subtle melodeon-style embellishments and bold rhythms, all held within what are often unusual settings of tunes," said Laura MacKenzie, a St. Paul-based flute player and band leader who has transcribed many of McHugh's tunes and produced a 2013 CD of his playing. <https://martinmchugh.com/recordings/>

From the 1950s past the turn of the century, McHugh was the anchor accordionist in a series of Minnesota ensembles. "He was the steady rock at the center of the traditional Irish music scene," said Dáithí Sproule, a Derry guitarist and singer who after emigrating to St. Paul in 1980 frequently accompanied McHugh on stage and in pub sessions. Over the years McHugh played for scores of dances and concerts and occasionally on TV and radio, including in live appearances on Garrison Keillor's *Prairie Home Companion*, but made most of his music informally in bars and living rooms. "Marty was always mainly a session warrior," Sproule said.

McHugh received multiple career-recognition awards and honors over the years from groups including the Irish Music and Dance Association, the Irish Fair of Minnesota, and the Center for Irish Music.

McHugh was born in County Roscommon, Ireland. His birthdate was October 26, 1929 according to people familiar with his official documents. (In his later years, when McHugh was surrounded by people half his age, he often asserted he had been born later.) He was the fifth of seven children born to Alice and Thomas McHugh on a 45-acre farm in Cloondahara near



Martin McHugh (photo by Nick Lethert)

the Roscommon market town of Castlerea. In a 2017 interview with Dáithí Sproule, conducted for the Eoin McKiernan Library in St. Paul, McHugh recalled his rural upbringing. (interview is here: <https://mckiernanlibrary.pastperfectonline.com/archive/3A481F75-44A6-4577-A49D-473779668024>) “We had cattle,” he said. “We had sheep, oats, wheat, barley, potatoes of course, turnips, mangels, rhubarb, cabbage...pigs, guinea hens, a couple of big roosters of course, and dogs – and turf. We used to sell our turf.”

The McHughs had no electricity or indoor plumbing. Martin helped with the chores, which included feeding livestock, milking cows, and riding a horse-drawn reaper to cut grasses for hay. He loved to play Gaelic football.

“I’d work a hard day, and evening out to the pitch,” he told Sproule. He recalled his near-despair when his father barred him from play if bad weather had delayed the harvesting. “I could hear the football, some of the other lads,” he said. “You could hear every kick of the ball. ‘Oh, God, I should be there,’ ” he recalled thinking.

He attended first through seventh grade at the 15-student, three-room Cloonroan National School, a three-mile walk from home. He attended a Christian Brothers School in Castlerea for three more years. “The brothers were vicious,” he said in an August 2021 interview. “They’d be locked up in this country. The brothers had a cane. You’d hold out your hand and they’d give you a thwack. How could any kid learn, with that fear?”

The McHughs were a musical family. His father played the flute, tin whistle, and everyone took turns on a shared melodeon. At five or six years old, Martin was already getting up on the bed with the box and trying to squeeze out tunes. “Driving my mother crazy,” he said. By the time he was a teenager, he was playing the box for school dances.

By the end of World War II, three siblings had already emigrated to England or Scotland. His older brother Mike had gone on from London to America, and by the late 1940s was sending letters back to Cloondahara, gushing with enthusiasm over life in St. Paul. Martin followed, travelling from Roscommon down to Cork to board a Cunard liner for a six-day Atlantic crossing, overnighing with friends in New York, and finally boarding a train westward to Minnesota.

McHugh probably arrived in St. Paul in 1949, he said in the 2021 interview. He took a room in Mike’s apartment. The day after his arrival, he attended a dance sponsored by the Gaelic Athletic League in a hall near the state capital, playing tunes for the crowd on a borrowed button accordion, he said. He had never owned his own box in Ireland, and soon bought the accordion from the man who had lent it.

That was McHugh’s initiation into St. Paul’s Irish community, especially rich at that time with fiddle players. In his earliest months in America McHugh often attended and sometimes played at dances held in venues including Liberty Hall, at Snelling and Selby, and the Irish-American Club at Prior and University.

He earned his first paychecks at a St. Paul factory turning out calendars and greeting cards. He later took jobs as a mail handler at the Union Depot, a seat upholsterer for the Great Northern railroad, and, for many years, as a janitor for the Saint Paul Public Schools.

After the Korean War broke out in June 1950, McHugh was drafted within a few months. He served at U.S. Army bases in Washington, California, Alaska, Oklahoma, New Mexico and Wisconsin before his discharge after two years of service.



Postcard from McHugh to friend Con Sullivan during his time in the U.S. Army



McHugh with the Cooley brothers and Johnny Ó Sé in Chicago

Back in St. Paul, he again began playing his box at Irish dances, usually with one or more fiddle players. During the 1950s, he also made car trips with Minnesota friends to Chicago to hear and play music. The legendary box player Joe Cooley and his brother Seamus were then living in Chicago. When Cooley was hired to play at one storied Southside pub, Hanley's House of Happiness, he invited McHugh to the stage to sit in with him. The two box players became chums. McHugh was staying in a hotel, but when, after an evening of music, he mentioned that he missed Irish food, the Cooley brothers invited him to their apartment. "They cooked sausage and black pudding for me," McHugh said.

As the years passed, traditional music was heard less and less at Irish gatherings in St. Paul. At the Irish-American Club, square dancing – even the bunny hop – began to compete with jigs and reels, McHugh said. When Club members took a Mississippi River cruise, McHugh and other Irish musicians found themselves competing for attention with a Dixieland jazz band. An early 1960s photo shows McHugh and two fiddlers at a club, seated alongside a swing orchestra and two saxophonists.

The Irish-American Club eventually went out of business. McHugh found himself playing solo in pubs, in some years only around St. Patrick's Day, with people pestering him to play Danny Boy and other sentimental ballads rather than the dance tunes that were his passion.

A big change came in the early 1970s. The Dayhills, a touring folk trio then building a repertoire of jigs and reels, met McHugh and began inviting him to the stage during St. Paul gigs. In a 2017 memoir, Tom Dahill recalled a St. Patrick's Day celebration at the Commodore Hotel when McHugh joined the Dayhills on stage to play his box to an exuberant crowd. "The dance floor was full the whole evening," Dahill wrote.

Word of McHugh's playing spread through the Twin Cities' folk community, and soon young musicians were following him around to learn his tunes. "I was so happy to see them," McHugh said in the 2017 interview.

MacEachron, MacKenzie and other young players formed a band with McHugh – the Plough and the Stars, later renamed the Northern Star Céilí Band – that played regularly for dances in the Twin Cities, Duluth and in Irish settlements in Wisconsin and Iowa from the mid-1970s through the early 1980s. Young dancers formed the Mooncoin Céilí Dancers, performing céilí and traditional dance choreographies, and helping the uninitiated try some Irish steps. Over the next half century, several other Minnesota ensembles formed around McHugh, with his box anchoring the music.

St. Paul's reputation as a center of traditional music grew when well-known players from Ireland settled in the city, including Sproule and Paddy O'Brien, a champion accordionist. Jode Dowling, a fiddle player who in 1989 was working to expand his repertoire of traditional tunes, said the allure of Minnesota's Irish music scene persuaded him to accept a job in the Twin Cities when



The Northern Star Ceilí Band (photo by David Aronow)

moving from Milwaukee that year, rather than one in San Francisco. “After moving, I discovered how core Marty was to the Irish community,” Dowling said. “I remember sessions where I’d sit right behind him to capture the notes and the rhythm.”

McHugh was generous in sharing his music. John McCormick, a St. Paul native and piper in the Brian Boru Irish Pipe Band, was about 26 in 1989 when he told McHugh that he wanted to learn to play. McHugh, then 60 years old, lent him a box, and over a couple of years of meetings in McHugh’s apartment played hundreds of tunes into McCormick’s tape recorder so that McCormick could teach himself to play. Today McCormick teaches many of the same tunes as an accordion instructor at St. Paul’s Center for Irish Music, founded in 2004.

The explosion of interest in Irish music that McHugh set in motion half a century ago continues today, Norah Rendell, the Center’s executive artistic director said. In 2016, the Center had 150 music students; by 2019, 350 students; and during the pandemic year, 450 individual students were enrolled, learning to play or sing Irish traditional music. “We can barely keep up with the demand because there’s so much enthusiasm for the music here in St. Paul,” Rendell said.

Besides Martin’s brother Mike, their sister Kathleen also emigrated to Minnesota. Mike, Kathleen and his four other siblings all died before Martin.

After McHugh’s retirement in about 2002, he began spending half of each year in Cloondahara on the farm of his youth. There he passed the days playing his box, meeting other traditional players and learning new tunes. The 2020 pandemic interrupted those annual pilgrimages, but he continued to play music in Minnesota until his last days. He performed in a June 2021 concert at St. Paul’s Celtic Junction Arts Center, anchoring an ensemble called “Marty McHugh and Friends.” In July 2022, he recorded tunes in a Minneapolis studio with MacKenzie and Sproule. And nearly every week over the past couple of years he hosted a session in his living room on Warwick Street in St. Paul, most often with Laura MacKenzie, fiddler Tom Lockney, Dáithí Sproule and sometimes others. “His recent playing was fantastic,” MacKenzie said. “He was always tickling my ears with some new tune variation.”

For McHugh, those sessions, like thousands of others over the past seven decades, were not only about music but about sharing stories and enjoying life. “He made us understand,” O’Driscoll said, “that it had to be fun or what was the point?”



MacKenzie and McHugh (photo by Patrick Maun)



An Evening with John Dingley

By Mike Casey

One of the most recognizable faces in the Irish community will be performing at the Celtic Junction Arts Center this month, as The Out of the Mist Celtic Theatre and The St. David's Society join to sponsor "An Evening with John Dingley." Actually a native of Wales, Dingley has been performing as an actor, singer, poet and storyteller locally for some forty years. He was a long time mainstay of Na Fianna Irish Theatre Company that performed Irish plays throughout the Midwest for the better part of two decades, and he has often performed for Irish Fair of Minnesota and Irish Arts Minnesota.

John Dingley is also a published author, and will be selling and signing his latest book, *A Visit Home*, including many stories from his native Wales, after his performance, which will take place **Sunday, Nov. 20 6:30 p.m., at The Celtic Junction Arts Center, 836 Prior Ave. N., St. Paul, 55104.**

Tickets \$20 at the door, \$15 for students and seniors (60+), or order on line: <https://celticjunction.org/>

Mike serves on the board of Out of the Mist Celtic Theatre.



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Smidiríní*

(*Irish for 'Bits and Pieces')

by Copper Shannon

Níl aon nuacht faoi láthair!

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

Or visit our website
www.centerforirishmusic.org

Dedicated to Handing Down the Tradition

Celtic Junction Concerts



[Ye Vagabonds in Concert](#): November 5 @ 7:30 - 10 pm. \$25.00. 18 and under receive free admission.

Ye Vagabonds are brothers Brian and Diarmuid Mac Gloinn. A core force in the traditional Irish music circuit, Ye Vagabonds fuse reflective folk music with traditional elements. The duo continues to develop new ideas within the trad style by forming their own sound. They have developed their compositions with influences of American old time, European music, and 1960s folk revival music.



[Irish Arts Minnesota Honors Tom Klein](#): November 11 @ 7:30 pm - 10:00 pm. \$15.00.

“IAM Honors” is the Irish Arts Minnesota’s program for recognizing a lifetime of excellence in, and service to, the Twin Cities Irish community. The 2022 IMDA Honors recipient, uilleann piper, community organizer, and teacher Tom Klein, is recognized for his contributions to Irish traditional music in the Twin Cities and across the United States.

Van Orman & Helwin



With Special Guests:
Todd Menton, Drew Miller, and Mark Black

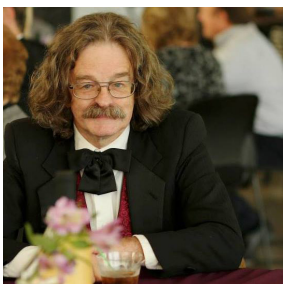
[Van Orman & Helwin in Concert with special guests Todd Menton, Drew Miller, and Mark Black](#): November 12 @ 7:30 -10:00 pm. \$20.00. Youth 18 and under receive free admission.

John C. Van Orman returns to Minnesota together with bandmate Adam Helwin for a concert at Celtic Junction. The duo will be joined by Todd Menton (Boiled in Lead), Drew Miller (Boiled in Lead, Kinda Fonda Wanda), and Mark Black (Other Country Ensemble) for this noteworthy event.



[BRASS LASSIE in Concert](#): November 18 @ 7:30 pm - 9:30 pm. \$20.00. Youth 18 and under receive free admission.

Brass Lassie boldly combines traditional tunes, songs, and style with dazzling modern horn lines, creating their own genre of remarkable music. The ensemble performs extraordinary takes on Scottish, Irish, and continental music, featuring a powerful 4-piece horn section, a terrific rhythm section, fiddle, flutes, pipes, and voice, plus guest percussive dance.



[An Evening with John Dingley](#): November 20 @ 6:30 pm. \$15.00 – \$20.00.

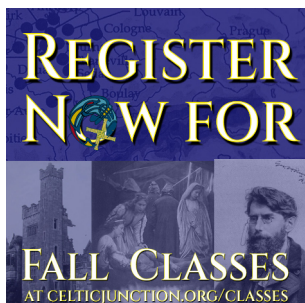
Join us for an evening of entertainment with local Welsh native, singer, poet, actor, author, and character extraordinaire! John will also be signing copies of his latest book, *A Visit Home*. Presented by Out of the Mist Celtic Theatre and the St. David’s Society.



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Celtic Junction Classes

Five online classes begin in the month of November including [Master of Fantasy Literature: Robert E. Howard](#); [Irish Women Hunger Strikers of the 20th Century](#); [Some Experiences of an Irish R.M. by Somerville and Ross](#); [Fintan O'Toole's We Don't Know Ourselves: A Personal History of Modern Ireland](#); and [James Joyce's First Masterpiece: The Dead](#). Join us for college-quality programming for community audiences!



Celtic Junction Outreach Webinars

[Seamus Heaney and His Contemporaries](#): November 4th @ 7:30 pm. Free. Featuring University of Hungary Scholar Dr. Attila. In Partnership with St. Thomas University. Registration required.

[Indigenous Language and Land Connections](#): November 7th @ 7:30 pm. Free. With Lac Courte Oreille's Mike Sullivan and the University of Milwaukee's Margaret Noodin. Registration required.

[Women in Irish Street Art](#): November 14 @ 7:30 pm. Free. With Molly McIntosh of the Edina Historical Society. Registration required.



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IAM Members and Donors

Members are reminded that IAM membership is renewable annually. If you haven't renewed for 2022, please do that today!

Irish Arts Minnesota wishes to thank these new members for their support:

Mark Malone

New and renewing supporting members will receive the following:

- A one-year (January to December 2022) subscription to the IAM's monthly email.
- Priority detailed 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 IAM newsletters and in related posts to the IAM web site and Facebook page.

Looking for the IAM Community Calendar?

The IAM 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 <https://irishartsmn.org/events/>.

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!

Questions? Comments? Contact Us!

Info@irishartsmn.org

www.irishartsmn.org



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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@irishartsmn.org

IAM Board

President	Amber Ladany
Vice President	Jan Casey
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Secretary	Cindy Ladany
Newsletter Editor	Bridget Dinter
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Questions? Comments? Contact Us!

Info@irishartsmn.org

Ceili CORNER By **Bhloscaidh O'Keane**
Check www.lomamor.org for all up-to-date Irish folk dancing information.



IAM Membership

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

All IAM members receive the newsletter by e-mail.

Name:	Date:
Address:	How did you hear about us?
Membership Type (circle one) Individual \$20 _____ Family \$25 _____ by US Mail \$35 _____ Band/Organization/Business \$25 _____ Name _____ (Name of Band/Organization/Business)	
Interests (circle all that apply) <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; text-align: center;"> Music Dance Theatre Language Volunteer </div>	
E-mail Address: _____ Phone Number: _____ Your monthly newsletter is delivered electronically via e-mail. Please advise us at Info@irishartsmn.org 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 IAMwebsite (www.imda.org) to pay electronically.	