



Irish Arts Minnesota

April
2025
Aibreán

43rd Year, Issue No. 4

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

Thank you for a great St. Patrick's Day Irish Celebration

Irish Arts Minnesota's goal is to bring a grand selection of Irish music, Irish dance, and good old Irish craic to celebrate St. Patrick's Day - St. Paul Style, including...

Musical Performances - Favorite local bands, new bands, and the Brian Boru Irish Pipe Band

Irish Dance Performances - Exciting dance performances from 13 Irish dance schools and performance groups, an African and Irish Cross-Cultural performance, and a showcase of adult Irish dancers

Awards - presentation of the Decade of Dance and Double Decade of Dance Awards

For the Family - Music, songs and stories, Irish dance sessions, and interactive storytelling for the little ones, as well as complimentary crafts for the kids

Community - Catching up with friends, interesting seminars, Irish community groups telling their stories, a new play from Out of the Mist Celtic Theatre

Shopping - Beautiful handmade gifts, Irish gifts, special offers on improving your home

Refreshments - Favorite and new food, beverage and treat options

Thank you to everyone who came out to help celebrate all things Irish.

Together, we enjoyed the things we always love about being at Landmark Center. The outstanding music from our local musicians, the intricate footwork of the dancers, the intimate setting for music and dance in the Weyerhaeuser Auditorium, the cozy atmosphere in the Tea Room, a bit of background on an Irish idea in a seminar, a nibble of one of Sarah's pies, an Irish beer at the bar, a bit of shopping.

Your support, in the form of your ticket purchase, your purchase of raffle tickets, and your presence at the event, means the world to us!

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



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Thank you to the 2025 Day of Irish Dance and St. Patrick's Day Volunteers!

Irish Arts Minnesota extends our gratitude to you for volunteering over the St. Patrick's Day weekend!

Thanks for greeting our guests so warmly, for making a great cup of tea, for helping to make the experience for the performers so nice – thanks for everything!

Thanks to YOU, our volunteers, we brought authentic Irish culture to the Twin Cities for the 43rd year and raised money for our educational grant program and Irish Arts Minnesota!

Only your involvement, talents, flexibility, and generosity made this all possible. Thank you for helping us to continue the tradition of Irish Culture in the MN community!

Clearly, you had more fun than anyone!!



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IAM Recognizes Dedicated Dancers

The Decade of Dance Award is Irish Arts Minnesota's way of recognizing the very special commitment that 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 major portion of their young lives. They have shared a unique element of Irish culture with audiences in all kinds of 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 to the greater community.

This is the twentieth year of the Decade of Dance Award, with 352 dancers receiving the award in that time. In honor of those 20 years, Irish Arts Minnesota added a new award – the Double Decade of Dance Award, recognizing the devotion and long-term commitment that some dancers have made. These dancers continue to dance, to learn and to teach – nurturing a love of Irish dance as cultural expression.

These awards were presented on the Main Stage at IAM's St. Patrick's Day and Day of Irish Dance Celebrations at Landmark Center. The dancers received a certificate and a special medal.

These dancers received the Double Decade of Dance Award:

Lauren Adams-Plehal ~ *Rince na Gréine Irish Dance*

Becky Bollinger ~ *Scoil na dTri Academy, Mooncoin Ceili Dancers, Knocknagow Irish Dancers*

Carol Gross ~ *Crossroads School of Irish Dance, Knocknagow Irish Dancers, Mooncoin Ceili Dancers*

Ed Koehne ~ *Clann na Cairde, Tir na nOg Dancers, Scoil na dTri Academy, Green Fire Irish Dancers*

Meghan Lovegren ~ *Scoil na dTri Academy, St. Paul Irish Dancers, O'Shea Irish Dance*

Evan Lowe ~ *O'Shea Irish Dance*

Elaine Murray ~ *Clann na Cairde, Tir na nOg Dancers, Scoil na dTri Academy, Green Fire Irish Dancers*

Beth Pitchford ~ *Drake School, Scoil na dTri Academy, O'Shea Irish Dance, North Star Irish Dance*

Eva Slattery ~ *Scoil na dTri Academy, O'Shea Irish Dance*

Liam Slattery ~ *Scoil na dTri Academy, O'Shea Irish Dance*

TJ Stumo ~ *Scoil na dTri Academy, O'Shea Irish Dance, Mooncoin Ceili Dancers, Knocknagow Irish Dancers*

Zachari Wetz ~ *ACTC Irish Dance Club, Conway Rec. Center, Green Fire Irish Dancers*

Betsy Wing ~ *Knocknagow Irish Dancers*

Because of the number of dancers qualifying for the award this year, we will share their favorite dance memories in future IAM newsletters.

See the Decade of Dance recipients on the next page!



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These dancers received the Decade of Dance Award:

Bridgid Corniea ~ *Rince na Chroi*
Teagan Crowe ~ *O'Shea Irish Dance*
Libby Currens ~ *Shamrock School of Irish Step Dance*
Mary-Grace Dobie ~ *O'Shea Irish Dance*
Anna Fini ~ *O'Shea Irish Dance*
Kara Fini ~ *O'Shea Irish Dance*
Adelyn Fokken ~ *Shamrock School of Irish Step Dance*
Joanna Fuerst ~ *Scoil na dTri Academy, Knockagow Irish Dancers, O'Shea Irish Dance, Mactír Academy of Irish Dance*
Lauren Hamer ~ *Scoil na dTri Academy, Corda Mór Irish Dance, Mactír Academy of Irish Dance*
Daisy Haney ~ *Eilís Academy of Irish Dance*
Katie Harris ~ *Trinity Irish Dance, Mactír Academy of Irish Dance*
Audrey Higgins ~ *Rince na Chroi*
Aislin James ~ *Mactír Academy of Irish Dance*
Bridgid Johnson ~ *Rince na Chroi*
Elle Johnson ~ *Rince na Gréine Irish Dance*
Gretchen Kiel ~ *Mactír Academy of Irish Dance*
Mackenzie Korb ~ *Rince na Chroi*
Violet Madrone ~ *O'Shea Irish Dance*
Ella Mcmanus ~ *Rince na Chroi*
Jason Mills ~ *O'Shea Irish Dance*
Morgan Mulcahy ~ *Rince Nua Irish Dance, Rince na Gréine Irish Dance*
Tessa O'Brien ~ *Rince na Chroi*
Corrah Perez ~ *O'Shea Irish Dance*
Kaili Rici ~ *Corda Mór Irish Dance*
Kelly Rightmire ~ *Brian Sexton School, Mactír Academy of Irish Dance*
Moirá Sandri ~ *Rince na Chroi*
Mila Schweisthal ~ *North Star Irish Dance*
Nora Tacheny ~ *O'Shea Irish Dance*
Clara Thompson ~ *Rince na Chroi*
Kaylie Valiga ~ *Shamrock School of Irish Step Dance*
Jade Weller ~ *Mactír Academy of Irish Dance*
Ginger West ~ *Rince na Gréine Irish Dance*
Margot Wittich ~ *Rince Nua Irish Dance, Hudson Irish Dance Academy*

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

Because of the number of dancers qualifying for the award this year, we will share their favorite dance memories in future IAM newsletters.

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

Educational Grants Available

For the study of Irish Music, Irish
Dance, or other Irish Cultural
Traditions

- ❖ Students of any age are eligible.
- ❖ Previous recipients have used their grants for tuition, travel expenses and instrument purchases.
- ❖ Previous recipients include dancers, singers, musicians, (bagpipes, flute, harp, uilleann pipes, fiddle and tin whistle), Irish language students, a costume designer and an information specialist.

What will you study?

Apply by April 15, 2025.

Use the funds by the end of 2026.



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Educational Grants Available for Students of the Irish Arts

By Jan Casey

The Twin Cities Irish community is rich with opportunities to see, hear and participate in Irish cultural events of all kinds – music, dance, language, and more. Irish Arts Minnesota is delighted to be able to encourage the study of the traditional arts of Ireland by making funds available for additional study in nearly any area of Irish culture.

The IAM 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 students. The grants are typically between \$300 and \$700 and are available for use in 2025 and 2026. IAM then asks the recipients to bring their new skills back to the community by participating in an IAM event. As they continue to learn and grow, they 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 to include the recommendation of a teacher or an elder in the community who is familiar with their work. The 2025 application deadline is April 15, 2025.

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

These are the 2024 Educational grant recipients:

Musician Teddy Brandt of St. Paul studies accordion at the Center for Irish Music. Teddy is using his grant for virtual accordion lessons with Sean McComiskey and for expenses associated with the week-long *Scoil Eigse* in Wexford, Ireland last Summer.

Dancer Anika Crouch of Coon Rapids studies with Eilís Academy of Irish Dance in Anoka. Anika used her grant for registration and travel expenses for dance competitions, with a focus on *Oireachtas*.

Musician Will Johnson of St. Paul plays uilleann pipes. Will used his grant for travel expenses for the St. Louis *Tionol* (gathering of pipers).

Musician Ellie Schirmer of Inver Grove Heights studies whistle and flute with the Center for Irish Music. Ellie used her grant to help with the purchase of her own 6-keyed wooden flute made by Eamonn Cotter in Ireland.

Dancer Zachariah Vandermeuse-Siteki of Minneapolis dances with Eilís Academy of Irish Dance in Anoka. Zach used grant for travel and registration for the North American Irish Dance National Championships in Texas last Summer.

Irish Arts Minnesota was delighted to have Teddy, Anika and Ellie performing as part of our St. Patrick's Day Celebration this year.

If you are interested or know a student of one of the traditional arts of Ireland who would be:
irishartsmn.org/programs-events/grants-awards/

Jan Casey coordinates IAM's Educational Grant Program.



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Where's My Irish Arts MN Calendar?

What a delight it is to have so many great Irish bands, dance schools and groups and community organizations active in the Twin Cities and beyond. Long-time members may remember the calendar that used to be at the heart of the IMDA Newsletter. Some time ago, Irish Arts MN / IMDA gave up including the calendar in the newsletter – with so much going on, a printed calendar was too quickly out of date.

Solution? **Irish Arts Minnesota Community Calendar On-Line** – a comprehensive and dynamic on-line calendar of events of all kinds with an Irish and Celtic connection.

Did you know? You can search the IAM Community Calendar by artist, by venue, and by type of event to find what's happening. Check it out at irishartsmn.org/events/ - and come back often throughout the month. We'll keep adding good stuff as we learn about it!

Lessons from Irish Dance

By Julia Rogers

St. Patrick's Day has me reflecting on just how much I've learned in my 30ish years on and off the stage.

♥ **Recover from mistakes.** I've fallen off a stage mid-performance. I've broken a TV camera live on air. In Irish dance, just like in life, mistakes happen. The key is to get back up, keep moving, and finish strong. And keep smiling. Always keep smiling.

♥ **We are our own biggest critics.** Half the time, when you make a mistake, no one else will even notice—unless you let it shake you. If you recover, get back on track, and keep going with confidence, the moment will pass, and you'll be just fine.

♥ **Make do, no matter what.** The music might skip, the floor might be too slippery, a costume might need to be frantically sewn together—but you don't stop. You adjust, improvise, and keep going.

♥ **Teamwork makes the dream work.** Whether it's running a step one more time (for the hundredth time), sharing snacks backstage like a well-organized buffet, or performing last-minute hair and shoe repairs with whatever supplies are on hand—there's nothing better than laughing through the chaos and helping your friends shine.

♥ **Go for it, even if you're scared.** There have been so many moments when I didn't feel ready—when my heart was pounding and my confidence shaky. But sometimes, you just have to smile, step forward, and go for it anyway.

♥ **Put in the work.** It's not enough to practice until you get it right. You have to practice until you can't get it wrong. Consistency, discipline, and repetition matter, whether learning a step or chasing a big goal. There's no such thing as over prepared.

♥ **Surround yourself with the right people.** Whether it's raining, 90 degrees, or you're exhausted after a long day, if you have the right community, you'll still find a way to laugh and have fun. Irish dance has given me a second family—people who support, challenge, and inspire me every step of the way. We're a team on and off the stage.

♥ **Do it for the love of it.** Most of us will never dance on the biggest stage or win the biggest prize. That's okay. We do it because we love it. Because it challenges us, brings us joy, and connects us to something bigger than ourselves.

Irish dance has shaped me in more ways than I can count, and I'm so grateful for the lessons, the friendships, and the pure joy it brings. Remember to cheer on the dancers in your lives. And never forget, chin up and smile!

Julia Rogers is a former President of Irish Arts Minnesota and dances with Rince na Chroi.



The Gaelic Corner- By Will Kenny

As you learn new vocabulary in a second language, pairs of opposites come in handy. After all, once you learn how to say something is "right" or "correct," you probably want to be able to point out when something is "wrong," as well. Learning these kinds of words in pairs is a good strategy for building useful vocabulary.



When we think of pairs of words with opposite meanings, sometimes they are completely different words -- think "hope" versus "despair," or "white" versus "black" -- and sometimes one is just the negation of the other, as in the pair "certain" and "uncertain." One of the things that makes learning another language fun is that the two languages do not always map such pairs the same way. Indeed, it can take quite a while to figure out how opposites work in the new language.

In Irish, for example, "certain" is *cinnte*, and "uncertain" is *éiginte*, a fairly straightforward negation situation. (The negating prefix *éa-* or *éi-* can cause a change in the immediately following consonant, as in this case, from *c* to *g*.) But unlike English usage, the words for "hope" and "despair" are also a negation pair: "hope" is typically translated by *dóchas*, and "despair" is translated by *éadóchas*, or "unhope."

Of course, I'm not suggesting that all opposites are created by these negating prefixes, but they do a lot of heavy lifting in Irish. Other opposites are self-contained, as it were: "white" and "black" are represented by *bán* and *dubh*, respectively.

Still, these negating prefixes are plentiful, and challenging to keep straight. Most Irish students learn to use *trom* for "heavy" and *éadrom* for "light" (in weight) fairly early on. And many of them never notice that they are really using another negation pair. *Éadrom* is not so much "light" as it is "unheavy." Similarly, "shallow" can be translated by *éadomhain* ("undeepest"). And use this *éa-* prefix before the word for "end" or "limit," *críoch*, and you end up with *éagríoch*: "limitless" or "infinity."

in English, we use prefixes like *im-* and *in-* and *dis-* and *un-* to negate concepts. Naturally, there are many negating prefixes in Irish as well, and just as naturally, prefixes do not line up consistently across the two languages.

So "independent" and "insensitive" are both translated into Irish with the prefix *neamh-*, producing *neamhspleách* and *neamh-mhothólach*. But then we have *do-ite* for "inedible" and *dofheicthe* for "invisible," as well as *éideimhin* for an "indecisive" outcome. We even have a negating prefix *in-* in Irish, so that "indirect" is expressed with *indíreach*.

Going the other way, the negating Irish prefix *dí-* comes across in English in a variety of ways. We have *dífhostaithe* ("unemployed"), *díchreideamh* ("disbelief"), *díbholaíoch* ("deodorant"), and *díbheo* ("lifeless").

Sometimes we may have more than one option to negate a word. The Irish for "even," in the sense of "balanced" or "level," is *cothrom*. We can use either *éagothrom* or *míchothrom* to say "uneven, unbalanced" and it really doesn't make much difference which one we choose.

On the other hand, sometimes the specific prefix makes a difference. The Irish word *ceart* expresses "right," both in the sense of being "correct" and in the sense of "a human right." We use *dícheart* to express "injustice". But we use *mícheart* to say "incorrect."

Indeed, *mícheart* is almost always used as the opposite of "right" when we want to say "wrong." Reminiscent of the "heavy" and "unheavy" opposites mentioned earlier, in Irish your answers to questions are not so much "right" or "wrong" as they are "right" or "unright."

TUNE OF THE MONTH

My Mind Will Never Be Easy

slip jig



This slip jig is paired with Redican's Mother (featured last month) in the CIM 2020 Common Tunes. It has a similar melody to the Irish song "The Whistling Thief" and shows up on CIM friend Nathan Gourley's album with Laura Fedderson: *Life is All Checkered*, which is backed by CIM instructor Brian Miller.

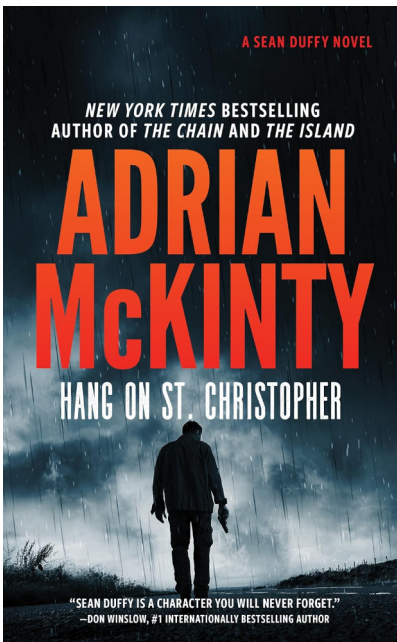
Respectfully submitted by Rosa Wells on behalf of the Center for Irish Music (CIM), a traditional Irish music school based in St. Paul, located inside the Celtic Junction Arts Center. We publish a tune each month with dots (sheet music), suggested chords and some basic background information including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



836 Prior Ave North, St. Paul MN 55104

On Leabhragan (The Bookcase)

Hang on St. Christopher— Adrian McKinty — *Blackstone Books 2025*



I'm a little late to the Sean Duffy detective series, but better late than never. The newest is also the last; eighth in the popular series of a seasoned Belfast detective who is nearing the end of his career. A legend in his field, Sean Duffy is ready to step down, but can't resist a good puzzle. Duffy has plenty of physical scars and emotional collateral damage, but he's still up for one big case (yeah, the "one last case" is a cliché, but who cares? This one is such a wild ride, you won't care.)

Along with his semi-retired partner Sergeant John McCrabb, the puzzling double murder by shotgun in a quiet place points to corruption in high places and government halls. There's plenty of gritty Belfast streets and urban patina, but also the beautiful rolling Northern Ireland countryside beyond the city, and with a Nirvana-loving detective who quotes poetry and drinks a lot (both industrial-strength tea and Northern Irish whiskey), lots of descriptive passages of places and character. There's a stop or two at a bookstore, lots of chases, gunfire, sinister late-night meetings with government officials, and thrilling encounters with baddies. Duffy has a nose for corruption and organized crime, and this case stinks to high heaven. Well aware of his shortcomings and short fuse, this detective is hardwired to fight killers and see justice

done. He wonders what he'll do when the adrenaline rush is over, but for now, the thrill of the chase and heart-pumping encounters with thugs will do just fine. If your cup of tea (or shot of Bushmill's) is a high-octane and highly literate detective, *Hang On St Christopher* will suit you to a T. As for me, I'm looking forward to catching up with the first seven Duffy books in the series as soon as possible. Hang on, indeed!

Sherry Ladig is a Saint Paul-based composer and musician and a former reviewer for the Hungry Mind Bookstore's newsletter, Fodder. Sherry welcomes recommendations of books of Irish or Irish-American interest for her to review, or—write a review yourself!. Sherry may be reached at ladig-dunquin@msn.com. Happy Spring reading!

Northwoods Songs: Irish Songs from Lumberjacks and Great Lakes Sailors

By Brian Miller

The Dublin Dancing Master



In Dub - lin ci - ty once there lived a cra - tur gay and hear - ty, A
danc - ing mas - ter he by trade his name was Ted - dy Mc - Car - thy, He
taught the girls and boys to dance and none could do it fast - er, He
al - ways danced so neat and nice, the Dub - lin dan - cing mas - ter,
Down the mid - dle, hands a - cross, go a lit - tle fas - ter
In and out and round a - bout the Dub - lin dan - cing mas - ter. —

In Dublin city once there lived a cratur gay and hearty,
A dancing master he by trade his name was Teddy McCarthy,
He taught the girls and boys to dance and none could do it faster,
He always danced so neat and nice, the Dublin dancing master.

Down the middle, hands across, go a little faster,
In and out and round about, the Dublin dancing master.

Now Teddy taught both reels and jigs and all the other dances,
From highland fling to plain quadrille to please the ladies' fancies,
Patsy Whelan, Mickey Flynn and a boy called Kit McAstor,
Came to learn a highland fling from the Dublin dancing master

Thus Teddy got the boys and girls proficient in their dances,
Polkas, jigs and schottisches, mazurkas, reels and lancers,
No matter what the dance he taught, none could go it faster,
And none could dance an Irish jig like the Dublin dancing master.

I happened on this song in my monthly search and thought it was the perfect choice as I am thinking this week about the passing of Séamus O'Shea. Séamus was a true modern day Dublin dancing master whose son Cormac carries on the family tradition here in St. Paul. Rest in Peace Séamus.

The Canadian Maritimes are, again, my source for this music hall song that migrated from the vaudeville stage to the voices of singers in their communities. The song was sung at Tony Pastor's famous New York theater in 1866 by singer William Carleton (not to be confused with the author of the same name). In Eastern Passage, Halifax County, Nova Scotia, it was sung by Ben Henneberry (with fiddle by Ken Faulkner) for Helen Creighton's recording machine in 1948. You can hear the Henneberry/Faulkner recording at archives.novascotia.ca.

The melody above is my transcription of Henneberry's singing and the text is adapted from Henneberry with additional words from a version printed in *Will Carleton's Dandy Pat Songster* (1866).

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



Celtic Junction Events



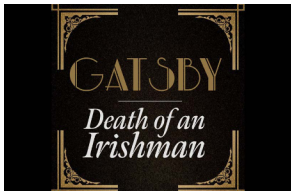
[Twin Town Old Time Music Festival, April 5 @ 10:00 am - 11:00 pm.](#)

The Twin Town Old Time Music Festival is a four-day celebration of old time music and dance, with a special focus on the rich traditions of the Midwest. On Saturday, April 5, join us at Celtic Junction from 9AM–6PM for a full slate of workshops in music and dance, followed by an evening of jamming, dancing, and community fun from 7pm–11pm.



[YAC Open Mic, April 6 @ 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm. Free](#)

Join us for a fun and fearless open mic presented by CJAC's Youth Advisory Council! Open to the young and the young at heart, this event offers youth performers priority access to the stage. Preparing for the Midwest Fleadh? It's a perfect chance to polish your tunes—or just share a joyful set with friends. All genres and talents are welcome in this supportive, no-judgment space.



[Book Launch *Gatsby: Death of an Irishman*, April 11 @ 6:00 pm - 7:00 pm. Free](#)

Join Irish author and historian Patrick O'Sullivan Greene for the North American debut of his new book, *Gatsby: Death of an Irishman – F. Scott Fitzgerald and His Search for Identity*. This compelling evening features a talk and reading in the heart of Fitzgerald's hometown, followed by a reception.



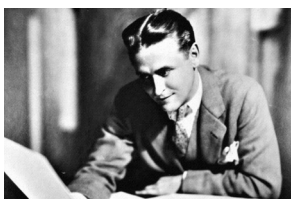
[Gatsby Speakeasy Dance w/ Patty and the Buttons, April 11 @ 7:00 pm. \\$20.00](#)

Step into the Jazz Age at our Gatsby Speakeasy Dance! Kick off the night with a Lindy Swing lesson, then swing into vintage revelry with Patty and the Buttons and special guest jazz vocalist **Connie Evingson**, whose velvet voice brings timeless glamour to the dance floor. Dress to impress, sip a signature cocktail, and dance the night away in celebration of *The Great Gatsby's* 100th anniversary—right here in Fitzgerald's hometown.



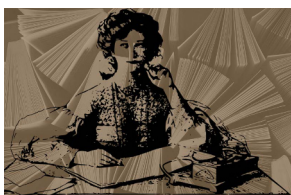
[The Sinn Féin Feis and Irish Culture in F. Scott Fitzgerald's St. Paul, April 13 @ 12:00 pm. Free](#)

Join Library Director Brian Miller for a fascinating look into the vibrant Irish cultural life of early 20th-century St. Paul and Minneapolis during F. Scott Fitzgerald's formative years. From Shamrock Club riverboat cruises and Sinn Féin-sponsored Irish dance competitions to local fiddlers and a visit from Lady Gregory, explore how Irish identity and community life shaped the world Fitzgerald grew up in. This is a hybrid event, at CJAC or join by Zoom.



[100 Years of *The Great Gatsby*, April 14 @ 7:30 pm. Free](#)

Join Dr. Lynette Reini-Grandell and Dr. Patrick O'Donnell for a Zoom seminar marking the centenary of F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*. Explore the novel's 1920s social and cultural context, its mythic portrayal of the American Dream, and Fitzgerald's literary influences—from James Joyce to John Keats. Registration required.



[Her Own Future: A Roundtable Discussion of Women Writers, April 16 @ 6:30 pm. Free](#)

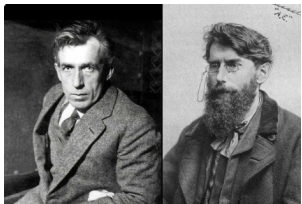
Join us for *Her Own Future*, a dynamic Zoom roundtable exploring the voices and impact of Irish women writers. Scholars Matt Reznicek, Renée Fox, Paige Reynolds, and Kate Costello-Sullivan will share rapid insights on topics including the ethics of care, Lady Jane Wilde, depictions of sexuality, and the role of shame in contemporary literature. A lively panel discussion and audience Q&A will follow. Registration required.

Celtic Junction Events



Fire Festivals: Documentary Screening and Panel Discussion, April 25 @ 7:45 pm. \$10.00

Be among the first to experience *Bealtaine*, an episode from RTE's upcoming *Na Féilte Tine* series, before it airs in Ireland. This beautifully crafted documentary explores the mythology and meaning of Ireland's ancient fire festivals. A panel discussion with Réamonn Ó Ciaráin and Fergal Mac Domhnaill will follow, delving into the cultural and personal significance of Bealtaine and its resurgence as a source of inner healing. Free for DSG attendees; \$10 public admission.



Seminar: Imagining Donegal, April 26 @ 4:00 pm. Free

Explore the cultural and political imagination of Donegal in this bilingual seminar with Dr. Patrick O'Donnell and Réamonn Ó Ciaráin. Presented in both Irish and English, the talk examines the legacy of Peadar O'Donnell and George "AE" Russell—two influential thinkers whose works shaped the literary and spiritual landscape of the region. Part of Deireadh Seachtaine na Gaeilge and free for the public to attend.



Dáithí Sproule in Concert, April 26 @ 7:30 pm. \$25.00

Don't miss this rare solo performance by renowned guitarist, singer, and Irish language speaker Dáithí Sproule of Altan and Skara Brae. Drawing from a deep repertoire of Irish-language songs, Dáithí brings his rich scholarship and musical artistry to the stage as part of Deireadh Seachtaine na Gaeilge and Irish Arts Week. Free for DSG participants; \$25 in advance for the public.



Bealtaine Folk Art Weekend, May 2–4. Registration required

Celebrate the arrival of summer with a weekend of hands-on creativity at the Bealtaine Folk Art Weekend, a collaboration between Folklore Village and the Celtic Junction Arts Center. Explore the Celtic and Scandinavian roots of traditional folk art through two immersive workshops: Celtic knot embroidery with Kelli Emerson and kolrosing (Scandinavian wood-carving) with Darlene Fossum-Martin. Held over three days with small class sizes and expert instruction, this special event is part of Irish Arts Week and invites participants to slow down, connect, and create.



Adrienne O'Shea in Concert, May 2 @ 7:30 pm. \$20–\$25

Enjoy an evening of traditional Irish music as Adrienne O'Shea returns to the Celtic Junction stage. With her crystal-clear vocals and impressive Irish flute playing, Adrienne brings depth and vitality to timeless songs. Joined by Sean O'Brien, Liam Slattery, and Cormac O Sé, the concert promises evocative ballads, and vibrant musicality. Part of the Women's Concert Series and Irish Arts Week, this performance showcases Adrienne's artistry as a new-generation tradition bearer rooted in both Dublin and St. Paul.



Cassie and Maggie in Concert, May 3 @ 7:30 pm. \$20–\$25

Nova Scotian sisters **Cassie and Maggie** bring their vibrant blend of Celtic tradition and contemporary flair to the stage with dynamic fiddle, piano, and guitar, rich sibling harmonies, and percussive step dancing. Singing in both Gaelic and English, their award-winning sound bridges generations with energy and grace. *Part of the Women's Concert Series and Irish Arts Week.*



Family Movie Night: Star Wars, May 4 @ 5:00 pm. Free

Celebrate Star Wars Day with a cozy screening of *A New Hope* hosted by CJAC's Youth Advisory Council. Kids ages 12 and up can attend solo, while those 11 and under should bring a parent—who's welcome to stay and enjoy the nostalgia! Bring blankets, wear your pajamas, and settle in for popcorn, cocoa, and fun. RSVP in advance to help us plan the space—registered kids get a free mocktail from the café!

CJAC at MSPIFF44: Irish Films and CJAC Discount

CJAC is proud to partner with the Minneapolis St. Paul International Film Festival (MSPIFF), running April 4–18, to spotlight outstanding Irish cinema. This year's lineup includes the offbeat dramedy [Four Mothers](#), the psychological thriller [The Surfer](#) (starring Nicolas Cage), and the documentary [Blue Road: The Edna O'Brien Story](#). *Blue Road* beautifully complements CJAC's [Her Own Future](#) seminar on Irish women writers, offering a rich, multi-layered exploration of Irish identity, storytelling, and voice.

CJAC friends receive discounted tickets with the promo code **CAJMSPIFF44**. Learn more and get your tickets at mspiff.org.



CJAC's Spring 2025 Classes are now open for registration!

Starting the first week of April, choose from 13 engaging courses—6 [creative arts and wellness classes](#), 2 in [history and literature](#) (plus two free presentations during Irish Arts Week), and 5 online [Irish language classes](#)—all designed to bring Celtic culture to life for learners of all levels. Spring programming includes [Deireadh Seachtaine Gaeilge](#) (April 25–27), our immersive Irish language weekend that kicks off [Irish Arts Week](#), culminating in the hands-on [Bealtaine Folk Art Weekend](#), a celebration of traditional craft and seasonal creativity. Whether you're near or far, curious or committed, CJAC has something to inspire you this season. Secure your spot today!



Thank you to our 2025 sponser!



WATER STREET INN
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Charlie's
Restaurant and
Irish Pub
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IN HISTORIC DOWNTOWN STILLWATER, MN!

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Charlie's Restaurant and Irish Pub

at the historic Water Street Inn

Live music for Charlie's Irish Pub in the Historic Water Street Inn located in downtown Stillwater. Charlie's Pub features live Irish music every Friday and Saturday night from 7:00pm to 11:00pm

April 4th & 5th - Bedlam

Bedlam is a band born out of the talent pool of the MN Renaissance Festival. Over the years, the band has had a diverse sound and many different members. Its recent incarnation is a folk band with a hippie attitude. Many familiar songs with a different slant along with some original material as well. As the name implies a stage with this group on it is not a very stable one and you never know who may show up and sit in on a set



April 11th & 12th - Fiddle and Flannels

"Fiddle and Flannels is a talented ensemble of musicians who specialize in delivering a captivating blend of classic country and lively Irish jigs. With their infectious energy and mastery of their instruments, they'll transport you to a world of heartwarming melodies and foot-stomping rhythms. Fiddle and Flannels is your go-to choice for an unforgettable musical experience."

April 18th & 19th - Prank Williams and the Broken Spoke

A high-energy Irish/folk band based in Saint Paul, MN highlighting the sweet stringed sounds of the fiddle, stand-up bass, guitar, and mandolin. Traditional Irish Music and Irish Rock with a twist! Broken Spoke never fail to deliver an outstanding performance that will have you up on your feet before you know it!



April 25th & 26th -Purgatory Creek

Purgatory Creek is a band that tracks from Nashville to Belfast featuring the music of Dee Brust, David Perry, Adam Stemple, and Ann Viviano. This group has decades of performance between them, and offers up folk rockin' Irish Americana to take you the river, the mine, the mystic, the mountain, the shady grove, and the devil's backbone

May 2nd & 3rd - Bedlam

Bedlam is a band born out of the talent pool of the MN Renaissance Festival. Over the years, the band has had a diverse sound and many different members. Its recent incarnation is a folk band with a hippie attitude. Many familiar songs with a different slant along with some original material as well. As the name implies a stage with this group on it is not a very stable one and you never know who may show up and sit in on a set



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The Ferryman, presented by U of M BFA Acting Program

The University of Minnesota's Department of Theatre Arts & Dance presents the Minnesota debut of Jez Butterworth's *The Ferryman* – a sweeping, critically acclaimed epic that has electrified audiences in London and on Broadway. Directed by Bruce Roach, this production will take the stage April 24-27, at Park Square Theatre in Downtown St. Paul.

Staging *The Ferryman* is a formidable challenge for the BFA Acting Class of 2025, with its large cast, intricate storytelling, and powerful themes. This production marks the culmination of their training, testing their craft, endurance, and commitment to storytelling.

About The Ferryman

Winner of the Tony Award for Best Play and the Olivier Award for Best new Play, *The Ferryman* is set in 1981 Northern Ireland. It is a war-weary time in the long-brewing Irish sectarian conflict known as "The Troubles." The Carney farmhouse in rural County Armagh is a hive of activity with preparations for the annual harvest. A day of hard work on the land and a traditional night of feasting and celebrations lie ahead. This year they will be interrupted by a visitor, awakening generations of unspoken truths and well-kept family secrets. The air is thick with tension and despair. The Carney home is full of life and bursting with energy, idyllically removed on the surface but simmering just beneath.

Why does The Ferryman matter now?

Although rooted in the specific history of the Troubles in Northern Ireland, *The Ferryman* resonates far beyond its setting. It is a story of family, loyalty, and the price of silence, exploring how political strife infiltrates personal lives. As the world continues to grapple with conflict, generational trauma, and divided societies, this production speaks to the urgent relevance of history's echoes in today's world.

[Tickets:](#) \$26 General public, \$16 Students (any college or under 18), \$1 Group tickets (10+ people).

Remembering our friend Martin McHugh

If you enjoyed the music of Bundle and Go at Irish Arts MN's St. Patrick's Day Celebration, you may have heard Dave Rhees sign this song.

THE GOOD-NATURED MARTIN MCHUGH

*Lyrics copyright 2023 by David Rhees
To the tune of "My Eileen is Waiting for Me" (trad.)*

How he loved the old music of Ireland
His accordion chuffing away
Whether jig or a reel or a hornpipe
He never lacked something to play
He often regaled us with stories
Some of which might have been true
We will always remember him fondly
The good-natured Martin McHugh

He was born on a farm in Roscommon
Where his family raised praties and pigs
There he learned to milk cows and raise chickens
And soon he would learn his first jigs
He was only five years when he started
With melodion tunes on the bed
Young Martin would torture his mother
And drive her right out of her head

CHORUS

**How he loved to regale us with stories
Some of which might have been true
We will always remember him fondly
The good-natured Martin McHugh**

Young Martin came over the ocean
Young Martin came over the seas
He landed in cold Minnesota
In the ice-ridden Land of the Freeze
But the people here welcomed him warmly
He decided no more would he roam
St. Paul was the place he'd play music
St. Paul was the place he'd call home

He was always light-hearted and easy
Not a care in the world for him
We miss all his wise-cracks and humor
Especially that mischievous grin
There was never a harsh word from Martin
He always was smiling and bright
If anyone started to argue
He would say, "You could be right"

CHORUS

The anchor of many a session
The leader of many a band
The bearer of Irish tradition
The driver of many a dance
His tunes will live on as we play them
And so will his spirit so grand
We will never forget our dear Marty
He was our good-natured man



Acknowledgements:

Sam Dillon, Remembering Martin McHugh, 1929-2022, Oct. 16, 1922, [Center for Irish Music](#).

Interview with Martin McHugh by Dáithí Sproule, Dec. 12, 2017, [Eoin McKiernan Library, Celtic Junction Arts Center](#).

Smidiríní*

(*Irish for 'Bits and Pieces')

by Copper Shannon

Deepest sympathy to **Cormac and Natalie O'Shea and their family** both here and in Ireland, and to the entire O'Shea Irish Dance family. Cormac's father **Séamus O'Sé** recently passed away. Séamus's legacy as a luminary in Irish dance will continue to inspire dancers and cultural leaders around the world for generations to come. The Irish Echo published a lovely remembrance that captures his extraordinary life and service, available on line at <https://www.irishecho.com/2025/3/minnesota-irish-bid-fond-farewell-to-legendary-irish-dancer-seamus-o-se> *Ar dheis Dé go raibh a anam dílis.* (May his faithful soul be on God's right)

Go mbíodh biseach ort gan mhoill! (May there be improvement on you without delay) to singer, musician and teacher **Katie McMahon**, who recently took an unfortunate fall. Wishing Katie well.

Go raibh feabhas ar Ed Koehne (May Ed improve). Ed Koehne, Director of the **Green Fire Irish Dancers**, suffered a heart attack on Sunday, March 16 at Day of Irish Dance about half an hour after the Green Fire show finished.

Ed's wife Elaine Murray tells us "The doctor at the hospital said it could not have been predicted, no symptoms, probably due to genetics. His arteries were so much clogged that it would have happened some time and he was so very fortunate that it came at a time and place where he got help right away. It certainly is not true that performing caused this. He dances just as hard practicing at home. In fact, it may have saved him by happening at the IAM event where he could get such great help. Ed was by the lower-level elevators when he collapsed. Ed's heart stopped twice. It was a very serious heart attack, the type that few people survive.

When he has recovered, he should still be able to return to dancing. He has been so worried about that in the hospital because he loves the dancing so much and it means the world to him. He feels so bad about missing the adult dancer showcase and the awards and St. Patrick's Day and the ceili, he keeps talking about it. (Ed and Elaine are both receiving IAM's Double Decade of Dance Awards.)

It was two security people who saved his life. They were there right away and knew exactly what to do. (And the Landmark Center had an AED readily available.)

Our Green Fire family has been so great. Ed will continue as Green Fire director and continue to be involved in ceili and set dancing as well. He can't wait to get back to dancing. Ed is home now and off work." Elaine tells us that Ed would love cards or messages. You can send him your good wishes at greenfiredancers@gmail.com.

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



Irish Arts Minnesota

April
2025
Aibreán

43rd Year, Issue No. 4

IAM Members

Irish Arts Minnesota Members

Membership is important to Irish Arts Minnesota as both a financial and social support of our mission of fostering a vibrant and diverse community of artists, dancers, musicians and businesses. A community where Ireland's traditional arts and culture are celebrated and instill an appreciation for generations to come. Membership is also a meaningful indication of community support when IAM seeks grant support and sponsorship.

Irish Arts Minnesota thanks these new and renewing members for their financial support:

Gemma Forbush family

Kathleen Green

Kathie Luby

James Young family

Jimmy Sheehy family

Patricia Tosney

Hurkle Durkle (band)

The Inland Seas (band)

Irish Network Minnesota IN-MN (community organization)

The Irish Rose (retail)

Members are reminded that Irish Arts Minnesota membership is renewable annually in January. Renew today for 2025!

New and renewing supporting members receive the following:

- A one-year (January to December 2025) subscription to IAM's monthly newsletter
- "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 "New or Renewed Members" section of future IAM newsletters and in related posts to the IAM web site and Facebook page.

*Note: The Community Resources List at irishartsmn.org/resources/ is a great community connection. It's very easy to use – just click on the business or organization name to be connected to their website or Facebook Page.



Irish Arts Minnesota

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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](mailto:info@irishartsmn.org)

IAM Board

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Questions? Comments? Contact Us!

[Info@irishartsmn.org](mailto:info@irishartsmn.org)

www.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 _____ Band/Organization/Business \$25 _____ Name _____ (Name of Band/Organization/Business)	
Interests (circle all that apply) Music Dance Theatre Language Volunteer	
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.	
Tear out the above form and send it with a check made out to "IAM" to: The IAM Membership Coordinator c/o Jan Casey 400 Macalester St. St. Paul, MN 55105 Or visit the IAM website (www.irishartsmn.org) to pay electronically.	