



Irish Arts Minnesota

May
2025
Bealtaine

43rd Year, Issue No. 5

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

New this Year – the Double Decade of Dance Award!

In recognition of the 20th Year of the Decade of Dance Award, Irish Arts Minnesota (IAM) added a new award in 2025 – the Double Decade of Dance Award. This award recognizes the long-term commitment that some dancers have made to the tradition of Irish Dance. These dancers have nurtured the love of Irish dance over at least two decades – continuing to study, to perform, to teach, and to encourage others to join them.

One of the unique elements of these dancers is how many dance schools and performance groups they have been involved with. It's also interesting to note that most of these dancers have danced together over the years.

IAM would like to thank the dancers who suggested that we recognize these very special members of our community.

The dancers were honored on the Main Stage at Irish Arts Minnesota's Day of Irish Dance and received a unique Double Decade of Dance medal and a certificate of appreciation.

Following are favorite dance memories of our Double Decade of Dance Award winners:

Lauren Adams-Plehal ~ *Rince na Gréine*
"Starting my own dance school!"

Becky Bollinger ~ *Knocknagow Irish Dancers (current), O'Shea Irish Dance, Mooncoin Ceili Dancers, Scoil na dTri Irish Dance Academy*
"The camaraderie of friends all working towards the same goal – and also sharing food in between performances at Festival of Nations."

Carol Gross ~ *Crossroads School of Irish Dance (1977-1980), Mooncoin Ceili Dancers (1977 to present), Knocknagow Irish Dancers (2012 to present)*
"Favorite memory of Irish Dance: traveling to Ireland with the Mooncoin Ceili Dancers to celebrate Mooncoin's 10th Anniversary, and to learn two set dances (Ballycommon and Wexford sets) and perform in multiple towns in Southern Ireland."

Meghan Lovegren ~ *St. Paul Irish Dancers (1996-2006), Scoil na dTri Irish Dance Academy (2006-2009), O'Shea Irish Dance (2009 – 2025)*
"Dancing alongside my daughters and watching their love of dance and the community grow."

Evan Lowe ~ *O'Shea Irish Dance (2002 – present)*
"All of the life time connections that I get to make in this sport."

Beth Pitchford ~ *Drake Irish Dance (2001 – 2006), Scoil na dTri Irish Dance Academy (2007), O'Shea Irish Dance (2009 – present), North Star Irish Dance (2009 - present)*
"The close relationships and chosen-family ties that develop over the years and seeing dancers grow from their first steps to the joy of dance and confidence that they built through dance."



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Eva Slattery ~ Scoil na dTri Irish Dance Academy (2003 – 2009), O'Shea Irish Dance (2003 – present)

"I have been Irish dancing for 23 years and am still currently competing in the elite levels internationally, as well as performing with O'Shea Irish Dance and our professional productions. There are so many wonderful memories of dance from both Scoil na dTri and O'Shea that it is hard to choose one after 23 years of Irish dance. After suffering what should have been multiple career-ending injuries and chronic diagnoses over the last two decades, the fact that I am still able to dance, perform, and compete is a wonderful miracle, because dancing is my favorite thing in the entire world."

Liam Slattery ~ Scoil na dTri Irish Dance Academy (2005 – 2009), O'Shea Irish Dance (2005 – present)

"Hands down, my favorite dance memory is winning the North American Irish Dance National Championships in 2013, but I've spent a lot of the last 8 years touring and performing internationally, so my favorite Irish dance memory of my second decade of dancing is getting to tour the world as the Lead Dancer in the show Dance Masters."

TJ Stumo ~ Mooncoin Ceili Dancers (2004-2018, 2022, 2023, 2025), Knocknagow Irish Dancers (2018 to present), Scoil na dTri Irish Dance Academy (2004 – 2008) I started taking Ceili lessons at Conway Center on Wednesday nights in 2003. I also danced with Green Fire - 2003-2005 & took classes at O'Shea Irish Dance 2009-2010.

"One of my first dance competitions was in Milwaukee. The room that held the adult competitions did not have many people in it. When it was my turn for the hornpipe, the sound from my hard shoes was so pure and loud, it echoed around the room. To hit all my steps and hear each one, it was just an amazing sound and feeling."

Zachari Wetz ~ ACTC (Associated Colleges of the Twin Cities) Irish Dance Club (Sept. 2000 – May 2001), Conway Rec. Center Irish Dance (Sept. 2001-2010), Green Fire Irish Dancers (June 2003 – present)

"The ACTC Irish Dance group ignited my joy of Irish dance and gave me a college activity to attend. The group at Conway Rec Center and dancing with Green Fire continued to fuel that joy, while also introducing me to people who have become some of my closest friends."

Growing up as a ballet dancer, performing was limited to a traditional auditorium stage, so it has been fun to perform in a wide variety of places with Green Fire. Performances that especially stick out are the James J Hill House and Winona Victorian Fair (in Victorian costumes), and the Wild Rumpus bookstore (trying to avoid stepping on each other in the small space). Favorite performances include the Landmark Center Celebrations, Irish Fair MN, MN Renaissance Festival, and Taylor's Falls Lighting Festival."

Betsy Wing ~ Knocknagow Irish Dancers (1988 – Present)

"The friends I've met along the way."

Congratulations to these dedicated dancers and our gratitude for all that they have done to inspire dancers of all ages.

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



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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. This is the 20th year that Irish Arts Minnesota has presented these awards.

The awards were presented on the Main Stage at IAM's Day of Irish Dance and St. Patrick's Day Irish Celebrations at Landmark Center. The dancers received a certificate and a special Decade of Dance medal. Their Certificate recognizes their commitment to Irish dance and their role as Ambassadors for the Irish Community.

Following are memories from a portion of the many dancers receiving the award this year. Look for the remainder in the next newsletter.

Bridgid Corniea ~ Rince na Chroi

"Having dance classes and shows with my friends."

Teagan Crowe ~ O'Shea Irish Dance

"Getting 3rd place for U-15 girls team at Oireachtas with my best friends!"

Libby Currens ~ Shamrock School of Irish Step Dance

"Every performance and the time that I spent with friends during it."

Mary-Grace Dobie ~ O'Shea Irish Dance

"Qualifying to compete at Worlds in 2025."

Anna Fini ~ O'Shea Irish Dance

"Our team winning Oireachtas in 2022."

Kara Fini ~ O'Shea Irish Dance

"Getting 3rd with my team at Oireachtas."

Adelyn Fokker ~ Shamrock School of Irish Step Dance

"Minnesota Irish Fairs every August."

Joanna Fuerst ~ Scoil na dTri Academy of Irish Dance, Knocknagow Irish Dancers, O'Shea Irish Dance, Mactir Academy of Irish Dance

"Dance class on a sunny Sunday afternoon at Oddfellows Hall. Everything about Oddfellows Hall. Brenda sitting on the little stage watching us dance two by two. The CD player that would skip because the music was so loud. The dusty floors (though we never slipped and fell). The pictures and posters on the walls. Just regular dance class from my teen years are my favorite to look back on. I didn't know then how much those days would mean to me!"

Lauren Hamer ~ Scoil na dTri Academy of Irish Dance, Corda Mor, Mactir Academy of Irish Dance

"Finding an awesome group of adult women at Mactir to dance with! From the Pub Crawl with Brian Boru to ceili team and evenings after class at the Howe, this group has been nothing but supportive and I'm so lucky to have found them to continue dancing with as an adult."



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Daisy Haney ~ Ellis Academy of Irish Dance

"From countless hours in the studio, helping teach the best little kids, local small competitions at Celtic Junction to Majors all across the country, drenched in rain or sweat at Irish Fair, St Patrick's Day tours, small pub shows, and big stage performances with local and international bands, meeting my best friends, and making time for epic adventures all along the way, and hugging my teacher after all of it, makes every day I dance my absolute favorite. I know it sounds cheesy, but I'm pretty cheesy."

Katie Harris ~ Corda Mór Irish Dance

"My favorite Irish dance memory is the experience of traveling to Belgium to perform in an international dance festival. Spending a week living and dancing alongside other groups from around the world was nothing short of incredible. Not only did I have the opportunity to make numerous international friends, but I also felt immensely proud to represent the United States and share the richness of Irish dance culture with people from different corners of the globe. It was a truly unforgettable experience that will always hold a special place in my heart."

Audrey Higgins ~ Rince na Chroi

"Dancing at Irish Fair."

Aislin James ~ Mactír Academy of Irish Dance

"Leaping over shoes in my first lesson."

Brigid Johnson ~ Rince na Chroi

"Being onstage at the end of treble reel for the first time."

Elle Johnson ~ Rince na Gréine, Mactír Academy of Irish Dance

"My favorite memory of Irish dance so far is building relationships within the Irish dance community and performing with incredibly talented dancers!"

Gretchen Kiel ~ Mactír Academy of Irish Dance

"Helping out with the wolf pups at community outreach day!"

Mackenzie Korb ~ Rince na Chroi

"In the summer of 2022, after practices or dance camp, our dance friend group would often go out to Punch Pizza and have dinner. It was so much fun and definitely a time I will not forget!"

Violet Madrone ~ O'Shea Irish Dance

"Competing in Ceili teams at the World Championships in Montreal."

Ella Mcmanus ~ O'Shea Irish Dance

"My first Irish fair."

Jason Mills ~ O'Shea Irish Dance

"Going to Worlds for the first time in Scotland. It was my first trip overseas in one of the most beautiful places I've ever seen. It was a great experience that I'll never forget."

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

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

www.irishartsmn.org



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!

The Gaelic Corner- By Will Kenny

If I were to hand you a novel or a memoir published 100 years ago today, would you be able to read it? Of course, you might have to look up some archaic words that are no longer in use. But for the most part it would look like any book published today.



The situation in Irish is quite different. An Irish novel published in 1925 would be incomprehensible to most students taking Irish today. In the mid-twentieth century, the written language was essentially reinvented.

We don't have the space to deal with the entire history of this massive language reform. But we can give you a feel for how dramatic the changes were, especially for Irish speakers in the period of, say 1935 to 1955, who had to keep up with these changes.

Let's look at a single common word in Irish as you would encounter it today, and as it looked in 1925. If you travel in the Gaeltacht, you will see signs for *Údarás na Gaeltachta* ("The Gaeltacht Authority"). This agency works to create more economic opportunity within the Gaeltacht, the theory being that if there good jobs available in the Gaeltacht, Irish speakers will be less inclined to leave. UnaG, as it is known, is all about stopping the drain of Irish speakers.

So when you see that sign you pull out your Irish-English dictionary and for the first word, *údarás*, you find this:

údarás, *m.* (*gs. & npl. -áis, gpl. ~*). Authority. 1. (a) Jurisdiction, power, right to obedience. ~ *na ndaoine, an rialtais, na geúirteanna*, the authority of the people,

As you can see, the head word or entry looks very much like English except for the addition of some accents. All the letters of the modern Irish alphabet look just like the corresponding letters of the English alphabet.

Now if we travel back in time 100 years to 1925, we would look up that word in the most comprehensive dictionary available at the time, namely, the Irish-English dictionary published in 1904 by Father Patrick Dineen. (His 1927 revision of this work remained the main dictionary until the 1970s.)

Here is what we would find:

uḡḡarás, -áir, *m.*, authority, title, authenticity, presumptuousness, assurance; uo-ḡnám muo ar m' u. péin, I do a thing on my own responsibility.

This is a different kettle of fish entirely. Comparing these two versions of a single word reveals some of the major reforms in the written language that occurred in the 20th century.

All the Irish words in Dineen's dictionary were printed in what's called *seanchló*. *Cló* is the word for typeface or font, so *seanchló* means the old typeface, sometimes called Gaelic script. It's only used for decorative purposes these days, but in 1925 this was standard written Irish.

You can see that some letters are easily recognizable, but others can be quite confusing. Let's look at the last syllable of that word, *údarás*, which is R-Á-S in both versions. In the 1925 entry, the R and the S are almost identical. It takes a sharp eye to notice that the R has a longer hook, you might say, than the very similar S at the end of the syllable.

You can also see that the G and D in the first syllable are different than the Roman counterparts. Those can be hard to learn for people who want to tackle the old script.

Finally, notice the dot over the G (second letter of the word) in the *seanchló* version. There are no dots in modern written Irish. The reform solution was to replace those dots with an H following the letter involved. In our case that dotted G would come into Roman type as GH. If I transcribe *seanchló*, directly into Roman typeface, we get *ughdarás*.

But this still doesn't match the entry from the modern dictionary (*údarás*). In an attempt to make learning Irish easier, the spelling reform removed combinations of letters that were silent in the middle of words. In our case, that GH would be removed because it's silent between the U and the D. It does, however, have the effect of making the vowel long, and that's how you get to *údarás*.

The transition between typefaces was perhaps not the smoothest. You can find *seanchló* throughout the 40s and into the 50s. There were some prominent magazines publishing around 1950 that had articles in Roman type and articles in the *seanchló* in the same issue.

Did all these changes make learning easier? I think so, and there is no reason that a modern student has to learn about the earlier form of the language ... except that it is fun!

Ní bhíonn an rath, ach mara mbíonn an smacht
There is no prosperity unless there is discipline.

TUNE OF THE MONTH

The Dairy Maid



This reel is a Martin McHugh session favorite! If you ever had the pleasure of playing music with Marty at the pub, this tune was likely a part of the fun. CIM instructors Norah Rendell and Mary Vanorny taught this tune to campers at the 2019 Summer Ensemble Camp, who performed it at the end-of-the-week camp concert.

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

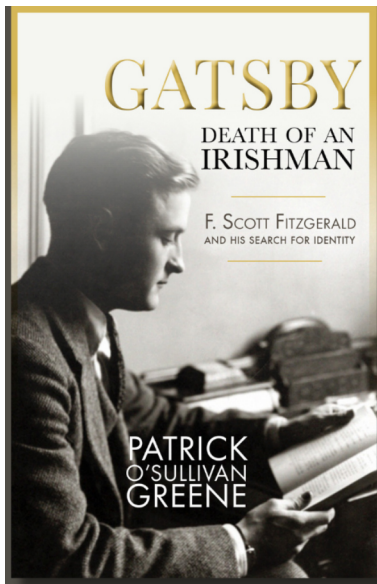


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On Leabhragan (The Bookcase)

Gatsby: Death of an Irishman— Patrick O'Sullivan Greene — Eastwood Press 2025



F. Scott Fitzgerald is getting a lot of ink this year on the occasion of *The Great Gatsby's* one-hundredth birthday. Magazine articles, broadcasts, and blogs are springing up everywhere about the brilliant Jazz Age protagonist, and his equally mercurial and mysterious creator.

Fitzgerald admitted to friends that, of all his characters, *Gatsby* came closest to being a version of himself: charming, self-invented, and deeply conflicted about his origins. As this new biography shows, it is Fitzgerald's Irish lineage – on both sides – which formed his character but also caused great division his soul.

Born into genteel poverty, with Southern-aristocrat charm and graces on his father's side and Celtic imagination and social pretensions on his mother's, Fitzgerald was greatly aware of being a "Have-Not" being raised in a surrounding society of richer, more polished WASPs and influencers. F. Scott's natural talents and gifts were legion: intelligence, imagination, an Ivy league education, good looks, and charm. But he was in the strong grip of insecurities and demons: procrastination, poverty, self-doubt, alcoholism and casual dismissal by the richer classes he tried to emulate. It caused him to be his own worst enemy.

Reading *Gatsby* many years ago, I recognized that Fitzgerald's need to re-invent himself as posher and more successful was part of his protective coloration of a poor man in a rich man's world, but it was not until I read *Gatsby: Death of an Irishman* that I realized that his Irish-ness was the reason for his self-invention.

In America, success is everything. Fitzgerald knew that many in established society thought of the Irish as inferior and barely civilized. This was true before the 1920s in America, even as the Irish had a distinguished and admirable record in the Revolutionary War as brave soldiers and statesmen. That F. Scott Fitzgerald felt he had to represent himself as "better" than he thought he was speaks to the immigrant's dilemma: how much do you show the world of your true self, and what do you need to do to make it in a world which doesn't value you?

Greene's book gave me that "aha!" moment: not only was *Gatsby* perceived as a parvenu, but Fitzgerald himself lived in dread of being exposed as less than he projected himself to be, *because* he was Irish (which he denied being, at various times). It all clicks into place once you're looking at it. And because of Fitzgerald's Irishness, he created one of the most brilliant characters in American literature: flawed, charismatic, self-destructive, doomed Jay Gatsby. Readers and *Gatsby* fans everywhere owe Patrick O'Sullivan Greene a debt of gratitude for his insightful biography of an American icon.

Sherry Ladig is a Saint Paul, MN based musician and composer, and a former reviewer for the Hungry Mind Bookstore's newsletter, Fodder. Sherry welcomes recommendations for books of Irish or Irish-American interest 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

Once More A-Lumbering Go

Freely:



Come all you sons of free-dom in Min-ne - sot - i - ay Come
all you rov - ing lum - ber-jacks and lis-ten to my strain, On the
banks of the Rum Ri-ver where the lim-pid wa-ters flow, - We will
range the wild woods o-ver and once more a - lum - b'ring go, And once
Slower
more a - lum - b'ring go, We will range the wild woods
o - ver and once more a lum - b'ring go.

Come all you sons of freedom in Minnesot-i-ay,
Come all you roving lumberjacks and listen to my strain,
On the banks of the Rum River where the limpid waters flow,
We will range the wild woods over and once more a-lumbering go,
And once more a-lumbering go,
We will range the wild woods over and once more
a-lumbering go.

With our cross-cut saws and axes we will make the woods resound,
And many a tall and stately tree will come crashing to the ground,
With cant-hooks on our shoulders to our boot tops deep in snow,
We will range the wild woods over and once more a-lumbering go,
And once more a-lumbering go,
We will range the wild woods over and once more
a-lumbering go.

You may talk about your farms, your houses and fine places,
But pity not the shanty boys while dashing on their sleigh,
For around the good campfire at night we'll sing while wild winds
blow,
And we'll range the wild woods over and once more a-lumbering go,
And once more a-lumbering go,
We will range the wild woods over and once more
a-lumbering go.

Then when navigation opens and the water runs so free,
We'll drive logs to St. Anthony once more our girls to see,
They will all be there to welcome us and our hearts in rapture flow,
We will stay with them through summer then once more a-lumbering go,
And once more a-lumbering go,
We will stay with them through summer, then once more
a-lumbering go.

When our youthful days are ended and our stories are growing old,
We'll take to us each man a wife and settle on the farm,
Enough to eat, to drink, to wear; content through life we go,
We will tell our wives of our hard times, and no more a-lumbering go,
And no more a-lumbering go,
We will tell our wives of our hard times, and no more
a-lumbering go.

I am working this month with St. Paul playwright Jeremiah Gamble of the Bucket Brigade Theater on a new play called *Shanty Boys of Pine County* that will feature songs and stories from my research. One song we were considering for the play is "Once More A-Lumbering Go" (sometimes called "The Logger's Boast") as recorded by Alan Lomax in St. Louis, Michigan in 1938 from the singing of Carl Lathrop. I learned Lathrop's version years ago. It features place names of the Saginaw area and, as I am always drawn to Minnesota-specific songs, I stopped singing it at some point.

Much to my delight, when I started looking around for other versions, I came across a fragment localized to the Rum River here in Minnesota! It turns up in an intriguing article published April 27, 1947 in the *Minneapolis Journal* about the establishment here of a Folk Arts Foundation of Minnesota. The article references the Finnish and Scots Gaelic songs recorded by Sidney Robertson in northeastern Minnesota (see Laura MacKenzie's wonderful *From Uig to Duluth* project!) and calls for more field recording to be done in Minnesota.

The article includes a fragment of "Once More A-Lumbering Go" submitted by Elizabeth Sadley of Minneapolis. Sadley writes:

...I am sending you the words, as far as I can recall, of a lumberjack song that my mother used to sing.

My mother has been dead several years, and the verses here are only a fragment of the entire song. Perhaps some one of my mother's generation can complete the words. The tune is very simple.

My family moved to Princeton, Minn., about 1875. My father operated two grist mills and supplied the lumber camps in the Mille Lacs Lake area. This song was sung by the lumberjacks who floated the logs down both branches of the Rum River to the saw mills.

Sadley's fragment is lines 3 & 4 of the first and last verses above along with the chorus of verse one. I created lines 1 & 2 of the first and fourth verses to further localize the song to the Rum River story and transcribed the rest of the text and melody from Lomax's recording of Lathrop.

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

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[Broadcasting Ireland \(from St. Paul!\)](#), May 4 @ 1:00–2:30 pm. Free

Brian Miller, Director of the Eoin McKiernan Library, introduces two groundbreaking 1960s TV series—*Ireland Rediscovered* and *Irish Diary*—created by Irish-American scholar Dr. Eoin McKiernan. Filmed in St. Paul and broadcast in 36 cities, these programs brought Irish culture and current affairs into homes across the U.S.



[Building Bridges: The Letters of Friel and McKiernan](#), May 4 @ 2:30–4:00 pm. Free

Join Education Director Patrick O'Donnell for a hybrid seminar exploring the decades-long correspondence between playwright Brian Friel and cultural leader Eoin McKiernan. Their letters reveal a powerful friendship shaped by literature, activism, and the cultural ties between Donegal and St. Paul.



[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!



[Trasma in Concert](#), May 9 @ 7:30 pm. \$25

Irish folk duo Trasma returns to St. Paul! Ger O'Donnell (Clare) and Trevor Sexton (Limerick) bring powerhouse vocals, rich harmonies, and a mix of stringed instruments to the Celtic Junction stage. With six chart-topping hits in Ireland, Trasma promises an incredible night of music full of heart and humor.



[Gráinne Hunt in Concert](#), May 11 @ 7:00 pm. \$25

With a voice like complex coffee and lyrics steeped in emotion, Gráinne Hunt brings her soulful, folk-rooted sound to Celtic Junction. Often compared to Tracy Chapman and Dolores Keane, she's shared stages with Glen Hansard and U2 and recently performed at the Cambridge Folk Festival and Folk Alliance International. Joined by Jules Stewart on drums and vocals, Gráinne delivers a night of powerful songwriting, tender ballads, and captivating presence. Gráinne wraps up our Women's Concert Series.



[Community Meeting: Shape the Future of Celtic Junction](#), May 17 @ 7:00 pm. Free

We're dreaming big—and we want you in the room. Join us for a community conversation about the future of Celtic Junction, including ideas for a potential capital campaign. We'll share what we've heard from surveys and feedback, and invite you to weigh in on what matters most. Whether you're a longtime supporter or just getting involved, your voice matters. Snacks and good company provided!



[Reverie Road in Concert](#), May 30 @ 7:30 pm. \$25–\$30

Reverie Road brings together legends from Solas and Gaelic Storm with a jazz and Raga twist—featuring Winifred Horan, John Williams, Katie Grennan, and Utsav Lal. With a sound that blends Irish tradition, classical finesse, and bold innovation, this acclaimed ensemble delivers a cinematic concert experience full of rhythm, and virtuosity.



[Breizh Fest](#), May 30 @ 4:00–10:00 pm. \$15

Celtic Junction is proud to support Breizh Fest, a family-friendly celebration of French Brittany held at Minneapolis Cider Company, 701 SE 9th Street, Minneapolis. Enjoy live music, delicious food, kids' activities, and traditional Breton dance—just like a Fest Noz in Brittany. Experience the joy and cultural vibrancy of this unique Celtic region in the heart of Minneapolis.



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Innovative multi-ethnic music and dance production, “Thistle and Rose: A Celtic-Balkan Fusion”, premieres at CJAC

A unique cross-cultural folk music and dance production, “Thistle and Rose: A Celtic-Balkan Fusion”, premieres May 31 and June 1 at the Celtic Junction Arts Center. Bagpiper/composer James Johnson leads a team of 24 musicians and dancers. Admission is pay-as-you-can (\$0-\$20-\$30-\$45).

The program, inspired by Johnson’s passion for Highland piping and Balkan folk music and dance, reimagines a historic encounter between Celtic and Balkan peoples, as actually occurred in ancient Thrace. It uniquely presents traditional Celtic and Balkan music and dance, both separately and in an innovative blend. The 75-minute performance (no intermission) is suitable for all ages and presumes no familiarity with folk music or dance. It opens with a series of short segments, each showcasing an individual folk art tradition (Highland or Bulgarian), and includes Highland and Bulgarian bagpipes. The main act is an extended Celtic-Balkan fusion segment, comprising nine original fusion tunes for bagpipe and folk ensemble, with associated fusion choreography that weaves Celtic and Balkan folk motifs into a contemporary dance. Dancers and singers are costumed according to their ethnic affiliations.

The Celtic-Balkan fusion tunes use Balkan-like irregular meters such as 7/8, 11/8, and 15/8. Musicians include Highland and Bulgarian bagpipers, a five-piece folk orchestra (clarinet, accordion, guitar/tambura, string bass, percussion), and a Balkan women’s choir, singing both traditional Balkan folk songs and a new Balkan-informed setting of an original Scottish Gaelic poem, “Meadh a Gheamhraidh” (Winter Mead). Dancers include elite Balkan, Highland, and contemporary dancers, the latter performing the program’s novel Celtic-Balkan fusion choreography.

The artists are from some of the area’s premier folk music and dance ensembles – Boiled in Lead, Choro Borealis, Doma Dance Theater, Ethnic Dance Theatre (EDT), Macalester College Pipe Band, Mila Vocal Ensemble, Orkestar Bez Ime (OBI), Traki, and Twin Cities Scottish Dance Association.

Tickets are available online celticjunction.org/event/thistle-and-rose-may31/ and at the door. All seats are general admission, regardless of ticket price. Early ticket purchase is recommended to guarantee a seat, and early arrival is recommended for optimal seat selection. Lobby doors open 1h and hall doors 30 min. before showtime.

Project leader James Johnson has been creating cross-genre fusion works for the Highland bagpipe for over 40 years. Fusion choreographer Alexandra Bodnarchuk is a Carpatho-Rusyn American dance artist and cultural activist based in Minneapolis, MN.

James Johnson is a fiscal year 2024 recipient of a Creative Individuals grant from the Minnesota State Arts Board. This activity is made possible by the voters of Minnesota through a grant from the Minnesota State Arts Board, thanks to a legislative appropriation from the arts and cultural heritage fund.

Thank you to our 2025 sponser!



WATER STREET INN
Est. 1890

Charlie's
Restaurant and
Irish Pub
at the Historic Water Street Inn

Join us for a
MOTHER'S DAY BUFFET
IN HISTORIC DOWNTOWN STILLWATER, MN!

Sunday, May 11th, 2025 🦋 9AM - 3PM

CALL NOW TO MAKE A
RESERVATION: 651-439-6000



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

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



May 9th & 10th - Tom Dahill



Tom Dahill and Ginny Johnson are superb entertainers with a fantastic repertoire of old Irish songs and dance tunes that you won't hear from anyone else. They have command of many instruments between them; Irish button accordion, concertina, uilleann pipes, fiddle, whistle, bodhrán, guitar and they sort of juggle these instruments between them to suit the sounds to fit the venue as they go along through their performances.

This is the music that is part of the soul of Ireland

May 16th - 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!



May 17th - Dine Here Dance Here

"Dine Here Dance Here" is a community event that benefits the Veterans Memorial on Saturday May 17th located on Chestnut Plaza right in front of the historic Lift Bridge. The event celebrates the historic street dances from Stillwater past while featuring many local talents of the present. For 2025, it is a 70's theme and will feature - open to the public - live music, beer / drinks garden, and raffles throughout the afternoon & evening



May 23rd & 24th - Bonnie Drunken Lad

"Bonnie Drunken Lad. A group of 4 lads and 1 lass (all with questionable Celtic heritage) with an interest in traditional and modern Irish drinking songs, war anthems, historical oddities, sea shanties, and anything Luke Kelly sings. They practice in a shack in Apple Valley, MN. Five miscreants, one Bonnie Drunken Lad."

May 30th Legacy

Based in the Twin Cities of Minnesota, Legacy has been playing Celtic traditional tunes and pub-style songs in a way that sets it apart from other bands. Legacy offers a balanced selection of songs (traditional pub, ballad, and contemporary styles) and dance tunes (traditional and stylized arrangements).



May 31st - Rocket Soul Choir



"Northern Irish, singer songwriter, Leslie Rich will be appearing with his band Rocket Soul Choir for a unique performance at Charlie's Pub, Stillwater on September 9th & 10th. It will be an acoustic, stripped back performance from their usual guitar led rock. Expect some great guest musicians and treats from Leslie's extensive catalogue. From his rock band, back in Belfast in the 90's, his time with A Little Of The Ready and Hounds Of Finn here in the US to his upcoming EP on Loud Folk Records, you can be guaranteed an enjoyable musical journey

Sign up for Center for Irish Music Summer Camps!



INTRO TO IRISH HARP

WITH HANNAH FLOWERS

****For children going into grade 2 to grade 7****

Learn all about the harp, one of Ireland's oldest instruments from Hannah Flowers, one of the leading Irish lever-harp players in Minnesota! This camp is for new and current students with limited or no prior harp experience. Music, games and other fun activities will provide an opportunity to learn basic technique as well as rhythm and ear-training skills valuable to any musician! Harps will be provided by CIM.

IRISH FIDDLE FOR VIOLINISTS

WITH MARY VANORNY & ROSA WELLS

****For children going into grade 3 to grade 8****

Join Irish fiddler and Suzuki teacher Mary Vanorny for a week of fun fiddle tunes! We'll build on skills you're learning in classical music and play some fun Irish melodies too. Learn some fun ways to make tunes you already know sound Irish, and meet new fiddle friends while learning Irish tunes! This camp is designed for advanced beginner/early-intermediate players.



IRISH MUSIC AND ARTS CAMP - HALF DAY

WITH ADRIENNE O'SHEA

****For children going into grade 1 to grade 6.****

At Irish Music & Arts Summer Mini-Camp (a condensed version of the 9am-3pm camp being offered the week of July 14th), campers will meet new Irish music friends, gathering each day to learn songs, try Irish instruments, and more!

This camp will be led by singer, flute/whistle player and dancer Adrienne O'Shea and advanced CIM students. Irish Music & Arts Camp is open to all, whether you play an Irish instrument, non-Irish instrument, or no instrument!



World-Class Musicians Travel to St. Paul for 17th Annual Minnesota Irish Music Weekend June 5-8



Internationally renowned musicians will come together in St. Paul for the seventeenth annual **Minnesota Irish Music Weekend (MIM)** June 5-8, presented by the Center for Irish Music, the state's only traditional Irish music school.

"This year's line-up of world-class performers and teachers are coming to St. Paul from across Ireland- East Clare, Galway, Derry, Cork and Kerry," explains Norah Rendell, Executive Director of the Center for Irish Music. "I look forward to sharing this rare opportunity to be inspired by our visitors at workshops, sessions, interviews, lectures and concerts!"

Trad Immersion Camps (ages 8-13) for beginner and emerging intermediate Irish musicians
Intermediate-Advanced Teen Program (ages 12-19) offering a rare opportunity for intermediate to advanced students to study with renowned visiting artists
Adult workshops, lectures, and classes are designed for all Irish traditional music lovers. Workshops are offered on fiddle, flute, tin whistle, concertina, accordion, piano, guitar, bodhrán, bouzouki, and song.

The Thursday evening **MIM Kick-off** at the Urban Growler featuring a performance by our visiting artists, refreshments, scholarship and awards presentations, followed by an open session. The Friday evening **Great Session Experience** is a free event bringing together the Twin Cities Irish music community with simultaneous sessions, including one dedicated to unaccompanied songs. Other activities include adult workshops and lectures on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday with the visiting artists, and the Saturday evening **Master Artists Concert** featuring all the visiting musicians. Closing out the weekend on Sunday afternoon is a concert featuring **Mary MacNamara and Sorcha Costello**, the iconic mother-daughter duo on fiddle and concertina. These events are all open to the public!

Additional information and tickets for all MIM events are available at www.centerforirishmusic.org/mim.

From Ireland to the North Woods: Danny Diamond & Brian Miller in Concert Saturday, May 10 at 7:30 pm

Sweeney Todd's Hair Salon, 2429 Lyndale Avenue South Minneapolis

Minnesota-based duo Danny Diamond (Slow Moving Clouds, Mórğa) & Brian Miller (Bua, The Lost Forty) brings together two of the top Irish folk/traditional musicians in the US. Building on their 2022 duo album, *Let Fly*, their live set digs deep into Diamond's musical heritage in the north of Ireland, showcasing rare and unusual repertoire, played with soul and sensitivity. These instrumentals sit alongside Miller's new arrangements of rediscovered Irish-American folksongs from the Northwoods of the Upper Midwest.

Danny Diamond is a Minneapolis-based Irish traditional / folk fiddle player, recording engineer and music researcher. Alongside performing, he teaches with the Center for Irish Music in St Paul, Minnesota, and works as a consultant with local, regional and international Irish cultural heritage organizations. Previously, Danny co-founded the influential Irish traditional band Mórğa and the Nordic-Irish indie/folk trio Slow Moving Clouds. He toured internationally as bandleader with acclaimed Irish contemporary dance company, Teac Damsa and worked for a decade with the Irish Traditional Music Archive in Dublin, Ireland, where he recorded the debut album by world-renowned band Lankum. dannydiamond.ie

Brian Miller's deep involvement with Irish music began when he was a high-schooler in Bemidji, Minnesota in the 1990s. He toured nationally for 14 years with the band Bua and performs now with Danny Diamond, the Lost Forty and Two Tap Trio. He has taught at the Center for Irish Music in St Paul, Minnesota since 2006 and at music camps and workshops around the US and Canada. Brian directs the Eoin McKiernan Library at the Celtic Junction Arts Center in St Paul. His research into Irish music in the Great Lakes region has earned him several grants and a Parsons Award from the American Folklife Center. evergreentrad.com

Tickets: \$28.52 at [EventBrite.com](https://www.eventbrite.com)



"Playing at the Dubliner Again"

David McKoskey (of favorite local band Legacy) wrote "Playing at the Dubliner Again" as a tribute to our own Dubliner Pub. The song is often on the set list when Legacy plays the Dubliner, and the band played it at Irish Arts Minnesota's St. Patrick's Day Irish Celebration at the Landmark Center in St. Paul on March 17, 2025.

*Well, the clock says it's 9:30 and I've tuned up my guitar
Stage lights on, the smell of popcorn and a fresh pint from the bar
With a nod from my companions, we're all ready to begin
We're playin' at the Dubliner again...*

*Chorus: Raise a glass to the good friends that we are
And this place we have, more than just a corner bar
We will say 'goodnight,' 'till the morning comes and then
We'll be playin' at the Dubliner again*

*Well, there's Tom Dahill and Legacy, Todd Menton, the Tim Malloys
Paddy Wagon, Locklin Road, The Gaels, The Wild Colonial Bhoys
Tramps and Hawkers, jigs and reels and polkas tearin' up the floor
We'll play them at the Dubliner once more... (Chorus)*

*Now the beer is just a memory and the popcorn's on the floor
And my voice is getting hoarse and my fingertips are sore
But with the last song on my lips, I already think of when
We'll be playin' at the Dubliner again... (Chorus 2x)*



David McKoskey
(Photo by [Tim Van Cleave](#))

David's bandmate Kevin Carroll has provided some background notes:

1. The first verse starts with "Well, the clock says it's 9:30." When Legacy first began playing at the Dubliner (at the dawn of the 21st century) the typical Dubliner band gig was from 9:30 pm to 1:30 am. Current "shifts" for performers at the Dubliner generally start at 5 pm, 7 pm, 8 pm or 9 pm, depending on the band and the day of the week.
2. There are popcorn references in the first and third verses, including a "popcorn's on the floor" phrase in the third verse. For the first few years that Legacy played at the Dubliner, there was a popcorn cart in the pub and patrons could help themselves for free. Many nights ended with the floor looking like it had been carpet-bombed by the Popcorn Air Force.
3. The second verse mentions a number of musicians and bands. Many are still active, but a few are not. For example, some may not know or remember that *The Gaels* was Brian Miller's first Irish band, during the 1998 to 2002 period, as I recall...so they were getting started around the same time as Legacy, although everyone in their band was much younger! *Tramps and Hawkers* was active from 2001 to around 2005, I think...so they were also "contemporaries" of ours at that time.
4. The chorus includes the line, "We will say 'goodnight' 'till the morning comes and then we'll be playin' at the Dubliner again." This alludes to the fact that in the early 2000's the standard Dubliner band gig was never a "one-off"...it was always three nights in a row (Thurs/Fri/Sat), and four hours per night. We'd stop playing at 1:30 am, pack up and say 'goodnight' to each other, get home around 2:30 am, and then wake up a few hours later knowing that we'd get to do it all over again at the end of the day. It was like "Irish pub music boot camp," and it was a hoot.

A recent video of Legacy performing this song can be found at <https://youtu.be/LzjJxE753fE>. Follow Legacy at www.legacycelticmusic.com and <https://www.facebook.com/LegacyCelticMusic>. Cheers!

BEALTAINÉ

MACTIR
IRISH
DANCE



WOLF
PACK
MPLS



UPTOWN THEATER | MAY 4

TWO TAP DANCE BAND | BRIAN BORU IRISH PIPE BAND
AVERAGE GATSBY | PURPLE HEATHER



Summer Opportunities with Mactír Academy of Irish Dance

Summer performances and free lessons

Longfellow Dance Party, joining Tapestry Folkdance Center, Zorongo Flamenco, and Ballare Teatro – Saturday, May 31 at Tapestry Folkdance Center, 3752 Minnehaha Ave, Minneapolis from 10 am to 6 pm.

Mactír Academy Performance and Free lesson: Noon & 2:00 pm

Minnehaha Falls Art Fair – July 18 - 20

Community booth throughout the weekend

Mactír Academy and free lesson times TBA

Kid's Classes

Mactír Academy offers Summer Sessions for Wolf Pups under 6 & Wolf Pups 6+ starting in June. Both classes are open to children with no previous dance experience, & there is no requirement to purchase shoes or a costume unless you want to perform during Summer performances! Try something new and join the Wolf Pack!

Free Trial Class: May 18 & 21, 2025

Classes on Sundays and Wednesdays, June into August

Beginner Adult Classes

Mactír Academy offers a Summer Beginner Adult Session starting in June! During the session dancers will learn the fundamentals of Irish step dancing learning both soft and hard shoe dances! No previous dance experience required. No requirement to purchase shoes or a costume unless you choose to perform during Summer performances!

Free Trial Class: May 19, 2025

The Beginner Adult Summer Session meets on Monday evenings, beginning June 2 and continues into August.

Details and registration through the website - www.mactirishdance.com/



SUMMER CAMP KIDS

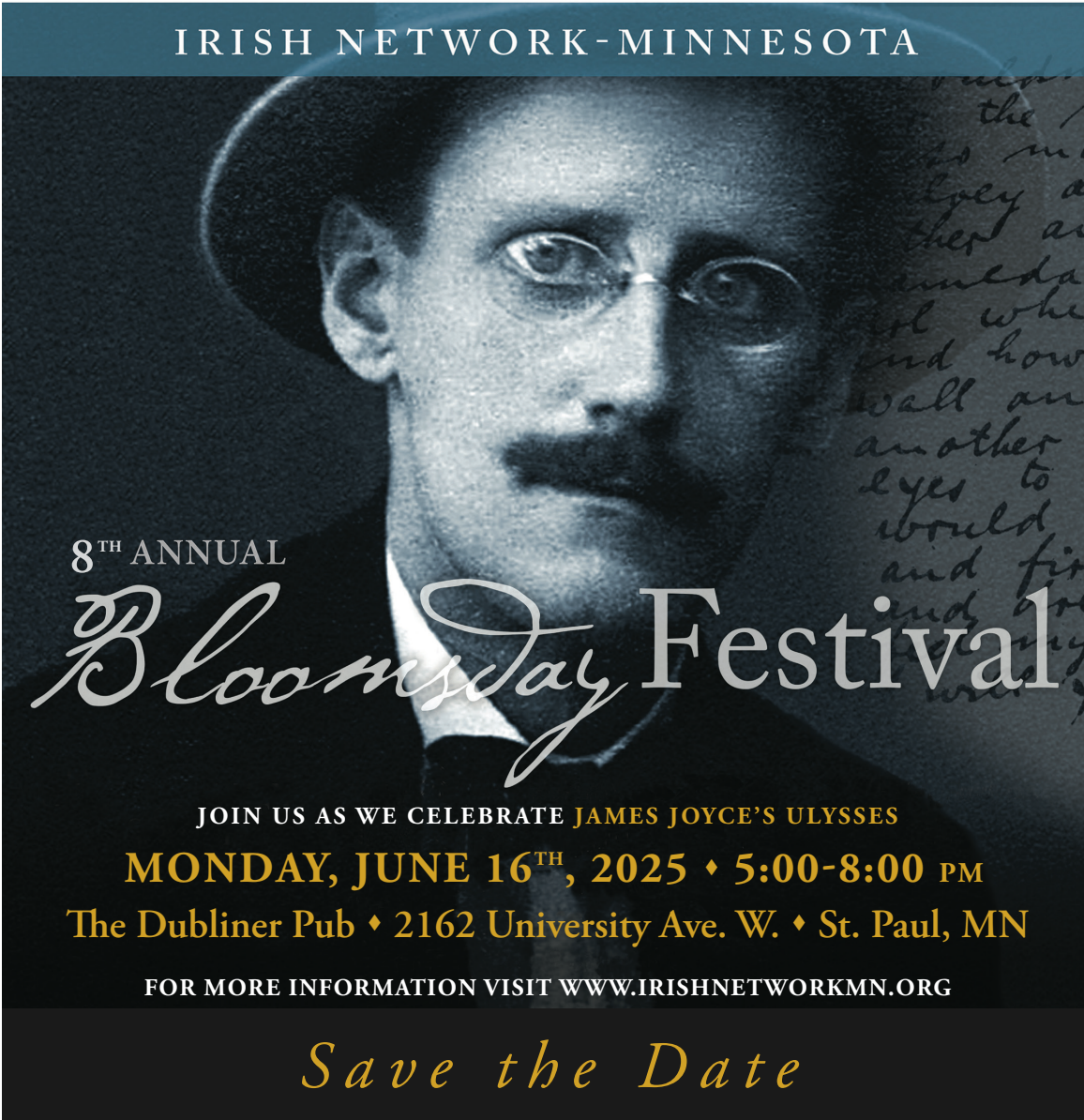
JULY 21-25

REGISTRATION



www.rincenachroi.com

IRISH NETWORK-MINNESOTA



8TH ANNUAL
Bloom's Day Festival

JOIN US AS WE CELEBRATE JAMES JOYCE'S ULYSSES
MONDAY, JUNE 16TH, 2025 ♦ 5:00-8:00 PM
The Dubliner Pub ♦ 2162 University Ave. W. ♦ St. Paul, MN
FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT WWW.IRISHNETWORKMN.ORG

Save the Date



www.irishnetworkmn.org



www.irishartsmn.org

Smidiríní*

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

*Comhghairdeas le (Congratulations to) and Best Wishes **Jim Rogers**, who is being honored by the Center for Irish Studies at University of St. Thomas. The new **James Rogers Award** will be presented annually for the outstanding article in *The New Hibernian Review* and includes a handsome honorarium. Jim is the retired director of Irish Studies at St. Thomas and the former editor of the *New Hibernian Review*, a multidisciplinary journal of Irish Studies including articles from a range of disciplines, especially literature and history.*

Deepest sympathy to **Sheila Jordan** and her daughter, on the loss of **Jimmy Magnan**. While Jimmy hasn't lived hereabouts for some time, old friends will remember him fondly. *Ní Bheidh A Leithéad Aris Ann* (There will never be the likes of him again.)

Heartfelt condolences to **Pat Lyles**, whose husband **Tim** recently passed away. Pat, who plays fiddle, leads the KLS session (Keegan's Learners Session) and is a longtime student and friend of the Center for Irish Music. Tim was a guitarist and teacher.

"Tiocfaidh críoch an tsaoil ach mairfidh ceol agus grá."
"An end will come to the world, But love and music will endure".

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

May
2025
Bealtaine

43rd Year, Issue No. 5

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 to 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:

**Patrick Bernie
Siobhan Dugan and Chad McAnally
Ross Sutter**

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 the 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.



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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

President	Amber Ladany
Vice President	Jan Casey
Treasurer	Maureen Engelhardt
Secretary	Cindy Ladany
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Board Member	Eileen Dahill
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Questions? Comments? Contact Us!

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

www.irishartsmn.org



Irish Arts Minnesota

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2025
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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.	

www.irishartsmn.org