

VOL. 34 NO. 2 | \$5.95 CDN/USA | MARCH / APRIL - 2020 | CELTICLIFE.COM

CelticLife

INTERNATIONAL

The Chieftains



INSIDE!

Byrne & Kelly, Chloe Agnew, Terry Jones
Natalie MacLean, Trailing John Muir
Spring Style, Scottish Fiddle Orchestra



DISPLAY IN LIFESTYLES
UNTIL MAY 2020



Celtic Knot Works

Inspiring Jewelry and Gifts



"I really love the
(Tree of Life T-shirt) design.
It's comfortable and
I get lots of compliments on it.
Will purchase again.
Thanks Celtic Knot Works!"
- Melissa



I hope you enjoy my work
as much as I enjoy making it.
-Bob, creator, owner, maker

NEW!
T-Shirts



FREE
U.S. Shipping
over \$30

Celtic Tradition, Original Design

Artisan Crafted Celtic Jewelry & Gifts

Ask for us at your favorite shop or
Find us online at

www.CelticKnotWorks.com





Keith Jack



Discover more at:

www.KeithJack.com
VANCOUVER, CANADA

 Keith Jack Inc.  keithjackinc

Put It On!

...Your Wall

...Your Desk



BRIEN
celtic gifts

CRAFTING ANTIQUE MAPS • JOURNALS • NOTEBOOKS • WALL HANGINGS
AND MUCH MORE – FOR OVER 30 YEARS – TO THE HIGHEST STANDARDS

23-24 Westlink Ind. Estate, Dublin 10. • Tel: +353 (0)1 626 6722 • Fax: +353 (0)1 626 8477 • Email: sales@obriencelticgifts.ie

Buy online direct from our Dublin Factory – or from your local store

www.obriencelticgifts.com

Quality...Made in Ireland...For You!

TICKETS ON SALE NOW!

"IF YOU WANT A COMIC WHO CAN HOLD AN AUDIENCE IN THE PALM OF HIS HAND FOR TWO HOURS, HERE'S YOUR MAN"

– THE TIMES

"HIS SET IS A MASTERCLASS IN INTELLIGENT, NO-FRILLS STAND-UP"

– THE GUARDIAN (UK)

DARA O'BRIAIN

VOICE OF REASON



MARCH 18 • 7:30 PM

OTTAWA

MERIDIAN THEATRES @ CENTREPOINTE

MARCH 13 • 7 PM

CHARLOTTETOWN

CONFEDERATION CENTRE OF THE ARTS

MARCH 20 • 7:30 PM

TORONTO

WINTER GARDEN THEATRE

MARCH 14 • 7 PM

MONCTON

CAPITOL THEATRE

MARCH 21 & 22 • 7 PM

CALGARY

BELLA CONCERT HALL

MARCH 15 • 8 PM

HALIFAX

SPATZ THEATRE

MARCH 23 • 7:30 PM

VANCOUVER

VOGUE THEATRE

HAHAHA.COM



Saoghal Ceilteach Iris chinnidheach
air fhoillseachadh sia uairean 's a bhliadhna le

Clansman Publishing Ltd.
PO Box 8805, Station A, Halifax,
NS, Canada B3K 5M4

Celtic Life International is an ethnic journal
published in Canada six times a year by
Clansman Publishing Ltd.

Angus M. Macquarrie, Publisher
Stephen Patrick Clare, CEO & Editor-in-Chief
Caitlyn Elizabeth Mearns, Associate Editor
Rebecca Dingwell, Senior Writer
Chris Muise, Senior Writer
Carol Moreira, Senior Copy Editor

Celtic Life International Office:
Phone: 902-835-CELT (2358)
Toll-Free: 888-215-6850
Email: info@celticlife.com
Website: www.celticlife.com

Subscriptions:
Phone: 902-835-CELT (2358)
Toll-Free: 888-215-6850
Email: subscribe@celticlife.ca

Advertising:
Toll-Free: 888-215-6850
Email: info@celticlife.com

Please send review books and CDs to:
PO Box 25106, Halifax,
NS B3M 4H4

Please return undeliverable
copies of Celtic Life International to:
PO Box 25106, Halifax,
NS B3M 4H4

Publication Mail Registration:
No. 40050439 ISSN 1918-0497

Contributors

Lesley Choyce
Andrew Ferguson
Andy Fraser
Gerald Herter
Tom Langlands
Cabrini Macquarrie

Funded by the Government of Canada
Financé par le gouvernement du Canada

Canada

By its publication Celtic Life International does
not endorse the historical accuracy or the editorial
stance of materials submitted for publication.
We do reserve the right to edit all submitted
manuscripts prior to their publication.

© Celtic Life International, 2020



Fáilte!

St. Patrick's Day

What do hockey star Sidney Crosby, St. Patrick and an Irish pub crawl all have in common?

Likely very little, to be honest. However, as we close in on another St. Patrick's Day, those three things serve as a pleasant reminder of a delightful time we had in the "Steel City" a few years back.

We were there to support one of our own; a native Nova Scotian, "Sid the Kid" is one of the finest hockey players to ever lace up skates, and a true icon of sport in Pittsburgh.

The real fun, though, was attending the city's St. Patrick's Day Parade and the ensuing hours of endless entertainment. Of course, everything was coloured green, including the beer!

Celebrated since 1869, the Pittsburgh parade is one of the largest of its kind in the USA, rich in tradition, culture and music. The world's first recorded St. Patrick's Day festivities were held in St. Augustine, Florida in 1600. Today, it is commemorated worldwide by the global Irish Diaspora each March 17.

It remains uncertain exactly when and where St. Patrick was born, but it is believed to be either in lowland Scotland or in Wales around the latter part of the 4th century. He is said to have been captured by Irish pirates at age 16 and taken to Ireland where he converted to Christianity. After 6 years, he escaped to Scotland but dreamt that the Irish were calling him back to guide them to God. He continued his religious studies in Scotland and France, before eventually returning to Ireland as a Christian missionary, later becoming a Bishop.

By the 7th century, Patrick had become a legendary figure. One such tale credits him with using the shamrock to explain the concept of the Holy Trinity; three persons in one God. The shamrock remains a central symbol for St. Patrick's Day. He is believed to have died March 17, 461 A.D., and was buried at Down Cathedral, in Downpatrick, County Down in Northern Ireland.

A pious 17th-century Franciscan priest, Luke Wadding, hailing from the city of Waterford on Eire's east coast, is said to be responsible for the feast day of St. Patrick, using his influence to have March 17 inserted into the Church calendar. Over time, the date would evolve into what it is today, both a religious and secular celebration.

As with so many Irish traditions, St. Patrick's Day is filled with good food, music, dancing, and a wee dram or two of "pota Phadraig" - Patrick's Pot.

*"Ordain a Statute to be Drunk
And burn Tobacco free as Spunk
And fat shall never be forgot
In Usquebah, St. Patrick's Pot"*

To all of our Irish friends and family (and those who wish they were Irish) -
Happy St. Patrick's Day!

Enjoy and May God Bless!
Angus M. Macquarrie, Publisher



23

Tara O'Grady takes readers on the ride of their life

31

Briana Corr Scott spins new skins on old tales

39

Irish singer Chloe Agnew returns to the fold

47

Belfast photographer Jonathan McFerran captures the Celtic spirit

59

Tom Langland visits Scotland's Netherby Hall

27

Seo Linn brings the craic from the classroom to concert halls

35

Byrne & Kelly are on the road again

43

Sommelier Natalie MacLean turns wine into words

51

Spring into style with Scotland's Lorna Gillies

67

Gerald Herter is on the trail of John Muir

9. First Word / **11.** De Tha Dol / **13.** Celts in the Community
85. The Piper / **87.** The Fiddler / **89.** The Dancer / **106.** Last Word

CELTICLIFEINTL.COM

SUBSCRIBE & WIN!

Subscribe (new or renewal) to our print or digital edition and you could win one a lifetime subscription to Celtic Life International Magazine! See our website for details or simply fill-out the form below and send in to qualify!

GET DIGITAL!

Pick up a one-year digital subscription for just \$14.95. See our website for details!

SIGN UP!

Sign up for our newsletter and you could win tickets to see Celtic Woman in concert! See our website for details!

SWAG UP!

Our new online store has a huge variety of Celtic goodies, including clothing, jewelry, giftware, household items, historical pieces, and more! See our website for details!

GET CONNECTED!

Get your daily dose of Celtic Life International on our website, where we profile the people, places and things that comprise our vibrant Celtic community! We also have the most comprehensive and up-to-date listings of Highland Games and Celtic Festivals anywhere online!

BE SEEN!

With an audience of millions, Celtic Life International is your gateway to the global Celtic community! Full details on advertising are available via our website!



PRINT SUBSCRIPTION

- ☐ 1 YEAR: \$24.95 / USA + \$10 / INTERNATIONAL + \$20
- ☐ 2 YEARS: \$39.95 / USA + \$10 / INTERNATIONAL + \$20
- ☐ 3 YEARS: \$49.95 / USA + \$10 / INTERNATIONAL + \$20

DIGITAL SUBSCRIPTION

- ☐ 1 YEAR: \$14.95
- ☐ 2 YEARS: \$24.95
- ☐ 3 YEARS: \$29.95

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____ CITY _____

PROVINCE/STATE _____ COUNTRY _____ POSTAL/ZIP _____

PAYMENT ENCLOSED ☐ PHONE _____ EMAIL _____

Credit Card; VISA ☐ MASTERCARD ☐ AMEX ☐

NUMBER EXPIRY

SECURITY CODE _____ SIGNATURE _____

CELTIC LIFE INTERNATIONAL • PO BOX 25106, HALIFAX, NS B3M 4H4



Daniel Allison

Scottish shanachie

Daniel Allison brings old stories to new audiences

Given his almost whimsical upbringing, it is not surprising that Daniel Allison developed a fascination with myths and stories.

"I grew up in the Lammermuir Hills in East Lothian, on an estate where my slightly eccentric grandmother kept a huge flock of peacocks," the 37-year-old tells Celtic Life International via email from his home in Edinburgh. "I spent most of my time either tramping around on the hills with my dogs or reading fantasy novels and wishing they were real."

And while dragons and dryads might not exist in the literal sense, the stories about them are quite real in a cultural sense; Allison found out, some years later, that there is a life to make from telling them.

"I was taking didgeridoo lessons from a Welshman named Ken Shapley. He said to me that I could tell myths and legends for a living. I couldn't believe it, yet I knew instantly that it was something I had to do. Since childhood I have wanted to be an author; but being an author is just one way of telling stories."

Allison, who has a background in theatre, proved to be a natural shanachie; today he weaves tales for children and adults alike.

"Every time I get into my car after a day spent working with hundreds of children I sit there saying 'thank you.' I might have walked into the mouth of a sea serpent with Primary 7, played the harp for the Fairy King with Primary 6, gone in search of the last monster in Africa with

Primary 5...and I always play some didgeridoo for the kids, and often they all get up and dance at the end. What could be more fun than that?

"With adults and older children, I choose stories that get down to the meat and bones of living," he continues. "They are full of impossible choices, unrequited love, and stark terror. I don't tell these stories flippantly; I have to do so knowing what they can stir in people. A story like The Six Swans can feel like a rebirth, and I have seen people experience this. But within it are traumatic experiences of abandonment and violence that listeners may well have experienced."

"It is important to respect the power of the story and to trust it to do its work."

While he is continuing a tradition of oral storytelling, Allison isn't just beholden to the old ways. In the 21st century, modernity brings opportunities to reach new ears, including with his podcast, House of Legends.

"I started that in April 2019 while living in Thailand. I had thought about it for a long time, but most of the story podcasts I had heard were for young children or took a very light, humorous approach to stories, which isn't my style. However, I realized that there must be a market for a podcast featuring my style of

storytelling, even if it was a narrow one."

Allison is also working on a few books, chief among them is his first novel, The Bone Flute.

"For years I have had children asking me if I had a book they could read, so I decided to write something for upper primary/lower secondary school pupils, based on one of the stories that I tell and love - a tale from Orkney in Northern Scotland called Asipattle and the Muckle Maester Stoor Worm, about a lackadaisical farm boy who takes on an enormous sea serpent. I always felt there was more to it. When I looked at the story more closely, it was like a trapdoor opened and the entire plot for the book came pouring out."

After its release, he plans to get to work on a sequel, in between teaching other would-be yam-spinners the tricks of his trade.

"I am a bit of an evangelist when it comes to this; I believe self-discipline trumps talent and everything else. I am going to start coaching writers soon and I won't be sending them out to look at clouds and daffodils; we will be talking more about alarm clocks and week-planning."

"We really need more young storytellers," he adds. "How we present storytelling is crucial in demonstrating that it is not a throwback activity for medieval festivals. It is living, it is vibrant, and it supports us to love one another and the wild places better. It could not be more relevant."

www.houseoflegends.me

TheCelticMarket

CONNECTING THE CELTIC COMMUNITY



CelticLife Magazine



TheCelticMarket
CONNECTING THE CELTIC COMMUNITY



Peace Tartan Scarf

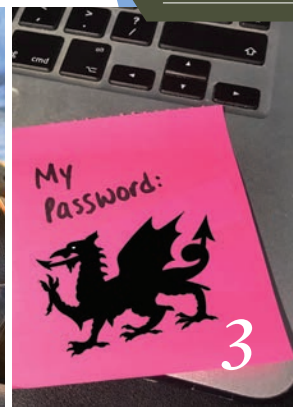


Guinness: Mimi Imports



Keith Jack, Tree of Life

CELTICLIFE.COM



one

Tying the Knot

As of Jan. 13, 2020, same-sex couples can register for marriage in Northern Ireland. It has been a long time coming; same-sex marriages have been allowed in England, Scotland and Wales since 2014, and in the Republic of Ireland since 2015. Northern Ireland has even lagged behind the Isle of Man, which legalized the practice in 2016. However, it is better late than never, and Northern Irish gay couples will now be able to tie the knot in their home country. As well, couples who have already been married will have their marriage legally recognized.

two

Seal Sitters

In late 2019, the Manx Wildlife Trust (MWT) put out the call for volunteers interested in “babysitting” seals. Grey and common seals often come ashore to Isle of Man beaches for shelter, particularly during stormy weather, and MWT wants to make sure those seals are kept safe. While volunteers would not be expected to physically intervene, the goal is to keep an eye on the seals and deter people and pets from disturbing them. The first round of seal sitters began in January after completing training, but as reported by BBC, the Trust is looking for volunteers indefinitely.

three

Welsh Password Generator

A programmer by the pseudonym “Alice” has created an open-source algorithm which randomly generates passwords in Welsh. While the programmer cautions that the wordlist and algorithm are freely available, they state on their website, “It’s probably fairly safe to use - the keyspace is large, the generation is done locally to your browser, and it uses a decent random number generator where possible.” You might end up with something like, “Haniaethu1GadnoesauDiriogaethold-eb” or “PestlauLicswm-Tafllennent.” Since the Welsh-speaking population is relatively small, they’d be tough codes for the average person to crack. To get your own Welsh password, visit welshpassword.wheresalice.info.

four

Manx in Space

Two classes of Cronky Berry school students have helped bring Manx Gaelic to the stars. The kids won a contest by the Royal Astronomical Society, which challenged people in 92 countries to choose names for their own assigned planetary systems: each consisting of an exoplanet and its host star. A team of astronomy experts narrowed 1,000 U.K. submissions down to a “top 10” list, which was then voted on by the public. The star, WASP-13, will be named Gloas, Manx for “shine,” and planet WASP-13b will now be known as Cruinlagh, which is Manx for “orbit.”

five

Giant Whisky

The world’s biggest bottle of single malt whisky has sold for £15,000 at an auction in December. The 105.3 litre bottle was filled by a team of 14 people at Scotland’s Tomintoul Distillery back in August 2009. Equivalent to 150 standard bottles of whisky, the gargantuan bottle was originally created to go on display at the Scotch Whisky Experience in Edinburgh in 2012 (when it was estimated to be worth about £5,000). Whether it was purchased as a conversation piece or with the intention of having enough scotch whisky for life, it’s sure to make its new owner happy.

six

Galician Film

A film shot in the Galician language recently won the Golden Alexander Award at the 60th Thessaloniki International Film Festival in Greece. It was also screened in the Un Certain Regard section at the 2019 Cannes Film Festival, where it won the Jury Prize. The film, *Fire Will Come* (O Que Arde), was directed by French-Spanish filmmaker Oliver Laxe. It tells the story of an arsonist who returns to his hometown in rural Galicia after being released from prison. The former prisoner tries to have a normal life with his mother, but a fire soon devastates the region.

Have an interesting tidbit to share with our Celtic community? Drop us a line anytime at info@celticlife.com



An international music and food festival

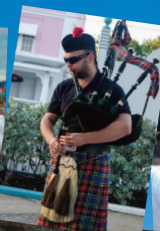
Fusing the best of Barbados with Celtic

Bring your pipes, your fiddles
and your dancing shoes and
join in the fun...

Annual Celtic Music Festival takes place in Barbados
on 19th - 24th May 2020. "We gatherin'!"

Massed bands parades, folk music concerts, fusion of
music with local musicians, food events celebrating
the rich cultural bonds we share between Nova
Scotia, Scotland, Ireland, Wales the Celtic countries
with the history of our peoples on the island of
Barbados going back 300 years.

#bringyerpipes



SUPPORTED BY:



www.barbadoscelticfestival.com

Follow us on Twitter @celticbarbados and facebook.com/celticfestivalbarbados/

Contact: 902-223-7325 CANADA +44 7836 546 256 UK email: info@barbadoscelticfestival.com




Kim O'Keeffe

A hospital director and former Apartheid nurse, Kim O'Keeffe has faced her fair share of challenges both on the job and in life. O'Keeffe has two current gigs: she is the director of nursing, midwifery and allied health professionals at the Royal Cornwall Hospital Trust, as well as the director for the Cornwall Partnership Foundation NHS Trust. In 1981, O'Keeffe began her career in Durban, South Africa, where she had lived since she was a kid. She worked in a variety of healthcare settings, including rural clinics where she set up a vital immunization program for young children. According to CornwallLive, O'Keeffe also "brought together the first post-Apartheid mixed nursing and medical team on a ward for mixed patients." She told the publication it was "one of the most rewarding and most challenging things I have ever done." O'Keeffe moved to the U.K. with her family in 1999, eventually landing in Cornwall. At the end of 2019, she was awarded a Medal of the Order of the British Empire in the 2020 New Year's Honours for services to nursing. She is one of more than 20 nurses and midwives who made the New Year Honours list for their work in the profession. It's appropriate, given that the World Health Organization (WHO) has designated 2020 to be The Year of the Nurse and the Midwife. So begins "a year-long effort to celebrate the work of nurses and midwives, highlight the challenging conditions they often face, and advocate for increased investments in the nursing and midwifery workforce," according to WHO's website.


Rosemary of Newport

One Welsh grandmother has made it her mission to keep late-night partygoers safe. Rosemary, who asked for her last name to be withheld in media coverage from WalesOnline, spends several hours wandering Newport's city centre on Saturday nights. She keeps an eye out for lone young people who may have had too much to drink or are underdressed for the weather. When necessary, Rosemary helps them contact a cab, phone a friend or reach emergency services. She's been on self-appointed patrol for more than three years. To many people in Newport - from club owners to police officers - Rosemary is a familiar face. "They have come out of the pub or wherever they have been and their friends might have left perhaps because they have had a bit too much to drink, or been ill, and I try to help them," Rosemary recently told WalesOnline. "The thought of them not getting home to their loved ones. I just feel I couldn't walk by and leave them." Rosemary's "job" started by happenstance, when she started taking walks into the city to get in shape. After running into a handful of distressed young women, she saw the need for a trustworthy person to be around and available well into the wee hours of the morning. While she's making her rounds, Rosemary spends much of her time picking up litter, especially bottles and glass that could hurt someone. She checks bus shelters, shop doorways, taxi stands and anywhere else she might find a vulnerable individual.


David Ferguson

David Ferguson is a volunteer at Scotland's only inshore lifeboat station, all the while maintaining a day job as a post officer. The holidays are especially hectic for Ferguson when it comes to both his gigs, and according to The National newspaper, "Ferguson carries a pager with him as he delivers cards and parcels to people living near Loch Ness" in case he's needed. Along with other volunteers at the local Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI) station, Ferguson was on-call for the entirety of the festive season, prepared to leave Christmas dinner for the lifeboat station at a moment's notice. Living and working close to the area means he is one of the busiest of the 15-person crew. "Today is your last chance to catch the Christmas post," RNLI posted on Twitter on Dec. 20. "David Ferguson from @lochnessRNLI will be working flat out to make sure Santa doesn't miss anyone out, whilst also being on call throughout the festivities." Calls for help come in for a variety of reasons. For instance, a car might be stuck down by the water after an accident. On other occasions, tourists sometimes sail into difficult waters after hiring a boat to look for the Loch Ness monster. All that said, Ferguson feels the rewards outweigh the challenges. "No matter the time of year, this is a way of life for us and we'll drop anything to help people in trouble on the water," Ferguson recently told The National.

CELEBRATING 50 YEARS!!

ST. PATRICK'S PARADE OF WASHINGTON, D.C.



MARCH 15, 2020

**COME JOIN US AS WE MARCH DOWN THE NATIONAL MALL &
CELEBRATE IRISH CULTURE IN OUR NATION'S CAPITAL!!**

REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN!

**For more information & to support this historic parade,
please visit us at DCSTPATSPARADE.COM**



St. Augustine Celtic Music & Heritage Festival

March 14-15, St. Augustine, FL
www.celticstaugustine.com

This year marks the 10th anniversary of the St. Augustine Celtic Music & Heritage Festival, a celebration of rich Celtic heritage that runs through Florida's veins. Hosted in St. Augustine – renowned for being America's oldest Celtic city, with an Irish presence that goes back to 1597 with the arrival of Father Ricardo Artur, America's first Irish priest - this two-day festival kicks off with a rousing St. Patrick's parade in the downtown core. After the parade, the gathering moves to Francis Field, with all-day musical performances starting at noon. Along with the annual array of Highland Games athletic activities, the 2020 festival is hosting a special event called Celtic NOIR, featuring mystery and crime authors partaking in panel discussions, a round table session, book readings and signings. Featured authors include Jane Casey, Arlene Hunt, Gerard Brennan, and more. Visitors are welcome to stroll through the grounds and enjoy the congregation of Clans, and savour a myriad of good food, drink and Celtic wares from a variety of vendors. An on-site kids' area will be sure to keep the wee ones engaged and entertained all weekend.



St. Patrick's Day Parade of Washington, DC

March 15, Washington, DC
www.dcstpatparade.com

Irish culture is alive and well in the nation's capital, and visitors of all ages and backgrounds are invited to take in the 2020 St. Patrick's Day Parade in Washington, DC. This year marks the 50th anniversary of the parade, with extra special activities planned to mark the occasion, including a number of fundraisers leading up to the big day, including live music events across the area. On the day itself, thousands of participants will weave and wind their way along Constitution Avenue for over two hours. The annual gathering is a wonderful opportunity for families to share something special together, and registration is open to anyone interested in joining. Along with having fun and hearing great local music, attendees will be helping to support the preservation and promotion of the area's rich and robust Irish heritage, and further contribute to the celebration of Celtic culture across the United States.



Declaration of Arbroath Exhibit at Federal Hall

March 23 - June 8, New York, NY
www.americanscottishfoundation.com

2020 marks the 700th anniversary of the Declaration of Arbroath, one of Scotland's most important historical artifacts. A copy of the Declaration - which is said to have inspired the American Declaration of Independence - will be on display at New York City's famed Federal Hall on Wall Street from March 23 to June 8. Dated April 6, 1320, the Declaration was written by the barons and freeholders of the Kingdom of Scotland in the Arbroath Abbey to Pope John XXII asking him to recognize Scotland's independence and to acknowledge Robert the Bruce as the country's lawful king. Thanks to the American-Scottish Foundation, in conjunction with VisitScotland, guests will view an English translation of the original Latin text and learn about the context in which it was written seven centuries ago. More recently, the Declaration of Arbroath inspired the adoption of April 6 as Tartan Day, which is now celebrated each year around the world. Many cities extend this celebration over the full week, most famously in New York City.



Highland Games & Celtic Festival April 2nd - April 5th

Celebrate National Tartan Day at the 10th Annual Tartan Day South
Highland Games Celtic Festival in the Midlands of South Carolina.



tartandaysouth.com





Tartan Day South

April 2-5, Cayce, SC

www.tartandaysouth.com

Tartan Day South celebrates a decade of Celtic heritage in the midlands of South Carolina in 2020. The Carolinas are rich with Celtic roots, and the four-day festival has brought in over 85,000 patrons since 2011 with a bevy of events, sports, sounds and sights. The event opens with a Kick-Off Party on Thursday at the British Bull Dog Pub. Friday's agenda includes a mainstage Celtic Concert featuring Syr, Tuatha Dea, and Off Kilter at the Icehouse Amphitheater in Lexington. The main event takes place on Saturday, April 4, at the Historic Columbia Speedway, with an array of activities that will keep attendees engaged and entertained, including Highland athletics competitions, great Celtic music, sheep dog and birds of prey exhibitions, on-site genealogy experts, pipe band performances, large British Car Show, vendors, and a great selection of traditional food and drink. The festivities come to a close on Sunday morning with a Kirkin' of the Tartans service and the Ruff Water Regatta river kayak competition at the West Columbia Riverwalk Amphitheater.



East Coast Music Awards:

Festival & Conference presented by TD

April 29-May 3, St. John's, NL

www.ecma.com

Celebrating both the established and emerging artists of Atlantic Canada, the East Coast Music Awards is a 5-day festival, awards show and industry conference held across the Atlantic region annually. This year, the big event comes to St. John's, Newfoundland & Labrador. Canada's East Coast is a hotbed of musical talent, and the ECMAs have highlighted the best and the brightest for 32 years by providing support through various professional development programs, showcasing opportunities, and two award ceremonies. 2020 nominees include Damhnait Doyle, Rich Aucoin, Wintersleep, Natalie MacMaster, and more - many of whom are likely to appear and perform during the gathering. Full show details will be revealed in the coming weeks, but tickets are available now, and music lovers can participate in the awards selection by voting in the Fan's Choice categories online, both in the Entertainer and Video categories, which include the likes of renowned singer/songwriters Dave Gunning, Jimmy Rankin, and Lennie Gallant.



2020 Greenville Scottish Games

May 22-23, Greenville, SC

www.gallabrae.com

In a list chock-full of noteworthy anniversaries, this one has two! This year marks the 15th annual Greenville Scottish Games, which anchors the Gallabrae festival, and is held on the prestigious campus of Furman University in Greenville, South Carolina. It is also the 10th anniversary of the Royal Highland Fusiliers (2SCOTS - Royal Regiment of Scotland) Honor Guard, the official Honor Guard of the Games. Greenville is a perfect spot to celebrate Scottish culture and heritage, as it is nestled in a region with one of the highest concentrations of Scots-Irish descent in the country. All the hallmarks of traditional Highland games and Celtic festivals can be enjoyed at the Greenville Games in 2020, including the heavy athletics, piping and drumming competitions, all-day Border Collie demonstrations, the British Car Show, the World's Greatest Scottish Happy Hour & Celtic Jam, and the Great Scot! Parade. There is even a Wee Scotland play area for the kids. Attendees are welcome to stroll through the vendor area, pop by the entertainment tent for some stirring Celtic melodies and savour the delicious Gallabrae Scottish Ale.

the cottages Ireland



**Three hundred year old cottage charm, the sound
of the sea, six miles of sandy beach... and you!**

Six unique five-star whitewashed thatched cottages in a private hamlet-like setting on the beach. Perfectly located to explore the vibrant beat of Dublin's heart or the World Heritage Site of 'Bru na Boinne' in the heart of the Boyne Valley, birthplace of Ireland's Ancient East. *25 Minutes from Dublin Airport.*

info@cottages-ireland.com

00353 41 9828104 • www.cottages-ireland.com

  @thecottagesireland



Winner of the 'Best beach holiday home in Europe'

Northern Ireland Food Tours

For Tracey Jeffery, happiness is the scent of home baked bread



Northern Ireland's cuisine has evolved greatly in recent years, and one woman from County Down is thrilled to be serving up her home cooking to hungry, globe-trotting foodies.

A former French and Irish language teacher, Tracey Jeffery has lived her whole life in Northern Ireland. As such, she is more than familiar with the local flavours.

"I have always made traditional Irish breads at home in my farmhouse kitchen for my young family," she shares via email. "And I had always dreamed of bringing guests into my home and inviting them to see the beautiful landscapes and coastline of County Down."

In 2016, she decided to bring that dream to life.

"I wanted people to be able to enjoy and appreciate our amazing food and drink, and everything that I offer comes from the immediate local area - less than five miles away."

Co. Down boasts a number of excellent local food providers, and - as part of her Northern Ireland Food Tours business - Jeffery takes guests straight to their doorsteps.

"They meet local producers, hear their stories, and enjoy their award-winning food and drink. Northern Ireland has evolved beyond recognition over the past few years; since we have had peace, we have enjoyed an increase in the number of visitors year after year. Our food is of such a high quality, due to the tremendous amount of rainfall that

we receive. Last year, we came first for Food and Drink in the World Travel and Tourism Awards."

Starting her tours in Belfast before weaving through to Mourne Mountains, pitstops include a meetup with a local cider producer, and an expedition harvesting oysters on Coney Island.

The most unique part of Jeffery's taste tour, however, is something only she can dole out.

"I offer a stand-alone immersive experience - traditional Irish bread-making in my own home."

"I live in a 17th-century thatched cottage on the shores of Strangford Lough, only 30 minutes from Belfast. I invite guests into my kitchen where they will enjoy homemade breads and sweet treats."

Like Eire to the south, Northern Irish cuisine is particularly known for, as you might surmise, potatoes; this even extends into their baked goods. The local Comber variety of potatoes, according to Jeffery, are as unique to the region as Champagne and Parmesan cheese are to their pockets of the globe. They are also perfect for Champ bread which Jeffery helps her guests prepare out of her own kitchen.

"They will also make soda breads and wheaten breads, which they can take home

with them along with a copy of the recipes. Guests love it, especially as they feel very welcome in my kitchen. It is a unique experience, as it can only take place with me. I have recently been awarded 5 stars from Tourism NI for my traditional bread-making experience - one of only 14 private companies in Northern Ireland to achieve this accolade."

As intrusive as it might seem to lead a foodie tour through your own house - and she is the first to admit, with two young boys in the house alongside guests, it can be a challenge to keep everything tidy - Jeffery loves her calling, and believes it reflects the innate hospitality the region is known for.

"I get to meet lovely guests - they come to me as visitors and leave as friends! I love what I am doing, and it honestly does not feel like work."

She is more than eager to tout the fantastic flavours of her home to the rest of the world but believes that more marketing is in order if Northern Ireland is to truly benefit from the bounty at its disposal.

"We still do not shout about what we have here - we need to recognize that we have so much to offer our visitors. Now is the best time to come to Northern Ireland, as we are still much more affordable than most destinations, and visitors are always blown away by our food and drink."

www.nifoodtours.com

**Celebrating
the Bond of
Friendship**

Since 1979



**ROYAL NOVA SCOTIA
INTERNATIONAL**
tattoo

June 27 - July 4, 2020 | Scotiabank Centre, Halifax

KIDS ARE FREE!

Tickets: nstatattoo.ca | 902-451-1221



sobeys

Canada

NOVA SCOTIA

HALIFAX

For the past fifteen years, Saint Mary's University (SMU) in Halifax, Nova Scotia has paired with Peaceful Schools International - a non-profit organization focused on the implementation of peace within the education system - to develop the Northern Ireland Conflict Resolution Program. The brainchild of SMU Professor and Conflict Resolution Advisor Bridget Brownlow, the program offers undergraduate students the opportunity to travel to Northern Ireland, where they share conflict resolution strategies with students in elementary schools.

Brownlow, whose family has roots in Northern Ireland, says that she was "always interested in peace education and conflict resolution design for children and youth." After meeting Peaceful Schools International Founder Dr. Hetty van Gorp, and several people in the field in Northern Ireland, she developed the program's concept.

Her resolve remained steadfast over the years.

"I will remain staunchly committed to the provision of peace education for our children and youth both in Halifax and in Northern Ireland for the remainder of my days. It is a privilege to continue working with so many incredible people here at home and in Northern Ireland."

The Northern Ireland Conflict Resolution Program, which recently visited 16 schools, is not for the faint of heart; to complete the course, students must compete for their spot, and then devote much of their time to the work both in Halifax and in Northern Ireland.

"It is the longevity of our connection to the people - especially the young people of Northern Ireland - which is most significant."

"We have built a great deal of trust and goodwill over the years with members of all communities, and that has allowed for other academic and non-academic projects to emerge from this peace education program."

She and her team have also introduced another series of workshops, specifically designed for Loyalist and Republican community activists, to run alongside the elementary school initiative.

"These sessions will be facilitated by myself and two colleagues, Dr. David Bourgeois, Psychology Saint Mary's



University and Dr. Bonnie Weir, Political Science, Yale University. These are educational opportunities to share our respective areas of expertise with humility and respect for the people of the Northern Ireland who ultimately know best how to move forward and resolve their own issues."

She admits that the initiatives have not been without their challenges. The rewards, however, make it all worthwhile in the end.

"We rely heavily on fundraising in order to support our university students with the opportunity to participate in this program, regardless of their financial limitations. In addition, we have far more requests from schools in Northern Ireland and in Halifax for peace education workshops than we are able to accommodate. This is the result of long-standing positive relationships with many schools - be they State controlled, Catholic maintained, Irish Medium or Integrated. We wish that we had more time and more funding to provide these schools with a far greater number of workshops than has been possible to date.

"Still, I believe everyone involved in this program - be they in Northern Ireland, Canada, the USA - have been transformed in a positive manner. This includes the children, university students, faculty and staff at all of the schools involved. They have consistently reported back on all of the mutual benefits we seem to have made through the longevity

and creativity of this program."

Recent political events in the U.K. - and specifically Northern Ireland - are a cause of concern.

"For some time now, the uncertainty surrounding the implications of Brexit on the North of Ireland have been in the forefront, and a source of great confusion and stress for people on both sides of the border in Ireland. Clearly, I cannot in any way predict precisely what will happen with Brexit.

"However, on the positive side, we have recently seen the Stormont Assembly return to session, and it is with great hope that their efforts to cooperate and work together will gradually improve the lives of all the people of Northern Ireland."

2020 will be busy for Brownlow. In addition to her work in elementary schools, she is looking to further flesh-out her program for Loyalist/Republican workers and activists.

"We are travelling to Londonderry/Derry with our Yale colleagues to begin working with two new partner schools and participate in a series of preliminary meetings. We want to determine how we can best share our experiences and support to their respective struggles within their communities going forward."

www.peacefulschoolsinternational.org



Fragrance & Memories

Fragrance from Ireland



Scented Candles and Reed Diffusers



Fragrance Diffuser \$35

Enjoy the fragrance memory of a visit to the Cliffs of Moher with the scent of wild heathers and lavender on the ocean breeze. Our award-winning home fragrance range will transport you there.



Scented Candle \$29

www.fragranceandmemories.com

Tara O'Grady

Tara O'Grady takes readers on the ride of their life - soundtrack included...

You would be forgiven for thinking that Tara O'Grady does not perform Celtic music. With a pin curl bob and strappy shoes, the Irish American songstress looks more at home in a smoky, turn-of-the-century nightclub, aside a jovial jazz pianist.

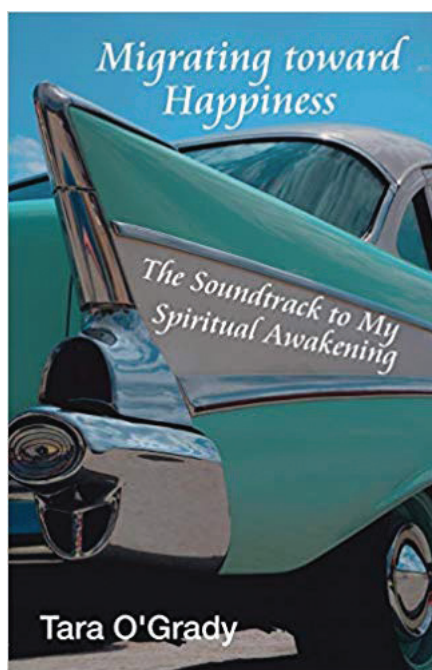
Despite her appearance, however, the New York native's music is inspired as much by Celtic trad as it is by old-school jazz.

"My mother was born in Donegal, Ireland, and my dad is actually a trad fiddle player," she tells Celtic Life International via email. "Growing up, I was always singing around the house, listening to my parents' music, which was Irish trad, as well as Elvis Presley and music from the 1950s."

After leaving her full-time job as a teacher, O'Grady considered a career in music.

"I knew I could carry a tune, so I began to sing full time and write original songs. It was my eye doctor who introduced me to Billie Holiday and Ella Fitzgerald and the rest. Suddenly a whole new world opened for me. But my Irish family didn't want me to sing jazz songs at family parties - they only wanted to hear Irish songs. So, I started singing 'Danny Boy' and 'Peggy Gordon' and 'Go Lassie Go' with a jazz tempo and phrasing. That is when I recorded a full album of Irish songs that swing like jazz, with trumpet and saxophone, called Black Irish."

Released in 2010, Black Irish was an instant success, winning O'Grady the Irish Voice's Most Influential Women award that year. Since then, she has released four additional albums; her sophomore effort, Good Things Come to Those Who Wait (2011); Celt in a Cotton Club (2013), a collection of Irish-jazz originals; Irish Bayou (2015), an 11-track recording inspired by New Orleans; and, most recently, Folk Songs: Songs about Real Folks (2017), a mix of folk, gospel, swamp pop, swing, country, and jazz.



"I am simply inspired by people's stories and journeys. I write songs on airplanes as soon as I leave a new place. I like true stories about real people. The songs I write are about real experiences, and the words reveal snapshots of those experiences."

"Of course, Ireland is never far from my mind, even if I am far from Ireland."

Recently, O'Grady added "author" to her resume with the release of her memoir, Migrating Toward Happiness: The Soundtrack to My Spiritual Awakening. Described as "Eat, Pray, Love meets Thelma and Louise on the yellow brick road," the 254-page tome invites readers on a revealing and emotional journey of self-discovery.

"I always wanted to be an author. I declared so at age eight. I just needed the right story to write about. When I left my teaching job, I decided to recreate my Waterford-born, Irish Granny's road trip. She drove a 1957 Chevy Bel Air from New York to Seattle in 1957. She didn't have a license, and she asked my Roscommon-born grandfather if she could get one, but he said no. She secretly got her driver's license by asking his Irish friends in NYC to teach her how to drive, and then she took her husband's '57 Chevy on a 6000-mile cross country road trip for seven weeks, sleeping in the back seat of the car. Women did not leave men in the kitchen to fend for themselves in the 1950s, so this was a daring feat. Plus, she didn't know how to turn the car around."

"Every chapter of the book is titled after a famous song, creating a soundtrack to the road trip. Songs from Billie Holiday and Willie Nelson to Elvis and Frank Sinatra - and even Led Zeppelin and Bruce Springsteen."

Since its release, the book has received both popular and critical acclaim, including a warm shout out from author Jeanine Cummins, who called the work an "intimate melody."

"I have men and women of all ages telling me they couldn't put the book down, and that it makes them laugh and cry at the same time."

With her first book behind her, O'Grady is moving forward with her sophomore effort.

"I have already written the first few chapters and, while I was in Ireland recently, I got a new idea for another book. I am now taking folks with me on tour to Ireland and across Europe and America for all sorts of retreats. I am here to teach lessons on love and compassion, and I plan to do so with my books, my music and my global excursions. All are welcome on my journeys of discovery."

www.taraogradymusic.com

ONE NIGHT PREMIERE EVENT ON APRIL 16TH
ONLY IN THEATERS

ANGUS
MACFADYEN

ANNA
HUTCHISON

JARED
AND HARRIS

ROBERT THE BRUCE

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY ANGUS MACFADYEN
AND EXCLUSIVE BEHIND THE SCENES FOOTAGE

IN ADDITIONAL SELECT THEATERS APRIL 24TH

A SCREEN MEDIA RELEASE. 'YELLOW BRICK FILMS' IN ASSOCIATION WITH PONDEROSA FILMS & EMERALD WAY PRODUCTIONS PRESENTS
'ROBERT THE BRUCE' ANGUS MACFADYEN ANNA HUTCHISON ZACH MCGOWAN GABRIEL BATEMAN TALITHA BATEMAN CHARMAUD MURTAGH EMMA KENNEY PATRICK FUGITT MELORA WALTERS BRANDON LESSARD WITH KEVIN MCNALLY AND JARED HARRIS
CASTING BY AMANDA LENKER DOYLE CSA CHRISSY HORILLA ELLINGTON CSA COSTUME DESIGNER VICKI ANNE HALES PRODUCTION DESIGNER ZACH DEPOLO APRIL HOPKINS ORIGINAL MUSIC MEL ELIAS
EDITOR HAYLEY MIRO BROVINE DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY JOHN GARRETT PRODUCED BY RICHARD GRAY ANNA HUTCHISON ANGUS MACFADYEN KIM BARNARD ANDREW CURRY NICK FARINELL CAMERON NUGENT
EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS CARTER BOEHM SHARON COX MIKE GILLESPIE WRITTEN BY ERIC BELGAU ANGUS MACFADYEN DIRECTED BY RICHARD GRAY

RobertTheBruceFilm.com

FATHOM
EVENTS



Celtic folk-rockers go digging for Kolar's Gold

The Celtic Diaspora is a large one - so large, in fact, that it is not uncommon to discover a lost corner of it somewhere in the world. That is what happened with Cornwall-based band The Rowan Tree when they stumbled upon a lost bit of Cornish history in India.

"I first discovered that Cornish miners had been in India after watching a TV show about Indian music," recalls Laura Garcia, who sings and plays a variety of instruments in the five-piece band. "I was inspired to explore the possible connections between India and Cornwall. I found a brief mention online of the Kolar Gold Field, but there was very little information about the Cornish community that had lived there."

"I knew one song that had fragments collected from Cornish miners working in the south of India, but I knew no more than this," adds fellow band member Richard Trethewey. "Like the miners of old discovering a seam of tin, once we knew the history was there, we simply had to follow it."

The quintet unearthed the story of those miners - who excavated in Karnataka, India from 1890 to 1940 - with their latest recording and multi-media project, *Kolar's Gold*, which fuses Cornish and Indian culture, both in terms of stories and sonics.

"The Cornish mining community in India had been all but forgotten," says Garcia, "We felt it was important to make people aware of this fascinating part of Cornish history. The more we researched and learned, the more inspired we were. We probably could have made five albums with all the

stories we uncovered!"

The band wasn't alone on the new album; music was a big part of life in the Kolar Gold Fields, and they wanted to reflect that in the recording by including Indian musicians from the region.

"It was always important to produce music of the highest quality, taking no shortcuts," says Trethewey. "We hoped to honour historical connections between Cornwall and India, such as miners at KGF, by raising money for Camborne Town Band, and so we had that band involved in the project."

"If the only musical contributors had been a Cornwall-based folk band, this story would have been missing many of its key characters," adds Tom Fosten, the group's guitarist. "Even with the best will in the world, we could never give an authentic representation of the Tamil and Karnataka folk traditions present in KGF's history on our own, nor are we the best to represent the Cornish shanty tradition."

"KGF was a melting pot of different cultures and this needed to be faithfully recreated in the music."

Arranging an album based upon nearly forgotten miners' tales from across the globe wasn't easy, especially as much of it was done through correspondence.

"It was recorded across four different studios in India and the U.K., by 3 different engineers, with a further two studios involved in the mixing and mastering process-

es," explains Fosten. "Some of the songs are made up of around 80 individual recordings, which made stitching it all together quite tricky!"

Thankfully, they had support from many others, including descendants of those Cornish miners.

"The challenges ranged from finding historical information to organizing the logistics of squeezing 50 Cornish musicians into a four-day recording window and overseeing the Indian recording process from my living room 4,000 miles away," adds Garcia. "We have been very fortunate to have some wonderful people get on board with the project; historians, musicians, and members of the public both in India and Cornwall have bent over backwards to help us, and we could not have done it without them."

By all accounts, the project - which began almost a full year ago - was well worth the effort.

"Being responsible for bringing these personal stories to life has been an honour for all of us," says Trethewey. "Seeing different participants forming relationships across countries has also been a wonderful outcome. I think we are all very proud of the high quality and the truly unique musical legacy of what we have done."

Garcia concurs, adding, "The people we have met both at home and in India, and the friendships we have made, have been the greatest reward."

www.therowantreemusic.com

THE WORLD'S LARGEST IRISH MUSIC FESTIVAL

MILWAUKEE IRISHFEST

AUGUST 13-16, 2020

40TH CELEBRATION

JOIN US FOR

ALTAN • THE HIGH KINGS • WE BANJO 3
AND MANY MORE TO BE ANNOUNCED SOON!

BUY TICKETS ONLINE

THE EARLIER YOU BUY, THE MORE YOU SAVE!

IRISHFEST.COM



IRISHFEST.COM



Irish folk-pop group Seo Linn caught the world's attention with an Irish Gaelic cover version of the late (DJ) Avicii's top-10 hit Wake Me Up in 2013. Though "barely even a proper band" at that time, the group has since taken their talents on tour around the globe, most recently in support of their Gaelic/English crossover album *Marcus in the Wood/Marcas sa gCoill*.

Keith Ó Briain, one of Seo Linn's four members, spoke with Celtic Life International via email. Ó Briain plays multiple instruments for the quartet, including guitar, bass and mandolin. Hailing from Kilkenny on the Emerald Isle's "sunny south-east," he has been performing in bands since he was a youngster, playing his first pub gig when he was just 14 years old.

"My Mam used to be outside waiting," he recalls, "ready to whisk me away from the alcohol and general pub stuff the second we got off stage."

As a teenager, Ó Briain connected with bandmates Stiofán Ó Fearail, Daithí Ó Ruaidh and Kev Shortall while taking an immersion course in the Gaeltacht - areas in Ireland where Irish Gaelic is still the vernacular.

"Kids here often go to the Gaeltacht to get better at Irish language for school. This is where the four of us first met [Coláiste Lurgan, an Irish-language summer college] and combined our musical passions.

"While we were there, each of us started translating our favourite pop songs into the

Irish language so we could play them at the talent show at the end of the course."

Michael Ó Foighil, the college's manager, caught wind of the idea and sent the group to a local studio to record the songs.

"We came back year after year doing this same process, recording pop songs in Irish," explains Ó Briain. Eventually, they became employed by the college, recording other cover versions and filming music videos featuring the college students, which were then posted on YouTube. By the summer of 2013, the videos' popularity skyrocketed, with over 10 million views in just a couple of months.

"We said, 'Right, so lads, we'll have to start a real band now then!'"

On the heels of that viral success, Seo Linn was soon sharing the stage with the likes of English ska band Madness and members of British girl group the Sugababes at the Dublin New Year's Eve Festival. International shows followed, with gigs in the United Kingdom and a charity trip in Uganda.

"We played bars, halls, stadiums - showing up at more Irish cultural events than we can count," notes Ó Briain. "Some of our instruments barely worked. We had very little experience and yet we were thrown into this madness. It was a real trial-by-fire,

and we were literally running to keep up, but those early years really molded us into the band that we are today."

Seo Linn's debut album, *Solas*, was released in 2017, winning Album of the Year at the The NÓS Irish Language Music Awards. The band's sound combines folk and pop with a strong traditional Irish influence.

"We love taking a piece of music that is old and has the character that only traditional or folk music can wield and take it somewhere new. That excites us a lot. We also love writing music that gets people up on their feet and dancing."

The band often composes music with their live performances in mind.

"When you have a roster of songs like that, it is easy to design an awesome show that has ebb and flow. If a song has enough character to make a section of your live show pop, then it is going to hit for people listening at home, in their car, or wherever."

Seo Linn continues to tour the world; in March, the band will travel to Australia, before making the rounds across Europe through the spring. Dates in North America are scheduled for the summer.

"We only ever produce music that we are 100 per cent invested in. Whether that is a good thing or a bad thing, it is what keeps Seo Linn real for us - it maintains it as this genuine and intimate journey that we have been on for the last eight years."

www.seolinn.com



UNITED IRISH OF DAYTON

CELTIC FEST

ESTABLISHED 2002

July 24-26

Come celebrate
three days worth of
Celtic music, dance,
art, and culture at
Dayton, Ohio's
iconic
FREE festival.

Live Entertainment
Food & Drink
Whiskey Tastings*
Parade of Kilts

FRI
24
5:30P-11P

Live Entertainment
Irish Ceili Dance
Food & Drink
Whiskey Tastings*
Children's Area
Parade of Kilts

SAT
25
11:30A-11P

Live Entertainment
Irish Ceili Dance
Food & Drink
Whiskey Tastings*
Children's Area
Celtic Breakfast
Gaelic Mass
Parade of Kilts

SUN
26
9:00A-6:00P



FOUR STAGES • FAMILY FRIENDLY • RAIN OR SHINE

DaytonCelticFestival.com



Located at
RiverScape MetroPark
in Downtown Dayton
111 E. Monument Street
Dayton, Ohio 45402

*Requires ticket purchase. Space is limited.
Tickets will be available online and at the
festival. Advance sales end July 25.

The Scottish Fiddle Orchestra

Scotland's Blair Parham brings fiddling to the fore



As Blair Parham puts it, he started to play music “properly” at the age of eight.

“I say ‘properly’ as I began learning the recorder when I was in London, but this was during whole-class music lessons.”

Growing up in Ayrshire Riviera (commonly referred to as Ayr) - after spending the first few years of his life in Argyle, Wales and London - Parham was surrounded by music.

“I took a listening test in school to determine whether I was able enough to play and was offered the cello as the instrument to learn,” he shares from his home in Troon, Ayrshire. “I jumped at the chance as my best friend played cello already. I kept up with both the recorder and the cello and competed quite successfully with both in the Ayrshire Music Festival as a soloist and in ensembles and orchestras.”

Before long, the 11-year-old musician joined the Ayrshire Fiddle Orchestra, a youth group that performs traditional Scottish music.

“Scottish trad was a little bit different to the ‘regular’ classical stuff I had been playing. However, being in the AFO meant I could go on their international tours! When I was a playing member, I travelled all over Europe, the States and Canada. I eventually left the AFO as a player and returned as one of the Directors. In addition to Europe and North America, I travelled with them to Australia, New Zealand and China.”

Parham continued to play with the AFO until 1995, when he joined the Scottish Fiddle Orchestra (SFO).

“I auditioned in front of the leader Bill Cook and the leader of the cello section, Irene Wood. I remember vividly just about



who sat down next to Bill and Irene. That was the first time I met the late, great John Mason, the founder of the orchestra.”

Starting out on cello, Parham quickly got involved with two smaller groups within the SFO, including the orchestra’s Glee Club. Later, in 2008, he was asked by Mason (then SFO conductor) to work as his understudy.

“He had a few health issues, so I did parts of some concerts to help him. Before he sadly passed away in 2011, he passed the baton over to me and I became conductor and joint Musical Director alongside the leader Bill Cook, who sadly passed away in September 2019. When I took over the baton, because of time and my new responsibilities, I had to stop playing the cello.”

Although he acknowledges the challenges of the gig – particularly finding a balance between modern and traditional musical styles - Parham says the rewards outweigh the difficulties.

“I get to meet wonderful people from all walks of life and get to spread the joy that is Scottish music.”

The SFO will soon embark on a North American tour to celebrate its 40th anniversary. Starting March 31 in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, the group will perform at various venues across northeastern USA and Canada, finishing in Montreal on April 8.

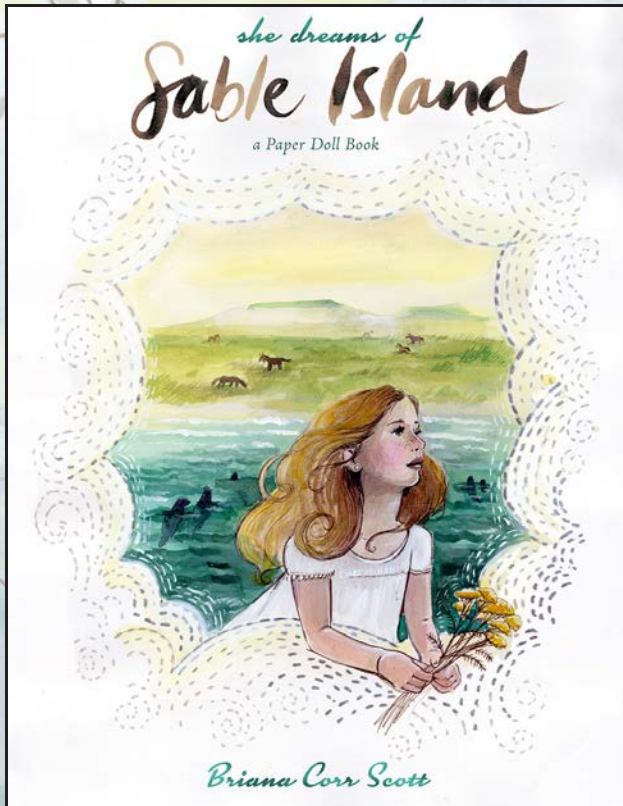
“It is going to be a tour-de-force of Scottish music, tipping our hats to the jigs and reels of our past but looking forward with brand new arrangements for the new decade upon us. We will have two of Scotland’s finest vocalists (Colette Rudy and Denis Haggery) with us, as well as our own piper, and we are planning on performing alongside North American pipe bands in showstopping finales.”

As Parham prepares for the upcoming tour, he continues to work with his art company, Scotia Arts. And though he believes the state of Celtic culture and music is in a relatively strong place, he does feel that more can be done for Celtic music and arts within the educational sphere.

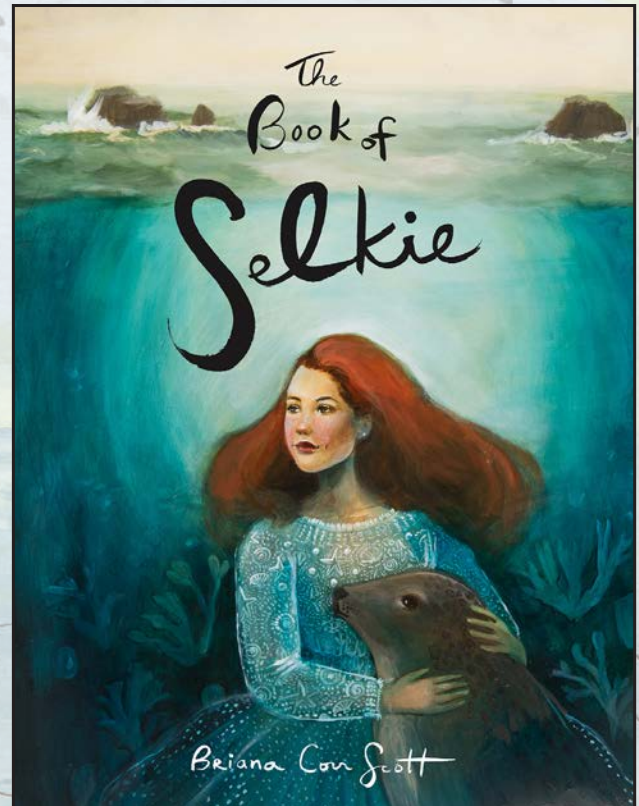
“There is a huge ground swell of public opinion against fees for instrumental music tuition, something that has been brought in by most councils relatively recently. I doubt I would be where I am today if it wasn’t for the free tuition I received in the 80s and 90s. Hopefully the government and local councils will treat music and music education in the same way it does with the likes of Maths, English and Science and realize it is an essential part of a young person’s development. There is a lot to look forward to in Scottish Music - but we must be mindful that music is not forgotten in education circles.”

www.sfo.org.uk

Paper Doll Books for Little Dreamers



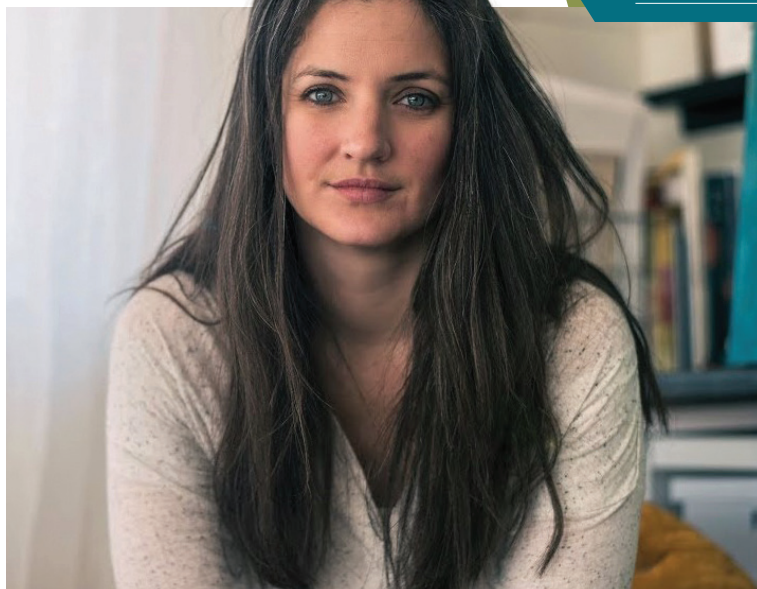
She Dreams of Sable Island
Text and art by Briana Corr Scott
\$24.95 | 9781771086264



The Book of Selkie
Text and Art by Briana Corr Scott
\$24.95 | 9781771088206

Nova Scotia-based artist Briana Corr Scott blends beautiful poetry with her whimsical artwork. In *She Dreams of Sable Island*, Scott explores the adventure and wilds of the childhood imagination, in *The Book of Selkie*, short poems explain and explore the mythology surrounding the legend of Selkie—the half-girl, half-seal.

Both books come with a paper doll of the main character as well as outfits and companions to immerse the reader fully in the story and continue to enjoy these gorgeous landscapes.



Briana Corr Scott *Nova Scotian artist/author Briana Corr Scott spins new skins on old tales*

Last Spring, Briana Corr Scott released her debut literary effort, a children's book titled *She Dreams of Sable Island*. Following a young, female protagonist, the story explored the natural beauty of Sable Island, an isle off the southeastern coast of Nova Scotia.

The work was an instant success thanks to both its poetic prose and alluring artwork. But this wasn't your typical children's book; snug behind the story's final page sat an old-school, impeccably-rendered paper doll kit.

Born and bred in Salem, Massachusetts, Corr Scott knew that she wanted to be creative from the age of three.

"That is my oldest memory of it," she tells Celtic Life International over the phone. "When I was little my mom would fold pieces of paper in half and staple it like a book and I would write in it."

In addition to authoring a book, Corr Scott has also plied her trade as a professional artist for more than six years.

"I make and sell paper doll kits for children - another thing I loved to do when I was a kid. Making paper dolls just struck that creative spark for me, and so I decided to incorporate them into the book. When I sent my manuscript to the publisher, I included a paper doll. They were thrilled. Writing the book was one of the biggest highlights of my career."

Corr Scott will release her follow-up narrative, *The Book of Selkie*, this May. Although similar in style to its predecessor, the author notes that this project draws inspira-

tion from her Irish heritage.

"My dad is from Belfast, and I have a lot of Irish relatives on his side of the family. The first paper doll kit I ever made was a Selkie paper doll. When I was in Massachusetts, my family lived in this little beach community and I have memories of myself there during the wintertime - walking around when the town was quite empty - and I would see the seals come up on the beach. Seals have always held a very special place in my heart because of that. Then I read the Selkie stories in folklore and that really inspired me."

The Selkie story is an old Scottish folktale that was popular across England, Ireland, and other countries bordering the North Sea.

Half-woman, half-seal, the creature is compared most frequently to her cousin, the mermaid.

"She becomes human and lives as such," Corr Scott explains. "In many stories, she goes on to have children. But then she will leave the children and go back to the sea. Typically, the Selkie in stories gets captured by a man, but in my version, there is no man involved and she doesn't get captured. It is a more subtle conflict about her being caught between the land and the sea. It is not a direct retelling."

"I loved that idea of a selkie being a paper doll because she has a wardrobe inherently built into her story," she continues. "It

is a story about someone being torn between two places, which is something I can relate to as I immigrated to Canada from the U.S. and my family is far away from me."

She notes that the project required a fair bit of research.

"I worked on it about a year, from start to finish, but I feel like I have been researching this book since I made that first paper doll. There was one book of stories called *The Tales of the Sea People* by Duncan Williamson that was helpful. It is a collection of tales from the Orkney islands and the coast of Scotland that were originally passed down through word-of-mouth. I also did an art residency at the Burren College of Art in Ballyvaughan, which is in County Clare. I used a lot of visual impressions from that area for scenes in the book."

Corr Scott is already working on her next creative project, alongside local author Taylor Widrig.

"It is called *The Mermaids Handbook*, and I am illustrating it. In the book there are eight different profiles of Selkie and mermaid creatures from around the world. It is interesting to see how all these different places have a very similar story."

"I am also working on new manuscripts for new books and illustrations for my small business, and exploring art and animation inspired by my time in Ireland as well."

www.brianacorrsScott.com

SMOKY MOUNTAIN



SCOTTISH FESTIVAL & GAMES

Join Us!

MAY 16-17, 2020

At Maryville College

BRING YOUR WHOLE CLAN and join us
for a weekend of authentic Scottish Highland
festivities right here in the East Tennessee
highland—the Great Smoky Mountains.
Kids under 16 get in FREE!

FOR INFORMATION VISIT
SMOKYMOUNTAINGAMES.ORG





It has been a little while since we last checked in with Plantec (October 2012), the Bretagne-based band whose catalogue of electronic-acoustic fusion songs find inspiration in the Celtic legends and folklore of their own backyard.

On the cusp of the release of their latest album - *Hironaat* - Celtic Life International spoke with Yannick Plantec, the trio's founder and guitarist. He says their newest offering takes the group's sound and style - and by extension, the musical heritage of Bretagne - to an international level.

"The past few years have been really amazing and intense," he shares via email, "full of meetings, tours, recordings, discoveries, and the pleasure of playing together. Our sound has transformed subtly in that time.

"Awen (2012) was the fifth Plantec studio album, but the first as a trio with DjiBrIL on samples/keyboard, my brother Odran on bombard, and myself on guitar. It was a kind of restart for the band, a mix of electronic and acoustic, in contrast to our previous two albums which were more electric.

"Then we produced *Kontakt* (2015), an album which was a bridge between Breton dances and our way of making music," he continues. "That album took us on tour to Africa, India, Japan, and all over Europe. On the *Kontakt* tour, we started to compose *Hironaat*."

Plantec notes that the inspiration for *Hironaat* was the simple story of a single life. Alongside the music, he also composed 12 accompanying poems. As such, and though the band has traditionally been known primarily as instrumentalists, the new recording includes the human voice.



"We wanted to integrate a new instrument into our music ~ vocals."

"We used the poems I wrote as lyrics, and we all sang on five tracks of the disc. Creating a new sound for the group, a new energy with new textures, was a big challenge for us. It was a very exciting time for us as artists, however."

Vocals were not the only new addition to the band's sound; their world tour inspired them to collaborate with other artists they met on their travels for three of the album's tracks.

"We met the two first guests (Jack & Yuji) in Tokyo on tour in Japan. We shared the stage with a band called The Syamisenist who mixed a traditional Japanese instrument called Shamisen with rock power drums. We kept in touch, and we started a new composition, which fit well with their particular sound. They loved the idea of appearing on

the album, and so we recorded it together.

"The second meeting was in Bulgaria, at a festival called 'Without Borders'. Mamadou Diabaté from Burkina Faso was there with his trio. After meeting, we rehearsed together, and the following night they performed with us on stage. Inviting Mamadou to play on *Hironaat* felt like an obvious step.

"For the third track, we wanted to include female voices from Europe, so we invited Maija Kauhanen and Päivi Hirvonen from Finland, and Morwenn Le Normand and Rozenn Tallec from Bretagne. It turned out to be a wonderful mix."

Early buzz from those who have heard the album has been very positive according to Plantec, who describes *Hironaat*'s sound as "wild power, tribal dances, with sonority from all around the world." He also says the album wouldn't sound the way it does without having met other like-minded musicians. That sense of global camaraderie, he adds, is helping to preserve and promote Celtic music.

"The connections we made during this period were invaluable and eye-opening."

The band is currently preparing for a 40-gig tour over the coming months in support of the new recording, with stops in Bretagne, France, U.K., Czech Republic, Germany, Italy, and Macedonia.

"Celtic music is always on the move, I believe, and it is alive in many countries today. We can feel it in Eastern Europe, for example - more and more young people are listening to Celtic music in that part of the world. We have toured places like Finland, Denmark, and Asia, and Celtic music is incredibly popular there. It is really quite amazing."

www.plantec.fr



*See &
Experience
so much more*

- Irish Music Night Tour with Celtic Steps & Spirits
- Fast Track Kilmainham Gaol, War & Revolution Tour
- Fast Track Family and Kids Book of Kells & Dublin Castle Tour
- Skip the Line Guinness & Jameson Whiskey Irish Experience Tour
- Fast Track Book of Kells & Dublin Castle Tour • A many many more

Skip the Line Guided Tours

LONDON • PARIS • AMSTERDAM • MALAGA • BARCELONA

New for 2020

LUXURY CAR TOURS & PRIVATE TOURS TO IRELANDS TOP ATTRACTIONS

For more info email: info@letzgocitytours.com or visit us at www.letzgocitytours.com

Byrne & Kelly

With a new album and tour, Irish songwriters Neil Byrne and Ryan Kelly are set for a busy year



A photograph of Neil Byrne and Ryan Kelly sitting in a traditional Irish pub. They are seated on a leather sofa next to a large, ornate fireplace with a fire burning inside. Ryan is on the left, wearing a light-colored sweater, and Neil is on the right, wearing a dark sweater and holding a glass of beer. The background shows dark wood paneling and a bar area.

Neil Byrne and Ryan Kelly are no strangers to Celtic Life International readers; the dynamic musical duo has graced the pages of our publication several times in recent years. On the heels of their latest release, *The Ballads Collection*, we spoke with the lads as they were preparing to take their show on the road across the U.S. over the coming months.

It has been awhile since the last recording... why the break, and what were you up to?

We recorded our last studio album, *Echoes*, in 2016 but did release a concert album titled *Live in Kansas City* just last year. I guess that sort of explains what we have been doing in between - playing live! We have been touring considerably in the past few years in North America and Australia, whilst at the same time getting back to writing new and original material which we are excited about debuting this time on tour and then releasing on a new album in the near future. ~ Ryan

How have you evolved as songwriters since *Echoes*?

The writing of *Echoes*, without doubt, brought us closer to our roots. It gave us a deeper interest in all that surrounds us in our homeland of Ireland. It is a very exciting process to discover stories and facts, whether it consist of folklore, historic figures, places, or ghosts of the past. We then take the subject that means something to us, tell that story in a three-minute song, and colour it with music. It is a beautiful, engaging and challenging exercise! The more we do it the more we learn how to evolve as songwriters. The audience will indirectly tell you how good or bad you are. To write the perfect song is a life-time search and it is a big part of the drive and passion. ~ Neil

How did you go about choosing the songs for the new album?

Neil and I have had the idea of compiling all our favourite ballads into one album for quite a while now. We find they are usually always the most requested and remarked upon songs at our live gigs. In making a list, we realized that six of our favourites hadn't made it onto one of our albums yet, so we got back into the studio to make sure they became part of this *Ballads Collection*. ~ Ryan

What was the recording process like for those songs?

It was done in different stages. The first step was to record a demo version of the song. The second, to play the song live as part of our set list on tour. When performing a new song every night on tour we soon discover what is working best and what isn't working within the arrangement. By the end of a two-month tour the song has taken a nice, tight shape. And, yet again, the audience reaction is the perfect kind of close scrutiny that we need. ~ Neil

Do you have a favourite track?

Actually, one of the tracks on the album that we had not recorded before is probably my favourite; I just love the new arrangement that we have given to *Black Is The Colour* this time around and can't wait to get on the road to replicate that sound in our upcoming live shows. ~ Ryan



What has the response been like so far from those who have heard it?

Releasing creative music into the world, whether it be original or new arrangements of classic Celtic songs, comes with a measure of vulnerability. We only hope that people will get out of it as much as we put into it! We were more than relieved, proud, overwhelmed all rolled into one when we received such an incredible reaction from our fans, and it has given us a lot of confidence in what we do. ~ Neil

What can audiences expect on the upcoming tour?

I always think our job is to take the audience on a journey throughout the gig. We have called this the Songs and Stories Tour and we think that is the best way to describe it. We will be introducing brand new songs that we have just written and the stories and inspiration behind them. We will also be revisiting some of the classic Celtic and Irish songs that really mean so much to us – and the reasons why they do. Honestly, we are loving the set list that we have put together for this tour and are hopeful those who come see us will as well. ~ Ryan

What is the best part of touring?

Every show is different from city to city. Even though we are more-or-less playing the same set list from the night before, there are always moments that are unique whether it be instrumental, dialogue or something from the audience. So, I guess we enjoy that unknown element. ~ Neil

What are the challenges?

We have been touring now for over twelve years across the world, so the challenges of touring have just become a way of life! Personally, I get into “tour zone” knowing that I probably won’t get an awful lot of sleep, and that I am going to see an awful lot of freeways and gas stations. However, the reward of playing music somewhere different every night always overshadows any potential issues. ~ Ryan

Do you have any favourite places to play?

There are honestly too many to list! When we first toured in the U.S., we hit the big cities, and playing in those places never gets old. In more recent times, we perform in a greater selection of venues and small towns in rural areas. It really opened our eyes to the beauty of the countryside in the U.S. We have been so lucky to get to see such a wide array of places right across North America. ~ Neil

What do you have on tap following the tour?

2020 is a pretty busy year of touring for us, between four separate legs of the Byrne and Kelly Songs and Stories Tour and then a Celtic Thunder tour in the Autumn. In between those, it’ll be about re-charging the batteries and writing new songs! One thing performing new tracks always makes you eager to do...write more! ~ Ryan Guinness ~ Neil

www.byrneandkelly.com



15 Celtic Woman

CELEBRATION

15 YEARS OF MUSIC & MAGIC



COMING TO A CITY NEAR YOU

GET TICKETS AT CELTICWOMAN.COM





Chloe Agnew

Irish singer Chloe Agnew has enjoyed a long and impressive career. Recently, the Dublin native spoke with Celtic Life International Associate Editor Caitlyn Mearns to discuss her musical journey, and her return to Celtic Woman for their upcoming 15th anniversary tour, Celebration.



It is safe to say that some artists are destined to be performers.

Irish singer Chloe Agnew is no exception to that rule. While the 30-year-old vocalist has enjoyed an incredibly successful solo career, her name is often linked with the multi-award-winning musical group Celtic Woman. The association is understandable; as a founding member, Agnew first joined the group at the tender age of 14.

Born and raised in Dublin to Adele “Twink” King and David Agnew, Agnew explains that a musical career came about quite naturally.

“I grew up singing, dancing and acting on stage from a very young age. It was very much a way of life for us, as it was the family business. I wouldn’t have changed it for the world.”

At 11 years old, she recorded her first single, “Angels of Mercy” for the album *The Holy Christmas Night*. The song was a smash success, raising upwards of £20,000 of charitable donations to the Afghan Children’s Charity Fund.

In 2002, Agnew was signed to the Celtic Collections record label, releasing both her debut album, *Chloe*, and her sophomore effort, *Chloe: Walking in the Air*, two years later.

“It has been a very colourful history. It was actually later in 2004 that a co-creative team came up with the concept of Celtic Woman. Originally it was supposed to be a

one-night music show. We all came together and performed in Ireland and filmed it for public television in America. That was in September. We then went on the road in January 2005 and by March we were performing in New York City. We were on the *Today Show* and were number one on the *Billboard*, and the rest is, as they say, Celtic Woman history!”

Even as a teenager, Agnew was aware of the importance of the gig.

“When you have the opportunity to share something deep within you with others it certainly creates a deep connection.”

“I think this is especially true with me, being Irish. When you’re singing about your homeland, or Irish songs that have become iconic worldwide, you feel a little piece of you is then injected into it and you then become a part of the storytelling.

“I also think that, from day one, Celtic Woman has truly had something in it for everyone,” she continues. “There is a wholesome and natural element that people gravitate towards. The music allows audiences to sit back, relax and be transported to Ireland. Of course, we have some audience members who don’t have any real connection to Ire-

land, but who come because they love the music and find it healing or uplifting - soothing to the soul. Our music is all about love, land, loss, and hope - themes that people all over the world can relate to and identify with.”

During her original stint with Celtic Woman, Agnew hit several vocational milestones, including performances at Carnegie Hall, Radio City Music Hall, and on the renowned stage at Red Rocks in Colorado.

In 2014, she opted to take a break from the production to focus on her own career.

“As a solo artist I have been extremely lucky,” she says. “I had the opportunity to perform at the Grand Ole Opry at the Ryman Auditorium. I also performed for the Guinness Book of World Records, here in Ireland, with 15,000 others, for the largest celebration of voices in one place. I performed with the band Chicago last year, which was amazing - the guys were just so lovely to me.

“I have had some incredible moments with Celtic Woman, and I am happy to have had a few good moments on my own as well.”

Agnew will be reuniting with Celtic Woman this year for the group’s 15th anniversary tour, *Celebration*. Starting February



27, she and her bandmates - Máiréad Carlin, Tara McNeill and Megan Walsh - will visit over 80 cities across North America, finishing up in early June.

"We are taking all of the best bits over the last 15 years and putting them into one action-packed show. It is going to be a journey of music and story, taking people through the songs that made Celtic Woman what it is. There will be ballads and the uplifting songs that audiences love, as well as the more energetic songs which will, hopefully, have people dancing in the aisles. We have world-class musicians on stage with us - including Tara, our fiddle player, who is beyond phenomenal at what she does - and we also have dancers and drummers. As I have said, there really is something for everyone in the show."

Rejoining the troupe after a six-year hiatus was not without its challenges - specifically, relearning the material. However, Agnew is thrilled with the opportunity.

"I still don't believe it is happening yet," she laughs. "It is hard to get my head around it. I think once I get into a dress and stand on stage with the girls it will finally feel real. It is always hard to revisit an older chapter in your life, but this time it feels very much like a new page - I am a different person and performer from when I last toured with them. I am really looking forward to bringing a little piece of the original show back into it, and I am also excited to tour with the girls who are there now, who have been flying the flag for the past few years. They have been doing a great job."

"The biggest reward is getting to see the

journey that these songs take people on; you see them crying and laughing and clapping their hands. I mean, anything you can do that can get that reaction from people is very special."

The next 12 months will be busy for Agnew; in addition to the Celebration tour, she has both a solo tour and another original album in the works.

"It feels like a new chapter in my life. Having the opportunity to tour to so many places, and to see some of my favorite cities across North America, is an amazing way to start of the year 2020. Bring it on!"

www.celticwoman.com
www.chloeagnewofficial.com



Kal Tire Place, Vernon BC
July 25 & 26, 2020

7th Annual

OKANAGAN

MILITARY
TATTOO



Tickets available at ticketseller.ca

okanagantattoo.ca



TOURISM
vernon

Canada

**Tickets Available Now! Call Ticketseller:
250-549-7469 • TOLL FREE: 1-866-311-1011**



Natalie MacLean

Sommelier Natalie MacLean turns wine into words



It has been a while since we spoke with wine connoisseur and writer Natalie MacLean. Recently, Celtic Life International Senior Writer Chris Muise caught up with the renowned sommelier to discuss her upcoming third book, the world of Celtic spirits, and connecting with your Clan.

Tell us a little bit about your roots.

My Celtic heritage goes back on all sides. Both sides of my family started in Scotland and emigrated to Cape Breton. My parents' families then relocated to Toronto, where my mom and dad met at a "Down East" dance. They returned to Nova Scotia and had a family. Although I was born in a suburb of Toronto, we moved back to Cape Breton when I was just 11 years old. I grew up in Nova Scotia for the most part, studying at Mount St. Vincent University, until I went away to the University of Western Ontario for the MBA program.

You are a sommelier. How did you get into that?

I always say that I come from a long line of hard drinkers, so I have a Teflon liver! That would be my Scottish genes. But actually, I really didn't get into wine as a youngster, as my relatives in Nova Scotia were mostly beer and whiskey drinkers. I didn't like the taste of beer or spirits - whiskey - because I found them too bitter. Later in life, I discovered that I am what is called a "super taster." I have, on average, more taste buds and more sensitivity to taste than the average taster. I didn't get into wine until I had finished graduate school and finally had the funds to get fancy and move to Toronto. My then-husband and I used to go for dinner a lot, and so we started ordering wine to accompany our meals. I remember my first taste of wine - it was really good wine - not the Baby Duck, behind-the-high-school variety. A Brunello; an Italian, robust red. And I thought, 'Wow, what

is this?' And it didn't taste bitter; it tasted good to me. And I wanted to find out more. That sent me on a quest to learn more about wine, and then putting those thoughts and feelings I had about wine into words.

Right, because you are a writer as well.

Yes. That is mostly what I do. I am not a "working" sommelier, shall we say? I don't work in a restaurant as a sommelier, and I never have, except when I was writing my second book with Random House, and I did a "Day in a Life" approach for everything in the wine industry - though I have a sommelier diploma. But my focus is now on writing, and I am currently working on my third book. My passion, too, is teaching wine and food pairing through online courses. I absolutely love that. My mother and my grandmother are both schoolteachers in Nova Scotia, and I taught highland dancing for fifteen years, so now I think that I am returning to my teaching roots with this.

Do you have any tips that you can share about what people need to do to approach wine the right way?

Well, first, they need to read both of my books and take my online course! It's easy! It's really easy! Actually, learning about wine is fun. People can do that through a structured course like the one I offer. Or, you can just start paying attention to the wines you are drinking. Think about it like the way you go to a movie. You go to a movie to



relax and watch a movie. But a movie critic is paying attention to the characters and the plot and the special effects and so on. So, the difference between wine tasting and wine drinking is paying attention to your wine. What do I see in my glass? What am I smelling? What flavors am I getting? What do they remind me of? What have I tasted in the past that tastes like this wine? It is a matter of developing a flavor and aroma vocabulary. We live in such a visual culture, so we really don't depend on our sense of smell as much. But when it comes to wine, scent is everything. We can detect millions of different aromas, but we just have five tastes on our tongue. So, the whole thing about wine is in the nose. If you practice smelling things, like when you cut open fruit or vegetables, that is when they are freshest, when they are most pungent; smell them and then see if you get anything like that in your wine. Smell the cinnamon on your toast. Smell the leather chairs in your den (just don't let anyone see you doing it). I also really encourage two-fisted drinking. Not just because I am from Nova Scotia, or that I am Scottish, but because that is the way you will learn most about wine. Instead of just having one glass at a time, maybe have half a glass of two different wines and compare them. Go back and forth, and the differences will jump out at you, how wine differs from glass to glass.

There are many different Scottish and Irish whiskeys. Is there an equivalent for people who want to enjoy wine, and also get in touch with the Celtic culture? Is there a wine for them?

There are two parts to this answer. First, climate change is having an impact on how far north vines for making wine can grow. Traditionally, of course, the northern countries - including Scotland, Ireland, and Canada to a certain extent - couldn't grow vines to make good wines as it is simply just too cold. So, they became specialists at making whiskey and beer. However, now I am reading about vine-

yards that are starting to become successful in Scotland. I haven't seen any of those wines here yet, but certainly England has great, well-known wines - especially sparkling wines and Champagnes. I think we will see wine from Scotland in the future, it's just not here yet. The second answer is that if you are looking for wines with a Scottish tie-in, Bordeaux (France) is actually a good region to explore. During the Highland clearances, and through Scottish history, it wasn't just poor folk like my family who had to leave their land. Many of the wealthy Scots went to Bordeaux, including a number of Lords. You will find that there are a number of wineries in Bordeaux that have Scottish roots - that were started by the Scots. And around the world, there are lots of wineries with Scottish founders, or wine makers, or labels.

There's definitely some Celtic culture down the vine, if you will.

Yes, exactly.

You mentioned a third book you're working on. What's it about?

Well, the first one is *Red, White and Drunk All Over: A Wine-Soaked Journey from Grapes to Glass*. The second one is *Unquenchable: A Topsy Search for the World's Best Bargain Wine*. The third one is going to be more of a memoir, and I am in the middle of writing it now. I don't have full details yet, but it is about what it is like to work in the wine world, especially as a woman - I don't think a lot of people realize what goes on there. This will be an insider's look of what it is like to be a woman in an industry that is still largely male-driven. I expect the book to be done by the end of this year.

From your perspective, is enough being done to preserve Celtic culture?

My mom is currently working on a family tree project. And, I have a wine newsletter that goes to 270,000 people, and I have been connecting with more and more people who say, 'Hey, I'm a MacLean. Are you by any chance related to...?' Also, combining an ancestry-type project with something like a DNA analysis will reveal some powerful connections, bringing the past to life - especially when you can connect that history to people that you meet and interact with today. And then the final piece of it, for us anyway, is having family reunions. We had one last year, and we are having another one this summer in Cape Breton. When you ask, 'Is Scottish culture being preserved,' I don't know on a global scale, but I know on a family scale, there have never been more resources available to bring one's Scottish history, family, or culture alive and together with all of those tools.

And family reunions are a great opportunity to have some wine.

Oh, exactly! That's what it's all about.

www.nataliemaclean.com

SCOTLAND



— 2020 ESCORTED TOURS —

British Isles

Scotland: Dumfries and Galloway

England: Hadrian's Wall, Lake District

Wales: Snowdonia National Park, Welsh Castles

Ireland: Dublin, the magnificent Neolithic site at Knowth in Bru Na Boinne, Belfast

May 9-22, 2020 • 13 Nights • \$5,795

Western & Northern Isles of Scotland

A combination tour of the popular *Lords of the Isles* and *Viking Treasure*. Skye, Lewis, Harris, Orkney, the Northwest and Northeast coasts, and the Highlands.

Includes the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo.

August 12-27, 2020 • 15 Nights • \$5,995

Special 17th Annual Outlander Tour®

Based on the book series by Diana Gabaldon.

An extended version of the 8-night Outlander Tour.

The addition of the Isle of Lewis, the Calanais Stone Circle, and other archaeological wonders of the Outer Hebrides, makes this extended version a once-in-a-lifetime adventure!

June 25-July 6, 2020 • 11 Nights • \$4,995

17th Annual Outlander Tour®

Based on the book series by Diana Gabaldon.

Time travel back to the 18th-century Highlands, where history and fantasy come face to face. See secret places and magical sites that are off the beaten path and that will paint a new portrait of Scotland for you.

September 26-October 4, 2020 • 8 Nights • \$3,995

*Deluxe escorted tours
16-guest maximum*

**Contact Judy at
judy@celticjourneys.us**



Scotsmaster / Member of the Better Business Bureau / Licensed and Insured / Tourist Board Certification

www.CelticJourneys.us • (703) 941-6455



Jonathan McFerran

www.jaimcferran.com

I was born in Belfast, Northern Ireland. My mother is descended from the Republic of Ireland on her father's side and Portland, USA on her mother's side. My father's heritage stems from Scotland on his mother's side and Northern Ireland on his father's side.

I've always been very artistic and creative. As young as I can remember, I was always drawing or painting. It really kicked off in my childhood when I was mesmerized by film posters such as the Star Wars posters by Drew Struzan - so much so I would try and recreate them. When I was in my teens, however, I became more interested in photography.

After my studies I tried my hand at digital photography for the likes of Belfast

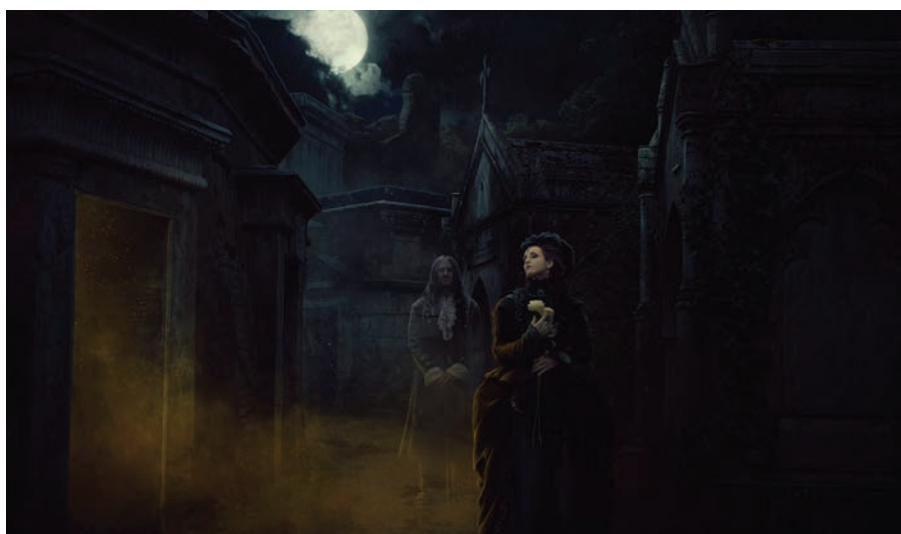
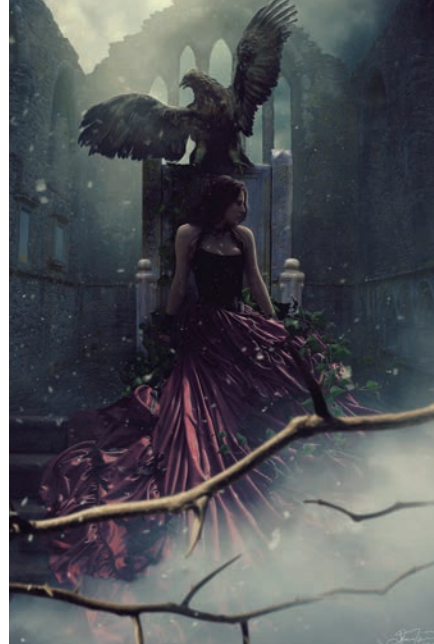
Fashion Week, New Look Retailers and other projects. In the end, however, it just wasn't as creative as I had hoped and so I got involved in photo-illustration, a form of digital art that uses multiple photographs composited and blended together to create a completely new image.

My work has taken many forms over the years. As I have gotten older, I have refined my techniques and processes and developed a style that I am well versed in. I describe my work as an exploration into dark fantasy. I have always been interested in Celtic mythology, I like the mystery in the stories, and the imagery of the ancient folklore speaks to me deeply. One of my favourite stories is the tale of Ceridwen

and Taliesin from Welsh mythology.

The reward really comes from seeing the finished image: a fully realized piece of art based on my own vision. There is nothing more satisfying than having an idea and then seeing that idea translated into a piece of art. It is exciting and fulfilling and inspires me to stay creative.

I like to believe that my art tells a story. I want people to look at my images and immediately be able to create their own world around them. As if my images are snapshots in time, I want to allow the viewer to create a narrative. This is what I think is unique about my work; that immersive quality that lets the viewer write a story to complement the image.





SATURDAY NOVEMBER 7TH
49th



Heavy Athletics, Piping and Drumming, Highland Dancing, Scottish Fiddling

Craft Beer from Highland Brewing
Scottish Food and Merchandise
Whisky Tasting

Live Celtic Rock Band

Children's Area, Sheep Dog Demonstration
Over 40 Scottish Clans

HONORED CLAN: CLAN DONALD

BOONE HALL PLANTATION

CharlestonScottishGames.com
#WeRScots



Lorna Gillies

www.lornagillies.com



I was born and raised in the Scottish Highlands - it is in my blood and in my heart. Being a Highlander plays a huge part in my work.

I first became interested in fashion in high school. I loved colour and was interested in fashion from different eras. My main interest was in the craft of design and tailoring. I then studied Theatre Costume in Edinburgh and later moved to Melbourne and gained experience with several boutique fashion labels.

In 2015, I moved back home to Ardnamurchan to start my fashion label and here, on the west coast of Lochaber, I am surrounded by the familiar lochs and hills, which

continue to inspire me. Historical costume continues to be my passion to this day.

Everything is designed and handmade by me. I avoid the fashion trends. Slow fashion appeals to me more; using local, quality fabrics and making something that will last - something you can wear for years, that stays with you, has a story that you can pass down to your daughter or your granddaughter.

I have started working with tartans more recently, as I love using traditional fabrics to create something elegant and with a fun, quirky edge; vibrant colours with a historical flare.

There is nothing like seeing a client delighted with their new coat. It is very rewarding to help a woman feel like she can take on the world. You see it, it is a magic feeling - when someone wears something that they feel good in, their whole posture changes and they exude confidence.

I believe Scottish design is thriving; we have our own cloth manufacturing - including lace, velvet and tweed - and we also have more and more boutique manufacturing companies popping up to make clothing. There are many talented designers, and the beauty is that we are all so different from one another.



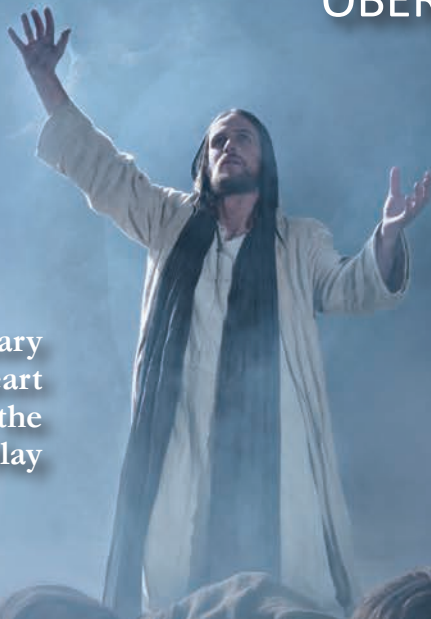


Experience the Passion

OBERAMMERGAU 2020



Once every 10 years, an extraordinary opportunity arises to explore the heart of Europe while also taking in the historic, world-famous Passion Play in Oberammergau, Germany.



Every decade for the past 400 years, this small Bavarian town has transformed itself into a massive Passion Play, depicting the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Over 2,400 residents of Oberammergau bring the story to life as actors, singers, instrumentalists and stage technicians. The five-hour play runs five days per week from May through September in an open-air theatre featuring comfortable seats covered by a dome to protect the audience from the elements.

The play itself is performed outdoors against a backdrop of magnificent mountains and sky. The variable weather makes each performance unique, with the actors incorporating the brilliant sunshine, rain or mist to help convey the story's many moods. This wonderful spectacle of pageantry is world renowned for its costumes, musical presentation and evolving screenplay. It is anticipated that more than 750,000 visitors will attend the performances in 2020. People from around the world, from many different religions, come to experience the fascinating way the town comes together to perform this religious and cultural spectacle.

"The staging changes fundamentally every time," explains Director Christian Stückl. "Since the Passion Play takes place once every 10 years, I keep having to write the text in a new way, tell the story in a new way. I'll include things I learned from the previous play, and it always has to reflect the respective time period and its political circumstances."

How did it begin? Oberammergau's Passion Play has been electrifying audiences in the Bavarian Alps since 1634, when in the midst of the Thirty Years' War, the bubonic plague swept across Europe. Eighty-four Oberammergau residents died

within three weeks after a resident working in a neighbouring village brought the infectious disease to the small hamlet when he returned home to his wife and children. After months of death and suffering, the people reached out in desperation to God and made a solemn vow that if God would spare the residents of Oberammergau from the plague, they would present a play depicting the life and death of Christ every 10 years. Miraculously, the plague took no more lives in the town. And so, the tradition continues to this day.

2020 marks the 42nd performance of the play and to celebrate, Craig Travel has created eight leisurely-paced, varied and carefully planned itineraries throughout Europe and the Holy Land for you to experience the Passion Play. Departure dates run from May through September. Six itineraries feature coach touring; two feature deluxe river cruises on the Rhine.

Travelling with Craig Travel puts your mind at ease. All of the details are taken care of for you. Our journeys include round-trip airfare, first-class hotel accommodation, most meals, all sightseeing, baggage handling, airport transfers in Canada and some of the best seats in the house to experience the Passion Play. A capable and well-travelled Canadian will escort your group from Canada and will work hand in hand with professional tour managers and local guides to provide you with the best worry-free travel experience.

Many departures are already sold out, and the remaining spaces are filling quickly. Complete details can be found at www.craigtravel.com/cli or by calling Craig Travel 1-800-387-8890.

Don't just go to the theatre, Experience Our World.



*Scots born and bred ~
Pontius Pilate, King Arthur,
and St. Patrick*

Story by Andy Fraser



Fortingall Yew Tree

Is it possible that a young Pontius Pilate shed a tear as he sailed away from his Scottish birthplace heading for Jerusalem? And how about good old King Arthur? Was that scion of English lore a kilt-wearing Celt? And was the revered, snake-chasing preacher St. Patrick a Haggis eater from Strathclyde?

All could be so if you choose to believe the legends and stories claiming these three were all Scots lads born and bred.

Scratch the soil of Scotland and you are disturbing countless layers of history, of things known and unknown, of fact, of conjecture, and of myth. Many tales have come swirling down through the mist covered hills and glens - stories of heroes, of brave deeds, of great adventures. For a Celt, it is not a big stretch of the imagination to accept some of these narratives as 'our own'.

If we believe the adage that legends and myths have some sort of basis in reality, then we must assume that there might be something to these 'local legends' - especially for Arthur and Patrick.

But Pilate? This man's encounter with Jesus is the only real focus we have on his life which make his beginnings - and his end - almost irrelevant. One could ask why any country would want to claim him as one of their favourite sons?

Despite the lack of any real evidence, however, the legends persist. Some claim that Pilate was born in Fortingall, Arthur was from Govan and/or the Borders, while St. Patrick's hometown is Old Kilpatrick.

Let's start with Pilate. Local lore has it that about 10 B.C. a baby was born to a Roman official and his Scots wife living in a Roman trading fort near Fortingall in Perthshire. This child would grow up, journey with his father to Rome, eventually becoming procurator of Judea.

Fortingall is a tiny village not far from

Aberfeldy. A sacred yew tree, thousands of years old, still grows beside a tiny church said to have been built on a Druidic site. Across the road is a plague cemetery, and nearby are sites of standing stones. A little further up the road is Dun Gael, a ring fort of the Iron Age, and a new archeological dig near the cemetery is currently uncovering a large Pictish site. Not far away is a mound known as the 'praetorium' - where, in 1934, a Roman amphora was dug up and now sits in a museum in Stirling. This is a place made for legends, and while there is no direct





proof Pilate was born here, Fortingall has a rich history that goes back 5,000 years.

One piece of 'evidence' pertaining to Pilate is an Elizabethan manuscript. The Holinshed Chronicles from 1577 claims that Pilate's Roman father was sent to the area thanks to King Metallanus, a Pict from Dun Gael. Metallanus is a Romanized name indicating the King's wealth in Iron and metals - something the Romans would have been most interested in acquiring.

And if you think it is only locals who believe the legend, have a look at Britain's oldest regiment, The Royal Scots, whose nickname is 'Pontius Pilate's Bodyguard' - claiming that status back in 1635 during a dispute with a French regiment about which one was older.

What about Arthur? We all know the tragic story; of Camelot, of Lancelot, of Guinevere and the Round Table - all somewhat doubtful. But really, that's about it - so little is known of Arthur that many historians don't believe there was such a person much less that he was a Scot. Nobody has ever found Excalibur or any other physical proof. But if there was no such person why are there more than 2,000 names associated with him in Britain? And why did four regional Kings name their sons Arthur toward the end of the sixth century, just decades after this imaginary Arthur's apparent death in 517?

Are the Scots trying to cash in on the legends or is there a bit more?

Let us take a closer look. In 1120, a chronicler, Lambert de St. Omer of Brittany makes a statement that "There is a palace of Arthur the Soldier, in Britain, in the land of the Picts." But wait - there is more; around 600, an epic poem - "The Gododdin" - about an old Celtic/British tribe with strongholds in East Lothian, mentions the strength and courage of Arthur, a War Leader of that tribe.

Coupled with many local Scots place names relating to battles and locations all derived from the ancient Welsh language, it becomes obvious that Arthur had a large



fan base north of the border. And what about that big hill in Edinburgh known as Arthur's Seat?

When the Romans left Britain in 410 the Picts, the Irish and the Saxons all attacked the former Roman province seeking plunder and new land. The only major fighting force to oppose the invaders sprang up in the Borders led by the Gododdin, and under their leader they continued to fight for more than 50 years.

Alistair Moffat, a Scottish writer, claims this leader was Arthur and that his cavalry headquarters was based at Roxburgh, previously named Marchidin, which means Cavalry Fort in the old Celtic language. It is Moffat who researched so many of the place names in the Borders affiliated with this clan. Moffat contends that Arthur headed south to help ward off attacks from the Irish and the Saxons.

Another historian, Andrew Breeze, a professor in Spain, has Arthur operating from Strathclyde on the country's east coast. This Arthur, says Breeze, came from Govan, now part of Glasgow and just 40 miles from Moffat's Arthur. Same person perhaps?

Bragging rights between Glasgow and Edinburgh aside, the invaders won the battle and the Celtic Britons were pushed back to what is today Wales, where they retained the old stories which gave rise to the belief that Arthur was from Wales.

Meanwhile, if you are heading towards Loch Lomond from Glasgow you will cross over the Erskine Bridge, within waving distance of the birthplace of St. Patrick - or

so say the old legends and letters, including some by Patrick himself.

His hometown, Bannavem Taburniae, was thought to be a Romano/Celtic settlement at the eastern end of the old Antonine Wall near the present Old Kilpatrick. As a youth, Patrick was waylaid by a gang of pirates and sold as a slave in Ireland where he was a shepherd before escaping, returning home to become a priest before going back to Ireland.

Along with Patrick's letters giving evidence of his familiarity with Strathclyde and Dumbarton, and hints about his birth and parents, other clues to his birthplace include the Oxford Dictionary of Saints. In addition, so many sites are associated with Patrick in this corner of Scotland that it would take a brave soul to place him somewhere else.

Fact or fancy, myths or kernels of truth? We don't know. But as time went on the legends of Arthur and Patrick grew and expanded to fill our needs for great and heroic figures. Nobody, however, really wants to be too closely associated with Pilate - except, perhaps, The Royal Scots - but even so, the stories of his Scottish birth remain.

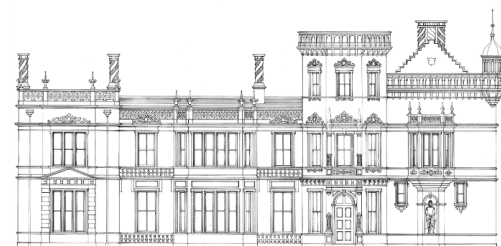
And though it is quite possible that none of the three were born in Scotland, evidence and local lore will continue to be collected and it is unlikely that Fortingall, the Borders or Old Kilpatrick will give up their claims anytime soon.

WE HAVE A UNIQUE
STORY TO TELL

STAY AT NETHERBY HALL

4 Night Stay \$1,300*

*price is per person based on two people sharing, starting and ending in Carlisle, England.



NETHERBY HALL

An outstanding grade II* mansion house, steeped in history from the Roman times to the modern day

Dates available 18th May
2020 & 7th September 2020

**For more information
& full Itinerary**

Please see website
www.netherbyhall.co.uk/tour
or via email or phone
events@netherbyhall.co.uk
+44 1228 792 732



Join us for an exclusive House,
Walled Garden and Stables Tour at
Netherby Hall and *experience hands on*
how a Victorian stable works.

A guide will take you on an
exploration of the Romans & Border
Reivers along with a guided walk
through historic Carlisle.



Netherby Hall

Our award-winning photojournalist Tom Langlands explores one of Scotland's most unique sites





It was early morning as I made my way across the frost-encrusted lawn to Netherby Hall. The ground crunched with every step I took, and, from a distance, I heard the rapid tapping of a woodpecker. As I paused to admire the splendour of this magnificent building - with its pink sandstone walls glowing in the soft, morning light - a murder of crows took flight from the surrounding trees reminding me that this area has a dark and more turbulent past.

Netherby Hall is situated on the south side of the Border Esk, east of Longtown in England's northern county of Cumbria. It was once part of the much larger Netherby Estate that straddled both sides of the Border Esk only a few miles from where it enters the Solway Firth. Before the Romans came to modern day Britain in the first century AD, the Celts of central Europe had already established themselves across the land.

Archaeological evidence including stone carvings of Celtic gods and Iron Age hill forts indicate that northwest England and southwest Scotland were among locations influenced by the Celts. As the Romans marched north, they were engaged in frequent skirmishes with these warrior

tribes. With their progress impeded they chose to consolidate their position by erecting Hadrian's Wall in 122 AD, stretching 73 miles from the River Tyne in the east of the country to the Solway Firth in the west. To the north of the wall the Romans constructed several forward forts as bases for expeditionary forces and as early warning posts in the event of attack. Netherby Hall is built on the site of one of these forts - Castra Exploratorum - the Camp of the Scouts. At its peak it housed 1,000 men and 300 horses.

As the Roman Empire began to crumble during the 5th century, this corner of the country fell again under the control of local tribes.

Castra Exploratorum would slowly crumble as mother nature reclaimed her landscape of wet, boggy, peat marshes. As the Kingdoms of Scotland and England evolved over the ensuing centuries their shared border was poorly defined and, by the Middle Ages, it was a lawless zone controlled by feuding families. Here, names such as Maxwell, Elliot, Johnston, Bell, Scott, Kerr, Nixon, Armstrong and Graham became synonymous with reiving - i.e. raiding and plundering. These were the infamous Border Reiver families that controlled the Debatable Lands. Feuding, cattle rustling, extortion, kidnapping, pillaging, rape and murder were the order of the day! Of these names the Armstrongs and Grahams were especially to be feared. When Neil Armstrong took

one small step for man on the moon it was one giant leap from the history of his reiving ancestors of whom the most infamous - Johnnie Armstrong - lived at Gilnockie Tower, Langholm.

Having been exiled from Scotland on account of his criminal behaviours in the late 1400s, it was Lang Will Graham who resettled the Graham family on the lands around Netherby on the southern edge of the Debatable Lands. Over the years the family built several fortified towers, but it was on the site of Netherby Hall that the Graham clan constructed the peel (or pele) tower that became their power base. The old Roman fort provided some of the stone for the building works, and in 1601 an inscription to the emperor Hadrian was noted on one of the walls. Although reiving had been a way of life across the border lands since the 13th century, the days of the Border Reivers were numbered when, in 1603, Queen Elizabeth I of England died. Unmarried and with no children, it was her cousin James VI of Scotland who became James I of a united Scotland and England following the Union of the Crowns. While the Debatable Lands may have been a useful buffer between two nations frequently at war, they were an embarrassment for a newly unified kingdom. As James I established law and order over the whole land the most notorious members of the Armstrong and Graham clans were exiled to the Low Countries and Ireland. For the Border Reivers who had lived on and around the Debatable Lands it had been difficult for them to see any other way of life. They lived in the power vacuum between two opposing nations on land that was poor

and unsuitable for farming. For many, reiving was simply a way of surviving.

Although the Grahams of Netherby had been responsible for much destruction across the border lands it was one of their kin, Richard Graham - a grandson of Lang Will Graham - who is credited with beginning the transformation of the peel tower that had been their seat of power into Netherby Hall. He became groom - and subsequently Gentleman of the Horse to the 1st Duke of Buckingham - before becoming Master of the Horse to both James I and Charles I. With his newfound wealth he purchased Norton Conyers estate in Yorkshire in 1624 and Netherby in 1628. Twice he was elected Member of Parliament for Carlisle and was knighted in 1629. In less than thirty years he had gone from being part of one of the most feared Reiver families to Sir Richard Graham, 1st Baronet. As Netherby estate passed down through the generations of the Grahams, it was during the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries that the house we see today evolved with some famous names stepping through its doors. Sir Walter Scott was a friend of the Grahams and a regular visitor to Netherby Hall which is the setting for his ballad, *Young Lochinvar*, and the future George V stayed there for three days in the early 20th century.

In more recent times the fortunes of the Grahams changed, and parts of the estate were sold. The current owners, Gerald and Margo Smith, purchased Netherby Hall in 2014 and immediately set about restoring the building. It had suffered years of neglect. Gerald Smith was determined that Netherby Hall should not become a visitor center with a tearoom,

"I wanted it to be our home, a home with a rich history reflected through sensitive restoration."

Works to date include repairs to the external fabric - including two hundred windows, the restoration of many internal rooms, the ongoing reconstruction of the original stables, the formation of three lettable, luxury, self-contained apartments within the north wing and the refurbishment of Middle Lodge and Gardner's Cottage within the grounds providing further lettable accommodation.

Three more units are in progress. The extensive, walled garden and stunning grounds have been brought back to their former glory. For Estate Manager Ken Ruthven it is the restoration of the stables that excites him most. As an experienced coachman and one of only fifteen active members of the elite Coaching Club founded in 1871 he is eagerly awaiting this spring when works to the stables will be finished and they are put to their intended use, "We are keen to embrace the wonderful art of carriage driving with several restored carriages on site and various driving horses." For Ruthven there is little to beat the exhilaration of sitting atop a beautiful coach, holding the reins and guiding a "team of four." Having driven road coaches and park drags at events throughout the UK including at Floors Castle and Royal Ascot as well as in Canada and America he wants Netherby Hall to offer a slice of authentic history and tradition, "Whether it be for enthusiasts, hobbyists, historians, corporate events, private groups or individuals we want to offer an immersive experience of what it would have been like to live at Netherby Hall in its heyday. We want to reach out to people who have an interest in the traditions of the past, who want to experience coaches and horses, to help them trace a family history perhaps entwined with the Border Reivers or simply those who want to relax in stunning surroundings."

With the crows resettling in the trees and the murderous days of the past laid to rest the early morning light may indeed be heralding yet another new dawn for Netherby Hall.

www.netherbyhall.co.uk
www.tomlanglandsphotography.com



Hearthstanes Steading



Working hill farm with 5 self-catering holiday cottages in traditional stone farm buildings, Cottages for 2 to 8 guests

The whole Steading can accommodate up to 26 guests, In the rural Scottish Borders – 40 miles south of Edinburgh Airport

Hearthstanes Estate
Tweedsmuir, Biggar
Lanarkshire ML12 6QN
Scotland

Phone 011 44 1899 225119
Mobile 011 44 7557 332348
info@hearthstanes.com
www.hearthstanes.com



PROMO OFFER OF 10% OFF FOR DIRECT BOOKINGS



The Fine Fields of Osgathorpe

*In the second installment in a three-part series,
Lesley Choyce cruises the Celtic countryside
of Leicestershire*



Once we were up and about on this fine Leicestershire Saturday morning, we went looking for something old and ruined and found the perfect combination in the Grace Dieu Priory near Thringstone. A priory, in case you are wondering as I was, is a monastery for nuns or monks and this one served as such until it went out of business, so to speak, and was taken over by a local scoundrel as his own personal estate. Spooky Isles considers it the most haunted location in Leicestershire. There are considerable reports of spirits wandering around here, including one “white lady” who walked out to the road once and appeared so real that a bus driver stopped to pick her up.



Lesley and Kelty



Linda

The remains of the priory date back to the thirteenth century and I saw nothing spooky about it, although I do think we all put a little bit of our own spirit into our

homes, our possessions, even including our cars. So, even though I didn't personally meet any ghosts or other spirits, I do think it is possible that those who have heard voices and seen apparitions here are tapping into something real. However, things must have gotten a bit out of control in recent years because the trust that owns the property states that enthusiasts “are no longer able to hold Paranormal events or Ghost walks, and Paranormal events organised by 3rd parties are forbidden.” Either the trust doesn't believe in ghostly spirits or they are hoping to protect their privacy from prodding ghost hunters and poltergeist chasers with their video cameras and “ghost boxes.”

We walked through the forest behind the priory and poked around a very cool-looking abandoned railway arch bridge, bringing me to the conclusion that I like most all things that are ruined, abandoned, overgrown, and otherwise half-forgotten. And England is a very good place for finding such attractions as long as the ever-greedy National Trust hasn't gotten their white-gloved paws on them. The only problem is you have to know where to look.



Arthur Newberry Choyce

However, the true quest for the weekend involved me looking for more Choyce connections. Sibson, home of my ancestor James Choyce, was a ways to the south of here but I had decided to first seek out connections with Arthur Newberry Choyce, a World War I poet from these parts who

had become famous enough to go on a tour of England and North America to read his poetry. He is mostly forgotten now but, as a poet myself, I felt a strong connection.

Arthur lived from 1893 to 1937 and had fought in the Great War with the Leicestershire “Tigers” which designated him as their official poet. It is curious to think that, in such a bloody mess of a conflict, the English remained civilized enough to appoint poets for their regiments. I don't think modern day battalions of soldiers select honorary poets for wars in Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria or anywhere for that matter. Bigger bombs and high-tech weapons, I suppose, have bullied away the writers of sonnets and sestinas.

In 1917, Arthur published a book of poetry called *Crimson Stains* which portrayed trench warfare and the horror of the battlefield. In a short poem about the fallen men called “To the Leicestershires,” he wrote,

*If in the next life or the next there
be / A starting of our quarrels
all again, / May Fate give task of
leadership to me / And let me find
the souls of these dead men.*

His poems were sentimental at times but not overly patriotic and he was well liked enough to tour extensively reading his work to surprisingly large audiences. After declining in health, he died at age 43 as the result of wounds he had received in the war and, unlike war poets Wilfred Owen and Rupert Brooke, he was soon forgotten by the literary world.

Arthur had written longingly about Charnwood Forest and, as we drove through there, I could see why. If you'd romped around those giant trees and played in the streams of Charnwood, you could understand why your mind and your pen



would want to take you back there while trying to erase the nightmares you saw on the battlefields of France.

After the war, the poet was a headmaster of Snibston Primary School, so we went looking for it in Coalville. We didn't like Coalville (pronounced Coville for some reason).

Linda kept asking me why we were there, and I said I didn't know. I thought we might find a statue or a plaque for ANC or maybe locate someone who could tell us where his grave was, but Coalville wasn't giving up any secrets about its one-time war poet in residence. The Bitter and Twisted Micropub looked somewhat interesting, but it was too early in the day for a pint and I saw a sign for a paintball park that could have entertained us, but we never warmed up to the town.

A bit of digging after the fact revealed that Coalville has a bit of a miasma hanging over it. One particularly unkind anonymous writer on ilivehere.uk wrote, "The whole town seems to have a depressing feel to it, and most of the time the inhabitants seem to walk around in a zombie like state, probably from the sheer boredom and dismal atmosphere of the place...if Coalville were to be summed up as a smell, that smell would be of urine, damp dog, and cheap cider."

Perhaps we should have had better luck in nearby Hugglescote where the poet was born, but Linda felt that we had squandered enough time among the Coalville zombies and were better off back with the quiet ghosts of Grace Dieu. So, I steered us back into the beautiful countryside to the south towards Sibson, the tiny village where James Choyce had lived before emigrating to America.

I was having a tough time navigating the back roads that would take us there and mistakenly took us down narrow lanes into Odstone, Congerstone and Shackerstone. After yet another wrong turn, we ended up on a tiny potholed road with a narrow bridge and a sign indicating that it was a "Weak Bridge," which was not encouraging. Throwing caution to the winds, we drove over it and wound up in Sheepy Parva, which I knew to be a stone's throw from Sibson.

*Again, the question was posed to me by
my soulmate; what are we looking for? And again,
I wasn't sure. What was I looking for?*

Some kind of connection, I suppose. I wanted to stand somewhere and say to myself, the man who set in motion my very existence came from this place. Some of my ancestors were buried - and probably forgotten - here. I waited for a revelation that never fully gelled.

Sibson was a tidy little well-upholstered town with brick houses, flowery, well-maintained lawns and ducks snoozing here and there on the sidewalks. I walked Kelty into the graveyard behind the church and saw no tombstones with my family name, although it was cool and shaded and felt old and, well, proper.

Like so many small British towns, Sibson had one pub. The Cock Inn claimed to be one of the oldest drinking establishments in the U.K., constructed in 1250. It played a role in the 1485 Battle of Bosworth Field both before and after. That famous robber, Dick Turpin, hid out here from the authorities along with his loyal horse,

Black Bess. Turpin is reported to have paid the locals to keep their mouths shut that he was in the neighbourhood. Quite possibly, some of my ancestors took coins from the famous highwayman. And, if so, I don't think I should be proud of that.

Although Dick Turpin has been mythologized as a lovable rogue, the truth is quite the opposite. Frank McLynn of *The Independent* writes, "The historical Turpin was a rather nasty thug, a butcher's apprentice who graduated to highway robbery via burglary, robbery and murder." More myth than man, Turpin was a criminal who became a kind of folk hero. He has even had a sausage and a sex toy named after him. In real life, he was ultimately arrested for shooting someone's chicken in the street.

And speaking of chickens, The Cock Inn, owned through the ages by the church which kept it open six days a week (not the Sabbath, of course), had a pit in the back reserved for regular cock fights up until the 1870s. The pub today garners some most favourable reviews including that of Brian F. of Nuneaton who writes, "The battered fish was great but the chips were warmed up and a few chips were hard, but the Banoffee Pie was fantastic. Staff friendly and helpful. The best thing is that the wife likes the Cock & the Willey on the A5." I am assuming the Willey is the name of another pub thereabouts.

On the way home, I scored a few more wrong turns to add to my list of errors that day and we found ourselves in yet another micro-community with the novel name of Barton in the Beans. Historically, a considerable amount of broad beans were grown here.

Undoubtedly, beans had been grown here dating back to the good Corieltauvi and their bark shields. A common old quip was, "Shake a Leicestershire man by the collar and you may hear the beans rattle in his belly." A reference to the town shows up in the famous Domesday Book but today it seems not much more than a scattering of farms and houses, a Baptist church and no pub to be found. There is a wonderful town sign, however, as you enter should you ever want to post a thought-provoking Facebook image of yourself standing beside it. We did not, but in retrospect I wish we had.

Back in our little apartment, we relaxed on the small deck and I gazed off into the fine fields beyond Osgathorpe. The sky was again like a Renaissance painting. Linda went for a run and Kelty and I hiked down to the babbling brook and the treeful of complaining crows, then out into some pasture land where I let him run free among the cropped grass and tall spikey purple thistles until I spotted a bull with a red bandana around his neck waltzing our way. I tethered Kelty and we crept out through the makeshift gate, looping it shut with a piece of bailing wire hanging there.

When Linda returned, we opened a bottle of Malbec and watched the sun slowly sinking in the west over the horses in the field. We talked about how things were going so far on our adventure - this after a rather trying day of travel due to so many wrong turns. It was just one of those times you get weary after many days on the road and expect there are more to come. Nonetheless, the wine reminded us that a wrong turn can often lead you down an unexpected path and the potential for rewarding experiences you'd never find sitting at home in front of Netflix.



PREMIER GUIDED SCOTTISH HILLWALKING TOURS



**Five outstanding tours which
showcase the cultural and
natural heritage of Scotland**

info@hikescotland.co.uk
+44 (0)7791 598 925
www.hikescotland.co.uk





On the Trail of John Muir

Celtic Life International correspondent Gerald Herter connects the dots with a Scottish-American pioneer



John Muir

I had no idea when I enrolled at the University of Wisconsin many years ago that I would be at the beginning of a life-long journey that would often cross paths with the legacy of the adventurer and environmentalist John Muir.

We shared a cultural heritage. Muir immigrated to the United States at the age of 10 from Scotland with his parents in 1849. My grandfather, Rex Phillips, came to America from Northern Ireland. But a couple of centuries earlier, his ancestors arrived on Irish shores from Scotland.

Working on his family's farm in central Wisconsin, Muir was mostly self-taught. After eleven years, he arrived in Madison at age 22. His curious alarm clock inventions brought him there to exhibit at the state fair. One of them combined a clock, mostly whittled out of wood, that at the appointed hour, linked by levers to a bed, tipped the sleeper out in an upright position.

In Madison, Muir discovered the opportunity to study at the University of Wisconsin. Having only 77 students at the time, the campus consisted of four buildings. He lived and took classes in North Hall. The setting was fitting with green hills nestled beside expansive Lake Mendota.

A century later, I would walk a mile from my dormitory down the Lakeshore Path to the Old Red Gym for gymnastics practice. By then, the University boasted over 30,000 students using dozens of buildings. Along the way each day I passed by a wooded area bordering the path known as Muir Woods. At the top, Muir Knoll was dedicated in 1918, near the black locust tree where Muir received his first botany lesson. A ski jump constructed there was used for maneuvers by Army ROTC cadets during World War II.

Though I participated in ROTC, the ski jump had long since been removed. However, an ROTC-related political science course brought me to a North Hall classroom in the late 1960's.

Known as a pacifist, Muir would most likely not have been drawn to ROTC, though the program was conceived during the 1860's. While available for the draft, his name was never called for Civil War duty.

Only picking classes that interested him, Muir studied chemistry, math, physics, Greek, Latin, botany and geology, although he did not complete the requirements for a degree. Later in life he would be awarded honorary degrees both from the University of Wisconsin and Harvard University. Nevertheless, mixed emotions filled his thoughts as he reflected upon his departure:

"From the top of a hill on the north side of Lake Mendota I gained a last wistful, lingering view of the beautiful University grounds and buildings where I had spent so many hungry and happy and hopeful days. There with streaming eyes I bade my blessed Alma Mater farewell. But I was only leaving one University for another, the Wisconsin University for the University of the Wilderness." (The Story of My Boyhood and Youth, John Muir, 1913).

Muir's early wanderings focused on his love for botany, studying and collecting specimens.

During the following two years working on a sawmill and factory in Canada, a trek through a swamp revealed to Muir the rare and lovely *Calypso borealis*, a white orchid "of the utmost simple purity like a

snowflower." That discovery led to his first published essay describing the flower and setting, including the famous quote: "It seems wonderful that so frail and lovely a plant has such power over human hearts." (The Life and Letters of John Muir, William Frederic Bade, 1924).

A couple of years after leaving Canada, Muir's first major solo hike from Louisville, Kentucky to Cedar Key, Florida, was chronicled in his book, *A Thousand Mile Walk to the Gulf* (1916). Following a similar route four years after my graduation from the University of Wisconsin, but in the far more comfortable and sporty confines of an MGB GT, my new bride, Lori, joined me for our honeymoon travels from Chicago to the Florida Keys. (Muir's adventure actually began from his Wisconsin home and passed through Chicago, before taking a train from Indianapolis to Louisville where he began the walk.)

Along the way, we marveled like Muir at the vastness of Mammoth Cave in Kentucky. Muir arrived there at the end of the first week of his journey. How different it must have been. The cave was already well known at the time. There had been tours there since 1816, albeit much cruder and more rustic than Lori and I would experience. In the early days, slaves were the tour guides and there was just one short or one long tour. Now there are around 20 different offerings, from easy going to extremely strenuous.

As Muir described it, "Arrived at the great Mammoth Cave. I was surprised to find it in so complete naturalness...were it not for the narrow trail that leads down the glen to its door, one would not know that it had been visited."



At over 400 miles of known passages, Mammoth Cave is the longest known cave system in the world. The natural "door" remains much as it was, albeit adapted with a pathway more suited for modern visitors. The surroundings have also been developed to accommodate the growing crowds. Even

in Muir's day, manmade amenities marred the setting in his view: "I never before saw Nature's grandeur in so abrupt contrast with paltry artificial gardens. The fashionable hotel grounds are in exact parlor taste, with many a beautiful plant cultivated to deformity, and arranged in strict geometrical beds, the whole pretty affair a laborious failure side by side with Divine beauty."

Missing the main section of the Appalachian Mountain range that was to become Great Smoky Mountains National Park, Muir's southerly route through Tennessee and the southwest corner of North Carolina traversed the Cumberland Mountains section. We drove in the National Park - which was established in the 1930s - up to the highest point of 6,643 feet at Clingmans Dome, and around the historic structures of Cades Cove, gaining a feel for the demanding terrain that he had to negotiate, as well as the quaint houses and farms where he sought food and shelter during his travels. Many a night he roughed it with only the canopy of the woods over his head.

Proceeding across Georgia, Muir stopped in coastal Savannah, where graves in the Bonaventure Cemetery served as his accommodation for the night. With each of us having cousins in Savannah, Lori and I found far more inviting lodgings when staying there over the years.

Muir's multi-state walk concluded in northwest Florida's Cedar Key. Though our furthest destination was Key West, our sojourn nearer Cedar Key at Orlando's then-recently opened Walt Disney World, most likely would have generated head-scratching dismay from Muir, had he witnessed what humans had wrought from a central Florida swampland.

Muir's original plan from Florida was to catch a ship bound for South America, whereupon he would find the headstreams of the Amazon and follow it all the way to the ocean.

Only later would he realize that his disappointment at not locating such a ship would turn out to be a blessing. While in the swampy southeastern reaches of the United States, he had contracted malaria, leaving him laid up for several months. Not improving after a month's stay in Cuba, he felt the need to leave the sub-tropical climate.

His next goal was the North American West. Getting there first required a voyage to

New York where the ships for the west coast departed. The brief stopover in New York City was not to Muir's liking with its crowds of people and concrete jungle of buildings. He was anxious for the wilds where he thrived. The cooler climate did help restore his health.

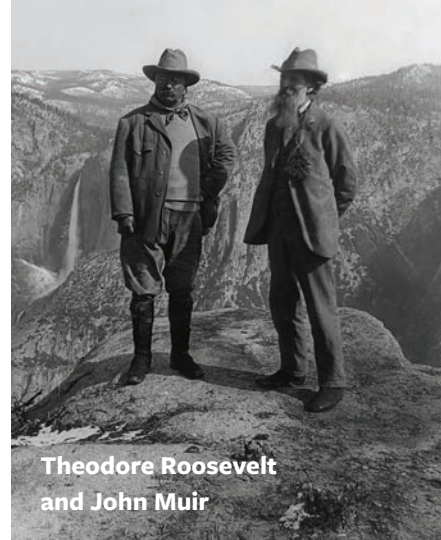
From New York, Muir's ship landed in Panama, where a rail journey brought him across the isthmus to the Pacific for the final sea leg of the journey. His six-hour traverse was faster than what Lori and I experienced on our cruise ship through the Panama Canal. The Canal was not completed until 1914. However, the comforts of our ship left us with little sense of the 19th century quest felt by Muir.

With Muir's arrival in California, the most storied part of his life began. Pausing but a day in San Francisco, he headed east on foot to Yosemite. Having a similar desire to be closer to the grandeurs of the far west, Lori and I left our Chicago home four years after getting married, and drove to southern California, never looking back. Over the next 40-plus years, we followed Muir's footsteps across the High Sierra and beyond.

Muir's first trip to Yosemite covered about 300 miles and took the better part of two months. Of his initial impressions of Yosemite, he wrote little compared to later descriptions. In a letter to a dear friend dated July 26, 1868 he summed up his feelings, "I thought of you, Mrs. Carr, when I was in the glorious Yosemite...It is by far the grandest of all of the special temples of Nature I was ever permitted to enter. It must be the sanctum sanctorum of the Sierras."

The first view of Yosemite Valley for Lori and I was one that many visitors will remember and never forget. Our first summer in California, we drove to Yosemite. Immediately upon exiting the long, dark Wawona Tunnel, approaching the park from the south, our senses were stunned by the spectacular panorama of the dramatically massive cliffs and main valley of Yosemite. With the sheer granite of 3,000 foot El Capitan on the left, radiant Yosemite Falls flowing in slender majesty for over 2,400 feet on the right, and iconic Half Dome, looming at over 4,700 feet high in the distant center, one's jaw could not help but drop in genuine awe.

In Muir's following year upon returning to Yosemite he wrote, "The far-famed valley came suddenly into view throughout almost its whole extent. The noble walls - sculptured into endless variety of domes and gables, spires and battlements and plain mural precipices - all a-tremble with the thunder tones of the falling water. The



**Theodore Roosevelt
and John Muir**

level bottom seemed to be dressed like a garden - sunny meadows here and there, and groves of pine and oak; the river of Mercy sweeping in majesty through the midst of them and flashing back the sunbeams. The great Tissiack, or Half-Dome, rising at the upper end of the valley to a height of nearly a mile, is nobly proportioned and life-like, the most impressive of all the rocks, holding the eye in devout admiration, calling it back again and again from falls or meadows, or even the mountains beyond - marvelous cliffs, marvelous in sheer dizzy depth and sculpture, types of endurance. Thousands of years have they stood in the sky exposed to rain, snow, frost, earthquake and avalanche, yet they still wear the bloom of youth." (My First Summer in the Sierra, John Muir, 1911)

My mind is boggled at the thought that the massive rock formations and waterfalls appear just as they did for John Muir a century ago.

Though he would have lamented the overcrowding of the Valley that speaks to the park's current popularity, I am sure that he would have concurred that the eminent stature of the natural formations remains as solid as the granite that forms the valley walls.

As part of my first summer trip to Yosemite in 1977, while driving along the east side of the magnificent Sierra Nevada Mountains, I could see the pinnacles of Mount Whitney as we passed by. Mt. Whitney, at 14,505 feet in altitude, is North America's highest peak south of Alaska. I remembered a summer as a teenager when I traveled with a group to Rocky Mountain National Park. We hiked to the top of 14,255-foot Long's Peak, the highest in that park. I wondered how Mt. Whitney would compare.

Though the widely traveled Muir never saw Colorado, he became the inspiration of



Enos Mills, who would later become known as the father of Rocky Mountain National Park. Stemming from a chance encounter with Muir on a San Francisco beach in 1889, Mills became a staunch advocate for preserving nature. Having ascended Long's Peak hundreds of times himself, alone and as a guide, Mills was the driving force that led to the establishment of Rocky Mountain National Park in 1915.

Though missing out on Long's Peak, Muir conquered many peaks in his day. In October 1873, he was one of the earliest to reach the summit of Mt. Whitney. Two years later, he was the first to ascend what is now known as the Mountaineer's route.

By the summer of 1879, two colleagues and I finally decided to tackle Mt. Whitney. At that time, we knew nothing about backpacking, or hiking at high altitudes. We were terribly out of shape. But off we went. What was supposed to be a 20-mile hike to the top of Mount Whitney turned into a 45-mile death march! As we hiked out to the trail head - almost half dead and never having made it to the top of the mountain - we swore we would never do that again.

It would be another 13 years before we returned and finally made the summit, using the same route. Muir contrasted his Mountaineer route (denoted as Class 3 in mountain climbing terms) with our Class 1 "mule" hiking route: "But for climbers there is a canyon which comes down from the north shoulder of the Whitney peak. Well-seasoned limbs will enjoy the climb of 9000 feet required by this direct route. But soft, succulent people should go the mule way." (Century Magazine, November 1891).

Even so, by then we had been seasoned by a series of annual treks during the intervening years, inspired by that initial ill-fated attempt at Mt. Whitney. Beginning with a hike over the same High Sierra Kearsarge Pass trod by Muir, we proceeded to such favorites as Sequoia, King's Canyon and Grand Canyon National Parks, as well as several forays into the backcountry of

Yosemite. A year after Muir's death in 1914, construction of a trail in his name began. Upon completion in 1938, the John Muir Trail covered 211 miles from Mt. Whitney to the heart of Yosemite, traversing some of the High Sierra locales that he most revered. Over 80 miles of the trail have been covered by my colleagues and I so far, in various segments over the years.

That a lover of mountains would also be fascinated by the vastness of the Grand Canyon is not surprising. As Muir put it, "Deep canyons attract like high mountains; the deeper they are, the more surely are we drawn into them." Like most of us, he struggled to describe the Canyon's unique character: "Try as I may, not in the least sparing myself, I cannot tell the hundredth part of the wonders of its features." (Steep Trails, John Muir, 1918). Nevertheless, in over two dozen pages of an article in 1902, he proceeded to elaborate in exquisite detail all aspects of the canyon's expansive natural magnificence, including flora, fauna and early native dwellers, along with the striking geologic proportions.

Muir's advice for taking in the fullness of the Canyon was that "The trip down and up can be made afoot easily in a day...But all who have time should go prepared to camp awhile on the riverbank, to rest and learn something about the plants and animals and the mighty flood roaring past." (Steep Trails).

In the course of a half dozen treks to the canyon floor, I am sure that the rustic facilities I found still offered more comforts than the "good spacious camp-ground in a mesquite grove" by the river, that Muir encountered. At the age of seventeen, I applied his first suggestion, hiking in and out in one day, stopping at the bottom just long enough for a cool swim in the murky green water of a swimming pool that has long since been filled in with dirt and vegetation.

Thirty years later, along with my two colleagues, we hiked rim to rim, camping at the bottom in a fashion more attuned to

Muir's approach. Subsequent visits included stays with beds and meals at rustic Phantom Ranch, as well as two trips rafting through the Canyon on the Colorado River. We could never get enough of this natural wonder of the world.

Along with his many adventures, the other place that kept drawing Muir back was Alaska. Starting with his first trip in 1879, Muir would travel to Alaska seven times over the following twenty years.

One of his motivations for studying the Alaska wilderness relates back to the origins of Yosemite. From his extensively documented explorations of Yosemite, he developed a thoughtful and detailed theory of the geologic history of the region. His observations of such features as the U-shaped valleys, and the grooved and polished rock formations convinced Muir that glaciation had been at work: "In my opinion, future investigation will uncover proofs of the existence in the earlier ages of Sierra Nevada ice, of vast glaciers which flowed to the very foot of the range." ("Yosemite Glaciers," New York Tribune, December 5, 1871).

Surprisingly, the renowned geologist of the time dismissed Muir's theory as absurd, contending that the cause was stream erosion coupled with fault upheavals. He looked upon Muir as a young, undereducated "shepherd," referring to his means of support while in Yosemite. Nonetheless, an official geologic study released in 1930 revealed that Muir's theory was substantially correct. Though there were several separate periods of glaciation with stream erosion at work in between, the bulk of the valley's features were found to be the result of the glaciers.

While most of the glaciers in Yosemite were gone or in rapid retreat as the nineteenth century wore on, Muir found in Alaska much younger glacial action in progress. Many formations appeared much like he would have expected in Yosemite eons earlier.

Muir was credited with rediscovering Glacier Bay on that 1879 trip. He traveled with native guides and a missionary, S. Hall Young, who suggested in his autobiography that "the greatest of all the glaciers" they encountered should be named for Muir, which it subsequently was. (Hall Young of Alaska, The Mushing Parson, 1927).

In years following, Muir Glacier would



become the highlight for a growing throng of tourists drawn to Glacier Bay as a result of Muir's and Young's vivid accounts of this newly accessible wilderness.

Alas, by the time Lori and I made our way to Glacier Bay 100 years later (by way of a cushy cruise ship), the grand Muir Glacier had all but disappeared, having shrunk to the point that it no longer reached the Bay and now residing back among the mountain recesses. In order to get a sense of its earlier grandeur, our ship pulled up close to nearby Margerie Glacier, whose massive mile-wide front on the Bay - rising 250 feet from the water's edge - was comparable to what Muir Glacier looked like in his time.

Glacier Bay has witnessed rapid retreat of its glaciers in less than 300 years. At the height of the Little Ice Age in 1759, the whole Bay was covered by one huge glacier. By Muir's day, the ice had already receded by almost 50 miles. Today, the Bay extends more than 65 miles inward.

His exploits in Alaska also revealed the fearless explorer that he was, risking his own life and saving the lives of others. In his book, *Alaska Days with John Muir*, Young describes in vivid detail how amazingly passionate and fearless Muir was. In admiration, the author remarked "I began to recognize him as my Master who was to lead me into enchanting regions of beauty and mystery, which without his aid must forever have remained unseen by the eyes of my soul."

Young was soon to learn first-hand of Muir's prowess. On his first hike with Muir, he marveled "Then Muir began to slide up that mountain. I had been with mountain climbers before, but never one like him. A deer-lope over the smoother slopes, a sure instinct for the easiest way into a rocky fortress, an instant and unerring attack, a serpent-glide up the steep; eye, hand and foot all connected dynamically; with no appearance of weight to his body."

Young struggled his best to keep up with Muir, but near the top Young took a tumble

and was hanging precariously from a cliff when Muir came to his rescue: "Hold fast; I'm going to get you out of this...Then I felt a careful hand on my back, fumbling with the waistband of my pants, my vest and shirt, gathering all in a firm grip...He drew me close to him by crooking his arm and as my head came up past his level he caught me by my collar with his teeth!... How he did it, I know not. The miracle grows as I ponder it. The wall was almost perpendicular and smooth. My weight on his jaws dragged him outwards. And yet, holding me by his teeth as a panther her cub and clinging like a squirrel to a tree, he climbed with me straight up ten or twelve feet, with only the help of my iron-shod feet scrambling on the rock. It was utterly impossible, yet he did it!"

Not only were humans the beneficiary of Muir's fearlessness. On a later foray with a faithful dog named Stickeen, Muir successfully traversed and jumped via a thin ice bridge over a dangerously wide and deep crevasse, cajoling the more cautious and sensible canine to follow him, ultimately grabbing hold when the dog made his final desperate leap, pulling him to safety.

The roots of Muir's adventurous athletic abilities were revealed when he recalled his childhood in Dunbar, Scotland; "The roof of our house, as well as the crags and walls of the old [Dunbar] castle, offered fine mountaineering exercise." Returning to Scotland more than fifty years later, Muir had to see his childhood home again to "judge what sort of adventure getting on its roof must have been, and with all my after experience in mountaineering, I found that what I had done in daring boyhood was now beyond my skill." (*The Story of My Boyhood and Youth*, John Muir, 1913).

In his letters to his wife and friends, Muir expressed how thoroughly he enjoyed his homecoming, both the many relatives and friends, as well as the natural allure of the land. He spoke of his hometown, "beautifully located on a plateau above the sea and with a background of beautiful hills and dales," and of spending with a fascinating new acquaintance "the most wonderful night as far as humanity is concerned I ever had in the world...and now I am a Scotchman and at home again."

Muir reminisced that "Edinburgh is, apart from its glorious historical associations, far the most beautiful town I ever saw. I cannot conceive how it could be more beautiful. In the very heart of it rises the great Castle hill, glacier-sculptured and wild like a bit of Alaska in the midst of the most beautiful architecture to be found in the world." From there, much like a tourist, he went "by

coach and boat, by the Trossachs and Loch Katrine, thence through Loch Lomond and the mountains to a railroad and on to this charming Oban."

Likewise entranced by Edinburgh, Lori and I followed a similar route, albeit driving by car, across Scotland to Oban, where we caught a ferry to the Island of Mull, and then another ferry to the captivating Isle of Iona, for a few days of retreat.

Iona is known as the birthplace of Celtic Spirituality, with an abbey first established by St. Columba in the sixth century.

Muir espoused a spirituality akin to the Celtic style, which celebrates the presence of the divine essence in all creatures and aspects of the natural world. Having been raised by a strict Presbyterian minister, Muir's solid foundation in Christianity was broadened and came to be exuberantly expressed as he saw the hand of God working in nature. Once, upon gazing at the brilliant first rays of the morning sun on an Alaskan mountaintop, he gushed "We have met with God...He sent us to his most glorious exhibition. Praise God from whom all blessings flow." (*Alaska Days with John Muir*, S. Hall Young, 1915).

A similar sentiment was expressed by Muir who, in his later years, fought to prevent Hetch Hetchy - the "other" Yosemite Valley - from being flooded to provide water for San Francisco; "Dam Hetch Hetchy! As well dam for water tanks the people's cathedrals and churches, for no holier temple has ever been consecrated by the heart of man." (*The Yosemite*, John Muir, 1912)

Though Muir was to lose that decade-long battle to save Hetch Hetchy, he built a legacy for conservation and preservation of lands filled with unique natural wonders. During his life and thereafter, he was directly responsible for the establishment of a number of American national parks and monuments. An escorted camping tour that Muir gave President Theodore Roosevelt through Yosemite in 1903 helped to influence Roosevelt's decisions for creating several national parks. Muir was also co-founder and first president of the Sierra Club, which preserves and continues Muir's legacy. I am indebted to the Sierra Club, of which Lori and I are members, for the website the Club maintains, providing a wealth of information and writings by and about John Muir.

www.sierraclub.org

THE CHIEFTAINS

and FRIENDS

THE IRISH GOODBYE



ANNOUNCING THE 2020 US  TOUR
TOUR DATES AND TICKET INFORMATION
[THECHIEFTAINS.COM/TOURS/](https://thechieftains.com/tours/)



The Chieftains

Paddy Moloney and the healing power of music

Story by Stephen Patrick Clare



Paddy Moloney is a titan of his industry - a musical giant who has spent a lifetime rubbing shoulders with the likes of royalty, religious icons, world leaders, business czars, captains of art and culture, rock stars, celebrities and more.

Though slight of frame with a slight hunch, the Dublin-born musician, composer, and producer - who also happens to be the founder and leader of the Irish musical legends The Chieftains - casts a big shadow.

Despite his grand standing amongst his musical peers, the 81-year-old is humble and soft-spoken, charming and cordial, warm and welcoming.

"Hello, how are ya' then?" he asks, taking my hand in his as we sit down for an afternoon chat at The Arms Public House inside the Lord Nelson Hotel in downtown Halifax, Nova Scotia.

The server comes by to take our orders. Coffee with milk for me. Moloney looks at

his watch, smiles slyly and says, "Well, it is after 12pm, so a double Jamesons, straight-up please," before turning to me and adding with a giggle, "You know, I got into the music game for the free drinks, and I'm damn well staying in it until I get some."

We make small talk as we await our drinks.

"Aye, we have been here several times," he nods, speaking of Atlantic Canada. "A lovely part of the world. Fine folks. There's a few Irish about. Lots in Newfoundland. We don't make it over this way often enough, but when we do it is always a grand time; good food, good drink and lots of great music."

"That could be the story of your life," I reply with a smirk.

"Ha, indeed," he laughs. "Well, that is not so bad then is it? I am quite blessed that things turned out as well as they did. It has been quite a ride."

That journey began at the age of six,

when Moloney's mother gave him his first instrument, a tin whistle. In time, he would pick up the Uilleann pipes, the button accordion and the bodhran.

"My mother had no idea what she set in motion all of those years ago. If only she could see me now!"

"Actually, I believe that I always had that music in me, even as a youngster growing up in Dublin. Once I had my hands on those instruments, it was like magic - the melodies just started pouring out of me."

The rest, as they say, is musical history; in the early 1960s, Moloney would join his first band, Ceoltóirí Chualann, with leader Seán Ó Riada. That group would form the basis for The Chieftains, who debuted in the fall of 1962. Over the next half-century, the group would release dozens of albums and

play thousands of concerts for millions of people around the world.

"We were kids," he recalls with a twinkle in his eye of those early years. "Back then, we were just pleased to play for pocket money or a pint of Guinness. Don't tell anyone, but we would have done it for free! We really had no idea what we were doing or how long it would last. We still don't. These days, we might have a bit better understanding of our instruments, and of what music is and can be, but we are still just winging it for the most part."

Moloney's modesty is both authentic and endearing. Despite an epic, larger-than-life resume replete with an array of awards, accolades and achievements, his demeanor is one of honest and hard-won humility.

"We have had the good fortune of making a living doing what we love, what we must, and we have traveled around the world doing it. All of these years, all we have been doing is carrying the message of music and, hopefully, making some sort of difference in the lives of a few folks."

Meeting people, he notes, is still the best part of the gig.

"We have always taken the time to chat with fans and friends. That hasn't changed since the very beginning. Everyone has a story, some comic and others tragic. We all

share those things in common, and it is the music that brings us together in celebration and in grief."

Many of those close encounters have been with fellow musicians. I begin dropping names, and Moloney willing replies.

Mick Jagger: "Very smart, and an extremely hard worker. He gets a bad rap for being a good businessman, but he knows music as well as anyone - especially the blues."

Paul McCartney: "A brilliant songwriter and a natural talent. A living legend with no ego whatsoever."

Sting: "A genius, really. He knows what he wants in a song and spares no expense or effort in bringing it to life."

Stevie Wonder: "He is a teacher at heart. I learned so much just being around him, and some of those sessions are among my most memorable."

Bono: "One of the funniest guys I have ever had the pleasure to know, and one of the most passionate about music."

Van Morrison: "How can you not respect someone so dedicated to his craft?"

Bob Dylan: "Unique - a one-off. There is nobody else in the world like him, and there never will be."

The list of past creative collaborators is endless; Madonna, Pavarotti, Moya Brennan,

Elvis Costello, Willie Nelson, Emmylou Harris, Tom Jones, Marianne Faithfull, Ry Cooder, The Pogues, Sinéad O'Connor, Bon Iver...

"I think that what has kept us around for so long is a curiosity about where we can take the music."

"We never hung out with those folks just because they were celebrities or to party - we had work to do; songs to write and record and perform. There may have been a few drinks along the way, surely, but it never got in the way of the music."

In an era when excess got the better of so many of his musical peers - from Jimi Hendrix, Janis Joplin and Jim Morrison to Phil Lynott, Kurt Cobain and Amy Winehouse - Moloney has kept his priorities straight and his house in order.

"Oh, my wife gets all of the credit for that. And my three children. Without them, I'd no doubt be homeless."

I remind him of Keith Richards' adage, "I am happy to be here. Actually, I am happy to be anywhere..."





"Ah yes," he laughs. "A bit of a miracle, really, that one. An incredible musician and band leader in his own right, and I have never known him to turn down either a drink or a session. He just loves to play."

As if the list of rock stars and musical dignitaries weren't long enough, there were mainstage performances for the likes of Queen Elizabeth II during her first ever official trip to Ireland in 2011 ("Gracious, as expected..."), and Pope John Paul II in 1979 ("Great sense of humour, and a keen ear for a melody..."), where the Chieftains performed for over 1 million people at Phoenix Park in Dublin. They were the first group to appear at the Capitol Building in Washington D.C. (1983) and - that same year - atop (!) the Great Wall of China. Another wall, this time in Berlin, was the site of a show with Pink Floyd frontman Roger Waters in 1990.

"It has been incredible to witness modern historical events first-hand, with my very own eyes. To experience these things, to be a part of them, is so very humbling. For me, they have served as reminders of how truly small we are in the grand scheme of things, but how big a difference we can make."

In 2002, Maloney and his bandmates took part in a memorial concert in New York City for the victims of 9/11.

"I was invited to Ground Zero, where I played a lament for the (rescue team) on my little tin whistle. It was then and there that I realized that the world we live in, the one I grew up in, would never be the same, and that - more than ever - music was needed to help heal our wounds...that we, as a band, needed to keep going and try to reach as many people as we could in the time that we had left."

I remind him that "music has charms to soothe a savage breast..." - a phrase taken from the poem *The Morning Bride* by 17th century English playwright and poet William Congreve.

"Aye, that is surely true enough," sighs Moloney, now sipping his second double Jamesons.

*"Music has worked wonders
for me through the years, and
hopefully ours has done that for
others as well."*

Moloney and his musical cohorts - Matt Molloy and Kevin Conneff - are currently on the road in the USA on their "Irish Goodbye" tour.

"An Irish Goodbye is an expression we use when someone leaves a party without telling anyone," he explains, "usually by quietly slipping out the back door when no one is watching."

I ask about the significance of the tour's moniker.

"Oh, I wouldn't read too much into that," he smiles. "So long as there are still people who want to come out and hear us, and so long as we have our health, we'll be there."

That audience has evolved over the decades.

"A lot of these folks have been with us since early on, and it is always a pleasure to see the same faces at the shows. We are all a little older, and perhaps a little slower, but we are all still going. What has been truly wonderful has been seeing these people bring their children, and grandchildren, along to the concerts. Music, and in our case traditional Irish music, is a great way to bring families, friends and communities together."

The Chieftains are sharing the stage with some friends of their own on the current tour.

"We've got musicians and dancers and other performers that will be joining us for each show - many of whom we have played with in the past. And you never know who is going to turn up for a tune or two. That is part of the fun for us, and for the fans also."

With stops scheduled in Irish hotbeds like Chicago, Pittsburgh, Boston and New York, there will likely be no shortage of expats in the audience.

"Yes, we do get a lot of Irish, of course, but you would be amazed at how many people come out to the shows who have absolutely no Irish or Celtic blood at all."

"That is the power of music; it goes beyond race, age, sex or religion. It goes beyond identity entirely. It really has that kind of power."

So long as that power is at play, Moloney and The Chieftains will continue to play.

"Who knows how long we will keep doing this? I guess we will just keep going as

long as we are breathing. I mean, really, at this point, why stop?

"Now, that said, if you had told me in 1962 that we would still be performing in 2020 I'd have told you that you were daft. It was simply inconceivable to us back then that we would have gone on to do the things that we have done, and that we are still doing. Don't get me wrong - I have no complaints at all. You see, I didn't choose music, it chose me - and I have cherished every moment of it, and every gift it has brought me, and I still do. I wake up every morning full of appreciation that the magic is still there and that, for whatever reason, the melodies are still pouring out of me."

As our server is set to pour Moloney another double Jamesons, he puts his hand over the glass.

"Aye, that'll do for now, thank you" he smiles, throwing me a mischievous wink. "We've a show to do here tonight, and surely there'll be plenty more drinks about later... maybe even a few free ones."

www.thechieftains.com

DISCOGRAPHY

The Chieftains (1964)
The Chieftains 2 (1969)
The Chieftains 3 (1971)
The Chieftains 4 (1973)
The Chieftains 5 (1975)
The Chieftains 6: Bonaparte's Retreat (1976)
The Chieftains 7 (1977)
The Chieftains Live! (1977)
The Chieftains 8 (1978)
The Chieftains 9: Boil the Breakfast Early (1979)
The Chieftains 10: Cotton-Eyed Joe (1980)
The Year of the French (1982)
The Grey Fox (1982 - OST)
Concert Orchestra (1983)
The Chieftains in China (1985)

Ballad of the Irish Horse (1986)
Celtic Wedding (1987)
In Ireland (1987 - with James Galway)
Irish Heartbeat (1988 - with Van Morrison)
The Tailor of Gloucester (1988)
A Chieftains Celebration (1989)
Over the Sea to Skye: The Celtic Connection (1990 - with James Galway)
The Bells of Dublin (1991)
Reel Music (1991)
Another Country (1992)
An Irish Evening (1992)
The Best of the Chieftains (1992)
Music at Matt Molloy's (1992)
Far and Away OST (1992 - with John Williams)
The Celtic Harp: A Tribute to Edward Bunting

(1993 - with The Belfast Harp Orchestra)
The Long Black Veil (1995)
Film Cuts (1996)
Santiago (1996)
Long Journey Home (1998)
Fire in the Kitchen (1998)
Silent Night: A Christmas in Rome (1998)
Tears of Stone (1999)
Water from the Well (2000)
The Wide World Over (2002)
Down the Old Plank Road:
The Nashville Sessions (2002)
Further Down the Old Plank Road (2003)
Live from Dublin: A Tribute to Derek Bell (2005)
The Essential Chieftains (2006)
San Patricio (2010) (with Ry Cooder)





IT'S TIME TO FOLLOW YOUR HEART

Powerscourt House and Gardens, County Wicklow

And it's telling you to come home. Home to family, friends, stories. Home to festivals, traditional music, and the Irish pub. Home to majestic landscapes and fabulous feasts.

You know the places. The castles illuminated by fiery sunsets. The tranquil beauty where High Kings once reigned supreme. The cities fusing modern life with legacies that remember the Vikings. The landmarks that pepper the shores, charting tragedy, triumphs and treasures. This is the place where smiles are broad and the 100,000 welcomes are legendary.

They say you should always listen to your heart. Now's the time...

Serving Dublin airport and connecting cities across Canada, Toronto offers year-round direct flights to Ireland.

Find your way home at

 **Ireland.com**



Tarta de Santiago

This delicious almond cake is named in honour of Santiago - St. James - the patron saint of Spain. The feast day of St. James is celebrated nationally every July 25th. His remains are buried in the city of Santiago de Compostela, Galicia. During the Middle Ages, the pilgrimage to Santiago was the most important pilgrimage

of the Christian world. Today many people still make the trip to Santiago not just for religious reasons, but as a cultural, historical or active vacation. The cake's origin is not certain, but it may have been brought to Galicia by a pilgrim. Today, this cake is sold all over Santiago de Compostela and is popular with tourists and pilgrims.

Ingredients

2 $\frac{2}{3}$ cup ground almonds
 $\frac{3}{4}$ cup flour
 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup sugar
 4 eggs
 8 tbsp butter (1 cube), at room temperature
 $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp baking powder
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup water
 Zest of 1 lemon
 Powdered sugar to decorate

Instructions

Blanch the almonds then, using a grinder or a food processor, grind the almonds until fine and set aside. Heat the oven to 350 F degrees. Grease a round 8-inch pan. In a large mixing bowl, beat the eggs and sugar together. Add the butter, flour, baking powder and water, and beat until thoroughly mixed. Stir the almonds into the batter. Grate the lemon and add the zest and stir until thoroughly mixed. Pour batter into cake pan. Bake in oven on the middle shelf at 350 F degrees for approximately 45 - 50 minutes. Check doneness after 45 minutes. Cake is done if a toothpick inserted into the center of the cake comes out clean. The traditional way to decorate is to sprinkle powdered sugar on top, with a cut-out of St. James or a cross on top. To create a cross, use any clean piece of paper folded and cut out a cross. Then, after the cake has cooled, place the cross in the center of the cake and dust the top with powdered sugar. A small flour sifter works well for the job. Serves 8.

Salud! Cabrini - cabrini@celticlife.com



We search high and low
for the most interesting
single malts in the World,
like these bespoke, exclusive
single casks: 23 Year Imperial
and 22 Year Ben Nevis.

It is a labour of love!



K E N S I N G T O N
WINE MARKET

ESTABLISHED 1992

kensingtonwinemarket.com

@KensingtonWM

The #1 Selling
Celtic Breton Whisky
in the World

RANKING #6 IN WHISKY ADVOCATE'S
MOST RECENT TOP 20 WHISKY LIST

ArmoriK
BRETON SINGLE MALT

IMPORTED BY HEAVENLY SPIRITS - HEAVENLYSPIRITS.COM



Daftmill Distillery

with Andrew Ferguson



Until the closing decades of the 19th century, most Scottish distilleries had started out as farms. Some were blessed with fertile fields, perfect for growing barley, while others got their start with cattle farming. Many did both. Either way, some discovered in due course that it was much more profitable to use malted barley to make whisky than it was to be a simple farmer. By the 1700s, there were literally tens of thousands of illicit stills across the highlands of Scotland, most of them belonging to farms and small crofts. By 1820, as many as 14,000 illicit stills were being confiscated each and every year.

There is an interesting synergy between the two - farming and malt whisky making - that goes well beyond the obvious. Barley has been Scotland's most important cereal crop for centuries. The grain is not only well suited to grow in the nation's cool, damp northern climate, but it is also very stable. Scotland's barley production continues to be the bedrock of its whisky and livestock industries, but the grain has a catch; it stores its energy in the form of starch, and before you can feed it to cattle and sheep, the grain needs to be modified. The best way to do this is to first use the barley to make beer or whisky.

The first step of the brewing and malt whisky making process is malting. By steeping it in water, and then leaving it to breathe, the grain is tricked into thinking it is spring, starting the process of germination which converts the starches to sugars. When the sugar yield is at its maximum, the process is stopped by drying the now-malted barley out. The grain is then milled, and the sugar extracted by sparging hot water through it. The sugary water, or wort, is then fermented to become beer or whisky. The leftover spent

grains are now rich in protein and slightly sweet, making them perfect animal feed.

In 1823, the Excise Act was passed in Scotland, reducing the size of legal stills and, more importantly, the duties levied on small distillers. Nicknamed the "Small Stills Act," it encouraged small scale distillers - mostly farmers - to go legit. Almost all the malt whisky distilleries founded before the last two decades of the 19th century began as farms. This only started to change in the 1880s, with the explosion in demand for malt whisky brought on by the collapse of Europe's wine industry.

Flash forward more than 100 years, and the Scotch whisky industry is a very different animal.

Many new distilleries have opened in the last decade. As with the modern industry as a whole, few of them retain a direct link to farming, other than the need for barely as a base ingredient. One curious exception is Daftmill Distillery, established by Francis Cuthbert in Fife, in 2003. The distillery was built in two-hundred-year-old farm buildings, in the fertile Eden Valley. The land has been farmed for more than a thousand years, by just 3 families, and specializes in growing malting barley for the whisky industry. For the last 15 years they have held back about 10 per cent of their annual barley harvest so that it may be used in the production of their own whisky. Oh, and they also raise cattle!

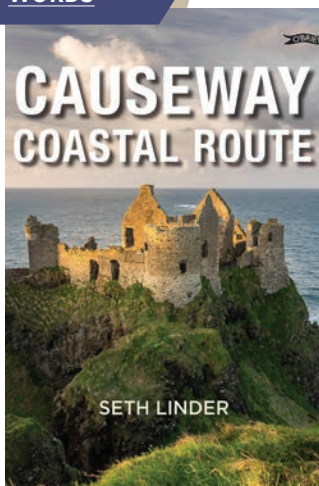
Daftmill's production is small, just 20,000 litres-per-year - less than 1/1000th of what Glenfiddich or Glenlivet produce over the same period. As with the farm distilleries of the 18th and 19th centuries, whisky produc-

tion has to be scheduled around the farm's main enterprise, and it is restricted to two three-month windows following the Spring and Fall harvests. Unlike most of the other new Scottish distilleries to open in the last decade, Daftmill was not in a rush to get its product to market. Both the distillery and its annual whisky production are financed from the farm's profits. Francis Cuthbert was determined not to release his first whisky until it was well and truly ready. This came to pass in 2018 when the first bottling, a 12-year-old, was released and sold by ballot.

One of the best descriptions that I have seen of Daftmill Distillery is that it is Scotland's oldest new distillery, at the forefront of the modern Scottish distilling boom along with Kilchoman Distillery on Islay. The two started production just a few months apart in 2005, and both are situated on barley farms. But the similarities end there. Kilchoman started releasing its whisky in 2008, to finance ongoing production, and it also happens to operate a farm to supply some of its production. Daftmill is a farm distillery, in the model of those of the 19th century - it is a farm that just happens to make whisky.

Daftmill Distillery is located about 30 minutes from St. Andrews in the bucolic countryside of the Howe of Fife. A working farm, there is no visitor center, and the distillery is not open to public except by appointment. Nor is the whisky particularly easy to come by; only a handful of bottlings have been released in the last two years, most of them single casks. But there will be more, when Francis feels the whisky is ready!

www.kensingtonwinemarket.com
www.daftmill.com



Causeway Coastal Route

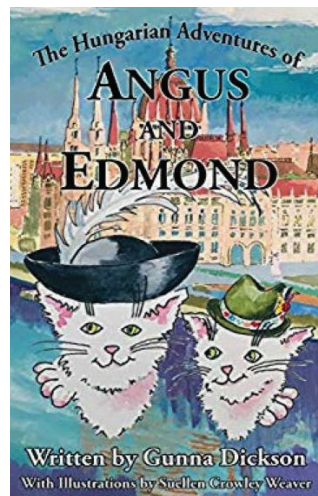
By Seth Linder
O'Brien Press
128 pp / €12.99

If you have never driven the Causeway Coastal Route in Northern Ireland, then be sure to put it on your bucket list. Consistently named one of the world's top road trips, the 212-kilometer trek weaves and winds its way from Belfast to Derry along the region's rugged Antrim coastline. Chock full of stunning coloured photographs, and peppered with text and tidbits of trivia, this table-top tome touches on the area's rich and robust heritage, tackling topics such as topography, history, culture, cuisine, language, sports, and more. Author Seth Linder does well to avoid politics and religion, instead pointing to the poignancy of the place and its people and hopefully inspiring those with a passion for travel to explore the finest gem in the British Isles. ~ SPC

Walking Cardiff

By Peter Finch
and John Briggs
Seren Books
192 pp / €14.99

Riffing on his past works on Cardiff, author Peter Finch takes readers on a rousing ride through the main streets and back alleys of one of Europe's most underrated cities. More than a general guide to the sights and sounds of the Welsh hub, the book explores both the robust history of the area's quaint and quirky neighbourhoods and the unique individuals that inhabit them. Accompanied by John Briggs' gorgeous photographs, Finch brings a poet's eye for the beauty of everyday details to the forefront, reminding readers why they should put Cardiff on their itineraries. And you have to admire someone who (in 2015) had the guts to write and release a book titled *The Roots of Rock - From Cardiff to Mississippi and Back!* ~ SPC



The Hungarian Adventures of Angus and Edmond

By Gunna Dickson & Suellen Crowley Weaver
Self Published
72 pp / \$24.95

The fantastic felines return with their latest foray of fun! Having previously sniffed around Scotland, Spain, Italy and Key West, the furry friends now find themselves exploring the Hungarian capital city of Budapest. As always with this pair, mischief is never far, and a day trip to Vienna opens the door to more shenanigans. Audiences will enjoy author Gunna Dickson's clean and clear narrative, which is entertaining, educational and engaging all at once. Beautifully illustrated by American artist Suellen Crowley Weaver, the work will also likely inspire younger readers to initiate an interest in European history. With so many tales under their tails, Angus and Edmond are racking up the air miles as they make a name for themselves in the world of children's literature. ~ SPC

A Feckin' Tour of Ireland

By Colin Murphy
& Brendan O'Reilly
O'Brien Press
256 pp / €12.99

Once upon a time, Colin and Brendan were at the pub enjoy a few pints of Guinness when one turned to the other and offhandedly asked, "Hey, you know what we should do?" After listening to the idea, the other obviously replied "That's a feckkkkin' great idea!" Well, guess what? They actually did it, and the result is exactly what you might expect from a book with this moniker. Subtitled *50 Must-do Things*, this tome is part handy-dandy travel guide and part Irish-Kerouac *On the Road*, meaning that the drinking likely didn't stop with the initial idea. Au contraire, the work is so casually composed that you will feel like you are raising a glass or two with the boys themselves. An absolutely brilliant read.

~ SPC





Celtic Woman *Celebration*

Subtitled 15 Years of Music & Magic, this 14-song selection celebrates the sweet sounds of one of the most successful groups in Irish history; 12 consecutive number one Billboard recordings, album sales exceeding 10 million, a Grammy nomination and over a billion online streams. Spanning a decade and a half, and showcasing an array of talented group members and musicians, the anthology (and accompanying DVD) showcases classic and contemporary tunes, including May it Be, Dúlamán, You Raise Me Up, Danny Boy, and the group's stirring, signature rendition of The Parting Glass. Supported by an upcoming 4-month, 80-date tour of North America, Celebration is an excellent collection for either longtime listeners or those who are just learning to love the lilts of these lovely Irish lasses. ~ SPC

Byrne & Kelly *The Ballads Collection*

Another amazing anthology from another great Irish group, The Ballads Collection captures the heart and soul of dynamic duo Neil Byrne and Ryan Kelly at their absolute finest. With a dozen previously released tracks, and six newer songs, there is something here for anyone and everyone who loves a good traditional tune. Highlights include The Water is Wide, Belfast, Black is the Colour, The Old Tweed Coat, and the pair's powerful take on the classic Carrickfergus. Though each are still core, card-carrying members of Emerald Isle supergroup Celtic Thunder, Byrne & Kelly continue to make a strong and compelling case for themselves as solo artists - both are skilled songwriters and masterful musicians. Be sure to catch them on the road over the coming months. ~ SPC



Gillian Boucher & Bob McNeill *Race for the Sun*

There is something to be said for keeping things simple. Canadian fiddler Gillian Boucher and Scottish guitarist Bob McNeill do just that with their latest recording, Race for the Sun, a terrific ten-track trek through traditional peaks and valleys of melody. Now based in New Zealand, the multi award-winning musicians have known and performed with one another for years. That sonic chemistry is apparent with this beautiful blend of old-school airs and upbeat toe-tappers, including Trip to Durrow, Steel & Silver, Emily Bay, and the title track. There is nothing complex or over-the-top at play here - subtlety and nuance carry both the day and the tunes, reminding listeners that less can be more, and that music lives in the spaces between the notes. ~ SPC

Aerialists *Dear Sienna*

Having met at Boston's Berklee College of Music, Adam Iredale-Gray (guitar), Elise Boeur (fiddle) and Màiri Chaimbeul (harp) each brought their own unique musical sensibilities to Aerialist's first recording Groupe Manoeuvre in 2017. That album won a Juno Award - the Canadian equivalent of a Grammy. The group takes that hybrid melange of musical influence - including traditional Celtic tunes, Norwegian melodies and prog-jazz (!) - to new heights with their sophomore effort Dear Sienna. While these 11 tracks might not be everyone's cup of tea, the stirring vocals and sheer musicianship are more than enough to keep the ears attuned for all 36 minutes. Like Bretagne's brilliant Plantec, Aerialists continue to push the boundaries of Celtic music, taking it to vital and vibrant places. ~ SPC



15th Annual Jamestown Regional

Celtic Festival **and Gathering of the Clans**

August 21 & 22, 2020

Friday ~ 5PM - 9:00PM

Saturday ~ 9AM - 9PM

Mayville Lakeside Park, Mayville, New York

Presented by the 96th Highlanders Pipes & Drums Inc.

- ◆ 28 Clans
- ◆ Beer & Wine Garden
- ◆ Celtic & Craft Vendors
- ◆ Celtic & Great Food
- ◆ 8 Pipe Bands
- ◆ 6 Celtic Bands
- ◆ 50 Heavy Athletes NYS Championships
- ◆ Scottish & Irish Dancers
- ◆ Erie / Jamestown Celtic Seisiúns



Saturday — \$10 DONATION

Saturday — \$8 SENIORS

Children 13 & Under Are Free

**Free Parking
&
Shuttle Service
Handicap Accessible**

An Festival Atmosphere for the Whole Family!!

For more information go to: www.96thhighlanders.com

Phone: 814.323.7360 or 716 .484.2833

Friday Evening August 21 ~ 5:00 PM - 9:00 PM

New York State Championships

Scottish Heavy Athletes Men & Women's





Welsh piper John Campbell found his musical calling later in life

Choosing to play the pipes was no easy task for Welsh piper John Campbell.

"I have had a desire to learn a musical instrument for as long as I can remember," he tells Celtic Life International via email. "But, with a 100 per cent effort mentality, this was somewhat of a barrier to starting an instrument; if I was to spend a lot of time in the effort of learning something completely new and improve, it needed to be the 'right' instrument for me."

It was not until 1999, after hearing a piper practicing his set list, that Campbell first took interest.

"I was then curious as to how to begin. The piper offered some advice on the basics, which inspired the start of what, at that time, seemed an obvious choice of instrument as my father originated from Scotland."

The 50-year-old has now been playing for just over two decades.

"The initial stages of my career were focused on playing the tunes correctly. I was soon part of a competing pipe band, which won two major championships. During that time, I also attended a number of solo piping recitals and quickly realized that this was where my interests truly were."

In 2008, Campbell began competing as a solo performer, most notably with the Competition League for Amateur Solo Pipers' (CLASP), an organization based in Glasgow. He considers his time with CLASP to be among his career's most notable highlights.

"In just my second year of competing, I had an overall win (joint) at the World Amateur Solo Piping Championships in 2009. In 2011 and 2012 the competition successes

helped me obtain an overall league win for that year. After promotion to the next grade, the successes continued, which gave me the confidence to consider playing for functions when asked."

Currently plying his trade on a set of Peter Henderson Bagpipes, Campbell performs for specific clients and events. Among his services he includes weddings, funerals, corporate events, and birthdays.

He admits his career has been as challenging as it has been rewarding.

"Starting a musical instrument later in life had its own issues."

"Realistically, there was - and is - a limit to the tempo in which I can play tunes. I have been settled with a similar instrument setup for a few years now. In competing terms, there were several avenues to compete as an adult amateur, although those opportunities have dwindled in recent years. An example would be the 'dropping' of all Adult Amateur events from an annual major London competition. Other competition avenues south of the border are not, in my experience, well supported. Since the inception of changes to the format of a competing league I have been part of, I have stepped back from the competitions. This is mainly due to time and expense, and the very limited number of competing opportunities closer to home. As long distances to compete from Wales are inevitable, I have to weigh up the balance of expense and competing against only one or two other pipers.

"Still, the rewards are numerous," he continues. "I have the mentality that each of my clients are my competition, judge and jury. It is very satisfying. I have had many positive comments and reviews about my playing, conduct and approach to the clients' wishes. In the competition environment it is very satisfying to come away with good results after playing tunes exactly as practised."

Campbell believes that much is being done to preserve and promote Celtic culture.

"Schools in Scotland support younger folks in their piping or drumming aspirations. For those showing real promise, they also have the National Youth Pipe Band to aspire to. There is no provision in Wales, apart from street bands, however. Still, Novice Juvenile age groups still have an abundance of options including contests which are in alignment with the Adult Major contests."

He hopes to make a return to online competing in the coming years. For now, however, he is content to sharpen his skills.

"I am attempting very difficult tunes that contain tricky embellishments. The aim is to overcome and improve my finger-work in weak areas. To date, a number of these tunes have been attempted and are starting to show positive results. Plans for 2020 are to continue with these difficult tunes with the aim of playing them at live functions in the future."

www.bagpipersouthwales.co.uk

CHICAGO
SCOTS



34th ANNUAL

SCOTTISH
FESTIVAL

&

HIGHLAND
GAMES

FRIDAY JUNE 19
SATURDAY JUNE 20

HAMILTON LAKES
ITASCA, ILLINOIS

scottishfestivalchicago.org

Advance discount tickets available online.



Proceeds from the
festival benefit

CALEDONIA
SENIOR LIVING & MEMORY CARE

NH SCOT

45th New Hampshire

HIGHLAND
GAMES & FESTIVAL



SEPTEMBER 18-20, 2020

LOON MOUNTAIN RESORT
LINCOLN, NH



DISCOVER
SCOTLAND



TICKETS GO ON SALE EARLY APRIL
ORDER BY JUNE 30 AND SAVE!
BUY TICKETS AT NHSCOT.ORG
OR 1-800-358-7268

Liz Knowles

Liz Knowles weaves a sonic tapestry from a patchwork of musical experiences

Raised on a Kentucky horse farm by her grandparents, fiddler Liz Knowles was surrounded by Celtic music.

"My grandfather was always singing Irish, Scottish and English songs," she tells Celtic Life International via email from her home in Portland, Maine. "Even though my Irish heritage is much further back in my family tree, it is no surprise to me that I came to Irish music later in life. My early years were filled with the sounds of modal melodies!"

Knowles first studied classical piano, learning to play under the tutelage of her grandmother. Her interest in the violin began at age seven and continued through to her college years, when her love for the fiddle took over.

"Being in New York, where my college was, it was hard not to 'run into' many different cultures, languages, music, and ways of being. At the time, I found myself ready to question the kind of player I wanted to be. Certainly, there was a lot of classical music that spoke to me, but there was a lot of it that didn't either. I think, most of all, I felt no ownership of it, and felt no connection to its history. And so, my dabbling, my searching, began.

"I first heard live Irish fiddling at a festival out on Long Island. There is no way to describe this first 'meeting' of live Irish music without sounding a bit cheesy. I had never heard the fiddle make those kinds of sounds or create that kind of rhythm. The melodies were so reminiscent of what I had heard as a child and were certainly what I gravitated towards in my listening of music

in general. I was captivated and knew that this was what I wanted to play."

From there, Knowles leapt confidently into her career. As a fiddler for Riverdance, she quickly made her mark within the industry, later performing in a variety of venues with several musical groups and even appearing on the popular Irish music and dance show, Celtic Legends. She has also released three full-length albums; two with a side musical project, Open the Door for Three, along with her solo effort, Making Time.

She says her reasons for playing have largely remained intact over time.

"That same delight, awe and fascination with the melodies of Irish music still exist today and is the reason I keep learning, listening and playing."

Her fiddles - a Guarneri copy designed by Peter Seman of Illinois, as well as a Hardanger d'Amore - are vital components to her unique musical style.

"If 'sound' were fabric, mine would be a patchwork made up of all of the experiences I have had in music. It would include my classical training, my time listening to and learning the instrument, the dabbling to find myself in music on the violin and through composition and, most importantly - because of the time and attention I have put to it - my deep understanding and love

for Irish music. I think I sound like me. But sounding like me in Irish music means that there are remnants of other players - or at least that is my hope."

Although she believes much is being done to preserve and promote Irish culture and music, she notes that there is a larger conversation at play and that there is always room to further improve.

"Gather any number of people involved in 'Celtic culture' and have them discuss what these topics mean to them and you would never come up with a single definition. I am not sure if anyone can perfectly 'preserve' a tradition or traditional music. I do believe we should. I think of myself and the musicians I know as carriers of tradition. Not one of us holds it all, knows it all, or can protect it all but I believe part of the privilege of playing traditional music is making sure that it is here to carry forward after we are gone. We need to start having more of these conversations."

Looking forward, Knowles has a busy 2020 on tap.

"In addition to festival appearances and performances, I will also be teaching a few summer camps this year - Swannanoa Celtic Week, the St. Louis Tionol, and Walker Creek Music Camp - and am hoping to finally finish a teaching book that I have been working on for years. I say this every year, but this year is the year!"

www.lizknowles.com

JULY
11



KAMLOOPS HIGHLAND GAMES

Albert McGowan Park
Gates Open at 7:30am
2025 Summit Drive

Admission: Adult \$10, Senior \$8, Child \$5

kamloopshighlandgames.ca or find us on FaceBook for more info.

**Come Check out performances by the 6 time World Champion
Simon Fraser University Pipe Band!**

Come check out the great events/activities we have this year....Agility Dogs, Sword Fighting, Kids Corner, Bouncy Castle, Scottish princesses, Scotch tasting just to name a few! Check us out at kamloopshighlandgames.ca for our full day schedule.

No Parking on Summit Drive this year. No Dogs in Park.

ATM on site!



July 31- 20
Aug 2 20

Save
the Date

Food & Drink · Celtic Vendors
Family Fun & Learning Area
Workshops in Irish dance and instruments
Irish Cultural Area · Whiskey Tasting
Catholic Mass in the Park on Sunday
Celtic Cruise
High Nelly Bike Rally · ShamRock N Run 5K
Rugby Tournament · Highland Games

LIVE MUSIC

Gaelic Storm · Scythian

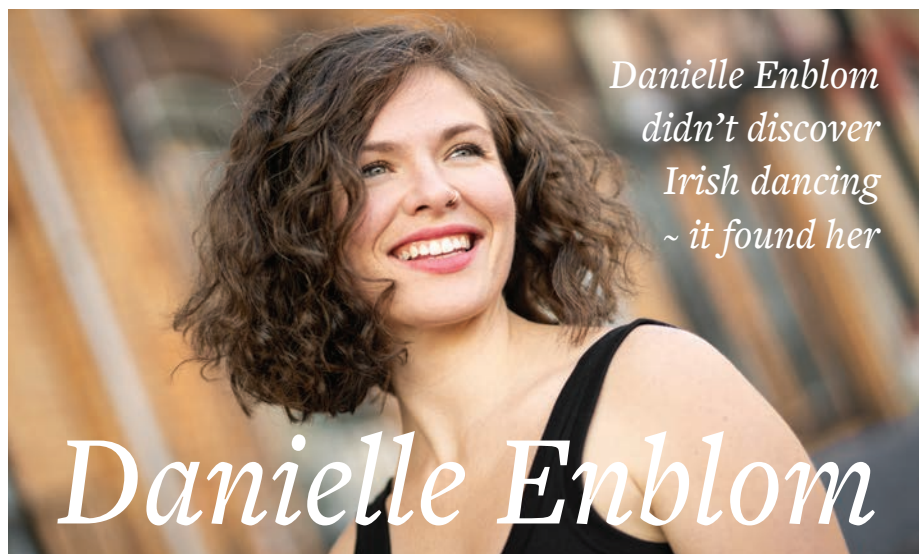
- The High Kings
- Socks in the Frying Pan
- Boxing Banjo
- The Friel Sisters
- Doolin
- Dublin City Ramblers
- Screaming Orphans
- Trinity Irish Dancers
- Aoife Scott
- The Logues
- Hermitage Green
- Shane Hennessy
- Colm & Laura Keegan
- Ian Gould
- Blame Not the Bard
- Cedar Glen Pipes & Drums
- Sammy Kruger



IowaIrishFest.com

Presenting Sponsor





Danielle Enblom

While it is true that most people within the Irish dance community are of Celtic descent, this isn't always the case. Born to a French-Canadian mother and to a father of Swedish ancestry, Irish American dancer Danielle Enblom admits that she has no Celtic heritage at all.

"I actually landed in Irish music and dance as a kid, by chance," she shares via email. "However, I have never looked back."

A student of ballet and modern dance, Enblom made the switch to Irish dance after taking up violin lessons at the age of 10.

"My teacher introduced me to Irish fiddle," she remembers. "She started taking me to ceilidhs and sessions, and I began Irish dancing lessons. I didn't really seek it out, and aside from a few moments where it has been an active decision to pursue traditional dance and music, it has just been something that has found me throughout my life."

After graduating from high school, Enblom attended the University College Cork (UCC), where she enrolled in the Traditional Irish Music program.

"During my time at UCC, I started set dancing, and then was introduced to various old regional styles from Ireland, including old-style step dancing in Cork and Kerry, festival dancing in the north, and sean-nós dance in the west.

"While at UCC, my work in cultural studies and ethnomusicology also spurred an interest in Canadian music and dance traditions. Unbeknownst to me, my own Canadian grandparents had come from families in Manitoba and Quebec with fiddling and dancing traditions. My maternal grandmother had grown up in a house where the kitchen was cleared, corn meal put on the floor, a fiddler positioned in the corner, and sets were danced all night!"

After UCC, Enblom's professional life quickly took shape as both an educator and a performer.

"I started a dance program for kids in the Twin Cities, where I currently reside. I also started spending a lot of time in Boston with the sean-nós dancer Kieran Jordan. We worked together in the group Sole Mates, which included step dancer Nicholas Yenson, Sean McComiskey on accordion, and Josh Dukes on guitar."

Like others with creative careers, Enblom had to balance her passion for dance with a stable source of income - working in a museum as a Steiner/Waldorf schoolteacher.

Her day job helps to support her real work of bringing people together through art.

"At the end of the day, dance and music are avenues for health, joy and connection. That is the path I am determined to carve for myself."

Last year, she launched The Step Collective, an online initiative where people can connect and engage with traditional Irish dance and dancers.

"It began with online tutorials, journal articles, and Facebook Live mini-lessons. They were led by me and often included music and dancing from guest artists. Suddenly I had folks all over the world joining me for 30 minutes every week while I talked about dance and taught a few steps!"

Since its inception, the Step Collective has evolved to include two additional elements: a holistic, membership-based, interactive community called The Dancer's Floor, and The Tradicle: The Podcast, which explores the greater world of dancing, showcasing styles from Irish and Scottish to Baroque and Métis.

"For now, it is just me, but my goal is to bring others on board by the end of the year to provide instruction from dance teachers all over the world."

And while Enblom has several projects on the go - most notably, her work with musical trio StepTune - she will focus most of her attention on the Step Collective over the coming months.

"As a performer and teacher, I have noticed that there are a lot of people out there who love and care about the traditions I study, practice, and teach, but who don't really have access to instruction or a dance community. Whether it be people in rural areas who have very little arts access, or just simply folks who don't live near a good sean-nós or old-style step dance teacher. There are, of course, lots of great DVDs out there for people to practice and learn steps and techniques with, but still, that approach is lacking in a certain level of engagement or interaction with a broader community. These traditional dance forms are all about connection, community, and human interaction, and I want to keep it that way."

www.danielleenblom.com



CANMORE, ALBERTA
SEPTEMBER 5-6, 2020

SEPT 5 - Taste of the Highlands | SEPT 6 - The Highland Games and The Canmore Ceilidh

www.canmorehighlandgames.ca

geographics.ca



• 14TH ANNUAL •

GREATER MONCTON HIGHLAND GAMES

JUNE 19 & 20, 2020
MONCTON, NEW BRUNSWICK



Join us in 2021 for the Scottish Masters Athletics Heavy Events World Championships

Ceud Mile Failte, Y'all

**TWO DAYS OF EVERYTHING
SCOTTISH IN THE NORTH
GEORGIA MOUNTAINS**

**June 13 and 14, 2020
MEEKS PARK, BLAIRSVILLE, GA**

*Live Music • Massed Parades
Reenactors • Falconry
Highland Cattle • Border Collies
Clans and Societies • Heavy Athletics Pipe
and Drum Bands • Weaponry Gordon
Setters • Children's Games
Fun Amateur Games • 'Kirkin o' the Tartans*

AND SO MUCH MORE!

www.blairsvillescottishfestival.com

A close-up, low-angle shot of a Scottish bagpiper. The piper is wearing a black kilt, a red sporran, and a black sporrans. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with green trees and a crowd of people.

A circular logo for the Greenville Scottish Games 15th Anniversary. It features a red lion rampant on a white background. The text 'GREENVILLE SCOTTISH GAMES' is at the top, '2006-2020' is in the center, and '15th ANNIVERSARY' is at the bottom.

A circular logo for the Royal Highland Fusiliers Honor Guard. It features a grey elephant on a white background. The text 'ROYAL HIGHLAND FUSILIERS HONOR GUARD' is at the top, 'ASSAYE' is in the center, and 'SERINGAPATAM 10th ANNIVERSARY' is at the bottom.

GREAT SCOT! PARADE

FRIDAY, MAY 22 ON MAIN STREET IN DOWNTOWN GREENVILLE, SC AT 6PM

2020 GREENVILLE SCOTTISH GAMES

SATURDAY, MAY 23 AT FURMAN UNIVERSITY

GALLABRAE.COM

Embroid Highland Games

CELEBRATE JULY 1ST

at Ontario's oldest games!

- Pipe Bands
- Highland Dancing
- Heavy Event Championships
- Road Races & Tug-of-War
- Live Celtic Music
- Scottish Clans & Concessions
- Children's Scottish Activities
- Scottish Livestock
- Sheep Herding & Agility Dogs
- Kilted Yoga & Rugby

**Family Fun
with a
Scottish Flair!**

www.EmbroidHighlandGames.ca

Embroid, Ontario
8am to 5pm



There's nothing else like it!

**THE GLENGARRY
HIGHLAND GAMES**

July 31 & August 1

**2020
MAXVILLE
ONTARIO**



NORTH AMERICA'S LARGEST MASSED PIPE BANDS
PIPING & DRUMMING - HIGHLAND DANCING - FIDDLING
HEAVYWEIGHT EVENTS - GAMES TATTOO - TUG OF WAR - CONCERTS

THE BEST IN CELTIC ENTERTAINMENT!

GlengarryHighlandGames.com | (613) 527-2876 | (888) 298-1666

ONTARIO'S
CELTIC
HEARTLAND



MAY 15 & 16, 2020

GLENGARRY SPORTS PALACE
170 McDONALD BLVD. • ALEXANDRIA ON

f /GLENGARRYCELTICFESTIVAL
GCF.MCMFESTIVAL.CA

FRIDAY SCHEDULE

6:30PM Whisky Tasting
6:30PM South Glengarry Pipe Band
7:00PM Fridge Full of Empties
9:00PM Noel and Rachel Campbell
9:30PM The Hallions

SATURDAY SCHEDULE

12:00PM Youth of Glengarry
1:30PM Campbell Trio
2:30PM Stewart's Glen
3:30PM Kelli Trottier's Tribute to
National Fiddling Day
4:30PM MacLeod Fiddlers
5:30PM Highland Dancing
6:00PM Quigley's Highland
Pipes and Drums
7:00PM The Brigadoons
8:30PM Noel and Rachel Campbell
9:00PM Hadrian's Wall



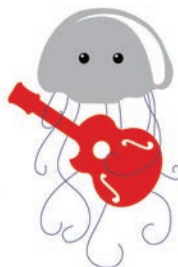
**Plan your vacation to Nova Scotia during
the most entertaining week of summer!**

Music by the sea!



LUNENBURG
FOLK HARBOUR
Festival
AUGUST 6 - 9

Ashley MacIsaac ~ Rose Cousins ~ Stephen Fearing
Martha Redbone ~ Ennis ~ Pretty Archie
Holly Near ~ Dave Gunning ~ Don Amero Trio
Amanda Jackson Trio, JP Cormier, Cassie and Maggie
Ken Whiteley, Les Fireflies ~ and many more!



5 Daytime Stages, 1 Main Stage Tent
Festival Passes (\$175)
Full Day Passes (\$75)
Main Stage Tickets (\$45)
Ages 13-25 are 1/2 price, Kids free
902-634-3180 | 888-311-9090

Canada

NOVA SCOTIA



folkharbour.com



Scottish Heritage USA, Inc.

Putting pride in your heritage to work for you

A Non-profit Organization providing student scholarships for highland dance and bagpiping and making charitable donations to the National Trust for Scotland and other non-profit organizations that promote Scottish tradition, history, crafts and culture here in the states and abroad

The chair of Scottish Gaelic studies at UNC Chapel Hill was largely funded by Scottish Heritage USA for the academic years of 2017-18, 2018-19 and 2019-20

WE ARE ALSO A PROUD SPONSOR OF THE GMHG CULTURAL VILLAGE!

ARE YOU PLANNING A TRIP TO SCOTLAND?

check out the deals you get from membership in Scottish Heritage USA



Hill House - Scottish Heritage
contributed funds to help
preserve this iconic building

- Reciprocal membership to the National Trust for Scotland Foundation, USA
- Free Admission to all (over 70) National Trust for Scotland properties, free parking and discounts at all their gift shops
- Reciprocal membership to the National Trust for Historic Preservation, USA
- Annual subscription (six issues per year) to "The Highlander" magazine
- Annual subscription to the National Trust's magazine published three times per year
- INVITATION to members only reception following the Grandfather Mt Highland Games AND for all new members, the first time you attend the reception it is FREE
- DISCOUNTS on all Scottish Heritage USA tartan merchandise and, Scottish Heritage's Newsletter



Eisenhower Suite at Culzean Castle-
Scottish Heritage funded the
refurbishing and reconstruction of this
guest suite

Memberships range from \$25 to \$500 and are well worth the price! Call now or visit our website for more information

P.O. Box 457, Pinehurst, NC 28370-0457 ♦ www.scottishheritageusa.org ♦ 910.295.4448

Heather Knight Clothing & Gifts



Inspired by Celtic spirit

Handcrafted in Nova Scotia

HeatherKnight.ca

Semper Scotia



**AMERICAN-SCOTTISH
FOUNDATION®**

A Bridge Between Scotland and United States

**Strengthening
the Legacy
Supporting
the Future of the
Scottish
American
Diaspora**

www.americanscottishfoundation.org

f ASFevents

americanscottish

#ASFevents

Cultural Events



BURNS SUPPER



KILT SKATE



WALLACE AWARDS



SCOTS WHO BUILT NEW YORK
HERITAGE & CULTURAL PROGRAM

Youth Bursaries



KIRK WALL CITY PIPE BAND



OBAN HIGH SCHOOL

NYC Tartan Week



AMERICAN-SCOTTISH FOUNDATION
NYC TARTAN WEEK PARADE



SCOTLAND ON
THE FOUNTAIN TERRACE

Educational & Historical Programs



TESTIMONIES
TRANSITION
TALKS & BOOKSIGNINGS



JOHN MUIR EXHIBIT



CLAN HANNAY
SORBIE TOWER RESTORATION

Scottish Diaspora Coalitions



SCOTTISH NORTH AMERICAN
LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE



AWARD PRESENTATION
SCOTTISH COALITION U.S.A.

SCOTTISH LANDS

Scottish Lands

Become a Lord or Lady
Buy a wee piece o' Scotland
breathtaking views
4 Star Scottish tourism



Buy from \$49.99
100sqft Camping lots

www.scottishlands.com



TAKE HOME A LITTLE
Newfoundland flavour



the PANTRY ccnl

155A WATER STREET, ST. JOHN'S, NL



**Dalriada
Heritage
Leather**



**ONLINE STORE
NOW OPEN**



COME CHECK OUT OUR GROWING LIST OF MERCHANDISE COLLECTIONS

- △ Duncarron Medieval Fort
- △ Saor Patrol
- △ Best Clan Tent
- △ Celtic Decor
- △ Clan Leslie
- △ Clan McAlister



Visit our site and contact us
dalriadaheritageleather.com
stewart@dalriadaheritageleather.com

Your Clan Could Be Next!

facebook.com/dalriadaheritageleather



Craftmanship Heritage Passion



Scottish tanners and suppliers
of sheepskins since 1983

SNUGGLE UP WITH OUR
LUXURY SHEEPSKINS,
EXCLUSIVE DESIGNER
RUGS, GORGEOUS WOLLENS
AND LOTS LOTS MORE. ALL
LOVINGLY DESPATCHED
FROM THE ISLE OF SKYE
JUST FOR YOU

skyeskyns.co.uk



McHarp

Crosses with Meaning

10% off
Coupon Code:
celticlife2020



HAND-CRAFTED CROSSES HONORING FAITH, HERITAGE, AND FAMILY
ARTISAN STONECAST HOME DÉCOR & GIFTS

FOLLOW US ON INSTAGRAM, FACEBOOK & PINTEREST

SHOP AT WWW.MCHARP.COM



See it all...



Killarney Tour & Taxi Services

www.killarneytaxi.com

e-mail: jhayden01@gmail.com

phone: 00353852803333

Check out over
500 excellent reviews
on TripAdvisor!

"Highly Recommended!"

"Best Ride Ever!!"

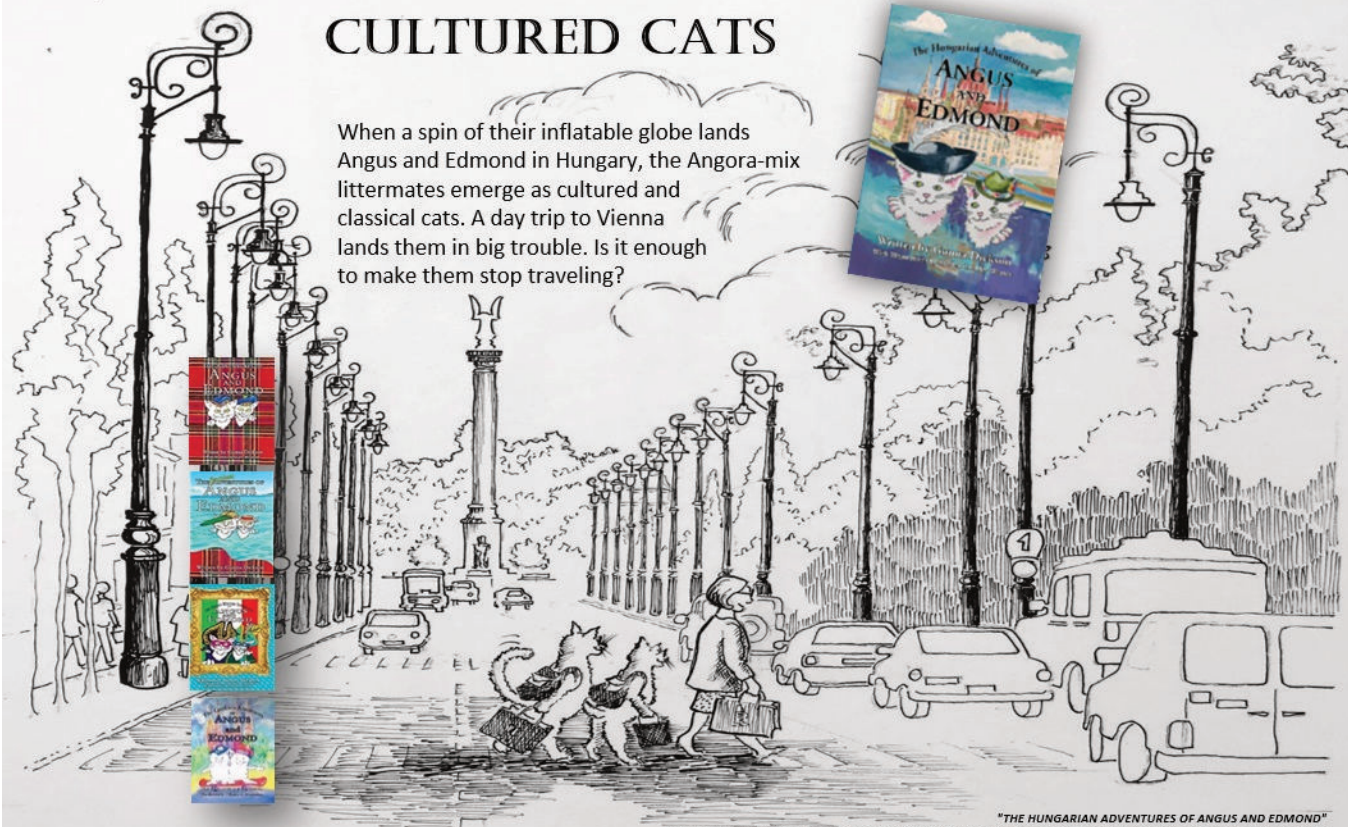
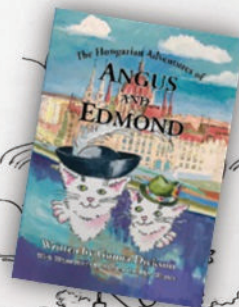
"Fantastic customer service!"

"Exceeded our expectations!"



CULTURED CATS

When a spin of their inflatable globe lands Angus and Edmond in Hungary, the Angora-mix littermates emerge as cultured and classical cats. A day trip to Vienna lands them in big trouble. Is it enough to make them stop traveling?



"THE HUNGARIAN ADVENTURES OF ANGUS AND EDMOND"
Written by Gunna Dickson and illustrated by Suellen Crowley Weaver is available on Amazon.com and other online sites

www.oideasgael.ie

Ireland's Language & Culture

Oideas Gael 2020

Adult Irish Language Courses
All learning levels
- weekend & week-long

Cultural Activity Holidays

- Hill Walking in the Donegal Highlands
- Archaeology • Environment & Culture
- Digital Photography • Painting & Sketching
- Flute & Whistle • Beat the Bodhrán
- Irish Harp • Tapestry Weaving



Info & Brochure 2020 from

Oideas Gael
Gleann Cholm Cille, Co. Dhún na nGall
Fón: +353 (0)74 97 30 248
oifig@oideasgael.ie



Fáilte Ireland

DACEY'S CORNISH TOURS

**A STRESS-FREE ADVENTURE - ESCORTED
TOURS OF CORNWALL, GREAT BRITAIN!**



Dacey's Cornish Tours are different; the agenda is yours, not ours. A unique travel experience that involves group transportation but never feels like a package tour. We're hands-on with the logistics of travel but hands-off when you need us to be, allowing each traveler an authentic connection with the destination.

THE ADVENTURE IS YOURS. WE'RE JUST HERE TO MAKE SURE NOTHING GETS IN THE WAY!

DACEYSCORNISHTOURS.COM • 651-484-4689

LIAM O'SHIEL

EIRELAN

SAGA OF THE LATTER DAY CELTS
BOOK ONE

“O'Shiel
delivers a rich,
engaging epic.”

– *Kirkus Reviews*

Available on Amazon
www.eirelan.com



**ALMONTE
CELT FEST**

JULY 3-5 2020
AT GEMMILL PARK

For 2020 lineup updates, find us on



@AlmonteCeltfest

Contact us for more information
www.almonteceltfest.com
almonteceltfest@hotmail.com
 613-566-7067





MAY 15-17, 2020

FEATURING FRED MORRISON!

PIPE BAND AND HIGHLAND DANCE CHAMPIONSHIPS

SCOTTISH OPEN/AMATEUR ATHLETICS

CRAFT BEER TENTS • CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES

CELTIC MUSIC & DANCE, ON-SITE FOOD, SHOPPING

& FARMERS' MARKET SATURDAY

Entry forms and information at
www.saskhighland.ca

20th ANNUAL

**PENN-MAR
IRISH
Festival**

June 20, 2020
York County, PA, USA

EILEEN IVERS
 SCREAMING ORPHANS • BARLEYJUICE
 MICKEY SPAIN • DAVE CURLEY
 ACROSS THE POND • CAS CEOL • ARISE & GO

SUPPORTED BY

#PennMarIrish  **pennsylvania**
COUNCIL ON THE ARTS

PennMarIrishFestival.com

14th Annual

**MAINE CELTIC
CELEBRATION**



JULY 17 - 19, 2020
BELFAST WATERFRONT, MAINE, USA

CELTIC MUSIC • CHEESE ROLL
 HIGHLAND HEAVY GAMES
 SHEEPHERDING • DOG SHOW
 BEER TENT • FIREWORKS • WORKSHOPS
 ARTISAN VILLAGE • AND MUCH MORE!

MAINECELTICCELEBRATION.COM

DON'T MISS ATLANTIC CANADA'S BIGGEST CELEBRATION OF MUSIC!

THE 2020 EAST COAST MUSIC AWARDS SHOW

April 30 at 7:30PM
Mile One Centre, St. John's, NL
Hosted by Mary Walsh

TICKETS & FESTIVAL PASSES ON SALE NOW AT ECMA.COM

EAST COAST
MUSIC
AWARDS

ST. JOHN'S / NL
APRIL 29 - MAY 3, 2020

TD

FACTOR

Canada

Newfoundland
Labrador

ST. JOHN'S



Garrett County
celtic festival
SATURDAY, JUNE 6, 2020 • FRIENDSVILLE, MD

Discounted tickets on sale now
GCCELTICFESTIVAL.COM
15 minutes from Deep Creek Lake resort area,
less than 3 hours from Baltimore, Washington, and Pittsburgh

MSAC
Garrett Arts

Celtic Celebration

Northern Nevada

May 16, 2020
Reno, Nevada
renoceltic.org

Reno Tahoe
Visit RenoTahoe.com

Southeast Michigan's largest Irish-themed festival:
motor city irish festival
June 12 - 14, 2020
Greenmead Historical Park, Livonia, Michigan
facebook.com/motorcityirishfest/ motorcityirishfest.com

THE MAHONES



UNPLUGGED

This St Patrick's Day is exactly 30 years to the day since the launch of the Mahones – still the hardest working band in the Celtic Punk scene. With guests Sarah Harmer, Damhnait Doyle and Simon Townsend of The Who, "Unplugged" is a collection of their best-loved tracks, in a raw and intimate performance. **AVAILABLE MARCH 13**

linus Canada

BAGPIPES ARE OUR
PASSION - CUSTOMER
SERVICE IS OUR FOCUS.

BAGPIPES BY DUNCAN MACRAE,
MCCALLUM, R.G. HARDIE,
PETER HENDERSON, STRATHMORE
& DUNBAR.



NORTH AMERICA'S ORIGINAL SOURCE
FOR FRED MORRISON REELPIPES
AND SCOTTISH SMALLPIPES.

reelpipes.com



306-533-6678 REELPIPES@GMAIL.COM @REELPIPES



THE WOLFE TONES Phenomenon

book by Alex Fell [www.amazon \[.com & .co.uk \]](http://www.amazon.com&.co.uk)

- a readable history of Ireland ballads & censorship

"a must read" Irish Voice

www.choicepublishing.ie

COME OUT YOU BLACK AND TANS

Download success simultaneously Ireland UK and Australia 2020

KINDLE DOWNLOAD NOW AVAILABLE



Carbony™ Celtic Winds are innovative
musical instruments that offer the
advantages of modern carbon fiber
technology with time tested designs.
www.Carbony.com

carbony™
CELTIC WINDS



Tie the *Celtic* Knot

Wedding & Engagement Rings - Made in Ireland - Free Worldwide Shipping



Celtic Wedding Rings

www.celtic-weddingrings.com

SCOTLANDSHOP

TAILORED TARTAN CLOTHING & INTERIORS



10%
DISCOUNT
USE OFFER CODE:
CELTIC10

NEW YORK CITY TARTAN WEEK

TARTAN POP-UP STORE & MEASURING SERVICE

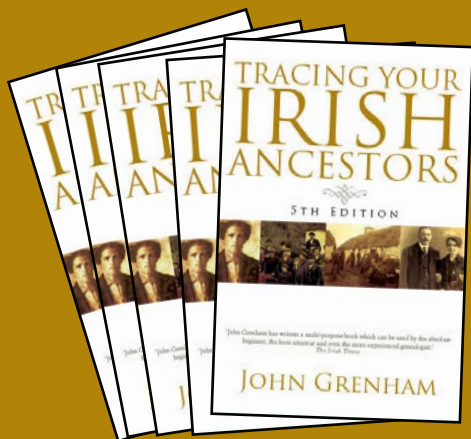
APRIL 2ND - 6TH | THE ALGONQUIN HOTEL 59 W 44TH ST

BOOK YOUR APPOINTMENT ONLINE NOW

SHOP ONLINE OR VISIT OUR EDINBURGH STORE

+44 (0)1890860770 www.ScotlandShop.com info@ScotlandShop.com

"The Bible" of Irish Genealogy
—Now Available in an all-new
5th Edition!



Genealogical research in Ireland has always depended on records that are localized and difficult to access. The Internet has changed that, as more records have come online. The new 5th edition of *Tracing Your Irish Ancestors*, by John Grenham, is the indispensable guide to those records, where they are, and what they mean. Order your copy today!

Genealogical.com

3600 Clipper Mill Rd., Ste. 229, Baltimore, MD 21211

GLASNEVIN

CEMETERY MUSEUM & GUIDED TOURS



Ireland's history carved in stone

TOURS • RE-ENACTMENTS • GENEALOGY



T: +353 (0)1 882 6550 | E: booking@glasnevintrust.ie

www.glasnevinmuseum.ie



FOUNDED IN 1828

GLASNEVIN TRUST

GLASNEVIN TRUST IS OPERATED BY THE DUBLIN CEMETERIES COMMITTEE.
REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER 20009411, CHARITY NUMBER CHY 5849



The 156th Prince Edward Island Highland Games & Scottish Festival

Will be held at Lord Selkirk Park in Eldon, PEI, on Saturday August 1, 2020. ScotDance P. E. I. will conduct the Highland Dance Competition. There will be Heavy Athletics, pipe and drum bands, Kilted Golf Tournament and various vendors on site.

Visit our website at: www.caledonianclubofpei.ca

Genealogical Research



Mark Windover

43 years' experience



mark@markwindover.com

413-884-1007



Write Your Novel or Memoir on Inis Mór Island, Galway, Ireland

with

Irene Graham

Story Editor & Author

Residential Writing Retreats

www.TheCreativeWritersWorkshop.com

NAGLE FORGE & FOUNDRY

*Fully, Guaranteed, Fully
Functional Plaid
Brooches*



KPTM ROPE
\$95.- USD

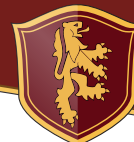
*Classic Craftsmanship, Unique Styles,
Traditional Designs, Exceptional Detail*

Phone: 415-897-1732

2 Farvue Rd. ~ Novato, California 94947

www.nagleforge.com

Full Kilt Outfits
Clan-Crested Gifts
All Made in Scotland



Engraved Quaichs



Sgian Dubhs



Brooches

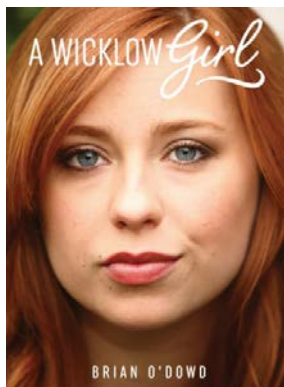


Visit our online store
stkildastore.com

enter offer code **CELTIC01**
for an introductory 5% discount



T: +44(0) 141 332 0407 / F: (0) 141 333 9143 / E: sales@stkildastore.com



A WICKLOW *Girl*

BRIAN O'DOWD

“Stunning
new voice
in Irish
Literature”

www.awicklowgirl.com



I
Am
A
Hare!

Irene Graham

Children's Story
with Images
of Newborn
Irish Hares

www.TheCreativeWritersWorkshop.com



Old Friends Genealogy
Kate and Mike Lancor
Genealogy Researchers

Let us chase your Celtic ancestors!
It's personal ~ Their story & legacy!

Website: oldfriendsgenealogy.com
Facebook: Old Friends Genealogy
Email: oldfriendsgenealogy@gmail.com
Phone: 603-204-8409 (U.S.)



Just Kilt Me
Celtic Apparel Store

Killer Kilts, Trousers & Jackets
justkiltme.com
Keeping Heritage with Style.



UK EXPO[®]
INTERNATIONAL

Coupon
UKEP8745

Highland & Historical Uniform

Fast DELIVERY

uk.expo@gmail.com
www.ukexpointl.com

Bank of America 2 VISA MasterCard PayPal

High Quality Highland Accessories and Utility Kilts



www.musikrazi.com
musikrazi@gmail.com

Musik de Razi
Manufacturers & Exporters Since 2004

KILT BELTS & KILT ACCESSORIES



Artfully Designed
Beautifully Handcrafted

Order
YOUR FESTIVAL GEAR
Today!

www.holyheckusa.com



Own the Shiny One!

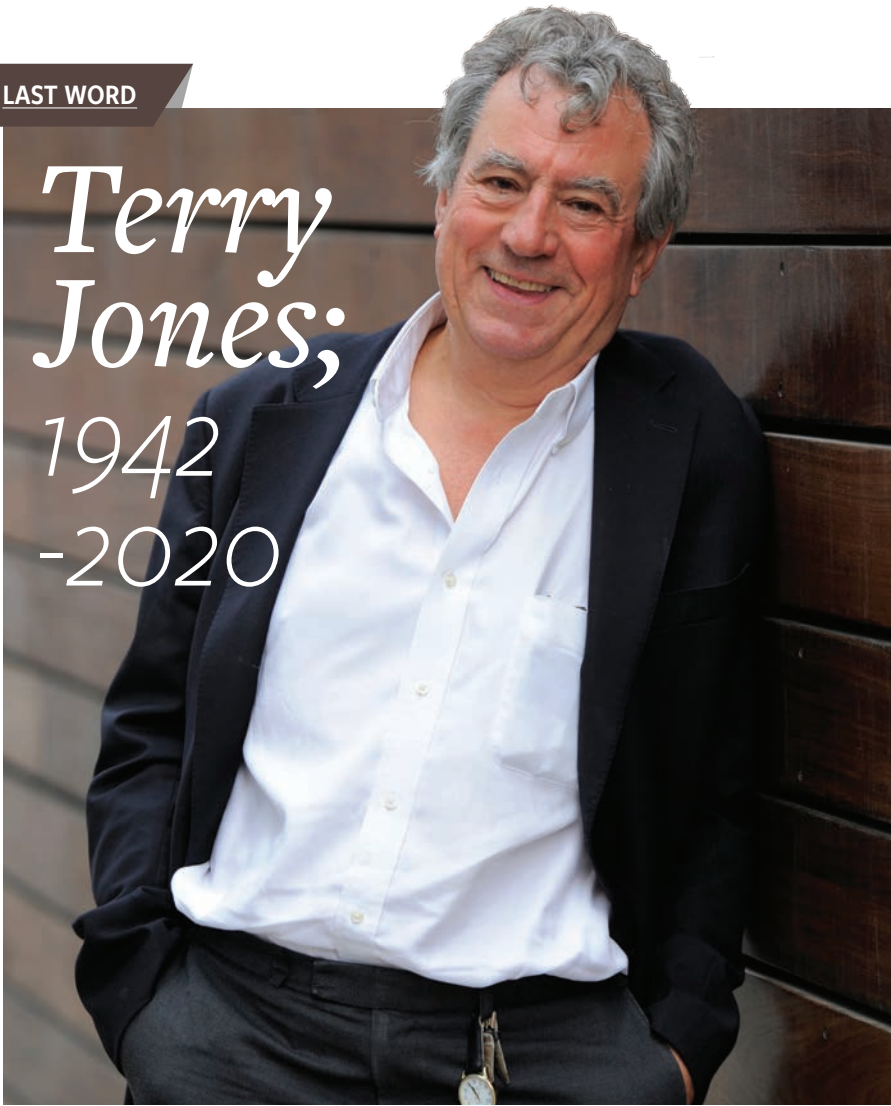
Solid Sterling/14K
Heirloom Quality
Pins, Pendants, Bolos

www.CrestBadges.com
Custom Orders Welcomed

Terry Jones;

1942

-2020



Terry Jones, comedic actor of Monty Python fame, left many admirers heartbroken when he passed away recently at age 77.

A statement from Jones' family read, "We have all lost a kind, funny, warm, creative and truly loving man whose uncompromising individuality, relentless intellect and extraordinary humour has given pleasure to countless millions across six decades."

Jones was born in Colwyn Bay, Wales, in 1942. Although his family left the country for England when he was just five years old, Jones always proudly identified as Welsh.

In his young adult life, he studied English at St. Edmund Hall, Oxford, falling in love with history, particularly the medieval period. Jones met future castmate Michael Palin while at St. Edmund Hall and the pair performed comedy together in the Oxford Revue - a true foreshadowing of what was to follow.

Before Monty Python took the world by storm, Jones joined Palin, Graeme Garden, Bill Oddie, Jonathan Lynn and Tony Buffery in the sketch comedy series *Twice a Fortnight* (1967). He also appeared in *The Com-*

plete and Utter History of Britain (1969) and *Do Not Adjust Your Set* (1967-69). Along with acting, Jones had writing chops, too: he wrote for the satirical television show *The Frost Report*, among others.

Monty Python's *Flying Circus* took off in 1969. The sketch comedy series starring Jones, Palin, Graham Chapman, John Cleese, Eric Idle and Terry Gilliam won over audiences in the United Kingdom but didn't pick up in the United States until a few years later. In 1971, the first film from the Monty Python troupe was released: *And Now for Something Completely Different*. Jones co-directed the next movie, *Monty Python and the Holy Grail*, with Gilliam. He went on to direct the two subsequent Monty Python films - *Life of Brian* and *The Meaning of Life*. Monty Python became a phenomenon. The troupe toured the world for live shows and, in 2004, a musical comedy called *Spamalot* was adapted from *The Holy Grail*. Jones played multiple Monty Python roles and was largely known for his portrayal of female characters.

However, Monty Python wasn't his

only claim to fame. He directed other film projects, wrote for comedy TV and theatre, and penned serious work on medieval and ancient history. He also wrote a number of books for children, such as *The Saga of Erik the Viking*, *The Knight and the Squire* and *Nicobobinus*. In 2016, he directed Robert Ross' *Jeepers Creepers* - a play about fellow comic Marty Feldman.

Jones' last public appearance was in 2016, when he received an outstanding contribution to television and film award from Bafta Cymru in Wales. The awards ceremony took place only a few weeks after he had announced that he had been diagnosed with degenerative aphasia: a severe strain of dementia. As the illness affected his speech, his son Bill stood by his side onstage and spoke on his behalf.

"The struggles at the moment we're having - it's a bit hard, but we're so proud of him," Bill said, through tears.

Jones is survived by Bill, his two other children Sally and Siri, and his wife Anna Söderström. He also had three grandchildren.

In addition to his career accomplishments, Jones is remembered as a kind soul. After his diagnosis, he became an advocate for dementia awareness and fundraising for research. According to the *Telegraph*, his brain was donated to further dementia research at the University College London's Institute of Neurology.

Shortly after his death, actress Minnie Driver shared a heartwarming story on Twitter. She ran into Jones back in 1992 after getting lost on her way to an audition.

"Rather desperately, I stopped a man for directions. He started to explain but then said it would be easier to show me. He walked me there, told some stories, then came in to charm the casting director because I was late."

Python castmate Eric Idle also took to Twitter, saying of Jones, "I loved him the moment I saw him on stage at the Edinburgh Festival in 1963. So many laughs, moments of total hilarity onstage and off we have all shared with him. It's too sad if you knew him, but if you didn't you will always smile at the many wonderfully funny moments that he gave us."

While there may be too many of those funny moments to list, there's no doubt people all over the world will curl up in front of their television screens and continue to watch them for many years to come.



Albannach



Enter the Haggis

27TH ANNUAL GLASGOW LANDS SCOTTISH FESTIVAL

LOOK PARK, NORTHAMPTON, MASSACHUSETTS

JULY 18, 2020 - 9 A.M. - 5 P.M. • ENTERTAINMENT UNTIL 9:30 P.M.

Highland Dance Competition, Heavy Athletics, Pipe & Drum Competition, Massed Bands,
Clan Tents, Historic Highlanders, Scottish Food and vendors, beer and mead, harpers,
weavers, water spray park.

ENTERTAINMENT IN THE CELTIC PUB TENT FEATURING
ALBANNACH, ENTER THE HAGGIS, THE AMERICAN ROGUES
AND CHARLIE ZAHM.

RAIN OR SHINE



The American Rogues



We are a 501(c)3 non-profit organization.

For information:
visit our Facebook page or
www.glasgowlands.org

Email:
glasgowlands@hotmail.com

Co-Sponsored By:





SHEENCO
TRAVEL

Luxury Vacations in
Ireland,
Scotland,
England &
Wales
Customized for you



TOLL FREE

888-674-3244
www.sheencotravel.com