



Aoibhneas na Bealtaine

The Sweets of May

THE CÉILÍ BAND ERA, MUSIC & DANCE OF SOUTH ARMAGH

A PROJECT UNDERTAKEN BY


CeolCamíocha



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Ceol Camlocha Chairman's Message

South Armagh doesn't have a distinctive regional "voice" or style of traditional Irish music like those you find in Sliabh Luachra, East Clare or South West Donegal. But it doesn't lack the passion and commitment that makes for a rich cultural vein. Nestled around the epicenter of the ancient district of Oriel, the small landmass, defined by the Ring of Gullion and dominated by Slieve Gullion inspired a truly culturally creative tradition that continues to flourish to this day. Towering figures from Cu Chullainn to Peadar O'Doimin, Art Mac Cobhthaigh and others help define South Armagh's cultural identity...but there's more!

Ceol Camloch's mission is to support and help articulate the strong sense of pride in Irish traditional music locally, and over the years we have organized festivals, workshops, concerts and published books and cd's of music by local artists to support and encourage its development in South Armagh.

The group shares the sense of pride present day musicians and dancers have in their heritage, and in particular the very distinctive local dance tradition, which will be revealed in this book and accompanying DVD. Music and dance go hand in hand, but all too often they are treated and perceived to be separate genres. We felt that in South Armagh the fusion of both streams deserved to be celebrated together; hence this project.

Thanks to the support of the Heritage Lottery Fund, we have been able to document the story of the dance and music in an ambitious, colourful and integrated way.

This book contains two CD's - one of which is a remastered collection of recordings by some of the great musicians, céilí bands and performers of the era, and the second is a resounding exclamation of the vitality of the present generation's stewardship of the tradition. Over 40 musicians demonstrate just a small sample of the current healthy state of the music in the area today.

A separate, complementary part of the project is a DVD of 8 local Dance Schools performing dances that are indigenous to the area. Many readers will be surprised to learn that such world wide renown dances such as The Sweets of May and The Trip to the Cottage were nurtured here. The DVD also contains an audio recording of the soundtrack of the DVD, for those who want to enjoy the music while driving.

The financial support of the HLF means that we can distribute copies of these free of charge to local schools and voluntary organizations who share our vision and values.

South Armagh is a designated Area of Outstanding Beauty; the music, song and dance draws the vitality of the mountains, streams and valleys that bespeckle this beautiful region. The pulse of the place is given expression every day of the year through local sessions, céilí's, feiseanna and festivals. The outside world has been fed a false impression of this place in recent times. This book, DVD and CD's proudly proclaim the true South Armagh for all who have eyes to see, ears to hear and feet to dance. Take to the floor, but mind the dresser!

Tommy Fegan
Chairman, Ceol Camlocha



MULLAGHBANE FOLK MUSEUM



PART 1

CD 1 - CÉILÍ BANDS
singers & solo musicians

Introduction to CD 1

The most difficult part of making this album has been the selecting of the material.

There have been many reasons for this. Some recordings we would like to have included were either unavailable or of such poor quality that they could not be used. Others were great to listen to until, for example, there was a score on the 78 or the vinyl.

This is not surprising since many of the 78s, such as the Malachy Sweeney band, were made over half a century ago. Things have changed a lot since those days and one of the most welcome innovations was the emergence of the reel-to-reel tape recorder.

It was now possible to record music directly from radio. This was an enormous advantage to the traditional musician and music follower. Radio broadcasts, of Irish music, that were taped could be listened to as often as one wished, and many tunes were learned from them and passed on to others.

To some of these enthusiasts we are grateful, as their recordings were an immense help in putting together these tracks for your enjoyment.

One important musician in Co. Armagh is conspicuous by her absence on this album is Mae Trainor (nee Burns) from Bessbrook, sister of the well-known Burns brothers, Jimmy and Gerry.

Jimmy has been known for his fiddle playing and teaching, and Gerry for his singing.

Mae was both singer and fiddle player. She played and sang in Malachy Sweeney's band, the Fred Hanna Band, Jackie Hearst's and the International bands. She was a popular entertainer over a wide area of this region, and unfortunately, search as we did, we were unable to find suitable material of her performances.

Nicholas Carolan has been most helpful in arranging for some reel-to-reel tapes to be re-invented in CD form. In addition, the Irish Traditional Music Archives have cleaned and re-mastered the material that could be used.

Tom Quinn, from Dundalk, has also been constructive in finding suitable material from the Céilí Band era and remastering it.

This CD is a window into the past days, and nights of music and dancing in South Armagh and surrounding districts. In those days Co Armagh probably had more Céilí bands than any other county in Ireland. It certainly had some of the best.

Our social life having changed so much since those days, we thought it important to document, record and present the results of our endeavors, not only to people who will listen with a sense of nostalgia, but especially to our present generation of young musicians and dancers who will, hopefully pass it on to future generations, giving them a sense of belonging, and pride of ownership such a rich heritage as ours.

We hope you will all enjoy listening to the Céilí bands and the singers with them, with the added variety of solo and duet players. We owe them all a debt of gratitude for their part in keeping the Tradition safe. The other CD in this project is the living proof of that.

The book contains more information about all the music and dance of South Armagh, past and present, and the DVD of the dances makes it all the more realistic for today's viewers.

We hope you will be happy to look back into the past and enjoy the forgotten and half-forgotten tunes that were commonplace here many years ago.

Josephine Keegan

Track list CD 1

- 1. Johnny Pickering Céilí Band**
Reels, The Yellow Heifer, Jackie Coleman's and The High Reel
- 2. McCuskers Céilí Band**
Jigs, The Bow-legged Tailor, The Rambling Pitchfork and The Paymaster
- 3. Malachy Sweeney's Céilí Band**
Reels, The Bag of Spuds, The Longford Collector and The Ships are Sailing
- 4. Paddy Murphy and Louis McDonald**
Jig, Out on the Ocean
- 5. John Murphy**
Solo fiddle, The Doon Reel
- 6. John Murphy Céilí Band**
Hornpipe Flaherty's
- 7. Gerry Burns, with the Jackie Hearst Céilí Band**
Song, The Bonnie Boy
- 8. Vincent Lowe Céilí Band**
Reels, Miss Monaghan, The Woman of the House and The Mooncoin
- 9. McCuskers Céilí Band**
Reels, McKenna's The Mason's Apron and The Donegal Reel
- 10. Johnny Pickering, Fiddle solo.**
Jigs, Rum Punch and The Rose in the Heather
- 11. Johnny Pickering Céilí Band**
Jigs, The Lark in the Morning and 2 untitled jigs.
- 12. Anna Boyle with the Inisfail Céilí Band**
Song, My Lovely Irish Rose
- 13. Inisfail Ceilí Band with Anna Boyle on banjo mandolin**
Reels, The Bird in the Tree,
- 14. Jackie Hearst Céilí Band**
Set Dance, The King of the Fairies
- 15. Joe Keegan, solo flute,**
Reels, The Earl's Chair and Sporting Paddy
- 16. McCuskers Ceilí Band**
Marches, Banners Green, The Moon behind the Hill and The Foggy Dew
- 17. Peter Murphy**
Reels, The Wheels of the World, The Sally Gardens and Down the Broom
- 18 Gerry Burns with Jackie Hearst Céilí Band**
Song, The Bridge below the Town
- 19. Siamsa Céilí Band**
Reels, The Girl that Broke my Heart, The Providence and The Bloom of Youth
- 20. John Joe Gardiner, fiddle solo,**
Hornpipes, The Cuckoo's Nest and Parker's Fancy
- 21. Johnny Pickering Céilí Band**
Reels, all three untitled
- 22. Fred Hanna Céilí Band**
Marches, Let Erin Remember, The Minstrel Boy,
Down by the Sally Gardens, Oft in the Stilly Night and The Harp that Once.
- 23. Peter Murphy**
Air, Uirchill a' Chreagain

Sleeve Notes for CD1

1. Johnny Pickering Céilí Band

Reels, The Yellow Heifer, Jackie Coleman's and The High Reel

Johnny Pickering, from Bunker Hill, Markethill was a well-known fiddle player in Co. Armagh and became more widely known through his traveling with Malachy Sweeney as a member of his ceil band. He was also an accordion player and that was the instrument that he used mostly in the band.

These reels illustrate Johnny's competence as an accordion player, and demonstrate the reason that the band that he formed, with his wife, Margaret, (nee Dillon), became such a success, and gained popularity, not only in Co. Armagh but throughout the country.

It is still talked about as one of the very best céilí bands, not only for its exciting sound but for the material it played. It is obvious that he was a lover of good tunes. He picked his musicians well. One of the best known members was Brendan McGlinchey, on fiddle.

2. McCuskers' Céilí Band

Jigs, The Bow-legged Tailor, The Rambling Pitchfork and The Paymaster

If you ask anyone in Ireland to tell you about céilí bands, McCusker's will probably be one of the first they will mention. This family band was formed back in the 1930s to play for local house and parish dances and very soon gained popularity and fame

When other bands saw musicians come and go, McCuskers' stayed constant, the reason being that they were unique in the fact that the band was made up of nine brothers.

The line-up consisted of three fiddles, piccolo, banjo/mandolin, button accordion, piano accordion, piano and drums. One of the brothers, Benedict has taken delight in this project and given us permission for the use of any of their material.

3. Malachy Sweeney's Céilí Band

Reels, The Bag of Spuds, The Longford Collector and The Ships are Sailing

Malachy Sweeney was known in his heyday as the 'King of Céilí'. He formed his first band in the thirties and one year after their formation the band won first prize at the Northern Ireland Musical Festival. His was one of the most successful bands in the country and traveled extensively.

The only commercial recordings of the Malachy Sweeney band were 78s, made in the fifties. Because he was so long in the business the face of his band was constantly changing. Many good musicians made their name playing in his band before going on to form their own bands or continue playing in a solo capacity.

4. Paddy Murphy, fiddle, and Louis McDowell, accordion

Jig, Out on the Ocean

Paddy Murphy was a musician from Cregganduff, and father of John, Pat, and Peter who all played fiddles, (and other instruments), and Eileen and Eithne who sang Traditional ballads.

This tune was recorded at one of the many house sessions in Paddy Murphy's home. On this occasion Louis Quinn was at home on holiday and taped some of the music that night.

Paddy played fiddle and melodeon and passed on the music to his family. Both he and his wife were welcoming hosts to many musicians.

Louis McDonald is the youngest of three brothers who all played two row boxes. He, with his brothers, Pete and Paddy were not really interested in joining céilí bands then, but did however play with the Dunreavy Band in Mullaghbawn for social nights and parish dances.

Louis went on to join Comhaltas Ceolteoirí Éireann and succeeded in many of their musical competitions. Although not able to play much now, for health reasons, he is a keen follower of the music and will, on occasions, play a tune or two.

5. John Murphy, solo fiddle

Reel, The Doon

John Murphy was the eldest of three brothers who played fiddles. His brother, Pat, who lives in Mullaghbawn now, is featured on CD 2 and Peter can be heard in his solo tracks on this CD. Sadly John and Peter are no longer with us but it must be said that South Armagh owes a lot to John Murphy. He was well known as a band leader and he taught music to children over a wide area of the county.

6. John Murphy Céilí Band

Hornpipe, Flaherty's

John, a fiddle player, took up playing accordion, mostly for the sake of his band. Formed in the mid fifties, it began playing for local céilíthe, but was soon to travel the country and became a popular broadcasting band.

We did find some tunes from the early days on a 78 that was made privately in Belfast but unfortunately the recording was not useable for this album.

Like many other bands that stood the test of time, the personnel changed quite a bit after some years. Among the players on this track, from his band in the 60s, is Fintan Callan on piano accordion. Fintan was well known in the area, not just for his playing but for the promotion of traditional music in his pub, aptly named 'The Céilí House.'

This track is from one of the RTE 'Céilí House' broadcasts in the 1960s.

7. Gerry Burns

Song, *The Bonnie Boy*

Gerry was well respected as one of the best singers of his time. His fine tenor voice and impeccable diction put him in a class of his own. He played drums also and played with the local Craobh Ruadh Céilí Band from Bessbrook together with his sister Mae (Trainor) and brother, Jimmy.

Later Gerry became a member of the Jackie Hearst Band which accompanies him on this Track. He did make some commercial records for Walton's of Dublin and was a regular contributor to their weekly sponsored radio programmes. We have not found any of these recordings as yet.

8. Vincent Lowe Céilí Band

Reels, *Miss Monaghan*

Vincent Lowe was from Camlough. (Lowe's Lane there was named after him.)

He was the first to form a trio to play for dancers. He played piano and Jackie Hearst played accordion. After they parted company he fronted the trio on piano accordion and later formed the Vincent Lowe Céilí Band. The band recorded for Copley with Sean O'Driscoll on piano. That was the only commercial record they made.

Their engagements took them all over Ireland and to the Irish clubs in England.

10. McCuskers' Céilí Band

Reels, *McKenna's, The Mason's Apron and The Donegal Reel*

They had a great many old tunes from South Armagh and always added to their repertoire. Their unique treatment of the tunes was a personal trait which is evident, especially, in this set of reels. They often played for BBC and RTE and may have recorded for them.

11. Johnny Pickering, solo fiddle

Jigs, *Rum Punch and the Rose in the Heather*

Johnny, from Bunker Hill, Markethill, was a fiddle player of great renown and a member of Malachy Sweeney's band for some time before starting out on his own.

Later, the fiddle was side-lined in favour of the accordion.

12. Johnny Pickering's Band

Jigs, *The Lark in the Morning* and two untitled jigs

13. Anna Boyle with the Inisfail Céilí Band

Song, *My Lovely Irish Rose*.

Anna was a very popular singer and much in demand by the céilí bands of the time.

She sang with Malachy Sweeney's band, John Murphy's and the Mowhan céilí band and on this Track the Inisfail backs her. Although Anna Boyle sang with other bands during her career, she is probably more closely associated with the band that she formed in her home town land of Mowhan, after which she named the band. This band, although not as well-known as some others, made many visits to RTE in Dublin to take part in the Saturday night programme, 'Céilí House.'

14. Anna Boyle with the Inisfail Céilí Band

Reels, *The Bird in the Tree, Martin Mulhaire's No.9 and Killabeg House*

Anna Boyle was not only a singer but played banjo mandolin with the best. The quality of the recordings of the Mowhan Céilí band did not do them justice, and therefore not useable, so instead you can hear Anna play the banjo mandolin on this track of Sean O'Neill's band, the Inisfail from the Moy, of which she was also a band member.

Anna now resides in Bessbrook.

15. Jackie Hearst

Set Dance, *The King of the Fairies*

This is one of the most popular Set dances and can be found in collections of traditional music, such as O'Neill's 'Dance Music of Ireland.'

16. Joe Keegan

Reels, *The Earl's Chair and Sporting Paddy*

This set of tunes was taken from a homemade reel-to-reel tape, at a time that Joe Keegan was in his upper eighties.

Born in 1883 in Derryvilla, near Portarlington, Co.Offaly, Joe Keegan lived since the thirties in South Armagh, after he retired from work as a Post Office engineer in Scotland. He learned his early music from his mother and local musicians around his locality, carried it with him through life and played his flute until his death, at the age of ninety. He never sought the limelight although he did one or two solo broadcasts for RTE in the fifties. He was a 'true blue' as far as Irish music was concerned and he was always glad to help another musician when he could.

He played with the early John Murphy band and the Dunreavy band a time or two, and once for the Siamsa Céilí Band.

17. McCuskers' Céilí Band

Marches, Banners Green, The Moon behind the Hill and The Foggy Dew

As well as playing reels and jigs, céilí bands were required to play marches for 'The Waves of Tory' popular dance

18. Peter Murphy

Reels, The Wheels of the World, The Sally Gardens and Down the Broom

Peter, the youngest member of the Murphy family, Cregganduff, became well-known for his great technique on fiddle and played guitar and bass guitar. He was also interested in playing country and western music, but his first and greatest talent, lay in the playing, with variations, of his own Traditional music

This track, like those of his Dad and brother John, was taken from a home recording, which was made in his house by Louis Quinn on one of his visits home from USA.

19. Gerry Burns

Song, Sitting on the Bridge below the Town

Gerry again has the backing of his friend, Jackie Hearst. Together they were a good combination, and when they retired from Traveling, often met in Fintan Callan's pub in Hackballscross, Co. Louth, for the sessions with the local musicians, and to listen to and to meet great musicians, many of whom had become personal friends over the years.

20. The Siamsa Céilí Band

Reels, The Girl that Broke My Heart, The Providence and The Bloom of Youth

The Siamsa, from Dundalk, played at many of the céilíthe in Armagh and, indeed all over the country for they were all-Ireland winners at the Comhaltas Fleadh on many occasions. The band was formed by John Joe Gardiner, who was a household name, for his influence on many musicians around. Coming from a musical Co. Sligo family, and with his two daughters playing in the band, the style of his native county was evident in their music. Pauline White (nee Gardiner) lives in Newry and is still helping young musicians with great success. Two of her former pupils play a track on the other CD.

21. John Joe Gardiner

Hornpipes, The Cuckoo's Nest and Parker's Fancy

It is with his second instrument, the fiddle, that the Co.Sligo style is most noticeable.

Many people knew John Joe as a flute player because that was usually his instrument in the céilí band that he formed and brought to fame on radio broadcasts.

On piano is Brendan Gaughran, a Siamsa Céilí band member for many years.

22. Johnny Pickering Céilí Band

Reels, All three are untitled (gan ainm)

23. Fred Hanna Céilí Band

Marches, Let Erin Remember, The Minstrel Boy, Down by the Sally Gardens and Oft in the Stilly Night

The line-up of Fred Hanna's six-piece band has earned for him a very pleasant and wholesome quality of sound.

Fred Hanna, from Poyntzpass, Co. Armagh plays accordion himself and he is supported by fiddle, flute, piano bass and occasionally, saxophone. (mainly for waltzes). His band is widely travelled, particularly throughout Ireland and Scotland.

He recorded first for the Beltona Recording Company in the mid-fifties and has many more albums to his credit.

24. Peter Murphy

Slow Air, Uirchill a' Chreagan (Creggan graveyard)

Creggan graveyard is the burial place of the O'Neill's, chieftains of the Fews, and of the McMahan family.

It is the resting place for many poets, singers, harpers and other traditional instrumentalists.

Art MacCumhaith, (McCooley), the renowned poet and author of this song, is buried here, as was his wish.

*'Guarantee and promise me before I take the road at dawn,
Should I die in Egypt, by the Shannon or on Manaan's Isle,
That with the Gaels of Creggan you will bury me In soil.'*

Here, too, is the resting place of Peter Murphy, whose treatment of the melody is sublime.

Peter co-produced an album with Tony Campbell in studios in Castleblaney.

This Track is taken from that album and features Eugene Smith on piano and synthesizer. The additional instruments are played by Peter, himself.





CD 2 - MUSIC TODAY

solo players, groups & singers

Introduction to CD 2

Many of the players on this album were members of the céilí bands of the past era.

Most can relate in some way to the Céilí band players. Others are connected to the musicians who played for the house dances, took part in them, and preserved and documented both dance and music.

There now has evolved a new set of players with a much greater diversity of instruments.

The accordion, concertina, banjo and flute flourish alongside the traditional fiddles of South Armagh. The harp, uilleann pipes, tin whistle and bodhran blend with piano and accordion and guitar are commonplace.

The music is enjoyed, and played, by people of all walks of life and of all ages, from primary school age to musicians now in their eighties. An example is the Jimmy Burns family group consisting of three generations of musicians playing together.

Perhaps the family and descendants of the late Henry Savage have the longest musical history in this area, and their contributions are important to this project. Henry's daughter, Mairita, composed some of the tunes. Grand-daughters, Martina and Angela, play a significant role, and many of his great-grandchildren are to the forefront of traditional music in the area and are contributors to this project, four of them playing fiddle with Fainne Cairde. Emma Murphy, who plays solo flute, and her twin brother, Niall, who plays solo fiddle are Henry's great-grandchildren.

Indeed all of the musicians have stories to tell, whether they are remembering who it was who influenced them, or taught them, or maybe some of the days and nights shared playing music and traveling with their fellow band members.

Their many memories are taken from those bands, soloists and singers who are featured on the other CD. All of our music has grown from their legacy to us, something which has made our lives all the richer.

As the music and dance are inextricably linked, it is necessary to point out that this CD is just part of much larger project featuring the music of the Céilí band era on a separate CD.

There is a DVD of the céilí dances, produced by Tom Quinn, together with a CD of its soundtrack, useful for dance groups and dancing schools.

Much more information can be found in the book associated with this production, which was researched and written by Sean O'Driscoll who, incidentally, played piano with the Ceol an Iubhair, John Murphy and Vincent Lowe bands.

Track list CD 2

1. **Caroline Fegan and Marian McGauley**
Reels, The Shoemaker's Daughter and The Maple Leaf
2. **Brendan McGlinchey**
Jig, Knocknagow
3. **Pat Murphy Group**
Barndances, Henry Savage's Favourites
4. **Dearbhla Bennett**
Air, Ta mo cleamhnas deanta
5. **Scór Group**
Jig, Seanamhac Tube Station
6. **Jimmy Burns family,**
Barndance, Lucy Farr's and Reel, I wish I never saw you
7. **Una Devlin and Rosie Ferguson**
Jigs, The Concertina and Untitled
8. **Tommy Fegan**
Air, Taimse i mo Codhladh
9. **Scór Group.**
Reels, Anderson's and The Trip to Cullenstown
10. **Dearbhla Bennett**
Planxty George Brabazon
11. **Josephine Keegan**
Hompipes, The Flowers of May and The Blue Haven
12. **Una Devlin and Rosie Ferguson**
Reels, Gan Ainm, Maud Millar and The Sailor on the Rock
13. **Aine McGeeney**
Air, Uir Cnoc Cein Mhic Cainte
14. **Ursula and Claire Byrne**
Jigs, Down the Back Lane and An Cailin Fionn
15. **Brendan McGlinchey**
Reels, McGlinchey's
16. **Fainne Cairde**
Barndance, Betty Black
17. **Josephine Keegan**
Slip Jigs, The Slopes of Slieve Gullion and Dunreavy Park
18. **Emma Murphy and Murphy/Savage Family**
Air, Aisling Geal
Jigs, Mullion Mountain, Drumhoney Sessions and The Crooked Road
19. **Fainne Cairde**
Hompipes, Kipeen Scanlon and The Philosopher
20. **Jimmy Burns Family**
Jigs, Goats on the Grass and The Kilmovey Jig
21. **Niall Murphy**
Reels, McGoldrick's, The Ronan Boys and Packie Deignan's

All singers and musicians (CD2)

Dearbhla Bennett Harp solo and song with harp
 Aine McGeeney Song, solo
 Tommy Fegan Uilleann pipes solo
 Brendan McGlinchey Fiddle solo
 Niall Murphy Fiddle solo
 Josephine Keegan Fiddle solo
 Emma Murphy Flute Solo

Jimmy Burns The Jimmy Burns Family
 Kieran Burns
 Paddy Burns
 Mark Burns
 Jame Burns
 Marykate Burns
 Eoin Burns
 Aoife Burns
 Eamon Burns

Martina Murphy The Murphy/Savage Family
 Emma Murphy
 Niall Murphy
 Conor Murphy
 Mairead Savage
 Angela Savage

Ursula Byrne Duet, fiddle and Uilleann pipes
 Claire Byrne

Úna Devlin Fiddle duet
 Rosie Ferguson

Caroline Fegan Accordion and banjo duet
 Marian McGauley

Pat Murphy
 Bernard O'Hanlon
 John Toal

Pat Murphy Group

Elaine O'Sullivan
 Feargal O'Brien
 Briega Quinn
 Moira Hughes
 Sean O'Chuinn

Mullaghbawn Scór Group

Josephine Keegan
 Betty Molloy
 Shauna Hughes
 Sinéad Savage
 Orla Savage
 Ursula Savage
 Nicola Byrne
 Martina Murphy
 Niall Murphy

Fainne Cairde (Circle of friends)

Piano accompaniments by
 Kathleen Gavin
 Angela Savage
 Mary Mullholland and
 Josephine Keegan

Sleeve Notes for CD2

1. Caroline Fegan and Marian McGauley

(Track 1) accordion and banjo

Marian, banjo player, from Luton, Bedfordshire and Caroline Judge, button accordion player from St Alban's, Hertfordshire, are both now living in Newry and have known each other since 1975.

Marian's mother, Ann Caulfield (nee O'Hare) from Newry, gave music lessons in her house in Luton and subsequently Caroline and Marian went on to give musical performances with the Luton Legrave and St. Alban's CCE groups over the years.

Marian played with the Legrave Céilí Band and Caroline played with St. Colmcille's Céilí Band who won the Senior All-Ireland titles in 1988 and 1991.

Both ladies have been part of the local music scene for the past ten years or so and are involved in teaching Traditional music on banjo and accordion.

Reel, The Shoemaker's Daughter is one of the most popular of Ed Reavy's compositions.

The Maple Leaf was learned from a recording by the piano-accordion player, Karen Tweed. It was previously recorded by Donncha O'Brien, tin whistle player of Dublin in 1975. This version of the tune is a variation on that. It is thought that the composer of this reel is an uilleann piper/whistle player called Darach de Brun.

2. Brendan McGlinchey

(Fiddle) (Tracks 2 and 15) and Mary Mulholland, piano

Born in Armagh City, and already making a name for himself in competitions, Brendan soon became noticed by the céilí bandleader, Malachy Sweeney and joined his band to travel throughout Ireland and beyond. He was also a valued member of the Johnny Pickering Band for some time before going to England. Meanwhile he became fiddle champion at every level to All-Ireland champion status. Brendan is a musician that County Armagh is very proud of.

Jig, Knocknagow is a popular four-part jig that is unusual in its use of the minor and major of the key of A. The first two parts are in A minor and the other two are mostly A major and, for this reason the tune has been mistaken, on occasions, for two separate tunes.

It has been recorded by many musicians and can be found in O'Neill's Collection of Irish Dance Music.

3. Pat Murphy Group

(Track 3) (Fiddle, whistle, bodhran and piano)

Pat is on fiddle, Bernard O'Hanlon, whistle, John Toal, bodhran and Josephine Keegan on piano

Pat, born and reared in Cregganduff, is a member of a very well known musical family.

His brother, John, formed a céilí band in the mid-fifties. Pat played fiddle with them as did his younger brother, Peter. John played both accordion and fiddle,

and was a well-known teacher of Traditional music in the area. Pat now also plays melodeon, as did his father.

Paddy, father of the family and John and Peter, can be heard playing individually on the other CD of this project.

Barndances, Henry Savage's Favourites 1& 2

These catchy tunes were favourites of the late Henry Savage, and also of the renowned fiddle player, Louis Quinn who emigrated to USA and brought many of the traditional tunes from this area with him. In turn, he passed them on to his musical family. It was from an album, that the Quinn family released, that Pat got these tunes.

4. Dearbhla Bennett

(Tracks 4 and 9)

Dearbhla, 25, lives in Mullaghbawn with her husband, Shane.

She is a teacher in the Gaelscoil Padhraig Naomha, (St. Patrick's Irish-speaking school,) Crossmaglen.

He father, Colman Burns, sang and played drums with the John Murphy Céilí Band.

Song with Harp, Ta mo cleamhnas deanta (My match is made.)

This is a love song by Peadar O'Doimin, and like many love songs in the Irish tradition, it has an unhappy ending.

5. Scór Group, Mullaghbawn

(Tracks 5 and 9)

Elaine O'Sullivan on box, Briege Quinn, fiddle, Moira Hughes, whistle, Sean O'Chuinn, banjo and Feargal O'Brien on bodhran

The Group was formed in 2005 after Brian McKinley, Chairman of Cu Chulainn GAA Club, asked Feargal to get some musicians together to represent the club in the Scór contest.

In 2006 they won the All-Ireland Championship in Scór, were runners-up in 2007.

This jig is one of their winning tunes in 2008.

Jig, Seanamhac Tube Station

6. Jimmy Burns and Family

(Tracks 6 and 20)

This is an all-Burns group, made up of three generations of the same family.

Jimmy Burns, aged 83, fiddle

His son, Paddy, 46 on flute, and Paddy's daughter, Mary Kate, on whistle, with

Jimmy's twin sons, Kieran and Mark, aged 45, and their children.

Kieran plays concertina and Mark, the uilleann pipes

Eoin aged 12 and on fiddle, is Kieran's son.

Aoife, Mark's daughter, aged 14, is playing the banjo and Eamon, the youngest, is on fiddle.

Barndance, Lucy Farrell's, is taken from the CCE book, 'Foinn Seisiun 2'

Reel, 'I wish I never saw you,' is a popular Co. Sligo reel and was a great favourite of the late John Joe Gardiner, a musician from that County who lived for many years in Dundalk. The tune can be found in the collection of Irish music, 'A Drop in the Ocean,' published in 2004.

7. Úna Devlin and Rosie Ferguson

(fiddles) (Tracks 7 and 12)

Úna Devlin (24) and Rosie Ferguson (17) are cousins from Newry. Úna is a barrister and Rosie is currently studying for her A-Level examinations. They have both played music from a young age and received their musical tuition from Pauline White (nee Gardiner).

Pauline is a daughter of the late John Joe Gardiner. A Sligo musician, who spent many years in Dundalk, he played flute and fiddle and also formed the renowned Siamsa Céilí Band. Another well known musical member of his family was Kathleen Harrington who also played fiddle with the Kincora Céilí band of broadcasting and recording fame.

Jigs, The Concertina and Unknown title

'The Concertina' was a convenience name given to this jig, as it appears in 'A Drop in the Ocean' collection

8. Tommy Fegan

(pipes), (Track 8)

Tommy has been involved in the promotion of Irish traditional music in this area for many years now, first as a founder member of Ceol Cinn Trá (Newry Music), and more recently in the formation of Ceol Camloch with the help of his musical friends, Paddy and Kieran Burns.

Ceol Camloch is a cultural organisation solely devoted to the preservation and furthering of the music of the area, and South Armagh in particular.

The uilleann pipes that Tommy Fegan plays are the last full set of pipes made by the late Dave Williams.

Slow Air, Taimse i mo Chodhladh

This beautiful slow air is from the song from the eighteenth century. It is one of a group of songs known as 'aislings,' the word 'aisling' meaning 'a dream'. Although the song possibly originates from Munster, it can also be traced to Ulster with the place names differing from the Munster names.

The song takes the form of a conversation, in a dream, between the poet and 'Ireland,' depicted as a beautiful woman, seeking freedom from foreign oppression.

Other versions of this song can also be traced to Scotland in the 1700s.

9. Scór Group, Mullaghbawn

Instrumental group

In 2006, when the group became the national champions, they were contributors to the album, 'What's the Scór?' which recorded eight acts from their Junior and Senior groups, covering music, song, and story-telling.

Colum Sands broadcasted the launch on his weekly BBC programme. Now, in 2008, the senior Scór Group members are the All-Ireland champions again!

Reels, Anderson's and A Trip to Cullenstown

10. Dearbhla Bennett

Harp solo

Dearbhla has been playing harp since she was 14, and is much sought after to play at functions, such as weddings. She now sings and plays harp with the Mullaghbawn Traditional Group, and recently, solo, reached the Ulster finals of the Scór competitions.

Planxty George Brabazon is by the famous harper, Turlough O'Carolan, who spent some time in the company of the South-east Ulster poets. Very little is known about George Brabazon, but O'Carolan often wrote melodies in praise of his friends and patrons, so we must assume that George Brabazon was one or the other.

11. Josephine Keegan And Kathleen Gavin

(fiddle and piano) (Tracks 11 and 17)

Kathleen Gavin, born in Mayo and now living in Co Dublin, is a member of the musical Gavin family, her father being a member of the famous Moate Céilí Band. She is a former student of the Royal Irish Academy of Music and also plays fiddle.

Kathleen and Josephine became acquainted a few years ago and made an album together, 'The Fairy Bridges,' which was released in 2006. Josephine composed both hornpipes.

Hornpipes, The Flowers of May and The Blue Haven

12. Úna Devlin and Rosie Ferguson

(fiddles)

As well as being fiddle enthusiasts, Úna plays flute and piano, and Rosie is accomplished on flute, banjo and mandolin. Their musical influences include Cathal Hayden, Frankie Gavin, Philip Duffy, Michael McGoldrick, Seamus Tansey and Brian Finnegan.

Playing more instruments than one, allows for experimentation, in changing a tune from its original key to a different one, with interesting results. The first of these reels is more than likely in its original key but there is an exciting 'freshness' about the other two because of the key change.

Reels, Gan ainm / Maud Miller and The Sailor on the Rock

13. Aine McGeeney

(Track 13), song unaccompanied

Aine began singing at an early age at primary school and was fortunate there to have come under the influence such excellent teachers as Pdraigín and Eithne Ni Ullachainn.

Afterwards she received tuition from Geraldine Bradley and Kim Lynch.

As well as singing, Aine is a well known, and very capable, fiddle player.

At present she is doing a BA degree in Irish music and song at Limerick University under the guidance of her singing teacher Eilis Ni Shuillibhain.

Song, Ur-Cnoc Cein Mhic Cainte (Burial ground of Cian, son of Cainte). It was here, at this site, that Pdraig Mac Goilla Fhiondan (Patrick Mc Alindon), poet and harper held a school of poetry, which was attended by as many as eighteen literary people of note. A place steeped in the local myths and folk history, a few miles north of Dundalk, it was frequented by Peadar O'Doimin (1700-1769), a native of Forkhill, who composed, among others, this beautiful song. It is a love song addressed to a young woman and inviting her, to no avail, to accompany him to Ur-Cnoc Cein Mhic Cainte.

14. Ursula and Claire Byrne

(fiddle and pipes) (Track 14)

Sisters, Ursula and Claire Byrne hail from Dromantine, Co. Down, outside Newry.

They currently live in Newry City and both are employed within the Education sector. Ursula is a teacher at St. Francis's P.S., Loughbrickland, whilst Claire is a Business

Development Manager with the Southern Regional College in Newry.

Both Ursula, on fiddle and Claire, on uilleann pipes, have won many national trophies, at underage and senior level, for solo playing, as well as combined instrument playing.

Amongst these titles is the All-Ireland Senior Fiddle Championship, won by Ursula in 1998, playing one of Josephine Keegan's compositions, The Square of Crossmaglen.

They are highly regarded in music circles everywhere as 'top of the range' musicians, and are much in demand. Touring extensively to perform at festivals, they have often been members of larger musical groups, such as Comhaltas, playing in USA and across Europe.

Ursula was a member of the Tain Céilí band from Dundalk, All-Ireland Céilí Band winners. Claire is the proud owner of a David Williams set of pipes

Jigs, Down the Back Lane and An Cailín Fionn.

15. Brendan McGlinchey

(fiddle) and Mary Mulholland, (piano)

Reels, McGlinchey's

These two tunes were composed by Brendan many years ago.

He recorded an album in 1974 for Silverhill Records with the apt title of 'Music of a Champion,' and it is with his kind permission that we are able to present these two Tracks.

Mary Mulholland, now deceased, won the All-Ireland title for solo piano in 1960 and 1963. She was a native of Antrim and played for many years with the Pride of Erin Céilí band from Co. Fermanagh, which has won the All-Ireland band title on many occasions.

16. Fainne Cairde

(Circle of Friends) (Tracks 16 and 19) is predominantly a group of fiddle players who play with piano or guitar accompaniment, and sometimes both. They came together back in 2000 to take part in a double CD published locally. They practiced weekly in the Stray Leaf in Mullaghbawn, learning new tunes and seeking out the best of old ones. The fiddle player's number about ten at present, and on this recording occasion are pleased to have the services of a guest accompanist, Kathleen Gavin.

Betty Black was the tune for a country dance, of the same name, in South Armagh. For many years both tune and dance were lost. Now that the tune has been found, it looks like the dance is going to be re-invented also.

17. Josephine Keegan and Kathleen Gavin

(fiddle and piano)

Josephine Keegan has spent most of her life in South Armagh. She plays fiddle and piano and has become known for her compositions of reels, hornpipes etc. She was a member of the original Dunreavy and John Murphy céilí bands and occasionally played in the Vincent Lowe, Ceol an Iubhair, Siamsa and Pickering bands.

Slip Jigs, The Slopes of Slieve Gullion and Dunreavy Park (both by Paul Murphy) Paul, of Cloughrea and now deceased, was a member of the Ceol an Iubhair Céilí band and a frequent visitor to musical sessions at the Keegan house, in Dunreavy Park in Mullaghbawn.

18. Martina Murphy And Family

(Track 18)

Slow Air, Aisling Geal

Emma Murphy, 16, plays this beautiful slow air on flute. She learned it from Mary Bergin with whom she has made friends over the past few years. This song was taken from the singing of a woman in West Cork in the late 19th century and first appeared in the Martin Freeman Collection of Irish Airs in 1920/21.

Jigs, Mullion Mountain, Drumhoney Sessions and The Crooked Road are all composed by Marrita Savage of Belleeks, Co Armagh, and mother of Martina Murphy. The titles are of local significance.

Marrita, born in 1926, played melodeon for the house dances as a young girl, with her sister Annie on fiddle. For many years she did not play due to other commitments. Her family bought her a melodeon about five years ago and she began playing, after an absence of sixty years, and she is now composing some lovely tunes too.

Other members of the group are Martina and Niall Murphy on fiddles, Conor Murphy, banjo, Emma Murphy and Mairead Savage on whistle, and Angela Savage on piano.

19. Fainne Cairde

(fiddles) with Kathleen Gavin, piano

Kipeen Scanlon was a renowned Sligo fiddle player, nicknamed 'Kipeen' (Cipin is the Gaelic name for the fiddle bow) because of his legendary skill in the use of the bow. The great composer, Ed Reavy, wrote his tune in his honour.

The Philosopher was composed by one of the Fainne Cairde members, Martina Murphy.

Fiddle players are Betty Molloy, Shauna Hughes, Martina and Niall Murphy, Sinead, Orla and Ursula Savage with Nicola Byrne and Josephine Keegan.

20. Jimmy Burns and Family

Jigs, Goats on the Grass and The Kilmovey Jig

These tunes were chosen by Jimmy, as was the barndance. The first jig was picked up from a recent CD which was recorded in a New York pub. The second jig came from the same source as the barndance on Track 6, 'Fionn Seisiun 2'

21. Niall Murphy

(fiddle) (Track 21)

Niall comes from a family that has been rich in the Tradition of Irish music for many generations, and began playing fiddle when he was seven years of age.

He is from Camlough, and had Jimmy Burns as his teacher for about four years, giving him a solid basis in the art of playing fiddle and a sound understanding of the musical Tradition. Subsequently he received tuition from Gerry O'Connor and now, aged sixteen, is attending Thomas Smyth's advanced classes at the Armagh Pipers' Club, often coaching some of the younger players too. Niall has had successes at many feadhanna and feiseanna, up to Ulster and All-Ireland level.

Reels, McGoldrick's, The Ronan Boys and Packie Deignan's

Piano accompaniment is by Kathleen Gavin on Tracks 11, 16, 17 and 19,

Josephine Keegan on Tracks 1, 3, 6, 12, 20 and 21,

Angela Savage on Track 18 and

Mary Mulholland plays on Tracks 2 and 15.

Additions to sleeve notes

Recorded on Location in the Stray Leaf, Mullaghbawn by kind permission of Bernard O'Hanlon, proprietor.

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Production and notes by Josephine Keegan

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Tom Quinn, Dundalk

Annette Trainor

Brendan McHugh, Glasgow

Thanks too to all of you who made this album possible.
We could not have done it without your generous support.

Compiled, mixed and mastered by Tom Quinn

CAMLOUGH LAKE



PART 2

INTRODUCTIONS



Newry & Mourne District Council

"The Sweets of May: Dance, Music and Musicians of South Armagh" Book, CD's and DVD provides an innovative and historically important insight into the Traditional music heritage of South Armagh. Musicians and dancers were the backbone of this community during the austere years of the Great Depression, the Second World War and its aftermath. House dances and Céilís lifted the spirits of a generation. This project proudly captures that mood, and brings to life the music, characters and events that may otherwise have slipped into oblivion.

South Armagh music is played and danced to the world over. This innovative project maps out how it has developed over the 20th and 21st century to provide the bountiful resource we have today.

Newry and Mourne Council is proud of the rich and diverse Traditions that thrive in this wonderful landscape, and we applaud in particular how the DVD of Dances locates in historic sites throughout South Armagh, with the names of dances and tunes celebrating this area of outstanding natural beauty

The involvement of so many local dancers and musicians in the project is testimony to this great living Tradition, which will continue to flourish because a new generation has stepped (or danced) up to the mark with such joy and merry abandon.

I congratulate Ceol Camlocha on this splendid initiative, and thank The Heritage Lottery Fund for their generous support.

Councillor Colman Burns

Mayor

Newry & Mourne District Council



Ceol agus Ceoltóirí Ard Mhacha Theas Réamhrá

Cuireann leabhar, CDanna agus DVD "Aoihneas na Bealtaine; Damhsa, Ceol agus Ceoltóirí Ard Mhacha Theas" léargas ar oidhreacht an cheoil thraidisiúnta in Ard Mhacha Theas ar fáil dúinn, léargas atá tábhachtach ó thaobh na staire de. Ba seasamh an phobail seo iad ceoltóirí agus damhsóirí le linn chruatan an Spealta Mhóir, an Dara Cogadh Domhanda agus a mharbshruitha. Spreag damhsaí tí agus céilithe misneach i gcroíthe glúine. Gabhann an tionscadal seo an spiorad sin go bródúil agus tugann sé an ceol, na carachtair agus na himeachtaí ar an saol as úire a ligfí chun dearmaid iad gan a leithéid de thionscadal.

Seinntear ceol Ard Mhacha Theas agus damhsaíonn daoine leis ar fud an domhain iomláin. Leagann an tionscadal nuálaíoch seo an dóigh amach a d'fhorbair sé sa 20ú aois agus sa 21ú aois chun an acmhainn thorthúil a chur ar fáil atá againn inniu.

Tá Comhairle an Liúir agus Mhúrn bródúil as na traidisiúin shuibhre éagsúla a bhfuil rath orthu sa tírdhreach álainn seo, agus molann muid go hard an bhaint atá ag DVD na ndamhsaí seo le láithreacha stairiúla ar fud Ard Mhacha Theas, agus an dóigh a cheiliúránn na damhsaí agus na poirt an ceantar ardáilleachta seo.

Tá sé mar theistiméireacht don traidisiún iontach beo seo ná rannpháirteachas an oiread sin damhsóirí agus ceoltóirí áitiúla sa tionscadal, traidisiún a mhaifidh beo mar gheall ar an ghlúine nua a bhfuil an dúshlán glactha acu go háthasach (go ceolmhar) agus go meidhreach.

Déanaim comhghairdeas le Ceol Chamlocha as an tionscnamh thar barr seo, agus gabhaim mo bhuíochas le Ciste Chrannchur na hOidhreachtas as an tacaíocht fhlaithiúil.

An Comhairleoir Colmán Ó Broin

Méara

Comhairle an Liúir agus Mhúrn

This project has been researched and compiled by the following people

Tommy Fegan (Chairman)



Tommy is Chairman and co-founder of Ceol Camlocha. His interest in Irish music was kindled initially by The Dubliners. A lifetime commitment to the music and to the uilleann pipes flared with the advent of Planxy and The Bothy Band in the early 70's.

He was a co-founder of Ceol Cinn Trá in the 1980's and is a member of Na Piobairi Uilleann and Armagh Pipers' Club. The Pure Drop is the self explanatory title of a column Tommy writes for The Newry Reporter. He presented a weekly programme of the same name for local radio stations for many years.

Tommy is currently researching the life and music of Johnny Doran and the unique contribution other members of the Travelling community have made to Irish traditional music. He and co-author Oliver O'Connell, Co. Clare will publish a book on this subject in 2010.

Josephine Keegan



Josephine Keegan has been immersed in the tradition of Irish music all her life. Learning from her parents, and helped by her sisters, she began playing tin whistle first. At the age of six or seven she had begun to learn fiddle and piano, and the rudiments of music, at home and had her first formal classical lessons at Bessbrook Convent when she was ten. Sister M. Paul (Hicks) taught her piano and Sister M. Therese (Martin), violin. She won her first bronze medal for piano from there at Newry Musical Festival and shortly afterwards her first silver medal for Traditional fiddle at Castleblaney Feis. She progressed on both instruments, winning gold at the Oireachtas in Dublin's All-Ireland fiddle competition. Her first experience of Céilí band playing was with Ceol an Iubhair and later with the John Murphy band. She occasionally played with the Vincent Lowe band, Johnny Pickering's and the Siamsa. She is a self-taught accompanist for Irish music and believes that her fiddle playing and knowledge of the tunes helped her in that. Consequently, Josephine has recorded with many musicians over the years. She has five solo fiddle albums made for Outlet too, double tracking her piano accompaniment. She is now seventy-three and has been involved with the music of the area for quite a while, taking part in sessions and in forming the fiddle group, Fainne Cairde. Over thirty local musicians took part in the making of a double CD of her compositions. Ceol Camlocha assisted her in that and in the production of a book of these tunes. TG4 awarded her the composers' prize in 2005. In 2006, she released two albums, one solo fiddle and the other solo piano. A second book of compositions followed as well as a Collection of Irish Dance music, entitled 'A Drop in the Ocean' that she had compiled over the years.

A third is in the making!

Kieran Burns



A renowned concertina player Kieran is one of three brothers (the others being Paddy on flute and Mark on Uilleann Pipes) from the well-known local traditional musical Burns family from Bessbrook.

Kieran has won three Comhaltas Ceolteoirí Éireann All-Ireland medals, an All-Ireland Slogadh medal in 1977 and two All-Ireland Senior Scór medals with his brothers in 1980 and 1995. He has toured with Comhaltas Ceolteoirí Éireann in Ireland and England (his first at 16 years of age) and also toured in America, Europe and Australia. Being self taught and with little concertina tradition in South Armagh at the time. As a teenager in the early eighties he pursued his ambition to learning the concertina by hitching frequent lifts down to Co. Clare to play with Paddy Murphy from Connolly, Ennis and listen to concertina players Noel Hill and Chris Droney. Kieran has taught the concertina for many years since beginning many notable players including the famed concertina player Niall Vallely of Armagh. Kieran has acted as concertina tutor for many years at the Willie Clancy Week, in Milltown Malbay, where he is regarded by the Concertina maestro, Noel Hill, as a truly outstanding exponent of the instrument.

Kieran continues to actively promote Irish Traditional Music in Newry & Mourne. His active membership of Camlough and Warrenpoint Comhaltas branches has ensured that concertina playing is now firmly rooted in the local tradition.

As co founder and current treasurer of the local Ceol Camlocha, Kieran continues to play the concertina and encourage the preservation of the musical and dance heritage.

He is very proud to be involved and associated with this project and trusts the value of its contents will be appreciated by many for generations to come.



Walter Bradley

Walter Bradley, originally from Bessbrook, is well known throughout the South Armagh area. He now lives in Camlough and is married to Paula and has three children.

He taught in St. Paul's High School in Bessbrook for over thirty years where he was Head of the Irish Department until his early retirement in 2007. He has been involved in the Irish language revival movement since his early teens and is currently the Chairperson of Naiscoil Chamlocha, Camlough's Irish medium nursery pre-school. He is very interested in all aspects of Irish culture and is a keen tin whistle player.



Tom Quinn

Tom Quinn and Irish dancing (both Céilí and sets) have become synonymous. His sheer love and enthusiasm for Ireland's native dance is infectious. He has inspired many people to take the plunge and discover the joy and merriment of this great social pastime because Tom is that revered figure in rural areas, a dance master. But Tom didn't get his love of dancing from the trees! Of South Armagh stock he began dancing at the early age of three, learning his first steps from his great Aunt Nan Quinn, a lady who was instrumental in the revival of the now famous Armagh Céilí Dances. Tom has taught Irish dance all over the world, and has become one of the foremost instructors in Ireland and has a large repertoire of dances from all parts of the country – and with his enthusiasm being carried through the generations; Traditional dance has a rosy future.

"To have danced an Irish dance is an exhilarating experience – simple perhaps in its execution, but profound in its intensity – full of camaraderie and interaction: the heady stuff of which lasting memories are made. Tom Quinn has further enhanced the prospects for Irish dancing into the next millennium and for this he has earned our unstinted appreciation." Senator Labhras O Morchu Director General of Comhaltas Éireann.

Background

Originating from South Armagh, Tom began dancing at the age of three, learning his first steps from his Grand Aunt Nan Quinn. In later years Pat Matthews, Dundalk, was his teacher, and it was during this time that he won Provincial, All-Ireland and World dancing titles. On retiring from competitive dancing, he became involved in teaching, and to date is still very active in the world of dance. Tom Quinn had been involved in tutoring competitive teams for the JJ Gardiner branch of Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann, Dundalk, for ten years. Over that period success has been achieved in all levels of Set and Céilí dance competitions. This includes Provincial and All-Ireland Coimisiún Le Rincí Gaelacha titles and Fleadh Amhrán agus Rince, which is a National competition organised by Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann. In 1993, Tom was commissioned to choreograph a team dance with his All-Ireland Céilí Dance Champions for Austrian television. The programme, which was hosted by Karl Moik, was broadcast live from Saalselden, Austria.

Some of the workshops and festivals where Tom has conducted classes include:

Galway International Set Dancing Festival.
Ireland Zugast in Sindelfingen and Holzgeringen, Germany,
Concert, Neues Schloss, Stuttgart, Germany,
Academie Internationale D'ete De Wallonie, Neufchateau, Belgium,
Irish Festival of the Northeast of England
Celebration of the Centenary of the Céilí in London
Rio Grande Valley Celtic Festival and Games, Albuquerque, New Mexico, U.S.A.
Mid West Fleadh Cheoil, Chicago, U.S.A.

In addition to this numerous workshops in Ireland and England.

Publications

Irish Dancing HarperCollins
Publishers 1993

Video

Set Dancing Made Easy
Céilí At The Castle
The Fodhla Céilí Band
Centenary Celebration of Irish Dancing
Take the Floor
Mal Rodgers

Sean O'Driscoll

Throughout Ireland the name of Sean O'Driscoll is associated with what is best in Irish music, even though music was not his chosen profession.

Sean, retired now, was a schoolteacher, first in Belfast and then in The Abbey Primary School in Newry where he spent many years as Vice-Principal.

He took a deep interest in traditional Irish music and played piano, and was accompanist to many musicians in broadcasts and recordings.

It was inevitable that he would become involved with ceili bands as good piano players were in short supply. He played in the Sean Maguire band in Belfast as well as recording some 78s with the band, and also for Maguire's solo 78s.

More locally, he played with the Ceol an Iubhair Ceili, Vincent Lowe and John Murphy's Ceili Bands and for many years accompanied John Conway playing for the Irish dancing competitions.

Sean was a founder member of the Newry branch of Comhaltas Ceoltoiri Eireann, and dedicated much of his spare time to adjudicating their musical competitions and lecturing to their teachers.

Sean O'Driscoll has taken an interest in this project and has written many of the articles in the book, especially on the local knowledge.

CRAIGMORE VIADUCT



FROM EARLY BANDS TO TODAY'S BANDS



Hall for Flute Band Practice,
Mullaghbawn

The turn of the century, from 1800s to 1900s, saw the emergence and flourishing of many types of bands.

They took many forms, pipe bands, fife and drum band, flute bands, brass and reed and silver bands.

It is thought the earliest was formed in 1835. The famous Hunter Moore Flute Band from Newry began in 1884.

The band practices and performances formed an important part of the social life of this area too. At one time almost every town and village had their own band, but most of that has passed into history and only a few sketchy details remain. As well as the local entertainment benefit, the band served traditional music well in that it not only trained the members in the use of their instruments, but the learning to read and write music was the most important legacy in preserving the local traditional music

Both Silverbridge and Newtownhamilton had Fife and Drum bands and the leader, or instructor was the same for both, Jack Murray from Newtownhamilton. Jimmy Sheridan played the big drum in the Newtown band. These bands often amalgamated for important events such as a visit from the new Cardinal Conway.

Pat Murphy from Cregganduff played in the Silverbridge band and remembers that Jack Murray would cycle from Newtownhamilton to Tom Gollgoly's barn at Carve, near Silverbridge, where the band practised.

The wooden constructed hall where the Mullaghbawn band practised is long since gone, like many other things in the changing face of the countryside.

The Bishopswood was from the midlands, (and has a close association with the South Armagh area), Portarlinton in fact, on the borders of County Offaly and Laois. The man who trained them used to travel by train from Dublin for their practices.

Owenie O'Neill, the well-known fiddle player from Bessbrook, was a member of St. Patrick's Pipe band, Bessbrook and subsequently formed the Ceol an Iubhair Ceili Band.

Owenie was able to teach many other musicians how to read music.

There was once a pipe band in Tullyvallen, St Catherine's Brass and Reed band in Newry, St Brigid's Accordion band in Jonesboro.'

Mayobndge, Whitecross and Cullyhanna also have accordion bands.

St Joseph's Brass and Reed Band from Newry was well acclaimed nationally and today

The Thomas Davis Pipe Band is one of the best known.

The history of marching bands, here or anywhere, is a whole different subject from that of our intent. We can only relate what we know, and what is relevant to the reason for this book. Most of the members of the marching bands we mention here played a significant role in the prominence and preservation of our traditional music.

The Silverbridge Fife & Drum Band

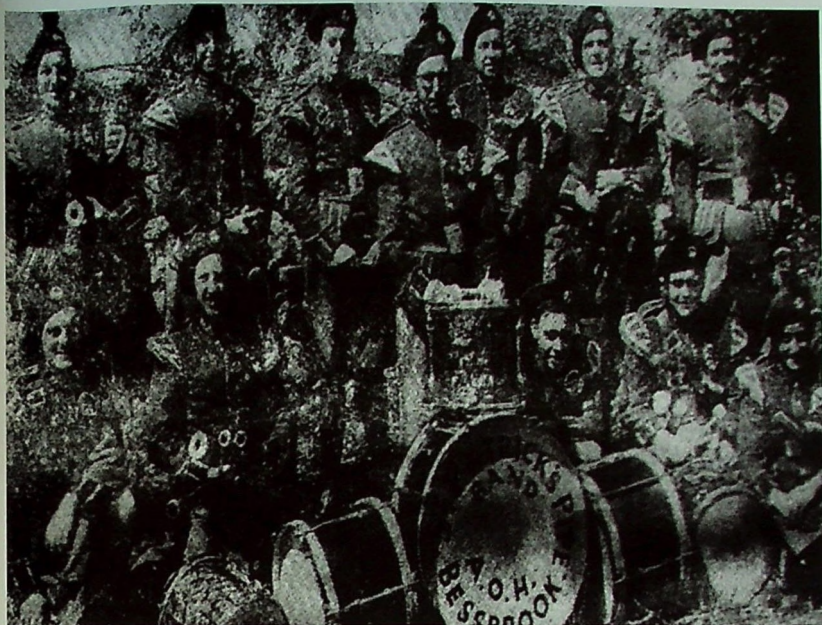
The Silverbridge Fife & Drum Band was formed in the 1940's. The leader was Jack Murray from Newtownhamilton, who would cycle to Tom Gallogly's barn in Carve where the practice was held.

Jack was a fife player who also had a similar band in the Newtownhamilton. These two groups would on occasions supplement each other when the need arose when regular personnel were unavailable for an outing.

Mullaghbawn Fife & Drum Band

Back Row: Left to right - James Kelly, Dan Bennett, Paddy McAleavey, Peter Murphy, Jack Lindon, Edward Nugent, Pa Quinn, Paddy Packs McKeown, Owen Kelly, Johnny Healey, Mick McAleavey, Dan O'Hanlon, Willie Murchan.
Front Row: Left to Right - Jimmy Rice, Tomie McAleavey, Frank O'Hanlon, Mick Heaney, Johnny McCann, Jack Smith, Joe Crilly, Mick Nealy, Jas Murchan, Paddy Jack O'Hanlon, Jas McGinnis.





St. Patrick's AOH Band

(Including Owenie O'Neill)

Owenie O'Neill pictured with other members of St. Patrick's AOH Pipe Band Bessbrook circa 1960



Bishopswood Year 1900

Top Row

L-R 2nd and 6th: Tommy & Joe Keegan

Henry Savage (1869-1938)



children of Angela Rafferty (nee Savage), the Savages from Drumhoney and Outlacken, Children of Hugh and Benedict. There are now also great-grandchildren of Henry who are continuing the love and interest in traditional music.

(Martina Murphy, nee Savage)

Nan Quinn, dance teacher, writes:-

I presented 'Trip to the Cottage' at Feiseanna in 1934 and 'The Three Tunes' and 'Sweets of May' in 1936. I had some difficulty in presenting the latter two because no one but Mr. Henry Savage from Outlacken knew the tunes, and we had to bring him around with us. This wasn't easy in those days.

It was Tom Farrelly from Dundalk who solved this problem. He came with me to the Savage homestead and took down-for all time- the lovely tunes.

The Savage residence in Outlacken, Belleeks, has been renowned for its affiliation with Irish music for many years.

It was a base for dancing and tune-learning and it attracted musicians and neighbours, both Protestant and Catholic, most nights of the week during the 1800's and 1900's.

Henry Savage continued the line of fiddle playing from his father, also Henry.

He had a family of eleven, all of whom had a love for music but the tradition was carried on in a different way by Pat who played accordion, Hugh, who played both accordion and fiddle, (both deceased) and Nano who played the piano.

Today there are grandchildren of Henry's who play traditional music these being, the Raffertys of Newry,

With tears rolling down his cheeks he said 'Thank God I have lived to see this day.

Now, I shall die happy, knowing the old tunes won't be lost.'

Quotation from an article in the music magazine, 'Treoir,' by Luai O'Murchu (1970s) in reply to an article by Sean O'Driscoll.

'There was no doubt of his familiarity with my native territory and with some of the musicians whos acquaintance I, too was honoured to share. I too can claim to have known 'the legendary Henry Savage' as Sean O'Driscoll calls this grand traditional fiddler, but it was my privilege as well to spend many an evening in the hospitable kitchen of John 'Roe' McParland, Henry Savage's contemporary and fellow musician.

Both Savage and McParland were part of the social life of South Armagh. Even long before I could recognize a reel from a hompipe, I had often heard it said that the knowledge throughout the countryside that Henry Savage and John 'Roe' (as he was always known) would provide the music for some forthcoming ceili was enough to guarantee its success.

Father, grandfather and great-grandfather to many fine musicians from this area, there is little doubt that Henry Savage has become a musical father to us all. The quality of his playing is legendary. His dedication to the local dances, and the right music to them, is well documented.

He was the favourite musician to supply the music for the house dances, barn dances and Ceill and Irish dancing competitions in his day. The competitions used to be held in open air, in a big level field, where temporary stages were erected for the purpose, usually in the corners of the field. One stage might have dancing competitions, one for singing, and another for instrumental competitions.

An annual outing like this was called a Feis. Camlough had one in the mid forties. Later, the name "Aenocht" was often used instead, and other activities would take place there on the day, such as suitable sports events.

Henry Savage was not just fiddle player, but with an appetite for good tunes, we were told he was most diligent in learning every good tune he heard. These tunes might sometimes been played by traveling musicians to the area, and Henry would offer the hospitality of his own home to the strangers. While they all made music together Henry would learn the tunes before setting them off on their next journey. Examples of this include "Henry Savage's Favourite" barn dances to be found on the CD's of today's musicians, and in this book. So he was a serious collector.

John 'Roe' McParland

McParland's style of playing gave new life to such threadbare items as Father O'Flynn, The Frost is all Over, McLeod's Reel, The Derry Hornpipe or Jackson's Morning Brush, but it was his playing of The Cuckoo Hornpipe and the reels, The Maid behind the Bar, Speed the Plough and The Salamanca, to mention but four of McParland's specialities, that used to move me most.

The reel is the test of the traditional musician, and I can still recall with delight John Roes' level rhythm, dance music with a 'lift' in it, and the spirit and élan of his playing.

As a youngster I used to listen spellbound to John Roe McParland. A musician needs only an audience to bring out his best. I have known many traditional players, who were by no means averse to a 'jar,' ignore, in their absorption in their playing, the lengthening line of drinks supplied by listeners where musician and company were already drunk, not with alcohol, but with music!

I remember John Roe, Henry Savage, with Joe Murphy and his brother Kevin, of Whitecross, Nora Trodden, Newtownhamilton, and her niece, Leon Murphy, A.L.C.M. taking turn about at the piano, playing at a ceili held in the former residence of the

Hart-Synott family, Ballymoyer House, long since demolished.

In fact, there were two groups playing that night, 27th December, 1936, for the music in the adjoining ballroom was supplied by The Mullaghbawn Ceili Band under the leadership of the late Frank Malone.

What local history is concentrated in that one event forty years ago!




Some of Henry Savage's great grandchildren, the Murohy family from Camlough. Niall, on the left is playing Henry's fiddle.



This photo was taken at an open air Fels, and shows Henry Savage and John Roe McParland, two fiddlers, playing for the dance competition, or maybe a dance exhibition.

The dancers are Arthur Burns and Eileen Murphy, and possibly dance teacher Nan Quinn at the far end of the stage. Eileen Murphy later married Paul Murphy, a fiddle player who also played for dancing competitions. Paul even composed some tunes for them, for example the two slip jigs in this book (and played on the CD too). "The Slopes of Slieve Gullion" and "Dunreavey Park" Paul was also a member of the Ceol an Iubhair Céili Band.



СУХЕРЪ
БИЛДНЕ
БАНД
АРМАИ.

THE CÉILÍ BANDS

Céilí - Time

The Céilí Bands evolved in response to the large number of musicians in rural areas who were regularly meeting in houses to play at house céilís. With little other means of entertainment, before the era of satellite television or the internet, people kept alive the customs and traditions handed down to them. These house céilís gave way to dances in local country halls and led to groups of local musicians getting together to form the céilí band. With the advent of Comhaltas Ceoltoirí Éireann, Céilí House on Raidió Éireann and the popularity of Céilí bands at Fleadh Ceoil competitions, greater numbers of musicians felt inclined to form their own bands.

This section of the book outlines the contribution many local musicians made to the preservation of our musical heritage and catalogues the contribution of local Céilí Bands which were popular during the post war years of the 1950's and 1960'.

The expected, and accepted duration of a Céilí in the early fifties was six hours, beginning at 9.00 pm and finishing at 3.00am.

The band was always conscious of the fact, regardless of the distance to cover, that they should be on stage and ready to play the first selection of tunes at the appointed time.

The sound of the band playing was expected to attract the dancers into the hall, and once the playing had begun, it should continue intermittently until a sufficient number of dancers were present to begin the night's entertainment. There were many nervous beginnings when the crowd was slow to come in and the question on every band member's mind was 'Is the price of the band in yet?' This was with good reason and experience, for if a sufficient number of people didn't turn up, the band didn't get paid its full fee.

The early céilí bands might have consisted of fiddles and flutes with piano and drums. That presented problems for sound in a large hall unless there were nine or ten members.

Amplification was not always available. Very few bands could afford as many musicians. McCusker's nine brothers' band was one exception.

Other parts of the country had accordions and concertinas as commonplace, as well as uilleann pipes, but those instruments were scarce on the ground in Co. Armagh and surrounding areas.

This brought a whole new way of looking at things here and anyone with the opportunity and ability quickly learned to play the accordion, be it piano box or 2-row button box.

The music required then was for all-céilí dances, reels, jigs and the occasional set of marches for the Waves of Tory.

Single reels of the Scottish type became the norm for some dances as they required less energy and provided some relaxation in the tempo, but not all venues would allow them to be played. A couple of changes came about to the 'Céilí nights,' however, in the late fifties. It was decided that the Céilís should finish at 2.00am instead of the usual time. Following that, the waltzes and barn dances were introduced and that idea met with mixed reaction from the musicians, some of whom would put down their instruments when the 'old-time dances were called and resume playing for the recognised céilí dances resumed. In time 'Céilí and Old-time' became the norm and some would say this heralded the decline of the true Céilí, or 'Fíor Céilí,' as it was called.

Refreshments, tea with ham and tomatoes for example would be served at the end of the night. Some places served this at around midnight, when there might be some local people available to sing, play music or recite a monologue or poem.

If there were no such artists available, the band would have to split up and one half at a time went for their tea while the other half kept the dancing going.

The border was always a problem for northern céilí bands going south to play. Firstly, they could only cross the border at an 'approved crossing' and this often took them miles out of their way. Once at the customs post they had to say at what time they would be returning, and the authorities would arrange for someone to be there to stamp their 'triptyque,' the legal document necessary for such crossings.

That was all very fine, but if you were not there at the appointed time the Customs officer went home and you had to wait there until eight o'clock in the morning, when the place re-opened, before continuing on your journey.

That's all very fine too, until you realise that the cars did not have any heating then!

There was always the reward of the night's pay, a pound, or one pound ten shillings or even two pounds, with certain bands who could afford it.

Most of the band members had day jobs and often went straight to work when they got back, and many had families to support and were delighted with being able to earn a bit extra, but if it had not been for the love of the music these people would not have subjected themselves to these conditions.

The personnel of most of the bands was continually changing because of employment, emigration, family circumstances and health reasons.

In spite of all the discomforts and inconveniences that I relate in this account of the 'Céilí nights' it is the good memories of the people met, and the music learned and shared, that remain. It is from times like these that stories are told, many hilarious, and too many to be told today.

Many lifelong friendships were made from these outings, and it is we, and those who come after who reap the benefit of the legacy of the music and dance, especially the local tradition of South Armagh. The fact that traditional music continues to flourish is due in no small way to these dedicated people.

The McCuskers Ceili Band

As far back as living memory goes the McCuskers were a musical force to be reckoned with.

Born in South Armagh, in Kilcreevy, were two girls and nine boys. Their Mother played melodeon and concertina and their father played the piccolo. Little wonder then that, in this musical household, many of the children would try their hand at playing some musical instrument. The girls, Mary and Teresa were singers and every one of the boys played an instrument, and traditional Irish music was their natural choice of music.

"The fiddle was taught to them by local man, Bill Lenagh, a fund of local music style and repertoire, who had picked up his music from travelling musicians heard on the monthly fair days in the town of Keady."

They started the band in the 1930s playing for house and village hall dances. The boys' early method of travel was by bicycle with their instruments tied to their backs. They all had day jobs but managed to carry their instruments and music with them to all parts of the area. By the time the forties and the second world war came they had become well-known further afield, and were playing for ceilis all over the country.

The make-up of the band ensured a good balanced sound.

Brendan, John and Vincent played fiddles. Francie played the banjo and mandolin.

There were two accordion players, Benignus on the 2-row button box and Tommy the piano accordion.

(Benignus was the youngest, and Tommy is now the only one still alive.)

Then there was Bernard on piano and Malachy on drums.

It was Kevin who played the piccolo which gave the band its distinct sound.

As their fame and popularity spread throughout the country the BBC and Radio Eireann were offering them air space.

Followers of Irish music in the forties and fifties always made sure to be in time to listen to the Ceili band broadcasts that were sent out at least twice weekly, Saturday night and Wednesday night and when Dinjo's programme, 'Take the Floor', came on air on Sunday afternoons, the listeners were always assured of more goo ceili music.

(It was very important in those days also to make sure that the batteries for the radio, both the accumulator, (the wet battery) and the large Ever Ready dry battery.

It was heartening to hear any of these programmes begin with the march, 'The Maid of the Mill', the signature tune of the McCuskers Band, because the music would be of the best quality.

Every band had their own 'signature tune' and everyone knew the band by that.

McCuskers happened to play theirs as the first tune of their first broadcast and kept it as their special tune.

Their broadcasts were much enjoyed and talked about and soon they were travelling across the water to Liverpool and London and other venues where the Irish communities were holding their ceilis.

From 1945 they started touring away, beginning in England, and playing in the major Irish halls of Liverpool, Birmingham and London. They were joined by another fiddle player, Kevin Vallely, taking Vincent's place. The Irish in England fell in love with their dance music.

The next step for the McCuskers Ceili band was across the Atlantic to entertain the Irish communities in USA, in such cities as Philadelphia, New York, Boston and Chicago, and the icing on the cake was to be asked to play in Carnegie Hall. N.Y.

They moved with the times, like many other Irish musicians and bands, and the 50s and 60s found them providing music for both old-time dancing as well as the ceili dances, often mixed on the same night.

At home the McCuskers played a regular Ceili Mor at Armagh City Hall

The band did make some 78 records and they also recorded for Avoca Records.

Some of their most remembered broadcasts for the BBC were on 'As I Roved Out' a 'St. Patrick's Day Special' of the popular radio programme.

Landmark appearances on BBC Television's first Northern Ireland TV broadcast of 'Come Dancing' and playing live from the Gresham Hotel in Dublin for the opening night of Irish Television.

Peter Kennedy of the BBC made some recordings of the family at home in Kilcreevy. Commercial recordings by the band included a number of 78s and several LPs.

In spite of their fame the McCuskers never forgot their roots in South Armagh and did much to preserve the local tunes and dances.



The famous McCuskers Brothers Ceili Band featuring back row L/R: Brendan, Vincent, Kevin, Tommy and John. Front row: Malachy, Benignus, Francis and Barney

Radio Eireann Céilí House

(From a newspaper cutting, an article by Joe McManus, nephew of Malachy Sweeney.)

The exact date when 'Céilí House' first took to the airwaves is not known for certain as there were different programmes of céilí band music for short periods under various titles. However, we do know that it is now nearly fifty years since the programme became established, in the middle fifties, as a regular, and indeed, indispensable part of Saturday night's entertainment for so many Irish people at home and abroad.

The man at the helm then and for so many years afterwards was the legendary, Sean O'Murchu from Co. Galway, whose voice and sense of humour were unmistakable.

In those early times before the advent of RTE Television, the weekly listenership to 'Céilí House' was said to exceed one million.

At a time of high emigration from Ireland, there are accounts of Irish workers in London climbing lamp posts on Saturday night, transistor radio in hand, in the hope of a better reception for their weekly link with the music and song they had left at home in Ireland.

A regular contributor to 'Céilí House' in those early days was my uncle by marriage, (married to my aunt, Rose McManus, from Milford), Malachy Sweeney who was known throughout Ireland as the 'Céilí King.' Not only did Malachy become legendary in Irish music circles, he was also responsible for introducing show, stage gimmicks, to bands, what the Clipper Carlton went on to do with modern music, hence the name, 'showbands' which were the rage in the 1960s.

Some of the best musicians Ireland ever produced played with the Malachy Sweeney Céilí band, including the maestro fiddler Sean McGuire, from Belfast, Johnny Pickering, from Markethill, Malachy Dons, from Ardboe, and Irish champions, Brendan McGlinchey, fiddle, and Bobby Gardiner, accordion, from Co. Clare.

Johnny Pickering and Malachy Dons, both of whom played accordion, later formed their own bands, and like Sweeney, made some recordings and many broadcasts. The Sweeney band records, 78s, are now a collectors' item.

Long before the popular Bridie Gallagher recorded 'The Boys from the County Armagh' in the late 1950s, a girl named Anna Boyle from Markethill, vocalist with the Sweeney band, put it on record and was singing it in dance halls right across Ireland. Indeed, it was listening to Anna singing 'The Boys' at a Dublin Céilí that prompted the 'Girl from Donegal' to have a go at it. The rest is history.

Other well-known vocalists with the Malachy Sweeney band were Gerry Burns, from Bessbrook, Margaret Slevin, Armagh, and John Mitchell, Dungannon, who also recorded songs with the band.

Malachy, an uncle of the renowned comedian and TV personality, Birdie Sweeney, toured extensively and was the first Irish Céilí Band to play in America's famous Carnegie Hall.

Other talented musicians who played with Sweeney included John Rocks, Madden, Frank Loughlin, Milford, Harry Davidson, Whitecross, Eva Gallagher, Margaret Dillon, from Blackwatertown and Jim Wray of Caledon.

At one time the Sweeney outfit boasted the cream of Irish traditional musicians including a number of Fleadh Ceoil champions. His name was a household name throughout Ireland.

There is a story that the band was returning from a céilí in Galway when their wagon broke down. Help was sought from a nearby roadside cottage and when the family became aware of the distinguished 'callers' all hands were invited in for refreshments and another Céilí got underway!

Malachy was probably the first to put a bandwagon on the road. His eye-catching brand new Volkswagen with the name 'Malachy Sweeney Céilí King' emblazoned back and front travelled the highways and the byways of Ireland when there was little or no traffic on the road.

Malachy Sweeney was in his heyday in the fifties. He paved the path for many acts to follow. He was truly a showman, setting the scene for what was to become a phenomenon. His name will be forever linked to céilí music and the Saturday night 'Ceilí House' programme.



Malachy Sweeney (in hat) chatting to his old friend, Ciaran Mac Mathuna, of 'Job of Journey Work' and 'Ceolta Tíe' fame.

In the background is the famous Sweeney 10-seater Bandwagon - a common sight on the roads of Ireland



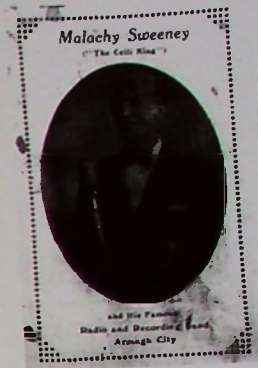
The earliest picture of the Band circa 1946 featuring L/R: Tom Turkington, Johnny Pickering, Sean Maguire, Jim Pickering, Jim McKee, Eva Gallagher, John Maguire, Malachy Sweeney (drums)



The Malachy Sweeney Céilí Band in the early days
 Front row (L - R) Frank Teague (Omagh), Mick Loughlin (Milford), Anna Boyle (Markethill), Jim Wray (Caledon), Willie Loughran (Milford),
 Back row (L - R) Harry Davidson (Newtownhamilton), Malachy Sweeney (Armagh), Johnny Pickering (Markethill), Margaret Dillon (Clonflecia) on piano.



A later line-up of the Malachy Sweeney Band



MALACHY SWEENEY

Malachy Sweeney is acknowledged as one of the greatest present day exponents of Ceilí Band Music in Ireland. To keep up with the modern trend, he took, as we would say here in the North, a brave step in branching out as Ireland's First Ceilí Band Show.

Traditional Irish Dance Music, however, he put foremost, as many will appreciate who have listened to his broadcasts and recordings. By keeping in Ireland's lovely ballads in the old-time waltzes, and tenor in the hour dances, military two-steps, etc., and with a little bit of comedy dancing on here and there, it will be appreciated that he certainly put something where it was lacking at the same time "reviving" our traditions: Irish dance music.

THE MANAGER

Scale of Fees

County	Fee (per hour)	County	Fee (per hour)
Armagh	£20 0 0	Clare	£20 0 0
Monaghan	20 0 0	Down	20 0 0
Tyrone	20 0 0	Ulster	20 0 0
Donegal	20 0 0	Wexford	20 0 0
Leitrim	20 0 0	Waterford	20 0 0
Fermanagh	20 0 0	Wick	20 0 0
Terry	20 0 0	Wiltshire	20 0 0
County	20 0 0	Yorkshire	20 0 0
Lancashire	20 0 0	Derbyshire	20 0 0
Cheshire	20 0 0	Staffordshire	20 0 0
West Yorkshire	20 0 0	Shropshire	20 0 0
North Yorkshire	20 0 0	Gloucestershire	20 0 0
West Midlands	20 0 0	West Midlands	20 0 0
East Midlands	20 0 0	East Midlands	20 0 0
East of England	20 0 0	East of England	20 0 0
West of England	20 0 0	West of England	20 0 0
South of England	20 0 0	South of England	20 0 0
North of England	20 0 0	North of England	20 0 0
South of England	20 0 0	South of England	20 0 0
West of England	20 0 0	West of England	20 0 0
East of England	20 0 0	East of England	20 0 0
West of England	20 0 0	West of England	20 0 0
East of England	20 0 0	East of England	20 0 0

Press and Public Comment

"Malachy Sweeney's interest in Ceilí Music developed comparatively late in life, but within twelve months after forming his first band, he had won the Prize at the Northern Ireland Musical Festival and made his first broadcast. That was in 1937. He has since been a regular broadcaster in the Northern Ireland Home Service."—Extract from "Radio Times," 12/2/42

"Malachy Sweeney has taken a courageous step in forming Ireland's First Ceilí Band Show."—"Irish Press," 12/2/34

"There is one man who has certainly been a leading light in the great revival of our traditional dancing here in the South, and that man is Malachy Sweeney."—Chas. A. O'Connell, Cork, 1940

"As long as there are men of the calibre of Malachy Sweeney in Ireland, we have no need to worry about the future of our Traditional Irish Dancing."—"The Irish Times," 1940

There are only a few of the hundreds, passed over the years, in the famous handbooks

Enquiries to: THE MANAGER,
 16, LYONSALL GREEN,
 ARMAUGH, CO. CO.

Felie and the Cardinal (Air: The Little Beggarman)

*There's a little dancing man, a'dancing he has been
For four score years—a terror to be seen!
He's known from Crossmaglen away as far as Buttevant,
And he's known by the name of Wee Felie Grant.
When Felie was a-courting he was told to attend
At Camlough for the funeral of a family friend.
There he didn't linger and was soon to be seen
At the Feis in Omeath with his sweet colleen.*

*The fairies of Sieve Gullion who had taught him all the steps.
And the fairies of Drumbee, who had heard of his leps.
Came riding on the wind when they heard that he was there.
And the Cardinal himself arrived at Omeath fair.
Now Cardinal Logue was a very handsome man
Who loved the merry dancing of our native land.
When he saw Felie stepping his own foot began to tap
And he lifted the gold medal that was lying in his lap.*

*'Here you are, dancing man, (says he,) for this belongs to you
As surely, little Felie, as your own dancing shoe'
All the people went mad and cheering split the air,
While the fairies go 'miraculous' at Omeath fair.
The Felie and his colleen had to face back to town
Very late from the funeral, for the moon was down.
Their parents, they were worried. They were standing at the door
And all they got for welcome was an old-fashioned roar!*

*But next day they read the paper and saw what Felie'd done.
They read about the Cardinal and the medal Felie won..
The honour brought to Crossmaglen and the fairies' wild delight.
So they joined with priests and people, and the lovers were aight!
Of all the fun a-going sure dancing is the best.
E'en though when you're dancing you can never take a rest
You can post for a living if there's nothing else for you'
But the cut and the shuffle and the batter you must do!*

(The 'Little Beggarman' is also known as 'The Rovin' Journeyman, the song of which was recorded by Delia Murphy in the early forties and was often sung by Maggie Barry.

It is in hompipe time and can be found in some collections of Irish dance music entitled 'The Red-haired Man.'"

It is often played in the key of G but also commonly played in A. This was the key preferred by the Malachy Sweeney Ceili Band, when this tune was chosen for their signature tune.)

Brendan McGlinchey

Brendan was born in Armagh City in 1940 and, in his youth was encouraged by his mother, who hailed from Forkhill and had played melodeon, to take up an instrument. At the age of twelve she found him a teacher, the well-known John Conway from Keady. Playing the fiddle was regarded as a sissy hobby in the neighbourhood when, much to Brendan's delight, John gave up teaching after nine months. His mother was not to be thwarted and within weeks she found him another teacher in Portadown. William Collins was a very good classical teacher and Brendan proved to be a receptive pupil. Impressed with his progress, Collins entered Brendan for the violin competition in the Dungannon Musical Festival. The subsequent publicity in the local paper when he won the cup attracted the attention of "the céili king," Malachy Sweeney, who recruited him for the band at the age of sixteen.

During the following year and a half, he toured the country in the company of Johnny Pickering meeting in sessions Paddy Canny, Willie Clancy, Bobby Gardiner, Seán McGuire, Paddy O'Brien, Leo Rowsome and Seán Ryan. In Brendan's own words, "I heard these lovely fiddle players and became really interested in trying to make myself better." Competitions followed. He never liked competing, being of a nervous disposition but he profited greatly from the advice and constructive criticism he received. His first solo broadcast in 1956 by Ciarán Mac Mathúna was the first of many successes including tying with Aggie White at An tOireachtas and Seamus Connolly at the 1961 All-Ireland Fleadh in Swinford. It was then he struck up a close friendship with Frank Sweeney, the Newry chemist. Frank embraced Traditional music with an enthusiasm bordering on fanaticism, although he was not a great fiddler himself, and he took a great shine for the young McGlinchey. In the following year he chaperoned and "nursed" Brendan until he achieved the 1962 All-Ireland championship in Gorey. The Champion of Champions was his two years later in the Clones All-Ireland Fleadh.

At eighteen Brendan went to work in England where he came into contact with many Irish émigré musicians such as Joe Burke, Martin Byrnes, Bobby Casey, Tommy McCarthy, Joe Ryan and Roger Sherlock. He played for two years at the Hibernian Club on Fulham Broadway with Roger Sherlock, Liam Farrell and Raymond Roland with whom he toured Ireland as the Hibernian Céili Band. From 1960 to 1964 he played with Johnny Pickering's Band returning to London when Johnny died.

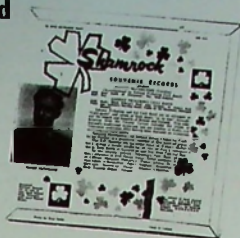
He eventually got a job in the National Health Service on the south coast of England and his fiddle playing became increasingly rare. In his own words, the motivation had gone but not before he had recorded an LP with Finbar Dwyer's Silver Hill label in 1974. "I married and started a family and just didn't take the fiddle out of the case for fifteen years until 1993." A slight stroke in 1993 prompted his return to playing. The therapy worked and after many months his co-ordination was restored.

Soon he was playing better than he had ever done. He has since been in great demand as a performer, lecturer and teacher in summer schools, workshops, sessions and recitals including tutor at the Comhaltas TTCT course.



Brendan McGlinchey circa 1960

The Johnny Pickering Céilí Band



Johnny Pickering, from Bunker Hill, Markethill was a well-known fiddle player in Co. Armagh and became more widely known through his Travelling with Malachy Sweeney as a member of his céilí band. He was also an accordion player, the instrument he used most in the band. The band was such a success, and gained popularity, not only in Co. Armagh but throughout the country. It is still talked about as one of the very best céilí bands, not only for its exciting sound but for the material it played. It is obvious that he was a lover of good tunes. He picked his musicians well. One of the best known members was Brendan McGlinchey, on fiddle.



The Johnny Pickering Céilí Band featuring L/R: Gerry Felghan, Brendan McGlinchey, A.N. Other (drums), Johnny Pickering, A.N. Other (bass), Margaret Dillon.

Anna Corkey (née Boyle)

Anna Corkey (née Boyle) of Mowhan grew up in a musical household. Her mother, the former Mary Anne Foster of Silverbridge, was forever singing as she went about her chores. Small wonder that Anne gradually accumulated a sizeable store of songs including **The Boys from the County Armagh** which she mastered at the tender age of five. Her father took her on his regular Sunday visits to a neighbour armed with a bag of sweets, the ultimate reward for Anna's rendition of "The Boys...." Music was the inevitable part of a night's céilí in the Boyle home in which Uncle James Boyle contributed his share on the fiddle.

At the age of ten she started mandolin lessons with Eva Gallagher, a piano teacher, in Markethill, the beginning of a long friendship during which the youthful Anna persuaded Eva to notate and arrange for publication in sheet music form **The Boys from the County Armagh**. The popularity of the song and its adoption as a virtual county anthem might reasonably be attributed to Eva and Anna.

The musical association was a happy one and, by her late teens, Anna had developed into a formidable instrumentalist and soon attracted the attention of the legendary Malachy Sweeney. The fiery and mercurial bandleader had the reputation of a musical predator, always on the lookout for talent to poach. An ex-army drummer and no instrumentalist himself, he knew his tunes and had an unerring discernment for a good musician. Many great performers and future band leaders served a Sweeney apprenticeship: Johnny Pickering, Brendan McGlinchey, Sean Mc Guire and John Murphy among them. Into the august company, Anna was introduced with Eva Gallagher as pianist.

During her time with Malachy Sweeney, she travelled widely throughout the land, an experience with hardly a dull moment. She recalls one homeward trip when they encountered the Ballinaslow Horse Fair. With dawn breaking at four in the morning, Malachy stopped to place mock bids on several nags. Initially travel was by Ford V8 into which the entire band squeezed. On one occasion on the way to an engagement in Donegal, the V8 collided with a lough Swilly bus on a bend in which Francie Murphy was injured. The band, undeterred, continued on their way to fulfil the booking.

Some time after she left Malachy, she collected a few local musical friends started rehearsals and the group was successfully auditioned by Radio Éireann. The Mowhan Céilí Band broadcast a few times. The band consisted of Justin McIvenna and Alfie Quinn (fiddles), Jimmy McAllister and Sammy Henderson (button accordions), Anna Corkey (mandolin), Eva Gallagher (piano) and Billy Duggan (drums). It was a very creditable performance for a cross-community project, which, unfortunately, could not be replicated in the dance hall.

Anna played for short periods in other bands including John O'Neill of Aughnacloy, a very talented piano accordionist, and Fred Hanna of Portadown. She went to Scotland with Fred when he went to make records for Beltona in Edinburgh but lost touch with him when he went to live in Glengormley.

In 1960 she joined the band newly-formed by John Murphy of Crossmaglen in the dual role of singer and instrumentalist. The new grouping auditioned successfully for both Radio Éireann and BBC. Following her marriage in 1962 Anna retired from public performance. She made a musical home for her family and nursed and raised her two sons crooning and singing to them as her mother had done for her. Her eldest son, Barry, a dentist practicing in Kirkcaldy and his wife, both singers and guitarists, training the local choir preserving the musical traditions indicated from the cradle. Anna in contented retirement continues in the privacy of her home in Bessbrook to sing the songs and play the tunes she has enjoyed from her youth.



Front row (L - R) Pat Murphy, Peter Murphy, Josephine Keegan, Anna Boyle, John Murphy
Back row (L - R) Joe Keegan, Colman Burns (drums), George O'Hare (piano accordion) and Sean O'Driscoll (piano)

Owenie O'Neill, Jimmy Burns, etc.

The late Owen O'Neill, a damask weaver in Bessbrook mill, lived with his wife, Bridie, and their three children, Maeve, Sean and Denis, in Maghernahely at the top of the Convent Hill. When quite young his cousin Barney was given a fiddle as a present, but Barney had neither the time nor the patience to learn to play it so Owenie fell heir to the fiddle. This must have awakened in him a latent musicality for he fell in love immediately with the fiddle and determined to master the instrument.

So every week in hail, rain or snow, he walked from his then home in College Square, Bessbrook to the Armagh Road in Newry for music lessons from a talented music graduate, Mrs. Henry. Within a short time of disciplined classical training he became quite an accomplished player with a keen interest in Irish music, and much in demand by local Irish dancing teachers, especially the neighbouring Nan Quinn, at feiseanna and at ceilithe in the South Armagh area.

A frequent visitor to house dances and hoolies, he was the first to introduce with Nan Quinn the hitherto relatively unknown social team dances such as The Sweets of May and The Three Tunes to audiences at Newry Musical Feis in the early 30s. His one regret was his failure to establish the popularity of the authentic traditional tune for The Sweets of May against the corrupt version which supplanted the original. Accustomed as he was to playing with ad hoc groups for ceilithe in the area, it was hardly surprising with his experience that he decided to form his own band which took the title of Ceol an Iubhair.

Among his first members were pupils Eddie McParland and Jimmy Burns on fiddles, Jimmy's uncle, Harvey O'Hagan, on drums, Dermot Hughes, flute-playing son of Margaret Hughes, a Newry Irish dancing teacher, and Michael Murtagh, a young pianist and cellist, who later became a music graduate of UCD, a secondary school teacher in Dublin and a balance and control engineer with Ráidíó Éireann who, as well as working for the Sunday morning broadcast Masses also worked for the Céilí House. The band had arranged an audition in Newry for the BBC in early September, 1939, an engagement which was abandoned with the outbreak of war. Continuing in wartime conditions was extremely difficult and by 1944 the band had faded out.

It was not until the summer of 1947 that Jack (Seán) O'Driscoll persuaded Owenie to revive the group. The Murphy brothers from Whitecross, old acquaintances, agreed to join along with Danny Bennett from Belleeks. Such a group had little volume or musical muscle to fill a noisy hall so they were joined occasionally by Jack's friends, Johnny McGivern, a classicist and trumpet-playing dance band leader who played the piano accordion, and his brother Jimmy who played a Boehm-system flute. Neither of these was greatly interested in traditional music so the band struggled on and after a few sporadic and relatively unimportant engagements the band broke up in the early 50s.

Owenie was a gifted teacher with conscientious attention to good bowing technique, accurate fingering and correct intonation which blossomed in his two most accomplished and successful players, Jimmy Burns and his sister May of Quarry Row. Jimmy's uncles on his mother's side had fiddle music so small wonder that Owenie was chosen as the teacher who would develop their natural talents. At eleven years old, Jimmy took weekly lessons in Owenie's house. Owenie had bought a good fiddle from Boosey & Hawkes for another fiddle which at first was indifferently received but when Jimmy's uncles, the O'Hagans, purchased the fiddle, it was another story. After some wrangling, the fiddle belonged to

Jimmy, who still uses it to this very day. Eventually Jimmy became Owenie's most promising and diligent pupil, learning two tunes a week.

Owenie was one of the few who had a copy of O'Neill's 1001 which he would play on demand from cover to cover. So this and tunes, gleaned from Kerr's Merry Melodies, were the sources of his teaching repertoire. Jimmy had a robust, resonant tone so it was no small wonder that, at thirteen years of age, he was taken into Ceol an Iubhair. One memorable engagement for the band was the prestigious Céilí Mór of 15th August, 1940 in a packed Newry Town Hall.

Jimmy was taken by Owenie to many house and barn dances in the hill country of South Armagh such as the home of John Kane of Annaghcloughmullion where music, song, dance and recitation were performed to the accompaniment of the singing crickets. One of John's daughters later married Kevin Murphy who played in Ceol an Iubhair along with brother Paul who married Eileen Murphy the dancer and niece of Nan Quinn.

In the early fifties, Kevin McElhatton, a button accordion player from Tyrone, took up a post as assistant teacher in Bessbrook Primary School. He, along with Jimmy and May Burns (fiddles), Gerry Burns (drums) and Francis Connolly (piano) of Newry, formed the Craobh Rua Céilí Band which carried out quite a number of local engagements for two or three years until Kevin had a serious motorcycle accident.

Vincent Lowe, a pianist and piano accordionist, of Carrickbracken, Camlough had managed a small dance band during the war and for a few years afterwards during peace time. Frank Hall, at that time a drapery assistant in Newry and a freelance contributor to digest magazines, played double bass. When Frank quietly married Sheila Kearney, Vincent acted as best man. Subsequently, Frank joined Independent Newspapers as a full-time journalist writing his own column. His popularity resulted in his being appointed to Telefís Éireann where he became famous overnight.

There was a huge resurgence in céilí dancing after the war, and the boom years for Céilí bands were beginning, when Vincent Lowe decided to go on the road with a trio specializing in céilí and old time music. He fully acknowledged the virtuosity of Hearst when he was taken on as the melody power house. Engagements came rolling in backed by radio broadcasts on Radio Éireann and BBC. Even ascetic traditionalists were grudgingly forced to admire the Hearst phenomenon, which could transform even the simplest polka with dazzling chromatic embellishments. However, the steady, nonsmoking, teetotal Lowe grew weary of the capricious, drinking behaviour and eventually Hearst was dropped. Not to be sidelined for long, Hearst joined a new trio with Paddy Rafferty on piano and Michael Matthews on drums. The rollercoaster of success continued as Rafferty exercised a sterner management.

Vincent continued with a more flexible grouping playing the piano accordion himself. On double bass at different times was Andy Tohill or Jim Bradley. Jimmy Murney of Newry or Gabriel McGuigan on drums and vocals, and, at various times, Josephine Keegan, Jimmy Burns or John Murphy, on fiddle, and Jack (Seán) O'Driscoll on piano, made up the band. Pat Rice the accordionist of Jonesboro, the brother of Kay, the harpist and singer, who made up the well-known broadcasting Rice Twins, was an occasional reinforcement. The band was kept fairly busy with countrywide engagements, broadcasts on both BBC and RE and an LP produced by Copley Records of New York. The boom years over, Vincent continued with cabaret style dances and functions on either portable organ or accordion and his son on drums.

The formation of the International Céili Band was a new beginning for Jackie Hearst when the trio with Rafferty and Matthews broke up. The creation was largely the work of the Burns trio – Jimmy and May on fiddles, Gery on vocals and drums. The band was a very formidable combination of accomplished musicians. Fintan Callan from Knockbridge, a fine, knowledgeable piano accordionist, Andy Tohill, bass fiddler, music tutor with the SELB music service and conductor of St. Peter's GAA brass band, and his wife, Aveen, pianist, music teacher and concert accompanist made up the group. Jackie Hearst was already famous through his tours, broadcasts and records.

Gerry Burns had built up an enviable reputation through his records and appearances of the RE Walton's sponsored programmes. His rendition of The Bonny Boy was legendary and his Steve Casey from Sneem guaranteed a warm welcome in the bands frequent appearances in the Galtymore Ballroom, Cricklewood which became the pivotal point of their English tours.

To claim that the reputations of Gerry and Jackie were crucial to the fame of the band would be most unfair to the other players who were highly proficient performers in their own right. When the complete story of the greats of the golden era of céili bands comes to be written, the international will certainly have an outstanding role.

In his teenage learning days, Jimmy Burns was surreptitiously taken to Doyle's pub in Camlough on pension day. His elders would have roundly disapproved of the presence of a 13-year old on licensed premises to say nothing of the constabulary in the nearby police station.

However, much advice and tunes were freely given by Micksey O'Callaghan of Belleeks whom Jimmy fondly remembers to the present day as important in his development as a traditional fiddler.

The tough work, the attendant lengthy travel, the late hours, the loss of sleep and the variable hospitality which are the lot of the band musician are now far behind but Jimmy still nurtures an incurable hunger for the music as a performer and, most importantly, as a diligent and highly successful teacher. In spite of the disabilities of his more than four score years, he continues to teach upwards of twenty pupils. He can recall with pride the success of pupils such as Ursula Byrne, an All-Ireland winner, and Darren Magee, an under 18 prizewinner at national level. Not to be forgotten are the many pupils who have achieved the highest grades in the LCM music examinations up to diploma level.

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Mrs. P. Hughes, formerly of Newry, now in Belfast, presents the Senior Championship Cup to Miss C. McAleer, Belfast. Margaret Hughes, mother of Irish Dancing adjudicator, Miss Sheila Hughes, formerly resided at William Street, Newry and might well be described as one of the pioneers of Irish dancing in Northern Ireland.



Micheal O'Callaghan, Belleeks one of those who kept the music alive



Ceol an Lubhair



Vincent Lowe and Gerry Burns



The International Ceilí Band circa 1960 featuring
L - R Back: Fintan Callan, Gerry Burns, Jimmy Burns, Jackie Hearst
L - R Front: May Tráinor, Eileen Murphy and Mary Savage.



The International Céilí Band circa 1960 featuring L/R: Fintan Callan, Jimmy Burns, Gerry Burns,
Jackie Hearst Andy Tohill and Aoibheann Tohill.



Jackie Hearst Trio

The Murphys of Cregganduff

The Murphy home was a well-known céilí house where Traditional musicians were always assured of a warm and appreciative welcome. Father Paddy (1901-1973), affectionately dubbed Red Paddy, a talented, if reticent, melodeon player, and fiddle player, reared three musical sons – John (1929-1996), Peter (1940-1993) and Pat who is happily retired in Mullaghbawn, and the girls, Eileen and Eithne were singers.

Pat recalls musical visitors to the house such as Peter Hearty, Packie Carragher, Gerry Martin, Pat Hughes, James Mallon and Michael McCooney. John Joe Prunty from Drumakill in County Monaghan, used to visit on fair days his sister, a Mrs. Keamey, who owned a public house in Crossmaglen. Prunty was a gifted fiddler who in the days of silent movies had played to accompany the films and could not be regarded as a strictly Traditional player. These occasional visits were a signal for an invitation from 'Red Paddy' to the Murphy home where late into the night he entertained the family and their neighbours. The eccentric tuning of the fiddle which he frequently used was a source of fascination for his eager listeners.

Tunes remembered from those nights were the Ivy Leaf, the air, Patrick Sheehan, (otherwise known as The Glen of Aherlow,) and the Irish Washerwoman in the key of A major.

John Joe Prunty sadly died as a result of an accident in Castleblaney. The exact date of his death is unknown despite various enquiries being made. Go ndeanaidh Dia trocaire ar a anam. (The Lord have mercy on his soul.)

The Bums' home in Camally was another noted céilí house and the girl of the family, who worked in Belfast, arranged a visit by the young Seán McGuire who, at the time, was a member of the Malachy Sweeney Céilí Band. He brought with him Johnny and Jim Pickering of Markethill. A result of this was the engagement of John Murphy for several years in the Malachy Sweeney outfit. Brother Peter on occasion joined John in the band. On one memorable occasion in Armagh City Hall by the touring Jimmy Shand Band Peter was invited to play.

John had played for a time in the late 40s in the Kevin Barry Céilí Band along with Packie Carragher and Gerry Martin (fiddles), Gene Carragher, Peter McGeough and Jack McVerry (accordions), Tom Quinn, and occasionally, Pat Murphy (drums). With

all this solid experience behind him, John felt that the time had come to start his own band.

After a chance meeting, and the inevitable conversation about music, between John's Uncle Barney (Campbell) and Joe Keegan in Mullaghbawn, there followed a session in Dunreavy Park, and another in Cregganduff, and soon these get-togethers were commonplace. There was the material there for a Céilí band to be formed.

The first engagement for the combination came on Easter Sunday 1956 in Mullaghbawn Hall. The early band included, with the three Murphy brothers, Packie and Gene Carragher, Joe and Josephine Keegan, Anna Boyle and Francie Murphy of Fivemiletown, who had played with Malachy Sweeney, and subsequently with the Pride of Erin Ceil Band. Pat Murphy recalls driving with Packie after the céilí to leave Francie home to Fivemiletown where a hearty breakfast awaited them. Soon the band was playing all over Ireland and a more settled arrangement emerged with John and the late George O'Hare (accordions), Josephine Keegan and Pat and Peter Murphy (fiddles), Joe Keegan (flute), occasionally, Anna Boyle (banjo-mandolin), Colman Bums (drums) and Jack O'Driscoll (piano). The late Willie McSherry (two-row accordion) joined later.

Spurred by the initial success of the band, John was successfully auditioned both by the BBC and Rádo

Éireann. The band was appearing three times a year with the late Seán Ó Murchú in Céilí House from 1959 onwards. In the mid-60s BBC launched a series of live outside broadcasts of Country Céilí with producer Sam Denton and fear a' tí Jack Sloan. The John Murphy Band appeared on many of these, some in the most unlikely venues. John had taken up the two-row accordion in the band out of necessity but the fiddle was his first love and accomplishment. Both he and Peter were successfully auditioned and broadcasted as fiddle soloists with Jack O'Driscoll as accompanist. Much to the dismay of John and the band, Peter left to join the Richard Fitzgerald Band of Bundoran at the peak of the céilí boom which lasted throughout the 60s. Another disappointment was the departure for England of brother Pat. John, whose music was his bread and butter, saw the downturn and, with a slimmed down band, formed a céilí show band which launched the spectacular career of Susan McCann.

Up until his untimely death in 1996, John had combined his public musical activities with teaching fiddle and accordion and many of his former pupils speak fondly of his quiet, painstaking, knowledgeable tuition. As a performer and bandleader, his faculty of adventurous choice in his music and his capacity for humble self-criticism are qualities, which every musician should emulate and cultivate.



The John Murphy Céilí Band featuring Front L/R: Pat Murphy, Peter Murphy, Josephine Keegan, Anna Boyle
Back L/R: Joe Keegan, Coleman Burns (drums), George O'Hare, John Murphy, Sean O'Driscoll



A later picture of the Band featuring Front L/R: Peter Murphy, Susan McCann, Teddy Campbell.
Back L/R: Fintan Cailan, John Murphy, Joe Dean, Denis Heaney.



John in session with young musicians including Gerard Quinn and Martina Murphy, Camlough



Packie Carragher from Cullyhanna

The Kevin Barry Céilí Band



Gerry Martin Cu'lyhanna in session in the 1970s

The Kevin Barry Céilí Band from the Cullyhanna area confined their playing to local Céilí s and functions in the late forties, early fifties. At different times, John Murphy, Fiddle, Packie Carragher, Fiddle, Gene Carragher, Accordion, Peter McGeough, Accordion, Jack McVerry, Accordion, Tom Quinn, Drummer along with Gerry Martin, Fiddle made up the band.



Skerrieff Bridge, near Cullyhanna in South Armagh. Photo by Paula Rafferty of Newry.

Glen Mona Céilí Band

The Glen Mona Céilí Band was a popular band in the early sixties. The members of the band came from the Warrenpoint, Rostrevor and Hilltown areas. They played at many Céilí s around a wide area and frequently appeared on the programme of local parish carnivals held in marquees, another feature of life in the fifties and sixties. They later became known as The Glen Mona Bandshow in response to the demise of the Céilí and the growing popularity of the showband scene.



The Glen Mona Céilí Band featuring L/R: Kevin Hanna, Seamus Murphy, Jim Rice, Eddie Sherry, Michael Morgan, Hugh Magill and Sean Cooper.



The Cuchullain Céilí Band Dundalk circa 1940

The Dunreavy Céilí Band

The Dunreavy Céilí band from Mullaghbawn was a very popular band in their local area, playing at Parish functions during the fifties and early sixties. They rarely travelled further afield. The band members were the McDonnell brothers, Louis, Pete and Paddy, Owenie McCoy (on fiddle, below), Barney McCoy, J.P. Leonard, and Josephine Keegan.



The McDonnell's were steeped in music from a young age. Louis' father played the accordion along with neighbors, Mick O'Callaghan and Jim Loughran from Ummericam. When Paddy, the oldest of the brothers took an early interest in the accordion, the other younger boys followed suit. Paddy Murphy, father of the Murphy's from Cregganduff, was a relation of their mother Annie nee Fegan. He was a great friend of their uncle Tommy Fegan. The young McDonnell boys were frequent visitors at house sessions in Murphy's. Paddy Murphy's brothers in law, Barney and Frank Campbell, great fiddle players would often be in attendance. Many sessions lasted to the early hours and when the woman of the house, Mary, at half two in the morning, would remind them that they hadn't played Bonaparte's Retreat, Paddy would announce that the night was still young! On a return visit from America, Paddy Murphy and Louis McDonnell were recorded in the late fifties by Louis Quinn, the famous fiddle player, Emmett's uncle, who had emigrated during the twenties. The tunes they played were The Trip to Durrow and Out on the Ocean. The McDonnell's were founder members of the Ring of Gullion CCE and the

next generation continues to foster the music. Kieran McDonnell, proprietor of The Railway Bar in Newry, plays the button accordion, and plays host to a lively session there every Thursday night.



J.P. Leonard in session in the 1970's



Paddy and Peter McDonnell



Louis McDonnell circa 1975



Josephine Keegan on fiddle and Joe Keegan on flute. Taken in Dwyer-Morris's pub in Boyle during the 1960 Pleadh Déil. On the bottom right, playing accordion, is Rory Kennedy of Dundalk, member of Siamsa CB.

Siamsa Céilí Band

Dundalk was indeed fortunate when John Joe Gardiner decided to make it his home. Coming from Corhobber near Ballymote in Co. Sligo, in an area steeped in the best traditions of fiddle and flute playing, he carried both traditions with him.

His well-known talented sister fiddle player, Kathleen Harrington who had also played with him in the Kincora C.B. was an enormous asset to the Siamsa.

(Another sister, Lucy Roland, (nee Gardiner) was also a fiddle player and mother of the musicians Yvonne, Raymond and Oliver Roland.)

John Joe Gardiner (1893-1970) was brought up in what we now call the golden era of Sligo music, because so many recordings of their best musicians were made then and he played with the best of them, Coleman, Momson, Killoran etc and played too with the great Leitrim flute player, John McKenna.

John Joe, with the help of his accordion player, Rory Kennedy, selected a first class team for the Siamsa band to win All-Ireland honours in 1968, 1969 and 1970.

Rory's family, son Eamonn (fiddle) and daughter Siobhan (flute), also play and teach traditional music.

John Joe's daughter, Pat, who played fiddle with the band is now married to accordion player Brian O'Kane who is the composer of many good tunes.

Newry is now reaping the musical benefits since his other daughter, Pauline(White), came to live there. She has taught and influenced, in her turn, so many of today's musicians of the area.



The Siamsa Céilí Band from Dundalk.
Back row (L - R) John Joe Gardiner, Brian O'Kane, Joe McKevitt, Rory Kennedy and Brendan Gaughan
Front row (L - R) Kathleen Harrington (nee Gardiner), Kevin D Callaghan and Patsy O'Kane (nee Gardiner)



The Siamsa Céilí Band from Dundalk
Three times all Ireland Céilí Band winners, Rory Kennedy is seen here receiving the trophy on their behalf from the CCE adjudicator.
(L - R) Pauline White (nee Gardiner), Peg Needham (nee McGrath), Noreen Shields, Lorraine McMahon and Rory Kennedy, Rory's son, Eamonn Kennedy at far right.

Bobby Langan



A man steeped in the language and culture would see him Trável the halls of Down and Armagh promoting the Céilí dancing and every 17 March, Easter Monday the 15 August would see him hold court in Newry Town Hall. I remember one 17 March when some people got in through a fire exit to the Céilí – Bobby immediately got on stage and called the next dance a "snake dance". "Would all those that snaked in would they please snake out". On the 15 August he got up on stage and proudly introduced to the people of Newry the famous "Calor Gas Céilí Band".

Everyone burst out laughing as he should have introduced the Gallowglass Céilí Band and indeed that nickname stuck with them for

a long time! Langan was a strict Céilí man and wouldn't tolerate old time or sets and had to be escorted out of Mullaghbawn one night when he called the 4 two-hand dances and discovered some of the natives had started to dance a schottische. Under escort he made it safely back to Newry.

"Ireland Divided Never Shall be Free". These words were sung by the late Bobby Langan a true Gael the length and breadth of Ireland as his unique Irishness heralded the end of another "Céilí Mor".



(L-R) Larry Beattie, TP Murphy, Tommy McKay & Bobby Langan

Enjoying Shamrocks' Céilí



These four young men, recently released from internment in Crumlin Road Jail, are seen here enjoying the annual céilí mhor of the Newry Shamrock G.F.C. in St. Colman's Parish Hall. They are (left to right) — Dan Moore, James Moran, Eugene Moore and Dominic Lay, all of Newry.

NEWRY DRESS CEILI



Photographed above is the sparkling committee of the Dress Ceili in St. Columba's Parochial Hall, Newry, during the recent evening ball. The Ceili, under the auspices of Catholic Community Club Ceili, will be a successful success and may become an annual event. Below is shown one of the many happy groups in the Ceili.



Newry Dress Ceili should be a Big Success

ON Tuesday evening next St. Columba's Parochial Hall, Newry, should have a packed attendance for the dress ceili under the auspices of Catholic Community Club Ceili.

A SPECIAL attraction at the Newry Dress Ceili will be the appearance of the famous Ceili Linn Linn which has captivated a wide area from throughout Ireland. It is their appearance at many of the leading hotels during the past year.

A success of the evening is touring the United States at the moment and meeting with a wonderful reception wherever they go.

The Ceili has around it an admirable record through the past year.

As a result of the success of the Ceili Linn Linn, many similar Ceilis should be arranged in the most successful manner over the whole of Newry.

The Old Ceili Ceil Band which has become an important one of the most popular combinations in Ireland.

Tickets are on sale at Messrs. Egan's, Hill St., Newry, or any member of the Ceil Band, Down, Armagh, Louth, and Wick.

WHITECROSS PAROCHIAL HALL

SATURDAY, 26th OCTOBER

CEILI & OLD-TIME

JOHN MURPHY'S CEILI BAND

Dancing 8.30 - 12 Admission - 4/-

TUESDAY, 29th OCTOBER

CEILI & OLD-TIME

JOHNNY PICKERING CEILI BAND

Dancing 8 - 12 Admission - 4/-

MULLAGHBAWN BAZAAR

DANCING IN PAROCHIAL HALL

Two Weeks' Entertainment commencing Wednesday, 18th June, with LEAP YEAR CEILI AND OLD-TIME

DANCE MUSIC BY CEILLYN BAND

ADMISSION TO HALL - 2/-

FRIDAY, 18th JUNE - Short Ceili and Old Time Ceili's Band

ADMISSION - 1/-

SUNDAY, 22nd JUNE - Ceili and Old Time - Seamus Noel

ADMISSION - 1/-

WEDNESDAY, 25th JUNE - Ceili and Old Time - Ceili's Band

ADMISSION - 1/-

FRIDAY, 27th JUNE - Short Ceili and Old Time - Ceili's Band

ADMISSION - 1/-

SUNDAY, 29th JUNE - Ceili and Old Time - Seamus Noel

ADMISSION - 1/-

SHOOTING COMPETITION

AS IN CASH PRIZES, ROULETTE, CARDS, ETC., ETC.

Proceeds in aid of School Building Fund.

THE TRUCK IMA (Irish Northern) Division
LOOK OUT FOR
CEILI MHOR
TOWN HALL, NEWRY,
FRIDAY, 25th MAY, 1952

PRELIMINARY NOTICE
KILLEAVEY MEMORIAL
COMMITTEE
Wishes for parties, give
participation of

CONCERT AND CEILIDHE

at

I.N.F. HALL, GLOUGHOGE,

on

SUNDAY, 18th MAY, 1952.

DON'T MISS IT!

THE PRESENT POPULAR LEADER

CEILIDHE MHOR

TOWN HALL, NEWRY - FRIDAY, 16th MAY

8.30 - 11.30 P.M. - DANCING 8.30 - 11.30

TRUCK IMA - FRIDAY, 16th MAY, 1952

INF
JOHN MITCHEL BRANCH, NEWRY,
CULTURE CLUB

2nd Annual Ceilidh

ON SUNDAY, 29th JUNE

IN THE TOWN HALL, NEWRY

8.30 - 11.30

MUSIC BY MALACHY SWEENEY AND
HIS BROADCASTING BAND

BALCONY PATRONS are invited of P.M. Club at
Newry, with ANNA BOYLE, Bazaar of Irish Belongs
MURPHY (Clerk), back from the recent Broadcasting
AUTHORITY REPORTS THOUSANDS OF DANCERS and appearance
their trip to New and THE SHAMROCK MEMBERS OF THE
IF YOU'RE IRISH, YOU'LL BE AT THE I.N.F. CEI

ADMISSION - 4/- 11 BALCONY - 12/-

SHAMROCK ATHLETIC CLUB NEWRY

ANNUAL CEILI MHOR

TOWN HALL, NEWRY

ST. PATRICK'S NIGHT

FRIDAY, 27th MARCH, 1952

Dancing 8.30 - 11.30

MUSIC BY ULIDIA CEILI BAND, BELFAST

(Irish Appearance in Newry)

CLUBS OF THE EVENING: BEL J. P. HILLER, C.C.

President.

BALCONY (Dancing Seats only)

Dancing from 8.30 to 11.30 P.M. (Dancing 8.30 - 11.30)

ADMISSION 1/- 11 BALCONY - 12/-

Victory Ceili at Mullaghbawn

The victory of the Armagh miners over Fermanagh added to the usual gay spirit of Gaelic night when local Cuchullain very successful Ceili held a party at Mullaghbawn. Attended by over 200, some of whom travelled from Newry. Camogie and the surrounding district function sponsored by the club since its re-organisation.

Two members of the county minor team, F. Donnelly and S. McCreesh, on entry into the hall, while a tumultuous welcome, added to the ovation by playing a stirring Irish march.

AN APPEAL
Addressing the patrons on behalf of the club, Gerard Mac Raols (Secretary) thanked everyone for their support and availed of the opportunity of thanking those who on previous occasions gave their moral and financial support. He appealed for more active support and co-operation and asked the schoolboys and minors of the parish to practice regularly the Gaelic games.

"Our Ceili might aptly be termed a Victory Ceili, as," he added, "we also celebrate the victory of the Armagh minors over Fermanagh. We are proud to claim two of S. Armagh's 3 representatives, and we feel sure they will re-ignite and keep aglow the fame attributed to former Cuchullain Gaelic."

ALL IN IRISH
The duties of soir a tigh were efficiently executed by G. Mac Raols and B. O'Murclada. All the dances were announced in Irish.

BORDER CARNIVAL

IN IRELAND'S LARGEST DANCE MARQUEE

SUN. JULY 24 - SUN. AUGUST 7

PROGRAMME

SUNDAY, 24th JULY
AFTERNOON CEILI
DANCING 2.30 - 5.30
DUELING CEILI BAND
ADMISSION - 1/-

MONDAY, 25th JULY
THE CLIPPERTONES
DANCING 8.00 - 11.00
ADMISSION - 1/-

TUESDAY, 26th JULY
TOP TOWN CONTEST - DUNDALK
CEILI & OLD-TIME
DANCING 8.00 - 11.00
ADMISSION - 1/-

WEDNESDAY, 27th JULY
Cloughogue and Dromalane Guest Tea
TOP TOWN CONTEST - DROGHEDA
DANCING - RAY MORGAN & HIS ORCHESTRA
ADMISSION - 1/-

THURSDAY, 28th JULY
THE SWING EARLS ORCHESTRA
DANCING 8.00 - 11.00
ADMISSION - 1/-

FRIDAY, 29th JULY
WHIST DRIVE - £75 IN PRIZES
TOP SCORE - £50. Some Cards (See Program) - 12/-
DANCING 8.00 - 11.00
ADMISSION - 1/-

SATURDAY, 30th JULY
THE JACK BARRETT ORCHESTRA
WITH TONY SHERIDAN SOCIETY
ADMISSION - 1/-

SUNDAY, 31st JULY
STOCK CAR RACING
MOTOR CYCLE RACING
KILLEAVEY PARK, 7.30 AM - BIG CASH PRIZES
ADMISSION - 1/- 12/- (See Program of Race Day)

STOCK CAR DANCE
IN THE MARQUEE, THE RAY MORGAN ORCHESTRA
DANCING 10.00 - 12.00 AM
ADMISSION - 1/-

EASTER SUNDAY CEREMONIES

PARADE LED BY ST. TERESA'S PIPE BAND
From Parochial Hall, Mullaghbawn, at 10 AM.
St. Mary's for 10 AM. Andertown Mass. followed
by Commemoration Ceremony at Republican Club
CEILI MOR IN PAROCHIAL HALL
Celtic Folk Dance Society Ceili Band
RIZZOE 8.00 - 11.00

Organised Shamrock G.F.C. Ceili



Above - the Ladies' Committee and, below, the Men's Committee of the Shamrock G.F.C. Ceili, organised by the Newry Shamrock G.F.C. in the Newry Parochial Hall.



THE CÉILÍ BANDS ONWARDS

The Burns Family, Camlough

Jimmy Burns, a renowned fiddle player, his sister May Trainor (nee Burns) also an accomplished fiddle player and his younger brother Gerry Burns, the prominent singer, all have had a major influence in the history of Céilí bands and Irish traditional music in the local area and further afield. The Burns family from Camlough has been a widely recognised traditional music family in South Armagh for generations. Jimmy Burns' grandfather, played around the Meigh area.

Jimmy, May and Gerry took up their music from their mother and two uncles, James and Patrick O'Hagan, both fiddle players, who in turn learned their music from their own father James O'Hagan senior, also a fiddle player who played at the occasional wedding in the area. Paddy and James often played together, one being left handed, the other right handed. Another uncle of Jimmy's called Hughie O'Hagan ended up buying a good fiddle for Jimmy when he was twelve years old and Jimmy continues to play the same fiddle today some 72 years later! Many years later the famous London auction house, Sotheby's had a road show in Castlewellan, Co Down, and there they valued Jimmy's fiddle at £2,000.00. At a Fleadh in 1980, the valuable fiddle was left at the rear window of his car parked on a hot summer's day in Lisdoonvama, Co Clare. Exposure to the intensive heat caused major hairline cracks, but was thankfully expertly restored by Mick Delargy, RIP, an expert maker and repairer of fiddles who sadly died all too young and just as his talents were attracting broader recognition.

Hughie arranged fiddle lessons for Jimmy with the well known local tutor Owenie O'Neill from Bessbrook, who besides being an excellent fiddle player was also a well known storyteller.

Eventually Jimmy became Owenie's most promising and diligent pupil, learning two tunes a week. Owenie was one of the few who had a copy of O'Neill's 1001 which he would play on demand from cover to cover, so this and tunes gleaned from Kerr's Merry Melodies were the sources of his teaching repertoire. Jimmy had a robust, resonant tone so it was no small wonder that, at thirteen years of age, he was taken into Ceol an Iubhair. One memorable engagement for the band was the prestigious Céilí Mór of 15th August, 1940 in a packed Newry Town Hall. Jimmy was taken by Owenie to many house and barn dances in the hill country of South Armagh such as the home of John Kane of Annaghcloughmullion where music, song, dance and recitation were performed to the accompaniment of the singing crickets. In his teenage learning days, Jimmy Burns was surreptitiously taken to Doyle's pub

in Camlough on pension day. His elders would have roundly disapproved of the presence of a 13-year old on licensed premises to say nothing of the constabulary in the nearby police station. However, much advice and tunes were freely given by Micksey O'Callaghan of Belleeks whom Jimmy fondly remembers to the present day as important in his development as a traditional fiddler. One of John Kane's daughters later married Kevin Murphy who played in Ceol an Iubhair along with brother Paul who married Eileen Murphy the dancer and niece of Nan Quinn. The tough work, the attendant lengthy travel, the late hours, the loss of sleep and the variable hospitality which are the lot of the band musician are now far behind but Jimmy still nurtures an incurable hunger for the music as a performer and, most importantly, as a diligent and highly successful teacher. In spite of the disabilities of his more than four score years, he continues to teach upwards of twenty pupils. He can recall with pride the success of pupils such as Ursula Byrne, an All-Ireland winner, and Darren Magee, an under 18 prizewinner at national level. Not to be forgotten are the many pupils who have achieved the highest grades in the LCM music examinations up to diploma level. May was both singer and fiddle player. She played and sang in Malachy Sweeney's band, The Fred Hanna Band, Jackie Hearst's and the International Céilí Bands. She was a popular entertainer over a wide area of this region but unfortunately no suitable recording of her playing has been available to include on the accompanying CD.



Edin, Kieran & Jimmy Burns



James Burns, Laura and Eien Matthews and Kate Burns



Gerry Burns

Jimmy won his first medal at the Armagh Feis which was held in the football field in Camlough in 1941. The young lady who came second to Jimmy that day was Mona Makem from Keady. Jimmy also at this time struck up a friendship with another Quarry Row, Bessbrook resident fiddle player called Peter Bradley. The two became life long friends until Peter unfortunately passed away earlier this year.

Owenie O'Neill in due course asked the eighteen year old Jimmy to join him in the "Ceol an Iúir Céilí Band" Following this both May and Gerry Burns also joined Céilí bands. Thus began a life long association with various bands in the area namely The Malachy Sweeney, Johnny Pickering, Vincent Lowe and Jackie Hearst Céilí bands.

Gerry Burns formed the "International Céilí Band" in the early sixties. The members were Jackie Hearst, Fintan Callan, Aven Tohill (nee Kinney), Andy Tohill, May Trainor (nee Burns), Jimmy and Gerry himself. With Gerry being the drummer and singer, this Céilí band played in virtually every county in Ireland and annually in Birmingham, Coventry and Glasgow. The band made regular broadcasts from Dublin in the "Céilí House" programme. They made several recordings through Walton's of Dublin where vocals by Gerry Burns with renditions of "The Bonny Boy" and "Slieve Gallan Brae" proved very popular.

More recently in the late 1990's Jimmy, now in his early seventies, joined the Cathal McNulty Céilí Band where he played until a couple of years ago.

Throughout this period Jimmy Burns and his wife Matilda (informally better known as "Tilly"), reared their family of six children firstly in 1. Camlough Park, Bessbrook and then in 12 Monnina Villas, Camlough Road, Cloughreagh. All the children were encouraged to learn and play traditional music from an early age. The family home would resonate from the sound of music coming from the regular unplanned sessions held in the house when a visiting friend/musician called in to visit. From the early seventies the family travelled the length and breadth of the country attending feadh's, festivals and music classes.

Anne, the eldest, is a music teacher who is a fine piano player and accompanist. Eamon (always referred to in the family as "Jim") is also an accomplished piano player. John also played the tin whistle.

The three youngest sons, namely Paddy (concert flute) and twins Kieran (concertina) and Mark (uilleann pipes) are successful musicians in their own right. The three boys in addition to All-Ireland Senior Scór Groupa Cheoil successes in 1980 and 1995 have numerous individual All-Ireland Comhaltas Ceolteoirí Éireann successes in all age groups up to and including the senior categories.

This musical dynasty continues today with Jimmy's and Tilly's grandchildren, the majority of whom have taken up the challenge of continuing the music and dancing tradition. Anne's daughter, Siobhan, is also a qualified music teacher, Eamon's two daughters, Claire & Naoimh, besides being expert dancers, are fine fiddle players taught by their grandfather Jimmy. Paddy's daughter Mary Kate is carrying on her father's flute playing. Kieran's first son James carries on the concertina tradition with his second son Eoin playing the fiddle and also being taught by the grandfather, Jimmy. Mark's daughter Aoife is already a fine banjo player, and his son Eamon is also learning the tin whistle, in anticipation for the task of carrying on the uilleann pipes tradition like his own father.

In April 2005 Jimmy was invited to meet Irish President Mary McAleese in her residence in Dublin where she commended him for his long association with Comhaltas Ceolteoirí Éireann and his continued contribution in the promotion of Traditional Irish music.

Jimmy sons, Paddy, Kieran and Mark also continue to teach music on their respective instruments the flute, concertina and uilleann pipes. With Jimmy still teaching the fiddle to a lucky few at the grand old age of 83, the Burns family have supported and encouraged various traditional musical groups/outlets/sessions/feadh's etc in South Armagh for a generation now and have been an inspirational foundation in nurturing and developing traditional Irish music and culture in the area.



May Trainor's daughter Annette being congratulated by Paul Murphy and Brendan De Giin for winning the best young dancer under 5 medal at Newry Feis.



May Trainor nee Burns an accomplished fiddle player and singer circa 1963

Louis Quinn

Louis Quinn, born in Newtownhamilton in 1904, was probably the best known South Armagh fiddler. Before emigrating to Canada in 1928 he had taken some lessons from the fine Outlacken fiddler Henry Savage. Shortly afterwards he left for New York City where he settled in 1933. He quickly became immersed in the Irish music scene establishing lasting friendships with the top traditional musicians of the time including legendary fiddlers Michael Coleman, James Morrison and James "Lad" O'Beirne. With "Lad" he formed a most accomplished duo which can be heard on the remastered Rounder CD "The Milestone at the Garden" (1123 - 1996).

Another close relationship was with the prolific Cavan emigrant composer Ed Reavy two of whose tunes he recorded with Mick Moloney (guitar). He formed his own band - Louis E. Quinn and his Shamrock Minstrels, a sample of which can be heard on Old Time Records (Vol.1 U.S. recordings).

On his few visits to South Armagh he was responsible for introducing the compositions of Ed Reavy. Josephine Keegan well remembers a visit arranged by the late Kevin Murphy in 1948 to her house when he taught her the most popular of the Reavy tunes "The Hunter's House." Louis used these visits to the homeland to record, and to bring back to America the playing of musicians who would be relatively unknown to listeners across the ocean.

In the summer of 1950 he visited the musicians of South East Donegal. Frank Cassidy (1900-1971) agreed to record some music, a novel way to communicate with his sister in the Bronx, and five of these tracks can be heard in the posthumous remastered CD of Frank's fiddling, issued this year by Cairdeas na bhFidiléirí, which included the enigmatic Japanese Hompipe.

In 1979 the Quinn Family issued an LP (MG 100) entitled "Music from the Glen" which was released as OAS 3016 in Ireland by Outlet Records. With his now deceased friends Ed Reavy and Frank Thornton he founded the Irish Music Association, becoming its first President and National Chairman. The association quickly branched out into Brooklyn, the Bronx, Queens, Long Island and Minneola. Louis was instrumental in incorporating the I.M.A. branches into Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann in the 1970s.

Throughout his life, he was a dedicated ambassador for Irish music on both sides of the Atlantic, popularising the compositions of his friend Ed Reavy.

Louis passed from this life shortly before his 87th birthday in March 1991 leaving five sons, Seán, Brian, Kevin, Louis Jnr and Pat, and two daughters, Mary Lou and Kathleen all of whom are carrying on the musical and dancing traditions.

It is hoped that much more information on this great fiddle player and his family will be available in a future publication by the Quinn family.

The Bradley Family

Another family that has had long links with the revival of traditional music is The Bradley Family originally from Quarry Row, now Father Cullen Park.



Peter Bradley, who died in 2007, at the age of eighty nine, was a life long friend of Jimmy Burns, Owenie O'Neill, Paul Murphy and Eddie McParland. He became interested in traditional music from a young age and played at many house céilís and barn dances in the area in their company. He bought his first fiddle in a pawn shop in Newry and was taught how to read music by Andy Haughey of Bessbrook. In later years Peter collected and mended fiddles as a hobby right up until his death. Three of his sons carry on the tradition, John, (fiddle) Walter (whistle) and Augustine (button accordion and melodeon) while Walter's and accordionist and Laurence has been known to play a tune or two on the banjo occasionally.

Sisters, Bernie Ui Luaois and Geraldine Bradley are fine singers of songs in both Irish and English, Geraldine having made a solo CD, *Clochfhauarain, From the Rising Spring*, in 2007. daughter, Aoife is at the age of thirteen, a promising young fiddle player. Peter's brother, Willie Bradley played the cornet with the Camlough I.N.F. Brass and Reed Band. His wife, Sheila, nee McKeown, was a reciter of poetry with an interest in singing. Small wonder that their cultural interests were passed on to their children. Willie's son, Joe, plays fiddle, concertina and tin whistle as well as being a fine traditional singer in both Irish and English. He was runner up in the Fiddler of Oriel competition in 1974 held in Monaghan and was among the performers assembled by the three sons, Cathal, Manus and Sean Óg, of the late Seán Ó Baoill of Armagh, to produce a long-playing record of the music and song of Oriel in 1978.

He was also the inspiration for his brother Paul Bradley, an accomplished fiddler now resident in Galway. Paul's debut solo album, *Atlantic Roar*, was issued on the Outlet label in 1997. Paul had been a talented pupil of Josephine Keegan before being trained as a violin-maker and repairer under the tuition of Paul Bowers, Patrick Jowett, Bharat Kandekar and Paul Harrid. Having graduated from the University of Nottingham with an Arts degree in violin making and repair, he now runs a successful business in Galway making fiddles and mending damaged string instruments. Paul managed and played with the well-known traditional music group Dorsa which included the accomplished South Armagh button accordionist, Martin Quinn, and fine Monaghan piper, Tiamán Ó Duinncinn, the husband of singer, Stephanie Makem, the great, granddaughter of the renowned Sarah Makem. The group tour USA and Europe regularly and formed part of Ireland's musical representation at EXPO 2000 in Hanover, the year of their debut CD, *The Wild Music of the Gael*.

Other members of Willie's family also have great interest in instrumental and

music. Dominic Bradley, MLA and teacher, also plays the fiddle. Brother Pat is an excellent singer. The whole Bradley family are synonymous with the revival of the Irish language and five of the clan are teachers of Irish in local schools.



Two generations of The Bradley Family, In session, Augustine on accordion, Walter on whistle and daughter Aoife on fiddle.

Seamus Sands

Family Background

Séamus Sands' mother (Magennis) was born in Camlough and his father (Sands) was born in Newry. His mother's parents were both from Camlough and his father's mother was from Belleek.

Music was handed down from both sides of the family. Grandfather Jimmy Sands was an accomplished fiddle player and brother of Mick "The Chief" Sands, fiddle-playing father of the well known Sands Family. The generation before that were fiddle players also. His mother's father was a very good singer and a fiddle was passed down through that side of the house also. Séamus' brothers and sisters also play when they get a chance when not busy with their own young children, a number of who now are aspiring fiddle players, including Séamus' own daughters who play fiddle.



Seamus and daughter Clare performing at Cork Folk Festival 2006.

Musical Background

He started out playing tin-whistle and was taught classical violin by Mrs Cronin in Newrya great grounding for appreciating tone and control on a fiddle. In the mid 1970s he learned a lot of his first traditional tunes on the fiddle at Comhaltas sessions in the old library in Newry. Séamus clearly remember the patience and encouragement of people such as Paddy Rafferty (piano), Willie McSherry (box), Dermot Macken (fiddle) and others. The main tunes played were not reels, as might be the case today, but were set dances, hornpipes, airs and single jigs..... tunes such as the Downfall of Paris, the Lodge Road, and the Three Tunes just being some examples of those that were regularly played, with a strong emphasis on rhythm but no great rush through the tunes!

Some time later he attended classes run in Camlough school by Jimmy Burns who introduced him to a lot of great fiddle tunes and techniques including ornamentation.

Some of the local families he played with around that time were the Burns, Bradley and Drain families.

Seamus had the benefit of meeting and learning from some of the legendary Clare fiddlers including Bobby Casey, John Kelly (Snr), Joe Ryan, Junior Crehan, Martin Rochford, and Paddy Canny.



Martin Rochford, Junior Crehan, and Séamus sharing a few tunes well over a decade ago

Séamus was very fortunate to live for some time within a stone's throw of Josephine Keegan and regularly got the chance to play with her at the Ceili House in Newry. If he didn't know the pedigree of a tune or was struggling with it then Josephine would surely have the answer! Séamus is also indebted to Sean O'Driscoll (Newry) and Gerry Doyle (Kilkeel) for their encouragement.

The Gallagher Sisters

Bronac and Niamh Gallagher are two musicians from Jonesboro who have held a prominent place in the music of South Armagh. Bronac is a distinguished traditional harper and is currently living in Australia. Niamh is a talented fiddle player and is completing her studies at University College London.

Bronac was first introduced to the harp at the age of eight. Soon after, she was playing music under the teaching of harpist, Aileen McArdle. Bronac continued with the classical harp and both girls joined the 'Warrenpoint Comhaltas', where Niamh renounced her bass playing for the fiddle under the teaching of Jimmy Bums.



Bronac Gallagher

It was at the 'Fiddlers' Green' festival in Rostrevor that Bronac, who had just started secondary school, attended her first traditional harp lesson under the teaching of Janet Harbison, one of Ireland's most prominent harpers. Bronac's transition from classical music to Irish traditional was completed. Through continued lessons with Janet, Bronac was invited to join the prestigious Belfast Harp Orchestra.

Niamh eventually took lessons from renowned Antrim fiddler and fiddle maker, Jim McKillop. Throughout the years, Niamh has also tried her hand at the bodhran, banjo, concertina and bouzouki, but it was her love for the fiddle which prevailed.

The girls cannot talk about their musical histories without reference to their locality of South Armagh. Sessions in the Welcome Inn at Forkhill, O' Hanlons in Mullaghbawn and the Railway Bar in Newry sparked the beginning of an enduring relationship with local musicians and proprietors. The Cunnane family, Terry Conlon, Justin Toner, Robbie Doolan, the Quinns, Bernard O'Hanlon and Ciaran McDonnell, to name but a few, fostered the girls' passion for traditional music and have become friends for life.

Niamh's love for the fiddle developed into a career, performing at festivals across the world like the 'Celtic Colours' festival in Nova Scotia with local musicians Terry Conlon, Robbie Doolan and Patsy Quinn to the 'Festivale Interceltique' in Lorient.

In September 2004, Niamh was asked to join Michael Flatley's 'Lord of the Dance' as one of two fiddle players, making her the youngest musician in the show's history to have attained that position. She was then invited to play alongside Michael in his new production, 'Celtic Tiger', where she performed live on 'Good Morning America' to millions across America, and on stage in such prestigious venues as Madison Square Garden, Wembley Arena and the Point Theatre, and in countries as far flung as Mexico, China and Taiwan.



Niamh Gallagher in Lord of the Dance

Pat & Kay Rice

Twins Pat and Kay Rice, children of John Rice of Jonesboro, himself a talented fiddler in his younger days, were sent to learn piano in Newry at the age of eight years. Accordionist virtuoso Jackie Hearst made a deep impression on Pat so, at the age of twelve, he took accordion lessons with Dan Alexander in Dundalk. Later on, influenced by Mary O'Hara, Kay travelled every week for three years to Dublin to be trained on the Irish harp by Sheila Larchet.

In their later teens, the twins performed at many local concerts, Kay alternating singing to her own harp playing with piano accompaniment of Pat on the piano accordion. They successfully auditioned for Ráidíó Éireann and BBC and gave their first broadcast in April, 1958. Frequent further broadcasts followed, including appearances of the BBC Country Céili series produced by Sam Denton with Jack Sloan as fear a' tì. Occasionally, Pat played with the Vincent Lowe and John Murphy Céili Bands but a full-time career in music held little appeal in his busy business life.

Both Pat and Kay accompanied teacher Arthur Burns and his senior dancers on several visits to continental folk festivals in southern France, Portugal and Italy although a projected American tour in 1963 was cancelled at the last minute. For a time Kay taught the harp and among her distinguished pupils were Eithne Cassidy, Máiréad Daly and Siobhán Farrell.

During a holiday in North America Pat guested with the Clancy Brothers' Céili Band in New York. Pat, originally from Moy and for a time a member of the Seán McGuire Céili Band, emigrated to the United States where he formed his own band which included his brother Eugene.

Other notable appearances of the Rice Twins included the St. Patrick's Night Ceol na Féile in the Dublin Gaiety Theatre dates in Scotland and Ireland with Kenneth McKellar, the Lord Mayor's Banquet in Belfast and recital at Stormont and the UTV series The Fiddle and the Flute. In spite of these prestigious engagements, professional music careers held no appeal for them and in the late 1960s they both retired into quiet, comfortable married life.



Pat and Kay Rice of Jonesborough circa 1960.

Newry Feis Fiddler Leads Traditional Music Revival

MR. JOHN CONWAY, Keady traditional violinist, and one of the most popular personalities connected with Newry Music Feis (Irish Dancing Section) for the past 25 years, has organised a "festival" to stimulate a greater interest in traditional Irish music—and the entire "festival" is being carried out by means of a tape-recorder.

HE is being assisted by Mr. Cyril Woods, a Keady publican, who is, however, a non-musician.

With two other local fiddlers—farmer Michael Gaffney and Electricity Board employee Jack Mekin, they have organised the "festival" to stimulate a greater interest in traditional Irish music and prevent it from dying out.

During the past number of weeks, more than 20 fiddlers from the surrounding districts of Middletown, Darkley, Derrygoose and Madden have been in Keady to record a reel, a jig and a hornpipe.

Last night (Friday) the "tapes" were played back to the adjudicator—an expert on traditional music whose identity is being kept secret.

Prizes which have been donated by Mr. Woods are a silver challenge cup and medals for the runners-up.

From behind his bar Mr. Woods said: "In this age of radio and television people have their entertainment 'ready-made.' But it's a pity to see old music and country ceildhes fading out of the picture.

"They are part of a culture, and I think it's a good thing that they should be kept alive."

Fostering their preservation perhaps more than anyone else is Mr. Conway.

The tradition was handed down to him by his father and his repertoire runs into hundreds of tunes. He has been playing regularly since he was disabled when 11 years of age.

Now he is passing them on—for since the "Festival" competition was announced almost a dozen would-be musicians between the ages of 15 and 50 have come to him asking for tuition.

Mr. Conway is only too happy to oblige and charges no fee. And the number interested continues to grow—more and more fiddles are being "resurrected" from dusty attics.



John's 32nd appearance

Josephine Keegan

Josephine Keegan from Mullaghbawn, through her unique talents as a musician, teacher, composer and collector, has been a major contributor to the Irish traditional music and dance culture in South Armagh and further afield. She is now treasured throughout Ireland and in traditional music circles throughout the world for recording, compiling, and collecting irreplaceable music that may otherwise have been lost. By learning from her mother at a very early age to write down accurately the music and tunes she heard, she has been able to compile and compose a substantial collection of Irish traditional music whose benefits are only recently being acknowledged.

"The Keegan Tunes" her first book, is a savoured collection of her own composed tunes, many with specific local references and names from South Armagh. Within this book you can feel the local influences, characters, place names, stories etc that help stir the mind of such talented people as Josephine to compose a new tune.

Another book, "A Drop in the Ocean" is a substantial collection of the many tunes Josephine has collected on her personal journey in traditional music circles over the years. She is rightly proud of this collection which is now fervently used by musicians and teachers throughout the many varied channels of Irish traditional music idioms.

Josephine picked up her music from her parents Joe and Alice Keegan. Soon after leaving Our Lady's Boarding School she joined the Ceol an Iubhair Ceili Band from Newry, playing fiddle and piano. Participation also in The John Murphy Ceili Band from Cregganduff followed. In 1955 she won an Oireachtas All-Ireland gold medal for fiddle playing while continuing to record numerous Radio Eireann, Telefís Eireann and BBC Radio and television broadcasts with many of the renown solo artists and ceili bands of the time, many of whom are detailed in this book. She also recorded five albums on the Outlet label playing both fiddle and piano accompaniment.

Over the years when not playing in ceili bands or recording, she assisted aspiring musicians in her native South Armagh, in many different ways, to understand, play and respect the tradition. Josephine continues today to play an active role in sessions, concerts and festivals both here in South Armagh and abroad. In recent times she has been assisted in her musical undertakings by The Arts Council of Northern Ireland and by Ceol Camlocha.



Sean O'Driscoll, Josephine Keegan, Joe Devlin and John Conway taking time off from playing for the Irish Dancing Competitions at Newry Feis.
(Photo supplied by Nan O'Driscoll, formerly McParland and niece of the well known fiddle player John Roe McParland)

Martin Quinn

Originating in the townland of Carricknagavna in South Armagh, Martin comes from a family of musicians, singers and storytellers.

Always taking a keen interest in the music he made the accordion his instrument of choice in 1981 and has since then acquired a wealth of tunes and developed his own unique style of playing and is now highly regarded as 'one of the best today.'

In his professional music career he has travelled widely throughout Europe and USA, playing at many festivals and with various groups, including La Lugh.

In 1996 Martin received the TTCT Diploma from the Irish Department of Education and Comhaltas Ceoltoiri Eireann, for teaching the 2-row button accordion.

He has featured on national and international radio and TV, and taken part on Paul Bradley's 'Atlantic Roar' album and is currently working on Na Dorsa's second CD.

The beautiful album Martin made with Angelina Carerry has been widely acclaimed.

Martin played solo on two tracks of the Double Album of 'The Keegan Tunes.'

Nowadays, when not playing, Martin Quinn is in demand as a teacher, and also as an accordion tuner and repairer.



Briege and Patricia Quinn

Cousins of Martin Quinn, and coming from the same Carricknagavna musical background, these sisters are known for their playing of traditional music, Briege on fiddle and Patricia on accordion and also for their singing in unison.

Travelling and working keeps them apart for most of the time now but they are always welcome at the local sessions accompanied by their mother, Philomena, on banjo.

The both took part a few years ago in the making of a double album of Josephine Keegan's compositions, and also on a 'Ceili House' RTE broadcast.

Briege has since been to Boston where she featured on a CD. 'The Magic Square.'

No doubt, there will be much more to read about, and listen to, concerning these talented ladies.



Michael Conlon



Michael could well be described as 'the quiet man' of music in South Armagh. He comes from the townland of Comonagh, right on the border with Co. Louth.

He and his brother, Pat, were playing traditional music in the forties. Pat is no longer with us and Michael has been for quite a few years now, and octiginarian.

Michael plays the fiddle and has lots of old tunes. He suffered a stroke a few years ago but was not to be beaten. Very shortly after that he resumed playing the fiddle and has never looked back. He may well have played for house dances, barn dances and wedding celebrations etc but never got involved with playing for any monetary reward.

Over the years he has done much playing at charity events and still attends the sessions in Keenan's Bar in Crossmaglen occasionally, though he has been seen in Silverbridge too, and Mullaghbawn last year!

He has passed on his music to his grandchildren who often play with him and I'm sure they make him very proud indeed.

He is pictured playing with them, and also with his son Martin and Mary Crilly, his neice.



Patrick MacCionnaith



Reared in the townland of Emy, close to Emyvale, North County Monaghan, Pat grew up in the 1940s and 1950s listening to the music of his uncle, Pat McKenna and other musicians from North Monaghan and South Tyrone. He learned his first tunes in 1964 guide by his uncle.

(The Uncle Pat, from Ballagh in Tyrone played celli, oldtime and modern music, firstly with the Mullan Melody Makers. One of the venues they played at was the local dancing deck, built by Barney Kerr, on the Monaghan bank of the River Blackwater at Ballagh Bridge, (also known as Burn's Bridge on the Emyvale road. He remembers playin sometimes four nights a week, for a pound a night!)

The set-dancing revival of the 1980s awakened Patrick's interest in the old ways of dancing. Introduced to set dancing, initially by Gemma Brolly and John Butler from Armagh, he was greatly influenced by the teaching of Joe and Siobhan O'Donovan from Co Cork, whom he first met at a workshop in Bush, Co.Louth in 1984.

He became involved in the revival of set dances and two-hand dances, and invited by Iarlaith he taught his first set dancing class in Port Mor in 1985. The growing interest led to classes in various places over the next seven years.

It was in Armagh that Patrick met his French wife, Corinne, who also taught dancing, and he moved with her to the Occitan region of France, where they are both involved with the promotion of the local music and dance. Since taking his degrees in both cultures Pat has organized two-way exchange cultural visits between his adopted region in France and the areas he left behind.

Through the Franco-Irish Association, and Patrick's music teaching, Irish music is flourishing in Colomiers and further afield. He brought a group of musicians over to visit Monaghan, Tyrone and Armagh in the summer of 1996.

There was a return visit to France that followed in 1998, organized with Sean O'Chuinn, Ti Chulainn, Mullaghbawn, when fifteen musicians and dancers from Tyrone, South Armagh and County Louth visited the Toulouse region.

Since then Patrick has been in regular contact with teachers and musicians like Mary Fox, Betty Molloy, Josephine Keegan and others and in December, 2004, Frederic Bourdois put a group of fiddlers through their paces, (including Eithne Vallely of the Pipers' Club in Armagh,) learning bourees and other rhythms at an Occitan Workshop in Quinn's of Camlough. Josephine Keegan, Kathleen Gavin, Martin Hayes and Denis Cahill spent a few days in the area in 2007.

There is now a good core of people in the Toulouse area playing Irish music, and dancing regularly. Some of these are frequent visitors to Ireland. Some are teaching in their own areas in the South of France and have integrated Irish music and dance classes into their local activities. The next 'step' is keeping up with them!

(Patrick MacCionnaith has done all the music notation and type-setting of the music for this publication)

Owenie Crilly 1921-1999



While other bands from the County spread their wings throughout the country and further afield, Owenie Crilly, while living at home, was happy to serve the community within a workable radius.

Mullaghbawn, of course, was his home territory and he was a popular figure in Forkhill, Lislea, Jonesborough, Faughiletra and Mount Pleasant. In the early days, too, Francis Byrnes, from Carrif, would play accordion with him occasionally and Pat McCann from Carrickasticken, the drums.

Like many young men of his time, he went to England to work, settling in Liverpool for a while and in his spare time, playing for Céilí s in the Shamrock Club there.

When he returned home from England he formed a band that was much sought after to play for the local Céilí s. His band was versatile in being able to play for old-time and modern dances too.

Owenie, himself, played piano accordion, brothers Leo and Joe Collins on tenor and alto sax, Paddy Cumiskey on fiddle, Joe Byrne (from Dundalk and now living near Forkhill) or sometimes Michael McQuade, on drums, Eva Cassidy on piano and Colman Hearty, singer. Most of these were from Crossmaglen where the band was a great hit with the locals.

Although he was known to take the accordion on the bicycle in the early days he often sought the services of Pete Murphy from Mullaghbawn to drive him and when he had the band, Eva Cassidy's husband Tom, and sometimes his brother, Benny, did the driving.

Owenie went off again in 1957, this time to Queen's, New York where he lived until 1984, playing his music with the pick of musicians, often for weddings and parties too.

After he came back to Mullaghbawn he just played a little locally and informally at parties and social functions. Although the advancing years curtailed his playing he did carry on as best he could, playing for the Senior Citizens' evenings until shortly before his death and his is a household name in this area and will be for many years.

Patrick James McKinlay



Patrick was born in Aughanduff in the parish of Mullaghbawn in 1917 to parents Bernard John and Catherine and was the youngest of a family of six. After leaving the local school at 14, he took an interest in playing music on the accordion, learning the air of the tune from the liting of his mother and became well-known for his story telling too and was a great favourite at the local plays and dance halls, also playing music at parties.

He married Mary Murphy in 1959 and had a family of five boys, none of whom have followed in his footsteps.

Bobby Hanvey of Downtown Radio, recorded him a number of times, usually around Christmas when he would make predictions for the New Year, and, believe it or not, many of these did come true.

He was a natural story teller and renowned for his outstanding memory which did put many a person to the test. His knowledge of the people of his community was tremendous and he had a story to tell about everyone.

A beautiful tribute was paid to him a few years ago, when a night's music was organized in his honour by Bernard O'Hanlon, the local Publican. All the local musicians gathered in to play for, and with him, and he was presented with a trophy in appreciation of his contribution to the heritage of the parish.

Although he is no longer with us, his memory will live on, both as a musician and a great story teller.

Other Musicians and Musical Families

Mullaghbawn and Forkhill areas are renowned for their encouragement of the singing tradition, especially since the "Singing Weekend" was established and drew crowds from all over the country.

These are names of some musicians and musical families who kept instrumental tradition alive.

It is not a comprehensive list, as it is well nigh impossible to compile such a list. It is rather, a jotting down, at random, some names of players that were and are familiar and to the forefront of today's memory. They may not have any direct association with the ceili band music or dancing.

Many other present-day musicians are featured on the CD'S and DVD of this project.

The Cumiskey Family, well known for their shops in Crossmaglen and also for their music shop in Dundalk, had some members who played various instruments and one in particular who played accordion.

The McAllister Brothers are much sought after for local functions and Martin has played guitar accompaniment on a few ablums. The youngest members of the family are now coming to the fore.

The Garragher Sisters, are highly qualified classical musicians as well as excellent traditional players. They all play piano and fiddle and Danielle also plays harp. Natasha, Marcella, Danielle and Nicole were valued members of the fiddle group, Fainne Cairde, until their college education took up so much of their time.

Grainne Clarke, a member of the well-known musical family, was one of the first to record and broadcast songs in the Irish language.

Patrick Martin, from Inniskeen, is a young man with a future in Irish music as a very skilled uilleann piper.

Seamus Bellew, from the same general area, is one of the few button accordion players that we have. His wife is also musical and plays piano too. Seamus was a member of the all-Ireland winning Tain Ceili Band.

Terry Conlon, another piano accordion player, has now returned to live in his native Cullyhanna and is very active on the music scene.

Dennis Heaney, too, another player of the same instrument, inherits his music from the Heaney family in Silverbridge. Many of the Heaneys were well known for their fiddle playing and possibly fiddle making before his time.

Michael McCreesh from Aughanduff also played, repaired and made fiddles and helped many musicians in their efforts to do the same.

Michael Quinn, of Aughanduff, is popular in the same area playing guitar and singing at local functions and plays accompaniment to traditional music with which he is familiar.

The Byrnes Family of Kilcurry; Susan, Louise and Nicola are grand children of the late Francis Byrnes, who played with the Owenie Crilly Band. Susan plays piano and piano accordion. Louise plays piano and 2-row button accordion and Nicola plays piano and fiddle. They often play at the Forkhill sessions on a Tuesday night and Nicola played on the CD with the fiddle group, Fainne Cairde.

There were also two brothers, **Pat and Michael Bennett** from Mullaghbawn who played fiddles.

Today the local Bridge bar, **The Real McCoy** and **The Stray Leaf** are the meeting places for not only the local musicians, but those from all over the country, encouraged by the proprietor, **Bernard O'Hanlon**, himself a multi-instrumentalist and singer. As well as the regular local musicians, occasional visitors might be **Peter Mackie** on fiddle and his wife **Patricia** on concertina and a neighbour of theirs, **Paul Flynn**, who also joins in on fiddle when he can get home from Dublin where he is now involved with **The Arts Council**.

Gerry Quinn often leads on banjo and **Niall O'Callaghan** plays guitar accompaniment and sings. The most regular of guitarists are **Mickey & Rory Cunnane**, (father and son), who each have a distinct playing and singing style. Indeed the pub is such a favourite with musicians that are often impromptu sessions of music, sometimes during the day, and sometimes in the evening, with people from all over the country, and from all parts of the world.

The O'Callaghan families of Belleeks have been playing traditional music now through several generations, and are much too numerous to mention for fear of leaving someone out, but suffice it to say, that the county owes them a dept for their commitment and tenacity in passing on to the young generation who have been successful in many competitions now and have become well known in local circles.

James McKnight, from Whitecross is a piano accordion player who plays at many functions throughout the country.

Justin Toner, a fine fiddle player, is a school teacher in Ballymoyer and that probably explains why he might not have as much time for taking parts in sessions as he might wish, but when he does, his music is a treat to listen to.

Justin McIlvenna, played fiddle with some of the best ceili bands around for many years, including the **Mowhan Ceili Band**, and so became better known in that capacity than as a solo player. Both he and **Hughie Conway** from Derrynoose had an influence on the fiddle playing of **Thomas Smyth**.

Husband and wife, **Thomas and Rosie Smyth**, of Derrynoose, are both known, not only as fiddle players, but for their music teaching qualities. **Thomas** is a proud owner of a fiddle, which was made by the late **Michael Dekargy** of Newry. He teaches at the **Armagh Pipers' Club**, among other locations, and **Rosie** has charge of the traditional music group in **Our Lady's Grammar School Newry**.

James Hughes of Camlough and **Patrick McNulty** of Sturgan are both promising young flute players taught by **Paddy Burns** of Camlough and already have some awards to their credit.

Willie McSherry, Hilltown, was a member of the **Caomhaltas Ceoltoiri Eireann** who frequented the Tuesday night sessions in Forkhill. He was a fine 2 row button accordion player and also a very competent repairer and tuner of the instrument.

Barney Gribben, Rostrevor was a regular part of the Monday night sessions in **Fintan Callan's Pub**, playing banjo with **Fintan** on piano accordion.

John Conway, from Keady, where he was both a tailor and a music teacher, had a great influence on fiddle playing in the county and was a favourite musician to play for Irish dancing competitions. He was especially well known at the **Newry Feis** where he played for the dancers each year, almost since it began, and was often assisted on fiddle by **Joe Devlin**. **Joe** was from **Tassagh** and a pupil of **John Conways's**. He went on to become a schoolteacher and played in some of the ceili bands of the day, including **Sean McSweeney's** and **Jimmy McNamara's**.





REMINISCENCES

Micil Quinn Remembers



Micil in typical pose recanting an old story.

Micil Quinn, at the tender age of 82, has a clear and sharp recollection of the heady days of house dances, ceils and sessions in his native South Armagh. In particular, Mick fondly recounts his earliest recollections of these happy, music and dance filled days in Annachloughmullion and, later, in Mullabawn where he settled.

He vividly remembers Nan Quinn coming up to a house-party in Annachloughmullion in 1938. There were 45 dancers- and the most popular dances were The Trip to the Cottage, TheThreeTunes, Sweets of May, Garyowen, Miss Clouds Reel, and the Connaughtman's Rambles. Other popular dances included Barn Dances, Schottisches and the Spanish Schottische, Lucy Farr and the Stack of Barley were just two favourites which guaranteed getting dancers to the floor.

Jimmy Burns learned Betty Black, McCloud's Reel, the Princess Royal, (by O'Carolan,) and many others in Annachloughmullion. The King's Head tune morphed into the Soldiers Joy, a more acceptable title in the republican heartland. The same fate befell other tunes of English influence such as The Queen's Wedding and the King's Heads. Peter Joseph and Terry McParland and Mick danced these tunes often.

One of the musicians Micil recalls who had these tunes was Martina Savage's mother, Marrita, a daughter of Francis Quinn, who later married a son of Henry Savage, to whom the preservation of this music is most accredited. Indeed, Jimmy Burns regards Annachloughmullion as something of a sacred shrine where he was first introduced to these old and rare tunes and dances.

Other musicians who were prominent at these house dances included fiddlers Francis Quinn, Old Paddy and Young Paddy McVerry, John Joe Larkin, Wee Mick O'Callaghan, John Kane and others.

John Kane had returned from America where he had been an acquaintance of the great Michael Coleman. Coleman, on occasions, would have come to John Kane

to borrow his fiddle, when his own might have been pawned. John picked up tunes and influences from Coleman.

Patsy Morgan (Runcan)

Patsy Morgan spent years working in Runcan in England. When he returned home he had the habit of prefacing most comments with, "When I was in Runcan...", a refrain that attracted the nickname thereafter of Patsy Runcan. He was an avid dancer, and often went straight from working flax in the bog directly to a house dance or Céili.

Runcan, Micil, his father John Ned, Jimmy Burns, Eddie and Jim McParland and friends often made their way on Sundays to John Kane's house at Camlough for a day of dancing. The standard of dances and music was equalled only by the high standard of hospitality, consisting of tea, boiled eggs, and sandwiches to fuel the dancers. All the Kane's children were girls, who lent a hand to ensure bounty of well prepared food for the revellers. Bean a' Ti who supervised the culinary proceedings was John's wife, Kathleen Murphy from Whitecross. One of the Kane girls married a doctor in Markethill, and played the banjo, while the rest of the girls all emigrated to England.

Micil and Jimmy recalled the Céilí bands that were prominent in the 30's and 40's. Ceol an luir included Owenie O'Neill, fiddle, Paddy McParland, Jimmy Burns and Dermot Hughes from William Street.

Nan and Tomas Farrelly, a well-known dance collector recorded the dances at house dances at Annachloughmullion. Figures and music were written down so that musicians and dancers were in unison. Often, local musicians heard their tunes being played on the radio (wireless!)

Micil is adamant that Runcan was a key figure in saving the old dances, and that his seminal contribution should be recognised. Without him, many of these dances would have been lost.

Runcan never married, and, having no partner, often danced with Micil.

Peter Joseph Quinn, Runcan and Micil went to great lengths to get to Ceillis. Runcan couldn't ride a bike, which for the young dancers was the only means of transport available to them. One ingenious method they adopted was to borrow the safety board from a cart, and hook it to the bar of the two bikes. Runcan then sat on the board, grabbed the two cyclists around each shoulder to create stability, and off they went!

One night they rounded the corner at Sturgan Brae and ploughed straight into two cows on the blind bend. The hapless trio ended up in the ditch, with the wheel of one of the bikes buckled, putting an end to the amorous intent for the night.

The Federation Hall, was located at the site of McShane's House, at Camlough Lake, and, being a popular venue for dances in the 30's and 40's, was also a prime target for our free wheeling trio. Micil recalls another mishap at the dreaded Sturgan Brae, when Runcan's foot caught on wheel. . Wee rubber laced boots were standard fashion during the War years, and Runcan's left boot got ripped in the accident. It ripped at the toe, revealing his unsocked toes. Hughie Murphy, the Drover's house was adjacent to the Hall, and on spotting the dancer's dilemma, offered the loan of a good pair of boots. Runcan opted instead for one of four discarded leather boots he spotted in the barn. Suitably provided for by a right blue welly and a left brown

leather boot, Runcan and Micil proceeded to dance, and never missed a step! Paddy Killeavy was there that night, and when pressed to sing a song while the hard working musicians took a break, Paddy treated everyone to a couple of verses of Faith of our Fathers! Barney McConnell, who owned a shop in Camlough, was MC.

Micil explained how the Planters from Scotland settled in the better farmland around Portadown, and how the interface between that part of Armagh and South Armagh impacted on the development of traditional dances.

They brought dances and tunes like the Kings Head, Queens Wedding etc

Down through the years, these dances and songs such as the Dewy Glens of Yarrow, Caroline from Edinburgh town, Show me the road to Bonnie Dundee, intermingled with the Irish dances – The Sweets of May, The Trip to the Cottage, Down the Broom, Garryowen, the Eight-hand Reel and the Eight –hand Jig. These dances were performed and the songs sung at mixed gatherings – weddings, American wakes and flax-pulling dances – down through the years. There were words to some, such as The King's Head.

'We all gather round the aul' king's head.

We all gather round the aul' king's head.

We all gather round the aul' king's head.

The young king's crowned 'cause the aul' king's dead."

Most of the Irish and the Scottish dances were 'clap dances' and involved intricate clapping routines in time with the music.

As described above, Mick was a committed dancer, and as the house dances gave way to Céilís in bigger Halls, Mick was a big follower of the Céilí bands of the era. He singled out the McCusker Brothers-all nine of them-as one of the most popular and influential, whose frequent appearances on RTE conferred status and popularity on the great Armagh Ceilí Band tradition. .

He recalls the McCuskers' bus being burned in Portadown around 1937. Benignus McCusker was youngest of the famous brothers.

Other popular bands included Johnny Pickering, and Malachy Sweeney, (the self-crowned Céilí King), May, Gerry and Jimmy Burns played with Malachy at one time Ceol an Iuir, Jimmy was with Jackie Hearst and International band as well.

Jimmy and siblings also played with Craobh Ruadh for many years, and Jimmy was just 13 years old on his debut in Newry Town Hall.

Gerry Malone, drummer, based in Dublin, played with Packie Joe.

Gene Malone, another band member, always insisted against intrusive foot tapping. " Move your feet inside your boots," he would often insist, "instead of foot tapping."

The Connaughtman's Rambles was another tune strongly identified with this area and era, and a dance that has largely been forgotten. Mick is delighted that it has been revived and that it features on the Dance DVD that accompanies this book

Peter Joe Quinn and the Fíor Céilí fraternity objected to the sets, insisting that they were old Morris Dances. This view was widespread for a while, but in latter years opposition relented, and the sets have regained some of their popularity.

Mick regrets that there never was a Ceilí in Forkhill, hence the dependency on the bike to get to Céilí in Mullaghbawn, Newry, Warrenpoint, Armagh and elsewhere. Bobby Langan, Mick recalls, was a popular Fear a' Ti at the Ceilís in The Parochial Hall, Newry, and farther afield.

Mick and Peter Joseph used to take bikes, coats tied to the bar, to go to ceilís in Warrenpoint, over twelve miles away, and to Armagh City.

A fiddle player from Dromore, Jimmy Cromac, an All Ireland Champion, called one night at Fintan Callan's pub in Crossmaglen during a Fleadh weekend. A queue formed to get in. Jimmy caught his finger in door, and lost top of it. Patrons anxious to hear him play were undeterred, helping him to apply a home made splinter, and fixed it up. Cromac went on to play great music that night, Mick recalls.

Henry Savage was the master musician in the early days

Tunes such as 'The Sweets of May' came from Henry Savage, beyond that no one knows. Mick speculated that travelling craftsmen, many of whom were musicians, who would stay with a family while completing their tasks, could have helped maintain the music and dances, and helped spread tunes within their circuit of travelling. People going around the country, builder's, for example, and stone masons came and stayed at the house till it was built.

Henry Savage could be found playing with such travelling craftsmen and musicians and learned many tunes from them.

Micil Quinn's townland is Carricknagavna, from the Irish, Carraig na nGarnhna, rock of the calves. In local folklore it gets its name from three large rocks. 'During a time of famine a lovely black miley, (hornless) cow arrived on the farm of a poor farmer whose family were dying of hunger. The Farmer's wife milked the cow and was able to fill any container, no matter how large, from the cow's milk. This fed the family for years and then the cow gave birth to a heifer calf and as a result the farmer became a wealthy man.

The farmer's wife died and he re-married and boasted to his new wife of his good fortune. After some time she grew tired of listening to the praises of the cow and in an attempt to test the magical powers of the cow she milked her into a sieve to prove her husband wrong. The cow bellowed loudly, kicked the sieve and took off with her calf and her calf's calf. She gave a mighty leap, followed by her calves, alighting three times and leaving three stones where she landed. She landed in Carricknagavna, in Co. Meath and finally Dingle, before leaping into the sea.'

Carricknagavna, one of the last areas in Armagh where Irish was spoken, was renowned for its singing, dances, music and story-telling.

The Murphy brothers, James and Barney (Ned) had a well-known ceilí house where neighbours regularly visited and sang songs. The brothers had a store of songs and at times competitions would take place to establish who the best singers were and who had the most songs. Many ways were tried to beat the Murphy brothers but all in vain.

Paidi (Tarry) Collins was another great singer in the area, as were Micil's father, John and his father, Michael, from whom Micil got many of his songs.

Pat O'Keefe Remembers



Pat hails from the Flagstaff, a picturesque area overlooking Carlingford Lough, the Moume Mountains, the Cooley Mountains and Slieve Gullion and tucked in close to the Louth /Armagh Border.

He was only 9 or 10 years of age when he went for fiddle lessons to

Sheila Devenish-Mears, Dublin Rd, who was later to become the wife of Newry Town Clerk, Gerry Cronin. "She was a great teacher, and within 10 - 12 weeks training she entered me for Feis in Newry, in the under 12, in 1945. There were 13 in the competition, and I got placed 3rd."

Pat has been playing traditional music for a long time, and he continues to get excited about it, and that comes through when he reminisces about the characters encountered.

Frontier Céili Band

His neighbours included a very musical family; Arthur, Brian, Gerald, Barney and Dermot (fiddle and Guitar) McConville all played traditional music and, along with Pat, played a few tunes on the sunny summer evenings of 1945/6. Word got around about the lively music being played on the edge of the Flagstaff mountain road. Gradually young courting couples made the 4 mile trek from Newry to listen and dance to the group that was to become known as The Frontier Céili Band. The "stage" was an elevated flat rock, and the only amplification was the warm summer breeze which carried the tunes to the dancers and beyond across narrow water to the other side of the Newry Canal. The band lasted a few years more before the lads went their separate ways. They managed a few commercial bookings in St. Coleman's Parochial Hall, in Castle St, Newry.

The full 4 mile free-wheel down from The Flagstaff with the banjo on the bar of the bike inevitable meant a return four-mile uphill struggle home. Bertie Trodden, who lived in Corry Square at that time, also played with the band. Pat recalls that their staple diet of tunes was dominated by single reels. They were aware of double reels because a few people had seen O'Neill's 1001. Pat was in his early teens then, and played a banjo which he had bought in Comiskey's Music Shop in Dundalk.

Shortly after this, Pat lost the bug for playing, but thankfully he got bitten again, and was back at the tunes before long.

Pat remembers, too, the ceilis in Cloughogue where the Parochial Hall was the popular venue on a Sunday night with Tommy McGill as Fear a Ti (M.C.)

Fintan Callan's pub in Crossmaglen was a focal point for sessions in the early 1970's, and Pat re-acquainted himself with his vast repertoire of tunes at the popular Monday night sessions. Crossmaglen was by then the most heavily fortified town in Western Europe, but the roadblocks, foot-patrols and regular gun battles rarely caused a dropped note in Fintan's oasis. Years later, the musicians followed Fintan to his new Céili House at Hackballscross. In the meantime, Pat

and Fintan Callan established their own International Céili House in Newry, hosting a decade of sessions the likes of which was never seen before or since in Water St. Newry. Connie Mathers was the capable Manager who ensured there was a convivial atmosphere to encourage music, song and dance in good proportions. (See Pub Sessions Chapter.)

Pat, Connie and others, swear to the existence of a ghost in the Ceili House. Footsteps in the upstairs lounge were often heard by staff and customers, and Connie came face to face with it one night when she went up to fetch some drink from the store. She entered the darkened bar, but with only the lights from Water St. offering respite from the darkness. In the corner, sitting on a chair close to the window was a lone figure, but so poor was the light that she could not discern any features. She didn't linger long enough to discover any details. Her record-breaking descent of the stairs ensured that it was the last time she ever ventured near that part of the bar.

Pat admits he has never seen the ghost but in addition to hearing the shuffling footsteps often he recounts how he had an extraterrestrial experience on a few occasions.

'On a couple of occasions, when I was at the till, I was physically flung back against the wall a few feet away, with such ferocity that it felt like being hit by a battering ram. I have no explanation for these happenings but there were witnesses. We made enquiries locally about the likely identity of our non-paying lodger, and discovered that 'hangings' used to take place in the alleyway adjacent to the bar.'

Pat has been spotted at sessions in the Railway Bar, Newry and at O'Hanlon's in Mullaghbawn and we think he is limbering up for a comeback!

Peter Makem Remembers



Peter Makem

Peter Makem, a native of Derrynoose is well known in GAA circles as he was twice involved with the Armagh senior team. In 1974 to '75 he was central in reorganising the team after their collapse in the league, and served as manager 1981 to 82 winning the Ulster senior title. He has had three volumes of poetry published, 'The Cursing Stone', 1990, 'Lunar Craving' 1996 and 'The Point of Ripeness' 2002 and one philosophical work, 'The Letters of Carrigatuke'. While not an active musician, he is nevertheless a former Ulster champion tin whistle player.

The Makems

The Makems have been living in Derrynoose since the middle of the nineteenth century with a tradition of competent flute and fiddle players. When Peter Makem Sr. (1891 to 1977) married Sarah Boyle (1900 -1983) one family of musicians and singers married into another family of similar interest- the latter along with her cousin, Anne Jane Greene known locally as the "Singing Greenes". Tommy Makem, youngest of their five children, was brought up in this environment of Traditional music and song. His older brother Jack was one of the early Uilleann Pipers and for a time played the fiddle with a Ceilí band set up by Joe and Tom Treanor in the sixties, "The Treanor Brothers" His father and sister Mona were also fiddlers.

While song provided the staple diet in Keady, three miles south in Derrynoose Traditional music was the mode of expression. Peter Makem recalls the strangeness of fiddlers arriving to the family home several evenings in the week as if they were taking part in a ritual, tuning up and settling into marches, jigs and reels. We knew who was who in the way they tuned up the strings, as each had a particular few bars of a tune to get the pitch right. There was little spoken and after a couple of hours they put the fiddles back in the case or hung them on the wall of the room and went away again.

Some people who were not musicians visited the Makem house and filled their pipes or lit up cigarettes and just listened and made the odd comment about the weather and the latest gossip. Over a period of several years some Gardai who were stationed across the border in Clontibret came to the house quite frequently. One of them, Paddy Egan from Offaly tapped both feet in a sort of dance as he played the tin whistle and could keep this up throughout a session. Matt Reynolds was from Roscommon and played the mouth organ confining himself mostly to marches and the sergeant, a man named Hogan also from Roscommon was not a musician, but he sometimes came along to hear the sessions.

Jack Makem

Jack was one of the early Uilleann Pipers and for a time played the fiddle with a Céilí band set up by Joe and Tom Treanor in the sixties, "The Treanor Brothers" His father and sister Mona were also fiddlers.

Jack Makem made his own drone reeds for the pipes out of the burtree which grew locally. This involved great concentration and he dare not be disturbed as he burnt out the centre and went through all the other delicate operations until something like the sound of a wild animal in pain arose out of the room. But chanter reeds, made from Spanish cane, had to be bought in and supplied by Leo Rowsome or Jack Wade. Jack Makem's obsession with the pipes involved the constant preoccupation of hemping, adjusting reeds, patching the bag and the general demands of maintaining the awkward instrument. Unlike today, where services by Na Piobairí Uilleann ensure that supplies and support are readily available, the loneliness of the long distance piper demanded self reliance. Peter recalls a young visitor Brian Vallely calling to the house, in awe of the pipes, and anxious to learn as much about them as possible. He was to go on to dedicate the rest of his life to promoting Uilleann Pipe playing from his base in Armagh City.

Jack also wrote out tunes for various fiddlers, many of whom could read music and who were taught by the central and most influential figure of his time in that entire district, John Conway. John was born in Derrynoose in 1900, the same year as Sarah Makem and was taught music in Scotland. He was a very competent fiddler and in the forties began to teach music in the locality, quickly becoming a familiar figure on his bicycle with the fiddle case in the carrier as he moved from house to house. Musicians enjoyed great status in the district in the 1940's and 50's. They were respected for their skills and appreciated as bearers of an ancient Tradition. Many were not formally taught but invested in a fiddle and picked up the tunes by ear and were proud of the fact that they did things the way of nature "like the thrush and the linnet, that never had to read music"

John Conway

John Conway had well over fifty pupils of all ages all around the border region, Keady, Carnagh, Derrynoose, Middletown, and Madden. So numerous were the numbers of fiddlers and the interest in the fiddle that in 1960 it was decided to hold a competition to settle the argument as to who was the best player in the entire area. The event was held in Woods' Pubic House in Keady and things got very serious. Seán O'Driscoll from Newry accepted an invitation to adjudicate and every Monday night for four weeks a series of entrants performed a jig, reel, hornpipe and slow air. The country was alive with practice. Fiddlers were rushing straight into the house after milking or whatever they were doing to practice the shakes and triplets and turns, listening to recordings of Coleman and Mc Guire and other well known performers for inspiration.

The slow air was a problem for many as only those who were trained and practiced in the art of vibrato could handle it with any competence and undo the banshee effect. Many got very nervous as their hour approached. But Justin McEivanna from Madden was so naturally pre eminent that the competition was about who would come second. After four intense weeks, fifteen year old Michael Keenan of Derrynoose was runner up and Mick Gaffney of the Rawes third, leaving up to twenty disappointed and somewhat disillusioned fiddlers. Some never got over not being placed and it was the first and last such competition. All three winners were pupils of Conway as were most of the competitors. In the early sixties John sent

many of his younger pupils as a matter of course to Feiseanna in Killeavy, Dundalk, Scotstown, Ballybay, Cavan and other venues to keep the competitive edge alive and provide them with goals. When he died in 1968 his brother Hugh became a prominent music teacher in the same mould maintaining the family tradition for another ten years.

Jack Makem was one of the few Uilleann Pipers in South Armagh in the forties and fifties and perhaps throughout the North along with Seán McAloon, Jack Wade- a noted reed maker from Monaghan- and Francie McPeake in Belfast. Leo Rowsome in Dublin was his major source of inspiration and motivation, one of the few Uilleann Pipe makers anywhere, and his weekly programme of Irish Traditional Music was one of the earliest sources of music on radio. Programmes such as "Job of Journey Work" and "Ceolta Tire" helped the nation recall and regain its Traditional voice.

Tommy Makem

For Tommy Makem, song was by far the mainstay of his involvement in traditional music. He was a competent tin whistler and piccolo player as well as a piper with the Keady Oliver Plunket Pipe Band, but being brought up in Keady instead of Derrynoose, he was reared into the song tradition. Even though his father was a fiddler, Tommy never took up that instrument and the only strings he was involved with was five string banjo. He was trained as a singer in the Keady Choir in the forties by Canon Pentony and taught to read music. The training was quite extensive, supplementing a natural superb bantone voice. He was also prominent in the Keady Dramatic Society that won the All Ireland Amateur Title in Athlone in 1953 and for some time was a singer with the Clippertones.

Sarah Makem

His mother Sarah Makem had a huge repertoire of songs gathered from the preceding generations, and these took on a new importance in the fifties when various song collectors such as Peter Kennedy, Sean O Boyle, Diane Hamilton and David Hammond realised their value as an ultimate cultural root. "The Month of January" found global profile through Sarah's interpretation and her version of "As I roved Out" became the title tune for the BBC radio programme which was seminal to the British Folk revival which continues to gather momentum to this day. Tommy once asked Sarah how many songs she knew, and suggested she write down the first line of each song, as a way to count them. When he returned home from America she had almost 600 lines written down. Sarah was born to Tommy Boyle and his wife Kate Greene, of the great singing Greene's of Keady. She sang constantly, and visitors and collectors had to learn to appreciate that an interview or conversation with her could take off to a song at the mere mention of a place name, person or event.

While she sang at local events, she never sang outside the area, or even travelled beyond its well defined, comforting boundaries. "Ulster Ballad Singer" was her only commercial recording, in 1955, back her impact on the global folk tradition was not inhibited in the least by her reticence to record or tour. Sarah's influence was by no means limited to her son Tommy. Geordie Hannah, Paddy Tunney and others were encouraged and inspired by the integrity of Sarah's treatment of indigenous and imported material, and they in turn have gone on to inspire a generation of singers far beyond the great Ulster idiom and dialect they dominated. Sarah and others from the Keady area were proud of their songs which covered every facet of local life and life in general, songs of the linen mills, of hunting, emigration, love,

loss, displacement, sports and so on. Many of these songs would later become a mainstay of the folk revival in the United States in the sixties.

There are still many Traditional players of fiddle, banjo and accordion in the Derrynoose and Keady, some of these technically outstanding, but they perform in the backdrop of a vastly different world. Their forefathers had the ears of the country to themselves with little competition while the modern players have to compete within the vast noise of the modern world. Keady and Derrynoose by-and-large kept their distance from Céilí Bands. There were lots of individuals playing accordion, fiddle, whistle, piccolo etc which constituted more of an individual tradition than a group tradition. Yet one of the best known Céilí bands of all, the McCuskers- all nine brothers- came from Madden next door.

When the generation previous to Tommy emigrated- all his aunts and uncles generation emigrated-it was usually for life. Only a few could afford to make a return visit home. The "Irish Wakes" that accompanied the ritual of emigration was exactly that as the departure was for ever. And so the music of Irish America in the first half of the century was in general on the theme of loss and longing where the songs of John McCormack and his contemporaries formed a staple diet.

But Tommy emigrated in 1955, the beginning of the age of transatlantic Atlantic flight which narrowed the Atlantic from the abyss to a day's travel. Consequently, Irish America changed into a more confident, self sufficient mood that found expression in the new songs and singing style that Tommy and the Clancys brought. They went on to conquer the world of folk music, making inroads into a wider domain of popular music so that the songs and tunes from the County Armagh area helped create a new phenomenon where the Kingston Trio, Bob Dylan, Peter Paul and Mary and others flourished.



Group of musicians in Sarah Makem's House, Keady, 1954.
Back row: Tommy Makem, John Conway
Second row: Jack Makem, Michael Gaffney, Paddy Loughran.

The Musicians

*I knew them in their arriving
Night after night, and felt the stall
Of feet, the slow door creaking
At the entrance to their ritual.
Many a time I arose a while
To sit with them in their circle,*

*And watched the fingers fall and rise
In unison. No drum
Marked time nor bodhran beat
Broke the lock on their eyes,
The bow arm pendulum,
And the heart pound of their feet.*

*But I was young then. Maybe seven.
Maybe undisturbed by thought then
That the chanter lilt and moan
Out of the line of mouths carried me,
The oxtar lungs, the drone on drone
Woman and man of the boortree.*

*Years after I knew I heard
That race of sound again, the cran
And shake, triplet and turn
In gathering of migrating bird,
Confused with certainty wheel and cry
Their wild fling in the sky.*

*But they were gone, the music men
When I awoke to search from them,
The fiddler gone, the piper gone,
And cold gathered to the ashes,
And cold gathered around their chairs
When I awoke to search for them.*

*Along the headrig of a ploughed acre
Facing north in the north wind
I trail the skies to evening's shore
Until the darkness sets me blind.
And dawn, and day, by day, by dawn
Will watch, will wait on their return.*

"The Musicians" by Peter Makem was published in his collection, "The Point of Ripeness", by Appletree Press in 2002.

It is a child's memory and works to capture the atmosphere of the traditional music session in céil houses, using the double image of the musician's ritual and the starling's migration to enforce things, waiting in the last verse for the return of both bird and musician. (The rhyming system varies throughout.)

Cen taobh don chlai and bhfuil and Chros **- Anonymous**

*Ar mo thsáitil dom aon oich amhain
Thar reilige ud an Chreagain
Do bhuail spear-bhean og alainn liom
Is I ag gol go fras.*

*Ar fíor ar sí and sceal is cíos,
Gur chall do Lurganach ceist a chur.
Ag cruinniu thíos i gcathair Ard Mhach
Can taobh den chlai a bhfuil and Chros.*

*Ta oidhri an Fheadha ag rothladh san uaigh
Ta Art Mac Cumhaigh fe bhrac an bhroin
Ta draid ar Chaonan ud na gceann
Ar chlos do damhas, i nglasdromainn.*

*A speirbhean gle croit suas do cheann,
Nach cuimhin leat and Chros, sa Tain
Is tracht ag laochra mom a bhfeinn
Ar Chros na mílte blain o shoin.*

*Nach cuimhin leat laochrana Crois
A sheas an fod ar son Ard Mach
I mbeama baoil an cluiche san chath
Le breis is ochtó o bliain anois.*

*Ta an Chros mar sheas and Chros ariamh,
Go dílis dluth do chuis na nGael
Níor mheall sean-bhaltz o dhilseacht i i,
Na meallfaidh coiche deamhain baoil.*

*Ar sí is i ag damhsa póirt
Ta luchair orm sin a chíos,
Biad a focal seartha liom
Ar bharr an tsaoil go raibh an Chros.*

The above was inspired by some Co. Board criticism of a Ceili and Old Time arranged for Glassdrummond Hall in aid of the Rangers Field Fund 1949. There have been many changes in the GAA since 1949.

By Howth's Fair Haven

By Art McCooey 1738 - 1773 - Translated by Tomas O Fiaich 1973

I lay in waiting beside the sea,

*When a sweet-lipped maiden, to me a stranger,
Appeared like Venus or some strange Ban-shee,
Who there related how a hundred brave men,
Rose from Creggan graveyard, by the tombs released,
And our own Uí Neill were once more in state there,
And the Fewes sustained them with gold and beast.*

*I moved adjacent as I was able,
When her northern tale fell upon my ears,
And I asked was Traolach, the son of Einní,
Restoring the greatness of bygone years;
Or had some foul traitor against our brave ones
Burnt down Dun Raimhe, nor left a tree,
Cold my fair maid say, with her information,
Was young Eoghan O'Neill back across the sea?*

*My heart is breaks in ten thousand places
And no healing grace can relieve my tears,
When I hear our Gaelic tongue forsaken
And broken Bearla in all men's ears;
Willy and Jane their leases taking
On the land of Erin that once was free,
But if I'm a claimant, the answers waiting:
"Shure you're a Papist, I know not thee".*

*A sudden shaking left me awakened,
Like some cowardly wastrel who'd fallen asleep,
Or like Oisín's fate as he travelled Erin
With the Fianna slain on the slaughter-heap;
The hills and vales of the Fewes got hazy,
With their conversation and many a feast,
All had faded, and in their place now
Was Willy raving like an angry beast.*

This poem was written during Art McCooey's 'exile'. The Mournes, Slieve Gullion, and other South Armagh mountains are clearly visible from Howth Head.

Creggan Vale – by F.J. Caraher

Midst Ulster's scenery as I went roaming,
 And speculating its historic plains,
 I was forced to ponder on scenes of grandeur-
 As if by a spell I did here remain.
 I was a patient to Nature's mercy,
 Being half unconscious of what prevailed;
 But entwining music from lark and linnet,
 Convinced my presence of Creggan Vale.

That historic spot midst Ulster's forelands,
 Where bold King Connor once led his clan
 Where Dunreavey's sentinels stood out undaunted,
 Like the lofty poplars of Creggan bawn.
 Where Franciscans sheltered in the troubled ages,
 Where Ulster's chieftains they did prevail;
 The fragrant clay that entombs their bodies,
 Their own selection was Creggan Vale.

The art and genius of that Gaelic poet,
 Whose lines had kindled the martyr's brain.
 To uphold the Faith against cruel aggression,
 In the homes of Creggan fresh and fair remain.
 That poet's bones now rest in Creggan
 As well as many an ancient Gael,
 Accompanied, too, by Eoinie Lukeie,
 To play the 'Indulgence' of Creggan Vale.

The youth now yearn for foreign scenery,
 The poet yearns with lust for gold;
 But the ancient scholar and poet likewise,
 Left Art unrivalled at a price untold.
 Though ages passed since time I mention,
 The whims of history they still prevail;
 And nowhere in Ulster are they more prevalent
 Than within the shadow of Creggan Vale.

The ancient churchyard holds in its bosom,
 The bones of bards and chieftains rare,
 Who traversed the plains of Creggan's landscape,
 Some Franciscans, too, are sleeping there.
 This Religious Order, though in secret functioned,
 For many years they did remain;
 Now stands an inn where they did flourish
 Till forced to flee to far-off Louvain.
 To praise Creggan's beauty would be my duty,
 But, alas, I am lacking in that noble part
 And to my sorrow I can no brains borrow
 To paint its picture as I'm short of art.
 Though sadly hobbled, I have made a stagger
 To encourage others who might avail
 To write the praises in better phrases
 The ancient history of Creggan Vale.

The Boys of Crossmaglen – T. O'Faich 1950

When first the border started and 'twas seen that smuggling paid,
King George he ordered out his men to try and stop the trade,
"But don't" says he, "pass Silverbridge, or you mightn't come back again,
For there's not a cop could ever stop the Boys of Crossmaglen".

So here's to all those gallant lads whose fame I want to tell,
God keep them faithful to himself and the land they love so well,
And when I meet St. Peter, O God grant that he'll say again,
"O come in, come in, shure they're all within, the Boys of Crossmaglen".

When Mick Higgins led the Slashers out to play in Clones town,
All Gaels they thought they'd be the champs from Donegal to Down,
Then up spoke one from South Armagh who knew his Rangers men:
Hold on there yet, yiz never bet the Boys of Crossmaglen.

So here's to all those gallant lads whose fame I want to tell,
God keep them faithful to himself and the land they love so well,
And when I meet St. Peter, O God grant that he'll say again,
"O You'll have to push, there's a heck of a crush of the Boys of Crossmaglen".

I met a poultry mistress that in Stormont once was hired,
"I'm on the dole for months", says she, "Sir Basil had me fired;
I thought that my results were good, one egg per day, per hen
But shure all the ould chickens were layin' like the dickens
For the Boys from Crossmaglen".

So here's to all those gallant lads whose fame I want to tell,
God keep them faithful to himself and the land they love so well,
And when I meet St. Peter, O God grant that he'll say again,
"Ah you're welcome there, now take a chair with the Boys of Crossmaglen".

Elvis Presley came to Ireland once to see a bit of life
And at Cross Fair he thought he'd find a girl to be his wife,
But all the girls he winked at, shure they turned away again,
For they'd rather wait and make a date with the Boys of Crossmaglen.

So here's to all those gallant lads whose fame I want to tell,
God keep them faithful to himself and the land they love so well,
And when I meet St. Peter, O God grant that he'll say again,
"Is it up you've come? Well you'll feel at home with the Boys of Crossmaglen".

The Churls of the Barley

– By Art McCooey – Translated by Tomas O'Faich

The Churls of the Barley were a well to do Catholic landlord family from Culltoiville. They once owned a distillery at Culltoiville where Cathal McEleavey's house is today. Art, obviously had not much time for such new aristocracy.

As the poems of McCooey and Bennett depict the O'Callaghans as unpatriotic, it is only fair to their memory to add that according to local tradition one of them had to flee the country because of his United Irish activities. He escaped to France where he became a Colonel in the French army. Their United Irish sympathies are further borne out by the lament in Insh for John Hoey, executed of his arrest; they would have come to release him. This is a far cry, however, from the snobbish upstarts, interested only in material things and with no time for literature or music, depicted in the following verses translated from McCooey's most bitter satire:

The Churls of the Barley are out for my blood,
For I laugh when I see them in sorrow,
If they gave me my fill of honey and beer,
I still wouldn't praise them tomorrow.

The ould dame's a sight, her lace is so tight,
Make money! That's all that she'd care to,
To buy silk and satin, a skirt for her bottom,
And a ringlet or two in her hair-do!

The daughter's a snob when she's out on the road,
On the new foreign fashions she seizes:
A hat that's all bound with a gold band around,
And a feather that ploughs through the breezes.

Not a friar or a priest who rides on a beast
But joins in their celebration,
Then out with the bottle, their glasses are filled,
And the Churls drink in salutation.

I'm a pauper, they say, a rascal, a stray,
And there's nothing but lies in my singing,
If I don't disappear, the parish will hear
The bells for my interdict ringing.

The curse of the friars and the vengeance of Rome
On the breed and the seed of the vipers,
Who threaten each day and never would pay
A penny to poets or pipers.

Opera- 'Song of High Summer'

In South Armagh people still talk of the white hare of Slieve Gullion that was really a beautiful Maiden in disguise.

Her name was Fionnuala who, because of a spell, could only appear in her true form each day in the twilight hour. She haunted the mountain until the dawn of Christendom.

Fionnuala is part of the folklore of Slieve Gullion which now forms a new opera, 'Song of High Summer,' the work of Miss Brigid Hannaway of Lislea, an authority on the traditional beliefs of her native county, Armagh.

It had its premiere in the 70s, with music supplied by members of Comhaltas Ceoltoiri Eireann.

The role of Fionnuala was played by Sheila Nolan, a former All-Ireland champion dancer and one of a team of Comhaltas performers who toured the United States in 1975. The opera also tells of the Calliach's lake at the summit of Slieve Gullion, (now an extinct volcano,) ever brimful but bottomless.

It tells, too, of the great stone table where the King of Ulster, Conor McNessa, feasted with his warriors and of the burial cairns that are the enduring relics of a pagan past. Conor McNessa was played by Pat Mooney.

Newryman's New Irish Ballet

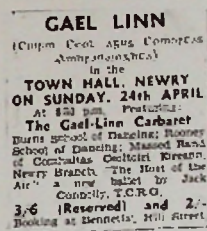
A Highlight of the Gael Linn Concert in the Town Hall, Newry, on Sunday last, was the new Irish Ballet, sponsored by Newry dance teacher and adjudicator, Mr. Jack Connolly.

The ballet, entitled 'Hosts of the Air' is based on a poem by W.B. Yeats and the narration throughout was by Miss. Deirdre Lynch.

Production was by Miss. Ethel Fitzpatrick L.G.S.M. and the music was rendered by the members of the Newry Branch of Comhaltas Ceoltoiri Eireann..

The three Principals in the ballet were: Anthony McKay (O'Driscoll); Sheila Trainor, (Brigid); L. Eliot (piper).

Others in the cast were: Maureen Fegan, Claire Trainor, Bene Treanor, Josephine Feighan, Madge Rafferty, Marjorie Craven, Nancy Murphy, Margaret Fitzpatrick, Dennis McAlreavey, Matt Patterson, Noel Murphy, Pat Magee, Benny Rafferty, Eugene Markey, Brenda Heaney, Tony Crawford, Sean Campbell and Donald Fegan.



The Fleadh over the years, remembered by Cormac MacGiolla

Since its inception on a national basis, I have served the Fleadh as competitor, administrator, spectator and mostly as adjudicator.... and I have seen the changes rung over the years.

Somehow one goes to the Fleadh today and the old stalwarts are missing, and the Fleadh has changed. As I write these lines, memories, so many memories, pour across my mind throwing any sense of logic out.

Do you remember Newry's own Frank Sweeney? I do, at Swinford, Boyle, Mullingar and many other venues. He lost his shoes in Mullingar, his car keys in Cavan, but never his sense of humour or his deep appreciation for our music.

I often think of Frank, the Newry chemist, with Sean O'Driscoll and Paddy 'I forget his name' and John and Peter Murphy in tow. He was a Fleadh regular until death deprived this world of his peerless humour, sometime, I think, towards the end of the sixties.

Indeed, I do remember an adjoined Convention in Omagh, when Frank left the meeting to escort some Offaly people, if I remember rightly, across the man-made artificial border that divides geographically though not musically.

The Fleadh is here to stay. It has survived and cut its musical and cultural teeth. It can only grow now, while generations, as yet unborn, will look back on the handful of enthusiasts who started it all off in Mullingar away back in 1951, (or was it 1952?) and bless their memory.

1976 Treoir Magazine

Armagh Comhaltas

The Armagh County Board of Comhaltas Ceoltoiri Eireann held their first annual meeting in the welcome Inn, Forkhill

Officers elected for the coming year were:-

Chairman, Michael O'Brien, Crossmaglen

Vice-Chairman, John Campbell, Mullaghbawn

Secretary, Sean Finnegan, Newry

Treasurer, Mary Golloly, Mullaghbawn

Auditor & Publicity Officer, J.P. Leonard, Mullaghbawn

The board has purchased a number of tin whistles and allocated these to certain schools where the pupils will be taught to play the instruments.

Forkhill Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann

Traditional Irish Music in South Armagh was not unaffected by the upsurge in interest sweeping the rest of Ireland in the early 1970's. The decline of Céilís and Céilí Bands in the late sixties gave way to the emergence of pub sessions as the growing and popular face of the music. The session was modeled on the formula developed in places like O'Donoghue's in Merrion Row, Dublin and much more locally and significantly, in Mark's Bar Dundalk.

The local branch was formed by Peter Gallogy's wife, Mary, from Donegal, and JP Leonard in 1973. Packie Joe McKeown, Louis McDonald, Packie Carragher, Brian and Philomena, Quinn, Jim Murphy and Mick were the catalyst for a new branch of Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann in Forkhill. The aim was to promote Irish Traditional Music in the area, through teaching and encouraging young people and others to take up an instrument. In addition to the weekly classes, they established a weekly session every Tuesday night in the Welcome Inn, Forkhill. Art O'Neil proved to be an accommodating host, and his wife Maura added sandwiches and nibbles to keep musicians and supporters well fed and fortified.

Fintan Callan, May Burns, John and Peter Murphy, Willie McSherry, Demot Mackin and others joined the ranks to make it one of the most popular and entertaining sessions in the North. But their secret weapon was the legendary storyteller, the late John Campbell. John provided hilarious and side splitting relief from the reels and jigs with his stories of life around his native South Armagh. John passed away in 2006, but thankfully the great storytelling tradition has been maintained by his great friend Mick Quinn, with his own, special style and delivery.

The Branch has been going uninterrupted for 35 years non stop. Art O'Neil was a generous benefactor, as are the current owners. Non-musicians like Peter Tierney, Pascal McCaul, Jim Flynn etc all occupied severable posts within the branch, keeping the administration and vital organisational requirements going. Most musicians had no heed for meetings, so the well-balanced group got on well. The current Chairman is Martin Campbell, and the Secretary is Steven Smith,

Gloria Hunniford came from UTV to record the extraordinary pulse of this great session, and was followed by crews from the BBC, RTE and even broadcasters and journalists from America. Suddenly, South Armagh was a good news story, and everyone wanted a piece of it.

Some of the musicians who frequented the weekly Ring of Gullion CCE Sessions in The Welcome Inn, Forkhill in the 1970's and 80's.



Crossmaglen Comhaltas Branch

The C.C.E Branch here has been in existence since the early 1970's and held their functions in the Rio.

One night in 1975, they were surprised by a visit from a German TV Crew with a request to film on of their branch sessions.

When the word was sent out, the musicians from the branch and other surrounding branches arrived in strength from Castleblaney, Mullaghbawn, Forkill, Camlough and Newry. Up to forty instrumentalists and many singers turned up to face the cameras. All present enjoyed a feast of music as they listened well into the night to the whistles, fiddles, accordions, banjos and every other kind of traditional instrument.

For all it was a night to remember and the German crew promised to send a copy of the film of the event, in appreciation for the co-operation and hospitality they had received.





PUB SESSIONS

in South Armagh & Newry

Introduction

Ceilis and dances gave way to the initially urban phenomenon of pub sessions in the early 1960's. Social and cultural changes signaled a new context for Irish society at large, which facilitated these changes. Women were beginning to exert their rights, and one of these which had been deeply resented was the denial of entry to public houses to enjoy a drink. Higher levels of employment and earnings meant that young people had more disposable income. Greater mobility in careers and education meant that influences from places like London and New York made an impact faster than ever. Irish emigrants had already carved out their niches in public bars where they indulged in nostalgia and reminiscences through the medium of dance music being played live, impromptu and informally.

The burgeoning folk revival in America and Britain encouraged the formation of pub based groups like the Dubliners to congregate in places like the back room of O'Donoghue's Bar, Memon Row, Dublin.

South Armagh was not protected from these winds of change, and one of the biggest influences on the individuals who would go on to establish sessions in South Armagh, was Mark's Bar, in nearby Dundalk.



Mark's Bar, Dundalk

Mark's Bar in Crowe St., Dundalk became the most influential Irish Traditional Music session pub from Dublin to Belfast. Only O'Donoghue's Pub, in Merion Row, Dublin, the melting pot for musicians drawn from the country during the early sixties, could equal Mark's.

Mark and Maeve McLaughlin were the hospitable inn keepers. Mark's previous careers in sales prepared him well for the call to host a pub that attracted musicians from all over the world. He had an interest in music from his early childhood, attending house Céilí s. While he never played, he was a regular attendee at the early Fleadhanna Cheoil in the early 1960's and was passionate about the music.

Mark credits Noel McNulty, Forkhill, as the first person to play music in his bar, in the early 1960's. Noel started to come into the bar with his accordion, and very quickly singers and other musicians started to join in. One such visitor was Peter McArdle, a great fiddle player from nearby Tallanstown. Mark used to pick Peter up in Tallanstown, and bring him home after the night's session concluded. One night, around 1964 or 65 after a very late session, Peter stayed the night...and never left. Peter was a bachelor, living on his own, and Mary and Maeve had no children. By mutual agreement, Peter moved into a room at the top of the house, and played music seven nights a week up to his death in 1975.

Musicians came from near and far every week, knowing that a good session was guaranteed, with such a fine musician anchoring. The young Sands Family Folk group from Mayobridge were regular players, as they were shaping up to be amongst the first of a wave of Irish groups to conquer Germany, then the rest of Europe. Ted Furey, (and later his famous sons,) was a regular visitor, as was Tommy Makem, Julie Felix, and members of the Dubliners, the Bothy Band and other super groups passing through or playing in Dundalk.

Brendan Behan and Patrick Kavanagh held court in Mark's. Connie Foley, who first recorded *The Wild Colonial Boy*, called in from time to time. Locals who Peter nurtured included Brendan Hearty, Eimear Byrne, Peter Short, Paddy Tyrell, Brendan Larrisey, Francie Duffy, Rose, Eibhlís, Peter and Gerry O'Connor, Vincent McGrath, Máire Garvey and others who went on to make their own mark on a burgeoning Traditional music scene around the country and around the world.

With so much talent available, the enterprising Mark arranged for a series of live recorded LP's to be produced. The first in the series was the 1966 album entitled "Fleadh Night in Mark's Bar."

Michael McKeon, a local artist, painted the *Battle Raid of Cooley* on the Céilí ng, which rivalled the Michael Angelo's similar effort on another Céilí ng in an equally revered establishment. Mark and Maeve tastefully created a traditional feel to the bar, in a style that was to be copied by Irish Pubs the world over many decades later.

An extraordinary development for a pub was the closing of the door at 6.00 pm. Thereafter only regular patrons, who could be guaranteed to give proper respect to the musicians and singers, were admitted. Admittance was gained by a secret knock on the stained glass window, and even then the keyhole in the adopted prison cell door was used to verify the caller before it was opened. Can you imagine a publican turning customers away in today's commercially driven "Oirish" Bars?

Mark's was frequented by musicians and singers from Newry and South Armagh in particular, and they in turn went on to establish sessions throughout the area.

These included Brian and Kate Murphy from Forkhill, Pat Quigley, Seán Flanagan, Charlie McGeown, Mick Sands and his family, Billy Fegan and Mick Bree.

This short chapter on sessions in the area goes no where near to chronicling the enormous impact Mark's Bar had on the evolution of Irish Bars and sessions. A large book must surely be written to capture the era, the music, musicians, artists and others who frequented this unique pub that was more of a club than a public bar.



Mark McLaughlin and Cardinal Tomas O Fiach



Ronnie Drew, Luke Kelly and Mark McLaughlin

Larkin's, Forkhill

Babs, Kitty and Jimmy Larkin were joint proprietors of Larkin's Pub, Forkhill, and their very cozy bar was the venue for occasional sessions. It was strategically placed on the road from Dundalk to Newry. (The back road was a necessity from the late sixties, as the main road home late at night guaranteed an unwelcome reception by RUC, UDR and British Army road blocks.)

Tom McHale, the great whistle player from Roscommon, was famously recorded in brilliant form in the bar one night in the late sixties. Any caller to the bar thereafter could summon up that recording on Larkin's old reel-to-reel to relive a truly historic moment.

The young musicians frequenting the early sessions in Newry were drawn to Larkin's for a break, including the Sands family, members of Crubeen, Billy and Tommy Fegan, Jimmy, Kieran, Paddy and Mark Bums and others. Local singers included the Murphys, Bnan, Kate and Breige and others. A favorite adopted son was Ciarán Bass from Dublin, a great balladeer regarded by many as one of the finest never recorded. Ciarán is now the jovial doorman at Brown Thomas in Grafton St., Dublin, residing under the formal tail length coat and top hat. The mere mention of Larkin's will set him off on a journey of reminiscence that will happily slow down your spending spree on that famous street. Try him!

Ciarán was often accompanied on his cross border flying visits by accordion player the late Paul Furey, of the Furey Brothers.

O'Hanlon's, An Mullach Bán



Rory Cunnane and Fergal O'Brien, O'Hanlon's, An Mullach Bán

The O'Hanlon clan of Mullaghbawn dates back many centuries, and for decades Bernard has been an enthusiastic promoter of Customs and traditions of the area, and notably of the regular World Wide O'Hanlon Clan Reunions. His passion for Irish Traditional music is as unquenchable as the thirst of his many patrons and for decades now has been the location for much of the music and song scene in their area.

For years, the Stray Leaf Folk Club, located in the converted shed at the back of the bar, was the Mecca for established visiting artists from throughout Ireland. Gerry O'Hanlon, Jim Flynn and others organized sessions fronted by great names like Liam O'Flynn, Noel Hill, Neillidh Mulligan, Tony Linnanne, Joe Burke, Paddy Glackin and others. The main bar has been the location for weekend sessions-that often last all weekend- and in recent years the Real McCoy bar, just a few doors up the road, has been the scene of Saturday night sessions. Anchor players have included Terry Conlon, Justin Toner, Pat Murphy, Josephine Keegan, Mick Quinn, Rory and Mickey Cunnane, Patrick Martin, Paul Flynn to name but a few. Members of the talented Mullaghbawn Scór Group which won two All Irelands in 2006, and 08, and were runners-up in 2007, swell the numbers and the talent of players. 'Bernard's,' as both bars are affectionately known, has established itself as focal point for regular music of the highest quality, attracting visitors from throughout Ireland, Britain and America throughout the year. Affordable and comfortably accommodation in the nearby Ti Chulainn Centre adds to the allure of this haven of Tradition and folk music, nestled at the foot of spectacular Slieve Gullion.



The Bridge Bar

McKeown's Bar, Camlough

For a short but intense period in the early eighties, local fiddle player Emmet Quinn "the man behind the bar" in McKeown's pub at the time, introduced a tasteful music session in the pub owned then by John McKeown. This gathering brought together well known fiddle player, Jimmy Burns, his sons (Kieran, Paddy and Mark) and Emmet's own sons, Paul on concertina and Gerard on fiddle. They were occasionally joined by local musicians including Packie Joe McKeown on the fiddle and local singer Paddy Finnegan from High Street, Bessbrook whose strong rasping renditions gave the musicians a welcome relief. With the influence of Emmet Quinn the pub provided the musicians with a cosy atmosphere to exchange tunes and help bring on the progress of the budding Burns and Quinn musicians.



Packie Joe Mc Keown

Quinn's Pub, Camlough

Emmet Quinn purchased what was previously known as McElhaw's Pub in Camlough just across the street from McKeown's pub. Here he started the legacy what is now perhaps the main traditional music pub in this region of South Armagh. A branch of Comhaltas Ceoltoirí Éireann was born and based in the pub. Largely with the help of Emmet and eager local traditionalists such as Jimmy Burns, Sean O Driscoll, Phelim Convery, Eddie McIntyre, Noreen Hughes, Kieran and Paddy Burns, this group went on to establish impressive musical classes in the local St Malachy's school that continued for a good number of years. A tremendous County Armagh feadh was also organized which brought the whole village to a standstill for a complete weekend. The pub has also been the main base for the Ceol Camlocha traditional organization who, with the help of Emmet's son Paul, (who has taken over the rein of the pub in recent years), have successfully organised sessions/tutorials in the pub that bring in traveling professional traditional musicians for all to listen to and learn from. There is many a night where the sounds of over twenty instruments play together in perfect harmony. Is it any wonder that this is often referred to as "a mighty session" It is doubtful that there is not one local musician in County Armagh or Down that has not played in this pub at some stage in their lives.

Musicians, singers and dancers alike travel from local and afar to congregate in this pub where they are guaranteed a warm welcome and an atmosphere that encourages the player to relax and bring out the best of music and song to be heard anywhere in Ireland.



Doyle's Pub, Camlough

This bar is recognised locally as a venue for local musicians and singers to join together for sincere, enjoyable and (sometimes unplanned) music sessions. A receptive audience is always guaranteed in this quiet rural pub. For years Gerry Burns, of the International Ceili Band frequented the bar and the patrons were fortunate to hear one of the most eminent singers the area has ever produced. In later years his nephew Paddy Burns (flute) joined in and organized some great music nights in the pub, which continue today. The beauty of the place is that most of the sessions are unplanned and this surely reflects the traditional aspect of the venue where musicians and singers alike feel comfortable to arrive unannounced and perform unhindered..



The Rio, Crossmaglen

No history of traditional music in South Armagh is complete without reference to the great accordion player, and member of the famous International Ceili Band, Fintan Callan, an accomplished player, entertainer, publican and member of the famous International Ceili Band. Fintan and his wife Mareta ran the Rio Guest House and bar in Crossmaglen, and great traditional sessions were a feature every week. Musicians like Gerry Burns, his sister May Trainor, and Rory O'Connor were amongst the regulars.



The Queen's Writ didn't seem to extend in those days as far as the Rio, with sessions often getting into top gear around 2.00am. At this stage Fintan would often announce it was the end of the session-part 1!

The Bridge Bar, Newry

Mick "the Chief" Sands, father of the famous Sands Family Folk Group, was always ready to help out with a tune in the Bridge Bar. This was at the time (1976) when Johnny Watterson had arrived from Downpatrick to take up a teaching post in The Abbey Primary School. Johnny lodged in an apartment above the bar, and he was just as keen as Mick for a tune at the drop of a hat. Manus O'Boyle, son of the famous song collector and commentator, Seán O Boaghail, had arrived from Armagh as Music Teacher in Our Lady's Grammar School. They provided the nucleus of sporadic sessions, sometimes after school, often on a Tuesday night. As these gatherings became more popular and regular, the search was on for a more permanent location.

Cosgrove's Bar, William St

The wandering tribe of troubadours arrived for a few weeks in Cosgrove's Bar, which, while cozy and frequented by interesting people from the worlds of politics, the arts, sport etc, simply didn't have enough room. The sessions lasted a few weeks here, before they arrived at a resting place where they camped for a few years.

The Cobweb, Monaghan St.

Johnny Watterson and Paddy Finnegan anchored a session in the Cobweb Bar, Monaghan St, on Friday nights. This was a small, intimate location, which attracted a good following.

Fintan's Ceilí House, Philipstown

Fintan moved to new premises which became known as Fintan's Ceilí House, Philipstown, near Hackballscross, just across the border in Co Louth, in 1978. Here he and Marietta built a wonderful pub, infused with a great atmosphere, copious hospitality and powerful sessions.

Fintan played his beloved huge piano-keyed, electric accordion which, when plugged in, could compete with the best of great cathedral organs. He loved having visiting musicians join him on stage. A lovable rascal resided with Fintan's persona, and as the invited singer or musician made their way to the stage, Fintan beckoned them with the famous refrain from the Laurel and Hardy films, much to the embarrassment of the poor performer, but to the delight of the patrons!

The above mentioned musicians and more made the move with Fintan, and often joined by Jackie Hearst, Maggie Barry, Josephine Keegan, Terry Conlon, Mickey Cunanne, Barney Gribben, Peter McGleenan, Tom Markey, Eileen McKeon, Billy Fegan, Paddy Burns, Jimmy Burns and more besides.

Sadly, after a serious illness, Fintan passed away in 1993, and is buried in his native Knockbridge. The session following his funeral in McNamee's Bar, Knockbridge, was one of the best ever seen or heard in the area. Rarely have so many accordion players performed at one session.

Behind Fintan's boyish and impish behaviour was a highly talented and earnest musician who did a lot, often single-handedly (for a box player!) to promote Irish traditional Music in this area. As long as a note is played in these parts, stories of Fintan will abound.

Fintan's wife, Marietta, and family still carry his torch for the tradition in Callan's Bar and Restaurant, in the same place. Go ndéana Dia grasta ar Fhintan, agus suaimhneas dá anam.



Larkin's, Ballybot

The late Mick Delargey and Johnny Watterson started meeting in Larkin's Pub, on the corner of Francis and Dominican St, around early 1976, exchanging tunes on fiddle. Mick was a teacher at St. Joseph's Secondary School, and was a very gifted musician and fiddle maker. The lads were soon joined by other locals, including Mickey Brady, who was a dab hand on the mandolin, and who later became the Sinn Féin MLA for Newry & Armagh. They were joined by other musicians whose numbers outgrew the wee back bar, and so the exodus began to find a suitable location for an appropriate premises that could accommodate growing numbers of musicians and audience.



Mickey Brady

The Hermitage Bar, Canal St., Newry

One of the most enduring regular sessions got underway in the upstairs lounge of The Hermitage Bar, Sugar Island / Canal St. on Thursday nights in 1976. The regular musicians included Charlie McSherry (son of Willie), Paddy Finnegan, fiddle, mandolin and even a short lived spell on the uilleann pipes, Seán Flanagan, banjo, Manus O'Boyle, tin whistle player and a fine singer, Tommy Fegan, tin whistle, Johnny Watterson, fiddle, mandolin and songs, Keith Hunter, bodhrán, and Charlie Brown, the tin whistler who drove from Kircubben, up to Ards, down to Belfast and Newry, and return, each night to enjoy the music. From a protestant community in the Ards peninsula, Charlie and a few of his friends went to these extraordinary lengths to cross the divide and play and enjoy Irish Traditional music. Young people today may find it difficult to imagine the courage they mustered in a violently divided atmosphere of sectarian murders taking place on an almost daily rate. Charlie sadly passed away a few years ago, but not before he had established himself as a leading exponent of the tin whistle.

The session proved so popular that Séamus Ruddy, a non playing enthusiast, agreed to do the door to control the crowds turning up to enjoy the session.

Noel Hill and Tony Linnane, the dynamic young duo from Co Clare who had yet to explode on the national stage of leading players, were regular visitors. John McElhemon was a very accommodating host, and he helped ensure the musicians had every comfort and encouragement, which included quite few free drinks for musicians.



Hermitage Bar 1976
 Some of the local musicians captured by Maureen Smyth, Newry at a weekly session in The Hermitage Bar, Newry in 1976.
 Back Row (l to r) Charlie McSherry, accordion, Seán Flanagan, banjo, John Shields, guitar, Johnny Watterson, fiddle, Charlie McGowan, fiddle, Eddie McIntyre, accordion.
 Front Row (l to r) Tommy Fegan, tin whistle, Tommy Sands, guitar, Charlie Brown, tin whistle, Donal O'Hanlon, guitar.

Shamrock's Club

Newry Shamrocks opened their new Social Club in 1977 and, a big push was on to get events going to help the club get off the ground. So the session shifted to the Shamrocks, and local members like Charlie McGeown, banjo, Eddie McIntyre, accordion, Billy Fegan, tin whistle, harmonica and vocals, Tommy Hollywood, vocals, and Benny McKay, vocals and bodhrán provided the anchorage for the session which lasted for three years, attracting full houses every Thursday night.

One regular visitor was Maureen Smyth, a local Art teacher in St Paul's, Bessbrook. Maureen sketched and painted most of the musicians in action over a number of years, and we are indebted for the use of some of these in this book. The Thursday night sessions replaced the Hermitage Bar sessions the only regular place in town, and continued to attract large crowds of musicians and listeners up to early 1980. These gave way to Thursday night sessions which continue there to this day.

Of course the Shamrocks was intimately involved in the Céilí music and dance Tradition on Newry for generations. Bobby Langan was one of Newry's most popular Fear a Ti, in St. Coleman's parochial hall and many other locations throughout the area.



Tommy Fegan and Johnny Watterson in Shamrock's Club in 1978

Nan Rice's, Francis St

When the first round of sessions at the Railway Bar came to an end, many of the musicians regrouped in Nan Rice's Bar in Francis St. The scene was set for a couple of years of lively sessions, with regulars included Terry Conlon, Justin Toner, Robbie Doolan, Paddy Finnegan, Patsy Quinn, John Shields, Mickey and Ruairi Cunnane, Benny McKay, Tommy Fegan and many more. Again the popularity outgrew the space, and the session moved back again at the Railway Bar, Monaghan St, where, at the time of writing, it continues in full throttle every Thursday night.

The International Céilí House, Water St., Newry

The Ceili House opened in 1980, attracting musicians and visitors from around the world.

Occasional visitors included Pecker Dunne, Sean Maguire, Brian McCollum, Maggie Bary and Joseph Locke.

Among the regular visitors were Jimmy, Gerry and May Burns, Dermot Mackin, Eddie McIntyre, the members of the Long Kesh Ramblers. (later de-commissioned to Crubeen), Frankie, Martin and Mickey Joe Drain, Josephine Keegan, Paddy and Kieran Burns and Mickey Cunnane. One morning Pat opened the door to find two fiddlers just arrived from Australia, for a session!

The Champion String Band from Newcastle-on-Tyne came one night on their way to play in Belfast, but with musicians such as Tom Gilfellon on guitar and Chuck Fleming on fiddle, their returning via the Ceili House made for a very interesting late session.

Donal O'Hanlon's folk Group left from the Ceili House every Saturday night to play at Queen's University in Belfast but always returned for a few tunes after their long day.

Often there were more musicians than customers, (not that there wasn't plenty of them.)

Every Christmas Pat and Connie supplied over 100 regulars with free food and drink to show their appreciation of their patronage. Catering was supplied by a popular French teacher at the Abbey Grammar School. He was always known as 'Serge.'

Dancing was a regular feature of the sessions, and Connie learned her first steps from Brigid Daly, wife of popular plumber Tom, (the Hack) Daly, from Chapel Street.

The Sands family members called in occasionally, and Pat recalls how one cold, quiet November night, Tommy asking in his characteristic half-apologetic way, if he could sing a song he had just finished writing. This was the first ever public rendering of one of Tommy's greatest compositions, 'There were Roses.'

Other performers were Eugene and Anthea Rea, who enjoyed a wide following during the 70s and 80s. Jarvey Folk Group member, Pete Mulholland, Mickey Cunnane and Peter McGleenan played her too, formally and informally.





The Musical Policeman

Pat was worried when the police raided the bar many hours after the official closing time. Somehow the story, that twenty-five cleaners just happened to be good players, wasn't going down well with the forces of the law order and logic. As the heavily armed patrol made their way upstairs, the Chief Inspector spotted Fintan Callan's accordion on the floor. Being well compromised at this stage, Fintan found it difficult to refuse his 'request' to have a go on the instrument. Setting his rifle against the bar, the policeman took up the accordion and produced reels and jigs of the highest standard.

The open-mouthed, jaw-dropped audience was told later that the uniformed musician had been a warden in Crumlin Road Prison, Belfast, in the fifties, during the time that the great Sean Maguire was interned. (Maguire was afforded the privilege of being allowed to play his fiddle there, out of respect for his stature as a virtuoso fiddle player.)

The intrepid intruder's basic musical training was gleaned from his local Loyalist marching band, but he was so taken with Sean's playing that he began to learn traditional Irish tunes.

There were no more raids on the Ceili House!

The Railway Bar, Monaghan St

Kieran McDonald, nephew of Louis McDonnell, invited his uncle and friends from South Armagh to come and play in his bar around 1997/8. These included Louis McDonnell, Paddy Finnegan, JP Leonard, John Shields, Johnnie Watterson and, occasionally, Fintan Callan and Mickey Cunnane. The low key session kept going for a few years, before he moved to Nan Rice's and, eventually back to the Railway where it flourishes to this day.

The Railway Bar, Monaghan St 2

Terry Conlon, accordion player and former member of a number of folk groups, gradually became the acknowledged anchorman, providing tunes for his repertoire which was greatly influenced by the great John Murphy. Terry's ease with an audience, moving comfortably from tune to song or recitation, ensured a big following of musicians and listeners.

Terry's move from Camlough back to his home place in Cullyhanna a few years later brought his participation to an end, a lively session continues there to this day. Regulars include Kieran Burns, concertina, Dermot Mackin, uilleann pipes and fiddle, John Shields, guitar and vocals, Michael Wright, banjo, Willie O'Hare, fiddle, Mickey Cunnane, guitar, his son Ruairi also guitar, Benny McKay, bodhrán and vocals, Eddie Ruddy, flute and whistle, Billy Fegan, whistle, harmonica and vocals, Tommy Fegan, uilleann pipes and whistles, Charlie McGeown, banjo and fiddle, Packie Carragher, guitar and vocals, Augustine Bradley, accordion, David Cunningham, guitar, vocals and dancer Caroline Fegan, accordion, Marian McGanley, banjo, Claire Byrnes, uilleann pipes, Ursula Byrnes, fiddle, Úna Devlin and Rosie Ferguson, fiddles and Brendan McGuire and Arthur Dillon on banjos. This regular team is backed up by impressive players like Paddy Burns, flute, Josephine Keegan, fiddle, Eamonn Kennedy, fiddle, Emmet and Gerald Quinn, fiddles and others too many to mention. There is even a regular visitor from Glasgow, the fiddle player, Brendan McHugh, whose visits are enjoyed by all. The session achieved a comfortable balance between traditional tunes interspersed with a few songs or recitations. One man who was central to this, coming "across" from the blues, was big Stevie Loughran, was sadly killed in January, 2007. Steve was a popular jovial character who loved his music passionately. His untimely death is never far from the minds of his fellow musicians and friends.





Other sessions in and around South Armagh include;

O'Toole's bar in Ballymacnab has been associated with traditional music for over half a century, from the days of the Malachy Sweeney band. The band frequently called on their way to, and from, their faraway venues, often holding an impromptu session there.

Keenan's Pub in Crossmaglen, owned by Eddie and Nanjo Keenan, has been for years now, the place to go for a tune on a Thursday night. There you will probably find Michael Conlon, from Comonagh, playing fiddle, often helped by his grandsons on banjo and piano accordion. Sean O'Neill and his son, Ciarán, are regular players there too, also banjo and piano accordion. Pat Casey goes along to sing a song most nights.

Many other pubs in the area support the traditional music on a regular or occasional basis, such as Garvey's on the New Line, Silverbridge and Silverbridge GAA Club, (in the Wee Bar).

Others include

The Red Fella's, Glasdrummond,

J.B's Kabin, Creggan,

The Clarnagh Maid, Crossmaglen,

Tully's and the Mountain House, Belleek,

Mullaghbawn and Carrickcruppen GAA Club



THE DANCE TRADITION

Instructions for the Dance,
that the Dance will live on

Archdiocese of Armagh

Ara Coeli, Armagh BT 61 7QY.
☎ Armagh (0861) 622046

23 July 1979

Dear Nan,

A thousand thanks for your gift of a beautiful linen tablecloth and napkins, which will be most useful here in Ara Coeli. I am most grateful.

I remember reading your article in "Ceim" some years ago, but it makes refreshing reading for me just after a short visit to Rannafast.

Keep me in your prayers.

Yours very sincerely,

+ Tomás Ó'Faoláin

Archbishop of Armagh

Miss Nan QUINN
19 Fountain Street
BESSBROOK
Newry
Co. Down

*P.S. I am sure you are the only Irish
Dance's Teacher in Ireland or abroad
who has had a Cardinal among
her pupils!*



Eileen & Paul Murphy

Nan Quinn, Bessbrook, is the acknowledged major influence on the development of Traditional dances in South Armagh.

Nan Quinn member of Cumann Na mBan, dance teacher, dance researcher was born 2nd September 1899 in Fintona, Co Tyrone and died in 1990. She was the youngest of a family of six children comprising four other sisters and one brother, who was my grandfather. Incidentally, when workmen were demolishing a house in Fintona Co. Tyrone they discovered an old newspaper that made mention of one Terence Quinn who carried out experiments in flying around 1860. Terence was Nan's godfather. The family moved to Bessbrook when Nan was very young as a result of their poultry business failing. There was plenty of work in Bessbrook Mill in the early 1900's and the job included a house at a19 Fountain St.

Nan was educated at Bessbrook Convent where Sister Mary Margaret (Edwards) from Cork taught some pupils solo dances for a school concert in 1911. Nan was one of this school group. I often heard Nan talk about a slip movement in the slip jig that Sister Mary Margaret taught but Nan dropped this because no one else danced this movement and as time passed this movement died. She admitted herself that this was a mistake and anybody who knew Nan knew she was a person who was very seldom wrong and indeed if she was wrong would never admit to it! So to admit to this omission was an event indeed. In 1914 Sister Margaret invited Tommy Arthur Hughes, from High Street, Bessbrook, to the convent in order to teach two four hand dances. Tommy Arthur was involved with the Gaelic League and did quite a lot to promote Irish culture in the Camlough area. Nan always maintained there was no national spirit in Bessbrook until she started her dancing classes. The dances Tommy Arthur taught were firstly the "Four Hand Jig". This dance was exactly the same as the "Humours of Bandon" but danced to any jig and both couples danced the figure between each body. The second dance was the "High Road Reel". This could be dances as a four hand of a Progressive same formation as the Walls of Limerick by leaving out the three figures. I remember Nan saying that these two dances opened up a new era in her life because not everybody could master the intricate steps or standard for solo dancing. However figure/Céilí dancing was a form of dancing that was accessible to everyone.

About this time and for a long time afterwards, a very successful Céilí Dancing Class was conducted in Correnshigo in Upper Killeavy. It was under the supervision of a local family, Patrick J. Courtney his brother's Joe, Jimmy and sister Clare who were all Traditional fiddlers, and singers with a wealth of old Irish Songs. They also danced a Hornpipe. "I am sorry I cannot tell you more about this class but we were brought up very strict and no night rambling was allowed, so I have no first hand information" said Nan. But she believed many of those who later promoted Irish Dancing in other districts; all got their dancing in Correnshigo. This family did a tremendous lot to preserve and promote Gaelic culture in South Armagh. They all emigrated after the War for Independence. P.J. carried his dancing with him and Trained several teams of Dancers in New York. Clare and Jimmy returned and made their home in Waterford.

In the early days of the Campaign, the Aeríocht and Céilí became very popular and the people in the area were anxious to promote all things Gaelic and besides to make some much needed revenue, the Camlough Branch of Cumann Na MBan ran a Céilí class twice weekly in Camlough hall. Between 1914 and 1919 Nan had a group of dancers three other dancers and herself. This was the group that Tommy Arthur taught in Bessbrook Convent. They performed at nearly every function in the area. It was whilst dancing at an American Wake this is a term used for a farewell party for intending emigrants in the Belleeks area that Nan was first introduced to what she referred to as the South Armagh Dances. During the evening someone

called for an owl reel and a group of elderly people took the floor and they danced the Three Tunes.

I clearly remember Nan telling me that she went home that same night and dreamed about the dance she saw and couldn't get it out of her mind for days. That was the last she saw of these dances for a while as, in her own words, long runs the fox, and she had to move to Omeath and Dundalk as she was on the run from the British authorities because at age fifteen Nan joined the Camlough branch of Cumann Na mBan. She lived in Omeath "under canvas" that's how she described her accommodation and it's difficult to imagine Nan tolerating living in a tent. During her period in Omeath Nan learned dances like the "Haymakers Jig", "The Harvest Time Jig", "The Siege of Carrick" and the "High Cauld Cap" all from a group from Belfast. Also at this time Frank Aiken and his sister Nano brought the dance "Haste to the Wedding" down from the Irish College in Donegal. This gave them a collection of seventeen dances which ensured good evenings enjoyment at the class. There were also two hand dances, two hand reel dances, two hand jig dances but much to Nan's dislike only one hornpipe dance. Nan was also disappointed that the two hand dances were not included in An Rince Foirne at the time. She was also unhappy after moving to Dundalk to find there was no Irish dance or Céilí 's as we know them today. When Nan returned to Bessbrook in December 1923 after a 20 month sojourn in Dundalk to start living a normal life in the Quaker Village of Bessbrook there was no dancing of any kind in any of the local halls.

At one time there was a dancing class in Lislea, a few miles from Camlough. The local Hibernians ran this and it was mixed dancing, referred to as Céilí and Square or Irish and English. The square dances included The Quadrilles, The Lancers, The Sets, The Half Sets etc; the men in charge took their dancing very seriously and took great pains to keep each in their own category, woe betide you if you mixed them. A stern warning was given before each Irish dance "Get it into your heads - this is an Irish dance, anyone introducing the Lancers Swing into it, will find themselves on the sunny side of the latch,," And this threat was often carried out. According to Nan these Square dances were very like, if not exactly similar, to the "Set Dances" danced today and it might be interesting to note that during the Campaign when there was a ban on all things foreign, these dances were rejected and dropped out of the picture.

In 1924 Micael Mackin from Newry returned from working in Dublin and started an Irish Language class in a hall in River Street Newry. Nan suggested that it should include a Céilí class not realising that over the next thirty five years or so she would carve her name forever in the history of Irish dance. She canvassed Correnshigo and Camlough and got a crowd of the old patrons to attend and of course there was a crowd from Newry itself. In a short time they had a terrific class going, and soon, nearly all the pupils knew the 17 Céilí dances.

This class led to a Céilí in the Town Hall in Newry and proved such a success that it encouraged all of the GAA clubs in Newry to take turns to organise and run Céilí's mostly on a monthly basis. At one of these Céilí's a four hand reel competition was organised. This may have been one of the first dancing competitions organised in this part of the country. Johnny Southwell, Mrs Hughes, Miss Rose O'Hanlon and Nan Quinn entered teams. It could be argued these were the first Irish dance teachers in the area. The Dominican Church committee were next to organise a Céilí also in Newry Town Hall but they went one step better than the GAA they

included a competition for a Senior 8 Hand reel. For this competition Nan got four men and four girls herself included. The men wore their pipe band outfits whilst the girls wore green Irish costumes. Nan was really proud of the display her dancers gave in this competition "I can still hear the applause when we danced out onto the stage – and I won my first medal" she often told me and this planted the seed to continue teaching.

In 1927 at a Céili in the Town Hall in Newry organised by the Faugh a Ballagh Hurling Club the first team to bear her name won the four hand reel competition. All this resulted in a Committee getting together and organising Newry's first musical feis, where Irish song and dance held their own on the programme. This in turn led to the formation of Irish Dancing classes in the area. From the commencement of the Newry Musical Feis in the Town Hall Nan and her troupes' were familiar figures in the Irish dance section. In fact the very first award for Irish dancing at the feis was secured by the Nan Quinn School this was the Seamus O'Hanlon Troupe and the dancers were Madge and Eileen Murphy, Patsy Cantrell and Emily Quinn. The following year in a packed Town Hall she won the premiere award at the Newry Musical Feis the Peter McGeough Cup for eight hand reel the troupe were Nan, Mary McInerney, Alice McCartan, Kathleen Burns, Patrick and Thomas Malone, Jim McDade and Pat McParland.

At first Nan only presented her nephews and nieces and a few of their friends, encouraged by their success she organised her first school in Bessbrook in January 1933. Arthur Burns was one of her early and most outstanding pupils. She arranged with Tom Farrelly to send him to Dundalk for steps. Tom gave him all his steps and then arranged for Arthur to go to Miss Connolly of Dublin, who came to Dundalk once a week. In this way Nan kept up her supply of steps. When Arthur left Nan to form his own dancing school he had won over 300 medals the Madame Markievicz Memorial Cup (Sligo) outright and the Ulster Championship Belt in three consecutive years.

Nan went out on research in 1933 around the slopes of Slieve Gullion and the hillsides of Mullaghbawn in pursuit of an old Traditional dance she had seen 8 aged people dance 16 years previously, namely The Three Tunes. Following the footsteps of the Gaelic students, who travelled there before her during the Irish Revival Movement, when the Irish language was still the proud possession of Scóires of native speakers in the area. There they travelled thrilled by the bardic tales they were told, gathering folklore and collecting and translating local place names which enabled them to complete successfully at the earliest Feiseanna. And like them she did not come away empty handed.

Though she had some disappointment at first she battled on in typical Quinn fashion and eventually, with the help of John Larkin succeeded in collecting and reviving the dance of her dreams The Three Tunes, and also discovering the now popular Trip to the Cottage and Sweets of May. She presented Trip to the Cottage at Feiseanna in 1934 and The Three Tunes and Sweets of May in 1936 at Newry Musical Feis. She had some difficulty in presenting the other two, because no one but Mr. Henry Savage knew the tunes, and he had to accompany the dancers all over the area playing the music. That wasn't easy in the 1930's with the lack of transport, private or public. It was Mr. Tom Farrelly from Dundalk, T.C.R.G., Ulster, Tailteann and Olympic champion, who came to the rescue and he went with her to the Savage homestead and took down from Henry Savage, one of the best-known Traditional fiddlers in the North of Ireland, the correct music for each dance. Saving for all time the lovely tunes. "The Three Tunes", as its name implies, is danced to

three different tunes – reel, jig and hornpipe – "Haste to the Wedding", "Leslie's Hornpipe" and "The German Beau". In the case of "Trip to the Cottage" and "The Sweets of May", the tunes have the same titles as the dances.

Nan told me several times how she will always remember how moved Henry Savage was when he realised that Tom had actually put down on paper his beloved tunes. With tears rolling down his cheeks he said "Thank God I have lived to see this day, now I shall die happy knowing the old tunes won't be lost". Henry Savage was over eighty years of age and died shortly afterwards.

In the months that followed, Nan and Tom spent many happy and useful hours around South Armagh; particularly at the home of James (Master) McParland it was here that they collected a number of unknown little dances. Paddy O'Carroll, The Garryowen, The Frost, The Kings Head, The Rakes of Clonmel, The Connaughtman's Rambles, O'Connell's Trip to Parliament and Betty Black with a special 6 part tune. These are all 8 hand dances with figures similar to The Three Tunes but each has a different body and all are danced to tunes of the same name.

John Larkin, Patsy Morgan, James (Master) McParland, John Ned Quinn, John McVery, Mrs. McParland and Mrs. Toner these are the people recalled by Nan that we are indebted to for pooling their knowledge and helping to piece together and save the South Armagh dances.

During her dancing years Nan taught in 13 centres, Bessbrook, Camlough, Newtownhamilton, Cullyhanna, Crossmaglen, Dromintee, Clonlig, Glasdrummond, Ballymoyer, Tullyherron, Whitecross, Aughanduff and Lissummon. Some of the classes were in schools as P.T. and in 5 centres she had adult Céili classes as well as junior class. In all her classes no matter how busy she was she always included at least 2 Céili dances. This didn't leave much time for polishing up for Feiseanna but Nan's aim was to give the dancing, not to concern herself on winning trophies. Figure or Céili dancing was her specialty and particular the tiny tots gave her the greatest pleasure. Many an adjudicator paid tribute to the teacher who instilled such finesse into tiny feet. On many occasions her 4 – 5 year olds would sweep the boards with their figure dances in competitions for under 9's. Nan, as well as rediscovering old and forgotten dances, has produced a number of new ones "The Seamus O'Hanlon" in memory of a sterling Irishman from Sturgan but the most popular of all is the "Battle of Benburb", to commemorate O'Neil's battle at Benburb in 1646 when he faced Scotsman Munroe. It was first performed at Newry Feis in 1946 and this dance has won first prize time after time and has been described by numerous adjudicators as one of the most beautiful of modern Irish dances. Trip to the Cottage was Nan's most successful dance winning 19 first prizes and her most successful team was Alice O'Hare, Nora Lee, Madge and Eileen Murphy (two nieces) Arthur Burns, Sam Bradley, P.O'Hare and Eugene McAteer who won countless prizes and were very stiff opposition on any stage. The Nan Quinn School Of Irish Dancing made steady progress and their successes are legendary from Dublin to Lame and Sligo to the Glens of Antrim. Sisters often played a prominent part in the Bessbrook troupe's success. In the three-hand reel competition for the McGeough Cup at Newry Feis, won on countless occasions by the Nan Quinn team, there were often two and sometimes three sisters on the winning team, viz. Madge and Eileen Murphy; Maureen, Julia and Nancy Shearan from Camlough; Brea, Ella and Kathleen McGivern; Angela, Rita and Eileen Sheridan but we were one big happy family even though Nan never married we were all her children and she was like a mother figure.

Almost as well known to the local dancers as Nan was Mr. Owenie O'Neill, from Maghernahley who had been associated with her down the years. Owenie had been the accompanist for Irish dancing at many Feiseanna and it was to the music of his fiddle that Nan's pupils danced their first steps in the Newsroom at the back of Bessbrook Chapel.

Looking back on a lifetime of teaching dance, of service to Traditional Culture and the legacy she has left to future generations she has every reason to feel justly proud of her work and efforts. Nan's only regret is that all Irish dancing associations are not closer associated and looks forward to the time when Feiseanna will be open to all Irish dancing teams.

For those of us that danced for Nan Quinn The Rust and Emerald Green will live forever.

Dance in File "Nan's Dancers"



Group of dancers at Killeavy Feis in the early sixties including Terresa Connolly, Maura Quinn, Joan Sheridan, Gertrude Mooney, Joan McGuigan, Maura Burke, Maura Malone, Joyce Williams, Dorothy Gwynne.



Lily Cassidy and her sister.



Ella, and Brea McGivern with May Morgan in the fifties.



The Nan Quinn School of Irish Dancing in the early 40's. L/R: Eileen McNulty, Jimmy Feehan, Brenda Osborne, Pat Courtney, Peter McGleennon, Annie Weir, Gene McAteer, Bridie Bradley.



Celine Graham, Noelio Graham, Margaret Quinn



Dance Group: Mary Bradley, Christina Downey, Nellie McConville, Marcelita Moan, Pauline McCauley, Noelle Graham, Ann Mulholland, Annette Trainor, Celine Graham, Mary Graham.



Troupe of Dancers including: Madge Marron, Joyce Mulgrew, A N Other, Gaeraldine Jackson, Margaret Goodland, Teacher Nan Quinn, Anna Haughey Teresa Mullan, Kathleen Weir.



Bessbrook Dancers during the Sixties including The Brady Family, Anna Quinn, Teresa Mullen and Madge Marron.



Nancy Carroll, Kathleen McGivern, Rita Sheridan, Bernadette Haughey, Maura Malone, Eileen Sheridan.



A group of Nan's Dance troupe relaxing at a crossroads ceil in the thirties.



Nan's Dancers in the early sixties including Kathleen Sheridan, Nuala McElherron, Maura Malone, Bernadette Haughey, Eileen Sheridan, Maura Quinn, Rita Sheridan, Christina Barron, Mana Byrne.

The Sweets of May

The Three Tunes

The Soldier's Joy

The Connaughtman's Rambles

The Square of Crossmaglen

Cuchulainn Jig

Glassdrummond Reel

Four Hand Jig

McCloud's Reel

Mullaghbawn Reel

Quinn's Reel

The Gap of the North

The Garryowen Jig

The King's Head

The Lake End

The Mountain Top

The South Armagh Jig

Armagh Lancers Set

Armagh Set

Armagh Quadrilles

The McCusker's Ideal Barndance

Aoibhneas Na Bealtaine – The Sweets Of May

This is an old Armagh Figure Dance for four couples danced in Double Jig

	(1)
	OX
(4)	
OX	(3)
	OX
	(2)
	OX

(1) and (2) are First and Second Tops, respectively, while (3) and (4) are First and Second Sides.

AN CHÉAD FHI GIÚR – FIRST FIGURE.

CÉIM AN FHAINNE - RINGS

All dancers join hands in a ring of eight and side-step clockwise, finishing with two short 'threes', return anti-clockwise, finishing as before [8 bars]. The side-step movement is then repeated, this time moving anti-clockwise, then clockwise [8 bars]. While doing the last two 'threes', all couples, breaking the ring, fall back into their original places, partners retaining inside hands. **16 Bars.**

AN CABHAIL. THE BODY

(a) Athrú Áiteachta. Cross over and back.

1. Couples 1 and 2, partners holding inside hands, exchange places with Promenade Step, passing across, gents left shoulder to left shoulder (2 Bars). While Top Couples are exchanging places, Couples 3 and 4 dance two 'threes' in place.

2. Side Couples exchange places in like manner (2 Bars) while Top Couples dance two 'threes'.

These movements are then repeated leaving all couples back in original positions (4 Bars). **8 Bars.**

(b) Ar Aghaidh is Ar gcúl. Advance and Retire.

1. Top Couples, still holding inside hands, advance to meet in centre, while Side Couples mark time with two 'threes'. (2 Bars).

2. Sides advance to centre while Tops retire. (2 Bars).

3. Tops advance while Sides retire. (2 Bars).

4. Tops retire while Sides mark time. (2 Bars).

8 Bars.

(c) Bualadh na gClog. Ringing the Bells.

All dancers bend and beat left hand on left knee and right hand on right knee 4 times (1 Bar); then clap hands in front of forehead twice (1 Bar). Repeat the whole movement (2 Bars). Partners side-step past each other, the gent passing behind, and all dance two 'threes' in new places (4 Bars).

This movement is now repeated, but partners side-step back to place, the gents now passing in front (8 Bars). **16 Bars.**

AN DARA FIGIÚR – THIRD FIGURE

GABHÁIL TIMPEALL – LEAD AROUND

Partners hold inside hands, and lead around anti-clockwise a complete circle; release hands, about turn inwards, take inside hands (8 Bars). Return clockwise back to original positions (8 Bars).

16 Bars.

THE BODY is now repeated. **32 Bars.**

AN TRIÚ FIGIÚR – THIRD FIGURE.

LUASCADH DEISEAL IS TUATHAL – SEE-SAW.

All couples take uncrossed hands, swing round (revolving clockwise) moving in an anti-clockwise direction (8 Bars). Couples reverse their swing and return, moving in a clockwise direction to place (8 Bars). (Please note that the arms are not moved up and down in this movement.) **16 Bars.**

THE BODY is again repeated. **32 Bars.**

AN CEATHRÚ FIGIÚR – FOURTH FIGURE

NA TONNAÍ – SIDES UNDER ARMS

Partners take inside hands, Top Couples holding up hands to form an arch, and with Promenade Step, Tops and Sides change places, 2nd Sides passing under arch of 1st Tops, while 1st Sides pass under that of 2nd Tops; release hands and face about (4 Bars).

All take inside hands again and dance back to places, this time Sides making arches and Tops passing underneath (4 Bars).

Repeat on opposite side, i.e. 1st Sides passing under arch of 1st Tops, and 2nd Sides passing under that of 2nd Tops, returning to places (8 Bars). **16 Bars.**

THE BODY is repeated once more. **32 Bars.**

Then the introductory movement – Céim and Fhainne – is performed again to complete the dance. **16 Bars.**

Three Tunes

DANCED TO THE TUNE: THE THREE TUNES

A. SIDES 16 Bars

All dance side-step to the left, finishing with two short threes and return to right, finishing as before; repeat this side-step movement to the right, and back to places. While doing the last two threes, all couples fall back to places as shown:-

	1	
	BA	
4G		F3
H		E
	CD	
	2	

1st Tops are couple 1, 2nd Tops are couple 2, 1st Sides are couple 3 and 2nd Sides are couple 4.

A,C,E,G are me; B,D,F and H are women.

B. RINGS 16 Bars

Women advance to the centre, take hands and, with promenade step, dance round clockwise to places; all clap hands twice. Partners dance a half side-step past each other, men passing behind (count 1-2-3) then side-step back to places, women now passing behind (**8 Bars**). Repeat the movement, the men dancing round in the centre this time instead of the women.

C. LEAD AROUND 16 Bars

Partners hold inside hands and lead around anti-clockwise a complete circle; release hands, reverse and again taking inside hands, lead back to places.

D. STAMP AND CLAP 6 Bars

All dancers stamp first the right foot, then the left, then the right again to 1 bar of music and clap hands three times on the second bar; then side-step past each other, the man passing behind, and back to places, the man this time passing in front. Clap alternate hands five times quickly on legs above knees, beginning with right hand on right knee; clap hands together three times (**8 Bars**). Repeat this movement.

E. SEE-SAW 16 Bars

Dancers take partner's hands uncrossed and dance around in couples anti-clockwise three quarter ways, turning clockwise as they go. Return to place clockwise, dancing around each other anti-clockwise.

F. ROLY-POLY 24 Bars

All dancers hold fists at chest level and roll them round each other in a forward direction, and then roll them in the opposite direction; pivot once clockwise on the right heel, clap hands together once; men shake right fist forward in air once (in a threatening manner), hand about shoulder level, at the same time placing right foot forward on ground, bringing it back as hand is returned to side. Shake left fist in similar manner, placing the left foot forward, stamp feet three times and clap hands together three times towards partner. Partners side-step past each other and back to places (**12 Bars**). Repeat this movement.

G. HOOK AND CHAIN 16 Bars

Each man hooks the left arm of the woman on the left in his left, turning her once in place and chains back to his partner, taking her right hand in his right. He continues the chain movement, giving alternate hands to each woman in turn until all return to places.

H. RINGS 16 Bars

Repeat B

I. SIDES UNDER ARMS 16 Bars

Partners take inside hands, Top couples holding up hands to form an arch and with promenade step, Tops and Sides change places, 1st Sides passing under arch of 1st Tops, while 2nd Sides pass under that of 2nd Tops; release hands and face about. All take inside hands again and dance back to places, this time Sides making the arches and Tops passing underneath (**8 Bars**). Repeat on the opposite side, i.e. 2nd Sides passing under the arch of 1st Tops and 1st Sides passing under that of 2nd Tops, returning to places as before.

J. STAMP AND CLAP 16 Bars

Repeat D

K. THREAD THE NEEDLE 16 Bars

All take hands in a ring, except 1st Tops man and 1st Sides woman, she passes under the raised hands of the couple on her right and takes all the other dancers of the line after her and so back to places (8 bars). Repeat this movement, 1st Tops man now passing under the arch of the couple on his left, and the others following.

L. ROLY-POLY 24 Bars

Repeat F.

M. SIDES 16 Bars

Repeat A.

The Soldier's Joy

DANCED TO THE TUNE THE SOLDIERS JOY 216 BARS

Beginning: All dance side step and two threes clockwise and back to place; then all side step anti-clockwise with "threes" and back as before. **16 Bars.**

AN CHABHAIL (BODY)

Three Cornered Hook Gents of first and opposite Tops advance hook right arms, pass on to Gent on right of original position, hook left arms. Pass behind own partner back to place. **6 Bars.**

Now all clap alternate hands on legs above knees four times. **1 Bar.**

and clap hands three times keeping time with the time. **1 Bar.**

Side Gents then repeat the movement. **8 Bars.**

1ST FIGURE LEAD AROUND

Partners cross hands and lead around clockwise to original position, turn inwards to each other without releasing hands and lead back again three quarter ways facing partners dance around each other back to original position. **16 Bars.**

AN CHABHAIL (BODY). 16 Bars.

2ND FIGURE SEE-SAW

Dancers take partner's hands uncrossed and dance around in couples anti-clockwise three quarter ways, turning clockwise as they go. Return to place clockwise, dancing around each other anti-clockwise. **16 Bars.**

AN CHABHAIL (BODY). 16 Bars.

3RD FIGURE HOOK AND CHAIN

Gents hook lady on left with left arm, then hook own partner with right arm. Chain back to lady on left with left hand, and continue the chain movement until all dancers regain their former places. **16 Bars.**

AN CHABHAIL (BODY). 16 Bars.

4TH FIGURE ARCHES

Partners take inside hands, Top couples holding up hands to form an arch and with promenade step, Tops and Sides change places, 1st Sides (on the left of 1st Tops) passing under arch of 1st Tops, while 2nd Sides pass under that of 2nd Tops; release hands and face about. All take inside hands again and dance back to places, this time Sides making the arches and Tops passing underneath. Repeat on the opposite side, i.e. 2nd Sides passing under the arch of 1st Tops and 1st Sides passing under that of 2nd Tops, returning to places as before. **16 Bars.**

AN CHABHAIL (BODY). 16 Bars.

5TH FIGURE ALL IN OR THREAD THE NEEDLE

All form ring and take hands except Gent of First Tops and Lady on his left. Top couple raise hands to make an arch. Lady on left passes through and round to her place taking all the dancers in line after her. Repeat the movement, Gent of First Tops passing under arms of couple on his left, others following. **16 Bars.**

AN CHABHAIL (BODY). 16 Bars.

Finish: All dance side step and two threes clockwise and back to place; then all side step anti-clockwise with "threes" and back as before. **16 Bars.**

Connaught Mans Rambles

4 HAND JIG

JIGS: 216 BARS

1. Couples form a circle side step to the left. Jig step and side step to the right, jig step continue to the right with the side step, jig step and back to the left finishing with the jig step. **16 Bars.**

FIGURE OF EIGHT

2.(a) Top gent advances and gives left hand to opposite lady's right hand and dances under an arch formed by opposite couple followed by the opposite lady. Top gent raises his left arm to form an arch and the opposite gent passes under. **4 Bars.**

(b) Top gent dances back to his partner and both couples turn once in place finishing with the jig step. **4 Bars.**

(c) Repeat A and B with opposite gent leading. **8 Bars.**

1ST FIG. - LEAD AROUND

3. Couples lead around anticlockwise hands crossed in front turn and lead back turning clockwise around in starting position on the last 2 bars. **16 Bars.**

4. Repeat movements 2A to 2C. **16 Bars.**

2ND FIG. - SEE SAW

5. Partners take hands uncrossed dance around each other clockwise moving anticlockwise $\frac{1}{2}$ way around in a circle. Return dancing around each other anticlockwise moving clockwise around to original position. **16 Bars.**

6. Repeat movements 2A to 2C. **16 Bars.**

3RD FIG. - GENTS CHAIN

7. Gents dance across to the opposite lady passing right arm to right arm and take right hand in right hand, dance around clockwise release hands and dance back to partner, gents passing left arm to left arm, dance around partner anticlockwise, left hand in left hand, release hand and dance to the centre where both gents hook right arm in right arm, dance full turn clockwise. Give left hand to left hand with opposite lady and dance around anticlockwise return to partner taking right hand in right hand turning into place. **16 Bars.**

8. Repeat movements 2A to 2C. **16 Bars.**

4TH FIG. - ARCHES

9(a) Couples dance straight across to the opposite position with top couple forming an arch and opposite couple pass under turn and pass back to original position with opposite couple forming the arch and top couple passing under. **16 Bars.**

(b) Repeat A. **16 Bars.**

10. Repeat movements 2A to 2C. **16 Bars.**

5TH FIG. - THREAD THE NEEDLE

11(a) Both couples dance to the centre top couple form an arch opposite lady dances under followed by her partner who takes top lady's right hand in his left hand, the top lady follows. **4 Bars.**

(b) Opposite couple form an arch and top gent follow by top lady and opposite pass under. **4 Bars.**

(c) Repeat 11A and 11B. **8 Bars.**

12. Repeat movements 2A to 2C. **16 Bars.**

13. Repeat movement 1 to finish. **16 Bars.**

The Square of Crossmaglen

ROUND DANCE 4 COUPLES

REELS 296 BARS

CIRCLE

1a. Holding right hands Top couples 7's to the right while Side couples 7's to the left finishing with 2'3s. Continue in the same direction dancing 7's and 3's.

8 Bars.

1b. 4 couples advance and retire once, 7's pass each other and 7's back no 3's.

8 Bars.

1c. Repeat 1a and 1b. **16 Bars.**

BODY

2a. Holding right hands dance around your partner and chain gents clockwise and ladies anticlockwise. Meet partner halfway round dance around again and continue the chain in the same direction meeting partner in original position dance around again. **16 Bars.**

2b. 4 Ladies advance 2'3s, double 7's to the right and reverse 2'3s. **8 Bars.**

2c. 4 Gents left hand wheel dance around picking up partner right hand in right in front continuing to original position. **8 Bars.**

2d. Form a circle gents facing in and ladies facing out dance 7's to the gents right on the 2'3s dance half turn ending with the gents facing out and the ladies facing in continue the 7's and on the 2'3's partners half turn again to face each other.

8 Bars.

2e. Dancers weave back to place passing right shoulder to right and left to left with the next person and so on. **8 Bars.**

1st FIGURE

3a. 1st tops join 2nd sides (couple to right) and 2nd tops join 1st sides facing each other in two diagonal lines advance and pass through passing right shoulder to right shoulder, pass each other back to back and reverse back to place. Partners dance 7's and 2'3s pass each other face and holding hands crossed dance around to form two diagonal lines with 1st tops and 1st sides facing 2nd tops and 2nd sides. **16 Bars.**

3b. Repeat but returning to original position. **16 Bars.**

BODY

4. Repeat 2a - 2e. **48 Bars.**

2nd FIGURE

5a. Form a circle and dance 7's to the right 2'3s, 1st top couple form an arch and 2nd couple release each other hands and dance under the arch 2nd lady around the 1st gent and 2nd gent around the 1st lady and the 1st couple dance under their own arch to form the circle again. 7's to the left 2'3s this time 2nd couple form the arch and 1st couple dance under and 2nd couple under their own arch bringing top couples back to original positions. Both couples dance around each other hands crossed.

24 Bars.

5b. Side couples repeat 1a. **24 Bars.**

BODY

6. Repeat 2a -2e. **48 Bars.**

CIRCLE

7. Repeat 1a -1c. **32 Bars.**

Cuchulainn Jig

FORMATION: FOUR COUPLES

JIGS: 232 BARS

A. CIRCLE

All catch hands and side step to the left, ending with rising step. Side step back to places again, ending with rising step. **8 Bars.**

Repeat the movement, but begin the side step to the right. **8 Bars.**

B. BODY

(a) Lines: 1st Tops and 1st Sides catch hands in line, as do 2nd Tops and 2nd Sides. The dancers advance and retire, advance and pass through. When going through, Pass right shoulder to right, and all turn by right. **8 Bars.**

(b) Lines: Repeat (a) and then back to Places. **8 Bars.**

(c) Side step and pass partners: Partners side step past each other, ending with rising step and then back to places again ending with rising step. **8 Bars.**

(d) Slip sides: Men side step to the left and women to the right with rising step and back to places. **8 Bars.**

(e) Lines: Repeat (a) and (b), but lines now comprise 1st Tops and 2nd Sides, and 2nd Tops and 1st Sides. **16 Bars.**

C. FIRST FIGURE

(a) Tops advance to the centre and dance rising step. **4 Bars.**

Catch hands in the centre and side step to the left, ending with rising step.

4 Bars

(b) Side step to the right and away from each other, and end with rising step.

4 Bars

Partners turn in places. **4 Bars.**

(c) Sides dance (a) and (b). **16 Bars.**

D. BODY

Repeat B. **48 Bars.**

E. SECOND FIGURE

Tops, with hands raised in arch formation, exchange positions with Sides: 1st Tops over 1st Sides and 2nd Tops over 2nd Sides; all dance rising step (hands should be placed by sides while dancing this step). Continue in circle and back to places. Tops and Sides alternate in raising hands. **16 Bars.**

F. BODY

Repeat B. **48 Bars.**

G. CIRCLE

Repeat A to finish. **16 Bars.**

Glassdrummond Reel

A SIX HAND DANCE FORMATION: DANCE IN THREES OF ONE MAN AND TWO WOMEN

A. ADVANCE AND RETIRE AND CIRCLE

(a) Advance and retire twice. On the second retire form a ring and on the last two threes all dancers turn out and dance seven steps to the right, then two threes. On the last of the two threes, all face in and dance to their right to original places.

16 Bars

(b) Repeat (a), this time going to the left. **16 Bars.**

B. ARCHES

(a) Each man takes inside hands with the woman on the right, forming an arch. Advance with promenade step to opposite woman who dances promenade step under the arch. Continue the movement, completing the square to original place.

8 Bars

(b) Repeat (a), starting with the woman on the left. **8 Bars**

C. MEN SWING RIGHT THEN LEFT

(a) Men face the woman on their right and swing. Meanwhile, the other woman beats time with her hands. **8 Bars.**

(b) Repeat (a) with woman on left, as the first woman beats time. **8 Bars.**

D. MEN CHANGE PLACES WHILE WOMEN DANCE SQUARE

Men take right hand in right; change places on their two threes. The women dance sevens past each other on their two threes. Men then give left hands and back to place; the women continue sevens. The men take right hands again and change places. **8 Bars**

Women continue sevens and men give left hands back to place.

Women continue sevens and back to place.

E. MEN AND WOMEN HOOK ARMS

(a) Men hook the woman on right, then on left, then right again. All dancers stamp on right foot, then left, and clap hands twice. **8 Bars.**

(b) Repeat (a), starting with the woman on left. **8 Bars.**

(c) Advance, retire, advance and pass through to next three. **8 Bars.**

Four Hand Jig

FOUR HAND DANCE: HOLDING INSIDE HANDS

JIGS: 264 BARS

A. LEAD AROUND

Dancers half right turn and lead around anticlockwise. On the 8th bar, release hands, turn about inwards. Man takes partners right hand in his left and both lead back to place. **16 Bars.**

B. BODY

(a) Sevens past partner: Partners side-step past each other (men behind women) and dance a jig step. Side-step back to place (women behind men) and finish with a jig step.

(b) Half-right and left: Partners take both hands and turn once in place. They release hands, and men and women cross to opposite side position, men crossing on the outside, women passing between opposite man and woman. (Women right shoulder to right shoulder between the men) Partners take both hands and turn into place.

(c) Sides: Repeat (a).

(b) Half right-and left: Repeat (b)

32 Bars

C. 1ST FIGURE

(a) Advance thru center: Leading man takes his partner's right hand in his right, they advance towards opposite couple and pass between and beyond them. Release hands, reverse and return to opposite couple, woman's right hand in man's left. Release hands. Woman takes opposite man's left hand in her left hand. Leading man takes opposite woman's right hand in his right hand; all turn once in place. Leading man takes his partners right hand in his left and they lead back to place. Release hands, reverse, advance again, woman's left hand in man's right. Release hands. The man gives his left hand to opposite woman and leading woman gives her right hand to opposite man; all turn once in place. Release hands, leading couple dance back to place, and turn once.

(b) The opposite couple dance (a).

32 Bars

D. Repeat B. 32 Bars.

E. 2ND FIGURE

(a) Center meet: Leading man and opposite woman advance to meet, take right hands, dance side-step to man's right and end with rising step. Woman takes her own partner's right hand in her right, and takes his own partner's left hand in his left and all turn in place. The same man and woman meet again in the center, take left hands and dance side step to man's left, ending with rising step. Release hands; woman gives her left hand to her own partner's left, man gives right hand to his partner's right; turn in place.

(b) The opposite couple dance (a)

32 Bars

F. Repeat B. 32 Bars.

G. 3rd Figure

Women's chain: Women advance, give right hands in the center and continue to opposite man, giving left hand. both turn in place, women return to own partner, both making a full tum in place. Both couples dance a complete circle around each other. **16 Bars.**

H. Repeat B. 32 Bars.

I. LEAD AROUND

32 Bars

McClouds Reel

ROUND DANCE

REELS: 216 BARS

1. CIRCLE

(a) Dancers sidestep clockwise two Three's and sidestep anticlockwise two Three's. **8 Bars.**

(b) Dancers continue anticlockwise with sidestep and two Three's, and return clockwise with sidestep finishing with two Three's. **8 Bars.**

2. BODY

4 gents dance to centre, top gents face side gents to their right and form a square, the four ladies stand idle during these movements.

(a) Gents clap both hands three times quickly on their knees. **1 Bar.**

(b) Gents clap their own hands once.

Clap both hands of facing gent once.

Clap their own hands once.

Clap both hands of facing gent once.

1 Bar.

(c) Repeat A and B twice. **4 Bars.**

(d) Repeat B twice. **2 Bars.**

(e) Gents turn and top gents face side gents to their left. Gents clap hands in a vertical motion; right hand goes down as left hand comes up. Left hand goes down as right hand comes up. Repeat these movements once more. **1 Bar.**

(f) Clap right hand in right hand then let hands with gents facing each other.

1 Bar.

(g) Repeat E and F twice. **4 Bars.**

(h) Repeat F twice. **2 Bars.**

3. FIRST FIGURE - LEAD AROUND

Partners reform gents holding the ladies left hand and lead around anticlockwise back to original position. Gents turning clockwise and the ladies anticlockwise on the 8th bar, gent taking the ladies right hand in their left hand and lead around clockwise to starting position. **16 Bars.**

4. Repeat Body. 16 Bars.

5. SECOND FIGURE - SEE SAW

Four couples take uncrossed hands and dance around each other clockwise moving anticlockwise way around the circle. Reverse movements dancing back to original position. **16 Bars.**

6. Repeat Body. 16 Bars.

7. HOOK AND CHAIN

Gents hook left arm with the lady on the left and dance around anti-clockwise. Return to original partner with right hand and dance full turn clockwise starting chain with left hand to the lady on the left. **16 Bars.**

8. Repeat Body.

9. ARCHES

Partners take inside hands top couples raise hands to form an arch and face the couple to their left. Tops and sides change places with sides passing under the arch, turn and face the same couple again. All take inside hands and dance back to place, this time sides forming the arch and tops pass underneath. Repeat arches with top couples facing side couples to their right. **16 Bars.**

10. Repeat Body. 16 Bars.

11. TREAD THE NEEDLE

All take hands in a ring except 1st top gent and lady of 1st sides. Top couple form an arch and 1st sides lady dances under the arch followed by the other dancers back to her original place. Repeat the movement with first sides forming the arch and top gent leads the dance. **16 Bars.**

12. Repeat Body. 16 Bars.

13. FINISH

The introductory movement, the circle is performed again, to complete the dance. **16 Bars.**

Mullaghbawn Reel

A ROUND DANCE

REELS: 408 BARS

A. LEAD AROUND

Four couples cross hands and lead around anti-clockwise in a circle. When couples arrive in original positions, the men turn clockwise and the women anti-clockwise without releasing hands. **8 Bars.**

Lead around clockwise to original positions. **8 Bars.**

B. BODY

(a) Side step: Top couples side step to the left while Side couples side step to the right, finishing with two threes; repeat side step to original positions. **8 Bars.**

(b) Men wheel and big wheel: The four men give right hands in a wheel and dance around clockwise. **4 Bars.**

Release hands and turn clockwise to grip left hands in the wheel; men take partner's left hand in their right and dance around anti-clockwise to original position.

8 Bars.

Partners Swing. **4 Bars.**

(c) Men Chain: Each Top man dances to the woman on his left while Side men dance to the woman on their right. The men pass left shoulder to left and each gives left hand to the woman's left; dance around and return to partner with right hand, men passing right shoulder to right. Dance around into place. **8 Bars.**

(d) Men Circle: the four men dance around anti-clockwise in a circle without taking hands, dancing for 1 bar on the spot opposite their own position. **8 Bars.**

C. 1ST FIGURE – ADVANCE AND RETIRE

(a) Top couples cross hands, advance and retire twice. **8 Bars.**

(b) Top couples, hands still crossed, dance around each other. **8 Bars.**

(c) Side couples dance (a) and (b). **16 Bars.**

D. BODY

Repeat B. **48 Bars.**

E. 2ND FIGURE – WOMEN CHAIN AND WHEEL

(a) Top women dance to the centre, take right hands and dance around clockwise; as the women dance towards their partners, the men dance in front of them, taking right hands above the women's hands to form a wheel. **4 Bars.**

(b) Top couples continue clockwise in the wheel. **4 Bars.**

Then turn clockwise, put left hand in the wheel and dance anti-clockwise to original position. **4 Bars.**

Top couples swing. **4 Bars.**

(c) Side couples dance (a) and (b). **16 Bars.**

F. BODY

Repeat B. **48 Bars.**

G. 3RD FIGURE – MEN CHAIN AND WHEEL

Repeat E, with the men dancing movements first. **32 Bars.**

H. BODY

Repeat B. **48 Bars.**

I. 4TH FIGURE – MEN'S CHAIN

(a) Top men dance across to the opposite women, taking right hands and dance around clockwise; dance straight back across to partner, taking left hands and dancing around anti-clockwise. Men then dance to the centre, grip right hands and dance a full turn clockwise; release hands and dance to opposite woman, taking left hands and dance around clockwise; return to original position. **16 Bars.**

(b) Sides dance (a). **16 Bars.**

J. BODY

Repeat B. **48 Bars.**

K. LEAD AROUND

Repeat A to finish. **16 Bars.**

Quinn's Reel

LEAD ROUND

Tops holding inside hands from an arch and lead round anti clockwise (right).

Sides ladies dancing clockwise dance under arch made by tops while their partners dance anti clockwise passing right to right with the ladies they meet. **8 Bars.**

This movement is then repeated with sides making the arch and the lady of tops passing through. **8 Bars.**

LONG EXTENDED SIDES AND LEAD BACK

Partner will dance sevens past each other ending with two short three's.

All dances will continue to dance seven and three's away from their partners till they finish beside each other on the opposite side of the set.

Partners take both hands in front and lead back to place and turn once in place **24 Bars.**

TOPS CROSS, SIDES CROSS

All dancers face own partners. Top couples change places dancing sevens and turning into opposite place with two forward three's.

Gents dancing through the centre.

Sides repeat this movement.

All are now in opposite places. All dancers now dance sevens and three's past own partners and then dance away from partners to leave top in side position and sides in tops position, but with new partners. **16 Bars.**

The above movement is then repeated with new partners to leave all dancers back with own partners but in opposite places. **16 Bars.**

Dancers now face partners and chain back to own places and turn into place.

8 Bars.

GENTS WHEEL

The four gents take right hands in centre and dance round for four bars then give left hand to lady before own partner and turn her once in place.

Gents then take right hands in centre as before and this time gives left hand to lady opposite his own place. Gents repeat this movement with third lady before finally returning to own partner. **32 Bars.**

FIRST FIGURE

Top couples face their own partners and dance seven and three's to centre and back then swing round the house and back to place. **16 Bars.**

Sides repeat this movement. **16 Bars.**

Body of dance then repeated. **96 Bars.**

SECOND FIGURE

Tops with hands crossed swing round each other and back to place. Then release left hands and continue to turn with right hands.

Dancers then dance between couple behind, gents dancing round ladies and ladies dancing round gents.

The four dancers then take right hands in centre and dance clockwise for four bars.

Turn the dancer beside original position with left hand and all dancers return to their own partners with their right hand. **24 Bars.**

Sides repeat. **24 Bars.**

Body of the dance is then repeated. **96 Bars.**

Finish as in high caul cap, 8 hand reel etc. **40 Bars.**

The Gap of the North

4 HAND REEL 168 BARS

1. Lead around Back. 16 Bars.

2. 7's past partner and 2/3's in place, ladies past right shoulder to right swapping places gents left shoulder to left swapping places. **8 Bars.**

3. Repeat back to original position. 8 Bars.

4. Facing each other partner's take right hand in right hand and dance 7's to the gent's right, when dancing the 2/3's, partner's change places turning the ladies under the right arm.

Repeat 4 back to original position. **8 Bars.**

5. Wheel right with hand in centre for 4 Bars turn left hand wheel back to place.

8 Bars.

6. 1ST FIG. THREAD THE NEEDLE.

1st gent, 1st lady, 2nd gent and 2nd lady take hands, 1st gent and 1st lady form an arch and 2nd lady dances under the arch and back to place followed by 2nd gent and 1st lady. 1st gent does not follow under the arch. 2nd lady and 2nd gent form arch and 1st gent followed by 1st lady and 2nd gent pass thread the needle. 2nd lady does not pass under the arch. **8 Bars.**

Couples cross hands and dance around each other. **8 Bars.**

7. Repeat 2-5. 32 Bars.

8. 2ND FIG. ARCHES

1st Top couple advance to opposite couple holding hands in an arch and 2nd couple pass under in opposite position top gent turns the lady under his right arm to change places while side couples dance pass each other right shoulder to right. Repeat movement with 2nd tops forming the arch. **8 Bars.**

Couples cross hands and dance around each other. **8 Bars.**

9. Repeat 2-5. 32 Bars.

10. Lead around and Back. 16 Bars.

The Garryowen Jig

CEOL: THE GARRYOWEN JIG 120 BARS

The formation of the dance is as follows: 4 Couples

Leading or first tops A B second C D First sides E F second sides G H

Boys: B C F G Girls: A D E H

1. Lead around and back to places. The lead around is danced anti-clockwise for the first 8 Bars and clockwise back again for a further 8 Bars. Dancers should not turn into places for following movement. **16 Bars.**

2. Boys side-step to right (near) dancing step at each position occupied by boy on right and completing fainne. Girls do likewise dancing to left (front). **16 Bars.**

3. Girls catch hands in centre (fainne) and side-step to left ending with rising-step. Continuing in same direction fall back into places and all repeat rising-step (left foot).

Boys will now repeat same movement. **16 Bars.**

4. All dancers place backs of hands on sides, fingers pointed downward and elbows turned in. Girls advance to centre and back again to places. As they are coming back Boys will advance to centre and back to places also.

Girls will advance for a second time and all will dance the rising-step.

NOTE: Girls are in centre at this position.

The movement is again repeated and is commenced by Girls falling back to original positions and Boys advancing to centre. At the end of 8 Bars, Boys will be in centre and girls in original places. **16 Bars.**

5. Boys taking partners crossed hands will dance around anti-clockwise completing fainne 8 Bars, and back again clockwise 8 Bars. **16 Bars.**

At the end of 8 Bars, that is, whenever, dancers have completed the fainne (first time), the Boys should be back to back before commencing to return to original places.

6. First and second tops will side-step back to back. First tops facing second sides, while second tops will face first sides.

All dance rising step on left foot, catch hands in fainne and fall back to places by left and end with rising-step again.

First and second sides side-step back to back. First sides facing First tops and second sides facing second tops. All dance rising-step on left foot, catch hands in fainne and fall back to places by left and end with rising-step again. 8 Bars.

16 Bars.

7. Lead around and back to places as described at No. 1. **16 Bars.**

The Kings Head

In an article in Part 6 of CEIM (still available from our office in 6 Harcourt St, post free 20p) Miss Nan Quinn of Besbrook, Co. Armagh mentions a large number of dances which she collected in the south of her county. One of these was **THE KING'S HEAD**.

Miss Quinn writes, "I remember when I first heard of THE KING'S HEAD one of the fiddlers asked me if I knew the tune. I said, no! He then Played the tune known to us as THE SOLDIER'S JOY. I said I did know the tune but under a different name. He said he never heard it called anything but 'The Kings Head', and they in Co. Armagh had a song to the tune the chorus of which he sang to me:

We'll dance a ring o' rosie round the ould King's Head.

We'll dance a ring o' rosie round the ould King's Head.

We'll dance a ring o' rosie round the ould King's Head.

For the young King's married and the ould King's dead.

I said 'All right! We'll not fall out over it, as in all probability the young king's wedding was the soldiers joy!' What's in a name anyway? We'll love our native tunes under any name, and we'll love our traditional dances both simple and intricate.'

This one of the simple dances and we give it here as we got it from Miss Quinn. An Eight-Handed Figure Dance in Reel Time.

Formation: All join hands and form a ring.

Beginning: All dance side step and two threes clockwise and back to place; then all side step anti-clockwise with "threes" and back as before. **16 Bars.**

An Chabhail (Body): Three Cornered Hook Gents of first and opposite Tops advance hook right arms, pass on to Gent on right of original position, hook left arms. Pass behind own partner back to place. **6 Bars.**

Now all clap alternate hands on legs above knees four times. **1 Bar.**

Clap hands three times keeping time with the time. **1 Bar.**

Side Gents then repeat the movement.

This completes the Body. **16 Bars.**

FIRST FIGURE - ALL ROUND ARCH

First Tops and Opposite Tops exchange places, First Tops making arch and Opposite Tops passing under Sides exchange places immediately after, First Sides making arch and Opposite Sides passing under. Then all dance the 'Sides Under Arms' movement, First Tops passing under arms of Opposite Sides while Opposite Tops make arch for First Sides. Tops are now in places first occupied by Sides and vice versa. From this position the movement is repeated, sides moving first. **16 Bars.**

SECOND FIGURE - HOOK AND CHAIN

Gents hook lady on left with left arm, then hook own partner with right arm. Chain back to lady on left with left hand, and continue the chain movement until all dancers regain their former places. **16 Bars.**

THIRD FIGURE - ALL IN OR THREAD THE NEEDLE

All form ring and take hands except Gent of First Tops and Lady on his left. Top couple raise hands to make an arch. Lady on left passes through and round to her place taking all the dancers in line after her. Repeat the movement, Gent of First Tops passing under arms of couple on his left, others following. **16 Bars.**

REPEAT BODY. THIS COMPLETES THE DANCE.

Please note that the Hook and Chain movement is rather different from that in The Three Tunes.

The Lake End

6 HAND JIG

Formation 3 facing 3. Gents in the centre of the two ladies.

1. 7's to the right and jig step, 7's back to the left and jig step repeat to the left. **16 Bars.**
2. Right hand wheel forward for 2/3's, reverse 2/3's and forward for 4/3's, left hand wheel repeat to original position. **8 Bars.**
3. Gents 7's to the right at an angle jig step and back again while the gents are dancing the ladies swap places with their partners 7's and jig step and back again to original position. Gents 7's to the left at an angle jig step and back again while the ladies face each other and swap places with the lady opposite dancing 7's and jig step and back again to original position. **16 Bars.**
4. Figure of eight with gents starting with lady on the right passing right shoulder to right shoulder and the ladies left shoulder to left and continue returning to original position in 8 bars of music. **8 Bars.**
5. Circle 7's to the right and jig step continue to opposite position with 7's and jig step. Gent and lady on the right form an arch and the lady on the left dances under, then lady on the left and gent form an arch and the lady on the right dances under finishing with gent and lady on the right forming an arch and the lady on the left dances under. Repeat 5 back to home. **32 Bars.**
6. Advance and retire and advance again lines with their back to the music form an arch and the opposite line pass under. **16 Bars.**
7. Repeat as required.

The Mountain Top

REELS

2 Lines gents in one line facing their partners in the other.

A. Advance & Retire

Advance again gents form arch and ladies pass under passing right shoulder to right and all turn clockwise into the opposite place. **8 Bars.**

B. Repeat A with ladies forming arches. **8 Bars.**

C. 1st man and 2nd lady hook right arms and dance around for 4 bars.

Hook left arm dance around and dance back to place. **8 Bars.**

D. 1st lady and 2nd man repeat C. **8 Bars.**

E. 1st couples cross hands and dance 7's to gents left & ladies to the right, 2/3's. Gents take right hand in right hand dance around clockwise 2nd gent and 1st gent swapping places ladies take left hand in left hand and dance around anti-clockwise swapping places, both lines move to centre. **8 Bars.**

F. Swing - partners - 6 bars reverse 2 bars to start dance again. **8 Bars.**

G. Repeat A to F as often as required. When 2nd couple arrive at the top of the line and 1st couple arrive at the bottom they stand idle for one movement.

NOTE:

When repeating A to F original 1st couples lead until they reach the bottom of the line and then return as 2nd couple. When 2nd couple arrive at top of line they return as 1st couple.

The South Armagh Jig

JIGS: 280 BARS

LEAD AROUND

Gents holding ladies left hand in their right dance two threes to the next position on the right, dance jig step in place (rise and ground) and two threes to the next position, jig step. Repeat to own position. **16 Bars.**

CHAIN

Right hand in right dance around partner and give right hand in right to the lady on left dance around and return to original partner with right hand and chain around to starting place. **16 Bars.**

STAR

Facing partners holding hands uncrossed couples dance sevens to the centre on the two threes gents turn anticlockwise and ladies turn clockwise to face new partners. Hold hands uncrossed and dance sevens out to the gents left and dance two threes turning clockwise into the ladies position. Repeat three more times until original couples return to starting position. **32 Bars.**

SEVENS

Gents to the left and ladies to the right dance three sevens and jig step. Repeat to home with gents to the right and ladies to the left. **16 Bars.**

1ST FIG THROUGH THE GAP

Top couples advance and retire advance again and dance jig step. As jig step is being danced gents turn anticlockwise and ladies turn clockwise gents take ladies left hand in their right. New partners advance towards side couples (who have formed an arch) and the top lady dances around the side and the top gent dances around the lady meeting original partner holding hands uncrossed dance around in place.

Side couples repeat. **32 Bars.**

Repeat Chain, Star and Sevens. **64 Bars.**

2ND FIG ARCHES

1st Tops form an arch and 2nd tops pass under swapping places turning anticlockwise into place. **2 Bars.**

1st Sides on the left form an arch and 2nd sides pass under swapping places turning anticlockwise into place. **2 Bars.**

Top couples turn to the left and side couples turn to the right tops forming the arches and sides pass under swapping places. **2 Bars.**

All dance 2 Bars in place

2nd Sides form an arch and 1st sides pass under swapping places. **2 Bars.**

2nd Tops form an arch and 1st tops pass under swapping places. **2 Bars**

Side couples to the left and top couples to the right sides forming the arch and tops passing under. **2 Bars.**

All dance 2 Bars in place. **16 Bars.**

Repeat Chain, Star and Sevens. **64 Bars.**

Lead around to finish. **16 Bars.**

Armagh Lancers Set

Square Set of four couples, Gents on the left of their partners. First Top Couple have their backs to the band with Second Top Couple opposite them. First Side Couple are on the left of First Top Couple (when facing into the set) and Second Side Couple are opposite them (to the right of First Tops).

The figures are all danced to Jigs - The step work uses an "Up Jig".

FIGURE 1: JIG (136 BARS)

1st Top Lady: 1st Top Lady + 2nd Top Gent Advance + Swing (waltz hold)

8 Bars.

+ 2nd Top Gent

Top Couples: Square (Gents on the outside) - Pass Opposite (right shoulders) + Turn toward Partner and change places (right shoulders) + Face across the set and pass Opposite + Pass Partner to corner **8 Bars.**

All Corners: Swing Corner - Ladies to right / Gents to left. **8 Bars.**

All Couples: Swing Partner. **8 Bars.**

2nd Top Lady: 2nd Top Lady + 1st Top Gent Advance + Swing (waltz hold).

8 Bars.

+ 1st Top Gent

Top Couples: Square (Gents on the outside). **8 Bars.**

All Couples: Swing Corner / Swing partner. **16 Bars.**

1st Side Lady: 1st Side Lady + 2nd Side Gent Advance + Swing in the centre.

8 Bars.

+ 2nd Side Gent

Side Couples: Square. **8 Bars.**

All Couples: Swing Corner / Swing partner. **16 Bars.**

2nd Side Lady: 2nd Side Lady + 1st Side Gent Advance + Swing in the centre.

8 Bars.

+ 1st Side Gent

Side Couples: Square. **8 Bars.**

All Couples: Swing Corner / Swing partner + Finish with 1-2-3-kick. **8 Bars.**

FIGURE 2: JIG (136 BARS)

1st Top: Right hand in right - Advance (**2 Bars**) + Turn Lady under once (anti-clockwise) while retiring (**2 Bars**) + Swing (waltz hold). **4 Bars.**

Top Couples: Square (Gents on outside) **8 Bars.**

(+ On last 2 bars Side Couples Cast off and join Top Couples in Lines Side Couples) of 4

Top Lines of 4 Join hands in lines of 4 - Advance and retire twice / Advance + Swing Partner back to place. **16 Bars.**

2nd Top: Advance + Turn Lady under while retiring (**4 Bars**) + Swing (**4 Bars**).

8 Bars.

Couple

Top Couples: Square + on last 2 bars Side Couples Cast off and join Top Couples.

8 Bars.

(+ Side Couples)

Top Lines of 4 Advance and retire twice / Advance + Swing Partner back to place. **16 Bars.**

1st Side: Advance + Turn Lady under while retiring + Swing. **8 Bars.**

Couple

Side Couples: Square - on last 2 bars Top Couples Cast off and join Side Couples.

8 Bars.

Side Lines of 4 Advance and retire twice / Advance + Swing Partner back to place. **16 Bars.**

2nd Side: Advance + Turn Lady under while retiring + Swing. **8 Bars.**

Couple

Side Couples: Square - on last 2 bars Top Couples Cast off and join Side Couples. **8 Bars.**

Side Lines of 4 Advance and retire twice / Advance + Swing Partner back to place + Finish with 1 -2 - 3-kick. **16 Bars.**

FIGURE 3: JIG (152 BARS) - CHRISTMAS

See the notes below on the Little Christmas and Big Christmas (= Basket) formation and movements.

All Couples: Big Christmas left (**4 Bars**) + Jump on the last beat of the 4th bar + Big Christmas right (**4 Bars**). **8 Bars.**

Top Couples: Right hand in right - Advance + Turn to Side Couple on right + Back into opposite place (**4 Bars**) + Advance to other Side Couple. **8 Bars.**

Stars: Right-hand star (**4 Bars**) + Left-hand star (**4 Bars**). **8 Bars.**

Little Christmas: Little Christmas to the left with Side Couple+ Top Ladies and Top Gents release left hand (and Sides release right hand). **8 Bars.**

Big Christmas: Big Christmas (All Couples) left + Jump+ Big Christmas right... Top Couples end in opposite place. **8 Bars.**

Top Couples: Advance + Turn to Side Couple on right + Back into opposite place + Advance to other Side Couple. **8 Bars.**

All Couples: Right-hand star + Left-hand star / Little Christmas left + Break + Big Christmas left + Jump + Big Christmas right. **24 Bars.**

Side Couples: Advance + Turn to Top Couple on right + Back into opposite place+ Advance to other Top Couple. **8 Bars.**

All Couples: Right - hand star + Left-hand star / Little Christmas left (Side Ladies and Side Gents release left hand + Tops release right hand) / Big Christmas left + Jump + Big Christmas right...

Side Couples end in opposite place. **24 Bars.**

Side Couples: Right hand in right - Advance + Turn to Top Couple on right + Back into opposite place + Advance to other Top Couple. **8 Bars.**

All Couples: Right-hand star + left -hand star / Little Christmas left + Break + Big Christmas left + Jump + Big Christmas right. **24 Bars.**

All Couples: Swing your Partner (waltz hold) + Finish with 1-2-3-kick. **8 Bars.**

FIGURE 4: JIG (136 BARS)

In this figure the Gent's progress to each Lady in turn (to the left) by returning from the chase around and swinging with the Lady on their left and finishing on her left in her position.

Ladies: Advance and retire twice. **8 Bars.**

Gents: Advance and retire twice. **8 Bars.**

Ladies + Gents: Ladies Right-hand star (clockwise) + Left-hand star (anticlockwise), while...

Gents chase around the outside (to their right) turning clockwise once to each position returning back to place. **8 Bars.**

New Couples: Swing Corner (Ladies right / Gents left) + Finish in the Lady's position. **8 Bars.**

Ladies + Gents: Ladies Advance + retire twice / Gents Advance + retire twice. **16 Bars.**

Ladies + Gents: Ladies Right-hand star + Left-hand star, while...

Gents chase around + Swing the Lady on their left. **8 Bars.**

New Couples: Swing next Corner + Finish in the lady's position. **8 Bars.**

Ladies + Gents: Ladies Advance + retire twice / Gents Advance + retire twice **16 Bars.**

Ladies + Gents: Ladies Right-hand star + Left-hand star, while...

Gents chase around + Swing the Lady on their left. **8 Bars.**

New Couples: Swing next Corner + Finish in the Lady's position. **8 Bars.**

Ladies + Gents: Ladies Advance + retire twice / Gents Advance + retire twice. **16 Bars.**

Ladies + Gents: Ladies Right-hand star + Left-hand star, while...

Gents chase around + Swing the Lady on their left. **8 Bars.**

New Couples: Swing original Partner + Finish in original position + Finish with 1-2-3-kick. **8 Bars.**

FIGURE 5: JIG (168 BARS)

In this figure couples form up for the cross-over/cast with the lead couple doing a half turn and facing out with the couple who were to their left in second place immediately behind them, the couple who were to their right in third place, and finally the couple who were opposite them in the rear.

All Couples: Face Partner - Chain all round (12 Bars) + Active Gent's Right hand around Lady's waist, turn and face out + Other Couple line up behind in columns (2nd = 1st Sides, 3rd = 2nd Sides, 4th = 2nd Tops) (4 Bars). **16 Bars.**

All Couples: Cross over (Lady in front of Partner) + Cast down, meet Partner and lead up back to form Lady's and Gent's lines (Side Lines). **8 Bars.**

Side Lines: Advance and retire twice. **8 Bars.**

All Couples: Advance, meet Partner + Swing to place. **8 Bars.**

All Couples: Face Partner - Chain all round + Form Columns - 2nd Tops facing out (2nd = 2nd Sides, 3rd = 1st Sides, 4th = 1st Tops). **16 Bars.**

All Couples: Cross over (Lady in front of Partner) + Cast down, meet Partner and lead up back to form Lady's and Gent's lines (Side Lines). **8 Bars.**

Side Lines: Advance and retire twice. **8 Bars.**

All Couples: Advance, meet Partner + Swing to place. **8 Bars.**

All Couples: Chain all round + Form columns - 1st Sides facing out (2nd = 2nd Tops, 3rd = 1st Tops, 4th = 2nd Sides). **16 Bars.**

All Couples: Cross over + Cast down, meet Partner and lead up back to form Lady's and Gent's lines (Top Lines). **8 Bars.**

Top Lines: Advance and retire twice. **8 Bars.**

All Couples: Advance, meet Partner + Swing to place. **8 Bars.**

All Couples: Chain all round + Form columns - 2nd Sides facing (out 2nd = 1st Tops, 3rd = 2nd Tops, 4th = 1st Sides). **16 Bars.**

All Couples: Cross over + Cast down, meet Partner and lead up back to form Lady's and Gent's lines (Top Lines). **8 Bars.**

Top Lines: Advance and retire twice. **8 Bars.**

All Couples: Advance, meet Partner + Swing to place + Finish with 1-2-3-kick.

8 Bars.

Notes**CHRISTMAS**

- Little Christmas: 2 Couples (One Top and One Side Couple)
- Big Christmas: 4 Couples (Both Tops and both Sides alternating)

Linked hand hold for the Big and Little Christmas: Place your right hand on the waist of the person on your right. Your left arm goes over the right arm of the person on your left with your left hand holding the next wrist behind the small of the back of the person immediately to your left. Place your left foot into the set.

Changing from Little Christmas to Big Christmas:

- When Tops are the leading Couple - Top Lady has hold of the right wrist of the Side Lady and Top Gent has hold of the right wrist of the Side Gent. To change to the Big Christmas both Top Lady and Top Gent should release the right wrist of the Side person then the Top Gent moves the semi-circle from the Little Christmas around to join with the other Side Couple using the same hold.

- When Sides are the leading Couple - to change to the Big Christmas both Side Lady and Side Gent should release the right wrist of the Top person then the Side Gent moves the semi-circle from the Little Christmas around to join with the other Top Couple using the same hold.

For the Big Christmas:

- Move 4 bars to the left pushing with your right foot (1-&-2-&-3-&4-jump).
- Jump changing feet to put your right foot into the set.
- Move 4 bars to the right pushing with your left foot.

Armagh Set

This set, as remembered by older traditional dancers in the area, was revived by Catherine Evans, of Bessbrook, County Armagh

FIGURE 1: JIG (104 BARS)

- (a) All couples lead around holding crossed hands. **8 Bars.**
- (b) The four ladies dance clockwise around inside to face the opposite gent (**4 Bars**); then with him they dance back to back. They pass each other forward, right shoulder to right and reverse back left shoulder to left. (**4 Bars**). **8 Bars.**
- (c) The four gents dance anticlockwise around to face their own partner; then dance the back to back with them. **8 Bars.**
- (d) All couples swing in opposite positions. **8 Bars.**
- (e) Taking right hands, all couples dance one turn; then chain back to home, ladies dancing clockwise and gents anticlockwise. **8 Bars.**
- (f) All couples swing in place. **8 Bars.**
- (g) Repeat (b) to (f). This time, gents cross to opposite lady first at (b). **40 Bars.**
- (h) All couples house around. **8 Bars.**

FIGURE 2: JIG (128 BARS)

- (a) All circle, advance and retire twice (polka step). **8 Bars.**
- (b) All couples swing. **8 Bars.**
- (c) Top couples advance and retire holding right hands; then side couples advance and retire. **8 Bars.**
- (d) Repeat (c). **8 Bars.**
- (e) Top couples cross, ladies turning once (clockwise) under the gent's right hand; then side couples cross, side ladies turning. **8 Bars.**
- (f) All repeat (e), dancing back to place. **8 Bars.**
- (g) All couples swing. **8 Bars.**
- (h) Repeat (a) to (g). **56 Bars.**
- (i) All couples house around. **8 Bars.**

FIGURE 3: REEL (216 BARS)

- (a) All couples lead around holding crossed hands. **8 Bars.**
- (b) Top couples join right hands with the side couple on the left, dance around (**4 Bars**); then join left hands and dance back to place (**4 Bars**). **8 Bars.**
- (c) All swing in fours (**6 Bars**) and reverse to place (**2 Bars**). **8 Bars.**
- (d) Repeat (b) and (c), side couples turning left this time. **16 Bars.**
- (e) Top couple take inside hands. Opposite lady crosses, giving right hand to the top gent and they thread the needle' (high gates). Opposite lady passes under the arch; then top lady and opposite lady again. **8 Bars.**
- (f) Top couples form a circle of four and dance around clockwise to opposite positions (**4 Bars**). They then pass back to home, top couple passing through the centre and second couple passing on the outside, with gents turning the lady anticlockwise into place, right hand in right (**4 Bars**). **8 Bars.**
- (g) Top couples swing. **8 Bars.**
- (h) Top couples repeat (e) to (g). Second couple leading. **24 Bars.**
- (i) Repeat (b) to (h) with side couples dancing (e) to (h). **80 Bars.**
- (j) All repeat (b) to (d). **32 Bars.**
- (k) All couples house around. **8 Bars.**

FIGURE 4: JIG (128 BARS)

- (a) All circle, advance and retire twice. **8 Bars.**
- (b) All couples dance at home. **8 Bars.**
- (c) All turn from their partners to face the person on the other side, advance and retire once towards them; then dance back to back with them - dance forward left shoulder to left and reverse back, passing right shoulder to right. **8 Bars.**
- (d) All face the same person and advance and retire once. Then, facing each other all the time, they dance anti-clockwise around each other, passing back to finish facing their own partners. **8 Bars.**
- (e) All couples dance at home. **8 Bars.**
- (f) Both top couples face the side couple on the left and dance a square, gents clockwise and ladies anticlockwise. Gents stay on the outside, passing right shoulder with the ladies, all dancing forward (**2 Bars**) and turning on the corner (**2 Bars**) four times as they complete the four sides of the square; then dance into place, ladies turning anti-clockwise under their partner's right hand. (**8 Bars**). **16 Bars.**
- (g) All couples dance at home. **8 Bars.**
- (h) Repeat (c) to (g) with side couples turning left for the square (f). **48 Bars.**
- (i) All couples house around. **8 Bars.**

FIGURE 5: REEL (136 BARS)

- (a) All couples lead around, holding crossed hands. **8 Bars.**
- (b) Top gents dance in place in the corner with the side lady on the left (6 Bars) and all return to their partners (2 Bars). The other gents and ladies dance on the spot in place. **8 Bars.**
- (c) All couples swing in place. **8 Bars.**
- (d) Repeat (b) and (c), with side gents and top ladies dancing in place in the corners at (b). **16 Bars.**
- (e) Top gents chain with right hands in the centre, turning three-quarter way around. They then chain left hand to left with the side gent right of their own position, turning halfway around him to face his partner (side lady), chain right to right around her to face back towards home and, dancing back inside the side gent, turn left hand to left around their own partners (top ladies) into place. **16 Bars.**
- (f) All couples swing in place. **8 Bars.**
- (g) Repeat (b) to (f) with side gents dancing the chain (e). **56 Bars.**
- (h) All couples house around. **8 Bars.**

FIGURE 6: HORNPIPE (80 BARS)

- (a) All couples house around in waltz hold. **8 Bars.**
- (b) The four gents dance into the centre, turn clockwise, dance out to place and turn anti-clockwise (**4 Bars**); then repeat all the movements (**4 Bars**). **8 Bars.**
- (c) All couples dance at home, turning twice. **8 Bars.**
- (d) Both top couples take near hands and, thread the needle, (high gates) with the side lady on their left, who takes the top gent's left hand in her right. Top lady passes under the arch first; then side lady passes and top lady again, as side lady dances back to join her partner. **8 Bars.**
- (e) Repeat (a) to (d) with side couples leading. **32 Bars.**
- (f) All couples house around. **8 Bars.**

Armagh Quadrilles**1ST FIGURE SINGLE REELS OR POLKAS (72 BARS)****A. PASS THROUGH**

Top couples pass through, women on the inside, and change places with their partners (**4 Bars**); Top couples pass through; change places with their partners (**4 Bars**). **8 Bars.**

B. SWING

All swing. **8 Bars.**

C. WOMEN CHAIN

Top women chain, right hands in the centre, turn twice around opposite man, hooking left arms (**4 Bars**); dance back to partner (**4 Bars**). **8 Bars.**

D. SWING

All swing. **8 Bars.**

E. REPEAT

Sides repeat A - D. **32 Bars.**

2ND FIGURE SINGLE REELS OR POLKAS (104 BARS)**A. ADVANCE AND RETIRE**

Top couples advance and retire once (**4 Bars**); pass through to opposite position and change places with partners (**4 Bars**). **8 Bars.**

B. ADVANCE AND RETIRE

Repeat A. **8 Bars.**

C. SWING

All swing. **8 Bars.**

D. REPEAT

Sides dance A - C. **24 Bars.**

E. REPEAT

Tops repeat A - C. **24 Bars.**

F. REPEAT

Sides repeat A - C. **24 Bars.**

3RD FIGURE JIGS (136 BARS)

A. LEAD IN THE CENTRE

Top man and opposite woman hold left hands in the centre and dance around anti-clockwise (4 Bars). Pick up partner. men with right arm around the woman's waist and woman's left arm on the man's right shoulder; lead around to opposite place (4 Bars). 8 Bars.

B. SLIDE IN AND OUT

In waltz hold, all slide in and out once (4 Bars), then slide across (4 steps to home) (4 Bars). 8 Bars.

C. WOMEN CHAIN

Top women chain as at 1st Figure. C. 8 Bars.

D. SWING

Four couples swing. 8 Bars.

E. REPEAT

Repeat A-D. 2nd Top man and opposite woman leading. 32 Bars.

F. REPEAT

Repeat A-D, 1st Side man and opposite woman leading. 32 Bars.

G. REPEAT

Repeat A-D, 2nd Side man and opposite woman leading. 32 Bars.

4TH FIGURE SINGLE REELS OR POLKAS (200 BARS)

A. SWING

Top couple swings across the set to the opposite couple. 8 Bars.

B. THREE AND ONE

2nd Top man takes the hands of both women, 1st Top woman's left hand in his left; his own partner turns out and he holds her right hand in his right - Both Top women are facing 2nd Top man. 2nd Top man advances (2 Bars) while the women retire (2 Bars). 1st Top man retires at the same time and dances in place for 6 bars. 2nd Top man advances and the women retire (2 Bars). 2nd Top man turns both women to face 1st top man (2 Bars). 8 Bars.

C. THREE AND ONE

Repeat with 1st Top man dancing with both women. 8 Bars.

D. BASKET

Basket of four. 8 Bars.

E. WOMEN CHAIN

Top women chain as at 1st Figure, C. 8 Bars.

F. SWING

Four couples swing. 8 Bars.

G. REPEAT

Repeat A - F with 2nd Tops leading. 48 Bars.

H. REPEAT

Repeat A - F with 1st Sides leading. 48 Bars.

I. REPEAT

Repeat A - F with 2nd Sides leading. 48 Bars.

5TH FIGURE SINGLE REELS OR POLKAS 128 BARS

A. CIRCLE

Circle, advance and retire twice. 8 Bars.

B. SWING

All four couples swing. 8 Bars.

C. LEAD AROUND

Lead around, the man's right arm around the woman's waist and the woman's left arm on the man's right shoulder. 8 Bars.

D. CIRCLE

Circle, advance and retire twice. 8 Bars.

E. SWING BEHIND

Swing behind; men turn to the left and women turn to the right; swing. During the swing the men take the women home to their position. 8 Bars.

F. LEAD AROUND

Lead around with new partner. 8 Bars.

G. REPEAT

Repeat A - C three times until women return home. 72 Bars.

The McCuskers' Ideal Barndance

A couple dance from John McCusker, partners in an open hold, side-by-side, man on the left/woman on the right, either a 'cross-back' hold or 'back(waist)-shoulder', man's right arm around her back (and under for cross-back hold), her left hand on his right shoulder for 'back-shoulder'.

The dance begins facing Anti-Clockwise around the dance space and starting on outside feet.

Bar 1: Walk forward with a slow step - 1, 2 (M-L,R/W-R,L).

Bar 2: Then a quick 123 turning in toward each other to face back the way you'd come (M-LRL/W-RLR).

Bars 3-4: REPEAT all that back the way you'd come, finishing by turning in to face your partner and take a ballroom/waltz-hold.

Bar 5: Moving to man's left/woman's right and ACW, step-together-step (M-LRL/W-RLR)

Bar 6: REPEAT in other direction, CW, to man's right/woman's left (M-RLR/W-LRL)

Bars 7-8: 4 X Step-Hop(*) (M-L*R*L*R*/W-R*L*R*)

The *HOP is not required. Some dancers danced this turn/'doubling'/pivot/dreher 'smooth', sans 'hop'.



The Sweets of May
The Three Tunes
Betty Black
The Soldier's Joy
A Trip to the Cottage
The Connaughtman's Rambles
The Square of Crossmaglen
The Garryowen Jig
Quinn of Armagh
Seán Quinn's
The Slopes of Slieve Gullion
Dunreavy Park
The Outlacken Lasses
The Philosopher
Henry Savage's Favourites
The Mullaghbawn Reel
The Glasdrummond Reel
Miss McLeod's Reel
Mullion Mountain
Drumhoney Sessions
The Crooked Road
Bunker Hill, Markethill
The Mountain Top

SHEET MUSIC

The Sweets of May

Older Version

Musical score for 'The Sweets of May' (Older Version). The score is written in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a time signature of 6/8. It consists of six staves of music. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a sharp sign, and a 6/8 time signature. The music features a mix of eighth and sixteenth notes, with some rests. The piece concludes with a double bar line and repeat dots.

The Sweets of May

Common Version

Musical score for 'The Sweets of May' (Common Version). The score is written in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a time signature of 6/8. It consists of five staves of music. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a sharp sign, and a 6/8 time signature. The music features a mix of eighth and sixteenth notes, with some rests. The second staff includes first and second endings, marked with '1.' and '2.' above the notes. The piece concludes with a double bar line and repeat dots.

The Three Tunes

Haste to the Wedding

Musical score for "Haste to the Wedding" in G major (one sharp) and 2/4 time. The score consists of three staves. The first staff contains the first eight measures. The second staff contains measures 9-12, with a first ending bracket over measures 10-11 and a second ending bracket over measure 12. The third staff contains measures 13-16, ending with a double bar line and repeat dots.

Leslie's Hornpipe

Musical score for "Leslie's Hornpipe" in G major (one sharp) and 2/4 time. The score consists of three staves. The first staff contains the first eight measures. The second staff contains measures 9-12, with a first ending bracket over measures 10-11 and a second ending bracket over measure 12. The third staff contains measures 13-16, ending with a double bar line and repeat dots.

The German Beau

Musical score for "The German Beau" in G major (one sharp) and 2/4 time. The score consists of three staves. The first staff contains the first eight measures. The second staff contains measures 9-12, with a first ending bracket over measures 10-11 and a second ending bracket over measure 12. The third staff contains measures 13-16, ending with a double bar line and repeat dots.

Betty Black

8-Hand Dance

The sheet music for "Betty Black" is an 8-Hand Dance, presented in G major (one sharp) and common time (C). It consists of nine staves of music. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a common time signature (C). The music is written in a single melodic line, likely representing one of the eight hands. The notation includes various rhythmic values such as eighth and sixteenth notes, as well as rests. There are several repeat signs (double bar lines with dots) throughout the piece. The final staff concludes with a double bar line and repeat dots. The music is characterized by a steady, rhythmic pattern typical of a dance tune.

The Soldier's Joy

(The King's Head)

Single Reel

Musical score for 'The Soldier's Joy' (The King's Head) - Single Reel. The score is written in treble clef, 4/4 time, and D major. It consists of four staves. The first staff contains the first four measures of the melody. The second staff contains the next four measures, including a first ending (1.) and a second ending (2.). The third staff contains the next four measures of the accompaniment. The fourth staff contains the next four measures of the accompaniment, including a first ending (1.) and a second ending (2.).

The Soldier's Joy

(The King's Head)

Single Reel

Traditional
from arr. by Tom Anderson

Musical score for 'The Soldier's Joy' (The King's Head) - Single Reel. The score is written in treble clef, 4/4 time, and D major. It consists of four staves. The first staff contains the first four measures of the melody. The second staff contains the next four measures, including a first ending (1.) and a second ending (2.). The third staff contains the next four measures of the accompaniment. The fourth staff contains the next four measures of the accompaniment, including a first ending (1.) and a second ending (2.).

A Trip to the Cottage

Jig

Musical score for "A Trip to the Cottage" in G major, 6/8 time. The score consists of four staves. The first staff is the melody. The second and fourth staves contain first and second endings. The third staff is a bass line. The piece concludes with a double bar line.

The Connaughtman's Rambles

Jig

Musical score for "The Connaughtman's Rambles" in G major, 6/8 time. The score consists of four staves. The first staff is the melody. The second and fourth staves contain first and second endings. The third staff is a bass line. The piece concludes with a double bar line.

The Square of Crossmaglen

Reel

J. Keegan

Musical score for 'The Square of Crossmaglen' in G minor, 2/4 time. The score consists of five staves of music. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and a common time signature. The melody is written in a single line. The second staff continues the melody with a triplet of eighth notes. The third staff features a repeat sign with first and second endings. The fourth staff includes a triplet of eighth notes. The fifth staff concludes the piece with a double bar line and repeat dots.

The Garryowen Jig

Musical score for 'The Garryowen Jig' in G major, 6/8 time. The score consists of four staves of music. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 6/8 time signature. The melody is written in a single line. The second staff includes first and second endings. The third staff begins with a repeat sign. The fourth staff includes first and second endings. The piece concludes with a double bar line and repeat dots.

Quinn of Armagh

Hornpipe

Ed Reavey
arr. J. Keegan

Musical score for 'Quinn of Armagh' in G major and 4/4 time. The score consists of four staves. The first two staves are the main melody, and the last two are an accompaniment. The melody features several triplet figures and a double bar line with first and second endings. The first ending leads back to the beginning of the piece, and the second ending concludes with a final cadence. The accompaniment provides a steady rhythmic foundation with triplet patterns.

Seán Quinn's

Hornpipe

Ed Reavey
arr. J. Keegan

Musical score for 'Seán Quinn's' in G major and 4/4 time. The score consists of four staves. The first two staves are the main melody, and the last two are an accompaniment. The melody features several triplet figures and a double bar line with first and second endings. The first ending leads back to the beginning of the piece, and the second ending concludes with a final cadence. The accompaniment provides a steady rhythmic foundation with triplet patterns.

The Slopes of Slieve Gullion

Slip Jig

Paul Murphy
arr. J. Keegan

Musical score for 'The Slopes of Slieve Gullion' in 3/8 time, key of D major. The score consists of three staves. The first staff contains the first line of music. The second staff contains the first and second endings of a repeat section, marked with '1.' and '2.' and repeat signs. The third staff continues the second ending and concludes with a double bar line.

Dunreavy Park

Slip Jig

Paul Murphy
arr. J. Keegan

Musical score for 'Dunreavy Park' in 3/8 time, key of D major. The score consists of four staves of music, all written in a single melodic line. The piece concludes with a double bar line at the end of the fourth staff.

The Outlacken Lasses

Jig

Angela Savage

Musical score for 'The Outlacken Lasses' in G major and 6/8 time. The score consists of three staves of music. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 6/8 time signature. The melody is written in a single line. The second staff contains a repeat sign followed by a first ending. The third staff concludes the piece with a double bar line and repeat dots.

The Philosopher

Hornpipe

Martina Murphy (nee Savage)

Musical score for 'The Philosopher' in G major and 4/4 time. The score consists of four staves of music. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 4/4 time signature. The melody is written in a single line. The second staff contains a first ending with two options, labeled '1.' and '2.'. The third staff contains a second ending with two options, labeled '1.' and '2.'. The fourth staff concludes the piece with a double bar line and repeat dots.

Henry Savage's Favourite

Barn Dance 1

Musical score for Barn Dance 1, featuring three staves of music in 2/4 time. The key signature is one sharp (F#). The score includes various rhythmic patterns, including triplets and first/second endings.

Henry Savage's Favourite

Barn Dance 2

Musical score for Barn Dance 2, featuring four staves of music in 2/4 time. The key signature is one sharp (F#). The score includes various rhythmic patterns, including triplets and first/second endings.

The Mullaghbawn Reel

J. Keegan

Musical score for 'The Mullaghbawn Reel' in G major (one sharp) and 2/4 time. The score consists of four staves. The first staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The second staff contains a triplet of eighth notes and a first/second ending bracket. The third staff begins with a repeat sign. The fourth staff contains another first/second ending bracket.

The Glassdrummond Reel

J. Keegan

Musical score for 'The Glassdrummond Reel' in G major (one sharp) and 2/4 time. The score consists of four staves. The first staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The second staff contains a triplet of eighth notes and a first/second ending bracket. The third staff contains a triplet of eighth notes. The fourth staff contains a first/second ending bracket and a final triplet of eighth notes.

Miss McLeod's Reel

For the dance "McCloud's Reel"

Version 1

Traditional Irish and Scottish
Arr. J. Keegan



Musical score for Miss McLeod's Reel, Version 1. The score is written in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a common time signature (C). It consists of five staves of music. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a sharp sign, and a common time signature. The music features a mix of eighth and sixteenth notes, with some triplet markings (indicated by a '3' above the notes). The piece concludes with a double bar line.

Miss McLeod's Reel

Version 2

Traditional Irish and Scottish
Arr. J. Keegan

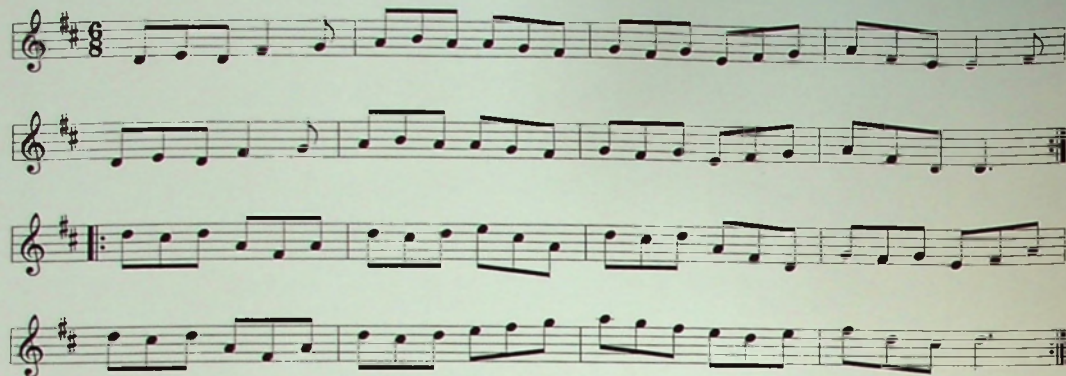


Musical score for Miss McLeod's Reel, Version 2. The score is written in treble clef with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#) and a common time signature (C). It consists of five staves of music. The first staff begins with a treble clef, two sharp signs, and a common time signature. The music is characterized by a more complex rhythmic pattern, primarily using eighth and sixteenth notes. The piece concludes with a double bar line.

Mullion Mountain

Jig

Marrita Savage



Musical score for Mullion Mountain, a jig in D major and 6/8 time. The score consists of four staves. The first two staves are the melody, and the last two are the accompaniment. The piece features a repeating first section and a concluding phrase.

Drumhoney Sessions

Jig

Marrita Savage



Musical score for Drumhoney Sessions, a jig in D major and 6/8 time. The score consists of five staves. The first two staves are the melody, and the last three are the accompaniment. The piece includes a first section with two endings, a second section, and a third section with two endings.

The Crooked Road

Jig

Marrita Savage

Musical score for 'The Crooked Road' in G major, 3/4 time. The score consists of four staves of music. The first two staves are in treble clef, and the last two are in bass clef. The key signature has one sharp (F#). The music features a mix of eighth and sixteenth notes, with some triplet markings. The piece concludes with a double bar line and repeat dots.

Bunker Hill, Markethill

Reel

Johnny Pickering

Musical score for 'Bunker Hill, Markethill' in G major, 2/4 time. The score consists of four staves of music. The first two staves are in treble clef, and the last two are in bass clef. The key signature has one sharp (F#). The music features a mix of eighth and sixteenth notes, with several triplet markings (indicated by a '3' below the notes). The piece includes first and second endings, marked with '1.' and '2.' above the notes. The score concludes with a double bar line and repeat dots.

The Mountain Top

Reel

Traditional
Arr. J. Keegan

The musical score for "The Mountain Top" is presented on five staves. It begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 2/4 time signature. The first staff contains the initial melody. The second staff features a repeat sign and includes a triplet of eighth notes. The third, fourth, and fifth staves continue the melody with various rhythmic patterns, including several triplet markings (indicated by a '3' below the notes) and a final double bar line.

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The Kerry Dances - James Lynam Molloy

Chorus

Oh, the days of the Kerry Dances

Oh, the ring of the piper's tune.

Oh for one of those hours of gladness.

Gone, alas, like our youth too soon.

When the boys began to gather in the glen of a summer night,

And the merry piper's tuning filled my heart with wild delight.

Oh, to think of it.

Oh, to dream of it

Fills my heart with trars!

Chorus

Lads and lasses to your places, up the middle and down again.

Ah, the merry-hearted laughter ringing through the happy glen.

Oh, to think of it.

Oh, to dream of it

Fills my heart with tears!

Chorus

Time goes on, and the happy hearts are dead.

And one by one the merry hearts have fled.

Silent now is the wild and lonely glen

Where the bright glad laugh will echo ne'er again.

Only dreaming of days gone by, in my heart I hear,

Loving voices of old companions

Stealing out of the past once more.

And the sound of the dear old music

Soft and sweet as in days of yore.

When the boys began to gather in the glen of a summer night

And the Kerry piper's tuning made us long with wild delight

Oh, to think of it.

Oh to dream of it

Fills my heart with tears.

Chorus

The Light of Other Days – Thomas Moore

*Oft in the stilly night ere slumber's chain has bound me
Fond memory brings the light of other days around me;*

*The smiles, the tears of boyhood years,
The words of love then spoken;
The eyes that shone now dimmed and gone,
The cheerful hearts now broke!*


*Then in the stilly night ere slumber's chain has bound me,
Sad memory brings the light of other days around me.*

*When I remember all the friends so linked together;
I've seen around me fall like leaves in wintry weather;*

*I feel like one who treads alone
Some banquet hall deserted,
Whose lights are fled, whose garlands dead,
And all but he departed!*

*Thus in the stilly night ere slumber's chain has bound me,
Sad memory brings the light of other days around me.*





Sweets of May - The Céilí Band Era, Music & Dance of South Armagh

(compilation book including two CD's & accompanying DVD)

This book and accompanying CD's (one of which contains remastered recording from the ceili band era) is part of "The Sweets of May" publication, an ambitious project which recounts the story, tunes, dances, musicians and ceili bands of South Armagh.

The main focus of the project is the 1930-1960's, an era of great social upheaval which was reflected in the evolution of the ceili bands.

The DVD has local dance schools from South Armagh and Newry performing old South Armagh dances-many almost lost to obscurity-and seen here for the first time outside the area.

*'O, the days of the Kerry Dances, O, the ring of the piper's tune,
O, for one of those hours of gladness, gone alas, like our youth, too soon.'*

The sentiments expressed in this evergreen song are the same sentiments felt throughout Ireland, by the Irish people, working and living at home and abroad. All of us taking part in this project, have found our journey back in time interesting in many ways, and we are pleased to be able to preserve, and present to you, what we have found, and remembered, of our music and dance.

On our way we have re-kindled friendships and made new friends, and have been encouraged by the help that we have received here in Ireland and abroad, and have learned a lot too. The numbers of people, dancers and musicians, who have happily taken part in the research and production of this Book, CDs and DVD are testament to the secure state of Irish musical traditions in the 21st century.

We hope you will find the whole production enjoyable, interesting, and of use to today's keepers of our heritage, and indeed to-morrow's.

Here, in South Armagh, we remember with pride, as well as a sense of sadness, our previous ambassadors of the culture, many gone from us, who have made this undertaking necessary and worthwhile.

*'Ort In the stilly night, ere slumber's chains have bound me.
Fond memory brings the light of other days around me.'*

Visit our website at www.ceolcamloch.co.uk
For further information contact tommyfegan@hotmail.com

