

VOL. 40 NO. 3 | MID-SPRING DIGITAL - 2026 | CELTICLIFEINTL.COM

CelticLife

INTERNATIONAL

Celtic Common Ground

ALSO!

*Mclusky, Holly Redmond Harvey
Tartan Trek, Pys Melyn
Ishna, Yukon Gaelic Festival*

WALK IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF YOUR ANCESTORS

Intimate, luxurious Irish cottages by the sea—
bespoke stays crafted around
your personal journey



 Cobblestone Cottage Donegal
 @cobblestonecottagedonegal
 CobblestoneCottage.ie
 info@cobblestonecottage.ie



Your Roots Your People Your Journey



Curated in Luxury

Imagine walking the same streets your ancestors bravely left behind.
Imagine raising a glass in the pub your great-grandfather once knew.
Imagine discovering not just a place – but a piece of yourself.

At Sheenco Travel, we craft bespoke luxury journeys that connect you more deeply to your past while creating unforgettable moments in the present. For more than a decade, we've helped members of the global Celtic diaspora return in style, comfort, and meaning.



**And for those who feel a deeper calling
the story doesn't need to end when the journey does.**

We are growing our network of independent luxury travel contractors – inspired people who are passionate about heritage, culture, and creating unforgettable experiences for others making their own journey home.

The journey continues – begin yours with us.

Travel | Heritage | Partnership

Learn more at www.sheencotravel.com/opportunities

Call Sheenco Travel 888-674-3244

www.sheencotravel.com

Availability is limited—start planning your tailored experience today.



Join Scottish Heritage USA

***Support Scottish Culture & Heritage and
Enjoy Great Member Benefits***

**Free admission to 100+ properties owned by
the National Trust for Scotland in the UK and
North America**

**Annual subscription to award-winning
Scotland magazine.**

**Digital subscription to *Celtic Life
International***

***The Trust* magazine 3 times a year**



**10% of membership dues benefit
student scholarships for piping,
drumming, Highland dance and
Scottish fiddling.**

**Explore the website for dues
information & additional benefits for
Patrons, Benefactors, Clans and
Corporate memberships.
From \$50 for Silver Single (65+), \$75 for
Silver Couple, \$65 Single and
\$82 Couple.**

www.ScottishHeritageUSA.org



LOHCARRON

MADE in SCOTLAND

YOUR STORY | YOUR HERITAGE | YOUR LOHCARRON

Lochcarron highland wear is handcrafted in the Scottish Borders, where craftsmanship, precision and attention to detail shape every piece, from timeless tartans to bespoke accessories.



LOHCARRON USA

Lochcarron of Scotland
+1 603 356 3369
jo@lochcarron.com

VISIT OUR ONLINE SHOP

www.lohcarron.com
+44 (0) 1750 726025
hello@lochcarron.com



THE WORLD'S LEADING
DESIGNER & MANUFACTURER
OF AUTHENTIC TARTAN.



The Scottish
TARTANS
Authority



f p @ d s x

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

Dara Knot Inc.
10 Peter St
Markham, Ontario, Canada
L3P 2A4

Celtic Life International is an
ethnic journal published in Canada
eight times a year by Dara Knot Inc.

Siobhán L. Covington, Publisher
Stephen Patrick Clare, Executive Editor
Rebecca Dingwell, Managing Editor
Chris Muise, Managing Editor
Lillian Holt, Senior Writer
Liz MacRae, Senior Copy Editor

Celtic Life International Office:
Toll-Free: 888-215-6850
Email: info@celticlife.com
Website: www.celticlife.com

Subscriptions:
Toll-Free: 888-215-6850
Email: subscribe@celticlife.ca

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

Please send all review
requests to info@celticlife.com

Please return undeliverable copies of Celtic
Life International to: Dara Knot Inc.
10 Peter St, Markham, Ontario,
Canada, L3P 2A4

Publication Mail Registration:
No. 40050439 ISSN 1918-0497

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

Canada

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

© Celtic Life International, 2026

WWW.CELTICLIFEINTL.COM



THE CELTIC MARKET

Visit www.celticlife.com



SUBSCRIBE

Don't miss an issue
www.celticlifeintl.com/subscribe



NEWSLETTER

Stay informed
www.celticlifeintl.com/newsletter



INSTAGRAM

See behind the scenes
[@celticlifeinternational](https://www.instagram.com/celticlifeinternational)



FACEBOOK

Join CelticLife at
www.facebook.com/CelticLifeInternational



TWITTER

Latest Celtic news
[@celticlife](https://twitter.com/celticlife)

INSIDE!

47

Celtic Common Ground

15. Craig Ferguson treks in tartan for mental health

19. Welsh rockers Pys Melyn are big in Japan

27. The return and revenge of Mclusky

31. One publisher preserves and promotes Celtic culture

33. The O'Brien family farm is a throwback in time.

37. Irish Mammy Orla Drumgoole doles out the dishes

43. Summer style from Scottish designer Holly Redmond Harvey

65. Scottish photographer Ron Strathdee's living landscape

69. Painter Paul Lewin captures and conveys Cornwall

CelticLifeStyle

Sign Up!

Sign Up! Sign up to our newsletter and you could win tickets to see comedians Danny Bhoy, Kyla Cobbler or Jimmy Carr! See our website for details!

Swag Up!

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

Share Your Story!

We are always on the lookout for a good story! If you'd like to become a Celtic Life International contributor, simply drop us a note via our website or social media channels for more information!



Help Us to Help You!

Celtic Life International has been involved with a variety of charitable organizations and fundraising initiatives over the years. Reach out to us via our website or social media channels and let us know how we can help.

Shop Talk!

If you are interested in carrying Celtic Life International Magazine in your retail outlet, please contact us via our website or social media channels and we will be happy to help

Be Seen!

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

www.celticlifeintl.com



Fiddlebling

Although Stacy Allegro lost her singing voice, she refused to lose the love of music. Her music-themed merch business, Fiddlebling, is a testament to that resilience.

“Music has been part of my life from the very beginning,” Allegro recalls via email. “My mother used to say the only way she could get me to sleep was by putting a radio in my crib with classical music playing.”

That passion continued into childhood, culminating in an affinity for folk artists, with the likes of Cat Stevens, Kris Kristofferson, and John Hiatt among her favourites.

Allegro inevitably picked up the guitar at the age of eight and began to write songs of her own. She dabbled in a variety of genres from bluegrass to rock, but Celtic music is where she felt most at home.

“I’ve always been especially drawn to Celtic music - it feels like it lives somewhere in my DNA,” she says, noting her Scottish roots on her mother’s side. “Music wasn’t just something I did, it was who I was.”

In 2018, Allegro was diagnosed with cancer. Then, in 2020, she landed in the ICU with one of the earliest COVID-19 cases in California. After nine days, Allegro made it out of the hospital, but the damage to her throat meant she could no longer sing, and even speaking became difficult.

“A friend suggested I try the fiddle because it’s the closest instrument to the human voice,” explains Allegro. This led her to take up the fiddle at age 60, which she admits “is either brave or slightly unhinged.”

Three months into lessons, her teacher suggested that she attend a music camp. At the time, Allegro didn’t have an instrument of her own. Regardless, she ended up at Valley of the Moon Scottish Fiddle School, founded by musician Alasdair Fraser. “There were about 250 people at the camp, and I bought a raffle ticket to support scholarships for students who otherwise wouldn’t be able to attend,” she remembers. The grand prize? The use of a \$20,000 fiddle for a year. “I remember I was in the shower when someone came to get me and said that Alasdair Fraser wanted to see me. It felt like I was being called to the



principal’s office. I walked into the community hall, and everyone was there chanting my name. I had won the fiddle.”

Allegro took this as a sign that fiddling was meant to be part of her life. Meanwhile, she was trying to re-enter the workforce without much success. After sending out hundreds of resumes to no avail, she once again shifted her focus. “While looking for a gift for my fiddle teacher, I realized there just wasn’t much out there that felt thoughtful or authentic to musicians - nothing that really reflected how we think or talk about what we do. I made some apparel myself, wore it to camp, and people started asking where they could get it. That’s how Fiddlebling was born.”

Allegro designs all of her company’s merchandise herself and oversees all production and partnerships.

“**Fiddlebling started with a simple idea: create clever, well-crafted products for string players that actually reflect the culture.**”

The online shop’s offerings include t-shirts, mugs and even candles. She often takes suggestions and inspiration from her fellow fiddlers. “The mandate is to create from within the community, not outside of it.”

What started as an array of fiddle-focused designs eventually expanded to include other string instruments, such as the cello. In addition, Allegro notes, part of her goal is to “give back” to other musicians, with five percent of company sales going towards scholarships for those who otherwise could not afford music camp.

“The fiddle community gave me a second musical life and community when I needed it most.” Since camp was such an integral part of her beginnings with the fiddle, Allegro wants students - children and adults alike - to have the same positive experience.

“These camps are incredibly welcoming and for a lot of people, especially younger players, it’s a place where they feel at home. Music camps aren’t just about learning tunes - they are about finding a place where you belong.”

Going forward, Allegro hopes to continue expanding her line of products. She’s also working on an online directory of music camps around the world.

“If something I create makes a player laugh at a session or feel a little more seen, that’s the goal. Fiddlebling is serious about the music, just not overly serious about ourselves.”

@fiddlebling

WWW.FIDDLEBLING.COM



JIMMY CARR

LAUGHS FUNNY

BRAND NEW LIVE TOUR

10 PROVINCES **32** CITIES
COAST to COAST

SEP 16 • 7:30 PM
SEP 17 • 7:30 PM
SEP 18 • 8 PM
SEP 19 • 8 PM
SEP 20 • 7:30 PM
SEP 21 • 7:30 PM
SEP 23 • 7:30 PM
SEP 24 • 7:30 PM
SEP 25 • 8 PM
SEP 26 • 8 PM
SEP 27 • 7:30 PM
OCT 13 • 7:30 PM
OCT 14 • 7:30 PM
OCT 15 • 7:30 PM
OCT 16 • 8 PM
OCT 17 • 8 PM
OCT 18 • 7:30 PM
OCT 19 • 7 PM
OCT 20 • 7 PM
OCT 21 • 7 PM

VICTORIA BC
ABBOTSFORD BC
VANCOUVER BC
KELOWNA BC
KAMLOOPS BC
PRINCE GEORGE BC
GRANDE PRAIRIE AB
FORT McMURRAY AB
EDMONTON AB
MEDECINE HAT AB
CALGARY AB
WINDSOR ON
LONDON ON
HAMILTON ON
TORONTO ON
BARRIE ON
SUDBURY ON
QUÉBEC CITY QC
MONTRÉAL QC
MONTRÉAL QC

FEW TICKETS LEFT

FEW TICKETS LEFT

SOLD OUT!

FEW TICKETS LEFT

SOLD OUT!

SOLD OUT!

SOLD OUT!

OCT 21 • 9:30 PM
OCT 22 • 7:30 PM
OCT 23 • 7 PM
OCT 23 • 9:30 PM
OCT 24 • 8 PM
OCT 25 • 7:30 PM
NOV 12 • 7 PM
NOV 12 • 9:30 PM
NOV 13 • 7 PM
NOV 13 • 9:30 PM
NOV 14 • 7 PM
NOV 14 • 9:30 PM
NOV 15 • 7:30 PM
NOV 16 • 7 PM
NOV 16 • 9:30 PM
NOV 18 • 7:30 PM
NOV 19 • 7:30 PM
NOV 20 • 7 PM
NOV 20 • 9:30 PM
NOV 21 • 8 PM
NOV 22 • 7:30 PM

MONTRÉAL QC
OTTAWA ON
QUÉBEC CITY QC
QUÉBEC CITY QC
KINGSTON ON
PETERBOROUGH ON
SASKATOON SK
SASKATOON SK
REGINA SK
REGINA SK
WINNIPEG MB
WINNIPEG MB
BRANDON MB
THUNDER BAY ON
THUNDER BAY ON
SAINT JOHN NB
MONCTON NB
CHARLOTTETOWN PEI
CHARLOTTETOWN PEI
HALIFAX NS
ST JOHN'S NL

THIRD SHOW ADDED!

SOLD OUT!

SOLD OUT!

FEW TICKETS LEFT

SECOND SHOW ADDED!

SOLD OUT!

FEW TICKETS LEFT

SECOND SHOW ADDED!

SOLD OUT!

SOLD OUT!

SOLD OUT!

SOLD OUT!

GRAB YOURS BEFORE THEY'RE GONE!



The Fairy Council For a Living Landscape

Holy Wells can be found across Ireland in many fields and forgotten corners. While some are maintained, others have been lost to roadwork, changes in ownership, or, sadly, neglect. For Sarai Humble, these wells are not mere remnants of the past, but markers of Irish heritage that carry meaning that matters.

"I run the community-based organization All is Well," Humble explains to Celtic Life International via email. "We are dedicated to locating, reviving, and restoring Holy Wells around Ireland."

There are, she notes, "reportedly over 3,000" Holy Wells, though no one knows exactly how many remain. "The core of the project is to encourage local communities to caretake their local well for future generations."

The work has taken Humble across the island. "I live nomadically in Ireland, both north and south of the Irish border," she says. In the course of her work, she met others who were also intent on protecting the land and culture, often without recognition or support.

"I often encountered people who were dedicated to ecology and heritage. Good people who were not always receiving the public notice or peer support for their good work. Often, they were not aware of projects that were similar to theirs and felt alone in their missions."

From that, the Fairy Council of Ireland was established. "I began to see a need to develop a network that supported these projects in connection with similar missions, and also to inform the public about them. In 2020, the Fairy Council of Ireland was born."

Although the name may sound like a

fairy tale, the function is anything but fantasy. "I have full belief that a society becomes lost if it is removed from what makes it unique as a people," Humble explains. "By facilitating the Fairy Council, we aim to preserve support for those who are actively working to ensure that our land stays healthy and our culture vibrant."

Humble's role in the organization is not easily defined. "I often have to wear different hats," she admits. "My role is often as an overseer to ensure everything runs smoothly." She sees herself as a communicator between different aspects of a project in an effort to keep things flowing. "I am constantly networking. We like to build in-person connections and link projects to encourage co-creation and support."

With the emphasis on accountability, complications can arise. "We are an organization of strong personalities, and sometimes navigating this has been challenging. We look for those who have integrity in their personal lives as much as in their project." Finding faith in the process took time. "It has been a learning curve to find those who are authentic. I feel we have finally achieved this."

Humble doesn't hesitate to add that the hard work has been worth the effort. "There's a deep satisfaction in watching the different projects interact for the betterment of our society."

“There is joy in watching those who find their way to the Fairy Council and involve themselves in projects that celebrate being Irish and loving this land...”

At its heart, the Council describes itself as “an ecological, living, cultural hub of intangible heritage supporting the interconnectivity of projects for the protection and regeneration of biodiversity, as well as the rich ancient knowledge and customs of our ancestors.” It is also, according to Humble, a way into the “old ways of this island.” The organization, she affirms, is committed to offering resources and holding members to the highest standard of quality in word and deed.

Interest and membership are reflected within the organization's layered framework, with projects grouped into five categories: Crann (trees), Uisce (water), Talamh (land), Imbas (inspiration), and Eolas Ársa (ancient knowledge). “Those interested in getting involved are welcome to reach out. We submit projects to a board that decides whether they align with the Fairy Council objectives. Mostly, though, we personally decide who we reach out to.”

The Fairy Council projects often extend beyond Ireland. “We have a far-reaching audience, and our cards have been found in the most unexpected places around the world.” And while social media helps, real-world connections matter just as much. “We believe it is important to connect with people directly.”

Events, in the process of being finalized, are planned for this year. “We are focused on the continued promotion of the wonderful things that those involved with the Council are doing. It is important for people to see that we are all a living, breathing mirror of the ecology as it unfolds.”

@fairyCouncilofireland

DANNY BHOY

ST JOHN'S SEPTEMBER 30
HOLY HEART THEATRE

HALIFAX OCTOBER 3
SPATZ THEATRE

MONCTON OCTOBER 4
CAPITOL THEATRE

OTTAWA OCTOBER 8
MERIDIAN THEATRES @ CENTREPOINTE

TORONTO OCTOBER 10
WINTER GARDEN THEATRE

KITCHENER OCTOBER 13
CENTRE IN THE SQUARE

EDMONTON OCTOBER 14 & 15
HOROWITZ THEATRE

RED DEER OCTOBER 16
RED DEER MEMORIAL CENTRE

WINNIPEG OCTOBER 17
BURTON CUMMINGS THEATRE

CALGARY OCTOBER 18
JACK SINGER CONCERT HALL

KELOWNA OCTOBER 21
KELOWNA COMMUNITY AUDITORIUM

VANCOUVER OCTOBER 22
CHAN CENTRE FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

SURREY OCTOBER 23
BELL PERFORMING ARTS CENTRE

VICTORIA OCTOBER 25
THE MCPHERSON PLAYHOUSE

TICKETS AT DANNYBHOY.COM

ACROSS
CANADA

Dear World...

OUTBACK  PRESENTS





Yukon Gaelic Festival

Born and bred in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Rebecca MacCulloch grew up with Gaelic culture and heritage within an arm's reach of wherever she went.

"In fact, I am the seventh generation on my father's side born in Nova Scotia," she shares with Celtic Life International via email. "My mother's family is Irish and British Canadian from the O'Marrin clan, so I come by my Gaelic heritage from both sides of my family."

Today, MacCulloch lives in Whitehorse, Yukon - a long way from home. And while Gaelic was all around her during her formative years, she admittedly took it for granted - especially the language. She only came to discover her love for her ancestral tongue due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Although I was born and raised in Nova Scotia, I never had any exposure or opportunity to access my ancestral language until later in life. I was not even aware this was an option until the pandemic, when online Gaelic groups began in Nova Scotia. My father was participating in them and encouraged me to check them out as he was really enjoying them."

Unlike in Nova Scotia, the opportunities to speak Gaelic and share the Gaelic culture elsewhere are few and far between - especially in the Yukon, given its immense size and relatively small population.

"I wish I had been given the chance to learn Gaelic when I was young. I am a beginner now and I have been taking classes online for about the past four years. Learning my heritage language is empowering; I have many interests and hobbies, but this experi-

ence has lit me up like nothing before."

Last summer, MacCulloch and her father took a trip to Scotland to research her family ties, which further pushed her to seize the opportunity to share her culture that she wanted to see in the world.

"I felt so inspired by the people we met and the places we went that when I returned to Whitehorse, I started the paperwork to create Comunn nan Seanchaidhean, the Seanchaidhean Gaelic Society. I had a teary, deeply emotional moment while filing the society papers, looking at the names listed as the three founders: myself, my father, and my oldest son.

“To me, this is a most beautiful collaboration - family representing three generations coming together to promote and protect their culture...”

MacCulloch has been hard at work getting the society afloat - dotting all the i's and crossing all the t's - but she knew that getting the community together under one céilidh was the most important item on her to-do list.

"When exploring our mandate and first steps, we decided to focus our first year on the festival; to bring people interested in Gaelic language and culture together to generate some inertia and make it easier for people who are already here or those who are newly arrived to connect."

In honour of Gaelic Heritage Month, the first-ever Fèis Yukon Gaelic Festival is set to open its doors on May 22 at the MacBride Museum of Yukon History in Whitehorse.

They're planning a barn-burner of a party for their freshman outing.

"We have so much great stuff in store for participants; some of the highlights include Scottish Gaelic Language & Heritage workshops with Lewis MacKinnon, Lodaigh is coming to lead a Gàidhlig aig Baile session as well as interactive workshops on Gaels in Canada, a family céilidh dance will be held at the Kwanlin Dūn Cultural Center early on Friday evening, then a traditional céilidh where people are seated in a circle and invited to engage and bring a song, poem, or story to share, followed by live local music by Stockstill & Rose and Crooked Folk. Also, there will be a silent auction fundraiser, door prizes, and a separately ticketed whiskey tasting event."

Sharing her cultural heritage is more to MacCulloch than a great social lubricant; however, she sees it as vitally important to her survival, the survival of her children and their children, and to everyone.

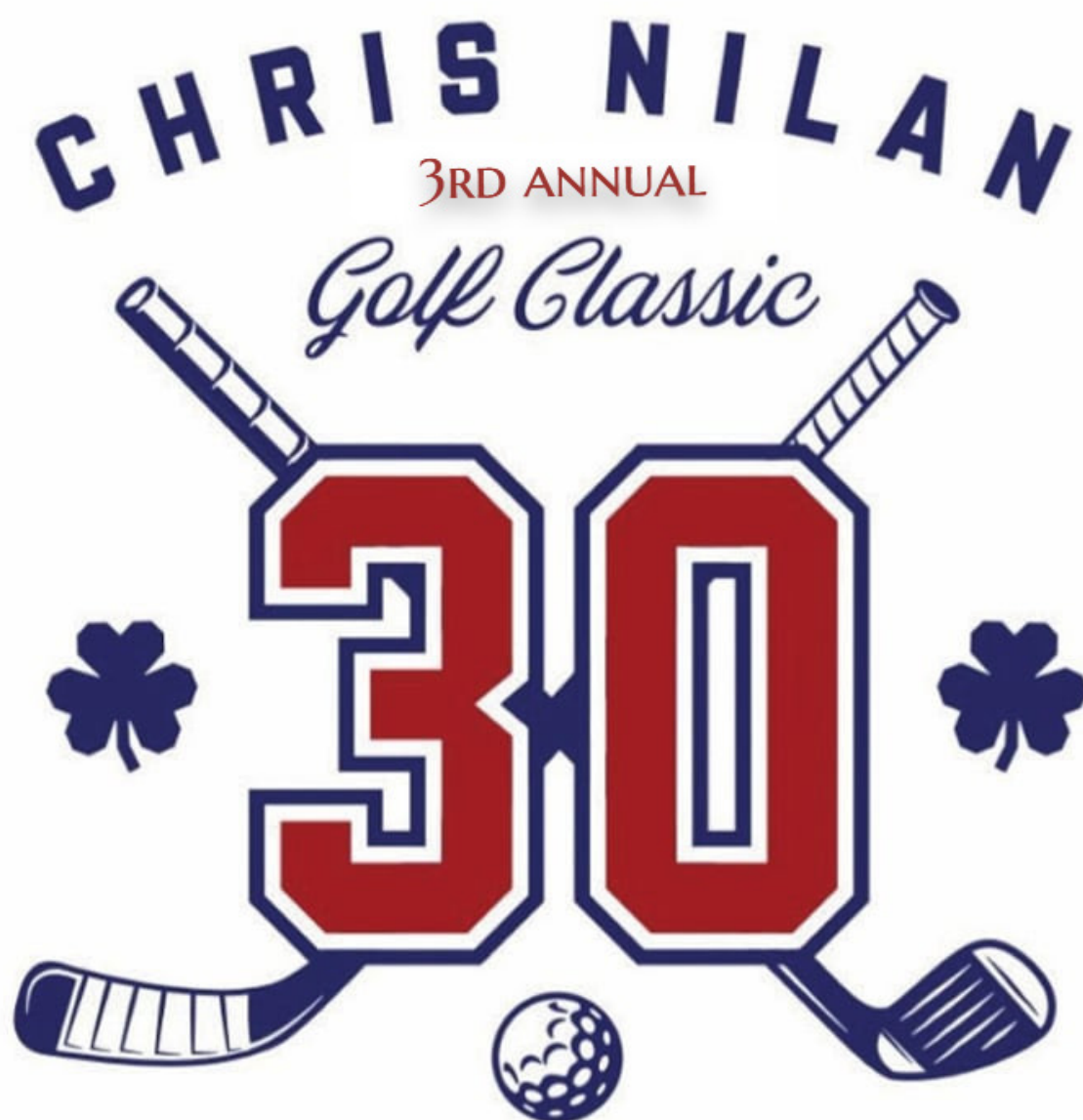
"The lack of community cohesion has a direct impact on mental health and wellbeing in this remote location where we live. It is in the best interest of our people - of all people - to preserve the tapestry of traditional cultures that create our history and inform our future as humankind. Ours is an old tradition full of wisdom and light, humour and generosity, honour and love, and connection to spirit and nature.

"It is incredibly rich and precious, and I wish to see this treasure protected for future generations of Gaels and all mankind."

WWW.SEANCHADHEANGAELICSOCIETY.COM

Monday, July 13, 2026

SUMMERLEA GOLF CLUB
VAUDREUIL, QUEBEC



POWERED BY
THE LIAM FOUNDATION

INFORMATION/TICKETS

www.liamfoundation.com



Craig Ferguson's Tartan Trek

So far, 2026 has proven to be a pivotal year for Craig Ferguson; the 22-year-old has been making his way across the United States on foot to raise money for Scottish Action for Mental Health - all while donning a kilt.

"There has been a lot of support online and in person," Ferguson shares via email with Celtic Life International. "People really seem to connect with both the challenge and the message behind it."

The young Scotsman worked as a server in cafes and restaurants before finding his niche in social media content creation. These days, Ferguson is active on TikTok, Instagram and Facebook, posting videos focused on travel and storytelling. His latest adventure is the Tartan Trek: a walk from Los Angeles to Boston, with the goal of finishing in time for Scotland's opening match at the World Cup on June 18. While this is not Ferguson's first self-imposed challenge of this kind, it's certainly his biggest.

"The Tartan Trek came from a mix of personal experience and wanting to push myself further after my previous challenge from Glasgow to Munich. That journey showed me how powerful these kinds of challenges can be - not just for raising money but for starting real conversations around mental health. With Scotland qualifying for our first World Cup in 28 years, I wanted to go bigger, create something with even more impact and tie it into something culturally meaningful, which is where the Scottish identity and the tartan element comes in."

With all of Scotland's World Cup games taking place in the United States, Ferguson set his sights on crossing the nation. To date, he has raised almost £130,000.

To say it hasn't been easy, however, is something of an understatement: with a goal of covering 30-40 miles per day, the trek takes its toll on both body and mind. "I am dealing with long days, unpredictable conditions and constant pressure to keep going. On top of that, there is the logistical side, planning routes, organizing support, creating content and making sure the message behind it all does not get lost."

That message is something he has emphasized every step of the way. Ferguson's mental health advocacy is rooted in personal experience, having witnessed friends and family members in their struggles. As a teenager, he was greatly impacted by the suicide of his best friend's father, and has since become passionate about raising awareness of men's mental health struggles in particular.

“From my experience, there are still gaps, especially when it comes to men feeling comfortable enough to seek help...”

"These are generational problems, but with a new wave of education and support being widely available, we will see a difference being made."

Ferguson has been a catalyst for that new wave, starting conversations as well as

raising money. This makes the difficult moments worthwhile. "Some of the highlights have been the people I have met along the way and the support that comes out of nowhere. During my last challenge, there were moments where complete strangers would stop me to chat, donate or share their own stories."

The easiest way for supporters to get involved in the Tartan Trek is to follow Ferguson's adventures online and, if one has the means, donate to his fundraiser. Scottish Action for Mental Health - Ferguson's charity of choice - offers dozens of mental health services all around Scotland. If financial support isn't an option, however, it's still possible to champion the cause.

"Even just starting conversations around mental health in their own circles is a huge part of it," Ferguson notes. He also welcomes visitors along the route, whether they join him to walk a section or advocate for mental health support within their own locale. "It feels like it is building into something bigger than just me, which is exactly what I hoped for."

Once the Tartan Trek is complete, Ferguson hopes to take some time to celebrate and enjoy the World Cup. While he admits he has never been great at slowing down, he does plan to put his feet up for a little while. "I'm planning to trek to Everest base camp with a group of my followers at the end of this year, but besides this, I have no more crazy big walks planned for a while."

WWW.THETARTANTREK.CO.UK

Join The Celebration -
July 3, 4 & 5, 2026

✦ Pipe bands - Parades - Heavy Events



KINCARDINE SCOTTISH FESTIVAL

& HIGHLAND GAMES



Music & More!

Full Entertainment
Schedule, News &
Tickets



kinscotfest



kinscotfest

kincardinescottishfestival.ca

ScotDance Canada

As a young girl, Cheryl Rafter was introduced to the world of Highland dancing by her mother.

“My mom came from a large family where all the siblings were tap dancers,” Rafter shares with Celtic Life International. “She was a school friend of Helen Turvey in Edmonton, who was a successful Highland dancer and later became a renowned teacher in Alberta. Through Helen, my mom became interested in Highland dancing, though she wasn’t able to participate. When I was four years of age, my dad wanted me to take Irish dancing lessons. However, with my mom’s love of Highland dancing, she wanted to give me the opportunity she never had and subsequently enrolled me in Helen’s Highland dancing school.”

Highland dancing became a central aspect of Rafter’s life, and she is now the president of ScotDance Canada, the national body of - and charitable arm that promotes and protects - Scottish Highland dancing in Canada.

“I have been a professional member of ScotDance Canada since its inception in 1987. In 2002, I was asked by the organization’s President, Christa Mackie, if I would be interested in the Vice-Presidency role. In 2003, I accepted the nomination and have been involved at the Office Bearer level since then, being elected to the role of President in 2017.

“I felt a need to give back to the Highland dancing community that supported me as in my early years...”

“It was almost second nature to me to want to be involved at the executive level of ScotDance Canada, where I could be a part of the decision-making process.”

She doesn’t make those choices lightly, knowing that a whole community of families



across the country rises or falls as a result of them.

“The greatest challenge of the President’s role is not to influence decisions, but rather to hear the voices of the board of directors and general membership in order to guide decisions accordingly. Being in a volunteer role, decisions made for the betterment of Highland dancing don’t often resolve quickly. ScotDance Canada is a forward-thinking, proactive organization.”

The crown jewel in the organization’s annual programming calendar is the ScotDance Canada Championship Series, which has been held longer than the institution itself has existed.

“The inaugural Canadian Championship was held in 1974 in Ottawa, Ontario and was called the Inter-Provincial Championship. It was a stand-alone event where selected dancer representatives from the provinces competed one day for the title of Inter-Provincial Champion in four age groups. Over time, the event grew, with more selected dancer representatives able to compete in an increased number of age groups. Today, we have a maximum of three dancers from each province, in each of the seven age groups, competing for the Canadian Champion title.

“It has grown from a one-day event, re-

stricted to Canadian dancers, to a five-to-six-day event where dancers worldwide are able to compete - with the exception of the Canadian Championship, which is the featured event of the SDCCS.”

Rafter notes that the vital nature of competitions like these are an opportunity to both showcase the sport’s current stock of talent and introduce it to potential future stars.

“With the event rotating west and east in alternate years, it provides the opportunity for provinces in Canada to host the event and showcase Highland dancing in their respective provinces,” says Rafter, adding that this year, the SDCCS takes place in Moncton, New Brunswick, from July 5-10. “The event gives those who may not be aware of what Highland dancing is to attend and be a part of the Scottish culture in Canada.

“Moncton, and New Brunswick in general, does not have a large Highland dancer base, although the province is rich with Scottish culture, as is the whole of the Maritimes. Hosting it there reinforces Highland dancing as part of its history and culture, and we hope that hosting the event there will provide a boost to their dancer base in the years to come.”

@scotdancecanada

WWW.SCOTDANCE.CA



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

We put tradition on the leading edge. Order one of our whistles, flutes, or bagpipes today at www.Carbony.com.

carbony™
CELTIC WINDS



Pys Melyn In Japan



If, as the ages-old adage goes, “seeing is believing”, then Welsh filmmaker Sam Rhys has taken the idiom to heart with his latest film *Band o Ben Llŷn ar daith yn Japan*, using the camera to share moments and milestones in Welsh culture and showing the world a side of his home that might slip through cultural cracks otherwise.

“My father is from Llanelli, and my mother moved around a lot due to her father being in the Royal Air Force,” Rhys shares with *Celtic Life International* via email. “I have family across the world, but roots firmly in Southwest Wales. I currently reside in Nefyn, on the Llŷn peninsula, as I married a local.

“I left school at 17, knowing that I didn’t want to go to university,” he continues. “I knew that I’d be bad at it, so I wandered around and ended up getting onto an apprenticeship for broadcast journalism with the BBC in Cardiff. I worked at the BBC for a while before getting a job at a television production company working on digital content.”

Rhys is currently a producer at *Cwmni Da* (literally “Good Company” in English), Wales’ only independent, employee-owned production company, headquartered in Caernarfon. While functionally a bilingual company, the company prides itself in making content in Welsh, for a Welsh-speaking audience.



It’s clearly an ethos Rhys shares. His most recent film follows the exploits of the 10-piece Welsh band Pys Melyn (“Yellow Peas” in English), while on a mission of good will to Japan last December. As part of the Welsh government’s The Year of Wales and Japan 2025 initiative, the bandmates were sent to the Land of the Rising Sun to explore the cultural elements of in-between performances - and Rhys was there to document every moment and melody.

“Jac, the bass player for the band, was on a placement with us,” Rhys explains. “I had discussed the plans with him and thought, ‘this could make for interesting viewing.’ So, we pitched the idea to (broadcaster) S4C, who jumped on the opportunity.

“I’m glad to have been a small part of Welsh music history, and to have been able to record it for the archives...”

The 23-minute short film, available in full and for free on YouTube, follows the band’s uncut, off-the-cuff response to the culture shock, be it unleashing expletives in response to a traditional (and painful) foot massage, the awkwardness of bathing together at an onsen, or their utter bewilderment visiting a Japanese Maid café. Interspersed are shots of performances to welcoming Japanese audiences. The majority of the spoken dialogue (save for the smattering of English curse words) is in Welsh, with accompanying subtitles.

“I learned a lot from dealing with 10 band members touring on a foreign continent,” says Rhys, admitting, “you really don’t have much control. There are so many

variables, you have to trust in what’s happening and adapt along the way. Be open to what happens and see what you can do with it. You have to be creative with the constraints.”

As such, the film is a raw, unobstructed glance at that window in time where a Welsh indie band found themselves in a vastly different culture; and - according to Rhys - that was the point.

“It captures a specific time in the band’s journey. Welsh music has had a lot of milestones and historic moments, and not all of them have been recorded for people to witness. I was glad to have been able to record this moment, and that it’ll live on forever. Who knows when the next Welsh band will tour Japan? Hopefully, this has inspired others to push and go further than where others have gone before them.”

While this moment was funded with help from the Welsh government, that help isn’t always reliable - and Rhys believes that’s the whole country’s loss.

“It’s hard, year-on-year cuts mean a year-on-year decline in culture. I personally believe in a Universal Basic Income for artists, which has been proven to work and generates more income for the economy. For this, we need funding. Who funds it is another question, but without culture, can we really call ourselves a country?”

Rhys will be keeping busy in 2026, though he is quiet on the details.

“There is a fun documentary series for S4C, of which I can’t share because of sensitive information, but that’ll be out by the end of summer. I’m sure it’ll cause quite a stir.”



40TH ANNUAL

SCOTTISH FESTIVAL

&

HIGHLAND GAMES

JUNE 12-13

DUPAGE COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS
2015 MANCHESTER ROAD, WHEATON

The Highland Games is a
Family-Friendly Festival

Tickets on sale now
Children 12 & under free
Volunteer = Free Admission



NEW
THIS
YEAR

FAMILY FUN FRIDAY

SCOTTISH CEILIDH - Friday Night

PARADE OF TARTAN

Veterans named 2026 Honored Clan will
lead the parade - 12:30 p.m. Saturday

WORLD CUP WATCH PARTY:

Scotland vs. Haiti

Join the entire Scottish Community to cheer for
the Scotland vs Haiti Match - 8 p.m. Saturday

LARGEST PIPE BAND COMPETITION IN NORTH AMERICA

More than 50 bands
and still counting

Rare U.S. visit 4x World
Champion Inveraray &
District Pipe Band

Special Inveraray concerts
Thursday & Friday nights

Sponsored by: Roscoe Company, The Georgeson Family & Scot
Forge, UL Research Institutes, Wintrust, Belhaven, ImpEx Beverages,
Duke of Perth, McAdam Landscaping, Pug & Hound, Sikich, Quaid &
Rooney Realtors, Scotland Shop, WDCB, Scottish Government USA

ChicagoScots.org/festival

No Fame Games

Stepping up to the plate and meeting the moment in uncertain and tumultuous times takes a lot of strength. Luckily for Joshua Mackintosh, strength is his stock in trade.

A well-reputed chef in the Boston area, Mackintosh recalls when he was inspired to a different calling.

"The inspiration really came from necessity," he reflects in an email exchange with Celtic Life International. "After the COVID-19 pandemic hit, the Celtic athletic community took big hits and we lost festivals. Sadly, some festivals still have not recovered.

"At the time, a group of athletes decided to band together to start our own Games and bring back the sorely missed camaraderie and community. We also wanted to honour those who came before us, and who kept the Highland Games and Celtic festivals alive for so many years. Particularly, by highlighting those individuals with 'no fame.'"

Hence the name No Fame Games – a moniker first given to Mackintosh's own backyard Celtic sports festival, which he began in 2021 to fill the void left by the shuttered, closed, or delayed Celtic festivals affected by the pandemic.

Since then, the event has taken on a life of its own. This year's event is especially exciting, as it will feature the inaugural Celtic Strength World Championships, a contest of champions that aims to highlight the feats of strength that Highland Games and other Celtic events are famous for, all under one roof (or tent).

"Our main event's core mandate is to unify what many people call 'fringe' or 'niche' traditions all under one banner," Mackintosh boasts. "To unite the diaspora in strength, through strength. This will be the first time in history that all of these various Celtic strength traditions will be together on one field on the same day..."

"We will host two Celtic Wrestling Championships: the first ever North American Scottish Backhold Wrestling Championships, with officials flying in from Scotland to sanction the event, and the return of Irish Collar and Elbow Wrestling to New England in the Northeast Championships. We will have experts in Bataireacht Irish Stickfight-



ing, Bareknuckle Boxing, Catch Wrestling, and Scottish full-staff fighting with us. We will have Stones of Strength, with legendary figures in the Celtic Stonelifting world on site."

As Mackintosh vows that they've courted the best and brawniest in each competition to participate in the Championships, in the same breath, he promises that gold medal

Army party by night."

Mackintosh worries that he might be coming off boastful, even braggadocios - that he makes this look easy. The truth is, he says, that it takes a tremendous amount of work to keep things running smoothly.

"It's a journey of strength in itself, and one of self-discovery..."



bona fides are not required to test your mettle.

"We will have an open format, removing nepotism and favouritism. If you want to throw your hat in the ring, do it. Register and compete! That is how the Scots do it and we want to carry that tradition on here in the USA too."

The timing couldn't be better, either, as Massachusetts will be hosting a plethora of sports fans in June, when the No Fame Games go down.

"As some have already figured out, June 13 is very significant because it is also the date Scotland returns to the World Cup, only 25 minutes away from our venue. Boston is expecting around 50,000 Scots to come into town to celebrate, and we are positioned to be an anchor for the Tartan Army and Celtic diaspora to celebrate Scottish and Celtic strength during this serendipitous alignment. How can you celebrate Scotland in Boston June 13? Highland Games by day, Tartan

"That is what is great about it. It's about growth, and through growth we attract the right people to us who see and believe in the mission.

"When you see the look on a youth's face after they've lifted a stone over bar that challenged them and they hear the crowd roar; when you see an athlete who has trained for years to break a world record finally achieve that; or when you look at your team during a very successful event and you all take in how impactful it is what you are doing. The rewards are not our purpose - we really do this because it is needed, and it is the right thing to do."

Even though it's not effortless, Mackintosh and his team are very good at what they do. So much so, that there'll be no rest for them after the Celtic Strength World Championships come to a close this summer; they've been asked to bring that same gumption to helping other Celtic events kick up their Games.

"We have quite a bit going on this year. No Fames Games was onboarded by the Oklahoma ScotFest to take over their athletic department, so we are excited leading up to that. Then we are also building a new CeltFest in New Hampshire, in collaboration with an old fort from the French-Indian War set for October."

@nofamegame

WWW.NOFAMEGAMES.COM

Scotland for Less? Aye.

Join **Chicago Scots**
reciprocal membership with
National Trust for Scotland

Enjoy **FREE** access at **100+**
heritage sites in Scotland

Join for Castles. History.
Wow-Moments & Savings!

\$60.....**Individual**
\$100.....**Family**
\$1,000.....**Life Member**

**Celebrate Scottish
culture all year long!**

BURNS TRIBUTE

HIGHLAND GAMES

KILTED CLASSIC GOLF

THE FEAST OF THE HAGGIS

*Membership supports Chicago Scots
primary charity, Caledonia Senior Living
& Memory Care, an elder care community
operated by the Scots since 1910.*



SCAN OUR
QR CODE FOR
DETAILS!



The Collective Voice of Ishna

According to an online source, “Ishna” is a Sanskrit word meaning “desire,” “wish,” or “aspiration.” While bandleader Ciaran Nagle makes no reference to the word’s origins, the meaning aligns well with the spirit of the Boston-based contemporary Irish folk band he leads with partner Tara Novak.

“For us, music has always been about the connections with other humans, and it still is,” shares Nagle via email. “The sound of the band now comes from seven years of sessions, which have contributed to creating a collective voice.”

“Collective” is the right word. Each member of Ishna comes from various points within the Celtic diaspora. “As far as having direct Irish heritage, we range from as Irish as it gets - myself and David from the home sod - to some amount of Irish American - Dan and Brian - to not Irish at all - Björn, who is Swedish, and Tara, who is American, German, and Swedish. Audiences often assume Tara is Irish, and we tell them we just keep Björn around as our pet Viking.”

All members are formally trained musicians, with backgrounds in classical and jazz, and most have explored genres beyond Irish trad. Nagle and Novak formed the group in the late 2000s with a goal in mind: “We wanted to explore something less commercial and more rooted in Irish traditional music.”

After touring together with the Three Irish Tenors and Nagle’s show *Druid*, the two teamed up, drawing on Novak’s musical upbringing with a jazz guitarist father and a pianist mother. “Tara wrote all of the arrangements for the band, and then we moved to Boston in 2012,” Nagle explains. “We needed to find new members, and Ishna came together as it is now in 2015.”

By 2018, the band had made a significant shift. “We voted to unplug and settle on a more authentic folk sound,” Nagle says.



The drum kit was replaced with a bodhrán, the electric guitar with an acoustic, and an accordion was added. Much of the band’s repertoire was culled during what they call ‘fireside sessions.’

“We would grab our instruments and whiskey, sit by the wood stove and explore ideas for hours...”

Those changes reflect shifts in the music industry itself. “Making a living as a musician can be difficult, and it seems to be becoming more difficult,” Nagle notes. “That’s largely because of the proliferation of cheap music through streaming services, and now, the advent of AI musicians and composers. To survive, we each have to be creative, using our skills to the best of our ability.”

That adaptability has worked well for Ishna. Individually, the members have been involved in major productions including *Riverdance*, *Aladdin*, the *Folger Consort*, *Newpoli*, *Orchestrotica*, and others. As Ishna, the band remained something of a side project for years until 2025, when they were invited to the world’s first Tolkien estate-sponsored LARP Hobbit Festival.

“We spent a week dressed as hobbits,

busking by day and performing on the main stage to fireworks and a thousand hobbits dancing at night,” Nagle recounts. “It was an absolute blast.”

Their latest recording, *Sli Amach: Way Out*, reflects their evolution. Released in 2024, it had an intentionally paced start. “Even though we had been together for almost a decade, we were deliberately waiting to record,” says Nagle. The material was painstakingly selected and includes fan favourites and tracks that had become staples of their live shows. Other songs like “Tippin’ It Up to Nancy,” “Tíocfaidh an Samhradh,” and “The Foggy Dew” came directly from those fireside sessions. “There is also a mix of Irish and English in the songs on the album, which felt representative of the current use of language in Ireland, but also of its very complicated history.”

Nagle’s nod to history is balanced with his awareness of the present. “There is a wonderful revival happening in Irish traditional music right now. New bands are experimenting and using the Irish language more, breathing new life into the music. It would be great to see more of that energy within the diaspora, where sometimes the focus is more on preserving repertoire than exploring its relevance today.”

The response to the album has been positive, revealing that Ishna has lived up to its name and achieved the wishes of its members and fans. “We have been overwhelmed by the warm reception and the heartfelt messages that have come in from family, friends, and also strangers. There seems to be something in this album that resonates right now, and for that, we are deeply grateful.”

@ishnamusic

WWW.ISHNAMUSIC.COM



COME JOIN US FOR ALL THE FUN, FOOD, AND HIGHLAND GAMES!

June 26 & 27, 2026



Friday, June 26, 2026
4:00 PM – 11:00 PM

Happy Hour and an Irish/Scottish
Cèilidh in the Pub Tent with Live Bands

\$22.50 Admission / Cash Bar

(Friday tickets include
FREE admission all day Saturday)

Saturday, June 27, 2026
9:00 AM – 11:00 PM

Highland Games begin 9:30 AM.
(Music continues until 11:00 PM)

\$14.50 for 16 & older
15 & under - FREE

HOLLAND, MICHIGAN

18 Live Bands | Traditional Irish and Scottish foods | Celtic Genealogy Assistance
Vendors of Celtic goods | Whiskey Bar | Irish Pub tent | Highland Cows
Scottish Clan Tents | Kids area | Highland Games | Scottish and Irish Dance



FOR TICKETS, VISIT:

HollandCelticFestival.org

Are you interested in being a part of the festival?
We welcome inquiries from Celtic Merchandise Retailers,
Irish & Scottish Food Vendors, and Scottish Clans.
Visit our website!

www.HollandCelticFestival.org
HollandCelticFestival@gmail.com
Facebook.com/HollandCelticFestival

HOLLAND CELTIC FESTIVAL

Ottawa County Fairgrounds

June 26 & 27, 2026

Sponsored by:





Sean Griffin's Musical Magic



When asked whether he is still passionate about his career after decades, singer-songwriter Sean Griffin replies that indeed he is, as “it is too late to become a plumber, anyway.” It is a cheeky-but-characteristic response worthy of his veteran status as the long-time frontman of The Ruffians, the high-energy, Irish band he formed in 1998 in New York City.

Plumbing as a profession would never do for the northeast American punk rocker who grew up listening to his musical mom and dad. As a teenager, Griffin strayed a bit from his traditional Celtic roots, finding his niche in alternative music and the Brit-pop-styled band Svelte in the early '90s. Today, post-Ruffians, he has come full circle with a mellower sound that better reflects his ancestral roots.

“My family is from Tralee (Kerry), Kilnacara (Mayo), and Derrynacleigh (Galway), and we have a little bit of French Canadian and German also,” he shares via email from his home base in the Hudson Valley in New York State.

“When I was young, I started singing with my family and in the school chorus and eventually formed bands as a teenager. I just loved it and felt compelled to do it.”

He opines on the challenges of his vocation and life as a musician. “Music is oddly becoming devalued in an ever-changing tech-

nological world. People aren’t coming out the way they once did before COVID-19, and too often, it can get relegated to just background noise. But it beats being a lawyer any day.”

Griffin’s track record certainly shows no evidence of him pondering a law career, or plumbing for that matter. He counts one of his strongest influences as The Pogues, a band that inspired him to form The Ruffians. After three albums, a grueling touring schedule, and performances with the likes of Shane MacGowan and The Popes, as well as other musical luminaries, Griffin made his way to Old Soul Studios in Catskill to team up with Kenny Siegel and Matthew Cullen to produce the hidden gems he had accrued over the years.

The resulting recording, *People Are Mad*, was a long time coming.

“I had wanted to make a solo record, and finally, here it is. I had an uncontrollable urge to get it done, and I’m happy with the result.”

So far, the response has been beyond positive.

“People have been very excited about the record, and happily, folks have named different songs as their favourite, which always makes me happy. A few people even think it is the album of the decade. Thanks Mom!”

All joking aside, and after 25 years of hard gigging, Griffin sums up the success of his new songs quite simply. “A good song can stand the test of time and add to the tradition. Having a good melody is key for me. I enjoy all kinds of things, but the melody is king. The rewrite is always a big part of it, too. I am lucky that I can sit down and always come up with something.”

He isn’t shy to share his views on the state of the music scene in general.

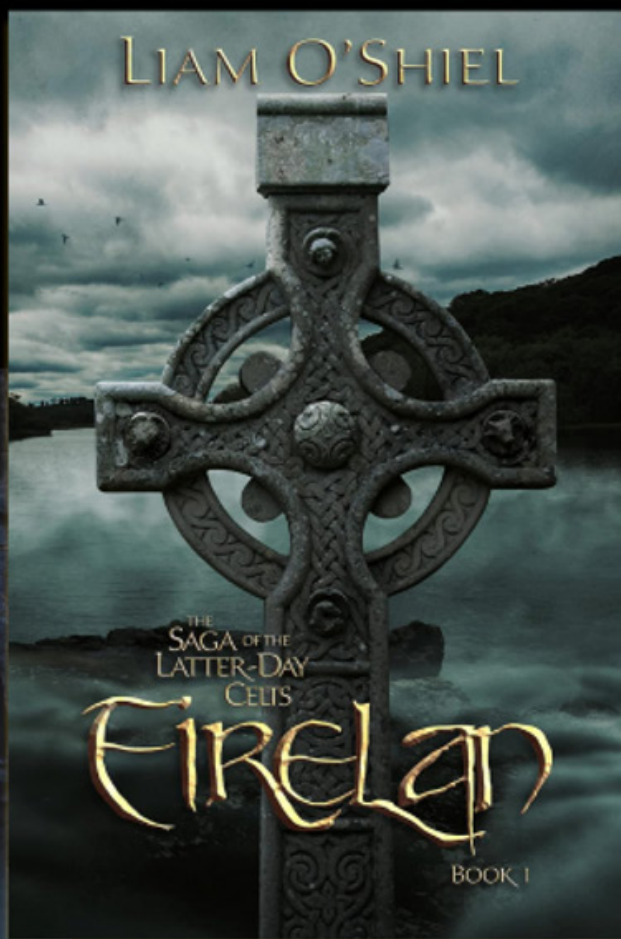
“It is a bit anemic, to be honest. The level of musicianship has never been higher, but the people supporting it have sadly not kept up. The scene isn’t the same. People need to open themselves up to new songs. Too many festivals play the same ten songs all day. We need new classic songs to keep the tradition alive.”

Griffin is doing his part with the new recording which will be followed by a series of shows.

“I try to sing in tune now and keep my clothes on. Seriously, I just try to keep learning and growing. Music is magic, and it deserves our full attention.”

@griffin.sean

WWW.SEANGRIFFIN.ROCKS



**A heroic and deeply human saga set 2,000 years in the future,
where a reborn Celtic civilization faces a changing world
shaped by climate, conflict, and time.**

**Told from within the lives of its people,
this trilogy explores love, friendship, moral courage,
and the struggle to preserve meaning and beauty
against overwhelming odds.**

Written for thoughtful readers of all ages and ways of life.

Available on  amazon



Lao Tzu once observed that “Nature does not hurry, yet everything is accomplished” - a reminder that not everything needs to be forced and frenzied. Though comparing the Taoist philosopher to the frontman of the frenzied, post-hardcore band mclusky might seem like a stretch, it is the very concept that comes to mind when speaking with Andrew Falkous.

To begin, Falkous doesn’t even mention his band’s current tour during a recent interview with Celtic Life International. The omission, likely unintentional, reflects something essential about his approach: a kind of ease that resists deliberate design, an attitude that has probably contributed to the band’s longevity, authenticity, and continued appeal.

Originally from Newcastle upon Tyne, Falkous moved to Cardiff, Wales, in 1993 to study journalism, though life had other plans. “I tried to deny my instincts and not play music, but by the age of sixteen, I knew it was all I wanted to do. My parents were both music teachers.”

If the early pull toward music had any adolescent ego, there’s no trace of it now. “I think I love music even more these days. Initially, my attraction to it was less pure - probably because I was a teenager. It’s everything now - the best thing in the whole world.”

Yet even the best things carry a bit of a burden. Falkous cites the administrative and social media demands of the industry as ongoing challenges. “The writing and performing part of it is an absolute pleasure. Experience tells you to stay away from the online comments, even though human nature com-

pels you to read them.”

The sentiment echoes his words following the band’s temporary breakup in 2005. “Personally, I would like to thank all the people, places, and times that occurred on or near us,” he said at the time. “I’m grateful for the love and, to a lesser degree, the hate. There’ll be more music soon, from all of us.”

True to his word, Falkous reemerged with Future of the Left and then brought mclusky back by 2014 for live shows. “The original incarnation of mclusky was late 1997 / early 1998. This version came together in 2014 to play some shows for Le Pub in Newport, but only became a proper thing in 2022 when we started to write songs.”

By 2024, new material followed, along with a North American tour. The delightfully unhinged People Person (Ipecac) is featured on the soundtrack for the 2026 Netflix film *Peaky Blinders: The Immortal Man*, alongside contributions from Nick Cave, Lankum, and Fontaines D.C. Although Falkous says the band reunited “to raise money for a venue,” the audience was already there. “There ended up being a demand from us as well

as an audience, which I think is the way it’s meant to be.”

The new material reflects Falkous’ tendency to go with the flow while pushing back against the pressures of the modern industry. “Bands are pressured to produce content in order to keep engagement up. I’d rather just release songs; they’re our content worth talking about.”

His approach to songwriting is equally straightforward.

“If a song isn’t working in any way, we usually fuck it off before the second chorus...”

With so many incarnations, Falkous is clear about what is important. “It’s difficult to explain, but it’s all about the connection, the memories of people and places,” he says. “Feeling free on stage - in command. Memory tends to pluck out the big or the crazy shows, but most of them are good.”

His criteria for a good show are not as sentimental. “Not getting too drunk. An audience that is as prepared for the occasion as we are. A good PA in a good room.”

Whether speaking about the Welsh music scene (“We weren’t ignored, but we weren’t boosted either - everybody chooses their own fighter”), or Cardiff in the broad sense, Falkous is a compelling combination of a bit of cheek with a Taoist twist. “Even though I’ve lived there for decades, I never felt as though my opinion was asked for or required. You just need to keep writing and enjoy the process. If you don’t enjoy the process, it’s probably time for another hobby.”

WWW.IPECAC.COM/ARTISTS/MCLUSKY

EDINBORO HIGHLAND GAMES & SCOTTISH FESTIVAL

SEPT. 11-12, 2026



Revel in the rich traditions of Scotland on the picturesque campus of PennWest Edinboro during the 32nd annual Highland Games & Scottish Festival.

- Highland Dance Performances
- Live Music
- Heavy Athletic Competitions
- Scottish Food
- U.S. National Scottish Fiddle and Harp Championships
- Scottish Clan Gatherings
- Fine Gift Vendors
- Kids' Games and Crafts
- Ceilidh Dinner
- And more!

FREE ADMISSION to events!*

Scan the code for a full event schedule



*All events are FREE except the Ceilidh.

PennWest.edu/edinboro-highland-games



PennWest EDINBORO SM



EDINBORO UNIVERSITY
FOUNDATION



Broom Bezzums Celebrates 20 Years

hearsed sets. Things just evolved organically over time.”

“The core of what we do has stayed pretty much the same,” agrees Bloomer, “the chemistry has been there from the very start.”

That sonic chemistry was distilled by early influences in childhood.

“My parents were music lovers, and one of my first memories of a live concert was U2 when I was 12 years old,” recalls Bloomer. “The support bands were REM, the Ramones, Billy Bragg, and Spear of Destiny. That inspired me to learn to play the drums and join bands.”

Cadie credits his family and friends who were ‘always singing or playing’ as early inspiration. “When I was 4, I got a plastic Bon-tempi mini-organ. My dad showed me how to play, and then I got piano lessons. At 11, I picked up my dad’s guitar and tin whistle and learned all his tunes, and at 14, I started to teach myself fiddle. Singing was a family activity from day one.”

“Both remain committed to their respective craft out of the sheer ‘joy of playing music and performing.’”

Bloomer is quick to point out, however, that the demands of taking on music full-time remain something to contend with. “It’s a huge financial challenge. It means having to do other jobs and trying to balance everything.” Cadie is a little more philosophical. “There are easier ways to make a living, but I already knew all that when I was still a child, and it never put me off.”

Even after two decades, the duo shows no signs of slowing down.

“I have had some great experiences with music,” Bloomer says. “One of the highlights was supporting Hawkwind at the Brixton

Academy in the 1990s. We opened for Celtic Connections and won the German Critic Prize twice.”

Cadie goes back even further. “When I was 17, I skipped school to play at Glastonbury Festival on a small stage in a muddy circus tent. With Broom Bezzums, we’ve had runs of gigs that are small enough to let the acoustic instruments speak, and big enough to get the roar of the audience to lift the whole room. It’s hard to think what could be more perfect.”

After six albums, the pair marked the milestone with the new album, whose title is taken from a line in one of their best-known songs, *Keep Hauling*.

Rouse & Raise Your Voice features only the two musicians: Cadie on violin, bagpipes, and guitar; and Bloomer on guitar and mandolin.

The pair can seamlessly shift from that pared-down experience to collaborating with other musicians. “These days, we both play more with people outside of the band, which makes the duo a stronger thing when we get back together.”

The decision to work with other musicians reflects their views on the Irish music scene in general, which both Cadie and Bloomer characterize as ever vibrant. “There are so many extremely talented people doing just about anything you can imagine with the music,” Cadie says. “Irish music has been a massive inspiration for us since day one.”

That spur has been there since that fateful meeting in the distillery, where they brewed a musical batch of their own. “We have a unique life, being able to get on stage and basically be ourselves. Being true to yourself is vital to survive in the world today.”

[@broom_bezzums](https://www.broombezzums.com)

WWW.BROOMBEZZUMS.COM

It is hardly surprising that folk duo Broom Bezzums emerged from Germany two decades ago, given the mix of elements that came together effortlessly from the start.

Originally from England and now based in Germany, a reviewer once described the band as having “superb multi-instrumental skills and contrasting but complementary vocal styles.”

This blending of differing parts has allowed Mark Bloomer and Andrew Cadie to stand out within the broader Celtic musical landscape, exemplified by their most recent release, *Rouse & Raise Your Voice*.

After their first meeting at an Irish bar in Germany, the two kept in touch and crossed paths again in 2005. “The band came together in a schnaps distillery on the River Moselle in Germany,” shares Cadie. “We jammed some songs and knocked out loads of unre-

AUGUST 6 - 9

Music by the sea!



LUNENBURG FOLK HARBOUR *Festival*

FEATURING

Kellie Loder, Sarah Harmer
Sechile Sedare, MacDougall-MacIsaac-MacLellan
Suzie Vinnick, Lloyd Spiegel
Cécile Doo-Kingué, Colin Linden

Beòlach, Boreal, Danny Michel
Grace Petrie, Gordie MacKeeman and His Rhythm Boys,
Jenny Whiteley, Joe H Henry, Le Diable à Cinq
Morgan Toney, Nadine Altounji, Noah Malcolm
Ndidi O, O'Sound, Pillow Fite, Steve Dawson
Youngtree & Carole Bee, and many more!

- 5 Daytime Venues
- 1 Evening Main Stage Tent
- Full schedule online

folkharbour.com

Festival Passes (\$190)
Full Day Passes (\$90)
Afternoon Passes (\$55)
Main Stage Tickets (\$55)
Ages 13-25 are 1/2 price
Kids 12 & under are free!



GET INFORMATION

902-634-3180
Lunenburg, NS, Canada

GET TICKETS

1-888-311-9090
www.ticketpro.ca

FUNDERS:

Canada

NOVA SCOTIA



The Pictou Bee Press

The Pictou Bee Press is the post-retirement passion project of John and Laurie Blackwell.

In 2020, the couple moved into an old stone house in Pictou, Nova Scotia, which was first built in the late 1820s. As history buffs, the Blackwells were keen to learn the house's backstory. "We found it very inspiring to live in a house built by Scottish stone masons and steeped in so much history," says John. The pair discovered that the home was first owned by Robert Dawson, brother of editor James Dawson. Originally from Scotland, James spearheaded *The Bee* newspaper, which was published in Pictou from 1835 to 1838. Additionally, James ran the first bookstore outside of Halifax and, in 1836, published the first Gaelic book written and printed in North America.

The official launch of the Pictou Bee Press corresponded with the 250th anniversary of the Ship *Hector's* landing in Nova Scotia. In 1773, the *Hector* became the first ship to sail directly to the province from Scotland, with 189 hopeful settlers aboard.

"In order to celebrate that important historical milestone, we published four books, produced a special commemorative pin, and featured important Hector-related memorabilia on our Pictou Bee Press website," shares John.

The Pictou Bee Press mainly publishes children's books, with a focus on Maritime history and the Scottish experience in northeastern Nova Scotia. It's a niche subject in a competitive marketplace, but it is of personal significance to the Blackwells.

Together, John and Laurie handle the day-to-day operations of the business. Laurie does much of the writing, although the company publishes other authors as well. It's a completely homegrown venture, John notes. "We engage talented local illustrators, translators, and even a music composer to help create our publications. We both edit our publications and use the services of a local layout person to design the books. Our



website is designed and maintained by a local company. We are proud of the fact that our books are 100 percent Canadian."

By way of example, he points to their children's book *Big Rory Returns to Market Square*, which "combines the talents of an author, illustrator, and music composer, all of whom are based in northeastern Nova Scotia."

The Blackwells pride themselves on the quality of the books they publish, and John emphasizes that they never use AI to produce stories or illustrations.

“We are committed to promoting Nova Scotian authors, illustrators, and translators in order to showcase local talent, particularly women...”

"As well, our books frequently feature local stories in a fictionalized context." *A Pictou Christmas* and *The Crow That Wouldn't Go* are among the local favourites. "They are intended to introduce young readers to local history in an accessible and entertaining way. Some of these books are available with an audio feature. Furthermore, we have designed our books to appeal to both young and adult readers as a shared reading experience."

In addition to books, the company sells t-shirts that pay tribute to the Scottish poet Iain mac Ailein (a.k.a. The Bard MacLean), who arrived in Nova Scotia in 1819. The shirts feature MacLean's words: "Cùm a' Ghàidhlig suas ri d' bheò" (and, in English, "Keep up

the Gaelic as long as you live"). In July 2025, a gathering of MacLean's descendants took place at Barney's River School Museum in northern Nova Scotia. "They were proudly wearing their Bard MacLean t-shirts, which we designed in collaboration with Maritime Swag of Pictou," says John. "The oldest person attending this event was 95 and the youngest was eight months. The attendees represented the fifth, sixth, and seventh generations of descendants of The Bard."

Pictou Bee Press is also championing the Gaelic language through its literary offerings. So far, the Press has published "three bilingual Gaelic-English books, which target the young Gaelic learner and feature an audio of the story read in Gaelic by a Gaelic speaker," explains John. "This allows the reader to follow the words of the text and to fine-tune their pronunciation."

While most of the Pictou Bee Press books find their readers close to home in Nova Scotia, they have indeed reached people in other parts of Canada and beyond. "One of our most loyal fans is a young reader in the Yukon, who loves the Big Rory series," shares John. They've also found audiences in Finland, Italy and Scotland. "A lot of our customers are parents and grandparents looking for children's books with local content." Tourists and expatriate Maritimers are important parts of their demographic as well.

The Press's newest release, a third Gaelic-English children's book, recently hit shelves in honour of Gaelic Nova Scotia Month which takes place each May.

WWW.PICTOUBEEPRESS.COM



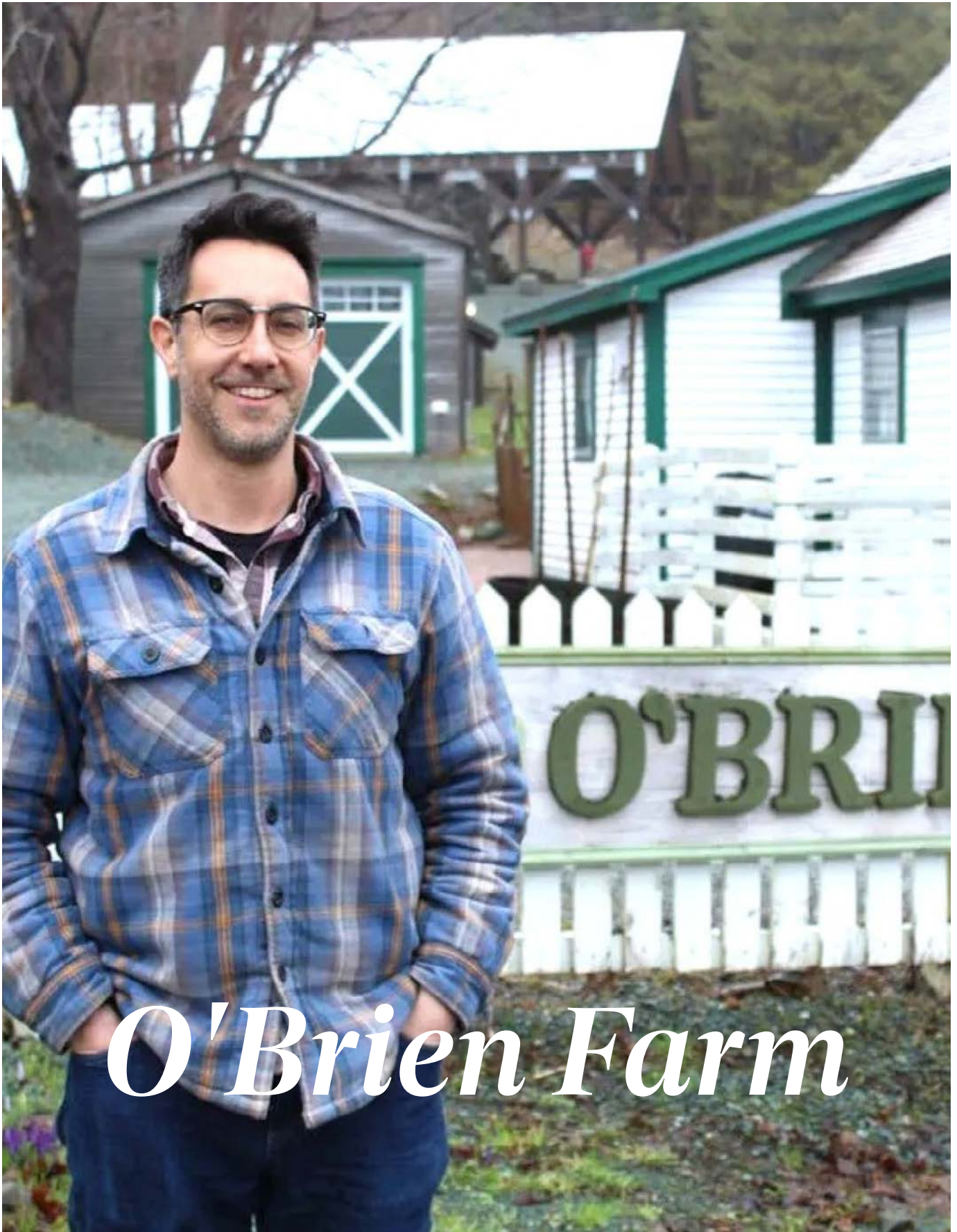
JEUX ÉCOSSAIS DE
MONTREAL
HIGHLAND GAMES
DEPUIS 1855 | SINCE 1855

The Montreal Highland Games
and Festival are back!



Join us August 2, 2026!

montrealhighlandgames.com



O'Brien Farm



O'Brien Brothers

The O'Brien family farm in St. John's, Newfoundland is a throwback in time. The simple rural dairy farm started four generations ago, eventually winding up in the care of three brothers - John, Mike, and Aly - the last of their name.

"The lineage of the immediate family ended," laments Aaron Rodgers, who oversees the O'Brien farm nowadays. "They were icons in the community because they lived such a traditional lifestyle, managing a small, funky dairy farm as development kept encroaching around them."

Interestingly, none of the three brothers ever married, and none had children.

"When the last brother passed away in 2008 - his name was Aly O'Brien, his other two brothers passed a couple of years before him - the farm was kind of left to the community to figure out what was supposed to happen with it. Aly had requested the rights of the farm be kept in agriculture and pushed for the exploration of Irish and Newfoundland history - Celtic history."

That's when Rodgers came in. In the immediate aftermath of Aly's death, the ques-

tion was how to fulfill his last request, and Rodgers was hired by the O'Brien Farm Foundation to become the general manager of the property and be part of figuring out those minor details.

"I was hired by the O'Brien Farm Foundation as the general manager of the property and to figure out the details. I'm from the U.S. originally, and my wife is a Newfoundlander. There's kind of a joke among expats who come back to Newfoundland - that Newfoundland has this government program where they send all the really funny, good-looking people around the world to get married, and then bring us all back to the island."

Rodgers drew upon his past for his current position.

"I grew up in an agricultural community. I've worked with wine grapes, which is what my parents have done for a long time. I have a master's degree in agricultural economics. Before I moved here, I was the executive director of the Mississippi Agriculture and Forestry Museum. I was in the Peace Corps as an agricultural extension agent - I worked in Senegal in West Africa for two years, growing

corn, millet, and sorghum. So, I have an understanding of production agriculture and the economics and business development side of things, both on the local level and on a global level."

Over time, Rodgers successfully rebuilt the old O'Brien farm into a living museum, where the traditional farming practices are kept alive for current and future generations to learn from.

"Aly O'Brien and his brothers were trying their best to preserve a way of life that was dying out. It had existed in the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s as this iconic farm where there was this sense of history and interpretation."

"Aly was kind of an amateur historian in a lot of ways. He was really good about journaling and writing what he was seeing on a daily basis here on this farm, so we do have a really good record of how it worked."

The O'Brien's old farming wisdom isn't just learned and appreciated for its own sake. Rodgers espouses that traditional farming practices like the ones that built the facility can still be useful in modern agriculture today.



“Our flagship program here is a farm incubation program. We’ve got five farmers right now that are in season four and five, and they all have their businesses pretty well set and are reaching out to try to find sole proprietorships and their own farmland. We have another cohort of six farmers waiting in the wings, also.

“The program affords young people, mostly new entrant farmers, an opportunity to have land, to have access to equipment, to irrigation, to infrastructure, and to have expertise available while they develop their own farm.

“It’s not just ‘go work on a dairy farm’ kind of thing; you buy your own goats, your own sheep, and raise them here on the farm; or you’d start a vegetable operation, start at the farmers market and then move to direct sales to the restaurants locally. One of our farmers’ first big sales was to one of the top restaurants in Canada; he didn’t know how to write an invoice - he didn’t know what an invoice was - but he knows how to grow hakurei turnips like you wouldn’t believe.

“These are points of pride for us - that we can provide people the opportunity to develop their own success...”

In a world that produces more food than ever in human history, starvation statistics have never been higher. Rodgers considers the most important work that the O’Brien farm does is to satiate the human need for community.

“What we’re trying to do on this micro-level - and I get it, we’re not changing the world here by any means - but we are demonstrating that you can exist and you can have a good life as a farmer, because a good life is about providing for your community. I’m by no means a cultural geographer, historian, or anything, but in my experience with the Celtic diaspora, there is an identity around food that nourishes the soul and brings people together.

“We look to provide as much as we can - to folks that want turnips, potatoes, carrots, and everything you need for that Jiggs dinner

twice a month, as well as for new communities that are coming in, immigrant communities and the like, that are looking for food ways and products that kind of fit their diaspora.

“That level of human currency is vital, and it’s just as vital to produce food - something that nourishes all of that, nourishes the community, and provides that sustenance. If we lose it, it’s gone.

“I think what we’re building here could be a model for all over. Certainly, in Atlantic Canada, but I’d say probably a lot of the Celtic diaspora would benefit from this; both that understanding of history and culture, as well as agriculture, providing that sustenance for our bellies and our souls.

“What we’re doing is a people-driven. The technologies aren’t going to save us all - we still have to know how to do things. We still have to use our bodies to make these things happen. I’m always impressed when people start learning how to do it and get good at it, how happy they are.”

WWW.OBRIENFARM.CA



Oxford Blue

EST 1968

Manufactures and designers of quality
lifestyle and country attire for over 50 years.

Irish Mammy Cooks!



Orla Drumgoole is a retired Irish teacher who has become a viral sensation as a home cook and author under the social media moniker Irish Mammy Cooks. After a 32-year career teaching English and Music at St Louis Secondary School in Dundalk, she retired in 2025 to focus on her thriving online community, which has grown to over 200,000 followers on Instagram.

What are your family roots?

I am originally from Kildare, but my mum was from West Cork and my dad from Co. Clare. We lived in Kildare because Dad was in the army for 42 years and was mostly stationed in the Curragh, but I have always been reminded of my proud Munster roots.

Where do you currently reside?

I live in Monaghan with my husband Paddy, and we have three daughters all attending college right now. I have lived here for longer than I did in Kildare, but it's hard to lose the 'blow in' status up here!

Why a cookbook, and why now?

The why? I have a very large following on social media, Facebook and Instagram especially. My followers kept asking for a book because they are of an age where it can be hard to navigate back and forth to find favourite recipes. The why now is because I retired from my teaching job last year and finally had the time to commit my recipes to paper.

What were the challenges involved?

I needed to pick the recipes I wanted to use! It was hard to know at first what chapters to include and whether to just share sweet recipes or offer a mixture of everything. Because a blog has both words and video, I needed to rethink the processes involved in recipes to make them manageable in book form. Having been an English teacher, I was lucky because that was the easy part for me.

What were the rewards?

I can't believe that as a retired teacher, I am living a whole new life as a bestselling author, being offered opportunities to meet with people all over the country, and to learn about so

many fabulous small Irish businesses making beautiful food. For me, the book is a tribute to my parents, my mam especially, so it has been so wonderful to feel her with me on this journey. Although the recipes are not all traditional Irish ones, they are the versions of them that mam and lots of other Irish mams were making for us all in the 70s and 80s.

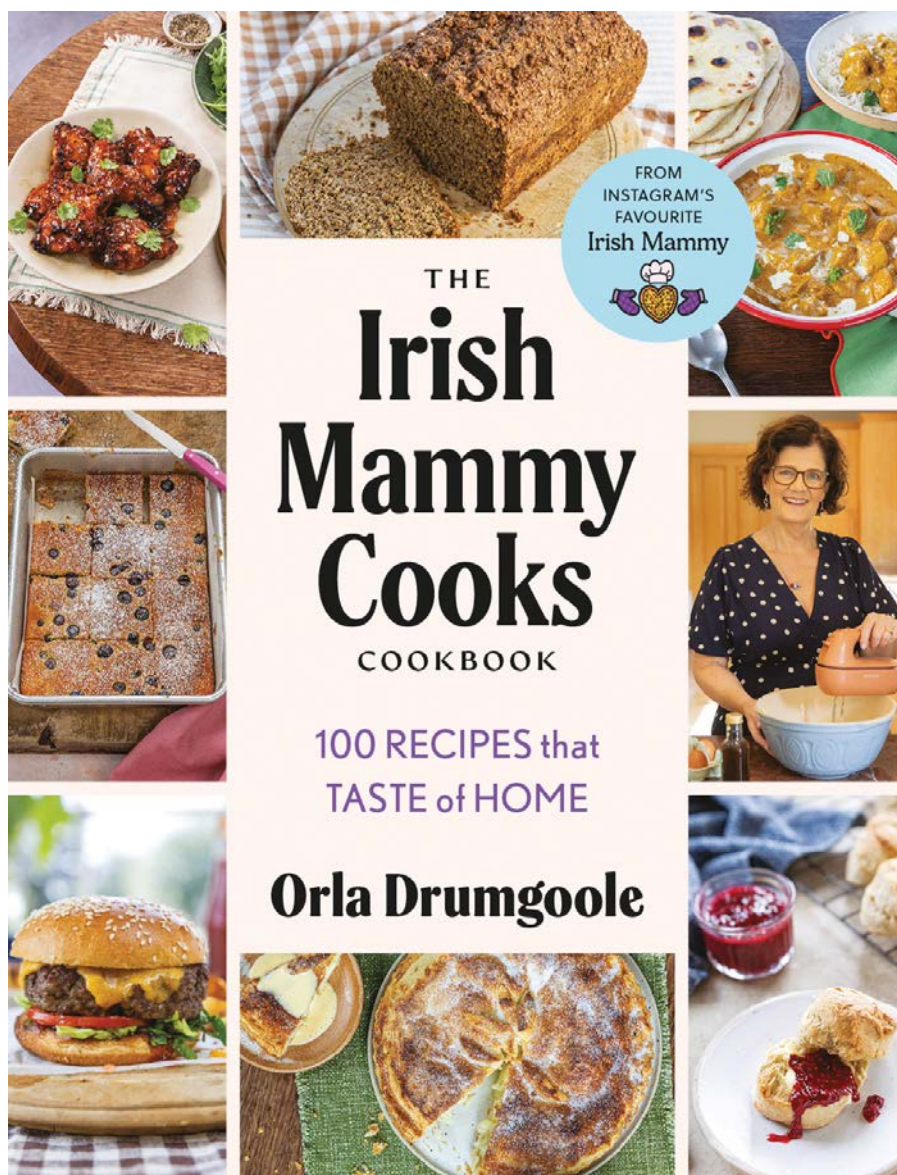
What has the response been like so far?

The part that pleases me the most is that people are messaging me every day sharing photos of the recipes they have tried. I am especially touched

when they share photos of my mam Nancy's pastry or stuffing - that is really lovely. The book was No 1 in both the Irish and Sunday Times Best Sellers lists and that is unbelievable to me. I seem to have struck a chord with people - there is nothing pretentious or 'cheffy' in the book - because I am neither!

How did you go about choosing the recipes?

I wanted to include the most popular recipes from my blog, as well as lots of easy dinner ideas. In Ireland, dinner is usually chicken, beef or pork, and the book has 26 dinner ideas, along with



lots of vegetarian ideas too. I included two chapters of traybakes, mini ones and large ones, but with instructions on how to adapt them for the size of your party. I also included a section on bread, of course, and one dedicated to chocolate because who doesn't love chocolate after all.

Do you have a favourite recipe from the collection?

My favourite and the one I worked the hardest to perfect is the brown scone recipe. It can be made as a loaf as well. I spent a whole summer tweaking it, and it is still one of my favourites to bake. It is really easy to make, you can

sub in or out ingredients to suit your own family, and it tastes delicious!

Will there be a sequel or follow-up?

I never thought I would write one book, so it is not beyond the realm of possibility that there's another one in me.

Is your creative process more "inspirational" or "perspirational"?

Definitely inspirational! I don't overthink recipes. I love a good rummage in the cupboards to see what's lurking and needing to be used up - and that is usually where the recipes stem from. I love finding

new products and seeing how I can incorporate them into different traditional recipes to elevate them.

What makes a good meal?

The company you keep. The food is merely incidental to the conversation and the love in the room. It does help, of course, when the food tastes good! I think starting light and ending large is key for me - and if I am prepping, I always make the desserts first - that way I know however badly everything else goes, the night will end well!

What is Irish cuisine, and what makes it so unique?

I think it started out as hearty stews, good bread and easy desserts, but nowadays it is all the flavours of the world, but with an Irish twist. I use smoked paprika in my lasagne - it shouldn't work, but it does! I think it is a cuisine that borrows from everywhere and incorporates the best flavours with the best products. We are so lucky in the quality of ingredients here.

How has it evolved in recent years?

Ireland is a wonderfully multicultural place nowadays, and that is evident in the kitchens of our homes. People are more experimental, and as families and cultures blend, this will become even more evident in the future. Pistachio cream, lemon myrtle, tonka beans - not standard, but we are using them casually as if they were always part of our cache.

What do you have on tap for the rest of 2026?

I am doing a few demos at food festivals this year, I have found an amazing agent, and I am going to take a month or two to breathe and see what opportunities are in store. I am blessed in having had a job I adored for 35 years, so this new career is a bonus. I can't wait to see where it takes me next, and I am grateful for every moment.

[@irishmammycooks](https://www.instagram.com/irishmammycooks)





Guinness Brown Bread

A Guinness brown loaf is heartier than a standard brown bread, and it is still very simple. There are fewer ingredients, yet it delivers a punch in terms of flavour. It takes five minutes to put together - the perfect afternoon activity. It freezes beautifully too - slice and separate with parchment paper for best results. This is great with soup, but honestly? We eat it with my homemade jam. It's also perfect with cheese and coleslaw, or some tasty sardines.

Ingredients

110g butter
85g treacle
500ml Guinness
300ml buttermilk
900g wholemeal flour
85g oat bran
85g demerara sugar
1 tbsp bicarbonate of soda

Instructions

Preheat the oven to 180°C fan. Line two 900g loaf tins with parchment paper. Place the butter and treacle in a pan over a low heat and allow to melt together. Then remove from the heat and add the Guinness. Stir to incorporate. Add the buttermilk too and mix again. Add the flour, oat bran and sugar to a large bowl, then sieve in the bicarbonate of soda. Add the wet mix to the dry ingredients and combine fully - I use a spatula, which is handy for getting every bit of the mix from the treacle pan, and from the bowl later! Divide the mixture between the two lined tins. Bake for 45 minutes, then remove from the oven and immediately turn the loaves out of the tins. The loaves should sound hollow when you tap the bottoms. If not hollow-sounding, pop them back into the tins and into the oven for another five to ten minutes - no longer though. When the bread is done, cover with a clean tea towel or muslin so you don't get a hard crust. Makes two 900g loaves.

Apple and Custard Traybake

This is easily the most popular video I ever posted on Instagram. It is nostalgia in a mouthful. We grew up on Bird's Custard. It was dolloped onto every dessert we ate: tart, semolina, trifle, sponge. With the power of the world wide web, you can now source this delight all over the world. The idea for this bake actually woke me in the middle of the night, and I had to try it. So far it has been watched by 5 million people and saved by 70,000, so it's a keeper for sure. We serve it warm with - you guessed it - dollops of custard, but it is equally lovely cold as a slice with a cup of tea. This can also be made with four mashed bananas or 300g finely sliced rhubarb in place of the apple.

Ingredients

3 large cooking apples, peeled and sliced (about 400g)
2 tbsp caster sugar
200g self-raising flour
80g Bird's Custard Powder
120g icing sugar
1 tsp baking powder
1 tbsp vanilla extract
5 eggs
200g very soft butter

Instructions

Place the sliced apples, caster sugar and 1 tablespoon of water in a saucepan over a medium heat. Cook for about 10 minutes, stirring regularly, till the apples have softened but still have a bit of bite to them. If you don't have cooking apples, you can use sharp eating apples instead - Granny Smith or Pink Lady are good - just leave out the sugar. Leave to cool completely. Preheat your oven to 160°C. Line a 25 x 35cm tray with parchment paper. Add the flour, custard powder, icing sugar and baking powder to a large mixing bowl and stir. Then add the apple, vanilla, eggs and butter. Use a wooden spoon or a fork and mix thoroughly so there are no lumps. Pour into a parchment-lined tray and bake for about 30 minutes. Stick a skewer in, and if it comes out clean, you will know it's done. Best enjoyed warm with custard, but equally lovely on its own. Serves 15-20.



Authentic Scottish Kilts

PROUDLY SERVING TEXAS SINCE 1982

Custom-Made in Scotland • Over 500 Tartans • Sales & Rentals



*For Over 40 Years, Your Trusted Source
for Highland Attire in North Texas!*

- Custom-Made Kilts Crafted in Scotland
- Over 500 Tartans to Choose From
- Complete Highland Accessories:
Sporrans, Jackets, Hose, Brogues & More!

— All Imported from Scotland —

Minsky Formal Wear

www.DallasKiltRental.com

819 W. Arapaho Rd, Suite 28, Richardson, TX • (972) 783-4889

True Scottish Craftsmanship • Genuine Highland Tradition

Holly Redmond Harvey

I grew up in Royal Deeside in Aberdeenshire, my favourite place on earth. I was surrounded by Scotland's landscape, traditions and a very strong sense of heritage. Scotland is an environment that shapes you without you quite realizing it at the time - growing up, we were forced to be curious, to climb mountains, cross rivers, and fall out of trees. It was rugged, yet beautiful and it taught us to make our own fun. There was also a quiet formality to life there, from white tie balls to Highland gatherings, and clothing always played a role in that. I went to boarding School in Perthshire and then attended the University of St Andrews with Prince William and Kate. I stayed in Scotland for as long as I could before moving to London. Looking back, I can see that my roots are not just geographical, they are cultural and emotional, and they underpin everything I design today.

I entered Scottish society at 17

years old and from that point onwards I attended events regularly, where dress codes were integral to the experience. I became fascinated by how clothing could communicate identity, tradition, place and ceremony.

The vision behind Redmond Harvey was born from something I found impossible to ignore. For generations, men have been gifted a kilt to mark their 18th or 21st birthday, a piece that carries identity, lineage and pride. Yet there was no equivalent for women, nothing that held the same weight or meaning. I wanted to change that. My tartan gowns are not garments in the conventional sense, they are heirlooms in the making. Each piece is entirely one of a kind, created for the individual in her own family tartan. They are conceived as wearable works of art, designed to mark life's defining moments.

What started as a personal fascination has become a mission. Today

it is about reinterpreting Scottish heritage for a global audience and proving that tradition can feel modern, relevant and desirable. It is no longer just appreciation, it is responsibility. What matters most to me is that these pieces endure. These are intended not only to be worn, but to be kept, treasured and passed down through generations. In doing so, they carry personal history, craftsmanship and Scottish identity forward, ensuring that heritage is not only preserved, but lived.

Scotland has an extraordinary foundation in terms of textiles and craftsmanship, from tweed, cashmere, jute and tartan, however it is often viewed through a purely traditional lens. In reality, there is huge potential for innovation and contemporary expression that has not yet been fully realized on the global stage.

@redmondharveyclothing

WWW.REDMONDHARVEYCLOTHING.COM







KYLEMORE ABBEY REFLECTS ACROSS THE WATER,
ITS EPIC LOVE STORY ETCHED INTO
CONNEMARA'S LANDSCAPE



Visit the island
that goes beyond

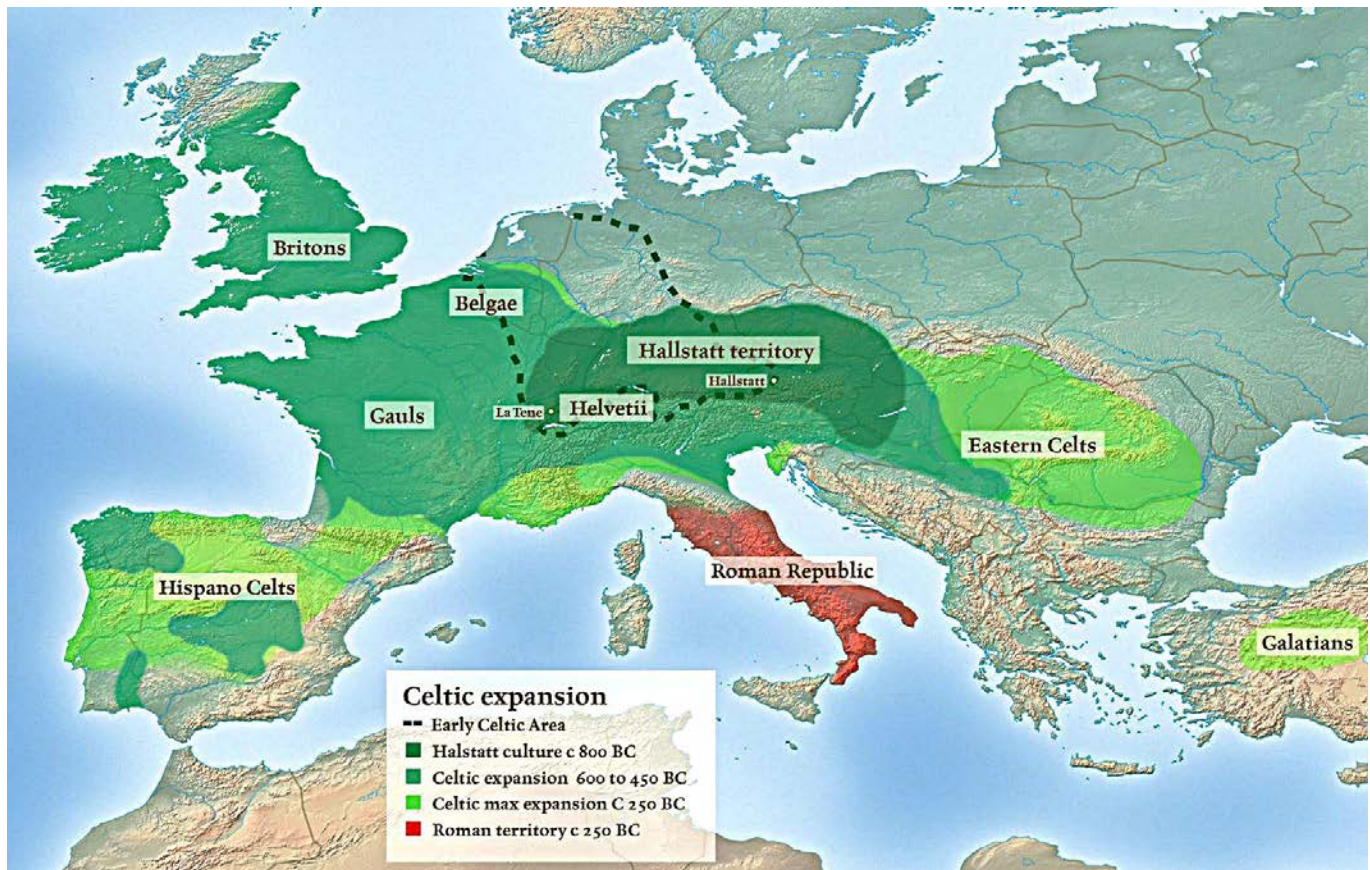
—  Ireland.com —

An aerial photograph of a lush green landscape featuring a prominent Celtic field pattern, also known as a 'craobh' or 'craobhach' pattern. The pattern consists of a series of concentric, wavy lines that create a sense of movement and flow across the field. The surrounding landscape is a mix of green fields, trees, and distant hills under a clear sky.

Celtic Common Ground

Story by Lillian Holt

*"In the old Celtic ways, dùthchas is
our birthright: our belonging to the
land, and the land's belonging to
us." - Ancestral Wisdom*



A boat rocks impatiently on the edge of a restless sea. The sun, still low in the sky, gleams over a small group of men, women, and children. As they huddle against the raw wind, their spirits remain open to what lies ahead: not just a new land, but the start of a new life. These are the early Celts heading to a land they will call their own.

Imagery aside, there are many theories on the origin of the Celts - a group of sturdy tribes that settled on the edge of the Western world. While much has been written and debated, one thing is often overlooked - how the land helped to craft the culture, and how that culture came to be shared.

One thing we know for sure is that no matter where they settled, the Celts had a close relationship with the land. "Indeed, what is called the 'Celtic world' is nowhere near a homogeneous, uniform whole and should be seen as a loose mosaic of independent but interconnected communities, their ways being largely related to their physical and economic environment," notes Patrick Galliou in *Brittany's Distant Past*.

As such, the land played a vital role in carrying culture long before communication

was a simple click away. However, can culture begin with the land itself, becoming part of the tradition passed down?

"The soil is the great connector of lives, the source and destination of all," writes author, farmer, and environmentalist Wendell Berry, whose work upholds that human life is inseparable from the land where survival and identity take root. For the Celts, the land equaled cultural development; although tribes were separated, they remained connected through the land, and - over time - the land called for a return.

The question of how the Celts are linked to the land and to each other is not simple, and much about the Celts' singular culture remains uncertain. What is evident from history, however, is that, although spread from Ireland to Turkey, many tribes shared common aspects of life. "Celtic culture is a real thistle of a thing to define," notes the article *Irish Myths*, "the term refers to the arts, customary beliefs, and social institutions shared by Celtic-speaking peoples."

While language was certainly a bond, geography was equally essential. Archaeological evidence from the 8th century BCE

reveals traces of this Celtic presence near the Austrian village of Hallstatt in the northern Alps. This early phase of the culture, named after the village, later evolved into the La Tene culture, continuing into the 1st century CE. During this time, the Celts established small settlements, practiced farming, and kept livestock.

From these early places, movement was motivated by the land itself. Travelling tribes sought resources, stability, and survival. The Celts moved into Gaul, then Ireland, Scotland, and Wales, settling on viable environments and seeking relief from conflict and crowding.

Perhaps because of this, the Celts developed a strong spiritual yet practical connection to the land, which was revered as a primary giver of life. "In Celtic traditions, the connection to nature and its spirits is deeply woven into the cultural and spiritual fabric. This ancient connection to the trees, rivers, and stones is not just a historical curiosity but a living practice," as noted in the article *The Nature of the Celts*. So, what began as survival evolved into belief.

As Celtic groups moved westward, they



settled in regions at the edge of the known world. In Ireland, cattle farming became a way of life due to a fertile soil and temperate climate. As one historical source notes, “Archaeological evidence indicates that a mixture of pastoral and arable farming was practiced, dependent upon the geographical location of the different tribes.” This did more than sustain an economy; it helped define a social structure. The land was not simply cultivated for survival, but signaled status as well.

By contrast, the terrain was much harsher in the Scottish Highlands. Rocky ground, steep hills, and unpredictable weather required resilience. This contributed to strong kin-based social structures, later expressed in the clan system. As one historical review by Rabbie’s Travel notes, “Scottish clans were largely formed of tenant farmers and labourers, loyal to a dominant family.” The land required cooperation, creating a community defined by endurance and loyalty.

Along the coasts of Brittany, the relationship to the territory was different yet again. “The Celts are seafaring peoples due to forced migrations over centuries,” writes

Beth Haslam in *Exploring the Celtic Roots of Brittany*. Here, the sea was both barrier and byway. Fishing and trade formed the daily routines, and cultural identity became linked to tides and weather patterns. “In the late millennia BC, men, goods, and ideas circulated freely between the maritime regions of north-western Europe,” confirms Galliou. Both land and sea added definition to an evolving Celtic culture.

“While these landscapes made room for variations in lifestyle, a deeper connection remained between the tribes that defied physical distance.”

Whether inland or coastal, fertile or rugged, the land dictated the terms of survival. Consequently, the Celts developed ways of living that, despite their physical distance, shared a common foundation: language, art, religion, and a close relationship with the natural world.

But how did Celts in different regions remain connected through customs despite minimal contact? The obvious answer is trade, but the true answer lies not in commu-

nication, but in continuity. They were, after all, an undefined network of similar communities spanning across Europe, yet distinct from their Mediterranean neighbours. What began as a survival mentality became a cultural identity carried forward over time. In this way, the environment did not merely sustain life; it helped form the cultural thread that connected Celtic peoples across time and distance.

Most common threads in Celtic culture were shaped by patterns of daily life, which eventually evolved into tradition. These customs, often connected to the land, were carried through Celtic stories. Even the Celtic language reflected this pattern. As explained in an article in *Young Scot*, “At a point in history, Scottish Gaelic was Scotland’s primary language, and this is the reason that many names of Scotland’s landscape have close ties to the language.” Gaelic words such as *ard*, meaning “tall,” are associated with elevated areas, while *beinn*, meaning “mountain,” appears in many place names as “ben.” Across regions, Celtic languages - Goidelic in Ireland and Brythonic in Great Britain - reflected features within the landscape.



Alongside language, storytelling evolved, becoming the primary means of transmitting knowledge and ways of life. These myths carried the common element, again, linked to nature, as noted by Caitrin Stewart in *The Art of Scottish Storytelling*. “The Picts and Scots, inhabiting Scotland from around 400 BC to AD, orally passed down tales grounded in nature. Tales were embedded in seasonal cycles or daily life rituals.”

For the Celts, storytelling was closely connected to an animistic worldview. Edward Tylor, a Victorian anthropologist, defined animism as “the belief in spirits” - understood by the Celts to inhabit stones, plants, trees, rivers, sky, and sea. As one account observes, “The Scots were very aware of spirit in everything. Every mountain, stream, and land mass on a map of Scotland is associated with a mythological story or a character.”

In this context, Druids preserved and passed down knowledge and laws through oral tradition. Druidic doctrine forbade written records of this cultural wisdom, encouraging it to be memorized instead. Bettina Arnold, an anthropology professor and the founding editor of *e-Keltoi: Journal of Interdisciplinary Celtic Studies*, describes the ancient Celts as “aliterate,” meaning they purposely chose not to put sacred teachings in writing. This practice was adhered to by the Celts in all regions. “Even though the Celtic tribes never unified politically under one kingdom, their shared

oral traditions helped to create and maintain a cultural unity across great geographical distances,” writes Dave Roos in *8 Facts about the Celts*.

That knowledge was preserved in memory and lived out in daily and seasonal life, where the connection to nature also played a practical role. The Celtic calendar centered on seasonal cycles, which included fire festivals spaced throughout the year. Samhain, Imbolc, Bealtaine, and Lughnasadh, “marked changes of season important to agriculture and the Celts depended on the Wheel of the Year to dictate when to plow, sow, harvest, and rest,” cites *The Celtic Journey*.

Alongside the practical importance of these festivals was a deeper meaning. These celebrations marked times when the veil between the physical world and the Otherworld was thought to grow thin. In her piece, *Remembrance of the Ancestors in Contemporary Paganism in the Irish Context*, Jenny Butler writes, “Samhain is the time when the mounds or side on the landscape open up, allowing the inhabitants of the Otherworld to interact with living human beings.” For ancient Celts, the land was a means for connecting with the unseen. “Pagans adhere to a cosmology of the sacred hills, which they regard as conducive to connecting with the ancestors,” Butler notes, with certain hills associated with different festivals - Tlachtga (Samhain) and Uisneach (Bealtaine).

“***The importance of nature in Celtic culture illustrates how the Celts maintained a shared relationship with their environment, no matter where they settled...***”

Since those early settlements, the culture’s evolution has been gradual, steady, and circular, eventually leading back to where it began: the land. As societal attitudes shifted, those early communities became towns and cities shaped more by industry and trade than by land and lore. Daily life moved away from seasonal cycles and agricultural rhythms toward commercial profit. Regions once defined by their natural features, grew into modern nations focused on production, efficiency, and expansion rather than oral tradition or continuity. The land itself shifted from a source of cultural meaning to a resource for exploitation.

Through the centuries that followed, Celtic culture underwent major shifts, including the transition to Christianity, which adapted much of the earlier pagan lore. By the 1600s, Celts were largely confined to the Atlantic regions of Ireland, Scotland, Wales, and Brittany, where they continued to endure. Over time, external pressures, including a centralizing British authority, shifted not only the culture but the landscape once again. As Darby Róis Ottoson notes, “In the



17th century, as the population swelled and colonial landlords converted more land into precarious tenant farming plantations, deforestation accelerated further. By the time the Republic of Ireland declared independence in 1922, tree cover had shrunk to 1%.”

Yet the link to environment was never entirely lost. During the Celtic Revival in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, efforts to preserve language, mythology, and tradition helped restore the Celtic identity. Writers such as W. B. Yeats drew upon the old mythologies, creating a new Celtic consciousness that moved into the modern era.

Today, that relationship to the land is being consciously restored, as initiatives across the Celtic nations bear witness to both environmental conservation and cultural preservation.

After leaving his job in Canada, Irish ecologist Eoghan Connaughton returned home to found the Gaelic Woodland Project, a charity dedicated to reforestation. Growing up aware of his heritage and its mythology, he realized that “those old stories felt flat without a connection to the wilderness that spawned them,” and he set out to bring some

of that connection back. “We’re trying to undo generations of ecological devastation, and that won’t be remedied in a few years. If we can infuse that with a rich tapestry of stories and music and language, and reinsert that into the culture, then it becomes an intergenerational thing that outlives us.”

Tim Smit, co-founder of the Eden Project in Cornwall, believes people are increasingly more attuned to the natural world, just like the Celts of old. In a recent article in *The Guardian*, Smit explained the original inspiration for the project. “Most people didn’t realise that without plants there’s no life on earth. Effectively, the Eden Project is a monument to the importance of plants - if people damage the natural world, they damage themselves.”

Santiago Rael, another founding member of the Gaelic Woodland Project, echoes a similar sentiment. “Ireland’s fragile ecology is fighting many battlefronts due to biodiversity threats, corporate interest, lack of government action, and the reduction of protective environmental policies.” He adds that “the public needs to remember their own individual and collective power to impact

things. Global thinking alongside local action is the key.”

These initiatives to reconnect with the land are not merely environmental but cultural, reflecting an ancient relationship that once shaped Celtic life and preserved traditions. For some cultures, particularly the Indigenous ones, the connection to nature was never lost, reminding us of what can still be reclaimed.

The journeys that began on restless shorelines were never only about migration, but about what those early Celts carried forward. While they set out with survival in mind, they also carried with them a particular way of interacting with the natural environment. This relationship, shared across distance through stories and seasons, trade and tradition, created a culture that endured across generations. Though that relationship changed through the centuries and at times was weakened, it was never entirely lost. Today, it is being rediscovered, reminding us that culture does not exist apart from the land, but grows from it.

Live the Dream,
Dream Ireland,
Think MCT.

Early Bird Special

10% off

ALL 2027

WINTER & SPRING TOURS



MCT
Irish Tours

www.michaelcowelltours.ie

Email info@michaelcowelltours.ie or Cowellm223@gmail.com

Phone 00 353 87 418 1457



The Spirit *of the* Land

Story by Lillian Holt



As the light begins its ascent, carrying spring into summer across the ancient Celtic world, cattle are driven between twin fires before being led to pasture. It appears to be some type of mystical ritual, yet its true purpose is ultimately practical. The smoke-filled passage was thought to cleanse and protect the herd, discouraging disease and ensuring fertility in the months ahead. Although the Beltane custom may appear to be a spiritual tradition, its ancient roots lie in an old world governed by nature and survival.

James Napier, in *Folklore on Superstitious Beliefs in the West of Scotland*, quotes from an older glossary which reads, “The Druids lighted two solemn fires every year, and drove all four-footed beasts through them, in order to preserve them from contagious distempers.”

For those early Celts, ritualistic practices were not theatrical undertakings set apart from daily life; they grew out of repeated interaction with the environment and were often developed from hardship. Pre-Christian Celtic customs came from a close relationship with the land, and the gradual suppression of these rituals marked a departure from land-based ways of life, one that modern Wiccans would later try to restore.

Cattle driven through fire and other rites came to be regarded as sacred over time. The Wheel of the Year guided crop planting and livestock management, which was the basis for the seasonal fire festivals of Beltane, Lughnasadh, Samhain, and Imbolc. Such tra-

ditions most likely evolved out of necessity, with the land as the meeting point between survival and the unseen.

For the Celts of old, the natural world was seen as alive and inhabited by spirit. In *Animism and the Living World of the Ancient Celts*, Zteve T. Evans writes that the Celts linked “everything together...the sky, earth, and underworld were connected; everything was part of a greater conscious universe.” Rivers, trees, stones, hills, and wells were not merely landmarks, but places of presence and significance.

Survival methods became symbolic over time. Samhain signalled the end of harvest labor and the hauling of cattle in for the winter, and was also associated with endings and ancestors. Imbolc marked the start of the lambing season and a period of dwindling winter supplies that was later synonymous with renewal. Livestock was moved to higher pastures for Beltane, and also represented prosperity and protection. Lughnasadh began as the start of the grain harvest and was also linked to survival and strength. Through repetition, labour on the land became a sort of spiritual practice that brought people together.

Certain places carried special significance. Holy wells, groves, hills, and burial mounds were part of ritual life. Sites such as Uisneach, Tara, and Tlachtga were associated with ceremony. In this sense, spirituality was not abstract but grounded in specific landscapes with specific outcomes in mind. “The heart of Celtic spirituality was simply living

the life, following the Way, travelling the journey in the everyday ordinariness of life,” writes Trevor Miller in *Celtic Spirituality - A Beginner's Guide*.

“As these customs developed, knowledge was preserved and passed on through oral tradition.”

The Druids, seen as judges, teachers, and healers, played an important role in transmitting ritual practice through generations. “After the harvest, labourers joined Druid priests to light a communal fire using a wheel that sparked flames. The wheel represented the sun and was used alongside prayers,” notes one historical account. The land was not just scenery for the Ancient Celts: it was a teacher and timekeeper.

And then came the Christians.

As Christianity spread through the Celtic world, many earlier customs were absorbed, renamed, or discouraged, but not quite fully erased. Several early missionaries appear to have used familiar symbols to help ease the process of conversion. As Barbara Percival notes in *From Paganism to Christianity*, “The fact that the Christian God took three separate forms was also a concept familiar to the Celts since their own deities took different forms.” As the new belief system continued to spread with the help of St Patrick, the position of the Druids as demigods was all but wiped out. According to some medieval sources, “Patrick performed miracles and humiliated the Druids, who

retaliated by trying to kill him. In response, Patrick invoked divine intervention, causing a massacre of Druids at Tara.”

Some traditions survived in altered form and were renamed for Christian saints. Saint Brigid is an example of this merging, where a pre-Christian goddess became associated with her saintly counterpart. As the customs were reinterpreted by Christian authority, the old land-based beliefs gradually waned and were eventually seen as superstition.

This change was not simply about one religion replacing another. It revealed a shift in authority and how knowledge was shared and understood. Oral tradition was replaced by doctrine. Generational wisdom was outside official control and discouraged. Christians portrayed pagan practice as dangerous and “the worship of daemons.”

From the late 16th century onward, witchcraft persecutions were frequent, particularly in Scotland, where thousands were accused, with 3,837 cases recorded between 1563 and 1736. As historian Christina Lerner, a leading scholar, notes, witchcraft was treated as “a serious crime against both church and state,” and those associated with it became targets for punishment. Ireland saw fewer prosecutions, though fear surrounding the old ways was present there as well.

At the same time, attitudes toward the land itself were also changing in terms of the law and the economy. No longer a source of memory and meaning, it was now an asset to be managed and controlled. As economic historian and social theorist Karl Polanyi observed, land became a “fictitious commodity” and was “inextricably interwoven with man’s institutions.” Systems of authority and profit became much more important than local customs and concerns. Ritual was suppressed, as was the natural way of relating to land, the community, and one another.

“**As capitalism took hold and the Industrial Revolution spread, the separation from the land became not only entrenched but encouraged.**

One of the most extreme examples of this was the Highland Clearances in Scotland,



where people were forced to leave lands that they had inhabited for generations. As Rhona Steel notes, “Landlords had become more interested in profits,” and “arable land and grazing were taken from tenants and consolidated into large (money-making) farms.”

Yet by the twentieth century, the deep-rooted link to ancient knowledge began to re-emerge.

Modern Wicca, led by Gerald Gardner, surfaced in Britain, bringing a range of older folk traditions. “Gardner was one of the first people in the twentieth century to publicly self-identify as a witch, and he either created, revealed, or refined the first long-lasting and influential tradition within modern paganism,” notes author and High Priest Jason Mankey.

Although Wicca was not a direct continuation of ancient Celtic religion, it does incorporate many of the same land-based themes. As one of the many offshoots of neopaganism, it resembles the old ways by recognizing the classic elements of earth, water, air, fire, and aether (spirit). Wiccan rituals are often held outdoors, reinforcing the link to nature. Focus is placed on the earthly cycles of birth, growth, death, and renewal, rather than abstract ideas. While there is no agreed-upon system of ethics among the various groups, most follow the Rede: “Do what ye will, and harm none.”

“British Traditional Wicca, practiced today in North America, shares many traits with Celtic culture and mythology,” notes author Christa Avampato in her book *The*

Celtic Diaspora. In addition to the practice of seasonal festivals from old Irish and Scottish traditions, Wicca sparked a renewed interest in sacred landscapes such as wells and groves. Deities associated with older mythologies, particularly goddess traditions, are often revisited in an attempt to restore meaning to ancient ways. “Modern-day Wiccans, and particularly young women who practice, are rediscovering this rich Celtic history and making it a potent part of their everyday lives,” claims Avampato.

In the modern world, these practices also take on ecological significance. For many, Wicca is tied to environmental awareness and a sense of responsibility toward the land and its sacred landmarks. “Many of the wells in Ireland are keys to our heritage, with folklore and mythology embedded in them,” says Sarai Humble, head of the Irish community-based organization “All is Well,” which “welcomes newcomers into the old ways of the land.” It is efforts like these, from a range of organizations, that seek to restore a connection to the natural world and ultimately, to a rich heritage.

What began as a connection to the land gave rise to forms of spirituality that were never separate from daily life. Though these practices were suppressed and redefined over time, the connection was never fully lost. What reemerged in modern times is not really something new at all, but something remembered and brought forth again by the same ground that first gave it life.



Use code **CELTICLIFE20**
for 20% off all new annual
memberships

TRAVEL TO SCOTLAND WITH US IN 2026

JUNE 16 - 23

St Kilda and the Magic of Hebrides aboard the *Hebridean Princess*

AUGUST 30 - SEPTEMBER 5

Gardens of the Scottish Borders



**NATIONAL
TRUST *for*
SCOTLAND**

Foundation
USA

Protecting Scotland's heritage and natural beauty today and for future generations

T: 617.227.7500 / E: mail@ntsusa.org / ntsusa.org



Dr. Mike Robinson



Dr. Mike Robinson (OBE) is chair of Stop Climate Chaos Scotland (SCCS), a coalition of more than 70 organizations campaigning together on climate change. The coalition came together in 2007 to provide a strong civil society voice to feed into the development of Scotland's first ever law on climate change, the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009. Since the 2009 and 2019 Climate Acts were passed, SCCS has campaigned for action to deliver on national commitments, and for Scotland to play its fair part in achieving international goals and tackling climate injustice. Dr. Robinson is also chief executive of the Royal Scottish Geographical Society.

What are your roots, and where do you currently reside?

I'm lucky to come from Perth, where I still live and work. Not only is it a beautiful place, with the mighty River Tay running through it, but the city was the historical capital of Scotland and a stronghold of the Picts. It is also the geographical heart of the

country. The local area is also blessed with amazing landscapes and wildlife. I'm very interested in Perth's Pictish heritage and have been carrying out a load of research on that. It was the seat of the southern Picts, as well as the coronation point of monarchs, right up until at least King James I. Scone Abbey formerly housed the Stone of Destiny, on which Scottish kings were traditionally crowned.

When and why did you get involved with SCCS?

Probably the main thing that drove me to get involved in the climate movement was because, coming from Perth, I have a very innate understanding of the quality of the environment and I'm really keen to keep protecting it - both for myself and for future generations. I saw the need for action and leadership in climate change. People weren't talking about it enough, despite recognizing it as an issue since the 1980s. It really needed a step up in action, more commitment, and there was a huge latent public

concern over climate change but not a clear place to gather and coalesce around the issue. That was why Stop Climate Chaos Scotland was formed. It really provided that rallying point and a place where people could come together to learn more and share their concerns.

What are your roles & responsibilities there?

I've been SCCS chair twice and a trustee for most of the past 20 years. It is quite hands-on because it's a fairly small charity. It has always been a coalition, so it has been a representative body for anything from 50 different charities to the 75 members we have today. My own work includes chairing and coordinating a board and managing responsibilities, inputting to policy and media work, and also, I like to think, providing vision, learning, training and networking for the whole of the climate community in Scotland. My role also includes representing Scotland on the international stage - such as going to



the European Parliament for a citizens' agora on climate change back in 2010, where I represented the whole of civic society in Scotland - so helping others in other countries develop what they're doing on climate, hopefully encouraging others to get involved and sharing what Scotland was up to.

What are the challenges involved?

Getting action - not promises. And also realizing that the science isn't enough, overcoming some of the toxicity surrounding environmental policies, focusing on solutions, not problems, and all the while trying to maintain your own mental health.

What are the rewards?

The rewards are many and varied. First of all, there is the success when policy actually does kick in - everything from the 2009 Climate Change Act to commitments on the likes of road mileage reduction targets, electrification of rail and road transport, air passenger duty, intro of a climate justice fund and loss and damage commitments at COP26 and COP27. The other big success is seeing sectors of society empowered by the legislation and the momentum around climate change, seeing the positivity in Scotland to actually embrace change and innovate and lead the world, I think that's really positive. And it's also working alongside the many policy and political minds in the NGO community. I think all of those things are successes.

What is the organization's core mandate?

SCCS's focus is on action, both nationally and internationally, and the ability to win change. The coalition has

contributed to Scottish policies and initiatives across many areas over the years, including transport, housing, climate justice, just transition, and loss and damage support.

How has it evolved over time?

Over the 20 years since SCCS was founded, we have grown to represent a fifth to two fifths of the Scottish population. Our focus has shifted from large-scale targets to specific actions in every sector. What is needed has also changed over this period and so has the urgency. Now, although we have achieved a lot in two decades, we still have a huge amount to achieve - and only 20 more years left to do it.

Why is the work you and your peers doing more vital than ever?

When you're talking about the biggest issue to ever face humanity, how could it be anything else? And we're rapidly running out of time to change the direction of travel.

From your perspective, are young Scottish people more "green friendly" than previous generations?

Yes, absolutely, I think young people today are more aware of environmental issues than previous generations, but they are also mystified and frustrated. Considering that so many people seem to understand climate change and the science is unequivocal, they don't really understand why we aren't sorting it out. This was especially true in 2019, after massive school strikes and calls for action from young people. They felt like it was a real kick in the teeth when their efforts saw no substantial changes or shift in momentum.

How can the general public get more involved?

Everybody needs to understand climate change and the solutions as much as they possibly can. They need to keep championing it, for instance by picking a solution they like and promoting it - the issue needs lots of solutions. People can join any one of the 75 member bodies in the SCCS coalition and help drive the agenda that way. Or they can just literally make sure their local politicians know

this is an issue they are concerned about. These are all invaluable ways of pushing for action.

Is the Scottish government doing enough to support eco-sustainability initiatives?

No, not recently anyway. They have done a certain amount over the past 20 years, but in recent times, there has been a complete lack of direction, vision and leadership. I think this has sort of filtered out because of a backlash from small groups against some of the net zero agenda, leaving ministers a bit rudderless. So no, the Scottish Government has not done enough and needs to do more. They need to lead the changes that are necessary, not follow at the pace of the most reluctant.

How has the internet (& AI) had an impact on what you are doing?

I don't have a lot of good things to say about either the internet or artificial intelligence. I think digital tools have cheapened communications and coordination and have made it much harder to reach people due to algorithms making it tricky to break through to certain groups. This means it's difficult to counter the spread of misinformation. There is a huge number of bots and a load of toxicity online, which has driven polarization, along with algorithms that keep repeating what we already know. So, the issues have become much more divisive. To be more successful in getting the climate messages across, it is really important that we break down these divisions and reach a consensus. Climate breakdown is too big an issue. It affects everybody, and we all need to play a part in helping to solve it.

What's on SCCS's agenda for the rest of 2026?

We need to make up for a slowdown in climate action. This government is going to be vital, and we cannot afford to miss another four or five years of delivery, so SCCS's work will focus on housing, agriculture, transport, energy and, I believe, education and skills. SCCS is the biggest coalition ever formed in Scotland, but I think we need to go bigger still and drive the change we all need to see.

the cottages Ireland



Your dream cottage awaits

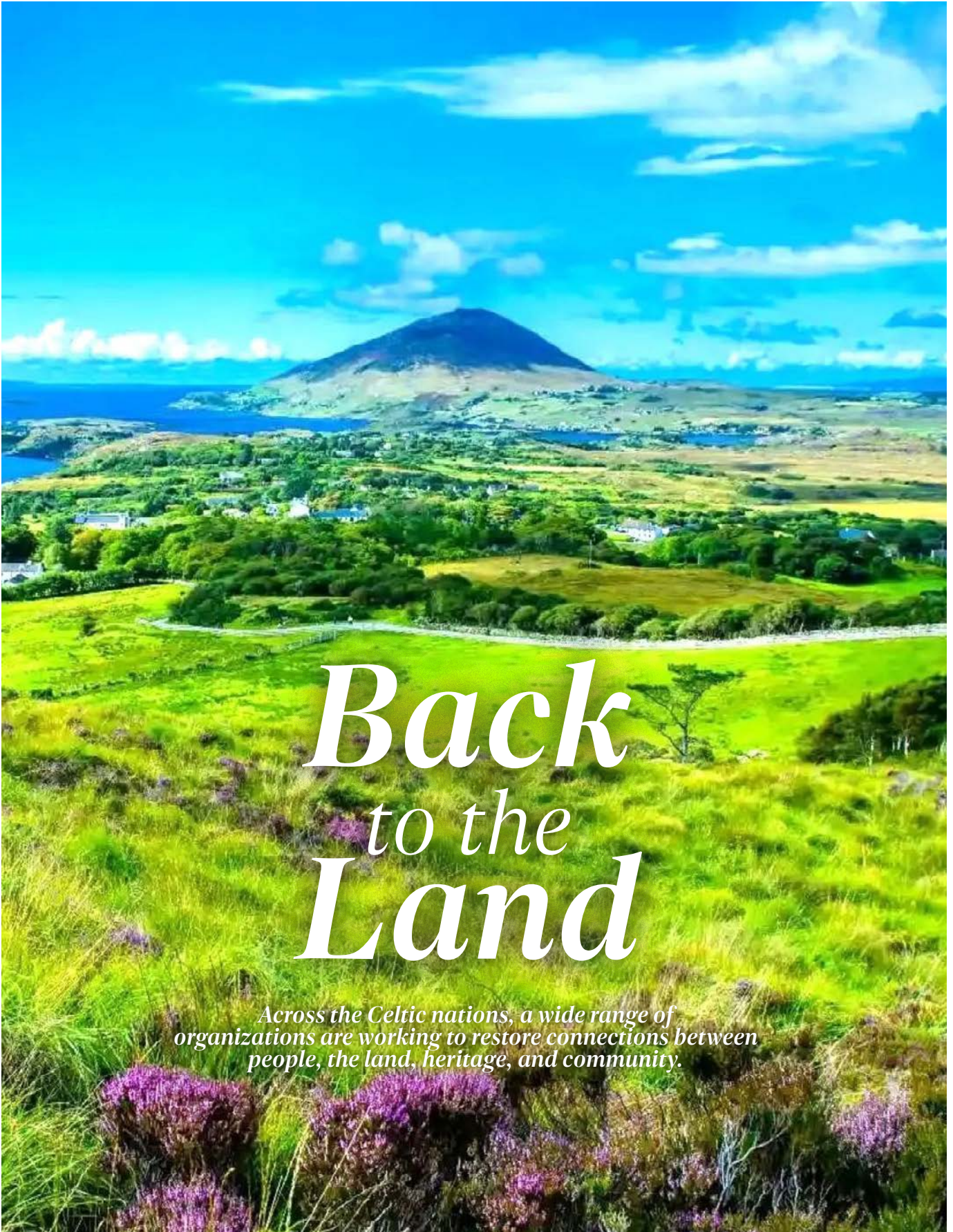
Three hundred year old thatched cottages in a private hamlet like
setting on the beach on Ireland's East Coast

Come and explore Dublin and the Boyne Valley



www.cottages-ireland.com
info@cottages-ireland.com





Back to the Land

Across the Celtic nations, a wide range of organizations are working to restore connections between people, the land, heritage, and community.



From rewilding projects in the Scottish Highlands to organic farming in Ireland and woodland conservation on the Isle of Man, environmental organizations have helped create awareness toward land-based legacy and environmental responsibility. While some focus on protecting ecosystems and wildlife, others promote the preservation of language, culture, and traditional ways of life. Together, they represent a broader movement that recognizes the importance of both sustainability and cultural heritage in an increasingly disconnected modern world.

Ireland

Hedgerows Ireland

Hedgerows Ireland was founded in response to the widespread removal of hedgerows in rural Ireland. The organization works to protect one of the country's most overlooked ecological and cultural resources by promoting traditional hedge-laying skills and educating people about the important role hedgerows play in biodiversity, carbon storage, water protection, and farming. Through workshops and education, they encourage a renewed respect for landscape boundaries that have been a fixture of the Irish countryside for generations. hedgerows.ie

The Organic Centre

Located in County Leitrim, The Organic

Centre is a charity and social enterprise committed to increasing knowledge about organic growing, biodiversity, sustainable energy, and food sovereignty. Located a short drive from the Wild Atlantic Way, the organization offers classes and workshops in gardening, food production, renewable energy, and heritage skills, while also maintaining lovely orchards and gardens for tours and visits. Its mandate encourages a reconnection with the land through hands-on environmental responsibility and “empowering people to grow with nature.”

theorganiccentre.ie

Scotland

Trees for Life

Founded in 1993, Trees for Life is one of Scotland's foremost rewilding organizations, working to restore the ancient Caledonian Forest and revitalize ecosystems across the Highlands. In addition to planting trees and bringing back missing species, the charity promotes community involvement through volunteer programs, education, and creative conservation initiatives. Its long-term vision is more than ecological recovery, however; it's about rekindling the relationship between people and the Scottish landscape.

treesforlife.org.uk

Community Land Scotland

Community Land Scotland supports local groups who seek greater control over the land and buildings where they live and work. Representing area landowners across Scotland, the organization seeks to support existing and emerging community landowners, act as the voice for these groups, and influence policy and legislation. Supporting community ownership that transforms local economies, addresses depopulation, and restores nature, the representative body is a significant driver of sustainable development across Scotland. communitylandscotland.org.uk

Wales

Tir Coed

Tir Coed helps reconnect people with woodlands through educational programmes on well-being and all things outdoors within the regions of Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion, Pembrokeshire, and Powys. Offering hands-on training in a natural environment, the organization works with individuals of all ages and backgrounds in traditional woodcrafts, conservation techniques, and sustainable land practices. They also support rural communities seeking to integrate with the natural environment and create job opportunities for the disadvantaged. tircoed.org.uk

The Landworkers' Alliance

The Landworkers' Alliance is a farmer and grower-led organization that advocates for small-scale farming, agroecology, and local food webs. Representing farmers, foresters, and food producers, the alliance supports sustainable agriculture and environmental responsibility within local communities. It also aids members' interests through education, campaigns, and policy work that seeks to limit industrial systems of exploitation and replace them with reciprocity and connection to the land as the foundation of food, culture, and community life.

landworkersalliance.org.uk

Cornwall

The Eden Project

Located in Cornwall, the Eden Project is one

of the UK's best-known environmental initiatives. Built on a former clay mine with no soil or plants, it is now home to large biome gardens representing ecosystems from around the world. The site has gone far beyond horticulture to include education, conservation, community outreach, and sustainability projects since opening in 2001. Through exhibitions, events, and research, the Eden Project inspires visitors to recognize the relationship between people, food, climate, and the natural world. edenproject.com

Cornwall Wildlife Trust

Founded in 1962, Cornwall Wildlife Trust seeks to conserve the region's natural habitats, including woodlands, wetlands, rivers, and coastal ecosystems. The organization manages nature reserves throughout Cornwall while also supporting marine conservation, environmental education, and volunteer projects. Through its work and community outreach, the trust seeks to build stronger connections between people and the landscapes that are key components of Cornwall's natural and cultural identity.

cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk

Isle of Man

Manx Wildlife Trust

Founded in 1973, the Manx Wildlife Trust works to preserve the Isle of Man's many natural landscapes, wildlife, and marine environments through conservation, education, and community involvement. The organization manages nature reserves across the island, including wetlands, coastal habitats, and woodlands open to visitors for exploration. Through volunteer programs, citizen science projects, and public outreach, the trust seeks to inspire others to act for nature and create more spaces for wildlife. mwt.im

Isle of Man Woodland Trust

The Isle of Man Woodland Trust is dedicated to protecting and expanding the island's woodlands while encouraging public access to new and existing green spaces. Working with volunteers, schools, and local communities, the trust plants a variety of trees and also focuses on restoration and environmen-



tal education projects across the island. Its efforts reflect and encourage awareness of the importance of woodlands not only for biodiversity and climate resilience but also for community wellbeing. woodlandtrust.im

Bretagne

Bretagne Vivante

Founded in 1959, Bretagne Vivante is one of Brittany's leading environmental organizations, dedicated to protecting the region's coastlines, wetlands, and natural habitats. With projects across Bretagne, the group manages nature reserves, conducts scientific research, and promotes environmental education through community programs and volunteer recruitment. Its history reveals a long-standing effort to preserve the landscapes and ecosystems that comprise both the natural environment and the cultural identity of the Breton region.

bretagne-vivante.org

Galicia

Adega

Founded in 1974, Adega is one of Galicia's oldest environmental organizations with a long-standing mission to protect the region's rivers, forests, coastlines, and rural areas. The group focuses on public education, urban planning, waste management, and sustainable living, while challenging industrial projects seen as harmful to regional ecosystems and communities. Through campaigns, research, and activism, Adega is committed

to strengthening the connections between environmental protection, cultural identity, and Galician landscapes. adega.gal

Canada

Highland Village Museum

Located in Iona, Cape Breton, The Highland Village Museum is a living history site dedicated to preserving the language, traditions, and everyday life of Nova Scotia's Gaels. Visitors can enjoy the restored homes, gardens, livestock, music, and storytelling, and experience how land, community, and culture were closely linked in rural Gaelic life. The museum also promotes the preservation of the Gaelic language and offers programs to keep heritage alive for future generations. highlandvillage.novascotia.ca

USA

The Celtic Heritage Foundation

Based in Mount Vernon, Washington, the Celtic Heritage Foundation is committed to all things Celtic. Traditions, languages, arts, genealogy, and history are shared through educational programs, community events, and cultural outreach, with information and resources provided for each Celtic nation. Best known for organizing the annual Skagit Valley Highland Games, the foundation also supports workshops, performances, and heritage projects that highlight Celtic cultural identity to carry forward a living and evolving legacy. celtichf.org



"The Original Blairsville Scottish Festival & Highland Games since 2002"

JUNE 6-7, 2026

2 Days of Scottish Fun & Festivities

Athletic Competitions • Live Demonstrations

Live Entertainment • Pipe & Drum Bands • Food Vendors

Artisan Vendors • Activities for Kids

at the

Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds *in* Hiawassee, GA

1311 MUSIC HALL RD, HIAWASSEE, GA 30546



THE ANNUAL CÈILIDH
will be held at Hamilton Gardens
JUNE 5 | 6PM-8:30PM

pronounced
KAY • LEE
a traditional
Scottish party



FOR MORE DETAILS:
(833) 272-6884
GaMtnScottishFestival.org





Ron Strathdee

I am Scottish by birth and lived in central Scotland until my late 20s when romance and marriage to a Manx girl brought me to the Isle of Man. It has been my home now for forty years.

I trained and worked as a Deck Officer in the Merchant Navy, and it was a desire to record my voyages and places visited that started my interest in photography. That interest was reawakened about 12 years ago as a need for a hobby that would get me out-and-about in the stunning Manx countryside and capture its natural beauty for others to appreciate.

As the majority of my work is of landscapes on the Isle of Man there is the

challenge of taking a view that may be familiar to people and making it unique, or even just different for the normal. I can work to get a different point of view of a scene that will attract the viewer's attention or let nature decide on how it will look with her paintbox of the time of day or time of year. Though being on an Island in the Irish Sea the main challenge - or benefit - is the changing weather that is thrown our way.

Planning and taking the time to compose a photo are important, however I will admit that some of my best photos come from luck in being in the right place at the right moment which means always having a camera with me.

My greatest reward is in doing astrophotography: the Isle of Man is home to over 26 recognized Dark Skies sights which makes the nighttime photography here clear of light pollution. Even more rewarding is simply stepping away from the camera and looking up at the millions of visible stars without a sound.

This small Island has all the scenery needed to inspire, rolling hills, a mountain, rugged coastline, sheer cliffs, flat northern plains, and a sprinkling of castles. Let's not forget wallabies too! Wrap all this in ever changing weather and you have it all.

WWW.DIGITALMANPHOTOGRAPHY.COM







Albannach



Haggis X-1

31 st ANNUAL GLASGOW LANDS SCOTTISH FESTIVAL

LOOK PARK, NORTHAMPTON, MASSACHUSETTS

JULY 18, 2026 - 9 A.M. - 5 P.M. • ENTERTAINMENT UNTIL 8:30 P.M.

Highland Dance Competition, Heavy Athletics, Pipe & Drum Competition, Massed Bands,
Clan Tents, Historic Highlanders, Children's Games, Whisky Tasting, Scottish Food and
vendors, beer, wine and mead, harpers, weavers, water spray park.

ENTERTAINMENT IN THE CELTIC PUB TENT FEATURING
ALBANNACH, HAGGIS X-1, SEVEN NATIONS, PIPE DREAM

RAIN OR SHINE



Seven Nations



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



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

Email:
glasgowlands@hotmail.com

Co-Sponsored By:





Paul Lewin

www.paullewin.co.uk

@lewin.paul

I was born and raised in Stockport near Manchester in the UK. My Mum and Dad were originally from Merseyside and my Granny from North Wales. I currently live in West Penwith, the western most tip of Cornwall.

As long back as I can remember drawing and painting held a fascination for me. I have strong memories as a child of my father, who was a textile designer, showing me drawing techniques that opened possibilities for representing the world around me.

Representing the world around me with paint is still important but it is a different world seen through mature eyes. My appreciation of the fragile beauty of the natural world has intensified and the challenge of doing justice to the powerful landscapes I inhabit continue to challenge me day to day.

A good painting is one that gives you just enough and leaves space for the viewer's imagination to fill in with their own experience and thoughts. A few years ago at the opening of one of my solo exhibition's a family came and told me that I had "altered the way that they view the coast of Cornwall", they continued by telling me that when they go for a walk now, they often exclaim "oh look, there is a Paul Lewin!". It struck me that through an artistic eye a good painting can highlight a subject that may go unnoticed to most people and by "naming" it our appreciation for the world around us can be enhanced.

Cornwall changed my life around completely. I found my subject within its profound landscape. There was a raw elemental charge that powered my creativity when I first arrived in 1989, and it continues to do so to this day.

I enjoy the sense that its wild weather always has the upper hand and that human beings are very much subservient to the landscape, a commonality that connects all the Celtic fringes of Europe. Cornwall's artistic community is also inspiring, being a creative is part of the social fabric down in this far western tip of the UK, nobody bats an eyelid when I walk out to the cliffs with all my painting gear to earn a living!

Cornwall has a vibrant and varied contemporary arts scene built on a rich history of traditional and modernist art. The Tate Gallery in St Ives and the numerous commercial galleries, as well as the art college in Falmouth ensure that it continues to be an exciting place for creatives.





Sydney Mines Highland Games

Sunday, August 16, 2026
11am - 6pm

FREE FAMILY FESTIVAL FOR ALL AGES



ALL ARE
WELCOME!



150 Pitt St. Sydney Mines, NS

www.sydneymineshighlandgames.com

Celtic Classic

HIGHLAND GAMES & FESTIVAL

A CELEBRATION
OF CULTURE,
AND CELTIC PRIDE



September 25 - 27

DOWNTOWN BETHLEHEM

www.celticfest.org

87TH EMBRO HIGHLAND GAMES!

JULY 1, 2026

FAMILY FUN WITH A SCOTTISH FLAIR

JOIN US AT ONTARIO'S OLDEST HIGHLAND GAMES!

NEW! International Tug-of-War Competition!



EMBROHIGHLANDGAMES.CA



HOST OF THE
2026 CSAF MEN'S MASTERS CHAMPIONSHIPS



20th annual
Greater Moncton
Highland Games &
Scottish Festival

June 9-13, 2026



Heavy Athletics
Highland Dance
Pipes & Drums
HEMA Sword Fighting
Agricultural Displays
Ceilidh Tent
& so much more!



WWW.MONCTONHIGHLANDGAMES.COM

Funded by the
Government
of Canada

Financé par le
gouvernement
du Canada

Canada

New Brunswick
CANADA

MONCTON

Atlantic
Lottery

Riverview

MIDLAND

Loto
Atlantique
19'



Make It Your Tradition



Maxville, Ontario
Jul 31 - Aug 1, 2026

Piping • Highland Dancing
Heavy Events • Scottish Fiddling
And the best in Celtic Entertainment

Home of the North American
Pipe Band Championships™



(613) 527-2876 | GlengarryHighlandGames.com

Ontario



Friday Tattoo headliners,
Award-winning
RUM RAGGED
from Newfoundland



2026 Guest of Honour
KELLI TROTTER
North American
Fiddler's Hall of Fame
Ottawa Valley
Country Music Hall of Fame
Glengarry Celtic
Music Hall of Fame



VIRGINIA SCOTTISH GAMES



**SEPT. 5-6
2026**

THE PLAINS, VIRGINIA
WWW.VASCOTTISHGAMES.ORG



SAVE THE DATE

FESTIVAL OF CAPE BRETON FIDDLING



Join us **August 15th & 16th** at the stunning **St. Ann's Gaelic College**

Enjoy a full weekend of music, dance, and community!
Bring your instrument, your dancing shoes, and your love for Cape Breton tradition.
This is a weekend you won't want to miss!

Highlights & Experiences

Saturday's Events:

- Live Concert & Family Dance
- Open Jam Session (all musicians welcome!)

Sunday's Events:

- Breakfast for overnight guests
- Workshops: Fiddle, Piano & Stepdance
- Special Fiddle Lecture by Stan Chapman
- Delicious BBQ lunch available at the canteen



Celtic Culture *in the* Canadian Rockies!

Just one hour from Calgary, Alberta

**September
4, 5 & 6, 2026**

Friday | Taste of the Highlands

Saturday | Highland Games, Canmore Ceildh

Sunday | Highland Games, Evening Hooly



Events
& Tickets

canmorehighlandgames.ca



CELEBRATE HALLOWEEN **SAMHAIN** IN LIMERICK, IRELAND

This October, celebrate the ancient festival of Samhain in Ireland, the birthplace of Halloween, and make lifelong memories filled with tradition, music, and dance.

OCTOBER 22-26



COSTUMES • PARADES • STORYTELLING
SAMHAIN.LUMENSTREETTHEATRE.COM

OCTOBER 27-31

THE BRENDAN & MARTIN **Mulvihill** TRADITIONAL MUSIC WEEK IN GLIN

WORKSHOPS • DANCING • CONCERTS
GLINTRADWEEK.COM



THE WOLFE TONES Phenomenon book by Alex Fell

available on
kindle

- a readable history of Ireland ballads & censorship

"a must read" Irish Voice

www.omahonys.ie



July 25 & 26

- Pipes & Drums
- Food Trucks
- Highland Dance
- Marketplace
- Heavy Games
- Beer Garden



For more information please visit:
www.sphg.ca



79th Annual Pacific Northwest SCOTTISH HIGHLAND GAMES & CLAN GATHERING

July 25 and 26

Expo Center
45224 – 284th Avenue SE
Enumclaw, Washington



**TICKETS
ON SALE
NOW**
www.SSHGA.org

17th Annual Bitterroot Celtic Games & Gathering



August 15 & 16, 2026

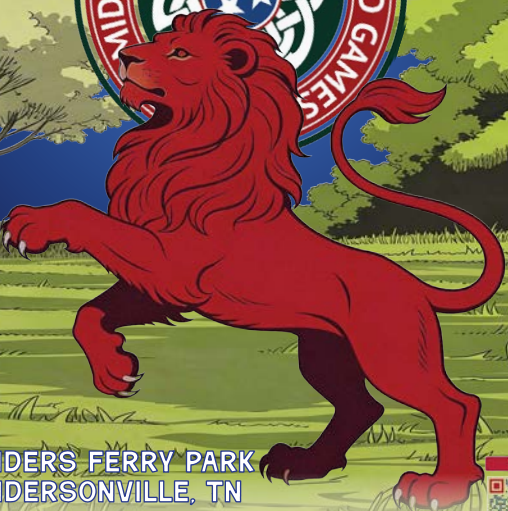
Daly Mansion
Hamilton, Montana

Tickets available on-line or at the gate.
www.bcg.org

LIVE CELTIC BANDS • ATHLETIC EVENTS • BAGPIPE COMPETITION
SCOTTISH ARTISANS/FOOD • SCOTCH TASTINGS • KIDS ACTIVITIES • MORE

September 12+13

2026 A CELTIC CELEBRATION OF 250 YEARS OF THE USA

**SANDERS FERRY PARK
HENDERSONVILLE, TN**

FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT MIDTENNAMES.COM



IGNITE YOUR
Scottish Spirit!

NEW HAMPSHIRE
HIGHLAND GAMES & FESTIVAL

SEPT. 18 - 20
LOON MTN RESORT
LINCOLN, NH

BUY TICKETS NOW:
NHSCOT.ORG



NHSCOT



KYLA COBBLER
GONE ROGUE
Across Canada

NEW SHOWS JUST ADDED!

TICKETS AT KYLACOBBLER.COM

OUTBACK PRESENTS Barking Ventures



**CHIEFS, CHIEFTAINS
& ARMIGERS**
Custom Personal Crests



WWW.CRESTBADGES.COM

For a Celtic Experience Like No Other

Come to
SALADO TEXAS

NOVEMBER 13-15



Games

Dance

Scottish Gathering & Highland Games
6th



The Pictou Bee Press

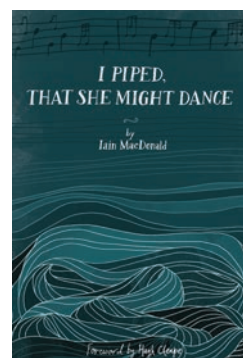
Specializing in
Scottish-themed
high quality books,
t-shirts, and pins
from Nova Scotia for all ages.

Bilingual books with audio for Gaelic learners also available!

www.pictoubeeypress.com

DISCOVER THE STORY OF QUEEN VICTORIA'S PIPER

ANGUS MACKAY (1813-1859) WAS FIRST PIPER TO THE SOVEREIGN, APPOINTED BY QUEEN VICTORIA. MACKAY, WHO IS ONE OF THE MOST SIGNIFICANT FIGURES IN THE HISTORY OF SCOTTISH MUSIC, DIED AFTER A LONG BATTLE WITH PHYSICAL AND MENTAL ILLNESS. THIS MOVING, FIRST-PERSON ACCOUNT OF HIS LIFE TRACES HIS LONG JOURNEY, FROM HUMBLE ORIGINS ON THE ISLE OF RAASAY TO THE HEIGHT OF FAME IN HER MAJESTY'S SERVICE.



AVAILABLE THROUGH
MAJOR BOOKSTORES
AND FROM
WWW.BLACKWATER.PRESS
AND
WWW.REELPIPES.COM

"I LOVED THIS BOOK ... IT EMPATHETICALLY CAPTURES THE TRIUMPHS AND TRIBULATIONS OF MACKAY'S LIFE..."
- DR. JACK TAYLOR, PAST PRESIDENT, PIOBAIREACHD SOCIETY

"REVEALING, SENSITIVELY WRITTEN AND EMINENTLY READABLE."
- JOHN PURSER, AUTHOR OF SCOTLAND'S MUSIC

"IT'S AN ENJOYABLE AND EVOCATIVE READ..."
- KAREN MCAULAY, ROYAL CONSERVATOIRE OF SCOTLAND

NEW PUBLICATION

Propaganda and History in the Medieval Celtic Lands Interrogating a Paradigm



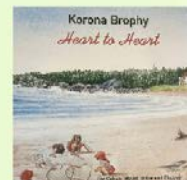
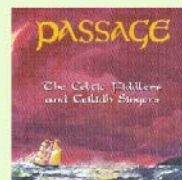
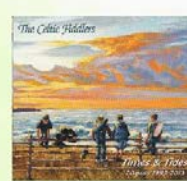
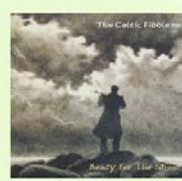
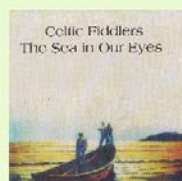
EDITED BY
BEN GUY AND PATRICK WADDEN

'Propaganda' has been a potent label to apply to texts written by the Celtic-speaking peoples of the Middle Ages for nearly a century. It carries emotive connotations for modern readers and encourages us to apply certain critical strategies when reading the texts. The propaganda paradigm has helped us understand the importance of interpreting texts in their own historical contexts, and discern how contemporary political views could shape them. But to what extent is 'propaganda' an appropriate description of the many texts that have been characterised in that way? This book offers the first thoroughgoing analysis of the propaganda paradigm as it has been applied to medieval texts written in Irish, Welsh and Latin across the Celtic-speaking countries. It presents theoretical reflections as well as key case studies, covering material from the early to the late Middle Ages. It is hoped that the book will sharpen our methodological awareness of a paradigm that has become foundational for the study of medieval Celtic texts and their roles in society.

www.celt.dias.ie

THE CELTIC FIDDLERS

Shop for great books of
Irish/Newfoundland/Scottish/English
music & CDs from
The Celtic Fiddlers, Newfoundland



Books contain history of the pieces; bio of composers; teaching tips;
bowings for strings; chords for guitar, piano and bass;
lyrics for vocals and full arrangements of choral and string ensemble pieces

Suitable for Grades 4-12 +
Post-Secondary

Great for
Students & Teachers!

WWW.THECELTICFIDDLERS.CA

PLAY BOLD, LAUGH LOUDER, AND GIFT SMARTER

Gifts for fiddlers, makers & music-soaked souls.

FiddleBling

WWW.FIDDLEBLING.COM



An Comunn Gàidhealach Ameireaganach

The American Scottish Gaelic Society

ACGA promotes and advances Scottish Gaelic language and culture in North America. We host the Grandfather Mountain Gaelic Song and Language Week, the US National Mòd, and online events. We share learner resources and publish *An Naidheachd Againne*, a bilingual Gàidhlig-English newsletter.

Grandfather Mountain Song and Language Week 2026
July 5th-10th in Banner Elk, NC. For more information or to register visit: <https://acgamerica.org/grandfather-mountain/>



Membership in ACGA is open to anyone with an interest in studying, learning, or preserving the Scottish Gaelic language, music, and culture. Join today at: bit.ly/3JvIUvF

 acgamerica.org
 facebook.com/ACGAGaelic
 [@acgamerica](https://www.instagram.com/acgamerica)

WWW.OIDEASGAEL.IE

Ireland's language and culture



 **Oideas Gael** 

Tel: +353 (0)74 97 30 248
oifig@oideasgael.ie
Co. Donegal, Éire

2026 COURSES INCLUDE
Irish Language (all levels),
Hill Walking, Archaeology,
Literature, Environment,
Geology, Painting, Weaving,
Flute & Whistle, Harp...

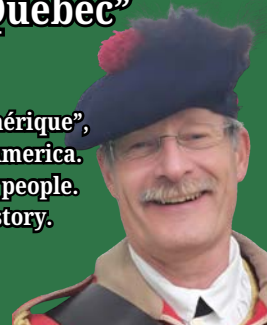


Visit Quebec City and immerse yourself in "The Scottish history of Quebec" walking Tour.

Quebec is the heart of the "l'accent d'Amérique", the bastion of French history in North America. Hiding within its roots are the Scottish people. Walk the streets and discover their story.



ToursChardon.com



GET YOUR GUIDE

Listed on
GetYourGuide

www.getyourguide.com



My Land

By Thomas Davis (1844)

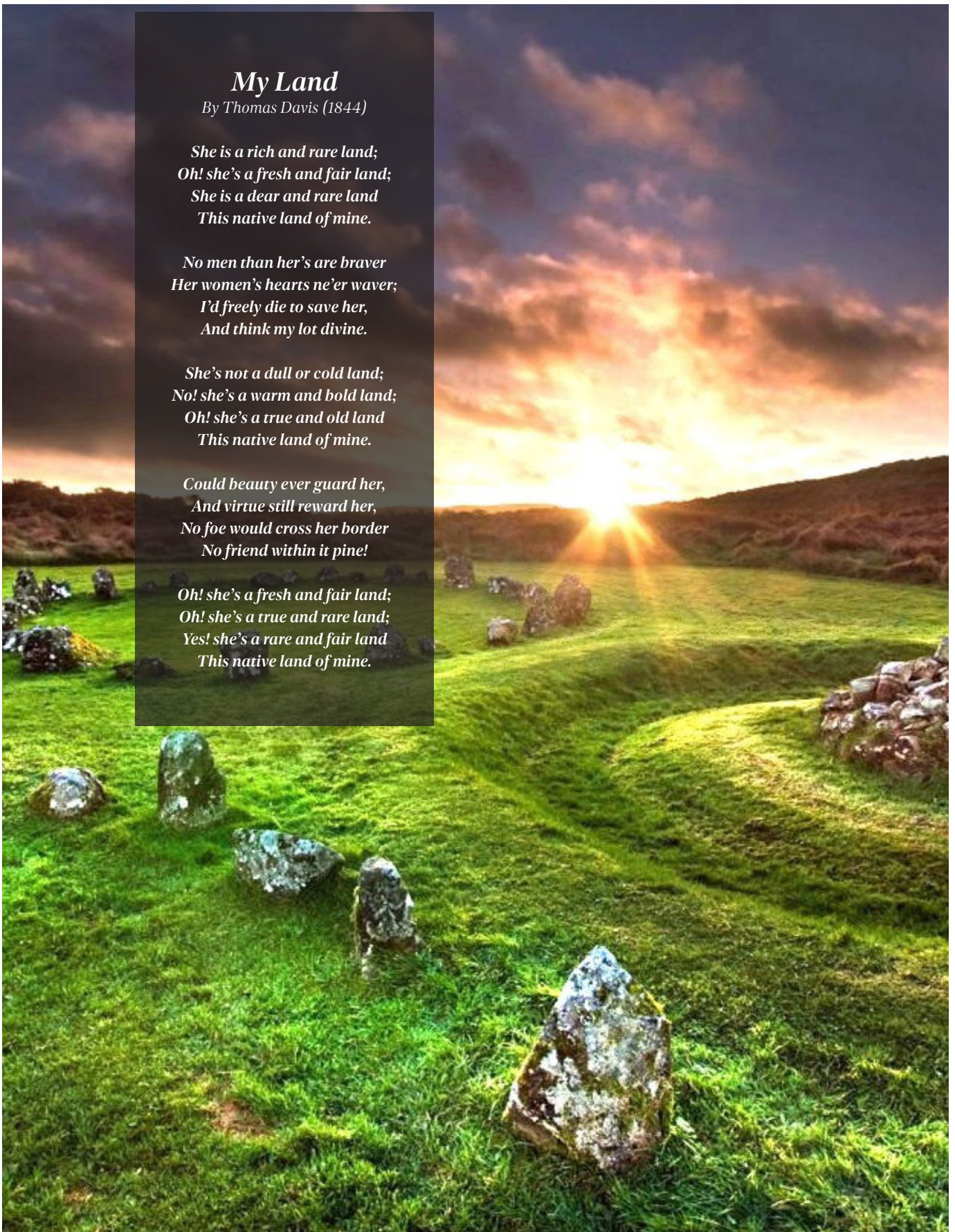
*She is a rich and rare land;
Oh! she's a fresh and fair land;
She is a dear and rare land
This native land of mine.*

*No men than her's are braver
Her women's hearts ne'er waver;
I'd freely die to save her,
And think my lot divine.*

*She's not a dull or cold land;
No! she's a warm and bold land;
Oh! she's a true and old land
This native land of mine.*

*Could beauty ever guard her,
And virtue still reward her,
No foe would cross her border
No friend within it pine!*

*Oh! she's a fresh and fair land;
Oh! she's a true and rare land;
Yes! she's a rare and fair land
This native land of mine.*



A photograph of four students walking along a paved path on a university campus. From left to right: a man in a light green polo shirt and khaki pants, a woman in a teal dress, a woman in a black dress, and a woman in a black top and jeans carrying a laptop. They are walking past a large tree and a modern building with large windows.

Irish Studies Program

www.fairfield.edu/irishstudies

FAIRFIELD, CT

Fairfield University, located in southwestern Connecticut only 75 minutes northeast of New York City, offers a dynamic program in Irish Studies. With a significant Irish-American representation among its students and alumni, interest in Ireland has characterized Fairfield for decades. This interest continues unabated today, as Irish people on both sides of the Atlantic have sought to resolve long-standing issues amidst an increasingly global economy. Fairfield's Irish Studies program enables students to investigate

Irish contributions to a wide range of disciplines, including literature, history, film, and art. Courses focus on the troubled history of the nation, its colonial and post-colonial significance, the difficult politics of Northern Ireland, and the inspired art and

literature that emerged from the turbulent Irish past. To complete the Irish Studies minor, students must complete a capstone research project in an area of their choice. Affiliated with the National University of Ireland, Fairfield's Irish Studies program, through study abroad in Galway, also allows students to take Irish-focused courses in archeology, economics, sociology, linguistics, and the Irish language. The program also offers on-site lectures, concerts, plays, and readings that complement the academic courses.



Fairfield
UNIVERSITY

College of Arts
& Sciences

19th Annual

Jamestown Regional

Celtic Festival and Gathering of the Clans

August 21 & 22, 2026 • 9 AM - 9:30 PM
Mayville Lakeside Park, Mayville, New York

Performers Include:

**TUATHA DEA • EMERALD ISLE
CELTIC CREEK • STEP N TIME
WATER HORSE • THE FIDDLE SESSION
CATCH N' RELEASE**

GATHERING OF THE CLANS • PIPE BANDS

SCOTTISH HEAVY ATHLETES

CELTIC & CRAFT VENDORS

CELTIC MUSIC • ALL KINDS OF GREAT FOOD

BEER & WINE GARDEN

SCOTTISH & IRISH DANCERS • CELTIC & CRAFT VENDORS

OLD FASHION FIDDLE SESSION • KIDS AREA W/ CLAN HUNT

**Purchase Your
Discounted Tickets
online at:**
www.96thhighlanders.com


The Villager
ELLICOTTVILLE • CHAUTAUQUE


Merritt
WINERY



SORRY NO PETS ALLOWED FOR INSURANCE REASONS
Plenty of shade trees and tents to escape the Sun & Heat