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# The Center for Irish Music

Late Spring 2007

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## Class Notes:

Dear Students and Families –

The Center for Irish Music is VERY excited to announce our NEW FALL LOCATION: **Paul & Sheila Wellstone Center for Community Building** run by Neighborhood House in St. Paul's "District del Sol". It is very conveniently located just across the river from downtown St. Paul near to Robert Street and Cesar Chavez Street at 179 Robie Street, St. Paul MN 55107. The facility is very new and beautiful with **ample free parking in an attached, covered accessible ramp**. A map is on the last page of this newsletter for your reference.

Neighborhood House is a multicultural, multilingual community center with programming for all ages and open doors for all people. Their mission is to build doorways of opportunity for vibrant, diverse communities. Their vision is to be the community-building resource for an increasingly diverse Minnesota. Their values include: mutual enrichment, cultural diversity, tradition, service, life-long learning and holistic well-being.

We hope you will agree that this location will be a great fit for our programming. You can get a preview of the space when you attend the Young Irish Musicians Weekend. The Friday night ceili (June 22) and Saturday night concert (June 23) will be held at the Paul & Sheila Wellstone Center. We are bringing the BEST of Irish traditional music right to you.

The Center for Irish Music is passionate about our art and our mission – to hand down traditional Irish music to the next generation of musicians in the Twin Cities. Our new location will invigorate our curriculum as we will be able to expand and deepen our offerings and administer our program in the way that best fits you, our student community. We intend to announce our fall programming at the Young Irish Musicians Weekend, June 22-24, 2007.

Join us in June, join us in September - - - join us any time! It's an exciting time to be Irish in Minnesota. We look forward to our continued strengthening of the Irish cultural community in the Twin Cities - with music at the heart of it.

Thanks, Kate Dowling

## Young Irish Musician's Weekend – June 22–24, 2007

### WE NEED YOUR HELP SPREADING THE WORD!



**If you can bring flyers, posters, etc around to your schools, churches and coffee shops, we'd appreciate it. We need to get the word out about our cultural-programming, the ceili and the concert. Please contact Kate Dowling and let her know how you might be able to help spread the word.**

The cultural-programming takes place on Saturday and Sunday June 23 & 24 at McNally-Smith College of Music at 19 E. Exchange Street, St. Paul.

- Intro to Irish Language (Gaeltacht MN)
- Intro to Irish History (Daithi Sproule)
- Intro to Irish Literature (Patrick O'Donnell)
- Intro to Tin Whistle (Kate Dowling)
- Intro to Step Dance (Cormac O'Se)
- Intro to Ceili (social) Dance (Mike Whalen).
- Travelling to Ireland as a Family – tips and ideas

These classes are available for \$25 each or \$100 for all.

**The Center for Irish Music**  
PO Box 7034, St Paul, MN 55107

Kate Dowling, Executive Director 651-493-2022

Web: [www.centerforirishmusic.org](http://www.centerforirishmusic.org) email: [irish.music@comcast.net](mailto:irish.music@comcast.net)

The Ceili with the **Doon Ceili Band** is on Friday night, June 22 at 7pm at the **Paul & Sheila Wellstone Center** run by Neighborhood House at 179 E. Robie Street St. Paul 55107. This is going to be a lot of fun and is a great family-friendly event. No dance experience necessary! Tickets are \$10 per person or \$35 per family.

The Concert is on Saturday, June 23 from 7-10pm also at the **Paul & Sheila Wellstone Center**. It features interviews and music with James Kelly, Tommy Martin, Paddy O'Brien, Daithi Sproule and Fintan Valley. Tickets are \$15 per person or \$45 per family.

This weekend is a great opportunity for many people, as it doesn't require an extended commitment, only a weekend. Come and give it a try - find out a lot about Irish culture. It works for kids and families and interested adults. All are welcome!

Tickets can be pre-purchased at Irish on Grand and are also available at the door. Please help us spread the word and pack the house! See our website for more information at [www.centerforirishmusic.org](http://www.centerforirishmusic.org)

**Classes – Concerts – Ceili – Discussions – Sessions – Student Performances – Sessions – Interviews – Info on Studying in Ireland – Family Programming – and more!**

**SEE THE WEBSITE FOR COMPLETE INFORMATION:  
[www.centerforirishmusic.org](http://www.centerforirishmusic.org)**

### Fleadh Ceol Results are in!



Ten students from the Center for Irish Music went down to St. Louis to compete in the annual Midwest Fleadh Ceol – official Irish Music competition. Winners who place first or second are eligible to compete at the all-Ireland Fleadh in Tullamore, Ireland in August.

Almost all students competed as soloists in their age categories. Of note were Rebecca Garrigan, 3<sup>rd</sup> place in Mandolin and Bonnie Hogan, 2<sup>nd</sup> place in Tin Whistle and Cait Gibbons, medal for Tir na Nog participation. The biggest event of the weekend however, was the larger group competitions: Groupa Ceol (ensemble) and Ceili Band (dance music). This was our first time presenting ourselves as a school – and the students certainly did St. Paul proud! It is a pretty intense evening starting at 7pm and going until midnight with band after band after band. Our school competed against groups from Chicago and St. Louis with up to 20 members in each group. Our nine-piece Groupa Ceol played the best they have ever played and took a very honorable 3<sup>rd</sup> place. The 8-piece ceili band did a fantastic job and came in 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Congratulations to all the students and teachers and parents. And thank you to our supporters without whom this trip and this competition would not have been possible. The 2008 Midwest Fleadh Ceol will take place in mid-May in Detroit.

### Center for Irish Music @ Grand Old Day, Sunday June 3

Come visit us in front of Irish on Grand on Sunday June 3 for tunes by the Hi Bs, the Center for Irish Music Adult Ensemble and the Center for Irish Music Youth Ensemble. It culminates in an open session – open to all Irish musicians. Stop on by and enjoy the tunes and the festivities. Irish on Grand is located near Grand & Lexington in St. Paul.

- 1-2pm Hi Bs
- 2-2:30pm Adult Ensemble
- 2:30-2pm Youth Ensemble
- 3-4pm Open Session

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## LAST FAMILY SESSION AT THE CONSERVATORY Tuesday, June 5 from 6:30–8pm

Mark your calendars! Bring your family and friends. The Center for Irish Music has a family session the first Tuesday of every month. It is part of our philosophy to offer our student community the opportunity to learn as a group by playing together and listening to each other, teachers and guest artists. This will be our LAST session at the Conservatory. We will take a break for the summer and our first family session of the fall will be Tuesday, October 2 from 6:30-8pm at Neighborhood House.

ALL CIM students with their families and friends are ALWAYS WELCOME and encouraged to attend. Let's finish off with a packed house and celebrate our music and our community.

## Set Dancing With Ger Butler June 8–10



Irish Dance Workshops with SPECIAL GUEST TEACHER dancemaster GERARD BUTLER from Co Roscommon, Ireland. GERARD BUTLER, of Co Roscommon, Ireland, began set dancing at fifteen and teaching shortly thereafter. He has conducted workshops in Northern Ireland, England, Scotland, Budapest, and throughout Ireland. Ger was a member of the Elphin Set Dancers, winners of 9 all Ireland titles, and has toured Asia and Europe as a Sean Nos dancer and percussionist with Dublin's Rhythm of the Dance. A brilliant dancer and engaging teacher, Ger brings great enthusiasm to his workshops. Come and learn a few steps – it's lots of fun! Kate & Jode Dowling will be there learning steps too!

### Schedule:

FRIDAY, June 8 - at Odd Fellows' Hall, Raymond & Hampden, St. Paul

7-8:30pm Irish Jive workshop (\$10)

8:30-11pm Ceili (dance); music by Legacy (\$10)

SATURDAY, June 9 - daytime activities at The Nickel Joint, Blair & Mackubin, St. Paul

11-11:45am Sean Nos dance (beginner) (\$10) (both sean nos classes for \$18)

1-2pm Sean Nos dance (beginner /intermediate) (\$12) (both sean nos classes for \$18)

-- Sat. evening activities (below) at Odd Fellows' Hall, Raymond & Hampden, St. Paul

6-8:30pm Set and Two-hand dances (\$20)

8:30-11pm Ceili (dance); music by The Hi B's (\$10)

SUNDAY, June 10 - at The Nickel Joint, Blair & Mackubin, St. Paul

1-4pm A day of social dances from Ireland: jives, waltzes, sets and steps (\$25)

FULL WEEKEND PASS \$85

SPACE IS LIMITED! Early registration is recommended. Send registration to "Loma mor Irish Dance Club, 2485 Londin Ln E #319, Maplewood, MN 55119." Email [LomaMorIDC@hotmail.com](mailto:LomaMorIDC@hotmail.com) or call 651-501-0113 for more information. [www.geocities.com/ceilis\\_twincities/index.html](http://www.geocities.com/ceilis_twincities/index.html) [www.setdancing.ie](http://www.setdancing.ie)

## Hi Bs performing for Ceili with Ger Butler, Saturday, June 9

Kate and Jode Dowling along with friend Sean Egan will be playing music for the Ceili on June 9 at Oddfellows Hall in association with the Loma Mor dance weekend featuring Ger Butler. See above schedule for info. Hope to see you there! See our myspace (*yes, myspace!*) for band info! [www.myspace.com/thehibs](http://www.myspace.com/thehibs)

## The Doon Social @ The Eagles Club – June 10

The Doon Ceili Band have been playing ceili and set dancing the second Sunday of every month for about 6 months now. We want to make sure that everyone knows that there is a lot more going on at these ceilis than just dancing. It's quite a social event. Come hang out, have a pint, have a chat, listen to tunes, meet some new friends – it's all good craic!

**Sunday, June 10**

**7:30pm -- \$5 suggested donation**

**Eagles Club: 2507 E. 25 St. (corner of 25th and 25th)**

**Minneapolis, MN 55406**

**for more information: 651-489-7044**



## TWO New Sessions in Town - Mondays and Fridays

Keegan's Pub in Minneapolis has recently started a Beginners/Learners Session on Monday nights. Stop on by and pick up a few tunes in a friendly environment. There is also a new session on Friday nights at Merlin's Rest, a new pub on Lake Street in Minneapolis. This brings our session count to 4 and if you include our family session, that makes 5. There's more opportunity than ever to get out and enjoy yourself with friends and have a few tunes!

## Irish Idol Contest at Irish Fair

Now you and your friends have a chance to perform at the Irish Fair of Minnesota. On Friday, August 10, 2007 from 3:00 PM to approximately 5:00 PM on the River Stage, the Irish Fair will hold the inaugural Irish Fair Idol Contest. The contest is open to any music or dance act that is not already booked for a set on the River or Cara Irish Pubs Stages at this year's festival. (More eligibility rules below.) The winner gets to perform on the River Stage on Saturday, August 11<sup>th</sup> at approximately 6pm and will receive \$250. There are two runner-up prizes as well. Completing a brief application is all you need to do to enter the contest. Review eligibility and request a form at the Irish Fair's website: [www.irishfair.com](http://www.irishfair.com)

## Saturday June 16, 8pm: CD Release Concert/Dance with Brian Miller and Button Accordion Player Tommie Cunniffe's New CD *Unbuttoned*



County Roscommon native Tommie Cunniffe is a button accordion player and avid composer of Irish traditional music. A long time friend of St. Paul resident and guitarist Brian Miller, Tommie is paying a visit to the Twin Cities this June to launch *Unbuttoned*, his first solo album which features Brian's guitar accompaniment behind a vibrant selection of Irish dance music, much of which was composed by Tommie himself. The duo will perform in concert at 8pm on Saturday June 16th at the Eagles Club in Minneapolis. After the hour-long concert portion, Tommie and Brian will play for set dancing and invite guests up on the stage for more music and fun. Suggested donation at the door is \$10.

While growing up between the towns of Ballinasloe and Athlone on the Roscommon/Galway border, Tommie Cunniffe spent 6 years with an Athlone based music ensemble which toured in Ireland, France, Denmark, Belgium and Holland. He was one of the founding members of the traditional Irish music group Taltarella who also performed across Ireland and Europe. In 1998, Taltarella released the EP *Six Reels of Joy*, consisting entirely of music composed by Tommie. Tommie's own tunes are very inventive and they reflect his singular style of accordion playing. Tommie moved to Cork City in 2000, and has spent much time playing the session scene there with various Cork based musicians such as Johnny Neville, Gerry McKee, Terry McKee, Karl Nesbitt and Eoin Coughlan. It was in Cork that Tommie met guitarist (and St. Paul resident) Brian Miller in the fall of 2000 while Brian was attending a semester of college at University College Cork. The two musicians hit it off immediately and have been meeting up and playing music together at every available opportunity since. Tommie even christened one of his tunes *Return to Minnesota* to commemorate Brian's first trip back home in 2000. (Little did he know Brian would be back in Cork each year since!)

When Tommie decided last year to make a full length solo album of his music he asked Brian Miller (along with Tipperary percussionist Brian Morrissey) to accompany him. This brand new CD, *Unbuttoned*, features many of Tommie's own compositions along with a number of traditional tunes. Congratulations to Tommie and Brian! The Eagles Club is located at 2507 E 25th Street in Minneapolis. For information about this concert and the CD visit [www.myspace.com/guitarflute](http://www.myspace.com/guitarflute) or call Brian Miller at 651-245-3719.

## Thanks to our Generous Donors in May

- **KD Athow** for a color ink-jet printer. We needed that!
- **Kathy Bjorke** for her VERY generous financial contribution.

***As Always – please contact us if you have any questions! Thanks, Kate Dowling***

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