

The Freebird

Volume IV

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The Freebird is the newsletter of the **Irish Fair of Minnesota August 8-10, 2008**. Its purpose is to keep us connected, provide updates, celebrate successes and share our stories, and to support the mission of the Irish Fair by promoting and cultivating Irish culture.



IRISH FAIR OF MINNESOTA 2008 HEADLINER NEWS -- RETURN OF SCYTHIAN

Dubbed by The Washington Post as “one of DC's most energetic and eclectic bands” Scythian (sith-ee-yin) specializes in fusing Celtic, Gypsy and rock traditions with all the energy, affection and wit they can muster, earning their billing as ‘Celtic Adrenaline Pushers.’

Their high-energy, interactive brand of music has one goal in mind - to get people on their feet and dancing. As The Washington Post notes, the results are consistent: “the band's enthusiasm is contagious, and shows seem to end with everyone dancing, jumping around or hoisting glasses.” Led by a pair of young raging fiddlers, Scythian has a great respect and admiration for the traditional, which is the foundation of their music; nevertheless, Scythian is not afraid to burst out of the box in search of a little fun, lending them an appeal to young and old alike.



Did you know you can now find the Irish Fair on [MySpace](#) and [Facebook](#)???. Check it out & spread the word to friends. Invite others to the Fair through our Facebook event listing. You can start blogging now about Flogging Molly, Scythian, Romantica and the other great bands coming this year!

Their energy is not intended to substitute for any musical deficiencies; these lads are impeccably trained musicians. For example, band lead Alexander Fedoryka, who plays violin/Mandolin/Harmonica/Bass/Vocals has Trained classically, since the age of 3 and has performed in such venues as the Kennedy center and Wolf Trap. Of note, Alexander spent six months in Japan studying under Dr. Suzuki, the renowned founder of the Suzuki School of Music. Alexander *also* spent four months playing in the streets of Ireland where he picked up the Celtic spirit and combined it with the Gypsy soul of his own Ukrainian ancestry. Josef Crosby (Violin/Bass/Vocals) and Danylo Fedoryka (Rhythm Guitar/Accordion/Vocals) are also classically trained; and percussionist Mike Ounallah, a Masters of Jazz Studies, enriches the sounds of Scythian with his wealth of experience and expertise.

We can expect to hear familiar tunes as well as some tunes from their new album “Immigrant Road Show”. Here the band occasionally pays tribute to kindred spirits, first with a suitably barbed and boisterous rendition of Goats Don't Shave's "Hills of Donegal," then with a original take on the Pogues' “Tuesday Morning” as well as a wonderfully fresh arrangement of "Gypsy Fiddle" that moves from rhapsody to romp. The band has also been writing a few of its one tunes to delight us, such as Danylo's amusing, tongue-tripping travelogue "Highway 81."

Come on down to the Fair to hear this classy Celtic band that can rock out with the best of 'um!

IRISH FAIR VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Yes, the Fair is *coming up fast* and *YOU* can be a part of it by becoming a volunteer. It's a great way to meet other energetic, interesting people who enjoy All Things Irish. Several vital volunteer opportunities are open. If you have a particular area of interest, the sooner you register the better the chance of availability for your requested slot.

We anticipate a busier Friday and Saturday evening and so are in particular need on those evenings for Food & Beverage Ticket Sellers and Beverage Servers. So if you'd like to spend some time renewing old acquaintances, making new friends and having fun while contributing your time to the worthy cause of keeping the Irish Fair Free, please register at our website www.irishfair.com where you will find a list of areas and times.



Volunteers celebrating success at the Summit Brewery after the Fair

Other Open Volunteer Positions:

- Seisiun Coordinator - All weekend at the Fair. Provide hospitality for musicians and welcome the public into the seisiun area.
- F&B Ticket Booth Manager - We are looking for a couple experienced F&B ticket sellers who wants to step up to an all day or, better yet, all weekend, position of managing a ticket booth.
- Legacy Fund Coordinator -Year round position – mainly an administrative position. Person would be involved in both tracking contributions and overseeing the grant program.
- Marketplace Manager – A year round (Jan - August) position that also requires person to be at the festival Thursday - Sunday. Administer vendor registration process, serve as point of contact for vendors, assist with setup of Marketplace and oversee load-in and load-out of Marketplace.
- Flyer and Poster Distribution Coordinator - March through July position. Distribute and/or develop a team to distribute posters and flyers throughout the metro and state to promote the festival.
- Photographer – New position, year round – capture events like Volunteer Thank You Celebration, Legacy Fund Grant Awards, year round volunteer activities, photo needs for the newsletter, etc

Contact Maria Flynn Conway at celticjourneys@msn.com if you are interested in these positions or want to find out about other ways you can help keep the Fair going --- and keep it FREE.

THANK YOU FOR HELPING OUT AT THE FAIR!

LEGACY GRANT SPONSORS

CONCERT OF THE MUSIC OF PATRICK BYRNE



Minnesota is rich in performers marinated in the Celtic tradition, and among the foremost are Ann & Charlie Heymann, who together comprise the musical duo Cláirseach. Ann is a leading performer on the wire-strung traditional Irish/Scottish harp that disappeared two hundred years ago. Her husband, Charlie, sings lilting songs in Gaelic and English and plays traditional instruments such as the cittern, bodhrán, button accordion and bones. The Heymans not only spread knowledge of Irish music through their performances, they have a deep-going interest in unearthing long-lost pieces from the Gaelic harp tradition. These days their interest has settled on Irish harper Patrick Byrne. The Legacy Fund responded with a grant of \$2000.



The Heymanns applied to the Irish Fair Legacy Fund for a grant to put together a concert program of not only the music Patrick performed, but also an account of his life and times, that of his patrons and family, including his intriguing brother Christopher who emigrated to the U.S. and eventually settled in Faribault, Minnesota in 1855. During the Civil War, Christopher enlisted in Company H, 10th Minnesota Infantry and wrote a letter to Patrick about his experience. The letter serves as a fascinating report of an Irish “outsider” point of view of the War.

Look to future editions of The Freebird for information about the timing and specific program of the Heymann’s Patrick Byrne concert.

IRISH THEATER CAMP FOR YOUTH DEBUTS THIS SUMMER

Let your children experience theater the Irish way! Join us at a new theater camp taught by one of the Twin Cities leading theater educators. This week-long camp will explore the rich world of Irish theater, art, song and stories. Children will explore a variety of texts to gain a basic knowledge of Irish theater and writings. Stories will be brought to life using fun and creative improvisational and staging techniques. During the course of the week participants will create an original performance with sets, costumes and script to be shared with family and friends the last day of camp as well as to be performed on stage at the Irish Fair of Minnesota the weekend of August 9th!!

Seeds for the camp were sown in 2006 when Sarah Cromer-Ben Said, an experienced local theater educator, teamed up with Patrick O'Donnell of the Irish Fair to offer "*Irish Theater Express, An Original Performance in One Day*" as part of the Irish Fair Summer School. Presented at the College of St. Thomas with support from Jim Rogers, the program was extremely successful; 22 participants ages 5-17 created an original interpretation of the classic fable "The Children of Lir". With costumes props, lines and a song, the young performers shone at the Irish Fair Children's Stage where they also performed for family and fair goers.

In 2007 Irish Theater Express was offered again with great success, and the Irish Theater Express developed into **Tír na nÓg Children's Irish Theater** and the time-frame for the program extended to a week-long summer day camp. “We’re excited about the opportunity for kids and they families to really dig into Irish theatre with this offering” said Steve Cerkenik, Executive Director of the Irish Fair of Minnesota. “Irish Theater is a broad and intriguing subject and it is great to see it being made accessible for a younger audience. “Programs like this hand down the tradition of Irish story telling ancient folklore to the next generation.”

Details of the Irish Theater Camp: Dates are M-F August 5th -9th, located at the Saint Paul Reformation Lutheran Church at 100 N. Oxford in Saint Paul. The camp is for children ages 5-17 from 9-2 Monday- Friday. The camp has limited enrollment. For registration forms email starngt@hotmail.com or for more information call **Tír na nÓg** at 651-249-5517.

This camp is made possible with a grant from the Legacy Fund of the Irish Fair of Minnesota.

OPPORTUNITIES & EVENTS



Host Families Needed!

Open your hearts and your home for five weeks this summer to a 10- or 11-year old child from Northern Ireland. The Children's Program of Northern Ireland was established in 1973 to provide children from Northern Ireland with a reprieve from "the Troubles". While the political process has moved recently toward peaceful resolution, many families are still recovering from the violence of the past, and CPNI's cross cultural community program works to replace centuries-old fear, suspicion and hatred with renewed understanding and respect for differing traditions. American families contribute to this effort by providing the children with a safe haven where people with diverse religious, cultural and political persuasions live side-by-side in peace.

To date, over 4000 Minnesota families have opened their homes and hearts to more than 4500 Catholic and Protestant boys and girls from Belfast and surrounding communities throughout Northern Ireland.

This summer, a small band of eager children will walk off an airplane from Northern Ireland into the waiting arms of Minnesota Families. In the five weeks that follow, baseballs will soar, campfires will crackle, and lives will be changed for the better. You can be a part of this! *CPNI seeks to hear from potential host families as soon as possible.* Call 651-405-1108 or check out our website at www.cpni.org to find out how your family can participate in this remarkable program.



The Celtic Edge Festival- A day of Celtic music and dance plus all things body, mind and spirit. Music featuring Irish legend Paddy Keenan, also appearing Celtic Wizard Laura MacKenzie, The Eddies, Rumgumption and Barra & Irish sean nos step dancing with Anna Lethert. A fun family event! Ending the day of music will be an Irish ceili dance led by Paul McCluskey. Sponsored by the Minnesota Folks Arts Alliance. Call 651-357-0400 or email at Mnfolkfestival@aol.com or got to www.MNfolkarts.org

Hibernian Challenge Golf Event

Benefiting Father Des Wilson & Hibernian High School Scholarship Fund. *Sponsored by the Ancient Order of Hibernians, Division #4, Ramsey County*

Place: Keller Golf Course Day: Friday, June 13, 2008 Tee Times From 11:30 to 1:30.

The event is a 4 Person Scramble and there will also be a Thomas C. Plunkett "Swing for Justice" Hole-in-One Contest - \$5,000, awards for Longest Putt, Longest Drive, Closest Pin & Top Teams. Cost - \$100/person (includes golf, cart, dinner and prizes). Dinner to follow at Keller Clubhouse. Deadline for sign-up - 6/6/08 For more information about the event and Sponsoring opportunities, contact Vincent Courtney courtneyvincent@hotmail.com phone 651-224-6622



The Center For Irish Music: *SHEAVES of Great Stuff Coming!*



June 1, 2-4pm: Center For Irish Music Spring Student Recital at The Paul & Sheila Wellstone Center, St Paul. Students will be performing what they've worked on over the last six months. Light refreshments. Donations appreciated.

June 20-22: Young Irish Musicians Weekend

Why leave the state or the country to get your Irish music fix? This is THE weekend for lovers of traditional Irish music in the Twin Cities. The YIM is: workshops, concerts and sessions for students of all ages and levels with a particular focus on intermediate and advanced youth from across North America. Master Artists include: Liz Carroll from Chicago (fiddle—photo at right), Tara Bingham-Diamond from Dublin (flutes & whistles), Dermot Diamond from Dublin (fiddle & banjo), Tommy Martin from Dublin (uilleann pipes, flutes and whistles) and Daithi Sproule from Derry (guitar and song in English and Irish). Classes for adults are available in conjunction with this weekend. Classes for beginners (entering grades 2-8) are also available. All events take place at McNally-Smith College of Music in downtown St Paul. See: <http://www.centerforirishmusic.org> for more information. *This is project is funded in part from a Legacy Fund grant).*



June 20, 7pm: Young Irish Musicians Reception/Hooley at McNally Smith College of Music. Meet the master artists, enjoy a short concert, view *Come West Along the Road* RTE programs, session, cash bar, light buffet, maybe break out a dance move or two! \$10 per person, \$35 per family. Public VERY welcome! Families encouraged!

June 21, 7:30pm: Young Irish Musicians Master Artist Concert at McNally Smith College of Music. Very rare! All YIM master artists in concert as soloists and as a group, short interviews. Cash bar. \$15 per person, \$45 per family. Public VERY welcome! Families encouraged!

IRISH IDOL CONTEST 2008 ---2ND NOTICE

Now you and your friends have a chance to perform at the Irish Fair of Minnesota. On Friday, August 8, 2008 from 3:00 PM to ~5:30 PM on the Jake O'Connor's Stage, the Irish Fair will hold the **Second Annual Irish Fair Idol Contest**. All acts must be Irish or Celtic in nature and can be music or dance instrumental or voice, solo or group. ***The winner gets to perform on the Jake O'Connor's Stage on Saturday, August 9th, and will receive \$250.*** The first runner-up will receive \$100 in gift cards from one of our sponsoring pubs and the second runner-up will receive \$40 in gift cards from one of our sponsoring pubs.

See <http://www.irishfair.com/idol-contest/index.php> for more information---and ***get practicin'!***

AN GHAELIGE

Níor chuaigh fial riamh go hIfreann.

No generous person ever went to hell.

Courtesy of Gaeltacht Minnesota <http://www.gaelminn.org/index.htm>