



**Irish Fair of Minnesota Comes to Saint Paul's Harriet Island
August 13-15, 2010**

***Great Big Sea, Young Dubliners Perform Friday-Saturday Nights
High Kings, Tommy Sands, Lunasa Take Stage on Sunday***

Saint Paul, MN (June 21, 2010) Irish Fair of Minnesota, the largest **FREE** Irish celebration in the upper Midwest, will be held at Saint Paul's Harriet Island Regional Park Friday through Sunday, August 13-15. **The FREE fair**, which draws over 100,000 visitors, will start at 3 pm on Friday and run until 11 pm Friday and Saturday evenings.

Musical headliners this year include *Young Dubliners* and *Great Big Sea*, which will perform both Friday and Saturday nights at 7 pm and 8:30 pm. *Great Big Sea* is an immensely popular Canadian folk rock band that pleases crowds with a high energy interpretation of traditional folk songs from their native New Foundland, as well as lots of original material. In 15 years, the band has made nine albums, the latest of which, *Fortune's Favour*, pools the influences of Bob Marley, Fergus O'Byrne and Johnny Cash. www.greatbigsea.com.

***Young Dubliners*, a hard hitting Celtic rock band, always brings the crowd to its feet at Harriet Island. Considered by many to be the ambassadors of Celtic and American rock, the band's dual Irish and American heritage give it a distinctively rich musical palette. Their newest album *Saints and Sinners* blends rock and Celtic influences to produce songs bursting with wit and wisdom. www.youngdubs.com**

Irish Fair welcomes three new groups to the stage on Sunday - ***High Kings*, *Tommy Sands* and *Lunasa*. *High Kings* is a band of balladeers in the tradition of The Clancy Bothers and Tommy Makem www.thehighkings.com, while *Tommy Sands* is a singer, songwriter and activist from County Down, who inspires with songs carrying a social message, www.tommysands.com. *Lunasa* is one of Ireland's hottest acoustic bands whose rich Irish melodies are enhanced with a distinctive bass, giving their music a touch of rhythmic jazz.**

In addition to the music, Irish Fair will feature food, drink, dance, cultural workshops, sporting events and contests and children's events. Here's a look at the festival lineup:

What's New in 2010:

Fitzgerald Cup Piping Contest (in honor of Tim "Fitz" Fitzgerald, Irish Fair board member and entertainment booking agent, who passed away in March, 2010) Highland bagpipe bands from across Minnesota will compete in Ahern's Croagh Park Sunday from 11 am to 12:30 pm.

Song of Ireland Exhibit – explores the history of songs associated with Ireland and Irish Americans. It includes 5,000 pieces of sheet music and over 6,000 recordings, some over a century old. This exhibit is part of a collection of Irish memorabilia from the Milwaukee Irish Fest Archives, and has toured over 20 Irish Fairs in America.

Sun Country Travel Area – Visit with various travel companies to plan your trip to Ireland and the British Isles.

Tall Ships of Waterford Contest – Irish Fair will stage a contest to send one lucky visitor to the Tall Ships of Waterford event from July 18-25, 2011. The trip will include sailing from Waterford to Greenock, Scotland aboard a tall ship. Over 70 sailing vessels from around the world will arrive in Ireland's oldest seaport for this amazing spectacle.

Cooking Demonstrations by Cork's Irish Pub in the O'Donovan's Pub Tent, Sat. 1 pm

FREE Shuttles will run from Harriet Island to several downtown parking ramps

Friends of Irish Fair Hospitality Area – Although Irish Fair remains FREE and open to the public, tickets to a VIP tent with great sightlines to the Cara Pubs Main Stage and complimentary food and beverages will be available. Tickets are \$100/day or \$250 for a weekend pass. Visit irishfair.com or call 952-474-7411 to get your tickets today.

Defense Demonstrations: Combining Irish Stick Fighting with Tai Chi in Ahern's Croagh Park

Back by Popular Demand:

Contests: To nurture that competitive Irish Spirit, Irish Fair has more contests than ever. To view rules and to register for contests, visit www.irishfair.com

Irish Got Talent Contest: Jake O'Connor's Public House Stage Friday from 3-5:30 pm. The winner will perform at the Fair on Saturday at 6 pm and will also receive \$250 cash.
Sun Country Run with the Celts: 5-K Race and 1-K Family Run/Walk Saturday 9:30 am (proceeds benefit the Irish Fair Legacy Fund).

Best Legs in a Kilt: Gentlemen, flex those calves and don those kilts! Sat. 4:15 pm

Pub Quiz of Irish Trivia: O'Donovan's Pub Tent: Sat. and Sun. evenings

Irish Soda Bread Contest: Bring in your best version of this traditional Irish treat

Irish Photo Contest: Submit your favorite Irish pictures

Dance: Irish dancing exhibitions will be held at the dance tent throughout the weekend. The Mississippi Riverdance, featuring dozens dancers from the area's top dance schools will be held Friday at 7:30 pm. Free step dance lessons ranging from céilí and reels, to set dances, will be held in the Crossroads Pub tent.

Sports: Gaelic football, rugby, hurling Tug of War matches and the Irish Immigrant Cup will be held at Ahern's Croagh Park sport field. Popular 1920s style boxing exhibitions will be held in the boxing tent.

Culture: The Irish culture and heritage area will include specific workshops on Gaelic language, genealogy, Irish instruments and more.

Kids: The *Irish Indeed Children's Area* is always a popular stop for young and old alike. Miniature golf, Dogs of Ireland, shepherding demonstrations, songs, games, storytelling and children's dance lessons will keep kids entertained throughout the weekend.

Food, Drink, Merchandise: Over 50 vendors, 15 artisans and a dozen community organizations will exhibit at a huge Marketplace, featuring jewelry, porcelain, clothing, CDs, sheet music, books and just about all things Irish. Guests can also enjoy Irish fare from local Irish pubs and restaurants as well as beer, ale, stout and wine in the O'Donovan's Pub Tent.

Sunday morning Mass will be celebrated at 9 am by Archbishop John Neinstedt at the Cara Irish Pubs Stage providing great views of the river and Saint Paul Cathedral.

Hours: Irish Fair of Minnesota will run Aug 13-15, Friday from 3-11 pm, Saturday from 10 am to 11 pm and Sunday from 10 am to 8 pm. For information call 952-474-4711 or visit www.irishfair.com.

Irish Fair of Minnesota is sponsored by Ahern's Irish Pub, Cara Irish Pubs, O'Donovan's Pub, Walser, Sun Country Airlines, Guinness, Finnegan's, Summit Brewing, Wayzata and Jameson. For a complete entertainment schedule or to view photos, visit www.irishfair.com.

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