



Four Peaks Irish Arts

A Branch of Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann

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Four Peaks Irish Arts
Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann (CCÉ)
3165 S. Alma School Road #29-146
Chandler, Arizona 85248
USA
www.fourpeaksirisharts.org

Letter from Chairperson A Chairde, I head out to Parsippany on the 8th April for the CCE North American Convention. I'm sure I will have some great info and pictures to share with you all when I get back. In the meantime prime yourselves for a great house concert and fiddle workshop with Kevin Burke and Cal Scott. We have half the seats are reserved so make sure to reserve yours today. Mary

KEVIN BURKE featuring Cal Scott



A performance not to miss!

"A superior instrumentalist in any idiom.....impressively virtuosic"
-the New York Times

"lyrical style that is always emotionally electric"
-the Washington Post

"Burke's fiddling is one of the high spots of the current Irish musical scene"
-the Irish Times

LIVE IN CONCERT!

presented by
FOUR PEAKS IRISH ARTS

When:
Saturday, April 24th
7:00 PM

Where:
An intimate home setting*

Contact:
Mary Hill-Connor
602.635.9760

*Address and directions will be provided when you reserve your seat.

\$20 Suggested Donation



www.fourpeaksirisharts.org

Workshop There is a workshop being offered the same day of the concert during the afternoon. Contact Mary Hill-Connor for details and reservations 602-635-9760

2009 Board Members

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The Knotty Harper Band

The Knottys, you know by now - but we saved our weirdest repertoire for Saturday night, March 5th. We called this show “A World Tribute to Irish Music” - because we love Irish tunes, but we can’t help but mess with them! And for Act 2.....

The Absinthe Minded Professors Storyteller Joshua Safford and Violinist Michi Regier presented “Fantasy and Fugues of Queen Victrola” a collection of steampunk tales in which; we meet a most extraordinary gentleman’s hunting club, discover the rather gory prequel to the nutcracker, and journey to a future that never was — all accompanied by Clockwork Violin. *Chris Boydston*

Saturday night they performed at the Fiddler’s Dream. This is a tiny venue that seats just 49 people but is a great place to listen to music. They don’t serve alcohol or amplify their entertainment. Chris and his troupe of entertainers did a great job, however it was over before I was tired of them. We were intrigued by the storyteller Joshua Safford and his accompanying violinist. Beverly Fizzell

Munnelly Band - Beverly Fizzell

We really enjoyed the antics and great music of the Dave Munnelly Band at the Irish Cultural Center in March. There were 140 people in attendance. Dave Munnelly played an outstanding button box performance, along with the best drummer, fiddler, flutist. Shauna Mullen, the vocalist, has the most beautiful voice. It was hard to tell who was enjoying it the most, the players or the audience.

Anita Arden provided her comfity home for their stay here. Thanks Anita! They will surely want to come again! *Beverly Fizzell*

Laura wants you to join Facebook

Lots of information is posted there about concerts and events.
You can make your reservations to attend events on Facebook.

Four Peaks Irish Arts

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Visit our website: www.fourpeaksirisharts.org
Membership Fees: Local Chapter Dues \$30.00 Family \$50.00
Send name, address & check payable to Four Peaks Irish Arts
3165 S Alma School Road #29-146 Chandler, Arizona 85248

The Four Peaks Irish Arts organization will be a recognized tax exempt educational and charitable organization under section 501-C-3 of the Internal Revenue Code and a nonprofit corporation organized in the state of Arizona.



2009 Calendar of Events

Saturday, April 24 - 7:00 pm Kevin Burke Concert

For more information, contact Johnny Kerr: Johnny@fourpeaksirisharts.org

Letters To The Editor

Your place for opinions, recognition, venting, complaints and compliments. Send letters to beverlyfz2@cox.net We can include photos with your letter!

Beverly,

As I was posting the March Newsletter to the website I noticed that before you came on board we had only managed to publish four letters in one year. Since you began volunteering your wonderful talents to us, we've been able to publish one every month since October. I am very grateful for what you do and I know it goes a long way towards keeping our membership in the loop and the community aware of the things we're accomplishing. Thanks so much for your continued support in this area; it means a lot to us!

Regards, Johnny Kerr



Flo is one of the busiest people we know. It seems that she is always going somewhere interesting. Watch for another great story when she returns from Georgia!

Irish Music Workshop for Teachers By Brian Harris

Sitting in an elementary school classroom at 9:00 on a Saturday morning, surrounded by teachers and not a Guinness in sight. That setting is about as far away from Irish Traditional Music's natural habitat as you can get! So those who attended Anita Arden's Irish Music Workshop at Santan Elementary might have been surprised to find that the music flowed and the craic was fierce!

The workshop, conducted the morning of February 27, was part of a series of seminars that Anita has presented to educate interested Valley public school teachers on Irish music and culture. FPIA members tend to have contagious enthusiasm for this music and Anita is no exception. Already, several of Anita's workshop students have recognized that Irish Traditional Music is a fun addition to their curriculum and have replaced the recorder with the tin whistle in their introductory music classes.

The workshop covered several topics including Irish history, folk tales and legends, dances, and last but not least, Irish music. One of the workshop "labs" was a mini ceili dance. Jim and Anne Daugherty volunteered their time to call the dance and teach the steps. The band De Mairt Ceol volunteered the music. The students volunteered the dancing and the fun! The attendees had such a good time learning the steps and dancing to the music that they asked De Mairt Ceol to hang around and play a few tunes after the ceili was over. Naturally, we were happy to oblige (we're often referred to as "the band that won't shut up")!

Certainly the main focus of the workshops is not the attendees, but the children they teach. Anita is teaching the teachers, so they can pass on the richness and fun of Irish Traditional Music to their students. However, Anita used De Mairt Ceol to illustrate an important point for the teachers as well. The De Mairt Ceol members in attendance were all adults (one was a retiree). She asked each of us to introduce ourselves and tell how long we've been playing. For most of us, the answer was less than 7 years. The teachers attending the seminar got the message loud and clear: It's never too late to begin!

Happy Birthday Marni

We all miss her terribly, and reluctantly, we allowed her to move away with her husband and children to the great northwest. I hope the Irish scene appreciates her like we did. You can find her busy and posting her activities on Facebook. Another good reason to sign up.

Ask Brian

about his peanut brittle dream.
What were you drinking at the time
Brian?



"What tune should I learn first?" by Will Thorne

Regrettably, many people don't discover this wonderful music and the session culture until later in life. Here in the States, very few of us were born into the tradition or blessed to learn Irish music kneeling at the feet of some gifted elder scratching out tunes on an ancient fiddle by a crackling peat fire. For us, it usually takes a bit of luck, a friend's introduction, happenstance, or an ever persistent grandmother to eventually bring a potential musician around to playing jigs and reels in a dark pub on a perfectly good Sunday afternoon. For those late bloomers who bravely, but happily stumble into a session with their new whistle, mandolin or fiddle they are suddenly confronted with what seems like an enormous library of literally thousands of tunes. Not only is there a ocean of melodies to learn, but they often are played in different keys, have more than one name, share the same name with a completely different tune, switch up the A and B sections regionally, and all of that, if the musicians can even remember the name at all. What may be considered a bog-common standard at one town's session may be completely unheard of in the neighboring town. Sheet music, often frowned upon by many within the Irish session community, can vary wildly from the notes actually played at your local session. Confronted by this reality, frustrated beginners go searching for a starting point - some hoped for magical list of universal tunes to learn that will get them started. The Holy Grail of a set list of Irish music.

Bad news - There really isn't one. Oh sure, you can go to any number of Irish music web-sites and find copious lists of commonly known tunes. Most contain the usual suspects; Drowsy Maggie, The Kesh Jig, The Butterfly slip jig, Harvest Home Hornpipe, etc. It certainly will do you no harm to learn these tunes to build your personal repertoire. However, truth be told, I can't remember the last time I heard Drowsy Maggie in a session, and yet it is the number one downloaded ABC file on thesession.org's web-page. Not that it's a poor tune, there really is no such thing as a "bad" Irish tune.

However, what are often referred to as common tunes typically suffer from aural "over saturation" by the players who have been around the sessions for a few years. Remember that one pop tune you adored as a kid? You heard it on the radio every 15 minutes and you loved it. Then one day, you vowed if you ever heard that damn thing again you'd go crazy. Unfortunately, many of the "common" tunes have somewhat unfairly acquired that same reputation amongst the more seasoned players. It wasn't all that long ago when my version of The Butterfly was met with audible groans by veteran players seated nearby. I was mortified. (Then again, perhaps it was my playing and not the tune that provoked the crowd- ahem)

So what do you do? Commit hours of your life learning "common tunes" that some old geezer of a player is probably going to groan about? If you love the melody of the tune, then YES. It should first and foremost always be the tunes that inspire you, regardless of what the grumpy, stodgy crowd may say. However, the best advice ever given to me was just go to the local session near you and listen to what tunes are actually being played. Introduce yourself. Listen for the melodies that really hook you and bounce around in your head for days afterwards. Ask the musicians the names of the tunes. Perhaps, with permission, you could record a few sets to learn.

Phoenix, the Valley of the Sun, has some of the most welcoming sessions I have ever seen anywhere. Any new player should feel extremely welcome going to any of the local sessions and get a whole list of tunes to learn. After making a few introductions, find another beginner and learn tunes together. Host your own tune learning session with the Comhaltas Fionn Seisiun CDs and books as a common starting point. Before you know it, you'll have a hundred tunes in your head and someday some eager whistle player will be asking you "what tune should I learn first?"





Donations are still being taken for Jane Hilton

Johnny Kerr is continuing to raise funds for Jane. This artwork represents a sticker that has been created as a fundraiser to help Jane throughout this difficult time in her life. These are available to anyone who would like to support Jane- there is a \$5 minimum donation for each sticker. These are high quality 3"

round vinyl decals that are suitable for indoor or outdoor use; put one on your car window and/or your instrument case to show your support for Jane around Phoenix. The cost to print these decals has already been covered by a small group of Jane's friends and 100% of your donation will go directly to Jane. We have printed 1,000 of these decals and the goal is to raise at least \$5,000 (1,000 decals at \$5 each) to help Jane with medical expenses. The added bonus is that Jane will see the stickers around town and know that she is loved and supported by her community.

This fundraiser is not associated with Four Peaks Irish Arts but I thank you for allowing me to use the newsletter to help get the word out for this cause. Please contact Johnny Kerr for details (kerr.johnny@gmail.com) on how to get your decal. *Johnny Kerr*



New t-shirt design. The shirts can be purchased by e-mailing or contacting any branch officer. They are sand (light tan) colored with a dark brown imprint, available in adult sizes small- to extra large, and are being sold for \$15. They were designed by Johnny Kerr and professionally silkscreened by a local print shop.

FPIA Marketplace

To place your ad, send e-mail to beverlyfz2@cox.net (Deadline is the 10th of next month)

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Classified Ads	one issue \$10.00 (free to FPIA folks)
Add a photo to your ad	\$5.00

Help Wanted:

Public Relations Your skills can be put to good use for FPIA. We need an aggressive Public Relations person to take over this job. Contact mary@fourpeaksirisharts.org

Marketplace Help Person needed to accept & compose ads (when needed), forward payments and encourage ad renewals. No sales experience necessary. Contact beverlyfz2@cox.net for more information.

Contact a board member for the following items:



AZ Seisiún Musician T-Shirt \$15.00

Featuring an original design by a local artist, professionally silkscreened on a 100% cotton t-shirt. Available in adult sizes small to 2XL.



Foinn Seisiún Tune Books & CD's

These are a great resource for the Irish musician. Each book and corresponding CD volume features over 100 standard session tunes. (books and CD's sold separately)



Craic Addict Instrument/Luggage Tag \$5.00

Engraved on durable acrylic, 2 1/2" in diameter. Includes beaded chain with optional Name, Address & Phone Number sticker on the back.



FPIA Logo Vinyl Decal \$1.00

This high quality 3" durable vinyl sticker can be applied to a car window, instrument case or anywhere else you want to show your FPIA colors!

