

**Comhaltas Ceóltoirí Éireann  
Tom Finucane Branch  
Rochester, New York**



**Newsletter**

March/April 2018

**Márta  
agus  
Aibreán  
2018**

An organization  
dedicated to the  
advancement of  
traditional Irish music,  
language, dance and  
culture

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# Heart-Warming Spring Thaw Concert

March 8, 2018



*John Whelan  
Low Lily  
Katie McNally*



Branch website: [www.irishrochester.com](http://www.irishrochester.com)  
Facebook: rochester irish musicians association

## An exciting, diverse, Irish, American Folk concert

Legendary Irish accordion champion John Whelan teams up with the American Roots band Low Lily and Scottish-style fiddler Katie McNally for a spectacular St. Pat's Celebration! Exploring the Roots music of Ireland, Scotland, and America, this diverse and energetic show will showcase fiery up-tempo jigs and reels alongside lushly arranged songs, featuring two fiddles, accordion, guitars, mandolin, and harmonious vocals.

**First Baptist Church of Fairport, 94 S. Main St., Fairport.**

**Concert will begin at 7:30 pm**

**Admission is \$20 at the door, \$15 for Comhaltas members, \$10 for students.**



**JOHN WHELAN's** father, Denis, was from Ireland's County Wexford. "Ours was a very traditional household," John says. "My father didn't have any major vices – his only addiction was to Irish music." Denis Whelan carried a reel-to-reel tape recorder to many shows, collecting hours of live music. "It was not the words but the emotion of the music that moved me." John recorded his first album, *Pride of Wexford*. Since his debut album, John has recorded six more albums, and has been featured on numerous compilations. He recorded several albums with Narada Records, has collaborated with such luminaries as *Eileen Ivers*, *Bernadette Peters*, *Johnny Cunningham*, *Tim O'Brien*, and *Kathy Mattea*.

<http://johnwhelanmusic.com/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xi1Ou89wakE>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-th95wvUT48>

John Whelan Trio at the New Bedford Folk Festival, 7 July 2013:



## The concert performers also include ...

Voted the Falcon Ridge Festival's "Most Wanted" band of 2016, the Brattleboro-based trio **LOW LILY** explores the roots and branches of American folk music, creating a unique brand of acoustic music that is rooted yet contemporary. Low Lily is **Liz Simmons** (vocals, guitar) **Flynn Cohen** (vocals, guitar, mandolin) and **Lissa Schneckenburger** (vocals, fiddle). They are masterful players, composers and arrangers with deep relationships to traditional music styles ranging from bluegrass to Irish, Scottish, New England and Old Time Appalachian sounds. Liz has a unique vocal and guitar style that draws from her musical history in the folk and ballad traditions of Ireland, Scotland, England and America as well as contemporary folk music. She has toured with *John Whelan*, *Long Time Courting*, *Tom Chapin*, and more. Flynn has toured worldwide with numerous notable acts in Irish and American music, including *John Whelan*, *Cathie Ryan*, *Aoife Clancy*, *Ruth Moody*. Lissa grew up in Maine as an active member of the fiddle community, graduated from The New England Conservatory of Music and has performed as a solo artist and with *Solas* and *Childsplay*, among others. Together as Low Lily, these seasoned musicians bring their considerable strengths, experience and history together to create an undeniably rich and versatile musical palette.

<http://www.LowLily.com>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tlQtRESRsM>

"The new face of Scottish fiddling in the USA" (the Living Tradition), **KATIE McNALLY** has made waves in both the American folk music scene and abroad since the release of her debut album, *Flourish*, in 2013. A 2009 New England Scottish Fiddle Champion and recent cover girl for *Fiddler Magazine*, Katie has performed and taught fiddle courses in the U.S., Canada, Spain, Scotland, England, and France. Katie attended both the University of Glasgow and the National Piping Centre in Glasgow, Scotland where she studied ancient and modern Scottish literature and Scottish traditional music. Katie graduated Magna Cum Laude from Tufts University in 2012, where she earned the Etta and Harry Winokur Award for Outstanding Contribution to Performance. She has performed and toured with famed Galician piper *Carlos Núñez* (on his first North American tour), the fiddle super-group *Childsplay* for the past seven years, with *Eric McDonald*, and with her own trio. She released her sophomore album entitled "The Boston States", produced by *Wendy McIsaac*, in the fall of 2016.

<http://katiemcnally.com>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3lpA5zDcQnE>







Low Lily Trio



Katie

## Pre-St. Patrick's Day Concert. The Geneseo String Band



Pre-St. Patrick's Day Concert. The Geneseo String Band, under the direction of James Kimball, will give its **39th annual** Pre-St. Patrick's Day Concert, **Saturday, March 3**, at 7:00 pm in Wadsworth Auditorium on the SUNY Geneseo campus. Sponsored by SUNY Geneseo Music Department.

Celtic music and dance will be featured. Guest performers will include the Drumcliffe Dancers (of Rochester) and Geneseo's own Sláinte Irish Dancers, Ted McGraw, Brian Clancy, Mary Lester, John Ryan, Bill Henrie, Adie Maher, Mitzie Collins, Roxanne Ziegler, the Geneseo Men's Chorus and more.

Admission \$5, under 12 free. Tickets available at the door. For information call 245-5824

### IACI Irish Film Feis – 2018

March 4: Philomena  
April 8: In America

4-7 pm at Briarwood at St. John's Meadows

*Irish American Cultural  
Institute, Rochester, NY*  
www.rochesteriaci.org



Jim Kimball & Ted McGraw



**Celebrate Irish American Heritage Month at the Siamsa Library Programs.****A Siamsa - (An Irish Evening of Entertainment)**

The Monroe county Irish organizations would like you to enjoy an hour and a half of a variety of authentic Irish entertainment. Known in Ireland as a Siamsa (Shee-am-sah), it includes traditional cultural music, dancing, and historical stories. Please join us in commemorating the city of Rochester's and county of Monroe's proclamation of Irish American Heritage Month while enjoying some traditional soda bread.

These programs are brought to you by Comhaltas, AOH, IACI, Jamieson Irish Dance & Creative Arts, and LAOH. The organizations will be available before and after the program to answer any questions about their groups.

**Thursday, March 8<sup>th</sup>, 7-8:30 pm Irondequoit Library**

- 7:00-7:15 pm Soda Bread Making Demonstration – LAOH (Ladies Ancient Order of Hibernians)- Deirdre Hickey. The bread tasting will be at the end of the program.
- 7:15-7:45 Traditional Irish Music Session- Comhaltas Ceoltoiri Eireann - John Ryan, Vice President. Members of Comhaltas will play some traditional Irish music.
- 7:45-8:15 Historical Presentation by IACI (Irish American Cultural Institute) President and local author Mike McCarthy. This presentation will describe how Sir Robert Wilmot-Horton, devised a scheme to emigrate impoverished Irish out of Ireland to Canada.
- 8:15-8:30 Irish Step Dance Demonstration by Jamieson Irish Dance & Creative Arts. Katie Jamieson, TCRG and international competitor and performer and some students will perform.
- 8:30 Conclusion of the program and soda bread tasting.

**Thursday, March 15<sup>th</sup>, 7-8:30 pm Fairport Library**

- 7:00-7:15 pm Soda Bread Making Demonstration – LAOH (Ladies Ancient Order of Hibernians)- Deirdre Hickey. The bread tasting will be at the end of the program.
- 7:15-7:45 Traditional Irish Music Session- Comhaltas Ceoltoiri Eireann - John Ryan, Vice President. Members of Comhaltas will play some traditional Irish music.
- 7:45-8:15 Historical Presentation by IACI (Irish American Cultural Institute) past President and local author Deirdre McKiernan-Hetzler. A brief history of Ireland will be presented.
- 8:15-8:30 Irish Step Dance Demonstration by Jamieson Irish Dance & Creative Arts. Katie Jamieson, TCRG and international competitor and some students will perform.
- 8:30 Conclusion of the program and soda bread tasting.

**Wednesday, March 21<sup>th</sup>, 7-8:30 pm Ogden Farmers Library**

- 7:00-7:15 pm Soda Bread Making Demonstration – LAOH (Ladies Ancient Order of Hibernians)- Deirdre Hickey. The bread tasting will be at the end of the program.
- 7:15-7:45 Traditional Irish Music Session- Comhaltas Ceoltoiri Eireann - John Ryan, Vice President. Members of Comhaltas will play some traditional Irish music.
- 7:45-8:15 Historical Presentation by IACI (Irish American Cultural Institute) President and local author Mike McCarthy. This presentation will examine the difficulties the engineers faced and how the Irish laborers contributed to construction of the Erie Canal.
- 8:15-8:30 Irish Step Dance Demonstration by Kathy Whitfield, TCRG and international competitor will compare modern and traditional Irish step dancing called Sean N6s.
- 8:30 Conclusion of the program and soda bread tasting.



## St. Patrick's Day Parade – Saturday, March 17, 2018

<http://rochesterparade.com/>

Parade press conference on Friday 3/9 at 10 am in City Hall. All are welcome.

## IACI & CCE sponsored concert

Manus McGuire (fiddle) and Emily Flack (Sligo fiddle music together with song/ dance from Ireland and Canada). **April 18, 2018** 7 pm at St. John Fisher College, room B-135, Basil Auditorium, Basil Hall.



Manus McGuire & Emily Flack, Toronto, August 5, 2017:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sa556j72E-M>

Manus McGuire and Emily Flack : Sligo International Choral Festival 2017:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8r1-KHNeqwc>

**Manus McGuire** from Sligo in the north west of Ireland comes from a strong musical family and from a region that is rich in the Irish fiddle music tradition. He won various awards for fiddle music at national level before foraging a burgeoning international career performing with the groups, "Buttons and Bows", "MovingCloud" and "Brock McGuire Band" each of which he co-founded. Twelve CD recordings followed, gaining various "instrumental band of the year" awards and at a personal level Manus was awarded "male traditional musician of the year" in the U.S. by Irish American News magazine in Chicago.

**Emily Flack** from Dorchester, Ontario, likewise comes from a family steeped in the music tradition, this time the music of Cape Breton/Ontario and Ireland. Her mother is Denise Leahy of the famed "Leahy" family from Lakefield, Ontario. She is a champion step dancer, pianist and singer/ song writer at the highest level and currently is undertaking a BA in "Traditional Irish Song" at the university of Limerick, Ireland. Emily has performed at festivals and venues across North America and has also been a guest artist with Leahy and Natalie McMaster. Her new album: "Feels like Me".





**Music club activities**

**March 3, 2018**

Box Club: there is no meeting this month.

**April 7, 2018**

Box Club, 10:00 am – 12:00, meets at home of Jon Berkner

407 Edgewood Ave in Brighton, 585 953 5670. [jonasan@rochester.rr.com](mailto:jonasan@rochester.rr.com)



“**Sean N6s** is the jazz of traditional Irish dancing. There are no set pieces, no costumes, no rules. It is essentially a pulse.” *Mary Owens, RTE*  
If you can walk in time to music, you can dance Sean N6s! Celebrate St. Patrick’s Day by joining us at our spring session for some “old style” stepdancing!

**Spring Session:** March 2, 9, 16, 23

**Time:** 8:30-9:15 p.m.

**Where:** Rince Na Saor Irish Dancing, located at Dance Biz in Longview Plaza, 1742 Long Pond Road, just off Route 390 near Unity Hospital.

**Cost:** \$35 for the session, or \$10/class drop-in rate.

**Register:** Kathy Whitfield, [kathyw@rns.dance](mailto:kathyw@rns.dance), or download and mail in a registration form from [www.rns.dance](http://www.rns.dance).

**Watch dancers and catch the fever:**

Sean Nos videos: [www.rns.dance](http://www.rns.dance), just scroll down on the homepage and or click on the Class Schedule Page and scroll down for two videos.

**North American Comhaltas Convention 2018: April 5-8, 2018**



**At the convention, Ted McGraw** will receive the Service Award at the pre-convention dinner.

**Next Northeast Regional Convention will be in Buffalo, October 27, 2018.**



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 [www.rns.dance](http://www.rns.dance)   
227-6614

Comhaltas Rochester T-Shirts are only \$15.  
To purchase a t-shirt,  
Contact Kate Ballard at  
[katekballard@gmail.com](mailto:katekballard@gmail.com)

**Fiddle lessons:** Taught by veteran teacher and performer **Kit Fallon**, various traditional fiddle styles, from Bluegrass to Quebecois. No music background is required. Quality rental instruments available. Pre-registration is required; E-mail [ckfallon@hotmail.com](mailto:ckfallon@hotmail.com) (put "Beginning Fiddle" in the subject line).



**Brennan Genealogical Research**  
Christopher Brennan, MA, MLS  
Genealogical and Historical Researcher  
116 Wildwood Drive, Rochester, NY 14616  
585-319-3806 [cristoir@twc.com](mailto:cristoir@twc.com)

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**Branch Officers - 2016**

Cathoirleach (Chair)  
Mark Ballard  
Leas-Cathoirleach (Vice Chair)  
John Ryan  
Runai (Secretary)  
Bill Hallahan  
Cisteoir (Treasurer)  
Lynn Pilaroscia  
Míchoir (Auditor)  
Shawn Casey  
Youth Protection Officer  
Gavin Barry

**Programs**

Music Events  
Cathy McGrath  
Ted McGraw  
John Ryan  
Ceili Dancing  
Arlene Miller  
Membership  
Bill Hallahan  
Singers' Session  
Chris Brennan  
Music Learner's Session  
Mark Ballard  
Website  
Ben Hockenberry  
Newsletter  
Bill Hallahan  
Music Instrument Library  
Mark Gowman  
Concerts & Festivals  
Dave Halligan  
John Ryan

Look for us on Facebook:

**Rochester Irish Musician's Association**

**Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann  
MEMBERSHIP AND DUES for 2017**Dues:

First Adult	\$25.00
Second Adult	\$ 8.00
Family	\$40.00
Junior	\$ 4.00

Make check payable to: "CCE Rochester"

Mail to: Comhaltas  
6658 North Avon Road  
Honeoye Falls, NY 14472

**Your donations are tax-deductible.**

**Irish Rochester CDs are still available.**

This classic, 2-CD set, produced by John McGraw contains many of the traditional tunes you will hear at sessions as well as local musicians from the Rochester area. **Only \$20.**

To purchase a CD, contact Lynn Pilaroscia:  
pilarins@frontiernet.net

**Irish music on the internet:**

<http://www.clare.fm/listen-live/>

**JOIN COMHALTAS AND SUPPORT IRISH MUSIC, AND CULTURE.  
NEW MEMBERSHIP YEAR: NOVEMBER 1 (2017) TO OCTOBER  
31 (2018). YOU CAN STILL JOIN OR RENEW ANY TIME.**

If you have ideas or articles or announcements or photos to include in this newsletter, please send them to Bill Hallahan at [whallah3@naz.edu](mailto:whallah3@naz.edu).



**Comhaltas-Sponsored Music Sessions, Dancing, Singing****1<sup>st</sup> Sundays of every month:**

4:00 pm **The American Hotel** 7304 E. Main Street, Lima, NY

**Last Sunday of every month:**

**Johnny's Irish Pub**, 1382 Culver Road, Rochester, NY  
3:00 pm Music Learning Session with Mark Ballard  
3:00-5:00 pm Singer Session with Chris Brennan  
5:00 pm Regular session

**Set Dancing Every Wednesday:**

**McGinnity's Bar & Restaurant**  
7:30 pm 534 West Ridge Road  
No experience, no partner necessary.  
Instructors: Arlene Miller (585) 663-4438. James Coughlin, caller.

**NOTICE: The Second Friday Session - suspended for an indefinite period of time.**

**OTHER TRADITIONAL IRISH & CELTIC MUSIC SESSIONS**

**Every Monday:** Colie's Café, Nazareth College campus

**Note: change in start time:**

7:00-8:00 pm waltz session

8:00-9:00 pm: jigs, reels, etc. Beginners are especially welcome

Ben's website for the Monday session:

<https://sites.google.com/site/rocnyslowsession/>

**Every Tuesday:**

7:00 pm (study session) **Charlotte Tavern**, 2 River Road & Lake Ave.

**Every Saturday:**

2:00-5:30 pm. **Barry's Old School Irish**, Webster.  
Leader: John Ryan

**First Wednesdays:**

7:00 pm **Scottish Sessions** at 7:00-9:00 pm

Check Facebook for current location:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/rochscotstrad> .

Two East side **Scottish music sessions** in new venues! And one on the West side too!

All sessions are 7-9 pm

Monday, Feb. 19 at the Kanack School, 2077 S. Clinton Ave, Rochester, 14618

Wednesday, Feb 28 at Parkminster Presbyterian, 2710 Chili Ave, Rochester, NY 14624

Our regular 4th Wednesday session:

Wednesday, March 14, the Wintergarden room at Brickstone, Elmwood Ave, just east of the old Psych center, (next to Joey B's restaurant, but please leave their parking spots free)

