

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



Newsletter

May/June 2020

**Bealtaine
agus
Maitheamh
2020**

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

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COMHALTAS
Rochester Irish Musicians Association

**ALL IN-PERSON
SESSIONS, WORKSHOPS AND EVENTS
ARE CANCELED**

Please see calendar and Facebook for virtual sessions and workshops!

Due to the COVID19 pandemic, until further notice, there will be no in-person sessions, workshops or ceilis.

This includes:

CEILI IS CANCELED (McGinnity's is closed).
NO SINGERS SESSION



Branch website: www.irishrochester.com
Facebook: rochester irish musicians association

**Watch your email for announcements of
Irish music and cultural events.**

We wish that you, your families and loved ones are well and cozy and and dancin' to many tunes. We have been able to establish several virtual sessions, thanks to the amazing local musicians, and locate some beautiful music and tunes on the internet.

Please keep playing, listening and dancing while we look forward to doing it all together again!

Sunday Learners' Session

A playlist of videos with the sheet music for this month's (**and previous months'**) tunes is available here:

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLRLNhqgUnuDoD6asvDcU3jnp2kHVT6wIC>

Virtual Irish Music Session in Lima: May3**Time: 4pm**

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://sjfc.zoom.us/j/95766803365>

Meeting ID: 957 6680 3365

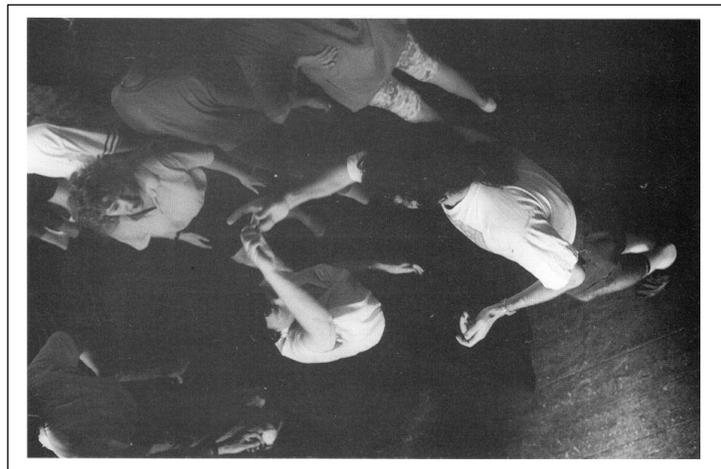
Phone in: +1 646 558 8656 US (New York)

Meeting ID: 957 6680 3365

Join Facebook Event: May 3

Irene Martin
from Dublin
Teaching Irish Set Dancing
Willie Clancy Summer School

- contributed by Leo Meath



**VIRTUAL
IRISH TUNES BY EAR • FREE WORKSHOP**

SECOND SUNDAY OF EVERY MONTH

All melody instruments welcome! Learn Tunes! 2:00-4:00pm



Photos: Cathy McGrath & Bill Hallahan

via Zoom

Join the Rochester Irish Music Association for a **free workshop. May 10**

WHERE: via Zoom

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://sjfc.zoom.us/j/99004574332>

Phone in: +1 646 518 9805 US (New York)

Meeting ID: 990 0457 4332

WHO IS WELCOME?

All acoustic melody instruments

The only prerequisite is that you can play the D and G scales on your instrument.

GOAL: That everyone will learn at least one tune by ear, modeling the method used in most traditional music camps.

WHAT DO YOU NEED?

- Your instrument
- A recording device (smartphone will do!)

WHEN: Second Sunday of the month, 2:00-4:00 pm

COST: Free

Virtual sessions from OAIM: play-along activities ... or, just listen.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hin_unmqFBc

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VyCW11Hgl4k>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2LSBTBY0jyY>





This is an amazing podcast recommendation from Dave! Do check it out!

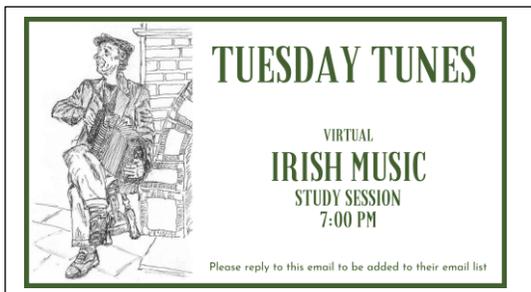
<https://www.stitcher.com/podcast/the-blarney-pilgrims>

CALENDAR of all events

<http://irishrochester.weebly.com/calendar.html>

Facebook Event Links:

<https://www.facebook.com/pg/RochesterIrishMusiciansAssociation/events>



If you would like to be informed of the Tuesday Tunes virtual study session, please contact this email and request to be placed on their list.: rochesterccce@gmail.com

Brendan Behan, not normally a man who prefers social isolation, is maintaining appropriate social distance regulations while on his seat by the banks of the Royal Canal in Dublin.

RollingNews.ie photo.



New book from Michael McCarthy: (historical novel)
The London Years of Stephen Hopkins.

An ordinary man who lived an extraordinary life, Stephen Hopkins, has been analyzed through history for his contributions to the pilgrim settlement of 1620 in what was to become Plymouth, Massachusetts. This story trails his meetings, associates and family members during a four-year period prior to leaving London that laid the foundation for him being included with the oppressed religious Puritans as they escape their persecution. Although not a Puritan, he surfaces as a family man, leader, merchant, and an envoy for the expedition. A man revered for his courage and devotion to family.

His exploits to the Jamestown and Plymouth colonies are well documented and this story does not attempt to repeat that history, but only set it in context. This story attempts to fill the gap in time that lacks detail between his return to England from Jamestown up to leaving London and landing at Cape Cod and Plymouth Plantation. I believe significant events happened during this period with his family, trade business, associates and other influences that affected the long term and quite possibly, the generations that followed for many centuries.

Excerpts from: Michael E. McCarthy, *The London Years of Stephen Hopkins*:

“He looked over the rolling countryside of neatly plowed fields, open meadows of grazing grass with the occasional two or three cows. This setting was too civilized and conventional for comfort. The wild called to him. It was God’s providence for him.”

“The Hopkins children gazed out each side of the carriage at the sight of men in topcoats and hats with fancy canes twirling with each step, women lavishly dressed in full-length flowing dresses as if going to a fancy ball, intermixed with ordinary people like themselves. All were on a mission to go somewhere, interspersed with children of all sizes darting in and out of the crowds of disinterested adults and sidewalk vendors hawking their wares with their carts. Such a noticeable change from the slow-moving life in Winchester.

“What they could not see was the world each person represented – lawyers, members of Parliament, the king’s court, shopkeepers, merchants, housewives, people from the countryside, lifelong city people, foreigners, sailors, soldiers, con-men, prostitutes, and those who had no life at all who spent their days walking the street from nowhere to nowhere. London had it all and the Hopkins children saw it while traveling through the streets to the western end of the city.”

This book is currently readily available as an e-book through various sources including [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com), Barnes and Noble, Apple Books and [Kobo.com](https://www.kobo.com). It soon will be available from these same sources in hardcopy.

However, the hardcopy is now available through my website at: www.michaelmccarthybooks.com. I will happily sign the book and send it out and for a limited time - free shipping. Thank you for your interest.

Best regards,
Mike McCarthy



IrishCentral.

Ireland's history and survival of pandemics before COVID-19

Shane O'Brien [@shamob96](#)

Mar 13, 2020

Ireland has entered full panic mode in the wake of a WHO declaration that Coronavirus should be treated as a pandemic.

This is not Ireland's first pandemic. It is not even Ireland's first pandemic this century.

The **Swine Flu** pandemic of 2009/10 infected upwards of 1.4 billion globally, for instance, and hit Ireland harder than Coronavirus is currently hitting some of Europe's worst-affected nations. More than 3,000 Irish people contracted Swine Flu (H1N1) and 20 people died. A total of more than 7,500 people died across Europe. There was not nearly the same levels of panic or government warnings, and there is one key reason for this.

Social media did not exist in the way it did today. Facebook and Twitter were both in their infancy, while Instagram and Whatsapp did not exist at all. Furthermore, newspapers were still largely confined to print editions and certainly weren't sending push notifications after every newly diagnosed case of Swine Flu. While the death rate was significantly lower than Coronavirus, the infection rate was far higher and as many as 500,000 people died across the world during the 18-month pandemic. A vaccine was eventually discovered for Swine Flu which resulted in a massive decrease in infection rates. Sooner or later, a vaccine will be discovered for Covid-19. Thinking back now, it does not seem like the pandemic lasted 18 months. People went about their lives unabashed and hysteria was kept to a minimum. In truth, that blasé attitude probably contributed to such a high infection rate. A vaccine was discovered for Swine Flu - Rolling News. And that is why the response to this has been so encouraging.

So far, there have been 43 diagnosed cases of **Covid-19** on the island of Ireland and the Irish Government, along with most other national governments, is taking dramatic and unprecedented steps to curb its spread. In fact, governments across the world are treating Coronavirus like it is the Spanish Flu. Spanish Flu was one of the most deadly outbreaks of influenza ever recorded in human history. It infected over 500 million people and killed between 50 million and 100 million people across the world. In a world recently torn apart by the First World War, the Spanish Flu killed everyone indiscriminately. Spanish Flu was equally deadly among the young as it was among the old and was feared the world over. Soldiers passed it on to one another in first aid stations in France and Belgium. Critically ill soldiers were sent away from the front lines in packed railway carts and disease continued to spread. When the war ended, returning soldiers brought Spanish Flu back to their own countries and it spread like wildfire around the globe. Ireland was ravaged by Spanish Flu. In 1918, it accounted for 10% of deaths worldwide. Spanish Flu arrived in Ireland in May 1918 when soldiers returned off the USS Dixie. It arrived in a particularly lethal second wave in the fall of the same year. In total, over 80,000 Irish people were infected and more than 23,000 people died.



But while the Irish Government is treating Covid-19 like it is the Spanish Flu, it does not mean that Covid-19 will end up being like Spanish Flu. In reality, it won't be anything like it.

Firstly and perhaps most obviously, technology and healthcare are far more advanced today than they were over a century ago. Hospitals have access to ventilators that could mean the difference between life and death and quarantine facilities are far more secure. Perhaps even more important is how aware everyone is of the Covid-19 outbreak. In 1918, the Spanish Flu was largely ignored by governments and media in wartorn countries. News of the flu's outbreak was kept out of newspapers to avoid damaging the morale of the people as the war entered its fourth and final year. That could not be any different today.

News about Covid-19 is constantly communicated by governments, media outlets and high-profile medical officials on social media. There is a slew of public health warnings about good hygiene practice and the vast majority of people seem incredibly conscious of hygiene. Most people who returned from Coronavirus-affected regions in Italy, for instance, have voluntarily entered into self-isolation to curb the spread of the virus. Community solidarity in the face of Covid-19 is what will ultimately limit the spread of the virus in the same way that ignorance in 1918 fostered the growth of Spanish Flu. Spanish Flu was so ruthless because it manifested at a time when the western world was on its knees. Soldiers returning from the war were fatigued, as were the people on the home front. Additionally, supplies were low and money was short. Soldiers were packed into crowded hospital wards which enabled the flu to spread exponentially and once it made its way into the slums and tenements in Dublin's inner city, it was almost impossible to stop. Keeping infected patients in close quarters with healthy citizens precipitated an increased infection rate.

That will not happen this time. The stringent measures that the Irish Government recently imposed, including closing schools and colleges for two weeks, will greatly reduce the spread of Coronavirus. If anyone is unfortunate enough to contract the virus, they will be immediately placed in quarantine and anyone they may have been in contact with will be tracked down. That simply wasn't possible in 1918 and it arguably wasn't happening to a satisfactory level in 2009 during the Swine Flu pandemic.

With just 43 confirmed cases of Covid-19, Ireland has acted swiftly in response to Covid-19.

Yet, just because the country is on lockdown does not mean it is time to lose the head. Now is the time not to panic, but to remain calm and follow instructions.

Coronavirus chronicles: Here's some good news amid the dire reports

<https://www.cnet.com/news/coronavirus-chronicles-good-news-amid-the-dire-reports/>



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Comhaltas Rochester T-Shirts are only \$15.
 To purchase a t-shirt,
 Contact Kate Ballard at
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 (put "Beginning Fiddle" in the subject line).

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Newsletter
Bill Hallahan
Music Instrument Library
Mark Gowman

Look for us on Facebook:

Rochester Irish Musician's Association

Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann

MEMBERSHIP AND DUES for 2020

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 (2019) TO OCTOBER 31 (2020). 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.





Jayne Pomplas's releases of February and March are digital-only releases exclusive to Bandcamp

By Daniel Neely

<https://www.irishecho.com/2020/04/pomplas-shows-ny-sligo-sensibility/>

This week my focus will be on not one, but two recently released albums by fiddle player Jayne Pomplas. Pomplas, who hails from upstate New York but seems to find herself away in Ireland most of the time, is a great player well known to New York traditional music fans, as she has been part of the scene since she was very, very young. She's got a couple albums to her credit ("Traditional Irish Music on Fiddle" [2015] and "My Mind Will Never Be Easy" with Luke Deaton [2018]) and these two new additions are very welcome, indeed

Jayne's other album:

Lost & Found with Jos Kelly and Darren Roche

<https://jaynepomplas.bandcamp.com/>

Other links to Jayne's music:

https://comhaltas.ie/music/detail/comhaltaslive_461_1jayne_pomplas

<https://soundcloud.com/www-tradconnect-com/jayne-pomplas-the-ceilier>

<https://open.spotify.com/artist/1hdUYp5FbGbGgkwojhQsZf>

or, just Google her name ...

