

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



## **Newsletter**

May/June 2019

**Márta  
agus  
Aibreán  
2019**

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

### **In This Issue:**

Concert	1-4
Upcoming Events	5
Irish Heritage Month Events and St. Pat's celebrations	5-7
Spring Ceili	7
Music Clubs	7
Ads	8
Officers, etc.	9
Sessions	10



## **Brian Conway & Pat Egan**

Summer Concert

First Baptist Church, 94 South Main Street, Fairport  
**June 22, 2019**

With music workshops on Sunday, June 23  
Location to be announced



Brian Conway is a contemporary Sligo-style Irish fiddler. Brian Conway is an American born Irish Fiddler. Born in 1961 to parents from County Tyrone in Northern Ireland, he first studied with Limerick born fiddle player Martin Mulvihill.

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

**Watch your email and online announcements for concert ticket information as well as workshop details.**

**Brian Conway returns to Rochester with Pat Egan**

Brian Conway Is the Irish Echo's Top Trad Artist for 2008

The Bronx-Born Fiddler Had a Standout Year

By Earle Hitchner

*[Published on January 28, 2009, in the IRISH ECHO newspaper, New York City]*

Consider the credentials: He is the pre-eminent exponent of Sligo-style fiddling in New York. He is a music teacher of proven dedication and success. He is a weekly session leader of unflagging energy and generosity. He is a founding member of a superlative quartet called the Pride of New York. He is a musician who has consciously stepped up his concerts and tours and thus gained a stronger global reputation. He is a recording artist with three outstanding albums during the past six years, including his most impressive CD to date, "Consider the Source," issued in 2008. It finished a hairsbreadth behind Billy McComiskey's "Outside the Box" for the Irish Echo's No. 1 traditional album of last year.

It is fitting that Brian Conway is now in the same elite list as his beloved friend and mentor, Andy McGann (1928-2004), who was a direct link back to Sligo fiddling legend Michael Coleman (1891-1945) in New York City. Coleman, McGann, Martin Wynne (1913-1998), James "Lad" O'Beirne (1911-1980), James Morrison (1893-1947), Paddy Killoran (1904-1965), and Paddy Sweeney (1894-1974) are all part of a Sligo-shaped New York fiddling fraternity and represent a nexus of breathtaking scale. It would make any younger fiddler's head spin, yet the 47-year-old Conway has admirably risen to this challenge of connection while also burnishing his profile as a musician of separate, consummate skill.

All of his albums reflect esteem for those fiddling forebears without any trace of slavish imitation. They include "The Apple in Winter" with fiddler Tony DeMarco in 1981; "First Through the Gate," Conway's magnificent solo debut that was the Irish Echo's No. 1 traditional album of 2002; and "A Tribute to Andy McGann," a superb 2007 homage that Conway recorded with button accordionist Joe Burke and pianist Felix Dolan.

But "Consider the Source," a Clo Iar-Chonnachta CD in 2008, tops them all. Conway's fiddling unflinchingly finds the elusive seam binding virtuosity, vitality, risk, and invention. It is a must-have recording.



Those who can, do and teach, and Conway is one of the best music instructors anywhere. This busy Deputy Chief of the Public Integrity Bureau in the Westchester County District Attorney's Office in White Plains, N.Y., can claim Maeve Flanagan (his niece), Dylan Foley, Pat Mangan, Kira Jewett, Colin and Brian Lindsay, Gene Bender, Shane Cornyn, Kathleen Parkes, and Caitlin Finley as past or present fiddle students who benefited greatly from his tutelage. Conway also uses the Internet to instruct Ceilidh Briscoe, a young girl in British Columbia, as well as other young pupils in the Detroit area. This past summer he additionally taught at the Catskills Irish Arts Week in East Durham, N.Y.

For the past 11 years Conway has organized and hosted a very popular Wednesday night session in Dunne's Pub in White Plains. His guests have included Joanie Madden, Catherine McEvoy, John Whelan, Jerry O'Sullivan, and Felix and Brendan Dolan, but the emphasis is on inclusiveness to encourage beginner, journeyman, and high-profile performers alike.

Throughout his musical life Brian Conway has paid the highest respect to those who came before and made an enduring difference. The Irish Echo is proud to pay its highest respect to Brian Conway for making the same enduring difference by naming him the Traditionalist of the Year for 2008. It is this newspaper's most prestigious annual accolade for accomplishment in Irish traditional music.

### **Discography**

(To purchase as CD, please email [sligofiddle@yahoo.com](mailto:sligofiddle@yahoo.com))

*Consider The Source*, Cló Iar-Chonnachta, 2008

*A Tribute to Andy McGann*, Cló Iar-Chonnachta, 2007

*First through the Gate*, Smithsonian Folkways, 2002

*Irish in America: A Music Record of the Irish People in the United States*, Folk Legacy, 2001

*The Celtic Fiddle of Liz Knowles*, Lyrichord Discs, 1998

*The Boston College Irish Fiddle Festival: My Love is in America*, Green Linnet, 1991

*The Rights of Man: The Concert for Joseph Doherty*, Green Linnet, 1990

*Playing with Fire: The Celtic Fiddle Collection*, Green Linnet, 1989

*Joe Burke: The Tailor's Choice*, Green Linnet, 1983

*The Apple in Winter - Brian Conway & Tony DeMarco*, Green Linnet, 1981

<http://www.brianconway.com/index.html>

### **Links to videos:**

Brian Conway & Brendan Dolan (2016)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5zqLS0h2dME>

Brian Conway & John Whelan & Don Penzien (2012)

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

Comhaltas Live: Brian Conway & Brendan Dolan

Good example of Sligo-style fiddle

[https://comhaltas.ie/music/detail/comhaltaslive\\_311\\_1\\_brian\\_conway\\_and\\_felix\\_dolan](https://comhaltas.ie/music/detail/comhaltaslive_311_1_brian_conway_and_felix_dolan)





## Patrick Egan

From Tipperary, Ireland, began singing and playing the guitar at an early age and took lessons from Phil Kelly at the National School. After meeting other singers and musicians, he moved to Dublin. He later moved to Westport, County Mayo and began playing at sessions seven days a week. He played on the famous recording, "Live from Matt Malloys." He went on tour with Olcan Masterson throughout Europe and the US, recording (cassette tape) "Westport Town." After moving to the USA, he toured with Paddy O'Brien and Michael Cooney for twelve years. Pat also taught guitar and singing at festivals including the Catskills Irish Arts Week in East Durham, NY. Pat has won awards and grants for his teaching and mentoring musicians and singers. In 2014, he won the Washington Area Music Association "Wammy" award for the best Traditional/Singer.

Patrick developed an interest in Old Time music while living in St. Louis – playing with fiddle player Barbara Weathers and national steel and old time banjo player, Tom Hall. He also recorded with Old Time banjo player Dave Landreth on his CD, Chairs. Patrick still enjoys traveling the U.S. to play with and listen to Old Time and Irish musicians.

After St. Louis, Patrick lived for a few years in Fairfield Iowa where he played frequently with uilleann piper and former bandmate Tim Britton before moving to Baltimore, Maryland in the fall of 2003. Patrick still tours regularly with Paddy O'Brien and new Chulrua member, fiddle player Patrick Orceau.

Patrick has taught at numerous workshops at festivals throughout the U.S. including Alaska. He has taught at the Tionól in St. Louis and has been teaching for the past two years at the Catskills Irish Arts Week in East Durham, NY. Patrick has made extensive tours of the United States, and has also performed in Sweden, Norway, Holland, Germany, Scotland, Spain and France. He has appeared on numerous television and radio programs in Ireland and abroad.



**Catskills Irish Arts Week 2019  
Featured**

**Dylan Foley, Dan Gurney & Pat Egan**

### Video links:

Pat Egan and Laura Byrne (2011)  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NVyJLb05BQ>

Alex Caton & Pat Egan (2011)  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9sBdzDBIk-M>



**Upcoming Events**

- Saturday, May 4 Box Club meets 10-12 at home of Jon Berkner
- Saturday, May 4 Ceili at McGinnity's, 534 West Ridge Road, Rochester
- Saturday, June 1 Box Club meets 10-12 at home of Jon Berkner
- Saturday, June 15 Celtic Faire, Genesee Country Village & Museum  
Comhaltas musicians will perform at the Exhibition Hall, 10:30-11:30 and 1-2 pm and, at the Wehle Gallery, 2-3 pm.  
There will be a jam session for all musicians to play Irish music at the pub on the hill.
- Saturday, June 22 Concert (see pages 1-4)
- Sunday, June 23 Irish music workshops with Brian Conway and Pat Egan
- August 17 & 18 Fiddlers Faire (schedule yet to be determined)
- Saturday, November 2 Annual Comhaltas Workshops at St. John Fisher College

**Celebrations of Irish American Culture**

[Irish American Heritage Month](#)



Siamsa at Henrietta Library



Siamsa at Ogden Library



Siamsa at Penfield Library



Siamsa at Webster Library

Photos: Jim Gilmore

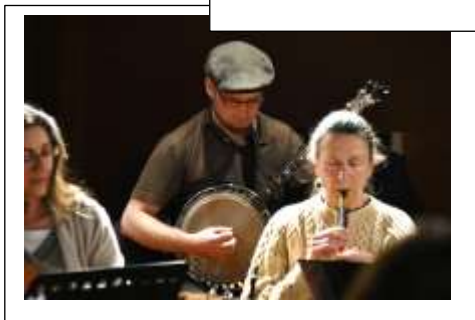


Innisfree plays for the 13<sup>th</sup> year at the American Hotel, Lima, NY  
Annual St. Patrick's Day Concert



Monday Session – St. Patrick's Day Party

photos by Alan Eldridge



St. Patrick's Day celebration and joint session: Monday & Learners' Sessions  
Hosted by Rick Muir and Brickstone



## Spring Ceili

May 4.

8 pm, \$5 for Comhaltas members, \$7 for nonmembers, children with parent are free  
Bring an item for the Raffle and receive free admission  
McGinnity's Restaurant and Party House, 534 W Ridge Rd, Rochester, NY 14615

## Music club activities

### May 4, 2019

Box Club, 10:00 am – 12:00 noon Meets at home of Jon Berkner  
407 Edgewood Ave in Brighton, 585 953 5670. [jonasan@rochester.rr.com](mailto:jonasan@rochester.rr.com)

### May 12, 2019

Learn a tune by ear Workshop, 2:00-4:00 pm. Room #113, 2-4 pm at Pittsford  
Recreation Center, 35 Lincoln Ave., Pittsford, NY.

### June 1, 2019

Box Club, 10:00 am – 12:00 noon Meets at home of Jon Berkner  
407 Edgewood Ave in Brighton, 585 953 5670. [jonasan@rochester.rr.com](mailto:jonasan@rochester.rr.com)

### June 9, 2019

Learn a tune by ear Workshop, 2:00-4:00 pm. Room #113, 2-4 pm at Pittsford  
Recreation Center, 35 Lincoln Ave., Pittsford, NY.



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[www.ms.dance](http://www.ms.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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Phone: 585-381-2605  
2509 Browncroft Blvd., Rochester, NY 14625





**Branch Officers - 2019**

Cathoirleach (Chair)  
Ben Hockenberry  
Leas-Cathoirleach (Vice Chair)  
Mark Ballard  
Runai (Secretary)  
Bill Hallahan  
Cisteoir (Treasurer)  
Lynn Pilaroscia  
Míchoir (Auditor)  
Shawn Casey  
Youth Officer  
Lydia Fanara  
Youth Protection Officer  
Gavin Barry  
Public Relations Officer  
Dave Halligan

**Programs**

Music Events  
Dave Halligan  
Kate Ballard  
Ceili Dancing  
Arlene Miller  
Membership  
Bill Hallahan  
Singers' Session  
Chris Brennan  
Music Learner's Session  
Mark Ballard  
Website & Facebook  
Ben Hockenberry  
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 2019

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 (2018) TO OCTOBER 31 (2019). 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.



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

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

**Last Sunday of every month:**

**the bar is open but not the kitchen;  
bring a snack to share**

**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.

**Every Monday:**

**Colie's Café**, Nazareth College campus

7:00-8:00 pm waltz session

8:00-9:00 pm: jigs, reels, etc. Beginners are especially welcome and the use of sheet music is acceptable, copies & pdfs are available.

Ben's website for the Monday session:

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

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

**OTHER TRADITIONAL IRISH & CELTIC MUSIC SESSIONS****Every Tuesday:**

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

**Every Saturday:**

**Barry's Old School Irish**, 2 W Main St. Webster.

2:00-5:30 pm. 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> .

