

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



Newsletter

November/December 2019

**Samhain
agus
Nollaig**

2019

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

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Irish Music Concert

Friday, December 6, 2019



Abanalan, Irish for “Beautiful River”

Come and listen to a new traditional Irish band.

Admission: \$20 for non-Comhaltas members, \$15 for members
8 pm at First Baptist Church
94 South Main Street, Fairport, NY 14450

Branch website: www.irishrochester.com

Facebook: rochester irish musicians association

**Watch your email and online
announcements for concerts, ceili's and
workshop details.**

Abanalan, Irish for “Beautiful River”, officially launched at [Pausa Art House](#) on Saturday, April 3rd, 2016 to a standing room-only crowd. The band includes regional standouts in the Irish trad scene (left to right): Tim Benson (Uilleann pipes, flute, whistles, fiddle), Stephanie Benson (fiddle), Maureen Bluett (vocals, bodhran and mandolin), and Mark Warford (cittern, tenor guitar, vocals). *Abanalan* features inspired sets of Irish dance tunes and song arrangements infused with a unique alchemy.

About Abanalan:

Ohio native **Tim Benson** became interested in the uilleann pipes as a teenager. Involvement with the Ulster Project at that time exposed him to recordings of traditional Irish music, and spawned the beginning of a life-long relationship with the pipes. Some of his earliest influences came through recordings of the Chieftains and of Joe McKenna. After attaining a practice set of pipes made by Michael Brennan of East Lake, OH, Tim received introductory lessons from Michael Kilbane through the Academy of Irish Music in Cleveland, OH. He later received more advanced tuition from piper Kieran O'Hare, and attended influential workshops at Scoil Acla in 2002 with Ciaran O'Malley and Robbie Hannan. He began teaching uilleann pipes at the Riley School of Irish Music in Cincinnati, OH while attending college at Xavier University. For several years Tim enjoyed performing at a wide array of venues around the mid-west, both independently and with Irish traditional groups Silver Arm and with the Cleveland-based Portersharks. He recorded albums with both groups, and appeared on *The Road to Riley*, a recording of Riley School faculty.



Driven by a desire to acquire a deeper understanding of the instrument, Tim devoted himself to making uilleann pipes after settling in Western New York in December 2006. Consequently, he has rediscovered the simplicity, beauty, and mystique of the instrument. He is joined in this venture by his partner Stephanie Cornelius, a fiddle player and mechanical engineer from Western New York, who provides design & fabrication support, and makes hand-stitched bags and bellows. Together they work to produce sets of all configurations in their shop located 30 miles east of Buffalo.

Tim primarily works with the traditional turnery woods associated with bagpipe making, such as ebony, the rosewoods, and boxwood. Brass and nickel silver are employed for the metal work. He has a great appreciation for pipes made by classic makers such as Leo Rowsome and the Taylor brothers, and has been influenced greatly through the invaluable guidance of a few modern masters.



Stephanie Benson is a mechanical engineer and highly accomplished fiddler as well as an avid hockey player and mom of three. Since 2006, Tim and his wife Stephanie have specialized in building Irish uilleann pipes. Check out their website at www.bensonuilleannpipes.com.

Maureen Bluett has been playing Irish music in WNY since 2006, starting with the bodhrán and then adding mandolin and vocals. She plays regularly at area seisiúns including Nietzsche's, and at Ceili's and contradances with Resistance is Futile. She is also a member of Setanta with Gregor Harvey and Mark Warford.

Mark Warford has been a staple of the Buffalo Irish music scene for many years. He cofounded the seisiún at Nietzsche's, the only weekly Irish music seisiún in the area, 15 years ago. He anchored the First Thursday seisiún at the Shannon Pub for many years. and is also a member of Setanta. You can see him playing bouzouki, cittern, guitar and singing at various venues around WNY.

Together they make up Abanalan and perform a traditional Irish repertoire including jigs, slipjigs, reels, hornpipes, airs and ballads. Their wide array of tunes, songs and instruments make them a delight to listen to.



18th Annual Irish Music & Dance workshops November 2, 2019

Free 12:00 noon - 4 pm at St. John Fisher College, 3690 East Ave, Rochester NY
<http://irishrochester.weebly.com/irish-cultural-day-at-fisher>

Session A: 12:30-1:30	Session B: 1:45-2:45	Session C: 3:00-4:00
Irish Dance <i>with the Fisher Irish Dance Club</i>	Old-Style (Sean-Nos) Dance <i>with Kathy Whitfield</i>	Social Dancing – Ceilis and Sets <i>with Kathy Whitfield</i>
Session Tunes, All Instruments <i>with Tony Scalise</i>	Anglo Concertina <i>with Jim Kimball</i>	Accordion <i>with Bob English</i>
Variation and Ornamentation <i>with Mark Gowman</i>	Guitar Accompaniment <i>with Cathy McGrath</i>	Playing by Ear <i>with Alyssa Rodriguez</i>
Fiddle <i>with Steph Benson</i>	Beginner Fiddle <i>with Mark Ballard</i>	Fiddle <i>with Ben Goehring</i>
Harp <i>with Mary Lester</i>	Irish Language and Song <i>with Brian Clancy</i>	Singing <i>with Mary Lester and Becky Farrell-Ferrigno</i>
Bodhrán/Irish Drum <i>with Kate Ballard</i>	Tenor Banjo and Mandolin <i>with Mike Keyes</i>	Drums for Pipe Bands (practice pads only) <i>with the Gates Keystone Police Pipe Band</i>
Beginner Tin Whistle <i>with James Hallahan</i>	Intermediate Tin Whistle <i>with Ralph Minervino</i>	Hornpipes for all instruments <i>with Mike Keyes</i>
Highland Bagpipes (practice chanters only) <i>with the Gates Keystone Police Pipe Band</i>	Uilleann Pipes (Irish bagpipes) <i>with Tim Benson</i>	Flute <i>with Tim Benson</i>



Irish Day Workshops

Location

Kearney Hall
(The building with a spire, visible from East Ave)
St. John Fisher College
3690 East Ave
Rochester, NY 14618

We'll get together on the 1st Floor in Cleary Auditorium, and disperse to classrooms at 12:30.

Parking is free! Visitors can park in the A lot, which is very close to Kearney Hall, straight ahead from the East Avenue entrance.

If parking lot A is full, lots C, D, E, and F are also free for visitors on that day.

Annual General Meeting

of the Comhaltas Ceoltoiri Eireann Tom Finucane Branch

October 27, 2019 at Johnny's Irish Pub, 1382 Culver Rd, Rochester, NY 14609

- Election of officers: the following officers were elected for 2019-2020:
 - a. Chair: Dave Halligan
 - b. Vice Chair: Mark Ballard
 - c. Secretary: Bill Hallahan
 - d. Treasurer: Lynn Pilaroscia
 - e. Auditor: Peg Halligan
 - f. Youth Officer: Lydia Fanara
 - g. Youth Protection Officer: Gavin Barry
 - h. Public Relations Officer: Dave Halligan, assisted by Jessica Kamens
- Comhaltas North American convention, April 16-19, 2020 in San Francisco, Calif.
- Musical tribute for Joe Dady, November 16, 2019. "A Show for Joe" (nearly sold out, tickets \$50).



**Banjo Burke – trad concert,
celebrating Erie Canal**

Bruce Foley, John Nolan, Dylan Foley, Pauline
Conneely, Patrick Doocey

October 12, 2019

INTERNATIONAL
UILLEANN
PIPING DAY

Saturday 2nd
November 2019



Fall Ceili**Saturday, November 30**

7:30-11pm at McGinnity's, 534 W Ridge Rd, Rochester, NY 14615

Admission: \$7 non-Comhaltas members; \$5 for members

Live music

All are welcome, no experience necessary, instruction provided.

Music club activities**November 2, 2019**

Box Club, postponed – please attend the Irish Day workshop

November 9, 2019

Irish Tunes by Ear workshop

Location: Pittsford Recreation Center, 35 Lincoln Ave, Pittsford, NY, Room #113.

Time: 12:00-2:00 PM

December 7, 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

December 14, 2019

Learn a tune by ear Workshop, 12:00-2:00 pm. Room #113, 2-4 pm at Pittsford Recreation Center, 35 Lincoln Ave., Pittsford, NY.

Reminder: celebrate the Celtic New Year, **renew your membership in Comhaltas**. Renewal forms have been mailed to 2019 paid members; watch your mail. If you wish to join Comhaltas, the membership form can be downloaded from the website: <http://irishrochester.weebly.com/>.



The John O'Sullivan Memorial Film Series

At St. John's Meadows

October - April 2019-2020

4:00 - 7: 00 p.m.

St. John's Meadows has easy handicap access, parking in front of building, full buffet, drinks, and signage will direct attendees to the door.

Join members of the Rochester Chapter of the Irish American Cultural Institute for a feis that celebrates some of Ireland's best films.

Buffet will be supplied by the Briarwood Catering and will change monthly. Cash bar available. We will eat first and follow with the film and discussion.

October 6th: **Brand Irish** Documentary 102 min. 2015

There is more to the Irish than meets the eye! With a diaspora of 75 million, the Irish brand is huge. Here is a look at the role the Irish have played in world culture.

November 3rd: **P.S. I Love You** Drama, Romance 126 min. 2007

A young widow discovers that her late husband has left her 10 messages to help her start a new life.

January 5th: **Song of the Sea** Animation 93 min. 2014

An Irish boy and his sister(a Selkie) go on an adventure to free the Faries and save the spirit world.

February 9th: **Leap Year** Comedy 100 min. 2010

A woman travels to Dublin to propose to her boyfriend on Leap Day. Will it work?

March 1st: **Hunger** Drama 96 min. 2008

Hunger follows life in the Maze Prison with an interpretation of the events surrounding the 1981 IRA hunger strike.

April 5th: **Circle of Friends** Drama, Romance 103 min. 1995

Based on the Maeve Binchey novel. A coming of age story of 3 girls from an Irish village, attending college in post WWII Dublin.

Contact: Katherine McMahon- Flynn kmcfly@gmail.com



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Longview Plaza--1742 Long Pond Road

www.rns.dance
227-6614




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).



Brennan Genealogical Research

Christopher Brennan, MA, MLS
Genealogical and Historical Researcher
116 Wildwood Drive, Rochester, NY 14616
585-319-3806 cristoir@twc.com

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Branch Officers - 2019

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Mark Ballard
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Cisteoir (Treasurer)
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Music Learner's Session
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Website & Facebook
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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.



Comhaltas-Sponsored Music Sessions, Dancing, Singing

1st 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> .

2nd Sunday of each month Geneva Irish Session -, 1 - 4 pm at **Bottomless Brewing**, 3543 E.

Lake Road, Geneva. The next Geneva Irish Session is Sunday, Oct. 13 from 1:00 - 4:00 (Beginners - 1:00 - 2:00, Open Session 2:00 - 4:00), and the following one will be Sunday, November 10.

Leader: Kit Fallon

