



SCÉAL ÉILE



THE NEWSLETTER OF THE COOLEY-KEEGAN BRANCH OF COMHALTAS CEOLTÓIRÍ ÉIREANN

FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Dear Friends and Members,

We had an enjoyable and successful Children's Céilí a few weeks ago, featuring a number of special guests who added some new life and variety to the afternoon's activities. Bruce Culbertson led a fine tin whistle workshop for the dozen or so kids in attendance (see photo on page 3), which not only covered some of the basics of playing, but included learning the beginning of a simple jig. He also generously provided a recording of several traditional tunes to each family in attendance, so everyone can remember how they go.... Bruce then switched over to the fiddle, and joined in providing the live music for the dancing portion of the afternoon, in which the young folks were joined by some of their parents in popular céilí dances. The singing portion of the day also included a special treat, as David Winters taught a song or two, then led the sing-along with all the children.

For the past few years, our branch has hosted four of these Children's Céilís each year. They probably represent the most direct way that Comhaltas can fulfill its purpose of supporting and passing along aspects of traditional Irish culture to future generations. There is considerable interest (at all levels within Comhaltas) in expanding this type of outreach to younger members of the community, both by increasing the level of participation and perhaps the frequency of such events. This will be a challenge, however, as these céilís are also entirely supported and run on a volunteer basis: Michael and Maureen Murphy have both devoted many hours to making these successful, and deserve great credit. To expand the Children's céilís in a meaningful way in the

future would require a broadening of these efforts, involving more of us in making our friends with families aware of the opportunity, and in putting the céilís on.

It's been nearly two years now (hard to believe!), since I sent out a short little questionnaire to the membership about "what should Comhaltas be doing?" Since that time, our branch has expanded its activities in a number of new directions, largely because specific members – some newcomers, some longer term – have put their energy into making them happen, and the results have been impressive. As we start a new year, then, I have no doubt that we can indeed make the Comhaltas events for children more rewarding and more accessible, if as a group we choose to make it a priority, and if individual members contribute their talents and time to doing so.....

Best wishes for the holidays & hope to see you on December 14th!

Slan,
Michael R.

GENERAL MEETINGS

The next General Meetings of the membership will be on Tuesday, December 2nd and January 6th at 7:30 p.m. at the United Irish Cultural Center (2700 45th Ave. at Sloat). All members are encouraged to participate in the planning and discussion of our branch's activities.



COMHALTAS CEOLTÓIRÍ ÉIREANN IS IRELAND'S PREMIÈRE CULTURAL MOVEMENT, FOUNDED IN 1951. WHEN YOU JOIN COMHALTAS, YOU JOIN PEOPLE FROM MORE THAN 400 BRANCHES WORLDWIDE IN SUPPORT OF THE TRADITIONAL IRISH ARTS OF MUSIC, DANCE, AND LANGUAGE. WE WELCOME NEW MEMBERS. PLEASE CONTACT THE CHAIRMAN OR MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY FOR MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION OR VISIT US AT SF.CCEWEST.ORG!

☞ SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS ☞

THE WREN BOYS ARE COMING ~ DECEMBER 26TH!!

Meet at the Murphy House, 1959 17th Ave. at 6:15 p.m. on Friday, Dec 26th. We go from house to house; pub to pub; and tree to tree! Wren Boy costumes are strongly encouraged. For info. contact Michael Murphy, 415-564-7188.

This is a Western Ireland custom where people dress up like farm boys and various disguises and go to either people's houses or the pubs, and recite the Wren Verse, and then dance or sing or play music or all three, and then pass the hat around.

The disguises range anywhere from blackened faces, masks, veils, fake facial hair, wigs, various unusual hats. (Ralph wore a milk carton on his head once.) Clothing consists of farm-type wear. Overalls, flannel shirts (the kind lumberjacks wear), jeans, etc. So come out and join us for a night of fun and laughs!

MEMBERSHIP DUES

Please remember that CCE Membership dues for 2004 are due. You are welcome to bring renewal forms and fees to set dancing and give to either Joannie, Moe, or Josephine, or please mail in ASAP. If you need more information, contact Joannie O'Leary. You can also pay electronically, on the CCE website at: http://sf.ccewest.org/misc/join_cceck.html

☞ CLIFFORD-HOBAN BRANCH ☞

The Clifford-Hoban Branch in the Santa Cruz -Monterey will host a **monthly céilí** on Friday, **December 12th**, at the Felton Community Hall (6191 Hwy 9 in Felton). Lessons begin at 7:30pm and the céilí begins at 8pm with a live band. \$10 for adults, children are free when accompanied by an adult.

They have also been hosting **slow seisiúns**. Please contact Linda Preston (831-688-5729) for information on these events.

☞ IRISH LANGUAGE & CULTURAL EVENTS ☞

A Chairde!

Friends!

Beidh fáilte romhaibh anseo i Hayward don Oíche Ghaeltachta, Dé Domhnaigh an 21ú Nollaig. (an triú Domhnach de mhí, mar is gnáth), le haghaidh comhrá as Gaeilge agus seisiún ceoil agus amhránaíochtá ar an tsean-nós. An chéad ceann eile: 18 Eanáir 2004! Seoaldh agus treoreacha le fáil, ach déan teagmháil liom: Gaeilge@ccewest.org, 510 881 5958

You will be welcome here in Hayward for the next Gaeltacht Night, on Sunday the 21st of December (the third Sunday of the month, as usual), for conversation in Irish and a music and sean-nós singing session. The next one: 18 January, 2004! Get in touch with me for directions: Gaeilge@ccewest.org, 510 881 5958.

"Ádh an phóta" don dhínnéar, agus seisiún sa gháirdín ina dhiaidh sin, más mian linn (cuirfidh muid tine síos má tá an aimsir fuair), nó beidh muid sa teach dá mbeadh sé ro-fhuar. Íosfaidh muid thart fá 6:30/7.00, agus cuirfidh muid tús ar an seisiún ag a 8:00pm nó mar sin.

Potluck for the dinner, and a session in the garden after that, if we like (we'll have a fire if the weather is cold), or we'll be in the house if it should be too cold. We'll eat at around 6.30/7.00, and start the session at 8:00 or so.

Nikki Ragsdale,
Treoraí na Gaeilge, CCE

☞ EDITOR'S NOTE ☞

Please contact me no later than the 15th of each month for items to be included in the next issue of the Scéal Eile. This includes updates for regular monthly events! My email address is danalregan@hotmail.com (Dana L. Regan) or my work number is 415-665-4505. Thank you!



☞ COOLEY-KEEGAN BRANCH OFFICERS ☞

CHAIRMAN: MICHAEL RIEMER (chair@ccewest.org) 510-548-4727

VICE CHAIRMAN/WEBMASTER: MICHAEL DUFFY (vicechair@ccewest.org or webmaster@ccewest.org) 650-592-2602

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NEWSLETTER EDITOR: DANA REGAN (sceal@ccewest.org) • YOUTH OFFICER: Siobhan McDonagh

☞ CCÉ DANCING ☞



On the **first Thursday** of every month from 8 to 11 p.m., we meet for **SET DANCING** to live music provided by the Shannon Céilí Band at the **Plough and Stars** pub on Clement Street between 2nd and 3rd Ave., San Francisco.



On the other **Thursdays**, we gather for **SET DANCING LESSONS** that are free to members, from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. at the **Sunset Recreation Center** (Lawton St. at 28th Ave). Immediately following these classes, we head over to the **Plough and Stars** (at about 9:30 pm) for more set dancing to the inspiring sounds of Topsy House, who play especially for the sets we are calling! Dancers are encouraged to contribute about \$5 to help support this great opportunity.

☞ MUSIC SEISIÚNS ☞

Our **Slow Seisiúns** are intended for beginners who are learning to play traditional Irish tunes. These are usually held twice each month at **Ireland's 32** pub (3920 Geary Blvd, S.E., between 3rd and 4th Avenues). This month they will be on Monday, **December 8th & 29th** beginning at 7:30pm. Starting at 9:00 pm, more experienced musicians are encouraged to join in on the faster paced, more **Traditional Seisiún** which follows. All are welcome to come listen as well! If you have questions, contact Michael Riemer or Michael Duffy.



Michael Duffy is hosting a **slow seisiún** at the **Plough and Stars** once a month (nominally on the third Tuesday of the month, starting about 8:00pm). This month it will be on **December 16th**.



Bruce Culbertson leads the whistle workshop at the recent Children's Céilí.

☞ MORE DANCING ☞

News for those who fondly remember the Palo Alto Céilí, started by Valery Deem, and continued until last year by Lynn Ferry. Unfortunately the YWCA, where it was held every month, has had to close its doors because of budget cuts. But the same event has sprung up again, now led by Lucy Geever and in a new location. So we announce ...

THE SAN JOSE CÉILÍ

Irish Céilí Dance with music by "Cooking with Turf." **December 20th** (every 3rd Saturday of the month) from 7:30--10:30pm at the **Trinity Cathedral**, 81 N 2nd Street at St. John Street, San Jose. Adults are \$10, students \$5, and kids are free. Email Jonathan at: ceili@doves.demon.co.uk or, www.doves.demon.co.uk/ceili, or call Lucy 408-885-0811 for more information.



Josephine Moore is teaching **set dancing classes** at the **United Irish Cultural Center** (2700 45th Avenue - across from the SF Zoo) on **Wednesdays**. Classes will start at 8pm. In the past, they have started later, but Josephine has asked to start earlier, or classes may have to be discontinued! So, please try to arrive earlier!



Set Dancing in San Mateo - For those who do not know - **Josephine Moore** leads set dancing every Tuesday night at 8:30pm at **O'Neill's Pub** on B Street in San Mateo . It's a nice pub with several local restaurants providing meals delivered to the pub. Attendance has been very low the last few months, and if it does not pick up soon, this class may be canceled. We are very lucky to have as much set dancing as we do in the bay area, let's not take it for granted. Please support Josephine if you can. You can reach her at 650-372-9659 for further details.



Michael Murphy is teaching at **Scruffy Murphy's** - 187 S. Murphy Ave, in Sunnyvale on **Wednesday, December 10th**. Lessons start at 8:00 pm and dancing to live music begins at 9:00 pm. More information can be obtained by calling him at 415-564-7188. The January dates are the 14th and 28th - mark your calendars!

☞ SONG & STORYTELLING ☞

The next Song and Storytelling Session will be at 8pm, **Wednesday, December 3rd** at Imelda White's home. Please RSVP so she can have an idea of how many to expect. Imelda's address is 275 Lassen Avenue, Mountain View. She can be reached at: 650-964-7643 or iwhite@stanford.edu

❖ DECEMBER EVENTS ❖

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|----------|--------------------|--|
| Sunday | 14th 21st | Christmas Céilí at the UICC ~ 7-10pm Gaeltacht Night ~ Potluck dinner in Hayward |
| Monday | 8th & 29th | Cooley Keegan Seisiún at Ireland's 32 (Slow Seisiún at 7:30 pm) |
| Tuesday | 7th | General Membership meeting at UICC ~ 7:30pm |
| Thursday | 2nd 11th & 18th | Set dancing at the Plough, with the Shannon Céilí Band ~ 8:00pm Dancing at Sunset Rec. Center, 7:30pm, then on to the Plough with Topsy House |
| Friday | 26th | Wren Boys meet at the Murphy home ~ 6:15pm |

PLEASE REMEMBER YOUR MEMBERSHIP DUES



**Cooley-Keegan Branch of
Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann
P. O. Box 16244
San Francisco, CA 94116**



COMHALTAS CEOLTÓIRÍ ÉIREANN
THE COOLEY-KEEGAN BRANCH

CHRISTMAS CÉILÍ

Join us for an evening of music,
singing and dancing

Music by: The Shannon Céilí Band

Special Guests: The Celtic Dance Ensemble

WHEN: Sunday, December 14, 2003

WHERE: United Irish Cultural Center
2700 45th Avenue, San Francisco

TIME: 7 p.m. to 10 p.m.

COST: Adults: \$10.00. Children: Free

For Information, call Michael Riemer, Chairman at (510) 548-4727

Please visit our website at: sf.ccwest.org