

July 2002

Scéal Eile

Iúil 2002

The newsletter of the **Cooley-Keegan Branch** of
COMHALTAS CEOLTÓIRÍ ÉIREANN

P. O. Box 16244 San Francisco, CA 94116

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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. Visit our web site at www.ccewest.org!

☰ FROM THE CHAIRMAN...

Dear Friends and Members,

Summer Greetings to all of you in the Comhaltas community!

It was a great pleasure to see so many familiar faces, and dancing feet, at the party on June 1st in honor of Jim Belcher and his contributions to our group. The nostalgic aspects were even kept at bay to some extent by the good news that Jim will be able to visit us (and dance, of course!) with some regularity over this summer, as he makes the transition in working from here to Seattle.

Looking ahead a bit to the end of summer, I'd like to announce that near the end of August, our branch of Comhaltas will be holding a one-day Irish Music Workshop, which will serve as a "kickoff" event for our music instruction program. While the details are still being ironed out, we are planning to provide an introduction and some instruction on a variety of traditional Irish instruments to those at beginner and intermediate levels, so keep your eyes open for a separate flyer describing this special event!

In looking forward to the longer term for the developing music program, there is one very obvious obstacle to those who are interested in learning to play: having access to a decent instrument on which to learn and practice. For many people, buying any instrument beyond a

tin whistle is in one sense a risky investment, especially if they have to do so just to explore the possibility, before they have had any lessons or experience. This is particularly true for parents whose children may want to learn. To help reduce this barrier, our Comhaltas branch is looking to develop a modest collection of instruments which interested beginners could borrow for a limited time, to ensure that no one is prevented from trying out their hand at traditional Irish music for lack of access to an instrument. Please see the short article within this issue for further information about this.

Many of us are either in the middle of planning or already embarked on summer holidays, trips abroad or other special events. In keeping with this, a few of our "regular" events are similarly on a month or two of holiday, so please check within this newsletter for details of what is happening in July, or contact the organizers if you are unsure.

Slán,

Michael Riemer

GENERAL MEETING

Our next General Meeting, which is open to ALL MEMBERS, will be on **Tuesday, July 2, 2001 at 7:30 p.m.** at United Irish Cultural Center (2700 – 45th Ave. at Sloat, S.F.). All members are invited and encouraged to attend!

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

***Our thoughts and prayers are with **Joe** and **Maureen Murtagh**, and their family, following Joe's recent heart problems. Best wishes for a safe (and short!) stay in hospital, and a complete recovery.

***Dominique and Luke are proud to announce the arrival of their baby boy, Louis-Michel Luke Friloux. Louis-Michel was born on April 15th at 7:30 p.m. and was named after both his grandfathers. He is at home, doing very well. He was born with a good set of hair (a mix of brown and blond) and has his dad's ocean blue eyes. He has been a little treasure, really good temperament and full of smiles. He will soon be taking button accordion lessons along with his mom. Luke and I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for your prayers, good thoughts and abundance of gifts. They all came in very handy, especially as we were not expecting him quite this early. We miss you all and are already making plans to visit soon. Thank you again. -- Dominique and Luke.

****New Life for an Old Instrument?*

Do you have an old flute somewhere in the back of a closet, half-forgotten and unplayed for many years? Perhaps a beginner's fiddle, which one of the children used for music lessons for a few years back when they were in school, but which now lies silent? Or maybe it's an accordion, or a guitar... Would you consider donating such an instrument, so that someone just starting out on the road of playing Irish music has an instrument to learn on?

To be useful in our developing program for teaching, the donated instruments need not be in tip-top shape, as we intend to work with music repair shops to "tune up" instruments prior to loaning them out. Because our group is an official nonprofit organization, donating such instruments may

even help out a bit with your tax situation (this requires a closer look!) – but apart from the economics, such a donation can be a very satisfying way of contributing to a larger community, especially by helping to pass along a cultural tradition as strong and vibrant as traditional Irish music.

If you have any suggestions or questions about this "library", would like to help develop or maintain it, or have an instrument that you would like to contribute, please contact Michael Riemer at (510) 548-4727, or (chair@cewest.org).

***In case you do not yet have your copy, Ballroom of Romance: the KRB Revisited by our own **Anne O'Brien Hickey** is available from Anne herself (415-664-5676) or at Irish Delights and Irish Imports.

CCÉ SESSIONS

Our **SLOW SESSIONS** are open to beginners who are learning to play traditional Irish tunes. These are now held twice a month, and the next sessions will be on **MONDAY, July 8** and **July 29th** from 7:30 p.m. at **Ireland's 32** pub (3920 Geary Blvd, S.F., between 3rd and 4th Avenues). Starting at 9:00, **experienced musicians** are welcome to join in on the faster paced, more traditional session. Interested? Contact either Michael Riemer (510-548-4727; chair@cewest.org) or Michael Duffy (650-592-2602; cosgrach@tsoft.com).

Our next **SONG AND STORYTELLING SESSION** will be at the home of Judy Forrest on Friday, July 12th at 8 p.m. Please contact Michael Murphy at 415-564-7188 or irishboogieman@yahoo.com for more information and directions!

The Clifford-Hoban Branch in the Santa Cruz/ Monterey area also hosts a number of **slow sessions**. Interested? Please contact Linda (831-688-5729).

<i>CCÉ and Bay Area Dance Events</i>

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 Avenues in 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 **Sunset Recreation Center** (on Lawton Street between 28th and 29th avenues). Usually, this is followed by a trek out to the Plough and Stars for more set dancing to the inspiring sounds of **Tipsy House!!!**

Josephine Moore is taking a break from her set dancing classes at UICC. Please contact Josephine at 650-372-9659 regarding her classes at O'Neill's pub in San Mateo and the resumption of her UICC classes.

NEED MORE SET DANCING? You can surely find it at **Scruffy Murphy's** (187 South Murphy Avenue, Sunnyvale) on the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month, with lessons starting at 8 p.m. and dancing to live music beginning at about 9. These popular evenings of set dancing are led by **Michael Murphy**, and more information can be obtained from him by calling 415-564-7188.

The Palo Alto céilís take place on the **3rd Saturday** of every month at 8 p.m. at the **Midpeninsula YWCA** (4161 Alma Street in Palo Alto). The cost is \$10 for adults and children are free. For information regarding the next one of these well-attended events, you may call Lynne at 650-325-6050.

Traditional Irish Step Dancing with Catherine Brosnan. Catherine Brosnan teaches step dancing on weekends in South San Francisco. These small, informal adult classes focus on traditional (old-style) dance steps, technique and

form. Contact Catherine at **650-615-9229** or e-mail: **cbrosnan@netwiz.net** for more information.

<i>Other Irish Language/Cultural Events</i>
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Oíche Ghaeltachta! *An bhfuil Gaeilge agat, nó an bhfuil tú á foghlaim? Ar mhaith leat feidhm a bhaint as an teanga álainn seo? Bíonn deis iontach le fail ar an tríú Domnach gach aon mhí, fá choinne comhrá Gaeilge, chomh maith le seisiún ceoil traidisiúinta agus amhránaíochta sean-nóis na hÉireann! Cruinnítear sa Chultúrlann (UICC) i San Francisco. Dinnéar agus comhrá i nGaeilge ag a 6.30 i.n. sa bhialann. Seisiún sa bheárr ina dhiaidh sin (thart fá 8.00 – 10.00 nó mar sin). An chéad ceann eile: 16 Meitheamh. Fáilte roimh chách! Tuilleadh eolais: Nikki Ragsdale, Gaeilge-cce@OneSourceGraphics.com, 510-881-5958.*

Gaeltacht Evening! Do you have Irish or are you learning it? Would you like to use this beautiful language? There's a great opportunity the third Sunday of each month, for Irish conversation, as well as a traditional session at the UICC (2700 – 45th Ave. at Sloat) in San Francisco! Dinner and conversation in Irish begin at 6:30 p.m. in the restaurant, and the session follows in the bar at around 8 to 10 p.m. or so. Our next one will be on July 21st. Following that, we will meet on September 15th and October 20th, but not during August, as UICC will be closed for vacation. Everyone is welcome (beginners, too)! For information, contact Nikki Ragsdale at Gaeilge-cce@OneSourceGraphics.com, or 510-881-5958.

EDITOR'S NEW EMAIL ADDRESS: Need to contact me? The best means is now write2anichka@hotmail.com . -- Anne.

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Address Correction Requested

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