



# SCÉAL ÉILE



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

## FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Dear friends and members,

Welcome back to all of those who traveled back east for the recent North American Comhaltas convention, held this year in Parsippany N.J. While I did not attend myself, I've received preliminary reports that overall it was a fine event, with very good dancing, the usual great turnout of excellent musicians, and some special programs and tours – despite some difficulties in dealing with the host hotel. I'm hoping that at least one or two of the attendees will be willing to share their impressions (and photographs!) with us in the next issue of the newsletter, and perhaps post a number of the photos on the web site as well. As many of you know, next April's convention will be hosted by the Ottawa branch, which should prove to be a great new venue – and there is continued interest, at the Provincial, Regional and Branch levels, to bring the Convention back to San Francisco in 2007!

So, while May often marks a time for us to collectively “catch our breath” after the flurry of spring events, this year it also brings with it the opportunity to set our sights beyond the next local seisiun or ceili – there are some major potential events looming on the horizon, and they require some attention very soon!

Initial work has already started to see whether hosting the 2007 Convention could be feasible here, since the Convention planning process has changed considerably since our successful campaign in 1998.

If the decision is made to “go for it,” we will be facing a long, sustained need for dedicated people to make it happen – clear your calendars now!

As a “practice run,” so to speak, it looks like our branch will be hosting a smaller “mini-convention” this coming Fall, which will be the first official major event of the West Region. We intend to include dancing, music, language and singing workshops, and an evening concert, and hope it will both draw Comhaltas members from throughout the West, but also serve to expose many other people in the Bay Area with Irish cultural interests to come out and join us for the weekend. You will be hearing a lot more about this event in the next few months, and I would strongly encourage anyone interested in leading or coordinating workshops to speak with Michael Duffy or myself about the plans that are developing

*Slan,  
Michael Riemer*

## GENERAL MEETINGS

The next General Meetings of the Membership will be on **Tuesday, May 4<sup>th</sup> and June 1<sup>st</sup> at 7:30 p.m.** at the United Irish Cultural Center (2700 45<sup>th</sup> Ave. at Sloat).



COMHALTAS CEOLTÓIRÍ ÉIREANN IS IRELAND'S PREMIERE 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](http://SF.CCEWEST.ORG)



## SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS



### A Man for the Kerry Set

We of the Cooley Keegan Branch send our deepest sympathy to Helen Kelly and family on the passing of our long-time member, Neil Kelly. Neil passed away in March and will be greatly missed by his countless friends. Even through his illness, Neil's great sense of humor remained intact. Whether you were at one of the family gatherings he loved so dearly, chatting with Neil at the UICC where he was bartender, or meeting on the dance floor....there was always a story....With the most serious of expression, Neil would relate "there was this fella...." and quickly have you in stitches of laughter. He always enjoyed a laugh himself, nearly as much as a dance. We are told Neil considered himself a "borderline" case, as he was born on the Kerry-Cork border, but you would never mistake him for anything but a Kerryman. Neil and Helen were great supporters of Comhaltas and in years past, would come to each Ceili. A generation of "young ones" grew up dancing with them and watching them swirling to the Polkas of the Kerry Set. Neil and Tim Reidy were often in "cahoots" and insisted that the Kerry Set was not done properly...unless it included the Full Slide. (everyone was exhausted at that point). They are now surely enjoying the craic together.

*Go ndéana Dia grásta ar t'anam, a chara dhil  
(May God give your soul grace, dear friend)*

### Thank You

Each year, the Cooley-Keegan Branch joins the United Irish Societies ("UIS") in a celebration of St. Patrick's Week at Laguna Honda Hospital in San Francisco. A haven for the chronically ill and aged, Laguna Honda is a massive expanse of hospital wards and it has served many in our Irish Community. Volunteers from many organizations within the "UIS" bring patients from the wards down to the auditorium for Mass the Sunday prior to the parade. The patients are provided with Irish bread, cookies, tea and coffee along with a great assortment of Irish entertainment. This year, the Cooley Keegan Branch was delighted to have musicians Miliosia Lundy, Richard Lundy and Derrick O'Neill providing lively tunes for the set dancers. Miliosia, Rich and Derrick came across the Bay to give of their time and talents and we wish to extend our grateful thanks.



### CHILDREN'S CÉILÍ



Sunday, May 23rd, United Irish Cultural Center, St. Patrick's Room (upstairs); 4-6 p.m.; LIVE MUSIC; Sing-alongs; Dancing; Tin whistle workshop. Parents must accompany their children. Admission is free for all.



### COOLEY-KEEGAN BRANCH OFFICERS

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## 2004 North American Comhaltas Convention

### ☪ MUSIC SEISIÚNS ☪

Our Slow Seisiuns 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 Boulevard, S.F., between 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Avenues). This month they will be on **MONDAY**, May 12<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> beginning at 7:30 pm. Starting at 9:00 pm, more experienced musicians are encouraged to join in on the faster paced, more Traditional Seisiun which follows. All are welcome to come listen as well! If you have questions, contact Michael Riemer or Michael Duffy.

Michael Duffy is also hosting a **slow seisiún** at the Plough and Stars one Tuesday each month. This month it will be on May 20<sup>th</sup>, and will start at about 8:30 pm.

The **Song and Storytelling Sessions** are held on the **first Friday** each month. The May event will be on the 7<sup>th</sup>, at the home of **Michael Duffy**, in Belmont. For details, contact him at [cosgrach@tsoft.com](mailto:cosgrach@tsoft.com).

### ☪ CCÉ DÁNCING ☪

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 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave., SF.

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** (on Lawton at 28<sup>th</sup> Ave). Immediately following these classes, we head over to the **Plough and Stars** 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.

### ☪ MORE DANCING ☪

**Josephine Moore** is teaching **set dancing** classes at the United Irish Cultural Center on **Wednesdays**. Classes will start at 8 p.m. Please try to arrive early!

Set dancing in San Mateo, at **O'Neill's Pub** is now being held just the **third Tuesday** of each month, beginning at 8:30 pm. This evening is also led by **Josephine Moore**, and you can contact her at 650-372-9659 for further details.

Michael Murphy is teaching at **Scruffy Murphy's** at 187 South Murphy Ave, Sunnyvale on May 12<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>. Lessons begin at 8:00 pm, with live music beginning at 9:00. Call 415-564-7188 for more details.

A Chairde!  
Friends!

Oíche Ghaeltachta, Hayward, Dé Domhnaigh an 16ú Bealtaine 2004, 6.30 i.n. (an triú Domhnach de mhí, mar is gnáth) --- comhrá as Gaeilge agus seisiún ceoil agus amhránaíochtá ar an tsean-nós. An chéad ceann eile: 20 Meitheamh 2004.\*\*\* "Ádh an phóta" don dhínnéar. Íosfaidh muid thart fá 6.30 no 7.00 i.n, agus cuirfidh muid tús ar an seisiún ag a 8:00 i.n. nó mar sin. Seoaldh agus reoreacha le fáil, ach téigh i dteagmháil liom: gaeilge@ccewest.org, 510 881 5958

Gaeltacht Night, Hayward, Sunday the 18th May 2004, 6.30 p.m. (the third Sunday of the month, as usual) --- conversation in Irish and a music and sean-nós singing session. Pot luck for the dinner, and a session in the garden after that. We'll eat at around 6.30 or 7.00, and start the session at 8:00 p.m. or so. The next one: 20 June 2004.\*\*\* Get in touch with me for directions: gaeilge@ccewest.org, 510 881 5958.

Tugaigí faoi deara! Beidh muid i Santa Cruz don Oíche Ghaeltachta i Mí Meitheamh, tar éis ceardlann amhránaíochta ar an t-sean-nós Éilís Kennedy!

Take note! We will be in Santa Cruz for the Gaeltacht Night in June, after Éilís Kennedy's sean-nós singing workshop!

Nikki Ragsdale,  
Treóraí na Gaeilge, CCE

Sean Nós (Old Style Singing in Irish)  
Workshop with Éilís Kennedy of Dingle  
Sunday, June 20 2-4 pm  
\$20 at a private residence in Santa Cruz  
1113 N. Branciforte Ave.

Join Éilís for a special intimate workshop featuring some of the most gorgeous traditional songs on our planet. Some experience singing in Irish recommended, but adventurous singers lacking the language background are welcome too.

Call Janet for reservations 831-429-1691 or email her: fasola@cruzio.com

Also that weekend:

Friday, June 18, 2004, 7:30pm  
Éilís Kennedy and Friends  
Kuumbwa Jazz Center, 320 Cedar St.,  
Santa Cruz

Éilís Kennedy is an amazing Irish singer from the Gaeltacht, county Kerry, who sings beautifully in both Irish and English, and plays the pennywhistle. Her album Time to Sail was released to critical acclaim, earning her a place in the prestigious Irish Folk Festival tour of Germany and Switzerland last October and November, as well as a tour of Taiwan in May 2002. The rest of the time she runs a pub with her husband in Dingle, and takes care of her 3 kids and a kitten. Tickets are only \$10 and may be ordered by mail by calling Westside Stories at 457-2021, or come into the store in the Almar Shopping Center next to Safeway on Mission Street.

**May 2004 EVENTS**

Tuesday	4	Membership meeting at UICC, 7:30
Thursday	6	Set dancing at the Plough, Shannon Ceili Band, 8:00PM
Monday	12 & 26	Cooley Keegan Session at Ireland's 32 (slow session, 7:30 pm)
Thursdays	13,20,27	Dancing at Sunset Rec., then at the Plough with Topsy House
Wednesday	12,26	Dancing at Scruffy Murphy's, Sunnyvale
Sunday	18	Ghaeltachta (Gaeltacht Night), Hayward
Sunday	23	Children's Ceili at UICC, 4-6PM

**Cooley-Keegan Branch of**  
**COMHALTAS CEOLTÓIRÍ ÉIREANN**  
**P. O. Box 16244**  
**San Francisco, CA 94116**

**Address Correction Requested**

May 2004 **SCÉAL EILE**