



SCÉAL ÉILE



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

⌘ FROM THE CHAIRMAN ⌘

Dear friends and members,

If each Sceal Eile had a theme, I suppose this would be the “singing” issue! While many of us in the branch are avid dancers, others are more interested in the music, or the social aspects, its good to see that there is a resurgence of interested people in Irish songs, as well. This is a part of Irish culture that many Americans are at least in part familiar with, even if some of the more famous songs are not necessarily Irish in origin.

Sing-alongs have been a popular feature of our children’s ceilis for a few years now, but we have also been holding the “Song and Storytelling” evenings once a month now for nearly three years. If you’ve never been able to attend one of these (or perhaps have not been aware of what you were missing!), Michael Murphy provides a great description in the following pages. Note that the location of these evenings “travels” all over the Bay Area, hosted at the homes of some of the regular participants, so its likely that on some occasions it will be relatively close to your home... and you needn’t be a polished singer to join in.

Another tradition for singing is the traditional sean-nós (unaccompanied) style, usually in the Irish language. I’d like to congratulate Nikki Ragsdale, our branch’s Treoraí na Gaeilge and organizer of all our Irish language events, on the recent release of her

very own CD of songs in Irish! This is a major project to carry out, and will no doubt provide a great resource for both new singers interested in learning the style, and help expand the repertoire of others who might have a song or two already under their belt. The timing is also excellent, in that Nikki will be teaching both morning and afternoon workshops (October 23rd) on singing in Irish at our big West Region convention, so now is the perfect time, if you’ve been meaning to give it a try.

Which naturally reminds me: if you haven’t yet signed up for your choices at the convention, now is the time to do so! We need to allocate space and finish up the planning based on the registrations we receive, so if you are thinking you’ll be coming to take a workshop or two, enjoy the fine Saturday night ceili, and/or join us for the fabulous Sunday night concert featuring John Whelan – send us your registration as soon as possible!

If that isn’t sufficient incentive, please note that we will also be selecting one of the early registrations at random – and waiving the entire fee for that lucky person’s package!

Slán,
Michael R.

⌘ GENERAL MEETING ⌘

The next General Meetings of the Membership will be on **Tuesday, October 5th and November 2nd at 7:30 p.m.** at the United Irish Cultural Center (2700 45th 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

⌘ Song & Storytelling ⌘
Special Report

After a two month recess and a few months before that of fewer-than-expected turnouts, the bonny balladeers, reciters, and seanactais [check spelling] (or storytellers) of the Cooley-Keegan Branch of Comhaltas returned to full strength numbering about 11 on September 3. More noticeably, everybody sang a collection of about 20 songs or so with an energy and enthusiasm that a proper 2-month break warrants, but at the same time, it sounded as if we never needed a break at all.

Our usual standards were spot-on. The new and infrequently sung songs were handled with grace and flair. Everybody made a good effort, which is the usual case with this hearty bunch of harmonizers. A good mixture of old songs, such as "Fields of Athenry," "Wild Mountain Thyme," and "Spanish Lady" with quirky and different ditties such as "Rose of Aranmoor," "Lowlands of Holland," (introduced by our brave new "choral director", Deirdre McNamara) and an always anticipated shanty from one of our resident ramblers, Michael Jones, was the order (and comedic chaos) of this fun evening.

A new blend of guests with the usual variety of vocal virtuosos sparked an experience that is never to be forgotten by those who attend this monthly meeting of melodies. Dierdre Corrigan even brought her flute and delighted us with some delicious tunes while we dived and dipped into some delectable delicacies and refreshments provided by our gracious hosts, Maureen and Dan Clarke.

Dan, by the way, enthralled us, using a cliffhanger style in relating a tale of kings, queens, deception, magic, revenge, romance, competition, humorous twists and a decapitation, which he very considerably left until the very end of his story - "Go mbeannaí Dia duit". Seriously, Dan Clarke has been researching rare, ancient (going back to 8th Century) Celtic tales for many years, and his generosity in sharing them with us should be appreciated by all who show an interest in the art of storytelling.

There you have it; a few snippets of what goes on at a Song and Storytelling Seisiún on the first Friday of each month. Intrigued? Are you now having a burning desire to take out your songbooks and dust them off, and sing that song that you haven't heard in ages? Can you think of that song that is on the tip of your tongue but cannot fully remember it? Perhaps it will come back to you as you sing it with us? Is there a song in the Irish/Celtic tradition that you composed yourself and you need a test audience to bounce it off of? Are you an aspiring storyteller and want to keep Dan Clarke company in our seisiuns (we can use more storytellers)? Are you a poet, a reciter? A musician desiring to hone your accompaniment skills? A lyricist of the Irish language? Any and all of the above are encouraged to come and try us out for an evening of songs, stories, poems, friendship and laughter that is very much embedded in the Cooley-Keegan and Irish traditions. Síne.

⌘ New Sean-Nós CD ⌘

A new Sean-Nós CD is available from Nikki Ragsdale, Treoraí na Gaeilge for Cooley-Keegan branch and the West Region, and organizer of the annual Deireadh Seachtaine Gaeltachta (Irish Language immersion weekend).

"Seansaol na hAislinge" (Old Life of the Dream) features Nikki's lovely interpretations of unaccompanied traditional songs in Irish, many of them rarely -heard gems. Monterey/Santa Cruz CCE branch members Janet Herman, Galt Barber and Mike Long (Dance Around Molly) also contribute a few instrumental tracks and back-up vocals.

The CD is available from cdbaby.com

For more information contact Nikki at:
Phone: 510-881-5958 E-mail: gaelige@ccwest.org



☞ COOLEY-KEEGAN BRANCH OFFICERS ☞

CHAIRMAN: **MICHAEL RIEMER** (chair@ccwest.org) 510-548-4727
VICE CHAIRMAN/WEBMASTER: **MICHAEL DUFFY** (vicechair@ccwest.org or webmaster@ccwest.org) 650-766-6491
PUBLIC RELATIONS: **JOSEPHINE BROGAN** (pr@ccwest.org) 415-681-4803 •
SECRETARY/REGISTRAR: **JOANNIE O'LEARY** (secretary@ccwest.org) 415-664-6579
TREASURER: **MAUREEN MURPHY** (treasurer@ccwest.org)
TREORAÍ NA GAELIGE: **NIKKI RAGSDALE** (Gaelige@ccwest.org)
NEWSLETTER EDITOR: **TIM SULLIVAN** (sceal@ccwest.org) • YOUTH OFFICER: **SIOBHAN McDONAGH**

Dé Domhnaigh Sunday	Dé Luan Monday	Dé Mairt Tuesday	Dé Céadaoin Wednesday	Déardaoin Thursday	Dé h-Aoine Friday	Dé Sathairn Saturday
September 26	27	28	29	30	October 1	2
				<u>Set Dancing</u> 7:30 Sunset Rec Center 9:30 Plough and Stars	<u>Song Seisiún</u> Murphy's - SF	
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
<u>Seisiún</u> 8:30 Plough and Stars		<u>CCE Meeting</u> 7:30 UICC	<u>Set Dancing</u> 8PM Scruffy Murphy's Sunnyvale	<u>Set Dancing</u> 8:00 Plough and Stars		
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
<u>Seisiún</u> 8:30 Plough and Stars	<u>Slow Seisiún</u> 8PM Ireland's 32			<u>Set Dancing</u> 7:30 Sunset Rec Center 9:30 Plough and Stars		
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
<u>Seisiún -</u> 8:30 Plough and Stars		<u>Slow Seisiún</u> 8:30 Plough and Stars		<u>Set Dancing</u> 7:30 Sunset Rec Center 9:30 Plough and Stars		<u>Western Regional Convention</u>
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
<u>Western Regional Convention</u> <u>Seisiún</u> 8:30 Plough and Stars	<u>Slow Seisiún</u> 8PM Ireland's 32			<u>Set Dancing</u> 7:30 Sunset Rec Center 9:30 Plough and Stars		

⌘ Song and Storytelling ⌘

The next Song and Storytelling Seisiún will be held at the Murphy House in San Francisco, 1959 17th Avenue (btwn. Ortega and Pacheco Streets); Friday, October 1; 8 p.m. until 11-ish. Admission is free. Beginners, intermediates, and veterans of Irish and other types of Celtic songs and stories are all welcome. Solos are encouraged but not necessary. We mostly sing as a group. Contacts: Michael Murphy (415-564-7188) or Maureen Murphy (415-661-0351) Email: irishboogieman@yahoo.com or check our Web site at www.sf.ccewest.org.

Interested in hosting an evening of song and stories? Submit inquiries to Mike Duffy (cosgrach@tsoft.com).

⌘ Irish Language ⌘

Oíche Ghaeltachta i Mountain View, teach Imelda White! Dé Domhnaigh an 17ú Deireadh Fómhair 2004, 6.30 i.n. (3ú Domhnach de mhí) --- comhrá as Gaeilge, craic, seisiún ceoil agus amhránaíochtá. "Ádh an phóta": 6.30 ; seisiún 8:00 i.n. An chéad ceann eile: 21 Samhain 2004, ar ais in Hayward. Seoaldh agus treoreacha le fáil: gaeilge@ccewest.org (510 881 5958), nó imelda_white@yahoo.com (650 964 7643).

Gaeltacht Night in Mountain View, Imelda White's house! Sunday the 17th October 2004, 6.30 p.m. (3rd Sunday of the month) --- conversation in Irish, craic, music and singing session. "Pot luck": 6.30; session: 8:00 p.m.

Next one: 21 November 2004, back in Hayward. For directions: gaeilge@ccewest.org (510 881 5958), or imelda_white@yahoo.com (650 964 7643).

Set Dancing

1st Thursday - 8PM - Shannon Ceili Band at the Plough and Stars.

2nd through Last Thursday - 7:30 to 9:30 Lessons at the Sunset Recreation Center (on Lawton at 28th Ave.)

Following the lessons 9:30 - Topsy House performs at the Plough and Stars. Dancers are encouraged to contribute about \$5 to help support this great opportunity

Wednesday's - Josephine Moor's classes at the United Irish Cultural Center have been cancelled.

1st Wednesday - Scruffy Murphy's in Sunnyvale. Michael Murphy teaches. Lessons begin at 8PM with live music beginning at 9:00. Call 415-564-7188 for details.

Music Seisiún

Slow Seisiún – 8PM Ireland's 32 Pub (3920 Geary Blvd. Between 3rd and 4th Ave.) Intended for beginners learning to play traditional Irish tunes. Starting at 9PM 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. Contact Michael Riemer or Michael Duffy for more information.

Slow Seisiún – 8:30 Plough and Stars -- Michael Duffy is also hosting a Slow Seisiún one Tuesday each month.

Seisiún – 8:30 Sundays at the Plough and Stars, various hosts.

Song and Storytelling Seisiún are held on the first Friday. See the calendar page for this month's location.

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

Address Correction Requested

October 2004 **SCÉAL EILE**

