



Saoithe: Paddy Daly, Diarmuid Ó Cathasaigh, Niamh Parsons, Ann Riordan

The Sweet Nightingale

New Series, no 11, September 2019

Nineteen Not Out

The Howth Singing Circle season beginning this September will run into our Nineteenth year of activity. The first thing to say is to thank all those who have supported the Circle through their attendance as performers or listeners; the management and staff of the Pier House, Howth Sea Angling Club and Abbey Tavern; and to those who have put in the unseen work of organising the many events. As with any traditional singers' club, Howth Singing Circle has known its highs and lows. It is interesting to see the changing faces. We have, sadly, lost many of those who were central to the Club in its early days with Jack Barron – with Nan better known as 'Sunshine', Andrew Clarke, Charlie Costello, Tom Crean, Tommy Lawrence, Charles O'Neill and our President Willie O'Connor among the more notable names.



*Brendan 'Bull' Moore who inspired our Club in whose memory it is dedicated
Diarmuid Ó Cathasaigh & Colly Moore presenting an early collection of The Sweet Nightingale
to Nicholas Carolan for deposit in the Irish Traditional Music Archive in the Pier House*

Nothing would please us more if any of those who have 'got out the habit' of attending Howth would come back, at least for one night. You were – and remain – part of who we were, are and will be. You would be welcome. We are open to suggestions as to how we might remember our past and, as part

of that, will carry some images of past nights in *The Sweet Nightingale*, mainly thanks to Il Paddarazzi – Paddy Daly who has catalogued our activities either on camera or on recorder.

The Club was founded in the memory of Brendan ‘Bull’ Moore, a Howth fisherman and extraordinary character who we honoured with a weekend Festival, *The Bull’s Roar*. After his untimely death in 2000, some of his friends suggested a night of songs to remember him and many gathered in what was then The Red Herring, better known for its former name of the Evora Bar, now a gym. The night – led from memory by Dave Moran and Siobhán Moore – was most enjoyable and a monthly club began in the back room of the Pier House. From September, it struggled – not through lack of singers and musicians – and we had a lot of music in those early days – but from competition with locals who would not either vacate the room or stay quiet during songs. At Christmas, we had ‘one final go’ and produced a theme – Christmas, a song sheet and sandwiches. Whatever all that did, particularly the sandwiches, the club took off and the first Burns Nicht saw attendances rise and a new, vibrant singers’ club was born. The room was jam-packed – and very smoky! – and one visitor from Dublin when asked what he thought of the HSC said, ‘Great! I came home with everyone else’s fleas!’ He was being complimentary if you can understand his logic – and he became a regular. In addition to those mentioned, Ann Buckley, Victor Byrne, Luke Cheevers, Máirtín Dempsey, Eileen & John Griffiths, Janet McCormack, Paddy Mackey, Colly Moore, Jerry & Anne O’Reilly, Dave & Vera Rickard, Gabriel Roberts and Elke & Thomas Westen were among the monthly stalwarts.

In addition to our monthly sessions, Howth Singing Circle has had

- many Special Guests from the late Al O’Donnell to the most recent visitors from Appalachia, Elizabeth LaPrelle and Sandy Newlin;
- hosted the Howth Burns Nicht, a unique night in the city’s traditional calendar and one that has again brought many outstanding Scottish guests to Ireland;
- run a number of day and weekend trips away;
- organised the fabulous Fiddle Buses to Naul and Skryne, Donegal, Antrim and Scotland in association with John Kelly and Liam O’Connor, Paul and Shona Anderson;
- held acclaimed Singing/Walking Tours of Dublin’s Quays and the National Botanic Gardens;
- raised considerable sums of money for St Francis Hospice, Raheny and Howth Lifeboat through the annual ‘Singing the Fishing’ sessions and the Sutton Methodist Church Singathons;
- held an annual Dinner Dance with guests including the Kelly Ensemble; Niamh Parsons & Graham Dunne; Seán McKeon & Liam O’Connor; Lynched [now known as Lankum]; Eoghan Ó Ceannabháin & Saileóg Ní Cheannabháin; Daóirí Farrell; and Jimmy Crowley;
- supported and been supported by St Lawrence Howth Pipe Band who have graced our Burns Nicht and other occasions;
- organised concerts with Damien Dempsey; Andy Irvine; The Drôle (John Kelly, Éamon McGivney & Peadar Ó Riada); Andy Irvine; Gatehouse and Martyn Wyndham Read; and The Voice Squad;
- enjoyed the talents of our two Young Singers/Musicians in Residence, Ruth Clinton and Cathal Caulfield;
- produced *The Sweet Nightingale* and maintained Facebook and web pages to publicise our activities and maintain contact with Club activists.

All this has been done on a completely voluntary basis. Howth Singing Circle has never received any sponsorship nor sought it. We publish our annual accounts to allow participants to see what happens to their €4 contribution at our monthly sessions. This contribution funds all that we do although many people contribute their time and energy to making our events successful.

Most of all, no traditional singers' club could survive without its singers and listeners and to each and everyone who has attended and supported the Howth Singing Circle over the past twenty years, our sincere thanks. Without that support, we would not have survived.

Fáilte Helen agus Daire

A welcome to the two new members of the Howth Singing Circle Committee, Helen Lahert and Daire Ó Baoill. Helen is pictured here with the redoubtable Janet Weatherston from Dalkeith, Midlothian, when the two of them ran the Burns Nicht Fare Thee Weel Session last February. Daire is pictured in action on the MayFest Singing/Walking Tour performing a great version of 'An Bonnán Buí'.



Helen with Janet Weatherston at the Fare Thee weel Session and Daire down by the Liffeside

Where Does Your €4 Go ?

As we always do, we request a €4 voluntary contribution from those attending our monthly sessions. Where does this money go? Firstly, we pay a small fee to the Abbey Tavern for the use of the room and the provision of sandwiches. We also pay our guests – at rates in line with or above Musicians' Union of Ireland rates. In the last season, we paid €1,800 to guests, all of whom were excellent and gave great value for money. For our Dinner, we take payment only for what the meals cost the Circle, the guest's fee comes out of our general accounts.

The only event we charge for is the Burns Nicht. In January 2019, the Burns Nicht cost us €3,661.64 to put on – and, we should remind our audiences, we receive no funding or sponsorship whatsoever. Thanks to the 180 who attended and the draw at the Fare Thee Weel Session, we actually showed a small surplus of €97.36 on the weekend. Since September 2018 until June 2019, our total income was €6,429 with outgoings of €6,097.64 leaving a surplus of €331.36, although some items remain outstanding.

So, please appreciate that our Singing Circle is run on a voluntary basis and could not do so without your monthly contribution. We account for that income and, we feel, give great value for money – for instance, the Burns Nicht cost of €20 is unchanged for the last decade!

Thank you all again.

An Góilín Traditional Singers' Club at 40

Howth Singing Circle extends our sincere and admiring congratulations to An Góilín Traditional Singers' Club who are currently celebrating their Fortieth Anniversary. An Góilín was founded by Tim Dennehy and Dónal de Barra 'to give a platform for people who like to sing and listen to traditional Irish songs and singing'. In addition to their weekly Friday sessions nowadays held in The Teachers' Club in Parnell Square, the club holds various other events, most notably the annual Frank Harte Festival, this year from 20-22 September. You can follow their events here –www.goilin.com/ We wish An Góilín continued success in all they do.



The mirror reflecting a cosy Christmas night in the Abbey with Laurence Bond and Ann Riordan

Liam O'Connor

On Thursday, 13 June, the Irish Traditional Music Archive (ITMA) announced the appointment of Liam O'Connor as its new next Director of ITMA, a position he took up in late August. organisation in a new role. The ITMA said that 'as a respected musician, collector, researcher and teacher, Liam O'Connor's music activities, qualifications and experience seamlessly align with the values, culture and ethos of ITMA'. They acknowledged that Liam had 'gained considerable insight into the internal and external workings of the ITMA having used the Archive for over twenty years in a variety of roles: from transition year work experience as a teenager, to unearthing rare tunes such as 'The Loom' sourced from the collections'. They noted that his work had included serving on the ITMA Board; research on Irish language songs recorded, 1928–1931, in the RIA Doegen Collection; applying for, and delivering on, Arts Council funded projects such as the innovative P.W. Joyce PORT Project (<https://youtu.be/b0NXjdRDsEU>); and publicly representing the ITMA with archival partner TG4 at Gradam Ceoil 2019.

Howth Singing Circle offered its congratulations to Liam on his appointment. He has been associated with the HSC in a variety of ways, performing at our Annual Dinner and in concerts, memorably with Damien Dempsey when he played with piper Seán McKeon, and – together with Paul Anderson, John Kelly and Ann Riordan – being central to the organisation of our Fiddle Bus excursions. Without the involvement of Liam and John those Fiddle Bus trips would not have attracted the calibre of musicians that they did or be as well informed about the fiddle music and musicians of the venues that we visited. Liam's father, flute player Mick O'Connor, has made an outstanding contribution to the performance, collection and standing of traditional music for decades and has also been a strong supporter of HSC events in many different ways, Fiddle Bus ventures included.

So, the HSC is delighted to congratulate Liam on his appointment and wish him every success.



Liam O'Connor with his sister Aoife, Aoife Kelly (concertina) and his wife Niamh McNeela in the Séamus Ennis Centre, Naul, on the first Fiddle Bus; and performing in the Burnett Arms Hotel, Banchory at a Concert for the erection of a statue to Scott Skinner in the town on Fiddle Bus 3. His father Mick is sitting behind him

Howth Burns Nicht 2019

Howth Burns Nicht 2019 was another memorable weekend of great singing, music and company. Our main guests – Paul Anderson and Shona Donaldson Anderson – are old friends and were received with great affection. Paul's courage and calm in dealing with serious illness – including an unscheduled trip to hospital just before his Saturday night performance – struck a chord with an audience well attuned to his struggles. Gerry O'Connor, accompanied by John Keely, started with 'The Night Visiting Song' and Eugene McElowney and Janet Weatherston completed an opening set of Scottish songs. As the Nicht was held on 2 February, tribute was paid to Saint Brigid – or Bride as the Scots ken her – with Eileen Clancy and Kay Burke read Séamus Heaney poems with Kay appropriately producing a straw girdle she had made for Heaney's 'A Brigid's Girdle'. Máire Ní Chróinín sang 'Gamhan Molta Bhríde' and Manus O'Riordan, 'Saint Brigid's Prayer', while our Saoi Paddy Daly made his Burns Nicht debut by reading 'St Brigid & the Baker'. In the second half, three Burns items were sung: Catriona Crowe with 'Ye Jacobites By Name'; Diarmuid Ó Cathasaigh, 'Ae Fond Kiss'; and Niamh Parsons & Graham Dunne, 'The Slave's Lament'. Superb music was provided, as ever, by John Kelly (fiddle), Mick Mullen (guitar) and Larry Egan (box), with many unable to resist the urge to step it out to the tunes.



Paul Anderson in full flow and Shona Donaldson Anderson with her HSC Choir – the sacrifice they all made flying over to Aberdeen twice a week for months for rehearsals can only be admired

A highlight of the night was our Young Singer/Musician in Residence Cathal Caulfield performing songs and fiddle tunes, displaying originality, invention and great technique. The haggis – again made by Ricky Higgins of Higgins Family Butchers, Sutton Cross – was piped in by St Lawrence Howth Pipe Band led by Pipe Major Noel Kelly. Noel returned after the break to play the lament ‘Tommy Tully’s Air’. The ‘Address Tae the Haggis’ was delivered in inimitable style by Morag Dunbar and the ‘Selkirk Grace’ was made by Reverend Kenneth MacKenzie, Crathie Kirk, Deeside.

One of the best moments of the night was the appearance of the HSC Choir under the direction of Shona Donaldson. They sang Burns’s song ‘The White Cockade’ and astounded the hall with their parts singing, pitch perfect standard and stage presence. They received a rapturous reception. At the night’s end, Nóirín Lynch led the crowd in singing the ‘The Foggy Dew’; Paul Redmond raised the rafters with ‘The Minstrel Boy’; and Shona got everyone on their feet with ‘Will Ye Go Lassie Go’ and ‘Auld Lang Syne’.



Our Young Singer/Musician in Residence Cathal Caulfield gracing the Burns Nicht and our ‘Resident Band’ performing mighty sets – Larry Egan (box), John Kelly (fiddle) and Mick Mullen (guitar)

Declan Hoey

Our Special Guest in April indeed proved to be special – Declan Hoey, together with his Boyneside supporters, charmed his audience with great song selection, superb tone and command, and a great presence. Laurence Bond began the night with Cotswold stone while Tom Finn commemorated Martin Luther King, 4 April, and Abraham Lincoln, 15 April, with ‘Abraham, Martin & John’. Diarmuid Ó Cathasaigh serenaded Norah McGinn; Seán Ó h Éarcháin, ‘Moira’; Des from Drogheda, ‘Carolina’; and Seán Faulkner, also Drogheda, ‘Sweet Hannah McKay’. Ruth and Noel Bailey completed the Louth contribution with ‘I Am Stretched on Your Grave’ and John Boyle O’Reilly’s ‘Cry of the Dreamer’. Regular voices were Antoinette Daly, Helen Lahert, Colin Stokes, Eugene McEldowney, Larry O’Toole, Úna Kane – who acted as Bean an Tí, Daire Ó Baoill, Brian Doyle, Eddie Phillips, Séamus Shiels, Kay and Andy Burke, Gerry O’Connor and Brenda Ní Ríordáin. Rose Hoey gave us ‘The Ballad of Drogheda’ and Siobhán Kavanagh showed great style with Shirley Collins’s ‘I Once Loved a Boy’ and the powerful ‘Underneath Her Apron’.

Declan Hoey began with ‘The Wheels of the World’ and ‘Bonnie Blue Eyes Nancy’, the latter demonstrating his range and artistry. He continued with ‘Lough Erne’s Green Shore’, ‘Johnny & Molly’, ‘Loving Hannah’ and ‘Pretty Susan, the Pride of Moyclare’. He had the room singing with ‘How Can I Keep From Singing?’ and ended with ‘Sleep on Beloved’. For some, his most powerful song was Gerry Cullen’s ‘Leave the Wood’, an opportunity for Declan to demonstrate his ability to deliver a wide range

of material. So, a splendid night with much humour and bonhomie. Our thanks again to those who had travelled down from the Far Side.



Helen Lahert captures some of our excellent guests – Rose & Declan Hoey and Sandy Newlin & Elizabeth La PELLE – Angela and Jack Plunket with Niamh Parsons looking appreciatively on

Cathal Caulfield – HSC Young Singer/Musician in Residence

The term of our Young Singer/Musician in Residence Cathal Caulfield is nearly complete. Cathal was a very diligent and extremely engaging appointment and contributed hugely to the HSC activities during his residency. From his research project, he has compiled a booklet to be entitled *Tales of Humour, Wonder and Woe: A Selection of Comic Songs Collected by Tom Munnelly* drawn from material in the Munnelly Collection in the National Folklore Collection, UCD. We hope to have the booklet and attendant materials out before Christmas.

Bring Out the Banners – Singing & Walking Tour With SIPTU

On Sunday 4 March, the HSC in association with SIPTU and Mandate organised 'Bring Out the Banners: An Historical Walking & Singing Tour' as part of SIPTU's May Fest. Manus O'Riordan began at the International Brigade Memorial at Liberty Hall with 'A Song for Charlie Donnelly', his adaptation of Blanaid Salkeld's tribute to Donnelly and SIPTU's Deputy General Secretary Ethel Buckley read Michael Longley's 'In Memory of Charles Donnelly'. At the Irish Women Workers' Union and Mother Jones's plaques, Niamh Parsons sang Charles Oppenheimer's anthem 'Bread and Roses' and Frank Nugent performed Ewan MacColl's moving song 'Nobody Knew She Was There'. At the Connolly Monument, Pipe Major Noel Kelly of St Lawrence Howth Pipe Band accompanied Francy Devine's singing of Patrick Galvin's 'Where O Where is James Connolly' and adding Robert Mathieson's 'Blackbird' within the rendition. SIPTU's Rachael Ryan read Winifred Letts 'The Connaught Rangers' and Ann Riordan read Eavan Boland's 'Quarantine' at the Famine statues on the quays. At the plaque for the *SS Hare*, the first foodship to arrive during the 1913 Lockout, Francy Devine sang 'Who Fears to Wear the Red Hand Badge?', Macdara Yeates's John Warner's 'Bring Out the Banners' – our day's theme song, and Tony Fitzpatrick 'Paddy's Green Shamrock Shore'. Before we crossed the Seán O'Casey bridge, SIPTU's Vice President Bernie Casey sang his 'Red Roses For Me' and Luke Cheevers greeted us on the other side with the shanty 'Billy O'Shea'. Laurence Bond recited E.J. Brady's 'The Dockers' Orchestra' at the Lineman sculpture and at the Matt Talbot Statue Daire Ó Baoill sang Cathal Buí Mac Giolla Ghunna's 'An Bunnán Buí'. On Rosie Hackett Bridge, Eibhlís Ní Ríordáin stirred us all with Philip O'Neill's 'The Cumann na mBan' and at the Abbey Theatre Helen Lahert gave a beautiful reading of Eiléan Ní Chuilleanáin's poem 'For James Connolly'. At the Larkin Monument, we sang MacColl's anthem for the Dunne's Stores Strikers, 'Ten Young Women & One Young Man'; Siobhán Kavanagh performed Dan O'Neill's song 'The ballad of the Clery's Workers'; and Fergus Whelan delivered 'In Dublin City in 1913'.

Éamon Hunt stirringly gave Jim Larkin's oration 'The Great Only Appear Great ...'; Éamon Thornton read Francis Devine's poem 'Remembering Jim Larkin'; and everyone raised their voices for Jim Connell's 'The Red Flag'.



Pipe Major Noel Kelly leading the marchers to the Larkin Monument and our award-winning writer Helen Lahert reading Eiléan Ní Chuilleanáin's poem 'For James Connolly' at the Abbey Theatre

After the Walk, we retired to Pipers Corner specially opened for us by Seán Potts, Our thanks to Brian Tracey (SIPTU) for sound; Sonia Slevin (SIPTU Communications Department) for design of the brochure with all the songs; Pipe Major Noel Kelly (St Lawrence Howth Pipe Band) who piped us around the keys and played so mightily afterwards; Ethel Buckley (SIPTU) and to Ann Riordan for general organisation. It was a most enjoyable day.



Helen Lahert captures Francy Devine & Noel Kelly performing Patrick Galvin's 'Oh, Where Oh Where Is Our James Connolly?' at the Connolly Monument in Beresford Place and Francy with Raven at the East of Ireland Pipe Band Championships in June

Elizabeth LaPrelle & Sandy Newlin

June session was moved from our normal Thursday to the following Tuesday to avail of the opportunity to have two very Special Guests, Elizabeth LaPrelle and her mother Sandy Newlin from East Virginia, USA. A large crowd gathered to hear these two fine exponents of Appalachian singing and banjo playing and among the many fine performances from the floor were Laurence Bond, 'The Most Familiar Place I've Ever Known'; Eugene McElowney, 'Babes in the Wood'; Máire Ní Bhaoill's

modern day parable on the life of 'John C. Clarke'; Martina Ní Chearnaigh, 'Mary From Loughrea'; Ciarán Ó Maoléoin, 'A Maid on the Shore'; Mags Maxwell with 'My Love Beside Me & the Tide Flows In'; Jack Plunkett, 'The Broom o' the Cowdenknowes'. Mick Fowler sang of the dentists from Fivemiletown; Máirídhe Woods flashed a silver dagger; and Daire Ó Baoill sang a Donegal drinking song. Welcome visitors from Roscommon were Declan Coyne who sang the West Virginia song 'He was the World to Me' and Fionnuala Maxwell with 'Weary O'.

The crowd had, of course, come to hear Elizabeth and Sandy and they proved to be excellent guests. Modest, understated, they let their talents and their material shine. Elizabeth provided excellent provenance for her songs, almost all deriving from her region and reflecting the mountainy, rural lifestyle of those who wrote or first performed them. 'Sail Away Lady' was associated with Uncle Dave Macon, 1871-1952, the 'Dixie Dewdrop' famed for his whiskers, gold teeth, gates-ajar collar and plug hat and 'As I Walked Over London's Bridge' was a moving version of a song associated with Sam Russell. Quite a few hogs were hunted, whether real or supernatural, as in 'Wild Hog in the Woods', and advice was given to East Virginia girls regarding the quality – or absence thereof – of menfolk from West Virginia. Texas Gladys – who had sisters with names like Minnesota – provided the source for 'Three Little Babes'.

Elizabeth and Sandy sang harmonically and Elizabeth accompanied some songs on banjo providing an additional sense of the Appalachian for the spellbound audience. 'The Hills of Mexico'. 'Shoulder Up Your Gun – Groundhog' and 'I Wish' were all well received, the latter a fitting and moving finale to a magical night. The chorus in 'I've Endured' was joined with gusto, an opportunity for a skilled audience to offer their own supportive harmonies, an ultimate compliment to their guests.



Sandy & Elizabeth and our hosts for the night Helen Lahert & Philip O'Connor

Elizabeth was born in Chapel Hill, North Carolina but grew up in Rural Retreat and lives in Cedar Springs, East Virginia and, while she sings a wide variety of north American international and contemporary songs, she is best known for her interpretation of Appalachian ballads. As she says, 'I love music, and I love the mountains'. She graduated from the College of William & Mary with a self-designed major in 'Southern Appalachian Traditional Performance' and is best known for her work with Anna Roberts-Gevalt with whom she has made extensive recordings. Elizabeth, singer and banjo player, won prizes for singing from a very young age and her 'dedicated research, passion, and a powerful voice to the ancient art of Appalachian ballad-singing'. As her sleeve notes on the night revealed, she acquired her songs from field-recordings, books, family, friends, and tradition-bearers like Sheila Kay Adams and Ginny Hawker. She has three sole albums: *Rain & Snow*, (2004); *Lizard in the Spring*, (2007); and *Birds' Advice* (2011). You can see and hear Elizabeth singing 'Pretty Sato' here

www.youtube.com/watch?v=TSI-jMiagLw
www.youtube.com/watch?v=soHmyn2BQik

or performing 'East Virginia' here



Fun at the Fare Thee Weel Session of the Howth Burns Night 2019 – Gerry O'Connor's wish to have someone to love him was miraculously answered when Madonna appeared – though she's put a bit of weight on since she was last seen at Howth Singing Circle! Andy Burke crowns Kay with the St Brigid's Girdle she expertly made for the weekend

We are indebted to Macdara Yeates from The Night Before Larry Was Stretched for offering us the opportunity to hear Elizabeth and Sandy. The night was run by Helen Lahert and Philip O'Connor, who also provided hospitality for our guests, and Gerry O'Connor acted as chauffeur for our visitors. A lot goes into a night like the one enjoyed by so many. Finally, may we thank everyone who came along and especially those who had travelled distances to get there.

Wheels, Walks & Songs

In June, Howth Singing Circle and the Heels & Wheels Group co-hosted a Singing/Cycling/Omnibus/Walking tour of Dublin, as part of International Velo Week 2019. The event was the initiative of Des Kane of the Heels & Wheels Group which is sponsored by Dublin City Council. It was an invigorating and interesting event, with approximately forty people taking part. Commencing at the Ierne Sports & Social Club, we made our way to South Andrew Street with Brian Doyle serenading Molly Malone and Luke Cheevers leading singing (and dancing) with his performance of 'Slip Jigs and Reels'. We then visited Luke Kelly on South King Street, remembering him with 'Dirty Old Town' sung by Tony Fitzpatrick followed by Eddie Phillips taking us on a 'Dublin Saunter'. Next we repaired to St. Patrick's Cathedral Park in the Liberties, where Tom Finn celebrated 'Biddy Mulligan' and Peter Byrne took us to 'Tim Finnegans Wake'. At Kilmainham Jail, we paused for some moving performances - Teresa Devaney of Heels & Wheels led the singing of 'Grace', Tony Fitzpatrick sang 'Where Oh Where Is Our James Connolly?' while Gerry O'Connor sang the very moving 'Last Call of the Day'. We sped onwards to the Phoenix Park, where we 'entertained' a group doing yoga in the bandstand. Appropriately, Joe Walsh sang 'The Zoological Gardens', which was followed by the equally apposite 'Abroad for Pleasure' from Eugene McElDowney, with a trio of songs being completed by Luke Cheevers with 'Down by the Liffeside'. At the Royal Canal, Ann Riordan mingled two canals by reading Patrick Kavanagh's 'Canal Bank Walk' and Mick Dunne concluded the event by singing with 'The Auld Triangle', adjacent to Mountjoy

After the singing, we retired to the Ierne Sports & Social Club for a debrief. Heels & Wheels put on a great post-cycle spread, with the pièce-de-résistance a cake which depicted the two groups's logos and some of the songs. Howth Singing Circle must give special thanks to Des Kane of Heels & Wheels for conceiving of and organising our singing saunter; to Derek Ahern of Dublin City Council Sports & Wellbeing Officer; and to all participants who contributed to making the event so enjoyable and

successful. Thanks also to Dublin City Council for producing a video of the event, a link to which is included here - <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1tQgQDJOFUSi11tGD34xLZAV9hkTmK2Qq/view>

Gerry O'Connor and Ann Riordan



Above: Kilmainham Jail; Tom Finn with 'Biddy Mulligan'

Below: Luke Cheevers & Gerry O'Connor chatting by Molly; Brian & Mary Doyle enjoying the day



Howth at the Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann

The HSC were delighted to accept an invitation from the organisers of Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann in Drogheda to host one of the singing sessions in the Boomerang Café on Sunday morning 11 August. We expected a quiet start early on a Sunday morning, but as we got into the swing of the singing, seats filled up and numbers swelled to close to eighty people. Helen Lahert started the ball rolling as Bean an Tí until we could welcome Fear an Tí Daire Ó Baoill fresh from competition, having come second in the Seán Nós Singing. He delighted us with 'The Boys of Barr na Sráide'. Ann Riordan made sure that all guests who wished to sing were welcomed and invited to take the floor.

Eddie Phillips got the room buzzing with 'Phil the Flutter's Ball'; Margaret Keane, sang 'Caledonia'; Mick Dunne with his cigar box guitar was ably accompanied by his son Seán on bodhrán to keep Dublin's side up, singing 'Biddy Mulligan'; Martina Nic Cearnaigh sang a lovely version of 'Sweet Eireann the

Green'; Francy Devine sang 'One Starry Night'; and Tommy Collins regaled us with a story of 'pucky fresian cows'. Goretti Molloy gave us 'The Cabin with the Roses around the Door', while young singers Hannah and Charlie from Cavan, sang 'Lough Sheelin's Side' and 'As I Roved Out'.



Helen Lahert, Daire Ó Baoill and Ann Riordan running the show; the Dunne family in full flow; Eddie Phillips flutering about to Antoinette Daly's amusement and Daire getting the big crowd going



Pauleen Egan sang 'Eileen O'Neill'; Helen Lahert sang 'Ballyshannon Lane'; and Gerry Shannon, 'Morrissey and the Russian Sailor'. Dennis O'Higgins read us a story from his book about Knockrockery. Máiríde Woods sang 'The Blue Hills of Antrim' and John Ennis from Wexford, 'My Love is a Tall Ship'. Margaret sang 'The Home I Left Behind' and a wonderful young singer, Kayla Traynor, wowed the house with her rendition of Fionnuala Maxwell's 'In Ireland we are All Related'. Stephen O'Connor from Belfast sang Maurice Leyden's 'The Tern and the Swallow' and Brian Doyle from Howth sang 'Blackwaterside'. Níall Wall from Enniscorthy sang for us and minded us well on behalf of the Fleadh committee and we were well fed and looked after by the Boomerang Café staff.

We heard thirty-nine singers from Cavan, Clare, Cork, Donegal, Down, Dublin, Fermanagh, Kerry, Louth, Monaghan, Offaly, Tyrone, Waterford, Wexford and Wicklow, and finished in true HSC tradition, linking arms to sing 'The Parting Glass'.

Helen Lahert

Buíochas Mór

As ever, *The Sweet Nightingale*, as with all HSC activities, does not just appear and we are grateful to the following: Richard Tobin, Allison O'Rourke and staff of the Abbey Tavern; Noelle Bowe & Drogheda Committee, Fleadh Ceoil na h Éireann; Ethel Buckley & Sonia Slevin (SIPTU); Des & Úna Kane, in tandem of course; Seán Potts & Pipers' Corner; Finola Young for many supports; Macdara Yeates; Noel

Kelly, St Lawrence Howth Pipe Band; Cathal Caulfield, Young Singer/Musician in Residence; and your Committee – Laurence Bond, Paddy Daly, Brian Doyle, Helen Lahert, Daire Ó Baoill, Diarmuid Ó Cathasaigh, Gerry O'Connor, Niamh Parsons and Ann Riordan.



We are not sure what the collective noun for Riordans is but here is a rare collection. Our superb guest Eibhlís Ní Riordáin provided a beautiful night of song and harp music with our Mna an Tí Brenda O'Riordan and Ann Riordan. There is nothing wrong with the photograph it is merely the sensational speed of the dancers!



Sonia Slevin's beautifully designed brochure for our Walk and Siobhán Kavanagh singing 'The Ballad of the Clery's Workers' at the Larkin Monument

Programme For 2019-2020

5 September – Diarmuid agus Áine Ó Cathasaigh, ‘Some Things Change, Some Things Stay’

3 October – Special Guest Liam O’Connor – night begins with talk on the Irish Traditional Music Archive at 8.30 from its new Director, Liam O’Connor

7 November – Helen Lahert & Niamh Parsons, ‘Women’s Songs’

21 November – Annual Dinner with Special Guests

5 December – Ann Riordan & Laurence Bond with Special Guest Tim Dennehy

9 January – Gerry O’Connor & Tony McGaley, ‘Captains, Kings & McAlpine’s Fusiliers: A Tribute to the Behans’

25 January – Howth Burns Nicht 2020, Tannahill Weavers, Abbey Tavern, €20

26 January – Fare Thee Weel Session, Abbey Tavern, 3-6, free

6 February – Daire Ó Baoill – Oiche Gaelach with Special Guest

5 March – Brian Doyle with theme to be announced

3 April – Francy Devine with Special Guests Paddy & Caoimhín Branigan

7 May – Laurence Bond with theme to be announced

4 June – ‘Thanks for the Memories’

**‘She exceeds Flora, or bright Aurora
Or beauteous Venus from the briny froth
I am captivated, I do repeat it
By Hannah Healy, the pride of Howth’**

Howth Singing Circle

First Thursday Every Month, Abbey tavern, 9pm

All Welcome

