



INISHOWEN
TRADITIONAL SINGERS'
CIRCLE



The 28th Inishowen International Folk Song and Ballad Seminar

24–27 March 2017



Inishowen Traditional Singers' Circle (ITSC)

The ITSC was formed in 1988 to celebrate, encourage, foster and perpetuate the folk song and ballad tradition of the Inishowen Peninsula. It organises monthly sessions, an annual weekend of traditional singing as well as occasional workshops and tours. In partnership with ITMA and IDP it launched the Inishowen Song Project and has published books and sound recordings. It is a voluntary organisation made up of passionate supporters of the rich singing tradition of the Peninsula.

The Inishowen International Folk Song and Ballad Seminar

The Seminar was established in 1990 by Jimmy McBride to provide a public platform to celebrate and expose the rich English language singing tradition of the Peninsula. Its aim was also to provide a space to listen to singers from other traditions and to highlight song research through presentations from guest and local speakers. Now in its 28th year, it is the longest running traditional singing festival in Ireland.

Song Tour to Urris townland

We're heading for the hills, literally the Urris Hills, to experience one of the most beautiful and important *songscapes* in Inishowen. This townland is home to many singers featured in the Inishowen Song Project, as well as being the inspiration for local songs of the sea and emigration. The tour will be led by local singer and ITSC member Colm Toland.



Young Singers' Bursary Scheme

Since 2010 we have welcomed almost one hundred younger singers as part of our Bursary Scheme. Hailing from Ireland, Europe and the US, these singers have added colour and a particular new sound each year. For the Bursary holders themselves it is an opportunity to sing, learn, network and experience the diversity of style and song that make up the Inishowen Singing Weekend.



The Inishowen Song Project

Freely available at www.itma.ie/inishowen is a unique digital soundscape of the rich singing tradition of the Inishowen Peninsula. Sound recordings, videos, and photographs of almost 200 singers from the Jimmy McBride Field Recording Collection are presented with transcriptions of 600 songs and publications relating to the Peninsula. This open digital project was funded by Inishowen Development Partnership in partnership with Inishowen Traditional Singers' Circle and the Irish Traditional Music Archive.

The Inishowen Traditional Music Project

Our 2017 concert performer Roisin McGrory along with Clodagh Warnock are the driving forces behind The Inishowen Traditional Music Project. This project provides teaching and performance opportunities for young Inishowen musicians, and has been instrumental in promoting the playing of local repertoire and maintaining local style.





Programme

Friday 24 March 2017

- 8.30pm Opening Address and Welcome**
by Kevin McGonigle, Chairperson ITSC
- 8.45pm Opening Lecture**
Packie Manus Byrne (1917–2015), Song Writer of the Century
by John Waltham
- 10.00pm Home & Away Session**
hosted by Colm Toland and Jim MacFarland

Saturday 25 March 2017

- 11.00am A Song Tour of the District of Urris**
led by Colm Toland
- 3.00pm Inishowen Singers' Circle Session**
McFeeley's Bar, Clonmany
- 7.00pm Seminar Dinner**
Ballyliffin Hotel
- 9.00pm Festival Concert** featuring:
- Landless
 - Pete Shepheard
 - Roisin McGrory and Friends
 - Members of the Inishowen Traditional Singers' Circle
 - Cloontagh and Rashenny National Schools

Sunday 26 March 2017

- 12 noon Music Session**
North Pole Bar, Drumfries
- 3.00pm North Pole Session**
The North Pole Bar, Drumfries
- 9.00pm Mac Tam's Session**
Mac Tam's Bar, Clonmany

Monday 27 March 2017

- 12 noon Farewell Session**
The Rusty Nail, Crossconnell, Clonmany

From Friday until Monday

Irish Traditional Music Archive (ITMA) Pop Up Studio

ITMA is a regular visitor to the Inishowen Singing Weekend, capitalising on the opportunity to record a wide range of traditional singers over the course of the event and of course at the concerts and talks. This is co-ordinated by ITSC's Jim MacFarland. This is the ITMA's largest annual traditional singing field recording event providing an important legacy resource for future years.

Silent Witness: Photographic exhibition Paul Eliasberg

A selection of photographs taken by Paul Eliasberg at the Inishowen Singing Weekend (2011–2016)





Guests

Landless



are Lily Power, Meabh Meir, Ruth Clinton and Sinead Lynch. Formed in 2013, they have risen to acclaim as singers of unaccompanied traditional songs in close harmony. The band have featured at many festivals and events in Ireland and released an EP in 2014. Their four-part harmonies bring together uniquely the strength of their individual quality as solo singers. The Inishowen International Folk Song & Ballad Seminar is proud to acknowledge that each singer was the recipient of ITSC Bursaries as individual singers earlier in their singing careers. We are now delighted to welcome them back on stage as Landless.

Pete Shephard



has been involved in the folk song revival since the 1960s. He first came into contact with the riches of traditional song when he was a student at St Andrews University and a member and organiser of the folk club. His contacts with the famed Stewart Family of Blairgowrie and Jeannie Robertson's family in Aberdeen led to exploration of traveller tradition and extensive song collecting in Scotland, England and Ireland. He was an organiser of the Blairgowrie Festival of Traditional Music and Song in 1966 that led to the forming of the Traditional Music and Song Association of Scotland (TMSA). His enthusiasm as a singer and collector resulted in the creation of Springthyme Records in 1973 specialising in the release of traditional music and song.

Paddy Cullen & Family



We are delighted that Paddy Cullen will be making the trip to Inishowen from Carrigart in Donegal a little earlier in 2017. Paddy is well known to Festival goers as the singer who traditionally joins us at the final Monday singing session in the Rusty Nail. A fine singer with a wide ranging repertoire, Paddy will be accompanied by family, on this his first trip to the full Singing Weekend.

John Waltham



John from Dorset is no stranger to Inishowen, having a long & illustrious connection with local singers since the early 1990s. A singer, collector and event organiser himself, he has championed local singers from his native area and those from other traditional song communities. John held a close friendship with the late Packie Manus Byrne from Ardara who passed away in 2015 at the age of 98. John will deliver the opening lecture of the festival on this well respected Donegal musician, singer, composer, story teller and entertainer.

Roisin McGrory



Fiddle player Roisin McGrory is the driving force behind the Inishowen Traditional Music Project. Led by Roisin and Clodagh Warnock this project provides teaching and performance opportunities for young Inishowen musicians, and has been instrumental in promoting the playing of local repertoire and maintaining local style. Originally from Burt, Roisin released her debut album in September 2016 'The Brae Road', a collection of music with strong Inishowen and Donegal influences.

Inishowen Traditional Singers' Circle



Members of the Singers' Circle including Bronagh Harkin and Grace Toland will take to the stage for the 2017 concert. The Circle meets the second Friday of the months September to June in either the North Pole Bar or McFeeley's Bar.

Cloontagh NS and Rashenny NS Inishowen



Three local primary schools will take the stage singing songs learned from the Inishowen Song Project. These choirs are made up of local children some of whose parents and grandparents feature in the project. The schools have wholeheartedly taken up our invitation and with support from teachers and parents are a highlight of our Festival.



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