

UNITED IRISH of DAYTON



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## **2019 United Irish of Dayton Celtic Festival to Include Expanded Cultural Area**

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The 2019 United Irish of Dayton Celtic Festival, presented by the United Irish of Dayton in partnership with Five Rivers MetroParks, will feature several cultural events in addition to performances from its seven headliner bands and regional and local musical and dance groups. The festival will take place July 26-28 at RiverScape MetroPark in Downtown Dayton. Admission is FREE!

The festival features an expanded cultural area this year, with several returning workshops and various new activities. For example, author Cindy Thomson, known for the inspirational Celtic theme employed in most of her books, has written six novels and three non-fiction books, including her newest, *Celtic Song*. A genealogy enthusiast, she writes from her home in Ohio where she lives with her husband Tom near their three grown sons and their families. Visit her at [www.cindyswriting.com](http://www.cindyswriting.com) or on Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest at @cindyswriting, and Book Bub at @cindyswriting.

Also, storyteller Cathy Jo Smith discusses the Irish Wake and attempts to explain in a family-friendly way many of the customs and traditions associated with the 3-day period of mourning as it was observed in Ireland. More information about Cathy Jo's stories and Irish Wake info can be found at [www.irishteller.com](http://www.irishteller.com).

In addition, Tim Garner, member of the Southern Ohio Forge and Anvil (SOFA), will be onsite along with other SOFA members to demonstrate traditional blacksmithing. Come learn more about the technique and art of blacksmithing while watching these specialists create various pieces on site. To learn more about their organization, please visit [www.sofablacksmiths.org](http://www.sofablacksmiths.org).

Musician and artisan Michael Vignoles, a maker of traditional Uilleann pipes and bodhran drums, will be joining the Dayton Celtic Festival for a fourth year for workshops on his instruments, as well as conversation and demonstrations throughout the weekend. To learn more, please visit his website at [www.michaelvignoles.com](http://www.michaelvignoles.com) or email him at [michaelvp60@gmail.com](mailto:michaelvp60@gmail.com).

Mai Herson, a traditional singer/dancer has four CDs on the market and has toured Ireland, England, Europe, and America. This is her fifth year performing and conducting workshops at the Dayton Celtic Festival. She is also performing with the duo Celtic Font at this festival, and she has shared a stage with bands such as Scythian, Cherish the Ladies, members of Dervish, The Drowsy Lads, and many more. To learn more about Mai, visit her website [www.maihersonirishtradsinger.com](http://www.maihersonirishtradsinger.com).

Another returning feature at this year's festival is the Irish wolfhound, the world's tallest breed of dog. Once prized as the war dog of the Celts, this canine is now known as the gentle giant. It was the dog of royalty in medieval times. During the Celtic Revival, the wolfhound became a symbol of Irish nationalism. See these amazing dogs up close, pet them, and maybe get a free Celtic kiss!

In addition, the Dayton Area Rugby Club (DARC) and Five Rivers Youth Rugby Foundation (FRYRF) will be present to promote the sport. Rugby first came to Dayton, Ohio, in the fall of 1969 when a group of University of Dayton students played their first rugby match. Today, DARC is a rugby union club dedicated to the promotion and growth of the sport. They play their home games at Dayton Rugby Grounds located at 620 Shiloh Dr. in Dayton. For more information on how to get involved, or even just to come out and watch one of their matches, visit [www.daytonrugby.com](http://www.daytonrugby.com).

Terence O'Leary, an Irish-American author who was born in Chicago, Illinois, but spent his teenage and adult life in Northwest Ohio, has written five critically acclaimed, realistic coming-of-age novels focusing on teenagers facing a family crisis. These books are fictional accounts of his family's struggles during the heartbreak of the Irish Potato Famine. Aside from sharing his novels during the festival, Mr. O'Leary will also talk about life in Ireland during the time of the Great Hunger. He will discuss how the Potato Famine not only changed the destiny of Ireland, but also America. For more information, email: [terry@terenceoleary.com](mailto:terry@terenceoleary.com) or visit [www.terenceoleary.com](http://www.terenceoleary.com).

Another cultural exhibit will focus on Maggie Delaney - The Story of an Indentured Servant. Forced from her homeland of Ireland, Maggie Delany, along with her husband and children, came to the American colonies as an indentured servant hoping to find a better life. Instead, she found sorrow and hardship as human property forced to serve whatever master bought her. Listen as Maggie shares her tale that reveals how thousands of our ancestors came to America in the 17th and 18th centuries.

In addition, David McDonnell, a critically acclaimed author and storyteller, has a vast repertoire of stories and a near-encyclopedic recollection of Irish history. He's told his tales and presented historical talks throughout North America and Ireland. His stories draw upon history, culture, and folklore with his vivid imagination and wry sense of humor added to the mix. David will present "The War of Independence and the Ordinary Irish" and "An Hour of Irish Storytelling." Both promise to be interactive and entertaining, with full audience participation. More information is available at [clandonnell@gmail.com](mailto:clandonnell@gmail.com) and [www.clandonnell.net](http://www.clandonnell.net).

Also, an Introduction to Irish Music workshop will take a big picture look at what makes Irish music...Irish! Have you ever wondered: What is the difference between jigs and reels? What do you call those instruments? How can people from all over the world sit in a circle and play the same song? Get a chance to hear tunes, songs, and explanations from some of the Dayton Celtic Festival's top Irish and American headliners. Feel free to come ready with questions.

Participating Artists include Fiachra Hayes, fiddle and vocals (Socks in the Frying Pan); Shane Hayes, accordion and vocals (Socks in the Frying Pan); and Daniel McKewen, guitar, uilleann pipes, and bodhran (The Drowsy Lads).

The Riley School of Irish Music, a community of children, teens and adults dedicated to the pursuit of Irish traditional music, will also be present at this year's Dayton Celtic Festival. The mission of the school is to foster traditional Irish music in the Greater Cincinnati region through instruction, communal events, and enrichment activities. Quarterly sessions are offered starting in September, January, and March. Classes are held on Saturdays at the Grace United Methodist Church in Norwood, Ohio. The Riley School is honored to receive support from both the Ohio and Kentucky Arts Councils and was awarded the Ohio Heritage Fellowship for Community Leadership in 2018 by the Ohio Arts Council. For more information visit their website <https://www.rileyirishmusic.com/> or their Facebook page

The Riley School will also host Irish Music Sessions at the festival. Participants can join Irish musicians, of all skill levels, as each pulls up a chair to join in jigs, reels, and the energy that comes with a community driven Irish session. People may bring their own instruments, or borrow some available at the sessions, to take part.

The Five Points Cloggers, a non-profit, energetic dance group based in Dayton with dancers of all ages, will also be present at the festival. The group specializes in Appalachian Mountain style clogging, also known as buck dancing, to traditional and popular music. The Five Points Cloggers have been performing in the Dayton area for over 30 years at local and regional festivals and events. The group was created to provide an extracurricular activity for young people (ages 8-80) in the Dayton area, to provide entertainment at local festivals and nursing homes and to continue the American traditional dance form created by settlers to America over 200 years ago. For more information, visit <https://www.facebook.com/FivePointsCloggers/>.

Also, staff members of the Dayton Metro Library's Genealogy Department will provide an overview of resources available, specifically the Irish and British Isles sources within their collection. For more information on the resources, events, and workshops available, visit their website at: <http://www.daytonmetrolibrary.org/locations/history>.

The Miami Valley Knitting Guild (MVKG) members will once again be present at the festival to put Irish craftsmanship at their skilled fingertips as they demonstrate Aran knitting. The Aran sweater is an integral part of Irish heritage, with a long history linked to the farming and fishing families of Connemara and the three Aran islands off Connemara's coast. From a craft created on the wind-swept islands at the mouth of Galway Bay, see centuries-old embossed patterns come to life stitch by symbolic stitch. Miami Valley Knitting Guild is a friendly group of local

knitters who offer a standing invitation to knitters of all skill levels. Information is available on Facebook, Meetup, ravelry.com, and mvkg.org.

Another returning feature this year has Bill Evans from Evans Bakery leading workshops on the art of bread making, specifically Irish Soda Bread. Come join as he shares the steps, ingredients, and process of making this Irish favorite. Dayton family owned and operated since 1969, the bakery is located in Old North Dayton and serves fresh baked breads, pastries, and various other treats daily. Visit them on Troy Street or check out their Facebook page to learn more.

New to the festival this year is Christopher Bodkin and his lessons from the Irish canting crews. Leaving New Orleans after learning from the Irish street gangs, Christopher Bodkin headed north with the intention of warning, teaching, and extolling against the 'hucksters, shiesters, and tricksters' who were preying on their own population. Using gambling sleights, magic, and the other skills learned in the Irish canting crews of his youth, his goal is to teach his people 'Do Not Play This For Money'. A family-friendly interactive look at the seamier side of Irish life, Christopher Bodkin is actually Eric Scites of Faire Wynds Entertainment, which strives to bring the historical side of entertainments to life. Find more information at [www.fairewynds.com](http://www.fairewynds.com).

Other Celtic cultural activities include the Gaelic Mass on Sunday at 10:00 a.m. and various ethnic merchandise and food vendors who will be on site throughout the weekend. In addition, beer connoisseurs can also partake of a pint of authentic Celtic beverages.

Another returning activity at this year's event is a Parade of Kilts on Friday and Saturday evenings at 6:30 p.m. and immediately after Mass on Sunday (around 11:30 a.m.). Bagpipers and flag bearers will lead us through the festival grounds in a display of Celtic pride unseen in these parts for a generation or more.

Whiskey tasting classes featuring Tullamore D.E.W. Irish Whiskey are open to festival goers 21 years of age and older. Classes will be on Saturday at 5 and 7 p.m. and Sunday at 2 p.m. in the cultural workshop area. Tickets will be available for purchase in the cultural workshop area beginning one hour prior to the tastings. Please check the festival website at [daytoncelticfestival.com](http://daytoncelticfestival.com) for updated information.

Children will also be able to enjoy the Celtic experience over the weekend. The Rainbow's End Children's Area, which has a new location at the fountains on Monument Ave. across from the Wright Flyer, has special activities set up just for the wee ones! There are games, picture boards, and Celtic crafts and tattoos. Magic can be found as the children play a round of putt-putt golf, walk through the Blarney castle, build a fairy house, and search for a Leprechaun's pot of gold. The Children's Area will be open Saturday from 11:30 a.m.-8:30 p.m. and Sunday from 11:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.

The Celtic Breakfast will be held Sunday, July 28, at the "Top of the Morn'n Cafe" located in the Beer Garden across from the United Irish of Dayton Main Stage on Monument Ave. Breakfast will be available from 9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Ala Carte items include Breakfast Pasti, Celtic Fry, Sausage rolls, orange marmalade sticky buns, Empire biscuits, Eccles cakes, bread pudding with hot apples and whiskey sauce, shortbread fudge tarts, shortbread slices, berry tarts,

cranberry and cinnamon raisin scones. Beverages available for purchase include orange juice, cran-apple juice, coffee and tea.

For information on all events, go to [www.daytoncelticfestival.com](http://www.daytoncelticfestival.com) or call (937) 372-9788.