



Contact us! Please send comments and suggestions about this newsletter and ideas for future topics to Janie Gillies at kjgillies@yahoo.ca.

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Message from the Chairperson

Welcome back September 8th, 7:00 pm at O'Leary's – bring a friend!

Hi all – as hard as it is to believe, our wet summer's almost over; on the up-side, we can now look forward to our fall session start-up on September 8th and getting together to make some great music and new memories.

Our numbers are growing and we're performing more often, but with this kind of growth, growing pains are inevitable. Please bear with us as the Executive Committee works toward keeping you informed, and keeping our sessions and events lively and relevant to our mandate to preserve and promote Irish music and culture.

There will be some minor changes to our regular Tuesday sessions. Our aim is to educate ourselves and be organized without being stifling. The first hour and a half of the session (until about 8:30 p.m.) will focus on traditional Irish tunes and songs. Our Music Director, [Keith Facey](#), will lead the sessions for this first part of the evening. Keith will call out the names of sets and their individual tunes beforehand so members have time to find music. If you're missing the music, make a note of it and talk to Keith at the end of the sessions; he'll do his best to have a copy for the next time. In the meanwhile, experience tells us that our members are always generous with music and happy to share.

We'll also try to list the sets and songs we'll be focusing on for each session on our website, so be sure to check it out at www.comhaltas.ca.

We'd like to introduce some new traditional songs and tunes, too. If you've heard something you'd like us to add to the roster, tell us about it! It should be traditional Irish, and sheet music and/or lyrics are appreciated if you have them – Keith will arrange for copies for the next session. If you're not sure if your tune or song is traditional and you only know a snippet of the song, or if you'd rather someone else introduce the tune, just talk to Keith or another member of the Executive Committee and we'll be happy to help.

After the first hour and a half or so, we'll open things up to a broader selection. We ask members to continue to present music that is of a traditional Celtic flavour. By being a bit more focused in our sessions, we hope to grow musically as a group, give newer members the music education and confidence they need to be ready to participate in public performances, and have a great time together.

Once we've given this new session format a shot for a while, we'll be checking back in with you to see what you think. Be sure to let us know!

Looking forward to getting back at it again,
[Rick Clark](#)
Chairperson

NEWS

Congratulations Stuart!

Our own branch Treasurer Stuart Hook was recently nominated to be inducted into the North American Comhaltas Hall of Fame.

Stuart has been tireless in his efforts to support Irish culture in our area for more than 15 years and has helped to carry the branch through tough times, when membership was almost nonexistent. Through music, dance and his support of storytelling and other cultural endeavours, Stuart's loyalty and dedication laid the groundwork for the record number of members we now enjoy.



Thank you Stuart and congratulations for this much-deserved honour. The induction will take place in Toronto the end of October.

North American Convention

Bob Burgess, our Vice Chairperson, attended the annual Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann North American Province Convention in St. Louis this April. Bob was on-hand to hear Anne McConnell-Strong read Stuart Hook's nomination into the Hall of Fame. Delegates were glad to see Saint John represented at both the regional meeting and the "all delegates" meeting.

Bob attended the meetings as well as a whistle and piano workshop; besides the meetings and workshops, there were concerts large and small, vendors, sessions, dancing, and a banquet. St. Louis also boasts a large number of young people involved in Irish music, so there were many talented kids at the convention too.

The branch gave a small sum to assist with Bob's expenses, and we appreciate Bob covering the rest of his costs and taking time from his schedule to attend the convention and represent our branch so well.



Comhaltas.ca

We've brought our website back! Check us out at www.comhaltas.ca. Here you can find information about our branch and activities, including upcoming events, photos, news, and sheet music to some of our more common traditional tunes and songs.

DID YOU KNOW?

Session Etiquette

Members have asked for some clarification on session etiquette, so members of the Executive Committee did some independent research and consulted with a range of new and senior members from our own branch, as well as folk from other chapters. We have created a pamphlet using this information, and it will be posted on our website shortly and distributed at our sessions.

We'll be using these basic concepts as a guide to our sessions in the hopes they remain a fun, invaluable playing experience. And it's worthwhile information to take with you on the road in case you're lucky enough to come across an Irish session in your travels.

DID YOU KNOW? cont...

Dues due...

It's that time of year to renew your Comhaltas membership. Membership forms will be available at our Tuesday night sessions for the next few weeks, and we'll post a form on our website. Please fill one out even if you're a returning member so we can be sure that we have your up-to-date contact information. If you're paying by cheque, you can make it payable to *Comhaltas Saint John*. Individual and family rates are available. See Treasurer [Stuart Hook](#) for more information.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Annual General Meeting and Ceili, October 3rd

Our Annual General Meeting (AGM) will be held on October 3rd, 2:30 p.m. at the Fairvale Outing Association. Then gather back at 7:00 p.m. with friends and family for a free ceili to celebrate!

Election of officers and other business will happen during the AGM in the afternoon – this is a great chance to get together with other Comhaltas members and discuss issues of importance. Don't forget to grab your musical instruments, put on your dancing shoes and come back for the ceili later that evening. More details to follow on our website at www.comhaltas.ca.

Please send agenda items to branch Secretary Keith Facey at info@comhaltas.ca **no later than September 18.**

Comhaltas performances

Our branch is being asked to perform more and more often, a sure sign of our musical growth. Please be sure to forward any performance requests to our Chairperson Rick Clark at r.clarksinb@gmail.com. The Executive Committee will determine the nature of the event and the set list and performers. As new members join Comhaltas and become familiar with our musical content, they will, in time, be invited to participate in public events.

August 29

Dragon Boat Festival

Come out and support our group for this fun event on Saturday, August 29 from 12:45 – 1:45 p.m. The festival takes place at the Renforth Wharf.

We're looking forward to seeing you all again, **September 8, 7:00 pm** at O'Leary's in the back room.

If you know of others who share your love of Irish culture, please encourage them to come out too!

Newsletter topics/suggestions

We hope this newsletter is a source of information and interest for you. Please send any comments, topic suggestions for future newsletters, and upcoming events to Janie Gillies at kjgillies@yahoo.ca.