

## Croan Yn Tead Ireland Trip 2016

“Croan Yn Tead” is Manx Gaelic for ‘The String Tree’, or ‘Tree of Strings’, in reference to the harp, and is the collective name of a group of young musicians from the Isle of Mann ranging in age from 12 – 16. The group was formed to undertake a cultural exchange trip to Ireland at the end of March and was organised by flute player Peddyr Cubberley of Manx band Mactullagh Vannin, and Irish harper and teacher Fiana Ní Chonaill of Co. Limerick, Ireland. The trip was instigated following a visit to the Island by Fiana in September 2015 at the invitation of Mactullagh Vannin. The initiative behind the trip was to give some of our young Manx musicians an opportunity to hone their skills through music performance, and to help develop their musicianship and creative skills whilst showcasing Manx traditional music to audiences in Ireland. In addition to that, many friendships were made and great time was had by all!

### Wednesday, March 30<sup>th</sup> - Boat to Belfast

As there was no scheduled ferry to Dublin, we had no option but to travel via Belfast which doubled the road journey, and due to the Steam Packet’s vessel Manannan colliding with the Victoria Pier on the approach to Douglas harbour some days earlier, she was put out of action and all Irish sailings were subsequently cancelled from the end of March until April 4<sup>th</sup>. It was touch and go whether we’d get actually even make it to Ireland at all! Fortunately though, the Steam Packet put on the Ben My Chree to cover the Wednesday Belfast sailing, albeit arriving much later than the original Manannan schedule. We finally arrived in Belfast at around midnight on Wednesday/Thursday, 30<sup>th</sup>/31<sup>st</sup> March, some 14 hours later than scheduled. This necessitated an over-night stop in the North at great expense, and we then had to leave early in the morning in order to make Limerick for our lunch-time concert at the Tower, part of the Irish World Academy of Music and Dance, University of Limerick. Image: Boat to Belfast



### Thursday, March 31<sup>st</sup> - Music of Mann Concert

Croan Yn Tead participated at concerts and workshops in the Limerick and Tipperary areas; performing as part of the Spring Concert Series of the Irish World Academy of

Music and Dance at the University of Limerick on Thursday, March 31<sup>st</sup> at 1pm.  
Admission to the concert was free and took place at the Tower. ~  
<https://www.facebook.com/events/1127119720652879/>

We had a warm and enthusiastic audience with the auditorium about ¾ full. Fiana also joined us for some of our sets and played along with pieces such as “O Kirree T’ou Goll Dy Faagail Mee”, “Car Juan Nan” & “Car Ny Ferrishyn”. Images: pre-concert warm-up



### Workshop No.1

Following the lunchtime concert, Peddyr gave a 90 minute workshop to students on the MA in Irish Music Performance course, whilst the young members went off for a visit to Bunratty Castle & Folk Park and had a fantastic time there by all accounts! The workshop was well attended with a variety of musicians with instruments ranging from harp, flute, concertina, Uilleann Pipes, button accordion and tin whistles to name but a few, where they learned a variety of Manx tunes including hornpipes, jigs and reels.

### Friday, April 1<sup>st</sup> - O' Ffogerty Harp Visit

Preceding the evening concert, the group and their hosts visited the library in Thurles and were treated to a very interesting and informative talk by Patrick Fogarty on the 17th century O'Ffogerty Harp, which is on display at the library. Following the visit, we were treated to a fantastic meal at Patrick and Tinas home where they fed the '5000' with a fantastic choice of food, and this was followed by a short impromptu and informal 'jazzy' rendition of the Manx air “Craih Foalsey” on piano by our own Owen Williams!

Image: The 17<sup>th</sup> Century O' Ffogerty Harp



## Templemore Concert

Friday evening and the group performed in concert at Our Lady's Secondary School in Templemore, along with other artists featuring: Fiana Ni Chonail & Harp Students, Cill Shleibhte CCÉ, Lizzie Affolter (harp), Members of the Thomas McDonagh Pipe Band, and the school's own Cuisle. ~ <https://www.facebook.com/events/192925184412101/>

A full house and another very warm and appreciative audience were present at the concert and the standard of music from all the performers was very high indeed, and a great night too! Images: Templemore Concert



## Saturday April 2<sup>nd</sup> - Workshop No. 2

It was off to the town of Nenagh in the morning for Peddyr who gave another workshop of Manx traditional music. The workshop attracted a number of harpers from around the county of Tipperary and even included a Breton harper resident in the county!

Images: Harpers at the workshop



## Wedding

Following on from the workshop, whilst everyone else was relaxing and shopping etc, it was off to Killaloe in Co. Clare where Peddyr teamed up with Fiana to play at a wedding in a beautiful setting next to the River Shannon. The Bride & Groom and their guests looked resplendent as they were entertained for 2 hours by Fiana's and Peddyr's harp & flute.



## Social night

To finish off our visit we were entertained and handsomely fed by our hosts at the Fairways Restaurant in Kilruane just outside of Nenagh. We were totally spoilt with fantastic food and hospitality that was second to none. Our hosts Joan and Geoff looked after us like we were royalty! After the meal, it was time to break out the instruments and let the session begin. It was great to see our young musicians mixed in amongst their new found friends and they all had a thoroughly enjoyable and fantastic time!



Our grateful and heartfelt thanks go out to all who looked after us and help arrange our visit to Ireland and made it the success it was. Special thanks to Fiana and her team, to all our hosts in Ireland, to all the parents of the young musicians of Croan Yn Tead whose help and encouragement has been priceless. Thanks too to Carl & Selina Joughin at the Mitre Hotel in Ramsey for the use of a room for weekly rehearsals, and to Culture Vannin for assisting our travel on the boat. Apologies if we've not named all those who have helped but you know who you are and again, a big thank you for all you've done for us.

Croan Yn Tead are planning a post trip concert or two in the near future so please keep an eye on our Facebook page for news and further details.

<https://www.facebook.com/Croan-Yn-Tead-Crann-An-Téad-494673533991186>

