

Dublin Comes West
by Michael Quinn, Class of '95
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A PC tradition often overlooked is the performance of student bands. Year after year students flock to local clubs and taverns, as well as the occasional on-campus events, to watch their peers do their best interpretations of rock and roll music. From Ants in the Cellar to Pavlov's Dogs to Pin Cushions, bands at PC have pretty much stuck to alternative rock, blues, and metal styles.

For the last couple of years, however, one PC group has named The Clancy Brothers as their main influence. "I wasn't driven by my parents or friends to play this type of music," says Pat McGrath '95. "I just grabbed my heritage by the reins and it took off."

Seniors and old high school friends McGrath and Ryan Dugan founded the Roving Friars when they both transferred to Providence College in 1992. Before they were friars, they followed a band called the Ringroses around their native Connecticut and played during intermissions and set breaks. Both sang, and Ryan accompanied them on guitar. They did similar work at Patrick's Pub after their transfer. Eventually, the Pub had them back to play their own shows.

Last year was a bit of an off year for the Friars, as both Pat and Ryan were busy with other interests. This year was a different story. BOP gave them a little spark by convincing them to play a night at Stuart's. After this, they performed at Parents' Weekend. Then they made a personnel change.

Transfer sophomore and music major Michael Corbett was added to the friars only two weeks ago to sing and play guitar, banjo, and mandolin. Within eight days, he helped them rework their repertoire and learn thirty songs. "He adds strong musical talent to the band," says Pat. "Before Michael joined, we had never even tried harmony. Now we work it in as much as possible."

The newly trioed Friars performed this past Friday at the BOP Beer Garden. Playing such classics as "The Irish Rover," "Come Out Ye Black and Tans," and the a capella "Santiano," the Friars impressed all with their traditional Irish folk sound and extensive material. They even took requests.

With Pat and Ryan both graduating in a few weeks, one might think their chances of catching the Roving Friars are limited. Not so. They will be playing two graduation parties next month, and are available to play more. They will be playing on the Boston radio station WERS on Sunday, May 7, and they may give one more performance at Patrick's Pub that weekend. I recommend getting out to see the Roving Friars. And if seeing them at some club isn't enough, you can call them at 272-3203, and if they are available, they just might play one of your own parties.