

IRISH HERITAGE

A photographic and written journey of the

The Queensland Irish Association

DANCERS
Est 1958

and

The Queensland Irish Association

PIPE BAND
Est 1919





This community history evolved as part of a federally funded community history 'Work for the Dole' Project entitled "Irish Heritage". The project was sponsored by Community Employment Link Group Inc. and approved by Queensland Vocational Training College. Up to 15 Work for the Dole participants and a supervisor gathered for two days each week from late May until mid-November 2004 to work on gathering together a history of the Queensland Irish Association Pipe Band and Dancers.

The net was cast far and wide in the search for history, photographs, newspaper articles, memorabilia, stories and reminiscences for this book. I must particularly thank Kate Hartley for the Dancers and Hugh McClelland for the Pipe Band for putting up with my endless queries and editing demands. Others who deserve special thanks include Bill Hanley, Mary Cunningham, Leo Moloney, Joanne Steckelbruck, Brian O'Connor, Bradley Watson, and Nicky Thorne for taking the time to look through their photograph collections, to talk to me in their homes, and/or to write down reminiscences. Thanks also to Vicki Lynagh, Sheryl Watkins, Catherine-Ann Oxenham and Charmaine Chase for taking time out of their busy schedules at the August Feis to talk to me. Mick Silvester and Colin (Buzz) Ennis were very helpful with general queries, Rowan Swee for cartoons, and Paul Jones, Sally Van Roden, Debbie Kerswell, and Chris Bell saved my sanity with their IT support. And last, but certainly not least, thank you to all project participants for being a great group to work with - I wish you all good things for the future.

Particular thanks must also be extended to the Board of the Queensland Irish Association for their support and assistance, and to the Mt. Isa Irish Club for their kind donation to the project.

This history is by no means definitive, limited as it was by time and thus access to all possible records and memories. I hope the finished product goes some way towards documenting this history, giving a permanent record for any later histories that may be undertaken, and provides inspiration for a whole new generation of pipers, drummers and dancers at the QIA.



Helen Riley
Project Supervisor
1st November, 2004



Thank you Mt. Isa Irish Club for your donation to support the printing of this booklet.



The Queensland Irish Association

The Association was formally established on March 23rd 1898, following the resignation, "en Masse" of the members of the 6 Companies of Queensland Irish Volunteers in the Queensland Land Defence Force.

Ex-members of the volunteers combined with the H.A.C.B.S. (Brisbane Branch of the Qld Hibernian Society) to found the new Association and the Inaugural Secretary of the Association was Major P.J. Stephens, former Commandant of the Irish Volunteers.

Premises to house the Association were first rented in Queen Street and later in the Courier Building (now the Commonwealth Bank in Brisbane CBD). The Association's current premises, Tara House, located on Elizabeth Street in the Brisbane CBD, were purchased in 1919. The building is now heritage listed.

Although there is no direct relationship, the Association can be regarded as a descendant of the Queensland Hibernian Association, which was founded in 1871, and the principles of the earlier Association are embodied in the Constitution of the Queensland Irish Association. Subsequently, the formation of the Queensland Irish Association is seen as being a natural progression from earlier Irish groups in the colony of the 19th Century.



Current premises

Groups associated with the Association are - Bridge Club, TARA Singers, Cultural Committee, QIA Library, Tigh Gaelach Gourmet Club, Dancers, TARA Hall Dining Club, and Pipe Band.

The Queensland Irish Association is considered to be the longest continuously operating National Association in Queensland although its formation is pre-dated by that of the German Club.

The present premises in the heart of the city were purchased in 1919, occupied in 1923, with major extensions completed in 1928 and progressive modifications and refurbishment continue to meet the changing need of the members.

Association policy has always been to support other organisations with Irish heritage or aspirations, but also to be a strong supporter of co-operation between all National & Ethnic Associations.



The QIA Dancers

The Queensland Irish Association introduced Irish National Dancing to Queensland in 1958, when it sponsored a small group of members' daughters under the tuition of Mrs. Pearl Neilson, assisted by Mrs. Helen Smith (nee Henry), who later became tutor. Members of the QIA Pipe Band were instrumental in proposing this formation, as the Pipe Band felt that Dancers were a valuable adjunct to an Irish Pipe Band. As the Dancers grew in number and success, they became a separate entity in their own right - The QIA Dancers.



RIGHT: Decked out in traditional Irish dress, competitors face the judge at the Queensland Irish Dancing Championships. The Australian championships will be held in Sydney in September.

L-R: Clare Giammichele (Michelson), Elizabeth McCabe, Lea Campbell, Lynn Murphy, Catherine Cunningham (Crocker), Debra McMackin, Shauna Daly, Kelsey Hegarty, Rachael Hocking - approximately 1976

[Photo Source: Mary Cunningham]

The QIA ballroom was a fabulous place to dance. The people and atmosphere were friendly, energetic, full of laughter and music, welcoming, supportive and encouraging.

Joanne Steckelbruck
(Cunningham)

From the outset, the dancing class flourished. An Annual Championship, now known affectionately as the May Feis began in 1961, and attracted many interstate competitors. These dancers, who made a huge effort in travelling to Brisbane by train each year, were able to display their considerable talents and authentically embroidered costumes to local girls. The dancers are indebted to the Irish National Association, Sydney, and Ms Maureen Dwyer in particular, for assistance in these early days.



QUEENSLAND IRISH ASSOCIATION DANCERS
with Miss Vicki Lynagh, Tutor

Front Row L-R: Aileen Moloney, Lorraine Burns, Catherine-Ann Oxenham, Leanne Townsend, Karen Draper, Joanne Cook, Kerry Campbell, Maureen O'Connor, Shauna Daly, Rachael Hocking
 2nd Row L-R: Lea Campbell, Elizabeth McCabe, Caroline Dryden, Caroline Hethorn, Peita Hanley, Joanne Cunningham, Lynda Burns, Maree Cunningham, Linda Law, Susan Hanley, Vicki Lynagh (Teacher)
 3rd Row L-R: Janet Townsend, Debra McMackin, Therese Sullivan, Catherine Cunningham, Alison McCabe, Anne Moloney, Majella O'Neill, Cheryl Waterson, Michelle Struby, Lyn Murphy
 Back Row L-R: Kelsey Hegarty, Suzanne McMackin, Sharon Boyd, Eileen Lynch, Cathy Lynch, Tracey Hegarty, Anne Turnbull, Patsy Daly, Debbie Eklam, Alison Thurgate

[Photo source: Leo Moloney]

Initially, the QIA Dancers competed at local and state Eisteddfods in a separate Irish Dancing category. This proved to be less than satisfactory, however, as both the Highland and Irish dance categories were adjudicated by a Highland Dance judge. As more Irish dance competitors entered the Eisteddfods, this problem became exacerbated.

L-R: Joanne Cunningham (Senior)*, Maureen O'Connor (Minor)*, Anne Turnbull (Adult), Maree Cunningham (Intermediate), Kelsey Hegarty (Junior), at the State Championships at Ascot State School (approx, 1976)

*Currently IDC Adjudicators.

[Photo Source: Mary Cunningham]



Finally, the Australian Irish Dance Association (AIDA) was formally approached to form a Queensland branch and first Queensland Championships were held at Ascot State School in 1974. The Australian Irish Dancing Association and Ms Jan Currie, Sydney, must be thanked for their assistance and advice in recent years. Nonetheless, these Eisteddfods provided valuable experience for the early dancers. Many dancers were successful in winning bursaries that helped to pay for lesson and other costs.

Joanne Cunningham (Steckelbruck) (18 yrs) contesting the senior section at the Queensland Irish Dancing Championships at Ascot State School in 1976.

Joanne was the senior champion in 1975

[Photo Sources: Mary Cunningham and Joanne Steckelbruck]



7TH AUST. INTER. C'SHIP 1973
 Q'L'D SENIOR CHAMPION 1974
 4TH AUST. SEN. C'SHIP 1974
 Q'L'D ADULT CHAMPION 1975
 7TH AUST. ADULT C'SHIP 1975
 Q'L'D ADULT CHAMPION 1976
 8TH AUST. ADULT C'SHIP 1976



Catherine Oxenham (L) and Maree Cunningham (R) dancing at the Irish Club in the 1970's.
 [Photo Source: Mary Cunningham]

In November 1971 the QIA sponsored dancers to compete in the Railway Eisteddford in Sydney. This was a great experience and helped us gain confidence to compete interstate. In 1972 the QIA also helped send three dancers to the Australian Championships in Sydney. Vicki Lynagh, Cathy Lynch and myself. Not long after, on 30th June 1974 Queensland held its first State Championship at Kedron State School.

Joanne Steckelbruck
 (Cunningham)

Catherine-Ann Oxenham started dancing with the Queensland Irish Association in 1971. She was an entrant in the inaugural Rose of Tralee Quest and won the Miss Ireland competition at Warana representing the Irish Club as Miss Ireland in All Nations. A highlight for her was initiating a special performance display with the drummers from the Pipe Band. This display, incorporating Drums and Dancers, was known as the Drummers Salute and was performed at Warana and other events.

Vicky Lynagh started dancing with the QIA Dancers in 1963 and as a teacher from 1973 until 1977. She became the first qualified TCRG Teacher in Qld in 1973 and became one of the first 3 ADCRG adjudicators in 1981 along with Joanne Cunningham and Lorraine O'Donohue.

"It was only when teachers and students came up from interstate that it became obvious that specific Irish dance teachers were essential if the level of dancing was to improve. This led to visits by interstate teachers and the introduction of the QIA Dancers Championship, the forerunner of the May Feis, which lured interstate competitors up to Queensland."

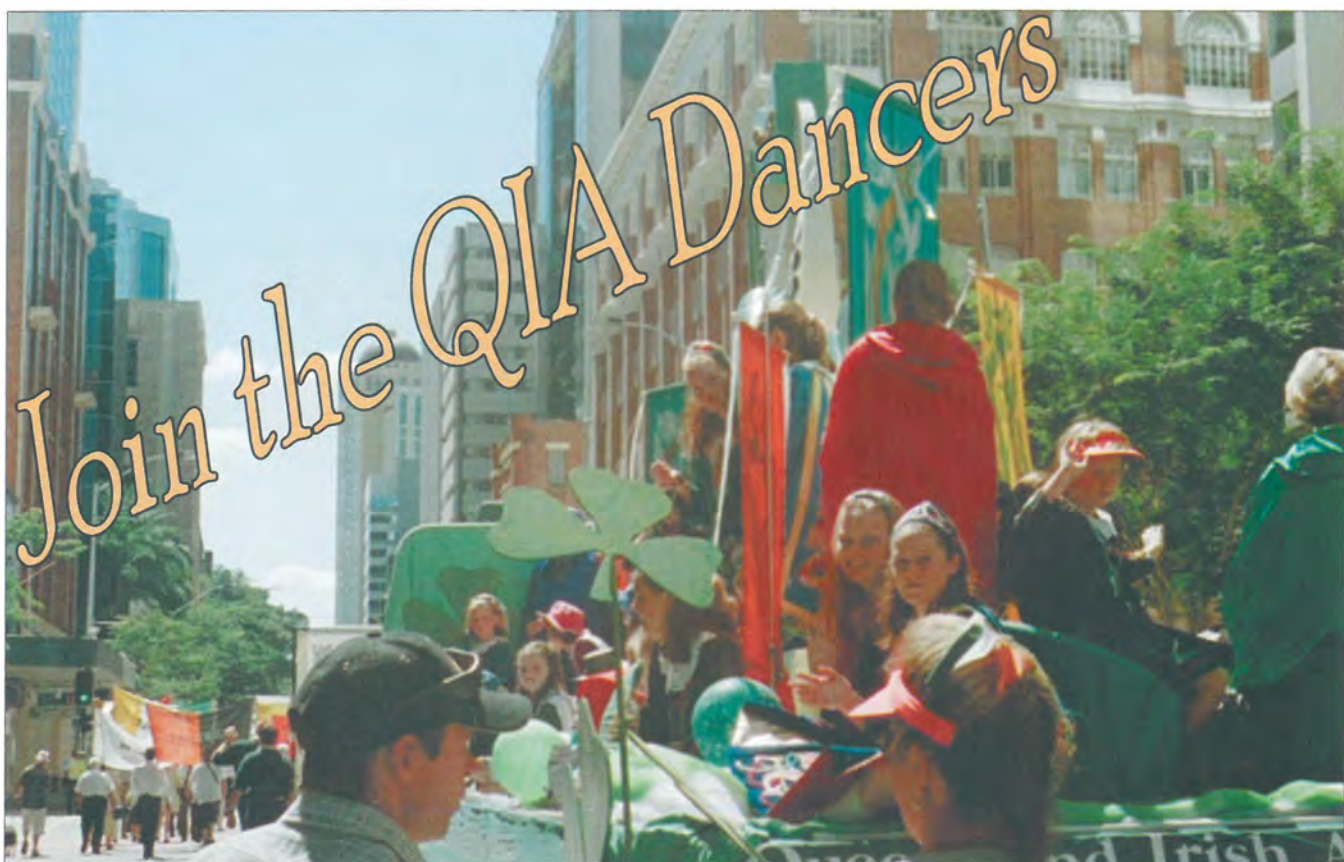
Vicki Lynagh

Thursday 30th August, 1973
Australian Championships
Melbourne

IRISH FLINGERS



Eight members of the Queensland Irish Association flew to Melbourne today for the national Irish dancing championships there tomorrow, Saturday and Sunday. The girls are (clockwise) medallion-wearing Linda Burns (left front), 14, Salisbury; Joanne Cunningham, 15, Morningside; Tracey Hegarty, 14, Greenslopes; Cathy Lynch, 18, Kedron, and her sister, Eileen, 16; Vicki Lynagh, 20, Hamilton; Linda Law, 15, Inala; and Maree Cunningham, 14, sister of Joanne.



Join the QIA Dancers

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The visit by Irish President Dr. Patrick Hillery to Australia in June 1985

L-R Dr. Hillery, Anne McNamara (Kennedy), Mary McNamara (Clarris), Aileen Moloney, Kate Moloney (Hartley), Gary Daly, and Fiona Gaffney (Wyse) in front



Fiona Wyse and Gaffney - Kate Hartley and Moloney. Oireachtas Rince na Cruinne Dublin 1994.

Kate Hartley (Moloney) began dancing in 1972-73 at the age of 5 years joining her her cousins, Anne, Aileen, Geoffrey and Michael Moloney. Her father Leo Moloney also acted as President of the QIA Dancers for many years.

Fionna Wyse (Gaffney)

Fionna and Kate first met, fittingly, at a dancing competition in 1983 and have been friends ever since. They competed together at all levels of competition one of the highlights being at the World Championships in 1994. Together they have been involved in more displays than they would care to remember from dancing at Nursing Homes and School Fetes to being involved in the Interceltic Festival in L'orient in 1999. The bond between the two is as strong today as it was all those years ago.

Gary Daly

Gary had extensive experience as a dancer with the Cosgriff School in Melbourne both Nationally and Internationally. He taught at the QIA in two stints for a total of 9 years in two sessions. It was under Gary's tutelage that the first Team of dancers from the QIA competed at the 25th Oireachtas Rince na Cruinne (World Championships) held in Dublin in 1994. Gary was always interested in taking on new challenges, which resulted in the dancers being involved in a wide variety of experiences from dancing at the Moree races to performing with the Pops Orchestra. He also started his own dance company, Celtic Rhythm, which gave dancers from different schools the opportunity to perform at many prestigious events, such as the International Tattoo as part of the Brisbane Festival.

He is currently working as the Events Co-ordinator with the Australian Ballet in Melbourne. (For many of us he was more than just a teacher he was a great friend and support)

The art of Irish dancing in Queensland has come a long way since the early founding days of the QIA Dancers. The commencement of QIA Irish Dancing classes in the 1950's was able to take place with the assistance of interstate and overseas teachers, and the dedication and hard work of many local people. As a result, state competitions frequently included dancers from locations as far-flung as Townsville, Mt Isa, Warwick, and other regional centers.



Warana Parade 1978



L-R: Petrina Gardner, Maree Cunningham, and Therese Sullivan outside the Irish Club after Warana in 1978 [Photo Source: Mary Cunningham]

The Warana Festival held in Brisbane was another fabulous event the QIA was involved in. Dancers and the Pipe Band were involved in the procession. The dancers competed in, and most often won, the multi-cultural dance competition held at City Hall during the festival.

Joanne Steckelbruck
(Cunningham)





Back L-R: Tracy Hegarty, Eileen Lynch, Cathy Lynch, Vicki Lynagh * (Teacher)
 Front L-R: Lynda Burns, Maree Cunningham, Linda Law, Joanne Cunningham
 * Currently an IDC Adjudicator

[Photo Source: Mary Cunningham]

The spread of Irish dancing across Queensland owes much to the dedication and success of early students and teachers, some of whom have moved on to establish other dance schools across Brisbane and Queensland. Past students and tutors of the QIA Dancers have established such centres as Chase Academy of Irish Dance, Crocker School of Irish Dancing, Lynagh Studio, Watkins Academy, The Oxenham School of Irish Dancing, and Dancers Academy; and all have seen success to varying degrees in numerous state and national Irish Dancing championships.

Former and Current Teachers:

| | |
|---------------|--|
| 1958 | Mrs. Pearl Neilson |
| 1959 | Helen Henry and Mrs. Pearl Neilson |
| 1968-71 | Mary Begley (assisted by Anne Begley and Vicki Lynagh) |
| 1972-77 | Vicki Lynagh (Cox) (assisted by Catherine Lynch) |
| 1978-80 | Charmaine Chase (assisted by Maree Cunningham and Tracey Hegarty) |
| 1981-83 | Joanne Stecklebruck (nee Cunningham) (assisted by Maree Cunningham and Tracey Hegarty) |
| Oct 83-Feb 84 | Yvette Jackson |
| 1984-87 | Gary Daly |
| 1988-89 | Fiona Brown |
| 1990-91 | Sheryl Chen (Watkins) |
| 1992-96 | Gary Daly |
| 1997-2001 | Kate Hartley * (nee Moloney) [assisted by Fiona Wyse (nee Gaffney). |
| 2001-Current | Kate Hartley & Anita Plaza |

The QIA Dancers' most high profile student to date, Sean Kelliher, is currently touring with Riverdance (pictured here when he was lead dancer for a performance in Brisbane in 2003). Between 1989 and 1997 Sean won the Australian Championships 5 times in different age groups, with a variety of teachers:



Intermediate Boys 1989 (Fiona Brown), Senior Boys 1991 (Sheryl Watkins), Junior Mens 1993 (Gary Daly), Men 1996 (Gary Daly) and Senior Men 1997 (Kate Moloney).

The Under 16 Reel in Couple with Sean Kelliher and Prudence Hill (Watkins) also won the Australian Championships in 1991.



The winning 4-hand Own Choreography team 1982

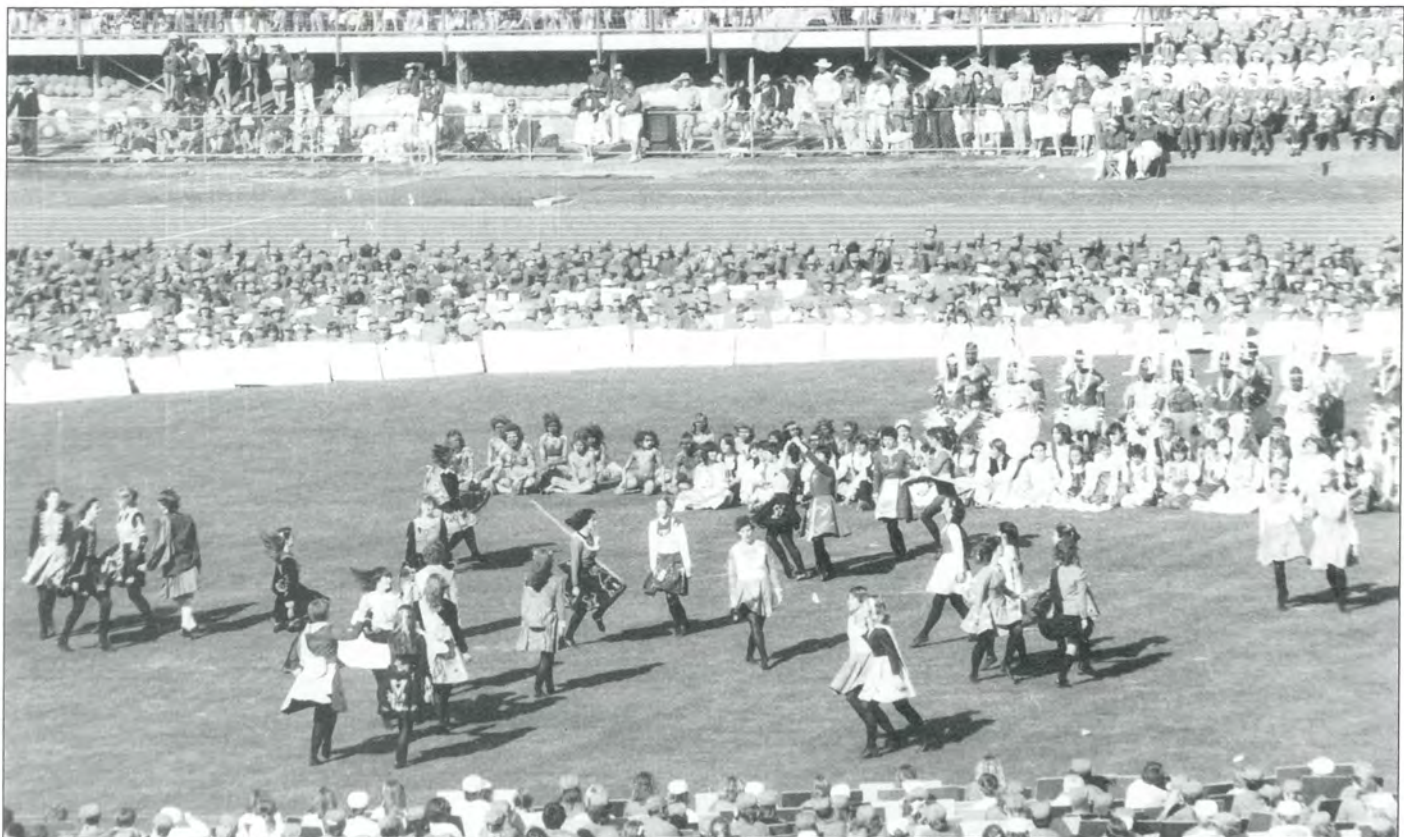
L-R Mary McNamara (Clarris), Therese Sullivan, Catherine-Ann Oxenahm and Sheryl Chen (Watkins).
Photo source: Joanne Steckelbruck]

Sheryl Watkins (Chen) started dancing with the QIA in 1978 and then went on to teach at the QIA from 1990 until 1991. She won the "Queen of all Nations" at Warana in 1985 where she represented the Irish club. As the winner, Sheryl received a trip overseas which she used to go to Ireland for the world championships in 1986.

Left - Competing at Australian Championships between 1980 and 1983.
[Photo source: Joanne Steckelbruck]



The Under 13 Own Choreography Team with Assistant Teacher Maree Cunningham [Photo source: Joanne Steckelbruck]



Dancers representing all Schools at the Commonwealth Games in Brisbane 1982

[Photo source: Kate Hartley]

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When the Australian Championships were held in Queensland for the 2nd time in 1987 this was big news in Brisbane. A function was held at City Hall with a Ceili to be held on the Saturday night in the Irish Club. Charmaine Chase remembers that she made an announcement at this function to the effect that everyone was welcome to attend the Ceili. "The club had never seen so many people", says Charmaine. "People were pushing other people up the front stairs whilst those inside were being pushed out the back door at the same time, and it took two hours to get a drink at the bar". It was not long after this experience that the Club realised the necessity for an extension.

What Goes On Tour Stays On TourSometimes!

Kate Hartley (Moloney)
recalls
SKIPPY



"At the Australian Championships in Melbourne, we were travelling in a station wagon with 8 people in the back. This was before seat belts had to be worn. Someone noticed that Ken James (of Skippy fame) was driving the car behind us. So of course, all 8 of us start hopping around (giving the car suspension a good test) doing Skippy impersonations."



Australian Championships 1990 – Sydney

Back Row – (L to R) Sheryl Watkins, Debbie Kelliher, Jennifer Cox, Sean Kelliher, Kathryn Morris, Geoffrey Moloney, Nicky Kelliher, Prudence Hill, Aileen Moloney
Second Row – (L to R) Michelle Davidson, Carol Keane, Elizabeth Cox, Fionna Gaffney, Kate Moloney
Front Row – (L to R) Rebecca Kirkwood, Kristy Hanna.



The St. Patrick's Day float 2000
L-R Shae Rodden, Daniella Kelly
& Gretel Harvey
[Photo source: City News Thurs
March 16, 2000



The Under 13 4-hand team at the 2004 Mid-Year Feis
Emilee MacMahon, Kathleen Downey, Laura Greenhalgh, & Gretel Harvey

What I am glad of is that I got to experience so much - different teachers allowed for different styles of teaching and dancing. Some were quite strict on form, while others let you use and develop your own creativity. This I found to be the most rewarding and brought out some pretty spectacular moves from us all. Dancing also honed my leadership skills and has taught me much that I have taken with me into work life and home life and especially 'dealing with a toddler' life right now.....keep it fun, keep it interesting, and always be open to new experiences wherever you can get them. What a great life I've had with the QIA Dancers!

Nicky Thorne (Kelliher)



Europe Day 2004

L-R Back Row Declan Kelly - Irish Ambassador to Australia, Amy Watson, Tammy Thompson, Charlotte Colchester, Tracey McGuinness, Anais Riley, Ray Hollis- Speaker of the House.

Middle Row Cheree McMahon, Emilee MacMahon, Gretel Harvey,

Front Row Erin McKaenzie, Daniel MacMahon, Tara McKenzie

[Photo Source: Kate Hartley]

What Goes On Tour

Stays On Tour

.....Sometimes!

Charmaine Chase
recalls

Adelaide



It was time for the Australian Irish Dancing Championships in Adelaide. Rory Hanley (son of Bill), a strapping young lad of 17 years was the only male amongst several young ladies representing Queensland. The accommodation organised for the female Dancers was in a forbidding old convent. Rory was snuck inside briefly, didn't say much (and then in a high pitched squeak), nodded politely and deftly avoided excommunication."

DANCING DOWN MEMORY LANE



Photo source:
Joanne Steckelbruck

Dancing was our way of life - we basically spent every Saturday for 15-20 years turning up to the Irish Club (it was like going to Church!). We all grew up together, shared our best and worst moments together, learnt about life, love, friendship and family. I have never had as good friendships as those that were founded at dancing. A couple of really good ones extended into years of family camping trips and holidays - and are still the strongest friendships we have!

(Nicky Thorne)

"Travelling by PLANE to Adelaide for (my) first Australians, wearing a BOILER suit and maroon dancing blazer with embroidered pocket!"

"Being old enough and good enough to fill-in when the 'big girls' were learning their new choreographies".

"Learning a ribbon dance - what a great idea!"

"Winning first prize and \$80 EACH at Cararra at our second international dancing competition on the Coast".

The stage collapsing on one side at one of the children's Christmas tree functions at the Club and the girls kept dancing as they slid off the stage.

Owen Keane's funeral when we were all guards of honour in our team dresses.

St. Patrick's Day Parade 1994 - dancing on the back of a truck without safety rails and having some hairy moments when the truck pulled up quickly or went up a hill.

Fionna Wyse's wedding - testing out all the different cocktails at the underages table! Oops [No names please !!!!!]

My own wedding [Nicky Thorne] with all the dancing crew (including Gary Daly, a previous teacher of mine) getting up to do mass 4 hands - while all the other guests were wondering what the heck we were doing and WHY!

Having the opportunity to dance for the President of Ireland on at least 3 occasions.

"Many, many car, bus, boat, plane and train trips with intimate chats, boy talk, girls talk, and various bodily functions.....say no more!"

"Broken stages, broken bones and broken hearts!"

An airline strike - drawing the short end of the stick and having to bus it home from the Australians.

The May Feis

The QIA Dancers' May Feis is the oldest continuously running Irish Dance competition in Queensland. This competition, currently run over 3 days in May, in the Tara Ballroom at Tara House, is unique in presenting gifts to place getters in every section. It also presents a number of perpetual and annual trophies, the awarding of which is highly prized. There are three major encouragement awards presented at the annual May Feis - the Flora Lynagh Memorial Trophy, the Kitty Lynch Memorial Trophy, and the Owen Keane Memorial Trophy.



The first competition was danced on the floor of the Tara Ballroom. The following year a stage was hired and thereafter a stage was built from monies raised by the QIA Dancers. This stage was used for the May Feis and other events in the Irish Club until 1998, when a new stage was purchased. The old stage was used again when numbers entered in the competition required the need to have two stages running. One memorable year, the second stage was placed in the Four Provinces Room under the chandelier. A late night emergency job was required when it was discovered the dancers could hit their heads on the chandelier and it had to be [very carefully!] taken down.

The first programs were hand written in an exercise book and parents were called in to help with everything and with few guidelines to follow. Parent/Secretary Mary Cunningham recalls that she was very unpopular the first year when she allocated a position to each dancer according to when their registration was received. This resulted in all competitors dancing in the same order for all dances ie first up on stage every time. This apparently caused quite a ruckus and a host of complaints from disgruntled teachers and parents.

| Item # | Slip Jig | Slips Jig |
|--------|------------------------|-----------|
| 30 | Karen Krol | |
| 21 | Lyn Murphy | |
| 15 | Clare Giammichele | |
| 62 | Therese O'Neill | |
| 13 | Shauna Daly | |
| 10 | Cathy Cunningham | |
| 37 | Anna Moloney | |
| 44 | Elizabeth McCabe | |
| 51 | Lynn McGree | |
| 20 | Faith Hanley | |
| 7 | Lea Campbell | |
| 21 | Colleen Hanrahan | |
| 27 | Rachael Hocking | |
| 52 | Debra McMaskin | |
| 1 | Francene Bassett | |
| 25 | Kelsey Hegarty | |
| 95 | (L) Bernadette Ritchie | |

| | | |
|------------|-----------------------|----|
| 1st Place | 1 Francene Bassett | 02 |
| 2nd " | 95 Bernadette Ritchie | 21 |
| 3rd " | 51 Lynn McGree | 59 |
| Gift Prize | 7 Lea Campbell | 87 |

Signature: _____
Date: 2.5.76

Spot the names!!

These early competitions were very popular with interstate competitors, who significantly outnumbered local competitors. They often travelled up by train, a not inconsiderable distance to travel for a dance competition. Apparently the attraction lay both in the prizes offered by the QIA Dancers, which were purchased from Ireland especially for the competition each year, and in the social life and friends made over the years.

Apparently the first dancing dresses were made by the wife/daughter?? of a Piper. Mary Shaw cut down some old kilts for the girls to wear. These were so big and heavy that they had to be held up by braces and usually were positioned up under the girls' arms. A white blouse with a cuff on the bottom was worn over this to hide the braces and keep everything in place.

Another story from these days concerns a persistent complaint from an interstate teacher (who shall not be named!) who believed the music was always too fast up in Queensland. She believed this was caused by Queensland electricity running faster than in New South Wales.



The Cunningham girls at an early May Feis L-R Joanne, Maree and Catherine



The May Feis was the most prestigious competition next to the Australian Championships. It was a big event for interstate competitors, but it was also a huge social event where we made long lasting friendships. The Rose Bowl Perpetual Trophy for Senior Dancers was, and is still, exceptionally highly prized.

Sheryl Watkins (Chen)



The QIA Dancers gained valuable knowledge from the interstate dancers whose abilities in the early days so far exceeded their own. It took many years before local dancers started to win places in this competition, although there was a Queensland prize awarded in each section to encourage local competitors. It wasn't until a special Bi-centenary May Feis in 1970 that local dancers were sufficiently competitive to win prizes in normal competition. Queensland dancers have not looked back since then.

A number of International Judges have also adjudicated at May Feisanna. Dermott Pratt (New Zealand), Michael Maguire (England), Aine O'Shea (Ireland).



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May Feis Encouragement Awards

Flora Lynagh Memorial Trophy

This encouragement award has been named for a special lady who made a huge contribution to Irish Dancing in its early days, both at the QIA and in Queensland generally. Flora Lynagh was a musician and where there was Irish dancing, there was Flora, playing jigs and reels often on pianos long past their prime.

She was unfailingly cheerful. She loved all the dancers and shared in their disappointments and triumphs, but she had a special place in her heart for the young dancers who were trying to cope with all aspects of dancing, elevation, posture, timing etc. Flora did everything she could to encourage the dancers and more than once the music kept the pace with the dancer.

This award encourages the winner and all the dancers that have competed to work a little harder, and listen to their teachers so that they can achieve their dream.

Kitty Lynch Memorial Trophy

This award remembers Mrs. Catherine Lynch who was never known as anything other than 'Kitty' Lynch. The Lynch girls commenced their dancing when the original QIA teacher, Mrs. Pearl Nielson was still the instructor over 40 years ago. Kitty would have been involved as a helper from the beginning.

Kitty was a staunch supporter, not only of the QIA Dancers, but also of Irish Dancing generally. Everyone associated with Irish Dancing lost an extremely loyal friend with her passing. She was a founding member of the Harp and Shamrock club, and chief organiser of their dancing competition of many years.

Her particular delight was encouraging the younger and less experienced dancers. Most current dancers would not remember her but former dancers and many current teachers will. It is appropriate to remember her with an encouragement award at the QIA May Feis.



What Goes On Tour

Stays On Tour

.....Sometimes!

Nicky Thorne (Kelliher)

recalls THOSE HAIR THINGIES!

"In Woollongong for the nationals we watched Australia win the netball finals against New Zealand in a Buddhist monastery. We were getting our hair put in toilet paper curlers at all hours of the night for the championships the next day."

"Being watched by every nationality at the World Championships in Dublin, while getting toilet paper curlers put in our hair."

"Getting any sort of curlers put in, from anywhere, at anytime of the day and night! (Wig wearers miss out on so many hours of bonding there!)."

Owen Keane Memorial Trophy

The Owen Keane Memorial trophy is awarded in dedication of the memory of Owen Keane - a young dancer from the QIA Dancers who unexpectedly died in 1991. He was an enthusiastic and eager member of the QIA Dancers during a period when Irish Dancing was seen as not being a particularly 'cool' thing to do. As a dancer he showed great ability and enjoyed both solo and team dancing.

A History of Irish Dancing

Irish Dancing combines artistry, grace, and physical ability. It has followed the Irish wherever they travelled. This brief history hopes to add to your enjoyment of the cultural aspect of Irish step dancing.

A major influence on Irish dance and Irish culture was the advent of the Dance Masters around 1750. A Dance Master typically travelled within a county, stopping for about six weeks in a village, staying with a hospitable family (who were honoured by their selection as host). These male teachers taught Irish dancing in kitchens, farm outbuildings, crossroads, or schools. Having a distinguished Dance Master associated with your village was a cause for pride and boasting within the community.



Each dance master had a repertoire of dance steps and new steps were created over time. Sometimes the masters danced competitively at feisianna, the winner being the one who knew the most steps, not the one with the best execution. The prize might have been gaining artistic control over a town in the loser's territory. Dance masters created the first schools of dancing, the best known being from Counties Kerry, Cork, and Limerick. It was these Dance Masters that created the set and ceili dances, and provided the platform for which the modern history of Irish Dancing is based.

The Modern history of Irish Dance begins in 1893 with the inception of the Gaelic League (Conradh na Gaeilge). This group encouraged the revival of Irish culture, which had been suppressed by the English for centuries. As part of this suppression, Set dancing was pushed aside and later 'outlawed', as it was seen as foreign, having originated centuries before in French Quadrilles. To replace it the Gaelic League introduced Ceili dancing, a form of dance which was considered to be more Irish. The League organized the first official Feis in 1897. These were almost always held outside, and involved competitions in all aspects of Irish culture, including music, dancing and language.



The first Ceili officially organized by the Gaelic League was held in London in 1897. It was organized by the London branch of the league, which is known for its work to promote Irish dancing throughout Britain. The spread of Ceili dancing enjoyed a boom at the turn of the century, and lasted until the outbreak of Civil War in 1920.



Irish dance has evolved in other ways during the 20th Century. Tuition is beginning at a younger age. Children as young as three or four are now frequently found in dance classes, and the majority of dancers in competitions are fairly young. The gender of students has also changed from mostly males to an overwhelming portion of females. Girls performing solos in competition were rare before the 1920s. Now both sexes dance Reels, Jigs and Hornpipes, although the Slip Jig is still only danced by



A recent phenomenon that has provided the art of Irish Dancing with worldwide publicity has been the recent arrival of the productions of Riverdance and Lord of the Dance. These shows have brought Irish dance into the media, along with the portrayal of Irish music and dance by such groups as the Corrs. This has created another boom, with dancing classes across the world filling with new dancers. There has also been an increase in the number of boys. The shows have also given Irish dancers the opportunity to turn their hobby into a career other than teaching, giving Irish dance a more professional aspect.

If it's history is anything to go by, it is certain that Irish dance will continue to evolve and change. However this happens, it seems certain that Irish dance is here to stay.

During the latter part of the 20th Century though, Irish dance has evolved in many ways, including the stages on which dances are performed, costumes, and dance technique. For example, during the period of the Dance Masters, stages were much smaller including tabletops, half doors, and sometimes the "stage" was simply a crossroad.

As a result of larger stages, the movement of dancers across a stage has increased immensely (a judge would now subtract points if a dancer does not "use the stage"). Subsequently, dance movements have also changed, with the development of more advanced steps such as toeing stands and splitting leaps. Dance steps, such as "flying jumps", that require substantial space have also become possible.

Picture 1: courtesy of www.irelandseye.com/dance.htm

Picture 2: courtesy of www.irelandsdance.com/history/dance.htm

Picture 3: courtesy of www.members.busynet.net/0557/ (An Conradh na Gaeilge)

Picture 4: courtesy of www.irelandsdance.com/history/dance.htm

The QIA Pipe Band

The Queensland Irish Association is fortunate in having a Pipe Band that has represented it at hundreds of charitable and public functions over many years.

An Irish Pipe Band, with uniform of black tunic with white piping and dark green kilt, existed from 1919 until the 1939-1945 World War.



The QIA Pipe Band can be officially traced back to 1925, with references to the band's existence being reported in the QIA Financial report and articles featured in *The Courier Mail*. However, there is an undated report (believed to be 1935/36) of a statement by the then President, one Mr McGrath that a fully uniformed Pipe Band existed for the first time. A photograph of the band, dated 1939/40, includes the following personnel:

Drum Major L. Hevey, Drum Sgt. T. McCartney, Drum Cpl. I. Stewart, Drum Instructor J. McRobbie, Drummers K. Hollyoak, V. Frawkey, and S. Mellor; Pipe Major K. McCarthy, Pipe Sgt. R. Shaw, Pipe Cpl. L. Shaw, Pipers R. Mollor, K. Frawley, M. Henry, L. Mollor, P. McCaffery, T. Byrne, and H. Rowe.

The Second World War saw the QIA Pipe Band put on ice until 1946, when the Pipe Band was re-formed for the first time after the war ended. The event that punctuated the QIA Pipe Band's reformation was the occasion of the association's annual St Patrick's Day Dinner, March 1946. The dinner was held in the Tara Ballroom - exactly the same room that the association currently celebrates in.

This reformed 'band' made up of about four pipers and two side drummers - Kevin McCarthy (Pipe Major), Bob Shaw, Jack O'Keefe, Jack Hocking (pipers), and Les Shaw and Cec Montgomery (side drummers). Only Pipe Major Kevin McCarthy appeared in pre-war uniform, which was a deep green kilt and plaid and hose; black Tunic with white pocket edges, white sword and waist belts; white spats and a black balmoral style head-dress. The remaining men were dressed in suits.

It was sometime between then and August-October 1946 that a recruitment drive became operational, offering membership to those who had some pipe band experience as well as welcoming interested novices. It was Kevin McCarthy, as the pre-war Pipe Major, who resumed control. He unbegrudgingly took on the immense task of teaching beginners how to learn the pipes. There were many established players in external bands that made no secret of the fact they thought such a task could not possibly succeed, believing one man alone could not take a handful of novices and make quality pipers of them.



Marchers include Kevin McCarthy, Cec & Boyd Montgomery, John Hockings, Bob and Les Shaw

1948 St. Patrick's Day Parade, [Source: QIA Pipe Band]

John Hockings in the Band Room 2004 [Source: Helen Riley]

When filled, his class contained a total of eight students; and of those eight, those who could actually play the pipes amounted to Kevin, Les Shaw and his brother Bob, Jack O'Keefe, and Jack Hocking. Classes were sponsored by the QIA and the band room was located in the basement under the association's rooms, next to a printing business.

Band practice was every Thursday evening from 7:00pm - 10:00pm, but for some reason activities seemed to slacken when 10:00pm grew near and eyes began to drift towards the bar. When the band became more established though, and practice was not to be stopped, one of the men would often make a journey up the stairs and re-appear with a jug in each hand. Considerable skill was often shown in coming back down the stairs - especially when it was raining!

It was during this time that the band's drum team was also beginning to take shape. They had four trainee side drummers and a bass drummer. They too had to be taught from scratch but Kevin, through the Association, saw to it that they were to have Brisbane's best drummers for their teachers.

He enlisted help from three other Brisbane pipe bands. Consequently, the band was privileged to have the likes of Frank Kenny (Brisbane Caledonian), George Lawrie and Billy McCormack (St Andrews), and Stan Hammond (Australian Scots) taught them the art of drumming. These men were side drummers of an exceptionally high standard.

However, it was the bass drummer, a very likeable man named Pat Flynn that was to inherit the absolute prince of bass drummers for his teacher. Pat was taught by the one and only, the great Ken Free (Brisbane Caledonian). Ken Free was regarded by everyone around as the best there was behind a bass drum and his grace, flourishing, timing and overall standard always drew praise, comment and prizes whenever his band competed. Such was the class of Ken Free that he instilled a confidence and standard in Pat Flynn very few other men could.

When Kevin decided it was time to try out the pipers who could actually play a tune on the pipes together with the drummers, we would form a circle on the concrete outside the band-room. Instruments that had remained silent through those years of war were in bad

condition, especially the side drums - three of which were sent out for repair. But an effort was made and it was soon recognisable they had a long way to go before a reasonable level could be achieved. Practice was repeated over and over, and whilst that seemed to work to a degree, when they were all together the obvious was plain to see - nothing was getting done at home!

Two tunes had been selected, and they were to be the only tunes that the band would play for some time. The tunes were both 2/4's "The Minstrel Boy" and "The Rakes of Mal-low" (pronounced marlow).

By this stage in the band's existence, two important decisions had been made: (1) Australia Day 1948 - the band's initial public appearance; and (2) and additional practice was going to start - Sunday mornings on the oval of St Laurence's College at South Brisbane.

Not long after this, David Lack & Co Melbourne were commissioned to provide a new uniform - a kilt, plain dark green melton; scarlet tunics; green plaids with gold trims, white goat hair sporrans; white sword and waist belts and black balmoral headware.

The hose tops were hand knitted by Kevin's fiancée, and a highland dancer named Jeanie Massey, in the colours of green, white and gold. Difficulty was experienced in having spats made, but one of the band member's fathers, who was a Chief Warder at Boggo Road Jail, pulled a string or two and, as a result, they were made by the prisoners in one of the shops inside the jail.



1949 Anzac Parade, Elizabeth St.



1965 QIA Ballroom



1969 QIA Ballroom

By 1973, the band had risen from C Grade to become one of the best in Australia.

The skilled tuition of "Sandy" Campbell, who became Pipe Major 1971, raised the standard of the Pipers and Drummers. Sandy, who was Pipe Major of the Australian Championship Band, Red Hackle, began tutoring some learners in the ballroom and eventually left the Red Hackle. He was persuaded to provide his services and expertise to the Irish Pipe Band. He soon attracted new bandsmen and a host of learners.



Warana Parade North Quay 1963

As a result of his leadership QIA No 1 Band won the first grade at the Queensland Championships held in Mackay Easter 1973. The QIA No. 2 Band also won the Grade 2 Championships. This success provided the incentive for Sandy to take on the strong inter-state bands, with much success



1974 Alex Duthart (reputedly the world's best side drummer) with the IRISH on tour (Melbourne)

Under Sandy's tough leadership the standard of the band reached a peak in 1976 when the Band won its first Grade 1 Australian Championship, with the QIA No. 2 band coming second in the Grade 2 Championships. With such success came an influx of learners and new band personnel, resulting in the formation of a 3rd Irish band. A highlight of this period occurred in 1982 at the Australian Championships in Melbourne. The Band came 3rd in Grade 1, and 2nd in both Grade 2 and Grade 3. At the conclusion of the contest, all three bands combined and marched off as one band. Competing bands from all States were overawed by the "Green Machine" as they became known.

A tour overseas in 1976 to Scotland was followed by further tours to Ireland and Scotland in 1978 and 1981 and again in 1985, which included the first visit by an Australian Band to the Brittany Festival - Festival Inter Celtique de Lorient - in France. Fundraising was a key feature of this period with the very popular Celtic Sundays at the Irish Club raising much-needed funds.



1972

The Brittany Festival welcomed the QIA Pipers with the "type of fanfare usually reserved for visiting rock idols (Sunday Mail Colour July 6 1986)". The 36 members No. 2 band, nicknamed 'Les Kangourous' by the French won rave reviews.



1978 World Champions Grade 2



1985 "Flying the Flag" - The Qantas Days

1985 was another successful year for the band. The No. 1 Band led by Pipe Major Roddy Campbell, Drum Sergeant Jon Jones and Music Director Sandy Campbell toured Ireland playing in contests at Bangor and Durrow, and then in Scotland. Here they played in the World, European and several local Championships with many wins and placings, winning the renowned Alec Duthart Drumming Shield.

Despite not completing the full season the Band missed winning "Champion of Champions Grade II" by only one point!. The QIA Pipe Band was upgraded to Grade 1 for the following season

The No. 2 Band led by Pipe Major George Leask and Drum Sergeant Ainslie Rowland toured Ireland and Scotland and was the first Australian Pipe Band to be invited to and play at the Pan Celtic Festival in Lorient, Brittany.

According to the band's secretary-manager, Bill Hanley, the band returned from this 1985 tour laden with so many trophies "they couldn't get them on the plane". None was more prized, however, than the prestigious Cowal Trophy. This silver shield was first presented at Dunoon on the west coast of Scotland near Glasgow in 1919.

This overseas tour established the Queensland Irish Pipe Band among the top 12 pipe bands in the world.

The band played in Geelong, Victoria and in Sydney in the following years, and toured New Zealand in 1988 and 1990 winning the championship at Rotarua.



ABOVE: Pipe band members perform a standing selection, comprising a march, a strathspey (dance tune) and a reel.



ABOVE: Pipe band drummers John Grant and Tom Collins tune their drums in a brief practice session at the band competition.



ABOVE: Pipers Dave Sutton (left) and Des Pullen tune their pipes and moisten the reeds before beginning to play.



Doomben Races 1985 [Photo Source: QIA Pipe Band]

Refer to Supplement at end of book for competition results for this period.

Sunday Mail 1986 [Photo source: Bill Hanly]



ABOVE: Bill Hanley, Irish Pipe Band secretary-manager, gets a last-minute spruce up from his Irish dancer daughter Pieta.

Irish Gifts



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Sandy Campbell



Tenterfield 1986

What Goes On Tour Stays On Tour

.....Sometimes!

Nev Montgomery recalls
Tenterfield



"Worthy of mention perhaps brings me back to when the band visited Tenterfield to compete. We were (in my time) always billeted in a tin shed on the outskirts of the showground. Single stretchers were placed for us to sleep in and the mattresses! - STRAW BETWEEN TWO LAYERS OF HESSIAN BAGS AND STITCHED ALL AROUND TO KEEP IT INSIDE. NO ELECTRICITY OR SHOWERS!

You couldn't imagine anything more primitive but the strange thing was not a soul ever complained. Tenterfield would be well booked out for the gathering and you must remember there was no such thing as motels in those days."

Mark MacKenzie took over as Pipe Major of the Band in 1994, and with Pipe Sergeant Malcolm Ketchon introduced the concert element into the band with great success in Brisbane, Glen Innes and Maryborough.



Pipe Major Mark MacKenzie
in the Tara Ballroom



The Pipe Band wins 1st place in March, Strathspey and Reel at the McLean Highland Gathering 2001

The band marching in the McLean (NSW) Highland Gathering Street march, Easter 2001. The band is lead here by DM David Booth (Life member and No 1 DM Brian O'Connor absent)
[Source: QIA Pipe Band]



New Zealand 1985 or 1986



Newstead Park 1986
Commemorating the Battle of the Coral Sea
[Photo source: QIA Pipe Band]

*The
QIA
Pipe Band*

*is currently seeking learners
and new members
of any age.*

*Bag Pipe and Drumming Tuition
FREE OF CHARGE*

Contact

Band Secretary: Mark Barrie

ph: 0417 072243

Email: secretary@qldirish.com

or inquire at the Irish Club

Debutante Ball - Brian O'Connor and David Booth in the 1980's



At the races



The Pipe Band and Dancers celebrate Sir Charles Kingsford Smith's historic crossing of the Atlantic from Ireland to Newfoundland At Brisbane airport 'Southern Cross Memorial' in 2000.



A History of the Pipes

BAG AND UILLEAN PIPES

A variety of instruments are played at a feis including fiddles, accordions, and flutes. A traditional instrument rarely seen at a feis is the Irish uilleann pipe. It is a complicated bellows-blown instrument that differs from the more often seen Scottish Highland bagpipes.



A HISTORY OF THE BAGPIPES

Contrary to popular belief, the bagpipes are not of Scottish or Irish origin. The first version of the instrument can be traced back to the Middle East several centuries before the birth of Christ.

It was most likely a rather crude instrument comprised of reeds stuck into a goatskin bag. As civilization spread throughout the Middle East and into the Mediterranean lands, the people brought along their music. It is generally believed that village musicians used the pipes along with drums for entertainment. The instruments also contributed to other facets of community life, such as the burying of the dead.

Some of their instruments were adaptations of the early bagpipe. Instrument sophistication grew with time, as reeds were replaced with the hollowed leg bones of small grazing animals. Holes drilled into the bones allowed the musicians to vary tones and pitch. Along with their trumpets and drums, the Romans carried with them their pipes. The legions spread the popularity of the instrument throughout Europe, eventually ending up in the British Isles.

It was in the evergreen landscapes of Scotland and Ireland that the pipes reached their highest level of popularity. During the 14th century, the bagpipes could be found in nearly every village. In addition to providing music for enjoyment, bagpipes were also used to rally the clans to battle, usually against the English. The English found the pipes so disturbing that they banned the Scots and the Irish from playing them at any time. Yet, that didn't stop their use. Over the years, the bagpipes grew in sophistication. More pipes were added, enabling the musician to reach a wider range of notes.

Mournful tunes were frequently played on the pipes following the death of a warrior. Villagers would gather around the body of their dead comrade while the piper stood some distance away (one gets a picture that the piper stood alone atop a naked hill, sun setting - or rising - behind him). It was said that the music was a sign to God that a brave and loyal subject was on his way to sit at "the steps of the throne."

The bagpipe was introduced to the other parts of the world during the great migration westward. British soldiers were led into battle by pipers and drummers. As the battle began, the musicians swung off to the side, encouraging the soldiers to fight on. Songs of past victories were carried on the breeze over the battlefield, reminding the soldiers of their heroic legacies.

During the great Irish potato famine of the 1840's, hundreds of thousands of Irish nationals

left their homes for the promise of a better life in America. During the terrible voyage across the Northern Atlantic, the only respite was their music.

Bagpipes, flutes and drums brought back memories of their heritage, and when they could, they sang and danced to the tunes. Their music also mourned fellow travellers who fell sick and died along the way.

A HISTORY OF THE UILLEANN PIPES

There is some speculation as to the origins of the Irish pipes. The first bagpipes in Ireland were probably more like the Highland pipes that are now native to Scotland. This would be the ancient Irish pipes, or, what some call the WarPipes. Medieval times may have seen the development of an Irish pipe more like the Scottish Smallpipe, called the Chuisleann. This was a bellows blown bagpipe with a cylindrical bored chanter and two or three drones in a common stock.

There are references to Piping in Ireland going back 13 Centuries. The earliest of these references are in the ancient law tracts and annals. There are carved depictions of early pipes on some Celtic Crosses (probably 10th Century) and from the 15th Century onwards the references are more frequent. Before the 18th century all references to pipes relate to mouth-blown instruments.

The distinctively Irish form of bagpipe, the Union or Uilleann Pipes, is believed to have originated between the 16th and 18th Centuries, although no exact source of development has been found. It is thought the name 'Union Pipes' refer to the union of sound produced by Chanter, Drones, and Regulators. Another theory is that 'Union' is a corruption of the Irish word 'Uilleann' which means elbow. This fits the change from mouth blown to bellows driven Pipes, the bellows being powered by the elbow.

The Scottish "Pastoral Pipes" may have inspired the current form of the Irish Uilleann Pipes. The pastoral pipes are bellows blown and played in a seated position. The conical bored chanter is played open along with 3 drones and (as with most examples of the instrument) 1 regulator. The major difference between the two pipes being that the Uilleann Pipe chanter is played



in a closed, partially staccato style, whereas the Scottish Pastoral Pipes are played in an open, legato style. This occurred, roughly, around the 18th and early 19th century.

This early form of the Uilleann Pipes was played relatively unchanged until the late 19th century. Early Uilleann Pipes (or "Union Pipes as they were called) were flat pitched. They were usually pitched around B up to perhaps C sharp. Around the turn of the century, pipemakers began to make what are now called "Concert Pitched" Uilleann Pipes. The Concert pitched set were, and still are, pitched in the key of D, and are somewhat brighter and louder in tone.

A few great makers in the mid 20th century were instrumental in keeping the instrument from dying out due to the modernization of music and the instruments popular music is played on. The 1960's and the 1970's, on to the present, saw resurgence in popularity of the Uilleann Pipes, thanks to several traditionally based Irish musical groups that had the foresight to record and tour. Also, with great gratitude from all who love the pipes, to the pioneering organizations in Ireland who kept the music and the pipes from becoming an anachronism.

**Tours
&
Special
Events**

Tour to Brittany 1999

Pipe Major Jeff Goward led the pipe band when they travelled to the Festival De Lorient in Brittany, France in 1999, followed by a tour to Scotland and Ireland where they played at the 'Rose of Tralee' finals and fester vial. A contingent of QIA Dancers and two Highland Dancers accompanied the band.



Fundraising for the tour to Brittany on the 'Island' - a cruise up the Brisbane River early 1999

[Photo source: Kate Hartley and Leo Moloney]



A group photo from Lorient



Traditionally, France has always been a country of many festivals: classical, baroque, musicals, jazz, cinema, etc... In this environment, the Interceltic Festival is unique, open, international and a gathering place to voice the contemporary expression of Celtic culture. The Interceltic Festival cross-cuts all forms of music of Celtic origin, from thousand-year-old traditional songs to folk, rock, jazz, and symphonic works, all in an extremely prolific creative environment. Alongside music, there are cinema, painters, sculptors, dance, history, literature, musical instrument making, showcase events and more.



I have danced with the pipeband on many many occasions - the most notable of these being of course Brittany France in 1999. An absolutely amazing atmosphere dancing in a huge football stadium with heaps of pipebands from around the world (including ours) all playing the same music at the same time while we're dancing to it with other dancers from around the world too - superb - I will never forget it, and is one of the reasons I'll never get sick of hearing pipeband music.

Nicky Thorne



The Dancers and Band performed at 10.30pm for 4 nights at the Night Magic Concerts in the Parc du Moustoir stadium. The Dancers were featured each of these nights.

The Dancers (below sheltering from the rain before performing) include:

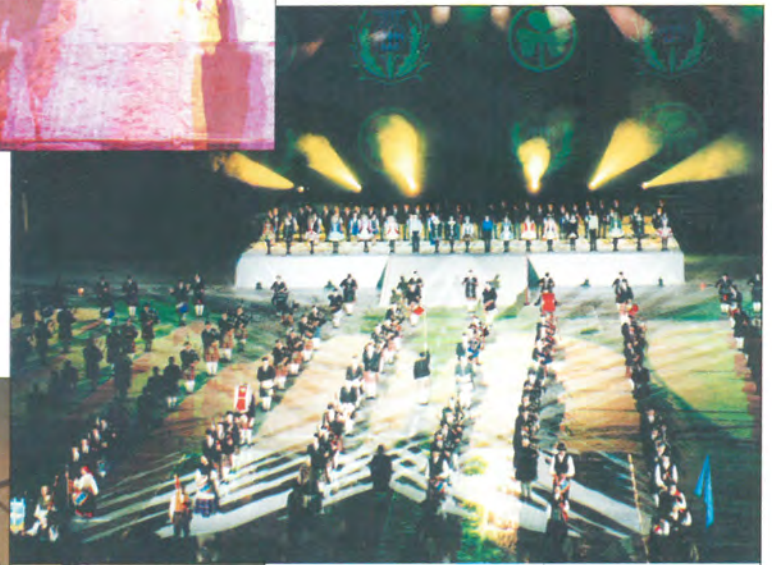
L-R Kate McGrath, Prudence Hill, Nicky Kelliher, Kristy Hanna, Triona Lee, and Fiona Wuse.





Festival Magazine

Photo below: Place Nayel Cabaret
Pipes, Drums and Dancers



All photos courtesy of
Kate Hartley



There was plenty of time for parades and fun! Grand Parade des Nations Celtes
Photo left: L-R Fionna Wyse (Gaffney), Kate Moloney (Hartley), Stephanie Rossiter,
Kristy Hanna, Triona Lee, Prudence Hill, Kylie Phillips, Nicky Kelliher

The Pipe Band and Dancers celebrate St Patrick's Day

THE ORIGINS OF SAINT PATRICK'S DAY

Saint Patrick's Day has come to be associated with everything Irish: anything green and gold, shamrocks and luck. Most importantly, to those who celebrate its intended meaning, St. Patrick's Day is a traditional day for spiritual renewal and offering prayers for missionaries worldwide. The Irish are descendants of the ancient Celts, but the Vikings, Normans and English contributed to the ethnic nature of the people. Centuries of English rule largely eliminated the use of the ancient Gaelic, or Irish, language. Most Irish are either Catholics or Protestants (Anglicans, members of the Church of England).

So, why is it celebrated on March 17th? One theory is that that is the day that St. Patrick died. Since the holiday began in Ireland, it is believed that as the Irish spread out around the world, they took with them their history and celebrations. The biggest observance of all is, of course, in Ireland. With the exception of restaurants and pubs, almost all businesses close on March 17th. Being a religious holiday as well, many Irish attend mass, where March 17th is the traditional day for offering prayers for missionaries worldwide before the serious celebrating begins.



1948 QIA Pipe Band celebrates St. Patrick's Day in Brisbane

THURSDAY, MARCH 17, 1977

St. Patrick on the skids?

CEILIDH FLING . . .

IT WILL NOT be such a great day for the Irish today . . .

Indications are that old charmer of snakes, St. Patrick, has slipped a bit in the popularity stakes.

Father Paul McLachlan of the Catholic Mass Media office said yesterday that as far as he knew there were few celebrations, dinners or special plans for St. Patrick's Day.

Catholic schoolchildren can't even claim a day off!

The Queensland Irish Association, however, won't be forgetting St. Pat.

Dancing

They have planned a Ceilidh (an informal Celtic evening of music) tonight at their Elizabeth Street premises with what they claim to be Brisbane's only ceilidh band and ceilidh dancing for entertainment.

Last night they held a dinner attended by the Governor (Sir Colin Fanning), Archbishop Rush and the first secretary to the Irish Embassy (Mr. Justin Carroll).

Other St. Patrick's Day celebrations would seem to be few and far between.

The regular Boys Town Bingo has included a "Paddy" Pot especially for St. Patrick the Rosalie Parish Hall is holding a St. Patrick's Day gala, and there will be Irish music at the Osbourne Hotel in the Valley between 12 noon and 3 p.m.

Leprechaun

The Shamrock Hotel will have its usual St. Patrick's Day fare of green beer and potatoes and a real live leprechaun to entertain the customers.

Keith Huddleton, 1.42 metres, tall, will dress in his green leprechaun suit for the occasion.

Why the sudden disinterest in St. Patrick?

Father Thomas McDermott, of the Oblate Fathers at Eagle Junction said he thought part of the answer lay with the influx of migrants to Australia.

"With the mixture of races many of the old traditions have had to give way to the new," he said.

A change

Father McDermott, who still sports a strong Irish brogue after 27 years in Australia, said probably the number of people attending this morning's Mass would be slightly increased.

"When the Church calendar was changed, St. Patrick's Day was one of the Holy Days of Obligation which ceased to be a holiday.

"When the school children had St. Patrick's Day off, there were more occasions planned," he said.

Father McDermott had no special plans for today, and admitted he had even forgotten to mention St. Patrick's Day to his congregation last Sunday!



CEILIDH FLING for Joanne Cunningham, 19, of Morningside, one of the dancers in the Ceilidh evening at the Queensland Irish Association Elizabeth Street rooms tonight. Joanne is the State adult Ceilidh dancing champion.



1998



1999



2000



2001



2002



2003



2004



The Pipe Band and Dancers at Glen Innes

The Australian Standing Stones in Glen Innes in the New England Tablelands of New South Wales are unique - one of the first to be built in the World for more than 3500 years. Glen Innes, settled largely by Scots in 1838, was chosen for the site of the Stones by the Celtic Council of Australia as an official national monument to honour all Celtic peoples who helped to pioneer Australia. The Standing Stones draw visitors from across Australia and overseas, and are the centre of the annual Australian Celtic Festival held in the first weekend in May. Building of the megalithic array in Centennial Park on the edge of Glen Innes - each granite stone averages 17 tonnes - resulted from a remarkable voluntary effort by a group of public-spirited citizens.

The inspiration came from the Stones of Callanish on the Isle of Lewis off Scotland's west coast. Stone circles were built by the ancient Celts as calendars and later developed religious significance.



At Glen Innes in 1995



Feeling very cold in Glen Innes

CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS 1998

The Pipers and Dancers welcomed Irish President Mary MacAleese to Brisbane in 1998 to attend the Centenary Celebrations of the Queensland Irish Association



Programme

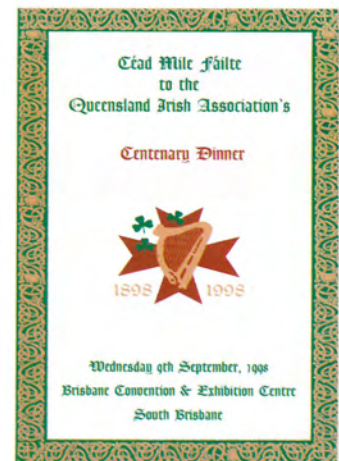
Master of Ceremonies Mr Eamon Gaffney – Director of Queensland Irish Association

Arrival Her Excellency Mary McAleese President Of Ireland and Official Party is announced. Guests are requested to stand

National Anthems "Advance Australia Fair"
"Ambran Na Bhfiann" by Tara Singers

Entertainment Tara Singers

Grace His Grace Most Rev. Archbishop John Bathersby D.D.



QIA Pipes and Drums

Competition Results 1970 -1980

| Year | Place and Title | Grade | 1 st | 2 nd | 3 rd or other |
|--|--|--|----------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1970 Easter April July Sept. 19 th | Ballymore Brisbane Aust. Champ. Tamworth | 3 | QIA No.1 A. | | |
| | | 3 2 | QIA No.1 A.DC. QIA No.1 A.DC. | | |
| | Lawnton | 3 | QIA No.2 A.DC.SS.D. DR.DM. | | |
| | | 2 | QIA No.1 A.DC.SS.D. DR.DM. | | |
| | 1 1 | QIA No.1 A.DC.SS.D. DR.DM. QIA No.1 A. | | | |
| 1971 Easter Sept. | Mackay Qld Champ. | 3 | QIA No.2 DC. | QIA No.1 A. QIA No.1 A. | QIA No.2 A (QIA No.2 NP.) |
| | | 2 1 | QIA No.1 DC. QIA No.1 DC. | | |
| | 1 1 | QIA No.1 A. QIA No.1 A. | | | |
| 1972 30-1 Easter 2-4 11-7 9-9 26-12 | Hobart Aust. Champ. Lawnton Qld. Champ. Wooroolin Warwick | 1 | QIA No.1 A.DC.SS. DR.DM. | | QIA No.1 A. |
| | | 1 | QIA No.1 SS. | | |
| | | 1 | QIA No.1 A.DC.SS.D. DR.DM. | | |
| | | 1 | QIA No.1 A.DC.D. DR. | | |
| | | 1 | QIA No.1 A.DC. | | |
| 1973 28-1 21-4 22-7 15-9 | Newcastle East Coast Champ. Maclean | 1 | QIA No.1 SS. | QIA No.1 A. | QIA No.1 DC. |
| | | 1 | QIA No.1 A.SM. | | |
| | Lawnton Qld Champ. | 3 1 | QIA No.2 A. QIA No.1 A.DC.SS. | QIA No.2 A. QIA No.1 A. | |
| | | 3 1 | QIA No.1 A. QIA No.1 A. | | |
| | 1974 9-2 14-4 | Blayney N.S.W. Champ. Melbourne | 3 | QIA No.2 A.DC. | |
| 1 | | | QIA No.1 A. | | |
| 1974 (cont'd) 21-4 6-10 | Toowoomba Brisbane Davies Park Qld Champ. | 3 1 | QIA No.2 A. QIA No.1 A. | QIA No.1 A. | QIA No.1 |
| | | 3 | QIA No.2 A. | | |

| | | | | | |
|----------------------|--|-------------|---|----------------------------|---|
| 1975 | | | | | |
| 25-1 | Bathurst | 3 | QIA No.2 A.DC. | | |
| | | 1 | QIA No.1 A.DC. | | |
| 28-3 | Maclean | 3 | QIA No.2 A.SM. (DC.NE.) | | |
| | | 1 | QIA No.1 A.SM. (DC.NE.) | | |
| 4-5 | Newcastle East Coast Champ. | 3 | QIA No.2 A.DC.SS. QIA No.1 DR.SS.T. | QIA No.1 A. | |
| 5-10 | Brisbane Davies Park Qld Champ. | 2 1 | QIA No.2 A.DC. QIA No.1 A.DC.7M. | | |
| 1976 | | | | | |
| 25-1 | Canberra National Champ. | 2 | QIA No.2 A.DC. QIA No.1 DC. | QIA No.1 A. | |
| 8-2 | Orange | 2 | QIA No.2 A. QIA No.1 DM. | QIA No.1 A. QIA No.2 A. | QIA No.2 NP. QIA No.1 DC. |
| 6-3 & 7-3 17-4 | Adelaide Aust. Champ. Maclean | 1 2 1 | QIA No.1 A.SS.7M. QIA No.2 A.DC.SS.SM. QIA No.1 A.SM.SS.7M. | QIA No.1 DC. | |
| 2-5 | Newcastle East Coast Champ. | 2 | QIA No.2 A.DC.SS. | QIA No.1 A. | QIA No.1 DC. (QIA No.2 A5th) |
| 3-10 | Brisbane Ballymore Qld Champ. | 1 | QIA No.1 T | QIA No.1 A. | |
| 1977 | | | | | |
| | Canberra National Champ. | 1 | QIA No.1 A.DR.D.SS. | | |
| | Maclean | 1 | QIA No.1 A.DC.SS.D.DR. SM. | | QIA No.2. 3 rd Dis. QIA No.1 DM. |
| | Brisbane Davies Park Qld Champ. | 1 | QIA No.1 A.DC.SS. | | |
| 1978 | | | | | |
| 2-1 26-3 | Sydney Sydney Aust. Champ. | 1 | QIA No.1 A.DC.DM. | QIA No.2 A. | (QIA No.1 4 th A.NP.) |
| 30-7 | Durrow IR. South East Ireland Champ. | | | QIA No.1 A. | |
| 5-8 12-8 | Bridge of Allan Lanark World Champ. | | QIA No.1 A. Overseas. (DM Overseas) Marching & Discipline Overseas | QIA No.1 A. | QIA. No.1 7 th A. |
| 19-8 26-8 | Rothesay Dunoon | 2 | QIA No.1 A. | | QIA No.1. 7 th A. |
| 27-8 2-9 | Cowal Champ. Edinburgh Shotts European Champ. | | | QIA No.1 A. QIA No.1 A. | QIA No.1 4 th A. |
| 3-9 1-10 | Peebles Brisbane Davies Park Qld Champ. | 3 | QIA No.1DC. QIA No.2A.DC. QIA No.1(A. Dis) DC.SS. | QIA No.1 A. | QIA No.1 4 th A. QIA No.1 A. |
| 21-10 | Dalby South East Qld Champ. | | QIA No.2 A. | QIA No.2 DC. | |
| 1979 | | | | | |
| 14-4 | Maclean | 3 1 | QIA No.2 A.SM. QIA No.1 A.DC.SM.DM. DR. | | |
| 30-9 | Brisbane Davies Park Qld Champ. | 2 | QIA No.2 A.DC. QIA No.1 DC. | QIA No.1 A. | |



