



AUGUST 09



The Herschel Arms Ceili Band. Sponsored by Tom King of the Herschel Arms Pub in Slough

Funded Through the Irish Government Emigrant Support Programme

Fleadh Ceol na hEireann

Fleadh Ceol na hEireann 2009 was held in Tullamore, county Offaly, in late August, for the third year running. The London and Southern region was well represented on many instruments in a wide variety of competitions. Pictured above are the Herschel Ceili band from Slough, from L-R (back row) Steve Byrnes, Liam O'Sullivan, Chris O'Malley, Sam Proctor, Brian Kelly. L-R (Front row) Laura O'Grady, Catherine O'Grady, Kieron Brady, Orlaith Mc Auliffe and Niamh Gallagher, who represented traditional Irish music in the region, by qualifying to perform in the Senior Ceili band competition. This exciting band, that boasts the very best musicians from in and around London, gave a thrilling performance but unfortunately didn't enjoy success this year. The band was mainly organised by Fiddle player Sam Proctor and Piano player Chris O'Malley and sponsored by legendary landlord of the Herschel Arms, Tom King. Tom's regular Monday night sessions have

an international reputation for quality and hospitality. Irish music in the region was also represented by the St.Albans branch senior Grupai Ceol, who qualified by winning the All Britain in Twickenham, in June. Again, although they played brilliantly, they didn't get placed this year. South London piper Rita Farrell, who is closely associated with West London Teacher Marian Gill, Came 3rd in the under 18 Uilleann Pipes Other successes include Brogan McAuliffe from East London who won the Tin Whistle Slow air 12-15, came first in the 15-18 Duets, with her sister Orlaith, and came third in the Concertina 12-15. Edward Gaughan from West London came 1st in the Mouth Organ 12-15 for the second year in succession, and Aaron Gallagher, also from West London came 3rd in the Mouth Organ under 12 competition. Grace Lemon from Cambridge came 2nd in the Uilleann pipes under 15. Etaoine Rowe from North London won the Liltin under 15 and was recorded by RTE for inclusion in their program Ceili House, that was broadcast on 12th September. Greg Robins from East London came second in the Senior War Pipes. Cavan town will host the Fleadh in 2010.



**St.Albans
branch exchange with Caherciveen, Co Kerry.**

The First weekend in August saw members of the St. Albans branch, East London branch and Eilish Byrne-Whelehan's Feith an Ceol music class, visit Caherciveen in Co Kerry, to participate in their annual Celtic music festival, for the second year. The group met and played music with Musicians from the area, taught by Piano Box player Marian Cournane. Marian First learnt music in the St. Albans class, but left some years ago when her family returned to Ireland. The group performed on the main stage as part of the weekends program of music and events. They also hosted a nightly session in the Eastend Bar and won the busking competition for the second year on the trot. The St. Albans Branch ran a highly successful fund raising event in February, to help fund the trip. We look forward to welcoming the Kerry musicians here, and visiting the festival next year. Please feel free to contact me if you are interested in getting involved in next years visit.





Comhaltas at the Cambridge folk festival. I was unable to join the gang in Kerry but I did have an opportunity to visit the Cambridge Folk Festival, the same weekend. Local branch members, friends and musicians, regularly support the festival and play a large part in the proceedings. Button Accordion player Bryony Lemon launched her debut album, to a capacity crowd, in the Club tent on the Friday night. Her band featured her sister Grace on the Uilleann Pipes. Grace also

celebrated her 15th birthday that night. Bodhran and Guitar virtuoso Adam Brown appeared several times. I caught the set he played in the club tent with Ruairidh Macmillan, BBC young Folk musician of the year. Another highlight for me was when Cathal Hayden, Martin O'Connor, Seamie O'Dowd and Johnny Higgins played stage 2 on the Saturday night. The atmosphere was electric and they bought the house down. I spotted many Cambridge branch members in the audience, including Chair Kathleen Collins. I also enjoyed Cara Dillon's set on the Sunday lunchtime, that featured my good friend, Luton based piper James O'Grady. They were joined on stage by Brian Finnegan of Flook. Cambridge branch and committee members also ran sessions at various locations throughout the weekend. I felt traditional Irish music was a little under represented in this year's line up, but it was still a great weekend and the weather was kind.

Beginner harps from the USA. August saw the delivery of 6 beginner harps from Rees harps in the USA. These harps are to be used in conjunction with the Harp teacher project often mentioned in these pages, due to start in September.

