



**ANNUAL  
REPORT  
2021/22**





CCE Irish Minstrel's Winter School  
Online in lockdown





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Theresa Gallagher

# Cathaoirleach

New Year, new challenge, new hope and determination to overcome adversity and move forward. The Comhaltas family in Britain have had a very challenging year, but a year which will be remembered for its many acts of kindness, compassion, togetherness (mostly through a virtual medium) and creativity.



The continued exceptional response of many people and branches to keep the music playing has left us with a memory and legacy which continued to lift our spirits in 2021, and will continue into 2022.

Our regional Fleadh season was successfully converted to an online competition, with every member, singer, dancer and musician, throughout the Province having the opportunity to enter. This led onto FÉILE 2021, in partnership with Coventry City of Culture, an exciting weekend of workshops, concerts and competitions. We even had the first “Baking with Shamo”, for those with traditional recipes and culinary skills to pass to others up and down the country, with some traditional singing thrown in for good measure.

As well as our own online competitions, a number of our musicians, singers and storytellers went on to compete at FleadhFest 2021 in Sligo, returning to Britain with an impressive collective “haul” of 19 medals! “Comhghairdeas”

And slowly but safely we, in the majority, returned to face to face lessons, sessions, workshops, meetings and competitions. A personal highlight was a Provincial Council meeting in October, hosted in the Liverpool Irish Centre. Not only was it a great chance to see my colleagues from round the country in person, but to enjoy time together discussing and problem solving, to bounce ideas and suggestions, to ensure that Comhaltas in Britain continues to thrive and evolve.

As we start 2022, Paddy and Patrick remain with us, as the Digital and Marketing, and Provincial and Corporate Officers, on our evolving journey to support of our projects, Regional and Provincial boards, as well as our diaspora and partners throughout the country and abroad. But Comhaltas in Britain go in to 2022 with a new, part time member of staff from mid-January. We are delighted to welcome Siubhán Macauley, who is based in Liverpool, and originally from Newry, in the role of Outreach and Development facilitator.

I look forward to a successful year of music , song and dance, and hope to meet you on occasion at a concert, session or Fleadhanna.

Bless you all  
Theresa Gallagher  
Cathaoirleach

## Our main aims for the Year:

- To continue with the restructuring of Comhaltas in Britain as a charity, developing our business plan and ensuring internal readiness to evolve to the changing environment.
- Develop the skills and confidence of the volunteers, musicians, singers and dancers.
- Provide opportunities to increase the health of musicians, volunteers and communities,
- Support and increase the membership and branches
- Increase resources for the Province to facilitate the delivery of core and infrastructure support to regions and branches.

Éamonn Ó hArgáin

# Uachtarán an Chomhaltais

Ba mhaith liom tréaslú le Comhairle na Breataine Chomhaltas Cheoltóirí Éireann as Comhthionól Bhliantúil an Chomhaltais a chur ar siúl in Kenilworth.

Tá áthas orm go mbeidh mé i lathair i mbliana mar tá sé roinnt mhaith blianta ann ó bhí mé i lathair ag Comhthionól na Breataine in East Kilbride, Glaschú, nuair a bhí The Irish Minstrels ag ceiliúradh 50 bliain bunaithe.

Táim cinnte go mbeidh Comhthionól iontach taitheamhach agaibh agus guím gach rath ar bhur saothair thar an deireadh seachtaine.

Over the past two years the COVID-19 pandemic had a considerable toll on all aspects of the Comhaltas movement. Essential lockdown measures introduced to slow the spread of the coronavirus resulted in the cancellation of Comhaltas events worldwide, including your own Conventions, Fleadhanna Cheoil and other events. It's wonderful that we are back on the road again, or as we say as Gaeilge, táimid ar ais.

Irish culture is a source of wellbeing to people. In fact, the surge in virtual cultural events provided on line by the Comhaltas movement worldwide to entertain people during the pandemic is a testament to this. One has only to view the story of Comhaltas in Britain in the twelve volumes of FleadhFest videos on your website and on YouTube.

It's a great pleasure for me as Uachtarán an Chomhaltais to attend your Convention in Kenilworth. I



know the convention will be most enjoyable and a huge success.

I have wonderful memories of attending Comhaltas events in London, Luton, Leicester, Glasgow and many other parts of Britain over the years.

Over the past 65 years, since the first Comhaltas branch, The Irish Minstrels was formed in Glasgow in January 1957, Comhaltas in Britain has been to the forefront in promoting Ireland's unique Irish cultural traditions – music, singing, dancing and the Irish language. Cultural and heritage connections have a value in and of themselves. They help us explain ourselves to others, and to reach closer understandings – and in a world of increasingly fierce global competition they also help to distinguish Ireland and to open doors in a welcoming and encouraging way.

Since its formation over 70 years ago Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann has elected 22 Presidents - three of them were resident in Britain, Pádraig Mac Suibhne, (2000 – 2003), Jim Teevan (2004 – 2009) and Vincent Jordan (2012 – 2015 and 2018 – 2021). In total 14 years of dedicated service from three wonderful people.

We are all looking forward to the forthcoming season of Fleadhanna Cheoil on the island of Ireland, in Britain and North America and in particular to Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann in Mullingar from 31 July to 7 August where there will be a céad míle fáilte for you all.

I want to extend my best wishes to the Provincial Council of Comhaltas in Britain under the chairmanship of Theresa Gallagher and her wonderful team.

I wish you every success with your deliberations at Convention 22.

Go n-éirí libh agus go dté sibh ar fad slán.

**Comhaltas in Britain - an immense contribution to  
the promotion of Ireland's Cultural Traditions.**

## Dr. Labhrás Ó Murchú

# Ardstiúrthóir

Greetings from Ireland to all our fine Comhaltas friends and colleagues in Britain. I know that when you meet for the 2022 Provincial Convention it will be against the background of the two most challenging years in the history of Comhaltas. The vision, creativity and tenacity which you displayed throughout the pandemic crisis was exemplary and inspiring.

How things had changed so drastically for us all during those terrible agonising months. What we took for granted in many cases was no more. Coronavirus was now the hidden enemy creating merciless havoc and grief throughout the world. The Irish people and friends of Ireland had to rely on their innermost spirituality and tenacity of character. The traditional neighbour for neighbour reliance again became common currency. As in days of old, the vulnerable people amongst us were our priority. There was a renewal and an energising of the old Gaelic spirit which in the past – in times of famine, conflict and mass-emigration – buoyed us with hope and determination. Ní neart go cur le chéile!

Comhaltas responded to the challenges. In villages, towns and cities our cultural movement embraced the challenges and delivered positive responses which were a credit to all concerned. Our global network was a source of huge encouragement for us. Online, our officers and members bridged the gap created by isolation and delivered cultural projects to benefit young and old. From across the island and to far foreign fields Comhaltas secured and strengthened the link between us.

We are now on an uncharted journey but with many milestones from the past to guide us to a safer





## “WE LOOK FORWARD TO A SUMMER OF MUSICMAKING AND CAMARADERIE”

and more secure destination. We know that this time of crisis requires a steady nerve, a selfless vision and dedication devoid of self-interest. We must all put a shoulder to the wheel in the national and global interest. Le cúnamh Dé, we will not be found wanting.

We now look forward to a Summer of musicmaking and camaraderie culminating in Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann in Mullingar where Comhaltas was founded in 1951. A Fleadh of celebration and survival!

Tá sibh in ár smaointe agus ár bPaidreacha. Tá gaisce déanta agaibh le 70 bliain anuas. Táimid an-bhródúil as ár gcairde sa Bhreatain agus ar fud na cruinne. Bail ó Dhia oraibh i gcónaí. Beidh lá eile ag an bpíobaire!



Máire Doolin

# Rúnaí

Comhaltas in Britain has been adversely affected by COVID 19 and the initial impact restricted our ability to play tunes, to socialize and enjoy the craic. However, we rose to the challenge despite the restrictions and adversity, our music, songs, stories and dancing have not stopped.

Our branches adapted to the restrictions and moved online for lessons and to connect with each other, the videos, Facebook posts and pictures give testimony to the desire to keep the music going. I pay tribute to the excellent work undertaken by our branches and volunteers and the joy that has been brought into many homes.

It has been a very difficult year presenting huge challenges to how we operate and adhere to our governance obligations. However, we overcame the challenge by holding meetings via Zoom and adhering to our due diligence obligations.

Once the initial shock of the pandemic settled into a “new normal”, our attention shifted to running FleadhFest to bring our music into the homes of many who had to isolate, and engage new members or friends of Comhaltas - it was a fantastic success and credit must be paid to our Project Officers who were the driving force behind it.

The pandemic has helped us to realise that change can be positive and despite the restrictions, we could still contribute to our local communities i.e. St Patrick's Day celebrations, delivering Food parcels playing music, Facebook Live etc. These are the records that in the future will allow us to look back and reflect on the present, and the significance of the events of this pandemic for history.

go raibh maith agat





Minister for Foreign Affairs, Simon Coveney visits Liverpool Comhaltas



In Session: Amairgin the Gael Comhaltas, South Wales

# Mental Health and Wellbeing



Even before the words lockdown and pandemic became so significant in all our lives, Comhaltas in Britain was recognising the importance of our mental health and the support which our members can give to each other as a community.

An initial discussion on the impact of dementia for an aging population has led to a widespread focus on the mental health of musicians, members and our families. The past 18 months has proven the importance to us all, how we need to manage and look after our mental health and look out for each other, from our youngest to our oldest members. Initiatives such as our Folláine wellness sessions, training for mental health first aid, or simply calling members and sending out Christmas cards have

all helped to keep our community together during a difficult period.

As we move forward, Comhaltas in Britain will continue to support and champion ways which we can support each other as we welcome new ideas and initiatives not just nationally but also from local branches such as Leicester Comhaltas' *La Gaelach* projects and St Wilfrids Comhaltas' ongoing *Ar-ais le Cheile le Ceol (Back together in Music)*.

Patrick Morrison

- 3 Supervising First Aid for Mental Health Courses
- Folláine - Wellness Sessions online for members
- 250 wellness packs for young members
- Check-in and well being calls to members
- Report, training and a tool kit for supporting people living with dementia
- Christmas cards to all members

# Back to School

Comhaltas in Britain are currently undertaking an education programme pilot in a Primary School in Ayrshire, Scotland. 25 Primary 3 children (aged 8/9) are currently learning to play the tin-whistle weekly at Dalmilling Primary School under the instruction of class teacher Fabian Greenan. The children are working through an education programme which has been designed specifically as an introduction to traditional Irish music and whilst the pupils learn a new tune to play on their tin-whistles each week across the 10 week programme, each week they are introduced to a new musical instrument such as the fiddle, harp, concertina, uilleann pipes and accordions.

We are hoping to operate pilots across other regions of Britain and eventually after some tweaks following the feedback from our pilots, roll out the programme across the Province. It has long been recognised that school education projects whilst having a positive impact on children's development also have a positive impact on recruitment to branches in the immediate vicinity of schools taking part and we expect that with a large number of programmes operating in schools, our branches will soon see the benefits with a new generation of young musicians carrying on the tradition across Britain.

Paddy Callaghan



## Irish Passport

For the past number of years Comhaltas in Britain has been proud to offer advice to members and the wider Irish-community who are looking to obtain an Irish Passport either through birth, thorough having Irish parents, or through having Irish Grand-parents.

The information which is constantly updated on our website was collated by Project Officer Paddy Callaghan in response to the UK's decision to leave the European Union and the resulting surge in applications from people based in Britain.

The information which we as an organisation have researched and pass on free of charge to interested individuals has been accessed an incredible amount of times over the past few years and on average we receive 8 enquiries per week from individuals seeking further information.

The page on our website:

([www.comhaltas.co.uk/passport-application](http://www.comhaltas.co.uk/passport-application))

was accessed almost 3,000 times during the year 2021 – to put that in to perspective, the OCC page on our website was viewed 900 and FÉILE page views were even lower.

This vital service which we are providing on behalf of the wider Irish community is serving a real purpose and helps to bolster the reputation of Comhaltas far beyond our own membership.

Paddy Callaghan



Michael Fitzgerald

## Oifigeach Caidrimh Poiblí

When I was elected to this post in February 2020, I could not possibly have imagined what the world was about to experience a matter of days later, and the challenges this would mean for us as an organisation. Despite this, Comhaltas in Britain has found unique, creative and innovative ways to continue to reach out to our members, branches and the wider community.



When it became apparent that regional Fleadhanna would not be able to take place for the second consecutive year, in Spring 2021 we held our first ever online competition series – the Online Comhaltas Competitions – ‘OCCs’ for short. In total there were five events with a regional qualifier in each region accompanied by an all-britain event. In total over 400 entries were received for the OCCs. This provided our musicians with an excellent opportunity to get feedback on their playing, as well as providing several hours of entertainment on our social media platforms.

Following on from the success of FÉILE 2020, in June we held FÉILE 2021. This saw a big increase in the scope of the event from the previous year. Across the weekend of 25th-27th June, we live streamed content from Coventry, the UK City of Culture for 2021. The weekend saw us deliver two concerts, workshops and the All Britain OCC. Working in partnership with Coventry City of Culture Trust, we delivered professional content that had a reach of over 384,000, and 656,000 impressions. This was an incredible success for Comhaltas in Britain, bringing our content on to the screens of members and non members across the world.

In July and August we facilitated and assisted overseas musicians in being able to take part in the FleadhFest competitions as well as helping to develop videos showcasing the four regions in the Province.

Towards the end of 2021, as face to face contact became possible we supported our branches in returning to their normal activities for the first time in a year and a half, complying with local guidance and laws.

Further to all of this, during the year we hosted two Mental Health First Aid programmes that were open to members and non-members; an ongoing trial of our Tin-Whistle in Schools programme; provided wellbeing packs to young musicians; ran a competition to design and a Christmas card that was then delivered to members; Updated several policies and procedures for Comhaltas in Britain; Reported on and applied for a number of funds such as Emigrant Support Programme, Awards for All, Creative Scotland, CO-Operative Community Fund – to name a few. And most recently we reached out to branches, especially PROs and Youth Officers to offer Online Social Media Training.

Looking ahead into 2022-2023, we look forward to helping branches and regions return to face to face activity with the first Fleadhanna scheduled to take place since 2019. We want to encourage branches and regions to develop projects and ideas that will help to re-engage members and bring in new members with our support. We want to maintain strong communication with our branches and regions and I will do my very best to support this in whatever way possible. I am always happy to hear from branches, regions and members.

I would like to offer my thanks to all branches and regions for their hard work over the last year. It is branches that reach out to their communities and work to promote our aims and objectives, and uphold our good reputation with the public.

Furthermore, I would like to offer my sincere thanks to our team of Project Officers. All of this work I have described in this report would not be possible without their hard work and creative thinking. My job is made easy as they deal with the day to day of public relations for the organisation.

I look forward to another year as PRO for Comhaltas in Britain and continue working with my colleagues on the Provincial Council. I wish branches and regions every success for this year, and I look forward to hopefully being able to see more of you face to face in 2022.

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Twitter: [@CCEBritain](#)

Instagram: [@comhaltas\\_in\\_britain](#)





## David Browne Oifigeach na nÓg

This marks the end of yet another successful year for Comhaltas in Britain, albeit in difficult circumstances. As in previous years, I have been working closely with the project officers and management team to ensure the youth are represented in decision making key to the running of the organisation.

We started off 2021 by laying plans for what would have been the All Britain Fleadh. The Fleadh was due to be hosted by Midland Region, in Coventry as they were the “City of Culture” for 2021. Plans had already been laid in conjunction with the Coventry City of Culture (CCoC) team for our usual Fleadh events, however this unfortunately could not go ahead in its usual form due to the COVID-19 restrictions.

The Fleadh Committee, in conjunction with Provincial Council, had meetings to discuss how we could design a hybrid event. We decided that this hybrid event – FÉILE 2021 – had to include a unique mix of both in-person and virtual events. I was fortunate to be asked to manage this project and was lucky to work with a great team including: Paddy Callaghan, Patrick Morrison, Patrick Ballantyne, Michael Fitzgerald & Orla Branigan; along with Marian Dwyer and Carmel Burke from the Midlands Region. We were lucky enough to be funded in part by the CCoC Trust.

The weekend was a great success drawing an online audience of ~600,000. Friday night began with a concert in the Albany Theatre featuring: Meabh Smyth (Fiddler of London 2021), Ímar and Mike McGoldrick Trio. We were lucky to have a small, invited audience watching the concert live in the theatre but it was also streamed online. This was followed by a Trad Disco from our own DJ Paddy Callaghan, again streamed from the 4 Provinces Pub with a small, invited audience of performers and crew. Saturday was host to an array of instrumental workshops online followed by another concert in the evening. The Saturday Concert was a personal highlight of the FÉILE for me personally as the whole production was put together in-house. It featured musicians, dancers and singers from Comhaltas in Britain interspersed with some pre-recorded and produced content created to promote Comhaltas and a

tribute to the late, great Hughie Gallagher.

The project was a learning curve for all involved. As an organisation we had to adapt to a new way of working, advancing our skills and drawing on each other's experiences. Team meetings were facilitated mostly online where we were able to rapidly share and collaborate on new content. There was a lot of new technology involved in the production aspect of the weekend and we were able to select some young members keen to get involved and give them some hands-on experience running live broadcast. The Saturday evening concert was a massive achievement for Comhaltas in Britain in that all aspects of the show were run by our own Comhaltas members. From the set-up of complex audio and lighting rigs, to scripting and arranging music for the show, to operating high-end cameras and directing/mixing the stream in real time – a great example of how Comhaltas in Britain have progressed in this technological era, bringing Irish culture to a global stage.

This project overlapped with “The OCCs” – The Online Comhaltas Competitions. These were born through variable COVID-19 restrictions hindering progress in planning regional Fleadhanna. Pioneered in the UK, the idea has since been taken on by other counties and provinces across the globe. Competitors entered through an online form and submitted a video of their performance. The video was adjudicated remotely, and results broadcast online with a sample of the winners of each competition. The “All Britain” stage of the competition was put out as part of the FÉILE 2021 programme showcasing the exceptionally high standard of musicianship we have here in Britain. This really re-introduced some normality for our young people and gave them something to work towards with their playing, singing and dancing.

Finally, FleadhFest 2021, Comhaltas' alternative to Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann was held in Sligo in August. We saw a decent number of competitors performing in this competition – some in person and some be pre-recorded video link. I was lucky enough to be there in person to assist with the production – it was a great weekend of music and was great to see people back playing music in person sharing songs and tunes. Hopefully we'll see this continue looking forward to the Fleadh Cheoil in Mullingar this summer. I have detailed successes:

April Macaulay	CCÉ Irish Minstrels	Céim 1 - Fiddle	Winner
Myles Macaulay	CCÉ Irish Minstrels	Céim 1 - Piano	Winner

Myles Macaulay	CCÉ Irish Minstrels	Céim 1 - Accompaniment	Runner Up
Cormac Cotter	CCÉ Leamington Spa	Céim 1 - Ballads (Boys)	Runner Up
Cara Sharkey	CCÉ Irish Minstrels	Céim 1 - Flute	Runner Up
Myles Macaulay	CCÉ Irish Minstrels	Céim 1 - Piano Accordion	Runner Up
Orla Bruce	CCÉ Irish Minstrels	Céim 1 - Piano Accordion	Runner Up
Jemima Soper	CCÉ Amairgin the Gael	Céim 2 - Fiddle	Runner Up
Alex Morgan	CCÉ East London	Céim 3 - Piano Accordion	Runner Up
Calum McGregor	CCÉ Irish Minstrels	Céim 3 - Piano	Runner Up
Calum McGregor	CCÉ Irish Minstrels	Céim 3 - Accompaniment	Runner Up
Paddy Callaghan	CCÉ Irish Minstrels	Céim 4 - Button Accordion	Runner Up
Marianne McAleer	CCÉ Amairgin the Gael	Céim 4 - Irish Singing (Ladies)	Runner Up
James McElhone	CCÉ Irish Minstrels	Céim 4 - Irish Singing (Men)	Runner Up
Phil Westwell	CCÉ Johnny Doherty	Céim 4 - Whistling	Runner Up
Marianne McAleer	CCÉ Amairgin the Gael	Céim 4 - Liling	Runner Up
Phil Westwell	CCÉ Johnny Doherty	Céim 4 - Liling	Runner Up
John Goulding	CCÉ Hastings	Céim 4 - Storytelling	Runner Up
Mícheál Ó Grianna	CCÉ Irish Minstrels	Céim 4 - Scéalaíocht	Runner Up

On a personal note, after 6 years, this will be my last year as Youth Officer for Comhaltas in Britain. I have really enjoyed my time on the Provincial Council and I'm fortunate to have been able to get involved in many great projects with our exceedingly talented young members. I hope I have successfully encouraged some younger people to get involved in Comhaltas at an organizational level!

Go raibh míle maith agaibh,  
David Browne



Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the ‘fleadh season’ of 2020 was unable to take place, and due to further waves of the pandemic, it was becoming apparent towards the end of 2020 that the following years fleadh season may also be in doubt. At this time I had approached the Provincial Council of Comhaltas in Britain to pitch the idea of an online competition – and at the same time I had also pitched this to the Scottish region who I knew were keen to have competitions taking place in some format or another.

Following on from discussions, it was decided to take a working group forward from the Scottish region to outline the framework of an online competition and put the infrastructure in place which can then be replicated across all the regions in Britain should there be a willingness to do so, and in turn, also look towards an All-Britain competition.

Very quickly, the format was agreed upon and I would like to commend the professionalism and vision of the working group who picked through every eventuality with a fine tooth-comb and the resulting competitions were called the ‘Online Comhaltas Competitions’ or ‘OCC’s for short.

The format of these competitions was very different from the normal Comhaltas competitions in a number of ways some obvious to most, and others not so obvious. The largest difference was that they took place via submitting a video performance, as opposed to performing live in person. This was decided to be the best way forward as to compete live via zoom or other video conferencing platforms places a great importance on the stability and speed of internet connections, and therefore would have been a disadvantage to competitors who were not lucky enough to have a more stable connection. One other big difference was that for accompaniment, céilí band drums and bodhrán competitions, we were permitting competitors to use a recording to play alongside due to restrictions regarding contacts from outside households.

One further big change for this format which might not have been as apparent to participants was that everything (including entering, paying entry fees, adjudication process, streaming the competitions winners) took place online and much of the process had been automated. This was a huge undertaking to put in place, but thankfully the format was easily adapted to the 4 regions – and all-Britain event.

In the end we held 5 competitions – SOCC (Scotland), NOCC (Northern), MOCC (Midlands), LOCC (London & Southern), & BOCC (All-Britain). Entries for this pioneering competition format were incredibly high across the country with over 300 entries received which blew away every expectation.

Each competition was broadcast live via social media and Youtube accounts which meant that our reach actually increased from what would be a traditional fleadh audience.

Of course with any ‘new’ project, there were absolutely lessons to be learned, and we have taken these on board and added to our thinking for the future should any events be organised at a later stage. Many of the elements which were developed as part of the OCCs such as using online entries with paypal, using an electronic admin system for fleadh administration and distributing adjudication sheets may well be utilised in our conventional events too at some stage.

Alongside the Scottish Region who were key in being the pioneers of the project, a special mention must also go to David Browne, Patrick Ballantyne & Orla Brannigan who assisted with the administration and production of the video broadcasts, the Music Sub Committee for their advice and assistance, Patrick Morrison for assistance in designing the logos for each competition.

This project was a symbol of resilience from the organisation, that in the darkest of times, the vision and creativity of a small group of determined individuals ensured that many of our musicians, singers and dancers were able to receive crucial feedback on their development despite being so isolated by the pandemic.

Of course we all look forward to a full fleadh schedule in 2022, but we do so thankful of just how much we were able to achieve despite the challenge of covid-19.

**Over 2,000 viewers watched the four regional OCC broadcasts live**

In 2020 we held the inaugural FÉILE event which was intended to be a 'one-off' due to the covid-19 pandemic. Unfortunately as the pandemic became a more protracted event, the 2021 All-Britain Fleadh was not going to be a viable in person event – in part due to the inability to host regional qualifiers earlier in the year, and also given that the All-Ireland Fleadh had already been cancelled.

This was a huge disappointment for the organisation given that the 2021 Fleadh had long been in the Diary as an event to take place in Coventry as part of the UK City of Culture celebrations in the city. Having already established a working relationship with Coventry UK City of Culture Trust, we decided to explore the possibility of organising an event on location in Coventry which would be branded as FÉILE and would incorporate live events (in some form) and also the All-Britain final of the OCCs.

A proposal document was drafted by a working group setup to look at the viability of the event, and having discussed this with the UK City of Culture Trust, the green light was given to the event.

The proposal submitted looked at 3 scenarios. One where Covid restrictions were fully lifted and all events could take place in person with a live audience in Coventry. The second scenario involved a 'hybrid' setup with an on location broadcast but no audience, and the third scenario involved pre-recorded elements which would be

broadcast from elsewhere in the eventuality of a 'lockdown' situation.

Due to a fortuitous gap in the severity of the pandemic in the summer, we were able to host an event which was able to have a limited live audience



5,642 Paid  
58,671 Video  
300,000 Total

Left: Coventry resident 'Dub'  
Right: FÉILE houseband with  
from the McHale Academy



ge Views  
eo Viewers  
Online Reach

liners' Seán Cannon  
dancers

which really added to the atmosphere of the event and also provided us with much hope for a future which was back to 'normal' at least in some ways.

Live broadcasting of events requires a very detailed and technical skill set with every member of the team having to understand and carry out multiple roles to tight deadlines. The FÉILE team headed up by David Browne went well above and beyond the level of any committee I have ever encountered either within our out with Comhaltas as an organisation and we should be rightly proud of what they managed to achieve.

Live broadcasting commenced on Friday 25th June with a live concert streamed online from the Albany Theatre in Coventry. The lineup included Michael McGoldrick, Dezi Donnelly & Ed Boyd, Ímar, and Meabh Smyth the 2021 Fiddler of London. With the FÉILE team manning cameras, operating sound equipment, and presenting the live broadcast, the event was underway. After 3 rousing performances resulting in a standing ovation from the live audience, the concert was followed by a Trad Disco again broadcast live on location in Coventry.

Saturday daytime saw a whole host of videos broadcast showcasing Coventry Irish cultural groups, as well as music and song workshops – not to mention a fantastic baking segment from Seamus Brogan, this ran right up to the evening live broadcast featuring a house band of young artists from across Britain brought together especially for this event. The theme of the event was 'some craic from the pub' although the actual venue was the foyer area from the Albany Theatre. Another hugely



successful live broadcast which led us on to the final day of FÉILE 2021.

Sunday morning kicked off with live zoom workshops with our house band from the previous evening and the whole event culminated in the broadcast of the All-Britain OCC competitions.

For such a young and relatively inexperienced team to pull off this event was a huge testament to the dedication that they all showed and indeed the event helped showcase the very best of what Comhaltas has to offer.

The FÉILE team consisted of David Browne, Patrick Ballantyne, Michael Fitzgerald, Marian Dwyer, Orla Brannigan, & Paddy Callaghan and were ably assisted by Patrick Morrison & Benedict Morris who also excelled in their efforts. A special mention must also go to Eoin Griffin who following a brief training session, found himself to be an excellent camera operator after standing in for the Saturday evening broadcast!

The event would not have been possible if it wasn't for the incredible work of the Coventry UK City of Culture Trust team who we were working so closely for during the project. Alice Williams & Eliza Jackson as well as being amazing workers have become life-long friends with us all and we would like to thank them and the whole team at the Trust.

Imar - Live and Online  
from The Albany  
Theatre, FÉILE 2021







Leamington Comhaltas. John & Carmel Burke with Eilish Commins playing in the Garden for FleadhFest

FleadhFest was an exciting and significant new initiative from Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann for 2021. In circumstances when normal Fleadh Cheoil activity is not possible Comhaltas units around the world gathered to present their stories, histories and music to the world through video.

Comhaltas branches from around the world answered the call and over 80 hours of content was produced, including many fine programs from Comhaltas in Britain. Branches across Scotland, the Northern region and the Midlands all took the opportunity to showcase their stories and continue their engagement with musicians, members and volunteers during lockdown.

All of the FleadhFest programs can be viewed on the official Comhaltas Youtube channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/comhaltas>

The apex of the FleadhFest initiative was undoubtedly the hybrid event hosted by Sligo during August. Many musicians from Britain were able to take part by submitting videos for the competitions and once again the technical skills of the team at Comhaltas in Britain proved invaluable, as our project officers and national youth officer were able to support the team in Sligo, and ensure competitors from overseas could take part the same as if they were in Sligo itself.

## Scottish Region

Due to the pandemic, the four branches in the Scottish Region continued with online lessons, with the region and branches holding virtual meetings throughout the year.

### November 2020

On 8th November, Super-Secretary Moira Callaghan had a very special birthday, and was surprised by a video message compiled earlier with branch members performing 'Happy Birthday'. Irish Minstrels CCÉ continued with online classes in all instruments. St. Patrick's CCÉ moved online with whistle and banjo classes. Along with online lessons, St. James the Great CCÉ also held regular Saturday night singing sessions, with guests from other branches taking part. Johnny Doherty CCÉ also delivered online lessons. The Irish Consulate in Edinburgh organised a competition to design a Christmas card. This was open to all members in the 4-13 year age group.

### December 2020

Online classes continued for all four branches, with Johnny Doherty CCÉ also holding their Irish language class every Wednesday with Eimhín Ó Dúnaigh. Lots of social events also moved online, with branches hosting quiz nights, sessions, recitals, and putting together videos of groups performing. Applications were invited for the Fiddler of London competition. The Blackwater Céilí Band held virtual workshops on 19th December, and a lot of members attended these.

The St. Patrick's branch organised a Christmas raffle, and held the draw live, on Facebook. All the children in the branch received a chocolate Santa, and some Christmas quizzes were also organised.

The Irish Minstrels held a Christmas Quiz on the 22nd December, with extra points given for Christmas attire!

St. James the Great CCÉ had an online Christmas party and session on 20th December. Bags of sweets were delivered to children before the party.

## January 2021

In January, while continuing with online classes, the Irish Minstrels branch started recitals with guest musicians after the classes. They also held a very successful virtual Winter School, concert and workshops on 23rd and 24th January. This was the 25th Annual Winter School. with all tutors performing, and bands also making an appearance. The weekend was rounded off with an online disco, which was a lot of fun. St. James the Great CCÉ held a virtual quiz on 21st January.

## February 2021

Applications were invited for the Newry Musical Feis, a competition that took place online. Lackagh Comhaltas Feis in Galway also hosted a virtual feis, that was free to enter. Warrenpoint Comhaltas held a Charity Zoom Recital, and invited members to join.

Entries to the Online Comhaltas Competitions 2021 opened on 28th February. Those placed in the Regional Online Competitions, went forward to the All Britain Online Competition, (OCC) which was held in June. Members submitted videos of their performances in order to take part.

St. Patrick's CCÉ were asked to support the Coatbridge St. Patrick's Festival, and St. James the Great CCÉ took part in the Gaelic League's St. Brigid's Cois Tine.

## March 2021

April Macauley from the Irish Minstrels branch, entered the Fiddler of London competition, and won 'Up and Coming Fiddler of London 2021 in the final on 13th March.' Well done April!

Branches continued classes online. The Johnny Doherty branch hosted a virtual St. Patrick's quiz night, which was very successful, and also organised an online session.

Members from the St. Patrick's branch made and sold St. Patrick's Day cards for branch funds. They also held an online quiz, recorded and submitted videos and family recipes/favourite meals that reminded them of Ireland, as part of their St. Patrick's Day celebrations. The branch participated in the virtual St. Patrick's Day Festival. St. James the Great CCÉ celebrated St. Patrick's Day by sharing online videos of

families playing together. First prize goes to the Deveney family, playing the 'Splendid Isolation' reel! The branch also organised an online St. Patrick's Scavenger Hunt and quiz, with bags of sweets delivered to children. The Irish Minstrels branch celebrated by joining others online, and sharing videos.

## April 2021

The Scottish Online Comhaltas Competitions took place on Sunday 25th April from 12 o'clock. These were broadcast on Facebook and YouTube, via the Comhaltas in Britain channel. Congratulations to all the winners. 1st, 2nd and 3rd placed competitors go forward to the next round.

Members from the St. Patrick's branch joined in Liverpool CCE's virtual Easter Bonnet Parade, by posting pictures of themselves in their bonnets. Easter goody bags were distributed to younger members of the branch. Lyn Crumlish, PRO of the Irish Minstrels, won the Mighty Pens/Herald Short Story Competition. Congratulation Lyn! Competitors from the Scottish Region took part in the virtual Newry and Lackagh Feiseanna. Congratulations to all the winners. St. James the Great held successful Spring Outdoor Sessions at the Bowling Green Community Space.

## May 2021

All branches continued with virtual lessons. The St. James the Great branch held an online beginner's whistle concert. The Irish Minstrels branch organised #StRochsPlayATuneDay on Saturday, 22nd May. This was to dedicate a day and hashtag, to their wonderful community and its music. Videos were recorded and shared on social media, adding the hashtag. The branch opened this up to anyone outside of the Irish Minstrels who wanted to join in. After busy, weekly classes, with 25 tutors giving of their time, 25th May was the last class before summer for the branch. Ferbane Feis Ceoil invited members to compete in a virtual Feis.

## June 2021

In partnership with Coventry, the UK City of Culture, Comhaltas in Britain held FÉILE 2021, from Friday 25th June to Sunday 27th June. This consisted of free online workshops, a showcase concert, traditional disco, a live pub session, and the finals of the All Britain OCC competitions. Well done to all

who took part, and the organisers, for what was a fantastic weekend.

The St. James the Great branch held Summer Outdoor Sessions at the Bowling Green Community Space, and also had a successful virtual class concert. Well done to all who took part.

The Seosamh Mac Gabhann Summer School held free tutorials with top class tutors, from Monday 28th June to Friday 2nd July

## July 2021

St. Patrick's CCÉ branch members, old and new, collated media and recorded videos for a presentation about the branch. All branches took a break from online classes.

## August 2012

All branches were still taking a break from online classes.

August 1st – 9th saw the first ever virtual Fleadh Cheoil/FleadhFest take place, with Scoil Eigse online from 2nd – 5th August. All four branches had competitors taking part. Congratulations to all competitors and winners. As part of FleadhFest, branches were asked to make a video about their history and music. All 4 branches contributed. Johnny Doherty CCÉ held face to face sessions in The White House pub.

## September 2021

Classes resumed for all branches, after the summer break. St. James the Great CCÉ moved to a new venue, the Clydesdale Hockey Club. St. Patrick's CCÉ restarted Saturday morning classes in St. Augustine's Parish Centre. The Irish Minstrels branch continued lessons online.

## October 2021

Irish Minstrels members, Malachy Arnold and Breanna Wilson, were successful in the Semi Final of the BBC Young Musician of the Year, and will now go forward to the final, which takes place during Celtic Connections in January 2022. Congratulations to them both.

St. James the Great had their AGM in October, and also held an online Halloween Party. Irish Minstrels CCÉ held their AGM via Zoom on 2nd November. Classes resumed for the Johnny Doherty branch in Taylor High School, New Stevenson.

Cathleen Armstrong

Rúnaí

Réigiún na hAlban

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## Midland Region

The Midland Region have hosted all of their meetings this year by Zoom, but are hoping to have their first face to face meeting in February 2022. The branches in the Region are very good at supporting each other in their activities, as well as their own. The Region is quite spread out, so some branches receive more support than others.

### Branch news

Of the eight branches in the Region, Amairgin the Gael, Cambridge, Coventry, Leamington Spa, Leicester and Nottingham, all applied for the Covid grant and were very appreciative of this. It provided the branches with various ways to keep the interest going during the pandemic and in some cases, the financial support meant that branches could continue for another year. By the time Convention happens, it may be the case that two branches in the Region are no longer going to exist. However, there is always the hope that they may restart when things improve.

Three of the branches (Coventry, Leamington Spa and Leicester) are all up and running with music classes, sessions, charity events etc. These branches also have many returning members and new

members (despite the pandemic) and a good number of children learning instruments. Some of the other branches in the Region are working their way towards this.

Amairgin the Gael (Newport branch) have lost a few key people who have been supporters of the branch for many years. They have moved to a new venue in the hope that they will drum up more support and they are paying for a teacher to give them a kick start initially for ten weeks.

Cambridge have managed to re-form for another year and at the last organised session in November, they were delighted with the turn-out of people (young and old).

Nottingham are still waiting to restart music lessons, due to some concern with teachers and health issues. They are also looking at a venue change. Their numbers are few, but they have formed a new enthusiastic committee. Kathleen Stanley R.I.P (a stalwart of the Nottingham branch and the Midland Regional meetings), sadly passed away. Her funeral was supported by members of the Midland Region.

## Upcoming events

Princethorpe College, near Rugby has been booked for 3 April 2022 in the hope that the Midland Region will be able to run their Regional Fleadh.

## Information

Information about mental well-being was sent out to all members and was very much valued.

## FleadhFest Videos

Seven out of the eight branches in the Midland Region submitted videos for FleadhFest. It gave branches something to focus on whilst in the middle of a pandemic. Branches in the Region worked very hard to put together a video of their branch and were supported by the Region. As a result, we now have some lovely archive material for the Midland Region and for Comhaltas in general.

## Online Regional/All Britain competitions 2021

Thanks to Paddy Callaghan and the team for enabling students to participate in competitions during the pandemic last year. It was very much appreciated by those branches who took part in the Midland Region.

## Coventry City of Culture event June 2021

This was a great weekend of online concerts and music workshops, which culminated in the online All Britain finals on the Sunday. The Midland Region were very grateful for the support from the Province for this venture.

## FleadhFest Competitions 2021

A number of members in the Region participated in this event.

Amairgin the Gael and Leamington Spa were delighted to have runners up in the FleadhFest competitions in Sligo 2021.

Carmel Burke  
Midland Regional Secretary

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# Northern Region

After nearly two years the gradual decline of the Coronavirus (COVID 19) outbreak normality as such is beginning to bloom in our branches with the return of the music classes. Because of the COVID 19 pandemic we were not able to host our Regional Fleadh in the normal way. However, we had members from the Region taking part in NOCC (Northern Region Online Comhaltas Competitions) on 9th May featuring live broadcasting and adjudicators for each competition. FÉILE 2021 was held on Friday 25th – Sunday 27th June 2021 in Coventry at which we hosted the All-Britain OCC. This was broadcast live on 27th June in each competitions category.



To celebrate St Patrick's Day, we had branches of Comhaltas in Liverpool, Manchester and Leeds coming together supporting 3 great charities which supported the community; Irish Community Care based in Liverpool and Manchester and Leeds Irish Health and Homes.

All the branches within the Region took part in a Comhaltas project. Each branch organised a video about the history of their branch with music from their members. This was released in November.

All the branches had to find ways of keeping in touch with their members and provided weekly teaching element through zoom however since July they are back teaching at their usual venues. However when restrictions were lifted St Wilfred were still unable to resume classes at the Irish World Heritage Centre as this was still being used as a vaccine centre and found an alternative venue at Prestwich Liberal Club and resume face to face classes. There was a similar issue with Tara O'Caralon who had to find another venue to host their music classes. All the branches are involved in monthly sessions too at which other branches also attend.

The branches have also got involved with other events like Liverpool CCÉ who took part in this year's Liverpool Irish festival and they also performed for the Irish Minister of Foreign Affairs Simon Coveney when he visited the Irish Centre. Middlesbrough branch have members involved in the North East Irish network providing information for articles in the newsletter. St Wilfred branch had four members of their branch who took part in the Adjudication Course weekend which was via Zoom, and they all thoroughly enjoyed the course. Leeds CCÉ are hoping to host a mini fleadh at the centre in February which is open to all their students and used to encourage entering the Regional Fleadh for the first time. In May they are hoping to host a fundraiser for HCPT to help them take disabled youngsters to Lourdes

All our branches are now back to normal and are working hard and are making plans for the future.

Julie O'Hare  
Rúnaí, Northern Region

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## London & Southern Region

Branches showed their resilience this year by moving sessions and classes online, which was critical to encourage musicians to keep playing to stay engaged with Comhaltas. At the end of lockdown in June, in-person classes began to take place and by the autumn the music scene had come back with a bang in the region with old and new sessions taking place all over London on various nights of the week and music classes up and running again.

Many London & Southern members took part in the Online Comhaltas Competitions (OCCs) in May and June 2021 with feedback from parents and teachers that the children and young people were really excited to be able to have a focus for their music again. They also commended the fantastic organisation of the OCCs and the professionalism of the live stream and feedback from adjudicators. London & Southern musicians went on to be awarded 24 1st places, 14 2nd places and 13 3rd places in the All Britain OCC. London & Southern members widely took part in the Coventry FÉILE 2021 online, participating in the online workshops and group sessions which gave essential access to the Irish music community for so many people during lockdowns.

In the coming year the London & Southern region is excited to be hosting the All Britain fleadh in June. We will be holding a fundraiser for the fleadh in the spring showcasing the wealth of talent in the region. We also hope to reignite Gaelic Voices festival, collaborating with other Irish language groups in London to encourage our members to engage with the Irish language. We will continue to support our branches as best we can to help them back on their feet after a difficult year.

Clare Nevin  
Rúnaí London & Southern

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FEILE 2021  
Production  
team



Roisin Hickey,  
Nottingham  
Comhaltas

# The Role of the Music Sub-Committee

## **Provide adjudicators**

The Music Sub-Committee (MSC) is responsible for helping to provide adjudicators for the Regional Fleadhanna and the Provincial Fleadh each year. Adjudicators are selected from the official adjudicators list and the committee are constantly looking for new adjudicators to add to the list. The Regions throughout the Province are requested to suggest suitable names for the list and those put forward are required to 'sit-in' at a number of Fleadhanna in order to give them the confidence and experience to then adjudicate on their own. They are also required to attend and complete at least one (and more if possible) seminar for adjudicators. The list of adjudicators is updated every year.

The MSC secretary has emailed all adjudicators informing them of the information that was held on them by the MSC (in accordance with GDPR guidelines).

A 'Code of Best Practice' issued from headquarters in Ireland will also be sent out to all adjudicators.

## **Brief adjudicators**

The Music Sub-Committee are expected to brief adjudicators on the day of the Fleadh before they adjudicate, so that problems on the day are kept to a minimum. Where possible, we send briefing notes before the Fleadh in order to remind adjudicators of the latest updates. The Music Sub-Committee members from the Region running the Fleadh are responsible for briefing the adjudicators.

## **Deal with complaints re adjudicators**

It is very important that we, as a Music Sub-Committee, are informed by the Fleadh Committee after any Fleadh if you feel disappointed in any way with an adjudicator. We will always respond to your query and if there is any justification in the complaint we will follow it through. In turn, it is very important that a Fleadh Committee looks after their adjudicators in terms of transport, accommodation,

meals and expenses for the day/weekend.

### **Assist with timetable for Fleadhanna**

We also deal with aspects of the timetable for Fleadhanna. As we are responsible for selection of adjudicators, there needs to be some liaison between the committee running the Fleadh and the Music Sub-Committee members in that Region to ensure that the relevant adjudicator is being used for the correct competitions and that length of time for competitions has been allocated correctly.

### **Guidelines Booklet for running a Fleadh**

The Music Sub-Committee is responsible for putting together a Fleadh Guidelines Booklet with suggestions for running a Fleadh. This Fleadh package is made available each year to Fleadh secretaries and, in particular, to those involved with running a Fleadh for the first time. We also keep this updated on an annual basis. This will be sent out in plenty of time before the Regional Fleadhanna to the Fleadh secretaries involved and any recent changes will be highlighted.

### **Coordinate dates of Regional Fleadhanna**

We try to ensure that all of the Regional Fleadhanna take place on different dates so that we are not limited in selection of adjudicators. Due to overlaps in previous years, it was decided that a Region should let the Music Sub-Committee secretary know the date of their Regional Fleadh as soon as possible. The Music Sub-Committee secretary will then inform the other Regions so that no clash occurs.

These are some of the many and varied activities that the Music Sub-committee are involved with.

Julie O'Hare

Rúnaí - Music Sub-Committee



## Séamus Ó Brógáin Farewell and Thanks to Comhaltas in Britain

After 35 years I am finally going home. When I retired from work in early 2020, I did not expect I would be retiring at the start of a global pandemic. I had many plans for those two years, nearly all Comhaltas and singing related events, workshops, festivals and weekends. Instead, I have been able to plan, with my family, our move back to Ireland and this is reminiscent of our move to Britain in the 1980s.

I've been a member of Comhaltas for over fifty years, starting in my local branch back home in Wexford, the Wexford County board and the Leinster Provincial Council.

In 1987 Marian and I decided to emigrate to Britain when I was offered a job in England. We started life in Cambridgeshire and later moved to inner city London. We were fish out of water like many Irish immigrants in the 1980s, a young family from a quiet rural town to suddenly being in a city of millions. We could have been left with no one in this new world but shortly after settling in London I had a phone call from the late Pat Judge about joining the St Alban's branch. I had got to know Pat and Diana and the family from going to many previous Fleadhanna and Congress and my family and I were overjoyed to join the St Albans branch.

We were made very welcome from the outset and made a lot of great friends over the years in the branch. Unfortunately, a lot of



these friends have gone to their eternal reward, but the branch and life carries on thanks to committed people eager to carry on the tradition. It was wonderful to be a part of the success of such a vibrant branch. I also began adjudicating at fleadh's all over Britain and had got to know a lot of Comhaltas people throughout the UK. One memorable meeting with Vince and Ann Jordan was to cement our families in friendship. - On our way to Birmingham to an All Britain fleadh we got "lost" on our journey and had the good sense to ring Vince - he arrived in his lovely Volvo to meet us off the motorway with Ann and kiddies in tow and guided us to the (memorable) venue - (don't mention the war) Thus began a lifelong friendship which we cherish to this day.



I became involved with the London and Southern Region and served on this board along with my wife Marian and daughter AnneMarie. It was there that we got to know the late Joan & John Burke and Jim Myers R.I.P as well as Pat Connolly, the Nevin and Walsh Family Pat Walsh Paddy and Nora Condon and many more people who were to become great friends to this day. It was a very busy time in Comhaltas in London with many Fleadhanna, sessions and dinner dances.

I also became a member of our Music Sub Committee. This committee was the backbone of the planning and preparing for all Fleadhs and was of enormous help to branches who needed information or clarification on matters relating to their members. Those meetings always gave a great sense of satisfaction for the amount of work achieved and we never left a meeting feeling disappointed.

From the regional board I was nominated as a delegate to Provincial Council and later nominated for the post of Provincial Treasurer, a post which I held for nine years.

In 2003, the Irish government extended its DION funding to cover Development of Irish Cultural Organisations in Britain. With the help of Vince Jordan, Jim Teevan, Marian and Sally Mulready we made an application for Government funding for two development workers.

Being “greenhorns” at funding applications we relied totally on the advice and expertise of Sally, and we spent long hours in Sally’s office in The London Irish Centre bashing out our answers to all seventeen pages on the old “word processer” (no fancy laptops or Apple Mac’s in those days) – strange as that may seem today.

On one of those nights Marian and I dropped Vince at Euston Station at midnight to get the last train back to Birmingham. Seven copies of this document were needed for the application so seventeen pages then had to be copied before being hand delivered to the Dion office in the Irish Embassy in London next day.

Without a hint of a yawn, I delivered the application forms at 6am next morning on my way to work. It was worth all the effort and our application was successful.





Through our development personnel and Provincial Council officers, we have developed a very close working relationship with the Dept of Foreign Affairs and we are indebted to them for their huge support ever since.

Thank You to our initial development team of Paddy Callaghan, John Devine, Michelle O' Leary and Patrick Morrison who all became great friends.

A special thanks must go to Patrick Morrison for all his help and guidance on numerous projects and committees over the years and his dedication to the work on the Diaspora. His organisation of the Overseas concert every year at Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann is to be commended.

Following the sudden passing of Uachtarán Tony Finnegan, the then chairman of Britain, Jim Teevan, became Uachtarán an Comhaltais and I was elected as Árd Comhairle Delegate in Jim's place, which I have been doing for the last eighteen years. I have attended numerous meetings in Culturlánn and attended every Congress since my election. While the serious business of Comhaltas was sorted at the meetings there was also a great social aspect to the visits to Culturlánn where members of Comhaltas from all over the world were in attendance. There was always plenty of time for music, song and dance and the odd pint or two. During my time here I had the good fortune to attend great Conventions in Britain and USA which were always memorable weekends. The travelling companions I had for either car, train, ferry or plane journeys to Provincial meetings and meetings in Ireland were many - The Jordans, Nevins, Teevans, Connollys, Burkes and Tom Beaumont to name but a few - made every trip worthwhile. We often shortened the journeys by telling stories and tall tales and there were always a few riddles to be solved. Sometimes we even swapped songs on these trips. We always had great representation from all over Britain at our Annual Congress in Dublin. I have shared many days with great stalwarts of Comhaltas in my time on the Árd Comhairle and miss those that have gone to their eternal rest.

One of the highlights of my time on Provincial Council of Britain was seeing the formation of Comhaltas na nÓg which was originated by my two daughters, AnneMarie and Sinead along with Katie Jordan and Daniel O Connor. They contacted the youth from all over Britain and soon a very successful group was formed which showed the way forward and supplied many Provincial officers to follow which makes our Provincial Council a mainly youthful committee with a few of us old fogies tagging along.

I would like to thank everyone with whom I've worked with in Comhaltas for such a long number of years and a special thanks to Labhrás and Úna Ó Murchú for their friendship and guidance and to past Úachtaráin Pat Sweeney RIP, Tony Finnegan RIP, Jim Teevan, Seamus McCormaic, Vince Jordan, Ann Finnegan and our present Úachtarán Éamonn Ó hArgáin for unstinting help over the years.



To all the great friends I've made in Britain for the last thirty-five years, thank you doesn't seem to be enough, you all have a special place in my heart. I may be leaving Comhaltas in Britain but it will not

be goodbye altogether. I'm sure we will be crossing paths as I will be continuing to be part of the Coiste meetings in Dublin which run in tandem with the Ard Comhairle meetings and will be available to help wherever and whenever I am needed throughout Ireland or beyond P.G.

Go raibh maith agaibh go léir agus go raibh Día libh

Séamus Ó Brógáin







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### Our Funders



### Accreditation & Affiliation

