

World Fiddle Day Scartaglin presents 2018 Fiddle Recital

presented by Emma O Leary

"Come down for a tune"



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Our fiddle recital on Sat May 19 will be a selection of tunes played by fiddlers Julia Clifford, Bridgie Kelliher, Sonny Riordan, Mrs Joan Crowley and Joe Thoma in Crowley's Bar sometime between 1985 and 1989. This was a relaxed meeting of great fiddle players playing Sliabh Luachra tunes in a quiet session. We encourage all fiddle players young and old to learn the tunes and join in on the day. Special Guests Joe Thoma and Billy Clifford

World Fiddle Day 2018.

"Come Down for a Tune."

**The fiddle music of Julia Clifford, Bridgie Kelliher,
Sonny Riordan, Joan Crowley and Joe Thoma.**

**Presented by Emma O'Leary
in Lyon's Bar, Scartaglin,
Saturday, 19 May 2018.**

Special guests: Billy Clifford and Joe Thoma.

Transcriptions and text © Paul de Grae 2018.



*Crowley's Bar, Kenmare, in the 1980s:
location of the session.*

The Kenmare session

The 2018 World Fiddle Day Recital, hosted by Scartaglin fiddle player Emma O'Leary, draws on tunes from a session in Crowley's Bar, Kenmare, which took place some time between 1985 and 1989. The musicians present were Julia Clifford, her sister Bridgie Kelliher, Sonny Riordan, Joan Crowley (proprietor of the bar) and Joe Thoma (all fiddles), later joined by Francis Thoma on bodhrán. Joe recorded the session and has kindly donated the tape to World Fiddle Day Scartaglin.

The date of the session is difficult to establish. It could be as early as 1985, when the first fiddle workshop was held at the Cibeal, featuring Julia Clifford (the Cibeal was an important arts festival held in Kenmare, organised by Joe Thoma). Julia also gave the fiddle workshop in 1986. She did not appear in the Cibeal again until 1989, when she headlined a concert in the Lansdowne Arms with Connie O'Connell and Diarmuid Ó Suilleabháin.

Peter Browne recorded Julia, Bridgie and Johnny O'Leary playing together in Knocknagree in 1987, for the RTÉ radio programme "Airneán". On the Kenmare recording, Julia tells Mrs Crowley that "Bridgie does not play much now", which suggests that the session may have occurred later than 1987.

Whatever the exact date, it's interesting to consider that four of the participants were well past retirement age, but clearly playing very well for all that. If the session was in 1989, for example, Julia Clifford was 75, Bridgie Kelliher was 94 years old (she lived to be 98), Joan Crowley was 67, and Sonny Riordan was 71; the Thoma brothers were in their thirties.

Thanks to PJ Teahan and Joe Thoma for the above information.

The transcriptions

This booklet contains transcriptions of just a selection of the tunes recorded at the session; each set also has a link to a recording on Soundcloud (thanks to PJ Teahan for these). As is normal in a session, tune titles were not announced; the titles supplied here are, for the most part, those in common use in Sliabh Luachra.

In keeping with the spirit of World Fiddle Day, we felt it was important that as many fiddlers as possible (the younger ones especially) should have the chance to learn these tunes, so that they can play them on the day, and indeed keep these tunes in circulation. With that aim in mind, we have opted for fairly basic transcriptions, generally omitting the ornamentation and variations.

Sound clips

PJ Teahan has posted the selected recordings on the Soundcloud page of World Fiddle Day Scartaglin. Individual links are shown here with each tune. You can also find them all here: <https://soundcloud.com/1scartaglin>



*Julia, Bridgie, Bridgie's daughter and Sonny Riordan
in Bridgie's kitchen – perhaps before heading off to Kenmare?
(photo courtesy of Billy Clifford)*



Crowley's Bar, Kenmare.

We're honoured and delighted to have fiddlers Joe Thoma and Emma O'Leary in attendance at the Fiddle Recital. Here's how they looked more or less at the time of the original session!



Joe Thoma with Mrs Joan Crowley, proprietor of Crowley's Bar.



Emma O'Leary at home in Scart.

1. Polkas: Con Thadhgo's, The Gullane, Mikey Buckley's.

Con Thadhgo's



The Gullane Polka



Mikey Buckley's



The titles here come from Terry Moylan's book, "Johnny O'Leary of Sliabh Luachra" (hereafter referred to as JOL). Johnny's versions are no.s 158, 44 and 148 in that book; the last has the parts in reverse order to that shown here.

Played on the recording by Julia Clifford, her sister Bridgie Kelliher and Sonny Riordan.

Soundcloud link: <https://soundcloud.com/1scartaglin/con-thadhgos-the-blackwater>



*Julia Clifford and Bridgie Kelliher, from photographer Jill Freedman's book "Ireland Ever".
Overleaf is another photo from the same occasion.*

2. Hennigan's Favourite.



Title from Johnny O'Leary (JOL 181). On the recording, Julia says "We call it The Old [?]" The first part is more or less the same as that of *Éireann go Brách* (JOL 2) and *Long John's Wedding* (O'Neill's "Dance Music of Ireland" [DMI] no. 233).

In the book Johnny says: "I worked in the bogs of Kildare, 1945/46, and a Mayo fellow with an accordion gave me that jig. Hennigan, Jim Hennigan was his name. 'Hennigan's Favourite'. And a nice jig it is. And he was a good player too, a very nice fellow."

Soundcloud link: <https://soundcloud.com/1scartaglin/hennigans-favourite-jig>



Julia and Bridgie – same session as previous page.
(photo courtesy of Aileen Roantree)

3. I Won't Marry Her; Tim Casey's Polka.

I Won't Marry Her

5

10

14

18 Tim Casey's Polka

22

27

31

Mrs Joan Crowley played both these tunes on Joe Thoma's 1986 cassette "Up the Track". The first tune is there called *Off She Goes*, but to avoid confusion with the well-known single jig of that title, I've used the title of Johnny O'Leary's setting (JOL 81). Whoever "her" was, she seems not to have been very popular – the version in the Dingle Wren repertoire is titled *Take her away down to the Quay, we don't want her at all today*.

Mrs Crowley named the second tune after her source, who was a local accordion player in Kenmare and also the local postman.

Soundcloud link: <https://soundcloud.com/1scartaglin/i-wont-marry-her-tim-caseys>

4. The Wind That Shakes the Barley.



A popular and widespread reel, a favourite of Joan Crowley, who leads it off on the recording. This mostly follows the standard setting (e.g., DMI 737) except at the end.

Elizabeth Cronin had a song, "The Little Pack of Tailors", set to this tune.

O-ro, we rattled them, o-ro, we chased them,
And o-ro, we rattled them, the little pack of tailors;
O-ro, we rattled them, o-ro, we chased them,
And o-ro, we rattled them, the little pack of tailors.
I went to Dublin and met a little tailor,
I stuck him in my pocket, for fear the ducks would eat him.
The dogs began to bark at him and I began to beat him,
And threw him in the water for fear the ducks would eat him.

Soundcloud link: <https://soundcloud.com/1scartaglin/wind-that-shakes-the-barley>

5. The Little Stack of Barley.



Another fairly well-known tune (e.g., DMI 858). P J Teahan writes:

"We believe after discussions that this is Sonny Riordan leading this hornpipe in the session. Sonny was a pupil of Padraig O'Keeffe and was a quiet man but his playing and tunes are always regarded highly by those who heard him."



Sonny Riordan

Seamus O'Sullivan of Kilmurry, Castleisland, said of this tune:

"...the setting I play I learned from Patrick Keeffe and whenever I play it, people tell I am doing it wrong, because it was one of the tunes that Patrick Keeffe used to mess with. He had three different settings. He used to put in a third part taken from another similar tune and adapt it. The setting I play has an extra part from *Cronin's*."

Soundcloud link: <https://soundcloud.com/1scartaglin/the-little-stack-of-barley>

6. The Galtee Rangers set.

The Galtee Rangers



The Glountane Reel



Jackie Daly

33 O'Callaghan's

37

41

45 to finish

Fiddler Dee Sullivan christened this set of reels "The Sliabh Luachra National Anthem", and the nickname is appropriate, since the set has indeed become anthemic. It was arranged in this form by Jackie Daly, and was first recorded by him on the Dolores Keane & John Faulkner album "Sail Óg Rua" (1983), as *Galtee Ranger*, *Denis Murphy's*, and *The Doon Reel*.

All three tunes appeared on the classic album, "The Star Above the Garter" by Denis Murphy and Julia Clifford, but not in this combination. The first two are played together on the album, but the third is paired with *The Lady on the Island*.

The first and third tunes are also played together by Denis and Julia on the "Kerry Fiddles" album, but in the higher key of G, and combined with *The New-mown Meadows*.

Soundcloud link: <https://soundcloud.com/1scartaglin/galtee-ranger-glountane-and>

Tune no. 7

This will be a slow air, to be played solo by Paddy Jones.

8. Old Torn Petticoat set.

The Old Torn Petticoat



The Ladies' Pantalettes



34 London Lassies

38

43

47

Lovely playing from Julia on another great set of reels: *The Old Torn Petticoat* (a.k.a. *The Worn Torn Petticoat*), *The Ladies' Pantaloettes* (a.k.a. *The Crooked Road*, *The Duke of Leinster's Wife*, etc.) and *London Lassies*. The first tune can also be played as a slide, and indeed Julia does so on the album "The Humours of Lisheen". Some nice touches here – notice the C# in the first tune (bar 11) and the variation in *The Ladies' Pantaloettes* (bar 23). Compare standard settings of these tunes, e.g., O'Neill's "Waifs & Strays" no. 244, DMI 509 and DMI 546.

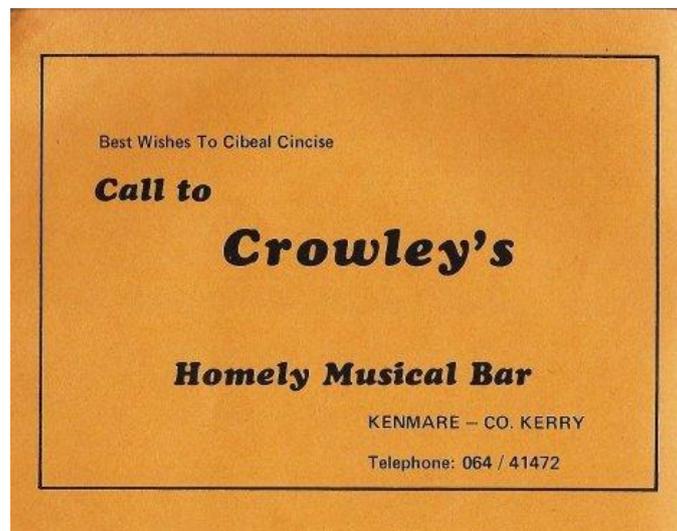
Soundcloud link: <https://soundcloud.com/1scartaglin/the-old-torn-petticoat-the>



*Julia and Bridgie in Bridgie's kitchen.
(photo courtesy of Billy Clifford)*



*Posters from the Cibeal arts festival in Kenmare
(courtesy of PJ Teahan)*



Crowley's Bar was the session location during the Cibeal.

9. Paddy's Return; The Frost is All Over.

Paddy's Return



Musical notation for "Paddy's Return" in G major, 6/8 time. The piece consists of 14 measures. The first line contains measures 1-4, the second line measures 5-8, the third line measures 9-12, and the fourth line measures 13-14. The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 6/8. The notation includes treble clef, a repeat sign at the beginning, and a double bar line at the end.

The Frost is All Over



Musical notation for "The Frost is All Over" in G major, 6/8 time. The piece consists of 32 measures. The first line contains measures 18-21, the second line measures 22-25, the third line measures 26-29, and the fourth line measures 30-32. The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 6/8. The notation includes treble clef, a repeat sign at the beginning, and a double bar line at the end.

Sonny Riordan leads off these two popular jigs. *Paddy's Return* is a variant of O'Neill's *Young Tim Murphy* (DMI 134). *The Frost is All Over* is a very widespread tune which appeared as early as 1706 in Playford's "Dancing Master" (as *The Masque*).

Soundcloud link: <https://soundcloud.com/1scartaglin/paddys-return-the-frost-is-all>

10. Tom Billy's Jigs.

Tom Billy's Jig

Musical score for "Tom Billy's Jig" in G major, 6/8 time. The score consists of five staves of music. The first staff (measures 1-4) begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 6/8 time signature. The melody is written in a single line. The second staff (measures 5-8) continues the melody. The third staff (measures 9-12) includes a repeat sign at the beginning. The fourth staff (measures 13-17) features two first endings, labeled "1." and "2.", with repeat signs. The fifth staff (measures 18-25) includes the annotation "(this part not on the recording)" above the first measure. The piece concludes with a double bar line and a key signature change to two sharps (D major).

The Flowers of Spring

Musical score for "The Flowers of Spring" in G major, 6/8 time. The score consists of six staves of music. The first staff (measures 26-30) begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 6/8 time signature. The melody is written in a single line. The second staff (measures 31-34) continues the melody. The third staff (measures 35-39) includes a repeat sign at the beginning. The fourth staff (measures 40-41) concludes the piece with a double bar line and a key signature change to two sharps (D major).

The Hare in the Corn

44

49

53

58

Three classic Sliabh Luachra jigs, the first two associated with Tom Billy Murphy (1875-1943) and the last with Julia's neighbour Art O'Keeffe, after whom it is sometimes titled. The first is usually played with three parts, but one of the fiddlers here was insistent on playing only the first two parts; in the transcription the third part has been added, more or less as played by Julia (with Denis Murphy) on "The Star Above the Garter". According to Tony Buffery, the third tune seems to be a very old one, as a version of it appeared in the Skene Lute Manuscripts of c.1620.

Soundcloud link: <https://soundcloud.com/1scartaglin/tom-billys-the-flowers-of>



Tom Billy Murphy and friends.

11. Dowd's No. 9; The Musical Priest.

Dowd's No. 9

The image displays two pieces of music in a single system. The first piece, 'Dowd's No. 9', is written in treble clef, key of D major (two sharps), and 4/4 time. It consists of 16 measures, with a repeat sign at the end. The second piece, 'The Musical Priest', is also in treble clef, key of D major, and 4/4 time. It consists of 21 measures, with a repeat sign at the end. The notation includes various rhythmic values, accidentals, and dynamic markings such as accents and breath marks.

5

9

13

The Musical Priest

17

21

25

29

33

37

Dowd's No. 9 is attributed to Sligo fiddler John O'Dowd (born c.1860, died in America in the 1930s); Michael Coleman reportedly said "nobody could play the fiddle better than John O'Dowd." The title is a long-standing mystery; some say it refers to a brand of whiskey, others

that it refers to the composer's apartment number. At any rate, there's no "Dowd's No. 1-8". Breathnach prints a setting from Aggie White in "Ceol Rince na hÉireann: Cuid 2" under the title *Summer in Ireland*.

The Musical Priest seems to have first appeared in O'Neill, sourced from Mayo fiddler John McFadden (1847-1913). He was an outstanding improviser and composer, so it is at least possible that he composed this one.

There are several tunes in O'Neill's collections bearing McFadden's name, none of which appear in earlier collections and which may, therefore, be provisionally considered to be McFadden originals: *McFadden's Favourite* (MI 1492, DMI 716), *McFadden's Handsome Daughter* (MI 1289, DMI 554), *McFadden's Mishap* (DMI 637), and *McFadden's Own Reel* (MI 1293, DMI 558); the title of the last of these, at least, strongly implies that McFadden was indeed the composer. McFadden and James Early were long-time musical partners, and it is conceivable that the reel *Sergt. Early's Dream* (MI 1419, DMI 656), sourced from McFadden, was composed by him and named for his friend.

All of these are reels, but he also composed jigs (*The Queen of the Fair* for certain; possibly *Wallop the Potlid*, MI 1948, DMI 258; and *Wallop the Spot*, MI 1087, DMI 281) and parts of at least one air (MI 28, *O'Connell's Lamentation*). His lack of musical literacy seems not to have been a problem: O'Neill wrote that "quite a few of McFadden's jigs and reels were preserved by others who later taught them to him over again." ("Irish Minstrels and Musicians", p396)

Soundcloud link: <https://soundcloud.com/1scartaglin/dowds-no-9-musical-priest>



*John McFadden, possible composer of
"The Musical Priest".*

12. She didn't dance and dance;
 Denis Murphy's Slide; Taidhghín an Asail's.

She didn't dance and dance

Musical notation for the first tune, 'She didn't dance and dance'. It consists of four staves of music in treble clef, key of D major, and 12/8 time signature. The melody is written on a single staff. The first staff starts with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a time signature of 12/8. The melody begins with a quarter note G4, followed by a quarter note A4, and then a series of eighth and sixteenth notes. The piece concludes with a double bar line.

Denis Murphy's Slide

Musical notation for the second tune, 'Denis Murphy's Slide'. It consists of four staves of music in treble clef, key of D major, and 4/4 time signature. The melody is written on a single staff. The first staff starts with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a time signature of 4/4. The melody begins with a quarter note G4, followed by a quarter note A4, and then a series of eighth and sixteenth notes. The piece concludes with a double bar line.

Taidhghín an Asail's Slide

Musical notation for the third tune, 'Taidhghín an Asail's Slide'. It consists of two staves of music in treble clef, key of D major, and 4/4 time signature. The melody is written on a single staff. The first staff starts with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a time signature of 4/4. The melody begins with a quarter note G4, followed by a quarter note A4, and then a series of eighth and sixteenth notes. The piece concludes with a double bar line.

On the RTÉ DVD "Come West Along the Road 3" there is a clip of Julia Clifford playing the first two tunes. They also appear consecutively in the Johnny O'Leary book (JOL 123-4).

Matt Cranitch points out that *She didn't dance and dance* is in O'Neill as a slip jig, *My Mind Will Never be Aisy* (DMI 421), and suggests that it was turned into a slide by Pádraig O'Keeffe. It's

possibly Scottish originally; it appears, in 9/8 time, in Aird's "A Selection of Scotch, English, Irish and Foreign Airs...", vol. 2 (published in Glasgow in 1782) as *Woo'd and Married and A'*.

"She Didn't Dance & Dance" is also the title of an excellent CD by two great friends of the Handed Down series and World Fiddle Day, Paudie O'Connor and Aoife Ní Chaoimh.

Denis Murphy's Slide (not a very useful title, I realise, but thus in the JOL book) also seems to have been derived from an older 9/8 tune, familiar in the Irish repertoire as the air of the song "Cucanandy" (see for example "The Songs of Elizabeth Cronin", no. 47).

Taidhgín an Asail was the nickname of Tadhg Ó Buachalla (Timothy Buckley). He was a travelling fiddle master who taught Tom Billy Murphy among many others. He lived in Park, Knocknagree but at different times he also lived in Kiskeam and Scartaglin. He travelled around on a donkey, mending shoes and teaching music. He taught using a form of ABC notation, as did his pupil Tom Billy Murphy. Tom Billy's title for this tune was *The Kitchen with No Food*.

Soundcloud link: <https://soundcloud.com/1scartaglin/didnt-she-dance-murphys-tadgh>



The 2016 Fiddle Recital in Lyon's bar – be sure to take your seat in good time!

Index of tunes

Con Thadhgo's (polka)	4.
Denis Murphy's (slide)	20.
Dowd's No. 9 (reel)	18.
Flowers of Spring, The (jig)	16.
Frost is All Over, The (jig)	15.
Galtee Rangers, The (reel)	10.
Glountane Reel, The	10.
Gullane Polka, The	4.
Hare in the Corn, The (jig)	17.
Hennigan's Favourite (jig)	6.
I Won't Marry Her (polka)	7.
Ladies' Pantalettes, The (reel)	12.
Little Stack of Barley, The (hornpipe)	9.
London Lasses (reel)	13.
Mikey Buckley's (polka)	4.
Musical Priest, The (reel)	18.
O'Callaghan's (reel)	11.
Old Torn Petticoat, The (reel)	12.
Paddy's Return (jig)	15.
She Didn't Dance and Dance (slide)	20.
Taidhgín an Asail's (slide)	20.
Tim Casey's (polka)	7.
Tom Billy's Jig	16.
Wind That Shakes the Barley, The (reel)	8.