

# TUNING IN WITH RANDY-O

News and picks for music, movies, performances, etc...

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## IRISH FEST SPECIAL EDITION

*For the week of August 12-18...*

*Milwaukee Irish Fest, August 14-17, Maier Festival Park (irishfest.com)*

Starting Thursday, the 34th edition of Irish Fest opens its 4-day run at Maier Festival Park (aka the Summerfest Grounds) on Milwaukee's Lakefront. Generally regarded as one of the world's largest celebrations of Celtic culture, the festival features music, dance, theater, history, sports, Celtic Canines, cuisine...not just from Ireland, but from all Celtic lands, including Scotland, Canada, Australia, Wales...even France and Spain!

In addition to the usual abundance of musical offerings from abroad as well as here at home and more Irish dancers than you can shake a stick (or shillelagh) at, each fest has special features unique for that year. Look for these at the 2014 Irish Fest:

### -Brian Boru Millennial Celebration

Irish Fest joins celebrations in Ireland for the first modern ruler of Ireland who unified the country after being victorious in the Battle of Clontarf in 1014. Genealogists, historians, musicologists, bow makers, chefs, etc, will be on hand throughout the grounds with special presentations as part of the celebration. The crown jewel of the celebration is the musical suite *Brian Bora: The High King of Tara*, composed in 2002 by Maurice Lennon and performed daily at the Miller Lite Stage. *America's Got Talent* favorites the Willis Clan will be featured in all performances.

### -Scottish Music Showcase

Previously, Irish Fest has showcased the music of County Clare, County Galway and Nova Scotia. This year, Scotland is the featured showcase. Among the acts included are Fest faves Red Hot Chili Pipers (back for the 5th year!), Manran, Dallahan, Gria, Alasdair Fraser, Skerryvore, Dougie MacLean and the ALT (featuring John Doyle, Nuala Kennedy and Eamon O'Leary).

Some special features: RHCP will be filming their new live DVD during their shows on Friday and Saturday nights; and it all wraps up on Sunday night with a Scottish Music Jam featuring members of RHCP,

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Skerryvore, Manran...and more! Both events take place at the Leinie's Rock Stage.

-In Tandem Theatre Presents *Sweeney Astray*

One of the things that help make Irish Fest really special is the Cultural Village, and one of the Village's jewels is the Theatre Pavilion. One of the featured theater productions this year comes from Milwaukee's own In Tandem Theatre. The play is an adaptation of a story-poem by Nobel laureate Seamus Heaney, regarded as "the greatest Irish poet since Yeats." It's the story of Sweeney, King of Dal-Arie, who is cursed by a priest during the Battle of Moira. The curse turns Sweeney into a bird and he loses everything. Has he truly been transformed or has he lost his mind? You'll just have to come to the show to find out! In Tandem co-founder Chris Flieller and popular local actor Marcy Kearns are the cast for this play, with performances on Friday, Saturday and Sunday.

-Jamesons/Gilles Custard

As longtime Irish Fest fans are well aware, plenty of Irish food favorites are available all over the festival grounds, including baked potatoes, fish & chips, corned beef & cabbage, shepherd's pie, scones, and the ever-popular bangers and mash. And to top it all off this year, the Jamesons Lodge will be featuring Jamesons/Gilles custard! Yes, Jamesons mixed with legendary Gilles Milwaukee custard to create a treat that is bound to appeal to the multitudes in custard-crazy Wisconsin!

And of course, a wide array of great music acts will be on hand, including returning favorites like Gaelic Storm, Milwaukee's Frogwater and Athas, fabulous Chicago fiddler Liz Carroll, Different Drums of Ireland and Black 47 (in their Irish Fest farewell performances!), brilliant accordionist Sharon Shannon, the high-energy Spanish piper Carlos Nunez, Milwaukee's rowdy Reilly and Whiskey of the Damned, the lusty vocals of the High Kings, longtime local acts Blarney and Leahy's Luck, and many, many more.

So get jiggy with it and head down to the Lakefront this weekend for Irish Fest...Paddy and Molly McFest will be looking for you!

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