

Réamhrá



“A Mhuire ’s a Rí gan orm na méara, “O Mary and God, if I had the fingers,
Bhuailfeadh port ar pháobaí ceoil. That would play a tune on musical pipes.
Bhuailfinn port aoibhinn ón taobh seo tíre, I’d play you a tune from these parts,
Nár chuala sibh riamh a leithéid go fóill.” That you never heard the likes of yet.”

THIS VERSE IS FROM an old traditional Donegal song called **A Mhuire ’s a Rí**. It tells the tale of a piper requesting Mary and God to give his fingers the dexterity to play a tune on his pipes that no one has ever heard before. In a way that echoes our vision as musicians and Altan’s vision as a band when we started back in the 70’s: to bring a store of unrecorded and unusual tunes and songs from our rich Donegal heritage to a wider world audience, undiluted and uncompromised. Some people had already done some groundwork: the virtuoso fiddlers Paddy Glackin, whose father Tom Glackin was

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a proud Rosses man then living in Dublin, and Tommy Peoples, from St Johnston in the east of the county, had both already recorded solo albums at this stage. The iconic Bothy Band, who generated a whole new generation of followers with their youthful energy and verse, had the wonderful siblings Mícheál Ó Dhomhnaill and Tríona Ní Dhomhnaill, on guitar, keyboards and song, bringing with them their Donegal heritage they inherited through their father, Hiúdaí, who came from Rann na Feirste. Another member of that band was the multi-talented Dónal Lunny, whose mother Mary Rogers came from the same district. I have to mention Skara Brae as well here, who focused mainly on traditional songs and made them more accessible for a younger generation. These people were not only heroes to me, but I was lucky enough to meet them frequently and get to know them when they would come to the Donegal Gaeltacht on holidays and visits.

Many's a night we would end up in a session with the Lunny clan and the Ó Domhnaills – Maighread, Tríona and Mícheál – augmented by the Brennans and Clann Uí Dhúgain of Clannad fame with maybe Dáithí Sproule and Tom, Paddy, Kevin and Seamus Glackin. The music and song and company were inspirational and great fun, and now, when I think of it, was all through the medium of the Gaelic language. People would give their right arm to be in such company nowadays! This is what inspires young singers and musicians and keeps memories special to pass on to the next generation.

It was against the backdrop of these magical nights that Altan decided to focus entirely on our own particular area and concentrate on the distinctive style of Donegal fiddle music and old Gaelic songs from our locality. I really enjoyed digging out new material from both people we knew and old archival tapes, yielding many tunes that weren't published in any manuscripts, as far as we knew.

We found tunes like **Dinky's**, **Leslie's**, **Paddy's Trip to Scotland**, etc.; tunes which were played by the famous Doherty clan, Frank and Con Cassidy of Teelin and Néillidh Boyle, and tunes from my own father which he got from his mother and relatives that weren't being played at the time but are now standard session tunes. Nowadays, the Donegal fiddle repertoire is more widely known at musical gatherings, but this was not the case back then.

*On previous page: Mark, Mairead and Ciaran Curran. Credit: Leila Grossman
Frankie Kennedy. Credit: Patty Bronson*

Frankie Kennedy and I came together because of music. We met in Hiúdaí Beag's pub in Bunbeg, Co. Donegal, in 1973. Although Frankie didn't play a note of music on our first encounter, he realised that music was my world and he eventually made it his world also.



*Frankie Kennedy and Mairéad in Gaoth Dobhair, Co. Donegal
Photograph: The Mooney Family*

We were very lucky to be able to listen to and learn a wealth of tunes at our doorstep from my father, Francie Mooney, Dinny McLaughlin, Tom Glackin and his family, Caoimhín Mac Aoidh, Ben Lennon and his family, the Campbells, Cathal McConnell, Gary Hastings, Dermý Diamond, Tara Bingham, Andy Dixon, Con Cassidy, James Byrne – the list is endless.

Every weekend and holiday ended up as an intensive non-stop session, meeting and learning from these great, generous people. We travelled to neighbouring Co. Fermanagh to visit fiddler Mick Hoy and flute player Eddie Duffy, who were influencing a whole new generation of flute and fiddlers with their own repertoire.

Many's a time we sat in with Josie Mc Dermott, Packie Duignan, Joe O'Dowd, Fred Finn and Peter Horan in Sligo. We travelled to the Willie Clancy Summer School and met the wonderful fluid Clare musicians like John Kelly and his family, Junior Crehan and Bobby Casey, and we met Roger Sherlock, Seamus Ennis, Sean 'ac Dhonncha, and many more. On our travels back to Donegal we would divert to Loughrea and meet up with Paddy Carty, who played on an unusual Boehm system wooden flute, and fiddler and composer Paddy Fahy and the Lewis Family to hear some beautiful East Galway music and get to know the people, which was just as important.

Raidió na Gaeltachta was, and still is, a wonderful source of tunes. One particular series stands out in my head as a leading beacon for the fiddle music and lore of County Donegal. It was called *Ón tSeanam Anall*. It was presented by Mícheál Mac Giolla Easbuic from Kilcar, in Southwest Donegal. Mícheál recorded the likes of Francie and Mickey Ó Beirn

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(the Dears) from Kilcar, and this was the first time that I had heard of the Dears. Other players were also discovered on these programmes, like Mícheál Carr and James Byrne. He also recorded the well-known fiddlers like John Doherty and Danny O'Donnell in their kitchens and informatively introduced them to the radio audience weekly.

These programmes led me to encourage my father to travel to Southwest Donegal and meet these great and wonderful musicians. I just needed to hear them live. I would tape the radio shows religiously every week and learn the tunes, such was my youthful enthusiasm and love for the fiddle.

RTÉ Radio One also had a wonderful traditional music programme, *The Long Note*, broadcast on Monday evenings, which I was delighted to present in later years. The aforementioned Mícheál Ó Domhnaill and Paddy Glackin were also presenters. Harry Bradshaw, the producer, had a visionary approach to the show and tirelessly travelled to every corner of the country to make field recordings of musicians and singers who hadn't already been recorded and brought their tunes, stories and philosophy to the listeners' firesides.

Harry was also very interested in the golden era of the 78 recordings, mostly made in the US by RCA and Polygram in the 20's, 30's, 40's and 50's from the great pioneers such as Michael Coleman, James Morrison, Patsy Touhey and John McKenna. Harry was a brilliant sound engineer and was able to un-crackle the sound of the old LPs to make them more audible to the modern ear, and this was before digitalisation!

The Long Note had a segment also for the latest music releases and gave them a critical review, something I personally found hard to do as I knew most of the players and singers and didn't want to be too critical since I was bound to meet them in sessions or at festivals! *The Long Note* produced a few amazing documentaries on the Donegal tradition, which brought about a new appreciation of the uniqueness and isolation of the fiddle style and its players.

Caoimhín Mac Aoidh, a Co. Derry man, born in Philadelphia, and a huge fiddle enthusiast, set up Cairdeas na bhFidiléirí in 1983. I remember travelling home from Dublin to be at the first gathering in the Highlands Hotel in Glenties. Belfast fiddle-maker Rab Cherry, who was studying his craft in Cork at the time, came with us to the event and it was at that meeting that Caoimhín and Rab started working together to establish one of the most important lifelines

to guarantee the continuation of this rich Donegal fiddle heritage which was close to its last days, as not many young people were playing the instrument in the county. It was a very social event with many of Donegal's well-known fiddlers congregating for the first time under the one roof.

I remember Con Cassidy was there with his wonderful wife Mary Kate. They were the heart and soul of the gathering. James Byrne made it from Glencolumbkille and my father and I made it from the Northwest of the county. There were men there that I knew were secret fiddlers who came from the surrounding mountains and villages to enjoy the music and camaraderie. Dermot McLaughlin came from Derry via Dublin, as he was still studying in Trinity College. Máire Ní Chaoimh, a Sliabh Luachra style fiddler, originally from Tralee, came via Dublin: she was teaching with myself and Frankie in St. Oliver Plunkett's Primary School in Malahide in North County Dublin. Paul O'Shaughnessy, whose mother was Pearl McBride with a Ballybofey background, also came from Dublin. Nothing like this had happened before.

From its first meeting, Cairdeas na bhFidiléirí has nurtured and protected Donegal's fiddle music and for over thirty years now, it continues to promote the tradition at both the local and national level by providing workshops, tuition and fiddles and by publishing CDs and literature.

All of the above influences moulded our young minds towards what the band Altan has become. People have come and gone. My soulmate and husband, Frankie Kennedy, whose vision for the band was so clear, succumbed to cancer in 1994. His death left a void, which can never be filled. But I think that he would be proud of what we have become and achieved on this magical, musical journey, which he and I dreamt about as young teenagers back in the 70's.

We play music which came from people that we loved and respected and were proud to know as friends. As is the cycle of life, a lot of these wonderful musicians are no longer with us, but their music and memories and stories remain. Their legacy is what is here in this book and above all we try to carry their humanity in every note.



Mairéad Ní Mhaonaigh
Dún na nGall, 2016

Altan

The First Album



IN 1983 FRANKIE KENNEDY and Mairéad made an album called *Ceol Aduaidh* for the Irish-based label, Gael Linn Records. They were primary-school teachers at the time and felt that this would be their first and last venture into the recording world. How wrong they were! *Ceol Aduaidh* was positively received, especially in the US, and it planted a seed in their minds to use it as a platform for an alternative career away from teaching.

At the time, Green Linnet Records, owned by Wendy Newton and based in Connecticut, was releasing Irish and Scottish traditional music albums from successful artists such as Matt Molloy, Relativity, Silly Wizard, and Kevin Burke, amongst others. Mairéad and Frankie happened to meet Wendy through the late Mícheál Ó Domhnaill during the Willie Clancy Summer School in the mid 80's when they shared a house in Mullagh with Mícheál's brother Éamonn and his wife Máire and Mícheál's wife Peggy. Wendy asked them to record a duet album for Green Linnet. They had been toying with the idea of starting a band to tour with and this gave them the ideal opportunity to launch it, so they accepted the invitation.

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On *Ceol Aduaidh*, they had as their accompanist, good friend and bouzouki player Ciarán Curran from Kinawley, Co. Fermanagh. After discussing with him the possibility of going professional, he was willing to give up his own position as a science teacher to join the band. Guitarist Mark Kelly, from Dublin, held his job in insurance but would perform on European tours, while Dáithí Sproule, the guitarist and singer from Derry, but by that time based in Minneapolis, Minnesota, would perform on the US tours.

Working with limited time and budget, we recorded the first Altan album in Aigle Studios in Artane, Co. Dublin, owned by the renowned producer Nicky Ryan – sound engineer and manager to the now famous Enya. Nicky had produced our previous album, *Ceol Aduaidh* and Enya played keyboards on one of the tracks, **An Clár Bog Déil**.

This time we asked our old friend, Dónal Lunny, to produce and engineer. Dónal gave great guidance and wisdom to the session and even brought his young daughter Cora Venus, who was about four at the time, into the studio, to play on her fiddle for us. These are wonderful memories.

Mairéad vividly recalls Mark Kelly, Ciarán Curran and herself listening to Frankie putting some flute on one of the tracks and falling about laughing at the litany of jokes being exchanged from the sound desk to the studio and back! Many such moments broke up the intensity of the recording experience for us novices!

We found the recording process unnatural and challenging, preferring to play to a live audience. It took us some time to overcome that challenge, but now we relish and enjoy studio work. It is just another way of approaching music.

The only other guest on this album was Anna Ní Mhaonaigh, who sang **Ceol a' Phíobaire** with Mairéad: this is still one of our favourite tracks on the album for its simplicity and directness. Other tracks that stand out for us were Néillidh Boyle's version of **Dúlamán** as a highland and Danny Meehan's gorgeous setting of **The Moving Bogs** reel. We love the melancholy and depth of Cathal McConnell and Seamus Quinn's newly composed tune, **The Sunset**, which we got from Belfast flute player Gary Hastings.

So with this album, Altan was born to the world.

The Tunes

The Highlandman/ The Cliffs of Glencolumbkille/ Old Cuffe Street

Francie Dearg Ó Beirn (1903–87) taught us **The Highlandman** in his house in Kilcar during Halloween, 1985. Francie Dearg will receive many mentions in these notes: a wonderful fiddler who never ceased to amaze us with his kindness, musicianship and spirit. **The Cliffs of Glencolumbkille** is often played as a highland in Co. Donegal but on this track, we play John Doherty’s (1900–80) version of it in reel time. **Old Cuffe Street** is a common reel, usually played in octaves in Donegal – a common practice here. This version is associated with another of the Donegal greats, Frank Cassidy (1900–71).

The Highland Man

Highland Trad./ Arr. Altan
Em/B

The Cliffs of Glencolumbkille

Reel Trad./ Arr. Altan

Old Cuffe Street

Reel Trad./ Arr. Altan

Chords: G, G/B, C, D/A, G, D, G, G/A, G/B, D/A, G/B, C, 1. G/B, D/A, 2. G/A, G, Am, G, Am, G/B, C, G/B, D/A.

An tSeanchailleach Ghallda/ Dermot Byrne's

Francie Dearg is the source of the first jig; the title of which could be translated as 'The Foreign Old Hag'. The second jig comes from the playing of Dermot Byrne, who was a good source of tunes for us even before he became a member of the band. It is a version of **Tumble the Tinker**, a tune that may be found in Francis O'Neill's *400 Tunes Arranged for Piano and Violin* (1915).

An tSeanchailleach Ghailda

Jig Trad./ Arr. Altan

Musical score for 'An tSeanchailleach Ghailda' in G major, 6/8 time. The score consists of three staves of music. The first staff 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 and third staves continue the melody. Chord symbols are placed above the notes: Am, G, Am, G, Am, G, C, G, Am, Am, G, Am, G, Am, G, C, G, Am. The piece ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

Dermot Byrne's

Jig Trad./ Arr. Altan

Musical score for 'Dermot Byrne's' in G major, 6/8 time. The score consists of five staves of music. The first staff 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 and third staves continue the melody. The fourth and fifth staves continue the melody. Chord symbols are placed above the notes: D, G, G/D, G, D7, D, G, C, D, G, C, G, Am, D, G, Bm, C, D, G, C, G, D, G, Bm, Am, D. The piece ends with a double bar line and the instruction 'D.S.' below it.

The Cat that Ate the Candle/ Over the Water to Bessie/ Dandy Denny Cronin

Frankie Kennedy learned the first reel from the playing of Larry MacDonagh, a flute player from Ballinafad, Co. Sligo. **Over the Water to Bessie** is from the playing of Fermanagh flute player and singer Cathal McConnell (a wonderful source of tunes and songs), who in turn learned it from John Fanning of Co. Cavan. **Dandy Denny Cronin** is a tune with strong northern associations and may be found in *O'Neill's Music of Ireland* (1903).

The Cat that Ate the Candle

Reel

Trad./ Arr. Altan

Musical score for 'The Cat that Ate the Candle' in G major, 4/4 time. The score consists of four staves of music. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 4/4 time signature. The melody starts with a quarter rest, followed by a quarter note G, a quarter note A, and a quarter note B. Above the staff are the chords Em⁹, D⁹, and Am⁹. The first staff ends with a double bar line and repeat dots. The second staff continues the melody with a quarter note C, a quarter note D, a quarter note E, and a quarter note F#. Above the staff are the chords 1. Bm⁹, Em, A, D, Cmaj7, and Am. The second staff ends with a double bar line and repeat dots. The third staff continues the melody with a quarter note G, a quarter note A, a quarter note B, and a quarter note C. Above the staff are the chords Bm⁷, Em, A, D, Cmaj7, and Am. The third staff ends with a double bar line and repeat dots. The fourth staff continues the melody with a quarter note D, a quarter note E, a quarter note F#, and a quarter note G. Above the staff is the chord Bm⁷. The fourth staff ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

Over the Water to Bessie

Reel

Trad./ Arr. Altan

Musical score for 'Over the Water to Bessie' in G major, 4/4 time. The score consists of three staves of music. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 4/4 time signature. The melody starts with a quarter rest, followed by a quarter note G, a quarter note A, and a quarter note B. Above the staff is the chord 1. The first staff ends with a double bar line and repeat dots. The second staff continues the melody with a quarter note C, a quarter note D, a quarter note E, and a quarter note F#. Above the staff is the chord 2. The second staff ends with a double bar line and repeat dots. The third staff continues the melody with a quarter note G, a quarter note A, a quarter note B, and a quarter note C. Above the staff are the chords 2. The third staff ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

Dandy Denny Cronin

Reel

Trad./ Arr. Altan

Am G D Am

D G Am

G Am D

Em



*Frankie Kennedy, Mairéad e3 Dáithé Sproule at the Half Time Rec in St. Paul, 1985
Credit: Patty Bronson*

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Tommy Peoples'/ Loch Altan/ Danny Meehan's

As the title suggests, Mairéad got this first reel from the legendary Donegal fiddler, Tommy Peoples: one of the most creative, original, inspiring and inspired musicians of our era. The tune which we call here by his name is Tommy's setting of **Larry Lavin's Choice**, which appears in *O'Neill's Music of Ireland* (1903). The second reel, **Loch Altan**, was composed by Mairéad and named after the lake near her home from which the band took its name – a beautiful and mysteriously quiet place nestled in the hills adjacent to Mount Errigal. The third reel was named after another good friend of the band, the great Donegal fiddler Danny Meehan, and is also known by the titles: **The Moving Bog(s)** (a title shared by another well-known reel in G), **The Moving Bogs of Allen** and **The Ballroom**.

Tommy Peoples'

Reel

Trad./ Arr. Altan

3

3

D.S.

Loch Altan

Comp. Mairéad Ní Mhaonaigh/
Arr. Altan

Reel

Danny Meehan's

Trad./ Arr. Altan

Reel

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Rogha An Ghabha/ Charlie O'Donnell's

The Mountcharles fiddle player, John James Conaghan, is the source of **Rogha An Ghabha**, ('The Blacksmith's Fancy'). Mairéad remembers teaching his grandchildren at the very first Cairdeas na bhFidiléirí summer school in 1983 in Glencolumbkille. This particular version was collected from a field recording of John Doherty's brother, Mickey. John is the source of the second reel, which is named after a fiddle player from Glencolumbkille called Charlie O'Donnell.

Our immense debt to the legendary fiddler John Doherty is clear throughout these notes and throughout our recordings and performances. John Doherty was born in Ardara, Co. Donegal, in 1900. Like his people before him, he was a travelling tinsmith and fiddle player who went from house to house on foot making tin cans and cups for people during the day and playing house dances at night. He and his brothers inherited a rich store of music from their father Simi (1854–1929), and John is regarded by many as one of the best and most influential performers of Irish traditional music in the twentieth century. The folklorist and singer David Hammond described him aptly: "His music, like his courteous and reflective speech, is intimate and embracing, the melodies luxurious and exuberant, played with a vigorous northern surge, triumphant in their rhythms, baroque in their ornamentation and improvisation, the notes flying off the fiddle like a flutter of blackbirds."

Rogha an Gabha

Reel

Trad./ Arr. Altan

The musical score for 'Rogha an Gabha' is presented in five staves. It is in the key of D major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The first staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp. The melody is written in a single line with various chords indicated above the notes: D, C, D, and A7(omit3). The second staff continues the melody with chords D, C, D, and first endings 1. A, D. The third staff features a second ending with chords 2. Em, G, D, D, A, D. The fourth staff has chords A, D, A, D. The fifth staff concludes with first endings 1. G, D, A, D and 2. A. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, accents, and repeat signs.

Reel

Charlie O'Donnell's

Trad./ Arr. Altan

Musical score for Charlie O'Donnell's Reel, arranged by Altan. The score is written in treble clef, 4/4 time, and D major. It consists of four staves of music. The first staff begins with an Em chord and a fermata over the first note. The second staff continues with D and Em chords. The third staff includes Em, D, G, D, and Em chords. The fourth staff includes Em, D, C, and Bm chords. The piece concludes with a double bar line.



*Mairéad e3 Frankie in Nick and Liz Lethbert's home, Minneapolis, March 1990
Credit: Nick Lethbert*

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The Sunset

This unusual and elegant tune was composed by our good friend, Cathal McConnell, with the help of his neighbour, the fiddle player Seamus Quinn. Ciarán Curran was present in Cathal's kitchen in Ballinalleck, outside of Enniskillen, on the night it was completed and recalls how it was Seamus who composed the third part; itself a harmonically adventurous variation on the second part. It was the Belfast flute player Gary Hastings who, along with Ciarán Curran, first brought this lovely tune to our attention. Apparently, when it was composed, it was intended to be played at a faster pace, but the slower tempo highlights the unexpected movement of the melody and its unique, modulating harmonic journey – always a treat to play, particularly for the accompanists!

The Sunset

Comp. Cathal McConnell
& Seamus Quinn/
Em Arr. Altan

Slow Reel

The musical score for 'The Sunset' is presented in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. It consists of seven staves of music. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 4/4 time signature. The melody starts with a quarter note G, followed by a quarter note A, and then a quarter note B. The second staff continues the melody with a quarter note C, a quarter note D, and a quarter note E. The third staff features a quarter note F#, a quarter note G, and a quarter note A. The fourth staff has a quarter note B, a quarter note C, and a quarter note D. The fifth staff continues with a quarter note E, a quarter note F#, and a quarter note G. The sixth staff has a quarter note A, a quarter note B, and a quarter note C. The seventh staff concludes the piece with a quarter note D, a quarter note E, and a quarter note F#.

Chords and ornaments are indicated above the notes. Chords include F#m, G, Em, C, G/B, D, Am, D/F#, A/E, and D(sus4)/E. Ornaments (tilde symbol) are placed above the notes G, A, B, C, D, E, F#, and G. Trills (triple lines) are placed above the notes A, B, C, D, E, F#, and G. The score includes first and second endings, marked '1.' and '2.', and a final double bar line.

The Humours of Whiskey (1)/The Fairy Jig/The Humours of Whiskey (2)
 The first and third slip jigs are Donegal versions of **The Humours of Whiskey**, learned from the playing of John Doherty and Francie Dearg. Mickey Doherty played **The Fairy Jig** on a field recording made by the great collector, Peter Kennedy.

The Humours of Whiskey (1)

Slip Jig Trad./ Arr. Altan

Em D Em D

D G D G

D G D G D/F# G D/F#

Detailed description: This block contains the musical notation for 'The Humours of Whiskey (1)'. It is a slip jig in 9/8 time, written in the key of D major. The notation consists of three staves of music. Above the first staff are the chords Em, D, Em, and D. Above the second staff are D, G, D, and G. Above the third staff are D, G, D, G, D/F#, G, and D/F#. The music features a characteristic slip jig rhythm with eighth and sixteenth notes.

The Fairy Jig

Slip Jig Trad./ Arr. Altan

D C D Am

D Am D Am

D Am D/F# G D/F# G Am Am/E

Detailed description: This block contains the musical notation for 'The Fairy Jig'. It is a slip jig in 9/8 time, written in the key of D major. The notation consists of three staves of music. Above the first staff are the chords D, C, D, and Am. Above the second staff are D, Am, D, and Am. Above the third staff are D, Am, D/F#, G, D/F#, G, Am, and Am/E. The music features a characteristic slip jig rhythm with eighth and sixteenth notes.

The Humours of Whiskey (2)

Slip Jig

Trad./ Arr. Altan

Musical notation for 'The Humours of Whiskey (2)'. It consists of two staves of music in 9/8 time, with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The notation includes various chords and melodic lines. Chords indicated above the staff are Bm, A, Bm, G, and A. Chords indicated below the staff are D, A, D, G, and A. The piece concludes with a double bar line and repeat dots.

Jimmy Lyons's Strathspey/ Leslie's Reel

Jimmy Lyons's Strathspey is called after the renowned fiddler of that name (1903–1977), who lived in Teelin, Co. Donegal, before emigrating to England. He had a very fine, sweet tone and technique and as was the case with several other prominent Donegal fiddlers, he learned much of his repertoire from lilters, in this case, from his father. This strathspey is a variant of **The Miller O' Hirn** – a composition of the Scottish maestro, James Scott Skinner (1843–1927), a man who had an immense influence on the fiddle players of Donegal. Mairéad learned **Leslie's Reel** from one of our favourite fiddle players, James Byrne from Meenacross, Glencolumbkille. This reel is named after Pat and John Leslie, highly respected fiddlers from the same area as James, who emigrated to America in the 1920s.

Jimmy Lyons's

Comp. James Scott Skinner/
Arr. Altan

Strathspey

Musical notation for 'Jimmy Lyons's Strathspey'. It consists of four staves of music in 4/4 time, with a key signature of three sharps (F#, C#, G#). The notation includes various chords and melodic lines, with triplets and first/second endings. Chords indicated above the staff are A, D, E, A, B, E, A, D, E, A, D, A, D, B, E, A, D, E, A. Chords indicated below the staff are E, A, E, A. The piece concludes with a double bar line and the instruction 'D.S.' (Da Capo).

Leslie's

Reel

Trad./ Arr. Altan



*Frankie Kennedy, Mairéad, Ciaran Curran and Dáitbít Sproule on a US tour in 1988
Credit: Dáitbít Sproule*