



2023 United Irish of Dayton Celtic Festival to Include Cultural Area

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The 2023 United Irish of Dayton Celtic Festival, presented by the United Irish of Dayton in partnership with Five Rivers MetroParks, will feature several cultural events in addition to performances from its seven headliner bands and regional and local musical and dance groups. The festival will take place July 28-30 at RiverScape MetroPark in Downtown Dayton. Admission is FREE!

The cultural area will include many exhibits to enhance festival goers' knowledge of Celtic history, language, genealogy, and other cultural areas. One returning favorite is the Irish Wolfhounds in Legend and Lore, presented by the Cú & Craic Irish Wolfhound Club. The Irish wolfhound is the world's tallest breed of dog. Once prized as the war dog of the Celts, this canine is now known as the gentle giant. It was the dog of royalty in medieval times. During the Celtic Revival, the wolfhound became a symbol of Irish nationalism.

In addition, the Dayton Area Rugby Club (DARC) will also be present to promote the sport. Rugby first came to Dayton, Ohio, in the fall of 1969 when a group of University of Dayton students played their first rugby match. Today, DARC is a rugby union club dedicated to the promotion and growth of the sport. They play their home games at Dayton Rugby Grounds located at 620 Shiloh Dr. in Dayton. For more information on how to get involved, or even just to come out and watch one of their matches, visit www.daytonrugby.com.

Also, an Introduction to Irish Music workshop will take a big picture look at what makes Irish music...Irish! For people who have ever wondered: What is the difference between jigs and reels? What do you call those instruments? How can people from all over the world sit in a circle and play the same song? This is a chance to hear tunes, songs, and explanations from some of the Dayton Celtic Festival's top Irish and American headliners.

The Riley School of Irish Music, a community of children, teens and adults dedicated to the pursuit of Irish traditional music, will also return to this year's festival. The mission of the school is to foster traditional Irish music in the Greater Cincinnati region through instruction, communal events, and enrichment activities. The Riley School is honored to receive support from both the Ohio and Kentucky Arts Councils. For more information visit their website <https://www.rileyirishmusic.com/> or their Facebook page. The Riley School will also host Irish

Music Sessions at the festival. Participants can join Irish musicians, of all skill levels, as each pulls up a chair to join in jigs, reels, and all the energy of a community driven Irish session.

The festival will also feature new workshops on Introduction to Irish Bouzouki and Irish Banjo with Randy Clapper; similarities and differences between Scottish Bagpipes and Irish Uilleann Pipes with Larry Fortson, and a workshop with the Scottish Dancers.

In addition, the Five Points Cloggers, a non-profit, energetic dance group based in Dayton with dancers of all ages, will return to the festival. The group specializes in Appalachian Mountain style clogging, also known as buck dancing, to traditional and popular music. The Five Points Cloggers have been performing in the Dayton area for over 30 years at local and regional festivals and events. The group was created to provide an extracurricular activity for young people (ages 8-80) in the Dayton area, to provide entertainment at local festivals and nursing homes and to continue the American traditional dance form created by settlers to America over 200 years ago. For more information, visit <https://www.facebook.com/FivePointsCloggers/>.

The festival will also feature other interesting sessions, such as The Sport of Hurling (the National Sport of Ireland): 3000 years of tradition and passion by Greg Bebbington of Cleveland Hurling. In addition, there will be workshop sessions on Irish Storytelling and History, with authors Cindy Thomson and Cathy Jo Smith on site to chat. Other cultural sessions include an Irish Wake Display.

Another returning favorite part of the festival is the Parade of Kilts on Friday and Saturday at 6:30 pm and Sunday at 11:30 am. Bagpipers and flag bearers will lead the parade through the festival grounds. In addition, the festival will include the Gaelic Mass on Sunday at 10:00 a.m. and various ethnic merchandise and food vendors who will be on site throughout the weekend.

For more information, please visit our Facebook page or our website at www.daytoncelticfestival.com.