



Pure Drop

by
Tommy Fegan

ROUND UP OF
TRADITIONAL
MUSIC

This Is Your Life, Louis

One man who has committed his life to the promotion of his native music in South Armagh is accordion player Louis O'Donnell.

I profiled Louis' musical background in this column earlier this year. On November 23, The Ring of Gullion CCE held a special tribute night for Louis. Past and present members of the Forkhill branch of Comhaltas gathered in The Welcome Inn, with family and friends, to acknowledge the great contribution he has made to Irish music, not only in South Armagh, but also across Ireland. Mick Quinn, Fear a Ti, said that if music was needed for a dance or charity function, it was always Louis who was called in – and he was always ready and willing. He added that the branch was extremely proud to honor Louis as one of their stalwarts and an outstanding man of music. Several musicians also turned up to join in the celebrations and many others who couldn't attend, sent messages. Apparently he has been conferred with the honorary title of President of the Global Grand Lodge of Pure Droppers! What an honor! And there was a great night of music and craic.

Q. What's the difference between a fiddle and a violin?

A. The fiddle has beer stains!

Geantraí

Powerful music from the Cobblestones, the home of traditional music in Dublin, on Geantraí last week. Ace Uilleann Piper, Neili Mulligan, presented and demonstrated his credentials as one of Ireland's foremost pipers. A younger generation than Neili (there goes my free pint) rose to Neili's challenge in the form of Conor McKeon and Owen Garvey, and along with a great mix of talent, provided a superlative demonstration of tight session playing at an enjoyable pace. Another group of talented young musicians followed and demonstrated how undoubted technical skills don't account for good taste. When I remarked, on a subsequent sojourn to that convivial

tavern, that the group "Slide" must have been in a hurry for the last bus home, a well known Dublin wit remarked that they were in a hurry for the Dart. Why is so much musical talent wasted on speed?

Seán Nugent

Sean Nugent was one of the 'greats' of the Irish traditional music movement. With his beloved Pride of Erin Ceili Band, he was a regular competitor for over 20 years at Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann.

The official CD and book launch of the 'High Hills of Largy: Compositions of Seán Nugent' was held on Friday November 23 in the Clinton Centre, Enniskillen. The CD is a celebration of the late Sean Nugent, a man whose life was immersed in the best of Irish Traditional music.

Sean was born in the townland of Kildrum, Dromore, County Tyrone but lived most of his life in Lack, County Fermanagh. In 1978, he won the All-Ireland Fiddle Competition at Fleadh Ceoil na hÉireann in Listowel. The Pride of Erin Céili Band recorded two albums, Harvest Time in Ireland and the Fermanagh Ceili and won two All-Ireland titles in 1983 in Kilkenny and in 1985 in Listowel.

Sean taught classes in Dromore, Irvinestown, Ederney, Aghyaran and Tempo as well as many pupils who came to his own home. Several of his junior Ceili bands won many Ulster titles and an All-Ireland title in Sligo in 1989.

The CD features Sean's son, Laurence, on flute, his daughter, Catherine, singing, and his granddaughter, Áine Nugent on fiddle. Gerry O'Connor from Dundalk produced the album.

The first track on the album was recorded on Laurence Nugent's first CD a few months before Sean passed away in 1996. With Sean Nugent (fiddle), Laurence Nugent (flute) and Arty McGlynn, a cousin of Sean's (guitar) playing the Mossy Banks and the title tune, The High Hills of Largy.

Further details are available from caitmclaughlin@btinternet.com

Q. Why couldn't the skeleton go to the dance?

A. Because he had no body to take!



Brendan McHugh, visiting from Scotland, at the Railway Bar. 07W50N102