

Come experience a traditional cèilidh at the Celtic Hall of Fame

July 11 2018 BY TARA MACDONALD News Staff



Top row, Judy Howes, Olivia Barton, Donald Joseph MacPhee, Tracy Young, Tess Senecal, Lynne MacDonald, Shanyng Young, David McPhee, Eliza Levert. – TARA MACDONALD

Fàilte! Every Tuesday night from 7 pm - 9 pm for the month of July, the Celtic Hall of Fame in Williamstown celebrates Glengarry's rich Celtic culture with a cèilidh.

Known as Ontario's Celtic Heartland, South Glengarry was founded in the late 1700s by Scottish loyalists and other Highland Scottish emigrants from the Mohawk Valley in New York.

Cèilidhs were an important part of rural life in Scotland's Gaelic-speaking districts, a tradition which the Celtic Hall of Fame has revived every July for more than a decade.

Celtic Jam Session

“Originally our idea was to offer a jam session for fiddlers. We never invited people or had any particular guest musicians in mind,” said organizer Ann McPhee. “But then the people started coming to listen and so we set up chairs for people to listen and started offering homemade cookies and lemonaid.”

Over the years, the July cèilidhs have grown, sometimes welcoming more than 70 guests. Depending on the week, there might be accordion players, bagpipers, pianists or sing-a-longs. “It’s a casual event,” said Ms. McPee. “Once we had a group of nuns show up who heard about the

ceilidh while they were at a convention in Cornwall. They had a wonderful time, they sang and one came back the following week with her fiddle.”

Guests are encouraged to bring their instruments and join in on the jam sessions. Not a musician? That’s okay, guests are welcome to listen, sing, socialize, or explore the Hall.

Preserving the Past

Working to preserve Glengarry’s Celtic music heritage and culture, the Celtic Hall of Fame features a permanent exhibit of artifacts, archival material, photographs and other memorabilia relevant to the music and culture of the area.

The Hall is located at 19687 William Street in Williamstown and is open from 10 am – 3 pm Tuesday to Sunday from June 24th to August 12th.