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HARP PERSPECTIVES

finding a voice: performance
research on the Irish harp

KATHLEEN LOUGHNANE

Welcome to *Harp Perspectives*, Cruit Éireann, Harp Ireland's online journal. One of our strategic aims is to establish thought leadership across the harp sector by building up a body of thinking about the harp and harping through a historical and contemporary lens.

Harp Perspectives is a conversation about harping and features key informants, harpers and non-harpers, sharing their authentic views and ideas. We believe that this combination of scholarly research and personal insights will highlight the harping legacy inherited from our tradition bearers and help forge a contemporary harping identity, secure in its understanding of its origin and how it wishes to evolve.

Our June edition features renowned harper, Kathleen Loughnane, as she reflects on her harping journey. In the coming months, we will be welcoming many other voices to the conversation and hope that they will broaden horizons and provide new perspectives on current and future harp directions.

Our thanks to each of our contributors for their willingness to add their voices. Their contributions will no doubt enrich our thinking.

Aibhlín McCrann and Eithne Benson

Editors

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FINDING A VOICE: PERFORMANCE RESEARCH ON THE IRISH HARP

Kathleen Loughnane

‘How, then do you find it? In practice, you hear it coming from somebody else, you hear something in another writer’s sounds that flows in through your ear and enters the echo-chamber of your head and delights your whole nervous system in such a way that your reaction will be, ‘Ah, I wish I had said that, in that particular way.’ This other writer has spoken something essential to you, something you recognise instinctively as a true sounding of aspects of yourself and your experience. And your first steps as a writer will be to imitate, consciously or unconsciously, those sounds that flow in, that in-fluence.’

Seamus Heaney, ‘Feeling into Words’, *Preoccupations*, 1980

In 2021 the harping community in Ireland celebrates 5 years since the establishment of Cruit Éireann | Harp Ireland, a period which – notwithstanding the depredations wrought in the last year on the entire area of artistic endeavour by CoVid-19 – has seen harping flourish in its several manifestations: performance, research, composition and education. A signal point was the admission in 2019 by UNESCO of Irish Harping to its ‘Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity’, taking its place alongside Uilleann Piping and Hurling as singular manifestations of Irish culture. It has taken quite some time for the harping tradition to transition from the doldrums of the nineteenth century to the vibrant position it presently occupies in Irish cultural life. This wonderful progress is has arisen through the vision, enthusiasm, musicality and sustained efforts of many people and organisations.

In an article in *The Leader* in September, 1946, Donnchadh Ua Braoin, then Head Organising Inspector of Music in Primary Schools, declared:

“The Irish harp is an outdated instrument – it was well suited to the conditions under which it functioned for perhaps a thousand years - to the royal and semi-royal courts of the kings, sub-kings and great chieftainries. But those days have passed for ever”.

After that, he contends, the harp was supplanted by the harpsichord – which was, in

turn, pushed into the background by the pianoforte. However, if Mr. Ua Braoin were alive today he would perhaps temper his pronouncements. The harp has proven to be a more resilient and versatile instrument than he anticipated. It has been successfully revived and, over the last fifty years in particular, has found many voices as an instrument, freed of its former romantic associations, to the point where it presently occupies an inclusive and valued position alongside the other traditional instruments.

The Early Years

When I completed my degree studies in UCD – in Social Science - in 1970, a life, or part-life, as a performing harper was certainly not in my line of vision. Reflecting on how that transition came about allows me to revisit particular moments – flashes of excitement and curiosity – that inspired me and continue to keep affairs of the harp central to my life.

I was raised close to Nenagh, Co. Tipperary. At the age of 12, my mother arranged for me to transfer to Coláiste na Rinne in Co. Waterford for my last year of primary school. It was on Sundays there that I would encounter the singing of Nioclás Tóibín – he standing in the wooden loft of the church, delivering himself of a seán-nós solo. A fisherman all his life, and a shy man, he was transformed in this role of carrier of the songs of his people. As a child of the midlands, I had never previously encountered such a passionate rendering of a song – in English or in Irish – and such an authentic voice. This encounter became a weekly source of joy and wonder. It was only gradually, over my lifetime, that I fully came to value the inspiration of his singing, his compositional talent, his wonderful phrasing and intonation, his mastery of variation.

This interest was afterwards nourished over several summer holidays with muintir Uí Bheaglaoich in West Kerry; I was introduced by my older brother, Vincent, who had become romantically attached to Eibhlín – whom he later married. This family has an extraordinary culture of song; music is the natural medium of communication in Tí Bheaglaoich, accompanied by great good humour and fun! Here, from Eibhlín and Séamus in particular, I heard the big songs of Munster. These were grounding experiences.

At secondary school, I completed the piano and harp examinations of the Royal Irish Academy. My elderly music teacher on both instruments – a fiercely intelligent Kerry

nun, Mother Veronica Evans – was a major influence on me. A particular expression of hers lodged with me: “*you don’t strike a note, you take the note..*” She did not bring to my classes the advantage of a professional training in harp, but all of her teaching was infused with an intense musicality.

Later, whilst a student in Dublin in the late 60s, and for a year or two after, I encountered singers from Connemara – Caitlín Maude, in Conradh na Gaeilge, Harcourt St. and UCD’s Aula Max, and Seosamh Ó hÉanaí, at the Damer on St. Stephen’s Green, on his return visits from the USA. I also had the privilege of hearing Séamus Ennis in full flow – songs, piping tunes, and inimitable storytelling – at a regular Wednesday evening session at the Chariot Inn in Ranelagh, which I sometimes attended with Eibhlín Ní Bheaglaoich. He would sometimes be joined by Nioclás Tóibín or visiting singers from Connemara. The Chariot Inn was a venue capable of accommodating the large audiences attracted to the music of the folk groups burgeoning in Ireland at that time – but the audience for the Wednesday evening sessions frequently amounted to only a handful of listeners.

While at UCD, my desire to explore the harp was in the background. I was limited by the Dan Quinn harp I had, which, though sweet in sound, was too light in tension to play the music that was by then engaging my interest. Nevertheless, I enrolled for lessons - focusing on harp technique - with Catriona Yeats, recently returned from her studies with Edward Witsenburg in Holland.

I spent the bulk of the 70s overseas, in London mostly, pursuing postgraduate studies and employed as a social worker, as well as marrying and starting a family. Returning to Ireland in 1982 – to Galway – circumstances dictated that my social work career take a back seat as I responded to the demands of three young children, but I availed of the opportunity to bring music to the fore again in my life. Harping in Ireland had moved on, with some very talented young harpers breaking new ground in terms of repertoire and technique. I bought a second-hand Aoyama harp, very different in tension to my earlier Quinn harp; I decided to keep it at the heart of the house and stole moments to play, and play, and play.

There were three sources, in particular, from which I drew inspiration in that period – Donal O’Sullivan’s *Carolan: The Life, Times and Music of an Irish Harper*¹,

¹ *Carolan: The Life, Times and Music of an Irish Harper* (Vols. 1 & 2), Donal O’Sullivan, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1958; republished in one volume by Ossian in 2001.

Gráinne Yeats' seminal double album *Féile na gCruitirí, Béal Feirste, 1792*, a scholarly and musical exploration of the Bunting collection (Gael Linn, 1980) and Bunting's *The Ancient Music of Ireland* (Waltons, 1969) which combined his three volumes of 1797, 1809 and 1840 in a single publication.

Galway being a storehouse of music, I eventually brought my harp to a small session in Club Árus na nGael where two friends played – Éamonn Ó Bróithe, piper and singer, who is possessed of an encyclopaedic knowledge of the music and songs of the Déise in particular – and Liam Lewis, who has a lyrical east Galway style of fiddling; these two outstanding musicians warmly welcomed me to their weekly session. They were receptive to, and perceptive about, the different material I was working at. Later, I met Seán Ryan, who has had a long-running Sunday session at the Crane Bar in Galway. Seán is a masterly player of the whistle, who brought – and continues to bring – an extraordinary breath of knowledge of song, traditional tunes and lore to our exchanges. When he proposed that we play together at an event, I mentioned that we didn't have very many tunes in common, to which he replied: 'I know that, but we won't tell them – and by the end of the evening, we'll have a few more!'

For inspiration, I could not have fallen into better company than these three musicians.

At the Crane Bar session one Sunday morning, Liam Lewis made a passing comment: "*Let's try that hornpipe that doesn't sound like a hornpipe, Molly Halfpenny*". As they began to play, I recognised the tune as a variant of 'Molly Mc Alpine', the beautiful, plaintive, slow air gathered by Bunting at the Belfast Harp Festival of 1792, attributed to one of the Connellans, from about 1660. Although the instrument, for which it was composed more than three centuries ago had gone into decline, this struck me as a small example of preservation by appropriation – or adoption – by players on other instruments within the tradition. Insignificant in itself, this realisation nevertheless added to my curiosity regarding tunes lost to the harping repertoire, which might have been preserved in the repertoire of the pipers and fiddlers – and some of whose historical nuance might even have been retained by empathetic performers on those instruments. It was gratifying to see the process continue with Steve Cooney's widely acclaimed 2019 CD, *Ceol Ársa Cláirsí* – solo guitar interpretations of a selection of Irish harp tunes – which includes four Conlan/Connellan tunes – and for which he acknowledges his debt to the modern-day harpers who revived them.

This was music I wanted to delve into and so began my tentative exploration of the early harp music. I began, for my own pleasure, to arrange pieces which attracted me; some of these appeared in Cáirde na Cruite publications, and, in 1995, I published 20 arrangements in a book *Harping On; Irish Traditional Music for the Harp*. Looking back, I note the first of these is dated 1987. I was heartened to be awarded the Dr. Annie Patterson Medal for Composition by Dublin Feis Ceoil in 1995 for a few arrangements I had submitted. A few years later, in response to requests, I released a CD of this material.

Dordán

Alongside this endeavour, I had – in 1990 – co-founded the group Dordán with Mary Bergin on whistle and flute and Dearbhaill Standún on fiddle. Our friend and manager, Martina Goggin, joined after a short time on vocals and percussion. During the 1990s we recorded five albums, containing dance tunes, slow airs and European tunes; there was a fair sprinkling of harp music from the Bunting Collection. We received the National Entertainment Award for Traditional Music 1993 – to our great surprise, and delight – and were also presented with the Bank of Ireland Award in 1995. Throughout that decade we travelled widely in Europe and in the US and were invited to play on State visits by Presidents Mary Robinson and Mary McAleese, as well as for President Bill Clinton and Nelson Mandela.

During that period, also, I started to record for myself some of the harp tunes I had been arranging. I was most fortunate in the wealth of musical talent I was able to call upon – between friends and family – to assist in this endeavour.

Edward Bunting and his Collection

A great deal has been written about Edward Bunting's work in recording the tunes played at the Belfast Harp Festival in July 1792 – which he recorded in three volumes published in 1797, 1809 and 1840 – and it is not proposed to rehearse it here.

In addition to the tunes, Bunting provides a considerable amount of historical detail on Irish harps and harp music, going back to antiquity. In Vol. 3 (1840), he includes

a section: *‘Anecdotes of the more distinguished harpers of the last two centuries’* – drawing, no doubt, on the Memoirs of harper Arthur O’Neill (c. 1734-1816), whom Bunting greatly respected – together with notes on various of the melodies.

Bunting’s work was timely: the old Irish harping tradition was in its death throes in 1792. Of the ten Irish harpists who attended the Festival, all but two were dead by the time Vol. 2 was published in 1809. A letter to Bunting in 1839 from John McAdam, secretary of the Belfast Irish Harp Society, and included in Vol. 3 (1840), states, somewhat forlornly:

‘Our gentry in Ireland are too scarce, and too little national, to encourage itinerant harpers, as of old; besides, the taste and fashion of music no longer bears upon our national instrument: it had its day, but, like all other fashions it must give way to novelty.’

Much interesting detail on Bunting and his work is available on the website of the Irish Traditional Music Archive at: <https://www.itma.ie/features/printed-collections/edward-buntings-first-collection-of-irish-music-1797> (+ further pages)

The Brothers Connellan

My first focused exploration was into the music of Thomas and William Connellan, which I had first come across in Bunting, and which had appealed to me. Of the 280 or so tunes listed in Bunting’s three volumes, a mere 11 are associated with the Connellans – very many less than those associated with Carolan. In spite of that, Bunting grants **‘Conolan’** equal billing with **‘Carolan’** on the frontispiece of his first volume (1797). He doesn’t always differentiate between the brothers and is not always consistent in his attribution of authorship.

In Vol. 3 (P69) Bunting states that Thomas Connallon, born in 1640 at Cloonmahon, Co. Sligo, was:

‘..the composer of “The dawning of the day” or “The Golden Star”, “Love in Secret”, “Bonny Jean”, “The Jointure”, “Molly St. George” &c., as well as of a vast number of airs now lost.’

Arthur O’Neill, in his Memoirs refers to:

‘Thomas Conlan, the great harper. I heard he played very well.’

However, he sounds less than approving in his follow-up comments:

‘He made himself conspicuous in Scotland by means of the tune of ‘Lochaber’, which he plastered upon the Scotch as one of his own composition, whereas it is well known it was composed by Myles O’Reilly ..under the name of ‘Limerick’s Lamentation.’ However, Conlan arrived to City honours in Edinburgh, chiefly by means of that tune among others. I heard they made him a bailie or burgomaster in Edinburgh, where he died.’

Hardiman, in his *Irish Minstrelsy* (1831), states that Thomas was born in the early 17th century, and, according to tradition, composed upwards of 700 tunes, dying at Loch Gur, Co. Limerick before 1700. There is some local support for this story. Hardiman further claims that after Thomas’s death his brother went to Scotland with some of Thomas’s tunes, two of which gained popularity – *The Battle of Killiecrankie* and *Lochaber*.

His brother, who Bunting and Arthur O’Neill refer to as ‘William’, and Hardiman ‘Laurence’ went to Scotland, according to Hardiman, after his brother’s death, taking several of Thomas’ compositions with him. Donal O’Sullivan states¹:

‘Less than a dozen airs of these two brothers now survive..’

Arthur O’Neill in his *Memoirs* declares:

‘I heard much of his brother William Conlan, who was a famous harper and a fine composer. He composed ‘The Golden Star’, Madame Lestrangle’, ‘The Jointure’ and a number of others that I now forget. He died in the county of Waterford.

Bunting (Vol.3, P70) declares of William:

‘His brother, William O’Connallon, born about 1645, affected a different style, in which, however, he produced pieces of high merit; among these may be enumerated “Lady Iveagh”, Saely Kelly”, Molly McAlpine” &c. &c.’

So, facts regarding the lives and compositions of the Connellan brothers are scarce and contradictory; however, all sources appear to agree on the quality of their harping and their compositions, Carolan being quoted by Bunting as saying he would rather have been the author of ‘*Molly McAlpin*’ than of any melody he himself had ever composed.

¹ *Carolan: The Life, Times and Music of an Irish Harper* (Vol. 1, p.18), Donal O’Sullivan, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1958; republished in one volume by Ossian in 2001.

We find the tunes of the Connellans in a variety of early collections. These include *A Collection of the Most Celebrated Irish Tunes*¹. The Neals attribute a few of their tunes to O'Carolan, but none to the Connellans. Nicholas Carolan's wonderful 2010 facsimile edition remedies this omission. Edward Bunting's three collections (1797, 1809 and 1840), Patrick O'Neill's MSS (c. 1780) and an account of their lives and music appears in Hardiman's *Irish Minstrelsy* (1831). Donal O'Sullivan refers to the origins and associations of several of their tunes.

I had been puzzled by the dearth of information on their lives and circumstances in contrast to those of Turlough O'Carolan (1670-1738), born just a few decades later. We have records of O'Carolan's family, considerable information about his patrons and a substantial collection of his music.

The 17th century was a time of great political and social upheaval. The Plantation of Ulster in the first decade of the century had resulted in extensive expropriation of land by the crown. The Act of Settlement (1652) after the Cromwellian War stated that anyone who had held arms against Parliament in the rebellion of 1641 was to forfeit their lands; those who had not would lose only three-quarters of their lands – and were compensated with other land, in Connacht. In the Connellans' native Sligo, over 63,000 acres were handed over to Cromwellian officers, soldiers and adventurers in lieu of pay. Any hopes the indigenous population might have had of reversal were dashed by the success of King William's forces at the Boyne in 1690 and at Aughrim in 1691. The end of the old Gaelic order was confirmed in the Treaty of Limerick in October 1691 and departure of the Wild Geese – 20,000 it is estimated - to France with Patrick Sarsfield at the end of that year. The Penal Laws which were enacted between 1695 and 1728, and were in vigour until about 1793, were imposed in an attempt to force Irish Catholics and Protestant dissenters to accept the established Church in Ireland. This was the background against which the Connellans – and Carolan composed and played their music. Bunting, reflecting at the end of the 18th century upon the variety and range of Carolan's musical invention, writes:

(..given) *'the disadvantages under which he laboured; born blind – with slender opportunities of acquiring ideas(,) the inhabitant of a country recently desolated by a civil war, the flames of which had scarcely subsided, and add to this, his own propensity for Idleness and dissipation, we cannot but be astonished at the prodigious powers of his mind..'*

They were remarkable people!

¹ *A Collection of the Most Celebrated Irish Tunes*, published in Dublin in 1724 by John and William Neal (re-edited by Nicholas Carolan, 2010)

My explorations resulted in the publication in 2009 of my arrangements of 11 tunes attributed to, or associated with, the Connellan brothers, and a recording of the tunes on CD (*The Harpers Connellan: Irish music of the late 17th century*). In the book of arrangements, I have included an extended introduction to the music, life and times of the Connellan brothers.

In arranging and playing these tunes, I hope that I am guided by the essential qualities of traditional music, which give shelter to the tenderness, the poetry, the essential lyrical nature of the music handed down to us. The music I heard from distinguished solo musicians during my teenage years laid down certain aural expectations and affirmed in me the importance of listening to the solo traditional player. I would find myself drawn back time and again to the colouration and the weighting I associated with their music. I like to take time to live in a tune, search for the heart of the tune, its emotive energy and beauty. In arranging, I approach it with an improvisational attitude, adding ornament and free variation in keeping with the style of each tune, as I perceive or imagine it.

Patrick O'Neill

In the facsimile edition of John & William Neal's *A Collection of the Most Celebrated Irish Tunes proper for the violin, German flute or hautboy*, the editor, Nicholas Carolan, writes that it is¹:

'..the earliest collection of Irish music. Far older than any existing manuscript collection, it was printed and published in the heart of ascendancy Dublin in 1724. It provides first-hand evidence of the practice of traditional music in an urban setting, the largest one in the country. In spite of the instruments mentioned in its title, which were then recent in Ireland, the collection actually consists for the most part of contemporary traditional Irish harp tunes and song airs. It consists some fifty pieces in all, which come mainly from the native oral traditions, both professional and non-professional, of Irish-speaking Ireland.'

Nicholas Carolan (ibid., p6) states in relation to the fiddle:

'By the 1670s it seems also to have become an instrument of popular dance music in Ireland.'

¹ *A Collection of the Most Celebrated Irish Tunes*, published in Dublin 1724; facsimile edition by the Folk Music Society of Ireland and the Irish Traditional Music Archive, Dublin 2010.

Seán Ó Riada states that¹ :

‘The Uilleann pipe came into being about the end of the 17th century and assumed its modern shape early in the 18th century.’

He writes also of the music:

‘..the so-called dance music, imported for the most part into this country in the 17th and 18th centuries. The tunes themselves are often banal and ordinary and, if the piper did not use variation, would quickly become boring.’

As mentioned earlier, the collapse of the system of musical patronage in Ireland through the 17th and 18th centuries led eventually to the demise of the old harping tradition. The fiddle and the pipes and the dance music began to occupy this space, and ownership of the music became more dispersed, onto what - to borrow a phrase from Daniel Corkery² – ‘the national hearth’, on which would gradually occur a melding of the new music with the old harping repertoire.

Figure 1



Figure 1 & 2 from *A Collection of the most Celebrated Scotch Tunes*.

Printed and sold by John and William Neal in Christ Church Yard, Dublin, c.1724. © The National Library of Ireland, Dublin

¹ *Our Musical Heritage*, Seán Ó Riada, Dolmen 1982

² *The Hidden Ireland*, Daniel Corkery, Dublin, 1924

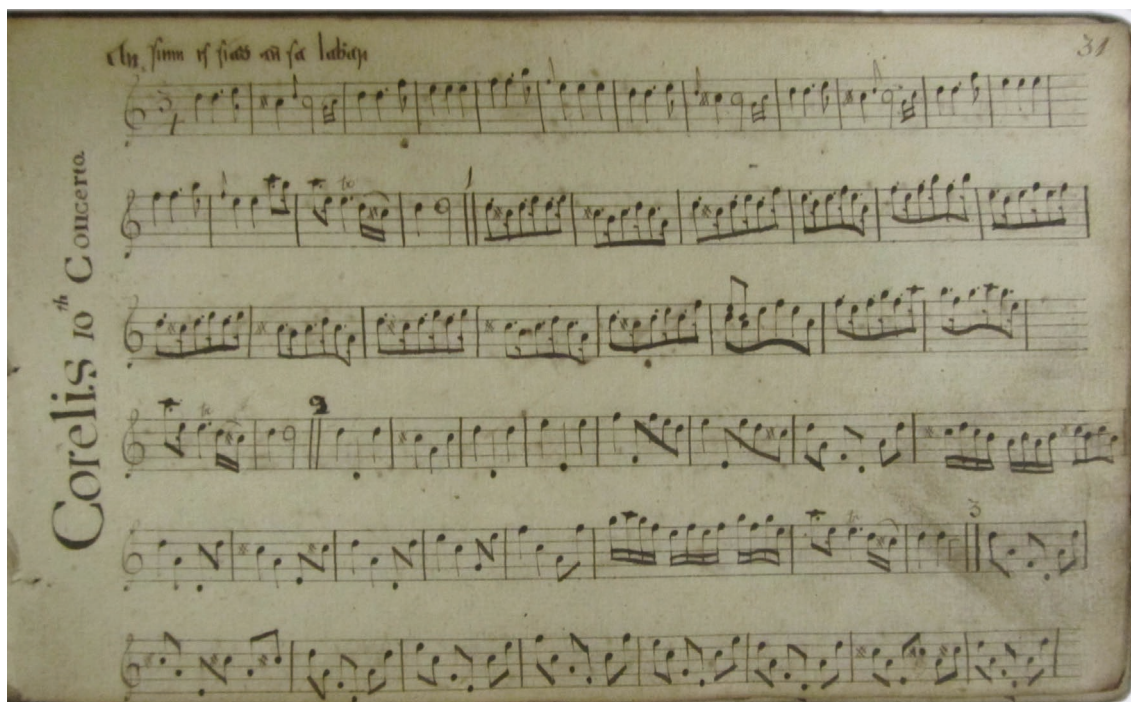


Figure 2

A short paragraph in the *Irish Times* in April 2008 drew my attention to a collection of traditional music bought at auction by The National Library of Ireland. The collection – comprising 8 manuscripts – represented the work of Patrick O'Neill (1765-1832), a prosperous farmer and miller, from Owning, Piltown, Co. Kilkenny. O'Neill was an educated man, rooted in his locality, who had inherited a consciousness of his noble lineage. An antecedent, Con O'Neill, had, c. 1150 – according to family lore - 'sailed into Waterford harbour with a force aboard three ships' to lend assistance to an O'Brien chieftain; being successful in that endeavour, he married the daughter of the Norse king of Waterford, and was granted an extensive landholding in the fertile Vale of Ivowen, between Slievenamon and the Comeragh mountains. Prior to the rising of 1641, the family are recorded as possessing upwards of 2,700 acres of prime land, but as a result of the Cromwellian War (1649-52) they were dispossessed and transplanted to east Connacht – not at all to their liking. From there they travelled to Rome where they were received by Pope Innocent III, moving onwards to Spain where they remained for several years. Eventually, the family returned and regained a modest foothold in their native area through the help of the Anglo-Norman Dalton family, being granted a lease on a farm in Owning from the Earl of Bessborough. It was here that Patrick O'Neill was born in 1765.

O'Neill was a collector of manuscripts and music; he wrote poetry in Irish, and his scholarly works show him to have had an interest in English, Latin, Greek and French.

He was also a musician, playing the uilleann pipes and the fiddle. He began collecting songs and airs when he was about twenty, entering them into the Manuscript Volumes which have come into the possession of the National Library. His collection is nothing if not eclectic, containing music from several different musical traditions – Irish, Scottish, English, alongside music from continental Europe. It encompasses country dance tunes, song airs, military marches, and continental dances - minuets and gavottes – as well as traditional Irish tunes, including elements of the harp repertoire. Its variety gives an insight into the cultural and social diversity of that part of Ireland in the late 17th and the 18th centuries.

It was fascinating – and quite moving – to visit the O'Neill castle at Ballyneale, from which they had been displaced; Patrick O'Neill's mill (with '1805' proudly emblazoned in white quartz on its façade), and his house at Owing, as well as the O'Neill graves with their detailed inscriptions in the cemetery at Owing, and the more heavily adorned graves at Kilmurry.

From a vast collection of approximately 450 tunes, I selected – to begin with – a modest 11 to arrange for the harp. I sought, in that selection, to reflect the eclectic nature of Patrick O'Neill's collection. In 2016, I published this selection on a CD *Patrick O'Neill's Manuscripts: a selection..* with an accompanying book of harp arrangements, containing an account of the life and circumstances of Patrick O'Neill.

Patrick O'Neill's manuscripts offer extensive scope for further research into the history of Irish traditional music.

Where Next?

Pablo Casals, the renowned cellist, interviewed when he was in his 90s, was asked the question:

"..and do you practise"? – to which he replied:

"I do, and each day I notice a little improvement!"

I take encouragement from that; I will continue my own love affair with the harp and make time for practice! After all these words – these musings – it is the music that engages me, listening to the yearnings between notes. The social and historical aspects bring an awareness and connection to the heart of the music, to the living experience of

playing and arranging the music – a connection across generations and time.

To work, to engage with one's craft, whatever that is, its endless revelations and vitality is, perhaps, to never grow old!

Kathleen Loughnane

Irish music Meteor Award (2010) nominee Kathleen Loughnane is highly regarded for her work in arranging traditional Irish dance tunes and airs for the harp and also for researching the music of Irish harp composers of the 17th and 18th centuries. In 1990, she co-founded Dordán, whose mix of Irish and Baroque music has received widespread acclaim. Dordán received the National Entertainment award for traditional music in 1993. Kathleen has 4 CDs and accompanying books to her credit, *Affairs of the Harp*, *Harping On*, *Harp to Heart* and *The Harpers Connellan*. She has taught in Ireland and at major festivals in the US, Japan and throughout Europe. Her arrangements have appeared in various publications and feature on the Harp Syllabus of The Royal Irish Academy of Music. Kathleen is currently researching the manuscripts of Patrick O'Neill of O'Connell, Carrick-on-Suir and making a selection from the manuscript to arrange for Irish harp.



Discography

Dordán

Dordán: Irish Traditional and Baroque (Gael Linn CEFCD150/ Shanachie 79079) (1991)

Ceol na Gealaí; Jigs to the Moon (Gael Linn CEFCD168/ Shanachie 78029) (1994)

Christmas Capers; Oíche Nollag (DMCD01, 1996)

The Night Before.. A Celtic Christmas (Narada, 1997)

Celtic Aire (Narada, 1999)

Christmas Compilation (Narada, 2002)

Kathleen Loughnane

* *Affairs of the Harp / Téada mo Chroí* (1997)

Lúchair an Léinn (1999) Anthem commissioned by NUI, Galway to celebrate 150 years of student enrolment

* *Harping On* (2002)

Harp to Heart (2005)

Music in the Family; Music of the Harpers with Cormac Cannon and Martin Hughes (Pure Irish Drops; 2005)

* *The Harpers Connellan – Irish Music of the Late 17th Century* (2009)

* *Patrick O'Neill* (2016)

* CD + book of arrangements; Published by Reiskmore Music unless otherwise indicated.

Contributions to other CDs

Cliaraí Ceoil – Seán Ryan CD (1994)

Cáirde – Joe Burke & Charlie Lennon CD (2001)

Alec & Cian Finn – Alec & Cian Finn CD (2019)