

# Northern Arizona Celtic Heritage Society

September, 2016

Moran Taing

Many thanks to Richard McKenzie and Marsha McIntosh for helping out at our table for the Children's Music & Arts Festival. We all had a good time making magic bean tambourines and musical bones!

## Celtic Music in America

Irish, Scottish and Welsh music have long been a major part of American music, at least as far back as the 18th century. Beginning in the 1960s, performers like the Clancy Brothers became stars in the Irish music scene, which dates back to at least the colonial era, when many Irish immigrants arrived. These included many Scots-Irish Presbyterians, whose music was most "closely related to a Lowland Scottish style" <sup>[1]</sup>.

The most significant impact of Celtic music on American styles, however, is undoubtedly that on the evolution of country music, a style which blends Anglo-Celtic traditions with "sacred hymns and African American spirituals". Country music's roots come from "Americanized interpretations of English, Scottish and Scots-Irish traditional music, shaped by African American rhythms, and containing vestiges of (19th century) popular song, especially (minstrel songs)" <sup>[2]</sup>. This fusion of Anglo-Celtic and African elements "usually consisted of unaccompanied solo vocals sung in a high-pitched nasal voice, the lyrics set to simple melodies (and using) ornamentation to embellish the melody"; this style bears some similarities to the traditional song form of Sean Nós, which is similarly highly ornamented and unaccompanied <sup>[3]</sup>.

Celtic-Americans have also been influential in the creation of Celtic fusion, a set of genres which combine traditional Celtic music with contemporary influences.

**The Knockabouts**  
Aztec Highland Games and Celtic Festival  
October 1 – 2  
Aztec, New Mexico  
for more info: [www.aztechighlandgames.com](http://www.aztechighlandgames.com)

Come help the Knockabouts celebrate our Celtic heritage in the Four Corners Region!

