



2023 annual report

Formed in 2006, the Céilí of the Valley Society is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting and perpetuating Irish heritage and culture in the Willamette Valley primarily through social events that incorporate music and dance.

OUR purpose is:

- ◆ To educate the public about Celtic dance and culture by providing public access to the same;
- ◆ To research the history of Celtic dance and preserve that cultural knowledge through educational outreach to the public;
- ◆ To nurture and develop Celtic dance callers and musicians for the purposes of ensuring the continuation of a vibrant cultural community;
- ◆ To enhance the community by creating a cultural organization dedicated to Celtic music, dance, and other Irish cultural activities;
- ◆ To support the local Irish community and to enhance relationships between the local Irish, Scottish and other Celtic cultural communities in the Salem area and the larger Willamette Valley of Oregon.



Demo Team at Salem Art Fair & Festival

a letter from our president

Ceili of the Valley Society has once again been very active promoting Celtic heritage and culture in the Mid-Willamette Valley and beyond. The list of performances and events in this report is impressive!

Several highlights need to be acknowledged.

First, I want to thank Darrin Johnson and Rick Chandler for their years of service as Board members. Among other things, their suggestions and input helped update our bylaws, suggest free attendance for a person's first dance class, helped our group navigate events and activities during Covid, and voted to increase membership fees for 2023.

At the annual meeting in February members elected two new Board members. We welcomed Board members Megan Willett and David Zelmer. They are already making their impact by suggesting the style for the new Céili of the Valley banner used at events and volunteering to lead a Samhain committee.

Attendance at dance classes and ceilis is beginning to return to pre-pandemic levels. People are learning about ceilis through a variety of ways. At the January award ceremony for the Marion County Development Corporation grants, Ernie Kirchner and I met Kelly, the leader of Danza Azteca, and invited her to come to a ceili. She not only came, but also brought several energetic adult and teen dancers with her. They had such a good time, they have returned again. A Meet-Up group advertised our St. Patrick's Day Walk-about and dance class as activities. A few now regularly participate in dance classes. Plus, others have learned about activities through the Travel Salem website or community demonstrations and events.

Doing dance demonstrations is always a highlight. One attendee at Boone Ridge Memory Care was especially engaged. At less than five feet in stature, Della came up to David Zelmer, our tallest dancer, to ask a question after the performance. Her question, "How's the weather up there?" She also asked if we could return the next day. Similarly, Weddle Elementary School enjoyed having Ceili of the Valley perform. Their applause was a unique and enthusiastic "clap woosh."

Ceili of the Valley is also promoting Irish culture locally in a new way. After contacting the City of Salem and the YMCA, both the Gerry Frank-Salem Rotary Amphitheater and the top of the YMCA will light up in green for St. Patrick's Day.

On a much broader scale, member Carl Beilstein got our group listed in The Session Calendar, a community website dedicated to Irish traditional music.

Our 8th annual Samhain Festival held in October was a rousing success. Festival co-chairs Ginny Wedel and Elisa Chandler arrange and coordinate a variety of speakers, musicians and experiences for festival attendees. The festival was made possible by generous volunteers and financial support through grants from the City of Salem and the Marion County Development Corporation along with business, cultural groups and individual donations.

In December, Ceili of the Valley learned that it had been named a recipient of a \$3500 grant for general operating support through the Fred W. Fields Fund of Oregon Community Foundation. This generous award allows our group funding to support musicians, callers and sound engineers for our ceilis.

As we close out 2023, we remember Joe Root, who died unexpectedly in February. He was a talented musician who played for classes when Ceili of the Valley was just beginning. Through the years he regularly played at our ceilis. We've also added to our group. Ezra Zelmer became our youngest attendee after his birth in May.

I appreciate everyone who makes Ceili of the Valley such a dynamic cultural organization.

We hope you'll join us in 2024.

Beth
President
Ceili of the Valley Society



ceili of the valley society BOARD of DIRECTORS

President: Beth Nevue
Treasurer: Elisa Chandler
Secretary: Ginny Wedel

Members at Large: Ann McBride, David Zelmer, Jessica Boone, and Megan Willett

celtic music hour

What a year! Listeners have been asking, and KMUZ's Board of Directors responded. In December 2023, KMUZ launched a new website with live streaming capabilities for all devices. That, plus easier access to already-broadcast shows, allows our listening audience to expand even farther. Find it all at kmuz.org.

Plus, several promoters found us this year. They have sent new releases from Ireland, Scotland, the United States and Canada. These additions have brought new musicians, as well as new music to our audience. Not only has the music been included in themed shows, but it has also been the impetus for more New Music-themed shows.

Besides our underwriter sponsorship from Ceili of the Valley, two other underwriters selected our show. Tiffany Homes and Cabin at Moonrust chose the Celtic Music Hour based on the number of listeners. After being on air for twelve years, the Celtic Music Hour continues to create new themes. Added this year were the following themes: Sea Creatures, Birds, and Festival Connections. There was also a special dance-themed show featuring the Joe Root Collection, music donated to the Celtic Music Hour that had belonged to this talented musician.

Our show would not exist except for the generous support of our listeners. We thank all who listen, donate to community radio KMUZ 88.5 & 100.7 FM, and let others know about the show.

Finally, the Celtic Music Hour had memorial segments dedicated to those musicians who left a lasting impact on Celtic music throughout the world. Though they are no longer with us, their music lives on. We remember Seamus Begley, Sinead O'Connor and Shane MacGowan.

The Celtic Music Hour airs live on Tuesdays at 10 AM. The show's rebroadcast is at 7 PM on Fridays. KYAC 90.1 FM Mill City, Gates, Lyons, Mehama and the surrounding communities airs the show on Mondays at 10 am and 5 pm, streaming live at kyacfm.org.

teacher's note

2023 brought lots of new faces and dancing friends to the Tuesday Night Class! It's always fun to watch folks as they learn new steps and formations... putting them all together into a dance. Each little part builds the "vocabulary" we draw from as we explore new dances and revisit familiar ones. I can't thank the more experienced dancers enough for all of the help and assistance you extend to the newer folks. I think one of our biggest successes as a group is how welcoming we are to all.

I have some personal goals for 2024 that I hope everyone is willing to go along with:

- ◆ Continue to have fun with the dances...always the most important goal.
- ◆ Make the classes inviting & accessible to new students and also relevant to the more experienced dancers.
- ◆ Explore the "Thirty" Popular dances of the Ár Rinci Fóirne (now known as the Ár Rinci Céilí)... we are more than half-way there, but there are some that I would like to know better. More on that as the year progresses.
- ◆ Keep adding to the Google Doc with video links. Please let me know if you would like me to share this with you.

As always, let me know if you have questions during (or after) class, or if you need me to slow down while we are learning things. Let me know what you would like to learn, or if there's anything you never want to do again (no promises). You can use my personal phone & email below if you want to chat.

Off we go...another fun year of dancing, music, fun, and most of all...friendships!

Elisa
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2023 IN REVIEW

céilis

Two new dances were choreographed by Carl and Céilí of the Valley. These were a wedding dance, joyfully danced at the reception of a Céilí of the Valley member, and the Kraken (fka The Plait) which debuted at the Samhain Celtic Festival. It is a dance of knotted ropes, danced along with the story “The Sailor and the Witch’s Knots.”

MUSICIANS:

Many thanks to these amazing musicians who played live traditional Celtic music at our céilis and events.

- Biddy on the Bench
- Bob Soper
- Bronnie Griffin
- Channing Dodson
- Conor O’Bryan
- D’n’A (Doug Heydon & Amey Herman)
- Dale Russ
- Eliot Grasso
- Elizabeth Nicholson
- Geraldine Murray
- Glen Waddell
- Kate Gregory
- Na Rosai (Richie Rosencrans, Preston Howard-Wild & Erik Killops)
- Nancy Conescu
- Preston Howard Wilde
- Rylan Suehisa
- Teresa Baker
- Two Rivers Céilí Band (13-member all-women céilí band)

Without our sound crew, the music and caller would not fill the Hall with joyful music and dance instructions. Many thanks to Preston Jordan, Elizabeth Jordan, Carl Beilstein, Pete Yoakum, and Mark Thimm for doing sound for our céilis.



events

Our volunteer performance team is (19) strong. Leading our team is Elisa Chandler with volunteer dancers: Ann McBride, Beth Nevue, Cammie Miner, Carl Beilstein, Darrin Johnson, David Zelmer, Ernie Kirchner, Ginny Wedel, Hannah Zelmer, Jessica Boone, Laura DeVoe, Len Munks, Lydia Goodman, Megan Willett, Patti McCarthy, Richard Chandler, Tracy Loew and Mark Thimm, our sound person.

Community Outreach events: (All events in Salem unless otherwise noted). CVS spreads Celtic joy in communities all year long. Our volunteer performance team put in an estimated 380 hours in these 16 events. Approximately 2,400 people attended.

- | | |
|--------------|--|
| March | Weddle Elementary School
Cascades of Stayton
Ankeny Vineyards
Boone Ridge Memory Care |
| April | International Dance Day at Saturday Market
Waverly Place – Albany |
| May | Hammond Elementary School
Eugene Scottish Festival |
| June | Scio Saturday Market
World Beat Festival |
| July | Corvallis Celtic Festival
Salem Art Fair & Festival |
| Aug | Private Wedding Reception |
| Sept | Oregon State Fair
National Dance Day at Saturday Market |
| Dec | Magic at the Mill at Willamette Heritage Ctr |

Events hosted by Céilí of the Valley Society:

- | | |
|----------------|---|
| March | • St. Patrick’s Day Parade, led by Willamette Valley Pipe and Drums |
| October | • 8th annual Samhain Celtic New Year Festival |

2023 IN REVIEW



at Boon Ridge Memory Care



at Salem Saturday Market



at Hammond Elementary School



at the World Beat Festival

accomplishments

Grant Awards:

- City of Salem – TOT Grant
- Marion Cultural Development Corporation grant
- Oregon Community Foundation (OCF), Small Arts & Culture Grant, Fred W. Fields Fund of Oregon Community Foundation

Dances created and choreographed by Carl Beilstein and CVS:

- Jessica & Sean Wheel Reel Wedding Dance
- The Kraken (aka The Plait) along with The Sailors and the Witch's Knots story

Video of Samhain Celtic New Year Festival by Capital Community Media



September ceili

samhain festival

SPONSORS:

Céili of the Valley was so excited to return in-person for our 8th annual Samhain Celtic New Year Festival! The festival was made possible by the generous support of these sponsors.

\$500 AND MORE:

- City of Salem – TOT Grant
- Marion Cultural Development Corporation
- Real Systems

\$250 AND MORE:

- Capitol Subaru
- Salem Health
- The Summit Group of Oregon
- Friends of Céili of the Valley Society

LESS THAN \$200:

- All-Ireland Cultural Society
- Cochell Family Dentistry
- Lifestyles Unlimited Hair Company

IN-KIND DONATIONS:

- KМУZ Community Radio
- Press Play Salem
- Capital Community Media



PRESENTERS:

The following individuals and musicians created events and music specifically for our Festival.

- Headliner band – Two Rivers Céilí Band 12 members did workshops, a concert, and provided live music for the Ceil Dancing Finale.
- Aislinn Adams – Lessons Learned in Family Research
- Amica Grimberg – Hand Painting
- Brenda Searcy – Try Your Hand at the Tin Whistle
- Brian Ó hAirt – Sean Nós Dancing Presentation and Workshop
- Carl Beilstein – Celtic Knots with Rope
- Capital Calligraphers – Names in Uncial Font
- Céilí of the Valley Society – The Kraken Dance & Story and Scottish & Irish Dances
- Eric Chandler – The Folding and Wearing of the Great Kilt and Sword Dance
- Mary Carey – Songs & Music of the Napoleonic Wars
- Scottish Highland Dance Presentation – Emily Bonneau (Seann Triubhas) and Hannah Zelmer (Flora MacDonald's Fancy) and Highland Fling duo. Dances were accompanied with Highland Pipes music provided by Nate Wahlgren
- Teresa Baker – Telling the Jigs from the Reels: Dance Forms in Irish Music
- Vi Voce – Traditional Songs from Ireland, Scotland, & Wales
- Will Hornyak – Spellbound! Storytelling
- Willamette Valley Nomads – Hurling
- Willamette Valley Pipes & Drums – Festival Opener & Closing March Through
- Yeates Academy of Irish Dance – Learn a Jig Step and Irish Dance Performance

We greatly appreciate the generous presenters that donated their time in lieu of payment.



∞ samhain festival ∞

EXHIBITORS:

- All Ireland Cultural Society
- Céili of the Valley Society & Salem Multicultural Institute – Celtic Nations / World Beat Display
- Comhaltas Ceóltóirí Eireann (CCE)
- Oregon Manx Society
- Welsh Society of Oregon
- Willamette Valley Nomads
- Willamette Valley Pipes & Drums

VENDORS:

- Céili of the Valley Society – General Store
- Angela Dawn Creations
- Bridie's Irish Faire
- Celtic Kate Gemwaith
- Granny Fi's Shortbread
- Heart Song Arts Pottery
- T and T Creations
- The Celtic Jewelry Studio
- Trinkets, Baubles & Charms

Sound provided by: Peter Yoakum

Publicity and website design by: Carlee Wright



Thank you to everyone who contributed to our
Samhain Celtic New Year Festival.
Visit celticfestival.info for more.

VOLUNTEERS:

The Festival would not have been possible without these volunteers. These dedicated friendly volunteers ran the festival like a well-oiled machine. Together these amazing dedicated volunteers contributed over 920 hours making this Festival day a warm family-friendly day of fun while learning about the seven Celtic nations with more than 400 attendees.

FESTIVAL COMMITTEE:

Elisa Chandler – Festival Co-chair
Ginny Wedel – Festival Co-chair
Beth Nevue – Family Crafts Area Coordinator
Jessica Boone – Signage
Len Munks – Safety Coordinator
Megan Willett – Volunteer Coordinator
Pamela Kelly – Vendor Coordinator
Patty Thompson – Food Coordinator
Rick Chandler – Outdoor Mini-Highland Games

VOLUNTEERS:

Ann Peck McBride	Karen Scrange
Becky Harrison	Liane Kirchner
Ben Willett	Linda Schafer
Beth Nevue	Lisa Chandler
Cammie Miner	Lori Veach
Carl Beilstein	Lydia Goodman
Charlie Berger	Marion Skog
Darrin Johnson	Mark Thimm
David Scrange	Megan Willett
Doneille Chomiak	Nancy Kurz
Doug Lownsbery	Pamela Kelly
Elisa Chandler	Pat Berger
Elizabeth Jordan	Patti McCarthy
Eric Chandler	Patty Thompson
Ernie Kirchner	Red Kirchner
Emily Bonneau	Rick Chandler
Ginny Wedel	Robin Albrecht
Gwen Miner	Rod Weston
Hannah Zelmer	Suzanne Cox
Jessica Boone	Tracy Loew
Jodi O'Neill	Trish Rositto
John DeJarnett	Vere Mccarty

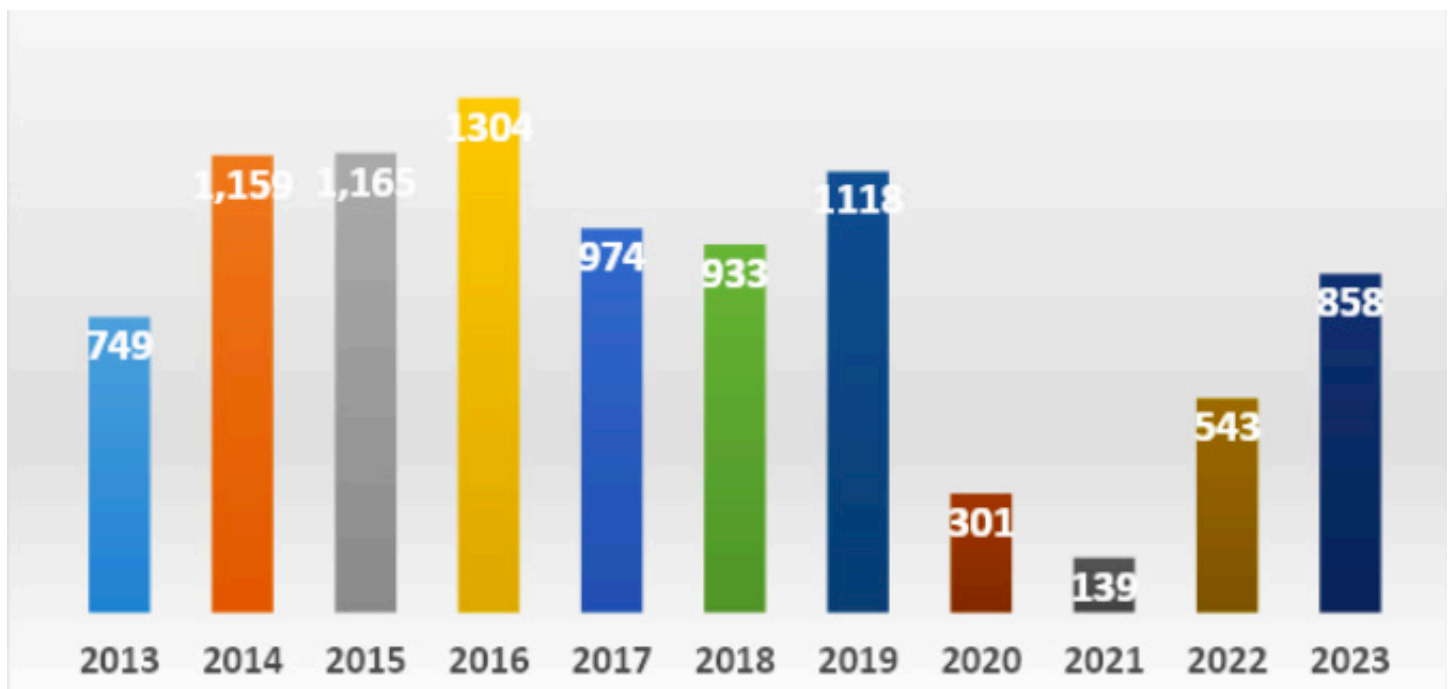
class attendance summary

NOTE: Years 2020 through 2022, attendance was down due to Covid.

For part of 2020 through 2021, Virtual classes were held January through April. One in-person class was held in August 2021 before we canceled classes.

In January and February 2022, classes were canceled. On March 2022, in-person classes resumed.

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
January	48	93	90	102	120	82	91	86	43	0	53
February	48	87	125	107	98	51	90	69	23	0	52
March	56	95	139	146	97	79	103	41	52	44	77
April	72	132	100	112	92	84	123	0	9	34	74
May	44	98	92	127	91	95	87	0	0	61	86
June	61	92	102	124	93	54	91	0	0	67	65
July	69	123	90	109	56	89	105	0	0	41	50
August	58	80	68	123	72	63	81	0	12	62	92
September	71	128	118	88	59	76	78	14	0	57	67
October	82	84	86	93	69	106	122	37	0	74	100
November	79	92	81	119	70	99	95	26	0	75	79
December	61	55	74	54	57	55	52	28	0	28	63
	749	1,159	1,165	1304	974	933	1118	301	139	543	858



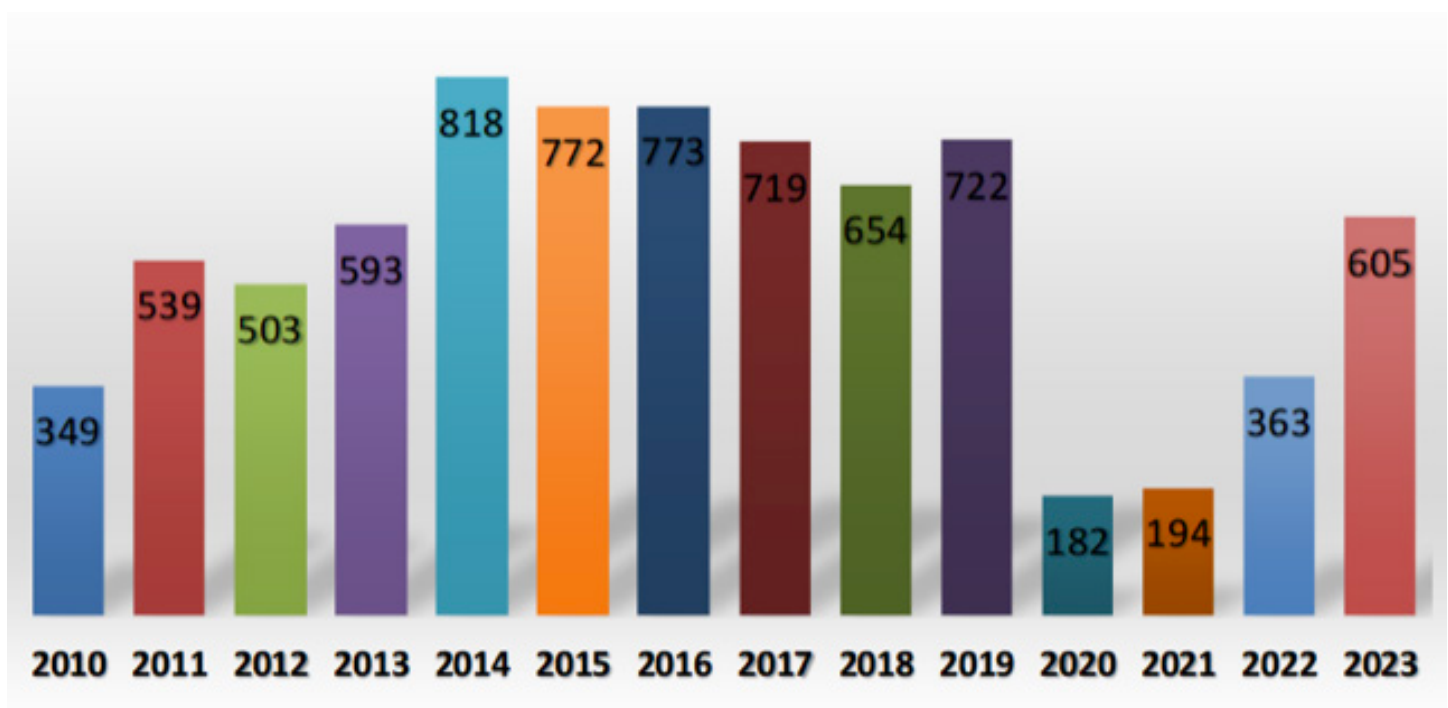
céili attendance summary

NOTE: Years 2020 through 2022, attendance was down due to Covid.

In 2021, we had a combination of virtual, outdoor, and indoor céilís. It was a year of flexibility.

In 2022, due to Covid, céilís were canceled in January and February. In March 2022, in-person céilís resumed.

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
January	40	137	75	69	65	62	52	68	0	0	53
February	63	76	130	76	76	38	72	69	0	0	46
March	170	108	100	100	113	53	63	0	13	46	65
April	34	52	70	65	51	59	60	0	0	35	66
May	35	53	50	40	40	39	60	0	0	38	47
June	27	0	0	60	40	35	36	0	28	30	40
July	18	54	50	67	57	54	66	0	29	41	38
August	26	67	50	47	33	57	46	11	31	34	27
September	50	73	63	54	67	72	72	34	0	27	33
October	35	50	69	67	44	60	65	0	26	38	60
November	58	78	51	68	68	71	79	0	32	48	67
December	37	70	64	60	65	54	51	0	35	26	63
	593	818	772	773	719	654	722	182	194	363	605





March ceili



Na Rosai at November ceili



Two Rivers Céilí Band at Samhain Festival



Audience at Samhain Festival



Craft area at Samhain Festival



Biddy on the Bench



The Littlest Ceili Supporter



Pipers at Samhain Festival