



## Winnipeg Comhaltas newsletter

Welcome to the April newsletter! Spring is just around the corner, the snow is melting, and Irish tunes will soon be heard in parks and backyard across Winnipeg. We've made it through another long, cold Winter, so let's celebrate! Happy April everyone!

### Here's some links to interesting and fun videos

How to improve timing and rhythm when practicing Irish Traditional Music.

<https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLeBSuVJgG93QKA8HBk0mJVjAmi50G52T7>

Can be used by tune players, as well as bodhran players.

### FIDDLEHED

<https://youtu.be/ShR58RFZDic>

Although not specifically Irish, the FIDDLEHED site offers friendly, well-organized instruction on a variety of musical concepts. The teacher is a fiddle player, but the instruction is applicable to any instrument. I've included the link to the video on timing, but you can explore the site for a variety of subjects.

QUESTION: Why are polkas played so fast?

<https://youtu.be/oK-bNnp-OKE>

ANSWER: So the musicians can keep up with the dancers!

### Tune of the Month

#### Brother Gilda's Jig

(version of Sunny Brogan's Jig)

<https://youtu.be/gDIDmqNnvkQ>

### MEET OUR MEMBERS

#### Cindy Smyth



#### Hi I'm Cindy Smyth

My earliest memory of music was listening to my transistor radio in the late 60's. I was fascinated by the beat and sound. I loved to sing along with Burton Cummings, Gordon Lightfoot and the like. As a child I never played an instrument. My 2 kids played piano, guitar and clarinet while in school. My Dad and his many brothers and sisters played every instrument and sang throughout their lives. They even had a band in a small town in southern Manitoba.

My Dad inherited his father's fiddle and he played it for many years.



### The Guitar Capo : The Agony and the Ecstasy

One of the most commonly used devices in Irish music is the capo. Used by guitarists, the capo is a small moveable clamp that attaches to the neck of a guitar, allowing the player to change keys easily. The capo is the perfect thing to lose because it is small, black, and blends in with chair cushions, where it often gets left behind at the previous night's rehearsal or music party. In Irish music, guitarists usually accompany the tune players, and nowadays tune players play their tunes in contrasting keys, and the capo is very helpful in allowing quick key changes. However, as useful as a capo may be, things can go horribly wrong while using a capo. In fact, using a capo can bring on a calamity of errors. For instance, a guitarist can easily mistake a capo for a hand-exercise device, and thereby take it to the gym, rather than to a rehearsal. Guitarists sometimes have nightmares about capos. These nightmares include 1. quickly moving the capo to the wrong fret, thereby playing in a different key than the tune player. 2. Opening the guitar case and discovering the capo has been left behind at last night's party. 3. Walking out onto the main stage of a folk festival only to realize that your capo is on the back seat of your car, in the parking lot. In conclusion, using a capo can bring joy to guitarists and tune players alike, or a capo can strike terror into the heart of the bravest of musicians.

. When Dad stopped playing, I thought his fiddle still needed to be played, so I dragged it out from under his bed, had it fixed up and started taking lessons at the age of 51. One of the hardest things I've ever done. But with determination I continued my lessons, attended fiddle camps and workshops.

One day I met a man at a local music store and got to chatting. He told me all about the Slow Session at the Irish Association and suggested I should join the group. I love the music, the spirit of the music and enjoy the great friendships I've made. The group has great warmth, kindness and so very encouraging.

Keep playing and practicing for yourself and for everyone who shows up at the Irish club.  
It brings joy.  
Be well. Stay well.

### From The Irish Association:

