

# CORK ST. PATRICKS'S DAY PARADE 2023

## Commentary

**PARADE STARTS – 1pm**

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## Introduction

Failte, Willkommen, Bienvenu, Bienvenido, Benvenuto and Laskavo  
Prosymo - Welcome to the Cork St. Patrick's Festival 2023.

We will be joined shortly by an Ardmhéara Councillor Deirdre Forde.

My Name is Laura O'Mahony and I am delighted to be your MC today.  
The festival is kindly supported by our media partners, my very own  
Cork's RED FM and The Echo. The organiser of this parade is Cork City  
Council, and we are delighted today to welcome Members of Dáil  
Éireann, our own members of Cork City Council, former Lords Mayor,  
Cork City Council Chief Executive Ann Doherty, and many friends.

Today we celebrate our nation's Patron Saint's Day, along with our  
many friends from Cork, Ireland and many other countries across the  
globe.

The theme of this year's St. Patrick's Day Parade is "A Century of  
Stories"

Reflecting that 2023 is the final year in the Decade of centenaries that  
have been marking our country's path to independence and to  
becoming the great little country we are today.

## **Blood Bikes**

First let us give a loud welcome to Blood Bikes South, last year's Grand Marshal, as they clear the route for the parade.

Based at St Finbarrs Hospital but covering Munster and as far as Junction 8 to Dublin, Blood Bike South is a charity run by a group of motorcyclists who provide a voluntary transport service for medical materials on an out-of-hours basis.

Be sure to give this group of volunteers a resounding cheer as we begin the 2023 Cork St. Patrick's Day Parade.



## **Defence Forces**

### **The Irish Defence Forces Colour Party**

The National Colours are being carried today by Capt Noel McCarthy, 1 Brigade Artillery Regiment, Army Reserve.

The colours are being escorted by Corporal Patrick Fingleton and Corporal James Morrissey, both 1 Brigade Artillery Regiment, Permanent Defence Forces.

### **The Band of the 1st Brigade**

This year's St Patrick's Day Parade is led by the Band of the 1<sup>st</sup> Brigade based at Collins Barracks, Cork.

The Band is led by band conductor Captain Ben Jacob. These musicians are highly qualified graduates in Music, employed as full-time musicians in the Defence Forces.

They participate in State Functions, concerts and recitals all over the country, including the annual Massed Bands Concert in City Hall.

## **The Defence Forces Number 1 Brigade**

The marching body today is drawn from 1 Brigade Artillery Regiment, Collins Barracks Cork and the Army Reserve.

### **The MOWAG Piranha Cavalry Reconnaissance Vehicle follows next.**

The MOWAG Piranha is deployed in both Major Troop Mission of the Irish Defence Forces in both UNIFIL (Lebanon) and UNDOF (Syria). At the rear of the MOWAG you can see Irish Troops representing dress both at home and overseas.

The soldier in the black beret is representative of the Irish Defence Forces dress while at home. The soldier in the blue beret is representative of the Irish Defence Forces dress while deployed with the United Nations on Peacekeeping Missions.

The Toyota Land Cruiser Armoured Utility Vehicle (AUV) is used by the Irish Defence Forces on deployments overseas to enhance force protection for troops on operations. The troops inside the vehicle are dressed the same as those on deployments with the Iconic Blue Berets representative of United Nations Peacekeeping Missions.

## **Lord Mayor and Grand Marshal Group**

Please give a warm welcome to the first citizen of Cork – the Lord Mayor, Councillor Deirdre Forde.

We ask you to give a big round of applause to The Sanctuary Runners, Grand Marshal of the Cork St. Patrick's Day Parade.

The Sanctuary Runners began five years ago in Cork and the Sanctuary Runners' movement is a worthy reflection of Cork's welcoming nature.

This organisation, through running - and now also swimming - brings the local community together with migrants, asylum seekers and refugees in a spirit of solidarity, friendship and respect.

Over 100 members of the Sanctuary Runners representing countries from all over the world have formed the Grand Marshal group and are leading the Parade today.

Give a big round of applause again for our Grand Marshal Sanctuary Runners!

## **Fáilte Group**

Bienvenue, Willkommen, Fáilte!

We welcome to Cork a group of Fáilte Ireland overseas tour operators who are here to experience Cork's St Patrick's Festival with a view to encouraging tourists to travel to Cork and enjoy future festivals.

Members of the group are from the UK, France and Germany and they are accompanied by staff from Fáilte Ireland and Tourism Ireland who are wearing their Tourism Ireland jackets.

We hope you have a wonderful time in Cork and that you enjoy what makes our city so special.

## **University of Florida Gator Marching Band**

We welcome American Marching Bands back to the Parade after an absence of three years and we extend a very warm Cork welcome to the University of Florida Gator Marching Band.

The band have performed in many prestigious events including the Opening Ceremony of the London Olympics, the Super Bowl, the opening of Disney World and the opening of the 2018 Season of American Idol!

There are over 350 students from the University of Florida Gator Marching Band taking part in the Parade today and we say mile buíochas agus céad mile fáilte to each member of the band.

## **Mayfield GAA Club**

Mayfield GAA Club was formed in 1893 with its pitches located in Lotabeg, and clubhouse on Kerry Road. With membership of 200 juvenile players, they field teams in hurling, Gaelic football & Ladies football.

2022 was another successful year with under 10 footballers winning the Mossie Walsh Shield, Under 13 Hurling league winners, Under 14 Football Championship winners and the fantastic minor football team winning the county championship. Mayfield GAA also came first place out of over 200 clubs in the Irish Life ' Every Step Counts' challenge.

The senior section of the club won the Junior A All Ireland Hurling Final in 2017.

## **Trish McCarthy School of Modern Dance**

Based in the Lough Community Centre and Togher Girls National School, Trish McCarthy School of Modern Dance, teaches a variety of dance classes including Hip-Hop, Theatre Craft, Contemporary and Freestyle.

Girls and boys of all ages are welcome.

The students love to take part in competitions locally and nationally and are the national Freestyle team champions for the past 10 years.

Trish McCarthy School of Dance presents a variety of shows, pantos and also runs summer camps. Their hugely successful panto this year was “Cindy In Cork”

With 100 dancers performing in today’s Parade – aged from just 12 months up to 18 years – this dance troupe are dancing to the music they feel sums the school up perfectly, “I Feel Better When I’m Dancing”.



## Together 4 Ukraine

The **Babusie and Dziadusie Rozom** of **Together Razem**, **Chorus Kalina**, **Shtab Pivdnia** and members of the eastern European community are walking together today under the Together4Ukraine banner to show their support to the Ukrainian people.

Members of **Together Razem** are carrying flower hearts and a banner to thank Irish people for their unwavering support.

The **Chorus Kalina** Choir which is a symbol of the strength of Ukraine are singing songs today for Ireland.

Volunteers from **Shtab Pivdnia** have been helping thousands of Ukrainians who are suffering during the war in Ukraine.

Founded in 2006, Together Razem Centre provides nationwide support and various services to Polish and Eastern European migrants nationwide.

## **Fr Mathews Basketball Club**

Fr Mathews Basketball Club is one of Ireland's leading basketball clubs with 22 underage teams who participate and compete at local and national level.

They also field teams in the U20 Men, DIV1, DIV2, Premier Ladies, Men's National League and Women's Super League.

Having grown from humble beginnings, the club now has its very own superior purpose basketball fit-out location on Cork's Model Farm Road.

## Joan Denise Moriarty School of Dance

The Joan Denise Moriarty School of Dance is proud to be Cork's oldest dance school. Students from the age of 3 study ballet, Tap dance, Modern dance, Latin and Musical Theatre.

The dance school recently won a Youth and Community award in the Cork Learning City Awards in recognition of their contribution to Lifelong Learning in Cork.

41 of the dancers here today have just taken part in the St Patrick's Day Parade in San Francisco and they only arrived back to Cork last night!

The students are performing a specially choreographed dance by Karena Walsh to the well-known Irish song 'Mo Ghile Mear'

The younger students are wearing beautiful white Tutu's, customised with green and gold trim to match up with the stunning dresses of the older students which feature traditional Irish colours.

## **Cork Environmental Forum**

Cork Environmental Forum has been active in Cork since 1995 and promotes the Sustainable Development Goals.

Cork Environmental Forum expresses themes of sustainability through its float and is joined by the wonderful creative children from the Mahon Youth Group.

The children through the symbols of fish, gulls and puffins are supporting the protection of our marine environment and all marine life and are highlighting the urgent need to designate Marine Protected areas.

Sustainable travel is represented by Cork Community Bikes, the Republic of Bike and the Transport Mobility Forum.

The float highlights the need for circularity for textiles with lovely warm & colourful upcycled costumes from upcycled fabric.

## **Rebel Wheelers Multisports Club**

Give a big cheer for the fantastic athletes from Rebel Wheelers Multi Sports Club who this year is celebrating its 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary as a club.

To mark the occasion the Group is being led by several of the founding families of the club.

Rebel Wheelers are a Cork based sports club who provide sporting opportunities for people of all ages with physical disabilities. Sports played included athletics, wheelchair basketball, boccia and rugby.

In January the Rebel Wheelers Senior Basketball won the National Cup Championships for the fourth year in a row and are proudly carrying the National Cup Trophy today.

## **Cork Puppetry Company**

And here comes “Ceol and Craic” by the Cork Puppetry Company which comprises of 3 interactive and separate floats, each focusing on Ireland’s 100 years’ stories in music.

Leading the parade is **“Ireland on the Map”**, which showcases the music and dance that made the country a global sensation and tourism titan.

Up next is **“The Music in Our Roots”**, a float of a giant tree with movable branches, actioned by the Fairies and muses that inspire our Irish tradition and make us who we are.

The final float **“Setting the record straight”** celebrates Ireland’s Eurovision dominance over the decades and looks back at the song genres we have enjoyed down through the decades.

## **Catholic Guides of Ireland**

The Catholic Guides of Ireland have been in Cork for over 90 years and the National Chief Commissioner Julie Donnelly comes from Cork.

The aim of the organisation is to encourage girls to develop into strong young women and future leaders.

The Girl Guides are wearing their official uniform and are singing campfire songs!

## **Rotary in Cork**

Congratulations to Rotary Club of Cork who this year is celebrating their 20th anniversary.

Rotary in Cork consists of 7 groups all of whom provide a service to charities in Cork.

Rotary in Cork is part of Rotary, a worldwide organisation with 1.2million members and one of the largest service organisations in the world.

Members of the Rotary Club in Cork are carrying Rotary umbrellas and placards to identify each club participating and projects they are involved with.



## **Aatma: Indian Dance Troupe in Cork**

Aatma, are an award-winning Indian dance troupe in Cork.

The embodiment of the spirit of diversity, Aatma was founded in 2018 and has grown bigger and stronger ever since.

The group have won multiple awards including Winner of Multicultural Dance Competition in Cork in 2019.

In 2022 dancers from Aatma performed in over 20 events all over Ireland.

This is their second time taking part in the Cork St. Patrick's Day Parade.

## **Neptune Basketball Club**

Neptune Basketball Club are the oldest basketball club in Ireland and the most successful club in Irish Basketball.

This year the club is celebrating its 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and we are delighted to welcome its juvenile and senior members who are proudly wearing the club's colours to the Parade.

## **Connolly Dance Studios**

Founded in September 2021 under the direction of dancer Sarah Connolly, Connolly Dance Studios offers a mix of dance styles from Modern, Ballet and Jazz to their squad Competitive classes.

With locations in Glanmire, Glenville, Knockraha and the Lough, Connolly Dance Studios teaches students from the age of 2-18 years of age.

In just over a year the Dance School has won awards for "Cork's Best Youth group" and has been nominated for "Emerging Business Person of the Year". The students recently performed in the RDS in Dublin.

The students are dancing in the Parade in their traditional dance colours which are red, black and white.

## Polish School in Cork

Welcome to all the students of the Polish School in Cork.

The school which runs classes at weekends in the North Monastery Secondary School helps to maintain the spiritual bond of the Polish Community in Cork with the country of their ancestors.

Approximately 700 students learn about Polish literature, culture, history and customs. There are also workshops at the Polish School where students can prepare for the Polish Exam in the Leaving Certificate.

Today, the students are wearing costumes inspired by the famous legend - The Wawel Dragon, also known as the Dragon of Wawel Hill.

## **Fusy Po Kawie**

The Polish Community is the second largest foreign community in Cork City, with over 12 thousand people.

**Fusy Po Kawie** is a Polish Senior Group based in The Lough.

The group meet every Thursday in the Lough Community Centre and organise different trips around Ireland.

They are marching with decorations featuring the colours of the Irish Flag.

## **St. Finbarr's National Hurling and Football Club**

Now welcome The Barrs!

Cumann Náistúnata Iománaíochta agus Peile Fionnbarra Naofa

(St. Finbarr's National Hurling and Football Club) are based in Togher!

The Barrs are the current Senior Hurling Champions in Cork and facilitate Gaelic games for boys and girls aged from five years old.

Coaching takes place every Friday and Saturday for boys and each Saturday and Sunday mornings for girls.

The Barr's boys and girls are sporting their blue jerseys and carrying all things GAA – hurleys, sliothars and footballs!

## **UCC Confucius**

Get ready to experience some Chinese culture at this year's Parade!

The Chinese Culture Show by UCC Confucius Institute presents 10 performances including Dragon Dance, Tai Chi, National Waist Drum, Beijing Opera Facial Makeup, and Cucurbit flute, and more!

The group has 100 members ranging in ages, with Chinese teachers, students, scholars and school-goers.

Give a special cheer to the Chinese Children's Choir as they perform a rendition of Aul Lang Syne.

## **Rising Sun School of Karate**

The Rising Sun School of Karate was founded in 1981 and has produced many young champions at local, national and international level.

Over 150 students attend the Rising Sun School of Karate which is located in St Anthony's Sports Hall in Ballinlough.

The school has had great success in National, European and World Championship Competitions and this year 4 students will travel to Zurich for the JKA European Karate Championships and to Tokyo for JKA World Championships in October Championships.



## **Cork Wolfpack Ice and Inline Hockey Club**

The Cork Wolfpack Club is located in Old Christians Rugby Club and is the largest inline club in Ireland.

The Club started in 1996 as the Cork Rebels and now has over 100 members. Both boys and girls play in the club and in 2021 the club fielded their first all-girl underage team.

The club hosts national training days, where players from all over Ireland come to Cork to play.

Give a cheer to the club members who are wearing in-line skates and their Wolfpack uniforms.

## **Cork Lions Club**

Give a big round of applause to the Cork Lions Club whose tireless fundraising has helped raise much need money for many worthy charities and organisations in Cork for over 60 years.

The Cork Lions Club is one of 100 Lions Club's in Ireland and each year support the people of Cork via its annual Christmas Food Appeal, City Centre Defibrillator Project, Seniors Holiday Project and Message In A Bottle Project.

On Sunday the Cork Lions Club will host a special Ball Run on Patrick's Hill where 12,000 multi-coloured balls will race down Patrick's Hill at 2pm in aid of Cork Life Centre.

## Irish Pakistani Community of Cork

Did you know that there are over 30,000 members of the Irish Pakistani Community living in Ireland.

We are delighted to welcome members of the Irish Pakistani Community in Cork to the Parade.

All members are dressed in the traditional costumes of Pakistan.

There are wearing dresses/attires from all four provinces of Pakistan including **Sindhi, Balochi, Kashmiri and Punjabi** and are holding the Pakistan map and weaving Pakistani flags.

## **Indigenous People of Biafra**

The indigenous people of Biafra (IPOB) are a Biafran community in Ireland.

IPOB members are spread across different counties in Ireland. Currently, IPOB are active in seven counties from Cork to Kerry, Waterford to Limerick and Clare, Galway to Dublin and Dundalk.

The Biafran Community last took part in the Parade in 2017 and we are delighted to welcome them back this year.

Members of the Community are wearing their colourful traditional costumes and they are carrying a Biafra masquerade whilst marching and dancing to the music.

## Spraoui

We welcome to the Parade **Spraoui**, a Waterford-based company who are specialists in outdoor parade and spectacle work

Spraoui have chosen our much-loved storytelling through music as its basis and present four floats of 'birds' each representing a genre of music or song, from disco to opera.

The first float is an electronic orchestral operatic take on Kate Bush's 'Cloudbusting'. The second float is an angular synth dance track, evoking precision machines and industrial design.

The third float features an atmospheric live spoken word piece (incl. ISL) featuring Emily Dickinson's 'Hope is a Thing with Feathers' while the fourth float is a foot thumping floor-filling fun disco tune, representing colour and life.

Musical Direction is by Rob O Connor who also composed the original music pieces and there are 25 performers taking part.

## **Bodhrán Bookills**

Lets get our feet tapping to the rhythm of the Bodhrán Bookills

**(pronounced buachalls)**

The Bodhrán Bookills are comprised of 5th and 6th class boys in St. Joseph's National School in the Mardyke and have been in existence since the 1990's

The Bodhrán Bookills compose their own rhythms, and they pass on their music through peer tutoring, under the guidance of their teacher Dóirín Sheehan.

The group perform each year for the Lord Mayor and have performed for the late Queen Elizabeth and Prince Philip when they visited Cork in 2011.

## **Cork Volunteer Centre**

Give a big welcome to The Cork Volunteer Centre who are being represented today by members of Cork Community Volunteers.

Being part of the Community Volunteers is a great opportunity to get involved in your local community, meet new people and learn new skills.

Wearing their distinctive blue and pink uniform, our Community Volunteers deserve a very big round of applause for the amazing unsung work they do.

## **Polish Scout Group in Cork**

Formed in 2010 the Cork Polish Scout Group was the first Polish Scout Group in Ireland inspiring the founding of many other Polish scout groups in Ireland.

The Polish Scout Group is dressed in the official uniform of the Polish Scouting Association.

Joining the scouts are representatives of the Polish Library which hosts an impressive 10,000 Polish Books and is the heart of Polish culture in Cork.

Members of the Polish Library are wearing traditional costumes and weaving traditional Polish Flags.



## **Mexican Community in Cork**

We are delighted to see The Mexican Community in Cork in this year's Parade.

There are now approximately 300 people from Mexico living in Cork.

Having first danced in the 2015 Parade, this year the group are honouring the State of Guerrero rhythms and through dance and music are showcasing the regions rich cultural heritage.

The Mexican Community in Cork are performing to the melodies "Las Amarillas" and "Alingo Lingo"

Their performance finishes with a dance to "Viva México", a hymn of brotherhood with the Hispanic world.

## **Nemo Rangers**

Give a cheer for the players from Nemo Rangers!

This legendary club has 1000 members aged from four up to 18 years old who participate in football, ladies football, hurling and camogie.

2022 was a very successful year with teams winning trophies in football, hurling and camogie. Nemo Rangers are the County Senior Football Champions 2022.

Their U14 and U12 boys and girl's teams are marching in today's parade sporting the colours of their club – green and black.

## **Hungarian School and PreSchool Cork**

Founded in 2010, the Hungarian School and Preschool is based in Colaiste Eamann Ris Secondary School and runs classes every Sunday during the academic year.

With 50 pupils and 10 teachers, the school promotes and encourages the cultivation of Hungarian culture and traditions through the Hungarian language and literature.

Members of the Hungarian School and Preschool Cork are singing traditional Hungarian songs and performing a traditional Hungarian folk dance at the Parade.

## Cork Renegades

Give a big Cork cheer to the Cork Renegades, a recently established baseball club in Cork.

Boasting members from the Americas, Eastern Europe, Africa and everywhere in-between, the team consists of beginners and players with decades of experience, all excited to join the Baseball Ireland B-League for the 2023 season.

Its great to see baseball being played in Cork and Cork Renegade  
Players are marching today in the club's uniform which consists of black shirts, black caps, black socks and white pants.

They are also wearing their baseball gloves and demonstrating how to toss a ball!

## **Amdie and the Latin American Community**

Set up in 2014 AMDIE which stands for Anahuac Mexican Dance

Ireland is a dance community group based in Cork, which celebrates

Latin American traditional dance and music.

In 2022 AMDIE were awarded Best Dance Group in Cork Saint Patrick's

Parade.

AMDIE has invited members of the Latin American Community to join

them in the Cork St. Patrick's Day Parade and the group features

participants from Brazil, Bolivia, Columbia, Venezuela, Mexico, Spain,

Argentina, Chile, Uruguay, Paraguay, Nicaragua, Italy, Spain and

France.

They are performing Mayan, Aztecs and Concheros Dances to the

sound of drummers playing traditional Latin American Music.

## **Cantonese in Ireland**

Cantonese in Ireland is an organisation that promotes Cantonese culture and language to Irish and Cantonese Communities in Ireland.

Flower Board crafting technique is an intangible part of the cultural heritage in Hong Kong and members of the group are holding a beautiful handmade Cantonese style Flower Board.

As well as holding the intricate flowerboard, members of the group are singing Cantonese songs and are wearing traditional Cantonese dress.

## **Cork's Indian Community**

We welcome the Indian Community in Cork who won “Best Spirit Award 2018” and are very proud of who they are.

They carry the Indian flag, which is similar to the Irish one, thus making Indians feel connected with Ireland.

This flag has acted as a comfort in uncertain times to the Indian Community in Cork in their home away from home.

## We Act

We Act, a campaign that celebrates charities and community groups in Ireland, is marching in today's Parade with local Cork groups including:

- The **Oceans Plastic Project**, a student-focused project from West Cork, started in 2017 to research the plastic waste along the Atlantic and Irish seacoasts of Ireland. The non motorised whale they are pushing is 10 feet in length and four feet in height and made of recycled materials!
- **JCI (Junior Chamber International) Cork** a non-profit organization of young active citizens age 18 to 40 who are engaged and committed to creating impact in their communities.
- **Cork Community Games** a voluntary organisation who gives children and young people aged 6 to 16 years the opportunity to develop active healthy lives through experiencing a wide range of sporting and cultural activities.
- **Cork Counselling Services** a group who provide affordable therapy across the community.

The colours of We Act are represented by the colours yellow, pink and green.



## **Cork City Judo Club**

Established in 2009, the Cork City Judo Club train in Colaiste Chriost Ri, Capwell Road, on Monday and Thursday Nights.

Judo which is an Olympic Sport, focuses on throwing, pinning and submission techniques.

Judo instruction is given by the club's black belts and the atmosphere is very welcoming, understanding that sport is there for everyone to learn.

For the Parade, the students are wearing their Judogi (**pronounced Judo Gee**) uniforms and are demonstrating throwing techniques.

## **Edo Community Cork**

Enjoy the rich cultural heritage of Southern Nigeria's Edo State at this year's Parade!

Founded in Cork in 2007, the Edo Community Cork is a social and cultural organization which aims to unite all Edo people living in Cork and to preserve their heritage and culture.

The group have represented their native Nigeria at various events in Ireland and won awards in the annual Cork Multi-Cultural Awards held in Cork City Hall.

## **GrandView High School Wolf Pride Band**

A big céad míle fáilte to the Grandview High School Wolf Pride Band who have come all the way from Denver, Colorado.

Founded in 2010, the band performs at School Football Games and at Parades all over Colorado.

This is the first international performance of the Wolf Pride Band and its students who are aged from 14 to 18.

The Wolf Pride Band is being led by drum majors Alyssa Chau and Quinn Dooley and they are playing “I Want You Back” by the Jackson 5 and “Hey Look Ma I Made It” by Panic at the Disco.

## Life FM

Life FM is a community radio station broadcasting on 93.1 FM.

They are here today with people from the Cork churches to show the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

The Body of Christ is the group of Christian believers in Jesus Christ from different churches united for the Parade to bring the message of the cross which is the good news of the kingdom of heaven.

They sing Gospel songs, emphasising the power of Jesus.

The t-shirts carry messages of Jesus, and the Golden Crown represents the victory of Jesus Christ.

## **Rebel Circus Circus Factory Cork Teens**

Roll Up Roll Up!

Rebel Circus is the teenage class of Circus Factory Cork which is based in Centre Park Road.

The group has 14 members, ages between 13 and 16 and they have all been working together since January.

The Rebel Circus Ensemble, Circus Factory's newest crew, are making their street debut and are demonstrating a variety of circus skills from hula hoop, staff to flag and acrobatics.

## **Cork Estonian Choir**

The Cork Estonian Choir was established in 2022.

The Choir are today honouring the tradition of **Kadripäev Pronounced Cadrepeev** (St Catherine's Day) where people dressed as women in white clothes and went from house to house singing, chanting and blessing the family.

In recognition of the tradition, all members of the Cork Estonian Choir are dressed as women, and are wearing white, lace and beautiful masks for disguise.

They are singing old Estonian folk marching songs as they make their way through the streets of Cork today.

## **Cork BMX Club**

Based at Tramore Valley Park which is home to Cork's only International Standard BMX Track, the Cork BMX Club has 80 members both male and female ranging from the age of four up.

Members of Cork BMX Club race nationally and internationally.

Give a "wheely" big cheer for Cork BMX Club as they demonstrate how to do different stunts and wheelies on their bikes!

## **Cycling for All Cork**

Cycling for All Cork is a new voluntary group which was formed in response to a request by visibly and physically impaired people who missed being able to go cycling as result of their disability.

The group rides Tandem bikes with visibly impaired passengers on the rear.

These are called “stokers” and by riding in tandem they get to experience the joy of cycling.



## **Cork Community Art Link**

Based in the LIDO, Blackpool, Cork Community Art Link is celebrating 30 years of making art and this is its 22<sup>nd</sup> year taking part in the Parade.

Cork Community Artlink's present The Blackpool Express which is made by and tells the stories of people creating and expressing their own culture. In doing so, they are challenging the social barriers that mystify and limit the making of art.

Cork Community Artlink has collaborated with a wide range of community groups to create today's amazing spectacle.

These include: Blackpool Community Access Programme, National Learning Network, Suisha Inclusive Arts - Cope Foundation, Cork Community Art Link Drama Group, Open Text alongside volunteers who have been attending open door workshops.

## Falun Gong

Falun Dafa, also known as Falun Gong, is a practice of mind, body and spirit. It is a peaceful meditation practice, with 5 powerful and very beneficial exercises.

The practice is based on the universal principals of Truthfulness, compassion, and forbearance.

The group today combines colourful traditional Chinese costumes with music and dance and celebratory banners.

Female members are dancing to the beautiful and graceful Lotus Flower Dance and the Fan Dance while several members of the group are demonstrating Falun Gong exercises.

## **Cork Pravasi Malayali Association**

**Cork Pravasi Malayali** represents migrant Indians from Kerala in the Southern part of India.

There are about 600+ families from Kerala living in Cork.

The majority are working in Health Care settings.

Today the group are celebrating their culture through music and dance and are wearing costumes representing the state of Kerala and India.

## **Plan Be Studios**

We extend a big welcome to Plan Be Studios, an accelerated dance studio based in Cork who are taking part in the Cork St. Patrick's Day Parade for the first time.

Plan Be Studios is owned by Megan Blyth and offers both accelerated programme dance classes and open dance classes for students aged 3+, as well as weekly adult classes open to all.

Over 20 of their students are performing a dance piece which has been choreographed by Eimear James and Sadhbh Gash.

## **Cork Barrack Street Band**

The Barrack Street Band, or 'The Barracka' as they are affectionately known, was founded in 1837 by Fr. Mathew as a temperance band.

It is an integral part of the cultural fabric of Cork and continues to make a huge contribution to the musical life of Cork City.

The Barrack Street Band have been partaking in St. Patricks Day parades since 1889.

It is great to have so many young people involved today in the band's music education programme in partnership with Music Generation Cork City.

## **Frontline Emergency and Security Service Eire Forum (FESSEF)**

Every day, the Emergency Services of Ireland work tirelessly to keep the citizens of the State safe.

Set up by retired school teacher Seamus O'Neill, the Frontline Emergency and Security Service Eire Forum is a non-profit organisation made up of volunteers from all front-line services.

**FESSEF** organises events for the public to show their appreciation, while fostering greater collaboration between their services.

The National Services Day has created a much-needed focal point for the Emergency Services to acknowledge their appreciation to the public.

## **Cork City Fire Service**

Cork City Fire & Rescue present 2 vehicles in this year's parade, an old water tender - with 5 new probationers sitting on top - followed by the pride of fleet, the new aerial platform.

These reflect the Fire Service both old and new.

(If there is a little pony say this: Dolly the Brigade Mascot is also with us today)

## Thanks

And this, my friends, brings us to the end of the 2023 Cork St. Patrick's Day parade.

Please join me in thanking the over 3500 people who have entertained us today with such joy and enthusiasm. They have displayed such immense pride in their groups – from large to small – and really shown us how wonderfully diverse and interesting Cork is today.

I would like to thank our Grand Marshall Sanctuary Runners; the Defence Forces and our International guests from Florida and Colorado.

I'd also like to thank our sponsors, (my own) Cork's Red FM and The Echo.

Our Gardaí, the HSE and volunteers from Civil Defence, St. John's Ambulance, Red Cross and Order of Malta all helped create a safe



parade for us today, and not forgetting the many City Council staff involved in making it all happen.

And thanks to YOU – the thousands of people who cheered, laughed and marvelled at today’s spectacle. Please be safe on your trip home, celebrate responsibly and enjoy the Cork St. Patrick’s Festival.

Go raibh míle maith agaibh agus Lá Fhéile Pádraig Sona Daoibh!

**END**