

Tune of the Month

by Amy Shaw

It is amazing what lovely, rhythmic music the melodeon players of Connemara coax from their little boxes. If you had never heard the playing of Johnny Connolly, John O'Halloran, or John Gannon, to name a few, you might think a one-row, ten-keyed melodeon would be a limited sort of instrument. But their music has an infectious, bouncy rhythm much admired by sean nós dancers in particular.

John Gannon's 2006 recording, *Melodeon*, is one of my favorites. I don't know how to describe the rhythm and do it any justice, but you might say it's like a chuggy locomotive that's headed straight for the Connemara Gaeltacht. Originally from Droim, Lettermore, John has been living in this country since 1959. Hearing him now, you'd never guess he gave up music for twenty years after immigrating. He and his wife Gerry, also from Connemara, settled in Boston and raised two sons, Seán and Colm. Fortunately, John took up the melodeon again when he decided to pass on the music to his sons. He's had great success at that, judging from John and Colm's recent duo recording, *Trasna na dTonnta* (Across the Waves), which is the source for this month's tune.

Irish tunes surface in the strangest places. Would you believe The Humours of Glendart is part of the soundtrack for *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows, Part 1*? I'm not sure who the musicians are, but you can hear it in the scene that takes place at the wedding of Bill Weasley and Fleur Delacour. A great choice of tune, but I recommend listening to the Gannons!

Usual disclaimers: Any transcription errors are my own. The notation here is not meant to be a substitute for listening. It is simply an aid to learning the tune.

Humours of Glendart

The image shows the musical notation for the tune 'Humours of Glendart'. It is written in treble clef, 6/8 time, and the key signature has two sharps (D major). The notation consists of four staves. The first staff is the main melody. The second staff has two first endings. The third staff has two first endings. The fourth staff has two first endings.

Rhythm: Jig

Source: John Gannon (melodeon) and Colm Gannon (accordion), *Trasna na dTonnta* (2011), track 6, tune 1