

The 25th Annual Irish Wake

Saturday, March 15, 2-10pm



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The Waupaca Community Arts Board's 25th Annual Irish Wake

Please join in the singing, toasting, honoring, forgiving, merriment and all around good craic as we continue our unique Waupaca tradition, a little different this year: Join us at HH HINDER Brewery for a full day of music! Swing over to Doc Kelly's at 7 for live music too!

History of the Honor Roll

As those who have been coming to the wake for the past 20+ years know, the Honor Roll serves to capture the names of those that have passed on in the past year, since the last Irish Wake. The Honor Roll is our community record of the impact that these wonderful people have left us. We grieve their absence, we celebrate their lives, and we carry on. Add your lost loved one to the Honor Roll, and then toast them when we read their names.

The History of the Waupaca Irish Wake

2025 marks the 25th year of The Waupaca Irish Wake, in some form or another. Here is a short history of the event, for your reading pleasure! The WCAB hopes that you will want to join us this year for this truly unique Waupaca event, on March 15 at HH Hinder Brewery on Churchill Street, Waupaca, with additional music at Doc Kelly's down by Rotary Park.

The Irish Wake started when a small group of people had an idea to do a wake-like event. Some friends had gone to the New London St. Pat's parade the year before, and we smugly thought "We can do that in Waupaca!" So, Marcel Van Camp and Terry Achten made a faux coffin and people came dressed as "mourners," and it really was like a flash mob scene as we all showed up at Weasel's, with very little pre-arranging. The coffin was brought in, and Fran Rademacher, Marci Reynolds, their band Baba Ganoush, and a bunch of friends sang a bunch of songs around the coffin, toasting Marci's grandma, which made the whole thing a little more serious, so much so that the owner Gary Holtane got out an old vintage bottle of whiskey and poured us all shots and we toasted some more. We then all traipsed out of Weasels, coffin in tow, and marched to Simpson's where we had set up for our Baba gig. At each band break, we would grab the coffin and walk out the front door and back in through the back door. Probably fuelled by beer, but it was pretty fun.

It was so much fun in fact that it became a thing. Many of you jumped on to the act as the years went by. I wish I could remember each and every one, but the word got out and the event grew. At some point, it became adopted by the Waupaca Community Arts Board.

For a few years we had certain families get involved who had lost a loved one... One year there was a dinner in honor of Al Pope at the Old Chez Marche, with fried rabbit, and the Pope family there. They gave us his police hat. Another year there was a farm market family, the Greens, who lost their patriarch, and they did a special song, and they led the procession. At some point very early on, we started traveling pub to pub, and at one point adopted the slogan "Wisconsin's best family friendly pub crawl..." What has been amazing all these years is that it has never become a rowdy, drunken scene, always respectful and although filled with singing laughter and fun, also a bit solemn and special.

T Dubs got involved for quite a few years, as did Little Fat Gretchen's, taking the event on, post-Chez Marche. When T Dubs got involved, the owner, Denny, started asking attendees to throw a note in the coffin: something they wanted to let go of, or someone they wanted to forgive. This became a very important part of the Wake for many of us because the act of giving people this opportunity is wonderful, and it is one reason that the Wake has become so special. Over the years that coffin has become sort of a time capsule of mementos, remembrances, notes, cards, pictures, it's really something and we treasure it.

Another feature that started many years ago was the Honor Roll. There is an actual book, with the names of those who have passed on in the previous year. Names were added to the list at every stop on the route and then read out in honor of all those who passed on. People seem to really like this, another chance to remember and honor a loved one.

For many years we started at LFG and ended at T Dubs, being serenaded down the ramp by a bagpiper. Our route was circuitous, but it always included Weasel's...We have always had a sing-along portion of the Wake, and eventually developed a songbook, so people could sing along, even in Gaelic! And we had certain Wake songs, including Danny Boy, which was sung by Marci's father Ron Reynolds, now 88...and also alternatively by the wonderful singer Barb Achten... beautiful singing, beautiful memories. Many years we also included poetry and Irish readings, by Susan Reniewicki and TC Farley. Every year seemed to have its own unique character, and we can all recall one or two special years that stand out in our own minds as "the year the Irish Wake was especially real for me."

In 2020, of course, the Irish Wake met Covid. By the day of the event, we knew that we needed to cancel the event, and we did. It was a couple days prior to the actual shutdown...some of us went to 22 Lakes for a mini-version of the wake because it was their last night in business. We tried to broadcast on Facebook live, but the event took on a very somber and surreal mood because we all realized that the pandemic was becoming very real, and we were starting to get a little freaked out. That event marks the last time many of us went out for a couple of years.

The following year, 2021, we did a "cyber wake," trying our best to take advantage of technology. The Calathumpians (the local Irish players) broadcast on FB live from Fran and Marci's kitchen. John Laedtke and friends broadcast from his house. At the time we had no idea how long we would be in lockdown, it had already been an entire year! It seemed that there was no end in sight.

In 2022, though, we emerged, and we returned to a live Irish Wake. At this point, having missed 2 real Irish Wakes, we decided to change it up. So in 2022, we had the Calathumpians do the Irish Session at LFG, which was filmed by the local radio/TV station. Then Flip O' the Coin played a Ceili at the Danes Hall. For the first time the Wake included dancing. So the pub crawl was officially over, and while we miss that aspect, we know that it had to change: remembering that many of the musicians who started this event are now literally 20 years older, it was really a unanimous decision.

2023 brought more change, as WCAB partnered with HH HINDER Brewery here in Waupaca to host the Irish Wake. Continuing this wonderful partnership we are happy to continue, this year with new session musicians taking up the cause, and a bagpiper helping with the procession to the new Eight10 Building on the HH Hinder campus! Thank you all for being a part of this ever-evolving event that has become a Waupaca tradition: never with green beer, leprechauns and beads, but with soul and love. Slainte to all of you!

And now: the singing!

Big Open Sky by Marci Beaucoup

The big, open sky
Where we go when we die
They say that it's the truest blue.
I'm there for you, I'm there for you.

The Parting Glass words and music *Traditional*

"May we all have a drink...take a drink and remember our dearly departed friends. Raise your spirits to the sky. Raise them to our friends. God Bless you, and may we be forever in your debt!"

Fill to me the parting glass, and drink a health for Hell be false! And gently rise and softly call, "Goodnight and joy be to you all."

Of all the money that ere I had, I spent it in good company.

And of all the harm that ere I've done, alas was done to none but me.

Fill to me the parting glass, and drink a health for hell be false. And gently rise and softly call, "Goodnight and joy be to you all."

Of all the comrades that ere I had, they're sorry for my going away, and

Of all the sweethearts that ere I had, they wish me one more day to stay.

But since it fell into my lot that I should rise while you should not, I gently rise and softly call, "Goodnight and joy be with you all!"

**So fill me to the parting glass, and drink a health for Hell be False!
And gently rise and softly call "Goodnight and joy be to you all!"**

MO GHILE MEAR (OUR HERO) as performed by the Chieftains

Chorus: (in Gaelic...you'll get it after a few rounds!)

**'Se/ mo laoch, mo Ghile Mear
'Se/ mo Chaesar Gile Mear
Suan na/ se/an ni/ bhfuaireas fe/in
O/ chuaigh i gce/in mo Ghile Mear**

**Phonetic version: *SHAY muh lake muh HEY-lah Mar
SHAY muh HAY-sah hey-lah Mar
Sown naw shayn neh voor-AHS FAYN
Ah KWEEEE guh GAYN muh HEY-lah Mar***

Grief and pain are all I know
My heart is sore, My tears a' flow
We saw him go how could we know
No word we know from him at home
(Chorus)

A proud and gallant cavalier
A high man's scion of gentle mean
A fiery blade engaged to reap
He'd break the bravest in the field
(Chorus)

Come sing his praise as sweet harps play
And proudly toast his noble frame
With spirit and with mind aflame
So wish him strength and length of day
(Chorus)

The Luck of the Irish (John Lennon) G

Chorus:

**If you had the luck of the Irish
You'd be sorry and wish you were dead
You should have the luck of the Irish
And you'd wish you was English instead!**

A thousand years of torture and hunger
Drove the people away from their land
A land full of beauty and wonder
Was raped by the British brigands! Goddamn! Goddamn!

(Chorus)

In the 'Pool they told us the story
How the English divided the land
Of the pain, the death and the glory
And the poets of auld Eireland

(Chorus)

Why the hell are the English there anyway?
As they kill with God on their side
Blame it all on the kids the IRA
As the bastards commit genocide! Aye! Aye! Genocide!

(chorus)

**If you had the luck of the Irish
You'd be sorry and wish you was dead
You should have the luck of the Irish
And you'd wish you was English instead!
Yes you'd wish you was English instead!**

Disclaimer: we do not support the history of violence in Northern Ireland,
and although we may agree that the English had been oppressive, we always
hope for peaceful negotiations.

OH DANNY BOYKey of C

(by an English lawyer and song-lyric cobbler named Frederick E. Weatherly)

Oh Danny boy, the pipes, the pipes are calling
From glen to glen, and down the mountain side
The summer's gone, and all the flowers are dying
'tis you, 'tis you must go and I must bide.

But come you back when summer's in the meadow
Or when the valley's hushed and white with snow
'tis I'll be there in sunshine or in shadow
Oh Danny boy, oh Danny boy, I love you so.

And if you come, when all the flowers are dying
And I am dead, as dead I well may be
You'll come and find the place where I am lying
And kneel and say an "Ave" there for me.

And I shall hear, tho' soft you tread above me
And all my dreams will warm and sweeter be
If you'll not fail to tell me that you love me
I simply sleep in peace until you come to me.

MAIRIE'S WEDDINGKey of G

Chorus:

**Step we gaily on we go
Heel for heel and toe for toe
Arm and arm and row and row
All for Mairie's wedding**

Over hillway up and down
Myrtle green and bracken brown
Past the sheiling through the town
All for Mairie's wedding

Chorus

Plenty herring plenty meal
Plenty peet to fill her creel
Plenty bonnie bairns as weel
That's the toast for Mairie

Chorus

Cheeks as bright as rowans are
Brighter far than any star
Fairest of them all by far
Is my darling Mairie

Chorus

Long Black VeilKey of G (The Band)

Ten years ago on a cold dark night
There was someone killed in the 'neath the town hall light
There were few at the scene but they all did agree
That the man who ran looked a lot like me

The judge said, "son, what is your alibi?
If you were somewhere else, then you don't have to die."
I spoke not a word though it meant my life for I'd
Been in the arms of my best friend's wife.

Chorus

**She walks these hills in a long black veil
She visits my grave when the night winds they wail.
Nobody knows, Nobody sees.
Nobody knows but me.**

The scaffold was high, and eternity near
She stood in the crowd and shed not a tear.
Though sometimes at night when the cold wind blows
In a long black veil she cries all over my bones.

Chorus

From Clare to Here Lyrics

Ralph McTell

**Learned in Ireland over many nights in many pubs and brought back to
Waupaca by marci beaucoup**

There's four of us who share this room as
we work hard for the craic
And sleeping late on Sundays I never get to Mass

Chorus:

**It's a long way from Clare to here
It's a long way from Clare to here
It's a long, long way, it grows further by the day
It's a long way from Clare to here**

When Friday comes around Eddie's only into fighting
My ma would like a letter home but I'm too tired for writing

Chorus

It almost breaks my heart when I think of Josephine
I told her I'd be coming home with my pockets full of green

Chorus

And the only time I feel alright is when I'm into drinking
It sort of eases the pain of it and levels out my thinking

Chorus

I dreamed I heard a piper play or maybe it's emotion
I dreamed I see white horses dance upon that other ocean

Chorus

Note: we all have been betrayed, and we've all betrayed. We

*can all forgive, and we can be forgiven. Most importantly we
can forgive ourselves. You can start tonight!*

Barett's Privateers by Stan Rogers

Oh, the year was 1778,
HOW I WISH I WAS IN SHERBROOKE NOW!
A letter of marque come from the king,
To the scummiest vessel I'd ever seen,
God damn them all!

(chorus)

**I was told we'd cruise the seas for American gold
We'd fire no guns-shed no tears
Now I'm a broken man on a Halifax pier
The last of Barrett's Privateers.**

Oh, Elcid Barrett cried the town,
HOW I WISH I WAS IN SHERBROOKE NOW!
For twenty brave men all fishermen who
Would make for him the Antelope's crew
God damn them all!

(chorus)

The Antelope sloop was a sickening sight,
HOW I WISH I WAS IN SHERBROOKE NOW!
She'd a list to the port and her sails in rags
And the cook in scuppers with the staggers and the jags
God damn them all!

(chorus)

On the King's birthday we put to sea,
HOW I WISH I WAS IN SHERBROOKE NOW!
We were 91 days to Montego Bay
Pumping like madmen all the way
God damn them all!

(chorus)

On the 96th day we sailed again,

HOW I WISH I WAS IN SHERBROOKE NOW!

When a bloody great Yankee hove in sight
With our cracked four pounders we made to fight
God damn them all!
(chorus)

The Yankee lay low down with gold,

HOW I WISH I WAS IN SHERBROOKE NOW!

She was broad and fat and loose in stays
But to catch her took the Antelope two whole days
God damn them all!
(chorus)

Then at length we stood two cables away,

HOW I WISH I WAS IN SHERBROOKE NOW!

Our cracked four pounders made an awful din
But with one fat ball the Yank stove us in
God damn them all!
(chorus)

The Antelope shook and pitched on her side,

HOW I WISH I WAS IN SHERBROOKE NOW!

Barrett was smashed like a bowl of eggs
And the Main trunk carried off both me legs
God damn them all!
(chorus)

So here I lay in my 23rd year,

HOW I WISH I WAS IN SHERBROOKE NOW!

It's been 6 years since we sailed away
And I just made Halifax yesterday
God damn them all!

(final chorus)

Do You Hear the People Sing? (Les Miserables)

[Enjolras:]

Do you hear the people sing?
Singing the song of angry men?
It is the music of the people
Who will not be slaves again!
When the beating of your heart
Echoes the beating of the drums
There is a life about to start
When tomorrow comes!

[Combeferre:]

Will you join in our crusade?
Who will be strong and stand with me?
Beyond the barricade
Is there a world you long to see?

[Courfeyrac:]

Then join in the fight
That will give you the right to be free!

[All:]

Do you hear the people sing?
Singing the song of angry men?
It is the music of the people
Who will not be slaves again!
When the beating of your heart
Echoes the beating of the drums
There is a life about to start
When tomorrow comes!

[Feuilly:]

Will you give all you can give
So that our banner may advance?
Some will fall and some will live
Will you stand up and take your chance?
The blood of the martyrs

Will water the meadows of France!

[All:]

Do you hear the people sing?

Singing the song of angry men?

It is the music of the people

Who will not be slaves again!

When the beating of your heart

Echoes the beating of the drums

There is a life about to start

When tomorrow comes