

Boys of the Lough

*Special Programs
available on U.S. Tours*

The Boys regular evening concert program is unique in its combination of true tradition, exemplary musicianship, and storytelling fun. There are also three feature programs available to Presenters who would like thematic emphasis. In addition, the Boys offer workshops and educational concerts (to be scheduled on the same day as an evening concert).

"Traditional heroes played a moving set, putting people on their feet and making them dance the night away."

Irish World

A Celtic Christmas

This is Ixtlan Artists' premiere Christmas program, and one of the best Christmas shows touring today. A Celtic Christmas with Boys of the Lough combines beautiful Christmas songs and instrumentals from throughout the British Isles and Ireland with fascinating stories of the history of this great musical tradition. Through anecdotes of fairies and trolls, master storyteller and multi-instrumentalist Dave Richardson weaves sparkling wit and humor with encyclopedic knowledge of British traditions, and adds a wee bit of fantasy. Flutist and Boys of the Lough founder Cathal McConnell adds a forty-year history of playing this music on stage. Brendan Begley brings a beautiful tenor voice to the songs of the tradition, singing in both Gaelic and English, including a beautiful Gaelic version of Silent Night. Guitarist Malcolm Stitt hails the Highlands of Scotland, and Kevin Henderson shares the rich fiddle tradition of the Shetland Islands. If you would like to bring your audience the world of the Celtic Christmas tradition, and present a Christmas show that combines family appeal, historical intrigue, brilliant musicianship, and "a touch of the different", A Celtic Christmas with Boys of the Lough delivers.



Songs of the Sea



An integral part of the Celtic tradition, Boys of the Lough have a long history of presenting seafaring lore. This special program, Songs of the Sea, consists entirely of maritime material. Songs include ballads of emigration and returning home, celebrations of ships and boats and fishing, tales of shipwrecks and drowning, and even a tune inspired by the legend of the mermaid.

Over thirty years ago, National Geographic asked Boys of the Lough to provide instrumental music for a special recording project "Songs and Sounds of the Sea". The music played on Songs of the Sea has been featured at the International Maritime Festival in France and the Bristol International Festival of the Sea. The band members have a special history with seafaring songs. Dave is from Wallsend-on-Tyne, famous for its shipyards. Brendan owns and fishes from a traditional Kerry "naomhog" at St. Brendan's Creek, where the missionary-explorer set out on his voyage to America. Kevin's father comes from the remote Fair Isle, where the boating skills of the inhabitants were crucial to survival. The great Shetland composer Tom Anderson was an honored guest fiddler on past Boys of the Lough tours. A terrific thematic program.

A Fireside Ceili

"In a small cottage near Lough Erne in Fermanagh..." So the program begins. The term ceilidh was originally used by country folk in Ireland and Scotland to mean a social visit. The term came to embrace all the activities associated with such a visit: news, gossip, jokes, singing, playing music and dancing. Cathal McConnell, founder of Boys of the Lough nearly forty years ago, grew up near Lough Erne in Fermanagh.



The cottage he lived in was well known as a ceili house and contained a very musical and sociable family. Brendan Begley shares a similar background. The Boys of the Lough present in concert an excellent cross-section of the arts of a good ceili. You are welcomed by them as if you had been invited into a ceili in one of their homes. From the warm interaction with audience and band members, to Dave Richardson's far yarns, to the expert traditional musicianship of the entire band both individually and as an ensemble, A Fireside Ceili is Celtic entertainment at its most historically satisfying.