

ADAMS COUNTY IRISH FESTIVAL

July 17, 2007

<http://www.adamscountyirishfestival.com>

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* NEWS ADVISORY *

RIVERDANCE MUSICIAN JOHN WHELAN APPEARING AT ADAMS COUNTY IRISH FESTIVAL IN HISTORIC GETTYSBURG, PA

8th Annual Benefit Offers Full Day of Sights, Sounds and Family Fun on Saturday July 21

WHAT:

Held rain or shine, the **Eighth Annual Adams County Irish Festival** features a full day of family fun with traditional Irish music, dancers, food and merchandise along with living history portrayals and music workshops. The music slate features button accordion master **John Whelan** from the original Broadway production of *Riverdance* plus several regional performers. Last year's festival drew **over three thousand people**. The festival **benefits the Children's Friendship Project for Northern Ireland** (an interfaith peace and friendship building program for Northern Irish teens) and has a long term goal of helping to fund the eventual establishment of a national Irish history museum and library near Gettysburg. The Adams County Irish Festival is **produced and presented by the Irish Heritage Foundation of Gettysburg**, an all-volunteer 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

WHO:

Seven-time All-Ireland Champion accordionist John Whelan & Friends will be making their Adams County Irish Festival debut this year. Although he grew up in England, John Whelan was raised exclusively on traditional Irish music by his parents who both came from Ireland. By age 14, Whelan's skill on the two row button accordion had already earned him several accordion championships and he recorded his first solo album. After moving to America in 1980, Whelan soon began performing with *Riverdance* fiddler Eileen Ivers in one of the most popular Irish duos of the decade. Whelan also performed in the original Broadway production of *Riverdance*. In the late nineties, the John Whelan Band thrilled audiences in America and Europe, and Whelan was named Traditionalist of the Year by the *Irish Echo* in 1998. Whelan has recorded over a half-dozen albums and in addition to his success as an instrumentalist, composer and arranger, he has appeared in TV specials and the 1999 Ang Lee film *Ride With the Devil*, along with producing the Celtic rock band Black Thorn in 2001.

Other notable sights and sounds in the shady glen of the park will include **Barleyjuice**, a kilt-clad rockin' Irish band from Philadelphia, Harrisburg's **Lochiel Emerald Society Pipes and Drums**, interactive music workshops and demonstrations, Civil War re-enactors from the Union Army's **Irish Brigade**, a portrayal of Irish Volunteers from the **West Cork Flying Column** of the 1919-1921 Anglo-Irish War, an **Irish dance performance**, Irish gift/merchandise vendors and the **Potomac Valley Irish Wolfhound Club**.

WHEN:

The festival is on **Saturday July 21, 2007** from 10:00am-7:30pm at the Gettysburg Moose Park. John Whelan & Friends perform from 3:30-4:30pm; Barleyjuice, 5:00-6:00pm; Irish dancers, 3:00-3:30pm. Full entertainment schedule and details at www.adamscountyirishfestival.com

WHERE:

The festival is held at the **Gettysburg Moose Park**, 100 Moose Road in Straban Township east of Gettysburg, PA. Moose Road is off of US 30 about 1.6 miles east of the US 15 interchange.

PHOTO/BROADCAST COVERAGE INVITED!