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HERITAGE

# Noel's tunes echo across time

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A BOOK based on a rare collection of traditional Irish music tunes found in an attic 40 years ago will be launched in Cappamore on Friday May 23.

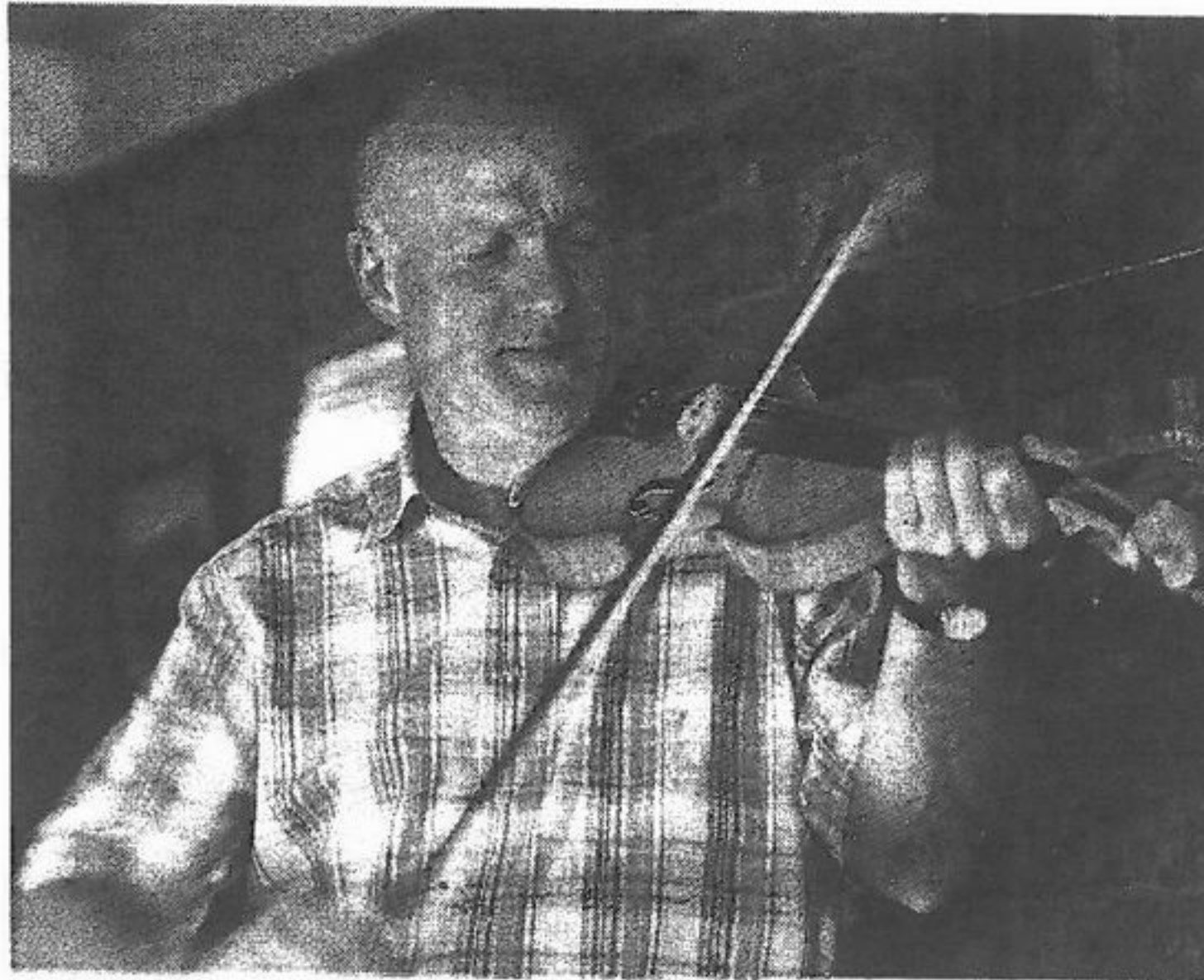
The music sheets were collected by Cappamore man John McCarthy between 1876 and 1912 and now they have been lovingly restored and compiled into a book by his grandson Noel McCarthy.

"My grandfather was a fiddle player and loved collecting things, and it was only after his death that my father Paddy discovered the 535 music and dance sheets in his attic 40 years ago," Noel said.

His father gave Noel the collection of music and the family handed over the 'McCarthy Manuscripts' to the University of Limerick library in 2000.

When Noel was employed as a porter in UL in 2005, he decided to research the papers and to compile a book. He has spent the last seven years painstakingly sourcing pictures and details of musicians from Cappamore and the Silvermines who feature in the collection.

"It was a real labour of love and what I learnt was the people's entertainment at that time was all about the dance. Some of the set dances of the day were banned by the Gaelic League and replaced by their own newly-approved ceili dances."



"Fortunately John McCarthy's collection remained intact and it contains examples of music and songs that were not regarded as 'appropriate' at the time by the Gaelic League like the 'RIC Polka' and songs and tunes from Irish, British, European and American composers," Noel said. Among them is the French national anthem which was being played and danced to in south Donegal at the turn of the last century.

Noel inherited his love of music from his grandfather and he started playing the fiddle on his grandfather's old violin when he was 15. He has

since developed a great love of traditional music and has played with groups in Castleconnell, Boher, Limerick city and Carrigkerry in west Limerick.

In 2006 he was one of the founding members of the University of Limerick traditional music group, Cruinniu and produced a CD for them in 2007.

Noel said he would like to thank all the people who have helped him over the years with his research. "I am especially grateful to the University of Limerick and I would like to thank all my friends in Cruinniu and the Garryowen Comhaltas who helped

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**Some of the set dances of the day were banned by the Gaelic League and replaced by their own newly-approved ceili dances.**

NOEL MCCARTHY,  
MUSICIAN AND AUTHOR

me raise funds to cover the costs of the book. He also thanked Cllr Kieran O'Hanlon and Shelia Deegan, the city and county arts officer, for their support."

The book, 'John McCarthy of Cappamore, Ireland, His Irish Traditional Music Manuscripts 1876-1912' will be launched in O'Dwyer's pub in Cappamore on Friday May 23 at 9pm by writer and University of Limerick librarian Dr Mícheál Ó hAodha and Peig Ryan, musician and music teacher in Murroe.

It will be on sale from next week in O'Mahony's and Eason's bookshops in Limerick city.