

# Irish Tour 2004

(English version of the article in local newspaper Telen, Notodden, June 23TH, 2004)

This year it's 30 years since the legend Rory Gallagher had his legendary Irish tour. This was on of several reasons while 13 friends from the little valley of Heddal outside Notodden, decided to go and participate at Rory Gallagher International Tribute Festival.

It turned out to be four day with heavy bluesrock from Thursday to late Sunday night. There is a saying about Norwegians that we are born with skis on our feet. Now we are convinced that the Irish are born with a guitar between their hands.

## No doubt

We are a group of friends with common interest in music, that have discovered a band with the name Barry McCabe Band. They are mixing blues and rock together with traditional Irish/Celtic music. When we realized that Barry McCabe Band was gone play at the festival this year, there were no doubt, we decided to go and tickets and accommodation were ordered.

## Great fun

Thursday June 3TH was the big day, it was time for departure. Kids and homes were left to close family and friends, working clothes were swapped with rock style clothing. We flew into Dublin in the afternoon and spent an lovely evening in city centre with good Irish traditional food and music. The next morning we took the bus from Dublin to the small town Ballyshannon on the northwest coast of the green island, which were hosting the festival. The bus was full of people from several different countries, all looking forward to the festival. We were expecting a quit long and boring ride (128miles=205km), but it turned out to be great fun and we made a lot of new friends on our way.

## Big happening

Ballyshannon turned out to be a lovely little town with a friendly population and we felt welcome at the first hours we arrived. There were lots of lovely small pubs all over and we adapted very fast. This was just a perfect place for us to stay, and to be an Norwegian in Ireland felt good and we were really good received by the Irish people.

The festival turned out to be a big event. The gigs were both inside small cosy pubs and out in the streets. It was easy to get in contact with member of the bands and we used the opportunity to tell about our hometown bluesfestival in Notodden. Some have heard of it and we even meet people that had been there too.

## Front row

The two main gigs were at the city centre theatre. The band "Nine below Zero", book for Notodden Bluesfestival in August, played together with Barry McCabe Band. All of us from Heddal were benched

at the front rows with high expectations. From the first guitar riff in the opening number "Pick a bale o' Cotton", the standard was set and when the "ulleann pipe" tuned in with the rest of the band the whole theatre were jumping. The combination of blues, rock and Celtic music had a very responsive audience at the festival. This must be something for Notodden Bluesfestival ? What made the evening complete was when we were invited to meet Barry and talk with the man himself and the band backstage.

One week is gone and daily tasks are here again, but in our dreams we still go back to Ireland and Ballyshannon. What an adventure it was for us all. We are already making plans for a reunion next year.

Web addresses:

<http://www.goingtomyhometown.com>

<http://www.barrymccabe.com>



Hilde, John, Barry(the man himself),Leiv(tourguide),Len(Coventry)



The group of travelling friends from Heddal,Notodden, Norway