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Editors Note: Artists are available for phone interviews. Contact PaperMoon for scheduling. Full Schedule of Events, Artist links, up-to-date information available at www.EurekaCelts.com.

Celtic Connections Eureka is a Musical "Who's Who"

EUREKA SPRINGS, Ark. – The music line up for Celtic Connections Eureka reads like a *Who's Who with a Lilt*. The four-day festival celebrating Celtic heritage brings to the stage six performers January 18-21, in Eureka Springs. That Eureka Springs herself was built limestone block by limestone block by Celtic ancestors isn't lost on event organizers at PaperMoon Attractions.

"This National Historic treasure planted firmly into the hilltops and hillsides of the Ozarks Mountains has its own moor-like castles and spellbinding history," says Gerry Ganong of PaperMoon Attractions, now counting year number three with their Celtic event success. "Celtic Connections Eureka hopes to infuse our winter visitors with our heritage here and abroad. I think we offer the very best of that heritage – great Celtic music and entertainment, Ceilidh-like gatherings, and plenty of good times among the clans of the seven nations."

Celtic Connections Eureka is timed for the birthday memorial of the great Robert Burns, the "Bard of Scotland" and shares its name with Celtic Connections in Glasgow, Scotland, also held in January during other worldwide Burns' birthday parties. This year Robert Burns will be 249.

While the centerpiece of Celtic Connections Eureka is the Burns Supper attended either Thursday or Friday, there are four days of concerts, workshops and a Gypsy Faire.

Enthusiasm for the Celtic culture in the Ozarks is as popular as its folk and bluegrass roots. Aside from the lilt, the music is strikingly similar, being the music of the common folk, the music that turns heart ache and hard toil into a light hearted jig or soulful prayer.

Some might beg to differ when it comes to Tartanic, the bagpipe and drum band from Houston. "Please treat us like the rock stars we were meant to be," pleads Adrian Walter, the band's frontman-dancer-drummer-comedian. He moves so fast between each of his roles, it's useless to distinguish one from the next. Just joggle your knees and be absorbed.

You can simply put aside any predisposition or prejudice you have about bagpipes and the people who play them. Tartanic will blow them all out the door.

"If you haven't been to a Tartanic concert, you owe it to yourself to get a ticket and go on Friday night. And take everybody you know with you," says music director Steve Shell of PaperMoon Attractions. "It's nothing like you've seen or heard before. It's... well, to quote Adrian, *'imagine one dancer, six drums, six drones, 18 notes, fast fingers, high comedy, flying bagpipes, taste-defying stunts and scorching hot music played with driving speed and high volume, all brought to you by five men without pants.'*

"Yep, that's Tartanic. The one and only."

For Celtic music lovers who follow a pied piper and fiddle player wherever they may go, Celtic Connections Eureka also features the music of Rowan, Ed Miller, Beth Patterson and Tinker's Dam.

The latter, Tinker's Dam, are favorites in Harrison and Mountain Home, Ark., where they host a Ceilidh every month. The group blends the traditional melodies of Scotland, Ireland and Cape Breton with the

traditional instruments of fiddle, accordion, pipes, penny whistles and harp. Eileen and Caven Clark were with the Celtic group Afan in Arizona before moving to Harrison, where they met Ozark native fiddler and dancer Sara Miller. The group will host a Ceilidh at the Basin Park Hotel Ballroom Saturday afternoon, with Crooked Creek Irish Dancers from Harrison.

Put a wee bee in your bonnet about a honey-voiced singer named Ed Miller, a decidedly not run-of-the-mill interpreter of Scots songs. Ed Miller is one of those singers who wins audiences with his sweet but powerful voice and equal doses of populist politics and wry humor. Miller is a native of Edinburgh and a product of the 1960s folk revival in Scotland. A scholar of folk lore, history and culture, he brings his love of Scotland to every performance. He will be performing at Friday's Burns Night Supper and again in concert Saturday night at the City Auditorium.

As one critic put it, "Hearing Ed Miller is like picking up a book of favorite short stories. Even though the characters are familiar and you remember the basic plots, the telling itself is worth hearing time after time."

Beth Patterson, a native of Lafayette, La., has a Celtic-Cajun lilt that's as infectious as her music. She is foremost a player of the eight (and ten) stringed Irish bouzoukis, trained as a classical oboist turned Cajun bass player gone heavy metal. All to circle 'round when she spent a year studying traditional Irish music at University College at Cork in Ireland. It was here she began to experiment with fusion of musical genres.

Her performance includes an eclectic repertoire of Celtic, roots, and contemporary songs, chock full of drive, energy, passion and humor. Her stage presence has been described as innocent savagery, a cross between a cobra and a puppy. Her multiple award-winning album highlights the style of a songwriter with over two dozen compositions on recordings of various artists and her own "alternative world" genre. Patterson will perform on several occasions at Celtic Connections Eureka, including afternoon concerts for children and instrument workshops.

Rowan is known for their traditional Celtic music from the heartland in which they put a lot of thought and care into the playing and arranging of the tunes. The group's namesake and Muse is Rowania, Goddess of People Who Are Somewhat Odd But Don't Care. They blend in so well with Eureka Springs folk that they return for their second year. "Rowan is such a breath of fresh air," says Shell. "We can hardly wait to have them back."

Based in Lawrence, Kan., Rowan performs with a melodic mixture of expertise gleaned from traditional Irish and Scottish roots and their own reflections and circumstances. Their collective gift is to stamp their personalities on traditional music, emerging on stage with a tight and powerful group sound. Rowan will perform Saturday night and at Sunday brunch at the Crescent Hotel.

Linda Brockinton's classical guitar-like style on the Mountain Dulcimer earned this Arkansas musician the title as the National Mountain Dulcimer Champion. But it's her warm personality that endears her to the folk music community. At Celtic Connections Eureka, participants can learn a little dulcimer from Brockinton at one of the workshop venues planned throughout the festival. She will play dulcimer with Brenda Ramsey on flute as Celtic Heartstrings at the Crescent and Basin Park Hotels.

Brockinton's popularity as a performer and workshop instructor spans the country. Turlough O'Carolan's and Celtic music are her favorites and her finger picking style of playing the mountain dulcimer bring these songs to life. All weekend visitors are also welcome to hear Brockinton perform on Sunday morning at the United Methodist Church in a special service in the Celtic spirit.

PaperMoon Attractions invites you to let the charm of Eureka Springs spark the Celt in you as you enjoy four days of music, hearty food, warm pubs, and shopping at Celtic Connections Eureka. All-day Tickets are: \$28 for Thursday including the Burns Night Supper; \$25 for Friday's events (without the Burns Supper); \$45 or \$80 per couple for Friday's events, including the Burns Night Supper; \$25 for Saturday's events. For more information and to purchase tickets online see www.EurekaCelts.com or call **866-363-9545**.