

A Tour to Remember

ONE of the vignettes from the Catskills last month that will remain forever etched in my mind was an early morning rendezvous between two mighty box players a generation apart.

One man was last year's TG4 Traditional Musician of the Year, and the other received a Composer of the Year award from them as well in 2004 and 2005.

Perched on the porch bench outside Furlong's, the great music pub, sat Corkman Jackie Daly and Mayoman David Munnelly playing accordion duets with tunes that were as varied as they were masterful. Polkas, waltzes, reels, hornpipes and jigs played note for note in an amazing display of respect and recognition between the two box players like I had never seen before.



The ace Bullet from Belmullet made a big impression in the Catskills this summer, and even more so when his full band joined him at the weekend to perform in East Durham. Their jazzy, innovative approach to traditional music make the David Munnelly Band a real crowd-pleaser for sure, and one of the more fascinating groups coming out of Ireland these days.

Listening to them and watching them give a fresh contemporary interpretation to the music of the 1920s associated with the Flanagan Brothers, make them the band to see if you can.

They have some gigs surrounding their appearance at this year's Milwaukee Irish Fest (www.irishfest.com) here in the east, with the first date this coming Friday at the legendary folk music emporium Towne Crier Cafe (www.townecrier.com or 845-855-1300) at 9 p.m. in Pawling, New York.

Munnelly's marauders will appear at the Hibernian Cultural Center in Worcester, Massachusetts on Saturday, August 12 at 8 p.m. Visit www.coolbawn.road.com. On Sunday, August 13 they are appearing at two free concerts (12 noon and 6 p.m.) as part of the Gigantic Musikfest (www.musikfest.com) currently underway from August 4-13 that takes place down in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania.

After Milwaukee they appear in Ridgefield, Connecticut at another free concert as part of their Concert Happenings series in Ballard Park on Tuesday, August 22 at 7:30 p.m.

Their final tour appearance is on the Kennedy Center's Millennium Stage on Wednesday, August 23 at 6 p.m. which will be available as a webcast on their site which is www.kennedy-center.org.

Paul Keating, August 8, 2006