



# Rhythm Bones Player

A Newsletter of the Rhythm Bones Society

Volume 23, No. 2 2021

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## Executive Director's Column

Bone playing contests are few and far between, but in a true sign of the times, an innovation in contests in general occurred this year. With the All Ireland Bone Playing Contest going virtual it can be reasonably assured that nothing like this has ever occurred. Martin O'Donoghue's article in this issue will detail the contest and participants, but to contrast previous contests let's think for a minute. Forgoing the live contest means contestants can compete in the relative comfort of their own surroundings. On the one hand, contestants have control over their accompanists, music, and setting, on the other hand they are deprived from

experiencing the town and people which have nurtured the contest and bone playing over the years. Each contestant deals with the technical aspects of formulating a recording in their own way, some in highly technical ways, others simple recording with a cell phone perhaps, but clearly the playing field varies from person to person. The judge has the ability to replay the performance endlessly, as opposed to a one shot performance on a stage in front of a crowd and possibly compromising weather conditions. Having been on that stage as both a competitor

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## Virtual All-Ireland Bones Competition

Fleadh by the Feale is in its 27th year. Due to COVID-19, the Fleadh by the Feale Committee decided to host our Fleadh and the All Ireland Junior and Senior Bones Competition virtually for 2021. Last year we had very little notice of a lockdown and we didn't have any Fleadh.

Late 2020 the Fleadh by the Feale Committee decided to run a virtual Fleadh for 2021. We contacted our Irish bone players and they said they were up for it. I then contacted Steve Brown to see if he could help us get overseas players to take part.

The format we picked was that bone players would be prerecorded playing the bones to a piece of music of their choice. As our Fleadh is an Irish music festival and therefore our bones competition is an Irish music bone playing competition. The bones in Irish music are an accompaniment, they are not meant to take over the tune. All of our Irish players have this, whereas is American blue grass rhythm bones are kinda an instrument in their own right played to the max.

Back to the competition, Steve Brown and Steve Wixson were a great help to us through the Rhythm Bones Society. We set March 31st as our deadline for entries to reach us and we got 15 overseas competitors and 8 Irish players to compete. We had only 2 players in the junior competition which was judged by Steve Brown from the USA. Once we had the video we put them together into a show.

Then the videos were sent to Junior Davey who was our judge. Junior is based in Sligo which is a

three and a half hour drive from Abbeyfeale. We need our judge to be totally impartial, and we always strive to achieve this, never having a local judge. Junior judged the competition and that was added to the show and it went out on Monday May 3rd at 8pm.

We only have 3 places and 23 competitors so there is always players disappointed, but there is always the next year. Sure what doesn't kill you makes you stronger as they say.

First place received €300 and a trophy and their name on the Fleadh shield.

(Continued on Page 2)



Martin O'Donoghue

## Editorial

I hope you find this issue interesting. It begins with the Page 1 story where Martin O'Donoghue writes about the Virtual 2021 All-Ireland Bones Competition. A companion article on judging the Bones Competition by Junior Davey is on Page 7. While it was very successful, they hope for an in-person event in 2022.

Timothy James attended virtual Bones Fest XXIV last year after writing a story about Dom Flemons. After our Fest, he wrote a nice companion piece for our newsletter.

Ter Wolin had to teach during the COVID-19 pandemic and she reports on her experience teaching rhythm bones.

Our old website of maybe 20 years was out of date and did not work well on smartphones. With a suggestion from Skeff Flynn, we have an updated website using the Word Press platform.

### (Editorial continued from Page 1)

and a judge I can assure you anything can happen. How great that players from all over the world could compete, and yet how it changes the nature of a contest held more than 20 years. Congratulations to Nic Dupin for his championship performance, John Ford, and our own Skeffington Flynn, and all the participants. But I hope for one that the contest reverts to it's original form, so that the participants experience the thrill of performing in front of a crowd, and experience Abbeyfeale, and Ireland and all that they are!

Another sign of the times, we are again deprived of seeing each other in person, and sharing in the fellowship that defines our organization.

Last years Virtual Bones Fest was joyful, but how I miss the hugs, and electricity of the in person bones fest. But for all our safety we do the best we can. Once again we will share in the retelling of our own personal bones story, and participate in a variety of activities from Kenny Wolin's workshop on Independence to lively discussions on bone playing style. I hope to see you there, Virtually of course! *Steve Brown*

### (All-Ireland continued from Page 1)

Second got €200 and a trophy

Third gets €100 and a trophy.

For most players it's not about the money it's competing and doing your best and trying to win. Nicolas Dupin won the competition, John Forde from Abbeyfeale came 2nd, and Skeffington Flynn was 3rd. John Forde is in his 3 year senior and was a multi winner of the junior bones. He actually won the junior title when he was 4 years old back in the day and many times after that. Sarah and Laura O'Donoghue are my daughters and they completed this year and are cousins to John Forde, Jackie and David Murphy (David in Juniors). Adrian O Leary are all cousins to each other and all grew up within 1/4 of a mile of each other in Ballaugh Abbeyfeale, Pat Forde, who was also a competitor, is John Fords dad. The great David Murphy is Jackie's and David's dad. David senior is the best one handed bone player in Ireland and taught all of the above players how to play bones. As ye can see Bones are big in Abbeyfeale. David senior doesn't complete anymore having won the competition numerous times. So hopefully in 2022 we will be back to a new normal and have our Fleadh and competition live in Abbeyfeale.

We hope to have a lot of the overseas competitors in Ireland for 2022 competition. So all the best from Martin O'Donoghue, a committee member, and the other organisers of the competition.



## Bones Fest XXV Silver Anniversary Fest

Virtual on Zoom  
Saturday, July 24, 2021  
Preliminary Information  
in column on right

### *Rhythm Bones Player*

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The Rhythm Bones Player is published quarterly by the Rhythm Bones Society. Nonmember subscriptions are \$10 for one year; RBS members receive the Player as part of their dues.

The Rhythm Bones Players welcomes letters to the Editor and article on any aspect of bones playing. All material submitted for consideration is subject to editing and condensation.

Rhythm Bones Central web site: [rhythmbones.org](http://rhythmbones.org)

## Bones Fest XXV Preliminary Program

Bones Fest XXIV is a Virtual Bones Fest using ZOOM teleconferencing technology. The exciting aspect, like last year, is that people who cannot attend an in-person Bones Fest can attend, and that means we will again have rhythm bones players from around the world in virtual attendance.

The Virtual Fest is scheduled for July 24, 2021, and will begin at 1 PM, GMT which is 9 AM Eastern Daylight Time, the time used in the program details

**Technical Details.** Prior to the 'Practice Workshop' described in the next section, attendees will receive an email with the technical details needed to attend the Fest.

**Saturday, July 17, 12:00 to 3:00 PM  
Practice Workshop – Moderator: Skeff Flynn**

This Pre-Bones Fest Workshop is for attendees to practice how to use Zoom. It will cover how to sign in, basic controls, microphone placement, video camera placement, lighting, screen sharing, chatting and more so all of us get the most out of the Fest.

**Legal Backup Music Required.**

Since BFXXV is online and we respect copyrights, legal music is required. We have a library of legal music that you can download and use, and attendees will be emailed a link to the library. If you have legal music, you can certainly use it.

**Bones Market Place** During break periods, attendees can show the rhythm bones they make or sell. Sign up on the Registration Form.

**Tentative Schedule**

**9:00 AM- Opening Session** - Meet and Greet with Steve Brown

The session begins with opening remarks from Rhythm Bones Society's Executive Director, Steve Brown. During this session in a somewhat controlled way, attendees can say hello or chat with old friends, and we can find out what parts of the world are represented.

**9:30 AM – Individual Introductions**  
– Moderator: Steve Brown

Each participant gets an allotted time to introduce themselves, talk about how they came to the bones, and demonstrate how they play. This is the hallmark of the Rhythm Bones Society, including everyone, no matter level of play.

12 noon - **Special Presentation - Jerry Mescher and his impact on rhythm bone playing**, Join Mel Mercier's presentation over the luncheon hour.

1pm Concepts in **Independence Workshop** - with Kenny Wolin. For two-handed rhythm bones players.

1:30pm **Workshop - How to improve your playing** with Bill Vits and Junior Davey.

2pm **Workshop - Essence of Irish bone playing**. A panel discussion with Tommy Hayes, Junior Davey, Mel Mercier, and Nickolas Dupin (winner of 2021 All-Ireland).

2:30pm **Workshop - Essence of two handed bone playing** with Bill Vits, Kenny Wolin, Brad Dutz, and Graham

(Continued on Page 7)

## rhythmbones.org Updated

The website of the Rhythm Bones Society finally gets an upgrade. It turns out that the old navigation did not work on some of today's mobile devices, and that much content could not be viewed.

Skeff Flynn suggested we use the WordPress platform which will make it easy to pass it on to a new webmaster when that is needed. It gives us lots of tools as well as it works on all devices including smartphones. It also gives us the ability to enter blog-like posts.

The new layout is shown in the images on Pages 4 and 5. There is a Homepage section shown on Page 4 and a Rhythm Bones Museum section shown on Page 5.

The Homepage is leaner and cleaner, but with enough information that someone can look at this page and go away with a fair understanding of what rhythm bones are about.

If their curiosity is aroused they can click on one of five rhythm bones pictures to get a more complete description.

'What Are Rhythm Bones' is pretty much what Jonathan Danforth included when he took over the website from its creator, Martha Cowett.

'Where to Buy Rhythm Bones' has a long list of people who sell rhythm bones. It is way out of date and it is not clear how to format it. This will be updated over the next few months.

'Learn How to Play Rhythm Bones' has a new focus - get people hooked quickly, and it does that with Dom Flemons' short instruction YouTube video. Dom has a great personality and has taught many people how to play rhythm bones. For those who want more, they can view Dr Fred Edmunds basic instruction or they are directed to Percy Danforth's and Aaron Plunkett's instruction videos that they can purchase. And if they like Fred's teaching, they can continue with his entire "Bones Unlimited" videos free on our website.

Of course, we hope they will 'Join the Rhythm Bones Society' which they can do by mail or online.

While the left side of the page is a repackaging of the old Homepage, the right sidebar is all new, and gives us the ability

to post anything of short term interest. These posts will be entered by the Board and not individuals who have our Facebook Page for individual posts. We may try letting individuals post comments to Board posts, and see if it is useful.

The list of post shows the most recent 10 posts, and if one of them is clicked a new page shows the entire post. Posts are saved unless deleted by the webmaster which will happen if the post becomes not relevant or is moved to the Museum.

Posts can be assigned a Category and/or one or more Tags, and below the recent post list are two search options, one for Categories and one for Tags. Clicking a Category or Tag will show a page with a list of all requested posts. This is a big step up from our previous Homepage.

The online virtual Museum is entered using the navigation bar at the top of each page or clicking 'Visit the Rhythm Bones Museum' picture on the Homepage. Hopefully it is clean, but it is not lean housing almost 25 years of rhythm bones information taken primarily from the 'Rhythm Bones Player' newsletter. Newsletter stories are not organized and the Museum is sort of an index to stories in the newsletter. This is a work in progress to include all these stories as well as add new stories from future newsletters.

The Museum has two ways to access information, global search and fixed exhibits. On the navigation bar at the top of the page is a search icon. Click it and a search bar forms at the very top of the page. Enter one or more search terms and 'hits' are summarized on a new page. Global search means that every Post and Page is searched

Fixed Exhibits are collections of related material, and each exhibit is advertised with an image on the lower part of the Museum page.

Percy Danforth, Ted Goon and Freeman Davis are three players who made major contributions to rhythm bones in the 20th century. Percy and Ted each have a fixed exhibit, and Freeman, known as Brother Bones, will eventually have one.

Want to know about other rhythm bones players, then check out the 'Player Profiles' exhibit where there are over 100 profiles to date mostly of players who have been written about in the newsletter. The content in these profiles was taken



Most everything on this page is clickable

## What Are Rhythm Bones

Save Brown Cow Skin Bones

Rhythm Bones are one of the oldest and made musical instruments. They are simple. Two sticks are held between the fingers and clicks are made with wrist and arm movement. They can be played one handed or two handed. As the name suggests, they are made from animal bones, but also other materials like wood shaped like a bone.

## WHERE TO BUY RHYTHM BONES

Check for Neale Rhythm Bones

The Rhythm Bones Society does not sell rhythm bones, but we have where to buy from. Animal bones are frequently made from cow skin or leather. Wood bones are made from wood and are made with being produced a few are not but still sound. You can also find retailers on how to make your own. Click to find a site.

## LEARN HOW TO PLAY THEM

Shooting Star Rhythm Bones

If you have rhythm, rhythm bones are easy to play when compared to other musical instruments. Click and find out for yourself with instruction from our website or on the internet.

## JOIN THE RHYTHM BONES SOCIETY

Preservation Rhythm Bones

The Rhythm Bones Society was formed in 2006 as a educational society to preserve and pass on rhythm bones and have fun doing it. We have this website, publish a quarterly Rhythm Bones Paper newsletter and host an annual Bones Fest. We invite you to join and help us.

## Visit the Rhythm Bones Museum

Visit the Rhythm Bones Museum where you will find a wide variety of information about rhythm bones including history, important players, players of today, the Rhythm Bones Paper newsletter, audio and video on the website, YouTube videos, and more.

### LATEST POSTS

ALL-IRELAND BONES COMPETITION RESULTS  
04 MAY, 2021

ALL-IRELAND BONES COMPETITION VIDEO  
04 MAY, 2021

BONES FEST KEY PRELIMINARY INFORMATION  
07 MAY, 2021

DOM FLEMONS IN OLDTIME-CENTRAL.COM  
07 MAY, 2021

JONATHAN DANFORTH PROFILE  
07 MAY, 2021

JONATHAN DANFORTH WORKSHOP - BONES IN SPACE AND TIME  
07 MAY, 2021

KENNY WOLN BFKXIV WORKSHOP - GALLOP RHYTHM.  
04 MAY, 2021

KENNY WOLN'S BFKXIV WORKSHOP - OSTERATO PATTERNS  
04 MAY, 2021

KENNY WOLN'S BFKXIV WORKSHOP VIDEO - 16TH NOTES  
15 APRIL, 2021

PERCY DANFORTH PORTFOLIO UPDATED  
26 APRIL, 2021

### CATEGORIES

CONTACTS

EVENTS

HISTORY

NEWS

NEWSLETTER

PROFILE

UNCATEGORIZED

WORKSHOPS

### TAGS

BonesFest2021, BonesFest2020, Danforth, Dom, Duain, Flynn, Ford, Jonathan, Wain

from the newsletter to make it look like a profile, but if your profile is there you are invited to submit a better photograph, up to date words, and audio and/or video that you would like to share. If you are not included, please feel free to submit a profile. Check out our Executive Director, Steve Brown, for a good example.

Bones Fests are an important part of our society and each Fest is briefly summarized in the 'Bones Fest Highlights' exhibit. For more detail and photographs, click the Summary link at the top of the page or for the original story click the 'Original Story' link.

You can search the newsletter in the "Search the Newsletters" exhibit. All of the newsletters are in an Adobe pdf file which is a large file that takes time to download particularly on mobile devices. Search using the Adobe Find function (cntl + F).

The 'Bones Through Space and Time' exhibit takes its name from Jonathan Danforth's great workshop at virtual Bones Fest XXIV where he shows how ideas, like rhythm bones, spread around the world. Many historical rhythm bones stories are in this exhibit.

The 'Published Articles' exhibit includes some of the major published articles on rhythm bones that can be read online.

The 'History of RBS' exhibit tells our society's history and includes profiles of all current and former Board members.

The 'Rhythm Bones' Media exhibit has a rich assortment of rhythm bones audio and video that are online on our website or on YouTube or Vimea.

The Rhythm Bones Art and Images' Exhibit presents images and photographs that appeared in the newsletter.

The 'Rhythm Bones Book of Knowledge' Exhibit is a work in progress idea that could be a published book for the 25th Anniversary of the Rhythm Bones Society in 2024. In theory it would contain all of the information found on this new website in book form. This exhibit has a few pages to preview.

As we all continue to research and learn more about rhythm bones, these exhibits will grow in size or new Exhibits will be added. We hope you will be a contributor.

A lot of the text you see is temporary and hours of editing are ahead of us.

**Rhythm Bones Central**  
Friends of the Rhythm Bones Society

HOME ABOUT CONTACT US Q

## Rhythm Bones Museum

Whaling Museum, New Bedford, MA

**You Can Search This Website**  
Click the Search icon in the navigation bar and a search bar will appear at the top of the page. Enter one or more keywords in the search bar and press Enter.

The Rhythm Bones Society knows a lot about rhythm bones, and the Museum has fixed exhibits and the ability to search the Rhythm Bones Website. Here are some fixed exhibits.

- The Percy Danforth Project
- The Memorabilia of Ted Goon Mr. Goon-Bones
- Player Profiles
- Bones Fests Highlights
- Search the Newsletters
- Rhythm Bones Through Space and Time
- Published Articles
- History of the Rhythm Bones Society
- Rhythm Bones Media
- Rhythm Bones Art and Images
- More Exhibits To Come

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# An Instrument Both Ancient and Modern: An Interview with Dom Flemons

*Dom Flemons is a songwriter, multi-instrumentalist, producer, actor, music scholar, historian, and record collector. He is considered an expert player on the banjo, guitar, harmonica, jug, percussion, quills, fife and rhythm bones. A Grammy Award Winner, two-Time EMMY Nominee, 2020 United States Artists Fellow, Dom Flemons hails from Phoenix, Arizona.*

*In 2005, Flemons co-founded the Carolina Chocolate Drops who won a GRAMMY for "Best Traditional Folk Album" in 2010 and were nominated for "Best Folk Album" in 2012. He left the group to pursue his solo career in 2014.*

*As his website notes, "He has branded the moniker 'The American Songster' since his repertoire of music covers over 100 years of early American popular music." Flemons released his third solo album titled Prospect Hill: The American Songster Omnibus on Omnivore Recordings.*

**Timothy Jones:** You have spent a lot of time studying the roots of traditional music. That exploration includes the minstrel era. I'm struck by how minstrelsy was not just about music but also theater. Do those roots account for the flourish and flair with which I think many bones players approach their playing?

**Dom Flemons:** I believe in some ways yes. The minstrel show was theater of course and everyone loves a bit of flair in their theater. I know that for me when I first saw photos of the old minstrel shows I was struck by the way the bones players always had their hands up in the air. When I first saw bones being played in real life they were always played close to the chest. I myself tried to experiment the way I played bones by giving them a bit more body movement and I was glad to find that it worked well for me. The bones truly respond to the player's every move and I think that is very liberating when you learn to play the instrument

because there aren't many instruments like that.

**TJ:** The ethnomusicologist Greg C. Adams talks about the roots of bones playing in dance. Any connections you see?

**DF:** Of course. Rhythm is rhythm. When you heard bones they are not always played like a dancer but the rudiments of where you land your rhythm can be traced to the way the dancer dances to the music. If you dance to a certain type of music, you yourself learn what makes the music tick. Once you have that in your mind, you can translate that over to your audience. The first blackface minstrel to make an international following was Daddy Rice, the creator of the "Jump, Jim Crow," and he was a dancer. Dancing was what started the craze and then the bands came in later.

**TJ:** If you were to characterize the accented beats when you play bones, would they typically fall on 2 and 4?

**DF:** What really matters is the song. When you reach into the world of percussion the playing gets a little more complex. It is the rhythm version of melody and harmony. When one sings a melody, the harmony is a perfect part that matches the notes of the melody and can transform the overall sound and feel to any piece of music. Percussion works the same way. While a rhythm may land on the two and four, the percussion can play a variation of that rhythm that will change and alter the feel of the whole of the music based on what parts are being played alongside the main rhythm.

**TJ:** Do you still use both wooden bones and bone bones?

**DF:** I still pull out wooden bones for recording sessions as bone bones tend to be very sharp coming back on a recording. With that being said, I still play shows with natural bones. I keep a wooden set around just in case I need a different tone. This usually happens when I'm jamming with a big group.

**TJ:** I have Dena Epstein's book, *Sinful Tunes and Spirituals*, about the African American connections to early minstrelsy, and to bones themselves, and I'm fascinated. Can you say a little more about that?

**DF:** I learned to play bones from a lot of people, black and white. The fact that I can understand how the instrument

works as both an ancient and modern musical instrument and play music that can transcend time by being both old and new, means that I try to employ all of my influences in my playing. I can reference in my playing Brother Bones, a black man who was the Harlem Globetrotters mascot, and have an urban feel like he did. I can also play western swing and sound like a snare drum doing a drag-roll beat. I can sound like a washboard. I could sound like a trap drum set or I could sound like a dancer. That is the beauty. I make my references in the context of the song I'm playing. There are cues and sounds that demonstrate this heritage from the African Diaspora. I can read a book like *Sinful Tunes and Spirituals* and immerse myself in the references to inform the way I approach the material itself. *Timothy Jones*

Timothy wrote a longer article that can be read at <https://oldtime-central.com/gimme-that-old-time-rhythm/>.

[We met Timothy at Virtual Bones Fest XXIV and videos from that Fest have a photograph of him at the beginning just above the letters A-J.]

Photo by Timothy Duffy



## Bones Calendar

**Bones Fest XXV.** July 24, 2021, Virtual on Zoom.. Check this newsletter for the preliminary program.

**NTCMA Festival,** Fremont, NE (NEW LOCATION). Assume canceled.

**(BFXXV continued from Page 1)**

Hargrove.

3pm **Workshop - Bone Tone** with Mardeen Gordon and Brad Dutz. Exploring tone quality and various materials.

3:30 **Workshop - Classical Bones Performance** with Annika Mikolajko, coloratura soprano, musician, multi-instrumentalist, pedagogue, sailor, Master of Music Arts and rhythm bones player

4pm **Workshop - The Quadruplet** with Graham Hargrove. Learn how to do the "true Quadruplet" based on Aaron Plunkett's one handed momentum technique.

4:15 PM **The Goat Bone Story** with Tom Connolly. Tom Connolly's journey of trying to make goat shin bones over the last 10 years involving a butcher named Billy, an Island off the coast of Cork, and an interesting find in an antique store.

4:30 **Workshop - Making Bones** with Steve Brown. Watch the process from beginning to end.

5:30 **Individual Introductions** continue to the end of Fest.

## Junior Davey on All-Ireland Judging

"First and foremost, I would like to thank the Committee for Fledh by the Feale and especially those associated with the Bones Championship for inviting me to adjudicate. It is an honor and a privilege for me to do that. And this was not easy task. We had 23 of the best exponents of rhythm bones playing in the world incorporating the best two-handed players and the best one-handed players. It meant for a serious competition and I think not only befits the All-Ireland Bones Competition, but indeed a World Bones Competition.

There were some great players and it was so fantastic to see players from so many places, from overseas, from North America, from Canada, and from Poland. You had the best and such a mix of styles especially among the two-handed players, some very extravagant technical playing.

It was amazing and a joy for me to sit and listen to which I did many times - I had to - to separate the standards and listen to the finery. Also we had so many

great single-handed players - exponents from pure traditionalists to some willing to take a little risk with improvisation and stuff like that. Really everybody brought their 'A' game.

Just to say at the outset as well, I'm involved as people know with bones as well. I know a lot of the players and this had absolutely no influence on the result. So I had to listen to the finery and the technique and make sure that people kept within the four minutes to play the two pieces and played with good, solid traditional music. So I listened and listened five times over to narrow it down to the final three.

The result is as follows for the 2021 All-Ireland Bones Championship. In third place we had Skeff Flynn and Skeff played lovely in a highly unusual style, but fantastic playing. In second place we had John Ford with wonderful traditional solo playing - fantastic player. And in first place, Nicholas Dupin with textbook, class playing, almost identifying every little twist and turn in the melody that he backed. So the All-Ireland Champion for 2021, Senior Bones, is Nicholas Dupin from France. Second is John Ford from Ireland and third place is Skeff Flynn from North America. Congratulation to all involved, and hopefully for 2022 we can all meet up and share ideas and approaches, experiences and everything because it is so great to have world participation in events like this. To have players from North America, France, and Poland is brilliant. OK, thank you very much and continue playing wonderful rhythm bones. See you all later.

## Teri Wolin Taught During COVID-19

Update from previous Newsletter Article - go to <http://rhythmbones.org/documents/RBP.pdf>, page 162.

WOW - How time has flown! I've been teaching bones in the school now for 14 years and my (then) 5 year old daughter Emily is now going to be 20 in March. Some of you may recall that Emmy and I performed at the DC Bones Fest that Kenny & I hosted here 10 years ago. I still have pictures of that performance and recently came across another one with her (then) toddler brother Aidan

also playing rhythm bones. Aidan's 17 now by the way. Boy do I feel old all of the sudden.

OK, coming back from my trip down memory lane...In reading over my grip thoughts from the previous Newsletter, I suppose I've changed my grip a bit and now I use the "Yankee" grip in my left hand and the "Irish" grip in my right. That's just something that developed over time and I wasn't even aware I was doing it. I generally use 2 different types of rhythm bones when I am playing 2-handed to get that "drum set" sound. I suppose that's the reason for 2 different grips and 2 different bone types.

This year has been especially challenging as a music teacher because our school chose to go Hybrid. That means I'm teaching In-Person as well as Virtual. The Diocese of Arlington has asked us not to sing at all in the classroom (or at Mass for that matter). We've also been spaced 6 ft. apart and wearing masks. It's very, very difficult to sing with a mask on anyway so the no-singing rule was just as well I suppose. So, what in the world is a music teacher to do now?

Luckily, I still have a large assortment of late Jim Lohmann's rhythm bones that I can carry in a small tote from class to class (yes, I even lost the use of my classroom so it's music-on-a-cart). Thank goodness for rhythm bones!!!!

OK, well that works very well for those that are sitting in front of me but what about those that are Virtual at home? While I'm able to supply my students with rhythm bones, I know that no one at home will have access to them. That is where I am blessed (many times over) to be living with a man who plays the spoons in addition to rhythm bones. Everyone has spoons! I made recordings of Kenny giving basic spoons instructions and delivered them to the students via their online school platform. We made 3 videos so far and he gives tips and techniques to further each student along in their spoons-playing progress.

In mid-January, our school chose to go Virtual for 2 weeks. I was teaching music from my kitchen table and had Kenny join in with rhythm bones and spoons while I played and sang some of the kids' favorite songs. It was a rare opportunity for the kids to see Kenny playing both of those instruments & they loved it! *Teri Wolin*

# All-Ireland Bones Competition Winners and Adjudicator



The winners of the 2021 All-Ireland Bones Competition are; Nicholas Dupin from France, First Place (left column), John Ford from Ireland, Second Place (middle column), and Skeffington Flynn from North America, 3rd Place (upper

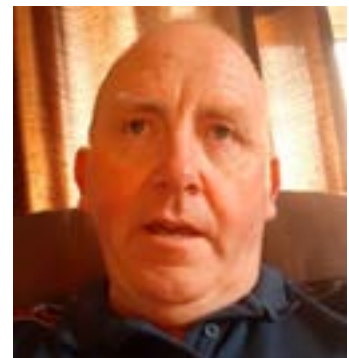


right column).

The Adjudicator was Junior Davey from Ireland (lower right column).

These images were taken live from the Facebook video of the event.

The story of the event by Martin O'Donoghue starts on Page 1, and includes a photograph of him. There are comments on how the competition was judged from the Adjudicator on Page 7. He notes how difficult a job it was to pick the winners from such great players.



## *Rhythm Bones Society*

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*Address Correction Requested*